



Bracknell Forest Councillors

Energy and water bills - essential advice and awareness

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Project Co-ordinator

Reducing energy and water bills



- What is fuel poverty?
- What's the current situation with home energy?
- Financial help available from Government
- Discounts/grants/financial help from energy and water suppliers
- Advice for those with energy and water debt including trust funds available
- Energy Efficiency grants – contact details at BFC

Fuel Poverty



“Using more than 10% of income on home energy costs”

- Estimated from April 2022 6.3 million UK households will live in fuel poverty
- More likely to affect those with chronic health conditions or disability

What is the current situation?



The Energy Price Guarantee

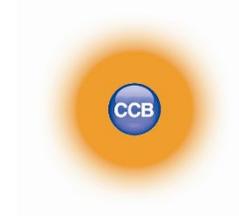
- The Energy Price Guarantee will reduce the unit cost of electricity and gas so that a typical household in Great Britain pays, on average, around £2,500 a year on their energy bill, for the next 2 years, from 1 October 2022.
- The consumer saving will be based on usage, but on average usage a household will save £1,000 a year (based on current prices from October). Energy suppliers will be fully compensated by the government for the savings delivered to households.

The Energy Price Guarantee



-
- <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/what-are-the-price-cap-unit-rates-/>
 - <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/energy-price-guarantee/>
 - Costs roughly 27% higher
 - £400 reduction over six months this winter will mean the average rise in costs is about 6.5%

The Energy Price Guarantee



If you use electricity, but don't use gas for your heating

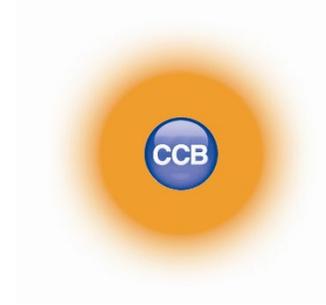
- If you are not able to receive a support for your heating costs through the Energy Price Guarantee (for example because you live in an area of the UK that is not served by the gas grid)
- You will receive an additional payment of £100 to compensate for the rising costs of other fuels such as heating oil.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support/energy-bills-support-factsheet-8-september-2022>

The Energy Price Guarantee



	% increase since last winter	<i>Typical</i> dual-fuel direct debit bill
Price cap last winter	–	£1,277/yr
Current price cap	54%	£1,971/yr
New price guarantee for 2yrs from 1 Oct	96%	£2,500/yr
Price guarantee this winter (including £400 rebate)	64%	£2,100/yr



