AKW®
Life Made Better

SUCCESSFUL ELECTRIC SHOWER SPECIFICATION & INSTALLATION

HOW TO AVOID THE PAIN POINTS

ELECTRIC SHOWERS: THE CORNERSTONE OF THE BATHROOM

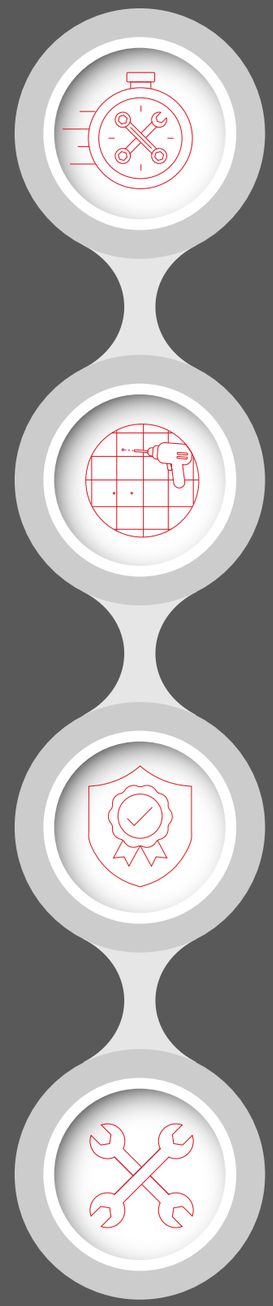
We can't imagine life without them now, but electric showers only became popular in the UK in the 1960s and '70s. An affordable way to get instant hot water, electric showers have become a cornerstone in most social and private housing bathrooms. However, there can be some challenges to their installation and maintenance, many of which can be solved if the right showers are specified.

In this guide, the key challenges to electric shower installation will be discussed for electricians. Also highlighted will be how many of these can be avoided by the specifier - be they the electrician or social landlord - if the right showers are chosen. Finally there will be an overview of how AKW has overcome many of these problems, cost-effectively, using good design.

INSTALLING ELECTRIC SHOWERS

THE KEY CHALLENGES

For electricians, electrical capacity and compliance, cable and pipework rerouting are the biggest challenges faced during an electric shower installation. For social landlords, legacy building problems are high on the list in any bathroom refurbishment, as are compliance, long-term maintenance, budget control, scheduling and tenant impact.



SPEED

Time is money. Whether it's an electrician needing to do more installations in less time, a social landlord wanting to minimise tenant disruption or shorten void lists as quickly as possible, reducing electric shower install complexity is important.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

During electric shower replacement, the location of water and electric points can complicate a 'straightforward' installation. Outdated pipework, damp or mould behind old tiling, weak walls and other pain points such as drilling new fixings into tiling can all cause delays and future shower unit longevity issues.

COMPLIANCE

Bathrooms are high-risk areas where zoning compliance, IP-rated fittings and proper RCD protection are all essential. However, in older buildings legacy layouts can mean that these are not always straightforward to achieve.

MAINTENANCE

Tenant misuse, limescale build-up or component failure can all be maintenance weak spots with electric showers.

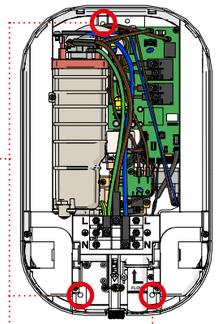
SPECIFYING ELECTRIC SHOWERS

AVOIDING CHALLENGES AT THE SPECIFICATION STAGE

Choosing a shower that has built-in flexibility and maintenance short-cuts is key to helping installers complete a quick, pain-free installation. Here is what to look for when specifying an electric shower if speed of installation, maintenance ease and reliability are key considerations:

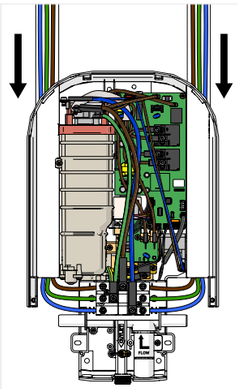
Fixing Points - Does the shower offer flexibility when it comes to its fixing points? The more options available the better.

Fixing points

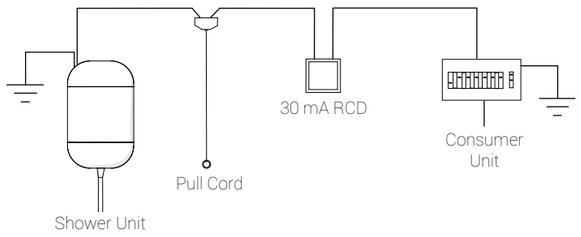


Water & Electrical Entry Connection Ease - How straightforward is it to plumb in and wire up the shower?

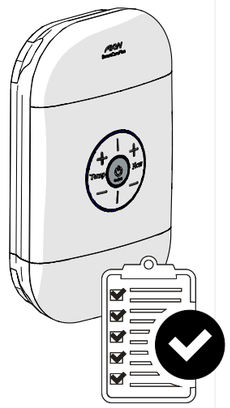
Does the shower require cutting of the case to allow for cable or electrical entry?



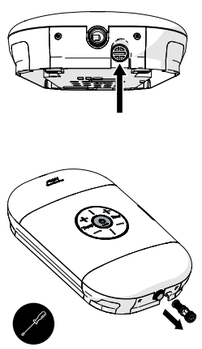
Electrical Capacity - Is the shower the right wattage? Many older properties don't have enough spare capacity in the consumer unit for a high-load electric shower, so the maximum size might be a 7.5 kW option.



Commisioning a shower correctly increases the unit's longevity. Ensuring a shower is primed by flushing water through is critical. If the flushing process isn't straightforward, is it being done by the installer?



Servicing Ease - Limescale build-up on the shower heating element (the 'heater can'), hose and shower head are common in hard water areas. If limescale is an issue in the area, how easy is it for the maintenance team to check the shower unit's filter to avoid blockages or change a 'PRD' pressure relief device?



COST-EFFECTIVE ELECTRIC SHOWERS WITHOUT CUTTING CORNERS

There is nothing more frustrating for an installer or social landlord than having to be called back to a property to diagnose and fix a problem on a shower that could have been avoided if certain steps had been followed. That is why AKW electric showers have been designed with installation and maintenance in mind.

iSure iTherm

SmartCareLever SmartCarePlus

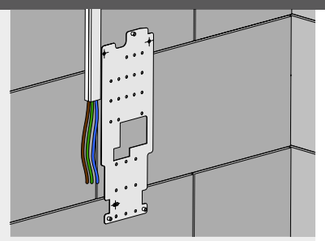
AKW ELECTRIC SHOWERS

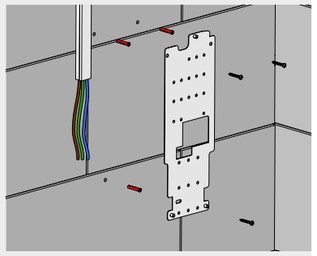
QUICK AND EASY INSTALLATION

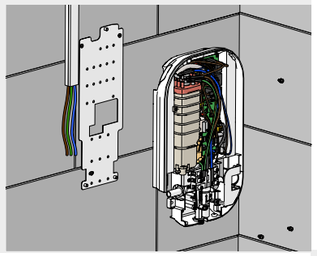
Designed to be installed with minimal disruption, AKW electric showers are available with a fixing plate that is compatible with many existing footprints. This means that the installer can re-use existing holes, minimising the need to drill into existing tiles with new fixing points.

The fixing plate also solves the issue of installing on soft walls as it provides a robust basis on which to fix the shower, even if the shower is being mounted to a surface such as plasterboard stud wall. When replacing a shower that has been tiled up to but not behind, the generous footprint of these showers means that any 'tile-gap' is covered and any "make good" time and costs are reduced.

The fixing plate is uniform across our electric shower range, meaning that if the heater unit needs changing for any reason, then swapping is a straightforward process using the same three M4 bolts through the backplate.





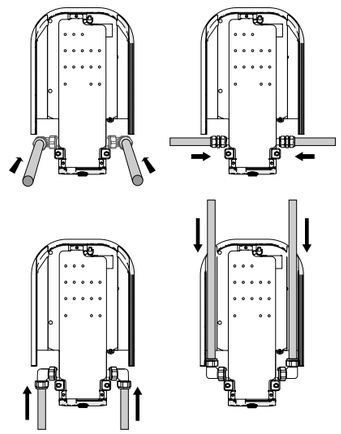


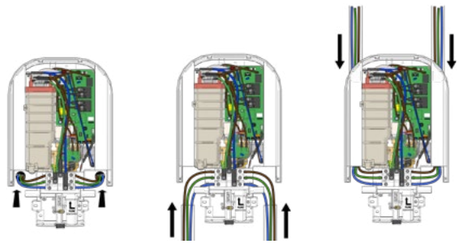
8 WATER & 6 CABLE ENTRY POINTS

AKW electric showers feature 6 electrical and 8 water entry points for flexible installation, allowing for easy retrofitting using existing pipework and cabling.

Electrical connection is made easier with dual connector blocks positioned to take even the shortest trimmed cable. To connect a shower waste pump, such as the AKW DigiPump or P12, there is a dedicated terminal within the shower. Simply remove the connector, insert and tighten the cable; it can then be clicked back onto the circuit board, alleviating the need to screw directly to a circuit board in a cramped case. Hardwiring from pump to shower also allows for the removal of flow switches and sensors, which are an extra cost, prone to failure, and require plumbing and boxing in.

For surface-mounted electrics, there is an optional 40mm trunking adaptor that slots straight into the case to accept 40mm trunking, meaning case cutting and silicone sealing the hole are eradicated. Trunking can be slotted in quickly, achieving a gap-free, stylish finish.





SIMPLE TO SERVICE

Limescale is an issue for many social landlords with 60-65% of the UK's water supply classified as 'hard water'. Often, call outs are required to unblock shower filters, or following the shower's pressure relief device activating due to a scaled-up shower head.

When it comes to checking and cleaning a potentially blocked filter, many showers require the removal of the front of the unit to access this filter to clean it.

The design of AKW electric showers means this is simply a case of using a screwdriver to unscrew a filter in the shower unit's base, to clean it and replace it – a two-minute job rather than a ten-minute one. If the PRD needs replacing, then its placement at the front of the heater is easily accessible, enabling the shower to be returned to full operation quickly.

Click the image to view on our YouTube channel

LOW MAINTENANCE SOLUTION

Cold flushing an electric shower is a maintenance procedure designed to remove airlocks, clear sediment, reduce limescale build-up in the heating element, or as a troubleshooting tool to identify issues with the water supply.

Carrying out a cold flush will protect the shower and ensures its proper function and longevity. However, performing a cold flush can be an unnecessarily complicated procedure, meaning it is often overlooked.

With this in mind, cold flushing AKW electric showers has been designed to be quick and straightforward. Step-by-step instructions can be found on the AKW Technical Hub, with a video also available online to demonstrate.

Click the image above to view on our YouTube channel or scan the code to download instructions

Installation guidelines mentioned within this document are correct at the date of release and can be referenced in the following installation instructions: SmartCare Plus: 21-005-103-06, SmartCare Lever: 21-005-104-06, iTherm: 21-005-159-06, iSure: 21-005-160-03

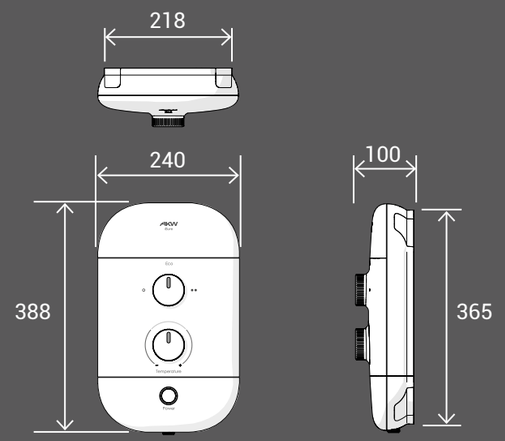
AKW ELECTRIC SHOWERS

COMING SOON: AKW iSURE 7.5KW ELECTRIC SHOWER

In many cases, old fuse boards and 6mm cables will require the fitting of a lower-powered electric shower to avoid overloading the property's system.

The AKW iSure 7.5kW electric shower is a cost-effective solution for these situations.

- Quick to install
- Ample footprint means minimal to no re-tiling needed in retrofit situations
- Compatible with older electrical systems
- Fitting plate design ensures a strong wall installation which allows for quick replacement if an AKW care shower is later needed
- Lower running costs for residents, which equates to a saving of as much as £95 per year†
- Simple to maintain
- Optional 40mm trunking adaptor for clean looking surface mounted installations



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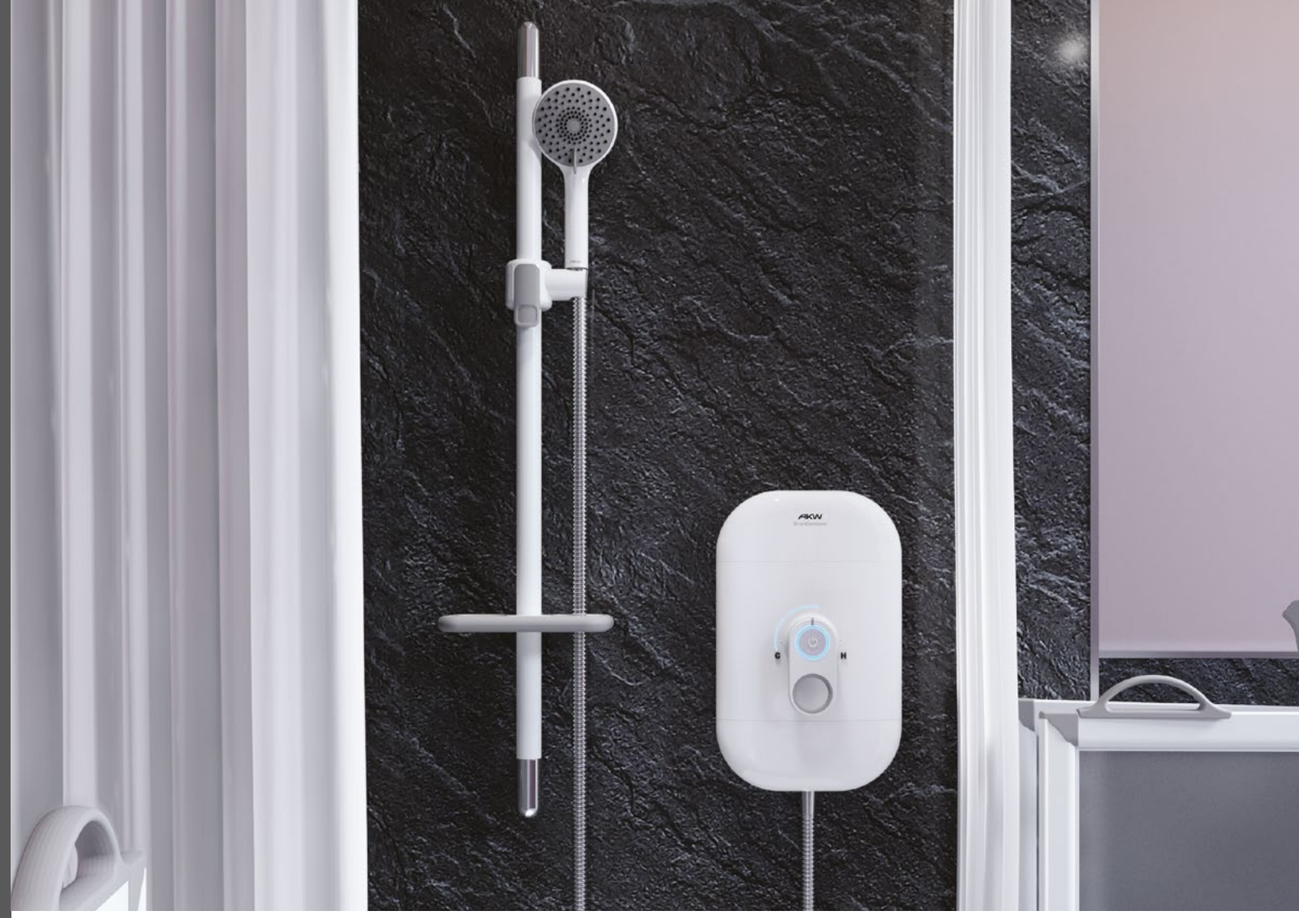
† Based on the difference of 1kw per hour, with an average uk unit per KW of 26p per hour, which, if run for 1 hour/day in a family = a £95 saving per year.



SUMMARY

When it comes to electrical shower installation, choosing the right shower can significantly reduce installation and maintenance issues. Good design doesn't need to be expensive, which is why so many specifiers and installers have chosen to use AKW electric showers.

For more information on how AKW electric showers can save you money as an installer or social landlord, whilst keeping the resident happy, visit the product range by clicking here.

NEED A LITTLE EXTRA KNOW HOW?

The AKW Technical Hub features a collection of useful resources for a selection of our products which require a little extra know-how.

Here you'll find specification sheets, installation and user instructions, marketing materials and videos. Visit now by clicking here.

Scan to visit the AKW Technical Hub

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To find out more about specifying and installing AKW electric showers, or to request a visit, scan to contact us

Scan to browse or download the AKW electric showers brochure