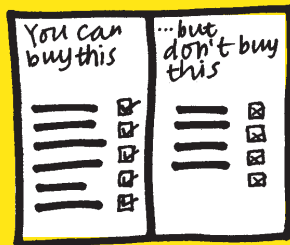


What you can and can't spend your money on

What is this?

The idea of an Individual or Personal Budget is that it gives you more choice and control over how you receive support to achieve full citizenship, in ways that make sense to you. One of the advantages of an Personal Budget is that it allows much greater flexibility about how you spend your money. It's important that the greatest emphasis is placed on your desired outcomes, rather than being prescriptive about what you can or cannot spend your money on.



How can it help me with my support plan?

People will continue to find ways of achieving outcomes that challenge human services perceptions of what is possible to purchase with their Personal Budgets. The following information is not an exhaustive or prescriptive list, just what we have seen and learnt that could assist you to use your money flexibly and creatively:

- 1 Buying direct support for the home and community. You might choose to employ a personal assistant - somebody who is employed to directly support you. You could buy help with everyday tasks such as cleaning or gardening, or you could use your money to cover the costs of a live in supporter.
- 2 Legal Rewards. Friends, family and neighbours can offer many kinds of support that is free or can be traded in exchange for something from you. We call these legal rewards. For example, you could you could pay for an occasional bag of shopping for a friend who takes you shopping every week.
- 3 Housing. You could use your money to make changes to your home so it better suits you. For example, purchasing lightweight, modular ramps to make your home wheelchair accessible, patios that make a garden accessible, or equipment that reduces the risk of you falling.



- 4 Assistive Technology. When you are thinking about creative ways to meet a support need or to achieve an outcome you may look to technology for some of the answers. Some examples are: purchasing a piece of computer software that can read your mail instead of paying somebody to read it to you, alarms that will alert others if you need support at night rather than paying somebody to stay awake all night, or communication aids.
- 5 Help with work. You could use your money to help you get work or return to work, for example employing a Personal Assistant to support you at work or doing a further education course like typing or computers.
- 6 Community and Social Inclusion. Your money could be used to;

take part in community activities and events, pay membership fees for clubs and courses, attend sporting events, pay for the support to enable you to take part in things or buy support with going away with family and friends rather than using a socially isolated respite service.

- 7 Support with General Health. You could use your money to get fit - help to attend a gym or fitness classes, using a personal trainer, or support to go swimming, lose weight - help to attend weight loss classes or get online support with your weight loss and support to attend GP or other general medical appointments.

How can I use this?

Your Personal Budget is allocated to you to pay for your support needs and enable you to live the life that you want. How you spend your budget should be clearly outlined in your support plan.

There are a number of things your budget should not be used for:

- Any activity which is against the law (this includes not paying people the minimum wage, not registering someone you employ with Revenue and Customs, giving people cash in hand and not following other legal employment regulations).
- Anything involving gambling.
- Paying for those things that other sources of income would normally pay for, like day to day food bills, rent, mortgage payments or utility bills.
- Cigarettes or alcohol.
- Healthcare needs that should be met by the National Health Service.
- On equipment that has been purchased from an auction, including online sites such as eBay, equipment that doesn't meet the required standards, or using equipment where the people required to use it are not trained.

Your Local Authority or Primary Care Trust should be able to provide you with further guidance on what you can and cannot spend your money on.