

Benefits and Direct Payments

Help to Claim

You could be missing out on money to help you pay for your home, housing costs, your care and support costs, and daily living.

A lot of people simply do not realise that they could get additional income from benefits. Whether you are ill, living with a disability or caring for someone, there are a number of benefits which could help.

To find out what benefits you may be entitled to claim, the [Solihull Council website](#) has details of Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit and advice about welfare reforms.

The [GOV.UK](#) website can also help you find out about benefits and support you may be entitled to receive.

You can also get help and advice from the [Community Advice Hubs](#) in the borough. A service which is provided on behalf of Solihull Council by Age UK Solihull, in association with other organisations. You can visit the hubs in:

- [North Solihull at Chelmsley Wood Library](#)
- [South Solihull at Solihull Connect at The Core](#)

Solihull Community Housing also provides advice on benefits and support. You can contact the Money Advice Team at Solihull Community Housing by:

- [visiting the website](#)
- phoning 0121 717 1515

Direct Payments

What is a Direct Payment?

A direct payment is a method of managing your personal budget.

Benefits of a Direct Payment

- You arrange and manage your own care.
- You can choose your carer/s yourself, either through an agency or you can employ your own personal assistant.
- By arranging your own care, you can make sure that all your care needs are met in the way you want.
- Services can be flexible. For example, you can choose to change when to have your support such as in the evenings or at weekends.
- Or you could have a managed account that is managed by a company the Council has a contract with.
- There is also the option of a pre-payment card from the Council; read the [prepaid card leaflet](#) on the Solihull Council website.

You can receive a direct payment after you have:

- [received an assessment](#) of your care and support needs
- [created a support plan](#)
- [received a financial assessment](#) of your ability to pay for your care
- [agreed a personal budget](#)

Direct payments can be made to:

- disabled people aged 16 or over (with short or long-term needs)
- disabled parents for children's services
- carers aged 16 or over (including people with parental responsibility for a disabled child)
- elderly people who need community care services

Direct payments can be used for:

- personal care
- help at home
- equipment to keep your independence
- support to take a carers break
- employing someone to help

Direct payments cannot be used for:

- paying for Solihull Council services
- paying relatives living with you
- paying for your permanent home

What happens if my needs change?

Your Care Act Assessment will be reviewed regularly. Your personal budget allocation and Support Plan will be changed as your needs change.

How will we know how you have spent your Personal Budget?

Your needs will be reviewed regularly by us to make sure that you are achieving the goals or outcomes that you identified in your Support Plan.

Will I have to contribute financially?

Depending on your income and savings, you may have to make a financial contribution to your social care support. We will carry out a Financial Assessment before your personal budget is worked out to let you know the maximum you will have to pay. A fact sheet is available on [Paying for your Care](#).