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# YOUR GUIDE TO **TELFORD ENERGY ADVICE**



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

# THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

## **fuel poverty in Telford & Wrekin**

Fuel poverty in England, as of 2014, is measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under this indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if:

- they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below

and

- when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

There are 3 important elements in determining whether a household is fuel poor:

- Household income.
- Household energy requirements.
- Fuel prices.

The latest sub regional fuel poverty data was published in April 2023 by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, using 2021 data.

The data shows that 14.9% of households in Telford and Wrekin were fuel poor in 2021 (11,686 households) compared to a regional average of 18.5% and average of 13.1% for England. The West Midlands has the highest fuel poverty rate in England.

You can view the data here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2023-2021-data>

**[www.gov.uk/government/statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics)**

Statistics correct as of 21st March 2023 by Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

# WHO ARE WE?

## The TEA team

**Telford Energy Advice is a partnership between local charity Marches Energy Agency and Telford & Wrekin Council.**

TEA is a handholding service offering free, impartial energy advice, bespoke to the individual circumstances of Telford & Wrekin residents.

Our dedicated local experts can help with a range of queries, including:

- General help and advice relating to energy efficiency and bills
- Help with tackling fuel debt and issues with energy suppliers
- Help accessing grants for insulation and heating improvements
- Home energy checks and free energy saving measures



# What is the energy price cap?

Between 1 April to 30 June 2024 the energy price cap is set at £1,690 per year for a typical household who use electricity and gas and pay by Direct Debit. This is £238 lower than the cap set between 1 January to 31 March 2024 (typically £1,928).

The price cap is based on typical household energy use. The price cap also makes sure that prices for people on a standard variable tariff (default tariff) are fair and that they reflect the cost of energy.

The next price cap announcement dates are as follows:

- 24 May 2024 – period 1 July to 30 September 2024
- 27 August 2024 – period 1 October to 31 December 2024
- 25 November 2024 – period 1 January to 31 March 2025

You can check for the price cap latest updates on the Ofgem website: [HERE](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

## Energy price cap rates 1 April to 30 June 2024

If you are on a standard variable tariff (default tariff) and pay for your electricity and/or gas by Direct Debit, you will pay on average (incl. VAT):



### Gas

6.04p per kilowatt hour (kWh).  
Daily standing charge is 31.43p per day.



### Electric

24.50p per kilowatt hour (kWh).  
Daily standing charge is 60.10p per day.



### Economy 7

Ofgem do not set a price cap for day and night rates. The energy suppliers set these rates, however rates must not exceed the price cap rates (as stated above).

[www.ofgem.gov.uk](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

Information correct as of 21st March 2024, Ofgem.



# How can I save energy at home?



Wash at 30°C and wash a full load.



Keep time in showers to a minimum.

You can order free water saving devices from Severn Trent Water through their 'Get Water Fit' scheme:

<https://www.stwater.co.uk/wonderful-on-tap/save-water/get-water-fit>.



Turn your thermostat down a degree.

*(not recommended for elderly people, people with health conditions or families with young children)*



Install low-cost energy saving measures like LED bulbs and draught excluders.



Wear additional layers of clothing, purchase heated throws and seat covers. We also recommend heated gilets.

# Low cost measures to keep you cosy!

If you are relying on the below methods to keep warm please get in touch with us for help and support by calling 0800 677 1952. Don't worry alone, we are here to help.

	How to heat	Average cost	Cost per hour
 <b>Heated gilet</b>	Charge via USB	£50 (including battery pack)	Less than 1p
 <b>Heated blanket &amp; throw</b>	Plug into mains	£35 (throw) £40 (blanket)	2p
 <b>Draught Excluders</b>	Put under doors or over letter boxes	£10	No further cost
 <b>Hand Warmers</b>	Charge via USB	£15	Less than 1p
 <b>Hot Water Bottle</b>	Boil water in kettle	£5.50	6p
 <b>Heated Insoles</b>	Plug into USB	£10	Less than 1p

Monro, MSE, 2024



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# Your energy queries answered

The Cost of Living Crisis means many Telford householders are now spending a high proportion of their household income just to keep their home at a reasonable temperature, with disposable income decreasing for struggling householders. Whilst energy costs are starting to reduce they are still far higher than pre-covid levels.

## What help is there for me if I have no money for gas or electric?

Contact your energy supplier for emergency credit first of all. We also encourage you to get in touch with Telford Energy Advice as soon as possible - don't keep it inside, reach out to our friendly team for help. We can help with things like resolving billing issues, providing emergency support in a crisis, and advising on how you can save money and energy in your home.

If you are worried about your energy bills and how you will keep warm this winter and would like to speak to one of our friendly team for free and impartial advice, you can call Telford Energy Advice on 0800 677 1952 or email [tea@mea.org.uk](mailto:tea@mea.org.uk) weekdays between 9am-5pm.

## What happens if I don't top up my pre-payment meter when its warm outside?

Your appliances and lights will go off and anything plugged into the mains will not work. This is called self-disconnection. If it's electric, your fridge freezer will go off alongside house alarms including wired smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. You will need to check these are working after you top up your prepayment meter.

If you have mains gas, be aware that the boiler may malfunction, alongside hobs and ovens. If they are old, they may not have the safety features that stop the gas if there is no flame. Always check the status of gas appliances if supply is interrupted.

Remember, you are still accruing a standing charge everyday so you risk being in debt when you start using the gas again.

### **I can't read or access my meter, can my energy supplier help me?**

If your meter is inaccessible, contact your energy supplier and ask them to move it somewhere more suitable - or you can ask them to install a SMART meter so you no longer have to take readings.

### **How do I switch from a pre-payment meter to monthly payments?**

It's best to contact your energy supplier. They will likely perform a credit check before they agree to switch your account to a direct debit account.

### **How can I reduce the amount they are taking for a debt on my pre-payment meter?**

You can speak to your supplier to see if they're willing to negotiate a lower repayment plan, or get support from TEA. It is not always possible to get the amount reduced, but it's always better to tackle the issue early, so if you have any concerns about debt you should speak to your supplier as soon as possible.

### **Can my energy supplier pay off my fuel debts?**

Not directly, but in some cases debt can be reduced or cleared through a trust fund application. In some cases, TEA can assist with this. We also recommend you seek debt advice from services like StepChange and Citizen's Advice.



# What's available in Telford?

## Connected for Warmth scheme

For loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and low carbon heating.  
Eligibility criteria apply.  
<https://www.connectedforwarmth.org.uk/>

## LEAP boiler scheme

For broken boilers, must be in a no heat situation. Eligibility criteria apply.  
Usually only open during the winter months.  
<https://applyforleap.org.uk/the-leap-boiler-scheme/>

## Struggling with debt?

Please speak to a TEA advisor for advice and support.  
Whilst we only deal with energy-related queries, we may be able to assist you with a referral for wider support, or you can try the organisations below:

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Advice line: 0808 278 7988 (Freephone)  
Local line: 01952 567193  
<https://www.citizensadvice.telfordandthewrekin.org.uk/contact-us>

### Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

01274 760720  
<https://capuk.org/contact-us>

### National Debtline

0808 808 4000.  
Monday to Friday: 9am - 8pm, Saturday: 9:30am - 1pm  
<https://nationaldebtline.org/contact-us/>

### Stepchange

0800 138 1111.  
Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 9am to 2pm  
<https://www.stepchange.org/contact-us.aspx>

**TELFORD  
CRISIS  
SUPPORT**

Telford Energy Advice has partnered up with Telford Crisis Support! TCS support with food, baby & toddler items, school uniform swaps and more.

**Contact: 01952 586 646**  
**[admin@telfordcrisissupport.org.uk](mailto:admin@telfordcrisissupport.org.uk)**



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# Home Upgrade Grant.

You may be eligible\* for FULLY funded:

- Cavity or Solid Wall Insulation
- Loft Insulation
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- High Heat Retention Storage Heaters

Do you answer **YES** to **ALL** of the following?

- ✓ Don't have mains gas heating
- ✓ Own your home  
(private rented tenants can apply with landlord's permission\*\*)
- ✓ Annual household income under £36,000, **or** receive a means-tested benefit, **or** qualify through flexible eligibility\* such as long term health condition, being in receipt of free school meals or a council tax rebate†  
† excluding single person rebate.

SCAN



<https://bit.ly/TelfordHUG>

Apply online, or get in touch  
via the details below

 **0800 677 1952**



**tea@mea.org.uk**

\* Subject to full eligibility criteria. See website for details.

\*\* Landlords will be expected to contribute towards the cost of works.

marches  
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# Warm & Well Telford

## An energy efficiency scheme by Telford & Wrekin Council

Telford & Wrekin Council is committed to reducing fuel poverty in the Borough, so are looking to help householders reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions. Warm & Well Telford is the latest addition to a number of energy efficiency grants and support schemes that the council is already offering to Borough households, such as the Home Upgrade Grant. The more energy efficient our homes are, the less they cost to heat and keep warm.

