

energise

p3 New community retrofit guide



p4 Heat networks: social research and new modelling software



p5 Snaps from the Green Influencers photo album

p6 Demand Flexibility Service: was it fair?



p6 Better energy advice provision for South Asian communities

New community interest company will accelerate net-zero home retrofit

For many years, CSE has worked on the crucial challenge of scaling up home retrofit services through our **Futureproof programme**. We have both partnered with local authorities on funded schemes, and developed services for households able to fund their home energy improvements themselves.

Along the way, we've spoken to many people who are keen to make retrofit improvements to their homes, but face a long wait to get a contractor to do the work.

This has shone the spotlight on the need for a new entity to help coordinate and support retrofit activity across our region – to map

out needs, connect key stakeholders, to improve opportunities and outcomes, support new initiatives and breakdown barriers.

And now it's happened! Working in close partnership with the West of England Combined Authority, we've set up a new community interest company **Retrofit West CIC**. It will include support for micro and small businesses such as builders and those carrying out repairs, maintenance and improvements.

Meanwhile, we'll continue our vital retrofit services helping tackle two big problems in the UK: rising energy prices and reducing emissions.



Click for more 

To what extent is the planning system working in tandem with the government's legal obligations in relation to climate change?



Local climate action hampered by Whitehall, our report for CCC shows

A lack of clarity about central government policy is undermining the ability of local planners to address climate change. This was revealed by research commissioned by the Committee for Climate Change (CCC) and produced by CSE and the Town and Country Planning Association.

The report, *Spatial Planning for Climate Resilience & Net Zero*, found the planning system is not living up to its potential as a vital tool for driving carbon reductions.

"The cause is not the intrinsic capability of the planning system," said lead author, CSE's Neil Best. "Rather it is a range of legal, policy, skills and resource issues, many of which stem from a lack of clarity on the priority that climate change should have."

Click for more 

energise

This newsletter is produced twice a year and distributed free. Request a copy by emailing info@cse.org.uk.

We also have an enews that comes out monthly. Sign up at www.cse.org.uk/newsletter.



Vulnerable Customer Support award: the winner is ... us



In May, we were awarded the Vulnerable Customer Support award for the South West. This award recognises our work to support people in vulnerable circumstances who are struggling with their energy bills and in fuel poverty. Shareen, Jonathan and Ian went to pick it up. "Eyes and teeth, people. Eyes and teeth."

Click for more

Hosting a visit from Charity Commission

The chair of the Charity Commission, Orlando Fraser, visited our office to hear about our work supporting people and organisations tackle the climate emergency and end the suffering caused by cold homes. He met with Janine Michael (pictured), CSE's Director of Development & Communications, and chair of Trustees, Anne Obey.



Click for more

What do we want? Fairer terms for PPM customers



In our response to Ofgem's consultation into the levelisation of payment-method cost differentials, CSE has urged the energy regulator to take a more ambitious approach. We would like Ofgem to ensure that the price of energy is the **same** for customers who use prepayment meters as it is for customers who pay by direct debit.

Click for more

Get ready for Bristol Heat Pump Ready

Bristol Heat Pump Ready plans to fit at least 200 heat pumps. This will more than double the number of heat pumps currently installed in homes in the city.

Bristol Heat Pump Ready is part of the wider government funded Heat Pump Ready programme, and one of just five such pilot projects in the country.

We are working as part of a consortium led by Bristol City Council



Click for more

focused on the Westbury-on-Trym area of the city. Together, we've developed and are now trialling an approach that puts the right heat pump, in the right homes, for the right customers, by the right installers.

This ensures consumer experience is prioritised, local installers are upskilled and the electricity network faces minimal disruption.

Vital part of the decarbonisation mix

CSE believes heat pumps are a key solution to providing low carbon heating, but they are more likely to stack up financially if homes are well insulated.

They need to be installed carefully by heat pump specialists, with follow-up visits to make sure the equipment has been correctly calibrated. Otherwise, they won't work properly and people will become sceptical about low-carbon heating options.

Want to hear from us regularly? Sign up to our monthly enews: www.cse.org.uk/newsletter



CSE launches new community retrofit guide

Community-led retrofit activity has an important role to play in our journey to net zero. That's why CSE has produced a new guide that covers everything community groups need to know to get started on retrofit projects

The free **Community Retrofit Guide** includes sections

on how retrofit projects work along with examples and inspirational stories from Plymouth Energy Community and Bristol Energy Network.

