

# **COST OF LIVING CRISIS**



**Helpful Information Booklet**

# Labour in The New Forest

Inflation is running at a record high. Food, fuel and household bills are rising all the time. Wages are not keeping up with inflation and public services are under pressure. Although the New Forest is an area that benefits from above average wealth, many of our residents are suffering from the cost of living crisis. Many are looking for help and are struggling to find it.

We hope this booklet can offer advice or assistance to as many people as possible.

<https://newforestwest.laboursites.org/>



Fordingbridge Labour / Lymington Labour / New Milton Labour / Ringwood Labour



[nfelabour.org](https://nfelabour.org)



New Forest East Labour Party

## Three Key Services in the Forest

### Citizens Advice New Forest

Citizens Advice offers advice in debt, benefits, employment, housing and more general advice in the form of their many useful online guides. To speak to someone face to face contact them by phone, the online form or drop in during the opening times.

<https://newforestcab.org.uk/>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> (for online advice)

Advice line: 0808 278 78 60

### Local councils: New Forest District Council & Hampshire County Council

Check out the two councils for key public services and for advice.

**New Forest District** <https://newforest.gov.uk/costofliving>

ways to contact <https://newforest.gov.uk/article/1162/Contact-us> Tel: 023 8028 5000

**Hampshire County Council** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/>

ways to contact <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/contact> Tel: 0300 555 1375



# Energy and Household Bills



## Citizens Advice New Forest

Contact Citizens Advice New Forest for help with energy bills. Tel: 0808 278 7860. They will advise on eligibility for any of the current energy help schemes.

### Warm Home Discount Scheme

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2022 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. You can get this discount if you: Get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension credit - known as the 'core group' or on a low income and meet your energy suppliers' criteria for the scheme.

### Warmer Homes Programme

The Warmer Homes Programme offers a variety of energy efficiency measures within the home, including: insulation, solar panels and heat pumps. You may qualify for the funding if your home has an EPC rating of E, F or G and either you have a total household income of £30,000 or less, or you receive means tested benefit. Apply online at:

[www.warmerhomes.org.uk/apply-lad-programme](http://www.warmerhomes.org.uk/apply-lad-programme)

Local Adviceline 0808 278 78 60

## Council tax discount, reductions and exemptions

You may be entitled to a Council Tax discount, exemption or reduction depending on your circumstances. You will need to contact New Forest District Council

<https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1241/Council-Tax-Discounts-and-Exemptions>

## Energy Saving Trust

Energy Saving Trust is a British organisation devoted to promoting energy efficiency, conservation, and the sustainable use of energy.

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



## Switch and Save - energy bills

Hampshire County Council and 160 other councils take part in three collective energy switching schemes a year. Year on year, the scheme has delivered more competitive tariffs for households.

<https://www.switch-plan.co.uk/energy/hampshire/>

## British Gas Energy Trust

The British Gas Energy Trust helps families and individuals experiencing hardship who are struggling with their energy debts.

<https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/>

## Winter fuel payment

If you were born on or before 25 September 1956 you could get between £250 and £600 to help you pay your heating bills during the winter months.

<https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>



**Heat the human not the home**

## Heat the Human, Not the Home

From hot water bottles to electric blankets to USB hand warmers – there are ways out there to keep yourself warm without turning up the thermostat.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/heat-the-human-not-the-home-save-energy/>

## Broadband support

If you are on certain benefits, you may be entitled to cheaper broadband. Many companies offer these social tariffs, but they are not well advertised.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/compare-broadband-deals/broadband-social-tariffs/>

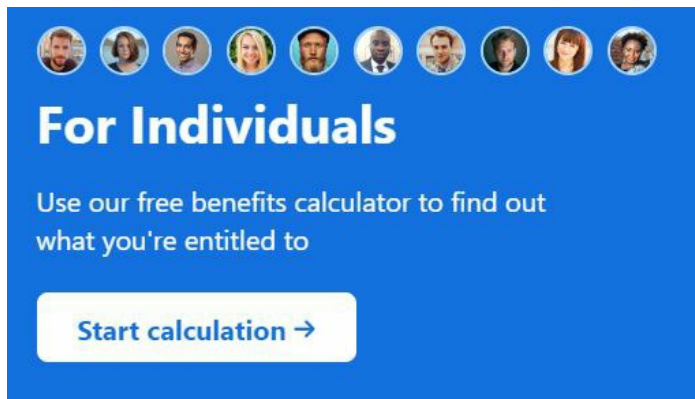


# Benefits, Tax and Grants

## Entitledto

Entitledto is an online benefits calculator. It informs you of all the benefits you are entitled to and whether they are being paid at the correct rate. There is also a tool that shows you how to apply for benefits.

<https://www.entitledto.co.uk>

A blue banner for the Entitledto website. At the top, there is a row of ten small circular profile pictures of diverse people. Below this, the text reads "For Individuals" in large white font. Underneath, it says "Use our free benefits calculator to find out what you're entitled to" in smaller white text. At the bottom, there is a white button with the text "Start calculation →" in blue.

## Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice has a wealth of information about benefits, tax issues and other relating financial support.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/>

## SupportLine

SupportLine is particularly aimed at those who are isolated, at risk, vulnerable and victims of any form of abuse. SupportLine gives advice on bereavement, alcohol abuse as well as benefits advice

<https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/benefits/>

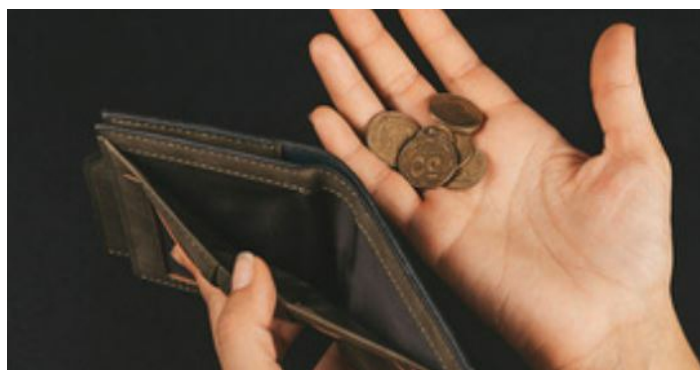
Helpline: 01708 765200



## Household Support Fund

New Forest District Council runs the Household Support Fund to help households facing financial challenges due to the cost of living rises, particularly vulnerable persons such as children or the elderly. Its aim is to support residents struggling with food and utility bills.

<https://newforest.gov.uk/article/2964/Household-Support-Fund>



## Turn2us

Turn2us has an extensive database that can help you to search for and apply for charitable grants, money which does not need to be paid back and which is given specific to your needs such as school uniforms or essential items such as a fridge.

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) Turn2us helpline: 0808 802 2000



## Pension Credit

Pension Credit is a means tested benefit for retired people with a low income. People receiving it are entitled to other support including help with household costs, dental treatment and free TV Licence after you turn 75.

<https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit>

Pension Credit Claim Line: 0800 99 1234

## Tax Relief for Employees

You might be able to claim tax relief if you are a taxpayer and you use your own money for things you must buy for your job such as uniforms, clothing, tools, professional fees and subscriptions. You may also be able to offset travel and overnight expenses and additional household costs if you have had to work from home.

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

## Marriage tax allowance

If you are married or in a civil partnership and have a lower income than your spouse, as long as your income is below the Income Tax threshold and theirs is above, you may be entitled to Marriage Tax Allowance.

<https://www.gov.uk/marriage-allowance>

Income Tax Helpline: 0300 2003 300

# Local Food & Goods Support

## New Forest Basics Bank

New Forest Basics Bank is a charity that provides food and other essentials for people in need in the New Forest. It was set up in 2004 under Churches Together in Lymington and Pennington.

<https://basicsbank.org.uk/>

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## Ringwood Bank

Emergency food boxes for those in Ringwood, Fordingbridge and Verwood.

[www.ringwood.foodbank.org](http://www.ringwood.foodbank.org)

Tel: 01425 600134

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## Waterside Foodbank

For Holbury, Hythe and Fawley plus surrounding areas.

[watersidefoodbank.org.uk](http://watersidefoodbank.org.uk)

Tel: 07768 713329

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## Totton Bank

For Totton and Calmore plus surrounding areas.

[youthandfamiliesmatter.org.uk/basics-bank](http://youthandfamiliesmatter.org.uk/basics-bank)

Tel: 02380 860320

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## Community Fridges

Community Fridges are publicly available fridges which store unwanted fresh food from the local area, so it can be passed onto those who can make use of it.

**Ringwood Community Fridge**, Ringwood Library, Christchurch Road, BH24 1DW

Open: Tue, Wed, Thur - 9.30 - 5.00 Fri 11.00 - 1.30, Sat 9.30 - 1.30, Sun 4.30 - 5.30

**Fordingbridge Community Fridge**, Fordingbridge Library, Roundhill, SP6 1AQ

Open: Tue 9.30 - 3.00, Wed 10.00 - 5.00, Fri 10.00 - 5.00, Sat 10.00 - 1.00

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## Lyndhurst Food Bank

Supporting local people in Lyndhurst, Emery Down and Bank who need extra help.

[lyndhurstfoodbank.co.uk](http://lyndhurstfoodbank.co.uk)

Tel: 07485 489275

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## New Forest Food Larders



FareShare food larders visit sites across the New Forest with supplies of dried, fresh and chilled food

to FareShare members. Membership is free.

<https://fareshare.org.uk/getting-food/>

### Tuesdays

**New Milton Open: 9.30 - 10.30**

Ashley Baptist Church, New Milton, BH25 5AA

### Wednesdays

**New Milton Open: 9.30 - 10.30**

Nedderman Centre, Marryat Road, New Milton, BH25 5NY

### Thursdays

**Pennington Open: 9.30 - 10.30**

Marks Community Hall, The Square, Pennington, SO41 8QN

**Bransgore Open: 9.30 - 10.30**

Friday at St Mary the Virgin Church, Ringwood Road, Bransgore, BH23 8JH

### Fridays

**Ringwood Open: 1.30 - 2.30**

Ringwood Leisure centre, Ringwood, BH24 1PX

**Fordingbridge Open: 1.30 - 2.30**

Friday at St Mary's Church, Fordingbridge, SP6 1BB

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## Step Up Safe Space

They collect donated used school uniforms, clothes and toys to pass on to its members and operate in our local area. [www.stepupsafespace.com](http://www.stepupsafespace.com)

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## British Red Cross

British Red Cross offer for short term loan, mobility aids such as crutches and wheelchairs. A donation is encouraged. Tel: 01590 679529

Lymington Centre, New Road, Lymington, SO 41 9BQ Open: 10.00 - 1.00 weekdays

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## New Forest Disability

Free confidential disability related advice including benefits, equipment, Blue Badges etc.

6-8 Osborne Road, New Milton, BH25 6AD

[www.newforestdis.org.uk](http://www.newforestdis.org.uk) Tel: 01425 628750

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# Housing Support



## New Forest District Council Housing Advice

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness, or your current property is not suitable, NFDC can provide support to help to resolve the problem. This could be helping you secure a more affordable home by giving you priority on the Homesearch housing register.

<https://newforest.gov.uk/housing>

### Discretionary Housing Payments

These payments, which are made by the district council, are intended to help with rental shortfalls. You are eligible if you are receiving either Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. The maximum award that will be made is the difference between your benefit award and your rent.

<https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1010/Discretionary-Housing-Payments>

### Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI)

If you are a homeowner, you may be able to get help to pay the interest on your mortgage or a home improvement loan. To be eligible, you need to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit, and you should contact the office that pays this benefit to confirm whether you are eligible.

<https://www.gov.uk/support-for-mortgage-interest>

### South Hampshire Women's Refuge

Women's Aid is the national charity working to end violence against women and children, providing refuges, help-lines, outreach services and advice centres for women and children affected by domestic and sexual violence.

<https://www.nhs.uk/services/service-directory/south-hampshire-womens-refuge/N10968282>

Tel 02380 637 550



## Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice has a lot of information about housing from renting privately, homelessness, mortgage and rent issues.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/>

## Shelter

Shelter is a charity that helps thousands of households each year, through a free emergency helpline, online guides, access to free legal advice or housing support.



<https://england.shelter.org.uk/>

## Homeless Link



Homeless England is the most comprehensive database of Homelessness services. It is constantly updated and lists of 1500 projects up and down the country with contact details and service descriptions. It is provided by Homeless Link to promote joint working across the sector and to help individuals find local services.

<https://homeless.org.uk/>





# Health and Well-Being

## Better Health, Healthier Families

Better Health exists to motivate and enable the nation to lead active and healthy lives. It's there to support and encourage all of us in taking steps to improve our physical and mental health.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>

## Age UK

Age UK is a local and national charity working in the community to support older people, their families and carers. It offers free advice, home help and dementia support.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/> Tel: 0800 678 1602

## Italk

Italk is a Hampshire based service offering free NHS Talking Therapies in a wide range of ways, by phone, in person, in classes, groups and 1-1 without needing to see a GP.



[www.italk.org.uk](http://www.italk.org.uk)

Tel: 023 8038 3920

## Domestic Abuse Support

For some people, being at home can mean that they are at greater risk of suffering abuse. Help and support services for people suffering are offered by Hampshire County Council. Refuges remain open and the police will provide support to all who are being abused, physically, emotionally, or otherwise.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/domesticabuse>

## South Hampshire Women's Refuge

Women's Aid is the national charity working to end violence against women and children, providing refuges, help-lines, outreach services and advice centres for women and children affected by domestic and sexual violence.

<https://www.nhs.uk/services/service-directory/south-hampshire-womens-refuge/N10968282>

Tel 02380 637 550

## Solent Mind

Solent Mind is a national and local mental health charity. For over 50 years Mind has been developing and delivering services with, and for, people with mental health problems. It aims to ensure everyone with a mental health problem gets the support they need. It also offers alternative mental health treatment services.

<https://www.solentmind.org.uk/>

Tel: 024 7655 2847



## Health Watch Hampshire

They are here to listen to what you like about services and what you think could be improved. No matter how big or small the issue, they want to hear about it. You can also speak to them to find information about health and social care services available locally.

<https://www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk/>

Tel: 01962 440262



## Samaritans Southampton and District

Samaritans is a registered charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide throughout the United Kingdom, often through its telephone helpline.

<https://www.samaritans.org/branches/southampton/>

116123 free or local 0330 094 5717

# Families and Children

## NHS Healthy Start Scheme

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. You'll be sent a Healthy Start card with cash on it you can use in some UK shops to buy essential items.

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>



## Tax Free Childcare

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider.

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

## Sure Start Maternity Grant

A one-off payment of £500 to help towards the costs of having a child. You usually qualify if you are having your first child, or if you are expecting a multiple birth, and if you or your partner receive certain benefits.

<https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant>

## Family Information Service

Here you will find information about what is going on in your area, details on how to access services, organisations and activities in Hampshire, and the advice and support that is available.

<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/home.page>

## Family Fund

If you're raising a disabled or seriously ill child on a low income, Family Fund might be able to help with various grants.

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/FAQs/how-do-we-apply>



## Children and Family Centres

Children and family centres offer flexible support for families with young people aged 0-19 (25 with additional needs). Services are on offer at 14 centres and outreach venues in Hampshire. Support is for all children and families with an extra focus on pregnancy and the early years of a child's life.

<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/home.page>

## Action for Children

The tailored support they offer helps families cope – and gives disabled children a chance to thrive. Last year, they helped more than 22,000 disabled children, young people and their families with our specialist services - including trips and dedicated support.

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/children-and-families/families-with->





## Money Saving Expert

This site has tips and guides to saving money, spending less and links to deals and special offers. The site also hosts live forums to discuss financial issues and consumer rights.

[www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)

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## Step Change

Free, confidential, debt advice and solutions, including help with Debt Management Plans, IVAs, DROs, bankruptcy, maximising savings and equity release.

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

Tel: 0800 138 1111



## MoneyHelper

MoneyHelper is here to help, so you can move on with life. Here to cut through the jargon and complexity, explain what you need to do and how you can do it. Here to put you in control, with free, impartial help that's quick to find, easy to use and backed by government.

[www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

Tel: 0800 011 379

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## PayPlan

Free, impartial and confidential specialist debt advice, recommended by Orbit Housing for their tenants. You can speak to an advisor online or over the phone, access advice sheets and create a personalised debt plan.

<https://www.payplan.com/>

Tel: 0800 280 2816

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## Citizens Advice New Forest

Citizens Advice offers advice in debt, benefits, employment, housing, or more general advice in the form of their many useful online guides. To speak to someone face to face contact them by phone, the online form or drop in during the opening times.

<https://newforestcab.org.uk/>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> (for online advice)

Advice line: 0808 278 78 60

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## Christians Against Poverty

A national charity that works through local teams. You can call the New Enquiries Team to be connected to a local Debt Coach or access their website to find online resources and the dates, times and locations of free CAP Money Courses.

<https://capuk.org/>

Tel: 0800 328 0006

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## Loan Shark Team

Investigates and prosecutes illegal money lenders while supporting those who have borrowed money from a loan shark.

<https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/>

Helpline: 0300 555 2222

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## Debt Advice Foundation

Debt Advice Foundation is a national debt advice and education charity offering free, confidential support and advice to anyone worried about debt.

[www.debtadvicefoundation.org](http://www.debtadvicefoundation.org)

Debt Advice Line: 0800 043 60 50

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## National Debtline

National Debtline offers free debt advice online through its digital advice tool and its web guides, fact sheets and sample letters.

<https://tools.nationaldebtline.org/dat-reg>

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## Support at work

### Trades Union Congress (TUC)



On average union members get higher pay, better sickness and pension benefits, more paid holiday and more control over things like shifts and working hours. This is because workers join together to negotiate pay and conditions rather than leaving it up to managers.

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/>

### Unite the union

Unite's vision is of a prosperous society in which employers and employees work together to build successful businesses and safe, healthy working environments. All those who contribute to our success receive the rewards, respect and recognition they deserve.



<https://join.unitetheunion.org/>

### Unison - the public service union



UNISON is the UK's largest union, serving more than 1.3 million members. They represent full-time and part-time staff who provide public services, although they may be employed in both the public and private sectors.

<https://join.unison.org.uk/>

### USDAW



USDAW is the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers. They provide advice and representation to workers in many different workplaces, including in the following: all major retailers, road transport, warehouses and distribution, food manufacturing, dairies, pharmaceuticals, home shopping, and a range of other industries.

<https://www.usdaw.org.uk/Join-U>

### GMB Union

GMB is a trade union that represents all workers. They have over 500,000 members who work in every type of job imaginable across public services and in private companies too. Their members work in full time jobs, part-time jobs or are working while they study.

<https://www.gmb.org.uk/join-gmb>

### RMT



The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers is a progressive, democratic and highly professional trade union, a fast growing union with more than 83,000 members from almost every sector of the transport industry - from the mainline and underground railways, shipping and offshore, buses and road freight.

<https://www.rmt.org.uk/about/>

