

Take Control



Warm Minds

Help and advice to achieve a warm home, warm body and warm mind

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Section One - Your Fuel Use

In this section we are looking at fuel use, this being the energy you use to heat your home to heat the water you use, to cook and to run all the little appliances you need every day, such as your fridge.

It is very easy to save yourself money by using energy efficiently. Basically this means only using energy when you need it.

In this section you will find information about:

1. Your gas and electricity supply
2. Paying for energy
3. Reading your meters

By following the advice in this section you should be able to cut the cost of your fuel bills, increase your warmth and comfort levels, protect your health and even save yourself money.

Section One - Your Fuel Use

Your gas and electricity supply

- If you are not receiving a gas or electricity bill and you don't know who supplies your property contact the following companies to find out:

Gas	NGT	0870 608 1524
Electricity	Meter Point Administration System	0845 601 3268

- You can choose who supplies your fuel. It is best to shop around to get the best deal. You can do this by contacting energy suppliers to find out what is on offer, for example, if they supply both your gas and electricity, will it be cheaper?
- If you have access to the internet there are useful websites that will help you find the best deal and organise the switching for you. *The internet is often freely available in a local library where someone may help you.*

Compare prices on:

www.uswitch.com or www.unravelit.com

- Make sure you know how to control your heating system correctly.
- Read your gas and electricity meters regularly and check

Section One - Your Fuel Use

your readings against your bill (see the section on reading your meter).

- If you have a prepayment meter make sure you are not taking on someone else's debt. For example if a previous resident left without paying their bill (see the section on reading your meter).
- If you have a problem with any of the above suggestions then you can phone the Energy Saving Trust on **0300 123 1234** (local rates apply). They can provide expert advice in all areas of energy efficiency.



Section One - Your Fuel Use

Paying for energy

When you go to the shops to buy some apples, you are told the price per kilogram. The apples are weighed on scales and you must buy them before you can eat them!



So how do you pay for the energy in your home?

- If you have a **prepayment meter** you can pay using an electronic card (similar to a mobile phone top-up card) or key, which buys you a certain amount of energy. When it runs out you may have a short time before your heating or lights go off, so you need to be sure to keep in credit.
- Often energy is used and paid for later. A meter measures the amount of energy we use in our homes, and once the meter reading has been taken you are issued with a bill.
- Most bills arrive every three months (this is called a quarterly bill) although you can decide to pay more often. For example if you are paid weekly or monthly you may decide that you would like to pay your bills this way.

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Electricity is charged by the unit which is a kilowatt hour (kWh). This will be visible on the front of your electricity meter.

Gas is charged differently. It is measured in either cubic feet or cubic metres.

You can find out how your gas is measured by looking at your meter.

ft³ = **cubic feet**

m³ = **cubic metres**

However things get more complicated because the cubic feet/meters are then changed into kWh so the power company can work out how much to charge you, based on cost per kWh. Don't worry because a full explanation will be shown on your bill.

Other things you might notice on your bill include:

Estimated bill - There may be a letter **E** next to your meter reading. This means that your readings have been estimated by your supplier. You may have used more or less fuel than they have estimated.

It is best to get in touch with your supplier and give them your actual reading. This will stop you having to pay too much for the fuel you use or getting into debt.

Section One - Your Fuel Use

Standing charge – Where there is a standing charge this is charged no matter how much energy you have used. It covers the cost of maintaining the gas pipes or the electricity power lines.

VAT – This stands for Value Added Tax. Domestic fuel is currently charged at 5%.

How much energy have I used?

To work out how much electricity or gas you have used in a month, you need to take a meter reading at the beginning of the month, then another meter reading at the end of the month.



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Take the previous reading away from the current reading and that gives you how much you have used.

For example:

Jenny reads her electricity meter, it reads: **16840 kWh**

At the end of the month it reads: **17000 kWh**

So the amount of electricity Jenny has used is:

Present reading	17000
Previous reading	- 16840
	= 160 kWh

Her bill for that month will depend on how much she is charged per kWh by her supplier. If she is charged 8p per kWh then her bill will be:

$$160\text{kWh} \times 14\text{p} = \text{£}22.80$$

(Remember: VAT and perhaps a standing charge will be added). All this information should be shown on your bill. If you have trouble reading your bill speak to the supplier who will talk through it with you.

