

# Keeping Well This Winter



At Age NI, we are delighted to be working with our friends in Power NI again this winter, to bring you practical tips to help you look after yourself, your home and each other.

Winter can be tough, and this year, living alongside COVID-19 will bring additional challenges and worries.

With this handy guide, we are bringing you simple steps to help you get prepared.

There are things we can do for ourselves and there is lots of help available from others – check our useful contacts on the back – and remember you are never on your own.

Staying well this winter means doing all we can to be prepared to **stay warm, stay well** and **stay connected**.

# Looking after **YOURSELF**

## Be Prepared



**Get your vaccinations** – get your COVID booster and your flu jab as soon as they are offered by your GP, or check with your local pharmacy. These vaccinations will not only protect you, but should help to ease the pressure on our key health services at a challenging time.



**Shopping** – stay stocked up on basics like rice, pasta and tinned goods like soup and beans. Remember that many local shops and big supermarkets have home delivery services if you're unable to get out and about.



**Personal Alarm** – a body-worn personal alarm button can be used to call for help in the event of a fall – especially reassuring for older people living on their own.

*For more information on Personal Alarms visit [www.ageni.org/personalalarms](http://www.ageni.org/personalalarms)*

**Weather Watching** – it may be harder to get out if the weather turns bad.



Make sure you have enough medication and food.



Keep a bottle of water in case your supply is interrupted.



Prepare for a powercut with torches and batteries.



Keep a mobile or portable phone well charged.



Keep a list of emergency numbers somewhere handy.

# Looking after **YOURSELF**

## Every Day



**Keep Moving** – Being active is proven to give you a boost. Try not to sit still for more than an hour at a time. Regular movement is important for strength, balance and mobility. Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity each day – try our Move with Mary exercises led by Lady Mary Peters.

[www.ageni.org/movewithmary](http://www.ageni.org/movewithmary)



**Eat Well and Stay Hydrated** – keep to a routine and eat regularly, include a variety of fruit and veg and fibre, avoid too many treats, limit alcohol and drink plenty of fluids.



**Stay Warm** - layering is the best way to keep warm. A knitted hat is great to keep in body heat and a scarf keeps the chest warm and offers protection from cold air.



**Do Something You Enjoy Every Day** – keeping busy takes effort, but daily tasks give great satisfaction. Find pleasure in things you now have the time for: a book you've been meaning to read, a forgotten hobby, or a project you never had time to complete. Small wins can build motivation and momentum.

# Looking after **YOUR HOME**



**Ensure your boiler is serviced** and any repairs are seen to before the winter – don't get caught out in a cold snap.



**Use thermostats and timers** to heat your home without wasting energy and keep at a steady temperature. Try to keep your main living room at 21°C during the day.



**Close doors** to rooms you're not using, turn off radiators. Use draught excluders at doors and windows to prevent heat from escaping.



**Draw your curtains** at dusk to keep heat in and tuck them behind radiators to minimise heat loss.



**Consider installing double glazing** in your main living room, loft insulation or even cavity wall insulation, to help keep your home warmer for longer. Check locally if financial help or grants are available for energy-saving investments.

# Looking after **EACH OTHER**

It's not unusual to feel a bit down in the winter when the days are shorter, and the weather is chilly. Try to keep your usual routines, think of others, and stay connected.



**Phone** family, friends or neighbours regularly for a chat, if you can't safely visit them.



**GPs have lots of ways to see patients safely.**

If you are unwell or worried about a change in your health, don't delay in seeking medical advice. GP services may be running differently but they do want to hear from you. Remember also that pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals who can provide medication and advice on minor health concerns.



**Warm Enough?** Ask others if they have everything they need and if their home is warm enough.



**When it is wet or icy outside,** help to make sure everyone can get out and about safely or that they have enough supplies.

**If you can offer help, do.** If you need help, ask. Remember that everyone, whatever age, needs a helping hand from time to time.





# How WE can help

## Powering Together

We are always here keeping you connected to the people and things you love.

**Power NI Customer Care Register** - Our Customer Care Register has a range of services which may be of help, whether that's a note so that the meter readers know to allow you more time to answer the door, passwords to protect from bogus callers, or help setting up a carer as an alternative bill payer.

Visit [www.powerni.co.uk/customer-care](http://www.powerni.co.uk/customer-care) or call 03457 455 455 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm to find out more.

**Keypad customers - Topping up** - If you are a Keypad customer you can top up from home. Call 03457 455 455 and press '1' to pay by debit card. You can also top up via our website or mobile app. The minimum top up amount has been reduced to £5.

**Bill pay customers - Paying your bill** - You can pay your electricity bill without leaving home, via our website or app, or call 03457 455 455 and press '2' to make a payment.

**Reading your meter** - It is important that your bill is based on an accurate meter reading. NIE Networks have resumed socially distanced meter reading. You can also submit a reading via [www.nienetworks.co.uk](http://www.nienetworks.co.uk), by calling 03457 643 643, or via your online account.

# How **WE** can help



## Age NI – Advice Line

Online: Age NI's website: [www.ageni.org.uk](http://www.ageni.org.uk) is packed with ideas, tips and guidance for winter wellbeing. Age NI's free, independent confidential advice line helps thousands of people every year.

Get in touch via freephone **0808 808 7575**  
or email [advice@ageni.org](mailto:advice@ageni.org)

## Money Matters

- Find out about pension credit.
- Get advice on winter fuel payments.
- Try our benefits calculator.

## Health & Care

Find out how to get the care and health support you need at home. Get expert advice on how to choose a care home.

## Advice on Loneliness

Reach out when things are really tough – don't suffer in silence. You are never on your own – we are here to help.

This winter may be tough, but with some preparation, a helping hand and **by looking after each other, we will get through it.**

