

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

BENEFIT CHANGES

MAKE IT GO FURTHER!

From April 2013, thousands of households in Croydon will be affected by changes to the benefits they will receive. For some, these changes will mean less income from benefit, and could result in money problems.

TAKE CONTROL OF MANAGING YOUR MONEY BY FOLLOWING THESE SIX STEPS:

STEP 1: work out your budget. Make a list of your household's income and expenditure. When you've added up all the figures, you'll see if you have any money left over to pay your debts. You may also be able to see if you can make some savings.

STEP 2: consider changes you could make to reduce the amount of money you need to spend. Things to consider could be your energy suppliers, insurance comparisons. If you smoke could you seek help to stop? If you have a satellite package is it a necessity?

STEP 3: sort out your priority debts. When you've worked out how much you have left over after paying your expenses, contact each of your priority creditors. Show them your budget and try to make an arrangement to pay back what you owe.

STEP 4: sort out your non-priority debts. This will depend on whether you have any money left over from dealing with your priority debts and paying for essential household expenses like housing costs and food.

STEP 5: stick to your budget. It is important that you start working on a plan and then stick to it. It takes discipline, but is worth it.

STEP 6: making these changes is not easy or clear. Therefore if you need help or support in overcoming these difficult issues please seek help, there are a number of organisations out there that provide support. We have listed a number overleaf.

If you are unsure about how the benefit changes will affect you phone **020 8726 7000** (with your benefit claim number).

Make sure you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to; phone **0800 731 5920**.

HANDY TIPS TO HELP YOU

The **Money Advice Service** provides comprehensive advice and support for managing your money and helping you to make sure that you're getting the right entitlements. You can contact The Money Advice Service on **0300 500 5000**, Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, and Saturday, 9am to 1pm.

Visit: www.moneyadvice.org.uk

SAVING MONEY

Get handy tips to help you get the best deals for gas and electricity and explain how you can cut down on costs. Read our 'Saving energy' fact sheet. It can be downloaded at www.croydon.gov.uk/benefitchanges

DEBT ADVICE

If you have a problem with debt, it's important not to panic but don't ignore it either - it won't go away! Read our 'Debt advice' fact sheet. It can be downloaded at www.croydon.gov.uk/debtadvice

HELP AND ADVICE

PLACES IN CROYDON

Age UK Croydon (for over 50s)

☎ 020 8680 5450

🌐 www.ageconcerncroydon.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau: Addington

☎ 01689 846890

Minicom: 01689 846927

🌐 www.croydoncab.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau: South Norwood

Opening spring 2013 see

🌐 www.croydoncab.org.uk for details.

Citizens Advice Bureau: Access Croydon

Taberner House, Park Lane, Croydon CR9 3JS

10am - 12.30pm and 1pm - 4pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Croydon Law Centre (part of South West London Law Centres)

☎ 020 8667 9226

🌐 www.swllc.org

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Christians Against Poverty (Cap)

National debt-counselling charity with 205 centres in local churches. Cap offers hope and solutions to anyone in debt through its unique, in-depth service.

☎ 01274 760720

🌐 www.capuk.org

Consumer Credit Counselling Service

☎ 0800 138 1111

🌐 www.cccs.co.uk

Money a+

Provides information about services to contact for finance and benefit advice.

🌐 www.moneyaande.co.uk

Money saving expert

Advice on the best shopping deals, utility bills and special offers.

🌐 www.moneysavingexpert.com

National Debtline

☎ 0808 808 4000

🌐 www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Payplan

Freephone: ☎ 0800 716 239

🌐 www.debtclinic.co.uk

Turn2us

Welfare benefits and grants information

☎ 0808 802 2000

Lines open Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm.

🌐 www.turn2us.org.uk