



Welcome to B&D Energy



Contact us

If you have any queries about this document or your service, visit our website for more information or contact us.

Website: **www.bdenergy.org.uk**

Email: **enquiries@bdenergy.org.uk**

Phone: Our Customer Service Team is available from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday on **020 8227 5960**. Outside of these hours, please call this number for emergencies only.

Write to us at: **B&D Energy Ltd, Barking Town Hall, Town Square, Barking, IG11 7LU**

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Welcome to your new home

Where do I find the important stuff?

- Read about your monthly billing on page 6.
- How does it work and can you switch? Turn to page 4.
- Find quick answers to FAQs on page 8.

There is a key feature to your property which you might be unfamiliar with. Your new property relies on a 'District Energy Scheme'. There is nothing to worry about here, as this document explains what the District Energy Scheme is and its benefits.

Your energy provider for heat and hot water is B&D Energy Ltd. This means you get:

- constant heating and hot water
- your energy from a low carbon energy source, which is more environmentally friendly
- peace of mind that the tariff you pay is fixed for a year, competitive and fair

What is a District Energy Scheme?

B&D Energy Ltd is owned by Barking and Dagenham Council. It produces and distributes energy locally in what's called a District Energy Scheme.

The energy that B&D Energy will initially generate, distribute and supply will be from solar panels and then by Combined Heat and Power (CHP) generators. These generators use an engine that runs on natural gas to produce electricity and to heat water. In the future, we plan to add other sources of energy such as fuel cells and energy from waste to the District Energy network.

Important Note.

In order to receive heating and hot water you must first sign an agreement with B&D Energy and set up your account for billing. The agreement will be provided by your landlord.

Why is this better?

- Big power stations generating energy are pretty inefficient. They often waste lots of heat. When we generate electricity locally, we save this heat and use it to heat your home.
- CHP is an efficient way of producing energy that causes less damage to the environment.

Altogether this makes for a much more efficient way of generating heat. Your heat then comes to your home via a network of underground pipes which we call 'District Energy'.

Why is this better for you?

- Profits are kept within the borough instead of being used to pay shareholders like with other energy companies. This means profits are put back into services for Barking and Dagenham residents and businesses.
- We are a local supplier so you will always be dealt with by people who know your development and your system.
- Our low carbon energy supply is backed up by an alternate source to be reliable for you.
- We produce low carbon energy which is environmentally friendly, helping to tackle climate change which is good for everyone.
- As your energy is not using gas, there is no risk of carbon monoxide.

Heating and hot water

Properties supplied by B&D Energy do not have a mains gas supply. We heat your property and hot water through our District Energy Scheme instead.

How does my heating and hot water work?

In your property, you do not have a gas boiler or a hot water tank. Instead you have a Heating Interface Unit (HIU) which looks like this:



We heat water and then pump it around our efficient underground pipe network and into this box.

Inside the HIU is a:

- heat meter – all the heat you use is metered. We read these meters automatically so that you are only billed for what you have used.
- heat exchanger – this transfers the heat from our network to the water in your central heating system and to the water in your hot tap.

B&D Energy are responsible for the maintenance of the heating pipe network up to, and including, the HIU. The cost of this is included in our Standing Charge. You will receive free periodical checks from our team to ensure it's working correctly. But please be aware that we are not responsible for all the internal plumbing in your home outside the HIU.

You can control the room temperature in your home by adjusting the controllers fixed to the walls inside your home. Please check your Residents Handbook, supplied by your landlord, for instructions on how these controllers work.

Important Note.

You should run your heating system at least once a month for a few hours - even during the summer. This will prevent the pump from seizing up and causing problems when you do come to use your heating.

Can I change suppliers for my heat?

This District Energy Scheme is a feature of your property.

You cannot change suppliers for your heat and even if you turn off the system, you will still be liable for the Standing Charge if you are still in a contract with us.

Read about how we heat your home and hot water at www.bdenergy.org.uk/my-home

What happens when I am away?

You will still be required to pay towards the standing portion of the charge. If you completely switch off your heating and hot water system, you will only pay for the fixed standing charge portion of your bill. Please note that, although your home is highly insulated to the latest standards, we would not recommend switching off your heating during the coldest winter months to avoid the risk of frozen pipes.

The HIU's "Keep Warm" function

We all know how frustrating it is to have to wait for ages for the hot water from the tap to get hot. To overcome this, your Heating Interface Unit was designed by the manufacturer to always be warm and ready to deliver hot water as soon as you want it. It does this by taking a tiny trickle of heat when it is not in use. This means that even when you are not using the heating or hot water there will still be a very small amount of heat usage. We estimate this costs you about 4p/day on average.

This is exactly the same as most gas combi boilers when not in 'eco' mode; it uses a tiny trickle of gas to keep the boiler hot and ready.

Your tariff

What am I paying?

The cost (or tariff) for heating your property and hot water is made up of two charges - the Standing and Unit Charges.

Standing Charge

This is a flat rate that you will be charged every month. The Standing Charge is based on the cost of employing people to operate, maintain, repair and replace our equipment and the cost of new parts.

Every year, we will use a mix of two indices to calculate a new Standing Charge that reflects movement in these two costs; one that reflects the cost of living and one that reflects the cost of employing people.

You will have to pay the Standing Charge even if you use no energy (which is the same as other energy providers), but if you are a Reside tenant, the Standing Charge is reduced. This is because part of the costs for servicing and maintaining the HIU, the Energy Centre (which is where we generate our heat supplies) and the network are included in your rent.

Unit Charge

We charge you the rest of your bill by multiplying each kilowatt hour (kWh) of energy you have used by the Unit Charge.

We have decided to index the Unit Charge in line with the change in the wholesale price of gas as this reflects price changes within the national energy market. This means because our prices are indexed, the tariff may go down as well as up. If you require the exact calculation we use to index your charges, then please do get in touch and we can supply this to you.

How is the overall tariff calculated?

We want to make sure that you pay a fair price for heat.

The tariff has been calculated so that the total annual cost of heating your home through from the District Energy Scheme is similar to what it would cost if your home was heated with a gas boiler. When a home has a gas boiler, the real annual cost of heating includes the gas usage, the costs of annual maintenance/safety check and also some provision to pay for a replacement boiler if it fails.

This method of cost calculation is approved by Heat Trust, a not-for-profit organisation set up to ensure energy companies provide a quality service to their customers. You can use their cost calculator to check that our tariffs are comparable to running a gas boiler system by visiting www.heattrust.org

We know that if you have previously lived in a council, housing association or privately rented property, you may not have been responsible for paying your heating bills or been responsible for the maintenance or replacement of the system, but this would have been included in your rent.

How will the tariff change in the future?

We will review our tariffs every April. We will use the same calculations every year to set your tariff which means the process is open, fair and you can understand how we have arrived at the new costs. This is much fairer than other gas or heat suppliers whose tariffs and price changes can be confusing and take place when they decide they should.

You can find your Heat Standing Charge and Unit Charge in your Residential Supply

Read our Pricing Policy to see how we calculate our tariffs and check your Heat Standing and Unit Charge at www.bdenergy.org.uk/my-tariff-pricing

Billing

How will I be billed?

We will automatically measure how much energy you are using.

You will be billed monthly for the energy you use. This bill will be sent to you in the post/by email.

Your bill will list two charges:

- Heat Standing Charge
- Heat Unit Charge

You can find out your latest tariffs by looking at your most recent bill or on our website.

We will send you a bill every month and you must make payment within 14 days. If you have signed up for paperless billing, we will send you a notification of the bill by email. The payment date will be shown on each bill.

How do I pay my bill?

Direct Debit

Our preferred method of payment is by Direct Debit and for this reason, Direct Debit customers receive a discounted tariff. You get the Direct Debit Guarantee and our processes are simple and manageable. Sign up to Direct Debit by filling in the form at the back of this Welcome Pack or the one in your Residential Supply Agreement and then returning it to us.

You can set up a Direct Debit to pay the outstanding balance on your bill every month. Simply complete the Direct Debit Form and return it to us and we will do the rest. If you wish to arrange a fixed monthly amount for your Direct Debit to help spread the payments, then please contact us to arrange a suitable monthly payment.

If you are paying by Direct Debit, your payment will be taken from your account 14 days after your bill date as shown on your bill.

Other payment methods

You should be aware that paying by any other method than Direct Debit will incur extra charges as your tariff includes a Direct Debit discount.

Other ways to pay, include:

- Bank transfer
- Standing order
- Debit/credit card payment over the phone

If you pay by any of these alternative methods, you must quote your account number as the payment reference which can be found on the front of your bill.

Online account access and payment

If you select paperless billing when you sign up with B&D Energy, we will send you an email which will enable you to log in to your account to see your usage, your bills and your payments. You will also be able to pay your bills online.

Find out more about paying your bills at
www.bdenergy.org.uk/payment-methods

Can I get help as a vulnerable customer?

If you feel that you need some extra support for paying your bill or for dealing with us as a customer, please contact us and let us know. This could be because you have a long-term illness or have suffered from a difficult recent event.

For more information, see our Vulnerable Customer Policy available online at
www.bdenergy.org.uk/extra-help

Important Note.

If you do not pay your bills for the heating supplied by B&D Energy then you may be required to use a Pay-As-You-Go system to maintain services or you may be liable for disconnection.

Other policies

Service standards

B&D Energy always wants you to have heating and hot water in your home. We know that whenever there's a problem with either of these, it's a huge inconvenience. That's why we have set ourselves high standards of customer service and energy availability that is one of the best in the market. What's more, if we fail to achieve these high standards, we will compensate you to say sorry.

Our Guaranteed Standards of Service sets out exactly how we will perform and the penalties on us if we fail.

You can find this online at
www.bdenenergy.org.uk/service-standards

Complaints procedure

Despite our best efforts to provide a quality service at all times, there may be occasions when the service provided does not meet the standards that we set for ourselves or that you might expect from us. We have therefore established a simple and effective complaints procedure so that problems can be resolved quickly and efficiently.

Find this online at
www.bdenenergy.org.uk/complaints

Debt recovery policy

Our Code of Practice on Debt Recovery for Residential Consumers explains the services we offer and tells you what to do if you have problems paying your bill on time.

You can find this at
www.bdenenergy.org.uk/payment-methods

Please tell us straight away if there is a change in your circumstances that affects your ability to keep to our payment agreement. Please call us on **020 8227 5960** (office hours 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) as soon as you can so we can help.

Your data privacy

Your personal data matters to us and we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. We process and protect all your personal data according to our Privacy Notice.

Read this online at
www.bdenenergy.org.uk/privacy-notice

Frequently asked questions

More information about our energy supply and services can be found at www.bdenergy.org.uk

What is a District Energy Scheme?

District Energy is energy (which can be heat or electricity) that is locally produced and distributed within a small area. We produce our energy within the borough and only supply it to customers who are connected to our networks.

Where does this energy come from?

B&D Energy will initially generate, distribute and supply energy from solar panels and then by Combined Heat and Power (CHP) generators. These generators use an engine that runs on natural gas to produce electricity and to heat water. In the future, we plan to add other sources of energy such as fuel cells, solar and energy from waste to the District Energy network.

How is this energy distributed?

Your energy comes to your home via a network of underground pipes for heat. If needed, we can fall back on conventional gas-efficient boilers for your heating.

How can I see how much energy I've used?

The Heat Interface Unit (HIU) in your property has a built-in meter which measures the heat you use. We collect your heat meter readings remotely, so you don't need to worry about sending us manual readings to be sure your bills are accurate.

How much will I have to pay per month?

Your energy bill will depend on your energy consumption. It can vary greatly depending on how many people you live with and how much energy you use. If you want to reduce the amount of energy you use in your home, we provide energy efficiency links on our website.

How does B&D Energy's heating tariff compare with other suppliers?

It is difficult to compare our heating with a gas supply as it is delivered in a different way. If you have a gas boiler in your home, you need to pay for your fuel supply as well as boiler maintenance and repairs. We have benchmarked your heating costs to be equal or cheaper than the average costs of running a gas fired boiler for a year. This is an industry standard method of comparing heating charges which is used by the Heat Trust.

You can find out more by visiting www.heattrust.org

What is an online e-billing account?

When you sign up with B&D Energy, you can opt for paperless billing. We will then send you an email which enables you to log into your account and to see your energy use, your bills and your payments. You will also be able to pay your bills online.

If you want to register for paperless billing, contact us and we will send you the registration email. If you have already registered, you can access your e-billing account at www.bdenergy.org.uk/my-account

When am I billed?

You will receive a bill every month and have 14 days to pay it. If you have activated your e-billing account, we will send you an email to tell you when the bill is available to view or download. The payment date will be shown on your bill. If you are paying by Direct Debit, we will charge you on this payment date.

How are my costs calculated?

We collect our meter readings remotely, so you don't need to worry about sending us manual readings to be sure your bills are accurate. We remotely read your energy meter which tells us how much energy you have used in kilowatt hours (kWh). We then charge you by multiplying each kWh by the Unit Charge.

You are also charged a Standing Charge at a flat rate. The Standing Charge covers our operation and maintenance costs and will apply even if you use no energy.

When do the tariffs change?

We review our tariffs annually with any changes becoming effective on 1st April each year, however, we may be required to review our tariffs more frequently. If there are any changes to our tariffs, charges or Pricing Policy, we will notify you a month in advance of them becoming effective with an explanation of why they were necessary and how they have been calculated.

You can find our Pricing Policy at
www.bdenergy.org.uk/my-tariff-pricing

Who maintains my HIU (Heat Interface Unit) and how often?

B&D Energy are responsible for the maintenance of the heating pipe network up to, and including, the HIU. The cost of this is included in our Standing Charge.

You will receive free checks periodically from our team to ensure that the HIU is working correctly and properly connected. If you have a problem with the heating and hot water supply in your property beyond the HIU, you (or your landlord) are responsible.

How do I report an issue?

If you are having problems with your heating or hot water, you can use our troubleshooting guide at www.bdenergy.org.uk/report-a-problem or contact us to report a problem.

Who will fix any leaks or supply faults?

If you have a leak from our equipment, we will fix it for you and if we agree that there is a fault with our equipment, then we will arrange an engineer to visit you and fix it.

Who do I contact in an emergency?

You can contact our Customer Service Team by writing to enquiries@bdenergy.org.uk or calling **020 8227 5960** from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, this number is available for emergencies.

How can I save money on my energy bills?

The Energy Saving Trust website provides information and advice on how to be more energy efficient at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Another resource is www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator which walks you through your personal circumstances and gives advice on how you can reduce your energy bills

You can find more help on the Citizens Advice Bureau website at
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy

What happens if I move in or out?

The landlord or sales agent asks the first occupier to sign a Residential Supply Agreement when the property is built. However, if this has not happened or you are not the first occupier, you should contact us and arrange to complete a Residential Supply Agreement.

If you are moving out, then you must tell us as soon as possible and provide us with an address where we can send your final bill.

You can ring us on **020 8227 5960** (office hours 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or download a Moving Out Form from our website at www.bdenergy.org.uk/moving-in-or-out

