



COMMUNITY
VOLUNTARY
SUPPORT
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

Winter Wellbeing



Useful information and support for the winter
months



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Energy Information

Energy bills and fuel poverty can be major concerns for many people during the winter months. Energy efficiency, energy costs and low income can all contribute towards fuel poverty.

“A household is in fuel poverty if they need to spend 10% or more of their household income on energy to maintain a satisfactory heating regime”

National Energy Action (NEA)

Energy Efficiency is regarding your property features such as windows, insulation and heating devices. Depending on your property's age and condition, these features can impact on your energy usage and bills.

What help is available?

Grants such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and Great British Insulation Scheme are available which help towards or completely cover the cost of home improvements (grant amount depends on the scheme and your circumstances).

People should seek energy advice or contact suppliers for help with comparing and applying for schemes.

What can you do?

Switch off devices at the plug when not in use

Use low energy bulbs

Wash laundry at lower temperatures

Bleed radiators regularly

Draught proofing (this alone can save £125).

**More tips can be found at the Energy Saving Trust website
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk**



Energy Information

High Fuel Costs are due to the wholesale market. This affects the price cap which sets a maximum limit that tariffs can be (price cap = £1,700 for October 24). It changes quarterly and will usually be at its lowest in the summer months.

What is available?

Smart meters show real time meter readings. It will send this to the supplier, meaning bills are based on actual usage and not estimated.

Changing tariffs can reduce costs. July is when tariffs are at their lowest or you can fix anytime but look out for no-exit fee tariffs to avoid a big payment to leave.

Comparison websites, contacting a supplier or seeking energy advice can all help check what the best options are.

Emergency fuel vouchers are available from some food banks or contact your local Citizens Advice.

What can you do?

Speak to your supplier if you are struggling with bills as they should offer advice and support. Hardship funds are available but debt advice is needed first. Contact agencies such as Citizens Advice, National Debtline, Stepchange etc to help with this.

Winter Fuel, Warm Home Discount and Cold Weather payments do not need an application made. They are means tested and people can check eligibility if concerned. An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is needed for most people to receive the Warm Home Discount. **To find out how to obtain a EPC, visit <https://www.gov.uk/get-new-energy-certificate>**

Financial Support



As well as higher energy usage during winter, for some there is the added expense of Christmas.

What help is available?

Benefit checks help find ways to increase your income. This is particularly important for those over pension age due to the Winter Fuel Payment cuts. The deadline is December 2024 for this. To check if you are in receipt of the correct benefit payments, a website called **www.entitledto.co.uk** can do this for you or contact your local Citizens Advice for a telephone/face to face appointment.

Your local council will usually have a Household Support Fund (or other discretionary payments) that can help with food and utilities. They may also be able to help with things such as rent shortfall/arrears or council tax shortfall.

What can you do?

Grants are available to some people. Eligibility criteria can vary from nationality, career, area and health conditions. **www.turn2us.org.uk** can help you search for these grants.

Outgoings can be reduced through discounted water tariffs (contact your water supplier), social tariffs for broadband and mobile contracts and travel passes. You may be able to get support with healthcare costs such as prescriptions. You can check via your NHS app or by visiting **www.nhs.uk**

PDSA, Blue Cross and RSPCA offer help with vet costs subject to circumstances.

Creating a budget to help monitor your income and outgoings can help. **www.moneyhelper.org.uk** is just one of the websites that can do this for you.



Health and wellbeing

Winter bugs can be reduced or prevented by keeping up to date with vaccinations such as flu and covid. To find out how to access these, visit www.nhs.uk

Keep illness at bay by **boosting your immune system** during the winter months. Increasing vitamin D and C can help (please check with your local pharmacist or GP surgery first if taking other medication). Vitamin D especially increases the brain's production of serotonin, a natural mood regulator.

Keep hydrated with both hot and cold drinks to prevent fatigue and kill invading viruses such as colds and chest infections.

Move around if able. At work, take regular breaks. Moving the body keeps circulation going and helps heat the body.

Get outside for a walk around the block during daylight. Maintaining physical health/exercising releases endorphins that relieve pain, help to manage stress and improve overall mood.

Check in with someone every day, it can be easy to hide away and hibernate during winter. However, this increases isolation and low mood which can lead to mental and physical ill-health. Whether it is a phone call, visit or walk you are guaranteed to feel brighter afterwards.

Plan something enjoyable each day. Having something to look forward to keeps your mood lifted throughout the day. This could be a hobby, cooking a favourite meal, starting a new book, taking a relaxing bath or binge watching a new TV series!



Useful Contacts

Energy Charities And Referrals

- Beat the Cold – Energy charity for residents of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Aims to reduce fuel poverty and prevent cold related illness. Advice and help available through casework and home visits. Referrals can be made via their website online form or by directly calling 01782 914 915
- Marches – Energy Charity for Derby, Derbyshire. Aims to reduce fuel poverty for vulnerable people. Advice and help available through casework and home visits. Referrals can be made through emailing wdd@mea.org.uk or by calling 0800 677 1332. Self referrals accepted.
- Ground Work Green Doctor – Charity for people in a range of UK areas. Advice and help provided through casework and home visits. Referrals can be made online or contact them directly via their online form.

Helplines

- Beat The Cold – 01782 914 915 (Staffordshire)
- Marches – 0800 677 1332 (Derby and Derbyshire)
- Citizens Advice Mid Mercia Adviceline – 0808 278 7972
- Citizens Advice Help through Hardship (support affected by cost of living) – 0800 208 2138
- Citizens Advice Consumer Service (help with supplier issues, complaints and switching) – 0808 223 1133
- Macmillan Energy Advice – 0808 223 1133 Specifically for those affected by cancer
- National Debtline – 0808 808 4000
- Stepchange – 0800 138 1111
- Winter Fuel Payment Helpline – 0800 731 0160 (note: number to check eligibility and report any issues)
- Warm Home Discount – 0800 030 9322 (note: number to check eligibility and report any issues)
- National Energy Action – 0800 304 7159



Useful Contacts

Websites

- Energy Savings Trust – energy saving tips **www.energysavingtrust.org.uk**
- Citizens Advice Website – energy issues, guides and much more
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Charis – check for energy debt grants on here **www.charisgrants.com**
- USwitch – online comparison tool **www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity**
- Ofgem – regulates the energy market and news about the price cap
www.ofgem.gov.uk
- National Energy Action – information and support for bills and benefits
www.nea.org.uk
- Money Saving Expert – tips to reduce income and save money
www.moneysavingexpert.com
- Changeworks – helps people understand their energy and heating systems. Also has guides to bills and dealing with suppliers including templates about what to say when phoning or writing to them
www.changeworks.org.uk
- EntitledTo – Benefits Calculator tool **www.entitledto.co.uk**
- Scope – disability rights, information and advice including energy advice
www.scope.org.uk
- Re-use Network – stocks affordable household items for those struggling. Includes furniture, electrical appliances and IT equipment **www.reuse-network.org.uk**
- Friends of the Elderly – grants programme for older people living on low incomes. Referrals need to be made by professional agency they are receiving support from **www.fote.org.uk**



Useful Contacts

Mental Health - Contacts

- Mental Health Support Line - Call NHS 111. Press option 2
- CALM - 0800 58 58 58
- SHOUT - Text SHOUT to 85258
- Kooth (Web Support) - <https://dccmhsp.com/Kooth>
- Childline - 0800 1111
- Papyrus - 0800 068 41 41

Mental Health - Useful Links

- Tomorrow Project (Suicide Bereavement Support) - <https://bit.ly/DerbyshireSBS>
- Mentell - <https://www.mentell.org.uk/>
- Crisis support - dccmhsp.com/DerbyshireCrisisSupport
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Website - <https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk/>
- CYP Support - <https://dccmhsp.com/CYPsupport>
- Let's Chat Map - <https://dccmhsp.com/Map>
- Community MH Map - <https://dccmhsp.com/DerbyshireMentalHealthMap>
- SOBS - <https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk/resources/survivors-of-bereavement-by-suicide-sobs-2>
- Let's Chat Derbyshire Podcast - <https://dccmhsp.com/Podcast>