



Christmas Newsletter

2014



It's Christmas again - can you believe it?! It's been quite a year and we're all getting ready for the festive season - all work and no play makes Liz, Rachael and Kathryn dull girls!

2014 has been a celebratory year for SE² as we turned 10 - a time to sit back and realise just how far we've come, and how much we've accomplished! We wrote [10 blogs](#) over the summer looking back at some of our top hits over the last decade, ran our own [photography](#) and [short-story](#) competitions and made a [movie](#) to give a snap shot too! And yes - being SE² - we couldn't not have a party - and it was lovely that so many of our friends could join us. You can check out all the photos [here](#).

At SE², we are passionate about helping communities and organisations find real solutions for a sustainable future. We believe people are the key to change; it's why we focus on organisational change and stakeholder dialogue, communicating the impacts of climate change and influencing what's done about it.

A breath of fresh air

We've been delighted this year to work with DECC's [Heat Network Delivery Unit](#). Set up in 2013, HNDU is unique in the way in which it's brought industry experts into Whitehall to create a support framework for local authorities. The team had grown rapidly over a short period of time and so we were brought in to help them take stock of all that they'd achieved, to recognise their strengths (and weaknesses) as a team and to plan their direction of travel for the next 6-12 months. This then led to us going on the road with HNDU to deliver three promotional workshops for local authorities who have yet to benefit from their funding and support.

HNDU isn't our only new client. On an appropriately stifling hot day in July, we ran a stakeholder workshop for the Zero Carbon Hub as part of their two-year project to investigate [overheating in homes](#). We worked closely with the Hub to design an event that shared their initial thinking with a wide cross-section of participants, and created a space for them to critique and develop different policy scenarios together.

"We commissioned SE² to deliver and facilitate a workshop on overheating homes as we knew we could trust them to do a great job. They have a great combination of experience in the energy efficiency sector and a professional and confident facilitation style, helping to ensure our event went excellently."

Creative spark



We've had great fun this year working with Reading University to create a series of behaviour change activities to reduce out of hours electricity use across campus. The University has made great strides on energy engineering and building management systems, but was still at the start of its behaviour change journey. A Blackout event at the end of November saw students, staff and faculty exploring the campus looking for lights, computers, printers and more left on unnecessarily over the weekend. We'll be following this up with activities in the run-up to Christmas and into Green Week next year, all part of the University's [Carbon Countdown](#) project.

We've also been busy updating the [London Fuel Poverty Hub](#), a website developed by us not because someone asked us or paid us to do it - but because we just think it should exist and no-one else was doing it! The Hub gives people the information, contacts and knowledge they need to play their part in helping tackle fuel poverty in London. It's worth a quick look if you haven't used it before - you'll find news, opinions and links to research papers that will help you understand the causes and effects of fuel poverty in the city and the impacts that it has on the lives of Londoners. You can also use our Borough search to find out what support, advice, funding and energy efficiency help is available to residents in each part of London. If you work for a Borough and want to update the information we hold for you, please email [Kathryn](#).

Bringing people together



“One thing that really struck me when I joined DECC was the scale of the heat challenge... and how fundamental it is that we get this right...”

So said Amber Rudd MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, at this year’s [Heat Conference](#), co-hosted by the CHPA and Energy Institute, and we couldn’t agree more. It’s the third year we’ve event managed the Heat Conference and the seventh we’ve managed the [CHPA’s Awards Dinner](#) - both of which were a huge success in 2014.

The conference saw over 230 delegates discuss ‘Lean Heat’, looking at the policies needed to move to a more efficient heat energy economy and heating inspiring examples of how policy is being translated into practice. For the first time, we also compiled a live [Storify feed](#) of the conference so others could follow the debate as it unfolded. It was great fun to do and we think adds another dimension to our events!

“I just wanted to say a BIG ‘Thank You’ for a thoroughly enjoyable event at yesterday’s ‘Heat 2014’. The choice of topics, the speakers and the venue were all first-rate. I came away with many new ideas and many new contacts to follow up on.”

Trusted delivery

As well as delivering great events and meaningful stakeholder engagement, we are also well known for being a safe pair of hands when it comes to strategic research. In recent months, we’ve undertaken two projects - one for [Community Energy England](#) and the other for [Citizens Advice](#) - both involving getting under the skin of an issue, talking to key players, untangling their views and providing a coherent, succinct summary and recommendations at the end.

From our [blog](#):

“It’s absolutely critical that the in-home displays are installed as that’s where many of the savings come from. It’s also going to be vital that smart works for pre-payment customers and that they don’t - once again - get penalised for the mere fact that they either can’t or choose not to pay for their energy in advance... Consumers will only save money if they know what action to take... and have the ability to take control.”

As part of [DECC’s Community Energy Strategy](#), published in January alongside [our evaluation of their 2013 Local Authority Funding Competition](#), a commitment was made set up an information resource for community energy but no-one knew exactly what this would look like. So we were commissioned to talk to the sector to find out what they really wanted and scope out what a resource might look like, how it could be structured and funded and what it might include.

Citizens Advice, and their predecessor body Consumer Futures, have been closely involved in network innovation and the transition to smart, low carbon grids over the past few years, and it’s a journey that SE² has been involved with too, running two workshops to disseminate and discuss reports on both smart grids and smart meters (we even [blogged](#) about it!). We have now been commissioned to review the consumer impacts of the £500m [Low Carbon Networks Fund \(LCNF\)](#), which supports projects sponsored by the Distribution Network Operators to pilot new technology, operating and commercial arrangements. We’ll be reporting to Citizens Advice before Christmas and expect our findings to be published early in the New Year.

2014 has also seen us continue in our work as the secretariat for both the [London HECA Forum](#) and the [London Energy Boroughs Group](#) - both of which we enjoy immensely and put as right at the heart of the going’s on in London!



So all it leaves us to do is to wish you all a happy Christmas and joyous new year! As usual, instead of sending Christmas cards we’ll be making a charitable donation, this year to [Oxfam’s Ebola Crisis Appeal](#).

See you all in 2015!

More information about our work is available at www.se-2.co.uk
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