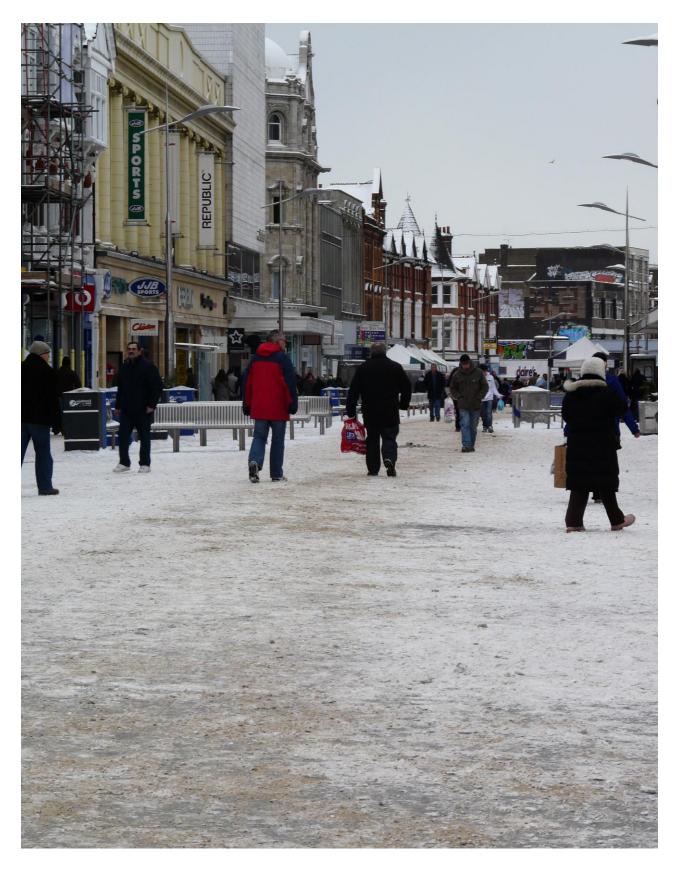
'Through the winter months'

A cold weather guide for residents





Introduction

The winter can present a number of challenges to residents and local communities. This booklet has been developed to support Southend's local residents and communities during the winter months.

This booklet contains information and advice on a range of national and local services and highlights different types of support under four themes including:

- Keeping warm
- Keeping healthy
- Getting out and about
- Public Services

This booklet is produced by a partnership of public services, and community and voluntary organisations in Southend.

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Keeping Warm

During a cold snap:

There are a number of actions that people can take to keep themselves warm during winter.

Keeping you and your family warm

- Avoid going outdoors unless necessary
- Keep active and moving around indoors as much as you can. Take regular, gentle exercise to generate body heat
- Wear lots of thin layers, clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are particularly good and help maintain body heat. If possible wear a hat, scarf and gloves if you go outside
- Consider using hot water bottles if your bedroom is cold at night

Be Alert

- Stay in regular contact with friends, family and services throughout the cold snap
- If you live alone try to arrange for someone to visit you at least once a day
- Check on elderly or sick neighbours, family or friends every day during a cold snap and make sure they are able to keep warm

Danger signs

If someone has these symptoms, they may be suffering from hypothermia:

- Very cold skin even under clothes, for example, across the stomach or under the arms
- Drowsiness and slurred speech
- Loss of sensation not being able to tell when it is cold

Taking action

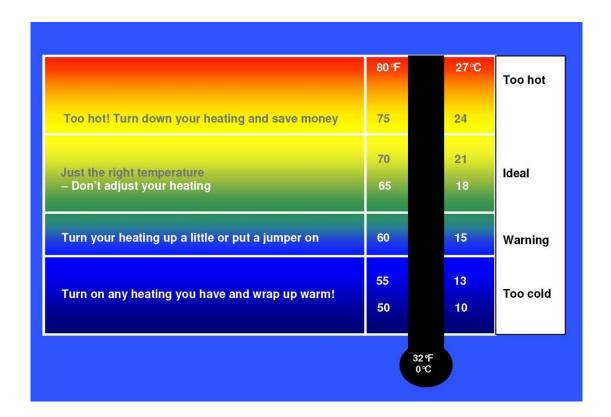
If you think someone may have hypothermia, take immediate action:

