



March 2011

EBICO AND GROUNDWORK UK PARTNERSHIP HELPS LEEDS FAMILIES BOOST ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Partnership offers low-income households free energy-saving advice and installations
- More than 750 Leeds households already set to save a combined £250,000 through the project

New figures released this week show how much money Leeds households will save over a lifetime through a groundbreaking energy-saving project in the city.

Over the past three years, Ebico, the UK's only not-for profit energy supplier has, through its Sustainable Development Trust, helped more than 750 Leeds households combat fuel poverty with its support of Groundwork's 'Green Doctor' programme.

The Green Doctor programme offers free advice and support to low income households across the city that saves them money while encouraging behaviour change. This includes the 'Green Doctor Prescription' – a checklist of energy-saving actions tailored to each individual householder's needs by Groundwork's energy efficiency experts.

Since partnering with Ebico, the scheme has fitted a total of 4,573 energy efficiency measures in 762 homes across the city to improve insulation and heating systems. The installation of these measures will save the participating households a collective £250,000 over a lifetime and the scheme continues to grow.

Adrian Curtis, Executive Director from Groundwork Leeds said: "Teaming up with Ebico on our Green Doctor programme allows us to assist priority low-income households in Leeds, providing them with the advice and tools needed to not only save energy, but to save money too.

"The Green Doctor also provides opportunities for local unemployed young people to gain skills and work experience in jobs that will help boost Leeds' low carbon future. This additional capacity has allowed Green Doctor to increase its output and help increased numbers of households in the city."

Phil Levermore, Managing Director of Ebico commented: "It may sound counter-intuitive for an energy supplier to be helping to lower energy use, but at Ebico we are committed to helping to create a low carbon future by encouraging people to cut their energy consumption.

"The Department for Energy and Climate Change recently published figures showing that the number of people suffering from fuel poverty in the UK continues to increase. The knock-on effects of colder weather and government cutbacks could put many UK households in a significantly worse position in the coming years. Partnering with Groundwork UK on the delivery of its Green Doctor initiative in the Leeds area enables us to work towards our goal to wipe-out fuel poverty in the UK."

Case Study:

Name: Sheila Brooke-Lacey

Age: 77

Lives: Roundhay, Leeds

Sheila Brooke-Lacey, 77, was referred to the Green Doctor programme through the Energy Saving Trust, the UK's leading impartial organisation helping people to save energy and reduce carbon emissions. The Green Doctor Team visited Mrs Brooke-Lacey at her home in Roundhay, and were able to give her advice on ways to improve the energy efficiency of her home.

The team then fitted energy saving measures that Mrs Brooke-Lacey would not have been able to fit herself, including solid wall insulation and energy saving lightbulbs. The team also draft-proofed openings - all free of charge - to leave Mrs Brooke-Lacey's home feeling more comfortable and functioning in a much more energy-efficient way.

Mrs Brooke-Lacey said: "My house is in the old Edwardian style and could be very draughty. The side wall is very exposed and I didn't know if it was insulated. The Green Doctor team were able to advise me on solid wall insulation. They also draught-proofed the door – and even my letterbox – which was marvellous.

"There used to be a really nasty draught – but thanks to Green Doctor, it's gone now and I'm thrilled. I was so surprised when they did it all – they came in armed with all sorts of stuff. They also fitted panels to all the radiators on my outside walls and fitted free energy efficient lightbulbs.

"As a pensioner these are some things that I couldn't do. I also didn't think that there was enough room for draught-proofing. I'm very grateful for the service."

Energy saving advice from Ebico:

Ebico was established as a social enterprise in 1998. The company donates its surpluses to the Ebico Trust for Sustainable Development in order to reduce fuel poverty and tackle climate change through community initiatives.

Ebico urges consumers to get energy-fit and offers the following quick advice for anyone looking to improve the energy efficiency of their homes:

1. When purchasing new appliances; always look for the 'Energy Saving Recommended' logo – it could save you up to £34 a year
2. Use energy saving lightbulbs and don't forget to turn off lights when you leave a room
3. Put your washing on at 30 degrees or lower – this uses a third less electricity
4. Insulate your hot water tank – jackets cost between £10 and £15 but could save you around £30 a year.
5. Switch to a high-efficiency boiler

- Ends -

For further media information please contact:

Adam Stones / Laura Mitchell

Cohn & Wolfe

020 7331 5370 / 020 7331 5389

ebico@cohnwolfe.com

Notes to Editors:

About Ebico

Ebico is the UK's only not-for-profit energy supply company in the UK and is committed to the reduction and elimination of fuel poverty. The company's flat rate tariff with no standing charge rewards low users of energy. For more information visit www.ebico.co.uk

About Groundwork

Groundwork helps people and organisations make changes in order to create better neighbourhoods, to build job skills and to live and work in a greener way. We operate across England, Wales and Northern

Ireland and our charities work on thousands of projects each year. We focus our activity on disadvantaged communities where we can make most difference. www.groundwork.org.uk

About Green Doctor

The Green Doctor programmes provide on-call help to householders by giving them advice and assistance that will improve the energy efficiency of their homes and save them money.

Ebico works with Groundwork UK on the Green Doctor programme in Leeds, London and Slough.