



# COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

Tips and hints on how to save money in your home this winter. This includes understanding your energy bills, home hacks, and local support.

 archeshousing



# Understanding your bill

With energy prices rising, it's more important than ever to have a clear understanding of your gas and electricity bills. However, it's fair to say these bills can appear confusing in the least. First and foremost, there are 3 things you need to look out for on your bill:

- 1. That you're being billed for the right amount.**
- 2. That you're not building up any debt.**
- 3. If there's a cheaper tariff you can move to (your bill will show this).**

Below you can find a brief overview of the key bits of information you need to know from your periodic bills.

## Tariff Name:

This is the tariff you're currently on. You'll need this exact name when comparing prices on comparison sites and switching energy providers.

Energy Price Guarantee - From 1st October 2022

### Gas

- ▶ Unit rate: £0.10 per kWh
- ▶ Standing charge: £0.28 per day

### Electricity

- ▶ Unit rate: £0.34 per kWh
- ▶ Standing charge: £0.46 per day

## Your estimated usage in the last 12 months:

Remember this is your estimated usage for the past year, not the actual usage. Always submit a meter reading to make sure you're being charged for the exact amount of energy you're using.

## Total kWh used

This will show you what your monthly consumption of electricity is. It will be less accurate if you've not given regular meter readings.

## Total Units (100s of cubic meters or feet)

This part of the bill will show you what your monthly consumption of gas is. It will be less accurate if you've not given regular meter readings.

## Frequently asked questions?

### What does 'kWh' mean?

A kilowatt hour (kWh) is the measure used to explain how much energy you use. One kilowatt hour is equal to 1,000 watt-hours. Use an appliance rated at 1,000 watts for one hour and you'll be billed for 1kWh.

### What does "credit" and "debit" mean?

The word "credit" would usually be associated with something you owe, in this case, credit means when you've paid extra on your energy bill. "Debit" means when you owe the supplier extra.

### What is a standing charge?

It's a fixed daily amount that you have to pay, no matter how much energy you use. A standing charge covers the cost of supplying your property with gas and electricity.

# How does the energy price cap work?

The price cap sets a limit on the maximum amount suppliers can charge for each unit of gas and electricity you use and sets a maximum daily standing charge (what you pay to have your home connected to the grid). Essentially if you use more energy, you'll pay more, use less and you'll pay less.

To find out the key information from the leading suppliers visit <https://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/guides/energy-bills/> to understand your bill in more detail.

## Can I get help to pay my energy bills?

For many households, the announcement of the increases in energy bills will be worrying at the least. As part of the package of support from the UK Government, all households will receive £400 off their bills. You will receive this over 6 monthly instalments from October 2022 to March 2023.

Regardless of how you get the payment, you WON'T be asked for your bank details to access the grant. Scams have been identified asking people for personal details for the cost of living support.

Those paying by direct debit, standard credit, or those who have smart prepayment meters will get the grant automatically. If you have a traditional prepayment meter this will NOT be paid automatically and you will have to redeem vouchers that will be sent to you via text, email, or post. You can then redeem this by topping it up at a shop or post office.

## Saving tips - What you could save per year

Switching off stand-by electronics - £55

Turning off the lights - £20

Wash at 30 degrees and reduce use by one run a week - £28

Avoid using the tumble dryer - £60

Take a 4 minute shower - £70

Swap one bath a week for a 4-minute shower - £12

Turn down your home's temperature 1 degree at a time at the thermostat, to find the right temperature for you, the World Health Organisation says that around 18 degrees is enough for health adults - Each degree you turn down may save you around £100.

Consider using your microwave more to cook certain foods, they use less energy than ovens - cooking a jacket potato in a microwave compared to an oven could be 85% cheaper.



If you're struggling to pay your energy bills, there is help available. On the back page of this leaflet, you can find support and advice agencies. You can also contact your energy supplier and see what options are available to you.

# Who to talk to

Citizens Advice Sheffield is open Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm (except Bank Holidays) - 0808 278 7820 <https://citizensadvicesheffield.org.uk/get-help/call-us/>

Citizens Advice Rotherham - Freephone Adviceline 08082787911 or 01709515680 to book a video advice call back. The debt advice line is 01709 794980.

National Debt Line - Free independent advice around debt/budgeting. 0808 808 4000 [nationaldebtline.org](http://nationaldebtline.org)

StepChange Debt Charity - 08001381111 - Monday to Friday 8 am to 8 pm and Saturday 8 am to 4 pm.

Sheffield City Council - Community Helpline for support urgent support coping with the rising cost of living crisis. 0114 273 4567 <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/benefits/help-money-issues>

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council - For support with costs of utility bills, food, etc. <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing-grants-finance/energy-crisis-support-scheme> - 01709 382121

Local foodbank - To be referred for a food parcel, you can contact your GP or Citizens advice. Alternatively, you can contact arches during our opening hours to request a referral.

Food Works Sheffield - Hot meals, barista coffees, cakes, and pastries are available daily on a Pay What You Can Afford basis with a minimum contribution of £1.00. Visit <https://thefoodworks.org/kitchen/> to find your nearest location.

Gov.uk - Cost of living payments and support [www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment)

Baby Basics - Providing essentials and equipment to families in need. [baby-basics.org.uk](http://baby-basics.org.uk) 0114 2787262

Entitled to - Find out what benefits you may be entitled to [https:// www.entitledto.co.uk/](https://www.entitledto.co.uk/)

