

# Winter

## WELLBEING

**A GUIDE  
TO HELP YOU  
STAY SAFE  
AND WELL  
IN WINTER**

# Winter

Winter can be a difficult season, particularly for older people. The cold weather can bring many challenges to our health and wellbeing. There are, however, lots of things you can do to get prepared for winter and to make sure you stay fit, safe and well.

This booklet offers information, along with a list of services from Dudley Council and other organisations. We want to support you during the colder months, especially people who may need extra help during winter.

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## Help with cost of living

Lots of people are worried about the rising cost of living.

If you are on a lower income and are struggling to pay bills, the council's Welfare Rights Team can help with a benefits check, to make sure you are not missing out on additional income.

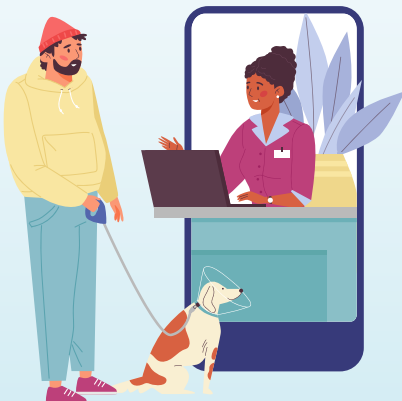


Call the **Welfare Rights Team** on **01384 815002** (Mon, Tue and Thu, 9.30am - 1pm and 2pm - 4.30pm).

If you're over the state pension age (66 years old) and on a low income, you may be entitled to Pension Credit which gives you extra money to help with living costs. Pension Credit is separate from your State Pension.

Call the **Pension Credit claims line** on **0800 991 234** or textphone on **0800 169 0133** (Mon - Fri, 8am - 6pm).

If you or someone you know is struggling and would like information and support with the cost of living, visit **[www.dudley.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/costofliving)**



If pets get ill you may struggle to pay vet bills. Speak to the PDSA (People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) to find out if you are eligible for funding towards your pet's healthcare costs.

Call the **PDSA** on **0121 422 2902**, or search 'PDSA eligibility criteria'.

## Warm Welcomes

Places across the borough offer people a warm welcome. Whatever the reason for visiting, you will be treated with dignity and respect.

Every time you visit a Warm Welcomes location, you will be greeted by friendly staff and volunteers, offered free hot drinks and a warm and safe space.

Find your nearest Warm Welcomes site

[www.dudleycvs.org.uk/warm-welcomes](http://www.dudleycvs.org.uk/warm-welcomes)

If you need help to find your local venue, speak to a member of the Dudley CVS team on **01384 573381** or email [info@dudleycvs.org.uk](mailto:info@dudleycvs.org.uk)

## Keep warm at home

You may be worried about the cost of heating your home. However, assistance is available.

The council's **Dudley Energy Advice Line (DEAL)** helps people stay warm and well at home, save money and be more energy efficient. Friendly staff will:

- Provide help in a crisis, which may include temporary heating, fuel vouchers, supermarket vouchers, heated blankets, etc.
- Assist with understanding your energy use, bills, tariffs and switching options. If you are eligible, sign you up to your supplier's Priority Service Register. Support people in complaint processes with energy companies.



- Give you practical support in finding solutions for fuel debt. Support you to apply for grants and access funding for insulation measures and replacement heating systems.
- Discuss energy-efficiency advice for your home and information on how to reduce condensation.

Contact DEAL on **01384 817086**

(Mon - Thu 9am - 5pm, Fri 9am - 4.30pm).

## Eating well on a budget

Planning meals and buying fruits and vegetables that are in season can reduce food costs. You can also swap meat and fish with cheaper protein alternatives such as beans and lentils and freeze leftovers, so food doesn't go to waste.

For recipe ideas visit **[www.lets-get.com/recipes](http://www.lets-get.com/recipes)**

If you are struggling to afford food and other basic items, you can be referred to the Black Country Food Bank which helps individuals and families in crisis. They provide emergency food and toiletry parcels.

