



Carbon Action Network
reducing carbon emissions & fuel poverty



www.carbonactionnetwork.org.uk

Can



Carbon Action Network
is the new identity of UK HECA

Introduction to CAN &
annual report 2007/08

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Foreword

Welcome to the national Carbon Action Network. CAN has been created in view of the Government's preferred option to repeal the Home Energy Conservation Act (as stated in its consultation paper issued in late 2007) and the already expanding role of the local authority energy officer following the widespread take up of the new climate change and fuel poverty indicators in Local Area Agreements.

Although a decision on the future of HECA has yet to be made, a survey conducted of UK HECA members has already provided us with a mandate to broaden our focus to cover the wider domestic carbon footprint, with the option to embrace the whole climate change agenda as our membership expands with new officers from related fields such as planning, transport and waste management. CAN will focus mainly on climate change mitigation but we will also address climate change adaptation and fuel poverty issues.

Importantly, CAN will continue to be a network of local authority officers for local authority officers. We will maintain our core objectives and activities, providing leadership, representation and support for local authority climate change and fuel poverty officers, sharing information and best practice, building partnerships with other sectors, and as a formally constituted, representative and expert body of officers, contributing to consultations on national policy and programme delivery.

In this special launch release we look back on our journey from the National Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Forum via the UK Home Energy Conservation Association to CAN, with our continuing support from E.ON and partnership with the Local Government Association, the Energy Saving Trust and Government.

I hope that CAN will continue to be as useful to our members as our previous incarnations have been. I do believe that the need for the network is as vital as ever, as we embark on a new learning curve, exploring and collaborating together, as we did when HECA was first introduced, to understand how we should best devote our time and resources in the fight against climate change.

- Oliver Myers, Chair of the Carbon Action Network



Development of the Network

When the Home Energy Conservation Act was passed through Parliament it was a groundbreaking move in the fight to promote energy efficiency and raise awareness of fuel poverty. The formation of a network of HECA officers was developed by a cluster of energy officers - namely the two key drivers Don Lack, then of Leicester City Council and Alan Jones of Leeds City Council - who wanted to stimulate funding opportunities, cross boundary working and information dissemination.

Shortly after the Act received royal assent in 1995, some 40 key energy officers were asked to attend a meeting at Leeds City Council, the idea being to get officers working together in the regions, and nationally, and to exchange information and ideas. This first meeting also enabled officers to work together on HECAAction bids and through this regional information exchange to assist each other to meet their respective HECA targets.

The proposed format of the regional structure was to establish 13 areas based on Degree Day Regions. Initially seven areas were formed and regular meetings took place within these regions for about two years. Regional fora started to recognise each other and form more solidly and after drumming up support for cross regional working, by 1999, a further five regions had set up fora.

Sitting on the NHER Technical Advisory Board at the time, Don and Alan highlighted the informal HECA Fora structure, which although was working, needed boosting and a higher profile. NES agreed to provide administrative support both nationally and regionally and these roles formed the first official structure of the National HECA Fora Group. The Group then had a National Secretariat service and, shortly afterwards, Don Lack and Alan Jones agreed to take the helm as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

The first HECA Conference was held in April 1999 to galvanise the good work done to date and present the need to work together as a National Fora and establish a national voice to Government. Conferences have been organised for over ten years with control being taken in-house by the Chairs in 2003.

Quotes

"When Don Lack and I called together the great and the good from across the UK in those dim and distant days following the Act's Royal ascent, our objective was to say 'you can't do this alone' and by working together regionally and nationally we have a chance of making this work and delivering. And so the Network was formed that you have grown to love".

