

10 “BETTER HEATING” TIPS FOR PROPERTY CONVENERS

1. The most important tip of all: make sure you have a frost protection system functioning to protect ‘wet’ systems from freezing in cold weather. The cost is low compared to costs of damage due to burst pipes.
2. Install thermostatic controls to prevent overheating if you don’t already have them.
3. Install suitable timeswitch controls with separate time channels for each heating circuit. 7 day time controls which allow up to 3 ‘on’ and 3 ‘off’ periods each day are generally best.
4. ‘Tamperproof’ thermostats are good and thermostats which allow dual temperature setting for sedentary and active groups are even better.
5. Try to restrict access to plant rooms and heating time controls.
6. Thoroughly ventilate the church at the end of Sunday services to allow moisture-laden warm air out rather than lock it in for a week.
7. Investigate centrally negotiated utility tariffs with the General Trustees.
8. Try to avoid use of electricity as the main means of heating your buildings, especially if your usage is high. Consider ‘renewable’ options such as heat pumps and solar water heating, especially in new build projects.
9. Instruct an energy survey under the Better Heating Scheme if your properties have not recently been surveyed, especially if you feel there may be scope for savings. Details overleaf.
10. Take comfort from the fact that it is not possible to heat a church to the satisfaction of an entire congregation. Some people will always be too hot while others are too cold. All you can do is strike the best possible balance.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BETTER HEATING SCHEME

The General Trustees have now been running 'The Better Heating Scheme' for almost 30 years and a large number of congregations throughout Scotland have taken advantage of the grant-aided energy consultancy services it provides. The scheme involves an 'Energy Survey' of the church buildings and aims to offer independent impartial advice to congregations on how best to provide adequate heating while minimising energy usage. Assistance is available to congregations who have never had a survey carried out before and to those who wish to have a 'Repeat Survey' carried out. Advice on non-heating related aspects of energy usage is also given together with suggestions for improving energy management techniques where appropriate. A detailed survey report with specific recommendations is provided, normally within two weeks of the survey.

If you feel that your congregation might benefit from the Scheme, please contact Emily Walker at The Church of Scotland General Trustees, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YR, or email EWalker@churchofscotland.org.uk for an information pack including application forms and schedule of fees.