Cost of Living Help

A guide to the help and support available for Tower Hamlets residents during the cost of living crisis.

Scan me to get help and advice at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help with money and debt</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with staying warm</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with childcare and school costs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with food</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with housing costs</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with homelessness</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help into employment</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with mental wellbeing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping others</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Household budgets continue to be stretched as the cost of living increases. Inflation has pushed up the price of essentials such as food, clothes, electricity and gas to unaffordable levels for many people.

Tower Hamlets Council is here to help. We have launched our Cost of Living Help campaign to provide one place where people can find information to access support and grants available to them and find useful tips on reducing their bills.

An incredible £15 million a year goes unclaimed in Tower Hamlets, and benefits such as Universal Credit, Pensions Credit and Disability Premium could provide a lifeline to many. One easy thing you can do is check that you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to by using our benefits calculator.

Our Cost of Living Help web pages also have more information on the funding I have made available to support our most vulnerable children and families, pensioners and working-age households through schemes such as the Mayor’s Energy Fund and the Household Support Grant.

This is in addition to the help available through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the Residents’ Support Scheme, universal free school meals for children up to 11, school uniform grants, holiday activities for children in low-income families, support of food pantries and the funding of local advice services. We also have a Tackling Poverty Team which works with partners to help all our communities.

We have recently launched our Warm Hubs at our Idea Stores and libraries. These are safe spaces where residents can drop in and get warm if you are out and about, or you simply want to save on the cost of heating your home.

The cost of living must not stop the aspirations of our young people so I have reinstated the Education Maintenance Allowance and University Bursary schemes to help with the costs of going to college or university. If you are eligible, you still have until January 1, 2023 to apply.

With significant cuts to council funding over the years there is a limit to our financial support, but I will keep looking for new ways to help our residents and businesses.

Please do not suffer in silence. Help is available and we will keep the Cost of Living Help webpages updated with new support from the council, government and other organisations – www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

Mayor Lutfur Rahman
Help with money and debt

Cost of Living Support
The council has offered a range of payments for residents throughout the cost of living crisis as part of a package of support worth over £5million in the last six months. This has included allocation of the Household Support Fund to deliver funding directly to residents through the Mayor’s Cost of Living payments and the Mayor’s Energy Fund.

The council is committed to tackling the cost of living crisis, with more financial support to come in due course to help residents over the winter and into 2023.

Residents’ Support Scheme
The Residents’ Support Scheme helps residents who are either in, or at risk of, being in crisis or are in need of immediate help and have no source of financial support available to them.

You do not need to be receiving universal credit or other benefits to claim this support.
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rss

Resident Support Outreach Team
The Resident Support Outreach Team provides holistic, face-to-face support to residents in locations across the borough.

The team speaks multiple community languages and can support residents to apply for benefits grants and discounts, while also making referrals to other services.

Residents can be referred to the service by emailing LBTHResidentSupport@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Residents’ Hubs
The council, in partnership with voluntary and community groups, has been trialling a face-to-face pilot to support residents who cannot access services online.

The council has launched pilot Residents’ Hubs at Idea Store Whitechapel and Mulberry Place to help residents with benefits, housing, employment, health and wellbeing, and more. A permanent hub will be based at the new town hall in Whitechapel in 2023.

Support for 16-18-year-olds and University Bursary Scheme
The mayor has reinstated the Education Maintenance Allowance to support low income 16 to 18-year-olds who want to continue their education after school leaving age. Applications are open until January 1 2023.
The mayor has also launched the Mayor’s Higher Education Awards, a programme of bursaries to support Tower Hamlets students who wish to attend university. Applications are open until January 1 2023. [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/EMA](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/EMA)

**Benefits calculator**
Did you know more than £15m worth of benefits is going unclaimed? Use our benefits calculator and see if you are missing out. [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving)

**Other organisations who can help**
There are various organisations in our borough that provide support and advice.

**Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network (THCAN)**
A partnership of local advice centres that provide free advice and representation in areas of social welfare law.
Visit [www.thcan.org.uk](http://www.thcan.org.uk)

**East End Citizens Advice**
Advice on benefits, debt, housing, employment, immigration, legal and more. Call 020 3855 4472 or visit [www.eastendcab.org.uk](http://www.eastendcab.org.uk)

**Citizens Advice – Help to Claim**
Advice and support for claiming Universal Credit.
Call 0800 144 8444 or visit [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Toynbee Hall**
Form-filling service mainly for benefits and income maximisation as well as debt advice.
Call 020 7392 2953, email advice@toynbeehall.org.uk or visit [www.thcan.org.uk](http://www.thcan.org.uk)

**Bromley By Bow Centre**
East End Energy Fit advice for people who are struggling to pay their gas, electricity or water bills, including advice on debt and welfare benefits.
Call 0790 816 3033 or 07719 867 933. Email eastendenergyfit@bbbc.org.uk or visit [www.bbbc.org.uk/services/energy](http://www.bbbc.org.uk/services/energy)

**Island Advice**
Advice on debt, housing and entitlement to benefits including ‘better-off’ calculations, reviews and mandatory reconsideration, appeals and tribunal hearings.
Call 020 7987 9379 (Mon-Fri 10am to 12pm). Email admin@island-advice.org.uk or visit [www.island-advice.org.uk](http://www.island-advice.org.uk)
**Limehouse Project**  
Advice on welfare benefits, debt, housing and immigration, over the phone and face-to-face (languages spoken: English, Bengali, Urdu and Hindi). Call 020 7538 0075, email info@limehouseproject.org.uk or visit www.limehouseproject.org.uk

**University House Legal Advice Centre**  
Legal advice, assistance and representation on matters relating to employment, housing and welfare benefits.  
Call 020 3606 0372 or visit www.legaladvicecentre.london

**Age UK East London**  
Support and advice for older people, their families and carers.  
Call 020 8981 7124, email info@ageukeastlondon.org.uk or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/eastlondon

**Shelter**  
Free housing advice.  
Call 0808 800 4444 or visit www.shelter.org.uk

**MoneyHelper**  
Support with debt, benefits, money management and pensions.  
Call 0800 138 7777 or visit www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en

**StepChange**  
Debt advice and money guidance.  
Call 0800 138 1111 or visit www.stepchange.org

**Christians Against Poverty**  
Debt counselling charity. Call 0800 328 0006 or visit www.capuk.org

**Turn2Us**  
Information and financial support to get back on track, including benefits calculator and grants.  
Call 0808 802 2000 or visit www.turn2us.org.uk

**Money A&E**  
Money advice, education and coaching for residents from disadvantaged groups and diverse ethnic communities.  
For more information visit www.moneyaande.co.uk or email info@moneyaande.co.uk

**Debt and money support**  
**Debt Free London**  
Free expert debt advice via helpline, webchat, WhatsApp and video chat.  
Call 0800 808 5700 or visit www.debtfree.london

**For asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**  
**Project 17**  
Advice on housing and financial options for families with children
facing severe poverty or homelessness because they have NRPF. Call 07963 509 044 or visit www.project17.org.uk

Unity Project
Support for those with NRPF, including to have NRPF condition removed if applicable. Visit www.unity-project.org.uk

Women’s Inclusive Team
Support for the Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Tower Hamlets including youth programmes, women’s empowerment projects and mental health support. Languages spoken include Somali, Bangla, Urdu and English. Call 020 7790 2650 or visit www.wit.org.uk

More support
Cost of Living Hub
The Mayor of London’s Cost of Living Hub has been set up to help people access information, financial support, and advice to help manage household finances. www.london.gov.uk

Cost of living crisis survival guide
MoneySavingExperts and MoneySavers have created a guide with more than 90 ways to save money on energy, broadband, childcare costs, furniture, water, food, fuel and more. www.moneysavingexpert.com

Government support
The government is offering support for households to help with the rising cost of living. Some residents will be eligible for payments throughout the year. www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk

Broadband social tariffs
Some broadband providers offer discounted rates (social tariffs) to customers on a low income. Ofcom has compiled a list of providers that offer discounted rates and their eligibility requirements. www.ofcom.org.uk
Help with staying warm

**Warm Hubs at Community Centres run by Tower Hamlets Homes**
Pop down to a warm friendly community centre near you and meet neighbours over a hot drink/refreshments.

