



COMMUNITY
MATTERS FUND



Saving energy this winter

We can all take action to save energy and reduce our bills. We've outlined some simple and free measures that you can take today.

Lights and appliances

- Turn off lights when you leave a room, if it's safe to do so, being particularly careful near stairs.
- Swap from traditional to LED bulbs.
- Microwaves, slow cookers and air fryers are more efficient ways of cooking food than using your oven.
- Switch appliances off when they're not in use rather than leaving them on standby. This doesn't apply to your fridge and freezer.
- 'Vampire Power' is the electricity drawn when equipment is off or on sleep mode but still plugged in. To save money, always unplug electronics and appliances when not in use.

Smart Meters

- If you don't have one, help take control of your energy use through a smart meter. Ask your energy supplier or go to smartenergygb.org to request one.
- A smart meter can help keep your bills more accurate by submitting regular readings to your energy supplier. Estimated readings can lead to higher bills.
- Get an up-to-date Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) which provides information on your current levels of insulation and the efficiency of your boiler/heating system. Check out: energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/guide-to-energy-performance-certificates-epcs/

Water and washing

- If you're on a water meter, you can help reduce your water bills by cutting how much you use. Many water firms are also offering free water saving gadgets and devices that can help reduce bills. Visit savewatersavemoney.co.uk
- When doing laundry, ensure the load is full, opt for the 'eco setting' mode if your washer has one, or consider washing on a lower temperature to save money.
- When drying clothes, try to use your tumble dryer sparingly, if possible. Instead consider using an airer or drying washing outside.
- Being careful about how you heat water could also save you money. Cutting down on the length of your shower and only boiling the water you need in a kettle are both easy actions to save on your bills.

Heating your home

- Consider turning your heating down a single degree. According to the Energy Saving Trust, going from 20°C to 19°C can save 10% on your heating bill. If you're elderly or vulnerable, Age UK advises that your living room (or the room you use most) should be at 21°C, if you're home, and that you should heat your bedroom to 18°C before you go to bed.
- Install thermostatic radiator valves – these enable you to heat only the rooms you need and use.
- Citizen's Advice recommends using timers and thermostats if you have them - this way you'll only heat your house when necessary.
- Keep sofas and obstructions away from radiators to ensure heating efficiency.
- Draw your curtains at night to keep the heat in and the cold out.
- Check your windows and doors for drafts and use draft excluders where needed. Don't forget your letter box too.

The cost of using household appliances

Kettle
(2200W)*



6.37p
each boil

Fridge
(126 litre)



13.6p
a day

Microwave
(800W)



2.78p
5 minutes

Washing machine
(8kg)



30.6p
each cycle

Tumble dryer
(Condenser, 8kg)



£1.19
each cycle

Games console**



24p
a day

*Calculation based on filling kettle to maximum capacity **PS4 two hours a day usage and left on standby

Source: BBC

What to do if you're struggling with your energy bill

Times are challenging right now and if you're having a difficult time paying your energy bill there are steps you can take. Your first port of call should always be to talk to your energy supplier. Your supplier, that's who you pay your bill to, have a responsibility to help you. Give them a call as soon as you can.

What to do if you're struggling to top up your pre-payment meter?

Your energy supplier will be able to give you temporary credit if you can't afford to top up. Give them a call as soon as possible to talk it through. You can also check your supplier's website to find out more.

If I need more help, what can I do?

You also may be able to get an energy grant or a fuel voucher. These are provided by the government and energy suppliers.

The Citizens Advice website is a good place to go for more information about how to check if you're eligible and how to apply. Check out the QR code here which will take you directly to their website.



Local advice and help