

# Winter Newsletter 2009/2010



## Top Tips to Keep Well This Winter

### 1. Heat your home well

Keep rooms heated to 18°C-21°C. If you feel cold at night, use a hot water bottle or electric blanket – but never use them together. Make sure you have adequate insulation and use energy efficiently to make energy bills more affordable.

### 2. Dress Well for Warmth

Several layers of thin clothing (ideally wool, cotton or fleecy synthetic fabric) are best for keeping warm. If you can, stay indoors when it's cold. If you have to go out wrap up warmly and wear a hat.

### 3. Get financial Support

If you are struggling with high fuel bills check you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to. There are also grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating and help with bills.

### 4. Eat Well

Eat hot meals and drink regularly throughout the day. Make sure your winter store cupboard is well stocked with long life foods.

### 5. Get a flu jab

Free flu jabs are available if you are over 65, have a long term health condition or are the main carer for an older or disabled person.

### 6. Stay Safe

Have your electric blanket tested regularly. Contact the fire service for a free home safety check on 0800 1691234. Slips are more common in winter; consider installing grab rails and other measures to avoid falls. Keep an eye on vulnerable friends, relatives and neighbours.



## New Affordable Warmth Service

Care & Repair Cardiff has recently launched a new Affordable Warmth Service. The service aims to help older people in Cardiff who may be struggling with high fuel bills or are finding their homes cold and hard to heat. The Affordable Warmth Casework Service will visit older people in their own homes and can provide advice, assistance and support to help the householder with a number of key issues. These will include advice on the energy efficiency of the property, using energy more efficiently as well as ensuring that people are paying for their energy in the most cost effective way. A benefit check can also be provided to ensure that people are claiming all the benefits they are entitled to, which may lead to extra money in their pockets to help cover the cost of fuel bills.

So far the service has helped with the following issues:

- ✓ Installation of central heating, insulation and draft proofing
- ✓ Support to claim extra benefits
- ✓ Help to arrange quotes and works to improve central heating systems
- ✓ Fundraising to pay for new windows to improve warmth of client's home
- ✓ Vulnerable clients added to energy companies priority service registers.

This service is available to people aged 60 and over who own their own homes or who are tenants of Taff Housing or Cardiff Community Housing Association.

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## An example of our work:

Mrs H (aged 88) was referred to Care & Repair Cardiff from a health professional at a hospital in Cardiff. Her mobility was poor and this had led to a number of falls in her home and garden. In particular, she had a small step in her garden which she was having difficulties negotiating. Our Caseworker visited Mrs H at her home to discuss how best we could support her to resolve this problem. Following this meeting, we were able to help Mrs H by:

- arranging for a small external rail to be provided over the step as well as painting the step edge white. This greatly reduced the risk of Mrs H falling by this step. We were able to obtain a grant from Cardiff Council to undertake these works for Mrs H which meant they were provided free of charge for her
- checking her income to ensure Mrs H was receiving the correct amount of benefits she was entitled to and completing the relevant benefit application forms. This resulted in an increase of nearly £80 per week in benefits for Mrs H
- providing information to Mrs H regarding finding a carer to help with her bathing needs.

## What some of our clients have said about the services they have received from us:

*"This is an excellent service, and it is very re-assuring to know such help is available - particularly in view of my age".*

*"My caseworker investigated all my needs fully and was not in a rush to get away".*

*"The extra money now pays for taxis back and forth to hospital as I can no longer drive. We are now able to pay our cleaner to come in an extra hour and we have increased our gardener's hours".*

*"The provision of reputable tradesmen is a huge bonus, invaluable and the additional support provided by (the caseworker) was a huge help".*

### Who are we?

Care & Repair Cardiff can help people who live in Cardiff to complete repairs, improvements and adaptations to their homes. Our clients are primarily older people, although we can assist younger, vulnerable people in certain circumstances. We can also provide advice and information to enable people to remain living independently within their homes. This can include a welfare benefit check, a healthy homes assessment, energy efficiency advice and details of other local services of interest.

### Contact Us

Please feel free to contact us or ask someone to contact us on your behalf

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