

'Here for Hart' COST OF LIVING <u>Help and Support</u>

January 2024



This section of the bulletin covers the ways Hart residents can get advice and support with energy bills and the cost of Living. The focus is on money saving APPs, discount vouchers and money saving tips. You can also check out our Cost-of-Living Support HUB on the Hart District Council website.

Hart District Council/cost-living-support-hub



Cold Homes and Health

18°C - 21°C = Comfortable

15°C - 18°C = Some discomfort but no serious health risks

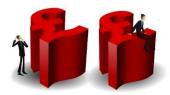
12°C - 15°C = Discomfort and risk of respiratory disease,

bronchitis etc

9°C - 12°C = Risk of heart problems and strokes, etc

Below 9°C = Risk of hypothermia







Home upgrade grants for residents:

There are a few grants available currently to help residents make their homes warmer. Depending on the grant, residents could get a whole house assessment and upgrades worth thousands of pounds for free. We have created a new webpage you can share that summarises the grants.

Grant highlights:

- Household income under £31,000? Try <u>Energy Company</u> <u>Obligation (ECO)</u>: Apply to your energy supplier
- Household income above £31,000? Try the <u>Great British</u> <u>Insulation Scheme</u>
- Replacing your boiler? Try the <u>Boiler Upgrade Scheme</u> (<u>BUS</u>)

Community Foodbanks / Pantries and Hubs





Hart Foodbank helps people that are in crisis within the boundaries of Hart. There are four foodbanks across the district where clients can collect food parcels. These foodbanks are situated in: Darby Green, Fleet, Odiham and Hook.

Collection of food parcels is strongly encouraged as we only deliver in exceptional circumstances. As well as food parcels, Hart Foodbank can also supply hygiene products and cleaning items for the home.

If you would like to donate ambient food, hygiene items, nappies or cleaning products, then please visit the Hart Foodbank website: hart.foodbank.org.uk for all the places you can take your donations to. Food donations and household items can be made at any of the 3 Sainsbury's in Fleet (Fleet Road, Aldershot Road and Sandy Lane) where they have collection baskets.

Please note that people cannot directly self-refer to the Hart Foodbank. Ideally, they will have been referred to Hart Foodbank by an agency such as a Housing Association, Citizens Advice, Job Centre Plus, local schools, GP Surgeries, or social prescribers etc.

Hart Foodbank also run a Kids Clothing Bank. Contact Emma at: emma@mabin.co.uk to talk about your need for children's clothes, or to donate clothes, for 4- to 14-year-olds.

Hart's Fleet Foodbank is located at Fleet Baptist Church, 115 Clarence Road, Fleet, GU51 3RS. **Monday** between 1.30pm – 3pm and **Thursday** between 11am – 12.30pm

Derby Green Foodbank is located at St Barnabas Church, Brinns Lane, GU17 0BT. **Monday** between 1.30pm – 3pm and **Thursday** between 1.30pm – 3pm.

Hook Foodbank is located at Life Church Hook, Elms Road, Hook, RG27 9DX.

Tel: 07849 198179 - office@lifechurchhook.org

Monday between 12pm – 1.30pm and **Thursday** between 10.30am – 12pm.

All Saints Church, Odiham Foodbank is located at the Church Office, Ostlers Place, Deer Park View, Odiham, RG29 1JY. Tel: 07387 116947 or email: odihamfoodbank@gmail.com **Thursday** between 1.30pm - 3pm.

For more information visit <u>FareShare Larder: Here for Hart Directory</u> and for a membership form please email: FSSouthernCentral@fareshare.org.uk

Hart Foodbank now have a new team of Community Connectors who are meeting with Foodbank clients, to offer advice about other organisations that may be able to help with specific issues. This may include benefits, debt, health issues and many more. We also have a part time Citizens Advice worker who is also available for support with issues.

Contact: hart.foodbk@hotmail.co.uk if you have any questions regarding Hart Foodbank. Please note that you cannot request a food parcel for yourself via this email address.

Fleet Community Pantry:

Fleet Community Pantry is now open and doesn't require anyone to have a "referral" or provide proof of need. We are part of the Hart Foodbank's network and we work on a membership model, whereby the customer pays £5 per visit and receives at least £15 worth of food.

