



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

23 March 2021

Dear

ATISN 14954 Welsh Government Warm Homes Arbed scheme in Llysfaen, Conwy

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 1 March 2021. You asked for:

1. How the decision to produce a scheme at Llysfaen, Conwy was made.
2. What the scheme parameters were.
3. What building types would qualify for inclusion in the scheme.
4. What funding was to be used for the scheme.
5. The methodology used to identify the need for a fuel poverty scheme in the area.
6. How the decision was arrived at not to progress the gas connection scheme.

Our response

The information you requested is shown below:

1. How the decision to produce a scheme at Llysfaen, Conwy was made.

In May 2018 Arbed am Byth were appointed as the Arbed Scheme Manager to identify, develop and deliver area based schemes designed to improve the thermal and energy efficiency of homes in areas where there is a greater risk of people living in fuel poverty.

Arbed am Byth work in close partnership with Welsh Local Authorities, who identify potential suitable scheme areas using local knowledge of housing stock and national data sets e.g. Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

Arbed am Byth initially engaged with Conwy County Borough Council in August 2018 and it was agreed Llysfaen was an area that should be explored under the Arbed programme.

2. What the scheme parameters were.

A household is regarded as being in fuel poverty if they are unable to keep their home warm at a reasonable cost. In Wales, this is measured as any household that would have to spend more than 10% of their income on maintaining a satisfactory heating regime. Any household having to spend more than 20% is defined as being in severe fuel poverty.

The following characteristics, in various combinations, may indicate households and properties more likely to be living in fuel poverty or severe fuel poverty:

- Household is in receipt of means-tested benefits or with an income below 60 per cent of median income.
- Household occupants include someone over 75 years or under 5 years.
- Household occupants include someone who is disabled.
- Home has an energy rating of EPC D, E, F or G.
- Home is off the gas network.
- Home is pre-1900, solid wall construction.
- Householder has never or rarely switched tariff or energy supplier
- Householder pays for energy through a pre-payment meter.

The target group of the Arbed Programme is low income households living in the most energy inefficient private sector homes.

The Arbed Programme's primary target is properties with an EPC rating of G, F & E, as these are the poorest performing properties and a key indicator of fuel poverty. Properties with an EPC rating of D can be considered if they form a minority of the overall scheme and this reflects the area based approach of the programme. The Scheme manager must be able to evidence an uplift in the energy performance of a property following installation of measures.

This scheme is for the domestic residential sector only and does not include advice and support for the non-domestic sector.

3. What building types would qualify for inclusion in the scheme.

All eligible privately owned or private rented domestic homes within an identified area are considered for inclusion in a scheme.

4. What funding was to be used for the scheme.

EU European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Welsh Government funding is used by the Arbed scheme.

5. The methodology used to identify the need for a fuel poverty scheme in the area.

The potential scheme was identified through collaboration between the Local Authority, Conwy County Borough Council and the Scheme Manager, Arbed am Byth, using local area knowledge, data which the Local Authority hold and national data including the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

6. How the decision was arrived at not to progress the gas connection scheme.

The decision to progress schemes to delivery phase is made by Arbed am Byth, in consultation with Welsh Government.

The viability of the scheme at Llysfaen was challenging given the associated costs to connect the area to the mains gas network. Officials and Arbed am Byth worked closely with Wales and West Utilities to explore a range of options to investigate if the scheme could be made viable. Ultimately costs proved prohibitive due to the geology of the area and the substantial distance required to extend the gas main network to the area.

An explanation of the above was provided by Crispin Jones, Managing Director, Arbed am Byth to local residents at a virtual public meeting held on 9 October 2020. The meeting was organised and attended by Darren Millar MS and advertised through social media and local radio. Also in attendance were representatives of Conwy County Borough Council and householders from across the local community.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

Parc Cathays • Cathays Park
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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.