- Alan Jones, Leeds City Council (Co-founder of the National HECA forum)

"The HECA proved to be a powerful Act, in some respects, despite a rocky road and a fairly inauspicious beginning. It started life as a private members' bill and in working through the parliamentary machinations, it got watered down to a reporting duty on the newly formed energy conservation authorities (essentially the same as housing authorities). Targets were removed and authorities were required to only report on 'practicable and cost-effective measures to significantly improve energy efficiency' in the domestic sector. Whilst Government always seemed uncertain what to do with the required reports, never developed a uniform reporting protocol on measuring improvements in energy efficiency and never seemed to take HECA seriously as a major step towards meeting Kyoto targets, the Act had some indirect benefits:

- It provided a much needed policy 'shot in the arm' for domestic energy efficiency at a local level as it raised awareness at a corporate (senior officer and member) level, much helped by high profile award ceremonies for HECAAction award winners*
- It helped to bolster the environmental enabling role of local authorities, beyond the established 'policing' and service roles. This had been floated with the concept of local agenda 21 around 1992, but was never formalised within Government policy and by 1995/6 had lost some momentum. HECA 'carried the baton' for this until a major shift in local government law was introduced*



under the Local Government Act 2000, as the community well-being power.

- It enabled local authorities to work together across their normal boundaries: many consortia were formed to develop working partnerships in sharing knowledge and running schemes, and many HECA fora were set up throughout the UK
- It positioned the Energy Saving Trust as a major support vehicle to local authorities in environmental change. Developing and running the HECAAction programme for six years, it subsequently developed and maintained a range of support mechanisms to local authorities in energy efficiency and renewable energy (as well as sustainable road transport)
- Many of the schemes developed by local authorities under HECAAction were adopted by energy suppliers as part of their EEC obligations (now CERT), such as the British Gas Council Tax Rebate Scheme. Typically these were bulk discount schemes, which proved the effectiveness of a third party promoting particular measures at a more affordable price and with reliable and approved installers.

- Dave Barton, Impetus Consulting

Improving the energy efficiency of our housing stock is vital to help people reduce their emissions and reduce their energy bills. In the last year councils have proved their commitment to tackling climate change by adopting relevant targets in their Local Area Agreements, we must use this framework to make real and lasting changes to our emissions. I welcome the launch of the Carbon Action Network which will help to retain and develop the skills and experience of the existing HECA officers.

- Paul Bettison, Chairman of the Environment Board, Local Government Association

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History of the Network

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- 1995** • The Home Energy Conservation Act receives royal ascent in 1995
 - 1996** • DoE circular 2/96 was issued as guidance to support the Act, in 1996
 - Best practise guide (GPG82) was published under the Energy Efficiency Best Practise programme to assist local authorities in developing local energy efficiency strategies, *(First 'HECA' related, but unconnected, conference held in Leicester, June 1996)*
 - 40 energy officers from across the UK met in Leeds to share information and support each other regionally and nationally, in early 1996
 - HECAction programme launched in June 1996 by the Energy Saving Trust as a three-year pump-priming competitive fund and resource for the new energy conservation authorities
 - Individual council and/or joint bids submitted for the HECA Action Resource, 1996
 - 1997** • Seven formal regional HECA Fora created based on Degree Day Regions in 1997 and other remaining regions encouraged to form
 - Regional meetings take place between 1997-1999, supported and administered by Leeds City Council.
 - 1998** • Government (DETR) agreed to extend HECAction in late 1998 for a further three years, to enable as many authorities as possible to learn the lessons from others in setting up local energy efficiency initiatives
 - NES provided administration and meeting support for National HECA Fora Group
 - 1999** • First HECA Conference, organised by NEF in association with Leeds City Council, was held in Leeds, April 1999
 - First meeting of national representatives from the regional Fora held in July 1999
 - UK HECA Fora Group structure (13 regions) officially established by November 1999
 - Structure of regional HECA Fora established with a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretariat
 - Don Lack appointed Chair and Alan Jones Vice Chair, November 1999
 - First UK HECA Fora Chairs Group meeting in November 1999
 - 2000** • Funding from EST commenced March 2000
 - First two-day HECA Conference organised by NES (supported by chairs group members), held in Nottingham, May 2000
 - UK HECA Fora Secretariat tender published May 2000
 - Leicester City Council appointed as national HECA Secretariat July 2000
 - First audit of regional HECA Fora carried out by the HECA Secretariat on behalf of EST
 - 2001** • 2001 HECA Conference held in York, organised by NES (supported by the chairs group)
 - New UK HECA Fora logo designed and implemented nationally and regionally, February 2001
 - 2002** • 2002 HECA Conference, organised by the Energy Institute (supported by the chairs group) held in Birmingham
 - First edition of the HECA Network News published winter 2002



