



# Staying Safe and Well at Home



Developed by the Lincolnshire Good Home Alliance  
in partnership with Connect to Support Lincolnshire



## **Staying Safe and Well at Home**

There are many different sources of help and support in Lincolnshire. This booklet contains information from different organisations to provide some top tips on staying safe and well at home.

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# Connect to Support

Connect to Support is provided by Lincolnshire County Council and the NHS.

Connect to Support Lincolnshire is your one-stop website for trusted information from health, care, housing and community organisations, all in one place.

Connect to Support provides information on:

- Health and wellbeing
- Mental health
- Support for carers
- Living independently
- Staying active
- Volunteering
- Community events and activities

**To stay safe and well at home, Connect to Support can be used to:**

- Get advice on keeping warm at home
- Find local services that offer home insulation, heating support, and emergency repairs
- Search the community directory to find nearby groups offering wellbeing checks and other support
- Learn how to prevent health issues like hypothermia and respiratory problems, and how to get support with other long-term health conditions like cancer, or energy limiting conditions

- Find help and resources for carers
- Explore digital tools to help you live independently and stay connected
- Access mental health support and advice for managing seasonal challenges
- Find support if you are a veteran or a member of the armed forces

### **Connect to Support website**

Access the Connect to Support website by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://lincolnshire.connecttosupport.org/>



# Good Home Lincs

Good Home Lincs aims to help Lincolnshire residents to repair, improve, and adapt their homes to help people stay safe, warm and well at home.

The Good Home Lincs resources are provided by Lincolnshire Councils. The Good Home Lincs website is a helpful source of information on lots of topics, including:

- Cold, damp homes
- Finding trusted tradespeople
- How to pay for repairs and adaptations
- Safety in the home
- Moving home

Good Home Lincs also provides a Healthy Home Assessment tool. This is an online tool to help you look at your home, spot any risks and maintenance issues, and provide information on how any problems can be tackled.

## **Good Home Lincs website**

Access the Good Home Lincs website by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://lincolnshire.connecttosupport.org/good-home-lincs/>



## **Healthy Home Assessment**

Complete the Healthy Home Assessment by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://lincolnshire.connecttosupport.org/good-home-lincs/healthy-home-assessment/>



# Money Talk Lincs

Finances can be a source of stress to many people. Money Talk Lincs is a section on Connect to Support which gives information on general financial wellbeing. You can find information on:

- Debt advice
- Food help
- Claiming benefits
- Council tax support
- Pension credit
- Planning and budgeting
- Reducing your bills
- Borrowing and saving

## Money Talk Lincs website

Access the Money Talk Lincs pages by scanning the QR code or visiting

<https://lincolnshire.connecttosupport.org/money-talk-lincs/>



# Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue offer lots of information and support about staying safe and warm, and reducing the risk of fire in the home.

## Heating Safety

### Open fires & log burners:

- Always use a fire guard to prevent sparks
- Keep chimneys clean and swept regularly
- Store fuels (wood, coal) safely away from the fire
- Avoid drying clothes near open flames
- Before you go to bed, ensure fires are completely out
- Make sure your chimney is swept by a professional at least once a year for coal and twice a year if you are burning logs

### Portable heaters:

- Keep heaters away from curtains, furniture, clothes and other flammable materials
- Never use heaters for drying clothes
- Secure heaters to prevent tipping
- Make sure that portable heaters or radiators are plugged into their own socket and not into an extension
- Make sure heaters are well maintained and in good working order
- Always sit at least one metre away from a heater
- Before moving your heater, turn it off and allow it to cool

**Electric blankets:**

- Do not use a hot water bottle or bring drinks nearby while you are using your blanket
- Unplug your electric blanket before you go to bed unless it has a thermostat for overnight use
- Store your electric blanket flat or rolled to avoid damaging wiring
- Check regularly for wear and tear and don't use your blanket if wires are visible or poking through the fabric
- Don't use a blanket that has scorch marks or discolouration or if the control makes a buzzing sound when it is switched on
- Test your blanket every 3 years and replace it if it is over 10 years old
- Do not buy second hand electric blankets; they may not meet current safety standards
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and use it as intended

**Electrical safety:**

- Don't overload sockets; use an online socket calculator to check
- Avoid using second-hand electrical goods unless they have been verified safe
- Don't run washing machines or dryers overnight or when unattended
- Do not use 'cube' type adaptors
- Do not use damaged cables
- Only use the charger that is provided with electrical equipment

- Turn off and unplug anything electrical that does not need to be left on
- Don't run cords under carpeting, bedding, or other combustible materials
- Check any products you have bought are not subject to a product recall
- Register your electrical appliances to make sure you are alerted if there is a safety concern with the product

**General home safety:**

- Complete an online home fire safety check for advice on how to stay safe in your home
- Fit working smoke alarms on every floor
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near fuel-burning appliances
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors regularly
- Ensure electrical and gas appliances are properly installed and maintained
- Have your boiler serviced every year
- Avoid using ovens or barbecues to heat rooms
- Keep battery-powered torches handy in case of lighting & power cuts
- Have an escape plan and keep keys in a place where everyone in your home can find them

## Online Home Fire Safety Check

Complete the online home fire safety check by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://www.safelincs.co.uk/hfsc/>



# Staying warm at home

There are a number of services in the county to help residents stay warm at home. These services can give information about energy efficiency in the home, such as small changes you can make to stay warm and save money.

These services can also advise on the grants and help available if you want to make changes to your heating system, install insulation or look at other ways to improve the energy efficiency of your home.

To help stay warm at home and reduce your energy use, think about your:

## Heating systems

- Use programmable thermostats and timers to heat rooms only when needed
- Heat the rooms you use most and lower the temperature in unused spaces
- Bleed radiators to ensure they're working efficiently
- Close doors to keep heat in individual rooms
- Maintain indoor temperatures of at least 18°C, especially for vulnerable individuals

## Insulation & draught proofing

- Seal gaps around windows, doors, and floorboards with draught excluders or sealant
- Use thermal curtains or blinds to retain heat at night

- Insulate your attic and walls if this has not already been done; this can significantly reduce heat loss
- Place reflective panels behind radiators on external walls to bounce heat back into the room

### **Energy-saving habits**

- Switch to LED bulbs; they use less energy
- Turn off appliances at the plug when they are not in use
- Use energy-efficient appliances and check the energy ratings when buying new ones

### **Laundry & cooking**

- Air dry clothes in well-ventilated areas or use a dehumidifier to avoid damp
- Batch cook meals to make the most of oven heat
- Keep pan lids on to reduce cooking time and energy use

### **Ventilation without heat loss**

- Ventilate briefly but effectively; open windows for short periods to reduce moisture without losing too much heat
- Ensure trickle vents on windows are open to provide ventilation

### **Personal warmth**

- Layer up with thermal clothing and socks
- Use hot water bottles, heated blankets, or microwaveable heat packs
- Keep throws and blankets handy in living areas

HEART and Lincs 4 Warmer Homes provide home energy advice and support for people in Lincolnshire.

### **HEART Service**

(For residents of East Lindsey District Council, Boston Borough Council and South Holland District Council). Get more information by scanning the QR code, visiting <https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/HEART> or phoning 01507 613189.



### **Lincs 4 Warmer Homes**

(For residents of West Lindsey District Council, City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council, South Kesteven District Council). Get further information by scanning the QR code or by phoning 01427 675199.



## **Green Doctors**

Further support and information is available through Green Doctors Lincolnshire. Scan the QR code, visit their website or call 0115 9788212 for more information:

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/fivecounties/green-doctor/>



You can also visit the Good Home Lincs pages for more information on staying warm at home (see page 4 of this booklet). Look for the heating and energy tile on the Good Home Lincs website.

# Staying cool in hot weather

While many of us look forward to the hot weather, homes can sometimes overheat and become uncomfortably hot.

Everyone's health can be at risk during periods of hot weather, but some people are particularly vulnerable to heat.

**Some people are more likely to become unwell in hot weather.** This includes:

- Older people, especially those aged 65 and over
- Young children, particularly under 5
- People with long-term health problems, especially heart or breathing conditions
- Pregnant women
- People taking certain types of medication
- People who need help with daily activities
- People who find it hard to adjust their behaviour in hot weather, such as those with dementia, mental health issues, or who use alcohol or drugs
- People who are at home during the hottest part of the day, like young children or people working from home

**Some types of homes are more likely to get too hot in warm weather such as:**

- Top-floor flats can overheat because heat rises.
- Homes with windows on only one side don't get much airflow, so they stay hotter.

- Homes without sun protection, like curtains, blinds, or external shading, can heat up quickly.
- Large windows facing east, west, or south without shade let in a lot of sun and heat.
- Homes in built-up areas with little greenery can be hotter due to surrounding heat.
- Appliances that give off a lot of heat, like inefficient hot water systems, can make homes warmer.

### **Be prepared for hot weather**

It's important to get ready for hot weather, especially if you or someone in your home is more at risk of becoming unwell.

#### **Before hot weather arrives:**

- Keep an eye on the news and weather forecasts so you know when hot weather is coming.
- Look out for advice about possible disruption to services like power, water, or transport.
- Check air quality forecasts, as pollution can get worse in hot weather and affect breathing.
- Plan your day to avoid being outside during the hottest hours (11am–3pm).

#### **Preparing your home:**

- Make sure any ventilation system is working properly and set for summer if possible.
- Check that fridges, freezers, and fans are working well.
- Store medicines correctly, following the instructions on the packaging.
- If you're improving or insulating your home, ask how to prevent it from overheating in summer.

### **Keeping your home cool during hot weather:**

- Block out the sun by closing curtains, blinds, or shutters on windows that get direct sunlight.
- Let cooler air in by opening windows when it's cooler outside, such as at night, and create a breeze if you can.
- Use fans carefully if the temperature is below 35°C, but don't point them directly at yourself for long periods as you can dehydrate.
- Reduce extra heat by turning off heating, lights, and electrical items when you're not using them, and cook during cooler times of the day.
- Move to cooler areas of your home, especially when sleeping.
- Take breaks elsewhere if needed; places like libraries, shops, or places of worship may be cooler than your home.

### **How to cool down if you or someone else has heat exhaustion:**

- Move to a cooler place, such as indoors or in the shade.
- Take off extra clothing.
- Drink cool fluids like water or a rehydration drink, or eat cold foods like ice lollies.
- Cool the skin by spraying or sponging with water, or placing cold packs (wrapped in a cloth) on the neck or under the arms.

You should start to feel better within 30 minutes.

If symptoms don't improve or get worse, call NHS 111.

**In an emergency or if you think it's heatstroke, call 999 immediately.**

**Where to get help**

**Government advice on beating the heat:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beat-the-heat-hot-weather-advice>



**NHS information on heat exhaustion and sunstroke:**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/>



**NHS information on sun safety:**

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>



# Damp and mould

Damp and mould can be a problem, especially in the winter. It is important to tackle damp and mould if you see it in your home, as it might affect your health.

Here are some top tips for avoiding damp and mould in the home:

## Ventilation

- Open windows regularly, even for just 10–15 minutes a day, to let moist air escape
- Use extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms during and after cooking or showering
- Avoid blocking air vents or trickle vents on windows

## Heating

- Keep your home at a consistent temperature, ideally above 18°C, to reduce condensation
- Use thermostats and timers to maintain warmth without overheating
- Avoid sudden drops in temperature which can cause moisture to settle on cold surfaces

## Moisture control

- Dry clothes outdoors if possible, or use a well-ventilated room with the door closed and a window open
- Cover pots when cooking and use lids to reduce steam
- Wipe down windows and sills daily if condensation builds up

## **Prevention & maintenance**

- Check for leaks in roofs, pipes, and windows and fix them promptly
- Clean mould early with appropriate cleaning products (e.g. mould specific sprays)
- Use dehumidifiers in problem areas to reduce moisture levels

## **Home design tips**

- Avoid placing furniture directly against cold external walls
- Use moisture-absorbing products like silica gel or moisture traps in wardrobes and cupboards
- Consider insulating walls and lofts to reduce cold spots where condensation forms

## **More information on damp and mould**

Find more detailed information about identifying and getting rid of damp and mould by scanning the QR code or visiting: [a-guide-to-condensation-damp-mould-gha-draft-leaflet-final-draft.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/a-guide-to-condensation-damp-mould-gha-draft-leaflet-final-draft.pdf)



# Anglian Water

Anglian Water can offer information, advice and help to Lincolnshire residents, including support with paying bills, information on practical support, and how to sign up to the Priority Services Register.

The Priority Services Register is there to support people who might need additional help such as those with health and mobility problems, new and expectant families, and many others.

**To protect your home from freezing weather**, Anglian Water recommend:

- Insulating pipes, water tanks, and outdoor taps using lagging and insulating jackets
- Fixing dripping taps to prevent freezing and pipe blockages
- Finding and testing your stop tap so you can quickly shut off water in an emergency
- Using the frost setting or a low heating setting when you are away from your home, to prevent frozen pipes
- Stopping draughts by sealing gaps around doors and windows
- Checking outdoor taps: remove hoses, shut valves, and drainpipes
- Checking your water meter: ensure pipes are insulated and the cupboard is sealed
- Letting warm air flow in lofts during extreme cold to protect tanks and pipes

- Isolating and draining water supplies to unused outbuildings and garages
- Knowing what to do in case of burst pipes; turning off the stop tap and calling a plumber

**To save water and energy at home:**

- Take shorter showers; this can save you money on your water and power bills
- Use eco-mode or lower temperatures on washing machines and dishwashers
- Wait for full loads before running appliances to save water and energy

**Anglian Water website**

Find out more information about Anglian Water's support by scanning the QR code or by visiting:

<https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/help-and-advice/>



# NHS Advice

The NHS and the UK Health Security Agency have also produced a leaflet, explaining how you can take actions to stay well. It gives information about:

- Vaccines
- Keeping yourself and your home warm
- Safety concerns at home
- Financial support
- Mental health support
- Medications
- Staying active
- Hand washing
- Prescriptions
- Looking out for others
- Where to go for the right medical help

To read the leaflet, please scan the QR code below:



# Trips and falls

When it is dark, icy or there are wet, slippery surfaces, it can be easy to fall. Top tips to minimize the risk of falls are:

## Outdoors

- Wear sturdy, non-slip footwear with a good grip
- Walk slowly and carefully on icy or wet surfaces; take shorter steps
- Use handrails when available, especially on steps and ramps
- Clear the paths around your home of any ice, snow and leaves, and use grit or salt
- Keep outdoor lights on or install motion-sensor lighting to improve visibility

## Indoors

- Keep floors dry and clutter-free, especially near entrances
- If you have to use mats or rugs, ensure you use non-slip mats especially at doorways and in bathrooms
- Secure rugs with tape or non-slip backing
- Ensure that you have good lighting, especially in hallways and staircases
- Avoid trailing cables or objects that could be tripped over

## Extra tips for those with mobility difficulties

- Consider using walking aids if balance is an issue
- Install grab rails in bathrooms, on stairways and near steps
- Keep a phone and emergency contacts handy in case of a fall
- Wear clothing that doesn't drag or catch underfoot

Further advice and guidance can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting:

[https://www.csp.org.uk/system/files/get\\_up\\_and\\_go\\_0.pdf](https://www.csp.org.uk/system/files/get_up_and_go_0.pdf)

