

59672 Stair and Communal Lighting Electricity Costs

Please provide the total cost (£) incurred by the City of Edinburgh Council for electricity for communal / stair lighting in domestic tenement/common stair blocks where the Council is not the sole owner (i.e. mixed-tenure blocks), including any costs relating to unmetered electricity supplies.

Please provide figures for each of the following financial years, separately: 2020/21 2021/22 2022/23 2023/24 2024/25 For each financial year, please break the total down into:

Unmetered supplies (e.g. unmetered electricity for communal/stair lighting), and (2) Metered supplies (where applicable).

Accounting/ledger detail - for each year, please also provide the ledger account codes, cost centre(s) and/or budget headings used to record these costs (and the descriptions/names of those codes/headings). The scope is electricity costs only (not repairs, maintenance, upgrades, inspections, or administration).

“Not the sole owner” means the block contains one or more privately owned properties (owner-occupier or private landlord), regardless of whether the Council owns any properties in the block.

All supplies of communal stair lighting paid for by the council are unmetered. Electricity costs relating to mixed-tenure blocks are estimated as follows:

2020/21 - £255,000

2021/22 - £322,000

2022/23 - £365,000

2023/24 - £529,000

2024/25 - £658,000

Explanation of unmetered supply arrangements:

I understand that the Council has previously stated that the cost of stair / communal lighting is in the order of £2.1 million per year, and that this is supplied (at least in part) via an unmetered electricity supply. Please therefore also provide:

An explanation of what is meant by an “unmetered supply” in this context and how charges are calculated;

An unmetered supply is provided where it is not possible to install a meter and/or where the energy provider cannot justify the costs of installing a meter because of the small amount of energy being used on an individual asset basis/specific piece of equipment. Energy costs are calculated using estimated consumption linked to predictable loads and regulations. In general terms, usage is determined by multiplying the total wattage of connect equipment by different grouped operating hours e.g. day and night.

The basis on which the Council is billed for unmetered stair lighting (e.g. inventory of fittings, wattage assumptions, burning hours, tariff type, etc.);

The Council is billed for stair lighting on a monthly basis:

- Amenity and dusk to dawn burning lighting
- Dusk to midnight burning lighting
- TV, Door entry, Warden call, Ventilation
- 24 hour burning lighting

Within the billing, there are the following elements:

- Consumption charges: Charged using nighttime and daytime unit per KWh rates
- Fixed standing charges: Set unit charge
- Industry and 3rd party charges: Unit per KWh rates
- Data collection: Daily unit rate
- Transmission Network Use of System charge: Unit charge per KWh
- Climate levy: Rate per KWh

The electricity supplier(s) used for unmetered communal/stair lighting for each of the years requested;

EDF Energy UK in all requested years.

Whether the Council maintains an inventory or register of unmetered stair lighting points, and if so, a description of how it is kept up to date; and

An asset register has been compiled across approximately 14,000 stairs and covers properties where there are stairs in 100% Council ownership, stairs with Council-majority ownership and private ownership, stairs with 50/50 splits between Council and private ownership, stairs where the Council are in the minority with private ownership and wholly private stairs. An asset register was produced to capture information on fittings, controls, bulbs, timing switches and such. There is a scoping exercise being undertaken at present to determine how best to bring the asset register up to date and this will steer how the exercise will be carried out. The Council stopped adopting stairs some time ago and no longer provides a maintenance service for stair lighting in general.

Any guidance, policy, contract documentation or standard operating procedure that governs the Council's use and payment of unmetered electricity for communal/stair lighting.

Stair lighting in Scotland is regulated to ensure safety, minimize slip/trip hazards, and provide adequate visibility for evacuation. The primary regulations are contained within the Building Standards Technical Handbook (Domestic), specifically Section 4 (Safety) and Section 2 (Fire).

- Minimum Light Levels: Common areas, particularly stairs and landings, must have artificial lighting capable of providing a uniform lighting level at floor level of not less than 100 lux on stair flights and landings.
- Circulation Area Levels: Other communal areas (e.g., corridors) should be lit to a level of at least 50 lux.
- Switch Placement: Any lighting point serving a stair must have control switches at, or in the immediate vicinity of, the stair landing on each storey.
- Automatic Control: A means of automatic control must be provided to ensure lighting is operable during hours of darkness.
- Safety & Design: Lighting must not present sources of glare or create areas of strong shadow that may cause confusion or mis-stepping.

- Emergency Lighting: In buildings containing flats or maisonettes, common escape routes (including stairwells) must be illuminated to assist in evacuation. In high-rise domestic buildings, emergency lighting must be installed in accordance with BS 5266: Part 1: 2016.