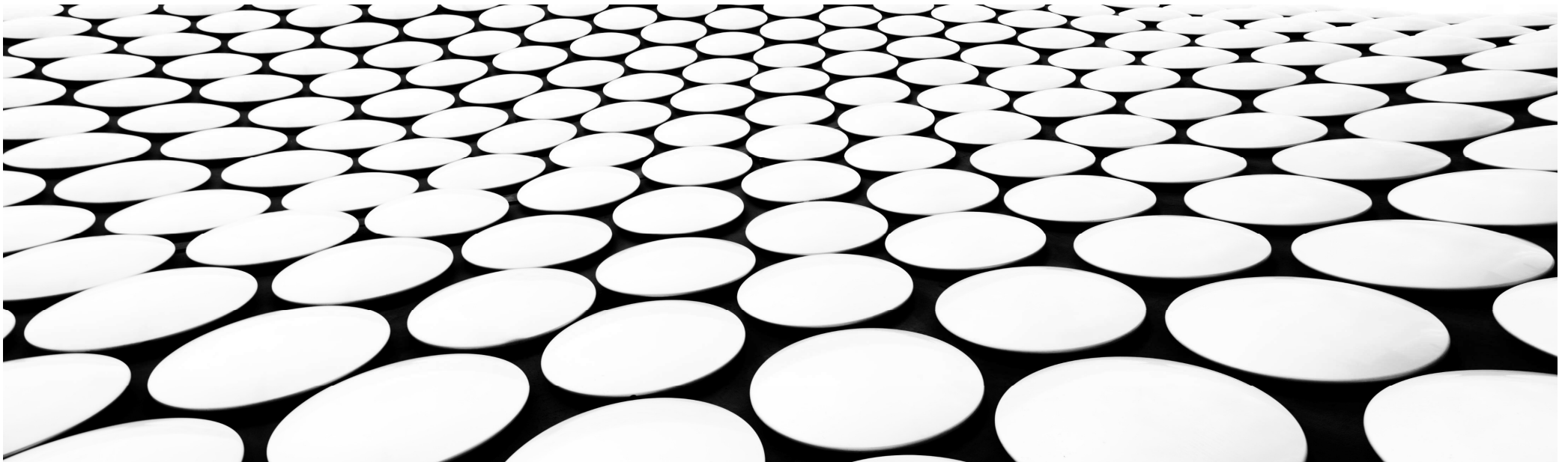

TENANT & LEASEHOLDER ENERGY SURVEY

TENANTS RESOURCE GROUP AUTUMN 2023



OUR ENERGY SURVEY

- Back in 2021 following a concern regarding how much tenants paid for their energy costs we decided to carry out a survey to get a sense of the different amounts tenants pay across the city.
- That survey showed that the (mean) average tenants paid was £1037
- Since then the cost of energy has skyrocketed and the group wanted to see the difference those two years have made.

Tenant Questionnaire: Heating and Energy Costs

Our Tenant Resources Group (a small group of tenants who look at where Housing spends its money) are currently looking at how much tenants and leaseholders pay for their energy & heating costs. They would be really grateful if you could complete this survey so they can get an understanding of the different amounts people pay across the city. As a token of thanks, you can enter a free prize draw to win a £10 supermarket voucher. If you prefer you can complete the survey online at <https://forms.office.com/e/iQhpAdYsP8> or scan the QR code (right).

SUPPORTED BY

SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL



Your Energy Costs

- 1) What type of energy do you use in your property? Gas & Electric
Electricity only
- 2) Do you pay the council's heating charge? Yes No
- 3) How do you pay for your individual electric (and gas if applicable) energy costs? Online
Direct Debit
Key Meters
Payment cards
Via Telephone
Other (please state) _____
- 4) When do you pay your individual electric (and gas if applicable) energy costs? Weekly
Fortnightly
Monthly
Quarterly
As needed
- 5) How much do you pay for electricity? £ _____ each week/fortnight/month/quarter
- 6) How much do you pay for gas (if applicable)? £ _____ each week/fortnight/month/quarter
- 7) How much do you pay for the council's heating charge (if applicable)? £ _____ each week
- 8) Do you have a Smart Meter? Yes No

Heating your home

- 9) What type of heating do you have in your property? (tick all that apply) Storage Heaters
Underfloor Heaters
Gas Central Heating
Geothermal Heating
Other (please state) _____
- 10) Are you satisfied with your current heating system? Yes No
- 11) How long has your heating system been in place? _____
- 12) Do you have to use additional heating appliances to keep your home warm? Yes No
If yes, please let us know what you use _____

OUR ENERGY SURVEY

- With the support of the Tenant Engagement Team, a survey was sent out to all tenants and leaseholders on Tenant Engagement's Sounding Board and a post on the Tenant Engagement Facebook Group. In total the survey went out to approx. 400 tenants and leaseholders.
- To encourage respondents, a £10 supermarket vouchers were offered in a prize draw.

