Livewell Southend

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 (November 2025).

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

With thanks to Southend-on-Sea City Council Public Health

Livewell Southend

Southend-on-Sea City Council

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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 2026. 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 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 in which they will receive care
- ease exceptional pressures on people or their families
- 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
- Winter Fuel Payment
- 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 via 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 and assist pensioners to make their pension credit application and then apply for their winter fuel payments.

Direct telephone number: **01702 456352**

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

King's Money Advice Centre (KMAC). This a free, confidential, local, face-to-face debt advice service, authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for debt advice and debt management. KMAC is affiliated to Community Money Advice who have been helping those in debt for 25 years. Please phone and leave a message or email to arrange an appointment: **01702 522197**. Email: **connect@kmacsouthend.uk** or visit: **www.kmacsouthend.uk**

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.

Age Concern offer free advice to unpaid carers and can support with form filling.

Telephone: **01702 345373**.

Drop-in time: Thursday 10am to 2pm

Address: The Haven Community Hub, 138–140 Hamlet Court Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. SS0 7LW

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. For more information email **EmploymentPlusR4@salvationarmy.org.uk** or contact Ann: **07850 310 380**, Shaun: **07776 516218** or Kelly: **07467 998553**.

You can access their services at The Salvation Army Southend on Wednesdays (appointment only), or at The Salvation Shoeburyness Community Hub, Friday drop-in.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) provides a lifeline to those struggling under the weight of debt. Through our network of services, we offer free support that goes beyond financial advice. We're committed to helping individuals regain their peace of mind, rebuild their confidence, and restore their hope, ensuring that everyone has the support they need to manage their finances effectively, whatever their beliefs. For more information about how we can assist you or to connect with our supportive team, please visit our website at **https://capuk.org/get-help** or call us on **0800 328 0006**. At CAP, we believe in a hopeful future for everyone, free from the burden of debt.

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**.

Breakeven offers support for anyone affected by gambling related harm, whether you are the gambler, partner, family member, friend or work colleague.

The treatment we provide is free, flexible and confidential and can be delivered via face to face, telephone or online sessions. Our counsellors will provide you a safe space to talk about how gambling affects you and work with you to find ways to help you take control of your life, move forward and feel better."

Visit: **www.breakeven.org.uk**

Email: **info@breakeven.org.uk**

Phone: **01273 833722**

Location: 95 Ditchling Road, Brighton, BN1 4ST, East Sussex

Support for Students living in Southend. The University of Essex has a dedicated team to support students experiencing challenges with the cost of living. The Funding Team administers a range of financial support funds, including the Hardship Fund for those in financial difficulty, and can offer advice on money management and budgeting.

Students should contact the Student Services Hub at the Southend Campus in the first instance for help and guidance. Further confidential advice on finances, housing, and wellbeing is also available from the Students' Union Advice team.

For more information visit:

- University of Essex Student Services Hub: **www.essex.ac.uk/student/advice-and-support**
- University of Essex Students' Union: **www.essexstudent.com/advice**
- University of Essex Fees, Funding and Money information: **www.essex.ac.uk/student/money**
- University of Essex Cost of Living information: **www.essex.ac.uk/life/cost-of-living-support**
- Southend of Sea City Council Debt Advice: **www.southend.gov.uk/debtadvice**

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

Best Start for Twos: 15 hours early learning for 2-year-old children. Eligible families who have 2-year-old children and are receiving some additional forms of support can get 15 hours of funded childcare a week.

Check eligibility: **www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds-extra-support**

Apply on the Southend Citizen Portal: **https://one.southend.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en**

15 hours funded childcare for 3 and 4-year-old children. All families with children aged 3 and 4 can get 15 hours of funded childcare a week.

30 hours funded childcare for children aged 9months to 4 years. Eligible working families in England with children aged 9 months to 4 years can get 30 hours of funded childcare a week.

Check eligibility: **www.gov.uk/apply-free-childcare-if-youre-working**

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. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).

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.

Upfront Childcare Costs. You may be able to get help if you have to pay upfront childcare costs and one of the following applies:

- you're starting work;
- you're increasing the hours you work, for example you've moved from part-time work to full-time work

Use your online account or contact your work coach at Jobcentre Plus. If eligible, the payment will be made directly to your provider. You will not have to pay the money back.

You can then claim up to 85% of those childcare costs to be paid with your Universal Credit. That could give you money towards the next month's childcare costs.

Care to Learn. The Care to Learn scheme can help with childcare costs while you study. You must be aged under 20 at the start of your course. The scheme is available for publicly-funded courses in England.

Visit: **www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/what-youll-get**

Check eligibility: **www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/eligibility**

Check what help you can get towards the cost of childcare

www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker

To find out more about help with the cost of childcare:

- Visit Best Start in Life for more information: **www.beststartinlife.gov.uk/childcare-early-years-education**
- Visit Childcare and early education funding on the Livewell Southend website: **www.livewellsouthend.com/childcare-early-education-funding**
- Text "**CHILDCARE**" TO **88440** (charged at standard network rate)
- Complete a Childcare Information Request form on the Southend-on-Sea City on the Council website: **www.southend.gov.uk/xfp/form/233**
- email: **earlyyears@southend.gov.uk**

Wrap Around Childcare is before and after school childcare for primary school aged children in England. The provision typically runs from around 8am until 6pm, during term time, either on a school site or another local setting such as a community centre, a nursery, or a childminder. This is different from out-of-school activities, or school clubs, which are less frequent and can be a one-off activity.

Email: **wraparoundchildcare@southend.gov.uk**

Holiday Activities and Food programme. 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 benefits related 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**
Tel: **01702 212948** or tel/text **07795 044329**.

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

Health4Life is a free local programme aimed at 5–16-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 also offers a range of workshops and events to support families; from Fussy Eating to Healthy Lunchboxes. The Health4Life Team can support children on an individual basis if the programme is not suitable. Parents/Carers can contact the Health4Life Team on **01702 534843** if they are concerned about their child's weight. For more information visit **www.livewellsouthend.com** and type Health4life Programme in the search bar.

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 8.30am to 4pm. Supporting with issues such as emotional support, budgeting, parenting,

domestic abuse, foodbank referrals and healthy start vitamins.

Call **01702 220810** for more information.

Chaos & Calm offer play and learning sessions for families caring for a pre-school aged child with any form of SEND. They also offer support and guidance to carers on a range of disability topics and can help complete applications. They also offer home visits for children unable to leave their home. For more information call **07828 230948**, email: **admin@chaosandcalm.org** or visit **https://abetterstartsouthend.co.uk/chaos-calm**

STRM – SEND the Right Message Charity is a charity run by parents, for parents, supporting neurodivergent and disabled children, young people, and their families. By joining, you'll have access to practical advice, emotional support, peer groups, activities, and resources designed to make the SEND journey less isolating and more hopeful. At STRM, it's all about Your Journey, Your Way. Whether you need guidance before or after diagnosis, help with benefits, inclusive family activities, or just a friendly place to talk, you'll always find support that fits your family.

- Before and after diagnosis – clear steps and guidance while you wait.
- Money and benefits guidance – help with DLA, PIP, grants, Cost of Living Support & Energy Advice Support sessions – safe, supportive spaces to connect with others who understand and to get practical help.
- Children's activities – fun, inclusive sessions like our Bouldering Club.
- Workshops and resources – including our Supporting Your Neurodivergent Child guide, co-written by our CEO and already used by 17,000 families across Essex, Thurrock, and Southend.
- Online forum and digital Membership Zone – connect with other parent carers, share experiences, and access resources 24/7.

Please email: **info@strmsupport.co.uk** or call: **07359 068827** or register via the website: **strmsupport.co.uk/registration-form**

Food support

Help with food and groceries

Storehouse. Free food parcel, food support.

Referrals: no referral needed except for the Wednesday family session

Opening times:

- Monday 10am to 12pm and 1pm to 2pm. Mixed sessions.
- Tuesday 10am to 1pm. Rough sleepers only
- 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 10am to 12pm Mixed Session. 1pm to 2pm men only session. 2pm to 3pm men only support session.

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

Tel: **01702 612900** (Vineyard Centre) /

01702 617348 (Direct). Information: **07888 831306** email: **marie@southendvineyard.org.uk**

The One Love project. Access to the foodbank and baby bank

Referrals: No referral necessary

Opening times: Thursday

- 11:30 to 12:30 adults only
- 1pm to 2pm adults attending with children (Family Session)

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 for up to 15 items on the first occasion, £4 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**.
- 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: The Book Hub at the Faith, Hope and Charity Shop, 40 Hedingham Place, SS4 1UP
- Monday 5pm to 6:30pm
  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 1pm to 3pm
  Address: St Saviours Church, Kings Road, Westcliff, SS0 8LL
- Thursday 12.30pm to 2.30pm
  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 Hobleythick Lane, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 0RJ
- Saturday 9:30am to 11am
  Address: West Leigh Baptist Church, 1150 London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2AJ

For more information please visit **southend.foodbank.org.uk/locations**

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 £4. 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** or 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

Southend Care Bank (toiletry care bank) is a community-driven charity, run and staffed by caring individuals, working to alleviate the cycle of hygiene poverty in Southend-on-Sea.We provide essential toiletries and support for families and individuals facing unseen struggles.

We are here to help and offer a friendly ear if that's what's needed too.

The St Mark's sessions offer time to sit and have a warm drink and snack.

We are a self-referral service; however, you will need to register users with ID.

Our sessions are:

- St Mark's Centre, first Tuesday of the month, 9:30am to 11:30am
- Westcliff Library, third Thursday of the month, 9:30am to 10:30am

Red Relief. Free period products are now available in locations around Southend. In a survey, 61% of participants said they are struggling to pay for pads or tampons. UK youth parliament heard about this problem and wanted to address it on a local level. With funding from the Southend Health and Wellbeing Board we now have free period products in public spaces including libraries, museums, and galleries that the Council owns with our brand new red relief scheme. A full list of locations can be found here: www.livewellsouthend.com/redrelief

A big step to help everyone feel safe clean and able to go to school and work, or enjoy their day without worry. Because everyone deserves dignity. Period.

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, 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).

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 Leigh-on-Sea.

Opening times:

- Monday and Tuesday 9am to 12pm 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**

The One Love Project. Hot meal and drinks. Adults Only

Opening times:

- Monday: 4pm to 5.15pm Women's only service (please come to the side gate)
- Monday, Thursday: 6.30pm to 8pm. Rough sleepers and those facing homelessness
- Wellbeing Wednesday: 11am to 1.30pm. Meaningful activities such as arts, crafts, and gardening etc.

Address: Hollybrook, 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**
Leigh Library	●▲★
Broadway W, Leigh on Sea SS9 2DA	Tel: **01702 475929**
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, 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**

There are other community places offering their spaces as a warm hub please visit **onesouthend.com** and look for 'cost of living' in the top menu bar and select the Warm Spaces interactive map.

● Wi-Fi | ▲ Computer Access | ★ Photocopy/printing

Utilities 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.

Southend Centres for Warmth. A multi-agency project supporting people who are living in vulnerable situations to keep warm, safe, and connected. The project is delivered by ten local charities and provides information on energy efficiency, carbon monixode safety and cost of living support. For more details, and to see a full list of participating charities, please visit: **https://cadentgas.com/news-latest/news-archive/march-2024/sun-sea-and-centres-for-warmth**

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 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, or visit: **www.gov.uk/government/consultations/design-of-the-energy-company-obligation-eco-2023-2026**

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.citizensadvicesouthend.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 10am to 12noon

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 offer 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.

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**. 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.citizensadvicesouthend.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

Support for South Essex Homes Residents. If you are a South Essex Homes resident and need help with money worries or day-to-day support, our Housing Support Team is here for you.

Call **0800 833 160** to speak to the team. They can help with things like food vouchers, benefit applications, housing support and referrals to other services if needed.

South Essex Homes Hardship Fund. We know the cost of living is difficult for many people. South Essex Homes has a Hardship Fund to support residents who are struggling with essential costs.

This fund offers a one-off payment to help with:

- Gas or electric bills
- Food
- White goods (like a fridge or cooker)
- Basic furniture

Please note: this fund cannot be used for rent.

If you are finding it hard to afford essential items, please contact the Housing Support Team and they will guide you through the support available.

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 215841**.

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 of the Victoria Shopping Centre, 324–325 Chartwell Square, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5SP or call the council on **01702 215002**.

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 abusive behaviour which occurs between two people aged over 16 years who are personally connected. You may be personally connected to someone if they are your current or ex-partner, family member or carer. Abusive behaviour includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse or psychological, emotional or other abuse.

Examples of abusive behaviour include gaslighting, preventing you from working, not letting you have access to household income, denying you basic day-to-day necessities, isolating you from friends/ family/colleagues. These could be one incident or a pattern of incidents over time.

For local support and advice please contact **Compass** on **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.

For 24 hour support please contact the **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** on **0808 2000247**.

For support for men experiencing domestic abuse please contact **Respect Men's Advice Line** on **0808 2010327**.

For housing support please contact **Housing Solutions** if you are at risk of homelessness, 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, searching for 'homelessness' and scrolling to the bottom of the page or call the council on **01702 215002**.

In an emergency, always dial **999**.



Health support

Get to the help you need

If you are 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** to find your local pharmacy and access a complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatments including what to do and when to get help.

If you think you need medical help right now, contact **NHS 111** by visiting the **111.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** or **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.

Be prepared for Winter. To help you stay safe and well this winter. Visit the Mid and South Essex Winter Information Hub for the latest updates, advice, and resources on how to protect yourself and your loved ones during the colder months.

- Get information on flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccinations
- Learn how to stock your medicine cupboard
- Find mental health support and advice
- Boost your immunity with simple tips
- Discover how to prevent falls

Everything you need is in one place, for more information please visit **www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/health/winter**

Social Prescribing

Southend's Social Prescribing Service supports patients, aged 18+, with their health and wellbeing needs.

Patients visit their GP for a range of different reasons and sometimes these issues can be caused by non-medical matters such as loneliness, anxiety, unemployment, illness or debt.

Patients, referred by their GP, talk with a Social Prescribing Link Worker to discuss their concerns, this includes help to access appropriate support in the community and support to make positive changes to their personal wellbeing.

Link Workers support patients with follow-up contact to track progress. Link Workers also update patient GP records on progress, referral pathways and outcomes before discharge.

If you want to find out more about social prescribing and how it might help you contact your GP Practice.

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. For more information visit **www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/nhs-health-check**

Help for people living with or supporting people who are living with incurable illness. If you're living with a terminal illness, you could be eligible for some financial support with your energy bills and the cost of living. You could also get help with your energy bills if you're caring for someone with a terminal illness.To find out if you may qualify for any grants please visit **https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/benefits-entitlements/living-with-terminal-illness/grants** Alternatively you can visit **www.gov.uk** and type "Benefits end of life" or visit **https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/end-of-life-care/your-wellbeing/coping-financially** for further information on the support available.

Pulmonary rehabilitation service. Pulmonary rehabilitation is a programme of exercise and education for people with respiratory conditions such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and pulmonary fibrosis.

Why exercise is important

When you suffer with a breathing problem becoming short of breath can be very frightening and uncomfortable and so you may naturally try to avoid activities that make you breathless. Over time this can result in you reducing the amount of activity that you do. This can lead to your muscles becoming weak, to you becoming increasingly unfit and ultimately more breathless.

This can then make it more difficult for you to do the activities you used to do and so may reduce your quality of life.

Pulmonary rehabilitation can help break this vicious cycle of reduced activity and increased breathlessness.

The benefits of pulmonary rehabilitation

Pulmonary rehabilitation can help by:

- reducing your breathlessness
- increasing the muscle strength in your arms and legs
- increasing your stamina and endurance
- giving you a better understanding of

your condition
- increasing your confidence in your own abilities to control your symptoms, such as breathlessness
- increasing independence in your everyday life
- improving your health-related quality of life.

You can be referred for pulmonary rehabilitation by your:

- GP or practice nurse
- community nursing team
- hospital specialist doctor/Nurse
- nurse or doctor during an admission to hospital
- healthcare professional that you have contact with.

Contact us

For more information please don't hesitate to contact us on **07900 656211** or by emailing **mse.pulmonaryrehabilitation@nhs.net**

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.

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
- 11am Wednesday – meet at Jocelyns Beach behind Chalkwell Train Station
- 11am 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 **www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters** Please visit **www.nhs.uk/better-health** for more information.

Everyone Health run a number of courses that are free to anyone living, working or registered at a GP in Southend. However, each service has its own individual inclusion and exclusion criteria.

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 Southend both Face to Face and Virtual.

Falls Management is a 24-week course comprising of a 60 minute session focusing on strength and balance building exercises for those who have experienced a fall or are concerned about the possibility of falling. This is then followed by a 30-minute chat with the instructor and a cup of tea!

Health Trainer provides up to six 1–2–1 sessions with a behaviour change specialist to target the things in your life you'd like to change. Lose weight, get

Population Screening timeline

RSV (Respiratory Syncytial virus) Vaccination

Age 75 to 79 or turned 80 after 1 September 2024

80

75

Shingles vaccination

Age 70 to 79 (plus eligible age groups and severely immunosuppressed



70

65

Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening

Offered to **men** during the **year they turn 65.** Older men can self-refer.
www.nhs.uk/aaa



60

Vaccinations

- Age 65 - Pneumococcal Vaccine
- Age 65 and over - Influenza (Each year from September)
- Aged 65 from September 2023 - Shingles Vaccine

55

50

Bowel cancer screening

Offered to **men and women** aged **60 to 74 every 2 years.** From 2021 to 2025, screening will gradually be offered to people in their 50s as well. Those aged 75 or over can request screening by calling **0800 7076060.**
www.nhs.uk/bowel



45

40

35

Breast screening

Offered routinely to **women** aged **50 up to their 71st** birthday. Older women can self refer.
www.nhs.uk/breast



30

25

Cervical screening

Offered to **women** aged **25 to 49** every 3 years, and **women** aged **50 to 64** every 5 years.
www.nhs.uk/cervical



20

15

12

Diabetic eye screening

Offered every year to **people** with diabetes aged **12 and over.**
www.nhs.uk/diabeticeye



5

more active, drink more water, get to bed earlier and much more!

Physical Activity Service. 12 weeks of guided exercise with a fully qualified trainer. Activities include Zumba Gold®, Seated exercises, strength and balance classes and much more!

Workplace Wellbeing. Supporting employers to improve staff health and wellbeing. Includes Making Every Contact Count and Mental Health First Aider training.

For more information you can visit **southend.everyonehealth.co.uk** or telephone **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 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 Support in Southend-on-Sea. The Everyone Health Lifestyle Service in Southend, offer stop smoking support to anyone aged 16+ who lives, works, or is registered at a GP in Southend. The local service offers FREE support to people who are thinking of and wanting to take positive steps towards stopping smoking. The service offer includes:

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- A vape kit
- Behavioural support
- 1:2:1 support
- Group sessions

Phone: **0333 005 0095**

Text: **QUIT** to **60777**

Visit: **southend.everyonehealth.co.uk/stop-smoking-service**

Email: **eh.southend@nhs.net**

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.

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**

Over 50s Black Men Forum

Provides preventative health information via webinars and seminars for older black male community using black medical professionals with the same lived in experience as the black male community they represent.

Membership is free for Black Men aged above 50, who can take advantage of access to Black GPs in a group setting,

Mental Health Workshops, and weekly Table Tennis physical activity sessions.

Please visit **www.o5bmforum.org.uk**

Contact **07488 352736** for any further details.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Home Fire Safety Visits. Knowing how to reduce the risk of fire in your home is an important part of living safe and well. We offer free Home Safety Visits to all Essex residents.

The service we offer includes:

- Smoke alarms
- Sensory smoke alarms for the hearing impaired
- Advice on home fire safety
- Health & Wellbeing check and referral if required
- Electrical hazards, kitchen safety and safety in the home
- Crime prevention advice
- Advice around carbon monoxide ans gas safety
- Fire retardant bedding

Tel: 0300 303 0088 (9.30am to 4pm Mon to Fri, or leave a message out of hours) or email: **home.safety@essex-fire.gov.uk**

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health issues can appear at any time to anyone and affect their life and relationships but there are things we can do to help ourselves. Your GP can help direct you to services that can help. No matter what, it's ok to ask for help, as the sooner you get support and treatment the quicker your recovery.

If you, a family member or friend are in crisis and need help, please dial **NHS 111** and select the option for mental health crisis (option 2).

Healthy Minds. Mid and South Essex NHS have a number of mental health services:

www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/health/staying-well/healthy-minds

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**.

Let's Talk About Suicide Essex website encourages open conversations and provides information and advice on suicide awareness and prevention. **www.letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk**

Amparo Suicide Bereavement Service. The free Specialist Bereavement Service provides emotional and practical support for anyone who has felt the impact of suicide at any time (recent or historical).

Tel: **0330 088 9255** Email: **amparo.service@listening-ear.co.uk** or visit **www.amparo.org.uk/our-locations/mid-and-south-essex**

Trust Links is an independent charity for mental health, wellbeing and the environment in Essex. We offer therapeutic gardening, recovery classes, social activities, employability support, training, environmental workshops and more.

We offer the following:

- Therapeutic gardening through our Growing Together project for more information visit **www.trustlinks.org/projects/growing-together**
- Recovery and wellbeing workshops

and courses through REACH Recovery College for more information visit **www.trustlinks.org/projects/reach-recovery-college**

- Access to the REACH Wellbeing Hub, providing wellbeing guidance, peer support groups and positive activities for more information visit **www.trustlinks.org/projects/reach-wellbeing-hub**
- A range of projects and groups for children, young people and families
- Environmental workshops and volunteering opportunities

For more information 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**

Age Concern host 3 free coffee and conversations sessions per week to help to reduce social isolation and improve mental wellbeing, anyone is welcome to come along to the following sessions

- Mondays: 10am to 12pm
- Wednesdays: 1.30pm to 3.30pm
- Thursday: 10am to 12pm

For more information contact **01702 345373** or email **enquiry@ageconcernsouthend.co.uk**

Therapy For you. Local NHS mental health talking therapy service for adults Call: South East Essex **01268 739 128** Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm or visit **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**.

Reducing Parental Conflict around Financial Stress. Financial stress can put a strain on any relationship, especially when parents are trying to make ends meet while supporting their children. Open, respectful communication and shared problem solving can help reduce tension and prevent conflict from escalating. Local services are here to support families with budgeting advice, debt support, and emotional wellbeing. Seeking help early can ease pressure and create a more stable home environment for children. Remember, you're not alone, there are free confidential resources available to help you navigate financial challenges together.

For more information on reducing conflict and relationship support – please go to **www.livewellsouthend.com/health/reducing-parental-conflict**

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



In line with expert advice, the NHS will offer the flu vaccines to those at greater risk of serious illness this winter. Those who can get the vaccine free 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 vaccination. Stay Strong. Get Vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccine will also be offered to those over 75, people with a weakened immune system because of a health condition or treatment and those that live in care homes for older adults.

You can find out more information about both vaccines by visiting **www.nhs.uk/flujab** and **www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine**