

FIGHTING THE COST OF LIVING

Below is a list of resources to help you fight the poverty crisis

Keeping local community partners and residents up to date with the latest information, initiatives and activities.

Slough residents can get advice and support with energy bills and the rise in the cost of living.

One Slough is an initiative coordinated by Slough Borough Council and Slough CVS.

If you have any questions you can contact us at community.development@slough.gov.uk



#OneSlough

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FINANCIAL HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Advice and Support

Green Doctor

Green Doctors are expert energy advisers who help south east residents save money, stay warm, and improve energy efficiency in the home. They are now offering pre-booked home visits/phone consultations. During telephone consultation/home visit, the energy advisors will help residents to:

- save money on their energy bills and lower the cost of heating their homes
- get personalised advice on energy bills
- access energy-saving devices
- support accessing home improvement grants and schemes.

Freephone: 0300 365 3005

Email:

greendoctorsldn@groundwork.org.uk

For more information visit:

<https://london.greendoctors.org.uk/>



Scottish and Southern Electric Network (SSEN)

SSEN have two services - one is the priority service register, and the other is Energy Advice service. Both aim to help residents with their energy bills.

Priority Service:

www.ssen.co.uk/power-cuts-emergencies/priority-services/

Energy Advice:

www.ssen.co.uk/power-cuts-emergencies/priority-services/energy-advice/

Freephone: 0800 294 3259

Textphone: 0800 316 5457

Visit: www.ssen.co.uk/power-cuts-emergencies/priority-services/

Registration can be by:

- Phone
- Online
- Text
- Post



Greater South East Zero Hub - Sustainable Warmth

Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2) - a scheme to make energy-saving improvements to the homes of people who struggle to pay their heating bills - has now been replaced by the Sustainable Warmth programme.

Sustainable Warmth is a government-funded programme that follows on from the Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2) scheme. Sustainable Warmth brings together two new schemes to tackle fuel poverty: Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3) and Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUG).

The Greater South East Net Zero Hub has been successful in obtaining Sustainable Warmth funding on behalf of local authorities.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact swarmth@gsetzerohub.org.uk

Sustainable Warmth funding is available until 31 March 2023.

Referral process: Residents can call the agent via call centre or complete a form online. www.gsetzerohub.org.uk/domestic-retrofit/lad2-and-sustainable-warmth/



National Energy Action

The national fuel poverty charity, working to ensure that everyone in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is warm and safe at home.

Advice line information: www.nea.org.uk/get-help/wash-advice/

Useful leaflets: www.nea.org.uk/get-help/advice-resources/

Resources for schools: www.nea.org.uk/training/education-resources/?parent=training

Training: www.nea.org.uk/training/course-outlines/?parent=training

Find out if you qualify for discounts on bills:

www.thameswater.co.uk/help/account-and-billing/financial-support



COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Help and Support

Connecting Communities Berkshire

This project delivers:

- drop-in advice sessions or talks to groups where families meet in Berkshire (such as in Children's Centres)
- telephone advice and support through referrals from frontline workers supporting low-income families
- training sessions for frontline workers supporting families on advice and support they can give.

See a 'how to' guide by Ofgem – www.ofgem.gov.uk/consumers/household-gas-and-electricity-guide/how-switch-energy-supplier-and-shop-better-deal



Warm Home Discount Scheme

This will open again for applications in September/October 2022.

This Warm Home Discount Scheme can provide a rebate off your electricity bill. People on low incomes, including families, pensioners, as well as people with long-term illness or disabilities, may qualify for a rebate of £150 from their energy supplier, which is paid in the winter/spring. Pensioners on low incomes are paid the Warm Home Discount automatically, but all of the groups stated have to contact their electricity supplier each year to claim this discount.

For more information on the Warm Home Discount, and how to claim it, visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme.

For a list of energy suppliers running the scheme, and links to their websites and online application forms, visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/energy-suppliers

Thames Water

Thames Water discounts are available for families on low incomes.

