

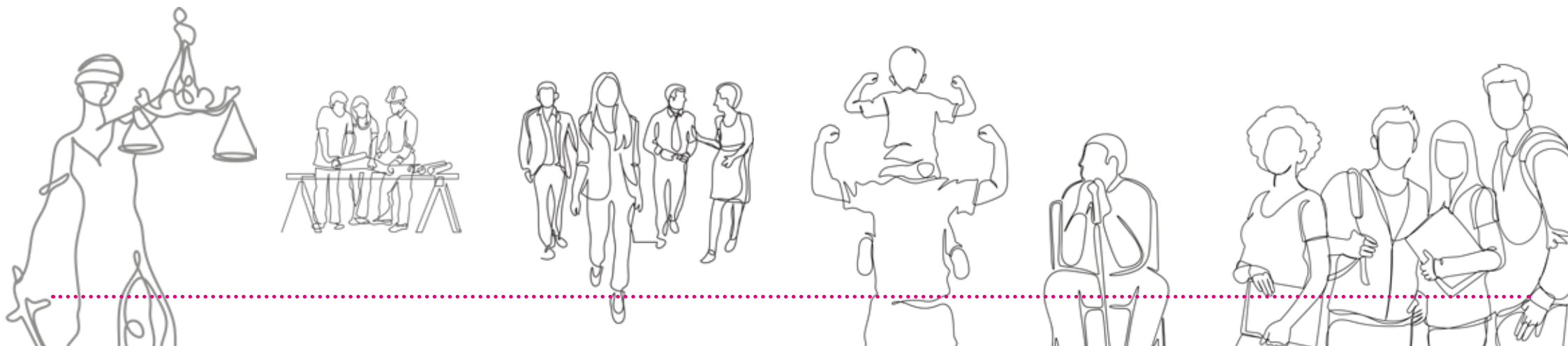
IMPACT REPORT 2024



We support people and organisations across the UK to tackle the **climate emergency and end the suffering caused by **cold homes****

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Charity 298740 | Company 02219673



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A year of growing impact ...

The cost-of-living crisis may have fallen off the news agenda, but many people are still experiencing significant hardship. I'm so proud that in its 45th year CSE remains a trusted source of help, and that our impact has continued to grow in 2023-24.



During the year we've helped record numbers of people struggling with their energy bills, collectively saving them more than £11.5m (a staggering £4.5m higher than the previous year). We have grown our home energy retrofit delivery schemes to enable more home energy improvement work, and supported more communities and local councils across the UK to run local fuel poverty and net zero programmes.

We developed a new set of consumer archetypes for Ofgem to aid national policy design. And our research provided the National Grid Electricity System Operator with the evidence for which households benefited the most financially from the Demand Flexibility Service, and built the case for running the pilot again next year.

CSE has continued to shine a spotlight on the issues faced by our clients. During the year we pushed for fairer, levelised tariffs regardless of payment method, fairer standing charges, protection for vulnerable customers from forced prepayment meter installations, and the introduction of stricter customer service standards for energy suppliers. The attention that we and other organisations gave these issues led to changes in national policy and regulation.

But there remains so much to do to tackle the root causes of fuel poverty and to ensure that the future net zero energy system benefits everyone. CSE will continue to deliver impact – practically through our projects and through making the case for fundamental policy change.

Janine Michael
Chief Executive

With a new government open to change, we will continue to offer evidence, insight and practical recommendations for the programmes and policy changes needed to deliver warmer homes and a net zero energy system.



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More about us ...

We support 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.

We've been doing this for over 45 years.

Our vision?

In a nutshell, we want to see a world where sustainability is second nature, carbon emissions are cut to safe levels and fuel poverty is replaced by energy justice.



In practical terms this means:

- No one suffers a cold home.
- Everyone is empowered to take action on energy and support net zero.
- Every building is zero carbon and liveable.
- Places are shaped for sustainable energy.
- The energy system is green, smart, fair and works for all of us.



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The year in numbers

The cost-of-living crisis, plus growing interest in home energy retrofit and local solutions to net zero, meant demand for our support hit an all-time high in 2023-24.



