



SOUTH TEES AFFORDABLE WARMTH PARTNERSHIP

Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2020 - 2022





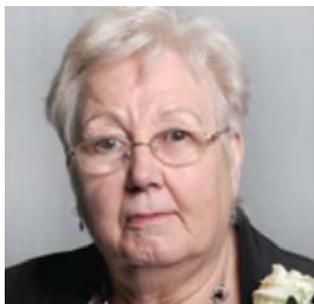
Welcome

We are pleased to introduce the South Tees Affordable Warmth Action Plan for 2020 to 2022. Covering both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, the Action Plan has been developed by the South Tees Affordable Warmth Partnership, whose members come from the public, voluntary and private sectors.

The Action Plan sets out how we can all help combat the scourge of fuel poverty across South Tees. Fuel poverty occurs when a household is unable to heat their home adequately within their household income. The effects extend well beyond being cold. Fuel poverty impacts on physical health and mental well-being. It leads to social isolation and limits employment prospects. We also know that children living in fuel poor homes often do less well at school. Currently in Redcar & Cleveland 12.1% of households are in fuel poverty; in Middlesbrough this rises to 15.4%. In total, this means that around 16,567 homes are in fuel poverty across South Tees.

Fuel poverty is a complex problem; addressing it requires a robust, comprehensive, partnership approach. We must recognise that the impacts are so wide ranging that every agency has a role to play. It is not an issue for just one local authority department, the NHS or the voluntary sector. We then need a co-ordinated approach that improves the energy efficiency of homes, maximises household income and helps residents manage their energy use affordably. We need to be able to find the people in greatest fuel poverty, who are often the most vulnerable in our communities, and ensure that all of the help is in place to support them.

We hope this Action Plan will convince you that you have a part to play in tackling fuel poverty and will inspire you to support the work of the South Tees Affordable Warmth Partnership in creating affordable warmth for all.



Cllr Dorothy Davison
Executive Member for Adult Social Care
and Public Health
Middlesbrough Council



Cllr Steve Kay
Cabinet Member for Health,
Housing and Welfare
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council



Background

The South Tees Affordable Warmth Action Plan is managed by the Affordable Warmth Partnership, a group of public, private and voluntary sector organisations who share the following vision:

Committed to improving the health and wellbeing of the people of South Tees by ensuring homes have safe and affordable warmth.

What is fuel poverty?

A household is judged to be in fuel poverty when the cost for a household to adequately heat their home is above the national average, and meeting those fuel costs would leave the household with residual income below the official poverty line.

What causes fuel poverty?

There are a number of factors contributing to fuel poverty, which can include the following:

- *Low household income* – Households on a low income often prioritise their spend on other essentials, for example choosing between food or fuel, and essentially do not have enough money to keep warm.
- *Homes with poor energy efficiency* – Many households suffering from fuel poverty are likely to be living in properties with low energy efficiency ratings.
- *The cost of fuel* – Domestic energy prices have been rising at above inflation rates consistently since 2004. According to Ofgem, the average variable tariff for a dual fuel customer is £1138 per year which is nearly 5% of the average UK household budget.

Who is at risk?

Fuel poverty often hits the most vulnerable members of our community hardest:

- people with long term health conditions
- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (from new-born to school age)
- pregnant women
- people on a low income
- people in hard to heat homes

What are the impacts of fuel poverty?

Fuel poverty impacts on many aspects of life, including the following:

Increasing ill health

Cold homes can increase the risk of some conditions including strokes and heart attacks. They can also lower resistance to respiratory illnesses and can exacerbate conditions such as COPD and asthma. Cold homes and fuel poverty can also have a negative impact on mental well-being.

Impacts on educational attainment

Fuel poverty may even impact negatively on children's education – for example, if health problems keep them off school, or if a cold home means there is no warm, separate room to do homework.

Social exclusion

Living in fuel poverty often prevents vulnerable householders from participating fully in society, for example they may be reluctant to invite people in because of the cold, damp conditions of their home, or may stay in bed during the day or go to bed early to keep warm.



