

Ferring Neighbourhood Watch



*Over 40 years of building community spirit,
safety in numbers
and working together
to reduce crime and the
disproportionate fear of crime*

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January 2023 Newsletter

This Issue Focuses On The Cost Of Living

As is well reported, the rise in the cost of living is putting more and more household budgets under strain. With increases in the cost of energy, fuel, food and everyday essentials, and in the face of double-digit inflation, these can be extremely challenging times for many people. Understandably, financial stress can impact social connections, especially for anyone who may feel isolated or lonely. Financial worries can also increase fear of becoming a victim of crime as the emotional effect can exacerbate concerns of all kinds. In an attempt to help, at least in some small way, Neighbourhood Watch nationally offers guidance to ease potential impacts of the current economic climate. More information is available by clicking on these 3 links:

- ▶ [Steps to take to avoid becoming a victim of crime](#)
- ▶ [Where to go for financial support, money-saving tips, help with energy and food costs](#)
- ▶ [Support to help reduce loneliness and isolation](#)

This advice is not exhaustive, but it may offer you and others you know useful support.

In addition here are some local sources of support:-

Citizens Advice Energy Team - Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice is available to everyone living in Arun. If you need energy advice or assistance with paying your bills, ring 01243 974063 (Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, local call rates apply)

Littlehampton Community Fridge, St James' Church Hall, 1 East Ham Road, Littlehampton BN17 7AN. **Anyone** may take five items per adult per day (plus bread). It costs nothing, all the food is rescued and needs a home to stop it being wasted. Opening times: Monday: 11am to 12pm, Wednesday: 3.30pm to 4.30pm, Thursday: 10.30am to 11.30am, Friday: 11am to 12pm, Saturday: 10.30am to 12pm Phone 0300 030 9376 Email littlehamptoncommunityfridge@faredivide.org.uk

St Peter and St Paul's Pantry, Rustington Church Hall, 77 The Street, Rustington, BN16 3NL. A space where people can top up their food supplies - no referral needed. Fresh, frozen and long life - a mixture of donations and surplus from businesses. Open:
First Wednesday of the month: 4pm to 6pm
Second Wednesday of the month: 8.30am to 10am
Third Wednesday of the month: 4pm to 6pm
Fourth and fifth Wednesday of the month: 10am to 12noon

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86 Ferring Street, Ferring, BN12 5JP

Littlehampton District Foodbank - Rear hall, Littlehampton United Church, 1 High Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EG. The Foodbank works with local agencies that can issue you with the required foodbank voucher. They include Citizens Advice, Turning Tides, Mind, Safe In Sussex, HomeStart, SSAFA, housing support officers, children's centres, health visitors and social services. Tel: 07925 862289 or email at info@littlehamptondistrict.foodbank.org.uk
Web littlehamptondistrict.foodbank.org.uk

Open: Tuesdays and Fridays 1pm to 3pm for those with appointments to collect a parcel.

Arun District Council - includes information on The Household Support Fund, Warm Spaces, Energy Bills Support. Tel: 01903 737500 or visit the Council's web page [here](#)

Age UK - how to save energy, keep warm and help with heating costs.

Tel: 0800 019 1310 or Email info@ageukwsbh.org.uk



Of course, it is important to be aware of scammers looking to take advantage of the cost of living difficulties. Here are a few examples of scams currently going round:

Cost of living payments Beware of texts asking you to claim or apply for cost of living help - payments are automatic. Such texts may say they are from Gov.org or DWP. You DO NOT need to apply or do anything else to claim the payment. If you're eligible, you'll automatically receive the money straight into your bank account. *NOTE - If you haven't received your DWP Cost of Living Payment, you can report a missing payment at [Cost of Living Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) - this link is legitimate.*

Universal Credit Scammers doorstep cold call or stand outside Jobcentre Plus offices, offering a Government grant or 'low-cost Government loans for a small fee.' They try to get enough information from you to make an initial Universal Credit claim and request an advance payment. You then have to repay the loan you never had. Those affected have reported approaches by well-dressed individuals, carrying what looks like official ID.

Energy bills There has been a rise in scammers claiming to be from one of the 'big six' energy companies, as well as Ofgem. They send emails, using official logos, claiming you have overpaid for your energy and ask you to fill out a form with personal and financial information for a refund. Beware emails from info@rebate-ogem.com asking for the same thing. There are also fake text messages claiming to be from GOVUK, with a scam link to energy.bill-rebate.com.

Council Tax Scammers, pretending to work for your local council, phone up, saying you have overpaid your Council Tax and offer you a refund. The scammer then requests bank details with the promise of a refund for the alleged overpayment, but instead, steals your savings. The council will **never** ring you up to ask for your bank details.

Household Support Fund Scammers claiming to be from your local councils are phoning people to say they are eligible for the Household Support Fund and ask for bank details. Councils would not phone people to request this information.

Loan fee fraud Loan fee fraud occurs when people pay an upfront or advance fee for a loan they never receive. It's an increasingly common scam which is reported to the Financial Conduct Authority, with people losing £280 on average. If ever you borrow, always check beforehand that the provider is authorised by the FCA.

Visit <https://www.fca.org.uk/consumers/loan-fee-fraud> for more information.

REMEMBER - You can protect yourself with this quick three-step check:

If you're asked to pay an upfront fee, it could well be a scam.

If you're asked to pay quickly, it could well be a scam.

If you're asked to pay in an unusual way, such as vouchers or money transfer, or asked for your bank details, it could well be a scam.

