

# Alan Campbell MP

## Community News Winter Special



Good afternoon

As an MP I get sent briefings from organisations regarding various avenues of help and support available for people over the winter.

Due to the increasing costs of living and rising fuel bills I thought it may be useful to pull together the most relevant in a special edition of my community news so people can have a guide to help and support available in one place.

This edition is tailored more for older people but please feel free to forward it to friends, family or anyone you think it may be of use.

As ever, I have included some links to various organisations that may be of help to people. Please be assured that all links have been tested and are safe to click through to. I do hope you find it informative and useful.

If you need to get in touch please call 0191 2571927 or email [campbellal@parliament.uk](mailto:campbellal@parliament.uk)

You can also find useful information on my website at [www.alancampbellmp.co.uk](http://www.alancampbellmp.co.uk) or on Facebook at;

[https://www.facebook.com/AlanCampbellForTynemouth/?eid=ARCt\\_uybFykBHP9Ze74JblWM5zGUiDhFgl8FizrUZK7Zmr1vijiCM68TFI\\_cGhOnsm\\_TvNnVuiYMhiLm](https://www.facebook.com/AlanCampbellForTynemouth/?eid=ARCt_uybFykBHP9Ze74JblWM5zGUiDhFgl8FizrUZK7Zmr1vijiCM68TFI_cGhOnsm_TvNnVuiYMhiLm)

I continue to write my fortnightly column for the News Guardian, you can access these [here](#).

With all best wishes

Alan Campbell MP

Tynemouth

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## AGE UK

### Staying Safe and Healthy this Winter

Winter can be a tough time for older people. They may be more vulnerable to respiratory viruses, as well as the coronavirus. It's vital that people are aware of practical steps that they can take to look after themselves.

This winter, it's more important than ever for older people to help protect themselves against the flu. AGE UK do a fantastic job providing help and support for older people and I would like to put on record my thanks for all they do.

They have created a useful resource for older people on flu prevention.

Read the full guide at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/conditions-illnesses/flu-prevention/>

They have also created an informative guide with useful tips for older people on how they can keep healthy in winter.

Read the full guide at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/keep-well-this-winter/stay-healthy-in-winter/>

## **Booster and Flu Jabs**

To find out everything you need to know about getting your booster and flu jabs please see the TyneHealth website FAQ's at:

<https://tynehealth.org.uk/findoutmore/covid-19-vaccination-helpline/#1614679950469-1-1>

## **Cold Weather**

### **Payments**

The scheme runs from 1st November – 31st March each year. If eligible you'll get a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days.

You will be entitled to £25 payment for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

After each period of very cold weather in your area, you should get a payment within 14 working days. It's paid into the same bank or building society account as your benefit payments.

You may get Cold Weather Payments if you're getting:

Pension Credit

Income Support

income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Universal Credit

Support for Mortgage Interest

More information can be found at [www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment](http://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment)  
[www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment](http://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment)

## Winter Fuel Payment

How much you get depends on your circumstances during the qualifying week. The qualifying week for winter 2021 to 2022 is 20 to 26 September 2021. Most payments are made automatically in November or December.

You'll get a letter telling you how much you will get and an estimated payment date.

If the money is not paid into your account by 14 January 2022, contact the Winter Fuel Payment Centre. <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/report-change-circumstances>

To find out about more see the Government website at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-much-youll-get>

## State Pension

### Christmas Bonus

The Christmas Bonus is a one-off tax-free £10 payment made before Christmas, paid to people who get certain benefits in the qualifying week. This is normally the first full week of December.

Find out more at: <https://www.gov.uk/christmas-bonus>

## Home Energy Checklist

With the rising cost of energy, I know people will be worried about their energy bills.

Advice from Energy UK is that first and foremost, if people are worried to contact their energy supplier as soon as they can. In March 2020, the energy industry agreed emergency measures with the Government to protect the domestic energy supply of those most in need during the disruption caused by COVID-19.

These measures can be found at  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/873960/Supplier\\_Agreement\\_19.3.2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873960/Supplier_Agreement_19.3.2020.pdf)

In August 2021, 17 suppliers signed up to additional, fresh commitments which will see them improve the quality and availability of support they offer

to customers in need this winter – whether that be from financial difficulties, mental or physical health issues, or other events.

These commitments are <https://www.energy-uk.org.uk/publication.html?task=file.download&id=7962>

Citizen's Advice have a good set of resources outlining where you can seek grants if you are really struggling with energy bills this winter. You can access the full list at:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/>

## **Care and Repair England**

A new report from Care & Repair England reviews the consequences of COVID-19 and associated 'lockdowns' for older people in England with particular reference to their housing, health and well-being. You can read the full report at <https://careandrepair-england.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=0dcba0a2-193d-4534-9667-a4b51cd84eab>

They also have a lot of great resources for advice on housing matters. You can see this on their website at <https://careandrepair-england.org.uk/Pages/Category/advice-and-help>

## **Carer's Rights**

A lot of older people in our area provide unpaid care and support and kinship care.

Providing unpaid care can be hard, from navigating services to managing finances. If you are looking after someone there is a lot of practical support available at <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice>

## **Bilsdale Mast**

I know that a number of care homes in the area have had their TV signal affected by Bilsdale Mast.

While the team continues work to restore all services, they are especially keen to help individuals who are older or vulnerable and who still don't have any TV service at all, and particularly with Christmas fast approaching.

The aim is to encourage more people to ring the helpline for support and advice on 0800 121 4828, and – if needed – to book a visit from an engineer.

They also want people to use the Project Restore website ([www.bilsdalemast.co.uk](http://www.bilsdalemast.co.uk)) to get advice on how to retune their TVs and for

other updates and information. For many people, the retune will help them restore the services they miss. There has also been a good response so far to the voucher scheme to offer TV streaming devices to people living in “not spot” areas via Currys, however they are keen to encourage further take up.

## PensionCredit

I am always keen to see that people get the help they need when they need it and as I have said in previous editions, more than 2,000 local people aged 66 or over are missing out to benefits they are entitled to.

In our country today 2 million people aged 66 or over are living in poverty. Pension Credit is designed to lift them out of poverty, but 4 in 10 do not receive it.

It’s estimated that 2,248 older people in our area are missing out, and they’re missing out on a massive £4,898,000 every year.”

Anyone who thinks they are missing out can ring the Independent Age helpline on 0800 319 6789. Or they can contact Pension Credit claim line directly on 0800 99 1234.

## My office

My office is available Monday to Friday to offer support and advice for local people. For any issues, no matter how small or big, please feel free to ring 0191 2571927 or email [alan.campbell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alan.campbell.mp@parliament.uk)



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