

Step by step

The Council is working closely with residents to help reduce energy bills and cut the borough's carbon footprint

Cold weather and expensive energy bills are a real problem for many people. Improving the energy efficiency of your home will help you heat it more effectively, save money on your bills and cut carbon emissions. Recent figures published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change show that Lewisham reduced its carbon emissions by 7 per cent over three years compared to a London average of less than 1 per cent. Mayor Sir Steve Bullock has now agreed a new target of a 40 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020.

Over the last two years the Council has won more than £1.5 million from government grants and energy companies to deliver energy efficiency measures, including projects to help the elderly, families and people on low incomes cut their fuel bills and heat their homes effectively. For example, last year, the Catford Energy Savers scheme delivered more than 10,000 energy efficiency measures to 1,100 homes in the Catford South ward. This saved residents an average of £100 on their annual fuel bills and more than 450 tonnes of carbon a year. The project was very popular with those who participated, with one resident saying: 'I found the fact that someone came to our house to evaluate my energy efficiency was better than the general information you find in the media.' Janet Gainey, a resident who signed up to the

scheme in early 2010 said: 'This was a really good project. I found I was more aware of the energy I used and now if I boil the kettle I put less water in.'

Lewisham's Low Carbon Zone is another programme in the Lewisham Central ward. It works with residents and local organisations such as Lewisham Hospital and the Fire Station to cut carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency through insulation and heating improvements.

The Council has worked with Lewisham Homes to provide cavity wall insulation to 32 housing blocks across the borough, benefitting more than 1,200 households. It has also worked with Affinity Sutton, an affordable housing provider, to install cavity wall insulation with the help of a team of abseiling specialists. The workers abseiled down the sides of buildings in the Leybridge Court Estate, Lee, injecting insulation into the walls – a cheap and efficient method which doesn't require scaffolding.

Make your home more energy efficient

It doesn't take much effort to reduce your carbon footprint and you'll save money in the process. Little things such as making sure your heating controls are on the right setting or switching to energy-saving light bulbs can reduce your energy bills, while proper insulation



Janet Gainey took part in the Catford Energy Savers scheme



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Mayor Sir Steve Bullock watches abseilers inject cavity wall insulation into buildings on the Leybridge Court Estate

and energy-efficient boilers can help you achieve real savings.

Loft insulation Ensuring your loft is properly insulated can cut your heating costs by a quarter.

Cavity walls If your home was built from 1920 onwards, it's likely that the external walls are made of two layers with a gap or cavity between them. A third of the cost of heating

your home can be lost through your walls, so insulating them is the best way to save energy. Installing cavity wall insulation can save you up to £160 per year on your heating bills.

Lightbulbs Replacing just one old light bulb with an energy-saving one can reduce lighting costs by up to £78 over the lifetime of the bulb. Plus they last up to 12 times longer than ordinary light bulbs.

Boilers If your boiler is more than 15 years old, consider switching to a new energy-efficient one. High-efficiency condensing boilers can save up to a third of your annual heating bills.

Heating Turning your thermostat down by 1°C can cut your heating bills by up to 10 per cent and save you around £100 a year.

Hot water Your cylinder thermostat shouldn't be set any higher than 60°C/140°F. Having an insulating jacket on your tank will save you around £40 a year.

More information

The Council offers practical information and advice on cutting your energy bills and can help you access grants for insulation and heating improvements.

For independent information and help you can call an energy adviser in the Council on 020 8314 6339, email energy@lewisham.gov.uk or visit www.lewisham.gov.uk/Environment. From here you can also sign up to the Council's newsletter, My Place My Planet, to receive monthly tips on how to live a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Electricity Leaving appliances on standby can waste energy and money. Always turn off the lights when you leave a room. Borrow a smart meter from your local library (all you need is a library card) to find out how much energy is used by individual appliances in your home.

Washing clothes and dishes Use the half load or economy programmes if you're not filling up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher.

Making a cuppa Boil only as much water as you need, but make sure the element is covered with water if you're using an electric kettle.

Dripping taps A dripping hot water tap can waste enough hot water to fill a bath in a fortnight, so fix leaking taps and make sure they're all completely turned off.