



# A guide to Boiler Replacement & Upgrades to Central Heating

What you need to know...



## Improving the energy efficiency of your home

Ashford Borough Council is committed to improving the energy efficiency of its homes. As part of this, we upgrade heating systems using modern, energy efficient solutions such as condensing boilers or energy-compliant storage heaters, where appropriate.

Our heating maintenance programme is designed to make your home more efficient, ensure suitable insulation levels, and help keep your energy bills as low as possible.

These improvements also help reduce carbon emissions, supporting a cleaner environment and lowering your home's impact on climate change.

## What happens and when?

### Before the works:

We will arrange a visit from our heating surveyor and the contractor's surveyor. During this appointment, they will talk through the details in this leaflet and agree the most suitable equipment with you, where appropriate.

### Removing old equipment

Any old or unused heaters, fires, back boilers or other redundant equipment will be removed by the contractor. Where removal causes damage, the affected areas will be left smooth and sealed, ready for you to decorate.

If a hearth is removed, you may need to provide your own flooring for the exposed area. Ashford Borough Council and its contractors are not responsible for replacing carpets or carrying out final decorations.

### Radiators

Where possible, your existing radiators will be reused. These will be fitted with new thermostatic radiator valves and lockshield valves.

If any habitable rooms do not currently have heating, new radiators will be installed in locations agreed with you. Wherever possible, radiators will be positioned beneath windows.

## Cupboards

If a new cupboard is required to house a boiler or hot water cylinder, this will be discussed and agreed with you in advance. Where needed, new airing cupboard shelves will be fitted as part of the works.

## Wall-mounted boilers

Our heating surveyor will discuss and agree the position of the boiler with you. However, the final location is often determined by the layout and construction of the room.

Ashford Borough Council only installs highly energy efficient boilers designed to keep running costs as low as possible. On colder days, you may notice a plume of steam from the flue while the boiler is operating. This is completely normal and part of how the boiler works.

## Existing back boilers

If an existing back boiler and gas fire are removed, a new gas fire cannot be fitted.

You will be able to choose from the following options:

- The existing fire surround can be left in place, with the opening boarded over and vented.
- The fire surround can be removed, the opening blocked and vented, and the area plastered. New skirting boards will be fitted, but you will be responsible for carpeting the affected area.
- The fire surround can be removed as above, and a replacement fire surround with an integrated electric fire can be fitted over the affected area.

## Pipework

Where possible, existing pipework will be reused. In some cases, new pipework may need to be installed vertically on walls, usually in a corner or next to a window.

Existing ducting will not be replaced. Any new pipework installed at low level will not be painted or boxed in.

## Controls and wiring

The programmer and room thermostat may need to be moved. Their new locations will be agreed with you in advance, and any disruption to decorations will be kept to a minimum.

Any wiring that would otherwise be visible will be neatly concealed using surface-mounted mini-trunking.

## Customer specification form

Before work starts, the surveyor will ask you to sign a form confirming the agreed work. This will include what will and will not be made good, based on what has been discussed with you.

You will be provided with a copy of this form within seven days.



## During the works

### Notice

After the survey of your home has been completed, the contractor will contact you to agree a convenient date and time for the work to begin.

### Identity cards

All contractors and Ashford Borough Council representatives carry identification cards showing their photograph, name and employer's contact details.

You should not allow anyone into your home if they cannot show valid identification. If you are unsure or concerned, please contact Housing Services on 01233 330688 or the Police immediately.

### The first day of work

Contractors work between 8.00am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. On the first day, the contractor's team will provide you with an information pack, which includes a 24 hour emergency contact number.



You should use this number to report any heating emergency or problem for up to 12 months after the installation. If your heating system breaks down and cannot be repaired straight away, the contractor will provide an electric heater until it is working again.

On the first day, the contractor's engineers will also recheck that all information for your property is correct. If you request any changes to the agreed work, you will be asked to sign a form confirming these changes.

## Removal of building rubbish and debris

We will take care to keep disruption to a minimum while work is carried out. Where needed, dust sheets will be used, and all rubbish will be cleared away each day. Your home, garden and any paths will be left clean and tidy at the end of each working day.

Engineers are not permitted to use portable radios while working in your home.

## Electricity supply

If required, the contractor will ask for your permission to use your electricity supply. You may refuse, but this could result in delays to the work being completed.

## Moving furniture, carpets, etc.

The contractor will be responsible for moving and protecting furniture and fittings as necessary, and for lifting and relaying floor coverings where required.

You may be asked to sign a disclaimer for floor coverings that could be damaged during removal, or you may choose to make your own arrangements for items to be moved in advance. You are responsible for keeping valuables and fragile items, such as glassware, safe during the work.

Please note that laminate or modular flooring will not be lifted or re laid by the contractor.

All plasterwork and woodwork disturbed during the works will be made good by the contractor. However, wallpaper and carpeting around the hearth area will not be replaced.

If you have any concerns, please contact our heating surveyor.

## **After the works have finished**

### **Customer satisfaction survey**

Once the installation has been completed, our heating surveyor and the contractor's supervisor will visit your home to check that the work has been carried out in line with the agreed specification. They will also confirm that your requirements have been met where possible.

At the end of the installation, the supervisor will ask you to sign a checklist to confirm that you are satisfied with the work.

The contractor is expected to get things right first time and:

- provide good management and skilled workers to ensure the work runs smoothly
- work safely at all times
- only receive payment once all work has been completed to our satisfaction
- treat you and your home with courtesy and consideration at all times
- ensure all work is inspected by our heating surveyor

### **Inspection**

When the works are complete, our heating surveyor will carry out a full inspection to ensure the installation meets the required standards and specification. They will ask whether you are happy with the new system and how it has been installed.

The surveyor will also check that the system is operating efficiently and providing the best possible performance for your home.

## Instructions for Use

Once the work has finished, you will be shown how to use your new heating system so that it can be run comfortably and economically. You will also be given a set of operating instructions for future reference.

## Emergency call-outs

If an emergency occurs as a result of the works outside normal working hours, at weekends or on Bank Holidays, please contact the contractor using the number provided in your information pack.

If you are unable to reach the contractor, you should contact Ashford Borough Council's out of hours emergency service on 01233 629911.

Please note that you may be recharged for any call outs or works that could reasonably have waited until the next working day.

## Servicing

The contractor will be responsible for servicing your heating system. They will contact you towards the end of the first 11 months after installation to arrange the initial service.

After this, you will be contacted each year to carry out the annual servicing of your central heating system.

## Complaints

We aim to make sure the work is carried out smoothly and to a high standard. However, if you do have any concerns, please contact the contractor in the first instance so they can try to resolve the issue.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can then contact our heating surveyor, who will investigate the matter further.

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **Do I have to have this work carried out?**

No. The decision to go ahead with the work is entirely yours. We will continue to maintain and repair your existing appliance for as long as it remains economical to do so. If it becomes uneconomic to repair, it will need to be replaced.

Installing a new heating system could reduce your heating bills by up to 30%, so we would recommend having the work carried out.

### **Will my rent go up if I have this work carried out?**

No. There is no additional charge added to your rent as a result of this work.

### **How long will it take to complete the works?**

A full installation usually takes around 4-5 days to complete. Heating upgrades and boiler replacements normally take 2-3 days.

If any unforeseen issues arise, the work may take slightly longer.





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Housing Department  
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### Housing Enquiries

Tel: (01233) 330688

E-mail: [Planned.Maintenance@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:Planned.Maintenance@ashford.gov.uk)

Web: [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk)

BSW Heating Ltd: 0800 206 1371 / 020 8763 5343

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