



Todd Holden

Persona: Energy Busting Beth



Our energy landscape is rapidly changing and it's vital we alter our behaviour towards the way we use electricity in our homes and businesses – if we do, not only will we reduce the need for costly new infrastructure, but also ensure future capacity and affordability and a low carbon green future.

48-year old Todd Holden from Rochdale was one of over 1,500 people to complete the Electricity North West [Energy Test](#) – a test which helps people get switched on to energy savings by discovering their 'Energy Persona'.

Todd has spent 25 years in the energy sector, helping businesses to reduce their impact on the environment by lowering their carbon footprint. Here, he explains why he took part in our Switched On Energy Test, how his family have followed in his low carbon footprints, and what he hopes to achieve in the future.

As Director for Low Carbon at [The Growth Company](#), Todd already has a real passion for limiting the impact he has on the planet. At home, this ethos is shared, with his wife and two teenage children all following the same low carbon values.

Todd explains why thinking and caring about how you use energy is so important: “Everyone has a responsibility and the ability to reduce the environmental impact of the energy we consume. It's easy to do, saves me money and it means our home is more comfortable to live in. It's a win-win situation – I don't waste money and I don't pollute the planet.”

It's no surprise then that Todd scored highly in our Switched On Energy Test, identifying as Energy Busting Beth however, he knows there's still more he can be doing, which is why he completed the quiz, and why he is now sharing his story with the aim of helping others.

Todd's tricks to reducing energy use

At home, Todd and his family are very conscious about how much energy they are using and have implemented many things over the years to help ensure they limit how much electricity and power they use.

As well as having an energy efficient boiler and thermostatic controlled radiators, Todd only buys high efficiency appliances and LED lights and has gas filled double glazed windows throughout his home. And as a public transport commuter, he has no car, meaning a much lower carbon footprint when it comes to travel.

For just a few pence, Todd has invested in flow restricting valves which limit the amount of hot water to the shower, without a noticeable loss of temperature. Slightly more expensive, but of great benefit, Todd has also installed wall insulation to help reduce the cost of heating his home by keeping the warmth in.

Room for improvement

Despite all of these efforts, Todd is still keen to become even more energy efficient, and is currently looking into even more energy efficient tactics in his home: “We live in a 300-year-old house, with a chimney and lots of structural gaps, often resulting in a loss of heat and energy.”

Eventually, he wants to combine this with micro combined heat and power – a renewable technology which generates heat and electricity from the same energy source. In other words, when Todd burns heat, he will produce electricity.

This technology is already being used as part of a ground-breaking project Electricity North West has recently announced with Octagon Project Energy Network (OPEN), which will contribute to Manchester City Council's carbon reduction ambitions. It uses combined heat and power generation (CHP) to provide low-carbon heat to South Manchester and is being pioneered as part of a major new development in the area.

Everyone has a role to play in reducing energy consumption

Todd believes it's critical for us all to take action now to reduce our energy consumption. "If we don't do it now, then who will do it and when? Reducing our energy consumption means we're less dependent on imported energy which improves our energy security as the price we pay isn't vulnerable to exchange rate changes.

"Lots of our existing power stations are coming to the end of their life, and we'll need lots of investment just to stand still – these costs will get passed onto all bill payers so it makes sense for us to use less now, in order to avoid picking up that tab. What's more, as time goes on we'll use more and more electricity rather than gas – using this efficiently means we won't need to dig up the roads and footpaths to put new, bigger cables in."

Simple steps to reap big benefits

So what advice would Todd give to people thinking about adopting measures to reduce their energy consumption? "Turn your heating down and put a jumper on! There's no reason to walk around a house in shorts and a t-shirt in the middle of December and then complain about how expensive your energy bills are.

"There are lots of simple changes that people can make that will pay for themselves quickly, such as turning things off when you're not using them, replacing old, broken appliances with more efficient ones, installing LED lightbulbs and ensuring your home is well insulated."

Transforming the future

As an energy saving champion, Todd has some valuable insights on the future, and believes Electricity North West will play a vital role in encouraging and supporting energy efficiency thanks to our transformational work within communities. "Moving forward, as we decarbonise our energy systems we'll substitute gas for electricity, and with the growth of electric vehicles, there'll be a massive increase in the demand we all place on the distribution network.

"Not adapting the network and how we use it isn't an option as it physically won't be able to cope. Which is where Electricity North West comes in – their work is vital to transform the networks and ensure they can support modern communities."

An inspirational outlook

By sharing his story, Todd hopes to inspire others to follow in his footsteps when it comes to energy efficiency. "Hearing other people's stories and seeing the positive impact of a low energy, low carbon lifestyle is really effective in encouraging people to change what they do. By getting involved in this campaign, I really hope to encourage others to adopt more energy efficient behaviours and highlight that even in an old, stone house, you can make small changes that make a real difference to your bills and the level of comfort you have at home."

The role of Electricity North West

Electricity North West owns, operates and maintains the North West's electricity distribution network, connecting 2.4 million properties, and more than 5 million people in the region to the National Grid.

Our aim is to effectively manage energy in order to transform the communities we work with and help to sustainably generate cleaner, greener energy to enable and enhance 21st century life.

By switching customers onto energy efficiency, we aim to inspire people to rethink energy and how they use electricity in order to drive long-term, sustainable change.

Have we inspired you to join the Big Energy Conversation? If so then get in touch with us!