- 2003
 - UK HECA Fora Conference Steering Group formed from members of the chairs group and national secretariat website developed and launched in the summer of 2003
 - First conference organised 'in-house' by the conference steering group, held May 2003 at Gosforth Park, Newcastle
- 2004
 - Early 2004, Defra announced there will be a Review of HECA (subsequently delayed due to foot and mouth, flooding and other reviews and pieces of legislation e.g. CCP)
 - UK HECA commissioned a report on 'HECA officers' views on the future of HECA' in April 2004
 - Bruce Pittingale appointed Chair, June 2004
 - 2004 HECA Conference, held in May in Cardiff, Wales (new delegate online booking service launched on website)
- 2005
 - Name of conferences changed to the 'National Home Energy Conference' to widen remit and appeal to all sectors. The first renamed conference was held in May 2005, Bournemouth
 - Started establishing the UK HECA Fora as a legal entity after EST announced that funding would be stopped, September 2005
 - Scottish HECA Officers' Network (SHON) become Associate members, 2005
 - The UK HECA Fora Group changed its name to the UK Home Energy Conservation Association (UK HECA) and the Chairs' Group to the HECA Executive, February 2005
 - Company Memorandum and Articles of Association written (structure and aims remain the same)
 - UK HECA Ltd, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee is incorporated, July 2005
 - Official launch of UK HECA at the House of Commons on November 2005
- 2006
 - Set up the Association's own banking system in February 2006
 - Grants from EST ceased March 2006
 - Home Energy Conference May 2006, Blackpool
 - Oliver Myers appointed as Chair, September 2006
- 2007
 - Home Energy Conference May 2007, Belfast
 - Northern Ireland HECA Panel become Associate members, September 2007
 - Two-year sponsorship deal with E.ON started in August 2007
 - Consultation on National Indicators under Governments Performance Framework, December 2007
- 2008
 - Consultation on the Review of the Home Energy Conservation Act and proposed repeal of the Act January 2008
 - UK HECA create and manage the first Creating a Carbon Neutral School Conference and Exhibition, March 2008 in Leicester
 - The Annual National Home Energy Conference held Solihull in May 2008
 - Development of new identity: the Carbon Action Network (CAN) July 2008
- 2009
 - Launch of the Carbon Action Network at the LGA Conference

Annual Review (August 2007 to July 2008)

The annual review is written in reference to activities undertaken by UK HECA in 2007 and 2008. Future reviews will be titled under the Carbon Action Network.

Core activities and work programme:

This financial year has been an eventful and busy time for UK HECA, with the HECA review and proposed repeal of HECA, the introduction of National Indicators in Governments Performance Framework, the development of Local Area Agreements, roll out of CERT and Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). In this report we have outline some of the key areas of activity and projects that UK HECA has been involved in this financial year.

Sponsorship by E.ON 2007-2009

We are delighted to again be working with E.ON having agreed a two-year sponsorship deal for 2007-2009. Commencing at the start of this financial year, the sponsorship has enabled the HECA Executive to continue with its support of local authority officers, HECA activities such as *HECA Network News*, conference and project work and to fund the day-to-day running of the national secretariat. It has also enabled financial support for some of the regional forums.

E.ON has previously supported UK HECA activities and events when they sponsored the annual Home Energy Conference 2006 in Blackpool and also numerous editions of *HECA Network News*.

HECA Review and UK HECA Survey

In December 2007, in response to Defra's consultation on the review of HECA, UK HECA consulted members about the review, the proposed repeal of the Act and also the future of the UK HECA Network. The results, analysed by New Perspectives, formed the basic of a National response to the consultation and paved the way to reform the Network.

The survey concluded support for the repeal (53%), but *only* on the basis that the new local government performance framework ultimately imposes more rigorous requirements on local authorities, introduces smarter and more outcome-focused indicators and allows reliable comparisons to be made in terms of local authority performance.

The survey also showed that more than 60% believe there is a valuable role for a network if HECA is repealed and 75% supported a wider focus beyond energy efficiency and affordable warmth. Additionally, 40% of respondents favoured the



widening “of our focus to include the domestic carbon footprint as a whole”, with a further 35% favouring an even wider focus on “all climate change issues”. Whilst officers stated that the remit of UK HECA would need to focus on climate change, it must also fulfil the potential link with the new relevant National Indicators.

Consultation Responses

Additional to the consultation response on Defra’s Review of HECA, as detailed above, in November 2007 UK HECA also submitted responses to the consultation Performance Indicators, which included:

- NI 185 CO₂ reduction from Local Authority operations
- NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in the LA area
- NI 188 Adapting to climate change
- NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy

New Identity - Carbon Action Network

The proposed new identity for the UK HECA Network stemmed from:

- Involvement in Defra’s Review of HECA (Initial stakeholder workshops and consultation of members)
- Defra’s proposal to repeal the Act
- New Performance Indicators - Wider scope for LA’s using HECA officers experience
- Members mandate from the consultation on the HECA review and future of UK HECA survey
- Business Planning Workshop conclusions to develop a Climate Change Network
- Support from Defra and the development of a partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA)

While the Network would initially focus on the domestic carbon footprint, after a short period of consolidation we will seek to recruit other local government professionals working on climate change. It would mainly focus on mitigation, but would also touch on adaptation, and ensure it’s framed within the four pillars of the UK’s energy policy i.e. should capture fuel poverty. The remit of UK HECA will also link with the new National Indicators on Climate Change.

National Home Energy Conference 2008

As popular as ever, the National Home Energy Conference attracted over 250 delegates and exhibitors to the event held at the St Johns Hotel, Solihull on 13-14 May. Two days provided topical presentations and an opportunity for discussion on the expanding role of the energy officer, as well as networking and social events.

A full report on the conference, videos of nearly all of the presentations and photographs can be found on the website at www.carbonactionnetwork.org.uk/conference



HECA Network News

The free quarterly *HECA Network News* is a key tool in showcasing best practice examples from across the UK and, after having published 21 editions of the magazine, it is still a valuable resource.

Website

The website remains a popular resource with 28,000 visits this year. There were peaks in visits when the conference bookings were open and also after the events when presentation slides and, for the National Home Energy Conference, video clips were added.

A new consultation section was also added to the website this year to highlight upcoming consultations, those that UK HECA intend to respond to and copies of responses UK HECA has previously submitted.

The website will provide a key marketing tool in the roll out of the new identity, with a new URL and logos. It is also anticipated to phase in the new identity over the next year and the website will feature a complete history of the organisation since conception after the Home Energy Conservation Act was passed through Parliament.



Creating a Carbon-Neutral School Conference

Additional to the usual work programme was the creation of the Creating a Carbon Neutral School Conference event, which was held at the Athena in Leicester in March. The Conference attracted 120 delegates and exhibitors from across the UK and was primarily organised to use our domestic energy efficiency expertise, which could be implemented when developing a school under Government's Building Schools for the Future initiative.

Marketing and Promotion

This year there has been an active development in raising our profile and partnership building, with UK HECA holding seats on national meeting boards, building partnerships with stakeholders and exhibiting at national events.

Exhibiting

Under its reciprocal arrangement with NEA, UK HECA exhibited at the NEA 2007 Conference and, to promote the Creating a Carbon Neutral Schools Conference, exhibited at the Building Schools Conference and Exhibition (BSCE) '08.

National Meeting Representation

Meetings members of the Executive board currently sit on include:

- Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes (EEPH) Local Authority Group (LAG) - now restructured to Local Authority Strategic Group who oversee a Local Authority Delivery Group
- Energy Advice Providers Group
- Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Energy Group
- Public Health Association (PHA) Health Forum

Partnership Building

Assisted in disseminating and collating responses to the Energy Watch Closure Survey. As detailed in the New Identity section above, we have established a close partnership with LGA and expect to forge relations when ESTACs are rollout fully by October.



HECA Executive Meetings and AGM

Chairs of the HECA Executive board meet quarterly to discuss and plan UK HECA business, activities and develop its annual work programme. It is also an opportunity to provide updates and be involved in national and regional strategy and policy.

New to the meeting agenda is the introduction of regional forum updates and presentations. Speaker contributions have included: SEN, CERT, Community Reward Insulation Programme and Article 5 of the Energy Services Directive.

Business Planning/Training Day

A training day is held annually for regional chairs, vice chairs and secretariats to focus on topical subjects. In February 2008, the theme of the day was 'Business Planning', which was facilitated by Impetus Consulting. The HECA review and the future of the UK HECA Network was investigated using the outcomes from the HECA survey, which was conducted in December 2007, and also updates from Defra on the HECA Review and National Indicators.

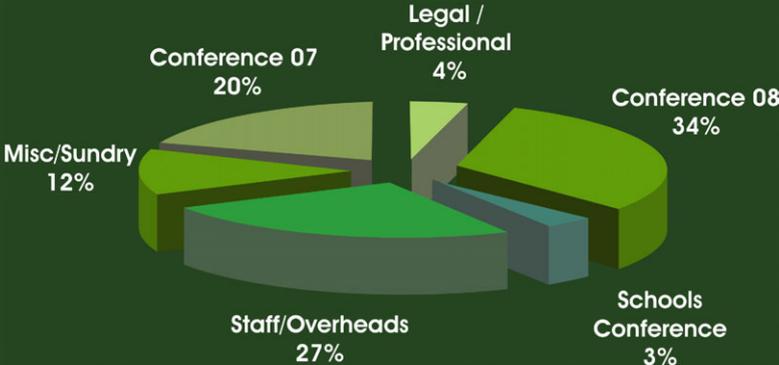
Additionally, the changing role of HECA officers was looked at in detail and the best method for the role of UK HECA was investigated. Outcomes from the day formed the work programme for the following year.

Finances 2007 - 2008

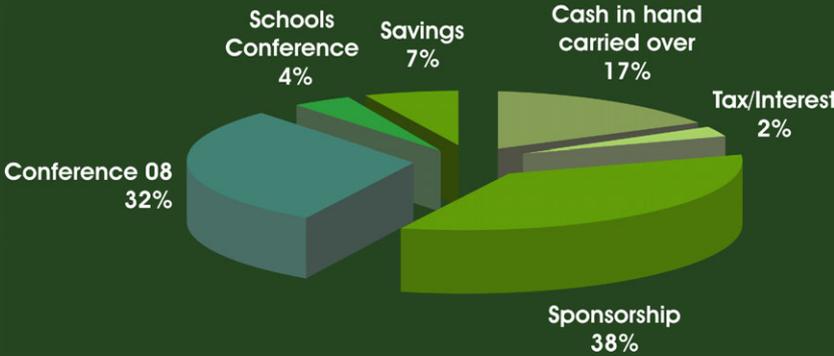
The pie charts opposite show an approximate percentage of income and expenditure from UK HECA accounts for financial year August 2007 to July 2008. Full company accounts for this period will be made available in *HECA Network News* once approved by the HECA Executive Board and filed with Companies House.



Expenditure 07/08

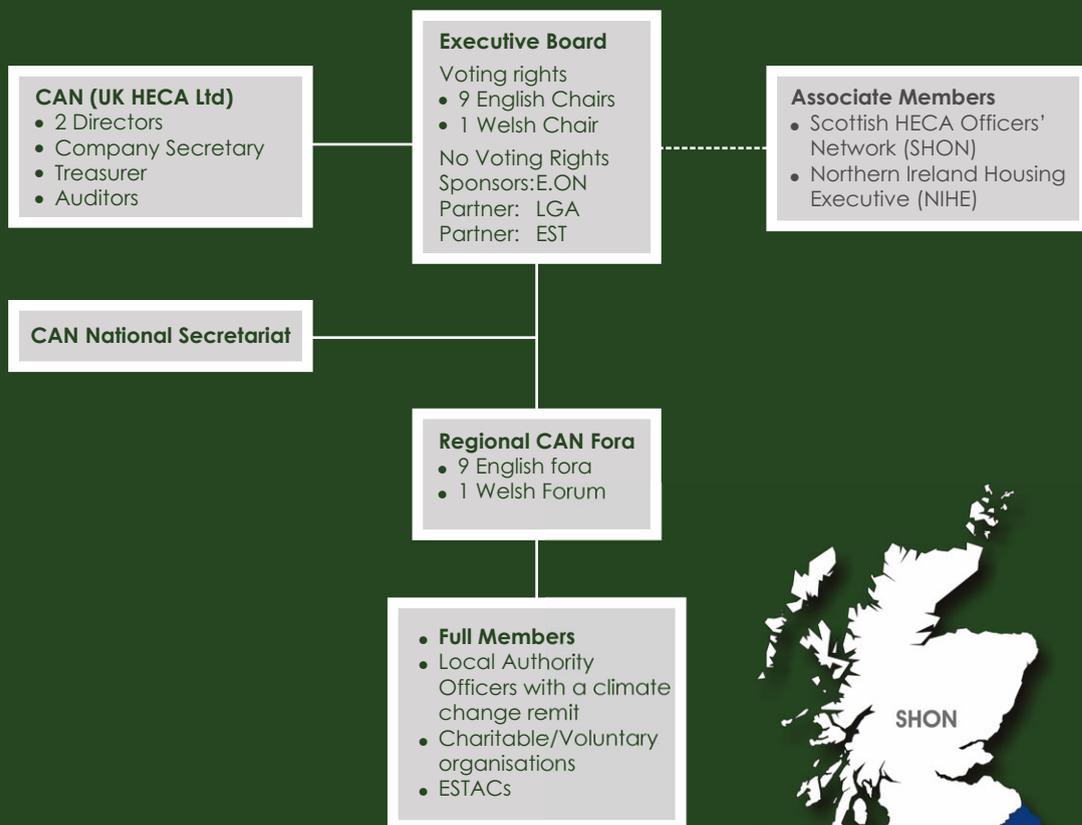


Income 07/08



Structure of the Carbon Action Network

The structure of the Carbon Action Network will remain the same as the HECA Network's, with regional fora holding local events, electing a chair that will sit on the national executive board to feed back issues and raise any concerns. Members of the executive represent the Network by sitting on a range of national meeting groups.





Moving CAN Forward

Even in light of the proposed repeal of HECA, we are delighted that Government recognised the value of the Act and the work of HECA officers to achieve their targets. It is now important to raise the profile of how officers' expertise can be utilised by local authorities under the climate change and fuel poverty indicators. It is also an achievement that Government recognised UK HECA as an organisation that supported HECA officers and has vocalised its plans to support the new organisation, the Carbon Action Network.

In the same way that the UK HECA Network provided a voice to HECA officers, the aim of CAN is to continue to represent and support officers who are linked to the National Indicators, but also widen its focus to provide support for all officers who have a climate change remit, within all sectors.

As there are no other networks like CAN, and there is therefore a lack of support for these officers, we will gradually expand our membership to cover local authorities, Housing Associations, ELMOs, ESTACs, health sectors, RSLs, voluntary organisations etc. This is in addition to maintaining close links with private sector companies within the energy field, and government departments.

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