



DR DAN POULTER MP

Member of Parliament for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich

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As the shorter days and darker nights of autumn are now upon us, I was delighted to learn that the Rural Coffee Caravan has launched its **Warm Homes** initiative, helping people in Suffolk to stay warm and well at home.

For some, it can be a struggle to pay heating bills, or to cover the cost of insulating your home, but the Rural Coffee Caravan can provide advice on what help and support might be available.

They can help with:

- Personal advice to keep your home warmer and more energy efficient
- Getting your home properly insulated, including draught proofing
- Practical assistance and advice on switching energy supplier, SMART meters and community bulk buying schemes
- Advice on grants and benefits
- Emergency repairs to boilers and heating (subject to terms)
- Eligibility for emergency fuel payments
- Loan of temporary heaters in event of emergency
- Advice on central heating installation for homes which have never had a boiler or radiators

Being truly prepared for winter also means thinking about others in the community – perhaps an elderly friend or neighbour? We already have a great sense of community here in Suffolk and much to be proud of with some of our local volunteering initiatives and partnerships, but as the colder weather is upon us, please take the time to look out for others who may be vulnerable and less able to manage alone.

Especially during colder months, hot meals and drinks can help to keep us warm and for those who are less able or perhaps live alone, taking time to eat and keep up energy levels can easily be overlooked. Having at least one hot meal per day and several hot drinks throughout the day can really help to sustain heat and I know that those who deliver care in our communities, whether professional services or family carers, play a vital and selfless role in supporting those in need.

Knowing what's going on in our communities isn't always easy, especially when many of us are busy with work commitments. We are lucky to live in such a beautiful county as Suffolk, but at the same time, living in a rural county can also bring challenges. The Rural Coffee Caravan visits communities across Suffolk, delivering information and friendship – equipped with coffee, tea and homemade cakes, the team bring along all sorts of helpful information, but crucially they offer a friendly environment on your doorstep for a chat and a cup of tea.

For further information, contact 03456 037686, or visit in person. Further details, including locations, can be found at www.ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk

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