

**North Somerset Council**  
**Home Energy Conservation Act 1995**  
**Further Report (March 2017)**



## i) LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES

### Existing local plans

- The Council approved a Private Sector Housing Delivery Plan 2013 – 2016 which detailed the proposed actions in relation to Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency. A new Private Sector Housing Delivery Plan is planned when a Stock Condition report has been received (expected Summer 2017) with enhanced data on energy efficiency and fuel poverty, using information from EPCs and English Housing Survey
- The Housing Strategy (2016-2021) has been updated; with dedicated section relating to home energy efficiency and fuel poverty.
- A review of housing conditions in the private rented sector is planned using the stock survey information to consider options for improvement.
- Climate Local – The Council have signed a commitment to Climate Local, the latest update is published on our website
- A Supplementary Planning Document was published in 2015 “Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places in North Somerset: Guidance for energy efficiency, renewable energy and the transition to zero carbon development”

### Baseline statistics & trends

Our current performance is as follows:

- Per capita CO2 emissions – 5.7 tonnes per person (data source DECC 2016); representing a 27% reduction since 2005.
- Fuel Poverty – 8.5% fuel poor households (DECC 2016) transitional period pending introduction of LIHC index. However, the stock condition survey indicated the number of fuel poor households is 12% (11,244 households) which is likely to be more realistic indicator given the sample size and increased EPC data.
- The level of home energy efficiency improvements reported since the last report remains disappointing which corresponds to the national trend and the low take up measures since closure of Green Deal and accessing funding through ECO schemes. Our estimate is that that home energy efficiency improved between 1% - 2% since the last report in 2013.
- The estimated cost to eliminate excess cold hazards from all homes in the private sector is estimated at over £12 million, largely linked to the high number of rural properties, off mains gas and reliant on electricity or fossil fuels. The full cost to implement measures is likely to be in region of £20 million.

### Targets and priorities

- We aim to reduce fuel poverty and now the government have published a revised Fuel Poverty Strategy (based on the Hill recommendations) we are considering how to incorporate the target into a local strategy. Achieving improvements to ensure all fuel poor households live in homes with an EPC of E or above will be challenging.
- Initial indications from our stock survey indicates the highest concentrations of fuel poverty (Low Income High Costs definition) in the private sector are found in the wards of Weston-super-Mare South, Weston-super-Mare Central and Weston-super-Mare Milton. This is the same for the private rented sector. We will explore options to bring about significant improvement in these areas.

We have identified a number of actions to improve home energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty including:

- Our social housing partners have completed a number of extensive schemes to improve insulation and heating systems.
- The Council support agencies offering debt advice services to residents.
- Promotion of the benefits of switching fuel suppliers and signpost to sources of support
- We have recently obtained a database of all EPCs completed in North Somerset and have commenced mapping the information to target interventions.
- Regularly host home energy advice drop in sessions in Council Gateways
- The fast approaching regulations covering the privately rented sector for compliance with the 'Minimum Level of Energy Efficiency standard (EPC band E) have been widely publicised across the sector.
- The Council's Housing Renewal Assistance Policy gives access to low cost loans including work to improve home energy efficiency in addition to any ECO or other funding available. The financial circumstances of individuals are taken into account when appropriate.
- **New action (July 2018)** The Council recently published a flexible statement of intent under ECO. <http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/18-19-PC-4-Signed.pdf>

### Energy Consumption

#### Existing local plans

- Our original HECA Strategy (1996) contained detailed plans to improve home energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in line with the targets suggested in the legislation i.e.30% energy efficiency and 20% CO2 reduction.
- The Climate Local statement confirms our commitment to improve energy efficiency.

	<p><b>Baseline stats &amp; trends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic electricity and gas consumption gas particularly shows a decline since 2005, in line with national trends.</li> </ul> <p><b>Targets and priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are revising our target for energy efficiency improvement but based on historic performance and trends especially the low take up of measures through Green Deal would estimate improvement of 1%-2% per year to 2019. This will be closely monitored and evaluated throughout the year and amended as appropriate depending on the uptake of measures through the funding regimes.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b><u>Domestic Carbon Emissions</u></b></p> <p><b>Existing local plans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are aiming to align with the national carbon reduction targets of the Climate Change Act; resulting in a reduction of around 25% by 2020 on 2010 levels.</li> <li>Our Climate Local commitment is scheduled to be reviewed this year to focus on key areas of activity to deliver the greatest carbon reduction including the domestic sector.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Green Deal and ECO</b></p>	<p><b>Green Deal</b> We are concerned that following the loss of funding for the Green Deal Finance Company (July 2015) due to low take-up and industry standards concerns; there has been no significant announcement of a replacement scheme to match delivery of possible measures. It will be interesting to monitor the impact and developments following the sale of the company to the private sector (January 2017).</p> <p><b>ECO</b> While we have been pleased to note the numbers of measures installed through ECO; we share the level of bureaucracy and technical requirements are over-burdonsome on installers, customers and local authorities. We would welcome any simplification of the scheme through ECO3 to help improve take up and targeting of resources to the worst performing households in fuel poverty.</p> <p><b>Partnerships</b> We are working closely with neighbouring local authorities to maximise the benefits available under ECO although the loss of Green Deal and the resultant fall out has impacted on what can be achieved.</p>	

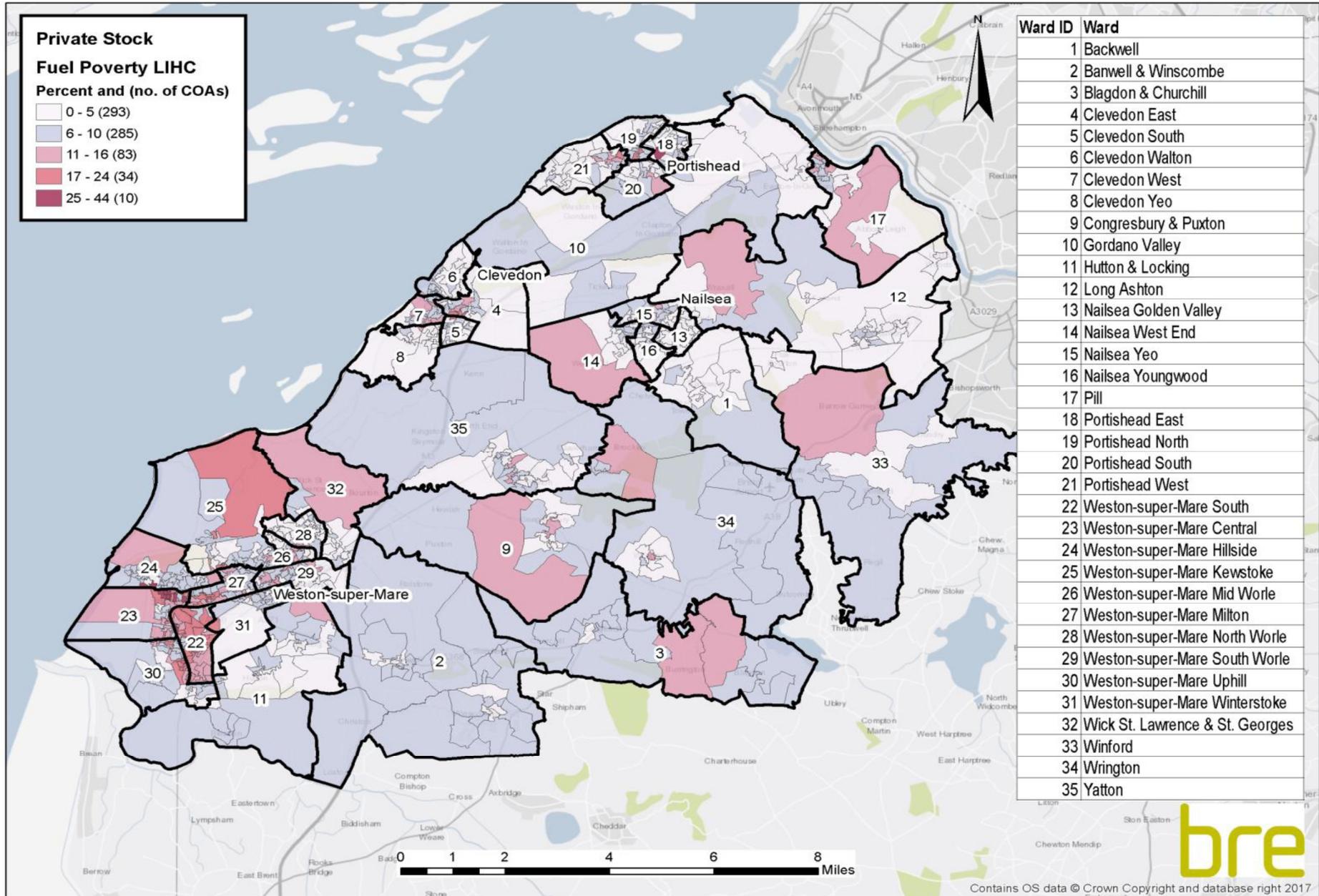
## HECA Further Report: North Somerset

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our existing partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Energy to provide energy advice has been extended to provide drop in advice and home visits, particularly to families.</li><li>• National Energy Action (NEA) continue to support us on eradication of fuel poverty; which will feed into the new Private Sector Housing Delivery Plan.</li><li>• The Council have established a community partnership working with older people to identify hazards within the home including excess cold and awareness training has been provided to front line staff to refer vulnerable households to sources of assistance.</li></ul>
<b>Renewable Heat Incentive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The uptake through domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) has declined although over 200 accreditation have been registered.</li><li>• We will continue to raise awareness of the incentive to encourage the take up of technologies through publicity and target rural communities via parish councils.</li></ul>
<b>Zero Carbon Homes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The removal of the zero carbon homes commitment is disappointing; even accepting the technical challenges of delivering these homes the target was a key driver for the construction industry. However, a review of the Supplementary Planning Document referenced above will consider how can strengthen the policy and re-instate zero carbon homes target is possible.</li></ul>
<b>EPCs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have recently obtained the complete data of EPCs for the district and are preparing an address-level dataset to aid targeting of resources in particular ECO and local schemes.</li><li>• Our Green Deal Communities project with Bristol City Council has ended partly as result of the loss of Green Deal funding but also the partner contractors entering administration.</li><li>• Actions in relation to the private rented sector are outlined above.</li><li>• Mapping of the EPC data from our stock survey will aid targeting of interventions.</li><li>• Our Private Sector Housing Forum (private landlords) have been briefed on the implications of MEES regulations scheduled for implementation in April 2018 and signposted to sources of funding.</li></ul>

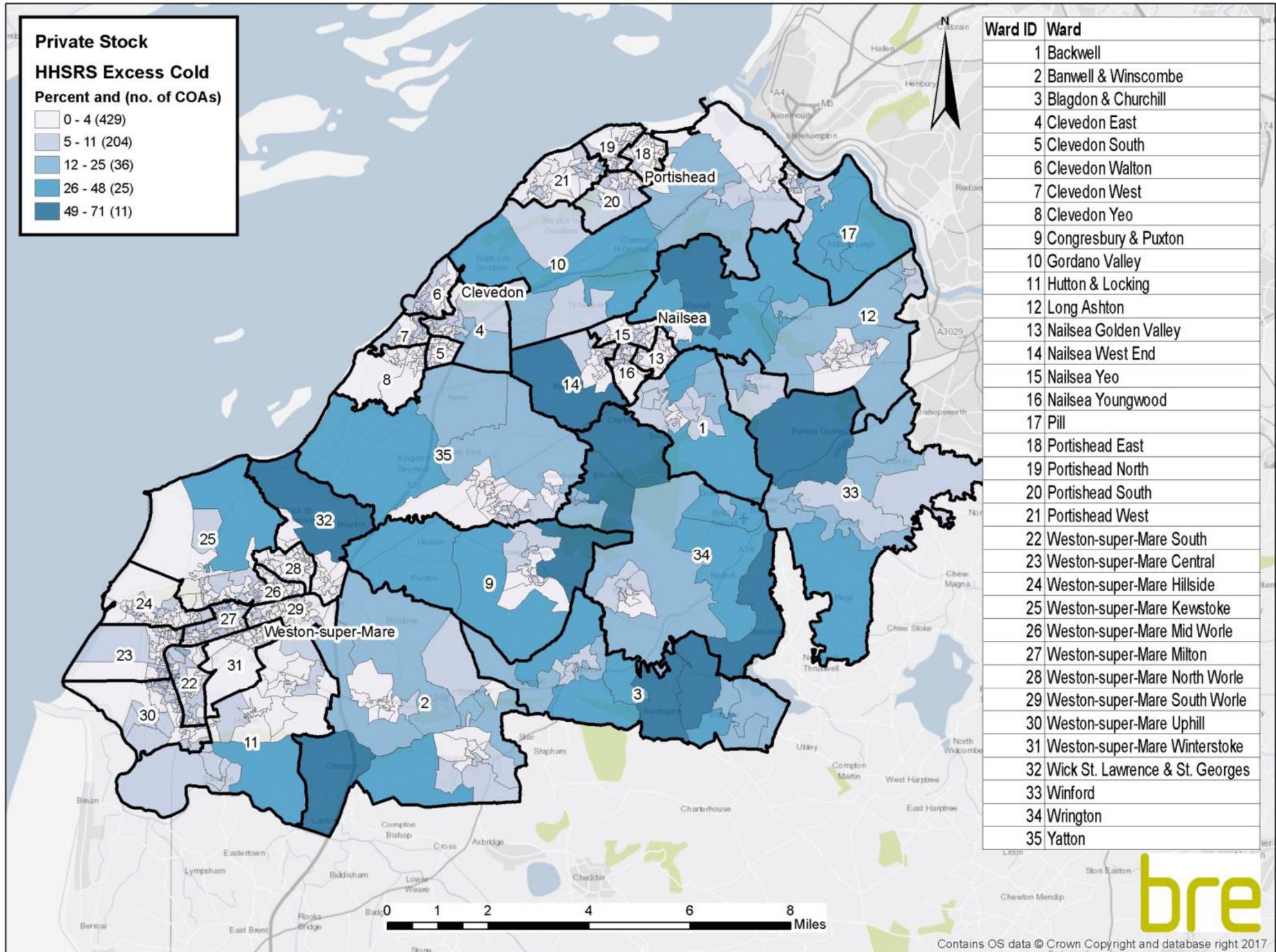
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A selection of maps follow which will be used to plan targeted interventions although localities which indicate a high proportion of dwellings with low simple SAP a largely rural, off gas which present greater challenges.

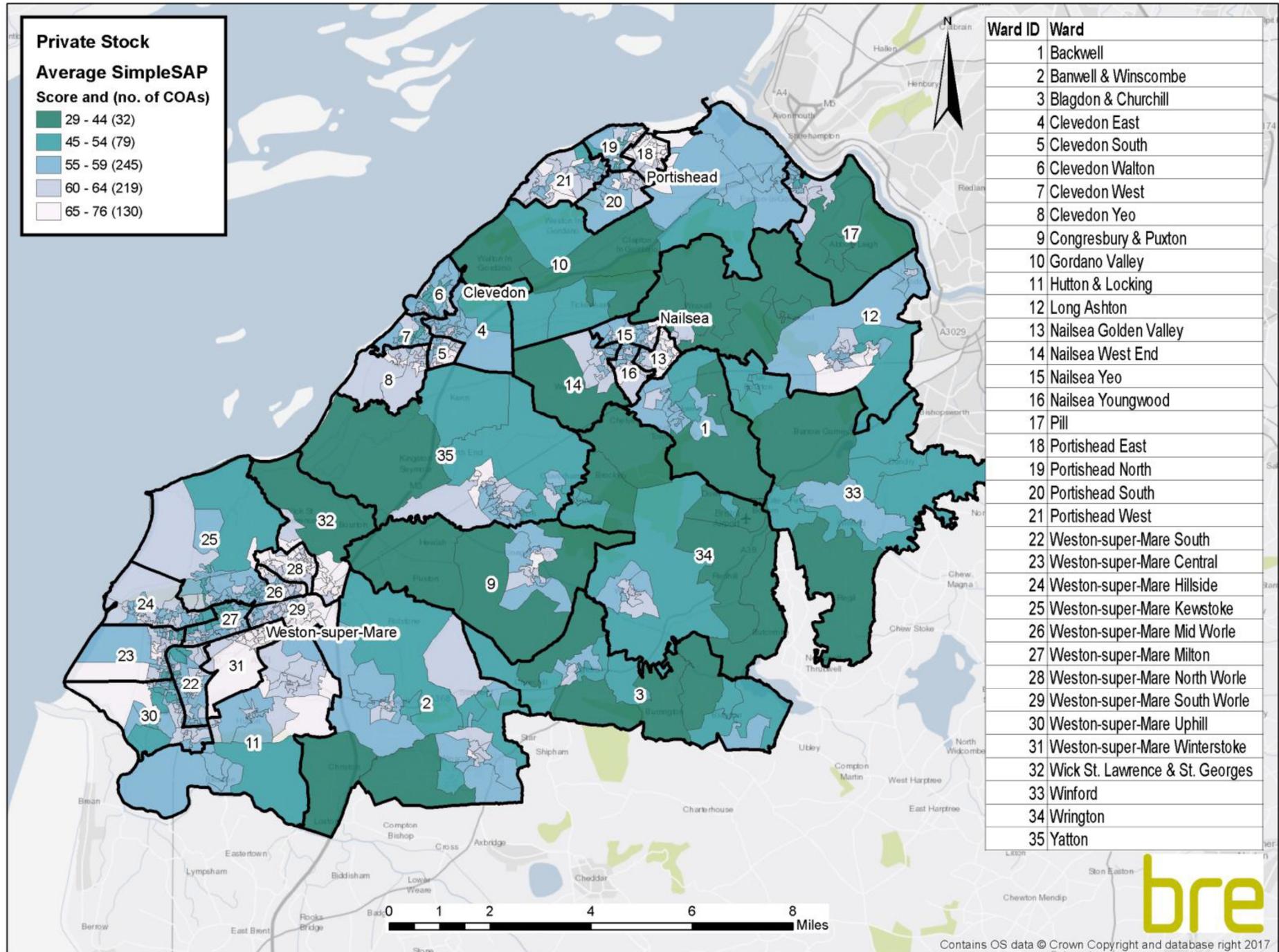
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Signed

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017

Howard Evans

Private Sector Housing Service Manager