



Mid and South Essex
Integrated Care
System



Southend-on-Sea
City Council

Cost-of-living support and advice available for residents



For the latest local updates, visit
www.southend.gov.uk



This booklet is designed to be a practical guide to the support available for those most in need and who are facing difficult financial choices.

The information in this booklet is correct at the time of printing (October 2023).

Please check opening times before visiting any of the services mentioned, as some will be liable to last minute changes.

With thanks to Mid and South Essex
Integrated Care System and PFS Group



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This document is published by Southend-on-Sea City Council. A summary can be provided in alternative formats such as Braille, audio-tape or in large print.

Translations of this document in alternative languages are also available upon request.

 Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6ER

 01702 215000

 www.southend.gov.uk



Financial support

Southend-on-Sea City

Council website. Up-to-date information on financial support and advice is available at www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving

One Southend. This community-led website offers information and advice around some key cost of living topics and suggests services that are available locally. Visit: onesouthend.com/cost-of-living and look for 'cost of living support' in the top menu bar.

Universal Credit. You may be able to get Universal Credit if you are on a low income or need help with your living costs. You could be:

- out of work
- working (including self-employed or part time)
- unable to work, for example because of a health condition

To claim you must:

- live in the UK
- be aged 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you're 16 to 17)
- be under State Pension age
- have £16,000 or less in money, savings and investments

You can use a benefits calculator to check what benefits you could be entitled to: www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators or www.turn2us.org.uk

and search for “benefits calculator” in the search box.

You can call the Universal Credit helpline on **0800 328 5644** or you can apply for Universal Credit online by visiting www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk

Relay UK helps deaf speech-impaired, and hearing people talk to each other over the phone using the **relay** service (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): **18001** then **0800 328 5644**. Lines open Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.

Council tax reduction (CTR). Council tax reduction is a means tested council tax discount. How much support you will receive will depend on your income and circumstances.

For more information and to make a claim visit www.southend.gov.uk/help-paying or call **01702 215001**.

Council tax exemptions. To apply for exemptions, go to MySouthend my.southend.gov.uk to complete the Discount, Disregard and Exemption form or call **01702 215001**.

Council tax disregards. Certain personal circumstances can mean that some adults in your household can be disregarded (not counted) for Council Tax purposes. Examples of people who can apply:

- Students
- Severely mentally impaired
- Resident in a care home
- Resident detained in prison or hospital

- 18 and 19 year olds included in someone’s Child Benefit payments
- Apprentices, youth trainees and school leavers
- Young care leavers
- Carers
- Members of visiting forces and certain international organisations
- Members of religious communities
- People who are diplomats or members of an international organisation headquartered in the UK

To apply for student reduction, please go to the Citizens Access Council Tax portal which can be found on the council website. For all other exemptions, go to MySouthend my.southend.gov.uk to complete the Cancel a Discount/Exemption form or call **01702 215001**.

Household Support Grant. The current scheme ends March 2024, it is there to help low-income households with the cost of energy and food bills. Visit the council website and use the search function to find ‘household support fund’.

Essential Living Fund. The Essential Living Fund (ELF) is primarily intended to help vulnerable people live as independent a life as possible in the community. The fund is designed to:

- help people establish themselves in the community following a stay in an institution, Care Home, Local Authority Care, hostel, prison or similar
- help people remain in the community rather than enter an

institution or Care Home

- help people with certain travel costs
- help people who are unable to meet their immediate short term needs either in an emergency in relation to some expenses or as a consequence of a disaster
- help children with school uniform costs

For advice and guidance visit the council website and use the search function to find 'Essential Living Fund' or call **0300 7900124**.

Pension Credit. If you are over the State Pension age and on a low income, this gives you extra support with your living and housing costs. If you receive Pension Credit you can also get other help, such as:

- Housing Benefit
- Support for mortgage interest payments
- a Council Tax discount
- a free TV licence if you're aged 75 or over
- help with NHS dental treatment
- Eye glasses
- transport costs for hospital appointments
- help with your heating costs through the Warm Home Discount Scheme

You can apply for Pension Credit up to four months before you reach the State Pension age. Eligible claims made after you reach state pension age will only be backdated by three months.

If you have already applied for your

state pension you can apply for Pension Credits by visiting apply-for-pension-credit.service.gov.uk/start or by calling **0800 99 1234**. Textphone: **0800 169 0133**. Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): **18001** then **0800 99 1234**.

Local charities

If you do not feel on top of your finances, you should seek advice. Details of some free organisations that can help are listed below

Citizens Advice Southend can help with debt advice, maximisation of income, help to claim Universal Credit.

Telephone: **01702 456352** or **01702 969696**.

Drop in time: Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm, bring in any documents to support your inquiry

Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL.

SECH Help in Hub is an independent safe space for the local community. They can provide support with filling in online forms, assisted access to computers, a free beginner computer course, housing support for On the Move, Discretionary Housing Payment, Essential Living Fund, and more. Digital Skills Support Including Email Access, Scanning, Job Searching, and more.

Telephone: **01702 611199**

Drop in time: Monday to Friday 10am to 12pm, 1pm to 4pm.

Address: 1st Floor Victoria Shopping Centre 324-325 Chartwell Square Southend on Sea Essex SS2 5SP.

