

Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16

Report by the Director for Communities

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the work being undertaken by the Councils' and partners with regard to Fuel Poverty in Adur and Worthing. In doing so, approval is sought for the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16.
- 1.2 The Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16 will act as the Councils' bi-annual submission for the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA). The Action Plan 2015/16 will be published on the Councils' website.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 An Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Working Group undertook a review which considered the Council's involvement with Fuel Poverty in deprived areas. The final report was presented to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) in June 2010 and also considered by the Joint Strategic Committee (JSC).
- 2.2 Since the original review work was undertaken, the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan has been update at least annually, with progress reported to JOSC and the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing on an annual basis.

3.0 Progress Update

- 3.1 The Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing are requested to note the progress being made to implement the recommendations and the further action being taken, details of which are set out in the Action Plan in the Appendix 1 attached to the report.
- 3.2 Since the completion of the report progress has been ongoing as shown in Appendix 1. The Director for Communities is overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan with the assistance of the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Working Group which includes the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator. The Working Group meets on a quarterly basis.

- 3.3 There are a number of significant issues detailed in the Action Plan that your officers wish to draw the Executive Members attention to:
- 3.3.1 The Adur and Worthing Financial Inclusion Group has recently completed the drafting of a new Financial Inclusion Strategy that has identified Fuel Poverty as a priority issue with regard to debt and financial inclusion.
- 3.3.2 The information held on Council's website on Home Energy Efficiency Grants has been updated to reflect current practice, grants etc.
- 3.3.3 Adur Homes is investing over £350,000 in energy efficiency related works and programmes in 2015/16, in addition to a new stock condition survey.
- 3.3.4 As part of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the Private Sector Housing Team continue to have a substantial caseload to manage, which now includes energy efficiency considerations in the licensing of Houses in Multiple occupation (HMOs).
- 3.3.5 Promotional work undertaken as part of Cold Homes Week in February 2015.
- 3.3.6 Appointment of a new West Sussex Fuel poverty Co-ordinator in January 2015, following a lengthy period in 2014 when the post was vacant.
- 3.3.7 Installation of a gas supply to the Test Road, Sompting area is progressing with work due to commence early in 2015/16.
- 3.3.8 The Action Plan now includes information on a number of Community based programmes and initiatives designed to tackle and mitigate the impact of fuel poverty and to promote energy efficiency. These include the actions of Registered Providers operating in Adur and Worthing such as Worthing Homes and Southern Housing.
- 3.4 In 2013 a new definition for Fuel Poverty was introduced. This is referred to as the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) definition. A household is said to be in Fuel Poverty if:
- They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level);
 - Were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
- 3.5 Fuel Poverty Analysis by the West Sussex County Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
- 3.6 In 2013 a local survey of older people: West Sussex Lifestyle Survey of Older People 2013 found that 28% of people surveyed said they worried about keeping warm in the winter. Actions taken by older people to keep warm included:
- Avoiding heating room;
 - Staying in bed;

- Wearing outdoor clothes;
- Turning heating off;
- Going to warm public places

4.0 **Legal**

4.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

5.0 **Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the approval of the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16.

5.2 The financial implications arising from activities set out in the Action Plan are being met from within existing revenue and capital budgets and grant funding streams.

6.0 **Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

6.1 The Councils' Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the progress in implementing the recommendations from the Fuel Poverty Overview and Scrutiny review at its meeting on Thursday 12th March 2015.

6.2 The Committee supported the submission of the Action Plan to the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing.

7.0 **Recommendations**

That the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing:

7.1 Approve the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16

7.2 Approve the submission of the Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16 as the Councils' bi-annual submission for the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA).

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

Report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee March 2015

Report to Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee March 2014

Foundations for Wellbeing: the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing 2013/14:

<http://jsna.westsussex.gov.uk/JSNA-DPH-Annual-Reports?filter=Annual+Public+Health+Report+-+Foundations+for+Wellbeing&filterfrom=title&item=316>

Report to the Cabinet Members for Health and Wellbeing: Adur and Worthing Fuel Poverty Overview and Scrutiny Review – Update report. March 2013

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Schedule of other matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Surf's Up - Enterprising Communities

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Adur & Worthing Financial Inclusion Framework.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Reference is made to energy efficiency in the Action Plan

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Fuel Poverty is an inequality and the Fuel Poverty review was undertaken to look at ways of reducing this inequality.

