

Community Briefing – 14.11.25

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

Welcome to the fortnightly Community Briefing delivered in collaboration with the Highland Community Planning Partnership and Highland Council, containing information about funding, training, support, resources, and news for Highland wide and local communities.

If you have anything you want included in a future Briefing, please e-mail: policy6@highland.gov.uk

To join the mailing list complete this short form: <https://forms.office.com/e/rSS3hXbGTa> or scan the QR Code:



FUNDING	NEWS
Dingwall Wind Co-op Community Fund – now open for applications. The thematic focus of the fund is improving public access to the countryside and projects that promote decarbonisation / reduced carbon footprint. £25,000 is now available to distribute to constituted groups or organisations that need funding to support projects or activities consistent with this theme. Organisations must be based in Ross-shire. The deadline for applications is 28th November 2025. To request on application form and guidance note please e-mail info@dingwallwind.org.uk	Highland Housing Need & Demand Assessment - Household Survey 2025: The Highland Council is carrying out research which will help them and other partners to understand the housing circumstances and needs of residents across Highland. This will help the Council plan for new housing and housing services in the future, making sure the needs of all residents across the Highland region are met. It will take no more than 10-15 minutes of your time to complete the survey, depending upon what you have to say.

- **Spirit Of Our Community Award – Zone 3**
- Open to organisations located or registered within a 35 mile radius of the following Distillery postcodes: Balblair Distillery – Edderton, Tain IV19 1LB and Pulteney Distillery – Huddart St, Wick KW1 5BA. Find out more information here: www.interbevgroup.com/charitable-giving/spirit-of-our-community-awards




SPRIT OF OUR COMMUNITY AWARD
£5,000 Award

Full Terms and Conditions Apply

What is it?
Our Spirits of our Community Awards provide funding to projects that benefit the local community.

Applications welcome from voluntary/community organisations, registered charities, schools and other not-for-profit organisations located or registered within a 35 mile radius of our distillery postcodes below.

There will also be 5 runner up awards of £600 across the Spirit programme in the Highlands.

Successful recipients announced/funded by January 2026.

DO YOU KNOW AN ORGANISATION DOING GREAT WORK IN THE COMMUNITY WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM £5,000?



APPLY BY FRIDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2025

Zone 3 Award
Open to organisations located or registered within 35 miles of our two distilleries below:

Balblair Distillery – Edderton, Tain IV19 1LB
Pulteney Distillery – Huddart St, Wick KW1 5BA

Download an application pack
www.interbevgroup.com/SOTC.php



Scan here for more information

- **SSE Renewables' Sustainable Development Fund** - SSE Renewables created the Sustainable Development Fund as part of its voluntary community benefit arrangements from its onshore renewable energy developments in the Highland region, primarily the Stronelaig, Bhlaraidh, Dunmaglass, and Strathy North Wind Farms. In this round the fund is worth a total of £1 million. You can apply for funding from £30,000 up to a maximum of the fund's total value. The fund is open to applications from not-for-profit groups, and the project must benefit communities that lie wholly within the Highland local authority area. For more information or to apply, click here [Sustainable development fund | SSE Renewables](#). Updated guidance is available here: [highland-sdf-guidance-document-2025.pdf](#) The deadlines for applications to

All your answers will remain totally confidential and anonymous. Nobody at the Council will know your individual answers without your permission. You do not need to answer any questions you don't want to. If there are any questions you don't want to answer, please just move on to the next one.

You can access the survey [here](#).

- **Bear Scotland Works on A82 Glenurquhart Road: BEAR Scotland** will upgrade the footway along A82 Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, between Smith Avenue and Ballifeary Road. Works start 17 November 2025 for 12 weeks, improving accessibility with widened paths, resurfacing, and drainage upgrades. Lane closures and temporary traffic lights will be in place. Please see the attached document for more information.
- **Green Freeport Quarterly:** This quarter has all the latest news relating to the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport, including information on the official signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the port and both the UK and Scottish Governments. To find out more, please find the full newsletter attached.
- **Highland Adult Learning Development Group News:** A fantastic interactive newsletter with stories including 'Growing Greener Communities Through Libraries', 'Community Voices in Balintore' and 'Success Stories from WEA'. You can access the newsletter [here](#).
- **Highland Social Value Charter:** The Social Value Charter – Renewables Engagement Team supports Highland communities to engage with renewable energy projects, offering impartial advice, signposting, and capacity-building. Their role promotes inclusive dialogue, community benefit opportunities, and good practice standards. A new webpage provides resources and case studies. More

be considered by the fund's award making panel are:

- Fund opens: 28th October 2025
- Fund closes: noon on the 20th January 2026
- Fund decisions: April 2026

SSE will host webinars on the following dates to provide further guidance and information on the fund. Please click on the date below to register for the relevant webinar.

