FACTSHEET

Keeping your home warm, healthy and affordable

Why a warm home matters

Cold, damp homes can affect health, comfort and everyday life. They can make respiratory conditions worse, increase the risk of illness during winter, contribute to poor sleep and make it harder to stay active, independent and well. Keeping your home at a safe, comfortable temperature is especially important if someone in the household is older, very young, pregnant, living with a disability, or has a long-term physical or mental health condition.

Top 5 quick actions

1. **Check your room temperature:** aim for at least 18°C in the rooms you use most.
2. **Keep heat where you need it:** close curtains at dusk and shut doors to warmer rooms.
3. **Let heat circulate:** keep radiators clear of furniture, curtains and drying clothes.
4. **Control moisture:** use extractor fans, wipe condensation and report leaks or recurring mould.
5. **Ask early for advice:** get help if your home stays cold, bills feel unmanageable, or damp keeps returning.

Safe temperatures for your home

As a general guide, aim to heat the rooms you use most to at least 18°C. Many people feel comfortable at around 18–21°C in living areas during the day, while bedrooms can often be cooler overnight if you are warm enough in bed.

- **Living rooms and lounges:** around 18–21°C when occupied.
- **Bedrooms at night:** around 16–18°C may be comfortable for many people.
- **Babies' rooms:** around 16–20°C, with regular temperature checks.
- **Older or vulnerable people:** at least 18°C in rooms used during the day and night.

A simple room thermometer or temperature strip can help you check the rooms where you spend most of your time. If your home struggles to reach safe temperatures, it may be a sign that heating, insulation, ventilation or draught-proofing needs attention.

Simple ways to stay warmer

- Set your heating to come on before you get up and to switch off before you go to bed. In very cold weather, heating for longer at a steady temperature is usually better than turning the thermostat up high for short bursts.
- Close curtains at dusk, tuck them behind radiators where safe, and close doors to keep warmth in the rooms you use most.
- Keep radiators clear of furniture, curtains and drying clothes so heat can circulate.
- Use several thin layers of clothing, warm socks and blankets to help keep body heat in.
- Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket safely, but do not use both together.
- Have regular hot drinks and, if possible, at least one hot meal each day.
- Reduce draughts around doors, windows and letterboxes, while keeping enough ventilation for fresh air.

Damp, mould and ventilation

Damp and mould are usually signs that too much moisture is building up or that parts of the home are too cold. They can affect breathing, skin and general wellbeing, particularly for babies, children, older people and people with asthma, allergies or weakened immune systems.

- Use extractor fans or open trickle vents where fitted, especially in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Try to keep lids on pans, dry clothes outdoors where possible, and avoid blocking air vents.
- Wipe away condensation from windows and check for leaks, blocked gutters or damaged seals.
- If mould keeps returning, look for the underlying cause and seek advice rather than only cleaning the surface.

How making your home more energy efficient can help

Energy efficiency means making improvements in your home, so it is warmer, healthier and often cheaper to run. This can include insulation, draught-proofing, improved heating controls, better ventilation and repairs that reduce heat loss or moisture problems.

Well-planned improvements can help your home hold on to heat for longer, reduce cold surfaces where condensation forms, improve fresh air flow and make it easier to maintain a comfortable temperature without wasting energy.

When to ask for help

Ask for advice if your home feels cold even when the heating is on, if you are worried about bills, if damp or mould keeps coming back, or if anyone in your household is becoming unwell because of the home environment.

Support may include practical energy advice, signposting to grants or benefits, help understanding heating controls, or guidance on suitable home improvements.

Find out more

For more information or help with any of these issues, visit one of our drop-in advice and information sessions or look out for Warmth Works events taking place across the town over the next few months.

Together, we can create warmer homes, stronger communities and a clean energy Calder Valley.

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