



# Winter Advice 2022

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**Resident Edition**



saha  
Transforming Lives

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# The Energy Bills Support Scheme

The Energy Bills Support Scheme provides a £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households to help with their energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023.

The discount is automatic. If you get a message asking for your bank details, this could be a scam. [You can report messages you think are suspicious.](#)

## Eligibility

All households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible for the discount.

If your circumstances change you will still get the discount if:

- you change your payment method
- you change your tariff
- you switch electricity supplier
- you move to a new address
- your supplier goes bust
- you're in arrears on your electricity bill payments

## How you'll get the discount

You do not need to apply for the discount, and there's no need to contact your energy supplier. The discount will be applied to your monthly household electricity bill for 6 months starting in October 2022. You'll get:

- £66 in October and November
- £67 in December, January, February and March

You'll get the discount monthly, even if you pay for your energy quarterly or use a payment card.

Traditional prepayment meter users will get equivalent vouchers that you will need to redeem - contact your supplier for details.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you have not received your first instalment by the end of October 2022, you need to contact your supplier as a matter of priority.

# The Energy Bills Support Scheme

## If you're a direct debit customer

You'll get the discount automatically in one of the following ways, as:

- a reduction to your monthly direct debit amount
- a refund to your bank account following the monthly direct debit collection

## If you pay by standard credit or payment card

Your discount will be automatically applied as a credit to your account in the first week of each month.

## If you have a smart prepayment meter

Your discount will be credited directly to your smart prepayment meter in the first week of each month.

## If you have a traditional prepayment meter

You'll get the discount from the first week of each month. You'll get the discount automatically in one of the following ways, as:

- redeemable vouchers, sent by SMS text, email or post
- an automatic credit when you top up at your usual top up point

Your electricity supplier will let you know in advance how you will get your discount.

Your supplier should have your contact details, but if you're not sure or you don't receive any information from them, you should check that they have your latest number and email.

If you get vouchers you'll need to redeem them at a top-up point. Your supplier will tell you where to redeem them, for example at a Post Office branch or a PayPoint shop.

# The Energy Bills Support Scheme

Payzone outlets are unable to accept the vouchers.

If your landlord has a domestic electricity contract with a licensed electricity supplier, and you pay for your electricity as part of your rent, your landlord may pass their discount on to you.

Your landlord may be reselling the electricity to you based on your usage, in which case:

- they must comply with the maximum resale price rules which say they must not make a profit
- the maximum resale price for electricity is currently set at the same price as that paid by the person reselling it (see [Ofgem's guidance on ensuring customers are being charged no more than they should](#))

As your landlord we may charge an 'all inclusive' rent, where a fixed cost for energy usage is included in your rental charges, in which case you are encouraged to come to an agreement with us.



# Other Help That May be Available

Below is some brief information on financial payments that maybe eligible for from the Government.

In addition, we have set up a support fund to offer some assistance in these difficult times to our residents. We have limited finances, but we know that many of our residents might just need a small amount of extra money for something that might make a substantial difference to their health and wellbeing. We hope you understand that we are trying to stretch what we have to help residents at this time.

## Other Government help

If you're in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to [get a grant to help pay it off](#).

Households on certain means-tested benefits can get the following help:

- a £650 [Cost of Living Payment for households on means-tested benefits](#)
- a £300 [Pensioner Cost of Living Payment](#), to be paid alongside the [Winter Fuel Payment](#)
- a £150 [Disability Cost of Living Payment](#) for people who get certain disability benefits
- help from the Household Support Fund from [your local council](#)

Please visit the website links above to find out how each scheme works and to find out if you are eligible for these payments.

See the [Help for Households](#) cost of living assistance package for consumers.

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# Other Help That May be Available

## Saha Support Fund

### Introduction

Saha's mission is to transform lives by providing solutions to homelessness and enabling our residents to fulfil their own potential.

To support Saha's vision to help transform lives we have established a resident support fund to help residents who may be facing challenging financial times. The aim of this fund is to provide one off grants to residents.

### Information

The maximum value of any grant will normally be £250.

Resident support fund grants are intended to be used for one off emergencies or unexpected costs. Examples include:

- Difficulties with utility bills due to the rising cost of living
- White goods
- Essential furniture/carpet etc
- Funeral expenses
- Food vouchers
- School Uniforms
- Car repairs (where car is essential for the resident to get to work).

Please note, this list is not exhaustive.

### Who Can Apply?

To be eligible for a grant through Saha's resident support fund, applicants should consider the following:

- Are you a current Saha resident?
- Do you have outstanding tenancy/rent issues? (These maybe taken into account)
- Are you willing to discuss your financial circumstances with a member of staff
- You can only be awarded a grant once a year

**How To Apply Contact Customer Service Centre on 0800 970 6363, they will take your details send you an application form and make an appointment to see your neighbourhood manager**

# How to stay well in winter

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition.

## Who's most at risk from cold weather?

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- people aged 65 and older
- babies and children under the age of 5
- people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- people who have a long-term health condition
- people with a disability
- pregnant women
- people who have a mental health condition

## Get advice if you feel unwell

If you are 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it's important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell.

You can get help and advice from:

- a pharmacy – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor
- your GP – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to
- NHS 111 – go to [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do

The sooner you get advice, the sooner you are likely to get better.

## Information:

Call a pharmacy or contact them online before going in person. You can get medicines delivered or ask someone to collect them.



# How to stay well in Winter

## Get the Covid Vaccination

The covid vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine.

Your GP can advise you on whether you qualify for a booster injection.

If you receive an invitation to receive a booster jab, please respond promptly to your GP and make an appointment.

## Keep your home warm

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

- The NHS advises that if you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18C
- Keep one room warm. Perhaps your living room in the day and your bedroom in the evening. The recommended temperature is 18 C.
- If you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, as long as you're comfortable
- Use a hot water bottle or electric blanket to keep warm – but do not use both at the same time.
- Have at least one hot meal a day – eating regularly helps keep you warm
- Have hot drinks regularly
- When the sun is shining, have your curtains open to attract as much natural heat as possible
- Draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts.

If you think your heating system is not working correctly, then please contact Saha on 0800 970 6363 and we will have the system checked by a qualified professional.

# How to stay well in Winter

## Help with heating costs

You may be able to claim financial and practical help with heating your home. Grants available include the [Winter Fuel Payment](#) and the [Cold Weather Payment](#).

For more information on how to reduce your bills and make your home more energy efficient, go to [Find ways to save energy in your home](#), or call the government helpline on 0800 444 202.

You can also find out about [benefits and financial support if you're on a low income](#)

It's worth claiming all the benefits you're entitled to as soon as winter begins.

## Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives

Check on older neighbours and relatives, and those with heart or breathing (respiratory) problems, to make sure they:

- are safe and well
- are warm enough, especially at night
- have stocks of food and medicines so they do not need to go out during very cold weather

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your [local council](#) or call the Age UK helpline on [0800 678 1602](#) (8am to 7pm every day). If you're concerned the person may have hypothermia, contact [NHS 111](#).

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# Keeping your home warm this winter

It's important to keep your home warm to avoid health problems.

## Why can cold weather be bad for your health?

The cold thickens blood and increases blood pressure and breathing in cold air can increase the risk of chest infections. So, it's all the more important to ensure your home and the homes of people you look out for are the right temperature.

## What temperature should rooms be in winter?

Ideally you should heat your home to a temperature of at least 18 °C. This is particularly important if you have reduced mobility, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease. Having room temperatures slightly over 18 °C could be good for your health.

If you are under the age of 65, active and wearing appropriate clothing, you may wish to keep your home at a comfortable temperature even if it is slightly lower than 18°C.

Overnight, people who are 65 and over or who have pre-existing health conditions may find bedroom temperatures of at least 18 °C are good for their health; this may be less important if you are a healthy adult under 65 and have appropriate clothing and bedding.

It is important to keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold.



# Keeping your home warm this winter

## 10 Energy Saving Tips

1. Set your heating to come on just before you get up and switch off after you've gone to bed. If it's very cold, set your heating to come on earlier and turn off later rather than turning the thermostat up.
2. If you can't heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room throughout the day and your bedroom just before you go to bed. Remember to close curtains and shut doors to keep heat in the rooms you use most.
3. Add draft excluders to maximise the heat in the house and minimise drafts and cold getting in.
4. If your heating system uses storage heaters, make sure that they are set up in the most efficient way possible. You can use this [guide](#) to do so.
5. Turn lights, appliances, and electronics off when are not in use. Unplug idle power adapters and mobile phone chargers.
6. Replace incandescent light bulbs with high-efficiency, compact fluorescent lamps (CFL's) or LED lights.
7. Control direct sunlight through windows. Use blinds, screens, awnings etc. In the winter, the sun can bring warmth through windows
8. Don't over-dry your clothes. Running a typical clothes dryer for 15 minutes less per load can save you up to £35 per year
9. When cooking, try and make multiple dishes at the same time, keeping some for a later date. This could save you money on your gas and electric bills
10. Place some tin foil behind your radiators. This will reflect heat back into your room and make the heating more efficient

There's really useful advice in the [Keep Warm Keep Well booklet](#) produced by the Government. This booklet aims to help you maintain good health during winter and take advantage of the financial help and benefits available. It is aimed at over 60s, low-income families, and people living with a disability.

