

Get Help and Advice - www.sunderland.gov.uk/get-support

You can get free information, advice and guidance on welfare benefits, debt, employment, and housing matters.

There is also information/ advice available about where to get:

- Support for food if you are in financial crisis (this will mainly be via foodbanks but also via our Local Welfare Provision Scheme for specific vulnerable groups)
- Help with utility bills, or if you have a shortfall in your rent
- How to apply for a range of support including free school meals, Healthy Start vouchers and general help around money

Have a look at what is available, and who to contact, in your area:

[Where to get help in the Coalfields area](#)

[Where to get help in the East area](#)

[Where to get help in the North area](#)

[Where to get help in Washington](#)

[Where to get help in the West area](#)



Where to get help in the East area



Know your rights

East area residents can receive a free Financial Resilience Check from Citizens Advice Sunderland, the council's contracted advice provider for the East area. Call 0300 3301194 or email enquiries@citizensadviceunderland.co.uk

This free service offers information, advice and guidance on welfare benefits, debt, employment, and housing matters.

Free school meals

Children may be able to receive free school meals if their parent(s)/carer(s) are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. If parent(s)/carer(s) are unsure of eligibility, they can call 0191 561 1417 or email freeschoolmeals@togetherforchildren.org.uk and one of the team will try to help.

Parent(s)/carer(s) can also check eligibility and apply online by visiting www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/parents-carers/free-school-meals

Free Healthy Start Voucher - help to buy food and milk

If a resident is more than 10 weeks pregnant or has a child under four years old, they may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. They may be able to receive free vouchers or payments to spend on cow's milk, fruit, vegetables, and infant formula milk, as well as free vitamins, if they are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

To check if they are eligible, residents can contact the Healthy Start helpline 0345 607 6823 and an application form can be sent out in the post. Residents can also ask a midwife or health visitor for an application form.

Residents can also check eligibility, and print an application form by visiting www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Wear Here 4 You - Together for Children

Provide information, advice and support for children, young people and families in Sunderland

More details can be found at: www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/article/21147/Wear-Here-4-You

Get help and advice

Residents can get free specialist advice from the following agencies, regardless of where they live in the city:

Specialist support provider	Support available
Sunderland Welfare Rights Service Tel: 0191 520 5555 Email: welfare.rights@sunderland.gov.uk	Specialist and complex casework service offering advice and representation in relation to: Benefits appeals and sanctions, Debt advice and Employment Law
Shelter Tel: 0808 800 4444 Web: https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice	Free advice, support, and legal services to help residents who are struggling with bad housing or homelessness and issues with landlords
Money Advice and Pension Service Tel: 0800 138 7777 Emergency Helpline: 0808 164 4660 Web: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk	Free information to help residents make the most out of their money and pensions. Information includes: Budgeting, Saving and Debt and borrowing
Illegal Money Lending Team Tel: 0300 555 2222 Email: reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk Web: www.stoploansharks.co.uk	Confidential help and advice to investigate and prosecute illegal money lenders while supporting those who have borrowed money from a loan shark
Gentoo Money Matters Teams Tel: 0300 123 2004 Email: moneymatters@gentooogroup.com	Gentoo tenants only. Offers free money and debt advice, as well as help with benefits
Citizens Advice Sunderland (Money Advice Service Contract) Tel: 0191 415 8998	Offers free, impartial debt advice with a specialist money advice worker

Food support near you

There are several crisis food providers in your area. Providers and opening times may be subject to change. Please contact 0800 234 6084 or 0191 520 5551 for details or for them to make a referral on your behalf.

Organisation	Location	Opening times	Referral route
Sunderland Foodbank - Bethany City	Bede Tower, Burdon Road, Sunderland SR2 7DZ	Monday to Thursday 4-5pm	Agency referral including council Tel: 0800 234 6084 or Tel: 0191 520 5551
Sunderland Foodbank - Millfield City Life	170 Hylton Road, Millfield, Sunderland SR4 6EX	Wednesday 1-3pm Friday 10am-12pm	
Sunderland Foodbank - ELIM	New Durham Road, Sunderland SR2 7PD	Tuesday and Thursday 10.30am-12.30pm	
Sunderland Food Heroes	YMCA, Silksworth Terrace, Silksworth SR3 2AW	Appointment only Saturday 1-4pm	Agency referral including council Tel: 0800 234 6084 or 0191 520 5551 Self-referral via Facebook
Salvation Army	Austin House Family Centre, Shakespeare Street, Southwick, Sunderland SR5 2JX	Monday to Friday 9am-12pm	Agency referral including council Tel: 0800 234 6084 or Tel: 0191 520 5551
	Swan Lodge, High St East, Sunderland SR1 2AU	Saturday to Sunday 9am-4pm	



Make Your Money Go Further

www.sunderland.gov.uk/mymgf

Be Informed

- ✓ Budgeting
- ✓ Maximising Income/Switching
- ✓ Bank Accounts Explained
- ✓ How to keep on top of bills

Be Safe

- ✓ Money online:
 - Online Banking
 - Open Banking
- ✓ Scams
- ✓ Making payments online

Be Prepared

- ✓ Unsure about insurance?
- ✓ How to get the best deal
- ✓ How much could I save by having insurance?

PLUS Affordable credit

Saving

Reducing Energy Costs

Reducing Broadband Costs



Case Study – Single Unemployed Person Under 25

Single person under 25 renting a 1 bedroom home Gentoo property seeking work

Total Income (Excluding housing cost) £61.05 pw

Eligible Rent covered by UC

Receives Council Tax Support

Free Prescriptions

Total Expenditure

Water & Sewerage £7.13 pw

8.5% Council Tax £ 1.50 pw

Energy Bill estimate £30 pw

£3.20 per day to buy food , essential items and pay other bills





Case Study – Single Unemployed Person Over 25

Single person over 25 renting a 1 bedroom home Gentoo Property seeking work

Total Income (Excluding housing costs) £77.07 pw

Eligible Rent covered by UC

Receives Council Tax Support

Free Prescriptions

Total Expenditure

Water & Sewerage £7.13 pw

8.5% Council Tax £ 1.50 pw

Energy Bill estimate £30 pw

£6.35 per day to buy food , essential items and pay other bills

