

Is your home still behaving badly?

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insulation **Is your home still behaving badly?** On a recent sort out I found some old publications. Its interesting to look back at this older stuff to see what's come to pass and what hasn't. I have written on one about electric cars recently. I found this publication "*Is your home still behaving badly?*" from the Energy Saving Trust". Its an energy advice pamphlet from ordinary people from 2002. **Energy costs.** The average house uses £590 pounds - far too much (2002)! Now its over double that (2018)! However given the amount that energy has gone up since then there is some evidence for the assertion that energy costs would be even higher if many of us had not taken some energy efficiency measures in the meanwhile. **Lights.** Technology has moved on a lot in the last 16 years. The talk then was all about compact fluorescents. The example costs given are impressive and even with electricity prices at 7p a unit would pay for themselves and more over their life. The light was poor compared with incandescent bulbs and they needed to warm-up. They improved on all counts though. I've got rid off almost all them and replaced them with LED's, then a distant dream. I found they gradually put out less and less light. **White goods.** Sorted. Thanks to the energy rating system. Try buying anything less than an A rated, you'll struggle. Same for computers/TV's/anything everything you buy is much more energy efficient. **Heating.** Mixed I think. Boilers are all A rated at least and condensing models. There were a lot of issues over reliability (probably due the mix of electronics and heat) but that is said to have improved. Most people have thermostatic radiator valves fitted and better controls (both recommendations). How people use their heating is another matter though. Much depends on insulation. **Insulation.** This an area where there is still much to do. Many houses still do not have much in the way of insulation in the loft. Certainly in the millions in the UK. Cavity wall insulation has proved very controversial with damp problems and government support has waxed and waned. Pipe and tank insulation is another area where more needs to be done. Many people simply cannot be bothered with any of this and it can be disruptive. One big innovation since 2002 is loft insulation made form recycled plastic, much nicer to work with. **Double glazing.** Still not economic despite increases in gas prices, people tend to replace single windows with it when required. That's the way it will go. Can be a problem still in conservation areas and old houses. **Lifestyle.** How you use all the above will dictate your energy use. The average energy bill and the drop in electricity consumption does suggest people are slowly learning to live more energy efficient lives. Neil

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