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Reading Your Meters

It's important to be able to read your meters correctly so that you can:

- Check any estimated fuel bills.
- Keep a regular check on how much gas and electricity is being used (to help you budget and avoid high bills).

First you need to check which type of meter you have. It could be either a digital or a dial meter.

Digital meters

These have either one or two rows of numbers and should be read from left to right, always ignoring the red number on the right.

Gas Digital Meter



Gas meters have four numbers in a row (excluding the red number).

The reading for the gas digital meter in the picture would be: **4539** (*do not count the numbers in the red box*)

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Electric Digital Meter



Electric meters have five numbers in a row (excluding the red number).

The meter reading above is:
17397 kWh.

When you next read your meter take away the previous reading from the new one. This will give you the amount you have used.

So for example if you recorded that last month the electricity meter reading was **17397** kWh and today it reads **17500** kWh.

You can work out what you have used:-

New reading		17500 kWh
Previous reading	-	17397 kWh
Amount used	=	103 kWh

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If you are on a special tariff – a price structure used by your fuel supplier which gives you lower-priced off-peak electricity (sometimes called Economy 7), your meter will have two rows of figures (see the off-peak meter shown).

Off-Peak Meter



The top row keeps count of how much “off-peak” energy you have used, take away the previous “LOW” reading from the new “LOW” reading.

The bottom row records normal rate (electricity you use during the day) and is marked “NORMAL”.

The NORMAL reading here is **27248**.

Example:

New low rate reading	27248
Previous low rate reading	-27100
You have used	<u> </u> = 148

New normal rate reading	47520
Previous normal rate reading	-47420
You have used	<u> </u> = 100

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Electricity Dial Meter



Dial meters can be quite difficult to read.

If you need help to take a meter reading an adviser will be happy to help you. You can request a reading from your supplier. It is unlikely that you

will have a gas dial meter.

Reading an electricity dial meter:

1. Start at the dial with the biggest number under it and work your way along to the smallest (*Do not count the red number*). So in the case above start at the dial with 10,000 under it.
2. Write down the number the pointer has passed.
3. Pointer directly over a number? Underline it then check the next dial to the right.
4. If the dial to the right reads 9, then take 1 away from the number underlined. If it reads 0, leave the underlined number as it is.

Pointer between 1 and 9? Read it as 9.

Pointer between 0 and 1? Read it as 0.

Final reading **91976kwh**

Section One - Your Fuel Use

- Key/cards can only be 'charged' at selected places that may only be open at certain times of the day. Shops and Post Offices are the most common places. Look for a PayPoint sign.
- Sometimes a fuel supplier adjusts the meter in order to recover debt from you (so you are not in control of your spending). If the meter is being used to recover debt, it means that even if you are away, using little or no fuel, the meter must contain enough credit to pay off debts or the fuel supply will run out. This may cause your freezer to defrost or other problems. The standing charge is also collected on a daily basis.
- It may be difficult to spread the payments throughout the year so the winter months could cause financial problems.
- The cheapest way to pay for fuel is to pay on a monthly Direct Debit tariff. This allows you to spread your fuel costs equally over winter and summer. Most power companies will replace the prepayment meters for standard meters at little or no cost. If you are in debt then you must stay with a prepayment meter, or clear the debt.



Section Two - Be Energy Efficient

In this section you will find information about:

- Saving money on your heating
- Savings with insulation
- Hot water savings
- Savings in the kitchen
- Lighting
- Appliances

Why save energy?

- To save money
- To help the environment

As well as making your money go further saving energy can also:

- Make you warmer, more comfortable and healthier
- Reduce the chance of winter freeze-ups

By being a bit more thoughtful in how you use hot water, cook food, use appliances and light your home, you can cut your fuel bills even more.

**Why not
ask your energy
supplier or an energy
adviser for a home visit
and see what they can
do to help you save
energy?**

Section Two - Be Energy Efficient

Saving money on your heating

If you have central heating:

- If you work or are out at regular intervals set your timer controls to go off shortly before you leave and come on shortly before you are due home. Try half an hour to an hour depending on how fast it takes your home to heat up and how cold it is outside.
- Turning down the room thermostat, if you have one, by 1°C can save you up to 10% on your fuel bills. *Recommended room temperature for living areas in cold weather is 18°C to 21°C.*
- If you do not have a room thermostat you may have TRVs (Thermostatic Radiator Valves) on your radiators. You can turn these down by one click at a time.
- Put aluminium foil/radiator reflectors behind any radiators fitted on outside walls. This will reflect heat back into your room. Also, make sure curtains are tucked behind radiators.
- Make sure the heating system is maintained at least once a year (consult your landlord where appropriate).
- Check that furniture isn't blocking the heat from the radiators.
- If your heating system contains electric storage heaters, make sure you understand how they work. If you are unsure seek help.



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Storage Heaters



Storage heaters should run on the Economy 7 tariff, which provides cheaper electricity for seven hours at night time (usually between midnight and 7am) but is slightly more expensive during the day. There may be a choice of other tariffs that can be used for storage heating.

The storage heater 'charges up' during the cheaper rate (night time) and then gradually releases the heat the following day.

To make sure you get the cheapest heat you must set the controls correctly.



The input control regulates the amount of heat that is stored in the heater overnight.

In very cold weather the input control should be set high; when it's not so cold the control can be set lower, adjust these regularly to save money.

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The output control (or boost) regulates the amount of heat released into the room. The output should be left on the lowest setting during the day and turned up during the evening, if more heat is needed.

It is important to remember to turn the output back to minimum before going to bed. Also, if the output is left on a high setting for long periods during the day there may not be enough stored heat left for the evening.

If you don't have central heating:

- When buying room heaters, make sure they are the right size for the room; too much heat wastes money.
- Buy heaters with thermostats and set them correctly so that the heater only comes on when you need it.
- Be aware that plug-in fires are cheaper to buy but cost more to run.
- Bottled gas fires and paraffin heaters are expensive to use and will create condensation. They may also be a safety hazard under some circumstances.



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Savings with insulation

Most of the money you spend on fuel goes on heating, either for your home or hot water. Heat can escape through the loft and outside walls. Heat can also escape through cracks and gaps between the doors, floors and windows. It can be quite cheap to block or fill up these gaps. But remember if you are using fuel-burning appliances e.g. gas, oil or solid fuel, they need fresh air to work properly and safely, so do not block air vents.



You also need ventilation in your kitchen and bathroom to avoid **CONDENSATION**. Too much condensation can lead to mould growth on your walls, windows, furnishings and clothing.

If your home has cavity walls, then one of the best and most effective ways to keep your home warm is to have cavity wall insulation installed. If you aren't sure if you have cavity walls ask for help from an energy adviser or housing officer if you are a social housing tenant.



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If you are a tenant then you will need permission from your landlord to make changes to your home. Contact the Energy Saving Advice Service on **0300 123 1234** (local rates apply) for advice on free or discounted measures that may be available to you.



If you have a loft in your home make sure it has been properly insulated (this is one of the best ways of keeping the heat in). The recommended thickness for insulation is 270mm and it can be done either by professional installers or as a DIY job.

Also if there are hot and cold water pipes in the loft, make sure that they have been lagged to stop them freezing and to cut down the cost of hot water.

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Other tips to keep the home warm:

- Outside doors and windows can be draught-proofed. Energy efficiency improvements will also benefit the property by reducing dampness and therefore future maintenance costs (discuss this with your landlord if you are a tenant)
- Gaps between your floorboards and between floorboards and skirting boards can be filled up with newspaper, papier-mâché, beading, mastic or plastic wood
- It's a good idea to block off any chimneys you don't use; this stops heat going up them and cold draughts coming down. But don't forget to put air grilles in them to avoid condensation and to provide ventilation for fuel-burning heaters e.g. gas, oil and solid-fuel (consult your landlord where appropriate)
- The sun is the most easily readily available source of heat there is and the cheapest! Make the most of it by opening the internal doors of any rooms that get more sun than others and let the warm air travel through your home
- Double glazing is expensive but another method that costs only a few pounds is to tape polythene or stretch clingfilm sheets across the window frames. This is almost as effective as double glazing and is easy to fit
- A free way of saving fuel is to close your curtains at dusk and don't let the curtains hang in front of the radiator, tuck them behind to let the heat into the room.

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Hot water savings

- If you do not have an insulated hot water tank make sure your tank has a jacket and that the pipes are lagged. This can save you up to a third of the cost of water heating (some systems do not have hot water tanks)
- The recommended temperature for the hot water thermostat is 60°C. Why heat water that you need to cool down?
- In one day a dripping hot water tap could waste enough water to fill a bath and you're paying to heat that water, so make sure dripping taps are fixed quickly and always turn hot water taps off properly
- If you can take a shower instead of a bath you will save money as there is much less water to heat. If you don't have a shower installed try using a mixer unit that attaches to your bath taps



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Savings in the kitchen

- If your freezer has empty space, fill it with plastic bags filled with newspaper.
- When you're putting things in or taking things out of a fridge or freezer don't leave the door open unnecessarily.
- Never put hot or warm food straight into a fridge or freezer, it could be a health risk and leads to a build up of ice, which makes the appliance more costly to run.
- Regular defrosting keeps fridges and freezers running efficiently and running costs low.
- Make sure the seal around the doors of fridges, freezers and ovens have not perished. They are cheap to replace.
- Try to cook more efficiently, use the toaster instead of the grill, or the microwave instead of a conventional oven.
- Choose the right size pan – the base should just cover the ring of an electric cooker. If using gas the flames should never come round the side of the pan.
- Put lids on pans and turn down the heat when the food starts to boil.
- Use only enough water to cover food being cooked. Using more water than you need, or over-cooking, wastes energy and spoils food.
- Cut food up into small pieces, it cooks more quickly that way.

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- Using a kettle, don't over-fill it – but be sure to cover the elements of an electric kettle.
- When doing the washing, always have a full load. If this is impossible then programme your machine to wash on a half load or economy wash.
- Try to dry your clothes outdoors. If you have to dry them indoors, dry them on a clothes horse in the bathroom or kitchen with the window open and the internal door closed.

Lighting

If you use any of your lights for an average of three hours or more a day it will save you money if you use either a fluorescent tube or energy saving lightbulb like the one pictured.

By using energy efficient bulbs you can save up to £48 a year. And don't leave lights on unnecessarily!



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Appliances

- All electrical appliances have an energy rating that is used to work out its running costs.
- Manufacturers of fridges, freezers, lamps, washer dryers, dishwashers and washing machines are required to provide information on how much energy each machine uses.
- Energy labels provide a guide as to how energy efficient the appliance is. Appliances are rated on the scale of A+++ all the way down to G. A is the most efficient and G is the least efficient.
- Always look for the BEAB Mark of Safety when buying electrical appliances.



Key points to remember:

- Ask a shop assistant to tell you about the running costs of the item(s) you are looking to buy or rent. Make sure you see the energy label and aim to purchase the highest rated model you can afford (A+++ to A), it will save you money over time.
- Ask if the appliance has any energy efficient features e.g. half a grill or half a ring features on cookers or a half-load feature on washing machines.
- A fan-assisted oven needs little or no pre-heating before cooking and therefore is more economical.

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- Ask to check the door seals on second hand fridges or freezers to check that they have not perished (although try and avoid purchasing second hand appliances, often they are old and very inefficient. It will end up costing you a great deal of money to run compared with an A rated model).
- Always check for safety features and certificates or labels.
- Make sure that any second hand electrical appliances have had safety checks.
- Make sure that flexes/cords or fittings are not damaged.



