

Keep Warm, Keep Well

Winter 2007/2008

A Winter Guide for people with learning disabilities



How to keep warm and healthy,
heat your home, get help with bills
and improve your home



Phone call charges

This booklet gives contact numbers for a number of different organisations.

If calling from a BT landline:

- all 0800 and 0808 numbers are free
- all 0845 numbers cost a maximum of 5 pence per minute
- all calls to 0870 numbers cost a maximum of 7.5 pence per minute

Calls from mobiles and other networks may vary. Your service provider may charge a minimum cost per call.

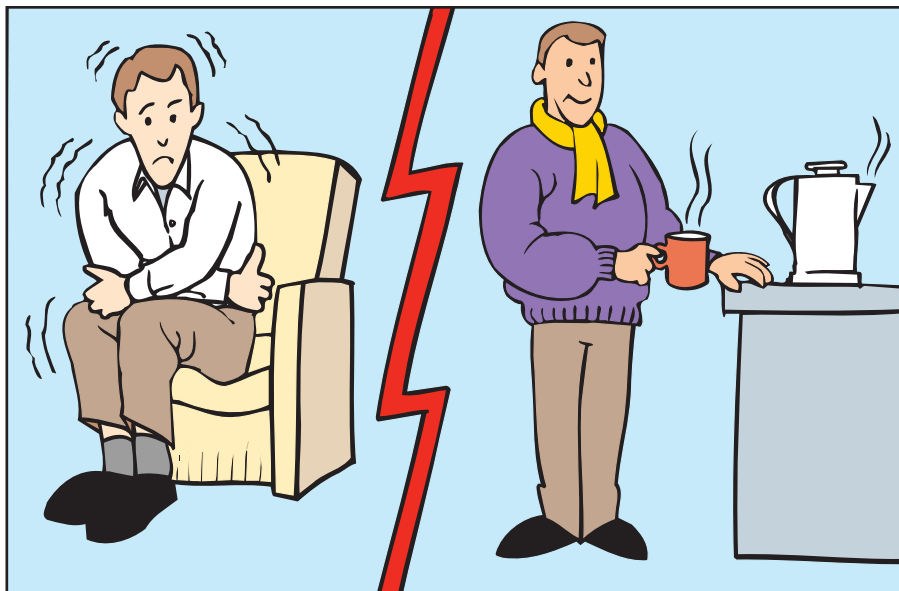


Contents

Why you need to keep warm	2
Get ready for winter	3
Keep warm, dress well	6
Keep warm, eat well	8
Keep warm, keep moving	10
Keeping a warm home	12
Money to pay for making your home warmer	14
Keep well, heat well	16
Help with heating bills	18
What to do if you feel ill	20
Help and advice	22

Why you need to keep warm

In winter it gets cold. That can make you *feel* cold, too. Then it's easier to become ill – with a cold or flu or perhaps chest problems.

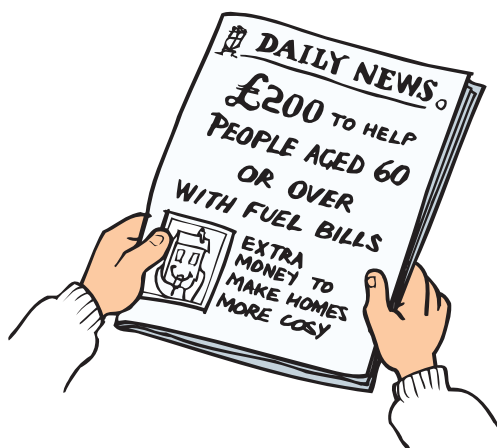


But you can stop this from happening to you.

Keep warm and it will help you keep well.
Keep moving. Eat and drink warming things.
Keep the house warm. Wear warm clothes at home
and when you go out.



This booklet gives you tips on how to keep warm.
And it brings you some good news, too.



Get Ready for Winter

Keeping Well



Do you smoke? Yes? Try to stop.
It will make you feel better.

You are never too old or too young for
stopping smoking to do you good.

Now you can get extra help from the
NHS Smoking Helpline:

Phone **0800 169 0 169** or textphone
0800 169 0 171.



Eating lots of different things is good for you. Have plenty of hot drinks on cold days.



Keep fit. Keep moving. In winter don't stop doing the things you like – such as going for walks.



Note to carers: Is a flu jab a good idea?

