

Warm Homes Campaign gets backing from local MPs

City MPs Mark Lancaster and Iain Stewart are backing a campaign for free heating help to those who can least afford their energy bills

Mark Lancaster is backing an awareness push from Consumer Focus, Citizens Advice, Age UK and National Children's Bureau on free heating help available for the poorest households. Mark Lancaster is urging people in Milton Keynes worried about their energy bills to find out if they are eligible for free heating and insulation improvements from Warm Front.

The call comes as new research from Consumer Focus shows that around six million households across England plan to cut back on heating their home this winter due to worries about affording their energy bills.¹ around 950,000 of these households are in the East of England.

Yet although so many people are worried and are cutting back, millions of pounds worth of help is being left unclaimed under Warm Front, the Government's scheme to help the poorest households in England to make their homes warmer and cut their energy bills.

Mark Lancaster, MP for Milton Keynes North, said: 'With the great news that the eligibility criteria is expanding for Warm Front, it is now a good time to see whether you are eligible to qualify for home improvements. Changes such as a new boiler to replace old and ineffective ones, as well as new insulation could really help keep us warm this winter.'

Iain Stewart, MP for Milton Keynes South, added: 'the Warm Front scheme is designed to give help to those in the most need of support when the cold weather draws in. No one should sit in a cold home because they are worried about energy costs, so I would encourage anyone who is concerned to check their eligibility before winter really sets in'

As the eligibility criteria for help under the Warm Front scheme was widened from 12 September, even if someone has been turned down before they may be able to get help this year. The heating and insulation improvements Warm Front offers could help thousands of households to stay warm and well and save up to Â£600 off their energy bills each year.

Jane Palmer from Age UK Milton Keynes added; 'Older people every winter may have to make the decision whether to heat their homes or eat. I hope that by widening the criteria for applicants and helping older people to access this scheme there will be fewer older people living in fuel poverty this winter.'

People can find out if they can get free help from Warm Front by calling 0800 316 2805 or by visiting their local Citizens Advice Bureau or Age UK. Further information and an online application form are also available on www.direct.gov.uk