

# NET your carbons and save money – 26 March 2011



Alison McCrorey (left) celebrates with local residents as they receive certificates for taking part in the Future Families initiative. Many reported energy savings of up to 42%

Residents taking part in a community initiative in north Edinburgh have made massive savings of between 20% and 40% on their energy bills.

As part of the NET Your Carbons project, North Edinburgh Trust's Future Families initiative has helped a small group of residents in Muirhouse reduce their energy consumption and save money. Those taking part have recorded an average of 16.59% saving on their electricity bills with some participants achieving savings of as much as 42%. Average energy saving for Gas was 29.92% with some participants achieving savings of as much as 68%.

North Edinburgh Trust's (NET) main aim is to reduce poverty in the area and received funding from the Climate Challenge Fund to tackle fuel poverty and lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Obviously, the less energy people use the more money they save AND the less CO<sub>2</sub> they produce.

In their funding application NET stated that they aimed to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 8%. The average CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from the Future Families project was actually 19.33% with some participants recording an impressive 38.7% reduction.

The key to this tremendous achievement was the one to one engagement from NET development worker Alison McCrorey that enabled the group to learn how to use the range of energy

saving gadgets that other organisations such as Energy Saving Trust distribute freely. "Many people are not sure how to make the most of this equipment and our experience is that they tend to end up at the back of the cupboard or in a drawer" said Alison. Future Families participants also learned how to programme heating systems effectively and monitor their energy usage.

Alison's input was just the start as it soon became clear that the group had their own energy saving tips and everyday methods to cut costs and save energy to share with each other, helping to reduce everyone's CO2 emissions even further.

Although the initial stage of the Future Families initiative has now ended, a team of volunteers drawn from the local community, have undergone training to become energy advisors who will be share the lessons learned and help other residents in the North Edinburgh area get the most from energy and environmental initiatives. Some of the participants have said that they intend to continue to use the tips, record their meter readings and keep an eye on how much energy they are using to sustain the savings.

Trust chief executive, Jackie McKenna, said: "The Future Families research has shown that every household can help Scotland meet its CO2 reduction targets and make real savings on their energy bills. "We need to get that message out to everyone, and the energy adviser volunteers will help us do so."

Learn how you can save money on your energy bills and help North Edinburgh Trust produce a community action plan that will address fuel poverty issues in your area during 2011/2012 at our NET Your Carbons Event at Craigroyston Community High School on Saturday 26th March. Call 0131 625 0045 for details or just turn up at 9.30 for registration.

Child care facilities are available – booking essential.