

Domestic Energy Efficiency Advice Code of Practice EEAC Case Study: Belfast

Opened in 1995, the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) in Belfast offers free and independent advice to help raise awareness about energy efficiency and the simple steps householders can take to save energy, money and the environment. The Belfast EEAC also provides information and advice on renewable technologies and the grants that are available.

The Belfast EEAC is involved in various programmes including a Primary School Energy Education Programme and an All Island Photo Competition for Secondary Schools.

The advice team at the EEAC found out about the Code of Practice through the Energy Saving Trust, and were one of the first EEACs to sign up.

"We saw signing up to the Code as part of our commitment to being a quality energy advice provider," says Sandra McKay (Advice Programme Manager). "Going through the application process gave us the opportunity to review our procedures and to ensure that we are doing a good job."

All organisations must sign up to the Heart of the Code – the generic standards that are relevant to all organisations, regardless of how they deliver energy efficiency advice. Organisations can then choose which specialist categories of the Code are more appropriate for them. Belfast EEAC chose three:

- Face-to-face advice not in the home (e.g. at exhibitions, presentations and drop in centres)
- Non face-to-face advice (e.g. over the telephone and in written reports)
- Advice in the Home

The Heart and each of the five specialist categories - the other two are for point of sales (aimed at retailers) and for installed measures (aimed at installers) – are split into four sections to address all aspects of energy efficiency advice:

- Quality of Advice and Information
- Training and Development
- Customer Access

- Quality Assurance and Service Improvement

The team at Belfast EEAC jointly completed the application forms, each contributing depending on their own area of responsibility and expertise. There were no organisational barriers to the EEAC signing up to the Code and the team didn't find the process time consuming or difficult. All staff are kept informed about the organisations commitment to the Code through staff meetings.

"The Code of Practice helps us to demonstrate that we're meeting the high standards required as an EEAC," says Sandra. "It's becoming the industry standards and is a good way for us to assess and review our own performance."

Bryan McGahan, Principle Energy Officer, agrees: "The Code is an excellent tool for customers and industry to assist them when looking for energy professionals."

"As the code is a recognised high standard of practice, it legitimises what the energy efficiency advice industry is doing and could be beneficial when bidding for future work," he adds. "You should sign up today!"



The EEAC team from Belfast

To speak to a trained energy efficiency advisor at your local EEAC call us on 0800 512 012.

For more information about the Code of Practice, visit www.goodenergyadvice.org.uk or call 08700 667 620.