

FIGHTING THE COST OF LIVING

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

Keeping local residents and community partners up to date with where they can go to for support and to access the latest information, advice, and help around the cost of living crisis.

In this second edition we will be highlighting ways Slough residents can get advice and support with food, furniture, debt, warm spaces and community cafes.

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

You can contact us at community.development@slough.gov.uk



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#OneSlough

COMMUNITY

Help and Support

Slough Community Support Café

Each café is a free and safe space to enjoy a meal, chat over coffee or just read the newspaper. Two cafés are now open with more on the way.

- Tuesdays 3-9pm at St John's Church, Stoke Poges Lane
- Thursdays 3.30-8pm at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Merton Road

Keep an eye on www.facebook.com/groups/503669827980898/?ref=share

This is for residents of Slough to have a place of comfort and to help ease any stress, anxiety, or difficulty they may be facing, especially around the rise of cost of living.

Slough Repair Café

Slough Repair Café is held on the last Saturday of every other month - currently outside the Former B&M store in Queensmere Shopping Centre. Take along household items, electricals, clothes and kitchen goods to be repaired by the team of volunteers. Items previously repaired include: a sewing machine; hair dryer; backgammon case and a pair of trousers. Co-ordinated by Slough Anti-Litter Society, there will also be an Anti-Litter Marker and Upcycle stall for clothes.

Visit <https://sloughantilitter.org.uk/> or look the group up on Facebook for more information.

The Repair Café can fix more items like electrical, woodwork or clothes, and also have someone who can fix bicycles!

They are looking for skilled volunteers who can support the café with this project. Residents can book their items in to be repaired, FREE of charge and also donate repairable items for charities, community groups or those in need.

Slough Anti-Litter Society also held two other projects along with opening of the Repair Café. One was an upcycling event for clothes and the other an anti-litter market, where people could buy and sell second hand items.



Slough Community Support Cafe

Are you experiencing difficulties with meals, staying warm, needing company etc.?

Slough Community Support Cafés are safe spaces to enjoy a simple meal, chat over coffee, play games or read a newspaper and above all receive a warm and friendly welcome ...

ALL FREE OF CHARGE

For more information or to book a place please contact Mark on 07817 829 393 or by emailing the café on: office@communitycafe.uk

Young or old, all ages are welcome

Space also available for children to play or complete their homework

Operating at locations across Slough, please call for details




Bring your broken item and learn to repair it!

SLOUGH REPAIR CAFE

Last Saturday, Every other month



QUEENSMERE SHOPPING CENTRE

Front of former B&M store 11:00 - 14:00

VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR FREE TICKETS AND ALL INFO

[WWW.SLOUGHANTILITTER.ORG.UK](https://www.sloughantilitter.org.uk)



PROVIDING FOOD

Help and Support

Support for food

Slough Borough Council is working with a number of partners and community groups to provide relief for residents, especially those who are vulnerable and struggling due to the rise in living cost.

Families in need of support for food can contact the groups below.

- **The council** to access the local food voucher schemes, such as the Household Support Fund www.slough.gov.uk/hsf
- **Community pantry** office@communitycafe.uk
- **Baby Bank** www.thebabybank.org/
- **Slough Outreach** <http://sloughoutreach.org/>
- **SHOC** <https://sloughhomeless.org.uk/>
- **Slough Foodbank**
01753 550303
<http://slough.foodbank.org.uk>
office@slough.foodbank.org.uk

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, contact Slough Foodbank on 01753 550303 or email office@slough.foodbank.org.uk

Salvation Army

Provides a Soup Kitchen on a Wednesday and a Sunday, from 7.15-8.30pm. This is a hot meal with drinks and snacks, plus food to take away. There is also the chance for a shower and a change of clothes.

Located on Stoke Road.

Call: 01753 525819

Visit: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/slough

Slough Outreach

They provide hot meals, warm clothes and advocacy support to those struggling with homelessness and complex needs.

Call: 07832442424

Email: info@sloughoutreach.org



Other organisations

Below is a list of organisations the council is working closely with to support residents by providing meals to the most needy/vulnerable.

To access meals, residents need to be living in the ward of the organisation and will need to get their family support worker or community organisation to contact the organisation in advance, via email below, to arrange meals pick up. Residents can go through support services or through schools, voluntary or community groups.

This is on a first come, first served basis and meals are limited per individual/household.

