

## Project Brief



The Project Brief is the **first** thing to do. It should be completed before **any** activity of any sort takes place. This is because the Brief is the document that subject to authorisation triggers the development of the Business Case.

<b>Project Name</b>	Central CEF Community Energy Ambassadors
<b>Project Manager</b>	Kate Urwin
<b>Document Author</b> (if different from Project Manager)	
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Yorkshire Energy Doctor CIC

### Benefit

Why would the community benefit from this project? Is there clear evidence of need for this project- detail any consultation, statistics or reports that back up for project brief.

There is a real need to educate people around energy use in the home and to increase awareness of the schemes that are available to support vulnerable households. This will enable more informed actions to be taken to manage energy use, reduce costs and make homes warmer.

Surveys show that 60% of adults don't understand their energy bills (more than any other household bill) (uSwitch, 2016). Nearly two-thirds of people worry about energy prices and in 2017 consumers voted that energy prices should be the second biggest priority for the UK government, behind only social care for the elderly (Which? 2017).

Problems with energy bills lead to financial difficulties and debt, which causes stress and anxiety, and living in a cold home negatively impacts on physical health. From our previous work we have helped residents make average savings of £234 per year by switching their tariff and have successfully applied to get over £26,000 of energy and water debts written off (an average of £1,358 per household who has been in arrears). This is in addition to making referrals for insulation or boiler schemes, giving general energy saving advice and ensuring people are aware of other services and sources of support that are available in the district.

Through our project we will train residents, Councillors, community volunteers or frontline staff from organisations within the Central CEF area so that they are equipped to work as Community Energy Ambassadors.

This will firstly benefit the participants directly by helping them to reduce and better manage their own energy costs. It will also improve their confidence and knowledge in this specialist area and, whilst doing so, enhance transferable skills in communication, problem-solving and providing advice. We will enthuse attendees and motivate them to use their new knowledge and skills to help others in their community.

The project will, therefore, have a much wider benefit - our new Energy Ambassadors will be encouraged to cascade information and knowledge further afield to their own social networks, to friends, family members, neighbours or constituents in the Central CEF area. In this way, many more people within the CEF area will benefit from energy savings and warmer homes.

The Selby East and Selby West Wards have been specifically identified by Selby District Council as two of the five priority areas in the district for tackling fuel poverty. This means that any household with an income of less than £21,000 in these areas is deemed as being at risk of fuel poverty and is eligible for support to improve the energy efficiency of their home, irrespective of whether they receive any benefits. In areas around Abbots Road and Flaxley Road, 14.2% and 15.9% of people are in fuel poverty. Over the last year we have received 201 referrals for home energy visits in the Selby District, 66 of them have been in the Central CEF area (33%). There is, therefore, a real need to do more to support residents who are on a low income, facing unaffordable energy bills, who are in energy debt and who are living in cold homes. We already have around 10 people we know of who would be interested in attending this course and that is before advertising it more widely.

## Details of the Project

*Please list the details of your project*

We would run two 5-week training courses (half a day each) to equip at least 15 local people with the skills and knowledge to act as Community Energy Ambassadors for the Central CEF area. As noted above, this will benefit the participants personally but they will also act as trusted voices within their own community as they will become fully equipped to cascade energy saving advice, as well as information on other sources of support available within their local area. This may be informally to friends, neighbours, or family members, or more formally to support the work of other community organisations. We have found throughout our work that word of mouth is a powerful tool to disseminate information

We will run two training courses in Selby, one at the library and the other is to be confirmed. Each course will consist of 5 sessions and will cover:

- Understanding fuel poverty
- How much different household appliances cost to run
- Smart meters, the pros and cons
- Understanding energy bills
- How to switch energy supplier
- Energy busting myths and facts
- Understanding heating systems and controls
- The schemes available to help people in fuel poverty and other low-income households
- Other sources of help and support to residents, particularly those who may be socially isolated

The modules will be interactive, using real life examples to demonstrate key topics, e.g. we will get participants to bring in their own energy bills and pictures of their own meters and heating controls, and we will bring energy monitors and electrical appliances to test energy use. We will create Ambassador packs for participants to build up as they progress on the course.

We developed the course content and materials thanks to a grant from the European Social Fund in 2017/18 and ran two courses through that project. We have also just run a third course in Tadcaster, funded by the Tadcaster and Villages CEF and have recently been awarded funding from Southern CEF to run courses in their area later this year. We have received very positive feedback from the participants, many have made cost savings themselves as well as cascading the knowledge gained further amongst their social networks.

## Project Objectives

*What will the project deliver, or what changes will it bring about and how are these linked to the CEF's Community development plan (CDP) for the area?*

Our project will tackle cold homes and high energy costs by looking to overcome the difficulties of getting support to those who most need it. We know that there is much distrust around energy issues, stemming from companies cold calling about switching energy supplier or promoting 'free' boilers or insulation. Additionally, there is increasing promotion of the need to be more aware of potential scams. This backdrop can deter people from actually accessing reputable and independent advice

We will look to overcome these barriers by skilling up residents, staff or volunteers within the Central CEF area so they can firstly save themselves money at home but, secondly, so they can act as a trusted person to support and advise other people within their local community and to signpost them to other support services. Ultimately this will save far more people money and, by doing so, help local residents be better able to afford their heating costs and be warmer in their homes.

