

A Helping Hand Over Winter

Helping Hands

The Helping Hands page on the Council's website contain lots of information on help to support residents with debt, bills and borrowing. The information can be found at:

www.manchester.gov.uk/helpinghands

COVID-19

This winter will be hard because not only will we still be dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, but there will also be flu and other cold bugs in circulation.

There is a lot of help and support if you do test positive for COVID-19, including [money to help you self isolate](#).

If you need help with food, medical supplies, or other COVID-19 related issues call 0800 234 6123 (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm). You can also text 07860 022 876 and get a response by the next working day.

If you need any other COVID-19 related help you can call the Manchester helpline 0800 840 3858. It's open 7 days a week from 9am to 5pm.

For further information please visit:

https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/500362/covid-19/8257/winter_in_manchester

Turn your cold house into a warm home.

Warm Home Discount Scheme – You could get £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The applications are usually open between October and December, but it can vary, so contact your energy supplier for more details. Local

Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) – The Energy and Money Saving Service that will help you make your home warmer and more energy-efficient. Call free on 0800 060 7567, or visit applyforleap.org.uk Uswitch – To compare energy prices from a range of suppliers, so you can find an energy deal that's right for you, call 0800 049 9722 or visit uswitch.com.

Struggling with your energy bills or having a problem with your provider?

There's help and support if your energy supplier goes out of business. You will not stop receiving gas and electricity. Ofgem (www.ofgem.gov.uk), the energy supplier regulator, will move your account to a new supplier – this may take a few weeks. Make a note or take a photo of your meter reading as soon as possible.

Download any bills while you are waiting for your new supplier to contact you. If you are in a vulnerable situation, check out what extra help might be available through the Priority Services Register by contacting your energy supplier or network operator. Call Citizens Advice Manchester on 0808 278 7800 for help:

- If your energy supplier goes out of business
- To apply to charitable trusts for help with arrears
- To find the cheapest tariff and supplier
- To deal with fuel debts
- With budgeting for your ongoing energy consumption.

United Utilities – When you are behind with your water bill payments, it can be a stressful time. The advice is simple – give United Utilities a call as soon as possible on 0800 072 6765 so they are aware of your circumstances and can give you the right financial support.

Energy Saving Trust – If you are looking for energy-saving home advice, call free on 0800 444 202. If you are a Social Housing tenant and require help with your fuel bills, please contact your Housing Association's call centre.

Council Tax

Reducing your bill

There are a number of ways that customers can get money off their Council Tax bill.

Severely Mentally Impaired – Residents can get a reduction from their bill if they or someone they live with is over 18 and is mentally disabled.

Care Leaver – Residents can get a reduction from their bill if they or someone they live with is under 25 and classed as a Care Leaver

For more information on these and other ways to reduce the Council Tax Bill visit

www.manchester.gov.uk/moneyoff

Council Tax Support

Residents on a low income can apply for Council Tax Support. It is important that people on Universal Credit make sure that they apply. We can backdate Council Tax Support for up to six months in some circumstances.

The claim form is available at www.manchester.gov.uk/benefits

Extra Help with Rent

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are available to residents in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit with the Housing Element. DHP awards can be made to help clear rent arrears or to make ongoing payments. The application form is available at www.manchester.gov.uk/DHP

Useful contacts

Citizens Advice Manchester (CAB) –Free, confidential, impartial advice. Call 03444 111 222, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/webchat or www.facebook.com/ManchesterCAB

Be Well Service – Helps you find a way to live and feel well with one-to-one support. Call 0161 470 7120.

Help and Support Manchester – For a range of services to help you and your family, visit hsm.manchester.gov.uk

Work and skills National Careers Service

For careers information, advice and guidance and help you to make decisions on learning, training and work at all stages in your career, visit: nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

Manchester Adult education courses can be found at manadulted.org.uk