

Insulate your cavity walls and keep the heat at home

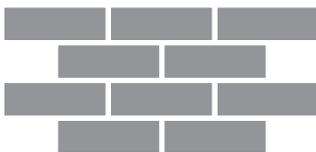


Cavity wall insulation is a simple and effective way to reduce your heating bills – and have a warmer home.

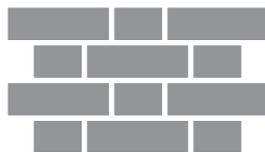
If your home was built after the 1930s, the chances are that its external walls are made of two 'skins' with a small gap between them. This means they are 'cavity walls' and the gap between them can be filled with insulating material to stop the warmth escaping to the outside.

To find out whether your home has cavity walls, look at the brick work. If your home has cavity walls, the bricks will normally have a regular pattern (left). If your home has solid walls, the bricks will have an alternating long-short-long-short pattern (right).

Cavity wall



Solid wall



Cavity wall insulation can cut your heating bills so much that it will pay for itself quickly. What's more there is financial help and support available to help people pay for cavity wall insulation. For professional installers, the job is simple, quick (about two hours) and makes no mess.

How much money will I save by insulating my cavity walls?

Cost	£500 (typical)
Annual saving	£190
Payback time	3 years (typical)
CO₂ saving per year	831kg

These are **estimated figures** based on a gas-heated, 3-bed semi. For larger homes, or those heated by electricity or oil, the savings will be significantly higher. Financing options for energy efficiency improvements like cavity wall insulation are available under the Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). See www.cse.org.uk/greendeal for more information.



People who insulate their cavity walls notice the difference in their comfort and in their fuel bills

Is my home suitable?

Generally speaking, your home will be suitable for cavity wall insulation if:

- the external walls are unfilled cavity walls
- the masonry and/or brick work is in good condition
- your cavity is at least 35mm wide (or 50mm for some forms of insulation)

If your home was built in the last 10 years it is likely that the cavity is already insulated. Some walls exposed to extreme weather and driving rain can also be unsuitable for cavity wall insulation. In all cases if you're thinking about cavity wall insulation, always check with a registered installer who will assess whether your home ticks all the right boxes. If your home is not suitable for cavity wall insulation, why not think about **solid wall insulation** (see other leaflet)?

Filling cavity walls is not a DIY job. It should always be done by a registered installer who is a member of the National Insulation Association (NIA), the Cavity Insulation Guarantee Agency (CIGA), or the British Board of Agrément. Check that your installer is signed up to a code of professional practice like those provided by the NIA, and that the installation is guaranteed for 25 years by CIGA.



"Insulating your cavity walls can reduce condensation inside the house. And you'll also be cutting CO₂ and helping to tackle climate change"



Tips for lower energy bills

Happy paying your electricity and gas supplier more money than you need to? Thought not. Here are 10 ways to cut your bills ...

1) Give your clothes a day in the sun; and give your tumble drier a break. Clothes dried in the fresh air feel great, and there are drying days in winter, too.



2) Keep the oven door shut as much as possible; every time you open it, nearly a quarter of the heat escapes.



3) Catch 'em young. Encourage your children to switch off electric toys and lights that they're not using. They'll soon get the hang of saving energy.

4) Be a friend to your freezer. Defrost it regularly to help it run more efficiently.

5) Buying a new washing machine, TV or dishwasher? Look out for the Energy Saving Trust logo.



6) Don't over-fill the kettle (but do make sure you cover the metal element at the base).



7) Dodge the draught! Fit draught-excluders to your front door, letter box and key hole, and draw your curtains at dusk to keep the heat in.

8) Turn your heating down by 1 degree. You'll hardly notice the change in temperature, but it'll make a big difference to your heating bill.

9) Wait 'til you have a full load before doing a wash. Two half-loads use more energy (and water) than one full load.

10) Sleep tight. Make sure all the lights are turned off when you go to bed. If you want to light a child's room or a landing, use a low-wattage night light.



This leaflet is one of a series that covers a range of energy efficiency and renewable energy topics, produced by the Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space (SEACS) project, for you to view online or download to share in your community.

SEACS brought together three UK and two French local authorities – Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, Wiltshire Council, le Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor and Lannion-Trégor Agglomération – to tackle the energy challenge that is faced on both sides of the channel.

The aim was to create opportunities for individuals, households, communities, schools and local authority buildings in both UK and France to reduce their energy consumption, implement energy efficiency measures and use clean/renewable energy where possible. The project has raised awareness of climate and energy issues and encouraged long term behavioural change towards energy use. Cooperation was the ethos of the project and participants had the opportunity to exchange and learn from each other.

For further information about SEACS project, to get ideas and view case studies to help you and your community save energy, and to find out which schools and community groups in your area have been involved, visit the SEACS website or the energy pages of your local authority's website.

www.seacs.info

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/sustainability

www.dorsetforyou.com/climatechange

www.devon.gov.uk/energy

This leaflet was first produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and reprinted in this version on behalf of SEACS.

CSE's Home Energy Team offers free advice on domestic energy use to householders in Bristol and Somerset (including the unitary authorities of North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset).

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Founded 1979

We are a national charity that helps people change the way they think and act on energy