

**ALEO London: Autumn Forum
Tuesday 18 October 2016**

Kindly hosted by the London Borough of Camden

Attendees

Bob Clegg	Bromley Council
Fran Evans	Camden Council
Andrew Jackson	Ealing Council
Ben Coles	Groundwork
Manjula Reddy	Harrow Council
Natalie Samson	Harrow Council
Jean Roberts	Hyde Housing
John Kolm-Murray	Islington Council
Mubasshir Ajaz	Islington Public Health
Daniella Gray	Keepmoat
Helen George	Lambeth Council
Martin O'Brien	Lewisham Council
Hayley Tranter	National Grid
Daniel Navarro	Peabody
Justine Dornan	Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
Robert Marjoram	Scottish Power
Liz Warren	SE ²
Charles Malissard	Smart Energy GB
Mumin Islam	Thames Water
Katharine Frost	Three Rivers Council
Kerry Potter	UK Power Networks
Brody Isaac	Viridian Housing
Patrick Kajura	Viridian Housing
Zoe Dunn	Waltham Forest Council
Neil Walter	Watford Borough Council

Apologies

Emma Adams	ARP Energy Services
Malcolm Bell	Croydon
Tim Hendry	Islington Council
Shadia Rahman	Kingston

Owain Mortimer	London Councils
Dale Hoyland	NEF
Tessa Barraclough	Peabody
Robbie Stevenson	SGN
Patryk Szczerba	Southern Housing Group
Tim Taylor	Sutton

1. Regional update Martin O'Brien, ALEO London Chair

1.1 Since last meeting (April 2016):

- **Election of Sadiq Khan:** the London elections saw the arrival of Sadiq Khan as Mayor, with a commitment to being the “greenest mayor ever”. Since the election, there has been a strong focus on air quality. The manifesto included proposals for Energy for Londoners, a new not-for-profit company. Local Authority Environment Directors went to a meeting with the GLA but details are still thin. The GLA have been invited to the next ALEO London meeting.
- **Vote to leave the European Union:** following the referendum, Government did propose to guarantee EU funding such as Horizon 2020, so this is worth watching.
- **Changes in Government:** The referendum was also the catalyst for a change in political leadership within UK Government, and for the restructure of Government departments. DECC is now part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), with newly appointed ministers.
- **CMA energy markets investigation:** the Competition and Markets Authority completed its investigation into energy markets. It identified that many non-switching customers are paying higher prices than they need to and that there are still problems with prepayment tariffs being higher than others. The CMA recommended creating a database of non-switchers who could be targeted with offers, putting limits on price comparison sites, reviewing core tariffs and placing a price cap on prepayment tariffs. There has been some degree of debate as to whether this went far enough, whether it is too complex and whether it will lead to unintended consequences and confused consumers. Ofgem has the job of picking up on the recommendations, so more consultation is likely.
- **ECO consultation:** since July, energy suppliers have been able to count their activities towards ECO 2.5 / Transition. Government also consulted on the shape of ECO 3 considering scrapping CSCO and the rural obligation, placing a greater emphasis on Affordable Warmth; deemed scores rather than EPCs; putting a limit on boiler replacements; allowing social housing properties rated E, F or G to qualify for measures (other than boilers); making eligibility more flexible (for example, for households in fuel poverty but not in receipt of benefits). The flexible element in particular may create opportunities for local authorities and is potentially something that collectively ALEO London members should think about to help all London Boroughs benefit from the opportunity.
- **Redress funding:** Ofgem consulted on redress funding, that is, the fines paid by suppliers when they do not meet their obligations. ALEO responded to the consultation saying that local authorities should have fair and proper access to these funds, rather than them being almost exclusively open to third sector organisations: schemes should not benefit those who have been fined. The ALEO response called for more third party involvement and transparency in deciding how funds are allocated.
- **Committee on Fuel Poverty report:** in September, the Committee issued a progress report on Government’s progress towards its fuel poverty target. In line with insight from ALEO and NEA, the Committee took the view that current levels of funding are insufficient to

deliver the target and Government needs to take further action.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cfp-report-september-2016>)