**Warm Hubs at Idea Stores & libraries**
Our Idea Stores and libraries will be hosting Warm Hubs for residents wanting a safe space to keep warm.

Refreshments including hot drinks, squash and biscuits will be available for service users. The Warm Hubs will also be hosting board games sessions to keep residents entertained. Staff will also be on hand to signpost people to advice and support services if required.

**Idea Stores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whitechapel, Bow, Chrisp Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon-Fri 11:00am-5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 11:00am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun 12:00pm-2:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cubitt Town, Bethnal Green</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon-Thurs 11:00am-5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 11:00am-4:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Warm Hubs at Community Centres**
Pop down to a warm friendly centre near you and meet neighbours over a hot drink/refreshments.

**Monday**
Wigram House Community Centre,
Wades Place, E14 0DA 12noon-5pm

**Tuesday**
Keddlestone Walk Community Centre,
Hollybush Gardens, E2 9QT 10am-1pm

**Wednesday**
Saltwell Street Community Centre,
Saltwell Street, E14 0DZ 2pm-7pm

**Thursday**
Glasshouse Community Centre
161 Old Ford Road, E2 9QB
10am-12noon

Wynn Garrett Resource Centre
Harpley Square, E1 4EA 10am-1pm

Cranbrook Community Centre
Mace Street, E2 0RB 1pm-4pm

Guild Room, Canton Street, E14 6JG
2pm-7pm

**Sunday**
St Matthias Community Centre
Woodstock Terrace, E14 0EY
2pm-7pm

For more information email: community.partnerships@thh.org.uk or call 020 7364 7956
Listed here is information on the financial support on offer for energy bills, as well as tips on saving energy and advice on keeping warm this winter.

**Financial Support**

*The £2,500 energy price cap explained*

The government’s Energy Price Guarantee is not a total cap on what you pay, but a cap on the amount suppliers can charge for standing charges and unit rates. Between October 2022 and April 2023, the average UK household will pay £2,500 per year for energy, but this is still dependent on usage.

If you use less energy you pay less, but if you use more you pay more. The previous Energy Price Guarantee was £1,971 a year, so it is likely will have seen an increase in costs from October.

*Energy Bills Support Scheme Discount*

All domestic households in the UK will receive a £400 payment from their energy supplier under the government’s Energy Bills Support Scheme. This will be credited to your energy bill from October 2022 and paid as £66 instalments over six months.

*Grants from your energy supplier*

Many major energy suppliers offer non-repayable grants to help reduce energy debt in households experiencing financial hardship. The schemes vary between companies, so you will need to get in contact with your energy supplier to check what they offer and who can apply.

*Warm Home Discount*

The Warm Home Discount provides a one-off £150 reduction on your electricity bills between October and March if you are at risk of fuel poverty.

The government tells suppliers which qualifying customers to apply the discount to, so the discount will be automatically applied to those eligible. To find out if you qualify, you can call the Warm Home Discount team between November 14 2022 and March 31 2023 on 0800 107 8002.

*Winter Fuel Payment*

All residents in receipt of state pension should automatically receive a Winter Fuel Payment between £250 and £600 to help with heating costs. This includes a Pensioner Cost of Living Payment.

www.gov.uk/winterfuel-payment

0800 731 0160
**Cold Weather Payment**
Residents in receipt of certain benefits could get a £25 payment to cover extra heating costs if the temperature drops below freezing seven days in a row. After each period of very cold weather in your area, you should get a payment within 14 working days into the same bank account as your benefit payments.

**Warmer Homes Scheme**
The Mayor of London's Warmer Homes programme provides free heating, insulation and ventilation improvements for low-income homeowners and private tenants. Grants of up to £25,000 are available, depending on your energy efficiency rating, your tenure, and your current fuel type.

[www.london.gov.uk/warmer-homes](http://www.london.gov.uk/warmer-homes)

**Energy saving tips**
Check our tips on saving energy and money and using your boilers and radiators at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving)

**Tips to stay warm**

**Layer clothes to keep in the heat**
Wear extra layers in the house – jumpers, cardigans, leggings, thermals, socks etc. anything that will keep you warm and potentially let you keep the house a few degrees cooler.

**Get electric heated blankets, heat pads or a hot water bottle**
There are lots of options to get some extra warmth. Consider getting the following:

- electric blanket or electric gilet
- electric heat pad
- USB gloves/USB or reusable hand warmers
- heated insoles or electric footwarmer
- hot water bottle or microwaveable wheat bag

Get an electric heated blanket for the night, instead of keeping the whole house warm as they use far less energy, and make sure you follow the instructions to avoid a fire risk. Also consider sleeping with an extra layer on and double the blankets.

**Eat regularly and have at least one hot meal a day**
NHS guidance confirms that eating regularly will help keep you warm. Have one hot meal a day and also drink hot drinks regularly. Consider homemade soup and porridge for money saving options.

**Keep your feet warm with thermal socks, slippers and rugs**
It’s said that if your feet are cold, the rest of you will feel cold too. Wearing thermal socks or slippers can be essential to staying warm inside. Also consider putting down rugs and bathmats to help your feet stay warm.

The floor is usually the coldest part of the house. Putting your feet up on a stool or similar can help them stay that little bit warmer while you’re sitting down.

**Hot water bottle or heated pad in a sleeping bag**
When sitting down, consider putting your legs in a sleeping bag to keep out draughts. For extra warmth, put a hot water bottle or electric heat pad at the bottom.

**Warm up by moving around**
Gentle exercise can help you stay warm, so try and move around once an hour.

**Warning**: Turning off central heating can cause its own issues.

Not heating your home properly can contribute to damp/mould issues and frozen pipes if the weather is cold, which can result in hundreds of pounds of damage. The Energy Saving Trust recommends ventilating rooms and having the heating on to some degree during winter.
Help with childcare and school costs

There is help available for parents and guardians who care for children. You may be able to claim support for childcare, as well as help with school costs, including uniforms, meals and transport.

**Help with childcare costs**
If you need help with the cost of childcare, there are various options available. You can also use the government’s childcare calculator to see what you might be entitled to.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

**Holiday Childcare Scheme**
The Tower Hamlets Holiday Childcare Scheme is Ofsted registered and provides childcare for children aged 3 to 13-years-old. The schemes take place during the school holidays, (excluding the Christmas break) within a Tower Hamlets school.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

**Specified Adult Childcare Credits**
If you are a grandparent, or other family member, who cares for a child under 12, usually whilst their parent (or main carer) is working, you may be entitled to receive National Insurance credits which will go towards your state pension.

You can search for 'Specified Adult Childcare credits' on the government website www.gov.uk

**Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)**
The Tower Hamlets Holiday Activities and Food Programme provides free places to free school meal eligible children during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays to help ensure children can access hot meals and fun activities during the school break.

Alongside free healthy food, the activity clubs deliver nutritional education, enriching and physical activities, food education for family and carers, and signposting and referrals to support services.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/haf

**Support for parents and families**
There are twelve Children and Family Centres in Tower Hamlets. These are free and open for all parents and carers with children from birth to 19 years-of-age (up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs and Disability) who live in the borough to access a range of services including play, family support, health, training, employment and more.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving
Healthy Start
Healthy Start helps families claiming certain benefits to buy healthy food and milk from the 10th week of pregnancy until the child’s 4th birthday. If you are under 18 and pregnant, you are automatically eligible, regardless of your benefit status.

Once you are signed up you will be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in supermarkets and other grocery stores. The card is topped up every four weeks.

www.gov.uk/healthy-start
www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply

Vitamins – Local offer
In Tower Hamlets, all children under the age of 4 and all pregnant and breastfeeding women and up to 1 year post-natal are eligible for free Healthy Start vitamins.

These can be collected from all Children and Family Centres. You must bring your Healthy Start card if you have one or when you get one.

www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Free school meals
All children from Reception to Year 6 in primary schools in Tower Hamlets get free school meals whether parents receive benefits or not. Children in nursery and in secondary schools could be eligible for free school meals if their parents receive certain types of benefit.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

Travel to school
Transport for London (TfL) offers free travel on London buses to all children under the age of 18 who are in full time education. They also offer other free or discounted travel.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

Help with the cost of school uniforms
A school clothing grant can help towards the cost of a school uniform for children aged 11 who are changing from primary to secondary school. Find out if you are eligible for this support.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving
Tower Hamlets has a network of foodbanks, pantries and food aid organisations throughout the borough that can support you with food. We also have some tips for managing food bills which can help you juggle the cost of your food bills. [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving)

**Tower Hamlets FOOD Stores**
The council has set up a number of FOOD Stores to support people who cannot afford enough food for themselves or their families. These are places you can go to pick up £25-£35 worth of food in exchange for a £3.50 membership fee. At the same time, you will be supported in other areas that you might need help with. This includes help with issues including housing, benefits and employment.

To find out more or to become a member email [thefoodstore@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:thefoodstore@towerhamlets.gov.uk) with your name, address, postcode, date of birth and contact number.

**Foodbanks**
If you are struggling to get food for yourself or your family there are a number of food aid organisations in Tower Hamlets that can help. Different food aid services will offer different support.

### Types

**Open access** – A food bank that anyone can go to for food.

**Limited access/By referral only** – A food bank that needs someone to refer you into the service. Please contact the organisation for details.

**Hot meals service/Hostel** – Provides hot meals or pre-made goods to residents. Hostels are frequently targeted at people experiencing homelessness or those who are rough sleeping.

#### Underwood Road Foodbank – (Open access)
Opening times: Thursday & Friday 9am-3pm
St Anne’s Catholic Church, E1 5AW
Contact [0207 247 7833](tel:02072477833) or email [underwoodroad@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:underwoodroad@rcdow.org.uk)
From Tuesday – Friday (9am – 3pm)

#### Ensign Youth Club – (Open access)
Opening times: Friday 10am-1pm
Wellclose Square, E1 8HY
Contact: [info@ensign.org.uk](mailto:info@ensign.org.uk)

#### Dorset Community Food Hub – (Open Access – Hot meals service)
Opening times: Thursday
Ground floor, former Dorset Library, Diss Street, E2 8QX
Contact: www.dorsetca.org

Edward Gibbons House – (Hostel)
Opening times: 24 hours
1 Parmiter St, E2 9NG
Contact: www.prha.net

Globe Primary School – (Open access)
Opening times: Friday 12pm-3.15pm
Globe Primary School, E2 0JH
Contact: www.globeschool.org.uk

Food for Aldgate – (Limited access/By referral only)
Opening times: Friday 1pm-3pm
Tonybee Hall, 28 Commercial Street, London, E1 6AB
Contact: Paul.wilson@eastendhomes.net or Twitter @FoodForAldgate

Womens Inclusive Team – (Limited access/By referral only)
Opening times: Appointment provided after referral
Mayfield House 202 Cambridge Heath Road, E2 9LJ
Contact: 07415372664 or email shakilaa@wit.org.uk

Bow Food Bank – (Open access)
Opening times: Monday 8am-12:30pm
Bromley by Bow Centre, St Leonard’s Street, E3 3BT
www.bowfoodbank.org/

Bethnal Green Foodbank – (Open access)
Opening times: Wednesday 2pm-7pm
Raines Foundations School, Approach Road, E2 9LY
www.bowfoodbank.org/

Bow Muslim Cultural Centre – (Open access)
Opening times: Friday 11am-3pm
246 Bow Road London, E3 3AP
info@bowcentralmosque.co.uk

SACC Food Bank – (Limited access/By referral only)
Opening times: Thursday & Friday 10am-3pm
St Anne’s Catholic Church, E1 5AW
Contact: braziliancp@rcdow.org.uk or 0207 247 7833.
Referrals can be discussed by email or telephone.
**Household essentials**
There may be ways you can reduce the cost of other bills, such as your broadband and TV.

It is estimated that around 15 million people are out of contract with their broadband, meaning they may be needlessly paying higher rates for this service. Have a look on a price-comparison website to see what you could save.

**How to reduce food waste**
On average, a typical family throws away £60 worth of food every month. Find out great tips on how you can reduce food waste. [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)
Help with housing costs

Financial Support

*Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)*
These are short-term payments that can help you with your rent if you’re experiencing financial hardship. To get a DHP you must be paying rent and be getting Housing Benefit or Universal Credit housing costs.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/benefits

**Housing benefit**
Most people who need help with housing payments should apply for Universal Credit. However, if you are exempt from claiming the rent element of Universal Credit and you have a liability to pay rent, you can make a new claim for Housing Benefit.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/benefits

Council Tax support
We can offer a cost reduction on your Council Tax depending on your personal circumstances. Find out about your options on the Council Tax benefits page.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/benefits

**Benefits calculator**
You might be eligible for benefits that you are not claiming. Accessing every benefit you are eligible for can help you with your income. It can also open the door to other support such as Council Tax reductions and reduced utility tariffs. Our benefits calculator will help you.

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

Universal Credit
Universal Credit is a monthly payment to help with your living costs, including housing payments. It is managed by the government’s Department for Work and Pensions. You may be able to get it if you’re on a low income or out of work.

www.gov.uk/universal-credit
Help with homelessness

Risk of homelessness
If you are homeless or require emergency homelessness advice, assistance and support outside of our opening hours or during the weekends please call 020 7364 4079.

For general queries, please call 020 7364 5000 or email homeless@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Rough sleeping
If you're rough sleeping or are aware of somebody rough sleeping, you can:

- alert the council and outreach services by making a referral to Streetlink online
- use the Housing Options Finder to find out what help there is available from the council
- search for local hostels and shelters

Visit our Housing Options section for more help and advice.
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk
The council has extensive support available for residents looking for training or employment.

**WorkPath**
WorkPath is an employment service for all Tower Hamlets residents.

It provides employment support tailored to your needs, whether you need basic skills or advanced training; access to work experience, apprenticeships or graduate schemes; CV help, interview preparation and more.

It can help also help you make a fresh start in a new career direction, or progress higher in your chosen area of work.

- Residents can register online to access all of our opportunities
- For any enquiries, please email workpath@towerhamlets.gov.uk or call 020 7364 3727 to speak to a member of our team
- Young WorkPath Careers Advisers are working across all schools and colleges in the borough
- For young people who are NEET (not in employment, education or training) we offer telephone, video or face-to-face interview appointments. Face-to-face interviews are by appointment only on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

**Young WorkPath**
To book an appointment, email youngworkpath@towerhamlets.gov.uk or call 0800 3581 2410 (freephone) or 020 7364 1401.

**Financial support**

**Flexible Support Fund (FSF)**
FSF may be able to help you with extra costs associated with getting into and starting work, such as travel expenses to attend interviews, and tools and clothing or uniform to start work. If you’re claiming Universal Credit you could also get help with the first month of childcare costs.

**Discounted travel**
If you are unemployed, claiming benefits and looking for work, you could get a free Jobcentre Plus Discount Rail Card. Transport for London (TFL), and Stagecoach, offer discounted travel up to 50% for those with this card.
**National Enterprise Allowance (NEA)**
If you want to start your own business, or develop your business if you’re self-employed, you may be able to get support through the NEA. You need to be getting certain benefits and have a business idea that could work.
For more information, please contact your local Jobcentre Plus.

**Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**
ESA is for people under state pension age who have a disability or health condition that affects how much they can work. You will get money to help with living costs if you’re unable to work, and support to get back into work if you’re able to.
Call **0800 055 6688** or visit **www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance**

**Access to Work Grant**
The Access to Work grant can pay for practical support if you have a disability, health or mental health condition and you start working, need help to stay in work or move into self-employment or start a business.

The grant can help you to meet the costs of travel to work, provide a support worker or pay for special equipment that you need to remain in employment. Visit **www.gov.uk/access-to-work**
Help with mental wellbeing

The council and the NHS work in partnership with charities and other organisations to provide a range of mental health and wellbeing support for Tower Hamlets residents.

Financial pressures can affect everyone differently. Talking to someone can help you deal with the anxiety and worry that financial stress can cause.

**Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies**
Provides a range of psychological therapies and counselling services. The service is provided by East London NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with Mind in Tower Hamlets and Newham. **020 8475 8080**.

**Mind in Tower Hamlets**
A community mental health charity that provides support to anyone with a mental health or emotional issue. They also provide free counselling for Tower Hamlets residents. **020 7510 4247/4248**
Email info@mitn.org.uk

**Inspire Mental Health Consortium**
Delivers new mental health, recovery and wellbeing services to improve the outcomes and life chances for people living with mental health problems in the borough. **0330 053 8122**
Email enquiry@inspire-wellbeing.org.uk
Mental Health Crisis Line
If you or someone you care about is experiencing a mental health crisis you can call 0800 073 0003. This service is available 24 hours a day and callers will be given support and advice from professionals.

Good Thinking
Good Thinking provides online mental wellbeing self-care for Londoners through digital tools that support the most common mental health conditions including anxiety, low mood, sleeping and stress. www.good-thinking.uk

GamCare
If you're concerned about your own or someone else's gambling, contact your local GamCare service to access quick, free, and confidential support. 020 7801 7008 0808 8020 133.

Kooth
Kooth offers free online counselling to children and young people aged 11 to 25-years-old in Tower Hamlets. It is free, safe, friendly and anonymous. www.kooth.com

Idea Stores and libraries
Visit your local Idea Store or library. There are lots of free activities on offer for residents and dedicated spaces for people to come together, stay warm and socialise.

Mental health support services in Tower Hamlets
Services are available for young people who may need support with mental wellbeing.

You can learn more, including what support might be right for you and how to access it. www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving
Volunteering
Volunteering is a great way to use your free time and skills to help other people and make Tower Hamlets a better place to live. It’s also good for you.

You can make new friends, feel part of your community, and keep mentally and physically fit during these challenging times. You will gain skills and experience to boost your confidence and increase your employability.

There are always plenty of local volunteering opportunities available. You can make a regular commitment of an hour or two a week.

You can also choose a short-term or one-off role if you don’t have much free time. There are even things you can do from your own home.

Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets (VCTH)
Contact the Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets to volunteer with a local charity, community organisation or public sector body.

They help people who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets to find inspiring volunteer roles. They have a huge variety of roles to suit all ages (15+), backgrounds, interests and abilities. Roles include:

- mentoring
- befriending
- helping at food banks
- supporting refugees
- youth work
- giving advice
- environmental projects
- health and social care
- event stewarding
- office admin
- teaching
- charity trusteeships

In partnership with the council, Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets is running the Covid-19 Recovery Volunteering Hub.

You will find some fantastic volunteering roles advertised on the Hub like:

- helping your local community recover from the pandemic
- supporting vulnerable residents during the cost of living crisis

You can volunteer whether you are a student, unemployed, working or retired.
How to get involved
It’s so easy to get started. Join thousands of local people already volunteering by registering on the Volunteer Centre’s website. You can see the roles currently available.
www.vcth.org.uk
07595 219 603
Email info@vcth.org.uk

Donating to foodbanks
The number of families using foodbanks has increased dramatically over the last few years, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

You can help our most vulnerable residents get through the cost of living crisis by donating long life food, drink and toiletries to your nearest foodbank.
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving

If you need this information in a different language, email communications@towerhamlets.gov.uk