

SGN Safe and Warm Communities 2024-25

Funding scheme outcomes and impact



September 2025

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Background



The Safe and Warm Community scheme is an SGN-funded scheme in partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). It is funded through The Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Allowance and was set up in 2022.

The scheme's overall aim is to create a network that brings together and supports grassroots charitable organisations to work at a targeted local level to provide much-needed energy-safeguarding support for vulnerable and fuel poor customers. The scheme has been running since 2023 and covers SGN's network areas in England and Scotland.

CSE deliver the scheme on behalf of SGN – this means that we promote the scheme, recruit organisations to receive funding and get them set up to deliver the best outcomes for their communities. We provide ongoing support through training events, networking opportunities and one-to-one support and advice throughout the programme.

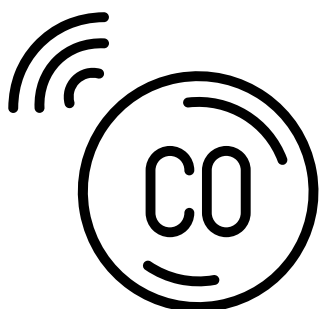
This report summarises the outcomes and impacts of the scheme across two rounds that ran between February 2024 and March 2025.

Households supported



17,476

Households supported with energy advice and other crisis support.

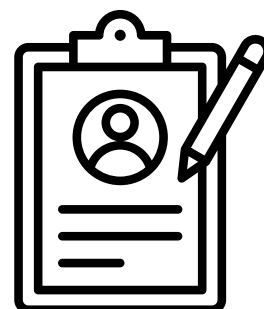


12,864

Households provided with carbon monoxide (CO) safety awareness advice.

11,663

Households supported to sign up to the Priority Services Register (PSR).



6,417

Households supported to access fuel vouchers.

8,223

Households supported to access debt advice.



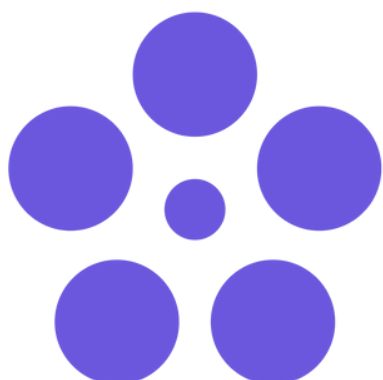
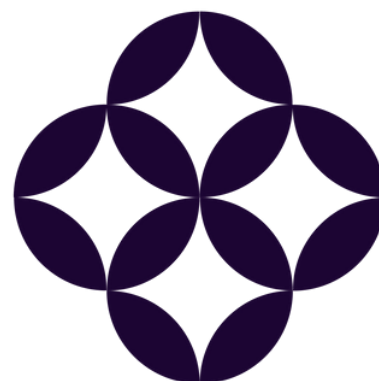
Impact on households



This page includes reflections from funded organisations on the impact the scheme and their work has had on the community they support.

"We continue to provide basic energy advice, information on gas safety and support with debt advice and benefit checks for vulnerable BME African refugees living in Croydon. This continued to reduce the negative effects of increasing energy price caps and raised the cost of living on the beneficiaries."

African Refugee Women Nzoto Ya Nkolo



"Staying warm affordably was frequently at the top of people's list of stressors. Since being equipped to help people with their practical stresses we've noticed that people are then free to work on their general wellbeing and do become much happier and healthier quicker."

Healthy n Happy

"Nepalese-language videos and translated SGN materials improved awareness of carbon monoxide safety and energy efficiency. This funding has enhanced well-being, strengthened community resilience, and facilitated integration, as reflected in increased engagement and positive feedback."

Folkestone Nepalese Community



Partnership with SGN



“We’ve been working with CSE for over three years now, and our SGN Safe and Warm partnership scheme has been invaluable in identifying the right grassroots organisations and empowering them with the skills and capacity needed to support vulnerable people in maintaining safe and warm homes. Through CSE’s expert guidance and resources, we have been able to extend meaningful help to households who might otherwise have been overlooked—especially at a time when advice services are overwhelmed and so many are struggling to afford basic essentials like energy. The broader network of personalised support CSE provides these grassroots organisations ensures these communities receive tailored assistance, making a real difference when it matters most.”



Folkestone Nepalese Community delivering energy advice.

Who was funded?



This table lists the organisations funded in the 2024 - 25 round in England.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
African Refugee Women	London (Croydon)
Afghanistan and Central Asian Association	London (Lewisham)
Community Drug & Alcohol Recovery	London (Merton, Wandsworth, Richmond, Kingston and Sutton)
Flashy Wings	London (Southwark)
The Upper Norwood Library Trust	London (Lambeth, Croydon)
The Sapphire Community Housing	London (Lambeth, Lewisham)
TechResort	East Sussex (Polegate and Eastbourne)
The Network of International Women for Brighton and Hove	East Sussex (Brighton and Hove)
Status Education	Surrey (Godalming)

Who was funded?



