



severn wye

IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024



ENERGY IN A TIME OF CRISIS

We’ve heard the word ‘crisis’ so much again this year; climate, housing, energy – the costs of daily life itself are at a record high.

For many of our clients, crisis has made itself at home – in their empty cupboards, mouldy bathrooms and freezing bedrooms. Our community-based advisers routinely see people with complex needs, well beyond managing and paying for their energy. At Severn Wye, we can’t put food in the fridge but we can make sure the people we support can access all the help they need – including nearly **2,800 clients with a vulnerability through our energy adviceline and community-based support.**

Many more people are now aware of the importance of energy efficiency – perhaps we can thank fluctuating energy price caps for that. But some people eager to **invest in improving their homes** are stuck because there’s too much – often conflicting – information out there to make sense of. Severn Wye is extending impartial, tailored support to more homeowners who are desperate for clarity and guidance on how to invest for the long term. This year our recommendations on home energy have given households the chance to save more than **£52,000 from their energy bills.**

And this year we’ve extended our **expert business support** to small- and medium-sized enterprises in Wales, giving local business owners the knowledge, confidence and expertise they need to cut costs through energy efficiency – making their companies resilient in the face of future price changes that have pushed many organisations to the brink. This year across England and Wales we’ve helped **140 enterprises on their net zero journey.**

Having community-based advice and advocacy, retrofit and renewable energy **expertise all under one roof** gives us a wide perspective on the energy issues facing homes and businesses in England and Wales – and a **unique ability to support** them on their sustainability journeys. And, pushing back against the belief that Britain’s older building stock is beyond help, we are advising more households and businesses in historic and listed premises on their ideal retrofit solutions.



PLAYING OUR PART

Sandy Ruthven MBE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SEVERN WYE



Fuel poverty and climate change are two of the biggest challenges we face, and Severn Wye’s mission is to play our part in tackling these crises. I am pleased to say we have had more impact this year than ever before.

While in 2023-24 the energy crisis began to subside and the cost-of-living pressures eased slightly, the government’s own figures show 13% of households were in fuel poverty in 2023 in England alone; meanwhile, National Energy Action reported that half the adults across Britain turned their heat off last winter or went to bed early to stay warm. So there is little let-up for many who continue to struggle to heat their homes and stay healthy. At the same time the impacts of climate change are more pressing than ever, with extreme weather increasingly affecting the UK and the world.

In our 25th year, our energy advice work is very much on the front line of the energy crisis. But helping people get through one winter at a time is not enough: we want to change the system. Retrofitting people’s homes, supporting businesses to be more energy efficient, and generating our own home-grown, carbon-free energy has been at the heart of our work at Severn Wye this year. Through grant funding and our growing ‘paid for’ service offer we are keeping more homes warmer and helping more businesses go green, and our cutting-edge, carbon-negative power station in Warrington is now well on the way to completion.

Our work changes lives and I am proud of our skilled and dedicated teams who rise unfailingly to the challenges we all face. This year was just the first in our new five-year strategy, to support more people, save more energy, and generate more carbon savings as our capacity grows. We doubled in size this year, growing both our numbers and the breadth of our expertise, and will continue to grow to meet the twin challenges of fuel poverty and climate change head on.



Our work changes lives forever and I am proud of our skilled and dedicated teams who rise unfailingly to the challenges we all face.”

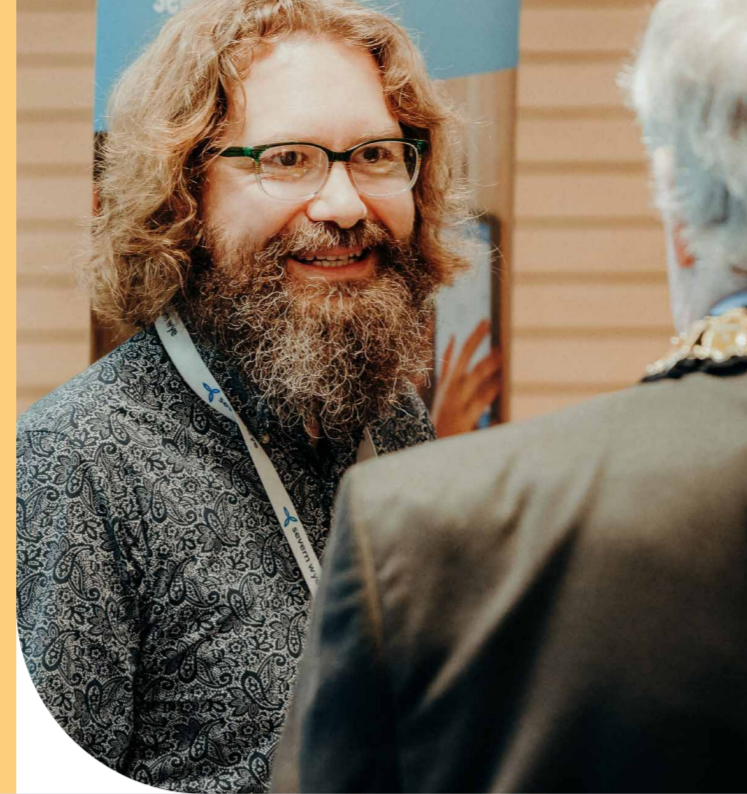


Sandy Ruthven MBE



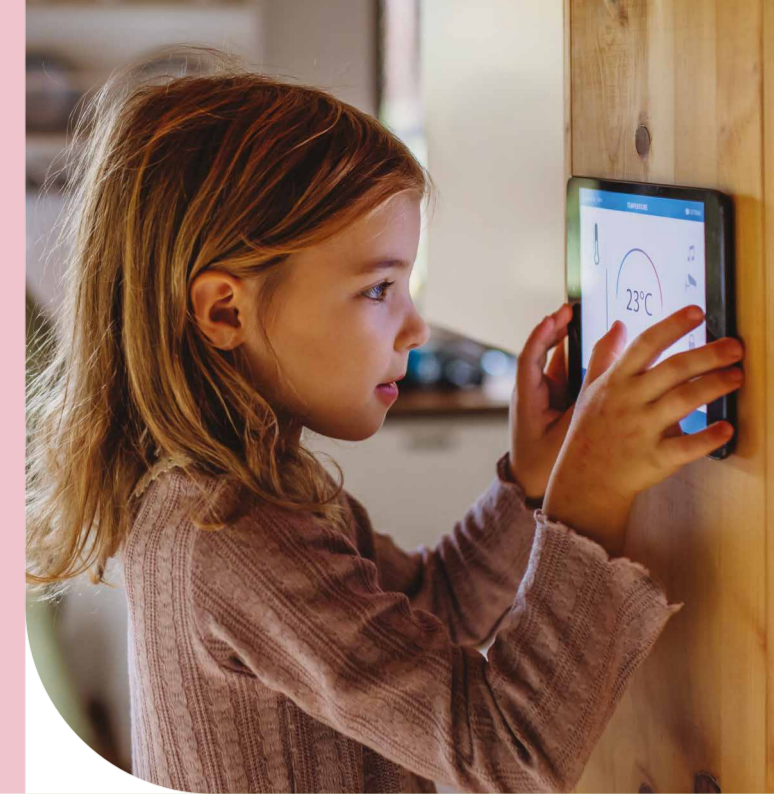
£20,000

of debt written off
after our intervention
with energy companies



364

no- and low-cost
measures installed by
our community-based
advisers



4,630

households helped
by Severn Wye



140

businesses surveyed
and advised on energy
efficiency

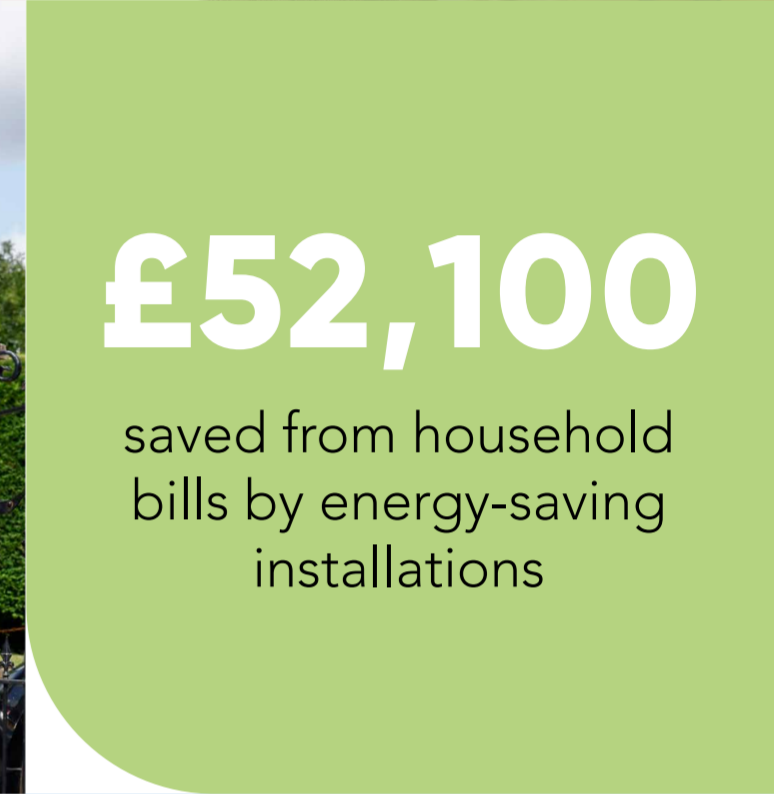
£247

saved per household
through measures
installed



£52,100

saved from household
bills by energy-saving
installations



£211,300

financial support to help
people pay for energy

2,788

clients with a
vulnerability



9,615

calls to home energy
advice line



211

households given
a survey and retrofit
advice



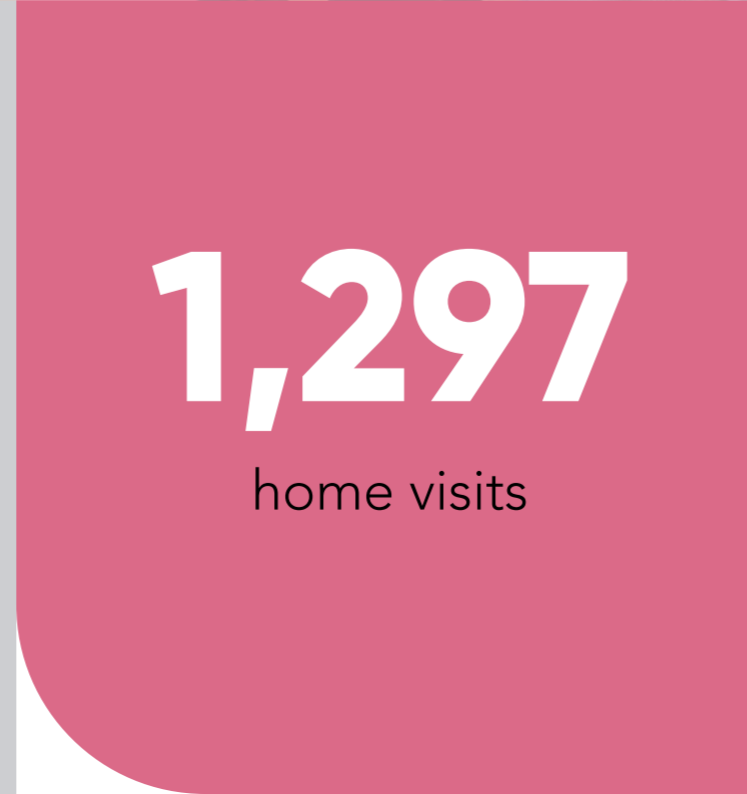
730.6

tonnes of CO₂ saved



1,297

home visits



£1,570,000

awarded for retrofit
measures





ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Energy price caps may have dropped over the last few months but demand for our services shows no sign of abating, with more than 9,600 calls to our energy advicelines.

This year again more people than ever have come to us for support with fuel poverty for the first time. Many are mired in debt and others struggle even to read their bills. Increasingly we see clients for whom English is a second language (or who speak no English), further distancing them from traditional information sources and services.

