



Department
for Work &
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HM Treasury

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Councillor Andrew Morgan OBE
Swyddfa'r Cabinet Office
Fourth Floor Office
2 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd
CF37 4TH

Our ref: MC2024/96718

11 March 2025

Dear Councillor Morgan,

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2024 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the decision to restrict Winter Fuel Payment eligibility. I am replying as the Minister for Pensions and I apologise for the delay.

I want to start by thanking you and your Council for the work you do supporting vulnerable residents, including pensioners during winter.

As you know, in face of the substantial pressures faced by the public finances the Government has had to make hard choices, including targeting the Winter Fuel Payment to low-income pensioners.

Despite this very difficult decision, we are determined to protect the poorest pensioners and target support to those in greatest need. Winter Fuel Payments will continue to be paid to pensioner households with someone receiving Pension Credit or certain other income-related benefits. They will continue to be worth £200 for eligible households, or £300 for eligible households with someone aged over 80.

The Government wants those eligible for Pension Credit but not currently claiming it to receive the benefits they are entitled to including the Winter Fuel Payment. As part of this we have run the largest ever drive to increase take-up of Pension Credit. I am well aware of, and grateful for, the support you have offered to residents of Rhondda Cynan Taf.

This drive has delivered real results, since 29 July 2024, we have successfully boosted applications with the Department receiving 235,000 Pension Credit claims – an 81 per cent increase or 105,100 extra applications on the comparable period in 2023/24. Of the claims cleared, 117,800 have resulted in an award – a 64 per cent increase or 45,800 extra awards on the comparable period 2023/24.

The Government is absolutely committed to supporting pensioners and giving them the dignity and security they deserve in retirement. That is why, through our commitment to protect the Triple Lock throughout this Parliament, over 12 million pensioners will benefit. Over the course of this parliament, the yearly amount of the basic State Pension is forecast to increase by around £1,500. Protecting the Triple Lock even in the current economic climate shows our steadfast commitment to pensioners and is set to see spending on the State Pension rise by over £31 billion.

The Warm Home Discount scheme also provides eligible low-income households across Great Britain with a £150 rebate on their electricity bill. This winter, we expect over three million households, including over one million pensioners, to benefit under the scheme.

At the Autumn Budget 2024, the Chancellor announced that £1 billion, including consequential funding for the devolved administrations, will be invested to extend the Household Support Fund in England by a full year until 31 March 2026, and to maintain Discretionary Housing Payments in England and Wales. This will help struggling households facing the greatest financial hardship.

Thank you again for the work you do to support your residents, and for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Torsten Bell', written in a cursive style.

Torsten Bell MP

Minister for Pensions