

How an Energy Efficiency Advisor can help your business save money

As part of the Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP), eligible businesses can take advantage of a free energy efficiency assessment, which can lead to improved efficiency and reduced costs.

Here we look at the benefits of undergoing an assessment with Liz Whinnett an Energy Efficiency Advisor employed by Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce.



What support does the Energy Efficiency Advisor give?

The assessment begins with a visit to your premises, where your Energy Efficiency Advisor will find out how your business is using energy. By looking at a year's worth of your energy bills, your Advisor can firstly determine if your tariffs are in line with what other similar businesses are paying.

An Energy Efficiency Assessment with Liz

During this initial meeting, the Advisor will discuss the business's energy use and key priorities. Half hourly data can also be accessed on behalf of the business, if available; to begin to identify energy use patterns and highlight usage overnight or during the weekends. As Liz explains "most businesses do not have the time to monitor energy usage, so we can begin to do this for them to draw attention to the costs and when usage is high. This in itself can lead to savings, as we often find around 20% of energy use occurring overnight. This quickly encourages the business owner to start investigating what equipment is left on!"

The energy efficiency assessment also includes a walk around of the site, where the Advisor will be looking for opportunities to make savings; some will be low cost immediate actions, such as fixing compressed air leaks, encouraging employees to turn off appliances, such as extraction fans when not in use, whilst others will require some investment.

Following the visit, the business receives a detailed report documenting energy saving recommendations. Typically, actions include updating lighting to LEDs controlled by motion sensors, upgrading heating systems to high efficiency boilers or moving away from fossil fuels, or improvements to reduce heat loss through the building itself.

"We return to explain the findings of this report," explains Liz, "we try to quantify the savings for each action and give the business an idea of the payback period, as this really helps to prioritise what needs to be completed first."

The follow up meeting provides a great opportunity to review each point and you will be pleased to learn that, on average, each report provides savings of around 30% to the business!

For more info see: www.business-central.co.uk/beep/

Email: info@business-central.co.uk

Or call: 01905 677888

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How can the Advisor help my business access funding?

The Advisor will then work with the business to put together a grant application for BEEP funding or make an introduction to an alternative source of funding. Although many of the opportunities make good financial sense even without additional funding.

“It’s really rewarding to work with a business from the energy assessment stage right through to the company being awarded a grant and implementing some of the actions we’ve discussed. The project is now seeing some fantastic results in the businesses we’ve supported, not only due to the grant funding but also due to a raised awareness of the need to save energy among members of staff.”



Open Space benefitted from an energy efficiency assessment

Many businesses choose to action the recommendations, even if they can’t get any financial support, because it makes good business sense. This is because there are many non-financial benefits to becoming more energy efficient and taking on board the recommendations made by your advisor, such as:

- Creating a better working environment for employees for example, by providing a more comfortable temperature or improved light quality
- Putting you back in control of your energy spending by encouraging your business to monitor usage and be more energy aware
- Helping your business to boost its environmental credentials

Project Information

The Business Energy Efficiency Programme is part-financed by the England European Regional Development Fund Programme as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020.

Worcestershire County Council along with its partners Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, Herefordshire Council, Telford & Wrekin Council, Shropshire Council and the Worcestershire Districts Councils were awarded £1.8 million funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government's European Regional Development Fund to help small and medium-sized businesses.

European Regional Development Fund

Business Energy Efficiency Programme- This project is receiving up to £1,797,112 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund.

Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.

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