This table lists the organisations funded in the 2024 - 25 round in England.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
Swale Community and Voluntary Services	Kent (Sittingbourne)
Folkestone Nepalese Community	Kent (Folkestone)
Canterbury District Volunteer Centre	Kent (Canterbury)
Friendly Faces of Kent	Kent
The Hope Trust Oxford	Oxford
Bournemouth Foodbank	Bournemouth
Prospect Estate Big Local (PEBL)	Hampshire (Rushmoor)
The Vine Centre	Hampshire (Rushmoor and surrounding areas)
Wickham Community Association	Hampshire (Wickham)

Who was funded?



This table lists the organisations funded in the 2024 - 25 round in Scotland.

Funded organisation	Geographic area covered
Healthy and Happy	Glasgow
The Food Train Falkirk	Falkirk
The Food Train Dundee	Dundee
The Play Centre Glasgow	Glasgow
Fifers for the Community	Fife
Rural Environmental Action Project (REAP)	Moray
Cumbernauld Poverty Action	Cumbernauld and Kilsyth
Glasgow's Golden Generation	Glasgow
Pilgrim Care	St. Andrews
The Edinburgh Tool Library	Edinburgh
Argyll, Lomond and the Island Energy Agency (ALI Energy)	Argyll, Lomond and the Islands

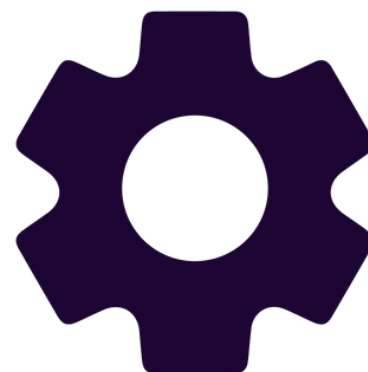
Impact on funded organisations



This page includes reflections from funded organisations on the impact the scheme has had for building their capacity to deliver energy advice and related support.

"We are constantly informed and empowered with information, which ensures that the team is fully prepared and confident for the project. Our organisation has learnt a lot from participating in this project; our service users have increased, our networking capacities have grown, and our voice as a grassroots organisation has been amplified"

Flashy Wings



"We're so thankful for the time we've been partnered with SGN/CSE. We'll continue to use the perfectly designed and targeted resources which are really helpful to the people living in CamGlen. Thank you for all of your help and support to make our project work over the last few years."

Healthy n Happy

"We have used the credibility and reach gained from our involvement in the scheme to submit applications for local and regional grants aimed at enhancing our energy advice services."

The Sapphire Employability and Wellbeing Academy



Key challenges



Some of the key themes around challenges organisations experienced on this scheme include:

Theme	Key feedback
Worsening cost-of-living crisis	The level of support available is often not enough when people have complex needs and face high energy bills and other costs. “Energy prices and energy debts are currently so high, sometimes the assistance we can give feels inadequate as there is limited grant funding available to help clear debt. Some households are so financially challenged they are self-disconnecting or significantly underheating, to detriment of their health.”
Services not linking up	Beneficiaries struggle with fragmented support services and frequently slip through the net. Gaps in support systems can lead to unnecessary hardship.
A complex and unfair energy system	Customers are struggling to understand how their bills can be so high despite low usage and the role that standing charges have on this. “Many vulnerable women and families struggle to understand the fixed daily charges on their bills, especially when their energy usage is low but costs remain high.”

Key challenges



Some of the key themes around challenges organisations experienced on this scheme include:

Theme	Key feedback
High demand and time constraints	Groups have said that it can be hard to ensure that customers access the right support and don't drop out of the loop. There are often time constraints when interacting with customers due to high demand or due to the setting.
Stigma and lack of trust	The organisations face challenges in gaining the trust of communities who have been repeatedly failed by energy suppliers and public bodies. This comes up as wariness to divulge personal information, especially when registering for the Priority Services Register, and to be referred on to other services.
Being new to energy advice and new to the scheme	Delivering energy advice is challenging because of the complexity of tariffs, available schemes and best practices for advising households with diverse needs. There is steep learning curve for groups new to energy advice, which is taxing on staff time.
Navigating fluctuating demand and unforeseen circumstances	Maintaining staffing to provide a good service to customers when demand is seasonal and when faced with disruptive events. The impact of disruptive events can be felt for a long time for these smaller grassroots organisations, who might not have the same resources and resilience as larger organisations.

Key learnings



Some of the key learnings from this scheme, based on reporting from the organisations, and CSE's reflections and experience, include:

There is a continued and growing need for the services delivered as part of this scheme.

Impacts go beyond energy saving and safeguarding, and include for example increased confidence, self-advocacy, improvements physical and mental health issues, and reduced isolation.

The outreach opportunities, experience and knowledge gained through the scheme have enabled funded partners to build up a reputation in their local areas and develop more reciprocal referral pathways.

Carbon monoxide safety advice is a good hook for tackling other issues.

There is unfairness embedded in the energy system. Issues such as standing charges, and transition to smart systems further disadvantaging certain communities are being highlighted by the funded organisations.

Organisations really value the support made available from CSE through this scheme, from the physical resources, the 1-1 support, the training and the opportunity to network with other organisations.

Being able to offer continuation funding for some partners has been a real strength of this programme, providing more stable support for these organisations to continue delivering essential services.

There is a lack of trust among these communities in the wider energy system, and there is stigma associated with being in debt or struggling generally - this is an ongoing challenge but is one of the reasons why local grassroots organisations seen as trusted sources of advice are so important.

Thank you.

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