

Voices of Sustainability



Warm Home Discount

You could get £150 off your electricity bill for winter 2025 to 2026 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

You qualify if you either:

- get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit
- are on a low income in Scotland and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme

If you receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, you will automatically get a letter telling you about the discount if you're eligible.

Otherwise, you'll need to apply directly to your energy supplier. You might be eligible if all of the following apply:

- your energy supplier is part of the scheme
- you (or your partner) get certain means-tested benefits or tax credits
- your name (or your partner's) is on the electricity bill

Your electricity supplier may have extra eligibility criteria. They'll also tell you which benefits mean you are eligible.

This is known as being in the 'broader group'.

If you are in the broader group, you will need to contact your electricity supplier to check if you're eligible and to apply. They will decide who gets the discount in Scotland. You cannot apply for the discount by contacting the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The number of discounts suppliers can give is limited. Contact them as early as possible, most suppliers open their scheme for applications from September 2025.

Check with them even if you were eligible for a discount last year.

If you're eligible, your electricity supplier will apply the discount to your bill by 31 March 2026. You'll need to stay with your supplier until it's paid.

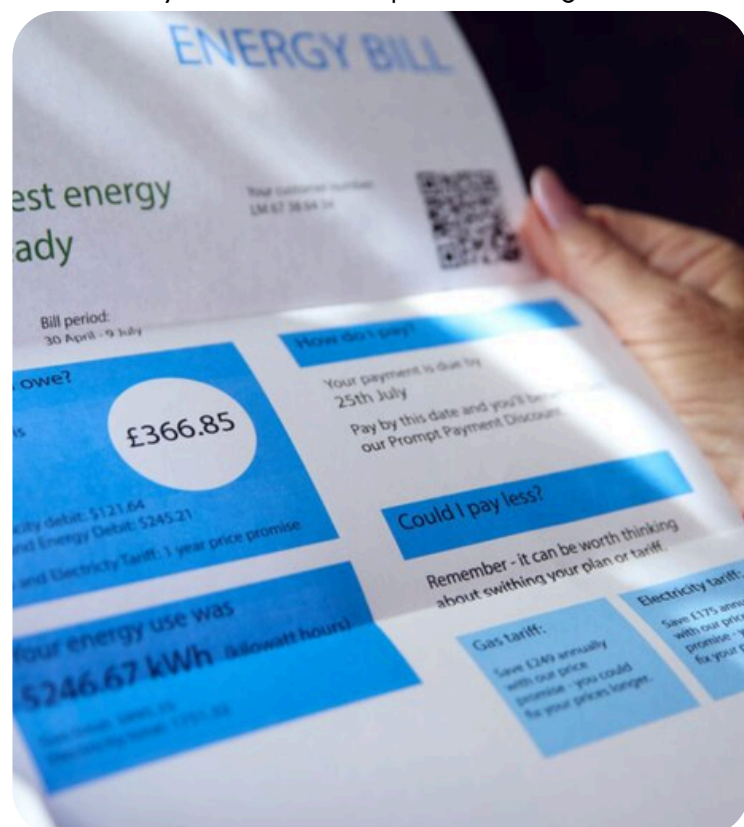
For assistance please contact our advice helpline on 01542 888070

alternatively email: info@reapscotland.org.uk

Help with energy bills

If you are finding it difficult to meet the costs of your energy we are here to help. In addition to energy saving tips, there is support available. Remember that energy suppliers have an obligation to support you in times of crisis or in an emergency.

For further information please contact our advice helpline on **01542 888070** or email: info@reapscotland.org.uk



Carbon Monoxide Safety

What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odorless and poisonous gas, produced by the incomplete combustion of carbon-containing fuels.



What are the symptoms of CO Poisoning?

The symptoms of CO poisoning are: Headaches, weakness, dizziness, nausea/vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision etc.

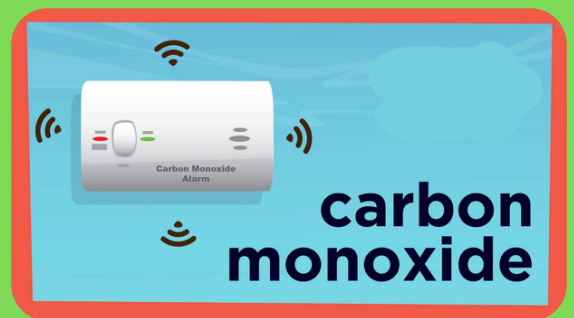
Pets can also suffer symptoms carbon monoxide poisoning.



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How to stay safe/avoid CO poisoning

- **Install CO alarms** – place in every room with a fuel burning appliance, test regularly.
- **Maintain Appliances** – have gas appliances serviced annually by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- **Improve Ventilation** – ensure proper airflow in rooms with fuel-burning appliances, and use exhaust fans in kitchens and bathrooms.



Emergency

If your CO alarm sounds or if you think you have CO poisoning:

- Open all doors and windows
- Get outside immediately
- Contact the National Gas Emergency Service – 0800 111 999

Keith Community Power Hub (KCPH)

Data Know Sessions



Every Tuesday, the 'Data Know' tech hub in Keith offers friendly support to help you build confidence with everyday digital skills. Whether you're new to using technology or just need a bit of guidance, our team is here to help in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

We cover the basics – like sending emails, browsing the internet safely, and understanding how to use your device securely. You can also get help with setting up online accounts, using your device more effectively, or accessing online services. We also have devices available to use in the office to access the internet. Additionally, we offer printing services.

The sessions are tailored to your needs, so you'll get practical support at your own pace. There's no pressure, and no jargon – just clear advice to help you feel more comfortable and capable online. While getting online, you can enjoy a fresh brew and chat with our friendly staff for advice and support.

These sessions are free to attend and people are welcome to drop-in to our office for support. Alternatively, get in contact with us for more information by emailing us at info@reapscotland.org.uk or by calling us on 01542 888070.

Helpful Digital Security Tips

- *Unique passwords: use a new password for each account. Combine upper case, lower case, numbers and symbols – and consider using a password manager (or a notebook that can be kept in a safe place).*
- *Update software regularly: ensure that all software is up-to-date on a regular basis to ensure that your device is secure.*

Use secure Wi-Fi connections: when doing online banking, ensure you use a secure, password protected Wi-Fi connection; not public Wi-Fi.

Free Legal Advice

We offer free legal advice for clients in Moray.

You can access advice on:

EMPLOYMENT LAW

CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW

Advice sessions are by appointment only.

Call 01542 888070 to book

Email info@reapscotland.org.uk



Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS) Switch Off

650,000 homes and businesses in England, Scotland and Wales have electricity meters using the Radio Teleswitch Service (RTS)

The RTS signal is now being switched off as it reaches the end of its operational life. This change will impact homes and businesses using RTS electricity meters, potentially affecting their heating and hot water supply.

What you need to know:

The Radio Teleswitch Service uses a radio signal to switch older electricity meters between peak and off-peak rates. It supports around 650,000 meters across England, Scotland and Wales, mainly for those using electric storage systems, panel heaters, or immersion heaters.

Why the change? Introduced in the 1980s, RTS is now outdated, and the equipment can no longer be maintained.

Book an appointment for a new meter: Ofgem expects all energy suppliers to replace RTS electricity meters before the service ends. Keep an eye out for the offer of a replacement from your energy supplier.

Contact your energy supplier to see if you have an RTS electricity meter or if you want to schedule a new meter installation.



How can I tell if I have an RTS electricity meter?

The only way of knowing for certain is by contacting your energy supplier but it's more likely that your meter uses the RTS if:

- you have a separate switch box near your meter with a radio teleswitch label
- your property uses electricity for heating or storage heaters
- there is no gas supply to the area, especially in rural locations
- you benefit from cheaper energy at different times of the day (for example, Economy 7, Economy 10)

Why accept a new meter?

If you do not replace your RTS meter, this could disrupt your heating and hot water or lead to higher electricity costs.

