

WORRIED THIS WINTER?

CAB Energy Support Services

As the weather turns colder and Christmas approaches, it's perfectly understandable that people are worried about their energy bills and keeping their homes warm. We know that here in Stirling many households are really struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Many will have already felt winter taking form this month, as temperatures have fallen significantly. This time last year we were at the height of the ongoing energy crisis, with government EBSS payments providing slight relief to all households. This year, whilst prices have reduced slightly, the lack of any blanket government support leaves a continuation of concern. Food inflation remains at very high levels, consequently, household budgets are still extremely stretched. Stirling CAB is committed to improving knowledge on energy funding and energy consumption, as well as providing small energy measures as a way to save money this winter.

It's never too late to make small changes. Reducing wall thermostats and hot water settings on boilers, switching unused appliances off at the socket, and using a slow cooker instead of the oven all combine together to make a bigger difference in reducing energy costs.

Support for clients

The energy team at Stirling CAB is providing a series of Energy Drop-in Sessions across Stirling and various outreach locations. Keep an eye on our social media platforms (<https://en-gb.facebook.com/stirlingcabcharity/>) to stay informed.

Stirling Citizens Advice Bureau offers a range of assistance regarding energy and you can directly contact our team:

Senior Energy Advisor, *Gary Egan* – at

07498988993

gary.egan@stirlingcab.casonline.org.uk

or

Eleanor Reynard - at

07932324975

eleanor.reynard@stirlingcab.casonline.org.uk

Energy support this winter

WARM HOME DISCOUNT

We are approaching the time of year when the majority of energy suppliers have opened the application process for the Warm Home Discount (WHD). Customers who receive Guaranteed Pension Credit are part of the core group and should have already received a letter informing them they will receive the £150 payment this winter. Those in the Broader Group (in receipt of a means-tested benefit) are to apply via their supplier. Octopus Energy, Eon-Next, EDF, SO Energy, and OVO applications are already open. Scottish Power applications are set to open soon. Whilst you are not guaranteed to receive the WHD when applying, it is always worth submitting an application.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

During the winter period, between £250 and £600 to be paid directly to all eligible pensioners.

WINTER HEATING PAYMENT

This winter, the WHP has been raised from £50 to £55.05 this year, payable in February 2024 to all eligible families.

CHILD WINTER HEATING PAYMENT

Has been raised to £235.70 this Winter, payable to families with a disabled child under the age of 19, in receipt of a qualifying benefit (e.g CDP, DLA)

ENERGY DEBT

Always contact your energy supplier first if you're struggling with your energy bills. At present, the Energy Team at Stirling CAB has access to some funding to help eligible families with energy debt. If you would like further information, please contact Stirling CAB using the contact details below.

CASE STUDY

A client approached us at our local outreach who was a single parent of 2 young children. They were struggling with their energy bills and sought advice. We conducted a home visit and managed to assist the client by turning down their thermostat, reducing their hot water settings, and providing small measures such as LED Bulbs, Draught Excluders, and a slow cooker. The client had some energy debt and through available funding, we were able to secure a 100% write-off.

Outreach Services

As part of our strategy to assist clients in fuel poverty, the energy team operates drop-in clinics across the Stirling Council area. This includes rural outreach drop-in clinics in Balfron, Callander, Cowie, Drymen, Dunblane, Fallin, Plean, and Strathblane Libraries as well as community hubs in Aberfoyle, Callander, and Killin. The energy team is also present at food banks due to the inextricable link between fuel poverty and food insecurity. For more info contact Rural Energy Advisors;

Peter Higgins at:

07498925159

peter.higgins@stirlingcab.casonline.org.uk

or

Ryan Kay at

07951795012

ryan.kay@stirlingcab.casonline.org.uk