

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 on improving 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.

Space heating



In a typical home, space and water heating can account for more than half the fuel costs. With the rising energy bills, there is a lot we can do to make our heating systems run more efficiently, reduce wastage, save money on 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). For instructions on how to use these, check this Youtube video from Groundwork UK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48co8eLBUmG>.
- 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 for 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 items 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.

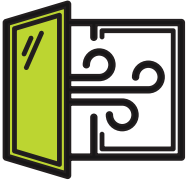
Hot water



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.
- If you are on Economy 7 tariff, ensure that the electric immersion tank is coming on during the off-peak hours when your electricity is much cheaper.
- Upgrade the water cylinder insulation by adding a jacket. These currently cost around £21 in B&Q.

Ventilation



Having the right level of ventilation at home is very important in maintaining good indoor air quality and removing pollutants like cooking fumes, carbon dioxide, and the chemicals that are found in day-to-day items we use. Ventilation also helps regulate internal moisture levels that are generated from human activities, and prevents damp and black mould growth which is harmful to your health.

- As part of the de-carbonisation strategy of Lancaster West Estate, homes that undergo retrofitting are fitted with top of the range Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) units. These are ventilation systems that extract air inside the home and replace it with pre-warmed, fresh air, distributed to all rooms.
- Regularly ventilate high moisture areas like kitchens, utility rooms, and bathrooms to prevent damp and mould build up. Opening windows, even just for 3-5 mins during winter, is one way of ventilating. Leave the trickle vents open and only close during extreme winter conditions. [<Add photo of a trickle vent and video on how to open it>](#)
- Leave the extractor fan on for at least 20 minutes after cooking, bathing, or showering.
- Close pot/pan lids while cooking to minimise vapour.
- Always ventilate the room when drying clothes inside.

Kitchen and 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 energy efficient and reduce wastage.

- Do not overfill refrigerators and freezers as it will affect its performance.
- Regularly clean and maintain kitchen appliances and check that the seals in the refrigerator and freezer are not 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. You will also be able to turn the hob down and use less electricity or gas.
- Use a slow cooker instead of 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 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 visit <https://www.wearew11.org/page/89565>

Appliances and 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, and good maintenance can help maximise lifespan.

- Regularly clean and maintain appliances.
- Maximise the washing machine and dishwasher by doing full loads and use a lower washing temperature, such as 30° Celsius. Also, 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 of electricity 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: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/home-appliances/>.

Lighting



Lighting can be up to 11% of an average household's electricity consumption, and even more so 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.

- Change lightbulbs in all rooms to LED lights as these consume much less energy than traditional incandescent or halogen lightbulbs.
- If your LED lights are connected to a mobile application, you can set the timings according to the household needs.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed. If the lights are required to be on at night, use a low-energy night light, eg. LED.
- During winter, allow sunlight to come through on the south-facing side of the house.

Your energy provider



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.

- Make sure you check if you are eligible to receive the energy discount of £400 (paid over a 6-month period) and the Warm Home Discount.
- If you are of pension age or are considered vulnerable 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.

Food sustainability and wellbeing



Practicing food sustainability, which includes growing food or buying locally, helps lower your homes the 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 Garden where you can grow edible plants.

- Grow your own herbs in pots or on planters on your balconies.
- Use the herbs and vegetables grown in the LWE's gardens, eg. Secret Garden, Thyme Square, etc.

Gardening can help keep you fit and healthy, so volunteer in the LWE's gardens and reap the benefits! Visit <https://www.wearw11.org/en/page/56922> to learn more about our garden activities and to volunteer.

More information on the benefits of gardening can be found in this article from the Royal Horticultural Society: [https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/health-and-wellbeing/articles/why-gardening-makes-us\[1\]feel-better](https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/health-and-wellbeing/articles/why-gardening-makes-us[1]feel-better)

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

Others

Energy Café



The effects of climate change and global warming are not only real but devastating and costly. There are many small changes we can make that can help reduce our carbon footprint and save on energy and other costs.



Contact : **Lilian Gowan**
lilian.gowan@rbkc.gov.uk
07966124510

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 here: **[https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/cost-living-support-hub/stay\[1\]healthy-and-warm-winter/find\[1\]warm-space-near-you#find-a\[1\]warm-space-near-y](https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/cost-living-support-hub/stay[1]healthy-and-warm-winter/find[1]warm-space-near-you#find-a[1]warm-space-near-y)**

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

