



Foundations

STARTLing Case Study

Warmer Homes, Advice, and Money

November 2017



The STARTLing case study consists of 6 sections which set out:

- **S** = the **Situation** the local provider is responding to or finds itself faced with. In other words what prompts the pressure to do something?
- **T** = the **Task** the local provider or service sets itself or is asked to achieve?
- **A** = the **Action** the local provider took to address the situation and set about the task. In other words what did you do?
- **R** = the **Results** of the activities. The outputs that were delivered by your collaborative project.
- **T** = the **Tests** to which the collaborative project was subjected. Was it evaluated? By whom? What outcomes did the evaluation Show?
- **L** = the **Lessons Learnt**: What was easier than anticipated, what was hard, what would you do differently, what would you do in addition if resources permit it?

Project name and host:

WHAM, Centre for Sustainable Energy

Lisa Evans, Project Manager

lisa.evans@cse.org.uk

The Situation: What are the circumstances you were asked to address? What was happening that prompted you or your commissioner to consider there might be a role for your organisation?

In Bristol, as in the UK, the main drivers of fuel poverty are poor quality housing, high energy prices, low incomes, people's knowledge and confidence. The percentage of households predicted to be in fuel poverty in Bristol is 13.6%; higher than the national average (10.8%), exacerbated by ageing housing stock (40% of housing is pre-1919), and deprivation. Some of Bristol's most deprived wards have higher levels of predicted fuel poverty, e.g. Ashley (15.8%) and Filwood (15.4%). Housing and energy are a household's biggest costs, so reducing a person's fuel poverty has a significant impact on reducing food and overall financial poverty.

All three partners in WHAM (The Centre for Sustainable Energy, Talking Money and West of England Care & Repair) were already supporting people living in fuel poverty and this proposal enabled them to work cohesively.

The Task: What did you set out to achieve?

The partnership was set up to assist at least 2,750 families in low incomes, unemployed people and lone parents in private sector accommodation struggling to stay affordably warm at home (an estimated 8,250 people).

See 3 outcomes below.

The Action: What did you do? What did you put in place? What resources did you mobilise (financial and staffing). What partnerships did you construct? What pathways did you construct or which people did you target and how?

The project will ensure our low-income groups can freely access the optimum in-depth and expert support of Bristol's three leading organisations tackling fuel poverty: energy (CSE), financial capabilities (Talking Money) and housing improvement support (WE C&R). We aim to go beyond the normal limitations of a partnership by employing two caseworkers to work in all three organisations (rotating between organisations), training them to become caseworkers with the skills of all three organisations, and embedding their skills and knowledge within each organisation.

The service will create an easier system for housing, social care, health and voluntary sector workers to refer clients to, with confidence that referrals are acted upon and result in positive outcomes. The partnership has created a single-point-of-contact referral service, creating systems, data sharing protocols, mutual understanding, and commitment to sustain the partnership beyond 2021.

The Results: What were the outputs? How many people did you help, what was average spend or time scales for response and resolution? Individual stories are welcomed.

It is still in its early stages and so no outputs to report as yet.

The 3 outcomes that we aim to reach are:

Outcome 1

Low income families, lone parents & unemployed people will improve their financial skills & understanding leading to reduced financial hardship.

Outcome 2

Low income families, lone parents & unemployed people will improve their physical & psychological wellbeing through living in warmer homes with more affordable energy costs.

Outcome 3

Local people & organisations are more knowledgeable about fuel poverty, better able to support their community or refer them to the partnership for in-depth support.

The Tests: Was your project evaluated? Who did the evaluation and what did they find. Does the evaluation allow you to enumerate some outcomes in terms of systems savings or personal health and wellbeing? Evaluation reports welcomed.

We are planning on evaluating the project around the end of the first year – on-going until the end of year four.

The lessons learnt: What worked? What did not? What would you do differently? What would or will you add? In other words what will you do in future?

We have learnt that there is definitely a need for this project judging by the number of referrals that we have already received, we are therefore seeking further top-up funding to support our work.



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The Old Co-op Building,
11 Railway Street,
Glossop,
Derbyshire, SK13 7AG

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