

Keep Warm Keep Well

West Sussex



2015 - 2016

- **Advice on staying healthy this winter**
- **Get financial help to heat your home**
- **Find the best deal for your energy**
- **Contact details for advice organisations**



Horsham
District
Council



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Be prepared for the cold weather

Although winter weather and snow can be fun, it is also associated with an increase in illnesses and injuries. There's more to feeling 'under the weather' than most people realise. Cold and wintry conditions can cause severe illness and, in the worst cases, people can die. The cold weather, combined with low levels of sunlight after the clocks go back, means that many of us can feel in poor health. However, with some simple precautions, most people can be prepared for the cold weather and prevent much of the misery often associated with winter weather.

Severe cold snaps can have dramatic effects on everyday life, especially for those people who are already vulnerable as a result of their age, illness or disability.

The Met Office provides weather forecasts on radio, TV and internet. Checking these bulletins regularly can keep you up to date with the weather. Severe weather warnings are also issued on the Met Office website at:

www.metoffice.gov.uk, through the Met Office Twitter feed at: **[www.twitter.com/metofficeUK](https://twitter.com/metofficeUK)** or you can ring the Weather Desk on **0370 900 0100** or **01392 885680**.

The Weather Desk is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide you with accurate and timely weather information so that you can stay one-step ahead of the weather.

Staying healthy this winter

We're all more likely to feel the chill in winter, but cold weather can lead to very serious health problems, such as heart attacks, strokes or pneumonia, and sometimes the cold weather can even kill – especially if you have a long-term health condition or are 65 or over. There are several things that you can do to help yourself stay healthy in winter.

Get a free seasonal flu jab

Not only is seasonal flu unpleasant, but it can also cause serious illnesses, such as pneumonia or bronchitis – in the worst cases it can result in a stay in hospital, or even death. You are more at risk if you have a long-term health condition, are older, or are pregnant.

Contact your GP or pharmacist if you think you, or someone you care for, might qualify for a free flu jab. There are four flu leaflets, one general, one for pregnancy, one about children and one for people with learning disabilities.

Free flu vaccinations are available for those who:

- are aged 65 or over
- are aged two, three or four years old
- children in Year 1 and 2 will receive the vaccine at school
- are pregnant
- have a serious medical condition such as chronic heart, lung, neurological, liver or kidney disease or diabetes
- have a weakened immune system due to HIV or treatments that suppress the immune system such as chemotherapy
- have had a stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA) or post-polio syndrome

- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility (not prison or university halls)
- are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill.

If you are the parent of a child who is over six months old and has a long-term condition listed above, you should also speak to your GP about your child having the flu vaccine. Your child's condition may get worse if they catch flu.

You can visit NHS Choices website for more information about flu at **www.nhs.uk/flu**

Avoid catching colds or flu

Colds and flu spread very easily. Young children in particular can be at risk of becoming unwell, as their immune systems are still developing. It's worth following these simple hygiene measures to reduce the risk of catching and spreading infections.

- Always cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and encourage visitors and relatives to do the same
- Throw away used tissues as soon as possible
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, and use a hand sanitiser gel when you're out and about
- Stock up on over-the-counter cough and flu remedies.

Living a healthy lifestyle

You probably know that keeping yourself as fit and healthy as you can is important all year round, but your lifestyle can make even more of a difference when it comes to keeping well in winter.

Eat well

Eating regular meals will help keep your energy levels up during winter.

- Have plenty of hot food and drinks
- Plan your meals and keep your diet as varied as possible. Aim to include your daily five portions of fruit and veg, this can include tinned and frozen fruit and veg
- Stock up on tinned and frozen foods, so that you don't have to go out too much when it's cold or icy.

Parents of children under four and women who are at least 10 weeks pregnant and are on certain benefits may be eligible for free weekly Healthy Start vouchers. The vouchers can be swapped for milk, fresh and frozen fruit and veg, infant formula milk and vitamins.

To find out if you qualify and for more tips and advice on healthy eating visit: **www.healthystart.nhs.uk** or call the Healthy Start Issuing Unit on **0345 607 6823**.

You also qualify if you are under 18 and pregnant, even if you don't receive benefits or tax credits.

Stay active

We all know that exercise is good for your overall health – and it can keep you warm in winter. If you can stay active, even moderate exercise can bring health benefits.

- If possible, try to move around at least once an hour. But remember to speak to your GP before starting any exercise plan.

Dress for the weather

- Wear lots of thin layers – clothes made from cotton, wool

or fleecy fibres are particularly good and help to maintain body heat. Wear shoes with a good grip to prevent slips and falls when walking outside.

Heating your home effectively and safely

Some of these energy-saving tips may seem obvious, but they can make a big difference when it comes to protecting your health and reducing your fuel bills.

- Heating your home to at least 18°C (65°F) in winter is particularly important if you have reduced mobility, are 65 and over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease. Having room temperatures slightly over 18°C (65°F) could be good for your health.
- If you are under the age of 65, active and wearing appropriate clothing, you may wish to heat your home to a temperature at which you are comfortable, even if it is slightly lower than 18°C (65°F).
- Overnight, people who are 65 and over or who have pre-existing health conditions, may find bedroom temperatures of at least 18°C (65°F) are good for their health; this may be less important if you are a healthy adult under 65 and have appropriate clothing and bedding.
- To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome, rooms in which infants sleep should be heated to between 16-20°C
- Set your heating to come on just before you get up and switch off after you've gone to bed. If it's very cold, set your heating to come on earlier and turn off later rather than turning the thermostat up.
- If you can't heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room throughout the day and your bedroom just before you go to bed. Remember to close curtains and shut

doors to keep heat in the rooms you use most.

- Heating your home safely is really important. Remember to get your heating system checked regularly, and keep your home well ventilated. If you have open fires make sure they are properly ventilated. Use safety guards and don't hang your washing near the open flames. If you use a fire or heater in your bedroom at night, always keep a window and the door open.
- Use your electric blanket as instructed and get it tested every three years. Remember never to use an electric blanket and a hot water bottle together.
- Switch your appliances (such as TVs and microwaves) off rather than leaving them on standby.
- Do not use a gas cooker or oven to heat your home – it is inefficient and there is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If you are not connected to gas or electricity mains, and use heating oil, LPG or wood products make sure that you have a sufficient supply to avoid running out in winter.

You might be interested in joining an Oil club to save money. These are groups of people, mainly in rural areas, who combine their orders for domestic heating oil. For more information visit:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/oilclubs

Keeping the heat in

Insulating your home not only helps to keep you warm and healthy, but it will also help to keep your heating costs down.

- Fit draught proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors.
- Make sure that your loft has at least 10 - 11 inches (270 mm) of insulation. Any home with 4 inches (100 mm) or less should have it topped up.

- If you have wall cavities, make sure that they are insulated too.
- Insulate your hot water cylinder and pipes.
- Draw your curtains at dusk to help keep the heat generated inside your rooms.
- Make sure that your radiators are not obstructed by curtains or furniture.

In England, contact the Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS) for more advice on how to reduce fuel bills and make your home more energy efficient. ESAS is a government-funded telephone advice service that offers impartial information about available heating and insulation measures. ESAS can signpost callers to a wide range of organisations that can help install energy-saving measures in their homes to help reduce their fuel bills and also give details on eligibility for the schemes mentioned above, including to which parts of the UK they apply. ESAS can be contacted on **0300 123 1234** (9am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm on Saturday).

Carbon monoxide poisoning

Incorrectly installed, poorly maintained or poorly ventilated cooking and heating appliances can give off carbon monoxide - a poisonous gas which you can't see, smell or taste but which causes approximately 30 accidental deaths per year in England and Wales. Low levels of carbon monoxide can cause serious harm to your health if breathed in over a long time.

- Have your cooking and heating appliances which burn carbon-containing fuels (such as gas, coal, charcoal, oil and wood), as well as flues and chimneys serviced at least once a year by a suitably trained, reputable, registered engineer.

- Don't block flues or chimneys, even if they are draughty, because these allow carbon monoxide to escape.
- Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm that meets European Standard EN50291.
- Follow all instructions for the appliance, keeping rooms well ventilated and stop using an appliance if you think it may be giving off carbon monoxide gas.
- If you suffer from repeated or severe headaches, symptoms similar to that of food poisoning or viral infections, flu or simple fatigue and think they could be caused by carbon monoxide, see your doctor at once and say you think it might be carbon monoxide poisoning.

To find out more about carbon monoxide safety, visit the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic or call the Gas Safety Advice Line on **0800 300 363** (9am-5.30pm Mon-Thurs and 9am-5pm Fri).

To find a gas engineer in your area call **0800 408 5500**.

If you use solid fuel to heat your home, you can find a HETAS (Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme) registered engineer by calling **01684 278170**.

For oil appliances, registered technicians can be found at OFTEC (Oil Firing Technical Association) at **01473 626298**.

For general health advice and information visit:

www.nhs.uk/carbonmonoxide

Free Home Fire Safety Check

West Sussex Fire & Rescue can carry out free home fire safety checks on your home if you are older or vulnerable. They will offer advice on how to make your home safer and where appropriate fit smoke alarms and other specialist equipment.

To find out more or to book your visit call: **0800 328 6487**

Financial help to heat your home

There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills. It's worthwhile claiming what you are entitled to.

Winter Fuel Payment

This is a tax-free benefit to help pay for heating during winter. You could be eligible if you have reached the qualifying age and you normally live in Great Britain. For winter 2015/16 people born on or before 5th January 1953 will have reached the qualifying age.

How much could I get?

This year (2015-2016) you could get a Winter Fuel Payment of between £100-300. The exact amount you'll get depends on your circumstances during the qualifying week of 21st - 27th September 2015, such as your age, whether you live alone and whether you're getting Pension Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

You will get the payment automatically if:

- you qualify; and
- you got a Winter Fuel Payment last winter and you still meet the conditions for getting it, or you got State Pension or another benefit, except Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Universal Credit or Child Benefit, during the week of 21st - 27th September 2015.

Most payments are made over a number of weeks from November onwards. You should get your payment by

Christmas - if you haven't, you should make a claim. All claims must be received on or before 31 March 2016.

To find out more about Winter Fuel Payments, call **03459 15 15 15** (8am - 6pm Mon - Fri, textphone 03459 606 0285). Or you can visit:
www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Energy Company Obligation

Under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) the largest domestic energy suppliers are obligated to fund energy efficiency improvements in the homes of certain consumers. To meet their obligation, participating energy companies promote and subsidise the cost of installing improvements to make homes warmer, healthier and more energy efficient. For homeowners or people living in privately rented accommodation, and who are in receipt of certain benefits and/or tax-credits, there may be support available for boiler repairs or replacements and a range of insulation improvements.

The Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS) will be able to discuss with you whether you may be able to get assistance. If you are likely to be eligible, with your consent, they can check your eligibility with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and then pass your details on to a participating energy supplier who will contact you directly to set up a free no obligation home assessment. After your assessment the Energy Supplier will be able to give more information about suitable improvements and whether they can subsidise the costs. These improvements may include boiler repair or replacement, loft and cavity wall insulation, draught proofing or pipework insulation and tariff advice. Eligible customers could also get a check to see if they are eligible for the Warm Home Discount, a rebate worth £140.

In addition, if you are not in receipt of benefits and/or tax credits, but live in a property that requires energy efficiency measures, financial support may be available to you to help cover the costs of these improvements. Again, the Energy Saving Advice Service will be able to tell you more.

How to apply

To find out more, including what type of support you could be eligible for, contact the Energy Saving Advice Service on **0300 123 1234** (9am - 8pm Mon - Fri and 10am - 2pm Sat).

