

Home User Guide Template

Who is this template for?

This template is for home-builders and developers who are providing home user guides to people moving into a newly built or renovated home.

The Home Performance Index, Ireland's national certification scheme for new homes, includes home user guides in its best practice on customer care. By using this template, your home user guide will align with the standards and recommendations set out in the Home Performance Index Technical Manual.

How to use the template

- Please use the example text and images in this template to explain the different systems in the home it is for.
- Text in **[green square brackets]** gives you options to choose from. Please use the text that is relevant and delete the rest.
- Replace any text highlighted in **[orange square brackets]** with the appropriate information.
- Notes for you are in **[purple square brackets]**. Please delete these notes before you give the guide to the person who will be using it.

This template guide includes information to help people get to know their home and the surrounding area. It also includes information about using and maintaining the systems in the home. You can adapt the text to fit specific homes and to make sure your guide covers all the essentials.

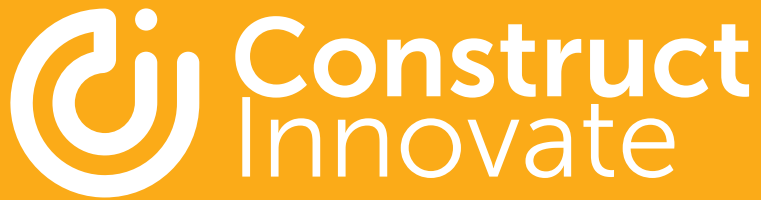
Please be aware that any text that is adapted or new text added won't be covered by the Clarity Mark. This will require an additional review by the Clarity Mark Assessors.

Please credit the source of the image. For all images taken from other websites, make sure you have permission to use them.

If you use your own image, it should be clear and easy to understand. For example, make sure that:

- The text is large enough for people to read easily
- The labels are clear
- Everything in the image is also explained in words
- Text is not printed over images
- The contrast is good
- Colours used are different enough not to be confused with each other

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Home User Guide Template

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Construct Innovate greatly values the work of the reviewers as their expert knowledge greatly contribute to the high standards of the Construct Innovate publications, therefore Construct Innovate thank the reviewers for their participation.

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Welcome to your new home!

We've written this guide to help you get to know your **[new/renovated] [name of builder/developer]** home. It explains how your home works and how to deal with any problems.

The guide tells you how to use and look after the heating, ventilation and other systems in your home. Following this guidance will help you run your home smoothly and efficiently, saving money while protecting the environment.





Why is fresh air important?

Getting fresh air into your home – **ventilation** – is important for your health, because it gives you cleaner air indoors and makes it harder for mould to grow.

To stop the heat escaping when it's cold, we've designed your home to be as airtight as possible. This is great for keeping you warm, but it also lets moist air build up from cooking, showering and even breathing. If this moisture isn't controlled, mould will grow. That's why your home has a ventilation system.

The ventilation system in your home:

- Lets fresh air in
- Takes moisture out
- Removes **pollutants** such as dust and chemicals that could harm your health

Health Effects of Poor Indoor Air Quality

Exposure to indoor pollutants can lead to:

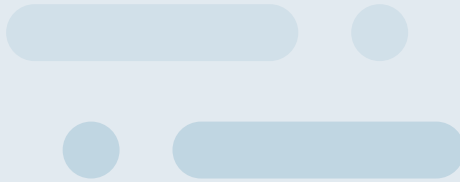
- Respiratory issues: Aggravation of asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory conditions.
- Cardiovascular problems: Increased risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Cognitive effects: Impaired concentration and decision-making abilities.
- Developmental concerns: Adverse effects on fetal and child development.

How Ventilation Keeps Your Home Healthy



Brings in fresh air

Ventilation brings fresh outdoor air into your home, replacing stale indoor air that can carry dust, odours, moisture, and harmful pollutants.



Takes pollutants out

Ventilation removes things in the air that can damage your health (like dust, smells, and triggers for allergies) by mixing them with fresh outdoor air.



Improves wellbeing

Ventilation makes your home more comfortable by allowing the air to move around and keeping the temperature more stable.



Controls humidity

Ventilation removes moist air from areas like bathrooms, kitchens and laundry rooms.



Prevents mould

Ventilation stops mould growing by taking moisture out of the air and keeping surfaces dry.



Your ventilation system

Your home has a [Please introduce the installed system here].

[Ventilation is usually provided in one of the ways outlined next. Please provide details of the ventilation system, including the system name and (if appropriate) the description from (A), (B) or (C). Delete the other two, and adapt the description you are using if needed.]

[(A)] Demand-controlled ventilation

[(A)] What is demand-controlled ventilation?

Demand-controlled ventilation:

- Takes stale, moist air out of your kitchen, bathroom and other rooms where moisture builds up.
- Lets fresh, dry air into your living room when you need it.
- Monitors the air quality inside your home, and uses the information to increase or decrease the amount of clean air coming in. This means you always have the right amount of ventilation and you get fresh air when you need it – for example, when there are more people in your home or there is steam from cooking.

The demand-controlled ventilation system in your home was made by [manufacturer's name]. The model in your home includes:

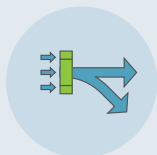
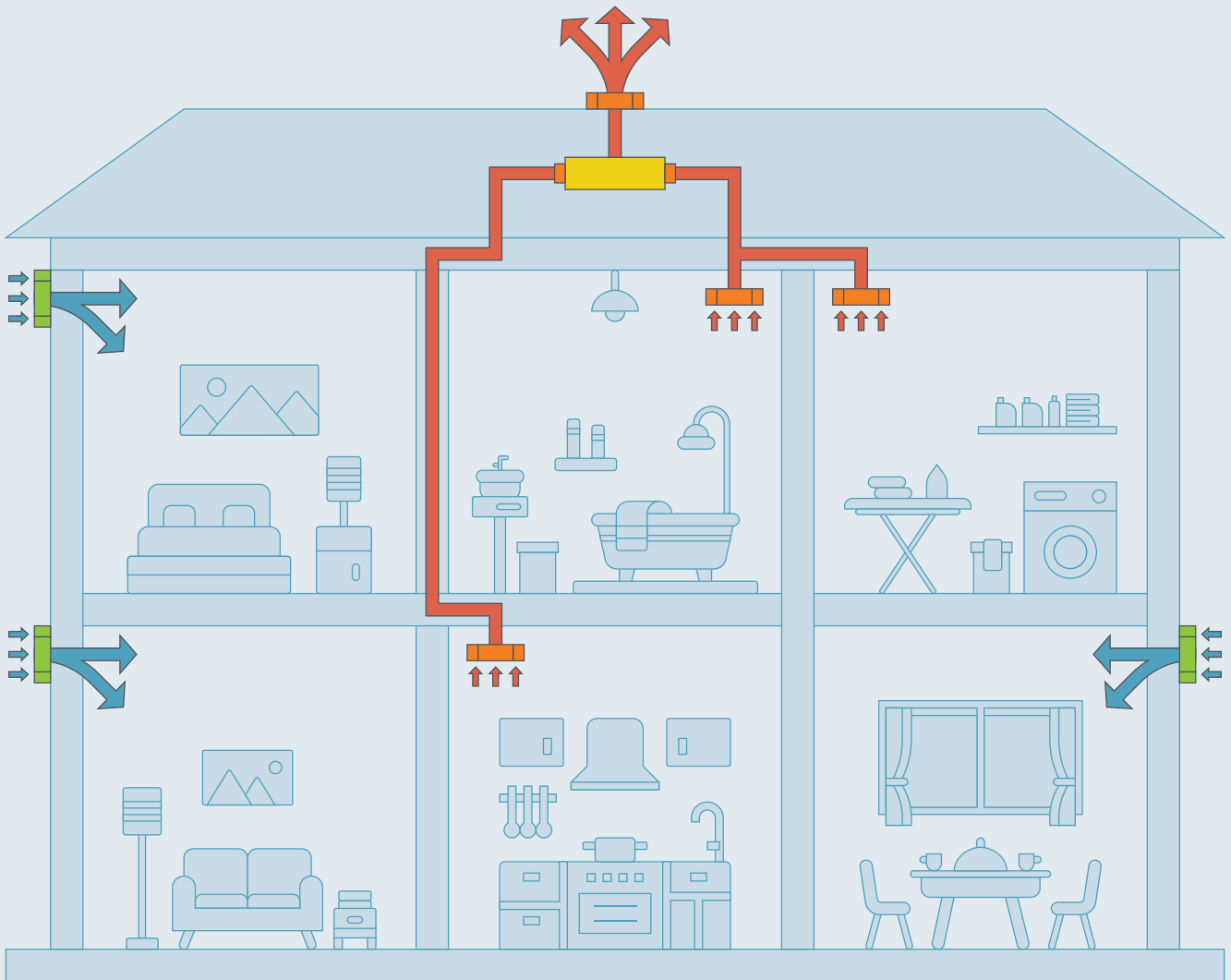
- [Humidity-sensitive air inlet model and picture]
- [Exhaust unit model and picture]
- [Fan model and picture]

[(A)] How does it work?

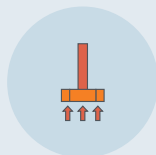
Here's how the system works:

1. **Fresh air comes in.** Air inlets in the [location of the air inlet] let air from outdoors into your home. The inlets open and close automatically depending on how humid the room is. This allows just the right amount of fresh air to enter.
2. **Stale air extracted.** Exhaust air valves in the [location of the exhaust units e.g. bathroom and kitchen ceilings] remove moist, stale air from these rooms. The valves adjust automatically depending on the humidity and pollution levels in each room.
3. **Stale air is taken away.** The central fan, which is in the [location of the fan], draws the stale air through the exhaust air valves, ready to be released outside.
4. **Stale air is released.** A roof vent or wall vent lets the stale air released outside.

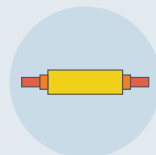
Demand-controlled ventilation



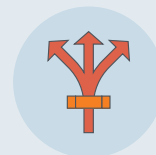
Fresh air comes in



Stale air extracted



Stale air is taken away



Stale air is released

[The image on the previous page is an example. If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the ventilation system is. We have adapted the image from the Aereco website.]

When there's a lot of moisture in a room (for example, when you're cooking or showering), the exhaust air valves open wider to get rid of the moist, polluted air. When the indoor air quality is good in the room, the valves close to save energy. This system makes sure that air is always moving through your home, keeping it fresh and comfortable.

Why your system should always be on



It gives you the best air quality

The system ensures your home always has clean, fresh air by automatically adjusting the ventilation. You don't have to worry about turning it up or down.



It stops moisture building up

The system maintains a healthy level of moisture in the air by removing excess humidity from cooking, showering, and other activities. Keeping the system on helps prevent condensation and mould, protecting both your home and your health.



It uses energy more efficiently

The system only runs when it's needed, adjusting itself based on your home's conditions. This helps reduce energy waste and saves you money on heating over time.

[(A)] How to look after your ventilation system

To keep your ventilation system working well, you need to look after it.

[If the following instructions don't match the ones for the system you've installed, please adjust them to fit the manufacturer's guidance]

Clean the air inlets

Clean the air inlets every [X] months by following these steps: [please provide a step-by-step explanation below]

Clean the exhaust air valves

Clean the exhaust air valves every [X] months by following these steps: [please provide a step-by-step explanation below]

Clean the central fan

Clean the central fan every [X] months by following these steps: [please provide a step-by-step explanation below]

Other maintenance [Remove this section if no other maintenance is needed]

Once a year, check the:

- [Specify the component or area to be checked]
- [Specify the component or area to be checked]
- [Specify the component or area to be checked]

For more information, please read the manufacturer's instructions or contact an expert.



You should read the manufacturer's manual, which you can find here: [insert link]. This will help you keep your ventilation system working well so your home stays comfortable, healthy and energy efficient.

[(A)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

[(B)] Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery

[(B)] What is mechanical ventilation with heat recovery?

Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery keeps the air in your home fresh, while saving energy. It takes warm, stale air from wetrooms like the kitchen and bathroom and brings in fresh, filtered air to your bedrooms and living areas. It also uses heat from the old air to warm up the new air, which helps to keep your heating costs down.

The mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system in your home was made by [manufacturer's name]. The model in your home includes:

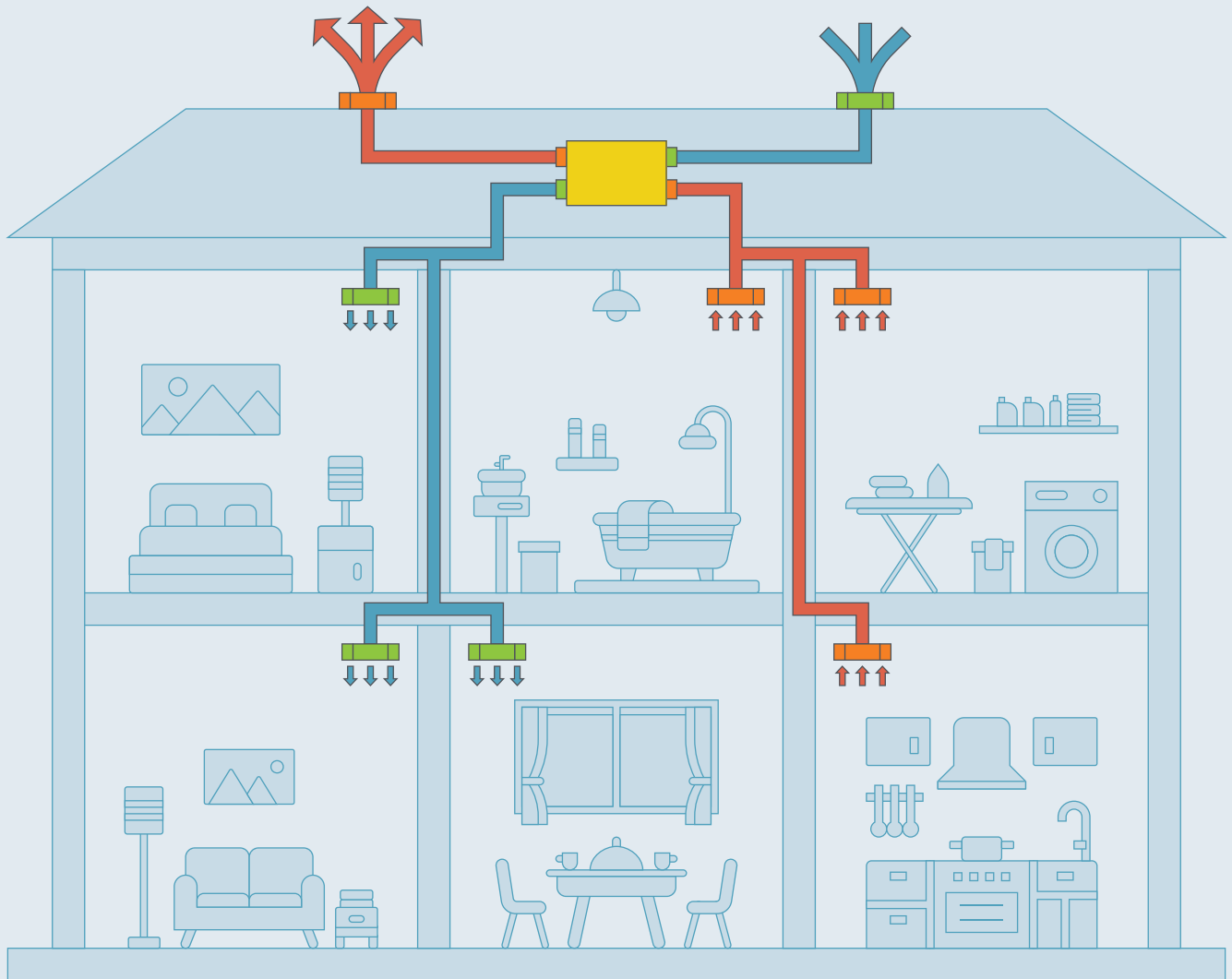
- [Supply air grilles model and picture]
- [Exhaust unit model and picture]
- [Heat exchanger model and picture]
- [Filters model and picture]

[(B)] How does it work?

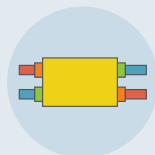
Here's how the system works:

1. **Fresh air comes in.** The fresh air intake grille allows clean, outside air into your home. Your air intake grille is in the [location of the air intake grille].
2. **Fresh air is warmed.** The heat exchanger (also called the air-handling unit) takes heat from the old, stale air leaving your home and uses it to warm up the fresh, new air. This uses energy more efficiently to warm your home. Your heat exchanger is in the [location of the heat exchanger]. It has two fans: one to draw fresh air into your home and the other to push stale air out. [The fans adjust automatically depending on the humidity and pollution levels in each room].
3. **Fresh air enters your rooms.** Once it is warmed, the fresh air enters your rooms through supply air grilles in the dry rooms (that is, not a bathroom or kitchen) [location of the air inlets].
4. **Stale air leaves your rooms.** Exhaust air grilles remove moist, stale air from the wet rooms [location of the exhaust units], where you get more moisture.

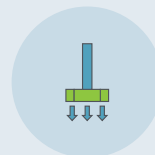
Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery



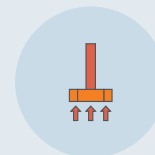
Fresh air comes in



Fresh air is warmed



Fresh air enters your rooms



Stale air leaves your rooms

[The image on the previous page is an example. If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the ventilation system is located. We have adapted the image from the H2ECO website.]

How to use the controls

- **Automatic:** Most of the time, your ventilation system will run automatically.
- **Manual boost:** Your system has a button that you can press to turn up the ventilation a short time – for example, if you have a lot of guests. You can find the button in [location of the boost button]. [If your system doesn't have a boost function, please delete this point].

Why your system should always be on



It gives you the best air quality

The system ensures your home always has clean, fresh air by automatically adjusting the ventilation. You don't have to worry about turning it up or down.



It stops moisture building up

The system maintains a healthy level of moisture in the air by removing excess humidity from cooking, showering, and other activities. Keeping the system on helps prevent condensation and mould, protecting both your home and your health.



It uses energy more efficiently

The system is most efficient when it's always on. And by taking heat from the air leaving your home, it helps you save on heating costs.

[(B)] How to look after your ventilation system

Your home's ventilation system is designed to keep the air indoors healthy and remove moisture so mould won't grow. But to keep the system working well, you need to look after it.

[If the following instructions don't match the ones for the system you've installed, please adjust them to fit the manufacturer's guidance]

Clean and change the filters

- **How often?** Clean the filters every [include the time in the manufacturer's instructions] and change the filters every [include the time in the manufacturer's instructions].
- **Where are they?** The filters are in [describe location].
- **What tools do I need?** [describe what tools, including their sizes, are needed to clean and replace the filters].
- **How do I clean the filters?** [describe how to remove and clean the filters according to the manufacturer's instructions. The text below (items 1-4) is just an example. Describe it fully, concisely and clearly].
- **How do I replace the filters?** [describe how to remove and change the filters according to the manufacturer's instructions. The text below (items 1-4) is just an example. Describe it fully, concisely and clearly].
 1. Open the filter compartment.
 2. Take out the filters.
 3. Clean the filters with a vacuum. If they're still dirty, change them.
 4. Put the filters back in and close the compartment.

Other maintenance

Once a year, you should also check that:

- The fresh air intake grille is clean and nothing is blocking it
- The supply air grilles and exhaust air grilles inside your home are clean
- [Specify the component or area to be checked]

For more information, please read the manufacturer's instructions or contact an expert.



You should read the manufacturer's manual, which you can find here: [insert link]. This will help you keep your ventilation system working well so your home stays comfortable, healthy and energy efficient.

[(B)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

[(C)] Exhaust air heat pump

[(C)] What is an exhaust air heat pump?

An exhaust air heat pump ventilates your home while helping to heat the radiators and hot water. It takes warm, moist air from rooms like the kitchen and bathroom. It then uses the heat from that air to warm up your radiators and hot water.

Your home has an exhaust air heat pump system made by [manufacturer's name]. The model in your home includes:

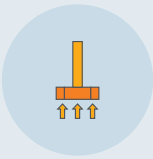
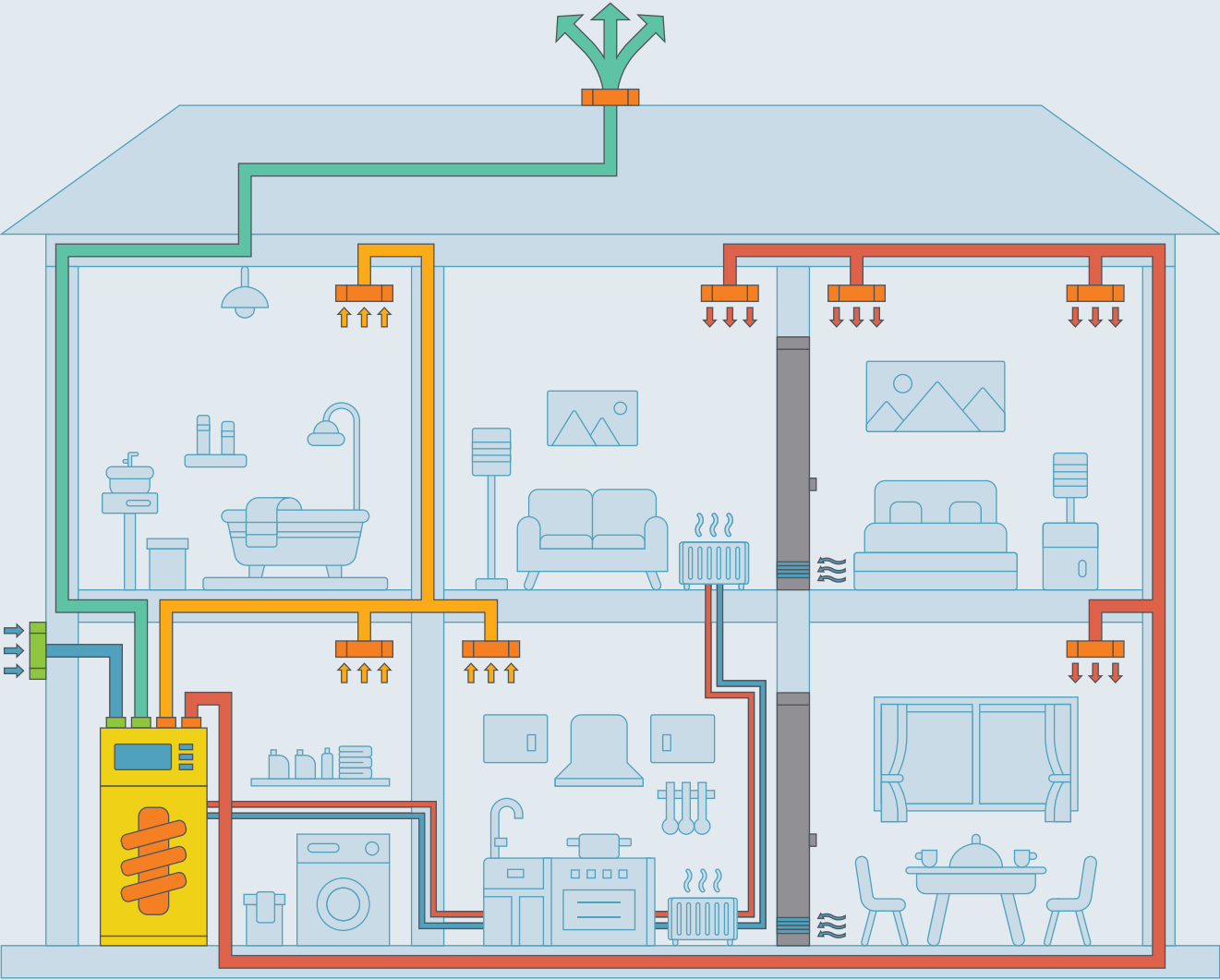
- [Humidity-sensitive air inlet model and picture]
- [Exhaust unit model and picture]
- [Heat pump unit model and picture]
- [Filters model and picture]

[(C)] How does it work?

Here's how the system works:

1. **Stale air leaves your rooms.** Warm, stale air leaves your rooms through valves. Your home has these valves in all the rooms where moisture builds up, like the kitchen and bathroom.
2. **Stale air travels to the heat pump.** The warm, stale air then travels through air ducts to the exhaust air heat pump in the [location of the heat pump].
3. **Heat is removed from the stale air.** Before the stale air leaves your home, the heat pump takes heat from it for warming up your radiators and hot water. [The temperature of the discharged air is reduced to approximately XX°C.]
4. **Fresh air comes in.** Fresh air from outside your home is pulled into the house through the air inlet, which is in the [location of the air inlet].
5. **Your home is heated.** The system heats all the rooms by the radiators.
6. **Air flows through your home.** The air flows through the rooms in your home under the doors, so make sure you don't block the gaps under the doors.

Exhaust air heat pump



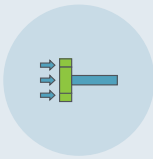
Stale air leaves your rooms



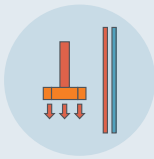
Stale air travels to the heat pump



Heat is removed from the stale air



Fresh air comes in



Your home is heated



Air flows through your home

[The image on the previous page is an example. If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the ventilation system is.]

[When there's a lot of activity in a room, such as cooking or showering, the exhaust air heat pump works harder to remove the moist, polluted air and use its heat to warm your water]. The system is always moving air through your home, keeping it fresh and comfortable [while helping with your heating when required.]

How to use the controls

- **Automatic:** Most of the time, the exhaust air heat pump system operates automatically, adjusting itself based on the air quality and heating needs of your home.
- **Manual boost:** Your systems have a button you can press to temporarily increase ventilation and heating, for example, if you're cooking or have a lot of guests. The button is located in [location of the boost button]. [If your system doesn't have a boost function, please delete this point].

Why your system should always be on



It gives you the best air quality

The system ensures your home always has clean, fresh air by automatically adjusting the ventilation. You don't have to worry about turning it up or down.



It stops moisture building up

The system maintains a healthy level of moisture in the air by removing excess humidity from cooking, showering, and other activities. Keeping the system on helps prevent condensation and mould, protecting both your home and your health.



It uses energy more efficiently

The system is most efficient when it's always on. And by taking heat from the air leaving your home, it helps you save on heating costs.

[(C)] How to look after your ventilation system

Your home's ventilation system is designed to keep the air indoors healthy and remove moisture so mould won't grow. But to keep the system working well, you need to look after it.

[If the following instructions don't match the ones for the system you've installed, please adjust them to fit the manufacturer's guidance]

Clean and change the filters

- **How often?** Clean the filters every **[include the time in the manufacturer's instructions]** and change the filters every **[include the time in the manufacturer's instructions]**.
- **Where are they?** The filters are in **[describe location]**.
- **What tools do I need?** **[describe what tools, including their sizes, are needed to clean and replace the filters]**.
- **How do I clean the filters?** **[describe how to remove and clean the filters according to the manufacturer's instructions. The text below (items 1-4) is just an example. Describe it fully, concisely and clearly]**.
- **How do I replace the filters?** **[describe how to remove and change the filters according to the manufacturer's instructions. The text below (items 1-4) is just an example. Describe it fully, concisely and clearly]**.
 1. Open the filter compartment.
 2. Take out the filters.
 3. Clean the filters with a vacuum. If they're still dirty, change them.
 4. Put the filters back in and close the compartment.

Other maintenance

Once a year, you should also check that:

- The fresh air intake grille is clean and nothing is blocking it
- The supply air grilles and exhaust air grilles inside your home are clean
- **[Specify the component or area to be checked]**

For more information, please read the manufacturer's instructions or contact an expert.



You should read the manufacturer's manual, which you can find here: **[insert link]**. This will help you keep your ventilation system working well so your home stays comfortable, healthy and energy efficient.

[(C)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

Cooker hood

Always use your cooker hood (also called an extractor fan) when you're cooking.

- Turn on the cooker hood as soon as you start cooking. You can also leave it on for a while after you finish cooking to help remove lingering smells and steam from your kitchen.
- It's important to maintain the fan. Clean and change the filter when needed. The manufacturer's instructions will tell you how often to do this and how to do it.
- Clean the grilles on your cooker hood regularly. Otherwise, grease can build up and stop the cooker hood working properly.



Your Ventilation System

Never turn off your ventilation system to ensure good airflow

Never block or obstruct airflow at the bottom of doors — this gap helps with ventilation and air circulation in the home

Always, use the extractor fan while cooking to maintain good air quality



Try not to dry clothes indoors



Always cover pots and pans when cooking



Open your windows for at least 5 minutes a day, if possible



Leave trickle vents and wall vents open (do not block them with curtains and furniture)



Clean wall vents and replace ventilation filters according to manufacturer's instructions



Use non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning products



Do not use incense, candles, or anything that burns



Avoid filling the home with lots of new furniture and other items, as these can emit chemicals that are harmful to your health



Do not use air fresheners (sprays, aerosol cans, plug-ins, etc)

Proper ventilation protects your home and your health

It's important to keep ventilation systems active and well maintained to ensure cleaner, healthier air for you and your family.

If your home does not have adequate airflow, moisture can build up. This creates the perfect conditions for mould growth, which can damage your home. Mould also has health risks as it can trigger allergies and make asthma worse, particularly

for children, the elderly and anyone with a respiratory condition.

In addition to mould, indoor air quality is affected by pollutants that can come from inside and outside the home. Common pollutants include cleaning products, dust and vehicle emissions. Poor ventilation means these pollutants build up, which can increase health risks.

For more information, please see your *Home User Guide Manual*



Your heating system

[Introduce the heating system that you've installed. Include the temperature range that is right for the home you've designed. We've included an example below.]

Your heating system uses heat from [an air source heat pump, an exhaust air heat pump, a district heater] to warm your home. The heat travels around your home through [radiators, underfloor heating, infrared heaters]. A thermostat measures the temperature in your home and turns the heating up or down for you.

[Please add an image or diagram of the heating system here.]

Your heat source

[Please use the text from the section that applies to the heating system you've installed – (A), (B) or (C) – and delete the other two options. Include the system name. If you need to, you can change the description to fit the heating system the household will be using (for example, if essential information is missing or different).]

[(A)] Air source heat pump

Your home has an air-to-water heat pump made by [manufacturer's name]. An air-to-water heat pump is a type of air source heat pump. It takes heat from the outside air and uses it to warm your home.

The warmth in the outside air is free to use, and it never runs out. The system is energy-efficient and works even when it's cold outside.

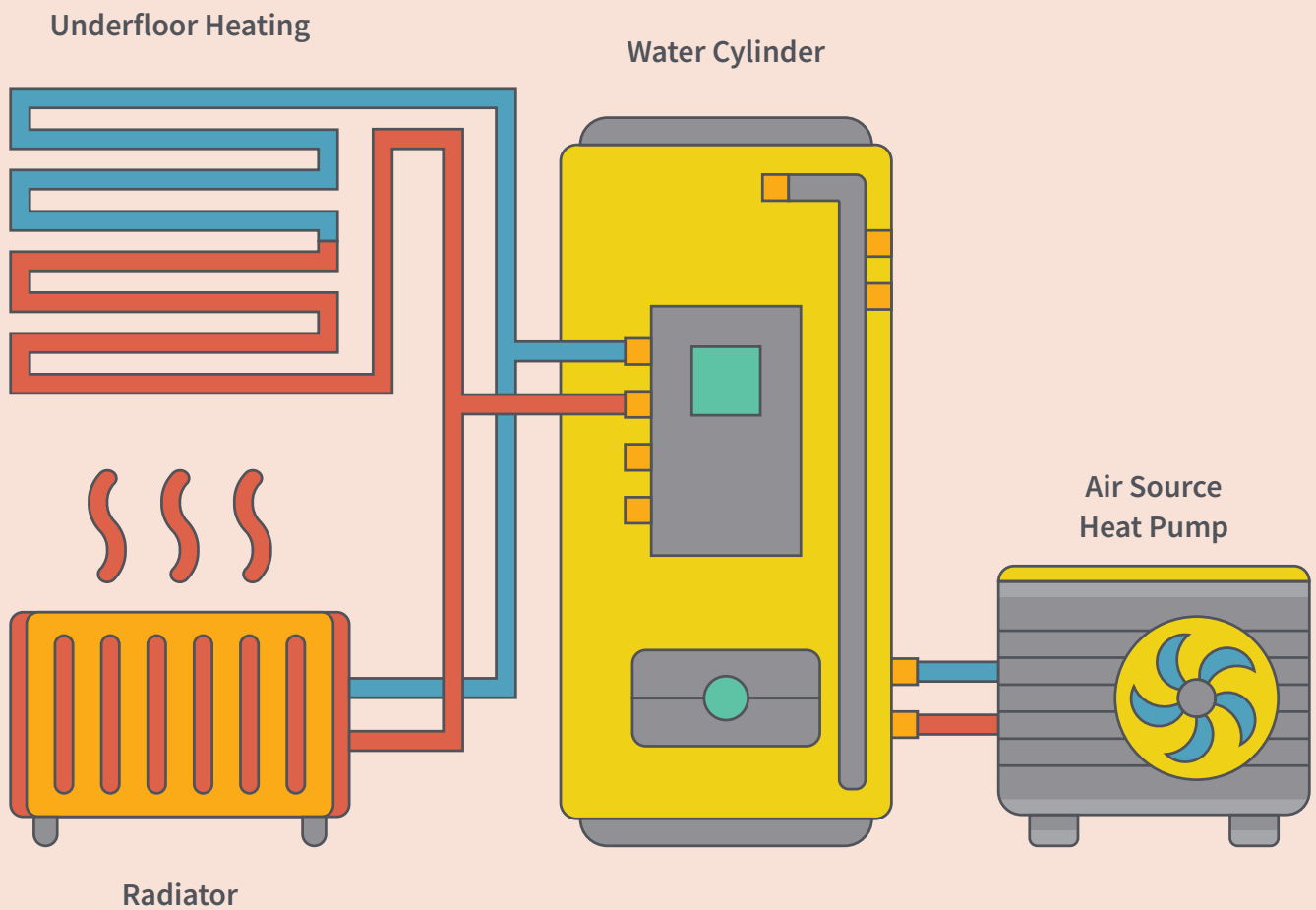
[(A)] How it works

An air source heat pump heats the water that goes to your radiators, like a traditional boiler does. But the heat pump is more energy-efficient. It warms the radiators at a lower, steadier temperature than a traditional boiler does, but heats them for longer. That means your radiators might feel warm rather than hot, but they're still heating your home effectively.

Here's how the system works:

1. **The heat pump absorbs heat from the air.** The heat pump takes warmth from the outside air, even when it's cold outside. To do this, it uses a **refrigerant** – a chemical that's good at absorbing and transferring heat.
2. **The heat is used to warm the water.** The refrigerant passes through a **heat exchanger**, where the warmth passes to the water in your heating system.
3. **The warm water heats your home.** Pipes carry the heated water to the [radiators, underfloor heating], which heat the rooms.
4. **You adjust the temperature in each room.** In each room, there is a [thermostatic radiator valve / wall mounted thermostat], which you can use to change the temperature in that room. The heat pump will keep the rest of your home at the overall temperature you have set.

Air source heat pump



[If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the heating system is.]

When there's a lot of activity in a room, such as cooking or showering, the exhaust air heat pump works harder to remove the moist, polluted air and use its heat to warm your water. The system is always moving air through your home, keeping it fresh and comfortable while helping with your heating.

Main Parts

- **Outdoor unit:** Takes heat from the air
- **Heat exchanger:** Transfers heat from the refrigerant to water
- **Pipes:** Carry heated water to radiators or underfloor heating
- **Thermostat:** Controls the temperature and the heating system

[(A)] Looking after your air source heat pump

Servicing

Your air source heat pump must be serviced professionally every 12 months.

Outdoor unit

Check the grilles and the bottom of the unit.

- Throughout the year, check regularly that the grille is not clogged by leaves, snow or anything else. Do extra checks after strong winds or snow.
- Check the back is free from dirt and leaves.
- Check the drain holes at the bottom are free from dirt and leaves.

Other checks [Remove this section if there is no other maintenance to do]

When [cleaning the outer casing, cleaning safety valves], check:

- [Specify the component or area to be checked]
- [Specify the component or area to be checked]



You should read the manufacturer's manual, which you can find here: [insert link]. This will help you keep your ventilation system working well so your home stays comfortable, healthy and energy efficient.

[(A)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

[(B)] Exhaust air heat pump

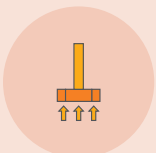
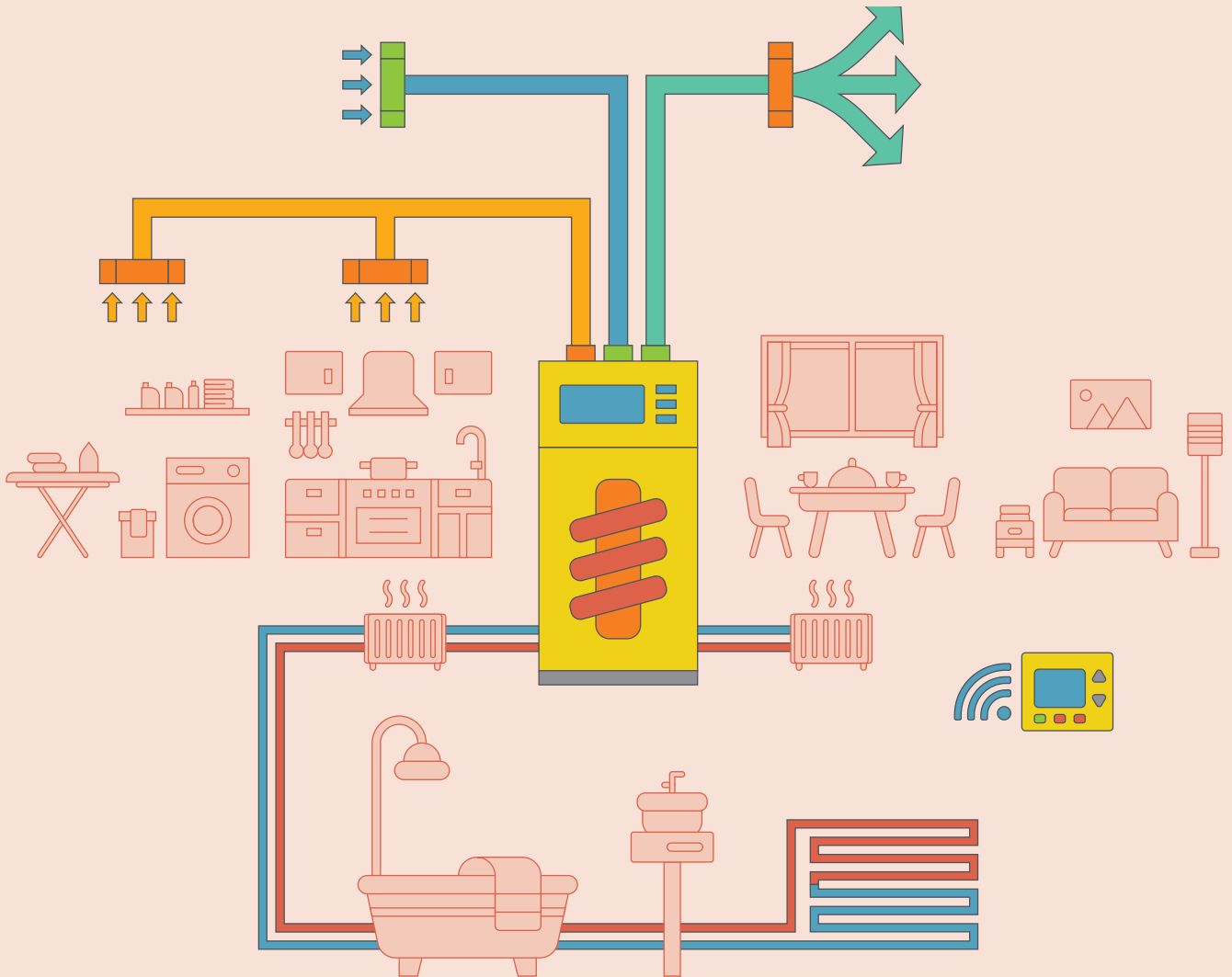
Your home has an exhaust air heat pump made by [manufacturer's name]. Your exhaust air heat pump takes warmth from air leaving your home and uses it to heat your rooms and your hot water. The air leaving your home is free to use, and it's **renewable** – it won't get used up.