The Salvation Army – Employment

Plus can support anyone with employability, money management and debt support along with tenancy and benefits guidance. They also help people with digital upskilling through their own eLearning platforms and accessing the Good Things Foundation Learn My Way initiative. Please contact Ann: **07850 310 380** or Shaun: **07776 516218** for any further details.

STRM – SEND the Right Message Charity.

A ‘by Parents for Parents’ registered charity, their goal is to improve the lives of families in Southend, Castle Point and Rochford districts where a child has been identified or suspected as having Specific Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities by providing support services and training. STRM can assist with benefit entitlement checks and

provides a free disability benefits service. They can help with form filling and guidance with: DLA Applications, PIP Applications, Carers Allowance Applications, Family Fund and Disabled Grants and Blue Badge Applications. STRM can help families facing digital exclusion by accessing free internet data. They also offer food bank referrals, access to work support and legitimate crisis support. Free service for registered residents of Southend if you fall in the category of charitable criteria. Please contact via the email: info@strmsupport.co.uk Mobile: **07359 068827** or register via the website: www.strmsupport.co.uk

Gambling Harm UK are a UK charity dedicated to the prevention and reduction of gambling harm you can visit <https://gamblingharm.com> for support. Alternatively, please call the National Gambling Helpline which is a free helpline that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: **0808 8020 133 24.**

If you do not feel on top of your finances, or if you feel your finances are out of control, you should seek advice. To find details of various other money advice support groups please visit:

www.southend.gov.uk/debtadvice

Benefits and support for those with children

- **15 hours free childcare for 2-year-old children**

Families who have 2-year-old children and are on certain benefits can get 15 hours of free childcare a week.

- **15 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-old children**

All families with children aged 3 and 4 can get 15 hours of free childcare a week.

- **30 hours free childcare for 3 and 4-year-old children**

Eligible working families in England with 3 and 4-year-old children can receive 30 hours of free childcare a week.

- **Tax-free childcare for children aged 0–11 (0–16 if your child is disabled)**

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the cost of childcare.

- **Claim back childcare costs**

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you're eligible for Universal Credit, with up to £646 back each month for one child or £1,108 for 2 or more children.

Find out more about childcare cost: www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-childcare-costs

To find out more about help with the cost of childcare: Visit Childcare Choices for more information:

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

email: earlyyears@southend.gov.uk or call **01702 215000**.

Free school meals. Children are entitled to receive free school meals if they or their parents or guardians receive certain benefits.

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim to your child's school.

www.southend.gov.uk/help-costs/free-school-meals-1



Holiday Activities and Food programme for school aged children aged 5–15.

For school aged children aged 5–15. You can get access to free activities and food for your children in the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays if they are eligible for free school meals.

To find out more, search for 'HAF' or Holiday Activity and Food Scheme on www.livewellsouthend.com

Email: HAF@southend.gov.uk or phone **01702 215000**.

Health4Life is a free local programme aimed at 5 to 16-year-olds to help children and their families achieve and maintain healthy lifestyle choices. It is a 6-week course that explores different themes around healthy lifestyles and offers practical advice and information. The Health4Life Team can support children on an individual basis if the programme is not suitable.

Parents/Carers can contact the Health4Life Team if they are concerned about their child's weight. To register or if you would like further information call **01702 534843**.

Email: mseicb-s.health4life@nhs.net

Child Benefit. You can claim Child Benefit if you're responsible for bringing up a child who is:

- under 16
- under 20 if they stay in approved education or training

Only one person can get Child Benefit for a child.

It's paid every four weeks and there is no limit to how many children you can claim for.

You can claim Child benefit at www.gov.uk/child-benefit or call the Child Benefit helpline: **0300 200 3100**.

Claim Healthy Start vouchers. If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four, you may be able to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

Check if you're eligible for Healthy Start vouchers: www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply or call **0300 330 7010**.

Get help with maternity costs. You could claim a one-off payment of £500 to help towards the costs of having a child.

Check if you're eligible for the Sure Start Maternity Grant: www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant/eligibility or call **0800 169 0140**.

Emergency Infant Feeding. If you are struggling to buy formula or food, please reach out to your Health Visitor on **01702 534913** or Local Family Centre on **01702 220810**.

Bibs & Bobs Baby Bank. Open to all parents and carers with a 0-5 year old in their care. Help yourself to free children's items and clothing.

Last Friday of each month, Summercourt Family Centre, Appointments available between 9.30am and 1.30pm. To book, email fcsessionbooking@southend.gov.uk

Family Centres. Open Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm. Supporting with issues such as emotional support, budgeting, parenting, domestic abuse, foodbank referrals and healthy start vitamins.

Call **01702 220810** for more information.

STRM – SEND the Right Message Charity. A ' by Parents for Parents' registered charity, their goal is to improve the lives of families in Southend, Castle Point and Rochford districts where a child has been identified or suspected as having

Specific Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities by providing support services and training. STRM - SEND the Right Message Charity objectives are: Positive Activities, Awareness & Acceptance, Overcoming Barriers, Advocacy & Support and Co-production opportunities. Free service for registered residents of Southend if you fall in the category of the charitable criteria. Please contact via the email: info@strmsupport.co.uk Mobile: **07359 068827** or register via the website: www.strmsupport.co.uk



Food support

Help with food and groceries

Southend Communities Outreach Group Food Bank.

