

Factsheet B41: Money Matters

This is a financial advocacy service available to people who face disabling barriers. The Money Matters service delivered by Equal Lives is available to disabled people, whatever their age. It provides information, advice and practical support around personal finances, usually as a short-term intervention. It is built on the model established by Age UK, which provides financial advocacy to older people aged 65 and above.

People mostly have to be referred in to this service by a professional (usually a care assessor), and the service is for those people who have no other way of developing their financial skills or confidence either through friends, family or other professionals.

People have to want to receive this service, and we will support them to remain in control at all times.

People living in Norwich postcode areas can self-refer into our Money Matters service, but other areas of Norfolk would require a professional referral.

If you live in Norwich postcode areas NR1-NR8, please have a look at the downloadable leaflet called Money Matters in Norwich.

Money Matters volunteers support people to:

- organise the payment of bills



- set up bank accounts
- set up direct debits / standing orders
- check eligibility for benefits
- develop budgeting skills
- access specialist debt / financial advice

Money Matters volunteers do not:

- provide financial advice
- provide debt advice
- handle cash
- have access to people's bank accounts, PIN numbers etc
- transport service users in their cars
- tell people what to do
- complete benefit applications (although they will refer into our wider Information, Advice and Advocacy service where necessary).

It is important that people using this service are in control at all times. For us, this means:

- providing people with information so that they can make informed decisions
- supporting people so that they develop the skills and confidence they need to do things for themselves.

Our volunteers are not there to tell people what to do and can only support people who are assessed as having capacity to manage their personal finances. As this service aims to promote people's independence, it is not intended to be available long term; where people are likely to need this support on an on-going basis, we will support them to explore other options such as employing their own Personal Assistant (PA).



Other useful contacts:

National services:

- Step Change Debt Charity 0800 138 1111 – debt/ bankruptcy advice, budgeting etc.
- www.consumercreditservices.org.uk
- National Debt Line 0808 808 4000
- <http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/>
- Money Advice Service 0300 500 5000
<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/>
- Money Saving Expert – Budgeting Hints and Tips
<http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/>
- Turn2Us – information on benefits and grants, budgeting etc.
<http://www.turn2us.org.uk/>
- Christians against poverty 0800 328 0006 – budgeting/ debt advice (home visits available)

Local services:

Norfolk Credit Union (NCU) has recently launched its Budgeting Account Service to help assist people with benefit reform and to help make sure that their priority bills are paid on time, direct to their Councils and Housing Associations – 01603 621811/ info@norfolkcu.co.uk/ www.norfolkcu.co.uk

If you require further information or would like this Factsheet in an alternative format you can contact us by calling: 01508 491210, by emailing: info@equallives.org.uk, or by writing to: Equal Lives, 15 Manor Farm Barns, Fox Road, Framingham Pigot, Norfolk, NR14 7PZ.