Community groups can use the guide to develop their own retrofitting project and engage with local residents.



Energy crisis exposes struggles of UK households

CSE reveals alarming trends in winter 2022-23 client survey.

In the aftermath of the pandemic and amidst a cost-of-living crisis we were keen to understand more about the experiences of people who had received emergency financial support through CSE over the winter, such as fuel vouchers and Surviving Winter Grants.

We were particularly interested in those on prepayment meters and on Economy 7.

To this end, we conducted and funded our own research to explore a range of issues but including two critical questions:

- Are prepayment meter customers struggling more than last year?
- Are people on Economy 7 struggling more than last year?

Our research revealed some alarming trends ...



Energy standards for landlords and for non-domestic buildings

CSE has published a new report looking at how laws requiring landlords of privately rented homes and non-domestic buildings to bring properties up to minimum standards for energy efficiency can be effectively enforced.

We acted as project coordinator for the work, providing the main contact between central government and the pilot local authorities.

Click for more

Click for more

Local partnerships for onshore wind: consultation response

Communities possess immense untapped potential to play a pivotal role in the development of onshore wind projects. That's the key message in our response to the latest government consultation, *Local partnerships for onshore wind*.

We first spoke about this in The Planner and you can read the commentary on our consultation response by Dan Stone (pictured), CSE's planner for net zero.

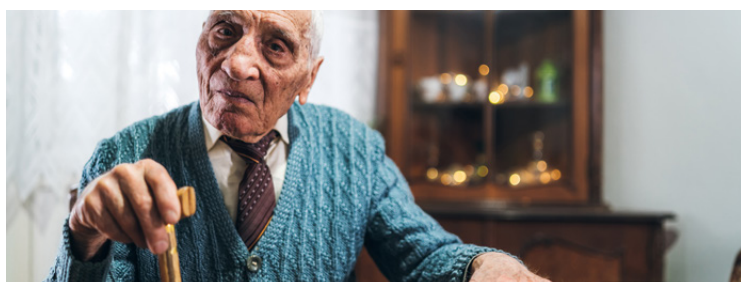


Click for more

CSE scoops Retrofit Academy prize

CSE has won the Retrofit Assessment & Coordination Service prize in the Retrofit Academy awards.

Ian Preston (pictured) said: "This award recognises the hard work of our retrofit team and the services offered to improve energy efficiency in homes and buildings and through grant-funded work."



Share the Warmth Appeal

Just before Christmas last year we launched our first individual giving fundraising campaign and were blown away by the support. Generous supporters helped us raise over £12,000, allowing us to help more people in fuel poverty. Thank you to Thrive Renewables for supporting us to launch this appeal.

Unlocking the power of heat networks: new social research and new modelling software

New social research

Heat networks are a critical part of the journey to a low carbon future and government is pushing forward with its heat network zoning policy, including introducing primary legislation to allow English local authorities to define zones and potentially mandate connections for some buildings. But their success is dependent on planning and engagement that unlocks local support and builds enthusiasm for connection.

Our recent social research report, produced in collaboration with ACE Research and SE2, found that building owners and occupiers value the potential offered by heat network zones and the social, health and economic benefits they bring – but the costs of connections needed to be communicated clearly and potentially shared.



Click for more

Heat network zoning pilot

In other ongoing work for the government on heat network zoning, our Research & Analysis team has developed new modelling software to support the UK government's Heat Network Zoning Pilot.

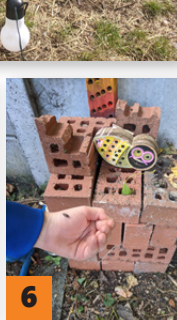
Our approach for identifying zones software combines high-resolution mapping data with sophisticated demand, network optimisation and zoning models to automate the identification of heat network zones within individual cities across the UK.

This will allow heat networks to be better targeted on neighbourhoods where they will make most difference, and to be built quicker and more economically.

Click for more

Pictures from the Green Influencers photo album ...

Green Influencers is one of several youth empowerment programmes that we run here at CSE. The aim of each of them is to empower children and young people with the tools to navigate the energy landscape now and as they grow older.



