

# **COST OF LIVING SUPPORT GUIDE**

## What is the council and its partners doing to support residents?

Many people up and down the country are really struggling, and the situation in Barking and Dagenham is no different.

Times are tough right now, so the Council and community partners are working together to support residents.

From help with sorting finances and making sure people have access to the right benefits, emergency money, and low-cost loans, to linking residents with local food banks and mental health support - there's lots of help available.

While we might not have the answer to everything, residents can speak to someone in their local area who will be there to listen and connect them to support.

## How can residents get support?

- **Face to Face:** through council and community buildings, such as Community Hubs, Libraries and more (see these listed in grid below)
- **Via Telephone:** 020 8215 3000
- **Website:** all of the information below and more, can be found at [www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support)

Face to face sites and locations	Opening times
<b>BLC, Barking Library</b> - 2 Town Square, Barking IG11 7NB	Monday to Thursday 9am to 7pm, Friday and Saturday 9am to 5pm, Sunday 10am to 4pm
<b>Dagenham Library</b> - 1 Church Elm Lane, Heathway, RM10 9QS	Monday to Thursday 9am to 7pm, Friday and Saturday 9am to 5pm
<b>Thames Community Hub</b> - Bastable Ave, Barking IG11 0LG	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
<b>Marks Gate Community Hub</b> - Rose Lane, Dagenham RM6 5NJ	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
<b>Robert Jeyes Library</b> - Chadwell Heath Community Centre, High Road, Chadwell Heath, RM6 6AS	Monday to Thursday 10am to 5pm
<b>Valence Library</b> - Becontree Ave, Dagenham RM8 3HT	Monday 10am to 5pm, Tuesday 10am to 7pm, Wednesday 10am to 5pm, Thursday 10am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm
<b>Village Community Hub</b> - (Leys) Wellington Avenue, Dagenham RM10 9XW	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
<b>Becontree Community Hub</b> - Stevens Road, Dagenham, RM8 2QR	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

<b>Northbury Community Hub at Al Madina Mosque</b> - 1st floor, The Hive, 2 Victoria Road, Barking IG11 8PY	Monday to Saturday 9am to 8pm.
<b>DABD</b> - 2-48 Parsloes Avenue, Dagenham, RM9 5NU	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
<b>Kingsley Hall</b> - Parsloes Avenue, Dagenham RM9 5NB	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
<b>Thames Life</b> - Riverside Campus, Renwick Road, Barking IG11 0FU	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.
<b>Harmony House</b> - Baden Powell Close, Dagenham, RM9 6XN	Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

## HELP WITH MONEY

**BD Money website** has a range of money help tools like a benefits calculator to check what they're eligible for, including Universal Credit. There is also help with utility costs, emergency support and family care advice. BD Money also offers access to affordable loans and savings through its partnership with Leeds Credit Union to help prevent residents from falling victim to high-cost credit providers or illegal loan sharks. <https://bdmoney.co.uk/>

**Affordable Loans:** Through the council's partnership with Leeds Credit Union affordable loan products are available to anyone who lives or works in Barking and Dagenham. From a Family Loan to help repair a broken washing machine, or a Consolidation Loan to combine several debts into one low-interest payment, there are lots of options available. [www.bdmoney.co.uk/partnership-page](http://www.bdmoney.co.uk/partnership-page)

**Council tax support:** Eligible residents aged over 18 can get up to 25 per cent discount on their council tax bill depending on their income, savings, household and circumstances. Residents who are pension age could be eligible for a Council Tax reduction of up to 100 per cent. [www.lbbd.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-and-exemptions](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-and-exemptions)

**Hardship schemes:** Funds to support vulnerable households most in need of help with the rising living and energy costs such as gas, electric, water and food costs. Additional support also includes white goods, winter clothing, essentials for work related costs such as travel and broadband. In exceptional circumstances residents may be able to get help with housing costs where Housing Benefit, Universal Credit Housing element or DHP (Discretionary Housing Payments) awards are not eligible or applicable. [www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support)

**Library of Things:** residents can borrow useful items like drills, sound systems and sewing machines. There are over 30 useful household, DIY and gardening items to borrow from as little as £1.50 per day. Residents can reserve items online, ready to collect from a self-service kiosk in Barking Learning Centre. People on low incomes will be able to sign up for a Concession Membership which offers 25 per cent off borrowing costs. [www.libraryofthings.co.uk/barking](http://www.libraryofthings.co.uk/barking)

**Tax Free Childcare:** working families with children under the age of 11 could save up to £2,000 a year on childcare costs (or £4,000 if they have a child with a disability under the age of 17). Residents can find out if they're eligible and sign up at [www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare](http://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare)

**Universal Credit:** Residents can find out what benefits they could be entitled to and how they can apply. [www.bdmoney.co.uk](http://www.bdmoney.co.uk)

## HELP WITH FOOD

**Food banks** across the borough can provide emergency food parcels if a resident is temporarily unable to provide for themselves. To use some of them, a voucher is required to receive a food parcel, so check it's best to check before visiting a location. [www.bdcollective.co.uk/food-bank-network](http://www.bdcollective.co.uk/food-bank-network)

**Community Food Clubs** led by community and voluntary sector partners offer free and discounted meals, food packages, food supplies and household goods. Residents can get more information at one of the face to face community hub venues above. [www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs)

**Free Christmas holiday activities** are available for young people who are eligible for free school meals. Includes podcasting and football to arts and crafts, and more. There's something for everyone and each activity includes a free nutritious hot meal. [www.lbbd.gov.uk/free-holiday-activities](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/free-holiday-activities)

**Free school meals:** All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state funded schools in England are eligible for free school meals. If your child is aged 11 to 16, they are also eligible if in receipt of certain benefits. [www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/free-school-meals-pupil-premium](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/free-school-meals-pupil-premium)

**Humdum:** Humdum UK was founded to ensure nobody in the community faces food poverty. They distribute over 300 nutritionally balanced meals a day and provide support to local people who are referred to them in crisis. Their food bank offers halal and vegetarian ready meals plus fresh food parcels to enable people to cook at home. The food bank is open on Saturdays from 1pm to 2pm. [www.humdum.org](http://www.humdum.org) | [info@humdum.org](mailto:info@humdum.org) | 07917 454 786.

**Kingsley Hall's Social Supermarket:** Free and discounted food supplies and household goods. Everyone is welcome, residents just need to turn up Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. Contact [info@khccc.com](mailto:info@khccc.com) or call 07951 895 889.

**Kingsley Hall's Street Kitchen:** Residents can enjoy warm spaces and discounted cooked meals and snacks, Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm. Contact [info@khccc.com](mailto:info@khccc.com) or call 020 8592 1708. Visit at Parsloes Avenue, Dagenham RM9 5NB.

**Al Madina Food Club:** Residents can join the Al Madina Food Club to reduce their food shopping bill. By becoming a member, residents can access food for a week. Membership also includes advice on finance, housing, employment and health. Membership is available to one person per household to visit once a week and is valid for three months. The Community Food Club also hosts the 'Seed to Plate' project, where residents can take part in free gardening and cooking projects. Residents can grow own produce, improve cooking skills and eat together with other local people. Eligibility criteria applies. Open every Friday from 3pm to 4.30pm at The Hive, 2 Victoria Road, Barking IG11 1PY | 020 8478 8526 | [info@barkingmosque.org.uk](mailto:info@barkingmosque.org.uk)

## HELP WITH ENERGY

**Warm spaces:** Together with local partners, we've created a network of warm spaces across the borough for residents, including in some of our Community Hubs.

They're places to go to meet up with other people and have a cup of tea to stay warm – so residents don't have to put the heating on as much at home. If they're struggling to heat their home this winter, we'll give them a warm welcome at the sites below.

	Warm spaces	Opening times
1	<b>Becontree Community Hub</b> Stevens Road, Dagenham, RM8 2QR. Tel: 020 8724 1830 Email: <a href="mailto:becontreecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk">becontreecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Monday – Friday, 10am – 4.00pm
2	<b>Barking Learning Centre</b> 2 Town Square, Barking, IG11 7NB. Tel: 020 8724 8725 / 8722 Email: <a href="mailto:libraries@lbbd.gov.uk">libraries@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Mondays – Thursdays, 9am - 7pm, Friday – Saturday, 9am - 5pm, and Sundays, 10am – 4.00pm
3	<b>Castle Point</b> 163 Bennett's Castle Lane, Dagenham, RM8 3YJ	Monday 10 - 2pm, Tuesday 10-12pm, Wednesday 10-3pm, Thursday 12 - 3pm, Friday 11am-2pm Starting Monday 12 December between 4 - 7.30pm, hot meals, space for homework, board games and crafts available.
4	<b>DABD</b> <b>Parsloes Avenue Annex site</b> (42-48 Parsloes Avenue, Dagenham, RM9 5NU)	The Parsloes Avenue annex will be open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays from 10am to 3pm Week beginning Wednesday 4 January 2023 until Thursday, 30 March 2023.  Tea and coffee will be available on all days.
5	<b>Dagenham Library</b> 1 Church Elm Lane, Dagenham, RM10 9QS. Tel: 020 8724 3942 Email: <a href="mailto:libraries@lbbd.gov.uk">libraries@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Mondays – Thursdays, 10am - 6pm, Fridays and Saturdays, 10am - 4pm
6	<b>Heath Community Hub (William Bellamy)</b> Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, RM10 7HX. Tel: 020 8724 1924 Email: <a href="mailto:heathcommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk">heathcommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm
7	<b>London Riverside Church (Side Entrance)</b> Parsloes Ave, Dagenham RM9 5PT	Every Thursday in December, January and February, 11am – 1pm
8	<b>Marks Gate Community Hub</b> Marks Gate Community Centre, Rose Lane, Marks Gate, RM6 5NJ. Tel: 020 8270 4165 Email: <a href="mailto:marksgatecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk">marksgatecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm
9	<b>Northbury Community Hub</b>	Monday – Sunday, 9am - 7pm

	Al Madina Mosque, 1st floor, The Hive, 2 Victoria Road, Barking, IG11 8PY Tel: 020 8478 8526	
10	<b>Park Centre,</b> Rectory Road Dagenham RM10 9SA	(Main Hall) Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10am - 4pm (Activity Room), Wednesday and Thursday 10 - 4pm
11	<b>Robert Jeyes Library</b> Chadwell Heath Community Centre, High Road Chadwell Heath, RM6 6AS Tel: 020 8270 4305 Email: <a href="mailto:libraries@lbbd.gov.uk">libraries@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Mondays – Thursday, 10.30am – 4.00pm
12	<b>Thames Community Hub,</b> Bastable Avenue, Barking, IG11 0LG. Tel: 020 8270 6619 Email: <a href="mailto:thamescommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk">thamescommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm
13	<b>Valence Library</b> Becontree Avenue, Dagenham, RM8 3HT. Tel: 020 8270 6864 Email: <a href="mailto:libraries@lbbd.gov.uk">libraries@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Mondays – Thursday, 10am - 4pm Saturdays, 10am - 3pm
14	<b>Village Community Hub</b> 215 Wellington Drive, Dagenham, RM10 9XW. Tel: 020 8724 1983 Email: <a href="mailto:villagecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk">villagecommunityhub@lbbd.gov.uk</a>	Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm

**Cosy Homes Scheme:** offers eligible residents FREE energy saving measures including cavity, loft and external wall insulation, air source heat pumps and solar PV panels.

<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/housing/home-energy-upgrades>

**Energy Bills Support Scheme:** every household is getting £400 off their electricity bill this Winter through the Government's Scheme. It is paid in instalments automatically through energy suppliers – so residents don't have to do anything or contact the council.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount)

**Reduce water bills:** There are lots of free water saving devices which can help cut bills from Essex and Suffolk Water at <https://esw.watersavingkit.com/>

**Hardship schemes:** Residents can check if they're eligible for additional support based on their income, including things like utilities (gas, electric, water), food and wider essential costs connected with utilities (such as boiler servicing and repairs – owner occupiers only). Selected household goods essential for cooking and provision of food (cookers, fridges, freezers, pans, utensils) or other related essentials that can support reducing the cost of living can also be considered.

<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/discretionary-hardship-support/hardship-payment-schemes>

**Warm Homes Discount:** Residents could get £150 off their electricity bill for winter 2022 to 2023 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The money is not paid directly to residents - it's a one-off discount on their electricity bill, between October 2022 and March 2023. Residents may be able to get the discount on their gas bill instead if their supplier provides them with both gas and electricity and they're eligible. Residents can contact their supplier to find out. [Warm Home Discount Scheme: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/warm-home-discount-scheme)

## HELP WITH WELLBEING

**Harmony House CIO** run a range of groups that can help isolated and lonely residents to make new friends and feel better connected, helping to make them feel safer and more independent. The groups provide lunch, refreshments, creative activities and games, skill sharing, informative talks, and entertainment. **020 8526 8200 | enquiries@hhd.org.uk**

**Every One Every Day** is a local charity which has five community spaces across the borough that residents can access for free. Everyone is welcome to attend a range of workshops and activities. Residents can find out about the fun things that are happening this Winter, from cooking to social events and more. [www.weareeveryone.org](http://www.weareeveryone.org)

**Housing and Homelessness:** Residents can get information about how to avoid becoming homeless or what to do if they are homeless. Call 020 8724 8323, Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm, or email [housingadvice@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvice@lbbd.gov.uk)

**Kingsley Hall's LIVEWELL Centre:** Residents can access a number of free and discounted wellbeing activities at Kingsley Hall. Everyone is welcome Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. Kingsley Hall, Parsloes Avenue, Dagenham RM9 5NB. Email or phone for weekly timetable: [info@khccc.com](mailto:info@khccc.com) | 07951 895 889

**Community mental health support:** Barking and Dagenham Access and Assessment team is a service for adults aged 18 to 65 that need to access community mental health services in the borough. They provide an initial mental health assessment and will refer or signpost to other mental health services or organisations or offer brief intervention for a time limited period. <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/adult-social-care/mental-health/community-mental-health-services>

**Talking Therapies Barking & Dagenham:** A free NHS service which offers help to learn new ways to cope with everyday pressures or unexpected events. They offer talking therapies including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Counselling for Depression, Couples Therapy, Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy, EMDR, and Interpersonal therapy. They also offer groups and courses to learn ways to cope with low mood, anxiety and more. <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/adult-social-care/mental-health/therapy-and-counselling>

## HELP WITH GETTING CONNECTED

**National Databank:** Eligible residents can access up to six months of free mobile data.

**Free wi-fi:** there is a full list of sites across the borough where residents can access and use free wifi and computers.

**Digital courses** are available for anyone who wants to learn skills to get online and digital support sessions are also available at the Adult College.

**Digital champions** are volunteers trained to help residents get online. Whether it's help using an iPad or support to fill out an online form – they're on hand.

**Digital Inclusive Zones** are coming soon and will be a space where residents can access digital technology with support from our teams.

More information about all of the above can be found at: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/adult-social-care/digital-barking-and-dagenham/computers-internet-access-and-wi-fi>