

Food & Essentials - including Utility Costs

Support for Families in Richmond

Richmond Council Cost of Living Hub

This online hub provides information and support available on a range of topics including household bills, family and child care, food and health and care costs. www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost_of_living_hub

Help for Households

The government has recently launched their Help for Household's website which brings 40+ government support schemes and their eligibility together in one place. www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk

Warm Spaces

This is a network of venues across the borough that offer a safe, warm space and access to information, and in some cases refreshment. Providers include council venues such as libraries and children's centres, faith groups and community venues. The range of support they offer varies so residents are encouraged to check the website to understand what is available at each venue and the age range it is suitable for. www.richmond.gov.uk/warm_spaces

The [Richmond Youth Service](#) are running Warm Spaces in their venues every weekday and on Saturday afternoons. www.kr.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/young-people/information-and-advice/youth-centres-and-activities/richmond-youth-service-winter-warm-spaces

Information about [Hounslow Warm Spaces](#) can be found at www.hounslow.gov.uk/homepage/256/warm_spaces.

Information about [Kingston Warm Spaces](#) can be found at www.kingston.gov.uk/benefits-5/support-rising-living-costs/10

[Advice and support to access grants, financial and debt management advice and welfare and benefits support](#) is available for everyone from Citizens Advice Richmond (CAR) and from Richmond AID for people with disabilities, long term health conditions and carers.

[Citizen Advice Richmond \(CAR\)](#) www.citizensadvice-richmond.org

Citizen Advice Richmond supports all residents living in the borough of Richmond. Call 0300 330 2114 (Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm). They can provide support across every aspect of advice including benefits, welfare and housing and support relating to fuel and utility costs. Email via the form on their website - www.citizensadvice-richmond.org/get-advice/email-us.

Organisations can refer clients directly using a form on the CAR website - www.citizensadvice-richmond.org/referral-page.

Richmond AID (RAID) www.richmondaid.org.uk

Richmond AID can support people with long term health conditions, disabilities or carers. Call 020 8831 6464 (Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm) or email advice@richmondaid.org.uk

The Household Support Fund

Both RAID and CAR have been given an allocation by the council from the government Household Support Fund to distribute to local residents. The fund is aimed at low income households who are struggling and need help and need financial support to help with things like food, energy costs and essential items. Grantees will receive:

- Up to £300 for households with 1 or more adults
- Up to £500 for households with households with 1 child
- Up to £600 for households and 2 children or more

This is a new allocation of the funding for Winter 2022/23 and people who have previously received a grant are eligible to apply again. Apply via CAR or RAID. More information can be found at www.richmond.gov.uk/household_support_fund.

Fuel Grants and Energy Advice

Richmond Winter Warmth Home Service – Wandsworth and Richmond Assessment Points (WRAP)

Thinking Works is an award-winning not-for-profit company helping to tackle fuel poverty and create a sustainable and more energy efficient future. It has been commissioned by Richmond Council to support residents to reduce their bills, apply for grants to support them and to ensure that their appliances are as safe as efficient as possible. The service is open to all residents, including families with children, with some groups such as those 65+ and children and people with disabilities prioritised. There are 2 services available:

Crisis Support – by phone

- ✓ Fuel vouchers – for those with a prepay meter
- ✓ Emergency heating repairs (homeowners only)
- ✓ Referrals for insulation and heating grants (via Sustainable Warmth and Warmer Homes 3 and subject to available funding)
- ✓ Support applying to the Household Support Fund (where available)

Standard Support – by home visit

- ✓ FREE carbon monoxide detector (CO alarm)*

- ✓ FREE LED bulb x 2
- ✓ FREE radiator reflector panels for 3 radiators on external walls*
- ✓ Specialist advice on lowering your heating bills whilst keeping warm
- ✓ Advice on energy and water bill tariff discounts including the 50% Water Help discount and the Warm Home Discount (where available)
- ✓ Assessments for grants for insulation and heating works**
- ✓ Referrals for benefit checks
- ✓ Advice on health and wellbeing services in the borough
- ✓ Referrals for FREE smoke alarm

**Heating and insulation grants are only available to residents in receipt of income or disability benefits*

***Measures are installed subject to survey but wherever possible*

Professionals can make a referral (with the client's consent) or residents can self-refer.

South West London Energy Advice Partnership (SWLEAP) provides free, friendly and impartial advice to help residents manage their energy bills. It offers energy advice to anyone having difficulty with fuel costs, with the aim of reducing their bills and connecting them with grants and other energy saving measures. The support can be provided via home visits, by email or phone. To find out how they can help call 0800 086 2706 or email susan@hbitatsandheritage.org.uk.

Scope Disability Energy Support Service has a helpline offering free energy and water advice to disabled people, helping them to manage their utility needs. The service is open to any disabled person or households where one or more disabled person lives (England and Wales) The support includes:

- Managing water and energy debt
- Accessing benefits, grants and trusts
- Free fuel vouchers (conditions apply)
- Support registering with the Priority Services Register

The service is provided via email or by telephone.

Green Homes Grants of up to £10k are available to borough residents with a household income of less than £30k who live in a property with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D,E,F or G. The funding is managed by Richmond Council and will support the installation of energy efficient and low carbon heating improvements to the home. Homeowners and landlords are eligible. For more information and a helpful video [visit Richmond Council's Green Homes Grant webpage](#). (Please note this is different to the Government Green Homes Grant Voucher which closed to applications on 31 March 2021).

Thames Water have a helpful page on their website that looks at a variety of options if you are in debt or struggling to pay your water bill, including financial assistance available.

The Mayor of London's Warmer Homes programme offers grants of £5k-£25k to make homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run. The grant scheme for individual homeowners or private tenants who are on low income or qualifying benefits will support:

- Heat pumps
- Insulation for walls, lifts and floors
- Heating system improvement or repairs
- Draught proofing
- Solar energy installations.

The grants are dependent on existing energy efficiency rating, tenure and fuel type.

Food provision

Richmond Food Bank

In order to get help from the Richmond Food Bank you need to get a Food Bank voucher provided by a local referring agency. You can call or email the Food Bank to talk through your situation and be put in touch with a relevant local agency. Email **foodbank@vineyardcommunity.org** or call **020 8940 0274**. Alternatively, you can phone Citizens Advice Richmond who are a local Food Bank voucher agency - 0300 330 2114.

The Real Junk Food Project offers weekly café sessions and food surplus hubs in St Margaret's and Hampton using surplus fresh food from local businesses. It operates a pay-as-you-feel scheme, no referral is necessary and you do not need to pay anything. They have sessions at:

- The ETNA Centre in St Margaret's - Mon/Wed/Friday 11.30am – 1.30pm (Community Café and Food Surplus Hub)
- Outside Noble Green Wines in Hampton Hill - Tuesday 11am-12pm (Food Surplus Stall)
- Linden Hall, Hampton - Thursday 11.30am-1.30pm (Food Surplus Stall and Takeaway Café)

They do not operate on public holidays. For more information and directions visit the **The Real Junk Food Project Twickenham website**.

Surplus 2 U is a project managed by RAID to distribute surplus food donated by local suppliers, building on the relationships they built up and utilised so effectively in 2022. The food stall is open on a weekly basis **every Wednesday, 11am -12.30pm** outside the RAID offices (DAAC 4 Waldegrave Road Teddington). No referral is necessary.

Food for Thought is a community project based on Heathfield Recreation Ground in Whitton TW2 6EG, near to Heathfield School and Heathfield Children's Centre. It distributes surplus food that would otherwise go to landfill from supermarkets, independent food outlets and restaurants. It is open to anyone.

No charge is made although you can [make a donation](#). The stall operates on **Thursday 2.30pm-4.30pm** and **Saturday 11.30am-1.30pm**. Bring a carrier bag.

Richmond Soup Kitchen (2 November 2022 – 27 April 2023) is open every **Wednesday and Thursday 5pm-6pm** outside St John the Divine Richmond TW9 2NA, a short walk from Richmond station. Free takeaway soup, hot drinks and sandwiches are available for anyone in need.

Twickenham Living Room provided by [Twickenham Salvation Army](#) offers a warm welcome space **every Tuesday 4pm-7pm** at May Road TW2 6QW, just off Twickenham Green.

The Warm Soup Club at Mortlake Hall (Mullins Path, Mortlake, SW14 8EZ) provided by [Mortlake Community Association](#) offers a warm space, simple lunch and access to computers and the internet **every Wednesday and Thursday from 12pm-3pm**. Everyone is welcome.

Hounslow Community Foodbox

For those working with London Borough of Hounslow residents, this is a referral community food provider which can provide a food parcel for those in need. Referral partners include [Hounslow Council](#), schools, GPs and [Citizen Advice Hounslow](#). Clients cannot self-refer but if they need help in finding a referral partner they can email Oonah Lacy at Hounslow Food Box at info@hounslowfoodbox.org.uk or call 07719 891787. Food Box does not limit the number of times you can request a food parcel but your referral partner does need to complete a new form each time. The food box provides enough for one week and needs to be collected from Brentford. Opening hours for both referrals and collection are Tuesday-Friday, 10am-1pm and Saturday 10am-12pm. The Food Box is closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Mobile Data - The O2 SIM card - 7GB of free data

O2 are giving away 1 million GB of free data to support those in need. If you need help staying connected you can redeem 7GB of PAYG data for yourself or someone else in need simply by providing a phone number. One code will be issued per mobile number.

Even if you are not with O2 you can order a free O2 SIM card and redeem a voucher – [instructions are on the website under FAQ](#). O2 are part of the National Data Bank, a network of over 650 organisations. It provides free mobile data, texts and calls to people in data poverty.

Local Funders

Richmond Parish Lands Charity benefits those living in TW9 / TW10 / SW13 and SW14 and offers grants to individuals for household essentials including white goods. Applications can only be made through a referral agency such as social services, a local charity, housing provider or school. For more information please visit www.rplc.org.uk.

The Barnes Fund benefits those living in the postcode area SW13. They offer an individual grants programme covering food and household essentials. Applications can only be made through a referral agency such as social services or a local charity. For more information visit www.thebarnesfund.org.uk.

The Hampton Fund benefit area is Hampton Hill, Hampton Wick, Hampton, Teddington, Twickenham and Whitton. They operate an individual grants programme for household essentials, utility costs and funding for school trips and school uniform. To be eligible it is likely you will need to meet one of the following criteria:

- be on a low wage
- be in receipt of state benefits
- receive help with your rent or council tax
- you live on a pension.

Visit www.hamptonfund.co.uk.

Hampton Wick United Charity provides educational grants to residents in need living in Hampton Wick and Teddington and their dependants under 25. You must have lived in the benefit area for at least 12 months. The education grants can be used towards:

- school uniform
- travel to and from school
- travel to and from college
- academic books
- school and field trips

Visit www.hwuc.org or contact them by emailing jerry@stjohnshamptonwick.org or calling 020 8977 7733.

Kingston Household Support Fund is for Kingston residents. Kingston Council has reopened its Household Support Fund for applications. Individual residents or families in Kingston (or those placed in temporary accommodation outside of the borough by the Council) are eligible to apply for support that will alleviate financial hardship that is detrimental to health and wellbeing. Examples given include food and fuel costs and boiler and white good repairs. A maximum of £500 is available and professionals can apply on behalf of their clients. Please note this is not an emergency payment. Those in urgent need should contact the RBK contact centre 020 8547 5000 or email householdsupportfund@kingston.gov.uk

Skylarks (BBC Children in Need Emergency Essentials Scheme) is a local charity that provides support and advice for families who have children with any additional needs or disabilities. They are a registered referrer for the BBC Children in Need Emergency Essentials Scheme which provides grants for essential items and equipment. For more information about the scheme, visit the [Family Fund](#) website. For more information about Skylarks services, visit www.skylarks.charity or email info@skylarks.charity.

Advice & Guidance to Help Access Grants, Loans, Benefits, Debt Management, Pension Advice & Legal Advice

South West London Law Centres offer free and independent legal advice on social welfare issues including housing, debt, immigration and employment. Visit www.swllc.org or call 020 8767 2777.

Employment Law for London is a new service provided by South West London Law Centre in partnership with BPP Law School. It offers 30-minute telephone advice appointments for all London residents needing legal advice about a workplace issue, such as unfair dismissal, unpaid wages, discrimination and notice and redundancy pay. Simply call 020 7633 4534 and leave a voicemail with your name and phone number and a law student will call you to take details of the issue. This will then be followed up by a phone call from a volunteer lawyer who can talk you through your rights and options. More information about the service can be found at the [South West London Law Centres website](#)

Thamesbank Credit Union

A credit union is a self-help co-operative whose members pool their savings to provide each other with credit at a low interest rate. To be part of a credit union you have to share a common bond with other members such as living or working in the same area. Thamesbank Credit Union is available to those in Richmond, Ealing, Hounslow, Kingston, Wandsworth and Spelthorne. It offers saving accounts and access to affordable credit at rates that are the lowest on the market. Your savings are 100% protected and it is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Visit www.thamesbank.org.

The [Mayor of London's Cost of Living Hub](#) brings together a range of information, advice and signposting across all aspects of the cost of living crisis, such as help with paying your bills and help in a crisis. The information is clear and accessible and links to both regional and national charities. Visit [The Mayor of London's Cost of Living Hub](#).

Is your child eligible for Free School Meals?

Many families are entitled to Free School Meals but do not claim them. The process is simple and your application will be processed in two days. As well as the benefit of a hot nutritious meal every day, the school benefits by receiving £900 per child (known as the Pupil Premium) which is used to offer increased opportunities, equipment and books to support pupil learning. For more information and to apply, visit Richmond Council's [Free School Meals webpage](#).

Early Education Funding and 30 Hours Childcare Offer

This online information from Achieving for Children (AfC) sets out the various entitlements available to fund Early Years children in nursery and childcare places. If you are unsure what might be relevant for you, give the AfC Family Information Service a call. Find all the details at the [AfC website](#).

Tax-Free Childcare for Working Parents

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) provides tax-free childcare for children aged up to 11, or 17 if the child has a disability. This can be used to help pay for accredited holiday clubs, childminders or sport activities. Working parents can open an online account at any time and the government will pay £2 for every £8 that gets paid towards a childcare provider via the online account. This is capped at £500 every 3 months, or £1,000 if the child is disabled. Parents and carers can check their eligibility and [register for Tax-Free Childcare via GOV.UK](#).

[LBRUT Private Sector Housing Team](#) investigates complaints relating to private rented housing conditions and repairs and sub-standard housing. They will pursue in court landlords failing to act responsibly towards their tenants. The team is a shared service with Merton and can be contacted at 020 8545 3025 or by email at privatehousing@merton.gov.uk.

[Crosslight](#) provides debt and money advice and is part of the Community Money Advice Network of debt advice agencies. They have an office in Twickenham which supports people to combat debt and hardship caused by the burden of unmanageable debt and lack of financial capability. Visit www.crosslightadvice.org or call 020 7052 0318.

[Money Helper](#) is an arms-length body sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It offers impartial money and pensions guidance, backed by government, and is free to use.

The advice available includes family and care finance, pensions and retirement, debt and finding extra financial support. Visit www.moneyhelper.org.uk or call 0800 138 7777.

StepChange is a national debt charity offering comprehensive non-judgemental debt advice to help people who have debt problems take back control of their finances. Whatever the situation, they look for practical solutions that help to improve it. Their helpline is open Monday–Friday, 8am-8pm and Saturday 8am-4pm and there are a range of online options as well. Call 0800 138 1111 or visit www.stepchange.org.

Employment

Richmond Workmatch is a service from Richmond Council that supports people to access local jobs and training. It gives access to jobs across Richmond, Wandsworth and Kingston and provides training for borough residents to increase their employability. Find more information at www.richmondworkmatch.org.

Choice Support Richmond and Wandsworth supports residents with disabilities aged 18+ to find work, including people with learning difficulties, those affected by mental ill health, sensory impairment, physical disability and autism. They provide pre-employment support and support when you get a job. Call 020 3697 7134, email randwemployment@choicesupport.org.uk or visit the [Choice Support | Richmond and Wandsworth website](#).

Constructing South London is a collaboration between the Mayor’s Construction Academy and the South London Partnership to connect people to jobs, training and skills in the construction industry. Its activities and the support available include Richmond. For more information visit the [Constructing South London website](#).

Transform Work Life is a new series of seminars delivered by Richmond libraries aimed at developing knowledge of personal and professional skills. Over six in-person interactive seminars, participants will gain skills and knowledge that will enhance employability and encourage potential transformation in work and life situations. The course is free to Richmond residents and applicable wherever you are on your employment journey, be that your first job or if you’re looking to make a career change. Visit www.richmond.gov.uk/transform_work_life.

Step Up South London (SSL) is delivered by Groundwork London and works with young people who are termed NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training). They cover Croydon, Merton, Sutton, Kingston and Richmond areas and are based in Croydon. They offer a range of support to 16–24 years old to improve their skills and increase their access to employment and vocational training. The eligibility criteria includes:

- in care or leaving care
- homeless or at risk of homelessness
- lone parents
- problem debt over £1,000
- young carers
- substance misuse
- criminal activity.

The free services include peer mentoring, short courses and skills packages, access to literacy, numeracy and ESOL support and interview skills and work experience. For more information contact Henriett Kovacs, Project Support Officer by calling 07549 018970 or emailing Henriett.Kovacs@groundwork.org.uk. Find out more at www.groundwork.org.uk/projects/step-up-south-london.

Room for Work is a local charity that specialises in helping mature job seekers aged 40+ with previous work experience ranging from administrative to professional and managerial roles. Their free 12-week course supports learners to understand current job searching methods, write an effective CV, practice competency-based interviews, develop their speaking skills and much more. Interested participants can register for the next course at www.oomforwork.org.

Other sources of support and information

Richmond Stop Smoking Service offers help, advice and access to stop smoking medications to all smokers who live or work in the Richmond area. See the online information at [Richmond Council's Stop Smoking Service webpage](#).

Cost of Living Support

Kingston Council has collated a range of support, advice and signposting information to support residents affected by the cost of living crisis. Resources include a [Worrying About Money leaflet](#) which signposts to a range of support including help for migrants with no recourse to public funds. Much of the information is universal, regardless of whether you are a Kingston resident or not, and may be helpful to explore options for people you are working with from either borough. Visit www.kingston.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport.

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