



The 2026 Energy Squeeze

REPORT



MyBuilder

Introduction

As the cost-of-living crisis continues, more Britons than ever are struggling to find a way to make ends meet. As the temperature drops, the pressure is on to keep homes warm without breaking the bank, as energy costs rise to a four-year high.

**35%**

say they are uncomfortably cold at home in winter

The UK is suffering from a legacy of “leaky homes” - badly insulated properties that are inadequately prepared to keep heat in. The problem is significant; our research showed that **more than a third (35%) of us feel uncomfortably cold in our homes in winter.**

The Energy Squeeze report from MyBuilder looks in detail at how Britons are feeling about running their homes this winter, the behavioural changes rising costs are causing, and the solutions that are being blocked due to lack of knowledge - and funds.

Based on a survey of 2,000 people, the report offers a startling glimpse into the impact of increased energy prices and the pressure of staying warm this winter. The statistics show how households are struggling to cope with spiralling costs, the sacrifices they are making to cope, and the barriers to home upgrades that could make a difference.



Bracing for an expensive winter

The cost of living crisis continues to simmer across the UK, and now energy prices are touted to rise to the highest in four years. To an already stretched nation, this energy squeeze is significantly contributing to financial pressures, leading to intensifying strain on British households. **Close to half of Britons (46%) feel that their bills are totally out of their control.**

The report shows that **50% of respondents admit to worrying about money** and finances more than ever before - with **51% specifically concerned about the running cost of their homes.**

Respondents aged 35-54 appeared the most concerned over their finances, **with 62% admitting to worrying more about money than ever before.** Those in the 18-34 age category were only slightly less concerned, at 58%. This was still elevated compared to the over 55s, where 40% said they were worried.

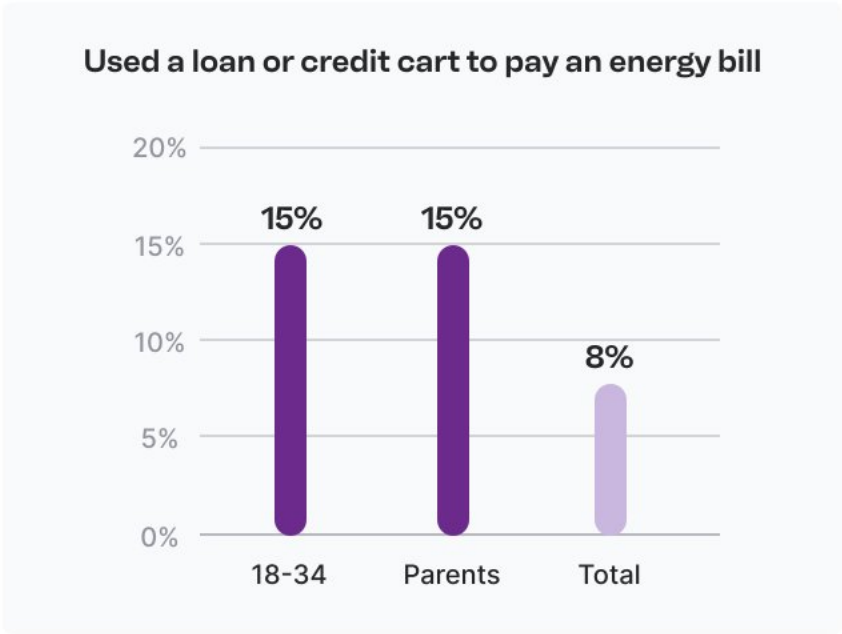
Worried about cost of running their home



The impact has become so severe that **38% of Britons are dreading opening their energy bills** - and **35% are worried about how they will afford to heat their homes** this winter. The psychological impact doesn't end there - **one in ten of respondents say that energy costs are causing arguments in their households.**



Already, **8% of respondents have turned to credit or borrowed from family or friends to pay an energy bill** - a figure that is only likely to rise as the costs increase as the nights draw in and the temperature drops. This concerning figure **rises to 15% among the 18-34 age category**. Equally, 15% of parents also reported using a loan or credit card to pay for their energy bills.



Behavioural change: Cutting corners to cut costs

These rising concerns are leading to behavioural change across the nation - **with more than three quarters (76%) admitting to watching how much electricity they are using** - while **two-thirds (66%) are monitoring their gas usage** for heating and cooking.

This caution is motivating millions of Britons to change their habits to conserve their energy supplies. **Nearly a fifth (18%) stated that they are taking shorter showers**, while **more than a third (41%) admit that they plan to only heat the room they are in** over winter, as opposed to their whole homes. Over **a tenth (12%) feel so concerned that they have even considered selling their homes** to live in something smaller and cheaper to run.

While some of these changes are merely inconvenient, others may represent a more serious problem. Concerningly, the research showed that millions of Britons are choosing to skip home maintenance to accommodate the impending higher energy costs.

Close to a fifth (16%) of respondents said they had cut back on essential home maintenance due to rising energy costs, while **9% admit they will delay their annual boiler checks**.

This strategy has the potential to cause serious damage to British homes across the country, and in some cases may pose a significant danger. Skipping a boiler service can lead to less effective heating, or even dangerous fumes coming into our homes.

4 ways homeowners are cutting corners

**41%**

Planning to heat only the room they're in

**18%**

Taking shorter showers

**16%**

Cutting back on essential home maintenance

**9%**

Delaying annual boiler service

The eco ask: Homeowners' appetite for sustainable change

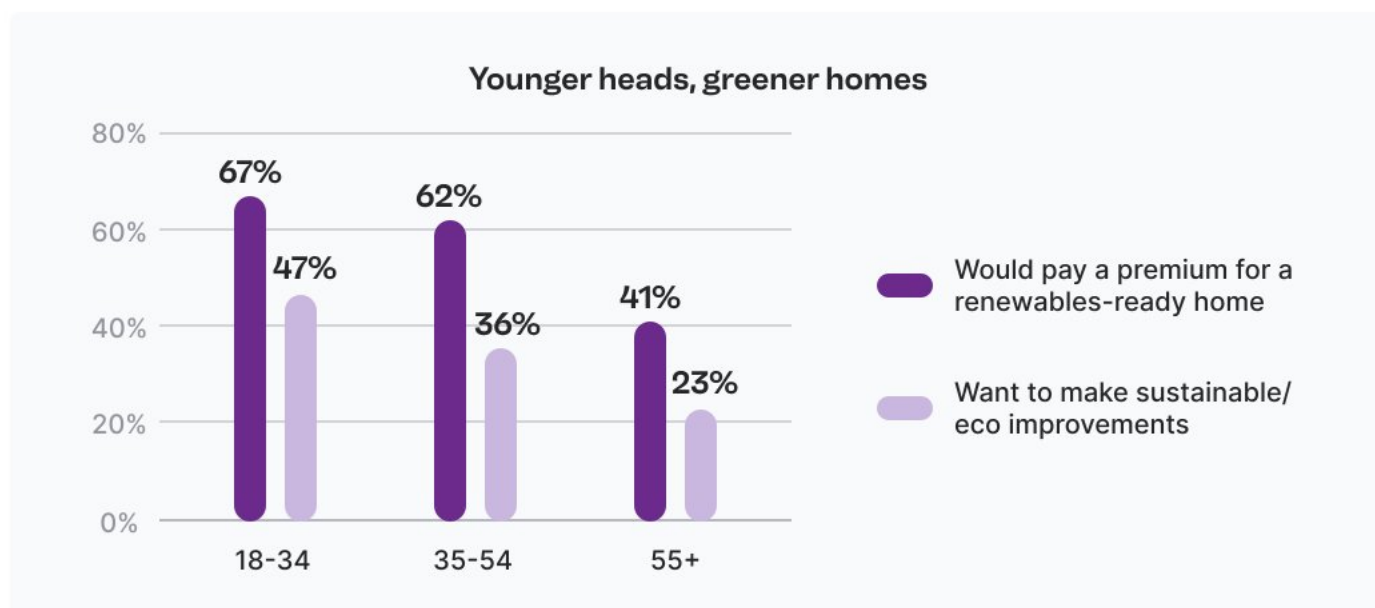
As millions of Britons contemplate the continuing pressures of hiked energy costs, the subject of installing more sustainable solutions is front and centre.

The research showed that the majority of Britons have the desire to make greener upgrades to their homes. In fact, **53% of respondents said that they would like to make sustainable and environmentally friendly improvements** to their property. Those **respondents aged 18-34 appeared particularly keen to make upgrades, with 67% stating that they would like to make improvements** - suggesting that demand for sustainable upgrades is likely to grow in the coming years.

Both **London residents and parents of children under-18 were also more eager than average to make sustainable changes, at 62% and 68% respectively.**

Sustainability is also becoming a huge draw when buyers come to the property market, **with 34% stating that they would happily pay a premium for a home that already has renewable energy sources.**

The appetite for change comes partially from a rising pressure to make environmentally-friendly choices, but also from the fact that British housing stock is in many cases dated and not effective at keeping homes warm. The "leaky home" legacy in the UK means that the majority of older British homes are badly insulated and extremely inefficient at keeping warm through colder weather.



Warm, but not worried: the path to affordable heating

Soaring energy costs has got the nation thinking about sustainable solutions which will make a meaningful difference to their bills - but the statistics show that most feel out of control and don't have the knowledge they need to make the upgrades.

Almost half (45%) of those surveyed admitted that their motivation for sustainable upgrades was primarily financial rather than environmental - but the cost of installation was holding them back.

The statistics showed that **more than half (56%) of respondents were confused about what grants and subsidies were available to install sustainable upgrades.**

And **two in five (41%) said they did not know which upgrades would lower energy bills the most.**

Despite this, there is a definite appetite to make changes. The report showed that 16% are now considering installing solar panels, and 7% plan to install a home electric vehicle (EV) charger. **This is supported by demand on the MyBuilder platform: requests for EV charger installation has gone up by a substantial 88%, while solar panel installation enquiries are up 35%.**

Intent is turning into action

EV charger installation +88%

Job requests on MyBuilder, year on year

Solar panel installation +35%

Enquiries on MyBuilder, year on year



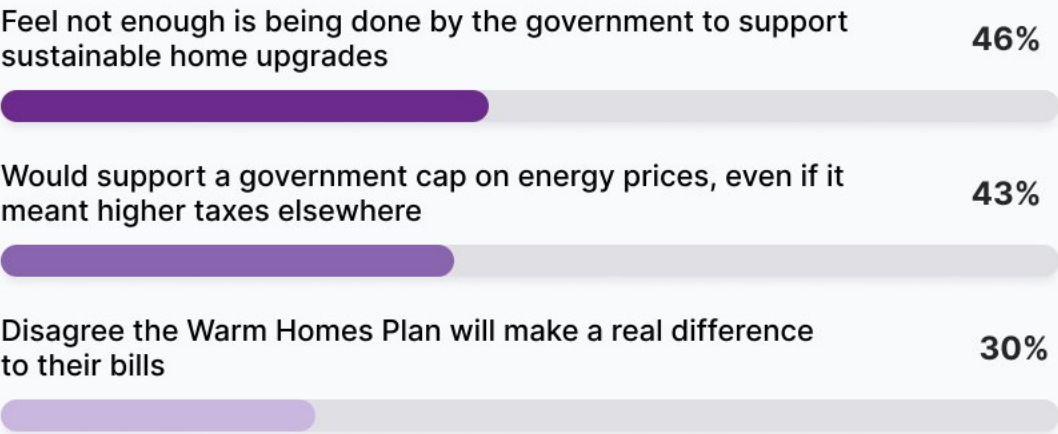
It’s potentially a good time for a sustainability push – because **while 51% of Britons are more worried about the running cost of their home than ever before, 64% stated that they were more willing to renovate their homes than move to another.**

Those aged between 35 and 54 appeared especially worried about running their home, at 61%. On a similar scale, both renters and parents of children under 18 were worried about home running costs, at 61% and 63% respectively.

There are many meaningful sustainable updates that can be made in our homes, However, the report shows that currently, **46% of homeowners feel that the government is not providing enough financial support to those who want to make their property more environmentally sustainable and energy efficient. A fifth (18%) stated that they had delayed a home improvement project that would reduce their energy bills, because of the upfront cost.**

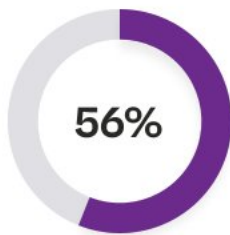
Nearly half (43%) of homeowners said they would support a government price cap on energy costs – even if that meant paying higher taxes generally. Just 21% felt that the Warm Homes Plan would make any real difference to their energy bills.

Homeowners want action, but doubt the plan on the table

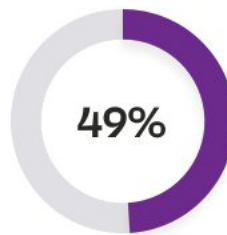


Base: UK homeowners, n=1,380. Angi Research 2026 (Opinium).

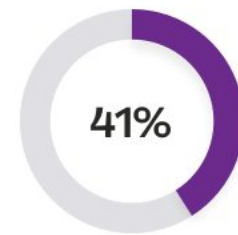
Improved support and better education will be key to removing barriers to meaningful change. Currently, there is a clear lack of understanding around subsidies and funding, but also what upgrades can actually offer. **Half (49%) of respondents did not know a heat pump can cool as well as heat**, highlighting the knowledge gaps that are a barrier to change.



of homeowners are confused about what grants and subsidies are available



didn't realise a heat pump can cool a home as well as heat it



don't know which home upgrades would cut their energy bills



Methodology

Survey data cited in this report is drawn from independent research conducted by Opinium on behalf of MyBuilder, among a nationally representative sample of 2,000 UK adults aged 18 and over, fielded between 3 and 8 September 2026. Of this sample, 1,380 respondents were homeowners; where a stat in this report is described as being about homeowners, it's based on this subset rather than the full sample.

Platform data referenced throughout, including EV charger installation and solar panel installation request volumes, is drawn from MyBuilder's own job request data.