

Support with energy and retrofitting

Introduction

Energy use is a significant contributor to climate change. Energy use from buildings makes up nearly a fifth of Scotland's total greenhouse gas emissions according to the Scottish Government.

In addition, over a quarter (29%) of households in West Dunbartonshire struggle with fuel costs to the point where they're classified as living with fuel poverty, and nearly one in ten households (9%) experience extreme fuel poverty. Fuel poverty is experienced when the energy costs are over 10% of household income after housing costs; extreme fuel poverty is when the estimated fuel bill is over 20% of household income after housing costs. Moreover, the majority (83%) of domestic properties fall within an energy efficiency rating of C or D.

Improving energy efficiency in buildings and switching to renewable energy sources is a core part of the UK's path to zero. In fact, the Climate Change Committee advises that to limit warming to 1.5°C, by 2045, 92% of existing homes will need to have low-carbon heat, reaching all homes by 2050.

Local renewable energy generates cheap energy, which can then be bought by local people at a price which reflects the lower costs. Community energy delivers the combined benefits of de-carbonising our energy systems, tackling fuel poverty, and providing income to develop further community projects.

Ideas for individuals

Easy, low-cost energy saving advice

- Air dry instead of tumble drier (£70/yr),
- Install reflective radiator panels behind your radiators on external walls (£30/yr),
- Turn off appliances that don't need to be on standby (£60/yr),
- Draught proof your home (£50/yr) - explore draught strips, draught cushions and window films,
- Replace your lights with LEDs (£60/yr),
- Turn your thermostat down 1 degree (more than £100/yr),
- Only fill the kettle with as much water as you need (£14/yr),
- Spend 1 minute less in the shower (£14/yr).

With these measures you could save up to £400 per year.

*All savings are approximate. The values are based on Home Energy Scotland's 2024 figures.

For free advice on improving the energy efficiency of your home, getting renewables (solar, heat pumps, batteries) and help understanding your bills – get in touch with Home Energy Scotland.

If you're struggling to pay or understand your bills, Home Energy Scotland can help. Alternatively, book in a chat with Ruth (ruth@wdcvs.com) to discuss your needs and get a direct referral.

Ideas for community groups

- Make use of the Community Energy Launchpad: the Launchpad can help you identify renewable energy opportunities in your community, get set up and running, and get wider support on governance, democratic finance or technical input on appropriate technology and sizing,
- Understand your energy use, and how to reduce it,
- Retrofit your buildings with energy efficiency technology,
- Install renewable energy technologies (e.g. solar, wind, heat pumps, batteries),
- Explore finance options which allow your local community to benefit from renewable energy projects, e.g. through community shares.



Further resources:

Community Energy Launchpad – support getting set up:

<https://communityenergy.scot/community-energy-launchpad/>



Business Energy Scotland - Energy usage tracking sheet:

<https://businessenergyscotland.org/tool/measure-energy-use/>

Business Energy Scotland – Free energy audit of your building; free Green Champions training to measure and monitor your organisation's energy use:

<https://businessenergyscotland.org/get-support/>

Social housing energy support: <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/maintenance-repairs/energy-advice/fuel-poverty/>

Private housing energy support and energy efficiency technology advice:

<https://www.homeenergyscotland.org/home-energy>

Adaptation Scotland – resources to embed adaptation and climate resilience into your organisation: <https://adaptation.scot/take-action/>

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West Dunbartonshire Climate Change Plan and Strategy: <https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/key-council-documents/plans-and-strategies/sustainable-development/climate-change/>

Need Help Getting Started?

We can help you:

- Develop your idea
- Link with funding opportunities
- Connect with like-minded and experienced groups
- Connect with organisations who can provide technical support and expertise