Financial help from government

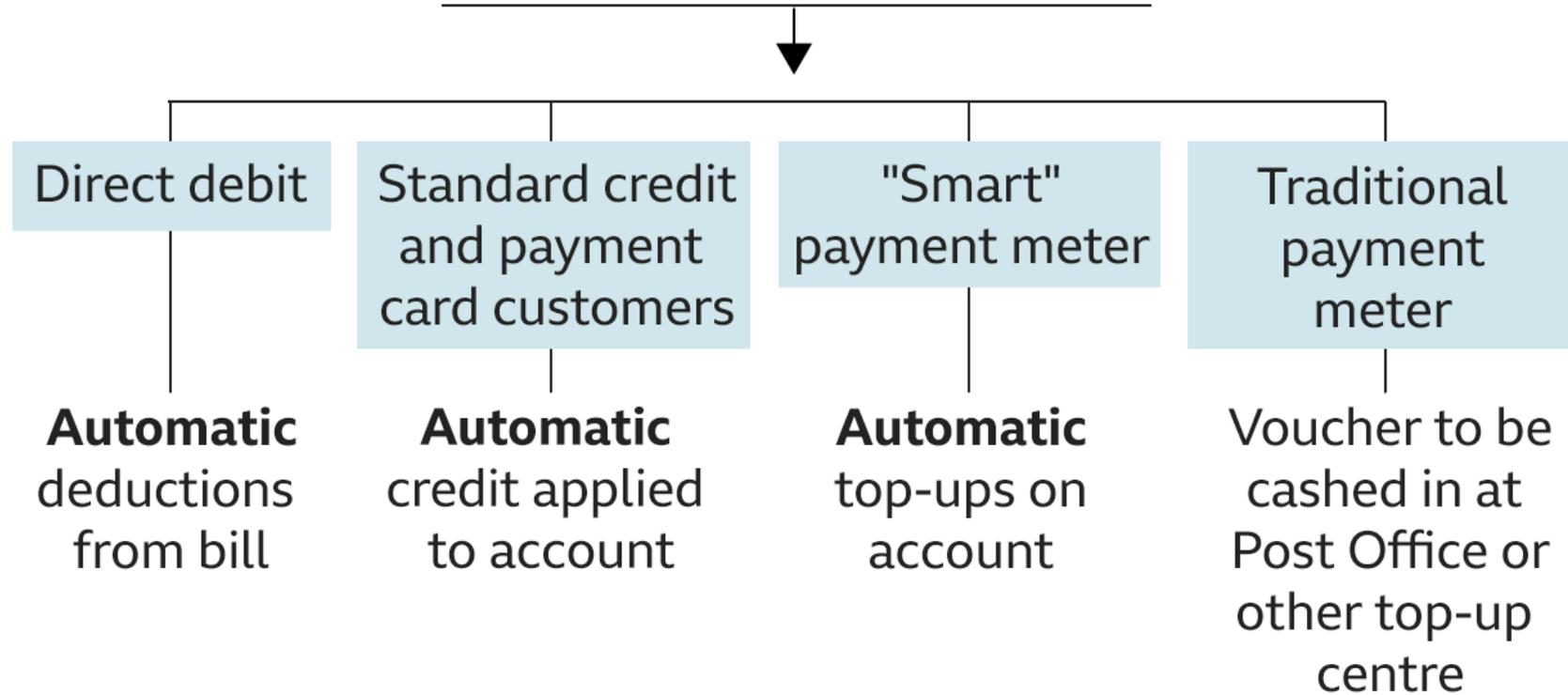
The Energy Bills Support Scheme



- For most people the £400 payment will be applied to your monthly household electricity bill for 6 months starting in October 2022.
- You'll get:
 - £66 in October and November
 - £67 in December, January, February and March
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount>

How do you get your £400?

How do you pay your fuel bill?



Payments or credits will be received monthly from Oct-Mar

Extra payments from government



As well as the £400 to all households:

- *Benefits:* Over eight million homes in the UK on means-tested benefits will get a total payment of £650 this year in two lump sums. The first half has been paid in July, the second half will be paid this autumn (there's no date yet). Full info in [£650 payment help](#).
- *Disabilities:* About six million people across the UK on certain disability benefits will receive an automatic [one-off payment of £150](#). Payments started going out from late Sept.

Extra payments from government

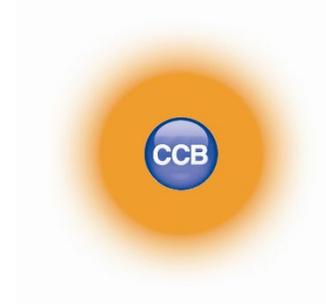


- *Pensioners*: Every UK household with someone over state pension age (aged 66 or above) between 19 and 25 Sept 2022 will also get an extra £300 on top of their normal winter fuel payment (usually between £100 and £300), payable in November or December.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support/energy-bills-support-factsheet-8-september-2022>

See for

- if you live in a park home
- If you pay for your energy as part of your rent



Financial help from suppliers

Warm Home Discount



- £150 discount off your electricity bill paid by March 2023
- Additional payment for:
 - Pensioners on guarantee pension credit
 - Other people who are fuel poor (you may qualify if you get certain benefits)
- Happens automatically (DWP sends info to suppliers, suppliers run more checks to see if you are in the most vulnerable group of households)
- Energy supplier informs those who will get it
- Smaller suppliers don't have to do this, some may still

Warm Home Discount



For non pensioners, each supplier has its own eligibility criteria and a limit on how many discounts it will pay out.

The standard requirements are:

- You're on a low income
- You receive at least one of the following means-tested benefits: Income Support; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; Income-related Employment & Support Allowance; Housing Benefit; Universal Credit; Child Tax Credit; Working Tax Credits; Pension Credit Savings Credit (PCSC).
- Your home must meet also new 'high energy cost' rules. This is where data around floor area, property age and property type is used by the government to identify households that are likely to have high energy costs.

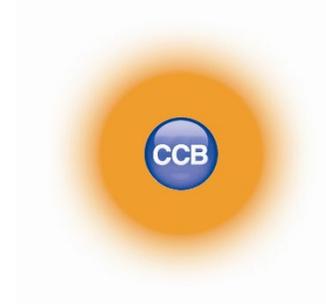
- <https://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/guides/warm-home-discount/>
- <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Benefit-guides/Energy-schemes/Warm-Home-Discount>

Further information



A good link for all you need to know on grants and benefits for your energy bills:

[https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/#Grants To Help Pay Energy Debts](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/#Grants%20To%20Help%20Pay%20Energy%20Debts)



Water Discounts

South East Water Social Tariff



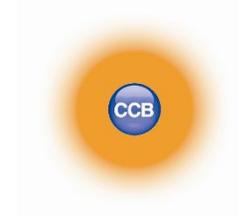
- Your yearly *gross* household income including housing benefit (if applicable) is less than £16,480 from April
- Disability benefits are excluded
- In Thames Water area for waste water - £127.14 cap fresh water + discount of 50% on waste water
- In Southern East Water area for waste water - £17.78 cap fresh water + discount of 25% on the waste water.

South East Water Social Tariff



- If you are in the Southern Water area for waste water
- And your income is over £16,780, but under £21,000 per year
- You may be eligible for a reduction in your waste water charges.