If you are on a low income and/or struggling to pay your water bill, please call Thames Water's Extra Care Services team and they will run through your options and the support available. You can reach them on 0800 009 3652 from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Thames Water Help: if your gross household income is under £16,480, not including disability benefits, apply to Thames Water to have your water bill halved: www.thameswater.co.uk/help/account-and-billing/financial-support/waterhelp

Thames Water sure: for families on means-tested benefits who have three or more children, or where someone in the household has a water dependant medical condition. If you have a water meter, this caps your bill at £423 per year in 2022-23. Visit www.thameswater.co.uk/help/account-and-billing/financial-support/waterhelp

British Gas

- British Gas Energy Trust: providing independent advice and support.
- Financial support and energy advice.
- Support even if not a British gas customer.

Local Advice Centres

- We have mapped and listed all Trust-funded organisations offering free, impartial advice on energy and money at <https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/fuel-and-money-advice/>
- Online debt and money information is also available at www.turn2us.org.uk, www.StepChange.org and on the Citizens Advice national website.



SIGNPOSTING

Reducing energy usage at home

For tips please visit:

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/domestic and

www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/energy-efficiency/reduce-bills

Insulation measures and boiler repairs and replacement for low-income families:

www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/pages/energy-company-obligation

Heat the Home Counties:

www.heatthehomecounties.org.uk/

Energy tips:

www.moneysavingexpert.com/energy/

Citizens Advice East Berkshire

Citizens Advice East Berkshire provides free, independent, impartial and confidential advice and support on issues such as benefits, work, debt and money, consumer's rights, relationships, housing and discrimination.

They provide a freephone number and a local number and local residents are also able to email enquiries.

- Freephone: 0808 1697766
- Local line: 01753 981040
- Email: advice.sl@caeb.org.uk
- Website: Home - Citizens Advice East Berkshire (caeb.org.uk)

There is also a drop-in on Thursdays from 10am-12.15pm at the Chalvey Community Hub, Ladbroke Road, Slough, SL1 2SR.

Quick tips to save energy in your home

1. **Switch off standby:** switch off electrical appliances at the plug, rather than leaving them on standby. To make this easier you can also use a standby saver or smart plug.
2. **Draft-proofing:** your home will lose heat through draughts around doors, windows, floors and chimneys. There are some DIY fixes that can help reduce this loss if professional fixes are out of budget: A helpful guide to draught-proofing - Energy Saving Trust: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/draught-proofing/>
3. **Turn off lights:** turning off lights when you're not in a room will save you money. Using LED bulbs could save you even more.
4. **Save on laundry:** washing at 30-degrees, using an 'eco-cycle' if you have one, filling your machine and only washing clothes when they really need it will all save you money.
5. **Avoid tumble drying:** if you can dry clothes outside or on a heated clothes rack that will help reduce your electricity bills.
6. **Shorter showers:** having 4-minute showers could save a typical household £65 a year on energy bills. Swapping baths for showers will also help you save.
7. **Don't over fill your kettle:** just boil what you need to save wasting electricity.
8. **Reduce your water use:** fixing aerators to your taps will reduce the amount of water coming out by adding air. Aerators are cheap gadgets that are easy to install. Turning taps off when brushing your teeth is also an easy way to save, as is fixing any dripping taps.
9. **Fill your dishwasher:** don't run a half-empty dishwasher as you will need to use it more often, using more water and electricity.
10. **Increase insulation:** make sure your hot water cylinder is insulated. Loose jackets are easy to put on and will reduce energy loss immediately.

Tips are from www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Citizens Advice national helpline

Slough residents can also access Citizens Advice national Help to Claim helpline for advice on Universal Benefits. Help to Claim advisers can help with the early stages of Universal Credit claims. They can be contacted over the phone, online over chat or face-to-face. Advisers can help:

- work out if you can get Universal Credit

- fill in the Universal Credit application
- prepare for your first Jobcentre appointment
- check your first payment is correct.

Advisers are available through the free Help to Claim phone service 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday: 0800 144 8444.

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Support for communities

Visit www.slough.gov.uk/council-services for information on council services.



- **Housing benefit**
www.slough.gov.uk/housing-benefit



- **Council tax support**
www.slough.gov.uk/council-tax-support



- **Local housing allowance**
www.slough.gov.uk/housing-benefit/local-housing-allowance



- **Ukraine welcome guide**
www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/ukraine-welcome-guide



- **Discretionary housing payments**
www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/discretionary-housing-payments



- **Report fraud**
www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/report-fraud



- **Help with fuel bills**
www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/help-fuel-bills



- **Help with debt**
www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/help-debt

Quick tips for a warmer home

1. Draw your curtains in the evenings to minimise heat loss through windows.
2. Tuck long curtains behind radiators so that heat isn't trapped.
3. Keep radiators and heaters clear so heat can circulate - don't put furniture in front of them or dry washing on them.
4. If there are rooms in your house you don't use, turn off radiators in them and close the doors. Keep your home at a stable, comfortable temperature.
5. Use your heating controls, such as thermostats and timers, to heat your home without wasting energy.

Tips from www.ageuk.org.uk

sloughcvs 
www.sloughcvs.org.uk

Slough Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) helps small charities to work more effectively in the local community. SCVS delivers training, advice, support, and tools so that groups can provide the best services for residents in a safe and practical way.

The rising cost of living is having a devastating impact on many

households across Slough. We are working with voluntary sector organisations to co-ordinate information and advice and services.

Please take a look at <https://sloughadvicecentre.co.uk/> to find out where to access information and advice including debt, housing and benefits.



SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Support for communities

Pharmacy

What do you think of when you 'Think Pharmacy?'

Many people have told us they think of their local pharmacy as somewhere to collect prescriptions and get medication, but your local community pharmacist, or chemist, offers so much more.

Community pharmacies are a key member of the NHS family, staffed by pharmacists and their teams, who are qualified healthcare professionals and who can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for minor illnesses, as well as provide a range of NHS services.

Every week, local community pharmacies help more than 865,000 patients who walk in for clinical advice about symptoms and more than 251,000 people who have questions about an existing medical condition.

Local pharmacies can help you get things sorted before they get worse and they don't ask you to make an appointment. If they feel you need further, or more urgent advice, guidance or treatment, they can advise you on the best place to seek assistance, ensuring you are getting the care you need.

How can I help?

Need advice or medication?
Just walk in

Part of the NHS in your community

www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/living-here/helping-you-to-stay-well/know-where-to-go-when-feeling-unwell/pharmacy/

www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy

www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/

www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/news/posts/2022/august/local-pharmacies-part-of-the-nhs-in-your-community/

Frimley Health and Care

NHS

Know where to go when feeling unwell

Pharmacists are qualified health professionals, who can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines.

Ask for help with:

- minor aches and pains, burns and scalds, head lice etc
- queries about medication dosage, type or suitability plus urgent requests
- medication related to hospital discharge
- repeat prescriptions



Pharmacists

KEY CONTACTS

Support on offer

There are a number of organisations offering support for residents, especially those who are vulnerable or struggling due to the rise in living costs.

Food

- **Slough Foodbank:** Provides three days' worth of nutritionally balanced, emergency food and support to local people referred to them in food poverty crisis. Referrals for e-vouchers can be made through GPs, social prescribers, children's centres and health visitors. To find out who is your local referral agency:
Call: 01753 550303
Email: office@slough.foodbank.org.uk
Visit: www.slough.foodbank.org.uk
- **Slough Community Support Café:** Will provide a community pantry and hot meal for residents including families offering somewhere for people to read the paper, meet others, signpost for other services, help children with homework all in a café-style setting. Places need to be booked. For updates follow Slough Community Support Café on Facebook.
- **Salvation Army:** Provides a Soup Kitchen on a Wednesday and a Sunday 7.15-8.30pm. A hot meal with drinks and snacks plus food to take away, and the chance for a shower and a change of clothes.
Located: Stoke Road
Call: 01753 525819
Visit: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/slough
- **SHOC:** Support for homeless people with food, crisis care, recovery and skills training.
Open Mon-Fri 9.30am-1.30pm and Sat 11am-2pm.
Location: Quaker Meeting House, 74 Ragstone Road
Call: 01753 577747
Visit: https://sloughhomeless.org.uk/

Clothes

- **Baby Bank:** Provide newborn starter kits including essentials for mother and baby, clothing bundles for babies and children up to age 16 plus school uniform. Referrals via a health professional or with help from the team.
Email: info@thebabybank.org
Visit: www.thebabybank.org/
- **The Cow Shed:** Provides good-quality cleaned and ironed clothes and other essentials to those in need.
Call: 0118 934 5120
Email: info@thecowshed.org
Visit: www.thecowshed.org/

Furniture

- **Baby Bank:** Can help source beds for children.
Email: info@thebabybank.org
Visit: www.thebabybank.org/
- **London and Slough Run:** A charity supporting the homeless and residents in need. Access to furniture and goods for homeless and residents re-homing.
Email: community.development@slough.gov.uk
Visit: https://thelondonandsloughrun.org/

Other useful links

Not a full list, but some may help with directing to other areas of support.

- **One Slough Directory:** A one-stop shop with information on activities and groups in Slough
<https://sloughhealth.org/>
- **Department for Work & Pensions:** www.gov.uk/check-benefits-financial-support
- **Slough Family Information Service:** Information, advice and support for families and young people
www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/home.page
- **Information on GP surgeries in Slough:** <https://eastberkshireccg.nhs.uk/local-services/gp-practices/our-gp-member-practices-primary-care-networks/slough>
- **Healthwatch Slough:** Independent champion for people who use health and social care services.
www.healthwatchslough.co.uk/
- **Turning Point:** Supporting people with drug and alcohol issues
www.turning-point.co.uk/
- **Home Start Slough:** Helping families with children under 5 with practical support.
<https://hsslough.co.uk/>
- **New Horizons:** Community Mental Health Team - working with adults with complex and severe mental health difficulties and support for families. Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.
www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-sites/slough/new-horizons/
- **East Berkshire Safe Haven:** Out-of-hours mental health support to anyone aged over 18.
www.mhm.org.uk/east-berkshire-haven
- **Friends in Need:** A peer support group for people managing depression and anxiety.
www.bucksmind.org.uk/guide/friends-in-need/
- **Healthier Together:** Advice for parents, young people and pregnant women.
<https://frimley-healthiertogether.nhs.uk/>
- **Slough Outreach:** Provide hot meals, warm clothes and advocacy support to those struggling with homelessness and complex needs.
Call: 07832442424
Email: info@sloughoutreach.org
Visit: <http://sloughoutreach.org/>

KEY CONTACTS

Household Support Fund (HSF)

The Household Support Fund (HSF) grant of £1,177,691.53 has been extended to support those most in need. The grant is to help families, pensioners and individuals who may struggle to pay for basic living costs. The current scheme will close on 30 September 2022. The next round of the funding scheme will start from 1 October 2022 until 31 March 2023. To see the criteria and to claim, visit www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/household-support-fund

One Stop Slough Directory

The directory will facilitate advice, resources, information and services that are available in Slough for residents and professionals to utilise.

We would encourage all services, groups, sessions, activities, advice, information providers to be available on this platform.

- **Visit:** <https://sloughhealth.org/>
Groups can scroll to the bottom of the front page to add their own listings.

Other useful sites

- **Slough Advice Centre**
<https://sloughadvicecentre.co.uk/>

This website is a directory of information and advice services in Slough. Please click on the area of advice you require to see details of local organisations who can help. You can then contact them directly to gain the advice you need. You may also like to visit the <https://slough.communitydatabase.co.uk/groups> for more details on additional groups and services in our area.

- **Family Information and Services Hub**
www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/home.page

Slough Family Information Service offers FREE impartial information and guidance about a wide range of services for children, young people and their families.

How can we help you?

We provide information on:

- support and advice for families with children and young people
- childcare for children aged 0-13
- financial support and help with childcare costs
- free early education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds
- children's centres and family services
- schools and school-based family services
- activities for children, young people aged 0-19 and families

- the Local Offer including activities and services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- adult education and employment.

How to find the information you need

Speak to us in person:
Our regular outreach sessions are held in community venues such as libraries, children's centre or schools.

Look at our website:
The Slough Family Information Service website holds lots of information about services and activities in Slough.

Call us on 01753 476589:
Available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. An answerphone operates outside these hours.

Slough Family Information Service is a member of the National Association of Family Information Service (NAFIS) and has gained the Families First Quality Award.

- **Slough Refugee Support**
srsinfo@sloughrefugeesupport.org.uk
01753 537142
- **Slough Public Health**
www.slough.gov.uk/public-health

Thank you

to everyone who contributed information for this issue of the Fighting the cost of living resource pack. If you have found this resource pack useful, have a suggestion to make it better or an idea for content for the next issue, we would love to hear from you.

For any queries and questions, please email community.development@slough.gov.uk

DISCLAIMER

Whilst every care has been taken in the compilation of this information, Slough Borough Council will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of using the resource pack and of any inaccuracy or error within these pages.