



## **Get your bills under control with the Home Heat Helpline Advice and benefits for older 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 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. In addition, as an older person you may be entitled to special services including free gas safety checks and prearranged passwords so that you know that anyone visiting your home is who they say they are.

### **Simple steps to reduce your bills**

- Turn radiators down in rooms which you only use occasionally
- Switch your lights off when you're not using them
- Turn appliances like televisions and phone chargers off at the wall rather than leaving them on standby when they're not being used
- Replace normal light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs which use 1/5 of the electricity. They may cost a little more, but they soon pay for themselves

### **What am I entitled to?**

All people over the age of 60 receive a Winter Fuel Payment from the government. If you're receiving benefits such as the pension credit you may also be eligible for extra grants to insulate your house and improve its energy efficiency. Energy suppliers also have money put aside to help those in financial difficulties pay their bills rather than getting into debt. Winter rebates are available for some customers who may be vulnerable over winter – if you qualify, you'll be receiving a letter from your energy provider.

### **How can I help others?**

If you know anyone who might go cold this winter, you can help them by visiting them to check that they are keeping warm. You can also call the Home Heat Helpline on their behalf for advice, or give them a copy of this guide. Download extra copies from our website at [www.homeheathelpline.org.uk](http://www.homeheathelpline.org.uk)

### **Hints & Tips**

#### **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)
- Avoid covering radiators with curtains - they will funnel heat out of the room. Instead, tuck them behind the radiator