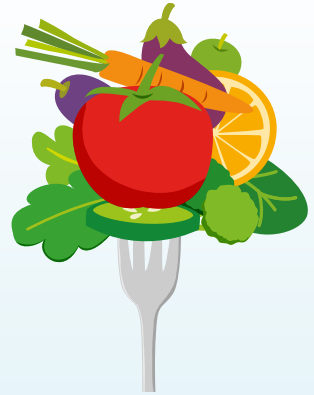
Call them on **01384 671250**

(Mon - Fri, 9am - 1pm), or visit

**[www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk](http://www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk)**

You can donate non-perishable food and toiletries, at the food bank on Albion Street, Brierley Hill DY5 3EE on Mon - Fri, 9am - 2pm.

Donations are also accepted at their food banks and donation points across the Black Country.



# Looking after your health

## Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.

The government advises that adults and children over four years old take 10 micrograms of vitamin D a day during autumn and winter. This is because you may not make enough vitamin D from limited sunlight in the UK between October and April.



If you are not sure about safely taking a vitamin D supplement, please talk to your doctor. For more details on vitamin D, including which foods contain it, go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) and search 'vitamin D'.



## Your NHS

It's important to use the NHS if you become unwell. You can get help from:

- **A pharmacy** - pharmacists can advise on minor illnesses and tell you if you need to see a doctor.
- **Your GP** - speak to a doctor on the telephone or online, or ask for an appointment.
- **NHS 111** - go to [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or call **111** if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do.
- **Call 999** - in an emergency.

If you are receiving Universal Credit or on a low income, you may be able to claim travel costs for hospital appointments.

Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) and search 'help with health costs'.

## ***Vaccinations***

Flu and Covid-19 can be serious, especially for those with medical conditions and pregnant women.



People aged from two years old upwards could be entitled to a free flu vaccine and people of all ages could be eligible for a free Covid-19 vaccine.

Visit **www.nhs.uk** and search ‘flu vaccine’ and ‘Covid-19 vaccine’ to find out if you should have a vaccine and what to do.

If you are unsure, those offering the vaccine will be happy to answer queries and explain anything that isn’t clear.

By getting vaccinated you can help reduce the spread of illness and risk to yourself and loved ones.

## ***Manage your long-term health conditions***



Self-Management Programmes are courses for adults who live and work in Dudley borough and have a long-term health condition, such as type 2 diabetes, cancer and for adults with a caring responsibility.

Courses can help you feel confident to manage your health condition, such as through goal setting, nutrition, exercise, relaxation techniques, and more.

They are free and run for two-and-a-half hours for six weeks, as a group, or online.

Call **07976 637404** and leave a message with your name and number, or email **smp@dudleycabx.org**



## ***Improve your mood and cope with stress***

Changes in our lives can have a big impact on our mental health and wellbeing. There are different ways to manage stress and help you feel more positive.

It helps to write down what is worrying you. Try breathing exercises and focusing the mind to help you relax.

Visit **[www.lets-get.com/road-to-wellbeing](http://www.lets-get.com/road-to-wellbeing)**

You may also want to try the 'Five ways to wellbeing'.

- Be physically active
- Connect with other people
- Give to others
- Learn new skills
- Take notice



Find out more at **[www.lets-get.com/five-ways-wellbeing](http://www.lets-get.com/five-ways-wellbeing)**

## ***Preventing falls***

You can improve your strength, balance and flexibility by doing muscle strengthening exercises at least two days each week. Try yoga, T'ai Chi, pilates or strength and balance classes.

You should also try to do 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity each week (e.g. 30 minutes of exercise five times each week). Moderate intensity level is if you can still talk, but not sing.

For more information on how to build movement into everyday life, visit **[www.lets-get.com](http://www.lets-get.com)** and search for 'lets get moving'.

If you're after advice and practical help about avoiding falls, improving your strength and balance, or need help to recover from a fall, contact Dudley Falls Prevention Service.

Call **0300 555 0055** and select **option 3** (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm), or email **[fallsspa@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:fallsspa@dudley.gov.uk)**



## Caring for others

If you care for someone else, such as a family member, friend or neighbour, it's important that you also look after your own health and wellbeing. Dudley Carers Hub and Wellbeing Service offers free practical help, information and advice to unpaid carers of all ages.

Call Dudley Carers Hub on **01384 818723** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm), email **dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk** or visit **www.dudley.gov.uk/carers**



## Staying active and involved

There are activities and groups to get involved in, even during the winter months.

### *Dudley Community Information Directory*

The Dudley Community Information Directory tells you what's happening in your local area. The online directory provides information on clubs, groups,

events, financial and housing support, and much more.

Groups and organisations are also encouraged to add their information to the website. Visit **www.dudleyci.co.uk**



### *Community development workers*

Do you have an idea to improve your local area, and would like to develop this further? If so, get in touch with the council's community development workers.

The team will explore your idea with you and connect you to other local people, groups, resources and support to help bring it to life.

Visit **www.dudley.gov.uk/cdw** or email **healthycommunities@dudley.gov.uk**

## ***Volunteering***

Volunteering can be rewarding for you as well as the people or organisations you help. It can help you gain new skills, make new friends and improve your mental and physical health and wellbeing.

If you would like to support others to make healthier choices and improve their health and wellbeing, email **publichealthvolunteers@dudley.gov.uk** or call **01384 816256**. For other local volunteering opportunities search 'volunteer' at **www.dudleyci.co.uk**

## ***Community learning***

The council's Adult and Community Learning Service provides learning opportunities for adults and families across Dudley borough. Courses include English and maths, computers, arts and crafts and health and wellbeing. They provide the opportunity to learn a new skill, meet people, gain a qualification, or further your career.

Call Adult and Community Learning on **01384 818143**, or visit **www.dudley.gov.uk/adultlearning**

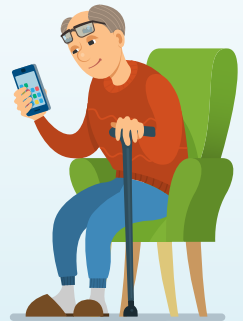


## ***Staying connected with family and friends***

Dudley Council's Pleased to Meet You service can help you get out and about and meet with others. Call our helpline for a friendly chat and find out what's going on in your area.

The service can also help arrange deliveries of groceries or medicines to your home and a host of other support to keep you independent, happy and connected with others.

Call Pleased to Meet You on **01384 812761** (Mon - Fri 9am - 4pm) or visit **www.dudley.gov.uk/ptmy**



# Keeping safe and secure at home

## *Safety and security*

Would you like to improve your home security?



The council's Living Well, Feeling Safe service offers free home safety and security advice and equipment, such as door chains and window locks - all provided from a home visit. This can also include a fire risk check.

To arrange a living well, feeling safe assessment, call **01384 817743** (Mon - Fri, 8.30am - 4.30pm) or visit **[www.dudley.gov.uk/lwfs](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/lwfs)**

You can also find out about aids and equipment to make living at home easier for a range of health conditions, mobility issues and illnesses at **<https://dudley.livingmadeeasy.org.uk>**

## *Protecting yourself from scams*

Make sure that you stay one step ahead of scammers. Here are our top tips to spot a scam.

- Ask yourself - is it too good to be true?
- Never disclose security details, such as your PIN or full banking password
- Don't assume an email, text or phone call is genuine
- Don't be rushed - a genuine organisation won't mind waiting
- Listen to your instincts - you know if something doesn't feel right
- Stay in control - don't panic and make a decision you'll regret

If you are concerned about scams call the Scams Team **01384 818871** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)

or visit **[www.dudley.gov.uk/scams](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/scams)**

## Keeping safe and connected

Dudley Telecare Service offers support to people, of all ages, helping them to stay living safely and independently, in their own homes.

Telecare assistive technology can be installed in the home, linked to either a loved one, a carer, or to the telecare monitoring centre.

Call handlers are available all day to take calls from people, or to respond to an alarm being triggered in the property.

Call Dudley Telecare Service on **0300 555 2040** (open 24-hours a day) or visit **[www.dudley.gov.uk/telecare](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/telecare)**

## What to do in bad weather

It makes sense to be prepared for snowy or icy weather, so that if we can't get out we are ready for it! Here are a few tips:

- Keep a food cupboard stocked up with long-life, tinned and frozen essentials, along with stocks of medication
- Be sure that your footwear is well fitted and has a good grip to prevent the risk of trips and falls
- Let someone know if you need to go out during bad weather, or take someone with you
- Ask someone you trust who can help with shopping and medication
- Make sure you order repeat prescriptions well before you run out, or before your pharmacy or GP practice closes for holidays
- Keep a handy list of your emergency contacts, including your utility providers, GP, any health conditions you may have and a list of things to pack in an emergency grab bag
- Ensure batteries for home medical equipment are regularly checked, replaced or charged, to guarantee they are ready for use at all times. Keep spare batteries handy for emergencies, such as a prolonged power cut
- Sign up to Met Office Weather Warnings at **[www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)**

To find out more visit

**[www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/emergencies](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/emergencies)**

## Helpful contacts

### Local information

#### **Dudley Community Information Directory**

Online information for local groups, activities and events.

**[www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk)**

#### **Dudley Council Plus**

A single point of contact for any council service.

Tel: **0300 555 2345** (Mon - Fri 8.30am - 5pm)

Email: **[dudleycouncilplus@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:dudleycouncilplus@dudley.gov.uk)**

### Financial advice and support

#### **Black Country Food Bank**

Helps people in crisis with emergency food and toiletries.

Tel: **01384 671250** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 2pm)

**[www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk](http://www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk)**

Email: **[admin@blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:admin@blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk)**

#### **Castle & Crystal Credit Union**

Affordable loans and secure savings for local people.

Tel: **01384 815771** (Mon - Fri, 9.30am - 3.30pm)

**[www.castleandcrystal.co.uk](http://www.castleandcrystal.co.uk)**

## **Citizens Advice Dudley & Wolverhampton**

### **Citizens Advice**

Free, impartial, independent and confidential information and advice on issues, such as benefits, debt, employment, housing, energy advice and more.

Tel: **0808 278 7919** (Mon, Tue & Thu 9.30am - 3.30pm)

Email: **advice@dudleycabx.org**

**www.citizensadvisedudleyandwolverhampton.org**

### **Debt**

Tel: **0808 278 7919** (Mon, Tue & Thu 9.30am - 3.30pm) or

Text: **07799 070595** (Mon - Fri 9.30am - 3.30pm)

### **Universal Credit Help to Claim Service**

Tel: **08001 448444** (Mon - Fri 8am - 6pm)

### **Citizens Advice specialist services**

This includes help with:

- Legal housing representation
- Advice for people with a long-term health condition
- Welfare benefits advice to people affected by cancer, in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support.

Tel: **01902 932170** (Mon - Fri 8.30am - 4.30pm)

Email: **referral.support@dudleycabx.org**

### **Dudley Council - cost of living support advice and information**

Support for people struggling with their finances.

**www.dudley.gov.uk/costofliving**

### **Dudley Council - Dudley Energy Advice Line**

Get energy advice and support during a crisis.

Tel: **01384 817086** (Mon - Thu 9am - 5pm, Fri 9am - 4.30pm)

### **Dudley Council - Welfare Rights Team**

Get a benefits check, advice and information.

Tel: **01384 815002** (Mon, Tues and Thurs 9.30am - 1pm and 2pm - 4.30pm)

### **PDSA**

If you are struggling with vet bills you may be eligible for support from the PDSA.

Tel: **0121 422 2902**

**[www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-help-and-advice/eligibility](http://www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-help-and-advice/eligibility)**

### **Pension Credit claim line**

Tel: **0800 991 234** or textphone on **0800 169 0133**  
(Mon - Fri 8am - 6pm)

## Health and wellbeing

### **Age UK**

How to stay well this winter - information for older people

**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)** and search for 'keeping well this winter'

Tel: **0800 678 1602** (8am - 7pm, 365 days a year)

### **Atlantic Recovery Centre**

Get information and advice about drugs and alcohol.

Tel: **01384 426 120**

**[www.changegrowlive.org/atlantic-recovery-centre-dudley](http://www.changegrowlive.org/atlantic-recovery-centre-dudley)**

### **Cranstoun**

Services supporting adults and young people with housing, substance misuse, domestic abuse and those in contact with the criminal justice system.

**[www.cranstoun.org/help-and-advice](http://www.cranstoun.org/help-and-advice)**



## Healthy Hubs

Indoor and outdoor exercise for all ages and abilities, at Netherton Park, Mary Stevens Park, Silver Jubilee Park and Huntingtree Park.

**[www.lets-get.com](http://www.lets-get.com)**

## Libraries

There are 13 library locations across Dudley borough, plus Dudley Archives.

Dudley Library tel: **01384 815560**

Dudley Archives tel: **01384 812770**

**[www.better.org.uk/library/dudley](http://www.better.org.uk/library/dudley)**

## Home Library Service

Join the Home Library Service.

Tel: **01384 812870** (Mon - Fri 8.30am - 4.30pm)

Email: **[Dudley.hls@gll.org](mailto:Dudley.hls@gll.org)**

**[www.better.org.uk/library/dudley](http://www.better.org.uk/library/dudley)**

## Just Straight Talk - Digi Dudley project

Improve your digital skills and connect with people, find information and shop and bank online.

Call or text: **07726 175 532**

or email: **[jim2022jst@gmail.com](mailto:jim2022jst@gmail.com)**

## Leisure centres

Fitness classes, swimming and gym at Dudley (Duncan Edwards), Halesowen and Stourbridge (Crystal).

**[www.dbleisure.co.uk](http://www.dbleisure.co.uk)**

## Let's Get Healthy Dudley

Information and resources on healthier lifestyles and looking after your health and wellbeing.

**[www.lets-get.com](http://www.lets-get.com)**

### **Self Management Programme**

A free six-week course for adults with a long-term health condition, or adults who have a caring responsibility.

Tel: **07976 637404** or email: **smp@dudleycabx.org**

### **The Beacon Centre - Befriending Service**

For people aged 65 years or older. Receive regular friendly chats and meetings with a volunteer.

Tel: **01902 880111** (Mon - Fri 9am - 3pm)

Email **referrals@beaconvision.org**

### **The Silver Line**

A national confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24-hours a day, every day of the year. Telephone free on **0800 470 80 90**

**www.thesilverline.org.uk**

### **Dudley Council - Support Services**

#### **Dudley Council - Adult Social Care**

Support for adults who require social care in Dudley borough.

Tel: **0300 555 0055** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)

Emergencies tel: **0300 555 8574** (5pm - 9am weekdays and 24-hours a day during weekends and public holidays)

**www.dudley.gov.uk** and search for 'Dudley Adults Portal'

#### **Dudley Council - Dudley Carers Hub**

Unpaid carers can call the Dudley Carers Hub helpline for information, advice and guidance.

Tel: **01384 818723** (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm)

Email: **dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk**

**www.dudley.gov.uk/carers**

### **Dudley Council - Dudley Falls Prevention**

Falls Advisors will help you avoid falls, maintain your strength and balance and regain your mobility, confidence and independence.

Tel: **01384 814459** (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm)

Email: **fallsspa@dudley.gov.uk**

### **Dudley Council - Fix a Home**

List of approved trades people to carry out maintenance work in your home, at a fair price.

**www.dudley.gov.uk** and search for 'approved traders'

### **Dudley Council - Living Well Feeling Safe**

Free home safety and security advice, equipment and fire risk checks.

Tel: **01384 817743** (Mon - Fri 8.30am - 4.30pm)

Email: **livewellfeelsafe@dudley.gov.uk**

**www.dudley.gov.uk/lwfs**

### **Dudley Council - Pleased to Meet You**

For people who may be feeling lonely or isolated, who would like support with getting out and about.

Tel: **01384 812761** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 4pm)

**www.dudley.gov.uk/ptmy**

### **Dudley Council - housing and homelessness**

Advice and support on housing options, for people who are homeless, to those at risk of losing their home.

Telephone emergency housing team: **0300 555 2345**

**www.dudley.gov.uk** and search for 'homelessness'

## **Dudley Council - Scams Unit Trading Standards**

Advice on how to avoid scams and get free call blockers to prevent scam calls to your landline number.

Tel: **01384 818871** (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm)

**[www.dudley.gov.uk/scams](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/scams)**

## Mental health services

### **Black Country Healthcare Foundation Trust**

Free 24/7 mental health support line for Black Country residents.

Tel: **0800 008 6516** or text: **07860 025281**

### **Dudley Talking Therapy Service**

If you are registered with a Dudley borough GP and are suffering from anxiety or depression.

**[www.dihc.nhs.uk/talking-therapy](http://www.dihc.nhs.uk/talking-therapy)**

### **Reach Out Dudley**

A suicide prevention website offering support to people who are having thoughts of suicide and people who are bereaved by suicide.

**[www.reachoutdudley.co.uk](http://www.reachoutdudley.co.uk)**