

DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker: Energy Bills and Tariffs Spring 2023, UK

22 June 2023

Official Statistics

This report covers the results of questions on energy bills and electricity tariffs asked in the DESNZ (formerly BEIS) Public Attitudes Tracker. This includes Spring 2023 results for annual questions on energy saving behaviours, energy bills and energy suppliers.

It also includes questions asked in Summer 2022 on smart meters and smart energy use including time of use electricity tariffs, smart electric vehicle charging, and energy smart appliances.

What you need to know about these statistics: These results from the DESNZ (formerly BEIS) Public Attitudes Tracker (PAT) were collected using the Address Based Online Surveying (ABOS) methodology introduced in Autumn 2021, which uses random probability sampling. The results should not be compared with previous PAT surveys, which used different data collection methods. For details, see the [Technical Report](#).

The table below shows the topics covered in this report and when these questions were included in the Public Attitudes Tracker. Links are included to the findings for each topic within this report.

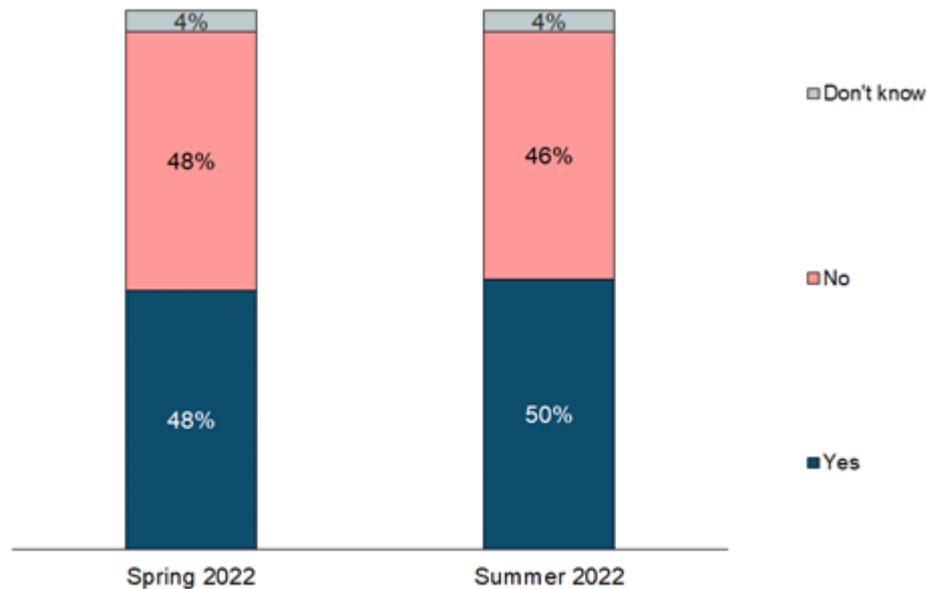
Topic	When included	Link to findings
Smart meters	Spring 2022, Summer 2022	Link
Saving energy in the home	Spring 2022, Spring 2023	Link
Cost of energy bills	Spring 2022, Spring 2023	Link
Perceived impact of renewables on energy bills	Spring 2022, Spring 2023	Link
Energy suppliers	Spring 2022, Spring 2023	Link
'Time of use' electricity tariffs	Summer 2022	Link
Smart electric vehicle charging	Summer 2022	Link
Energy smart appliances	Summer 2022	Link

Smart meters

The findings related to smart meters have been weighted to represent all households (rather than all individuals).

In Summer 2022, half of households (50%) said that they had a smart meter, with no change from Spring 2022 (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Whether has a smart meter in the home (based on all households), Spring 2022 and Summer 2022



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease from previous wave

SMARTMET. The next question is about smart meters. Smart meters automatically send meter readings to your energy supplier and usually come with a home energy monitor that provides information about your energy usage. Smart meters also allow prepayment customers to top up their credit online and over the phone. Does your household have a smart meter?

Base: All wave respondents –Spring 2022 (4,362), Summer 2022 (4,486)

Note: At this question, results are weighted to households (not individuals)

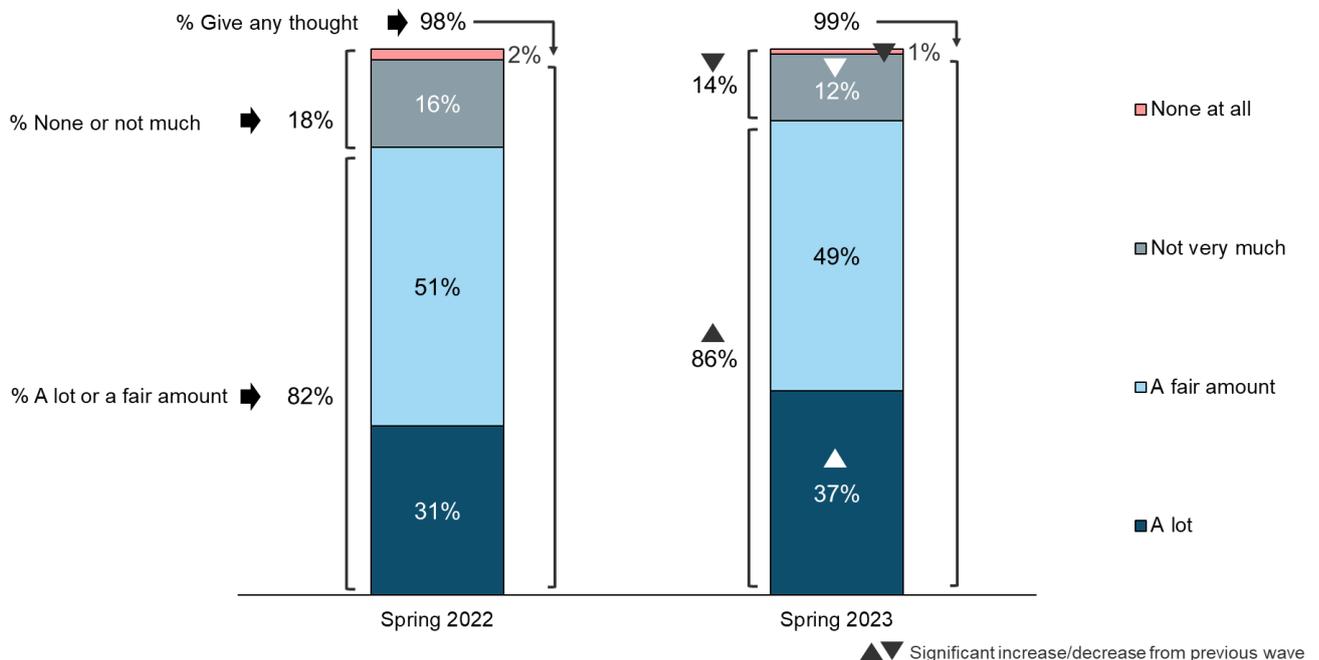
Smart meter ownership was higher for owner-occupied (51%) and social rented households (52%) compared with 41% of privately rented households. Households living in houses or bungalows were also more likely to say they had a smart meter (52%, compared with 42% of households living in an apartment).

Saving energy in the home

Questions on saving energy in the home have been asked in Spring 2022 and Spring 2023. Changes over time related to these questions are likely to be related to rises in energy costs over this period.

In Spring 2023 almost all people (99%) said they had given some thought to saving energy in the home (Figure 2.1), unchanged since Spring 2022. However, people increasingly reported giving a lot of thought to this (37%, up from 31%) and 86% said they had given it at least a fair amount of thought, up from 82% in Spring 2022. Conversely, the proportion who had had given this no thought or not very much thought had declined since Spring 2022 (14%, down from 18%).

Figure 2.1: Amount of thought given to saving energy in the home (based on all people), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



ENERGSAVE. How much thought, if any, would you say you give to saving energy in your home?
 Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 (4,367), Spring 2023 (4,399)

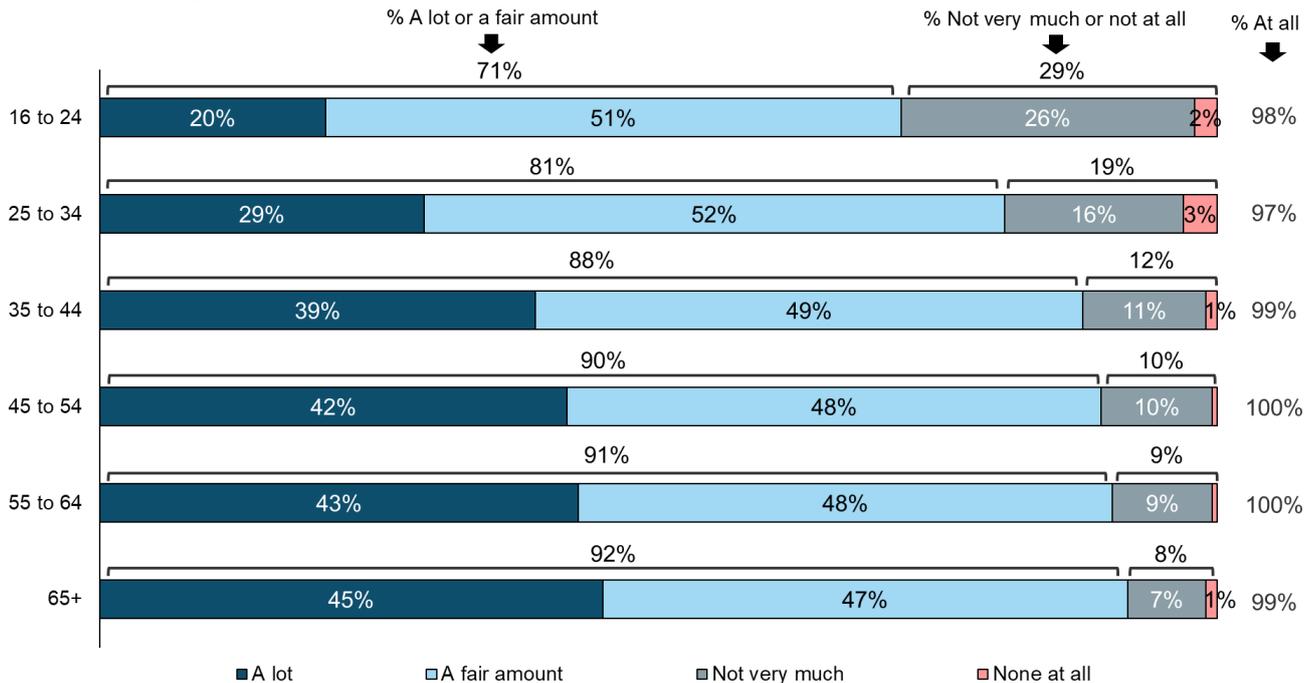
There was a link between the amount of thought given to energy saving and how worried people felt about paying energy bills over the past three months (see [Figure 3.1](#) for findings about how worried people were about their energy bills). People who were very or fairly worried about their energy bills were much more likely than those who were not very or not at all worried to give a lot of thought to saving energy in the home (44%, compared with 28%).

Those who were very concerned about climate change were also more likely to give a lot of thought to saving energy at home (48%, compared with 32% of those fairly concerned and 27% of those who were not very or not at all concerned about climate change).

People who described themselves as the decision-maker in the household about matters such as paying bills¹ were more likely to give a lot of thought to energy saving (41% of sole decision makers, and 40% of those who share this responsibility, compared with 26% who say this role lies with someone else in the household).

People aged under 35 were less likely to say they had given it a lot of thought (20% of those aged 16 to 24 and 29% of those aged 25 to 34) compared with those aged 35 and over (ranging from 39% of those aged 35 to 44, to 45% of those aged 65 and over) (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Amount of thought given to saving energy in the home by age (based on all people), Spring 2023



ENERGSAVE. How much thought, if any, would you say you give to saving energy in your home?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2023: 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (816), 65+ (1,286).

Self-reported frequency of the following energy saving or wasting behaviours is assessed annually in Spring (Figure 2.3):

- Washing clothes at 30 degrees or lower (*energy saving*)
- Trying to keep rooms not in use at a cooler temperature than those you are using (*energy saving*)
- Boiling the kettle with more water than you are going to use (*energy wasting*)
- Leaving the lights on when not in the room (*energy wasting*)
- Leaving the heating on when you go out (*energy wasting*)

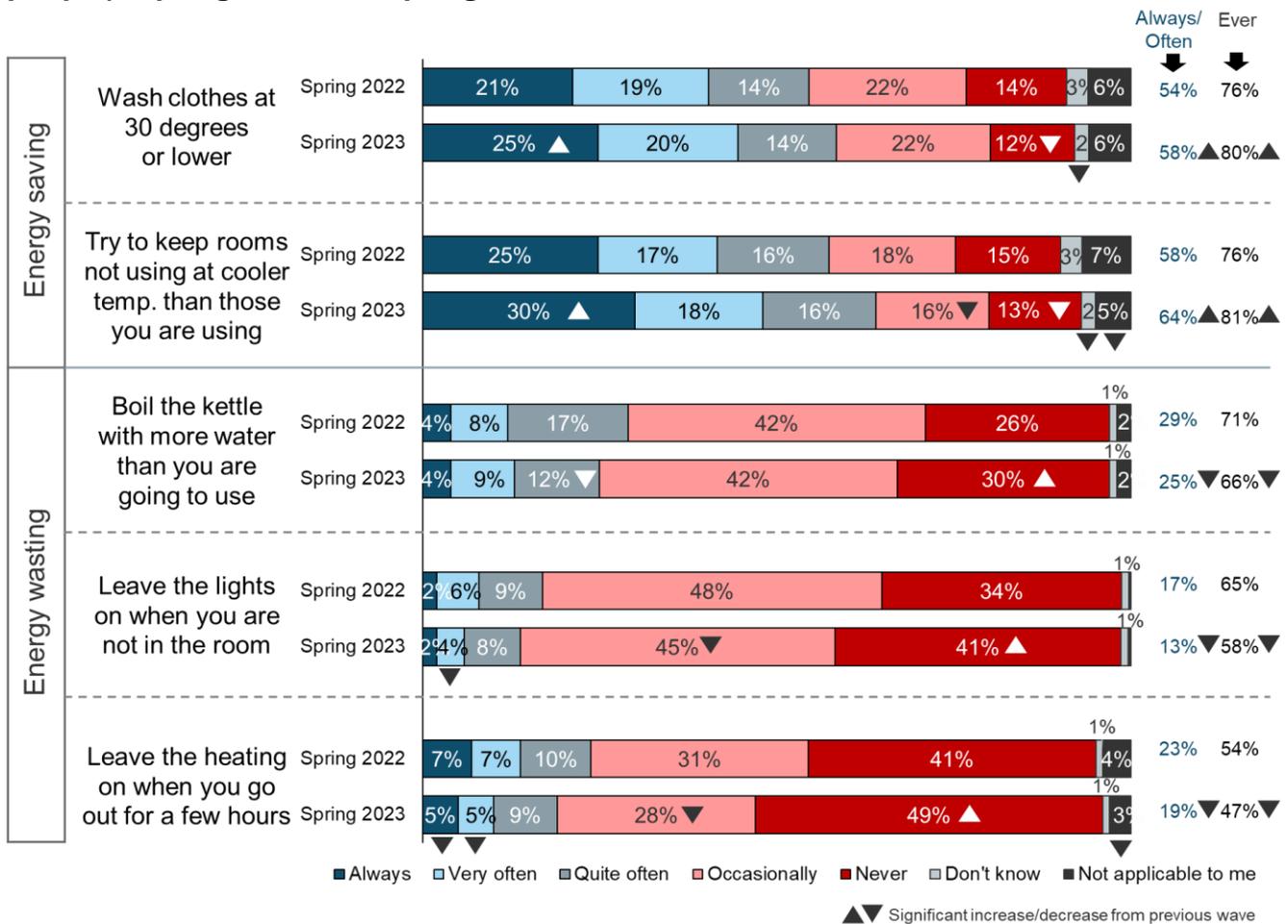
There have been positive changes across the board since Spring 2022 in reported behaviours, and this is again likely to be related to rising energy prices and associated increases in behaviours to help mitigate this.

¹ This was defined by a new question added in Spring 2022 asking whether the respondent was the person who is mainly responsible for decisions about their household such as paying household bills or choosing a provider for energy or broadband. Main decision-maker includes people in households with 2+ people who said they had this role, and people who were the only adult aged 16+ in the household.

Focussing first on energy *saving* behaviours, in Spring 2023, 80% of people said that they wash clothes at 30 degrees or lower at least occasionally, up from 76% in Spring 2022 while 58% did this at least quite often, up from 54%. A similar proportion (81%) said that they try to keep unused rooms at a cooler temperature than those being used at least occasionally, up from 76% in Spring 2022, while 64% said they do this at least quite often, up from 58%.

Focussing now on energy *wasting* behaviours, people in Spring 2023 were less likely to report doing each of the following behaviours at least occasionally: boil the kettle with more water than they intended to use (66%, down from 71% in Spring 2022); leave the lights on when not in the room (58%, down from 65%); and leave the heating on when going out for a few hours (47%, down from 54%). The most frequent energy wasting behaviour remained boiling a kettle with more water than needed, with 25% saying they did this at least quite often, although this was down from 29% in Spring 2022.

Figure 2.3: Frequency of energy saving and energy wasting behaviours (based on all people), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



ENSAVFREQ. How often, if at all, do you personally do any of the following?

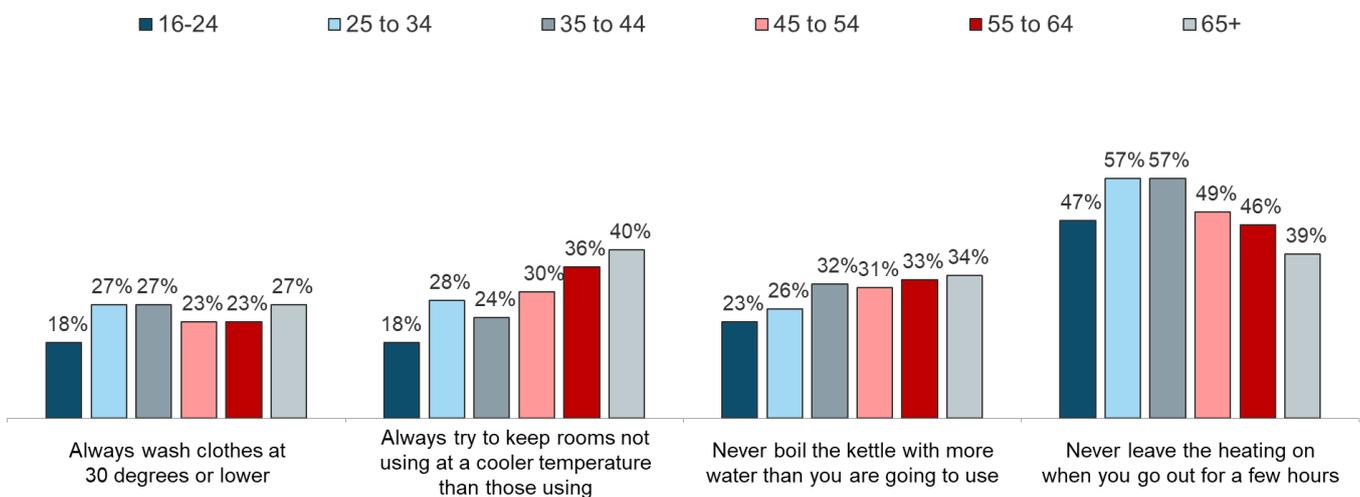
Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 / Spring 2023: Wash clothes at 30 degrees or lower (4,349/4,383); Try to keep rooms that you are not using at a cooler temperature than those you are using (4,360/4,392); Boil the kettle with more water than you are going to use (4,359/4,392); Leave the lights on when you are not in the room (4,362/4,390); Leave the heating on when you go out for a few hours (4,357/4,392)

Figure 2.4 below indicates the proportion of people who report positive energy saving behaviours, that is those who say they *always* do the energy saving behaviours and those who say they *never* do energy wasting behaviours, by age.

While there was little difference by age in never leaving the lights on when out, those aged under 25 were less likely to report each of the other four positive behaviours than those aged 35 and over. Among those aged under 25, 18% always washed clothes at 30°, 18% always kept unused rooms cooler, 23% never boiled too much water and 47% never left the heating on when going out.

People aged 65 and over were most likely to report always trying to keep unused rooms at a cooler temperature (40%) and in general this decreased across the age bands. In contrast, those aged 25 to 44 were more likely to report never leaving the heating on when going out for a few hours (57% of both those aged 25 to 34 and of those aged 35 to 44) compared with those aged 45 and over. Those aged 65 and over were least likely to say that they never leave the heating on when they go out for a few hours (39%).

Figure 2.4: Frequency of energy saving and energy wasting behaviours by age (based on all people), Spring 2023



ENSAVFREQ. How often, if at all, do you personally do any of the following?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2023: Wash clothes at 30 degrees or lower - 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (815), 65+ (1,272) Try to keep rooms that you are not using at a cooler temperature than those you are using - 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (815), 65+ (1,280) Boil the kettle with more water than you are going to use - 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (815), 65+ (1,281) Leave the heating on when you go out for a few hours - 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (816), 65+ (1,280)

The five positive energy behaviours noted above were also reported more by the sole household decision maker than by those not involved with decisions. The scale of this difference was most evident when looking at the proportion who said they always keep unused rooms at a cooler temperature (37% of sole decision makers compared with 20% of those not involved with decision making) and least for never leave the heating on when going out for a few hours (53% compared with 46%). There was a difference of around ten percentage points for each of the other positive behaviours.

All five positive behaviours were also reported relatively more by those more concerned about climate change. For example, 52% of those very concerned about climate change said they never leave the heating on when they go out for a few hours, compared with 43% of those who were not very or not at all concerned about climate change.

People who were worried about energy bills were more likely than those who were not worried to report some of the energy saving behaviours: never leaving the heating on when going out

for a few hours (55% of those worried about energy bills, compared with 37% of those not worried), always washing clothes at 30 degrees or lower (27%, compared with 21%) and never leaving the lights on when not in the room (46%, compared with 33%).

Cost of energy bills

Concern about paying energy bills

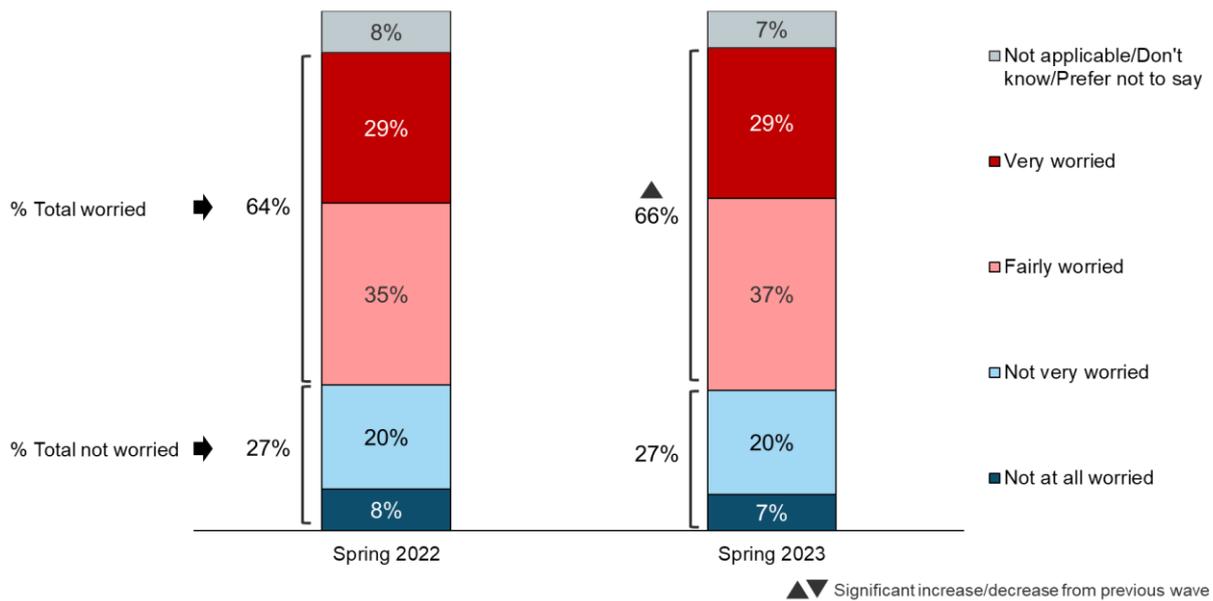
Questions about concerns about paying energy bills were introduced in Spring 2022 and asked again a year later in Spring 2023.

The Spring 2022 survey was conducted shortly before a widespread increase in energy prices, caused by a rise in wholesale natural gas prices, further affected by the war in Ukraine which began in February 2022. From 1 April 2022 (just after the Spring 2022 survey fieldwork was completed), the energy price cap set by Ofgem was raised, causing considerable increases in the price of gas and electricity. There was widespread media coverage of this expected price rise throughout the Spring 2022 survey fieldwork period.

In October 2022, the energy price cap as set by Ofgem was raised again but the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) was introduced, which limited the increase in household energy bills. For most households, there was also a £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme payment paid in six separate monthly instalments from October 2022 to March 2023. The Government further announced on 15 March 2023 that the planned 20% increase in the EPG would be delayed from April to July 2023. Interviewing for the Spring 2023 survey was conducted between 9th March and 6th April 2023, at which time the level of the Ofgem energy price cap for July 2023 was not known. Additionally, as the Energy Bill Support Scheme ended in March 2023, energy bill payments increased for many people in April 2023.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that a high proportion of people remained worried about payment of energy bills. In Spring 2023, 66% of people reported being either very worried (29%) or fairly worried (37%) about paying for their electricity bills over the previous three months, a slight increase compared to Spring 2022 (64%). There was no change in the proportion of people saying that they were not very or not at all worried (27% in both Spring 2022 and Spring 2023) (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Level of worry about paying for energy bills (based on all people), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



PAYBILLEN. Over the last three months, how worried, if at all, have you been about paying for energy bills (gas/electricity)?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 (4,369), Spring 2023 (4,408)

Women were more likely to be very or fairly worried about energy bills (68%, compared with 63% of men). Those aged 25 to 54 were also more likely to be worried about their energy bills (73% of those aged 25 to 34, 76% of those aged 35 to 44, and 74% of those aged 45 to 54). This is compared to lower levels of worry among those aged 55 and over (64% of those aged 55 to 64 and 57% of those aged 65 and over). Those aged 16 to 24 were the least likely to be worried about energy bills (48%).

People living in rented accommodation were more likely than people living in owner-occupied homes to be worried about energy bills (78% compared with 62%). By geography, people living in Northern Ireland were most likely (76%) and those in the South West of England were least likely (56%) to be worried about energy bills than those in other localities.

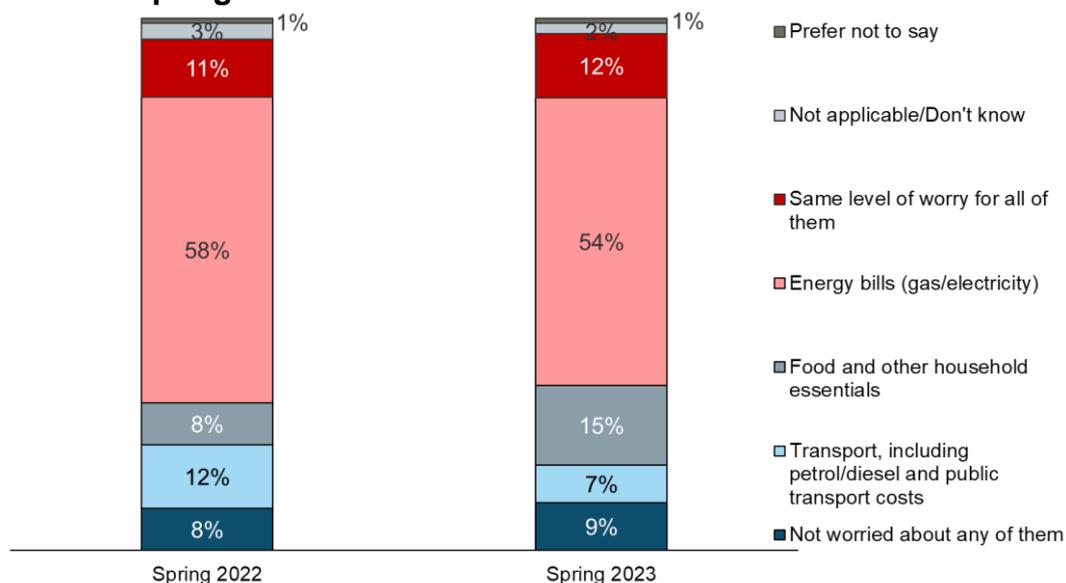
To provide further context about the level of worry about energy bills, respondents were asked which out of three different types of bill or outgoings they were most worried about: energy bills, transport (petrol/diesel and public transport costs), and food and other household essentials.

In Spring 2023, as in Spring 2022, concern about paying energy bills far outweighed concern about other types of bills, which again is likely to reflect prevailing circumstances regarding increased energy prices. Over half (54%) were most concerned about energy bills, although this was slightly lower than the 58% recorded in Spring 2022 (Figure 3.2).

The proportion of people whose greatest concern related to bills for food and other household essentials increased from 8% in Spring 2022 to 15% in Spring 2023, likely reflecting the high inflation and rises in food prices over this period. In contrast, transport was now reported less often as the main concern (7%, compared to 12% in Spring 2022).

Around one in ten (12%) were equally worried about all three types of expense and 9% said they were not worried about any bills.

Figure 3.2: Worry about energy bills compared with other household bills (based on all people), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



MOSTWORRY. Which ONE of the following bills or expenses are you most worried about?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 (4,315), Spring 2023 (4,355)

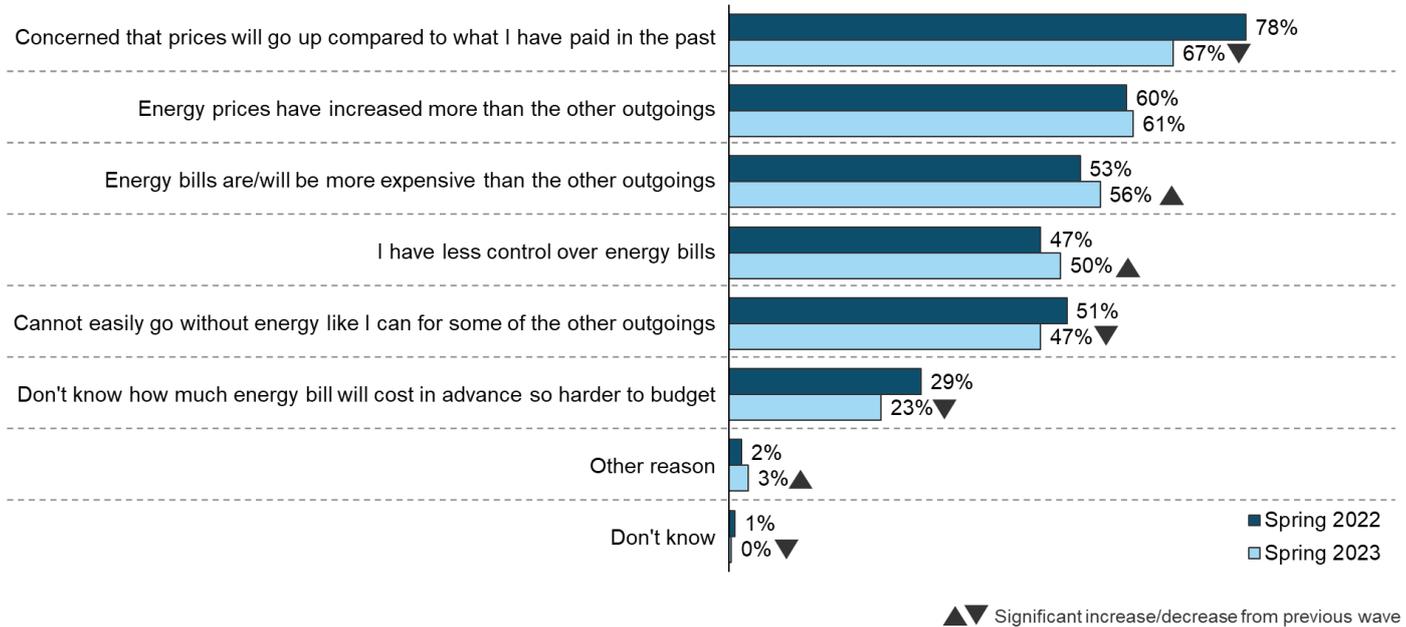
The propensity to be most worried about energy bills was lower for people aged 16 to 24 (35%) compared with those in all age bands over 24 (ranging from 54% to 59%). Those aged 16 to 24 were more likely to be most concerned about transport costs (15%) compared with those aged 25 and over (ranging from 4% to 7%). Those aged 65 or older (15%) and those aged 55 to 64 (11%) were more likely to say that they were not worried about any of these expenses, compared with those aged 45 and under (ranging from 5% to 9%).

People who were a decision-maker in the household about matters such as paying bills were more likely to be most worried about energy bills than those with no involvement (59% of sole decision makers and 57% of joint decision makers, compared with 40% who said the decision-making role lay with someone else in the household).

People who were more concerned about energy bills than other bills were asked their reasons for this. Respondents were presented with a list of possible reasons (Figure 3.3). Among this subgroup, the most widespread cause of worry related to concerns that prices will go up compared with past energy prices (67%). This was, however, mentioned less frequently than in Spring 2022 (78%).

In Spring 2023 people in this subgroup were more likely to worry about energy bills becoming more expensive than other outgoings (56%, up from 53% in Spring 2022) and having less control over energy bills (50%, up from 47%). There was no significant change in the proportion worried that energy prices had increased more than other outgoings (61%). There were decreases in the proportion saying they can't easily go without energy like they can for some other outgoings (from 51% in Spring 2022 to 47% in Spring 2023) and in those saying that they don't know how much energy bills will cost in advance, making it harder to budget (falling from 29% to 23%).

Figure 3.3: Reasons for being more worried about energy bills than other household bills (based on all people who said they were most worried about energy bills), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



WHYWORRYEN. You said you were more worried about paying for energy bills compared with food and other household essentials, or transport. Why are you more worried about energy bills? Please select all that apply
 Base: All respondents who are more worried about paying for energy bills compared with other bills – Spring 2022 (2,541), Spring 2023 (2,358)

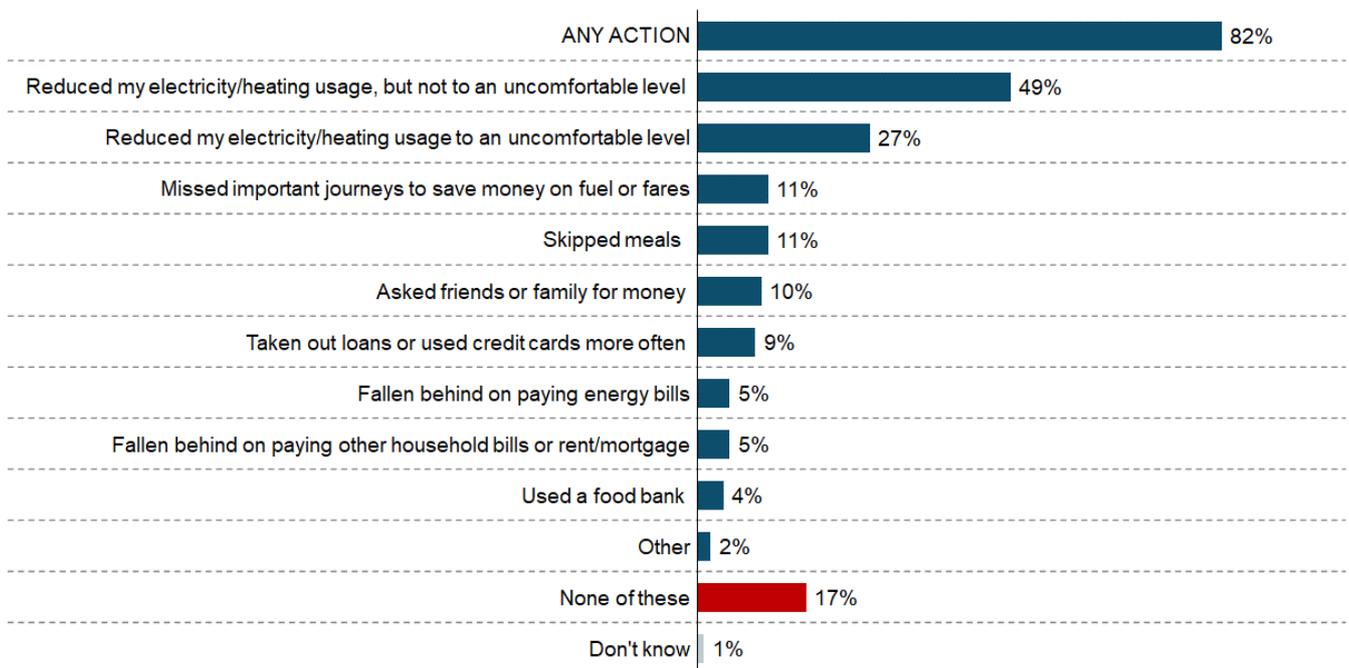
Impact of increased cost of energy bills

In Spring 2023 a new question was added to the survey to identify the impact of increases to energy bills. People were asked to choose from a list which actions, if any, they had taken in recent months as a result of increased energy bills (Figure 3.4). Overall, 82% of people had taken at least one of the listed actions as a result of the increase in energy bills.

