

# Ashley Housing Energy Awareness Project – Bristol Community Energy Fund



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We are delighted to have been awarded a grant from Bristol Community Energy Fund through the Quartet Community Foundation. The Bristol Community Energy Fund is a scheme started by Bristol City Council which aims to support local groups to run energy efficiency projects in Bristol. The topic of energy efficiency and sustainability is especially relevant to Ashley Community Housing tenants, and we are in a great position to run projects with some of the “hard to reach” community in Bristol.

### How will we use the grant?

The money will fund us to run a set of workshops with our tenants and enable them to gain an award in Energy Efficiency and Sustainability. We will also use the money to make our properties more energy-efficient, carrying out energy surveys of our properties and responding by making adaptations. We have been working with the Centre for Sustainability Energy and Easton Energy Project to gather resources and knowledge to run our project successfully. It's encouraging to have the support of local organisations who are passionate about raising awareness in the community.

### Why run the project?

Fuel poverty affects 4.4 million households in the UK; it occurs when 10% or more of a household's income is spent on fuel use. New arrivals to the UK are often at a higher risk for various reasons including lifestyle and also to do with lack of experience and knowledge. Our tenants may maintain their homes at a higher temperature, or use the cooker for long periods of time. If tenants are on job seekers allowance, they may spend more time in the home, therefore using more fuel in the home.

Our tenants are not currently responsible for their energy bills, which means that moving on from Ashley Community Housing could be quite a shock when gas and electricity bills start coming through. This project aims to prepare our tenants for managing their own bills and enable them to be in control of the money they are spending on fuel. The aim is to give individuals the skills and knowledge to be a voice in their community and support to run further energy awareness projects.

### What will the workshops cover?

The workshops will cover the meaning of sustainability and efficiency, sources of energy and the importance of sustainability and efficiency on a global, national, and personal level. It will help the learners to understand how different appliances use different levels of energy, and how much that costs, and will give advice about how anyone can change their behaviour to save energy.

Desmond Brown from Growing Futures is helping to run the workshops. We asked him how he is feeling about the project:

*“I’m very excited about being involved in this project. Energy awareness is very important for individuals and communities, and this project will give information on ways to reduce and manage energy within the home and in our communities.”*

We want to make the workshops interactive, interesting and fun, and will be using a range of teaching techniques including group work, case studies, videos and interactive tools to teach about energy and sustainability.

Our aims are to increase knowledge about the effects of unsustainable energy and unsustainable lifestyles, on the environment, society, and on individuals. We want to encourage tenants to change their behaviour to become more sustainable, and for them to be proactive in inspiring change within their community. Watch this space for an update on how we get on with our first workshop!