

# Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)

[www.ofgem.gov.uk/drhi](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/drhi)

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Domestic



## Frequently Asked Questions

Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive  
(RHI) FAQs about Energy Performance  
Certificates (EPCs)

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# Energy performance Certificates: the basics

## Introduction

**Alongside reading these FAQs, make sure you've read our [Essential Guide for Applicants](#) and have understood what you need to do to before you apply.**

This document contains answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for people intending to apply to the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) or currently receiving Domestic RHI payments. This document provides guidance on different situations and scenarios you may encounter with your EPC.

EPCs indicate how energy efficient a building is and recommend specific ways to improve the efficiency of your property. Your EPC gives your property a rating from very efficient to inefficient. It also lets property occupiers know how costly it will be to light and heat their property, as well as what its carbon dioxide emissions are estimated to be. Please [see Question 5](#) to learn more on EPC ratings.

We've designed these FAQs to support you in completing your Domestic RHI application correctly and to reduce the chances of your application going into manual review.

The EPC is used by us to:

- determine whether the property can be considered domestic or not,
- provide evidence that loft and cavity wall insulation measures aren't required, and
- provide an estimate of the heat demand in kilowatt hours (kWh) for the property being assessed.

For your EPC to be eligible for the Domestic RHI, it must not be older than 24 months. Your EPC also needs to accurately reflect information about your property at the time you apply. If you've undertaken construction work on your property, you may need to get a new EPC to ensure it reflects your property correctly at the point you apply to the scheme.

## 1. What is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?

It's a legal requirement to get an EPC every time you buy, sell or rent a property. The EPC shows you the estimated heating, lighting and hot water costs, and carbon emissions released over three years. The EPC gives you recommendations about how you can reduce energy use and costs. With an EPC you can compare the energy efficiency ratings of homes across the UK.

Find more information from the Government website on [Buying or selling your home](#).

## 2. Why do I need to get an EPC for the Domestic RHI?

Under the scheme regulation, you need a domestic EPC to join the Domestic RHI scheme. Your property's EPC gives us the proof we need that it's a domestic residential building and provides us with the details we need to calculate Domestic RHI payments. Without one, you won't be able to apply and can't join the scheme

### 3. Where can I get my EPC from?

There are websites where you can check to see if you have an existing EPC for your property:

- for England and Wales, see the [Landmark Register](#), or
- for Scotland, see the [Scottish EPC Register](#).

If your property doesn't have an existing EPC, and you're unsure whether you'll be able to get a domestic one, you may wish to talk to an EPC assessor directly. To find a EPC assessor for your property:

- for England and Wales, see [Find a EPC assessor](#) on the Landmark Register, or
- for Scotland, see the [Scottish EPC Register](#).

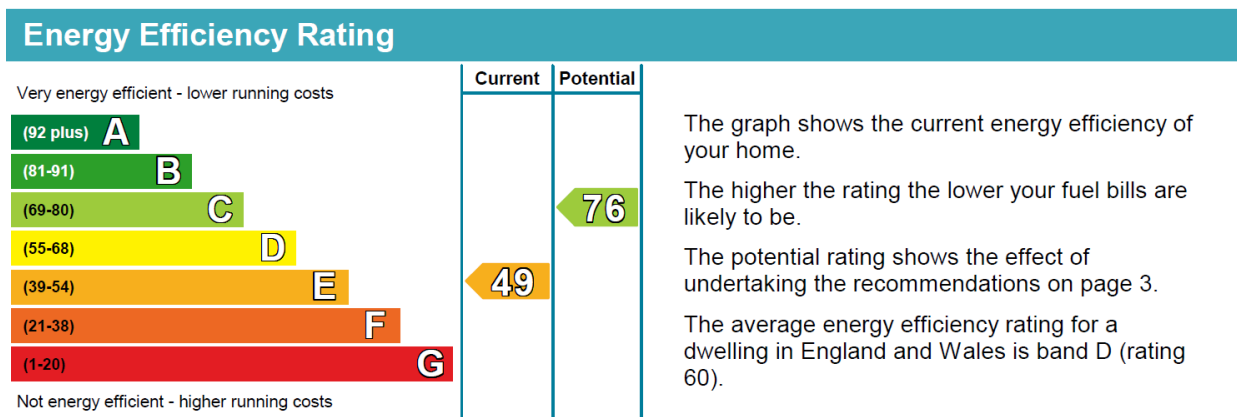
### 4. How long is my EPC valid for?

An EPC is valid for ten years. However, for the Domestic RHI, we require a domestic EPC that is less than 24 months old at the date of your application to the scheme.

Your EPC needs to accurately reflect information about your home at the time you apply, so if you've undertaken construction work on your property you may need to get a new EPC to ensure it reflects your current circumstances.


### 5. My property has received an A/B/C/D/E/F/G rating on the EPC; that does this mean?

The EPC tells you how energy efficient your house is and gives it a rating from A (very efficient) to G (inefficient). You may be familiar with this rating system from other domestic appliances in your house.



## 6. What details do you use from my EPC?

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)



17 Any Street, District, Any Town, B5 5XX

**Dwelling type:** Detached house

**Date of assessment:** 15 August 2011

**Date of certificate:** 13 March 2012

**Reference number:** 0919-9628-8430-2785-5996

**Type of assessment:** RdSAP, existing dwelling

**Total floor area:** 165 m<sup>2</sup>

**Use this document to:**

- Compare current ratings of properties to see which properties are more energy efficient
- Find out how you can save energy and money by installing improvement measures

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Estimated energy costs of dwelling for 3 years</b> | <b>£5,367</b> |
| <b>Over 3 years you could save</b>                    | <b>£2,865</b> |

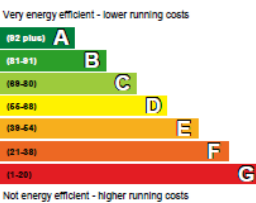
Estimated energy costs of this home

|                | Current costs       | Potential costs     | Potential future savings   |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Lighting       | £375 over 3 years   | £207 over 3 years   | <div style="background-color: #548235; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <b>You could save £2,865 over 3 years</b> </div> |
| Heating        | £4,443 over 3 years | £2,073 over 3 years |  |
| Hot water      | £549 over 3 years   | £222 over 3 years   |  |
| <b>Totals:</b> | <b>£5,367</b>       | <b>£2,502</b>       |  |

These figures show how much the average household would spend in this property for heating, lighting and hot water. This excludes energy use for running appliances like TVs, computers and cookers, and any electricity generated by microgeneration.

Energy Efficiency Rating

Very energy efficient - lower running costs



Not energy efficient - higher running costs

| Current | Potential |
|---------|-----------|
| 49      | 76        |

The graph shows the current energy efficiency of your home.

The higher the rating the lower your fuel bills are likely to be.

The potential rating shows the effect of undertaking the recommendations on page 3.

The average energy efficiency rating for a dwelling in England and Wales is band D (rating 60).

Recommendations

The measures below will improve the energy performance of your dwelling. The performance ratings after improvements listed below are cumulative, that is, they assume the improvements have been installed in the order that they appear in the table. Further information about the recommended measures and other simple actions you could take today to save money is available at [www.direct.gov.uk/savingenergy](http://www.direct.gov.uk/savingenergy). Before installing measures, you should make sure you have secured the appropriate permissions, where necessary. Such permissions might include permission from your landlord (if you are a tenant) or approval under Building Regulations for certain types of work.

