

Newsletter January 2017

The New Year is here and I hope that it is going to be kind to us all. However now is the time when we really do need to be keeping warm. I know that for some people on a tight budget this can be a problem. There is something called the **Warm Home Discount Scheme** that means that people could get £140 off their electricity bill for winter 2016-2017 if they meet certain criteria. The money isn't paid to the individual, it is a one-off discount on the electricity bill between October and April. Individuals may be eligible if their electricity supplier is part of the scheme, if their name is on the bill and if they are in receipt of certain means tested benefits. To find out if you are entitled to this the best thing to do is contact your electricity supplier. However if anyone need assistance in this respect contact **Warm and Well** on 0800 500 3076, myself or <http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/eligibility>

I sometimes visit people who need to get their eyes tested but are unable to visit the optician due to a medical condition. **Specsavers Healthcall** now offers a home visiting service. So if you, or someone you know is unable to visit an optician unaccompanied, don't worry, Specsavers Healthcall will now visit the client at home, and fully qualified visiting opticians can conduct an eye test in your own home or in a care home, to the same high standard as in their stores. This can be free if the person is due for an eye test and is housebound, but can cost £50.00 if these conditions are not met, it is worth checking to make sure you are entitled beforehand. To discuss your situation and book a home visit, call 0800 198 1134 or go to specsavers.co.uk/home-eye-tests

I have just been reading a booklet that I picked up the other day called **Are You Ready?** It is about being prepared for emergencies. If anyone would like a copy I will do my best to get hold of one for you. However it has prompted me to think about how we will cope during the extreme weather conditions that we may experience in the next few months, especially as many of us live in fairly rural locations. It is good to be prepared for some cold and snowy weather, both for ourselves and with our neighbours in mind. Useful things to do are to make sure that you have an emergency larder of non-perishable food that could last for several days, including things like longlife milk. Make sure there are extra blankets and hot water bottles in accessible places, and salt/grit so that it is safe to pop in on a neighbour if need be.

Penny French. Mobile: 07776 245 726. Email: pennyf@villageagent.grcc.org.uk