

Getting to Know Your Communal Heating

Q&A for Residents

Why Doesn't My Flat Have a Boiler?

Just moved in and noticed there's no boiler? That's because your home is part of a communal heat network. Instead of a traditional boiler, you have a Heat Interface Unit (HIU), which connects your property to a shared central system that supplies heating and hot water across the building.

It's smart, space-saving, and energy-efficient - but if it's new to you, you might have a few questions. This guide covers everything you need to know: how it works, what the HIU does, and how you'll be billed.

What is a Communal Heat Network?

A communal heat network uses a central Energy Centre (often located in the basement) to generate heat - usually via communal gas boilers. That heat is distributed to each property through insulated pipes.

Instead of a boiler in your home, there is a HIU, which transfers heat from the network into your property.

HIU vs. Traditional Boiler

A traditional boiler uses a gas flame to heat water, whereas a HIU uses heat from the central energy network.

What Does a HIU Do?

Each flat within the heat network is fitted with a Heat Interface Unit (HIU). Your HIU contains a heat meter that accurately records the amount of heat you use, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), which is then used for billing purposes.

The meter is located inside the HIU, and a display allows you to view your meter readings at any time. These are the readings we use to calculate your bill.

Do HIUs Need Servicing and Who is Responsible for it?

Yes - an HIU should be serviced every two years by a qualified HIU Service Engineer. Your lease will confirm whether it's your responsibility or your managing agent's.

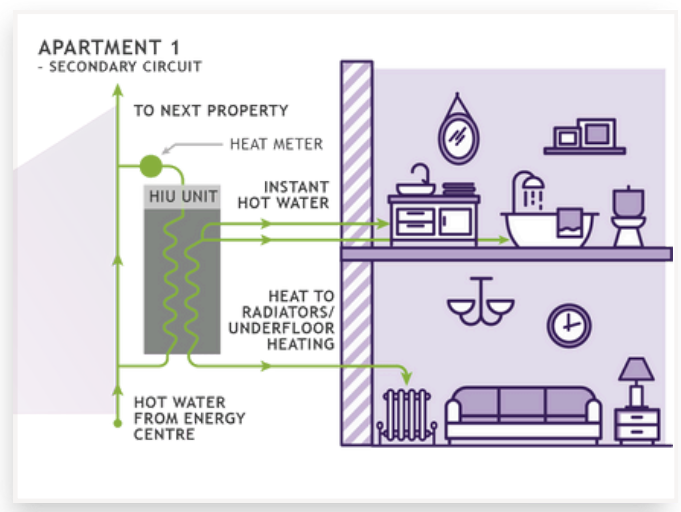
Why Use a HIU?

HIUs make use of a shared energy source, often making them more efficient. They give you heating and hot water on demand, without waiting for tanks to heat up - and they save space.

How Does it Work?

Thermal energy is distributed around a building, or number of buildings, via a network of pipes, in the form of steam, hot water, or chilled liquids from a central source (i.e. communal gas boilers in a plant room), for the use of space heating, cooling or hot water.

Each flat is fitted with a Heat Interface Unit (HIU). The HIU transfers heat from the building's pipe network (primary circuit: Image 1) into your home (secondary circuit: Image 2).



*For indicative purposes only

What are the Benefits for Residents?

Reliable and Instant

You get heating and hot water on demand, without waiting for a tank to warm up - saving you time and making daily routines easier.

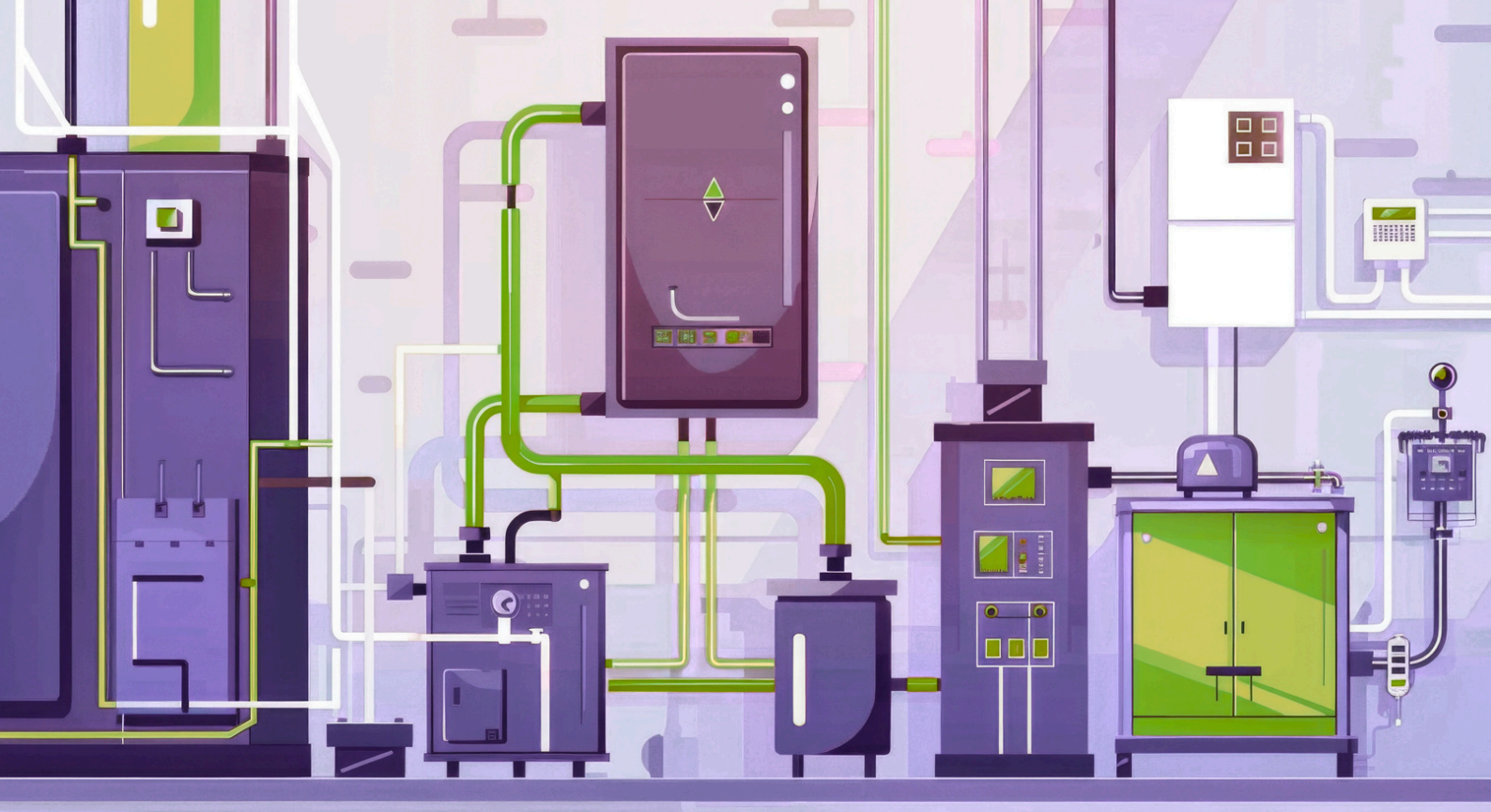
Space-Saving

With no need for a bulky boiler or hot water cylinder, you free up valuable space in your home for storage, furniture or just a bit more breathing room.

Efficient and Cost-Effective

Using a centralised energy source is often more efficient than individual boilers, which can help reduce overall energy use and keep bills lower.





Why Do Buildings Use Communal Heating?

Communal heating is increasingly common in modern apartment blocks, especially in cities. Here's why:

- **Efficiency:** one Energy Centre can be more efficient than hundreds of smaller, individual boilers.
- **Lower Carbon Footprint:** when combined with renewable sources like heat pumps, it reduces environmental impact and works towards our Net Zero goals.
- **Space-Saving:** no need for gas boilers in each apartment.
- **Future-Proofing:** aligns with government regulations for energy-efficient buildings and is a lot safer.

