



WELFARE AWARE

UNDERSTANDING AND PREPARING FOR CHANGE

LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE (LWA)

What is LWA?

LWA replaces some parts of the social fund including most Crisis Loans and all Community Care Grants.

What is happening to the Social Fund?

- Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants are no longer available
- The money for community care grants and crisis loans has been given to local authorities to provide their own schemes, called 'Local Welfare Assistance'.
- Crisis Loans that were used to cover delays with benefits have been replaced by Short Term Benefit Advances (see separate factsheet)

How does local welfare assistance work?

- Local authorities decide how support is provided in their area.
- In many cases Local Welfare Assistance consists of vouchers or donations of goods (such as furniture) and not as cash.

What can you do?

Many people used to use Crisis Loans or Community Care Grants to help with the cost of moving into their own home. The changes mean planning ahead and finding different support for the move:

- Contact your local authority and find out what their system for local Welfare Assistance is, how to apply, when to apply, what information they will need and what items may be provided.
- Buy small household items each payday and save for the move.
- Do you need extra help with budgeting and money management? Ask your local authority or support worker for help and information
- Local Councils have a fund called 'Discretionary Housing Payments' which may be able to help with costs like rent in advance. Talk to the council to be considered for assistance.

Need more help?

Have a benefits 'check-up' to make sure that you are claiming the right benefits.

Talk to Citizens Advice for information on benefits, debt and money management
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

The Money Advice Service has lots of useful, free tools to help you plan your budget.
www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

The CPAG has a LWA post code finder
<http://www.cpag.org.uk/lwas>

WHAT?

Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants have been replaced by local schemes

WHEN?

Starts from April 2013

NEW Local councils will have the responsibility to provide Local Welfare Assistance the money given by the government to councils for this ends in March 2015.

www.homeless.org.uk/welfare-reform

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