

Applying Climate Just in Plymouth

Citizens Advice Plymouth



Smeaton's Tower, Plymouth ©M. Peverill

1. SUMMARY

Plymouth Citizens Advice has used the Climate Just website and map tool to make a case for funding to support its energy advice work for local people experiencing fuel poverty.

2. CONTEXT

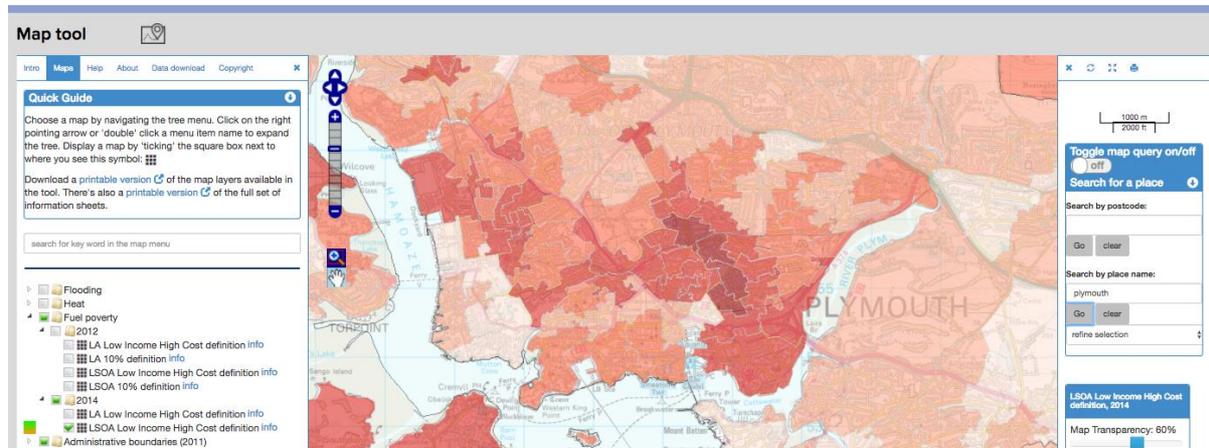
Citizens Advice provides free, confidential and independent advice to help people overcome their problems. It is the UK's largest advice provider, helping over 2 million people a year (2015) via its workforce of 23,000 trained volunteers and 7,200 paid staff. In addition to providing one to one advice, Citizens Advice also uses client's stories anonymously to campaign for policy changes that benefit the population as a whole.

The Citizens Advice service is provided by a network of over 300 independent local charities across England and Wales working with the national Citizen's Advice charity. Citizen's Advice Plymouth is one such local charity and provides services to help people with their [energy and water bills](#).

3. ACTIVITIES

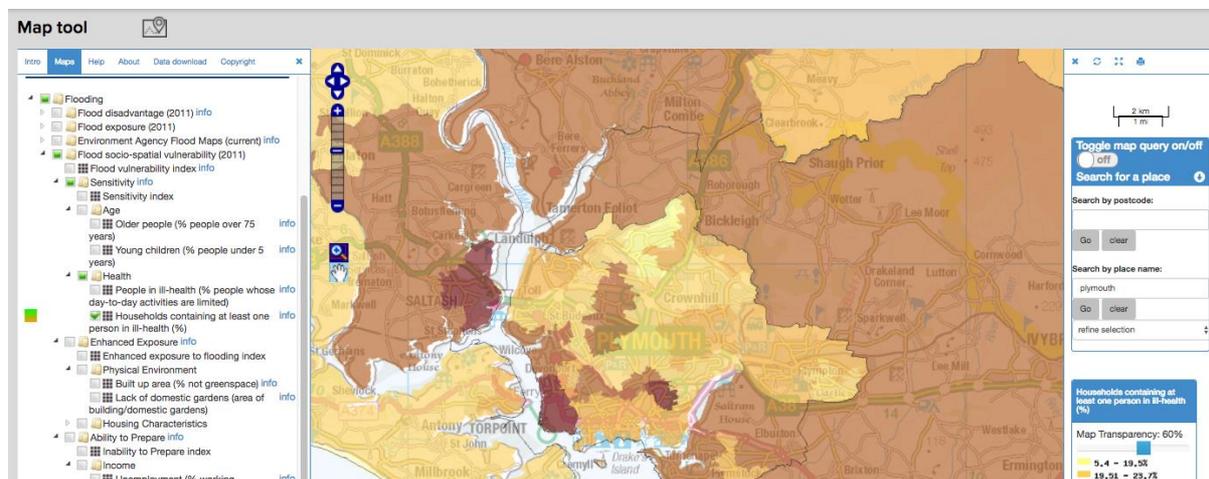
Following attendance at a Climate Just training workshop in Plymouth in November 2015, the Energy Advice Champion at Plymouth Citizens Advice was able to use information from the Climate Just tool in five funding applications, four of which were successful. In order to provide specialist energy services, the local charity has to raise funds on an ongoing basis from different sources in order to support four volunteers and one full time member of staff. Between them they provide one to one advice to people coming in with debt problems, where struggling to pay utility bills is often part of the issue. They also provide more pro-active energy advice by talking to groups of people in one go (local clubs and interest groups) and through other outreach activities (stalls in libraries, community centres and at public events).

Although the Climate Just map tool clearly shows up the areas in Plymouth (below) where fuel poverty is a particular problem (the darkest red patches), the most useful information for Citizens Advice was actually the data on social vulnerability.



Screen grab from the Climate Just map tool showing the 'Low Income High Cost' definition of fuel poverty at Lower Super Output Area level with the most recent data from 2014

The data on the percentages of older people, people with a disability or illness and people living in the private rented sector were used to help make the case for funding energy advice work targeted at particular areas and groups. Plymouth's Energy Advice Champion comments that their good success rate in these funding bids can be attributed to being able to demonstrate a good understanding of the problem and quantifying it statistically, 'We know the areas anyway where fuel poverty is a problem and have a large map on the wall showing them, but it's useful to have the data'. Having attended the training course, he knew where to look to find the information: the map layers showing all the different types of social vulnerability are not in the same place as the fuel poverty maps, so are not intuitive to find, but are in the flooding and heat folders, as shown below.



Screen grab from the Climate Just map tool showing the 'Percentage of households containing at least one person in ill health' map layer selected. Other social vulnerability map layers are shown in the folders on the left.

4. NEXT STEPS

Plymouth Citizens Advice does not have in-house data mapping capability but may use Climate Just map visualisations to support larger funding bids for its energy services in future.

5. CONTACT

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IN PRACTICE CASE STUDY



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