

Warming homes

in Northumberland

Winter 2023/24

A resource for frontline staff to navigate support and advice available for residents so that we can help everyone stay safe, warm and well at home this winter.



Northumberland
County Council

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Making every contact count

Struggling to keep a home warm can be a result of **multiple factors** including:

- Living on a low-income
- High energy costs
- Living in a poorly insulated or heated property

It might not be immediately obvious that a person is struggling to keep warm.

These questions might help you find out more

Are you **satisfied** that you are able to **heat your home to a comfortable temperature**, even during the colder months? If not, why?

Do you **worry about the cost** of keeping your home warm?

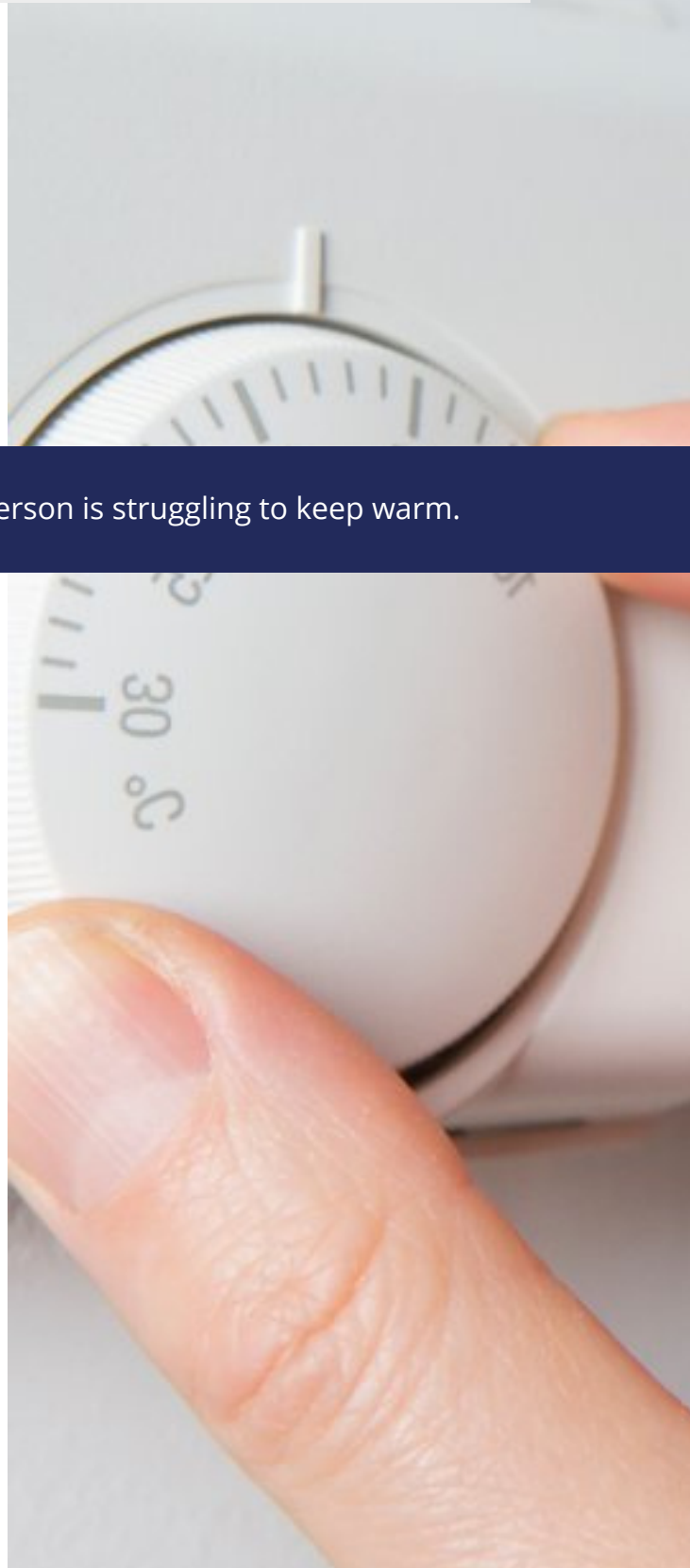
- How often?
- Occasionally, regularly, all of the time?

