

Cost of Living Help Sheet – June 2022

Benefits

Income Team Welfare Benefit Advisers and BOOST can assist residents with making benefit claims, appealing decisions, using online services or looking at entitlements and better off calculations

Universal Credit

Making a claim

Apply for Universal Credit online <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

Phone: 0800 328 5644

Help to claim:

- Citizens Advice Barnet - 0808 250 5708 (freephone)
Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4pm and until 7.30pm on Wednesdays
- Income Collection Service Welfare Benefit Advisers (WBAs)
- BOOST refer online www.boostbarnet.org or call 0208 359 2442

UC Advance Payment

Claimants can receive an advance on their universal credit by making an application to their Jobcentre Work Coach

UC Rent Payments Direct

Claimants can get their Universal Credit paid direct to their landlord. Support to do this from Income Service WBAs or BOOST

Personal Independence Payments

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can help with extra living costs for those with a long-term physical or mental health condition or disability leading to a difficulty doing certain everyday tasks or getting around. Residents can get PIP even if working, have savings or are getting most other benefits

New claims: 0800 917 2222 <https://www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim>

Or advice and support from Income Collection service WBAs or BOOST

CTAX Support

Council Tax Support is a benefit applied to Council Tax bill. The amount of Council Tax Support is based on income band. Up to 72% discount is available.

Apply online <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/council-tax/get-money-your-council-tax-bill/council-tax-support> or get help Benefits@Barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 2000 – Extension: 2

Or help from BOOST refer online www.boostbarnet.org or call 0208 359 2442

Housing

Rent Arrears – speak to Income Collection Officer in first instance

Housing Crisis – If homeless in an emergency call Barnet Homes' Housing Options service on 020 8610 3539 (Monday – Friday, 9AM – 5pm), outside these hours call 020 8080 6587

housingadvice@barnethomes.org

<https://thebarnetgroup.org/bh/applying-for-housing/help-with-housing-problems/>

Help with meeting housing costs for those receiving Housing Benefit or UC available from Discretionary Housing Payment team

Apply online <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/housing-benefit/apply-discretionary-housing-payment>

Tenants and residents can get help to apply from their Income Collection Officer or BOOST

Food

Help to get foodbank vouchers and referrals available from Income Collection Officer and BOOST. For Trussell Trust Foodbanks at Colindale and Chipping Barnet call the confidential, freephone national helpline on 0808 208 2138 and they can issue a voucher

Full details of all foodbanks and other resources available here:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/food-security-resource-hub>

Help to purchase white goods available from Household Support Fund see below for details

Fuel

Household Support Fund - see Grants below

Direct contact with utility provider - Contact supplier as soon as possible if worried about paying your energy bills or in debt. Suppliers must work with customers to agree an affordable payment plan under Ofgem rules <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/getting-help-if-you-cant-afford-your-energy-bills>

The Priority Services Register - The Priority Services Register is run by energy suppliers and offers free services for older people and people who have disabilities or long term ill-health. Utility providers also fund the Home Heat Helpline, a service for vulnerable customers struggling to pay their bills. To receive these services, you need to sign up to your supplier's Priority Services Register. If you have different suppliers for electricity and gas, you will need to register with each. If you have a carer, they can register on your behalf. There is no charge and you can register for all or some of the services.

£150 Council Tax rebate – already applied directly to those in Band A – D on Direct Debit or by voucher redemption to others. Discretionary assistance available for those in other bands to be announced by LB Barnet, <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/rebate>

Energy Bills Support Scheme – domestic electricity customers in Great Britain will receive a £400 grant which will appear as a credit from energy suppliers from October 2022 onwards. This will not need to be repaid. Households will not need to apply for the Scheme, in most cases electricity suppliers will apply the reduction automatically to bills

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/energy-bills-support-scheme-explainer>

Utilities

Assistance toward meeting utility bills available from Household Support Fund see below

Direct contact with utility provider to explain circumstances is generally best first step

Water

Providers have a range of offers for those needing help, again contact your supplier first to see what they can do <https://www.ccwater.org.uk/households/help-with-my-bills/>

Broadband

Community Fibre have free broadband for eligible Barnet residents. Details from BOOST or Barnet Council <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/digital-barnet>

Help with broadband costs – Most providers have deals available usually for those receiving benefits

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/costs-and-billing/social-tariffs>

<https://www.uswitch.com/broadband/guides/broadband-deals-for-low-income-families/>

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/broadband-and-tv/broadband-for-low-income-families/>

Laptops

Laptop Loan scheme – access to devices to be used to support employment, training, wellbeing etc available from BOOST, Age UK Barnet or via Barnet Council <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/digital-barnet>

Recycled equipment at discounted prices

<https://www.2econdchance.co.uk/> (a Barnet based service)

<https://www.getonlineathome.org/>

Phone

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/phone-internet-downloads-or-tv/if-youre-struggling-to-pay-your-mobile-phone-internet-or-tv-bill/>

<https://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/mobile-phone-debt.aspx>

Grants

Local Welfare Assistance Fund (Crisis Fund)

Supporting residents who need emergency financial assistance due to unexpected circumstances

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/grants-and-funding/apply-barnet-local-welfare-assistance-fund>

LocalWelfareAssistance@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 4242

Speak to Income Collection Team or BOOST if unable to access the service

Household Support Fund

The government has provided local authorities across England with funding to support residents most in need to help with rising living costs. The fund will support households with a range of costs including food and energy bills, white goods etc. and can be used to support with wider essential needs not linked to energy

For households without children or aged over 55 the Household Support Fund can be accessed via BOOST, Age UK Barnet or Citizens Advice Barnet

Boost – 0208 359 2442; boost@barnet.gov.uk – paid by BACS

Age UK Barnet – Household Support team 020 8203 5040 support@ageukbarnet.org.uk

CAB – 0808 250 5708 <https://barnetcab.org.uk/>

For families with school age children talk to child's school or early years setting.

