Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Biomass User Guide

Your guide to your heating and hot water system.

Contents

1. Introduction to your heating and hot water system

The heating system in your flat is connected to the Community Heating System (CHS) and the boilers are located in the new Energy Centre next to one of your buildings.

Most of the heat energy will come from a wood biomass boiler. This is good for the environment and in the longer term it is expected to be a lower cost than gas.*

Your heating and hot water will work exactly the same as it would if you had your own boiler.

You can set heating times and control the temperature. Hot water from your taps is 'instantaneous': this means that you just turn on a hot tap and within a few seconds you will have hot water.

Your flat is fitted with a Customer Billing Unit which monitors the amount of heating and hot water that you use.

It is a pre-payment system which means you need to pay in advance by putting credit on your meter.

All the controls and equipment that connect your system to the Community Heating System are housed within the large white cabinet which we call a Heat Interface Unit (HIU). You do not need to access this unit but you must make sure that there is always electricity to it, or your heating will not work.

*There is more information about the biomass boiler at the back of this booklet.

It is important that you have both credit on your heating credit meter and that your electricity is working for you to get heating and hot water.

2. Quick Guide

1. Before you can get heating and hot water you must put credit on your credit meter.

You can do this via a PayPoint outlet using your ID card.

Or you can pay by phone, or via the internet, using a debit card.

Whichever way you pay, the credit will be added to your meter automatically.

2. To turn your heating up

Just turn the top dial on the Programmable Room Thermostat.

3. To get hot water

Just turn on the hot tap and wait for a few seconds.

There are more detailed instructions in the following pages.

3. How to pay for heating

Payment for your heating is arranged through a company called Energy Billing.

As part of your heating system you will have a Customer Billing Unit (CBU) that looks like this and may be fitted in your hall or kitchen.

Energy Billing call this an "EE Monitor"

You need to put credit on your CBU for the system to operate.

If you have just moved into the flat, the previous tenant may have left some credit on the meter. This means the system may work to start with, but you will need to add credit to keep it working.

There are three ways you can put credit on your meter:

1. Through the PayPoint system   (cash or debit card)
2. By telephone   (debit card)
3. Via the internet   (debit card)

PayPoint

To use this system you will be provided with an identification (ID) card.
Simply show your card at the PayPoint outlet and pay for the amount of credit you need.

Telephone

To pay by telephone call the **Energy Billing** number on the back page of this booklet.

They will list some number options but it is best to wait for someone to answer. They will take your details.

Internet

Go to **www.energybilling.co.uk** and enter your user name and password, then follow the on screen instructions for adding credit to your meter.

Whichever payment method you use, the credit will usually show on your credit meter within a few minutes of you making the payment. At busy times it could take up to 2 hours.

> **NOTE: For each transaction you will be issued with a PIN Code.**
>
> **If there is a problem with the automatic system, or if you need to add credit straight away because you have run out, you can enter this number directly into the Credit Meter.**
>
> **See the instructions for this in section 8 of this booklet.**

How much credit do I need to add?

Everyone will use a different amount of heating and hot water but we advise that you start with £10 or £20 and see how long it lasts. Obviously, it will last longer in summer when you are only using hot water and no heating.

IMPORTANT:

There is an Emergency Credit facility built into the system.

This is provided so that if your credit runs out and you cannot immediately get to a PayPoint shop, you can use this credit to keep your heating going until you can next get to a shop. It gives you £5 of emergency credit.

The next time you buy more credit some of this will be used to top up the emergency credit you have used.

The CBU will do this automatically when you first add credit or each time after you have used some of your Emergency Credit.

For example, if there is no credit at all on your meter and you add £20 of credit, the meter will automatically put £5 into the 'Emergency Credit'.

You would see this on the meter:

```
15 Oct 2012        11:31

        Enter to add credit

Heat        Cr: £15.00

            E:  £5.00
```

£20 of credit in total but £5 of this automatically put into Emergency Credit.

How do I use the emergency credit when my main credit runs out?
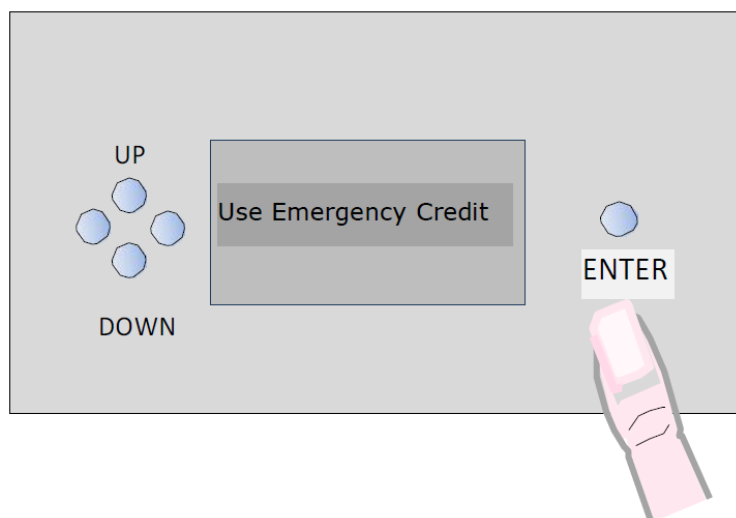
1. Press ENTER on the Credit Meter

2. Use the UP and DOWN buttons to highlight Use Emergency Credit.

3. Press ENTER again.

The Emergency Credit will now start counting down until you next top up.
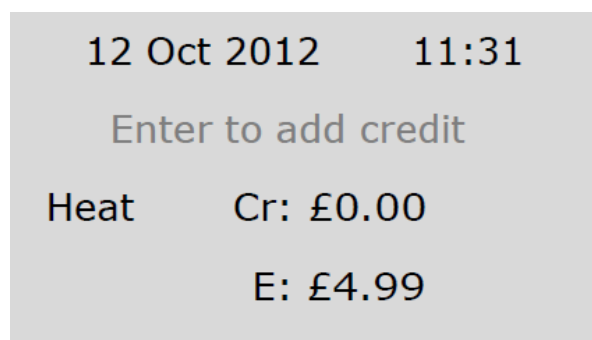
REMEMBER to top up with more than £5 so that you have normal credit and emergency credit available.

4. How to control the temperature in your flat

There are two ways to control the temperature.

The main temperature control is by using the Programmable Room Thermostat which looks like this and will be located in your hallway.

Use this device to control the temperature in your flat.

The most economical way to use the device is in Automatic Mode.

1. Pull up the cover flap to reveal the controls.

2. Rotate the minute hand clockwise until the clock shows the correct time. Move the slider switch to 'am' or 'pm' as appropriate.

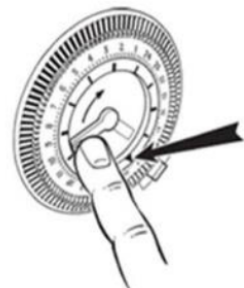3. To the left of the clock there are two small dials. Use the top dial to set your preferred daytime temperature. In the hall this should be about 18°C – 20°C.

Use the bottom dial to set a minimum temperature for night-time or when you are out. We suggest 5°C – 10°C.
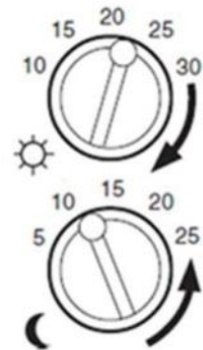
4. Around the outside of the clock face there are 96 'tappets' or little switches. These correspond to 15 minute intervals throughout the 24 hour day.

Move the tappets outward for the periods of the day that you want the heating on.

And move the tappets inward for the periods when you want the minimum 'night-time'/off temperature.

5. Finally, there is a slider switch to the bottom right of the clock face.

Set this so that the slider is next to the clock symbol. This will place the unit in Automatic mode and the heating will now be controlled to provide the daytime and minimum temperatures that you have set.
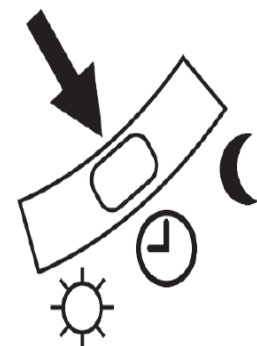
Manual operation

To operate the heating manually, move the slider switch to the bottom right of the clock face.

Then use the top dial to set the desired temperature.

