

[www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide](http://www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide)

# Reading Services Guide



**Adult & Carers Support Services**

**Family Information Services**

**Reading Youth**

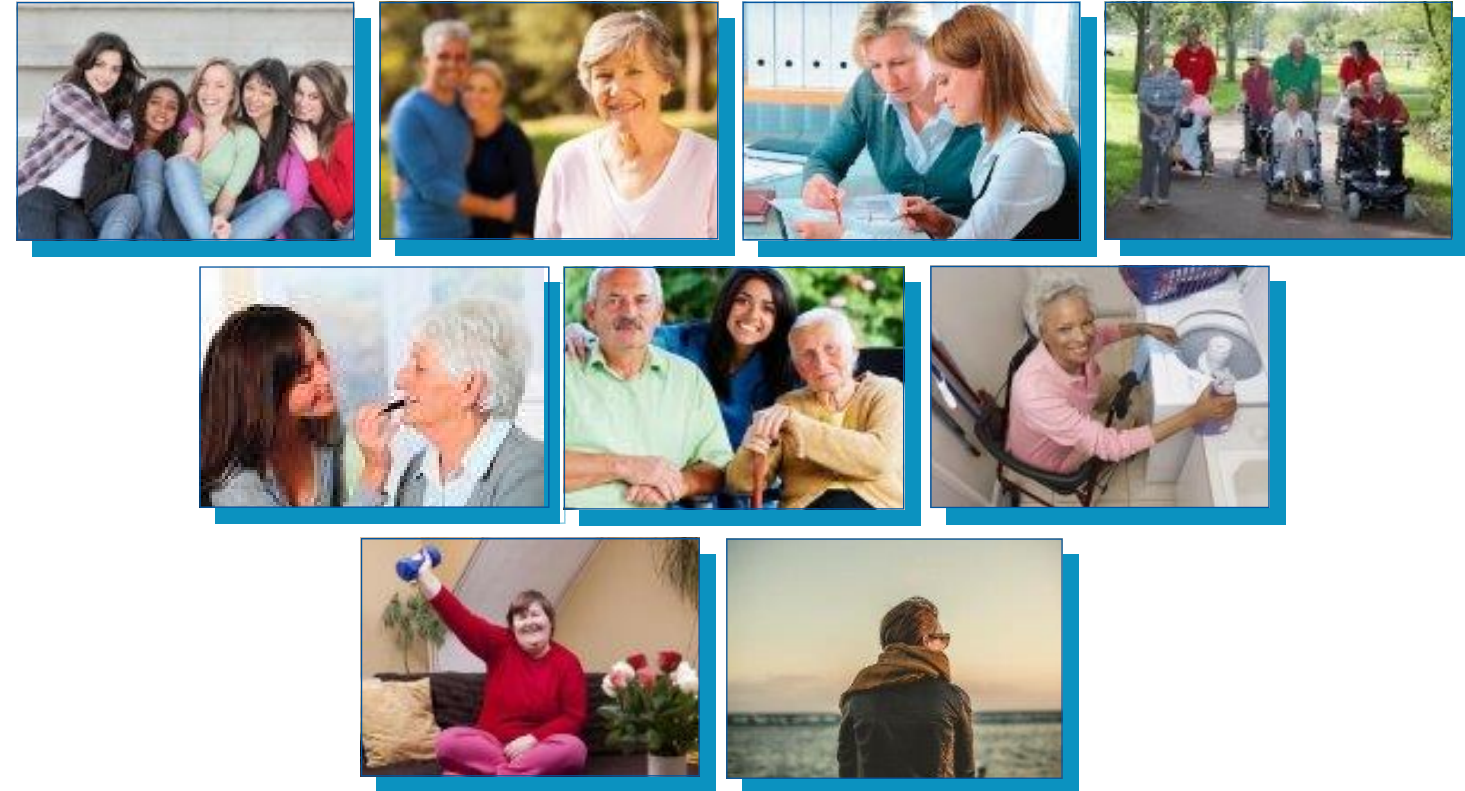


**Disabled Children & Young People's Register**

- Community activities and support groups for all
- NHS Choices for GPs, Pharmacies, Dentists
- Venues for hire
- Local events

Reading Services Guide is the one-stop shop to find out about local services, clubs, groups and activities. You can use the guide to find things to do, support to get out and about, services to help you live safely at home, help with housing or finding a care home. If you need help or need to speak to someone call us

0118 937 3747



## Caring in Reading

April 2016

Where to get information, help and advice to support you in your caring role



provided by  
**carerstrust**  
East Midlands carer services  
action · help · advice



## Caring in Reading

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*The information in this publication was correct at the time of going to print. To request additional copies call 0118 937 3747.*

## Notes

## Useful Contacts

### Carers Support Organisations

Reading and .W.Berks Carers Hub	0118 324 7333	www.berkshirecarershub.org
Carers UK	0808 808 7777	www.carersuk.org
Carers Direct (NHS)	0300 123 1053	nhs.uk/carersdirect

### Social Services:

Older people/adults with disabilities	0118 937 3747
Children with disabilities	0118 937 3641
Young Carers ( <i>Early Help Hub</i> )	0118 937 6545
Sensory Needs Service	0118 937 6131
Out of Hours (emergencies only)	01344 786543

### Safeguarding Children and vulnerable adults and children

Safeguarding adults	0118 937 3747
Safeguarding children	0118 937 3641

### Community Mental Health Services

Common Point of Entry	0300 365 0300	www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk
Mental Health Crisis Service	0300 365 99 99	

### Health Services

Royal Berkshire Hospital	0118 322 5111	www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	0118 960 5027	www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk
Reading Walk-In/Minor Injuries	0118 902 8300	readingwalkinhealthcentre.nhs.uk
NHS Choices		nhs.uk
NHS non-emergency number	111	
Life threatening emergencies	999	

### Money and benefits Advice

Reading Citizens Advice	03444 111 306	www.rcab.org.uk
Reading Welfare Rights	0118 955 1070	www.readingcommunitywelfare.sunit.co.uk
Communicare	0118 926 3941	www.communicare.org.uk

## Getting help as a carer

**Caring can be rewarding but it can also be demanding - physically and mentally. This can have a huge impact on your own health and wellbeing.**

It can:

- Put you more at risk of injury if you need to help someone with walking or getting out of bed
- Wear you out - especially if you don't get a break
- Cause financial difficulties if you have to give up work
- Make you feel guilty, angry, frustrated or depressed

- Isolate you from family and friends - especially if caring makes it difficult for you to stay in touch with family and friends or stay involved in your hobbies and interests

As a carer it is very important that you are aware of the help available to support you so you can continue to care without putting your own health and emotional wellbeing at risk.

You may not see yourself as one, but if you provide care and/or support to a relative or friend who is elderly and frail, physically disabled, has a learning disability, has mental health issues, has a history of substance misuse or has a serious health condition, then you are a carer.

The Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub offers a range of support for carers, to help you look after yourself as well as the loved one you care for. The help available includes:

- Information, advice and guidance
- One to one telephone support
- Signposting to other organisations
- Carers support groups offering a chance to meet other carers, activities and outings and guest speakers
- Free access to local leisure, health and well-being facilities
- 'CarerSmart' benefits and discounts
- Free training and caring support
- Access to Carers breaks - including short break accommodation in Suffolk
- Carers grants to help pay for essential equipment, a break from caring or to learn new skills
- Peer support




### How to contact the Carers Hub

Call the Helpdesk on 0118 324 7333.

Our experienced support workers will provide a personalised service to meet your individual needs.

