

Warmer Homes for Devon Tenants Frequently Asked Questions

What is Warmer Homes for Devon Tenants (WHDT)?

Warmer Homes for Devon Tenants (WHDT) is a fully funded programme helping private tenants and landlords across Devon to improve the comfort, condition and energy performance of privately rented homes. The programme offers advice, home visits, referrals and guidance on improving homes affected by issues such as damp, mould and high energy costs.

Who can use the service?

The programme is aimed at:

- Private tenants
- Private landlords
- Letting agents

The service focuses on privately rented homes across Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay.

Does it cost anything?

No. All advice provided through the programme is fully funded through the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme.

Can you help me find funding for improvements?

We can help identify grants and funding opportunities that may be available. Eligibility will depend on the property, tenant circumstances and funding programmes available at the time.

Which areas does the programme cover?

The programme supports privately rented homes across Devon, including:

- North Devon
- Torridge
- Mid Devon

- East Devon
- Exeter
- Teignbridge
- South Hams
- West Devon
- Plymouth
- Torbay

What happens after I get in touch?

Typically, you will:

1. Speak with an advisor about your situation.
2. Receive tailored advice and guidance.
3. Be offered a home visit where appropriate.
4. Be signposted to additional support, grants or services if available.
5. Receive follow-up support where needed.

Why are healthier, more energy-efficient homes important?

Cold, damp and poorly ventilated homes can affect health, wellbeing and household finances. Improvements can help:

- Lower energy bills
- Improve comfort
- Reduce condensation and damp
- Improve indoor air quality
- Create healthier living conditions
- Reduce reliance on fossil-fuel heating
- Help ensure homes are fit for the future

Tenants

I am a tenant. Can I contact you directly?

Yes. Tenants can contact us directly for advice about energy bills, damp and mould, keeping warm, improving comfort and understanding available support.

Can you help me reduce my energy bills?

We can provide practical advice on energy use, managing heating effectively, reducing waste and accessing available support schemes.

Can you help with damp and mould?

We can offer advice, home visits where appropriate, and guidance on identifying possible causes and practical solutions.

My home has damp and mould. Is my landlord responsible for fixing it?

Landlords are generally responsible for dealing with underlying property issues that contribute to damp and mould, such as leaks, structural defects or inadequate building systems. Tenants should report issues as soon as possible and keep records of communications. Recent housing reforms are strengthening expectations around addressing serious hazards in rented homes.

Can I ask my landlord to improve the energy efficiency of my home?

You can discuss improvements such as insulation, ventilation, heating upgrades, draught-proofing and energy-saving measures with your landlord.

Do I need my landlord's permission to contact WHDT?

No. Tenants can access advice and support directly. However, any physical improvements to a property would normally require the landlord's involvement.

Will you tell my landlord if I contact you?

We will only share information where appropriate and with your knowledge. Our aim is to help tenants and landlords work together to improve homes.

Can I be evicted for raising concerns about housing conditions?

Recent rental reforms are intended to provide tenants with greater security and stronger protections when raising legitimate concerns about the condition of their homes.

Landlords

How can WHDT help you?

We can provide:

- Property-specific advice
- Information on improving energy efficiency
- Advice to improve tenant comfort and wellbeing
- Information on funding opportunities where available
- Advice on making homes fit for the future

Can you help improve my property's EPC rating?

We can provide property-specific advice on measures that may improve energy performance, comfort and efficiency.

Not all improvements will have the same impact on EPC ratings, and some may provide greater benefits than others. We can help landlords understand which measures are likely to offer the best return on investment, support compliance with future standards and contribute to warmer, healthier homes.

Will every energy improvement increase my EPC rating?

Not necessarily.

Some improvements can make a property more comfortable, healthier and cheaper to run without significantly improving its EPC rating. For example, certain ventilation measures may help tackle condensation and mould, while some heating system upgrades or repairs may not always deliver a substantial EPC improvement on their own.

Because investment budgets are often limited, it is important to understand which measures are likely to have the greatest impact on both property performance and EPC rating before committing to major works. WHDT can help landlords identify the most effective improvements for their specific property and avoid spending money on measures that may deliver limited benefits.

Are there exemptions from future EPC requirements?

Potentially. Landlords may be able to register an exemption where it is not technically feasible, practical or cost-effective to achieve the required standard. The Government has confirmed a proposed £10,000 cost cap for the future EPC C standard, after which a landlord may be eligible for an exemption if the property still cannot meet the target. Eligible improvement works carried out from 1 October 2025 can count towards this cap. Landlords should retain invoices, certificates and records of all qualifying works and check the latest government guidance before relying on an exemption.

Should I aim for an EPC rating or focus on the right improvements?

The most effective approach is usually to focus on the improvements that will deliver the greatest benefit for the property rather than pursuing individual measures in isolation.

Not every upgrade will significantly improve an EPC score. Some measures may primarily improve comfort, ventilation, indoor air quality or reduce damp and mould risks. Others may have a much greater impact on energy performance and EPC ratings.

A property-specific, whole-house approach can help landlords prioritise improvements, make the best use of available budgets and avoid spending money on measures that deliver limited benefits. WHDT can help landlords understand which improvements are likely to provide the greatest impact for their particular property

Will I be expected to deal with damp and mould more quickly?

Housing reforms are moving towards clearer requirements for investigating and addressing serious hazards, including damp and mould. Landlords should have clear procedures for responding promptly to tenant concerns.

What is the Decent Homes Standard?

The Decent Homes Standard sets expectations that homes should be safe, warm, weatherproof and in a reasonable state of repair. Government reforms are extending these principles more widely across the private rented sector.

Will I have to improve the energy efficiency of their properties?

There is increasing focus on improving the energy performance of privately rented homes. Landlords are encouraged to consider measures such as insulation, efficient heating systems and ventilation improvements to create warmer, healthier and more affordable homes.

How can I future-proof my rental property?

Measures that can help include:

- Improving insulation
- Upgrading heating systems
- Improving ventilation
- Addressing damp and mould early
- Improving EPC performance
- Reducing reliance on fossil-fuel heating
- Planning for future housing standards

A whole-house approach is often the most effective. Rather than installing individual measures in isolation, landlords should consider how insulation, ventilation and heating systems work together. This can help ensure investment is targeted where it will deliver the greatest benefit for comfort, energy performance and property condition.

Why should I invest in healthier, more energy-efficient homes?

Improving housing conditions can:

- Reduce maintenance issues over time
- Improve tenant wellbeing
- Support tenant retention
- Lower energy costs for occupants
- Improve property performance
- Reduce reliance on fossil fuels
- Help ensure properties remain fit for the future

This benefits both landlords and tenants while supporting a higher-quality private rented sector.