

Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Thursday 7 March 2024

Winter Energy Support Scheme extension - Household Support Fund

The Winter Energy Support Scheme, which was due to close 29 February 2024, has been extended **until midday 21 March 24**, or until funds have been spent.

Please do continue to refer or signpost people to the scheme and we thank you for your support.

Any scheme specific queries can be sent direct to the team at householdsupportfund@kent.gov.uk

More information on how to apply and eligibility can be found here: [Household Support Fund - Kent County Council](#)

Household Energy Bill – additional support

We are delighted to inform you that Kent County Council is currently working with Citizens

Advice North and West Kent to support residents on low incomes who are taking positive steps to address their debts.

Residents could be eligible for additional support towards their household energy bill and receive up to £500 (subject to eligibility criteria).

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for this scheme, residents must at a minimum meet the following qualifying criteria:

- Be aged 16 or over.
- Be a Kent resident, permanently living within one of the 12 local authorities covered by Kent County Council (this excludes Medway, Bromley, and Bexley)
- Be responsible for paying the household energy bill (one award per household). *If a partner is awarded an energy card, but is not the main energy account holder, they can still use the card against the household energy costs.*
- Be accessing support through the 'Kent Money Advice Hub'.

Other eligibility criteria will apply and be assessed through the debt advice process.

Funding is limited so please encourage residents that meet the above criteria to contact the Kent Money Advice Hub (we advise residents to contact the Kent Money Advice Hub via 'video call' in the first instance - click on the link below and scroll down slightly to select 'make a video call').

[Kent Money Advice Hub](#)

This support is funded by the UK Governments Household Support Fund – the scheme will close once all funds are spent or before the 31 March 2024.



7 minutes could change a life - hone your skills and help people experiencing abuse

With Valentine's Day far behind us, let's get real about relationships.

Would you notice the signs if someone was experiencing domestic abuse? Do you feel confident enough to give safe advice when you spot the signs?

A minimum of 2 people a week are murdered by someone that was supposed to love them. In most cases this is by a partner or ex-partner but can also be by family members or carers.

Domestic abuse is a hugely under reported crime and a secret that many people keep for years, sometimes decades.

Oasis Domestic Abuse Service and East Kent Domestic Abuse Forum want you to feel confident identifying abuse and have the skills to increase people's safety.



These 5 '7 Minute Snippet' videos are easily accessible and can be watched in the time it takes for a quick cup of tea, but could help you change a life:

1. [Signs of abuse](#)
 2. [Safety planning](#)
 3. [Safe enquiry](#)
 4. [Support & signposting](#)
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5. [Understanding risk](#)

Scammer alert



We have been advised by a provider that there is a scammer phoning businesses in the Medway area saying they're calling from the Educational centre and that they have spoken to Medway Council last year about an anti-bullying campaign; claiming Medway Council has agreed to sponsor it for books and they have been asking businesses

for an amount of around £250.

This is a scam and should be ignored.

Best start for life strategies - public consultation



We are consulting on two draft strategies to help make sure that every baby in Kent has the best start in life.

Nurturing little hearts and minds: a perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationship strategy sets out the ways in which KCC plans to work with partners to support infants, parents and families during pregnancy and the first two years of life,

Nourishing our next generation: a 5-year infant feeding strategy shows five key themes and how these could be developed to support families in their infant feeding journey.

Find out more about both strategies and tell us your views at kent.gov.uk/startforlifestrategies

Consultation closes **3 April 2024**.

Adult Social Care Charging Policy consultation

Kent County Council (KCC) provides adult social care services to approximately 16,394 residents aged over 18 years old. Approximately 15,806 of these people receive chargeable social care services.

When people living in Kent need adult social care, as well as assessing their care needs, we also assess their income to decide how much they pay towards their care. Some people don't pay anything, and the council picks up all of the cost, some people pay a contribution, and some people pay for all of their care (these people are known as self-funders).

KCC sets out what and how people need to pay in the [Charging Policy for adult social care in a person's own home or in the community\(External link\)](#). This policy does not impact on people who live in and receive care and support in a residential care home.

KCC is facing a large increase in the cost of providing services and ever-increasing demand for services and needs to find ways to make these services sustainable. One possibility is to make changes to the Adult Social Care Charging Policy. You can find more information about this [here](#).

What are these consultations about?

KCC is reviewing how much people may have to pay towards the chargeable care and support services that we provide or arrange at home (for example homecare including supported living) and in the community (for example daytime support).

We are consulting on two potential changes to our Adult Social Care Charging Policy:

1. To stop disregarding the higher or enhanced rates of Attendance Allowance (AA), Personal Independent Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) when we calculate a person's income.
2. To introduce a new Self-Funding Arrangement Set up Fee for all new self-funders who would like KCC to negotiate, arrange and manage care and support services with care providers on their behalf.

How can you find out more and have your say?

Click on the links below for more information on both consultations, including details of:

- The proposals, who could be impacted and how
- Why we are proposing these changes
- The current charging policy
- How you can tell us your views.

[Higher Level Disability Benefits](#)

[Self-Funding Arrangement Set up Fee](#)

These consultations are open from **Tuesday 6 February** and close at midnight on **Sunday 7 April 2024**.

Kent Connect to Support website and financial estimator tool



Have you explored our new website for adult social care in Kent?

Visit kent.connecttosupport.org and take a look at the range of information, advice and guidance now available to you - and to the people that access your services.

You can browse the homepage and navigate to specific areas such as:

- **Community directory** - listings of local organisations, voluntary and community groups and much more. You can also submit a listing for free for your own care-related business or community organisation.
 - **Financial estimator tool** – use the simple tool to gain a better indication of what
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care and support may cost

- **Support in the home and community** - homecare, home adaptations, personal assistants and residential care.
- **Caring for someone** - financial support, emotional support and carers assessments.
- **Health and wellbeing** - staying healthy, keeping safe, neurodiversity, learning disabilities, autism, mental health and more.
- **Housing** - information about local housing options and homelessness prevention and support.
- **Out and about** - public transport, accessible toilets, changing places, how to get involved in sports and leisure activities
- **Money and legal** - paying for care and support, power of attorney, welfare and benefits.

We would be grateful if you could promote the platform in your service. If you would like to request copies of printed posters or flyers or gain further information, please email: connecttosupport@kent.gov.uk and visit the site at: kent.connecttosupport.org

The website has been developed in collaboration with people that access care and support and we are constantly seeking feedback, so please do use the online form to send through your own comments and ideas to be considered for further development. Find out how you can get involved in shaping adult social care and share your views, by joining the Your Voice Network. Visit kent.connecttosupport.org/get-involved to register for updates.

BetterCare Support online Self Assessment

Adult Social Care and Health (Kent County Council) have launched [BetterCare Support](#), an online self-assessment tool, to enable people to live independently and safely within their communities and home.



By answering questions about their social care needs, the tool provides people with information, advice, and guidance about the options and services available to them.

Other online resources:

- [Kent County Council Adult Social Care and Health website](#)
- [Financial Calculator to estimate how much you may need to pay](#)
- [Connect to Support, information, advice and guidance website with community directory](#)
- [Kent PA Personal Assistants website](#)

Please share and advertise these resources with your services and contacts.

Want to have your say on social care? Join the Your voice network!



If you aren't already a member, are interested in hearing more about social care in Kent and would like us to keep you updated about opportunities to get involved, receive our newsletter or link you up with our lived experience groups.

Please join our **Your voice network** online or contact makingadifference@kent.gov.uk to speak to a member of the team.

We'd love to hear from you!

Our mailing address is:

Stakeholderteam@kent.gov.uk