

The Newsletter for the Warm Hubs Network

WarmHub
COMMUNITY ACTION NORTHUMBERLAND

COSY

CAN

Winter Edition 2021/22



Do you need energy advice?

Our Community Energy Advisers are helping people in rural Northumberland to keep warmer and spend less on energy.

They can offer advice ranging from installing FREE simple measures to improve the energy efficiency of homes, paying less for energy, accessing financial help, adopting more energy-efficient habits and applying for grants to make improvements to your house.

If you'd like a home visit from Leanne or Myra and live in Northumberland please get in touch.

Contact our Energy Advisers

Leanne Shipley

0772 4867010

leanneshipley@ca-north.org.uk



Myra Milne

0771 5408343

myramilne@ca-north.org.uk



Funded by the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme.

Stocksfield Tuesday Club Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

Stocksfield Tuesday Club was formed in November 2011 (though it was then known as Stocksfield Social Centre) and on 2nd November it celebrated its 10th Anniversary.

The photo shows a special gâteau created by one of our volunteers, Dorothy Charlton, being cut by long-time member Doreen Crosland. The gâteau was served as the pudding following a main course of sausages in onion gravy, mashed potatoes, carrots and cauliflower – a typical Tuesday Club main course. A celebratory glass of white wine was served with the gâteau as members and volunteers toasted the success of their club.

Tuesday Club began as a replacement to a 'Meals on Wheels' service which closed in March 2012 after operating from Stocksfield Community Centre for some 40 years. The idea that recipients of 'Meals on Wheels' would rather come along

and eat together soon proved very successful - particularly combined with the opportunity to meet from 10 am to 2 pm and join in a variety of social activities. Volunteers still deliver meals out to those members unable to attend. Tuesday Club became a 'Warm Hub' in 2016 and has benefited enormously from the support received - including gifts of slow cookers and carbon monoxide monitors plus the opportunity to meet members of other Warm Hubs.

Members and volunteers are now looking forward to their next celebration - the Annual Christmas Dinner at Stocksfield Golf Club on 14th December.



Does the energy price cap affect you?

The energy price cap is backstop protection from the government, calculated by Ofgem.

It applies if you're on a default energy tariff, whether you pay by direct debit, standard credit or a prepayment meter.

It won't apply if you:

- are on a fixed-term energy tariff
- have chosen a standard variable green energy tariff Ofgem has exempted from the cap.

You can contact your supplier to check if you are on their default tariff. If you're not, you may already be paying a better rate for your energy. But it's still worth checking if you could save more by switching to another tariff or supplier.

The price cap limits the rates a supplier can charge for their default tariffs. These include the standing charge and price for each kWh of electricity and gas (the units your bill is calculated from).

Ofgem sets the cap level for summer and winter based on the underlying costs to supply energy. This keeps prices fair and makes sure suppliers reflect any drops in costs in your rates.

- The price cap won't limit your total bill if you are on a default tariff.

The cap level Ofgem sets depends on costs in the energy market. So your bills could go down or up.

Different factors also affect how much suppliers change their prices (the rate they charge you) to meet the cap:

- where you live
- how you pay (prepayment, direct debit or standard credit)
- your type of energy meter.

Your energy usage will affect your total bill too.

It's best to contact your supplier for personalised information on your tariff.

Any figures you may see in the media aren't guaranteed. They also usually show a customer with 'typical' energy usage who pays by direct debit. So what you pay could be more or less than what's reported.

What next?

Your supplier must automatically apply the price cap Ofgem sets if you are on a default tariff. That's right so you get a fair price, but it won't mean you're on the cheapest deal. You can shop around to see if you can get a better tariff.

If your supplier has gone bust

Take a meter reading, sit tight and don't switch

You will continue to move to your chosen supplier if you already have a switch in progress.

Wait for Ofgem to appoint a new supplier

You don't need to do anything. Your supply won't be disrupted and it should only take Ofgem a few days. Ofgem's safety net will protect your supply and any credit balance. If Ofgem finds you a new supplier, your new supplier will contact you directly.

In exceptional circumstances, Ofgem may ask the

Court to appoint an administrator to run your existing supplier rather than move you to a new one. If this happens, your existing supplier will contact you about this and explain what is happening – you will be free to switch to another supplier as you wish and your credit balance will be protected.

When the new supplier contacts you

Ask to be put on their cheapest tariff or shop around and switch if you want to. You won't be charged exit fees.

They'll also explain how they will manage your account balance, including any credit refunds.

Support during coronavirus (COVID-19)

Energy suppliers won't disconnect your gas or electric if you miss a payment right now. Ask for 'emergency credit' if you use a prepay meter if you can't top up. Our rules mean suppliers must offer payment plans you can afford.

Call your supplier if you are worried. They have agreed emergency measures with the government during the pandemic. Most have also signed up to fresh commitments drawn up with Ofgem and the industry trade body Energy UK to support you this winter.

Back-billing Rules

- What are the back-billing rules?
- You can't be charged for gas or electricity used more than 12 months ago if you have not been correctly billed for it before.
- Suppliers must make these terms clear in their contract terms and conditions.

The rules apply to household and small business energy customers.

They may not apply if you have behaved obstructively or unreasonably, preventing accurate billing.

This could include:

- blocking meter readings at your property on more than one occasion

- stealing gas or electricity.
- If you get a back bill

Contact your supplier if you get a bill for energy usage that's for more than a year ago.

Explain that you understand you are protected by the back-billing rules. You should only be charged for up to your last 12 months' energy use if you haven't had an accurate bill in over a year.

Make a complaint if your supplier continues to ask for the full amount.

- If you haven't had an energy bill in over a year

To help your supplier send you accurate bills, try to:

- provide regular meter readings
- tell them when you are moving in or out of a property.
- think about getting a smart meter.
- If you can't pay a back bill

If you think you can't afford to pay, ask your supplier about repayment plan options. They must take into account how much you can afford. They will explain your options.

All information is from the Ofgem website.



Christmas is coming



R	S	A	T	U	R	K	E	Y	S	M	T	S	M
R	T	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	S	T	Y	I
R	S	M	T	S	A	E	V	L	S	F	S	T	N
F	E	L	V	E	S	S	L	D	I	I	L	H	C
E	C	E	N	B	R	I	N	G	B	D	P	S	E
S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	I	P	I	I	P
T	C	U	L	D	F	T	N	A	S	U	P	E	I
E	S	P	E	R	T	S	E	T	U	D	S	I	E
M	I	T	I	T	E	L	R	N	H	D	I	N	S
A	I	I	I	L	E	R	D	A	M	I	Y	B	T
E	E	E	B	S	N	E	L	S	S	N	R	M	E
C	E	U	N	Y	I	B	I	T	N	G	I	E	M
L	A	I	E	E	C	R	H	I	O	G	A	S	R
B	T	S	T	R	E	C	E	W	I	F	R	U	

CHILDREN

CHRISTMAS

TREE

PUDDING

FAIRY

REINDEERS

BAUBLES

MINCEPIES

ELVES

SANTA

TURKEY

TINSEL

SNOW

GIFTS

If you would like any help or advice please contact CAN

Carbon monoxide

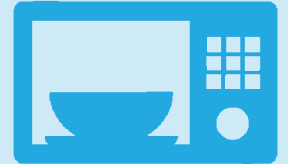
Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that has no smell or taste. Breathing it in can make you unwell, and it can kill if you are exposed to high levels. Make sure you have a working carbon monoxide monitor in your home and follow the instructions on how to use it and where to place it to keep you safe.



Saving money

Microwaves and slow cookers are cheaper to use than traditional ovens.

You can save up to 63p an hour by using a slow cooker.



Warm Homes Discount

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2021 to 2022 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.



PSM

The Priority Services Membership (formerly Register) is a free service provided by energy suppliers and network operators. To get on it, you need to contact your energy supplier.

CONTACT US

If you would like any help or advice please contact CAN

Christine Nicholls

Community Development Officer

Organisational Lead in Energy Equality

Mobile number 07827 403837

Email: christinenicholls@ca-north.org.uk

Tel 01670 517178

Email: info@ca-north.org.uk

Website: www.ca-north.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/communityactionnorthumberland



Community Action Northumberland
UNIUN Enterprise Building,
Front Street, Pegswood,
Northumberland, NE61 6UF

Community Action Northumberland is a Company Limited by Guarantee (no. 07805401), and a Registered Charity (no. 1144604).