

## **Donate to our Appeal and join the battle against fuel poverty**

As you probably know, in November and December this year every household with members over 60 will receive a Winter Fuel Payment of at least £200. It is a universal benefit that is easily administered and reaches everybody who is eligible due to their age, regardless of financial means. Famous pensioners such as Peter Stringfellow and Lord Sugar are adamant they don't need the payment, but it's sent to them regardless.

If you are fortunate enough not to rely on this payment to heat your home, we would urge you to donate it to Wood U Waste's 'Winter Fuel Payment Appeal' to support local people in need.

Fuel poverty occurs when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on heating. Some of the most vulnerable are the elderly, particularly those who are infirm and immobile and for whom the effects of fuel poverty can be devastating. In the most extreme cases the hardships caused by fuel poverty can lead to death.

Figures recorded by Gloucestershire County Council estimate that, on average, the Excess Winter Mortality Rate county-wide is 278 people per annum. This means that 15% more people die in winter than in summer. Stroud District's figures are slightly worse since 18% more people die each year during the winter. It is clear that fuel poverty is a contributory factor.

In July this year the latest official UK fuel poverty statistics came out for 2009 (the official statistics are always 2 years behind) and recorded 5.5 million households living in fuel poverty, a startling 22% rise compared to the 2008 figure. Consumer Focus estimates this will rise to 6.4 million households by the end of 2011. These figures mean, of course, that fuel poverty will increase locally and inevitably more people will be at risk of illness and death.

Citizens Advice reported that last winter an increasing number of vulnerable people around the country had to make the decision whether to heat their home adequately or cut back on food.

This is a shocking situation, and political action clearly needs to be taken. In the meantime we would encourage you to donate to Wood U Waste's 'Winter Fuel Payment Appeal' to support local organisations working to help vulnerable local people stay warm.

All donations made to the Appeal will be shared equally between the following four organisations:

- Wood U Waste is a registered charity providing free wood fuel to the most elderly and vulnerable who still rely on open fires, wood burners and park rays to heat their homes. It also works to advise and educate people on energy saving.  
*A £50.00 donation will enable Wood U Waste to deliver 15 x 5kg bags of wood fuel briquettes to those in need in the Stroud District.*
- Care and Repair (Stroud) Ltd has been running since 1988 and offers a range of services to enable elderly people to remain independent in their homes.  
*A £50.00 donation will enable Care and Repair to undertake a home visit to a vulnerable person to find significant savings on energy bills via fuel switching on the internet.*
- The Uplands Care Service and Acorn Day Care Centre are two local day centres for the elderly, including those with mild dementia. They offer a warm environment, hot meals and drinks and vital support and services to their visitors, including assisted hot baths and massage.  
*A £50.00 donation will subsidise four elderly people to benefit from their valuable day care services.*

In these difficult times when funding is so uncertain your donation will help to ensure that these organisations can continue to offer their help to the most vulnerable in our communities.

Even if you are not in receipt of a Winter Fuel Payment then we would welcome your donation.

Making a donation is very simple. For more details about the appeal and to donate on-line please see [www.donateyourfuelallowance.com](http://www.donateyourfuelallowance.com).

If you would prefer to donate by cheque, please make it payable to 'Wood U Waste Ltd' and send it to 1 Henley Villas, Uplands Road, Stroud GL5 1UH

For further information please contact Debbie Hewitt on 07794 262477 or [debbie@wooduwaste.com](mailto:debbie@wooduwaste.com)