

# Energy bill support for Northern Ireland households launches

- Energy Price Guarantee launches in Northern Ireland today – cutting energy costs for households
- the UK government scheme will reduce energy bills until the end of March 2023 to help consumers this winter – providing equivalent support to that being delivered in Great Britain
- it comes in addition to wider support including a £400 discount on bills and scheme to protect businesses from surging energy costs

From today (Tuesday 1 November) households in Northern Ireland will receive money off their energy bills, shielding them from soaring energy costs as the UK government's Energy Price Guarantee launches.

The scheme reduces the price suppliers charge customers for units of gas and electricity, with support running until 31 March 2023 – providing crucial help to households who might otherwise face very significant increases in their energy bills.

It offers support equivalent to help already being delivered in Great Britain, which is expected to save consumers who use both gas and electricity around £700 this winter.

Households will see the discount on their energy bills from this month, with savings for October's energy use seen in bills from November. To make this as easy as possible, there is no need for consumers to apply for the scheme with support delivered automatically.

Business and Energy Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Getting this support to households across Northern Ireland will help ease the pressures facing families this winter, with consumers seeing a discount on their bills from this month.

We've worked at pace to deliver this support, including introducing new powers so the UK government can get it to households as soon as possible, with a further £400 discount on bills due later this winter.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris said:

This is vital support for households across Northern Ireland, providing relief for many families in the face of high energy bills.

It is disappointing that this support has had to be delivered in

the absence of a functioning Executive, but the government has been clear in its commitment to help Northern Ireland households through this challenging time.

Only this week the UK government put into law support to help households with their energy bills through the Energy Prices Act. This gives the UK government powers to ensure support can get to households, businesses and public-sector organisations in Northern Ireland this winter in the absence of a fully functioning devolved government.

It comes in addition to the previously announced £400 energy bill discount for all households through the Northern Ireland Energy Bills Support Scheme. This also offers the same level of support as households in Great Britain, with the UK government working at pace to deliver a solution which accounts for differences in the Northern Ireland energy market so it can get to households as soon as possible.

John French, Chief Executive of the Utility Regulator said:

The Utility Regulator welcomes the delivery of both the Energy Price Guarantee scheme and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in Northern Ireland, the first schemes to go live from the UK government's energy support package. This support is desperately needed to help households and businesses in Northern Ireland with their energy bills this winter.

We have worked hard to assist the UK government with the delivery of these schemes and we will continue to provide proactive support to get the additional schemes rolled out in Northern Ireland. Specifically, we are currently working with the UK government to ensure that the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme payment is paid to Northern Ireland consumers as soon as possible.

Under the Energy Price Guarantee, energy suppliers will reduce bills in Northern Ireland by up to 20p/kWh for electricity and 4.8p/kWh for gas. The discount for households in Northern Ireland has been set to account for energy use covering October.

For pre-payment meter customers in Northern Ireland, the Energy Price Guarantee will be applied to the rate you pay for each unit of energy at the same rate as for all other customers (20p/kWh for electricity and 4.8p/kWh for gas), so the money put on the meter will last longer than would otherwise have been the case this winter.

Those not on the main gas grid and therefore use alternative fuels like heating oil to warm their homes will instead receive a one-off £100 payment. This has been calculated to ensure a typical customer using heating oil does not face a higher rate of growth in their heating costs since last winter, in comparison to those using mains gas who are supported by the Energy Price Guarantee. The government will set out the timing of this payment soon.

Support with energy bills is also available for businesses, public and voluntary sector organisations across Northern Ireland through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme. It works in a similar way as the Energy Price Guarantee, providing a discount on the wholesale cost of gas and electricity and could see wholesale energy costs reduced by half for some businesses.

Whilst the scheme applies to energy use from 1 October, savings applied to October bills are typically received in November – meaning businesses across the UK will start to feel the benefits this month.

Government support with energy bills will deliver substantial benefits to the economy – boosting growth and curbing inflation by 4 to 5 points, reducing the cost of servicing the national debt.

Households who are eligible for but who do not receive Alternative Fuel Payment, because they do not have a relationship with an electricity supplier for example, will receive the £100 via the Alternative Fuel Payment Discretionary Fund which will be provided by a designated body.

Details of when this payment will be made and how the UK government will identify eligible households will be confirmed shortly. The UK government is committed to delivering this support to customers as fast as possible. There is no central register, either in Great Britain or Northern Ireland, of people who do not use the gas grid for their heating; therefore, we are working rapidly with stakeholders on the best way to identify those who are eligible for support.

[See full details of government energy bills support.](#)