We will link into the Community Development Plan objective: *raise awareness and break down barriers around community health and well-being and encourage practical support activities*. Being cold at home can make people ill and exacerbate underlying medical conditions. Being in debt with your energy supplier or worrying about the cost of energy bills can have a significant negative impact on mental well-being. The course will help attendees in all of these areas with the ultimate aim of helping people to be able to heat their home at an affordable price.

The project also touches upon Loneliness and isolation and creates practical support activities. We are introducing an exciting new opportunity into the area where residents can attend a five-week course, learn new skills, meet new people, share experiences and feel part of a new initiative. We will then encourage people to share their new knowledge with other people in their own social networks.

## Benefits

*Outline any key financial or non-financial benefits the project will deliver and how this will impact the community.*

Participants:

- 1) Direct financial benefit – estimated average saving of £234 per person by taking actions such as changing energy supplier, having a water meter fitted, applying for a warm home grant, getting homes insulated. Some impacts are however much greater than this – on our recent Tadcaster course three participants changed their energy supplier during one session, saving over £1,400 between them.
- 2) Non-financial – development of confidence and skills in providing energy advice to others in the community. Provision of a new activity within a local area, thus potentially tackling loneliness and social isolation by encouraging people to get involved.

Wider community:

- 1) Direct financial benefit – from participants cascading information on energy saving and support schemes within local communities
- 2) Local Community Energy Ambassador will give a trusted point of contact for any energy-related queries, giving reassurance amongst vulnerable households
- 3) Improved health and well-being benefits, for example, helping to reduce energy costs or understand energy bills can alleviate stress and worry. Advising on ways to heat a home at a more affordable cost will negate the risks of people living in cold homes.
- 4) Increase in people accessing one-to-one specialist energy advice visits or other initiatives being run in the area.

## Project Approach / Delivery Options

*Outline any initial ideas for how the project might be delivered including external delivery, consultants, governance arrangements etc.*

We will firstly promote the opportunity to key people within the community. For example, we will email all District Councillors, CEF Board Members and Town/Parish Clerks. We will provide a poster to be displayed on community noticeboards and promote in village newsletters, the Selby Times, Selby AVS and Selby Advice Network. We will also promote via local organisations such as Horton Housing's Community Cafes, coffee mornings, over 60s groups, churches and via some of our existing community contacts. Our key aim is to upskill staff and volunteers from organisations and groups so they can help people in their community to make savings. However, the courses will be available to anyone who lives, works or volunteers in the Central CEF area.

Our two courses will then be held at two different community venues in Selby and will be delivered by the Yorkshire Energy Doctor CIC (2 staff members). We will run 5 sessions per course, each of which will last 3.5 hours.

## Project Timescales (Milestones)

Outline the overall timescale for project completion and include delivery phases together with milestone dates and funding deadlines, if appropriate. Your knowledge may be based on assumptions at this stage.

2019

March/April: Design flyer and publicise project as widely as possible

Summer: Recruit participants for first course and set dates and times

Sept/Oct: Run first course

Aug/Sept Recruit participants for second course and set dates and times

Oct/Nov: Run second course

## Project Resources (people and money)

These will be indicative at this early stage. However, on the basis of what you expect the project to look like, indicate your estimates together with the assumptions made in making the calculations.

- **Costs –**

Resource	Cost
Staff time to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote training courses</li> <li>- Sign up participants</li> <li>- Compile course materials</li> <li>- Deliver 5 x 3.5hour sessions, plus travel time and some preparation (x 2 cohorts, 2 staff members)</li> <li>- Publicity via social media etc</li> <li>- Prepare Ambassador packs for each participant</li> </ul>	£3,750
Admin support for publicity, promotion	£150
Flyer design	£45
Printing costs for flyers and posters	£100
Stationery (course packs etc)	£40
Travel (14 trips to cover course delivery & promotional activities @ average 11 miles each @45p/mile)	£70
Room hire costs (10 sessions, 4.5 hours each @£15 per hour)	£675
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,830</b>

- **People –**

2 staff members will deliver the course together, one specialist in energy and one with expertise in training and community work.

## **Funding**

*Where do you expect the money to come from, e.g. revenue or capital budgets, external grants, all from CEF funding or a combination? Please state if you don't know at this stage where the money is coming from. Please include any quotes you have*

One of the two courses will be run in partnership with WEA who have agreed to cover the costs of one course tutor and the room hire, costed at £1,160

We have also discussed the project with NYCC Stronger Communities Team and will be applying to them to match fund the WEA funding for one of the courses (£1,000 to be applied for)

We are applying to Central CEF for funding to cover the cost of the second course, including costs for 2 tutors and room hire, and some additional costs that are applicable to both courses such as the course packs, flyer design, staff costs for promotion and preparation, travel etc. = £2,670

Any follow-up work, e.g. referrals made by Energy Ambassadors for home visits or joint community advice events etc will be provided through other funded projects.

## **Links and Dependencies**

*Does this project link to any others in the area or services already available? Is its success dependent on the completion of other projects, funding from elsewhere, interest from volunteers etc?*

We are currently running this training course in Tadcaster and later this year will be running it twice in the Southern CEF area.

Once trained, the Community Energy Ambassadors for the Central CEF will be able to link in with other funded projects we currently have going on. For example, if they come across a vulnerable resident needing a one-to-one home visit then we would be able to meet this need through separate funding. Also, if the Ambassador is involved in a local community group and wants to run an advice session for that group then we can also support this through a different project.

Our aim is to create a new network of local expertise that can address the issues and options relating to energy usage, supported through the Yorkshire Energy Dr CIC. An exciting opportunity to make a lasting impact on the lives of many people in our local community.