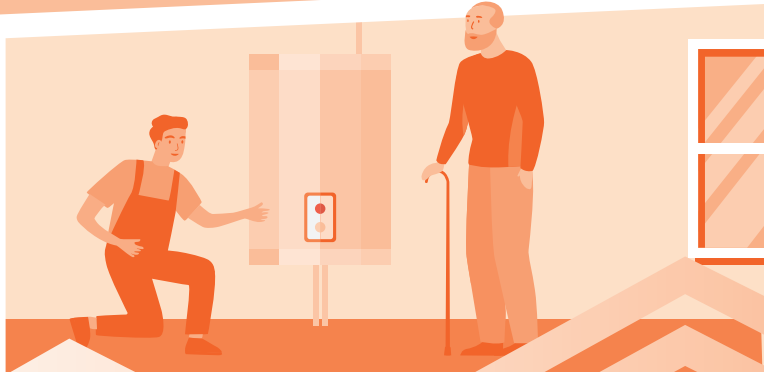




SPITALFIELDS
HOUSING ASSOCIATION
স্পিটফিল্ডস হাউসিং এসোসিয়েশন

Energy Efficiency

A Guide for Tenants



How we can help

At Spitalfields Housing Association (SHA), we are committed to moving towards Net Zero as part of our response to the global climate emergency. At the same time, we understand that managing energy costs can be challenging - especially during colder months, when energy use tends to rise and prices can fluctuate.

This guide has been created to offer practical, everyday advice to help you reduce energy use, lower your bills, and keep your home warm and comfortable.

Why energy efficiency matters?

Improving energy efficiency can help you to:

- Save money on your energy bills
- Keep your home warmer and more comfortable
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Lower the risk of damp, mould, and related health issues

With energy prices still higher than in previous years, even small changes can make a noticeable difference to both comfort and costs.

What is Net Zero?

Net Zero means balancing the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere with the amount we remove, so overall they add up to zero.

In practice, it means:

- Reducing emissions as much as possible: for example, by using cleaner energy and more efficient buildings.
- Offsetting or removing what's left, like planting trees or using carbon-capture technology.

The goal is to slow climate change by stopping extra pollution from building up in the atmosphere.



Simple ways for a more energy efficient home



Switching energy suppliers

- Compare your current energy tariff with other suppliers to check if you could save money.
- Consider different payment methods (direct debit, prepayment, or pay-as-you-go) and choose what suits you best. Paying upfront can mean bigger long-term savings.
- Some suppliers can provide apps or dashboards that show: real-time energy usage, breakdown by appliance, and cost tracking.

Heating and thermostats

- Turn your thermostat down by 1°C - small changes can lead to real savings.
- Do not set temperatures below 18°C if you are elderly, unwell, or have young children.
- Keep doors closed in unused rooms to concentrate heat where it's needed most.
- Bleed radiators regularly to remove trapped air and improve heat circulation.
- Use thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) to control the temperature in individual rooms.
- Consider using an energy monitor to see how much energy you are using and which appliances cost the most to run.



Electricity use

- Replace old bulbs with LED lighting - they last longer and use far less electricity.
- Turn off lights and appliances when not in use.
- Avoid overloading sockets, as this reduces efficiency and increases safety risks.
- Unplug appliances when not in use or left on standby, as many still use electricity even when switched off.



Draughts and insulation

- Seal draughts around doors and windows using draught excluders.
- Close curtains when it gets dark to keep heat in, and tuck them behind radiators where possible.
- Shut doors to rooms you use most often to retain warmth.
- Keep furniture away from radiators so heat can circulate properly.
- Turn down radiators in rooms that are rarely used.
- Cover floors with rugs, mats, or carpets to reduce heat loss.
- Ask SHA about loft or cavity wall insulation if your home feels cold.
- Heavy curtains and draught-proofing strips can significantly improve heat retention.

