

This fact sheet has been developed by the Walsall Energy Action Project to help give a better understanding of energy conservation and to highlight the potential savings from making marginal gains in our home. For more information please visit one of our partner community hubs, where you can find help and support and access one of our libraries of inspiration.

What are Marginal Gains?

The idea of marginal gains were popularised by Sir Dave Brailsford, who was performance director for British Cycling from 2003. His idea was that if you could break everything down that you could think of that goes into riding a bike, and improve it by **1%**, you will get significant increases when you put them all together.

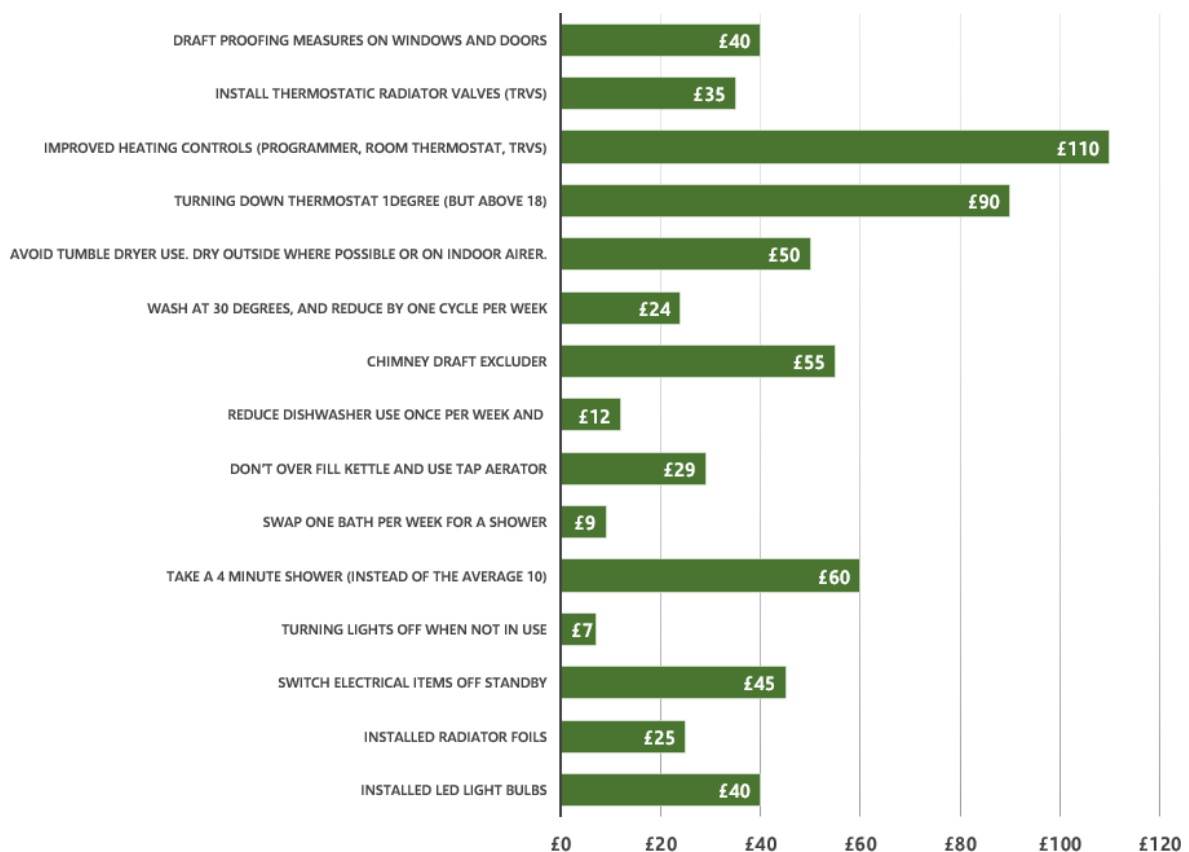
Through Brailsford's stewardship the Great British Cycling team led the cycling medal table at both the 2008 and 2012 Olympics.

The same marginal gains approach can be applied in our homes to **conserve energy**. If we try to look at all areas where we use energy in our home, and make **small improvements** where we can, they could all **add up** to help to make a larger overall saving. Helping to **save money, energy and the environment**.



How much could you save?

Below are a list of energy saving measures, tips and technologies and the estimated savings you could expect to make in one year.



The savings are based on a typical three bedroom semi detached house on a standard energy tariff paying by direct debit. ⁽¹⁾ Data sourced January 2025 from energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/

'It's like Blackpool illuminations in here'

The above saying is something many of us would have heard when we left the 'big light' on by mistake. But when thinking of **marginal gains**, what if we all turned the 'big light' off when we didn't need it, how much energy would we save nationally?

In a recent survey of 2000 adults by 100 Green⁽²⁾, they recorded that on average the lights were left on unnecessarily for 3 hours 36 seconds per day. That's over **1095 hours per year!**

The average light bulb uses 11w to keep on, that's about **12.05kWh** per home, per year wasted from one bulb, and there are **28.2 million** homes in the UK.

Its estimated that the Blackpool illuminations use an estimated **960,000kWh** of electricity each year.

So if we all turned the 'big light' off when we didn't need it, we could power the Blackpool illuminations for an astonishing **354 years!**



Did you know that some devices use energy even when they are on standby. These are known a '**Vampire Devices**'. They use and waste energy when we're not using them. Its estimated if everyone in England turned these devices off when we didn't need them, in **one year** it would collectively **save over £1billion**, and enough energy to electrically power **over 1,7million homes!**

That's nearly every home in the West Midlands, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent combined! ⁽³⁾

Find out more

Our aim at for the WEAP is to build a sustainable, climate-resilient and net-zero Walsall **together**. We are offering free 1-2-1 Energy and Climate Advice sessions and free Home Energy Advice visits.

If you would like to find out more about ways you can reduce your carbon footprint and save energy at home, please contact your nearest partner hub below.

WEAP Partner Community Hubs

Ryecroft Community Hub, WS3 1TR

Tel: **01922 626693**

Darlaston All Active, WS10 8AA

Tel: **0121 568 6144**

Aaina Community Hub, WS1 3BS

Tel: **01922 644006**

Nash Dom CIC, WS1 4AL

Tel: **01922 616444**

Brownhills Community Association, WS8 7JS

Tel: **01543 452119**

Bloxwich Library / Launchpad, WS3 2DA

weap@walsall.gov.uk

Sources

1. Data sourced January 2025 from webpage "Quick tips to save energy at home - Energy Saving Trust" energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/
2. What could the UK do with light energy waste? | 100Green www.greenenergyuk.com/blog/news/uk-light-energy-waste
Blackpool Illuminations Facts - www.visitblackpool.com/things-to-do/blackpool-illuminations-and-lightpool/25-blackpool-illuminations-facts/
3. Vampire devices
Estimated cost saving per household (£45) - [Energy saving trust. energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/)
Average price per kwh = 24.86p kwh www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households
Estimated annual electricity usage per household = 2700kwh www.ofgem.gov.uk/average-gas-and-electricity-usage
Total dwellings in England. 25,396,447 www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dwelling-stock-estimates-in-england-2023
No. dwellings in West Midlands 1,204,034 (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton)
No. dwellings in Staffordshire 399,436
No. dwellings in Stoke on Trent 118,450
Method
Estimated annual energy saving per household = 4500p / 24.86p kwh = 181 kwh
Estimated annual energy saving in England = 25,396,447 x 181 kwh = 4,597,104,243 kwh
Estimated number of dwellings this could power for one year = 4,597,104,243 / 2700 = 1,702,631 dwellings
Total dwellings in West Midlands, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent = 1,721,920

