

Community Oil Buying Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who and what is 'olive'?

olive is a service from local company eSmartMetrics Limited. olive works with Community Lincs to improve the efficiency of its oil buying scheme and has developed the online system for members of the Lincolnshire Community Oil Buying Scheme.

olive also offer an oil Smart Meter service which will help users manage and understand their oil usage. If you would like more information contact olive at info@esmartmetrics.com

2. How does the scheme work?

All you need to do is Register on the website by entering your name, address, phone number(s), email address, comments about your tank location or access requirements and create a password. If you forget your password, just click on the button to reset your password and a temporary password will be emailed to you instantly. You will then need to go into your Account Details to reset yourself a new password for future use. Please keep a note of this in a safe place. If you use more than one email address, make sure you use the email address that you put in when you first registered with the website.

3. Once I've registered, how do I order oil?

Once you have an account you can log in at any time to order oil. Simply select the product you require (Kerosene 28, with or without additive) and add any notes that may be relevant to that particular order; i.e. if you are going to be away, changes to access, etc. Oil order deadlines will continue to be once a month. You will need to register card payment details or direct debit instructions either at registration or prior to making your first order. When you place an order you will need to be as accurate as possible with your order quantity as you will only be able to order a set number of litres (minimum order quantity 500 litres). A top up will no longer be available. You will need to pay for this oil before it is delivered. See the point 13 for more details.

4. Is there an option to get my tank 'topped up'?

Increasingly, oil companies cannot offer the service to top up people's oil tanks. This is generally because they have a number of deliveries to make and a set amount of oil in their delivery tankers. If the amount of oil required to top up tanks is greater than the anticipated quantity they then do not have enough oil to deliver to

everyone on their route that day. This is less efficient for the oil company and disappointing for the customer who did not receive the oil they were expecting.

As you will be paying for your oil order in advance it is important that you know the amount of money that will be charged to your debit/credit card or direct debit. If **more** oil is delivered than you ordered then an additional payment or credit transaction will take place at a later date. If your delivery is **less** than your ordered and paid for, a credit will be issued to your account to use against your next order. Alternatively you can arrange to have this paid back into your bank account.

5. What if I don't have access to the internet?

If you are not able to use the new web based system yourself you may be able to ask a trusted friend or family member to register for the scheme on your behalf.

6. How does the scheme pay for itself?

Instead of taking an annual membership fee we add a small levy to the oil order each month. Due to the volumes of oil we are purchasing you will still be getting your oil cheaper than if you were to buy it by yourself.

Although we are a charity, we rely on paid staff to carry out the work we do. We do use the services of volunteers in some areas of our work, but in general we have staff and office costs to pay. Our staff is professional, efficient, reliable and hard-working and to keep them happy we have to pay them! We are non-profit making and find it increasingly difficult to source funds to enable us to carry out our work; so we have to make the oil buying scheme pay for itself.

7. Why can't I know what the price is before I place my order?

Before we can negotiate with the oil suppliers, we need to know the total number of litres we are ordering and how many deliveries that is made up of. The suppliers cannot give us a price until they know what they are quoting for. You can be assured that the price we achieve will be extremely competitive and excellent value. If you are not happy with the price we are achieving then you can leave the scheme at any time. Equally you can re-join the scheme at any time if you change your mind.

8. How do I know if I am getting the best price?

We cannot tell you exactly how much money you will save by using our scheme as we cannot know how much you would have paid for your oil if you ordered it direct from a local supplier. Some people are happy to ring round various suppliers and negotiate a price for themselves so they have the flexibility of ordering oil when they want it and have control over who supplies it and at what price. That's fine if that's what you want to do. If you would rather just have peace of mind that you are getting the best price and are organised enough to know the order deadline dates

to make sure you order in good time then this scheme really will save you money and hassle.

9. What if I miss the order deadline?

The order deadline window will 'close' at 12 midnight on the deadline day and it will not be possible to add your order after that time.

10. How will I know who will deliver my oil?

Once the price negotiation has taken place and an agreement has been made with the oil supplier you will receive an email/phone call to advise you of the supplier, price, when your payment will be taken and any other relevant information. Contact information for the chosen supplier will also be provided should you have any queries.

11. What should I do if my internet is down and I cannot access the website to make my order?

Don't panic! Just phone Community Lincs and they will be able to access your account on the website to make the order on your behalf.

12. Who will I be placing my order with?

Your order will be taken by eSmartMetrics Limited, who will be acting on Community Lincs' behalf and placing the group order with the winning oil supplier. By grouping together payments and maximising efficiencies for both Community Lincs and the oil supplier we hope to maximise the savings available to our members.

13. How will I pay for my heating oil?

Payment by members is online by credit/debit card through the secure olive website. All major debit and credit cards are accepted. There is no charge for debit or credit card use.

You will be asked to enter your card details as part of your account registration or as part of your first online order. It will only be possible to place an order once a valid payment card has been stored with Paymentsense for your account. Payment will automatically be taken from your chosen card 24 hours after we have confirmed the negotiated oil price to you, giving you time to change your mind.

Alternatively, you can set up a direct debit, electronically, from your chosen account.

14. Why can't I pay the oil supplier direct?

By paying for your oil through our new website we can pay the oil company one payment for all of the oil orders. This means they can optimise their route planning and they don't have to spend time taking payments from every member. This increased efficiency will enable us to negotiate a better price.

15. How secure are my card details?

Members can safely enter payment card details via the website and secure PCI DSS-compliant Payment Provider, which encrypts all submitted information.

To ensure the highest possible level of online payment security, all payments are secured with:

- Security Code (CV2) Checks
- IP Address Checking
- PCI Compliant Servers

With our online Payment Provider you're using one of the most secure online payment services currently available. They process millions of card transactions every year and guarantee 100% payment protection for online businesses and their customers.

All payment card details are held on the secure Payment Provider's website. Olive/Community Lincs does not and cannot store card details on the site.

16. Can I pay by cheque?

We are not able to accept payment by cheque. You can however set up a direct debit, and the oil payment will be taken automatically from your chosen account.

17. Do you offer a monthly payment scheme?

Not at the moment, but we are looking to offer this option in the future.

18. What if the address of the property I want the oil to go to is different to my home address?

You should register the address you want the oil to be delivered to – this does not have to be your home address. We will look to add multiple properties to a single account in the future.

19. Is this scheme only for domestic oil users?

No, anyone that uses oil can join the Community Oil Buying Scheme in Lincolnshire. Community buildings (village halls, schools, churches, sports clubs and scout huts

included) can order their oil, but you need to be clear about the type of heating oil you require (28 or 35 second burn) and be able to pay by card on the internet (please contact us if you have any queries with this). Businesses can also join, but please be aware that commercial VAT rates (at 20%) may be applied.

20. Do you use local oil suppliers?

All the suppliers that we negotiate with will deliver across the whole of Lincolnshire, even though some of them may send their delivery vehicles in from outside the county. If you feel strongly about only using local companies, then you may wish to contact your chosen supplier directly. We choose to use businesses in the region that can provide a good service at the best price.

21. I'm worried about the carbon footprint of using an oil supplier from outside the county.

We have asked all the oil suppliers we use for their Environmental Policy so we can be assured that they are doing their bit to keep carbon emissions as low as possible. By receiving such a large order at one time, the oil companies can plan their delivery routes to be as efficient as possible, saving fuel and therefore reducing emissions. If you would like to see a copy of any of the policies, please contact us.

22. What if I have any issues when I order through the scheme?

If you're not happy then please let us know and we will try our best to work things out. The new system may not suit everyone, but we hope that it will work well for the majority and even bring in more new members. Please let us have your feedback to help us with future development.

Have you got any other questions?

If yes, please telephone 01529 301980 or email communitybuying@communitylincs.com