TRUST NEWS

charis the business of giving

JULY 2011

EDF ENERGY TRUST

Surprisingly, in this time of need, application numbers to the EDF Energy Trust have fallen. You are therefore encouraged to apply on behalf of clients struggling to clear gas and electricity debts. The Trust awards grants to clear such debts and in addition offers help via Further Assistance Payments - grants to clear other essential household debts or purchase essential household items including:

- Washing machines, cookers, refrigerators etc.
- Council tax debts
- Rent arrears
- Other key priority debts, e.g. water
- Telephone debts (where a medical need is demonstrated for a telephone)
- Boiler repair / replacement
- Bankruptcy deposits / Debt Relief Orders
- Funeral Expenses

'The aim of the Trust is to give vulnerable individuals a fresh start and enable them to keep free of debt going forward.'

The easiest way to apply is via the Trust's online application form via www.edfenergytrust.org.uk

SPECIAL HELPLINE FOR CUSTOMERS OF EDF ENERGY

EDF Energy sponsors a customer helpline based at Plymouth Citizens Advice Bureau providing generic money and debt advice to customers of EDF Energy. The advice line is available 6 days a week, as follows:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday - 9am to 5pm

Tuesday & Thursday - 9am to 8pm

Saturday - 9am to 12pm

Landline calls are free to 0800 1566 666.

Mobile callers should dial 0300 3300 519 (calls are charged at the standard rate).

HELPLINE FOR CUSTOMERS OF BRITISH GAS

BG provides a special helpline number for customers offering holistic advice, including ensuring the customer is on the right tariff, discussing affordable payment plans and if appropriate signposting the customer to the BGET. i.e. those struggling to clear debts owed to British Gas. Customers should be ready with their customer reference number (starts with 85) and call 0800 107 5793.

The number is available Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm and Saturday 8am to 6pm.

SMALL GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM THE BRITISH GAS ENERGY TRUST

APPLY NOW!

Trustees are pleased to announce the launch of a new Small Grants Programme. Charitable organisations are encouraged to apply for a one-off grant of up to £3,000 to pay for small capital items or activities that will assist in meeting the Trust's objectives for funding (see website). Applications will be accepted from 1st to 21st July 2011. The Trust will award approximately 40 grants and competition is expected to be high. Priority will be given to organisations that can demonstrate a focus on the elderly and people suffering from mental illness- two target groups that are particularly vulnerable to fuel debt. For more information, including details of eligible items visit ww.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk

The Scottish Gas energy trust

The British Gas energy trust

Since the announcement of additional funds from British Gas applications to the BGET have increased but the Trust is still able to support many more applications. In addition to clearing energy debts, the Trust offers a range of Further Assistance Payments. The easiest way to apply is via the Trust's online application form via www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk

BRITISH GAS ENERGY TRUST AWARDS NEW ORGANISATIONAL GRANTS

Trustees of the BGET are pleased to announce award of grants to the following organisations:

- Bristol Debt Advice Centre
- Bromley by Bow (London)
- Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau
- Bradford Citizens Advice Bureau
- St Ann's Advice Centre (Nottingham)
- Money Matters Money Advice Centre (Glasgow)
- Coventry Law Centre
- Five Lamps (Sunderland)
- Community Links (London)
- Speakeasy (Cardiff)
- Riverside Advice (Cardiff)
- St Helens Citizens Advice Bureau
- Preston Citizens Advice Bureau

These were among a number of organisations invited to apply from within regions of high fuel poverty. All demonstrated strong partnership networks. Grants are for an initial one-year period with projects due to commence on 1 July 2011.

All funded project workers will be required to achieve a City & Guilds qualification in energy awareness. They will deliver specialist fuel debt advice, assist clients to submit applications to the Trust's Individuals and Families Programme, and also promote the work of the Trust.

Contact details for project officers will be given in the next newsletter for specialist advice and support.

ONLINE APPLICATION FORM UPDATE

We are thrilled with the way the new online application form has taken off. The new form allows applicants and agencies to submit applications via the internet, replacing the old static online form. Users have reaped the benefits of a new streamline system where they can save the form part completed.