- **Data sharing:** Cabinet Office is taking legislation through Parliament to enable energy company data to be shared with “public authorities”. ALEO are trying to make sure that the definition of this includes local authorities.
- **Heat Networks Investment Project:** HNDU has announced the final shape of the pilot HNIP - £39 million funding for district heating projects, with the funding aimed at the public sector. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-central-heating-for-cities-to-help-reduce-energy-bills>)

1.2 Forthcoming activity:

- **The Bonfield Review** should issue its report, though there is no set timetable for this.
- **The final shape of ECO** should be announced; it is unclear to what extent it is going to create a viable offer for fuel poor households for example loft and cavity insulation that doesn't require a 'customer contribution'.
- **Energy Performance Certificate data** should be more widely available from Landmark - there may still be an administrative cost but it should be easier and cheaper to access EPC data and use it for targeting.
- An important takeaway from the ALEO National Conference was that there is a lot to be done before the introduction of **private rented sector minimum energy efficiency standards** in 2018. Local authorities as a sector need to think about our role in enforcement, and about the robustness of the standards (when they were introduced, there was the proviso that landlords would not have to pay for improvements because they could access ECO or Green Deal).
- **Energy for Londoners** - we are expecting progress on this and hope to have a presentation from the GLA at the next ALEO meeting.

1.3 Members Survey: Martin O'Brien presented the results of the Members Survey, carried out in July / August 2016. The general picture is one of decline in fuel poverty resourcing in London local authorities, there was however variation from borough to borough with some places maintaining or increasing capacity. Despite the pressures the majority of boroughs were maintaining a range of activity on fuel poverty, working with partners across health, housing and the third sector. With new opportunities such as ECO and redress funds local authorities remain the most effective route to reaching vulnerable households and connecting local activity. The question is how best we enable all local authorities in London to bridge the gap between pressures on resources and the job that needs to be done.

1.4 National update: John Kolm-Murray, speaking as National ALEO Chair, provided a further update. The picture for local authority resourcing for fuel poverty is similar across England and Wales; there are areas of England that don't have enough energy officers for a fully-functioning regional association. There has been consolidation among many local authorities. There are some reasons to be cheerful though. ECO should include recognition of a formal role for local authorities for the first time. It is likely to be used as a test, and it could be a difficult test to pass if the guidance is too restrictive so we are lobbying BEIS on this. ALEO's position is that local authorities should be a driving force, whether in delivering directly or commissioning. There are lots of organisations moving into the area of fuel poverty advice, but local authorities are best at reaching the most vulnerable members of a community and at working with partners. Local authorities found it hard to access the redress funding. With the reform of the Warm Home Discount, some authorities are speaking to energy suppliers about bringing that advice money in and having success. BEIS are thinking about making WHD available for boilers, and you could see the third sector moving more into fabric measures as a result of this and ECO flex. If the third sector gets more involved independent from local authorities, what role for us? BEIS' assessment of Green Deal Communities and the Central Heating Fund was not wholly

positive but there were design issues with policies but these aren't necessarily recognised centrally and we need to be better at presenting evidence of the impact of restrictive guidelines. We need to work together more. Partnerships between boroughs aren't a threat to jobs and industry does appreciate what we do.

1.5 Association for the Conservation of Energy update: Liz Warren gave an update on behalf of the Association for the Conservation of Energy. They have recently published a report (<http://www.ukace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ACE-RAP-report-2016-10-Buildings-and-the-5th-Carbon-Budget.pdf>) looking at the 5th Carbon Budget period, current energy policies and the policy gap between the current mix and what is needed to achieve the overall target. The report also revisits a number of policy options in both the domestic and non-domestic sector. ACE are also producing a series of Local Stories: these are designed to build cross-party support for action on energy efficiency in a local area, bringing together key figures (eg, levels of fuel poverty), opportunities and benefits of energy efficiency. A London Local Story (<http://www.ukace.org/2016/07/energy-efficiency-in-london/>) has been produced, but there are opportunities to produce more localised versions (sponsorship is needed, but ACE can help to raise this).

2. What does good health impact evaluation look like?

Mubasshir Ajaz, Public Health Advisor, London Boroughs of Islington and Camden
(see slides)

2.1 Public health is complex, and made up of many determinants; not only the health of the individual but also a wide range of social and economic factors. This means that it can feel difficult to isolate cause and effect and measure improvements in public health outcomes.

2.2 There are many types of evidence which can be used to assess changes in public health. Each of these has its own data quality issues which will affect the robustness of the conclusions that can be drawn. As long as you are clear in your analysis about the quality and source of your data, your reader will understand how you have come to your conclusions and your confidence in them.

2.3 The JSNA is the most powerful tool for influencing public health, usually drawn up every three years.

2.4 Mubasshir presented some insights from the Holly Park external wall insulation projects. You can see a clear increase in the number of residents reporting that they were "warm enough" and a reduction in reported incidence of damp. Behaviour change around how often heating is used was also recorded. That said, there was no overall reported improvement in health and wellbeing (as reported by residents). Limitations related to sample size and accuracy of recall may have affected this. In future projects, there will be data gathering from the clinical side as well as from the patient perspective to try and quantify improvements in health and wellbeing.

Q1: A lot of results claimed from projects are based on short-term studies (unlike Holly Park which was a long term study). Are these findings replicable? Are reports peer-reviewed?

A1: I can't speak to specific projects, but peer review is very important. You need to look at the research behind the headlines, get at the data that lies beneath.

Q2: What proportion of a project's budget should be set aside for evaluation?

A2: A lot of people don't set aside any budget for evaluation, so you're a step ahead even thinking about it. There's no hard and fast rule; the Holly Park evaluation cost around £6,000 for a three stage project looking at 269 properties. This used Public Health resources and engaged Housing and Energy Departments in design. Some of the analysis was also done at no cost.

For a DECC project we're doing, they said to spend 5%. However, that project is targeted at people with a long-term health condition; much more time will be required to engage them. You have to think also about who's collecting your data, how they're engaging with

people and the ethics of it. You can't force answers from people or you might misuse your powers as commissioners. Ethics are vital: people have to know their data is confidential and you need informed consent and transparency of reporting.

3. Smart meters, the campaign and local authorities

Charles Malissard, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Smart Energy GB
(see slides)

3.1 Over 4 million smart meters have been installed and the publicity campaign is ongoing. Smart Energy GB for Communities funding has recently been announced and several local authorities (including Lewisham) have secured funding for outreach work in their communities.

3.2 Smart Energy GB has built up some strong partnership to reach people, including working with the Post Office to ensure that information about smart meters is available in every branch, helping to reach those who may not be online or see TV advertising.

3.3 Local authorities can help by sharing information about smart meters with local residents. There are a lot of resources available on the Smart Energy GB website; these are free to download and use, and we can print them for you as well.

Q1: What happens with people who have a medical dependency on electricity or gas? Are you building relationships with the NHS to identify these people?

A1: Our partnerships team have built a number of relationships so far with organisations like Citizens Advice, Bild and others to ensure we raise awareness amongst vulnerable audience and train people in the local community. currently our relationship with the NHS is principally about them raising awareness amongst their employees of the potential of smart meters. Going forwards we will develop other partnerships to target other specific audiences.

Q2: Are there issues for smart meters related to mobile phone signals in London? It's important for us to know of common issues in case residents contact us.

A2: The DCC will use its own dedicated communications system, in the meantime smart meters are operating using something akin to phone signal. However it is not because you don't have signal on your phone provider in a specific area that you will not be able to use your smart meter. Moreover the in home communications between your smart meter and the in home display will work independently of this.

Q3: Could this be more integrated with existing resident engagement infrastructure (eg, local fuel poverty schemes)?

A3: Smart Energy GB's task was set by government legislation- we are here to raise awareness and propensity about smart meters, with a special focus on vulnerable audiences. We are meeting with Boroughs where we can to see how the rollout and our campaign might fit within their broader plans, from smart city projects to fuel poverty alleviation. In places like Islington and Camden, there's already a real sense of enthusiasm about the role smart meters will play in their broader plans. We're trying to be as effective as we can through communications.

Q4: We have heard stories that if you switch supplier, your in home display won't work any more.

A4: Meters will become fully interoperable when the new Data and Communications Company (DCC) goes live. Some early adopters have been concerned about this; it's not universally the case but it seems that a temporary and partial loss of functionality can occur in specific instances. This will be addressed over the air by the DCC. When the DCC goes live, it will run on the air upgrades to which will address this. It is worse mentioning that 80% of people with a smart meter would recommend it to a friend and that in the vast majority of cases there are no issues with switching.

4. Smart metering update

Mumin Islam, Metering Stakeholder Liaison, Thames Water and Ben Cole, Director, Groundwork London

(see slides)

- 4.1 There is potentially a significant gap between supply and demand for water in London. Installing meters is one way to help bridge this gap (along with improving infrastructure and fixing leaks). We are currently installing meters in Bexley, Greenwich, Enfield, Islington, Camden, Lewisham, Haringey and Waltham Forest, and will gradually move into all Boroughs.
 - 4.2 Smart meters allow customers to be able to go online to see exactly what they are using - giving greater control of water use and their bill. It also means that in most cases we will provide bills based on the actual meter reading rather than an estimated reading. The same technology will help us identify leaks on both yours and our pipes so we can fix them quickly free of charge and save water.
 - 4.3 The smart meter installation allows for a customer journey over a number of years. Households are not automatically switched to metering, even after their meter is installed - there is a two year grace period. Households can request to switch to metered billing when they want; if this is within the first year of installation, they will receive a credit for any over payment.
 - 4.4 Groundwork are supporting Thames Water by providing Smarter Homes visits when smart water meters are installed. This includes personalised water audits and provision of a range of water saving devices (it's very like a Green Doctor visit).
 - 4.5 Thames Water also has a range of extra support services for vulnerable householders, such as social tariffs, grants for debt relief and a special assistance register.
- Q1:** Quite a lot of Victorian houses have water supplies that are split across terraces. There are examples where people have had meters installed and then been billed for their neighbours' water consumption as well as their own. Is this going to be an issue in London? It's important for us to know of common issues in case residents contact us.
- A1:** Common supply is a massive issue in London particularly in areas like Camden and Islington. We will undertake an external survey of every property to see if a water meter can be fitted in the footpath or outside in the road. If this is not possible because the water pipe going to the property serves more than one customer, such as a block of flats or a maisonette, we will aim to install a water meter internally typically under the customer's kitchen sink, though this is a bigger challenge and we're doing a lot of engagement work around it.
- Q2:** Are there comms issues in London related to mobile phone signals?
- A2:** Not that we are aware of, we have been rolling out comms masts at sites, and these will be one of the factors that determine how we plan our meter roll out.
- Q3:** There's some concern that we are bombarding people with home visits and junk mail. People will get fatigued, making them harder to reach. It doesn't seem integrated, and it doesn't use what's already there (eg, local authority fuel poverty / health schemes). We already have resident engagement infrastructure in some areas.
- A3:** We are looking at this and how we can make energy referrals in the Smarter Homes visits and linking across to fuel poverty programmes where we can. We're also engaging with social housing providers and private landlords: a big part of this engagement is looking at how we integrate with existing work. Groundwork's involvement on both sides means that we know some residents who have had two visits in one day - Groundwork would love to see more synergy.
- Q4:** What happens if you find a leak in a property?
- A4:** One of the benefits of smart water meters is that it will identify leaks on customers' pipes, which accounts for more than a quarter of all leaks across our region. Once the smart meter flags a potential leak, if we then prove to find a leak on customers' supply pipe externally (which runs from the point of entry of customers' property boundary), we will

offer to repair this free of charge. If we can't find a leak externally, we would advise the customer to check for any leaks internally. For any leaks found internally within the property, which may include a repair to a water tank will be the customers' or owners' responsibility to repair and we are happy to advise or refer customer to a list of approved plumbers on our website.

