

Hot Tips Calendar



Keeping warm, healthy and safe: October 2011 - December 2012



October 2011 : Welcome



Making sure your home is safe, warm, comfortable and affordable is the best way of dealing with the challenges of the winter months. This Age Scotland Hot Tips Calendar offers useful information and practical easy-to-follow actions for each month to help you to do this. Age Scotland is grateful to all our partners whose contributions have made this guide possible.

This month, we're looking at accessing support and services for house repairs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Care & Repair offers independent advice and assistance across Scotland to help homeowners repair, improve or adapt their homes so that they can live in comfort and safety in their own communities. The service is available to owner-occupiers, private tenants and crofters who are aged 60 and over or who have a disability.

To find your local Care & Repair team, log on to the website www.careandrepairsotland.co.uk or telephone 0141 221 9879.

Local Authority: your council **MUST** provide you with support, advice and practical assistance on repairs and can tell you if you're eligible for grants. Their Social Work department is also required to provide certain services to meet the needs of disabled people.

Other sources of funding: Check out what might be available to you. Your local library, **Age Scotland member group** or **Council for Voluntary Service** may know local charities or trust funds that can help towards the cost of smaller repair work. The organisation **Charity Search** can also provide information on sources of funding

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
27	28	29	30	31	1 International Day of Older Persons	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 World Mental Health Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

November 2011 : Financial Health



Up to £5 billion of means-tested benefits for older people is unclaimed in the UK each year, equivalent to £13.9 million a day. Making sure you receive all the support to which you're entitled will help make winter that bit more affordable.

The **Winter Fuel Payment** is targeted at people aged 60 or over. Payments vary between £100 and £300 depending on individual circumstances. For help with claims **call the Winter Fuel Payments helpline on 0845 915 1515.**

Your local **Citizens Advice Bureau** or **Energy Saving Scotland** advice centre can also check your eligibility for **Pension Credit Benefit, Cold Weather Payments, Council Tax Benefit** and **Attendance Allowance.**

Cold Weather Payments: these are issued when your area's average temperature is recorded as 0°C or below over seven consecutive days and can

help people in receipt of certain benefits meet their additional heating costs during winter. A payment will be made for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

From 2011, the **Warm Home Discount** replaces suppliers' social tariffs for vulnerable consumers, and applies to all customers of the 'Big 6' energy companies. In the first year, payments of £120 will be made **automatically** to those in receipt of only the Guarantee Element of Pension Credit. The payment will be extended in later years to those in receipt of the Savings Elements of Pension Credit. Payment will be deducted from the quarterly bill, the direct debit account, or credited to pre-payment meters to help with winter bills.

Other people may be eligible for the Warm Home Discount. You should **contact your supplier** to see if you're eligible.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Remembrance Day	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 St Andrews Day				

December 2011: Emergency Info



With severe weather increasingly becoming the norm, it is important to prepare as best as possible for unwelcome surprises like a burst water pipe. While you can't anticipate every eventuality, knowing who to turn to can make a huge difference.

Make sure you have an **emergency kit** ready for any power failures, including a torch and batteries, portable radio, first aid supplies and emergency numbers. If you have a mobile phone, keep it charged and close to you!

1. **Radio and television:** stay tuned to local stations for updated weather forecasts.

2. **Room temperature:** if you're home all day, you're not always aware of how cold your room really is, so check and maintain a warm heat. Consider purchasing a cold alarm to alert you if the room becomes dangerously cold.

3. **Food and drink:** keep your store-cupboard well stocked, including a supply of bottled water or canned drinks in case you are unable to go out.

4. **Burst pipes:** know where to find the stop valve that controls your water supply and make sure you know how to shut it off quickly in an emergency. If you are unable to do this yourself, ask your neighbour, family or friend to help.

5. **Local Council:** keep its number handy - your council will have a plan for helping older people in severe weather, so call it if you require urgent assistance outwith normal office hours.

6. **Care & Repair** can assist by supplying details of reputable contractors and through its links with Local Authority, Gas, Electricity, Fire and Police departments. It doesn't provide an emergency service itself but can often short-cut your request to the right person, so get in touch if your emergency relates to a repair.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28	29	30	1 World Aids Day	2	3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day
26 Boxing Day	27	28	29	30	31 Hogmanay	

January 2012: Getting Fit & Healthy

HAPPY NEW YEAR! We hope 2012 brings everything you wish for. If you're looking for a resolution for the coming year, why not make health one of your top priorities? Doing as much as you can every day is a vital part of lowering blood pressure and reducing the risk of stroke and heart attack. It's never too late to be more active and the benefits only increase the more active you are.

There are 3 key steps to health & wellbeing in later life:

1. Do as much as you can every day to keep in good shape,
2. Eat the right balance of foods to get the nutrients you need,
3. Feed your mind with fun and stimulation to stay sharp.

Older adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week.

Here are some activities to help target some 'problem' areas:

- Heart and blood pressure: dancing, walking (with or without a frame) and housework
- Muscle strength: balance and flexibility: chair-based group games, physiotherapy, tai chi, yoga and everyday household tasks
- Mind and coordination: knitting, arts, crafts, dressing, washing, brushing hair, icing cakes, arranging flowers and making tea.

If you're concerned about the right kind of exercise for you, speak to your doctor or physiotherapist, or your activity coordinator if one is present where you live.



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 New Year's Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 International Holocaust Remembrance	28	29
30	31					

February 2012: Care & Support



We know that being able to stay at home is the top priority for many older people, but sometimes a little help is required to make this possible. We want to highlight some of the ways you can tap in to support which will enable you to remain independent.

Attendance Allowance (AA)

This benefit is for people aged 65 or over who, because of an illness or disability, need help from another person with personal care or supervision - for example, if they need help getting dressed, washing or going to the toilet.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

This tax-free benefit is for people who have a long-term physical or mental disability, and make a claim,

before their 65th birthday. Contact your local Pension Service office or even claim online at www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice.

Carer's Allowance

This is paid to people unable to work full time because they spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone receiving AA or the middle or higher rate DLA care component. Being in receipt of another benefit or state pension may affect the amount of Carer's Allowance paid, but there is no upper age limit.

- To find out which benefits you may be entitled to, call the **Age Scotland Helpline: 0845 125 9732**.
- Alternatively, contact the **Benefit Enquiry Line: 0800 882 200**.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Shrove Tuesday	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				

March 2012: Planning For The Future

Is your current home suitable for your needs? How about over the next ten or twenty years? Is it likely your home could NOT be adapted to enable you to remain living there? We hear all too often about older people stuck in homes too big for them that are expensive to heat and actually prevent them from living a full and active life. Perhaps now's a good time to think about your future needs and whether a new home might make a positive difference to you.

1. Benefits of Downsizing: You may find you're able to manage better if you move to a smaller property, with benefits such as reducing running costs, cutting down housework and maintenance and releasing equity.

There's also a wider social benefit of downsizing – making larger properties available for young families.

2. Social Housing Tenants: speak to your landlord about what other properties they have available if your current home doesn't meet your needs or can't be reasonably adapted. Tenants may be offered financial incentives to transfer to a smaller property.

3. Contact the Elderly Accommodation Counsel: its online housing options self-assessment questionnaire helps you decide what type of housing suits you. To talk to an adviser, call: 020800 377 7070, or visit : www.eac.org.uk.

4. Contact estate or letting agents

Ask a local expert about properties for sale and to rent in the areas in which you're interested in living – and ask in particular about accessible or adapted homes.



5. Some things to consider:

Moving and setting up a new home can be expensive, so make sure you'll have enough to pay estate agent's fees, legal fees, stamp duty, for a Home Report and removal costs. **Remember – any cash you're left with after the sale of your property may affect your eligibility for certain means-tested benefits.**

PS – Are you on the electoral register? If not, you won't be able to vote in next month's local elections! Older peoples' votes have never been so important, so call your local authority to make sure your voice is heard.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
27	28	29	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 International Women's Day	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Mothering Sunay
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2012: Checking Your Benefits Entitlements

Unfortunately, Age Scotland can't predict what the Chancellor's next budget will hold – but whatever the outcome, it will be worth taking the time to review the benefits to which you're entitled.

Pension Credit for people of 60 and over

If you are in doubt about your possible entitlement it can do no harm to claim anyway, as getting even a small amount of Pension Credit can result in entitlement to other benefits such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. Contact the Pension Credit line, free, on 0800 99 1234.

Income Support (IS) for people under 60

Homeowners may get some help with certain housing costs. When working out your benefit, some income, for example Disability Living Allowance, is not taken into account. To claim, contact your local Jobcentre Plus.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA)

If you are under State Pension Age (SPA), contact your local Jobcentre Plus for more information and to make a claim.

Working Tax Credit can be claimed by single people or couples, and there is no upper age limit. Disabled people may get extra money and you may qualify for the 50 plus element based on a number of criteria.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

If you apply for Pension Credit you should be asked whether you pay rent and/or Council Tax, and, if so, you should be sent a short claim form for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit. If you apply over the phone, a member of staff will complete the form for you.



If you apply for Income support or income-based JSA you will automatically be sent a claim form for Housing and Council Tax Benefit. Otherwise you will need to contact your local authority. See Age Scotland's Factsheet 18, 'A brief guide to money benefits' for more information.

The Social Fund: Age UK Factsheet 49 is about the Fund and other sources of financial help. Alternatively you can call the **Age Scotland Helpline on 0845 125 9732**.

By the way!

Spring is a good time to assess winter damage like fallen or loose roofing tiles or slates and have the gutters cleaned. There may be evidence of water coming into your attic, windows or wall so get any problems sorted out now.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6 Good Friday	7 World Health Day	8 Easter Sunday
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2012: Repairs



As a result of the improving weather this time last year, Age Scotland's Helpline experienced a rise in the number of people looking to undertake home improvements. Perhaps you should take advantage of the summer months to finally get round to those home improvements you've been putting off! Inspecting your home on a regular basis is the best way to protect your home - you'll find a little care and maintenance goes a long way!

If you're anxious about getting work done to maintain your property, contact your local **Care & Repair** team, which can offer independent advice and assistance to help homeowners repair, improve or adapt their homes so they can live in comfort and safety in their own communities.

Step 1 – the home visit

Care & Repair staff can visit you at home to help you decide what work is to be done and organising the

building works. This home-based and personalised service puts you in control of decisions.

Step 2 – discussing the options

Once you know what needs done, Care & Repair staff take you through each step, from acting as advocates and discussing your case with other professionals, to co-ordinating repairs and even arranging the work for you!

Step 3 – talking money

Care & Repair staff can also go over any financial issues with you, including lending options available to owners, grants, loans and charitable funding. They can also discuss how you can use your personal resources or utilise the value of your home to help pay for vital repairs and improvements.

To find your local **Care & Repair** team, log on to the website at: www.careandrepairsotland.co.uk, or telephone **0141 221 9879**.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	1 May Day	2	3	4	5	6
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28	29	30	31			

June 2012: Keeping Cool In Summer

The sun helps keep our bones healthy, but over-exposure can lead to skin cancer – one of the most common cancers in the UK. The over 65s are more likely to be diagnosed with late stage malignant melanoma than younger people, and Scottish people have a higher than average incidence than the rest of the UK.

When the sun is strong, spend time relaxing in the shade, cover up with hats, sunglasses and loose, long sleeved clothing, and use at least SPF 15 sunscreen, with a four or five star rating that protects against UVA and UVB rays. Sunscreen should be applied generously throughout the day to ensure skin protection.

With early diagnosis of skin cancer, treatment is easier and more likely to be successful. By getting to know your skin and what's normal for you, any unusual changes will be easier to spot. The **ABCD** rule helps you recognise the warning signs of skin cancer:

Asymmetry:

The two halves of a mole do not look the same

Border:

The edges of a mole may be irregular, blurred or jagged

Colour: The colour of a mole may be uneven, with more than one shade

Diameter: The mole is wider than 6mm in diameter (the size of a pencil eraser).

Remember, not all skin cancers look the same. Other signs that you should see your doctor about include:

- A new growth or sore that won't heal,
- A spot, mole or sore that itches or hurts,
- A mole or growth that bleeds, crusts or scabs.



Cancer Research UK recommends keeping an eye on your skin and reporting any changes in the size, shape or colour of a mole, or any other change to a mole or normal patch of skin, to your doctor. To find out more on how to enjoy the sun safely and facts about skin cancer, visit the SunSmart website, www.sunsmart.org.uk.

And another thing!

Summer is the best time for external painting, checking the condition of garden paths, and taking an overview of the whole house. A surprising number of people who think about major repairs, such as reroofing or rewiring, delay these until autumn or winter months. Why not get them attended to while the days are longer and contractors can be more flexible about their working hours?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Father's Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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July 2012: Changing Your Supplier

Getting the best deal is an important way of coping with the ever-increasing cost of heating your home. It is recommended that older people heat living areas to between 21°C and 23°C and non-living areas to 18°C. Make sure you're paying the right price for the gas and electricity you use by switching payment method, tariff or supplier.

Consumer Focus Scotland found that nearly everybody who switched after comparing prices found the process easy or very easy – most made savings which met or exceeded their expectations.

For most people, switching involves 3 simple stages:

1. Find details of your current tariff & energy use from your latest bills, and decide which payment method you want to use

Have the following information to hand, all of which should appear on your bill:

- Your current supplier and tariff
- Your postcode
- The number of units you use per year, in kilowatt-hours (kWh)
- Your current payment method – direct debit, standard credit, or prepayment meter

2. Compare prices – the easiest way is to use an accredited comparison service, by phone or online

- Use one of the approved price comparison services listed on the **Consumer Focus Scotland** website.
- If you don't have access to the internet, you can call **Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06**, which can provide contact numbers for the price comparison services and give further help and advice. It can also post copies of its price comparison fact sheets.



- You can also call the energy companies directly and ask about their prices.

3. Register your details with the new supplier

- Once you have decided on the tariff that is best for you, you can transfer either through a comparison service, or by contacting the new supplier directly.
- The new supplier is responsible for organising the change, and it will tell the old supplier that you wish to transfer. The new supplier will agree a date with the old supplier for the transfer. The whole process will take up to six weeks to complete.

Did you know?

People who switch supplier as a result of a doorstep sales visit are much less likely to make savings and, in some cases, can end up paying more than they did before! Use a comparison service to make sure you get the best deal for you.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
25	26	27	28	29	20	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2012: Getting Energy Efficient

Keeping warm during winter is so important. To heat your home without worrying about the bills, it's a great idea to make your home as energy-efficient as possible. Summer's a good time to do this, so if you're looking for some simple ways to save energy and money, here's a few things to do right away.

Energy experts from the **Scottish Government's Home Energy Hotline** can give free, impartial reports on how to save up to £250 a year on household energy bills.

They can also give you advice on how to keep the heat in during the winter, save money on winter fuel bills and determine whether you're eligible for additional benefits and tax credits or cheaper fuel tariffs. You may also be eligible for a range of help, including free central heating, draught-proofing devices or insulation. Call the Hotline **0800 512 012**.

Contact your energy supplier's energy efficiency helpline. Your gas and electricity suppliers are required to offer energy advice, funding for loft and cavity wall insulation (including grants), and free energy saving light bulbs, so find out what schemes are currently on offer!

Some top tips

1. Always turn off lights in empty rooms, and try using low energy light bulbs. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, use only a fifth of the electricity and can save around £40 over the lifetime of the bulb!
2. Turn off your electrical appliances at the wall instead of leaving them on standby – which uses almost the same amount of energy as if they were switched on.
3. Set your thermostats correctly; reducing room temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10%.



4. Check your hot water cylinder isn't too hot – set it at around 60°C/140°F, and make sure your heating and hot water only come on when required.
5. A dripping hot water tap wastes enough hot water in one week to fill half a bath, so fix leaking taps and make sure they're fully turned off.
6. Washing with a full load uses less energy than two half loads. Also, avoid washing at high temperatures.
7. Choosing the highest energy rated model (A or A+) when replacing electrical appliances such as fridges and washing machines will save money over time.
8. Insulate water tanks and lag pipes and fit double or secondary glazing to keep the heat in.

Did you know?

Autumn is the best time to get your home ready for the coming winter. If you have a central heating system, have it checked and serviced. It may also be worth taking out a service contract with a gas supplier.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
13th - 17th August : 8th World Congress on Active Ageing, Glasgow						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2012: Housing Repair Options



There are so many options available to people who want to carry out repairs to their property it can sometimes be difficult to know where to start. It's worthwhile finding out if you're eligible for support to help you stay at home!

For homeowners:

Grant funding for repairs is now very limited, so you may need to use your own assets to cover the cost. However, where grants are not available, councils have a statutory duty to provide, as a minimum, a comprehensive package of information, advice and practical assistance.

Local councils have a duty to provide advice and to organise repairs in a way that meets the needs of private households. Contact your local authority to find out what grants are available, or to get the ball rolling with repairs to bring your home up to an acceptable standard.

For people with disabilities:

Mandatory grants assistance is only available in relation to disabled adaptations. The Housing (Scotland) 2006 Act requires councils to provide assistance to make a house suitable for a disabled person where that house is their main residence.

For tenants

If your home isn't meeting your, or anyone else in the household's needs, contact your landlord to find out their policy for Adaptations. Landlords are generally responsible for "permanent adaptations" for fixed items such as showers or permanent ramps.

Telehealthcare

You might want to consider telehealthcare and a personalised alarm system to give you extra security / support to stay in your home. Speak to your social services department to see what support is available.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2012: Getting set for winter

Having a plan for the onset of winter could make a huge difference when dealing with extreme weather. This month, we look at some essential steps we think you should take to ensure you're prepared for what nature throws at you!

The **Scottish Government** has a whole host of advice on preparedness for an emergency, which is available on its website at: www.readyscotland.org.

- Emergency contact arrangements:** make agreements with family and friends and identify meeting places
- Important local phone numbers:** note your doctor's number, that of the local police station and any others you may need
- Neighbours:** Find out if any neighbours might require your help – or if they can be of any help to you!
- Emergency Kit bag:** make sure you have yours prepared! (See above for details)
- Useful information:** Keep a note of your gas, electricity & telephone suppliers, and your insurance company
- Medication:** Make sure you have a note of your prescription medication and restock your medicine cabinet
- Food & Drink:** Stock up your store cupboard and freezer with soup, dried foods and also some food that you can eat even if there is a power cut. Keep a supply of bottled water and long-life snacks, and don't forget some high energy sweets or drinks too!
- Utilities:** Make sure you know where your water stop cock is and where to switch off your gas and electricity supplies



Some other things to think about

Insurance: Ensure you have adequate buildings and contents insurance. Check if your policies cover you for risks such as flood or storm damage and the costs of temporary accommodation if your home becomes uninhabitable.

Frozen pipes: If cold weather is forecast, it is best to keep your heating on overnight at a low temperature so your pipes won't freeze – simply turn your thermostat down to 15°C.

Local Information: Find out what services in your area provide advance warning of severe weather and updates during storms and flooding. These include local radio stations, Met Office UK Severe Weather Warnings, SEPA Flood Warnings, and the national Floodline service.

Look back at what the Age Scotland calendar suggested you do in October 2011 – if there was anything you didn't do, why not try it now?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 International Day of Older Persons	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 World Mental Health Day	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2012: Doorstep Selling

Energy companies may send a salesperson to your home to get you to sign up with them. This is called doorstep selling. If you're not expecting a salesperson to visit, it's called cold-calling. These sellers won't provide details of all the deals available in your area, only those offered by their company. You're more likely to make savings by switching your supplier or tariff, as described earlier.

There are rules salespeople calling at your home have to follow. They mustn't put you under pressure to sign if you're not ready and they must give you enough information to help you decide what you want to do.

Salespeople must also behave in a responsible way. They must not use any tricks to try and get you to sign a contract without you realising it. Furthermore, they mustn't use pressure to get you to sign a contract when you may not be ready to make up your mind.

If you get a visit from a doorstep salesperson, they must:

- Show ID and give you a number to call so that you can check their identity
- Only call between 9am and 8pm unless you have invited them to call outside these hours
- Check they are talking to the person who is responsible for paying the bills
- Be honest about why they are calling
- Go away if you ask them to
- Get permission from the warden if they are visiting sheltered accommodation
- Give the correct information about prices.



Look back at what the Age Scotland calendar suggested you do in November 2011 – if there was anything which you didn't do, why not try it now?

Remember!

During winter you may have to spend more time in the home. Routine checks can prevent falls and accidents in the home. Check for:

- Batteries in smoke & carbon monoxide detectors.
- Loose carpets – get these secured down.
- Cables on electrical items like kettles, microwaves, and vacuum cleaners - if any are frayed or loose, get them replaced by a qualified person.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Remembrance Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 St Andrews Day		

December 2012: Hot Tips For The Home

It's always good to remember what you should do to ensure you can relax safely in your home. The suggestions below might be straightforward, but at times it's the easy things which make the biggest difference – just think about the batteries in your smoke alarm!

Fires and Heaters

- For **open fires**, check the hearth, floor & furnishings for sparks or embers and get your chimney swept every year. Also, use a fireguard and don't overload the grate or bank the fire too high.
- For **gas or electric fires**, make sure you switch off at the socket before bedtime, and have your gas fires, boilers and central heating checked annually.

Smoke and gas

- Buy and fit a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide alarm. You may get these free if you're on your energy supplier's Priority Services Register.
- Don't plug up air vents to cut down on draughts – this may cause a build up of carbon monoxide.

Nightwear & Electric Blankets

- Make sure you have enough bedding and try to keep your bedroom at a comfortably warm temperature – between 21-23°C is best.
- In case of power cuts during the night, keep a torch by your bed and a hot drink in a flask.
- Wear warm night clothes and/or thermals & socks in bed. Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket. If your electric blanket is not new, have it checked. Your local Fire department can tell you how.
- Replace your electric blanket if it is over 5 years old.



If you smell gas, phone the National Grid on 0800 111 999.

Look back at what the Age Scotland calendar suggested you do in December 2011 – if there was anything which you didn't do, why not try it now?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	1 World Aids Day	2
3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27	28	29	30
31 Hogmanay						



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www.agescotland.org.uk

Age Scotland Helpline: 0845 125 9732
helpline@agescotland.org.uk

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Cancer Research UK



Consumer Focus Scotland



Care & Repair Scotland



Scottish Government

Energy
Saving
Trust

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