

Help available for Warwickshire residents struggling with household costs

Warwickshire residents who need help with the rising cost of living can access support locally from Warwickshire County Council.

The steep rises in costs this year from fuel and energy to food and heating have already impacted household budgets across the UK, leaving people worried about the additional costs that winter will bring. In response the County Council is sharing the resources and support available across Warwickshire so that residents can get the help they need. All of the following help and guidance is available at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/costofliving.

The [Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme](#) continues to help the county's most vulnerable residents in times of hardship when they have no other means, providing financial support and guidance to help people meet their household costs. The scheme also signposts to the support available from other public, community and voluntary services around the county. This includes debt and money management advice, family information and support, help to access food and household essentials and putting people in touch with local mental health and wellbeing services.

Sudden unexpected costs can also create real financial pressures and challenges. [The Household Support Fund](#) is still available until 30 September 2022, which is designed to provide short-term financial support for people to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford to pay for energy. To enquire or to apply for support, call the Local Welfare Scheme on 0800 4081448 or 01926 359182.

If you are struggling to pay bills or manage energy debt, residents can phone Act On Energy, who provide free and impartial advice to householders on 0800 988 2881, or [visit the Act on Energy website](#) for

energy advice. Help and support is also available on the County Council website for other [housing problems](#) you may experience, including paying your council tax or homelessness.

If you need [help with childcare costs](#), you may be entitled to, or be able to claim a certain number of hours of free childcare if you meet the required criteria. Your child may also be eligible for the [Early Years Pupil Premium](#) if you are in receipt of specific benefits or credits, or find out if you are eligible to receive support from [The Disability Access Fund](#) (DAF), which helps providers to make reasonable adjustments to their settings for 3 and 4 year olds.

Multiple [foodbanks](#) are available across Warwickshire, and typically use a voucher referral system so that you can receive the right kind of help for you and your family. If you need a food parcel because you're experiencing financial hardship, please contact your local food bank. [Food supply help and advice](#) is available for low-income families whose children are eligible for free school meals, people who are homeless, and those who are isolating.

Warwickshire Library and Information Service can also help people to access the support they need by providing free internet access, library membership, and signposting to community services. You can find out more about the library offer through the service [blog](#).

Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Leader of Warwickshire County Council, said:

"The increases in cost of living will be impacting household budgets across the county and leaving many people feeling concerned as we approach the colder autumn and winter months.

"I would like to reassure residents that Warwickshire County Council has a range of support available to help those in need of financial support and advice, whether that be for food, energy, heating, or other bills. We also have services in place to support people's mental health and wellbeing during what is a very challenging time in the current

economic climate.

“We know that many people have been affected by the rising cost of living and we are very aware of the financial and mental pressures being placed on families and individuals. I strongly encourage people to find the support they need through our website, our local services, and the services of our partners that work in the public, community, and voluntary sectors. We are here to help and will do our best to support people with getting the help they need.”

Cost of living advice and support is available at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/costofliving.

Information to stay safe and well can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wellness

For family support and information go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies