



Drumchapel Citizens Advice July 2023 Newsletter

Welcome to our July Newsletter.

In this issue, we explore the cost of living social policy, Meter Reading Week and Drumchapel's 70th Birthday

Social Policy

We continue to see the impact of the cost of living, in particular, ongoing issues with energy costs. This quarter, we received further feedback on our social policy action in this area of crisis. Below is the note we received from CAS:

"We have recently given evidence to the Social Justice Social Security Committee at Holyrood on the impact of the increased cost of living on unpaid carers and those with disabilities, health conditions and impairments.

Thanks to the Social Policy feedback submitted by Drumchapel Citizens Advice Bureau, we were able to, for example, shine a light on the impact of the energy affordability crisis on these with additional energy needs due to health vulnerabilities. We were able to demonstrate that while temporary crisis support is necessary, there is an urgent need to recognise the underlying causes of the crisis and take a longer-term approach to solutions."

Read our contribution here on The Official Parliament:
<https://www.parliament.scot/api/sitecore/CustomMedia/OfficialReport?meetingId=15275>

Source: Citizens Advice Scotland

Case Study

The client is 63 years old and lives with her partner aged 62 and disabled son aged 33.

The client and partner both had to end their employment due to health conditions and caring responsibilities. The client is living with deteriorating health conditions and their partner is fulfilling the role as full time carer to both the client and their son. The household income is benefit only and due to health conditions of client and son, the family disclosed long periods of time spent at home and explained medical equipment is provided and required for both client and their son.

The client is concerned about the costs of energy and disclosed they spend around £120 per week topping up both electricity and gas. Whilst the household has received energy support fund payments and cost of living payments, they were unable to apply for the warm home discount due to the limited availability for application with their provider, who closed application to the scheme after 2 weeks.

The family are experiencing high fuel costs due to disabilities and required use of medical equipment at home, and further increased by costs of living crisis. The client and their household were assisted with full benefit checks, with contact to their provider for review of registration on priority register, pre-payment meter tariff update and costs. In addition, assistance with obtaining fuel vouchers from the local authority grant scheme. Further action included application to home heat Scotland grant fund.

The case was raised as social policy to highlight the impact of the increased cost of living on unpaid carers and those with disabilities, health conditions and impairments. Highlighting energy affordability crisis for those with additional energy needs due to health vulnerabilities.

Source: Citizens Advice Scotland



It's Meter Reading Week!

The Scottish government's rent freeze is ending and is being replaced by a temporary rent cap.

News has been announced in relation to a decrease in energy costs, however, it is recommended to provide accurate and updated meter readings to ensure costs calculated reflect your current usage to avoid any build-up of debit balances with providers.

Prices fall an **average 17%** as the price cap drops,.

If you have a smart prepayment meter you **NEEDN'T** do a meter reading. The smart meter should provide your supplier with accurate meter readings.

If you pay by direct debit you should submit a reading. With monthly direct debit, firms estimate your usage, and assign it to a certain period, so submitting a reading within a few days of the change reduces the risk of their 'estimating' going against you.

Source: Citizens Advice Scotland



Drumchapel's 70th Birthday

Drumchapel is set to celebrate its 70th anniversary with a series of events organized by the G15 Project. Despite challenges over the years, Drumchapel's community spirit has remained constant. The G15 Project, supporting young people for 25 years, plans to showcase the community's history through storyboards and hold a big festival in the summer.

Despite funding cuts, the project provides essential support, including mental health programs, sports activities, and one-on-one assistance, ensuring young people are included and heard. Drumchapel's 70th anniversary is an opportunity to unite the community and recognise its achievements.

Source: Citizens Advice Scotland