Measures with a green tick ✓ are likely to be fully financed through the Green Deal, when the scheme launches, since the cost of the measures should be covered by the energy they save. Additional support may be available for homes where solid wall insulation is recommended. If you want to take up measures with an orange tick ⚠, be aware you may need to contribute some payment up-front.

| Recommended measures                      | Indicative cost | Typical savings per year | Rating after improvement | Green Deal finance |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Increase loft insulation to 270 mm        | £100 - £350     | £47                      | E 51                     | ✓                  |
| Cavity wall insulation                    | £500 - £1,500   | £179                     | D 59                     | ✓                  |
| Draught proofing                          | £80 - £120      | £26                      | D 60                     | ✓                  |
| Low energy lighting for all fixed outlets | £50             | £43                      | D 61                     |                    |

Your home's heat demand

For most homes, the vast majority of energy costs derive from heating the home. Where applicable, this table shows the energy that could be saved in this property by insulating the loft and walls, based on typical energy use (shown within brackets as it is a reduction in energy use).

| Heat demand                  | Existing dwelling | Impact of loft insulation | Impact of cavity wall insulation | Impact of solid wall insulation |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Space heating (kWh per year) | 22,154            | (1179)                    | (4535)                           | N/A                             |
| Water heating (kWh per year) | 2,792             |                           |                                  |                                 |

### 1. Reference number

We use your EPC Reference number and automatically import the publically available data from the relevant register into our system to process your application.

### 2. Date of certificate

We need to check whether your EPC was completed in the last 24 months and, in the case of a [custom-build](#) property that it was issued after your house was completed.

### 3. Type of assessment

We check if your property is a new or existing domestic residential building. Properties are assessed using **RdSAP** (Reduced Standard Assessment Procedure) or **SAP** (Standard Assessment Procedure). To see how your property will be assessed, jump to [Question 11](#). Find out more about the Standard Assessment Procedure on the [HM Government website](#).

### 4. Recommendations

We check your assessor's recommendations on how to improve your energy efficiency rating. If these include cavity wall and/or loft insulation, you'll need to make these improvements and then get a new EPC before we can continue with your application, unless your property is exempt from requiring this insulation (see [Question 18](#)).

### 5. Your home's heat demand

We'll use your estimated space heating and, if applicable, your estimated water heating demand for the year. We use this heat demand figure, or the annual [heat demand limit](#) - whichever figure is lower - to calculate your Domestic RHI payments. The heat demand limit caps the financial support that you can receive for their annual heat use. This is to ensure subsidies represent good value for money in order to protect the public purse.

## Getting an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

### 7. What is meant by a 'domestic' EPC?

A domestic EPC is one that's issued for a property on the basis that it's a residential building.

If your residential building includes a home office or studio etc, you may be able to apply to the Domestic RHI, provided you can get a domestic EPC (and meet other eligibility criteria – see the [Essential Guide for Applicants](#) for more information). For more information, read [our key term](#).

The relevant [Energy Performance of Buildings \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2012](#) and [Energy Performance of Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2008](#) set out the energy efficiency requirements of buildings.

### 8. Can I get an EPC before my house is completed even though I only have minor completion works to do and already live in the property?

For the Domestic RHI scheme, you'll need to complete all of your construction work before getting a domestic EPC. If you get an EPC during the construction work, referred to as Predicted Energy Assessments (PEAs), it won't be able to accurately reflect the final state of the property, so we can't accept it. We'll always ask you to provide us with the most recent valid EPC available for your property.

### 9. How do I find out if my heating system heats more than one property?

If your heating system provides heat to more than one domestic property, you won't be eligible for the Domestic RHI scheme. We may consider it to be providing heat to another property if one of the buildings:

- is rented out or let separately;
- is covered by a separate address;
- is subject to business rates;
- has a separate council tax bill; or,
- has a separate domestic EPC.

If your renewable technology provides heat to more than one property, you may be eligible for the Non-Domestic RHI. For more information on the [Non-Domestic RHI scheme](#), please see the [eligibility criteria](#) for the Non-Domestic RHI.

## 10. When should my EPC use the SAP or the RdSAP methods?

If your property was built after 1 May 2007 in Scotland or after 6 April 2008 in England and Wales, and was built within 24 months of applying for the Domestic RHI scheme, your property should have an EPC produced using the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) assessment method.

If your property was built more than two years before your application to the Domestic RHI scheme, then you'll need to get a new EPC, which will use RdSAP method.

RdSAP stands for Reduced Data Standard Assessment Procedure. It's used for existing properties that were completed before these dates, or if your property was built more than two years before your application to the Domestic RHI.

