

Christ Church, Davyhulme: Davyhulme Energy Saving Project



For the residents of Davyhulme in Greater Manchester, the non-stop flow of traffic along the nearby M60 motorway is a daily reminder of the critical issues facing the environment.

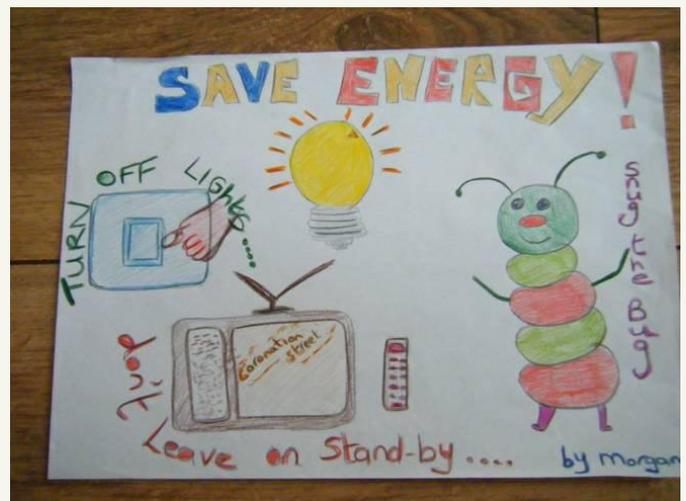
In 2006, members of the congregation at Davyhulme's Christ Church decided it was time to help the community focus on environmental issues, on both a local and global scale. The group, who called themselves IDEA (Improving Davyhulme's Environmental Awareness), set about achieving 'eco congregation' status for their church.

Raising awareness of environmental issues

With this target in mind, the group began raising awareness about green issues among those who came to the church. Their bid to become an eco congregation was achieved in 2008. It was one of only 100 churches in the country to earn the award.

Spurred on by this success, the group decided to reach out beyond their church and to focus on making an impact within the wider community of Davyhulme. DESP (Davyhulme Energy Saving Project) was born.

One of the key aims was to make events and opportunities to learn about environmental issues fun and enjoyable. Over the course of 2008 DESP organised a community litter-picking event, developed a gardening



project with a local school and created a portable display board packed with ideas and information about green issues.

DESP and Energy Saving Trust

IDEA applied to Energy Saving Trust's Green Communities Programme for support on DESP in early 2009. The group held a launch event and invited the Mayor of Trafford to attend. This helped raise the group's profile across Davyhulme. With the support of the Energy Saving Trust, IDEA organised an energy fun day at the local sports centre to share information with residents about ways to save energy. The group also delivered 600 information leaflets and home energy check forms to local households. It was a busy year.

1

One of only 100 churches to be awarded eco-congregation status.

2

331 homes installed loft or cavity wall insulation

That's a lifetime CO₂ saving of around 6,106.5 tonnes.

3

652 households

Contacted for installations, advice, Home Energy Checks or new boilers.

DESP's achievements

A discount on insulation measures was funded by the local council after discussions with the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre. During the project 331 homes in Davyhulme installed loft or cavity wall insulation, at a cost of £50 per measure. This resulted in an estimated lifetime carbon dioxide saving of around 6,106.5 tonnes. Overall, a total of 652 households had contact either for installations, advice, Home Energy Checks or new boilers.

Many residents – children as well as adults – found out about green issues and what they can do to reduce their energy consumption and cut carbon emissions. Through all of this, the group achieved another of its key aims: to bring the wider community of Davyhulme together and to have fun.

DESP's challenges

One of the challenges the group faced was also one of the reasons for its success. Initial enthusiasm for the project meant that the group's expectations of what they could achieve were very high. They had to learn to avoid frustration by taking small and regular steps towards their goal, and to take heart and encouragement from every small success along the way.

What is IDEA doing now?

Christ Church has continued to reach out to Davyhulme residents to increase the community's knowledge of environmental issues and to let people know the steps they can take to cut carbon emissions. IDEA group members took part in a European smart meter project in 2011. The church's parish hall has also been refurbished into an energy efficient building, which has significantly reduced their gas bills. Christ Church has won two Eco Congregation Awards and is applying again in 2014.

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