

Leicester Charity Link



Tackling Poverty - Changing Lives

Over 130 years of helping  
people in need across  
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

## We're here to help!

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If you are working with individuals or families who are experiencing hardship, then we may be able to help. We provide essential items such as food vouchers, clothing, beds, furniture, medical and mobility equipment to those in need.

Each year we help over 5,000 vulnerable people and children throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland by working with you to ensure that we get help to those who need it when they need it.



If you are working with individuals or families who are experiencing hardship through ill-health, disability or crisis then we may be able to help.

This pack contains all the information that you need to know to access help for your service users. Please also find enclosed a poster for your notice board to promote our service to your colleagues. If you need any further information or if you have any queries; then simply give us a call on **0116 222 2200**, we're here to help.

Leicester Charity Link  
20a Millstone Lane  
Leicester  
LE1 5JN

t: 0116 222 2200  
f: 0116 222 2201  
e: [info@charity-link.org](mailto:info@charity-link.org)  
w: [www.charity-link.org](http://www.charity-link.org)

# Who do we help?

We help vulnerable people and children who are experiencing poverty, hardship or crisis, from all backgrounds, ages and circumstances.

**We are particularly keen to help people from all communities who are:**

**During 2008 -2009 we helped:**

**2,091 children and young people**  
**441 older people living in poverty**  
**824 disabled people**  
**445 people living with mental health problems**  
**782 carers**  
**548 people facing homelessness**

- **In receipt of Incapacity Benefit or Employment and Support Allowance, where a Community Care Grant or Maternity Grant cannot be accessed**
- **Vulnerable families with young children who have already received help through section 17 funding but would benefit from additional help**
- **Families experiencing exceptional hardship where children are involved**
- **Lone parents**
- **The elderly**
- **People with an illness or disability**

John was referred to us by a Community Psychiatric Nurse. He was on a means tested benefit and disability living allowance. Due to his psychiatric illness it was recommended that he had a lifeline telephone system, so that he could access support when he needed it. We covered the £70 required for the item and, as he had a long term illness, we were able to provide £250 from a local charity for a short holiday.

**We raised £320 for John and purchased a lifeline telephone system and paid for a short holiday.**

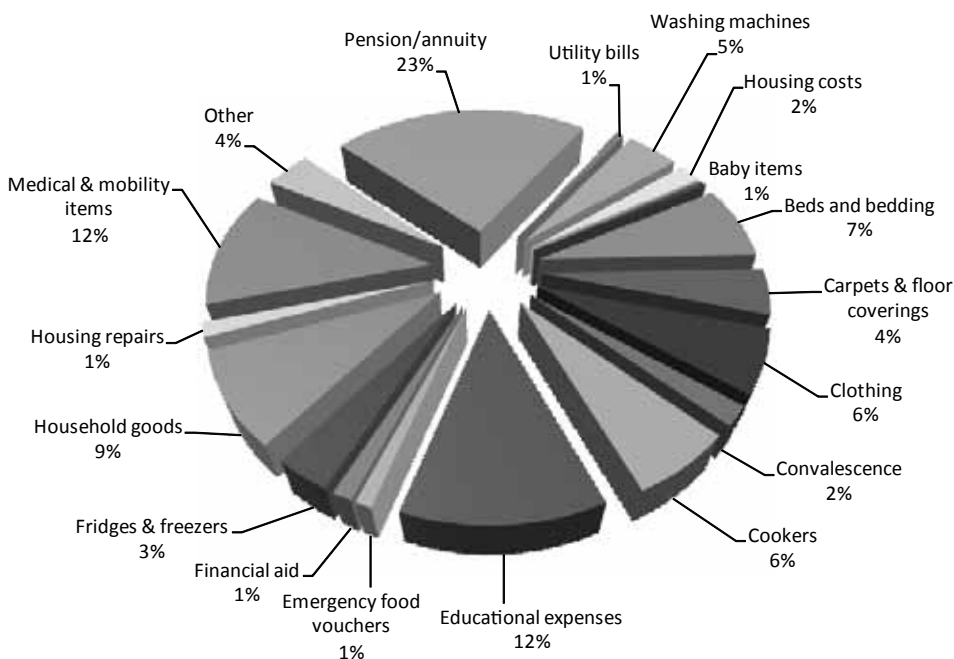
"The smallest amount of help can make all the difference. Leicester Charity Link has helped our clients return to employment, end social isolation and prevent homelessness. Many thanks."

Paul Linnell  
Shelter (Sharp)

# How do we help?

We use our expertise and knowledge of the many occupational and benevolent funds that are available to help those in need. For each person we help we match their individual circumstances such as previous employment history against the vast array of funds that can help. We then make individual applications to these funds for specific assistance for that person.

Once we have received the funds we then purchase the goods required. Please find below a breakdown of items purchased during 2008 - 2009.



**During 2008 - 2009 we provided 5,079 items, including:**

**£7,444 worth of food vouchers**  
**665 household goods**  
**714 beds and bedding**  
**560 items of clothing**  
**384 cookers**  
**68 wheelchairs**

Stuart received income support and had recently signed for a new tenancy after a period of street and hostel homelessness. A middle aged man, he had some employment history in the construction industry, but not for the length of time that would allow us to approach an occupational charity. He had no personal possessions apart from a sleeping bag, so we were able to use our emergency funds to purchase a single bed and provide a voucher for bedding.