Do you know how to **stay warm, safe and well** over the winter? (see [pg.4](#))

Would you like to know more about the **support available** to help you to keep your home warm?

- [Energy costs \(see pg.6-9\)](#).
- [Home energy efficiency \(see pg.10\)](#).
- [Maximising income \(see pg.11-12\)](#).

For local support fast go to:
northumberlandfrontline.org.uk





Affordability

Advice map

Energy cost support



Energy switching
(pg.8)

Energy costs
(pg.6)

Bulk buying for oil, coal, LPG
(see OILCAN, pg.7)

Grants
(pg.9)

Maximising income



Savings, money and debt
(pg.11-12)

Employment and skills support
(pg.12-13)





Energy efficiency

Advice map

Home improvements



Energy Company Obligation (ECO)
(pg.10)

Northumberland County Council
Local Authority delivery of
national funding grants
(pg.10)

Check property energy ratings
(pg.10)

Energy switching
(pg.8)





Staying safe and well

Advice map

Staying safe



Carbon Monoxide risks/awareness
(pg.14)

Using alternative methods to save electricity
(pg.14)

Debt advice
(pg.11)

Northern Gas Networks Advice
(pg.5)

Staying well



Age UK Keeping Well this Winter
(pg.5)

NHS Stay Well in Winter
(pg.5)

Join vulnerable household's
priority service register
(pg.6)



Providing good quality advice



Northern Gas Networks

Tips on **saving money**, reducing waste and staying safe.

[northerngasnetworks.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Your-Electricity-Gas-and-Water-How-to-save-money-reduce-waste-and-stay-safe-at-home.pdf](https://www.northerngasnetworks.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Your-Electricity-Gas-and-Water-How-to-save-money-reduce-waste-and-stay-safe-at-home.pdf)

NHS

Advice on how to stay well in winter.

[nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well)

For non-emergency health advice **call 111**

In an emergency call 999 (or 112 from a mobile)

Age UK

Advice on keeping well in winter.

[ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/stay-healthy-in-winter](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/stay-healthy-in-winter)

0800 678 1602 (8am-7pm everyday)

Northumberland Communities Together: Household Support Fund

Will be distributed to directly help those who need it most. The grant will be distributed through small payments to support vulnerable households meet daily needs such as food, clothing and utilities.

[northumberland.gov.uk/coronavirus/Northumberland-Communities-Together/NCT.aspx](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/coronavirus/Northumberland-Communities-Together/NCT.aspx)

nct@northumberland.gov.uk

01670 620015 (9am - 6pm, everyday)





Energy costs

Vulnerable Households Priority Services Register

Targeted support offered by energy providers to households containing people who are:

- Pensioners
- Disabled
- Chronically sick
- Have a long-term medical condition
- Learning or visual impairment of additional communication needs
- Have a child under five years of age

Check energy provider websites.

Citizens Advice Northumberland Specialist Energy Advisers

- Confidential, impartial and holistic advice
- Casework via phone, email, in person and through home visits for vulnerable households
- Support to alleviate fuel poverty, from simple queries to complex complaints
- Carbon monoxide awareness and smart metre advice

citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/get-help/our-projects/the-energy-project

energy@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

01670 339749

Energy Advice in Rural Northumberland (EARN)

Provides advice to reduce energy use and access financial support.

energyadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

info@ca-north.org.uk

01670 517178

Groundwork NE Green Doctor

Groundwork's Green Doctors help UK residents stay warm, well, and save money on household bills.

groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor

greendoctor@groundwork.org.uk



Energy costs

Advice for people living in rural areas or off mains gas/electricity

Northumberland CAN: Off grid households

Powerless People Register and survey for people living without mains electricity.

ca-north.org.uk/promoting-rural-issues/offgrid-households-powerless-people

info@ca-north.org.uk

01670 517 178

Northumberland CAN: OilCAN

A bulk buying scheme for residents purchasing oil, coal and LPG. Residents can join the scheme for £12 per year to access fuel at lower prices.

ca-north.org.uk/supporting-individuals/oilcan

Northumberland CAN: Warm Hubs

Supports a network of community buildings in rural areas to provide access to a warm environment and advice.

ca-north.org.uk/supporting-individuals/warm-hubs

Energy Advice in Rural Northumberland (EARN)

Sharing tips on energy efficiency and the benefits of fitting renewables.

energyadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/renewables

info@ca-north.org.uk

01670 517178

Cosy Can

Residents in rural areas can sign up to a newsletter for energy advice.

christinenicholls@ca-north.org.uk

07827 403837

Energy costs

Energy switching

When fuel costs are high and the market is unpredictable, customers should check the best deal with their existing energy provider. When fuel costs and markets are more stable, customers may want to consider switching energy providers if there are better deals available.

Citizens Advice: Energy Know How

The advice you need this winter booklet.

drive.google.com/file/d/1aQuReB16DfBrFihZdXhIWk1mYsYtnJYT/view

Ofgem: Accredited energy switching tools

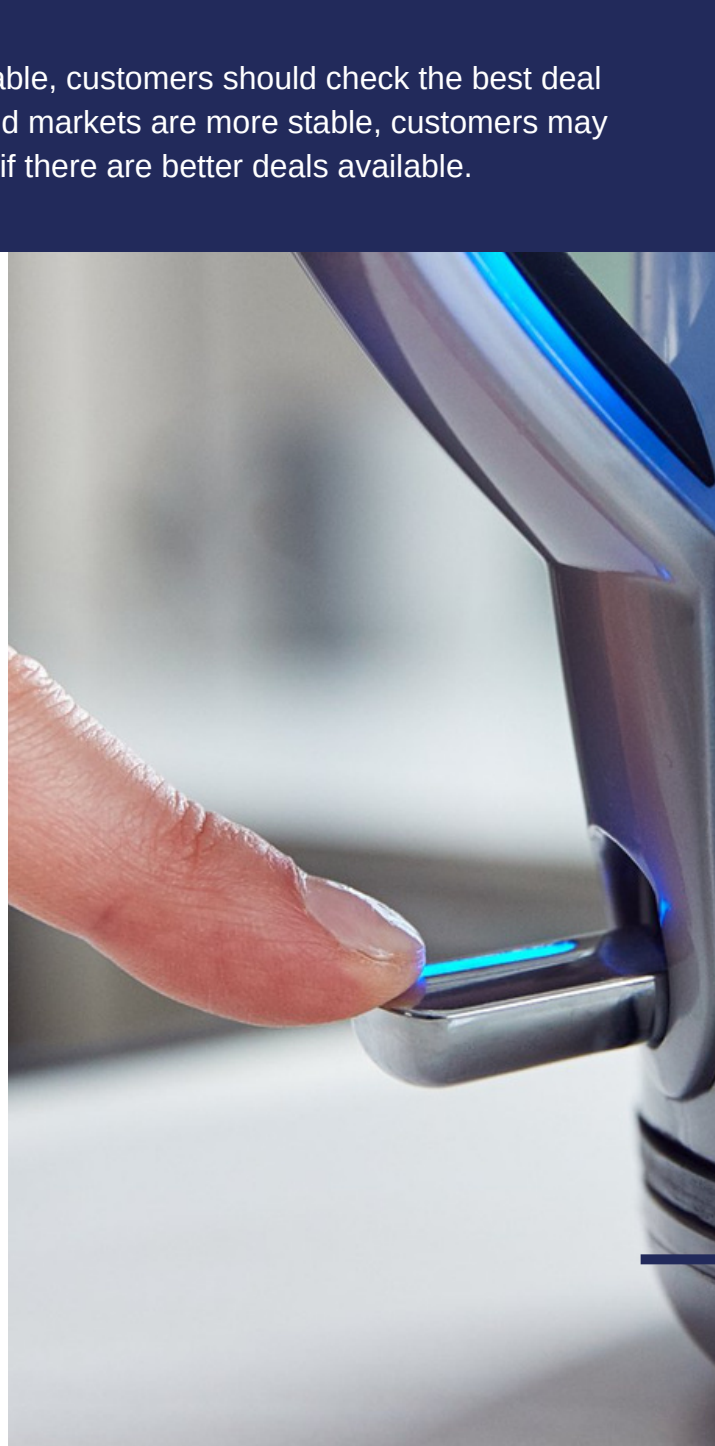
[ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/switching-energy-tariff-or-supplier](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/switching-energy-tariff-or-supplier)

Big Community Switch

For the time being, Standard Variable Tariffs, limited by Ofgem's Price Cap, remain the best option. Fixed tariffs remain significantly higher and therefore do not offer opportunities to save when switching away from a variable tariff.

Households can register online and iChoosr will get in touch when the next collective energy switching auction is due to take place that could deliver potential savings.

bigcommunityswitch.co.uk/northumberland/home





Energy costs

Grants

Warm Homes Discount

Low-income households can apply to their electricity supplier to see if they qualify for the Warm Homes Discount. Rebate is £150 as of 2022/23. This is automatically paid to those who are eligible (others will be invited to apply if criteria met). Those eligible will receive a letter in Autumn/Winter 2022.

[ofgem.gov.uk/publications/faqs-warm-home-discount-scheme](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/faqs-warm-home-discount-scheme)

Cold Weather Payment

£25 per week is available to people on certain benefits for each seven-day period where the temperature is below zero degrees Celsius. Payment is provided automatically.

[gov.uk/cold-weather-payment](https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment)

Winter Fuel Payment for over 65s

Between £100 and £300 for those receiving state pension or another social security benefit. There are also various time limited discretionary grants which could help in emergency situations.

[gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment](https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment)

NCT@northumberland.gov.uk

01670 620015 (9am to 6pm, seven days a week)



Home energy efficiency improvements

Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) scheme

Energy upgrades for eligible homes that do not have a mains gas connection, or only have a gas cooker. Please note: This is not suitable for emergency referrals.

northumberland.gov.uk/ClimateChange/Renewable-energy

EARN offers renewable expert advice ([see pg.7](#)).

LEAP Boiler Scheme

For eligible vulnerable households that have a broken or condemned gas boiler.

applyforleap.org.uk/the-leap-boiler-scheme

Great British Insulation Scheme

Residents may be able to get free or cheaper insulation if their home:

- has an energy performance certificate (EPC) of D to G - check your EPC
- is in Council Tax bands A-D in England or A-E in Scotland or Wales - check your Council Tax band

gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme

Telephone: 0800 098 7950 (Mon to Fri 8am to 6pm (except public holidays), Sat 9am to 12pm)

Energy Savings Trust

Advice on making your home more energy efficient, reducing your carbon emissions and lowering your energy bills.

energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home

Check a property's energy rating:

find-energy-certificate.digital.communities.gov.uk

Home energy efficiency improvements

Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) scheme

For eligible households in receipt of income-related benefits, or with a total household income of less than £31,000. Please note: This is not an emergency fund and the decision on what measures will be installed rests with the obligated energy supplier or their contracted installers.

[ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/energy-company-obligation-eco/homeowners-and-tenants/faqs-domestic-consumers-and-landlords](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/energy-company-obligation-eco/homeowners-and-tenants/faqs-domestic-consumers-and-landlords)

Eon Next and Utilita are the only suppliers who accept flexible eligibility applications direct as well as the means-tested benefits route.

eonnex.com/energy-company-obligation

utilita.co.uk/eco

These others allow you to apply direct if you are in receipt of means-tested benefits.

britishgas.co.uk/home-services/boilers-and-heating/eco-scheme.html

edfenergy.com/eco4-subsidised-energy-efficiency-measures

octopus.energy/blog/all-you-need-to-know-about-the-eco-scheme

ovoenergy.com/energy-company-obligation

Contact phone numbers and email addresses for all 13 obligated energy suppliers can be found on Ofgem's website:

[ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/energy-company-obligation-eco/contacts-guidance-and-resources/eco-supplier-contact-details](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/energy-company-obligation-eco/contacts-guidance-and-resources/eco-supplier-contact-details)



Maximising income

Through savings

Northumberland Community Bank

Supports residents to regularly save and access fair, flexible loans.

northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk

enquiries@northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk

01670 522779 (Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm)

Call in to:

Northumberland Community Bank
65 Station Road
Ashington
NE63 8RX

North East First Credit Union

Can offer loans at lower interest rates than many loan providers, especially door stop lenders, pay-day loan companies and pawn brokers.

nefirstcu.co.uk

info@nefirstcu.co.uk

0330 055 3666

Welfare benefits advice

Northumberland Adviceline
0808 278 7944

Debt advice

Citizens Advice Northumberland provides advice on a range of money, employment, debit and benefits.

citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk/get-help

01670 339960

Text DEBT to 81400





Maximising income

Through employment and skills support

A range of support is open to help residents increase their income through raising skill levels and finding a job, or moving on to a better one.

Northumberland County Council Employability, Inclusion and Skills Support

The team works to ensure the labour market needs of Northumberland residents are met through a diverse range of support programmes.

northumberland.gov.uk/Economy-Regeneration/Economy-Regeneration-Teams/Strategic-Transport-Employability-1.aspx

Northumberland County Council Education & Skills

Information about adult courses.

northumberland.gov.uk/Education.aspx

Short courses to boost interview and digital skills.

rienne.gallon@northumberland.gov.uk

01670 626107

Jobcentre Plus

Supports job seeking and benefits.

gov.uk/universal-credit/contact-universal-credit

Universal Credit: 0800 328 5644

Other appointments: 0800 169 0190

CVA Job Club

Provides support with CVs, applications and covering letter.

northumberlandcva.org.uk/for-individuals/help-getting-a-job/job-club

Leanne Brown or Lisa Wackett: 01670 858688





Support for young people

Northumberland County Council Education & Skills

For those aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training.

careersteam@northumberland.gov.uk

07827 244027

The North of Tyne Youth Employment Partnership

Support for young people aged 16 to 24, improving availability and access to employability and mental health services

northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/projects/youth-employment-partnerships

Careers Guidance for under 18s

northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Careers.aspx

careersteam@northumberland.gov.uk

01670 622799 or 07827 244027

E-Learning for Health

If you would like to find out more how to help people living in cold homes. You could complete “Helping People living in cold homes” e-learning module on E-Learning for Health: e-lfh.org.uk



Risk awareness

You may find households using high risk coping strategies to keep warm.
Share this advice to keep residents safe.

Carbon Monoxide risks/awareness

The risk of carbon monoxide poisoning increases when appliances are not regularly serviced or equipment for cooking and heating that is intended for use outdoors is used indoors such as barbeques and portable stoves.

gassafecharity.org.uk/media/1027/29074_gas_safe_a4_leaflet_aw2_final.pdf

Using alternative methods to save electricity

Households may be tempted to light their homes or stay warm by using candles or ovens to stay warm.

northumberlandfireandrescue.gov.uk/community-safety

Energy Safety

Residents may be tempted to tamper with electricity or gas meters to avoid the rising costs. This is extremely dangerous.

stayenergysafe.co.uk/stories/new-research-energy-theft-is-a-ticking-time-bomb-but-do-people-know-the-dangers

