

Grants awarded to local energy advice services

Recipients of the Western Power Distribution Affordable Warmth Local Action Fund 2016 have been chosen

Not-for-profit organisations across the Midlands, South West England and South Wales recently applied for their share of almost \$80,000 (£60,000) funding pot as part of the electricity distribution company Western Power Distribution's (WPD's) Affordable Warmth Local Action Fund.

This new fund aims to help organisations to further tackle fuel poverty and improve wellbeing in their local communities. The money will go towards improving the delivery of energy advice and support services to vulnerable households. Services include guidance on energy tariff switching, saving energy, encouraging behavioural changes and income maximisation.

We had an unexpectedly large number of high quality applications from all over the region and the fund was actually oversubscribed seven times over! This made it all the more difficult to make a decision on the winners but there were some stand-out applications and so we're pleased to announce that the successful applicants are:

- [Central and North East Northamptonshire Citizens Advice](#)
- [Cornwall Rural Community Charity](#)
- [Derbyshire County Council's Healthy Home Programme](#)
- [Disability Resource Centre, Birmingham](#)

Alex Wilkes from WPD said: "We were taken aback by the volume and quality of applications but are delighted to have made the funding awards to four very worthy and capable organisations and we look forward to seeing the positive impact that these projects will have on vulnerable households in their areas."

James Watt, who was overseeing the Centre for Sustainable Energy's (CSE) administration of the fund said: "We're confident that these organisations will deliver successful projects to help local households to cut energy costs and make energy efficiency improvements in their homes. The projects will support vulnerable households such as those in fuel poverty and people with cold related health problems. This is also an opportunity to reach out to customers who may be eligible to join Western Power Distribution's Priority Service Register, which offers greater support to people during a power cut – a time which can be particularly worrying for some people. Links with health care professionals will also be a focus in order to build stronger awareness of the risks of cold homes and fuel bill struggles on physical and mental health and also to strengthen referral networks."

The CSE will also share their experience in delivering household energy advice services, including WPD's current 'Power Up!' programme. Through funding provided by WPD, CSE will also be supporting successful applicants by offering guidance, training and resources, sharing learning between organisations and helping develop common practices. As well as the focused training on offer to successful applicants, they're hoping to offer some training to some of the unsuccessful applicants too.

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