[(B)] How it works

Here's how the system works:

1. **Heat Pump takes warmth from old air.** The heat pump pulls warm air from inside your rooms into **air ducts** (pipes) through **exhaust air valves**. These valves let air out of the room but don't let it in. They are in the [location of the exhaust air valves].
2. **Air goes to the heat pump.** The warm air travels through the air ducts to the exhaust air heat pump in the [location of the heat pump].
3. **Heat pump uses warmth from the air.** The heat pump absorbs the air's warmth and uses it to heat your home and hot water. The old air goes to the exhaust units in the [location of the exhaust units] and is released outside.
4. **Warm water heats your home.** Pipes carry the heated water to your [radiators, underfloor heating], which heat your rooms.
5. **You adjust the temperature in each room.** In each bedroom, there is a [thermostatic radiator valve / wall mounted thermostat], which lets you turn the heat up or down in that room. The heat pump will still keep the rest of your home at the overall temperature you have set.

Exhaust air heat pump



Heat Pump takes warmth from old air



Air goes to the heat pump



Heat pump uses warmth from the air



Warm water heats your home



You adjust the temperature in each room

[The image on the previous page is an example. If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the heating system is located.]

[(B)] Looking after your exhaust air heat pump

Servicing

Have your exhaust air heat pump serviced professionally every 12 months.

Checking the filter

[Please change this text in line with the manufacturer's instructions]

[Your heat pump has a filter. You'll need to clean it every [X] months and change it every [X] months (or each time it is serviced). If[the symbol on the left appears, the filter is blocked and you need to clean or change it. After you've done that, highlight the symbol and push the knob. Scroll down to the tick and push the knob again to clear the error code.]

How to clean and change the filter

[Please change the steps in line with the manufacturer's instructions]

To change your filter, follow these steps:

1. Turn off the heat pump at the mains electrical panel.
2. Remove the front panel.
3. Then turn off the main switch inside the unit.
4. Unscrew the filter cover.
5. Remove the filter cover.
6. Pull out the filter. Clean it with a vacuum cleaner or replace it with a new filter.
7. Put the filter cover back, and tighten the screws.
8. Turn on the main power switch inside the unit.
9. Put back the large front cover, and switch the pump back on at the mains.



You should read the manufacturer's manual, which you can find here: [\[insert link\]](#). This will help you keep your ventilation system working well so your home stays comfortable, healthy and energy efficient.

[(B)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

[(C)] District Heating

Your home is connected to a district heating system provided by [supplier's name]. District heating supplies heat from a central energy plant through insulated pipes to warm your rooms and provide hot water. Because the heat is generated centrally and shared among many homes, it is efficient and reduces the need for individual boilers. District heating often uses renewable or recovered energy, making it a more sustainable option.

[(C)] What is it?

District heating is a system where boilers and heat pumps kept in a central area provide the heat for your central heating and hot water. This means your home doesn't have its own boiler or heat pump. Each district heating system supplies several homes, and the heat is piped to each home on the system.

[(C)] What are the benefits?

- District heating is an efficient way to heat your home, because having the heating source in one place can reduce install costs and maintenance costs.
- You have more space in your home because there's no need for a boiler, a hot-water tank or a flue (a large pipe that goes through the side of your wall).
- Hot water comes out straight away when you use the tap.
- There are no hidden costs. The management company sets money aside to make sure the system doesn't get outdated.
- Your energy provider, [name of the energy provider], looks after the central boilers and pipes, so you don't need to budget for this.

[If a drawing or layout is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration showing where the district heating is.]

Who runs my district heating?

Your district heating system is run by [company operator]. They are responsible for managing the heat provided to you and others on the system. To make sure heat is always available, they look after the heating equipment and provide a [call-out service / service 24 hours a day, seven days a week].

How accurate are my bills?

The meter in your home's heat interface unit - the large white box [located in] - tells you how much heat you've used. You can use the meter reading to check that the amount on your bill is right. Your meter meets EU standards for metering and carries the CE mark.

[(C)] Who to contact if there's a problem

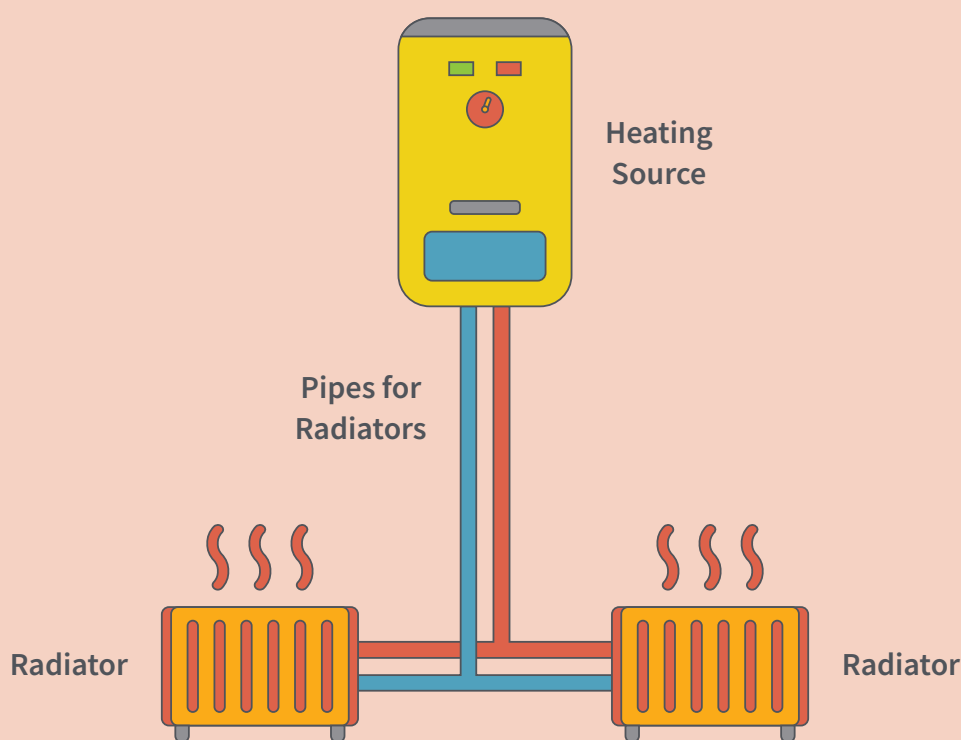
[Please add the contact details here.]

Your [radiators or underfloor heating]

[Please use the text from the section that applies to the heating system you've installed – (A) or (B) – and delete the other two options. Include the system name. If you need to, you can change the description to fit the heating system the household will be using (for example, if essential information is missing or different).]

[(A)] Radiators

Your home has a radiator heating system made by [Name of the manufacturer]. The model is [insert model here].



[If a drawing or layout of your specific house or apartment is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the heat-distribution system is]

[(A)] How your radiators work

The hot water from your [heating source] travels through the pipes to your radiators, heating them up. The heat from the radiators then warms the air in the room.

The highest temperature setting for all the rooms in your home is 21°C. The system is not designed for temperatures above this.



[If a picture of your specific radiator is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration showing each part of the radiator]

[(A)] Looking after your radiators

Why clean your radiators?

Keeping your radiators clean prevents dust from circulating in the air, which can help reduce breathing issues. Clean radiators also work more efficiently, as dust build-up can block heat from being released effectively.

Inspect your radiators and pipes

Check your radiators and the connecting pipes once a year for any signs of rust or leaks.

Keep the area around your radiators clear

Avoid placing furniture or other items directly in front of your radiators. This allows warm air to circulate freely and heat the room more effectively.

Bleed your radiators

Over time, air can become trapped inside your radiators. When this happens, the radiator may not heat properly, as the warm water cannot circulate fully. To ensure optimal performance, bleed your radiators every [insert frequency] by following the steps below.

How to bleed your radiators

If you notice that a radiator is cool at the top, air might be trapped inside. To release the air:

1. Turn off the heating and allow the system to cool.
2. Attach the radiator key to the bleed valve and turn it anti-clockwise. Open the valve slowly, so water doesn't escape. Open it just enough so you can hear the hiss of the air escaping.
3. Hold a cloth underneath the bleed valve to catch the water when the last of the air is released.
4. When water comes out, immediately close the bleed valve.

[We have given you a radiator key.] [You can get a radiator key from a hardware store.]

[(A)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]

[(B)] Underfloor heating

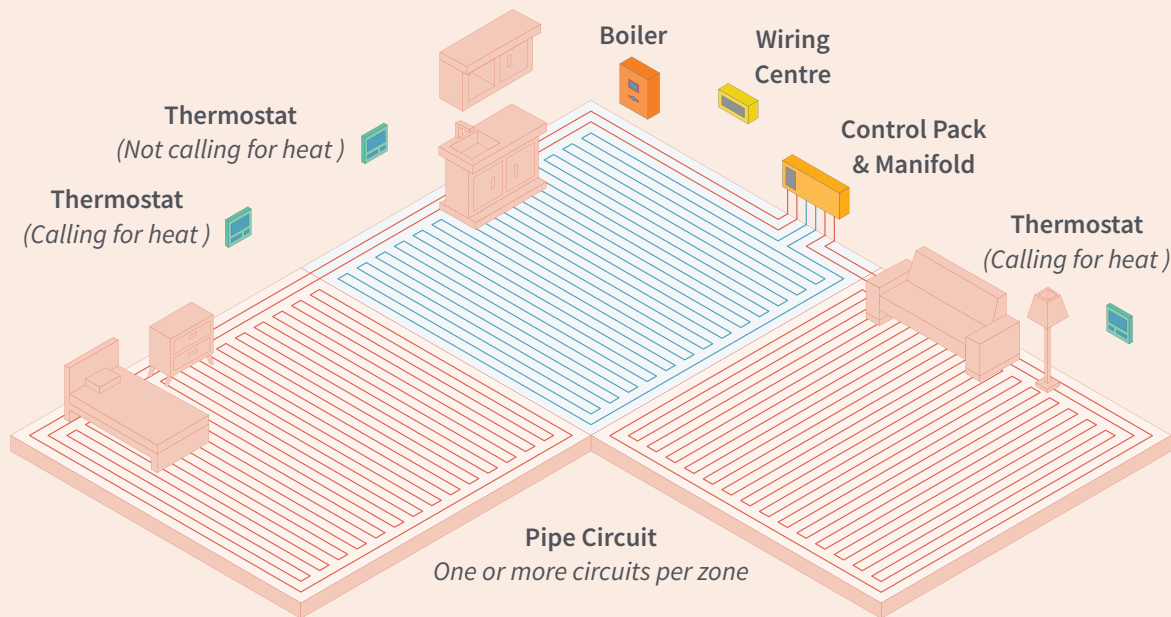
Your home has underfloor heating made by [Name of the manufacturer]. The model is [insert model here].

[(B)] How your underfloor heating works

Your underfloor heating uses [hot water, electricity]. [Pipes/electrical cables] under the floors then carry the heat around your home, warming each room evenly. Heat is monitored and controlled by intelligent thermostats to maintain a consistent temperature throughout the property or individual zones. Underfloor heating doesn't get as hot as radiators do, so it's much safer to touch. The temperature of the surface is between 25°C and 27°C.

You can control the overall temperature of your home and the temperature in separate areas called zones. There are [X] zones in your home: [kitchen and utility room, living room, bathroom, bedrooms]. Each zone has its own thermostat, which you can set at different temperatures to keep you more comfortable and use energy more efficiently.

The highest temperature setting for all the rooms in your home is 21°C. The system is not designed for temperatures above this.

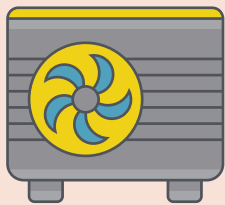


[(B)] Looking after your underfloor heating

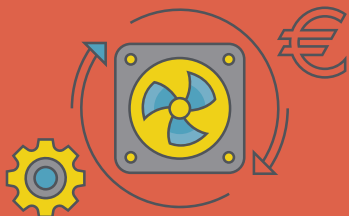
When you book your annual service for your heating system please ensure that they also include a check of your underfloor heating system.

[(B)] Who to contact if there's a problem

[Please add the contact details here.]



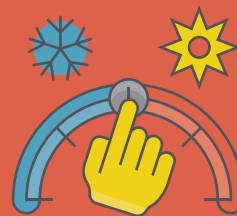
Air Source Heat Pump



Never turn off your heat pump. Keeping it running continuously allows it to operate more efficiently and maintain a stable temperature. This helps reduce your overall heating costs.



Never obstruct or block the outdoor unit, even with plants. Clear space around the unit ensures proper airflow and maintains optimal performance.



If your home feels too hot or too cold, adjust the thermostat by 1 degree at a time. Keep in mind, it may take up to 24 hours before you notice any change in temperature.



Your heat pump must be professionally serviced every 12 months



Your radiators will not feel very hot to the touch



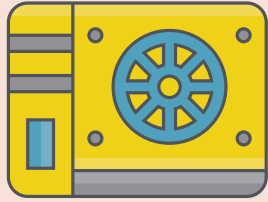
Keep radiators on as recommended – and always leave them uncovered



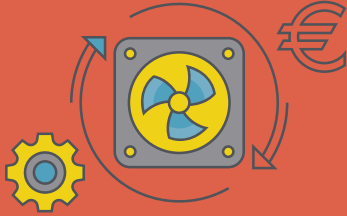
Boosting the hot water increases the running costs of the system – it was programmed to run efficiently in your home



In the summer, lower the thermostat to 16°C – and always use the holiday function when going on holiday



Exhaust Air Heat Pump



Never turn off your heat pump. Keeping it running continuously allows it to operate more efficiently and maintain a stable temperature. This helps reduce your overall heating costs.



If your home feels too hot or too cold, adjust the thermostat by 1 degree at a time. Keep in mind, it may take up to 24 hours before you notice any change in temperature.



Your heat pump must be professionally serviced every 12 months



Your radiators should not feel very hot



In the summer, lower the thermostat to 16°C – and always use the holiday function when going on holiday



Boosting the hot water increases the running costs of the system – it was programmed to run efficiently in your home



Turning off radiators is not recommended – and you should never cover a radiator

Using electricity and water efficiently

04



Using energy efficiently means using less electricity to achieve the same results, whether it's heating your home, lighting a room, or running appliances. It helps reduce your energy bills, lowers your environmental impact, and conserves valuable natural resources.

Keeping track of what you use

By keeping track of the energy you're using, you can:

- Understand how you're using electricity at the moment – for example, how much you use and when you use more
- See what you could do to use it more efficiently
- Make changes and see if they make a difference



Understanding your electricity bill

Your electricity bill provides a detailed breakdown of your energy usage, including how much electricity you consume, the cost at different times of day and night, and any applicable taxes or credits. This information helps you better understand your consumption patterns and manage them more effectively, which can lead to greater control over your electricity costs.

For a clearer explanation of each item on your bill and how charges are calculated, visit the following resources:

- Electric Ireland: [Understanding your Electricity Bill](#)
- Bord Gáis: [My electricity bill explained](#)

Paying for your electricity

There are two main systems for paying for the electricity you use.

Equal monthly payments

With equal monthly payments, you pay a set amount each month to cover the cost of the electricity you'll use over the whole year. By

spreading the cost evenly, you avoid higher bills in some months and lower ones in others. It helps you manage your money, because you know how much your bill is going to be each month. If you find that you've used more than you've paid for over the year, you won't have to pay for it all at once. Through a monthly instalment plan you can make smaller, more manageable payments each week, fortnight or month.

Pay as you go

With pay-as-you-go electricity, you pay in advance and track how much you use. This gives you a clearer picture of what you're spending, but it's usually more expensive than a monthly payment plan or other electricity plans. Higher rates and extra service charges make it a costly option.

If you're struggling to pay your bill or want to change how you pay, contact your energy provider as soon as possible to find the best option. Missing payments may lead to extra costs, including reconnection fees for your heat pump or ventilation systems.

What's a smart meter?

A smart meter records how much electricity you're using in real time, so you don't need to wait for a bill to find out what you've used. It uses wireless technology to send this information to your energy company and ESB Networks, so you no longer have to take manual meter readings. Your bills will also be more accurate. This gives you a better understanding of your energy use, helping you manage it more effectively.

How to read your smart meter

On your meter's main display screen, you'll see your **cumulative meter reading**. This is the total amount of electricity used in a certain

period and is measured and displayed in kilowatt-hours kWh. This figure always shows on the main display, so you don't need to press anything to see it.

To see how much electricity you've used at night, during the day or at peak times, press the blue button on the left-hand side of your meter:

- Press once: Time and date
- Press twice: Cumulative meter reading
- Press three times: Amount of electricity you've used at night – the code 'A+T1' will appear in the top right-hand corner
- Press four times: Amount of electricity you've used during the day – the code 'A+T2' will appear in the top right-hand corner
- Press five times: Amount electricity you've used at peak times – the code 'A+T3' will appear in the top right-hand corner

Tracking the electricity you use over a year

To track how much electricity you're using for a year, record your meter readings every month. This will show you how your use changes over the seasons. For example, in winter you'll probably use more electricity for heating, lighting, cooking and watching TV.

You can compare your cumulative meter readings from one year to the next to see if you've used more or less electricity than in the previous year. You can then look at where you could make savings.

Record your readings in a table like this:

Date	Cumulative meter reading	Electricity used since last reading	Electricity used this year
02/01/2024	50,300 kWh	-	-
02/01/2025	54,600 kWh	4,300 kWh	4,300 kWh

How to use the table:

1. **Date.** Write the date of the new reading. To make it easier to compare years and months, you can use the same date each month or year.
2. **Cumulative reading.** Write the cumulative meter reading shown on the display on your chosen date.
3. **Electricity used since last reading.** Once you've recorded more than one cumulative meter reading, look at the two most recent readings. To work out what you've used since your last reading, subtract the earlier reading from the latest one. In the example, you would take 50,300 from 54,600, which is 4,300. So, you've used 4,300 kWh between 2 January 2024 and 2 January 2025.
4. **Electricity used this year.** This will be the same as the kWh used since last reading if you are tracking on a yearly basis. If you track more frequently, this column can show cumulative usage over the year.

How much electricity do my appliances use?

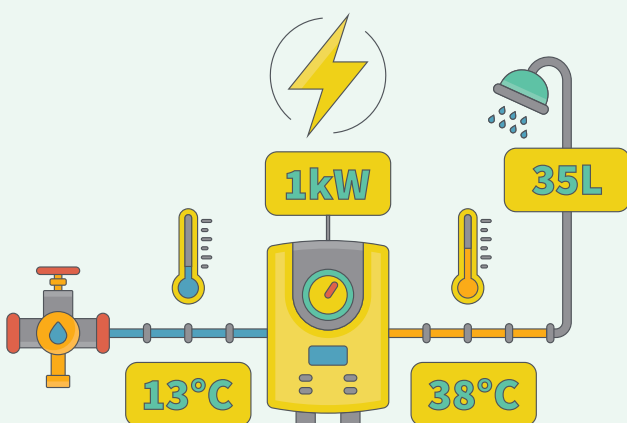
Many household appliances have energy labels. You can use the information on the label to work out how much electricity they're using and see where you could make savings.

For example, a washing machine might have an energy label that says '40 kWh per 100 cycles'. This means that the washing machine uses 40 kWh of electricity for every 100 washes on the eco 40–60 programme. That's the same as 0.402 kWh for one wash.

How does using hot water affect my electricity bill?

If you use electricity to heat your water, this will add to your bill. Heating water for things like showers and washing takes a lot of energy. In Ireland, between 20% and 40% of the energy people use at home is for heating water.

Heating 35 litres of water from 13°C to 38°C uses 1 kWh of energy. A 6 minute shower with an efficient showerhead of 6 litres/min will use 36 litres of hot water.

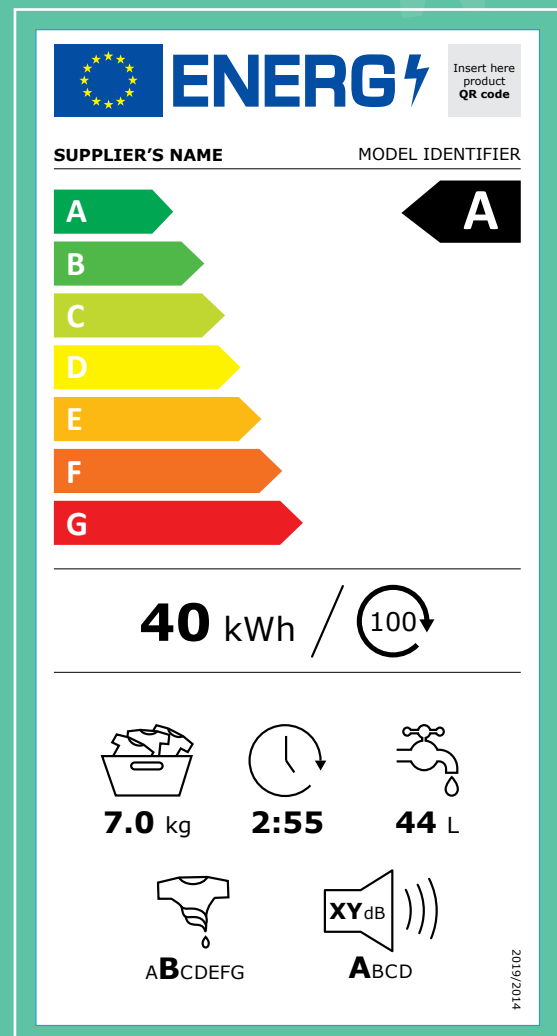


How much does doing one wash cost?

This label on a washing machine tells you that it uses 40 kWh of electricity for every 100 washes. The price of electricity is €0.40 per kWh. To work out how much it costs to do 100 washes with the machine, do the following calculation:

$$40 \text{ kWh} \times €0.40 = €16 \text{ for 100 washes}$$

This is the same as 16 cents for one wash.



If your household has four people, and they each take a 7.5-minute shower every day using 6 litres a minute, that's 180 litres of hot water a day. Over a year, that uses about 1,900 kWh of energy. With heat pump technology this equates to about €340 per year.

Using water efficiently

We've designed your home to save water, so you only use what you need.

Dual-flush toilets are an efficient way to conserve water by offering two options for flushing. The low-volume flush uses [X] litres of water, and the full-volume flush uses [Y] litres. You can save water by only using the full-volume flush when you need it.

Single Flush vs Dual Flush Toilets

Single-flush toilets use the same amount of water—typically between 6 and 13 litres—for every flush, regardless of the type of waste. They are straightforward and easy to use but can lead to unnecessary water consumption, especially for smaller flushes.

Dual-flush toilets feature two buttons: a convenient half flush (around 3–4 litres) for liquid waste and a powerful full flush (around 6 litres) for solid waste. This design conserves water and lowers utility bills, making dual-flush toilets a more efficient and eco-friendly option.

Flow restrictors in your taps and showerheads limit the amount of water that flows through them. This saves water without changing the pressure enough for you to notice it.



The restrictors in your shower and taps limit the flow of water to:

- Shower: [X] litres a minute
- Kitchen tap: [X] litres a minute
- Bathroom tap: [X] litres a minute

[Delete this paragraph if there is no greywater harvesting system] Your home also has a greywater harvesting system. This system collects water leaving your washing machine, shower, bath and bathroom sink – but not from the kitchen sink or the dishwasher. This water, known as ‘greywater’, is then treated, filtered and stored in tanks. It is then pumped to a separate tank to use again, mainly in the toilet. This system can save [X] litres of water a year.

[Delete this paragraph if there is no rainwater harvesting system] Your housing development has a rainwater harvesting system. This system collects rainwater and stores it to use for **[flushing toilets, running washing machines, and watering the green areas in the development]**. It can save [X] litres of water a year.



How to Save Money in your Electricity Bill



Do not choose a pay as you go energy plan



Change your energy provider every year to save 20% to 30% in your electricity bills



Take shorter showers



Wash clothes at 30°C or colder



Take quick showers instead of baths



Use a full load for both your dishwasher and washing machine



Turn off electrical appliances like TVs, laptops, and sound systems instead of leaving them on standby



Choose the eco settings for your dishwasher and washing machine



Programme your dishwasher and washing machine to run at night if you have a day/night energy plan



Avoid using the tumble dryer



In the kettle, only boil the amount of water you need



Turn off the lights when they are not needed

We do not recommend drying clothes inside but if it is necessary, make sure windows are open or the room is well ventilated.

Staying cool in hot weather

05



Many people enjoy warm, sunny days, but when temperatures rise significantly, hot weather can quickly become dangerous. Heatwaves, in particular, can put extra strain on the body and lead to serious health issues if precautions aren't taken. While anyone can be affected by extreme heat, certain groups—including older adults, babies and young children, people with chronic health conditions, and those who are very active outdoors—are especially vulnerable.

During periods of hot weather, it's important to stay cool and hydrated, avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day,

and seek shade or air-conditioned spaces whenever possible. Keeping an eye on symptoms of heat exhaustion—such as dizziness, headache, or excessive sweating—is essential to prevent it from progressing to heatstroke, a life-threatening condition. By taking simple, proactive steps, everyone can stay safer and more comfortable during high temperatures.

Here are some things you can do to keep cool indoors. For more information about staying safe in hot weather, please visit the [HSE](#) website.

Tips for Keeping Your Home Cool



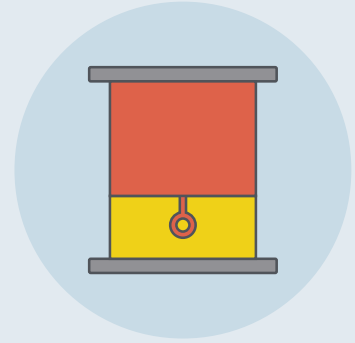
Create a breeze

- If it's safe to do so, leave your windows open overnight to let cool air in.
- Open doors inside your home to get more air flowing through.



Turn off heat sources

- Turn off electrical appliances at the wall when you aren't using them (they give off heat even in standby mode).
- Switch off electric lights in rooms you're not using.



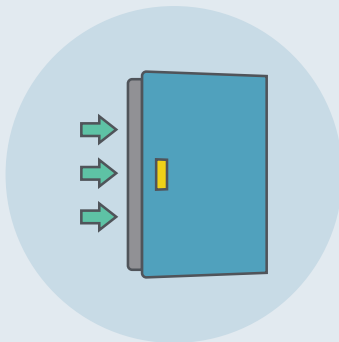
Use shade

- Use outside blinds, shutters or awnings during the day to block the heat from the sun.
- Indoor blinds or curtains can also help, but they might not be as effective.



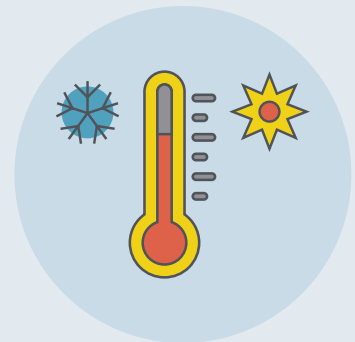
When the outdoor air is cooler

- Open windows and doors early in the morning or late in the evening to let cooler air in.
- If you have sash windows, open them so there's a gap at the top and the bottom to get the air flowing.



When the outdoor air is warmer

- Only open windows a little, so you keep the cooler indoor temperature while still getting some ventilation.
- Keep doors to the outside closed, but leave inside doors open.



Extra tips

- Use a thermometer so you can tell whether it's warmer indoors or outdoors.
- Don't open windows and doors wide when the outdoor air is warmer than the indoor air, unless you need to for air quality.

Your renewable energy system

06

Solar panels

Your home has solar panels from **[manufacturer's name]**. This system uses sunlight to produce clean, renewable electricity for your home. As well as saving you money, producing your own electricity means you don't have to rely as much on the national grid.

If your system produces more electricity than you need, it will store it in a battery. If you don't have a battery or your battery is already full, you can send the extra electricity to the grid. You'll get paid for adding this renewable energy to the grid.

How the system works

Solar power is energy that has been converted from sunlight into electricity. Here's how it works:

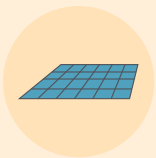
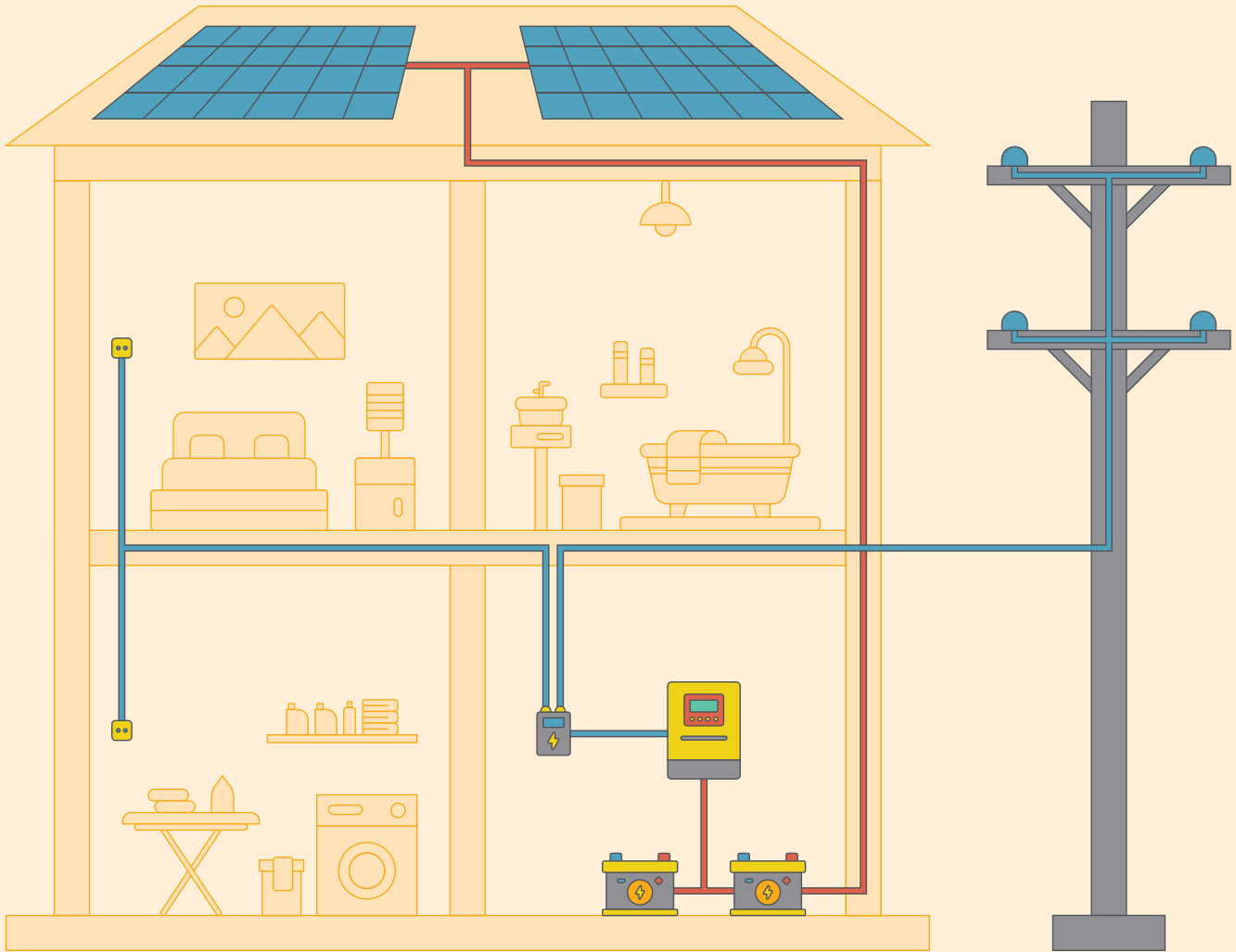
1. **Sunlight hits the solar panels.** The panels contain solar (cells, which convert sunlight into electricity).
2. **The inverter converts the electricity ready to use.** The electricity that comes from solar panels is direct current (DC), but our homes use alternating current (AC). To make it suitable to use in your home, your inverter converts it into AC. Your inverter is in the **[add inverter's location]**.
3. **The electricity powers your home.** The inverter sends the AC electricity to your

home's electrical panel so it can power lights, appliances and everything else you plug in at home.

4. **Batteries store energy.** If your solar panels are producing more electricity than you're using, it will be stored in your batteries. You can then use the batteries at night or on cloudy days, when the panels aren't producing electricity. **[Delete this point if no batteries are installed]**
5. **Extra energy goes to the grid.** If your solar panels produce more electricity than you're using **[and the batteries are fully charged]**, the system can send the extra power to the grid. Your meter will record how much electricity the grid has used, so your energy provider can pay you for it. Different energy providers offer different rates, so check this when choosing a provider. You'll also need to tell Revenue about this income.



Solar Panels



Sunlight hits the solar panels



The inverter converts the electricity



The electricity powers your home



Batteries store energy



Extra energy goes to the grid

[The image on the previous page is an example. If a drawing or layout of your specific home is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where each part of the solar photovoltaic system is.]

Looking after your solar

Solar panels don't need much maintenance, especially if they're tilted, because the rain can wash away any dirt. If you do need to have your solar panels cleaned, use a specialist. They'll be able to do this safely and in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

If your solar panels start to produce less electricity than you think they should, monitor it on the app or website. If it continues, your panels might be blocked by something, such as shading from trees or new buildings so they can't produce as much as normal.

Monitoring your solar system

To get the most from your solar panels, regularly check how much electricity your system produces and uses through the app or online monitoring website.

Here's what you can usually track:

- **Real-time electricity production** – See how much energy your panels are generating at any given moment.
- **Daily and historical performance** – Review data over time to see seasonal patterns or identify changes in efficiency.
- **Battery levels (if installed)** – Check how much stored energy is available and when it's being used.
- **Grid export and import** – Monitor how much electricity you're sending to or drawing from the grid.

If your app shows a sudden drop in production or an error code, this could be a sign of a technical issue. In this case, refer to your system manual or contact your installer for support.



It's a good habit to check your system at least monthly and especially after storms or long periods of cloudy weather.

Maximising your solar savings

To get the most financial benefit from your solar panels, try to use more electricity during the day—when your panels are generating power. This reduces the amount you need to buy from the grid.

Here are a few simple tips:

- **Run appliances during daylight hours** – Use washing machines, dishwashers, or charge devices while your panels are producing energy.
- **Stagger usage** – Avoid running multiple high-energy appliances at the same time. Spread them out to make the most of the available solar power.
- **Use timers or smart plugs** – Set appliances to run during peak sunlight hours, especially if you're not home during the day.
- **Monitor your usage** – Use your system's app or portal to see when production is highest, and plan your usage around it.
- **Check your tariff** – Some energy providers offer export tariffs that pay you for unused electricity. Make sure you're signed up to one that suits your usage pattern.

Who to contact if there's a problem

[Include links to manufacturer's manuals]

What is biodiversity and why does it matter?

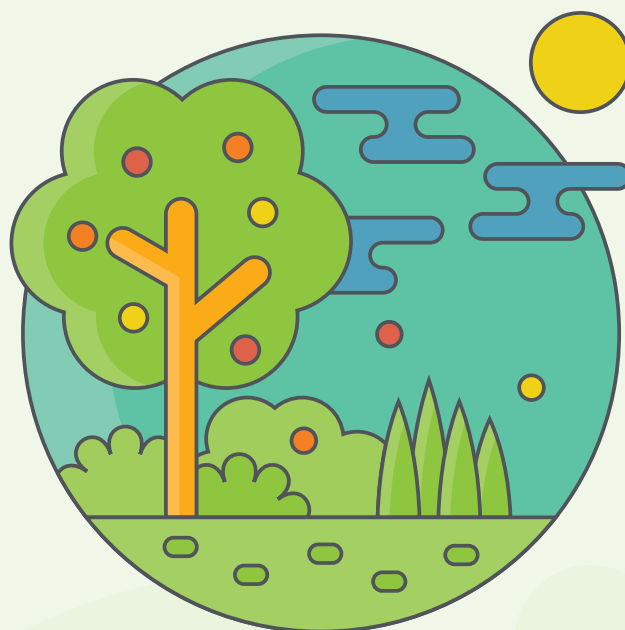
Biodiversity means the variety of life on Earth. It includes all living things – from plants, birds and mammals to insects and fungi. It also includes the habitats they rely on, like forests, rivers, oceans and grasslands.

An **ecosystem** is a community of plants, animals, birds, insects and habitats. It also includes non-living things like soil, air and water.

Healthy ecosystems support a rich variety of living things. We need healthy ecosystems to be able to grow food, have clean water, improve our air quality and prevent flooding. Spending time in green spaces (such as parks and woods) is also good for our mental health. It eases stress and gets us doing physical activities like walking or running.

It takes hundreds of years to build up healthy soil and habitats, but only a short time to disrupt or destroy them – so we need to look after our biodiversity and ecosystems. To do this, we need to:

1. **Protect** the ecosystems we already have
2. **Maintain** them to keep them healthy
3. **Restore** ecosystems if we can't avoid disturbing them.



What's important for biodiversity in my local area?

Meadows, hedgerows and native trees are important for biodiversity in Ireland. These areas support a wide range of life both above and below ground, including essential pollinators, such as bees, and are crucial habitats for local wildlife. No matter how small, these natural spaces should be valued and protected, whether they're part of your garden, or in your local area.

Your home is part of a development that's been designed to protect and nurture local biodiversity by providing food, shelter and safe spaces for wildlife. Your garden isn't isolated; it's part of a broader **wildlife corridor** – a natural pathway that connects green spaces. Wildlife corridors allow animals to move freely from one area to another, find food and shelter, and spread seeds. In this way, they help keep local ecosystems healthy and more able to cope when something affects them (such as storms or flooding).

While a neatly trimmed lawn may look attractive, it doesn't offer the same benefits as a garden rich in biodiversity. A diverse garden filled with different kinds of plants attracts birds, insects (including bees) and other wildlife. You don't have to spend as much time maintaining it, and it can improve your own wellbeing.

Whether you have a large garden, a small backyard, a balcony or a window box, adding things that attract a wider range of life will help create safe havens for wildlife across Ireland.

How can I support biodiversity in my garden?

By making some small changes, you can create a welcoming environment for wildlife in your local area. You'll also have a healthier, more natural space to spend time in.

Protect features that help wildlife

Try to keep any hedgerows, mature trees, and natural water sources (for example, small streams) that are in your garden. They provide food, shelter and nesting spots for birds, insects and small animals.

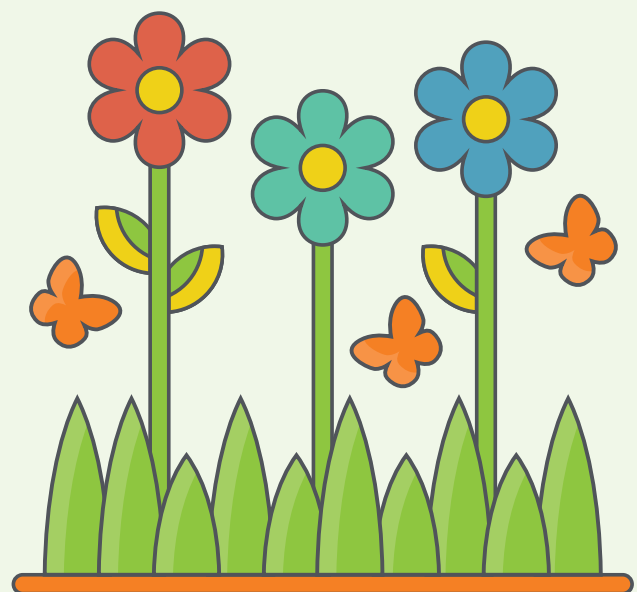
Avoid hard surfaces

Lawns, hedgerows and soil are important for wildlife and plants, while hard surfaces

(such as concrete or fake grass) block water from entering the ground. By reducing hard surfaces, you allow rainwater to soak in naturally, which reduces flood risks and provides moisture to plants and animals.

Mow less often

If you have space, let some of your lawn grow wild and mow it just once a year – in September. Let the cuttings lie on the ground for a few days so seeds can drop, and then take them away. By letting the lawn grow, you'll allow wildflowers to bloom when butterflies, bees and other pollinators need them. You'll also be providing undisturbed areas for nesting. Just mowing a single section or strip of grass less often can make a big difference.



Add wildlife-friendly features

To create natural habitats for birds, bees, butterflies, insects and other creatures, try adding:

- Native plants
- Bird boxes and bat boxes
- Bug hotels
- Small ponds



Help garden birds

Providing food, shelter and water for birds in your garden can make a big difference.

Put bird feeders close to trees or hedges. This gives the birds somewhere safe to perch before they land on the feeder. For more tips on where to put feeders and what food to provide, visit BirdWatch Ireland's guide to [Feeding Your Garden Birds](#).

Once birds come to rely on your feeders, you'll need to keep feeding them – especially in winter, when there's less food around. You could also plant trees and shrubs that produce berries, so the birds have a natural source of food throughout the year. You could also try adding nest boxes in your garden to help the birds breed.

Help bats

Most Irish bat species don't like artificial light at night. To help them, only have the outdoor lights you need, and only switch them on when you need them. For tips on how to make your garden friendly for bats, visit Bat Conservation Ireland's guide to [Gardening for Bats](#).

Create mini habitats

Gardening for biodiversity is all about creating mini-habitats in your garden and trying to re-create natural ecosystems, many of which have been lost. The more different kinds of

mini-habitats that you can create, the greater the diversity of wildlife that will come and live in your garden.

Embrace a shift from perfectly manicured gardens to those that are “wild and wonderful”. Instead of judging a garden by its tidiness, consider its value by the diversity of wildlife it attracts and supports.

For more information on how to create a garden that helps bees, butterflies and other pollinators, read the [National Biodiversity Data Centre's All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#).

What if I live in an apartment?

You don't need a garden to help biodiversity. If you live in an apartment, you can help bees, butterflies and other pollinators by putting a 'pot for pollinators' on your patio, balcony or window box. By planting flowers that are rich in pollen or pollinator-friendly herbs, you'll provide essential food for pollinating insects.

To find out how to make a pot for pollinators, visit [Plant a Pot for Pollinators » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#). You can also learn more about pollinator-friendly herbs at [Resources » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#).



A balcony garden can improve biodiversity and also be an attractive space to enjoy. Image source: Kevin Dennis, Cityscape Gardener.

What wildlife can I find near my home?

[This section is only for developments targeting the EN 5.0: Ecology indicator. If the development does not target this indicator, please delete the whole section. The text in this section is an example – please include only the text that is relevant to the development. You can find all the biodiversity options in a separate document: ‘Home User Guide_ EN 5.0: Ecology indicator template’]

Your development has incorporated a range of important features designed to support local biodiversity and create a healthier environment for wildlife. Each feature plays a role in providing food, shelter, and safe spaces for various species. Below is a list of the biodiversity features introduced within your community.

Pond



A pond has been created within the landscaped area, providing a suitable habitat for frogs and newts. This pond offers a safe environment for these amphibians to live, breed and find food, as well as a place to hibernate during colder months.

[Add an image of the pond used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [AquaLife Ponds Inc.](#)]

Bird boxes



Bird boxes provide safe nesting sites for common garden birds, such as finches, tits and blackbirds. There are [X] bird boxes throughout development.

[Add an image of the bird box used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [BirdWatch Ireland](#)]

Trees and shrubs that provides berries



Trees and shrubs in the landscaping scheme were selected to produce berries, providing a natural food source for birds throughout the year.

[Add an image of the tree and/or shrub used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#)]

Native trees and shrubs



The landscaping scheme primarily includes native trees and shrubs that are well-suited to the local environment and provide essential food and shelter for local wildlife.

[Add an image of the native tree and/or shrub used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [Liquidsapes](#)]

Hedgehog box



Hedgehog boxes give hedgehogs a safe place to nest and hibernate, especially in dense areas of shrubs. There are [X] hedgehog boxes installed throughout the development.

[Add an image of the hedgehog box used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [BBC Gardeners' World](#)]

Habitat for insects

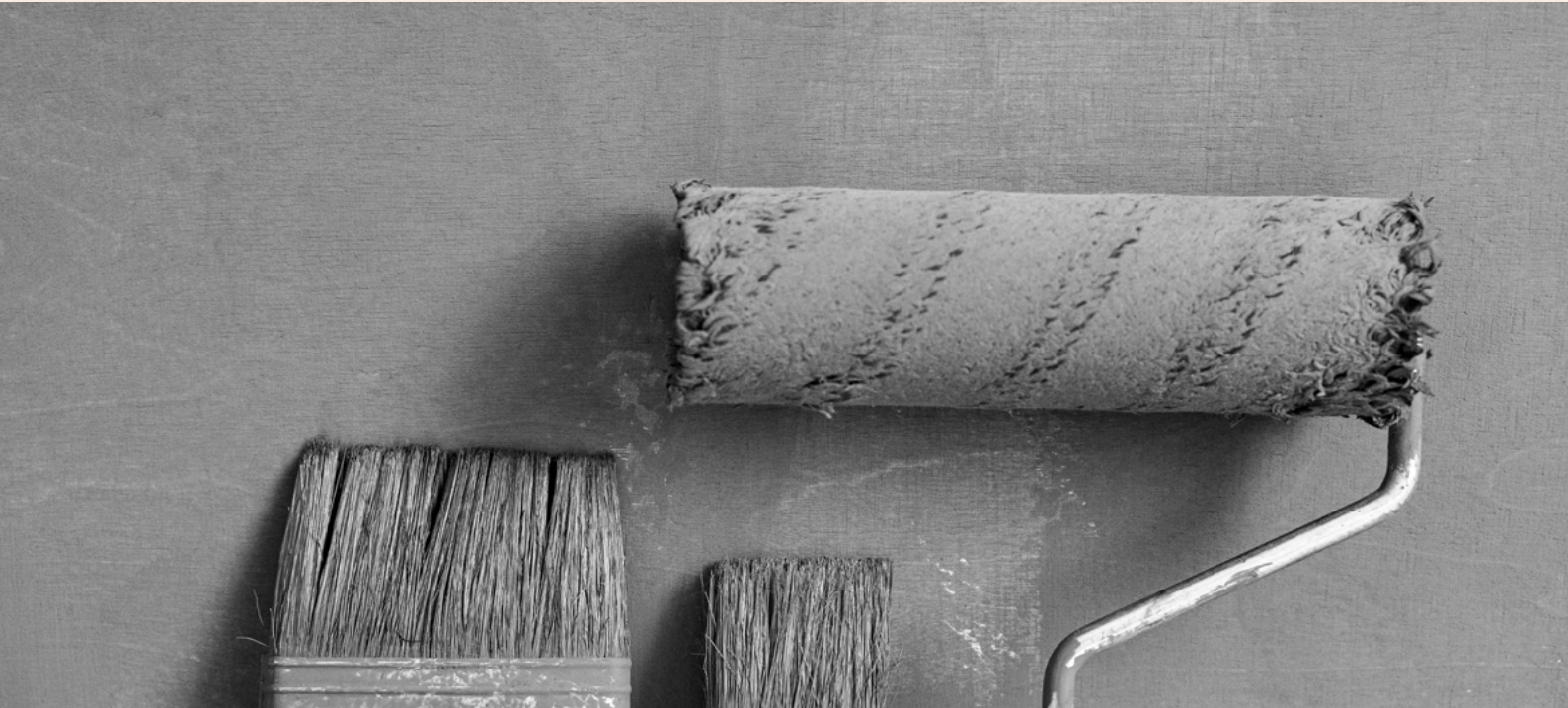


The landscaping includes special designated habitats to support [name of the specific insect species]. These habitats give them essential resources such as food, shelter and breeding grounds.

[Add an image of the insect habitat used in the development. This image is only for illustration. Image source: [TerraTrellis](#)]

Who should I contact if something is wrong?

If you notice something wrong in or around your home, it's important to know who to contact. For any wildlife-related issues, there are several organisations that can help. If you witness a wildlife crime, such as illegal hunting, trapping, or habitat destruction, you should contact the Wildlife Crime Unit at the [National Parks & Wildlife Service](#). If you come across an injured wild animal, like a fox, hedgehog, or badger, the [Kildare Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre](#) can provide assistance. In the case of injured birds or baby birds, it's best to refer to the guide "[What to do if you find a baby bird or injured bird?](#)" published by BirdWatch Ireland. This resource will help you determine whether the bird needs help and what actions to take safely.



Maintaining your home well is important for several reasons. First, it helps preserve the value of your property, ensuring it remains a worthwhile investment over time. Regular upkeep also keeps your home running efficiently, which can save you money on energy and repair costs. Most importantly, consistent maintenance helps prevent small issues from developing into larger, more expensive problems down the line.

Lighting







We've designed the lighting in your home to suit different purposes – whether you need bright, cool light to see what you're doing or you want dimmer, warm light for a cosy atmosphere.

By getting to know the lighting in your home and how to look after it, you can keep your lighting comfortable and energy-efficient.

Light bulbs in your home

There are several types of light bulbs and light fittings in your home. They have different levels of brightness and warmth, and need different amounts of energy, depending on what they're used for.

[For each room, give clear information about the lighting so people understand what each bulb is for, where it is, and what they will need to replace it with]

Balcony		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED filament bulb]	Fixture type: [E27], Watts: [3.8], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [2700K]
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
Bathroom		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
Bedroom		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
Dining Room		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]

Hall		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
Kitchen		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED filament bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
Living Room		
What it looks like	Bulb type	Details
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]
	[LED bulb]	Fixture type: [XX], Watts: [XX], Has a warm/cold colour temperature of [XX K]

Looking after your lighting

To keep your lighting working well:

- Dust bulbs and fittings regularly to keep the light bright.
- Replace old bulbs with new ones of the same type and wattage to keep your lighting even in the room and in the light fitting. Keep a few spare bulbs on hand for quick replacements.
- Use energy-efficient LED bulbs, because they use less power and last longer than traditional bulbs.

What does the technical information about light bulbs mean? [Optional]

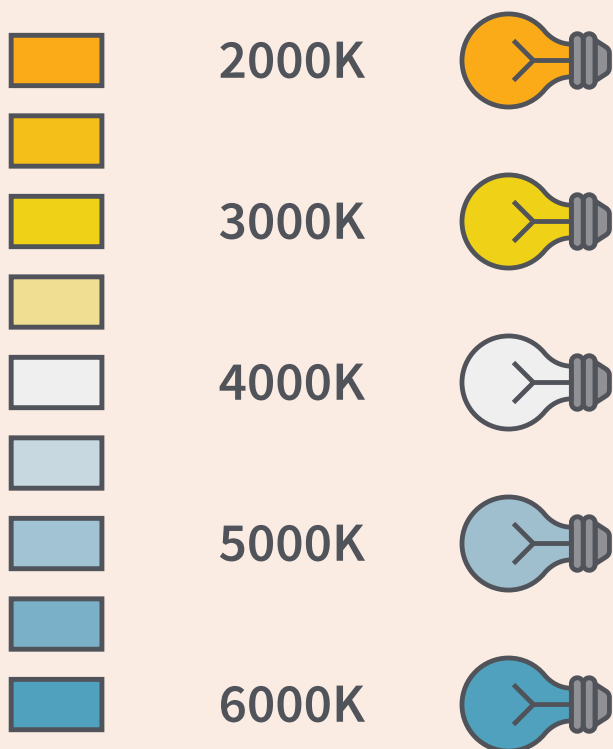
When you're replacing a light bulb, it's useful to understand the technical information so you can make sure the replacement will be suitable. This information tells you about:

- The colour of the light
- How bright it is
- How much energy the bulb uses
- How resistant it is to damage
- How the bulb fits into the light fitting

Kelvin (K)

Kelvin measures the colour temperature of light, ranging from warm to cool. It helps you choose the right tone for the mood and function of each room:

- **Warm light (2,700K – 3,300K)** is good for creating a cosy and inviting space. It's ideal for living rooms and bedrooms.
- **Neutral light (3,300K – 5,300K)** is neither warm nor cold. It's good for rooms like kitchens and bathrooms, where you need clear lighting so you can see what you're doing.
- **Cool light (over 5,300K)** is bright and like daylight. It's suitable for workspaces or outdoor areas.



Wattage

The wattage tells you how much energy the bulb will use – the higher the wattage, the more the bulb uses. LED bulbs use less energy (for example, 3.8 watts) to give the same brightness as an older-style bulb (for example, 40 watts).

Lumens

Lumens measure the brightness of the bulb – the higher the lumens, the brighter the light. For example, a bulb with 800 lumens is suitable for lighting a whole room, and a bulb with 450 lumens is good for creating a cosy space or highlighting a feature or part of a room.

Ingress protection (IP) rating

The IP rating shows how well a light fixture is protected from damage, like water or dust. Those with a higher IP rating are more protected, safer and likely to last longer.

Fixture type

The fixture type tells you what type of base the bulb has. Different bases fit into different light fittings. The two main types are bayonet (which you push and twist into the light fitting) and Edison screw (which screws into the fitting).

Painting

To keep surfaces in your home protected and looking good, it's important to use the right type and colour of paint. The codes and brands for the paint used in your home are:

- Interior walls: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Exterior walls: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Ceilings: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Doors: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Skirting: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Kitchen cabinets: **[Insert manufacturer and paint code here]**
- Bathrooms: May have a different, moisture-resistant product.

If you want the same colour and finish, always use these codes when you're repainting.

In areas that get used a lot, like hallways, you might need to touch up the paintwork once every two or three years. Depending on how much wear there is and how exposed the surface is, you might need to repaint the whole wall or the whole room every five to seven years.

If you want to use eco-friendly paint, look for products that have the Eco Label logo or that are clearly marketed as low-VOC (volatile organic compounds – chemicals that evaporate easily and cause air pollution). This information is usually on the packaging or in the product description. Check for trusted marks like the EU Ecolabel, Greenguard or similar ones that tell you the paint meets environmental, health and safety standards.

Other maintenance

To avoid small problems turning into bigger ones, it's also important to maintain the following things.

Gutters and downpipes

Check and clean your gutters and downpipes at least twice a year, especially in autumn, when they can get clogged with leaves. Check for any blockages and signs of damage, and repair or replace the parts if needed.

Drainage

Regularly check your drains for blockages, especially after heavy rain, and clear any that you find. Watch out for water pooling or being slow to drain away, because that could mean there's a blockage. If you can't see the blockage or clearing the drains hasn't solved the problem, get a professional to have a look.

Roof

Check your roof for loose, broken or missing tiles once a year. If you notice any problems, get a professional to fix or replace them.

Flow restrictors

Maintaining flow restrictors is easy but essential, to ensure they continue to operate effectively. Over time, minerals (like limescale) and dirt can build up in the flow restrictors in your taps and showerhead and clog them. To keep them working well:

- **Clean them every six months.** Take the flow restrictors out of your taps and showerheads to clean them. Soak them in vinegar to dissolve any limescale, and then rinse thoroughly before putting them back.
- **Check for leaks from time to time.** Leaks can waste a lot of water, which offsets the savings made by the flow restrictors.
- **Replace them when needed.** Flow restrictors are made to last, but if you notice the water pressure has dropped or the restrictors keep getting clogged up, it's time to replace them.

Regular maintenance helps ensure that your flow restrictors continue to save water effectively while providing consistent water pressure for your daily needs.

Windows

Inspect windows annually to ensure that they still function correctly, particularly that they are closing tightly. Pay particular attention to windows that receive a lot of sunlight in the afternoon and evening.

By recycling and composting your household waste, you can stop so much going to landfill. It's important to avoid putting the wrong items in your recycling bin, as this can contaminate all the recycled waste in a batch.

This section tells you what bin to use for different types of waste, which items should never go in your recycling bin, and what to take to a recycling centre (a civic amenity site).

Recyclable waste (green bin)

You can put all your recyclables into the green bin. They are then sorted at a recycling centre.

Before you put something into your green bin, please make sure it is suitable for recycling and that it is clean and dry. Put it loosely in the green bin.

What can I put in the green bin?

You can place the following items in your green recycling bin. Please make sure they are rinsed and dry before disposal:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Food tins
- Drinks cans
- Tetra Pak cartons (e.g. milk, soup, and juice cartons)
- Hard plastics (e.g. mineral water and detergent bottles marked with codes PET1, HDPE2, or PP)
- Soft plastics (e.g. crisp packets, plastic bags, plastic wrapping, and bubble wrap)

What can't I put in the green bin?

Never put the following items in the green bin:

- Cables
- Clothes and bedding
- Electrical items
- Food, or containers with liquid or food on them
- Glass
- Suitcases
- Nappies or sanitary products
- Polystyrene
- Mirrors or window glass
- Ceramics (e.g. mugs, plates)
- Garden waste
- Batteries

What about foil and takeaway packaging?

Kitchen foil: You can put aluminium foil and trays in the green bin, but only if they are clean and there are no remains of food on them.

Paper coffee cups: Some paper coffee cups are compostable. If it says this on the cup, you can put it in your **brown** bin for food and garden waste. Otherwise, put it in the **black** bin for general waste. Always check the lid and the sleeve of the coffee cup to see if these can be recycled.

Pizza boxes: If the pizza was a frozen, home-cooked pizza and the packaging is clean, put the box in your **green** bin. If the pizza was from a takeaway and the box is greasy or dirty, put it in your **brown** bin for food and garden waste. If you don't have a brown bin, put it in the black bin for general waste.

For more on what you can and can't put in your recycling bins, visit the [MyWaste](#) website.

Food and garden waste (brown bin)

Your brown bin for food and garden waste is provided by your local bin collection service. They take the waste for composting or for anaerobic digestion in Ireland. Anaerobic digestion is a process that turns food and garden waste into biogas, which can be used to generate electricity.

What can I put in my brown bin?

Food waste: You can put all food in the brown bin, **except** cooking oils. That means it's okay to put dairy products (like milk and cheese), eggs, raw and cooked meat, fish, and bones in the brown bin.

Compostable food packaging:

Look for the seedling logo on packaging and coffee cups. This logo, which looks like a sprouting plant, tells you that the packaging can be composted and goes in the brown bin.



compostable

Garden waste: You can put garden waste, such as grass clippings and leaves, in the brown bin.

Home composting: You can also compost food scraps and garden waste yourself in your garden. For detailed information on how to compost at home, visit [Citizens Information](#).

General waste (black bin)

The black bin is for things that can't be recycled or composted. These things go to landfill.

Here are examples of things that go in the black bin:

- **Nappies:** Wrap them up tightly to avoid unpleasant surprises.
- **Used kitchen roll and tissues:** Dirty kitchen roll or tissues can't be recycled.
- **Vacuum cleaner bags:** You can throw it away or empty the contents into the black bin.
- **Paper with food waste on:** Used paper plates and similar things that have food waste on them.
- **Pet waste:** Bag up cat litter and dog waste and put it in the bin.
- **Polystyrene:** This includes things like polystyrene food containers and 'packing peanuts' (small pieces of polystyrene that protect items in parcels).
- **Plastics that can't be recycled:** Black plastic food trays and some other types of plastic packaging can't be recycled. If you aren't sure, put it in the black bin.

- **Personal hygiene products:** Things like cotton wool, sanitary towels, tampons and cotton buds.
- **Broken toys:** If they're too broken to be donated and they can't be recycled, put the toys in the black bin.
- **Dirty foil:** If foil sheets or trays have food or liquid on them, they can't be recycled.

What about things that can't go in the bin?

Some things can't go in any of your household bins and need to be taken to a civic amenity site. If you do put them in your bin, your bin will be marked as contaminated and it may not be collected. Here's how to get rid of these things safely.

Glass

Don't put glass bottles in your household bins. Instead, you can drop them off at one of the bottle banks around your area. You can find most of them on [Google Maps](#), or use Repak's convenient [search tool](#) to find the nearest one.

Oil

Cooking oil is a common type of kitchen waste but it needs to be disposed of carefully, to avoid harming the environment.

Never pour oil down the sink or a drain. It can solidify in pipes and cause blockages in your plumbing. It can also harm aquatic plants, fish and animals by reducing oxygen levels in rivers, streams and other waterways.

Here's how to get rid of it responsibly:

1. **Cool** the oil so you don't burn yourself.
2. **Store** the cooled oil in a container that you can seal closed.
3. **Recycle** your full container of used oil at

a civic amenity site. Most of them accept used oil, but you can check using the [Waste Services Locator](#).

Batteries

You can recycle batteries at a civic amenity site or at a shop or supermarket that sells batteries. WEEE Ireland has blue battery collection boxes in local supermarkets, newsagents and other places where batteries are sold.

Clothing and textiles

Don't put anything made of material or fabrics in your household bins. Please take them to a clothing bank instead. To find your nearest clothing bank, check the following websites:

- [SVP Clothing Banks](#)
- [Clothes POD](#)
- [Enable Ireland](#)

If you have new or barely used items to get rid of, you could donate them to charity.

Electrical items

Take all electrical items to a WEEE drop-off recycling point or a civic amenity site. Visit the [MyWaste](#) website to find your nearest [waste service](#).

If you aren't sure if a centre takes a particular electrical item, you can check by visiting the My Waste website. Click on item type, then use the green search box to find a nearby centre that accepts it.

Medicines

All medicines are classed as dangerous waste, so they can't go into your household bins. Check if your pharmacy accepts unused or unwanted medicines. If not, check if your local civic amenity site accepts this type of waste.



How to Reduce Waste?

Separate your household waste correctly

Do not buy items you don't need

Try to maintain, repair, reuse or repurpose your items

Try to buy or use second-hand goods



Try to buy food that isn't wrapped in plastic



Take reusable shopping bags to the supermarket



Choose paperless billing and digital receipts



Buy cutlery and storage containers you can reuse



Use rechargeable batteries instead of single-use ones



Buy in bulk to reduce packaging waste



Recycle all items that can be recycled



Compost food waste and other organic materials



Avoid single-use plastic – buy reusable water bottles, coffee cups and drinking straws



Avoid plastic bottles to cut down on plastic waste by switching to solid shampoo and soap bars.

Recyclable waste includes items that can be processed and reused – which helps to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. Before disposing of your items, ensure they are suitable for recycling and that they are clean, dry, and placed loosely in the green bin designated for recyclable waste.



General Fire safety

For apartment buildings, a detailed, building-specific fire safety plan **must** be provided and accessible to all residents.

If you hear the fire alarm, leave your home immediately using the nearest safe exit—do not use lifts.

If you think a fire has broken out, call 999 immediately to report it. Give the address and Eircode of the building and follow the instructions from the emergency services.

Never do anything to stop the fire alarm working properly. It is fitted to withstand deliberate or accidental damage but interfering with it will cause parts to break and will result in increased false activations. Always take care to avoid triggering the alarm accidentally.

Fire alarms

Your home has fire alarms. These alarms will sound if they detect too much smoke or heat in your home.

Please check your fire alarms every week. When the battery gets low, you'll need to replace it – otherwise, the alarm will beep continuously.

How to maintain your fire alarm

- **What the lights mean:** When the alarm is connected and working, the green light will be on. The red light will blink once a minute to show you the sensor is working properly.
- **Testing the smoke detector:** Your alarm has a test button (marked 'Push and hold to test weekly'). Press and hold the test button until the alarm sounds.
- **Replacing the battery:** If your alarm starts to beep regularly, the battery needs replacing immediately. You are responsible for changing the battery to make sure the alarm continues to work properly. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to replace the battery.

Do not misuse the smoke or heat detectors in your home. It will put your and other people's safety at risk.

What should I do if there's a fire?

If you see a fire or you think a fire has broken out, immediately leave your apartment building. Once you're in a safe place, please call the emergency services on 999 or 112 immediately and ask for the fire service.

Water

If you need to turn off the water in an emergency, use the valves in the **[location]**.

[If a drawing or layout of your specific home is available, you can use it to create a labelled illustration that shows where the water valves are]

Electricity

Your consumer unit has switches that protect all your lighting circuits, plug sockets and fire alarms. It is attached to the wall in the **[insert the location]** of your home.

[If a photograph of the consumer unit in your house or apartment is available, you can include it here]

Inside the consumer unit you'll find the different circuits with their respective description. e.g bedroom lights, bedroom sockets, kitchen oven, heat pump, etc. If the power isn't working in one area of your home, first check your consumer unit to see if all the switches are on. If all the switches are on or if turning a switch back on doesn't solve the problem, contact an electrician.

To turn off the electricity supply to your home, switch off the main switch in the consumer unit.



Fire Safety

If a fire occurs in your home: get out, stay out and call for help

Dial 999 or 112 immediately to connect to the Emergency Services

Check your fire alarm every week

What to do if a fire breaks out in your building



Do not use the lift



Do not investigate the fire



Do not return to get your belongings



Only go back in if the fire service tells you it is safe



Learn the fire evacuation plan located on your home entrance door



Do a fire safety check before you go to bed



Keep exits clear by avoiding clutter in the hall, on landings, or on stairs.



Never leave phones charging overnight or on soft furnishings



Do not smoke when you are in bed, tired or on medication



Never leave cooking unattended in the kitchen