

Residential Care Homes

This guidance is based on practical energy saving advice provided by Suffolk County Council (SCC) to providers of Care Services. If your business supplies SCC, you can access further support by contacting cnnp@suffolk.gov.uk.

The tips below cover the most common energy saving opportunities. You can draw on these suggestions to inform your [action plan](#), then focus on one or two actions at a time.



1. Rented Properties

If it's a rented property, it may have an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) with some recommendations.

- i. Look on the Government website [Find an energy certificate - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), enter your postcode and see if there is a report for your property
- ii. Note that these reports can be out of date and sometimes include errors etc, so use it as a guide rather than a source of definite information

2. Housekeeping

Have you completed all the usual housekeeping measures you would normally do at home?

- i. Turn off heating and lighting when not in use. It's surprising how much energy, carbon and money can be saved for no investment (it changes culture too)
- ii. Are windows closed when heating is on?
- iii. Are doors and windows properly draught-proofed?

3. Windows

- i. Do windows seal properly when closed. If not, they may need repair or replacement. Sometimes it's OK to fit additional draught excluders or additional seals, but talk to a professional first, rather than causing damage
- ii. Are windows fully double glazed? Double glazing is more common now than in the past, but if you still have single glazing, it may be worth replacement or installing secondary glazing. There are some options available for listed buildings etc, although these can be challenging.
- iii. Good quality curtains reduce heat loss, and make rooms feel warmer. Keeping them closed at night saves energy

4 Insulation

- i. Has the loft got a full 300mm (about 1ft) of thermal insulation? If you can't get into the loft to check, arrange for someone to do it for you. Often an electrician or plumber etc will look, measure and take photos for you if they are on site doing another job.
- ii. Are the walls insulated? Often it's difficult to tell. Most buildings built since 2000 will have a good standard of insulation, those before 1930 are unlikely to have any. Between those years much depends on the building regulations at the time, and many other circumstances.

When you have an indication of what's installed, the next step is a professional survey and quote by one or more installation installer. If you're not sure, our team can provide an initial assessment if you email a good quality photo of the brickwork (assuming the building is brick) to us at suffolkbusinessadvisor@groundwork.org.uk. Sometimes it can answer the question, other times it can't, but it's a good first step.

With both the above, improvements can often be made. Insulation usually provides a good quality long term energy saving, as well as improving comfort conditions



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5. Lighting

- i. As above, turn off what you don't need, even for short periods. (Fluorescent lights do not cost more to start than they do to run, it's another urban myth).
- ii. If some lights are used for long hours, consider replacement with LED, especially if you can safely replace them yourself
- iii. Fit movement sensors to outside lights, rather than 'dusk to dawn' controls

6. Heating and Hot Water

- i. Has the heating timer and thermostat been set to the lowest required use. Turning down heating by 1C is reckoned to save about 8% energy use, so wearing jumpers can be sensible.
- ii. Do you only have hot water on when you need it? It is not cheaper to keep a tank hot 24/7, that's an urban myth
- iii. Do you have thermostatic radiator valves, and are they set to the lowest comfortable setting? A spare room needs very little heat!

7. Clothes Drying

- i. Use nature if you can. Drying on the line saves energy. It's the original solar and wind power!
- ii. If you need to use a tumble dryer a great deal, consider a gas tumble dryer, or a heat pump tumble dryer. They cost more to buy, but use less energy. Businesses can sometimes write off the whole purchase against tax in year 1 by using Enhanced Capital Allowances.

Avoid drying clothes on radiators. They will go rusty, and it will promote mould growth on walls in winter when windows are closed. Keeping all the moisture in the property is unhealthy.

8. Solar PV & Battery Storage

So you've done everything you can to save energy, now you can think about generating some of your own.

- i. As above, Solar PV on the roof can provide much needed electricity, but remember, most electricity is generated in summer during the day. Most electricity use is in winter and at night, so be realistic in your expectations.
- ii. If you have a hot water immersion heater, get a solar diverter fitted at the same time as Solar PV. The diverter uses spare PV generation to heat the hot water, saving you energy and cost
- iii. Battery storage can be useful, but it's expensive. If you have lots of spare electricity from the solar PV, and lots of night-time demand, it can make sense. Every case is different. PS, battery storage can be added later, you don't need to install it at the same time as the Solar PV
- iv. If you have solar PV, think about using the washing machine etc when the sun is shining, let the PV pay for your washing!

9. Cooking

Not the greatest energy user, but there are some opportunities to save

- i. An induction hob can use much less energy than other electric hobs, and may also be safer. This is especially true in a commercial kitchen (if Chef is happy to use one).
- ii. Another great option for commercial kitchens, converting from traditional Falcon ovens to Combination ovens. Faster cooking using much less energy
- iii. Reduce your oven use where you can.

Still need some help?

There's lots more advice, including links to funding, on <https://carboncharter.org/>

Or you can contact one of our decarbonisation advisers, free of charge, on 01473 350 370 or suffolkbusinessadvisor@groundwork.org.uk

This Sector Guide is based on advice provided by Glyn Lee, Renewable Energy Project/ Programme Manager at Suffolk County Council.

