**Draft Kent Domestic Retrofit Group meeting 14th March 2024 Microsoft Teams Call**

**Presen****t**: Linn Helgesen, Sustainable Warmth Officer Medway Council; Lucy Rivers, Domestic Energy Officer Thanet; Sandra Woodfall, Environmental promotions and energy officer Dartford BC; Victoria Frost, energy team including Solar Together KCC; Ben Hudson, Energy Team Leader in KCC; Carol Stewart, energy efficiency officer at Sevenoaks; Christine Kingham, TWBC PSH officer implementing energy efficiency schemes; Lucy Hicks, TMBC Housing Initiatives Officer; John Underwood, Energy support officer Dover District Council; Lisa Hopkins, Home Energy Service Thanet District Council; Lynn Wilkinson, DFG and energy officer, Gravesham BC; Louise Shrubsole, Green Doctor; Sharon Irvine, Partnership Assistant, Kent Housing Group.

**Apologies**; Julian Watts, Ashford Borough Council; Helen Miller, Partnership Manager, Kent Housing Group

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who | Action/Decision |
| Minutes from last meeting | Eve – ask Project Board whether Sunamp can be added to list of measures for HUG 2  All Consider volunteering to join HUB Project for HUG2 Consortium. Linn H – this might be in relation to the new retrofit scheme; just put in an expression of interest re LARS via the HUB.  Lucy R - Give group update on time needed, process and proxies for LA flex to share learning with other LAs. Will take this forward to next time, as her first flex has just come through and she is writing a guidance document for her team.  Eve Share learning and rationale on contracts with Eon. To be covered later in the meeting.  Eve Provide summary for Hannah on where ECO4 funds come from. Linn to check if she has access to Eve’s emails on progress on this item.  Lucy to share details of schools project – there is a delay to the year 2 Quarter 1, because of staffing issues. Will cover this in the agenda later. Sandra W this is related to HUG2, regarding a representative from the group sitting on the local net zero hub. Lucy R – this may be HUG related and will check on whether it’s a national HUB. Offered to clarify this with Sandra W via email.  Julian & Eve Catch up on using infrared camera  All Share your marketing materials and how well they work – Linn has done some through HUB marketing material; Carol W begun getting referrals for the eligibility checker the link put into the newsletter that goes to all households; her usual marketing measure is speaking directly to people in their homes.  Victoria F- Provide summary of details on open house for ASHP pilot - moved the pilot from two dates to just one - the 11th of May in Faversham when a couple of homeowners with low carbon technologies will open their homes and talk to some other local people. Like a myth busting exercise. Victoria will have a presentation on domestic retrofit, low carbon renewable heating. Victoria has previously circulated promotional materials to the group and is happy to share learning with the group. Everyone is invited and welcome to suggest other areas, as Victoria would like to host similar open days across Kent in the future.  Hannah Clarify with Hub the support it provides LAs – Lucy will follow up with an email to clarify points with Hannah. |  | Carry forward to next meeting.  Carry forward to next meeting.  Carry forward to next meeting.  Linn to update group.  Carry forward to next meeting. |
| Green Doctors | Louise Shrubsole, Front Line worker, Training Green Doctor Project shared slides: “Keeping warm and healthy at home”  Victoria F asked about the Pie-chart showing energy consumption, whether the measure was KWH or cost. VF will check the Energy Saving Trust for the figures. |  | Share slides with group |
| Project updates | **HUG2 –** Carol S – Sevenoaks finding it difficult to get things through the batch system, especially cavity, mid terrace. Only completed 7 this year but can increase by 20% next year because she has a lot of properties in pipeline that have already had assessments done. In her main area, been knocking on doors to get more mid-terrace properties but the difficulty is some properties are so small and cannot fit heat pump or water tank and can only be given high heat retention storage heaters, which have their own issues. Included this in mid-year review.  Lucy R – Thanet has similar issues; but went through consortium. Having issues with eligibility, transition between EON and ECO4; EON lacks contractors to work on huge tower blocks, making the blocks not eligible. Thanet has a lot of tower blocks, there is a lot of flexibility around household income. Linn asked if this was around area eligibility, as they have done mail outs on area eligibility and income eligibility. Lucy R – yes, but also income and living costs. Lucy will feedback on the Urban Tide feedback and also on the data as there are concerns.  Linn – Medway doing second mail out but need different address formats which was time consuming.  Sandra W – Dartford did mailshot re low EPCs and properties not heated by gas; included eligibility checker and a quarter or responses came by that route, possibly helped by the cold weather in February. Midpoint review discussed yesterday, 31 in consortium, and still a few to install by end of March. They still have problems with UKPN delays and this incurs high costs not just in EWI properties also in cavity wall properties. Had HUB2 policy session, many were distressed on the way the schemes are going. She suggested a support group for officers, not a working group, mor like a Teams chat. She is having another meeting with Salix to look at how the group could be set up to support people. The Deputy Director stated they have to work with their existing policies, including new policy changes from April. Sandra invited group members to email her about the support group and the progress.  Carol S – asked Linn about Park Homes as Sevenoaks had two applications on eligibility checker, but cannot get an EPC on those? Can’t do EWI because the park homes do not have a long life? Linn – not sure how it would work if it is not a full park home site. There were three sites in the consortia chosen, with a contractor working on it specifically. Contractors did EWI because it was a whole site, approved and having works done. Need to check if your contractor would be willing to do it.  Lucy H asked about the latest on RDSAT10.2 in relation to HUG as the guidance mentions batteries being a new eligible measure – didn’t get a definitive answer on including batteries alongside solar PV once 10.2 comes into effect.  **LARS –** Linn H -new scheme coming in and need clarity and information on how this will work; Medway has submitted an expression of interest through the Hub.  Carol S - Sevenoaks going to apply for it, it might complement off gas and on gas too. Do not want to go for LARS. Useful to use the same form changing from hub to LARS. Cost caps aren’t realistic.  Sandra W – Dartford has DAC in place, so they already have a contract in place. Will only be involved if it is made similar.  Lucy H – HUG2 documents can be passported to LARS but it's looking at resource is needed etc. They expressed an interest with HUB and want to see the details; LARS workshop was cancelled.  Victoria F - similar to others no details on what LARS will look like. Pre tender market engagement runs between February and mid-June. KCC won't be involved in direct delivery, but if anyone sees a role for KCC let her know.  Sandra W – Documents to apply will be available from August onwards; with the idea that it will be up and running for April 2025.  **ECO4 and Flex**  Lucy R- Thanet has the MOU with Eon for their Flex; have a few coming through but less than anticipated. Will review in April or May. Regarding cavity walls no ECO4 just GBIS.  Sandra W – Dartford not pushing ECO as they have a different funding source for cavity wall and insulation.  Linn H – Medway is with Eon, which is hardly doing ECO4, all migrated over to GBIS and focusing on cavity walls.  Lucy R **–** Meeting manager about getting a MOU and contact with another company. It might get done by 2025 if they start now.  **GBIS**  No updates  **Able to pay**  No updates |  | Linn H to look into including batteries alongside solar PV  Lucy Rand Linn H **-** arrange a meeting with Ian and report back to the group. |
| Solar Together | Victoria Frost, Community and Domestic Energy Support Officer, KCC gave an update.  Solar Together Kent was split in 2 for 2023, and will follow this format again in 2024. This is to allow for Spring and Autumn registration and installation periods. This means that the 2022 scheme ran for roughly the same amount of time as the Spring and Autmn 2023 schemes added together.  The Spring 2023 period has now finished, with all installations complete, while installations from the Autumn registration period are in progress.  2023: 1149 total installations (Solar PV and battery across Spring and Autumn) thus far, compared to 1576 in 2022 overall.  Spring 2023: 782 Solar PV, totalling around 4MW of capacity plus 63 retrofit battery storage.  2022 overall, for comparison: 1470 PV installations cited as 6.7MW of capacity. |  | Victoria will send the figures to Linn/Sharon; and for the next meeting Victoria will produce a presentation slide/graph for the next meeting. |
| Marketing and comms (including to your Councillors) | Carol S – Asked Sevenoaks Comms team to advertise eligibility checker via Facebook on 13th March. When the eligibility checker link was advertised in the newsletter they got a sudden influx.  Lucy R - Thanet might be registered for the eligibility tracker but haven't had anything come through. Does it work with flex in the same way as Eco 4? Carol S – Just HUG 2; it checks LSY errors. There are faults e.g. – people on shared ownership are told they are ineligible, though they are eligible.  Lucy R – Will find a way to share Members’ packages, logo and information using a link that is accessible and editable, to people who are interested. Take up was really good. Also, Thanet had permission to write information, including advice service telephone number across the bottom of Council Tax bills, but decided against it because of issues around eligibility, pressure on staff resources etc. Will consider adding a link to the eligibility checker, which might boost referrals.  Linn H – Medway has found letter drops or mail outs work quite well; there is an uptake in terms of mail out more so than social media. For both of the schemes that they are doing, they are trying all avenues like newsletters etc to get as many referral they can. |  | Lucy R to share Thanet’s Members Packages. |
| Venues: 4th July; 11th Nov in person meetings | Phil had confirmed Maidstone as the venue for 4th July.  Linn H asked group for their thoughts on a venue for 11th November. |  | Linn H and Lucy H will check availability at Medway and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council as venue for 11th November meeting. |
| AOB and topics for next time | Lucy R - HUG2 asked how people are feeling about being in a consortium, about the reporting marketing aspects? Had influx of emails about HUG; spent time working to do year two marketing, budgeting and approvals, only to be told approvals cannot be done yet – making it difficult to plan.  Linn H - several people in the same organisation want the same information, this could be more streamlined. Lucy H – Sends information direct, bypassing the egress 1 system. Linn H – People have had problems with opening and accessing documents on the egress 1 system.  Carol S – Decided not to join Consortium as experience in HUG1 showed they were able to do more outside of the consortium and can report on what is going on as they have more information.  Topic for next meeting – LARS. Group asked to email ideas for agenda to Linn H and Lucy R. |  |  |

Next meeting: 10th May 2024, 10:00 am – 12:00pm on Teams

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