For assistance in checking whether you have an RTS meter/arranging a replacement, please contact REAP on 01452 888070

You can find more information at: [ofgem.gov.uk/replacing-your-radio-teleswitch-electricity-meter](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/replacing-your-radio-teleswitch-electricity-meter)



New energy advisor and Priority Services Register (PSR)

Introducing Our New Energy Advisor Peter Cruickshank with an Early Success Story

We're delighted to share an update from our newest team member as we step into another busy and inspiring spring at REAP Scotland.

Settling into the Role

I joined REAP Scotland as the new Energy Advisor in December and have been warmly welcomed into the team. My professional background spans over 25 years in Mental Health, Housing and Advocacy, experience that has proven invaluable in supporting households facing today's energy pressures.

By February, my caseload was already active, and I've been working closely with local residents to help them manage energy bills, navigate suppliers, and access support. With ongoing cost of living challenges and global uncertainties affecting prices, providing clear, practical energy advice has never felt more important.

A Recent Success from Our Buckie Hub Drop In

During one of our regular Energy Drop in Sessions at the Buckie Hub, held every two weeks, I met Jane. She arrived frustrated by rising bills and concerned about the poor customer service she'd been experiencing from her energy supplier. As she was registered on the Priority Services Register (PSR), she expected, and was entitled to, better support.

After discussing her situation, Jane asked for help lodging a formal complaint and exploring whether switching suppliers might benefit her. A review of her current tariff uncovered a £50 early exit fee, which initially appeared to block an immediate switch.

However, once I contacted her supplier to raise the complaint, they acknowledged they had fallen short of their obligations toward a PSR customer. As a result, they agreed to waive the £50 exit fee, clearing the way for Jane to move to a new supplier with a stronger reputation for customer care and saving her an additional £100 on her annual costs with her new Supplier. Jane was delighted with the outcome, we had saved her a total of £150, and it was a great example of why energy advocacy matters.

What Is the Priority Services Register and Why Does It Matter?

Jane's case highlights how important it is for eligible households to make use of the Priority Services Register (PSR) a free UK-wide scheme designed to support people who may be at greater risk if their energy supply is interrupted.

Who Can Join?

You can join the PSR if you are:

- Over state pension age
- Living with a disability or long-term health condition (including mental health conditions)
- Pregnant or living with young children
- Recovering from an injury, bereavement or hospital stay
- Experiencing difficulties with communication, mobility, or reading bills [ofgem.gov.uk]

What Support Does the PSR Provide?

Customers on the PSR can receive:

- Advance notice of planned power cuts
- Priority support in emergencies, including help with alternative heating or cooking if needed
- Password protected visits for safety and reassurance
- Nominate dperson schemes, allowing bills or communications to be sent to a trusted family member or carer
- Prepayment meter relocation if the meter is inaccessible
- Accessible formats for bills and account information (large print, Braille, etc.)
- Quarterly meter readings if needed
- Protection from winter disconnection for vulnerable households
- Why It Matters for Advocacy and Complaints

Suppliers participating in the Energy UK Vulnerability Commitment must ensure they do not disadvantage PSR customers and must take extra care when handling complaints or billing issues. In Jane's case, this recognition was essential in securing the waived exit fee and a better deal.

REAP Scotland Is Here to Help

If you think you may be eligible for the Priority Services Register, or if you're unsure, our Energy Advice Team can help you check, register, and make the most of the support available. Whether it's billing concerns, supplier issues, switching advice, or understanding your rights, our dropin sessions and onetoone appointments are always available.

To find out more about our energy support services or upcoming events, visit the REAP Scotland website or get in touch with the team.

The Glebe Social Therapeutic Community Garden, Keith

The Glebe Garden is getting ready for Spring! During the wintery weather, we've enjoyed our weekly sessions indoors at the Longmore Community Hall, which has been a very cosy, comfortable, and welcoming space to plan and prepare for the season ahead. The snow has given us some extra challenges around travel and transport at times but our participants have been fantastic about staying involved over these long winter months.

We've used this quieter time to enhance our knowledge about seed saving, botanical families, garden design, and plant propagation, with plenty of practical workshops, including taking cuttings from currant bushes and pollinator-attracting shrubs to enhance the Glebe Garden soon.

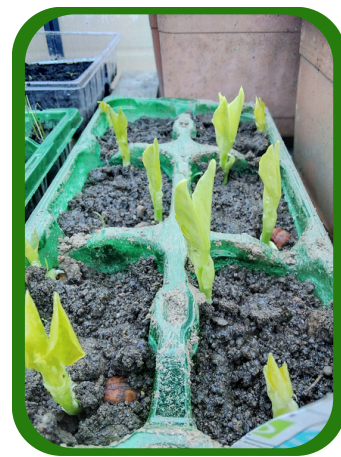
The project has recently received a very generous donation of hundreds of packets across a huge variety of flower, herb, and vegetable seeds, which we've also been busy sorting and organising. We have far more than we can use ourselves and are keen to share with the wider community. If you're involved with a local school, charity, or other organisation which could benefit from a selection of seeds - ranging from beans to basil, carrots to carnations, pumpkins to petunias and much, much more - please get in touch with Keith Community Gardener, Georgia at keithgarden@reapscotland.org.uk to arrange a free seed starter-pack, and look out for giveaways on our FaceBook page @The Glebe Community Garden!

Georgia has been out and about getting to know the Keith community better in recent months, with visits in February to share about the Glebe Garden at Keith North Church, and The Tuesday Table. Thanks again for the warm welcomes, fly cuppies and fine pieces!

If you or your organisation would like to know more about REAP community gardening in Keith, we'd love to hear from you: we can visit to present a talk and chat about gardens, or even tailor a mini-workshop to fit your interests.

Over the next wee while, we'll soon be back in the Glebe Community Garden and getting on with the many jobs that early Spring will bring: pruning and training our young orchard trees before the buds open, sowing and growing the more cold-hardy veg such as broad beans, cabbages and parsnips, and supporting more people to join in and get gardening with us.

Hope to see you there, and happy growing!



We run sessions on Tuesday Afternoons from 1pm - 3.30pm
and Wednesday Mornings 10am - 12.30pm

If you would like to join us please email info@reapscotland.org.uk for more information.



Enhancing healthcare together

The Oaks Therapeutic Garden, Elgin

The Oaks Therapeutic Garden Winter 2025/26

As the weather turned too cold and wet to work in the garden, and the earth settled into its 'long winters' nap'. The Team at The Oaks headed inside to continue activities focused on wellbeing and reusing both natural and manmade items to limit our impact on the Earth.

Activities included Christmas wreath making, with an abundance of natural items donated to the group from a wreath maker.

After the festive break, we had a workshop on making bath salts using essential oils and lavender harvested from the garden, while some members of the group made bird feeders out of pinecones collected from the garden and we looked forward to the big garden bird watch which ran toward the end of January. The results of this were submitted to the RSPB.

A session on using various dried herbs that grow in the garden were also used to make herb and spices mixes for use in our kitchens along with herb, garlic and chilli infused oils.

Other Winter activities have included, maintenance of our tools, and cleaning pots and seed trays ready for the coming growing season, along with discussions on what we will grow this year and some seed sowing for those few plants that can be started off in January and February. We didn't forget about our houseplants and had a session on how to look after and propagate them and that these can be a great way of bringing the outside in, especially during the quieter winter season when outside work can damage habitats for our native smaller creatures, which in turn impacts the larger wildlife.

We are all looking forward to a busy Spring and Summer season back in The Oaks Garden and continue to grow.



If you'd like to come and have a go at gardening alongside others in a safe and welcoming environment, then please email info@reapscotland.org.uk
We hold sessions on Tuesday afternoons (1:30-4pm) and Thursday mornings (10am-12:30pm).

funded by the National
Lottery



Foundation Apprenticeship

My name is Cohen and I'm an S5 at Keith Grammar School. As part of the Business FA course, you have to work at a local organisation as if you are an employee, carrying out 3 different tasks such as Document writing, clerical duties and flyers to get the qualification. For my Foundation Apprenticeship I have been working at REAP Scotland, and have created a poster for Facebook, this newsletter, and will be doing clerical duties like creating a spreadsheet or answering calls as my third task. I hope you liked this Newsletter and enjoyed reading it.