Email: [ask@berkshirecarershub.org](mailto:ask@berkshirecarershub.org)

Visit: [www.berkshirecarershub.org](http://www.berkshirecarershub.org)

 [Facebook.com/reading-and-west-berkshire-carers-hub](https://www.facebook.com/reading-and-west-berkshire-carers-hub)

 [@RWB\\_Carers\\_Hub](https://twitter.com/RWB_Carers_Hub)

*Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub provided by the Carers Trust and funded by Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, North and West Reading CCG, South Reading CCG and Newbury and District CCG*

## Carers support from health and social care

If you are the parent carer for a disabled child or you provide unpaid care and support to a Reading adult (18 years+) you may be eligible for Carer's Support from Reading Borough Council's Social Care Services.

### Carer's Assessment

All Carers have the right to a free Carer's Assessment from social services.

Your assessment gives you the opportunity to:

- provide an overview of the care and support you currently provide
- say which caring tasks you are willing and able to continue with and what you need help with
- say how caring impacts on your own health and well-being.

This information will help the Council understand your support needs and decide what support you are eligible for.

### How to get an Assessment

Complete an online Carer's Assessment at [www.reading.gov.uk/carersa](http://www.reading.gov.uk/carersa) or call for a paper copy:

- 0118 937 3747 if you look after a Reading adult
- 0118 937 2225 if you are the parent carer of a disabled child

You have the right to have a Carer's Assessment even if the person you look after doesn't want help from social care.



If the person you care for lives outside the Borough of Reading you must ask their local Social Services department for a Carer's Assessment.

### Support for carers

Social services support carers by offering:

- Carer's Personal Budgets
- advice and support to help you manage stress and look after your health
- information and advice about other organisations and groups supporting carers
- advice and support on developing a Carer's Emergency Plan which can be put into place if you are unavoidably detained or suddenly unable to provide care.

The help you are offered depends on the outcome of your assessment.

These services are free to all carers, regardless of your financial situation.

### Supporting you by supporting the person you care for

The Council will take account of the outcome of your Carer's Assessment when deciding what support the person you look after is eligible for.

*See page 6 for details.*



### Support for Young Carers

The Council also supports children under 18 years who have extra responsibilities at home because of a disabled sibling or parent with support needs.

*See page 25 for details*

## NHS Health Services

### NHS Choices

For information about health conditions, advice about staying well plus signposting to local health services:

Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Carers Direct on NHS Choices

For information and advice for carers visit [www.nhs.uk/carers](http://www.nhs.uk/carers) or call the Carer's Direct Helpline 0300 123 1053

### Your local pharmacy

Ask your pharmacist for advice on treating common minor illnesses (diarrhoea, minor infections, headache, sore throats and colds)

### Your GP

Make an appointment with your GP for if you are unwell and it is not an emergency.

### Reading Walk-in Health Clinic

(Broad Street Mall RG1 7QA)

For drop-in GP services and minor injuries (*cuts and sprains*) – no appointment needed:

Walk in or call for an appointment  
0118 902 8300 (open everyday 8am - 8pm)

### 111 – NHS Non-Emergencies

For information and advice for illness or injury which is not life-threatening plus advice about local NHS services:

Call 111 – available 24/7

### A&E - Royal Berkshire Hospital

For serious illness or injury:

Craven Road, Reading RG1 5AN - open 24/7

### 999 Ambulance Services

For life threatening illness or injury (chest pains and/or shortness of breath are an emergency):

Call 999

### Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

For confidential information and advice on health-related matters and support to complain about hospital services.

- For services provided by the Royal Berkshire Hospital call 0118 322 8338 or email [talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)
- For services provided by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust call 0118 9605027 or email [BHT@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:BHT@berkshire.nhs.uk)



Helps local people get the best out of their local health and social care services by providing:

- opportunities for people to have their say and influence the delivery and design of local health services
- Providing advice and advocacy to help you understand your rights, raise concerns or make complaints about the service you received.

Call 0118 937 2295 or email [info@healthwatchreading.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchreading.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchreading.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchreading.org.uk)

## Drug and Alcohol Support

There are a number of organisations offering support to people who misuse drugs and/or alcohol and those who are affected by this addiction.

### Drug and alcohol services

#### IRiS Reading

The Integrated Recovery Service (IRiS) provides free and confidential information, advice and support to Reading adults (18 years+) and is the first point of contact to access local drug and alcohol services.

Services include:

- Referrals to substitute prescribing
- Pre-detox support
- Harm reduction
- Health screening and vaccinations
- Housing support
- Alternative therapies
- Referrals to IRiS treatment and Recovery Services and IRiS Recovery and Wellbeing Services
- Needle exchange

Drop in to 38 Queens Road, Reading RG1 4AU or call 0118 956 7441

#### SOURCE

Drug and alcohol service supporting children and young people with a drug and/or alcohol problem in Reading.

Source also support parents and other family members.

Call 0118 901 5666

### Support for family and friends

#### DrugFam

Support for families and friends affected by someone else's misuse of drugs and/or alcohol.

National helpline 0300 388 3853 or [www.drugfam.co.uk](http://www.drugfam.co.uk)

Local support group meets Wednesdays 7-9pm Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, Caversham RG4 5AE

#### Adfam

A national organisation supporting families and friends affected by someone else's drug and alcohol problems.

Visit [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk) for information, advice and to find your nearest support group.

#### Al-Anon

Supporting family and friends of alcoholics.

National Helpline 020 7403 0888

Visit [www.al-anonuk.org.uk](http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk) to find a local meeting.

#### Families Anonymous

Supporting family and friends affected by someone else's substance misuse.

Visit [www.famanon.org.uk](http://www.famanon.org.uk) to find a local meeting.

### Carer's Personal Budgets

Your Carer's Personal Budget is money allocated for you to spend on things that will help meet your needs as a carer.

For example, you could spend it on:

- relaxation therapies
- household equipment or
- help to manage tasks which you find difficult to stay on top of because of your caring responsibilities.

You can't spend the money on replacement care for the person your look after - if this is needed it will be included in their own support plan.

#### Taking your Personal Budget

You can choose to:

- take your Personal Budget as single lump sum payment (a Simple Carer's Direct Payment) - the amount you get is based on the amount that other carers in a similar situation have found will buy the support they need or
- we can help you choose and plan services and support to meet the needs identified by your Carer's Assessment. In this case the amount of your Personal Budget will be based on your actual support plan and may be more or less than the amount you would get as a Simple Carer's Direct Payment.

## Help from your GP

**Caring can take a toll on your own health and wellbeing so it is especially important to look after yourself.**

It is important to identify yourself as a carer to your GP Practice so they are aware of your situation and can offer extra support if necessary. For example they can:

- ensure you have access to flu jabs and health checks
- provide information and advice on medical conditions and treatments for the person you care for
- visit you or the person you care for at home if your situation makes it difficult for you to attend appointments at the surgery
- arrange appointments for you and the person you care for at the same time to avoid you having to visit the surgery twice
- arrange for repeat prescriptions to be delivered to your local pharmacy
- provide information on other NHS services such as the continence service and patient transport to hospital appointments
- provide letters and information to support applications for benefits or help with housing or travel.

## Carers Emergency Plan

Do you worry what might happen to the person you care for if you were stuck in traffic, involved in an accident, suddenly taken ill or otherwise delayed? If so, ask your social care worker about putting together an emergency plan or speak to the Carer's Hub.

Your plan will set out who needs to be contacted and what needs to be done to make sure the person you care for is safe and properly supported.

Keep your "in case of emergency" numbers" in your mobile phone.

## Social care for the person you look after

Reading Borough Council provides community based social care services for families with a disabled child and adults who are dependent on others for care and/or support because they are older, have a physical or learning disability, have a visual and/or hearing impairment, a long-term illness, mental health needs or are dependent on drugs and alcohol.

### The Children & Young People's Disabilities Team (CYPDT)

CYPDT supports children and young people up to 25 years with:

- severe or profound physical, learning or sensory disability
- long-term illness, life threatening condition or complex medical needs
- severe communication or behavioural difficulties
- a combination of less severe disabilities/issues which together cause significant stress.

Their aim is to ensure your child:

- supported within the family
- encouraged to achieve their maximum potential
- is part of your local community.

They also support young people to transition to adulthood.

### Help offered

This is based on the outcome of an assessment and may include help with meeting personal care needs, equipment and adaptations.

Personal Budgets and Direct Payments may be offered.

### How to get an CYPDT assessment

Call:

0118 937 3641 - children (0-18 years)

0118 937 3747 - young adults (18-25):

### Adult Social Care Services

Reading's adult social care teams offer a range of services for adults (over 18 years) who need help to support their wellbeing, maintain their independence and stay living at home for as long as possible.

### Help offered

The help offered is based on the outcome of a care and support needs assessment and may include one or more of the following:

- Advice and information about local services that could provide the help you and the person you care for need
- Helping you find a social or activity club which offers both you and/or the person you care for the chance to keep active, maintain interests and/or stay in touch with others
- A referral to the Reablement service which provides up to 6 weeks of intensive care and therapy to help the person you care for rebuild their strength and mobility, improve their confidence and regain all or some of their independence following an illness or injury.
- Telecare such as a pendant alarm that calls for help or sensors that detect and raise an alert when something happens (or doesn't happen that should). There are also devices that can monitor activity or safety of a person or their environment. Alarms and alerts can

### Mental Health Foundation

National charity providing information and advice on a wide range of mental health issues.

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

### Mind

Information and advice on mental health issues, where to get help, treatments and legal issues.

Visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) or call the Infoline 0300 123 3393.

### Young Minds

The voice for young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Visit [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) or call the parent helpline 0808 802 5544.

### Alzheimer's Society

Information and advice about living with and caring for someone with dementia.

Visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) or call the national helpline on 0300 222 1122

### Reading and District Alzheimer's Society

Information, one-to-one support, befriending scheme and activities for people with all forms of dementia, their carers, family and friends.

Call 0118 959 6482 or email Berkshire [@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:@alzheimers.org.uk)

### Samaritans

If you need to talk about an issue that is troubling you - large or small - call the Samaritans

116 123 Free helpline (available 24/7)

## Palliative Care

If the person you care for has an illness that can't be cured, palliative care will make them as comfortable as possible, by managing pain and other distressing symptoms. It also involves social, psychological, and spiritual support.

Palliative care isn't just for the end of life. The person you care for could receive palliative care earlier in their illness while receiving other therapies to treat their condition

Palliative care can be provided in a range of settings - at home, in hospital or community hospital, in a care home or a hospice. It is important to know the wishes of the person you care for so, where possible, they get the care they want.

See [www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide](http://www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide) to find details of organisations providing palliative care Support for Carers

### Marie Curie

Marie Curie offers information, advice and guidance to help you deal with your feelings, look after yourself and provide day-to-day care.

Visit [www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/being-together](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/being-together) or call 0800 090 2309



### Difficult Conversations

The "Dying Matters" website provides advice and guidance to help you and the person talk about their wishes for their end of life care.

Planning ahead also makes the legal and practical consequences of illness and death much easier for everyone to deal with.

[www.dyingmatters.org](http://www.dyingmatters.org)

# Mental health and dementia care

**Community mental health services in Reading are provided by Berkshire Healthcare NHS foundation Trust** - see [www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)

## Community Mental Health Team

The Community Mental Health Team is a joint health and social care team provided by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Reading Borough Council.

The team provides specialist support to Reading adults (18 year+) with severe and complex mental health issues.

The team accepts self-referrals and referrals from relatives, friends and other agencies - call the Common Point of Entry (CPE) on 0300 365 0300

## Mental Health Crisis Service

This team provides a 24/7 service to support people having a mental health crisis and who are at risk of harming themselves.

The aim of the service is to provide support to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions.

Call 0300 365 99 99.

## Talking Therapies

This service provides interventions, therapy, courses, workshops, face-to-face therapy and counselling to help with:

- Depression, anxiety and stress
- Phobias
- Panic
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Call 0300 365 2000

## Services for older people

The Older People's Mental Health Team supports older people with dementia or other mental health conditions such as depression, psychosis and severe anxiety.

They also support younger people with early onset dementia.

Services include

- assessment and diagnosis
- medical care
- psychological (talking) therapies
- group and one-on-one therapy
- occupational therapy
- support and information for your carers
- inpatient services (for 24 hour care)

Where appropriate they will refer to specialist services like:

- Memory Service (Memory Clinics)
- Home Treatment Team
- Care Home Support Team
- Inpatient Services and the
- Older People's Mental Health Liaison Team

Ask your GP or care worker for a referral or contact the Common Point of Entry (CPE) on 0300 365 0300

## Information, advice and support

### Rethink

National charity offering information, advice and support for people with mental illness, their families and carers

Visit [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) or call 0300 5000 927

be routed to the carer, other nominated person or to a support centre who will make contact and if necessary arrange for help to come

- Equipment or minor adaptations which can help you or the person you care for manage more tasks without help or more safely
- Advice about major adaptations (such as adapted bathrooms, stairlifts, ramps for wheelchairs, moving light switches) to make it easier for the person you care for to get around their home and have their needs met. Households on low incomes may have financial help with the cost of this work
- Advice on housing options if the person you care for is unable to continue living at home.
- Personal Budget Support - if their assessment shows they have eligible ongoing care and support needs.



The Council will only recommend that the person you look after should move to a care home if their assessment shows that they have substantial and complex needs which can no longer be met at home.

### Getting an assessment

You and/or the person you care for can either complete a Adults Care and Support Needs Assessment online:

[www.reading.gov.uk/supportsa](http://www.reading.gov.uk/supportsa)

or call:

- 0118 937 3747 (older people/adults with disabilities)
- 0118 937 6131 (adults with visual/hearing impairment)
- 0300 365 0300 (adults with mental health needs)

## Personal Budget Support (PBS)

The PBS Team will work with you and the person you care for to develop a Support Plan which sets out how their eligible needs (identified through their assessment) will be met.

This includes:

- Identifying any eligible needs that you (and any other carers involved) are willing and able to support
- Identifying any eligible needs that could be met by community based services (like lunch clubs and social/activity groups)
- Identifying the remaining (unmet) eligible needs and helping the person you care for choose how they would like those needs to be met.

At the same time the PBS Team will work out how much it is likely to cost to pay for services to support the unmet eligible needs - the Personal Budget.

## About Personal Budgets

A Personal Budget gives the person you look after more choice and control over:

- How their Personal Budget will be spent - they choose the type of support they want, when they want it and who will provide it
- How their support is managed - they may choose:
  - ♦ to take the Personal Budget as a Direct Payment which means they take control of the money and take responsibility for arranging and managing their own care (with support if needed). This option allows them to directly employ a Personal Assistant or
  - ♦ to ask social services to arrange and manage their service for them or
  - ♦ to have a combination of the two

## Care charges and help with care costs

Although the support provided to carers in Reading is free, adults receiving support may be asked to pay something towards the cost of their care.

The rules around charging for social care services are complicated - for more details visit [www.reading.gov.uk/carecharges](http://www.reading.gov.uk/carecharges)

### Community based services

#### Free services

Services like information and advice, assessments, support planning and Reablement are free to all Reading adults regardless of their financial situation.

#### Services with a fixed charge

Everyone pays the same for services like community alarms regardless of their financial circumstances.

#### Personal Budget

The person you care for may be asked to pay towards their Personal Budget - how much they pay depends on the outcome of a financial assessment.

They won't be asked to pay more than their assessment shows they could afford - people on a low income may not be asked to pay anything.

#### Self-funders

The person you care for will not get help with funding if they:

- have income and savings above the Government's upper limit or
- refuse a financial assessment

Self funders who ask social services to arrange and manage their care services for them will be charged a fee to cover administration costs.

### Care home fees

If your assessment shows that the person you care for has substantial and complex needs that cannot be met at home they may be eligible for help towards their care home fees based on the outcome of a financial assessment.

#### Self funders

If the person you care for has income savings and capital over the Government's Upper limit (or they refuse an assessment) they will be responsible for paying their own care home fees.

### NHS funded care

#### NHS Funded Continuing Healthcare

If the person you care for has an overriding primary health need they may be eligible for NHS Continuing healthcare. This means that the NHS will cover all the costs

- of any health and social care services provided at home or
- care home fees (including board and accommodation).

#### NHS-funded nursing care

If the person you care for is assessed as requiring nursing care in a registered nursing care home you will be eligible for NHS-funded nursing care.

This means that the NHS pays towards the cost of the registered nursing services provided.

For more information visit NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## Neighbourhood Services for older people

The Council's Neighbourhood Services Team works directly with older people in their neighbourhoods to ensure they have opportunities to stay involved in community activities.

### Social groups

The team has supported the development of a number of successful social groups which are now run by older people (with help from the team where needed) in Caversham Park Village, Amersham Road, Southcote and Whitley Wood .

More groups are planned.

### Events

From time to time the team arranges Borough wide events for older people like Tea Dances and the "Older People's Day" which celebrates the contribution older people make to our town.

### Advice and support

The team can also offer information about other services available for older people and will provide individual support to help someone take the first step to get involved in their neighbourhood activities.

#### Contact the team

For more details call Michelle Berry on 0783 433 5103 or Sarah Hunneman 0758 087 0945

## Sensory needs services

If the person you care for is deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired or deaf blind contact Sensory Needs Team. A social care worker will arrange to visit you at home to carry out a specialist assessment to see what help you need to help you cope with a sensory disability.

Depending on the outcome of this assessment they may:

- offer practical tips, advice and information
- provide specialist equipment to help you maintain your independence
- offer specialist training

- tell you about specialist support groups
- add your name to the register for people with sensory impairments and explain the benefits of becoming registered.

If you need other care and support needs they will support you through the assessment process.

#### Contact the Team

Call on 0118 937 6131 (minicom: 0118 943 1088) or email: [adultsensoryneeds@reading.gov.uk](mailto:adultsensoryneeds@reading.gov.uk)



# Learning disability services

## Social care services

Reading Borough Council has two teams supporting people with learning disabilities:

- The Children and Young People's Team who work with families with disabled children up to the age of 25 years
- The Community Learning Disability Team (CLTD) who support people over 25 years

Both teams are made up of social care workers and community nurses who work together to support people with severe learning disabilities/difficulties.

Their role is to make sure that the person you look after has the specialist support they need to:

- stay healthy and well
- be as independent as possible and reach their potential
- be involved in the community

This can include support to:

- find somewhere to live
- go to school or college or work
- meet new friends
- take part in sports and other activities
- find a day service
- access health services

## Housing options

If the person you care for wants to live more independently their social care worker can help find suitable housing - this could be:

- Supported housing - the person you care for may be able to live on their own in a flat or in a group home with the support they need to maintain a tenancy, manage their money and develop independent living skills.

- Shared Lives Scheme - the person you care for may be able to live with a Shared Lives Carer who support to them to develop independent living skills.
- If the person you care for has complex needs a residential or nursing care home for people with learning disabilities may be an option.

## Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH)

The Senior Nurse/Learning Disability Coordinator can help make hospital visits easier for you and the person you care for.

For more information see [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/information-for-disabled-patients](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/information-for-disabled-patients) or call 0118 322 8159 for details.

## Health Passport

Talkback offer a "Health Passport" which allows you to record important information that can be shared with health professionals to make appointments easier to manage.

Call 01494 434 448

## Talkback

This is a self-advocacy group providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to meet, share experiences, support each other and learn to speak up for themselves.

Call 01494 434 448 or email [talkback@talkback-uk.com](mailto:talkback@talkback-uk.com)

## Mencap Reading

Provides services and support for people with learning disabilities and their families.

Visit [www.readingmencap.org.uk](http://www.readingmencap.org.uk) or call 0118 966 2518

## Deferred Payments Scheme

If the person you care for needs to sell their home to pay their care home fees they could apply for a Deferred Payment.

This scheme allows people to put off selling their home to pay their care home fees during their lifetime.

The Council effectively lends money to help pay the fees. They will place a legal charge on the property and recover all their costs, plus interest, when the property is sold.



## Choosing a care home

If the person you care for needs or is likely to need help with care home fees in the future they must choose a home that is prepared to accept Council rates or find someone who is willing to commit to paying the additional costs for as long as the person is in the home.

# Help with decision making

## Power of Attorney

If the person you look after lacks the capacity to make decisions about their care (because of a learning disability, head injury, dementia etc.) the Council will discuss their needs with the person/people legally allowed to make welfare and/or financial decisions for them because they have a 'Lasting Power of Attorney' or have been appointed by the Court of Protection.

For more information about mental capacity and planning ahead visit [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian).



## Independent Financial Advice & Support Options

The Council works with My Care My Home to make sure people can access independent information and advice - this includes :

- Providing information and advice about care and support options
- Referrals to regulated financial services to help plan funding for care

The advice My Care My Home provide is free. To Reading residents. They will always explain any charges for services they refer people to.

Call 0800 731 8470 or email [info@mycaremyhome.co.uk](mailto:info@mycaremyhome.co.uk)

## Getting a break from caring

Regular breaks from caring can benefit both you and the person you care for. The right kind of break, at the right time, can help people who are ill, frail or disabled to carry on living with friends or family in their own communities.

The person you care for may not want someone else looking after them but most carers find that once they've taken the plunge it doesn't take long for everyone to adjust to a change in routine and even start looking forward to seeing someone different from time to time.

### Supported activity sessions

The person you care for could go to a supported day service, social group or activity session.

This gives the person you care for the opportunity to get out of the house, take part in activities and make new friends while you take some time for yourself.

### Shared Lives breaks

The Shared Lives Scheme could link the person you care for with a trained carer who can provide care and support while you take a break.

This could be in their own home, in your home or out and about in the community.

Breaks are very flexible and may be anything from a few hours each week to overnight or longer stays.

### Sitting Services/replacement care

Some organisations provide trained carers/support workers to sit with the person you care for a few hours while you do other things.

### Residential respite breaks

The person you care for could have a short stay in a residential or nursing care home so you can have a complete break from caring.

Lots of homes offer residential respite - some people like to return regularly to one place where they get to know the staff and routines, but taking a break in an institutional setting doesn't suit everyone.

### Need a break from caring?

Search the Reading Services Guide support to find information about organisations offering residential respite, sitting services and supported activities.



[www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide](http://www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide)  
0118 937 3747

Crossroads offer:

- Sitting services
- Day/evening, overnight or weekend replacement care (regular or as needed)
- Group care with targeted activities for the person with care needs



0118 945 4209

[www.readingcrossroads.org](http://www.readingcrossroads.org)

## Supported learning, training and working

### Colleges

Most colleges provide specialist courses and/or support to help people with disabilities.

### New Directions

Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BQ

Call 0345 842 0012

### Reading College

Reading Campus, Kings Road, Reading RG1 4HJ

Call 0800 036 8888 or email courses@uwl.ac.uk

### Bracknell and Wokingham College

Church Road, Cracknel RG12 1DJ

Call 0845 330 3343 or visit [www.bracknell.ac.uk](http://www.bracknell.ac.uk)

### Henley College

Dean field Avenue, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 1UH

Call 01491 579 988 or visit [www.henley.col.ac.uk](http://www.henley.col.ac.uk)

### Newbury College

Monks Lane, Newbury RG14 7TD

Call 01635 845 000 or visit [www.newbury-college.ac.uk](http://www.newbury-college.ac.uk)

### Help with costs

#### 24+ Advanced Learning Loans

Loans to available to pay course fees for people over 24 years attending an eligible course (level 3 or 4 /A level)

#### Bursary Fund

Help with some costs while studying - like classroom assistance, childcare and travel.

For details visit [www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans](http://www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans)

### Reading Services Guide



### Looking for a course, training opportunity or paid work?

Visit the Reading Services Guide to find organisations offering specialist support for people with disabilities



### Training and working

#### Jobcentre plus

Specialist Disability Employment Advisers providing advice and support to help people with disabilities into work.

Drop into Adelphi House (Friar Street, Reading RG1 1HD) or call 0845 604 3719.

#### Adviza

Offers specialist advice and support for young people with special needs up to the age of 25 years.

Drop into the Elevate Reading Hub, (Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BQ), call 0845

## Keeping vulnerable adults and children safe

Older people, adults with disabilities, mental ill-health or long-term illness and children are at greater risk of being harmed or exploited by other people.

Anything which threatens someone's safety is abuse and must be stopped.

### What is abuse?

Abuse can be:

- Physical abuse - if someone hurts another person by slapping, pushing or punching them
- Sexual abuse - if someone touches another person inappropriately, or forces them to touch or have sex with them against their wishes
- Emotional abuse - if someone is constantly shouting at, humiliating or threatening to harm another person
- Financial abuse - if someone takes a person's money or valuables without permission, or stops them having access to their money or puts pressure on them to give them or leave them money or things in their will
- Neglect - if a carer stops giving the person they look after the help they need to stay warm, get washed and dressed, eat properly and take medicine
- Discrimination - if someone is treated badly because of their age, disability, race or religion

Abuse can happen anywhere:

- at home or at work
- in a care home, day centre, hospital
- in any public place

Anyone can be an abuser:

- a partner, relative, carers
- neighbours and friends
- staff

### Report Abuse - make it stop

#### Adult abuse

If you are being abused, or are concerned about a vulnerable adult:

**Safeguarding Adults  
0118 937 3747**

#### Child protection

If you are concerned about a child or young person:

**Multi Agency Safeguarding  
Hub (MASH) 0118 937 3641**

#### Domestic abuse

If you are experiencing domestic abuse:

**BWA Helpline 0118 950 4003**

#### In an emergency

If someone is in danger:

**Police 999**



Looking after someone can be stressful and lonely and may push you to your limits.

If you are worried you might harm the person you care for please call the Adults Safeguarding Team or MASH on the numbers above.

## Carers Support Groups

Many carers find it useful to join a support group where they have the opportunity to take a break and meet other people in a similar situation.

### ACRE Family Support Group

Supports black and minority ethnic families caring for children (0-25) with additional needs and disabilities.

Support groups, 1-2-1 information, advice and guidance and activities for children.

Email [amelia.robinson@acre-reading.org](mailto:amelia.robinson@acre-reading.org) or call 0118 951 0279

### Crossroads

Support group for carers of younger people with dementia (pre-retirement age).

Call 0118 945 4209.

### Reading Mencap - Alpha Service

Information and Support for black and minority ethnic families with children and adults with learning difficulties & disabilities.

Call Reading Mencap on 0118 966 2518

### Reading & Wokingham MS Society

Support for those caring for someone with MS.

Contact [heathercresswell@talktalk.net](mailto:heathercresswell@talktalk.net) or 0118 931 1017

### Mental Health Carers Group

5.30 to 7.30pm (Room A&B) on first Monday in the month at Prospect Park Hospital, Honey Lane, RG30 4EJ 5.30

Call 0118 324 7333 or email [ask@berkshirecarershubs.org](mailto:ask@berkshirecarershubs.org)

### Pangbourne Carers Group

Pangbourne Small Village Hall (*Station Road, Pangbourne RG8 7DY*)

12.30 to 2pm on first Wednesday of the month

Call 0118 324 7333 or email [ask@berkshirecarershubs.org](mailto:ask@berkshirecarershubs.org)

### Reading Carers Groups

Risc Centre (*35 -39 London Street Reading*).

2.30 - 4pm second Wednesday of the month (starting 11 May 2016)

19.00 - 20.30 first Wednesday of the month (starting 1 June).

Call 0118 324 7333 or email [ask@berkshirecarershubs.org](mailto:ask@berkshirecarershubs.org)

### Whitley Carers (Stroke) Group

South Reading Youth and Community Centre, Northumberland Avenue.

10am to 12noon on first Thursday of the month every other month (from 2 June 2016)

Call 0118 324 7333 or email [ask@berkshirecarershubs.org](mailto:ask@berkshirecarershubs.org)

# Carers grants, discounts and offers

The Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub provides a range of grants to support carers who look after an adult or disabled child.

## Carers Essentials

You can apply for grants of up to £300 towards the cost of ONE piece of household equipment which will benefit you in your caring role.

This could include things like:

- washing machine
- cooker
- fridge-freezer
- bed

The amount you get will be based on a standard price for a particular item - this is to ensure that the Carers Trust can maximise funds and help more people.

You must take this into account when you are choosing the items.

In very exceptional circumstances you may be able to apply for multiple items (as long as the combined cost is not more than £300). Ideally these items must be related (like a washing machine and outside airer)

## Carers Take Time Out

You can apply for a grant of up to £400 to help you take a break from caring.

You can use the grant to pay:

- towards the cost of a holiday/break at home or abroad
- for the person you care for, a family member or friend to go away with you
- up to £160 (or 40% of the total grant awarded) of the cost of replacement care if needed.

## Carers: Skills for You

You can apply for a grant of up to £500 to pay towards the costs of a course, class or training that will help you:

- with your caring role
- to refresh your skills and knowledge or retrain for a new career so you can return to work
- develop new interests outside your caring role.

You can use the grant to pay towards:

- course, class and tuition fees
- course materials, books or equipment needed for the course or activity
- travel expenses and subsistence costs while taking part in the learning activity
- the cost of replacement care (up to £200 or 40% of the grant awarded) needed while you take part in the course or activity

In the past the Carers Trust has helped pay towards a wide range of courses - including creative writing, sign language, counselling and training for an HGV licence.

For more information & to apply for any of these grants



Call the Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub  
**0118 324 7333**

## No. 5 Counselling Service

If something is troubling you it is important to talk about it.

Counselling offers a safe place to talk about the difficulties in your life. They are specially trained to listen and help you make sense of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour. They won't judge you or tell you what to do.

No. 5 Young People's Counselling Service offers free, confidential counselling to young people aged 10 to 25 who live or work in the Greater Reading area.

Call 0118 901 5668 to make an appointment.

For other enquires call 0118 901 5649 or email [admin@no5.org.uk](mailto:admin@no5.org.uk)

## Babble.carers.org.uk

Babble (developed by the Carers Trust) provides a safe and supportive online space for you to:

- chat and share experiences with other young carers across the UK
- get individual information and advice from the online support team by email or chat

## Reading Youth

Website providing information about events, activities and organisations for young people in Reading.

Visit [www.reading.gov.uk/youth](http://www.reading.gov.uk/youth)



## Young Carer Aware e-learning course

Although this course was designed to help other people understand the needs of young carers, it is also useful for young carers themselves.

Young Carer Aware has three bite-sized modules plus a short test at the end to test your learning.

- Young but not care free (20 mins)
- Legislation and children's rights (11 mins)
- Meeting the needs of young carers (10 mins)
- Test your knowledge (10 mins)

[www.reading.gov.uk/youngcareraware](http://www.reading.gov.uk/youngcareraware)



## Carer Aware e-learning course

This course is a useful resource to help carers understand their rights and the support they are entitled to.

Carer Aware has three bite-sized modules plus a short test at the end to test your learning.

- Who cares? (10 mins)
- Carer's legal rights (15 mins)
- Meeting carers needs (15 mins)
- Test your knowledge (5 mins)

[www.reading.gov.uk/careraaware](http://www.reading.gov.uk/careraaware)

## Support for young carers

If you are between 5 and 18 years and you spend a lot more time looking after a family member or carrying out household chores than other children/young people your age because a parent, brother, sister, grandparent or other relative is ill, disabled, has a mental illness, a learning disability or a problem with drugs or alcohol, then you are a young carer.

### Your extra responsibilities

These may include:

- Extra household chores like cleaning, cooking, shopping or laundry
- Organising appointments or helping with medication
- Looking after brothers and sisters or helping them with homework
- Helping someone in your family with washing, dressing, getting in and out of bed because they can't manage on their own
- Supporting a relative after they have been drinking or using drugs
- Supporting a relative when their mood is low
- Looking after and/or playing with a sibling who has special needs to keep them calm.

### Why you may need support

Your extra responsibilities may:

- cause you to fall behind with school work because you can't attend, don't get time to do your homework or you are too tired to concentrate
- make it difficult for you to take part in after-school activities, play or meet with friends outside school or get time to yourself

You and your family may be eligible for support from social services - call the Early Help Team 0118 937 6545 to ask for a Young Carers Assessment.

### Young carers assessment

This involves talking to you, your parents (and anyone else you want to be involved) to understand your situation.

Your assessment will:

- look at the impact your responsibilities have on your education, training and leisure opportunities
- decide whether it is appropriate for you to continue providing this care
- ask you if you want to carry on caring and, if so, how much support you are willing and able to provide
- identify other services to support your family.

Contact the Early Help Team on 0118 937 6545 for details.

### Young Carers Project

Youth Clubs for young carers 5 - 9 years, 8 - 12 years and 12 - 19 years.

All sessions are at Fairview Youth Club (George Street, Reading, RG1 7RR) - transport can be arranged.

Email [youngcarers@reading.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@reading.gov.uk) or call 0118 937 4003 for more details

### Stable Life

This project offers young carers the chance to work with horses (alone or in a group) and members of the Stable Life team to develop new experiences and skills in team work, relationships, communication and emotional well-being.

Email [youngcarers@reading.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@reading.gov.uk) or call 0118 937 4003 for a referral.



Register with carerSmart to benefit from a wide range of offers including:

- Cash back on shopping from major retailers (like Boots, Argos, Sainsbury, M&S, B&Q, Apple)
- Best rates from energy providers (like npower, e.on, British Gas)
- Insurance renewal savings
- Discounts on holidays and travel arrangement (First Choice)
- Reduced price lifestyle activities (Costa Coffee, Legoland, Odeon, David Lloyd, Fitness First)
- Member advice services

....and much more

The club is for carers, people with care needs, Carers Trust staff and volunteers as well as people who donate money.

Register free at: [www.carersmart.org](http://www.carersmart.org)

CarerSmart is provided by Carers Trust.

### Reading Arts and Venues

A person accompanying a wheelchair user will get free admission to events at the Hexagon, Town Hall, and South Street. They can also arrange escorts to give carers a break.

For details call 0118 960 6060

### Cinema

If the person you care for receives a disability benefit or is registered blind they could get a CEA\* Card - for a small charge.

With the card the person accompanying them to a film gets a free ticket.

To apply go to [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk) or call 0239 224 8545

\*Cinema Exhibitors' Association

### Your Reading Passport (YRP)

YRP is a combined discount and library scheme for Reading Borough residents.

It offers discounts:

- on activities in the Council's sport and leisure centres
- to selected shows and events at Reading Arts and Venues
- in Reading Museum's gift shop and on children's activities
- on DVD, Video and CD hire at Reading Libraries
- on allotments
- on bulky waste collections and
- with a variety of local businesses

### Concessionary Passport

If you are over 60 years old, have a disability or are on a low income you may qualify for bigger discounts and free off-peak use of some sports and leisure facilities.

### How to join

Pick up a YRP Application Form from your local library or any Reading Sport and Leisure centre.

Take your completed form (and supporting documents) to any issuing centre.

## Benefits for Carers

Caring often leads to financial difficulties. It is important to ensure that both you and the person you care for claim all the benefits you are entitled to.

### Carer's Allowance

You don't have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for to claim. You won't get extra if you care for more than one person.

To be eligible the person you care for must get:

- Personal Independence Payment Daily Living Component or Disability Living Allowance at the middle or highest rate for personal care or
- Attendance Allowance or
- Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or
- Constant Attendance Allowance at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension or
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP).

and you must:

- Be 16 years or over
- spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone
- have lived in England, Scotland or Wales for at least 2 of the last 3 years
- normally live in England, Scotland or Wales, or live abroad as a member of the armed forces
- not be not in full-time education or studying for 21 hours a week or more
- not earn more than £110 a week (after taxes, care costs while you're at work and 50% of what you pay into your pension) - don't count your pension as income
- not be subject to immigration control

### How to claim

Online [www.gov.uk/carers-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance)

Email [cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Call 0345 608 4321 or Textphone 0345 604 5312

### Changes to other benefits

When you claim Carer's Allowance the person you care for may stop getting:

- a severe disability premium
- an extra amount for severe disability paid with Pension Credit
- reduced Council Tax (call 0118 937 3707 to see if this applies)

When you claim Carer's Allowance your other benefits may be reduced, but your total benefit payments will usually either go up or stay the same.

### National Insurance Credits

For each week you get Carer's Allowance you'll automatically get National Insurance credits.

These credits can help to fill gaps in your National Insurance record, to make sure you qualify for certain benefits including the State Pension (see [www.gov.uk/national-insurance-credits](http://www.gov.uk/national-insurance-credits))

## Working and Caring

Although working alongside caring can be difficult to juggle, it does ensure you have a life outside your caring responsibilities which provides different challenges, the chance to meet/stay in contact with other people and some financial stability.

### Should I give up work?

Many carers feel they should give up work because the demands of caring are so great. However, once you give up work you may find it hard to get back into the job market. And once you are a full-time carer you may find it difficult to keep in touch with others and you may face financial difficulties.

Before you decide ask yourself:

- How much time do I spend caring?
- Am I the only person who can provide this care?
- Would the person I care for accept help from others?
- Can I afford to give up work?
- How will giving up work affect my pension entitlement?
- Will I miss the social contact or the work itself?
- Will I lose important skills?

### Know your rights

Most working carers have the following rights:

- The right to request flexible working
- The right to take time off in emergencies
- The right to parental leave if you have a child
- The right not to be discriminated against or harassed under the Equality Act

You may not be covered by these rights if you are self-employed, on a short term contract or employed through an agency.

### Talk to your employer

Make sure your employer is aware of your situation - they may agree to making reasonable changes to your work pattern - like working part-time, job sharing, working term-time only or working compressed hours (fitting five day's work into four longer days) and other support.

### Other help

- Contact Adult Social Care Services to see if you and the person you care for can get help so you can continue to work. *See page 4.*
- You may be able to buy support services from a care agency.

### Talking through your options

Before you decide it may help to talk your options through with someone else. You can:

- call the Carers Hub on 0118 324 7333
- see if there is someone in your workplace who could help - like HR, occupational health or an in-house counselling or information service.

### Getting back into work

Jobcentre Plus runs a Work Preparation Support Scheme for carers which provides advice and training to help you start or return to work.

You may also get help with the cost of replacement care while you take part in training or attend interviews.

For details call Jobcentre Plus 0845 6060 234 or Textphone: 0845 6055 255

## Accessible holidays and days out

Use the following websites to help you and your family find a short break, holiday or day out.

### Tourism for All UK

National charity dedicated to making tourism welcoming to all. Visit [www.tourismforall.org.uk](http://www.tourismforall.org.uk)

### Visit England

The English national tourist board website has information and guides to help you plan an accessible break. See [www.visitengland.com/plan-your-visit/access-all](http://www.visitengland.com/plan-your-visit/access-all)

### Open Britain

Search [www.openbritain.net](http://www.openbritain.net) to find accessible destinations and places to stay in the UK.

### Nationwide Access Register

See [www.directenquiries.com](http://www.directenquiries.com) for information and guides to help you plan accessible outings in the UK.

### Disabledholidays.com

Specialist travel agent offering everything you need to find and arrange a holiday at home and abroad.

- accessible accommodation
- supported and escorted holidays and holidays with care
- activity holidays for disabled adults and children
- airport assistance, flights and adapted transfers
- mobility and equipment hire
- specialist holiday insurance
- deals

Visit [www.disabledholidays.com](http://www.disabledholidays.com) or call 01457 833 444

### Take a break at Carlton Meres Country Park

If you are registered as a carer with the Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub you can access breaks in one of our self catering lodges at Carlton Meres in Suffolk.

Carlton Meres is set amongst beautiful mature woodland surroundings and is perfect place to escape from the stresses of modern life with everything you could want to relax.

We have two lodges available for one week bookings (Saturday to Saturday):

- Forest Lodge sleeps 4-6 (not suitable for wheelchair access).
- Kingfisher Lodge sleeps 6- 8 (fully wheelchair accessible with wet room).



Facilities on site include: Shop, Launderette, outdoor pool, gym, sauna & steam room, snooker room, tennis court, fishing lake, bar (with WiFi) and restaurant. Pets are not allowed (assistance dogs

Guest are asked to cover cleaning costs by way of a minimum £45 donation to the Carers hub.

**For more information please call 0118 324 7333**



## Income Support

If you and your partner are of working age and on a low income you may be eligible for Income Support.

For more details see [www.gov.uk/income-support](http://www.gov.uk/income-support).

To claim call Jobcentre Plus 0800 055 6688 or Textphone: 0800 023 4888

## Universal Credit

This is a new means tested benefit which is gradually being rolled out to working age people on a low income.

It replaces Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits.



Use an online benefits calculator to make sure you are getting ALL the benefits you are entitled to:

- [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)
- [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## Disability Benefits

The person you care for may be eligible for disability benefits to help towards the cost of their care and support.

### Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP helps people aged 16 to 64 with some of the extra costs caused by long-term ill-health or a disability.

PIP has two parts – a Daily Living Component and a Mobility Component. The rate you get is based on an assessment and depends on how your condition affects you, not the condition itself. You will be regularly reassessed.

For details: visit [www.gov.uk/pip](http://www.gov.uk/pip)

To claim call 0800 917 2222 or Textphone 0800 917 7777

### Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

If you were born on or after 8 April 1948 your DLA is being replaced by Personal Independence Payments (PIP) – even if you have an indefinite or lifetime award.

The Department for Work and Pensions will tell you when you should apply.

If you were born before this your DLA will continue.

### DLA for children

You can only make new DLA claims for a child under 16.

For details visit [www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children](http://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children)

To claim call 0345 712 3456 or Textphone 0345 722 4433

### Attendance Allowance

This benefit is for adults over 65 years to help towards the costs of personal care and support.

It is paid at two different rates - how much you get depends on the level of care you need.

Your other benefits may increase if you get Attendance Allowance.

For details visit [www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance)

To claim call the Attendance Allowance Helpline 0345 605 6055 or Textphone: 0345 604 5312

## Help with housing costs

If you are on low income and struggling to meet your housing costs you may be eligible for help with your rent, council tax and mortgage or loan interest.

### Housing Benefit

If you are on a low income you may be able to get Housing Benefit to help towards your rent. How much you get depends on your rent, your income and savings and the people in your household.

Your entitlement to Housing Benefit will be reduced if you have more bedrooms than you need (according to the national bedroom standard). However, you are allowed an extra bedroom if a member of your household receives overnight care from someone who does not live with you.

### Council Tax Support

If you are on a low income you may be eligible for Council Tax Support to help towards your Council Tax.

You can apply for Council Tax Support even if you own your own home



To check your eligibility for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support and apply visit [becs.reading.gov.uk](http://becs.reading.gov.uk) or call the Council's Benefits Team on 0118 937 3707.

### Support for mortgage interest (SMI)

If you own your own home and get certain income related benefits/Pension Credit you may be eligible for help towards the interest payments on:

- your mortgage
- loans for certain repairs and improvements to your home

SMI is paid as part of your benefit and is normally paid direct to your lender.

You won't get help towards the amount you borrowed - only the interest.

For more information visit [www.gov.uk/support-for-mortgage-interest](http://www.gov.uk/support-for-mortgage-interest)

### To claim

Call: 0345 604 3719 or Textphone 0345 608 8551

If you get Pension Credits:

Call 0845 606 0265 or Textphone 0845 606 0285

### Council Tax Discounts

If you live alone or nobody else in your home counts as an adult you are entitled to a discount.

For Council Tax purposes the following people do not count as adults:

- anyone under 18, 18 and 19-year-olds in full-time education, full-time college and university students, student nurses and some apprentices.
- people under 25 who get funding from the Skills Funding Agency or Young People's Learning Agency

### Disabled parking

The Blue Badge Scheme provides parking concessions for people with severe mobility problems.

To apply visit [www.reading.gov.uk/bluebadge](http://www.reading.gov.uk/bluebadge) or call 0118 937 2033.

### Travelling by Air

Passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility can request free assistance to travel through airports and get on and off planes in Europe and the US (other countries may charge). You must book in advance.

Airlines must carry two pieces of mobility equipment free of charge - as long as it fits through the door.

Visit [www.caa.co.uk/specialassistance](http://www.caa.co.uk/specialassistance)

### Shopmobility

Shopmobility is a service that helps all people with mobility problems to get around city and town centres independently, with freedom, confidence and dignity.

See [www.shopmobility.org.uk](http://www.shopmobility.org.uk)

### The Oracle Shopmobility Scheme

Provides scooters, wheelchairs and powerchairs to help people with mobility problems get around the town centre.

Holy Brook Car Park, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LR

New users must register with the service. It is best to book in advance - call 0118 965 9008

See [www.theoracle.com/visitor-info/facilities/shopmobility](http://www.theoracle.com/visitor-info/facilities/shopmobility) for details.

### Wheelchair hire

You may be able to borrow or hire wheelchairs (and medical equipment):

- British Red Cross - 0844 4122 750 [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)
- Medical Equipment - John Nike House, 90 Eastern Avenue, Reading RG1 5SF or call 0118 935 8236

### RadAR National Key Scheme

The National Key Scheme (NKS) offers disabled people independent access to locked public disabled toilets around the country.

You can buy a RADAR key from the Shopmobility service in the Oracle.

Go to level 1 of the Holy Brook Car Park, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LR

## Accessible facilities

### Changing Places

Changing Places toilets offer extra facilities with extra features and more space to meet these needs of people with complex disabilities.

For more information and to search for changing places services visit [www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org)

### Changing Places Reading

Broad Street Mall on the first floor close to other toilet facilities The facility is fitted with specialist equipment including an overhead hoist.



## Help with travel and travel costs

There is a range of support to help you get out and around.

### Travelling by bus

Reading Buses have priority seats for older people and passengers with disabilities and most buses are accessible for most types of wheelchairs (but not mobility scooters).

In Reading, buses on the busiest routes are colour coded to help people with learning disabilities or cognitive impairment to find the bus they need.

For details [www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk) or call 0118 959 4000.

### Concessionary bus passes

If you live in the Borough of Reading and have reached state pension age you qualify for a concessionary bus pass which allows you to travel free on:

- Reading buses Monday to Friday from 9am to 11pm and anytime at weekends and public holidays.
- other local services across the country from 9.30am

If you hold a concessionary bus pass on disability grounds, you may use your pass at any time.

Travel companions may also qualify for free bus travel in Reading.

Call Reading Borough Council on 0118 937 3787 to apply.

### Readibus

ReadiBus operates in and around Reading, offering a door-to-door, fully accessible, assisted bus service for people who cannot use, or have great difficulty in using, ordinary public transport.

Readibus services include:

- Dial-a-ride (individual door-to-door support)
- Timetabled services
- Shopping assistance in the town centre
- Football service to away games (STAR members only)

For more information to register and book visit [www.readibus.co.uk](http://www.readibus.co.uk) or call 0118 931 0000

### Travelling by train

You can find information about the services, facilities and assistance available to support disabled passengers on the National Rail Enquiries website.

For details see [www.nationalrail.co.uk/](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/) or call 0845 7484 950.

Visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations) for an interactive tool that lets you plan your way around stations to avoid stairs.

Some stations offer free parking for Blue Badge holders.

### Railcards

You may be eligible to buy a railcard which gives money off most first class and standard fares across the UK:

- The Disabled Persons Railcard is for passengers with eligible disabilities and their travelling companion - see [www.disabled-persons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabled-persons-railcard.co.uk)
- The Senior Rail Card is for people of 60 see [www.senior-railcard.co.uk](http://www.senior-railcard.co.uk)

- foreign language assistants registered with the British Council
- people with a severe mental impairment
- live-in carers who look after someone who isn't their partner, spouse or child

Apply online at [www.reading.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.reading.gov.uk/counciltax) or call the Council Tax Team 0118 937 3707

### Council Tax Reduction

You can apply for a reduction in your Council Tax if your home has been adapted to include:

- a room for the disabled person or
- an additional bathroom or kitchen or
- extra space for wheelchair access.

Apply online at [www.reading.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.reading.gov.uk/counciltax) or call the Council Tax Team 0118 937 3707

## Housing Grants

The Council offers a variety of grants for people on low incomes to help ensure homes in Reading meet the decent homes standard.

### Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

If the person you look after is having difficulty getting around and using the facilities in their home they may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to pay for essential adaptations - like a stairlift, wheelchair ramps, hoist etc.

To apply contact social services

Call 0118 937 3747 (disabled adults)

Call 0118 937 2225 (disabled child)

### Small Repairs Grants

If you are on a low income and have owned and lived in your home for at least three years, or you are a private tenant with responsibility for repairs you may be eligible for a Small Repairs Grant to help pay for essential repairs or improvements.

For details call the Council's Private Sector Renewal and Adaptations Team on 0118 937 2562.

### Home Improvement Agency

Reading Borough Council works in partnership with Aster Living, a Home Improvement Agency which provides support and guidance with adaptations, repairs or home improvements from grant applications through to completion of work.

See [www.asterliving.co.uk](http://www.asterliving.co.uk) or call 01635 588 811 for details.



## Help with heating costs

If you struggle to keep warm in winter you may be eligible for benefits, discounts and/or energy efficiency improvements to help with heating costs.

### Winter Fuel Payment

If you were born on or before 5 July 1953, live on your own or in rented accommodation and receive a state pension or another social security benefit you should get a Winter Fuel Payment to help pay for heating in winter.

If you haven't had your payment by Christmas call the helpline on 0345 915 1515/Textphone: 0345 606 0285 or visit [www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment](http://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment)

### Cold Weather Payment

If you receive certain benefits you may be entitled to a Cold Weather Payment if the temperature falls below zero for 7 days or more in a row between 1 November and 31 March. If you qualify you should get this payment automatically.

### Warm Home Discount Scheme

You may be eligible for a one-off discount on your energy bill if you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, are on a low income or have young children.

See [www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme) for details.

### Home Heat Helpline (HHH)

If you're struggling to pay or are in debt with your suppliers the HHH can:

- give you advice on benefits
- put you in touch with the right person in your energy company
- offer advice on making your home more energy efficient.

See [www.homeheathelpline.org.uk](http://www.homeheathelpline.org.uk) or call 0800 33 66 99.

### The Energy Company Obligation

The larger energy companies are required to help households keep costs down by:

- providing heating and insulation improvements for low-income/vulnerable households (not social housing tenants).
- providing funding to insulate solid-walled properties and those with 'hard-to-treat' cavity walls

Contact one of the larger suppliers (you don't need to be a customer)

See [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) or call 0300 123 1234 for independent advice.

### Switch and save

You may be able to reduce your energy costs by switching to a cheaper supplier.

Visit [www.energyhelpline.com](http://www.energyhelpline.com) or call 0800 074 0745

### Winter Watch (October - March)

Winter Watch is for Reading residents who are on a low income and:

- over 60 or
- have very young children or
- have a disability or health concerns.

Winter Watch offers:

- home energy checks
- advice on bills and energy providers
- advice on energy efficiency grants
- minor repairs to stop draughts
- Loans of heaters or dehumidifiers.

For details see [www.reading.gov.uk/winterwatch](http://www.reading.gov.uk/winterwatch) or call 0118 937 3747



### Priority Service Register

All energy suppliers must provide extra free services to pensioners, people who are registered disabled or have a sensory impairment and people with a long-term illness. This may include:

- Priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted and advance notice if they have to stop your supply
- Alternative facilities for cooking and heating if your energy supply is interrupted
- Protection from bogus callers with a password protection scheme
- Arranging for your bills to be sent or copied to a relative or carer who can help you read and check them
- Moving your meter or providing controls or adaptors to make appliances easier to use
- Quarterly meter readings if you tell your supplier you can't read it yourself

For free information, advice and information about the services available because of your age, disability or chronic illness contact your energy supplier(s).

## Help with health costs

You and/or the person you care for may be eligible for help with certain health costs.

### NHS Low Income Scheme (LIS)

If you are on a low income you may be able to get help with

- prescription costs
- dental costs
- eye care costs (test and glasses)
- travel costs to and from hospital
- wigs and fabric supports

This help is also available to your partner and any dependent young people.

To apply complete form HC1 available from Jobcentre Plus or NHS hospitals or by calling 0300 123 0849

### Medical Exemptions

People with certain medical conditions are exempt from prescription charges. Check with your doctor and ask for an

FP92A form to apply.

### Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC)

If you do not qualify for free prescriptions and you need more than 3 items in 3 months, or 14 items in 12 months you could save money with a Prescription Prepayment Certificate.

Apply online or call 0300 330 1341

### Over 60

If you are over 60 years of age you are entitled to free prescriptions and eye tests.



For more information about help with NHS health costs see:  
[www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts)