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12 March 2026

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Direct payments

Those that are eligible can receive money to arrange care services or buy equipment.

If an individual has been assessed by adult social care as eligible for support, they (or their representative) may be offered direct payments, provided by Hampshire County Council. This allows them to arrange their own care and support in the way that best suits them.

A direct payment allows the individual to have more control and flexibility over how their care and support needs are met, rather than relying on services arranged directly by the County Council.

Direct payments are not always without cost. The County Council (like other local authorities) requires that, depending on the individual's financial situation, they contribute towards the cost of their care.

Direct payments schedule

See the latest direct payment schedule:

[Direct payment schedule](#)

Introduction to direct payments



[Types of direct payment](#)



[Advantages of receiving a direct payment](#)



[What a direct payment can and cannot be used for](#)

Updated Direct Payments information now live

We have launched newly redesigned web pages providing clear, easy-to-navigate guidance on Direct Payments.

Direct Payments give eligible individuals more choice and control by allowing them to arrange their own care rather than using Council-commissioned services. The updated pages explain how Direct Payments work, who can receive them and how to request one. They also outline the different ways payments can be managed, including through the Virtual Wallet, along with key responsibilities such as record keeping and contributing towards your care costs.

The refreshed content offers practical advice on day-to-day management, employing Personal Assistants, using care agencies, planning for emergencies,

and understanding the role of nominated or authorised persons who may help manage payments.

The site also signposts to the Direct Payment Support Service for further guidance on managing payments, employment duties, and maintaining records.

Anyone receiving, considering, or supporting someone with Direct Payments is encouraged to explore the new pages and the resources available.

EXPLORE THE WEBSITE

Understanding the security behind the Virtual Wallet

The Virtual Wallet is Hampshire County Council's preferred and secure way for individuals to manage their Direct Payments. Designed to be simple and user friendly, it allows people to oversee their care budget and pay for support in line with their personalised care plans.

As more individuals are choosing to receive their Direct Payments via the Virtual Wallet it's natural to want reassurance about how securely that information is handled.

We would like to reassure you that there are strong protections in place to keep your information safe. While senders are responsible for securely transmitting information – such as using secure email and avoiding public Wi-Fi – once it reaches the Virtual Wallet, it is safeguarded by robust security controls.

All information sent to the service is transferred into the Virtual Wallet's managed system, where it is protected by industry-recognised standards. These include:

- **Cyber Essentials Plus** – a government-backed accreditation providing independent testing against common cyber threats, including malware and unauthorised access.
- **ISO 9001** – ensuring high-quality, consistent service delivery.
- **ISO 27001** – the leading international standard for information security management, covering risk management and data protection.

Together, these certifications demonstrate strong technical defences, clear governance and ongoing auditing to ensure continuous improvement.

For users, this means having the confidence that once your information reaches the Virtual Wallet, it is handled within a secure, well-managed environment.

ILG Community upcoming events

ILG Community supports Personal Assistant (PA) employers across the UK.

Whether you employ PAs directly or manage a budget on behalf of someone else, ILG Community offers guidance and peer support.

Upcoming events from ILG Community include:

Event/booking link	Date/time	Content
Flexibility in Direct Payments – online event	23 March 2026 1.30pm to 3.30pm	The flexibility of Direct Payments and how they can empower recipients to better meet their needs.

Understanding Individual Service Funds (ISFs) – webinar	22 April 2026 2.00pm to 3.00pm	Essex County Council shares insights into how they have successfully implemented ISFs.
What’s Wrong with Local Authority Decision Making – webinar	18 May 2026 2.00pm to 4.00pm	Yo Dunn explores the common flaws in local authority decision making under the Care Act.
Digging Further into CHC: Topics and Tensions Including PHBs – webinar	8 June 2026 2.00pm to 3.00pm	An interactive workshop with plenty of time for Q&A about the NHS CHC issues impacting you and the additional barriers around delivering a Personal Health Budget Direct Payment package.

VISIT THE WEBSITE

New Direct Payments Strategy for Hampshire – empowering choice, control and independence

We’re pleased to share Hampshire County Council’s new [Direct Payments Strategy](#).

Direct Payments play a crucial role in giving people greater choice, control and flexibility over the care and support they receive. This updated strategy sets out how we will make Direct Payments simpler, clearer and better supported for residents across Hampshire.

The strategy has been co-produced with people who use Direct Payments, family carers, frontline staff, service providers and voluntary organisations. Their lived experiences, insights and ideas have shaped a strong, practical plan for improving how Direct Payments work over the coming years.

What the strategy covers

The new strategy outlines:

- **Making Direct Payments easier to understand and use**
Clearer information, simpler processes and more support throughout the journey.
- **Improving support for individuals, families and carers**
Practical actions to ensure people have the right advice and help at the right time.
- **Strengthening collaboration with organisations across Hampshire**
Working with community groups, voluntary organisations and providers to improve access, guidance and independent challenge.
- **Setting clear expectations for people receiving a Direct Payment**
What people can expect from us – and how we will make the experience more consistent, fair and person-centred.
- **How you can get involved**

- **Please share the strategy** to enable those using our services to understand what will be changing and how Direct Payments can offer more control over your support.
- **Share your feedback** – your views will help us continue improving.
How do I give feedback? Through the DP Support Service DPsupportservice@hants.gov.uk.

READ THE STRATEGY

Peer support

I have learned most about how to run a Direct Payment from doing it for 25 years, but when I don't know how to handle something talking to someone else who lives it can be so valuable. That is what peer support is all about. Please get involved. Share your experience to help others and listen to others to help you. And, when there are difficulties, we can share so we don't feel alone.

At a recent peer group meeting we discussed contingency planning. Contingency means something going wrong. Here are some questions that you could ask yourself to help you make a contingency plan.

- What would I do if someone is unable to come because they are ill?
- What would I do if the electricity goes off?
- What would I do if there is no water?
- What would I do if it snows and my PAs can't get here?
- What would happen if the person who runs my Direct Payment (me or an authorised or nominated person) isn't able to run payroll or access my bank account?

The solution to these problems may be something you aren't worried about, or they might be something you can do something about easily. Alternatively, you might have to think about how many PAs you employ or whether you need a Power of Attorney. It can really help to reduce the worry if you have a plan for when things don't go the way you want or need.

Future meeting dates

- Wednesday, 8 April 2026, 2pm to 3pm
- Friday, 22 May 2026, 2pm to 3pm
- Friday, 3 July 2026, 2pm to 3pm

All meetings are held online on Zoom. Please email rachel.harrison3@btopenworld.com if you would like to attend or have any ideas or questions.



Support starts with a simple chat

It's not always easy for men to open up about how they are feeling - many don't want to 'be a burden' or feel they should just 'man up'.

So, if someone you know says he's 'alright', try asking twice. A simple chat could really lift someone's day. We've created a quick [Men's Mental Wellbeing toolkit](#) to help you start the conversation.

If you need to talk to someone today, or need urgent help:

Call NHS 111, the Samaritans on 116 123, or Text HANTS to 85258. In an emergency, always call 999.

GET THE TOOLKIT

Important update on first aid kits

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have issued updated warnings advising the public to stop using non-sterile alcohol-free cleansing wipes. This follows contamination incidents linked to *Burkholderia stabilis* infections.

The risk remains low, but it is important to ensure that any wipes in your first aid kit are safe to use. [See the advice on gov.uk.](#)

Four brands have been specifically identified and withdrawn from sale. If any of these wipes remain in your first aid kits, they must be disposed of. Non-sterile alcohol-free wipes, of any brand, are not considered safe for use on broken skin. The following four products in particular have shown contamination in tests:

- ValueAid Alcohol Free Cleansing Wipes
- Microsafe Moist Wipe Alcohol Free
- Steroplast Sterowipe Alcohol Free Cleansing Wipes
- Reliwipe Alcohol Free Cleansing Wipes

Any wipes included in your first kit must be sterile and individually wrapped, and within their expiry date.



Electrical fire safety and registering appliances

Now is a good time to check old electrical appliances and register new ones. [Registering your electrical products](#) means that the manufacturer can easily contact you if your product turns out to have a fault, be dangerous or needs recalling. Old or faulty electrical appliances can cause electrical fires, so it is vital to check regularly for scorch marks, loose/damaged wires or hot plugs and sockets.

Help to keep safe by following this guidance:

- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Only buy electrical items from reputable retailers.
- [Register new appliances](#) so, you can be notified about product recalls.
- Turn off all [electrical appliances](#), including portable heaters, when not in use or before bed.

Electric blankets should be replaced if there are visible scorch marks, the fabric is worn or frayed, there are wires poking through the fabric, or the electrical cord is damaged. They should also be disposed of if the appliance is giving off a smell, if the control buttons make a buzzing sound or if the connector fitted to the blanket is overheating or damaged.

Hampshire PA Finder website

The [Hampshire PA Finder](#) is a free service working to connect people seeking a Personal Assistant in Care with people who are, or want to be, Personal Assistants in Care. You will find lots of useful information on the site about being an employer or being a Personal Assistant in Care.

We'd love to know what you think of the website, so please send your feedback to pafinder@hants.gov.uk.

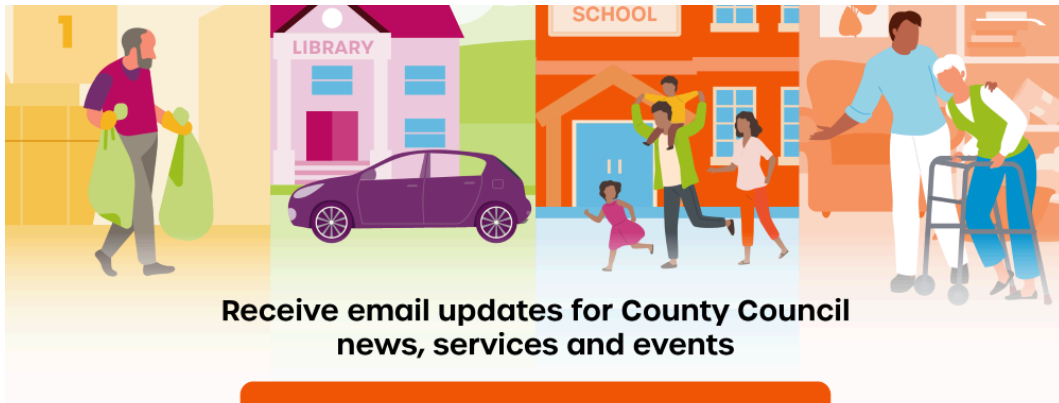
The Direct Payment Support Service

Our Direct Payment Support Service (DPSS) is available to help Direct Payment recipients, operational staff and providers. The team has three full-time members of staff and can support you with a range of Direct Payment related queries. If you need some advice about Direct Payments, contact the team at DPsupportservice@hants.gov.uk for support.

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