

Ready for Winter Guidance

Stiùireadh Deiseil airson a' Gheamhraidh

A wide range of information on being 'Ready for Winter' can be found on the Highland Council website www.highland.gov.uk/readyforwinter. This includes links to emergency contacts, water safety advice and Met Office weather forecasts.

For up-to-date information you can:

- visit the Highland Council News Centre: www.highland.gov.uk/news subscribe to the Highland Council Community Briefing, by emailing policy6@highland.gov.uk
- follow the Council's social media at <https://x.com/HighlandCouncil> and www.facebook.com/highlandcouncil
- visit www.highland.gov.uk/schoolclosures for information about school closures

Winter Resilience Programme

The Highland Council Winter Resilience Programme offers assistance to communities who wish to take action in their own areas to help clear snow and ice from footpaths. We recognise that some communities may themselves be able to treat a more extensive path network. The scheme needs co-ordination between the local community and their Community Council to allow for provision of public liability and personal injury insurance.

The Council will provide grit, shovels and snow pushers, gloves and high visibility clothing, health and safety advice and insurance. The community must nominate a lead contact person, compile a list of volunteers, identify the paths it would like to treat and locations for salt storage and identify what equipment it needs and where it will be stored.

For further information:

www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/107/winter_road_maintenance/3

Benefits and financial support

For benefit advice contact the Welfare Support Team.

Telephone: **0800 090 1004** or email: welfare.support@highland.gov.uk

Information on winter related benefits can be found at:

www.highland.gov.uk/directory/22/benefits/category/479

A Worrying About Money advice leaflet can be downloaded from:

www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/23081/worrying_about_money_english

Depending upon household circumstances, some may qualify for additional financial support during the winter, these include:

UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment

This payment is for households with someone over Pension Credit age to help with heating costs during the winter. The amount received can vary according to their circumstances. Payments are made automatically during November and December. If you think you qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment and have not automatically received it contact the Winter Fuel Payment Helpline.

Phone: **0800 731 0160** (8am - 6pm, Mondays to Friday) or textphone contact:

RelayUK on 18001, then 0800 731 0160.

More information: www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Scottish Government's Winter Heating Payment

This once a year payment is to help people on low income 'qualifying benefits' who might have extra heating needs. If you're eligible to get a winter heating payment, you'll be paid it automatically. More information:

www.mygov.scot/winter-heating-payment

Warm Home Discount scheme

A one-off payment towards the energy bills of those who need it most. The scheme is managed by energy suppliers and is a one-off discount that is credited to the customer's energy account, prepayment card or key, during the winter. Most eligible people must make an application for this. More information: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/low-income-scotland



Scottish Government's Child Winter Heating Payment

This once a year payment is to help disabled children and young people and their families with increased heating costs over winter. If the child or young person is eligible, you'll receive this payment automatically. More information:

www.mygov.scot/child-winter-heating-payment

Inverness Winter Payments Scheme

This is available to eligible people within the Inverness Wards. The City of Inverness Area Committee winter payments scheme is designed to help people who are most in need and meets the eligibility criteria. This is funded by the Inverness Common Fund and is only for more information and details of how to apply please visit:

www.highland.gov.uk/invernesswinterpayments

Housing

At risk of losing your home or having nowhere safe to stay?

Contact Highland Council as soon as possible. We may be able to prevent a crisis. Phone us on **01349 886602** or Out of Hours Service **01349 886691**

See our website to find out more: www.highland.gov.uk/housing

Highland Council Tenants – Emergency Repairs


We know that some tenant repairs cannot wait until our housing offices are open again. In case of an emergency, Highland Council tenants should call the Housing Out of Hours Service on **01349 886691**. We only act where there is a serious risk to health and safety or where there is potential for serious damage to one of our properties. See our website to find out more: www.highland.gov.uk/housing

Domestic Abuse

There are confidential services which are available to support and provide a safe space for individuals who have been affected by Domestic Abuse. You can find information on where to get support here:

www.highland.gov.uk/info/1400/domestic_violence/235/domestic_abuse

You can also contact Police Scotland on **101** for non-emergencies and **999** for emergency situations.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

Winter can be difficult for many people and we would like to remind people of the importance of reaching out for support. Partner agencies in Highland have developed a collection of resources to support mental health and wellbeing including where to get help in a crisis.

For more information Highland Mental Wellbeing:

www.highlandmentalwellbeing.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Highland Preparing for Winter provides information on preparing for colder weather, viruses and power cuts:

www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/health-and-wellbeing/preparing-for-winter/

There are a number of befriending organisations in Highland, these can be found by searching on the Befriending Network UK Directory:

www.befriending.co.uk/directory

Concerned about someone?

Should you be concerned about a vulnerable adult, whether for care, welfare or mental health reasons, then please use the following contacts:


Adult protection: Phone the Police on **999** if an adult is at immediate risk of harm.

General advice or concerns and local numbers for each area can be found at <https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/your-services/all-services-a-z/adult-support-and-protection/> or the Emergency out of hours service can be contacted on **0808 175 3646**.

Should you be concerned about a child, their welfare, wellbeing or their safety, then please use the following contacts:

Child protection: Phone the Police on **999** if a child is at immediate risk of harm.

General advice or concerns and local numbers for each area can be found at <https://hcpc.scot/help-advice-numbers/> or the Emergency out of hours service can be contacted on **0808 175 3646**.



Electricity and Gas supplies and Support

Electricity: Who to contact in a power cut?

Call **105** free. You will be connected to your local electricity network operator's emergency line.

Gas: Who to contact if you smell gas?

Call the free National Gas Emergency Service immediately on **0800 111 999**.

Ofgem guidance on www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/finding-your-energy-supplier-or-network-operator of your gas or electricity.

The network operator oversees the pipes and wires providing your energy, whereas the supplier provides the actual gas or electricity service.

Should you run out of credit on pay as you go meters, you can use emergency credit. For how to access information on Pay As You Go meters, click on the links below for information depending upon your providers:

OVO: www.ovoenergy.com

Scottish Power: www.scottishpower.co.uk

E.On: www.eonnext.com

EDF: www.edfenergy.com

British Gas: www.britishgas.co.uk



Handy numbers in the event of an emergency

In an emergency dial **999** for the police, fire and ambulance service.

Non-emergencies, you can contact the police on **101** and the fire service on **01382 835804**.

Council emergency and out of hours phone numbers

Health and social care: **08457 697284**

Roads, parks, flooding and street lighting: **01349 886690**

Housing, homelessness, and public buildings: **01349 886691**

Registration: **07818 588 203**

Other useful Council Numbers

Welfare helpline: **0800 090 1004**

Trunk road maintenance

BEAR Scotland: **0800 028 1414**

Other numbers

Gas Freephone: **0800 111 999**

NHS 24: **111** if you are ill and cannot wait until your regular NHS service reopens

Police Scotland: **101** (for all services)

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service: **01382 835804** (24 hours)

Scottish and Southern Electric Freephone: **105**

Scottish Water: **0800 0778 778** (24 hours)

SEPA Floodline: **0345 988 1188**

SEPA Pollution hotline: **0800 807060** (24 hours)

Samaritans: **116 123** (calls are free and do not show on a phone bill)

Breathing Space: **0800 83 85 87**

Updated October 2024

