



### High Energy Costs

If you have your heating turned on unnecessarily for long periods of time and/or if you have your room thermostats set at a high temperature then you are likely to have a higher heating bill.

Windows should be opened in your home to ensure you have adequate ventilation and to avoid issues such as condensation. However, if windows are opened for long periods of time then you could be heating the outside air and the fabric of your home may be harder to heat, which is likely to also mean you have a higher heating bill.

There are ways to reduce the cost of energy to your home, which include making changes to how you use energy and considering switching energy providers. More information is available at [www.choice-housing.org/energy](http://www.choice-housing.org/energy)

### Heating Faults

Any faults with your heating system should be reported through to Choice Housing on 0300 111 2211. However, before calling us you should check the following:

- Check you have credit on your gas meter or sufficient heating oil in your oil tank.
- Check your electricity is not off for any reason and no controls have accidentally been switched off.
- Check your time clock if you have one to ensure your heating is switched on.
- If you have room thermostats or TRVs then try turning these up fully and wait 15-30mins. Remember to turn these back down again, although if your radiators start to heat up then there may not be a fault and you may simply need to adjust your heating controls.

## Cold Radiators do not mean your heating is not working!

Your room thermostat and radiator valves control the temperature of the air in your home and not the temperature of your radiators. It is normal for radiators to feel cold at times while your heating is on as this means the room has reached the temperature you have asked for on your controls.

If you would like any further support then please contact a member of the Property Services Team or our Sustainability and Energy Management Team on **0300 111 2211** or email [energy@choice-housing.org](mailto:energy@choice-housing.org)

## GET IN TOUCH

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# Heating Controls Guide

If your home has a wet heating system, with radiators or underfloor heating, then you may have heating controls installed. The type of heating controls you have in your home will vary for a number of reasons but some of the most common ways to control your heating are outlined below.

## A Time Clock

Many homes will have a time clock or programmer installed, which is used to determine when you would like heat. The same time clock may determine when you have hot water available if your home has a hot water cylinder.

A time clock allows you to set a number of heating periods during the day, with some time clocks allowing heating periods to be set across a full week. When setting heating times you should consider when your home is likely to be occupied.

Many time clocks will also have a “boost” button which will allow you to turn heating on for a set period of one or more hours.

A similar option which may be available is an “advance” button, which can be used to either bring heating on earlier or switch it off earlier than the times set in your programmer.

You should have been provided with instructions on using your time clock but if you would like any further support then please contact a member of the Property Services Team or our Sustainability and Energy Management Team on **0300 111 2211**.

### *Example: Using a Time Clock*

A home has a time clock fitted and the occupants use this to set heating times. During the week they get up at 7.00am and leave their home at 8.00am. They decide to set their timeclock to have heating on from 6.30am to 7.30am each weekday morning as this means they get up to a warm home and their home is starting to cool down when they are leaving. Each weekday they normally return home at 5.00pm and go to bed at 11.00pm and so they set their time clock so that heating is on from 4.30pm to 10.30pm so their home is warm for when they arrive home and starting to cool down when they go to bed.

At weekends they normally get up at 8.00am and are at home most of the time. They choose to set the heating to be on for one hour from 7.30am to 8.30am and then use the boost button during the day when they feel that heat is needed.

The occupants decide to go out for an evening during the week and so they use the advance button before they leave the house. This means the heating will go off earlier than planned and they will save money on their heating bills.

## A Room Thermostat

Some homes will have a room or wall thermostat installed, normally in the living room or hallway. In some recent homes additional thermostats may also be installed on other floors.

A room thermostat allows you to control how much heat you would like in your home or on a particular floor.

Typically this should be set at around 20-21 Degrees Celsius although this will vary depending on the needs of the occupants. If you have multiple room thermostats in your home then one may relate to bedrooms and it may be more comfortable to reduce this thermostat to around 18 Degrees Celsius.

A room thermostat switches the heating in an area off when the air around the thermostat reaches the temperature you have set. This means your heating is more controlled and not running unnecessarily. By using this control you can manage your comfort and heating bills more effectively. A common mistake is to assume there is a fault with your heating system because your radiators are cold at times and many homes will resort to turning their room thermostat up, which may result in higher heating bills.



### *Example: Using a Room Thermostat*

A room thermostat is fitted in a home and the occupants set this to 20 degrees celsius. They find their room temperature is cool and decide to turn the room thermostat up to 21 degrees Celsius which means the room temperature is more comfortable.

## Radiator Valves (TRVs)

Many homes will have TRVs on radiators which can be adjusted to control where you want heat in your home and how much heat you would like in each room. You will not normally have TRVs in a room where there is a room thermostat.



TRVs can be adjusted to determine how warm you would like a room to be and so a high setting (such as “5”, “V” or a full circle) indicates that you would like that room to be warmer when your heating is on. A common misunderstanding is that turning a TRV up to a higher setting means that the radiator is hotter, but this is not the case. However, a high setting will mean the radiator is likely to be warmer for longer periods.

A very common mistake is to assume that there is a fault with your heating system or radiator valves because some of your radiators are cold at times. However this is normal where TRVs or room thermostats are fitted as the radiator will cool when the air in that room is warm enough.

### *Example: Using TRVs*

A home has TRVs fitted on radiators in most rooms. The occupants set the TRVs in their living room and kitchen to “3” or “4” but prefer to have cooler temperatures in their bedrooms and so adjust TRVs in these rooms down to a lower setting of “2”. This means these rooms are cooler and the radiators are warm less often. During warmer months of the year they adjust TRVs in their bedrooms down further to “1” so heating is unlikely to come on.

## Boiler Controls

If you have your own boiler installed at your home then it will normally have built in controls, which vary depending on the type of boiler.

We would not recommend changing these controls as they can affect the temperature of your radiators or underfloor heating, and also the temperature of the hot water from your taps, which could result in a health risk.

## Hot Water Cylinder

If you have a hot water cylinder, the thermostat should be set to 60°C and should not be changed.