You do not have to be an existing customer of a participating supplier to qualify for support.

Cold Weather Payment

Cold Weather Payments are made during periods of very cold weather to help people pay for extra heating costs. To get a Cold Weather Payment, the average temperature where you live must be recorded as, or forecast to be, 0°C or below for seven days in a row.

You may be able to get Cold Weather Payments if you are getting:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old, or Child Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability element, or child disability premium in Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old, or Child Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability element, or child

disability premium in Jobseeker's Allowance, or

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance in the main phase or in the assessment phase and you are in receipt of a pensioner or disability premium or have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old, or Child Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability element, or receive the support or work-related component of Employment and Support Allowance, or child disability premium in Employment and Support Allowance.
- Universal Credit - you will usually get cold Weather payments if you get Universal Credit, you are not employed or self-employed and one of the following applies:
 - you or your partner receive either a limited capability for work element or a limited capability for work element with a work-related activity element, or
 - you receive a disabled child element within your assessment, or
 - you have a child under the age of 5 years living with you.

An exception to this criteria has been made for families with a disabled child i.e. Universal Credit recipients who are employed or self-employed will be eligible for Cold Weather Payments if they have a disabled child in the family.

A Cold Weather Payment is £25 for each period of very cold weather. To find out more about Cold Weather Payments contact your Pension Centre or Jobcentre Plus (you can find your nearest office in the phone book) for more information please visit: **www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment**

Warm Home Discount scheme

The Warm Home Discount scheme helps low-income and vulnerable households with energy costs. Participating energy companies will be providing a discount of £140 on the electricity bills of certain customers in winter 2015/16.

Pre-pay or Pay-as-you-go meters

You can also qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter. Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, e.g. a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

Eligibility

You qualify for the discount if on 12th July 2015 all of the following apply:

- your electricity supplier was part of the scheme
- your name (or your partner's) was on the bill
- you were getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit as well)

What do I need to do if I am eligible for the discount?

You do not need to do anything now to claim the discount. Most people will receive their discount without having to do anything.

If you are eligible for a discount for winter 2015/16 you will receive a letter from the Government before the end of December 2015. The letter will either:

- tell you that a discount has been paid automatically and that you do not need to do anything; or
- ask you to call a helpline so that you provide some information from your electricity bill. The helpline will then

check whether you can get a discount.

I'm not eligible for the discount - can I get any other help through the Warm Home Discount scheme?

Participating energy suppliers will also be providing discounts to a Broader Group of their vulnerable and low-income customers.

There is standard eligibility criteria for the Broader Group, which include certain means tested benefits, which participating energy suppliers are required to adopt. Energy suppliers can also set their own eligibility criteria for the Broader Group discount, which have been approved by Ofgem (the energy regulator). You can contact your electricity supplier to find out whether you are eligible.

Further information on the Warm Home Discount can be found at:

www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme
or call **0345 603 9439** (8.30am - 4.30pm Mon-Fri).

Other sources of financial support

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills, there are plenty of sources of help. Remember to contact your energy supplier in the first instance, as they may be able to offer you a special tariff or payment plan to help you stay on top of your bills.

Paying for the energy you use

You could save money by switching your tariff or energy supplier, or by changing the way you pay for energy. This can be quick and simple, especially if you use a price comparison site. Fixed rate tariffs can be a good deal and could protect you from future price rises.

Change your payment method

There are a number of different ways to pay for the fuel you use. It is possible to save money by changing the way you pay your bills. The cheapest way to pay your energy bills is often by monthly direct debit. Many energy suppliers offer better deals for customers who pay this way and some have special deals online. You can also cut down on your energy costs by getting paperless billing. This is called e-billing. Many energy suppliers offer discounts on your bills for this.

Contact your supplier to ask about the best deal that they can offer you. They should tell you how to do this on the front of your bill.

