**ENERGY**

Recent research shows 42% of homes here are in fuel poverty, the highest compared to GB and ROI. This is largely the result of increasing energy prices; for example between 2009 and 2012, the average price of home heating oil increased by around 90 per cent. Here are some easy ways to reduce your energy bills.

1. **Switching your supplier to reduce your electricity and gas bills**

All electricity consumers across Northern Ireland and gas users in Greater Belfast and Larne are able to switch supplier. Switching your energy supplier may save you money and you may receive a better service. The Consumer Council’s has compared and collated the best tariffs available for gas and electricity users in its Gas and Electricity Price Comparison Tables, visit: [www.consumercouncil.org.uk/energy](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/energy)

1. **Improving the energy efficiency of your home**
2. Turning down your thermostat by 1o can save around £45 a year;
3. Insulating your hot water tank can save around £40 a year; and
4. Turning appliances off at the wall socket when not in use and avoiding standby saves around £35 a year.

For more information on energy efficiency measures and the grants available contact Bryson Energy Advice Line on 0800 1422 865 or email: advice@brysonenergy.org .

1. **Shopping around for home heating oil**

Use the following checklist to get the best deal before you fill up with oil:

* Always shop around and compare prices before you order;
* Use the Consumer Council online oil price checker to find out the cheapest oil prices in your area: [www.consumercouncil.org.uk/oil-price-watch/](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/oil-price-watch/)
* Ask what payment methods are available; and
* Many local Councils offer an oil stamp savings scheme, which can help you save money towards your oil bill.

**Cheapest and Dearest Oil Prices (CCNI Oil Survey 8 January 2013)**

