

PSY SESSION 4 TRANSCRIPT

Recording starts

19FS: I was lucky because I've got the monitor at home and I do use it a lot. It's always in the kitchen, my grandchildren are coming and they say, 'oh look nanny, you're using 2p', which is actually 2 units.

20FS: 2 watts or something.

19FS: Yes, they say, 'what have you got on?', so it's teaching them to check as well so it's good.

20FS: And you got it from EDF?

19FS: Yes, one of them.

19FS: Is it free?

20FS: Yes, unless it was something that was on the internet, there was something.

19FS: I'll phone them up and see if I can get one.

20FS: It's an energy monitor, and it's ever so easy, just clips on the wires, cables that come out of the meter just like a little peg. It automatically feeds through on to this little thing in the kitchen, because mine's in the cupboard under the stairs and I put this little peg on one of the wires that comes down.

.....

23MS: As soon as I saw them, I thought the only way to approach them was to put them in groups as you would use them.

.....

20FS: What was yours?

22MS: LED lights.

20FS: Oh yes.

19FS: Oh they're good.

23MS: I suppose that would be the same thing.

22MS: Because I've grouped mine in energy consumption.

21FS: Yes, that's what I've done.

23MS: They've got quite a long life on them too, haven't they?

22MS: Well, their biggest function is their low energy use. There's a massive difference between a low energy bulb and an LED bulb.

23MS: I've got a flat screen television, and according to the instruction manual it's supposed to have a life of 60,000 hours. I suppose that would be low power, a flat screen television doesn't use a lot, not like years ago when they had a tube in them, now they're flat screen.

.....

E: You've done yours by energy consumption and so have you, have you as well?

20FS: Mine are in, those are the most I think in the home, the most electric, and then I'm not sure about these at all.

E: That's fine.

20FS: Electric blanket you missed off. I have that on every night.

E: You do as well.

21FS: yes

19: And me. It must be a woman thing.

21: my husband doesn't like it coz his side stays cold and mine is really hot

19: most men say they don't want it

20FS: I know it doesn't take a lot because I've got a pre-paid meter, I've got a key meter and I'm always looking at that.

E: You've seen from the meter that it doesn't affect the energy use?

20FS: Yes. It doesn't take a great deal, nor the... where's the electric fan gone?

23MS: Another one I can't see down here is the immersion heater that heats your water.

E: Do you want to put that on?

23MS: Yes, that would come under 'home'.

20FS: They took mine out.

19FS: Yes, it's all boilers now isn't it?

E: What do you want this under?

23MS: That would go under 'home'.

E: Domestic usage, okay. You were saying to me that you had Economy 7 with the storage heaters?

23MS: Yes, they were put in last year.

20FS: That's what I've got. They're expensive, awful.

E: Does anyone else have those?

19FS: No, thankfully not. I've heard about them.

20FS: I'm in sheltered housing, a big block of flats, and we have to use electric, we haven't got an option. I come from a centrally heated house to these storage heaters; about £6 a day if you have them all on and you're really warm. I'd rather cold and turn them off.

MS: Ours were all renewed last year, so whether they're any more economical than the other type...

21: £6 a day for your heating??

20FS: They've not, they're more expensive.

23MS: Are they?

FS: Yes.

22MS: They're like a heater they work out roughly, £3 each for each unit.

20FS: No, I find about £1.50 for each unit, but it's ridiculous. I put in £70 a fortnight for electric.

21FS: That's more than we use over a whole month.

20FS: I know. I've talked to EDF about it, checked the meters. Also if you're staying in the living room, you have to put extra heating on because by the evening it's cold.

E: So what do you use then?

20FS: I've got a fire they've installed, an electric fire.

23MS: I've got an electric fire. In the sitting room I've got two storage heaters plus a flame effect fire.

20FS: It sounds like we've got the same. Where are you?

23MS: At Whipton.

20FS: You at Wrenns?

23MS: Yes.

20: So am I. well I've never seen you before

23: well I'm always out. I do voluntary work every day, I can't sit around, I'm on me own now so I can't sit around.