Referrals: No referrals needed, just proof of address as SS07 post code only

Opening times: Monday and Wednesday 10am to 12pm

Address: Balmoral Community Centre, Salsbury Avenue Westcliff SS0 7AU. Enter via the white side doors.

Tel: **07876 116552**.

Storehouse. Free food parcel, food support.

Referrals: no referral needed except for the Wednesday family session

Opening times:

- Monday 10:30am to 12pm and 1pm to 2pm. Open session
- Wednesday 9:30am to 11:30am. Family sessions by referral only. Access referrals from: social worker, health visitor, school, any other support service.
- 1pm to 2pm women only session
- Friday 1pm to 2pm men only session and 2pm to 3pm men only support session.

Address: Storehouse Community Centre, Coleman Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5AW.

Tel: **01702 612900** (Vineyard Centre) / **01702 617348** (Direct).

The One Love project. access to soup kitchen and amenities for all

Referrals: No referral necessary

Opening times:

- Monday 4pm to 5:15pm women only session and 6:30pm to 8pm open session
- Thursday 11:30 to 12:30 adults only. 1pm to 2pm families with children

Address: Hollybrook, Carnarvon Road (Behind Police Station), SS2 6LR

The Shoebury Ark. Free food parcels and children's clothes

Referrals: No referrals needed but priority given to SS3 residents (proof of address will be requested on first visit).

Opening times: Tuesday 2pm to 4pm

Address: Friars Baptist Church, Eagle Way, Shoeburyness SS3 9RJ

Email: info@shoeburyark.org.uk

St Vincent's Centre Southend. Free food parcel.

Referrals: No referrals

Opening times: Monday to Friday 11am to 2pm

Free food parcel delivery for people that have mobility or medical exemptions, call: **01702 592980** (deliveries on Tuesday)

Address: Unit 9 Victoria Business Park, Short Street, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY

Vinnie's Pick 'n Mix. A low-cost food market, £1 annual membership, £5.00 for up to 15 items on the first occasion, £4.00 thereafter.

Referrals: No referrals

Opening times: Friday 11:30am to 1pm

Address: Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short St, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY.

Tel: **01702 592980.**

Southend Foodbank. Free, three-day food parcels.

Referral: Referral needed

Access referrals from: SAVS **01702 356000**, Early Help **01702 215783**, South Essex Community Hub Tel: **01702 611199** Email: info@sech-uk.com, Citizens Advice Southend: **01702 456352** or **01702 456354**, Welcome to the UK: **01702 808579.**

Opening times:

- Monday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Ferndale Baptist Church, North Avenue, Southend, SS2 5HU

- Monday 5pm to 6:30pm
Address: Hawkwell Baptist Church, Rectory Road, Rochford, SS4 1UG
- Tuesday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Belle Vue Baptist Church, Belle Vue Avenue, Southend, SS1 2QZ
- Wednesday 9:30am to 11am
Address: Eastwood Baptist Church, Rayleigh Road, Eastwood, SS9 5PY
- Wednesday 2pm to 4pm
Address: St Saviours Church, Kings Road, Westcliff, SS0 8LL
- Thursday 1pm to 3pm
Address: Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay Baptist Church, 90 Thorpdene Gardens, Shoeburyness, SS3 9JD
- Friday 12:30pm to 2:30pm
Address: Earls Hall Baptist Church, 120 Hobblythick Lane, Westcliff-on-sea, SS0 0RJ
- Saturday 9:30am to 11am
Address: West Leigh Baptist Church, 1150 London Road, Leigh-on-sea, SS9 2AJ



Southend FOOD Clubs (Food On Our Doorstep). Provides good-quality food at a low cost, while also reducing food waste. It costs just £1 a year for a family to become a member. Members can then purchase a bag of tasty food items every week worth approx. £10–12 for just £3.50. To become a member you must live or work within 15 minutes of the club.

Referral: Please email

SouthendFoodClubs@family-action.org.uk

or phone Karen on **07812 496015** / Natasha on **07971 951636**

who will help you join as a member and book you a timed slot to attend a club.

Opening times:

- Monday: 9:30am to 11:20pm,
Address: Constable Way,
Shoeburyness, SS3 9X
- Friday 1:30pm to 3:20pm,
Address: Centre Place Family
Centre Prospect Close, SS1 2JD
- Saturday 10:30am to 12:20pm,
Address: Summercourt Family
Centre, Summercourt Road,
Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 7AU

Help with toiletries

All Rise Collective (Toiletry Care bank). Free toiletry/essentials bag, period/baby bag,

Referrals: No referrals

- Opening times: The first Tuesday of every month, 10.30am to 11.30am
Address: St Marks Centre, Princes Street, Southend-on-Sea SS1 1QA

- Opening times: Every third Thursday of the month 9am to 10.30am

Address: Westcliff Library 649
London Road, Westcliff-on-Sea
SS0 9PD

Free meals

Storehouse. Free hot meal

- Monday 10:30am to 12pm for Breakfast and 1pm to 2pm for Lunch, all welcome
- Wednesday: 1pm to 2pm for Lunch, Women only session
- Friday 10:30am to 12pm Breakfast for mixed adults, 1 to 2pm men only session and 2pm to 3pm men only support session pm

Address: Storehouse Community Centre, Coleman Street, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5AW.

Tel: **01702 612900** (Vineyard Centre) / **01702 617348** (Direct).

HARP (Homeless Action Resource Project).

Breakfast. All welcome.

Opening times: Breakfast Monday to Sunday 9am to 11am.

Address: Bradbury Centre, 103-107 York Road, Southend on Sea.

Tel: **01702 430696**.

All Saints Church. Free continental breakfast, £2 charge for a cooked breakfast, all welcome

Opening times: Tuesday 8am to 11am

Address: 1 Sutton Road/Southchurch Road SS2 5PA.

Tel: **01702 307518**.

57 West. Tea, coffee and snacks

Opening times:

- Wednesday, Thursday 12pm to 2pm
- Friday 11am to 1pm

Address: Clarence Road Baptist Church, 6 Clarence Rd, Southend-on-Sea SS1 1AN.

Tel: **07938 847147**.

The Salvation Army.

Opening times:

- Monday and Tuesday 9am to 12noon, refreshment
- Thursday 10am ,Tea and Toast (drop in for all ages) and 10am to 2pm, Employment Plus
- Friday 9.30am to 11.30am, Tea and Toast (drop in for all ages)

Address: Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 1SP

For more information on all the sessions and support Salvation Army provide please contact **01702 716607** or visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/leigh-sea

One Love Soup Kitchen.

Opening times:

- Monday, Thursday 6.30pm to 8.00pm: Rough sleepers and those facing homelessness

- Wednesday: Wellbeing Wednesday 11am to 2pm. Open session, meaningful activities every week. Lunch and refreshments provided.
- Thursday: 11:30am to 12:30pm adults only. 1pm to 2pm: families with children, freshly cooked nutritious meals at our Pop-Up kitchen, Adults £1.00, children eat for free.

Address: Holybrook, Carnarvon Road, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6LR.

Kindness Kitchen. A hot meal, outreach and a hot drink, all welcome

Opening times:

- Lunch: Monday to Friday 11am to 2pm
- Dinner: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 7pm to 8pm,

Address: St. Vincent's Centre, Unit 9, Victoria Business Park, Short Street, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5BY.

Tel: **01702 592980**.

The Shoebury Ark. 1 free meal for every person in a household (adults' and children's meals available).

Referrals: No referrals needed but priority given to SS3 residents (proof of address will be requested on first visit).

Opening times: Tuesday 2pm to 4pm

Address: Friars Baptist Church, Eagle Way, Shoeburyness SS3 9RJ

Email: info@shoeburyark.org.uk

Warm hubs

Warm hubs (also known as warm banks) are spaces that are open to the public and can be used to keep warm during operating hours. For up-to-date opening times please contact the warm hub directly.

Southend Library @ The Forum	●▲★
Elmer Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NB	Tel: 01702 534111
Westcliff Library	●▲★
649 London Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 9PD	Tel: 01702 341961
Kent Elms Library	●▲★
1 Rayleigh Road, Eastwood, Leigh on Sea, SS9 5UU	Tel: 01702 523803
Southchurch Library	●▲★
221 Liftsan Way, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 2XG	Tel: 01702 212185
Shoeburyness Library	●▲★
Shoebury Youth & Community Centre, Delaware Road, Shoeburyness, SS3 9NS	Tel: 01702 534010
Focal Point Gallery	●
The Forum, Elmer Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NB	Tel: 01702 534108
Central Museum	●
Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6EW	Tel: 01702 212345
The Beecroft Art Gallery	●
Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6EW	Tel: 01702 212511
Prittlewell Priory/ Prittlewell Priory Visitor Centre	●
Priory Park, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6NB	Tel: 01702 212190
Southchurch Hall	●
Southchurch Hall Gardens, Park Lane, SS1 2TE	Tel: 01702 467671
Civic Centre	●▲
Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6ER	Tel: 01702 215000
Southend Adult Community College	●▲
Ambleside Drive, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 2UP	Tel: 01702 445700

There are other community places offering their spaces as a warm hub please visit [onesouthend.com](https://www.onesouthend.com) and look for 'cost of living' in the top menu bar and select the Warm Spaces interactive map. Also look out for the Warm Hub logo in your local area. ▶



Energy cost advice and support

If you are in debt to your energy supplier, you might be able to get a grant to help pay it off. Contact your supplier directly to see what extra support they can give you.

LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership) is an energy and money saving service that is helping people keep warm during the colder months and reduce their energy bills without costing them any money.

Scheme year is now open. Residents can apply directly on their website www.applyforleap.org.uk and to arrange for a telephone energy advice appointment.

Resident eligibility:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Pension Savings Credit
- Child Tax Credit / Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reductions
- A disability benefit (Including DLA, PIP etc)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

- Less than £31,000 total annual household income

LEAP provides:

- Switching to a cheaper energy tariff
- Sending out small energy efficiency measures such as LED lightbulbs, draught proofing and radiator reflectors
- Giving energy savings advice
- And, onward referrals to IncomeMax for income, benefits and debt advice or for larger energy efficiency measures, such as ECO4 scheme, where applicable

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

Scheme. ECO4 is a government-supported initiative that requires energy suppliers to install cost-effective energy saving solutions in some of the UK's most vulnerable properties. Through the ECO4 Scheme, homes could receive discounted (or free) home insulation, an upgraded boiler or green heating system.

Eligibility: Your property must have an Energy Performance Certificate

(EPC) of D or lower **and** you must be receiving one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Income based Jobseekers allowance
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Pension Credit Savings Credit
- Housing Benefit

If you have any queries or think you may be eligible, please contact your energy provider for further information.

Great British Insulation Scheme. The Great British Insulation Scheme is a new government energy efficiency

scheme that is designed to deliver improvements to the least energy-efficient homes in Great Britain to tackle fuel poverty and help reduce energy bills.

Eligibility: As well as supporting low-income and vulnerable households, it will also be available to those living in homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D-G, and within Council Tax bands A-D in England.

If you have any queries or think you may be eligible, please contact your energy provider for further information.

HUG 2 funds energy efficiency upgrades and clean heating systems in low-income households. The scheme targets the worst quality (EPC band D-G), **off-gas grid** homes



in England, to tackle fuel poverty and progress towards the UK's 2050 Net Zero commitment.

Eligible residents can apply now using the Energy Saving Trust phonenumber at **08081 968255**.

Citizens Advice Southend. If you would like further energy advice, Citizens Advice Southend have Energy Specialists who can provide support. You can contact Citizens Advice Southend on **08082 78 79 78** or visit their website www.citizensadvice-southend.org.uk/advice Alternatively, you can drop in: Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL

Energy Saving Trust. Visit the website to find out how you can save money on your energy bills: energysavingtrust.org.uk

Getting the best energy deal. If you pay your energy supplier directly (including through a prepayment meter for your gas or electricity) you have the right to switch suppliers. This could help you get on the most cost-effective energy tariff for you and save you money. Often the new supplier deals with all the administration for you. You don't need to worry about an interruption to your energy supply either. You may not even have to switch suppliers to get a better deal – you can call your current supplier and ask what other deals they can offer.

Priority services registers.

Vulnerable residents can sign up to this service with their energy company to ensure they get priority help and support if there is an issue if with their supply.

You can apply to sign up to this register by contacting your supplier or network operator. Information is available in a range of formats including braille, large print or different languages and more information can be found on the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) website: www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register

National Energy Action. NEA gives advice and support both directly to people in need and through frontline workers and other intermediaries.

Call **0800 304 7159**, Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12.00noon

British Gas. Offer support through their Energy Trust and have grants for customers of both British Gas and other suppliers. For more information visit www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available

E.ON Next Energy Fund. There are two ways this fund can help and support people. It can either help customers with help paying their bills or to replace broken electrical appliances. Visit www.eonnextenergyfund.com for more information

OVO Energy. Offers a range of support. For more information visit www.ovoenergy.com/help/debt-and-energy-assistance

Alternatively, contact your supplier, who will be able to provide further information about any trust funds or further assistance they have available.

Anglian Water. Anglian Water's specially trained extra care support team can create personalised payment plans to help their customers' budgets. They can also provide some breathing space if a customer needs some extra time to pay, as well as guide them towards other help and benefits that are available. Anglian Water can help a wide range of people, from those with sight, hearing, or mobility difficulties, to parents with babies under 12

months old. They offer a wide range of support, from reading the water meter for customers who find this difficult, to sending out bills in other formats.

Call **03457 919 155** or ask them to call you back.

WaterSure scheme helps people with their water bills. To apply for the scheme, you must be on benefits and need to use a lot of water either for medical reasons or because your household has a certain number of school-age children. You also need to be on a water meter or be waiting to have one installed.

You can apply for WaterSure by filling out a form from your water company. The provider for Southend is Essex & Suffolk Water. For account and billing queries call **0345 782 0111** or visit www.eswater.co.uk and search for WaterSure.



Business support

Energy bills support factsheet

www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-bills-support

Business-on-Sea. The Economic Inclusion team at the council are the first point of contact for local businesses. The team offer direct advice wherever possible and signpost to other teams within the council or external partners where necessary, to get the best response to a question.

To find out more about the team and to see what business-related events are taking place in Southend, please visit www.businessonsea.co.uk or the team's Facebook page [@BusinessOnSea](https://www.facebook.com/BusinessOnSea). Alternatively, the team can be contacted on economicd@southend.gov.uk

Multiply Southend provide fully funded numeracy workshops, produced in partnership with Southend Adult Community College. Whether you are an employer looking to encourage your team's ongoing development, or someone wanting to help your children with homework or better manage your budgets. Multiply will help you overcome your doubts, gain qualifications and progress in your career. Employers or individuals can sign up direct through visiting www.multiplysouthend.co.uk

Housing support

Mortgages. If you are worried about meeting your mortgage payments, talk to your lender as early as possible, to explore options. If your mortgage rates are going up, speak to a broker.

Rent. We know it can be difficult when money is tight, but you should prioritise paying your rent, as you are at a higher risk of eviction if you don't pay. You should avoid payday loans to cover rent or mortgage payments and avoid unregulated lenders (loan sharks). If you are

struggling financially, we encourage you to explore whether you have all the benefits and/or grants you may be entitled to (please see relevant pages in this booklet). There is advice on what to do should you be in financial difficulty with payday loans or loan sharks on the council website, under the heading 'debt, income and financial support' on the page www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving

If you would like further information or advice regarding support for mortgage interest (SMI), Mortgage

Arrears, Mortgages, Rent and Mortgage Arrears and much more you can contact Citizens Advice Southend on **08082 78 79 78** or visit their website www.citizensadvice-southend.org.uk Alternatively, you can drop in Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm

Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL

Housing Benefit. If you're on a low income, out of work or you cannot work, you must claim Universal Credit for help with your housing costs.

You can only claim for Housing Benefit if either of the following apply:

- you have reached State Pension Age
- you're in supported, sheltered or temporary housing

If you are in one of these categories, you can claim Housing Benefit if you pay rent and your income and savings are below a certain level.

To make claim visit: www.southend.gov.uk/help-paying or call **01702 215001**.

Discretionary Housing Payments.

Are you struggling to pay your rent and are you considering moving to a more affordable rented accommodation? If so, you may be entitled to help from the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme, if you are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit or receive the Housing Element in your Universal Credit Payment.

To make a claim visit:

www.southend.gov.uk/costofliving or call **01702 215001**.

Council's Housing Solutions team.

If you are at risk of homelessness (for any reason), you can contact the Council's Housing Solutions team using the online 'Housing Advice and Homeless Enquiry form', and an officer will call you back. This form can be located via www.southend.gov.uk and searching for 'homelessness' and scrolling to the bottom of the page.

For support with completing the form, you can approach SECH on the 1st Floor Victoria Shopping Centre, 324-325 Chartwell Square, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5SP or call the council on **01702 215002**.

Citizens Advice Southend. You can contact Citizens Advice Southend to receive information, advice and guidance on housing issues.

Tel: **01702 456352** or **01702 969696**.

Drop in time: Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm, bring in any documents to support your inquiry.

Address: Citizens Advice Southend, 1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS1 2AL.

Rough sleeping. If you see an adult sleeping on the streets, please notify Southend's outreach support via streetlink.org.uk or **0300 5000914**.

If the individual is in immediate danger, requires urgent care, or is under the age of 18, you should call the police on **999**.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence. Threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour and emotional, psychological, sexual and economic abuse (including preventing you from working, not letting you have access to household income, denying you basic day-to-day necessities or social contact with friends/family/colleagues) are also examples of abuse.

Support is available:

Compass (Essex Domestic Abuse Helpline): **0330 3337444**.

The Compass helpline is available 8am to 8pm weekdays and 8am to 1pm weekends. Outside this time, you can leave a message to receive a response within 24 hrs. In an emergency, always dial **999**.

Men: Respect helpline: **0808 2010327**.

Women: National domestic abuse helpline: **0808 2000247**.



Health support

Get to the help you need

If you think you need medical help right now, contact NHS 111 by visiting the [111.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) website or call: **111** by phone to get assessed and directed to the help you need.

NHS 111 is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are a BSL user and want to use the phone service, you can use the NHS 111 British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter service by visiting [111.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) or [nhs.uk/111](https://www.nhs.uk/111). You can also call 18001 111 using text relay or a textphone.

You should still call 999 and go to A&E in an emergency when someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.

111 online is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Blood Pressure checks. High blood pressure is a major cause of heart attack and strokes but usually has no symptoms until it's too late, which is why it's known as 'the silent killer'.

If you are under 40 and you don't know your numbers, it's a good idea to have a check, especially if you're carrying extra weight, you smoke, or you have any of the other health problems. If you are over 40: you should get a blood pressure check at least every five years. If your Blood pressure is high/low book an

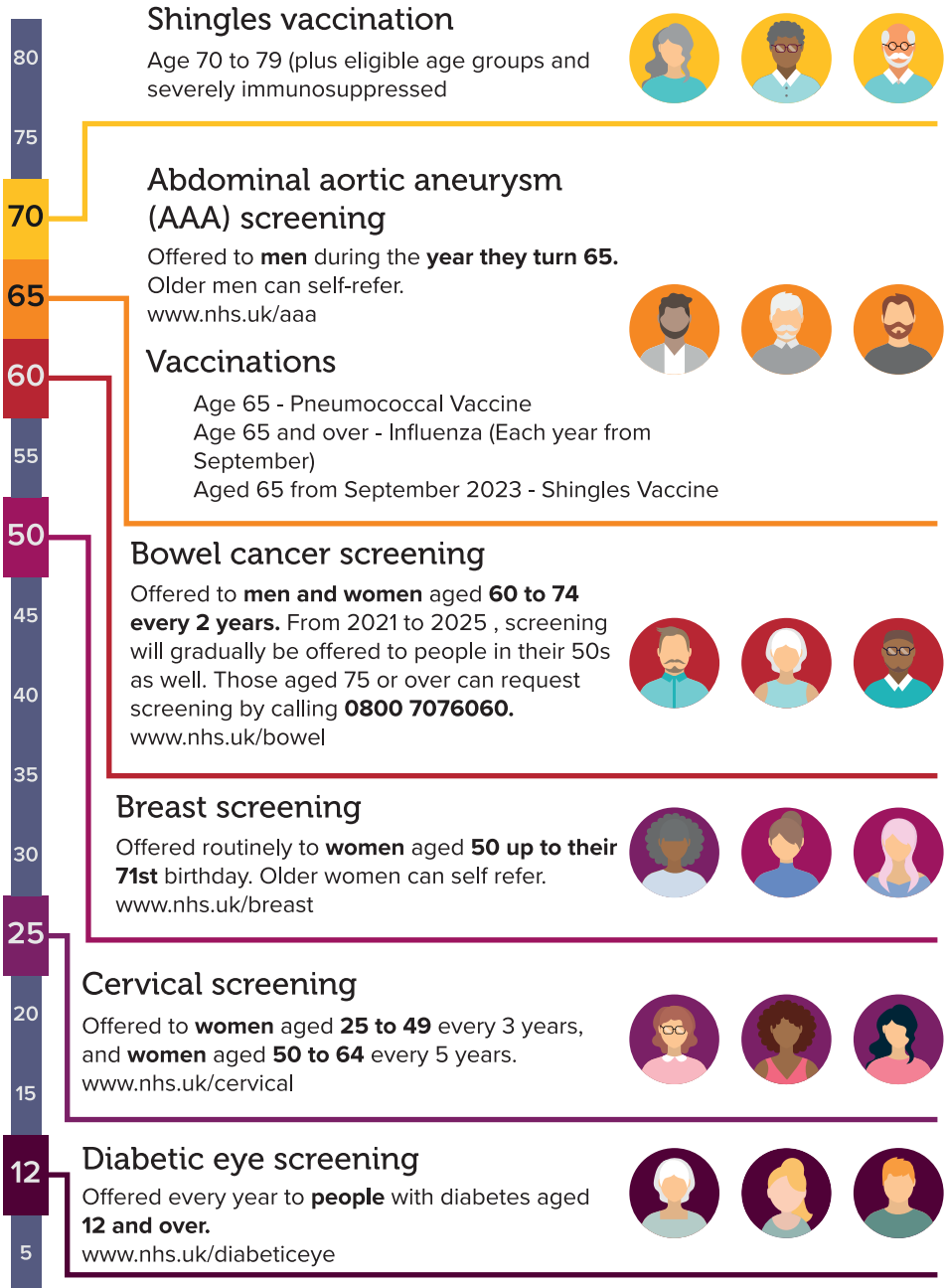
appointment with you GP to start to make lifestyles changes and get the medical support you need. You can visit your **local pharmacist, GP** or use a **reliable home device**.

NHS Health Checks are like an MOT for people. Once every five years, it measures your circulatory and vascular health, looking for factors that could mean you are at higher risk of diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, stroke and dementia. Anyone aged **40 to 74** years who **doesn't have a pre-existing condition** and who hasn't had a NHS Health Check in the last five years is eligible for a NHS Health Check. Every GP practice in Southend-on-Sea is inviting people to attend a NHS Health Check. This is a rolling programme, so you might not have received your invitation yet. If you prefer not to wait for an invitation, contact your practice and ask for a NHS Health Check appointment.

NHS Screening and Vaccinations.

The NHS offers a range of screening tests to different sections of the population. There is a screening table on page 23 with details on the screenings and vaccinations available to you. For further information please contact your GP or local screening programme.

Population Screening timeline



Feeling poorly?

Local pharmacies offer professional healthcare advice and support to maintain and improve your health and wellbeing. You do not need an appointment to see a pharmacist. Visit [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) to find your local pharmacy and access a complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help.

Feeling low?

There are things we can do to improve how we feel.

Southend Health Walks. The Southend Health Walk Scheme helps people lead a more active lifestyle.

Group walks are short, over easy terrain, with trained volunteers on hand to provide support.

- 11:15am Tuesday – meet at Shoeburyness Hotel High Street Shoeburyness
- 11:00am Wednesday – meet at Jocelyns Beach behind Chalkwell Train Station
- 1:15pm Thursday – meet outside the café in Priory Park

All walks are free of charge. For further information, please contact Angela on **07771 926932**.

Better Health Healthy changes start with little changes. Whether you want to lose weight, get active or quit smoking, Better Health is here with lots of free tools and support. You can also find simple ways to lift your

mood with Every Mind Matters. Please visit www.nhs.uk/better-health for more information.

Everyone Health offer FREE Adult Weight Management sessions. This is a 1.5-hour group session involving a 45-minute Nutrition Workshop and 45 minute Physical Activity class. We have a range of different classes in different areas over Southend both Face to Face and Virtual.

Visit southend.everyonehealth.co.uk or call **0333 005 0095**.

Parkrun is a 5km run, walk or jog every Saturday morning at Gunners Park and at Chalkwell Beach. Go at your own pace. It's free and for enjoyment.

To find out about local sport and physical activity, please visit, www.activesouthend.com

Healthwatch Southend are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Southend. They focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed, by working to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

Healthwatch Southend also encourage those in charge of local care to involve you when changes are being planned to services. You can also speak to Healthwatch Southend to find information about

health and social care services available locally. To get in touch visit www.healthwatchsouthend.co.uk or telephone **01702 416 320**.

Help with Health Costs

NHS Low Income Scheme. If you have a low income, the NHS Low Income Scheme could help you pay for:

- NHS prescription charges
- NHS dental treatment charges
- the cost of sight tests, glasses and contact lenses
- the cost of travelling to receive NHS treatment
- NHS wigs and fabric supports (check with your hospital for their arrangements for supplying NHS wigs)

You can apply for the scheme as long as your savings, investments or property (not including where you live) do not exceed the capital limit.

In England the limit is:

- 23,250 for people who live permanently in a care home (from October 2025 the limit will rise to £100,000)
- £16,000 for everyone else

Any help you're entitled to is also available to your partner and any young dependant young people. If you need help making your claim, call NHS Low Income Scheme Customer Contact Team on: **0300 330 1343** or visit www.nhs.uk and search for "Help with Health Costs".

Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC). It can be cheaper to buy a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC) if you need to pay for multiple prescriptions. A 3- or 12-month PPC covers all your prescriptions for that period, no matter how many you need. A prescription costs £9.65 per item, but a PPC costs:

- £31.25 for 3 months
- £111.60 for 12 months

For more information, please visit your local pharmacy. Alternatively, if you would like to order a PPC by phone you can call **0300 330 1341**.

HRT prescription prepayment. You can buy an HRT PPC for a one-off payment of £19.30 (the cost of two single items). The HRT PPC covers an unlimited number of certain HRT medicines for 12 months, regardless of why they are prescribed.

For more information, please visit your local pharmacy. Alternatively, you can call HRT PPC for more help and support on **0300 330 2089**.

Improve your Health

Stop Smoking Services in Southend-on-Sea. Any smoker, including pregnant smokers, who lives or works in the City of Southend-on-Sea is eligible to sign up for Stop Smoking Support.

Support is available at a:

- GP surgery
- Southend participating pharmacy scheme

- Participating Vape shops
- Hospital in/outpatient department

Tel: **01702 212000**, visit www.southend.gov.uk/StopSmoking or email southessex.stopsmoking@nhs.net

Brook Southend operates a free and confidential sexual health and wellbeing service for people of all ages.

This includes:

- Condoms, contraception, and emergency contraception
- STI testing and treatment
- HIV testing and support
- PEP and PrEP (medicines to prevent HIV)
- Pregnancy testing and help with pregnancy choices
- Abortion referrals

Information and advice around all aspects of sexual health and wellbeing

Address: Brook Southend, The Victoria Centre (first floor), 362 Chartwell Square, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5SP

Tel: **0330 135 5916**, email: infosouthend@brook.org.uk or visit www.sexualhealthsouthend.co.uk

Support around drug or alcohol use.

Southend Treatment and Recovery Service (STARS) can provide support, advice, and where necessary, specialist treatment and support to help people struggling with drug or alcohol use. The service can

work with individuals directly and can provide support and advice to family members and those living with another's drug or alcohol use.

Tel: **01702 431889** or email Southend.Referrals@ForwardTrust.org.uk

Young people / young adults service email Southend.YPreferral@openroad.org.uk

Or visit www.forwardtrust.org.uk and search for STARS treatment and recovery service.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Samaritans. Volunteers offering emotional support to those experiencing distress and despair. Available 24/7.call **116 123** or visit www.samaritans.org

SHOUT 85258. The UK's first and only, free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope. Text **SHOUT** to **85258**.

Trust Links. Support for anybody with any mental health issue in Southend, Castle Point and Rochford through the REACH Wellbeing Hub. Mon to Fri 8.30am to 4.30pm; Sat 1pm to 4pm call **01702 213134** or visit www.trustlinks.org

SECE Mind. Adults service for those with a mental health issue or a learning disability. Call: **01702 601123** Mon to Fri: 10am to 3.30pm or visit www.secemind.org.uk

Therapy For you. Local NHS mental health talking therapy service for adults www.therapyforyou.co.uk

Kooth. An online support community for young people aged 11 to 18 years (up to 19th birthday) with a free, safe and secure means of accessing support from a professional team of qualified counsellors www.kooth.com

Southend, Essex and Thurrock Children's and Adolescent's Mental Health Service (SET CAMHS). For children and young people, and their families or carers, across Southend to access mental health and emotional wellbeing care and support. Tel: **0800 953 0222**. Out-of-hours: **0800 955 1000**.

For a directory of local wellbeing services, clubs and businesses, please visit the Livewell Southend website on: livewellsouthend.com

Livewell
Southend



A portrait of a Black woman with braided hair, wearing a grey NHS uniform and a blue lanyard with 'NHS' repeated. She is smiling slightly. In the background, a blurred office setting shows other staff members and a patient.

GET VACCINATED. GET WINTER STRONG.

In line with expert advice, the NHS will offer flu and COVID-19 vaccines to those at greater risk of serious illness this winter. Those who can get both vaccines through the NHS will include everyone aged 65 and over, pregnant women, care home residents, people with certain health conditions, frontline health and care staff, unpaid carers and household contacts of those at higher risk.

Protect yourself this winter. Get your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations. **'Get winter strong'**.

For more information visit www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations

