

**Forward**

**Midlothian**

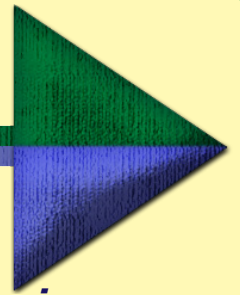
**Disabled People**

[www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk)

**Forward**

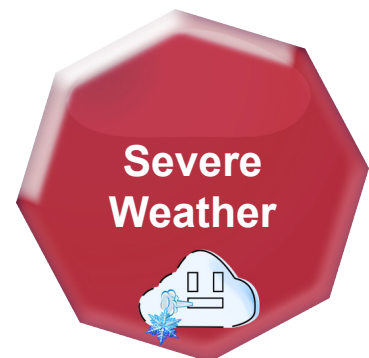
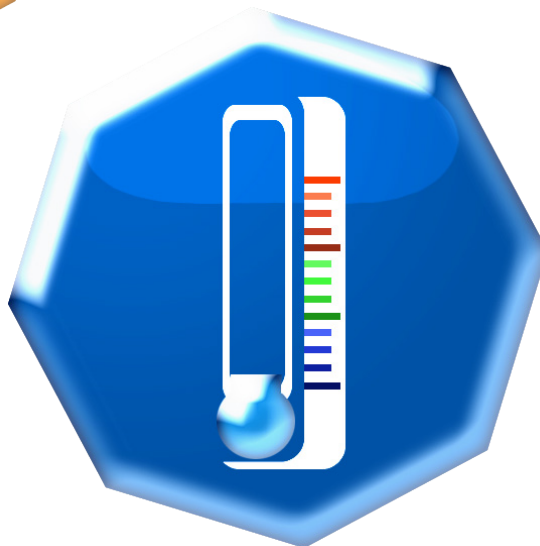
**Mid**

**Equality - Diversity - Inclusion**



## **Winter Ready in Midlothian 2019**

This special newsletter contains some good advice and tips to prepare us for this winter.



## Preparing for Winter

Getting ready for winter at home is easy. Just make a household plan and collect together the items for an emergency kit that may be essential for you and your family.

It is time to think about winter-proofing your home. Do you know what action to take if a water pipe bursts? Do you know where your stop valve is and how to turn it off? Do you know how to turn your electricity supply off at the mains?

If cold weather is forecast, and during a cold snap, keep your heating on at a low temperature to help prevent pipes from freezing.

Making your home energy efficient will make it cheaper and quicker to heat during cold weather. For further information, please call the Scottish Government's Home Energy Scotland Helpline on ☎ 0800 512 012.



Remember to check the terms of your household insurance policies to find out what cover you have for risks such as flood or storm damage or for the costs of temporary accommodation if your home is not habitable. Consider taking out insurance if you don't currently have any.

It is also important to not only prepare your home, but to prepare your body for winter! Preventative measures can be taken to avoid colds and flu. People aged over 65 years or those who have a medical condition can check with their local medical practice to get advice on a seasonal flu vaccination.

Keep a supply of remedies at home. Paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin all help to reduce raised temperatures and relieve the aches and pains associated with coughs, colds and flu. Many cold and flu remedies already contain paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin. Using several products together can be very dangerous and can lead to an overdose. Products are labelled to indicate their contents, so always check before using them. If you do have a cough, cold or flu, drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic liquids to replace the fluids lost after sweating. Keep warm and rest as much as you can.

It is best to periodically check that the medicines in your home are up-to-date. This is why it is important to keep them in their original containers. Always follow the instructions on the box or label. If you are unsure about taking any medicines, consult with your doctor or pharmacist first. To combat the cold, layers of thin clothing are far more effective than one thick layer. Choose clothes made of wool, cotton or fleecy synthetic fibres. Remember to wear a hat when outdoors and ensure you wear footwear with a good grip.

During the holiday season, most GP practices will be closed on the 25th and 26th December and 1st and 2nd January.

Most pharmacies will also be closed during the holidays. Please refer to the NHS24 website, [www.nhs24.com/findlocal/](http://www.nhs24.com/findlocal/) for opening times.

Remember to order and collect any repeat prescriptions you may require in sufficient time prior to the holidays. Hospital Accident and Emergency services (A&E) are for emergency and urgent situations only. A&E is not an alternative to G.P.s. Please don't go to A&E if your doctor can't see you immediately or when your surgery is closed.

