

£400 energy bills discount to support households this winter

- Households to start receiving £400 off their energy bills from October, with the discount made in 6 instalments to help families throughout the winter period
- government confirms today important details of the Energy Bills Support Scheme, which will provide energy bill discounts to 29 million households across Great Britain
- today's announcement comes as the government launches a new online one stop shop setting out ways homeowners can help to heat their properties as part of wider Help for Households campaign

Millions of households across Great Britain will receive non-repayable discounts on their energy bills this winter, as the UK government today (29 July 2022) sets out further details of the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

The £400 discount, administered by energy suppliers, will be paid to consumers over 6 months with payments starting from October 2022, to ensure households receive financial support throughout the winter months.

Those with a domestic electricity meter point paying for their energy via standard credit, payment card and direct debit will receive an automatic deduction to their bills over the 6 month period – totalling £400.

Traditional prepayment meter customers will be provided with Energy Bill discount vouchers in the first week of each month, issued via SMS text, email or post, using the customer's registered contact details. These customers will need to take action to redeem these at their usual top-up point, such as their nearest local PayPoint or Post Office branch.

In all cases, no household should be asked for bank details at any point. Ministers are urging consumers to stay alert of potential scams and report these to the relevant authorities where they are suspected.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

People across the country are understandably worried about the global rise in energy costs, and the pressure this is placing on everyday bills.

While no government can control global gas prices, we have a responsibility to step in where we can and this significant £400 discount on energy bills we're providing will go some way to help millions of families over the colder months.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nadhim Zahawi, said:

We know that people are struggling with rising energy prices which is why we have taken action with support over the winter months to help ease the pressure on household budgets.

This £400 off energy bills is part of our £37 billion of help for households, including 8 million of the most vulnerable households receiving £1,200 of direct support to help with the cost of living.

We know there are tough times ahead and we will continue to do everything in our power to help people.

Households will see a discount of £66 applied to their energy bills in October and November, rising to £67 each month from December through to March 2023. The non-repayable discount will be provided on a monthly basis regardless of whether consumers pay monthly, quarterly or have an associated payment card.

This means that where a person's housing circumstances change during the 6-month period, such as those leaving or moving home, they will still benefit from the relevant portion of the total £400.

This also applies to students and other tenants renting properties with domestic electricity contracts from landlords where fixed energy costs are included in their rental charges. In these circumstances, landlords who resell energy to their tenants should pass the discounted payments on appropriately, in line with Ofgem rules to protect tenants.

As part of this package, we are confirming today that further funding will be available to provide equivalent support of £400 for energy bills for the 1% of households who will not be reached through the EBSS. This includes those who do not have a domestic electricity meter or a direct relationship with an energy supplier, such as park home residents. An announcement with details on how and when these households across Great Britain can access this support will be made this Autumn.

Details set out today will ensure the scheme is delivered to as many domestic electricity customers as possible over the winter, regardless of which supplier they use or their choice of payment method.

- Direct Debit customers will receive the Energy Bill discount automatically as a deduction to the monthly Direct Debit amount collected, or as a refund to the customer's bank account following Direct Debit collection during each month of delivery
- standard credit customers and payment card customers will see the Energy Bill discount automatically applied as a credit to standard credit customers' accounts in the first week of each month of EBSS delivery, with the credit appearing as it would if the customer had made a payment
- smart prepayment meter customers will see the Energy Bill discount credited directly to their smart prepayment meters in the first week of each month of delivery
- traditional prepayment meter customers will be provided with redeemable

EBSS Energy Bill discount vouchers or Special Action Messages (SAMs) in the first week of each month, issued via SMS text, email or post. Customers will need to redeem these at their usual top-up point

Steps are also being taken to protect consumers from the risk of fraud, gaming, and non-compliance. Suppliers will be expected to report to government action they are taking to ensure the support has been passed onto consumers, including notifying customers in writing they have received the £400 Energy Bill discount from HM Government, and ensuring it is clearly shown on bills or statements for Direct Debit and credit customers.

Greg Hands Energy Minister said:

Today we have set out how the government will deliver discounts to help 29 million households with their energy bills this winter.

I encourage families across the country to engage with these plans and particularly those customers on traditional prepayment meters who need to take action.

Coupled with world-leading action to radically enhance our home-grown energy security, we will continue to be on the side of British consumers now and into the future.

The Energy Bills Support Scheme forms part of the government's £37 million Cost of Living Support package, providing [Help for Households](#) with rising prices, targeted at those most in need.

