



Cost of living booklet

Update from Pat McFadden MP with information from agencies, organisations, and charities that can help residents of Wolverhampton South East with the rising cost of living



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Foreword from Pat McFadden MP Wolverhampton South East



Cost of living crisis

Inflation is at a forty year high. Food prices are rising. Energy prices have rocketed. Mortgage rates are rising and often rents too. All of this means many people in this constituency, and millions more around the country, are struggling to make ends meet.

I have produced this booklet to make sure that my constituents have as much information as possible about any help that might be available, whether that is from the local council, the Government, energy companies or other agencies.

I hope you find the information in this booklet useful, and that through it you are able to get whatever help is available to get through the coming period.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat McFadden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP
Wolverhampton South East

The City of Wolverhampton

Council's support

If you are a resident of the City of Wolverhampton, the council has support in place to try and mitigate against some of the financial difficulties people living in Wolverhampton are experiencing.

- **Household Support Fund** which can be used to purchase food, gas and electricity, water, essential household items (white goods, small appliances etc), and other essentials (such as warm clothing and bedding). The Household Support Fund can be accessed by calling **01902 290241** or applying online at **grantapproval.co.uk**- If you are a Wolverhampton Homes, Dovecotes TMO, Bushbury Hill EMB, or New Park Village TMC tenant, please contact them in the first instance to be able to access the fund.
- **Discretionary Housing Payments scheme** is available as a short-term solution to help assist customers who are unable to meet their rent costs. Wolverhampton residents who are receiving Housing Benefit or the Housing Costs Element of Universal Credit can apply. Contact **01902 551155**
- Further information about **cost-of-Living Support** across the city can be accessed online, **www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/community/cost-of-living-support**

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's support

If you are a resident of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, the council has put support in place for people to help with the rising cost of living.

- The council offer **Discretionary Housing Payments** to help with paying your rent. You may be eligible for this payment if you live in Dudley and claim Housing Benefit, or the Housing Element of Universal Credit. To check your eligibility, or to make a claim call **0300 555 2345** or email **customers.benefits@dudley.gov.uk** or
- Dudley council **Welfare Rights Benefits Advice Service**, which can give support and advice on benefits and eligibility to residents, call **01384 815002**.
- Information about **cost of living support** across the borough of Dudley can be accessed online at **www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/cost-of-living/**

Are you getting everything you are entitled to?

The information below outlines useful information and contact details on how to ensure you can access the benefits and other financial support that you may be eligible for from the DWP.

Universal Credit helpline:

Telephone: **0800 328 5644** / Textphone: **0800 328 1344**

Apply online at: **www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk**

Pension Credit (For people of pension age, and on a low income).

Telephone: **0800 99 1234** or Textphone: **0800 169 0133**

Help to claim- You can get free support from trained advisors to make a Universal Credit claim, The Help to Claim service is provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau and can be accessed by calling: **0800 144 8444**

For details on eligibility, how to apply for other benefits, and to gain further advice, contact **Jobcentre Plus** -

Telephone: **0800 055 6688/0800 169 0190** / Textphone: **0800 023 4888** or visit **www.gov.uk** or visit your local Jobcentre Plus branch.

Debt advice



Debt can be difficult to manage and can impact peoples' lives in many ways, leading to stress and worry. If you are affected by debt, and would like advice, please see below for organisations that may be able to help:

- **Christians Against Poverty (CAP)**

www.cap.uk.org/money-and-debt-advice

Telephone: 01274 760761

- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debtandmoney

National telephone: 0800 144 8848

Wolverhampton- 0800 144 8848

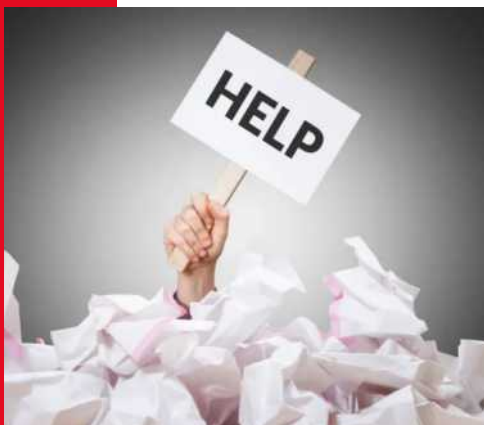
Dudley- 0808 278 7919



- **National Debt Advice Line**

www.nationaldebtline.org

Telephone: 0808 808 4000



- **StepChange-The debt charity**

www.stepchange.org

Telephone: 0800 138 1111

Housing Advice

Housing is a basic necessity to ensure people live healthily and happily. Therefore, if you are unable to access suitable, safe, affordable housing, this can impact on your whole life, and that of your family. Below are some of the support avenues available to you if you are experiencing issues with housing.

- The City of Wolverhampton Council, and Wolverhampton Homes, offer housing support for residents through **Housing Options**. They can be contacted on **01902 556789**, or by email **homes.direct@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk**
- Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council residents can also access **Housing Options** by visiting **www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-options/** or by calling **0300 555 2345**.

Housing associations that may be able to help-

- **Accord Housing- 0121 568 3900**
- **Bromford Housing- 0845 6050603**
- **Heantun Housing- 01902 571100**
- **Green Square Accord- 0300 111 7000**
- **Midland Heart- 0345 60 20 540**
- **Whg Housing association- 0300 555 6666**

Housing and Homelessness Charities

Further support is available from housing charities.

- **Shelter England**, the housing charity
0800 444 202 www.England.shelter.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)**
0800 144 8848 or www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing
- **Crisis**, the homelessness charity
0121 348 7950 or www.crisis.org.uk
- **Centrepoint**- the homelessness charity for 16-25 year olds, **0808 800 0661 or www.centrepoint.org.uk**
- **The Salvation Army**- homelessness support
020 7367 4500 or www.salvationarmy.org.uk/homelessness



Grants, support and advice

There are grants and financial assistance available for residents wishing to make energy saving improvements to their homes.

- The City of Wolverhampton Council in partnership with **Marches Energy**, and **Warmer Homes West Midlands**, are offering owner-occupiers help to reduce their energy bills by making grants available to make their homes more energy efficient. You can check your eligibility by emailing **westmids@mea.org.uk** or by calling **0808 196 8298**.
- The City of Wolverhampton Council are also offering general energy efficiency advice at **www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/private-housing-grants-and-assistance/energy-efficiency-advice**
- Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council are offering support in the form of the **'Keeping Warm in Winter'** initiative and offer the **Dudley Energy Advice Line (DEAL)**- which can advise on many areas of energy saving, provide information on grants, give crisis financial support, and advising on fuel debt options. Call **01384 817086**, email **winterwarmth@dudley.gov.uk** or visit **www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-advice-information-and-support/dudley-energy-advice-line/** to access this support.

Mental Health Support

The cost of living crisis is placing people not only under financial strain, but also placing them under stress and worry. Please see some details of agencies and charities below who may be able to help if you are struggling to cope with your mental health.

- If it is an emergency and you are concerned for your immediate mental health and safety, go straight to **A&E** or call **999**.
- If you are struggling with your mental health and feel like you are in crisis, please **contact your GP** and request an emergency appointment. If it is out of hours, please **call 111** and support and signposting will be available to you.
- Dudley and Wolverhampton both offer a **24/7 Helpline** if you or someone you know are experiencing a mental health crisis. Call **0800 008 6516** and choose **Option 1** for Wolverhampton residents, and **Option 2** for Dudley residents.
- **Wolverhampton Healthy Minds**, call **0800 923 0222** or visit www.wolverhamptonhealthyminds.nhs.uk
- **Dudley Talking Therapies**, call **0800 953 0404** or visit www.dwmh.nhs.uk/dudley-talking-therapy-service
- **Head 4 Health**, run by the Wolves Foundation and aims to improve mental and physical wellbeing in all adults 18+. Call **07971900257** or email healthadmin@wolves.co.uk
- **Samaritans**, call **116 123** or email jo@samaritans who will reply 24/7
- **Shout**, mental health text service - **text 'Shout' to 85258**

