

Empowering Positive Change

Managing the distribution of financial support, products and services to vulnerable households and community projects.





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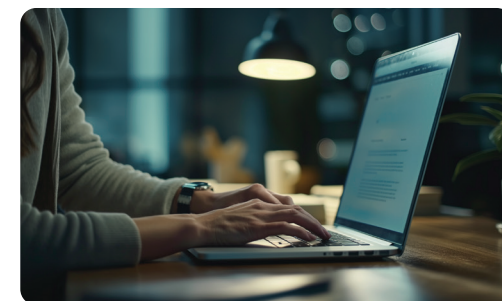
My wife has COPD and other medical conditions. She needs to be kept warm. We're earmarking that money for the purpose it has been provided. It means we are not going to be here dressed up in our overcoats this winter.”

Rodney
Park Homes WHD Recipient

Delivering fast and effective help to the people who need it most

For over 20 years, Charis has been managing the distribution of financial support, products and services to vulnerable households and community projects on behalf of private sector, public sector, and not-for-profit organisations.

Tailored scheme management alongside our plug and play support platform, the Charis Shop, enables almost a thousand local authorities, housing associations, utility companies and charities to deliver fast and effective help to the people who need it most.



The Charis Shop, our one stop support platform

The Charis Shop is a one stop e-commerce platform which helps our partners streamline the delivery of support to households struggling with financial challenges, ill-health, disabilities or life-affecting circumstances.

From energy vouchers to energy-efficient appliances, soft furnishings to furniture, retail vouchers to digital devices, our product range reflects the disparate needs of individuals and families across England, Scotland and Wales.

The Charis Shop is simple to use, secure and there are no management fees.

You can register for a free account online and we'll send over your login details and user guides. Pay money into your Shop account by BACS transfer and you're ready to go. You'll be able to set up additional users within your organisation, determine spend limits, and establish award criteria to help you to target your support more effectively.

Everything is delivered directly to the customer - instantaneously in the case of vouchers and door-to-door for physical products. We arrange for the installation of all large household appliances that are ordered and take away the old ones for recycling.

Real-time reporting enables you to track deliveries, voucher redemption statuses, organisational spend and order history. We also have a customer service team to help with any Shop-related queries you may have.

The Charis Shop saves you time, maximises your funding and lets you focus on what really matters - providing support to your customers.

“Working with Charis to administer the Cadent Foundation £2 million winter support fund has been invaluable.

Through their efficient and accessible online platform, our charity partners have been able to provide energy and food vouchers, as well as essential household appliances, to thousands of vulnerable households.

Last year alone, over 38,000 people benefited from this support, and we're looking forward to helping even more individuals and families this winter as we begin our second year of partnership. Charis's commitment and expertise have made a real difference, ensuring that help reaches those who need it most during the most challenging season.”

Julia Dwyer
Director - Cadent Foundation

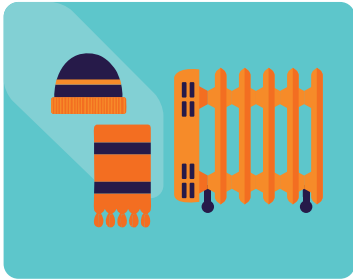


Vulnerability is multi-faceted

Financial struggles, physical and mental health issues, capability challenges, the cold, hunger and life-changing circumstances are frequently interconnected, with one triggering or exacerbating another. Ideally, to alleviate these challenges, a combination of short-term AND sustainable support would be provided.

The Charis Shop product range offers a holistic approach to vulnerability. A fuel voucher can be an immediate antidote to a freezing house, but a heated throw or mattress topper can provide winter-long comfort. A clothing voucher can pay for a school uniform, but a new tablet can make it easier to apply for a job that will increase the household's self-sufficiency. A supermarket voucher can put food on the table, but an air-fryer can reduce the cost of cooking it.

We understand the importance of providing the right type of support to households at the right time.



“Many of our patients are unable to live independently. Our discharge plans have different levels of supported living and accommodation which sometimes have to include the provision of basic amenities such as cookers, beds and other furniture.”

Jefferson Seager
Essex Partnership University
NHS Foundation Trust

The Charis Shop, an extensive range of support in one place



Energy Vouchers

Top-ups for prepayment meters, smart pay as-you-go meters and direct debit energy accounts give customers immediate peace of mind when it comes to heating their homes.



Retail Vouchers

Our extensive selection of fee-free retail vouchers caters for a broad spectrum of household support needs. Some of the biggest UK and global brands are included, from supermarket chains to leading clothing brands, homeware to DIY and stationery to electronics.



Cash Vouchers & Direct Payments

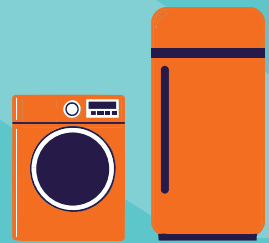
Fast access to cash can be critical for customers facing emergency situations. We have direct-to-account Faster Payments available alongside traditional cash vouchers redeemable at Post Office and Paypoint stores.



We recently surveyed our Charis Shop partners and achieved a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 58. NPS measures customer loyalty and satisfaction and our score falls into the 'Great' tier!

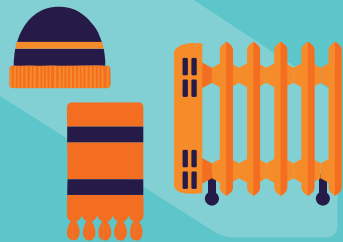
Sign up for a Charis Shop account at charisgrants.com/shop/ or, if you'd like to know more, email us at businessenquiries@charisgrants.com

With a sizable not-for-profit partner network, we are uniquely placed to be able to "socialise" new initiatives across relevant stakeholder organisations so if you would like some comms support from Charis, we'd be delighted to help!



Energy-Efficient Appliances

Many vulnerable households are struggling without basic appliances, while old models are notoriously expensive to run. Our energy-efficient appliances enable customers to refrigerate and freeze food, cook, launder clothes and heat the home cost-effectively, reducing bills immediately and in the long run.



Winter Warmth

Our Winter Warmth products keep customers and their homes warm. Heated throws, mattress toppers, duvets, bodywarmers, hot water bottles and radiator foils provide instant relief from the cold, this winter and next.



Digital Devices

Our range of smart phones, tablets, laptops and Wi-Fi hotspot devices helps reduce barriers to education, information, employment and social inclusion.



Furniture

A 2023 report from Barnardo's found that an estimated 900,000 children in the UK were without a proper bed, impacting their mental wellbeing and education. Charis offers a variety of beds and other furniture to improve the household comfort for children and adults alike.

“

If I could score you with more than 10 I would. Excellent service. Thank you from all the people I support on a daily basis!”

Melanie Nicholas
Benefits Entitlement Customer
Support Officer - NEA

Tailored Scheme Management

Charis has been managing support schemes, foundations and charitable trusts for utility companies and not-for-profit organisations since 2003. From 2015, we have also been running our own, Ofgem regulated Industry Initiatives that support fuel-poor households in England, Scotland and Wales.

Each scheme is white-labelled and tailored to reflect the target audience, support avenues, eligibility criteria and available funding, and delivered with a combination of sophisticated software, vulnerability-led human intervention and process efficiency.

Outsourcing scheme management to Charis enables our partners to focus on the strategic intent of their schemes, trusts or foundations, rather than the operational detail:

- Save time and costs
- Optimise the distribution of support
- More easily meet and evidence any regulatory obligations
- Increase the speed to market of new CSR initiatives



Charis's scheme management requires a comprehensive cross-functional approach that can include a combination of:



Software

- Eligibility logic that ensures the fair distribution of funding and triages customers to the right support
- A repository for documentary evidence
- A portal to manage customer journeys, application statuses, organisational workflows and task assignment



Communications

- Status-triggered emails and SMSs to applicants
- PR support to build awareness of our partners' schemes



Telephony

- Inbound call handling for applications and queries
- Outbound calling to support digitally excluded customers



Application Assessment & Validation

- From automated assessments to the chairing of assessment panels for large grant awards
- Validation of documentary evidence



Case Management

- Vulnerability assessments
- Support guidance for customers



Debt support

- Automated plan management
- Late payment prompting for customers and customer service teams



Energy Assessments & Property Retrofits

- Energy performance assessment visits to homes
- Installation of energy performance measures including water tank jackets, draught proofing and cavity wall and loft insulation



Fulfilment

- BACS transfers and Faster Payments to individuals and organisations
- Real-time digital distribution of vouchers and door to door delivery of appliances and Winter Warmth products



Partner Integrations

- Auto-population of customer data within application forms
- Automated hand-off of applications to our partners for additional support avenues



Reporting

- Bespoke dashboards and reporting with detailed analytics around application volumes, financial balances, support requests, statuses and awards
- Commission of external audits for Ofgem regulated schemes

The EDF Customer Support Fund & E.ON Next Energy Fund

The impact of high energy tariffs, coupled with the cost-of-living-crisis has had a major impact on consumer energy debt. The commercial ramification for suppliers is significant and for customers, struggling to pay off energy debts can be a stressful experience, often affecting both physical and mental health.

The year-round Customer Support Fund and Energy Fund help households who are experiencing financial difficulties and health vulnerabilities. Eligible customers with mounting debt are offered payment plans which if completed, result in the debt being cleared in full. In the vast majority of cases, this support enables customers to break a cycle of debt and engender a change of behaviour which results in sustainable, financial stability and reduced anxiety. For EDF and E.ON Next, the respite provided to thousands of vulnerable customers each year helps to reduce their debt exposure and increase customer retention.

“Our partnership with Charis to administer our EDF Customer Support Fund has successfully provided essential support to our most vulnerable customers - together we have provided over £3m direct support to customers this year (2024). We're proud to be the first supplier to work with Charis to set up a Matched Funding debt scheme which has helped over 79% of EDF applicants remain debt-free for at least 12 months after an award was given.

The Charis team carefully considers every detail to ensure all our evolving requirements are met for the best customer experience. They take the time to understand our business requirements and goals, and they're committed to balancing the needs of what is right for our customers too. The proficiency of the team, who are always on hand, is invaluable. It's a 21-year Partnership that I'm immensely proud of”.

Marie Cox
Vulnerability Customer Executive – EDF



npower Business Solutions Foundation

The npower Business Solutions Foundation funds projects of not-for-profit organisations which help create stronger, greener and more sustainable local communities within West Midlands and Yorkshire. Charities, social enterprises, and schools and universities can apply for up to £100,000 of funding, which helps to generate significant social value within the regions.

“As the npower Business Solutions Foundation is a hugely important initiative, we needed an experienced partner that could understand what we want to achieve and also collaborate closely with our team to ensure that the application process ran smoothly.

It is vital that our grant recipients not only receive their funds in a timely manner, but that they feel comfortable and supported throughout the process.

Charis ticks all the boxes. The team is excellent, making what could be a complex process feel seamless, and their quick delivery, professionalism and attention to detail means that the npower Business Solutions Foundation has already been hugely successful since its launch.”

Anthony Ainsworth
Chief Operating Officer – npower Business Solutions (nBS)

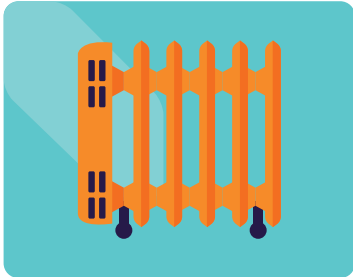
“The delivery of new software and application processes this year has enabled us to increase the provision of support. The Charis team has been amazing throughout the transition, facilitating brilliant training sessions for our colleagues as well as assisting customers with their applications.”

Kelly Davies
Continuous Improvement Support Lead - E.ON Next

Park Homes Warm Home Discount & Let's Talk Energy Fund

The Park Homes Warm Home Discount (WHD) and Let's Talk Energy Fund are both WHD Industry Initiatives regulated by Ofgem. The former provides an annual WHD payment to Park Homes households, many of whom are fuel-poor because of old age, low income and thermally inefficient properties. Let's Talk provides energy efficient appliances for customers in receipt of means-tested benefits.

Over the years, almost every energy supplier has contributed to one or both schemes, helping them to become established lifelines for struggling individuals and families. Ongoing cost of living challenges and the increasing prevalence of fuel poverty have led to businesses in other sectors expressing an interest in contributing to the schemes as part of their social responsibility commitments.



“

I live in a park home and in winter I can go from one chest infection to another as I'm cutting back on gas.

Now I can afford to use the heating more, I'm going to feel better and I'm not going to get so ill. My daughter said to me you have worked all your life, just take the help that is there.”

Jennifer
Park Homes WHD Recipient

GroceryAid School Essentials Grant

The £1 million GroceryAid School Essentials Grant helps families working in the UK grocery sector that are in receipt of Universal Credit or Child Tax Credits. For a short window each summer, families can apply for a £150 payment per child (up to 3 children) and on a randomly selected basis, over 3000 applicants receive a payment to their designated bank account.



“

We worked with Charis for the first time in 2024 to deliver our £1m School Essentials Grant. Previously, we managed the programme in-house, but we wanted to find a partner who could give us greater flexibility with regards to the application and payment processes.”

Mandi Leonard
Welfare Director – GroceryAid



Clarion Retrofit Programme

Clarion Housing Group is the UK’s biggest housing association with more than 350,000 residents. Their charitable foundation, Clarion Futures, launched a pilot to identify households that would benefit from the installation of energy efficiency measures that can immediately reduce bills and increase comfort whilst residents await more extensive retrofit works.

The Clarion Futures team request energy assessment calls from Charis during which an expert will survey the home, offer energy advice and issue, if required, an Energy Performance Certificate. Based on the assessor’s report, low-level retrofit solutions are ordered from Charis and then installed on a subsequent visit. These can include smaller measures such as hot water tank jackets and radiator reflector foils through to more significant remedies such as loft insulation. Following the success of the pilot in the Midlands, there are plans to explore wider rollout of the scheme.

“

The work done through our responsive retrofit pilot supports both our fuel poverty and sustainability agenda, allowing us to support those at risk of fuel poverty living in homes with EPC ratings of D or below. Our partnership with Charis allows us to deliver practical support by providing access to low-level energy efficiency measures tailored to a resident’s individual needs.”

Mary Bunner
Money Guidance Manager – Clarion Futures

Find out more

If you'd like to know more about the Charis Shop, please email us at the address below.

If you're interested in launching a new scheme, trust or foundation please get in touch - we'd be delighted to share our insights with you.

If you already run a scheme or distribute monies from the Household Support Fund or other sources, and you're considering how best to manage some of your activities, again, please drop us a line.

If you'd simply like to contribute to a Charis scheme, to help more people get the support they need, we'd love to hear from you.

 businessenquiries@charisgrants.com

 charisgrants.com



Get in touch via
our website