20FS: We're both talking about the same heating.

E: While we're talking about heaters, what about the rest of you, how do you heat your house?

22MS: Well, I've got gas central heating, which is quite efficient, but I don't have it on that much, I don't feel the need.

E: Do you put it on as and when you need it?

22MS: Exactly. If it's cold, I'll put it on for a while, if it's not I'll turn it off. I can remember when I was a child, the house I lived in with my parents there was no heating, there was an open fire in one room. I can remember having frost and ice on the inside of the glass.

19: Iced up widows. Ice on the inside of the windows that's all we had.

20: yeah true.

22: I think in a lot of cases, you get used to all these luxuries; you don't really need it.

21FS: Oh we do.

19FS: I do.

22MS: But the difference between me and you, I'll go away and I'll just put a fleece on, just put another layer on.

19FS: I do wear several layers but I still need the air to be warm. I can't be cold. It's so miserable to be cold. Our heating is on all the time, set at 20°. I tried it on 19° yesterday and it wasn't enough, so it's on all the time.

22MS: But you're probably conditioned to being warm.

19FS: Probably.

E: Do you try it up and down, or you just keep it normally at one level?

19FS: I try to lower it because I know even 1° makes a difference, but I tried it at 19° yesterday and it wasn't enough, so it's gone back to 20°.

20FS: Well, it is extremely cold at the moment.

E: Does anyone else know what temperature their thermostat is on?

21FS: Yes, mine's on 20°, but not lately because it's too cold, it goes down to 18° and sometimes 16° / 17°.

E: However you need it?

19FS: Yes, and I've got it on a timer, from 5 in the morning until 8 at night. 5 in the morning it's damn cold, my cat lets me know.

23MS: My brother lives on the Mendips and they've got oil heating, he's got a big house.

22MS: My gas bill for a quarter for 3 months was £52.

19FS: Mine is £70 a month, but I don't want to be at home wrapped up in blankets and coats.

20FS: No, I don't.

22MS: No, I'm not wrapped up in blankets or anything.

20FS: You just obviously don't feel the cold. Look, you've got your sleeves rolled up now, and I'm cold sitting here.

22MS: Yes, it's a luxury coming in here. This seems to be warm.

23MS: I do agree, a lot of the things we've got now, we never had. Just after the war, we lived in a very old house in Bath and all we had was one coal fire, and coal was in short supply so you had to use it economically.

19FS: We all had that, we had just one gas fire for the house. I used to put the cooker on in the kitchen to heat upstairs.

20FS: I still do, in the room anyway upstairs.

23MS: I had in one house solid fuel central heating and that was very good, but you had to get the fuel in the summer. Because you..

19FS: I suppose we do get spoilt really with this heating, but that's progress, isn't it? I don't wake up with ice on the windows anymore.

23MS: My next door neighbour said, 'you've got your heating on, haven't you?' He used to dry his clothes because it got so hot.

21S: Your neighbour?

23MS: Yes.

20FS: Now you see, that's the problem where I am. I'm up on the 10th and I've got nobody above me to insulate me.

23MS: I'm on the 8th.

20FS: Yes, so you've got someone above you, I haven't, and I've got a flat roof. I've got no-one to the sides, it's all concrete, it's an old building; it's 44 years old. They're very spacious, but solid concrete. I've got nobody above or to the side of me to insulate me at all, so that's another reason it's expensive I think. Apart from that, I love it there because the views are stunning and it's quiet.

23MS: I had a Parkray and I used to burn phurnacite on it. That would go all day, once it was lit and it was warm, you'd just turn it back, it used to heat up the hotplate, four or five radiators, plus the water. Having two daughters we used to get through gallons of hot water.

E: They used lots in the shower?

23MS: Yes.

21FS: That's the benefit with gas central heating and the gas hot water, you're only heating what you actually need, you're not running off a lot of water or stacking up the boiler as with a Parkray. I used to have one years ago and you had to keep it going even if you didn't need the actual heating, you kept it going for the hot water.

23MS: Oh yes, but any form of heating has got its downside.