Households most in need will be eligible for further support in addition to the Energy Bill discount. This includes:

- a £650 one-off Cost of Living Payment for around 8 million households on means tested benefits
- a £300 one-off Pensioner Cost of Living Payment for over 8 million pensioner households to be paid alongside the Winter Fuel Payment
- a £150 one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment for around six million people across the UK who receive certain disability benefits
- a £500 million increase and extension of the Household Support Fund available to councils to support vulnerable households with the cost of essentials such as food, utilities and clothing

Today's announcement comes as the government launches an online service to help homeowners save money on their energy bills by providing a one stop shop of ways to make properties more energy efficient.

[The new GOV.UK website](#), originally available through the Simple Energy Advice (SEA) service, offers a breakdown of support available through various schemes and how much financial support they can receive towards energy improvements.

This is part of the government's 'Help to Heat' support, investing £12

billion to make homes, particularly for low-income households, warmer and cheaper to heat, already delivering average energy bill savings of around £300 a year.

Lord Callanan, Energy and Business Minister, said:

This is a challenging time for many amidst the rising cost of living, which is why the government is stepping in with direct support.

From delivering discounted energy bills throughout the winter months to launching a new website providing homeowners with help to make homes cheaper and warmer, we want to make sure UK residents have the information they need to access all the support that is on offer.

Notes to editors

- See more details on the [design and delivery of the Energy Bills Support Scheme](#)
- to help with the cost of living pressures, the government announced a package of support worth £9.1 billion to help households with rising energy bills on 3 February 2022. This support package contained a range of measures to help households with their bills which included the Energy Bills Support Scheme is one of these measures
- the government will work with Ofgem and suppliers on guidance ahead of implementation of the Scheme from October 2022. This will include a full set of the Energy Bills Support Scheme reporting requirements for suppliers, to be published in due course
- the Energy Bills Support Scheme will apply to consumers in England, Scotland and Wales. The UK government is urgently working to ensure the people of Northern Ireland receive the equivalent of this support as soon as possible. Devolved administrations are receiving extra funding through the Barnett formula in financial year 2022 to 2023, enabling them to provide similar support
- the UK government is today also launching a consultation proposing the continuation of the Hydro Benefit Replacement Scheme. This scheme protects consumers in the North of Scotland from the high costs electricity distribution in that area
- as a further step the government will consult on prices and protections for domestic consumers whose energy supply arrangements do not enable them to move to a tariff protected by the price cap such as those paying for energy through all inclusive rents
- there are rules which can protect tenants and ensure they receive the benefit of this policy. Ofgem's guidance on [how to ensure customers are being charged no more than they should when they buy the electricity through their landlord, including what to do if they think there has been a mistake](#)
- the government committed to set up the [new energy advice website](#) in the [British Energy Security Strategy](#), enhancing the online service that is

currently available through the Simple Energy Advice (SEA) service. This online advice complements £6.6 billion government investment in energy efficiency through Help to Heat schemes and expanded the Energy Company Obligation

Consultation

- full details explaining the design and delivery of the EBSS can be found in the [government's official government response to this year's technical consultation](#), being published today on gov.uk
- the EBSS consultation was published on GOV.UK on 11 April 2022 and closed on 23 May 2022. BEIS received 233 written responses to the consultation from a range of organisations, including large and small suppliers, Distribution Network Operators, consumer groups and interested charities
- BEIS also ran a series of stakeholder engagement sessions before, during and after the consultation, where we presented and discussed the proposals with more than 93 interested parties, including suppliers, consumer groups and charities
- the proposals in this government consultation response document set out the final policy decisions reached for the delivery of the EBSS

[UK and Ghana reaffirm commitment to tackle global threats](#)

The UK Government hosted the second UK-Ghana security dialogue between July 25 and 27 to discuss the countries' shared interests in tackling global issues.

UK Home Secretary Priti Patel and the Minister for National Security of Ghana Kan-Dapaah agreed to strengthen law enforcement agency collaboration, strengthen engagement on border security, work together to enhance cyber security in Ghana and support regional solutions to instability in Ghana's neighbouring states.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK and Ghana has a deep and long-standing relationship, and we are powerful allies when confronting the scourge of organised criminal gangs that operate across our borders.

Ghana is the beacon of freedom and democracy in West Africa and through our joint work we are tackling global threats and cracking

down on the threats to our mutual security.

Ghana's National Security Minister, Albert Kan-Dapaah said:

The UK is a primary and reliable partner to Ghana, therefore, we welcome essential security initiatives from the UK towards building Ghana's resilience to address national and regional threats.

The Home Secretary visited Ghana last year in the first round of talks, opening a new Home Office-funded immigration taskforce office in the process.

Because of the joint working, since January 2022, 14 organised crime groups have been disrupted preventing the facilitation of 56 individuals from entering the UK illegally, saving the UK over £812,000 in the process.

Through the New Plan for Immigration, the UK Government are working with countries around the world to tackle the heinous people traffickers who work across borders and bring misery to vulnerable people.

The Home Secretary hosted a reception with Ghanaian delegation at Lancaster House on July 25 before counterparts discussed topics including, serious and organised crime, border management, security, countering terrorism and violent extremism, conflict prevention and military over the course of two day event.

Defence staff met to discuss peacekeeping, regional stability, counter terrorism and maritime security.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces, James Heappey MP, said:

"The UK is committed to expanding defence co-operation with the Ghanaian Armed Forces and we will continue to work together in frameworks such as the Accra Initiative to counter violent attacks and insurgency in West Africa and the Sahel."

[Read more about the security and defence dialogue between the UK and Ghana](#)

[Explanation of vote on resolution on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment](#)

Mr President.

We have welcomed the opportunity to discuss this resolution and make our national position clear in negotiations.

The United Kingdom has a strong commitment on taking ambitious action to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. We were proud to host COP26 in Glasgow, where all 197 Parties agreed to the Glasgow Climate Pact. At COP26, nature also moved from the margins of the debate on climate change to the heart of it. We will continue strong UK leadership and engagement on climate change and on nature to make sure that promises are kept and delivered to the highest standards, working with all partners to maintain momentum.

The United Kingdom is concerned environmental degradation can have implications for the full enjoyment of human rights. In some circumstances, it can pose a risk to the lives and wellbeing of individuals and communities. We continue to call on States to promote their human rights obligations while taking action to combat climate change and biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

However, the recognition of the right in this resolution is without due regard to the usual formation of international human rights law – and without prejudice to the UK's legal position. There is no international consensus on the legal basis of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and we do not consider that it has yet emerged as a customary right.

Recognising rights without due consideration and a common understanding at an international level of what those rights comprise creates ambiguity: individuals cannot know what they can legitimately claim from the State, and the State has no clear understanding of the protection it is obliged to afford to the individual.

We regret that, despite our constructive approach to negotiations, this resolution has no reference to important, related issues. In particular, it fails to acknowledge the role of human rights defenders working on environmental issues or the need for a deeper discussion on this right.

Nonetheless, we want to make three points on our vote today:

- First, General Assembly resolutions are not legally-binding.
- Second, as such, the recognition of the right in this resolution does not legally bind States to its terms.
- And third, our understanding is that the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment derives from existing international economic and social rights law – as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, or the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. As this resolution states in OP2, this right is “related to other rights and existing international

law”.

The UK acknowledges this is an issue of deep concern to all of us and it is on this basis that we voted yes today.

Gemini containers return to action

News story

The first active shipment of legacy waste drums from Magnox Harwell to Sellafield has been completed using the NDA’s Type B Gemini container fleet following a multi-million pound refurbishment.



Around 800 concrete-lined drums of Intermediate Level Waste will be transferred over the next three years for interim safe storage at Sellafield under the project, which forms a critical part of the NDA’s Nuclear Materials Transfer (NMT) programme, ahead of eventual disposal in a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF).

As part of Nuclear Waste Services’ Type B programme, the three-strong Gemini fleet of specialist packages spent two years in France with ORANO NPS undergoing a condition assessment and refurbishment before undergoing extensive Site Acceptance Testing at Sellafield and Harwell to ensure their readiness for a return to service.

Steve Chester, NWS Type B Programme Manager, said:

The Gemini fleet was brought back into service specifically for its role in this project and the launch of shipments is a major milestone for the NDA Site Decommissioning and National Waste Management Strategy, its Nuclear Material Transfer Programme, and for NWS’s Type B Packaging Programme.

Teamwork proved vital to the success of the project with an

integrated programme/ project management strategic approach adopted, led by NWS, with Sellafield, Magnox and ORANO NPS, to manage risk and respective site interfaces, and drive efficiencies wherever possible.

Intermediate Level Waste is loaded into a Gemini container.

Darren Holt, NWS Gemini Project Manager, said:

It is testament to the collaborative efforts and professionalism of all three site teams culminating in the successful return to service of the TN Gemini package and demonstrates the benefits of a fully integrated and collaborative approach to delivery.

Samantha Berryman, Senior Project Manager at Magnox, said:

This project has been an excellent example of teamwork, both within Magnox, the wider NDA estate and overseas. Learning from Experience has been readily shared culminating in a number of safety improvements and process optimisation.

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Human rights in Russia: invocation of OSCE Moscow Mechanism

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the following delegations: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States, and my own country, Iceland.

We have all been following very closely and with increasingly deep concern the human rights situation in the Russian Federation. As a participating State in the OSCE, the Russian Federation has freely committed to upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms. It has also recognised their universal significance and acknowledged that respect for human rights and fundamental

freedoms is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States.

However, numerous laws imposed in the Russian Federation over the last years, such as the “foreign agents” law, regulation of the so-called “undesirable” organisations, as well as countless decrees by the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor), along with individual administrative decisions, have all been used by Russian authorities to crack down on independent civil society, independent media, and political opposition, targeting in particular non-governmental organisations, anti-corruption activists, human rights defenders, journalists, other media actors, researchers, and lawyers. Allegations of extremism have also been used to outlaw dissenting opinions or beliefs, as well as to ban peaceful organisations.

During Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, freedom of expression, as well as freedom of assembly and association, have been restricted further. On 4 March 2022, the Russian Parliament amended the Criminal Code to impose a penalty of up to 15 years in prison for spreading allegedly “fake” information about the war in Ukraine; on 22 March 2022, the law was broadened to criminalise the sharing of “fake news” about any activities of Russia’s official bodies abroad; on 4 March 2022, the Russian Parliament criminalised the spreading of allegedly “fake” information discrediting the Russian armed forces and any calls for restrictive measures against the Russian state, its nationals or any Russian legal entities. Also, on 4 March 2022, the Russian Parliament banned demonstrations against the war in Ukraine.

According to a statement made by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on 16 March 2022, “the Russian Federation is rapidly moving towards a situation of complete censorship and isolation of its citizens from any form of independent information”. As reported by the citizen monitors, the Russian Federation continues to hold more than 430 political prisoners. There are also widespread reports of torture and other mistreatment in places of detention throughout Russia. The censorship of the media and of content on the internet, political repression, impunity for violence, the spread of hate speech, engagement in propaganda for wars of aggression, the imposition of severe restrictions on freedom of assembly and association, on the right to liberty and security of person, and on the right to vote and to be elected all indicate a clampdown on democracy, the exercise of human rights and the rule of law in Russia. All this requires further assessment of the impact of these severe measures on the human dimension of security. Any failure to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms runs counter to OSCE commitments.

Our delegations, as well as many others at the Permanent Council, have repeatedly raised growing concerns about these developments. The Russian Federation’s response has been inadequate. We note that Russia has also failed to provide an adequate response to the findings and recommendations of the [2018 Moscow Mechanism Experts Mission report](#) on allegations of impunity for reported human rights violations and abuses in the Republic of Chechnya,

and that alarming information continues to emerge from Chechnya about abuses and violations of human rights.

Today we take the step of invoking paragraph 12 of the [1991 Moscow Document of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE \(Moscow Mechanism\)](#) to establish a mission of experts to look into and report on the ongoing concerns we have identified as particularly serious threats to the fulfilment of the provisions of the OSCE human dimension by the Russian Federation, to assess Russia's legal and administrative practice in light of its OSCE commitments, to establish the facts, and to provide recommendations and advice.

The mission of experts will be tasked, inter alia, to report on the following:

- Firstly, to assess the state of Russia's adherence, in law and in practice, to its OSCE Human Dimension commitments and to identify actions taken by the Russian Government over recent years that have led to the current human rights and fundamental freedoms situation in the country.
- Secondly, to assess ramifications of such developments on Russian civil society, on free media, on the rule of law, and on the ability of democratic processes and institutions to function in Russia, as well as on achieving the OSCE's goal of comprehensive security.

We encourage the mission of experts to apply a gender-sensitive approach to their assessment. In addition to establishing the facts, we also encourage the experts to offer recommendations and give advice to the Russian Federation, to the OSCE, and to the international community on how to address the matters of concern. In particular, we encourage the experts to offer recommendations to the OSCE and its participating States on identifying early warnings and addressing such emerging challenges in a timely and effective manner.

We look forward to working with OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on arrangements for the mission.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.