

DISTRICT HEATING PARAMETER SETTING POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Stockport Homes manage 1,443 properties which receive heat from district heating using a service heat charge (SHC) payment method. The parameters at which these sites are set (times and temperature) have been in place since the buildings were originally designed.
- 1.2 The district heating sites described in this policy are: Lancashire Hill, Mottram Street, York Street and Hollywood Towers.
- 1.3 The parameters settings at each of the sites are designed to provide a water-flow temperature to deliver a 21°C room temperature with the boiler being active between 6am and 11pm.
- 1.4 It is widely accepted to be a difficult task to meet everyone's individual thermal preference at sites with a common temperature system. Stockport Homes' officers are guided by Public Health England guidelines for homes to be heated to at least 18°C.
- 1.5 Each year the Customer Feedback Team receives a number of enquires in relation to district heating and in particular when the heating comes on and goes off as well as some customers mentioning they are too hot or too cold.
- 1.6 To address the feedback received from customers as well as put actions into place to create a district heating policy staff consulted with customers across the district heating sites to examine if the current parameter settings were still appropriate for modern society. If it was deemed that heating times are extended this will require more energy and in turn likely there is an increase in cost.
- 1.7 In 2012 officers changed the way service heat charges were calculated at Lancashire Hill; moving away from the number of bedrooms to a methodology which is calculated from the actual footprint size of the property (M²). This proved a successful model and fairer in that the heat costs are calculated by a direct influence over the actual size of the property and subsequently this was implemented across the other schemes.
- 1.8 In 2016, the last time heating parameters were consulted on, the majority (marginal in some instances) for all the sites was for the heating to remain the same, turn on at 6am and turn off at 11pm

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Investment work has been planned for 2021/22 to change the properties the Lancashire Hill scheme which include The Bentleys, The Longson, Clarkethorne Terrace and Stonemill Terrace to Heat Interface Units (HIUs). These properties will no longer be using a service heat charge (SHC), as they will be separately metered and will be able to control the timings of their

heating within their property. As these works are imminent, we have decided not to include them in this consultation. The total properties included in the scope of the consultation are 1,142

- 2.2 A questionnaire was developed, see appendix 1.0, with input from the working group and customer involvement in 2016. This has remained the same for the consultation in 2021 to ensure consistency and accuracy. The questionnaire provided four options for customers to select from:
- Heating times to remain the same
 - Heating times to be adjusted seasonally
 - Heating times to be reduced
 - Heating times to be extended
- 2.3 Customers were not consulted on the temperature settings as this may conflict with the Public Health England guidelines and would return a wide range of options which would be impractical to implement.
- 2.4 Consultation was conducted remotely due to Covid restrictions. It was also decided to go 'paperless' in line with our environmental commitments. All SHG customers will have either received an email, text or phone call with a link to the survey (via Survey Monkey) and a number to call if they cannot complete the survey online.
- 2.5 The consultation was advertised in all blocks via the AV Screens as well as on SHG social media platforms
- 2.6 A webpage was created on the Stockport Homes Website for customers who required further information as well as featuring the link to the survey. www.stockporthomes.org/advice-and-support/heating-review/
- 2.7 Leaseholders as well as SHG customers where we did not have any contact details registered on our system were delivered a flyer to ensure they were aware of the consultation and had the information to respond
- 2.8 The survey was open for responses for 6 weeks

3 RESULTS

- 3.1 Table 1 shows the overall results for all of the sites surveyed. The response rate for all the sites range from 19% to 22%. This is above the threshold of 10% which is a company accepted target with guidance from the Customer Engagement Team.
- 3.2 The majority (marginal in some instances) for all the sites was for the heating to remain the same, turn on at 6am and turn off at 11pm.

Table 1:

2021	Response Rate	Keep the same	Adjust seasonally	Reduce run- hours	Increase run- hours	No selection
Lancashire Hill	19%	51%	28%	5%	15%	0%
Mottram St	19%	44%	37%	7%	12%	0%
York St	22%	56%	31%	6%	6%	2%
Hollywood Towers	22%	53%	41%	3%	0%	3%

- 3.3 Within the district heating sites, there are slight differences in opinion between blocks. This maybe for a multiple of reasons including the demographic, size and location of flat in the building, position of block in relation to sunrise and sunset. These variables will all impact a customer's opinion. Alterations for individual blocks cannot be considered as the current heating system does not allow us to adjust the settings for individual blocks, it must be done per site. An example of this is that 50 % of respondents in Mottram Towers stated that their preference would be for the heating to be adjusted seasonally. However, the majority opinion on the Mottram Street site was to keep it the same.
- 3.4 On the survey there was also the option to leave for customers to leave comments (See Appendix 2.0). There was a mixture of positive and negative feedback received. Where a repair issue is highlighted it has been followed up and reported.

4 KEY ASPECTS

- 4.1 The district heating sites affected by this policy will be Lancashire Hill, Mottram Street, York Street and Hollywood Towers.

The heating will be active from 06:00 until 23:00. During this period a constant flow temperature will be maintained to achieve a predicted room temperature of 21°C. Hot water (for taps and baths) will be available 24hours a day.

- 4.2 Table 2 defines the settings for the heating outside of the active period which is 23:00 hours until 06:00 hours.

Table 2:

Outside temperature	Boiler settings between 23:00hrs and 06:00hours
3°C and above	Heating off
At 3°C	Trickle flow to prevent pipes from freezing
Below 3°C	See point 4.3

- 4.3 Authority is given to the Head of Assets to be able to consult with the M&E Manager when the temperature falls below 3°C, and in times of extreme cold, it will be at their discretion be able to manually override the system.
- 4.4 All customers that have left comments that suggest potential repairs issues will be followed up and a repair raised where required

5 Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations (HNMBR)

- 5.1 The Heat Network Regulations (HNMBR) may impact this policy in the future. In 2014, BEIS published the HNMBR as part of the UK's response to the EU Energy Efficiency Directive (EED). The regulations aim to drive energy efficiency and transparency within heat networks to ensure that customers can monitor their energy usage and are provided with competitively priced energy.
- 5.2 The regulations require heat network operators to notify the Secretary of State about their heat networks every four years and, where necessary, to install heat metering devices on those networks.
- 5.3 The HNMBR Notification Tool was set up to establish which properties should be metered and which properties are deemed as not compatible. The overview being customers on a weekly heating charge open their windows to cool the property down which creates emissions as opposed to customers who are metered turn the system down to cool etc. We have a mixture of both.
- 5.4 New regulations brought in November 2020 require all unmetered networks to be assessed to find out if individual meters should be installed in every home or heat cost allocators. The assessment must be completed by 27th November 2021 with the installations being carried out by September 2022 if applicable.
- 5.5 Depending on the outcome of our study further properties on our district heating sites may be required to become metered over the coming years.

6 Review

6.1 This policy will be reviewed by April 2026 on a 5-year cycle.

Appendix 1.0: Heating Timings Survey

Heating Timings Survey

We are contacting you as you have a right to consultation as outlined in your tenancy agreement, and we would greatly appreciate your view so it can inform our service provision.

Stockport Homes would like your opinion on when the heating comes on and goes off in your block. The timings have been in place for over 15 years and we last consulted in 2016 in line with the policy to review it every 5 years. We want to know if the timings still work for people living in the block.

You can alter the heating in your flat through the thermostatic radiator valve (TRV). We can't change the temperature of the main heating system, as this is set to 21°C which follows the guidelines from the World Health Organisation, but we can change the timings if residents feel a change is needed.

We will let you know the results from this survey, and may use the results to change our policy on timings. If the majority of customers feel a change is needed, we will tell you before we make any changes.

The data will be deleted or pseudonymised (names removed from data that could ID the responses) once the analysis is complete and will not be shared with any other organisations

More information, including your individual rights, can be found in the Stockport Homes' Privacy Notice which is available here:
<https://www.stockporthomes.org/privacy-policy/>

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact me on
0161 474 4062

Yours sincerely

Daniel Johnson

Energy Solutions Advisor

2. At the moment, the heating comes on at 6am and goes off at 11pm. The temperature is kept at 21°C. Please select one of the options below by ticking the relevant box:

I would prefer the heating to remain the same.

The heating will stay as it is, coming on at 6am and going off at 11pm. The system will maintain the temperature at 21°C.

I would prefer the heating times to be reduced.

The total hours the heating is on will be reduced. The heating system will maintain the temperature at 21°C. For example, the heating could come on at 7am and go off at 10pm. If most people choose this option there will be further consultation with you to find out preferred timings.

I would prefer the heating to be on longer.

The total hours that your heating is on will be increased. This could mean you have to pay more in the future. The system will maintain the temperature at 21°C. For example, the heating could come on at 5am and go off at 12 midnight. If most people choose this option there will be further consultation with you to find out preferred timings.

I would prefer the heating to be different in Winter and Summer.