5.0 Community Safety issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered.

9.0 Risk assessment

9.1 Any areas of risk are identified within the attached report.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

12.0 Partnership working

12.1 This report relates to Adur and Worthing. The Action Plan sets out a number of examples of partnership working

Fuel Poverty Action Plan 2015/16

Report Type: Actions Report

Report Author: Mark Lowe

Generated on: 11 February 2015

Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
Production of a Joint Fuel Poverty Strategy	Relevant Officers to work with Executive Members for Wellbeing to produce a Joint Fuel Poverty Strategy	Director for Communities West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator	<p>To date the focus has been on the development and updating of the Fuel Poverty Action Plan.</p> <p>Work on the development of a Strategy has ben delayed pending the appointment of a new West Sussex Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator (see below). In addition consultation will take place with the newly appointed Head of Housing and Head of Wellbeing to agree who should take the lead for the Fuel poverty in the Councils.</p> <p>Fuel Poverty is featured in the Director for Public Health's Annual Report 2013/14 published in October 2014. It is also an element in the West Sussex Public Health Plan 2012 – 2017.</p> <p>The Communities Directorate are currently developing a number of over-arching strategies to address issues such as the A&W Public Health Plan, Housing & Older People, and Social Isolation. Fuel Poverty will be a factor in these strategic approaches. It is expected that these Strategies will be completed in 2015.</p>
Adur & Worthing Financial Inclusion Framework	This framework, released 2015, has been produced by the local partnership group the Adur & Worthing Financial Inclusion Group (A&W FIG). The framework is action based and due to evidence collected locally tackling fuel poverty is one of the key actions within it.	A&W FIG	<p>The framework has been completed and endorsed by the Adur & Worthing Strategic Partnership (Waves Ahead).</p> <p>Following this it will be placed on the Adur & Worthing Councils Web site.</p> <p>The link to the Fuel Poverty Action Plan will be placed in the framework (March 2015).</p>
Tackling Fuel Poverty	Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing to take an active approach to targeting fuel poverty working with the Communications Team to publicise the benefits and grants available to help residents insulate their homes and combat fuel poverty.	Head of Housing and Head of Wellbeing	<p>The Private Sector Housing (PSH) team is continuing to take an active approach to targeting fuel poverty and advertising the benefits and grants if and where available. PSH staff have promoted the Energy Switch programme during their visits. The Environmental Health Repair Grant Assistance scheme (administered through Adur & Worthing Home Improvement Assistance) has approved 21 grants for boiler replacements.</p>