21FS: Well, I don't think the gas has, I'm really happy with ours. It's so economical, even though it's on all the time. I'm saying it's on all the time; it's not working all the time it's kept at that temperature.

23MS: Have you got it on a timer?

21FS: No, I don't have the timer on. It's on all the time, set at that temperature. I don't use the timer. In the summer I just turn it back to 0. It's so economical.

23MS: I was just saying to the young lady, my brother has got a big house out on the Mendips, they've got no gas or anything, so they burn oil, and that is expensive.

20FS: See, I used to have gas central heating and it was miles cheaper than this. When they put the new heaters in last

year, 'it's going to be more reasonable, lower', and you think, humph, oh no.

23MS: The bottom line is that any form of heating, if you want to be warm, is going to be expensive.

19FS: It is these days.

21FS: I disagree, I really do.

20FS: You've got gas central heating, radiators everywhere?

21FS: Yes.

20FS: And you keep it on at night as well?

21FS: Yes, all the time, this time of year as cold as it is now.

19FS: Who are you with?

21FS: British Gas. I've never changed, I've never needed to.

19FS: Your monthly bill must be high?

20FS: No, she just said it's not.

21FS: It's not, that's what I'm saying. At the moment we are in credit by £183. We pay I think it's £48 a month for gas and we are that much in credit.

19FS: Have you got this, what you call it the stuff they put in the walls got

21: cavity wall insulation? Yes

20: Oh yes.

MS: Yes.

19FS: I can't have anything like that because I'm single brick, I've got an attic room so there's no lagging at the top, it's an old 1890s house so it's cold. That's probably where yours is keeping the heat in.

21FS: That would make a huge difference. In our loft the insulation is like that, a foot I think something like that.

19FS: That does make a difference.

23MS: That makes a difference. I assume your water tank is in the roof?

21FS: We don't have an immersion heater any more, they took that out of the airing cupboard. We've just got the boiler.

20FS: Do you have the heater on in your bedroom?

21FS: I don't because I have my electric blanket all the time.

20FS: I can't cope with a lot of heat in the bedroom.

21FS: When you've got individual radiators, you can put on the ones you want. I mean we've got three bedrooms and there's only my husband and I now, the children have left home, but when they come and stay, their radiators go on in the spare bedrooms. It's so easy to manage.

19FS: Because they're surrounded by the padding (*cavity insulation*) I think that makes a lot of difference.

23MS: I went down to my youngest daughter in Weston-Super-Mare and they've got gas and the radiators got really hot.

19FS: Have you got the insulation?

22MS: Yes.

19FS: See, I've got nothing at all like that. That's why mine's so much dearer and that's why I have to have it on from 5 in the morning. It does make a lot of difference. It is, literally, freezing.

22MS: Generally where I live, I live down in the Quay, and they're very efficient. Even on a sunny day like today, just the sun through the windows will be adequate to keep my place warm.

19FS: See, I don't get sun either. It's very cold, it's a lovely house but it's cold in the summer.

21FS: I see what you're saying, but on a sunny day like this, our heating won't be actually be on because the temperature has reached that certain degree it's set at. So the heating itself won't be working, won't be using the gas, that's what I'm saying. If it does drop later on in the evening, I notice it comes on then, but it comes on because it needs to, to boost up to that 20°.

19: she's covered in a big electric blanket there. I'm jealous

20FS: I often go to bed early in the evening because of my blanket, because I'm so cold in the living room.

21FS: That's awful.

20FS: I'm paying such a lot of money. In the summer all I put in is £10 a week, now in the winter I put in £60 a week.

19FS: That's a lot.

22MS: That's just too much.

E: That's all your electricity?

20FS: Yes, we don't have gas. That is everything, but the main bulk of that is the storage heaters.

E: Those of you who have got Economy 7, do you find that you delay using certain things to when the electricity is cheaper?

20FS: No, because it goes down at night, I mean you can't use most of these things in the night.

E: Anything you'd put off using?

23MS: What I try and do is make sure that the water is on when it's the cheaper electric.

20FS: Oh yes, I do something, the switch in the kitchen that switches on the hot water for my water in the kitchen, I turn that off and only have it on in brief little times, because I've looked in the meter and it *noises* whizzes around.

E: In general, if there was a different system other than Economy 7 where there were different times, is there anything, especially with the groups you've got here, that you think you could perhaps delay using, or is there stuff here that you have to use when you need to use it?

19FS: I'm not on Economy 7.

E: No, but if you were or if there was another kind of system like that?

22MS: Me I always look at the alternative. For example, instead of using the cooker I use the microwave. I find that a good option for saving some money.

23MS: I do.

20: You couldn't use an electric drill at night.

20FS: The central heating goes down in the night, its much cheaper, sort of double lower if you see what I mean. but there are so many things you don't need at night. I mean the freezer is on all night and the fridge.

23: your fridge freezer, that's gotta..

20: I wouldn't have my stereo on at night even though most of them are hard of hearing.

20FS: The microwave uses quite a lot of electric though.

E: Does it?

20FS: Yes. In fact because the cupboard to the meter is outside my flat, which is a pain, but certain things I know are expensive, like these first two lines very expensive. I watch it and it's whizzing around.

E: Your meter is just electricity use it's showing; it's not showing you anything in more detail?

20FS: Well, I suppose all the numbers and everything, but I don't understand those I'm afraid. It's flashing and the wheel's going round. If you put the kettle on that's a very big burst of energy.

22MS: But if you use your microwave, say for making a cup of coffee, you'd find that would use less energy than using the kettle. Have you tried that?

20FS: No, I haven't.

22MS: It uses a lot less.

23MS: I only boil the water I need.

E: Yes, only boil the water you need.

23MS: If I was going to make a cup of tea for myself, I don't fill the kettle right up.

22MS: Although the microwave is in your opinion quite high use but you're using it for shorter periods, it heats the water a lot more efficiently.

20FS: Does it taste as nice though?

22MS: Yes, absolutely fine.

19FS: We're old fashioned; want the cooker and the kettle.

23MS: I don't even know how to use the cooker.

20FS: Never think to heat up a drink in the microwave.

22MS: Yes, two minutes for a mug. Certainly uses a lot less.

21FS: You've got an electric oven; do you find that uses as much as a microwave or less?

20FS: More.

21FS: Do you use your microwave for cooking instead of your big oven?

20FS: Not much, I don't really like it for cooking. I use it for heating up things but not actual cooking. It's only a basic one anyway; it's not a fancy one with a grill or anything. I do like the taste from the oven. I do think it is better. Old fashioned again

19: And me, yeah and me.

E: How did you organise your cards?

21FS: This one was 'household heating and lighting', lights, boiler and central heating; this one's 'food, drink, storage, cooking and preparation', that's all the cooking appliances; 'household appliances, general, maintenance and cleaning', the electric fan and the vacuum cleaner, washing machine, lamps, those sorts of things; this one is 'entertainment and information access'; and 'personal hygiene' for the rest.

E: The two of you, they're slightly different but they're quite similar, because he's got 'cleanliness' for the personal hygiene. You've been thinking more about the meanings and the functions of the objects, whereas you've been thinking about energy use. There are lots of different ways to do it.

22MS: You didn't take into consideration their energy consumption whatsoever?

21FS: No.

19FS: Because she knows it's cheap where she lives, doesn't need to worry about it.

20FS: And she's in credit.

21FS: I'm very conscious of how much things cost to buy and to use. I am not wasteful, I'm very conscious about the economy of the country, the world, so I do think of all those sorts of things.

23MS: I've been thinking about this, I mean you see a lot of these solar panels now and they reckon you use what you need and then sell the rest to the grid. Then you've got the wind turbines. I watched 'Coast' the other week and one place they wanted to put them would spoil the views.

19FS: They can put one in my garden if it cuts back on the bills.

22MS: In the Nordic countries every house has got its own wind generator.

19FS: Yes, stick it on the roof or something.

22MS: It's going to happen here, it's only a matter of time.

23MS: There's another thing, I don't know if it's used at all, you've got all this power in the sea, haven't you, coming in, going out, get a rudder of a ship or something and use it as a charger somehow; people cleverer than I.

19FS: They do it with the rivers. They've done a few with the rivers I think. The River Dart is next.

23MS: You take the power of the sea, I mean if you could put something that when the water comes in...

20FS: Don't they have the oil under the sea?

23MS: They do, don't they, they've got wave energy, there are a couple of projects running down in Cornwall, and there's another one down there recently where they actually secured a blade to the ocean floor and as the tide flows, it turns the turbine.

20FS: That's good. Talking about solar panels, my niece has got some on her roof and she's seen no difference whatsoever in her electric bill. The council are putting them on now, they're not doing everybody's but a lot of people have got them, but she hasn't noticed much difference at all.

21FS: Two of my neighbours have and they've said their electrical charges have gone down considerably.

E: It might be differences in the position of the actual panels themselves. It could be anything.

23MS: Do you think this is an age thing? I'm not being rude here, perhaps we come from an age where we had to go careful, where there was a shortage of everything, but people these days seem to think everything is plentiful.

19FS: Yes, they don't care.

19FS: You get a lot of that from the young.

20FS: They're not conscious about it, are they?

23MS: I thought with the price of fuel in cars that there would be fewer cars but there's still as many cars, if not more cars and vehicles on the road. Some people go without things just to run some of these things.

20FS: It all depends what's important to you.

E: Talking about going without, one of the ways some people organise these cards are into things that are 'essential' and 'non-essential'. Could someone tell me things that would be absolutely essential for you and things that aren't?

19FS: Fridge, cooker, microwave, washing machine. Those are probably the main ones for the kitchen side.

E: Anyone else?

20FS: Telly

19FS: Electric blanket.

21FS: Heating, cooking appliances, and the washing definitely, because my washing machine broke down at Christmas, I was 11 days without it, and I was lost. It was awful.

19FS: You can handle the hand washing but when it comes to the bedding, you can't do it.

21FS: The towels, it was awful.

20FS: I haven't got a washing machine. We go up to the laundry. There's a laundry at the top and you get them for a £1 each, special tokens. Tumble dryers are totally free so that's brilliant, but I said to EDF, I've got no washing machine, I've got no bath, I've got a shower, no tumble dryer, all the big things, a dishwasher, I haven't got anything like that, so I said, why is my bill so high? My blanket is my priority.

E: You do all your washing in the communal one?

20FS: Yes.

E: Do you do that as well?

23MS: No.

E: You've got your own washing machine?

23MS: No, my daughter helps me out there. I come after the horse.

E: Do you use the tumble dryer up there because it's free?

20FS: Oh yes, get something out of it. It's very good.

21FS: The internet I would be lost without now, because we keep in touch with family, which is lovely.

19FS: Yes, that's true with the Skype and that.

E: Do most of you use the internet?

19FS: I do.

23MS: I've only just learnt to text so..

E: Most people around the area, do you think your friends have got the internet?

21FS: Everybody I know has it.

19FS: I know lots that don't, a lot of elderly people around where I am, and some that really just don't want it anyway.

20FS: Is that the older people?

19FS: Older yes, and some about 60, they just don't want it, they don't seem interested.

23MS: I notice with the daughter if she's doing a project, where she used to sit down and write it, now she gets the laptop and types it all. I haven't got a clue what she's doing.

20FS: Do you use the internet?

22MS: Yes, all the time.

20FS: So you'd be lost without it?

22MS: Yes, absolutely.

E: Is that one of your essentials?

22MS: Absolutely.

E: What else would you have?

22MS: I'd definitely have the microwave ...

23MS: I second that.

22MS: ... electric shower that's important to me, and obviously the internet, my laptop. I could certainly do without the hair curlers and straighteners.

20FS: How have you arranged your list?

E: You've done the energy consumption?

22MS: Yes.

E: What have you put in the 'high consumption'?

22MS: I've got in 'very high' the tumble dryer, oven, central heating, bath, boiler, shower, cooking hobs, dishwasher, electric fan heater and the washing machine.

19FS: Anything that heats isn't it.