- **Langley College**
Langley Campus, Station Road, Langley, SL3 8BY
For more information please click the following link to fill in the form to request your meals:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeqz_4JutzybTBO7q0PT0TvOLzUK0DRA0MXQ1iiuEplWaOz7A/viewform?usp=sf_link
- **AJ Café**
Britwell Community Centre, Wentworth Avenue, SL2 2DT
Email: amana.journey@hotmail.com
- **Ujala Foundation**
6c Villiers Road, Manor Park, SL2 1NP
Email: ujalaslough@mail.com

Useful apps to reducing food waste:

Too Good To Go: lets customers buy and collect Magic Bags at a lower price directly from the business
Visit: toogoodtogo.co.uk

Olio: allows people a platform to give away food and other household items for free
Visit: <https://olioex.com/>

Note: Anyone wanting to provide meals or food to residents must read the guidance provided by the council's Environmental Health Department, Food Safety Team. The FSA have just published guidance for food banks and charities at www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/registering-as-a-food-business-charity

WARM SPACES



With the rise in the cost of living, we understand this winter will be challenging.

Warm Spaces are places where people can gather for free in a warm, safe, welcoming place and maybe enjoy a hot drink and some company.

We are working alongside voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to establish a network of Warm Spaces across Slough this winter. These include libraries, community centres, community hubs and other places offering a warm welcome and free to use for anyone struggling to heat their home.

Some venues will also offer hot drinks, activities, and other services such as free Wi-Fi. Warm Spaces will be heated, safe and friendly places where you can comfortably spend time reading, studying or chatting with others.

To register your venue/organisation as a Warm Space or to find a Warm Space near you visit www.sloughhealth.org or email community.development@slough.gov.uk



Scottish and Southern Electric Networks (SSEN) have stepped forward to sponsor the warm space initiative. For each venue that signs up to be a warm space, they will receive a free start pack from SSEN which will contain a pack tea bags, coffee jar and pack of biscuits.

We thank and appreciate the support SSEN on this great project supporting our residents.

Look out for posters in the window which identifies somewhere as a Warm Space.



Warm Spaces operating now:

- **Slough Baptist Church**
Windsor Road, Mondays 3-5pm
Wednesdays 11am-2pm
- **Slough Community Support Café**
St John's Church, Stoke Poges Lane
Tuesdays 5-9pm
- **Slough Community Support Café**
St Andrew's Methodist Church,
Merton Road, Thursdays 3.30-8pm
- **Cippenham Carers Group**
Cippenham Baptist Church, Elmshott
Lane, Third Wednesday of the month
from 1-3pm
- **Ujala Foundation**, Manor Park
Pavilion, Villiers Road, Tuesdays
10am-2pm, Thursdays 12noon-2pm.
- **Home Slough** is offering a warm
space during their WOW Slough
winter programme at The Curve.
For dates and times visit [HOME
Slough - Creative arts in your
community](http://HOME
Slough - Creative arts in your
community)
(www.homeslough.org.uk/)
- **The Salvation Army Slough**,
Stoke Road
- A warm space and refreshments at
a coffee morning on Wednesdays
10am-12noon.
- A warm space, refreshments,
food, clothing and showers at their
drop-in on Fridays 10am-12noon
- The **Slough community support
café** is for all ages to have a simple
meal, coffee, read newspapers or
have a chat and there is space for
children to play or complete
homework. For more information,
email office@communitycafe.uk or
call Mark on 07817 829393.

If anyone is already running a Warm Space, or wants to register, submit a listing (<https://sloughhealth.org/submit-listing/>) to detail what you can offer.

FURNITURE

Support for communities

With the rise in the cost of living, we understand these are challenging times for our residents. To help with this we are working alongside voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to establish a hub for residents to source household furniture, to help save them money and to make their living conditions better.

We have three organisations currently supporting residents with clothes and furniture.

London and Slough Run

A charity supporting the homeless and residents in need. Access to furniture and goods for homeless and residents re-homing.

Call: 07746950181

Email:
admin@thelondonandsloughrun.org

Visit:
<https://thelondonandsloughrun.org/>

Note: Slough London Run is not directly accessible to residents. You can only access furniture from Slough London Run through support services/charities or SBC who can request on your behalf.

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/



Baby Bank

They collect good quality second-hand clothes, equipment and furniture for families in need.

Access to The Baby Bank is based on third-party referral by professionals such as community midwives, health visitors and family support workers.

Reasons for referral include (but are not limited to):

- Poverty
- Refugee/asylum seeker status or newly arrived to the UK
- Domestic violence/leaving the family home
- Isolation from family
- Teenage pregnancy
- Military families in need
- Victims of fire or flooding
- Children in emergency foster placements
- Homelessness or living in temporary accommodation.

Email: info@thebabybank.org

Visit: www.thebabybank.org/



FINANCE AND DEBT

Support for communities

The council's Debt and Welfare team can help to support residents with debt issues, by negotiating with creditors, third parties and, liaising with internal departments. Where the waiting times are more than two weeks, we would advise the resident to self-refer and get debt advice from Money Helper - Adviser Network using the link - <https://adviser.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/start>

Residents can also visit our webpage on Benefits and Support - Help with Debt (www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/help-debt) for advice on the debt respite scheme called Breathing Space. This gives the resident time and space to engage with debt advice and find a longer-term solution. Residents can only apply for Breathing Space via organisations like Stepchange and Payplan.

Contact the council's debt and welfare rights unit on 01753 475111 or email _incomeboost@slough.gov.uk

The following agencies offer free, independent and impartial debt advice and assistance and can also help you arrange and set up debt management plans with your creditors:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/

www.gov.uk/options-for-paying-off-your-debts



Web:

www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/debt-savings/debt-advice/



- National Debtline is a charity which gives free and independent debt advice over the phone and online. They will never cold call you and will not pass your personal information to other companies.
Web: <https://nationaldebtline.org/>
Tel: 0808 808 4000

- **SPACE**

Tel: 0344 515 1380

- **Payplan**

Tel: 0800 280 2816

Web: www.payplan.com/

- **Step Change**

Tel: 0800 138 1111

Web: www.stepchange.org/debt-advice-start.aspx

- **Money Adviser Network**

Tel: 0800 138 7777

Web:

<https://adviser.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en>

www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en

General advice and tips for dealing with your debts

- It is a normal reaction to ignore letters and/or calls but this will not help. Your creditors (those you owe money to) do understand and do also have a responsibility to help. Do not ignore letters from your creditors. Not responding to letters adds to the problem of then trying to negotiate at a later stage.
- Don't borrow money to pay off your debts without seeking appropriate advice and guidance.
- Always pay priority debts first (mortgage, rent, gas, electric, council tax, etc).
- Keep all the correspondence you receive (organise, file, etc).
- Keep copies of anything you send.
- Treat all your non-priority creditors (unsecured loans, store cards, credit cards, catalogues, overdraft, etc) equally.
- Be realistic when you make offers of payment. Don't pay more than what you can actually afford.
- If you can't pay for a short period, tell your creditors. Not keeping them updated will give the impression you are deliberately ignoring your responsibility but keeping them updated shows you want to resolve the matter.
- If your circumstances change (e.g. you lose your job) tell the creditors and make an appointment to see your adviser again to re-do your Financial Statement.
- Don't give up if a creditor is difficult and not willing to negotiate, start paying whatever you have offered straight away.
- Always reply to court papers, keep a copy of your reply and if you are required to attend court, please do so as this can help you and is not always a bad thing.
- Arrange to make payments soon after your pay day (if applicable).
- If the bank you use to pay in your wages or benefit is one of your creditors, discuss this with your adviser. You may need to open a new account.

FINANCIAL HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Advice and Support

Green Doctor

For more information visit:

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



Scottish and Southern Electric Network (SSEN)

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



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/

Energy Advice: 0800 304 7159

Benefits Advice: 0800 138 8218

Website: www.nea.org.uk/webchat/

Warm and Safe Homes Webchat

Available weekday afternoons, 1-4pm

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.

Comparing costs and switching supplier: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-a-better-energy-deal/compare-domestic-energy-suppliers-customer-service1/

See a 'how to' guide by Ofgem: www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/ofgem-helps-those-who-switch-get-better-deal

Energy advice and fuel poverty: <https://ccberks.org.uk/our-projects/energy-advice-and-fuel-poverty/>



Help for Households

For information/advice around Help for Households, visit <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/>

- Cost of living: www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment
- Energy Saving Tips to Save Money: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/energy-saving-advice/>
- Support with Energy Bills: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-your-bills/>
- Winter Fuel: www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment
- Warm Home Discount: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme
- Household Cost: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/housing-support/>
- Help with Child Care Cost: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/>
- Income Support: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/income-support/>
- Transport Cost: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/help-with-transport-costs/>

Reducing energy usage at home

For tips please visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk 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/

FINANCIAL HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Advice and Support

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. Visit 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 Energy Trust - providing independent advice and support. (<https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/>)
- Financial support and energy advice.
- Support even if not a British gas customer.
- For Help with Energy call 0330 100 0056 1, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.
- For Help with Home Services call 0333 009 5784 1, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

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.

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

FINANCIAL HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Advice and Support

Cost of living crisis - help and support

For information and advice on support available, please click the QR code below and for more information and advice, along with low-cost health and social activities across Slough, please [visit the One Slough directory \(www.sloughhealth.org/\)](http://www.sloughhealth.org/).



Citizens Advice help and support

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/struggling-to-pay-your-energy-bills/

Household Support Fund (HSF)

The Household Support Fund (HSF) grant of £1,177,691.53 has been extended again to support those most in need.

The grant is funded by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and is available until 31 March 2023 or earlier if the funds have been exhausted. The council cannot commit to applications made once all the available funding has been allocated.

The grant helps families and vulnerable individuals who struggle to pay for basic living costs, such as:

- food
- energy
- water bills
- essential goods.

We plan to run a one-off, locally managed, aid to vulnerable households in our community:

- who are most in need of support, and
- to help with significant rising living costs and
- to those who may be going through exceptional hardship.

The HSF is considered as a last resort and will be awarded at our discretion following an assessment of eligibility. Each case will be treated strictly on its individual merits. All those deemed eligible will be treated equally and fairly within the constraints with the HSF budget.

We will make sure any award given is used for the purpose it was applied for. Most of the award will be given in goods or services by online vouchers only.

Visit the HSF webpage www.slough.gov.uk/benefits-support/household-support-fund

Help available through DWP, health partners and local support

FEDCAP Employment

A charity helping people to find suitable, sustainable work through the Restart Scheme. FEDCAP Restart referrals come from the job centre. Anyone who is claiming universal credit and wants to come on the Restart programme, must make a note in their work journal and ask their work coach to refer them on to FEDCAP's programme. FEDCAP's local team work from The Switch, The Grove in Slough. The Restart Scheme offers support to pick up necessary skills, boost confidence and find a job that's right for the individual. There is a team working with employers of all sizes and once employed, they offer an in-work support service to make sure both employee and employer are happy.



Are changes to your circumstances affecting your wellbeing?

We work closely with local health, social care, and other organisations if you need support with:

- Housing
- Money worries
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Loneliness and social isolation
- General wellness such as diet, sleep, and healthy living

We offer one-to-one sessions, wellbeing workshops, and online support programmes.

If you're registered with a GP in East Berkshire, contact us to find out more

Call: 0300 365 2000 (press option 2)
Web: www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service

Training and Skills

Slough's Community Learning and Skills service: www.slough.gov.uk/community-learning-skills

Slough Jobcentre

Offers the following support:

- Job vacancies in the area
- Recruitment Days
- Pre-employment training
- Job Fairs

If you are a Slough Jobcentre customer and would like to access the above opportunities, please speak to your Work Coach or send a message via your Universal Credit journal.

Address: Yew Tree Road, Slough, SL1 2AQ

Call: 0800 169 0190

Visit: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

Check what support and benefits you might be entitled to [check benefits and financial support you can get - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/check-benefits-and-financial-support-you-can-get)

SIGNPOSTING



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 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.

The Slough Hub

A community hub to support mental, physical and economic wellbeing for residents in Slough. They help residents to find or create meaningful work and volunteering opportunities that benefit the people or the environment. They offer free English workshops, careers advice and job aid.

Visit: <https://thesloughhub.org/>

Email: contact@thesloughhub.org

Call: 07769682056

Family Information and Services Hub

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?

How to find the information you need

Speak to us in person - you can speak to us at our regular outreach sessions which are held in community venues such as libraries, children's centre or schools.

Look at our website - [The Slough Family Information Service website](http://www.sloughfamilyinformation.org.uk/) (www.sloughfamilyinformation.org.uk/kb5/sloughcst/directory/home.page)

holds lots of information about services and activities in Slough.

Tel: 01753 476589.

Slough Refugee Support

Email:

srsinfo@sloughrefugeesupport.org.uk

Tel: 01753 537142

Physical Activity Resource Pack

A Healthier Slough resource pack, which includes lots of information and advice on support available, including low cost health and social activities across Slough, can be found at www.slough.gov.uk/costofliving



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.