The most widespread action taken to mitigate against energy price increases was to reduce electricity/heating usage: almost half (49%) said they had done this but not to an uncomfortable level, while 27% of people said that they had done this to an uncomfortable level.

Around one in ten reported missing important journeys (11%), skipping meals (11%), asking friends or family for money (10%), and taking out loans or using credit cards more often (9%). Other actions listed were selected by 5% or less.

Figure 3.4: Actions taken in recent months because of increase to energy bills (based on all people), Spring 2023

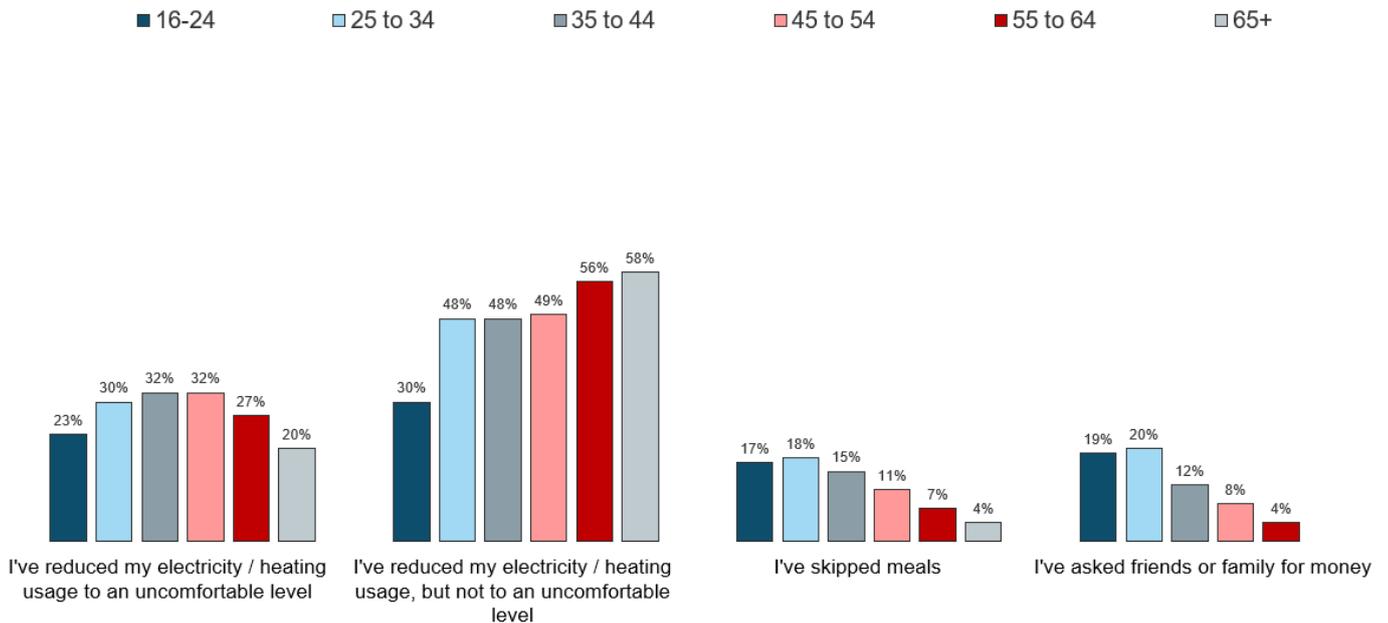


COSTACTIONS. Which, if any, of the following actions have you taken in recent months because of the increase in the cost of your energy bills? Please select all that apply.

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2023 (4,395)

Those who were worried about their energy bills were more likely to report taking some action to help manage rising energy prices (92%) than those who were not very or not at all worried (67%). In particular, this group was more likely to state that they had reduced their energy usage to an uncomfortable level (37% of those who were worried, compared with 8% of those who were not worried about their energy bills).

Figure 3.5: Selected actions taken in recent months because of increase to energy bills by age (based on all people), Spring 2023



COSTACTIONS. Which, if any, of the following actions have you taken in recent months because of the increase in the cost of your energy bills? Please select all that apply.

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2023: 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (678), 45 to 54 (739), 55 to 64 (815), 65 or over (1,286)

The proportion taking at least one action to help manage rising energy prices was lower among those aged under 25 (67%) and by those aged 65 and over (77%) compared with those in the middle age bands from 25 to 64 (ranging from 84% to 87%). However, younger people were more likely to mention certain types of behaviour: asking family and friends for money (19% of those aged 16 to 24 and 20% of those aged 25 to 34 compared with those aged 45 to 54 (8%) and those aged 55 to 64 (4%), and skipping meals (17% of those aged 16 to 24, 18% of those aged 25 to 34 and 15% of those aged 35 to 44 compared with those aged 55 to 64 (7%) and those aged 65 and over (4%) (Figure 3.5).

Those aged over 55 were more likely to report reducing energy use but not to an uncomfortable level (56% of those aged 55 to 64 and 58% of those aged 65 and over), particularly compared with those aged 16 to 24 (30%). Those aged 25 to 54 were more likely to report reducing energy use to an uncomfortable level (30% of those aged 25 to 34, 32% of those aged 35 to 44 and 45 to 54), particularly compared with those aged 65 and over (20%).

Perceived impact of renewables on energy bills

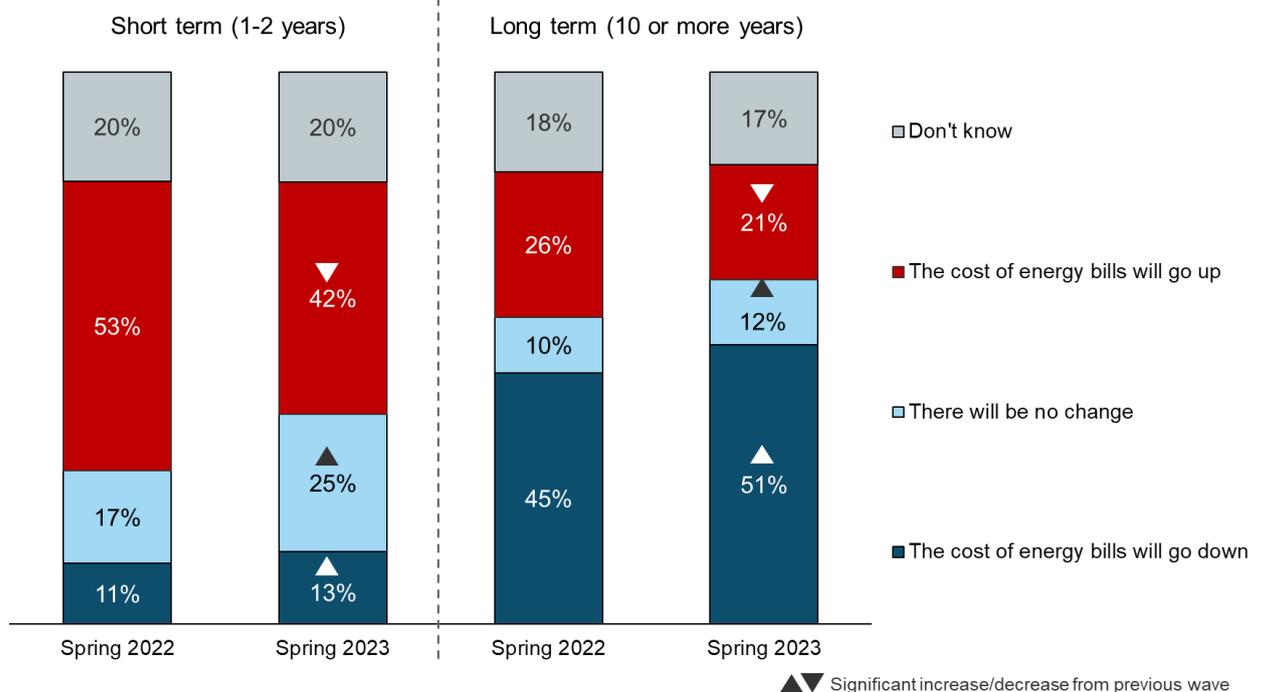
In Spring 2022 and Spring 2023, people were asked about their expectations of the impact on energy bills of moving towards renewable energy sources in the short term (1-2 years) and longer term (10 years or more) (Figure 4.1).

In Spring 2023, 42% thought that there would be short-term rises in their energy bills as a result of the shift towards renewable energy sources, down from 53% who thought this in Spring 2022. They were instead more likely to believe that costs would stay the same (25%, up from 17%) or go down (13%, up from 11%).

In Spring 2023, people were twice as likely to anticipate price decreases (51%) than price rises (21%) in 10 or more years' time as a result of the shift towards renewables. The proportion expecting prices to decrease in the longer term has risen over the past year (from 45% in Spring 2022 to 51% in Spring 2023). It is worth noting that the findings relating to short-term price increases are likely to be associated with a more general concern about energy price rises, given the ongoing context of high energy prices.

In Spring 2023, around a fifth of people said they did not know what impact the shift towards renewable energy would have on prices in the short term (20%), and slightly fewer reported uncertainty in the longer term (17%).

Figure 4.1: Perceived impact of move to renewable energy source on energy bills (based on all people), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



IMPACTBILL. What impact do you think that the UK's move to renewable energy sources might have on people's energy bills in the UK...?

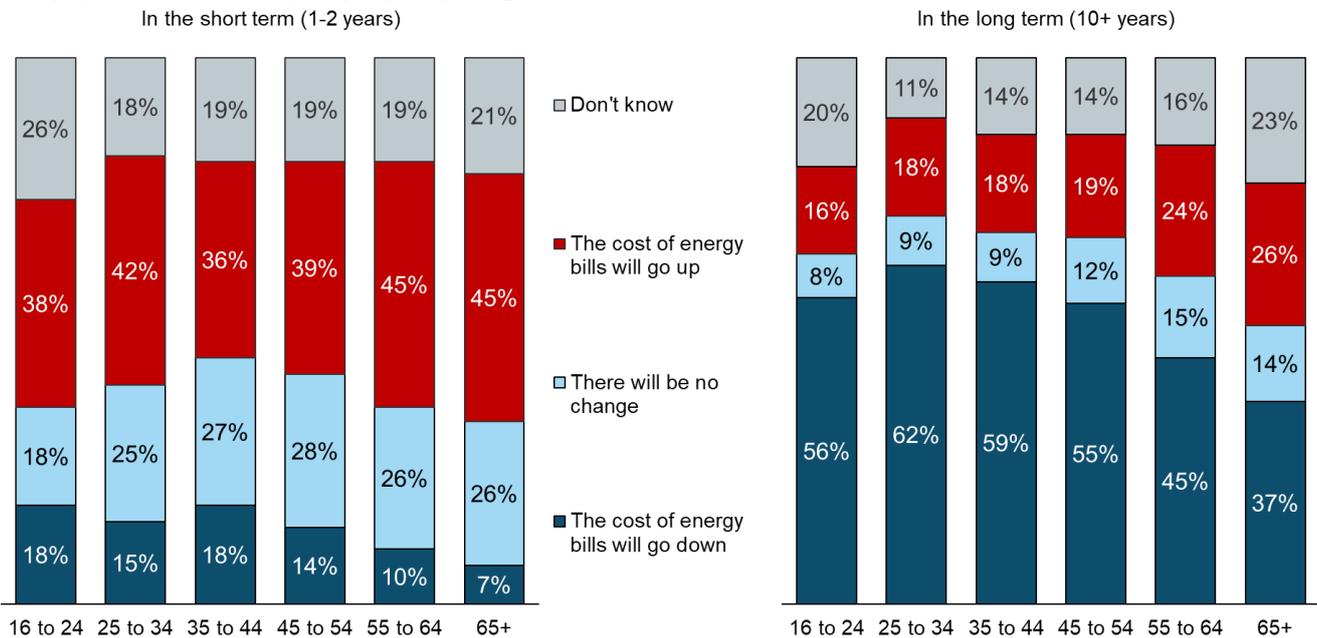
Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 / Spring 2023: ...In the short term (1-2 years) (4,336/4,377); ...In the long term (10 or more years) (4,301/4,372)

Men were more likely to believe that the move towards renewables would increase the cost of energy both in the short term (45%, compared with 39% of women) and in the long term (23%, compared with 18% of women). However, this difference was largely explained by a higher proportion of women who reported that they did not know what the cost impact would be (for the long-term, 21% of women did not know, compared to 12% of men); there was no difference by gender in terms of the proportion who expected prices to decrease.

People educated to degree level were also more likely to expect the move towards renewables to cause prices to fall in the longer term (61%, compared with 50% of those with other qualifications, and 36% of people with no qualifications). Conversely, people with non-degree qualifications or no qualifications were more likely to think that prices will rise in the longer-term because of the move towards renewables (15% with a degree-level qualification, compared with 23% of those with other qualifications and 25% of those with no qualifications).

Those in all age bands were, on balance, more likely to expect an increase in costs in the short term, and a decrease in the longer term. However, those aged 55 and over were relatively more likely to expect an increase in costs both in the short and longer term. In the short-term 45% of both those aged 55 to 64 and those aged 65 and over thought costs would go up, compared with 36% of those aged 35 to 44 and 39% of those aged 45 to 54. The proportion expecting an increase in the longer term was 24% for those aged 55 to 64 and 26% for those aged 65 and over, compared with between 16% and 19% for the younger age groups (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Perceived impact of move to renewable energy source on energy bills by age group (based on all people), Spring 2023



IMPACTBILL. What impact do you think that the UK's move to renewable energy sources might have on people's energy bills in the UK...?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2023: Short term: 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (735), 55 to 64 (815), 65+ (1,269). Long term: 16 to 24 (270), 25 to 34 (534), 35 to 44 (680), 45 to 54 (738), 55 to 64 (814), 65+ (1,263)

Energy suppliers

In Spring 2022 and Spring 2023, people were asked to rate their satisfaction with energy suppliers on three different aspects of service:

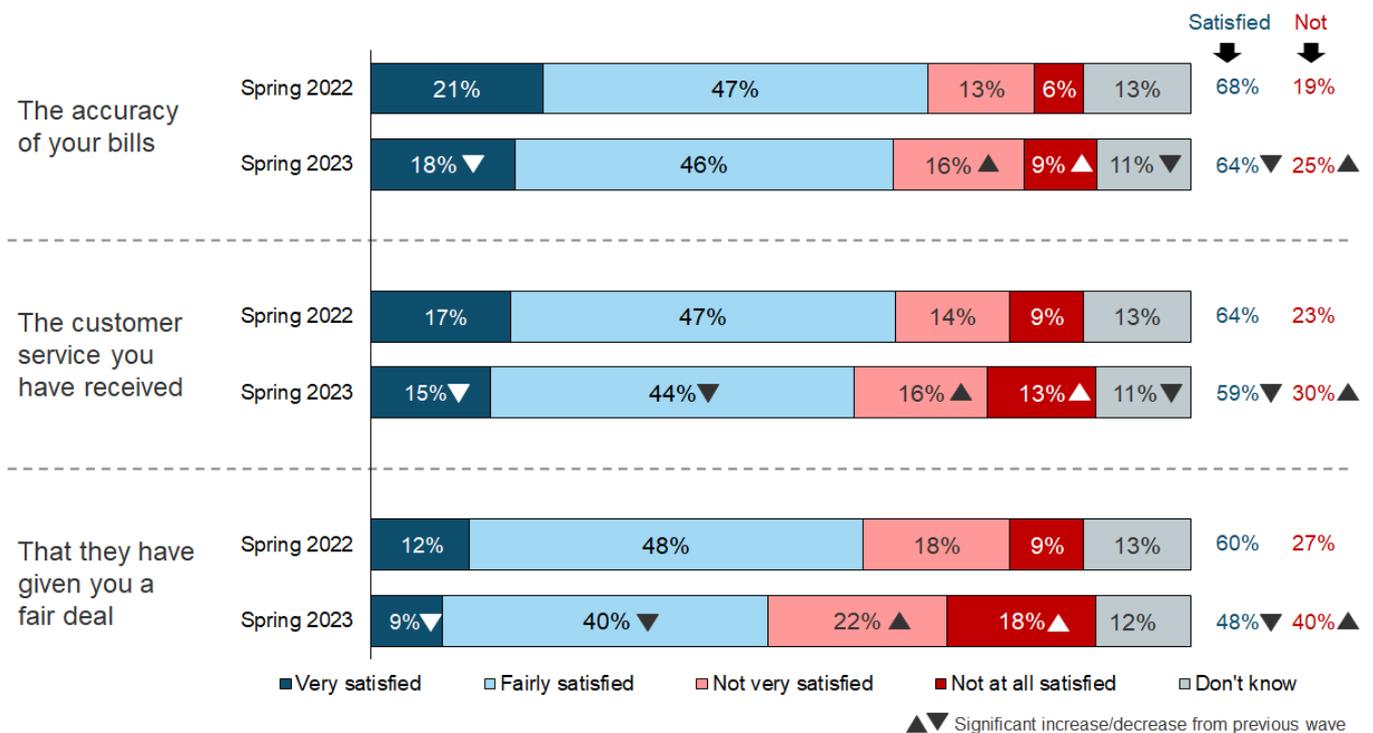
- The accuracy of bills
- Customer service received
- Being given a fair deal

For each aspect of service, results are based on all respondents excluding those who said this question did not apply to them (for example because they are not responsible for managing energy bills in their household). In Spring 2023 there was a pattern of decreased satisfaction with all three of the aspects of service compared to Spring 2022, particularly in terms of being given a fair deal (Figure 5.1).

Satisfaction levels remained highest for billing accuracy, with 64% satisfied overall (down from 68% in Spring 2022). More specifically, 18% were very satisfied with the accuracy of their bills (down from 21%), 46% were fairly satisfied and 25% were dissatisfied (up from 19% in Spring 2022).

Satisfaction levels were a little lower for customer service with 59% satisfied, down from 64% in Spring 2022. More specifically, 15% were very satisfied (down from 17%), 44% were fairly satisfied (down from 47%) and 30% were dissatisfied (up from 23%).

Figure 5.1: Satisfaction with different aspects of energy supplier service (based on all people excluding those who said this was not applicable), Spring 2022 and Spring 2023



SATISENERG. How satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the following aspects of energy supplier(s)? If you have different suppliers for gas and electricity, please think about your overall opinion.
 Base: All wave respondents excluding those who say 'not applicable' – Spring 2022 / Spring 2023: That they have given you a fair deal (4,195/4,188) The accuracy of your bills (4,155/4,177) The customer service you have received (3,853/3,681)

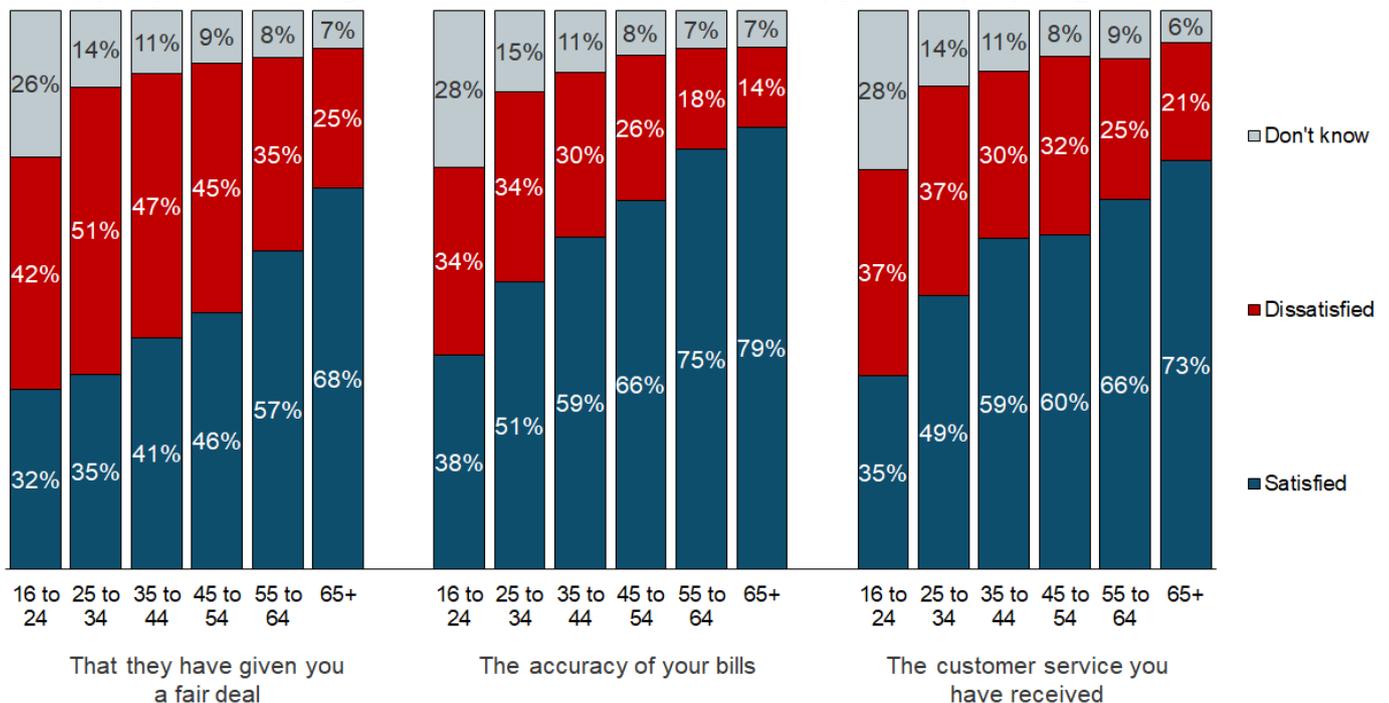
DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker (Spring 2023, UK)

People were considerably less likely to be satisfied that they were given a fair deal in Spring 2023 (48%, down from 60% in Spring 2022). More specifically, 9% were very satisfied (down from 12%), 40% were fairly satisfied (down from 48%) and 40% were dissatisfied (up from 27%).

It should be noted that Spring 2022 fieldwork was completed during February/March 2022, just before an increase in the energy price cap from 1 April 2022 and further subsequent increases in energy prices.

There were clear differences in levels of dissatisfaction by age (Figure 5.2). The level of satisfaction was lowest among those aged under 25 for all three aspects (32% for being given a fair deal, 38% for billing accuracy, and 35% for customer service). Satisfaction levels increased across the age bands and was highest among those aged 65 and over (68% for being given a fair deal, 79% for billing accuracy, and 73% for customer service). Those aged under 25 were also more likely not to have an opinion about each aspect of service.

Figure 5.2: Satisfaction with different aspects of energy supplier service by age (based on all people excluding those who said this was not applicable), Spring 2023



SATISENERG. How satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with the following aspects of energy supplier(s)? If you have different suppliers for gas and electricity, please think about your overall opinion. Showing % very or fairly satisfied.

Base: All wave respondents excluding those who said this was not applicable – Spring 2023: That they have given you a fair deal - 16 to 24 (204), 25 to 34 (511), 35 to 44 (654), 45 to 54 (703), 55 to 64 (795), 65 or over (1,251) The accuracy of your bills - 16 to 24 (202), 25 to 34 (509), 35 to 44 (656), 45 to 54 (717), 55 to 64 (793), 65 or over (1,229) The customer service you have received - 16 to 24 (190), 25 to 34 (444), 35 to 44 (577), 45 to 54 (625), 55 to 64 (686), 65+ (1,099)

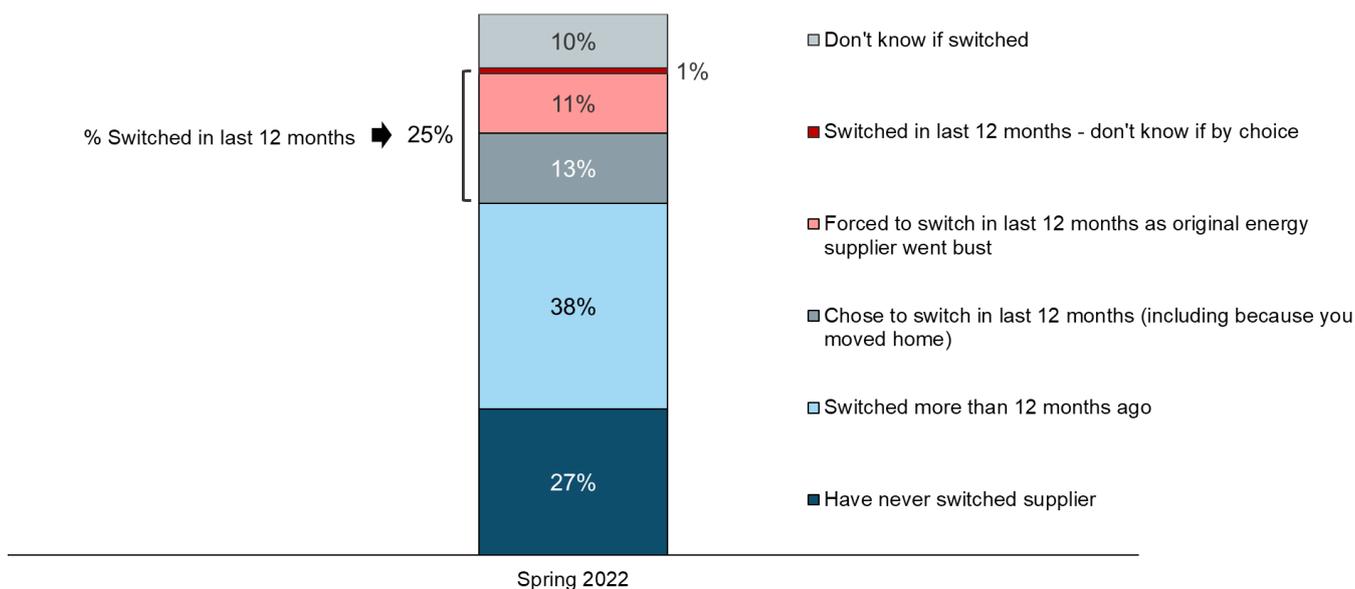
Switching energy suppliers

In Spring 2022 consumers were asked about switching energy suppliers in the last 12 months; the results have been weighted to represent all households.

The energy switching market changed significantly in the period leading up to Spring 2022 fieldwork, with a number of suppliers ceasing trading during Autumn and Winter 2021, and limited competitive options given the sharp increase in global energy prices, which led to an increase in the energy price cap set by Ofgem. However, some consumers will have switched in the period before these changes.

Against this backdrop, in Spring 2022, one in four households (25%) reported having switched supplier in the last 12 months, split fairly evenly into 13% who chose to switch and 11% forced to switch as their supplier ceased trading (Figure 5.3). A further 38% said they had switched supplier more than 12 months ago, while over a quarter (27%) said they had never switched supplier.

Figure 5.3: When last switched energy supplier and whether this was related to their supplier ceasing trading (based on all households), Spring 2022



ENERGYSWITCH. Thinking about your gas and electricity supplier, when, if at all, did your household last switch supplier? Please include switches which you were forced to make if your energy supplier closed down.

ENERGBUST. And when your household **last** switched supplier, was this by choice or were you forced to switch as your supplier closed down?

Base: All wave respondents – Spring 2022 (4,365)

Note: At this question, results are weighted to households (not individuals)

Owner-occupied households were less likely to have never switched energy supplier (23%, compared to 35% of households in rented accommodation) and they were more likely to have been forced to switch due to their energy supplier going bust (14%, compared to 5% of households in rented accommodation).

'Time of use' electricity tariffs

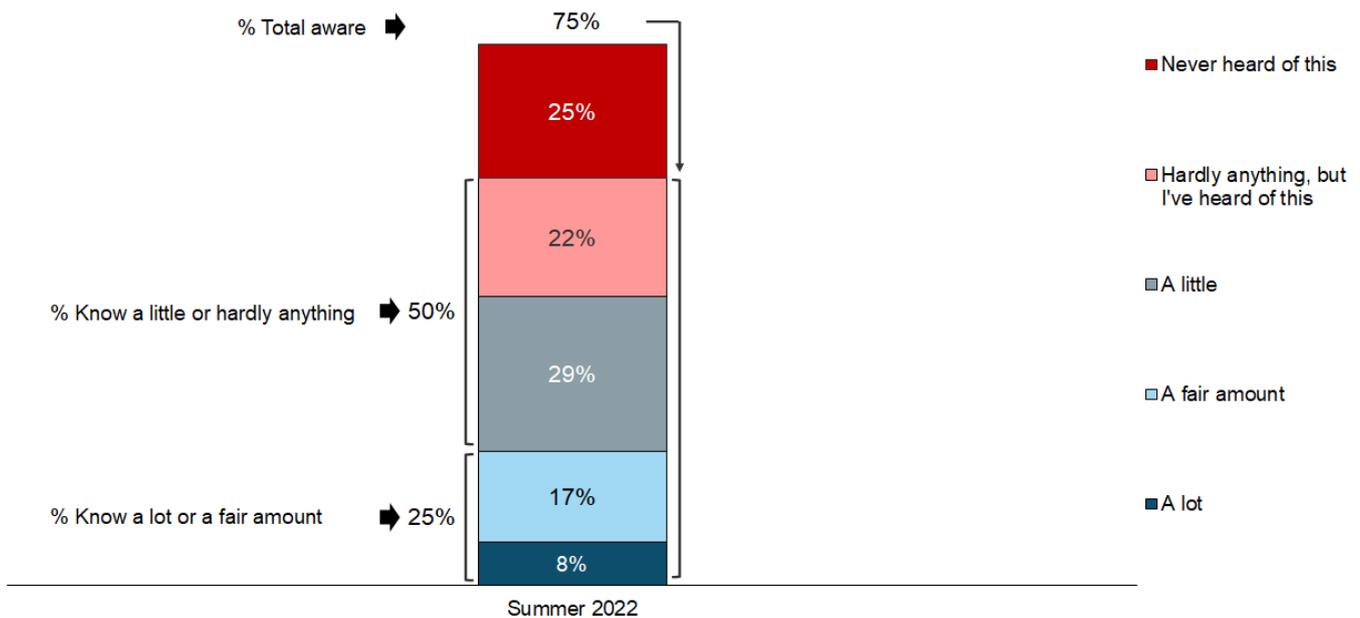
Awareness of 'time of use' electricity tariffs

Respondents were provided with the following explanation about 'time of use' electricity tariffs before being asked about their level of awareness of this:

An electricity tariff is the pricing plan for the electricity that you use. Some suppliers offer 'time of use' energy tariffs. These charge consumers cheaper 'off-peak' rates for their energy at times of night or day when demand is at its lowest, and higher 'peak' rates at popular times. This means that energy demand can be better managed, and can help customers reduce their bills.

In Summer 2022, 75% of people said that they had heard of 'time of use' electricity tariffs (Figure 6.1). However, only 25% said they knew at least a fair amount about them, with 8% saying that they knew a lot. Half of people (50%) said they knew hardly anything or a little about them, and 25% had never heard of them.

Figure 6.1: Awareness of 'time of use' electricity tariffs (based on all people), Summer 2022



TOUTAWARE1. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about a 'time of use' electricity tariff?
 Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,486)

Awareness of these tariffs varied by gender, age and education. For example, men were more likely to have any awareness of 'time of use' tariffs (79% compared with 72% of women) as were people aged 25 and over (77%, compared with 61% of people aged under 25), and those educated to degree level (82%, compared with 75% of those with other qualifications and 65% of those with no qualifications).

Owners (77%) and private renters (79%) were also more likely than social renters (68%) to be aware of such tariffs. There were also differences by locality, with awareness of 'time of use' tariffs higher than average in the East (80%), East Midlands (79%), West Midlands (78%), South West (78%), Scotland (78%) and South East (77%); and conversely lower than average

in the North (North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber – 71%), Wales (68%) and Northern Ireland (67%).

People who were solely or jointly responsible for making decisions in their household such as choosing an energy provider were more likely to be aware of such tariffs than non-decision makers (78%, compared with 64%).

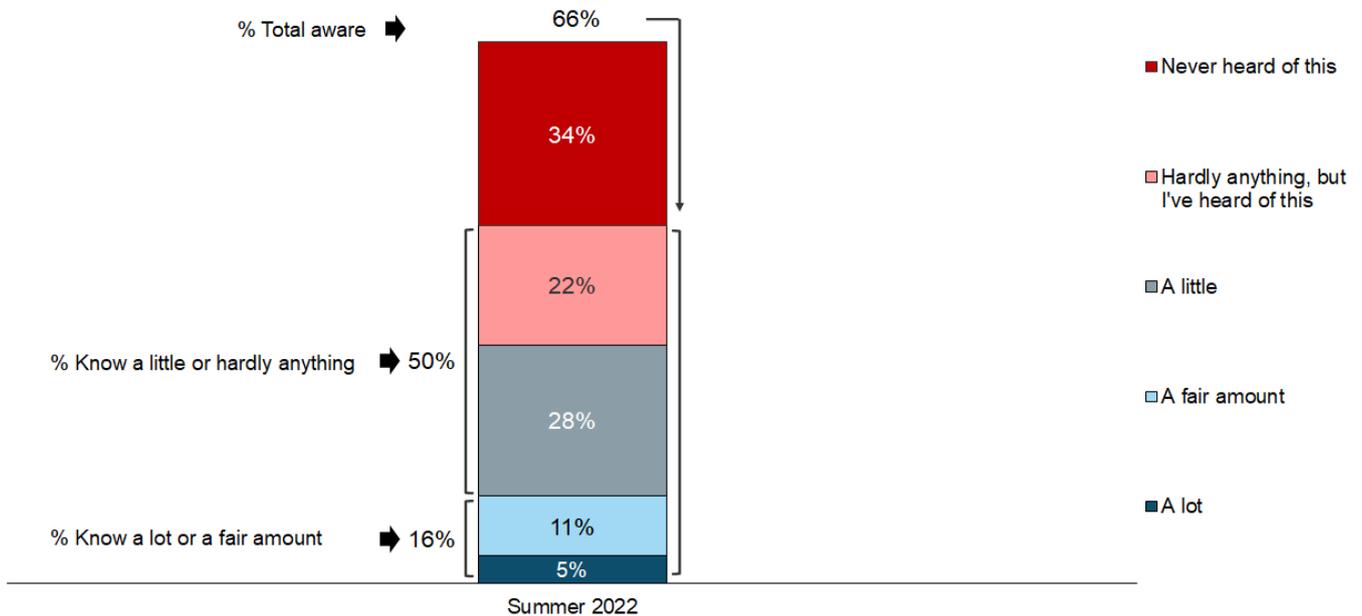
Awareness of dynamic ‘time of use’ electricity tariffs

Respondents were then provided with a more detailed explanation of *dynamic* ‘time of use’ tariffs:

Some suppliers have introduced ‘time of use’ tariffs that offer rates of electricity that change throughout the day or night depending on overall demand and supply. Instead of just two rates (a daytime and night rate), prices typically change every half an hour. These new tariffs can work with any appliance or form of heating. Using energy at off-peak times (for example at night or when there is a high renewable electricity available) can help people to reduce their electricity bills.

In Summer 2022, compared with awareness of ‘time of use’ tariffs more generally (75%), a lower proportion of people had heard of dynamic time of use tariffs (66%) (Figure 6.2). Half of respondents said they knew hardly anything or just a little about them (50%), and 16% said they knew a lot or a fair amount.

Figure 6.2: Awareness of ‘time of use’ electricity tariffs that change throughout the day and night (based on all people), Summer 2022



TOUTAWARE2. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about ‘time of use’ tariffs which offer changing rates of electricity across the day and night?
 Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,484)

DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker (Spring 2023, UK)

Differences by gender, education and type of renter were similar for awareness of dynamic tariffs as they were for 'time of use' tariffs in general: higher overall awareness was found among men (70%, compared with 62% of women), those educated to degree level (72% compared with 56% with no qualifications), and owner occupiers (67%) and private renters (69%) compared with 59% of social renters.

By age, awareness was higher among people aged 25 to 64 (69%) compared with those aged under 25 (57%) and those aged 65 and over (62%).

Compared with 'time of use' tariffs in general, there was less regional variation for dynamic tariffs although, compared with the UK average, awareness was higher in the South East (71%) and South West (70%) and lower in Northern Ireland (58%).

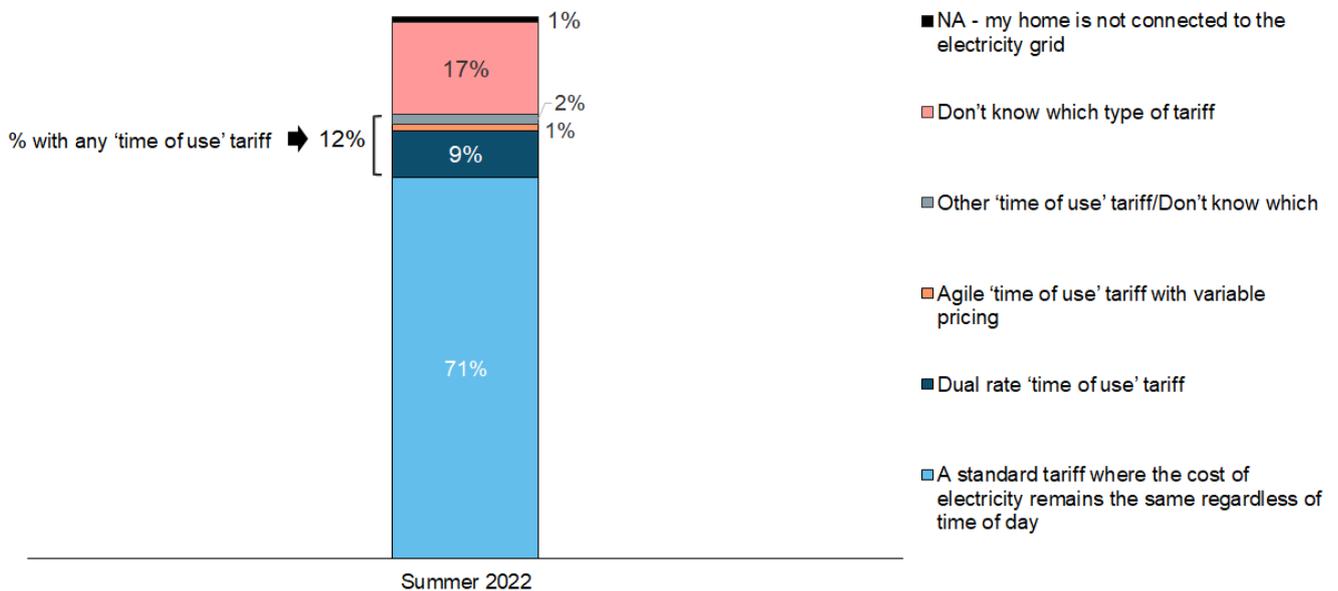
Awareness of dynamic 'time of use' tariffs was also higher among sole or joint household decision-makers (68%, compared with 57% of other household members) and was especially high among people whose main vehicle was an electric vehicle (EV) (84%) compared with 67% of petrol or diesel drivers and 59% of people who didn't drive a vehicle. EV owners were also more than twice as likely as all other groups to know either a fair amount or a lot of about these types of tariffs (41%, compared with 15% of other drivers and 13% of non-drivers).

Types of Electricity Tariff in use

In Summer 2022, most people (71%) reported that their household was on a standard tariff where the cost of electricity remains the same regardless of the time of day, while 12% reported having a 'time of use' tariff that varied by time of day (Figure 6.3). The 12% of people with 'time of use' tariffs comprised 9% on a dual rate tariff, 1% on an agile (dynamic) tariff and the remaining 2% saying they had either another type of 'time of use' tariff or they didn't know the type.

It is of note that 17% did not know their tariff type, rising considerably to 37% among those who were not responsible for making decisions in their households and 47% of those aged under 25.

Figure 6.3: Current household electricity tariff type (based on all people), Summer 2022



TARIFFTYPE. As far as you are aware, which type of electricity tariff is your household on?

WHICHTOU. You said that your household is on a tariff that changes depending on the time of use. As far as you are aware, which of the following types of electricity tariff is your household on?

Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,485)

Of those who had said they were aware of 'time of use' tariffs (dynamic or non-dynamic), 14% said they were on such a tariff, rising to 26% among those who said they knew a lot or a fair amount about them.

Private renters were slightly more likely to report being on a 'time of use' tariff (15%) compared with owners (11%) and social renters (10%). Prevalence of 'time of use' tariffs was higher in the East (17%) and East Midlands (16%) compared with the North East (6%), North West (9%), London (9%), Scotland (10%), Wales (9%) and Northern Ireland (8%).

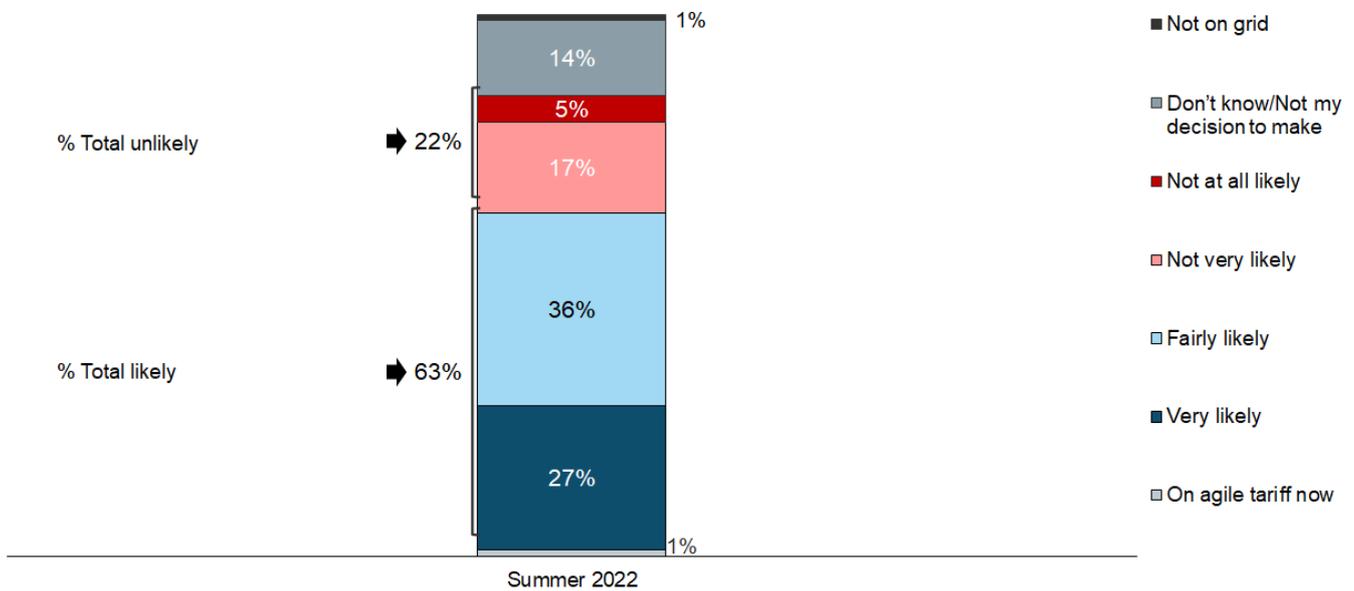
'Time of use' tariffs were also much more likely among EV owners (33%, compared with 13% of hybrid owners, 11% of those driving a petrol/diesel car, and 11% of non-drivers).

Likelihood of switching to a dynamic ‘time of use’ electricity tariff

Based on information provided about dynamic ‘time of use’ electricity tariffs in the survey, respondents were asked about their likelihood of switching to this in the future if the tariff was available to them.

In Summer 2022, in addition to the 1% of people who said they were already on a dynamic tariff, a further 63% said that they would be likely to switch to a dynamic tariff (Figure 6.4), with 27% saying they would be very likely to do so. One in five (21%) said they were not very or not at all likely to switch to a dynamic tariff.

Figure 6.4: Likelihood of switching to dynamic electricity tariff (based on all people), Summer 2022



TOUTLIKELY. Thinking again about a ‘time of use’ tariff where pricing varies throughout the day and night (for example every half an hour) to help people save money by using electricity at cheaper times. If this was available to you, how likely would your household be to switch to it?

Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,474)

While a smaller proportion of people aged under 25 and over said they were very or fairly likely to switch (45%, compared with 66% of those aged over 25), this was largely explained by higher rates of ‘don’t know’ among younger people (35% of those aged 16 to 24 said this compared with 11% of those over 25). Older people aged 55 or over were more likely than those aged under 55 to say they would be unlikely to switch to a dynamic tariff (25%, compared with 19%).

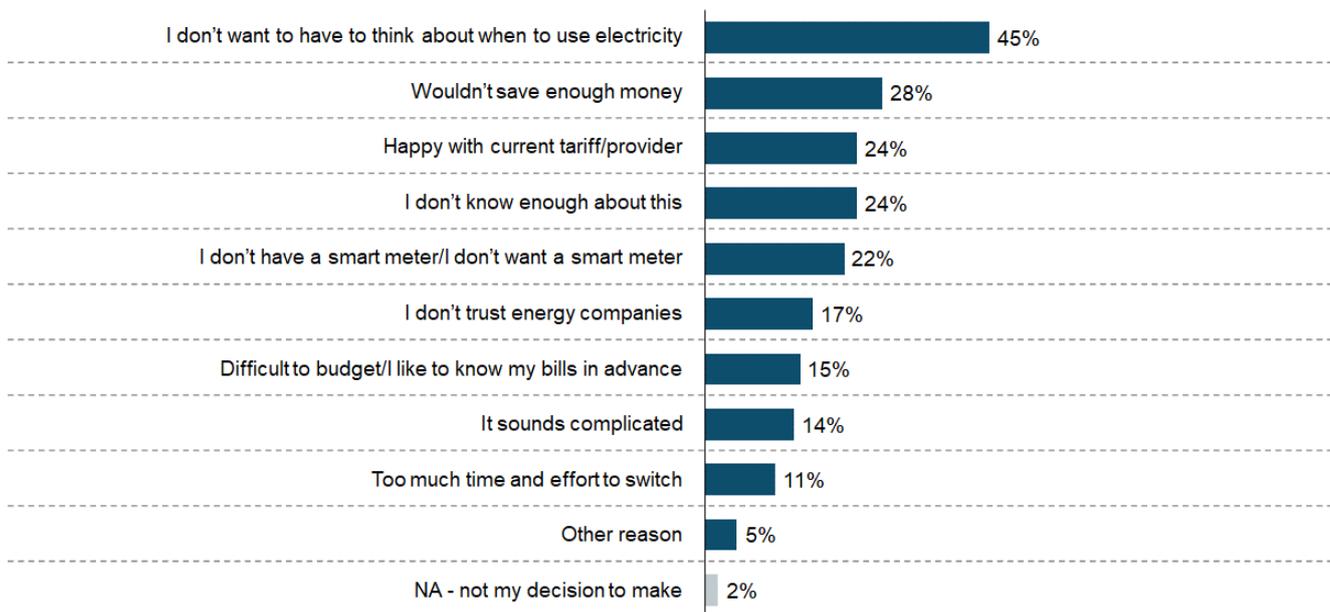
People who were very concerned about climate change were more likely to be open to switching to a dynamic electricity tariff (68% said they would be likely to switch to this compared with 50% who were not concerned about climate change).²

² All subgroup differences relating to the likelihood of switching to a dynamic electricity tariff have been rebased to all respondents, including those on an agile tariff now or not on the grid.

Reasons for not wanting to switch to dynamic ‘time of use’ tariff

People who said they were unlikely to move to a dynamic tariff were asked about their reasons for this. In Summer 2022, the main barrier to dynamic tariffs was not wanting to think about when to use electricity (45%) (Figure 6.5). Other barriers, each cited by around a quarter of those unlikely to switch, included not saving enough money (28%), being happy with their current tariff (24%), a lack of knowledge (24%) and not having or wanting a smart meter (22%). Lack of trust of energy companies was a barrier for 17%, with lack of ability to budget a barrier for 15% of this subgroup.

Figure 6.5: Reasons unlikely to switch to dynamic electricity tariff (based on those unlikely to switch), Summer 2022



WHYNOTOUT. You said you would be unlikely to switch to a flexible ‘time of use’ tariff. Why is this? Please select all that apply.

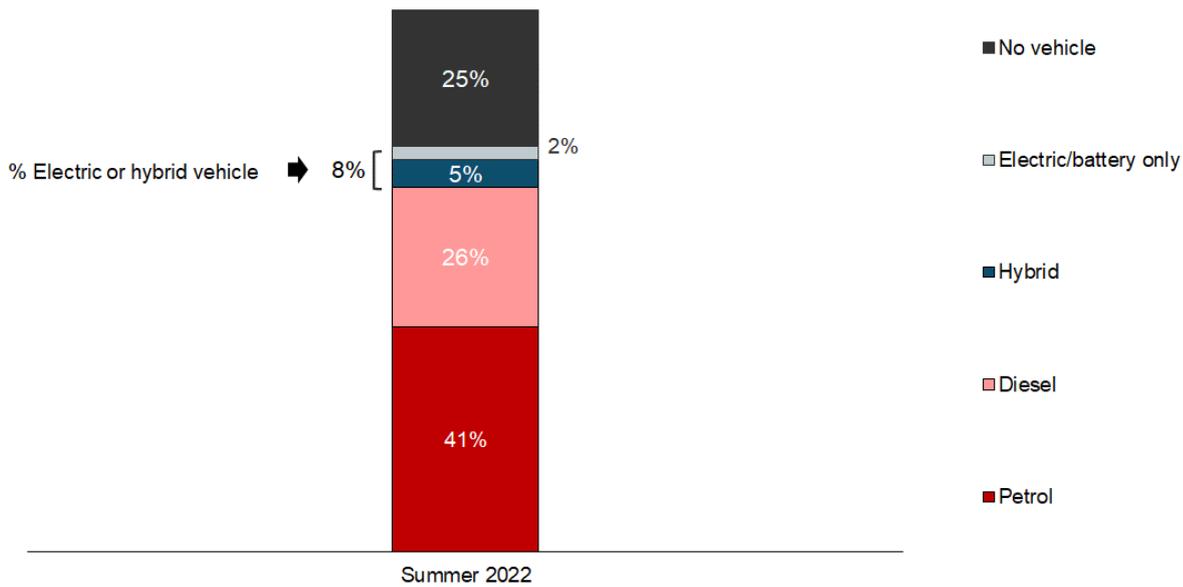
Base: All wave respondents not currently on an agile tariff and unlikely to switch – Summer 2022 (1,002)

Smart electric vehicle charging

Vehicle ownership

In Summer 2022, three-quarters of people (75%) said they owned or had regular use of a car or van (Figure 7.1). Based on the vehicle used most often (if more than one), petrol (41%) and diesel (26%) vehicles were most common, while 8% of people had regular use of an electric or hybrid vehicle (EV): 4% non plug-in hybrids, 1% plug-in hybrids and 2% fully electric.

Figure 7.1: Vehicle ownership (based on all people), Summer 2022



VEHICOWN. Do you personally own or have regular use of a car or van? Please include any company cars that are also driven for private use. VEHICTYPE. [Thinking about the car or van which you use most often] What type of car or van is this? HYBRIDTYPE. What type of hybrid car or van is this?
Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,483)

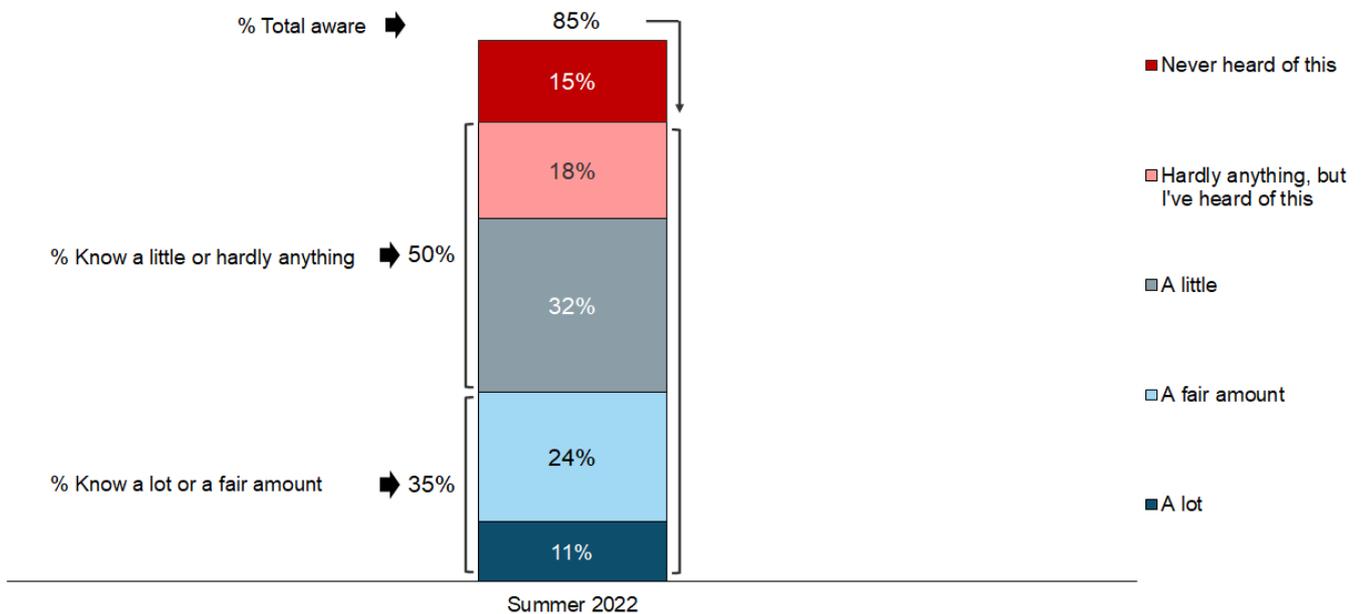
Awareness of Electric vehicle (EV) smart charging

Respondents were provided with the following explanation about EV smart charging before asking for their awareness of this concept:

Smart electric vehicle charging is a way of charging an electric vehicle (EV) at times when demand for electricity is lower, for example at night. Charging during these off-peak times can help reduce costs for EV drivers by using cheaper energy rates. It can also help reduce periods of high demand for electricity from the national grid (the system which distributes electricity throughout the country).

In Summer 2022, 85% of people said they were aware of EV smart charging, although half of people only knew a little or hardly anything (50%). Just over a third (35%) said they knew a lot or a fair amount, while 11% said they knew a lot (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Awareness of EV smart charging (based on all people), Summer 2022



EVSMARTKNOW. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about the concept of smart electric vehicle charging?

Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,466)

Awareness of smart EV charging was higher among car users (87% compared with 79% of non-users). Among vehicle users, the proportion who knew at least fair amount about smart charging was higher for those driving an EV (58%) compared with a hybrid (43%), diesel (38%) or petrol vehicle (34%).

There were differences in both awareness and levels of knowledge by gender and housing tenure. Men were more likely to say they know at least a fair amount (41%, compared with 29% of women), as were private renters (42%, compared with 35% of those in owner-occupier households and 27% of social renters). People aged 65 or over were least likely to know at least a fair amount about smart EV charging (22%, compared with 39% of people aged under 65).

Energy smart appliances

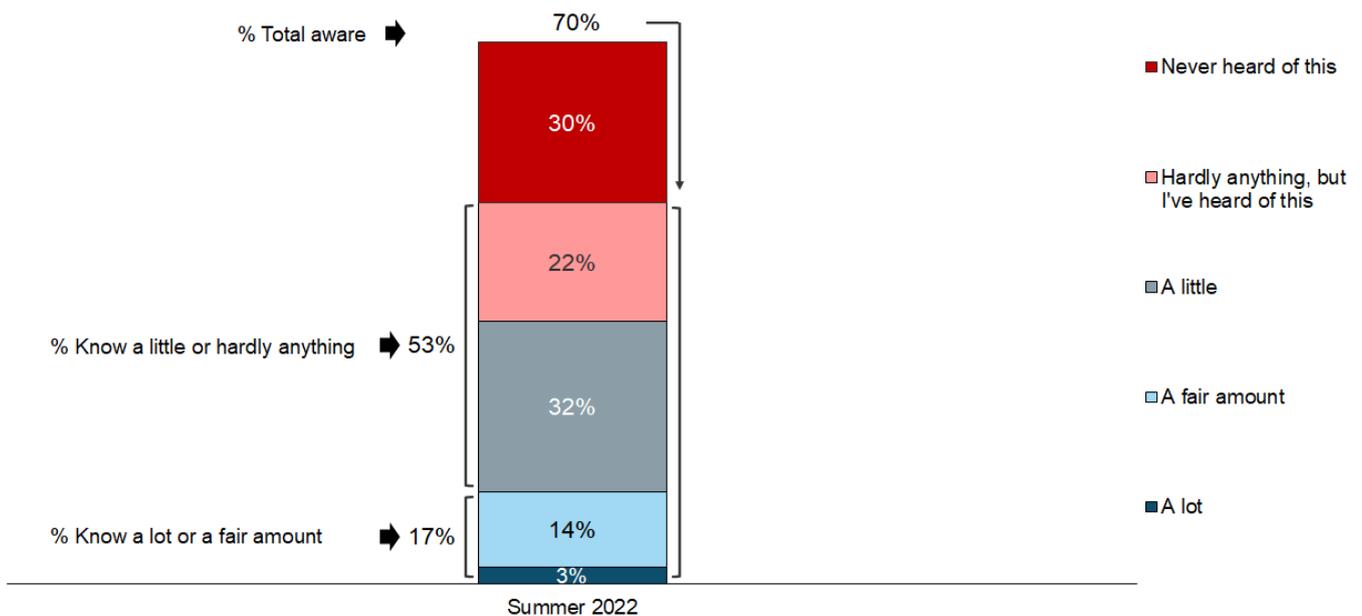
Awareness of energy smart appliances

Respondents were provided with the following explanation about energy smart appliances before asking for their awareness of these:

New types of so-called ‘energy-smart’ appliances are becoming available. An energy smart appliance (for example washing machine, dishwasher) is a particular type of smart appliance which works with your smart meter and allows your energy supplier to run it at the cheapest times. If it suits you, you could still decide to run your appliance at another time. This will help people reduce their energy bills by changing the way in which they manage their household energy use.

In Summer 2022, 70% of people said they were aware of energy smart appliances although over half of people (53%) knew only a little or hardly anything (Figure 8.1). Only 3% said they knew a lot about energy smart appliances with 17% saying they knew at least a fair amount.

Figure 8.1: Awareness of energy smart appliances (based on all people), Summer 2022



SMAPPKNOW. Before today, how much, if anything, did you know about these types of energy smart appliances?

Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,486)

There were differences in the level of awareness and knowledge of energy smart appliances by age and gender. For example, men were more likely to say they were aware of energy smart appliances (74%, compared with 67% of women) as were people aged under 45 (76%, compared with 70% of those aged 45 to 64 and 59% of those aged 65 and over).

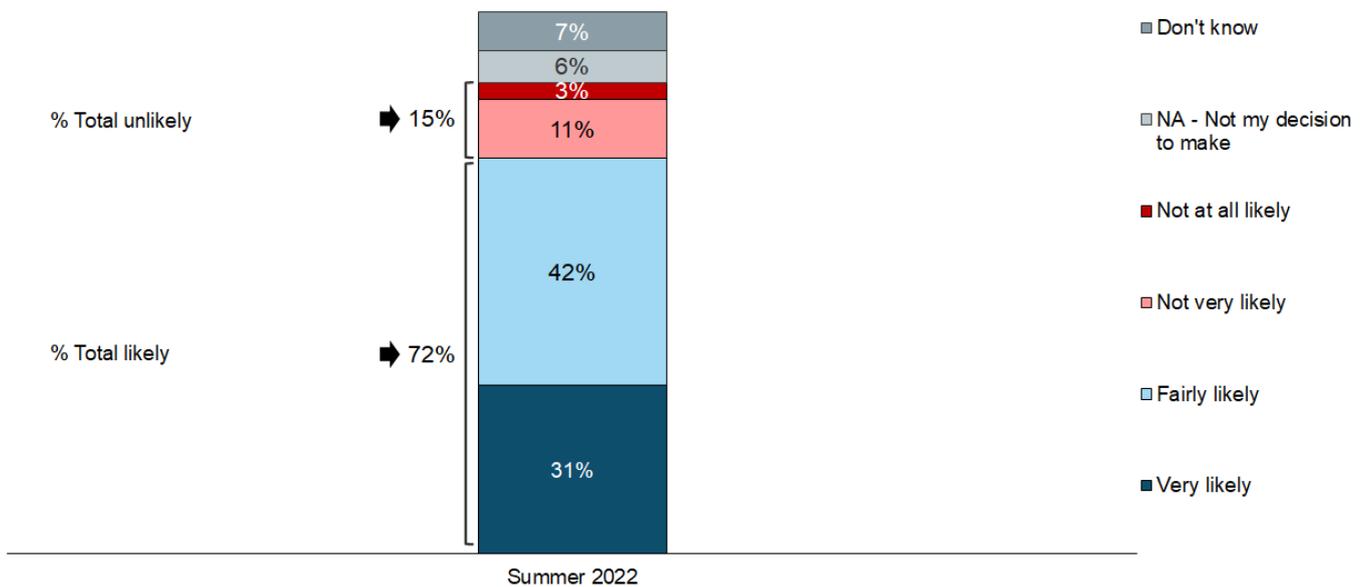
Private renters were more likely to be aware of these appliances (76%) compared to those living in owner-occupier households (69%). Awareness was also higher in households with more than one adult (72%, compared with 64% of single-adult households) and in households with children (75%, compared with 68% of households with no children).

Likelihood of purchasing energy smart appliances

In Summer 2022, based on the description provided within the survey, 72% of people said they would be likely to purchase energy smart appliances next time they needed to buy or replace an appliance to help reduce their energy bills (Figure 8.2), with 31% saying they were very likely to do so. Relatively few (15%) said they would be unlikely to make such a purchase.

Among those who classed themselves as the sole or joint household decision maker, 76% said they were likely to make such a purchase, which compares to 59% of non-household decision makers.

Figure 8.2: Likelihood of purchasing energy smart appliances (based on all people), Summer 2022



SMAPPLIKELY. Thinking about when you next need to buy or replace an appliance (for example washing machine, dishwasher), how likely would you be to purchase an energy smart appliance like this to help reduce the cost of your household's energy bills?

Base: All wave respondents – Summer 2022 (4,488)

People aged 35 and over were more likely to say they were very likely to buy an energy smart appliance (34%, compared with 28% of those aged 25 to 34 and 16% of those under 25).

A greater proportion of people living in households with a smart meter said they were very likely to purchase an energy smart appliance (36%, compared with 28% in other households).



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