

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Tony Collins</p>	<p>The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme, Phase 2 (LAD2), is designed to enable local authorities to deliver energy efficiency improvements to low-income households in low energy performance homes, which will also reduce carbon emissions and lower bills. Many said the fund was flawed in design, as covered by Inside Housing in May last year. The fund closes at the end of March 2022. Of the £300m in the fund, the South East was allocated £79.6m.</p> <p>How much of this fund was allocated to this local authority area? How many households successfully applied for grant funding under the scheme? How many household projects i) have been started; ii) have been completed; iii) are expected to successfully access funds?</p> <p>If there is likely to be a significant underspend compared to the allocation and if so what factors do you consider account for this?</p>	<p>Councillor Batsford:</p> <p>The Green Home Grant was split into LAD1A, LAD1B and LAD2. (Local Authority Delivery). The subsequent Sustainable Warmth Fund comprises LAD3 and HUG (Home Upgrade Grant) 1.</p> <p>Hastings Borough Council has led successful East Sussex Consortium bids on LAD 1A, 1B, LAD3 and HUG1, totalling approximately £4.2 million. These rounds all used the same funding model of a direct grant to Hastings Borough Council, who then transferred the funding between East Sussex Warm Home Check Service and Optivo. This funding is due to have supported nearly 500 homes across East Sussex to access energy efficiency measures when delivery of LAD3 and HUG1 is complete.</p> <p>LAD 2 was modelled differently from the other rounds of funding with the East Sussex area funded up to £2 million with approximately £300K for Hastings Borough Council. This money was given to the Greater South East Energy Hub to administer. The Managing Agent initially appointed by them was Happy Energy. Hastings Borough Council officers working across fuel poverty and minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) met with Happy Energy to identify, identification and referral pathways, particularly landlords and the private rented sector in the town. However, Happy Energy were not able to deliver within the constraints of LAD2 and withdrew as managing agent for East Sussex and beyond. This was mirrored in other areas, with E'ON also withdrawing as the managing agent from West Sussex.</p> <p>Recently, Warmworks were appointed as the replacement managing agent for LAD2, and finally, an extension was granted by BEIS with the delivery timescale of December 2021 moved to 31st March 2022. There are some concerns that Warmworks may also struggle to deliver the LAD2 project.</p> <p>East Sussex Consortium partners, particularly the Hastings</p>

Borough Council resource, has focused on successfully delivering LAD1A, LAD1B, LAD3 and HUG 1.

Local Authorities who did issue communications on behalf of Happy Energy have since received some complaints from residents that did not receive the promised work. Hastings Borough Council made the decision not to issue any communications for Happy Energy in relation to LAD2. We did agree that we would do a direct identification and referral to Happy Energy via the MEES project for any eligible households. However after our initial meeting with them we never heard from them again and later they withdrew as the managing agent.

It was felt by Hastings Borough Council and other East Sussex Local Authorities that the simultaneous communications for both the delivery of the East Sussex Consortium programme and the contradictory model for LAD2 had potential to confuse residents and reduce clarity and faith in the primary East Sussex model resulting in the contracted delivery targets of the Consortium Programme not being met. Concerns were also raised for the long-term impact on resident clarity and faith in energy efficiency schemes – an identified barrier to successful retrofit programmes.

Throughout the LAD2 process, significant officer resource has been dedicated to finding a way for Hastings Borough Council residents to benefit from the LAD2 funding in such a way as to support them and compliment the delivery models we had already committed to.

As far as we are aware no works have been carried out in the Hastings Borough area under LAD2, and we have received no complaints of promised but undelivered works. Therefore, it is anticipated that a potential £300K has not been spent under LAD2; however, due to the factors explained above it is not thought that the funding will be successfully delivered.