

THE COST OF LIVING

**Information
& Advice**



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The Rise of Food Poverty

With the cost of living rising in the UK in April 2022, the already vast issue of food poverty will be rising with it. Covid-19 has also negatively affected many people who have previously been living with food insecurities.

According to the Family Resources Survey on the Government's website, around **5 million** people in the UK were living in food poverty between 2019-2020 with **4.7 million of those people being adults and old people.**

The Food Foundation provided statistics that showed an **increase of 8% to 9% of the population** were living in food poverty from 2020-2021. –

Reference [sustainweb](#)

We found that in older people, food insecurities mostly emerged from lack of support with food shopping and meal preparation.

Studies have shown that there are specific groups of people who experience elevated levels of food insecurity. Two of these groups are directly related to older people; those who are severely vulnerable and those who are restricted by health conditions or disabilities.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, most of the already ongoing issues with food insecurities and poverty magnified. Vulnerable people were in self-isolation, had less access to public transport, and didn't have enough income.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the UK went into lockdown from March 2020 – July 2020. During these 4 months we saw empty supermarket shelves which left most seniors with not enough food. On top of that, supermarket prices started to rise and many employees were put on furlough or let go by employers.

Statistics from The Food Foundation provided information on the financial impact of the pandemic – with 22% of **all households** having lost income since before Covid-19 started. Their figures also show that **only 23% of affected households** managed to seek out help in January 2021.

At Age UK West Cumbria, we understand that food poverty is unacceptable, and we are committed to helping the vulnerable people in need. We are launching this campaign to raise awareness and offer help to you or your older loved ones who might be affected.



Cost of Living Payments

If you claim some benefits, you might be eligible for an additional **£650** from the UK Government, spread over two **Cost of Living Payments**. The first payment will be for **£326**, and the second payment of **£324** will be paid later in the year.

You don't need to contact anyone; your payment is automatic.

Find out what you will get and when you will receive a payment by searching '**cost of living support***'.



gov.uk/costoflivingpayments

Find out more



*Eligibility criteria apply

Food Supplies on a Budget

One of the most common ways of support for people in a food crisis is food banks. Food banks are designed to provide essential supplies through donations. Most local supermarkets accept food bank donations of dried and canned food like cereal, pasta, soup, beans, nuts, canned vegetables etc.

Care workers and health professionals will identify those in a food

crisis and refer them to food banks – which is why it is vital that people reach out for help if they need it, otherwise they will go unnoticed.

The Copeland and Allerdale local food banks can be found by visiting the Copeland County Council website - <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/foodbank.asp>.

Alternatively, there is the Phoenix Enterprise Thrift Hub Food Pantry that provide essentials to those who are out of work, claiming benefits, waiting for their benefit payments, struggling with debts etc.

For more information contact Phoenix Food Pantry
Telephone: 01946 813555 / 07388996202
Email: advice@phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk



Phoenix Enterprise Centre Phoenix Thrift Hub Food Pantry

Due to the current struggle that most families and individuals are facing, with rising fuel bills and inflated shopping costs; we are sending out a reminder about the Phoenix Food Pantry

if you're finding it hard to get shopping every week?

- If you're out of work
- Claiming benefit
- Waiting for benefit payments
- Trying to cope with debt
- Or just struggling to make ends meet



You could be eligible to access the Thrift Hub Food Pantry our team of Advice & Guidance workers are ready to help you

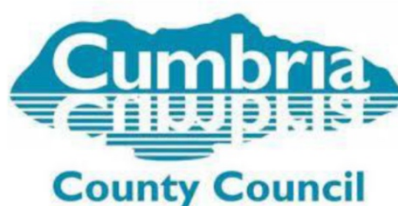
Phoenix can be contacted by the following:

Tel: 01946 813555 / 07388996202

Email: advice@phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk /

admin@phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk

Facebook: Phoenix Enterprise Centre



Money Saving Tips

If you do not qualify for receiving supplies for a food bank but are still struggling with budgeting, we have some other tips and guidance.

- If you live alone, buy fruit and vegetables individually and not by bulk
- If you live as a family buy frozen fruit and vegetables
- Take time to meal prep for the week ahead
- Invest in a slow cooker or pressure cooker
- Cook meals in a microwave
- Defrost food on the counter overnight to save energy on using a microwave
- Investing in a 3-tier steamer means you can steam 3 food items at the same time, on the same hob ring
- Only fill the kettle with the required amount of water
- Boil water to use for cooking pasta and vegetables to reduce the time used on the hob



CUT ENERGY COSTS

22% of all households
have lost income since before Covid-19

Low Energy Cooking

Electric ovens can still retain heat for up to 10 minutes after being switched off, which means you can continue cooking your food without using the energy.

Investing in glass or ceramic dishes – these also retain more heat and will help speed up the cooking process.

When cooking with big vegetables or joints of meat, try cutting them into smaller sized chunks to reduce the cooking time.

Although using a microwave is probably the easiest money-saving alternative for many households, it will be difficult to cook the more complex meals from scratch.

However, microwaves do cook food faster by directly heating up the water in the food and the smaller size means more heat is focused on the food – which saves more energy compared to an oven

If you are able to, you should consider investing in a slow or pressure cooker would save money in the long term.

Slow cookers use as little energy as a light bulb, even when left on for a long amount of time.

When using a slow cooker, you can also cook

more complicated recipes from scratch –which can be a lot healthier than store-bought microwaveable meals. If you live alone slow cookers can also cook large portions which you can then keep in the fridge or freezer for another day. Cheap slow cookers retail for about £12-£30 and will save you a lot of money in the long term.





FOOD INSECURITIES

4.7 million of people living in
food poverty are adults and seniors

Low Budget Meals

We have created some simple recipes for people who are food shopping on a low budget, or are finding it difficult to cook a balanced and nutritional meal.

These meals are quick to make and require little ingredients to keep things straightforward.

All of the ingredients we use can be found in a supermarket and most ingredients will be sent out by food banks.

We did our shopping at ALDI, so our prices per portion may differ depending on your local supermarket.

***Note: We did not include the cost of spices and herbs in our prices per portion.**



Spaghetti Bolognese

**about £2.42 per serving*

SERVINGS: 2

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 30 MIN

INGREDIENTS

spaghetti
mince
chopped tomatoes
stock cube
onion
garlic
salt
paprika
italian herbs
oregano
basil

DIRECTIONS

1. Boil the kettle and add the boiling water to a saucepan with the spaghetti and leave to simmer.
2. In a frying pan, start to cook the diced onion and mince and cook for 10-15 minutes, stirring continuously.
3. Next, chop the garlic and add to the frying pan and cook for another 5-10 minutes.
4. Add the stock and chopped tomatoes to the frying pan and drain the spaghetti.
5. Add 1tsp italian herbs, 1tsp oregano, 1tsp paprika and 1tsp basil to the sauce and leave to reduce.
6. Once the sauce has thickened, add the spaghetti and stir together. Cook for another 5 minutes before serving.

NOTES

If you'd like to add some vegetables to this meal, you could try chopping up some mushrooms and frying with the mince.

CHILLI CON CARNE



Ingredients

chopped tomatoes
 mince
 1 onion
 red kidney beans
 ground cumin
 paprika
 turmeric
 chilli powder
 2 cloves garlic
 cooking oil
 stock cube

Notes: For more flavour, try adding sweetcorn and/or green beans at the same stage as the red kidney beans.

Method

1. In a saucepan, add the can of chopped tomatoes and leave on a simmer to reduce.
2. Next, heat the oil in a frying pan, dice the onions and add to the pan.
3. When the onions start looking translucent, add the mince and chopped garlic to the pan.
4. Wait until the mince is looking brown before adding the stock and red kidney beans.
5. Leave the pan on a simmer for the stock to reduce.
6. Once the chopped tomatoes and stock have both reduced, add the chopped tomatoes into the frying pan.
7. Add 1tbsp of chilli powder, 1tsp of paprika, 1tsp of turmeric and 1tsp of ground cumin to the pan and simmer for another 5 minutes
8. Serve with white or brown rice.



Cheesy Pasta Bake

Makes 6 Servings

INGREDIENTS

400g dried pasta
1tbsp vegetable oil
3 large chicken breasts
1 large onion
1 red bell pepper
1 yellow bell pepper
2 garlic cloves
1tbsp tomato puree
1 can chopped tomatoes
6 rashers bacon
100g strong cheddar cheese
100g mozzarella
bunch fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 190 degrees celsius.
2. Boil the pasta in a saucepan, drain 1 minute before the recommended cook time.
3. Add the vegetable oil into a frying pan and fry the diced chicken breasts for 5 minutes.
4. Chop the peppers and garlic and add to the frying pan with the tomato puree and 1/2tsp of oregano and 1/2tsp of dried thyme.
5. Stir in the chopped tomatoes and bring to a gentle bubble.
6. Add the cooked pasta and cooked bacon. (Optional: add a handful of spinach)
7. Stir all together then transfer to a large baking dish.
8. Top with the grated cheddar and mozzarella, then cook for 20-25 minutes in the oven.
9. Once cooked, serve topped with chopped fresh parsley.
10. Portion the leftovers into tubs and freeze for another day.

SERVINGS: 6

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 45 MIN



Mushroom Risotto

*about £1.10 per serving

INGREDIENTS

250g button mushrooms
1 medium onion
25g butter
1 garlic clove
350g arborio rice
125g white wine
200g frozen peas
2tbsp chopped parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. Add half the butter to a frying pan and fry the chopped onion until translucent.
2. Add the chopped garlic clove and stir for 2 minutes.
3. Then add the optional white wine and rice to the pan.
4. After 5 minutes of simmering, add the rest of the butter, mushrooms and frozen peas.
5. Keep cooking and stirring until the rice becomes creamy.
6. Once the rice is soft and thick, serve with chopped fresh parsley.
7. Portion left overs into tub and store in the fridge or freezer for another day.

SERVINGS: 6

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 45 MIN



Lentil Stew



2 servings



45 minutes

Ingredients

one large onion
one celery stick
two medium leeks
two cups lentils
two cups kale
one sweet potato
two medium potatoes
one can chopped tomatoes
one stock cube
seasonings to taste

Method

1. Finely dice the onions and fry in a frying pan until they start to become translucent.
2. Chop the garlic and add it to the pan to cook for about 5 minutes.
3. Make the stock cube according to the instructions on the packet and add to the pan along with the lentils.
4. Next add in the potatoes (cubed), carrots (chopped) and one teaspoon of ground cumin and one teaspoon of onion powder.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste.
6. Bring everything in the frying pan to a boil and reduce to a simmer for about 30 minutes.
7. When the potatoes, carrots and lentils are tender, take off the heat and serve.



Vegetable Soup

*about £1.65 per serving

INGREDIENTS

2 onions
1 red pepper
3 carrots
2 garlic cloves
stock cube
2 celery sticks
salt & pepper
paprika
frozen peas
frozen sweetcorn
red kidney beans

DIRECTIONS

1. Dice the onions, carrots and chop the celery and red pepper then fry all together in a pan.
2. When the vegetables have softened and the onions look translucent, add the chopped garlic and continue cooking for another 2 minutes.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes and stock to the pan and bring to a boil before reducing to a simmer and partially covering the pan with a lid.
4. Simmer for 20 minutes or until the vegetables become tender.
5. Next add the frozen sweetcorn & peas, red kidney beans and 2tsp of paprika and cook for a further 5 minutes.
6. For an extra burst of flavour, pour in 1tbsp of white wine vinegar and serve.

NOTES

Try adding spinach or kale to the soup for added colour and nutrition.

SERVINGS: 2

PREPPING TIME: 15 MIN

COOKING TIME: 30 MIN