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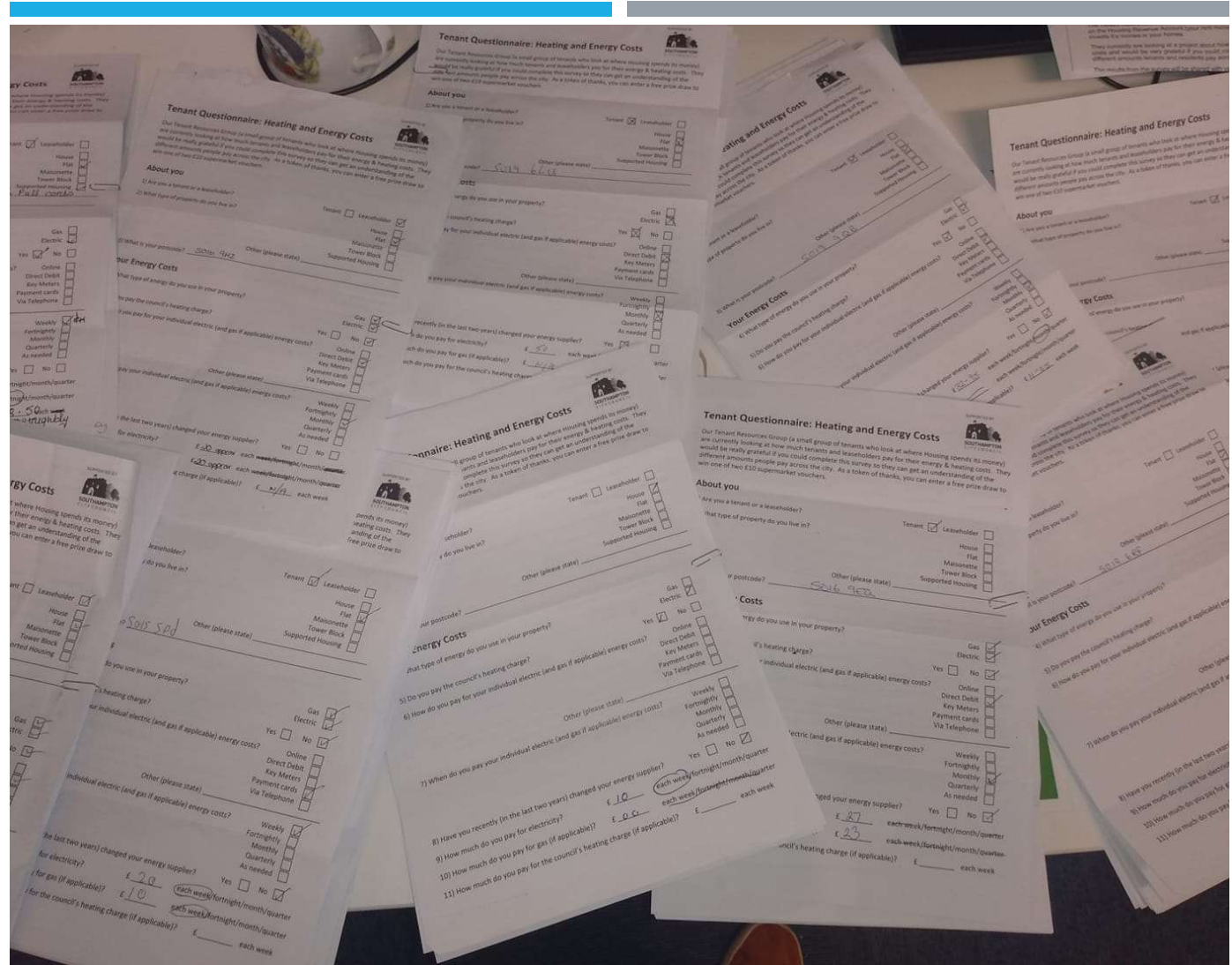
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TENANTS ARE INTERESTED!

- We had 144 surveys returned. (137 tenants, 7 leaseholders)

- A **36%** response rate!

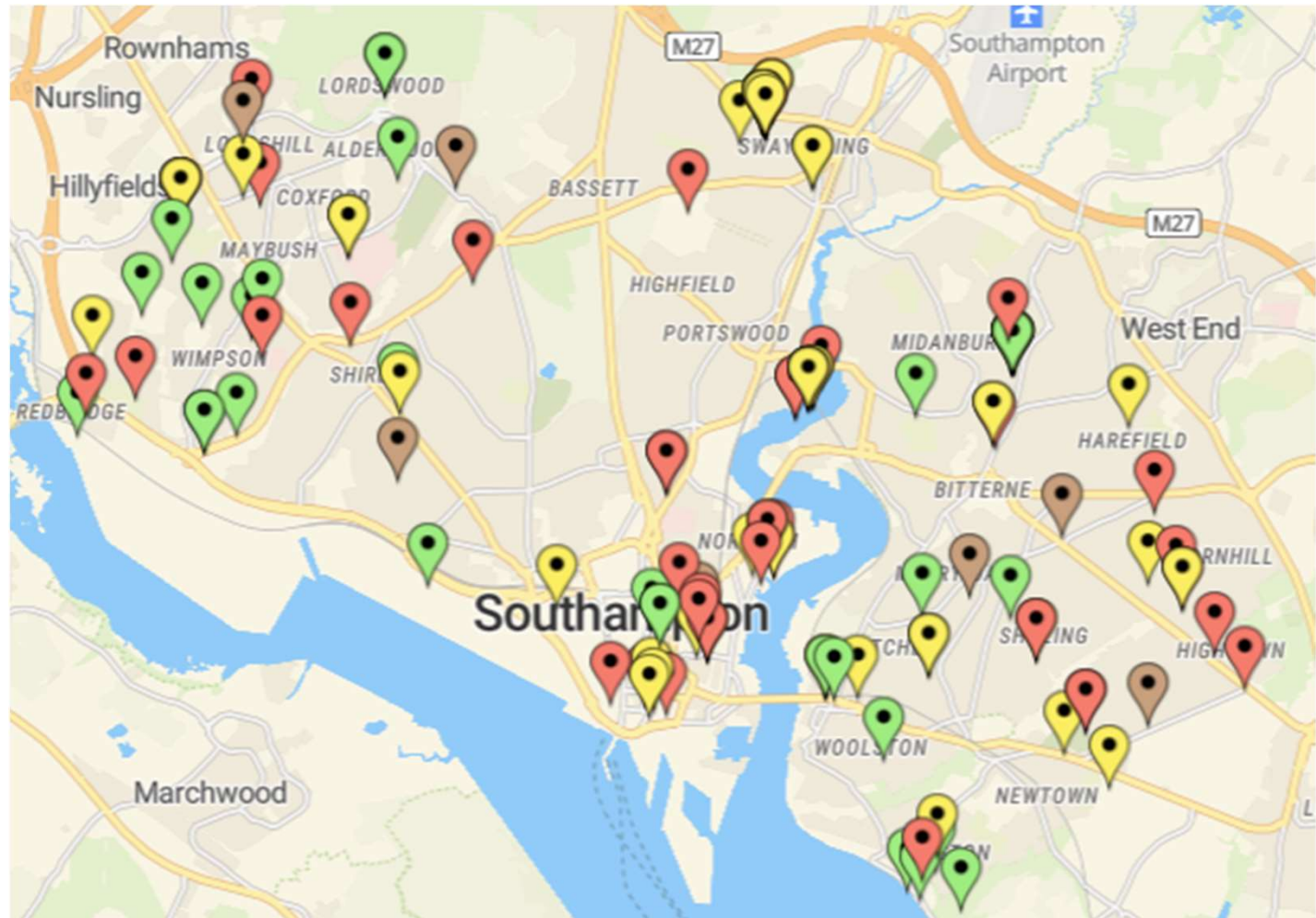
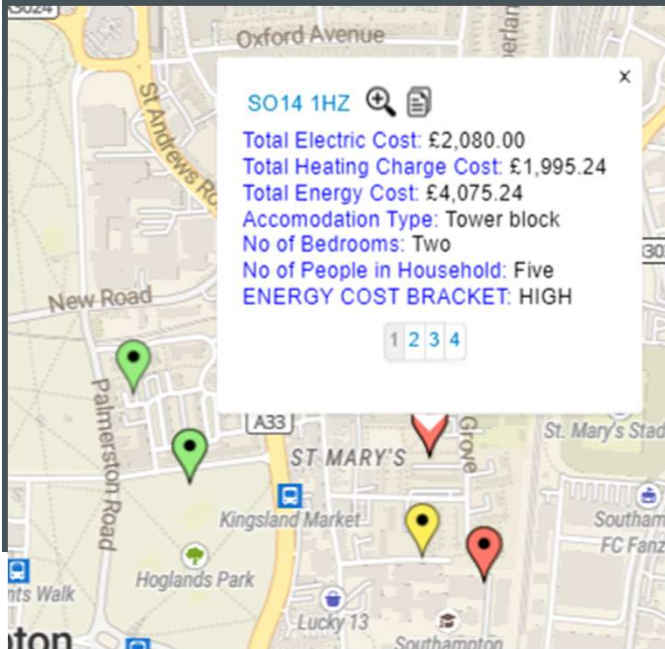


A WORD OF WARNING

- We updated our 2021 survey to include people's household size and number of bedrooms and asked whether they had a smart meter.
- We aren't convinced that everyone completed the survey totally accurately and not everyone answered every question.

