

# RVS offers support to older people in Scotland to keep safe, well and warm this winter

Older people will get help from Royal Voluntary Service this winter to stay safe, warm and well with advice and practical help for those lacking support.

Research carried out by the national volunteering charity, and long-time supporter Yakult, shows that almost one in five people aged 70 and over in Scotland have no friends or family nearby to support them during the challenging months ahead.

In a separate Great Britain-wide survey of people aged 70+, just four in ten told the charity that they stock up on essential food items like tinned goods in case they can't get out in the winter, and only six in ten cook themselves a hot meal each day in winter months.



Fewer than two thirds said they get their boiler or heating serviced every year and only three in ten have their carbon monoxide alarm checked annually. Just one in four said they have emergency supplies put by, like a torch and batteries, and only one in four keep a list of emergency contacts to hand.

One third say they spend a lot of time sitting down over the winter months and over one in five do little or no physical activity. The same percentage said they often feel cold.

To help older people and their friends, families and neighbours prepare for when temperatures drop, Royal Voluntary Service and Yakult have produced a short, practical advice booklet to staying safe, warm and well this winter. The booklet is available to download from [royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/safe-warm-well](http://royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/safe-warm-well), along with a short animation.

Sam Ward, Director of Services and Deputy Chief Executive at Royal Voluntary Service, said: "Coping in a Covid winter is going to be a particularly difficult experience for many older people, particularly those living alone and without support. We know that nearly one in five people aged 70 and over are dreading the winter months, and we want to provide as much support as possible to those that need it, to help them keep poor health, cold and hunger at bay.

"Our new advice guide provides practical tips on how to stay safe, warm and well this winter, like a reminder to get a flu jab, to stay hydrated, and to be as active as possible. It also provides information on where to turn for help if needed, like the Priority Services Register to receive support during power outages, our own local support services and the Virtual Village Hall where you can find a wide range of fun, interesting activities to take part in at home."

Reshma Patel, Marketing Manager at Yakult UK and Ireland said:

“This winter will be especially difficult for vulnerable and older people in our communities who lack support. We hope that this practical guide will highlight simple things that we can all do to get prepared and also help others stay safe, warm and well. This is just one of many admirable Royal Voluntary Service initiatives and we are proud to give back by supporting their efforts.”

Royal Voluntary Service is one of Britain’s largest volunteering charities with volunteers supporting thousands of vulnerable people and the NHS. During the crisis, the charity’s staff and volunteers are working in local communities, delivering essential supplies, library books and activity packs, and providing companionship support, home from hospital services and patient transport. Its Virtual Village Hall offers a wide range of activities to take part in online, promoting well-being and keeping people active and occupied through the pandemic.

The charity’s Safe, Warm and Well advice booklet is available to download at [royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/safe-warm-well](https://royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/safe-warm-well).

To make a donation to support the charity’s work during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit: [royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/donate](https://royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/donate).

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