

**I am worried about my energy bills because they are very high and I am getting behind with payments. What can I do?**

The most important thing is to contact your energy supplier as soon as possible. They have a duty to help you come to a solution and negotiate a payment plan that works for both of you. When making a payment plan, they have to take into account how much you can afford to pay and how much energy you'll use in future. On a payment plan, you'll pay in fixed amounts towards the debt you owe over a set period of time.

If you can't come to an agreement with your supplier about repaying your debt, contact Citizens Advice for help.

Energy bill debt is classed as a priority debt but it's not the only expense people have to deal with. If you are having problems with other bills as well, seek advice on managing debt. Citizens Advice will help you with long-term strategies to cope, and advise you on grants and benefits you may be entitled to.

Another thing you can do is save energy by making sure your home is energy efficient. There are simple changes you can make such as checking your central heating or using your appliances differently. You might also be able to get towards the cost of making bigger energy efficiency changes around your home such as getting a new heating system.

Look online for more information about savings - Citizens Advice nationally is working with the Energy Saving Trust to help people manage their energy bills. If you need personal help, contact South Lakes Citizens Advice.

***Free, confidential advice and help is available from South Lakes Citizens Advice on any aspect of debt, consumer problems, benefits, housing, employment or any other problems. How to access:***

- ***Call 015394 46464 (9.30am – 2pm, Monday – Friday)***
- ***Drop in sessions at Wainwright's Yard, Kendal, LA9 4DP (10am – 1pm, Tuesday and Thursday)***
- ***Adviceline: 0808 2787 984 (9am - 5pm, Monday – Friday)***
- ***email advice via the submission page on our website [www.southlakescab.org.uk](http://www.southlakescab.org.uk)***