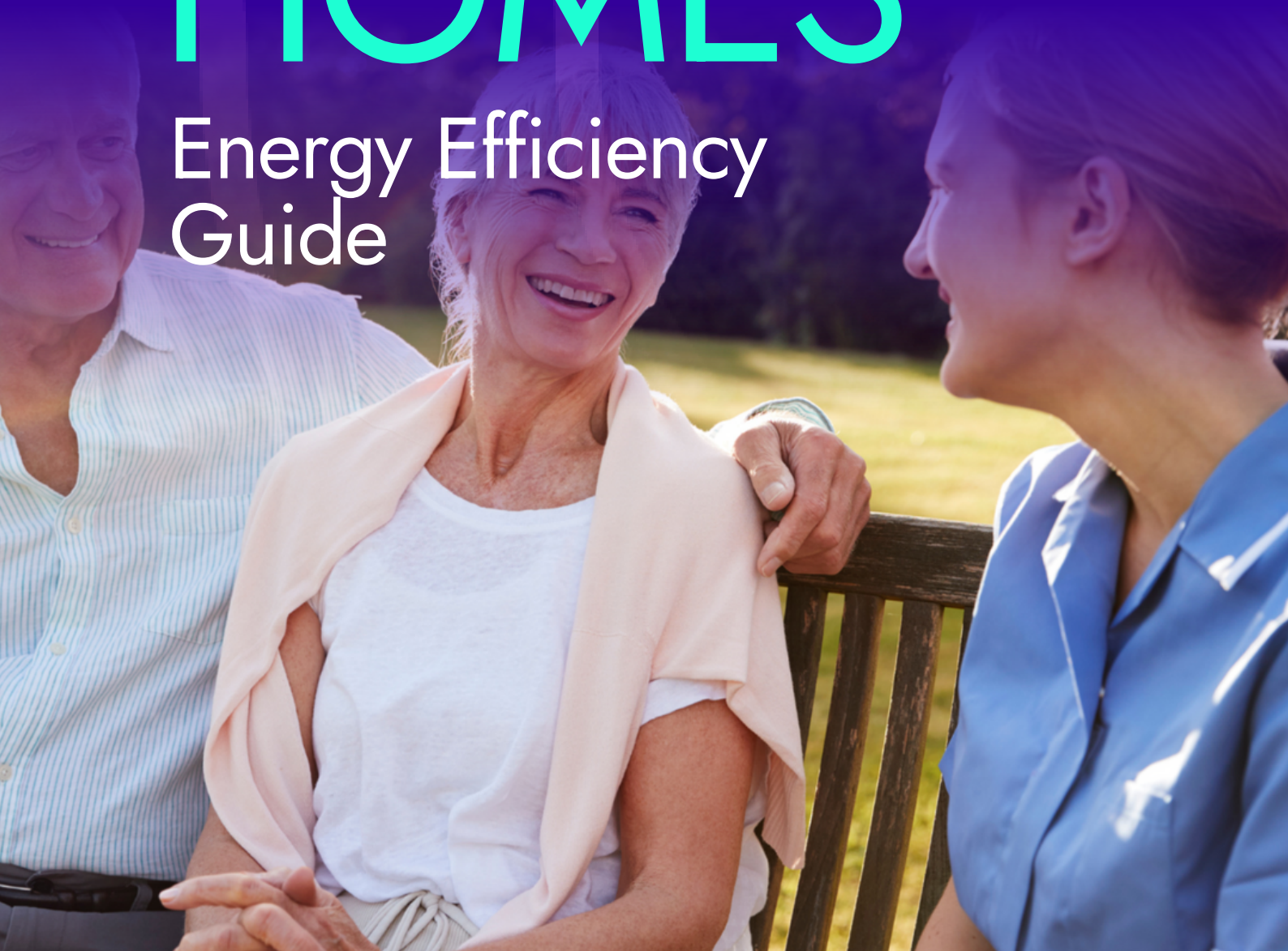




CARE HOMES

Energy Efficiency
Guide



Protecting people, budgets, and the planet.

Why it Matters

Care homes are 24/7 environments. From resident bedrooms and communal lounges to kitchens, laundries and staff areas — energy is constantly in use.

But with rising energy prices, growing regulation, and the sector's duty of care, improving energy efficiency is more than a cost-saving move. It's about creating safe, warm, dignified spaces while preparing for a lower-carbon future.

Where Care homes Use Energy

- **Space Heating:** Vital for comfort and health, especially in winter
- **Hot Water:** For bathing, cleaning, kitchens and laundry
- **Lighting:** Night-time safety lighting, resident rooms, and shared areas
- **Catering & Kitchen Equipment:** Three meals a day — every day
- **Laundry:** Bed linens, towels, clothing — high turnover
- **Resident Medical Equipment:** Some homes support complex needs
- **Office IT & Admin:** Often overlooked, but continuous demand



Energy-Saving Strategies for Care Homes

Zoned Heating Controls

- Split the building into zones: bedrooms, corridors, lounges, admin, kitchens
- Set temperatures based on use – e.g. 21°C in bedrooms, 18–19°C in corridors
- Use programmable timers to reduce heat overnight in communal areas

Avoid heating empty rooms or areas not in use – without compromising resident comfort.

Efficient Water Heating

- Fit hot water tanks with lagging jackets
- Use thermostatic mixing valves to safely set temperature
- Regularly check for dripping taps and leaks – especially in en-suite bathrooms
- Consider solar thermal for hot water where usage is high



Energy-Saving Strategies for Care Homes

LED Lighting & Smart Controls

- Replace all lighting with LEDs – especially hallway and night lights
- Install motion sensors in staff rooms, WCs, and storerooms
- Use dimmable lights in lounges for ambience without energy waste

Safety remains the priority – but that doesn't mean inefficient.

Kitchen & Catering

- Train kitchen staff to switch off equipment when not in use
- Maintain ovens, fridges and extractor fans to avoid energy loss
- Use induction hobs and fan-assisted ovens where replacements are due
- Install timer switches or smart plugs on backup appliances



Energy-Saving Strategies for Care Homes

Laundry Efficiency

- Wash full loads only
- Upgrade to energy-efficient washers and dryers when possible
- Clean lint filters and avoid over-drying
- Schedule laundry runs for daytime, using off-peak tariffs where available

IT and Appliance Policy

- Power down desktops and printers at the end of each day
- Use smart plug timers or standby savers in low-use areas (meeting rooms, staff rooms)
- Choose A-rated appliances for kitchens and admin spaces

Resident Comfort + Sustainability

Care homes must strike a careful balance between energy efficiency and consistent comfort. Many residents are vulnerable to cold or temperature fluctuation.

That's why improvements should focus on:

- Stable temperatures, not just reduced temperatures
- Even heating, not patchy heating
- Reliable systems with proactive maintenance

Simple language and subtle resident engagement — such as posters saying “Help us save energy, safely” — can build a positive culture.

Long-Term Sustainability Development

Fabric Improvements

- Insulate lofts, walls, and hot water pipes
 - Replace or seal draughty doors and windows
 - Consider secondary glazing where full replacement isn't possible
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Low-Carbon Heating Options

- Explore air or ground source heat pumps, particularly during boiler replacement cycles
 - Combine with smart controls for zoned, demand-led heating
 - Investigate grants or finance packages for system upgrades
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Solar PV and Battery Storage

- Generate clean electricity on-site
 - Offset daytime loads from kitchens, laundry and admin areas
 - Use batteries to manage peak periods or charge EVs if part of fleet
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Equipment Evaluation

- Create a rolling register of high-consumption equipment (e.g. catering, HVAC, laundry)
- Review energy ratings annually
- Replace kit when payback aligns with budget and usage case

Many care homes inherit old systems — now's the time to plan for replacements with long-term efficiency in mind.



Engage Your People

Care home staff are at the heart of operations — and that includes how energy is used. While no one expects staff to prioritise kilowatts over care, the right training and habits can cut waste without compromising standards.

Key Opportunities

- **Opening/closing checks:** Build energy checks into shift handovers — heating, lights, laundry kit, extractor fans.
- **Switch it off culture:** Encourage staff to turn off lights, appliances and equipment not in use — especially in empty rooms or during quieter hours.
- **Laundry routines:** Run full loads, avoid using dryers when not needed, clean filters regularly.
- **Zoning awareness:** Staff should understand where heating or cooling is needed — and where it isn't.
- **Kitchen efficiency:** Reinforce switch-off protocols for ovens, fryers, hobs and extraction when not in use.
- **Many staff are unaware** of the cost and carbon implications of simple behaviours — not because they don't care, but because no one's ever told them.

Training & Motivation

- Include sustainability in induction — a short session on energy awareness during onboarding goes a long way.
- Use signage and reminders — gentle prompts like “Lights off = more for care” near switches.
- Celebrate savings — share monthly progress (e.g. “£83 saved this month = two new sets of linens”)
- Nominate energy champions — staff members who spot waste and encourage best practice on shift.
- Link actions to outcomes — reinforce that reducing energy bills can help protect jobs, improve facilities, and contribute to residents' wellbeing.

Staff aren't just part of the solution — they are the solution. Empower them, and the results follow.

YOUR CHECKLIST

Area	Action	Impact
Heating	Zone control & smart scheduling	Lower bills, same comfort
Zone control & smart scheduling	Insulate tanks, fix leaks	Energy & water savings
Lower bills, same comfort	Replace with LEDs, add sensors	Safer, cheaper, longer-life
Water Heating	Train staff, time equipment use	Better performance, less waste
Insulate tanks, fix leaks	Efficient machines, smart usage	Lower electricity bills
Energy & water savings	Insulation, draught-proofing	Long-term resilience
Lighting	Add PV and battery where possible	Clean power, future-ready



Need Support?

At PE, we understand the balance between care and cost. We support care homes with simple, effective sustainability strategies that reduce bills without compromising standards.

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