Eligible Essex residents urged to seek support with heating oil costs this winter

Eligible residents who use heating oil may be able to access support through the Crisis and Resilience Fund this winter. Essex residents who rely on heating oil to heat their homes are being encouraged to seek support early if they are worried about meeting costs this winter.

With heating oil prices remaining significantly higher than in previous years, many households across rural Essex may face additional financial pressure as temperatures begin to drop.

Latest figures suggest around 94,000 homes across Essex are not connected to the mains gas network. The highest concentrations are in Braintree (29%), North West Essex (26%) and Witham (26%). This means many residents rely on alternative fuels such as heating oil to keep their homes warm.

Residents who use heating oil as their main source of heating and are struggling with rising costs may be eligible for support through Essex's Crisis and Resilience Fund. The fund is designed to help low-income households experiencing financial hardship or unexpected financial hardship.

Support may be available towards the cost of heating oil following an assessment of a household's financial circumstances. Residents are encouraged to contact the service well in advance of their usual purchase date to help ensure fuel can be ordered and delivered when needed.

The reminder comes ahead of further energy cost increases, with the energy price cap set to rise from 1 October. Councillor Chris Hossack, Cabinet Member for Resident and Community Services, said: "We know that many households across our rural communities rely on heating oil and may be concerned about rising costs as we approach the winter months.
"Nobody should have to choose between heating their home and paying for other essential items. We would encourage anyone who is struggling financially to seek support as early as possible.
"The Crisis and Resilience Fund is there to help residents through difficult periods and ensure they can access the support they need."

The Crisis and Resilience Fund can support residents facing difficulty paying for essential household costs, including food, energy, water, housing costs and heating oil.

Residents can find out more about the support available and check their eligibility by visiting
https://www.southend.gov.uk/extra-financial-help/crisis-resilience-fund/4