

**As the winter months approach us and we become increasingly aware of the cost of energy rising, there's no doubt that using less energy can save us money.** But that doesn't mean we should have to use less than we need – it's vital that we have enough light and warmth. There are lots of ways we can use less energy without losing any of our creature comforts – and we can save money into the bargain! Age Concern Thurrock offers a winter pack which gives lots of tips and information to help to do this. Please call us on 01375 389872 or pop in to the Beehive to collect one.

**Check whether you are received all the benefits to which you are entitled.**

If your total weekly income is below £145.40 for a single person or £222.05 for a couple you may qualify for Pension Credit.

Also if you are over 65 and have a disability/health condition which affects your quality of life you may be entitled to Attendance Allowance.

If you contact us on 01375389872 we will be happy to discuss your situation and if you wish to help you to complete the necessary application forms.

If your home is properly insulated it can result in lower heating bills as less heat is wasted. There are a number of schemes that offer insulation for your homes. Some are free of charge, some at a reduced prices depending on your age and circumstances. Call us on 01375 389872 for further information.

**As winter approaches, if you haven't already done so, it is advisable that you have your gas central heating boiler checked for safety.**

This is important as an inefficient gas boiler can result in carbon monoxide being given out. This is a colourless, odourless gas that can make you feel ill and even cause death. Carbon monoxide detectors are available from supermarkets and DIY stores.



## Winter Ready

**The Winter Fuel Payment** is paid by the Government to assist with heating costs. If you were born before 5<sup>th</sup> January 1952 you may be entitled to this. Previous recipients should get the payment automatically. At present it is £200 per household or £300 for those households with a member over 80 years. If you have not received the payment yet give us a call on 01375 389872 or call the Winter Fuel Payment Helpline 08459 15 15 15.

**Cold Weather Payments** are made during periods of very cold weather to help towards extra heating costs. To get a Cold Weather Payment, the temperature for your postcode area must be recorded at 0°C or below for seven days in a row. Specific Met Office weather stations are used to get this information and they should be paid out automatically to those who qualify. To qualify for this payment you need to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit such as pension credit.

