

Warmth Matters

Stay warm. Stay healthy. Save money.

February 2020



In this issue...

- Are you eligible for The Warm Home Discount Scheme?
- What is the Priority Service Register?
- Top tips for keeping warm
- Warm Hubs
- Ever heard of ECO?

Book your Warmth Matters Session before the end of March

Who do I contact to find out more?

If you would like to book a Warmth Matters session, or are interested in supporting or funding our work, or would just like to be kept informed then please get in touch.

We are currently taking bookings for our Warmth Matters sessions and we deliver these between October and March each year.

We are also keen to hear from you if you are interested in our Warm Hubs initiative. We are keeping a list of interested organisations whilst we look for further funding to deliver the project.

About Warm Hubs

'Warm Hubs' are places within the local community where people can be assured of finding a safe, warm and friendly environment in which to enjoy refreshments, social activity and receive information and advice on saving energy and saving money on your energy bills, as well as enjoying the company of other people.

For more information:

Email: davidcarter@surreyca.org.uk

Telephone: 07521 503 696

Find out more online: warmthmatters.org.uk

Priority Services Register

Electricity and gas suppliers must offer special services to customers who are of state pension age, disabled, suffering from a chronic illness or have a visual or hearing impairment. Among the benefits of being part of the PSR are:

- Free annual gas safety checks (subject to additional qualifying criteria)
- Priority in an emergency, this could include providing alternative heating and cooking facilities in the event of a loss of supply
- Controls and adapters for appliances
- Meters moved to an accessible location for free (if possible)
- Meter reading service
- A password scheme
- Statements in large print or braille
- Statement nomination scheme

Remember if you switch suppliers you will need to re-register on their Priority Service Register. The contact details for your energy suppliers is usually on your bill.



Warm Home Discount Scheme

You could get £140 off your electricity bill this winter under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The money is not paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between September and March. You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity. Contact your supplier to find out. The discount will not affect your Winter Fuel Payment.

There are 2 ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- You get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit - known as the 'core group'
- You're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme - known as the 'broader group'



What is the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO)?

Energy efficiency measures available through ECO include loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, solid wall insulation and boiler replacement or repair. They're all designed to help people save money on their energy bills, keep homes warmer and help to reduce carbon emissions.

Your energy supplier should advise you if you're eligible for an ECO grant - this is also called Affordable Warmth. You can also contact the Energy Saving Trust for more details. To benefit from ECO, you must either own your home or have the landlord's permission. Even if you are eligible, an energy supplier doesn't have to install an energy efficient measure in your home.

Can I get ECO funding?

It's quite complicated to work out if you're eligible for ECO funding. It depends on what improvements your home needs, where you live, the level of carbon or cost savings made, and if you receive any benefits. If you receive the Warm Home Discount, or certain types of benefits, you're likely to be eligible.



Top Tips

Use your curtains

Heat from the sun is free so make the most of it - open your curtains and let the sunlight in during the day to make use of this free heat. When it gets dark, shut your curtains which act as another layer of insulation and keep warmth in your rooms. You should also make sure you don't have any gaps so that the warm air can stay in and the cold air stays out – this can help reduce condensation.

Furniture

It might feel great to have your favourite seat or sofa in front of the radiator, but it's absorbing heat that could be warming your home. By moving it away from the radiator hot air can circulate freely - the same goes for your curtains or drying clothes.

Insulation

When it comes to heat, around 25 percent is lost through the roof. This can be easily reduced by installing insulation throughout your loft. It's also worth seeing what's going on in your walls, as around a third of the heat in an uninsulated home is lost this way. Although it's not as cheap to install as loft installation, cavity wall insulation could save up to £160 a year in heating bills.

Draughts

The Energy Saving Trust estimates that DIY draught proofing your doors, windows and cracks in the floor could save you £25 per year. Self-adhesive seals around doors and windows and door draught excluders are relatively cheap and easy to install, so it's worth getting it done before winter kicks in.



Service or Upgrade your boiler

If your boiler is more than 10 years old, it may be time to replace it with a new, more efficient model.

Wrap up Warm

If you have a hot water tank, make sure it is properly lagged - or insulated. This will keep the water warmer for longer and reduce heating costs. Insulating an uninsulated tank can save you up to £150 a year.

Turn down the dial. This may seem a little counter-intuitive, but bear with us. Research shows that turning your thermostat down by 1 degree could cut your heating bill by up to 10%. So keep the dial between 18-21 degrees.

Reflect the Heat

Radiator panels ensure that heat from your radiators warms up your room and not your walls, they are particularly important when the radiator is on an outside wall. These panels are currently available free to anyone attending one of our Warmth Matters sessions. Contact David Carter for more information.

Switch your energy supplier or tariff

You could switch your energy supplier and save hundreds of pounds on your gas and electricity bill.



What are smart meters all about?

Put simply, smart meters are the latest generation of gas and electricity meters which will replace your traditional meters. As well as your smart meter, you'll receive a portable in-home display that clearly shows you how much energy you're using, and how much it's costing you. Both parts communicate with each other automatically and send your energy usage information to your energy supplier, which means you don't have to! Energy suppliers hope to be rolling out the second generation smart meters next year. If you have any questions about smart meters contact your energy supplier.



Hi, my name is David Carter and I started working on the Warmth Matters Project in November 2018 as an Advice and Guidance Project Officer. I work three days a week helping to provide free and impartial information on a range of topics. Some of the things we can help with include:

- Talking to local groups about saving money on their energy bills
- Checking that you are on the best and most appropriate fuel tariff
- Helping households improve their energy efficiency
- Helping those in fuel debt.

Warmth Matters is a project aimed at sharing tips on energy efficiency and keeping warm as well as helping you to save money on your energy bills.

We offer free and impartial advice, group presentations and one to one advice to help you stay warm, stay healthy and save money.

The project is delivered by Surrey Community Action and funded by The Sobbell Foundation and The Henry Smith Charity.

Useful contacts

Simple Energy Advice

Simple and independent advice to help you reduce your energy bills, make your home warmer, plan home improvements and make your home greener

www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk

Tel: 0800 444202

Action Surrey

Action Surrey helps residents and organisations within Surrey to save money on their energy bills, keep them warm and reduce their environmental impact.

www.actionsurrey.org

Tel: 0800 783 2503

Heat Surrey

The Heat Project is a one-stop-shop service to help households across Surrey to reduce their energy bills through a range of home energy saving upgrades, grants and through the provision of free energy advice.

www.heatproject.co.uk

Tel: 0800 0246 231

Surrey Community Action

We have a wealth of knowledge about a variety of organisations, groups and communities across Surrey. We provide advice and support to voluntary and community groups, parish councils and social enterprises and deliver projects to help the community.

www.surreyca.org.uk

Tel: 01483 566072

The Centre for Sustainable Energy

An independent national charity that shares knowledge and experience to help people change the way they think and act about energy.

www.cse.org.uk