



Keeping Warm and Saving Money

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Campaigning for Warm Homes



Price rises in last 12 months

Oct 2012-Jan 2013 increases (%)	Gas	Elec	Effective from
Scottish Power	7.0%	7.0%	December 2012
Eon	9.4%	7.7%	January 2013
British Gas	6.0%	6.0%	November 2012
SSE	9.0%	9.0%	October 2012
npower	8.8%	9.1%	November 2012
EDF	10.8%	10.8%	December 2012

Energy Prices for off-gas homes

Average price of space and water heating alone (2012)

Oil: £1,720

Coal: £1,227

LPG: £2,556

Electric: £1,324



**Average price of Gas and electricity dual fuel:
£1,352 (2013)**

Oil/Coal/LPG//Oil - Based on 3 bed house 117,900 kWh for space and water heating alone

Make sure bills are correct

- ❑ Check against estimated readings/bills
- ❑ Know the approximate cost of bills
- ❑ Check that suppliers haven't made a mistake
- ❑ Telephone the fuel utility with the correct meter readings
- ❑ Ask for up to date bills with current meter readings
- ❑ Check your annual statement
 - ❑ This will tell you yearly cost of fuel and number of units used
 - ❑ Will also provide estimate of how much your fuel will cost for the following year



Best Energy Tariff

There are over **320** different tariffs available from the main six energy suppliers. Approximately 95% of customers are not on the cheapest tariff

- Before considering switching to a new supplier make sure your current supplier is giving you their best tariff
- Make sure they are quoting you tariffs which include planned rises
- Ask if you are eligible for the new Warm Homes Discount
- Ask if you are eligible to go on their Priority Service Register

Home Heat Helpline can help do this (details later)

They can transfer householder to current energy supplier and also give you advice on any grants or advice you might need

Price comparison

Use one of the internet price comparison websites accredited by the Consumer Focus Confidence Code

These websites:

- Compare different energy suppliers' prices
- Show how much money could be saved
- Have a free and easy-to-use switching service
- Provide details of those sites which also have a telephone number
- Internet price comparison websites with the Consumer Focus Confidence Code Accreditation

How to avoid fuel debt

- ❑ Check bill - especially if it is estimated
- ❑ Choose the right payment method
- ❑ Take advice on choosing an energy supplier
- ❑ If in difficulty contact the supplier
- ❑ Talk to a debt advisor if unable to pay the bill
- ❑ Income maximisation
- ❑ Energy efficiency

Switching fuel supplier - things to consider

- Cost
- Check standing charge
- Will prices change
- Contract – length/exit charge
- Level of use
- Dual Fuel
- Warm Homes Discount eligibility criteria

It's interesting to note that 60% of customers in England have never switched supplier

What's available nationally?

- **Winter Fuel Payments** are automatically given to those when someone in a household reached pensionable age or is in receipt of a state pension
 - ❑ Currently £200 per household for under 80s and £300-£350 for over 80s
- **Cold Weather Payment** is given to those on a low income and on certain qualifying benefits, where temperature recorded or forecast to be zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days
- **Warm Home Discount** requires energy companies by law to give a discount on energy bills to their most vulnerable customers

Warm Homes Discount Scheme

Began April 2011

Energy companies must provide financial support for fuel poor and vulnerable low income households – fixed rebate off electricity bill

The key elements:

1. **Core Group** – older pensioner groups on low incomes
2. **Broader Group** – suppliers will be able to assess who most needs support (e.g. low income families, long-term sick and disabled)



All suppliers serving more than 250,000 domestic customer

Core Group

(Mandatory element)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Eligibility</i>	<i>Discount on bill</i>
2012-2013	Pension Credit Guarantee only <u>and</u> those aged 80 or over and in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee and Savings Credit	£130
2013-2014	Pension Credit Guarantee only <u>and</u> those aged 75 or over and in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee and Savings Credit	£135
2014-2015	Pension Credit Guarantee only <u>and</u> all in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee and Savings Credit	£140

Simpler Tariffs

British Gas has a new energy bill design – new pricing structure with standing charge, simpler discounts and single unit rate for new energy customers.

E.ON has simplified their tariff range. Now has five new, simpler tariffs which include variable and fixed price options and standard tariff.

