



Press release

Get help cutting gas and electricity bills in Kirklees

Advisers are now on hand in Kirklees to help people understand the ways they can reduce their energy bills.

Research last year revealed 3 in 10 people believe they will be unable to heat their homes to a comfortable level over the winter.

To help people cut down on costs Kirklees Citizens Advice & Law Centre are running Energy Best Deal sessions until May.

Advisers at these sessions can help people compare their gas and electricity costs, negotiate with providers and reduce how much energy they use.

In many cases people can save hundreds of pounds on their gas and electricity bills. Some people will be able to save money by switching to a cheaper deal with another supplier. Citizens Advice has estimated that as many as 4.7 million households in England haven't switched their energy supplier for 10 years.

People may also be able to cut costs by making their home more energy efficient. This could involve having their boiler serviced or getting double glazing for their windows.

Last year a record 14,000 people from across the UK attended an Energy Best Deal session to get help saving money on their bills.

Energy Best Deal is a project run by Citizens Advice and funded by voluntary contributions from energy companies, who this year contributed £1.4 million to fund it.

Craig Eastwood, Head of the Financial Information Team at Kirklees Citizens Advice & Law Centre said:

“Bigger bills for gas and electricity can add to people’s financial worries at the beginning of the year.

“Many people could be able to save hundreds on their bills by switching to a cheaper deal or making their home more energy efficient.

“Anyone who wants to trim the cost of their gas and electricity can get in touch with our team of Energy Best Deal advisers for help.”

As well as helping people looking to save money on their bills directly, last year Energy Best Deal also trained 5,900 professionals who work to support people with issues such as homelessness and health problems. This training enables them to pass on tips to the people they support who could also benefit from cutting their energy bills.

Anyone looking to cut their bills should contact **Kirklees Citizens Advice & Law Centre** on 0344 848 7970 to find out if they can benefit from Energy Best Deal.

Energy top tips

1. If you are having problems paying your energy bills contact your nearest Citizens Advice. They can check to see if you are getting the benefits you are entitled to, or if you are eligible for extra help.
2. Contact your supplier if you have problems paying or if you think your bill is wrong. If you're struggling to afford your bills they should refer you to available support or talk you through repayment options.
3. Make sure that you're on the cheapest tariff. Check with your supplier and use the Citizens Advice price comparison tool to see what the best available deal for you is:
<https://energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk>
4. If you are on the standard variable tariff check if there is a cheaper fixed deal available. The standard tariff is often much more expensive than other available fixed price tariffs, where the price of a unit of energy will stay the same for the length of the deal.
5. Check your bills carefully and send a meter reading to your supplier regularly. This will allow you to check how much energy you use and make sure you're paying the right amount. You can find out more about how to do this here:
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/your-energy-meter/how-to-read-your-energy-meter>
6. If you use a pre-payment meter, remember that standing charges will be added daily - even when you aren't using energy. Check how much they are and keep your meter topped up even during warm weather to avoid unexpected charges
7. If you use heating oil as your main fuel, buy before winter and see if there are any local oil buying clubs you can join. If not, you might want to start your own.
8. Make your home more energy efficient – insulate lofts and walls, double glaze or use thick curtains to keep the heat in, and get your boiler serviced or replaced to ensure it is energy efficient. You can find out whether you are eligible for financial help with this here:
<https://www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator>
9. Avoid leaving appliances on standby or leave laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily. Fix leaking taps and always turn off the light when you leave a room.
10. Do a home energy check to find out about savings on household energy bills:
<http://hec.est.org.uk>

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For more information contact: Kirklees Citizens Advice www.advicekirklees.org.uk

Tel: 0844 848 7970

Notes to editors:

1. Energy suppliers contributed £1.397, 178 for Energy Best Deal delivery between January and May 2017. The funding was contributed by the energy companies EDF Energy, First Utility, Scottish Power, SSE and Utility Warehouse.
2. A questionnaire of 7,400 people attending Energy Best Deal sessions by the Centre for Sustainable Energy found that 3 in 10 said they couldn't heat their home to a comfortable level in winter.
3. Energy Best Deal is delivered through regional Financial Capability Forums and overseen by Citizens Advice.