**Key local and national support with**

**energy, food and other essential costs**

*Brighton & Hove, December 2023*

**PLEASE NOTE: This document is intended as a high-level reference guide for workers who may be signposting or referring the people they support.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Contents** | **Page** |
| Energy  | **2** |
| Food and other essentials  | **4** |
| Money, water & home safety  | **5** |
| Public Health advice and guidance on keeping warm and well at home | **7** |
| COVID-19 and Flu vaccinations | **9** |

**ENERGY**

|  |
| --- |
| **Energyworks** |

A partnership project between Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove and Brighton & Hove Energy Services Co-operative (BHESCo). Energyworks provides energy advice and grants to Brighton & Hove residents experiencing fuel poverty.

To refer yourself or someone else, choose one of the following routes:

* Call the Energyworks voicemail service on **0333 090 9150**. Leave a message and they will aim to call back the same day or as soon as possible after this.
* Send an email to energyworks@cabrightonhove.org
* Submit a request through the online referral form at [Energyworks Online Enquiry Form – Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove (cabrightonhove.org)](https://www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/online-enquiry-form/)
* Drop-in for advice service: Thursdays, 1:15pm at Tisbury Road Offices, Hove Town Hall, Tisbury Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ.

For more information on Energyworks, visit <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/>

**BHESCo**

Via the Energyworks project, BHESCo will deliver free home visits to qualifying households, offering energy advice, help with energy suppliers, installation of free energy-saving kit and emergency warmth items (e.g. lightbulbs, draught-proofing, radiator reflectors, portable heaters, thermal curtains, electric blankets).

To contact BHESCo directly, call **0800 999 6671** or email info@bhesco.co.uk with the subject heading:  Energy Advice. For more information on BHESCo, go to <https://bhesco.co.uk/fuel-poverty-energy-bills-brighton-hove>

|  |
| --- |
| **LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership)** |

A free service that helps people keep warm in their homes and reduce energy bills. Brighton & Hove City Council is a LEAP partner and this service is available with good capacity to eligible residents in Brighton & Hove.

The service includes energy advice, tariff and meter advice, installation of free small energy efficiency measures, income maximisation & fuel debt advice, onward referrals to other organisations where appropriate, boiler repair/replacement (owner occupiers only, where/when available), white goods (where/when available).

LEAP has broad eligibility criteria: [Check Your Eligibility | LEAP | Local Energy Advice Partnership (applyforleap.org.uk)](https://applyforleap.org.uk/eligibility/)

To refer yourself or someone else, visit [Apply Now | LEAP | Local Energy Advice Partnership (applyforleap.org.uk)](https://applyforleap.org.uk/apply/)

Phone free on **0800 060 7567** or email support@applyforleap.org.uk if you have any problems using the online form.

|  |
| --- |
| **National Energy Action (NEA) - Warm & Safe Homes Advice Service (WASH)** |

Free, impartial support and advice for vulnerable and low-income customers. The charity can help with gas and electricity accounts, inability to pay and energy debt, Priority Service Register, energy efficiency and water rates, trust fund applications, benefits advice and income maximisation. Pre-payment vouchers are sometimes available.

To contact the WASH Advice Service call **0800 304 7159**, apply online at <https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/wash-advice/> or **use the chat function on the website** to speak directly to an adviser who can give tailored advice. We work with LanguageLine and BSL interpreters to provide advice to non-English speaking clients. The phonelines are often busy so clients can leave a message and they will be contacted as soon as possible.

NEA can also offer in person or online workshops for at risk groups, providing free, impartial advice on switching, bills, supplier issues, energy debt, grant applications and more. Please contactrebecca.jones@nea.org.uk for more information or make a request directly at [https://www.nea.org.uk/speaker-request](https://www.nea.org.uk/speaker-request/).

|  |
| --- |
| **Brighton & Hove City Council** |

**Disabled Facilities Grants**

**Warm Safe Homes Grant** - for eligible householders who are owner occupiers or living in privately rented homes. Up to £20,000 for works to make homes warmer and more energy efficient, such as safety checks and repairs, boiler repair/replacement, loft/cavity wall insulation, replacement of windows and doors, other forms of heating, roofing and guttering repairs.

Grants are also available for older and disabled people, including children, to help prevent falls and injury in the home and assist hospital discharge. These are all non-repayable grants with a simple application process.

To apply, contact the Disabled Facilities Grant Team at disabledfacilitiesgrant@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call **01273 294366.** For the hospital discharge grant, contact Possability Peopleon **01273 069851** orHDS@possabilitypeople.org.uk.

For more information about the range of assistance on offer go to: [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care/care-and-support-adults/changes-your-home](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care/care-and-support-adults/changes-your-home)

**Warm Welcome Directory** - Indoor activities and warm places to go this winter:

[www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support/warm-welcome-directory-indoor-activities-and-warm-places-go-winter](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support/warm-welcome-directory-indoor-activities-and-warm-places-go-winter)

**Find out if you can get support with your energy bills** and get advice about how to keep your home warm and save energy at [Help with energy bills (brighton-hove.gov.uk)](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=99b87a6f11&e=a89bd7ed66)

|  |
| --- |
| **National support** |

National advice and support is available and it’s worth checking to see if you qualify for a discount on your energy bills.

Information on all the energy bill support available from the government can be found on the [GOV.UK help with your energy bills page](https://www.gov.uk/get-help-energy-bills).

The government’s [Help for Households website](https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/) has information on what support is available to help with the cost of living and how to save money on your energy bills.

You can also [visit Ofgem’s website for the latest energy advice, support and information.](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households)

**Food & Other Essentials**

|  |
| --- |
| **Brighton & Hove City Council - Household Support Fund** |

**Food, energy & other essentials**

For people struggling to pay for food, energy and other essentials, help through the Household Support Fund is available this winter, whether or not you’re currently receiving benefits. Funding is limited and residents in emergency situations will be prioritised. Only one award can be made to each household.

Apply online at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/household-support-fund](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/household-support-fund)

If you can’t get online, call **01273 293117** (select option 1 if you receive benefits,or option 2 if you don’t receive benefits).Phone lines are open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4.30pm. Phone interpreters are available on this number.

You can find more advice and support at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support)

|  |
| --- |
| **Brighton & Hove Food Partnership**  |

Information on all the local support available for people struggling to buy food, including signposting to the city’s food banks and to organisations that can provide referrals or food bank vouchers.

**Food Emergency:** <https://bhfood.org.uk/resources/referring-to-a-food-bank/>

**Food Poverty:** <https://bhfood.org.uk/food-insecurity-advice/>

* There are a range of [affordable food projects](https://bhfood.org.uk/how-to-hub/low-cost-and-free-community-shopping/) across the city, where you can pick up a weekly shop cheaper than your average supermarket.
* We also have information on [free & cheap meals](https://bhfood.org.uk/low-cost-meals-for-delivery-takeaway/) outside the home e.g. lunch clubs, community cafes and other shared meals.
* You can pick up surplus food from Real Junk Food Project at [Bevendean Food Hub](https://bhfood.org.uk/directory/real-junk-food-project-bevendean-food-hub/) on a pay-as-you-feel basis.
* There are three [Community Fridges](https://bhfood.org.uk/directory-hub/community-fridge/) in Brighton where you can pick up surplus food for free.

For more information, visit [www.bhfood.org.uk](http://www.bhfood.org.uk) or call **01273 234810.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Impact Initiatives - Food Access** |

Emergency on-the-day service for people with no access to funds and support for individuals to find long term solutions removing barriers to accessing food and shopping. We work with Brighton and Hove residents who are aged 18+ and are struggling to get food due to lack of money or other barriers.

Call **01273 322950**, email food.access@impact-initiatives.org.uk or use the online contact form at [www.impact-initiatives.org.uk/services/food-services](http://www.impact-initiatives.org.uk/services/food-services).

|  |
| --- |
| **Free School Meals & Healthy Start Vouchers** |

**Free School Meals**

For information on who can get free school meals and how to apply online, visit

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/free-school-meals>, call **01273 293497** or email freeschoolmeals@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

**Healthy Start Vouchers**

If you’re more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. If you’re eligible, you’ll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. We’ll add your benefit onto this card every 4 weeks. Find out more and apply at [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)or call **0300 330 7010**

**Money, Water & Home Safety**

|  |
| --- |
| **Moneyworks** |

A partnership of community advice agencies across the city who can help with all money issues, including fuel bill payments and vouchers, debt and benefits help, foodbank referrals, getting a bank account, getting online. To access the service, contact either:

* **Moneyworks –** the best way to contact isvia the online form to request a call back or an email back from an adviser: <https://advicebrighton-hove.org.uk/adviceline-questionnaire/>. Or call Moneyworks Advicelineon **0800 988 7037** (open Mon 2-5, Tue 2-5, Wed 10-, Thu 2-5, Fri 10-1).
* **Citizens Advice Helpline** on **08082 78 78 15** or go to <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/get-advice>

|  |
| --- |
| **Southern Water**  |

Help and advice for people struggling to afford water bills, including discounts and support from Southern Water and free, water-saving home visits and operational support in the event of a water outage.

**Help with paying your water bill:**

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/account/help-paying-your-bill>

**Free, water-saving home visits:**

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/help-advice/how-to-save-water/water-saving-home-visits>

**Operational Support in the event of a water outage:**

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/register-for-individual-needs>

|  |
| --- |
| **East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS)** |

**Help for people to save money safely and keep warm this winter**.

Visit <https://www.esfrs.org/contact-us/getting-involved/save-safely/> for ideas on saving money and reducing the chances of a fire.

**Keeping warm and fire advice - Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove and ESFRS**

Lots of useful information on the different methods people may be using to heat their homes and how to do this safely: <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/campaigns/keeping-warm-and-fire-advice-energyworks>

**Free** [Home Safety Visits](http://www.esfrs.org/your-safety/home-safety-visits)offer a range of advice on keeping the home warm safely; falls and accident prevention; health and wellbeing; escape route planning and much more. ESFRS will also fit free smoke alarms and other specialist equipment when needed. To find out more call **0800 177 7069** (freephone) or visit <https://www.esfrs.org/your-safety/home-safety-visits>.

**Free Fire Safety Training Sessions** can also be delivered to front line staff / volunteers offering advice, guidance and best practice for fire safety in the home. [Book a training session here](https://www.esfrs.org/your-safety/safer-homes/care-providers-fire-safety-scheme/).

|  |
| --- |
| **KEY PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGES****Advice and guidance on keeping warm and well at home** |

**Keep your home warm, efficient and safe:**

Try to heat the rooms you use to at least 18°C if you can, as this reduces the risk to health of someone wearing suitable warm clothing.

* Cold weather can have a serious impact on health, and it is important to try and heat the rooms you use to at least 18°C if you can, particularly if you have reduced mobility, are 65 and over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease.
* Overnight, people who are 65 and over or who have pre-existing health conditions, may find bedroom temperatures of at least 18°C are good for their health; this may be less important if you are a healthy adult under 65 and have appropriate clothing and bedding.
* If you can’t heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room during the day and your bedroom just before you go to sleep.
* Get your heating system and cooking appliances checked and keep your home well ventilated.
* If you have an electric blanket, use it as instructed and get it tested every three years. Never use a hot water bottle with an electric blanket.
* Do not use a gas cooker or oven to heat your home; it is inefficient and there is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning which can kill.
* If you are not on mains gas or electricity, make sure you have a good supply of heating oil, LPG or solid fuel so you do not run out in winter.

**Keep the warmth in your home:**

* Fit draught-proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors.
* Make sure you have loft insulation. And if you have cavity walls, make sure they are insulated too.
* Insulate your hot water cylinder and pipes.
* Draw your curtains at dusk and tuck behind radiators to help keep heat inside.
* Make sure your radiators are not obstructed by furniture or curtains.

**Look after yourself:**

* Keeping well will allow you to do more and keep your independence. Being cold isn’t just uncomfortable it can be bad for your health. Sitting or sleeping in a cold room is not good for you and increases the risk of heart attacks, stroke and breathing problems. Don’t let the cold catch you out, check the weather forecast and be ready for cold weather.
* Keep your bedroom windows closed on cold nights. Breathing cold air can increase the risk of chest infections.
* Exercise is good for you all year round and it can keep you warm in winter.
* Keep moving if you can, this will help keep you warm. Try not to sit for more than an hour, get up and walk around, make a hot drink and spread housework throughout the day.
* Wear a few layers of thin clothing rather than one thick layer; this will trap the heat to keep you warm.  Thin layers of clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are best for maintaining body heat.
* Wear shoes with a good grip to prevent slips and falls. Make sure you have spare medication in case you are unable to go out.
* Food is a vital source of energy and helps to keep your body warm so have plenty of hot food and drinks.
* Aim to include five daily portions of fruit and vegetables. Tinned and frozen vegetables count towards your five a day.
* Prepare for cold weather. Stock up on tinned and frozen foods, warm clothes and any medication so you don’t have to go out too much when it’s cold or icy.
* Power and utility companies have schemes which make at-risk groups a priority for reconnection following power cuts. Find out if you meet the criteria and if so, sign up. Visit <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/consumers/household-gas-and-electricity-guide/extra-help-energy-services/priority-services-register-people-need> for more information

**Look after others:**

* All of the advice for looking after yourself can be used to plan how to help others.
* Check on frail or older neighbours or relatives, especially those living alone or who have serious illnesses to make sure they are safe, warm and well.
* Ask about living in a cold home and support vulnerable individuals to access existing resources to keep warm.
* Those with care responsibilities, whether that’s for family members or on a professional or voluntary basis, should consult the [Cold Weather Plan for England](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england) for a range of useful advice.
* In advance of winter, carers should be aware of how to refer to local housing and health services if further support is required.
* Charities, social and health care organisations should ensure that carers of those most at-risk are getting the support and advice they need to protect those who may be vulnerable to the ill-effects of cold weather.

**Useful resources on how to stay well and warm in winter:**

* [How to stay well this winter](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=a4d20c6ced&e=a89bd7ed66) webpages and has easy read, large print and audio resources.
* [Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=772812e91b&e=a89bd7ed66)
* [16 tips on how to stay warm in cold weather](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=66d640d642&e=a89bd7ed66)
* [Keep well this winter AgeUK](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=4e4610aa26&e=a89bd7ed66) web pages
* Health and Safety advice on [Slips and trips - Icy conditions and winter weather (hse.gov.uk)](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8b19e79423fcad078c2d810bd&id=93f461fe6a&e=a89bd7ed66)

|  |
| --- |
| COVID-19 and Flu vaccinations  |

All those who are at greater risk from the COVID-19 and flu viruses should take the extra protection offered by vaccination this winter.

**COVID-19 vaccine**

**Who is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination this autumn?**

* Residents in care homes for adults
* People aged 65 years and older
* People aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
* People who are pregnant
* Carers in receipt of carer’s allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
* Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
* Frontline workers in health and social care settings

**Community pharmacies** will continue to provide bookable appointments and some walk-ins for people who are eligible. These can be booked:

* through the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/)
* using the NHS App
* by calling 119

If you can’t find a time or location that suits you, keep checking back as more times and locations will be added as soon as they are available.

**Flu vaccine**

Eligibility for [free NHS flu vaccines](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/) is the same as above, plus also:

* all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023
* school-aged children (from Reception to Year 11)

Adults should be invited by their GP. Once invited, you should book an appointment with your GP or [a pharmacy that offers the flu vaccine](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/pharmacy-nhs-flu-vaccine-service/) as soon as possible to ensure you are protected ahead of winter.

Most children are offered the flu vaccine as a nasal spray. Younger children will be invited by their GP and school-aged children will be offered this through their schools. Parents are strongly encouraged to fill out their consent forms to enable their child to get protected.

**More information** about the [local vaccination programme is available on the Sussex Health and Care website](https://www.sussex.ics.nhs.uk/your-care/covid-19-vaccination/).

*This resource was compiled by Sarah Podmore, Health Promotion Specialist,*

*Public Health, Brighton & Hove City Council; November 2023.*

*sarah.podmore@brighton-hove.gov.uk*