Did you know?

Many communal heating systems are designed to meet stringent efficiency standards, offering long-term cost savings for residents.

How Your Heating & Hot Water Works

Instead of generating heat in your own home, you receive it via hot water circulating through the building's pipework. Your HIU (Heat Interface Unit) regulates the heat entering your home, allowing you to control your radiators and hot water supply as you would with a traditional system.

Think of it like this: Instead of paying separately for gas and electricity, you're billed just for the heat you use - much like how you're charged for water or electricity.

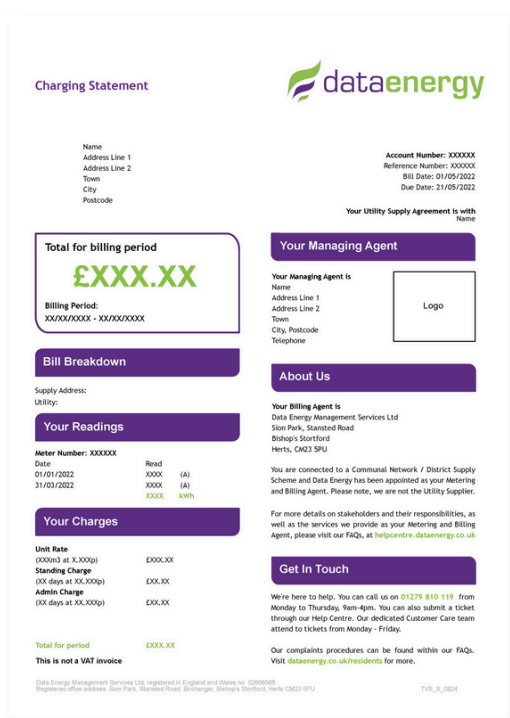
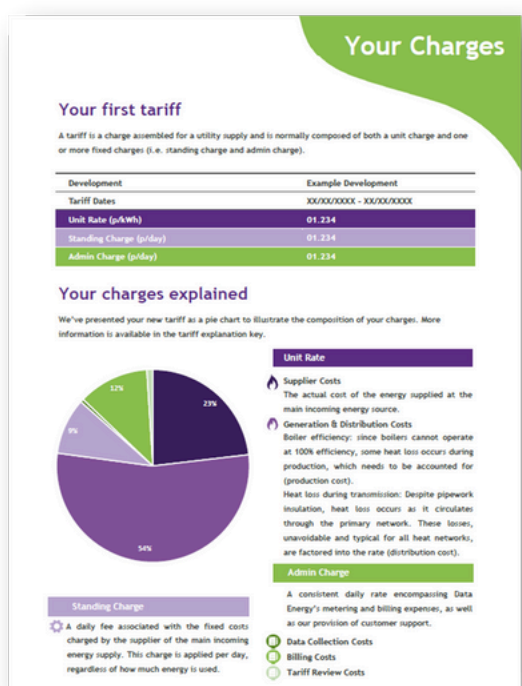
Understanding Your Bill: What You're Paying For

One of the biggest questions new residents ask is "Why is my heat bill structured differently?".

Unlike typical utility bills, communal heating (and cooling) charges are usually split into:

- **Energy Usage** - The heat and hot water you actually consume (measured via your heat meter).
- **Standing Charge** - Covers the maintenance, operation, and upkeep of the communal system.
- **Additional Charges** - Some buildings have an energy management provider handling efficiency and metering.

This setup ensures you only pay for the heat you use while contributing to the shared maintenance of the system.



