



## Rising cost of living and your wellbeing in 2024

The rising cost of living in the United Kingdom is beginning to have a negative effect on the mental health and wellbeing of people across the country as rising expenses and financial constraints consume daily lives.

If, like the majority the cost of living is a concern for you or directly affecting you, here are some budgeting ideas that may help you.

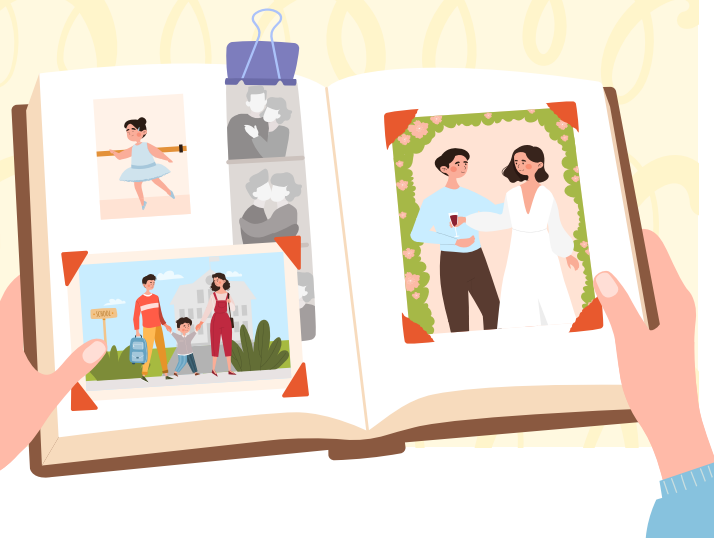
- Start by looking at your monthly income – this might include maintenance loans, bursaries, wages, personal savings, or family funding.
- Look at what you are spending, essential expenses will typically include things like mortgages, rent, groceries, transport, utility bills for electricity, gas and water.
- Don't forget other bills such as mobile phone costs.
- Non-essential expenses may include subscriptions, going out, clothes shopping and holidays, among others.

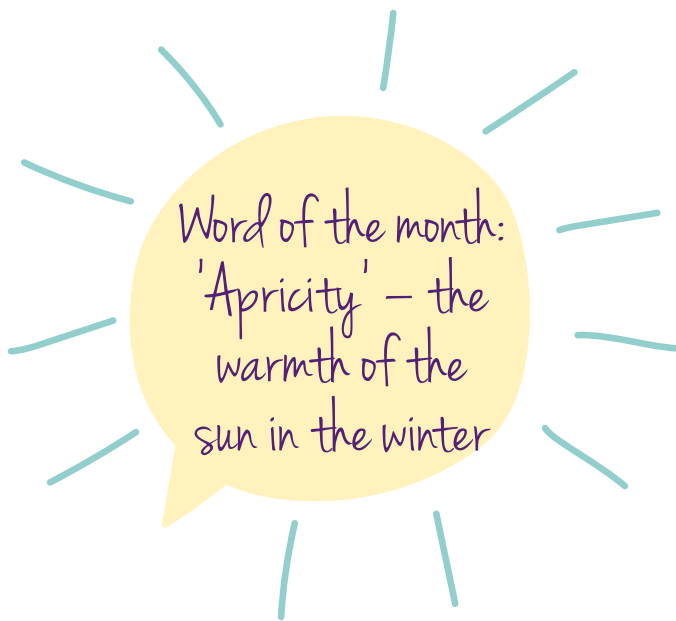
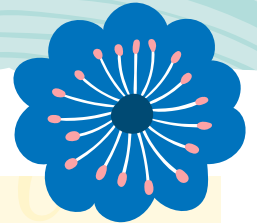
If you are spending more than you have coming in, you will need to make some changes. You could look at cutting back on non-essential expenses, such a little luxuries or non-essential gifts. It's also worth rethinking a few of your essential expenses, for example you could make some changes to your weekly groceries by buying own-branded goods, or even changing to a cheaper supermarket.

With the up-and-coming half term school holiday, rather than spend money for attractions or activities, here's a list of free activities you could consider to entertain the family:

- Build something out of recycling cardboard /household waste such as yoghurt and milk cartons
- Collect leaves and then try to identify them by researching them online or at the local library
- Go to the park
- Go for a family walk
- Listen to your favourite songs together and sing along
- Ride bikes
- Take a walk in the woods
- Bake brownies or cupcakes together for family or friends
- Create memory boxes for your child's favourite pictures, artwork, and mementos or a scrapbook
- Help fix a broken item or toy
- Let your child style your hair
- Do a scavenger hunt around the house or garden
- Make a slide show of your favourite digital photographs
- Make a meal for someone else or a 'fakeaway' to save on the expensive of dining out.

**Remember: being active, creative, and kind to others can help to maintain our positive mental health and increase our overall wellbeing.**





Word of the month:  
'Apricity' – the  
warmth of the  
sun in the winter

## Morning struggles with your children?

My daughter shared this with me this week, in a bid to help me understand her morning struggles with waking up for school. For those of you with teenage children, bear in mind as the pillow hits your head as you creep out of their room after waking them, that waking a teen at 6am is the biological equivalent of waking an adult at 4am! Perhaps their gloomy moods are justifiable! Don't believe me? – watch this TED talk which explains!

<https://www.facebook.com/TED/posts/waking-a-teenager-up-at-6am-is-the-biological-equivalent-of-waking-an-adult-up-a/10158701954630652/>



## Wellbeing tip for Jan

I have recently started to take a collagen supplement daily, not as you may be excused for assuming, in a bid to make me look like Taylor Swift (although I wouldn't mind it if did!), but in a bid to aid my overall wellbeing and so far the benefits are clear to see.

Collagen is not only good for women of a certain age, to aid skin elasticity and natural collagen production, but it's also been clinical proven to be hugely beneficial to joint and bone health, boosting muscle mass as well as for general hair, nails and skin health. There are many forms of it available on the market; from personal research this seems to be a good value, good quality product, and better still, it's completely tasteless, so can be slipped into morning tea or coffee without you knowing!

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Hunter-Gather-Collagen-Peptides-Unflavored/dp/B07J65XBVS?th=1>



### Happy thoughts for the month ahead:

By the end of January, sunset will be 5.14pm, giving us an extra 45 minutes of daylight

March 1: 6.14pm

April 1: 7.11pm

May 1: 8.06pm

Brighter days are  
on their way...

