



# OWL MONITOR ACTION PACK



## Some answers to some commonly asked questions...

### How does the Owl monitor work?

A sensor is placed around your electricity mains cable – it wirelessly sends the information it receives about your energy use to the portable display unit via the transmitter. If you have a three-phase supply then you need to connect three sensors to the transmitter. Follow the instructions in the box carefully when installing the monitor.

### What information does it give me?

The Owl energy monitor gives you real-time information on how much electricity you are using, how much it is costing every hour and how much carbon pollution is associated with that electricity use. To give an accurate picture of costs, you will need to look at your energy bills to find your unit rate, usually around 10-15p per kWh. If you are borrowing the USB version of the Owl, then the information can be exported to a computer.

### How long do I have it for?

We would like you to have the Owl energy monitor for up to two weeks to give you an opportunity to get a good grasp of your electricity use. Please return it on time with all the packaging – if you have finished with it then we would appreciate it if you returned it to us early. Please remove the batteries from the unit so that they are not drained whilst the energy monitor is in the box. We will be happy to discuss the results with you and remember that we can also visit you to provide detailed and personalised energy advice.



## A quick reminder about how electricity is billed...

The amount of electricity an appliance uses when it's on is typically measured in **watts (W)**. Larger energy guzzlers may have their consumption measured in **kilowatts (kW)**, which is 1,000 watts. Owl energy monitors display the amount of electricity being used at any given time in kW. If an appliance consumes one kilowatt of electricity in one hour, it will have used one **kilowatt-hour (kWh)** of electricity. This is the unit of electricity that appears on your bills.

## Some things to do with your Owl energy monitor...

There are lots of ways that you can use an energy monitor to help you get a better understanding of your electricity use.

### **What is your current energy use?**

This is the obvious first step. Once you have installed your energy monitor, make a note of what the reading is straight away. Try and think about what appliances you have on that are contributing to that energy use.

### **How close to zero can you get your Owl?**

Switch off ALL the appliances that you can find. Be careful not to switch off anything that must be kept running, but it should be okay to switch off your fridge and freezer for a short while. Check the energy monitor after a few moments – it should show a current reading pretty close to zero. It's rare to get it exactly at zero, but it certainly should be under 0.01kW. If it doesn't get this low, check your appliances again to make sure that everything is off. Should you still not be able to work out where your consumption is coming from, don't panic! Some appliances cannot be switched off and could be contributing to the small energy use. However, it may reveal an energy consumer that's constantly draining power. Don't forget to switch the important appliances back on.

### **Which of your appliances are the energy-guzzlers?**

The amount of electricity used by different appliances varies greatly. Switching some appliances on may not even change the reading on the energy monitor. Try switching a few appliances on and off. Which appliances are using the most energy and what are all of those appliances using their electricity to do? If you would like to be more accurate, we recommend that you borrow one of our Eergy esocket meters. These let you monitor one appliance with a plug at a time, so they are much more sensitive than the Owl energy monitors. Some appliances that would be especially worthwhile checking with the Owl energy monitor include the kettle, toaster and microwave and, if you have any, electric heaters.

### **How low can you keep your energy use?**

Over a period, try to keep your energy use to a minimum. How long can you keep your electricity use low for? Can you think of any ways of keeping consumption as low as possible?

### **How does your energy use change during the day?**

Record how much energy you are using at different times. It may be most important for you to record your use just before the end of the day. This could be how much energy is used overnight, every night, so a high reading could be having a significant impact on your annual bill.

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*This action pack has been adapted from a document originally produced by Alness Transition Town Group*