



End of project impact report

Grant Awarded: £2670

Date Awarded: January 2019

Organisation Details

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Project Details

Project Title: Central CEF Community Energy Ambassadors

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IMPACT REPORT FOR PERIOD _June 2019 _____ TO ___November 2019 _____

Q1 In no more than 500 words please outline the key outcomes of your project.

Between July and November 2019 we ran two Community Energy Ambassadors training courses in Selby, jointly funded by the Central CEF, WEA and Stronger Communities. The first course started on 16th July 2019 and the second on 15th October 2019. Both ran for 5 weeks and were held at Community House in Selby. In total we had 16 people attend across the two courses, these included volunteers involved with Selby Food Bank, Horton Housing Community Cafes, Big Local, Selby District Disability Forum, Selby AVS, St Wilfrid's Wellbeing Café, Over 50s Computing Club, Hands of Hope, Selby Abbey, Selby Community Choir, Friendship Friday, and Horizons, as well as a few interested residents. The course covered issues around debunking myths around energy use, understanding how much appliances cost to run, heating types and fuel poverty in the Selby District, understanding energy bills, switching energy supplier, renewable energy technologies, and schemes available to help residents with their energy bills and heating.

Feedback collated from the attendees showed that:

- Knowledge around energy increased from 2.15/5 before the course to 4.77/5 after the course
- Course content was rated at 5/5 and 100% of attendees would recommend the course to others
- Nearly 85% of attendees had already spoken to at least one other person about some of the topics we covered throughout the period of the course. On average they had shared information with 4 other people, thus reaching an extra 64 people through the project

During the session on energy bills and switching, attendees brought in their own energy bills and we reviewed their tariffs. Actual savings were generated of £1,865 just from people on the course switching their own energy supplier or tariff, applying for financial help towards their bills or getting a water meter fitted. This was a vital part of the course as, by going through the process themselves, attendees are much better equipped to then talk to others, to be able to share their own experience, and to allay any fears.

Q2 In no more than 500 words please demonstrate how the project has met the Community Development Plan objectives that were identified in the original application for funding.

Our project met the Community Development Plan objectives of:

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: Raise awareness and break down barriers around community health and well-being and encourage practical support activities.

- a) Ultimately the main aim of supporting residents with their energy costs is to ensure that everyone can afford to heat their homes to a comfortable and safe temperature, and to minimise the stress and anxiety that energy bills can cause. We have delivered a very practical and interactive course to teach local people all about energy, how people can reduce their costs and still be warm and well at home. Attendees have reduced their own bills and are now equipped to share information and practical energy saving tips further afield through community groups and their own social networks. Attendees are also now fully informed of local support schemes and thus would be able to signpost friends, family, neighbours or clients to appropriate services should more in-depth advice be needed.
- b) The course is designed to be participatory and interactive and offers an opportunity for attendees to not just learn about energy but also to build confidence and improve communication skills, as well as empowering people to make changes in their own households.
- c) In some cases the project has also contributed to alleviating social isolation and created practical support activities. This was a new opportunity in Selby where residents could attend a five-week course, learn new skills, meet new people, build relationships, share experiences and feel part of a new initiative. Going forward we will give the Community Energy Ambassadors opportunities to be involved in a number of community engagement activities in early 2020.

Q3 In no more than 250 words please give details of any additional benefits or objectives that the project has met that were not anticipated/ outlined in the original application for funding.

We were really pleased to have such a good mix of people attend the course who were very positive and engaged with the topic. It was particularly beneficial to have a large number of people who are involved with different community groups in Selby. We will now be looking at opportunities to work with the Energy Ambassadors to link up with attendees of these groups and to potentially organise awareness events or talks. One unexpected outcome came from a discussion around solar panels which led to one attendee discovering that her elderly father had been persuaded to pay £1000s to have un-necessary equipment fitted to his existing solar PV installation. With our support the participant has subsequently felt empowered to take the case on to try and get him some money back.

Here are some of the attendees on the second Selby course (where permission has been given to share a photo!):



Any other comments on the project and its success:

Feedback comments:

What was most useful?

- “to learn how to save money and to switch suppliers [and] how much energy we do actually use”
- “Everything was useful”
- “how to understand my energy bills”
- “the way the course was presented with quizzes, facts and slide information”
- “info on insulation and heating improvements”
- “learning what appliances cost to run”
- “learning about what help there is”

Other comments:

- “Totally brilliant course”
- “I now feel confident to address my finances and bills”
- “Very informative, well set out, tutor was very knowledgeable”
- “Very informative, well run course”
- “Loved it!”
- “I really enjoyed the course”
- “The course was very good”

Thanks to the Central CEF for providing funding for this project.