You will get more hours of heat during the winter months and fewer hours during the summer. When the heating is on, it will keep the temperature at 21°C. The timings will be changes around the clock changes for British Summer Time. i.e. Between October and March you will get more hours of heat. For April to September you will get reduced hours of heat

Appendix 2.0 – Comments from customers

Comments
Mottram Towers
Never feeling warm in winter, especially when the winds get up. I feel with have issues with the windows and the flat retaining the heat, as i have sit in a coat late at night. Lounge radiator does not warm up fully with cold patches
The pipes are just far too hot all of the time. My daughter burnt herself on the pipe a few weeks ago, and the radiator wasn't even on. Also the hot water is far too hot, I can't tell you how many times I've burnt myself whilst washing dishes, I checked the temperature of the water and it's coming onto 90 degrees c which is ridiculous
I get up at 6am and during the winter months it is freezing as the rooms take about an hour to warm up
Yes the cost for heating and hot water is way too much I'm a single person in a one bed flat paying £60 a month where my parents are in a 3 bed house with 4 people living there and they pay £50 a month so can someone explain why it costs so much
No problems with how the heating is now as can be turned of and by radiator they are very warm flats which is great for winter just the pipes stay hot constantly which isn't so great in summer but I think that's something that can't be changed
I think the heating goes off to early, think midnight, especially in the winter months would be better
Sometimes its cold and could do with it warmer
Sometimes in the winter it is colder around 5.00am and this wakes me up so consequently I have to have more blankets on the bed to compensate for this, as I am getting older I am tending to feel the cold more so I expect this probelm of feeling cold in the winter will increase. However due to climate emissions I am not totally sure about putting the heat on earlier and of course the added measure of paying more for it on a reduced income in older age,

<p>can there not be ways devised to ensure that older citizens in the flats wont be encumbered by the cold than just switching the heating on to an earlier time. Indeed in the past if the temperature went below certain degrees nationally the heating remained on during the night, so perhaps temperature matching re the environment is the way to go much more with less redress to charging people more for this service.</p>
<p>I don't go to bed till late & the heating goes off at 11 o'clock it's freezing in here then, Also my wife gets up for work at 6 on n the morning & it's freezing because it doesn't come on till 6 takes ages for the flat to warm up, it really could be doing with coming on at 5 in the morning & staying on later at night</p>
<p>I don't think the heating is hot enough through the winter months. Hard to get warm at night.</p>

Millbrook Towers
<p>What date will do you intend reducing the heating on? I would like to register my decline of that offer in advance please. Thank you in advance. Mr John Lock</p>
<p>it has been on for 24 hours for two weeks, pipes to hot. As i am high up and on the west side it seems the heating is on to much and it is to hot. Those on the other side may need it but i don't.</p>
<p>I do not sleep as much so would prefer it to be on abit longer untill midnight</p>
<p>Sometimes it seems to be on a lot longer and i get to hot during the night</p>
<p>Extend to Midnight. Seems to be issue with the TRVS, heating seems to go off at times when they should be on and it feels cold. I assume it was SHG overriding the system and switching it on and off</p>
<p>is too warm on the top floor and would like it off or reduced</p>
<p>The heating seems to be on at 3am when 99.9% of people are in bed so me personally i wake up because I'm too hot this is with my window open in the middle of winter</p>
<p>Yes it gets very cold in my flat</p>

Ratcliffe Towers
<p>I hardly use the heating unless very cold, I turn on and off I need to, all is is good regarding the heating. Thank you.</p>
<p>Fine with how it is. Never have radiators on as it is warm enough without</p>
<p>never have the radiators on. Has complained about the temperature of the water in the past - it is dangerous</p>
<p>Heat is unbearable in the summer. I would like the heating to be reduced</p>

Flats are very hot. I would like the heating to be reduced in order that our costs are reduced
Need it longer in winter and not so much in summer
Our flat gets too hot we are on 15th floor.
21 %c all year round . Prefer to have 22%c or 23%c in winter months we are a cold country.
Needs to be left on longer in winter months my radiator is full of silt so only half of it gets hot I've had someone out a while back he said the room temperature was ok but he doesn't live here when the cold wind is blowing
The heating doesn't need to be on at all throughout summer it is so hot during summer
Working shifts, early morning can sometimes be a tad chilly, especially in winter, but a quick boil of the kettle and a shave and we are sorted.
Please could you let us know the timings of the heating on during winter period and same on the summer time.
You could just turn it off in the really hot months of summer, I remember the heating being on when it is roasting outside its ridiculous
hot box in summer

Bosden Close & Chesworth Close

If we cut it down in summer, perhaps in winter it can be on longer
The heating is often off when it should be on. I should not pay for times when the heating fails. I have been left without heating too many times this winter. You should make provision for old and vulnerable people when you fail to provide heating
Yes they took 57 pound direct debit come out I want payment scheme so pay post office
Turn it up
Hardly have it on. Bottom pipes keep flat warm enough
All fine for me. I turn it off a lot and do not have it on much in summer
Heating should be more on at night time during the winter
I was not aware you turn off my heating during the night, this was never said to me when we got the property, I am not happy with this as I have a baby that wakes in the night and the house is always freezing.

Durham House

I never knew we had timings!
My heating is dependant on how many other people have got their radiators on. As I'm at the end of the pump thing when the weather is really cold, and everyone has got their heating on mine doesn't come on

<p>very warm at all which seems unfair as I pay the same as everyone else but I end up having to use an electric heater aswell just to stay warm.</p>
<p>The flat has exposed pipes and the flat gets extremely hot in the summer due to the airing cupboard pipes heating the Emersion heater being constantly on.</p>
<p>Too hot in the summer . Far to cold in the winter . Only two radiators in my flat give out a nice amount of heat. The rest off the rooms the radiator dosnt work or they are weak</p>
<p>I wake up at 5 am and am very cold so would love the heating to come on just before then</p>

Pembroke House
<p>I'd prefer we could have a new system. The fact they choose when we can have it on is ridiculous and out dated</p>
<p>I can't turn any radiator down apart from one in one bedroom...my boys bedroom radiator is always on at full blast</p>

Radnor House
<p>never have my radiators on as pipes around the property keep it warm</p>
<p>No. Thank you for your good care!</p>

Palatine House
<p>Would like heating to be on further into the night. When i stay up late i get cold</p>
<p>I have had issues with the bedroom radiator going off early 7/8pm and the room still being cold. This affects my health, this does not happen in the lounge. He has brought this up in the past</p>
<p>Heating comes on at 5 and off at 12 here. Husband complained last year that in summer the heating does not come on and we are paying for it throughout the year</p>

Bowdon House
<p>It is fine. If anything, it gets too hot, but we turn the TRVs off</p>
<p>Issue with radiator in front room, seems to be cold at the bottom</p>
<p>I would like heating to be on till 2am, as it gets cold when it goes off and i am usually still awake</p>
<p>Reasonably happy except it is very very noisy living on floor 7 thanks</p>

Hollywood Towers
<p>Could you make available the reasons why we can't control the heating times ourselves Please. I would like some heating at 4 or 5 am when the temperature drops and I'm not active. During the day we can often generate our own body heat so don't need the heating all day every day. Yet with that in mind. Later on in the year, we need the heating regardless. As the weather changes with no particular pattern, it would be easier for us to have total control. Thanks</p>
<p>Yes, usually we keep the thermostat off in bedrooms as we spend most time in living. I noticed sometime there is no heating sometime but got knowledge of timings through this survey. Would turning on only required area heating has any impacts. I am not asking any reduction in bills but energy savings like we do same for water</p>
<p>Customer refused to choose an option as she says the TRV's don't work as they should, the flat is cold, problem with the balcony door letting a draught through, basically unhappy with the whole heating system, refused to have the data loggers, believes we are blinkered and nothing will get sorted.</p>
<p>2 of his radiators do not work anyway. Find that is hot enough so have not reported it to repairs</p>
<p>Sometimes if need to get up in the middle of the night it is a little bit cold</p>
<p>Would like discount in summer when it is not on as much.</p>
<p>If its not broke don't fix it</p>
<p>The heaters in my flat don't heat enough</p>
<p>The flat all time is cold I can't stay comfortable at home always need blanket and still cold</p>

Montague House
<p>Repair issue with living room radiator not getting hot</p>
<p>repair issues. Bathroom radiator only gets warm when hot water is running. Bedroom radiator only gets lukewarm, so she has to sleep in the living room. It has been looked into before but not resolved.</p>
<p>It would be good to have thermostatic rad valves on all the radiators or possibly a thermostatic valve on each floor with a thermostat in the landing/hall</p>
<p>The heating needs to be checked and all the radiators as the radiators need bleeding and the pressure needs checking i have told stockport homes countless times and nobody seems to listen</p>

Lincoln Towers
Repair issues (reported) valves do not seem to be working to turn it down or off
My heating is old and think it needs replaced or repair it not working properly?
Very warm
I don't have my heating on. It keeps warm anyway
I barely use the heating, find it very warm anyway
I find it feels cold in the middle of the day if sun is hitting the thermostats and heating will go off thinking it is up to 21c
Issues for repairs. Front room radiator valve broken, have to turn heating off via the wheel on the pipes, Bathroom radiator only works in winter when i run the hot water
the radiators need bleeding
Please leave heating as it is

Hanover Towers
Perhaps start the heating 1 hour later and extend it to midnight
He has noticed the hot water is not as hot since work was done a couple of weeks ago
I would like it to be on 1 or 2 hours longer. But if it wasn't changed i would be fussed either way
It will be nice if the heater can be on longer during winter

