

Cost of living Support Factsheet and Checklist

For an online directory of Cost-of-living support, visit the Brighton & Hove City Council website: [Cost of living support \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support)

Do you need some extra help?

You can call us to speak to a Family Hubs Navigator

Tel: **01273 293545**

Our helpline is open Monday to Friday 9.30am-4.00pm.

You can also email us with your enquiry familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Cost of living support - checklist

Please read this list to identify the support you need, then refer to the information in this factsheet to find out what to do next.

To ensure you are getting the right support, it would be good to have some key information ready which includes:

- What benefits are you claiming and are you benefit capped?
- Are you getting any support from Discretionary Housing Payments?
- Are you claiming any health-related benefits including Personal Independence Payments (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA)?
- Are you registered for Council Tax Reduction
- Do you have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)?
- Do you have the right to work in the UK?
- What is your housing status? ie in Temporary/ Emergency, Council Housing, private rented accommodation.
- Do you have any debts including Rent arrears, Council Tax, Utilities?
- How do you pay for your energy – is it pre-payment meter or monthly bills?
- Are you claiming Free School Meals and Childcare Support Funding?

**Information included in this factsheet was correct to the best of our knowledge in October 2025.
For the most up to date information, please contact the services listed directly**

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Benefits – what you may be able to claim

Find out which benefits you may be entitled to. Use the online benefit calculator:

Visit: [Better Off Calculator | Policy In Practice](#)

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is the main benefit that most new claimants will receive.

Applying for Universal Credit

You need to make your Universal Credit application online

Visit: www.gov.uk/universal-credit

If you don't have a computer at home, you can use the computers at your local Jobcentre. If you need some help, work coaches at the Jobcentre may be able to advise you.

The Jobcentre for Brighton & Hove is: 15 Queens Square Brighton BN1 3FD

Universal Credit Help to Claim

Help to Claim is a dedicated service from Citizens Advice. It's free, independent, confidential, and impartial. Advisers can help with things like how to gather evidence for your application or how to prepare for your first Jobcentre appointment.

You can contact an adviser through the free national Help to Claim phone service, ask for an interpreter if needed

Call: 0800 144 8 444

You can also talk to an adviser online at

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/helptoclaim/

You can also read online guidance about Universal Credit at

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/

Top tip: If you are vulnerable and may miss appointments due to physical or mental health, addiction, domestic violence, unstable housing or for any other reason make sure you declare this on your UC Journal. This will minimise the chances of being sanctioned if you miss appointments.

Help to Save

Help to Save is a type of savings account. It allows people receiving Universal Credit to get a bonus of 50p for every £1 they save over 4 years. At the end of the second and fourth years you receive a bonus. The bonus is based on how much you've saved. The most you can pay into your account each calendar month is £50, which is £2,400 over 4 years. The most you can earn from your savings in 4 years is £1,200 in bonus money.

You'll be asked to provide your UK bank details when you apply, National Insurance number or postcode and ID.

For more information:

Visit: www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income

Child Benefit

If you are responsible for a child, you can normally claim Child Benefit for them. Child Benefit payments usually stop when your child reaches 16, unless they are in full-time education or training.

For the eldest child you will get £26.05 each week. For each additional child you will get £17.25 each week. Only one person can get Child Benefit for a child.

For more information:

Visit: www.hmrc.gov.uk (keyword search *child benefit*)

Call: the child benefit helpline 0300 200 3100.

Top tip: Other benefits that you may be entitled to require you to be in receipt of Child Benefit before you can apply for them. It is therefore important that you make your Child Benefit claim as early as possible.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

DLA is paid for children and may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who:

- is under 16
- has difficulties walking or needs more looking after than a child of the same age who doesn't have a disability

DLA rate is made up of two parts, the care and mobility elements. Children may be eligible for one part or both and the amount of money you receive depends on the level of help the child needs. Children may need an assessment to work out what help they require.

Top Tip: Amaze offer expert advice with filling out DLA application forms, and the transition to PIP. We recommend that you contact them.

Call: 01273 772289 for further advice from Amaze

Visit: www.amazesussex.org.uk/benefits-advice/

Call: 0800 121 4600 for DLA enquiries

Visit: www.gov.uk for more Information about DLA

Top Tip: Your child does not have to have a formal diagnosis or EHCP to claim DLA, but you will need supporting evidence from people who work with your child (for example from a health professional, school or childcare provider) that shows they have significant needs that affect their daily life.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a benefit for people aged between 16 and under state pension age who because of a long-term illness or disability and may need help with daily activities or getting around.

PIP has replaced Disability Living Allowance for adults who are making a new claim.

Call: 0800 917 2222 For PIP enquiries

Visit: www.gov.uk . For more Information about PIP

Carers Allowance/ Carers element of UC

You may be entitled to carers allowance or carers element of UC if you are spending at least 35 hours a week caring for a person who gets PIP, or the middle or high rate of the care component of DLA.

Call: 01273 772289 for advice from Amaze

Call: 0800 731 0297 the Carer's Allowance Unit

Visit: www.gov.uk (keyword search *carers-allowance*)

Where to go for help with claiming benefits

If you need help applying for a benefit, appealing a benefit decision or feel you are not claiming the right benefits the services below may be able to help you

Brighton & Hove City Council's Welfare Rights Team

The council's Welfare Rights Team offer advice to people who have been turned down for benefits and run a public advice line on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10.00am until 1.00pm.

Call: 01273 291116

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/welfarerights

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project (BUCFP)

The BUCFP offers a wide range of services, not just for the unemployed. This includes free, impartial, and independent advice on benefits issues, form filling, tribunals, problems with debts, bills and your rights.

Call: 01273 671213

Visit www.bucfp.org

St Luke's Advice Service

St Luke's Advice Service provides free, independent, and impartial help, advice and information. Areas they specialise in include debt and budgeting, welfare benefits and help with filling in forms. If the service is very busy referrals may pause for a short period.

Call 01273 549203

Visit: www.stlukesadvice.org.uk

Citizens Advice – specialist benefits support for those that have cancer

Citizens Advice have specialist advice services for Macmillan Horizon Centre Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice for people who have or have had cancer and their families.

Visit: <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/specialist-advice/>

Top tip: Vulnerable clients who need extra support from a Keyworker or professional with their Universal Credit claim, please encourage them to add a note to their journal that says:

I am being supported by <organisation>, my support worker is <name>, and their contact details are <phone/email>. I may have difficulty maintaining my claim because <brief details of complex needs and any regular appointments/treatment etc>

Benefit cap

The Benefit Cap is a limit on the total amount of benefit working aged people can receive. This is so that no family out of work will receive more in welfare benefits than the average take home pay of a family in work.

How to know if you are benefit capped:

Benefit Cap – if claiming Universal Credit:

When looking at your award on your Universal Credit statement look at the section: 'What we take off', this will show 'Benefit cap' clearly stated, and by how much you are capped.

Example: What will show on your UC statement if you are benefit capped (amount not applicable)

Benefit cap

- £58.01

[Need help understanding the benefit cap?](#)

We take money off your payment as there is a limit on the total amount of benefit you can get. This includes money from other benefits, like Child Benefit.

Search for 'benefit cap' on the GOV.UK website to find out how it's calculated.

Benefit Cap – if claiming other DWP benefits (not Universal Credit):

If you are receiving other benefits combined with housing benefit, the benefit cap will reduce the amount of housing benefit you will receive. This means your housing benefit may not cover the full cost of your rent. You will be expected to pay this shortfall yourself.

You can call the DWP to check if you are benefit capped.

Call: 0845 6057064

Ways to remove the Benefit Cap

- Working and earning £846 or more as a household per month, after tax and national insurance is deducted
- Receiving Carers Allowance, DLA, PIP or certain other benefits

Visit: [Benefit cap: When you're not affected - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Where to get help

If you are worried about the benefit cap and how it affects your family. Contact the Benefit Cap Support Team. You may be able to request an appointment to see one of the Benefit Cap Support Team.

Call: 01273 291954

E-mail: benefitcapsupport@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Budgeting

Working out a household budget

- Look at a bank statement for a full month and look at all your direct debits, card payments and cash taken out
- Write down any money you have coming in such as your UC, Child Benefit, and earnings
- Complete the exercise below, writing down the total money coming in, then all your expenses going out
- Then subtract your outgoings from your money coming in, this shows your 'disposable income'
- Look at your main source of outgoings after your rent and bills. Are you paying off debts or arrears? Are you buying food nearly every day?

Once you have worked out where you spend your money, contact a service from 'Where to get help' below to help you manage your household budget

Example 1: Budgeting template

Current finances	Money saving options
Incoming finances monthly: £ Child benefit £ UC (are there any deductions from this?) £ other (earnings if working) Total: £	Incoming finances monthly: £ Child benefit £ UC £ other (earnings if working) Total: £
Outgoing finances monthly: £ rent £ council tax (getting CTR?) £ phone £ internet £ gas/ electric £ debt repayments £ water £ clothes £ food £ other Total: £	Outgoing finances monthly: £ rent £ council tax £ phone £ internet £ gas/ electric £ debt repayments £ water £ clothes £ food £ other Total: £
£ - £ = - £ per month disposable income	£ - £ = £ per month disposable income

Example 2: Household budget of unemployed lone parent with one child

Current finances	Money saving options
Incoming finances monthly: £112.88 Child benefit £1692 UC Total: £1804.88	Incoming finances monthly: £112.88 Child benefit £1692 UC Total: £1804.88
Outgoing finances monthly: £1000 rent £117 council tax + arrears £30 phone £35 internet £10 Netflix £150 Gas/ electric £100 credit card debt £45 water £50 children's clothes £500 food Total: £2037	Outgoing finances monthly: £1000 rent £29 council tax – after Council Tax Reduction £30 phone £35 internet £10 Netflix £150 Gas/ electric £20 credit card debt – payment plan agreed £45 water £0 children's clothes – Pelican parcels £200 food – Bright Store Total: £1519
£1804.88 - £2037 = - £232.12 per month disposable income	£1804.88 - £1519 = + £285.88 per month disposable income

Where to get help with budgeting

The Money Advice Service

The Money Advice Service is a national organisation that offers free, clear and unbiased advice to help manage money better. Their website is packed with useful information and has a section aimed specifically at parents. There are also online calculators that you can use to help you work out your household budget.

Call: 0800 138 7777 to speak to an adviser

Visit: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Charity grants

Charity grants do not need to be paid back. To get the best results use the occupation, health, and other categories when using the grant search tool.

Visit: www.grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/

Childcare costs

Childcare Support Funding

For the latest information on how to save money on your childcare bills and to find out what help you might be entitled to, visit: www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

For the children of eligible working families: Homepage Best Start in Life				For the children of families getting some forms of government support: Homepage Best Start in Life			
Age of child	Hours available		Applications start from	Age of child	Hours available		Applications start from
9 month – 4 year olds	30 hours per week, term time	1140 hours per year	Can apply now	2 Year olds	15 hours per week, term time	570 hours per year	Can apply now
All 3 and 4 year olds get universal entitlement to 15 hours per week (570 hours per year) no application needed ask your Ofsted registered childcare provider							

All funded childcare support must be at an Ofsted registered early years provider, who has been approved to offer the sessions by the local authority.

For further local information and support, call Family Hubs

Call: 01273 293545

Email: familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Search online for local Ofsted registered childcare providers

Visit: [the Brighton & Hove Childcare Directory](#)

Tax Free Childcare

Parents can open an online account and for every £8 you put in the account, the government will top-up by £2 to pay your childcare provider. You cannot claim Tax Free Childcare and Universal Credit / Tax Credits / Childcare Vouchers at the same time. However, you can claim Tax Free Childcare and childcare support funding for 15 or 30 hours if you are eligible for both.

For more information:

Visit: www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

Universal Credit support for childcare

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you're eligible for [Universal Credit](#). You (and your partner if you live with them) will usually need to either:

- be working - it does not matter how many hours you or your partner work
- have a job offer

The most you can get back each month is:

- £1,031.88 for one child
- £1,768.94 for 2 or more children

If you are eligible, you must claim the Childcare Support Funding first and claim Universal Credit 85% support for the remaining costs.

To find out more:

Visit: www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/universal-credit

Or speak to your Work Coach at the jobcentre

Universal Credit help with childcare costs for starting work or increasing your hours

You might be able to get help from UC if you have to pay childcare costs upfront if one of the following applies:

- you're starting work
- you're increasing the hours you work, for example you've moved from part-time work to full-time work

If you're starting a new job, you may be able to get all your childcare costs paid for the first month. If you're increasing the hours you work, you may be able to get all your additional childcare costs paid for one month. You may also be able to get help if you must pay a deposit or a retainer to your childcare provider.

If eligible you will not have to pay the money back.

Visit: www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-childcare-costs

Contact: your work coach at the jobcentre

Help with childcare costs for students

Care to Learn

This is for parents under 20 at the start of their course in school, 6th form, 6th form college and some community training.

You must choose your learning provider and childcare provider before you apply.

To find out more and apply:

Visit: www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

E-mail: caretolean@studentbursary.education.gov.uk

Call: 0800 1218989

The Childcare Grant

This is for full time students in higher education who are eligible for Student Finance and have a child under 15 or under 17 if they have special educational needs. The grant does not need to be paid back; it is paid on top of your other student finance.

To find out more and apply:

Visit: www.gov.uk/childcare-grant

College Funding

If you are eligible for other forms of childcare support funding for children aged 9 months – 4 years old this funding must be used first, and students can only use the college Childcare Bursary to pay for any additional hours of childcare that they need. This will depend on the funding available at each college.

Greater Brighton Metropolitan College (The MET) - Childcare Bursary

If you are 20 or older you **may** be eligible to apply for childcare support. The bursary can only be used to pay for Ofsted registered childcare, term time only. This fund is limited and only available at the college's discretion depending on individual circumstances.

To find out more and apply:

To find out more:

Visit: www.gbmc.ac.uk

Call: 01273 667788

Children's clothes and equipment

Pelican Parcels (Professional Referral only)

Pelican Parcels help provide clothes, toys, bedding, and equipment for babies and children. They also provide school uniform for certain schools within Brighton & Hove, see the 'School uniform' section of this factsheet.

There is also an option to order Xmas presents for families when you refer from October 2025.

NEW - Pelican Parcels now have a collection point for families in Churchill Square Shopping Centre customer service desk. This is for single bag orders only and families need to take their referral reference number with them to collect their bag.

Visit: [homepage - Pelican Parcels](#)

Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF)

There may be support via these funds for clothing in an emergency. The extra support is available for a limited period. If you receive benefits and need help to pay for essentials:

Visit: [apply for help from our Local Discretionary Social Fund](#)

Council Tax

Council Tax Reduction

If you are on a low income, you may be entitled to a reduction in your Council Tax. The amount of reduction that you get depends on your personal circumstances.

You can apply for a Council Tax Reduction online:

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk (type *council tax reduction* in the search box)

There are also discounts available for being the only adult living in your household and for adults with disabilities.

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk (type *council tax discounts* in the search box)

Discretionary Payment Scheme

If you are entitled to Council Tax Reduction, you can also apply for a Discretionary Payment if you need extra help to cover the rest of your bill. You can apply for a Discretionary Payment online.

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk (type *Discretionary Payment Scheme* in the search box)

Council Tax Debt

You may be able to get help to pay for arrears by asking a professional to refer to the Council Tax Debt Prevention Team. You can use the link below to apply yourself stating 'Council Tax Arrears' as the support needed

Visit: [Council tax arrears \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Top tip: If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax, the sooner that you get help the better. Non-payment of Council Tax can lead to fines and even imprisonment. Call Brighton & Hove City Council's Council Tax Team. Call: 01273 291 291.

Debt

Overpayments and deductions to benefits

You may be getting deductions from your Universal Credit or Income Support if you have been overpaid, taken out a budgeting loan or you are in arrears with utilities. Deductions to benefits can mean you struggle financially and find it much harder to budget each month.

You can check what is being deducted from your benefits by doing the following:

Universal Credit:

- On your Universal Credit payment statements there is a link (at the top of the page, immediately under the dates for that assessment period) called “Need help understanding your assessment period?”
- Click on this and it takes you to a menu of options, including “Debt and deductions” which explain how this works.
- There is then a further link to a tool called “Find out who to contact about money taken off your Universal Credit payment” (this is a direct link to the page on gov.uk).
- Using information from your statement, you can enter information into this simple tool, and it will tell you who to talk to about it.

Universal Credit sanctions

Once you’ve made a claim for Universal Credit, you will have an appointment to agree your “commitments”, which explains what you need to do to continue receiving the benefit. If you do not do what you’ve agreed to, without a good reason, you may be sanctioned, which means that your benefit will be reduced. You will be given the chance to explain why it happened before a decision is made.

You could also receive a sanction if you do not attend an appointment without giving a good reason.

To avoid sanctions and delays in payments, **please ensure that you check your Universal Credit account for messages at least once each week**, and preferably twice. Reply to messages quickly, attend all your appointments; if you can’t attend, add a note to your “journal” to explain why. Check your Commitments and Work Plan regularly, to make sure you’re doing what you’ve agreed to.

If you don’t understand any of this, ask your Work Coach or add a note to your journal.

[Universal Credit: Your claimant commitment - GOV.UK](#)

If you are having deductions for early payments, overpayments, or debts with the DWP, contact Debt Management on the below number to try and reduce your monthly repayments.

DWP Debt management

Call: 0800 916 0647

(For debts with utilities or other organisations outside of the DWP, you will need to go directly to them to request help)

Income Support/ other benefits:

If you are claiming Income Support or any other benefits, you need to speak with the Jobcentre directly to find out if you have deductions.

Call: 0800 169 0310

For Jobcentre support including budgeting advances if you are eligible:

Visit: www.gov.uk/universal-credit or [click here](#)

For budgeting loans:

Visit: www.gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits/eligibility or [click here](#)

Managing other debts or financial issues

Money Advice Plus

Money Advice Plus provides free, confidential, and impartial advice and can offer casework for eligible referred clients for debt and benefit issues.

They also run the Money Advice Plus advice line:

Call: 01273 809288/ 0800 988 7037 (freephone advice line)

Website: [Home \(moneyadviceplus.org.uk\)](http://Home(moneyadviceplus.org.uk))

Email: info@moneyadviceplus.org.uk

St Luke's Advice Service

St Luke's Advice Service provides free, independent, and impartial help, advice, and information. They specialise in debt, budgeting, welfare benefits and help with filling in forms. They are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Call to arrange an appointment. For more information:

Call: 01273 549203

Visit: www.stlukesadvice.org.uk

(Occasionally the service may pause accepting referrals)

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project (BUCFP)

The BUCFP offers a wide range of services, not just for the unemployed. This includes free, impartial, and independent advice on benefits issues, form filling, tribunals, problems with debts, bills and your rights. They also offer the use of laundry facilities and have a vegan café offering a hot lunch. For more information:

Call: 01273 671213 (confidential line)

visit www.bucfp.org

The Step Change Debt Charity

Provides free and confidential counselling about debt problems including personal budgeting and credit advice. They can also liaise with your creditors to work out a repayment package that meets your budget. For more information

Call: 0800 138 111 (freephone helpline)

Visit: www.stepchange.org

Money Helper

Shows details of reputable debt advice services that can be accessed online or via the telephone

Visit: www.moneyhelper.org.uk

Top tip: Once you have applied for help with one of the services above, make sure you keep an eye on your phone and emails, including your junk folder. Services often have waiting lists, and will not try more than a couple of times to contact you if you miss the call.

Gambling support

Break Even

Offer free counselling support for people affected by gambling.

Call: 01273 833722

E-mail: info@breakeven.org.uk

Visit: www.breakeven.org.uk

Gamble Aware

For people who gamble, and family members affected by gambling. There is also information for professionals supporting people who gamble.

Call: 08088820133 (freephone 24-hour helpline)

Visit: www.gambleaware.org

Citizens Advice Gambling Aftercare

Advice and casework on issues arising when recovering from gambling addiction or problem gambling, including for affected others. Including debt, benefits, housing and employment.

Contact using online enquiry form.

<https://www.cabrightonhove.org/get-advice/>

Call: 08082787815

Professional referral:

Professionals can refer using the link below if they have a recognised e-mail account such as a council e-mail address:

https://referrals.citizensadvice.org.uk/make-a-referral?task_list_id=52697

Food and Laundry

For all food banks and food store Information

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

This is the best site to visit to find out information on food banks or community food stores where you pay what you can afford, and other affordable food related information including affordable recipe ideas.

Self-refer to a local food bank or find out who can make the referral

Call: 01273 234810

Email: info@bhfood.org.uk

Visit: www.bhfood.org.uk or for emergency food visit:

www.bhfood.org.uk/directory-hub/accessing-emergency-food-2

Low-cost food stores

Bright Store

Bright Store is a community food scheme where customers can pay what they can afford (around £7-£9 is suggested) and can get a selection of food in return. This is different to a food bank as you can pick the food you would like, which includes milk, fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs, bread, dried goods and toiletries.

Visit: [WHAT WE OFFER | BrightStore](#)

Lucky Dip - by Balfour Mutual Aid Knoyle Community Hall

A weekly opportunity to browse through surplus fresh fruit and veg, bread and other goodies helping Balfour Mutual Aid Foodbank to widen access to affordable food and reduce waste. No need to have a regular foodbank order. Please pay as you feel. This is a non-referral service and often offers many different things from supermarket surplus including toiletries, and even flowers.

Call: 07502 305973

Visit: [Facebook page - \(3\) Facebook](#)

Pankhurst Pantry

Non-referral, pay as you feel low-cost food store.

Volunteer-run affordable food project for anyone living or working near The Edge Community Centre. Those who can afford to make a donation for the food are asked to do so to support those who can't.

Visit: [Pankhurst Pantry - Brighton and Hove Food Partnership](#)

Woodingdean Community Food Hub

Open 10am-12 every Friday for Woodingdean residents. No referral needed. Collection only. Register on first visit (£1) with small cost of £3.50 for subsequent visits (if you are able to).

Call: 07876 404004

Visit: [Woodingdean Food CIC](#)

Healthy Start Vouchers

The Healthy Start scheme can help low-income families to buy milk, fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables. Vitamins may also be available.

If you are pregnant or have children under the age of four you could qualify if you are claiming benefits. You are also automatically eligible if you are pregnant and under 18,

regardless of whether or not you receive benefits.

To check if you qualify and to find out how to apply.

Visit: www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/

Free School Meals

Being registered with Free School Meals ensures a family can access:

- HUGGG vouchers for the school holidays towards food
- Access to [Holiday Activities and Food](#) (HAF) in school holidays
- Free school meals until child reaches 18 if in full time education (eligibility restrictions apply)

Register for Free School Meals:

[Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Call: 01273 293497

Email: freeschoolmeals@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Family Hubs

Offers families support to access services that can help with the cost of utilities, food, debt and cost of living.

How to refer: [Family Hubs referral form](#)

Call: 01273 293545

Email: familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF)

There may be support via LDSF for food vouchers and utility costs in an emergency. The extra support is available for a limited period.

If you receive benefits and need help to pay for essentials

Visit: [apply for help from our Local Discretionary Social Fund](#)

The Old Boat Community Centre – Emergency Support

The Old Boat Pantry is open 9am-5pm every day. Food Bank (no referral required), Tuesday and Friday mornings 10am-12pm, donations are encouraged for pantry and food bank.

Boatopia, a give and donate charity shop is open seven days a week, where people can take up to five items in a week.

The Old Boat are a Data Hub and can provide O2, Vodafone and Three SIM cards. Hugg Vouchers are available to help with shopping for people in need. They must have a BN postcode and be prepared to share details.

Call: 01273 540779

Email: helpatoldboat@gmail.com

Chomp – school holiday lunch clubs

Chomp's school holiday lunch clubs are a free provision across Brighton & Hove for families facing the pressures of food insecurity offering activities and a nutritious meal. Chomp also runs wellbeing and empowerment initiatives, from days out at a therapeutic farm, cookery workshops, yoga classes, DIY courses, running groups and more.

Register for a place: [here](#)

Email: chomp@onechurchbrighton.org

Visit: [HOME | Chomp Brighton](#)

Laundry

Harriett's Press

A creative laundry space at Brighton Open Market. Access free wash and dry of your laundry load, a hot drink and a creative activity while you wait.

Pre-booking is essential. Sessions run on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (Closed in school holidays).

Use the washer and dryer for free including eco-friendly detergent. Machines hold medium load, and it takes 1 ½ - 2 hours to wash and dry.

Tea and creative activities available while you wait.

E-mail: harrietspress@gmail.com

Call: 07442958207

Housing

Brighton & Hove City Council Housing Service

For advice about housing, including rent arrears, eviction, and risk of homelessness

Call: 01273 294400

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housing

If you are eligible to bid for council housing and have an active HomeMove account. There is a drop-in "bidding support session" every other Monday from 1.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. at Bartholomew House Customer Service Centre.

E- Mail: TAmoveonofficers@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Shelter

Shelter has a helpline for urgent housing advice if you have nowhere to sleep or are facing homelessness. The helpline is open all year round 8am-8pm on weekdays and 9am-5pm at weekends.

Call: 0808 800 4444

Visit: https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice

Brighton Housing Trust (BHT)

BHT offers advice and support for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and people with complex needs.

BHT have drop ins on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for Housing advice. This is held at 144 London Road, Brighton BN1 4PN. Anyone who would like to attend the drop ins must bring photo ID.

Call: 01273 645400

Visit: www.bht.org.uk/services/

Top tip: If you are a council or housing association tenant, there may be extra support available to you via your landlord. Contact them directly to ask for assistance

Homelessness

There is local information about support for homelessness issues on the Brighton & Hove city council website.

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk (keyword search: homelessness)

If you're about to become homeless...

Get advice. Find out your rights by contacting the Housing Options Team. Your rights will depend on the type of tenancy you have.

Housing Advisers may:

- advise you of your responsibilities
- advise you on welfare benefits to help with your rent or mortgage
- negotiate with your landlord about any problems
- negotiate with your bank or building society if you have fallen behind with your mortgage payments

Support available if you are at risk of homelessness:

- Professionals - If you are working with someone with an active application, please contact their assigned officer in the first instance.
- If you are at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness and need to contact us, please fill out an online form [here](#).
- If you are a professional and need to notify us of a person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness, please fill out the form [here](#).
- We also operate a Housing Advice phone line (01273 294 400, Option 1) from 9:30am - 1:30pm.

IMPORTANT

If you are working with an applicant who is homeless on the day then please advise them to attend the [Customer Service Centre at Bartholomew House](#) for assessment. They can also call: 01273 294400 (Option 1) See above for opening hours.

Out of hours homeless emergency

If you have a homeless emergency out of office hours (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) the council can help. The team can be contacted out of office hours.

Call: 01273 294400 (following option 2, then option 1.)

Help if you have rent arrears

Top tip: If you cannot afford to pay your rent, let your landlord know straight away. They will work with you and support you to access money advice and ensure you are receiving all the income you are entitled to.

Apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment

You can apply for an advance payment for your rent, or towards rent arrears if you claim the following:

- **Universal Credit**
- **Housing benefit**
- **Council Tax Reduction**

Visit: [Apply for a discretionary payment \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](http://brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Free advice

Get impartial advice to support you with rent arrears through the services above (see contact details above in the 'Housing' section)

Household items

Free furniture/ household items

Pelican Parcels (Professional referral only).

Pelican Parcels help provide beds and bedding (no other furniture) and equipment such as highchairs and buggies for babies and children.

Visit: [homepage - Pelican Parcels](#)

Brighton Fund (professional referral only)

Apply to the Brighton Fund for household items for local residents who are in need hardship or distress. Please note that applications to the Brighton Fund can take 4 – 5 months to process. Find out if they are accepting applications for grant funding before you apply as they may run out of funding.

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/brighton-fund-application

Local Discretionary Social Fund - essential items for the home and help with energy costs

Apply to the Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF) for help with essential items. You can also apply for help with energy vouchers for households with pre-payment gas/electricity meters only

Visit: [LDSF](#)

Online options for household items

Freecycle

Visit: www.freecycle.org/

Facebook marketplace

Visit: en-gb.facebook.com/marketplace/108695472488778/free

.../...

Brighton Freegle

Visit: www.ilovefreegle.org/explore/greencyclesussex

Friday Ad

Visit: www.friday-ad.co.uk/brighton/for-sale/free-to-collector/

Gumtree

Visit: www.gumtree.com/freebies/brighton

Low-cost furniture/ household items

British Heart Foundation (furniture and electrical store)

95-97 London Road, Brighton, UK, BN1 4JF

Open: Monday to Saturday 9:30am-5:30pm, Sunday 11am-5pm

Call: 01273 769080

Visit: www.bhf.org.uk/what-we-do/find-bhf-near-you/brighton-furniture-electrical-store

Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade Village, BN41 2PA

Open: Tuesday to Saturday 10am-5pm

Call: 01273 426474

E-mail: contact@emmausbrighton.co.uk

Visit: www.emmausbrighton.co.uk/our-shops/secondhand-superstore

Furniture Now!

Unit 1, Pheonix Works, North Street, Lewes, BN7 2PE

Open: Monday to Friday 10am-4pm

Call: 01273 487377

E-mail: donate2lewes@furniturenow.org.uk

Visit: www.furniturenow.org.uk

Magpie Recycling Co-Op

Shabitat, Saunders Park, Lewes Road, Brighton, BN2 4AE

Open: Monday to Friday 9am-5pm and Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays 11am-5pm

Call: 01273 677577

E-mail: info@magpie.coop

Visit: www.magpie.coop/

Martlets Hospice (furniture store)

Unit 5 Sussex House Business Park, 270 Old Shoreham Road, Hove, BN3 7DX

Open: Monday to Saturday 9am-5pm

Call: 01273 021577

Visit: www.martlets.org.uk/shops/hove-furniture-showroom/

YMCA stores

66 Blatchington Road, Hove, BN3 3YH

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-5:30pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

Call: 01273 203976

E-mail: hoveblatchington.shop@ymca.org.uk

Visit: www.ymca.org.uk/location/hove-blatchington-road-charity-shop

26 George Street, Hove, BN3 3YA

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-5:30pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

Call: 01273 719322

E-mail: hovegeorgestreet.shop@ymca.org.uk

Visit: www.facebook.com/YMCAHoveGeorgeStCharityShop/

Hove Amenity Site, Modbury Way, Hove

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm and Saturday 8.30am-1.30pm

Off Old Shoreham Road, between Aldrington Road and Leighton Road. The postcode is BN3 7AE

Call: 01273 722370

E-mail: hoveamenity.shop@ymca.org.uk

IT access

Help to get online in Brighton & Hove

Digital Brighton & Hove offer a range of services, whether you just want to find a computer to use, or need advice and support, they can:

- Stay safe online
- Communicate using email, social media, video calls
- Set up a device
- Support to get employment; creating a CV, looking for jobs online, finding courses to upskill
- Feel confident to bank and shop online

Call: 0300 180 0028. Open 9-5 Monday to Friday, except Thursday open 12-5.

Visit: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Call: 0300 180 0028

Email: enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk.

Help getting IT in your home

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project (BUCFP)

Sometimes have donated laptops to give away

Call: 01273 671213

TechTakeBack

Why pay more? Treat yourself to high-quality, affordable tech through the eBay store. All devices are securely wiped, expertly refurbished and have a warranty.

Visit: www.techtakeback.com

[Buy Online - Tech-Takeback - Circular Solutions for Tech Reuse & Recycling](#)

Help getting internet in your home

Finding the cheapest broadband and phone options:

Visit: [Cheaper broadband and phone packages - Ofcom](#).

Free Data – Brighton & Hove Libraries

Jubilee Library has SIM cards preloaded with data that can be given to people age 18+ who are from a low-income household and meet one of the follow criteria:

- No or insufficient access to the internet at home
- No or insufficient access to the internet away from home
- Cannot afford existing monthly contract or pay as you go

Library computers can be used for free for up to 1 hour a day (2 hours for concessionary members). Use the library Wi-Fi for free during opening hours.

For more information

Visit: Jubilee Library

Call: 01273 290800

Email: libraries@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Moving house

Apply for help with moving costs

Brighton & Hove City Council may be able to help with moving costs

Visit: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/benefits/help-and-support/apply-extra-help-removal-costs>

For Free or low-cost furniture options – see the ‘Household Items’ section

No recourse to public funds

Services that can support you

Voices in Exile (ViE)

ViE supports refugees, asylum seekers and those with no recourse to public funds. They offer immigration and general advice, a foodbank and help for people applying to the EU settlement scheme.

Call: 01273 328598 / 01273 082105

Visit: www.voicesinexile.org/

Sussex Interpreting Service (SIS)

SIS offers free help, support and information in other languages.

Call: 01273 702005

Visit: <https://sussexinterpreting.org.uk/>

The Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership (BMECP)

BMECP is a resource centre for the Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community in Brighton and Hove. They also offer a foodbank for people in crisis and drop-in advice sessions.

Call: 0300 303 1171

Visit: <https://bmecp.org.uk/about-us/>

Trust for Developing Communities (TDC) Social Prescribing Plus

TDC social prescribers help connect people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds to other people or groups to improve wellbeing. Get in touch for a free informal chat.

Call: 01273 234769

Visit: [Home - Trust for Developing Communities \(trustdevcom.org.uk\)](http://trustdevcom.org.uk)

Call: 07533 011417 (Sayanti Banerjee - Bengali speaking)

E-mail: Sayantibanerjee@trustdev.com.org.uk

Call: 07445 183142 (Maha Mustafa – Arabic speaking)

Email: mahamustafa@trustdev.com.org.uk

NRPF Network

Give general information about your rights, what help you can get and up to date news

Visit: [NRPF Network](#)

Free School Meals - NRPF

Some NRPF families can get support with Free School Meals, which also opens up eligibility for other options such as the [Holiday Activities and Food Scheme](#).

Find out about eligibility here: [Providing free school meals to families with no recourse to public funds \(NRPF\) - GOV.UK](#)

Apply for Free School Meals here: [Apply for free school meals](#)

Contact the Brighton & Hove Free School Meals Team to check eligibility:

We can undertake an online check for you in complete confidence - you will need to tell us your National Insurance Number or your National Asylum Seeker Number (NASS), your date of birth and your surname (as it appears on your benefit letter)
Email [Free School Meals](#) or call the Free School Meals team 01273 293497.

Help with food

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

Self-refer to a local food bank or get tips on cooking on a budget and recipe ideas

Visit: [Click on this link to see food bank options](#)

Other free/cheap food options

Visit: [Community Fridge – Brighton and Hove Food Partnership \(bhfood.org.uk\)](#)

Visit: [Home - The Real Junk Food Project Brighton \(realjunkfoodbrighton.co.uk\)](#)

Visit: [Very Local Food Hubs - Moulsecoomb & Bevendean - Home | Facebook](#)

Childcare funding

Two-year-olds whose family have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) may now be eligible for early years funding.

Email: familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Tel: 01273 293545 (Monday to Friday, 9.00am – 4.30pm, excluding bank holidays)

Help with housing

Brighton & Hove City Council Childrens Services may have a duty to assist a family with dependent children who are destitute and do not have recourse to public funds. If you concerned that a family is in this position a referral to Childrens Services should be made.

Visit: [Front Door for Families \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)

Adult Social Care may have a duty to help destitute adults who also have eligible care needs.

Visit: [Adult Social Care \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](http://brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Safety in the home

East Sussex Fire and Rescue

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service provide [FREE Home Safety Visits](#) where specially trained Safe and Wellbeing advisors offer fire safety advice around home. They will cover matters including fire safety, electrical safety, bedtime routines and escape routes; they also provide advice on a wide range of general support needs. They will fit free smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and other specialist equipment when needed.

Advisors have gathered a few ideas on [How to Heat Your Home Safely](#) while saving on energy bills this winter. Not only could these save people a few pennies, they will help reduce the chances of a fire.

Areas they can support with include:

- Trips and Falls
- Adequate Heating partners with the CABs Energyworks
- Security
- Equipment/Adaptations
- Disabilities/reduced Mobility
- Hygiene and Welfare
- General Support Needs
- Substance Misuse
- Obesity/Eating disorders
- Smoking
- Dementia
- Befriending

Call: 0800 177 7069 (free helpline)

Visit: [online](#) to book

Safety Net

You can make your home safer through our home safety scheme, which supplies a variety of safety items such as stair gates, bed guards, fireguards and cupboard locks.

You can get this help if you live in Brighton and Hove and any of the following are true:

- Have a child under the age of 2
- You are a young parent (under 20)
- You are receiving benefits (e.g. Universal Credit, Income Support)

- Have a child who is more at risk of unintentional injury at home
- You have attended hospital with your child because of an unintentional injury at home

Safety Net can also give you advice if your child is under 5 and more at risk of injury in the home.

Self-Refer

Call: 01273 411613

Email: homesafety@safety-net.org.uk

Professional Referral: If you are a health visitor or professional and would like to refer a family to the scheme please complete a [Home Safety Equipment Scheme referral form](#) and send it to the address on the form. [Click here](#)

School uniform

Smarter Uniforms

Smarter Uniforms has been making it easier for families to access second-hand school uniform since 2017. The Smarter Uniforms website has recently been updated to include lots of useful information for families who want to access both free and low-cost school uniforms as well as information about how to repair school uniform and tips for running a uniform sale.

The online marketplace has also been updated, and it is now even easier to buy, sell and request school uniforms and a new feature has been added making it possible for sellers to donate money from uniform sales to schools that have signed up to the schools fundraising initiative.

Smarter Uniforms also stock some non-branded items, suitable for any school.

Visit: www.smarteruniforms.org

Pelican Parcels (Professional Referral only)

Pelican Parcels is a children's charity working to help provide primary school children across Brighton & Hove with free non-branded items of uniform. Most items given out will be pre-loved but in excellent condition (as well as some new) and the clothing is provided alongside new school shoes and new PE trainers to eligible families in receipt of free school meals at the following schools (or children currently in any nursery but about to start in reception at these schools):

Please speak to a relevant professional for a referral e.g. your school, nursery, foodbank, Council contact, or local community organisation about accessing support.

Email: info@pelicanparcels.org.uk

Visit: www.pelicanparcels.org.uk

Contact Your school

If you are struggling with the cost of uniform contact your school and they may be able to help you.

Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF)

May be able to help with the cost of uniform by providing vouchers.

Visit: [apply for help from our Local Discretionary Social Fund](#)

Family Hubs reception areas

Have a limited supply of school uniform in the four main Family Hubs reception areas. You are welcome to pop in or call to see if they have what you need.

Visit: [How to contact Family Hubs and the Family Hub locations](#)

Call: 01273 293545

Email: familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Utilities

Discounts and grants

Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme is a one-off £150 discount off your electricity bill. If you are eligible, your electricity supplier will apply the discount to your bill. The money is not paid to you. You will usually get the discount automatically if you're eligible.

You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity and you're eligible. Contact your supplier to find out.

Visit: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme

Local Discretionary Social Fund

The fund provides help in an emergency with vouchers for fuel, food, and other essentials.

Call: 01273 293117 (option 1)

E-mail: LDSF@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/benefits/help-and-support/get-emergency-help-food-energy-bills-and-other-essentials

Cold Weather Payment

If you receive certain benefits, you will receive an automatic payment if the weather falls to zero degrees or lower over seven consecutive days.

Visit: www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

Winter Fuel Payment

Winter fuel payments. Guidance explains eligible adults will receive a letter in October or November telling you how much Winter Fuel Payment you'll get, [if you're eligible](#).

Visit: [Winter Fuel Payment: Overview - GOV.UK](#).

Priority Services Register - If you have children under five years of age

Energy suppliers **MUST** maintain your connection between 1st October and 31st March if you have children under five in your household – even if you are unable to pay your bills.

Register online

Visit: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register>

Other sources of help and advice

LEAP | The Energy and Money Saving Service | Free Advice (applyforleap.org.uk)

Visit: <https://applyforleap.org.uk/>

Save energy and water

Visit: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/topic/save-energy-and-water>

Help for Brighton & Hove residents with winter energy bills - BHESCO

Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove and Brighton & Hove Energy Services Cooperative (BHESCO) 'Energyworks' project provides advice to Brighton & Hove residents experiencing fuel poverty.

BHESCO offer support to help clients:

- Understand energy bills and metering
- Contact and negotiate with suppliers
- Find the best energy tariff
- Reduce energy costs
- Keep homes warm and dry
- Access financial and material support for energy costs and general cost-of-living
- Referrals to BHESCO for energy-saving measures
- Access schemes for home-improvements

Visit: <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/>

Call: 0333 090 9150. Leave us a message, we will call you back the same day

Email: energyworks@cabrightonhove.org

Or come to our in-person drop-in advice service: Thursdays, 1:15pm at Tisbury Road Offices, Hove Town Hall, Tisbury Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ

Grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills - Citizens Advice

Visit: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/>

web page: <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/>

Save money on your gas and electricity - Citizens Advice

Visit: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-a-better-energy-deal/save-money-on-your-gas-and-electricity/>

Energy advice for your home - Energy Saving Trust

Visit: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/>

Water

If you are struggling to pay your water bills, Southern Water can provide you with help and advice.

Visit: www.southernwater.co.uk/account/help-paying-your-bill

Options include **WaterSure** *reduced bills if you have 3 or more children under 19, in full-time education, or a medical condition which means you need to use more water.

Visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/water/water-supply/problems-with-paying-your-water-bill/watersure-scheme-help-with-paying-water-bills/

Working

Find out how working could improve your finances

Use a benefit calculator to check which working hours are the best option for you financially: **Visit:** [Better Off Calculator | Policy In Practice](#)

Top tip: If you are claiming UC the Jobcentre can help pay towards deposit and upfront childcare costs when you start work, along with travel costs and work clothing. You can also get 85% of your childcare costs paid back into your UC

once you are working. Write on your journal when you are offered work that you need help from the Flexible Support Fund to access this.

Back to Work Support

Family Hubs – Employment Support

There are Employment Advisors in Family Hubs that can offer employment support and childcare advice. The advisers work with parents to help them improve their confidence, gain work experience, work skills, develop a CV, improve their job hunting methods, practice interview skills and find work.

Call: 01273 293545

Email: familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Supported Employment Team

Help for people with disabilities to find and stay in work. This includes people with learning difficulties and autism.

Visit: [complete the referral form](#)

Email: SET@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Youth Employment Hub

This is a virtual and physical hub based in Kemptown that supports young people up to the age of 25 who are unemployed or need careers, information, advice and support to enable them to take the next steps into work, volunteering, education or training.

Call: 01273 291654

Visit: [Youth Employment Hub \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](http://brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Youth Employability Service (YES)

For young people aged 16-19 and not in employment, education, or training. If you have a disability, learning disability or are a care leaver we work with those up to 25 years old.

Call: 01273 294 247

E-mail: youthemployabilityservice@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Visit: [Brighton & Hove City Council](#)

DWP Flexible Support Fund for starting work

A fund from the Jobcentre to support people claiming out of work benefits back into work. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and must show proof of need such as a job interview, job offer, travel receipts.

The fund can pay for ID, work clothing, travel costs, childcare costs, laptops and mobile phones.

The Flexible Support Fund from the Jobcentre can also help with upfront childcare costs and deposits. **Please see childcare section on page 9 of this factsheet.**

Contact: your work coach at the jobcentre via your UC Journal or go into the Jobcentre