



STAYING WELL THIS WINTER

Part 1 Supplement



Welcome!

Winter may seem a long way off, especially with the sun still shining so brightly, but we all know that in the coming weeks the weather will begin to become a little cooler and probably a little wetter as the days begin to shorten and Christmas approaches.

If you are anything like us, you probably won't even be thinking about preparing for the winter weather. It is usually when you go to turn the heating on and find that the radiators stay cold that you then find the local plumber can't get to you for at least 2 weeks, or there is a power cut and you discover that the batteries are flat in your torch...and at that moment you wish you had been a little more prepared!

So, to help us all be as prepared as we can be this year, we have put together this 'Staying Well This Winter' themed, supplement. It is packed full of helpful information and advice and includes a handy checklist.

Keep an eye out for Part 2 released in December!



Age UK Oxfordshire



Make sure you know where your main stopcock is and check it is easy to turn. If water pipes freeze they can burst, so you need to be able to turn off the water at the main stopcock.

Keep a torch (and spare batteries) handy in case of a power cut. If possible have one upstairs and one downstairs.



Have you registered with your FREE Utility Priority Service? All utility companies (electricity, gas water) hold a list of customers who, in the event of a utility failure, may need additional support but you need to register with them to be on the list. If you are aged 65+, have a long term health condition or rely on electricity (e.g. to keep medicine cool) then give your utility company a ring and ask about their priority register.

Did you know that 18°C is the ideal temperature to keep your bedroom at and 21°C is the ideal temperature to keep your living room at? NB: If it would help you to receive a **FREE thermometer** call **0345 450 1276** and ask for the 'network' and we will post one out to you.



Boiler tips

- If you have a **gas boiler** you will need a "Gas Safe" registered engineer – you can check or find an engineer by calling **0800 408 5500** or going to **www.gassaferegister.co.uk**.
- If you have an **oil fired or other fuel boiler**, you can find trusted engineers through the Trading Standards Buy with Confidence scheme **www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk**.
- **Consider having an emergency source of heat**, such as a small plug in radiator, in case your boiler breaks and it is difficult to get a plumber quickly.
- If you have a **condensing boiler** and the drainage pipes have frozen before, take the opportunity to speak to your engineer about ways to prevent this in the future – they may be able to fit some insulation to help reduce the problem.
- **Bleed your radiators** (this means using a 'key' to let the air out from the top), to help them work more effectively. If you're not sure how, your heating engineer can show you after they've done your service.

No one should be alone on Christmas Day

If you are wondering what to do on Christmas Day we would recommend visiting the Community Christmas website for details of Christmas meals locally, some areas will also offer transport assistance. Visit: **www.communitychristmas.org.uk** or phone **0800 063 9285**

Fancy joining a coffee morning, exercise class or social group?

To see what's already happening locally please visit the **Community Information Network Directory**, an online search tool showcasing a wide variety of activities across Oxfordshire: **www.communitynetworkdirectory.org.uk**

If you are not online you can contact **0345 450 1276** and ask to speak to the network and they will print off a hard copy for you.

Why not take a look at Oxfordshire County Council's Live Well Oxfordshire site? **https://livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk**

It has information to help you to find your own way to meet any needs for support and care and for you, or a loved one, to lead the lives that you want.



Better Housing
Better Health

Take advice on better insulating your home

It is important to insulate your property sufficiently. 35% of heat can be lost through uninsulated walls and a further 25% escapes through lofts and roofs. Insulation helps to keep your house warmer for longer during the winter months and means you spend less money on energy bills.

It's not always easy to know who you can trust when seeking assistance. That's why your Local Authority and County Council have commissioned the '**Better Housing Better Health**' service; a one-stop-shop for all of your home energy needs. The service provides expert advice and access to a host of support schemes. To find out more call their team on **0800 107 0044**.

STAYING WELL THIS WINTER



Checklist

Have a look at our handy checklist to help ensure you are staying well this winter:

September

- ☐ Book your boiler service
- ☐ Get support with giving up smoking: why not speak to your GP, pharmacist, family or friends to let them know you want to?
- ☐ If you have an electric blanket(s) book to have it tested
- ☐ Write a list of urgent and emergency numbers and keep it by your phone

October

- ☐ Check whether you are claiming all the financial support you are entitled to
- ☐ Check your smoke alarm is working
- ☐ If you have an open fire/woodburner book to have your chimney swept: did you know that a carbon monoxide alarm only costs approx £10 and can be bought locally?
- ☐ Take advice on how to better insulate your home: insulation is a bit like a Thermos - it keeps warm things warm and cool things cool so you will feel the benefits all year round

November

- ☐ Book your flu jab: if getting to your GP surgery/pharmacist is difficult for you why not ask your local Good Neighbour Scheme for help?
- ☐ Have 2 torches and spare batteries: one set upstairs, one set downstairs
- ☐ Find out where your stopcock is situated and check if it can be turned easily
- ☐ Remember to close your bedroom window at night

December

- ☐ Ensure you have five ready meals in the freezer: did you know that you can also freeze milk and bread?
- ☐ Order repeat prescriptions to cover the Christmas/new Year period and keep a stock of simple cold, flu and sore throat remedies in the house
- ☐ Have you registered with your utility provider's Priority Service?
- ☐ Book your Christmas activities

Are you eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination?

Flu can be more dangerous if you are over 65, have an existing health problem, are pregnant, a carer, or children under 4.

Don't put it off. Get your flu vaccination straight away. Ask at your GP Practice.

**STAY WELL
THIS WINTER**



How your local Good Neighbour Schemes can help you

Your local Good Neighbour Scheme is run by a team of volunteers who live in your local community and can help in a variety of ways...

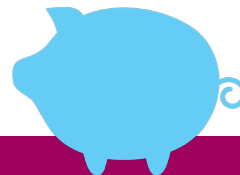
- **Help with transport** - some schemes will ONLY offer this to help you get to a medical appointment but some will also offer support for other trips
- **Help with food shopping**
- **Help with small tasks around the house or garden** such as mowing the lawn, helping with washing, paperwork, simple DIY jobs etc.
- **Befriending** – regular visits for companionship or going out together for a coffee.

To find out if you have a Good Neighbour Scheme in your local community you can use the Community Network Directory, an online search tool showcasing a wide variety of activities, support and opportunities that exist throughout Oxfordshire.

You can access this directory by visiting <http://www.communitynetworkdirectory.org.uk>. Or, you can contact the Age UK Oxfordshire office on **0345 450 1276** and ask to speak to the network and we will send you the details by post.



Benefit Check Tips



1

Many welfare benefits are **means-tested** (based on your income and savings) so before setting out to get a benefit check, gather up to date information on your income and savings, and your partner's savings.

2

You can get a **benefit check** by contacting your local advice agency, Citizen's Advice or Age UK Oxfordshire. There are also many easy to use calculators online (e.g. <https://benefitscheck.ageuk.org.uk>).

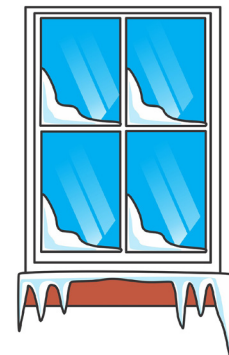
3

There are other entitlements that are not dependent on your income. You may be able to get **Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment** if you struggle due to an illness or disability.

4

Check that you're not missing out on a **Council Tax discount** by counting the number of adults in your household. If you get a total of 1 or less, then speak to your district council.

Keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold



Breathing in cold air lowers body temperature and raises the risk of chest infections, heart attacks and strokes.

Useful Phone Numbers



Power cut?
Call 105

Feeling poorly call NHS
111

Age UK Oxfordshire
0345 450 1276

Oxfordshire County Council
0845 050 7666

Emergency Planning
01865 323 765

WILTSHIRE

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FOODS

The Scouts motto is “Be prepared” so why not keep your freezer stocked this winter with some of Wiltshire Farm Foods meals? There are over 300 dishes of wholesome meals to keep you nourished and warm, delivered straight to you. Please call their team on **01993 868 810** for a copy of their new autumn and winter brochure.

STOPPING SMOKING **NHS**

WHAT CAN I DO?

To quit successfully



Contact Smokefree services

You are more than 4 times more likely to be successful with support. Locally services offer: one to one, group, online or text support.



Download the Smokefree app

From the One You website:
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps#row-180#LRsRiW7XCMiV/KLKp.97



Use nicotine replacement products

Nicotine gum, patches and e-cigarettes.



E-cigarettes

Find out more about e-cigarettes www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/e-cigarettes These are better for you than smoking, although the risks have not been fully assessed.



Talk to family and friends and ask them to support you.

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