



Energy & Sustainability Traded Service

... helping you save

# Energy Matters










The energy and sustainability service's newsletter  
Issue 48 October 2020

## Continued service in these strange times

Our May newsletter was published via NYES, but was not included in the Red Bag due to the Covid-19 situation. If you missed that issue, it can still be found on the NYES website; or email [energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk) for a copy.

We are living through strange, challenging and unprecedented times. Many working from home, schools after having been closed or open for a limited number of pupils are now fully open again, our young people have been home schooled and are now subject to further controls, as we all are. With the start of the autumn term and winter approaching cases of Covid-19 are on the increase again. The anxiety levels for our children and young people are high. Sometimes when everything is up in the air, full of uncertainty, some small piece of normality is key. At the Energy & Sustainability Service we are endeavouring to continue as normal and deliver our services. Many are already delivered remotely such as billing queries and heating controls, others like DEC's and the schools' carbon reduction services are having to change their approaches. Details of how we are doing this are featured in this term's Energy Matters. In the spirit of 'hoping for the best and planning for the worst' we are hoping schools will be back to normal soon and are planning for this as well as it not being the case. We will keep you posted, but in the meantime stay safe and well.

From all of the Energy Team

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Contact the Energy and Sustainability Team  
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OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ENERGY SUPPLY AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

### New gas contract

Our current gas supply contract ends on 31st March 2021, and in collaboration with our purchasing partner Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation, the Energy and sustainability traded service have procured a new contract. The good news is that this is with Corona Energy, our current suppliers, so there will be no change to any existing arrangements.

If you have not chosen to use our contract but haven't had time to make alternative arrangements then it's not too late to join our contract - contact [energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk)

### Meter readings during lockdown

During lockdown, our suppliers **were** unable to take manual meter readings. And while many schools have Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) meters fitted, these are not 100% reliable and if one should develop a fault the suppliers will need to estimate your bills. Therefore, we ask that if you are able to do so, you continue to read your energy meters on the last working day of the month, and enter the readings into SystemsLink immediately. Readings entered after midday on the first of the month, have missed the supplier's cut-off deadline and will not be used when producing your bill, so if you can't do it on the last day then do it earlier rather than later. If you have lost the log-on details for SystemsLink or experience any problems, please email [energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:energy.team@northyorks.gov.uk) for help.

### Water bills

Our water supplier is not able to read your meters during lock-down, so they will estimate your bills based on **past consumption**. **If your school was completely closed earlier this year**, please notify them by emailing Key Accounts Mailbox [keyaccounts@business-stream.co.uk](mailto:keyaccounts@business-stream.co.uk) so that they can set your meter to "non-consuming" so that you don't pay for water that you haven't used.

### Energy supply pricing for 2020/21

Our purchasing partners, Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) have provided the following information about energy supply prices for 2020/21.

#### Electricity

A typical electricity bill under the framework is currently made up of 34% commodity, 65% non-commodity and 1% supplier margin.

Commodity: The price of wholesale electricity prices has fallen in the last 12 months, although falls have been far less pronounced than Gas. The main drivers for electricity are as follows:

- Lower gas prices- On average around 50% of UKs electricity comes from gas fired power generation, therefore falling gas prices will put downwards pressure on electricity prices.
- Increase in renewable generation provides more supply.

- Carbon prices has prevented lower electricity prices, as non-renewable generators must pay more to produce electricity.

However, Covid-19 has put some downward pressure on Carbon prices due to lower demand. Through YPOs effective purchasing strategy and given that the basket is now 100% purchased, the wholesale element has fallen by 5% from 1st April 2020 compared to the current rates.

Non-commodity: Non commodity costs are expected to rise by around 10%, largely due to increases in the schemes that subsidise large renewable projects (Contracts for different and Renewable Obligations).

Overall customers can expect to see an increase in electricity prices from the 1st April of around 8%. Npower are currently going through the process of building the new rates.

## **Gas**

A typical gas bill under the framework is currently made up of 50% commodity, 49% noncommodity and 1% supplier Margin. The commodity part is the wholesale element which YPO purchases on the live markets through a flexible procurement strategy which manages the price risk. The supplier margin is part of the winning tenderers submission and is fixed for the framework duration. The non-commodity element is all the other charges, including network charges, metering charges, Government Taxes and levies, these charges are regulated by OFGEM.

Commodity: The price of wholesale gas has fallen over the past 12 months, the main drivers behind this decrease are as follows:

- 2018 and 2019 winters were both mild- This meant demand was not as high as expected. □ European Gas storage levels are at historic highs, peaked at 98% full in 2019. Storage levels are currently 15% higher than the same time last year.
- Record numbers of Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) cargoes continue to arrive at UK shores. 22 in total arrived during the month of March.
- Covid-19 has had a huge impact on Gas prices. With around half the world's population under some form of lockdown, demand for many commodities has fallen drastically. Through YPOs effective purchasing strategy, the wholesale element is expected to fall by 14% from 1st April 2020 compared to the current rates.

Non-commodity Gas: non-commodity charges are also expected to fall on the back of lower network charges for the period 1st April 2020-30th March 2021.

Overall, the majority of customers should see final billed gas rates fall by around 13% compared to what they are paying currently. Corona are currently going through the process of building the new rates.

## **Water**

Water prices are set by the Wholesaler rather than by our supplier.

## Green flag greatness as Hunton and Arrathorne protect the planet

The prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag Award has been awarded again in North Yorkshire.

With environmental issues now taking centre stage, it is up to our future generations to lead the change required to prevent further damage to the planet. Schools across the country are working hard to put the children in the driving seat of school decisions that impact on the environment. This child-lead scheme has been running in the UK since 1994 and has been supported for over 11 years by NYCC energy and sustainability service.

At Hunton and Arranthorne Community Primary School, children who took part in the scheme have made transformations in their school and put environmental issues at the heart of the curriculum. Their “nectar Café” began as an overgrown strip of land and now has veg patch, fire pit, story telling chair, planting, bird hide, bug hotels. The biodiversity topic has been a large part of their green flag application. With work on cutting paper waste and energy use the school has been instrumental in reducing its carbon footprint.

This impact on the children has been profound. The school said, “The children have been incredibly enthusiastic. The committee members have been superb ambassadors for the world, especially where a threat to nature was found. They have been relentless in driving our school mission forward –‘Plant more flowers, Give the insects powers!’ Our eco school project is now a way of life.”

Many of North Yorkshire schools have been working on the Eco-Schools programme for a number of years, and the Green Flag schools are held in high regard.

The whole scheme is designed to be student lead developing skills in the children that can be applied to life as well as the planet. So how important is the green flag? The final word belongs to those children:

“We need eco club because at the moment people keep throwing lots of rubbish into the sea. Just joining the club isn’t enough - You must want to do it.”

“Eco committees are important to help save the planet because people need to look after the planet, now more than ever. There is plastic in the oceans killing the sea animals and pollution in the air which is making the ice melt where the polar bears live. Trees are being chopped down in the Amazon killing wildlife and it is bad for the environment.”

“Our green flag is important because then you make people look after the world. Because if we don’t no one else will.”



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## Boiler houses

Our Display Energy Certification Officers visit many schools in the course of their work. They see many examples of schools doing wonderful things; but every now and again they see something worrying.

Boiler houses can be dangerous places, and using them as store rooms for flammable items is really not recommended!



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## Seven years is a long time in energy management

More observations from Stephen Armstrong, our Display Energy Certification Officer who left but couldn't stay away for long...

The energy team have always promoted the benefits of thermal upgrades to the fabric of buildings; such as boiler house pipe lagging and valve jackets, roof void and cavity wall insulation and windows and doors upgrades. I have surveyed many sites in the year since my return to NYCC as a DEC officer, and it is encouraging to see a lot of sites now have fully insulated boiler houses, and upgraded windows and doors. Some schools have really embraced the need to insulate well, also called the 'fabric first approach'.

