

October 2022 Newsletter for Shropshire Special Guardians

Welcome to this Autumn newsletter.

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It feels only appropriate to start this newsletter with an acknowledgement of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on September 8th 2022, and her life of service as Monarch.

We are sure many of you have your own private reflections on this and will also have been supporting children to understand the historic and personal implications of this for the country as a whole and the Royal Family in particular.

The death of such a prominent figure can raise questions from young people that you might find difficult to answer. Coverage of the death of the Queen has understandably been everywhere, and for bereaved children and young people this can bring up their grief.

If you feel you need support during this time, there are organisations which can help.

Winston's Wish has some excellent advice on its website [Supporting children following the death of the Queen | Winston's Wish \(winstonswish.org\)](https://www.winstonswish.org)

Cruse Bereavement Support also has information and helplines - <https://www.cruse.org.uk>

On to happier matters and the first of our post Covid coffee mornings. We do hope as many of you as possible can join us. Just let us know if you can come so Amy can stock up on enough chocolate digestives!

*Start the week right with the Special
Guardian's*

Coffee Morning (there may even be biscuits)



Come and have a chat with other Special Guardians....and meet
your support social workers

Amy and Jane.

Monday 10th October 2022 at 10:00-12:00

The Community Room

Sunflower House, Kendal Road

Shrewsbury SY1 4ES

Parking allowed in Wickes DIY store car park at the traffic lights by Kendal
Road.



COST OF LIVING HELP



www.shropshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help

We're working with many organisations to make sure there's a range of help and advice available.

We have brought together all the key information together on the [Shropshire Council Cost of Living help page](#).

Did you know Citizens Advice Shropshire have a specialist team who can offer free advice on budgeting and debt solutions?

This service is available via phone and face-to-face appointments. The best way to get in touch is to call 01743 280019 (Mon-Fri 10am to 4pm) and one of the friendly staff will find the best way to assist you.

For general information and advice, you can contact the free Shropshire Adviceline on 0800 278 7894.

Did you know?



For those with petrol or diesel vehicles you can find the cheapest fuel near you.

Small savings soon add up. Compare fuel prices at the [Petrol Prices website](#).

Welfare Support Team

Local welfare provision, including our Local Support and Prevention Fund (LSPF), is funding managed by local authorities to help families under exceptional pressure. It can be used to help keep families together, help people to settle or remain in the community and help vulnerable people who struggle to meet their essential living costs or who have an unexpected crisis.

Who can apply?

- Aged 16 or over
- Not under immigration control (there may be some limited examples where people can get help)
- On a low income and struggling to meet your essential living costs. Essential living costs can include things like food, energy and essential furniture items, but this is not a full list. If you're not sure whether we can use our funding to help meet the cost of the item(s) you need to pay for, **please call us on 0345 678 9078.**

How to apply

We realise that people may be confused about which fund to apply for, so we've made it easier - only one application is required.

The Welfare Support Team will then decide on the best fund to help you. The quickest way to apply is to call us on **0345 678 9078 (and select option 2)** between 8:45am and 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) to make an application. Someone will gather some basic information from you about your circumstances (including your household, your income and savings), and ask you what help you need.

Worrying about money?

Support is available in Shropshire

Step 1: What's the problem?

I suddenly have no money

- Lost job or reduced hours
- Money stopped
- Lost money
- Unexpected expense
- Disaster (e.g. flood or fire)
- Relationship breakdown
- Sanctioned (see option: 6)

See options **1 2 3**

My money doesn't stretch far enough

- Deciding between food, fuel, and mobile credit
- Low income
- Zero hours contract
- Statutory Sick Pay too low
- Facing redundancy
- Not sure if eligible for support
- Change of circumstance

See options **1 2**

I have debt

- Rent or Council Tax
- Gas and electricity
- Payday loans
- Owe friends or family
- Benefit repayments

See option **3**

I am waiting on a benefit payment or advance

- New claim for benefit
- Payment delayed
- Waiting for decision

See options **1 4**

Step 2: What are some options?

1 Council Support Schemes

People on low incomes may be eligible for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Discretionary Housing Payments. Find out more at: www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits

Local Welfare Provision support is also available for anyone struggling to meet their essential living costs or facing an unexpected crisis. Find out more at: www.shropshire.gov.uk/local-welfare-team

2 Maximise Your Income

Anyone who is struggling financially can get a benefit check and speak to an advisor for free and confidential advice. A benefit check can ensure that you are receiving all the money you're entitled to, especially if your circumstances have changed recently. Speaking to an advisor could also help you find cheaper deals on things like gas and electricity and make sure you're not missing out on things like free school meals.

3 Debt Advice

Debt can happen to anyone. Free advice and support can help you find ways to manage your debts and reduce how much you pay each month.

4 Benefit Advance

If you have made a new claim for benefit and are in financial hardship while you wait for your first payment, you may be able to get an advance to afford things like rent or food. It's important to get advice before taking out an advance. Benefit advances must be paid back, and the money will be taken from your future benefit payments (a loan).

5 Hardship Payment

If you have been sanctioned, you may be able to request a hardship payment from the DWP. Hardship payments are not always paid immediately, and they're not available to everyone. Hardship payments of Universal Credit need to be paid back (a loan), but hardship payments of JobSeekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance do not (not a loan).

6 Challenge a Decision

You can challenge a benefit decision if your benefit has been stopped / sanctioned / reduced / refused or you have been overpaid. Most benefit decisions need to be challenged within one month.

Step 3: Where can I get help? For free and confidential advice

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL	A4U
<p>Advice on Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments and Council Tax Support 0345 678 9002 (Benefit Service) benefits@shropshire.gov.uk www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits</p> <p>Help with options: 1</p>	<p>Information, legal advice and advocacy for those with a disability and their families and carers 01743 539 201 advice@a4u.org.uk www.a4u.org.uk</p> <p>Help with options: 2 4 6</p>
CITIZENS ADVICE SHROPSHIRE	AGE UK SHROPSHIRE TELFORD & WREKIN
<p>Advice on local welfare provision 0345 678 9078 (Welfare Support Team) localsupport@shropshire.gov.uk www.shropshire.gov.uk/local-welfare-team</p> <p>Help with options: 1</p>	<p>Support and advice for older people, their families and carers 01743 233 123 www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford</p> <p>Help with options: 2 4 6</p>
CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY	KEEP SHROPSHIRE WARM
<p>Debt counselling charity 01274 760 720 info@capuk.org www.capuk.org</p> <p>Help with options: 2 3</p>	<p>Energy advice and support with energy tariffs, bills, emergency grants and more 0800 112 3743 (freephone) advice@mea.org.uk www.mea.org.uk</p> <p>Help with option: 3</p>

Other Support

Community Resource
Energy advice and small grants for people struggling with fuel bills
01743 360 641
enquiries@community-resource.org.uk
www.community-resource.org.uk

The Shropshire Larder
Advice on income maximisation, budgeting, debt and more
www.shropshirelarder.org.uk

The Shrewsbury Ark
Support, hardship funds and more for people in need
01743 363 305
ark@shrewsburyark.co.uk
www.shrewsburyark.co.uk

Just Credit Union
Provide safe home for savings with access to affordable low cost loans
01743 252 325 | info@justcreditunion.org
www.justcreditunion.org

The Samaritans
Mental health support
0330 094 5717 | 116 123
www.samaritans.org/branches/shrewsbury

Shropshire Council - Mental Health and Wellbeing
Resources to support your mental health
www.shropshire.gov.uk/healthy-shropshire/mental-health-and-wellbeing

Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service
Supporting for anyone affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence
0300 303 1191 (Shropshire - freephone)
0808 2000 0247 (National Helpline - freephone)
www.shropshdas.org.uk

Shropshire Mental Health Support
Support and services for people affected by mental health issues
01743 368 647
manager@shropshiremhs.com

Step Change
Debt advice and money management
0808 138 1111 | www.stepchange.org

Healthy Start Vouchers
Help to buy fruit, vegetables and milk if you are pregnant or have a child under 4 and are on a low income
healthystart@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
0345 607 6823 | www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Link to access the Worrying about Money Shropshire support leaflet [Final Shropshire Leaflet.pdf \(strikinglycdn.com\)](#)

Healthy Start - support for families

Healthy start is an NHS Scheme that supports families on low income to buy fruit, vegetables and milk and access free vitamins.

In Shropshire, not all eligible families are currently claiming this support and uptake of the NHS Healthy Start Voucher Scheme has fallen below 30%.

Many Shropshire families are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. It has never been more important for the most vulnerable families to access to financial support available to them.

All professionals working with pregnant people and young families can play a key role by talking about Healthy Start and promoting the offer. The scheme is now digital, making the application process easier. Further information available on the [Healthy Start website](#).

[Autism West Midlands Update](#)



Autism West Midlands (AWM) enjoyed some fantastic activities during the summer holiday including family trips to Chirk Castle, Attingham Park and Telford Town Park. These were relaxed opportunities for families to come together and have fun in local places of interest. It was great to see people joining in and connecting with each other, playing, and enjoying some of our lovely surroundings in the sunshine. Their teens group was also busy during the summer, they had a range of activities available to support youngsters aged 12-18yrs make the most of the holiday including drama, yoga, games, art/crafts, nature spotting at Whixall Moss, exploring Hawkstone Follies and Blists Hill. They are planning more events for the October half term so keep an eye on our [events page](#) to join in the fun!

****Reminder**** No diagnosis is needed to access the AWM Shropshire service and there is no formal referral route – parents/carers can self-refer by booking an advice appointment or contacting them directly.

Learn more about autism...

AWM have lots of FREE autism related webinars coming up, click on the links below for more information and details about how to book. You can watch live or catch up by viewing a recording of the broadcast up to 14 days later – you must register in advance though.

For families with younger children...

In November AWM will be starting their very popular “Rising To The Challenge for the Early Years” – a series of webinars and optional ZOOM groups tailored to the needs of families with younger autistic children. More details of how to book coming soon!

Webinars for parents, carers and professionals

- [Autism and Girls - Tuesday 4th October 9.30am](#)

- [Pathological Demand Avoidance \(PDA\) Tuesday 11th October 9.30am](#)

WEEKLY Zoom Advice slots

Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

For those would like some face-to-face advice AWM are offering this virtually via video appointments. Zoom works well on mobile phones. To book a 45 min advice appointment with a specialist autism advisor please [book via our shop](#). The Zoom link will be emailed the week before your slot so please check your inbox, including junk/spam to get your link.

Virtual Support Group for Parents

Wednesday Mornings 10am-11am and Wednesday Evenings 8pm-9pm – 1st and 3rd Weds of each month (term time)

AWM online support groups meet twice a month via Zoom. This is an opportunity to talk with other parents, share ideas, and offer support. They recommend that you have attended an online advice appointment with a member of the team before joining group sessions (link above).

If you would like to join either of the support groups, please email the team here shropshire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk

Dad's Group

Monthly on a Thursday 7pm-8pm

This is an opportunity for dads to meet online, share ideas, celebrate their children's achievement's and offer support to each other with a member of Autism West Midlands present.

[Click for more information and booking details](#)

Advice and support

AWM also offer advice and support over the phone and via email. Parents/carers and professionals can contact their small team directly to arrange an appointment please call:

Shropshire office 01952 454156

Mon, Wed, Fri Wendy Cowton 07900784186

Weds, Thu, Fri Emma Hegenbarth 07881109480

Tue, Wed, Thu

Dawn Lewis

07706309382

Email

shropshire@autismwestmidlands.org.uk

Helpline

0121 450 7575

Community tree scheme launched



This week, we launched our free Community Tree Scheme, ahead of the 2022/23 planting season.

Shropshire Council is committed to planting 345,000 trees by 2050, though we are hoping to bring the target forward. This year there will be 21,000 trees available.

This scheme supports that effort and we're focusing on planting groups of native trees and shrubs as copses and small areas of woodland, to maximise the benefits for landscape and wildlife around the county.

The planted trees and hedges will 'lock up' carbon and provide other environmental benefits as they grow and mature, contributing in their own small way towards our ambition of making Shropshire net zero carbon by 2030.

Applications are invited from people who wish to plant trees and short sections of hedging, and to create small areas of woodland in Shropshire.

[Find out more](#)

Never Ever Shake A Baby - [ICON - Babies cry you can cope - Advice and Support | ICON \(iconcope.org\)](#)

Please find attached **essential** information related to Birmingham's video campaign, which is in response to concerns surrounding shaken baby. ICON has been commissioned by Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin CCG. Parenting a baby can be stressful, shaking the baby can be fatal or leave babies with serious lifelong injuries, it is a really important conversation, so spread the word!

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/news/2067-child-safety-awareness-campaign-urges-parents-to-never-ever-shake-a-baby>

<https://youtu.be/ath5bigcoZ0>

<https://youtu.be/NifkpczdolU>

Early trauma

Source: ACAMH

Date: 25 July 2022

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH) has released a new podcast which looks at early trauma and relationships. This episode focuses on the impacts of early trauma on a child's wellbeing and development and discusses how the relationship between babies and their parents can be strengthened.

Listen to the podcast: [Early trauma and the importance of early relationships](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning

> [Podcast: infants and child development](#)

Purple Leaf education programme for 10-18s

The Purple Leaf education programme increases young people's awareness of sexual abuse and exploitation, both on and offline, equips them with the skills, knowledge, and tools to be able to identify uncomfortable feelings, and to know where to go for help and support.



The programme is delivered by experienced specialists, who understand the complexities surrounding sexual violence and child sexual exploitation. It can be delivered in group settings such as schools or on a 1:1 basis, if that is deemed more suitable for the child.

The programme includes a one-hour session for parents and professionals to increase awareness of sexual abuse and exploitation, knowledge about Purple Leaf and other services within WMRSASC. More in-depth CPD and training options for professionals are also available.

Purple Leaf provide advice, risk and need assessments, and interventions for children and young people (aged 5 to 18) who have experienced or been

impacted by and/or exhibited inappropriate, problematic, or harmful sexual behaviours. This includes specialist AIM assessments, psychosocial and education support and advice in relation to sibling sexual behaviours.

For further information or booking enquires please visit www.purpleleaf.org.uk or contact us on enquiries@purpleleaf.org.uk or 01905 677444.

Purple Leaf is a trading name of West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC). WMRSASC has over 30 years' experience of delivering frontline support to survivors of sexual violence and abuse, and provides a range of services including advocacy, therapy, online and a helpline service.