Section Three - Your Money

In this section you will find information about:

- What to expect if you are renting a home
- Finances – money you spend
- Benefits – what you can claim

If you already have your own home, or are planning to move into one, it's also worth planning how you spend your money, or you could face some problems.

You will have to think about how you are going to pay for things such as rent/mortgage, fuel bills, food and that's not all!

This section will help you to plan how you spend your money, where to find help and advice about most money matters, and also gives you information on benefits which you may be able to claim to help you.

**Don't forget,
if you do get into
debt (owe money) there
are always ways to solve
the problem. Don't sit and
worry about how you are
going to pay for things, make
sure you speak to a money
adviser at your council or
your local
Citizens Advice
Bureau.**

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What to expect if you are renting a home

If you are renting:

- Always read your Tenancy Agreement carefully before you sign it and keep an original copy. As an idea of what to expect, read this extract from a tenancy agreement:

The tenant will:

1. Not damage the property;
 2. Maintain the gardens;
 3. Keep fixtures and fittings in good order;
 4. Allow the landlord to inspect the property at reasonable hours;
 5. Not sublet the property;
 6. Not play any musical instruments loudly, stereos etc between the hours of midnight and 6am.
- You may have to pay a deposit to your landlord, before you move in. This is sometimes called bond money. If you do not damage the property you will get all of the bond back when you leave.
 - If you move in with other people make sure you all get a set of keys.
 - Keep a record of your landlord's details, i.e. his/her name,

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address and telephone number, so that you can get in touch with them quickly if necessary

- Make sure you get a list of the furniture that is in the house, with details of its condition, signed by your landlord.

When accepting a property, make sure you are shown where the following items are:

- **Electricity fuse box**
- **Electricity and/or gas meters**
- **Water stop-cock**

Once you are in...

When you move in, make sure you **READ YOUR METERS**. You maybe paying for someone else's fuel if you don't.

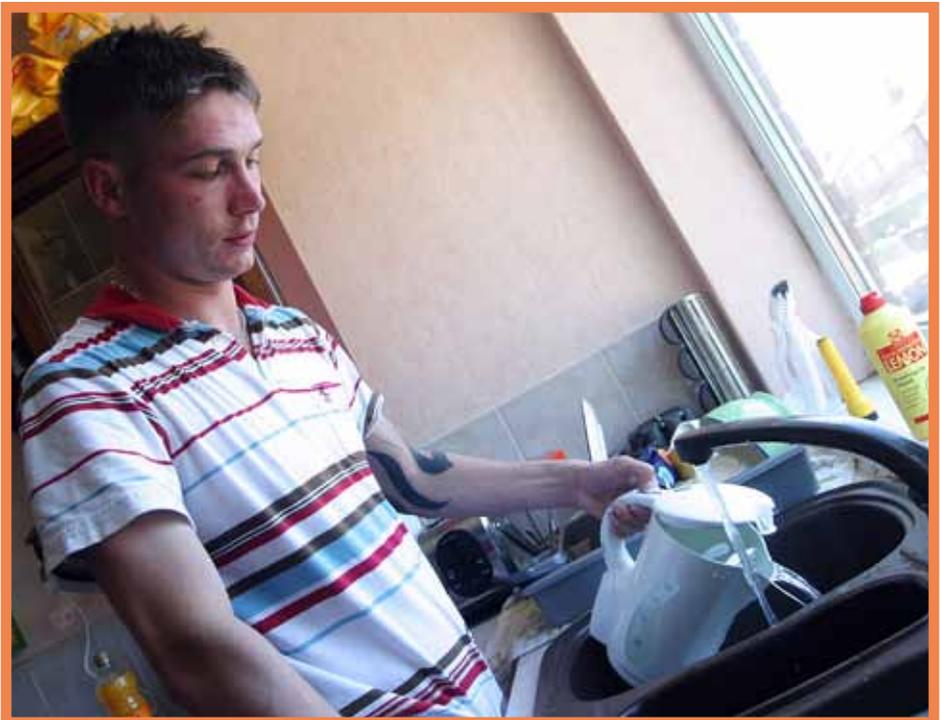
Also...

- Make sure you get a receipt for all rent payments or make sure your landlord signs your rent book each time you make a payment.
- Your landlord should always tell you when he/she is going to come round.
- Make sure any gas-burning appliances are serviced at least once a year. Private landlords must provide you with a Gas

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Safe certificate which proves that your gas appliances are safe. Most social landlords will complete a gas safety check routinely, at least once a year for tenants.

When you decide to accept an offer of housing, find out where your Employment Service Jobcentre (ESJ) and/or Department of Work and Pensions office and housing offices are. It is important to know this as you may have to go there if you need to claim certain benefits.



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Finances - Money you spend

If you have your own home you are responsible for many things which you may not have thought about before!

The things that you have to pay for are called your expenses. For example rent is an expense that you may have to pay every month/week.

Here is some information about other expenses you will come across when you have your own home whether you are renting or buying.

Gas and electricity

Ring your gas and electricity suppliers and give them your moving-in date. Arrange for them to carry out a meter reading for that date. You must do this as soon as you can or you may be liable for the last occupant's debt.

Water rates

Most water companies send two half-yearly bills but you can arrange to change your bills to monthly payments to make budgeting easier. If you are renting, check that water rates are included in your rent.

Council Tax

Make sure you tell the council that you have moved in and check that you are not paying Council Tax unnecessarily, if you

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are on benefits you may get a rebate, single occupants also pay less whether or not they are on benefits.

TV licence

If you own a TV (colour or black and white) then by law you must have a licence to use it. You don't have to pay this all at once, the TV Licensing Authority can work out smaller payments that you can pay every month or every week. Call TV Licensing Direct on **0870 241 6468** for more information.

Benefits - What you can claim

Many people lose money every year because they don't apply for a benefit that they are entitled to or because they apply too late. It is down to you to find out what benefits you can claim. If you are of working age you claim benefits from your local Jobcentre Plus or housing department (for Housing and Council Tax Benefit).

Tips for claiming benefits:

- Get help to fill in difficult forms
- Always give full and truthful information
- If you are turned down and think some information was wrong, find out about appealing
- Seek advice as early as possible

There are many benefits available and the ones you can claim depend on your personal circumstances.

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Other sources of financial Help

THE SOCIAL FUND

- Community Care Grants
- Crisis Loans

Community Care Grants and **Crisis Loans** are available for individuals who are facing difficulties in their personal lives. Applications must be made in writing to the Social Fund Officer at the Department of Work and Pensions.

No one has an automatic right to a grant. You can ask for a review if your claim is turned down, by writing to the Social Fund Officer at the Social Security Office you applied to, within 28 days of refusal. The Department of Work and Pensions may give you a **LOAN**, which you have to pay back out of your benefit, **instead** of a **GRANT**.

Community Care Grants are to help you buy essential furniture and equipment to set up home. It is a payment to help you move out of an institution, where you have been receiving care and support, or to prevent you going into one. You can also apply if your family have had a really difficult time - the Department of Work and Pensions call this a "family experiencing exceptional circumstances."

You must be claiming income support or other income-related benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) when you apply.

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If you are refused a Community Care Grant ask for a review.
You do not have to pay back this grant.

You may need help in applying from an Adviser, as Community Care Grants are very difficult to get. It helps if you can get letters of support from people who have helped you e.g. a G.P. or keyworker.

The Department of Work and Pensions should tell you within 28 days if you will get a grant.

A **Crisis Loan** is to help you meet short-term financial needs in an emergency, or after a disaster such as a fire or burglary. You do not have to be claiming Income Support and any savings you have will be taken into account. You can apply for one by going to any Department of Work and Pensions office.

Energy Supplier Help

Warm Home Discount Scheme

Warm Home Discount (WHD) is a four-year, Government led rebate scheme, which was introduced in 2011. It involves the Government and electricity suppliers working together to offer additional support to people who are struggling to cope with fuel bills.

There are two elements to the rebate part of the scheme. For the winter 2012/13 the Warm Home Discount provides a

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rebate of £130 to customers who receive only the guaranteed element of Pension Credit, as well as customers aged 80 or over who receive the savings element of Pension Credit. These customers are known as the 'Core Group'.

The fuel suppliers and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will share data to identify those customers who qualify for the Core Group. If this applies to you, the DWP will write to you this autumn and let you know.

The other element of the rebate scheme is known as the 'Broader Group'. Under the Warm Home Discount Scheme, suppliers have discretion over which households fall under their 'Broader Group' criteria. Some suppliers will also be actively seeking out customers who they feel may qualify for their 'Broader Group' scheme. Each company has its own set of qualifying conditions.

Rebates will start to be paid from winter 2012 and this will continue until the end of March 2013, with the majority of successful applicants receiving payments before this date.

The following suppliers are members of the Warm Home Discount scheme and will offer support to customers in Core and Broader Groups:

- EDF Energy
- Scottish Power
- British Gas
- E.ON Energy
- npower
- SSE / Atlantic / Southern Electric / SWALEC / EBICO / Equipower

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Warm Front Grants

These grants are aimed at people who either own their home or rent from a private landlord. You must seek your landlord's permission for Warm Front measures. Social housing tenants are not eligible. Grants can be claimed to help you with the costs of improving or installing a heating system or to install insulation measures.



Qualifying households can get improvements worth up to £3,500 (£6,000 where oil-central heating and other alternative technologies are recommended). The grant is used to pay for the recommended improvements.

The scheme is now targeted at people on certain income-related benefits and living in properties that are poorly insulated and/or do not have a working central heating system. You must own your home or rent it from a private landlord.

Ring the number below and speak with an advisor to find out if you are eligible.

You can apply for this grant from Carillion plc on Freephone **0800 316 2805 (or textphone 0800 072 0156)**. (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm).

Warm Front is now in its final year and will be closing in 2013. Call now to ensure you get the measures needed.

Section Three - Your Money

Budgeting

You can plan how much you spend every week/month by using the table below:

Put all the money you get in this column

Put all the money you spend in this column

PERSONAL BUDGET PLAN

Income	£	Expenses	£
Full Time Wages/Salary		Rent/Mortgage	
Part Time Wages/ Salary		Electricity	
Partner's Wages/Salary		Gas	
Non-Dependant's Contribution		Food	
Benefits and Allowances (please list what you are receiving) for example: Income Support		Housekeeping	
		Council Tax	
		Water Rates	
		Telephone	
		Insurance	
		TV Licence	
		Laundry	
		Clothes	
		Maintenance Payments	
Grant/Student Loan		Loans/Hire Purchase	
Child maintenance		Schools Meals/Meals at Work	
Money saved/carried over		Books/Course Equipment	
Other income		Travel Costs	
		Entertainment	
		Other Expenditure	
Total Income		Total Expenditure	

Section Three - Your Money

Useful Contact Numbers

Mental Health North East - Tel: 0191 492 8235 or 0191 492 8241, Web: www.mhne.co.uk/

**National Energy Action Tel: 0191 261 5677
Web: www.nea.org.uk**

Home Heat Helpline	For free advice for any energy efficiency enquiries	0800 33 66 99
Warm Front	For energy efficiency measure for poorly insulated homes	0800 316 2805
Energy Saving Advice Service	For advice on energy efficiency and	0800 123 01234
Citizens Advice Consumer Service	For advice on benefits and energy efficiency measures	08454 04 05 06

Energy supplier energy efficiency advice helplines

British Gas	0800 072 8629
EDF Energy	0800 0969966
npower	0800 022220
E.ON	0500 201000
ScottishPower	0800 332233
SSE	0845 7776633



Campaigning for Warm Homes

The Warm Minds project was developed by NEA and MHNE and supported by the ScottishPower Energy People Trust to address the links between fuel poverty and mental health in the North East. This booklet is designed to be a practical and easy-to-use document that will help you identify the best way to bring down your energy use at home and make energy bills more affordable.

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