

Watchfield, Longcot & Shrivenham Trial

Our communities have been selected with Westmill Sustainable Energy Trust (WeSET) to test a new way of buying and using electricity that will save consumers money and support local renewable generation.

Background

At present, most domestic electricity is sold on a 'flat' tariff. You pay the same amount per unit whenever you use it. However, your supplier who sells you power, pays the generators different prices at different times of day.

With a few limited exceptions (such as Economy 7)

if you use power at a time when the power is cheap for the supplier to buy, this saving is not passed on to you.

Also, small power producers (e.g. home-owners with roof-top solar panels) are only paid ~ 5p per unit for any 'surplus' electricity they produce. This electricity is then sold for around ~14p per unit.

Not-for-profit Energy Local want local people to be able to use this power directly and share this price difference between local generators and consumers.

The Idea

By working as a group, you will be able to access a 'time of day' tariff, benefit from cheaper prices at periods of low demand and/or high generation and access locally generated renewable power directly.

This will help encourage renewable energy, reduce carbon emissions and boost the local economy.



The Trial

Partly government funded, the trial will be run by Energy Local working with local charity WeSET, the Oxford University Environmental Change Institute and other partners.

We need 50 households to test equipment which is designed to control electrical devices (in particular storage heaters and water heaters). The control helps 'match' local use with local generation and 'shift' electricity use into low price periods (like a more sophisticated version of Economy 7). A display will show your usage and cheap times of day to use power.

The first stage of the trial involves monitoring your usage for a few months. Around September 2015, for the second stage, we will install the control equipment to let you trial it for at least a year.

You do NOT need to switch supplier for the trial - the technology will run alongside your normal supply and calculate the savings that you would be making on the Energy Local tariff.

Installations

We will install the equipment in two stages, a measurement device initially and later the control box - positioned near your meter and fuse box.. It should take 2-3 hours. We will put programmable switch on your storage or water heaters (if you have them). We may also provide a plug socket that can be switched on remotely by the control box. Some homes can trial a battery and high efficiency lighting. All equipment will be removed at the end of the trial.

The electricians will be 'Part P' qualified (i.e. fully trained for domestic work) and locally based in case of problems. We will provide phone numbers.

If you do not have a computer/smart phone, we will provide a display. We will need to use your internet or phone connection to send you information.

Savings

We aim to achieve up to 15% savings compared to your normal tariff. However your actual electricity bill depends on the weather and the amount of electricity you use. The trial only affects the timing of your usage and the source of your electricity so we cannot guarantee any savings.

We will need to know your historic usage, your usage during the trial period and the tariff you are currently on in order to calculate your savings. Your share of the savings will be paid in Co-op shopping vouchers (that can be used for example in Midcounties Co-op shops).

The equipment will use a very small amount of electricity and the cost of this should be more than outweighed by the savings you make.

Surveys and your Feedback in the Trial

An electrician will visit you to check that your home is suitable for testing the equipment. We will also record the type of certain appliances that you have, partly to help us provide you with some general energy saving advice.

We will ask you to fill in an 'energy use diary' for a few days.

We will ask you to fill in a survey online or on paper at the beginning, middle and end of the trial. A researcher from Oxford University would like to interview you, in person or by phone, during the trial.

We will also work with you so you understand the technology and tariffs.

Timescales and Contacts

Month	Activity
January - March 2015	Home Surveys
March - August 2015	Energy Monitoring
September 2015	Survey and equipment installation
February/March 2016	2nd Survey and workshop
September/October 2016 onwards	Final survey and equipment removal

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Project Partners:

Energy Local, WeSET, Oxford University, Exergy Devices, De Montfort University, Moixa Technology, Energise Sussex Coast, Co-operative Energy

