

## Energy Champion and Assessor Training in Devon

### Summary

Devon County Council provided direct SEACS funding to two sustainable energy community partnerships to train community energy champions. This was to build the capacity of the partnership member to engage more effectively in their communities. Devon County Council also funded a sustainable energy social enterprise, 361 Energy, to train 4 energy assessors to enable them to undertake technical energy assessments (Domestic Energy Performance Certificates and Green Deal Assessments) during 2013. These assessments were offered free as part of their initial 40 Household Project.



### Objectives

- To increase the sustainable energy knowledge of volunteers so that they have more confidence when engaging with their communities on sustainable energy issues
- To engage with community energy volunteers and make them feel valued
- To provide members of sustainable energy social enterprise with the technical capability to independently energy assess homes in their communities

### Methodology/approach

#### Community Energy Champions

Two sustainable energy partnerships (South West Devon Community Energy Partnership and North Devon Biosphere Sustainable Energy Partnership) decided to fund a non qualification based session as it required less time commitment from delegates. The partnerships approached a number of volunteers to gauge interest in a one day training session offered the Centre for Sustainable Energy. Over 30 volunteers expressed an interest in receiving this training.

A number of quotations were sought from relevant training providers and a trainer was appointed based on the relevance of the training and associated costs.

A date was set and the training took place.

#### Energy Assessor Training

Domestic Green Deal Energy Assessor training courses were investigated, both distance and on-site options were considered. A provider was chosen based on price and location.

Training was booked and took place over a period convenient for delegates.

### Tools used, including those to reach target groups

A number of partnership events took place to engage with stakeholders in respective areas. These involved launching the strategic energy studies that were undertaken for South West and North Devon. These amongst other events were used to gather interest for the training.

### How was the project managed?

The relevant community energy partnerships and groups co-ordinated the training sessions along with the provider assisted by the Devon SEACS Energy Ambassador.



## Energy Champion Training

The South West Devon Community Energy Partnership is looking for people from within our community groups to attend a free training workshop to help deliver energy advice within our communities.

- Could you be an energy champion?
- Would you like to be able to offer energy advice on promotional stalls, advice surgeries, through talks to community groups?

The 1-day workshop will be delivered by experienced staff from the Centre for Sustainable Energy and will cover the following topics:

- introduction to why we need to save energy and the benefits of doing so, intro to fuel poverty
- saving energy around the home (using heating controls effectively, insulation, draughtproofing measures, condensation and damp).
- benefits of changing suppliers, reading meters and understanding energy bills
- introduction to the green deal process and ECO i.e. what help is out there for people, where to go for further advice

The training is going to be held in Newton Abbot at Forde House (Teignbridge District Council Offices) on 9th and 10th December from 9.30-4.30. Refreshments will be included.

Energy Champions will be asked to sign a basic training agreement to commit them to passing the information on within their communities.

Please let Katie Reville, PL21 Secretary know if you are interested in attending the above training as soon as possible as there are a limited number of spaces available. ([katie.shears@mac.com](mailto:katie.shears@mac.com) / 01752 698183 / 01752 698183 / 01752 698183)

communities and increase volunteer capacity significantly.

Local authorities may be able to provide free venues for training to keep costs down.

Important to try and filter potential delegates who have the capacity to volunteer. Typically these tend to be retired people but important to try and include students or younger people looking to gain experience.

Delegates found the interactive nature of the session, as opposed to a qualification, curriculum driven course, useful for brainstorming and to develop engagement ideas.

A non qualification course which required less time commitment enable more champions to attend the training.

On-site training for the technical Green Deal Assessor training was felt to be more time effective even though more time was needed away to attend training. This contrasted directly with training (Domestic Energy Assessor) that was done by distance learning.

Technical energy assessments (EPC's or Green Deal Assessments) take a long time with a significant amount of back-up administration involved.

Having in-house energy assessor expertise is invaluable in understanding the complexities involved with energy assessment and working up energy efficiency options for householders.

Being able to provide a technical energy assessment service gives sustainable energy social enterprises a service to offer to help generate revenue for the organisation.

## Who were the project partners?

Devon -361 Energy, South West Devon Community Energy Partnership, North Devon Biosphere Sustainable Energy Partnership and Devon County Council

## How was it financed and much did the project cost?

Devon County Council financed the training through its SEACS budget. The community energy champion training cost approximately ££1,000-1,500 per session depending on numbers of days booked (not including venue hire or lunch). Green Deal Assessor Training cost approximately £2, 000 per delegate. Travel costs were all met by the delegates.

## What were the lessons learned from the project?

Community Energy Champion training can be a good way to engage with volunteers and give them more confidence to engage on energy issues in their

## Contact for further information

361 Energy- [www.361energy.org](http://www.361energy.org)

SWDCEP- <http://www.swdcep.org.uk/>

National links –

Centre for Sustainable Energy  
<http://www.cse.org.uk/skills/training/>

Energy Saving Trust  
<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Organisation/s/Certification/Endorsed-Advice-Service/Energy-Saving-Trust-Advice-Training>

National Energy Action  
<http://www.nea.org.uk/training>