In Manual mode though, you will need to remember to turn the heating down each night and up again in the morning – **otherwise your flat will be heated fully all night and this will be very expensive**.
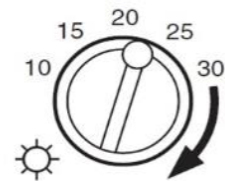
If you are going out or away for an extended period, move the slider switch to the bottom right of the clock face.

If you have just moved into the flat, it may have different settings that have been entered by someone else. If the current settings don't suit you, you can change them.

TEMPERATURES

Your heating system is designed to provide 21°C (70°F) in the living room and bathroom and 18°C (64°F) in other rooms when it is just below freezing outside.

Most of the year you will be able to have it even warmer but this will cost you more money.

The Programmable Room Thermostat is in the hall and the hall should be around 18°C. For night-time 5-10°C should be adequate.

You can then see what is comfortable and adjust the settings to suit you. The lower the temperature you are comfortable with, the less it will cost you.

The second way to control temperatures is at the radiators in each room

The temperature in individual rooms can be reduced by using the thermostatic radiator valves on each radiator (except the one in the hall).

They look something like this:

These are useful to reduce the temperature in individual rooms if they are warmer than necessary: for instance, if you have an unused bedroom or if you have guests and the sitting room is getting too warm, you can lower the temperature in that room without affecting the other rooms.

To reduce the temperature, rotate the radiator valve clockwise. If you turn it all the way it will turn the radiator off. If you just want to reduce the temperature a little do it a quarter turn at a time and let it settle for about 20 minutes. Then re-adjust as necessary, letting it settle a while each time.

NOTE: The temperature of the radiators will change when you use these controls. Simply adjust the Thermostatic Radiator Valves until you are comfortable.

IMPORTANT:

These valves should never be used to isolate a radiator so that it can be

5. What to do if your heating stops working

If you have no heating, follow these steps:

Is your hot water working? Open a hot tap and try now.

No	Yes
Hot water not working	**Hot water working**

No — Hot water not working:

Is your electricity working? Your heating will not work if you have no electricity.

↓

Check that the power is switched on to your Heat Interface Unit.

↓

Check that there is credit on your Customer Billing Unit.

↓

If the main credit has run out you can use the Emergency Credit (see section 3).

If your Emergency Credit has run out you will need to pay for more credit.

↓

If credit is shown on your meter and the power is on to your system but you have no heating or hot water call the Contact Centre on: **0121 717 1515**

Yes — Hot water working:

↓

Check that the tappets around the clock on the Programmable Room Thermostat are moved outward to give the daytime temperature and check that the slider switch is set to

 or

↓

Check that the daytime temperature dial is set to around 18°C.

↓

If your hot water is working but you have no heating despite checking the heating controls call the Contact Centre on: **0121 717 1515**

Other heating problems

Problem

Radiator cold at the top but warm at the bottom

Cause

This is probably caused by air and can happen if someone has removed and replaced a radiator.

Action

You will need to call the Contact Centre on 0121 717 1515 and report this problem.

Noisy system

Cause

This can be also be caused by air or due to faulty equipment.

Action

You will need to call the Contact Centre on 0121 717 1515 and report this problem.

6. What to do if you have no hot water

If you have no hot water, check the following:

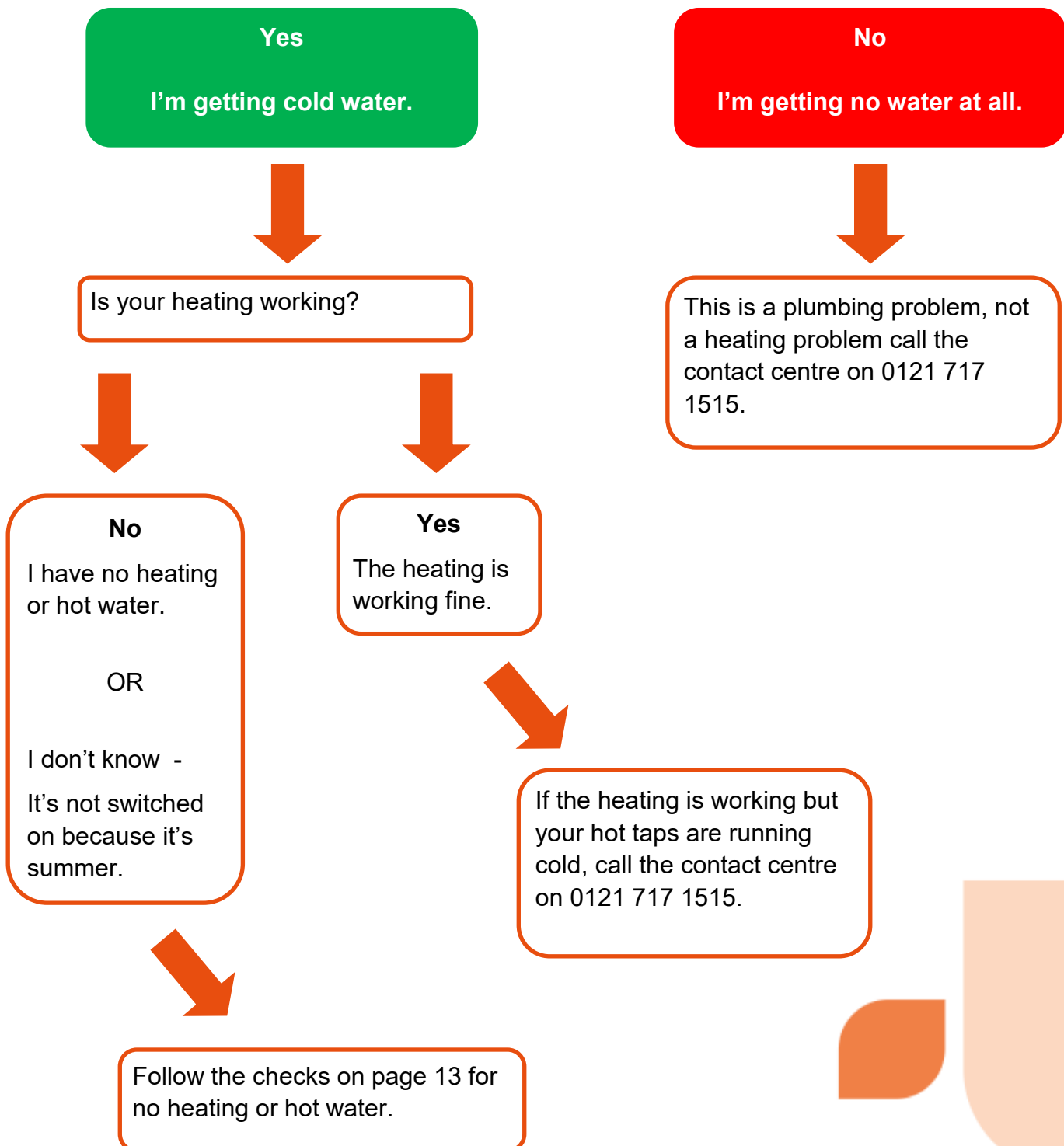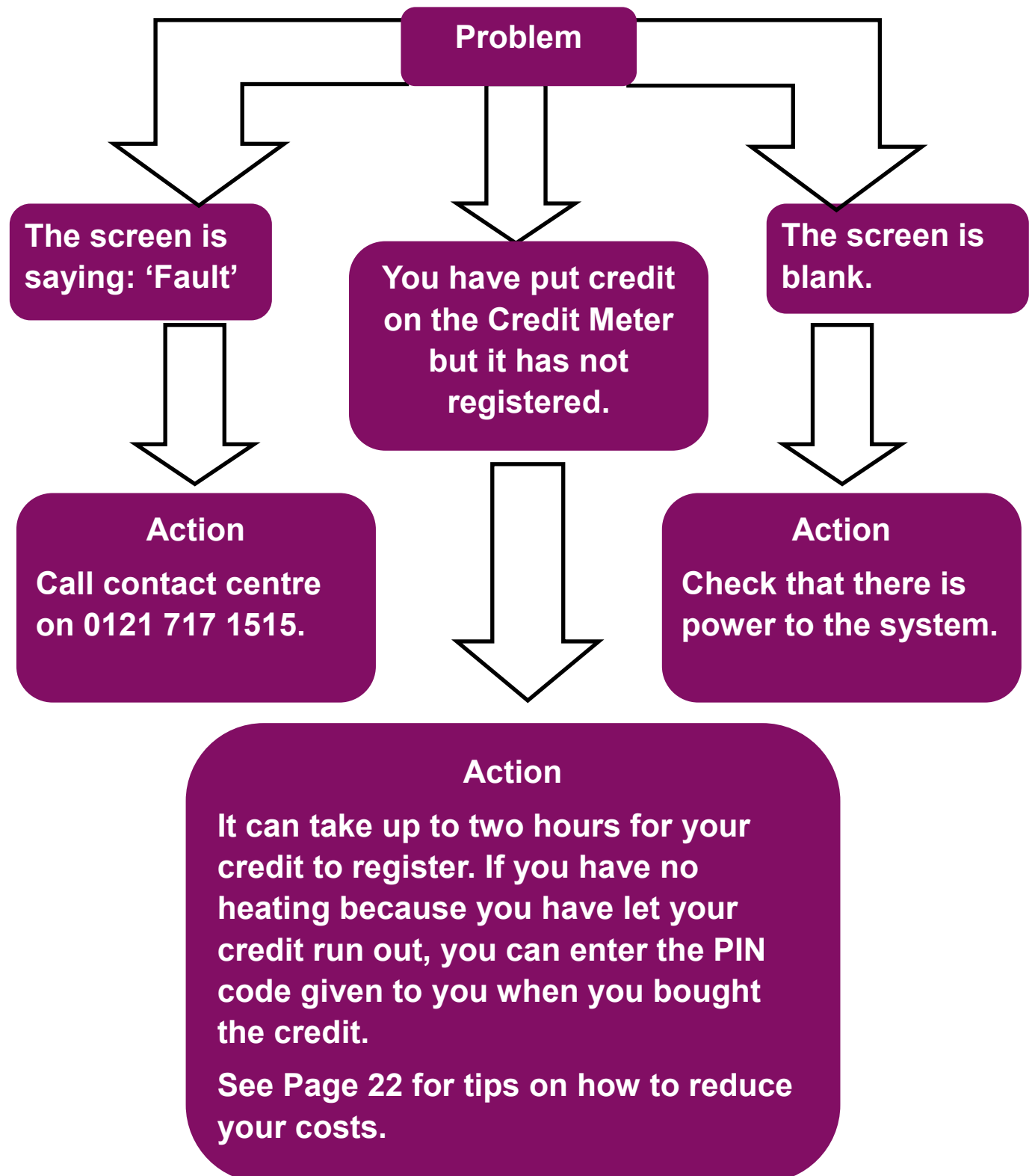Are your hot taps running cold, even after waiting a couple of minutes?

| **Yes**

I'm getting cold water. | **No**

I'm getting no water at all. |

Is your heating working?

This is a plumbing problem, not a heating problem call the contact centre on 0121 717 1515.

No

I have no heating or hot water.

OR

I don't know -

It's not switched on because it's summer.

Yes

The heating is working fine.

If the heating is working but your hot taps are running cold, call the contact centre on 0121 717 1515.

Follow the checks on page 13 for no heating or hot water.

What to do if you have problems with your heat meter

Problem

The screen is saying: 'Fault'

Action

Call contact centre on 0121 717 1515.

You have put credit on the Credit Meter but it has not registered.

Action

It can take up to two hours for your credit to register. If you have no heating because you have let your credit run out, you can enter the PIN code given to you when you bought the credit.

See Page 22 for tips on how to reduce your costs.

The screen is blank.

Action

Check that there is power to the system.

# 8. Other information

How to manually add credit to your customer billing unit

When you make a payment at a PayPoint outlet or use the telephone or website to make a payment, you will be given a PIN code that is confirmation of your payment.

The credit should usually appear on your meter, automatically, within minutes but always within 2 hours. In the event that there is a fault with the communication system or if you allowed your credit to run out completely, you can enter the code manually as follows:
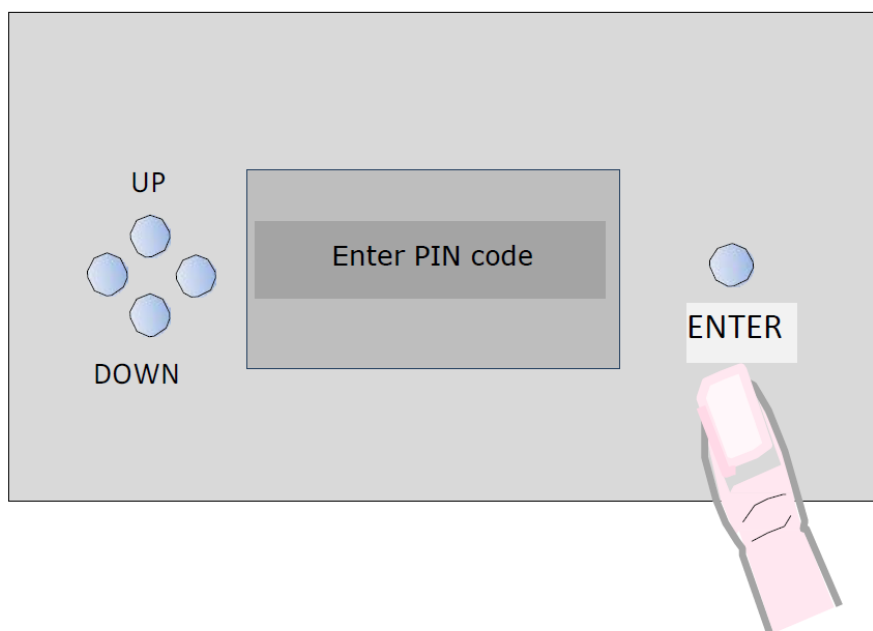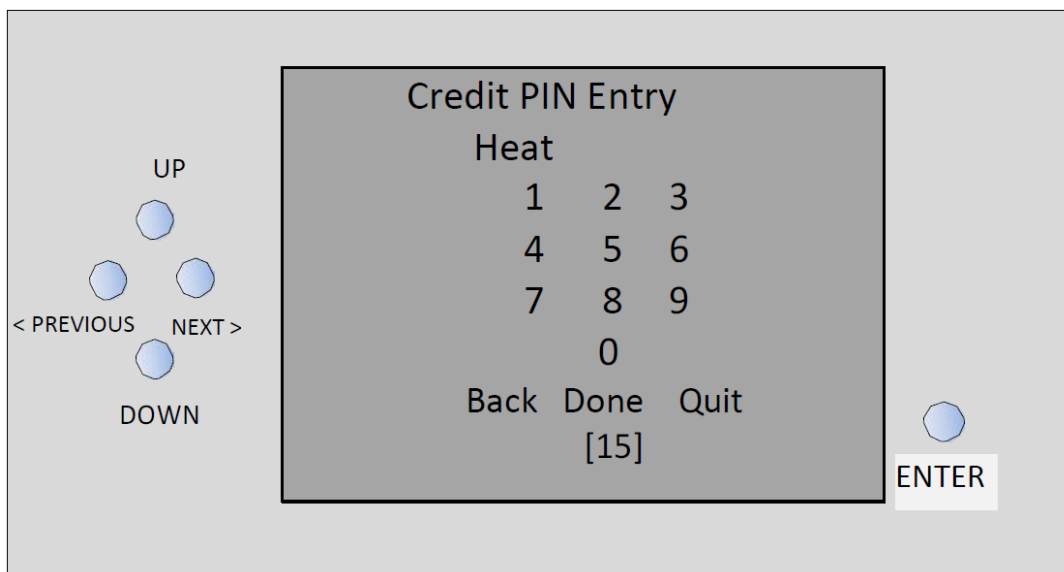

1. Press ENTER

2. Use the UP and DOWN buttons to find 'Enter PIN Code' and press ENTER.

The screen will look like this:

Credit PIN Entry
Heat
1   2   3
4   5   6
7   8   9
0
Back   Done   Quit
[15]

3. Enter the 10 digit code by using the four direction buttons, to highlight each number in turn and press ENTER. The code number will appear at the bottom as you press ENTER for each number.

4. Once all of the PIN code is entered, select DONE then press ENTER.

(BACK enables you to delete a number if you entered it in error.) The credit will now be added to the meter.

Battery replacement

Your Programmable Room Thermostat runs on batteries. These should last about a year.