E: Anything that heats you think?

19FS: Yes.

20FS: Mm.

E: Did you use a similar thing to think about it; did you just know instinctively, you said, 'things that heat'?

19FS: Yes that takes the most.

E: What about you?

22MS: I thought about that, because you've got the difference there with the extractor fan and what was the other one there?

19FS: The electric fan heater.

22MS: Yes, the electric fan heater.

20FS: Yes, they take a lot.

22MS: Well, obviously the one that heats is going to cost a lot more than the extractor, so I've done it that way.

E: Any other ways to tell whether something uses a lot of energy?

19FS: Get a monitor.

20FS: One of those things you've got.

19FS: They are excellent, or watch the whizzer go around like this lady. I used to do that.

23MS: I've done it like 'entertainment', and more or less what he says. I haven't done it in consumption; I've just done in its place.

E: The function and the use of it?

23MS: Yes.

20FS: It's interesting how we've all done it different.

E: Everyone does it different.

22MS: I think I'm just plain stingy.

19FS: I think we've realised that. If we come to see you we've got to wear five layers!

21FS: If that's your way of budgeting your life, that's the right way to be isn't it.

22MS: I just hate giving my money to energy companies. I'm not stingy or anything, but I even go as far... you know some of these things down here like my mobile phone, I've got a solar device so I charge my phone with the solar panel; my digital camera I charge that with it too. I am stingy, and as far as the radio goes I have a wind up radio.

20FS: I've got a wind up torch but not a radio.

23MS: I've got a digital camera and I've got to take the battery out and put it in a charger, a red light comes on, and when it's fully charged the light goes out, so you're saving power that way.

20FS: That's what they have in Africa and all the Third World Countries don't have batteries.

22MS: One minute wind you get 20 minutes of radio.

20FS: There are so many ways we can cut down.

.....
22MS: I think peoples' energy bills should be a lot clearer too. For example, if I said to you, how much standing charge do you pay per day for your meter, could you answer that? And how much every time it turns over a unit, say on a gas meter or your electricity meter, do you know how much that's costing?

20FS: No, and that's what I'd like to know.

22MS: Whereas me I know exactly what it's costing me, my standing charge. Also I've converted the cubic meters.

20FS: I could look on my bill and it would tell me, I couldn't tell you offhand.

22MS: On a lot of bills it doesn't.

20FS: I think it does tell me.

22MS: It doesn't, it may tell you how many units but when they break the bill down, for example the gas bill, it will talk about cubic meters of gas.

19FS: Yes, it's very confusing.

20FS: What would we know about cubic meters?

19FS: I'd have no idea.

22MS: There is a method. You can work it out yourself so you virtually know every time a unit turns over how much it costs.

20FS: No, I don't have a clue. Even with that list I wasn't sure with the last three lots how much energy was going from them.

22MS: I think that would make a big difference to a lot of people.

.....

20FS: Security lights we didn't mention, outside. We've got a light on in the hall 24 / 7.

23MS: They've just replaced them haven't they?

19FS: Why, is that for security?

20FS: Security yes.

19FS: Do you know what, I used to work at the police station and nobody sits in the hallway.

20FS: Because it's so bright?

19FS: No, for burglars. If they see the hallway light on, it's a perfect thing because nobody stays in the hallway. If your light is on in the bathroom or something like that; people don't sit in a hallway. If you're leaving your hallway light on

20FS: But we haven't got any option, it's done from the central system.

19FS: I thought you meant for security reasons.

20FS: No, I turn my lights off.

19FS: People will go out and leave a hallway light on, and all the rest of the house is in darkness.

20FS: No, this is the main communal area. You can't turn it off. I prefer it anyway, it makes me feel secure. If you go out in the evening you come back, it's nice, it's all lit up.

.....

22MS: I think that educates the public about their energy, it is important.

19FS: Trouble is, don't you find that there are always those that just don't care. There are a lot of those as well, just couldn't care less.

23MS: Also a lot of it can be age related. I mean years ago all we had was one coal fire and when that fire went out that was it.

Recording ends 34:55 minutes