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	<p>Councils also to develop a communications action plan to communicate issues of fuel poverty to residents in Adur and Worthing to continue to highlight fuel poverty. This should involve creating a dedicated web page on the websites. A guide to be produced for local landlords on the Council websites to highlight funding/grants available for tenants.</p>		<p>A review of Fuel Poverty related content on the Councils website has been completed to ensure it is clear, co-ordinated and with the correct links in place. It is now amalgamated at http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/home-energy-efficiency-grants/</p> <p>The PSH team have offered to liaise with the Think Family project workers to provide house condition and fuel poverty audits for the relevant properties</p>
House Condition Survey of private sector properties	<p>Councils to undertake a House Condition Survey of Private sector properties working with the Building Research Establishment at a cost of £10,000 for each Authority (within budget) to help identify those in fuel poverty. With the benefit of the information provided from the survey, target the areas in most need of improvement in energy efficiency and then make contact with the occupants and landlords advising them of the findings and the help that is available to improve the energy efficiency levels of the properties.</p>	Head of Housing	<p>In February 2012, Adur & Worthing Councils commissioned BRE to provide information on key housing indicators, with a focus on private sector housing. Principal among these indicators is the rate of Category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating Hazards found in the stock as this is now the minimum standard for housing which every housing authority is obliged to keep under review.</p> <p>The report and database was completed in April 2012, and the information provided on the Category 1 Hazards was used as the principal inputs for the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of private sector housing which was completed in May 2012. The report and database allows the identification of those properties most at risk of Excess Cold, as well as Vulnerable Households.</p> <p>The findings of the stock modelling in combination with national census data allows informed strategic decisions to be made in respect of housing in Adur & Worthing. It is also anticipated that the HIA will assist in the Councils' public health role and in their relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board. The information within the database has been made available to other departments for intelligence and appropriate actions.</p> <p>Within Adur Homes stock a Stock Condition Survey will take place in 2015/16 to inform the Adur Homes Capital Investment programme to ensure it meets the Decent Homes Standard and addresses any problems identified with regard to heating and energy efficiency. Adur Homes Budget provision for this work in 2015/16 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock Condition Survey £55,000 Central Heating Installation (Test Road) £118,000 Central Heating Replacements (boilers etc) £250,000 Insulation Upgrades and energy related improvements £18,000.
Use of powers under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to take action against landlords	<p>Councils to continue to take enforcement action against landlords who, following warnings, fail to improve the energy efficiency levels of their properties and the Executive Members for Health and Wellbeing ensure that the powers and how they can be used, are publicised.</p>	Head of Housing	<p>The primary legislation in respect of housing and housing conditions is the Housing Act 2004, which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) as the methodology for the evaluation of the potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings and replaced the fitness standard contained in the Housing Act 1984. This means that the concept of fit or unfit dwellings no longer exists and that properties are assessed according to whether any Category 1 or 2 Hazards exist.</p> <p>Enforcement actions taken in respect of unsatisfactory housing conditions range from advice given to occupants and/or landlords through to the imposition of Prohibition Orders. The legislation requires</p>

Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
			<p>that, in the case of any formal action, all decisions must be justified in writing. All enforcement actions will therefore be taken in compliance with the Council's Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.</p> <p>The PSH team have invested in the BRE Excess Cold Calculator which offers a more robust, intensive and evidence based model to calculate heating requirements for properties to support formal cases.</p> <p>During 2014/15, officers from the Private Sector Housing team responded to 413 complaints about housing conditions within the private rented sector. In line with the Enforcement Policy, most inspections were carried out under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which allowed advice to be given without detriment to the complainant's security of tenure. 51 full inspections were necessary under HHSRS, but works to improve conditions including for Excess Cold were completed without recourse to statutory notices.</p> <p>Officers have re-inspected and re-licensed over 40 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's), with license conditions now including the provision of efficient, effective and affordable heating.</p>
Targeting Fuel Poverty LSP	LSP to continue to ensure that fuel poverty is addressed and reduced in communities through local projects.	Communities Team	<p>The Sussex Energy Saving programme has now been renamed Your Energy Sussex (YES) and despite the problems and delays they encountered in securing funding for local energy projects, YES continue to work with local organisations to develop projects and advice around fuel poverty.</p> <p>In addition a network of groups working on fuel poverty in Adur and Worthing has been identified and has recently started meeting with a view to working more closely together through collaboration, but also ensuring unnecessary repetition is avoided.</p> <p>As part of an exercise to review the strategic priorities of the partnership, reducing Fuel Poverty has now been identified as a top priority for the Waves Ahead sub-group "Health and Wellbeing Partnership for All Ages (HWPAA)" and increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon has been identified as a priority for the sub-group "Better Place Partnership (BP)".</p>
Training on fuel poverty issues for Adur and Worthing Councillors	Adur and Worthing Councillors to be provided with training on fuel poverty issues, utilising the support of the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator and other Councillors experienced in fuel poverty issues, to help them deal with, understand and recognise fuel poverty cases amongst their constituents.	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator	<p>A Four page Fuel Poverty Councillor guidance document will be updated by end of May 2015. Fuel Poverty Coordinator to distribute to Councils via CAN officers.</p> <p>Training has been identified for the Adur and Worthing Wellbeing Advisor Teams and can also be rolled out to Councillors. The Council is hosting a half day Energy Awareness Course run by National Energy Action in March 2015 for frontline workers and volunteers working on Fuel Poverty and Energy.</p>

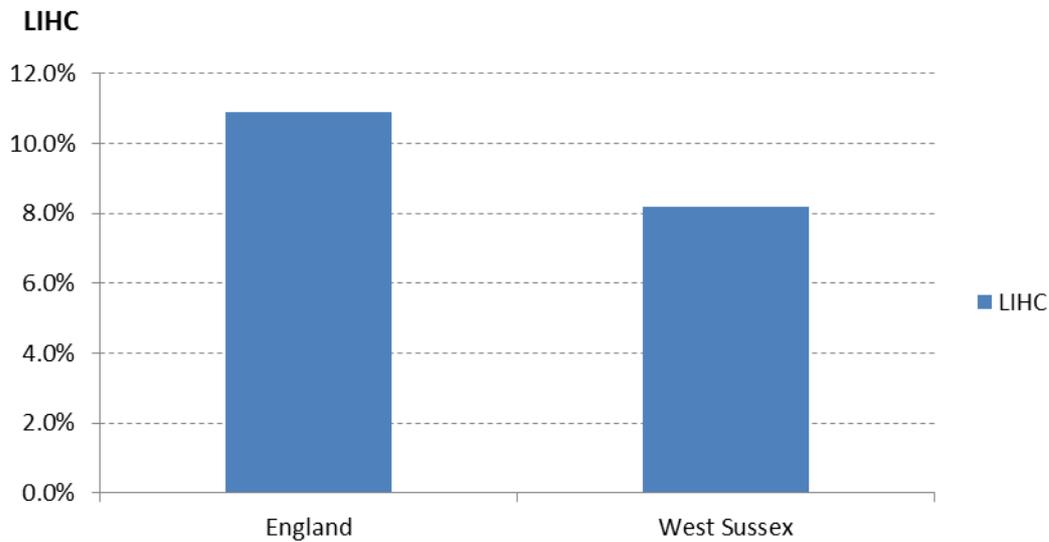
Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
Fuel Poverty/cold homes as a wider determinant of ill health	That Health visitors, GP's and Practice Managers be encouraged to help highlight fuel poverty when dealing with clients to assess if they are in Fuel Poverty to provide them with information on what is available and what can be done to help them as well as providing them with information outlining the services available to tackle fuel poverty.	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator	<p>To coincide with the national Cold Homes Week (2-6th Feb, 2015), 1,000 free packs including insulated mugs to keep drinks hot, socks and hand warmers as well as practical advice and information about staying warm, switching energy providers and being energy efficient were handed out across West Sussex via local libraries, food banks, West Sussex Fire & Rescue, community energy groups, Prevention Assessment Teams and Social Workers.</p> <p>The project was organized by Public Health, West Sussex Fire & Rescue and the Sustainable Energy Partnership.</p>
West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator	That the continuation of the funding for the post of the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator (FPC) be welcomed.	Director for Communities	<p>Following a lengthy period in 2014 when the Fuel Poverty Co-ordinator post was vacant, the post has now been filled in January 2015. The Fuel Poverty Coordinator post has now been extended for a further period until March 2016. Further extension of the post to be discussed by end of Q1 2015.</p> <p>West Sussex FPC continues to work with the Councils on various projects to tackle fuel poverty issues and is also working with voluntary groups who support vulnerable people.</p>
Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO)	How Adur and Worthing Councils engage in Green Deal and ECO resources	Communities Team; Fuel Poverty Coordinator; Energy & Sustainability Manager	<p>Adur and Worthing Councils are involved in Your Energy Sussex (previously known as the Sussex Energy Saving Programme). At the JSC in November 2012 it was agreed that the Councils would be partners to the County proposals as affiliates – an updated proposal to sign up to the revised Your Energy Sussex Partnership is currently being worked on. .</p> <p>As at February 2015 the Council is continuing to work with Your Energy Sussex to better understand how Adur and Worthing can lever in ECO and Feed in Tariff (FIT) resources to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock, including looking at proposals for installing Solar PV on council stock (see Community Energy Proposals below).</p> <p>HHCRO (Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation) is part of ECO that provides funding for boiler replacements / repairs for low income residents in receipt of certain means tested benefits. Your Energy Sussex have set up a HHCRO scheme in West Sussex using a Brighton based company called Charlie Mitten; the local scheme went live at the end of January 2015. The scheme includes providing top-up funding where ECO is not fully funded (which is the case for most applications).</p> <p>Due to difficulties securing ECO funding, a domestic insulation scheme is yet to be rolled out to West Sussex residents, but it is now hoped that an offer will be able to be rolled out by mid 2015.</p> <p>CSCO (Carbon Saving Communities Obligation) is an area based programme which forms part of ECO. Specific communities considered income deprived will qualify. There are 5 eligible Local Super Output Areas in Worthing and 8 in Adur. Some of these will cross over with Think Family Neighbourhoods and should be targeted first with any projects through Your Energy Sussex.</p>

Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
<u>Community Energy Projects</u>			
Energy/Fuel Switching initiative	Energy & Sustainability Manager		<p>The Adur and Worthing Energy Switch went live in December 2013, supported by the UK's leading fuel switching company - IChoosr. The first auction closed in mid-February 2014 with over 300 registrations across both councils. Auctions now run every 4 months, approximately, and we participate in all rounds.</p> <p>The auctions have been an excellent way for residents to save money, with average savings offered to participants consistently being above £200 per annum nationally. Savings for people on pre-payment meters have also reached over £100 per annum per residence.</p> <p>Going forward we aim to increase the marketing of the scheme through the Wellbeing and Communities Teams and through local energy advisors such as Guild Care and the Transition Town Worthing Community Energy Shop.</p>
Install a gas supply to the electric only estate in Test Road, Lancing	Head of Housing		<p>The project aims to provide a gas supply to an estate of approximately 200 properties, along with other energy efficiency measures. On 6/2/14 JSC approved a proposal for Adur Homes to contribute £54,000 to a scheme alongside £237,500 grant funding from Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) to supply gas infrastructure to the Adur Homes properties in Test Road – approximately 50%.</p> <p>Work continues with SGN to offer affordable funding packages to the private sector element of Test Road so that non-Adur Homes properties can benefit from this scheme.</p> <p>As at February 2015 work to connect over 200 properties in Sompting is due to commence in April 2015. This will be supplemented with a package and advice for residents that are designed to match their individual circumstances.</p> <p>Adur Homes has set aside £118,000 in its 2015/16 Capital Programme in install Central Heating in Test Road following completion of gas supply.</p>
Solar PV Panels project	Energy & Sustainability Manager		<p>A report will be submitted to the Joint Strategic Committee setting out the business case for the installation of Solar Panels on Adur Homes properties and on Council corporate properties. The project has been developed in consultation with Your Energy Sussex.</p>
Worthing Energy Shop & SNUG workshops (Transition Town Worthing)	Transition Town		<p>The transition town energy group have been focusing on reducing energy use, conserving energy and generating energy. The group have been using Colonnade House as the temporary location of the energy shop until end of March, it is run by volunteers as a drop-in centre 3 days a week and includes giving advice on switching tariffs/suppliers. The group have also been working on delivering local "Snug" draft-proofing workshops to help people to retrofit energy measures at home.</p>
Energy & Money Visitor, Guild Care	Guild Care		<p>Guild Care have a post funded by Comic Relief for 3 years from 2013-2016 to offer home visits with a focus on energy supplier/tariff switching, referrals to ECO for heating and insulation grants and income maximisation. The</p>

Title	Description	Assigned To	Latest Note
			target audience is mixed tenure, but aimed at older residents (over 50). Due to over-demand, the project continues but is not currently being proactively promoted.
Ground Work South (Green Doctor)	Groundwork South		Groundwork South offers a “Green Doctor” home visit scheme, which is currently being delivered to eligible applicants in Adur and Worthing through a contract with Southern Water. Groundwork have also recently received funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to deliver energy updates/training to frontline workers; the details of which have been circulated to staff and the CVS.
Relish (Residents for Low Impact Sustainable Homes) at Worthing Homes	Worthing Homes		Most of the Worthing Homes housing stock has now been structurally brought up to standard where loft and cavity wall insulation is possible. The focus is Relish currently is on behaviour change with tenants, led by Relish Advisor Poppy Scott. Soon Relish plan to open their scope to include wider community engagement and go into schools etc. The Relish website is currently being updated. Also worth noting that Worthing Homes have an energy retrofitted show Relish flat on Shelley Road, Worthing which will remain unoccupied and can be used for observing/learning best practice, but also for hosting meetings, training and events.
Southern Housing Home Energy Advice Team (HEAT)	Southern Housing		Michelle Cheeseman is the local contact from a team of 3 delivering HEAT for Southern Housing. The team has been operating since April 2014. In Adur and Worthing the main concentrations of Southern Housing accommodation is in Durrington, Lancing and Shoreham. As well as home energy visiting for their tenants HEAT hold events at community centres local to where they have housing; other non-tenants would be welcome to drop into these events. HEAT are now starting to recruit volunteer energy champions for two purposes: a) to do admin and follow up calls and b) to be energy champions and provide advice having been trained on energy awareness. They will specifically be targeting JSA and NEETS to recruit.

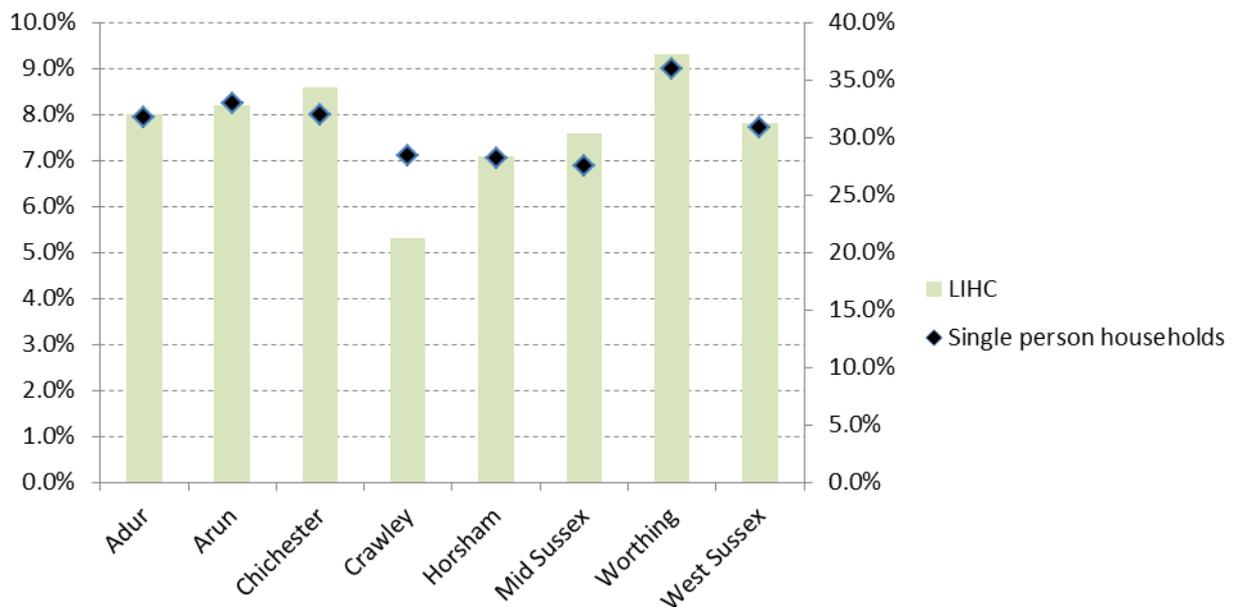
Appendix 2: Fuel Poverty in West Sussex

West Sussex and England comparison under the LIHC definition



As with previous years West Sussex has a lower level of fuel poverty than the national average. At local authority level this ranges from 5% in Crawley to above 8.5% in Chichester and Worthing. Areas with higher proportions of single person households and older people have higher levels of fuel poverty.

Percentage of people living alone (right axis) against percentage of fuel poor households (left axis)



Average age (right axis) to Fuel poverty (left axis) comparison.