Background

How are we addressing Affordable Warmth in Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland?

As described above, fuel poverty is a complex issue and addressing it needs a wide-ranging and coordinated approach. The Partnership helps services and organisations to coordinate their work, develop relationships with other partners, minimise duplication and identify and fill gaps in provision.

The Partnership includes a wide range of local organisations, all of them committed to improving Affordable Warmth within their own diverse priorities. These include the two Local Authorities, other public sector partners, Housing Associations, voluntary groups, community organisations and private businesses.

The approach that we are seeking to use is called a Whole System Model and this is shown in the diagram on the next page. A Whole System Model recognises that making real change needs action at a number of levels. Some of these actions can be taken by individuals, community groups and organisations. However, tackling fuel poverty also requires the development and implementation of appropriate policies that enable positive change to take place.

The Action Plan is divided into five themes, reflecting the main work areas needed to tackle fuel poverty. These are:

Theme 1 – Ensure a high profile for Affordable Warmth – so that organisations and groups are aware of the issue, how it impacts on their services and how they can contribute to tackling fuel poverty.

Theme 2 – Promote energy efficiency in the housing stock across all tenures – lowering the costs of heating a home through minimising the energy needlessly lost.

Theme 3 – Improve Affordable Warmth through income maximisation and budgeting advice – ensuring that households have the money available to reasonably heat their home and can manage their money well.

Theme 4 – Improve health and well-being through Affordable Warmth – recognising that fuel poverty has significant health impacts and looking at how these can be addressed.

Theme 5 – Community engagement, awareness raising and frontline staff training – increasing knowledge of fuel poverty in communities including amongst front-line staff and community members, so that they can identify people needing support and guide them to help.

Each theme includes a number of actions. These are illustrative and cover the main actions that need to be taken. However, the list is not exhaustive and as the Plan is delivered, we hope that more partners will join the Partnership and identify further ways to bring Affordable Warmth to our communities.

NICE Guidelines

The Action Plan has been developed to fit alongside the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines for excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes.

The guideline sets out recommendations on how to reduce the risk of death and ill health associated with living in a cold home. The aim is to help meet a range of public health and other goals. These include:

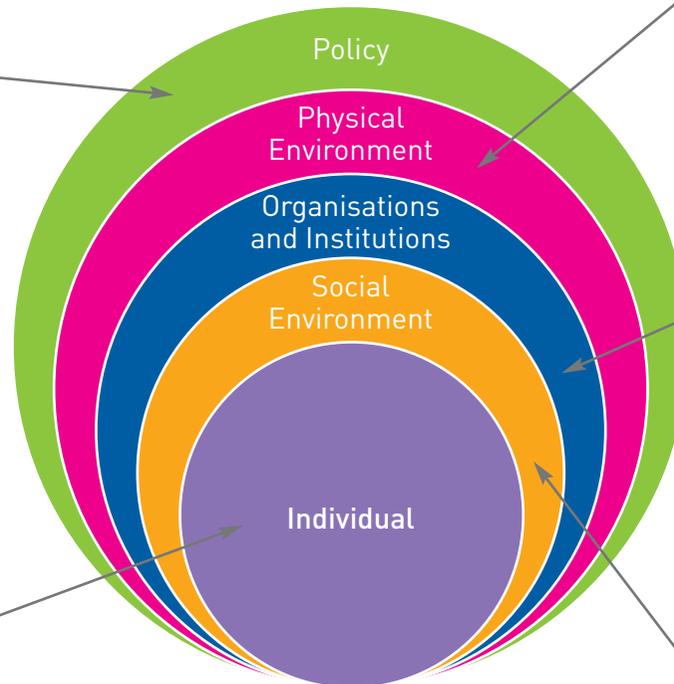
- Reducing preventable excess winter death rates;
- Improving health and wellbeing among vulnerable groups;
- Reducing pressure on health and social care services;
- Reducing fuel poverty, the risk of fuel debt or being disconnected from gas and electricity supplies (including self disconnection);
- Improving the energy efficiency of the home.



Whole System Approach

- A South Tees Affordable Warmth Partnership and Action Plan that guides the delivery of affordable warmth across South Tees.
- Ensuring that affordable warmth is included in relevant policies across the area.
- Recognising the importance of affordable warmth at a senior level, including through the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Advocating policy change at a national level.

- Ensure that the home is as well insulated as it reasonably can be.
- Check energy tariffs and compare regularly. Change tariff or supplier if a cheaper option is available.
- Take simple measures to reduce energy use, including using low energy light bulbs and turning the thermostat down if it is too warm.
- Maximise income, for example to claiming benefit entitlements.
- If finding it difficult to keep the home warm, don't be afraid to ask for help.



- Installing energy efficiency measures to help reduce fuel use in homes.
- Encouraging the uptake of renewable energy sources.

- Looking at their policies and practices to see how they can help with the actions in the Action Plan.
- Help identify people they work with who are in fuel poverty and refer them for help.
- Help service users to become more aware of the impacts of and solutions to fuel poverty.

- Learn more about how to recognise fuel poverty, its impacts and the support that is in place to help people affected by fuel poverty.
- Look out for friends and neighbours who might be in fuel poverty and help them to get support.



Theme One: Ensure a high profile for Affordable Warmth

Theme Lead: **Mark Fishpool, South Tees**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Timing |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>1. Maintain an effective Affordable Warmth Partnership.</p> <p>(NICE Guideline, Recommendation 1)</p> | <p>Proactive Affordable Warmth Partnership maintained with broad representation from key partners and delivering against a locally relevant Action Plan.</p> | <p>1.1 Hold bi-monthly Steering Group meetings.</p> <p>1.2 Review the actions within the Action Plan on a bi-annual basis to ensure they are relevant and remain in line with changing local and national policies.</p> <p>1.3 Review membership of the Affordable Warmth Partnership along with the refresh of the actions.</p> <p>1.4 Work with the other Tees Valley authorities to share best practice and investigate the formation of a Tees Valley Affordable Warmth Partnership.</p> | <p>Ongoing – review membership on a 6-monthly basis.</p> <p>By April 2022</p> <p>By April 2022</p> <p>By April 2021</p> |



Theme One: Ensure a high profile for Affordable Warmth

Theme Lead: **Mark Fishpool, South Tees**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Timing |
|--|---|--|--|
| 2. Ensure ownership of Affordable Warmth by partner organisations. | Broad support for the Affordable Warmth Partnership beyond the Public Health and environmental sectors. | <p>2.1 Ensure that principles of the Affordable Warmth Partnership are adopted at highest level in partner organisations.</p> <p>2.2 Integrate Affordable Warmth priorities into partners' work programmes.</p> <p>2.3 Increase the awareness of Affordable Warmth through promotional activities of partners.</p> <p>2.4 Maintain links between the Affordable Warmth Partnership and other relevant groups eg Financial Inclusion Group, Food Partnership, Joint Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>2.5 Provide training and awareness raising opportunities to senior staff in partner organisations to develop their understanding of Affordable Warmth and enable them to integrate Affordable Warmth into their work programmes.</p> | <p>Ongoing – review progress 6 monthly</p> <p>By April 2021</p> |