Thankfully, our energy advisers are there to help people through their crises, getting bills under control, helping people stay warm at home, and linking them with other services. The diversity of our projects makes Severn Wye uniquely positioned to provide tailored advice; from villages in isolated rural areas to city dwellers and refugees, each community has particular needs and constraints.

Our advisers have an encyclopedic knowledge – not just of energy efficiency but of the patchwork of regional funding schemes and their eligibility requirements, and how to get people further specialist support when their energy debt turns out to be only the tip of the iceberg.

It's being part of that support network that makes us so effective. The trust and credibility we share with partners, coupled with our on-the-ground knowledge, means we can work towards longer-term change.

For example, an innovative programme in partnership with the NHS – Warmth on Prescription – has helped hundreds of people who could otherwise have had lengthy stays in hospital, adding to the 'bed blocking' that in turn creates more problems. And we do this while stitching together a complex and ever-changing landscape of national and regional funding schemes that have their own goals and target audiences.

We see the frustration and stress of trying to communicate with energy companies time and again. In one case, a client had done his best to avoid debt for two years while trying to get his energy company to install a prepayment meter. Hours trying to get through, getting cut off, being passed between departments, and still not getting anywhere. With permission to advocate on his behalf, Severn Wye has been able to resolve the issues and return control to the client.

Around 90% of clients referred to us are vulnerable, often with multiple concerns. Especially for clients with chronic illness or mental health issues, getting a little thing solved means a lot.



We see the frustration and stress of trying to communicate with energy companies time and again."

VOUCHING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

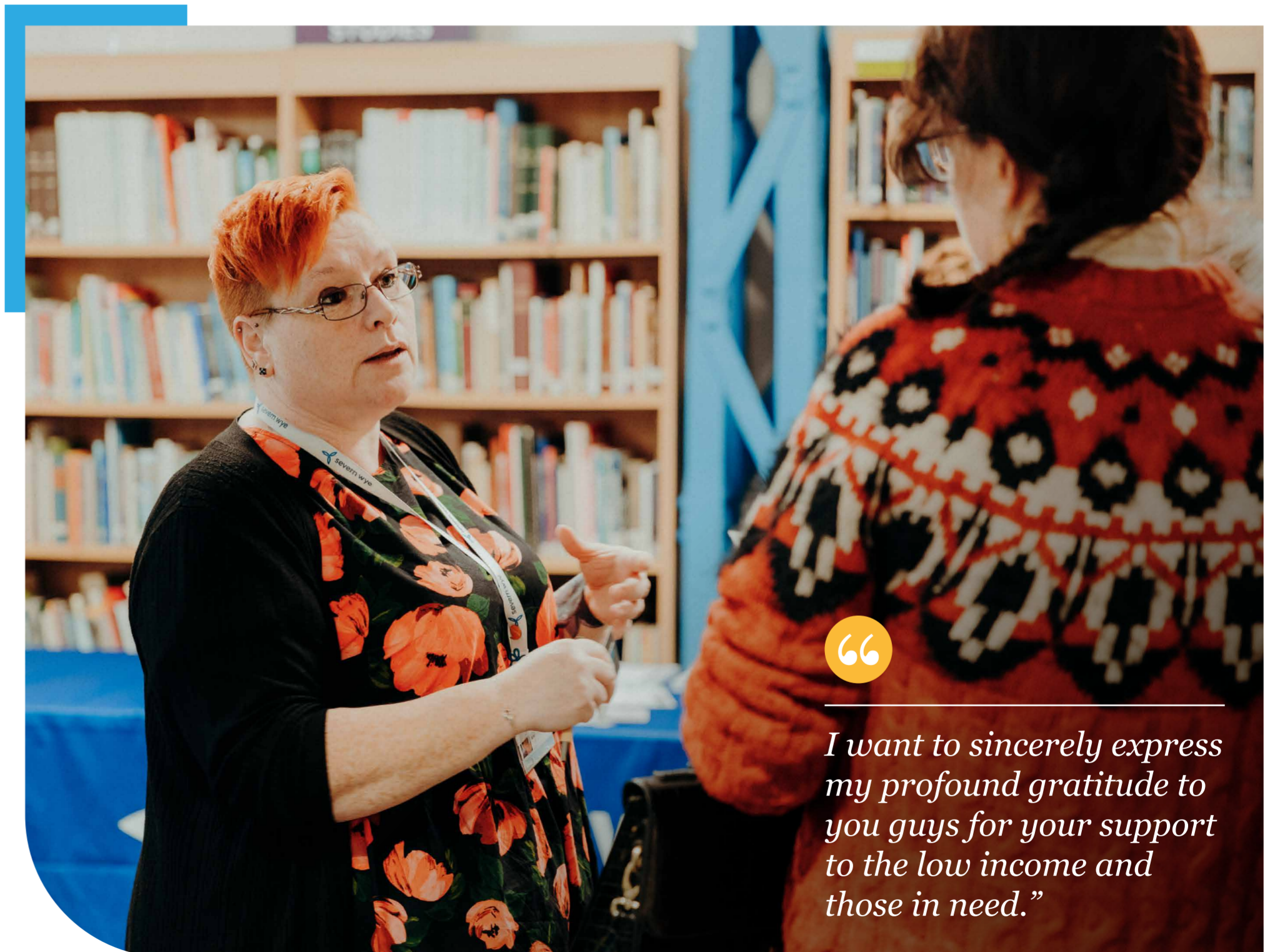
Despite living with cold radiators, one elderly client referred to us believed they had a large debt on their prepayment meters and were extremely worried about paying it back.

A home visit revealed there was no debt on the meters but this client was not making an unnecessary fuss: they couldn't read or write – and because of this they hadn't known how to turn on their heating. We issued fuel vouchers for a meter top-up to help over the coming winter, but these had to be sent to our energy adviser's phone and redeemed at the post office with the client's key and card before they could be put onto the meters. Without this hands-on help the vouchers, though much needed, would have been useless.

GIVING THE POWER BACK

An older lady referred to us by Gloucestershire County Council had limited mobility and speech, and multiple physical and mental health conditions.

When we first met her, she had a debt of more than £3,700. She did not have a payment plan and her supplier was planning to fit a prepayment meter which would have made the costs and inconvenience of heating her home even worse. With no access to appropriate advice the client had not even able to set up boiler and storage-heater programmes. When our energy adviser contacted the supplier with relevant details of the client's health, they cancelled the prepayment meter and initiated installation of a smart meter instead. The client is now making affordable monthly payments and is looking forward to clearing her debt – she knows how to programme her storage heaters too.



I want to sincerely express my profound gratitude to you guys for your support to the low income and those in need."



WHEN CARING COSTS DOUBLE

A single mum and child with multiple health issues were referred by Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust. The child's round-the-clock care relies on electric medical equipment and keeping the house heated 24/7.

The mum was using her benefits to pay for additional care leaving her nothing to cover energy bills, and fuel debt was making an already stressful life even harder. Despite their obvious need, it took our energy adviser's intervention with the supplier to cancel this client's debt and get their energy costs halved over the winter. The family's medical needs qualified them for £500 of emergency funds. While energy debts were being addressed, the client mentioned her oven was broken so her adviser helped her apply to the Household Support Fund to get a new one. The client cried with relief.



“

The one-off payment really helped me at my most difficult time to get my energy bill to a manageable level again. It took away so much stress. Thank you so much!”

“

Tried contacting my supplier numerous times by phone and letter and daughter's support. Only now with your support and a home visit have we finally sorted this.”

STEPPING OUT ON A FIRMER FOOTING

One Powys client was a young man living alone for the first time and finding life hard to navigate. For one thing his energy supplier was refusing to progress his Fuel Direct application because of a faulty smart meter – which their Smart Team repeatedly failed to sort out.

Our adviser spent an hour and a half on the phone patiently building a positive relationship with a customer services adviser to get the emergency action fast-tracked. She then stayed on to talk through the Client's other issues and alerted the initial referrer to provide further support he needed. This young client had been at his wits' end and the adviser's care meant a lot: 'Thank you for talking, sorry it's later on in the day, I just got really overwhelmed and didn't know who to talk to. You are an absolute diamond you are...I really appreciate everything you are doing.'



NOT SO SMART?

The government estimates around four million smart meters are faulty – a statistic that comes as no surprise to us. This is another story of extreme stress and anxiety, one where English is not the client's first language, final-demand bills were piling up, and they were too worried to use the heating even on the coldest days.

It's also a story of a large utility company that frequently cut off our calls midway, didn't call back or turn up when promised, and advised us to call back in several weeks when their deadlines had already passed. For 11 months we were there at every step, making home visits to translate and support our client to make phone calls, regularly checking in and accessing £500 of Household Emergency Funds to reduce their debt – tirelessly pressing their right to decent customer service. Since our client's first call it took more than 50 weeks to get a working SMET2 pre-payment meter installed.

Just one story, and one family. We celebrated the win, but there are many more people unable to get the service they are entitled to.



“

Severn Wye's Warm & Well service has been vital for some of our most vulnerable residents. They have helped us put together bids for millions of pounds of government grant funding and provided eligible households with vital insulation and heating measures.”

CHRIS GILLET,
HOUSING STANDARDS AND IMPROVEMENT MANAGER,
SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



HOME ENERGY SERVICES

When it comes to understanding how energy efficient their home is, faced with the sea of often conflicting information out there, many people might simply turn to their EPC.

This short report – the Energy Performance Certificate – gives a firm score out of 100 for efficiency and helpfully lists some things you could do, in order, to improve the rating. What it doesn't consider is the occupants' behaviour, their budget, or the small – often free – things they could do right now that will make a difference.

That's why our bespoke home energy surveys and recommendations are hands-on and genuinely tailored to the needs and goals of residents – creating the potential for annual savings of £52,000 and 730 tonnes of carbon across the 200+ households we've advised this year. Our home energy advisers make sure they understand their client's budget, their sustainability priorities and how they use energy at home, so they can make the right recommendations for them – and those recommendations come in an actionable plan that gives home-owners quick wins as well as guidance on longer-term capital investments, if that's what they're interested in. Because when people want advice, just being presented with a report isn't always helpful – too much, too little, or the wrong kind of information can leave people more confused.

We also work closely with funders and installers to make sure grant funding is spent on the right installations in the right homes, staying with clients through the process and not signing off until we're sure they understand how to get the most out of their new measures. For example, HUG – the Home Upgrade Grant – is a government energy-efficiency upgrade scheme that funds the retrofit of the leakiest and most fuel-poor homes.

This year we have delivered HUG in partnership with Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Councils. The scheme had a slow start nationally, but we have been one of the highest performing areas in England – our Gloucestershire delivery accounting for 40% of the south-west total and our Hereford work 32% of the total delivered in the West Midlands. And while we're leading on quantity, our client's own words demonstrate the quality of the difference it makes.

“

Our bespoke home energy surveys and recommendations are hands-on and genuinely tailored to the needs and goals of residents.”





LIFE-CHANGING INVESTMENT FOR CHILLY PENSIONER

One Gloucestershire resident had been in her house for about 12 years and wondered why she was so cold in the winter.

Leaflets through her door had quoted about £10,000 to upgrade the heating – way beyond the budget of a pensioner. Previously installed cavity wall insulation had made some difference, but when a friend suggested she call Severn Wye's Warm and Well advice line – which we've run for 16 years in partnership with Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire councils – the client discovered there was so much more help available. She now has a completely new heating system and is even generating her own energy:



They were very helpful and very efficient and said I was eligible for solar panels and the air source heat pump through the Home Upgrade Grant. I'm very grateful to have received the grant. Since it's been installed I've had constant hot water – because the panels are on the front and back of the house they've been generating quite a lot of electricity."



STONE COLD FOCUS ON RETROFIT

One Herefordshire family had already put in some energy saving measures into their 19th-century home but it was still proving hard to heat and the cost of running their oil-fired boiler left little money for further improvements.

They initially approached us for an up-to-date energy performance certificate and a survey to see what was possible, and were delighted to be accepted onto the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) scheme.

One of our home energy specialists carried out their EPC survey and a thorough evaluation of which energy upgrade measures would work best for the stone cottage. Their south-facing roof was ideal for solar panels, and cavity wall insulation for newer parts of the property as well as a doubling of their existing loft insulation were all suggested as measures that would substantially reduce the couple's fuel use and carbon footprint.



In the first few days following the install we already noticed the difference in warmth in the house. In two dull days at the beginning of spring we halved our electricity use, and as the days lengthen the solar panels will make a substantial reduction in our energy use."



ABLE TO PAY?

This year we've ramped up our service delivery to clients looking to retrofit their own homes but stumped by generic and often promotional advice on the technologies available.

We've been carrying out grant-funded home energy surveys and making retrofit recommendations to residents and landlords in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, giving clients the insight and confidence they need to take the next step.



More than anything else, having drowned myself in open-source research which is challenging giving how unusual my house construction is, the most valuable thing by far was having you to discuss things with in person. It has really helped clarify what I need to do to make my house as green as possible."



The central heating is amazing already and I willingly wobble out of bed whenever I wake up ... I'm just so unbelievably grateful to all of you!"



I am absolutely delighted with the service provided by Severn Wye Energy Agency. They did a thorough survey and came up with short-, medium-, and long-term plans for improvements. A great job all round and I'm enjoying watching my smart meter giving power back for a change!"



BUSINESS ENERGY SERVICES

Energy efficiency is good for business, that's the bottom line. Leaner, cleaner, greener business practices attract more customers and make enterprises big and small more desirable in the supply chain.

But a 'business' can be a small local charity shop in a converted Victorian house, or a manufacturer with 200 employees and a mix of workshop, warehouse and office premises – there can be no one size of advice to fit everyone.

Our business energy specialists spend time on site to understand business goals and devise a set of recommendations that will deliver them. We're with business owners at each step, to make sure they get the full benefit of any improvements.

As more organisations take steps towards net zero we're working with an ever-widening client base that includes shops, churches, prisons, manufacturers and leisure centres. Our advice can help businesses keep the doors open in the face of unpredictable and seemingly unmanageable energy bills.

For many businesses advice is welcome but the cost of installing energy efficiency measures can be a big problem. That's why we break down our recommendations into no-cost, low-cost and capital investments that don't just tackle building fabric but look at processes, equipment and behaviours too.

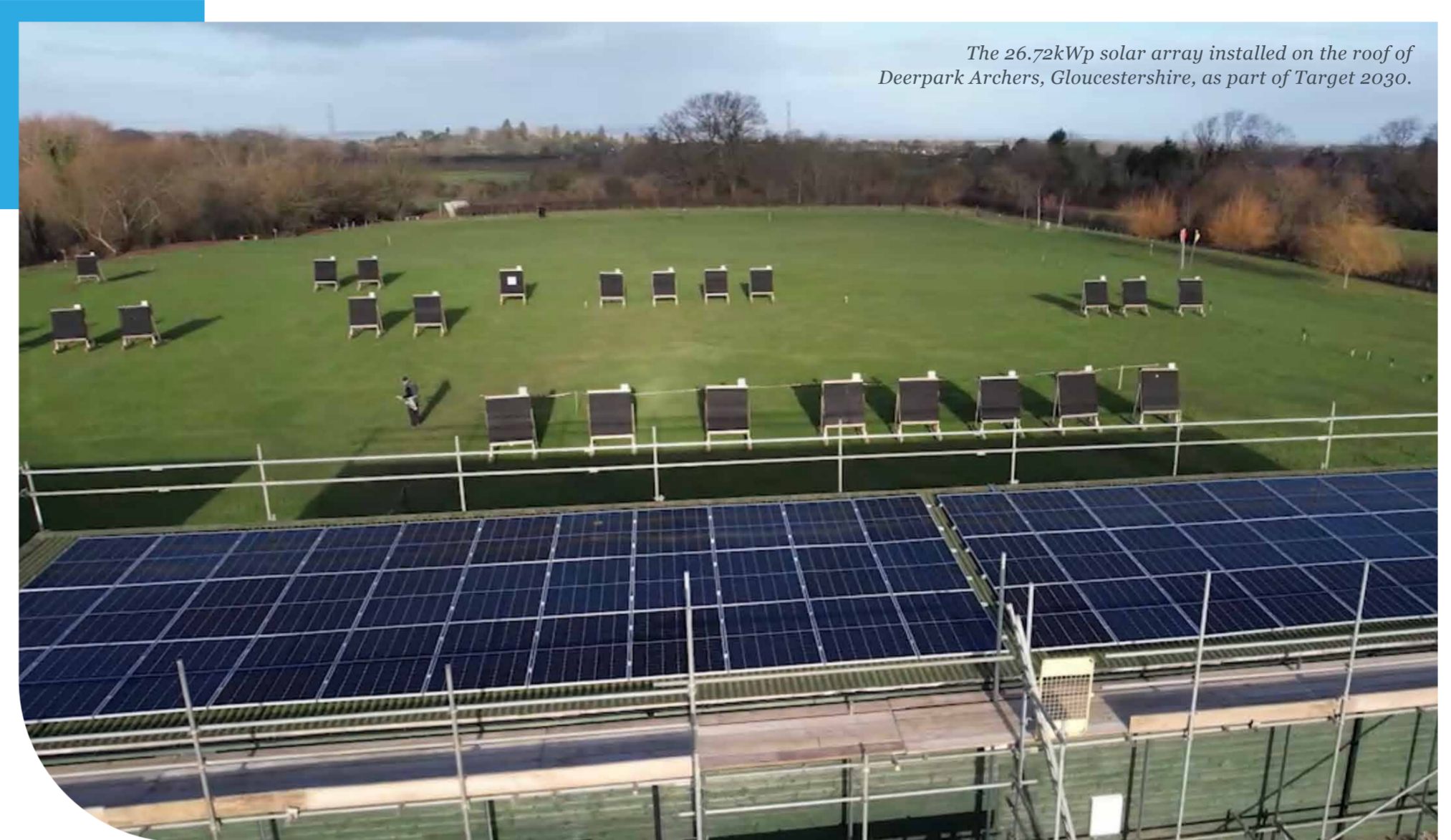
June saw the close of our EU-funded Target 2030 project in Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire. We carried out energy efficiency surveys for 436 small- and medium-sized enterprises across manufacturing, hospitality, retail, sport and leisure, office and community sectors.

The energy-saving measures they installed based on our advice achieved a combined annual saving of £1.3 million on their energy bills. We gave out grant funding of more than £2 million and leveraged more than £4.7 million in match funding invested in energy efficiency measures, saving nearly 5,000 tonnes of CO² and generating 5,700kWp of renewable energy.

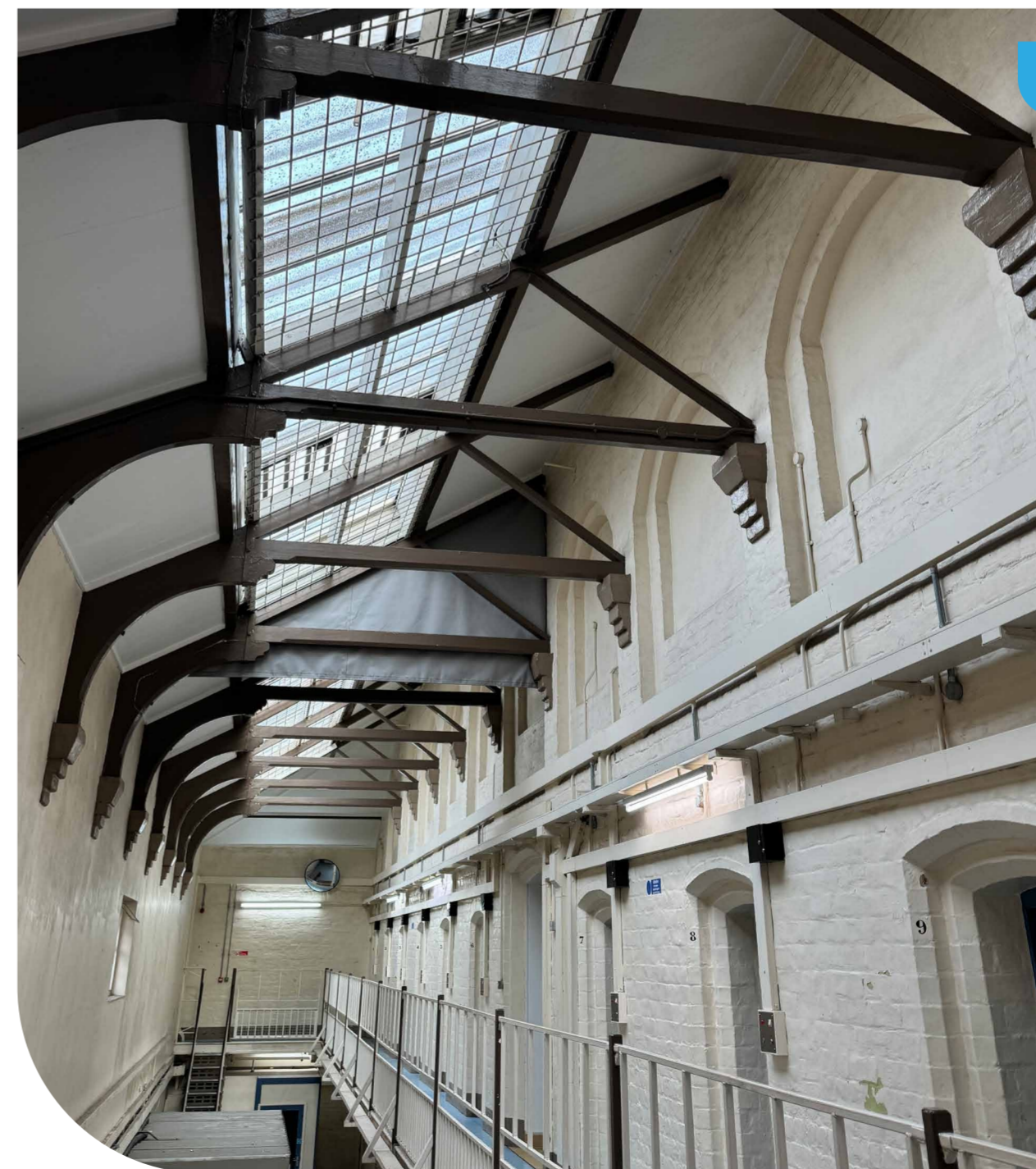
And this year we have also extended our energy efficiency services to small businesses and community buildings in Powys, Ceredigion, and Bannau Brycheiniog National Park.

“

We don't just tackle building fabric but look at processes, equipment and behaviours too.”



The 26.72kWp solar array installed on the roof of Deerpark Archers, Gloucestershire, as part of Target 2030.



SHREWSBURY PRISON

Decommissioned in 2013, Shrewsbury Prison is now run as an events venue which we supported through the Marches Energy Grant, an initiative of the UKSPF.

The site's reliance on electric heaters was contributing to its high running costs of around £43,000 per year and while the prison's old warm-air gas heating could be reconnected, our specialist advised it was oversized for their current needs. Instead, they recommended measures that would improve their energy efficiency to the tune of £31,000 annual savings and cut carbon emissions by 65%, including by upgrading the roof insulation in the main building and installing air source heat pumps.

A new hotel planned for the site could increase overall energy use but is an ideal opportunity to install solar PV; the roof will have room for a 80kWp array which would save 73,000kWh a year – and if the prison follows our recommendations they can benefit from £20,000 towards these measures under the grant scheme.

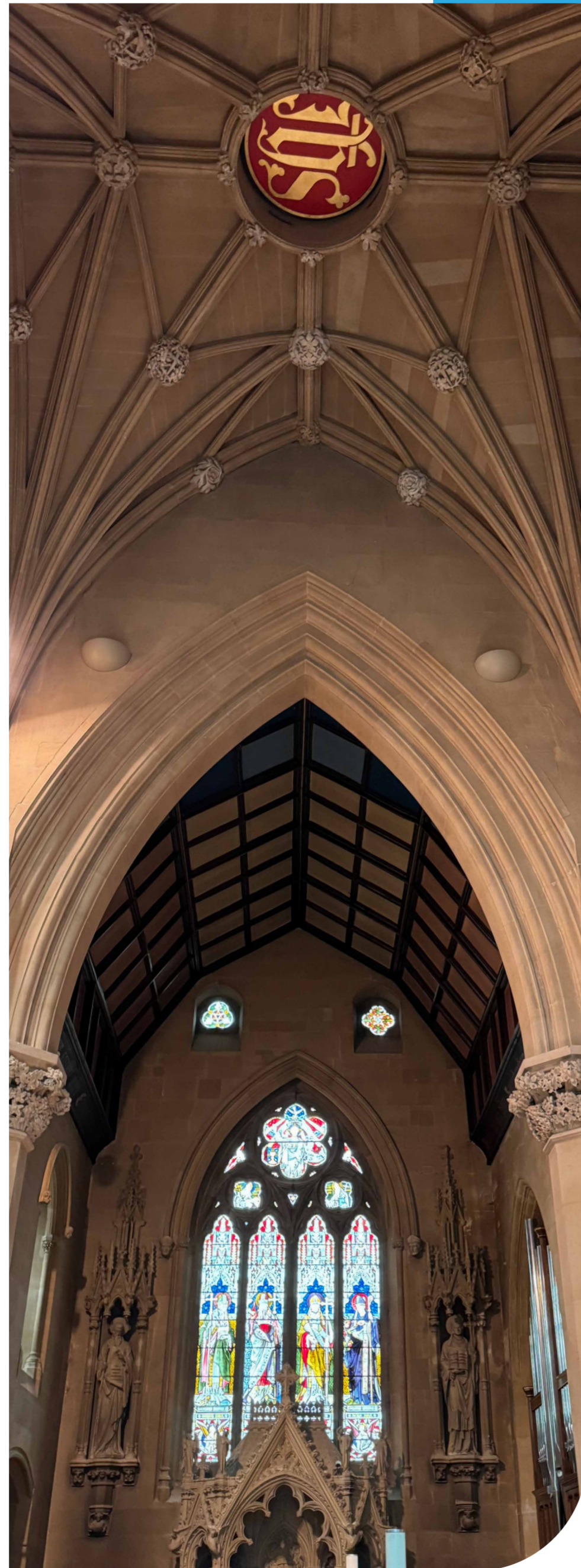


BELMONT ABBEY

Extensive premises that have had different uses can have complicated heating needs, so understanding how the buildings are used is fundamental to energy efficiency.

Belmont Abbey, just outside Hereford, is a good example. The abbey is home to a small monastic community and a guesthouse, including a large commercial kitchen dating from the site's use as a school.

The monastery, guesthouse and church have separate multiple-boiler heating circuits but the electricity and gas are on single meters so it's not possible to monitor energy use on each circuit. With estimated gas use on the high side we recommended sub-meters and smart meters to monitor whether consumption matches the needs of each area of the site; for example, the church only needs to be warm when in use during winter so while its boilers are fairly new some may be surplus to requirements. The guesthouse's old and inefficient boilers, however, were an obvious priority for replacement; new condensing units here would save the abbey around £3,300 a year. And with the kitchens in daily use, efficiencies here like smart sensors in fridges and replacing worn-out hobs with induction versions, can take a tasty chunk out of catering costs too.



“

Throughout the process, the National Park Authority and Severn Wye have been extremely helpful and supportive.”

“

At the time we were looking at installing solar panels but we couldn't proceed due to the nature of our lease. Working with Severn Wye triggered our next steps.”



© Gary Pillinger/Audience Systems

AUDIENCE SYSTEMS

Audience Systems designs and manufactures auditorium seating for venues and arenas around the world. Their Wiltshire HQ is home to offices, manufacturing lines, and warehousing.

The company takes its impact on the local environment and community seriously and wants to lead the industry on environmental management. We worked with them into 2023 as part of the EU-funded Target 2030 programme. Despite their active interest in energy efficiency, our business energy report gave the company a few surprises.

‘We'd upgraded to LED in the factory ages ago but had forgotten about the office,’ said compliance manager Paul Rigby. ‘We didn't replace like-for-like in the end as we realised we just had too many lights.’

And while the premises had gas heating, it turned out 80% of their gas was used in manufacturing processes. Based on our advice, the company applied for grant funding to complete their LED upgrade, install more efficient boilers, upgrade their air compressor, and install new gas heaters. The measures will return at least £200,000 of savings over their lifetime and save 38.8 tonnes of CO₂.

‘At the time we were looking at installing solar panels,’ Rigby explains, ‘but we couldn't proceed due to the nature of our lease. Working with Severn Wye triggered our next steps.’

STEEPLE HOUSE

This year we have helped small businesses in Bannau Brycheiniog National Park with energy efficiency advice and grants through the Sustainable Development Fund.

Once such is Steeple House in Brecon, owned by Edmund Jones Charity, the rents from which are used to help local youngsters into further education – so energy costs have a direct impact on their charitable purpose.

When their gas boiler failed the charity turned to us for a free energy survey. Our business energy specialist saw the biggest energy-saving opportunity was the pressing need to upgrade the heating; with one of the offices still relying on expensive electric heaters a more efficient gas boiler would power new radiators in this space too. And we recommended new point-of-use electric water heaters that will reap huge savings against having to heat a whole tank of water each day. A grant of £5,000 halved the costs of the work, and the charity will save more through reduced energy use in future – not to mention cutting their carbon footprint.

‘Throughout the process, the National Park Authority and Severn Wye have been extremely helpful and supportive,’ says Sally Morris, Clerk to the Trustees. ‘Without it, we would not have been able to make all these improvements, so a big thank you to everyone involved!’





ENERGY AND COMMUNITIES

Rural communities are often blessed with tranquillity and stunning surroundings but under the surface, at least for some, life is hard.

Food and fuel poverty, little local employment, and unreliable access to services and transport mean people struggle – and that can lead to further isolation and poor physical and mental health.

Severn Wye has many years' experience of working with isolated and disadvantaged rural communities across Wales, helping them understand their existing strengths, identify and prioritise the issues they face, and develop grassroots actions to address them. These approaches embed new skills and experience that begin to address the causes, not just the symptoms, of rural poverty.

Key to our success are the skills of our place coordinators, who are not parachuted in from HQ but spend years with the communities they support. They are skilled communicators, building trust on the ground and confidently sharing our experiences with decision-makers to influence rural policy. They played a crucial role in, among others, the seven-year Rural Futures programme which concluded this year. Rural Futures projects ranged from community gardens, hubs for activities and training, and new business opportunities, while the communities at Penmachno and Cwmlinau retrofitted existing community buildings with energy efficiency measures and installed renewables.

Another long-term scheme, Create Your Space, has seen six community groups make positive, sustainable change to their natural environment leading to a variety of approaches, including one project that is about to apply for planning permission to install a solar farm which will considerably reduce the running costs of the restored buildings associated with an old iron-working site.

Meanwhile, we have supported several communities referred to us through the EGIN programme, run by DTA Wales. By providing energy audits for community buildings, we have helped them take their first steps to tackling climate change and live more sustainably – with a particular focus on groups who might not normally feel represented or included in conversations around these issues but can be some of the most impacted.

And our Powys hub, The Hive, is the home of our Llandrindod Wells Working Together project and now firmly embedded in the local community. It provides both a physical home and a sense of stability for a range of community projects and facilities, including the baby bank, the uniform exchange, and the library of things. It's a place where people feel comfortable both donating and receiving help – enabling families to have the basics and sometimes a little more.



The Create Your Space communities have all found innovative ways to make the most of the opportunities the programme has offered."

DAVE GITTINS
SEVERN WYE DIRECTOR FOR WALES

THE HIVE

Deprivation can have a long-term impact on young people, sometimes in unexpected ways. Not having the right kit, for example, stops you taking part and can set you apart from your peer group.

A single mum of three is a frequent visitor to The Hive, and in turn donates her children's items back to us. She needed help this year so her eldest could go on the Year 6 trip to Urdd Llangrannog – a rite of passage for schoolchildren in Wales which is remembered fondly by generations of people who have been. The boy has been through a lot in his short life and his mum was desperate for him to have this positive experience, but the cost of £160 – plus outdoor clothing, snacks and pocket money for the three days – put it beyond the family budget. It looked like he would be the only one in his year not going.

From donations to The Hive we found him waterproof gear, walking boots, and other new clothes, and loaned him a cosy sleeping bag for £1, plus made a referral to the food bank to help plug the budget gap until their next benefit payment.

Next time we saw the mother, her son had just returned from Urdd Llangrannog; it had been a wonderful trip, she said, and he'd loved every minute.



The circular economy created through donation and reuse at The Hive has saved **6862.15kg** from landfill equating to **160.56 tonnes** of CO₂.

The uniform exchange, baby bank and children's clothing exchange have together supported more than **3,000** families, with **27,200** items given out to the value of **£235,408**.



CREATE YOUR SPACE

Severn Wye has spent the last seven years working with six community groups wanting to make transformational, environmental change in their communities, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and the Welsh Government.

As each project evolved we developed a network that helped the groups learn together and share successes and failures. We then provided support as needed on business and financial planning, with a growing emphasis towards the close of the programme to helping the groups think commercially so their projects will be sustainable over the long term.

The varied projects have included Treherbert residents creating more jobs and economic opportunities based in the local woodland, and better access to outdoor spaces, through 'Welcome to our Woods', while 'Roots to Shoots' is developing brownfield sites at Brymbo for educational and recreational benefits. The group has secured significant funding to renovate furnaces and buildings associated with an old ironworking site. Severn Wye has been supporting them in meetings with funders and designers to develop a solar farm on the site.

The Our Back Yard project at Connah's Quay nurtured green spaces for local residents, making them safer and more accessible, involving and empowering local young people along the way.

A RESILIENT RURAL FUTURE

Coming to a close this year was our seven-year Rural Futures programme, funded by The National Lottery Communities Fund (TNLCF) and delivered with BRO Partnership.

We supported 14 disadvantaged Welsh communities develop grass-roots actions to address the issues they face. Our 'place coordinators' helped with engagement activities and working up ideas. Once their projects were fully developed, groups could apply for up to £140,000 from TNLCF. In all however, they ultimately leveraged an additional £1.35 million for capital improvements and other costs – demonstrating the strength of their plans and their newfound skills and confidence to 'sell' their projects to other funding bodies.

Rural Futures has generated skills, improved local employment opportunities, and reduced exclusion and isolation far more effectively than any top-down approach. Each project developed partnerships with local organisations and agencies and in many cases provided a venue for the co-location of previously unavailable services. One group presented evidence at the Senedd on the challenges they face in securing affordable housing and all the projects will have a profound legacy as we present evidence directly to decision-makers so they can design more effective rural policies.



“

The communities supported by Rural Futures have developed their own unique responses to the issues they face and in some cases are already considering further projects.”

PETER DAVIES CBE,
CHAIR EAP

LLANDYSUL, CEREDIGION

Concerns about food security and costs led this community to create a new CIC, Yr Ardd – The Garden. The space provides:

- low-cost food and a year-round programme of training and volunteering opportunities
- a venue for young people to learn about food growing, offering vocational and social reasons to stay in the area
- capacity for lifelong learning and green prescribing.

“

Once we had obtained funding from the Lottery via Rural Futures, many more volunteers stepped forward to share the load.”

ANDREA SANDERS, LLANDYSUL CHAIR



PENTREDŴR, DENBIGHSHIRE

Residents highlighted rural isolation and the struggles of upland sheep farms. Their new hub:

- explored innovative uses for low-value upland fleeces, including matting at farm gates, tree guards and path underlay
- brought people together to learn wool-based skills including weaving, spinning and felting
- hosted social events and workshops to reduce isolation.

“

This project will foster a sense of unity and connection, contributing to the wellbeing of individuals of all ages.”

PLACE COORDINATOR, PENTREDŴR



DEINIOLLEN, GWYNEDD

Residents wanted a space to integrate and upskill their community. To realise their ambitions they:

- renovated disused rooms at a local school using Shared Prosperity Funds to supplement Rural Futures funding
- devised events to reduce isolation, improve digital skills and integrate non-Welsh-speaking families into the community
- employed an activities coordinator to deliver their events programme.

“

It's important to have a clear vision that can be shared and reinforced.”

GROUP MEMBER, DEINIOLLEN





INNOVATION

We are working to find opportunities to generate energy ourselves and play our part in tackling the climate emergency.

Our innovation team is at the forefront of bringing new technologies to market, in particular this year with the start of construction at Mersey Biochar, our state-of-the-art carbon-capture plant at Lingley Mere business park in Warrington.

The plant will lock away over 2,500 tonnes of carbon a year into biochar, a versatile product with a range of uses from improving soil quality to decarbonising the construction industry. Together with our project partners Pure Leapfrog, Vital Energi, Pyrocore and United Utilities, we're looking forward to demonstrating that this technology can be rolled out across the country to help tackle climate change. Once fully operational, some of the heat recovered from the plant will be recycled back into the biochar production process and the rest diverted into a district heating system, to supply buildings across the business park – a UK first. The project is funded by the UK's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero through their Direct Air Capture and Greenhouse Gas Removal innovation programme.

Meanwhile we are exploring the potential for further biochar sites in Wales, in partnership with businesses that have suitable space and demand for heating, and learning from the experience of others to create powerful energy-generation partnerships.

As a trusted charity, we are building relationships with communities including land-based industries and academia, enabling them to field-test new technologies for future development at industrial scale and to bring local benefits right now.



The first bits of plant and equipment arrived in November 2023 and construction began in February 2024.”



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Among others, in 2023-24, Severn Wye teamed up with:

- AFFORDABLE WARMTH SOLUTIONS
- AGE UK
- AGILITY ECO
- AWEL AMAN TAWE
- BANNAU BRYCHEINIOG NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
- BARNARDOS
- BLENDED LEARNING INSTITUTES COOP
- BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
- BRO PARTNERSHIP
- BROMFORD HOUSING
- CENTRE FOR ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY
- CEREDIGION ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (CAVO)
- CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL
- CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
- CHELTENHAM BOROUGH HOMES
- CITIZENS ADVICE
- COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
- DEG
- DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO
- DEPARTMENT FOR LEVELLING UP, HOUSING & COMMUNITIES
- DEVELOPMENT TRUSTS ASSOCIATION WALES
- DTA WALES
- DWR CYMRU
- ENERGY INDUSTRY VOLUNTARY REDRESS SCHEME
- ENERGY SAVING TRUST
- ENERGY SYSTEMS CATAPULT
- EPCONNECT
- EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
- EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
- EVOLVE HOME ENERGY SOLUTIONS
- FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
- FOREST RESEARCH
- GFIRSTLEP
- GLOUCESTERSHIRE ACTION FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
- GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
- GWYNEDD COUNCIL
- HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
- HEREFORDSHIRE GREEN NETWORK
- HORIZON 2020
- INCLUSION GLOUCESTERSHIRE
- INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND RURAL SCIENCES, ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY
- INTERREG NW EUROPE
- LIGHTFOOT
- LIZ BICKERTON CONSULTING
- MARCHES ENERGY AGENCY
- MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
- MONMOUTHSHIRE HOUSING ASSOCIATION
- NATIONAL GRID
- NATURAL RESOURCES WALES
- NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL
- NHS GLOUCESTERSHIRE
- PLAY RADNOR
- POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL
- PUBLICA GROUP
- PURE LEAPFROG
- PYROCORE
- RSK
- SALIX
- SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL
- SIRONA CARE & HEALTH CIC
- SMART ENERGY GB
- SOUTH WEST ENERGY HUB
- STONEHOUSE TOWN COUNCIL
- STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
- SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
- TERRAFFIX
- TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL
- THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND
- TURNER & TOWNSEND
- UNITED UTILITIES
- VITAL ENERGI
- WELSH GOVERNMENT
- WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION
- WILTSHIRE COUNCIL
- WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



severnwyenergy.org.uk



Severn Wye Energy Agency is a non-profit company (no. 03830608) and registered charity (no. 1083812) to provide households and organisations with impartial, expert advice to help them save energy, reduce carbon and create a more sustainable future.



SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees

Mareike Schmidt, Chair
Christopher Bierley (appointed 1 May 2023)
Richard Boyes (resigned 30 November 2023)
Andrew Bull (resigned 12 January 2024)
Simon Burgess (resigned 16 March 2024)
Louise Cooke (resigned 21 May 2024)
Vilislava Ivanova
Rowena Kay
Martin Smith Lomas (appointed 1 May 2023)
Emma Voss (appointed 1 May 2023)
Christopher Welby

Company registered number 03830608

Charity registered number 1083812

Registered office

3rd Floor Pillar & Lucy House
Merchants Road
Gloucester
England
GL2 5RG

Company secretary Hugh Boyes

Chief executive officer Sandy Ruthven

Independent auditors

Bishop Fleming LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
10 Temple Back
Bristol
BS1 6FL

Bankers

HSBC
The Cross
Gloucester
GL1 2AP

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors of Severn Wye Energy Agency Ltd (Severn Wye) present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the Severn Wye Energy Agency Ltd for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and Activities

Severn Wye's objects are:

The advancement of education for the public benefit in particular but not exclusively in relation to energy conservation, the efficient use of energy and the utilisation of renewable sources of energy and

The relief of poverty and the preservation and protection of health by promoting the efficient use of energy (including energy for heating purposes) and the utilisation of renewable sources of energy and

To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by:

- I. The preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources.
- II. The relief of poverty and the improvement of the conditions of life for those socially and economically
- III. disadvantaged.
- IV. The promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

Sustainable development means development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The trustees confirm that they refer to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing Severn Wye's activities. To achieve the above objectives and public benefit Severn Wye has developed and implemented a range of projects which are noted within this report and further detailed in the annual Impact Report, which is published on Severn Wye's website at www.severnwyenergy.org.uk.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Documents

Severn Wye is a company limited by guarantee, governed by its memorandum and articles of association, incorporated on the 24th August 1999 and registered with the Charity Commission on the 27th November 2000. If Severn Wye is wound up, its members are liable to pay the sum £1 each.

Method of Appointment or Election of Trustees

The directors of Severn Wye are also trustees of Severn Wye for the purposes of charity law and under the Article of Association are also members of the Council of Management.

New trustees are appointed either by the members of Severn Wye at a general meeting or by the Council of Management. One third of the member of the Council of Management retire each year by rotation and are eligible to be re-elected. The Council of Management is in effect another name for the Board of Trustees.

Induction and Training of Trustees

New trustees are provided with appropriate information, induction and training, taking into account the nature of Severn Wye and their previous experience in the charity sector.

Charity Governance Code of Practice

The Trustees have resolved to comply with the Charity Commission's code of practice for good governance. There are seven

SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)



principles which are considered to be necessary to qualify as a well governed charity. The trustees have formed a sub-committee who have assessed the evidence for performance of the Board of Trustees (the Board) against each of these principles:

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. Organisational purpose
2. Leadership
3. Integrity
4. Decision making, risk and control
5. Board effectiveness
6. Diversity
7. Openness and accountability

Following this assessment, the trustees concluded that the Board was broadly compliant with the principles. The ethos of the code of practice is to promote continual improvement and to that end the sub-committee highlighted areas for further improvement which have been addressed. The trustees have resolved to continue to embed this cycle of review and improvement on an annual basis.

Organisational Structure and Decision Making

The Board administers Severn Wye, meets quarterly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of Severn Wye. A minimum of three trustees is required for a meeting to be quorate. At present there are ten trustees from a variety of professional backgrounds. There are three sub-committees responsible for Finance, People & Welfare and Governance.

The Board appoints the CEO who manages the day to day operations of Severn Wye.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy that comprises;

- reviewing Severn Wye's risk register at least once a year;
- receiving general risk report and register at each quarterly Council of Management meeting;
- establishing policies, systems and procedures to mitigate risks identified in the register; and
- devising procedures designed to minimise the potential impact should those risks materialise.

The trustees believe they have adequate procedures in place to mitigate the risks to which Severn Wye is exposed.

The main risks identified are;

- The project management of the Mersey Biochar project;
- Recruitment remains a significant issue for Severn Wye at all levels of the organisation;
- Identifying and putting in place a long term external solution to the Hive to ensure the continuation of the projects that have been so beneficial to Llandrindod Wells.

These risks are being managed by the following actions;

- An existing member of staff has been appointed as the new Mersey Biochar Project Manager after an external recruitment process. We have also secured the services of a consultant to provide additional expertise. This significantly reduces the risk to the project as Severn Wye now has overall control of its management.
- We are reviewing our existing recruitment processes as well as reviewing the reasons why staff leave Severn Wye. We will be carrying out a staff survey in the summer that will hopefully identify areas where the staff experience can be improved;
- Funding for the Hive for the next two years has now been confirmed. This will allow plenty of time to transfer the lease to a local organisation to ensure the continuation of the projects beneficial to Llandrindod Wells and reduce any future potential liability of Severn Wye.

Pay Policy

The trustees do not receive any remuneration from Severn Wye, but can claim reasonable costs for travel, sustenance and training (see Note 9).

Severn Wye has a remuneration policy to ensure fair pay and to retain suitably qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver its aims. A revised pay structure was introduced from April 2023. The People & Welfare Committee oversees the implementation of the policy.

Achievements and performance

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Fuel poverty and climate change are two of the biggest challenges we face and that is why Severn Wye focussed it's work in 2023/24 to play our part in tackling these crises. We are pleased to say we have had more impact than ever before.

Whilst in 23/24 the energy crisis began to subside and the cost-of-living pressures eased slightly, energy prices remained over double their cost in 2019 causing many to struggle to heat their homes and stay healthy. At the same time climate change was more present than ever with record breaking heatwaves, floods and extreme weather across the UK and the world.

We are proud that our teams reached more people than ever before this year helping those in crisis and offering long term, sustainable solutions to the problems we face.

Our Energy Advice work is on the front line of the energy provider crisis. Supporting people in their homes or over the phone to save energy, negotiate with their energy provide and, in some cases, provide emergency payments to keep the lights on.

But helping people through a crisis, one winter at a time is not enough. We want to change the system so there is no crisis in the future. Retrofitting peoples homes, supporting businesses to save energy and generating our own, home grown, carbon free energy has been at the heart of our work at Severn Wye this year. We have made more homes warmer than ever before; we have helped more businesses go green than ever before and our cutting edge, carbon negative power station in Warrington is now well on the way to completion.

This work will change lives forever and we are proud of our amazing teams who work so hard to rise to the challenges we all face. And this year was just the start of our new, 5 year strategy, to support more people, save more energy and generate more carbon savings than ever before. We doubled in size this year and we aim to grow again to meet the twin challenges of fuel poverty and climate change head on, working with our partners to create a world with a stable climate and energy for all.

1. Energy in a time of crisis

We've heard the word 'crisis' so much again this year; climate, housing, energy – the costs of daily life itself are at a record high.

For many of our clients, crisis has made itself at home – in their empty cupboards, mouldy bathrooms and freezing bedrooms. Our community-based advisers routinely see people with complex needs, well beyond managing and paying for their energy. At Severn Wye ,we can't put food in the fridge but we can make sure the people we support can access all the help they need – including nearly 2,800 clients with a vulnerability through our energy advice line and community-based support

Many more people are now aware of the importance of energy efficiency – perhaps we can thank fluctuating energy price caps for that. But some people eager to invest in improving their homes are stuck because there's too much – often conflicting – information out there to make sense of. Severn Wye is extending impartial, tailored support to more homeowners than ever desperate for clarity and guidance to invest for the long term. This year our home energy services have saved more than £52,000 from householders' energy bills.

And this year we've extended our expert business support to small- and medium-sized enterprises in Wales, giving local business owners the knowledge, confidence and expertise they need to cut costs through energy efficiency making their companies resilient in the face of future price changes that have pushed many organisations to the brink. This year across England and Wales we've helped 140 enterprises on their net zero journey.

Having community-based advice and advocacy, retrofit and renewable energy expertise all under one roof gives us a wide perspective on the energy issues facing homes and businesses in England and Wales – and a unique ability to support them on their sustainability journeys.

2. Energy advice in the community

Energy price caps may have dropped over the last few months but demand for our services shows no sign of abating. This year again more people than ever have come to us for support with fuel poverty for the first time. Many are mired in debt and having to choose between putting food on the table or staying warm. Others struggle with the basics like reading their bills, and

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

increasingly we see clients for whom English is a second language (or who speak no English), further distancing them from traditional information sources and services.

Thankfully, our energy advisors are there to help people through their crises: whether through home visits, community events or on the end of the phone, our advisers will go the extra mile to get bills under control, give people the advice they need, link them with other services and get people warm in their homes. The diversity of our projects makes Severn Wye uniquely positioned to provide tailored advice to people from all walks of life. From villages in isolated rural areas to city dwellers and refugees, each community has particular needs and constraints.

Our advisers have an encyclopedic knowledge – not just of energy efficiency but of the patchwork of regional funding schemes and their eligibility requirements, and how to get people further specialist support when their energy debt turns out to be only the tip of the iceberg.

It's being part of that support network – those strategic partnerships – that make us so effective. Most of the home visits we carry out start with a partner referral. The trust and credibility we share with local authorities, charities and delivery partners, coupled with our on-the-ground knowledge, means we can shift from short-term solutions to longer-term change.: our's is an holistic, cross-agency approach. For example, an innovative programme in partnership with the NHS – that keeps vulnerable patients warm at home in winter has helped hundreds of people who could otherwise have had lengthy stays in hospital – adding to the 'bed blocking' that in turn creates another set of problems. And we do this while stitching together a complex and ever-changing landscape of national and regional funding schemes that have their own goals and target audiences.

We see the frustration and stress of trying to communicate with energy companies time and again. In one case a client had done his best to avoid debt for two years while trying to get his energy company to install a prepayment meter. Hours trying to get through, getting cut off, being passed between departments, and still not getting anywhere. With permission to advocate on his behalf, Severn Wye has been able to resolve the issues and return control to the client.

Around 90% of clients referred to us are vulnerable, often with multiple concerns – not always visible or obvious – that are made much worse by cold or the stress of unmanageable bills. Especially for clients with chronic illness or mental health issues, getting a little thing solved means a lot.

3. Home Energy Services

When it comes to understanding how energy efficient their home is, many people might turn to their EPC. The energy performance certificate gives a firm score out of 100 for efficiency and helpfully lists a number of things you could do, in order, to improve the rating. What it doesn't consider is the occupants' behaviour, their budget, or the small – often free – things they could do right now that will make a difference.

When people want advice, being presented with a report isn't always helpful – too much, too little, or the wrong kind of information can leave people more confused.

Our bespoke home energy surveys and recommendations are hands-on and genuinely tailored to the needs and goals of residents. Our home energy advisers make sure they understand their client's budget, their sustainability priorities and how they use energy at home, so they can make the right recommendations for them – and those recommendations come in an actionable plan that gives home-owners quick wins as well as guidance on longer-term capital investments, if that's what they're interested in. We can unpick the EPC

We also work closely with funders and installers to make sure grant funding is spent on the right installations in the right homes, staying with clients through the process and not signing off until we're sure they understand how to get the most out of their new measures. For example HUG – the Home Upgrade Grant – is a government energy-efficiency upgrade scheme that funds the retrofit of the leakiest and most fuel-poor homes. We deliver HUG in partnership with Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Councils. The scheme had a slow start nationally but we have been one of the highest performing areas in England; our Gloucestershire delivery accounting for 40% of the South West total and our Hereford work 32% of the total delivered in the West Midlands. And while we're leading on quantity, our client's own words demonstrate the quality of the difference it makes.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Business Energy Services

Energy efficiency is good for business, that's the bottom line. Leaner, cleaner, greener businesses attract more customers and make enterprises big and small more desirable in the supply chain. But a 'business' can be a small local charity shop in a converted Victorian house, or a manufacturer with 200 employees and a mix of workshop, warehouse and office premises – there can be no one size of advice to fit everyone.

Our business energy specialists walk and talk with clients, taking them on a journey from aspiration to installation. Spending time on site means we can understand business goals – such as cost-cutting, employee comfort, sustainability – and analyse energy use and budgets to devise a set of recommendations that will actually work to deliver those benefits. We talk through our reports – they don't just land as an email attachment – and we're with business owners at each step, helping assess installer quotes and checking installations to make sure businesses get the full benefit of any improvements. We also offer regular, long-term energy monitoring, and an energy-brokering service that is free at point of use – we plough any commission back into supporting local community projects.

As more organisations take steps towards net zero we're helping spread the word, through business breakfasts and networking with an ever-widening client base that includes shops, churches, prisons, manufacturers and leisure centres. Our advice can help businesses keep the doors open in the face of unpredictable and seemingly unmanageable energy bills.

For many businesses advice is welcome but the cost of installing energy efficiency measures can be a big problem. That's why we break down our recommendations into no-cost, low-cost and capital investments that don't just tackle building fabric but look at processes, equipment and behaviours too.

5. Energy and communities

Rural communities are often blessed with tranquillity and stunning surroundings but under the surface, at least for some, life is hard. Food and fuel poverty, little local employment, and unreliable access to services and transport mean people struggle – and that can lead to further isolation and poor physical and mental health.

Help can be limited, often short-term, and there remains a stigma around asking for it.

Severn Wye has many years' experience of working with isolated and disadvantaged rural communities, helping them understand their existing strengths, identify and prioritise the issues they face, and develop grassroots actions to address them. These approaches embed new skills and experience that begin to address the causes, not just the symptoms, of rural poverty.

Key to our success are the skills of our rural experts, who are not parachuted in from HQ but spend years with the communities they support. They are skilled communicators, building trust on the ground and confidently sharing our experiences with decision-makers to influence rural policy.

And our Powys hub, The Hive, is firmly embedded in the Llandrindod Wells community; a regular venue for delivery of services and the lynchpin of a circular economy where it is now unexceptional to visit for donations and loans – enabling families to have the basics and sometimes a little more.

6. Innovation

As well as cutting costs and carbon for households and organisations, we are working to find opportunities to generate energy ourselves and play our part in tackling the climate emergency. Our innovation team is at the forefront of bringing new technologies to market. This year construction began this year at Mersey Biochar, our state-of-the-art carbon-capture plant at Lingley Mere business park in Warrington. The project is the first in the UK to recycle waste heat to provide low-carbon heating to local premises. In effect we are creating carbon negative power – a key development in the fight against climate change.

The plant will lock away over 2,500 tonnes of carbon a year into biochar, a versatile product with a range of uses from improving

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

soil quality to decarbonising the construction industry. Every tonne of biochar produced can remove up to 3.6 tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere and store it away for centuries. Mersey Biochar is expected to produce 71600 tonnes of biochar each year which will equate to over 2,500 tonnes of carbon reduction. We're looking forward to demonstrating that this technology can be rolled out across the country to help tackle climate change. Once fully operational, some of the heat recovered from the plant will be recycled back into the biochar production process and the rest diverted into a district heating system, to supply buildings across the business park. The project is funded by the UK's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero through their Direct Air Capture and Greenhouse Gas Removal innovation programme.

The first elements of the plant and process equipment arrived on site in November 2023 and construction is underway by consortium partners Vital Energi.

Meanwhile we are exploring the potential for further biochar sites in Wales, in partnership with businesses that have suitable space and demand for heating.

And in partnership with biochar producers, national parks and land-based businesses we are running events to share the benefits of biochar for soil improvement and pollution mitigation at local scale, including demonstrating how landowners can produce biochar for their own use or for sale.

In addition, we are beginning the journey of learning from the experience of others, we plan to combine our knowledge with other organisations' land and premises to create powerful energy-generation partnerships.

As a trusted charity, we are building relationships with communities including land-based industries and academia, enabling them to field-test new technologies, for industrial scale something and to bring local benefits right now.

Financial review

Results for the Year

The increase in the unrestricted funds in the year of £317,817 (2023: £132,112) shows further consolidation on the progress made over the last three years. Overall income has increased to £7.22m, excluding the Mersey Biochar project £5.03m (2023: £5.02m), the income excluding grants & Mersey Biochar has also increased to £2.89m (2023: £2.65m). On the expenditure side the grants allocated have increased along with the increased income, and expenditure elsewhere has decreased to £3.79m.

Funding Sources

The main funding sources in the year are:

- Local Authorities (Cheltenham Borough, Cotswold District, Forest of Dean District, Gloucester City, Gloucester County, Herefordshire, South Gloucestershire, Stroud District, Tewkesbury Borough, Wiltshire and Worcestershire) for Warm & Well and other programmes;
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) via Wiltshire and Gloucestershire CC for T2030 projects;
- European Commission for the 3C project;
- National Lottery Community Fund for CREATE Your Space, Rural Futures, Working Together for Llandrindod Wells and Sustainable Steps Wales;
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for the GHG LAD 1b, Sustainable Warmth Competition HUG & LAD, HUG 2, Mersey Biochar and SHDF funding, some via local authority;
- Clinical Commissioning Group for Warm Homes Fund and Build 2 Low Carbon;
- Energy Saving Trust for the Redress projects;
- Private sector and small local bodies for one off services.

The charity had no fundraising activities requiring disclosure under S162A of the Charities Act 2011.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Reserves policy and going concern

The purpose of the Reserves Policy is to ensure the stability of the ongoing operations of Severn Wye and to enable the ongoing future of Severn Wye.

Severn Wye's unrestricted funds on the 31 March 2024 amounted to £1,041,223 (2023: £723,406). Severn Wye's free reserves on the 31 March 2024 were £995,960 (2023: £652,643). The trustees expect to maintain or increase those reserves to try to achieve the target set in the Reserves Policy.

The Reserves Policy target is to have sufficient reserves to meet 3-6 months running costs, plus meet all the liabilities of the organisation and to provide sufficient cash to fund the organisation's activities. Whilst falling short of the overall target of £1,000,000, the reserves are more than sufficient to meet the latter two aspirations. The Board of Trustees regularly review and monitor the Reserves Policy and aim to move towards a more risk-based policy within the next financial year.

Within restricted funds is an amount of £2,060,932 that is classified as Energy Innovation. This relates to the development of a Biochar facility, as described in note 11 and note 14. This asset relates to new technology, and although the trustees believe it to be commercially viable there are a number of uncertainties around future income generation. If the asset were to be impaired it would not be expected to have any significant impact on the free reserves of the charity.

The charity is currently projected to increase the unrestricted funds in 2024/25 by a further £75k. The position will be under regular review by the trustees.

The board are pleased to confirm that we believe Severn Wye remains a going concern for the coming 12 months. This assurance is based on our robust financial reserves that fall within our reserves policy and a healthy cash flow, which together provide the necessary stability and resources to continue our vital work.

Investment Policy

Severn Wye is committed to maintaining sufficient funds in instant access or short notice period accounts to meet its ongoing expenditure and cashflow requirements. Any funds beyond this will be invested in low risk deposit accounts or fixed-term bonds, with notice periods not exceeding one year.

The Trustees are satisfied with the investment returns in the current year, the policy will be reviewed annually.

Future Developments

The new strategic plan was approved by the trustees at their meeting in February and has been implemented from the start of April 2024. The budget based on that plan was agreed at the trustee meeting in May and it anticipates an increase in Unrestricted Funds by £75k and we are currently in line with that budget.

This year we look to have confirmed funding of over £7.7m of which £3.1m are grants to be allocated;

- HUG 2, to install clean heat and insulation to 300 Off Gas homes;
- Energy Aware Communities, to provide energy advocacy services to households in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire;
- Social Housing Demonstrator Fund, Wave Phases 1 & 2 to provide retrofit coordination services to support the delivery of the Whole House Retrofit Demonstrator project in Stroud and Cheltenham;
- Mersey Biochar Phase 2, to build and run a prototype plant for the production of biochar from forestry waste for carbon capture, sequestration and utilisation in the district heating scheme.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)



TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Auditors

The auditors, Bishop Fleming LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 11 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Mareike Schmidt
Trustee

Emma Voss
Trustee

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD (CONTINUED)**

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Severn Wye Energy Agency Ltd (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

OTHER INFORMATION

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

OPINION ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2006

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD (CONTINUED)**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD (CONTINUED)**

AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and noncompliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- We have considered the nature of the industry and sector, control environment, and business performance;
- We have considered the results of enquiries with management and the directors in relation to their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities within the entity; and
- We have reviewed the documentation of key processes and controls and performed walkthroughs of transactions to confirm that the systems are operating effectively, in line with documentation.

As a result of these procedures, we have considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the highest area of risk to be in relation to revenue recognition, with a particular risk in relation to year-end cut-off.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK) we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We have also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the Company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the UK Companies Act, FRS 102 and UK tax legislation.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the Company's ability to operate or avoid a material penalty. These included data protection legislation, health and safety regulations, and employment law.

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management in relation to actual and potential claims or litigation;
- Performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reviewing board meeting minutes;
- Performing detailed transactional testing in relation to the recognition of revenue with a particular focus around the year-end cut off;
- Performing walkthroughs to understand management's control environment; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgments made in accounting estimates are indicative of potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all members of the engagement team and

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD (CONTINUED)**

remained alert to possible indicators of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

As a result of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that not all irregularities, including a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation, will be detected by us. This risk increases the further removed compliance with a law and regulation is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, given we will be less likely to be aware of it, or should the irregularity occur as a result of fraud rather than a one off error, as this may involve intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

David Butler FCA DChA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Bishop Fleming LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

10 Temple Back

Bristol

BS1 6FL

9 October 2024

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME
AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations		-	42,586	42,586	6,362
Charitable activities	3	5,001,663	2,154,383	7,156,046	6,678,747
Other Income		-	4,705	4,705	5,909
Investments	4	-	23,160	23,160	4,180
Total income		5,001,663	2,224,834	7,226,497	6,695,198
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	5	3,574,472	2,108,678	5,683,150	6,330,097
Total expenditure		3,574,472	2,108,678	5,683,150	6,330,097
Net income		1,427,191	116,156	1,543,347	365,101
Transfers between funds	14	(201,661)	201,661	-	-
Net movement in funds		1,225,530	317,817	1,543,347	365,101
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		1,228,503	723,406	1,951,909	1,586,808
Total funds carried forward		2,454,033	1,041,223	3,495,256	1,951,909

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 17 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	2,064,002	6,001
Investments		1	-
		<u>2,064,003</u>	<u>6,001</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	1,207,876	1,272,733
Cash at bank and in hand		2,087,947	1,107,085
		<u>3,295,823</u>	<u>2,379,818</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(1,864,570)	(433,910)
Net current assets		<u>1,431,253</u>	<u>1,945,908</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>3,495,256</u></u>	<u><u>1,951,909</u></u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	14	2,454,033	1,228,503
Unrestricted funds:			
Designated funds	14	45,263	70,763
General funds	14	995,960	652,643
Total unrestricted funds	14	<u>1,041,223</u>	<u>723,406</u>
Total funds		<u><u>3,495,256</u></u>	<u><u>1,951,909</u></u>

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 11 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Mareike Schmidt

Trustee

Emma Voss

Trustee

The notes on pages 17 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities	17	3,018,635	269,318
Cash flows from investing activities			
Dividends, interests and rents from investments		23,160	4,180
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,060,932)	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		(2,037,772)	4,180
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		980,863	273,498
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,107,085	833,587
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	18	<u>2,087,948</u>	<u>1,107,085</u>

The notes on pages 17 to 37 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The company was formed on the 24th August 1999, is limited by guarantee (No 03830608) and is a registered charity (No 1083812). The company is registered in England and Wales and the registered office is 3rd Floor, Pillar & Lucy House, Merchants Road, Gloucester, GL2 5RG.

In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

2.1 BASIS OF PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Severn Wye Energy Agency Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

2.2 GOING CONCERN

Severn Wye has demonstrated that it was able to cope with the effects of Covid-19. The war in Ukraine and the subsequent increase in utility costs has resulted in high demand for our services.

The current budget for 2024/25 anticipates a reasonable unrestricted surplus.

Even if the unforeseen happens and a loss is incurred, Severn Wye has the reserves and cash to be able to cover a loss and have enough reserves and cash to go securely into 2024/25.

A draft budget has drawn up for the succeeding year. The position here is much less certain but with prudent assumptions it is hoped to achieve a breakeven position for the year. The financial position will be under regular review by the trustees along with the progress made against the strategic plan.

The trustees are of the opinion that, in the light of the level of reserves above, the new strategic plan, staff structure and budget put in place to meet the future challenges, there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.3 INCOME

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Government Grant Income:

The company had the following grants from the Government which were obtained through a bid / tendering process:- the Big Lottery Fund, (Landrindod Wells, Rural Futures, Create, Sustainable Steps Wales), South Gloucestershire CC (SGC Grants, Household Support Fund, Step Up S. Glos, GEEG SGC Grants), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG Grants), Warm Homes Fund (Warm Homes Grants), ERDF (Target 2030 Grants), Herefordshire Council (Keep Herefordshire Warm, Hereford Winter Grants, 30 for 2030, FRH Surveys), Stroud District Council (Winter Grants, Park Home Grants, SHDF Wave), Welsh Gov (went Green Grids, SCW), BEIS (GHG LAD 1a & LAD 1b Glos, SHOF Wave, SWC LAD & HUG, Mersey Biochar),

Further details of these grants are given in the notes to the accounts. The grants are recognised when the charity is in receipt of the grant, is entitled to that funding and there are no specific contingencies.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.4 EXPENDITURE

Expenditure is recognised in the period in which it is incurred. Expenditure includes attributable VAT where VAT cannot be recovered.

Expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the costs of the overall direction and administration of each activity is apportioned on the basis of the staff time directly attributable to that activity.

Grants paid are included in the Grant Making, in the period defined by the rules of the relevant scheme. Normally this is when the agreed work has been carried out, certified and paid for.

Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and are primarily associated with constitutional, regulatory and statutory requirements and are included within administration.

Administration includes support and central functions and have been allocated to the activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

2.5 INTEREST RECEIVABLE

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

2.6 TAXATION

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

2.7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Computer equipment	- 33%	Straight line
Office & General Equipment	- 20%	Straight line

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use and reclassified to Plant and Machinery.

2.8 DEBTORS

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.9 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.10 LIABILITIES AND PROVISIONS

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

2.11 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.12 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

2.13 PENSIONS

The Charity contributes to a group and individual stakeholder pension scheme for some of its employees. The amount charged in the SOFA represents the contributions payable to the scheme in respect of the year.

2.14 FUND ACCOUNTING

Unrestricted funds are expendable at the discretion of trustees in furtherance of the objects or the administration of the charity.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Energy Advice	-	356,304	356,304	702,743
Energy Services Domestic	2,656	723,968	726,624	334,206
Energy Advocacy	77,500	272,604	350,104	260,171
Energy Services Non Domestic	199,362	330,824	530,186	522,448
Grant Making	2,163,656	-	2,163,656	2,379,710
Wales	393,472	276,418	669,890	526,903
Energy Innovation	2,165,017	194,265	2,359,282	1,952,566
	<u>5,001,663</u>	<u>2,154,383</u>	<u>7,156,046</u>	<u>6,678,747</u>
TOTAL 2023				
	<u>5,301,327</u>	<u>1,377,420</u>	<u>6,678,747</u>	

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Bank interest receivable	<u>23,160</u>	<u>23,160</u>	<u>4,180</u>
TOTAL 2023			
	<u>4,180</u>	<u>4,180</u>	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

5. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Energy Advice	-	398,365	398,365	522,807
Energy Services Domestic	9,172	664,953	674,125	392,992
Energy Advocacy	170,617	269,930	440,547	271,486
Energy Services Non Domestic	235,982	364,226	600,208	555,435
Grant Making	2,604,557	-	2,604,557	2,132,501
Wales	463,472	186,258	649,730	525,915
Energy Innovation	90,672	200,260	290,932	1,928,961
Administration	-	24,686	24,686	-
	<u>3,574,472</u>	<u>2,108,678</u>	<u>5,683,150</u>	<u>6,330,097</u>
TOTAL 2023				
	<u>6,238,962</u>	<u>91,135</u>	<u>6,330,097</u>	

Expenditure is allocated to a particular project where the costs relate directly to that project. All other costs are allocated to each project on the basis of the staff time attributable to the project.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

6. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Energy Advice	300,412	97,953	398,365	522,807
Energy Services Domestic	544,081	130,044	674,125	392,992
Energy Advocacy	351,800	88,747	440,547	271,486
Energy Services Non Domestic	472,838	127,370	600,208	555,435
Grant Making	2,604,557	-	2,604,557	2,132,501
Wales	536,840	112,890	649,730	525,915
Energy Innovation	167,965	122,967	290,932	1,928,961
Administration	369,389	(344,703)	24,686	-
	<u>5,347,882</u>	<u>335,268</u>	<u>5,683,150</u>	<u>6,330,097</u>
TOTAL 2023				
	<u>6,060,978</u>	<u>269,119</u>	<u>6,330,097</u>	

6. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Staff costs	2,245,934	1,754,404
Staff Development and Support	64,878	145,433
Grants & Contracts	2,856,661	4,020,251
Marketing	100,042	73,232
Travel and Accommodation	62,566	55,539
Insurance	17,801	12,119
TOTAL 2024	5,347,882	6,060,978

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

6. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Depreciation	2,931	5,432
Insurance	8,956	8,143
Bank Charges	2,083	2,007
Office Overheads	86,086	70,549
Staff Development and Support	9,749	15,937
Premises Costs	56,078	53,074
IT Costs	86,628	62,950
Travel and Accommodation	9,185	10,666
Legal and Professional	71,211	35,132
Forex Gain/ Loss Realised	2,361	5,229
TOTAL 2024	335,268	269,119

7. ANALYSIS OF GRANTS PAID

	Grants paid 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
To institutions by projects:			
Rural Futures Grants	-	-	4,149
Target 2030 Wiltshire	2,052	2,052	235,069
Target 2030 Gloucestershire	56,197	56,197	435,993

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ANALYSIS OF GRANTS PAID (CONTINUED)

	Grants paid 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
To individuals by projects:			
CCG	71,258	71,258	54,538
Deloitte Digital Connect	1,290	1,290	-
GEEG SGC	10,884	10,884	2,941
Gloucestershire Household Support Fund	362,165	362,165	419,773
Herefordshire Winter Grants	22,945	22,945	98,060
HUG 2	461,807	461,807	-
Park Homes 202 Grants	317,143	317,143	-
Pay Warmth Forward National Grid	5,272	5,272	-
Retrofit West Voucher Scheme	697	697	-
South Gloucestershire Household Support Fund	92,139	92,139	73,449
Stroud District Council Winter Grants	-	-	6,400
SWC HUG Grants	660,981	660,981	470,924
SWC LAD Grants	365,540	365,540	175,523
Warm Homes Fund 6	5,636	5,636	22,543
Warm Homes Fund	-	-	63,498
Warmth on Prescriptions Grants	168,551	168,551	69,641
TOTAL			
	<u>2,546,308</u>	<u>2,546,308</u>	<u>1,457,290</u>
TOTAL GRANTS PAID			
	<u>2,604,557</u>	<u>2,604,557</u>	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The grants are paid out in respect of work done for individuals and institutions, who qualify under the criteria of each project. The reimbursement of part of the cost of work are paid to the contractor once the work has been approved, completed, certified and the recipient's contribution paid by the recipient.

The support costs for the above are included in charitable activities expenditure. Please refer to the charity website for further details of grants awarded in the year. Examples of grant recipients can be found at <https://target2030.co.uk/case-studies/>. There were no material grants paid to any individual institution.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

9. STAFF COSTS (CONTINUED)

8. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating lease payments in respect of land & property	144,558	41,314
Operating lease payments in respect of equipment	30,227	40,095
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	2,931	5,433
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- Audit	16,975	9,500
- Non Audit	-	3,377
TOTAL	<u>194,691</u>	<u>99,719</u>

9. STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	1,959,512	1,535,169
Social security costs	172,523	137,354
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	113,899	81,881
	<u>2,245,934</u>	<u>1,754,404</u>

Redundancy and settlement costs for the year were £24,903 (2023: £10,127)

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Average head count	<u>80</u>	<u>64</u>

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

9. STAFF COSTS (CONTINUED)

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Average full time equivalent	<u>68.8</u>	<u>54.3</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	-	1
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	-

All Trustees and the Senior Management Team are considered to be key management personnel. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer National Insurance contributions) received by key management personnel was £245,013 (2023: £226,556).

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £NIL-).

During the year ended 31 March 2024, expenses totalling £633 were reimbursed or paid directly to two Trustees (2023 - £100 to one Trustee - for travel and accommodation costs incurred).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office & General Equipment £	Computer equipment £	Assets Under Construction £	Total £
COST OR VALUATION				
At 1 April 2023	8,697	24,205	-	32,902
Additions	-	-	2,060,932	2,060,932
At 31 March 2024	8,697	24,205	2,060,932	2,093,834
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2023	4,550	22,351	-	26,901
Charge for the year	1,626	1,305	-	2,931
At 31 March 2024	6,176	23,656	-	29,832
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2024	<u>2,521</u>	<u>549</u>	<u>2,060,932</u>	<u>2,064,002</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>4,147</u>	<u>1,854</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,001</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARIES

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the Charity:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Holding
Mersey Biochar Limited	14785142	Unit 15 Newent Road, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8DN	100%

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Net assets £
Mersey Biochar Limited	1

12. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade debtors	862,756	1,046,744
Other debtors	3,640	-
Prepayments and accrued income	341,480	225,989
	<u>1,207,876</u>	<u>1,272,733</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	1,488,929	119,932
Other taxation and social security	155,822	115,716
Other creditors	72,640	80,336
Accruals and deferred income	147,179	117,926
	<u>1,864,570</u>	<u>433,910</u>
	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at 1 April 2023	29,540	64,751
Amount deferred in the year	59,139	29,540
Amounts released in the year	(29,540)	(64,751)
Balance as at 31 March 2024	<u>59,139</u>	<u>29,540</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

14. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

STATEMENT OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
Designated Funds	<u>70,763</u>	<u>35,833</u>	<u>(439)</u>	<u>(60,894)</u>	<u>45,263</u>
General Funds	<u>652,643</u>	<u>2,189,001</u>	<u>(2,108,239)</u>	<u>262,555</u>	<u>995,960</u>
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>723,406</u>	<u>2,224,834</u>	<u>(2,108,678)</u>	<u>201,661</u>	<u>1,041,223</u>
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
Energy Advice	193,458	-	-	(179,457)	14,001
Energy Services Domestic	96,055	2,655	(9,172)	(88,320)	1,218
Energy Advocacy	125,412	77,500	(170,617)	(2,520)	29,775
Energy Services Non Domestic	-	199,362	(235,982)	36,620	-
Grant Making	643,535	2,163,656	(2,604,557)	4,738	207,372
Wales	153,593	393,472	(463,472)	722	84,315
Energy Innovation	16,450	2,165,018	(90,672)	26,556	2,117,352
	<u>1,228,503</u>	<u>5,001,663</u>	<u>(3,574,472)</u>	<u>(201,661)</u>	<u>2,454,033</u>
TOTAL OF FUNDS	<u>1,951,909</u>	<u>7,226,497</u>	<u>(5,683,150)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,495,256</u>

14. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Designated Funds

- **The Hive** - Whilst the running costs of the Hive are covered by the Llandrindod Wells BLF project, the income generated by the utilisation of the building is being set aside to meet the future costs of running the Hive once the BLF funding ceases.

Purpose of restricted Funds

Energy Advice

- **Household Support Funds** - see Grant Making section below.
- **W&W Referral Fees** - each year agreement is reached with the W&W funders as to how these fees are best utilised to help with our Affordable Warmth programme.
- **W&W Support for Home Energy Advice** - to provide additional advice support to households in Gloucestershire.

Energy Services Domestic

- **SWC LAD & HUG Ancillary** - funding to compliment the main project to fund small enabling works.
- **Stonehouse Demonstrator** - to make recommendations for the improvement of the Stonehouse Pavilion, it will also assist with funded energy efficiency support to 10 example homes in the area.
- **Summerfield Trust** - to provide winter care packages for people living in Gloucestershire.
- **HUG 2** - see Grant Making section below.
- **Revolving Retrofit Guarantee Fund** - the fund was established by Stroud District Council for historic reasons, discussions are taking place to agree a future purpose.

Energy Advocacy

- **Step up South Gloucestershire** - Community advocate support service and an infrared camera project.
- **Warmth on Prescription** - see Grant Making section below.

Energy Services Non Domestic

- **Target 2030 Gloucestershire** - see Grant Making section below.
- **Target 2030 Wiltshire** - see Grant Making section below.
- **Retrofit in the Marches** - to work in partnership with MEA and others to provide mainly retrofit surveys in Herefordshire and Powys.

Grant Making

- **GEEG SGC Grants** - these are funds received from South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) and Stroud District Council (SDC) for households meeting age and income criteria, with Severn Wye acting as the principal for the scheme, to assist people with health conditions with energy saving measures.
- **CCG Grants** - these are funds received from the CCG through SDC for households in Gloucestershire meeting age and income criteria, with Severn Wye acting as the principal for the scheme, to assist people with health conditions with energy saving measures.
- **Household Support Funds** - to distribute grants to households in fuel poverty.
- **Warm Home Funds Grants** - are funded by SDC providing grants to private tenants, owner occupiers and social housing for central heating systems and insulation to improve energy efficiency.
- **Rural Futures Grants** - micro grants made to communities supported through the Rural Futures project.
- **Target 2030 Gloucestershire** - offers up to 5 days energy efficiency consultation to small and medium enterprises in Gloucestershire and up to 35% financial assistance to help install energy saving measures.
- **Target 2030 Wiltshire** - offers up to 5 days energy efficiency consultation to small and medium enterprises in Swindon & Wiltshire and up to 35% financial assistance to help- install energy saving

14. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

measures.

- **Hereford Winter Grants** - to support vulnerable residents affected by Covid-19 by making small cash payments to assist with food and essential items, such as fuel bills.
- **SW LAD & HUG Fund** - to provide energy efficient retrofit works to low income homes in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire.
- **HUG 2** - to install clean heat and insulation to off gas homes.
- **SGC & Glos Household Support Fund** - to provide winter care bags, vouchers for Pre Paid Meters, energy debt write off and top up energy credits in the respective counties.
- **Warmth on Prescription** - to support vulnerable households with severe respiratory illness via grants to improve the dwelling or financial support with heating bills.
- **Deloitte Digital Connect** - This project explores how we can better connect with people in fuel poverty through digital communications.
- **Pay Warmth Forward National Grid** - to provide short-term warmth interventions for vulnerable people
- **Retrofit West Voucher Scheme** - to help home owners with grants for home surveys.

Wales

- **Rural Futures** - Big Lottery Fund grant to support rural communities to co-produce sustainable local projects and help those communities harness their potential and build a lasting future.
- **Llandrindod Wells** - together for Wellbeing, working with families who are in employment, but struggling to make ends meet and balance the needs of their families. Through the project families will be enabled to co-design and co-deliver projects that can improve the quality of their lives.
- **Energy Advocates Powys** - Energy Advocacy work across Powys.

Innovation

- **Three C** - to promote innovation and business development in the circular economy based on alternative carbon products, technologies and services, using local carbon feedstocks. The 3C project has been moved from Communities to the new Sustainable Technologies theme as it is a more appropriate classification.
- **CapCall Re-Direct** - to build a timber framed, green roof and living wall community structure.
- **Mersey Biochar** - to carry out a feasibility study into using a pyrolysis plant to develop a community-owned, carbon-negative energy solution. Now commissioned to build a prototype plant to demonstrate feasibility.

Transfer between Funds

- **W&W Referral fees** - the funders agreed that £89,457 could be used to fund our business support services.
- **SWC LAD & HUG** - the loss on these projects will be met from General Reserves.
- **Three C** - There is matched funding for this project from Welsh Water and Gwent Green Grids in Unrestricted Income that more than covers most of the costs, the rest is met from General Reserves.
- **Target 2030 Wilts & Glos** - the loss on these projects will be met from General Reserves.
- **Warmth on Prescription** - the loss on these projects will be met from General Reserves.
- **Revolving Retrofit Guarantee Fund** - the fund was set aside in previous periods

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

14. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT OF FUNDS - PRIOR YEAR

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS					
Designated Funds	17,725	189,703	(91,135)	(45,530)	70,763
General Funds	573,569	1,204,168	(1,058,668)	(66,426)	652,643
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	591,294	1,393,871	(1,149,803)	(111,956)	723,406
RESTRICTED FUNDS					
Energy Advice	110,089	103,292	-	(19,924)	193,457
Energy Services Domestic	95,539	287,781	(288,686)	1,422	96,056
Energy Advocacy	150,000	74,956	(94,485)	(5,059)	125,412
Energy Services Non Domestic	-	233,028	(284,181)	51,153	-
Grant Making	396,327	2,379,710	(2,132,502)	-	643,535
Wales	243,560	391,367	(482,056)	722	153,593
Energy Innovation	-	1,831,193	(1,898,385)	83,642	16,450
	995,515	5,301,327	(5,180,295)	111,956	1,228,503
TOTAL OF FUNDS	1,586,809	6,695,198	(6,330,098)	-	1,951,909

15. SUMMARY OF FUNDS

SUMMARY OF FUNDS - CURRENT YEAR

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Designated funds	70,763	35,833	(439)	(60,894)	45,263
General funds	652,643	2,189,001	(2,108,239)	262,555	995,960
Restricted funds	1,228,503	5,001,663	(3,574,472)	(201,661)	2,454,033
	<u>1,951,909</u>	<u>7,226,497</u>	<u>(5,683,150)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,495,256</u>

SUMMARY OF FUNDS - PRIOR YEAR

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Designated funds	17,725	189,703	(91,135)	(45,530)	70,763
General funds	573,569	1,204,168	(1,058,668)	(66,426)	652,643
Restricted funds	995,515	5,301,327	(5,180,295)	111,956	1,228,503
	<u>1,586,809</u>	<u>6,695,198</u>	<u>(6,330,098)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,951,909</u>

16. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - CURRENT PERIOD

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	2,064,002	2,064,002
Fixed asset investments	-	1	1
Current assets	2,454,033	841,790	3,295,823
Creditors due within one year	-	(1,864,570)	(1,864,570)
TOTAL	<u>2,454,033</u>	<u>1,041,223</u>	<u>3,495,256</u>

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - PRIOR PERIOD

Restricted 2023	Unrestricted funds	Total funds
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		2023	2023
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	6,001	6,001
Current assets	1,228,503	1,151,315	2,379,818
Creditors due within one year	-	(433,910)	(433,910)
TOTAL			
	<u>1,228,503</u>	<u>723,406</u>	<u>1,951,909</u>

17. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	1,543,347	365,101
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation charges	2,931	5,433
Less interest received	(23,160)	(4,180)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	64,858	(151,467)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	1,430,659	54,431
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	3,018,635	269,318

18. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank Deposits	2,087,948	1,107,085
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	2,087,948	1,107,085

19. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Acquisition of subsidiaries	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	1,107,085	980,863	(1)	2,087,947
	<u>1,107,085</u>	<u>980,863</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>2,087,947</u>

20. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The group operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amounted to £113,899 (2023: £81,881). There was a liability at the year end of £21,086 (2023: £1,857).

21. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2024 the Charity had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	62,982	46,167
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	111,803	15,347
	<u>174,785</u>	<u>61,514</u>

22. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year, one trustee, who was also a director of Mersey Biochar Limited, resigned from both positions to take up the role as the lead project manager of the Mersey Biochar project.

The 100% shareholding of Mersey Biochar Limited was then transferred from the former trustee to the charity at nil consideration.

This individual is now paid for freelance services by the charity. No related party transactions occurred under this arrangement during the financial year.

No other trustee or other person related to the charity had any other personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity in this year or the previous one.