

Cost of Living Crisis



Shooting Star
Children's Hospices

We understand that the rising cost of living is having a particular impact on vulnerable families, and we appreciate how scary this may feel. We are sorry we cannot offer financial support to families and we hope the advice below may be helpful to you.

1. Have you contacted your Local Council to hear about their support?

All councils are offering financial advice and may have rebates or grants which can be accessed. Visit www.gov.uk/find-local-council to find the best contact details for your local council.

- Surrey: Warmth Matters (Provided by Surrey Community Action)
 - Tips on reducing your energy usage: www.surreyca.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Top-tips-for-managing-your-money.pdf
 - Further advice and support: www.surreyca.org.uk/advice-and-support/warmth-matters
 - County Council response: www.surreycc.gov.uk/community/surrey-matters/magazine/your-council/cost-of-living-financial-support-available
- Brent: www.brent.gov.uk/benefits-and-money-advice
- Croydon: www.croydon.gov.uk/get-help-rising-cost-living
- Ealing: www.ealing.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport
- Hammersmith & Fulham: www.lbhf.gov.uk/cost-living-crisis-find-help-here
- Harrow: www.harrow.gov.uk/benefits/cost-living-support
- Hillingdon: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/cost-of-living
- Hounslow: www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/19999/your_council_and_elections/2432/support_while_the_cost_of_living_rises
- Kensington & Chelsea: www.rbkc.gov.uk/cost-living-support-hub
- Kingston upon Thames: www.kingston.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport
- Lambeth: beta.lambeth.gov.uk/cost-living-crisis-support
- Merton: www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/money-advice/cost-of-living
- Richmond upon Thames: www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost_of_living_hub
- Sutton: www.sutton.gov.uk/w/cost-of-living-support-1
- Wandsworth: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/cost-of-living-hub
- Westminster: www.westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

2. Have you checked if there is anything that can be done about your energy bill?

Speak with your energy provider to check that you are on the lowest rate possible. Have a look at the meter in your home. It has a unique registration number. Check that the number on your meter matches the number on your bill (this is different to your customer number). Talk to your energy provider as many companies will provide a discount for vulnerable families. It is helpful to call your energy provider to inform them of your living situation, detailing the needs within your household.

3. Did you know that we have a food bank that all families of Shooting Star Children's Hospices can access?

Contact familysupport@shootingstar.org.uk and we will provide vouchers for a local food bank.

4. Did you know that community hubs have money they can distribute?

Lions Charity is a nationwide scheme which forms community hubs to respond to a rising need within the local community. There are currently over 600 nationwide. Contact your local Lion Charity to ask whether there are any local schemes that could support you.

www.lionsclubs.co/Public/contact-us

5. Do you require heating and plumbing services at home?

DEPHER will come to your home to make repairs free-of-charge during the winter months. They also provide a discounted service the rest of the year. Please visit **www.depher.com/get-help-now/** for more information.

6. Have you thought about using a toy library to enhance and encourage your child's development without having to buy new toys?

www.familyinformationdirectory.surreycc.gov.uk/kb5/surrey/fsd/home.page

Visit the above website to find local toy libraries across Surrey. Please google toy libraries in your local area to find your closest toy library.

7. Have you booked an independent visit to Shooting Star House?

Shooting Star House can be used for you and your family to spend time in a heated premises, whilst accessing the resources at the hospice. Book to use our Art & Crafts Room or Sensory Room and stay a while – we would love to see you.

Bookings can be made at: **www.shootingstar.org.uk/how-we-help/family-zone/events-and-activities/**

8. Have you discovered other warm hubs in your local area?

Organisations are hosting sessions for families to spend time together for free in a warm space. If it is too expensive for your family to run the heating at home this winter, consider finding a safe space where you could complete homework, charge devices, meet with others and eat together.

www.surreycc.gov.uk/health-and-welfare/support/welfare-support/everyday-living/warm-hubs/list-of-warm-hubs-in-surrey

Information about warm hubs outside the Surrey area can be found on your local authority website.

9. Did you know there are several charities that can help you with equipment, benefits and managing your finances?

Scope offers practical support through a helpline for parents. This helpline supports enquiries on benefits, finance, social care, work, equipment and assistive technology, housing and home adaptations.

www.scope.org.uk

My Family, Our Needs provides financial advice for families with disabled children and a helpful place to check whether you are receiving the correct benefits to support your family.

www.myfamilyourneeds.co.uk/supporting-your-child/disabled-children-benefits-financial/

Contact supports families who have children with any health condition or additional need. They have a freephone helpline staffed by advisers who can help with a wide range of topics including grants/funding. They run some financial advice workshops and are a hub of information to help you manage your finances and reduce spending with helpful tips.

www.contact.org.uk

www.contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/money-debt/energy-saving-tips

Carers UK website – If you are a carer, have you checked you are receiving all benefits you are entitled to? Have you had a Carer's Assessment by the local council to see if you are eligible for support?

www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support

10. Have you checked the Turn2us directory to see who may be able to help you?

Turn2us help people in financial need gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help – online, by phone and face to face through partner organisations.

www.turn2us.org.uk

11. Have you informed your Social Worker?

We urge you to inform your Social Worker of the specific difficulties that you are facing.

12. Have you made a charity application?

Charlie & Carter Foundation can provide up to two months of support for bills/rent etc. The criteria is:

- The sick child must be diagnosed with a life-limiting condition – confirmed in writing from a medical professional
 - The parent/s must care for the sick child up to 16 years old
 - One of the parents must have had to leave their job or reduce working hours to care for their child
- Engage Foundation: www.engagemutual.com/foundation
 - Family Fund: www.familyfund.org.uk for essential items
 - League of the Helping Hand: help those who are living on a very low income, receiving the appropriate welfare benefits and who have exhausted all other funding sources including statutory funding, occupational, local and specialist charities.

We are aware of one or two other funds that some families will be eligible for. Please speak with us if you wish to find out more.

13. Are you in financial crisis?

If your financial difficulties have become overwhelming and you are facing debt, please contact StepChange debt charity who can offer you a debt management plan. Your situation can change for the better.

www.stepchange.org

Are you facing homelessness? Contact Shelter for advice and support.

england.shelter.org.uk/get_help

Visit MoneyHelper for government-endorsed advice on a wide range of financial topics, including money troubles, savings, benefits, housing and work. If you are overwhelmed by multiple debts, visit their Bill Prioritiser to help you tackle your bills, step by step.

www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/way-forward/bill-prioritiser

14. What have we done to advocate for you?

Along with other charities, Shooting Star Children's Hospices added their signature to a letter composed by Together for Short Lives. This was to inform government of the impact of cost of living on families who have a child or young person with a life-limiting condition.

If you would like more information or to speak to one of the team,
contact Family Support on 01483 230 974 / familysupport@shootingstar.org.uk