



WINTER



FUEL ALLOWANCE
* GUIDANCE





If you were born before 23 September 1958, you could qualify for help towards your fuel bills.

Do you qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment?

If you were born before 23 September 1958, you could get either £200 or £300 to help you pay your heating bills for winter 2024-2025.

NOTE: Eligibility for the Winter Fuel Payment has recently changed, so you may no longer qualify for this support.

To receive the Winter Fuel Payment, you must live in England or Wales AND receive one of the following:

- Pension credit
- Universal credit
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

The amount you get is based on when you were born and your circumstances between 16 and 22 September 2024. This is called the 'qualifying week'.

If you live alone

You'll get either:

- £200 if you were born between 23 September 1944 and 22 September 1958
- £300 if you were born before 23 September 1944

If you live with someone

If you and your partner jointly claim any of the benefits, one of you will get a payment of either:

- £200 if both of you were born between 23 September 1944 and 22 September 1958
- £300 if one or both of you were born before 23 September 1944

You'll still get a Winter Fuel Payment if you apply for Pension Credit by 21 December and your claim is backdated to 16 to 22 September.

What is pension credit and do you qualify?

Pension Credit is a benefit given to those over the state pension age and on low income. This is separate from a State Pension.

- You might get extra help if you're a carer, severely disabled or responsible for a child or young person.
- You can get Pension Credit even if you have other income, savings or own your own home.

To be eligible for Pension Credit you and your partner (if you have one) must have reached State Pension age or if one of you is receiving housing benefit for people over state pension age.

Your income is calculated to see if you qualify for pension credit. You may qualify if you're a single person with a weekly income of up to £218.15 or a couple with a joint weekly income up to £332.95.

If your income is higher, you might still be eligible for Pension Credit if you have a disability, you care for someone, you have savings or you have housing costs so you should still apply.

Income that is taken into consideration is your state pension, other pensions, earnings from employment and some social security benefits such as Carer's Allowance. Benefits that are **not** counted as income include:

- Adult disability payment
- Attendance allowance
- A Christmas bonus
- Child benefit
- Disability living allowance
- Personal Independent Payment
- Social funds such as Winter Fuel Payment
- Housing benefit
- Council tax reduction

You may still qualify if you have savings and investments of £10,000 or less. If you have more than £10,000, then every £500 over £10,000 will count as an additional £1 weekly income.

So if you had £11,000 in savings, this would add an extra £2 to your weekly income.

You can use the online Pension Credit Calculator to find out if you're eligible
www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator

Other help you may be eligible for if you get Pension Credit

If you get Pension Credit you can also get other help, such as:

- Housing Benefit if you rent the property you live in
- Winter Fuel Payment
- Support for Mortgage Interest if you own the property you live in
- a Council Tax discount
- a free TV licence if you're aged 75 or over
- help with NHS dental treatment, glasses and transport costs for hospital appointments, if you get a certain type of Pension Credit
- help with your heating costs through the Warm Home Discount Scheme
- a discount on the Royal Mail redirection service if you're moving house



Applying for Pension Credit

Telephone: 0800 991234

Textphone: 0800 169 0133

Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone):
18001 then 0800 99 1234

Freepost: Call the number above to request a form to be sent to you.

Online: www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim



Need help applying for Pension Credit?

There are services and charities out there who may be able to assist you to check your eligibility and apply for Pension Credits and other benefits:

Peabody Outreach Service



Tel: 0800 288 8883

Email: efsc0-ordinator@peabody.org.uk

Drop in Services:

- Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Bocking End, CM7 9HB - Wednesdays 2pm – 4pm
- Christchurch Methodist United Reformed Church, London Road, Braintree, CM7 2LD - Fridays 10am – 12pm

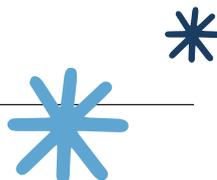
Citizens Advice

Tel: 0808 278 7852
www.cabse.org.uk/



Drop in Services:

- Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Bocking End, CM7 9HB – Mondays 10am – 1pm
- The Public Hall, Collingwood Road, Witham, CM8 2DY – Thursdays 10am – 1pm



Age Well East

Tel: 0300 37 33 333

Email: enquiries@agewelleast.org.uk



Age UK Advice Line

Tel: 0800 678 1602



Eastlight (tenants only)

Tel: 0330 128 0330



Community Agents

Tel: 0300 303 9988



What to do if you don't qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment

If you are now no longer eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment and are worried about affording your energy bills this year, please read below for more information about support available:

Braintree District Council Handyman Service

We offer a free service for residents aged 65 and over or vulnerable owner occupiers and private tenants to help keep you safe and well. The service does not cover plumbing or electrical work and does not include maintenance work.

In terms of helping keep homes warm, they can help with radiator bleeding, hot water tank jacket, trickle vents, replace curtain rails and loft clearance to enable loft insulation to be installed.

Call 01376 552525 for more information.



Heat the rooms you use most to a comfortable temperature

It's more efficient to stick with a constant temperature and tweak it when you need to rather than turning the heating off and on again. For many people, usually around 18°C (64°F) is ideal.

Don't let heat escape through windows and doors

It's a good idea to draw your curtains in the evenings to reduce heat loss through windows, and tuck long curtains behind radiators so that heat isn't trapped. And make sure warm air can circulate by keeping radiators and heaters clear – don't put furniture in front of them or dry washing on them.



Green Doctor Service

The Service is provided by Groundwork supporting residents who may be struggling to pay their energy bills, the support includes:

- Installation of saving measures eg draught proofing, LED light bulbs, water saving shower heads and foil backing to radiators.

Fixing issues with utility suppliers eg energy debts and high water bills Eligible residents include:

Being over the age of 65 Living on a low income or with debt Suffering with physical or mental health conditions, especially made worse by the cold, eg arthritis, asthma or cardiovascular conditions

- Young families with children under the age of 5
- Living in emergency housing/poor housing conditions
- Pregnant women

For further information contact greendoctoreast@groundwork.org.uk or telephone 0770 2941440



Compare energy saving quotes

Use a comparison website to compare prices for energy bills, or ask someone you know to help you with this, to ensure you're paying the best price. Energy companies often don't reward loyalty, so it's worth shopping around each year.

Visit a warm space

Many local community halls, pubs and other spaces have warm spaces throughout the winter, some have extended these as social spaces throughout the year. They're a great way to enjoy a warm environment, refreshments and meet other people from your community.

Speak to your local parish or town council about nearby warm spaces or ask the social prescriber at your local doctors' surgery. If you or someone you know has internet access, you can find a list on <https://essexfrontline.org.uk/>



Better Housing Better Health

FREE HELPLINE ON 0800 107 0044
www.bhbh.org.uk/

Better Housing Better Health is a free service, working to help residents living in, or at risk of living in fuel poverty to access free advice and support. All residents experiencing issues with their home energy can access our service - we have a free helpline where our team can give valuable tips on how to stay warm at home, provide financial help for pre-payment meters and small emergency items, as well as help with funding for energy efficiency measures such as insulation and new heating.



Layer up

Wearing lots of layers rather than one thick piece of clothing will help trap your body heat and keep you warmer. Clothes made with insulating material, like wool jumpers and thermal underwear, are best for keeping you warm at home. Using a hot water bottle is also an inexpensive way to stay warmer for longer. You can also keep your feet warm with thick socks and slippers.





Useful Contacts

Any of the below can provide help and advice on energy and cost of living issues.

Agewell East - 0300 37 33 333 (local rate)

Peabody - 0800 288 8883 (freephone)

Citizens Advice - 0808 278 7877 (freephone)

Green Doctor – 0770 294 1440 (standard rate)

National Energy Action Energy Advice
- 0800 304 7159 (freephone)

National Energy Action Benefits Advice
- 0800 138 8218 (freephone)

Essex Wellbeing Service
- 0300 303 9988 (local rate)

**Eastlight Community Homes
Cost of Living Help**
(for tenants) - 0330 128 0330
(local rate)



