



CONTACT US

advice@mea.org.uk



WEBSITE

*[https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/
private-sector-housing/affordable-
warmth-and-energy-efficiency/](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/private-sector-housing/affordable-warmth-and-energy-efficiency/)*



PHONE

0800 112 3743

YOUR GUIDE TO

THE ENERGY CRISIS

from the Keep Shropshire Warm team

What is the energy crisis?



From 1 April 2022, about 18 million households on standard energy tariffs have seen an annual bill increase of £693 - from £1,277 to £1,971 per year. The price cap is reviewed every six months, and prices will rise significantly again in October.



Some 4.5 million prepayment customers have already seen an average increase of £708 - from £1,309 to £2,017.



The cap determines how much companies can charge for average usage, but if you use more energy, you will be charged more.



Energy bills won't rise immediately for customers on fixed rates, but many are likely to see a significant increase when their deal ends.



Bills are going up because the energy price cap - the maximum price suppliers in England, Wales and Scotland can charge households - is being raised.



Energy firms have been able to increase bills by 54% following the introduction of the new cap on 1 April.



Bills are likely to reach over £3,000 a year by this October 2022.

Your energy queries answered

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 are on 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.

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 KSW. 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, KSW can assist with this. We also recommend you seek debt advice from services like StepChange and Citizen's Advice.

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.

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 Keep Shropshire Warm 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.

Am I living in fuel poverty?

A household is classed as being in fuel poverty when low incomes and low home energy efficiency leave residents struggling to pay for energy.

The West Midlands region has the highest percentage of householders in fuel poverty across England, with 17.5% of all households being classed as fuel poor. In Shropshire, over 14.5% of households are fuel poor. This is likely to rise when the new energy price cap is increased in October 2022.

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

Keep Shropshire Warm on **0800 112 3743** or email **advice@mea.org.uk** weekdays between 9am-5pm.

Links to Central Government Support

Cost of living support (26/05/22) - Factsheet link [here](#)

Winter Fuel Payment - <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>

Warm Homes Discount - <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

Cold Weather payment - <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>

Shropshire-based energy support

Sustainable Warmth Shropshire - Energy efficiency grants available to help with heating, insulation and improving the energy efficiency of homes. Eligibility criteria apply - the Keep Shropshire Warm team can advise or residents can apply online directly here: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/keep-shropshire-warm>

- Loft, cavity and solid wall insulation
- Park home insulation
- Floor and roof insulation
- Air source heat pumps, as first-time central heating or to replace old or broken LPG, oil or solid fuel heating systems
- Modern high heat retention electric storage heating
- First-time double glazing and external door upgrades
- Solar PV panels and battery storage technology

Scan the QR code
for our application
form



Priority Services Register – we can register vulnerable householders so that they are prioritised in the event of a power cut.

Warm Home Discount applications - eligible residents may be able to obtain an energy bill discount.

Health and cold homes – Healthy Homes Shropshire provides in-depth support to those struggling with a cold home and health conditions or other vulnerabilities. In addition to our usual suite of support, we can now also help with flexible crisis support including small grants.

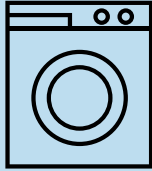
Retrofitting energy measures – we have a pilot project looking at upscaling home retrofit in the Marches. This will include providing a fully-funded Energy Efficiency survey for your home. If residents are interested in being involved, encourage them to get in touch – reference 'Future Ready Homes' to enable them to be directed to the right team.

Householders can apply to the Future Ready Homes scheme via this link <https://mea.org.uk/our-work/future-ready-homes/>



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How can I save energy at home?



Wash at 30 C.



Keep time in showers to a minimum.



Turn your thermostat down a degree.

(not recommended for elderly people, people with health conditions and/or have young children)





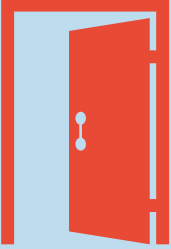
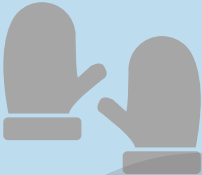


Purchase low-cost energy saving measures like LED bulbs and draught excluders.



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 below methods to keep warm please get in touch with us for help and support by calling 0800 112 3743. Don't worry alone, we are here to help.

	How to heat	Initial cost	Cost per hour
 Heated gilet	Charge via USB	£46 (including battery pack)	Less than 1p
 Heated blanket	Plug into mains	£14	3p
 Draught Excluders	Put under doors or over letter boxes	£10	No further cost
 Hand Warmers	Charge via USB	£5	Less than 1p
 Hot Water Bottle	Boil water in kettle	£5.50	6p
 Heated Insoles	Plug into USB	£8	Less than 1p

Monroe, MSE, 2022

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

The Priority Services Register is a free service to support vulnerable people. Contact KSW 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.

Call **Keep Shropshire Warm** on **0800 112 3743** to find out whether you are eligible and for help with signing up!