South East Water Watersure



Someone in your household:

- Must receive a means tested benefit AND
 - Must have a medical condition that requires extra water
 - OR
 - Three or more children under the age of 19 living at the property who make you eligible for child benefits
-
- Caps charge
-
- <https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/help/priority-services/help-paying-your-bill>

South East Water Watersure scheme



Must be in receipt of one of these benefits:

- Child Tax Credit (receiving more than the family element)
 - Housing Benefit
 - Employment Support Allowance
 - Job Seekers Allowance
 - Income Support
 - Pension Credit
 - Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit
 - Council Tax Benefit
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- If due to having a large family – receive child benefit for 3 or more children under 19

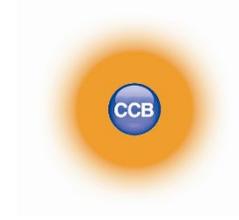
South East Water Watersure scheme



You or someone living in your household has a medical condition that means they use a lot of extra water

- Desquamation (flaky skin disease)
- Weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
- Incontinence
- Abdominal stoma
- Crohn's disease
- Ulcerative colitis
- Renal failure requiring home dialysis (except where the health authority contributes to the cost of the dialysis)
- Another medical condition which requires the use of significant additional water and can be supported by a doctor's certificate (including autistic behaviours etc.)

South East Water Watersure scheme



The current caps for the Watersure Tariff (till end March 23)

In Thames Water area for waste water the caps are: £381.01 per year, £31.75 per month

In South East Water area for waste water the caps are: £469.01 per year, £39.08 per month

Single Occupier Tariff



- Customers who live alone, and are not on a water meter can apply to get a reduction in their bill.
- Charges vary as the reduction depends on the rateable value of their home
- All help from South East Water - <https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/help/priority-services/help-paying-your-bill>

Affinity's Water Low Income Fixed Tariff



Covers some properties in the north and east of the borough, such as Winkfield, Cranbourne and North Ascot

Low Income Fixed Tariff

The named person on the water account either:

- Has a household income of less than £16,480 a year

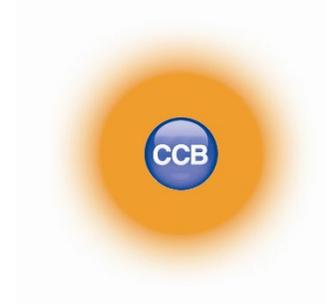
Or

- Claims one of the following benefits - Income related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Pension Credit. They can be working and receiving these benefits too.

Affinity's Water Low Income Fixed Tariff

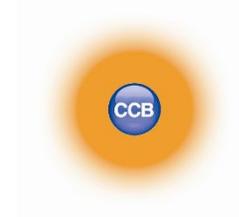


- In 2022/23 their clean water bill will then be capped at £107.20
- For waste water they will then contact Thames Water on the customer's behalf to see whether they would qualify under Thames Water's discount schemes for help with their waste water sewerage, and apply that discount to their *total* Affinity Water bill.



Energy and Water Debt

Grants for Fuel Debt



British Gas Energy Trust

- You don't need to be a British Gas customer
- To apply, you must have had money advice before applying
- <https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/>, 0121 348 7797

Hardship Funds -

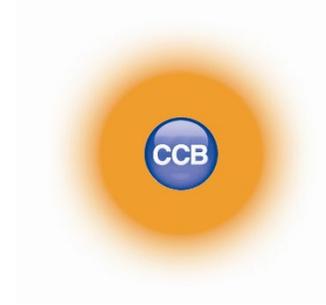


- British Gas Energy Support Fund - [apply for a grant on the British Gas Energy Trust website](#)
- Scottish Power Hardship Fund - [apply for a grant on the Scottish Power Hardship Fund website](#)
- Ovo Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the Ovo Energy Fund website](#)
- E.ON Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the E.ON Energy Fund website](#)
- E.ON Next Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the E.ON Next Energy Fund website](#)
- EDF Energy Customer Support Fund - [sign up to the priority services register to apply for a grant on the EDF Energy website](#)
- Bulb Energy Fund - [apply for a grant on the Bulb Energy Fund website](#)
- Octopus 'Octo Assist Fund' - [apply for a grant on the Octopus website](#)
- Shell Energy Support Fund - [apply for help on the Shell Energy website](#)

Helping Hand Scheme



- South East Water Scheme for helping with debt
- Customers have to show that they can make payments each month for six months towards their usage and an agreed amount off their arrears, and then they can apply to the Helping Hands charity for help to clear the remaining balance.
- Apply through your account or phone South East Water Customer Service to be sent the application form- set criteria, however not published.
- 0800 952 4000



Improving the Energy Efficiency of the Home

BFC schemes – contact Hazel Hill at BFC for more information

<https://www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency>

Signpost for bespoke telephone advice



National Energy Action's WASH Advice Service

- <https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/wash-advice/>
- 0800 304 7159

SSEN Energy Advisor Programme

- <https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/ssen-programme/how-we-help>



Training evaluation

<https://ccberks.wufoo.com/forms/31022-energy-advice-and-awareness/>





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<https://ccberks.org.uk/our-projects/energy-advice-and-fuel-poverty>

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