

Help for Vulnerable Householders this Winter

Hampshire County Council is using its Household Support Funding from the Government to provide a range of support between now and March next year, that will help vulnerable households with the costs of food, energy and other essentials. As well as discretionary grant funding that has been awarded to schools, colleges and early years settings to help families facing hardship, we are also working with community groups, local councils and other organisations to provide the following support:

- [Help with energy costs](#) – local Citizens Advice services are supporting eligible households with the costs of gas, water and / or electricity bills. Households who qualify for support can contact their local Citizens Advice directly.
- [Help with food costs](#) – there are 19 Community Pantries across Hampshire which provide food at a lower cost than supermarkets, in exchange for a small membership fee.
- [Food vouchers](#) – food vouchers will be available to households who receive council tax support, and households who receive housing benefit. These will be distributed by local district and borough councils in the coming months. Those who are eligible don't need to do anything – they will be contacted by their local council.
- [Housing costs](#) – local district and borough councils can provide support for housing costs in exceptional circumstances. Residents are asked to contact their local council if they think they may be eligible for emergency support.

All of this is in addition to the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which will be providing more than 120 free schemes this Christmas for children who receive income-based free school meals during term time. Parents and carers wishing to find out what is on offer in their area should search the [Family Information and Services Hub](#) and contact their local providers directly to sign up to schemes.

Families can find out more about all of the support available by visiting the [connect4communities website](#).