

A Quids in! Guide

www.quidsinmagazine.com

THE BATH BILL BUSTER

Social
Publishing
project



PRODUCED BY THE SOCIAL PUBLISHING
PROJECT WITH SUPPORT FROM BWCE

✓ SAVE ENERGY ✓ CUT COSTS ✓ GET HELP

SAVE ENERGY

Gas and electricity costs are still rising and many of us fear we can't afford to stay warm. *Quids In!* has found ways to keep out the cold and cut down on energy use, so that we can all be snug as a bug on a budget.

HEATING

- 1 SET YOUR HEATING** to come on 30 minutes before getting up or arriving home and to go off 30 minutes before going to bed or leaving for work. You will avoid heating an empty house which will just cost you money.
- 2 IF YOU CAN TURN YOUR** heating down by 1°C, this can cut your energy use by 10%.
- 3 KEEP** your radiators clear. Don't put anything in front of them or on them.
- 4 CONSIDER** putting radiator panels behind radiators fixed to external walls.
- 5 USE THERMAL** or heavy curtains during the winter. Keep them drawn after dark.
- 6 TRY TO BLOCK** all draughts around the house to help stop the heat from escaping.
- 7 IS YOUR WATER** too hot? Your cylinder thermostat should be set at 60°C.

LAUNDRY

- 8 ALWAYS TRY TO** use a full load in a washing machine. Half loads waste energy.
- 9 USE AN ECONOMY** programme on your washing machine whenever possible.
- 10 WASH** your clothes on a lower heat. Most modern washing powders work well at 30°C or 40°C.
- 11 IF THE WEATHER IS FINE,** dry your laundry outside instead of using the tumble dryer.
- 12 DON'T DRY CLOTHES** on the radiators. It makes your boiler work harder than it needs to.
- 13 KEEP FILTERS** clean in your tumble dryer.
- 14 HANG** or fold clothes up straight away after drying them so they will need less ironing. If you're going to iron make sure the clothes are still slightly damp, they will iron more easily.

- SAVE CASH

TIME TO SWITCH!

We may be tired of people telling us to switch our energy supplier, but brand new figures show that we're a mug if we don't. The average saving people make when they switch gas and electricity supplier has risen to a whopping £228 per year and you could easily save up to £400 – think what you could do with all that cash! Uswitch are the biggest outfit, but there are others like consumer champs Which! and brand new phone-only social enterprise Citrus Energy you might prefer.

**SAVE
£100S!**

USWITCH
www.uswitch.com

WHICH!
www.which.com/switch

CITRUS ENERGY
0800 221 8089





**GET £140
TOWARDS YOUR
HEATING BILL!**

THE WARM HOMES DISCOUNT

If you live in a low-income household the government and the larger electricity and gas suppliers have teamed up to offer a whopping £140 discount on your winter heating bill. The scheme's not perfect as every supplier has slightly different ways they judge if you qualify...

To find out if you qualify for the warm homes discount you'll need to give your gas or electricity supplier a ring and ask. Most also have online forms you can fill in.

However if you receive the Guarantee Credit Element of a Pension (that's the extra top-up paid if you don't have other income than the state pension) or are in receipt of certain other benefits such as Job Seeker's Allowance or Universal Credit, or have a household income under £16,000 or so per

year you will probably qualify. And even if you don't, but are struggling, it's still worth asking. The Warm Home Discount scheme is worth £140 to you if you qualify – and it's applied directly to your bill – so when the dreaded bill drops on your doormat it'll be a whole £140 cheaper. Well worth a phone call!

If you're not confident about ringing up, ask someone to do it for you. Your landlord may be happy to help for example. Or if you're 50 or over Bath Age UK will happily ask on your behalf. Turn to page 7 for details.

RESOURCE SAVING

- 15 ENERGY SAVING** light bulbs last up to 10 times longer and cost less to run. And of course, remember to turn off the lights when you don't need or aren't using them.
-
- 16 UNPLUG** your mobile phone or games console from the socket when it has charged.
-
- 17 SWITCH APPLIANCES** off standby, leaving TVs and other devices on standby wastes valuable energy.
-
- 18 A DRIPPING** hot water tap wastes energy and in one week wastes enough water to fill half a bath.
-
- 19 LIMIT** the time you spend in showers or buy a shower monitor to watch how much hot water you're using.

