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**Pensioners in the Chichester District urged to apply for Pension Credit**

Pensioners in the Chichester District are being urged to apply for Pension Credit to boost their income.

Chichester District Council is concerned that those eligible for the state pension ([www.gov.uk/state-pension-age](http://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age)), could be missing out on payments, which could give them cash and provide access to the Winter Fuel Payment.

They are especially keen to raise awareness following a government announcement that only those receiving Pension Credit, or other means tested benefits, will now be eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment.

The deadline to apply for Pension Credit and still receive the Winter Fuel Payment is 21 December 2024.

“Pension Credit is one of the most under-claimed benefits, with figures indicating that nearly 900,000 households across the country have not yet claimed it,” says Cllr Oona Hickson, Cabinet for Housing, and Revenues and Benefits at Chichester District Council.

“A successful application for Pension Credit will also give people automatic eligibility for the Winter Fuel Payment of up to £300. We are urging any pensioners in our district to look into this as soon as possible by visiting: [www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit). Even though someone may have modest savings, retirement income, or own their home, they may still be entitled to claim this. The scheme can also provide access to a range of other benefits such as help with housing costs — from housing benefit (if you rent the property you live in), to support for mortgage interest (if you own the property you live in). Other benefits could include help with council tax, heating bills and for those aged 75 or over, a free TV licence.

“We also want to make people aware that our Supporting You team at Chichester District Council is available to help with the process if someone is unsure of how to apply or are struggling with the application. They are a dedicated team of trained advisors who work hard to make a difference to the lives of many people living across our district by helping to deal with a range of challenging issues at once. They work with services across the council to help people access a range of assistance including financial help to pay bills; help with housing; and health and wellbeing support.”

People can find out more about the team at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyouteam](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyouteam), and can contact them by emailing: supportingyou@chichester.gov.uk or calling: 01243 534860.

The council is also encouraging people to visit their Supporting You campaign web pages at: [www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyoucampaign](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/supportingyoucampaign). On these pages there is a link to a free benefits and budgeting calculator. The calculator helps someone to estimate their entitlement to a range of different benefits. Anyone can use this to see what support they may be eligible for. For example, it can be used by residents to compare income under both their current situation and Universal Credit. People can also save and download information about benefits and how to maximise income and see which benefits couples can claim to maximise joint income. People can then choose to share this information with an advisor, who can give additional support and provide tips on how to make savings.

**ENDS**

For further information, please contact Sarah Parker, Communications Manager on 01243 534537 or email: sjparker@chichester.gov.uk

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