



Are you interested in 'green' issues, reducing fuel poverty and making sure more people can enjoy affordable warmth?

WHY NOT VOLUNTEER TO BE A COMMUNITY WARMTH CHAMPION?

Background

Cambridgeshire ACRE is currently working in partnership with Calor, National Energy Action (NEA), the Rural Community Action Network and the Commission for Rural Communities to reduce levels of fuel poverty and carbon emissions in off-grid areas by delivering The Future of Rural Energy in Europe (FREE) project. The project targets rural areas across the UK with the highest rates of rural fuel poverty – households who need to spend 10% or more of their annual income to maintain a warm and healthy home.

We believe the most effective way to deliver the project will be to identify and work with Community Warmth Champions, who are volunteer members of a local community who know it best. We have limited funding and are only able to work in a handful of areas, we have identified two villages which are off gas and therefore potentially amongst the most affected by fuel poverty – Bassingbourn and Wisbech St Mary in which we would like to focus our activity.

The role

Community Warmth Champions are not expected to be experts on energy efficiency issues but rather people with enthusiasm for saving energy who are willing to commit some time to promote simple energy messages within their own communities. There is already a wealth of help and guidance available to householders but we want to ensure that as many as possible are aware of that help and the difference it can make.

We expect champions to learn about signposting householders to other sources of specialist energy or money advice, grant aid for energy efficiency or other household improvements.

Anyone can become a Community Warmth Champion as long as they have contact with people within their local community, either as neighbours, family and friends and/or a member of a local community groups, e.g. voluntary organisations, sports club, faith organisation etc. We are particularly keen to recruit Champions who come into contact with those on low incomes, the elderly, those with young children and/or those living with disabilities or long term illnesses.

We will expect you to:

- Commit a small amount of time each month to their champion role and we envisage that this will mean about a day a month.
- Promote simple messages and provide further details of what help is available.
- Maintain contact with Cambridgeshire ACRE's Community Champion Coordinator for guidance, assistance and project updates
- Complete and return a simple feedback form detailing how many householders have been contacted during the project period and the information provided to them.

Please note that all contact with local residents will be in community settings and Champions are not expected to cold call or visit householders at home, even if invited.

Requirements

- Should have an interest in energy issues, fuel poverty and the provision of affordable warmth.
- Must be aged between 18 and 80.
- Must have access to a computer and the ability to use email.
- Must have effective communications skills (oral and written) including being able to address groups of people.
- Should have high level of personal integrity.
- Should be able to travel by own or public transport.
- Should have an enjoyment of meeting new people and networking.
- Would be helpful to have an understanding of rural life.
- Previous experience of working or volunteering with people in the community is also desirable but not essential.

What to do next

If you think you might be interested in taking on this role, please get in touch with Lynda Bubb, Cambridgeshire ACRE's Community Warmth Champion Co-ordinator on tel: 01353 865037 or email: lynda.bubb@camsacre.org.uk.