Kate Elliott-Rudder (pic#10) explains why these programmes are so crucial for the young people we support, the UK, and our planet ...

"Young people are among the least likely people to have contributed to the impacts of climate change – they just haven't been alive for as long! Yet, it's they who will face the costly and severe impacts of it over their lifetime.

"Luckily, many young people have the drive, ingenuity, agency and enthusiasm to contribute to tackling the climate emergency. Green Influencers harnesses this and makes sustainability fun for all ages. We support 8-14-year-olds to connect with their local patches of nature and take environmental action in their community. Green Mentors, like me, run regular sessions at schools, youth clubs and adventure playgrounds with our plucky young green influencers."

Click for more

PICTURE CAPTIONS

1 Learning about solar power at Felix Road Adventure Playground (Easton) as we build a 'future playground' out of recycled boxes.

2 Zara from Easton putting up some solar lighting at Felix Road Adventure Playground.

3 Lolly from Hartcliffe comparing her litter monster to Heart of BS13's huge Trash Monster. Don't get eaten Lolly!

4 Isla and Lolly using an app to collect photos of Hartcliffe bees for citizen science.

5 Zara from Easton strikes a pose with the solar lights at Felix Road Adventure Playground.

6 Building a 'bug hotel' at The Grove youth club in Bedminster Downs. No spiders today, only woodlice.

7 Making small bug hotels to take home, made from recycling and debris.

8 Ollie, Erin & Lexi from Hartcliffe winning a Groundbreaker Award for their litter monsters 'Stop Littering' campaign. Proud.

9 Hartcliffe Club for Young People at the Hartcliffe climate education hub, roasting marshmallows.

10 And this is me! In the middle of making a seed bomb out of mud ...

Pioneering fairness in the energy market

Demand Flexibility Service: was it fair?

The National Grid ESO's Demand Flexibility Service ran last winter and involved energy suppliers paying customers a small bonus if they used less electricity than usual at a particular time, usually around 17.00 to 18.00 when demand is normally high.

The service involved 26 energy providers, all offering different routes to sign up, and passing on different proportions of incentive to consumers. About 1.6m customers participated – with people flexing their demand e.g. by opting to use the microwave instead of the oven, or not using the washing machine until later.

CSE designed and led the research for National Grid ESO to explore why and how consumers participated. Recognising that not everyone could participate equally, it was important

to ascertain how fair this initiative was.

By coincidence, at around the same time, HOMEflex published its report into what rules are needed for the domestic flexibility market, to ensure consumer protection keeps pace with market innovation.

CSE led the qualitative research element of HOMEflex. Speaking about the report, Charlotte Johnson, Head of Research Programmes from CSE said: "Creating the conditions for a fair and inclusive energy transition is central to CSE's **Smart & Fair programme** which champions social justice in the energy system. Through the HOMEflex research, we engaged with consumers who have very different living situations and attitudes towards technology to understand their concerns and expectations for flexibility services.

"Both these pieces of research will help industry and government think about the consumer protections needed as the UK domestic flex market develops. This will be vital to build consumer confidence in this growing market."



Click for more



Research improves support for South Asian communities

In order to understand more about the South Asian community and the particular issues around energy and cold homes, CSE teamed up with Dhek Bhal, an organisation that has supported this community in Bristol and South Gloucestershire for many years.

A feature of the South Asian community is multiple generations living together under one roof, and more people living in larger homes. Many households we interviewed had above-average energy use and bills. This is partly down to house size, but also to the living arrangements and the varied routine of each family member. Multiple occupants means higher-than-average overall bills as it is harder to reduce energy use and save money.

Click for more

energise

Request a copy of Energise by emailing info@cse.org.uk.

Or sign up to our enews that comes out monthly (roughly) at www.cse.org.uk/newsletter



St James Court
St James Parade
Bristol BS1 3LH

0117 934 1400
info@cse.org.uk

COMPANY 2219673
CHARITY 298740
FOUNDED 1979

The Centre for Sustainable Energy is a charity supporting people and organisations across the UK to tackle the climate emergency and end the suffering caused by cold homes. We do this by sharing our knowledge, practical experience and policy insights.

www.cse.org.uk
[@HelloCSE](https://twitter.com/HelloCSE)