

(CCC) Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Overview: The aims are restricted to:

1. Finding out about proposed schemes that were NOT awarded funding under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), so far, in rounds 1 and 2. This information hasn't been published. The government has only published awards to the winning bids. My assumption is that many councils were keen to do more works, if more part-funding made more schemes viable, but this might not be true.

2. Available details about the nature of the works that your council bid for (or housing associations bid for in your area, if relevant and known), from the SHDF, (funded and unfunded bids), specifically concerning three different categories of works:

a) Energy efficiency measures such as insulation works.

b) Installation of Heat Pumps, if any.

c) Installation of solar panels, if any.

3. Fully self-funded schemes for council homes. Same types of work. (No SHDF funding)

The SHDF can cover all of these types of works, with landlords required to provide some 'match funding.' To avoid doubt, I am NOT asking for details about works funded by other government schemes. I'll submit a separate request about that, because it's likely to be the remit of different teams. (See below).

Councils that don't own council housing

1. In these cases, it would be useful to know how (roughly) much council stock was transferred to housing associations and when. If relevant.

2. Such councils may also be aware of SHDF bids by local housing associations for stock in their area, for two reasons. In round 1, housing associations were not allowed to bid directly for funding but could receive money if local authorities bid on their behalf. This means some or all of the funding awarded to councils in round 1 may have been for housing associations planning to improve homes locally in collaboration with the council.

In round 2 associations bid for funding direct, so presumably all funding awarded to local authorities will go to council homes, not association stock. But councils that don't own any council housing themselves may be aware of associations bids for stock in their area. If officers aren't aware, just state that. If the council does have information, brief details would be appreciated. (Eg, X housing association plans to improve the energy efficiency of 200 homes to EPC Band C by 2025. They also intend to install solar panels to 2 blocks covering 50 homes).

- Arms-Length Management Organisations: stock managed by ALMOS is still owned by councils, so councils should be able to report on bids from ALMOs. If you can't, just state that.

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) had limited funding

Councils are likely to have bid for more schemes than those awarded funding.

Some councils that got no money at all may have bid for some.

Exclusion of other government funding schemes

Asking for information on these issues - heat pumps, solar panels, and energy

efficiency works - could be complicated by the fact that councils could (part) fund them from at least four different sources: their own resources, or supported by three different government schemes aimed at reducing carbon emissions and reducing heating costs. In addition to the SHDF, heat pumps and solar panels could be delivered in future by the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (for non-residential public buildings like offices), and Homes Upgrade Grant, which councils distribute to eligible households. I assume different council teams deal with these schemes, so I'll put in a separate request about them in the hope of making it easier for officers. This request is just about 'SHDF schemes' – all bids, funded or not – and any self-funded schemes for council homes, because they could be significant and housing departments should know about them.

- Costs: a rough estimate is fine. (If known). I don't need precise figures.

- Relevant periods to report on: whatever's easiest. (Mostly relevant to future, self-funded plans in part 2)

Part 1: questions for councils that own council housing: SHDF schemes only

My assumption is that most SHDF schemes are to provide energy efficiency improvements only, and that landlords will not be installing many heat pumps or solar panels, for strong reasons, but I need to quantify the facts.

1. No-bids: If your council didn't bid for SHDF grant, a brief explanation would be appreciated. (Possible reasons: lack of borrowing capacity in your Housing Revenue Account to provide the necessary match funding; lack of preparation time; lack of qualified installers in your area. Or, All homes already reach EPC Band C or B. Installing solar panels is considered too expensive. Retrofitting heat pumps to existing homes is too disruptive to tenants for individual houses. Fitting communal heat pumps for whole blocks is difficult as there aren't any suitable products available).

2. Successful SHDF bids (if relevant, all rounds): can you provide brief details of the works covered, under the following categories. (This hasn't been published)

a) Number of homes to get energy efficiency improvements. (Eg, 2 blocks to be improved from EPC Band D to C by 2025. Covers 50 homes). Cost.

b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs will be installed. (If any). Cost.

c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels will be installed. (If any). Cost.

(Note: heat pumps can heat whole blocks as well as individual street properties)

3. 'Rejected/unfunded' SHDF bids (if relevant, all rounds): can you provide brief details of the works that would have been covered, under the same categories:

a) Number of homes/blocks that would have got energy efficiency improvements. Cost.

b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs would have been installed; cost.

c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels would have been installed; cost.

