



Key local and national support: Energy, food and cost of living

Brighton & Hove, November 2025

PLEASE NOTE:

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

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GROUPS AT INCREASED RISK

Groups at increased risk during cold weather include people whose health, housing or economic circumstances put them at greater risk of harm:

- **aged 65+ including those who are frail or socially isolated**
- **young children and babies**
- **pregnancy**
- **cardiovascular (heart and circulation) conditions**
- **respiratory conditions (in particular COPD and childhood asthma)**
- **mental health conditions**
- **disabilities, learning difficulties or cognitive impairment**
- **people at risk of falls**
- **lower income households**

There are many reasons for increased risk of ill-health in cold weather, including:

- living in poor quality, cold or damp/mouldy housing
- higher rate of infectious diseases, such as flu, covid and norovirus
- physical hazards such as snow and ice

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Community Hub

Extra financial support is available for people aged 66 and over in Brighton & Hove who are struggling with the costs of energy bills, food or essentials. The Community Hub can:

- check eligibility for Pension Credit and Winter Fuel Allowance and support to make an application
- help with costs of energy, food and other essentials
- make referrals to LEAP, Energyworks and money advice services
- liaise with utility companies about debt
- provide free Carbon Monoxide alarms and arrange home safety visits
- check eligibility to join the priority services registers (energy and water)
- give energy advice on keeping warm in an affordable way

To apply for support from the council's Community Hub, choose one of the following:

- Online form: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/request-help-and-support
- Call **01273 293 117** (option 2)
- Email communityhubhelp@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF)

Those eligible for benefits and struggling to pay for food, energy and other essential costs, may be able to get help through the council's Local Discretionary Social Fund. The service does not provide cash – but can offer vouchers or find another way to help residents access essential goods and services.

- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/other-brighton-hove-city-council-grants/local-discretionary-social-fund
- [apply for help from our Local Discretionary Social Fund](#)
- LDSF helpline: **01273 293 117 (option 1)** - Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 1.30pm.

Family Hubs

Family Hubs support families in Brighton & Hove with children aged from 0 to 19. Young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can access our services up to age 25. You can drop in to one of our Family Hub reception areas where we have free school uniform, sanitary products, toys and clothing for children. There are four main Family Hubs, and we also deliver services from other locations in Brighton & Hove.

- www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/family-help-online/family-hubs-and-what-they-offer
- familyhubs@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- **01273 293 545**

Professionals can refer to Family Hubs any families who need more specialist support or are in financial crisis and in need of food: [Refer a child or family to Front Door for Families](#)

Further support

For information on advice and support for food, money, energy bills, and how to look after your physical and mental wellbeing, visit: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support

For information on indoor activities and warm places to go during cold weather: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/cost-living-support/directories/warm-welcome-directory-indoor-activities-and-places-go

ENERGY

Energyworks

A partnership project between **Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove** and **Brighton & Hove Energy Services Co-operative (BHESCo)**.

Energyworks provides advice and support to help Brighton & Hove residents reduce energy bills and make homes warmer. The service includes energy advice, supplier negotiation, income maximisation, home visits with energy saving kit (eligibility criteria apply) and onwards referrals. Fuel vouchers are available to top up prepayment meters and the service can also help access financial support from other sources.

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

- Call the Energyworks voicemail on **0333 090 9150**. Leave a message and they will aim to call back the same day or as soon as possible after this.
- Email energyworks@cabrightonhove.org
- Online referral form: www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/online-enquiry-form/
- Drop-in for advice: Thursdays, 1:15pm at Tisbury Road Offices, Hove Town Hall, Tisbury Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ.

For more information on Energyworks, visit:

www.cabrightonhove.org/energyworks-energy-advice-service/

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](#). To refer yourself or someone else, visit [Apply Now | LEAP \(applyforleap.org.uk\)](http://Apply Now | LEAP (applyforleap.org.uk)).

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

National support

Information on help with energy bills available from the government can be found on the [GOV.UK help with your energy bills page](#). The government's [Help for Households website](#) 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](#).

The **Priority Services Register** (PSR) is free to join. It helps utility companies, including energy suppliers, electricity, gas and water networks to look after customers who have extra communication, access, health or safety needs. It helps tailor services to support households who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills, and also in the unlikely event of a power cut, gas or water supply interruption.

For more information and to join the Priority Services Register: www.thepsr.co.uk/

FOOD

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Information on accessing emergency food in Brighton &

Hove: <https://bhfood.org.uk/directory-hub/accessing-emergency-food/>

- There are a range of [affordable food projects](#) across the city, where you can sign up for a weekly shop cheaper than your average supermarket.
- They have information on [free & cheap meals](#) outside the home e.g. lunch clubs, community cafes and other shared meals.
- There are three [Community Fridges](#) in Brighton where you can pick up surplus food for free.

Winter Info Guide 2025: a live dashboard of useful information for referrers and people needing food support from December to January. It includes food project opening times and festive meal events in Brighton & Hove:

[The Food Partnership Winter Info Guide 2025](#)

<https://airtable.com/appnh7kPQUvi6JofM/shrqlxicBTZmBdLjd?0Wzno=allRecords>

If you have any questions or want help filling in the form, email info@bhfood.org.uk or call 01273 234 810 and stay on the line to speak to general enquiries.

Please note: the Food Partnership no longer have capacity to provide food bank referrals or in-depth advice. Please signpost to Impact Initiatives as detailed below –

Impact Initiatives - Food Access Service

The Food Access Service supports residents in Brighton and Hove aged 18+ who are struggling to access food due to financial instability. The team can help by:

- Providing information on local affordable food initiatives
- Referring for short-term support from a food bank
- Offering eligible people emergency support on the day as a last resort
- Linking people with further services to support them with the wider issues that might be impacting them, such as cost of living support or health and wellbeing services.

Tel: **01273 322950** (Mon – Fri 10am – 4pm)

Email: food.access@impact-initiatives.org.uk

Website: <https://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 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 or call **0300 330 7010**.

MONEY, WATER & HOME SAFETY

Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove - Advice & Financial Inclusion Partnership

The single point of contact at Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove can assess financial and other advice issues. The service can provide advice on the spot for Brighton & Hove residents, or referrals to more specialist advice with scheme partners as needed.

- Phone: Monday to Friday on **08082 78 78 15**
- Request advice via the online enquiry form: [Online Enquiry | Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove](#)

- Drop in (spaces are extremely limited): Monday afternoons from 1.15pm and Thursday and Friday mornings from 9.15am at Tisbury Road Offices, Hove Town Hall, Tisbury Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ.
- Further information: [Get advice | Citizens Advice Brighton and Hove](#)

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:

[Priority Services Register - Southern Water](#)

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS)

Free [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 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.](#)

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

Visit 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: www.cabrightonhove.org/campaigns/keeping-warm-and-fire-advice-energyworks

KEY NATIONAL RESOURCES

Keeping warm and well:

NHS England - [How to stay well this winter](#)

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) - [Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather - GOV.UK](#)

Met Office - [Keeping your home warm this winter](#)

Cost of living:

GOV.UK - [Help for households](#)

Age UK - www.ageuk.org.uk/financial-support or call **0800 169 6565** and quote 'Winter'

Home energy advice:

Energy Saving Trust - [Energy at home](#)

*This resource has been compiled by Sarah Podmore, Health Promotion Specialist,
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