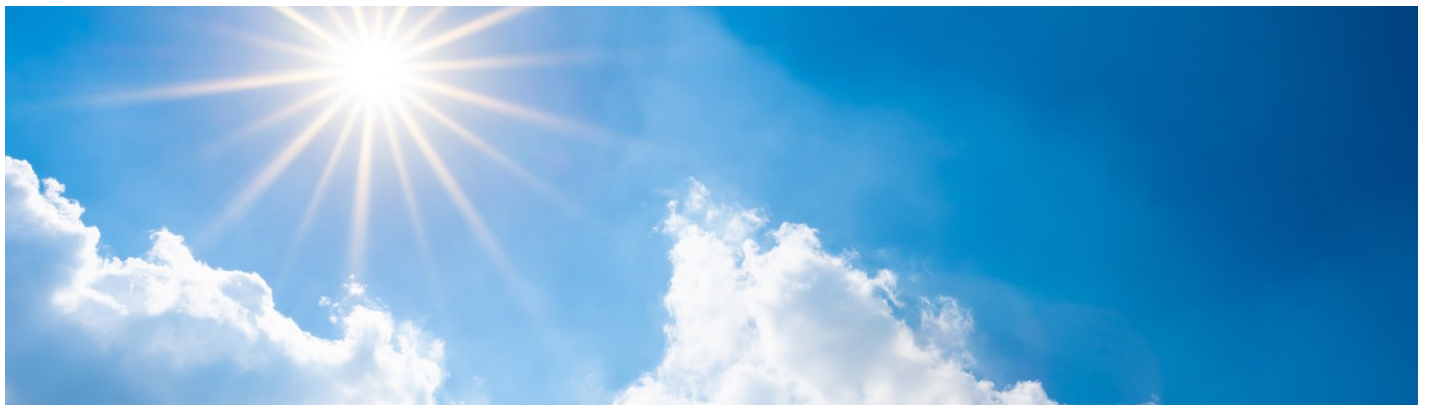


## WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

We are an independent charity providing practical help so that people can live safely and well in their homes and communities. (You might know us by our former name, 'Mobile Repair Service'.) We hope to bring some light into your day with our regular newsletter which has information, stories, and ideas to help you through these uncertain times.

### **This month we are... hoping for global action on climate change**



It's November, and at the time of writing, world leaders are gathering for the United Nations' Climate Change Conference (COP26). All eyes are on Glasgow for signs of the commitments and ambition needed to keep global warming at a maximum of 1.5 degrees. While we may not be able to do much about the building of new coal-fired power stations in China, we can all take some small steps to reduce our own personal impact on the environment. Lots of small steps add up to big changes, after all! At MRS we're working to reduce our own impact on the environment as much as possible and will be looking at everything we do to see what changes we can make. Keep reading for ideas of small steps we can all take.

You're receiving this newsletter as you have used one of our services in the past. If you don't want to receive any future newsletters please contact us by email on [newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org), phone 0330 380 1013 or text STOP followed by your name to 07780 311735.

# Latest coronavirus information

**Booster jabs** are now being offered on a walk-in basis (i.e. without an appointment) across England as the NHS hopes to increase uptake before winter. A booster gives you longer-term protection from getting seriously ill with Covid-19. You are eligible for a booster if it's been 6 months since your second dose and you are:

- Aged over 50
- Aged 16 to 49 with underlying health conditions
- Caring for a vulnerable person

Getting your booster is a great way to help protect the NHS this winter, at a time when cases of both Covid-19 and flu will be high. You may have already been contacted by your GP, but if you haven't, and if you've got access to the internet, you can find your nearest vaccination site at [50pd.uk/walkin](https://50pd.uk/walkin). If you don't have access to the internet, call us on 0330 380 1013 to request help with finding your nearest site.

**Note on flu jabs:** Most people who can get a COVID-19 booster vaccine are also eligible for the annual flu vaccine. If you are offered both vaccines, the NHS says it's safe to have them at the same time.

Cases of Covid-19 are still very high in the UK and you can still catch the virus even if you've been vaccinated, although your chances of getting seriously ill are much, much lower if you've had the vaccine. Thanks to research, scientists now know much more about the disease and its symptoms. As it's sometimes difficult to distinguish Covid-19 from normal coughs and colds, they are recommending people get tested if they develop symptoms like headache, runny nose, sneezing and sore throat. The NHS still recommends that people take rapid tests every 3-4 days even if they have no symptoms at all.

The Government may decide to re-implement social distancing restrictions this winter to help reduce pressure on the NHS. We should all continue to take care when out and about, for example by wearing a mask on public transport (mandatory in London) and in crowded spaces, getting tested regularly, staying 2 metres apart, meeting outdoors where possible, or opening windows and doors if meeting inside.

# Keeping warm this winter

Gas prices have been in the news a lot over the last few weeks - they are rising due to global supply issues, and customers are facing much higher bills this winter. You may be thinking twice about putting on your heating because of this. If you are, the British Heart Foundation has highlighted these 8 ways to help keep warm this winter...



1. Wrap up warm: Dress in layers and wear a hat, coat and scarf when you leave the house. Put on warm socks and slippers inside - keeping your feet warm will help your whole body feel warmer.
2. Close doors and use draught excluders to stop cold air getting in.
3. Don't use alcohol to keep warm.
4. Check your heating works and have it serviced regularly.
5. Keep your main living room at 18-21 degrees and the rest of your property at around 16 degrees. Consider heating only your main living area and your bedroom just before bed to save energy.
6. Have warming food and drinks like porridge, soups and stews (we've included a recipe for a cheap and tasty stew in this newsletter)
7. Stay active: Move around at least once an hour to boost your circulation.
8. Check you're getting Winter Fuel or Cold Weather Payments, if you're eligible.

## Get help with your energy bills

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills, you can apply for **Hackney Winter Fuel Vouchers**. Contact Citizens Advice Hackney on 020 3855 4472, Monday to Friday, 10am-12pm, and 2pm-4pm, or text 'Help' to 07860 041410.

You can also contact **Hackney SHINE**, which provides energy advice to help Hackney residents keep well and warm. Call 0800 281 768 to make a referral. If you've used Hackney SHINE before, we'd love to hear your experience. Email [newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org) or phone us on 0330 380 1013.

## What's going on at MRS

**Hackney Dudes:** The Dudes are still meeting up on Friday mornings at Dalston Curve Garden for the regular drop-in and fun, creative activities like cooking workshops and pumpkin carving. To get involved or refer an older man you know, talk to Vicky Harrison on 07957 432098. You can also check out the Dudes' YouTube channel here!

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCi3FskHYInVE6NzlquK54Zw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi3FskHYInVE6NzlquK54Zw)

**Digital:** We're heading back to our old favourite, the Whitmore Community Centre, for digital sessions three afternoons a week to help boost your confidence using smartphones and tablets. Visit <http://50pd.uk> to find out what's on and when, or contact Rick Crust at [hello@50pd.uk](mailto:hello@50pd.uk) or phone/text to 07761 887927.

**Staying Steady:** We've restarted most of our in-person strength and balance exercise classes in venues around Hackney and the City. If you're feeling nervous getting out and about and would like to join a free class for 6 months, please contact Julie Bromwich on 0330 380 1013 or email [stayingsteady@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:stayingsteady@mrsindependentliving.org). You can also request a free home safety check to check for any potential trip hazards at home.

## Hot meal services in Hackney

This newsletter we're highlighting a couple of the amazing hot meal services that deliver to residents in Hackney.

### Carib Eats

We cook and deliver delicious Caribbean food to those who need it across Hackney, taking the time to stop, connect and chat. Request a referral by email [caribeatslondon@gmail.com](mailto:caribeatslondon@gmail.com) or phone 07958 060947.

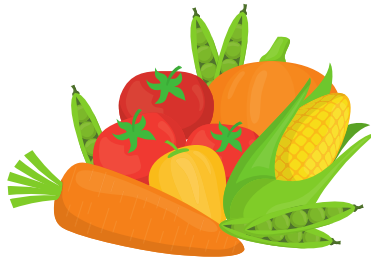
### Made in Hackney

Delivers six healthy plant-based meals each week. You'll need a fridge or freezer to store the meals. Call 03337 721826 for more information and to request a referral.

# What can we all do about climate change?

You might think there's not much you can do to combat the impact of climate change, and in some ways, you'd be right. The biggest changes need to be made by Governments and polluting industries, and there's little practical influence we can have over those aside from using our vote, making our views known to those in power, and joining protest movements. But there are still small tweaks to our lifestyles we can make that will have a big overall impact if lots of people make them. Here are some ideas we've collated...

**Eat more vegetables and less meat and dairy.** Even cutting out one meaty meal a week will make a difference over a year.



**Throw away less food.** Rotting food produces methane, a greenhouse gas, so use what you buy and compost food waste if you can.

**Reduce, reuse, repair and recycle.** Buy fewer things, buy secondhand, and try to get things repaired rather than buying replacements.



**Choose eco-friendly products.** Buy local and seasonal food, and try to avoid food that comes with a lot of plastic packaging. Markets are great places to shop to avoid plastic!

**Save energy at home.** Wash your laundry at a lower temperature, cook with the lid on, use LED lightbulbs, and consider getting a Smart Meter, which tracks your usage and helps you track how much you're using and spending on energy.



**Walk or cycle when you can.** Use the bus or train for longer journeys.

**Talk to other people.** Tell them about the changes you're making and encourage them to make changes too. It's one of the quickest and easiest ways to have a positive impact on the environment.



# Recipe for self-care stew

This recipe was created by the 'Bootstrap Cook' who estimates you can make this dish for just 38p per person. You will need:

- oil, for frying
- 2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- A few handfuls of finely chopped or grated carrot
- 1 tsp paprika
- 130g tofu or 2 white fish fillets
- 1 x 400g tin of beans (baked, kidney, butter, cannellini, chickpeas – any beans), drained
- 1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
- A fistful of kale or spinach
- squeeze of lemon juice
- a pinch of salt and a bit of black pepper

## Method

- Warm a little oil in a pan over low heat and cook the garlic and onion to soften.
- Add the finely chopped or grated carrot or other root veg, and stir some more, then add the paprika and stir in.
- Chuck in some chunks of tofu if you're veggie/ vegan, or white or tinned fish if you aren't.
- Tip in the beans.
- Pour over the tomatoes.
- Shred some greens in your hands. Drop them in and stir them through.
- Bring to the boil, then reduce it to a simmer.
- Douse in lemon juice to brighten, and add some salt and pepper to amplify the flavours.
- Spoon it into a bowl and eat!

This newsletter was brought to you by **MRS Independent Living.**

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[www.mrsindependentliving.org](http://www.mrsindependentliving.org) | 0330 380 1013

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