



Hammersmith,
Fulham, Ealing
and Hounslow

WINTER WELLBEING TOOLKIT



STAYING WARM AND WELL THIS WINTER



As the seasons change and colder weather sets in, many of us may feel the impact on our mental health. Here's how to prepare for winter:

Service Heating and Cooking Appliances: Ensure your heating and cooking appliances are regularly serviced to keep your home warm.

Manage Medications: If you take regular medication, remember to preorder and collect your prescriptions, especially before bad weather or holidays when GP surgeries and pharmacies may close.

Eat a Balanced Diet: Focus on a balanced diet and stay hydrated to boost your mood and energy. Balance your cravings for carbs—like pasta and potatoes—with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Boost Vitamin C Intake: Increase your vitamin C this winter from sources like oranges, peppers, strawberries, blackcurrants, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts.

TIPS FOR THE WINTER

Consider a Vitamin D Supplement: Our bodies produce vitamin D from sunlight, which is essential for healthy bones, teeth, and muscles. During winter, sunlight is often too weak for our bodies to make enough vitamin D, and it can be hard to get sufficient amounts from food. Talk to your doctor about taking a supplement for an extra boost this winter.

Get Your Flu Jab: Speak to your GP or visit a pharmacy to discuss getting your flu vaccination.

Seal Drafts: Keep doors and windows closed to reduce cold drafts. You might want to invest in insulation stickers for windows to block small gaps.

Maintain a Comfortable Temperature: Heat your home to a comfortable level, ideally at least 18°C in frequently used rooms like your living room and bedroom, especially if you have a health condition.

Stay Active: Keep moving during winter. If you're indoors, try not to sit still for more than an hour. Combat winter tiredness by getting outside in natural daylight, ensuring good sleep, and managing stress with meditation or exercise. Listen to your body and choose activities that feel right for you.

Dress Warmly: Layer light clothing instead of wearing one thick layer, as multiple layers trap warm air better. Fabrics like wool, cotton, or fleece will keep you warmer.

Enjoy Hot Meals and Drinks: Aim for at least one hot meal a day and enjoy regular hot drinks. Herbal teas can be great alternatives to coffee.

Practice Good Hand Hygiene: Good hand hygiene is an easy way to prevent colds and flu. Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces like phones, door handles, and countertops.



SELF-HELP TECHNIQUES



REACH OUT TO SOMEONE

Reach out to a trusted friend, family member, or a mental health professional about what's bothering you. If you can't open up to someone close, the Samaritans offer a helpline for support (details at the end of this Toolkit).

JOURNALING

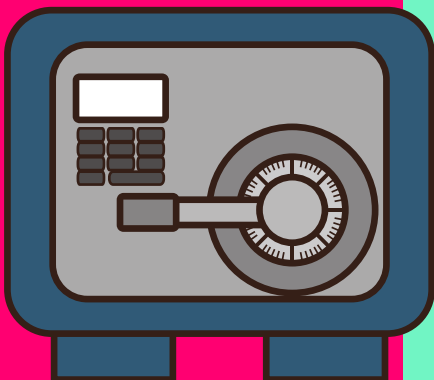
Try maintaining a journal to note when you're feeling down and when you're not. This can help you identify triggers and patterns. By recognising these patterns, you may be able to address certain situations and approach them differently.

SAFETY BOX

When you're feeling overwhelmed, having a safety box can help you cope and feel better. Include items that engage your senses:

- **Vision:** Photos, inspiring quotes or images of a safe place.
- **Hearing:** music playlists, meditation recordings, or phone numbers of supportive friends.
- **Smell/Taste:** Essential oils, your favourite perfume, or comforting snacks.
- **Touch:** A soft teddy bear, a cosy blanket, or massage oil.

Personalise your box with whatever brings you comfort and joy!



GROUNDING, MINDFULNESS AND BREATHING EXERCISE



1. TRY ABDOMINAL BREATHING ALSO KNOWN AS BELLY OR BALLOON BREATHING

Place one hand on your Chest. The other hand under your rib cage. Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds. Then breathe out slowly through your mouth for 4 seconds. (You should feel your stomach inflate and deflate with your lower hand)

2. QUICK TENSING AND RELAXING

Start by tensing your feet, lower legs, thighs, buttocks, pelvic muscles, abdomen, and lower back. Hold the tension for a moment, then release completely, allowing those muscles to soften and relax.

Next, tense your hands, forearms, upper arms, shoulders, belly, midriff, middle and upper back, and facial muscles. Inhale deeply to fully expand your ribcage. Notice the sensation, then exhale and let all those muscles relax.

Continue this process, focusing on releasing tension with each out-breath, letting go and allowing your body to become supple and relaxed.

3. CREATING A SYMBOL OF RELAXATION

When practicing relaxation, choose an image that brings you peace and comfort. This could be anything—a serene beach, a favourite nature spot, the sun, a rope untwisting, ice melting, a calming colour, or the face of a beloved pet or person.

As you relax, bring this image to mind. Let it grow and fill your awareness, allowing its qualities to wash over you. Imagine these qualities moving through your body with each breath. With practice, you'll be able to close your eyes anywhere and quickly relax by focusing on your chosen image for a few minutes.

5-4-3-2-1 TECHNIQUE

GROUNDING EXERCISES TO CALM YOUR ANXIETY

This technique asks you to find five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.



**5
THINGS YOU
CAN SEE**



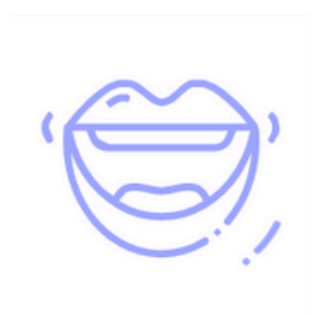
**4
THINGS YOU
CAN HEAR**



**3
THINGS YOU
CAN TOUCH**



**2
THINGS YOU
CAN SMELL**



**1
THINGS YOU
CAN TASTE**

MONEY AND MENTAL HEALTH

Worrying about money can be incredibly stressful and may dominate your thoughts, making it hard to focus on anything else. This anxiety can also impact your confidence and self-esteem. To help manage these feelings, it's important to recognise your unique qualities, reminding yourself that financial difficulties are just one aspect of who you are. Here are some tips for coping with money pressures:



TIPS TO MANAGE FINANCIAL WORRIES

1. Make a list of all the essential things you need to spend money on every month. This could be things like rent or mortgage payments, energy bills, phone bills and food shops. The Mental Health and Money Advice website has a free budget planner which might help.



2. Put all your important documents in one place so you can find them easily. This could be letters, bank statements, payslips, bills, and receipts.

3. Check your bank balance at a regular, set time so you know what you're spending your money on and how much you have left. Try to avoid checking your bank balance constantly throughout the day.



TIPS TO MANAGE FINANCIAL WORRIES



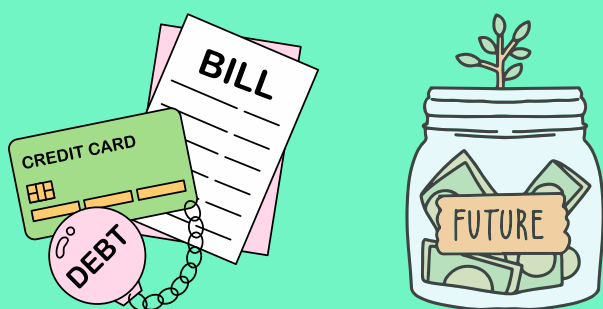
4. Build money tasks into your daily or weekly routine. You could allocate a set amount of regular time to think about any tasks you need to do around money, for example paying bills. You could plan a relaxing activity for after you've finished to reward yourself.

5. Make a plan for ways to distract yourself, if you notice changes in your mood that might affect your spending.

6. Create a budget - The Money Helper website has budgeting advice for people who are claiming Universal Credit.

7. Set up direct debits for your bills and other regular payments so they don't pile up.

8. If possible, use cash instead of cards. Take out only the amount of money you can afford to spend, for example for a weekly shop. Use bank accounts which allow you to put money aside in separate pots. This can stop you spending the money you need for rent or bills.



9. If you're struggling to pay off your debts, you could ask for a break from paying interest on your debts. This is possible under a Government scheme called breathing space. The National Debtline website has more information about the breathing space scheme.

10. Manage your debts if you can afford to. You could set up a standing order to pay off your debts each month. Or you could use an online debt tool. One way to try this is through the tools on the StepChange website.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT 2025



<https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>



0800 731 0160



<https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/contact-winter-fuel-payments-centre/date-filter>

If you were born before 23 September 1958 you could get £100 to £300 to help you pay your heating bills for winter 2025 to 2026. This is known as a ‘Winter Fuel Payment’.

You may be eligible if you or your partner get certain benefits. You will not get the extra Pensioner Cost of Living Payment given in 2022 and 2023. It stopped in early 2024.

ELIGIBILITY

You can get a Winter Fuel Payment for Winter 2025 to 2026 if you were born before 23 September 1958.

You must also live in England or Wales and get one of the following:

- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

You’ll also need to have been getting a benefit during the qualifying during the qualifying week, which was September 15-21, 2025

In some circumstances, you might be eligible if you live abroad.

HOW TO APPLY FOR WINTER PAYMENT

Most people get the Winter Fuel Payment automatically, if you do not get a letter you can make a claim:

By post to the Winter Fuel Payment Centre:

Winter Fuel Payment Centre
PO Box 1
Wolverhampton
WV1 1JN

By Phone: 0800 731 0160



Most payments are made in November or December.

WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME

The Warm Home Discount Scheme offers a one-off £150 discount on your electricity bill.

If eligible, your electricity supplier will apply the discount automatically; you don't receive the money directly.

If your supplier provides both gas and electricity, you might get the discount on your gas bill instead—check with your supplier.

COLD WEATHER PAYMENT

You may qualify for Cold Weather Payments if you receive certain benefits or Support for Mortgage Interest.

These payments are made automatically; no application is needed. However, inform Jobcentre Plus if you have a baby or a child under 5 moves in with you.

Payments do not affect your other benefits. You'll get £25 for each 7-day period of very cold weather between 1 November 2025 and 31 March 2026, if the average temperature in your area is forecast to be that low.

PRIORITY REGISTER

Sign up to the Priority Services Register for peace of mind knowing extra support is there for you should you have a power cut. Help available could include regular updates about when your power will be back on, access to a 24-hour helpline and other welfare support. You could also get energy saving tips and help understanding your energy bills.

To find out more visit ukpowernetworks.co.uk/Priority

LOCAL SUPPORT



EALING COUNCIL

Local welfare assistance is a discretionary scheme designed to help individuals maintain independence or address immediate financial crises.

Ealing Council has received extra funding from the Department of Work and Pensions' Household Support Fund to assist households struggling to buy food, pay utility bills, or cover essential costs. This funding is extended until March 2026, with expanded eligibility for Local Welfare Assistance payments.

The local welfare assistance team also offers debt advice, budgeting help, and job-seeking support. Financial awards may require attending sessions for these services.

Applying for local welfare assistance:

Different rules apply depending on what you are claiming for, but you must be an Ealing resident and be able to provide supporting evidence to make a successful claim.

SCAN ME



LOCAL SUPPORT



H&F HARDSHIP PREVENTION FUND

Hammersmith & Fulham offers a Hardship Prevention Fund for residents in financial crisis, providing one-off payments of up to £900 for essential living costs.

To be eligible, you must be an H&F resident in severe financial hardship, require immediate help, and have no alternative means of support. You do not need to be on government benefits to apply, but you must demonstrate a lack of other available funds.

Contact the cost-of-living crisis team if are finding it difficult to apply online, or you have a question about a new or existing application.

You can call them on the free phone number:

0800 917 6994

The line is open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

British Sign Language (BSL) users can [contact the team using a BSL video interpreter.](#)

SCAN ME



LOCAL SUPPORT



HOUNSLOW DISCRETIONARY LOCAL CRISIS PAYMENTS (DLCP)

This scheme is in place to:

- Help households to establish themselves in the community following a stay in institutional or residential care
- Help households remain in the community instead of entering institutional or residential care
- Ease exceptional pressures and stress on households
- Avoid serious risk to health and safety where it may be prevented.
-

A household is defined as a unit of individuals who live together and who are socially and financially dependent on or for one another. Full application criteria are detailed within our Discretionary local crisis payments (DLCP) policy.

Examples of where we may assist are:

- Household facing exceptional stress i.e. family/marital breakdown
- Household facing exceptional pressure i.e. partner or child with a disability, replacement of items damaged by a family member with challenging behaviour
- Households with unexpected expenses i.e. food costs will be referred to our local foodbank.

If you have any queries about the process, you can call us 020 8583 2000 with general enquiries but the call centre will not be able to give you any update on any application you have made at present.

SCAN ME



OTHER SUPPORT

**BENEFITS**

Turn2Us has a free online benefits calculator where you can find out which benefits you can claim: <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Find out if your eligible for pension credit: <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator>

Check you are receiving all the support you are entitled to.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT:

If you are on a low income and need help to pay your council tax bill, then you may qualify for council tax support. Search council tax support on your local borough's website.

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT (DHP)

After receiving housing benefit, if you are still in financial difficulty due to a shortfall between your benefit entitlement and the rent you are charged, you can apply for a discretionary housing payment.

CHILD BENEFIT:

You can claim Child Benefit if you're responsible for bringing up a child who is under 16 or under 20 if they are in education or training. Find out more about Child Benefit on GOV.UK.

HEALTHY START VOUCHERS:

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be able to get help to buy healthy food and milk. Find out more about Healthy Start vouchers on <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/>

HELP WITH MATERNITY COSTS:

You could claim a one-off payment of £500 to help with the costs of having a child. Find out more about the Sure Start Maternity Grant on GOV.UK.

URGENT HELP

If you need urgent medical help: Call 999

Go straight to A&E (if you can)

For Adults living in Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing or Hounslow call the Mental Health Single Point of Access on:
0800 328 4444

Your GP can also be contacted by phone if you need immediate help. Outside of surgery hours you can call NHS Direct for more guidance on 111.

The service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



shout
85258

here for you 24/7

SAMARITANS

Call free day or night on

116 123

A registered charity

SAFE SPACE

A local hub for anyone who feels they are nearing crisis point, including carers. We offer face to face, telephone and video-call support.

Drop-in available from 2–10pm, seven days a week (last drop-in at 9:30pm).

Safe Space Hounslow Helpline

Our helpline is accessible from 11am-11pm, 365 days a year.

Please call 020 3475 5185.

EALING SAFE SPACE:

0207 471 0583 or email:

safespaceealing@hfehmind.org.uk

The Lido Centre, 63 Mattock Lane, W13 9LA

HOUNSLOW SAFE SPACE:

0207 471 0584 or email:

safespacehounslow@hfehmind.org.uk

9-10 Central Parade, Sparrow Farm Drive, Feltham, TW14 0DH

Please call 0207 471 0584 when you arrive, and a member of staff will meet you.

HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM SAFE SPACE:

02074710582

or email: safespacehf@hfehmind.org.uk

309 Lillie Road, Fulham, SW6 7LL



Safe Space

A local hub for anyone who feels they are nearing crisis point, including carers.

Safe Space Hounslow
Helpline 020 3475 5185

Ealing Advocacy

Independent advocates can help you express views and wishes and to help make sure your voice is heard for your care and treatment

Compass

Support to navigate social issues (housing, benefits & debt) and monthly wellbeing workshops

Mind the Carer!

A service for adult carers that focuses on offering mental health support and community building to connect isolated carers in the borough of Hounslow.

Supported Self-Help

The Supported Self-Help Programme is a 6-session early intervention programme for anyone who is starting to experience symptoms of worsening mental health.

Mind Within Counselling

Offers low-cost therapy for adults 18+ with mild to moderate mental health needs who live in H&F, Hounslow, Ealing and Spelthorne.

Men's Mind

Regular gatherings for men from diverse backgrounds to share experiences and support each other

My Practice My Health

Support residents to engage with annual, physical health checks who otherwise might not get them.

Nova Roots:

Forensic Womens Hub

Out of hours community space for women aged 18+ leaving forensic mental health services



Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing and Hounslow



Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing &
Hounslow Mind
309 Lillie Road, London, SW6 7LL



dutyadultservices@hfehmind.org.uk



0208 571 7454



www.hfehmind.org.uk

**Find local support services on:
Wellbeingwestlondon.org.uk**

