



## Get your bills under control with the Home Heat Helpline Advice and benefits for disabled people

### Why call now?

If you are worried about your heating bills you are not alone. But it is never too late or too early to prepare for the cold weather. By calling the Home Heat Helpline now you can access advice and grants to insulate your home for free in time for the winter to come.

### What am I entitled to?

If you're receiving benefits such as the disability living allowance or council tax benefit, you may be eligible for additional grants to insulate your house and improve your home's energy efficiency. In addition, energy suppliers may offer schemes to help those in financial difficulties pay their bills, rather than getting into debt. If you are visually impaired, bills and advice are available in large font, Braille or as 'talking bills'. And if you have manual dexterity problems you may benefit from specially adapted controls for some of your household appliances. You can also ask to be put on the Priority Service Register, giving free access to a range of services designed to make your life easier. It makes sense to find out about the services that you're entitled to.

### What can I do?

The first step is to call the Home Heat Helpline for free on **0800 33 66 99**. It is staffed by experts who can give advice on grants and how to save money on your heating bills by making your home more energy efficient.

### What is the Helpline?

The Home Heat Helpline is a free, central phone number offering practical advice for people concerned about paying their energy bills. The Helpline is staffed by specially trained advisors. It is **open from 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm on Saturdays**. You can access the Helpline by calling 0800 33 66 99 or by **minicom 0800 027 2122** and the Helpline has access to an interpreting service.

## Hints & Tips

### Priority Service Register

If you are disabled you are eligible to be added to your supplier's Priority Service Register. This gives you access to additional free services, which can include:

- Free annual gas safety check of all gas appliances
- Password scheme - Suppliers will provide a password that will be used when the supplier sends someone to visit a customer
- Bill nominee scheme - Customers who have difficulty reading or checking their bill can nominate a friend, relative or carer to receive a copy direct from the supplier
- Bills can be provided in Braille, large print or on audio tape
- Gas and electricity meters can be moved to make them more accessible if a customer has difficulty gaining access

### Thinking about insulating your home?

- Insulating a loft with no insulation at all with 270mm of new insulation could save up to £175 a year\*
- Topping up your loft insulation from 100mm to 270mm could save around £25 a year\*
- Around 33% of the heat lost in your home is through the walls, so insulating them can be the most cost-effective way to save energy in the home. Cavity wall insulation could save up to £135 a year\*

### Staying warm

- Draw curtains over windows at night to provide insulation for the room
- Keep outside doors shut and block up obvious draughts (including the letterbox)
- Move furniture away from radiators and heaters to allow heat to circulate around the room
- Open internal doors of any rooms which get more sun than others and let the warm air travel around your home

\*According to the Energy Saving Trust. Based on a typical three-bedroom semi-detached gas heated house, with an average gas price of 4.49p/kWh and electricity price of 14.39p/kWh; correct as of September 2011 and valid for 2011-12.