Generally, RdSAP shouldn't be used in support of a Domestic RHI application for the following residential buildings:

- a new-build that is less than 24 months old
- a new-build or a converted building (change of use)
- multi residential buildings (eg halls of residence, nursing homes and hotels that are commercial buildings)

SAP and RdSAP are the only official Government approved methods to assess and compare the energy ratings and environmental performance of properties.

If you have queries, please speak to your EPC assessor. To find an EPC assessor for your property:

- for England and Wales, see [Find a Domestic Energy assessor](#) on the Landmark Register, or

for Scotland, see [Search for EPC assessor](#) on the Scottish EPC Register.

## 11. My original property was built before 1 May 2007 in Scotland or 6 April 2008 in England and Wales and I have added extensions to my property after these dates. Which assessment method will be used to calculate my property's heat demand?

If your property was constructed before these dates but you've extended the property after these dates, your EPC assessor may use RdSAP or SAP to calculate your property's heat demand. To learn more about which method is used, please contact your EPC assessor. If an EPC assessment has already been carried out, the name and contact information for the assessor can be found on your EPC

## 12. I have a converted garage; do I need a separate EPC?

If your main house and converted garage have a shared entrance and they share cooking and bathroom facilities, your converted garage can be included in the EPC assessment of your property.

If your converted garage is self-contained and has its own entrance, cooking and bathroom facilities, it needs a separate EPC. Providing heat to multiple properties from a single heat source isn't allowed under the Domestic RHI scheme, but you may be eligible to the [Non-Domestic RHI scheme](#).



### 13. My heating system provides heat to more than one property/unit with different uses or purposes (eg a domestic flat above a commercial shop). Can I apply for the Domestic RHI?

If your renewable technology provides heat to a main house and outbuildings that are part of the same property, and are included in one domestic EPC, you can apply for the Domestic RHI. Examples could include garages, pool houses, sheds, games rooms and gyms.

If your domestic property has a commercial use, which is **not** covered by the domestic EPC, but is **also** heated by your renewable technology, you may be eligible for the Domestic RHI as long as all the eligibility criteria are met. Examples could include agricultural buildings, shops, hospitality, commercial greenhouses, workshops or offices. However, you may wish to consider applying for the [Non-Domestic RHI scheme](#).

If your domestic property also has a commercial use which *is* included in your domestic EPC, you may still be eligible for the Domestic RHI scheme, as long as all the eligibility criteria are met. In this scenario, you may be required to have meters installed so we can measure the heat provided to the domestic part of the property only. Or, depending on the purpose of the non-domestic part of the property, you may be eligible to receive deemed payments. Any questions about your property and the heating system design should be sent to [DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk).

### 14. I have a Grade I or II listed building and my EPC assessor said I'm exempt from getting an EPC; do I need one to apply for the Domestic RHI?

Yes, you still need to get a domestic EPC to be eligible for the Domestic RHI, even if your property is exempt for other reasons listed by the Government in the '[Buying or selling your home](#)' section.

### 15. I have a houseboat; am I eligible?

No, you need to get a domestic EPC to be eligible for the Domestic RHI.

At this time the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) assessment method does not support the creation of domestic EPCs for houseboats. Unless this changes, domestic EPCs should not be issued to houseboats and as such they're not eligible for the Domestic RHI.

### 16. I have a park home; am I eligible?

EPCs may be created for park homes.

## 17. Why do I have to have cavity wall/loft insulation? What if I can't install it?

Renewable heating systems are at their most efficient when installed in a home that is already well-insulated. If loft and/or cavity wall insulation are recommended in your EPC, you must install them before you apply for the Domestic RHI.

However, we understand that there are some circumstances in which this may not be possible. In such circumstances, you'll need to complete an [exemption form](#) signed by a suitably qualified professional.

Reasons for insulation exemption may include:

- your property is a listed building;
- your property is in a conservation area;
- your property houses a protected species that would be materially impacted by insulation;
- local environmental conditions;
- the structure of your building; and/or,
- it would be otherwise unlawful.

Suitably qualified professionals are:

- The local planning authority;
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England;
- Historic Scotland;
- Cadw;
- Natural England;
- Scottish Natural Heritage;
- The Natural Resources Body for Wales;
- A chartered ecologists report; and/or,
- A chartered surveyor's report

See [here](#) for a full list of insulation exemptions and the evidence we'll ask for before we can approve your application.

## 18. What if I can't get an EPC?

You must have a domestic EPC to be able to apply to the Domestic RHI scheme. There are some buildings that don't need an EPC according to the [Energy Performance of Buildings \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2012](#) and [Energy Performance of Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2008](#), but it's still a requirement for the Domestic RHI scheme.

If your property isn't capable of getting a domestic EPC then you aren't eligible for the Domestic RHI. You may wish to consider applying for the [Non-Domestic RHI scheme](#).

## 19. What are the recent changes to EPC requirements?

**On 1 April 2018 a new minimum standard for properties rented out in the private sector was introduced:**

From 1 April 2018 there will be a requirement for new lets and renewals of properties rented out in the private sector to have a minimum energy efficiency rating of E on an EPC. From 1 April 2020 the minimum standard of an energy efficiency rating of E on an EPC will apply to all existing tenancies. It will be unlawful to rent a property which breaches the requirement for a minimum E rating, unless there is an applicable exemption. Refer to the [Energy Performance of Buildings \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2012](#) and [Energy Performance of Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2008](#) for detailed information.

Please note this is not a requirement for the Domestic RHI, but for your general knowledge.

## Ofgem asked me to get a new EPC

### 20. My EPC is more than two years old but nothing has changed; do I really need to get a new EPC?

Yes, you do.

At Ofgem, we administer the Domestic RHI scheme on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and we need to make sure everyone receives the right payments, to help protect the public purse. Because our payments are based on the EPC, or the [heat demand limit](#) - whichever is lower. We need to make sure they reflect the most accurate energy efficiency rating of your home to issue you the correct payments. This is why the scheme Regulations ask for a domestic EPC that accurately reflects information about your home, and is less than 24 months old at the time of application.

### 21. Ofgem requested a new EPC even though I just got a new one; can I refuse?

If we have reason to believe that the information on your EPC is incorrect, we may ask you to provide us with a new EPC. Should this occur, we'll be happy to explain to you our reasons why we believe a new EPC is needed. If we request a new EPC, you must provide this so that we can consider your eligibility for the scheme – refusing to do so will mean that we don't have all the information required, and we won't be able to accredit you to the scheme. You have the right to submit a [Right of Review request](#) for a decision Ofgem has made.

### 22. If I add more insulation to my house after joining the Domestic RHI, will my RHI payments change?

No, if your RHI payment is calculated from your annual heat demand listed on your EPC, your payments won't be adjusted post-accreditation for improvements you make to your property, provided the information on the original EPC was correct at the time of application.

If you're being metered for payment you may see a reduction in your heat generation because of improved insulation and, as a result, receive lower payments. Find out more about how your RHI payments are calculated in our [Factsheet: Tariffs and Payments](#).

### 23. I have been asked to get a new EPC; how much time do I have to get one?

It depends on the reason we are asking you.

- If we ask you to follow the recommendations on your domestic EPC to add loft and/or cavity wall insulation, you need to send us a new domestic EPC within three months.
- For any other reason you need to send us a new domestic EPC within 28 days.

To find a Domestic Energy assessor for your property:

- for England and Wales, see [Find a Domestic Energy assessor](#) on the Landmark Register, or
- for Scotland, see [Search for EPC assessor](#) on the Scottish EPC Register.

If you can't provide us a new EPC within this timeframe you need to let us know as soon as possible or we may reject or revoke your application.

### 24. I realised the EPC I used to apply for the Domestic RHI was wrong. Can I get my payments changed retrospectively and going forward?

We have a duty to make correct payments to scheme participants as well as help protect the public purse. If you believe that the EPC used as part of your application to us is wrong, we will investigate this on a case-by-case basis to determine what payments should be made to you.

If you discover at any time that the information you used to submit your Domestic RHI was incorrect, you must let us know as soon as possible. This may result in sanctions and/or revocation of your membership from the Domestic RHI scheme.

Please contact us as soon as possible on [DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk) and we'll be able to help you through the process.

## EPC site notes

### 25. What's included in the 'EPC site notes'?

The EPC site notes may include notes of observations, photos as evidence of the observations and a floor plan. As part of our application reviews and/or audits we may request to see EPC site notes recorded by your assessor. We will notify you if we wish to see copies of these and you'll need to ask your assessor if they're willing to forward them to us.

### 26. Do I have to pay the EPC assessor to send me the EPC site notes?

This is a matter between you and your assessor. Some EPC assessors may charge an admin fee for EPC site notes. If you don't have the site notes and we request copies of them, please contact your EPC assessor. Your EPC assessor's contact details are on your EPC (see below).

#### About this document

The Energy Performance Certificate for this dwelling was produced following an energy assessment undertaken by a qualified assessor, accredited by AAA Energy Assessors Ltd. You can get contact details of the accreditation scheme at [www.aaa.co.uk](http://www.aaa.co.uk), together with details of their procedures for confirming authenticity of a certificate and for making a complaint. A copy of this EPC has been lodged on a national register. It will be publicly available and some of the underlying data may be shared with others for the purposes of research, compliance and direct mailing of relevant energy efficiency information. The current property owner and/or tenant may opt out of having this information disclosed.

**Assessor's accreditation number:** AAA\_123456  
**Assessor's name:** John Smith  
**Phone number:** 030 5555 1234  
**E-mail address:** [john.smith@isp.net](mailto:john.smith@isp.net)  
**Related party disclosure:** No related party

Further information about Energy Performance Certificates can be found under Frequently Asked Questions at [www.epcregister.com](http://www.epcregister.com).

*This is an extract from an example EPC.*

For legal reasons, some EPC assessors may be unable to pass on the site notes to you. In this case, please let us know as soon as possible.

## Guide Material

We update our guide material regularly. Check the website for the latest versions, to be sure you're reading the most up-to-date information.

See our website:

[Domestic RHI](#)      [Non-Domestic RHI](#)

### Domestic RHI Factsheets

[Factsheet: The Renewable Heat Incentive – Domestic or Non-Domestic?](#)  
[Factsheet: A Metering and Monitoring Service Package for the Domestic RHI](#)  
[Factsheet: Tariffs and Payments](#)  
[Factsheet: Do I Need Metering?](#)

### Domestic RHI Essential Guides

[Essential Guide for Applicants](#)  
[Essential Guide for Installers](#)  
[Essential Guide to Metering](#)  
[Essential Guide to Metering and Monitoring Service Packages \(MMSP\)](#)

### Domestic RHI Reference Document

[Domestic RHI Reference Document](#)

## Find out more

### Next steps

See the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

[Domestic RHI Payment Calculator](#)

Ask your installer to fill out and give you:

[Installer Checklist](#)

## For Help

For queries regarding Domestic RHI scheme requirements and eligibility and for free impartial general information on how to save energy in the home:

### Energy Saving Advice Service

(England or Wales) **0300 123 1234**

Calls are charged at the standard national rate

Email [energy-advice@est.org.uk](mailto:energy-advice@est.org.uk)

### Home Energy Scotland

(Scotland) **0808 808 2282**

Calls are free from landlines and most mobile networks

[Online email form](#)

## For consumer protection information:

### Renewable Energy Consumer Code (RECC)

[www.recc.org.uk](http://www.recc.org.uk)

### The Home Insulation and Energy Systems Contractors Scheme (HIES)

[www.hiesscheme.org.uk](http://www.hiesscheme.org.uk)

### The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)

[www.ggf.org.uk](http://www.ggf.org.uk)

## If you need help with a Domestic RHI application:

### Domestic RHI Applicant Support Centre

Telephone: **0300 003 0744**

Email: [DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:DomesticRHI@ofgem.gov.uk)

For opening hours, please see [our website](#).