



Disability Sheffield
The Centre for Independent Living

Disability Sheffield Information Service

Fuel Schemes and Energy Efficiency Factsheet



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Disability Sheffield Centre for Independent Living Limited is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Cardiff No. 4639160 and is a registered Charity No. 1112712

Fuel Schemes and Energy Efficiency

Fuel costs are increasingly expensive. Fuel schemes to financially support low income households and people who are vulnerable to cold temperatures appear complicated and regularly change their name or eligibility criteria. It can be confusing to know where to find information about the schemes and what energy efficiency measures you can take to reduce your costs .

The good news is that there is still a lot of information and support available from local and national organisations. They will help you to understand your entitlement to financial support and help you consider your options to make your home more energy efficient.

In this factsheet we aim to direct you to information under the following colour-coded headings:-



The Energy Company Obligation

Information about the government's Affordable Warmth Scheme and the Green Deal



Extra Schemes for Low-income Households and Vulnerable People

Winter Fuel Payments, the Warm Home Discount Scheme and the Priority Service Register



Grants

Home Energy Grants and calculator, disability grants and grants for vulnerable customers from energy providers.



Benefits and Fuel Arrears

Signpost you to support and advice if you are struggling to pay your energy bills



Making a Complaint about your Energy Provider

Information from Ofgem about making a complaint or enquiry to your energy company



Local Support and National Helplines

Where to find local and national organisations that can provide support. helplines, other factsheets and resources about fuel schemes and energy efficiency in your home

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The government launched the [Energy Company Obligation \(ECO\)](#) scheme in early 2013 to replace Warm Front. The ECO is a government energy efficiency scheme in Great Britain to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty. It is designed to help people with fuel costs and support the installation of energy efficiency measures in low-income households and properties that are 'harder to treat'. The scheme has changed over the years but we have summarised the current offer as best as we can below:

Scheme	Helps with	Eligibility
<p>The Affordable Warmth Scheme</p> <p>(part of the Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation or HHCRO).</p>	<p>You may get help with the cost of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insulation work, for example to your loft or cavity walls replacing or repairing your boiler - or other upgrades to your heating 	<p>You might be able to get help for energy-saving improvements to your home if you either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim certain benefits and live in private housing (for example you own your home or rent from a private landlord) live in social housing that has an energy efficiency rating of E, F or G you might be eligible for help with insulation or installing a heating system for the first <p>See the Gov.UK website for a full list of the Help from your energy supplier under the Affordable Warmth Obligation and the Eligibility Criteria</p>
<p>The Green Deal</p>	<p>The Green Deal helps you make energy-saving improvements to your home and find the best way to pay for them. The improvements that could save you the most energy depend on your home, but typical examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insulation, such as 	<p>The Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF) is closed to new applications.</p> <p>You're not affected if your Green Deal improvements have already been made and you're making repayments through your electricity bill. Your Green Deal provider will still be responsible for any warranties or maintenance</p>

	<p>solid wall, cavity wall or loft insulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heating • draught-proofing • double glazing • renewable energy generation, such as solar panels or heat pumps 	<p>specified in your contract with them.</p> <p>View GOV.UK website Green Deal.</p>
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NB : Please Note

You may be contacted directly by an installer claiming to be working under the ECO scheme. If the company claims to be an installer, always ask to see the following credentials: for most measures, installers under ECO must be PAS 2030:2017 (Publicly Available Specification) accredited, and will have a registration number. If they are installing microgeneration measures (eg measures that produce heat) they need to be Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited and will be registered on the [MCS website](#). All companies repairing or replacing a gas boiler must be registered with Gas Safe. You can check this on Gas Safe's [website](#).

Extra Schemes for Low-income Households and Vulnerable People

Cold Weather Payments

These are sent out automatically to [people who qualify](#) when there is an extended period of freezing temperatures: Payments are made when your local temperature is either recorded as, or forecast to be, an average of zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days. You'll get a payment of £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

Tel: 0800 731 7898 Pension Service if you receive Pension Credit

Tel: 0845 604 0234 Job Centre Plus – if you receive any other income-related benefit.

See [Direct Gov Website](#) for further information

Winter Fuel Payments

The Winter Fuel Payment could help you with money towards your heating bills.

You qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment if both the following apply:

- you were born on or before 5 November 1953
- you lived in the UK for at least one day during the week of 17 to 23 September 2018 - this is called the 'qualifying week'

If you did not live in the UK during the qualifying week, you might still get the payment if both the following apply:

- you live in Switzerland or a [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) country

- you have a genuine link with the UK social security system, such as having lived or worked in the UK for most of your life

Tel: 0845 915 1515

You may still be able to get [Cold Weather Payment](#) or [the Warm Home Discount Scheme](#), even if you do not qualify for Winter Fuel Payment.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

If you are on a low income, you may [qualify](#) for the Warm Home Discount Scheme. This gives a rebate to pensioners on low incomes and some other customers on low incomes.

See the [GOV.UK Website](#) and [Citizens Advice](#) for more information.

Priority Services Register

If you are of pensionable age, disabled, visually/hearing impaired or chronically sick you can apply to join your energy supplier's Priority Service Register. Being on the Register entitles you to the following free services:

- Safety check on gas appliances
- Meter reading
- Moving meters
- Password scheme to protect against bogus callers
- Advance notice if your supply is to be disrupted
- Bill nominee scheme if you need a friend or relative to help read and pay your bill

More Information

Contact details

- Npower Spreading Warmth Programme Tel: 0808 172 6999
- E:ON Caring Energy Tel: 0800 051 1480
- British Gas Home Energy Care Register Tel: 0800 072 8625
- Scottish Power Home Heat Helpline Tel: 0800 33 66 99
- Scottish & Southern Priority Service Register care line Tel: 0800 622 838
- EDF Energy Priority Services Tel: 0800 169 9970

Grants

The government have a dedicated [Energy Grants and ways to improve your energy efficiency](#) page which includes an energy grants calculator.

[Disability Grants](#) have a dedicated [Energy Saving Grants](#) page which details energy saving grants which may be available to disabled people.

Charis works with a number of companies to help vulnerable customers with water and energy debts and other essential household bills and costs. See [Charis website](#) for details of how to apply.

Benefits and Fuel Arrears

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills or get a bill you can't afford, you should take steps to sort out the problem as soon as possible. If you don't pay your gas and electricity debts, you risk being cut off. The Citizens Advice Bureau can help. You can find your nearest advice centre in Sheffield by entering your postcode or area on the [Advice Sheffield](#) website or phone 03444 113 111.

You may also wish to look at our [Money Matters Factsheet](#) to make the most of your money and see the previous section on Grants.

Fuel Direct

If you're on certain benefits, you can arrange to pay your fuel arrears direct from your benefit. The amount you pay is fixed by the Department of Work and Pensions.

See the [GOV.UK website](#) and the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#) website for more information.

Making a Complaint about Your Energy Provider

Ofgem

Ofgem is Britain's energy regulator which oversees the energy market, setting obligations about how energy suppliers act and promoting competition.

You can find information on their website about [Making an Enquiry or Complaint](#) about your energy company and [general information for domestic consumers](#)

Local Support and National Helplines

Sheffield City Council

Sheffield City Council have a [Ways to reduce your fuel bills](#) page which details the support available to keep your home warm and reduce your energy costs. This includes information on the [Home Energy Check](#), the [Energy Grants Calculator](#), tips to reduce your fuel bills and [Energy Efficiency in council homes](#).

Contact: Private Housing Standards Team – Tel: 0114 273 4680

Sheffield Stay Put

Sheffield Stay Put is a not-for-profit home improvement agency operated by Yorkshire Housing Foundation in partnership with Sheffield City Council. Sheffield Stay Put offer a number of services to help you keep your home in good repair including advice on Energy Efficiency grants and Discount Schemes.

Sovereign Court
300 Barrow Road

Sheffield
S9 1JQ

Telephone: 0114 256 4270

Email: sheffieldstayput@yorkshirehousing.co.uk

Website: www.housingcare.org/service/ser-info-333-sheffield-stay-put-generic.aspx

South Yorkshire Energy Centre

The South Yorkshire Energy Centre is a visitor centre and project based at Heeley City Farm. The Centre offers free energy advice every Thursday, 11am to 3pm

Drop in and get advice on how to:

- Find cheaper tariffs and switch supplier
- Access grants and discounts to make homes warmer
- Take control of heating systems and save money
- Make homes warmer through low and no cost useful tips

Alexandra Road, Heeley, S2 3EE

For more info and to check advice sessions which sometimes also take place at other community venues across the city contact Shelly McDonald on (0114) 303 9981 ext 2

Email: syecvol@gmail.com

Website: South Yorkshire Energy Centre

Simple Energy Advice

Impartial and independent advice on how to make your home more energy efficient at the [Each Home Counts website](#). You can also find out about any grants and schemes you're eligible for.

Energy Saving Trust

[The Energy Saving Trust](#) has information on grants and schemes and an [online home energy check](#) to help you find out where you could make savings on your bills. See also their tips on Saving Energy: [Energy Saving Quick Wins](#)

Turn2Us

[Turn2Us](#) is a national charity providing practical help to people who are struggling financially. Their website includes a dedicated [Energy Schemes](#) section which includes useful information if you are struggling to pay your energy bills, and explains some of the schemes and grants that may be available to help towards the cost of energy.

Advice Guide: Self Help from Citizens Advice Bureau

[Citizens Advice](#) has a lot of detailed information on their website summarising government assistance for paying bills, how to save money and advice on switching supplier

Useful Pages on their website include:

- [Save money on your gas and electricity](#)
- [Grants and Benefits](#)
- [Getting a Smart Meter Installed](#)
- [What to Do if You're Struggling to Pay your Energy Bills](#)

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills or get a bill you can't afford, you should take steps to sort out the problem as soon as possible. If you don't pay your gas and electricity debts, you risk being cut off. The Citizens Advice Bureau can help. You can find your nearest advice centre in Sheffield by entering your postcode or area on the [Advice Sheffield](#) website.

Age UK Factsheets

[Age UK](#) has produced a number of comprehensive guides for Older People

- [Winter Wrapped Up](#)
- [Save Energy. Pay Less](#)
- [Help with heating costs](#)
- [Switching Energy Supplier](#)

Which? Guides

The independent consumer organisation [Which?](#) Have some useful guides on their website:


- [Heating, Water and Electricity](#)
- [Energy Monitors](#)

What do you think of this factsheet?

If you would like to comment on this factsheet or provide additional information from your own experience please let us know and we would be happy to consider adding to or amending the factsheet. We welcome any comments to help us improve our service. Our contact details are:

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Disclaimer

No recommendation is given or implied by providing these details. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Please note that the inclusion of groups or individuals on the factsheet does not mean that they have been vetted or are recommended by Disability Sheffield Information Service. Details may change so it is important you check the information provided to make sure they are accurate and suitable for your own requirements

Nov 2019