



PRESS RELEASE

Energy Local wins prestigious Ashden Award for its tariff – supporting local renewable energy

Energy Local has won the 2018 Ashden Award for Energy Market Disruptors for its ground-breaking Energy Local Club (ELC) model. The model promotes distributed renewable energy by allowing households to benefit directly from electricity produced by local renewable generators. The first ELC started in 2016 in Bethesda, Gwynedd, but Energy Local is already working to expand the scheme more widely across the UK.

The Ashden Awards are given to sustainable energy pioneers and are a globally recognised measure of excellence. Energy Local will receive its award next Thursday 14 June at a ceremony at the Royal Geographical Society in London. Former UN Climate Chief and key architect of the Paris Climate Agreement, Christiana Figueres, will be the keynote speaker at the Ceremony.

Energy Local's model both supports renewable generation and tackles fuel poverty. Most renewable generators sell their power at 5 to 6p per unit (kWh) and customers buy it back from electricity suppliers for about three times that price. Energy Local use a 'match tariff', which applies to household energy per half hour period and which can be 'matched' against local renewable generation in the same period. In Bethesda, the match tariff is set at 7p per unit, so the local hydro generator receives 7p per unit and ELC members pay the same 7p per unit price. This is a win-win for the generator and customer.

Energy Local partner Co-operative Energy is the electricity supplier for households and provides all the billing, with the power generated from the hydro allocated fairly across the Club members. At times when the hydro-power supply isn't enough to match the energy needs of the Club, Co-operative Energy tops up the power using a Time of Use tariff, which sets different prices for morning, midday, evening and night, encouraging households to shift energy use to cheaper off-peak times.

Unlike most UK energy customers, ELC members have more control over their energy bills, as they are able to save money by shifting their energy usage to the times when hydropower production is available. Each ELC member's house is fitted with an 'advanced meter', which measures how much electricity they use every half hour, and the member can access a web-based 'Energy Dashboard' showing a forecast of how much power the hydro is predicted to produce. As a result, ELC customers, on average, save 10% to 30% on their electricity bills while helping to maximise the income of the hydro generator.

The Bethesda ELC is made up of a group of 100 local households and the generator, a 100kW

National Trust-owned hydro on the Berthen river. Energy Local has plans to bring an additional community owned hydro scheme into the project next year, meaning they will be able to recruit more ELC members in the area.

Energy Local is recruiting for ELC members for a hydro project in Crickhowell; and Carmarthenshire Energy Ltd is looking to develop Energy Local Clubs on two sites in Carmarthenshire – one is a hydro project and the other uses solar power. Energy Local is also sharing its expertise with community energy groups in Brixton and Oxfordshire.

The Ashden judges said: “Energy Local’s model offers a simple, efficient way of encouraging the use of renewable electricity close to where it is generated. This grassroots innovation has the potential to reignite the community energy movement and enable new renewable energy projects to be built.”

Director of Energy Local, Mary Gillie, said: “We are honoured to have our work given the recognition of an Ashden Award. It’s a tribute to the hard work of all our partners who have helped get Energy Local to this point. We look forward to working with the Ashden network to scale Energy Local to achieve its potential as we strive to achieve a green, inclusive, fair and sustainable economy.”

Ten awards will be presented at the 14 June Ceremony to organisations working on the frontline of energy innovation, sustainable buildings, energy market disruption, and clean air in towns and cities, both in the UK and globally. All winners will receive a prize of up to £20,000 along with tailored support to help scale up their work.

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Notes to Editors:

1. Since the Ashden Awards were founded in 2001, Ashden has rewarded more than 200 enterprises around the world which so far have collectively improved the lives of more than 88 million people, saving 13 million tonnes of CO2 emissions every year. www.ashden.org
2. Funders of the 2018 Ashden Awards include Citi, the Garfield Weston Foundation, Grosvenor, HSBC, Impax Asset Management, and the Waterloo Foundation.
3. The Awards Ceremony is on Thursday 14 June at 7pm. [Tickets](#) cost £35. For press passes please contact Emma Frost, emma.frost@ashden.org 0207 4107068.
4. Other 2018 UK Ashden Award winners are:
Upside Energy – Impax Ashden Award for Energy Innovation
Q-Bot – Ashden Award for UK Sustainable Buildings
Chargemaster – Ashden Award for Clean Air in Towns and Cities