## Winter in the Community

In recent years severe winter weather struck quickly leaving some people vulnerable. A little planning now can help keep people warm and safe this winter.

Identify family or neighbours who may need an extra helping hand if severe weather strikes. Have their 'phone numbers to hand, and offer to help with grocery shopping or other essential tasks.

Equally if you think you may feel isolated or alone during a patch of bad weather, equip yourself with a few useful local contact numbers - a neighbour who can help, the local minister or your local community council.

Be a good neighbour and clear paths of ice and snow during cold weather if you are able to do so. A helping hand with this can make all the difference for people who may be unable to clear their own paths or who need to use local paths to access services.

Communities throughout the country are being urged to follow Scottish Water's winter code - a set of simple steps you can take to protect your pipes. Be prepared and heat, insulate and protect your home. Download the Scottish Water winter poster to display in your local community to help people know where to find more winter information and advice.

Your community can get ready for winter by agreeing what you, your neighbours and your colleagues can do on your own and collectively to minimise the effects of winter weather where you live and work.

You can volunteer to help others during winter by contacting Volunteer Midlothian. ☎ 0131 660 1216. Midlothian Council will do all they can to keep essential services running during periods of severe weather. However, severe weather may cause some changes to routine local services, such as the temporary closure of schools, changes to the times of refuse collections and a greater emphasis on gritting and route clearance. Information about local services is kept up to date on Midlothian Council's website, so it's important to check with them for the latest information and advice during severe weather.

Although not exhaustive, here is a list of items you may wish to consider storing in case of bad weather when you may not be able to leave your home. It is also worth considering supplies you may need in case of a power cut:

- ☺ Canned/no-cook food (bread, crackers, dried fruits);
- ☺ Drinking water;
- ☺ Non-electric can opener;
- ☺ Prescription drugs and other medicine;
- ☺ First-aid kit;
- ☺ Rock-salt to melt ice on walkways;
- ☺ Flashlight and extra batteries;
- ☺ Battery-powered radio or wind up radio;
- ☺ Fully charged mobile phone;
- ☺ Any pet food required;
- ☺ Long life or powdered milk;
- ☺ Books and magazines;
- ☺ Crosswords and puzzles;
- ☺ Emergency contact list
- ☺ Battery-powered lamps or lanterns (To prevent the risk of fire, avoid using candles);
- ☺ Blankets and extra clothes should your heating not work;
- ☺ Juice and enhanced waters in boxes and plastic bottles;
- ☺ Supply of cat litter or bag of sand to add traction on walkways;



**CLEARING A PATH  
FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
CLEARS THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!**  
Inspired by a student with disabilities  
2002 Michael F. Giangrecco

## Keeping Affordably Warm this Winter

Energy prices keep rising and many people will struggle this winter living in a cold home or will get into fuel debt.

There is help out there to support people who are struggling to keep their home warm. To identify if someone needs help ask these four key questions:

- ❖ Is their home cold?
- ❖ Is their home damp?
- ❖ Is their home draughty?
- ❖ Are they concerned about affording energy in their home?
- ❖ If the answer is 'yes' to any of these, what next?

Support is available through:

1) the Scottish Government's Energy Assistance Package. Just ring the Energy Saving Scotland advice centre on ☎ 0800 512 012 for more information.

2) Changeworks' Warm and Well Midlothian provide support to people who struggle with heating costs. Warm and Well supports anyone in Midlothian whose health may be affected by living in a cold, damp or draughty home. Older people, young families and people with health difficulties are particularly vulnerable, so we work with health and social work professionals, amongst others. We provide tailored advice on affordable warmth through home visits, talks and events. VOCAL are offering free 45 minute appointment within the carers centre, through Changeworks for Energy Advice Surgeries once a month. Carers can book by email on [Midlothian@vocal.org.uk](mailto:Midlothian@vocal.org.uk) or on ☎ 0131 663 6869.

3) The Scottish Government says: "A person is living in fuel poverty if, to heat their home to a satisfactory standard, they need to spend more than 10 per cent of their household income on fuel."

If you would like to contact one of their advisors - email: [ask@changeworks.org.uk](mailto:ask@changeworks.org.uk)  
[www.changeworks.org.uk/projects/warm-and-well-midlothian](http://www.changeworks.org.uk/projects/warm-and-well-midlothian)



## Warm Home Discount Scheme

For winter 2019 to 2020, you could get £133 off your electricity bill through the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The money isn't paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, usually between September and March.

The discount won't affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment.

### Pre-pay or pay-as-you-go meters

You can also qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, eg a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

### Eligibility

You qualify for the discount if on 12 July 2019 all of the following apply:

Your electricity supplier was part of the scheme





Your name (or your partner's) was on the bill

You were getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit as well)

- \* Have a child living with you who was born on or after 01 April 2008;
- \* Receive Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance;
- \* Receive Disability Living Allowance or you receive Disability Living Allowance on behalf of a child living with you;
- \* Receive War Disablement Pension;
- \* Receive Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit;
- \* Receive an additional payment (such as the work-related activity group or support; component of Employment and Support Allowance) because of sickness or disability.

### **Check with your supplier to see if you're eligible and how to apply.**

Electricity suppliers. The following suppliers are part of the scheme:

- Atlantic ☎ 0800 300 111
- British Gas ☎ 0800 072 8625 [www.britishgas.co.uk/energy/energy-saving/warm-home-discount.html](http://www.britishgas.co.uk/energy/energy-saving/warm-home-discount.html)
- Co-operative energy ☎ 0800 954 0693 [www.cooperativeenergy.coop/warm-home-discount-eligibility/](http://www.cooperativeenergy.coop/warm-home-discount-eligibility/) have an online tool to check eligibility.
- EDF Energy ☎ 0800 072 8625 [www.edfenergy.com/for-home/help-support/warm-home-discount](http://www.edfenergy.com/for-home/help-support/warm-home-discount)
- E.ON ☎ 0843 506 9877 [www.eonenergy.com/for-your-home/saving-energy/need-little-extra-help/warm-home-discount/warm-home-discount-form](http://www.eonenergy.com/for-your-home/saving-energy/need-little-extra-help/warm-home-discount/warm-home-discount-form)
- Equipower (Ebico) ☎ 0800 458 7689
- Equigas (Ebico) ☎ 0800 458 7689
- First Utility: Online only [firstutilitywarmhomediscount.com/](http://firstutilitywarmhomediscount.com/)
- Manweb - see Scottish Power ☎ 0800 027 0072
- M&S Energy ☎ 0800 294 3263
- Npower ☎ 0808 172 6999 [https://customerservices.npower.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/490](https://customerservices.npower.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/490)
- OVO: Only online [ovowarmhomediscount.com/](http://ovowarmhomediscount.com/)
- Sainsbury's Energy - see British Gas
- Scottish Gas - see British Gas
- Scottish Hydro: ☎ 0800 300 111
- Scottish Power: ☎ 0800 027 0072 [www.scottishpower.co.uk/customer-services/support/warm-home-discount/](http://www.scottishpower.co.uk/customer-services/support/warm-home-discount/)
- Southern Electric: ☎ 0800 300 111
- SSE: ☎ 0800 300 111 [www.sse.co.uk/help/accessibility/warm-home-discount#item1](http://www.sse.co.uk/help/accessibility/warm-home-discount#item1)
- SWALEC: ☎ 0800 300 111
- Utilita: ☎ 03452 072 000
- Utility Warehouse: Online only [www.utilitywarehouse.co.uk/clubhouse/warmhome](http://www.utilitywarehouse.co.uk/clubhouse/warmhome)

### **How to claim**

If you qualify for the discount, you'll get a letter this autumn or winter telling you either:

- You don't have to apply - you'll get the discount automatically
- To apply by 29 January 2020 - the letter will tell you why and how

You'll receive your letter by 24 December at the latest.



## Severe Weather

SP Energy Networks manage the electricity network in Midlothian so if you have a power cut it's there engineers who attend to make repairs and they want to make sure that in the unusual event of a power cut that you are well supported.

They can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on either our Freephone number ☎ 0800 0929290 or on the new single emergency number of ☎ 105. This new number is free from all landlines and mobiles and will connect you to the correct network operator for your property, no matter who you pay your bills to.

If your electricity goes off unexpectedly there are a few checks that it's useful to do if you can, before you call us.

- Have your neighbours lost their supply?
- Are the streetlights out?

If electricity is crucial to your health (for instance if you use medical equipment at home) or if you are over 60, ask to be included on the Priority Services Register. You can do this via online at [www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/priorityservices](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/priorityservices) by phone ☎ 0330 10 10 444 or by email [customercare@spenergynetworks.com](mailto:customercare@spenergynetworks.com) or by text to 61999.

SP Energy Networks on ☎ 0330 1010 154 can offer free & impartial energy efficiency advice and access to grants where available. It is important that everyone keeps in contact with any friends and neighbours who might require assistance during periods of severe weather. Older people particularly value the information and support they receive from neighbours during these times. Someone they know popping round can help to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.

If you would like to help any elderly or vulnerable people in your area, you could contact your local community council.

Other key phone numbers in Midlothian:

<b>Emergency Telephone list</b>	
Emergency Services	☎ 999
Non Emergency Police	☎ 101
NHS24	☎ 111
Midlothian Council	☎ 0131 270 7500/663 7211
Midlothian Social Work Services	☎ 0131 271 3900
National Gas Emergency Service (if you smell gas)	☎ 0800 111 999
Scottish Power Energy Networks	☎ 0800 092 92 90 / 105
Scottish Water	☎ 0845 601 8855
Midlothian Council Housing repairs	☎ 0131 663 7211
Midcare (Telecare) Midlothian	☎ 0131 271 3900
Carers VOCAL Midlothian	☎ 0131 663 6869
Dementia Helpline	☎ 0808 808 3000
Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living	☎ 0131 475 2350
British Red Cross	☎ 0131 654 0340
Midlothian Community Hospital	☎ 0131 454 1001
Midlothian Council – Housing Benefits	☎ 0131 271 3201
Midlothian Council – Direct Payments	☎ 0131 271 3900
Midlothian Council - Social Work (out of hours)	☎ 0800 731 6969
Midlothian Refuse/Wheelie Bins	☎ 0131 561 5284

Midlothian Recycling	☎ 0845 130 2322
Lothian Buses	☎ 0131 555 6363
Traveline Scotland	☎ 0871 200 2233
Dial-a-Bus Midlothian	☎ 0131 447 1718
Dial-a-Ride Midlothian	☎ 0131 447 9949
Citizens Advice Bureau Dalkeith	☎ 0131 660 1636
Citizens Advice Bureau Penicuik	☎ 01968 675 259
My Doctor	☎
My Plumber	☎
My Emergency Contact	☎

## Home Alone at Christmas

This is one of those films which are guaranteed to be seen over the next few months [along with others such as *It's a Wonderful Life*] to remind us all that our society has created a myth around the many different glues which are supposed to bind us together into a community.

The reality for growing numbers of people is that the winter months can herald not only dark days and nights, but also dark thoughts and worries, which can in turn grow to take on the unbearable ache of loneliness. For some of the neighbours in our communities, the bustle of winter months for many of us can become limited for them to perhaps just a passing word with the postie once or twice a week, if that. This ache of loneliness respects no social status. The person in a rented house in Mayfield can encounter despair each day just as much as the person behind the tall stone walls of a house on Eskbank Road.

Getting through these days and months can be tough, physically and mentally. Spring and the promise of lighter days and nights can seem an eternity away. For some, the sense of struggle can overwhelm and thoughts of ending life can take on hard edges. It is at times like these that those who are lonely – which is not always about being on your own – can find real support in talking to a stranger. Phoning someone at the Samaritans or at Breathing Space can help bring light back into your life, hope back into your heart, and help you build a clear path which will take you through to the Spring which is coming next year.

Both the **Samaritans ☎ 116 123** and **Breathing Space ☎ 0800 83 85 87** offer free confidential support, listening and being there, for people who are anxious or towards the end of their tether. They will help you realise that you do matter, that the world does care about you, and that drawing on the strength of others at a time like this is proof positive that we can as a community help one another no matter how much darkness surrounds.

Wlad Mejka, Forward Mid

Samaritans

25 Torphican Street, Edinburgh EH3 8HX, 10.am to 10.pm for a face to face chat  
24/7 ☎ 116 123 [Jo@samaritans.org](mailto:Jo@samaritans.org)



## Volunteer Midlothian – Connect Online

Would you like help to keep connected while not leaving the house? We can help you keep in touch with family and friends via email, Facebook, messenger, Whatsapp, text messages, calling from your smartspeaker (Alexa) and many more ways!

We can help setup online grocery shopping so you can have shopping delivered to your home. Looking for winter weather updates? We can help you access Midlothian Council's website and/or facebook for the latest information via your smartphone, tablet or laptop. Or maybe you would like to access electronic books, audiobooks or newspapers and magazines for free online via the library apps?

Contact: Una Paterson ☎ 0131 660 1216

## Crimbo Dinners

### Danderhall



**Don't be alone  
this Christmas!**  
have Christmas with us  
**Christmas Day Dinner**  
Danderhall Miners Club, 1pm.  
**Book before 14 December**

For all ages. Turkey Dinner with all the trimmings, plus fun and presents. There's no cost, but you can donate if you want to.

**Book before 14 December.**  
Contact Stephen on 07387 634108.  
Email: [stephen@192media.com](mailto:stephen@192media.com)

Can you help? Do you know someone in our community who'll be alone on Christmas day? Some people may require transport to and from the Miners Club on Christmas day, could you assist with transport? Contact Stephen (phone or text) on 07387 634108.

### Dalkeith

Newbattle Parish Church Ministry Team are offering a 3-course Christmas dinner for people who would otherwise be alone. Transport within 3 miles of Mayfield (EH22 ) can be arranged and venue is wheelchair accessible. Contact Erika Pryde 📧 [erika@newbattleparish.org](mailto:erika@newbattleparish.org)

### Penicuik

Free four course Christmas meal with a gift at St James the Less Church Hall in Penicuik. We are having a Community Meal on Christmas Day. 4 courses with all the usual trimmings and a wee gift from Santa. If you are local and wish to join us but can't make the journey, Penicuik Taxis (Dougie) will arrange transport.

It is shaping up to be a lovely day.

Please get in touch if you need more information. June x 07740 586 878

📧 [meal@penicuikstorehouse.org](mailto:meal@penicuikstorehouse.org)



## Moving About

If there's heavy snow, police have powers to remove vehicles parked on bus routes.

"No parking" cones will be placed along specific lengths on the streets but only when prolonged and heavy snow is forecast.

A temporary one way system may also operate, if required, around the upper estates at Mayfield.

Lothian Buses can request assistance from Police Scotland to have a car or van removed if it is obstructing a bus route.

For maps of routes affected visit see below or [www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200270/severe\\_](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200270/severe_)

The streets affected so far by the traffic regulations are:

### Dalkeith:

**Woodburn Park:** 1 ➡ 7, 35 ➡ 41, **Salter's Road:** 17 ➡ 21, **Woodburn Road:** 24 ➡ 32, 64 ➡ 68, **James Lean Avenue:** 1 ➡ 7, 33 ➡ 39, 45, 47, 75 ➡ 81, **Woodburn Avenue:** 1 ➡ 5, **Eskbank Road:** Outside the Kings Park.

### Loanhead:

**Fountain Place:** West side of Fountain place from No. 1 ➡ 27

### Gorebridge:

**Powdermill Brae:** 47 ➡ 49.

### Bonnyrigg:

**Polton Road West:** Entrance to Cameron Crescent and Gordon Avenue, Number 66 ➡ 60.

**Lothian Street ➡ Dundas Street:** Bonnyrigg High street Traffic control and Waverley Crescent Cockpen Road Roundabout.

**Polton Avenue Road:** Entrance to Polton Hall Sports complex, Outside Numbers 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D. Also 20, 21, 22, 23. Hawthornden Primary School, entrance to Argyll Place.

### Rosewell:

**Carnethie Street:** 49 ➡ 53, 73 ➡ 79, 103 ➡ 107, 137 ➡ 141 also bus terminus Rosewell.

Police have powers to remove vehicles parked on the coned areas. Please, do not park your cars on these roads when the snows arrive.

Lothian Buses Website: [lothianbuses.com](http://lothianbuses.com) Twitter: [twitter.com/on\\_lothianbuses](https://twitter.com/on_lothianbuses)

East Coast Buses Website: [eastcoastbuses.co.uk/](http://eastcoastbuses.co.uk/)

Borders Buses Website: [www.bordersbuses.co.uk/](http://www.bordersbuses.co.uk/)

Prentice Buses Website: [www.prentice.info/](http://www.prentice.info/)

Stagecoach Website: [www.stagecoachbus.com/](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/)



## Bus “apps” for smartphones

Most bus operators have their own presence in the digital world, offering a range of information from journey planning to real time information about bus departure times from any/every bus stop in their operating area. “**Transport for Edinburgh**” embraces East Coast Buses, Edinburgh Trams, Lothian Buses and Lothian Country. The “**Borders Buses**” app gives info about the X62, X70, X95 and 339. “**Prentice of Haddington**” has details for their 111 service. “My Bus Edinburgh” is another App. It is restricted to information on East Coast Buses, Edinburgh Trams, Lothian Buses and Lothian Country.

Apps can be found in the Play Store, AppStore or Microsoft Store. These Apps can keep you up to date with bus information during bad weather.

“**Traveline Scotland**” is the national service for all modes of transport information. If you’re going further afield, there are links to Traveline Cymru and Traveline England.

Getting winter ready is something we all need to do – it only takes a few simple steps. It’s time to start thinking about how you could be affected by severe weather, and what you need to do now to be better prepared.

Whether it’s at home, in the community or behind the wheel, we all need to consider what might help. By thinking about how we can all be ready, we can help Midlothian be better prepared. Previous years severe weather caught many people out.

Make sure you will be able to have your footpaths and driveway cleared if severe weather strikes. It is a good idea to keep a shovel (specially designed snow shovels are particularly good) and some salt or grit at home. Remember to find out where your nearest local authority grit bin is located. Information about local services is kept up-to-date on Midlothian Council’s website ([www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk)), so it’s important to check for the latest information and advice during severe weather. Stay tuned to local radio stations such as Black Diamond and Forth FM as they also provide advice and updates during bad weather.



Clearing snow from a vehicle, clean the snow from the roof as well as the windscreens and also make sure your number plate is visible both front and rear,

Here are some recommended items to keep in your car over winter:

- ☺ **A blanket;**
- ☺ **Warm winter clothing (including boots);**
- ☺ **Ice scraper and de-icer;**
- ☺ **Battery jump leads;**
- ☺ **A map for any unplanned diversions;**
- ☺ **A first-aid kit;**
- ☺ **A torch and spare batteries;**
- ☺ **A mobile phone and charger;**
- ☺ **A shovel for snow; food and drink that will last (and a warm drink in a flask before each journey).**

## A message from Midlothian Council

Councillor John Hackett, Midlothian Council's Cabinet Member for Commercial Operations, which includes roads, said:

All of us will be hoping we don't have a repeat of "Beast from the East" but we all need to be prepared. The weather has been colder earlier this year and gritting trucks have already been seen on the roads. People realise that in severe weather we all need to pull together. Scenes last winter of neighbours clearing roads, parents clearing schools and neighbours looking out for each other was wonderful to see. If severe weather strikes again this winter, I am sure the people of Midlothian will step up to the challenge....

"For the council, the focus is on keeping the 380 kilometres priority roads such as bus routes and those near hospitals and schools open throughout winter. Council staff will also be on hand to clear obstructions such as fallen branches and any other debris caused by adverse weather."

There are currently more than 460 grit bins placed throughout Midlothian for public use. Residents are asked to use the grit for footpaths and roads rather than private driveways.

If adverse weather leads to the closure of a school, nursery or public building then Midlothian Council will ensure all residents are informed as soon as possible, via its website, radio and social media, allowing everyone to plan ahead accordingly.

For more information, including gritting routes, visit [www.midlothian.gov.uk/severe-weather](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/severe-weather). For latest updates follow the council on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MidlothianCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/MidlothianCouncil) and on Twitter at [twitter.com/@midhelp](https://twitter.com/@midhelp)



## Winter Information

### Social Media

Midlothian Council: Website: [www.midlothian.gov.uk/](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/)

Twitter: [twitter.com/@midhelp](https://twitter.com/@midhelp)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MidlothianCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/MidlothianCouncil)



### Midlothian Voluntary Action

Website: [www.mvacvs.org.uk/](http://www.mvacvs.org.uk/)

Twitter: [twitter.com/MVACommunity](https://twitter.com/MVACommunity) or [@MVACommunity](https://twitter.com/@MVACommunity)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MidlothianVoluntaryAction](https://www.facebook.com/MidlothianVoluntaryAction)



### Other Essential Contacts

For all other essential contact details see the Ready Scotland Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ReadyScotland](https://www.facebook.com/ReadyScotland)

**VOCAL** Midlothian Carer Centre: Christmas opening times; Midlothian Carer Centre will close at 12noon on Tuesday 24th December 2019 and re-open at 9am on Friday 3rd January 2020.

**VOCAL** Midlothian has a Winter Programme of events, activities and support available to carers - ☎ 0131 663 6869 or email: [midlothian@vocal.org.uk](mailto:midlothian@vocal.org.uk)

# ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑ A message from Police Scotland ❑❑❑❑❑❑❑❑

## Winter Driving:

With winter approaching are you prepared for challenging driving conditions?

- Ensure you check the weather forecast prior to any journey.
- Check windscreen wiper fluid is topped up, your tyre tread is correct for driving and tyres are correctly inflated.
- Always clear any snow or ice from the windscreen and the rest of the vehicle prior to any journey.
- Consider packing a shovel, bottled water and blanket into the boot should you become stranded.
- If you have a mobile phone ensure it is fully charged, and make someone aware of your intended journey, as well as when you leave and arrive at your destination.
- If in doubt consider rescheduling any journey or travel plans if the weather is poor.

## Home Security:

As winter draws closer and the nights get darker remember to review your home security:

- Use timer switches on lights and radios to make it look as though your home is occupied.
- Ensure all your windows and doors are secure before going to bed.
- If possible use security lighting at the front and back of your property.
- Make sure all garden tools and ladders not being used are locked away and secure.
- Use a good quality lock on any garden sheds or out buildings.
- Make a note of all makes and serial numbers of your property.

## Scams:

Anyone can be the victim of doorstep crime and cold callers to their property. Be aware of the following when answering your door:

- If in doubt; keep them out
- Keep front and back doors locked
- Use a door chain or bar
- Only let callers in if they have an appointment and you have confirmed they are genuine
- Always ask for ID
- Don't keep large sums of money at home
- Ensure your doors and windows are locked
- Look out for those in your community
- Report any suspicious, Call ☎ 999 and ask for the police if you feel scared or threatened.



## Getting Help With your Health

### Where you can go for help with your health

Think about what your health problem is before you phone your GP and try one of these alternatives:

#### NURSE

Nurses are experienced in dealing with many conditions such as high blood pressure, asthma and diabetes and a range of minor illnesses such as chest, urine and ear infections and skin conditions. Many can prescribe medication and arrange investigations. Nurse appointments are often easier to get than a doctor's.



#### GP PHONE APPOINTMENT

If you don't need to be examined then a phone appointment is often quicker and easier. If the doctor feels they need to see you they will arrange it. If you can't make your GP appointment



please phone and cancel.

### PHARMACIST

You can get free advice for minor illnesses such as flu, sore ears and throats, acne, constipation, eczema and allergies, hayfever, indigestion, mouth ulcers, warts and stopping smoking. You may also be able to register for free treatment – ask your pharmacist if you qualify. You can also see your pharmacist in private.

Defibrillators are now positioned around Midlothian for the Public to use when someone is in Cardiac Arrest. If you need to use a Defibrillator in an emergency, the 999 call handler will often know where the closest one is and inform you, you will also require the code to access the Defibrillator. By switching on the Defibrillator, it will immediately start to give a series of visual and verbal prompts, informing you of what you require to do. Follow these prompts informing you what to perform.



**NHS 24** can provide you with health information and self-care advice.

Call ☎ 111 twenty-four hours a day.

**NHS Inform** ☎ 0800 22 44 88 or [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) provides comprehensive health information.

Doctors Surgeries are closed over the Christmas and New Year, make sure you have enough medication and get your prescription in to the Pharmacy and leave enough time to collect it.

## After the Snow Comes the Thaw

After a period of severe winter weather, the thaw comes as a relief. But it has its own risks and challenges. You can prepare for these by taking some simple steps and keeping up to date on the current situation.

### Burst Pipes

In the coldest days of winter the water pipes around the house can freeze. As the water turns to ice it expands, this will cause the pipe to burst, when it defrosts and the ice has turned back to a liquid is the first indication you have a burst pipe. Make sure you know where to locate the stop valve which controls the water supply entering your home. If you suspect you have a burst pipe, turn off the water supply immediately.



### Icicles and excess snow on roofs

If your property has large amounts of overhanging snow or large icicles, try to make anyone entering it aware of the risk. If you are confident that it is safe to do so, you should try to remove overhanging icicles that pose a threat on your own property - but ladders should not be used in icy conditions, nor should you hang out of windows to reach roof. It is important to let children know of the risks of falling icicles - and of the danger of throwing snow or any other objects onto (or at) icicles or snowy roofs.

## Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/forwardmid/](http://www.facebook.com/forwardmid/)



Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone ☎ : 0131-663-9471 or [eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk](mailto:eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk) write to him at MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on [www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk). The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol  in the address bar, click and select narrate from left menu. The latest Safari Browser has the reader symbol  but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

**Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid**