



## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

### Sustainable Tenancy Fund

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| <b>POLICY TITLE:</b>                               | Sustainable Tenancy Fund<br>(formerly Welfare Reform Support Fund)  |
| <b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>                               | Jennie Daly   |
| <b>DATE APPROVED:</b>                              | December 2022   |
| <b>APPROVED BY:</b>                                | Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council  |
| <b>IMPLEMENTATION DATE:</b>                        | April 2013  |
| <b>DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW:</b>                       | December 2024   |
| <b>ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:</b>                        | Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery Procedure, Income Management Strategy, Anti-Poverty Strategy, Allocations Policy |
| <b>TEAMS AFFECTED:</b>                             | Income Management Team, Tenancy and Estate Management Teams, Financial Inclusion Team, Doncaster Home Choice Team     |
| <b>THIS POLICY REPLACES WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT:</b> | Welfare Reform Support Fund Policy  |

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

### Revision History

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Date of this revision:</b> | December 2022 |
| <b>Date of next review:</b>   | December 2024 |
| <b>Responsible Officer:</b>   | Jane Davies   |

| <b>Version Number</b> | <b>Version Date</b> | <b>Author/Group commenting</b> | <b>Summary of Changes</b>   |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 0.1                   | Jan13               | R Wilkie                       | First draft   |
| 0.2                   | Jan13               | R Wilkie                       | Consultation with JJ  |
| 0.3                   | Feb13               | R Wilkie                       | Further consultation with JJ  |
| 0.4                   | Mar13               | R Wilkie                       | Consultation with EMT   |
| 1.0                   | 27/03/13            | Board                          | Approved  |
| 1.1                   | October15           | M Lerner                       | Updated to reflect Policy changes   |
| 1.2                   | January 17          | J Daly                         | Updated to reflect wider use of the Fund to support tenancy sustainability for those affected by variety of welfare reforms and financial exclusion |
| 1.3                   | December 22         | C Harling                      | Updated to incorporate the cost of living crisis and incentivising residents to move to smaller affordable accommodation                            |



## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

### **Sustainable Tenancy Fund**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Sustainable Tenancy fund has been designed to support to a broader group of tenants to help improve tenancy sustainability and make best use of available housing stock.

It is aimed at those tenants adversely affected by welfare reforms, other forms of financial exclusion and the impact of the cost of living crisis. The fund provides opportunities for tenants to engage with us when in financial crisis.

The Fund does not replace other financial funding streams available such as DHP or Local Assistance Scheme, but works alongside them to support our tenants and in this way will ensure as many people as possible receive support to help them to cope with an unforeseen event or to improve their living and financial circumstances.

#### **2. What is the Fund and who is it for?**

- 2.1 The Fund will primarily provide financial support to St Leger Homes' tenants who are suffering financial exclusion, particularly where their tenancy could be at risk. The fund can provide short-term assistance where the usual routes for assistance have been exhausted, are not available or are not appropriate.

- 2.2 The fund will also be available to help incentivise tenants to downsize from their property where this makes better use of scarce property resources and supports the aims of the Council's Allocations Policy.

- 2.3 The Fund is only available to St Leger Homes' tenants. Applications for the Fund must meet at least one of the following criteria, where the tenant;

- Has an immediate short-term financial crisis and usual sources of funding have been exhausted, are not available or are not appropriate.
- in need of financial support for a time-limited period whilst taking positive steps to improve their circumstances
- believes that short-term assistance can improve the their longer-term financial situation
- is taking active pro-active steps to improve their financial circumstances by way of engagement with appropriate services
- Can be incentivised to move to a smaller, age designated property to free up a larger property to make most effective use of larger accommodation

- 2.4 Many of the items contained within this policy are for short-term assistance and will not in themselves resolve the financial issues of individuals. However the purpose of the Fund is to provide staff with the appropriate tools to offer at those critical points of crisis. Interventions at this point will encourage tenants to engage with us to be supported towards financial independence.

Specific examples of the support which can be provided by the Fund can be seen in **Appendix A**.

### 3. **Background to the Fund**

- 3.1 The previously known Welfare Reform Support Fund (WRSF) was introduced in 2013 in response to the Government's Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax). Its aim was to help encourage and support those who had been adversely affected and were taking positive steps to downsize to a more affordable home.
- 3.2 This Fund was subsequently updated to reflect welfare changes such as the introduction of the Benefit Cap and the subsequent reductions, expansion of Universal Credit (UC) including the Managed Migration and eroding transitional protection and the Removal of the Severe Disability Premium.
- 3.3 More recently, the Policy has been reviewed in line with the impacts of the cost of living crisis due to rising inflation and energy costs. In addition, a review of the incentives to encourage tenants to downsize to support the aims of the Allocations Policy.

### 4. **Aim of the Sustainable Tenancy Fund**

- 4.1 Despite various Government support schemes, the cumulative effect of inflationary rises in the cost of food as well as escalating energy costs, combined with greater employment insecurity is likely to have a detrimental effect on tenancy sustainability, as people find it increasingly difficult to keep up with rent payments and the costs of running a home.

The risks of rising arrears cases and the increased activity associated in managing those cases will place an additional burden on the organisation. The potential of more evictions, increased turnover and associated void management costs could be a feature over the coming years.

With this in mind, improving the financial resilience of our tenants to improve tenancy sustainability in St Leger Homes is crucial. Early intervention and the engagement of tenants when in financial hardship is key.

- 4.2 It is therefore the aim of the Sustainable Tenancy Fund to have a wider scope than previously in order to support more tenants who want to downsize to a more affordable property, or are financially excluded, particularly where their tenancy may be at risk.
- 4.3 The Fund is a non-cash alternative and should only be used where other funding sources or support have been exhausted. In this way it will help 'fill the gaps' between other financial support funds such as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and Local Assistance Scheme (LAS), where genuine cases may fall between different qualifying criteria.

**Appendix B** contains details of the commonly used financial support schemes, as well as the Government Cost of Living payments and provides guidance on of the qualifying criteria and situations where they might be used.

- 4.4 It is important to stress that the fund is principally aimed at those tenants who are prepared to take positive steps to achieve lasting changes to their financial situation and does not provide a long-term solution to bridging any income gap.

## 5. Applications and Decision-Making

- 5.1 Decisions to allow access to the fund will be made by Senior Income Management Officers (SIMOs) or Tenancy Sustainability Team Leader following a full assessment of the applicant's situation. Complex cases will be reviewed by Service Managers to ensure the use of the Sustainable Tenancy Fund is the most appropriate route. In all cases, the use of the Sustainable Tenancy Fund should only be considered when other funding sources have been explored.
- 5.2 Whilst the policy does provide guidance on the terms and conditions of use, it should not provide a blanket approach to supporting tenants. Individual circumstances and factors such as levels of rent arrears and payment history, general conduct of the tenancy, willingness to engage to help alleviate their financial stress, as well as the circumstances leading to the current situation will always be taken into account when being considered by Managers. As such, exceptional circumstances will inevitably occur and Managers will be required to consider the business merits where it is proposed that limits are exceeded.
- 5.3 **Appendix A** provides examples of the types of support that can be funded along with the financial limits to be imposed. Financial support is not routinely expected to exceed these limits unless in exceptional circumstances and only with Service Manager approval.

A claim for assistance can be made by completing an assessment. Each application will be treated strictly on its own merits with all tenants treated equally and fairly.

- 5.4 Assistance will be made via payments made directly to the tenants rent account and/or payments made directly to any third party for assistance. Cash payments to tenants are not permissible through this scheme.

Any agreed support with rent payments will be credited to a tenants rent account retrospectively. Persistent non-engagement by the tenant (i.e. 2 failed attempts to engage the tenant) will result in the removal of assistance and normal arrears procedures being followed.

## 6. Sustainability Plans

- 6.1 A Sustainability Plan will be developed with each applicant. The Plan will set out the terms of the financial support (i.e. maximum amount, period of support etc.), when the support will end and also set out the steps the tenant is required to take to improve their situation. Details should also be recorded where a referral has been agreed for longer-term support if required.
- 6.2 In some situations it may be appropriate to apply certain conditions before funds are released, such as joining the South Yorkshire Credit Union, setting up a Direct Debit for rent payments, undergoing a financial assessment, money management training or seeking a more cost effective utilities meter/tariff etc.

## 7. Other sources of financial assistance

- 7.1 In order to make best use of resources and to support as many people as possible, this fund is intended to complement other funding sources such as the Councils

Discretionary Housing Payment scheme and the Local Assistance Scheme, as well as Funds such as the Stronger Families Innovations Fund.

7.2

Staff must apply for funding from the source most appropriate to each situation - see **Appendix B** for guidance on which means of assistance is most appropriate in order that the policy is used in the most effective manner to support tenants in times of hardship; reducing instances of tenancy failure.

In addition **Appendix C and D** provides a range of useful links of relevant information sites and sources of practical support and information, as well as Foodbank details.

7.3 It is accepted that tenants have changes in their circumstances, therefore each case will be reviewed on an on-going basis and the assistance on offer may change. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that they advise SLHD of any changes.

## 8. **Fraud**

8.1 In cases where it is discovered that assistance has been provided and fraud has been committed, a *Sundry Debt* will be raised to recover any monies and the matter could be referred to the Police for further investigation. Any information gathered from a tenant as part of this process will be used to inform their housing application and therefore is subject to the same rules.

## 9. **Responsibilities**

9.1 It is the responsibility of staff and managers involved in administering this Fund to ensure this policy is adhered to.

This policy will complement Doncaster MBCs Discretionary Housing Benefit Payment Policy and Local Assistance Scheme.

## 10. **Monitoring and Review**

10.1 Expenditure will be monitored on a monthly basis and will be reported as part of the regular Housing Revenue Account reporting arrangements.

10.2 SLHD will set, monitor and review appropriate performance targets for tenancy sustainability, income maximisation, arrears minimisation. Compliance against this policy will be reviewed at monthly one to ones.

10.3 In addition, the Business Assurance Team will carry out random sampling of payments to ensure compliance and consistency to the Policy

## 11. **Strategic links**

11. The Sustainable Tenancy Fund will assist St. Leger Homes of Doncaster in delivering the strategic objectives set out in the Annual Business Delivery Plan as well as assisting the Council to meet its Borough Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy.

## 12. **Financial Inclusion**

12.1 The Sustainable Tenancy Fund will assist St. Leger Homes of Doncaster, Doncaster Council and partners to deliver Doncaster's Anti-Poverty Strategy.

## 13. **Equality Assessment**

13.1 An Equality Assessment has been carried out on this policy. The assessment did not highlight any adverse impacts on communities, individuals or groups based on protected characteristics

Positively, tenants from the protected characteristic groups may take advantage of and benefit from this policy. In addition, the aim of this policy is to provide greater tenancy sustainability which will benefit the wider community.

Practical example uses for Sustainable Tenancy Fund

|    | <b>Circumstances Included within the Fund</b>   | <b>Financial Limit*</b>   | <b>Qualifying Criteria</b>   | <b>Pre-Conditions</b>   |
|----|---|---|--|---|
| 1. | Payments to pre-paid gas or electric card payments in exceptional circumstances   | <b>Manager Discretion</b><br><br><b>Once-only payment</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicable only in households with children or where there is a health condition</li> <li>• Other funding sources have been exhausted (i.e. DWP long-term advance, Local Assistance Scheme)</li> </ul> <b>Once-only payment</b>   | Sustainability Plan completed<br><br>Income and expenditure assessment to be completed<br><br>If on UC, APA to be applied for<br><br>Referral to Big Switch for best deal and consider whether Smart meter is appropriate   |
| 2. | Pre-paid utilities debt cleared to enable tenant to move to a cheaper tariff on standard meter<br>OR<br>Payment of Meter swap deposit to more affordable standard meter | £200 maximum debt to clear historic debt or to fund the deposit for meter swap<br><br><b>Once-only payment in exceptional circumstances</b> | Can only be paid where tenants meet the following criteria; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant paying a disproportionate amount of income on utilities causing <b>exceptional</b> hardship</li> <li>• Tenant must evidence they can budget for and manage on a standard meter with monthly or quarterly bills (i.e. manages other bills, has DDs etc.)</li> </ul> | Sustainability Plan completed<br><br>Income and expenditure assessment to be completed<br><br>If on UC, APA to be applied for if tenancy is at risk or arrears of 2 months+<br><br>Can only be paid to utility company to clear outstanding arrears or to pay for fitting of standard meter<br><br>Exhausted other funding sources via community trusts |



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|    |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant must be demonstrably and considerably better off on new standard tariff</li> <li>• Explore whether Credit Union (CU) loan a viable option (see next page for assistance to open CU account)</li> <li>• Referral to Big Switch for best deal and consider whether Smart meter is appropriate</li> </ul> <p><b>Once-only payment</b></p> |  |
| 3. | Incentivising a tenant to move to smaller, more affordable accommodation | One off payment  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal van</li> </ul>  | Determined by condition of property  |
| 4. | Provision of 1-day bus passes  | <p>Issued direct to tenant</p> <p>Limited to <b>3 per year</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure other funds have been explored</li> <li>• No more than 3 per year</li> <li>• Tenant must have a specific need and be in financial crisis i.e. awaiting 1<sup>st</sup> UC payment and needs to travel to Food bank or</li> </ul>  | <p>Sustainability Plan completed</p> <p>Income and expenditure assessment to be completed</p> <p>If on UC, APA to be applied for if tenancy is at risk or arrears of 2 months+</p> |

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|    |   |   | attending a UC work coach interview etc.  |   |
| 5. | Provision of hardship payment i.e. pre-paid grocery card for emergency crisis | <b>Manager Discretion</b><br><br><b>Once only payment</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food bank voucher must be considered first</li> <li>• Ensure other funds have been explored</li> <li>• Issue Grocery Card only where Food bank is not open etc.</li> <li>• Applicable only in households with children or where there is a medical condition</li> </ul> <b>Once only payment</b> | Sustainability Plan completed<br><br>Income and expenditure assessment to be completed<br><br>If on UC, APA to be applied for if tenancy is at risk or arrears of 2 months+                                 |
| 6. | Assistance to open a South Yorkshire Credit Union (SYCU) account              | Maximum <b>£6</b><br><br>(cost of membership and share fee to open account) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant must open a Budget account with SYCU</li> <li>• Rent payments must be paid direct to SLHD from the Budget account</li> </ul> <b>Once only Payment</b>   | Sustainability Plan completed<br><br>Referral made from SLHD to SYCU<br><br>Rent payments must be paid direct to SLHD from the Budget account<br><br>Tenant must take part in the SYCU Financial assessment |
| 9. | Hardship Payments   | Discretion<br><br>Alternative support options have been exhausted           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment, below the threshold for alternative support, but on a low income</li> </ul>  | Sustainability Plan completed<br><br>Income and expenditure assessment to be completed  |

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|     |                               | Crisis which is not<br>aforementioned                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Credit to the rent account, for immediate crisis</li> </ul>  | If on UC, APA to be applied for if tenancy is at risk or arrears of 2 months+                         |
| 10. | Downsizing incentivised costs | <p>Manager discretion</p> <p>Removing the barrier for downsizing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring alternative options have been exhausted</li> <li>• Downsizing from family accommodation</li> <li>• Moving to age designated accommodation</li> <li>• Property in good state of repair</li> <li>• A realistic prospect of moving property</li> </ul> | Identifying those who are <b>unable</b> to move, without support from the Sustainable Tenancies Fund. |

| <b>Funding Source</b>                       | <b>Description</b>  |
|---|---|
| DMBC Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) | <p><b>Discretionary housing payments provide extra help for tenants who are already getting housing benefit but still need further help with housing costs.</b></p> <p>To qualify for Discretionary Housing Payments:</p> <p>Tenant must be receiving some housing benefit or Universal Credit towards the rent</p> <p>Tenant must have a shortfall between the amount of housing benefit and the full amount of rent</p> <p>Tenant must be able to show that they need extra help to meet the housing costs</p>  |
| DMBC Local Assistance Scheme (LAS)          | <p><b>The Local Assistance Scheme is designed to help the most vulnerable residents in meeting their need for support or to help people cope with special difficulties such as;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in an emergency</li> <li>• in a disaster</li> <li>• where there is serious risk to the person or their families' health and safety</li> <li>• people returning to the community after being in care</li> <li>• people to stay in their own home rather than going into care</li> <li>• those leaving prison/young offender establishment</li> <li>• with easing exceptional pressure</li> <li>• pay for certain travel expenses, such as visiting someone who is ill or going to a family funeral</li> </ul> |

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|   | <p><b>Who may qualify?</b></p> <p>Eligibility criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receipt of qualifying benefit (Job seekers, Pension Credit, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance)</li> <li>• able to prove residence in Doncaster</li> <li>• on a low income</li> <li>• without access to alternative funds to meet the need</li> </ul> <p><b>Only one award per year</b> will be authorised with payments ranging from very small amounts to a maximum payment of £1,250</p>  |
| <p>Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universal Credit short term advance</li> </ul> | <p>The Department for Work and Pensions will provide a variety of loans or payments. This includes a loan for Universal Credit (UC) claimants. There are 4 types of UC Advance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal Credit Advance (new claim)</li> <li>• Universal Credit Advance (change of circumstances → 50% of the proposed increase)</li> <li>• Universal Credit Advance (benefit transfer)</li> <li>• Budgeting Advance</li> </ul> <p>The loan is repaid by deductions to future UC payments over a period of several months.</p>  |
| <p>Department for Work and Pensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Removing barriers to employment Flexible</li> </ul>    | <p>The following expenses are paid to job seekers on a case-by-case basis. Receipts must be provided afterwards to prove the job seekers has spent the money/vouchers on what it was intended for. If they fail to provide receipts it is classed as an overpayment which is recoverable. They do not promote these payments, so claimant would need to discuss with their work coach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Courses:</b> JCP will pay for courses that they send the job seeker on, such as IT courses and work experience. They will also cover the cost of travel. However they will not pay for courses the job seekers finds for themselves.</li> <li>• <b>Clothes vouchers for Matalan</b> are issued when a person needs something specific to wear for a new job or to attend an interview.</li> <li>• <b>Travel costs</b> are paid to attend interviews outside the borough or, on occasions, to travel to a new job in the short term. They would expect the person to pay their own</li> </ul> |

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|  | bus fare if inside Doncaster. On occasions they have paid £50 towards the Wheels2Work scheme.   |
| DMBC Stronger Families' Innovations Fund   | <p>Payments can be made where;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household is taking part in the Stronger Families (SF) programme</li> <li>• No spare money available to cope with unexpected event/hardship</li> <li>• Hardship is likely to be a barrier to achieving the SF outcomes</li> <li>• Funds are not generally repayable but may be reclaimed if household fails to engage with SF programme</li> <li>• Funds or purchases can be provided speedily</li> <li>• Maximum payment of £500 per application</li> <li>• Short application form approved by line manager and then submitted to the Area Manager of Stronger Families team</li> </ul>  |
| Section 17 funding                         | <p>This fund is available for looked after children or children who are deemed to be in need. Payments can be made where the hardship will have an impact on the child or children. Payments can cover essential items such as furniture to food and nappies. Applications should be made vi the Doncaster Children's Services Trust.</p>   |
| Sustainable Tenancy Fund                   | <p>The Fund is only available to St Leger Homes' tenants. Applications for the Fund must meet at least one of the qualifying criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants who have an immediate short-term financial crisis, where usual sources of funding have been exhausted, are not available or not appropriate</li> <li>• Tenants who need financial support for a time-limited period whilst taking positive steps to improve their circumstances</li> <li>• Tenants who have a financial barrier to seeking employment or improving their employment prospects</li> </ul> <p>Where it is believed that short-term assistance can improve the tenants longer-term financial situation</p> |
| <p><b>Cost of Living Payments 2022</b></p> |   |

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Household Support Fund      | Administered by the Doncaster Council  |
| Cost of Living Payment 2022 | <p>£650 to claimants on UC, Pension Credit and those on means tested legacy benefits as at 25 May 2022 (excluding those on HB only). Payments sent into bank accounts in two lump sums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ first of £326 in July 2022</li> <li>○ second of £324 in autumn 2022</li> <li>○ Tax Credits only recipients will receive their first payment in 'autumn'</li> </ul> |
| Winter Fuel Allowance       | <p>£300 additional winter fuel allowance for those that would qualify normally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Payment being sent November/December 2022</li> </ul>   |
| £150                        | <p>£150 for those claiming PIP, DLA, Attendance Allowance and some other equivalent awards. Household get a payment for everyone who qualifies</p>   |
| Energy Grant                | <p>£400 energy grant paid to anyone who gets an energy bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ payments made over six months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ £66 October &amp; November</li> <li>▪ £67 December to March 23</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

## Useful Information

**Citizens Advice** is an independent organisation providing free, confidential and impartial advice on all subjects to anyone. The address and telephone number of your local CAB can be found in the telephone directory. There is also advice on line on their website.

Website [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Advice on line Website [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

**Directgov** is a useful government website. Information about caring for disabled children (including the early support programme of co-ordinated support for children with disabilities and direct payments can be found here.)

<https://www.gov.uk/>

For information on benefits and other potential help available to families and individuals on Directgov:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>

**Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council** Local Assistance Scheme is designed to help the most vulnerable residents in meeting their need for support or to help people cope with special difficulties.

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care/local-assistance-scheme>

“**Entitled To**” is a calculator to help people work out their entitlement to benefits and tax credits:

[www.entitledto.co.uk/benefits-calculator](http://www.entitledto.co.uk/benefits-calculator)

**My Money Steps** is a free online debt advice service from National Debtline. It is free, confidential and simple to use. My Money Steps will tell you what options you can choose from to deal with your debts and give you a personal action plan to help you manage your money.

Phone Freephone **0808 808 4000** to speak to an adviser.

<https://www.mymoneysteps.org/>

**Social Fund** - There are different payments available in this fund, which are set out below:

- **Sure Start Maternity Grant:** This is a £500 payment available to help buy things for a baby. The grant can be claimed up to three months after a baby’s birth, or for a child less than 12 months old if the baby has been adopted or is looked after or is under a child arrangement (residence) order, within three months of those orders.

To qualify you have to be getting pension credit, income support, income related employment and support allowance, income-based jobseeker’s allowance or child tax credit of more than the family element. It is not paid if there is another child aged under 16 in the household.

How to claim: Claim on form SF100 (Sure Start) from your local Jobcentre Plus.

- **Budgeting loans:** These are interest-free loans available from Job Centre Plus to help you buy things that you have not been able to save for while on benefits. To qualify you must have been getting pension credit, income support, income-related employment and support allowance or income-based jobseekers’ allowance for at least 26 weeks.

How to claim: Claim on form SF500 from your local Jobcentre Plus.



- **Short-term benefit advances:** These can be claimed from Job Centre Plus if you are waiting for benefits to be paid or calculated. They replace crisis loans, which ended in March 2013.

**Step Change Debt Charity** is an independent charity offering tailored advice and practical solutions to help you manage debt and make a fresh start.

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

**Money and Pensions Service (MaPs)** provides free of charge accredited and tailored debt advice over the telephone

**Yorkshire Water Partnership** grants are available to support with water related debt.

**DWP Change in circumstances advance** available for Universal Credit cases at the commencement of the claim for Universal Credit or when the tenant has a change in circumstances.

| Area    | Foodbank  | Address  | Opening Hours  | How to Apply  |
|---------|---|--|--|---|
| Central | <a href="#">Agape Life Chapel International</a>                             | Civic Quarter Car Park, Mezzanine Floor, College Rd, Doncaster DN1 3JH |  | 01302 278715  |
| Central | <a href="#">BME United</a>  | 56 Beckett Road, Doncaster DN2 4AJ                                     | Thursday 1-4pm   | For BAME families on low income. Email <a href="mailto:bmeunitddoncaster@mail.com">bmeunitddoncaster@mail.com</a> or call 07791 914997 or 07983 691054  |
| Central | <a href="#">Cantley Neighbourhood Centre</a>                                | 10 St Wilfrid's Court Cantley Doncaster DN4 6ED                        | Tuesday to Saturday - 10am to 2pm                          | Telephone: 01302 – 215690<br>E-Mail: neighbourhoodcentre1@gmail.com   |
| Central | <a href="#">Friends of the Elderly</a>                                      | Online   | <a href="#">Online form</a>                                | ESSENTIAL LIVING COSTS grants include clothing, food, medicines, books, and anything that has become unmanageable either because of the Covid-19 pandemic or due to some pre-existing need  |
| Central | <a href="#">Kings Cross Church/The Junction</a>                             | 28 Hexthorpe Road Hexthorpe DN4 0BG                                    | Monday – Friday 10-4                                       | Can potentially do an emergency food parcel, also run cook and grow sessions etc.<br>Telephone: 01302 349341<br>Email: thejunction20@yahoo.com  |
| Central | <a href="#">Local Assistance Scheme</a>                                     | DMBC   | Online form available 24/7, processed within working hours | Online form   |
| Central | <a href="#">People Focused Group</a>  | Intake Wellness Centre, 45 Montrose Avenue, Intake, DN2 6PL            | Monday – Friday 9-4  | No voucher system but think they prefer us to ring in advance if we need a parcel   |
| Central | <a href="#">Pioneer Social Enterprise</a>                                   | 44 Tickhill Road Balby Doncaster DN4 8QE                               |  | Helps with food parcels and fuel poverty. Mainly works with people who are unemployed and have life debilitating illnesses.<br><br>Tel: 01302 854445<br><br>Email: <a href="mailto:florence.mccready@googlemail.com">florence.mccready@googlemail.com</a>   |
| Central | <a href="#">Sheffield Pet Food Bank</a>                                     |  |  | Mainly donates to other food banks but can sometimes support a customer direct with a referral.<br><br>Email: <a href="mailto:sheffieldfood4pets@hotmail.com">sheffieldfood4pets@hotmail.com</a><br>Tel: 07479273636  |
| Central | St James Church – Trussell Trust  | St. James' Church, St. Sepulchre Gate West, Doncaster DN1 3AQ          | Wednesday 10-12<br>Friday 10-12                            | Need an online voucher code. 3 vouchers allowed in a six month period.  |
| Central | <a href="#">St John the Evangelist Church</a>                               | 312 Balby Rd, Doncaster DN4 0QF  | Monday, Tuesdays and Thursday between 9:30 - 12            | No referral needed  |
| Central | St Paul's Church – Trussell Trust   | St Paul's Church Durham Road, Wheatley Park, Doncaster DN2 4HN         | Tuesday 10-12  | Need an online voucher code. 3 vouchers allowed in a six month period.  |
| North   | <a href="#">All Saints Foodbank</a>   | All Saints Church, Quarry Lane, Doncaster, DN6 7RT                     | Collections by referral only                               | Referral forms (via web site) to be completed by someone from either Doncaster Community Hub, key workers, doctors, local schools or local Christian Churches. Parcels for those in Woodlands, Highfields, Adwick, Carcroft and Skellow.<br>Email – <a href="mailto:foodbank@all-saints-chuch.net">foodbank@all-saints-chuch.net</a><br>Tel: 01302 339618 |
| North   | <a href="#">Bentley Baptist Community Foodbank</a>                          | Bentley Baptist Church, Askern Road, Bentley, DN5 0EQ                  | Monday 1-3pm   | This food bank supports residents with a DN5 post code. Need to email over a form   |
| North   | Bullcroft Memorial Hall Foodbank (Run by North Doncaster Development Trust) | Bullcroft Memorial Hall, Chestnut Avenue, Carcroft, Doncaster, DN6 8AP | By appointment only - Fridays - 10am to 1pm                | By referral.<br>Email – <a href="mailto:info@northdoncaster.org.uk">info@northdoncaster.org.uk</a><br>Tel: 01302 874587   |

|       |   |  |   |   |
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| North | <a href="#">CRY - Askern</a>                            | St Peter's Church Community Hall, Sutton Road, Askern                                | Thursdays, 11 am - 1pm  | Parcels are free of charge but limited to one per person over a 3-week cycle. This food bank supports residents of Askern, Norton and Campsall. |
| North | <a href="#">Foresters Food Bank</a>                     | The Foresters Arms, Village Street, Adwick, DN6 7AA                                  | Monday 3-7pm<br>Friday 3-8pm                                    | Message on facebook, can provide help for up to 6 weeks.  |
| South | ECO Food Bank Edlington                                 | Yorkshire Main Community Centre, Edlington Lane, Edlington, DN12 1AB                 | Thursdays, 11am to 1pm  | This food bank supports residents of Edlington and Warmsworth.  |
| South | Rossington Holmescarr Community Centre – Trussell Trust | Holmescarr Community Centre Grange Lane Rossington DN11 0LP                          | Thursday 10-12  | Need an online voucher code. 3 vouchers allowed in a six month period.  |
| South | The Food Train  | Holmescarr Community Centre Grange Lane Rossington DN11 0LP                          | Wednesday 12.15pm   | Contact on facebook or on   |
| East  | <a href="#">Armthorpe Food Support Project</a>          | Armthorpe Community Centre, 20 Church St, Armthorpe, Doncaster, DN3 3AG              | By pre-arranged delivery or collection - Thursdays 8-30 to 10am | Armthorpe residents only, who aren't receiving food support from anywhere else. Tel: 01302 834069 or 01302 355093                               |
| East  | DN7 Community Foodbank                                  | St Mary's Church Hall, Field Road, Stainforth, DN7 5AQ                               | Fridays, 10:00am to 12:30pm                                     | This food bank supports residents with a DN7 post code.   |
| East  | Moorends Miners Welfare Centre                          | 24A West Road, Moorends  | Unsure  | Contact on facebook, or 01405818299. Facebook says they will deliver.   |
| East  | Thorne & Moorends Food Bank                             | The Rugby Club, Church Balk, Thorne, DN8 5BU   | Thursday 10-12  | Email - info@foodawarecic.org.uk<br>Tel: 07742 043737   |
| West  | Mexborough Food Bank                                    | Mexborough Family Hub (formerly the Children's Centre), Wath Rd, Mexborough, S64 9ED | Fridays, 10am to 12 noon  | Need a voucher  |

## Hot Food

| Food Provider   | Address                                | Opening Hours                    |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Amber Project   | 5-7, St Sepulchre Gate                 | Monday 9-11am (Women Only)       |
| Christchurch    | Thorne Rd, Doncaster DN1 2HG           | Wednesday 5-6<br>Sunday 6 – 6.30 |
| St James Church | St Sepulchre Gate W, Doncaster DN1 3AQ | Tuesday and Thursday 6-7         |

## Energy Help

| Company/Charity                        | Support With   | Amount of Award (if known) | Who is Eligible?  | How to Apply |
|--|--|----------------------------|---|--------------|
| Citizens Advice                        | Prepayment energy top ups  | £49 (max three vouchers)   | Has a prepayment meter  |              |
| <a href="#">Friends of the Elderly</a> | ESSENTIAL LIVING COSTS grants include clothing, food, medicines, books, and anything that has become unmanageable either because of the Covid-19 pandemic or | £250                       | You must be:<br>Currently residing in England or Wales<br><br>In privately owned, privately rented, or social housing, but NOT in residential care or a nursing home<br><br>Of UK state pension age | Online form  |

|   |                               |          |   |  |
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|   | due to some pre-existing need |          | On a low income AND with savings of less than £4000<br>Have not served in the UK Armed Forces**                     |  |
| Household Support Fund                  | Gas and Electric              | £100     | Getting Housing Costs, HB or CTS  | Online form  |
| <a href="#">Local Assistance Scheme</a> | Gas and Electric              | Variable | 16+, connection to Doncaster, on a means tested benefit or on a low income and no other source of financial support | Online form available 24/7, processed within working hours |

## White Goods

| Company/Charity                             | Support With   | Amount of Award (if known)   | Who is Eligible?   | How to Apply   |
|---|--|------------------------------|--|--|
| <a href="#">Friends of the Elderly</a>      | Help with the cost of replacing everyday items in the home (white goods such as washing machines, fridges, freezers etc. and furnishings), small home repairs and mobility adaptations.  | £400 (£500 if a couple)      | You must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently residing in England or Wales</li> <li>In privately owned, privately rented, or social housing, but NOT in residential care or a nursing home</li> <li>Of UK state pension age</li> <li>On a low income AND with savings of less than £4000</li> <li>Have not served in the UK Armed Forces**</li> </ul>  | Online form  |
| Garage 32                                   | White goods, some furniture  | Variable, depends on stock   | St Leger Tenant?   | Ask estates assistant                                      |
| <a href="#">Glasspool</a>                   | Small grants for household items and essential clothing.   | 3 items                      | UK Resident  | Online form  |
| <a href="#">John Chapman Trust</a>          | Help with essential items  | One application in 12 months | Doncaster resident, has applied elsewhere and exhausted other options  | Online form  |
| <a href="#">Local Assistance Scheme</a>     | White goods, beds, pots and pans, bedding etc  | Variable                     | 16+, connection to Doncaster, on a means tested benefit or on a low income and no other source of financial support  | Online form available 24/7, processed within working hours |
| <a href="#">National Benevolent Charity</a> | White goods e.g. fridge, freezer, microwave, washing machine or cooker<br><br>Household goods e.g. bedding and beds, bedroom furniture, kitchen equipment<br><br>Help to buy baby equipment e.g. buggy, cot, clothes<br><br>Help with food shopping or clothing<br><br>Help with utility bill costs<br><br>Help with costs of training or work tools | Approx £300, but variable    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have UK citizenship or have been granted leave to remain.</li> <li>Have been resident in the UK for at least 12 months.</li> <li>Be over 18 years old.</li> <li>Be unable to fund your request yourself.</li> <li>Be applying for something not usually funded by the state.</li> <li>Have not received an award from the National Benevolent Charity in the past 12 months.</li> <li>Have had no more than three successful applications to the National Benevolent Charity in the past five years.</li> <li>Be in receipt of all state benefits you are entitled to (except where you are waiting for benefit to be awarded for example PIP or appealing against a decision of the DWP to refuse or withdraw a benefit)</li> <li>Have applied to other trade related benevolence funds (if applicable)</li> </ul> | Online form  |
| Real Help Fund                              | Bedding, microwaves, kettles, toasters, cutlery, pans  | Up to £100 from Argos        | Anybody who has or is at risk of rough sleeping  | Paper form   |
| Veteran Fund DMBC                           | Up to £200 to spend on anything that will help circumstances   | £200                         | Must have served in the Armed Forces   |  |

## Carpets

| Company/Charity                        | Support With   | Amount of Award (if known)   | Who is Eligible?   | How to Apply |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|--------------|
| <a href="#">Glasspool</a>              | Small grants for household items and essential clothing.   | Variable                     | UK Residents   | Online form  |
| <a href="#">John Chapman Trust</a>     | Help with essential items  | One application in 12 months | Doncaster resident, has applied elsewhere and exhausted other options  | Online form  |
| <a href="#">Linking Help with Hope</a> | White goods (cooker, washing machine, fridge), household furniture, flooring, other household essentials | £250                         | Applicants must present with a physical or diagnosed mental health condition, learning disability, or be a carer for an adult or child with a disability. Must be on a low income. | Online form  |
| Veteran Fund DMBC                      | Upto £200 to spend on anything that will help circumstances  | £200                         | Must have served in the Armed Forces   |              |

## Clothes

| Company/Charity                        | Support With   | Amount of Award (if known)   | Who is Eligible?   | How to Apply  |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Baby Basics Doncaster                  | Baby starter packs   | Moses basket filled with useful items of baby clothing and toiletries. | Anyone struggling to afford the basics for a new baby. Ideally refer while still pregnant.   | <a href="mailto:babybasics@s-m-c.co.uk">babybasics@s-m-c.co.uk</a>                            |
| <a href="#">Friends of the Elderly</a> | ESSENTIAL LIVING COSTS grants include clothing, food, medicines, books, and anything that has become unmanageable either because of the Covid-19 pandemic or due to some pre-existing need | £250   | You must be:<br>Currently residing in England or Wales<br><br>In privately owned, privately rented, or social housing, but NOT in residential care or a nursing home<br><br>Of UK state pension age<br><br>On a low income AND with savings of less than £4000<br><br>Have not served in the UK Armed Forces** | Online form   |
| <a href="#">Glasspool</a>              | Small grants for household items and essential clothing.   |  | UK Residents   | <a href="#">Glasspool Charity Trust</a>   |
| <a href="#">John Chapman Trust</a>     | Help with essential items  | One application in 12 months   | Doncaster resident, has applied elsewhere and exhausted other options  | Online form   |
| Preloved                               | School Uniforms  | Items from 50p per item  | Families with school age children attending school in Doncaster  | Contact 07847 473536 for latest date.   |
| St John the Evangelist Church          | 312 Balby Rd, Doncaster DN4 0QF  |  |  | Everyone is welcome, there is no need for a referral and they make no charge.                 |
| <a href="#">The Clothes Bank</a>       | Clothing   | Unknown  | No restrictions listed   | Message online using the website. Clothing is posted out although clients have to pay postage |
| Veteran Fund DMBC                      | Upto £200 to spend on anything that will help circumstances  | £200   | Must have served in the Armed Forces   |   |

## Debts

| Company/Charity                                | Support With                                     | Amount of Award (if known) | Who is Eligible?         | How to Apply                           |
|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <a href="#">Charis Trust</a>                   | Administers various schemes                      |                            |                          | Check website for current schemes open |
| <a href="#">Community Money Advice Bentley</a> | Debt advice, help with cost of DRO, moving costs |                            | Must be working with CMA | By appointment. 01302 637336           |

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|--|--|--|--|---|
| <a href="#">Friends of the Elderly</a>     | Help with unexpected bills and large costs such as utility bills, funeral costs for loved ones, moving fees etc. | £400 (£500 if a couple)                            | You must be:<br>Currently residing in England or Wales<br><br>In privately owned, privately rented, or social housing, but NOT in residential care or a nursing home<br><br>Of UK state pension age<br><br>On a low income AND with savings of less than £4000<br><br>Have not served in the UK Armed Forces** | <a href="#">Online form</a>   |
| <a href="#">Smallwood Trust</a>            | Moving costs, contribution towards arrears/debts, household items (not white goods)                              |  | Women only. See criteria on website. Must have also applied to Glasspool   |   |
| <a href="#">Vicars Relief Fund</a>         | Preventing eviction or securing accommodation  | £350 (prevention)<br>£500 (securing accommodation) |  | Online application available Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 9am and 12 noon, excluding Bank Holidays |
| <a href="#">Yorkshire Water Trust Fund</a> | Priority debts if they also have water debt  | Max £750   | Must have arrears with Yorkshire Water between £50 and £2000 and at least one priority debt  | Online PDF  |

## Support Agencies

| <b>Company/Charity</b>                   | <b>Support With</b>   | <b>Who is Eligible?</b>   | <b>How to Apply</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|
| 6/ Sober Social                          | Drug/Alcohol misuse   |   | Call Us: 01302 360090<br>Address: 18 Priory Place, DN1 1BZ<br>Email: <a href="mailto:info@project6.org.uk">info@project6.org.uk</a>  |
| Age UK                                   | Home care, cleaning service, social activities, befriending                                 | People age 50+  | Helpline: <a href="mailto:helpline@ageukdoncaster.org.uk">helpline@ageukdoncaster.org.uk</a><br>Monitored 9am-5pm Monday-Friday<br>10am-2pm Saturday, Sunday<br><br>Information & Advice – 01302 811174                  |
| Alcohol Support Service                  | Works with customers 50+ (with a bit of leeway) who have issues with alcohol overuse/misuse | Over 50 and has issues with alcohol   | <a href="https://forms.office.com/r/dyteUyPVNd">https://forms.office.com/r/dyteUyPVNd</a>  |
| <a href="#">Aspire</a>                   | Drug/Alcohol support  |   | Drop ins or 01302 730956   |
| Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance | Support packages to combat poor mental and physical health and well-being.                  | Doncaster resident  | Anyone who needs help or advice or has no other support can ring the SIA Helpline seven days a week Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm and Saturday and Sunday 8am to 6pm.<br><br>HELPLINE NUMBER: 01302 430322            |
| St Leger Homes Tenancy Support           | Budgeting<br>Benefits<br>Grant/Benefit Applications<br>Financial Advice<br>Debts            | St Leger Homes tenants  | Internal form available on OH shortcuts page <a href="#">Tenancy Sustainability Referral Internal (SLHD) (office.com)</a><br>External referral <a href="#">Tenancy Sustainability Team Referral (stlegerhomes.co.uk)</a> |
| Working Win                              | Helps people with health conditions find work   | Aged 18+<br>Lives in South Yorkshire/Bassetlaw<br>Has a physical and/or mental health condition<br>Unemployed and looking for work, or<br>Off work sick & want to return to work, or<br>Struggling in work and want support to continue working | Online form<br><a href="http://www.workingwinreferrals.co.uk">www.workingwinreferrals.co.uk</a>  |

## Other Sources of Finding Funding

| <b>Name</b>       | <b>Types of Funding</b>                                      | <b>Website</b>  |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Benevolent Funds  | Grants for people who have worked in different sectors       | <a href="#">List of benevolent funds   Britain Explained</a>  |
| Disability Grants | Grants for people with different types of medical conditions | <a href="#">Disability Grants - Charitable Funding for the Disabled (disability-grants.org)</a>                   |
| DMBC              |  | <a href="#">List of groups offering support across the borough/Volunteering Opportunities - Doncaster Council</a> |
| Turn2Us           |  | <a href="#">Search for charitable and educational grants - Turn2us</a>  |