

Support to Success

Your first stop for help and advice to...



Get budgeting

Help and support available to budget

www.solihull.gov.uk/supporttosuccess



Get budgeting

Do you know how much money you are spending each week or month? Making a budget will help you see where your money is going, if you could make any savings, pay off debts, save towards a goal and help you make the most of your money.

Completing your budget

A budget is a record of money you have coming into and out of your household. To complete your budget you could use an online budget calculator, spread sheet or pen and paper.

Start by listing and adding up all the income coming into your household – for example salary, wages, pensions or benefits. If you or your partner are not working, on a low income or caring for someone, **visit www.turn2us.org.uk/** and use their simple benefit calculator to check you are receiving all benefits you are entitled to.

List and add up all money you and your household spend. View your bank statements and list all spending including;

- Bills for your home e.g. rent or mortgage, Council Tax, insurance, utility bills, phone, TV, internet
- Regular spending e.g. travel costs, food shopping, lunches, mobile phone bills, social activities, clothes
- One-off expenses e.g. car maintenance and tax, Christmas or Birthday presents, school uniform

If you are unsure of what you are spending your money on keep a diary for at least a month to get a true picture.

Look at where your money goes and make savings

If you have less money coming in than you are spending each month or week or you just want to reduce how much you spend, look closely at where your money is going and where you can cut back.

- It can be surprising how quickly small savings can add up. For example if you stop buying, takeaways, magazines or sandwiches at lunchtime.
- Plan your weekly food shopping to reduce waste
- Stopping or cutting back on smoking or drinking can give you significant savings. For more information on free support available pick up a Support to Success: Getting Healthier leaflet from your local Solihull Connect Office, visit **www.solihull.gov.uk/supporttosuccess** or call 0121 704 6000
- Cancel any subscriptions, Direct Debits or policies you no longer want or need. Make sure to check for any cancellation fees you may be charged
- To see if changing suppliers for insurance, energy, credit cards or phones can save you money visit **www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/money-help**

If you can't afford to repay any debts or arrears contact those you owe money to and ask if you can agree repayments that you can afford.

For more information on repaying your debts pick up a Support to Success: Getting Help with Debt leaflet from your local Solihull Connect Office, visit **www.solihull.gov.uk/supporttosuccess** or contact an organisation offering free help or support listed on the back of this leaflet.

Can you reduce your fuel costs?

Heating your home can be expensive, but you could reduce costs by:

- Changing your gas or electricity provider, or ask your present company to change to their best tariff
- If you don't already have loft or cavity wall insulation, your gas or electricity provider may be able to provide it for free
- If you are on a low income you may be able to get help replacing old, inefficient heating boilers
- Keep heat in your home by closing curtains at dusk, making use of sunlight to warm rooms, closing doors to keep heat in occupied rooms and using heating controls to manage the energy use in your home

For more advice and assistance on reducing your fuel costs contact Act on Energy www.actonenergy.org.uk/ or call 0800 988 2881.

Further information, advice or support on budgeting

You can get free advice, online budget calculators and support to help you manage your budget through the government's Money Advice Service at www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Use the budget planner and follow Money Saving Expert's tips at www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/Budget-planning

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) offer drop in sessions every Monday (10am to 4pm) to help answer any questions about money. If you would like to know more about budgeting, making your money go further or receive a full benefit check visit the CAB's Chelmsley Office at 176 Bosworth Drive, Chelmsley Wood, B37 5DZ.

You could also visit the CAB's online budgeting tool at www.adviceguide.uk

Solihull Community Housing tenants & leaseholders can drop in to see the Money Advice Team at 6/8 Coppice Way, Chelmsley Wood B37 5TX for general budgeting help or preparation of financial statements. No appointment is necessary. To receive help and advice the same day please take along information regarding all the money coming into and out of your household.