

Older people urged to check available benefits

Owen Thompson MP has said that people over pension age would be well advised to check that they are claiming all the grants, benefits and allowances which they qualify for.

Mr Thompson advised people to call the Age Scotland helpline for information and support. They can also get in touch with the local Citizen's Advice Bureau in Dalkeith or Penicuik, or Midlothian Council's welfare team to have their benefit income checked.

Statistics from the DWP show a significant number of older people are not claiming money they are entitled to, particularly pension credit for those on low incomes, with just over 60% of those who are entitled to it claiming it – meaning many older people in Midlothian are struggling much more than they have to.



Owen Thompson MP

Mr Thompson said: "It's wrong that so many older people are struggling to put food on the table, pay their bills and stay warm this winter when they could be getting a bit more support to ease the strain. With the added TV license cost for over 75s it's even more urgent people check if they are due pension credit and make sure they claim.

“The system of benefits and allowances has become a bit of a complex maze, and understandably many people just don’t know their options, but there are specialist advisers you can call to help navigate through it.

“It’s even more important during the Covid19 crisis that no-one struggles alone. I would strongly advise older people in Midlothian to check and make sure they are getting the benefits they are due. Age Scotland’s helpline is there for advice and help to make a claim, and also as a friendly voice if you need support during these trying times.”

Age Scotland Helpline 0800 12 44 222

Citizens Advice Dalkeith 0131 660 1636 Penicuik 0131 675 259

Midlothian Council Welfare 0131 270 8922

UK Gov information on how to claim pension credit:<https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim>