

Charitable Trust Application

Citizens Advice St. Helens - Community Energy Champions

The Community Energy Champions service is funded by the British Gas Energy Trust and provides specialist level income maximisation casework, assistance with debt, and energy efficiency advice. This holistic approach takes into account the whole advice needs of the client.

Project Overview

The Champions help people:

- Apply to energy trusts and funds providing grants to pay gas and electricity debts.
- Apply for hardship funds.
- With advice on tariffs and energy suppliers, and advice on the funding available to install energy-efficient home improvements such as boilers and insulation.
- Access energy vouchers, and funds to pay for DRO or Bankruptcy fees.

About the Client

The client is a single mother with two dependent children. She had been living in London, working for 7 years as a cleaner in a nursery. When her husband left her, she was rehoused many miles away in St. Helens Merseyside.

The private rented property she had been moved to was unfurnished and she could not afford white goods, beds or bedding for her children.



Stock Image



Case Study highlights

Date: March to June 2020

Time: 3 months

Money Advice Caseworker

3 hours 30 minutes

8 interventions

About the client

- Divorced
- Two dependent children
- Private tenant

She was referred to Citizens Advice St. Helens, and on her behalf a Community Energy Champion contacted the Local Welfare Assistance schemes in St. Helens and in client's previous London location to attempt to obtain help for her.

Unfortunately, both of these local authorities couldn't help as she didn't meet their criteria for assistance.

Support

The client:

- Had applied for housing benefit and was awaiting the outcome of application.
- Had outstanding debts and was given details of the debt team within Citizens Advice St Helens to contact if she wished to pursue debt advice.
- Was also advised to contact the benefit team for income maximisation support.

The Community Energy Champion, keen to locate alternate sources of funding for assistance made an application to the *Children in Need Emergency Essentials Fund* but was unsuccessful.

They then contacted the *Teaching Staff Trust (TST)* on the client's behalf to query eligibility as a part time cleaner. TST confirmed that the client would be eligible based on proof of employment. The client obtained the necessary documents to evidence her job and posted them to the CAB office (due to Covid-19 face to face client support had stopped).

The documents arrived at the office and the Champion forwarded the evidence to the TST charitable trust with the full application for financial support. TST granted assistance and funding for client.

"Thank you so much. Myself and my children are now able to settle into our new home."

Client

"We are pleased to have achieved such a positive outcome for client and her family."

Community Energy Champion

Project Outcomes

The client was awarded funding for

- A washing machine
- A fridge freezer
- A cooker
- 2 single mattresses
- A double mattress
- £500 towards household bills and essentials sent directly to client

Receiving assistance prevented the client from getting into further arrears. Fundamentally the family was much happier moving and settling into a new home with white goods and furnishings. The persistence of the Champion increased the client's confidence to seek and engage with the support offered.