Part 2: other information (If relevant and known)

3. Self-funded improvements to council homes: not part-funded by the SHDF or other schemes with government funding. Can you provide brief details of the works covered; same categories:
- a) Energy efficiency improvements: number of homes already improved, (recently, from a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.
 - b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs have already been installed. (From a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.
 - c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels have already been installed. (From a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.
4. Stock information/energy efficiency
- a) How many council homes do you own? (Stock numbers change. A rough recent estimate is fine. Including Arms Length Management Organisations).
 - b) How many already meet Energy Efficiency Band C or better? (If known)
 - c) If you have long term plans to improve energy efficiency of council homes, can you provide brief details. (All funding sources). (Eg. Currently 60% of council homes reach Energy Efficiency Band C or better. By 2028 our target is to reach 80% of homes to reach EPC C, with 50% at Band B).
5. Housing association schemes in your area (if relevant and known): if the council is aware of any SHDF-funded works in your area, brief details would be appreciated. (Number of homes, nature of works, inclusion of heat pumps, solar panels). If not, just state that.
6. Collaborations: if you collaborate with other councils or housing associations – to buy and/or install heat pumps, or solar panels, or energy efficiency upgrades, brief details would be appreciated. This could apply to SHDF schemes or others.

Response

1. No-bids: If your council didn't bid for SHDF grant, a brief explanation would be appreciated. (Possible reasons: lack of borrowing capacity in your Housing Revenue Account to provide the necessary match funding; lack of preparation time; lack of qualified installers in your area. Or, All homes already reach EPC Band C or B. Installing solar panels is considered too expensive. Retrofitting heat pumps to existing homes is too disruptive to tenants for individual houses. Fitting communal heat pumps for whole blocks is difficult as there aren't any suitable products available).

N/A

2. Successful SHDF bids (if relevant, all rounds): can you provide brief details of the works covered, under the following categories. (This hasn't been published)

a) Number of homes to get energy efficiency improvements. (Eg, 2 blocks to be improved from EPC Band D to C by 2025. Covers 50 homes). Cost.
185 homes to be improved to Band C. Estimated cost £6.2m

b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs will be installed. (If any).
Cost.

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12842

Response sent

09 May 23

None

c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels will be installed. (If any). Cost.

None

(Note: heat pumps can heat whole blocks as well as individual street properties)

3. 'Rejected/unfunded' SHDF bids (if relevant, all rounds): can you provide brief details of the works that would have been covered, under the same categories:

a) Number of homes/blocks that would have got energy efficiency improvements. Cost.

Cavity Wall insulation - £161,000

External wall insulation - £296,000

Deep retrofit insulation - £2,625,000

b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs would have been installed; cost.

None

c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels would have been installed; cost.

None

Part 2: other information (If relevant and known)

3. Self-funded improvements to council homes: not part-funded by the SHDF or other schemes with government funding. Can you provide brief details of the works covered; same categories:

a) Energy efficiency improvements: number of homes already improved, (recently, from a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.

b) Heat pumps: number of homes/blocks where HPs have already been installed. (From a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.

c) Solar panels: number of homes/blocks where solar panels have already been installed. (From a convenient date), and any future plans. Costs.

4. Stock information/energy efficiency

a) How many council homes do you own? (Stock numbers change. A rough recent estimate is fine. Including Arms Length Management Organisations).

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7400

Response sent

09 May 23

b) How many already meet Energy Efficiency Band C or better? (If known)

Estimated 5200

c) If you have long term plans to improve energy efficiency of council homes, can you provide brief details. (All funding sources). (Eg. Currently 60% of council homes reach Energy Efficiency Band C or better. By 2028 our target is to reach 80% of homes to reach EPC C, with 50% at Band B).

Target for all homes to be EPC by 2035

5. Housing association schemes in your area (if relevant and known): if the council is aware of any SDHF-funded works in your area, brief details would be appreciated. (Number of homes, nature of works, inclusion of heat pumps, solar panels). If not, just state that.

Not known

6. Collaborations: if you collaborate with other councils or housing associations – to buy and/or install heat pumps, or solar panels, or energy efficiency upgrades, brief details would be appreciated. This could apply to SHDF schemes or others.
N/A

Further queries on this matter should be directed to foi@cambridge.gov.uk