- Dial 999 for an ambulance
- Try to warm the person gradually by warming the room, wrapping them in a blanket or duvet, and giving them a warm drink
- Don't give them alcohol or try to warm them up quickly

Heating your property

- As a priority heat the rooms that you spend the most time in
- Shut doors to keep the heat in the rooms
- Close any curtains/blinds to keep the heat in the rooms

- Care closing curtains and blinds may cause condensation (water) to form on windows. This, in turn, can allow mould to grow and, if unchecked, can threaten your health
- If condensation forms on windows, wipe up any water as soon as possible and do not keep curtains closed for extended periods
- Try running your bathroom and kitchen fans longer
- Do not close curtains if condensation becomes a persistent problem
- Draught-proofing is one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to save energy and money - in any type of building. To draught-proof your home you should block up unwanted gaps that let cold air in and warm air out. Be careful in areas that need good ventilation: areas where there are open fires or open flues and rooms where a lot of moisture is produced, such as the kitchens, bathrooms and utility rooms
- If you have a room thermostat set it to the right temperature, you can keep your home warm and lower your bills. Ideally set the thermostat so that the main rooms are at 21°C during the day and bedrooms are at 18°C at night



- If you cannot heat all your rooms: Heat your living room during the day. Heat your bedroom just before you go to bed
- Use a timer to make sure the heating is only on when you need it
- If your boiler is more than 15 years old, it's probably not as efficient as it could be. Replacing your old boiler for an A rated condensing one with a full set of controls can save you about £200 a year. Information for this may be available via the Energy Saving Trust on 0300 123 1234

Cutting energy bills

- Kettles use a lot of electricity, so only boil water for your immediate use: most kettles can boil as little as a mugful
- Make sure that any washing machines (and dishwashers) are full before you use them
- Get into the habit of turning off the television (and other appliances) at the mains or pull the plug out, and not leaving it on standby. You can buy mains controllers which do this by remote control
- Use energy saving light bulbs where possible available free from most energy suppliers if you are on certain benefits or grants. Energy saving light bulbs are also available to buy from supermarkets and hardware stores
- Always turn the lights off when you leave the room. Whatever type of lights you
 have, you will save energy by turning them off even for a few seconds

Safety Advice

- If you have an electric blanket: follow the instructions that came with it and get it tested
 every three years. Remember never to use an electric blanket and a hot water bottle
 together. Please contact Essex Home Fire Safety team on 01376 576500 for further
 advice and to see if you qualify for a free electric blanket test
- If you have an open fire: Make sure the fire gets enough air. Use a fireguard to stop people or pets getting too close to the fire. Do not hang washing near the fire
- Poorly installed or maintained heating appliances can give off carbon monoxide. Look to get your heating appliances serviced at least once a year by a qualified and registered engineer. Also consider fitting a carbon monoxide alarm that meets European Standard EN50291

For information on how to receive home fire safety advice and to see if you qualify for a **free Home Fire Safety Visit** please contact Essex Home Fire Safety team

Telephone: 01376 576500

Insulation

- Fit draught proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors
- Cover your hot water cylinder and pipes with lagging to prevent heat loss
- If you have a loft it should have has least 10-11 inches (270mm) of insulation. Any
 property with 4 inches (100mm) or less may be eligible for a top up under current
 funding schemes
- If your home has wall cavities, consider having wall cavity insulation installed

For more information or advice visit: www.direct.gov.uk or www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Support for insulation may be available via your current energy supplier.



Keeping Warm

Financial support

Depending on your situation there are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills. It's worthwhile claiming all of the benefits you are entitled to.

Please contact the following organisations for further help and advice:

Southend Citizens Advice Bureau -

1 Church Road, Southend on Sea, SS1 2AL. Telephone: 0844 477 0808

Open Monday to Friday 10am till 4pm (until 2:30 for an initial assessment if you have a problem)

- or **Age UK** on 01245 346106
- or the Energy Saving Trust on 0300 123 1234

Cold Weather Payments

You may be able to get Cold Weather Payments if you are getting:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who
 is disabled or under 5 years old
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and have a pensioner or disability premium, or you have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance in the main phase of incomerelated Employment and Support Allowance in the assessment phase and you are in receipt of a pensioner or disability premium or have a child who is disabled or under 5 years old

You don't need to apply - you'll be paid it automatically. Cold Weather Payments can help with additional heating costs during winter. You will get £25 for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. Payments will be made when the average temperature for where you live is:

- recorded as zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days
- forecast to be zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days

To find out more about Cold Weather Payments contact:

Jobcentre Plus, Dencora Court, Tylers Avenue, Southend-On-Sea, SS1 2AP. Tel – 01702 575702 or visit **www.direct.gov.uk/coldweatherpayment**

Winter Fuel Payments

The Winter Fuel Payment is a tax free payment to help older people keep warm during winter. It is provided by the government to those who are eligible. **If you were born on or before 5 January 1951 you may qualify**. It's not means tested and you can get it if you're still working or claiming a benefit.

If you have previously received a Winter Fuel Payment and there has been no change to your circumstances, you don't need to reapply. You should automatically get your payment this year. If you have not received a Winter Fuel Payment before then you need to find out if you qualify. Claims must be received by 30 March.

How much you are eligible to get will depend on your circumstances. This year you could get a payment of up to £200 for households with someone who qualifies aged up to 79, or up to £300 for someone aged 80 or over. The exact amount will depend on your situation during the qualifying week of 19-25 September.

For more information on about the Winter Fuel Payment call the Helpline on **0845 9 15 15 15** or visit <u>www.direct.gov.uk/winterfuel</u>

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The ECO for the big six energy suppliers was launched in early 2013. It is in three parts:

Affordable Warmth Obligation

To provide heating and insulation improvements for low-income and vulnerable households (but social housing tenants are not eligible for affordable warmth).

There are complex eligibility criteria for this means-tested scheme. Call the **Energy Saving Advice Service** on **0300 123 1234** to check whether you might be eligible, and to apply if you are.

Carbon Saving Obligation

To provide funding to insulate solid-walled properties (internal and external wall insulation) and those with 'hard-to-treat' cavity walls.

This is not means-tested but can be used in conjunction with the Green Deal. The aim is to provide enough support to make these relatively expensive measures cost-effective.

Call the **Energy Saving Advice Service** on **0300 123 1234** to check whether you might be eligible, and to apply if you are.

Carbon Saving Communities Obligation

To provide insulation measures to people living in the bottom 15% of the UK's most deprived areas. It is expected that this element of ECO will particularly benefit the social housing sector.

Call the **Energy Saving Advice Service** on **0300 123 1234** to check whether you might be eligible, and to apply if you are.

Through ECO, the government aims to help 230,000 low-income households or those in low-income areas. Of the expected investment by suppliers of £1.3bn per year, there will be a 75:25 split between the carbon and affordable warmth obligations.



Keeping Healthy

Preventing and Managing illness

Winter illness... It pays to be prepared

Make sure your medicine cabinet is stocked up.

Remember, you can get a free flu vaccine every year to protect against seasonal flu from your GP if you are over 65, pregnant, or have a long-term condition or are a main carer.

Contact your GP or practice nurse to arrange getting the flu vaccine or for more information go to www.see.nhs.uk or www.nhs.uk

Remember - catch it, bin it, kill it

To prevent illnesses you have caught spreading to others:













Eat well and have plenty of fluids

Food and water are vital sources of energy; they help keep your body warm. Try to make sure you and your family have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day.

Support may be available from the following organisations:

- HARP (Homeless Action Resource Project) 01702 343040
- The Salvation Army 01702 348999
- Southend Vineyard The Storehouse
 Coleman Street Community Centre,
 Coleman Street
 Southend, SS2 5AW

or stop by the Vineyard Centre at Warrior Square. Tel: 01702 612900



Keeping Healthy

Preventing and Managing illness

Dealing with colds and flu

If you do catch a cold or flu, make sure you:

- Stay at home and get plenty of rest
- Have lots of non-alcoholic drinks
- Eat if you feel able to
- Let a friend or neighbour know you are ill
- You can also take paracetamol to reduce fever and other symptoms

If you need advice about your symptoms, there a number of options open to you:

SELF CARE

Self-care is the best choice to treat very minor illnesses and injuries. A range of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply by combining a well-stocked medicine cabinet with plenty of rest.

Self-care – essential information:

Ensure your medicine cabinet is well stocked with:

- paracetamol
- · anti-diarrhoeal medicine
- rehydration mixture
- indigestion remedy
- plasters and a thermometer

PHARMACIST

Visit your pharmacy when you are suffering from a common health problem that does not require being seen by a nurse or doctor. Your pharmacist can provide advice on common illnesses and the best medicines to treat them. They may offer a prescription delivery service. Please contact your local pharmacy direct for more details.

Pharmacist – essential information:

To find your local pharmacist, including details of opening hours please visit www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories or call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47

NHS DIRECT

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the call is free. You will be assessed and advised by a qualified nurse on the best course of action to take and whether or not you need to seek professional help.

Telephone: 0845 46 47

GP

If you have an illness or injury that just will not go away, make an appointment with your local GP. They provide a range of services by appointment, including medical advice, examinations and prescriptions.

When absolutely essential, GPs can also provide home visits out-of-hours.

GP – essential information:

To find your local GP surgery, visit

www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories or call NHS Direct on: 0845 46 47

or visit NHS South East Essex website www.see.nhs.uk

If you're not registered at a GP surgery

and want to know your nearest one.

send a free text with the word 'Doctor' to 64746 or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

NHS WALK-IN CENTRE

Walk-in centres treat minor illnesses and injuries that do not need a visit to A&E.

You do not need an appointment and can see a GP or nurse at St Luke's Health Centre in Southend even if you're not registered between 8am and 8pm, 365 days a year.

Your local NHS walk-in centre

is situated at:

0800 587 9159

St Luke's Health Centre

Pantile Avenue (next to the Cumberlege Intermediate Care Centre) Southend on Sea SS2 4BD

Open every day Mon-Sun 8am-8pm (including bank holidays) Tel: 01702 611505

A&E

Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments should only be used in a critical or life-threatening situation.

A&E departments provide immediate emergency care for people who show the symptoms of serious illness or are badly injured.

Dialling 999 and stating a medical emergency will result in a response vehicle being sent to your location.

Your local A&E

department is situated at:

Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Prittlewell Chase Westcliff-on-Sea Essex SS0 0RY

Telephone: 01702 435555

24 hours 7 days per week



Getting out and about

Planning your journey

During periods of bad weather the best advice is to try and limit travel to essential journeys only. If you do need to travel - preparation is the key.

If you do have to travel in bad weather -

 Before each journey, listen to local traffic or weather reports to see if a route you intend to use could be affected, consider if your journey is essential

Southend Radio 105.1 FM or Heart Essex 96.3, 97.5 & 102.6 FM or BBC Essex 103.5 FM

As a driver

- · Clean and check lights, and clear windows and mirrors
- Frost can affect visibility through the windscreen, so ensure that heated air is directed towards the screen
- Keep an ice scraper in the car and carry de-icer in case the locks freeze
- Ensure that your vehicle has been serviced for the winter, has effective windscreen
 wipers and washers, sufficient antifreeze, and tyres that are properly inflated and have
 correct depth of tread. It may be advisable to lower tyre pressure a little to increase
 traction
- Leave plenty of time for your journey, do not hurry
- Reduce your speed
- Drive with great care, whether on treated or untreated roads, and be aware that a route may not be treated along its whole length
- Do not make any sudden braking or accelerating motions
- Keep a safe stopping distance between your vehicle and the one in front, keep speeds low, use dipped headlights in poor conditions and take special care of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists
- Keep a warm coat or blanket in the car in case of a breakdown (to keep you warm) as well as some emergency supplies such as some biscuits and a non-alcoholic drink
- Take your breakdown telephone help-line number and mobile phone with you on all journeys
- It may also be useful to keep a torch and in extreme weather conditions Wellington boots and a shovel in your car



Getting out and about

Passenger Transport

Community transport services (including Dial-a-Ride)

For more information and to ask if community transport services are operating please call – Southend Borough Council on 01702 215000.

Public Transport

Public transport may have a difficult time during periods of bad weather and unpredictable traffic. For up to date information please contact them direct to check whether your service is affected.

Bus operators:

- Arriva http://www.arrivabus.co.uk/South-East/ or telephone: 01582 585522
- First Group plc <u>http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/essex/travel_news/service_updates/</u>

or telephone: 01268 525251

Rail operators:

- c2c http://www.c2c-online.co.uk or telephone: 08456 014 873 or minicom / textphone: 08457 125 988
- Greater Anglia http://www.greateranglia.co.uk
 or telephone: 0845 600 7245 (option 7)

As a pedestrian

- Leave plenty of time for your journey, do not hurry
- Wear warm clothing lots of thin layers and if possible wear a hat, scarf and gloves
- Wear shoes which provide good grip so that slipping on icy surfaces is prevented
- Keep alert to what is going on around you, lookout for likely slippery surfaces



Getting out and about

Gritting

The Council is responsible for salting and snow clearance of highways within the Borough and we prioritise the gritting of four main routes known as 'Primary Routes' that cover the major roads, bus routes, other busy roads, and selected hills on secondary and minor roads within Southend. They have been selected in consultation with the emergency services and transport companies.

Once the roads have been completed and if salt stocks allow the council will treat priority footways. These include main shopping areas, transport links and underpasses/bridges (crossing interchanges).

The council also provides grit bins across the borough for residents to use on public highways.

For a map of the gritting routes or the location of grit bins either visit Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's website at www.southend.gov.uk and access the Roads, Highways and Pavements pages.

Can I buy salt for my own use?

Yes, it is available from Central depot Eastern Avenue Southend SS2 5QX

currently at £6.50 for 20kg (approximately 44 pounds in weight or 3 stone in weight).

This service is available from 1st November each year and limited to 20kg per person while stocks last.

Salt is also available from most DIY stores – approximately £9 for 25kg.



Other Services

Council Services

Care Services

Residents who use care services are advised to contact their care provider directly if the severe weather disrupts visiting arrangements.

If they have any concerns they should call the Council's Customer Service Centre on -

Telephone: 01702 215000.

School closures

There are a number of ways to find out if your school will be closed due to bad weather and other unforeseen circumstances.

- Through one of the radio stations listed below;
 - *Heart Essex http://www.heart.co.uk/essex/news/
 - Southend Radio- http://www.southendradio.com/news
 - *BBC Essex http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-12408589
- By visiting <u>www.southend.gov.uk</u> and clicking on School Closure Information or
- · Checking individual school websites

Recycling & Waste Services during Adverse Weather conditions

In the event of adverse or extreme weather conditions, for example heavy snowfall or icy conditions, kerbside recycling and waste collections may be delayed, and opening times of Household Waste Recycling Centres affected. Every effort will be made to continue services as normal and you can help by placing your waste out for collection on the edge of your property to make collection as easy as possible.

However, in the event that collections are suspended residents are advised to listen to the local radio, visit www.southend.gov.uk or contact the Customer Service Centre on 01702 215006 for updates regarding recycling and waste collections.

Crematoriums and Cemeteries

During severe weather the priority will be to ensure both burials and cremations are allowed to take place, therefore the memorial gardens and cemetery plots will not be cleared.

Conditions are very hazardous and members of the public are advised only to visit if absolutely necessary, i.e. if attending a funeral. Conditions on the cemetery plots and crematorium memorial gardens are extremely hazardous and members of the public are strongly advised not to visit these areas and if so, do so at their own risk.



Other Services

Services from the Voluntary Sector

H.A.R.P (Homeless Action Resource Project)

HARP's main objectives are to provide homeless people with help and advice in securing accommodation, and to alleviate homelessness through the provision of short-term emergency accommodation.

The Day Service (based in Valkyrie Road – Westcliff) opens as a Drop in Centre offering service users practical support and advice. HARP also operates emergency accommodation on a short term basis. People wanting to approach them for emergency accommodation can do so at the Day Service in Valkyrie Road.

If you feel HARP can help you with any homeless issues you have, or if you are concerned about somebody sleeping rough, please contact them on **01702 343040**.

Age UK and Age Concern (Southend)

Provide vital direct services to people in later life. Local services can include:

- information, advice and advocacy services
- day centres and lunch clubs
- home help and 'handyperson' schemes
- IT and other training.

Age UK Essex 112 Springfield Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6LF

Telephone: **01245 346106** Website: http://www.ageuk.org.uk/essex

Age Concern (Southend)3rd Floor, Queensway House, Essex Street, SS1 2NYTelephone: 01702 215780Website: http://www.acsos.co.uk/

South East Essex Advocacy for Older People

Provide one-to-one support and citizen advocacy for residents over 60 to help deal with debts, utility bills, rent and mortgage arrears.

181 London Road, Westcliff-on-sea.

Telephone: **01702 340566**

(9am to 4pm Monday to Friday, 24 hour answer phone service)

Southend Carers Forum

Southend Carers Forum exists to help carers who look after or care for a relative, neighbour or friend, who is suffering from

- a long-term illness
- physical or sensory disability
- learning difficulty
- mental health problems
- drug or alcohol problems

They provide information, advice and support, on the issues that concern them most, irrespective of age group and social, ethnic, cultural and religious background and also aim to represent their interests with policy makers and services providers.

The range of support services include:

- Carers Telephone Helpline;
- Information and Advice
- Carers Drop-in Centre
- Support Groups
- Luncheon Clubs
- Ex/Former Carers Support
- Social Events
- Carers Handbook
- Newsletters
- Website: http://www.southendcarers.co.uk .

Telephone: **01702 393933** (10.00am – 2.00pm Monday to Friday, 24 hour answerphone)

Southend Association of Voluntary Services

Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) is a Council for Voluntary Services and its main role is to serve the voluntary and community sector in the Borough of Southend on Sea. The sector is thriving and diverse and covers many hundreds of organisations of differing shapes and sizes, some with paid staff, some with volunteers and many with a mixture of both. Through its 300 plus member organisations, SAVS will co-ordinate volunteers to complete home visits for people in need.

Home visits will involve a friendly informal chat by a trained volunteer about advice on how to keep warm and healthy over the winter months. Risks identified will be referred to the relevant services.

If you would like a free home visit by one of our CRB checked volunteers then please contact Louise McIver at SAVS on **01702 356000** or email <u>warmhomes@savs-southend.co.uk</u>

Southend Vineyard

The Storehouse day centre is open Monday, Tuesday (Family Storehouse – for families with younger children, 10am) Wednesday & Friday from 11.30 to 13.30. Give out free tea, coffee,





Useful Numbers

Age Concern (Southend) 01702 215008

Age UK 01245 346106

Arriva (Bus operator) 0844 800 4411

Citizens Advice Bureau 01702 610610

c2c (Rail operator) 08456 014 873

D.I.A.L (Disabled Information Advice Line) Southend 077067 45693

open Tuesday-Thursday 10 am-3 pm

Energy Saving Advice Service 0300 123 1234

Essex Home Fire Safety Team 0800 6128992

Essex Police 01245 491491 or 101

First Group plc (Bus operator) 01268 525251

Greater Anglia (Rail operator) 0845 600 7245

HARP (Homeless Action Resource Project) 01702 430696

Housing Options Team (Southend Borough Council) 01702 215002

Jobcentre Plus 01702 575702 or 0845 604 3719

Money Advice Service 0300 500 5000

NHS advice 111

St Luke's Health Centre 01702 611505

Samaritans 01702 611911

SAVS (Southend Association of Voluntary Services) 01702 356000

South East Essex Advocacy for Older People 01702 340566

Southend Carers Forum 01702 393933

Southend Borough Council 01702 215000

Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust 01702 435555

Southend Vineyard - The Storehouse 01702 612900

Sure Start Children's Centres 01702 220810

Tax Credit Helpline

Turning Tides 01702 220101