To replace the batteries:

- open the cover flap and use a screwdriver or a pen to unclip the battery cover flap
- slide it downward to reveal the batteries as shown
- replace the batteries as shown with two LR6 (AA) batteries.
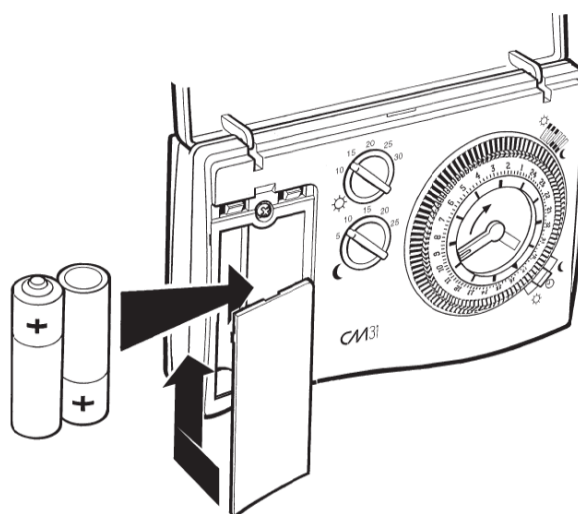
Make sure they are the correct way round.

9. Where can I get help?

What if I am struggling to pay for heating and hot water?

You are responsible for budgeting your money so that you can manage to pay for your heating.

If you are in severe financial difficulty then please contact us.

You can reduce your costs by reducing the heat and hot water you use. Here are some tips:

- Don't leave windows open when it is cold outside.

- Reduce the temperature at the thermostat and use additional clothing.

- Program your heating so that it is only at daytime temperature when you are at home. Set it at a lower temperature for night time and when you are not at home.

- Don't leave hot taps running. Use plugs to fill the sink or hand basin rather than using a running tap.

10. What if I have a complaint?

If you have any complaint about the heating and hot water system you should contact us straightaway, you can contact us by:

- Our online complaints form (www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk)
- Send a letter to Endeavour House, Meriden Drive, Solihull, B37 6BX
- Call us on 0121 717 1515

We will then:

- Formally log the complaint on our system so that its progress can be checked

- Resolve complaints, where possible, at the first point of contact;

- Deal with all complaints within the relevant timescale

Biomass heating

The wood biomass boiler that provides most of your heating is an efficient, fully automatic, clean burning and modern heating device. It uses wood pellets as fuel.

Gas boilers are also fitted for when the biomass boiler is being serviced and when the weather is exceptionally cold.

The wood pellets come from sustainable sources mostly in the UK. Most pellets are derived from timber industry wastage and the main reason for using biomass is because when burned, it releases only the amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere that was absorbed when the tree was growing. This is better for the environment than gas and electricity.

IMPORTANT

Solihull Community Housing can accept any responsibility for any loss or injury resulting from misuse of this system. Resident operation of the system should be limited to the controls explained within this booklet.

Tips to keep your energy bills down

1 Adjust the times on your programmable room thermostat to make sure your heating is not on when you are out.

Adjust the temperatures so that they are only as high as you need them to be. 21°C should be enough when you are relaxing. Try reducing the temperature if you are doing anything more active. You can also reduce the temperature to around 12°C at night.

2 Use the Thermostatic Radiator Valves to reduce the temperature in bedrooms or to turn off radiators in rooms that you are not using.

3 Avoid opening windows when you have your heating on.

4 Don't wash things under a running hot tap. Use the sink plug, run the hot tap and then run the cold tap to mix the water to the right temperature.

Internet Access

If you wish to top up your credit via the internet go to www.energybilling.co.uk and enter the following login ID and password:

Login ID:
Password:

If no details are entered above, contact us on 0121 717 1515.

Keep this in a safe place.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have a problem with your heating or hot water check the guidance on pages 16-19.

If you are unable to resolve the problem yourself call our contact Centre on:

0121 717 1515.

To add credit to your Credit Meter by telephone (credit or charge card
only) call Energy Billing on:

01159 55 66 77

To add credit to your Credit Meter via the internet (credit or charge card only) go to: www.energybilling.co.uk

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Typetalk: 18001 0121 717 1515
Text: 07781 474 722

Email: info@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk
Website: www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

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