RESPONSES CAME FROM ALL OVER THE CITY

- You can view the map at <https://www.easymapmaker.com/map/TRGEnergySurvey2023>

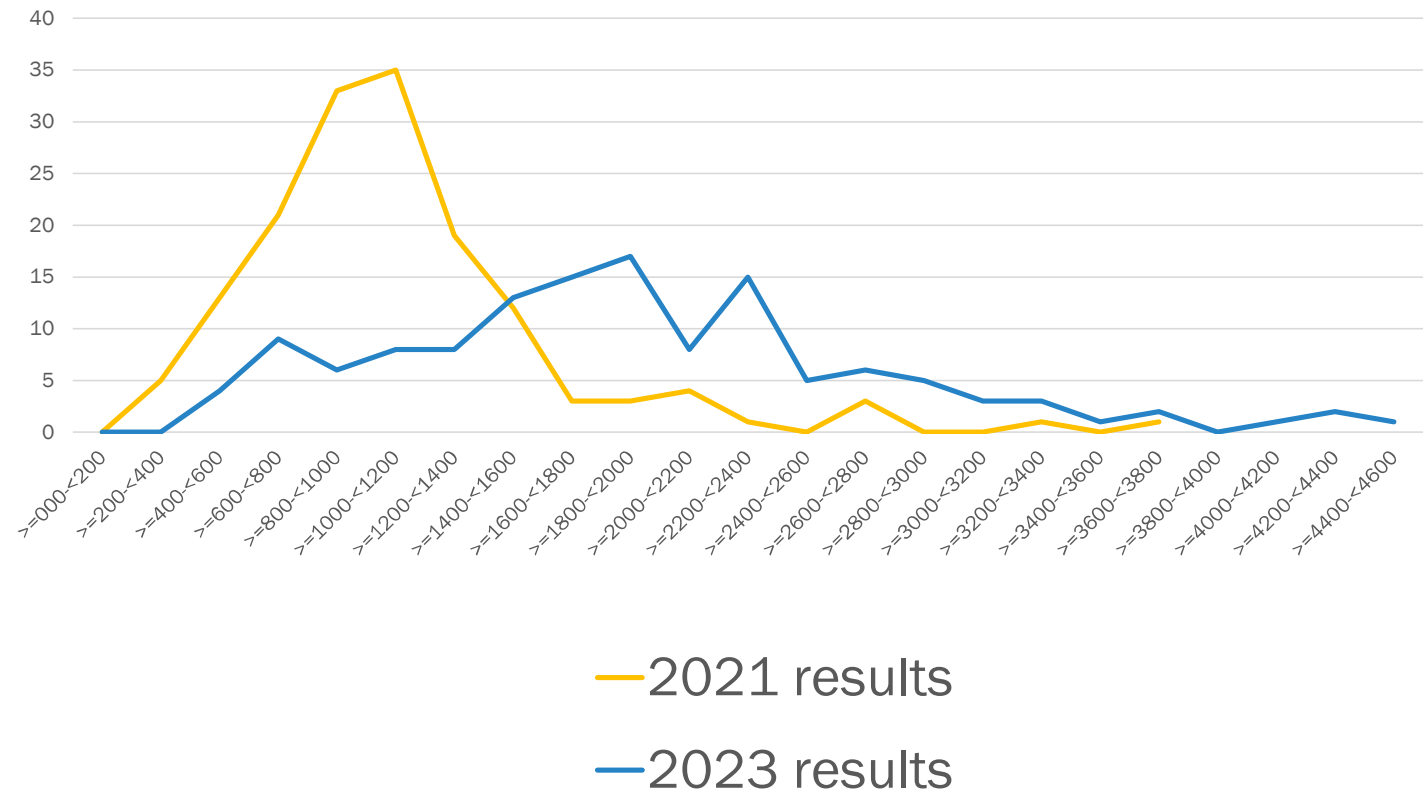


Green = Lower than Average*; Yellow = Paying an average* amount;
Red = Paying well above average* (*according to the survey)

CALCULATING THEIR ENERGY COSTS

- Based on the answers given we calculated their total energy spend for the course of the year.
- The cheapest amount was £420. The range went up to £4453.
- The average (mean) amount paid by tenants for their energy costs was £1893 (£1,098.87 in 2021)
- The median average paid by tenants was £1821 (£1,036 in 2021)
- According to energy market regulator Ofgem the average amount paid for low usage is £1,313 a year, medium usage is £1,835 and a high usage is £2,597.

Total Cost for Energy (2021 & 2023 results)



ENERGY COSTS BY PROPERTY TYPE: FLATS



- 50 responses
- Energy costs range from £380-£3640
- Average costs: £1727.47
(up from £1093 in 2021)
- Median costs: £1609.54

This is broken down as:

Bedsit (4 responses): Range £1,040-£1947

Average: £1,585.31

Median: £1,667.08

1 Bed (24 responses): Range £600-£3,640

Average: £1991.36

Median: £2,101.68

2 Bed: (21 responses): Range £480-£3096

Average: £1,478.08

Median: £1,200.00

3 Bed: (1 response): £1200

ENERGY COSTS BY PROPERTY TYPE: MAISONNETTES



- 7 responses
- Energy costs range from £1,080-£4,453.40
- Average costs: £2,541.70
(up from £1206 in 2021)
- Median costs: £2,511.16

This is broken down as:

1 Bed (1 response): £2,289.12

2 Bed: (3 responses): Range £1,080-£2,511
Average: £1,797.05
Median: £1,800.00

3 Bed: (3 responses): Range £2,769-£4,453
Average: £3,370.55
Median: £2,889.45

ENERGY COSTS BY PROPERTY TYPE: TOWER BLOCKS



This is broken down as:

1 Bed: (2 responses):
Range £531.36- £2,240
Average: £1,385.68

2 Bed: (7 responses): Range £420-£4,395
Average: £2,847.74
Median: £3,295.24

- 9 responses
- Energy costs range from £420-£4,395.14
- Average costs: £2,522.84
(up from £1250 in 2021)
- Median costs: £3,273.20

ENERGY COSTS BY PROPERTY TYPE: HOUSES



- 13 responses
- Energy costs range from £692-£4320
- Average costs: £1,750
(up from £1389 in 2021)
- Median costs: £1,560

This is broken down as:

1 Bed: (1 responses): £1,696.40

2 Bed: (3 responses): Range £692-£2,400

Average: £1,586.80

Median: £1,668.00

3 Bed: (9 responses): Range £1,216-£4,320

Average: £1,810.67

Median: £1,440.00

ENERGY COSTS BY PROPERTY TYPE: SUPPORTED HOUSING

- 53 responses
- Energy costs range from £480-£3,600
- Average costs: £1,887.73
(up from £887 in 2021)
- Median costs: £1,856.80

This is broken down as:

Bedsit: (1 responses): £1,163.64

1 Bed: (50 responses): Range £480-£3,600

Average: £1,870.01

Median: £1,853.40



2 Bed: (2 responses): Range £2,568-£2,817

Average: £2,692.60

HEATING CHARGE

Those that pay it:

- 75 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £1,419.08–£4,453.40
- Average energy costs £2,284.47
(up from £1191 in 2021)
- Median energy costs £2,201.64

Those that don't pay it:

- 55 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £420–£4320
- Average energy costs £1,370
(up from £946 in 2021)
- Median energy costs £1,200

Energy costs are significantly cheaper for those tenants and leaseholders who are not on the communal heating charge.

8 tenants told us they were spending over £1500 a year on the heating charge alone. The (mean) average was £1327.77

COMMUNAL HEATING CHARGE

For those tenants on Communal Heating, they pay between 42%–89% of their total cost for energy on the heating charge of which they have no control and cannot reduce.

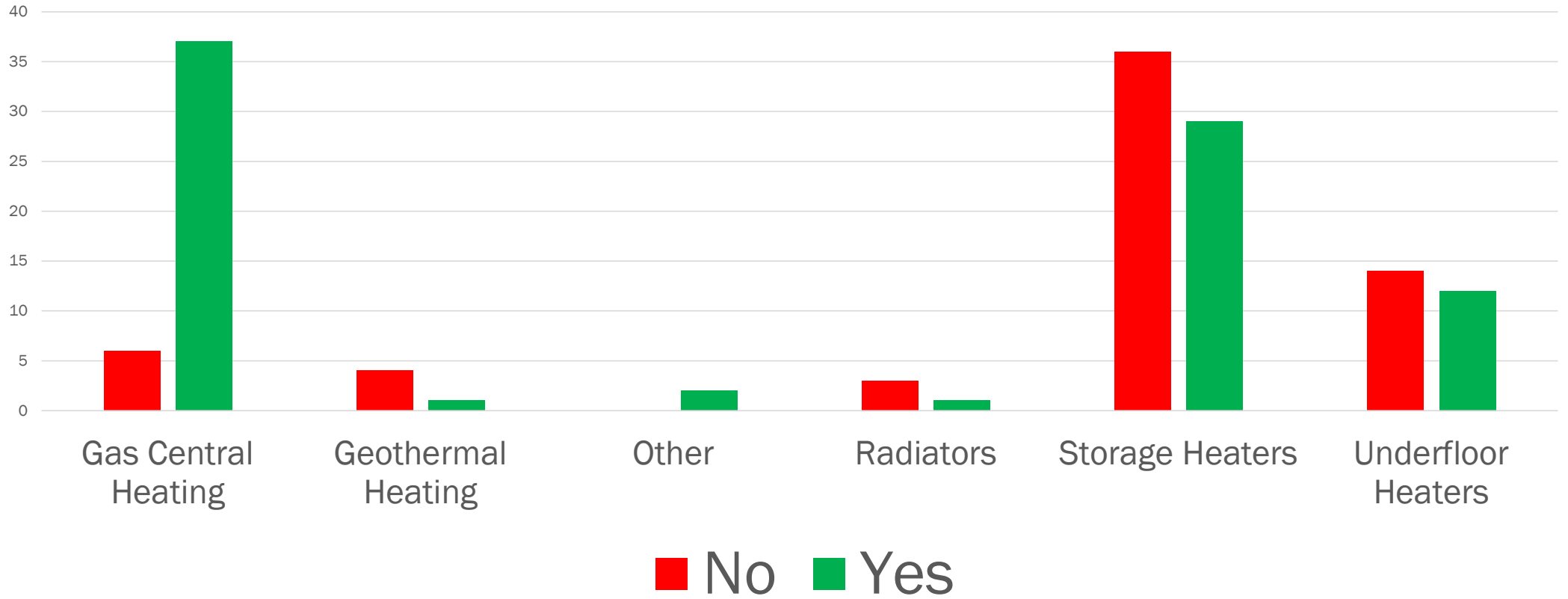
The average is 60%.

KEY QUESTIONS FROM US

Why is the communal heating so expensive for tenants?

Who pays for the heating of community rooms and staff office spaces? [Now answered]

SATISFIED OF HEATING SYSTEM?



ENERGY COSTS PER HEATING SYSTEM

Gas Central Heating
(42 responses)



- Range from £420 to £3640
- Average £1,402.95
(up from £955 in 2021)
- Median £1,218.00

Geothermal (Holyrood)
(3 responses)



- Range from £1,767 to £3,460
- Average £2,610.76
(up from £1446 in 2021)
- Median £2,605.20

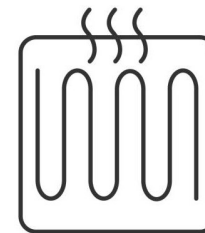
Storage Heaters (53 responses)

- Range from £480 to £4,395.24
- Average £2,035.52
(up from £1091 in 2021)
- Median £1,920



Underfloor heating
(15 responses)

- Range from £648 to £4,453.40
- Average £2,293.21
(up from £1279 in 2021)
- Median £2,241.12



Underfloor heating & Storage Heaters (7 responses)

- Range from £1,856.80 to £3,295.24
- Average £2,660.68
(up from £1333 in 2021)
- Median £2,817.20

THE AREAS WHERE TENANTS PAY THE MOST! (MORE THAN £3K A YEAR)

Albion Towers (3 respondents)	Eastchurch Close, Lordshill
Burgoyne Road, Thornhill	Irving Road, Maybush
Castle House	Kendal Avenue, Millbrook
Chandos House, Holyrood	Redbridge Towers
Clarence House, Northam	Wavell Road, Bitterne
Palmerston House, Holyrood	

THE AREAS WHERE TENANTS PAY THE LEAST! (LESS THAN £700 A YEAR)

Copenhagen Towers

Waltham Crescent, Aldermoor

Clover Nook (Redbridge)

Wimpson Lane, Millbrook

Havre Towers

46 Roundhill Close (2
responses)

Midenbury Walk, Townhill Park

Potters Court, Maybush

South Front (2 responses)

SMART METERS

Those that have it:

- 71 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £420 to £4,453.40
- Average energy costs £1,857.53
- Median energy costs £1,856.80

Those that don't have one:

- 53 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £600 to £4,395.24
- Average energy costs £1962.47
- Median energy costs £1,783.08

SMART METERS (FOR THOSE ON THE HEATING CHARGE)

Those that have it:

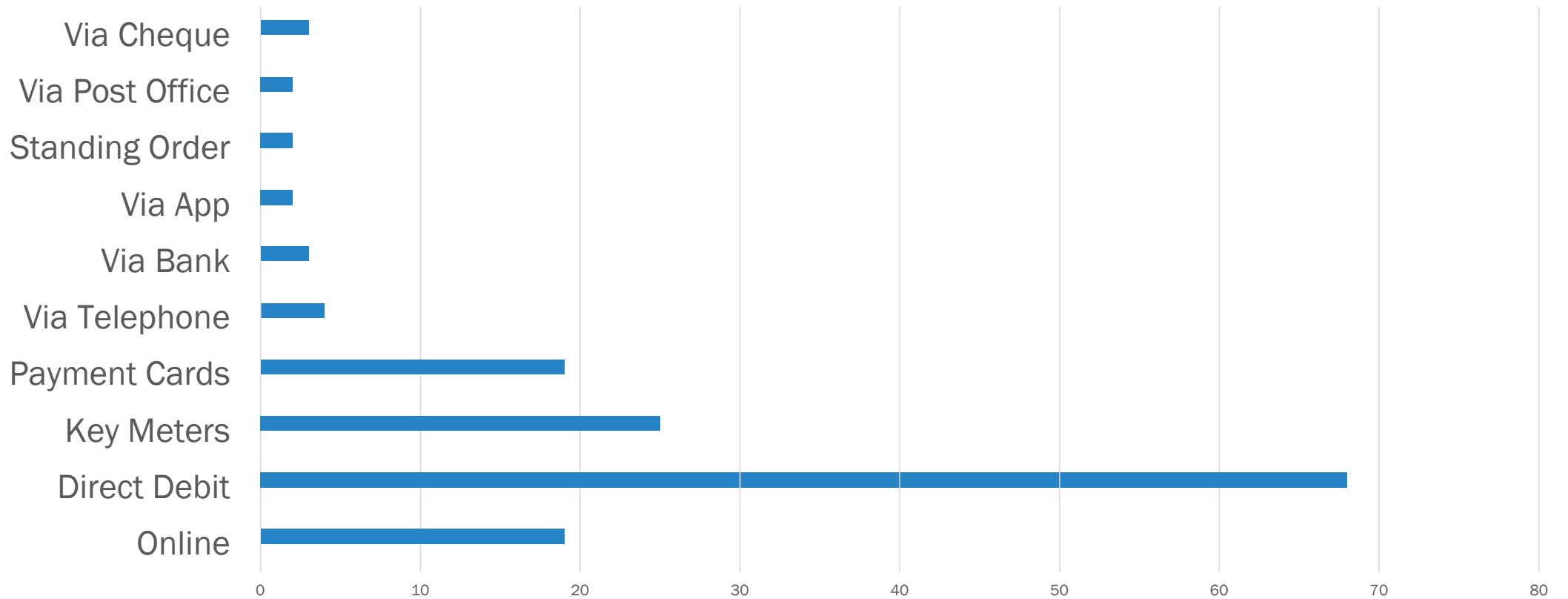
- 41 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £1,491 to £4,453
- Average energy costs £2,298.01
- Median energy costs £2,229.12

Those that don't have one:

