

Somerset West energy bulletin

Spring 2011

Welcome to the spring 2011 edition of the Somerset West energy bulletin, produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE). You'll find information and updates for the Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane and West Somerset areas.

For all energy help and advice, or further information about any of the stories below, please call the South West Energy Saving Trust advice centre on: **0800 512 012**

The Renewable Heat Incentive

The government has recently announced details of the new Renewable Heat Incentive – a financial incentive to householders and groups to promote the uptake of renewable heat-generating technologies. Two phases of support will be available, with those who install solar thermal panels, biomass boilers, and heat pumps from July 2011 receiving the a one off Premium Payment to help towards installation costs.



From October 2012, an ongoing payment tariff will be introduced for anyone who has installed an eligible technology since 15 July 2009 – including those successful in obtaining the phase 1 payment.

For more information, call the National Energy Advice Service on **0800 512 012** or visit the Department of Energy and Climate Change's website www.decc.gov.uk

Warm Streets funding to continue

Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor and West Somerset councils will continue to support residents in upgrading home insulation through the Warm Streets scheme. Administered by CSE, the scheme offers free loft and cavity wall insulation, plus a package of additional measures – including draught-proofing, lagging of tanks and pipework, and benefits advice – to owner occupiers and privately renting residents who are: over the age of 70, **or** are in receipt of certain benefits, **or** have a household income of less than £30,000 and savings of less than £20,000.



Those who don't qualify for full grants can still access considerable discounts for these measures through the scheme. For more information, call **0800 512 012**.

Update on the Warm Front grant

The national grant scheme for insulation and heating improvements, Warm Front, was re-launched in April, after temporarily closing to new applications last winter, with changes to the eligibility criteria and the measures installed under the scheme.

It's now re-opened to owner-occupiers or privately renting households in receipt of certain benefits, whose properties are poorly insulated and/or who have no central heating. Properties will undergo a survey to assess the energy performance with grants available up to £3,500 (or £6,000 for oil heated properties) for: loft insulation or cavity wall insulation; gas, electric, LPG or oil heating systems; glass-fronted fires; draught-proofing; or hot water tank insulation.

Households that don't qualify under the amended scheme may still qualify for other grants and discounts for insulation and heating improvements.

To speak to a local advisor who'll be able to refer you to the most appropriate scheme, call free **0800 512 012**.

Insulation grants for 'old and cold' properties in Somerset West still available

A new scheme to help households with complex insulation needs has been set up. The Somerset West Hard-to-Treat scheme, managed by CSE, and set up in partnership with Scottish and Southern Energy and the three district councils in Somerset West, is offering grants of up to 25% up to a maximum of £2,500 per property. The grants are to help with the cost of installing solid wall insulation (internal and external), floor insulation and complex loft insulation.



To find out more, call free on **0800 512 012**.

Want to learn more about solar PV?

An evening hosted by local group Quantock Eco which focused on solar PV, was recently held, with almost 100 people attending, twice the expected turnout, with late arrivals turned away due to lack of space.



The evening started out with a fish and chip supper and was followed by presentations about technical aspects of solar PV, user experiences and the financial implications of the feed-in tariff from an accountant's perspective. There was also an overview from CSE of key considerations when installing solar PV and a comparison with other energy saving measures. The audience also had a chance to grill the panel with questions that arose.

The evening was a huge success, with great feedback and organisers are planning to repeat the event. The next evening is planned for Thursday 16 June in Bishop's Lydeard. For more details, email info@quantockeco.org.uk

Quantock Eco are members of the 'Warm Streets Communities' programme, which offers cash payments and/or in kind support in exchange for referrals to the local authority-backed Warm Streets insulation scheme, as well as free support for community projects.

Support from you local council

Barbara Wells is Energy Efficiency Officer for the Somerset West Partnership which covers Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor and West Somerset. If you'd like help and advice, call her on **01278 436 426** (every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and alternate Fridays).

Free support for community energy groups

A new project, offering a range of support to help communities in Somerset and the West of England to develop their energy projects, has recently been launched by CSE. Intended to be reactive to project specific needs, the type and level of support on offer is flexible, but includes: telephone and email advice; technical and on-site support; training and workshop delivery; and printed resources and event kits.



As part of the programme CSE is developing a series of training sessions to be run across the area and would welcome input from individuals or groups that may be interested in taking these sessions up. You can have your say by taking part in a short online survey: www.surveymonkey.com/s/CSE_training

For more information on the project, or to access support, contact the CSE Communities team on **0117 934 1400** or communities@cse.org.uk

Out and About

Somerset County Cricket ground in Taunton was the venue for an energy advisor in April, as they ran a stall handing out free and impartial energy advice during play. The event was part of an advice day organised by Taunton Deane Council's Tenant Empowerment team, with more than 60 people visiting the stall to find out more. Local residents found the day a great opportunity to get free advice on energy efficiency.



Q. Is it cheaper, and more energy efficient, to leave your boiler on all day for hot water?

It always takes the same amount of energy to heat the same amount of water to the same temperature. So, if you heat your water just before you need it, the only energy you'll use will be what's required to heat the water. But if you heat it in advance, say all day, then you're providing the same energy plus the energy to keep it hot until you use it.

So we think it's best to only switch your hot water on when it's required; for most people this will be once in the morning and once in the evening. If you don't use a whole tank of hot water in the morning and the tank is well insulated, you might be able to get away with it coming on once in the morning only (just before you get up) and still have enough hot water to do the dishes at dinner time.

As every home has different hot water needs, it may take a bit of trial and error to find the best solution for your household. It's worth checking that you have at least 75mm (3") of insulation around your tank and top it up with an extra jacket (these only cost around £12), as this will minimise the heat lost from your tank between heating periods.

What's going on in your patch?

Look out for the summer edition of the Somerset West energy bulletin, available in August. If there's anything else that you'd like to see included in the next edition, please email: energy_bulletin@cse.org.uk

Sedgemoor
IN SOMERSET

TAUNTON DEANE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

WEST SOMERSET
COUNCIL