



Household Support Fund

Are there residents in your Ward in need of financial help this Winter?

Residents who need help with food, fuel or other household essentials can get help this Winter through the recently announced Household Support Fund.

The Government announced its Household Support Fund (HSF) on 30 September 2021, allocating £6.69 million to Norfolk County Council to be spent by the end of March 2022 to alleviate winter hardship while the economy recovers.

The fund is to support residents with financial uncertainties, providing a bridge between the end of furlough, the reduction in Universal Credit, and unprecedented increases in the cost of household bills and fuel. There is a major focus on supporting families, with 50% of the fund to be allocated to households with children.

This briefing gives details of the purpose of the scheme and importantly, how to apply.

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Household Support Fund

Household Support Fund – Breckland Council Offer

Funding has been divided up by NCC, in proportion to the number of Universal Credit claimants in each district. Breckland Council's allocation is £193,200. This is the preferred route to support our residents directly.

Who can apply?

At least 50% of the grant is allocated to support households that include:

- a person who will be under the age of 19 as of 31st March 2022, or
- a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit is paid or free school meals are provided during the Grant Period, and

Up to 50% of the grant is used to assist other households

We recognise that some of our residents may experience unexpected financial hardship but do not meet the criteria set out above. In these circumstances, we will review applications on a case-by-case basis.

You can only make a new claim for the fund if the following apply:

- you are over the age of 18
- you live in the district
- Your claim relates to financial support for food, fuel, or other household essentials due to financial uncertainty

How can I support someone to apply for the fund?

Referrals should be made online via the Breckland Council [website](#). Alternatively, referrals can be made by email to CommunitySupport@breckland.gov.uk and with consent, should provide details of the person requiring support, their contact details and reason for the request.

The Community Team will contact the applicant directly to review eligibility and complete the required information. Approved applications will be submitted to finance each Thursday for payment.

How much could a household expect to receive?

Applications meeting the criteria set out above will be eligible for a one-off payment of up to **£200 per household**. Final amounts paid will be agreed based on individual circumstances, following a conversation with the applicant to ascertain the need.

Who can I contact for further information?

For further information or to discuss a resident's need in more detail, please contact the Community Team via email CommunitySupport@breckland.gov.uk or contact Samantha Armitage, Community Services Manager Samantha.armitage@breckland.gov.uk

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What other schemes are available?

Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is a government scheme designed to help tackle fuel poverty and provide people with the financial assistance they may need throughout the winter months to pay their energy bills. The initiative was first introduced in 2011 and is run in cooperation with a number of different energy providers.

This one-off payment of £140 is just one of a number of schemes that can offer help during the colder months, such as the **Cold Weather Payment** and **Winter Fuel Payment**. It is credited to the resident's electricity bill by their supplier, or they will receive a voucher to redeem if they're a pay-as-you-go customer. There are 2 ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- they get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit - known as the 'core group'
- they're on a low income and meet their energy supplier's criteria for the scheme - known as the 'broader group'

How residents apply for the Warm Home Discount Scheme depends on how they qualify for the discount.

Winter Fuel Payment

Residents who were born on or before 26 September 1955 could get between £100 and £300 to help pay their heating bills. This is known as a 'Winter Fuel Payment'. They will get their Winter Fuel Payment automatically (they do not need to claim) if they're eligible and either:

- get the State Pension
- get another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit)

If they do not get either of these, or if they live abroad, they may need to make a claim. The deadline for them to make a claim for winter 2021 to 2022 is **31 March 2022**.

[Winter Fuel Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Cold Weather Payments

Residents may get a Cold Weather Payment if they're getting certain benefits or Support for Mortgage Interest. They will get a payment if the average temperature in their area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days.

They will receive £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. The Cold Weather Payment scheme runs from 1 November 2021 to 31 March 2022.

To check if residents can [get a payment in your area](#) visit the following page:

[Cold Weather Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

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Other support routes in Norfolk

Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS)

NAS provide hardship support to Norfolk residents who are struggling with their living costs. This year the service will receive additional funds to be able to support more people over the winter months.

The type of support that NAS provides is tailored to the individual needs of each household. It can include food vouchers, help with buying school uniforms and gas or electricity meter pre-payments, the purchase of oil and a range of other support as needed.

NCC have invested in additional advice capacity that NAS can refer to. This means that as well as one-off financial support, people struggling with their finances will find it easier to access debt and welfare advice and support to find longer term solutions.

Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS) - Norfolk County Council

Support for families who receive Free School Meals

All schools and educational establishments in Norfolk have received communication about ensuring that all children who are eligible are signed up for free school meals (the means tested pupil premium element and not the universal free school meals that all children in reception to the end of year 3 are entitled to).

Schools are then able to provide a link and code for EdenRed which is the chosen provider of supermarket vouchers to the value of £55 per child for the two weeks over Christmas and £15 a per child per week at February half term - these vouchers can be used at the following shops: Aldi, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda, Morrison's, Iceland, the Company Shop Group, Waitrose, McColls and M&S.

Children who are home educated and may be entitled to the vouchers can complete the Norfolk Assistance Scheme form and will be supported to access EdenRed by NAS. For more information about free school meals click here [Free school meals, school meals and milk - Norfolk County Council](#)