

Reducing energy costs and cutting carbon emissions is important for businesses of all sizes, operating in all sectors.

By installing energy-efficiency improvements into business premises the average company could reduce its energy bill by up to 25%. The savings generated by reducing energy bills could payback the upfront cost of the improvements in just one to three years. Businesses that cut energy costs increase their bottom line. Businesses that future-proof their green credentials attract more customers.

Business Renewables Energy Efficiency Sunderland (BREEZ) offers eligible businesses in Sunderland a flexible approach to cutting their energy bills and carbon emissions:

- **Free initial assessment** – BREEZ eligibility check; open discussion and walk-around survey
- **Fully-funded commercial Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), level three or four** – if required BREEZ will fund an EPC to establish the actual energy rating of your business premises
- **Free energy audit** – consider the broader opportunities to further cut energy bills with e.g. awareness raising campaigns supported by bespoke energy-saving advice and guidance and /or consider upgrades to industrial process machinery and plant
- **Grants** – Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may also qualify for 50% grant funding towards the cost of installing recommended measures. Typically, the scheme offers funding towards microgeneration (e.g. photovoltaics), insulation, heating upgrades and LED lighting. Grant support for upgrading business process equipment is also available.
 - The minimum grant payable is £1000 (for a £2000 project)
 - The average grant amount for a typical SME is between £2000 and £8000
 - Larger grants maybe available for projects that offer significant, pre-agreed carbon reduction outcomes
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What are the potential benefits of BREEZ?

Improving your business's bottom line through good energy management has the same impact as increasing sales. Many customers are becoming more environmentally aware, and your energy improvements is a way of highlighting to customers your commitment to the planet and local environmental sustainability.

How do I register my interest in BREEZ?

Go to www.sunderland.gov.uk/BREEZ to complete the brief enquiry form.

How do I qualify for BREEZ?

You need to be an SME based in Sunderland and able to meet some broad criteria in relation to the number of staff, turnover and ownership of the business. We will do everything we can to help you qualify but we will also need to carry out a few simple, formal checks to ensure your business is eligible for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support and funding. We can quickly establish your eligibility. After that, we can get on with really understanding your businesses energy needs and priorities.

Note: BREEZ will be available from Jan 2020 until approximately March 2022 but operates on a first-come-first-served basis. It is expected that the final applications will be December 2021 allowing time to complete by end of March.

What information do I need to provide for the EPC and energy audit?

The EPC (if required) is conducted by a qualified Commercial Energy Assessor as appointed by Sunderland City Council. The EPC focuses on all energy-related aspects of your business premises. The EPC process is “non-intrusive”.

This means the assessor does not drill holes, lift flooring or floorboards etc to conduct the assessment but will need access to all areas of the premises and sight of your boilers, energy meters. Any documentation you can provide such as energy bills etc helps produce a comprehensive and accurate EPC.

The broader energy audit is conducted by Sunderland City Council in partnership with Narec Distributed Energy - to help us understand your energy needs we will request copies of energy bills, any site drawings or plans of your premises (if available), operating hours, shift patterns etc.

We can conduct an energy audit without some of this information but the more information you can provide the more accurate our service will be. Note: if you don't have copies of your energy bills then with your permission, we can contact your energy supplier on your behalf.

What does the EPC and energy audit focus on?

The EPC looks at all the energy related aspects of your business premises.

The energy audit can be generalised across the entire site or it can be focussed on any priority areas for your business.

For example, is there any production machinery or equipment lines that you would like us to focus on? Or do you have any plans to improve the lighting in the building? Or we could help you develop an effective staff energy-awareness-raising campaign. Are you considering renewable energy for your premises? A BREEZ energy audit is flexible and can be adapted to suit your own priorities and plans.

What will the EPC and energy audit report look like?

The EPC is produced via provider software in accordance with Government legislation. The certificate records the actual energy performance rating of your business premises and produces a series of costed, energy-saving recommendations.

The energy audit will be a written report that outlines other ways to reduce energy bills. This could include a staff awareness-raising campaign and/or a bespoke process machinery upgrade.

Each energy saving opportunity will be detailed, with an estimate of how much it will cost, and the annual cost savings that it would achieve for your business, summarised in a table and executive summary so you can quickly refer to the key opportunities. The auditor will discuss the report with you and address any questions on the recommendations and how to implement them.

How do I apply for the grant?

Once you've received your EPC and/or energy audit we may be able to support you with a 50% grant towards the cost of purchasing and installing new energy-efficiency measures. It

could be that your business will benefit from LED lighting, or a replacement boiler, insulation or replacement equipment to improve the energy efficiency of your business processes. Once the application is submitted BREEZ grants are approved by Sunderland City Council in a few simple steps.

Can BREEZ adapt to my specific needs?

The scheme is flexible and as adaptive as possible. We aim to help 135 Sunderland-based manufacturing, automotive and technology and engineering businesses from January 2020 to March 2022. BREEZ can focus on one specific priority at a time and return to another priority later. Or a comprehensive approach can be adopted covering all aspects of energy efficiency at once.

Any further questions?

Please get in touch with Graeme at Sunderland City Council. Tel 0788 0465 959 or email BREEZ@sunderland.gov.uk