Charging Statement

Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Town
City
Postcode

Account Number: XXXXXX
Reference Number: XXXXXX
Bill Date: 01/05/2022
Due Date: 21/05/2022

Your Utility Supply Agreement is with
Name

Total for billing period
£XXX.XX

Billing Period:
XX/XX/XXXX - XX/XX/XXXX

Your Managing Agent

Your Managing Agent is
Name
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Town
City, Postcode
Telephone

Logo

Bill Breakdown

Supply Address:
Utility:

Your Readings

Meter Number: XXXXXX
Date: 01/01/2022
Read: XXXX (A)
31/03/2022 XXXX (A)
XXXX kWh

Your Charges

Unit Rate	
(XXXX at X.XXXp)	XXXX.XX
Standing Charge	XXXX.XX
(XX days at XX.XXXp)	XXXX.XX
Admin Charge	XXXX.XX
(XX days at XX.XXXp)	XXXX.XX

Total for period: XXXX.XX
This is not a VAT invoice

Data Energy Management Services Ltd, registered in England and Wales no. 02089598
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About Us

Your Billing Agent is
Data Energy Management Services Ltd
Stan Park, Stansted Road
Bishops Cleeve
Herts, SG2 0PU

You are connected to a Communal Network / District Supply Scheme and Data Energy has been appointed as your Metering and Billing Agent. Please note, we are not the Utility Supplier.

For more details on stakeholders and their responsibilities, as well as the services we provide as your Metering and Billing Agent, please visit our FAQs at helpcentre.dataenergy.co.uk

Get In Touch

We're here to help. You can call us on 01279 810 119 from Monday to Thursday, 9am-4pm. You can also submit a ticket through our Help Centre. Our dedicated Customer Care team attend to tickets from Monday - Friday.

Our complaints procedures can be found within our FAQs. Visit dataenergy.co.uk/residents for more.

Example Bill

Data Energy is a metering and billing agent. Metering and Billing agents are specifically appointed by your building owner or heat utility supplier to raise and issue bills for the energy and/or water you use. The utilities billed depend on what is supplied by your Communal Network. The Metering and Billing agent typically:

- Raises and issues periodic bills
- Collects metering data (if available)
- Processes payments (if applicable)
- Provides customer support
- Processes change of tenancies
- Administers payment plans
- Hosts a customer and client portal
- Provides monthly reports to Building Owners/Managing Agents

Why is my HIU not providing hot water or heating?

- Check if the system has power.
- Ensure your thermostat is set correctly.
- Check if the HIU has a fault code on the display.
- If there is no heat supply from the central system, contact your energy provider or building management.

Why is my HIU making noise?

A humming or whistling noise can be caused by trapped air, high water pressure, or a faulty component. Bleeding the radiators or contacting maintenance may help.

Why is my heating on when the thermostat is off?

Check your settings and try resetting the system if needed.

Why is my hot water pressure low?

Low water pressure could be due to a partially closed valve, debris in the filter, or a wider system issue. Contact your building's maintenance team if it persists.

Why is my bill different from my last home?

Unlike gas bills with standing charges for supply and delivery, communal heating bills include system maintenance and operational costs.

How can I save energy?



Turn It Down, Save More

Lowering your thermostat by just 1°C could save you around £90-£100 a year.



Heat Where You Need It

Use heating controls to set cooler temperatures in rooms you don't use often. Keep your living room between 18°C and 21°C for efficient warmth.



Tweak Your Tech

Reduce your HIU's flow temperature to around 55-60°C, if your system allows it. Switch to water-saving shower heads for greater energy and water savings.



You're in Safe Hands

We work behind the scenes to ensure your communal heating runs smoothly, efficiently, and sustainably. But great service isn't just about the systems - it's about people, too.

We're committed to making your experience simple and supportive:

- Clear, transparent energy bills
- Friendly experts just a call or click away
- Fast, helpful responses when you need them

Here's what one resident had to say:



I had an excellent experience with Sara from Customer Care.

She was incredibly helpful and persistent in resolving my account issue. Sara guided me through every step with patience and professionalism, ensuring the problem was fully resolved. Her dedication and friendly attitude made the entire process smooth and stress-free. Thank you, Sara!

Eray Cil, Trustpilot Reviewer



Want to find out more?

Visit [Data Energy](#) or [DMG Delta](#).