Simple ways for a more energy efficient home



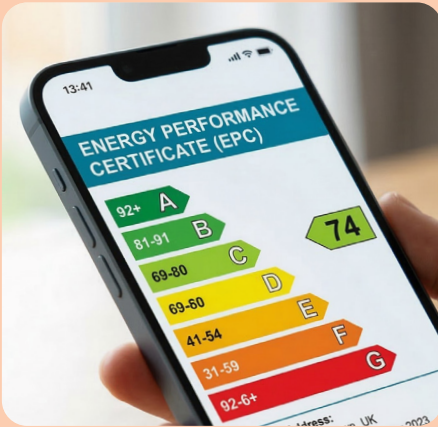
Kitchen and bathroom tips

- Take shorter showers and install water-efficient shower heads where possible.
- Wash clothes at lower temperatures to reduce energy use.
- Dry clothes outdoors or on indoor airers instead of using tumble dryers.
- Keep lids on pots when cooking to reduce cooking time and energy consumption.
- Only boil the amount of water you need in the kettle – kettles are generally cheaper than using an electric hob.



Smart use of meters and appliances

- If available, use a smart meter to track your energy usage and identify where you can save.
- Choose appliances with A-rated energy efficiency, which use the least energy.
- Defrost your freezer regularly to keep it running efficiently and reduce running costs.



Understanding EPC ratings

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) measure how energy-efficient a home is, ranging from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).

Homes with higher EPC ratings usually have:

- Lower energy bills
- Less heat loss
- Reduced environmental impact

Housing providers are increasingly raising EPC ratings and meeting Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in preparation for future requirements.



Everyday considerations can make a difference

If you're trying to stay warm without increasing the heating, the key is to keep heat close to your body, generate small amounts of warmth, and minimise heat loss.

Small changes in daily habits can make a noticeable difference:

Retain body heat

Focus on trapping the warmth your body already produces.

- Wear multiple thin layers rather than one thick one, as they trap warm air more effectively.
- Start with a snug base layer (like thermals), then add items like a jumper or fleece.
- Add a hat or scarf indoors if needed - a lot of heat is lost from the head and neck.
- Wear warm socks and slippers, as heat is easily lost through your feet, especially on hard floors.
- Choose soft, insulating fabrics like wool or fleece, which hold warmth better than lighter materials.
- Avoid staying in damp clothing, as moisture draws heat away from the body.

Use blankets and throws

These help retain warmth without needing to heat the whole room.

- Keep a blanket or throw on the sofa so you stay warm when sitting still.
- Layer blankets rather than relying on one - this improves insulation.
- Electric blankets (for beds or as throws) use far less energy than heating an entire room.
- Use flannel or fleece bedding to keep warmth close to your body overnight.
- A hot water bottle can provide long-lasting, low-cost warmth exactly where you need it.

These small adjustments work by keeping warmth close to you rather than trying to heat the entire space, which is often much less efficient.



Supporting you



SHA is responsible for ensuring homes are safe, warm, and meet current quality standards under the Decent Homes Standard.

Report any repairs as soon as possible. Any serious damp or mould issues should be reported to SHA immediately and will be addressed promptly.

Some older historic homes can be more challenging to insulate and often need to maintain good ventilation - they must “breathe” to help prevent damp and mould.

You can ask SHA officers about planned improvements such as insulation, draught-proofing, or heating upgrades.

Help with energy bills and heating costs

Cold weather payments

You may receive a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, 0°C or below for seven consecutive days.

More information: www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

Warm home discount scheme

A one-off discount applied directly to your electricity bill if you are eligible. The payment is not made directly to you.

More information: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/energy-suppliers



Winter fuel payments

An annual, tax-free government payment to help older people with winter heating costs.

More information: www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Fuel vouchers

If you are struggling to top up a prepayment meter, you may be eligible for a fuel voucher. Vouchers are provided as a code by letter, text, or email and can be used to add credit to your gas or electricity meter.

More information: www.fuelbankfoundation.org/3-things-that-make-a-difference

Oxygen concentrator rebate

If you use an oxygen concentrator due to a disability, you may be able to claim a rebate from your energy supplier to cover the additional electricity costs. Payments are usually made directly to your bank account based on usage readings.

Speak to your oxygen supplier for further details.

By using simple energy-saving measures and staying informed about available support and home improvements, you can make your home warmer, more energy-efficient, and more affordable, while also reducing your carbon footprint.

For more information, read the News & Information section of the SHA website: www.spitalfieldsha.co.uk

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