



Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute

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Green Deal Communities

Private Rental Sector Incentive

Report of findings

FINAL





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Contents

Executive Summary	1	
1 Introduction	6	Deleted: 7
1.1 Background – Green Deal	6	Deleted: 7
1.2 Background – Green Deal Communities and Private Rental Sector funding	6	Deleted: 7
1.3 Research aims and objectives.....	7	Deleted: 8
1.4 Methodology	8	Deleted: 9
2 Key Findings	10	Deleted: 21
2.1 Delivery of the Green Deal Communities Private Rental Sector incentive	10	Deleted: 21
2.2 Marketing the Private Rental Sector incentive.....	12	Deleted: 23
2.3 Motivations for taking part	22	Deleted: 32
2.4 Progressing the customer journey	34	Deleted: 44
2.5 Conclusions: addressing the qualitative research questions	44	Deleted: 54
3 Appendices	50	Deleted: 60

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from qualitative research on the delivery of the Green Deal Community (GDC) funding to the Private Rental Sector (PRS). The funding supported four local authorities to target installation of energy efficiency measures in PRS properties. The research used 44 qualitative interviews with stakeholders of the scheme (LAs, delivery partners, landlords and other stakeholders) to understand the motivations of beneficiaries for utilising the scheme and uncover where barriers might exist to more successful delivery and how they might be overcome. The research aimed to provide lessons for the future delivery of similar funding to this sector. Further detail on the background is provided in section 1.

Delivery of the scheme

The way in which the scheme was delivered in each area was broadly similar. A lead authority worked in partnership with partner authorities and contracted a supplier to manage the delivery of the scheme, while using the existing branding from previous energy efficiency initiatives. The main area of variation was in the use of a single supplier (as was the case in three LAs) or allowing landlords the choice of accredited supplier that provided the work (as was the case in Haringey). In Haringey the other element of the scheme delivery that differed was the use of a Smart Advisor – a senior architect and sustainability consultant who offered additional advice and guidance to the householder following the receipt of the Green Deal Assessment (GDA) and EPC. Further information on the delivery of the scheme in each LA is provided in section 2.1 of this report.

Marketing the incentive

LAs used several channels to promote the incentive to prospective beneficiaries, with LAs adapting their approaches as they went on. Drawing solid conclusions about the effectiveness of the array of different marketing approaches employed is not possible due to a lack of effective recording of marketing codes for scheme applications. This is one finding that any future scheme would need to address if evidence is required on the successes of marketing approaches.

All LAs attempted directly approaching tenants through door knocking or direct mail addressed to the occupier, as this allowed targeting of specific properties most likely to be in need of improvement (generally Solid Wall Insulation). In all LAs this was felt to be generally unsuccessful as tenants were perceived to be unwilling or unable to sign up to the scheme without their landlord's permission, or were not sufficiently engaged with the issue of energy efficiency to take an interest.

LAs believed the most successful approach was the use of personally addressed letters sent to landlords, as opposed to more 'ad-hoc' marketing techniques such as setting up stalls in public locations such as shopping or community centres. The ability for LAs to have access to and share landlord data with their partnering authorities was pivotal in being able to send such targeted communications out, and some LAs reported barriers in being able to do this. LAs felt that success depended on the ability to target an engaged audience of landlords, which tended to generate the most interest. Making use of informal landlord networks, such as landlord forums and readership of landlord newsletters, has therefore been shown to be an important tool to effectively build interest in the scheme.

All LAs took advantage of existing LA energy efficiency branded schemes (logos and scheme names), rather than trying to tie into the Green Deal branding in a national context. This was felt to provide continuity and also reassurance to landlords

that the scheme was legitimate and could be trusted. Certainly some landlords interviewed supported the view that the LAs involvement gave the scheme legitimacy and gave them faith that it would deliver what it proposed to.

While some landlords reported receiving information on the scheme via their letting agent made them more likely to be receptive to it, LAs had limited success in engaging this intermediary in supporting the delivery of the scheme. LAs tended to put this down to a general lack of engagement from letting agents as there was no clear benefit to them, which financial incentives to letting agents did not successfully counter. LAs also reported a perceived level of risk aversion on behalf of letting agents which they felt prevented their participation, although LAs could not define the precise nature of this risk. Letting agents have the potential to be an important stakeholder in the delivery of energy efficiency to the PRS as they are a trusted source of information by many landlords, not to mention an entry point to getting in touch with engaged landlords who might be interested in the scheme. Successfully tapping into this network might benefit from early engagement as well as coordination at a wider level through representative bodies.

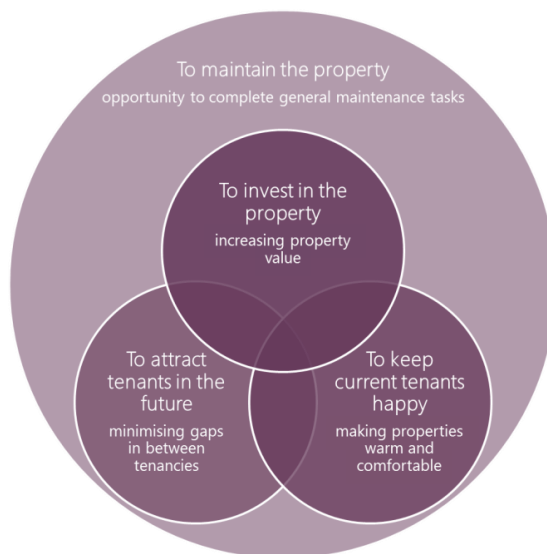
Further information on marketing of the incentive can be found in section 2.2 of this report.

Motivations for taking part

As reported by landlords and LAs, tenants themselves tended to have a very limited role in the process of using the PRS scheme – what input they did have tended to be facilitating rather than instigating or driving it. In the main, they did not influence decisions about whether to take part in the scheme or what measure was installed in the property.

Landlords reported four main motivations for taking part, as illustrated below; financial investment, maintaining happy tenants, attracting future tenants and general property maintenance. These motivations tended to be overlapping and rarely operating in isolation, as illustrated by Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key landlord motivations for utilising PRS Schemes



Many landlords saw the scheme as an opportunity to invest in the resale value of their property at a subsidised cost. Landlords did not consider the addition of the energy efficiency measure to have any impact on rental value however.

Landlords also reported happy tenants as a driving motivation, both in terms of keeping energy bills affordable and providing a warm home. The ability to let the property easily in future was also a motivating factor for landlords. Landlords aimed to minimise gaps between tenancies and saw the scheme as a way of improving the attractiveness of the property to tenants. However, both landlords and LAs in areas of high rental demand felt this was less of a factor. Similarly, most landlords did not feel that improved EPCs were an important factor in tenants choosing a property.

For landlords planning maintenance of their property, the incentive provided the opportunity to meet this need at a lower cost, sooner or to a higher specification than planned. This was particularly mentioned as a driver by landlords who were considering replacement boilers and windows. Some landlords also cited the perceived ease of the scheme – that it took the burden of identifying and selecting a supplier away from them – as a key factor in deciding to take up the incentive.

Awareness of future PRS energy efficiency legislation regarding EPC ratings was low among interviewed landlords. Only a small number of landlords reported being motivated by this future requirement. However, LAs saw this as necessary and useful, particularly for those landlords requiring a push to take action and that are perhaps less inclined to use the PRS incentive.

Landlords interviewed did not see Green Deal Finance as an attractive way of financing their financial contribution. Many were not aware of what it entailed and of those that did, it was not considered a preferable option. Reasons reported by landlords included perceptions that it was unfair to the tenant to have to pay, negative connotations of taking out a loan, and concerns over complications of transferring repayments between tenants. Landlords also often had the disposable income to fund the work.

Further information on motivations for taking part in the scheme can be found in section 2.3 of this report.

Progressing the customer journey

Following the landlord or tenant's initial contact with the scheme, there were four key stages to the customer journey that all landlords would have gone through if they progressed to installation; the Green Deal Assessment (GDA), receiving a quote for work, deciding whether or not to proceed with the quote, and installation by an accredited installer. In Haringey an additional stage was also completed; a Smart Adviser (a senior architect and sustainability consultant) made a home visit and offered additional advice and guidance to the householder following the receipt of the Green Deal Assessment (GDA) and EPC. Interviews were conducted with landlords who had at least received an energy assessment, and most went to installation.

The GDA was either free or subsidised, with the cost of the GDA being repaid to the landlord if they went through to installation. There is no evidence from the LA and landlord interviews that this initial cost prevented people from taking part in the scheme. On the other hand, LAs felt that a cheap or free assessment was not a hook attracting landlords to the scheme and most landlords interviewed were not aware of the full unsubsidised cost.

Landlord and LA interviews indicated that uptake of the scheme was largely landlord-driven. LAs did not see the tenant incentives offered as sufficient to drive tenant uptake, questioning whether the value fully offset the potential disruption faced by the tenant.

The process of getting a quote varied: in Haringey, landlords could choose a contractor, including their preferred GD supplier. In the other three authorities the LA worked with a single delivery partner. In the single supplier LAs some landlords believed that they could have had work done cheaper by suppliers they knew (particularly for more experienced

landlords or those with larger portfolios), and LAs believed this was a barrier to some landlords taking part where they preferred having this prior relationship with a supplier.

Reported reasons for landlord dropouts tended to fall into one of three categories; cost, planning requirements or the time the process took. The financial contribution, particularly for more expensive measures like SWI, was not considered affordable by some landlords compared with quotes they could get from other suppliers. The premium price that some considered they were paying for the measure through the scheme (and supported by LA views) was generally not thought by landlords to be a barrier for cheaper measures like boilers, as it still represented a net saving compared to purchasing outside the scheme.

Landlords and LAs reported some drop outs due to planning restrictions which added long delays to the process or meant they couldn't get the measures they were initially recommended. These delays caused frustrations to landlords. In Cambridgeshire the responsibility for leading the planning application was initially with the supplier but this was changed to be with the landlord as it was felt by the LA to add unnecessarily to the supplier's liability and provided greater clarity to the landlord.

The overall length of the process of receiving a measure put off some landlords as it seemed much longer than a comparable private installation. LAs believed these delays were due to reasons inherent in the scheme design, and problems with delivery by the supplier. Thus is particularly pertinent for landlords as delays to the process and the installation of measures has the additional impact for some landlords on their ability to let their property. Many reported targeting periods when the property was not tenanted to conduct the work and were not able to re-let until the work was complete. In other cases, landlords reported cases of their tenant moving out as a result of long installation periods. The frustration caused by these delays also has the risk of damaging the reputation of the LAs ability to deliver future energy efficiency schemes.

Throughout the process, landlords experienced some confusion. Some were not clear why they needed a GDA if they had a recent EPC, and reports themselves were perceived as misleading in some cases (sometimes due to a misunderstanding of whether the report was recommending a measure or stating that it was suitable for the property, subject to planning permission). In Haringey, there was a degree of landlord confusion regarding the role of Smart Advisers. The LA thought the advisers played an important role as an independent source of advice and review, but landlords often felt their role required extra clarity.

In terms of customer service, some landlords reported having to chase at various stages. Others were frustrated by dealing with multiple bodies and would have preferred a single point of contact to provide greater consistency and clarity of communication.

Further information on the customer journey can be found in Section 2.4 of this report.

Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Background – Green Deal

The energy used in homes accounts for more than a quarter of UK energy use and carbon dioxide emissions. Facilitating and encouraging domestic energy efficiency is therefore a key strand of Government policy to cost-effectively reduce carbon emissions. The Green policy aims, including Deal was introduced in 2013 as a key policy instrument to enable improved domestic energy efficiency. In addition, it contributed to other national reducing fuel poverty through lower fuel bills, and improving security of supply as a result of reduced dependence on imported energy. The Green Deal helps householders to make energy-saving home improvements, such as insulation. The scheme enables households to finance improvements with lower up-front costs, while receiving bespoke property assessments and installations through accredited suppliers. The finance mechanism allows householders to pay for some or all of the improvements over time on their electricity bill, with repayments being no higher than what a typical household would be expected to save in energy costs.

1.2 Background – Green Deal Communities and Private Rental Sector funding

Green Deal Communities

To support the delivery of the Green Deal and test the impact of providing subsidised Green Deal Assessments through local delivery partners, the Green Deal Communities (GDC) programme was setup by DECC¹. The GDC programme started in 2014 and in total £85m of grant funding was provided to 23 lead Local Authorities, with a total of 98 Local Authorities participating through local delivery consortia. Participating areas are due to complete all of their installations by the end of September 2016.

Local Authorities developed their own energy efficiency schemes targeting local households. Common design features across the schemes were provision of subsidised or free Green Deal Assessments, targeting of whole streets/areas and use of innovative approaches to achieving installations. Within a participating area, the lead local authority had the freedom to determine which homes could receive funding. Depending on the individual project, this might be based on geographical location, the current energy efficiency of the property, and/or the household income. Measures that were installed as part of the programme included solid wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, energy efficient boilers and heating controls, and replacement glazing.

The grant funding enabled Local Authorities to subsidise both the initial Green Deal Assessment and the installation of energy efficient measures. Each Local Authority set its own limits on allowable contributions, however, in almost all cases householders were required to make some contribution towards installation costs. The assessments and installations were carried out by Green Deal approved suppliers, as required by the Green Deal scheme.

¹ Scheme details provided by the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

Private Rental Sector funding

Within the central GDC programme, four Local Authorities received specific funding targeted at the private rented sector (PRS). These additional funds were provided as there are unique challenges to delivering energy efficiency measures to this sector and DECC were keen to learn what works in driving demand in this sector.

The PRS in particular has a high prevalence of poorly insulated, energy inefficient buildings; G rated properties account for 5.8% of the PRS compared with 3.4% of owner-occupied homes. In addition 20% of households in the English PRS are fuel poor, compared with 18% of households in England overall.²

Achieving installations in private rented properties is also a challenge due to the 'split incentive' found in rented properties. While the landlord has historically had to incur the cost of installing energy efficiency measures, it is the tenant who receives the benefit through decreased energy bills and increased comfort.

Under the Green Deal, landlords can choose to pay for measures using Green Deal Finance (GDF). This mechanism was expected to enable more installations in private rented properties as it allows landlords to make energy efficiency improvements without having to pay all the costs upfront. The property's bill payer, usually the tenants, repays the cost of the measures through their energy bill savings. Given the shared responsibility for loan repayment, both the landlord and the tenant must give permission for a GDF plan to be set up. Landlords were not restricted to using this finance mechanism, and could pay their contribution for measures through more traditional methods.

The four Local Authorities received an additional £2m to target and incentivise uptake of energy efficiency installations in private rented properties. The four Local Authorities were selected based on a competitive process. Bids were evaluated based on the expected number and value of Green Deal plans, their sustainability beyond the funding, the credibility of the bid (e.g. other funding secured and identification of target areas), and creativity in use of incentives. The lead authorities that were successful in securing funding - and which form the basis for this research - were Haringey, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Bristol.

1.3 Research aims and objectives

To maximise learning from the Green Deal Communities PRS programme, two evaluation work streams were put in place by DECC. To assess the impact of the additional PRS funding on the delivery of energy efficiency measures, the Behavioural Insights Team were commissioned to conduct quantitative analysis on delivery to the PRS through this programme. To help understand the effectiveness of the delivery models, the success factors and the challenges, Ipsos MORI were commissioned to conduct a piece of qualitative research among stakeholders in the four PRS funded Local Authorities.

The findings of Ipsos MORI's research are presented in this report. This qualitative research aimed to identify the motivations of landlords and tenants for using the scheme and uncover where barriers might exist to more successful delivery and how they might be overcome. Ultimately, the research aimed to provide lessons for the future delivery of similar funding to this sector.

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-a-green-deal-information-for-householders-and-landlords>

The research has been designed to answer the following questions:

Primary research questions:

1. How were stakeholders (landlords, tenants, letting agents) affected by the PRS funding and its marketing?
2. What other potential interventions could have helped, beyond those implemented by the LAs?
3. Which parts of the PRS incentive were perceived as helpful/not helpful by the stakeholders?
 - a. What were the important context factors?

Secondary research questions:

4. What were the factors that led or did not lead to installations or Green Deal Assessments (GDAs)?
5. Why were these factors important?
6. What factors were unintended?
7. Did the PRS incentives assist LAs in upgrading F and G rated properties within their region?

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Summary of methodology

Ipsos MORI carried out the research using a case study approach to build a picture of how the scheme was delivered in each area and the strengths and weaknesses of its delivery. This comprised in-depth qualitative interviews with stakeholders in each of the four LAs. Stakeholders interviewed in the research included staff at DECC managing the policy, LA staff managing the scheme in their area, staff from partnering authorities and organisations involved in managing the scheme, and landlords who had come into contact with the scheme. The original research design was to conduct interviews with tenants, however for reasons described below these were not achievable.

Ipsos MORI interviewers conducted all interviews between July 2015 and February 2016 and were primarily conducted over the phone with a small number being conducted face to face.

1.4.2 Development of discussion guide

The interviewing team completed all interviews with the use of a discussion guide, agreed in consultation with the Behavioural Insights Team and DECC, to structure the conversation with respondents. Two separate discussion guides were used; one for landlords and one for local authorities and delivery partners. Each guide consisted of a series of open questions and probing to elicit detailed responses, while allowing flexibility in the order of questioning. Interviews with LAs and delivery partners covered the background to the GDC, local delivery of the GDC, successes and challenges of delivery and learnings for future delivery. Interviews with landlords were broadly structured along the lines of the customer journey that they would have gone through. The full discussion guides are included in the appendices. Interviews lasted up to 60 minutes in length.

1.4.3 Pilot

The Ipsos MORI research team conducted a pilot in Cambridgeshire to assess the suitability of the proposed method, recruitment plan and discussion guides. Interviews were first conducted with four LA staff about the delivery of the scheme and about the availability of beneficiary contact details that could be used to recruit participants for interviews. Following this, one interview was conducted with a delivery partner and four interviews were completed with landlords.