Food Bank and Food Pantry Support

- **Bilston Support Network- Bilston Community Shop** - Off Market Way, Bilston. WV14 0DR- Email: info@Bilstonsupportnetwork.org- **07361557009**. Community pantry shop- quality food at affordable prices. £2 one-off membership fee- open to all residents of Wolverhampton.
- **Eastfield Pop-up Community Shop**- Eastfield Community Centre, Colliery Road, WV1 2QY. Membership fee £5 which then entitles members to £5 off their first shop. Email: eastfieldcommunitycentrewolves@gmail.com
- **Elias Mattu Foundation (EMF)** - 8 Owen Road Pennfields, Wolverhampton WV3 0HP- **07904 310530 / 07427 173171**. Referrals are taken from professionals; self-referrals may be considered in certain circumstances.
- **Excel Church Food Bank** - Bilston People's Centre, Excel Church, Wolverhampton Street, Bilston WV14 0LT. Operates on a referral only basis. Email foodbank@excelchurch.org.uk
- **Hub for Grub** - Freshly cooked meals to collect and take away. For more information call 07971 173914 or visit www.hubforgrub.com
- **The Well**- Unit 16, Wulfrun Trading Estate, Stafford Road, Wolverhampton, WV10 6HH. Referrals accepted from agencies. **01902 256523**
- **Darkhouse Foodbank** at Darkhouse Baptist Church in Coseley, open Tuesday 2pm to 4pm, for more information follow this link darkhousebaptistchurch.org.uk

Ofgem and energy company advice and support

Ofgem aims to work to protect energy consumers, especially vulnerable people, by ensuring that they are treated fairly. Ofgem has provided support online which can be accessed by visiting-

- Energy advice for consumers-

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers>

- Energy advice for businesses-

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-businesses>

Energy support

- The Government is providing support with a £400 support payment to households this winter. For more information visit www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount
- Additional grants may be available from your energy supplier if you are in debt or not managing to pay your bills visit, www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/ for further information or call CAB on 0800 144 8848
- If you wish to make a complaint about your energy supplier, you can find more information about how to do this by contacting the Ombudsman Services on www.ombudsman-services.org or call 0330 440 1624

Warm Spaces

The City of Wolverhampton Council is launching a range of warm spaces throughout the city to help its residents keep warm this autumn and winter.

The council will open its own wide range of buildings across the city to offer a safe space for people to keep warm, and also to be able to charge and connect their devices to Wi-Fi if needed and get a hot drink and something to eat. There is also a free shuttle bus service offered to get to and from the Warm Spaces.

For more details, please call **01902 290241- option 0** or visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/community/cost-of-living-support/warm-spaces for a full list of the Warm Spaces venues. Here are some of the local Warm Spaces within the constituency-

- **Bilston Community Centre**, Prouds Lane, Bilston WV14 6PW
- **Bilston Library**, Mount Pleasant WV14 7LU-
Tues/Thurs/Fri: 10am - 5pm, Wed: 10am - 7pm, Sat: 10am - 3pm
- **Bob Jones Community Hub and Library**, Bromley Street, Blakenhall WV2 3AS- Mon: 9am - 5.30pm, Tues/Wed/Thurs: 9am - 9.30pm, Fri: 9am - 5pm, Sat: 9am - 1pm
- **Eastfield Community Centre**, Colliery Road, WV1 2QY
- **East Park Library**, Hurstbourne Crescent, WV1 2EE-
Mon/Tues/Sat: 9am - 1pm, Thurs: 2 - 5pm.
- **Lunt Community Centre**, Lunt Road, Bilston, WV14 7HF-
- **Spring Vale Library**, Bevan Avenue, WV4 6SG- Tue/Sat: 10am - 1pm, Wed: 2pm - 6pm, Sun: 9am - 2pm

Ways to get in touch

If you have any issues that I can help with, please do not hesitate to get in touch:



01902 405762



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