

Energy Advice Service



LANCASTER WEST
NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

WT11

Lancaster West Neighbourhood Team's Energy Advice Service, provides support to residents who are at risk of fuel poverty or are already experiencing financial difficulties due to rising energy bills.

This booklet contains guidance to help improve your understanding of household energy usage, the different components of energy bills, help in finding financial assistance, and advice on small energy efficiency measures that you can adopt for free.

How to keep your home warm



In a typical home, space and water heating can account for more than half the fuel costs. With energy bills on the rise, there are measures we can adopt to make our heating systems run more efficiently, reduce wastage, reduce bills, and help cut our carbon emissions.

- Set the programmable thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter, ideally between 18° - 21° Celsius.
- Use radiator heat reflectors (currently priced at £7.99 for a 470mmx 4m. (1.88m²) per sheet in Screwfix).
- Close internal doors to keep the heat in the rooms you use most, and reduce the amount of heat moving into colder areas.
- If your house is not damp, try turning the heat down a fraction. You will not feel the difference and your bills will be cheaper.
- Bleed the radiator valve (to release trapped air) annually. It doesn't require a professional plumber, but should be done by someone familiar with the process.
- Do not place furniture or curtains in front of radiators as it blocks the heat.
- To keep the heat inside the room, fill up gaps to stop draughts. Place draught-excluders on your front door, letter box, and keyhole.
- Use rugs and thermally-lined curtains for extra warmth in the home, especially where there are draughty windows or gaps in floorboards. Close curtains when it gets dark to keep the heat in.
- Do not dry clothes on the radiator as it blocks the heat and produces moisture in the air that could lead to damp or mould.
- Thermostats should be placed away from devices that give off heat (like radiators or TVs) and away from doors, windows, and draughty areas. They should be placed on an interior wall, 5 feet above the floor, in a room that is frequently used by the occupants.
- During colder months, open curtains to south-facing rooms in the house for solar heat gain.

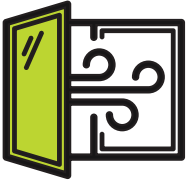
How to lower your hot water costs



Heating and hot water accounts for about half of a typical home's energy bills. An efficient and well-maintained heating system can make a noticeable difference in terms of energy usage and cost savings.

- Hot water should be stored at least at 60° Celsius. This is due to the risk of legionella bacteria growing in water stored below this temperature.
- Keep your shower time brief. According to the Energy Saving Trust, replacing a single bath each week with a 5-minute shower can help save up to £20 on energy bills and up to £25 on water bills each year.

How to keep your home ventilated



Having the right level of ventilation at home is very important in maintaining good indoor air quality and removing pollutants like cooking fumes. Ventilation also helps regulate internal moisture levels that come from day to day life, and helps prevent problems of damp and black mould growth which can be harmful to our health.

- Make sure to regularly ventilate high moisture areas like kitchens, utility rooms, and bathrooms to prevent damp and mould build up. Opening windows, even just for a few minutes, is an effective way of ventilating.
- If your windows have them, leave trickle vents open and try to only close them during extreme wintery conditions.
- Leave the extractor fan on for at least 20 minutes after cooking, bathing, or showering.
- Cover your pots and pans with lids whilst cooking to minimise vapour.
- If you dry laundry indoors, make sure the windows and doors are open to increase air circulation.
- Pick up an air quality monitor from Baseline Studios to keep an eye on the humidity levels in your home. Call 0800 389 2005 for more information.
- If you are concerned about condensation and mould in your home, contact LWNT for a free condensation and mould MOT. The team will come to survey your home and create a plan to help you tackle the problem.
- Scan the QR code below for more information.



Reduce the effects of cooking



The kitchen is at the heart of the home, but this important room can also account for a significant amount of household energy usage. There are various ways to make kitchens more energy efficient and reduce wastage.

- Do not overfill refrigerators and freezers as it will affect their performance.
- Regularly clean and maintain kitchen appliances and check that the fridge/freezer door seals aren't broken. Also, make sure to defrost the freezer regularly.
- Put your fridge in a spot that has the required space behind it. Do not put it next to a cooker or radiator.
- Cook multiple dishes in the oven to maximise use.
- When using the oven, keep the oven door shut as each time you open it, heat is lost.
- Keep the lids on pots and pans while cooking to minimise vapour. This will allow you to turn the hob down and use less electricity or gas.
- If available use a slow cooker instead of an oven.
- Always unplug appliances when not in use, e.g. microwave ovens or kettles.
- Boil only the water you need for a cup of tea or coffee, or boil a whole kettle and keep it in an insulated flask for use over the whole day.
- If your gas/electric stove and oven need to be replaced, consider getting an induction hob. LWNT is currently running the Goodbye, Gas offer where we will replace your old stove/oven with an efficient induction hob and electric oven for FREE! For more information, please scan below.



How to get the most from your devices



Understanding appliances and devices that you use at home, and how much energy they use, can help you manage your home's energy usage. Keeping these items well maintained can also help maximise lifespan.

- Regularly clean and maintain appliances.
- Maximise the washing machine and dishwasher by doing full loads and lowering the temperature to 30° Celsius. For those on Economy 7 or Economy 11 Tariffs (whose appliances have a timer) set it to run at night or during the off-peak hours when the price is lower.
- Where possible, hang laundry to dry outdoors as tumble dryers use a lot of electricity. If you don't have a garden, hang your washing on a clothes airer in a bathroom and make sure to ventilate.
- If you need to replace appliances choose those that have a high energy efficiency rating such as Band A, and choose the right size for your home.
- Don't leave the TV or other electrical appliances on stand-by mode. Instead, unplug them from the socket so they don't consume any electricity.
- Don't leave your phone or laptop on charge all night. They only need a few hours to charge.
- Ask your children to switch off electric toys and lights when they are not using them. This will teach them useful energy saving habits.
- For more information about home appliances, visit the Energy Saving Trust website by scanning below.



How to reduce your lighting costs



Lighting can be up to 11% of an average household's electricity consumption, and even more when homes use inefficient lights such as incandescent bulbs. Using a more efficient lightbulb can help lower electricity bills without compromising on the quality of light inside the home.

- LED lights have been installed in as many LancasterWest Estate properties as possible. If you require your non-LED lights upgraded to LED, please email us at lancasterwestoffice@rbkc.gov.uk.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Change lightbulbs in all rooms to LED lights as these consume much less energy than traditional incandescent or halogen lightbulbs.
- Make sure all lights are turned off when you go to bed. If the lights are required to be on at night, use a low-energy nightlight, e.g. LED.
- If your LED lights are connected to a mobile application, you can set the timings according to the household needs.
- During winter, allow sunlight to come through on the south-facing side of the house.

Are you getting the best deal?



Changing tariffs with your energy supplier, or moving to a new energy supplier altogether, allows you to get better value for money or better customer service. The process is usually straightforward, and the switch can be done online or over the phone.

- Assess your current tariff, and compare with tariffs from other providers.
- Use Ofgem-accredited price comparison websites when comparing tariffs. Scan the QR code below.
- If you are of pension age or are considered vulnerable, you can register with your energy providers Priority Services Register (PSR). Contact LWNT on 0800 389 2005 if you need assistance in contacting your energy provider to register to the PSR.



Get gardening!



Practicing food sustainability, which includes growing food or buying locally, helps lower your home's environmental impact and can help you save on food expenses.

- Join LWNT's Garden MOT scheme* by sending an email to lancasterwestoffice@rbkc.gov.uk
- Get involved in the sensory wildlife garden at Verity Close Garden of Life where you can grow edible plants.
- Grow your own herbs in pots or planters on your balconies.
- Use the herbs and vegetables grown in the LWE's gardens, e.g. Secret Garden, Thyme Square, etc.
- Gardening can help keep you fit and healthy, so volunteer in LWE's gardens and reap the benefits! You can learn more about our garden activities and how to volunteer here.

*Garden MOT scheme is only available to residents over 65 or those with mobility restrictions.



Other tips



There are many small changes we can make to help reduce our carbon footprint and save on energy and other costs.

- To manage heat during the summer, apply sun-control or other reflective films on south-facing windows to reduce solar heat gain.
- Find free warm spaces in Kensington and Chelsea over the winter by scanning the QR code below.

Energy Café



To find out more, please contact Hazel Dion

hazel.dion@rbkc.gov.uk

07890 396981

Energy Advice drop ins

Everyone deserves to live in a warm and comfortable home and have access to necessary support when needed. A Sustainability Officer is available at Baseline Studios to provide you with free, one-to-one energy advice either by phone, video call, or in person at the Energy Café.

We can provide you advice on reducing energy bills, looking for applicable financial help, and help you register to your energy provider's Priority Service Register.