22,114

People supported by our freephone energy advice service.



£525

Average saving per household for people who called our advice line.



£11.5 million

Saved by our clients following our advice.

Includes benefits claimed, measures installed (such as insulation and new heating systems), fuel vouchers distributed, and much more.



24 schools

Where we helped learners in key stages 1 and 2 become energy influencers in their homes and communities.



2,017

Young people reached through our high-quality education and youth leadership programmes.



854

Local authority officers and councillors supported to run climate-action initiatives.

445

Community organisations supported to take action on climate change or tackling fuel poverty.



2,400

Energy efficiency measures installed as a result of our help.



£1 million

In grants distributed to 74 groups enabling them to drive community-focused energy projects reaching over 32,000 households.



We were an integral part of the evaluation team for the Demand Flexibility Service, highlighting who benefitted most from this first major national turn-down trial, and who is unable to take part and why. **Over 25,000 people engaged with our evaluation.**

We actively participated in around **450** events, and ran about **200** events ourselves.



Through our media work we achieved coverage with the potential to reach over **160 million** people, sharing our practical energy advice and advocating for a smarter, greener and fairer energy system.

In March 2024 we had **8,217** followers on X (formerly Twitter) and **5,505** on LinkedIn.

The challenge facing the UK is to undertake a rapid transition to net zero based on the broad support of people and communities across the country.

To achieve this, new thinking is needed, and CSE is helping to provide it. Here's how ...

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▶ We published our latest **Smart and Fair** report (February 2024) which explores how **everyone** can participate in and benefit from the low-carbon transition, and not just the customers most favoured by energy companies.



▶ How can we increase the uptake of low-carbon technologies by people on lower incomes? Through the Guidelight project, run with UK Power Networks, we explored some of the solutions. We presented this at the UKPN Net Zero Networks event at the Institute of Engineering and Technology.

▶ We actively engage with government consultations in order to impact the policy making process. In our response to Ofgem's **consultation into consumer standards** we highlighted the lack of accessibility to services and continue to champion the need for dedicated support lines for vulnerable customers. In the call for evidence on standing charges we set out the case for moving a significant amount of the standing charge to the unit rate or, even better, general taxation.

▶ We're collaborating on projects such as Crowdflex which aims to develop models for predicting domestic demand for heat and power.



This is needed in order to develop an energy system that is flexible and responsive, able to meet increased demand for electricity from renewables-dominated generation.

▶ We supported the development of the **Homeflex code of conduct** for the energy industry and are now evaluating its acceptance and relevance across the sector.

▶ To help Ofgem better understand how different groups of people are impacted by changes to the energy system, CSE developed a set of 'consumer archetypes' reflecting the diverse characteristics, capabilities and habits of different consumer types. These are used to develop more nuanced approaches to policy design and communication strategies.



CSE's software team has developed the heat zoning model that now sits at the heart of the government's Heat Network Zoning programme. And we have secured a place on the new Heat Zoning consultancy framework through which we'll provide councils and consultants with the modelled data they need to target and accelerate heat network developments locally.



Our report for the Committee on Climate Change on **Spatial Planning for Climate Resilience & Net Zero** highlighted the role the planning system could play in achieving net zero locally. It underpinned the **evidence we gave** to the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee inquiry into a Flexible Grid of the Future, and **our response to government's proposals** for a Future Homes Standard.

We have pioneered the development of new open-access software, tools and datasets to help people plan net zero improvements to their homes and communities and local areas.

These have been widely adopted by academics, energy consultants, local authority officers, and the general public, demonstrating their effectiveness right across the energy system.

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THERMOS

By offering a much faster and more cost-effective and replicable way for planners to deliver viable heat maps for energy master planning, this unique, open-source modelling tool is revolutionising the opportunities for heat networks.

thermos-project.eu

Over 3,500 registered users



Impact Community Carbon Calculator

Want to know what your area's carbon footprint is? Let Impact tell you. Drawing on more than 30 datasets, Impact estimates the amount of greenhouse gases produced directly and indirectly in any parish, ward or local authority area in England, Scotland or Wales. It presents this information in a visually engaging way, designed to help communities act on reducing their carbon footprint.

impact-tool.org.uk

Used by over 300 councils



Solar Wizard

Our latest website calculates the potential to generate electricity from rooftop solar panels for homes in England, Scotland and Wales. It provides quick and independent predictions about the viability of solar PV, from a single house, to a whole street.

solarwizard.org.uk

Used by Birmingham council. Other local authorities to follow



London Heat Map

This website uses advanced mapping and demand-estimation techniques to identify optimal sites for heat networks. It helps investors in heat networks make technical and financial decisions based on the best evidence available.

apps.london.gov.uk/heatmap

The UK's first open-access regional heat map



Our six work programmes

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Each work programme focuses on an area where CSE has a strong track record, formidable skills and expertise and unique insight. They are therefore aligned with our strengths and where we are best placed to drive change and maximise our impact.

The following six pages describe how we've had an impact in each work programme in 2023-24.

Our six work programmes are the foundation of our 2024 **organisational strategy** which directs how we work towards our vision and high-level objectives.



Supporting people in fuel poverty and vulnerable circumstances



Housing energy retrofit



Local authority support and action for net zero



Empowering communities



Future generations



Fairness in the energy system



Supporting people in fuel poverty and vulnerable circumstances **2023-24**

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For 45 years CSE has been focused on improving the lives of those on the lowest incomes.

We provide advice for households in fuel poverty or in vulnerable circumstances to enable them to enjoy warmer homes and lower energy bills.

We offer our support by phone, in-person and online.

Without us, many more people – including those with debilitating health conditions, on the lowest incomes or living in substandard accommodation – would be colder, poorer and sicker.



In 2023-24 our advisors dealt with almost 33,000 enquiries, and gave direct advice to 22,000 people, providing benefit worth over £11.5m.

We helped set up an ethical and sustainable shop in central Bristol called Sparks, in the former M&S department store. Here, our advisors and volunteers provided advice on tariffs, bills and benefits to over 1,000 people.

We secured a record level of fuel-voucher funding, £2m, from the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme, providing much-needed fuel vouchers for prepayment meter customers – often the worst-off households in Britain. Typically this amounted to £300 of credit per household. That's the difference between surviving and going without.

For Bristol and Wiltshire councils we've been delivering the Household Support Fund, supporting people through the energy and cost-of-living crises with fuel vouchers, new heating systems and insulation improvements. We helped over 2,000 people save on average £357.

In a pilot project for National Grid we helped over 400 vulnerable people understand smart-energy innovations like time-of-use tariffs. And we continued to deliver in-depth casework through three long-standing projects: **Warmer Homes Advice and Money** (WHAM), **Tenants Energy Advice** service for Bristol council tenants, and **Warm & Safe Wiltshire**.

We were delighted to win the Vulnerable Customer Support award at the 2023 National Energy Efficiency Awards in recognition of our support for people in fuel poverty. (We won the regional award in the previous financial year.)



Our free telephone services gave advice to over 33,000 people in 2024.

Find out more ...



PROJECT

Warmer Homes Advice and Money



PROJECT

Bristol Tenants Energy Advice



Housing energy retrofit **2023-24**

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Too many homes in Britain aren't fit for the future. We want to make homes affordable, liveable and low carbon.

This means making them thermally efficient and adequately ventilated, so that they provide a healthy living environment and are not dependent on fossil fuels for heating.

To bring this about, we support the delivery of high-quality, people-centred retrofit services.

We don't install energy efficiency measures in homes ourselves. Instead, we work with professionals in the building trade to provide bespoke and cost-effective installations.



Nearly a third of the measures delivered by the government's flagship £0.7bn Home Upgrade Grant Scheme (HUGS) came about through our collaboration with Somerset Council and Evolve, where we supported applications by householders living in homes that are cold or expensive to heat.

Due to the poor performance of HUGS nationally, our work in Somerset accounts for a whopping 25% of the 300 households that have received measures in the first year of the scheme across the UK.

In our home city of Bristol we delivered 115 HUGS assessments, while our work on Energy Company Obligation (ECO) delivered a total of 843 installations.

Our [community retrofit guide](#) and [Local Energy Advice Demonstrator](#) projects have enabled us to deliver local retrofit work with communities in Wiltshire and Somerset. We trained 19 members of local community groups in retrofit practices and enabled a series of Green Open Homes events.

Supporting the set up and growth of [Retrofit West](#) in partnership with the West of England Combined Authority, has given local households access to tailored support, surveys and local installers. CSE's own retrofit advisers have staffed the helpline handling 196 enquiries since the programme was launched. Additionally, our team completed the assessment of [Canberra Towers](#), a 144-unit council-owned tower block Southampton.



We made a significant contribution to nearly a third of the installations delivered by HUGS.

Find out more ...



PROJECT

[Local Energy Advice Demonstrator](#)



WEBSITE

[Retrofit West](#)

Local authority support and action for net zero **2023-24**

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Local authorities have a critical role to play in the shift to net zero. We work with many of them – from rural districts to large cities – to drive forward their energy-related goals.

We provide access to knowledge, data and expertise. We offer tailored advice. And we provide innovative solutions – both technical and non-technical – making it easier and cheaper for councils to act.

We're specialists in convening stakeholders and building community consensus around planning developments for net zero.



We worked with two London boroughs – Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham – on the **Cross-borough Energy Masterplan**. Our two-fold approach involved employing advanced mapping and modelling techniques to identify prime heat network locations. In addition we led a carefully managed stakeholder engagement process to make best use of existing local knowledge, and secure consent and commitment from key actors. It also helped the boroughs to secure funding for the next stage of heat network delivery.

Abracadabra! We built and launched **Solar Wizard** a website that identifies the solar potential for rooftops on homes and community buildings. This unique application is being used to support the development and targeting of community-scale solar PV projects in Birmingham.

In Bristol, **Mission Net Zero** aims to speed up the West of England's transition to net zero, and with our project partners we've explored how net zero investment, skills development and delivery programmes can grow directly from the needs and ambitions of communities. A £5m second phase is now in the pipeline.

We completed research for the Committee on Climate Change into barriers and opportunities for delivering net zero and climate resilience through the local planning system. Stakeholder engagement with over 100 different individuals and organisations showed that planning needs to do more in defining and delivering strategic pathways to net zero.



We're a key partner in Mission Net Zero, a £5m initiative to accelerate Bristol and the West of England's transition to net zero.

Find out more ...



PROJECT

Cross-borough Energy Masterplan



WEBSITE

Solar Wizard



Empowering communities **2023-24**

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The capacity of individuals working together to make positive changes within their community is immense. That's why one of our work programmes focusses specifically on community-level action.

We recognise the power of bringing communities and enabling actors such as planners, local authorities, investors and businesses together.

We also know that for many communities it isn't about sustainable energy; it's about building resilience and creating healthier, more prosperous and better places to live.



Our work empowers people and organisations. Through **PLACE**, we built up the knowledge and skills of six community organisations and parish councils meaning they can use the planning system to boost renewable energy.

We worked with Historic England to train key members of their workforce in carbon literacy. We supported 75 community businesses and buildings to improve their buildings using funding provided by Power to Change and Thrive Renewables. And there are now 83 participants on our new energy efficiency for social investors programme.

We re-launched our improved online community carbon footprint calculator, **Impact**. And we ran several **Future Energy Landscapes** workshops, and Parish Action Days building buy-in for climate action and local renewable energy generation.

We continue to build links with and between individuals and organisations, identifying learning and sharing good practice to make local activity more effective. We co-ordinated Wessex Community Energy Network, established a series of workshops for the Community Energy Fund in the North West, and managed networks of community organisations, awarded grants by SGN's Safe and Warm Communities Scheme and National Grid's Energy Affordability Fund.

Our workshops with Climate Outreach and mapping of their Britain Talks Climate segments, helped communities to frame messages on positive climate actions.



We work with community organisations and parish councils to help them use the planning system to boost renewable energy.

Find out more ...



WEBSITE
Impact



PROJECT
Future Energy Landscapes



Future generations **2023-24**

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This work programme focuses on ensuring young people of all backgrounds feel inspired and able to play a meaningful role in the transition to a fair and sustainable energy system.

Our youth-specific work seeks to integrate young people's energy, views and desires into CSE's work as a whole.

In the past year a further 45 participants were welcomed on to [Bright Green Future](#), our transformative environmental leadership programme, funded by National Grid ESO, that focuses on inspiring young people of colour to take up careers with a positive environmental slant.

Our Bright Green Future alumni network stayed active, co-delivering workshops on sustainability at the Better Business Summit in Manchester in January, and assisting in the delivery of BGF programme content for the latest intake. We also ran a busy programme of online workshops on early career skills.

Beyond BGF we kicked off our work on the youth engagement element of Bristol's [Mission Net Zero](#) and the upskilling strategy for the city's youth workers.

In schools in South Gloucestershire we ran 16 [climate change and energy workshops](#) attended by over 550 key-stage 2 students. And in four further schools we ran more in-depth sessions working with 126 students to explore the differences they can make in their homes, schools and neighbourhoods.

Our work delivering Energy Matters to [schools across Merton](#) enabled us to refresh and publish our [free primary educational resources](#) on climate and energy for use in schools across the UK.



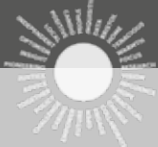
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PROJECT
[Climate change and energy workshops](#)



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[Bright Green Future.](#)



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I have always been passionate for youth and environmental causes, but Bright Green Future helped me to find my voice and get involved in a meaningful way.

Thanks to BGF, I'm currently working for an environmental education charity alongside my degree, something I didn't even think was possible."

Participant on [Bright Green Future](#)



Fairness in the energy system **2023-24**

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We're working to bring about a future energy system that is both low carbon and demonstrably fair.

No one should be left behind in the transition to sustainable heat and power.

A fair and green energy system will deliver environmental and societal value in partnership with people. It will allow all to meet their basic energy needs at costs that they can afford. And it will ensure equitable distribution of system benefits and costs.



Energy companies commission our research and analysis skills to help them understand their vulnerable customers and how to reach them. In 2023-24 we provided data analysis of millions of priority services customers for all six distribution network operators – those are the firms who run the gas and power networks. And we helped National Grid deliver their social obligations programme by undertaking analysis of organisations offering energy and affordable warmth services to vulnerable customers. [The database and report can be seen here.](#)

As part of our [Smart and Fair programme](#), which works with industry to champion an inclusive energy transition, we undertook an evaluation of household experiences of [National Grid ESO's Demand Flexibility Service](#), the UK's first major national turn-down trial. Our survey got over 25,000 responses, representing a mine of evidence on how different households shift their electricity demand to earn rewards. Insights from our evaluation have been used to inform industry practice and to influence policy development. The evaluation itself has been cited by Energy UK and Citizen's Advice in submissions to Ofgem, and by the UK parliament.

We produce resources that help everyone – regardless of income, circumstances or capability – benefit from the low carbon transition. Our [Smart Energy Action Plans](#) help households identify which smart energy options work for them, be it a time-of-use tariff or solar panels. We help them leap on board the energy transition and not be left on the platform.

We produce resources that help everyone – regardless of income or circumstances – benefit from the low carbon transition.



Find out more ...



PROJECT

Smart and Fair programme



PROJECT

National Grid ESO's Demand Flexibility Service



Our funders

We would like to thank all CSE's funders and clients for their support of our work in the year.

1 Energy	Bristol Energy Cooperative	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero	Frome Town Council	Foundation)
ACCESS - The Foundation for Social Investment	Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership CIC	Devon County Council	GHE Solar Ltd	Innovate UK
Association for Decentralised Energy (ACE Research)	Buckinghamshire Council	Durham County Council	Gloucester City Council	J&J Crump & Son Ltd
AECOM Ltd	C&T Eco Consultants Ltd	Electricity North West Ltd	Golden Globe Ltd	Land Use Consultants
Alliance Homes	Cadent Gas Ltd	Energy Saving Group	Good Earth	Local Trust
Arun District Council	CAG Consultants	Energy Saving Trust (Ofgem Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme)	Gower Street Trust	London Borough of Merton Council
Aspey Energy	Carbon Rewind	EnergySmart	Greater London Authority	Love to Save Energy Ltd
Bath and West Community Energy	Citizens Advice	Envo Energy	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Marigold Insulation UK
Baxter Kelly Ltd	City Energy Network Ltd	Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	Green Home Plans Ltd	MCS Charitable Foundation
BBH Consulting AG	Committee on Climate Change	European Commission (Horizon 2020)	Green Improve	Monza Installs
Berks Insulation	Complete Remedial Solutions	Evolve Home Energy Solutions	Green Leaf Solar Energy UK Ltd	My Eco Move Ltd
Birmingham City Council	Correct Contract Services Ltd	First Choice Energy	Greener Solutions Group Ltd	National Grid Electricity Distribution
Bristol City Council	Cotswold District Council	Flex Assure Ltd	Groundwork UK	National Grid ESO
Bristol City Leap	Creara	Francis Winham Foundation	Historic England	National Infrastructure Commission for Wales
	Curtis Anstee Eco Installations Ltd		Iclei Action Fund (on behalf of Tides	NHS BANES, Swindon & Wiltshire

Continued over ...



We've come from a place of recognising the climate emergency but feeling completely overwhelmed and not knowing what we could do ... to a place of understanding our role as community leaders, and the opportunity that gives us to be advocates for change."

Tina, clerk for Bay of Colwyn town council. CSE gave the council support on effective use of the [Impact Carbon Calculator](#).

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ICB	Retrofit West CIC	Society of Local Council Clerks	Swindon Borough Council	Universidad Politecnica Madrid
NHS Shared Business Services (SBS)	Retrospect Ltd	Society of Local Council Clerks - Sussex Branch	Switch Energy	University College London
North Somerset Council	Ricardo	Somerset Community Foundation	TDS Charitable Foundation	University of Birmingham
Consumer Council for Northern Ireland	RISE Social Enterprise Ltd	Somerset Council	The Anchor Society	University of East Anglia
Northern Powergrid	RJM Insulation	South Coast Building Company	The Aurora Trust	Urban Retrofit Projects Ltd
Nottingham City Council (on behalf of West Midlands Combined Authority)	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	South Coast Insulation Services	The Blagrave Trust	Waddeton Park Ltd
Ofgem	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks	South Gloucestershire Council	The Barrow Cadbury Trust (Connect Fund)	Wales & West Utilities Ltd
OVO Energy	Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution Plc	South Wonston Parish Council	The Ernest Cook Trust	WarmaUK
Oxfordshire County Council	SGN	SP Energy Networks	The Green Register	Wessex Community Energy Network
Parity Projects	SIA Partners Ltd	St Monica Trust	The National Benevolent Charity	Wessex Water Services Ltd
Power to Change Trust	Simple Green Energy Ltd	Steer Economic Development	The Nature Conservancy	West of England Combined Authority
Quartet Community Foundation	Simply Eco Ltd	Stroud District Council	The Newcore Foundation	Wiltshire Community Foundation
Regen	Smart Energy Sense	Sustainability First	Thirty Percy Foundation	Wiltshire Council
Repowering Ltd	Smart Energy West Midlands Ltd	SWALLOW (South West Action for Learning and Living Our Way) Ltd	Thrive Renewables Plc	Wolf & Player
Retford Consulting	So Eco	Sweet.Work Ltd	UK Energy Management (NE) Ltd	Zing Energy Ltd
			UK Power Networks	Zoa Energy Solutions Ltd



I just turned the tap on to wash up and there's hot water! First time in two years. No more boiling kettles! Your whole service from start to finish has been superb, including excellent coordination. This is going to make such a difference to my life."

Mike, one of 33,000 people whom our advice line helped in 2023-24.



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CSE is grateful to all members of staff whose hard work, dedication and compassion are central to the achievement of our mission and goals.

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