

MECC-ZERO

The July 2026 Edition



Working Together to Make Healthier, Safer and Fairer Communities

Welcome to this month's newsletter! We have lots to share, including exciting new green projects, simple ways to keep cool during the summer, helpful tips to save money, and inspiring stories from our local community.

As energy prices continue to affect households and summers become hotter, there is positive news for communities like Balsall Heath. Across Birmingham and the West Midlands, new projects, funding opportunities and community action are helping people reduce bills, improve their homes and prepare for a changing climate.

For many families, older homes can be difficult to keep warm in winter and can become uncomfortable during hot weather. This can be especially surprising for people who are new to the UK, as many British homes were built to keep heat inside.

The good news is that many changes that help save energy can also make homes healthier, more comfortable and cheaper to run all year round.

Whether you want to reduce your bills, make your home healthier, stay active, or get involved in your community, this newsletter has something for you.



WANT TO KEEP UPDATED WITH MECC TRUST? SIGN UP FOR OUR FREE NEWSLETTER AND YOU'LL RECEIVE OUR LATEST EDITION EVERY MONTH IN YOUR INBOX

email: info@mecc-zero.com



DISCLAIMER: This newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not constitute professional advice. Opinions are our own.



Content - July 2026

Important Announcements



Cleaner heating for Birmingham residents
Community energy: a £1 billion opportunity
West midland climate action plan

Community Stories



Greener hospital for Birmingham
Supporting a family through difficult times
Empowering communities

Heat wave guide



Don't suffer through the summer instead try some of these useful cooling hacks

Please make sure you're staying hydrated during this heat



Contact Us



0121 440 3500



www.mecctrust.co.uk

Important Announcements



Breaking Down Barriers: Supporting Warmer Homes Across Birmingham

Through the Household Support Fund (HSF), MECC Trust has supported over 2,500 residents and families across Birmingham with advice and assistance around energy costs, household essentials and financial pressures. To help residents who face language barriers, our trained community advisers provide support in languages including Somali, Amharic, Tigrinya, Farsi, Arabic, Urdu and Pashto, ensuring people can access advice in a way that is clear and culturally appropriate. With support from BVSC, MECC Trust has expanded this specialist language service, helping more residents overcome barriers and access the support they need. This approach is also continuing through the Crisis and Resilience Fund, allowing us to reach more communities and help residents build warmer, healthier and more financially secure homes.

One resident shared:

"Without MECC Trust's support, I would be struggling to pay my bills. I didn't even know this help was available. I don't speak English and I cannot read English, so having someone explain things in my own language and support me made a huge difference."

(Resident supported by MECC Trust through the Household Support Fund)

Simple ways to save energy:

Use electricity wisely
switch off unused lights and appliances

Heat your home efficiently
turn temperatures down where possible

Save hot water
take shorter showers

Save energy in the kitchen
plan meals to reduce food waste

A £1 Billion fund could help power Birmingham's future

There's exciting news for communities like Balsall Heath. The UK Government's **Local Power Plan** will invest up to **£1 billion** to help local communities develop their own clean energy projects. This could support things like solar panels on community centres, schools and places of worship, local energy hubs, battery storage and create new green jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities.

At MECC Trust, we believe local people should be at the heart of these opportunities. That's why our **MECC Net Zero team** is working with residents, community groups and local partners to explore how Balsall Heath can become a greener, healthier and more climate-resilient neighbourhood.

Community energy isn't just about solar panels. It's about reducing energy bills, creating local jobs, improving neighbourhoods and giving communities more say over how energy is produced and used. By working together, we can help keep more of the benefits within Balsall Heath and build a stronger, fairer future for everyone.



Contact Us



0121 440 3500



www.mecctrust.co.uk

Community Stories and events



A greener hospital for Birmingham

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham is upgrading its heating system to cut pollution, save money and make the hospital more energy efficient.

The new system will use heat from underground and reuse waste heat from buildings, supported by solar energy. This will help move the hospital away from gas boilers, which produce higher levels of pollution.

What this means for local people in Balsall Heath and Ladywood

This £14 million project is expected to:

- **Cut carbon emissions by over 4,000 tonnes each year**
- **Save more than £180,000 a year on energy costs**
- **Improve air quality in and around Birmingham**
- **Create cleaner, healthier spaces for patients, staff and visitors**

Better air quality matters for inner-city communities, where people are more likely to be affected by conditions such as asthma, heart and lung disease. Reducing pollution from large buildings like hospitals is one small part of improving long-term health across the city.

Why it matters for the future

Hospitals are some of the biggest public buildings in our city, and changes like this are part of a wider move towards cleaner energy across Birmingham. Over time, this helps reduce pressure on the NHS, supports healthier neighbourhoods, and contributes to a lower-carbon city.

The system is expected to be fully working by **2028**.

Supporting a family through difficult times

After moving from London to Birmingham five years ago, a mother of four children, who is currently expecting her fifth child, found herself living in temporary accommodation and needing support for her family.

Through Clifton School and their Family Support Worker, she was introduced to MECC Trust, where our team was able to provide guidance and support. MECC helped complete an online referral for accommodation transition support and connected the family with the services they needed.

Our support doesn't stop there, the MECC team continues to carry out regular welfare checks and provide ongoing advice, ensuring the family feels supported during this period of change.

At MECC Trust, we are here to help residents access support, navigate challenges, and feel connected within their community.

Client Testimony



----- Abat Belay

It was a nice experience with excellent customer service, specially the women who gave me the service I think her name is Hana she was humble and supportive, I'm glad I had this experience. Thank you.

Empowering communities: From local action to lasting impact

MECC Trust was proud to attend the first annual **"Empowering Communities: From Local Action to Lasting Impact"** conference, bringing together local organisations and community leaders from across Birmingham. The event celebrated the difference that local people and grassroots organisations make every day. Through inspiring talks, workshops and networking, participants explored how communities can work together, influence local decisions and create lasting positive change. For MECC Trust, it was a fantastic opportunity to share our experiences, learn from others and build new partnerships. The conference reinforced something we strongly believe, that **when local people are involved in shaping solutions, we create stronger, healthier and more connected communities.**

Don't sweat it: Mecc's Heatwave Essentials



Staying safe during the summer:

Heatwaves are becoming more common across England, but keeping cool does not have to be expensive.

Try these simple tips:

- **Close curtains or blinds during the hottest part of the day.**
- **Open windows early in the morning and later in the evening when it is cooler.**
- **Drink plenty of water.**
- **Wear light, loose clothing.**
- **Cook earlier in the day or choose cooler meals.**
- **Plants, trees and greenery can provide shade and help cool outdoor spaces.**

Let's look after each other

Hot weather can be difficult for older people, babies, young children and people with health conditions. A quick phone call, message or visit to check on a neighbour can make a big difference.

If you are new to the UK and finding the weather unfamiliar, local organisations like MECC Trust can offer advice and support.

Feeling the heat?

Here Are Some Simple, Low-Cost Ways to Stay Cool:

- Wet a flannel (or if you have one a sports cooling towel) with cold water wring it out and place it on your shoulders or neck it creates an immediate cooling sensation and when it starts to feel a bit warm all you have to do is shake it a bit or re wet it
- Fill a hot water bottle half way up with tap water lay it flat in your freezer for a couple hours before bed, then when you go to bed you can place it where ever you want stays nice and cold for hours - **make sure there is a cover over it DO NOT put it directly onto your skin!**
- This one may seem strange but drinking warm beverages helps regulate body temperature and help cool body temperature by encouraging sweating.



Summer energy challenge

Close curtains or blinds during the hottest part of the day, open windows when it's cooler, and avoid using fans or cooling appliances unnecessarily.
Small changes big difference



MECC Trust: Get Involved

We are excited to launch the **new MECC Trust website**, bringing together information about our services, community support and ways you can get involved. You can find: Tips on saving energy and reducing bills, Advice on keeping your home healthier, Information about our community projects, Opportunities to learn and take part. **Become a volunteer**: The strength of Balsall Heath comes from its people. We are always looking for volunteers who can bring: New ideas, New skills, Energy and enthusiasm **Volunteering can help you**: Meet new people, Learn new skills, Build confidence, Support your community, Improve your wellbeing

Whether you have lived here all your life or have recently made Balsall Heath your home, your ideas and experiences matter. Together, we can make Balsall Heath and Birmingham a great place to live, work and play.

Contact Us



0121 440 3500



www.mecctrust.co.uk