Compare and switch energy suppliers

There are different energy suppliers on the market. You could save money by comparing their prices and switching to a cheaper deal if possible. Switching to the cheapest dual-fuel, direct debit accounts at the start of the year could save you hundreds of pounds. Savings could be even higher for customers who switch from standard credit or pre-payment meters.

You can switch if you rent your property and energy bills are not included in your rental payments. If you pay for your energy by Pre Payment Meter you can also switch even if you have debts of up to £500 with your current supplier.

There are a number of websites that can help you to find a better deal and ensure that you are not paying more for your energy than you need to. The Ofgem Confidence Code is a Code of Practice that governs independent energy price comparison sites. Using a site with the Confidence Code logo means that the process of switching energy supplier should be easier, more reliable and reassuring for you.

A full list of accredited sites is available online at -

www.ofgem.gov.uk/confidence-code

There are a number of questions you should ask potential suppliers before switching to a new tariff:

- How much does the supplier charge for fuel?
- What payment methods are available?
- Which is the best tariff for me?
- Are there any special discounts or incentives?
- Is there a standing charge or variable rates?
- How often do they send bills out?
- Does the supplier have a high rate of complaints?
- Is there a charge for switching supplier?

You can get further independent advice about switching energy supplier from the Citizens Advice consumer service on **03454 04 05 06** (9am-5pm Mon-Fri).

Below there is a list of price comparison services that can make switching quick and easy.

Making switching easy

There are a number of services that can help, that have both websites and phone helplines. Ofgem, runs an accreditation scheme for independent price comparison services. The

Confidence Code. Price comparison sites accredited by the Confidence Code include:

www.energyhelpline.com/

0800 074 0745

www.energylinx.co.uk/

0800 849 7077

www.moneysupermarket.com/gas-and-electricity/

0800 177 7861

www.myutilitygenius.co.uk/

0203 468 0461

www.simplyswitch.com/

0800 011 1395

www.switchgasandelectric.com/index.aspx

0333 321 9060

www.theenergyshop.com/HomeEnergy/

0845 330 7247

www.ukpower.co.uk/

0800 320 2000

www.unravelit.com/energy-switching

033 3344 0031

www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/

0800 051 5493

www.switch.which.co.uk

0800 410 1149

What to do about fuel debt

If you have already run up a large debt, first of all talk to your supplier. Try to be realistic about what you can afford to pay back and how regularly you wish to make payments. Remember you still have to pay for the fuel you are using at the moment.

The most common debt repayment methods are:

- Paying an extra set amount on top of your regular payments. The amount can be negotiated with your supplier.
- If you are on Income Support, consider fuel direct. This is when debt payments are collected directly from your benefits, this is sometimes called third party deductions.
- A prepayment meter. Many suppliers are keen to fit these as it guarantees them repayment. However they are the most expensive method of paying for your fuel, have a risk of self-disconnection and the inconvenience of having to purchase cards.
- Paying debts by a lump sum payment.
- In some cases you can apply to your energy suppliers Trust Fund. Please see the next section for more details

For more information on managing debt please speak to your local Citizens Advice Bureau or the Money Advice Service. Please refer to the Contact details section of this booklet.

Energy trust funds

Some energy suppliers have trust funds to assist with outstanding debts and help with the purchase of essential household goods and heating systems.

These funds are to help individuals and families in poverty, suffering or other distress who are struggling to pay their gas and/or electricity debts.

For more information or to apply for a grant please visit:

www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/

01733 421 060

www.edfenergytrust.org.uk/

01733 421 060

www.npowerenergyfund.com/

01733 421 021

www.eonenergyfund.com/

03303 80 10 90

www.sedhardship.fund/

0808 800 0128

or call SSE on:

0800 096 6192

Alternatively you can telephone your energy supplier directly.

Priority Services Register

Energy suppliers can offer extra services and assistance to customers on a low income, with disabilities or long term health conditions. Services can include: a free annual gas check; a frequent meter reading service; and advance warning of disruption to supply.

To register call your energy supplier. Your electricity network operator can also provide extra support services.

UK Power Networks

Tel: 0800 316 3105

SSE Power Distribution

Tel: 0800 294 3259

Textphone: 0800 316 54

Local help and advice

Over the winter 2015/16 there are a number of local organisations providing advice, support and practical measures for keeping warm and reducing your energy bills. These services are aimed at helping low income, older and vulnerable residents.

Adur and Worthing

Over 50s can book a free visit from an energy and money advisor through Guild Care.

Tel: **01903 528627** or email: **warmandwell@guildcare.org**

Adur and Worthing Councils run a collective energy switching scheme three times a year in conjunction with iChooser. The scheme is open to anyone living in Sussex, not just Adur or Worthing and there is no obligation to take up the offer following initial registration.

Tel: **01903 221122** or visit

www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/energy-switch

Adur & Worthing Home Improvement Assistance exists to help people who need repairs or adaptations to their homes and either can't afford it or are not sure how to go about it. The service offers professional help to work out what needs doing, organising builders and surveyors and accessing grant funding. You can also get general advice and support along the way.

Tel: **01273 263309/08/07** or

email: **homeimprovement@adur-worthing.gov.uk**

Your Community Energy Shop is a social enterprise set up by volunteers at Transition Town Worthing, providing information, guidance and advice on switching energy tariff or supplier, low cost energy efficiency measures and checking eligibility for grants and support.

To find out more about the Community Energy Shop and upcoming events visit:

[www.transitiontownworthing.ning.com/page/](http://www.transitiontownworthing.ning.com/page/worthing-energy-shop)

worthing-energy-shop or

email: **transitionworthing@gmail.com**

Arun

Free home energy visits can be booked with the Wellbeing Home Energy Visitor. Tel: **01903 737862**

Chichester

Free home energy visits can be booked with the Wellbeing Home Energy Visitor. Tel: **01243 521041**

Crawley

Crawley Borough Council runs a collective energy switching scheme three times a year in conjunction with iChooser.

The scheme is open to anyone living in Sussex, not just Crawley and there is no obligation to take up the offer following initial registration.

Tel: **01293 438000** or

visit **www.crawley.gov.uk/energyswitching**

Horsham

Free home energy visits can be booked (between October to March only) Tel: **01403 215111**



The West Sussex Wellbeing teams can offer further support on keeping you and your family healthy. Advice can include how to make small changes to improve your wellbeing, such as being more active or eating healthier meals.

For more information please contact your team on:

Adur & Worthing Wellbeing

Tel: 01903 221450

Arun Wellbeing

Tel: 01903 737862

Chichester Wellbeing

Tel: 01243 521041

Crawley Wellbeing

Tel: 01293 585317

Horsham Wellbeing

Tel: 01403 215111

Mid-Sussex Wellbeing

Tel: 01444 477191

For more information on the Wellbeing teams and the services they can offer please visit:

www.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk

West Sussex Local Assistance Network

A group of organisations in West Sussex that can provide fuel top ups and access to other goods and services such as food banks, furniture recycling schemes, or vouchers to get household goods including fuel, nappies, cooking equipment, clothes or transport costs in times of crisis.

If you or someone you know is in need of assistance then you should contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or one of the local charities:

Worthing Churches Homeless Projects

(Covers Worthing and Shoreham only)

Tel: 01903 832929

Horsham Matters (Covers Horsham only)

Tel: 01403 211833

Stonepillow (Covers Chichester and Arun only)

Tel: 01243 698547

Crawley Open House (Covers Crawley only)

Tel: 01293 447702

Contact details for advice organisations

Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS)

ESAS provides advice on how to reduce bills and make homes more energy efficient. It also gives details on eligibility for the schemes mentioned above, including which parts of the UK they apply to.

Call the Energy Saving Advice Service on **0300 123 1234**
(9am - 8pm Mon - Fri and 10am - 2pm Sat)
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/domestic/england

The Home Heat Helpline

This is a free national helpline offering access to grants for free home insulation and reduced or 'social' tariffs from energy suppliers, as well as advice on managing your bills and reducing your energy use.

Call the Home Heat Helpline on **0800 33 66 99** (9am - 6pm Mon - Fri, textphone **0800 027 2122**)
www.homeheathelpline.org.uk

NHS 111 Service

NHS non-emergency 24-hour helpline for advice if you feel unwell. Call: **111**

Citizens Advice

Your local bureau will be able to give you advice on benefits, energy supplier switching, heating, grants and debt.

To speak to an advisor or to make an appointment at your local Citizens Advice Bureau contact: **03444 771 171**

Arun and Chichester CAB - **www.arunchichestercab.org.uk**
Central and South CAB - **www.centalsussexcab.org.uk**

Age UK

Advice and information for people in later life on a range of issues including welfare and disability benefits, health and social care, housing and help with heating. Local Age UK branches are independent charities which offer a variety of services, including benefit checks, exercise and social activities, lunch clubs and day centres.

For more information contact your local Age UK on

0800 019 1310 (10am - 2pm, Mon - Fri) or

e-mail: **admin@westsussex.gov.uk**

www.ageuk.org.uk/westsussex

Gingerbread

Gingerbread provides advice and practical support for single parents. Call the helpline on **0808 802 0925** (10am - 6pm Mon, 10am - 4pm Tues, Thurs, Fri and 10am - 1pm and 5pm - 7pm Wed) **www.gingerbread.org.uk**

Scope and West Sussex Independent Living

These organisations offer local knowledge and national disability expertise, providing free, impartial and expert information and support to disabled people and their families.

To contact **Scope**, call the helpline on **0808 800 3333** (9am - 5pm weekdays, closed at weekends and on Bank Holidays)

Email: **response@scope.org.uk** **www.scope.org.uk**

West Sussex Credit Union

West Sussex Credit Union offers a fast, safe and secure way of borrowing money at a reasonable rate. They also offer an easy and safe way to save your money, whilst benefiting the local economy.

www.westsussexcreditunion.co.uk Tel: **01903 237221**

Money Advice Service

An independent service set up by the government that can help you manage your money or deal with unexpected bills.

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk Tel: **0300 500 5000**

Step Change

A leading debt advice charity that provides free, impartial and expert information to help you become debt free.

www.stepchange.org Tel: **0800 138 1111**

Gas Safe Register

The official list of gas engineers who are qualified to work safely and legally on your gas appliances. You should contact them if you need your boiler serviced or repaired.

www.gassaferegister.co.uk Tel: **0800 408 5500**

Buy With Confidence

If you are looking for a company to carry out work on your home, the Buy With Confidence website lists your local trading standards approved companies.

www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk

All numbers starting 0800 or 0808 are free from landlines and mobile phones. Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than calls to geographic (01 and 02) numbers.

Your top tips for keeping warm and well

- 1. Get your free flu jab** if you are aged 65 or over, pregnant, have certain medical conditions, live in a residential or nursing home, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person.
- 2. Keep warm.** By setting your heating to at least 18°C in winter poses minimal risk to your health when you are wearing suitable clothing. You can keep your home warm and your bills as low as possible.
- 3. Look after yourself and check on older neighbours or relatives** to make sure they are safe, warm and well. Layer your clothing and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside.
- 4. Food is a vital source of energy,** which helps to keep your body warm. Try to make sure that you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day and keep active in the home if you can.
- 5. Get financial support.** There are benefits and other sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with your energy bills.
- 6. Have your home checked for fire safety.** West Sussex Fire & Rescue service can provide free Home Fire Safety Checks for older and vulnerable people.
Call **0800 328 6487** to enquire about having a free check.
- 7. Check if you are eligible for inclusion on the priority services register** operated by your water and power supplier.
- 8. Have your heating and cooking appliances checked**
- carbon monoxide is a killer.