### The Warm and Well Telford grant is available to eligible households and the following measures are on offer:

- Smart thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) - these can help to keep your home comfortably warm, for less. Smart TRVs are designed to reduce temperatures in unoccupied spaces - saving energy and reducing fuel bills.
- Energy efficient glazing - can help reduce heat loss through windows. The scheme will be focussing on homes primarily with windows which are single glazed or in poor condition (up to 2 windows per property).
- Energy efficient external doors - can prevent the heat escaping and stop the cold getting in, keeping your energy usage lower and your home warmer (1 door per property).

### Warm and Well grant funding is available for owner-occupiers and private rented properties, subject to the following eligibility criteria:

- Energy Performance Certificate **(EPC) rating of D, E, F or G** (D or E for private rentals).
- someone in the household receives a means-tested benefit **OR** the gross combined household income is less than £50,000 per year.

Private tenants can apply for the grant with their landlord's permission. Landlords will be asked to contribute to any work carried out.

For more information please refer to the full eligibility criteria guidance on the application form here: <https://forms.office.com/e/UeTJAp4NeQ>

T&Cs apply. Please note, an eligible application does not guarantee receipt of measures, which are subject to: survey, availability, property suitability, access, funding caps and timescales.

Contact TEA on 0800 677 1952 or email [tea@mea.org.uk](mailto:tea@mea.org.uk) to find out more.

# If you haven't already... join the priority services register.

**The Priority Services Register is a free support service to support vulnerable people. Contact TEA and we can help you get registered.**

The benefits of the **Priority Services Register**:

- You'll receive notice of planned power cuts.
- Priority support in an emergency. Network operators may be able to provide heating and cooking facilities if you are cut off supply.
- Identification and password scheme. This could include arranging a password or agreed on picture cards if callers need to visit or contact you. This way you can feel confident they are genuine.
- Nominee scheme. You can nominate someone to receive communications and bills from your supplier. For example, a family member, carer or someone you trust.
- Help with prepayment meter access. For example, moving a meter if you can't safely get to it to top up.
- Regular meter reading services. For example, if nobody can read your meter.
- Accessible information. For example, account info and bills in large print or braille.

## **You are eligible if you:**

- have reached your state pension age
- are disabled or have a long-term medical condition
- are recovering from an injury
- have a hearing or sight condition
- are pregnant
- have young children under 5
- have experienced domestic abuse
- have extra communication needs

Call **Telford Energy Advice** on **0800 677 1952** to find out whether you are eligible and for help with signing up!



# Be Aware of Energy Scams

**You may have received unsolicited letters, phone calls or home visits offering energy efficiency improvements to your home.**

It is important to be vigilant as what they are offering may not be as described.

You may not be sure if the company is legitimate or trustworthy.

## **Here are things to consider if you are cold-called:**

- Always ask for photo ID so you can identify the company name and staff member.
- Never give out your bank account sort code, account number, or credit card numbers. You may need to supply evidence of your income for a grant scheme, but they should never ask for your bank payment information, or passwords and PIN number.
- Offers of any home energy efficiency improvements are speculative, the measures suggested to you might not always be suitable for your home. A survey of your property should determine which measures may, or may not be suitable.
- Residents should always consider improving their insulation before installing low carbon heating.
- Residents are under no obligation to accept works and should not be pressured into doing so.

**If you're in doubt about a letter, call, or visit you have received, or wish to check the authenticity of a scheme or an installer, please contact Telford Energy Advice on 0800 677 1952.**



# Heating, windows & solar PV panels - Mary's story

“ It's lovely, absolutely smashing, fitted beautifully and wonderful quality. Making a lot of difference with draughts. ”



**How we helped:** Telford Energy Advice (TEA) met Mary at a local event and have supported her to get fully-funded energy efficiency measures via the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG1) administered by Telford & Wrekin Council.

**What was the property like beforehand?** Mary's property is a detached house c. 1930s. The EPC rating was G1, the lowest possible rating and she has always relied on coal fires to heat the house. The windows were single-glazed and very draughty and would condensate in cold weather.

## The effect this has had on Mary's life:

Mary is delighted with the new measures and is already noticing the benefits in her house, which is now much more energy efficient, with the EPC jumping from G1 to D68, even generating electricity from the sun via the solar panels.

# Insulation - Steve's story

“ Living conditions are better, it feels warmer in the house and is better to come home to after being at work all day. ”

Steve applied to the fully funded home improvements scheme administered by Telford & Wrekin Council and TEA, after he and his wife were so cold during the winter they had to go to bed early just to keep warm under the covers.

Steve received fully funded external wall insulation and loft insulation and now their home is a much more comfortable temperature. Their heating bills have reduced and they are able to enjoy evenings together downstairs without being too cold.





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