Scottish Power to writing to all its customers who pay for their energy on a quarterly basis, with a personalised quote to estimate how much they can save by making changes to their energy account.

npower tariffs will all have a single rate for each unit of energy that is used by consumers from 1st May. Bring an end to two tier tariff structure

Priority Service Register

Each fuel utility company will have its own version of the register

The following groups can apply:

- customers of pensionable age
- disabled or chronically sick
- hearing and/or visually impaired

Services include:

- bills and leaflets in large print and braille
- talking bills
- use of password
- special controls and adaptors
- annual gas safety check if all in household are eligible (owner occupiers)
- no winter disconnection

How to avoid problems with fuel bills

- ❑ Check bill - especially if it is estimated
- ❑ Choose the right payment method and tariff
- ❑ Take advice on choosing an energy supplier
- ❑ If in difficulty contact the supplier
- ❑ Talk to a debt advisor if unable to pay the bill
- ❑ Include all the no cost measures in your daily routine

Home Heat Helpline

- The Home Heat Helpline offers advice on energy efficiency and fuel debt
- Contact Home Heat Helpline on **0800 33 66 99**

 **HOME HEAT
HELPLINE**

Other sources of help with fuel debt



- Citizens Advice Bureau

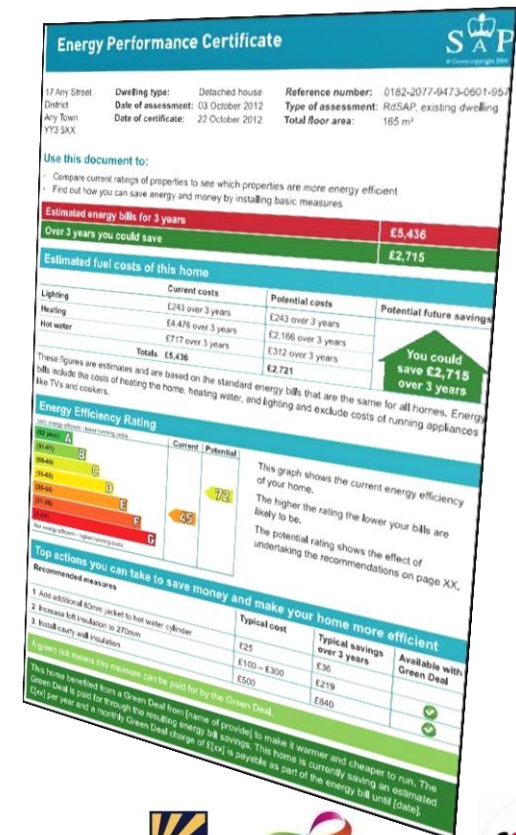
- National Debt line



- Consumer Credit Counselling Service

The Green Deal (1)

- A new government backed initiative started in January 2013
- Aims to reduce CO₂ emissions from buildings through improvements in their efficiencies
- Available in all tenures
- Pay as you save mechanism (PAYS)
- No upfront capital costs for a range of energy saving measures including insulation, heating and renewable measures
- An accredited assessor will visit your home, assess needs, complete an Energy Performance Certificate and produce a GD report for you detailing potential energy efficiency improvements



Green Deal (2)

- You approach a potential GD finance provider(s), they review the report and may offer you a GD Plan proposal which outlines the cost of the recommended measures and installation. You review and agree the proposal and finance re-payment options.
- Qualifying measure must meet a 'Golden Rule' – the energy savings you make must be more than it cost to purchase the measures
- You have a 14-day cooling off period
- Your provider then installs the measures and provides manuals and warranties to you
- You pay a Green Deal Plan charge for the measures as repayments in instalments on your electricity bill (with interest)

Bill Now
Electricity (and gas)
charges

GD measures installed

Bill After
- Electricity (and gas)
charges
- GD Payment
- GD Interest

ECO (1) – Energy Company Obligation

- A new obligation on energy suppliers started in Jan 2013
- Services for low-income/ vulnerable households in receipt of specified benefits, and/or those with hard-to-insulate properties
- 3 key offerings:
 - (1) Carbon Saving Communities (CSCO)
 - Loft, cavity and other insulation measures
 - All tenures
 - 85% funding for low income urban areas
 - 15% funding for low income rural areas
 - (2) Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation (CERO)
 - Solid wall insulation plus other measures that are costly and can't meet the Golden Rule requirement – essentially a top-up for GD applicants
 - All tenures

ECO (2)

(3) Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO – often termed the ‘Affordable Warmth’ option)

- Any measure will be eligible if it reduces the notional cost of heating a property – including heating and insulation measures, controls, showers, glazing etc.
- Available to private sector tenants and owner occupiers only
- Eligibility criteria:
 - State Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit with a household income under £15,860
 - Working Tax Credit with a household income under £15,860
 - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income Support

Further assistance

- Fuel supplier trust funds
- Local authority services

The Warm Homes for Older People resource guide is a reference documents for all the schemes and services noted in the presentation but also consider local advice providers

