



## **Response to Consultation on Energy Redress Fund**

### **Question 1 - Do you consider the funding split between the Main Fund, Innovation Fund and Decarbonisation Fund to be appropriate?**

It is reasonable that the Main Fund should address fuel poverty. The introduction of a Decarbonisation Fund is welcome, however, and, I suspect will be increasingly popular. There is a desperate need to accelerate the move to much lower carbon emissions. Many good local projects find difficulty sourcing capital grants and support for their activities because there aren't sufficient funding bodies offering grants to schemes. The best of these schemes lower costs as well as carbon for community buildings and in some cases residents. I hope therefore that the Decarbonisation Fund will continue beyond 2021 and beyond the existing limited budget.

### **Question 2. Do you consider the proportionate funding split between vulnerable consumers and all energy consumers to be appropriate? i.e. 70% to vulnerable consumers and a total of 30% to all energy consumers.**

I would not want to decrease funding too much to the vulnerable consumers but, given the urgency as the effects of climate change increasingly manifest, a small adjustment to allow greater funds for innovation and carbon emission reduction projects might be sensible.

### **Question 3. Should a fuel voucher fund remain a permanent feature of the overall Energy Redress Scheme, so that it can react quickly to specific crises?**

### **Question 4. If a fuel voucher fund is set up, what type of consumer should be eligible to apply for these vouchers? e.g. vulnerable consumers, pre-payment meter consumers.**

I do not have sufficient experience of the fuel voucher fund to have a considered view.

### **Question 5. What are your views on expanding the applicant scope beyond charities and organisations that partner with charities? If you think the scope should be expanded, do you have any suggestions for how eligibility should be defined? (e.g. what legal structures/status should qualify? Should there be other qualifying criteria?)**

The definition should definitely be 'not for profit'. I believe that there is scope to include Community Benefit Societies and Community Interest Companies that can show that any income beyond the needs of operating costs will be redirected to community benefit. I do not think that smaller community groups should be eligible for any of the existing funds unless they are working with charity or other eligible organisation, if the rules change. A fund for smaller local projects would be valuable to these latter groups but the application process would need to be simplified.

I appreciate that managing an increased workload for EST might not be a good idea.

Local Authorities are currently excluded unless working with an eligible charity. I would not favour expanding eligibility to Local Authorities. I believe that it is healthy for them to work with charitable partners with both parties benefitting. Any joint project achieves greater reach through the different networks and associations and gains greater credibility with beneficiaries.

**Question 6. How did you find the application process?**

**Question 7. Did you have a good understanding of the eligibility criteria?**

**Question 8. Do you have any feedback on what would have made the process better?**

Since I have only been involved in one application so far in a consortium with an eligible partner and others, which has only recently been submitted, I am not submitting an opinion on this.