We have noticed a few agencies are still submitting applications 'as an individual' . It is highly recommended that they set up an 'agency account' so they can keep track of their applications and take advantage of the additional benefits offered such as the ability to print after submission.

BANKRUPTCY & DRO APPLICATIONS

Please remember when applying for Bankruptcy or DRO fees as a Further Assistance Payments (FAP) on behalf of a client, you must submit a signed declaration confirming that your client fits the Trusts' criteria and that they have received comprehensive advice on the implications of being declared bankrupt / obtaining a DRO from an appropriately trained Money / Debt Advice worker.

This is essential for the relevant Trusts to be confident that the client is fully informed of the action they are taking and all possible consequences. If you are supporting your client but are *not* the one giving this advice, do not sign the declaration, but pass it to the trained adviser to sign. The declaration is available for download from the Trusts websites (see below.)

CHARIS COMPETITION - WINNER REVEALED

Congratulations to the Bristol Debt Advice Centre, winner of £600 of IT equipment. Energy Advice Co-ordinator Rhianne Cotterill said, 'We are thrilled to have won the competition. The money will come in very helpful to enhance our IT services for both our advisors and clients.'

BDAC submitted a total of 68 successful applications in the four month period between October 2010 and January 2011.

HELP FOR VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS OF NPOWER

Customers of npower struggling to clear gas and electricity debts can apply to the npower Energy Fund for a grant to clear their debts. Prior to an award of grant, an applicant must demonstrate their commitment to achieving financial stability by making regular payments for their ongoing usage over a six month period. The Fund also offers npower customers further assistance (FAPs). For more information and to apply on line visit www.npowerenergytrust.org.uk

Veolia Water Trust

The Trust still has ample funds available to help those most in need by clearing water debts and in exceptional circumstances offering assistance with other priority bills and essential household items.

For those not already aware, the Trust has reverted back to its original method of awarding grants whereby the debts of a successful applicant are immediately cleared at the time of award via a payment made directly to their account.

The easiest way to apply to the Trust is via its online application form via www.veoliawatertrust.org.uk

A WORD FROM THE GRANTS UNIT...

As you are aware the Grants Unit is under increased pressure due to the recent rise in applications. When we have to request further evidence to support your clients application, it can really slow the process down so please try and send as much information as possible at the time of submission. If that is not possible, please send all the information in at the same time. Some support workers are in the habit of sending pieces of evidence one at a time which causes us a lot of extra work .

It has also come to our attention that some support workers are routinely requesting extra time for their clients to obtain the necessary information. Please note that it is not possible to grant extra time. Evidence sent in after the deadline date will not be considered.

GRANTS TO CLEAR WATER DEBTS OWED TO ANGLIAN WATER & SOUTH EAST WATER NOW

Anglian Water and South East Water continue to operate six month provisional award schemes for their vulnerable customers. If an applicant makes sufficient payments over the six month provisional period, an award will be made directly to their water account. Anglian Water has a debt advisor based at Peterborough Citizens Advice Bureau - call Tanya Ramage on 01733 887924 or email awdebtadvisor@peterboroughcab.org.uk The easiest way to apply to the Funds is via their online application forms - see websites below.

TRUSTS' CONTACT DETAILS

APPLICATION REQUEST LINE: 01733 421060

FREEPOST RRZJ-XBSY-GYRG, British Gas Energy Trust, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk
FREEPOST RLXG-RBYJ-USXE, EDF Energy Trust, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.edfenergytrust.org.uk
FREEPOST RSRX-JHTT-AZSG, npower Energy Fund, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.npowerenergyfund.com
FREEPOST RSHE-ARTT-AAUE, South East Water's Helping Hand, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.southeastwater.co.uk/helpinghand
FREEPOST RSHH-JKZA-HAUY, Veolia Water Trust, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.veoliawatertrust.org.uk
Anglian Water Assistance Fund, PO BOX 42, Peterborough, PE3 8XH	www.anglianwater.co.uk/awaf

Please ensure we have your email address for future newsletter mailings. Contact details, including your organisation should be emailed to stephaniebowler@charisgrants.com

CHARIS' SWITCHBOARD: 01733 421021 WEB: www.charisgrants.com