

# Energy

## HELP WITH ENERGY COSTS

### Smart Meters

A Smart meter replaces the old style electric and gas meters and will provide you with real time information on your gas and electric usage. It will also automatically send a meter reading to your supplier every 30 minutes, therefore eliminating any more estimated bills.

A smart meter usually comes with an in-home display screen in which you can monitor your usage and manage your account.

The advantages of a smart meter are:

- No need to submit meter readings as this is done automatically
- Track usage and spend – encourages good energy saving habits
- Accurate Bills
- Highlights any faulty appliances – Identify a sudden spike in energy usage which could be associated with a faulty appliance.
- Changing behavioural habits to use less energy
- Smart meter can be switched between pre-payment and credit mode remotely which can help you budget for your energy costs.

### Warm Home Discount

The warm home discount provides a rebate on your energy bills; however, your supplier must be part of the warm home discount scheme.

You could get £150 off your electricity bill for winter 2022/2023 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme and the scheme opens around October each year.

The money will not be paid to you but deducted directly from your electricity bill, between October and March. You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead, only if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity.

## Eligibility

There are 2 ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, which is also known as the 'core group'
- you are on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme, known as the 'broader group'

If you're on a low income, you may be able to apply directly to your electricity supplier for help if you do not get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit but:

- Your energy supplier is part of the scheme
- you're on a low income
- you get certain means-tested benefits

This is known as being in the 'broader group'.

To get the discount you'll will need to remain with your supplier until it's paid.

## How to apply

Your electricity supplier decides who can get the discount. The number of discounts a supply can provide is limited.

Check with your supplier as early as possible to see if you're eligible and how to apply. Even if you were eligible the previous year, year need to check your eligibility and reapply.

Further information on the Warm Home Discount scheme can be found on the below website:

Website <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

This scheme is currently under review by the government and the eligibility criteria and application may change.

## Winter fuel payments - for older customers

The Winter Fuel Payment is a tax-free payment to people over pension age. Despite the name the Winter Fuel Payment is not linked to expenditure on fuel. It is also not means-tested, and you can get it whether you are still working or claiming any benefits.

The payment can be up to £300 available.

For more information on the Winter Fuel Payment, please see the below website or call the helpline.

Website <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>

Telephone 03459 15 15 15

## Cold Weather Payments

The Cold Weather Payment is a payment made to people on a low income if the average temperature in their area is recorded at, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days.

The payment is £25 for each 7-day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. Cold Weather Payments do not affect your other benefits.

## Winter wellbeing Advice from Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council provide information on winter wellbeing and provides useful information on energy saving and assistance.

For further information, please visit their website:

Website <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/winterwellbeing>

## Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is for customers that are vulnerable and may need help with their utilities.

The general eligibility criteria to be registered include:

- Pensionable age
- Registered disabled
- Children under 5

- Other specific needs such as sight or hearing impairments

Please contact your energy supplier to request to be entered onto the register.

## Community Energy Plus

Community Energy Plus provides free advice to help householders reduce their energy bills. This advice includes Energy efficiency, understanding energy bills, tariff switching and dealing with fuel debt.

They can also issue emergency electricity and gas key-meter top-ups. Vouchers are provided directly to beneficiaries via text message, email or through the post for redemption, wherever you usually top up your meter.

Households can access a maximum of three vouchers through the scheme.

You can contact Community Energy Plus via the following ways:

Website	<a href="http://www.cep.org.uk">www.cep.org.uk</a>
Telephone	0800 954 1956
Email	<a href="mailto:advice@cep.org.uk">advice@cep.org.uk</a>

## Your current energy supplier

Your current energy supplier can help if you are struggling with the rising costs of energy. They can offer special payment arrangements, energy saving improvements, trust fund support for energy debt and even assistance in purchasing new energy efficient white goods.

They can also provide energy vouchers if you are struggling to top up your meter based on their set criteria.

Contact your supplier directly to discuss how they can help you.

## Oil Buying Club – Heating Oil

The Oil-Club is the largest, family-run oil club in the UK, with over 10 years of experience. They negotiate great rates for the cost of heating oil.

For more information, please visit the Oil Buying website

Website	<a href="https://www.oil-club.co.uk/">https://www.oil-club.co.uk/</a>
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# Cost of living support package

The government recently announced a number of extra measures to support people with the cost of living. These awards are targeted to help around 8 million vulnerable households and all domestic electricity customers. You could receive multiple awards depending upon your eligibility.

## Energy Rebate via Council Tax

Households in bands A – D would have received a payment of £150 in April/May 2022. Cornwall Council have already paid this to residents who pay their Council Tax by direct debit.

If you did not receive this payment please check your Council Tax account as Cornwall Council may have credit the amount to your account, if they were unable to contact you.

## Energy bill Support Scheme

Households will receive £400 for support with their energy bills.

This is a grant and not repayable.

Electricity suppliers will be crediting the money to the customer's account or applying the money to pre-paid meters or paid via a voucher. Monthly payments of approximately £66 are scheduled to start in October 2022.

## Cost of living payment - means tested benefits

Claimants will receive a total of £650 to help towards the increase in living costs.

This payment will be made in 2 instalments. The first instalment was paid in July 2022 - £326. With the following being scheduled for some time in the Autumn - £324 – the exact date of this payment is to be confirmed.

The payments will be made by the Government using the details they hold for you in relation to your benefits.

To qualify for these payments, you need to be in receipt or have begun a successful claim on or before 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 for the July payment.

The eligibility for the Autumn payments will be confirmed nearer the time.

To be eligible for this payment you need to be in receipt of:

- Universal Credit (UC)
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance (JSAIB)
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESAIR)
- Income Support (IS)
- Working Tax Credit (WTC)
- Child Tax Credit (CTC)
- Pension Credit (PC)

This award is tax free and will not count towards the benefit cap or have any impact on your existing benefit awards.

## Pension Cost of Living payment

Pensioners will receive an extra £300 to help cover the cost of energy this winter and will be awarded to any pensioner household who receive the Winter Fuel Payment.

The award is due to be paid in November/ December 2022.

To be eligible for this payment, you need to be over State Pension Age between 19 – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and the payments will be made by the Government using the details they hold for you in relation to your benefits.

This award is tax free and will not have any impact on your existing benefit awards.

## Disability Cost of Living Payment

If you are claiming any of the below benefits as of 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022, you will be entitled to the additional £150 payment towards the cost-of-living increases.

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payments (PIP)
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Scottish Disability Benefits (SDB)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- War Pension Mobility Supplement

Payment will be made using the details held in respect of your benefit and the award is tax free and will not have any impact on your existing benefit awards.

# Energy saving tips to reduce costs

Learning how to conserve energy will not make your life uncomfortable. In Fact, by just making small changes here and there and creating new habits, you can make a big difference to the environment and sustainability.

In addition, it will save you money.

## How to save energy in the kitchen

The kitchen is a key area of the home when it comes to energy wastage and you can save a huge amount of energy when cooking, if you know where energy is most likely to be wasted.

Here are just a few tips:

### **Use a microwave**

Try to heat up food in the microwave as often as possible – it is generally the most efficient way to heat up and cook food because of its relatively small size, meaning a stronger level of heat can be focused on whatever's being cooked.

### **Be water-conscious**

When you're boiling food in a pan, make sure you only use the amount of water needed to cover the amount of food you're cooking. Boiling water you don't need can waste a lot of energy.

### **Use a Slow Cooker**

To save energy and maybe lessen the need to cook, try using a Slow Cooker to cook throughout the day. A Slow Cooker only uses as much energy as a light bulb.

### **Leave enough defrosting time**

Defrost frozen food in the fridge overnight or while you're at work. Defrosting food in advance typically halves the cooking time and also means that you don't need to use the energy of a microwave to defrost more quickly.

### **Don't go for metal trays in the oven**

Use glass or ceramic dishes in the oven wherever possible as they retain heat better than their metal counterparts.

### **Fan Assisted Oven**

If possible, invest in a fan-assisted or convection oven, which circulates heat throughout the oven. This means the heat doesn't have to be as high as it would in a normal oven.

### **Use the right size pan**

Always use a pan which is the right size for the amount of food you are cooking. This will ensure you don't waste energy heating a bigger surface area than you need.

### **Use the right size hob**

When you've selected your pan, make sure you use the right size hob for it. A bigger burner will use more energy and a pan that's too big will take longer to get to the right temperature.

### **Keep heating rings clean**

Similarly, make sure you keep your heating rings as clean as possible. If there is any food stuck to the ring will absorb heat, which will make it less efficient.

### **Use the right ring for the right thing**

If you're going to use your oven, try to cook a few meals at a time to get the most out of having your oven on and hot.

## **Energy-saving laundry tips**

Because of the amount of water used in washing clothes and the amount of energy that goes into drying them, there's a few ways you can bring down your energy usage and cost when doing your laundry.

### **Shrink your bills, not your clothes**

90% of your washing machine's energy expenditure is spent heating the water, so if you wash your clothes at 30-40°C you're saving a significant amount of money.

### **Hang out your laundry**

Air-dry your laundry rather than tumble-drying it, particularly if the weather is warm or windy.

### **Save yourself ironing time**

Take your clothes out of the dryer before they're completely dry. Not only will they iron much quicker, but you will also use less energy on your drier.

## **How to save gas in your home**

There's a lot you can do to use less gas around your home.

### **Install a smart meter**

If your supplier offers smart meters, it's a no-brainer to install one. By clearly indicating where you're spending the most on your energy, you can take steps to cut down usage wherever possible and save money.



## Upgrade your gas appliances

With more energy-efficient appliances on the market than ever before, make sure you're investing in the models which use gas in the most efficient way.

## Invest in a smart thermostat

A smart thermostat will enable you to track your gas usage and make adjustments when it comes to using less.

## How to save electricity around the home

Similarly to gas, there are a few changes you can make around your home that could help cut down your average electricity usage and the amount of money you have to spend.

### Use energy-saving lightbulbs

A lot of electricity is used in lighting your home, but you can use less energy by investing in specific energy-saving lightbulbs, which are readily available. You won't lose any light, and you'll save money too.

### Use energy-efficient electric appliances

Some appliances, like dishwashers, run on electricity as opposed to gas, so it's worth seeking out the most energy-efficient models to ensure you're not spending more than you need to. Look for models rated A+++ by the EU as a general guide.

### Don't leave anything plugged in that isn't being used

A lot of wasted electricity occurs through leaving appliances plugged in that aren't being used. Even charger cables that don't have anything plugged into them, but are still connected to the socket, can waste electricity, so it's often better to err on the side of caution by unplugging anything that isn't being actively used and switching the power off at the plug.

## Save energy and money around the home

### Stay warm, cut costs

Turning your thermostat down by just 1°C can save you as much as £80 per year!

### Layer up

Wearing more jumpers, socks and slippers around the house and putting an extra blanket on the bed means you won't be tempted to turn the heating up.

### **Turn the pressure down**

A high-pressure power shower is a luxury, but you'd be surprised how much water they use - sometimes even more than a bath.

### **Don't leave the tap running**

Turn the tap off when you're brushing your teeth or washing your face - it can waste more than six litres of water per minute while it's running.

### **Get a water-efficient shower head**

This will cut down the amount of hot water you use but still feel like a strong shower. Water companies can sometimes provide these free of charge.

### **Turn the lights off**

When you leave a room, don't leave the lights on unless you're coming back.

### **Use halogen lightbulbs outside**

These bulbs consume around a quarter less electricity than incandescent bulbs without losing any brightness, so they're a no-brainer for any exterior lighting.

### **Put exterior or security lights on timers**

Your neighbours won't thank you for keeping your exterior lights on all night, and neither will your wallet. Make sure any exterior lights are on a timer or activated by motion so they only come on when needed.

### **Opt for an electric lawnmower**

Electric mowers are much less hassle to use than petrol-powered mowers and are obviously more energy-efficient as well.

### **Educate the household**

Energy will only be saved if everyone in the house recognises the importance of saving it. If you've got kids, try and turn energy saving into a game to teach them why they should remember to switch things off.

## **Stop overpaying on energy**

### **Compare energy prices**

Use a comparison website to compare your current usage to ensure there aren't any cheaper options you could switch to.