

Project Name: ACE Energy

Quarterly report (Jan – Mar 16)

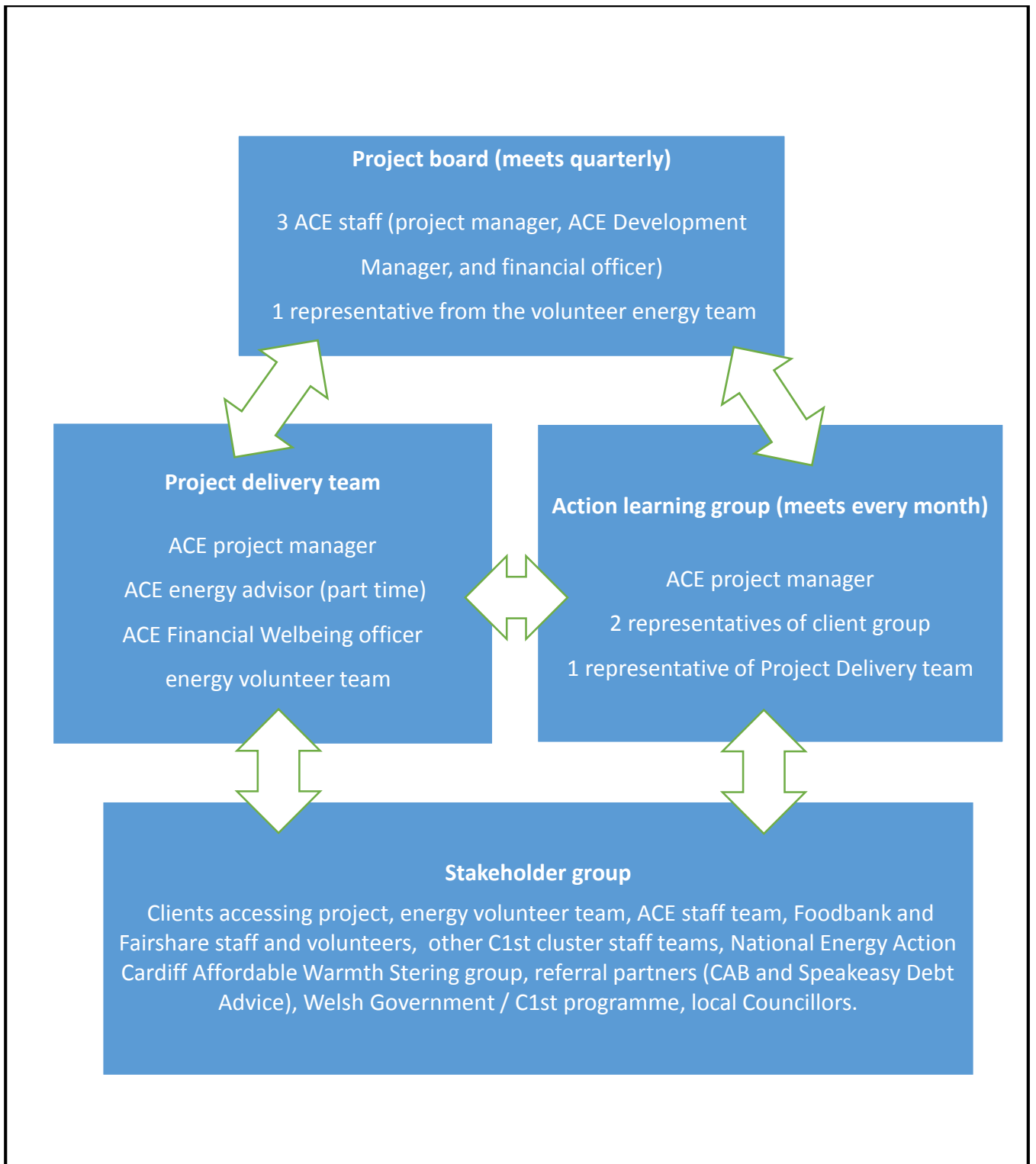
Short project summary

ACE is delivering an energy advice project that aims to reduce levels of fuel poverty with people accessing emergency food services (Cardiff Foodbank) in Ely and Caerau in west Cardiff. We aim to reduce fuel poverty in our target group by improving their knowledge and confidence to take actions to reduce their energy costs and better manage fuel debt. Through partnership with Cardiff Foodbank, we are targeting some of the most disadvantaged people in our community who are unable to afford sufficient food. In many cases our target group are having to make difficult choices between paying for food or energy and are often in severe fuel poverty. Through this project we have recruited and trained a team of volunteers who are supporting the project by providing advice and encouragement to our clients, helping them to better manage their energy costs in the longer term.

Project management and progress

The delivery team of one ACE staff member and three volunteers are responsible for the day to day delivery of the project activities, with overall coordination from the project manager. A project board has been set up to oversee the progress of the project towards its targets and outcomes, made up of ACE management staff and a representative from the volunteer support team. The board is meeting every quarter and receives regular updates from the delivery team on progress / outcomes.

To assist in ongoing monitoring of the project we have also set up an action learning group which is meeting monthly and is responsible for monitoring outcomes and collecting / disseminating learning from project delivery to project team and wider stakeholder group. This group also enables members of our target group to work with ACE staff to design and deliver energy advice and support activities. The action learning group involves representatives from the delivery team, volunteers and participants. A diagram showing our project's management structure is given below.



The objectives of the project are:

- To provide 1-1 energy advice sessions for 200 clients accessing Cardiff Foodbank (by end of March 2017).
- All 200 clients engaged with will receive an initial energy advice session and energy saving pack with 100 clients will receiving additional follow up sessions or a home visit to support follow up actions.

For the first Quarter of this project, we have made good progress towards engaging with our target group. We have engaged with a total of 51 clients who were accessing support from Cardiff Foodbank. All these clients have received 1-1 energy advice and 49 have received a pack of free energy saving devices including LED lightbulbs, Water Widgets (water saving shower valves), electricity monitor, radiator reflector panels, standby saving extension leads, and slow cookers. The following table shows what energy saving devices have been given out in the first quarter.

Item	Number
LED lightbulbs	130
Slow cookers	21
Radiator reflector panels	174
Standby saver extension leads	35
Water widgets (energy / water saving shower head valve)	36
Electricity monitors	49

Energy advice sessions have been delivered by an energy advisor (part time ACE staff who started working on the project at the beginning of January). He has been working with a team of 3 community volunteers who have attended a programme of training sessions on fuel poverty and providing energy efficiency advice and help with switching suppliers, tariffs and payment methods. The volunteer team have also been organising follow up sessions with clients to provide additional support on managing energy costs and referrals to other agencies.

Progress with referrals

Due to the nature of the project (engaging with foodbank clients) all those engaged with were struggling to pay for energy costs – usually due to being on very low income or having their income suddenly / unexpectedly reduced. As the majority of clients seen in this Quarter (67%) were using prepayment meters this meant that they were also often having to self-disconnect or were at risk of self-disconnection. We have been engaging with clients both when they make an initial request for a Foodbank voucher at twice weekly drop in sessions at the Dusty Forge Centre and the Ely Community Hub and have been providing short initial advice sessions to clients requesting support from Foodbank and making referrals or planning any follow up action as appropriate. Referrals have been made to both other ACE staff / projects (in particular we have been closely working with our Financial Wellbeing Officer who has been providing debt and benefits advice) and also to a range of partners including Speakeasy Energy Advice, Citizens Advice Bureau, and NEST programme.

Although engaging with clients when they are making a request for Foodbank support is not always the easiest time to provide in depth information / advice, we are using this as an opportunity to build trust and rapport with clients to facilitate engagement in tackling longer term issues with managing energy costs at a later time. This has proved a successful approach in many cases, with over half of clients (29 out of 51) having ongoing engagement with the project through home energy advice visits or additional support sessions. However, we are concerned that there are a number of clients requiring further assistance that have not re-engaged after the initial advice session, and the project team has decided to adopt a more proactive approach in following these people up (e.g. with regular phone calls to check if any further support is required).

The impact

The expected outcomes for this project were to achieve an annual energy cost saving of around £200 - £250 per client (on average) through increased efficiency, applying for Warm Home Discount, reducing repayments for fuel debt and switching to cheaper tariffs / payment methods. In the first three months of the project, we estimate that the 51 clients engaged so far could make an annual saving of **£4,875** through installing the energy efficient devices. We also estimate the total annual saving from clients' switching tariffs, changing payment methods and reducing debt repayments is **£4,977**. If savings from measures such as insulation and new heating systems are included that have been provided by referral partners, the total estimated annual savings made by clients of the project is **£10,610**. We have not been able to provide an estimate on savings likely to result from behavior changes resulting from the advice and support given, so there may be additional household savings not counted in these figures.

In addition to cost savings, the debt and benefit advice provided through referrals of clients from the project has resulted in an annual household income enhancement of **£43,830**. This has resulted from supporting clients to apply for Housing Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, PIP, Discretionary Housing Payment, Income Support and Tax Credits. Additional budgeting and debt advice has been offered to all clients involved and 10 clients have received intensive support from the Financial Wellbeing Officer to better manage their finances over the long term.

Progress in Quarter 4 (1st quarter of project)

Households and People

Number of fuel poor* households helped by tenure			Number of children (i.e. below 16 years) helped	Number of adults aged 65 or over helped
Private Rented	Owner Occupier	Social Rented		
7	7	37	44	0

*Definition used for this project is the 10% of income definition - A fuel poor household is defined as one which needs to spend more than 10% of its income on all fuel use and to heat its home to an adequate standard of warmth.

Money

Total amount of household debt paid-down	Total annual projected savings from tariff switch	Total annual projected savings from behaviour change	Total annual household income enhancement (incl. WHD)
£5,300	£1,576		£42,830

Energy Efficiency Improvements

Insulation			Appliance Replacement/H eating Controls		
Type	Total Annual Savings (£)	Total SAP Improvement*	Type	Total Annual Savings (£)	Total SAP Improvement*
Cavity Wall insulation (installed in two properties through NEST scheme and by Cardiff Council)	£320		LED lightbulbs (130 bulbs, estimated average annual saving of £4.93 / bulb)	£641	
			Radiator reflector panels (174 Radflek panels installed with estimated	£574	

			average annual saving of £3.30 / panel)		
			Replacement boiler (installed in 4 properties with help from NEST scheme and Supplier Trust fund)	£760	
			Water widgets (36 installed with estimated average annual saving of £87 for each device)	£3,132	

*if known