Figure 2 summarises the findings of the pilot and the subsequent revisions made to the research methodology.

Figure 2: Pilot outcome and revisions to methodology

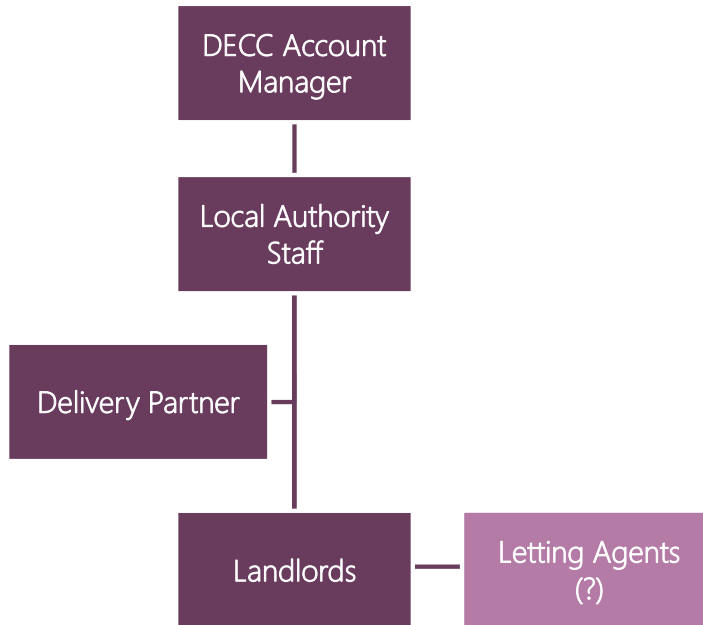
Research approach / phase	Pilot finding	Mitigation / revised approach
Sampling of landlords	The LA provided contact details of 35 beneficiaries who had given their permission to have their data shared for research purposes. All beneficiaries were landlords. Of the 35 beneficiaries, seven did not have telephone numbers recorded, and three beneficiaries had measures installed in multiple properties, reducing the number of available contacts to 21. The information provided included name, contact number and the measures installed. Following contact with the available beneficiaries, five appointments were made for a telephone interview, resulting in four completed interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of landlord interviews that could be completed was kept under review as this depended on the availability of contact information. It was not possible to use quotas to ensure diversity of landlords in the pilot sample due to the lack of information about the landlords in the database and the limited number of contacts available. The use of quotas was kept under review for the main fieldwork.
Sampling of tenants	The LA could not provide contact details of any tenants - the pilot indicated that the vast majority of installations were landlord-led, with tenants in Cambridgeshire having minimal active involvement in the scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the aim was still to interview tenants if possible, the focus of the research with beneficiaries switched to landlords, given the limited involvement tenants were reported to have in the scheme and the lack of contact information available for tenants. Inclusion of tenants depended on the ability of LAs or landlords to provide tenant contact details. Questions were added to the discussion guide for interviews with landlords in order to recruit the tenants of landlords, if possible. PRS representatives were approached to be interviewed to provide a proxy measure of tenant views.

Sampling of 'beneficiaries' at different stages of the customer journey	No contact details were provided by the LA for people who had dropped out of the incentive scheme or those who were at the GDA stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus of interviews with landlords was therefore generally on the latter stages of the customer journey (post-installation). • LA, delivery partner and letting agent interviews were used to explore reasons for drop out at earlier stages of the journey and the discussion guides were revised accordingly.
Interviews with LA officers and delivery partners	The original aim was to undertake immersion days (arranging several appointments with LA officers / partners to take place over one day). In the pilot, these interviews took place over the telephone as LA officers in Cambridgeshire were geographically dispersed. Telephone interviews were completed with LA officers without any negative impact on interview quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised approach was to use a face-to-face approach where sufficient contacts were available in a geographically clustered area (or one which could easily be covered by local transport) to make this approach logistically possible. • Telephone interviews would be used as an alternative option.

1.4.4 Recruitment

As illustrated by Figure 3, interviews began with account managers at DECC responsible for managing the PRS element of the Green Deal scheme. DECC account managers provided contact details of the lead individuals at each GDC authority. Interviews with these lead authorities provided an entry point to the scheme in each LA. Through these individuals it was possible to further explore the options for sharing contact information of the beneficiaries of the scheme in the LA as well as staff in partnering LAs. Cambridgeshire was the only LA able to share beneficiary contact details directly. Bristol, Haringey and Suffolk were not able to share contact details of beneficiaries of the scheme but sent emails to beneficiaries inviting them to take part. The email detailed the purpose of the research, who it was being conducted on behalf of, details of how the research would be conducted and the incentive offered, and provided contact details of the research team for beneficiaries to get in touch with to register interest in taking part.

Figure 3: Recruiting participants through gatekeepers



The original intention was to use quotas to ensure that the final research sample reflected a range of different types of beneficiary. For example landlords with different sized portfolios (small scale, medium scale or large scale), different locations of the properties (e.g. urban/rural) and the type of measure installed. However this was hindered by the lack of available contact information, both in terms of the small number of beneficiaries and the inability to contact them directly in three out of four LAs.

As a result, the recruitment was based on an opt-in approach. This is an important limitation of the research (explained in more detail in section 1.4.5) and meant that quotas could not be enforced. However, when interviews were booked with landlords who expressed an interest, information was collected on these factors (e.g. the number of properties they had, if these were freehold, leasehold or mixed across their portfolio and what measures they had installed) in order to monitor the fall out amongst the sample. As the contact information was held by the LAs, it was not possible to send reminders (or targeted reminders which would ideally have been the case) in order to boost any groups which were not present or under-represented in the sample. Further information about the types of landlords included in the research is provided in

[Figure 4](#).

The pilot research indicated that the vast majority of contact was between the LA and the landlord. Where landlords indicated that their letting or managing agent was involved in the process, interviewers asked if details could be shared to allow interviews to be conducted with this audience. LAs made various attempts to engage letting agencies in the scheme and were perceived to be a stakeholder in the delivery of the GDC to the PRS. However, letting agents had a limited role in the marketing and delivery of the scheme. As a result, limited contact information was available to include this group in the research and, while it would have been useful to interview more, only one interview was conducted with a letting agent. The number of interviews conducted with each stakeholder group are presented in

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Figure 4

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Figure 4: Interviews conducted by stakeholder group and local authority

	LA officer interviews	Delivery partner interviews	Landlord interviews				Others	Total in LA	
			Small (1 or 2 properties)	Medium (3 – 9 properties)	Large (10 or more properties)	Unknown ³	Total		
Cambridge	4	1	1	2	1	0	4	0	9
Bristol	3	0	5	2	2	1	10	0	13
Haringey	4	2	2	3	1	1	7	1 ⁴	14
Suffolk	2	0	2	1	0	1	4	0	6
Others	0	1 ⁵	0					1 ⁶	2
Total	13	4	10	8	4	3	25	2	44

³ Three landlords preferred not to provide this information.

⁴ An interview was conducted with a letting agent who supported the marketing of the Haringey PRS scheme.

⁵ An interview was conducted with the delivery partner in Peterborough, which as noted above, is not included in the analysis for this report.

⁶ An interview was conducted with Generation Rent.

1.4.5 Analysis

All interviews were audio recorded, and transcriptions were made of recordings. Summary notes of all interviews were recorded in an analysis spreadsheet (an example of which is presented in Figure 5) to allow for synthesis of the data. This spreadsheet allowed for comparisons of themes by subgroups, such as the scale of the landlord's portfolio, if the landlord owned the property freehold or leasehold and differences between each of the LAs. The interviewing team conducted analysis sessions during the fieldwork to reflect upon the emerging themes. Following the completion of interviews, these themes were revisited, with further discussion around the nuances between different groups of landlords and how findings from landlord interviews complemented or were in tension with findings from interviews with LAs.

Figure 5: Example of analysis sheet

Measure installed	Measure installed #3	Reflections on installed measure experience	General reflection on scheme	Recommendations for a PRS scheme	Key messages to DECC	SUMMARY
		<i>Summary of the observed outcomes of the measure, thoughts about carrying out work under the scheme, what they wish went differently.</i>	<i>Summary of if and why P would recommend the scheme to others.</i>	<i>Summary of recommendations for another PRS energy efficiency scheme.</i>	<i>What was the key message the P would pass to DECC about the scheme?</i>	<i>Please summarise the overall interview.</i>
WI	Loft insulation	Still glad he'd used the scheme, despite it being 18months before any work was actually carried out	Thought the scheme was good. Wasn't sure about future marketing of the scheme as he lives in London and not where the properties he rents are located, assumed that it would have also been in the paper but not sure. Wouldn't have done the work if the funding wasn't available but it coincided well with upcoming work at the property, such as painting external walls. Now thinks he won't have to do this work on properties for 10 years and felt that the cost to him wasn't too much more than paying for scaffolding to do some of this work	Felt the paperwork was complex and extensive - suggested that perhaps the council/company could complete this and then landlords date and sign. Thought messages should tie work in to property maintenance and general upkeep of their properties.	Didn't have any specific recommendations for other schemes, but felt that it might be difficult to get landlords to part with cash in the future given the changes made around taxation for landlords income, they might be come tighter with their money	P owns several properties and was prompted to carry out work following his sister finding out about it when her tenants contacted the council about excessive cold and difficulty heating the property. The biggest advantage of the scheme was the cost saving through the grant but mentioned other benefits for the tenant, in terms of bills and comfort, and for the landlord in terms of value of the property and making it more lettable. Got caught up in liquidation of [contractor] which meant that things took longer than they should have but despite this was still positive about the scheme.
EWI		<p>"Now, this little condensing central heating boiler, I put the gas in off the street, I put that in off the street, I funded that because there was no gas, and this little thing fires up and now this little boiler fires up and within 5 mins the house is toasty warm, and then really when the EW is finished, it's anybody's guess. So from every point of view, it ticks all the boxes."</p> <p>Delighted he took up offer as it's offered great improvement to the house.</p> <p>Only fly in the ointment was [contractor]</p> <p>"As I say I'm very glad I found out about it, I'm very grateful to my friend for passing me the information, but I suppose one thing to say is that I'm not sure how I would have been made aware of the scheme had he not, by pure chance, passed this information on to me. So maybe something to consider in the future is a mail shot, I don't know if there's a way of finding out who is a landlord, so targeting."</p>	Obvious problems with [contractor], long periods where nothing seemed to happen. Very poor perceptions of them. [contractor 2] were great!	think that the message should be any different from the one that attracted me. Here is an opportunity to invest X and get a return of 2.5 times X, as a result, as a landlord it's a business really. As much as the focus or driving force is CO2 and efficiency, as earners if you're looking to attract the business man or the landlord, as they did very well, they played it from a business point of view, let us help you improve your asset. That's a good angle to attract anyone who is doing it as a small business. It's one of those sad things, you can talk about climate change all you want and how doing this or that will decrease CO2 emissions, but in the end you have to sadly appeal to a more monetary side of people if you want them to get on board. and the upside, and the beneficial byproduct of that is that you achieve your aim of reducing carbon emissions. from a publicity point of view I would always say to attract people by saying here's a great investment opportunity, here's the money you will save and you will get a tremendous return, your property will be enhanced, it'll be worth more and by the way the benefits	Suggests looking at council tax records for the property is empty - could use this to identify rental properties - although not sure about data protection would allow this, or insurance companies for landlord insurance.	Landlord with 2 properties to provide a pension in the future as he is self employed. The Victorian terrace has solid walls and storage heaters meaning it is very expensive (£5-7 a day!) to heat. Found out about a scheme from a neighbouring landlord. Felt like it was an investment in the property which will be beneficial in the future.
					"Don't be quite so gung-ho about it - it never occurred to me for a moment that it would go wrong or that I would be in a position where I had paid nearly £1000...and I've got nothing to show for it".	

1.4.6 Challenges and limitations of the research

A number of challenges were faced during the research. These are summarised in Figure 6, along with any implications for the interpretation of the findings.

Figure 6: Challenges faced by, and limitations of, the research

Challenge/ limitation	Mitigation	Implication
<p>No comprehensive sample frame of landlord contact details: Only one LA was able to provide a database of landlord contact details, consisting of 21 beneficiaries.</p> <p>In the remaining three LAs an email was sent to landlords asking them to get in touch with the Ipsos MORI team if they wanted to take part.</p>	<p>Key characteristics were recorded during the interviews to facilitate some limited subgroup analysis.</p>	<p>Where an opt-in approach was used respondents may not reflect the broader spectrum of beneficiary landlords. Their characteristics or motivations for taking part in the GDC PRS scheme may be different from landlords declining to take part in the research.</p> <p>It was not feasible to enforce quotas, as there were insufficient leads available and insufficient information on which to base quotas. Instead all eligible and willing participants were interviewed. This means that the scope for subgroup analysis is limited.</p>
<p>No tenant contact details available: Since installations were largely landlord driven, LAs had no sample of tenant contact details. Snowballing attempts to speak with tenants were unsuccessful; landlords were not able to provide these details, generally because the tenant had moved out since the installation or the property was untenanted during installation. In a small number of cases, the landlord did not feel comfortable in providing these contact details.</p>	<p>The focus of beneficiary interviews was switched to landlords, with all beneficiary interviews conducted with this group.</p> <p>The landlords' and LA perceptions were captured as a proxy for tenant views where relevant.</p> <p>An interview was conducted with Generation Rent, a charity representing private tenants, in order to explore the perceptions of the PRS scheme.</p>	<p>Since installations were generally landlord driven the additional insight that would have been gained by interviewing tenants is limited.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the research has not captured the first-hand views of tenants who remained throughout the process, for example regarding their involvement in the decision, impact of the measure, or experiences of the process.</p>
<p>Varying ability to contact landlords who had dropped out: In three LAs no interviews were conducted with those who dropped out of the scheme as no contact details were available. In the 4th LA</p>	<p>In the LA and delivery partner interviews the reasons for drop out at earlier stages of the journey were explored, and in one authority there is evidence from the</p>	<p>The landlord perspective on the earlier stages of the customer journey is limited to those who have decided to take part in the scheme. It is not possible to provide a comprehensive picture of the reasons behind lack of</p>

interviews were carried out with those who dropped out between the quote and the installation, but in no LA were interviews conducted with landlords who had heard about the scheme but did not follow up.	landlord interviews of reasons for drop out after the quoting stage.	interest in the scheme and how this could be overcome.
Delivery changed over time: Email contact with Delivery Partners and LAs, as well as triangulating their evidence with interviews with beneficiaries, revealed that in some aspects the delivery changed during the fieldwork period.	Where these changes to delivery are known, these are raised in the report.	It is important to bear in mind the findings reflect what interviewees said was the case at the time of interviews, which may not reflect reality at the close of the scheme. The research presents a picture of the scheme at a time when its delivery was still incomplete.
Administration of contractor: The sole contractor for three of the four LA areas went into administration during the research	The analysis took into account this context when considering the customer journeys and the barriers experienced. The replacement contractor was interviewed in one LA where they had taken over.	The interviews with landlords were against the backdrop of very complicated delivery, with several problems encountered, and thus some interviews were clouded by these experiences. It was not possible to interview the contractor lead in two of the three case study areas prior to administration.
Recall of beneficiaries: In many cases, beneficiaries were interviewed several months after initially becoming engaged in the scheme. This meant that it could be difficult for them to recall specific details.	Careful probing was used to try to get an accurate picture as possible but without leading respondents.	As with all qualitative research the interviews reflect the truth to the respondent as they see it, which may not reflect exactly what happened. Findings are reported to reflect this.
Disentangling from the broader GDC scheme: The PRS incentive was part of the broader GDC scheme which included owner occupiers. Disentangling findings related to the PRS incentive specifically was sometimes challenging in interviews with LAs and delivery partners.	Interviewers probed thoroughly to ensure their understanding was as clear as possible.	Whilst LAs generally had a good awareness of the separation, in some cases delivery partners would have seen the scheme as a whole, therefore the authors have had to make the distinction based on their understanding and insight. This report presents findings specifically for the PRS to the best extent possible.
Inclusion of a non-PRS funded comparator LA: One interview was also conducted in Peterborough - a LA that had some success in engaging the PRS in the GDC scheme without receiving funding to specifically target the PRS. It was therefore selected to allow for an exploration of the successful strategies and the barriers to engaging the PRS in energy efficiency schemes. The interview was		As just one interview was conducted here, the Peterborough scheme is not commented upon in this report as it does not present a rounded view of delivery. The findings in this report are only on the delivery within the four LAs receiving funding to target the PRS, so no lessons can be learnt from other models of delivery.

conducted with Peterborough's delivery partner, however it was not possible to conduct interviews with LA staff delivering the scheme (after receiving no responses to calls and emails) or the beneficiaries of this scheme.

1.4.7 Glossary

A number of different terms and abbreviations are used within this report. The following glossary summarises these along with their definition or explanation.

Beneficiary: Those benefiting from the GDC PRS scheme, including the landlord of the property receiving the measure and the tenant, where the property was tenanted. The term 'beneficiary' is used to indicate the intended recipient of the measure(s), for instance in relation to how LAs marketed the scheme.

Delivery partner: Contractor working on behalf of the lead authority to deliver the GDC in a local authority area.

EPC: Energy Performance Certificate. An Energy Performance Certificate is required for properties when constructed, sold or let. The Energy Performance Certificate provides details on the energy performance of the property and what can be done to improve it. An EPC gives a property an energy efficiency rating from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).

EWI: External Wall Insulation. Insulation to reduce heat loss through external walls.

GDA: Green Deal Assessment. The assessment involves a visit to the property to assess its energy use and eligibility for the Green Deal.

GDC: Green Deal Communities

LA: Local Authority. The administrative body in local government involved in the delivery of the GDC. Staff in each LA were interviewed for this research to understand the design and delivery of the scheme in each area.

PRS: Private Rental Sector. The GDC scheme provided additional funds to work with this sector of housing where a tenant rents a property from a landlord who owns it, usually under a contractual agreement. Tenants may rent from a landlord directly, or through a letting or estate agent who mediates the relationship. Private rental is a type of tenure of a property in contrast to owner occupiers and properties rented from a housing association or LA.

SWI: Solid Wall Insulation. GDC schemes offered contributions towards the installation of solid wall insulation, be this externally (see External Wall Insulation) or to internal walls. None of the landlords interviewed had had internal wall insulation.

Small Scale Landlord: A landlord who owns one or two properties for rental purposes.

Medium Scale Landlord: A landlord who owns three to ten properties for rental purposes.

Large Scale Landlord: A landlord who owns more than ten properties for rental purposes.

Key Findings

2 Key Findings

2.1 Delivery of the Green Deal Communities Private Rental Sector incentive

Figure 7 presents a summary of how the GDC PRS funding was delivered in each of the four LA areas. It should be noted that this information is based on the interviews conducted with LA officers at the beginning of the research and was true at the time of interview. The way in which the scheme was delivered may have changed since this time as the scheme evolved. It is not possible to document these changes as this was not revisited with the LA interviews. These changes to service delivery also may have occurred after the completion of the landlord interviews, and the delivery at that point in time is more pertinent.

The way in which the scheme was delivered in each area was broadly similar. A lead authority worked in partnership with partner authorities and contracted a supplier to manage the delivery of the scheme, while using the existing branding from previous energy efficiency initiatives. Partner authorities consisted of neighbouring District or Borough Councils and worked with the lead authority to help deliver the scheme. These could be districts within a lead county council (for example Huntingdonshire was a partner of Cambridgeshire), or a neighbouring authority entering into partnership with a lead authority at the same level (for example Haringey led a consortium of 6 London Boroughs). This information is summarised in [Figure 7](#).

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Incentives were paid to landlords of varying levels but covered the majority of the cost of the measure. The Green Deal Assessments were either free or subsidised. Landlords receiving measures were required to contribute towards its cost and would be reimbursed for the cost of the assessment if they went on to installation.

The main difference between the four case study areas in terms of delivery was between Haringey and the other three LAs. Haringey worked with a group of different installers to offer a choice of different companies for landlords to receive quotes from. Landlords could use any one of an approved list of Green Deal suppliers. Bristol, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk all worked with the same single contractor who managed the delivery of the scheme on their behalf, including marketing, arranging quotes for the work and delivery of the installation. This meant that in these three LAs landlords were not presented with a choice of installers to get the energy efficiency measure delivered.

In Haringey the other element of the scheme delivery which differed was the use of a Smart Advisor – a senior architect and sustainability consultant who offered additional advice and guidance to the householder following the receipt of the Green Deal Assessment (GDA) and EPC. This was an additional layer to the process that did not happen in the other three LAs. Further information about this process is discussed in section 2.4.

Figure 7: Summary of delivery approaches among GDC LAs

Lead Local Authority	Partner authorities	Scheme branding	Delivery	Landlord incentive	GDA fee ⁷	Tenant incentive	Other
Cambridge City Council	East Cambridgeshire DC, Fenland DC, Huntingdonshire DC, South Cambridgeshire DC, Cambridgeshire CC	'Action on Energy'	Used one contractor to manage delivery, marketing and arranging of quotes and installations.	75% up to £6,000	£29	£100 £500 if disruptive	£500 for landlords if they improved an F or G property to a D or above
Bristol City Council	South Gloucestershire, North Somerset	'Warm up Bristol'	Used one contractor to manage delivery, marketing and arranging of quotes and installations.	66% Up to £3,000. Initially F and G rated properties, and category 1 hazards (e.g. excess cold), later expanded to include E.	£49	£150 of energy efficiency gadgets and tools and loft clearance	Up to 10 installations per landlord. £1,000 towards a gas connection if the property was not connected
Suffolk County Council	Babergh DC, Mid Suffolk DC, Forest Heath DC, St Edmundsbury BC, Ipswich BC, Suffolk Coastal DC, Waveney DC	'Suffolk Energy Action'	Used one contractor to manage delivery, marketing and arranging of quotes and installations.	75% Up to £6,000	£0	1 month council tax rebate	Focus on SWI
London Borough of Haringey	London Boroughs of Enfield, Hackney, Camden, Islington, Waltham Forest	'Smart Homes'	Beneficiary had choice in contractor. Independent architects provided advice following GDA.	75% Up to £6,000 for SWI Up to £3,000 for other measures	£50		Focus on SWI

⁷ Reimbursed if the landlord went on to installation of a measure.

2.2 Marketing the Private Rental Sector incentive

Summary of Marketing of the PRS incentive

This section explores how the PRS scheme was marketed across the four LAs, identifying the different approaches used both by the councils, and also by their delivery partners, to inform potential beneficiaries about the scheme. It explores which techniques were successful amongst which audiences and where there were challenges with certain approaches. It also explores how the scheme was branded, and how this impacted on take up of the scheme.

Approaching tenants directly

- LAs and their delivery partners used numerous channels to inform potential beneficiaries about the scheme, with mixed success. This included door knocking of targeted properties, as well as direct mail addressed to the occupier. Several LAs targeted older properties in the hope this would identify where work was needed in order to meet forthcoming energy efficiency regulations.
- Significant barriers were reported, however, as tenants were unwilling or unable to sign up to the scheme without their landlord's permission, or were not sufficiently engaged with the issue of energy efficiency to take an interest.

Most appropriate method for landlord engagement

- LAs believed the most successful approach was the use of personally addressed letters sent to landlords, as opposed to more 'ad-hoc' marketing techniques such as setting up stalls.
- The ability for LAs to have access to and share landlord data with their partnering authorities was pivotal in being able to send such targeted communications out.
- The ability to target an engaged audience of landlords tended to generate the most interest, with advertising in specialist publications being one effective approach.

Branding

- Continuity of branding with existing LA schemes (logos and scheme names) was preferred by LAs to trying to tie into the Green Deal branding in a national context.

This section draws on interviews conducted with LA staff and delivery partners, but is also informed by interviews with landlords themselves in terms of how they first became aware of the scheme and their reflections on the way in which it was presented. The relative success of different marketing approaches could not be quantified, as marketing codes were not always recorded by the delivery partner. As such, it was not possible for the authorities to draw conclusions about which methods received the best return on investment (either of time or money). Indeed, often the marketing was part of a broader scheme that was also aimed at owner occupiers, meaning that it was not always possible for LAs to distinguish between the success of different approaches in the PRS market specifically.

The focus of this section is on the reasons why certain approaches were thought to be successful by interviewees. It is difficult to provide insight into unsuccessful marketing approaches as contact information was only available for those who had taken advantage of the scheme.

2.2.1 Reaching tenants directly via door-knocking

One approach, that tended to be favoured by the delivery contractor in Cambridgeshire, Bristol and Suffolk, but was also adopted by LAs in the early stages, was to door knock in targeted higher priority areas. This approach was adopted, as all LAs explained, based on the rationale that it allowed targeting by property type. For example streets which contained housing of a particular age and type that might be suitable for a Green Deal installation were targeted. It also had the benefit of allowing targeting of areas known to contain high incidence of PRS occupancy. This supported the aim of the GDC scheme to deliver energy efficiency in a localised way that allowed for targeting to the properties most in need.

“The first thing we did was pick a street that was built in the 20s/30s, avoided the Victorian terrace, which has problems from a planning point of view. So we picked properties that were largely rendered, and then we literally went round ourselves street knocking.” Haringey – Delivery Partner

Street by street door-knocking allowed targeting of properties which would be more likely to benefit from the scheme. In towns and cities such as Ipswich and Cambridge this involved focusing on streets of a particular property type and age, likely to be most in need of work to their fabric. Victorian and early 20th century streets were prioritised, as their properties were more likely to require updating as the original building materials did not offer sufficient insulation or protection against damp, cold, or noise. However, authorities reported that some of the pre 20th Century properties were sometimes in conservation areas, or in some cases listed, prohibiting or limiting the work that could be done on their fabric. LAs reported that this targeting was more effective for certain measures, particularly properties that would benefit from solid wall insulation. There was no guarantee that this would also mean that the boilers in such properties required an upgrade.

Another benefit of this approach was that those involved in delivery were able to interface directly with tenants who were potential beneficiaries of the scheme. As such, they were able to (where they found tenants who were happy to talk to them) take the time to explain what the Green Deal scheme was, and how they would be able to benefit from it, both in terms of upgrading their homes, but also being able to save money on their heating bills. The main barrier reported by LAs of being able to do this was finding tenants willing to spend the time discussing the details of the scheme on their doorstep. In these cases, delivery partners felt it was more appropriate to make the initial contact on the door-step and provide the opportunity to find further information in their own time. This included information leaflets or details of an event where the scheme would be discussed in more detail, such as a landlord forum (discussed later in this section).

Another reported benefit of door-knocking was that it allowed the delivery partner to ‘self-source’ a pool of tenants without having to rely on the council to provide data. As such, LAs felt the targeted door knocking was effective as a first step in that it did allow them to pick up beneficiaries that might not have been on the LA lists, or that could not be shared with third parties. One LA reported focusing door-knocking on getting the tenants to agree only to a Green Deal assessment at the doorstep. The subsequent assessment and report would provide further details and a recommendation about what Green Deal work could be done. This was seen as reducing the amount of information the tenants would have to consider, and allow them to make a simpler decision with less commitment.

However, a key problem reported was that there was no guarantee that the person answering the door would be a tenant. Furthermore, even if they were a tenant, there was no guarantee that they would be interested in benefitting from the scheme personally. As section 2.3 on motivations goes on to discuss, much of the tenant population in Cambridge and Bristol is formed of transient student populations on short term leases who, as reported by the LA officer, were therefore less concerned about the upkeep of their short term homes. Additionally, it was reported that the perceived inconvenience of allowing workmen into their home did not represent a 'net benefit' for them in terms of reduced bills for the remainder of a relatively short tenancy period.

The main barrier, however, for this approach to work effectively was that the tenants themselves were not the decision makers. The delivery partner reported that they were often in favour of the scheme in principle but required 'sign off' from their landlords, who may have decided against it. An attuned and engaged tenant does not necessarily have a landlord that feels the same way, so lengthy sales discussions undertaken by the street operatives often came to nothing. As such, the delivery partner soon realised that this may have been an effective use of resources in terms of generating interest but was not that helpful in terms of leading to sign up.

"That is another layer of complication because there are two layers of people, like when the door knockers knock on the door, they haven't got the decision maker there in front of them, they've got another level of communication to go through... I don't expect they would say, well they don't say, 'what's your landlord's address', it's not appropriate, so it's just about, 'if you didn't know, pass this onto your landlord if you would like to'". Bristol – Local Authority

Also, a key learning from this research was that the relationship between the tenant and the landlord was an important factor. One LA provided their sales operatives with letters addressed to 'the landlord' but, the delivery partner reported that tenants were not passing them on to their landlords, due to either a strained or non-existent relationship between the landlord and the tenant.

2.2.2 Reaching landlords via letting agents

Delivery partners and landlords both reported that many tenants interacted solely with a lettings agent and, as such, had no interaction with their landlord. Lettings agents were therefore reported by LAs and delivery partners to be an important conduit of information and a stakeholder in the delivery of the scheme. A small number of landlords interviewed received information about the scheme via their letting agent. These landlords strongly indicated that this was a successful approach, as the letting agent is the intermediary between the landlord and tenant, and were trusted by the landlords we spoke to.

"This recommendation for this deal that I went ahead with, came from my letting agent. I know that I can trust that letting agent because they've looked after me for the last seven, eight years....they give me good advice. And they always give me the best deal. So if they're recommending it to me then it must be good." Landlord - Cambridge

However, LAs reported that it was hard to generate 'buy-in' from letting agents, as there was no clear benefit to them. LAs also reported difficulties in knowing how to approach the letting agents and that it was a time consuming process. Haringey took the targeted approach of using an officer to approach letting

agents on a door-to-door basis. However, this was not considered an overwhelming success because the LA felt that letting agents considered it a risk to get involved (although the exact nature of this risk was not clear from the LA interviews). Fenland in Cambridgeshire tried to take advantage of an already existing landlord meeting advertised via letting agents, but received no take-up and they therefore questioned whether the invites were sent out.

To combat this lack of engagement from letting agents, in some areas, such as Bristol, financial incentives (i.e. a finder's fee) were offered to letting agents to help recruit landlords to take part in the scheme. However, LA officers reported that this had limited success. Using letting agents to help widen the reach of the marketing had some success in reaching landlords, however LAs felt it was not successful in driving significant numbers of installations through the scheme.

2.2.3 Targeted communications aimed at landlords

In some cases, large scale mail-drops were used to reach as many potential beneficiaries as possible. For instance, Suffolk employed a general mail-drop in areas of high PRS incidence. However, according to the delivery partner and more than one local authority, as this correspondence was not addressed to a named individual, it was not successful, even when the letter was sent to areas with a high percentage of solid wall properties, and included the recognisable 'umbrella' branding.

With the above in mind, the LAs felt the most effective means of communication with landlords tended to be personalised mailshots to known PRS landlords. It was reported by LA officers as the most effective approach, particularly when combined with a 'hook' to draw the landlord in, such as referencing the financial 'incentive'.

"Some local authorities weren't willing to provide [data] to me directly, but were willing to mail it out themselves. And once that went as a personalised letter and using a few of the little tips we got from the BIT team - 'you're missing out on this money, it will be given to somebody else' that sort of thing - that led to a very high take up." Suffolk – Delivery Partner

A similar, but online, marketing stream was also used in Haringey (and partnering authorities) via an online tool. A simple online application form was developed which was administered via email across 11 different London Boroughs. Emails and letters were sent out to landlords who own category one homes (i.e. those most in need of improvement), which the delivery partner estimated to be in the region of 2,000 to 3,000 addresses. These emails generated 57 leads across the Haringey-led GDC scheme, which led to 106 property leads that were passed to the delivery contractor.

Emails and letters to targeted landlords was considered to be an effective lead-generating tool; while it did not provide large numbers of leads, LAs reported that it required less staff time than other more labour intensive approaches. However, these leads had, at the time of the interview, not been turned into customer 'sales'. The reason behind this failure to convert leads into installations was unknown and questions were therefore raised by the LA delivery team about the effectiveness of the process in achieving actual installations.

“A very simple online tool developed by professional marketers seems to be a really simple way to get landlords to engage at a basic level, but then you need the processes to stand behind it”.

Haringey – partner authority

However, targeted marketing methods necessitated having access to the relevant landlord data. LAs reported that this tended to be made available from a number of sources, including EPC data that had been collected informally, through information sent back by landlords themselves or collected via surveys, or through enforcement data that had been collected formally.

“And we’d also got a database which came on a little bit later in the scheme from, it was based on EPC data which showed property, well we were able to filter properties that were E, F, and G banded and then private rented, and then I went through that picking out actually mid terraced properties, and that was a bit later on in the scheme, but that was a very successful way of doing it actually.” *Suffolk – Local Authority*

However, the interviews indicated there was no consistency between the authorities in terms of how the data was gathered, and where they did exist, these databases were not inclusive of all landlords across any given LA. It is worth noting that the scheme plans were not necessarily based on the foundation of a coordinated approach to data collection and management. Such ‘compulsory registration’ of landlords would be one way, according to LAs, to generate this kind of data more comprehensively (when combined with enforcement) but this was not in operation in any of the LAs included in this research.

In some instances, data sharing between, and within, councils caused a barrier to effective marketing. Landlord data was held by district councils who had collected it in the first instance, and, where this had taken place, some County Councils expressed frustration that the district councils that operated in their county were not able to share landlord data between councils, or indeed, in some instances, between departments within councils. This was largely due to concerns about data protection, and particularly where landlord data had been generated as a result of enforcement work. There was a feeling amongst local authorities that this overriding concern about data protection prevented statutory bodies from working collaboratively.

Other sources of contact data included council-led landlord forums which, by their nature, were composed of landlords who tended to be engaged with their responsibilities as landlords. In Haringey, other external bodies were utilised to gain access to landlord contacts, such as the London Landlord Association and the GLA. The latter sent a series of emails to people who had signed up for the London rental standard, referring them to the Smart Homes advice line. While LAs said these were engaged audiences more open to this kind of initiative, there were still mixed levels of success in using them. Suffolk reported targeting landlords with large portfolios by accessing a list of estate properties and arranging meetings with the estate managers. Although initial feedback was positive, take up was very low following provision of information about the landlord contribution, with landlords reportedly not willing to make the financial investment.

2.2.4 Successes and challenges of marketing strategies

It tended to be the case that ad-hoc community marketing, as opposed to a more targeted approach, was perceived to be less successful, for a number of reasons. LAs who had tried to set up mobile stalls and

stands in environments such as shopping centres reported that this approach was unsuccessful due to the relatively low number of landlords in passing footfall.

Furthermore, though LAs reported being able to attract landlords to their installation through the use of signage, those landlords were not necessarily in need of Green Deal work, or able to contribute towards the work. As such, LAs generally reported moving away from this approach as implementation progressed.

Also the use of such pop up stalls was not perceived to be entirely appropriate by LAs. Such approaches were felt to be used by private sector organisations such as telecommunications companies, and LAs who had tried this approach reported that this was more reminiscent of a 'hard sell' as opposed to a public sector organisation that was trying to incentivise landlords to improve their properties.

The use of stalls and stands was, however, useful in the right context. For example, where there were existing conferences or events that were aimed at landlords or property owners, LAs reported having such an installation was more successful. At the very least LAs reported they were able to raise awareness about the scheme. Such events were felt by LAs to be more conducive for landlords to have initial conversations about the scheme as they 'walk the floor'. Alternatively, some LAs felt the use of show homes was effective, allowing landlords who were curious about how it would work in practice to see the difference for themselves.

"And in reality we did find the best way of selling the scheme was actually through people seeing properties which had been improved and that was certainly a benefit of having show homes. We found trying to invent events was very time consuming and could be very hit and miss; events were held in the city and outside and were very poorly attended and they weren't worth the effort." Cambridge – Local Authority

Another approach for targeting landlords specifically was mentioned by Bristol – namely the use of advertising in landlord focussed magazines and newsletters. They found this to be a particularly useful exercise, as this allowed them to speak to a 'captive audience' of landlords. Although the magazine's distribution was across most of the west of England, there was still the opportunity to convey the message to a number of landlords in the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire areas. This was also reflected in the landlord interviews with several saying they had seen or heard about it via these means (although not all could recall if this how they first became aware of it).

"The most effective way has been through a publication called 'landlord News' which goes to around 4000 landlords based in the West of England. These are the kinds of landlords that are interested in being kept updated on the kind of things that they need to know as landlords. That's been the most successful method." Bristol – Local Authority

In some areas, many different channels of marketing were used in trying to find the one of 'best fit' and also to increase the chance of success. For example in Bristol, adverts were placed on Gumtree, with a click through to the Warm Up Bristol website, and this yielded between 300 and 400 visits. The scheme was also advertised at festivals, through the local Asian radio network and through drop in sessions run by the contractor – often with mixed results – in an attempt to target those who might be most interested.

2.2.5 Branding and joining forces

There was a general view among the PRS LAs that the most effective way of branding the scheme was to use the existing council branding of energy efficiency schemes that were being delivered locally. This provided continuity and allowed existing awareness and momentum of the local brand to be built on. For instance, LAs believed this provided landlords with a reference point and ensured they knew broadly that the offer was in relation to energy efficiency. Often, such branding made very little reference to the Green Deal specifically, though it served as the delivery mechanism for the scheme. Green Deal branding was therefore not a prominent element of the delivery to the PRS, although it is not possible to determine whether references to the Green Deal had a positive or negative impact.

Landlords stated that it was very important for them to be able to trust that the scheme would be delivered satisfactorily. Therefore those who had investigated or taken advantage of the scheme for their own home, and understood its legitimacy, reported that they were reassured by the consistent branding and were more likely to consider it for their tenanted properties. However, this was also a risk – particularly when there had been delays or other issues around delivery caused by the delivery partner.

During interviews, several Landlords made reference to the fact they trusted the scheme because it was being delivered by the LA. In these instances, recognising the LA branding meant that the landlord could immediately see it as being legitimate and worthy of attention.

“We’ve got an online presence and we’ve got a relatively well-known brand, but it’s run out of the Suffolk County website and called the Green Suffolk Website – it was set up for businesses, communities and individuals. So originally the scheme would have been promoted on that scheme.” Suffolk – Local Authority

Figure 8 shows some of the wider 'umbrella' branding under which the PRS initiative was marketed in the pilot areas.

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Figure 8: Local Authority 'umbrella' Green Deal Branding



Generally speaking, the more 'joined up' the approach the more effective it was felt, by the LAs delivering it, to be. This was the case not just with branding but also with partnership working with other internal operational teams. In particular, LA GDC delivery teams reported working with enforcement teams to target particularly negligent or disengaged landlords. For these landlords the 'stick', as opposed to 'carrot', approach was felt to be more effective – promoting the scheme as a way to comply with upcoming EPC minimum standards⁸. This is discussed further in Section 2.3.7.

2.2.6 Views of landlords themselves

Despite the specific efforts that had gone into marketing, many of the landlords interviewed reported an array of ways in which they heard about the scheme. For some, and particularly those most engaged landlords that tended to be keen to improve their properties, they reported that they had instigated the process of looking to see what deals were available, as they had been planning to do some work on their properties.

For other landlords, however, it was often the case that they found the information through informal sources – most often word of mouth via friends and family who may have benefitted from the wider

⁸ from the 1st April 2018 there will be a requirement for any PRS properties to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E on an (EPC)

scheme. Keen to know more, they then investigated online or called either the council or the delivery partner. Sometimes, although far less frequently, the call or knock on the door came just at the right time, and fitted in perfectly with the landlord's plans, though the marketing was still important for others.

2.3 Motivations for taking part

Summary of Motivations for taking part

This section draws primarily on interviews with landlords whose installations of measures were pending or had been completed. Tenants had a limited role in instigating or driving forward use of the scheme and generally had a facilitating role, particularly during the installation phase. Landlords' participation in the scheme were driven by four key motivations. In addition, forthcoming PRS energy efficiency regulations were a motivator amongst a limited number of landlords.

Investing financially in the property

- Landlords felt the scheme allowed them to increase the resale value of their property, at a lower cost. Landlords were less certain that the investment would increase rental value.
- Landlords and LA staff, felt that quotes for work were inflated compared to those outside of the PRS scheme. The subsidy meant that costs were generally lower but the saving in real terms was not as high as they expected.
- GDF was not an attractive financing option for landlords because they felt it was unfair for tenants to pay the costs and were concerned about transferring repayments between tenants. Landlords interviewed as part of this research also generally had the funds available for the work.

Keeping current tenants happy

- Landlords interviewed wanted to provide a warm and comfortable home for tenants and were aware of the demand of energy bills on tenants' finances. It was unclear whether landlords motivations were predominantly altruistic or primarily driven by wanting a longer tenancy.

Attracting future tenants:

- Some landlords were motivated to install a measure as they felt it would make the property more attractive to prospective tenants and therefore minimise the gaps between tenancies.
- Landlords and LA staff felt that in areas of high demand landlords did not need to provide a high quality property in order to let it quickly.
- Landlords had mixed feelings about the role that EPCs played in selecting a rental home; while some felt that prospective tenants used these, most believed they were a minor factor.

Maintaining properties

- Keeping properties in a good condition was important to landlords and many landlords used the scheme to carry out maintenance at a lower cost.
- For many landlords the scheme sounded easy to use and trustworthy given its association with the LA.

Low awareness of future PRS energy efficiency regulation

- Awareness of future legislation was low among landlords and only a few were motivated to use the scheme to ensure their properties met this standard.⁹
- LA staff felt the legislation was the necessary 'stick' for making landlords improve their properties where the 'carrot', the offer of grants, was not successful.

This section explores the motivations of beneficiaries for using the PRS schemes across the four LAs, identifying which parts of the scheme were perceived as helpful by stakeholders and which factors led beneficiaries to have assessments and measures installed. It also examines the influence of future legislation which will impose minimum EPC standards for private rental properties. It primarily draws on interviews conducted with landlords, the majority of which had installations completed or pending.

Few respondents had started on the customer journey and dropped out; those that had were in Haringey only (other LAs could not provide contact details of those that declined to take part). Whilst those who had progressed to an installation mentioned barriers they came across (but ultimately overcame), it is not possible to conclusively identify the motivational barriers for those who did not engage in the scheme. LA staff discussed the barriers they felt had prevented beneficiaries either taking up the offer or dropping out at stages along the customer journey. This is discussed further in section 2.4.

2.3.1 Key motivations for utilising the PRS scheme

Landlords noted a range of motivations for engaging in the PRS schemes across all four LAs. Their motivations were often not singular and often did not identify one sole reason for taking up grants under the scheme. Whilst motivations were multifaceted and overlapping, 'investment' in the property was a common driving motivation for landlords. Whilst other motivations were important, these alone appeared not to have been enough to utilise the scheme. The interrelationships between motivations are shown in Figure 9.

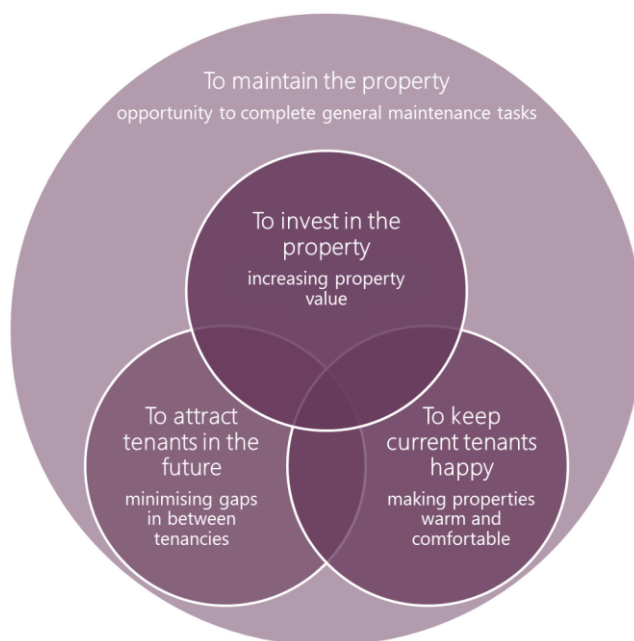
Primarily, investing in the property was a key driver for many landlords who wanted to increase the value of their properties. For some this was through increasing resale values in the longer term or, for a limited number of landlords, the rental value in the shorter term. Where the financial investment was not the key motivator, landlords were motivated by providing a good quality home to tenants. For a selection of landlords, the installation of energy efficiency measures increased the attractiveness of the property to prospective tenants in the future, minimising the gaps between tenancies. Spanning all three key motivations identified was the role of energy efficiency measures to contribute towards the ongoing maintenance of the property. Maintenance of the property was also linked to the other motivations. Keeping properties well maintained was reported to improve the value of landlords' initial investment in the property, improve the experience of the current tenants and make the property more appealing to

⁹ From the 1st April 2018 there will be a requirement for any properties rented out in the private rented sector to have a minimum energy performance rating of E, unless there is an applicable exemption.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346767/Domestic_PRS_Regulations_Consultation_Draft_v1.6_No_tracks_final_version.pdf

prospective tenants. Environmental performance of the property was only a backdrop for these considerations, rather than a motivation in itself, generally being mentioned as a secondary factor or after probing by the interviewer. Primarily landlords wanted to maintain their property so that it provided a warm and affordable to heat home while keeping their tenants happy.

Figure 9: Key landlord motivations for utilising PRS Schemes



2.3.2 Installations as an investment

Using the scheme to fund energy efficiency improvements as a financial investment in properties was a major influence for landlords, regardless of the size of their portfolio. Primarily landlords were motivated by increasing the resale value of their property, be this in the longer term future or where they had shorter term plans to sell the property. The ability to install measures and therefore improve the property, but at a lower cost, was attractive to landlords. Many reported they wanted to use the scheme to add value to the property with a lower outlay than if they had carried out work themselves, whilst improving energy efficiency.

"Essentially, from a selfish point of view, I feel like £10,000 of value has been added to my property, for my contribution of £4,000. So from an investment point of view it's an excellent return on your investment. From an environmental point of view it's a great benefit... there was no insulation really, so these houses were very inefficient. Also my previous tenants were paying £5 to £7 a day to heat this house with storage radiators, and this is a very small house, so their electricity bill in winter was enormous!" Suffolk – small scale landlord

There was a mixed feeling among landlords of the extent to which investments made through the installation of measures under the PRS scheme would raise its rental value. Some landlords felt that the

improved warmth and upkeep of the property meant they would be able to increase the rent charged to tenants, whilst others felt that the investment would pay off at resale of the properties treated, rather than increasing rents. Landlords felt that installation of measures would improve the standard of the property and thus encourage tenants to stay longer in the property or for properties to be let faster.

Landlord motivations tended to vary depending on how competitive the local rental market was; in areas where demand is lower the drive to improve the 'offer' to prospective tenants was stronger than in areas where demand outstrips supply. The latter was particularly reported to be the case (by landlords and LA officers) in Cambridge and Bristol where there is a large student population providing a regular flow of new prospective tenants into the market.

"In my situation, it really doesn't make any difference [having new windows and EWI installed], because properties go in a heartbeat around here, whatever state they're in... I set my rent, I decide what the rent is going to be but I never charge the full market value because I think the rents are outrageous" Bristol – small scale landlord

"I don't know whether it's going to actually add any increase in the rents you could charge, but it would make it easier to rent out. If there was a lot of competition and a lot of empty properties, people are more liable to go for a property that's fully insulated rather than a property that's not insulated ... So in theory it's either going to be hopefully keeping them fully occupied or at least maintain the rents." Suffolk – medium scale landlord

Generally making investments was important to landlords. Whilst not asked directly in interviews, many landlords tended to be forthcoming in that they had purchased the property to let as an investment, providing an income stream when retired for example, or in favour of having their assets secured in property rather than other investments. Even amongst 'amateur', small scale landlords with one or two properties, an income was a primary goal of renting the property, be this through monthly payments of rent or the ability to sell the property later.

"The property ... it's like an investment really for my daughter and basically it's sort of a pension fund if you like." Cambridge – small scale landlord

"Us self-employed musicians don't have a great deal of a pension of course, so when I got the opportunity I invested in a local house and a flat as well and that, if you like, is my pension really. I'm not a professional landlord as such, this is just a couple of small properties for investment purposes and just to provide us eventually with a pension when we come to sell them at the end." Suffolk – small scale landlord

Where landlords were making investments in their property, cost of installations was an important factor. For some landlords, having work done on properties using the scheme was more expensive than they had anticipated. Whilst the contribution made by the scheme made it attractive and encouraged take up, for some landlords the costs were inflated compared to other quotes they received outside of the scheme or from their experience of having installations in the past. This was perceived as effectively 'reducing' the size of the contribution paid by the scheme. The landlords interviewed had mostly gone ahead with quotes and high prices were seen as a negative element of the scheme rather than a hard barrier, given there was still a

perceived saving. LAs however did feel that high quotes were a barrier to other beneficiaries engaging in the scheme. It is also possible that costs limited the number of installations made for engaged landlords with larger portfolios.

“Our intention was to do 15 or 20 [properties], but when we got the quotes from [delivery partner] and the contractors we were surprised how much [delivery partner] were being charged for these boilers, I can ring up and get a Worcester boiler installed and get a boiler installed tomorrow for £1,750, and that’s not a back street plumber, that’s a proper Gas Safe registered plumber who would do a very good job. The quotes we were getting were £3,000 and we’d be paying half that, so we were saving, I reckon probably £400 on our installation, but we should have been saving £1,500. So the installations were expensive. So it was worth doing, but not, not worth doing for the whole portfolio.” Bristol - large scale landlord

2.3.3 Green Deal Finance and funding investments

Using Green Deal Finance (GDF) would allow landlords to make investments in their properties without funding the work themselves. Landlords were able to avoid paying for the full amount of the measure by taking a loan out which is repaid by the bill payer (typically, the tenant) through their energy bills¹⁰.

Not all landlords had heard of, or been made aware of, the availability of GDF. Of those who were aware many said they were not interested in taking out a loan through GDF to fund the work, with a range of reasons being provided, including an objection that tenants should pay for improvements, the practicality of tenants repaying a loan and that landlords were able to fund improvements themselves without assistance.

Perception that tenants shouldn’t foot the bill

Landlords tended to feel strongly that their tenants should not be paying for improvements to a property they did not own. Landlords did not perceive the benefits of a warmer home, or more efficient heating, to be outweighing the cost to the tenant of the work being completed. There was also a perception among landlords that they would be reaping the benefit of the tenant’s investment, which they were not comfortable with.

It was also clear there was some confusion among landlords about the repayment of such a loan, which is perhaps unsurprising as landlords on the whole were dismissive of GDF and may not have explored the terms and conditions. Some landlords thought that their tenants would be paying higher energy bills if they used GDF, which potentially presented a challenge for communication of this element of the scheme.

“Yes it was explained but how can you go to your tenant and say that you’ve got to put on your gas bill, or your electric bill? ...it wasn’t the right thing to ask the tenants to pay for it over a number of years when it’s the landlord’s responsibility to make sure that he pays for it himself.” Cambridgeshire – medium scale landlord

¹⁰ On the most part landlords interviewed did not pay the energy bills for the property, with bills being the responsibility of the tenants.

Landlords also questioned the suitability of the loan repaid by tenants given that the repayments would be transferred to any future tenants. This would complicate the procedure of tenancy changes and was seen to be additional hassle.

Low appeal of a loan

The landlords interviewed generally did not need assistance in funding the energy efficiency installations. The grant itself was generally felt to make the measures more affordable but landlords also often had money available for this kind of work. Taking out a loan was considered as costly because of the interest in repayments. The interest accrued was also of a concern as it was felt to be an expensive way of borrowing money.

“I don’t remember that particularly, but what I’m thinking is that had I seen any paperwork about a loan, I wouldn’t have read it because I’m not interested in it. So it wasn’t an option that I was even interested in reading about” Bristol – small scale landlord

For some landlords, the idea of taking out a GDF loan was also unappealing. They would prefer not to get into debt, particularly when many could afford the initial outlay required (albeit it should be noted that the research sample predominantly consisted of landlords who had taken up the offer, so an assessment cannot be made about whether lack of funds was a barrier for those not taking part).

GDF had been a key part of the offer in Bristol. The use of GDF had been used to improve the cost saving to landlords by combining the grant and the reduced cash outlay for the landlord. Initially the cost saving was attractive but when landlords became aware this was a finance offer and that these repayments were to be made by tenants (as they most frequently paid bills) it became less so. The concerns outlined above then arose.

The long process involved in the customer journey, and/or coupled with the liquidation of the delivery partner in three of the four LA areas in some cases meant that the option of GDF was withdrawn from the few in Suffolk who did intend to use it or had been interested in doing so.. As the option of GDF was withdrawn for some they then had to fund the work themselves. Amongst the interviews conducted this was not mentioned to be problematic with the exception of one landlord. In this case, the landlord was to have SWI installed to an excessively cold property in which the tenant was of poor health and thus difficulty in heating the property was an issue. The small-scale landlord did not have the funds available to fund the improvements herself. As a result the landlord had to borrow money from a family member to ensure that the improvement could be made.

2.3.4 Keeping tenants happy

Aside from making an investment in their rental property, providing a comfortable and warm home for tenants was important for landlords and was mentioned as a motivation. Related to providing a good quality home was consideration of the tenant’s bills for heating the home. Landlords were aware that this was an expense for their tenants in the property and that by installing energy efficiency measures they could reduce this cost.

Across the interviews, landlords with a better understanding that their homes were difficult and costly to heat appeared to be more engaged with the value of installing measures. Not all landlords knew the actual amounts tenants paid for heating, but some had closer relationships with their tenants or in some cases had previously lived in the property themselves. Whilst the experience of the tenant was considered by landlords it was not clear if this consideration was driven more by altruism or by the thought that a happy tenant would potentially have a longer tenancy, and provide more stable rental income.

"I like my tenants to be toasty warm. A happy tenant is a good tenant." Bristol – small scale landlord

As reported by landlords and LAs, tenants themselves tended to have a very limited role in the process of using the PRS scheme – what input they did have tended to be facilitating rather than instigating or driving it. In the main, they did not influence decisions about whether to take part in the scheme or what measure was installed in the property. In some instances some landlords reported consulting their tenant to make sure they were happy with the measure the landlord planned to install, and sometimes to tailor it to their use of the property. For instance, one landlord interviewed consulted their tenants in order to understand where in the property new radiators should be installed and the specific location in rooms based on how the room was used.

Tenants were however more involved in the installation process. Landlords said tenants were consulted to request permission to install the measure on a certain date, and, where necessary, to access the property for the purpose of installation. Sometimes these requests for access were made by the landlord themselves or they would be made through a letting or managing agent, depending on who managed the tenancy.

"I just told the tenants when they were going to come round to do it, and work around them in the day and they come out to do it. The installation was very professional and they didn't have a problem with that at all." Cambridgeshire – medium scale landlord

In some cases properties were vacant when the installations were made. Where tenants were residing in the properties landlords reported being conscious that work could be disruptive. For this reason some landlords told us they deliberately targeted down times between tenancies to get the installation made, as it did not require permission from a tenant and would not involve any disruption to a tenant. This was often the case in areas of high student populations where the summer vacation period would provide an opportunity most years for work to be completed without disruption.

2.3.5 Thinking about future tenancies

Landlords not only considered their present tenants; being able to attract tenants in the future was also an important motivating factor. Energy efficiency installations were deemed by some landlords to make properties more attractive to prospective tenants, shortening the gap between tenancies which see a loss of income for landlords. The need to make properties attractive to future tenants varied by LA areas and the types of tenants in the areas. In Bristol and Cambridgeshire it was felt that strong demand from private renters meant the quality of housing was less important. This was seen as a barrier by LA staff in these areas, feeling that there was less pressure on landlords to improve their properties.

“There’s so much competition in Bristol for housing, for rented housing, you know it’s a booming city and there’s plenty of work and there’s plenty of people that want to live here as a result of that. It’s a booming population, there’s no shortage of people to fill any sort of home, whether it’s like a penthouse or a cave really, there’s always a queue.” Bristol Local Authority Staff

Landlords were also aware of the relative ease of letting properties in these areas. For some landlords it was important to ensure that properties were of a high standard in case of a downturn in the market where PRS funding allowed them to make these improvements. In these cases landlords were aware that other rental properties in their area were of a lower quality and by installing measures using the scheme they were able to lift their property above the competition and thus assume that their properties would be rented faster than other properties.

“I think within the city we’ve got a lot of students, whether that has something to do with it, with their age and their lack of understanding about the properties. And motivation to do something because they’re on a short-term tenancy as well, but certainly it’s been very difficult to get any tenants involved.” Cambridgeshire Local Authority Staff

Landlords also questioned the extent to which tenants are concerned about energy efficiency of properties when house hunting. Students were felt to place higher priority on other factors, such as location, when selecting accommodation. Some felt that energy efficiency was something tenants look at, using EPCs as a measure, although the dominant view was that this was a lesser priority for them. This was based on previous experience of property viewings where landlords, or their letting agent, had been asked or not about EPCs or the cost of heating the property. The role of EPCs is discussed further in relation to future legislation later in this section.

“Any particular house purchase, the EPC has got to be quoted. It seems to feature less in renting. If you’re buying a house you’re more concerned whether it’s energy efficient. For some strange reason it’s a question that I don’t very often get asked, is what the EPC performance is. So it potentially should help me let the property. In practice I don’t think it makes any difference.” Cambridgeshire – medium scale landlord

Further to using the scheme to make improvements to properties to ensure future tenancies, some smaller scale landlords also considered that they might live in the property themselves in the future. One landlord had at the point of interview moved in to one of their previously rented properties, while another said they were likely to move in to the property in the future, and had previously lived there in the past. For these landlords, it is therefore difficult to unpick their motivations and difficult to ascertain how much of a role this played when deciding to use the scheme, versus the needs of their tenants.

2.3.6 The role of installations in maintaining the property

Maintenance of the property was important to most landlords. Keeping properties in a good condition was felt to enhance their investment, the tenants’ experience of the property and the provision of a good quality home to them and also to future tenants. For those landlords who cited maintenance (directly or indirectly) as a motivator, utilising the scheme meant that works that they considered to be part of the general maintenance of the property could be carried out at a lower cost, to a high specification (e.g. a more

energy efficient boiler than without the funding), with greater ease or by an installer that could be trusted given the association of the scheme with the council.

The maintenance motivator was, however, measure specific; with landlords citing maintenance of properties as a reason for using the scheme in particular to install boilers and new windows, and to a lesser extent, EWI. Utilising the scheme to maintain properties was especially the case for new boilers where landlords are responsible for regularly servicing them and funding any works they require. Boilers, unlike other measures that were installed under the scheme by landlords interviewed, were described to be problematic in that they could breakdown, and thus be costly in their repair. Given the cost of maintaining and servicing boilers, landlords were keen to utilise the opportunity to install new boilers with a lower financial outlay by using the PRS scheme as this was an inevitable cost for the future. Additionally, Landlords felt installing a new boiler could reduce future costs because a new boiler would come with a new warranty which would cover the cost should there be a fault or break down.

Maintenance of properties at a lower cost was also a motivating factor for the installation of other measures in some cases, particularly where they could further benefit from the efficiencies of wrapping this work up into a larger package of maintenance work. One landlord installed EWI which would prevent him having to paint the exterior of these properties in future, thus also preventing further costs being incurred through the erection of scaffolding. In this case the landlord was motivated by the incentive of the grant available under the PRS scheme and the long term saving by not having to carry out this maintenance in the future.

“Two of my flats, to actually put scaffolding up and paint all of the exterior of that building, which I was probably going to do in the next 18 months anyway, that would have cost me probably £2,000 or £3,000, and now this scheme has come along and in effect it's, I'm doing both jobs in one, so it's worked out very nice.” Suffolk – medium scale landlord

Similarly, properties with older wooden framed windows also required maintenance. Replacing these windows with uPVC double glazed windows was attractive to Landlords because they would not require regular painting and would additionally keep homes warmer or prevent drafts. Maintenance of windows required a lot of effort for some landlords, where scaffolding was needed to access them, making maintenance more costly. Replacing windows was perceived by landlords to eradicate the need to do this in the future.

The perceived ease of the scheme was also cited by landlords as making it more appealing, and acting as a nudge to taking part. Landlords reported that maintaining properties was not only a financial expense but also expensive in terms of time, particularly in gathering quotes from various tradespeople to carry out the work. The association of the scheme with the LA also led landlords to believe the scheme, and by extension, the installers, were trustworthy.

“It meant that I wouldn't have to go around looking for a plumber to sort out the boiler because that boiler is about 20 years old. To get a plumber to do that...all the hassle...I wouldn't have to worry about those things [by having the boiler installed under the scheme]” Cambridge – medium scale landlord

In contrast, trust is also given as a barrier by LAs to landlords taking part in the scheme. These landlords reporting having existing relationships with their 'go-to' tradespeople who they trusted to do work well at a good price. Landlords, especially those with larger portfolios, were reported as being put off by the inability in most LAs to use a preferred installer. This is discussed in more detail in section 2.3.2.

Landlords also reported that installing energy efficiency measures enabled them to tackle other problems in the property. Treatment and prevention of mould and condensation was described as part of maintaining the property. Installing new boilers, new or upgraded heating systems and SWI helped some landlords to tackle problems of mould. Using the scheme to subsidise the cost of these measures allowed for homes to be improved, preventing mould in the future. It is not possible to assert that landlords would not have installed any measures to prevent mould without the scheme. However, in some cases, the landlord knew they had a problem but not how to solve it; knowledge of the scheme, and the resulting GDA, provided the landlord with this solution through a recommended measure. One landlord only became aware of SWI, and that it would contribute to the prevention of mould, by coming in to contact with the scheme.

"No, external wall I'd never heard of. ... But when I was thinking about how to solve this mould problem I'd never really thought of insulating the outside". Suffolk Landlord - Small

Many landlords had considered installing these measures before where they were installed as part of the property's maintenance, for example, replacing boilers, radiators or installing new heating systems had been on their 'to do' list for the future. The availability of funding however was described by landlords as a nudge to have the work done sooner than if they had not been prompted by the funding. The funding also encouraged one landlord to install a higher standard, more efficient boiler than they would have installed without the funding.

"I've known about things that wanted doing and that but the scheme has made me do things quicker than I was going to do it, and my tenants benefit from that which is good. I benefit as well because I get a better property and get EPC ratings up, and when you go to let them and that you don't have any voids in rental between tenants." Cambridgeshire – medium scale landlord

Case Study: Saving money by installing a new boiler under the scheme

The landlord: has been a small-scale landlord in Bristol to students for over fifteen years as part of a long term investment to provide a pension in the future. He had completed a lot of work to improve the property since he purchased it; replacing the old, inefficient boiler was one of the few remaining improvements he wished to make. He had set the summer aside to carry out this work, when the property had no tenants during the summer vacation.

Motivation: Replacing the boiler would not only improve the property but would provide a nicer, more comfortable home for his tenants. Ensuring future tenancies however was not a motivation, he knew the property would let even if this work was not carried out.

The journey: The landlord got quotes for the boiler to be replaced before he was aware of the scheme. He then received a call from the LA's delivery partner because the property had a low EPC rating, and heard about Warm Up Bristol through a landlord news bulletin from the council. He made enquiries and received a quote which was cheaper than the others he had collected, so decided to go ahead using the grant scheme. He felt there would be a limited window to make use of the funding and wanted work completed before new tenants moved in.

Aside from the cost saving that could be made, the landlord felt that using the council backed scheme would offer protection against 'cowboy' plumbers.

2.3.7 Impact of forthcoming PRS minimum EPC legislation

Forthcoming legislation will impose – from 2018 - a minimum EPC rating that rental properties must meet, except where properties are exempt. This legislation was felt by LAs to potentially provide a motivation for landlords to utilise the scheme, to improve their properties to meet future minimum standards. LA staff felt that legislating for minimum energy efficiency standards would provide balance and act as a 'stick' to encourage landlords to improve their properties, in combination with the grant contribution to the work which acts as the 'carrot'. This approach was considered necessary by LA staff as it was felt that those landlords not motivated by maintaining an efficient property or placing the same kind of attention on their tenants' satisfaction, would not make these improvements with the carrot alone.

"There are barriers to engaging the landlords...a lot of them won't carry out any improvements to their properties above keeping them legal and comfortable, they won't engage in any further improvements unless they have to by law." Bristol Local Authority Staff

There was a limited awareness of the forthcoming EPC legislation among the landlords interviewed. Where landlords had heard of a minimum rating being introduced they tended to know little detail, when it would be introduced, what the minimum standards would be or the exemptions that might apply. Those who had heard about the future legislation had heard about it through their council, their landlord forum, their estate or managing agent. Some landlords aware of the legislation had been encouraged to think about the future

and make improvements to their properties and the GDC scheme provided an opportunity to take action. The EPC legislation itself was not seen to be a key motivator for utilising the scheme, however. Even among the few aware, the legislation was not the sole motivation but was in combination with other motivations discussed throughout this section. There are however no clear patterns in landlord characteristics suggesting which combinations are the strongest motivators or how precisely they interact.

“You see, I’ve got one F rated property and in 2017, or something like that, I don’t think you’ll be allowed to let F rated properties and so I’m concerned and I wanted to get that sorted. They came round to do an EPC and they told me all the things I could have done on it that the government would pay towards so I took them up on that” Bristol – large scale landlord

“The council sent me a letter saying about the funding and that, and once I looked into it and thought, well I’m going to have to do something about it, but then my letting agent wrote to me and advised that by 2018 you’ve got to spend some money on the flats because of the ... the EPCs and that. And I thought, ‘oh right, this has all come together now so I have to go forward’. So, luckily I heard about the funds from the council.” Cambridge – medium scale landlord

Whilst the legislation could act as a stick for landlords to improve the standard of their properties, the lack of landlord knowledge of the details was felt by LA staff to reduce the effectiveness. This meant it was difficult for marketing materials to reference this legislation as a reason to use the scheme. Uncertainty around when the legislation came in to force also meant that the push to improve properties was less strong.

2.4 Progressing the customer journey

Summary of customer journey

This section explores the customer journey that a landlord went through, covering the stages from the Green Deal Assessment through to installation.

Green Deal Assessment

- The GDA was either free or subsidised. Those who did have to contribute financially did not see this as a barrier, but on the other hand LAs felt that a cheap or free assessment was not a hook attracting landlords to the scheme.
- Uptake of the scheme was largely landlord-driven. LAs did not see the tenant incentive as sufficient to drive tenant uptake.

Quote and selection of contractor

- The process of getting a quote varied: in Haringey, landlords could choose a contractor, including their preferred GD supplier. In the other three authorities the LA worked with a single delivery partner.
- In the single supplier LAs landlords believed that they could have had work done cheaper by suppliers they knew, and that the sole supplier did not have sufficient capacity.

Reasons for landlord dropouts

- One main reason cited by landlords was cost – the contribution, particularly for SWI, was not affordable compared with quotes they could get from other suppliers.
- Landlords and LAs reported some drop outs due to planning restrictions which added long delays to the process or meant they couldn't get the measures they were initially recommended.
- The overall length of the process put off some landlords as it seemed much longer than a comparable private installation.

Installations

- Landlords that reached the installation stage reported being generally happy with the quality of the work. There were early indications of warmer homes for tenants.

Confusion

- Throughout the process, landlords experienced some confusion. Some were not clear why they needed a GDA if they had a recent EPC, and reports themselves were perceived as misleading in some cases.
- In Haringey, there was confusion regarding the role of Smart Advisers. The LA thought the advisers played an important role as an independent source of advice and review, but landlords often felt their role required extra clarity.

Customer service

- Some landlords reported having to chase at various stages. Others were frustrated by dealing with multiple bodies and would have preferred a single point of contact.

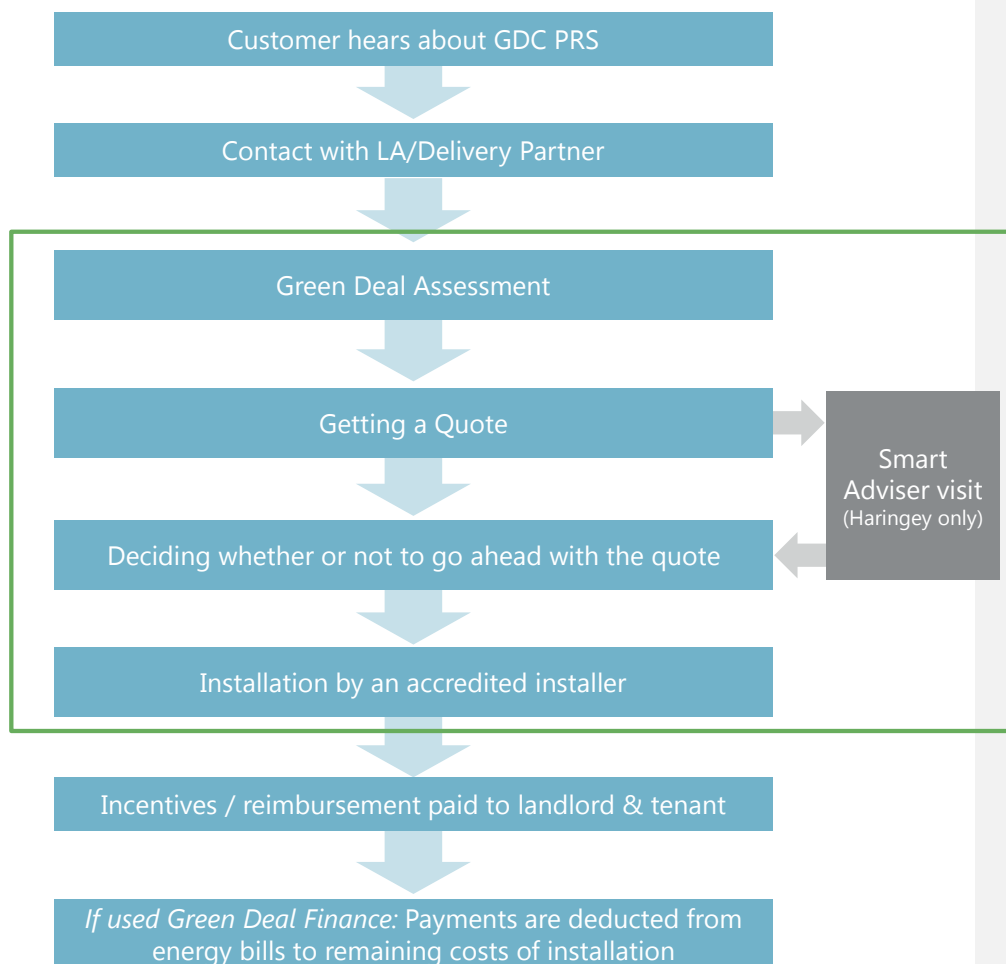
This section of the report explores the customer journey that a beneficiary went through. The customer journey as a whole went from initial contact with the scheme to - if they took up the funding - completion of an installation. Interviews were conducted with landlords who had at least received an energy assessment, and most went to installation.

In addition to the landlords having assessments or installations, there are also landlords who did not engage at all with the scheme, and those who dropped out before the assessment stage. Where possible, experiences of these landlord types are informed through interviews with other stakeholders.

The customer journey began by becoming aware of the scheme in one way or another and then making contact with the relevant body, largely via a phone number run either by the Local Authority or a delivery partner. Customer engagement at this stage is discussed in section 2.2 on marketing.

This research did not explore payment (or reimbursement) of incentives and financing, which typically occurred post installation. Financing of the installations are covered in sections 2.3 of this report. This section thus explores the stages of the customer journey within the green box set out in Figure 10.

Figure 10: The GDC PRS customer journey



2.4.1 The Green Deal Assessment

Subsidies and grants

As noted in section 2.1 the LAs involved in delivering the PRS incentive subsidised the initial assessment to varying degrees (ranging from a free assessment to a cost of £50). There is no evidence from the interviews conducted as part of this research that the relatively small cost to the landlord of this assessment prevented landlords taking part. Although landlords who did not engage with the scheme (potentially due to the cost of the assessment) were not interviewed, LA officers supported the view that this initial outlay did not present a barrier.

Landlords that were interviewed were broadly happy to cover the cost of the GDA, although one thought it should have been made clearer that this would be refunded if they went ahead with the work, as they did think it was a significant outlay.

While there is no evidence that the cost for the GDA prevented landlords from taking part, it also did not appear from interviews with landlords receiving an assessment that the subsidy acted as a 'hook' into the scheme – most landlords did not seem aware of the full unsubsidised cost.

One rationale for making potential beneficiaries cover some initial cost is that they would then be more invested in the whole process and more likely to follow up with agreeing to a quote given the initial investment they had made. There is insufficient evidence in this research to test this hypothesis.

In most of the GDC areas an incentive was offered to the tenants to encourage participation in the scheme. Evidence from interviews with landlords and with LAs showed that this was, generally, ineffective. Tenants were rarely the focal point of marketing, certainly after the initial stages, and they were not involved in the process sufficiently to act as a catalyst for the work to take place. Some LAs also raised the question of whether the value of the incentive would be considered large enough by the tenant to outweigh the disruption they may experience as a result of the quote process and installation.

2.4.2 Getting a quote

This stage of the process also highlighted an important difference between the delivery model in Haringey and the other LAs. In Haringey, landlords had a choice of contractors, and could also choose their own local supplier to quote for the work as long as they were Green Deal accredited. By contrast in Bristol, Cambridge and Suffolk, the LA worked with a single delivery partner who would provide the sole quote to Landlords. Some landlords in the areas where there was no choice did raise this as a potential barrier, claiming that they could have had the installation completed at lower net cost by their preferred supplier, even if this was not assisted by any grant funding. As noted earlier, landlords – generally those with larger portfolios or more experience of being a landlord – did indicate some preference to using known suppliers and this may therefore have been a barrier to taking part in these three areas.

Furthermore, it became clear through interviews with LAs that the sole contractor in some cases did not have capacity to meet demand. Choice in contractor and transparency about likely waiting times could have sped up the customer journey in those areas if landlords were able to get quotes from contractors who were not so stretched (delays in the customer journey being a key reason for drop outs as this report goes on to discuss).

However by contrast, the landlords who did have this choice did not mention going through many quotes to get the best deal. For this reason, the option of multiple quotes is not likely to have been a significant enabler. Nevertheless the LA believed that take up was higher with Pyramid Solutions in Haringey, a Green Deal installer who weren't the council's main contractor, as landlords already had a prior relationship with them. This suggests that among landlords as a whole, if not those interviewed, it was beneficial to continue to work within these pre-existing relationships.

As already indicated, the GDA stage differed in Haringey from the other three areas with the additional input from a Smart Advisor following receipt of the initial GDA and quote. The Smart Advisor role is discussed in more detail later in this section.

2.4.3 Agreement to proceed - Deciding whether or not to go ahead with the quote

All landlords interviewed as part of this research reached at least this stage, i.e. they received a quote for work. At this point in the customer journey however some did drop out. This was generally due to one of three main factors; cost, planning regulations or the time the process was taking.

Cost

Some landlords said that even with the incentive, the measure was not affordable for them. This was particularly the case where landlords had received a quote for solid wall insulation. As shown in [Figure 7](#) in Section 2.1, LAs had a cap on the grant of 75% up to a maximum of £6,000. This meant that if the measure cost more than £8,000 the landlord would need to contribute £2,000 plus the entire amount above £8,000.

Deleted: Figure 6

“When I did get the report it was more expensive, something like £19,000 which seemed like a lot of money to do some fairly small internal insulation works. I hadn’t realised at that point just quite how bad the damp had got, so I was keen to find a cost effective solution even if it meant losing some space in the rooms. But when we got the estimate through it was just too much.” Haringey – small scale landlord

Landlord concerns over high costs chimed with the reflections of some LA and delivery partner staff. Whilst welcoming the impact of the scheme on properties that were most in need of improvement, they thought the large customer contributions for SWI meant that those who lacked the ability to pay could feel excluded. GDF was available to help landlords without the funds to meet upfront costs, however as noted in section 2.3.1 GDF was not well known or popular.

Landlords taking part in this research who installed cheaper measures such as boiler replacements or double glazing did not drop out on the basis of cost. As noted above, some felt that they were paying a premium within the scheme compared with using a local installer, but for such measures the (subsidised) customer contribution was not considered prohibitively expensive. Nevertheless LA staff believed that many landlords have strong relationships with a preferred contractor who may provide their services below the market rate meaning that the scheme could not compete.

“Some landlords also have their own handymen who do jobs below market rate prices so our contractors were more expensive.” Cambridgeshire – Local Authority Staff

In Haringey the LA carried out their own analysis of the quotes that were going through GDAs in their area and found that contractors in the scheme were pricing too high. There were discrepancies between installers and also within the same installer for the same type of work, leading to wide disparities in quotes that affected around 300 leads.

“So we had a variance in some cases that was 300%, 400% above benchmark rates.” Haringey – Local Authority Staff

The LA successfully challenged the installers through a negotiation process to revise the quotes in 90% of cases, but it is possible that these high initial quotes would have put off some potential beneficiaries.

Planning regulations

For some landlords, planning regulations were an impediment to installing the measures (windows and EWI) identified by the assessment and quotation. Several incidents were reported by landlords where planning issues caused problems with the progression of the installation and delays. This added time onto the process causing drop outs in some cases.

One landlord calculated that delays over planning had added 10 weeks to the timetable for his measures to be installed. Planning permission was required as the property had been converted into flats; therefore any work to the exterior was not a permitted development. At the time of the interview this landlord was waiting for the issue to be resolved and had not withdrawn from the scheme, but was frustrated with the delay. The tenant had also moved out due to the delays, as there was scaffolding up for a long time and workmen frequently requiring access. The landlord therefore had to wait for the work to be completed before finding a new tenant meaning during this planning delay they were losing out on rental income.

Other landlords gave examples of measures being recommended which then turned out to be prohibited by building regulations or local planning regulations.

“They misled me a little bit because they said you could have the cavity walls done, and gave me a quotation. But I actually said before I give you the go ahead to do this work, are you sure we can do it, don't forget it's a Grade II listed building. They said we can't do external walls but we will contact the county council and tell them that we plan to do the internal walls. They came back and said Cambridgeshire council will not allow you to do internal walls.”
Cambridgeshire – medium scale landlord

In some LAs taking ownership of the planning process was initially part of the service offered by the contractor, but this changed given the complexity and the challenges the contractors had in managing it.

“The property owner always had to pay. The contractor did offer this service as an add-on cost but it was later scrapped as all the districts had their own planning rules and it got very complicated. It is much better for the homeowner to take charge of planning.” *Cambridgeshire – Local Authority Staff*

In Cambridgeshire they moved the responsibility from the contractor to the landlord when they realised that in some cases the planning application was not completed properly by the contractor. In these situations LAs said contractors were not always communicating with the landlord on progress, which frustrated landlords. It also increased the liability for the company and for these reasons the approach regarding responsibility for the planning application process was switched to lie with the landlord.

In Bristol, everything was handled by the landlord, whereas in Haringey there were grants available from the scheme to help with planning applications but it was unclear to landlords that this was the case, or who was responsible. The resources required to finalise planning applications were a barrier to uptake of the scheme in some cases.

Case Study: Dropping out due to planning confusion

The landlord: A medium scale landlord in Haringey.

The journey: The landlord had a quote for external wall insulation on a 3-bedroom terraced house. Their contribution was going to be around £2,500 which he thought was too high. Nevertheless he did investigate further but stalled over the issue of planning. He had to do a lot of very time consuming research to understand if he needed permission but expected this to have come from the Smart Advisers. When he found out that he did need planning permission, and combined with the cost of the proposed measures, these delays and uncertainties caused him to withdraw from the scheme.

"It was completely unclear about whether you needed planning. I wanted a bit of paper overtly saying that I didn't need planning permission, I had to pay another fee and then at that stage there was this whole toing and froing about whether the installer would pay for that and then it would add to the cost, and because by this stage it was already looking like I couldn't really afford it I didn't really go too much further into it because there was no point."

Such experiences suggest that potential issues with planning need to be factored in at an earlier stage, such that when given a quote landlords are clearly told if they need planning permission or not, and can decide whether or not to proceed based on that knowledge. This would speed the process up and also reduce the burden on landlords.

Length of the process

The process of getting a measure installed through the scheme took longer in general than a similar private installation, both due to reasons inherent in the scheme design, and problems with delivery.

The inclusion of Smart Advisers in Haringey, and more broadly the need to use Green Deal Accredited installers (who may not be specialists in each measure), extended the process for the landlord according to some LA staff, compared with if they arranged the installation privately. This was perceived by LAs to be a barrier to uptake.

"The use of Green Deal accredited companies and processes also meant the process was much longer and that the landlords could not always use the plumber/heating engineer they have previously worked with. E.g. for a boiler replacement, using their own company could see the work done in a week. Using Green Deal meant assessments had to be carried out, the companies were not always boiler specialists, and by the time the work is done the process could take in excess of 4 weeks." Cambridgeshire – Local Authority Staff

Whilst none of the landlords interviewed immediately dropped out upon hearing of the length of time it would take there were reports of unforeseen delays in delivery due to the contractors being overstretched.

This meant that some landlords waited a significant period of time at each stage of the process, and dropped out.

2.4.4 Installation

The preceding parts of this section have highlighted the problems some landlords faced prior to the installation stage, with some dropping out before any measures were installed. However, those who did have an installation were generally happy with it, and landlords' early perceptions of the impact were positive.

Quality

Most landlords were positive about the people who came to fit the measure, with a good picture presented in terms of their professionalism, tidiness and overall management of the process. Whilst as noted above some landlords did wait longer than anticipated before reaching the installation stage, once a date was agreed it was normally kept to.

This in part reflects the hopes of the LAs i.e. that since all contractors included in the scheme are Green Deal Accredited the quality should have been high across the board, and this was why some landlords felt the cost was high.

Impact

It should be noted that many landlords did not feel they were in a position to comment on the impact of the installed measure. In some cases this was because as landlords they do not spend sufficient time in the property to notice the impact so would only do so in discussion with the tenant, or by examining the energy bills. Most landlords had not done this. Furthermore, several landlords were interviewed in the summer and autumn and thus before the benefits of the measures would have really been felt.

Nevertheless, some landlords had heard from their tenants that the property was indeed warmer, or had experienced it for themselves.

"With this little condensing central heating boiler, I put the gas in off the street, and this little thing fires up and within 5 minutes the house is toasty warm." Suffolk - small scale landlord

Thus there was some evidence of positive impacts for the property in the short term. Increases in the rental and/or resale value of the property for the landlord may be seen in the long term, but these were beyond the scope of this research which came very soon after installations were completed.

2.4.5 Confusion

In addition to barriers and enablers at different stages of the customer journey, some themes cut across the entire process. First among these was that some landlords found the process to be confusing at different stages.

The assessment

Regarding the assessment, the basic principles behind the assessment appeared to be well understood by landlords interviewed as part of this research. Nevertheless some were unsure why they needed to have an assessment to establish their EPC if they had a recent certificate. This was noted as a barrier to involvement in the scheme, but appeared to some landlords to duplicate previous work.

However, in some cases the GDA reports themselves were perceived to be misleading regarding the recommendation being made. For example, one report showed that the home was suitable for SWI, however the landlord understood that because they were in a conservation area they would not be permitted to install SWI. In this case the landlord had believed the GDA was recommending he install SWI, when in practice the GDA was only informing him that it was technically possible and beneficial. It is this difference in perception which caused the confusion.

Smart Advisers

The model of scheme delivery unique to Haringey also caused confusion at the assessment and quoting stage, with the use of Smart Advisers. From the point of view of those involved in delivery and management in Haringey, the Advisers were an important additional agent in the process who could provide independent advice to landlords and help them understand the scheme and provide an independent review.

"If the customer says they're happy, the quote is sent to the smart advisor, they visit the property, review the quote, review the schedule of works, ensure that everything is above board and appropriately detailed." Local Authority

However, landlords interviewed as part of this research were not clear as to the purpose of the Adviser's visit and how this fitted in with the original assessment. The Adviser's visit, to landlords, added confusion between the quotation and signing the contract.

"I wasn't necessarily getting a clear and coherent message about what was possible and what likely costs would be" Haringey small scale landlord

"Now, I'll tell you one thing, by the way, which I did find all very confusing, and I'm sure others must have done as well. You call Smart Homes on a leaflet attached to the Haringey letter, which ends up, I think is Haringey. They then send round a Green Deal assessor...You then find yourself dealing with Saving Energy and you wonder, ooh, who are they? I've suddenly gone from Smart Homes to Saving Energy. Nobody gives you the idiot's guide of what to expect." Haringey – medium scale landlord

Landlords did not report dropping out of the scheme specifically for this reason, but given the confusion it caused, and presumably expense incurred, the evidence from this research suggests that the inclusion of independent advisers should be carefully considered and if included, clearly communicated to beneficiaries.

2.4.6 Contact and customer service

Also relevant throughout the process was the issue of contact and customer service. Some landlords reported having to chase for their assessment and/or results. Whilst none of the interviewed landlords dropped out of the scheme because of this it did negatively affect some perceptions. Some landlords who had agreed to go ahead with the quote also reported having to chase, which was a source of frustration. This frustration was exacerbated when landlords were unable to contact overstretched sole contractors – in this case, they had to contact the LA. However in some cases LAs did not have the resources to handle large volumes of customer service calls meaning long waiting times for a response.

It is important to note that in some authorities only landlords who completed the installation were interviewed, meaning by definition this research misses the views of those who dropped out due to poor customer service in these authorities. However LA staff believed it was a major barrier.

“There were big delays on the scheme due to poor management and difficulties of our partner organisation. This meant poor customer relationship management and poor communication and complaints.” Bristol – Local Authority Staff

Furthermore, several landlords were keen to see a single point of contact. At various times in the process they may have been in contact with someone from the LA, an assessor, installer and Smart Adviser, as well as any customer service representatives from the contractor. Some landlords thought it would have made things easier to have a single point of contact managing all others involved in the customer journey, ‘handholding’ them through the process. This was particularly the case where landlords felt that they had to repeat the same information to two different parties, such as a contractor and a Smart Adviser, who, it appeared to the landlord, were not in communication with each other. These landlords felt that the scheme should ensure these parties were kept informed without relying on the landlord as the go-between. Ideally this would be through a single point of contact, or failing this some mechanism for different parties to access case information,

“I thought the whole point of the scheme was that some hand holding went on but I felt I was negotiating afresh at each stage and it wasn’t really clear what could and couldn’t be done.” Haringey – small scale landlord

2.5 Conclusions: addressing the qualitative research questions

This section summarises the main findings of this research, structured by the research questions detailed in section 1.3.

2.5.1 How were stakeholders (landlords, tenants, letting agents) affected by the PRS funding and its marketing?

Tenants

Tenants were peripheral to the delivery of the scheme in the sense that they rarely initiated the household's involvement, and had at most a facilitating role in the installation of the measure such as allowing access to the property. In all four LA areas an early emphasis on direct marketing to tenants largely proved unsuccessful, perceived by LA staff to be due to a lack of engagement from short-term tenants, or reluctance to engage with the scheme given that the final decision must be ratified by their landlord. Incentives aimed at the tenants were not considered effective by LAs as the amount was thought to be too low to offset the disruption.

In some cases landlords reported that tenants were affected by delays in delivery and installation. In a small number of cases this led to the landlord reducing the rent during long periods of disruption, and even moving out when the disruption became too much. Where installations have been made using the funding, landlords interviewed believed the impact of the measures on thermal comfort and affordability of heating bills, if realised, has been positive. In many cases, however, the installation was too recent for a noticeable impact to have been seen.

Landlords

The stakeholders of the PRS element of the GDC scheme that were most involved and affected by the process were **landlords**. These were the decision-makers who were most likely to instigate the process and the individuals who were affected most when the process did not run as planned. **Targeted and direct marketing to landlords** (including direct mail and approaching them through landlord fora) was perceived as the most effective, and therefore favoured, approach.

Marketing

Drawing solid conclusions about the effectiveness of the array of different marketing approaches employed is not possible due to a **lack of effective recording of marketing codes** for scheme applications. This is one finding that any future scheme would need to address if evidence is required on the successes of marketing approaches. The operation of the PRS element of this scheme within broader Green Deal activity to the owner occupier market is another factor that makes it difficult to assess with any degree of accuracy the pros and cons of different modes of delivery.

Data access

This research has shown that it is vitally important to have **access to a database of landlord contacts** if marketing of a scheme to the PRS is to be effective and provide a good return on investment. While other approaches can be successful, having such a database provides the starting point from which to build

further engagement with this audience through word of mouth and more informal networks of landlords. Another challenge faced by Councils who do not hold such a database was accessing networks that landlords are part of, because landlords are not necessarily geographically clustered as is the case with the owner occupier market. This means that the word of mouth generated from a localised, street by street scheme has less impact for the PRS. Making use of **informal landlord networks**, such as landlord forums and readership of landlord newsletters, has therefore been shown to be an important tool to effectively build interest in the scheme.

Frustration was also evident in the ability of the authorities delivering the scheme locally to work together in data sharing. In some cases this worked, but in others there was a feeling that an overriding **concern about data protection** prevented these partnering authorities from working collaboratively, so that landlord contact details could be shared. This is one area that might need to be considered in design of future programmes where joint working of this nature is required. There is certainly evidence that when enforcement departments can work in tandem with energy efficiency teams, this can be an effective way of reaching the properties most in need of this kind of support.

This research faced difficulties in **accessing contact information for beneficiaries** and/or potential beneficiaries to interview. This is also a lesson for the design of future programmes. The lack of any consolidated database of contact information hinders the ability to fully understand the reasons for successful or unsuccessful delivery. The requirement for delivery authorities to provide access to this kind of information should be considered for future evaluations of the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Letting agents

Letting agents have the potential to be an important stakeholder in the delivery of energy efficiency to the PRS as they are a trusted source of information by many landlords, not to mention an entry point to getting in touch with engaged landlords who might be interested in the scheme. The four GDC areas targeting the PRS have however struggled to get much buy-in from this stakeholder group, with financial incentives proving largely unsuccessful. Successfully tapping into this network might benefit from early engagement as well as coordination at a wider level through representative bodies.

2.5.2 Which parts of the PRS incentive were perceived as helpful/not helpful by the stakeholders and what were the important context factors? What other potential interventions could have helped, beyond those implemented by the Local Authorities (LAs)?

This research has shown that **adaptability** of those delivering the funding is important. Those involved in the delivery of the schemes reflected on a number of ways in which they needed to revise their approach and to learn from what worked and what did not. All LAs revised their delivery approach to some degree, for example removing upper limits of the number of properties that a landlord could receive funding for, changing the approach to managing planning permissions and broadening the scope to include a wider range of EPC ratings.

The degree of **choice** that beneficiaries had in selecting a supplier varied across the four GDC areas. It is difficult to make a thorough assessment on the impact of this on uptake of the incentive as it involves comparing three areas that all used a single contractor that went into administration during the course of this research, with one authority area where choice in supplier was offered. However, Haringey reported

that lack of choice could sometimes act as a barrier for those landlords who preferred to use their own suppliers. Given that only Green Deal approved suppliers could be used, providing choice will, however, not solve the problem for all landlords who will only use the cheapest providers they can find.

While the Fund provided subsidised measures, the **prices quoted were often considered relatively expensive** by landlords, particularly by more experienced landlords or those who have trusted tradespeople they use for maintaining their property. Many still went ahead with the work as it still proved cheaper to do so, given the subsidy they were receiving. However, high prices were commonly mentioned as a disadvantage of the scheme, and in a small number of cases did prevent installations being made. The research sample this research is based on had predominantly gone ahead with an installation, so it is difficult to assess the impact of this reported price inflation.

While this research sample was too small to allow for a full segmentation of landlords, some landlord interviews showed that, for time poor landlords, or for those who are less involved in the maintenance of the property, the **ease of the scheme** was a key selling point. When marketed as a simple exercise - of receiving an energy assessment, followed by quotes and then selecting the most attractive offer for the work to be done – this was received well. This was also particularly the case for landlords who trusted their LA and had faith that they would make the right decisions. For them, the funding was not only a way to improve their property at lower cost, but also in a way that required less commitment and involvement from them. Where this can be emphasised to landlords it is likely to have some success, but it is also important the delivery matches this expectation to avoid this trust being lost.

Landlords also showed a desire for **simplicity and clarity of process**. While some landlords saw a benefit in receiving independent advice from the Smart Advisor in Haringey, this process was not always considered to be clear. Efforts were made to document this process clearly for landlords but some landlords called for greater clarity in who they would speak to, about what, when and why. There was also a feeling that coordination between different parties could have been improved, ultimately providing an easier and more reassuring process for beneficiaries.

The **planning process** was cited by several landlords as one part of the 'customer journey' that could have been improved. Many examples were provided of delays caused by planning applications (sometimes late or missed), incorrect guidance, or confusion over where responsibility for this lay and whether all parties had sufficiently considered planning regulations early enough. Landlord interviews showed that this process resulted in some dropping out from the scheme, and also risked landlords losing faith that those involved in delivery sufficiently understood and factored in the planning process.

Incentives paid to the tenant were not considered effective either by the landlords or the local authorities interviewed in this research. Tenants were not involved in the process sufficiently (as they were not required to have any legal role in the transaction) for this incentive to be effective, and some LAs also questioned whether the value was sufficient to act as a trigger.

Landlords interviewed in this research did not consider **Green Deal Finance** to be an attractive element of the scheme. However, this qualitative research is not able to draw conclusions as to whether or not this perception was shared across all landlords in the target areas. While the ability to repay the cost of the measure back through the property's energy bills might be considered a way of challenging the 'split

incentive' that exists in delivering energy efficiency to the PRS, it was generally not considered this way by landlords. In contrast, landlords felt it was fundamentally unfair that a tenant would repay the cost of the loan whilst only accruing the benefit for a short period of time during their tenancy. Although this financing option no longer exists, the complexity around the issue of repayments versus benefit realised by the individual presents a communications challenge.

2.5.3 What were the factors that led or did not lead to installations or Green Deal Assessments (GDAs) and why were these factors important?

In addition to the reasons cited above on aspects of the scheme deemed to be helpful or resulting in drop outs, there are a series of additional factors that informed success of the PRS element of the GDC scheme:

- **Maintenance of, and investment in, the property** were important drivers of landlord behaviour. Investing in the property, whether aiming to increase the resale value or to maintain satisfied tenants, was the main motivation for taking up the incentive. The interviews with landlords suggest that many of the landlords taking part in the scheme were those who are more inclined to look after their property and/or tenants. From this research sample at least, the funding tapped into an engaged audience of landlords. LAs felt the funding worked well in synergy with the forthcoming legislation requiring minimum EPC standards of E-rated PRS properties which, when in place, would target the less engaged end of the spectrum.
- **Competitiveness of the rental market** is an important context factor which impacted on how likely landlords were to take advantage of the funding. In areas where rental demand exceeds supply, landlords do not have the same impetus to offer the best possible renting experience for their prospective tenants. In these locations taking up the PRS offer requires either landlords who are inclined to invest in their property and their occupants, or a problem that might need resolving through the installation of energy efficiency measures. In this sense, the Fund also supported landlords to resolve problems with their properties which they otherwise would not have understood how to solve. The GDA provided an opportunity to receive advice on how issues such as mould and dampness could be treated and then act on them at low cost.
- Having a **range of measures**, including boilers and windows, meant that a broader range of landlords took part in the scheme. Landlords who were considering replacement of their boiler or windows saw the fund as an opportunity to get this work completed at a lower cost. While this raises the question of the additionality delivered by the funding, there was evidence that in some cases the work was completed sooner than would have otherwise been the case, or to a higher specification (for instance a more energy efficient boiler).
- **Landlord's trust in their LA** is also an important factor. Many landlords expressed faith that a scheme run by the LA would be legitimate and make use of trustworthy suppliers. In these cases, making use of an existing brand allowed LAs to tap into this underlying goodwill.

2.5.4 What factors were unintended?

Landlords provided several examples of **delays** in the process which resulted in unintended consequences. These were largely a result of problems with the delivery contractors, particularly in Suffolk, Bristol and

Cambridgeshire where the delivery contractor went into administration midway through delivery of the scheme. Landlords and LAs also provided examples of delays which occurred due to confusion over planning requirements.

As a consequence, some landlords dropped out of the scheme due to delays in delivery. The frustration caused by these delays also has the risk of damaging the **reputation of the LAs ability to deliver future energy efficiency schemes**. Specific examples of the unintended consequences included the loss of tenants during delays in work commencing, and the **opportunity cost to landlords** of either having to reduce rents during longer periods of disruption, or having a vacant property until the works were complete.

2.5.5 Did the PRS incentives assist local authorities in upgrading F and G rated properties within their region?

Interviews with landlords and LAs indicated that the GDC PRS funding did help LAs to deliver energy efficiency measures to F and G rated properties. These were the properties that were initially targeted, either at a street-by-street level, in marketing or through coordination with LA enforcement teams. However, it is not possible to make a thorough assessment of the impact of measures on EPC ratings generally due to the delays in delivery of the scheme. Most of the landlords interviewed were still waiting for their measure to be installed.

The forthcoming EPC legislation was considered by Local Authorities to be an important lever to encourage landlords to take action to improve their properties, particularly those landlords that are less conscientious about their tenants' wellbeing or enjoyment of their home. However, it was not considered to currently be an important driver of behaviour. The legislation was considered too far in the future (coming into force in 2018) to have an immediate effect on behaviour, and awareness of the legislation, as shown by the interviews with landlords, is currently low.

Landlords also felt that tenants are not sufficiently concerned about energy efficiency for EPCs to be an important part of their decision making when choosing a rental property. At most, landlords felt it was of secondary importance and therefore does not feature in their conversations with prospective landlords.¹¹ However, it was expected that this would increasingly become the case as the legislation draws closer.

¹¹ It should be noted that this is based on landlords' own interpretation and could not be corroborated with tenants.

Appendices

3 Appendices

3.1.1 LA and Delivery Partner Discussion Guide

FINAL Discussion Guide for depth interviews with Local Authority officers and delivery partners

1. Research objectives

The objectives of the research are to explore the impact of additional funding on the uptake of the Green Deal in the private rented sector (PRS) of selected pilot local Green Deal Community (GDC) authorities. The Green Deal helps householders to make energy saving home improvements such as insulation by allowing them to pay for some or all of the improvements over time on their electricity bill.

The overall aim is to enable improved domestic energy efficiency by ensuring that work done is affordable. By extension, there will be a reduction in the amount of household energy needed, therefore reducing our reliance on imported energy supplies.

Across the project, we will explore the reasons for varying levels of Green Deal uptake in the selected areas.

The primary research questions are as follows;

- How were potential Green Deal stakeholders and beneficiaries (landlords, tenants, letting agents) influenced by, and aware of, the PRS funding and marketing?
- What was the key draw of the Green Deal - which elements were felt to be attractive and which were not?
- What other interventions could have helped, or might be helpful to others in similar situations?

There are also secondary research questions, as follows:

- What were the factors that led or did not lead to installations or Green Deal Assessments (GDAs)? Why were these factors important? What factors were unintended?
- Did the PRS incentives assist local authorities in upgrading F and G rated properties within their region?

The findings of the study will allow DECC to understand the effectiveness of the piloted scheme in the four areas that received additional funding beyond the GDC programme

2. Structure of the discussion

Notes	Guide sections	Guide timings
1. Introductions and background	Explains the purpose and ground rules for the interview	5 mins
2. Green Deal – topline thoughts on the GDC overall	Explores their overall understanding of the purpose of the Green Deal Communities overall before turning to the PRS initiative specifically	10 mins
3. Background to and details of the local GDC scheme	Explores their role in implementing the scheme locally, and the details of how it has been delivered.	20 mins
4. Successes and challenges of the GDC PRS	The success factors and the hindrances, as well as how it was marketed, and wider perception of the scheme	10 mins
5. Research with beneficiaries/other stakeholders of the GDC PRS	Covers the information they hold about progress against delivery targets, and how this is communicated to DECC. Also covers what information we could access to help with recruitment of the beneficiary research	5 mins
6. Looking to the future	The future of delivery in their area and more widely	5 mins
7. Key messages	Key messages to feed back to DECC about the scheme	5 mins

We use several conventions to explain to you how this guide will be used, described below.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>(Timing in minutes)</i> <i>Notes and prompts</i>
<p>Bold = Question or read out statement: Questions that will be asked to the participants if relevant. Not all questions are asked during fieldwork based on the moderator's view of progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bullet = prompt: Prompts are not questions – they are there to provide guidance to the moderator if required. ▪ CAPITALISED INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO THE MODERATOR IN MANAGING THE INTERVIEW 	<p>This area is used to summarise what we are discussing, provides informative notes, and some key prompts for the moderator</p>
<p>Typically, the researcher will ask questions and use the prompts to guide where necessary. Not all questions or prompts will necessarily be used during the discussion</p>	

1. Introductions and background	5 mins
<p>Introduce self/note-taker/Ipsos MORI – stress role as independent research organisation i.e. independent of DECC or BIT, and that we are here to gather all opinions.</p> <p>Explain the aim of the discussions; here to talk about their experiences of helping to deliver GDC in targeted areas – specifically the PRS - so that BIT/DECC can better understand how the scheme is being delivered.</p> <p>Confidentiality – reassure responses anonymous and that information about individuals will not be passed on to anyone, so they should feel free to speak openly as possible. Explain that we adhere strictly to the MRS Code of Conduct which forbids us from passing on individual details.</p> <p>Get permission to digitally record – transcribe for quotes and an accurate record, again explain that there is no detailed attribution.</p> <p>Report will be available at the end of the research, in 2016 – offer to send as a courtesy.</p> <p>I'd like firstly to know a little bit about you. Could you please tell me...?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What your current job entails ▪ How long you have been in your current post ▪ What you enjoy most about your job 	<p><i>Orientates respondent and gets them prepared to take part in the discussion.</i></p> <p><i>Outlines the 'rules' of the interview (including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and Data Protection Act guidelines)</i></p>
2. Topline thoughts on the GDC itself	10 mins
<p>Turning first to the Green Deal initiative generally, could you take a moment to describe it in your own words?</p> <p>PROBE - What would you say are the benefits of the initiative? Are there any drawbacks you can think of?</p> <p>Who in particular is the Green Deal Communities initiative aimed at helping? PROBE for geographic areas as well as demographic groups</p> <p>Do you think that the initiative will have the desired effect that you just outlined?</p> <p>PROBE</p> <p>What factors might hinder it?</p> <p>What will <u>success</u> look like for the initiative?</p> <p>What might the legacy of the scheme be? What should this legacy look like?</p>	<p>(Note to interviewer - make sure to remind them that we are just interested in PRS remit)</p>

3. Background to and details of the local GDC scheme	20 mins
<p>What has been your role in terms of helping to roll out GDC in your area? What role do you have in relation to the PRS element of the GDC? What support have you had in doing so?</p> <p>PROBE – if a larger team who was part of the team? Is this support sufficient, in your experience?</p> <p>Have any other delivery partners outside of [Bristol/Cambridgeshire/Suffolk/Haringey] been involved? PROBE: e.g. contracted companies or other Local Authority partners, and what their specific roles are</p> <p>IF NOT ALREADY COLLECTED INFORMATION, GET NAMES, CONTACT DETAILS, ROLES OF STAFF WHO IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO INTERVIEW AS PART OF THE RESEARCH (SPECIFIC TO PRS)</p> <p>FOR LAs WORKING WITH OTHER LAs OUTSIDE OF THEIR LA AREA (E.G. GLOUCESTERSHIRE WORKING WITH BRISTOL AND OTHER LONDON BOROUGHs WORKING WITH HARINGEY): What is the division of roles with the other Local Authorities that are involved in the delivery of the scheme? PROBE – How were these authorities chosen and what was your role in this? What contact do you have/help do you give them?</p> <p>PROBE - Were there any benefits of partnering with other authorities? i.e pooling resources etc.</p> <p>What is the GDC PRS incentive to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PRS tenants? - PRS landlords <p>PROBE ON: Financial incentive, for each of measures included. How has it changed over time – and why? PROBE –is there a GDA incentive (if so, how much) and/or a separate offer incentive?</p> <p>Is there an incentive for the scheme on top of easing the financial burden for renters/landlords?</p> <p>Can you briefly, in your own words, outline the journey that customers go through in taking up the incentive?</p> <p>We have put together an example customer journey that someone might go through in taking up the incentive. Is this an accurate reflection of the journey that PRS tenants/landlords go through in [Bristol/Cambridgeshire/Haringey/Suffolk]? IF THERE ARE ANY VARIATIONS LOCALLY, ASK THEM TO ANNOTATE THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY OR TALK IT THROUGH AND ANNOTATE TOGETHER</p>	<p>Assumes a F2F interview but could be sent via email</p> <p>Interviewer – compare and contrast with their spontaneous journey</p>

ALSO PROBE ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS INCLUDED ON THE IMAGE.

Has the PRS incentive been delivered in a targeted way geographically or through a broader roll-out? E.g. have any specific locations or neighbourhoods been targeted over others?

How were they targeted? E.g. by tenure, EPC rating, property type, ability to pay/fuel poverty etc.

How has the scheme been marketed?

PROBE – does it fall under a wider energy efficiency programme in the LA? If so, under what branding is the GDC PRS? Or was the scheme set up from a previous scheme (ie CERT/CESP, Pioneering Places, Core Cities etc)

How is the PRS sector targeted/made aware that the scheme exists?

PROBE, MAKING CLEAR WHETHER TARGETED AT LANDLORDS OR TENANTS – through landlords, estate agents, leaflets, flyers, home visits, letters, telephone calls, local media, existing landlord or tenant fora etc. Was it a combination of different types of marketing? I.e. a phased approach, street by street/mass marketing etc?

Are any third parties involved in marketing?

Has the focus been more on targeting landlords or tenants? Has this changed over the course of delivering the GDC to the PRS? If so, why?

Which of these channels are, in your experience, the most effective in terms of generating interest in the scheme? Why is that?

Which ones haven't been effective? PROBE why is this?

Have some channels been better for tenants rather than landlords or visa versa?

Did the effectiveness change over time?

Has a combination of marketing approaches worked best?

What questions do the public ask about the initiative?

- **What are they most concerned about?**
- **What are they most uncertain/confused about?**

Are these different between landlords and tenants?

How do you address these concerns? Does that satisfy them?

4. Successes and challenges of the GDC PRS

10 mins

Thinking generally, how easy or difficult has it been to roll out the initiative in your area?

How easy or difficult has it been to roll out the GDC generally? What about the PRS specifically?

<p>What have you found <u>easy</u> about project implementation?</p> <p>PROBE Why was that? Was it because you had support? Or wider interest in the scheme?</p> <p>What have you found <u>difficult</u> about project implementation?</p> <p>PROBE Was this due to a lack of support or interest? Or resourcing issues?</p> <p>Has there been anything specific to your area which has encouraged or hindered take-up of the initiative? PROBE on environmental or demographic factors</p> <p>Have potential beneficiaries dropped out at particular points? REVISIT THE AGREED CUSTOMER JOURNEY IF NECESSARY)</p> <p>What were the reasons for this?(Was there anything that helped, or would have helped, prevent people from dropping out?</p> <p>Is there anything about the design of the GDC PRS funding that could be improved to increase take-up?</p> <p>Has the PRS incentive helped the local authority to upgrade F and G rated properties within the region? Why/why not?</p> <p>How was the PRS Scheme received by the supply chain (installers etc.) – what views did they have overall and specifically on PRS?</p> <p>What factors seemed most effective in motivating landlords? What factors created barriers to take-up?</p>	
5. Research with beneficiaries/other stakeholders of the GDC PRS	
<p>How do you monitor take up of the Green Deal amongst the PRS in your area? Do you have targets etc.?</p> <p>Explain that we are going to conduct research with beneficiaries of the scheme and those involved in delivering it – tenants, landlords and letting agents.</p> <p>Do you have contact details of beneficiaries that we could get access to invite to take part in our research? (EXPLAIN DATA PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS IF NECESSARY, AND EMPHASISE THAT WE WOULD ADHERE TO THE CONDITIONS OF THE MRS CODE OF CONDUCT).</p> <p>What about letting agents? PROBE - Have they been involved in the marketing/delivery etc.?</p>	5 mins

<p>IF CONTACT DETAILS ARE NOT AVAILABLE: Are there any other ways in which we could tap into existing networks to interview letting agents or landlords that might have been involved in the GDC PRS scheme?</p>	
<p>6. Looking to the future</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>How has the initiative been received by the local authority generally?</p> <p>How will the learning and legacy of the scheme be used for future energy efficient schemes – what will the key learning be?</p> <p>Was the scheme effective in helping to improve F& G properties? Were there any particular factors that made a difference to them?</p> <p>Was there anything that turned out differently from your expectations?</p> <p>If you could go back to the beginning of the delivery of the PRS element of the GDC in your area, would you change anything?</p> <p>Would you change the incentive that was provided? If so, how? PROBE WHERE RELEVANT ON THE GDA SUBSIDY/INCENTIVE AND THE MEASURE OFFER/INCENTIVE</p>	
<p>7. Key messages</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>What would be your key message to DECC about how well the roll out of the PRS scheme has gone in your area?</p> <p>What one key thing do they need to bear in mind for a future PRS specific energy efficiency scheme?</p> <p>Thank and close – explain next steps</p>	

3.1.2 Landlord Discussion Guide

Uptake of the PRS incentive

FINAL discussion guide for depth interviews with landlords

1. Research objectives

The objectives of the research are to explore the impact of additional funding on the uptake of the Green Deal in the private rented sector (PRS) of selected pilot local Green Deal Community (GDC) authorities. The Green Deal helps householders to make energy saving home improvements such as insulation by allowing them to pay for some or all of the improvements over time on their electricity bill.

The overall aim is to enable improved domestic energy efficiency by ensuring that work done is affordable. By extension, there will be a reduction in the amount of household energy needed, therefore reducing our reliance on imported energy supplies.

The Green Deal has had some success with home owners and social housing. However, the PRS faces additional challenges in benefiting from the Green Deal, such as the necessary consents that must be obtained from both parties (landlords and their tenants), the 'split incentive' that exists and lower levels of awareness of the Green Deal. Green Deal Communities (GDC) funding has 'enabled local authorities and their local partners to maximise the delivery of Green Deal plans across whole streets/areas including hard to reach property sectors'.

Across the project, we will explore the reasons for varying levels of Green Deal uptake in the selected areas.

The primary research questions are as follows;

- How were potential Green Deal stakeholders and beneficiaries (landlords, letting agents) influenced by, and aware of, the PRS funding and marketing?
- What was the key draw of the Green Deal - which elements were felt to be attractive and which were not?
- What other interventions could have helped, or might be helpful to others in similar situations?

There are also secondary research questions, as follows:

- How were potential Green Deal tenant beneficiaries influenced by the PRS funding and marketing?
- What were the factors that led or did not lead to installations or Green Deal Assessments (GDAs)? Why were these factors important? What factors were unintended?
- Did the PRS incentives assist local authorities in upgrading F and G rated properties within their region?

The findings of the study will allow DECC to understand the effectiveness of the piloted scheme in the four areas that received additional funding beyond the GDC programme

2. Structure of the discussion

Notes	Guide sections	Guide timings
1. Introductions and background	Explains the purpose and ground rules for the interview	5 mins
2 Green Deal Specifically	Their understanding of the Green Deal specifically and its wider benefits	5 mins
3. Initial approach	How they first became aware of the scheme and the fact that they might benefit from it	15 mins
4. Eligibility and assessment	Their experience of the in-home assessment and what they were told about their eligibility	5 mins
5. Awarding of the incentive	The financial arrangements that were put in place and the administration of the grant itself	10 mins
6. Installation	The process of installing the modifications to their property and how smooth or difficult this process was	5 mins
7. General thoughts and key messages	Their reflections on the scheme in general and how it could best be advertised to other landlords	5 mins
8. Close and contact details	Conclusions and key messages	2 mins

We use several conventions to explain to you how this guide will be used, described below.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>(Timing in minutes)</i> <i>Notes and prompts</i>
<p>Bold = Question or read out statement: Questions that will be asked to the participants if relevant. Not all questions are asked during fieldwork based on the moderator's view of progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bullet = prompt: Prompts are not questions – they are there to provide guidance to the moderator if required. ▪ CAPITALISED INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO THE MODERATOR IN MANAGING THE INTERVIEW <p>Typically, the researcher will ask questions and use the prompts to guide where necessary. Not all questions or prompts will necessarily be used during the discussion</p>	<p>This area is used to summarise what we are discussing, provides informative notes, and some key prompts for the moderator</p>

1. Introductions and background	5 mins
<p>Introduce self/Ipsos MORI – stress role as independent research organisation i.e. independent of X local authority and the Department of Energy and Climate Change who are funding the Green Deal Communities programme, and that we are here to gather all opinions.</p> <p>Explain the aim of the discussions; here to talk about their experiences of receiving financial grants through the Green Deal so that (LOCAL AUTHORITY) and DECC can better understand how the scheme is being delivered. It will also help other landlords and tenants as it will help the government to understand how to deliver energy policy.</p> <p>Contact details were supplied by (LOCAL AUTHORITY)</p> <p>Confidentiality – reassure responses anonymous and that information about individuals will not be passed on to anyone, so they should feel free to speak openly and honestly as possible. Explain that we adhere strictly to the MRS Code of Conduct which forbids us from passing on individual details.</p> <p>Remind that no right or wrong answers, all answers are valid and they are welcome to stop or ask questions at any time. If anything that they would prefer not to talk about or do not feel comfortable answering then they are welcome not to.</p> <p>Get permission to digitally record – transcribe for quotes and an accurate record, again explain that there is no detailed attribution.</p> <p>Reminder of incentive (£30) – payable in cash for F2F interviews and by cheque for telephone interviews. Interview should last no longer than 60 minutes.</p> <p>I'd like firstly to know a little bit about you. Could you please tell me...?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How long you have been a landlord? ▪ Do you manage the relationship yourself or do so via a landlord/managing agent? ▪ How many properties do you let out? Are they all in (AREA)? ▪ Was the property/ies you had the work done on....? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Freehold/leasehold ○ In a conservation area? A listed property? ○ What type of property? Flat? Purpose built? Detached house? Terrace? Rough period it was built? ▪ Are you generally satisfied with the condition of the property? If not, what would you improve? ▪ What about the other properties you own? Are they similar? 	<p><i>Orientates respondent and gets them prepared to take part in the discussion.</i></p> <p><i>Outlines the 'rules' of the interview (including those we are required to tell them about under MRS and Data Protection Act guidelines)</i></p> <p><i>To understand if there are differences by 'professional' landlords and those with fewer properties</i></p>

2. The Green Deal specifically	5 mins
<p>Turning specifically to the (GREEN DEAL) initiative, could you take a moment to describe it in your own words?</p> <p>PROBE - What would you say are the benefits of the initiative? Are there any drawbacks you can think of? PROBE - What about for tenants?</p> <p>Who in particular do you believe is the initiative aimed at helping? PROBE for geographic areas as well as demographic groups</p> <p>What would you say the main attraction of the scheme is to landlords?</p> <p>Do you think that the initiative will have the desired effect?</p> <p>PROBE What factors might hinder it?</p> <p>(Note to interviewer - if needed, make sure to remind them that we are just interested in PRS remit)</p>	<p>INTERVIEWER NOTE THAT TERMINOLOGY MAY VARY AND THEY MAY KNOW THE SCHEME AS SOMETHING ELSE EG 'SOLID WALL FUND' OR THE LOCAL BRANDING – TRY TO USE THE TERMINOLOGY THEY ARE FAMILIAR WITH</p> <p>TRY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE AWARE THAT THERE WAS TARGETED FUNDING IN THEIR AREA.</p>
3. The initial approach/contact	15 mins
<p>I'd now like to turn to your personal experience of the (GREEN DEAL)</p> <p>Thinking back, can you remember how you first became aware of the scheme?</p> <p>PROBE FULLY – PROMPT ONLY IF NECESSARY to JOG MEMORY, eg. Leaflet through the door Word of mouth TV/ Newspaper article or advert Doorstep visit from LA officer/sales agent Local roadshow or event Through landlord association or other landlords Through my letting agent Through my tenant</p> <p>What were your initial perceptions of the scheme? Did you think it was something that you might be able to benefit from?</p> <p>What initially attracted you to the scheme? PROBE: financial incentive, ease of application, make home warmer or more energy efficient, reduce energy bills, preparation for the 2018 minimum energy efficiency standards</p> <p>Is there anything that you liked or disliked about the marketing approach? Did it feel like it was aimed at you?</p>	<p>INTERVIEWER NOTE THAT TERMINOLOGY MAY VARY AND THEY MAY KNOW THE SCHEME AS SOMETHING ELSE EG 'SOLID WALL FUND' OR THE LOCAL BRANDING – TRY TO USE THE TERMINOLOGY THEY ARE FAMILIAR WITH</p>

<p>Did you have any apprehensiveness about it? Were these concerns addressed? How? If not, what would have combated them? What would you have needed to know?</p> <p>At what point did you become aware of the opportunity for your property to benefit from the Green Deal?</p> <p>Had you considered doing the work before you heard about the funding you could receive?</p> <p>PROBE TO DETERMINE IF DIFFERENT FROM THE ABOVE</p> <p>What did you do once you became aware of the scheme?</p> <p>PROBE FULLY – PROMPT ONLY IF NECESSARY to JOG MEMORY, eg. Explored further about eligibility Explored further about the cost of installation Explored further about money saved on bills Checked in with tenant Checked in with letting agent Waited/expected to be contacted by sales people/energy supplier</p>	<p>TRY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE AWARE THAT THERE WAS TARGETED FUNDING IN THEIR AREA. WAS THIS COMMUNICATED THROUGH OFFICIAL LITERATURE?</p>
<p>4. Eligibility and green deal assessment</p>	<p>5 mins</p>
<p>Can you tell me if anyone visited the property to make an energy assessment before the installation?</p> <p>Who was it that made the assessment? PROBE IF UNSURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Deal Assessor (might be the partner firm e.g. Climate Energy) • Chartered surveyor/surveyor/assessor • Sales person • Someone from energy supply company • Someone else <p>Did you have to pay for the assessment? How much did you pay? PROBE When was this fee payable?</p> <p>Did you have to do anything in advance of the assessment (e.g. get paperwork such as energy bills and statements together)?</p> <p>How was your eligibility assessed? Was it made during the initial contact or at the assessment itself?</p> <p>What do you remember about the assessment report that you received?</p>	<p>Note to interviewer - in some LAs customers had an initial visit to see if they were eligible and to talk them through the scheme etc and then a more technical report for the GDAR – just to let the interviewer be aware</p>

<p>Did you speak with the assessor about your property? What did they recommend?</p> <p>What did the offer or incentive include? Was the incentive offered to the tenant and the landlord?</p> <p>How easy was it to decide to take up the offer/quote? FOR THOSE WHO AGREED TO THE QUOTE: What was the main reason you decided to agree to the quote? Were there any other reasons? What were your expectations of what impact the measure would have on your home/property?</p> <p>IF NOT ALREADY MENTIONED: Would you have installed the measure in this property without the financial incentive?</p> <p>Who initiated the request for an assessment? Was the tenant involved? Was the tenant involved in the decision to accept the offer? If so, how?</p> <p>Did the incentive for the tenant contribute to the decision to go ahead?</p> <p>IF NOT ALREADY MENTIONED: Did the fact that the measure could help improve the EPC rating of the property have any impact on your decision to go ahead? Why / why not?</p> <p>What is the EPC rating of the property when it was first assessed? And now?</p>	
<p>5. Awarding of the incentive / taking up the quote</p>	<p>10 mins</p>
<p>Following the assessment, what were the next steps to advance the installation? Who was driving this stage of the process forward? PROBE IF NEEDED: tenant/LA/delivery body (e.g. climate energy)</p> <p>What information were you given about the contractors who would carry out the installation? Were you given a choice in terms of who you could use? IF YES: did you select a preferred assessor?</p> <p>What were you told would need to happen?</p> <p>How long did this process take? Were you satisfied with how things progressed, or not? Why not? What could have improved this?</p> <p>Who did you liaise with across all these different stages?</p> <p>PROBE – local authority, delivery partner (i.e. Climate Energy), contractor, etc.</p> <p>What information were you given about finance and payment terms?</p> <p>Do you remember how much you were required to contribute towards installation? ... how much was contributed by the scheme?</p>	

<p>PROBE – when was this amount payable?</p> <p>Have you heard about Green Deal Finance? What do you know about it?</p> <p>At what stage were you told about this feature of the scheme?</p> <p>Did you take advantage of it?</p> <p>IF NOT – what were the barriers to using this feature?</p>	<p>PROBE FOR SPONTANEOUS AWARENESS OF THE 25% CONTRIBUTION</p>
6. Installation	5 mins
<p>Can you tell me a little more about the work that was done on your property?</p> <p>Prompt only if necessary – did you benefit from...?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wall insulation • Cavity wall insulation • Loft insulation • New boiler <p>How was the installation arranged?</p> <p>What did the installation involve? What did the installers need to do?</p> <p>How were you affected? How would you describe the experience?</p> <p>Were you happy with the work done? Do you have confidence in the quality of the installation?</p> <p>How well informed did you feel about the installation through the process?</p> <p>How satisfied were you with the overall installation experience?</p>	<p><i>May not be relevant for landlords – check if tenants passed on any information/feedback/complaints about these issues</i></p>
7. General thoughts about involvement in the scheme	5 mins
<p>Since the installation, has your tenant noticed any differences? PROBE for other factors – Does the property look better/smarter/cleaner? Bills lower? Warmer? Less mould/condensation/drafts?</p> <p>Thinking generally, how do you now feel about the fact that you took up the Green Deal offer?</p> <p>Are you glad you did?</p> <p>What would you prefer to have happened differently?</p>	<p>ADJUST PHRASING ACCORDING TO BRANDING USED</p>

<p>PROBE IF NECESSARY – speed of installation, use of preferred suppliers, flexibility around the installation options</p> <p>What, in your view, is the best way to get the message out to other landlords about the scheme?</p> <p>What are the best ‘hooks’ of the scheme for landlords similar to you?</p> <p>Have you recommended the scheme to other landlords? What did you tell them about it?</p> <p>What would be your key message to DECC about how well the roll out of the Green Deal to the Private Rental Sector has gone in your area?</p> <p>Are there any improvements that could be made to the scheme?</p> <p>What one key thing do they need to bear in mind for a future PRS specific energy efficiency scheme?</p> <p>Are you aware of the new minimum energy efficiency standards legislation for PRS domestic properties? If so, has this influenced your plans in any way? (Note to interviewer - if needed, we are referring to the change in minimum EPC standard of E that is required from 2018)</p> <p>(if landlord is aware of new minimum standards) And are you aware that landlords who cannot get their property up to the minimum standard for legitimate reasons will have to register an exemption on an exemptions register? (Note to interviewer - landlords can be exempt in certain circumstances, eg if they rent a listed building and they cannot obtain planning permission to make the energy efficiency improvements)</p> <p>(if landlord is aware of exemptions register) Are you expecting to rely on a minimum energy efficiency exemption for any property you let?</p>	
<p>8. Close and contact details</p>	<p>2 mins</p>
<p>We’d also like to hear about tenants’ experiences, would we be able to speak with the tenant living in the property? COLLECT NAME, TELEPHONE NUMBER, ADDRESS</p> <p>IF HEARD ABOUT SCHEME THROUGH LETTING AGENT We’d like to speak with letting agents about the scheme and their involvement, would you be able to give us any contact details for your agent?</p> <p>COLLECT NAME/ADDRESS OF PARTICIPANT TO ISSUE CHEQUE</p> <p>THANK & CLOSE</p>	

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About Ipsos MORI's Social Research Institute

The Social Research Institute works closely with national governments, local public services and the not-for-profit sector. Its c.200 research staff focus on public service and policy issues. Each has expertise in a particular part of the public sector, ensuring we have a detailed understanding of specific sectors and policy challenges. This, combined with our methodological and communications expertise, helps ensure that our research makes a difference for decision makers and communities.