

VOICES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Newsletter Vol 9 Autumn 2025

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

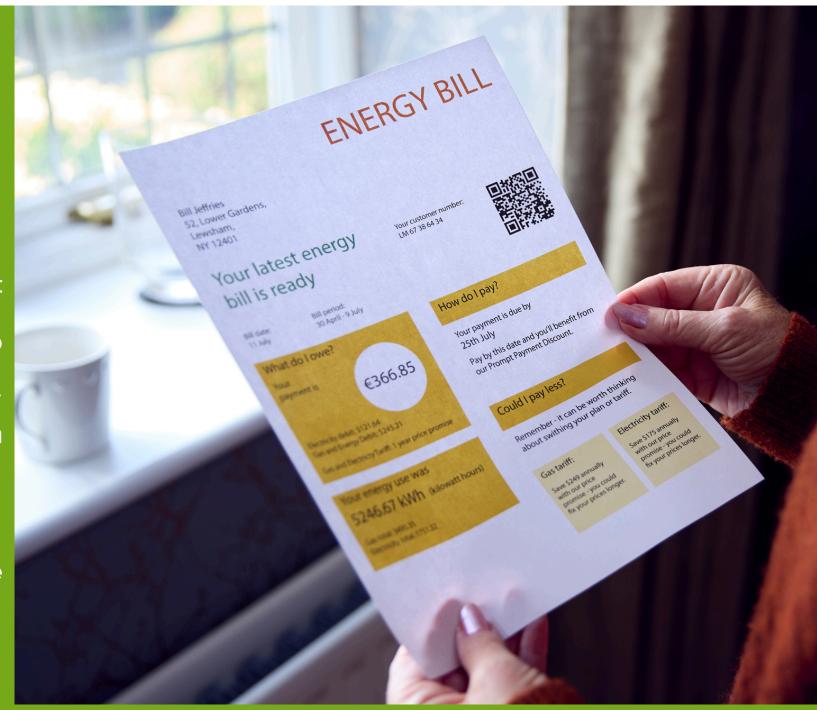
alternatively email: info@reapscotland.org.uk

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



PENSION AGE WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

The Winter Fuel Payment has been replaced by the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment for people in Scotland. It is paid once a year by Social Security Scotland and is designed to help people of State Pension age who live in Scotland pay their heating bills.

Payments in winter 2025

If you're eligible, you could get a payment of between £101.70 and £305.10.

How much you're paid will depend on:

- your age
- the age of anyone you live with who is also eligible for Pension Age Winter Heating Payment
- if you receive certain benefits from DWP as a joint award
- if you live in residential care

Eligibility

Social Security Scotland looks at your situation during a specific week to see if you're eligible: Monday 15 September to Sunday 21 September 2025. This is called the qualifying week.

To be eligible, you must have:

- been born on, or before, 21 September 1959
- lived in Scotland during the qualifying week

Most eligible people will be paid automatically. These payments will be made from November 2025.

Find out more at: www.mygov.scot/pension-age-winter-heatingpayment

WINTER HEATING PAYMENT

Some people in Scotland get a single payment during winter called Winter Heating Payment. This will be paid from December 2025 and will be £59.75.

How you get Winter Heating Payment

You will get Winter Heating Payment automatically if you get one of the benefits that make you eligible. Social Security Scotland uses your data to decide if you get Winter Heating Payment.

When you get it

You'll automatically get the single payment between December and February. This does not depend on how cold it is.

You'll get a letter or an email from Social Security Scotland telling you it's coming. It appears as 'WHP' on your bank statement, WHP stands for Winter Heating Payment.

Qualifying Benefits Include:

Pension Credit
Support for Mortgage Interest
you have a child under 5 or you get:

- a disability premium
- a pensioner premium
- a child disability premium

Universal Credit

you're employed or self-employed and get a child or young person disability element or:

you are not employed or self-employed and you have either:

- a limited capability for work element
- a limited capability for work element with a work related activity element
- a child or young person disability element
- a child under 5

Income Support or Income based Jobseeker's Allowance you have a child under 5 or you get:

- a disability premium
- a severe disability premium
- a pensioner premium
- the child disability premium

you have a child under 5 or you're in a support group or a work related activity group

Income Related Employment Support Allowance

or you get:

