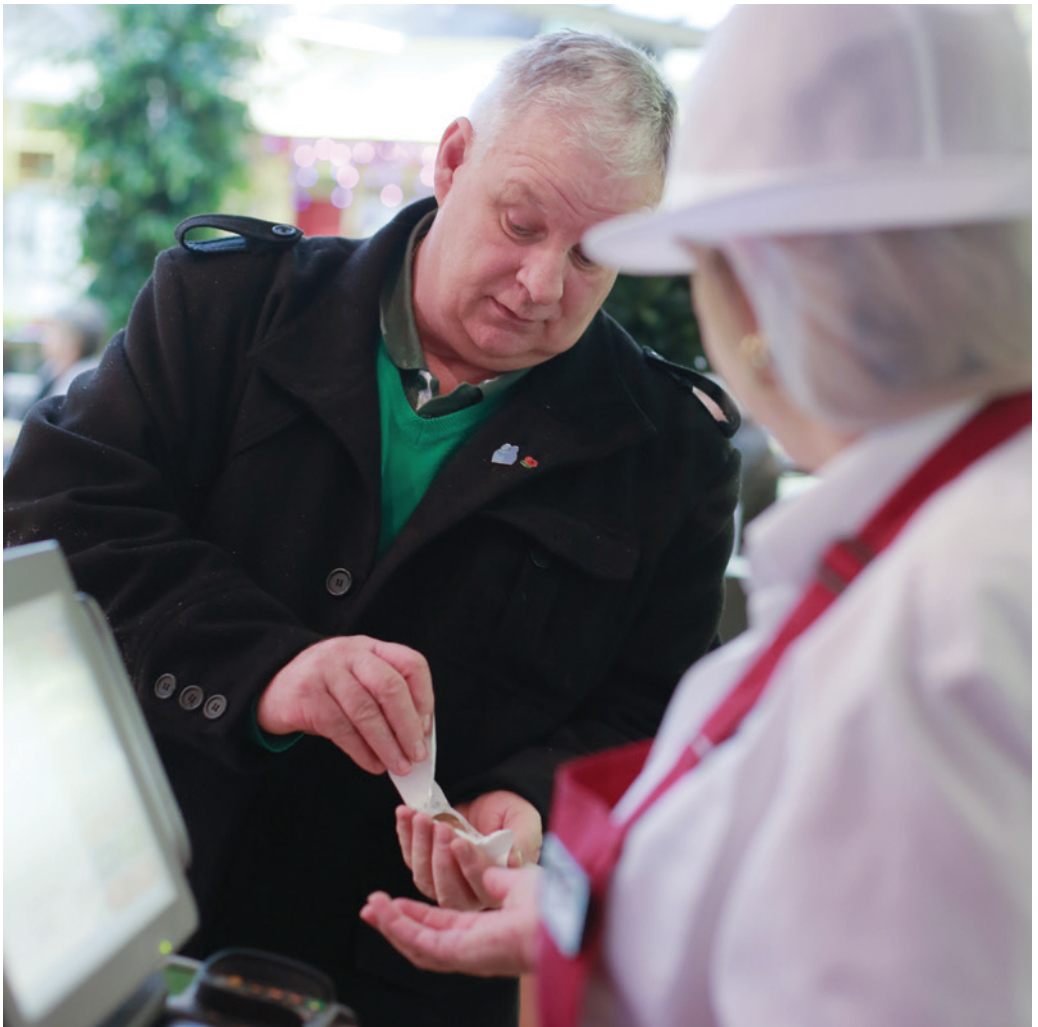


# Living with dementia

## Managing your money





**Managing your money from day to day can be difficult when you have dementia. You may forget to pay bills or take money out of the bank and then forget where you've put it.**

Even managing cash can be difficult – such as counting change and recognising different notes and coins. There are many things you can do to make dealing with money easier. We explain some of them in this booklet.

After a diagnosis, you might also want to start thinking about how you will manage your money in future. At some stage you may need to think about your bank account or ask someone to manage your money on your behalf. It can be hard at this stage to think about the future, but it can help to be prepared. We explain what you might consider doing and how to go about it.

**‘The more I can get in place now... or at least understand... the less stressful it will be when the time comes.’**

Carer of a person with dementia



## Ways to pay

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### Cash

Handling cash can be confusing sometimes – knowing what the different notes and coins are worth, or working out how they add up. You may find it hard to keep track of how much cash you've taken out and how much you've spent.

You can make this easier by finding other ways to pay for things – you could pay bills by direct debit, or use a debit card to pay for your weekly food shop, for example.

If you do use cash, it can help to work out how much you will need for a week and take that amount out of a cash machine on the same day each week. You can usually ask for a receipt when you do this. You might also want to keep a 'cash book' with a record of how much you've taken out and how much you've spent.

The bank will be able to change notes into coins for you, which they will put in plastic bags. If you pay for the same items each week using small amounts of cash, try putting the right money in different bags. For example, you may pay the milkman every Friday or the newsagent every Saturday. You can put the right money for these into bags or envelopes each week when you get cash out. Keep the envelopes in a safe place where you will remember them.



If you drive, you may want to keep a few coins in plastic bags in the glove compartment to pay for things like car parking and road tolls. Only keep a small amount of cash in the car. Make sure it is out of sight at all times, especially when you leave the car parked.

If you have physical difficulties that make it hard for you to use cash, an occupational therapist may be able to help. Ask your GP about getting an appointment.



### **Chip and pin**

‘Chip and pin’ debit cards have been designed to make paying by card easier and more secure. Instead of signing your name, you enter a four-digit number on a keypad. You can choose this number yourself. It should be a number that is easy for you to remember but difficult for other people to guess.

If you think it will be hard to remember a number, talk to your bank. They may suggest a chip and signature card, so you can sign your name as usual, or a contactless card (see page 6).

If you have problems signing your name, banks can also provide cards, such as photocards, that identify you in other ways. You can also use a rubber stamp to sign your name (see ‘Cheques’ on page 8).





### Contactless cards

Contactless bank cards are another way to make paying for things easier. Instead of signing or entering a number, you just swipe the card over the keypad to pay. You can only do this for amounts up to £30 at a time.

This might be a good option if you have problems remembering numbers or signing your name. However, it might not be a good idea if you misplace things often. It is easy for someone to use someone else's card, so you need to be careful to keep track of your card and not lose it. If you do, you should call the bank to cancel it straight away.



### Direct debits

A direct debit is an instruction to your bank to pay for some things automatically. You can pay most regular bills by direct debit. This includes things such as gas, electricity, water, TV licence and council tax. This can be helpful as it means you don't have to deal with them each time. You will receive bills as usual, so you can check how much you are being charged, but you don't have to do anything else.

Most companies and organisations that provide these services will also charge you less if you pay by direct debit. They can tell you how to set one up.







**‘Our local town has been amazing, the majority of shops have all signed up to become dementia friendly, with a huge push on the streets for people to become dementia friends too. I think this is great.’**

Carer of a person with dementia



## Cheques

Many people like to use cheques to pay for things.

It can be easier and safer than carrying cash, and it allows you to keep a record of what you have spent. However, cheques are less common than they used to be – not every shop still takes them. Many supermarkets and high street shops won't take cheques, but some smaller shops still do. Most bills can still be paid by cheque.

If you do want to keep using cheques, the following tips may help.

- If gripping a pen is difficult, try using adapted pens and pen grips.
- A plastic template may help you write your signature in the correct place.
- If you have a number of items to sign, take a break between signing them.
- Some banks allow people to use a rubber stamp of a person's name rather than a hand-written signature. This might be helpful if you find it hard to write. Not all banks do this though. Ask your bank if they do and if so how to get a stamp.







### **Online banking**

If you use the internet, you might find it easier to use online banking than go into your branch. Online banking allows you to 'log in' to your account online by going to your bank's website. You will need to set up a password to access your account.

You can do many of the things you can do at your branch, such as view your balance and statements, make payments, and manage standing orders and direct debits.

Online banking might be a good option for you if you find it hard to get to the bank regularly, or prefer the convenience of being able to do things from home.

All banks now offer online banking. If this is something you think might be helpful for you, talk to your bank about how to get set up.



### **Telephone banking**

Telephone banking is another option if you find it hard to get to your branch regularly. It might be a good option for you if you don't have access to the internet.

Telephone banking allows you to access your account and make payments over the phone. Most banks offer telephone banking services, and you can do most of the things you can do online (see above).



## Bank accounts

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### Joint bank accounts

A joint bank account is an account held by two or more people. This is often couples, but may also be other family members or people with shared expenses. Joints accounts allow all ‘account holders’ to manage the account and pay bills, which can be helpful.

Some joint accounts allow both people to make payments and withdrawals without the other needing to sign or agree. Others need both people to sign or agree. This might be a problem as your condition progresses and you find things more difficult. You may not be able to give your consent to payments and withdrawals. It is worth thinking about which option is best for you, both now and in the future.

Some banks won’t allow a joint bank account to continue if one person loses the ability to consent. If this happens the bank may stop or ‘freeze’ your account until someone with the legal power to act on your behalf is available. This would usually be someone with a power of attorney (see page 14).

If a bank knows that someone is acting as an attorney, deputy or controller for you, they will usually want you to have a separate bank account. If you are thinking of appointing someone to do this for you, talk to your bank.

It may also be a good idea to have separate accounts because it makes it easier to manage your money when it comes to paying for care. This is because a local authority should only be looking at how much money the person who receives the care has (known as ‘means testing’) and not their partner.





### **Sole bank accounts**

You may find it easier to have your own bank account. Salary, benefits and pensions can be paid directly into the account and payments can go out from the same account. This can make life simpler. You may also want to have your own account because of some of the reasons mentioned previously.

Managing your own account will be easier if you:

- write everything down in a simple cash book.
- remember to include any cash you take out of cash machines.

If you want to have your own account but would prefer someone else to help manage it, such as a close relative or friend, you can ask your bank for a ‘third party mandate’. This allows someone else to be able to sign cheques and manage your account for you. It is important to think carefully about who you ask to do this – it should be someone you know and trust.

The mandate is only valid while you have the capacity to manage your own account. If you lose capacity, the mandate will stop and the person will no longer be able to help you with your account.



## Benefits

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### **Some people with dementia will be entitled to receive benefits.**

You can be paid benefits in three ways:

- Directly into your bank or building society account.
- Into a basic bank account that you can also access at your local Post Office.
- Into a Post Office card account. This account is designed to receive benefits, state pension and tax credit payments. You can also nominate someone else you trust to have a card to access this account.

Many people will reach a point where they are unable to manage their income from benefits themselves. If this happens, it is possible to appoint someone (an 'appointee') to manage it for you. The appointee will have to apply for permission from the Department for Work and Pensions.

An appointee will usually be a close relative who lives with you or visits often, or they may be a trusted friend or neighbour. If you have already arranged a power of attorney (see 'Power of attorney' over the page), the attorney will take over from the appointee if you become unable to manage your affairs.





**‘Yes, you’ll have to register your LPA with your bank. I’d advise you to do this early, and hopefully it’ll all go smoothly and then you won’t have to worry about it when the time comes.’**

Daughter of a person with dementia

## Power of attorney

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**After receiving a diagnosis of dementia, you might want to start planning for the future. There may come a time when you need someone to make some decisions for you. A power of attorney is a legal tool that allows you to appoint someone (the ‘attorney’) to do this.**

You can choose who you appoint as an attorney, and it is up to you what powers you give them. They have to do what is best for you and always think about your wishes and needs. You can give them general powers, so they can make decisions on most things. Or you can give them specific powers – for example, to only make decisions about your property.

You can make a power of attorney if you have already been diagnosed with dementia, but you must be able to show that you understand what it is and what it means (its legal significance).

If you live in England and Wales, the current system is the Lasting power of attorney (LPA). There are two types of LPA depending on the decisions you want the attorney to make.

A property and affairs LPA enables the attorney to make decisions about your property and finances when you are no longer able to yourself.





This can include:

- paying your bills
- collecting your income and benefits
- selling your house.

A personal welfare LPA allows the attorney to make decisions on your behalf about your personal welfare, for example:

- decisions about where you live
- the power to give or refuse consent to medical treatment.

If you live in Northern Ireland, the current system is the Enduring power of attorney (EPA). An EPA gives the attorney the power to make decision about your finances and property only. It does not cover decisions about your health and welfare.

EPAs were also the old system in England and Wales, and some people may still have an EPA. This is still valid if it was granted before October 2007 and has been signed by all parties.

Powers of attorney can be complicated, so you may wish to speak to a solicitor before making one. There are forms you will need to fill out and the document will need to be registered before it can be used.



## Trusts

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**If you have property or savings, you might want to think about setting up a trust. This is a legal arrangements that allows someone to hold these things (your assets) on your behalf. It will ensure that your money is managed the way you want from now. In the future it could include money used to pay for care or where you live.**

Setting up a trust can be complicated and expensive, and isn't something that everyone can do, so you will need to talk to a solicitor. There are several types of trust and different ways of arranging them.

**'If you want to be a joint signatory, go to the relevant bank and ask. They might want to make a special appointment and take relevant details with you. We did this and everything went really well.'**

Former carer of a person with dementia



## Keeping your money safe

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**After a diagnosis of dementia, there are things you can do to make sure your money is safe in the future. People with dementia can be more vulnerable to financial scams and tricks. Being aware of this means you can do things to keep your money safe.**

- Set up a property and affairs LPA. This can allow to keep an eye on your finances for you in the future.
- Discuss your finances with your family, carer or a close friend. If someone knows your situation, they will be able to notice anything unusual – for example, unnecessary purchases or not having as much money as you should.
- Keep good records of your finances, such as bank statements, bills and so on.
- Think about putting a limit on your credit or debit cards, so only a certain amount can be taken out at a time.
- Run background and reference checks if you are employing a carer or people to support you at home.



- Stop junk mail and unwanted telephone calls by registering with the Telephone Preference Service and Mail Preference Service (see ‘Other useful organisations’).
- Put a ‘no cold callers’ sign on the door – some local authorities will provide these to people for free.
- If you are uncertain about anything, speak to someone you trust, such as a friend or relative. If you can’t speak to a relative or friend, contact the Action on Elder Abuse Helpline, see ‘Other useful organisations’ on page 19.

**‘I would advise that you keep a record of all financial issues you deal with – bank appointments, phone calls, payment of bills, purchasing of food, clothes etc, just in case anyone queries anything, and keep all bank statements, bills, invoices, receipts too!’**

Son of a person with dementia



## Other useful organisations

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### **Action on Elder Abuse**

PO Box 60001

London SW16 9BY

T 080 8808 8141

E [enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk)

W [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk)

They work to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults and via their helpline provide support and information to people who are affected by abuse.

### **Age UK**

Tavis House

1–6 Tavistock Square

London WC1H 9NA

T 0800 169 8787 (general enquiries)

0800 169 6565 (advice line)

E [contact@ageuk.org.uk](mailto:contact@ageuk.org.uk)

W [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

### **Age Cymru (in Wales)**

Tŷ John Pathy

13/14 Neptune Court

Vanguard Way

Cardiff CF24 5PJ

T 029 2043 1555

E [enquiries@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@agecymru.org.uk)

W [www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru)



**Age NI (in Northern Ireland)**

3 Lower Crescent

Belfast BT7 1NR

T 028 9024 5729

E [info@ageni.org](mailto:info@ageni.org)

W [www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland)

Provides information and advice for older people in the UK.

**British Bankers' Association (BBA)**

Pinner's Hall

105–108 Old Broad Street

London EC2N 1EX

T 020 7216 8800

[www.bba.org.uk](http://www.bba.org.uk)

The British Bankers' Association provides free guides to various aspects of banking in plain English. It also sets the standards for best banking practice.

**Disability Benefits Centre**

W [www.gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline](http://www.gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline)

**Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**

T 0345 850 3322

Textphone: 0345 601 6677

Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm

**Personal Independence Payment (New claims only)**

T 0800 917 2222

Textphone: 0800 917 7777

Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm





### **Disability Living Allowance**

T 0345 712 3456

Textphone: 0345 722 4433

Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm

### **Attendance Allowance (also for DLA claimants who are 65+)**

T 0345 605 6055

Textphone: 0345 604 5312

Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm

### **Northern Ireland – Benefit Enquiry Line**

T 0800 220 674 (9am–5pm weekdays except

Thursday; 10am–5pm Thursday)

028 9031 1092 (textphone, 9am–5pm weekdays)

Provides advice and information on Attendance allowance, Disability living allowance, Personal independence payments, Carer's allowance and Carer's credit.

### **Mail Preference Service**

W [www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk/mpsr/)

Register that allows you to opt out of all unsolicited mail. Registering with the service is free, and it is supported by Royal Mail and the Information Commissioner's Office.



**Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)**

PO Box 16185

Birmingham B2 2WH

T 0300 456 0300

E [customerservices@publicguardian.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@publicguardian.gsi.gov.uk)

W [www.justice.gov.uk/about/opg](http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/opg)

Provides free booklets on enduring power of attorney, lasting powers of attorney and deputyship. The court of protection is at the same address.

**Solicitors for the Elderly**

Mill Studio Business Centre

Crane Mead

Ware

Hertford SG12 9PY

T 0844 5676 173

E [admin@solicitorsfortheelderly.com](mailto:admin@solicitorsfortheelderly.com)

[www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com](http://www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com)

Solicitors for the Elderly is a national association of solicitors, barristers and legal executives who are committed to providing comprehensive and independent legal advice for older people, their families and carers.

**Telephone Preference Service**

W [www.tpsservices.co.uk/telephone-preference-service.aspx](http://www.tpsservices.co.uk/telephone-preference-service.aspx)

Register that allows you to opt out of unsolicited or 'cold' calls. Operated on behalf of Ofcom. Registering is free.



This publication has been reviewed by people affected by dementia and health and social care professionals. A full list of sources is available on request.

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Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading support and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers. We provide information and support to people with any form of dementia and their carers through our publications, National Dementia Helpline, website, and more than 3,000 local services. We campaign for better quality of life for people with dementia and greater understanding of dementia. We also fund an innovative programme of medical and social research into the cause, cure and prevention of dementia and the care people receive.

If you have any concerns about Alzheimer's disease or any other form of dementia, visit [alzheimers.org.uk](https://alzheimers.org.uk) or call the **Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline** on **0300 222 1122**. (Interpreters are available in any language. Calls may be recorded or monitored for training and evaluation purposes.)

## **Alzheimer's Society**

Devon House  
58 St Katharine's Way  
London E1W 1LB

**020 7423 3500**  
**[info@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:info@alzheimers.org.uk)**  
**[alzheimers.org.uk](https://alzheimers.org.uk)**

