**District support**

The district councils undertake a range of support and activity that provides assistance to low-income households and to address fuel poverty.

* Support to low-income households through the Revenues and Benefits teams including:
  + Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme – successfully administering the government funded scheme to ensure that all households in Council Tax bands A-D receive a one-off rebate of £150 in 2022. Over 116,000 households have been supported in ABC, CBC and CCC. Funding of £150 per household through the discretionary scheme is to be distributed in Oct/Nov and will provide support for around 9000 households.
  + Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) – Cumbrian districts administer one of the most generous schemes in the country which offers up to 100% assistance with Council Tax bills for those on low incomes where many other local authorities now offer a much smaller maximum percentage. This is planned to continue under Cumberland, with changes to the scheme to help ensure people receive their entitlement more easily.
  + Housing Benefit scheme, this is a national scheme to assist residents with their housing costs.
  + Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) – a payment scheme using funding received from the DWP each year to help residents who need extra financial help to meet their housing costs. This is targeted at residents in receipt of benefits who need additional help to cover their rent payments.
* Sustainable Warmth Scheme funding – £20m worth of grant funding from the Government’s Sustainable Warmth Scheme was awarded across all Cumbrian district councils as a consortium. This combines the Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3) to support low-income households heated by mains gas and the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) focused on homes without access to the gas grid. LAD3 is being targeted at homes where at least 35% anticipated fuel poverty is anticipated in the area and there is a D, E, F or G Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating. Grants of up to £25,000 are available for a range of energy efficiency improvements.
* The various Housing Options team provide a key service to support with housing pressures - working with at risk households to prevent homelessness and with homeless households to find them suitable accommodation.
* Advice and signposting – there is information on the district councils’ websites (along with links to other agencies’ websites) about how to find debt or further useful advice on managing household costs.
* Resilient Communities Grants:
  + Core Grant support to Citizens Advice and Disability Association to help provide support to clients.
  + Core grant to Cumbria CVS to help them to provide support to third sector organisations.
  + Setting up or assisting with Warm Hub projects for residents impacted by increased energy bills
  + Grants provided through the small community grants in 2022 to support the establishment of a Food Pantry project.

**Other support**

* Third sector and local community organisations continue to offer a huge range of support to individuals and households covering all aspects of cost of living pressures from advice services to foodbanks and local food pantries. Grant support in some cases such as Citizens Advice is already coming from CCC, districts or both.
* Warmth and energy efficiency schemes include Cumbria Community Foundation’s Winter Warmth Fund and Cumbria Action for Sustainability’s Cold to Cosy Homes scheme.
* Warm spots/rooms/hubs – various organisations are looking at setting these up including CCC at libraries, town councils, community centres and facilities, village halls.
* Local Focus Hubs run a series of Operation Respect Community Days with events organised to give members of the public the chance to engage with representatives of agencies covering housing, homelessness, crime prevention, fire safety, how to budget, and how to create a cleaner, greener area. There will also be a focus on food and fuel hardship at all of the Community Days being led local housing partners.