

Communities encouraged to join forces to beat big energy bills this winter

- **Today marks the start of Community Energy Fortnight organised by the Community Energy Coalition, in association with Cooperative Energy**
- **Around the UK there have been at least 5,000 community groups undertaking initiatives in the last five years to generate and help people to save energy**
- **New research released by Siemens and the Energy Saving Trust¹ shows the majority of consumers are not aware of community energy schemes, however a quarter would be interested in joining with others in their local community to generate energy**

People across the UK are being encouraged to look into community energy schemes in their areas as winter approaches and throughout Community Energy Fortnight.

There are more than 5,000 schemes around the country that see communities join together to generate their own energy from renewable sources such as solar and wind energy, while many other schemes offer help on home insulation and energy audits.

However, new research released today shows that despite the fact more than 80% of us feel we pay too much for our energy bills, more than half of us are unaware of community energy schemes that could save us money.

Almost a third say they would be interested in generating their own power if it was the same price or cheaper than their current tariff, while a quarter say they would consider an energy source that was generated amongst their local community. One in five say it would make a difference to them if profits from energy production also went back into their community.

Almost half admit they don't know how their current energy supply is generated but many of those surveyed by Siemens say recent developments in technology in relation to energy interests them.

Greater choice of suppliers and tariffs, smart metering, renewable energy solutions; such as solar panels, smart products in the home including energy saving fridges and washing machines, and tariffs that see people rewarded for not using energy at peak times were amongst the developments that those surveyed consider most important.

Paul Brodrick, Head of Smart Grid Applications & Solutions for Siemens in North West Europe, said: "The UK is on the threshold of a new energy revolution, with individuals and communities starting to play a greater role in the energy system. Our research shows that people are clearly interested in generating their own energy as well as buying it through their local community. Whilst our research suggests an overall lack of awareness of decentralized community energy, there is a clear desire amongst consumers to find out how they can generate their own energy. As an industry, we now have a responsibility to enable the next energy revolution."

Siemens is a technology enabler for community energy schemes. The Decentralised Energy Management System from Siemens connects up and pools many small-scale distributed energy sources so they can be operated as a single 'virtual power plant.'

Graham Ayling, Community Services Manager at Energy Saving Trust, said: "The growth of community energy over the last few years has been explosive. From a handful of visionaries it has grown to movement encompassing more than 5000

projects across the UK, from neighbourly energy advice to multi-megawatt renewable energy generators.”

“This quiet revolution is happening against a backdrop of far-reaching technological advances and changes to our energy system, creating an unprecedented opportunity to make energy cleaner, smarter and more affordable for everyone. Community Energy Fortnight brings together communities, councils, businesses and civil society to share that vision.”

Ramsay Dunning, General Manager at Cooperative Energy, said: We welcome the commitment to community energy shown by Siemens, and the desire from people for community energy demonstrated in the research. Through ‘User Chooser’ and using technology is what has enabled customers of Cooperative Energy to choose how their electricity is generated, and even where from, so they can support community schemes and still save money from low prices. We see using technology providing ever more opportunities to reduce costs and offer greater choice to our customers.”

To find out more about all the events happening during the 2014 Community Energy Fortnight, visit <http://ukcec.org/events/community-fortnight-2014>. You can also follow #CEF2014 on Twitter.

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¹ The research for Siemens was carried out by Opinion Matters 1 – 5 September 2014, amongst a sample of 1,915 UK adults. Key findings:

- 83% believe they pay too much for their energy bills (q1)
- 54% are unaware of community energy (q4)
- 24% would be interested in energy that came from a source that was generated locally from within their community and was the same price or cheaper than their current tariff (q3)
- 21% would be interested in energy that saw a proportion of the profits go back into the community and was the same price or cheaper than their current tariff (q3)
- 46% do not know how their current energy supply is generated (q8).

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About the Community Energy Coalition (CEC)

The CEC has 36 members, including the Church of England, the National Union of Students (NUS), the National Trust and represents a combined membership base of several millions. Its aim is to ignite an energy revolution which places communities at its heart and strives for a clean, affordable and secure energy system for all. We are achieving this by helping communities across the UK to own, generate and save energy together. The CEC has already made significant strides towards scaling up community energy. Most noticeably the CEC was a key contributor to the Government's first ever Community Energy Strategy, launched this year, which features a number of potentially break through policies. Visit www.ukcec.org for more information.

About Siemens

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 170 years ago and now employs 13,760 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £3.36 billion*. As the world's largest engineering company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges across the key sectors of energy, industry, infrastructure & cities and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit www.siemens.co.uk

* Data includes intercompany revenue. Data may not be comparable with revenue reported in annual or interim reports