- [Tues 18th November: 0930 – 1100](#)
- [Wed 10th December: 1400 - 1530](#)
- [Wed 7th January 1400 – 1530](#)

If you have any issues signing up for the webinars please contact chelsea.mccoll@sse.com

The panel will prioritise projects which:

Support community housing, especially encouraging early-stage housing development and housing in highly rural and island areas.

Support sustainable capacity building in the community sector, especially projects which build enterprise and self-financing expertise and/or those which build demonstrative capacity for fragile socio-economic communities.

- **Highland Council Reuse and Repair Fund:** The Highland Council has launched a new Reuse and Repair Fund. Community groups can apply to receive a share of £500,000 for local projects. Examples include

Establishing local repair cafés, reuse hubs, and upcycling workshops

Hosting community swap and reuse events

Creative upcycling and circular economy projects

Skills for sustainable living workshops

information can be found in the document attached.

- **Public Involvement and Public Engagement (PIPE) Group** - The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is inviting members of the public with an interest in rural and island healthcare to join our Public Involvement and Public Engagement (PIPE) Group. They are looking for people who would like to share their experiences, views, and ideas to help shape our nursing and health-related courses, ensuring they reflect the needs and realities of communities across the Highlands and Islands.

Meetings take place every six months, and members can join remotely. No specific background or qualifications are required - just an interest in improving rural health and nursing education.

The first meeting is online on the 26-Nov-2025 at 13:00pm. If you would like to get involved, or to find out more about what participation involves, please contact nursing.admin@uhi.ac.uk

- **The Highland Council** has opened applications for the new Employability Framework, which will commission No One Left Behind (NOLB) employability services across the Highlands. If your organisation delivers employability support, or is considering doing so in the future, please take a moment to look over this opportunity. The opportunity is hosted on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). To apply, your organisation will need to register for a free PCS account if you don't already have one.

Where to Apply: Public Contracts Scotland

Closing Date: Thursday 27th November at 12 noon

Support is available to help you with your application:

Just Enterprise – advice on tender readiness and business planning

Development of community tool libraries and resource hubs

Intergenerational learning and traditional skills sharing

To find out more and to apply, click [here](#).

- **HITRANS People and Place Programme Expression of Interest Form – Local Delivery Partners:** Please use the attached form to submit an Expression of Interest to becoming a local delivery partner within the HITRANS People and Place Programme. Before completing this form, please read the accompanying guidance document. When complete, please email this form to Emily.Bowie@hitrans.org.uk by the closing date of 5pm on Friday 9th January 2026. To help gather feedback on your submission, HITRANS may share it with relevant local authorities, if you do not wish for them to do this, please indicate as such when you submit your EoI.

- **Local Improvement Fund - The Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (Highland ADP)** has been awarded Scottish Government funds for third sector organisations in Highland. They are offering approximately nine grants of up to £10,000 to be spent over 12 months from April 2026.

This community-led approach has enabled increased participation in local services, improved community resilience and facilitated effective collaboration between providers, so we are delighted to be able to offer more of these grants to providers in the third sector.

Find out more information here: [Local Improvement Fund | Highland Third Sector Interface \(HTSI\)](#) Applications must be received no later than MIDDAY Friday 5 December 2025.

- **The Robertson Trust** provide funding to third-sector organisations that help people and communities in Scotland living with poverty and trauma. Information on who

Supplier Development Programme (SDP) – free training, webinars and guidance on using Public Contracts Scotland

If you'd like to talk through the process or find out more about what this means for your organisation, please get in touch with Fiona Macleod – HTSI Employability Development Officer
fiona@highlandtsi.org.uk

- **MOD Free Xmas Mail Service - Army&You** the Army Families Federation magazine has highlighted the Free Christmas mail and last posting dates, details available here: [Free Christmas mail service and BFPO last posting dates - Army&You](#) The MOD free Christmas mail service for forces families opens on 27 October and runs until 24 November 2025.
- **Connected Together Campaign:**

Connected Together campaign

We're pleased to share the launch of the second phase of our Connected Together campaign. The objective is to build customers' confidence in switching to a digital landline.

