Help to manage at home

Where to get help when everyday things are getting harder: assessments, help at home, equipment, alarms and money, with local help in Staffordshire

For adults who are finding everyday things harder at home, and their family and friends. This edition adds a list of local help in Staffordshire.

You do not have to wait for a crisis. If washing, dressing, cooking, getting about or staying safe at home is getting harder, you can ask for help now. This guide is general information. It is not advice about your own situation.

Ask your council for a free needs assessment

- Anyone can ask for one, for themselves or for someone they know. It is free. Contact adult social services at your local council, by phone or online.
- Someone from the council, such as a social worker or occupational therapist, looks at how you manage everyday things like washing, dressing and cooking. It can be at home, by phone or online.
- Tell them about everything you find hard, even small things. If you leave things out, you may be offered less help.
- It can help to have a friend or relative with you.
- If you do not qualify for help, the council should still give you free advice about support in your area.

- If you disagree with the result, you can complain to the council.

Help that may follow

- Equipment, such as a walking frame or a personal alarm.
- Changes to your home, such as grab rails or a walk-in shower.
- Paid carers who visit you at home.
- Day centres and lunch clubs.
- Equipment and small changes to your home are free if you are assessed as needing them.
- You will usually be asked to pay towards the cost of care. A financial assessment works out whether the council will help pay.

Equipment and changes to your home

- Small things can make a big difference: a raised toilet seat, a non-slip mat in the bath or shower, a grab rail by the bed, or a kettle holder for easier pouring.
- Ask the council for a home assessment. An occupational therapist visits and watches what you find hard. It is free.
- The council should pay for each adaptation that costs less than £1,000, such as grab rails or a small ramp.
- For bigger work, such as a stairlift, a level-access shower or wider doors, you may be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant from your council. It does not affect your benefits.
- You can often hire equipment first, to see if it suits you before you buy it.

Personal alarms and key safes

- A personal alarm lets you get help if you fall or have a problem at home. You wear it on your wrist or round your neck.
- Some are linked to a monitoring service that answers 24 hours a day. Some have fall detectors.
- A key safe is a small locked box on an outside wall that holds a key. Family, carers or the emergency services can open it with a code if you cannot get to the door.
- Costs vary. Monitored alarms usually have a set-up charge and then a monthly charge. Ask adult social services what your council offers.

Money help

- If you are over State Pension age and need help looking after yourself because of an illness or disability, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance. You do not need to have a carer to claim. Check on GOV.UK. In Scotland it is called Pension Age Disability Payment.
- Getting Attendance Allowance may mean you can also get extra Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction.
- If someone cares for you for at least 35 hours a week, they may be able to get Carer's Allowance.

Staying safe and keeping in touch

- Keep floors clear of clutter, loose wires and rugs. Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower.
- If you think a medicine is affecting your balance, speak to your GP or pharmacist.

- Activities that improve strength and balance, done at least twice a week, help prevent falls. Our free sheet of simple exercises is at mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/balance-exercises.
- If you feel lonely, keep in touch by phone or video call, or join a local group or class.
- Ask your GP about social prescribing. A link worker can help you find local support and activities.
- Age UK, The Silver Line and Re-engage offer support and befriending.

Get help quickly

- If you need help urgently, but it is not an emergency, call NHS 111.
- If you or someone else needs help right now, call 999.

If you fall and cannot get up, or may have hurt your head, neck, back or hip, call 999.

More free guides

Looking after someone? Our free guide for carers: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/carers-guide/staffordshire. Coming home from hospital? Our free hospital checklist: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/after-hospital-checklist/staffordshire.

Local help in Staffordshire

Staffordshire has two councils for social care. Staffordshire County Council covers most of the county, including Stafford, Lichfield, Burton, Tamworth, Cannock and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Stoke-on-Trent City Council covers the city of Stoke-on-Trent. Each line says which area it is for. Some NHS and charity services cover both.

Staffordshire County Council adult social care. For people in the Staffordshire County Council area, outside Stoke-on-Trent. Call Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. You can also ask for help online. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0345 604 2886. staffordshire.gov.uk

Stoke-on-Trent City Council adult social care. For people in Stoke-on-Trent. Call 0800 561 0015, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. You can also ask for help online. Out of hours, for emergencies: 01782 234234. stoke.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Equipment. Staffordshire County Council area: ask Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010. Equipment and small changes to your home are usually free if you are eligible for care and support. Stoke-on-Trent: ask on 0800 561 0015 or online. The assessment is free, and equipment is usually lent free from the council's store. In both areas you can use AskSARA online to find simple equipment that may help.

Falls. If you have had a fall, tell your GP. Staffordshire County Council area: find local falls prevention classes on Staffordshire Connects (staffordshireconnects.info). Stoke-on-Trent: ask your GP to refer you to the Specialist Falls Team. Anyone can do the NHS-approved Falls Assistant check online. fallsassistant.org.uk

Personal alarms. A button you wear and press for help, day or night. Staffordshire County Council area: the council does not run its own alarms, and they are not free. Find a provider on Staffordshire Connects. Stoke-on-Trent: the council's Lifeline alarm service can send a responder if you fall. There is a charge. Call 01782 234545.

Help for carers. Staffordshire County Council area: Staffordshire Together for Carers gives free advice and support. Call 0300 303 0621. A carer's assessment is free: ask Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010. Stoke-on-Trent: North Staffs Carers runs the carers' support service. Call 01782 793100, Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm, and Saturday and Sunday 9am to 12 noon. A carer's assessment is free: ask the council on 0800 561 0015.

Home Fire Safety Visit. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service covers Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Call to find out if you can have a home visit, or do the free online Home Fire Safety Check. **0800 0241 999** · staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Citizens Advice. Help with money, benefits and other problems. The national Adviceline puts you through to your local Citizens Advice. It is usually open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. **0800 144 8848** · citizensadvice.org.uk

Healthwatch. Tell them about your health or care, good or bad, to help services improve. Healthwatch Staffordshire: healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk. Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent: 03303 130247, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Local contacts checked 16 November 2026. Services can change, so check before you rely on one.

General information, not advice about your own situation. Prepared by Mobile Physiotherapist UK from NHS and GOV.UK guidance. Sources checked 2 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share. Local contacts checked 16 November 2026.