# Keeping your home warm this winter

## Stay safe with fires, heaters and electric blankets

In severe weather, you may consider making use of fires and candles for warmth, ambience, or in the event of power cuts, for light.

We strongly advise against using naked flames as things like candles can cause fires. Certainly, do not place these near belongings and furniture that might be flammable. Also, before going to bed make sure that all such items are extinguished.

To stay safe using fire, you are advised to ensure that you have a smoke alarm on every level of your home and that you test it regularly

You should also do the following:

Electric heaters: keep away from curtains and furniture, and do not use for drying clothes. Always unplug the appliance when you go out or go to bed.

Electric blankets: do not use a hot water bottle, even if the blanket's switched off. Unplug blankets before you go to bed, unless they have thermostat control for safe all-night use.

## Carbon monoxide poisoning risk

When burning fuel, carbon monoxide poisoning can be a health risk. Carbon monoxide is produced when fuel does not burn properly, and every year around 30 people die following accidental exposure to high levels of the gas, which is difficult to detect because you can't see, smell or taste it.

To minimise risks, a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm, which meets European Standards EN 5029, should be fitted in any room that contains a gas burning appliance, like a boiler and gas fire or a solid fuel burning appliance. These appliances must be tested regularly to ensure that it is in effective working order. Please don't forget to ensure that your rooms are adequately ventilated.

# Food Banks and Warm Rooms in the UK

## The Salvation Army

Our parent organisation, The Salvation Army, run food banks all year-round from many of their churches and community centres.

As a result of the [cost of living crisis](#), some food banks have seen a [dramatic rise](#) in need.

Their dedicated teams of staff and volunteers are packing and delivering boxes of essential food supplies to those who need it most.

Using their local networks in communities across the UK, they are reaching people who can no longer feed themselves or their families and who are cut off from other sources of support.

Not all of their churches and community centres have foodbanks as some corps focus on different local needs like homeless outreach services. Some foodbanks respond to local need where necessary, and some are organised on a more on-going basis.

To find out whether your local Salvation Army runs a foodbank or a different community service, visit our [map page](#).

## Independent Food Advice Network

Member organisations operate throughout the UK and provide food aid to people in their communities in a variety of ways. IFAN's membership includes over 550 independent food banks. Find out more about being part of IFAN and join the network [here](#).

How to search our member map:

1. Click [here](#) for an expanded version of the map.
2. In the expanded version, click on the magnifying glass icon to enter a postcode or place name.

Map of Britain, showing where IFAN food banks can be found:

[Our members - Independent Food Aid Network UK](#)

At least 1172 independent food banks operate across the UK in addition to 1393 Trussell Trust food banks, food banks run by schools, universities and hospitals, and any SA food parcel distributors.

In addition to venues usually proving emergency food parcels, there is estimated to be more than 3,500 independent food aid providers distributing meals and other forms of food aid. Find out more [here](#).

# Food Banks and Warm Rooms in the UK

## The Trussell Trust

Their vision is for a UK without the need for food banks.

They support a nationwide network of food banks and together they provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, and campaign for change to end the need for food banks in the UK.

In the UK, more than 14 million people are living in poverty – including 4.5 million children. They support more than 1,200 food bank centres in the UK to provide a minimum of three days' nutritionally-balanced emergency food to people who have been referred in crisis, as well as support to help people resolve the crises they face. Between April 2019 and March 2020, food banks in their network provided a record 1.9 million food supplies to people in crisis, an 18% increase on the previous year, and during the coronavirus pandemic food banks have seen need rise even further. You can find out more about the impact of their work during the pandemic in their latest report, available [here](#).

We know it takes more than food to end hunger. That's why they recently launched their five-year [strategic plan](#). They have a goal to end the need for food banks. They know that this is ambitious, but by working with Together for Change, they believe it is achievable.

## Find a Food Bank

Find your local Trussell Trust food bank, their contact details and opening times.

If you're struggling to afford the essentials or need advice and support, you can [call one of their free helplines](#).

## Warm Rooms in Public Buildings

Many local authorities are opening up buildings such as libraries for members of the public to use to keep warm this winter. These rooms will mainly be open during the daytime hours and will be free to use.

Information on where to find a warm room in a public building will be available on your Local Authority website.

# Mental Health and Well Being

We all have 'mental health', just as we have 'physical health'. And just like our physical health we can all have times when our mental health is better than others.

It is so important that people look after their own mental health. Prevention is said to be more effective than subsequent treatment. Mental health issues can affect the way you think, feel and behave. For some people, these feelings go away naturally without any long-term challenges, but for others these negative emotions can become worse over time. This can affect any one of us.

The Mental Health Foundation advise anyone who is concerned for the mental health of themselves or of a friend or family member to get advice and support from GP's and a range of specialist support agencies, including Mind, Samaritans and Rethink Mental Illness. Their advice can be found [here](#)

Agencies like Mind, Samaritans and Rethink Mental Illness are not just there for those in crisis or experiencing serious mental health issues. They, along with agencies like Age UK are there to help with advice at the earliest stages of poor mental health. It's worth remembering that a "stitch in time, saves nine". Don't put off approaching a trusted friend, family member or a support agency for help.

Some useful organisations who work in this field are:

[Mind](#)

[Rethink Mental Illness](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[Age UK](#)



# Mental Health and Well Being

## Top Tips for Good Mental Health

Again, the Mental Health Foundation have produced a very useful guide providing information on top tips for preventing mental issues arising and for managing your health and wellbeing. The link to their website and to their guide is [here](#)

The top tips include things like

- Get closer to nature. Nature can have a calming effect on us and there is evidence that shows that plants, animals and fresh air can all have a positive impact on mental health. Why not try it, take a walk in a park and listen to the birds, smell the flowers & grasses and become connected to the environment
- Learn to understand and manage your feelings. From time to time we all feel certain feelings like sadness, loneliness or anxiety. Sometimes we can't identify what the underlying reason is but evidence shows that if you are able to name those feelings and speak about them to others, can make a significant difference. It really is good to talk.
- Talk to someone you trust for support. It's amazing but talking about your feelings may change the way you feel about a situation.
- Be aware of using drugs and/or alcohol to cope with difficult emotions. It can be tempting to use drugs or alcohol to 'block out' difficult emotions like sadness, fear or grief. However, drugs and alcohol do not stop the emotions from returning and may make things worse.
- Try to make the most of your money and get help with debt problems. The truth is, we are never alone with money problems. This can affect us all and is not something to be ashamed of. At Saha, talk with your Neighbourhood Manager about any issues affecting your ability to pay rent or any other debt. If we cannot help then we will refer you to an organisation that has the skills to provide the help you need.

# Mental Health and Well Being

- Get more from your sleep. Adults need between 7 & 9 hours sleep per night. The inability to sleep is often a sign that you are anxious about something. Try to follow a routine with your sleep pattern and your body should over time become familiar with the routine that you develop. Advice on improving your sleep can be found [here](#)
- Be kind and create a better world. Evidence shows that being kind to yourself and to others can have a positive impact on your own mental health and those of the people you are kind to. Why not give it a try.
- Keep Moving. Our bodies and mind are connected. A healthy body is good for a healthy mind. Exercise releases 'feel good' hormones that actually reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Many of us started walking during the pandemic. Don't lose that habit. If it was a positive experience during the pandemic then it will still have a positive impact now.
- Eat Healthy Food. A balanced diet with lots of vegetables and fruit is essential for good physical and mental health. We know that the cost of food can make it difficult to eat a balanced diet, but things like food banks can help. Food can also be an issue in terms of over-eating or under-eating when upset.

# Mental Health and Well Being

·Be curious and open minded to new experiences. Getting stuck in a rut, can lead to a self-fulfilling emotional spiral, around feelings such as “I am not good enough” or “I’m not interesting”. Changing your routine or doing something new might provide stimulation and you might also surprise yourself and find out that there are other things that you enjoy and/or are good at.

·Plan things to look forward to. Having things in the diary, especially fun things, can help you deal with current issues as it provides you with something to focus on. It doesn’t have to be something big. A small activity or action might be all you need. Just make a plan and stick to it.

## Loneliness and mental health

Earlier this year, Mental Health Awareness week focused on the connection between loneliness and mental health. Loneliness is affecting more and more of us in the UK and has had a huge impact on our physical and mental health during the pandemic. How we connect and interact with other people and our community is fundamental to our mental health and well-being. We can all help tackle the epidemic of loneliness. Pop round to a neighbour and see how they are doing or engage in conversations with people to see what you have in common.

At Saha, we pride ourselves on providing a range of support services to people. These services, small and big, can make a huge difference to someone and we want to work with tenants to explore more ways to create conversations, be available and offer support to help create a more positive and inclusive society.

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