Flu is a particular winter problem. It can be a serious health hazard if the person you care for is in an "at risk" group. Flu immunisation is strongly recommended for people in these groups and it is free. Talk to your GP or local surgery.

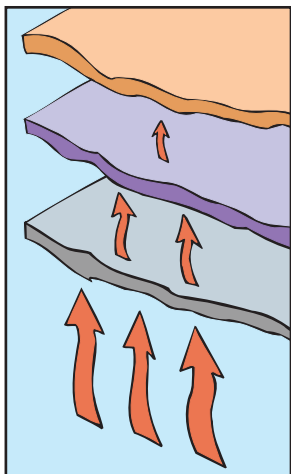
They are at risk if they are:

- aged 65 or over
- have serious heart disease, serious respiratory disease, (including asthma, serious renal disease, diabetes)
- have lowered immunity due to a disease or treatment.

Their GP may also advise a flu jab if they have serious liver disease.

Ask their GP whether they need the pneumo jab to protect against serious forms of pneumococcal infection. It is available for everyone aged 65 or over and for younger people with certain serious medical conditions.

Keep warm, dress well



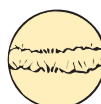
Wear the kind of clothes that keep you warm and help stop you getting ill.

At home

Wear thin clothes on top of each other instead of one thick jumper or jacket.

Warm air gets held between layers.

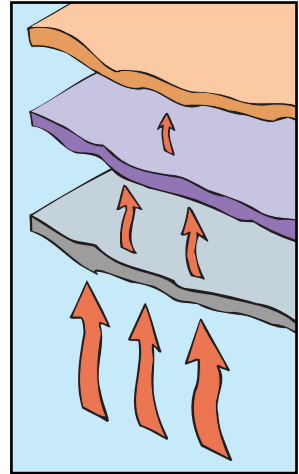
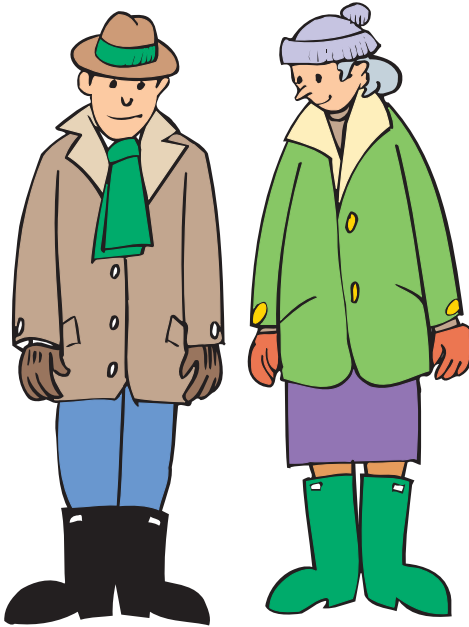
Choose wool, cotton or light fleecy clothes.



When it's very, very cold a good way to keep warm in bed is to wear woolly socks + woolly hat or head scarf + warm night-dress or pyjamas + thermal underwear.



Outdoors



Wear thin clothes on top of each other under a coat.
This will keep you warmer than a thick jumper or jacket.

Wear a hat or cap or you'll get cold very quickly.

Wear warm, dry, flat shoes or boots. The soles should not be smooth. Then you won't slip when it's icy.

Keep warm, eat well

Food heats you up and helps you keep going.

When to eat and drink

Have one hot meal or more than one every day. Have hot drinks spaced out at times right through the day.

Have a hot drink before bedtime.

What to eat

There are 5 kinds of food.

Try and have some of each kind every day.

1. bread,
breakfast cereals,
potatoes,
pasta,
chapatis



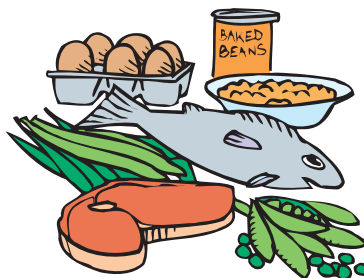
2. Fresh fruit and vegetables –
five lots each day if you can



3. Milk and dairy foods



**4. Meat, fish, eggs,
peas and beans
(including baked beans)**



**5. Foods which have got
fat or sugar – puddings, cakes
or chocolate
or crisps for a treat!**

Note to carers:

Try to keep a stock of food from all these groups in case you or the person you care for cannot get out to the shops in very cold weather.

If the person you care for is on a special diet, talk to their doctor before making any changes in their diet.

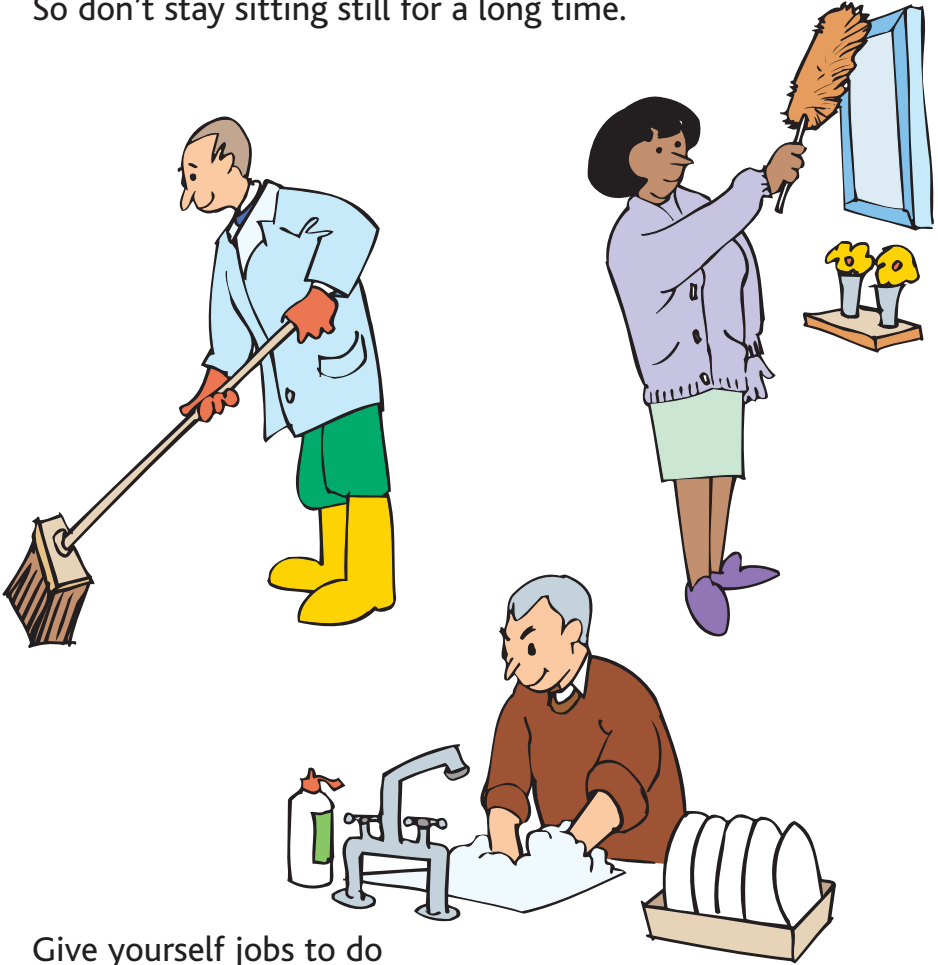
Prepare a thermos flask of a hot drink to have by their bedside in case they wake up in the night feeling cold.



Keep warm, keep moving

Moving around warms you up.

So don't stay sitting still for a long time.



Give yourself jobs to do
all through the day – not all at once.



A bit of exercise like walking or games is great for your health.

Keep it up all year round. That means in winter, too.



But be careful not to get wet or slip on icy ground.

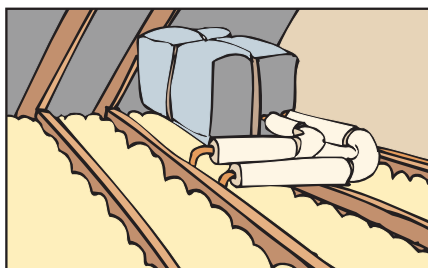
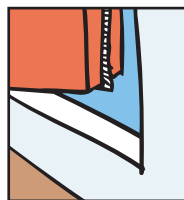
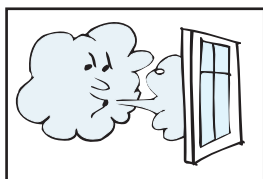
Keeping a warm home

The jobs to be done to make your home warmer for winter



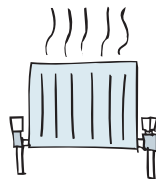
Stop cold air and draughts from getting in. Fit draughtproofing in the gaps around doors and windows.

Stop warm air getting out.



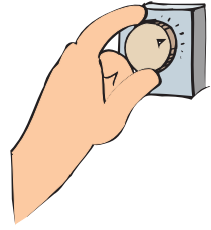
Put strips of insulation around hot water pipes and the hot water tank and on the floor of the loft.

Do you have central heating?
Get someone from the gas or electricity company to check it's working properly.
They might do it for free.



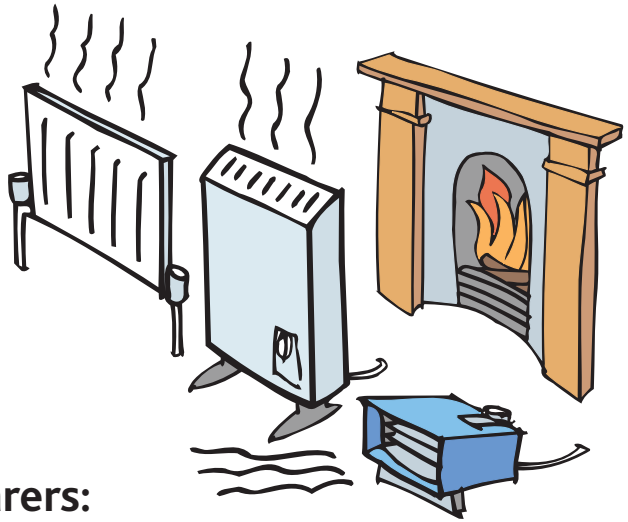
Have them service the heating once a year.

Make sure you know how to set the heating control or ask someone to help you.



Buying a new fire or heater?

For help in choosing the right one for your home call the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre: 0800 512 012.



Checklist for carers:

If the person you care for is a tenant, check what the landlord can provide and what kind of heater they will allow. If you're buying an electric heater, ensure that it has a thermostat.

If you are buying an open fire, check it has air control to regulate the burning rate. For specialist advice call the Solid Fuel Association: 0845 601 4406 or visit www.solidfuel.co.uk

Keeping a warm home

Money to pay for making your home warmer

Jobs like fitting insulation, draught-proofing or central heating all cost money.



The Government and your local council may be able to give you a grant and help get the work done.

Warm Front Scheme

If you own your own home or rent it from a private landlord, and you get a benefit, you may be able to get a grant of up to £2,700 for better insulation and heating.

Talk to the people who run the scheme in your area.

They can tell you if you stand a good chance of getting a grant.

They will help you apply and find people to get work done. Call **0800 072 0151**.



From your local council

If there's not much money coming into your home, the council may be able to help with grants to:

- improve your home, including insulation
- fit your home with equipment to make life easier for a disabled person
- get small repair jobs done.

Ask your council for details and a form to apply. Or ask your carer to ask.

Note to carers:

Organisations such as Age Concern (see page 22) or your local Mencap branch may be able to help with the paperwork.

If you or the person you care for have applied for a grant, don't start any work before the application is approved.

The council may send someone to inspect premises.

Make sure they show a proof of identify before being let in.

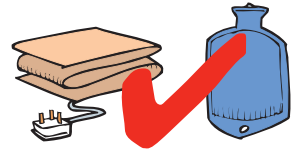
Keep warm, heat well

How to keep your home nice and warm ... and not get big fuel bills

It helps to have a thermometer in your living room. Try to keep the thermometer at 21°C (70°F) in all the rooms you use during the day. Or just keep your living room warm during the day.



Warm your bedroom before going to bed. Warm your bed with a hot water bottle or electric blanket – **but not both together.**

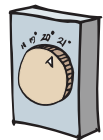


Keep your bedroom window closed at night - when it's coldest.



Do you have central heating?

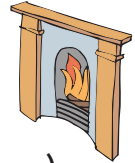
Here are some tips for using it so the house is not too warm and not too cold. Your carer can help you set it. Look for the thermostat – the thing that controls how warm the house is. Set it at 21°C (70°F).



If the room gets too warm, turn the thermostat down.

Set the timer to come on before you get up and to go off at bed time. If the weather turns very cold, set it to come on earlier.

Do you have an open coal fire?



Keep it well filled up – about 3 to 4 inches (75-100mm).
To make it burn higher or lower, use the air control.

Have your chimney swept once a year. For more tips, call the **Solid Fuel Association: 0845 601 4406**.

Be careful!

Put fire guards on all open fires.



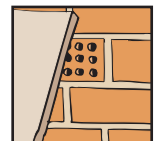
Do not sit too close to a fire.



Do not hang washing too close to the fire.



Do not block up any air bricks in your walls.



Help with heating bills

There are two ways to be given money to help pay winter home heating bills:

1. Winter Fuel Payment

Are you aged 60 or over? You could be getting £200 this winter, or you might have to make a claim.

To find out, call this number or ask your carer to call:

Winter Fuel Payments Helpline:

08459 15 15 15 (textphone **0845 601 5613**)

Monday-Fridays 8.30am – 4.30pm. Have your National Insurance number ready.

2. Cold Weather Payment

Are you paid a social security benefit? You may be given £8.50 if the weather is very cold (0°C) for seven days one after another. Make sure you spend it on keeping yourself warm and well.

More help with the money

There are benefits which are not just for heating, such as Pension Credit (if you are 60 or over). You may be able to claim. To find out, call this number or ask your carer to call:

Pension Credit Application Line:

Phone **0800 991 234** (Textphone **0800 169 0133**).



Note to carers:

There is a special confidential telephone helpline giving advice on benefits for people with disabilities and their carers:

The Benefit Enquiry Line: 0800 88 22 00.

Textphone 0800 24 33 55.

Budget Schemes The electricity and gas companies have payment schemes which enable people to spread payments more evenly over the year instead of having them peak in winter. Ask your supplier for details.

If the person you care for has gas or electricity bills he or she (or you, if they live with you) can't pay, let the supplier know quickly before the amount builds up. They'll want to help find a solution, perhaps by spreading out repayments. A safety net procedure has been set up to ensure that no vulnerable customers are disconnected from their gas or electricity supply. Make sure the person you care for is signed up to the **Priority Service Register**.

For independent advice contact your local **Citizens Advice Bureau, Age Concern – 0800 009966** or **energywatch** on **0845 688 9594**.

What to do if you feel ill

This advice is for you, but show it to your carer, relatives and neighbours, too.

Is it flu?

When you get flu, your skin feels hot, you get the shivers, a headache and maybe pains in your muscles.

This may turn into a sore throat, runny nose or cough.

This is what you should do:

- stay at home and rest
- drink lots of liquids (not alcohol!)
- eat what you can
- tell your carer or – if you live alone – a friend, relative or neighbour
- if you already have heart or chest problems, diabetes or other serious medical condition, call your GP
- if you start feeling worse, get chest pain or short of breath, call your GP.



Any other illnesses?

If you are feeling ill, and don't know what to do, NHS Direct can help.

- Call **0845 4647** – or textphone **0845 606 4647** if you are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- Go to NHS Direct Interactive on digital satellite TV by pressing the 'Interactive' button on your remote control.

Note for carers:

Dealing with hypothermia

Hypothermia is a dangerous condition caused by short exposure to extreme cold, or prolonged exposure to mild cold. Where an older person suffers a collapse, there is a danger that hypothermia may set in.

Unless it's treated quickly, this will be fatal.

The danger signs are:

- very cold skin even under clothes, for example across the stomach or under the arms
- drowsiness and slurred speech
- loss of sensation – not feeling cold even when it is cold.

What to do:

- call an ambulance immediately – dial 999
- don't impose any sudden change in temperature, but try to warm the person up gradually by warming the room
- give a warm drink but not alcohol.

Help and advice

For help and advice for people with learning disabilities, including older people, you can get in touch with a range of organisations.

Voluntary organisations

These organisations help in lots of different ways. Often they have a branch near you that you can get in touch with direct.

General advice and support

Age Concern

Age Concern provides a range of services for older people through its network of independent local voluntary organisations. Local branches are listed in your local phone book; or call **0800 009 966**, 8am - 7pm, every day.

Or write to: Age Concern Information Line, Freepost (SWB 30375), Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7ZZ

You can also visit the website at www.ageconcern.org.uk



Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB)

CAB provides general advice on benefits and heating matters. Visit www.adviceguide.org.uk or find your local branch in the phone book.

Dial UK

A UK network of disability information and advice services run by people with direct experience of disability.

Tel: **01302 310123**.

Mencap

See the phone book for your local group.

Help the Aged

SeniorLine provides information and advice for older people and their carers about welfare and disability benefits and residential and community care issues.

Phone **0808 800 6565**. Monday-Friday 9am-4pm;

or write to: Help the Aged, 207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ.

WRVS

WRVS provides practical help to the housebound, older people, families in crisis and those affected by disaster. To find out more call **029 2073 9000** or visit www.wrvs.org.uk

Help for people with disabilities

Disabled and Independent Living Centres

Practical solutions for managing the tasks of daily life.

For details of your nearest centre, write to:

The Disabled Living Centres Council, Redbank House,
4 St Chad's Street, Manchester M8 8QA.

Tel: **0870 770 2866**.

Disabled Living Foundation

Information and advice on equipment to assist with all aspects of daily living. Helpline **0845 130 9177**, weekdays 10am to 4pm. Or write to:

Information Officer, The Disabled Living Foundation,
380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU.

Government Agencies

Government Agencies can advise on benefits, other payments and health matters.

Benefit Enquiry Line

A confidential telephone helpline is available giving advice on benefits for people with disabilities and their carers.

Phone **0800 88 22 00** (textphone **0800 24 33 55**).



Pension Credit

To apply for Pension Credit call the Pension Credit Application Line on Freephone **0800 99 1234**.

(Textphone **0800 169 0133**). An adviser will help fill in the application form with you over the phone and post it to you to check and sign.

NHS Direct

NHS Direct provides confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day. If you are feeling ill, and don't know what to do; would like to find out more about a condition or treatment; or need details of local health services, NHS Direct can help.

- Visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- Go to NHS Direct Interactive on digital satellite TV by pressing the 'Interactive' button on your remote control
- Call **0845 4647** – or textphone **0845 606 4647** if you are deaf or hard of hearing.

NHS Direct has interpreters so you can get advice in your own language. For patients' safety, all calls are recorded.

NHS Smoking Helpline

This is a free and confidential service offering advice and support to anyone contemplating stopping smoking.

Call: **0800 169 0 169**. Callers can also be provided with information on getting help locally to stop smoking.

Social Services

Social Services can be contacted through your local county council, district council or town or city hall.

Winter Fuel Payments

For queries on the Winter Fuel Payment, call the Helpline: **08459 15 15 15**, open weekdays 8.30am to 4.30pm. Textphone **0845 601 5613**. You can also visit the website at www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel

Other information Sources

Energy Saving Trust advice centres

Provide free and impartial advice on energy saving measures around the home. Call: **0800 512 012**.

Gas and electricity companies

Your gas and electricity suppliers should have a service offering advice on usage for older customers.

energywatch can help with advice on energy saving measures and if you have a complaint. For further information call: **0845 688 9594**. You can also visit www.energywatch.org.uk



Home Heat Helpline

The Home Heat Helpline offers advice on subjects including cheaper payment schemes, grants for insulating your home, and how to register for extra services and government benefits, like winter fuel and cold weather payments.

The phone is **0800 33 66 99** (minicom **0800 027 2122**).

National Energy Action (NEA)

NEA is a charity which campaigns for affordable warmth and improved energy efficiency in the homes of people who are vulnerable to the cold.

Write to: NEA, St Andrew's House, 90-92 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle NE1 6SG or visit www.nea.org.uk

Solid Fuel Association

Information and advice on all forms of solid fuel heating:

Telephone **0845 601 4406** or visit www.solidfuel.co.uk

Warm Front Scheme

Grants for insulation and heating improvements.

For information call: **0800 072 0151**.

Help with insulation and home improvement

Home Improvement Agencies

For help and advice on repairs and home improvements for older and disabled people.

Write to Foundations, Bleaklow House, Howard Town Mills, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 8HT. Tel: **01457 891909** or visit **www.foundations.uk.com**



Information about this booklet

For bulk orders call the DH Publications Orderline
08701 555 455.

Keep Warm Keep Well is a national campaign to reduce cold-related illnesses and deaths during winter. It is a partnership between the Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this booklet, and in particular the following partners, for supporting the Keep Warm Keep Well campaign: Age Concern, energywatch, Help the Aged, NEA (National Energy Action) and WRVS.

**Keep Warm Keep Well
For people with learning disabilities**



Supported by the NHS

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