

Response to the Energy Redress Scheme consultation
ERS funding recipient REAP, NE Scotland, Energy Advice Moray

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

Looks good as it is

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.

Again, looks good – the bulk should be available to vulnerable energy customers to get energy advice and help, while looking to the future de-carbonisation is good to have in the mix, too.

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?

I think it would be better to work through the Fuel Bank Foundation as we do, which gives a link to Charis. These funds work best if trusted local groups can distribute them (your current scheme is too large for us to apply to) and help those accessing them address their energy issues and bills in general as well.

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.

Working with the Fuel Bank to do pre-payment meters only – easier to administer and prepayment meters have long been an indicator for fuel poverty and help prioritise the payments.

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?)

There are not many funders able to provide this level of funding to employ energy advisors and make a real difference locally. Please keep the funding focussed on local charities, with perhaps SCIO's added in only, so as not to dilute the valuable funds and their impact to fund well run, safe, accountable charities.

Energy Advice is difficult to deliver well, requiring well trained and supported, dedicated staff. ERS funding allows us to retain these valuable workers in our rural area.

Question 6. How did you find the application process?

Good – a hard form to complete, but appropriate to the level of funding sought

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

yes

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

It's good as it is, with officers on hand to answer queries

Question 9. Should we consider any other areas regarding the Energy Redress Scheme? If so, please provide an outline explanation of your suggested area(s). If possible, please outline any associated benefits and costs with your suggestion(s).

I'd be very wary of widening the fund areas, as this would detract from the good work being funded at present. Keep it focussed on energy advice for vulnerable customers

Question 10. Do you have any other general comments or feedback you would like to provide?

There is a lack of funders other than the ERS for charities wishing to give energy advice to vulnerable clients across a LA or wide area. Many other funders demand smaller community buy in or being run by particular groups (eg disabled, youth etc). This fund is great for focussing on energy customers. Long may it remain!