**We raised £165 to purchase a bed and bedding.**

Marie had recently won a custody battle involving her two children. She received means tested benefits and child benefit. She had a five year history of working in the hosiery trade, so we were able to apply to an occupational charity for the items she requested. She was awarded a grant of £600. We used the money to order a fridge freezer and two single beds from our regular suppliers. With the remaining funds, we raised a voucher for household goods for Wilkinson.

**We raised £600 for Marie and purchased a fridge freezer, beds and household goods.**

# Benefits of our service

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Where there is a crisis or immediate need for example cases of domestic violence or those experiencing homelessness, we are able to act quickly. We help with food vouchers, basic goods and small amounts of cash on a weekly basis for those who have, for one reason or another, slipped through the system.

## When the need is urgent we can help the same day.

We have also helped thousands of people moving out of hostel accommodation and into independent tenancies by providing items to furnish new homes, such as beds, cookers and household goods.

If we are not able to cover the cost from our local funds, then we have developed relationships with regional, national, illness and occupational charities over many years that allow us to approach them for help. On average, it takes approximately three weeks for one of the major national charities to respond to our referrals.

We can also help when hardship is as a result of an illness or disability especially when a persons quality of life could be significantly improved through the provision of medical and mobility items. During 2008 - 2009 we provided 68 wheelchairs and 92 scooters. When we make an application on behalf of an individual to illness and occupational charities it will take longer because this often depends on when trustees meet.

Yolande was referred to us by a health visitor. She was a long-term sufferer from Multiple Sclerosis and was unable to walk unaided. She was requesting help with a powered mobility scooter. Despite her and her husband's work history, there were no occupational charities we could approach, so we applied to national, local and illness charities. The total cost of the scooter was £2,500 and it took five months to raise the necessary funding.

**We raised £2,500 to purchase a scooter for Yolande.**

"Without your services I don't know what we would have done to support our residents Leicester Charity Link is a worthwhile charity and your help is fantastic."

K Chauhan  
YMCA Leicester

Rina had recently fled domestic violence. Her child was considered at risk and many items were requested to improve his immediate environment. We were not able to help with all these items, but, as there was illness in the family, we were able to access a county local fund to provide a washing machine. The history of domestic violence meant we were able to approach a national charity and they awarded a fridge freezer.

**We raised £474 to purchase a washing machine and fridge freezer for Rina.**

# How to access our service

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You can access our service by completing one of our application forms. If you do not have an application form, please contact us on **0116 222 2200**.

Alternatively, you can download an application form from our website **www.charity-link.org**. We accept photocopied application forms, although it is recommended that you use the most up to date version. Please remember to consult the guidelines before you complete each section, as the more comprehensive and accurate the information is the more likely it will be that we can help your service users.

**Call 0116 222 2200 for an application form or download an application form from [www.charity-link.org](http://www.charity-link.org). Please ensure that you read the guidelines supplied before completing the application form.**

## Constraints on our service

Like any organisation, we are not able to meet everyone's needs all of the time. Below are some of the constraints that we operate under, please bear these in mind when making an application for help.

- Most charities will not help unless statutory funding – such as Section 17 funding and community care grants - has first been accessed. We would ask you to explore this funding before you make your application. You also need to ensure that your client has their full welfare benefit entitlement. If there are any discrepancies in the benefit information you provide this will delay the application whilst we clarify this.
- There will be cases where we cannot help. There may be no general, illness or occupational charities we can approach and our emergency funds may be very low at the time. There may also be a considerable excess of income over expenditure. In order to avoid any problems with an excess of income please provide as full a picture as possible of the applicant's income and outgoings. You can also provide an explanation of any excess of income in your report of the applicant's circumstances. We will always try to explain why we can't help and, where appropriate, we will signpost to other organisations.
- If we apply to other charities for items, we have no control over when their trustees will reach a decision. Usually, it takes between 3 and 8 weeks before an outside charity replies to an application. In the case of more costly items, such as electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters, it can take several months before we are able to secure the funding.

**Please call us on 0116 222 2200 if you need any help when making an application.**

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1. Please read the guidelines before completing the application form. They are designed to help you make a successful application.
2. Complete the application form on behalf of your service user.
3. Please ensure that you have provided all the information required. This form may appear daunting at first but all information required is relevant to ensure that when we apply for help we can secure the money required.
4. Please ensure that your service user has signed the data protection section on the front cover.
5. Post the form to us at Leicester Charity Link 20a Millstone Lane, Leicester LE1 5JN or fax the form to us on 0116 222 2201.

We'll do the rest! Once we have received all the information we then make applications to trusts and charities who have funds to help - by using our expertise and knowledge we can match people up with trusts who can assist. It is vital that we have as much information as possible so we can get the funding required.

We aim to help within 20 days. If the need is urgent we can help the same day so please call us immediately on **0116 222 2200**.

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