5. Round Table

5.1 Members' Update

- **Waltham Forest:** we are developing a heat network for a large regeneration site, and currently at the stage of approving design and looking at metering and billing.
- **Islington:** we have just launched our carbon offset fund, which takes money from developers and invests it in high rise EWI, our Warmth on Prescription programme and our district heating programmes
- **Ealing:** we are evaluating our fuel poverty project with a view to re-tendering early next year. We are working with British Gas on HHCRO and would welcome feedback from other local authorities on their experience of the same.
- **Harrow:** Natalie's position has been made redundant so this will be her last meeting. Some work will be picked up by others in the office, but some will stop. Warm Homes Healthy People is funded by Public Health until March 2017.
- **Lambeth:** we are awaiting the outcome of the ECO consultation so that we can put a new fuel poverty strategy in place. There is likely to be a lot of research into the location and extent of fuel poverty in the Borough. Interestingly, the private rented sector now accounts for 34% of housing in the Borough.
- **Kensington and Chelsea:** business as usual, with Healthier Homes fuel poverty scheme running again this winter.
- **Lewisham:** we are working on the Warmth scheme with redress money. We also secured funding for six months from the CCG but are struggling for resource. We have funding from Smart Energy GB towards outreach on smart meters.

We are also carrying out a research project looking at the cost effectiveness of referral routes and are still keen to receive responses to our survey of fuel poverty scheme providers (www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5K87ZHM). We are building up a great picture of fuel poverty schemes across the country to help us understand more about cost effectiveness and success factors. We would also like to hear from organisations who make referrals into schemes (eg, charities, GPs) using the survey at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WT25D3Q. Please circulate this survey link to your referral network if possible.

- **Camden:** energy efficiency programmes include our ongoing insulation programme of council stock properties, cross tenure Well and Warm home visit service (for vulnerable residents), energy efficiency grants for low income private sector residents and also our Green Camden Helpline and WISH+ health and wellbeing referral hub. In addition to our ongoing targeted affordable warmth comms campaign, we are carrying out additional comms in our designated 'warm home zones' - areas which have high levels of poor health, inefficient housing and low income using IMD, (anonymised) Housing Benefit and EPC data.

5.2 Associate Members' Update

- **Scottish Power:** we are into our ECO2 transition year funding. 70% of our budget is now on Affordable Warmth, so particularly looking for opportunities for insulation, first time central heating, electric heating and non-gas replacement boilers. We're keen to work with local authorities on these.
- **National Grid:** we are working with the DNOs on ECO and meeting with BEIS to look at how best to channel funding for gas connections.

- **Peabody:** we are looking at how smart meters fit into the voids process, particularly once SMETS 2 capability is in place.
- **Watford Borough Council:** we are finishing a Green Deal Communities programme of 127 EWI installations, then scoping out what to do as we wait for ECO3.
- **Three Rivers Council:** we are installing EWI with Green Deal Communities funding and looking at energy consumption within the Council and a possible pathway to carbon neutrality.
- **UK Power Networks:** we are promoting the Priority Services Register and data sharing across utilities. Kerry Potter is happy to discuss with local authorities and asked for her email address to be shared: kerry.potter@ukpowernetworks.co.uk
- **Viridian Housing:** we are providing energy advice and low cost energy saving measures to our residents. We are also looking at insulation measures specifically targeting our F&G rated properties.
- **Keepmoat:** we are looking at electric storage heating and comfort, and working with the National Grid to look at a balancing service to take the pressure off peak loads.
- **Hyde Housing:** we are looking to increase our average SAP rating, and are testing nanotechnology, batteries for PV and infra red heaters.

6. AOB

6.1 Natalie Samson: The Chair recognised Natalie for all the work and input she has given to ALEO over the years, both as a representative from Harrow and as Treasurer.

6.2 Election of new Treasurer: full members of ALEO London are invited to join the Committee and become our new Treasurer. All accounts are online and reporting templates are available so the role requires minimal input. Please contact rachael.mills@se-2.co.uk if you are interested or would like further details.

7. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 12th January at City Hall