

**QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC**

**Question submitted by:** Mr Kelly

**To the Cabinet Member or Chair for:** The Leader

**Question (to be no longer than 50 words):**

Cllr Evans do you support and agree with the Chancellor & the Prime Minister in removing the £300 Winter Fuel Allowance that will have a detrimental effect on thousands of pensioners living in Plymouth?

**Response:** (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs)

We are committed to ensuring that the residents of Plymouth of pension age are economically stable and able to heat their homes effectively during the Winter.

But we know that people are missing out on benefits that they could be accessing to support them.

To this end we are supporting the Government's campaign to ensure that everybody who is eligible gets support to access Pension Credit. This will also automatically passport them to receive the Winter Fuel Payment. The Winter Fuel Payment is worth £300 for households with someone aged 80 or over. Households with someone aged 66-79 will receive £200.

They will also be eligible for Household Support Fund, extended by the current government to support vulnerable households for the cost of essentials this winter.

We are working with the Citizens Advice Plymouth to contact people we know could be eligible for Pension Credit to offer advice and support on benefits, grants, and financial management. Alongside working with our partners in the Voluntary and Community Sector we are also offering a programme of outreach drop-ins where advisors are based in local community spaces. The timetable is available on our website and Council officers and our partners will be helping to promote it.

If you get Pension Credit you can also get other help, such as:

- [Housing Benefit](#) if you rent the property you live in
- [Winter Fuel Payment](#)
- [Support for Mortgage Interest](#) if you own the property you live in
- a [Council Tax discount](#)
- a [free TV licence](#) if you're aged 75 or over
- help with [NHS dental treatment, glasses and transport costs](#) for hospital appointments, if you get a certain type of Pension Credit
- help with your heating costs through the [Warm Home Discount Scheme](#)
- a discount on the [Royal Mail redirection service](#) if you're moving house
- Free bus travel [Bus pass | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

It is also worth noting that the new full state pension has risen this year by over £900, an increase of 8.5%, and is expected to rise again by £460 a year from April 2025. This increase is pegged to wages, which have gone up by 4%. Under the "triple lock" arrangement, the state pension goes up each year by either 2.5%, inflation, or earnings growth - whichever is the highest figure. Created in 2010, it was designed to ensure the value of the state pension was not overtaken by the increase in the cost of living or the incomes of working people. The Government has committed to keeping this until the end of the current Parliament.

We want to everybody to help get the word out. We would encourage friends and families to help share the message and encourage pensioners do a simple online check to see if they are eligible. There is updated information on the Council website, we are sharing messages on social media and providing information leaflets with our staff and centres including libraries and wellbeing hubs.

Finally we are also coordinating an Ageing Well Advice and Information Fair, promoting all types of services and opportunities that support ageing well across the city, including advice and support regarding benefits on the afternoon of October 4<sup>th</sup> at the Memory Matters Hub in the City Centre.