*Before and after a facia upgrade*



Moving forward there has been much success, but there still remains a lot to be done. One of the main barriers for improvement appears to be lack of funding in schools, which is why the energy team have always promoted government incentives such as interest free loans, and also Feed In Tariffs (FITs) e.g. solar panel electricity generation and Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) e.g. biomass and heat pumps that exist for schools.

For more information visit:

- <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/fit>
- <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/non-domestic-rhi>

Low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies are fundamental if we are going to answer the 'climate emergency' by moving away from fossil fuel dependency. Some sites have been successfully moved to biomass, while others have taken an intermediary approach installing newer modular boiler systems and getting rid of larger energy hungry oil and gas boilers. This is also true of the provision of hot water, moving away from centralised storage of water to modern point of use localised systems, or using solar water heating to produce a base load for calorifiers; and some properties installing air source and ground source heat pumps. All these measures have helped reduce their CO2 emissions in only a few short years. All of these technologies, as long as they have meters, are classified as renewables for DEC purposes; so any kWh usage can be acknowledged on the DEC.

So all in all a lot has changed; technology and funding. However, much remains the same; the message 'pay the best price possible for the energy you use, only pay what you use and use as little as possible'.

STOP PRESS---STOP PRESS---STOP PRESS---STOP PRESS---STOP PRESS

This week the government launched its new decarbonisation grants for the public sector and schools...full update to follow!

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## Reusing food waste to create power

Did you know that food waste can help to power our homes, schools and local communities?

We recently visited 'Refood' in Doncaster where unwanted food waste from businesses, supermarkets, households and schools is turned into power. The food is heated and treated to allow anaerobic digestion to take place, which makes biogas. The biogas is then used to power homes, businesses and the Refood site itself. Leftovers from the process are used to fertilise the land with only a small amount of hard grit residue being sent to landfill.

<https://refood.co.uk/about-refood/>

### Isn't it smelly?

If you sign up to a weekly food waste collection, your bin will be collected and replaced with a clean bin every time. You can even include bin bags if it's easier to line your dining hall bin with a bag to collect school dinner leftovers.

The food waste bins take:

- Leftover food, including cooked food (unlike composting)
- Packaged food – eg leftover packed lunch waste, bin bag that food waste is collected in from the dining hall
- Liquid waste
- Kitchen waste, although vegetable peelings etc can be composted and this is free to do and great for your school grounds! Contact Jeff at the North Yorkshire Rotters for help with composting [jeff.coats@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:jeff.coats@northyorks.gov.uk)

While some packaging is fine as it's removed during treatment, there must be no glass – very important as it messes up the machinery!

### Setting up a food waste collection

If your school would like to set up a weekly food waste collection, we recommend:

- 1) Looking at your waste contracts first to see if you can reduce the size of your normal waste bin (which you pay for) as food waste will no longer need to go into this, this will help balance out the cost of your new collection
- 2) Work out where to store the food waste bin – eg round the back of the kitchen?
- 3) Make sure you have done everything you can to reduce food waste in the first place, eg looking at portion sizes of school dinners, asking pupils who leave food, why they are leaving it, could they make a better dinner choice or do they need longer to eat their meal?

To find out more about organising a weekly collection for your school, contact:

- Kelly Taylor at Refood [Kelly.taylor@refood.co.uk](mailto:Kelly.taylor@refood.co.uk) Tel 0800 011 3214. Kelly can also run a virtual assembly for your pupils to explain more about turning food waste into fuel.
- or Yorwaste – who can organise collections by Refood as part of their service. Ring 0845 3008889.

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## School declares climate emergency

We're keeping an eye on what schools around the country are up to...

**THE YORKSHIRE POST**

Education

# Leeds school first in county to declare climate change emergency

A school in Leeds has become the first in the region to declare a climate change emergency in response to increasing levels of anxiety among pupils about the future of the environment.

By Sarah Freeman

Monday, 2nd March 2020, 5:30 am



Climate change anxiety is growing amongst young people

As part of the move, Roundhay School, in the north of the city, is working towards becoming carbon neutral in an effort to show students how they can play a part in averting the crisis.

Teacher Matthew Carmichael, who has spearheaded the project, said: "Many schools have recently looked to creative ways to tackle issues surrounding climate change, from adapting the school curriculum to holding sustainability-themed drop-down days.

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## Training and pupil events – a new way of working in autumn 2020

As we continue in the Autumn term, the Energy and sustainability service would like “Power Down Pete’s” school visits to be as close to normal as possible.

Therefore, we will still be offering school visits by Power Down Pete should a school want it. To deliver this in a Covid Secure way we will:

- clean all equipment and resources used with the children during visits after each class and at the end of every day
- observe social distancing rules wherever possible and where it is not possible wear face masks
- plan activities that require minimum contact between pupils within classes
- follow all guidance and precautions from the school during the visit

We are fully aware of the issues currently concerning schools around Covid 19 and understand that some schools simply will not wish to have visitors on site. For those schools we can offer a virtual visit in certain circumstances. If schools want Pete to work with their eco team or school council, this can be done via skype.

We have also developed a range of readymade lessons, videos, activities and quizzes that can be accessed through our new “Power Down Pete Secret base” website <http://nyorks-eco.education/>. This site will be continually updated throughout the term.

For staff, we will still provide a range of lesson ideas Eco – Schools activities and guidance as well as support for schools wishing to reduce their carbon footprint and develop their work around their teaching of environmental issues.

We are currently offering environmental inputs in to the curriculum around Energy and Climate change, Water, Waste and recycling, Rainforest and Japanese culture. New for this term is ARPete, a World War 2 study looking at current environmental issues in comparison with issues people faced in the second world war home front. SWITCH THAT LIGHT OUT!!

We are also working with Community Action Yorkshire delivering a fuel poverty project into schools and the community through the comic “Evil doctor freeze and the Zombie penguins”. We are now working on ways of delivering this online with each child receiving a free comic.

These activities all contribute to an evidential portfolio for progression through the Eco-Schools scheme.

For further information on the services offered please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feb956Pd6N0&app=desktop>

or contact <mailto:Peter.Bell@northyorks.gov.uk>

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## Healthy Schools award online training

### Overview

Take part in an interactive online training session to begin working on your Healthy Schools award or to develop your work further if you are already taking part. Please choose the session title and date most relevant to you. Staff from the Healthy Schools award team will be delivering the training and on hand to answer any questions you may have about working on the scheme. Please register with the scheme before attending training at [www.healthyschools.org](http://www.healthyschools.org)



The Healthy Schools scheme is funded by Public Health to enable all North Yorkshire schools to take part free of charge, Private and out of County schools can join for a charge. The online training is free for all North Yorkshire schools, including academies, special and secondary schools. Private or out of County schools can access the training if they are signed up to the scheme.

### Booking

To apply for any of the training below please go to North Yorkshire Education Services (NYES) <http://www.nyestraining.co.uk/> If you are a school or educational setting your school will have been issued with a username and password, which will enable your school to log in and apply for training. If you have any questions or need help using the site call the NYES team on 01609 533 222 Or email [nyes@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:nyes@northyorks.gov.uk)

**Please note a link to access the training will be emailed to you nearer the time.**

| DATE     | SESSION TIME | COURSE TITLE                                        | NYES COURSE CODE |
|----------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 07/10/20 | 1.30-3.30pm  | Getting started with Healthy Schools                | SI-1020-T025     |
| 08/10/20 | 1.30-3.30pm  | Getting ready to submit for a Healthy Schools Award | SI-1020-T026     |
| 05/11/20 | 1.30-3.30pm  | Getting started with Healthy Schools                | SI-1120-T039     |
| 12/11/20 | 1.30-3.30pm  | Getting ready to submit for a Healthy Schools Award | SI-1120-T049     |

For general queries about the training, please email: [healthyschools@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:healthyschools@northyorks.gov.uk)

To register online to join the scheme go to: [www.healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org](http://www.healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org)

**Please register with the scheme before attending the training.**

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