

## How can we help members during these difficult times?

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In the first instance if people are having difficulty with their fuel bills, they should contact their energy supplier. Local councils will also have some money available through the Household Support Fund. This fund is intended to act as a safety net for those who have fallen through the cracks and are struggling to pay for essentials such as energy and food. Each local council is allocated a certain amount from the overall fund, and it is down to them to decide who qualifies for help.

The agencies below all provide information on both fuel issues as well as general financial guidance and debt advice.

### 1) The Paperweight Trust

Guidance on financial, legal and welfare issues. No charge is made for their service.

Web: [www.paperweight.org.uk](http://www.paperweight.org.uk)

Tel: 0330 174 4300E

### 2) Citizen Advice Bureau

Web: [Online enquiry to the Citizens Advice consumer helpline](#)

Tel: Free helpline on 0808 223 1133 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

To contact your local bureau, [how to contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau](#). (The CAB also has an Extra Help Unit to deal with energy suppliers, but they cannot be contacted directly by the public. But if you have a very difficult case, the Helpline can refer you to this unit.)

### 3) NEA - National Energy Action (NEA)

The national fuel poverty charity. They offer benefits advice and income maximisation, support with gas and electricity accounts including fuel debt and switching suppliers.

Web: [www.nea.org.uk/get-help](http://www.nea.org.uk/get-help)

Tel: 0800 304 7159 (Monday to Friday, 10am-12 noon)

They also have a referral form and a web chat service.

### 4) The Money & Pensions Service - MoneyHelper

Provides information on debt advice services that are **free**, confidential and hold a standard or membership code **accredited by the Money & Pensions Service**.

Web: [www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

### 5) The Greater London Authority

Also has a website with useful advice on cost-of-living issues.

Web: [www.london.gov.uk/cost-living-hub](http://www.london.gov.uk/cost-living-hub)

### 6) Warmer Home Advice Service

Web: [www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/energy/warmer-homes-advice-service](http://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/energy/warmer-homes-advice-service)

### 7) Debt Advice Charities that offer free, impartial advice:

- [National Debt Line](#)
- [Turn2Us](#) (also offers benefits and grant eligibility calculators)
- [StepChange](#)

### 8) Martin Lewis' "Money Saving Expert"

Gives up to date information and often mentions schemes and entitlements not in the public realm so can be worth looking at.

Web: [www.moneysavingexpert.com/](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/)