

Cost-of-living support and advice available for residents



For the latest local updates, visit
www.southend.gov.uk



This booklet is designed to be a practical guide to the support available for those most in need and who are facing difficult financial choices.

The information in this booklet is correct at the time of printing (November 2022).

Please check opening times before visiting any of the services mentioned, as some will be liable to last minute changes.

Contents

Financial support	3
Benefits and support for those with children	6
Food support	8
Warm hubs	12
Energy cost advice and support	14
Business support	18
Housing support	18
Domestic abuse	20
Health support	21

Financial support

Southend-on-Sea City

Council website. Up-to-date information on financial support and advice is available at www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving

One Southend. This community-led website offers information and advice around some key cost of living topics and suggests services that are available locally. Visit: onesouthend.com/cost-of-living

Universal Credit. You may be able to get Universal Credit if you are on a low income or need help with your living costs. You could be:

- out of work
- working (including self-employed or part time)
- unable to work, for example because of a health condition

To claim you must:

- live in the UK
- be aged 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you're 16 to 17)
- be under State Pension age
- have £16,000 or less in money, savings and investments

You can use a benefits calculator to check what benefits you could be entitled to: www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators or Turn to Us: benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk

You can apply for Universal Credit online: www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start or by phoning

the Universal Credit helpline on **0800 328 5644**.

Council tax reduction (CTR). Council tax reduction is a means tested council tax discount. How much support you will receive will depend on your income and circumstances.

For more information and to make a claim visit www.southend.gov.uk/help-paying or call **01702 215001**.

Council tax exemptions. To apply for exemptions, go to MySouthend my.southend.gov.uk to complete the Discount, Disregard and Exemption form or call **01702 215001**.

Council tax disregards. Certain personal circumstances can mean that some adults in your household can be disregarded (not counted) for Council Tax purposes. Examples of people who can apply:

- Students
- Severely mentally impaired
- Resident in a care home
- Resident detained in prison or hospital
- 18 and 19 year olds included in someone's Child Benefit payments
- Apprentices, youth trainees and school leavers
- Young care leavers
- Carers
- Members of visiting forces and certain international organisations
- Members of religious communities

- People who are diplomats or members of an international organisation headquartered in the UK

To apply for student reduction, please go to the Citizens Access Council Tax portal. For all other exemptions, go to MySouthend my.southend.gov.uk to complete the Cancel a Discount/Exemption form or call **01702 215001**.

Household Support Grant. The current scheme ended on 30 September 2022. Further funding has been received for October 2022 to March 2023 and the relevant council departments are working to put this together.

Please check back for further details: www.southend.gov.uk/health-wellbeing/household-support-grant or call **01702 215000**.

Essential Living Fund. The Essential Living Fund (ELF) is primarily intended to help vulnerable people live as independent a life as possible in the community. The fund is designed to:

- help people establish in the community following a stay in an institution, Care Home, Local Authority Care, hostel, prison or similar
- help people remain in the community rather than enter an institution or Care Home in which they will receive care ease exceptional pressures on people or their families

- help people with certain travel costs
- help people who are unable to meet their immediate short term needs either in an emergency in relation to some expenses or as a consequence of a disaster
- help children with school uniform costs

For advice and guidance please visit www.southend.gov.uk/extra-financial-help/essential-living-fund or call **0300 7900124**.

Pension Credit. If you are over the State Pension age and on a low income, this gives you extra support with your living and housing costs. If you receive Pension Credit you can also get other help, such as:

- Housing Benefit
- Support for mortgage interest payments
- a Council Tax discount
- a free TV licence if you're aged 75 or over
- help with NHS dental treatment
- Eye glasses
- transport costs for hospital appointments
- help with your heating costs through the Warm Home Discount Scheme

You can apply for Pension Credit up to four months before you reach the State Pension age. Eligible claims made after you reach state pension age will only be backdated by three months.

If you have already applied for your state pension you can apply for Pension Credits by visiting apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/start or by calling **0800 99 1234**. Textphone: **0800 169 0133**. Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): **18001** then **0800 99 1234**.

Local charities

If you do not feel on top of your finances, you should seek advice. Details of some free organisations that can help are listed below

Citizens Advice Southend. They can help with debt advice, maximisation of income, help to claim Universal Credit.

Tel: **01702 456352** or **01702 969696**.

Drop in time: Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm, bring in any documents to support your inquiry

Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL.

King's Money Advice Centre (KMAC). This a free, confidential, local, face-to-face debt advice service, authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for

debt advice and debt management. KMAC is affiliated to Community Money Advice who have been helping those in debt for 25 years.

Please phone and leave a message or email to arrange an appointment: **01702 522197**.

Email: kmacsouthend@btinternet.com or visit: kmacsouthend.wixsite.com/kmacsouthend

Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

Has been providing free regulated debt advice to anyone who has unmanageable debt for the last 25 years.

This CAP Debt Help Centre is run in partnership with various local churches in Southend-on-Sea and surrounding areas.

To arrange first appointment call (freephone) **0800 3280006**.

Send the Right Message. If you have a child or young person 0-25 with a disability Send the Right message can support you with DLA, PIP, Carer's Allowance, short-break forms, Food Bank referrals, housing, transport forms, Blue Badge applications and more. Please contact Claire on **07359 068827**.

If you do not feel on top of your finances, or if you feel your finances are out of control, you should seek advice. To find details of various other money advice support groups please visit:

www.southend.gov.uk/debtadvice

Benefits and support for those with children

- **15 hours free childcare for 2-year-old children**

Families who have 2-year-old children and are on certain benefits can get 15 hours of free childcare a week.

- **15 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-old children**

All families with children aged 3 and 4 can get 15 hours of free childcare a week.

- **30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-old children**

Eligible working families in England with 3 and 4-year-old children can receive 30 hours of free childcare a week.

- **Tax-free childcare for children aged 0–11 (0–16 if your child is disabled)**

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the cost of childcare.

- **Claim back childcare costs**

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you're eligible for Universal Credit, with up to £646 back each month for one child or £1,108 for 2 or more children.

Find out more about childcare cost: www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-childcare-costs

To find out more about help with the cost of childcare: Visit Childcare Choices for more information: www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
email: earlyyears@southend.gov.uk
or call **01702 215000**.

Free school meals. Children are entitled to receive free school meals if they or their parents or guardians receive certain benefits.

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim to your child's school.

www.southend.gov.uk/help-costs/free-school-meals-1

Holiday Activities and Food programme for school aged children aged 5–15. For school aged children aged 5–15. You can get access to free activities and food for your children in the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays if they are eligible for free school meals.

To find out more, search for 'HAF' or Holiday Activity and Food Scheme on www.livewellsouthend.com
Email: HAF@southend.gov.uk or phone **01702 215000**.

Food vouchers. For school aged children aged 4–15. Schools issue food vouchers for use during school holidays to families with children eligible for free school meals.

For children attending a pre-school, nursery or childminder aged 2-4: your childcare setting will issue food vouchers for use during school holidays to families receiving certain benefits.

This scheme will run to at least March 2023.

Child Benefit. You can claim Child Benefit if you're responsible for bringing up a child who is:

- under 16
- under 20 if they stay in approved education or training

Only one person can get Child Benefit for a child.

It's paid every four weeks and there is no limit to how many children you can claim for.

You can claim Child benefit at www.gov.uk/child-benefit or call the Child Benefit helpline: **0300 200 3100**.

Claim Healthy Start vouchers. If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four, you may be able to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

Check if you're eligible for Healthy Start vouchers: www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply or call **0300 330 7010**.

Get help with maternity costs. You could claim a one-off payment of £500 to help towards the costs of having a child.

Check if you're eligible for the Sure Start Maternity Grant: www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant/eligibility or call **0800 169 0140**.

Bibs & Bobs Baby Bank. Open to all parents and carers with a 0-5 year old in their care. Help yourself to free children's items and clothing.

Last Friday of each month, Summertime Family Centre, Appointments available between 10am and 2pm. To book on email fcsessionbooking@southend.gov.uk

Family Centres. Open Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm. Supporting with issues such as emotional support, budgeting, parenting, domestic abuse, foodbank referrals and healthy start vitamins.

Call **01702 220810** for more information.



Food support

Help with food and groceries

Southend Communities Outreach Group Food Bank.

Referrals: No referrals needed.

Opening times:

- Monday and Wednesday 10am to 12pm
- Friday 9am to 11am

Address: Balmoral Community Centre, Sailsbury Avenue Westcliff SSO 7AU. Enter via the white side doors.

Tel: **07876 116552**.

Storehouse. Free food parcel, food support.

Referrals: no referral needed except for the Wednesday family session

Opening times:

- Monday 10:30am to 12pm and 1pm to 2pm. Open session
- Wednesday 9:30am to 11:30am. Family sessions by referral only. Access referrals from: social worker, health visitor, school, any other support service.
- 1pm to 2pm women only session
- Friday 10:30am to 12pm men only session and 1pm to 2pm. Open session.

Address: Storehouse Community Centre, Coleman Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5AW.

Tel: **01702 612900** (Vineyard Centre) / **01702 617348** (Direct).

The One Love project. Access to fresh food, cupboard fillers and clothing.

Referrals: No referral necessary

Opening times:

- Thursday 11:30 to 12:30: adults only
- Thursday 1pm to 2pm: families with children

Address: Hollybrook, Carnarvon Road (Behind Police Station), SS2 6LR

The Shoebury Ark. Free food parcels.

Referrals: No referrals needed but priority given to SS3 residents (proof of address will be requested on first visit).

Opening times: Tuesday 2pm to 4pm

Address: Friars Baptist Church, Eagle Way, Shoeburyness SS3 9RJ

Email: info@shoeburyark.org.uk

St Vincent's Centre Southend. Free food parcel.

Referrals: No referrals

Opening times: Monday to Friday 11am to 2:30pm

Free food parcel delivery for people that have mobility or medical exemptions, call: **01702 592980** (deliveries on Tuesday)

Address: Unit 9 Victoria Business Park, Short Street, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY

Vinnie's Pick 'n Mix. A low-cost food market, £1 annual membership, £4.50 for up to 15 items on the first occasion, £3.50 thereafter.

Referrals: No referrals

Opening times: Friday 10:30am to 1pm

Address: Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short St, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY.

Tel: **01702 592980.**

Southend Foodbank. Free, three-day food parcels.

Referral: Referral needed

Access referrals from: SAVS **01702 356000**, Early Help **01702 215783**, South Essex Community Hub Tel: **01702 611199** Email: info@sech-uk.com, Citizens Advice Southend: **01702 456352** or **01702 456354**, Welcome to the UK: **01702 808579**.

Opening times:

- Monday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Ferndale Baptist Church, North Avenue, Southend, SS2 5HU
- Monday 5pm to 6:30pm
Address: Hawkwell Baptist Church, Rectory Road, Rochford, SS4 1UG
- Tuesday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Belle Vue Baptist Church, Belle Vue Avenue, Southend, SS1 2QZ
- Wednesday 9:30am to 11am
Address: Eastwood Baptist Church, Rayleigh Road, Eastwood, SS9 5PY
- Wednesday 2pm to 4pm
Address: St Saviours Church, Kings Road, Westcliff, SS0 8LL
- Thursday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay Baptist Church, 90 Thorpdene Gardens, Shoeburyness, SS3 9JD



- Friday 12:30pm to 2:30pm
Address: Earls Hall Baptist Church, 120 Hobbeythick Lane, Westcliff-on-sea, SS0 0RJ
- Saturday 9:30am to 11am
Address: West Leigh Baptist Church, 1150 London Road, Leigh-on-sea, SS9 2AJ

Southend FOOD Clubs (Food On Our Doorstep). Provides good-quality food at a low cost, while also reducing food waste. It costs just £1 a year for a family to become a member. Members can then purchase a bag of tasty food items every week worth approx. £10–12 for just £3.50. To become a member you must live or work within 15 minutes of the club.

Referral: Please email SouthendFoodClubs@family-action.org.uk or phone Karen on **07812 496015** / Natasha on **07971 951636** who will help you join as a member and book you a timed slot to attend a club.

Opening times:

- Monday: 9:30am to 11:20pm,
Address: Constable Way, Shoeburyness, SS3 9X
- Friday 1:30pm to 3:20pm,
Address: Centre Place Family Centre Prospect Close, SS1 2JD
- Saturday 10:30am to 12:20pm,
Address: Summercourt Family Centre, Summercourt Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 7AU

Help with toiletries

All Rise Collective (Toiletry Care bank). Free toiletry/essentials bag, period/baby bag,

Referrals: No referrals

- Opening times: Every other Tuesday, 10.30am to 11.30am
Address: St Marks Centre, Princes Street, Southend on Sea SS1 1QA
- Opening times: Every third Thursday of the month 9am to 10.30am

Address: Westcliff Free Church, 635 London Rd, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9PE

Free meals

Storehouse. Free hot meal

- Monday 10:30am to 12pm for Breakfast and 1pm to 2pm for Lunch, all welcome
- Wednesday: 1pm to 2pm for Lunch, Women only session
- Friday 10:30am to 12pm for Breakfast, men only session and 1pm to 2pm for lunch, All welcome

Address: Storehouse Community Centre, Coleman Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5AW.

Tel: **01702 612900** (Vineyard Centre) / **01702 617348** (Direct).

HARP (Homeless Action Resource Project).

Breakfast. All welcome.

Opening times: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10am to 11am.

Address: Bradbury Centre, 103-107 York Road, Southend on Sea.

Tel: **01702 430696**.

All Saints Church. Free continental breakfast, £2 charge for a cooked breakfast, All welcome

Opening times: Tuesday 8am to 11am

Address: 1 Sutton Road/Southchurch Road SS2 5PA.

Tel: **01702 307518**.

57 West. Tea, coffee and snacks

Opening times:

- Wednesday, Thursday 12pm to 2pm
- Friday 11am to 1pm

Address: Clarence Road Baptist Church, 6 Clarence Rd, Southend-on-Sea SS1 1AN.

Tel: **07938 847147**.

The Salvation Army.

Opening times:

- Monday and Tuesday 9am to 12pm noon Refreshment
- Thursday 10am to 2pm Coffee and Employment Plus
- Friday 9am to 12pm noon Coffee morning

Address: Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 1SP

Tel: **01702 716607**.

One Love Soup Kitchen.

Opening times:

- Monday, Thursday 7pm to 8.30pm. Rough sleepers and those facing homelessness
- Thursday: 11:30am to 12:30pm adults only. 1pm to 2pm: families with children, freshly cooked nutritious meals at our Pop-Up kitchen, Adults £1.00, children eat for free

Address: Holybrook, Carnarvon Road, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6LR.

Kindness Kitchen. A hot meal, outreach and a hot drink, all welcome

Opening times:

- Lunch: Monday to Friday 11am to 2pm
- Dinner: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 7pm to 8pm,

Address: St. Vincent's Centre, Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short Street, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY.

Tel: **01702 592980**.

The Shoebury Ark. 1 free meal for every person in a household (adults' and children's meals available).

Referrals: No referrals needed but priority given to SS3 residents (proof of address will be requested on first visit).

Opening times: Tuesday 2pm to 4pm

Address: Friars Baptist Church, Eagle Way, Shoeburyness SS3 9RJ

Email: info@shoeburyark.org.uk

Warm hubs

Warm hubs (also known as warm banks) are spaces that are open to the public and can be used to keep warm during operating hours.

Southend Library @ The Forum

Elmer Square,
Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NB
Tel: **01702 215011** Mon to Fri 8am to 7pm,
Sat 8am to 5pm

Westcliff Library

649 London Road,
Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 9PD
Tel: **01702 215011** Mon to Sat 9am to 5pm

Kent Elms Library

1 Rayleigh Road,
Eastwood, Leigh on Sea,
SS9 5UU
Tel: **01702 215011** Mon to Sat 9am to 5pm

Southchurch Library

221 Liftsan Way,
Southend-on-Sea, SS1 2XG
Tel: **01702 215011** Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday, and
Saturday 9am to 5pm

Shoeburyness Library

Shoebury Youth &
Community Centre,
Delaware Road,
Shoeburyness, SS3 9NS
Tel: **01702 215011** Mon to Sat 9am to 5pm

Focal Point Gallery

The Forum, Elmer Square,
Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NB
Tel: **01702 534108** Wednesday to Saturday
11am to 5pm

Central Museum

Victoria Avenue,
Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6EW
Tel: **01702 212345** Wednesday to Sunday
11am to 4pm

The Beecroft Art Gallery

Victoria Avenue,
Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6EW
Tel: **01702 212511** Weds to Sun 11am to 5pm

 Refreshment for purchase |  Wi-Fi |  Computer Access |  Photocopy/printing

Prittlewell Priory/ Prittlewell Priory Visitor Centre



Priory Park, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6NB

Tel: **01702 212190**

Prittlewell Priory: 1/3/22 to 31/10/22 Weds to Fri 11am to 5pm 1/11/22 to 29/2/23 Sat and Sun 11am to 4pm
Prittlewell Priory Visitor Centre: 1/3/22 to 31/10/22 Weds to Sun 10am to 5pm 1/11/22 to 29/2/23 Weds to Sun 11am to 4pm

Southchurch Hall



Southchurch Hall Gardens, Park Lane, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 2TE

Tel: **01702 467671**

1/3/22 to 31/10/22 Weds to Sun 11am to 4pm, 1/11/22 to 29/2/23 Sat and Sun 11am to 3pm

Civic Centre



Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6ER

Tel: **01702 215000**

Mon to Fri 9am to 4pm

Southend Adult Community College



Ambleside Drive, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 2UP

Tel: **01702 445700**

8am to 8.30pm Mon to Wed, 9am to 4pm Thurs and Friday

There are other community places offering their spaces as a warm hub please look out for the Warm Hub logo.



TOP TIP: If you don't heat your home whilst you are visiting a warm place, let the fresh air circulate in your house if possible to avoid mould. You could do this by slightly opening a window, if it's safe to do so in your home and the window is not accessible for other people.

■ Refreshment for purchase | ● Wi-Fi | ▲ Computer Access | ★ Photocopy/printing

Energy cost advice and support

If you are in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant to help pay it off. Contact your supplier directly to see what extra support they can give you.

Warm Home discount. You could get £150 off your electricity bill for winter 2021 to 2022 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The money is not paid to you – it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between October and March.

Eligibility: There are 2 ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit – known as the 'core group'
- you're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme – known as the 'broader group'

Pre-pay or pay-as-you-go meters:

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter. Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you're eligible, for example it could be a voucher you can use to top up your meter.

Visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme or contact your supplier via telephone – their phone number will be on your latest bill.

Your supplier will be able to either apply for the Warm Homes Discount on your behalf or direct you to the correct place to apply.

Sustainable Warmth. Offers grants to residents to help make homes warmer. Funding is available for homeowners and private tenants who live in a home with a low energy (EPC) rating of D or below and have a household income of less than £30,000 a year, or those you are unemployed and receive an income, health or disability benefit.

The aim is to improve your homes energy rating and lower the carbon footprint. It covers homes that are on or off the gas grid. A home survey is completed initially to confirm it is possible to apply the measures.

Measures include:

- insulation such as solid wall
- low carbon heating systems such as air source heat pumps
- first time double glazing
- solar systems

Apply through the Sustainable Warmth Grant Scheme Application

Form at surveys.est.org.uk/s/sustainablewarmth or call **0808 196 8255** (Freephone) to apply.

Energy Saving Trust. Visit the website to find out how you can save money on your energy bills: energysavingtrust.org.uk

Getting the best energy deal. If you pay your energy supplier directly (including through a prepayment meter for your gas or electricity) you have the right to switch suppliers. This could help you get on the most cost-effective energy tariff for you and save you money. Often the new supplier deals with all the administration for you. You don't need to worry about an interruption to your energy supply either. You may not even have to switch suppliers to get a better deal – you can call your current supplier and ask what other deals they can offer.

Priority services registers. Vulnerable residents can sign up to this service with their energy company to ensure they get priority help and support if there is an issue with their supply.

You can apply to sign up to this register by contacting your supplier or network operator. Information is available in a range of formats including braille, large print or different languages and more information can be found on the

Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) website: www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register

National Energy Action. NEA gives advice and support both directly to people in need and through frontline workers and other intermediaries.

Call **0800 304 7159**, Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12.00noon

British Gas. Offer support through their Energy Trust and have grants for customers of both British Gas and other suppliers. For more information visit www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available

E.ON Next Energy Fund. There are two ways this fund can help and support people. It can either help customers with help paying their bills or to replace broken electrical appliances. Visit www.eonnextenergyfund.com for more information

OVO Energy. Offers a range of support. For more information visit www.ovenergy.com/help/debt-and-energy-assistance

Alternatively, contact your supplier, who will be able to provide further information about any trust funds or further assistance they have available.

Anglian Water. Anglian Water's specially trained extra care support team can create personalised payment plans to help their customers' budgets. They can also provide some breathing space if a customer needs some extra time to pay, as well as guide them towards other help and benefits that are available.

Priority Services Register. Anglian Water can help a wide range of people, from those with sight, hearing, or mobility difficulties, to parents with babies under 12 months old. They offer a wide range of support, from reading the water meter for customers who find this difficult, to sending out bills in other formats.

Call **03457 919 155** or ask them to call you back.

WaterSure scheme. WaterSure scheme helps some people with their water bills. To apply for the scheme, you must be on benefits and need to use a lot of water either for medical reasons or because your household has a certain number of school-age children. You also need to be on a water meter or be waiting to have one installed.

You can apply for WaterSure by filling out a form from your water company. You will need to supply evidence that you qualify, such as a copy of your awards notice for a benefit.



Top tips to save money at your home

Save water to save money:

- Claim your free water saving kit from Essex and Suffolk Water esw.watersavingkit.com
- Replace one bath with a shower a week
- Filling up a washing-up bowl to do your dishes
- Challenge yourself to take a shower in less than 4 minutes
- Insert water flow regulators in all your taps at home

Ways to save energy expenses:

- Switch your appliances off at the plug when they're not in use
- Wash full loads of laundry at 30 degrees or lower
- Avoid the tumble dryer. Dry clothes on racks – indoor or outdoor
- Draught-proof any windows, doors, chimneys or floor gaps, and treat yourself to a new jumper to reduce reliance on heating
- Only boil the kettle with as much water as you need to brew your cup of tea or coffee
- Turn your lights off when you're not using them or when you leave a room
- Only run the dishwasher when it is full
- Ensure your hot water cylinder is well insulated
- Use LED lightbulbs
- Consider using the microwave for quick meals instead of using the oven

Recycle to reduce waste and save money:

- Buy second-hand instead of buying new
- Repurpose or upcycle items instead of throwing away to prevent 'throwaway culture'
- Try to fix things, rather than replacing broken items

Business support

Energy bills support factsheet

www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support

Business-on-Sea. The Economic Inclusion team at the council are the first point of contact for local businesses. The team offer direct advice wherever possible and signpost to other teams within the council or external partners where necessary, to get the best response to a question.

To find out more about the team and to see what business-related events are taking place in Southend, please visit www.businessonsea.co.uk or the team's Facebook page [@BusinessOnSea](https://www.facebook.com/BusinessOnSea). Alternatively, the team can be contacted on economicd@southend.gov.uk

Housing support

Mortgages. If you are worried about meeting your mortgage payments, talk to your lender as early as possible, to explore options. If your mortgage rates are going up, speak to a broker.

Rent. We know it can be difficult when money is tight, but you should prioritise paying your rent, as you are at a higher risk of eviction if you don't pay. You should avoid payday loans to cover rent or mortgage payments and avoid unregulated lenders (loan sharks). If you are struggling financially, we encourage you to explore whether you have all the benefits and/or grants you may be entitled to (please see relevant pages in this booklet). There is advice on what to do should you be in

financial difficulty with payday loans or loan sharks on the council website, under the heading 'debt, income and financial support' on the page www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving

Housing Benefit. If you're on a low income, out of work or you cannot work, you must claim Universal Credit for help with your housing costs.

You can only claim for Housing Benefit if either of the following apply:

- you have reached State Pension Age
- you're in supported, sheltered or temporary housing

If you are in one of these categories, you can claim Housing Benefit if you pay rent and your income and savings are below a certain level.

To make claim visit:

www.southend.gov.uk/help-paying
or call **01702 215001**.

Rent arrears – Discretionary Housing Payments. Are you struggling to pay your rent and are you considering moving to a more affordable rented accommodation? If so, you may be entitled to help from the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme, if you are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit or receive the Housing Element in your Universal Credit Payment.

To make a claim visit:

www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving
or call **01702 215001**.

Council’s Housing Solutions team.

If you are at risk of homelessness (for any reason), you can contact the Council’s Housing Solutions team using the online ‘Housing Advice and Homeless Enquiry form’, and an officer will call you back. This form can be located via www.southend.gov.uk, searching for ‘homelessness’ and scrolling to the bottom of the page. Free Wi-Fi locations for accessing the online form are listed on page 12 of this

booklet. For support with completing the form, you can approach South East Essex Community Hub 1st Floor Victoria Shopping Centre, 324-325 Chartwell Square, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5SP or call the council on **01702 215002**.

Citizens Advice Southend. You can contact Citizens Advice Southend to receive information, advice and guidance on housing issues.

Tel: **01702 456352** or **01702 969696**.

Drop in time: Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm, bring in any documents to support your inquiry.

Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL.

Rough sleeping. If you see an adult sleeping on the streets, please notify Southend’s outreach support via streetlink.org.uk or **0300 500914**.

If the individual is in immediate danger, requires urgent care, or is under the age of 18, you should call the police on **999**.



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence. Threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour and emotional, psychological, sexual and economic abuse (including preventing you from working, not letting you have access to household income, denying you basic day-to-day necessities or social contact with friends/family/colleagues) are also examples of abuse.

Support is available:

Compass (Essex Domestic Abuse Helpline): **0330 3337444**.

The Compass helpline is available 8am to 8pm weekdays and 8am to 1pm weekends. Outside this time, you can leave a message to receive a response within 24 hrs. In an emergency, always dial **999**.

Men: Respect helpline: **0808 2010327**.

Women: National domestic abuse helpline: **0808 2000247**.



Health support



NHS #DoYourBit

Get Vaccinated. Get Boosted. Get Protected.

Colder weather, mixing with more people indoors and lower levels of natural immunity mean the chances of becoming unwell and catching flu, COVID-19 and shingles are high.

The good news is you can do something about it.

The NHS offers FREE vaccinations to those at higher risk of being unwell to help you this winter.

If you are invited for a FREE vaccination, don't delay, protect yourself as soon as possible to give yourself the best possible protection from illness this winter. Visit EssexDoYourBit.nhs.uk for more information.



Feeling poorly?

Local pharmacies offer professional healthcare advice and support to maintain and improve your health and wellbeing. You do not need an appointment to see a pharmacist. Visit [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) to find your local pharmacy and access a complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help.

Feeling low?

The winter months can have an impact on the way we feel the shorter, darker days meaning our mental health can suffer.

Fortunately, there are things we can do to improve how we feel.

Find a new activity and meet new people. There are many opportunities to meet new people in your area and a group for everyone, so have a look for activities and volunteer groups near you.

Get moving. Whether you run, take a brisk walk, join a fitness class or spend time cleaning or gardening, getting moving will make all the difference not only to your physical health, but how you feel as well. Just 30 minutes a day and at least 150 minutes a week of some form of exercise will help you feel better inside and out.

Southend Health Walks. The Southend Health Walk Scheme helps people lead a more active lifestyle.

Group walks are short, over easy terrain, with trained volunteers on hand to provide support.

- 11:15am Tuesday – meet at Shoeburyness Hotel High Street Shoeburyness
- 11:00am Wednesday – meet at Jocelyns Beach behind Chalkwell Train Station
- 1:15pm Thursday – meet outside the café in Priory Park

All walks are free of charge. For further information, please contact Angela on **07771 926932**.

Everyone Health. Everyone Health is a service for residents of Southend who wish to make positive changes to their lifestyle to improve their health and wellbeing. The service includes a personalised programme to help people reach their health goals. This could include 1-to-1 support or referral to other programmes such as weight management, physical activity or stop smoking. Individuals can refer themselves, or healthcare professionals such as GP's and pharmacists can refer patients. Visit southend.everyonehealth.co.uk or tel: **0333 005 0095**.

Parkrun. Parkrun is a 5km run, walk or jog every Saturday morning at Gunners Park and at Chalkwell Beach. Go at your own pace. Its free and for enjoyment.

More help to keep moving – many local sports clubs and physical

activity providers maybe able to offer discounts where financial difficulty is a concern. Please talk to your local club or physical activity provider to see what potential discounts might be available to you.

Find help and support. Mental health issues can appear at any time to anyone affect their life and relationships but there are things we can do to help ourselves. Your GP can help direct you to services that can help.

No matter what, it's ok to ask for help, as the sooner you get support and treatment the quicker your recovery.

If you, a family member or friend are in crisis and need help, please dial **NHS 111** and select the option for mental health crisis (option 2).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Samaritans. Volunteers offering emotional support to those experiencing distress and despair. Available 24/7.call **116 123** or visit www.samaritans.org

Trust Links. Support for anybody with any mental health issue in Southend, Castle Point and Rochford through the REACH Wellbeing Hub. Mon-Fri 8.30-4.30; Sat 1-4pm call **01702 213134** or visit www.trustlinks.org

SEE Mind. Adults service for those with a mental health issue or a learning disability. Call: **01702 601123** Mon-Fri: 10am-3.30pm or visit www.secemind.org.uk

Therapy For you. Local NHS mental health talking therapy service for adults www.therapyforyou.co.uk

Kooth. An online support community for young people aged 11-18 years (up to 19th birthday) with a free, safe and secure means of accessing support from a professional team of qualified counsellors www.kooth.com

Southend, Essex and Thurrock Children's and Adolescent's Mental Health Service (SET CAMHS). For children and young people, and their families or carers, across Southend to access mental health and emotional wellbeing care and support. Tel: **0800 953 0222**. Out-of-hours: **0800 955 1000**.


For a directory of local wellbeing services, clubs and businesses, please visit the Livewell Southend website on: livewellsouthend.com

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A summary can be provided in alternative formats such as Braille, audio-tape or in large print.

Translations of this document in alternative languages are also available upon request.

 Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue,
Southend-on-Sea,
Essex SS2 6ER

 01702 215000

 www.southend.gov.uk

