



keep warm and well
...in East Sussex



East Sussex
Energy Partnership
Working with your local council



RETROFITWORKS
BUILDING EFFICIENCY TOGETHER



citizens
advice East
Sussex

NHS



East Sussex
County Council



Preparing for winter

Briefing – Autumn 2022

What is fuel poverty?

A household is said to be in fuel poverty if: they have required fuel costs that are above average and, were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

Even with the recent energy price freeze, this October, energy bills will have more than doubled in a year. In October 2021 there were an estimated 4.5 million UK households in fuel poverty, this will increase to around 6 million by October 2022.

East Sussex Warm Home Check Service

Get in touch for free advice and free support to keep warm this winter.

For more information call **0800 464 7307**
TEXT WARM TO 80011 or
visit **www.warmeastsussex.org.uk**



What are the signs?

By spotting the signs, asking questions and taking action you could help those in fuel poverty and maybe even save a life. Look out for:

- Their health
 - Are they able to move around?
 - Have they developed a cough or breathing difficulty?
 - Is their mood low?
 - Are they becoming more isolated?
- In the home
 - Does the house feel cold inside?
 - Is there any central heating?
 - Are there black patches on the wall or a musty smell?
 - Is there a draught from cracked or broken windows or gaps under doors or in the floor?

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- Their habits
 - Do they wear lots of clothes or outdoor clothes inside?
 - Does it look like they heat just one room?
 - Are there blankets or hot water bottles by the chair they sit in?
 - Are the curtains kept closed?
 - Is there evidence of proper hot meals being eaten?

If the home is cold it may be because of worries about cost, broken or hard-to-operate heating controls, poor insulation, or even a belief that being cold is good for you.

You can tell people who to contact for advice and help.

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Being cold isn't just uncomfortable; it can be very bad for your health particularly if you are an older person, disabled, have a family with young children or have a long-term limiting illness.



Why does it matter?

Keeping warm over the winter months can help prevent colds, flu or more serious health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

We already know that without additional support, millions are going to sink further into debt and many will turn off their heating leaving them at acute risk of serious ill-health, and even death.

The Health Institute have estimated that in 2023 we could see as many as 180,000 fuel poverty deaths and 360,000 cold home deaths unless there are effective interventions to prevent this.

Cold homes kill.

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- **Keep your home at the right temperature**

Heat your home to at least 18°C.





What support is available nationally?

In May, government announced the following measures:

- **The £200 rebate announced in February doubled to £400 and will be a grant.** This will be automatically applied to electricity account. For most people this will be split between 6 monthly amounts of around £60.
- People on lowest incomes/means-tested benefits will receive a **one-off 'cost of living payment' of £650**, paid in July and Autumn directly to bank accounts.
- **Pensioners who are in receipt of Winter Fuel Payment will receive a one-off pensioner cost of living payment of £300.**
- **Warm Home Discount of £150** for those in receipt of Pension Credit or means tested benefit and high energy costs.

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- **Disabled people in receipt of non-means-tested disability benefits will receive a one-off disability payment worth £150** (many will also receive the means-tested benefits £650 payment, so a total of £800)
- Household Support Fund extended by £500 million with local authorities offering grants and support to pensioners and other vulnerable groups.

On September 8th government announced a new price guarantee, starting 1 October and lasting six months. This means that for someone on typical use they will pay £2,500 a year. The current price cap is £1,971 and this new rate will still be nearly double the amount paid last winter.

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What support is available locally?


Across East Sussex there is a range of support available to support people suffering with fuel poverty and to improve the energy efficiency of their home:

- Citizens Advice can provide fuel vouchers
- The Warm Home Check service provides free energy advice and support. It is also able to offer:
 - Small home improvement measures such as pipe insulation, draught proofing, or radiator reflectors
 - Emergency temporary heating such as electric heaters or a microwave should the heating breakdown or is insufficient
 - Access to government grants (subject to eligibility and limited availability) for larger energy efficiency measures such as insulation or heat pumps

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A close-up photograph of a person wearing a light-colored plaid shirt. The shirt has a grid pattern of thin lines. A white button is visible on the left side of the chest. Overlaid on the center of the image is a large, rounded orange rectangle containing white text. The background is dark and out of focus.

Look after yourself and check on older neighbours or relatives to make sure they are safe, warm and well.



What can you do to help?

Get people on the Priority Services Register(s)

What is it and who can go on it?

- Those on the register(s) can receive additional support during power cuts, help with meter reading and support with billing problems

Who can go on it?

- Pensioners, disabled, long-term sick, hearing or visually impaired, mental health, households with children aged under 5

How do they join?

- Contact their supplier by telephone or online to sign up
- Do it for electricity, gas and water

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What can you do to help?

Warn people about scams

- Watch out for scams relating to energy and cost-of-living payments, these payments are all automatic
- Citizens Advice does not make unsolicited phone calls, send text messages or emails – any received are likely to be a scam
- The only proactive contact individuals may receive is from their energy supplier, particularly if they have a prepayment meter (some suppliers may pay them the £400 grant as a voucher in the post).

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What's the best thing to do?

Tariffs: right now – 'stay where you are' is usually the best advice, there is no need to switch tariff or supplier

Unless you're on a very expensive fixed rate tariff.

Energy price guarantee limits standing charge and unit cost for the next 6 months

But you still pay more if you use more!

Check you have the most suitable payment method and meter- ensure you submit regular meter readings.

Talk to your energy supplier if have problems, or talk to Citizens Advice or other support agencies.

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What's the best thing to do?

Make the best use of gas central heating:

Turn down boiler flow temperature:

<http://www.moneysavingboilerchallenge.com/>

Decide which rooms need heating, and to what temperature

Use thermostatic radiator valves, timer and thermostat to control heating if you have them.

Emergency heating available in the event of breakdowns

Make the best use of storage heaters:

Check you're on the right tariff (Economy 7) and adjust the heaters if required based on the weather.

Use automatic controls on modern storage heaters

Boost function is expensive!

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FIRE SAFETY **IN THE WINTER**





What's the best thing to do?

Alternative sources of heat – BE SAFE

Wood burners and open fires; chimney must be swept at least annually and checked for obstructions.

Logs must be dry enough and free of paint/preservative.

Carbon monoxide monitor is essential.

Portable heaters

Cheaper to use central heating if you have it, and limit to just the rooms in use and beware of fire risks – see East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

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**Small energy efficiency
measures can make a big
difference**



What's the best thing to do?

- Hot water tank insulation (0 to 80mm) saves £225/yr
- Low-flow shower head saves £83/yr
- Draught proofing chimneys saves £90/yr
- Doors & letterbox or gully-proofed saves £60/yr
- Windows and doors draught-proofed saves £63/yr
- Radiators or reflectors through out house saves £21/yr
- Insulate water pipes saves £27/yr
- Repair dripping hot water tap saves £13/yr

**POTENTIAL SAVING
up to £583/year**

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**Small changes in behaviour
can make a big difference**



What's the best thing to do?

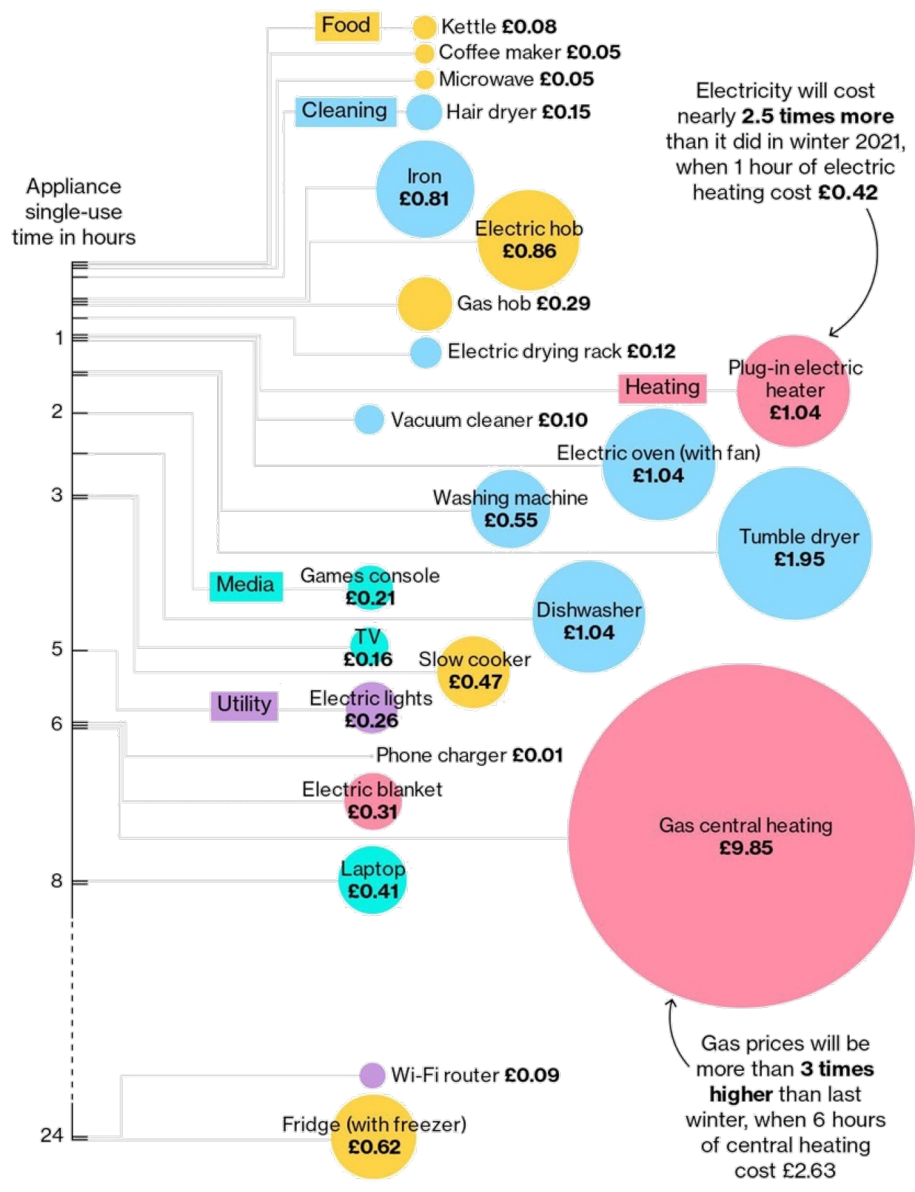
- Turn down thermostat from 20 to 18C saves £117/yr
- Turn down boiler flow temperature saves £124/yr
- Turn off radiators in unused rooms saves £55/yr
- Air-dry laundry instead of tumble dryer saves £134/yr
- Turn off standby appliances saves £117/yr
- Only use dishwasher when fully loaded saves £34/yr
- Lights off in empty rooms saves £44/yr
- Put a lid on soup pan while cooking saves £41/yr
- Stop overfilling kettle saves £27/yr
- Wash clothes below 40 degrees saves £24/yr
- Fully load washing machine saves £10/yr

**POTENTIAL SAVING
UP TO £928/year**

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Budgeting for Winter's Energy Bill
 Estimated single-use costs for appliances from Oct. 2022 – Jan. 2023

Sources: Uswitch; Ofgem; The Heating Hub
 Note: "Electric lights" is equivalent to 10 non-energy-saving bulbs. "Gas central heating" is for a typical home size according to Ofgem.

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What's the best thing to do?

Tell people how to keep warm

Wear multiple layers of clothing, including thermal base layer (avoid cotton)

Hot meals, hot drinks (fill a flask in the morning)

Physical activity – don't sit for long periods if possible

Hot water bottles – fill carefully, don't use boiling water!

Wheat bags – don't microwave for too long (fire risk)

Electric blanket – but check it's safe and not too old

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Preparing you for severe cold weather in East Sussex

Helping you to reduce the impact of
severe cold weather on your health

coldAlert is a text, voicemail, e-mail
or web service that alerts you when
there are severe weather warnings
in your area. The service runs
annually from November to March.



We recommend that you register to receive coldAlerts if you are, or care for, an older person or an individual who may be adversely affected by severe cold weather conditions.

Cold weather alert service for East Sussex

www.coldalert.info

Telephone: 01273 484337





- **Don't cancel your direct debit or refuse to pay. If you, or someone you know, are concerned about your bill – talk to your supplier.**
- **A cold home makes underlying health problems worse or even fatal. It also increases the risk of trips, falls, stroke or heart attack.**
- **If you, or someone you know, is finding it difficult to keep their home warm then the Warm Home Check Service can help.**
- **If you, or someone you know, has a low income (around £31k or less) they may be eligible for support to make their home more efficient.**

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