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/householdsupportfund>

If in desperate need though please contact BOOST and we will try and help if possible. Documentary evidence of debt/income is usually required and BOOST ask that claimants are known to and working with professionals

Mayor's Benevolent Fund

Small one-off grants given to residents living in the borough who are in financial need. To qualify for a grant applicants must be living in the borough of Barnet and be in receipt of an income-related statutory welfare benefit (such as Universal Credit)

Applications should be made by e-mail to MBF@barnet.gov.uk

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/grants-and-funding/mayors-benevolent-fund>

Debt

Citizens Advice can offer the local first point of contact and are in BOOST Tuesdays and at Grahame Park on Mondays

Contact CAB - <https://barnetcab.org.uk/> 0808 250 5708 (freephone) or online referral <https://barnetcab.org.uk/get-advice/email-us/referrals/>

Debt Free London - 0800 808 5700 <https://debtfree.london/>

Money Helper <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

Step Change <https://www.stepchange.org/>

Council Tax Arrears

Clients having difficulties paying Council Tax, should tell a debt advice agency. They might be able to help by granting a breathing space. Breathing space gives time to go through finances and agree a payment plan. It can be used for all debts, including debts to other organisations such as banks and credit cards, as well as other debts owed to the Council.

<https://www.stepchange.org/how-we-help/breathing-space-scheme.aspx>

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/council-tax-arrears-and-debt-recovery>

Support is available to help clients deal with Council Tax team from BOOST

Welfare - Staying well and dealing with stress

Mental health crisis

24-hour BEHMT Crisis helpline: 0300 0200 500

Barnet Wellbeing Hub – based in Meritage Centre, Hendon offer a range of support services

[Meridian Wellbeing](#)

Suicide prevention

Immediate problems/risk of injury call Police 999

Samaritans - call 116 123 <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

Andy's Man Club - a men's peer to peer support group. This men's only support group runs every Monday at 7pm at the Meritage Centre, Hendon NW4 4JT [Andy's Man Club | #ITSOKAYTOTALK |](#)

Young Persons

Young person's mental health

(Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust) Crisis Resolution Team 0800 151 0023

Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online mental wellbeing community including live chat with the team, discussion boards, magazine with helpful articles and a daily journal a magazine. It also provides counselling support for young people aged 11 to 25 years [Home - Kooth](#)

Young person's suicide prevention

Papyrus Hopeline UK - a confidential support and advice service for Children and Young People under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide and anyone concerned that for a young person who might be thinking about suicide [HOPELINEUK - Papyrus UK | Suicide Prevention Charity \(papyrus-uk.org\)](#)

Its helpline service - 0800 068 4141 Text: 07860 039967 (opening hours 9am to midnight –365 days a year) pat@papyrus-uk.org

Domestic violence

Immediate problems/risk of injury call Police 999

Barnet Homes One Stop Shop, a free drop-in advice service for male and female victims of domestic violence call 020 8610 3539

Barnet Solace Advocacy and Support Service on 020 8733 4113

<https://www.solacewomensaid.org/get-help>

Call the 24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247. It's open 24/7 and is free from a landline or public phone. <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

Safeguarding

Under 16

If you believe a child (under 16) is at risk of immediate harm please call the Police on 999

If you feel you have urgent welfare concerns about children or young people that require an immediate response, phone the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 8359 4066. The MASH team are available Monday to Thursday 9am to 5.15pm and Friday 9am to 5pm.

Outside of these hours report to emergency duty team on 020 8359 2000.

Online safeguarding concern referral -

<https://account.barnet.gov.uk/OnlineApplication/Introduction.aspx?form=MASHANDCAF&time=637902117720462757,1654611372134>

Adult

If you are concerned about an adult who may be at risk of abuse, harm or neglect you can make a referral or contact Social Care Direct on 020 8359 5000 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) or 020 8359 2000 (out of hours). socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk

Useful Contacts

| Organisation | No. | Email | Web referral/link |
|---|---------------|---|---|
| BOOST – all Barnet residents | 0208 359 2442 | boost@barnet.gov.uk | www.boostbarnet.org |
| Income Collection Service - BH and ODH Tenants | 020 8080 6587 | | https://thebarnetgroup.org/bh/contact-us/ |
| Housing Options – Housing applicants /homelessness | 020 8610 3539 | housingadvice@barnethomes.org | |
| Floating Support – for BH tenants | 020 8080 6587 | | https://thebarnetgroup.org/bh/floatingsupport/ |
| Outreach Barnet – for private rented sector housing support | | | https://thebarnetgroup.org/bh/floatingsupport/ |
| Citizens Advice | 0808 250 5708 | https://barnetcab.org.uk/get-advice/email-us/referrals/ | https://barnetcab.org.uk/ |
| Local Welfare Assistance (Crisis Fund) | 0208 359 4242 | LocalWelfareAssistance@barnet.gov.uk | https://www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/grants-and-funding/apply-barnet-local-welfare-assistance-fund |