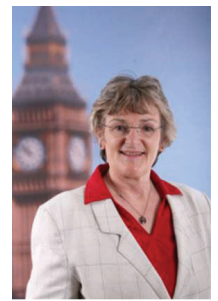


LINDA GILROY MP

reporting back on

Older People Matter



Spring 2009

Speaking Up for Plymouth & for Pensioners

Water Bills and Council Tax Bills set to rise

I know that when you are on a fixed income a rise of 4.8% in your Council Tax is not going to be welcome, nor are you going to find further increase in water charges easy to manage. At least this year it was the lowest rather than the highest in the country.

I am going to be issuing an updated newsletter on water soon, if you are not currently receiving these, and want to let Jane know in my office on 226626, and if you are having problems with bills, or with benefits, contact me.

I make no promises, but often there are things that can be done to help and I would welcome the chance to try.

Energy Advice Surgery

Thank you to everyone who came to my Energy Advice Surgery in January, pictured here.



I found it a very useful day, both from the information gained from the experts at Devon Energy Advice centre, but also from the information gained from those of you who came to the event.

I have put some information about Warm Front and other schemes to help with energy costs overleaf, but wanted to give you advance notice of my next themed surgery which will be on crime and anti social behaviour.

The Police will be there and I will also make sure that we have a cup of tea and a biscuit for all who come! If you interested put April 25th at the Jan Cutting Centre in Beacon Park Road (previously the Scott Hospital) from 1030 am in your diary, and call my office (226626) and let Jane know that you want an invite. She will then make sure you are sent full details.

Advice and Support for Veterans.

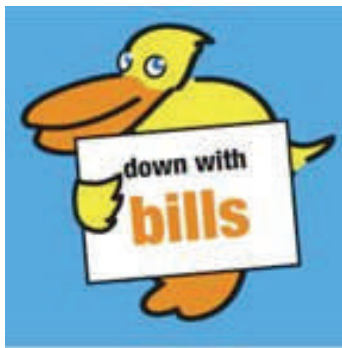
A veteran is anyone who has served time in the UK armed forces and includes widow(er)s and dependents. The Veterans Agency will help with any issue affecting a veteran or their families and you can speak to a trained advisor free of charge on 0800 169 2277. They can help with pensions, housing, and finance, and I am keen that Plymouth veterans use the service – it has been set up for you, and I would welcome your thoughts on how it is working.



Labour & Co-operative Member of Parliament:

Plymouth Sutton

www.lindagilroy.org.uk/olderpeople



Warm Front *and other ways to save money and save energy*

Warm front is the scheme that can award up to £2,700 to help you replace or install central heating,

and also helps with insulation.

1809 householders in Plymouth have been helped so far but there are improvements to be made and the government is working to ensure that the result is a fair, efficient and effective programme. Funding has been increased by £174 million since September bringing the total to £959 million over three years.

Here in Plymouth Devon Warm Zones will give you free advice and a home energy audit on 0800 512 012 and grants of almost £4 million have been paid out.

And don't forget households with someone over 60 get an extra £50 this year in their Winter Fuel Payment and over 80s get an extra £100 taking their payment up to £400.

Energy companies are also being asked to do their bit, and between now and March 2011 they are contributing £3.7 billion back to Government to spend on insulating homes. With free loft insulation for pensioners over 70. If you have not claimed this yet, don't wait for the winter to roll around again, call Devon Warm Zones on the free phone number above and they will help you to get all your entitlements.

Ofgem are also now providing an "Energy Best Deal" service through the Citizens Advice Bureaux to help older people check and feel confident they have got the best energy supply deal. There are lots of offers out there, be sure your not paying more than you need to for your fuel.

Did you know.....

- That at the age of 70 everyone's driving licence expires, but that the Government have now abolished the fee for renewing it.
- That as well as free prescription medicines, there are now many non prescription medicines that are also free for those over 60. Everything from allergies to corns is covered, ask your local chemist for advice.
- That the fire service will come and do a FREE safety check of your home to make sure you are safe. Call them free of charge on 0800 7311 822 to make an appointment.
- That if you born on or before 2 September 1929 you do not have to pay for your UK passport. This is to honour those who helped to secure our nation's liberty and democracy.
- That there is a charity called TaxHelp for Older People (TOP) who provide FREE professional help for older people on low incomes (earning around £17,000 or less), if they have a tax query or problem. Their website is www.taxvol.org.uk, or contact my office, details below and we will forward them your details.
- That the WRVS have a free Books on Wheels service—call 769033 to find out more

Contact Linda:

London office
phone 0207 219 4746
fax 0207 219 0987
Plymouth office
phone 01752 226626
fax 01752 221645

All post:
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
E-mail:
gilroyb@parliament.uk
Website:
www.lindagilroy.org.uk

Spread the word

If you know of anyone living in or based in Plymouth Sutton (roughly PL1-PL4) who may be interested in receiving this newsletter, then please let us know.