Contact: kate.wakley@hartfoodbank.org.uk

The Hygiene Bank:

Community Partners can refer eligible clients to the Hygeine Bank. They will support and signpost to other partner organisations that can help The Hygiene Bank - get-products

Other local food provisions in neighbouring districts are:

Darby Green Mobile Community Larder: This is a community larder based on a membership scheme where you pay a maximum of £5/week to get food of significantly more value. **Located at:** St Barnabas Church, Brinns Lane, Darby Green, GU17 0BT Every Thursday: Between 1pm – 2.30pm

Hook Mobile Community Larder: A small fee is payable depending on the size of your family (ID is required). **Address:** Life Church Hook, Elms Road, Hook, RG27 9DX. For more information call 0784 919 8179. It is open on **Thursday** mornings between 10am - 11am.

Community Pantry at <u>Yateley Industries</u> provides support to members. People can register and pay £5 per shop to receive at least £15 worth of fresh, frozen, and general foods.

Tel 01252 872337 or Email alexs@yateleyindustries.net

The Hart Community Pantry's focus remains on people on low income or benefits. Yateley Industries Community Pantry

The Larder Foodbank:

They can deliver food parcels to families and individuals in need on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. To receive a food parcel, referrals must be made by a professional. This can be: A Key Worker/Social Worker, children's school, GP surgery, Housing Association, Citizen's Advice, Rushmoor Borough Council, Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

Please call the Larder Phone (07501 202546) and leave a message with your details.



Fleet Phoenix: The Fleet Phoenix food store offers food & hygiene parcels to those families most in need. If you need help or would like to make a professional referral, please email: info@fleetphoenix.co.uk or call: 01252 812308 for more information. They also supply school uniform to families in need Services | Fleet Phoenix

Address: The Point Youth Centre, Harlington Way, Fleet, GU51 4BP.

Youth Charity | Fleet Phoenix | Hampshire

Hampshire Kitchen Heros!

<u>Hampshire Kitchen Heroes</u> is an interactive programme for residents across most of Hampshire, that rewards you for taking steps to reduce your food waste. You earn Green Points by taking action to cut your food waste with Hampshire County Council. The hero with the most green points at the end of the month can choose from a selection of prizes including a £20 Love2Shop or M&S voucher.

How to reduce your food waste:

We'll provide you with easy activities to help cut down your food waste. Such as:

- Shopping smart by making meals plans and lists
- Keeping your food fresh for longer by improving your storage
- Getting creative to make the most of your leftovers



Hampshire

County Council

Discounted and Free Food APPS





Too Good To Go

This app helps people that are in crisis - <u>Too Good To Go</u>
Download the App to find reduced priced food near you. **Links and apps for useful discounts, offers and reduced food options:**

A whole host of companies take part, including Starbucks, Greggs, Toby Carvery and Costa to name a few. In some cases, they will tell you what you're buying and in others, you will receive a 'Magic Bag'. This can be whatever they have left over, but you won't know until you arrive. You just need to reserve your chosen food through the app and collect. But be warned, lots of other people are keen to do it too, so you need to be quick.

OLIO App

SHOPPERS can bag Tesco food for free using the Olio app, which aims to cut food waste.



Biscuits, bread and fresh produce that is approaching its expiry date will be picked up from stores by one of the app's 8,000 volunteers who will then distribute it in their local communities. <u>OLIO</u> is a free **app** which connects neighbours with each other and local shops so that surplus **food** can be shared.

The idea is that the volunteer and community groups arrange for the food to be collected. **Olio** is registered with the Food Standards Agency to ensure

that all the food is still safe to eat when its collected. The groceries are completely free but of course there's no guarantee what will be on offer as it will all depend on what's leftover. This is because Tesco already runs its own surplus food donations programme, like the Community Food Connection scheme with Fare Share.

Central Tickets

Provide a free seat filling service that connects productions with new audiences – that includes underserved groups in a way that is socially responsible and climate positive.

Central Tickets



tickets, update your account and manage your bookings easily and quickly.





Central Tickets

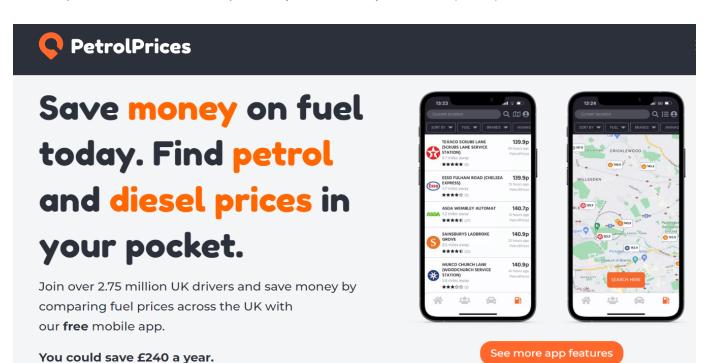
10% free wallet credit with first top-up (up to £10 - terms apply)



Membership with Central is totally free. Seat-filling tickets range from £4 to £15 and you'll have access to special offers for West End shows via our ticketing partners.

Petrol Price Comparison

To compare Diesel and Petrol prices by location to you - www.petrolprices.com/



Cheap Mortgage Finder

For help with how to find the best deal for you, you can try the Money Saving Expert. Money Saving Expert - Mortgage Finder

For current deals - Money Saving Expert Best-buys Mortgages

Help with rent

If Universal Credit or Housing Benefit does not cover all of your rent, you can make a claim for a discretionary housing payment (DHP). A DHP is a single payment from your local council to help pay your rent. Your local council will decide whether to give you DHP based on your circumstances – if you are struggling to pay you rent, visit <u>Citizens Advice</u> – search 'rent'

You might be able to get help with your rent from these benefits:

- 1. Income Support
- 2. income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- 3. income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- 4. Pension Credit

Citizens Advice - search 'housing benefit'

Young Families



Hart Foodbank

https://hereforhartdirectory.org.uk/services/view/214

Can provide formula that has been donated (unfortunately, not all brands) so cannot necessarily meet all expectations exactly. They can provide nappies but most are donated by parents who have left over nappy packs and the majority are the smaller sizes as well as baby wipes too.

Fleet Phoenix (youth support based in Fleet)

https://hereforhartdirectory.org.uk/services/view/210

Store baby products including milk, food, nappies, wipes, nappy sacks, baby shampoo, creams, lotions, wash etc, but only hold a small amount of stock. They will endeavour to purchase specialist products for babies if needed, like the right type of milk if not in stock. Needs and requirements do fluctuate:

Cold weather and health: Supporting vulnerable people

The UK Health Security Agency has published information and guidance to protect vulnerable people from the cold weather in England and offer health support.

This guidance offers advice for caring for people most at risk during cold weather. It is part of a wider collection of documents providing guidance on how to minimise the health effects of adverse weather and to build community resilience - health impacts of cold weather in England

Places in Hart for coffee mornings, social groups and cafes in community buildings

St. Johns Church, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8ED - St Johns Church

Is a quiet space with coffee shop, used by community groups. Accessible toilet, child friendly, food available with free WIFI, hot drinks and parking.

Open hours are:

Monday to Thursday from 9.30 am – 2pm

Friday from 10am - 12noon, Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm and Sunday 9am - 1pm

Yateley Industries Warm Space

We plan to offer members of Yateley Community Pantry a warm welcoming place where they can have a hot drink and meal for £1.

Child Choices Website

This is 'help with paying for Childcare costs' from the Gov.

https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/

Parents are encouraged to apply for support with childcare costs.

The Department for Education is <u>reminding eligible working parents of two-year-olds that they will</u> <u>be able to register to access 15 hours free childcare per week from April 2024</u>. The recommended time to register is between mid-January and the end of February.

More information on the childcare support available to parents can be found on the <u>Childcare Choices website</u>, where parents can explore the early education entitlements and other government help with childcare costs.

Hampshire Libraries - Local Information



Local libraries offer safe, warm places where the heating is on, and people can go to get warm in the winter. <u>Fleet Library</u> and <u>Yateley Library</u> both offer a lovely space for various social groups and welcome those who need help and would like to meet new people.

Hampshire Libraries - offer a range of free or low-cost resources, events, activities and learning opportunities, and provides a safe and inclusive community space for everyone, with access to free WiFi and support with - Cost of living resources | Hampshire County Council (hants.gov.uk)

Barclays Local at Fleet Library: Every Tuesday: 9.30am to 2.30pm

Every Wednesday: 9.30am to 1.30pm Every Thursday: 12.30pm to 3.30pm Every Friday: 9.30am to 3.30pm

Barclays offer a cashless and paperless service, but help can be provided with servicing requests (transfers, ordering stationery), digital support (Barclays app and online banking), new products (via the banking app only) and fraud and scam awareness. Book at barclays.co.uk/local

Fleet Library are offering the following social groups:

- 1. **Community Connections** a free drop-in for all seekers of sanctuary for a chat, helpful information and signposting. Colouring Lego and bricks available for children. Every Wednesday from 10am 12 noon.
- 2. 'Chat About' regular sessions on a Monday (except public holidays) from 11am midday. Join us for a free hot drink and biscuit. Remember to bring your own reusable lidded cup. For people to come to a warm space, meet new friends and have a chat. Babies and children welcome with an adult. Food and drink can be brought along.
- 3. **Games Morning** a free drop-in with games provided, but feel free to bring you own. Every Friday from 10am 12noon.
- 4. **Singalong** singing is good for you, your health and mood can be enhanced through singing, and you can benefit even if you don't think you can sing. These relaxed sessions are for adults of all ages and will have popular songs from many eras. Every Monday (except public holidays) from 2.15pm 3.15pm.
- 5. **Craft and Chatter** come and join like-minded crafters to share ideas, advice and friendship while working on whatever project you have on the go. Free, friendly, fun and just turn up! Every Wednesday at 10am 12noon.
- 6. IT Support Speak to a member of staff t book a FREE one-to-on session with our Digital Champion Volunteer. Pre-booking is essential. Our Digital Champion Volunteer will be available to help you with your personal devise, and also on the library computers. Sessions are held on the first floor. Every Monday (except public holidays) from 11.30am 1.30pm and every Saturday from 10am 12noon.
- 7. **Hong Kong Connections** every 3rd Saturday of the month from 11am 1pm. It is a chance to meet others for a friendly chat. Drinks, snacks and games are also available.

Yateley Library are offering the following social groups:

- 1. **Book Club** why not join our friendly, general fiction, book club? Every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10am 12noon.
- 2. **Craft and Chatter** bring your current project into the library and meet other crafters to exchange ideas. Every Monday (except public holidays) from 10am 12noon.
- 3. **Chat About** a weekly drop in to meet new people. Grab a drink and biscuit. Families are welcome to stay after our earlier rhyme time session. Every Friday from 10.45am 11.34am.

Cost of Living Crisis - Local Help & Support



SUPPORT FOR HART COMMUNITIES

1. Support with Gas, Electric & Water Bills - Citizens Advice Energy Advice Programme



Citizens Advice Hart are providing advice and support for energy related issues. The aim of this programme is to offer additional target advice and support to ensure that clients are living in warm efficient homes on a tariff they can afford. They can assist access to support funds where eligible and are providing advice and support for energy related issues. To book a referral please complete the contact form making sure you mention energy advice or please get in touch on: Tel: 01252 878435

Adviceline: 0808 278 7864. Visit Citizens Advice Hart or email help@citizensadvicehart.org.uk

There are answers to lots of questions about your energy supply here: **Energy supply Advice**.

You may not realise that you can get help towards the cost of heating and lighting your home especially if you are on a low income or claiming benefits. Citizens Advice Hart are taking applications for grants which goes straight to the energy bill or meter. This grant is for the most in need and you must be in fuel poverty. Please contact: Citizens Advice Hart

Citizens Advice Hart are offering a 'Home and Well' service which is a unique collaboration of organisations working together to support residents of Hampshire. If you are a patient being discharged from hospital but need support to get your home ready and to transition, this service is available - Citizens Advice Hart-Home and Well

2. Community Grants

Helping community and voluntary organisations provide local support

Community organisations, who know their communities best and are in the ideal position to provide support, <u>can apply for Community grants</u> to support initiatives that help people in need with food and fuel.

The Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need to help with significant rising living costs and is intended to cover a wide range of vulnerable households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people. Additional money will be given to councils to provide further help to the most vulnerable households across England with essential food and energy costs through the Household Support Fund until 31 March 2024.

Vulnerable households and families are encouraged to check their council website for details of support available – <u>Hart.gov.uk/Household Support Fund</u>

3. Evouchers (part of Wonde)

Evouchers was created as a simple solution for schools and local authorities in the UK and supports vulnerable families at the time when they need it the most.

Distribution and enquiries - Help Centre: help evouchers

4. Fleet Lions Fuel and Utilities Project: Fleet Lions are supporting families experiencing fuel poverty https://www.fleetlions.org.uk/index.html

Please email fuel@fleetlions.org.uk if you are in debt to your energy suppliers or water utilities.

5. Support with Housing Costs

There is also help available from the Exceptional Housing Costs Fund, where support cannot be met by existing schemes. Please contact Hart District Council: housing@hart.gov.uk

Anyone facing a genuine emergency and struggling to meet their housing costs can apply to Hart District Council's Emergency Housing Costs Fund. The funding is for exceptional cases and where existing schemes do not meet this need.

For more information, please contact 01252 774420 or email: hardship@hart.gov.uk

6. Holiday Activities Food Programme (HAF): support for children and families

The Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) provides healthy food and activities to children and young people, with free places available for those who receive free school meals. HAF is funded by the government and run by councils which help deliver the holiday clubs. The programme is available during school holidays. The free holiday club programme helps children to enjoy active and healthy school holidays, where they can experience new activities, meet friends and eat healthy meals. The Department for Education is promoting the scheme to pupil's parents and carers and in the clubs in their area. Education Hub - holiday activities and food programme

The Department for Education (DfE) is providing funding to local authorities to coordinate a programme that provides healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children during school holidays. Hampshire County Council and the Isle of Wight Council are delivering this through the <u>connect4communities programme</u>. The HAF scheme is in place for 2022 – 2025. <u>Government holiday activities and food programme</u>

7. Action Hampshire

Action Hampshire plays a critical role in supporting Hampshire's communities. They provide advice and guidance for voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and local councils - Action Hampshire get support with the cost of living crisis

Their website offers a wealth of information and services across our local districts.

8. Hitting the Cold Spots: Helping you stay warm

Hampshire County Council offers 'Hitting the Cold Spots: Fuel/Energy advice' which is a service commissioned for Hampshire residents and is delivered by **The Environment Centre (tec)** and focuses on keeping your home warm and your family healthy which is expensive and sometimes difficult. Hitting the Cold Spots Advisors can help you with keeping warm at home and reducing your energy bills — **Telephone 0800 804 8601**, 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday or 023 8033 6172 Or emailing staywarm@environmentcentre.com

- Access to funding for home energy upgrades such as heating improvements and insulation
- Small energy-saving measures such as low energy light bulbs and draught-proofing
- Advice on energy use in the home, including using Smart Meters
- Advice on tackling damp, condensation, and mould

They can refer or signpost clients to other services including:

- Benefits, budgeting, and debt support
- Home safety and improvements, e.g. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Blue Lamp Trust and disabled facilities grants
- Charitable organisations, food banks and utility vouchers

Further details can be found on the **Here for Hart Directory of Services**: Hitting The Cold Spots: Fuel/Energy Advice

More Funds & Support for Hart Communities



OTHER CURRENT AND UPCOMING FUNDS / SUPPORT AVAILABLE

- Vivid Welfare Grant this is support for Vivid tenants, including fuel poverty.
 Contact emily.brown@vividhomes.co.uk
- Carers Household Support Fund for Hampshire carers to support with utilities, food and white goods. Contact info@carercentre.com or if you are known to them contact your career support / EPC worker who can then request the funding.
- NHS Frimley Healthier communities Innovation Fund North East Hampshire –
 launched on 15 January 2024 and closing on 18 February 2024 with a delivery date of June
 December 2024. Looking for projects that will protect and enhance the health and
 wellbeing of the most vulnerable in our community from the consequences of COVID-19.
 frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/get-involved/innovation-fund/
- Tesco Stronger Start grants supports thousands of local community projects and good causes with voting via local Tesco stores which focuses on projects that provide food banks, counselling & support services for children, healthy eating on a budget. Max £1.5K per project – tesco stronger starts.org.uk
- Utilita Giving for registered charities only supporting people in fuel and food poverty utilitagiving.org/grants-for-organisations
- BigGive Kind2Mind -kind2mind has just launched and closes for applications for mental health support projects on 9 February 2024. For more information: <u>big give.org-kind2mind</u>
- Park Homes Warm Home Discount by Charis enables residents living in a park home to apply for a £150 payment to help towards the cost of their living bills – <u>Charis Grants</u> <u>Park-Homes</u>
- Berkeley Foundation Resilience Fund applications close on 2 February 2024 to support up to 6 organisations working with young people who are experiencing or who are at risk of homelessness <u>berkeleyfoundation.org.uk/grants</u>
- The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, Veteran's Capital Housing Fund this
 programme will award grants of between £75,000 £500,000 towards projects that support
 significant refurbishment, including extensions and new builds of rental accommodation that
 will offer high quality support for veterans with a housing need. Application deadline 17
 June 2024. Eligible to organisations registered charities that can demonstrate that they
 work with veterans covenant fund-apply-for-a-grant
- VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme to help voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSEs) across England to delivery more efficient services for people and community by saving money on their energy bills. Applications close 30 August 2024 groundwork.org.uk/vcseenergyefficiency/

Please contact HVA for details on the bespoke grant search using the Grant Finder Database – info@hartvolaction.org.uk

Quick Tips to Save Energy in your Home



- 1. **Press -** switch off electrical appliances rather than leaving them on standby.
- 2. Pull pull out chargers while not in use.
- Insulate draft proof your home as heat is lost through draughts around doors, windows, floors and chimneys. A helpful guide to draught-proofing - Energy Saving Trust
- 4. **Turn off lights –** especially when you're not in a room. Using LED bulbs or energy efficient ones could save you even more.
- 5. Save on Laundry washing at 30-degrees, using an 'eco-cycle' and filling your machine.
- 6. Avoid tumble drying dry clothes outside or on a heated clothes rack.
- 7. **Shorter showers -** a 4-minute showers could save a typical household £65 a year on energy bills. Swapping baths for showers and install a water efficient showerhead.
- 8. **Reduce -** thermostat temperature by 1degree.
- 9. Moneysavingboilerchallenge.com set the water flow temperature to 60degrees.
- 10. **Don't over fill your kettle –** only boil what you need.
- 11. **Match –** use the right sized hob for your pan when cooking.
- 12. **Fill your dishwasher –** half-empty dishwashers will use more water and electricity.
- 13. **Alternative cooking methods –** instead of cooking your food in a traditional oven, try cheaper alternative methods such as slow cookers, air fryers and microwaves.
- 14. **Using an oven –** if you need to cook using your oven, ensure it is used to full capacity and when finished, leave the door open for the airflow to heat your home.
- 15. Increase insulation make sure your hot water cylinder is insulated.
- 16. **Loft insulation -** Check your insulation is topped up in your roof.
- 17. **Fridge/freezers** make sure they are set to the right temperature.
- 18. **Radiators –** make sure you bleed them regularly and only turn them on in rooms used.
- 19. **TV** select a low energy setting to reduce cost of running.
- 20. Draw your curtains and close your blinds to minimise heat loss through windows and keep the heat in more effectively.
- 21. Tuck long curtains behind radiators so that heat is not trapped.
- 22. Keep radiators and heaters clear so heat can circulate.
- 23. If there are rooms in your house you do not use, turn off radiators in them and close the doors.
- 24. Use your heating controls, such as thermostats and timers.
- 25. Put on extra layers when it's cold indoors.