Find out more...

Call the Home Heat helpline on **0800 33 66 99** for more help and advice on paying your energy bills. Calls are free and they have access to all sorts of schemes that can help you with your heating costs!

IN THE KITCHEN

- 20 YOU CAN SAVE** fuel by putting lids on saucepans when cooking.
-
- 21 ONLY FILL** the kettle with as much water as you actually need.
-
- 22 WHEN BOILING** vegetables use just enough water to keep them covered.
-
- 23 ALWAYS USE** the right size of pan for your cooking ring.
-
- 24 TRY TO AVOID** putting hot food in a fridge or a freezer. Let it cool down first.
-
- 25 KEEP YOUR FRIDGE** at the optimum temperature of around 3°C to 5°C.
-
- 26 DON'T LEAVE** the fridge or freezer door open any longer than you need. Position them away from cookers and direct sunlight where possible.
-
- 27 YOU WILL SAVE** electricity if you regularly defrost your freezer.
-
- 28 WHEN REPLACING** electrical goods look for an 'A' energy rating. Don't buy bigger items than you need.



GRANTS AND SUPPORT FOR ENERGY SAVING HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Bath & North East Somerset Council's Energy at Home Scheme is helping residents improve their home's energy performance and bring down their energy bills.

The Scheme provides a free Advice Service which gives expert guidance on all aspects of home energy;

- ✓ get a better deal on your energy bills,
- ✓ help to get out of fuel debt,
- ✓ learn how to use your heating system and appliances efficiently,
- ✓ find out which energy saving improvements might be appropriate for your home,
- ✓ what grants and finance are available to help you

Improvements such as **new boilers, heating controls, insulation, improved glazing and external doors**, and **renewable technologies** are all available through the Scheme. Grants of **up to £6,000** for solid wall insulation and **up to £2,000** for other improvements are currently available to homeowners, private landlords and private tenants to help cover the costs. Additional support may be available for low income or vulnerable residents who struggle to keep their home warm in winter.

energy
at home

**CONTACT THE ENERGY AT HOME
ADVICE SERVICE TO FIND OUT MORE:**

Freephone 0800 038 5680, Monday to Friday
9am-6pm, and Saturday mornings 9am-12pm.
email advice@energyathome.org.uk or visit
the website www.energyathome.org.uk

Have you heard about the Age UK B&NES Winter Warmth Project?

50 or over? Struggling to pay your bills? We can help!

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013, **5,510** households in Bath and 3,844 in North East Somerset** were living in fuel poverty, with this figure rising year by year



B&NES ranks roughly **272nd** out of 326 local authorities, with 1st being the best and 326th the worst



There have been **1020** excess winter deaths in Bath and North East Somerset over the past 10 years (2003-2013)*

In 2011/12 there were **50** excess winter deaths in Bath among older people, and 10 in North East Somerset

Our **Winter Warmth Project** is aimed at ensuring all older people are able to stay warm at home and get the best energy deal possible.

We can help with:

- ✓ Managing debt
- ✓ Switching supplier
- ✓ Applying for money to help pay bills
- ✓ ...and much, much more!

Our service is **FREE** and completely confidential. Get information and advice now by giving our friendly local staff a call on **01225 466135**.



*[ONS - Excess Winter Mortality in England and Wales, 2013/14 (Provisional) and 2012/13 (Final)]
** [DECC - sub-regional Fuel Poverty England 2013 Low Income High Costs (LIHC) definition]



GET SOME HELP!

Here's where to go for more support and advice

ENERGY AT HOME ADVICE SERVICE

Local help with your bill and access to grants

Freephone **0800 038 5680**

www.energyathome.org.uk

AGE UK (BATH)

Support for over 50s to manage debts, switch suppliers and access grants

01225 466135

HOME HEAT HELPLINE

National Hotline for more help and advice on paying your energy bills

0800 33 66 99



SWITCH YOUR ENERGY

We recommend you start with one of the following

USWITCH

The biggest switcher with most options

www.uswitch.com

WHICH!

Well-known and trusted consumer brand

www.which.com/switch

CITRUS ENERGY

Brand new social enterprise

0800 221 8089



This magazine has been supported by Bath & West Community Energy, a co-operative that generates green energy in the local area. To find out more about them visit **www.bwce.coop**