

Practical support to help people stay warm and well in North Yorkshire

Wellbeing support through Warm & Well in North Yorkshire creates warmer homes and improves overall health.

What help was needed?

Due to a long spell in hospital, Steve became very behind on his bills and was struggling financially. He owed Scottish Power £276 and couldn't afford the monthly payments they were insisting upon. On top of this, he owed £2,713 to Yorkshire Water and was paying £480 a month to travel to and from the hospital as he needed regular check ups. He had some financial aid with Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment but he struggled to make his income stretch far enough.

Steve was getting very worried and could see no way out of his financial hole, even resorting to turning off his heating, despite the cold and his health, to try to save money.

Steve had a British Gas Energy Trust funded home visit with Warm & Well in North Yorkshire's local delivery partner, the Yorkshire Energy Doctor. She helped Steve agree an affordable payment plan with his energy supplier and applied for a Hardship Fund due to his limited income and arrears having built up during his time in hospital.

This was accepted and his arrears were cleared. On



top of this, the Energy Doctor helped Steve find a new and cheaper energy supplier, saving him £245 a year.



To help with his water areas, the Yorkshire Energy Doctor helped Steve apply for the Resolve scheme, which allowed him to agree an affordable monthly payment with Yorkshire Water, with the hope to write off his arrears if he continues to pay over the next year.

The Yorkshire Energy Doctor also referred Steve to the charitable organisation Perennial to check if there is any further support he might be able to get. They were able to help him with his benefits and support him to claim back some of the money he spent on his many hospital visits.



How did Warm & Well in North Yorkshire help?

The arrears for Steve's energy bill were cleared and he was able to save £245 a year by switching to a new tariff. Steve received help from Perennial to claim an extra £65 a week by applying for the severe disability premium on his benefits.

Steve's home is warmer and he is no longer worried about turning on the heating.

His arrears for his water bill were written off after successful monthly payments.

He was also able to claim the Warm Home Discount, a one off payment of £140, to help with his energy bills.

The help provided by Perennial has meant that Steve was able to reclaim a lot of the money he spent visiting the hospital, which helped him to repay a significant portion of his £4,000 debt. It also means that any future trips to the hospital should be reimbursed now Steve knows his entitlements.

Steve says: "When [the Yorkshire Energy Doctor] came to see me I was desperate,. Now I don't worry; I've got people that I can turn to."



"I had turned my heating off since I became aware of higher bills. I wouldn't have known how to switch to a different company and had never heard of the company I'm with now, but it's so much cheaper."

"You don't realise these things are there to help you. I was just trying to cope myself but just couldn't make it work."



Warm & Well in North Yorkshire is a project managed by Community First Yorkshire.



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