Theme One: Ensure a high profile for Affordable Warmth

Theme Lead: **Mark Fishpool, South Tees**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Timing |
|--|---|--|---|
| 3. Encourage increased investment in Affordable Warmth in South Tees. Ensure that investment is maximised by adapting existing resources, where possible, towards delivering Affordable Warmth outcomes. | Increased investment in both capital energy efficiency measures and revenue advice support across South Tees. | 3.1 Maintain a watching brief on national and local policy to identify opportunities for local investment. 3.2 Actively identify and apply for external funding to support Affordable Warmth initiatives. 3.3 Work with installers and other agencies to promote the uptake of initiatives to eligible householders. | Ongoing – review progress 6 monthly Ongoing – review progress 6 monthly Ongoing – review progress 6 monthly |
| 4. Monitor and review the Affordable Warmth Action Plan and ensure it contains a clear strategy to address the health consequences of cold homes. (NICE Guidelines - Recommendation 1) | Affordable Warmth Action Plan remains relevant to local needs and priorities. | 4.1 Collate information and evaluate current programmes to inform future priorities. 4.2 Review the actions in the AWAP at the bi-monthly meetings. 4.3 Promote successes of the Affordable Warmth Partnership and Affordable Warmth Action Plan including through the publication of an annual progress report and case studies. 4.4 Review the Affordable Warmth Action Plan every two years. | Annually in April Bi-monthly meetings ongoing By April 2021 By April 2022 |



Theme Two: Promote energy efficiency in the housing stock across all tenures

Theme Lead: Peter Brewer, Middlesbrough & Steve Cooke, Redcar & Cleveland

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>1. Maintain baseline data for the housing stock across all tenures using the UNO database.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines - Recommendation 4)</p> | <p>A data sharing protocol and updating procedure is established with housing providers, installers, partners and others to identify data sources and ensure regular capture of data is established and maintained.</p> <p>Training opportunities and best practice ideas are shared across the South Tees area to ensure best use is being made of the UNO database.</p> | <p>1.1 Ensure a process is in place to update UNO regularly with relevant information.</p> <p>1.2 Arrange UNO information sharing and UNO training sessions with Redcar and Cleveland.</p> | <p>By September 2020</p> <p>By April 2020</p> |
| <p>2. Continue to monitor fuel poverty across the South Tees area and use UNO to collate data to identify people at risk of ill health from living in cold homes.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines - Recommendation 4)</p> | <p>The Partnership has up to date information regarding the levels of fuel poverty across South Tees and is able to identify areas where there is more vulnerability.</p> | <p>2.1 Use annual national fuel poverty data on the BEIS website to update and report to the Partnership.</p> <p>2.2 Use health data collected using UNO/or during project delivery to identify and target health vulnerabilities.</p> | <p>Annually from April 2020</p> <p>By September 2020</p> |
| <p>3. Ensure energy efficiency improvement programmes to the housing stock across all tenures are attracted into the South Tees area.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines - Recommendation 12)</p> | <p>The South Tees area is maximising opportunities to improve housing stock under all tenures via the current home energy efficiency funding programmes.</p> <p>Private landlords and private sector housing are encouraged to take-up energy efficiency measures through available home improvement grants.</p> | <p>3.1 Assist delivery of grant funded installation projects using ECO, ECO Flex funding.</p> <p>3.2 Support delivery of the Warm Homes Fund programme as part of the Tees Valley Consortium.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>From January 2020 to March 2022</p> |



Theme Three: Improve Affordable Warmth through income maximisation and budgeting advice

Theme Lead: **Joanne McNally, Middlesbrough & TBA, Redcar & Cleveland**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>1. Implement a co-ordinated approach between energy efficiency, income maximisation and debt advice. Work with advice workers to identify people requiring Affordable Warmth support.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 5)</p> | <p>All organisations giving advice around benefits, money management and debt are able identify fuel poverty among their clients and can refer directly or signpost clients to partners delivering Affordable Warmth initiatives and provide feedback.</p> <p>Local areas of high poverty are targeted to ensure that residents receive appropriate advice and support to maximise their opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.</p> <p>Community Hubs are used to promote awareness and deliver integrated advice to maximise income, increase energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.</p> | <p>1.1 A simple question about ability to afford fuel bills to be added to the evaluation form during unclaimed benefits events. A direct referral will then be made if required. Referrals will be monitored.</p> <p>1.2 A joined up approach is used for benefits campaigns to promote Affordable Warmth alongside income maximisation activities or campaigns.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>2. Establish a cross-referral network for Affordable Warmth partners in Redcar and Cleveland.</p> <p>(NICE Guideline Recommendation 9)</p> | <p>Affordable Warmth and income maximisation support in Redcar and Cleveland is more closely aligned to that which is already established in Middlesbrough.</p> | <p>2.1 A process is in place to establish cross referral pathways.</p> | <p>By October 2020</p> |



Theme Three: Improve Affordable Warmth through income maximisation and budgeting advice

Theme Lead: **Joanne McNally, Middlesbrough & TBA, Redcar & Cleveland**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>3. Use effective targeting to improve awareness and engagement with hard to reach communities in South Tees.</p> <p>(NICE Guideline Recommendation 4)</p> | <p>Affordable Warmth advice and income maximisation support is available to all South Tees residents including those with English as a second language.</p> | <p>3.1 Investigate opportunities to establish or support ESOL courses for home energy efficiency and establish a route for implementing action.</p> <p>3.2 Investigate opportunities to establish or support budgeting and financial capability courses aimed at younger people and establish a route for implementing action.</p> <p>3.3 Investigate opportunities to support the Gypsy and Roma Traveller community.</p> | <p>By July 2020</p> <p>By July 2020</p> <p>By July 2020</p> |



Theme Four: Improve health and well-being through Affordable Warmth

Theme Lead: **Katrina Jackson, South Tees**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>1. Ensure Affordable Warmth continues to be included in key policy documents dealing with health and social care.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 1)</p> | <p>Key policy documents and strategies will make clear reference to the impacts of fuel poverty and will be updated regularly with relevant information.</p> <p>Local issues and impacts of fuel poverty, excess winter deaths and local impacts of cold homes on residents' health and wellbeing will be identified and reflected in relevant local strategies and policy documents.</p> | <p>1.1 Create a list of key policy documents across Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland and ensure that Affordable Warmth and actions to alleviate fuel poverty are specifically referenced.</p> | By July 2020 |
| | | <p>1.2 Continue to monitor, analyse and review baseline data on Excess Winter Deaths (EWD) and seasonal variations in hospital admissions for respiratory and circulatory diseases. Request data from Public Health on an annual basis to allow informed and timely targeting and inclusion in reports or funding applications.</p> | By July 2020 |
| | | <p>1.3 Ensure evidence and findings of local fuel poverty, EWD and hospital admissions is evidenced in key policy documents - e.g. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.</p> | By July 2020 |
| <p>2. Provide tailored solutions via a single point of contact referral service for people living in cold homes.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 3).</p> | <p>Two single point of contact referral services will be available; one in Middlesbrough and one in Redcar and Cleveland.</p> <p>Residents who are vulnerable to the cold will be able to seek help via a single point of contact referral hub and get access to a wide range of tailored solutions.</p> | <p>2.1 Ensure a single point of contact/referral continues to be available in both Local Authority areas.</p> | By Sept 2020 |
| | | <p>2.2 Investigate creating a free-phone number for Redcar and Cleveland.</p> | By Sept 2020 |
| | | <p>2.3 Establish a data sharing protocol between partners to enable existing data to be used to identify people who in fuel poverty, particularly those vulnerable to the cold.</p> | By Sept 2020 |



Theme Four: Improve health and well-being through Affordable Warmth

Theme Lead: **Katrina Jackson, South Tees**

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------|
| | | 2.4 Use monitoring of frontline staff training to investigate the potential of increasing referrals from partners. | By Sept 2020 |
| 3. Discharge vulnerable people from health or social care settings to a warm home. (NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 7) | People being discharged from a health or social care setting will ensure that if the person is judged to be vulnerable to the cold they will received help and support to ensure the home is warm, safe, and that they are able to afford to heat their home adequately. If there are any difficulties in achieving this appropriate onward referral to Affordable Warmth partners will be made. | 3.1 Explore the potential for developing discharge procedures from health and social care settings that includes an assessment of Affordable Warmth needs for all patients regardless of whether there is social work involvement (NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 7). 3.2 Continue to develop partnership working with existing partners working within the current discharge procedure eg Staying Put Agency, MacMillan. | By June 2020 Ongoing |



Theme Five: Community engagement, awareness raising and frontline staff training

Theme Lead: Val Lambert, South Tees

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>1. Organise and run events in the community to: raise awareness about energy efficiency in the home; promote energy efficiency measures; encourage behaviour change; access available home improvements grants; and raise awareness of the health impacts of cold homes.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines - recommendations 9, 10, 11)</p> | <p>Energy efficiency and fuel poverty training workshops are available for all residents and community groups.</p> <p>Bespoke energy efficiency and fuel poverty training workshops have been developed to specifically address vulnerable groups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mental health and dementia issues - BME communities - D/deaf communities - Any other vulnerable group requiring extra support or interpretation. | <p>1.1 Deliver public events to promote take up of energy efficiency programmes and promote awareness and behaviour change.</p> <p>1.2 Investigate opportunities to widen delivery of bespoke events to target identified vulnerable groups.</p> | <p>Ongoing – review progress at bi-monthly meetings</p> <p>Ongoing – review progress at bi-monthly meetings</p> |
| <p>2. Raise awareness amongst practitioners and the public about how to keep warm at home.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 11)</p> | <p>Affordable Warmth partners work together to deliver a programme of winter warmth events between October and March each year.</p> <p>Work with relevant partner agencies to ensure the importance of Affordable Warmth is highlighted as part of other relevant health awareness campaigns.</p> <p>Provide support to the Public Health England winter campaigns and flu inoculation uptake campaigns.</p> | <p>2.1 The Affordable Warmth partners work together to deliver a co-ordinated Winter Warmth Campaign between October and March each year, offering a range of support and advice for vulnerable people at risk of ill health from living in a cold home, including those with dementia or mental health issues.</p> | <p>October to March each year</p> |



Theme Five: Community engagement, awareness raising and frontline staff training

Theme Lead: Val Lambert, South Tees

| Objective | Outcomes | Actions | Time Scale & Lead Person/Agency |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>3. Develop a Making Every Contact Count approach to training courses to enable all key workers, health professionals and other frontline staff assess the heating needs of vulnerable residents and make appropriate onward referral and for additional help and support.</p> <p>(NICE Guidelines, Recommendation 5 & 6,8,9,10, 7 & 11).</p> | <p>Key workers and frontline staff are aware that living in a cold home may have a greater effect on vulnerable people and use their time with people to assess whether they, or another member of the household, are experiencing difficulties keeping their home warm enough. They will then make appropriate onward referrals .</p> <p>Targeted training workshops about energy efficiency and the health impacts of fuel poverty fully incorporating the ethos of the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) principals, are available for housing professionals and all other front-line staff including heating engineers and those installing building insulation.</p> <p>Standardised and consistent promotional material across agencies is distributed across South Tees.</p> | <p>3.1 Develop further engagement to work towards including a Public Health MECC framework around the health impacts of cold homes, energy efficiency, household income and fuel costs into all front-line staff training.</p> <p>3.2 Raise awareness of the health impacts of fuel poverty amongst front-line workers including Health and Social Care practitioners, housing professionals, heating engineers and insulation installers.</p> <p>3.3 Scope out the additional frontline staff training needs in Redcar and Cleveland to ensure training is consistent across South Tees.</p> <p>3.4 Conduct a baseline and mapping exercise of training and training needs to ensure training is focussed and targeted.</p> <p>3.5 E-learning support training package is rolled out to all front-line staff who have previously received training.</p> | <p>Ongoing – review progress at bi-monthly meetings</p> <p>Ongoing – review progress at bi-monthly meetings</p> <p>By June 2020</p> <p>By June 2020</p> <p>By Sept 2020</p> |



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Published on behalf of South Tees Affordable Warmth Partnership by Middlesbrough Environment City.

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Middlesbrough Environment City is a registered charity, no. 1070131.