

Warm Home Discount expanded to help 280,000 Scottish households with energy bills

- Over 280,000 low income and vulnerable households across Scotland to get extra help to pay their energy bills next winter
- Warm Home Discount to be expanded by £13 million and extended for 3 more years
- comes in addition to existing £22 billion package of support for UK households including £200 energy bill discount from October

The UK government is today (Monday, 9 May) launching a consultation on a proposed expansion of its Warm Home Discount scheme. Proposals are for support in Scotland to grow by around £13 million, to £49 million per year.

The uplift would mean rebates are provided to an additional 50,000 families in Scotland each year on top of the 230,000 that already receive payments and boost cash paid out to help meet energy costs from £140 to £150.

The consultation would also see the scheme extended to 2025 to 2026, providing much needed certainty to those most in need.

Proposals for supplier participation thresholds would also be lowered, enabling more energy suppliers to participate, particularly from 2023 to 2024 onwards, mirroring how the Warm Home Discount scheme operates in England and Wales.

The Warm Home Discount in Scotland will continue to focus support on those in receipt of means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit and Pension Credits, which ensures that rebates go to those on the lowest incomes.

Energy suppliers can use additional eligibility criteria, as long as the criteria identify households at risk of fuel poverty, subject to approval from Ofgem.

The Warm Home Discount supports low income and vulnerable households across Great Britain with the cost of living and is in addition to a £22 billion package of support, including a £200 energy bill discount from October.

UK government Business and Energy Minister Lord Callanan said:

We recognise the pressures that people living in Scotland are facing with the cost of living. That is why we are expanding the Warm Home Discount and increasing the amount households receive so those most in need are supported to heat their homes.

The discount is just one measure we are taking to help tackle

rising energy costs. Our energy price cap continues to protect households from volatile gas markets, and later this year families will get £200 off their energy bills, while we have already provided £290 million to fund Council Tax rebates in Scotland.

UK government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord said:

We are acutely aware of how many Scots are worried about the rising cost of living and, where we can help, we are doing just that.

Rebates of £150 through the Warm Home Discount will help to directly address the issue of fuel poverty for a quarter of a million Scottish households.

We are facing global challenges, but measures such as these, and our far-reaching £22 billion package of action in 2022 to 2023, will ensure that more people can keep more of their money in their pockets.

Households in Scotland are also benefiting from an additional £296 million of support for the cost of living, including help for high energy costs and a record block grant of £41 billion per year for the next 3 years announced at the Spending Review for the Scottish Government – the largest since devolution.

We are providing an average of £1,000 more per year back into the pockets of working families on Universal Credit and increasing the minimum wage by 6.6%, which will give a full-time worker on the National Living Wage more than £1,000 extra each year. The scheme will continue to support low-income pensioners and other low income and vulnerable households with their energy costs.

- the Warm Home Discount scheme is a key policy in the government's strategy to tackling fuel poverty and reducing the energy costs of low-income and vulnerable households
 - read the details of [eligibility for the Warm Home Discount](#) on GOV.UK
 - the scheme began in 2011 and since then has provided over £3 billion in direct support to households
 - the [Warm Home Discount Scotland consultation](#) follows commitments made in the [Energy White Paper](#) to extend the scheme until 2025 to 2026 and expand it to support more households in fuel poverty
 - the energy price cap has shielded millions of customers from price volatility in wholesale markets and ensured they pay a fair price for their energy. Despite the rising costs of wholesale energy which precipitated the failure of several energy suppliers, Ofgem have kept the cap at the level set in October 2021 over this winter
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[Moving cosmetics between Italy and GB](#)

Watch a recording of the 'Moving cosmetics between Italy and GB' webinar to help you understand how you can move cosmetics, in this example lipstick, from the EU (Italy) to Great Britain (GB) taking into account the further changes that have come into place since January 2022 onwards.

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1. 9 May 2022

Updates to page made to reflect the changes on import controls announced on 28 April 2022

2. 16 December 2021

Added translation

Recipients of £5.4 million suicide prevent fund revealed in Mental Health Awareness Week

- 113 charities have benefitted from £5.4 million to prevent suicide in high-risk groups, including people from Black communities and men
- Demand for services has increased during the pandemic and funds have bolstered services including therapy, stigma-busting workshops and helplines
- Government will publish a Suicide Prevention Plan later this year to outline further support for those in need

The government has announced the charities that have received a share of £5.4million, to support people experiencing suicidal thoughts or approaching a crisis. This follows increased demand for services, met by the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector during the pandemic.

Marking the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Week the government has announced that, following an open and competitive application process, 113 charities were awarded a share of the VCSE suicide prevention grant fund.

This funding, which was distributed and used earlier this year, enabled recipients to either set up new projects, or expand or sustain current services to ensure people are supported – including funding projects retrospectively. Funded projects included providing additional capacity in crisis helplines, both for those struggling with suicidal thoughts and for those who are concerned about a loved one, providing signposting to local services, support and information, refreshing campaigns to provide targeted support to specific at-risk groups, therapy sessions and supporting families who have tragically been bereaved by suicide.

These voluntary and community services are vital for supporting individuals in the community, ensuring they receive the help they need, whilst also allowing health services to continue tackling the Covid backlog.

In 2021, there were over 5,000 suicides registered in England. In both men and women, around 40% of suicides are by people in their 40s and 50s, whilst men aged 45 to 49 have the highest rate.

Whilst this additional funding is already helping communities, the government is committed to doing all it can to prevent deaths by suicide. Later this year, it will publish a new Suicide Prevention Plan that will set out actions and commitments to do so.

To support the development of this plan, the department has opened a 12-week call for evidence which is running until 7 July, to help inform both the new 10-year Mental Health Plan and the new National Suicide Prevention Plan. It is seeking views from the public, as well as the sector, on what can be

improved within the current service, and what more can be done to prevent suicides – particularly in light of the pandemic which has led to record levels of people seeking treatment and accessing support.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

I know how devastating suicide can be and I am committed to making sure the NHS and voluntary sector services have the support they need.

We know many more people have been asking for help with their mental health over the last two years and we're publishing a Suicide Prevention Plan later this year to outline further support for those in need.

If you're struggling, please reach out for support – we're here to help.

Minister for Mental Health, Gillian Keegan, said:

The suicide prevention voluntary sector has played a crucial role in providing people with the help and support they need throughout the pandemic and I thank them for all they do.

Suicides are preventable tragedies when the right support and help is in place. I'm committed to continuing to support the sector and to do all we can to ensure people have the help they need.

This Mental Health Awareness Week, I want to be clear that there is support for those struggling – and if you need help, I encourage you to reach out.

The £5.4million of funding has been awarded to a wide range of organisations, including small community groups which play a vital role in responding to local needs, ensuring communities up and down the country can access suicide prevention support.

The support has predominantly been targeted at high-risk groups who may have struggled the most during the pandemic, such as people with a pre-existing mental illness, children and young people, and those from groups considered to be at higher risk of self-harm and suicide, such as people from Black communities, men, and people who are economically vulnerable.

The charities who've been awarded funding include:

- James' Place Charity, who've been awarded £283,968 and provide innovative, free, suicide prevention therapy to men over the age of 18 in Merseyside who are in suicidal crisis.
- Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN), who've been awarded £41,599

and address the wider social determinants to reduce health inequalities for people from Caribbean & African communities, tackle taboos around suicide in black communities, raising awareness through workshops and campaigns as well as running virtual chat and support sessions for young people.

- Chasing the Stigma, who've been awarded £51,918 and provide the Hub of Hope, a mental health signposting tool accessed by over 22,000 people per month
- Papyrus, who've been awarded £151,815 and provide confidential support and advice specifically to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person. This support is provided through their HOPELINEUK.

Ellen O'Donoghue, Chief Executive Officer at James' Place said:

At James' Place, our professional therapists work with men in suicidal crisis who have an active plan to end their lives or who have recently made an attempt. The DHSC's Suicide Prevention Fund has made a huge difference to the men we supported at our Liverpool centre in 2021 and 2022. We are now focussing on expanding our provision further, opening our second centre in London and three more beyond that, so that we can reach more men and help them to find hope for the future.

Charles Kwaku-Odoi, Chief Officer of the Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN) said:

Suicides occurs in all communities although it is not a topic openly spoken about in ethnic communities often due to stigma, shame, cultural and religious issues. It is important that we combat the threat of increasing suicide in the Black community while encouraging people to seek help at the earliest opportunity.

The funding will enable us increase understanding and knowledge of practical suicide prevention techniques via different platforms helping people to spot the early signs and act appropriately. CAHN is committed to helping the Caribbean & African community tackle suicide. Our helpline (07710 022382) is open 9am to 9pm every day for those who need someone to talk to, feeling down or struggling.

Jake Mills, Chief Executive at Chasing the Stigma said:

The grant of £51,918 received from the DHSC's VCSE Suicide Prevention Grant Fund felt like a real lifeline for us at Chasing the Stigma in what was a year of unprecedented demand for our services. As a result of the pandemic, our Hub of Hope, the UK's biggest and most comprehensive mental health signposting tool, witnessed an exceptional increase in demand from people looking for

help and support across the UK. Although encouraging that more people were seeking and finding support, the significant pressure on our services came with its own challenges, including rising costs for maintaining and sustaining the platform. A challenge which has been made easier as a result of this grant.

Chasing the Stigma is a national mental health charity with lived experience at the very core of all we do, which is why we are pleased to see the announcement of a new suicide prevention strategy in England. We are eager to engage in any plans as a voice of those who have lived through the pain of suicide and suicidal ideation. We fundamentally believe that the experiences of people should play a vital role in any new initiatives to reduce suicide and we are committed to represent those voices wherever we can.

Ged Flynn, Chief Executive at Papyrus said:

PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide was pleased to receive a grant of £151,815 from DHSC's VCSE Suicide Prevention Grant Fund. The grant has helped to offset some of the rising costs of our vital HOPELINEUK service which offers professional advice to young people experiencing thoughts of suicide, and to those who are concerned about them. The service met hugely increased demand during the first two years of the Coronavirus pandemic.

As a national charity, we welcome the announcement that there is to be a new suicide prevention strategy in England. We are keen to see the voice of young people at the heart of that initiative. After all, suicide remains the leading cause of death in those aged under 35. That's why strategic cross-Government and cross-society effort is so important. PAPYRUS continues to do all it can to work with others, and especially with young people themselves, to help save young lives.

This fund is on top of £10.2 million already given to mental health charities over the course of the pandemic, and will support suicide prevention organisations to continue to provide support to all those who need it.

More widely, the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, backed by £500 million, has ensured the right support is being offered to people with a variety of mental health conditions who have been impacted most by the pandemic.

Mental Health Awareness Week is an annual event which provides an opportunity for the whole of the UK to focus on achieving good mental health. This year, the aim is to raise awareness of the impact of loneliness on people's mental wellbeing and the practical steps which can be taken to address it.

Notes to editors

- The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has made available £5.4

million for a grant fund to support suicide prevention voluntary community and social enterprise organisations across 2021/22. A portion of the grant fund was ring-fenced specifically to help support small community-led and user-led groups and organisations.

- Following an open tender process, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) were selected to administer the grant fund on DHSC's behalf.
- Applications were open from 2 December 2021 to 16 January 2022 for grants from the £5.4 million fund.
- Applications which passed eligibility and due diligence checks were reviewed by an independent expert panel which included people with lived experience.
- Following the panel, 113 organisations have been awarded funding. A full list is available [here](#)
- Last year, the government published the latest progress report against the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, which included a refreshed cross-government suicide prevention workplan to reduce suicides as far as possible

Lowest paid workers to be given flexibility to top up their pay under government reforms

- Government to widen ban on exclusivity clauses, removing red tape and giving lowest paid workers the choice to work multiple jobs if they wish
- new reforms will ensure around 1.5 million low-paid workers are not subject to exclusivity clauses, providing them with flexibility over where and when they work
- Business Minister Paul Scully said: "We are putting more control into the hands of the lowest paid, giving them the freedom to decide who they work for and how often."

Britain's lowest paid workers will be given the flexibility to boost their income through extra work, under new plans set out by the government today (Monday 9 May).

The proposals will widen the ban on exclusivity clauses, which restrict staff from working for multiple employers, to contracts where the guaranteed weekly income is on or below the Lower Earnings Limit of £123 a week. An estimated 1.5 million workers are earning on or below £123 a week and the new reforms will ensure that workers in this group that have exclusivity clauses are able to top up their income with extra work if they choose.

The reforms will give workers more flexibility over when and where they work to best suit their personal circumstances such as childcare or study,

including the option of working multiple short-hours contracts.

As well as supporting workers to increase their income, the reforms will also benefit businesses by widening the talent pool of job applicants to those who may have been prevented from applying for roles due to an exclusivity clause with another employer, and also helps businesses to fill vacancies in key sectors like retail and hospitality. The reforms will allow low-paid workers to reskill and make the most of new opportunities in existing sectors with growing labour demand.

This follows government action to support people with their cost of living and help the lowest paid workers keep more of what they earn, including increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour – equivalent to an extra £1,000 a year for a full-time worker – and cutting taxes for the workers on Universal Credit – putting an extra £1,000 back in their pockets.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

We are creating a high skilled, high productivity labour market that supports workers by removing unnecessary red tape, helping the British people boost their incomes and keep more of what they earn.

By extending the ban on exclusivity clauses, we are putting more control into the hands of the lowest paid, giving them the freedom to decide who they work for and how often, including the option to top up their pay packet if they wish.

While not everyone will want a second job, the reforms will remove red tape that prevents those who want to do so – for example, gig economy workers, younger people, or those from disadvantaged backgrounds facing barriers to entering the labour market.

By giving more workers the option to take on additional work on short hours contracts, the reforms could also help increase businesses' confidence to create jobs with contracts which suit them and their current circumstances.

In 2015, exclusivity clauses were banned for workers on zero hours contracts, where employers are not obliged to provide any minimum working hours and the worker is not obliged to accept any work offered. The change provided more workers with the option to take on additional work, with the number of people on zero hours contracts having a second job rising.

Legislation for these reforms will be laid before Parliament later this year. The proposals follow the conclusion of a consultation launched by government in December 2020, which sought views on extending the ban on exclusivity clauses beyond zero hours contracts.

Some responses to the consultation highlighted the impact that COVID-19 has had on job security and its decrease in guaranteed working hours. Extending the ban to those earning below the Lower Earnings Limit will therefore enable vulnerable workers who have been moved to reduced hours contracts, due to the

pandemic, to increase their income.

The reforms come at a time when there are more employees on payrolls than ever before. The move will also make workplaces fairer, reflecting the government's commitment to protecting and enhancing workers' rights across the country.

Andy Chamberlain, Director of Policy at IPSE said:

The extension of the ban on exclusivity clauses is welcome. By cutting back on these restrictive clauses, the opportunity to find more flexible work will be open to more people.

Read the full [government response to the consultation on exclusivity clauses](#).

PM to announce new laws to level up education opportunity so no child is left behind

- Schools Bill to help deliver government's ambition to give every child in the country a world-class education, providing the foundation they need to secure future well-paid jobs
- Bill will support schools to raise standards, strengthen attendance and improve safeguarding for children wherever they are educated
- Measures will feed into the government's central mission to spread opportunity, level up the country, and strengthen our economy

New laws are expected to be unveiled tomorrow to underpin the government's ambition for every child to receive a world-class education, no matter where in the country they live.

The Schools Bill is set to be announced in the Queen's Speech. It will provide the legislation necessary for the government's key education reforms and support its central mission to spread opportunity and level up the country, driving future economic growth.

Making sure every young person gets a good education is at the forefront of the government's agenda. It is also in the interest of the entire country, because these young people will have the skills, knowledge and opportunity needed to fulfil their future potential, secure the good jobs needed to support our economy, and fill local skills gaps.

Through the Bill, the government will raise education standards across the

country via a range of measures including supporting schools to join strong, multi-academy trusts, introducing registers for children not in school and giving Ofsted more powers to crack down on unregistered schools operating illegally.

It will help to deliver the government's Levelling Up mission for education – for 90% of children leaving primary school to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030, providing them with the foundation they need to secure well-paid jobs in the future.

To support this, last month the government announced its new pledge to parents: if your child falls behind in English or maths, they will get the support they need from their school to help them get back on track.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

“I want every parent across the country to know that their child's education is at the very heart of this government's agenda.

“We are determined to raise standards in our schools so every child has access to the same opportunities wherever they live, and our brilliant teachers are supported to do what they do best, which is why we're putting our education ambition into law this week.

“By giving every child a good education, we're giving them the opportunity to thrive so they can reach their full potential and secure the jobs needed – this is absolutely vital to our levelling up mission.”

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

“Our new Schools Bill, alongside the Schools White Paper, will create a school system that works for every child, parent and family, bringing every school up to our current best standards.

“We want every school to be part of an academy trust, enabling teachers to focus on what they do best – meeting the needs of every child. Schools' approach to attendance is being overhauled to make sure every child gets the benefit of every possible hour in the classroom.

“In combination, this work will make sure every child has access to an education that they deserve and helps them fulfil their potential.”

The measures in the Bill will:

- Support more schools to become part of a strong, multi-academy trust.
- Strengthen the regulatory framework for academy trusts, underpinned by powers to intervene where they are failing.
- Introduce a direct National Funding Formula, so that every school is allocated funding on a fair and consistent basis, wherever it is in the country.
- Require schools to publish an attendance policy
- Establish compulsory registers for children not in school, so that the system can identify those who are not receiving a suitable full-time

education.

- Place a duty on local authorities to provide support to home-schooling families, so that no child falls through the cracks.
- Give Ofsted more powers to crack down on 'unregistered schools' operating illegally.
- Give the Teaching Regulation Agency increased powers to investigate misconduct.

This is all backed by huge government investment – core school funding will rise by £4 billion in 2022/23 compared with 2021/22, which represents a 7% increase per pupil. On top of this, £5 billion has been invested in the National Tutoring Programme, offering high-quality catch-up tutoring for students who fell behind during the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the government also set out its vision for a post-18 education system that promotes social mobility by providing more options for people to study, train, retrain or upskill at any stage throughout their lives.

In support of this, the Higher Education Bill is also expected to be announced this week, enabling the introduction of the Lifelong Loan Entitlement. This will provide people with a loan equivalent to four years of education (£37,000 in today's fees) that they can use over their lifetime for a range of studies including shorter and technical courses. This could help them secure a promotion, or a better job.

This is a seismic shift in the way post-18 education is funded and accessed – and combined with the government's school reforms – will make sure an excellent education is accessible to everyone in this country, no matter what stage of life they're at.