

# Gas & Electricity

## What is it for?

You will need to heat and light your home, cook and operate electrical appliances. Paying for your gas and electricity is a **priority**. If you do not pay your gas and electricity charges, you can have your supply disconnected.

## I have just moved in – who supplies my gas and electricity?

If you've just moved into a property and you do not know who your gas supplier is, you can call the National Grid Meter Number Helpline on 0870 608 1524.

To find out who supplies your electricity you can call the regional electricity distribution number. The number for properties in Runcorn Borough Council's area is 0845 601 5467.

## How much will my gas and electricity cost?

The following are average prices for dual fuel (both gas and electricity) and Economy 7 and will vary according to which utility company you choose and how much fuel you use.

Usage Level	Payment Method	Yearly		Monthly		Weekly	
		Standard Dual Fuel	Economy 7	Standard Dual Fuel	Economy 7	Standard Dual Fuel	Economy 7
Low 1 or 2 bed flat Single person / a couple	Direct Debit	£875	£908	£73	£76	£17	£17
	Standard Credit	£968	£1,000	£81	£83	£19	£19
	Prepayment	£945	£975	£79	£81	£18	£19
Medium 2 bed flat or house Single person / a couple with children	Direct Debit	£1,257	£1,358	£105	£113	£24	£26
	Standard Credit	£1,372	£1,474	£114	£123	£26	£28
	Prepayment	£1,353	£1,452	£113	£121	£26	£28
High 3 / 4 bed house Single person / a couple with children	Direct Debit	£1,758	£1,978	£147	£165	£34	£38
	Standard Credit	£1,903	£2,128	£159	£177	£37	£41
	Prepayment	£1,889	£2,111	£157	£176	£36	£41

Figures are for guidance only and are correct as of 15 October 2012

Paying by Direct Debit and having the same supplier for your gas and electricity (dual fuel) generally saves you money on your bills. However, please note that not all properties have a gas supply.

## Struggling to make ends meet?

If you are on a low income and struggling with your energy bills, there is help available which you may be able to apply for. Participating energy suppliers are providing financial support to some of their customers who are on a low income or to those who are most vulnerable.

## Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is a scheme which is being phased in over a four year period to replace social tariffs. It is an annual credit that suppliers will place on the account of an eligible consumer. During 2012/2013 this will be worth £130 and will apply to two distinct groups - the 'Core Group' and the 'Broader Group'.

### Which consumers make up the 'Core Group'?

For 2012/13, consumers are eligible for the Warm Home Discount Core Group if on 21 July 2012 they are either:

- Aged under 80 and receiving only the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (no Savings Credit); or
- Aged 80 or over and are receiving the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, (even if they get Savings Credit as well)

The following must also apply:

- The consumer's name, or their partner's name must be on the electricity bill
- The consumer purchases electricity from one of the energy suppliers participating in this scheme

Consumers in the Core Group should automatically receive a letter from the Government.

### Which consumers make up the 'Broader Group'?

Unlike the 'Core Group' there is no single criteria set for all the suppliers to follow. Each supplier sets their own policy.

Places on the 'Broader Group' of the Warm Home Discount are provided on a 'first come first served' basis for those that meet the eligibility criteria, and places are limited.

The participating suppliers have had their own sets of eligibility criteria and have a limit on the number of customers who can benefit. Customers who may be eligible could include those on low income with a disability, long term illness or those with young children, but the actual criteria used will vary as it depends on which electricity supplier you are with. A discount of £130 will be issued via the electricity bill of customers who have been identified under the Broader Group scheme in 2012/13. Contact your energy supplier to find out more.

## Energy Trust Funds

At present British Gas, EDF and npower offer trust funds which are available for their customers, which can help consumers to pay off fuel debt or in extreme situations they can help towards making other essential purchases.

Strict criteria apply, and proof of income, evidence of disability and all relevant bills must be sent together with an application form.

If you are a customer of one of these suppliers and need help or assistance with fuel debt or would like to apply for financial help to purchase an essential household item, please contact your supplier.

## Switching suppliers

You should regularly (approximately every six months) compare energy prices to get the best price. You can do this by contacting the different suppliers directly, or by price comparison websites.

You can get the latest information on recent energy price changes from [www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities).

Be aware that you may be required to sign up to a minimum term contract, with fees if you leave the supplier early.