

CASE STUDY – PARTNERSHIP WITH HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND



GREENING KYLE IS A PROJECT MANAGED BY THE KYLE OF SUTHERLAND DEVELOPMENT TRUST AND FUNDED BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S CLIMATE CHALLENGE FUND 2014-16.

The project has been working to cut the carbon output in the Kyle of Sutherland area by lowering residents' household energy consumption, reducing food waste and encouraging the growth and production of local food.



GREENING KYLE'S TRAINED ENERGY ASSESSORS OFFER FREE HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENTS, AND SUGGEST WAYS IN WHICH RESIDENTS COULD MAKE THEIR HOUSEHOLD ENERGY CONSUMPTION MORE EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE.

Project Assistant Jo Smith explains: "After each Home Energy Assessment we write a report for the resident with recommended measures such as solid wall insulation, draught-proofing, roof insulation top-up, upgraded windows and doors, installing a room thermostat, radiator shelves etc.

Each recommendation is thoroughly explained to the resident: what it is exactly, the materials that should be used, how to install it (if DIY is possible) and how it will improve the home's energy efficiency. We then do a rough carbon reduction and payback period calculation for each measure.

We also lend out home energy monitors that show residents their real-time energy usage, which appliances are using the most energy and how much it's costing them. It's helped many people to change their habits."

Home Energy Scotland supports Greening Kyle with specialist advice at events and through a referral system. This enables householders to access programmes that can help with insulation and boiler replacements, benefit and tax credits checks, and tariff checks with energy suppliers.

Greening Kyle has carried out over 100 Home Energy Assessments, and referred 68 households to Home Energy Scotland.

Alan Grant from Home Energy Scotland says: "It's great working with the Greening Kyle team; it really helps to have a local presence and a project run by and for the community itself."

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Greening Kyle Project Officer Rhionna Mackay agrees:

“We know that if there’s ever something we aren’t 100 per cent sure on, we can call the advice centre and have a chat with one of the advisors to clarify things.

We refer lots of our clients on for specialist advice on things like solid wall insulation and renewable energy systems. Having the support of a larger, more established organisation behind the project has been very useful.

When our project finishes we will ensure that all of our clients know to contact Home Energy Scotland for impartial energy advice”

Greening Kyle exchanges referrals with Age Scotland, Citizens Advice Bureau, New Futures Sutherland and the Highland Council’s Income Maximisation Team.

Jo says: “It can be difficult when you visit people who are struggling with a choice between buying food, heating their home, or paying rent, and we cannot respond to all of these issues on our own.”

Many clients are in fuel poverty and need help to make their homes more energy efficient.

Energy Action Scotland provided £5,169.20 to install draught-proofing and room thermostats in people’s homes, and the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust has a Small Grants Fund that was used to pay for wood and coal to help 11 clients stay warm over winter.

One Greening Kyle client told us: “Without Greening Kyle, I’d be sitting here in the cold. I didn’t know that you could pay for your fuel through a monthly payment plan and previously couldn’t afford to pay for an oil delivery up front.”



Gaining trust in the community has been key to Greening Kyle’s success, says Jo:

“Each client gets a referral slip, like a *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* type golden ticket: when they refer a friend they are entered into a prize draw. This has really encouraged people to refer others, and it’s a great way to keep in touch with a lot of our older clients. Prizes include eco kettles, solar radios, herb planters and gardening equipment.

One of the most important things we’ve found is that people like to get to know the individuals running projects, before allowing them into their homes. That’s why we get involved in community events, so residents can get to know our faces. Past events have included Four Seasons club lunches, Keep Active Together events, the Kyle of Sutherland Growing Group and we also started a knitting appeal for blankets, to help those who are struggling with fuel poverty. It was fantastic to see between 300-400 blanket squares handed in. This showed a great understanding of fuel poverty, and that people are eager to help.”

IF YOUR ORGANISATION WOULD LIKE TO PARTNER WITH HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND ADVICE CENTRE ON 0808 808 2282