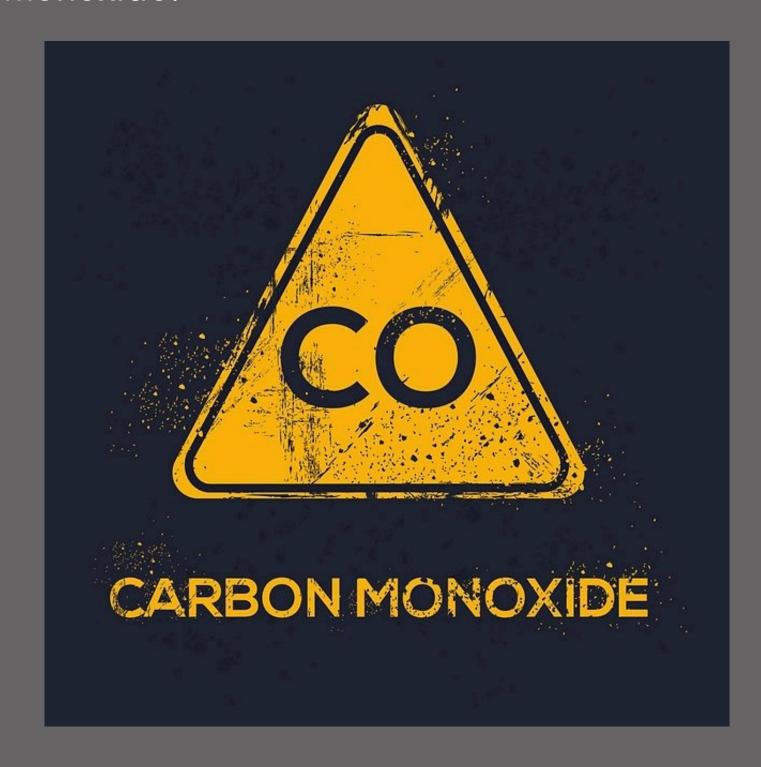
- a severe or enhanced disability premium
- a pensioner premium

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) SAFETY

What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)?

Carbon monoxide is gas that is very dangerous and can harm you.

You cannot see, smell or taste carbon monoxide.



Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- Headaches and dizziness
- Feeling or being sick
- Collapsing or loss of consciousness

The symptoms will only happen when at home, and people in the same house will experience similar symptoms around the same time.

Pets will also show symptoms.

How to stay safe from Carbon Monoxide

- Check the flame. Is it burning lazy and orange? It should be crisp and blue
- Have all your appliances checked every year by a Gas Safe Engineer
- Do not block air vents, these are essential to keep your appliances running safely
- Have a carbon monoxide alarm and test it monthly
- Get chimneys swept annually



What to do in an emergency

If you think there is carbon monoxide in your home, you are experiencing symptoms, or your carbon monoxide alarm sounds:

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



COMMUNITY ENERGY EFFICIENCY

REAP, in partnership with Moray CAN, are working with community groups and organisations to provide advice and support to improve energy efficiency in community buildings across Moray and help to achieve your net zero goals.



TRANSITION



Advice on renewable measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the installation of green energy.

Phase 02

ENERGY AUDIT

Information and support to access free energy audit services.



FUND

Assistance to access energy efficiency schemes; grants and loans.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Minimise energy waste and optimise energy consumption, save money on energy bills.





Contact us today at 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

THE OAKS THERAPEUTIC GARDEN

The team at The Oaks have continued to enjoy the weather as we transitioned into the Autumn months. Everyone involved has the fruits of their labour with bountiful harvests of fruit and vegetables throughout the season, which was hard earned with all the watering required throughout the particularly warm and dry Summer.

We were delighted to welcome new gardener Jenny to the team in October in time for our apple pressing session! Despite the event coinciding with the long-awaited rain it was a lot of fun and enjoyed by all who came along.

Weeding and mulching has been the main activity over the last couple of weeks and thoughts now turn to winter preparation and planning...



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).



THE GLEBE SOCIAL THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY GARDEN, KEITH

The Glebe is a new community garden in the heart of Keith. This beautiful natural space offers a peaceful environment to make new friends and engage in outdoor activities which support positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Over recent months the Glebe gardeners have been busy planning and collecting materials to prepare the space to welcome community participation. We are now ready for people to come and get growing, with a weekly session running on Tuesdays from 1pm-3:30pm, and another due to start on Wednesday mornings 10am-12:30pm early in 2026. Even though we are entering the Winter months there are many tasks to get involved in from designing the space for next year, making composting bays, setting up a water system, preparing growing spaces for next year, and taking care of the fruit trees. We'll host indoor training, crafts, and collaborative garden design sessions over the winter months when being outside is less accessible.

If you're interested in gardening, environmental conservation, or spending time in nature, we would love to hear from you. We'd love for local people to get involved, share skills and knowledge to make this a shared and cared-for space to enjoy and appreciate.







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.



LOCAL POWERHOUSES: HILL OF TOWIE & EDINTORE WIND FARMS

In the heart of Moray, two wind farms are quietly transforming the region's energy landscape. The Hill of Towie and Edintore wind farms not only generate clean electricity — they also fuel community development and showcase Scotland's leadership in renewable energy.

HILL OF TOWIE WIND FARM: A HIGHLAND BEACON

Located near Drummuir, the Hill of Towie Wind Farm has been operational since 2012, featuring 21 Siemens turbines with a total capacity of 48.3 MW. Developed and operated by RES, the site is a prominent contributor to Scotland's onshore wind portfolio.

COMMUNITY IMPACT: The wind farm supports a local community benefit fund, administered by REAP, which finances the capital expenditure of grassroots projects throughout its operational life.



This year the following groups and projects have received funding totalling over £100,000:

Keith TMSA Festival - Portable keyboard and amp.

Keith in Flower / Keith Community Council - Bandstand restoration

KCR – Upgrades to IT systems and recording equipment

Drummuir & Botriphnie Community Trust – Drummuir village playing field & Drummuir in Bloom

Islavale Football Club - Dug outs

Keith & District Silver Band – Instrument upgrade project

Mulben Picnic Committee - Grass cutting equipment and playing fields upkeep

Keith Show – Education area marquee

Drummuir 21 – Zig Zag Path

Boharm Public Hall - Updating utility room

EXPANSION PLANS: A proposed extension, Hill of Towie II, could add up to 16 more turbines, potentially doubling the site's capacity.



The Hill of Towie Community Fund is currently open for applications.

Closing Date: 30th April 2026

To apply for a grant for your project visit: reapscotland.org.uk/community-grants/

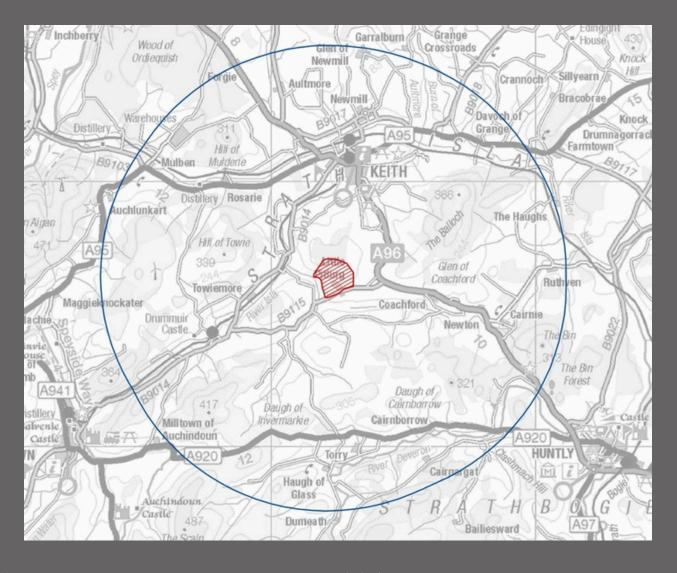
LOCAL POWERHOUSES: HILL OF TOWIE & EDINTORE WIND FARMS

In the heart of Moray, two wind farms are quietly transforming the region's energy landscape. The Hill of Towie and Edintore wind farms not only generate clean electricity — they also fuel community development and showcase Scotland's leadership in renewable energy.

EDINTORE WIND FARM: SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Just outside Keith, the Edintore Wind Farm came online in 2017 and consists of six Enercon E-92 turbines with a combined capacity of 14.1 MW. Despite its smaller scale, Edintore punches above its weight:

- Energy Output: It generates approximately 42,400 MWh annually, enough to power up to 12,000 two-person households.
- Community Benefit: With a fund of £5,000 per megawatt, Edintore contributes around £70,500 per year to local initiatives totalling an estimated £1.7 million over 25 years. Again this is for projects' capital expenditure
- Priority is given to groups operating in this primary area of benefit (see map below) or to projects benefiting people in that area, but consideration may be given to those just outside it.





WHY THESE PROJECTS MATTER:

Together, Hill of Towie and Edintore represent a powerful shift toward sustainable energy in Moray. They:

- Reduce regional carbon emissions
- Enhance energy independence
- Provide long-term financial support to local communities

Create jobs in construction, maintenance, and environmental management

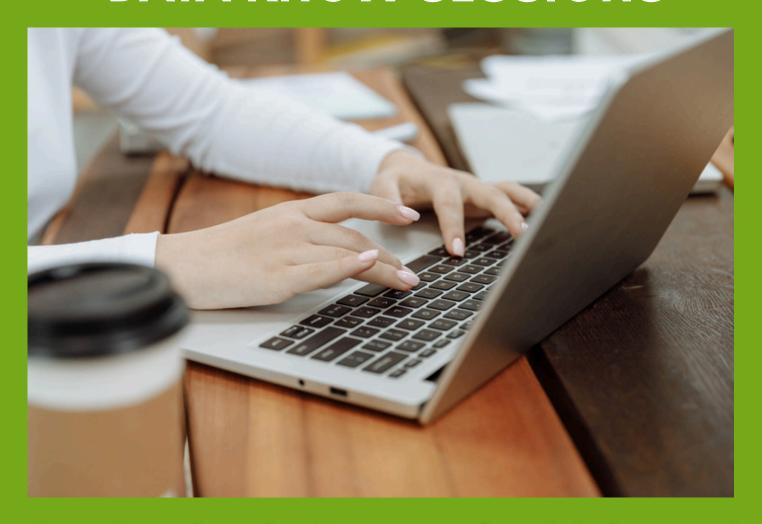


The Edintore Windfarm Community Benefit Fund is currently open for applications.

Closing Date: 10th February 2026
To apply for a grant for your project visit: reapscotland.org.uk/community-grants/

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 an 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.

Whether you're looking to stay connected, manage tasks online or simply learn something new, the 'Data Know' tech hub is here to help.

TOP 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



