

ADEPT President's Awards - Category 3: Improving the environment, promoting health

Devon County Council Stimulating Community Involvement in Energy

Twitter-Length Summary: Since 2011 Devon County Council has invested £604k to support communities to better understand local energy issues, generate income from 6.2MW of community-funded renewables costing £8.2m, avoid 2,695tCO₂e annually and help 1,117 households make their homes healthier.

Since 2011 Devon County Council (DCC) has supported communities to better understand local energy issues, generate income from community-owned renewables and help vulnerable people make their homes healthier. This has been in response to:

1. Above average fuel poverty, large areas of off-gas properties, and generally older, inefficient housing which affects residents' health. The local-authority energy efficiency scheme – [Cosy Devon](#) – was finding it hard to reach the most vulnerable.
2. Community concerns about the rapid deployment of commercial renewable energy that offers very little local benefit.

SEACS 2011 - 2014

Invested £450k in schools and communities. [DARE](#) and [Resource Futures](#) were commissioned to help teachers integrate energy into the curriculum at 49 schools.

Start-up funding was provided to new community energy organisations (CEO) and it established two energy partnerships – one in the North Devon Biosphere and one in South West Devon ([SWDCEP](#)) – which brought together CEOs with councils to work on energy planning, renewables and fuel poverty.

Devon Community Energy Accelerator 2014 - 2016

Delivered nationally by [Regen](#), this received £107k funding from DCC which guaranteed £59k of the national budget for Devon. This partly provided grants to CEOs which were used to obtain £226k from government's Community Energy Funds. It also:

- Provided technical, community engagement and networking workshops
- Made [a film](#) to encourage new CEOs to develop projects
- Produced the UK's first, free [Community Energy Legal Toolkit](#)

Community Energy Support Service 2016 – 2017

Partnering with DARE, DCC provided £25k to offer assistance including admin, legal, technical, event planning, bid writing, business planning, share offer management etc. The support service assisted 17 CEOs and secured a further £62k from a variety of sources.

2018 Peer Power

A £36.5k partnership with Regen to:

- Produce a State of the Community Energy Sector report
- Run a community-energy celebration conference
- Deliver technical support
- Plan communities' workshops at [Smart Energy Marketplace](#) tradeshow

Achievements

There are 23 CEOs in Devon, more than any other county.¹ Eleven have installed 46 electricity generation projects totalling 6.2 MW (at the end of 2017) that will generate approximately 6000MWh annually, equating to 2,695 tCO₂ saved. The total investment is £8.2 million, which has created 22.5 FTE jobs. Fourteen CEOs have projects under development.

Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency

Eleven CEOs are delivering fuel poverty projects. Four CEOs have established community funds with the profits from their renewables projects, worth £1,125,000 between now and 2030.

The CEOs have supported 1117 households with energy efficiency services or installations, run 250 events that have been attended by more than 2000 people and have 6479 people on their mailing lists.

Cosy Devon now has community representation on its Board and four CEOs are receiving payment to deliver part of the scheme. The CEOs intelligence of vulnerable households in their areas has been valuable in increasing the resource available to Cosy Devon during austere times to refer vulnerable people into the scheme; the CEOs have made links with frontline health workers and housing associations to provide 52% of the 470 referrals in the 6 months to January 2018.



¹ <https://communityenergyengland.org/pages/state-of-the-sector-report>