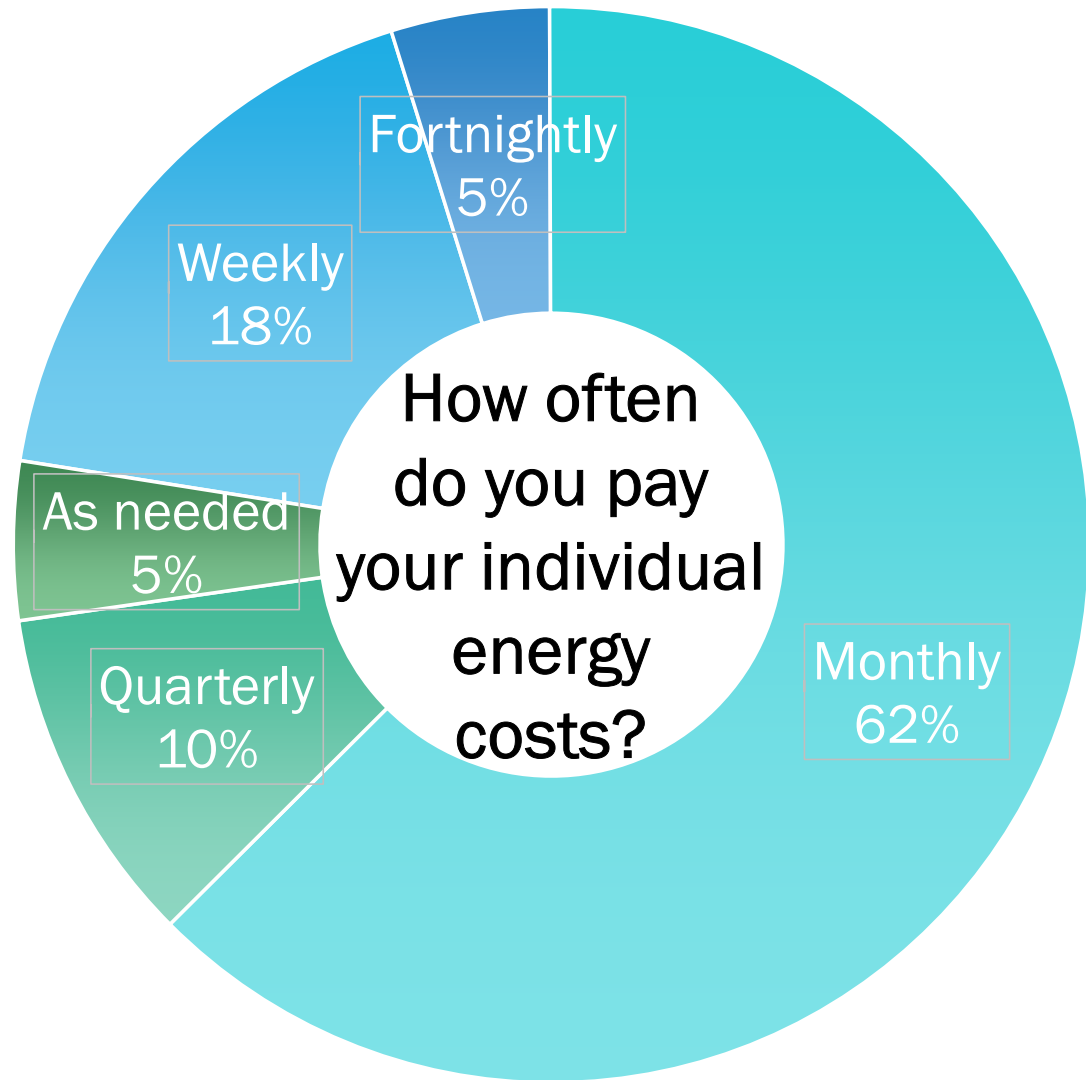
- 31 responses.
- Total energy costs range from £1,419 to £4,395.24
- Average energy costs £2,274.30
- Median energy costs £2,133.20

For those on the communal heating charge – smart meters appear to make no difference (£25 on average more expensive to have one!)

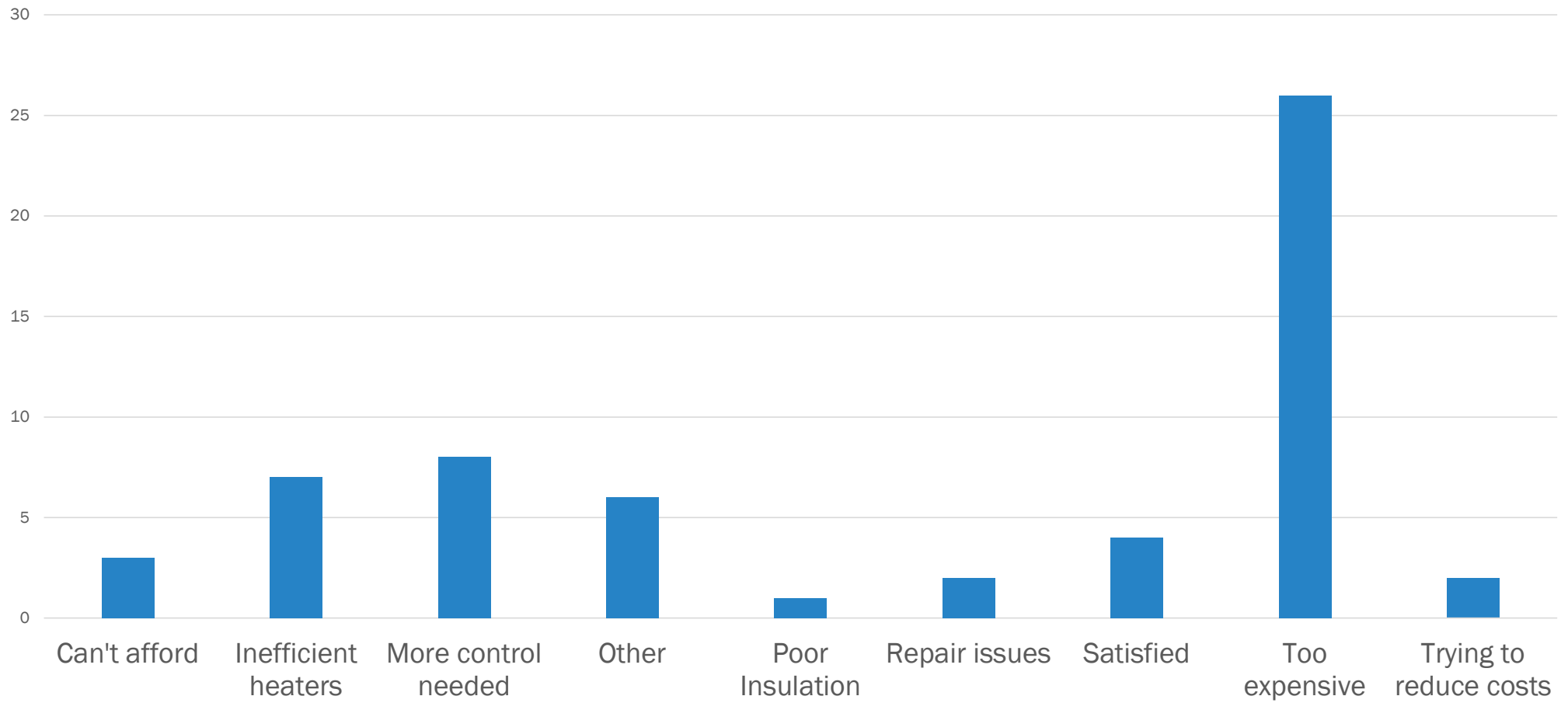
RESPONSES TO: HOW DO YOU PAY YOUR INDIVIDUAL ENERGY COSTS?



MOST TENANTS PAY THEIR ENERGY BILLS MONTHLY



THEME OF COMMENTS



SELECTED COMMENTS

As an OAP the heating charge cost is causing distress. I have less money for food.

The storage units are ancient and make the walls black, am constantly washing walls. Last year several people here had new modern one installed, they hadn't asked for them. It apparently was an experiment. Are we all going to get new ones?

I never use my heating and it's disgusting that we pay 52 weeks per year and it's disquieting that we pay 52 weeks per year for nothing. It feels like we are being robbed every month if we do not use it.

I think if they updated the heating it would be more economical

SELECTED COMMENTS

The night storage heaters all need replacing in the flat as too old. Plus neither of them (old and new) are responsive enough as you have to guess what temp be the next day and if temp rises or falls suddenly then can't adjust heaters.

I have no control or say so in what I am charged. Underfloor heating is never going to be cheap as electrical bills continue to rise. Cooking and lighting give me an average monthly bill of 90 pounds per month. More control needed

Would like to be able to control heating ie pay for what you see and not a standard charge per property.

We have to pay an extortionate amount for heating which we have no control over!! We want to be able to control when we have our heating on!. We do not have our heating in our two bedrooms but still have to pay the full cost!. There is no choice of what we pay for our heating, this has got to change!!

SELECTED COMMENTS

I want to be able to have to turn on heating when I want it all year round. I want to be able to control my own heating when I want it on.

It is getting very expensive and I appreciate the heating charge in the rent so I don't have to choose whether to heat or eat

Council to find alternative heating/electric system, solar panels, air source heat pumps.

Even on a fixed tariff at great tariff my bill has increased 3 times the amount it was before cost of living crisis each month. I have no choice but to pay as reliant on electric for my power to my powered wheelchair, electric bed adaptations, stair lift and breathing machine used for medical needs with breathing.

SELECTED COMMENTS

I know that the council has to cover their cost but £25 per week is rather high in my opinion

£2600 a year to the council for heating, £1020 to energy supplier - £3620 to heat a 1 bed flat which is excessive. £70 a week of my pension goes to heating and electric. I pay all year round; I pay even when I turn the heating off because it's too hot.

We pay £25.56 per week although from May to September no heating being used. The only hot water used on above cost is a bowl to do washing up as when shower fitted we pay for that on Eon electric, not in above cost. When you look at council electric cost it's extortionate as it's £100 a month x 12 although 5 months a year not used

A FEW BLOCK BREAKDOWNS

- Ventnor Court: 15 responses
- Energy costs range from £1,419 to £2451
- Average costs: £1,855.21
- Median costs: £1,827.08

All one bed flats



A FEW BLOCK BREAKDOWNS

- 46 Roundhill Close: 8 responses
- Energy costs range from £600-£1560
- Average costs: £1,063.50
- Median costs: £1,020.00

This is broken down as:

1 Bed: (1 response): £840

2 Bed: (6 response): Range £600-£1,560

Average: £1,078

Median: £1,110



3 Bed: (1 response): £1,200

ENERGY BILLS DISCOUNT SCHEME HEAT NETWORK SUPPORT

We are aware of other Housing Providers applying for the government support for those on heat networks which made a significant reduction to their heating bills.

- Has SCC applied for this scheme? If not, why not? If yes, what was the result? [since answered]



Policy paper

Energy Bills Discount Scheme heat network supplier guidance

Updated 18 July 2023

MAIN SURVEY FINDINGS RECAPPED:

- Tenants on the Communal Heating System pay considerably more than those without.
- The increase of energy costs since the last survey (carried out in February 2021) have gone up by 92% for tenants on the heating charge compared to 45% for those that don't
- The comments from tenants show they want control of their heating

WHAT SHOULD WE RECEIVE FROM OUR HEATING CHARGE?

Just using the experience of the group, it appears that different blocks get different benefits

- Some receive 'free' hot water while others have to pay.
- Some boosters get charged to the domestic supply while others don't.

WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN NEXT

- *How has the council taken on board the recommendations from our previous survey?*
- *What plans do the council have about how they are going to reduce the levels of Fuel Poverty across the city, particularly for council tenants.*
- *Continue investing to make existing properties more energy efficient.*
- *How have heating systems improved since our last survey? What programme is in place to improve existing heating systems in the future?*
- *Help tenants understand their existing heating systems and how to use them as efficiently as possible. Information sheets online and other formats to show people how to make the most of their storage heaters/systems.*
- *A plan to support more tenants to come off the communal heating charge*
- **If we haven't already, apply for the Energy Bills Discount Scheme heat network support**

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING