|  |  |  |  |  | **Timescales** |  |  | **FUEL POVERTY ACTION PLAN** |
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| **Category** | **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Available to** | Short  1-3 months | Medium  4 - 9 months | Long  9+ months | **Key themes** | **UPDATE ON ACTIVITY**  **30th June 2023** |
| **Property** | Order and obtain programme of works for pipeline infrastructure for viable connections | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Avonbridge, California, Slamannan Whitecross & Letham to be taken forward with gas infrastructure programme followed by individual property connections. | **Ongoing**  Scottish Gas Network (SGN) are undergoing their own procurement exercise to appoint contractors to deliver this project.  SGN completed the final phase of the pre-qualification exercise for contractors who would be interested in bidding for the works (closing date was Monday 22nd May).  The current position is that SGN have issued the tenders to their shortlisted contractors and the tender returns are due back by mid-July, with an indicative award in the 2nd week of August.  While this procurement exercise has been happening SGN have been progressing with their design and the various implications this has such as land access, bridge crossings, etc.  Within the tender documentation SGN have provided the contractors with an indicative proposed programme as below:-  **Project 1 (California to Slamannan)**   * California site start Oct 23, gas on April 24 * Avonbridge site start May 24, gas on July 24 * Slamannan site start July 24, gas on to be targeted for end of 2024, however, may take until April 25   **Project 2 (Whitecross)**   * Site start Sept/Oct 23, gas on May 24   **Project 3 (Letham)**   * Site start Sept/Oct 23, gas on March 24   This is the first more detailed information we have received from SGN and as always is caveated that it could be subject to change once the contracts are lets, however I hope this give you a reasonable amount of information to assist your constituents.  Following appointment, the successful contractor is likely to have a significant mobilisation period to obtain the necessary road and other consents.    Gas supply will be available to progress to installations after each individual area is completed.  SGN will have a dedicated comms team to ensure consistency, with a dedicated webpage set up for information accessed through links and QR codes. They will also arrange temporary drop-in centres prior to the works starting to allow residents to pop in, get info and ask questions.    When all is available the intention is for information regarding location of works, temporary traffic lights, and roads closures to be accessible to residents to allow them to plan and be aware of what is happening when. |
| **Property** | Further assessment of options for the remaining villages including renewable technologies | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Blackness; Standburn; South Alloa, Torwood and Limerigg covers all areas with no gas infrastructure. | **Ongoing**  **Phase 1**  ASHP installations to properties included in Phase 1 are complete except for one property in a communal block where consultation with owners is ongoing.  A follow up survey will take place 6 months after the installation date of the new heating system to review findings.  To date, 3 tenants have refused the proposed change of heating.  **Phase 2**  Scottish Government (SG) Funding approval for Phase 2. Confirmation of match funding received by Falkirk Council 17/11/22, SG draft grant letter has been received, and signed acceptance returned.  Ph2 contract has been awarded and the contractor has started installs with works progressing well.  The Energy Officer has installed internal temperature and humidity monitoring devices in 1 property in Limerigg and 1 property in Whitecross prior to the new heating being installed in Phase 2. This will provide comparative data and assess the impact on the thermal comfort of the new heating. |

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| **Property** | Recommendations from property visits will be implemented, radiators / thermostat issues. Ongoing support for tenants experiencing issues | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Fabric of buildings meeting SHQS and EESSH.  Energy Performance Certificate’s show all at Band C or D rating.  Servicing and responsive repairs to existing heating systems ongoing. | **Ongoing**  643 properties have received an annual service. In addition, 4 existing boiler units have been fully refurbished and 21 Thermaflow boilers replaced due to major faults. Servicing Works are ongoing, but access problems continue to hamper progress. Our servicing contractor Neat Heat have advised they are still operating on a day to day call out basis while trying to gain access. |
| **Property** | Window & door programme estimated to commence late 20/21 | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Doors and windows at the end of their useful life. Forms part of the Council strategy of a fabric first approach to meeting EESSH2. | **Ongoing**  Year 2 is now progressing well with Year 3 addresses now being surveyed. 98% of all addresses in the off-gas areas have been surveyed with 98% of those addresses already receiving new doors and windows.  Customers have expressed high levels of satisfaction when all snagging work has been completed with over 95% of tenants reporting satisfaction on the post installation customer feedback surveys. There was a delay in attending to some of the snagging works which has now been addressed and the contractor is working towards clearing the backlog. |
| **Property** | Investigate new funding and loan options for owner occupier and private residents to participate on the opportunity for a new system or gas connection | Falkirk Council | All residents |  |  |  | Home Energy Scotland can offer advice for non-council properties. FC staff will also investigate funding options. | **Ongoing**  Further information can be found at  [www.homeenergyscotland.org](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org) |
| **Communication Strategy** | Develop a Consultation Strategy support and engage with its tenants and residents facing difficulties with the heating systems. | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Communication Strategy developed and passed to SHR as Part of Engagement Plan. | **Complete**  Communication Strategy is available on the Council’s website. And can be viewed here - [Help maintaining, adapting or repairing your home - Wet electric heating systems | Falkirk Council](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/housing-support/repairs-maintenance/wet-electric.aspx)  In the last quarter, April – June there were 94 visitors to the web page with 72 unique views. 52% these were from a mobile device; 5 copies of the Improvement Plan were downloaded.  . |

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| **Communication Strategy** | Update web page to publish advice and progress on works programmes | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Information published and being updated | **Ongoing**  Information on the Falkirk Council website can be updated in ‘real time’ and is accessible from a variety of devices.  . |
|  | Provide tenants with regular updates by their preferred method of communication (Letters) | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | Individual letters issued to tenants February 2022.  Postal survey seeking views of tenants affected issued and findings considered and published.  Update letter delayed until we have a confirmed programme from SGN. This was agreed with tenant representatives as they felt this would allow tenants to make for informed decisions whether to wait for gas or consider ASHP & PVs. | **Complete, with further letters and communication to follow.**  Information is shared in a range of ways including direct communication with those affected as detailed above.  Now that an indicative programme is available from SGN, a further letter to all tenants is being prepared. This will allow tenants to make an informed choice whether to wait for gas heating or consider alternative renewable solutions, subject to available funding.  A personal letter re ‘Off-Gas’ heating replacement. is planned for sending out in during July to those people who will be affected. The letter will also include a link to [Living with your heat pump · Home Energy Scotland](https://www.homeenergyscotland.org/heat-pumps/living-with-your-heat-pump/) |
|  | Prepare regular newsletters | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | First Newsletter issued with letter in February 2022. | **Complete, with further newsletters to follow.** |
|  | Prepare updates for the Tenant Talk Magazine | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | The Tenant Talk magazine is sent to all our tenants three times per year. The magazine will be used to updated tenants on programme information, advice and support on fuel cost and energy saving tips. So far this has included an article in the May edition and July edition. The Spring 2023 Edition of Tenant Talk featured an article/advert on the ‘Help for Households’ - Scottish Government’s Energy Bills Support Scheme, but no energy saving tips. | **Complete, with further articles to follow.**  Articles on Condensation Dampness will be included in the next edition of Tenant Talk. Further energy related articles will be included in the Autumn 2023 edition. |
|  | Continue to engage and support the network of community groups | Falkirk Council | All residents |  |  |  | Falkirk Council Community Engagement Team and Community Planning Team will provide support and advice to people within the community who are considering establishing a group such as a Registered Tenants Organisation and will work together with the community to address needs locally. | Housing Service Community Engagement Team have met with various community representatives on various occasions to discuss the possibility and benefits of setting up a Registered Tenants’ Organisation (RTO). However, to date, no volunteers have come forward to set up such a group. The option of setting up an RTO will remain open. |

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| **Communication Strategy** | Housing Operations kept fully informed | Falkirk Council | Falkirk Council Tenants |  |  |  | The front-line Housing Officer plays a crucial role in communication with tenants. | **Ongoing**  Housing Operations Teams are informed of plans and progress to assist with any enquiries. We are also using a range of methods including Tenant Talk and digital on the web. |
| **Communication Strategy** | Provide confidential personal advice and guidance for:  - Welfare benefits  - Income maximisation and debt management | Falkirk Council | All residents |  |  |  | The following links are available on Falkirk Council Website. Residents are asked to:   1. Residents can check they are getting all the income to which household is entitled. This can be done via <https://falkirk.entitledto.co.uk/home/start>      1. If it is identified that a resident has entitlement to any other benefits but have difficulty in successfully applying for this, we can assist - <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/benefits-support/help-with-welfare-benefits.aspx> 2. If a resident has debt or difficulty budgeting, because of energy costs we can offer independent advice - <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/benefits-support/money-advice.aspx>   If anyone needs help to access these services, they can visit any Advice and Support Hub. <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/places/oss-ash/> | **Ongoing**  Access to advice and guidance is widely promoted across the Falkirk area.  There is now a link on the Falkirk Council web site with financial assistance information and more:-  [Benefits & support - Energy grants | Falkirk Council](https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/benefits-support/energy-grants.aspx) |
| **Communication Strategy** | Provide financial support to assist with energy costs | Falkirk Council | All residents |  |  |  | The Council is providing a one-off payment of £100 to households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and living in an off-gas area. This is currently being reviewed and the website will be updated accordingly.  427 off-gas households have been referred for a payment through the Household Support Fund.365 households (85%) have received this support to date. This fund has been set up to support low-income households struggling with the rising cost of living. | **Ongoing**  The Household Support Fund is now closed. The fund was open between September 2022 and June 2023. In total, there were 4491 payments made in Phase 2 of the fund. 5261 adults were supported through the fund, as well as 3541 children. The total amount paid out was £792,660. The fund will open again in late August/early September 2023.  n May 2022 we wrote to 48 households eligible for financial assistance but received no response, therefore Housing Officers will engage with these households directly regarding their entitlement to the payment.  The Covid Economic Recovery Fund has now closed. 86% of the 12518 households eligible for the one-off £75 payment applied and received their payment. Any individual who did not apply for the payment will have this payment credited to their Council Tax account, so they do not miss out. Any households in this situation will be notified in due course.  Whilst the Household Support Fund is a referral-based fund - I.e. only Falkirk Council Services and trusted partners such as CABs and RSLs are able to refer individuals, come early October members of the public will be able to declare an interest in being referred for the fund, via a separate webform. This will allow us to provide individuals with a one-off payment as well as identify other areas of support available. The above form is now live and being circulated to target groups. As with the main referral form, the self-referral form is no longer active as the Household Support Fund has closed for the summer. |
| **Communication Strategy** | Offer advice on financial support | Falkirk Council | All residents |  |  |  | Advice and information have been provided. | **Ongoing**  Advice and information have been provided on the Council’s website, letters, Newsletter and Tenant Talk magazine. Updates will be provided as an when necessary. |