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# COST OF LIVING CRISIS:

## ADVICE, SUPPORT & FINANCIAL HELP IN SHEFFIELD

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Millions of people are experiencing increases in the cost of living, including rises in petrol, food, and gas and electric charges. This has left many facing tough decisions about how to spend their money, and many others in need of advice and financial support to afford rent, fuel bills, and everyday items. We have put the following list together which shows the resources available across Sheffield.

### GENERAL ADVICE AND RESOURCES

- Sheffield City Council has put together a **Money Support Guide** and **Worrying About Money** leaflet which can be found online (<https://bit.ly/3zBLzdF>). Your local GP surgery may also have a paper copy.
- **Sheffield City Council's benefits page** (<https://bit.ly/3cKLyuW>) contains information about support available in the city, including Household Support Fund, Council Tax Support, the Council Tax hardship scheme, Discretionary Housing Payments, and the Local Assistance Scheme.
- **Voluntary Action Sheffield** has information about local cost of living support, including the network of Welcoming Places across the city.
- The **MoneySavingExpert** website has information about how to reduce your spending as costs rise.
- The Government's **MoneyHelper** and **Help for Households** websites provide advice for people facing financial difficulties.
- **Citizens Advice Sheffield** provide free, independent advice on benefits, debt, housing, and employment rights.
- The **Stop Loan Sharks** team have a 24-hour helpline (0300 555 2222) and online chat to enable people to report Loan Sharks and receive confidential support.
- **Step Change** provide advice and help for people who are in debt, including an online debt tool.

### FUEL AND ENERGY SUPPORT

- The Sheffield City Council website has a page of information about **Ways to reduce your fuel bills**.
- The government has a **Simple Energy Advice** website, including an **Energy Efficiency Calculator** which provides personalised advice on reducing energy bills.
- The **Turn2Us** website contains information about the schemes available to help with fuel bills.
- Groundwork provides free **Green Doctor** visits to help with reducing heating costs.
- Energy suppliers have **Priority Services Registers** which provide support for vulnerable people, including those with a mental health condition or families with children under five. You can find more information about these on the **Ofgem** website.
- **National Energy Action (NEA)** provide one-to-one advice, support, and grants to the most vulnerable and low-income households. They have grants available for customers on pre-pay meters and on low incomes or benefits.
- Water suppliers also have extensive support for people struggling to pay. Information about the schemes offered by **Yorkshire Water schemes** can be found online.
- **Citizens Advice Sheffield** may also be able to offer fuel cost support for prepaid meter users.

## HOUSING SUPPORT

- If you are a Council or Housing Association tenant and are struggling to pay your rent, you should contact your landlord in the first instance. Council tenants who make contact may be able to arrange for their debts to be paid over a longer period or by direct debit and will also receive advice about the support they are entitled to.
- **Discretionary Housing Payments** can provide financial support for rent or housing costs to those who receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (but not the maximum amount).
- If you are of pension age and on a low income, then you may be able to claim **Housing Benefit** and/or **Pension Credit**.
- The Homelessness Prevention Fund can be used as short-term help for someone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. For further information call the **Housing Solutions Team** (0114 273 6306).
- Private rented tenants struggling to pay their rent and at risk of homelessness can contact the Sheffield City Council Housing Solutions Team on 0114 273 6306.
- If you are worried about paying your rent or mortgage, you can find information and advice on **Shelter's website** and via their freephone line (0808 800 4444). You can also contact your local Shelter team on 0344 515 1515 or email Sheffield\_Hub@shelter.org.uk if your landlord has threatened or taken action, served you with a notice or there is a court order in place.

## GRANTS AND FUNDING

- **Council Tax Support** may be available for those on low incomes. In addition, the **Council Tax Hardship Scheme** provides further support to those who receive council tax support but are still unable to meet their council tax costs.
- The **Household Support Fund** is available for those who need urgent support coping with the cost of living crisis, providing advice on a wide range of hardship grants and support schemes. The support fund team can be contacted online or by phone (0114 273 4567).
- **Citizens Advice Sheffield** are also available to support people to claim for Universal Credit through their **Help to Claim** service available online or over the phone.
- Families who are eligible for **Free School Meals** will continue to receive vouchers over some school holidays this year. Further information about this scheme is available online.
- **Sheffield Credit Union** is on hand to provide affordable loans and savings advice for those who need it. The credit union can help build and improve credit records to improve your access to mainstream financial services.
- The **Local Assistance Scheme** provides grants to support independent living and for those in crisis situations who are not receiving help.

### For Organisations:

- South Yorkshire's Community Foundation has set up a **Sheffield Cost of Living fund**. This can provide grants for organisations that are supporting local people with the cost-of-living crisis.