We know from experience that the people customers trust most are often their friends, family, and local support networks. The Connected Together campaign is designed to activate and equip this support system, ensuring nobody is left behind.

Thank you to our stakeholders who have already started to signpost their communities to our Connected Together website, where customers, families, support networks and organisations can access all the guidance, resources and support they need in one place: bt.com/connected-together.

If you'd like one of our stakeholder toolkits with digital assets and content, just drop us a line at digital.voice.comms@bt.com.

- **Cashback for Communities - CashBack** for Communities is a Scottish Government programme supporting young people from all 32 of Scotland's local authorities. It takes funds recovered from the proceeds of crime and invests them to deliver free activities and programmes for young people.

In 2024-25, CashBack partners supported over 15,000 young people most at risk of involvement in the justice system towards positive destinations.

and what they fund, useful links and resources and FAQs can be found [here](#).

- [HTSI](#) produce a monthly Funding Bulletin for their [members](#), which details current funding opportunities in Highland. They can provide workshops for staff or volunteers in Highland's third sector, to address some of the challenges they're aware of when it comes to applying for funds. They also distribute funds to third sector organisations on behalf of agencies in the public sector, find out more information here: [HTSI Funding](#).
- The [National Lottery Community Fund](#) has a number of Funding Programmes available including Awards for All, Community Action Scottish Land Fund, Climate Action Fund and more, many with a focus on Scotland. Find out more information [here](#).
- [Foundation Scotland](#) manages a number of funds many with a focus on the Highlands. Find out more [here](#).

Women's Fund for Scotland – applications close 18th November 2025. The Women's Fund for Scotland makes grants across three themes, and applications must meet at least one of these themes. These themes are related to the previous six and allow more flexibility for groups to describe their work and the impact they wish to have:

Thrive – funding the potential of women and girls to thrive – through leadership, skills-building, innovation and creativity.

Heal – funding the spaces and support systems that women need to heal – from violence, from marginalisation and from injustice.

Rise – supporting women rising – together and on their own terms. Rising out of loneliness, of poverty and into a more equal Scotland. This could support movement building or collective work.

- Click [here](#) to see a snapshot of activities in the Highland area.
- Poignant Poppy Display Created – Fort George: **The Army Welfare Service Craft Club**, based at Wimberley Way, Inverness, have worked together to create a stunning and poignant poppy display at Fort George Kirk. **The Craft Club is made up of partners of 3SCOTS serving military personnel** and they are delighted to share with you their incredible display.



- **Sea Cadets Inverness** –

Help launch young people for life!

We are in need of people who are happy to roll up their sleeves and get involved to make a positive impact on our young people and our community!

JOIN OUR UNIT MANAGEMENT TEAM

If you have skills in leadership, business or administration and would like to oversee a unit's operation, why not join our unit's management team?

You can help manage the finances and budgets, help fundraise for the unit, organise events, write press releases for the local media or build corporate relationships with local businesses.

MAKE MORE OF YOUR FREE TIME

No nautical experience required...whatever your experience and skills, they could be utilised to help young people flourish. Volunteer with Sea Cadets Inverness!

[See our adventures on Facebook @ Sea Cadets Inverness](#)

For further details, contact:
umc.invscc@aol.com



- **Rural Transgender Health Research goes live!** Do you know a rural trans or non-binary person in Highland or Argyll and Bute? Are you a rural GP working in Highland or Argyll and Bute?

Oliver Wain (NHS Highland Public Health), Shanthi Ravichandran (Munlochy GP), Miles Mack (Dingwall GP), have launched their research project exploring trans and non-binary people's experiences of GP practices in remote and rural Scotland. This project has been funded by the NHS National Centre for Remote and Rural

Find out more information here: [Women's Fund for Scotland | Foundation Scotland](#)

- **S4GI Community Benefit Fund:** S4GI partner Cellnex UK has grants of up to £2,000 available to support initiatives focused on digital projects, community wellbeing, learning & development and more. The fund will prioritise projects located near any of the 55 S4GI mobile masts.

Communities and organisations interested in applying can find further information about eligibility criteria and a link to the application process on Cellnex's website: [S4GI Community Fund Additional LP - Cellnex](#).

- **Winter Resilience Aid** - Highland Council is urging community groups to 'apply now' for its Winter Resilience Programme if they want grit bins in their local communities.

The Highland Council's winter service started Tuesday 14 October and the Council is ready to treat - according to its policy - the 6,787km of roads for which it has responsibility. More information can be found [here](#).



Health and Care, and been developed in partnership with charity Scottish Trans.

They want to learn more about the experiences of trans and non-binary people accessing GP practices in rural Scotland. We also want to learn more about how rural GPs experience caring for trans and non-binary people.

For rural trans and non-binary people:

Click the survey link to learn more and take part, or share this with rural trans and non-binary people who may be interested:

[PARTICIPANT INFORMATION : Rural Transgender Health: Primary Care Experiences: Trans and Non-Binary Participants Survey](#)

For rural GPs: Click the survey link below to learn more and take part, or share this with rural GPs who may be interested in this important research: [PARTICIPANT INFORMATION : Rural Transgender Health: Primary Care Experiences: GP Participants Survey](#)

- **Alzheimer Scotland - Action on Dementia** - November What's on Guides for sharing with colleagues and people you support are attached.
- **New Resource for Highlands FE/HE Educators** - Following on from a very successful online training delivery to the University of the Highlands and Islands Campus Network, MLG (Education) have created a new online audio learning resource that reflects this training input.

This learning resource may be helpful to staff members of any Further/Higher Education College or University that supports Young People from Armed Forces Families. Find out more information here: [New Resource for Highlands FE/HE Educators – Armed Forces Families Highland](#)
- **Highland Community Lottery:** Play Highland Community Lottery and support your community with a fundraising lottery. At least 60% from each ticket sold goes to

	support Highland, and there's a chance to win the £25,000 jackpot every week. • Directories: The Highland Community Planning Partnership website now has a page dedicated to Directories, here you will find links to ALISS, Highland Directory of Services and Highland Mental Wellbeing. Click here to find out more. • Winter Heating Payments: Information on the winter heating payments due to benefit over 720,000 pensioners across Scotland. Any pensioner with an income of less than £35,000 will receive these payments. You can find more information here. • Highland Repair Directory: The Highlands and Islands Climate Hub is pleased to welcome the Highland Repair Directory to their list of projects supporting communities in Highland. The Repair Directory is an online resource which makes it easier for people to share or repair items, instead of sending them to landfill and replacing with new. For more information, click here. • Free Period Products are available in Highland to everyone who needs them. They can be accessed at community locations, through a home delivery service and are also available to pupils in schools. For more information and how to access products, click here.
TRAINING/EVENTS	EMPLOYABILITY/VOLUNTEERING
• Speakeasy Programme for Parents and Carers: Speakeasy is free and is provided by trained facilitators. The focus of this programme is to help parents and carers of children of any age to tackle the difficult and often confusing issues of growing up, sex and relationships. We provide relaxed and informal small group work sessions around aspects of growing up, relationships and sexual health and in these sessions, we discuss information, resources, and support to help	• Connecting Carers: a Highland based Charity that provides support to unpaid carers (Carers) – people who look after a loved one, friend, or neighbour due to illness, disability, mental health conditions, or age-related needs. Please see attached flyer and poster for further information. • The Highland Adult Learning Development Group have published their first bulletin. Use this link to access the bulletin: HALDG Newsletter or scan the QR code:

parents/carers to confidently chat about these things at home.

The programme is currently delivered to small groups of parents in relaxed and interactive learning sessions that are delivered online.

How to discuss contraception and sexual health with your child: Thursday 20th November 6.30 to 8pm: [How to discuss contraception and sexual health with your child.](#) | [Meeting-Join](#) | [Microsoft Teams](#)

- **Inverness Community Partnership Networking Event:**



Community Networking Event
Eastgate Centre
Wednesday 26th November
2-4PM

An opportunity for community members, groups, practitioners and partners to learn, network and connect with each other and find out what is happening across Inverness.

Everyone is welcome!

If you have any questions about the event, please contact jamie.kellas@highland.gov.uk

- **Carers Rights Day 2025: ‘Know Your Rights, Use Your Rights’:** Carers Rights Day takes place on **Thursday 20 November**, with this year’s theme focused on empowering unpaid Carers to know and use their rights in employment, social care, and beyond. To mark the day, the Connecting Carers team will be travelling across Highland to host a series of local events celebrating and supporting unpaid Carers. These free drop-in sessions are open to all Carers, families, and anyone interested in learning more.



- **Volunteer Academy:** The Highland Volunteering Academy is dedicated to sparking and nurturing a movement of engagement through volunteering, tailored to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century with our evolving and diverse communities. Find out what volunteering opportunities are available [here](#).
- **MyJobScotland:** for public and third sector [vacancies](#).
- **totaljobs:** for private sector [vacancies](#).
- **Work.Life.Highland:** one-stop support for job seekers, low-income parents & employers in Highland—offering advice, training & employability services. For information on news, events and how to get in touch, click [here](#).
- **HTSI Fellowship Programme:** Designed to advance volunteer practices through targeted learning and collaboration, through grants to undertake study and learning visits. HTSI now four live Fellowships open for application. Full details and application instructions can be found on the Volunteer Academy [website](#).

Come along to:

- Learn about your rights as a Carer
- Discover local support and services
- Access tailored advice and guidance
- Connect with others on their caring journey
- Ask questions about your caring role

For more information, please see document attached.

- **Hilton Community Event, Wednesday 19th November:**

A blue poster for the Hilton Community Event. At the top, it says 'HILTON COMMUNITY EVENT' in bold black letters. Below that, in pink, it says 'BRINGING SERVICES TOGETHER FOR A STRONGER COMMUNITY'. On the left, there is a clock icon and the text '12:00 - 14:00 Wednesday 19th November 2025'. To the right of the clock is a location pin icon and the text 'Hilton Community Centre Hilton Village Old Town Road Inverness IV2 4HT'. At the bottom left is a logo of five stylized figures in different colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) holding hands. To the right of this logo, it says 'SERVICES' in bold black letters, followed by 'Speak with agencies about your community including housing, Police, NHS and many more.'

- **Suicide Prevention: Let's Continue the Conversation:**

A poster for a Suicide Prevention event. The background is dark with a close-up image of two hands clasped together. In the top right corner, there are logos for 'Highland Community Planning Partnership' and 'Suicide Prevention Scotland'. The main title 'Suicide Prevention' is in large white letters. Below it, it says 'Let's continue the conversation'. A paragraph of text follows: 'A community event to help conversations about suicide prevention in Highland, delivered by local organisations.' Another paragraph says: 'We will be showing two short films and introducing a new pack to support people after a suicide. There will also be an opportunity for us to talk about the impacts of suicide and discuss ways that we can build suicide-safer communities. Refreshments provided.' In the bottom left corner, there is a dark box with white text: 'Nevis Centre, Fort William, 25th November 2025 10am - 3.30pm'.

- **In-Person Planet Youth Invergordon Community Action Group:** This first meeting will review the aims of Planet Youth and our focus on reducing risk-

taking behaviours to improve the physical and mental health of children and young people in the community. The meeting will allow us to ensure we have the right people around the table to review the data and to action it when it is returned and to identify who might be missing from these meetings. It will offer an opportunity to introduce ourselves, learn from each other and understand the Planet Youth Model. To register for the event, click [here](#).

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

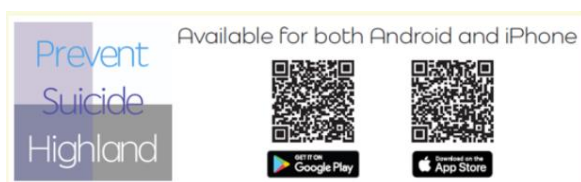
- **Highland Mental Wellbeing** – this website is a list of services, information and training around the subject of mental health and wellbeing. It also provides information about training and resources for community/service volunteers or paid staff, in a ‘helping’ or supporting role.

The Highland Mental Wellbeing website is accessible on desktop and laptop computers, mobile devices and wherever an internet browser is available.

www.highlandmentalwellbeing.scot.nhs.uk



- **Prevent Suicide Highland App** - This easy-to-use app helps should you ever find yourself in distress, feeling hopeless or suicidal in the future. The app is available on Google Play for Android devices and the Apple App Store for iPhone and iPad.



- **Think Health Think Nature** - Taking time to enjoy local outdoor green space could bring you huge health benefits – getting outdoors is good for your physical, mental, and social well-being. Regardless of age and ability, there really is something for everyone.

COMMUNITY SAFETY & RESILIENCE

- **Police Scotland** - Counter Terrorism Policing is launching its winter campaign, encouraging the public to trust their instincts and report anything that doesn't feel right to security or the police.

With a winter season full of events in busy public spaces such as Christmas shopping, festive markets, sporting fixtures, pantomimes and concerts, we all have a role to play in keeping each other safe.

They are asking for your support in sharing our important safety messages with your community, visitors and customers so we can reach as many people as possible.

They know that campaigns are a powerful way to use security-minded communications to add an extra layer of protective security. Using our campaign could help deter hostile activity at venues and events across the Highlands and Islands at no cost to your organisation.

Campaigns are based on extensive research and public testing. They are designed to reassure, rather than alarm, the public, and build their confidence in knowing what to do if they see something that doesn't feel right. We want them to trust their instincts and not worry about wasting anyone's time by reporting their concerns.

- **Think Health Think Nature Newsletter:** The August newsletter highlights library Saturday closures, upcoming Friends of the Library luncheons, and a proposed tax levy increase with September info sessions. New offerings include Empire Passes, Birding Backpacks, a seed library, and a bike repair kit. Kanopy streaming and online program registration are now available for patrons. You can read the full newsletter [here](#).

- **Suicide Intervention and Prevention Programme:** This course is available to those who work within the Highland area only. Various dates available.

Who this is for: staff who have patient, client, service user, or public contact and who have had no previous suicide awareness training or last training was more than three years ago.

Course delivery: Please note this course is delivered over two separate 2 hour sessions and you are required to attend both to complete the course. The sessions are usually run a week apart so please check the calendar below to make sure you can attend both Week 1 and Week 2 before booking your place.

Bookable course: [Turas | My Turas | Home](#)

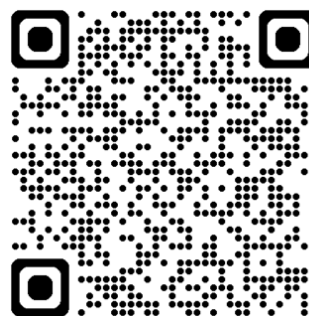
- **Mental health and wellbeing: self-harm awareness - understanding and supporting people who self-harm** (various dates available).

Who this course is for: This session is aimed at anyone who works with or provides support to people who self-harm or at risk of self-harm. 3hr online session

Bookable course: [Turas | My Turas | Home](#)

- **Money Counts Courses:** please see attached flyer for updated dates for upcoming Money Counts courses.

The communications toolkit is available on the QR code below or click on this [link](#) at the ProtectUK website. You will find images and animations to use on social media and digital screens, social media copy, posters to print, email signature and suggested content that can be used for internal and public-facing channels.



- **Home Energy Scotland:** Home Energy Scotland's advisors are true energy saving heroes. They can help you discover practical solutions to reduce your energy consumption, save money, and create a warmer, more comfortable home this year. Whether it's through energy efficiency tips, grants, or tailored support, their advisors are dedicated to helping you to take control of your energy costs.

Don't let rising bills catch you off guard. Reach out to Home Energy Scotland today for expert advice that puts you and your home first. Call Home Energy Scotland's free helpline at 0808 808 2282 or visit homeenergyscotland.org

- **ALlenergy:** Support people who live in the Highlands from all tenures who are struggling with fuel poverty with Energy Advice and support. They can help clients with: Energy bills: how you pay for your energy, how much you pay and how often; Advise on changes to the way you deal with your energy payments that may result in saving you money; Advise on heating controls and the way you use your heating to ensure you are using it efficiently and cost effectively; Fuel vouchers for people who have a PPM and have no funds to top up. In some cases, if eligible, they can apply to funded schemes to help with

	paying for your energy, replacement of white goods, alleviation of fuel debt. (subject to funds being available). Further information is available on their website: Allenergy. • Met Office Weather Warnings: Information from the Met Office on weather related matters.
--	---