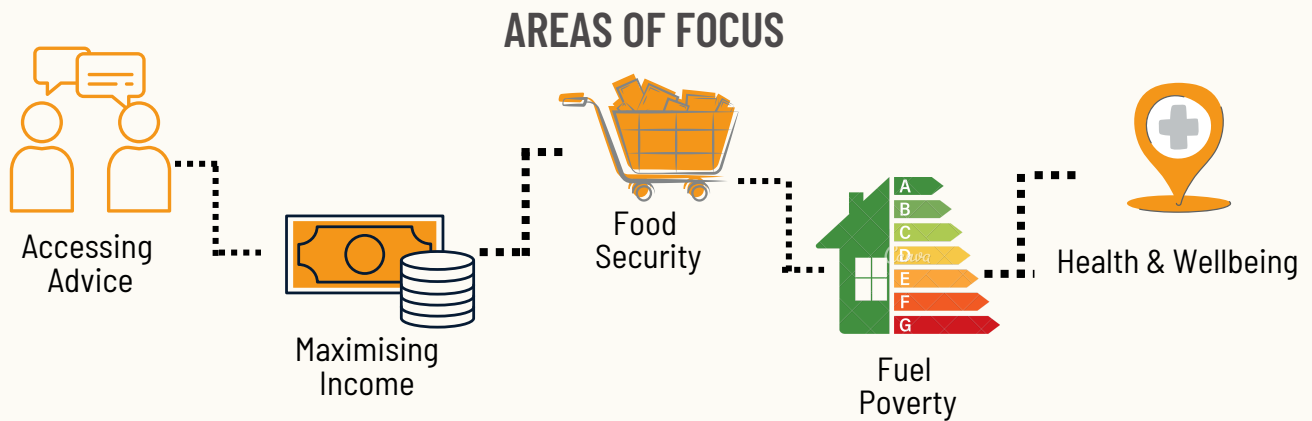


TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE LAST UPDATE

**£ 1,061,626.04**

TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE PLAN FIRST APPROVED

**£11,472,496.68**



## SUPPORTING HOUSEHOLDS IN CRISIS

### Since last update

#### Household Support Fund - Housing Support

**Mid Suffolk** 48 Households | £50,000

**Babergh** 41 Households | £50,000

#### Foodbanks Mapped

**Mid Suffolk** 9

**Babergh** 18

#### Warm Spaces: Winter Warmth Grants

**Mid Suffolk** 32 VCSEs Supported | £55,995.74

**Babergh** 30 VCSEs Supported | £55,000

#### New Resources for Staff

New cost of living Connect pages, a Fuel Poverty Toolkit, and webinars for staff launched.

#### Alternative Fuel (AF) Payments

**Mid Suffolk** 645 Applications Paid | £129,200

**Babergh** 438 Applications Paid | £87,600

#### Communications Campaigns

Cost of living campaigns across web, print and targeted email.

**Opportunities to see generated** 1,105,300

#### Energy Bill Support Scheme (AF) Payments

**Mid Suffolk** 343 Applications Paid | £137,200

**Babergh** 242 Applications Paid | £96,800

#### Cost of Living Webpages

**Views** 812

### Since plan first approved

#### Homelessness Prevention Fund

**Mid Suffolk** 41 Households | £33,056.59

**Babergh** 57 Households | £40,794.92

#### Free activities for low income families (HAF)

7419 activities

#### Discretionary Housing Payments

**Mid Suffolk** 76 Households | £70,022

**Babergh** 108 Households | £86,438

#### Homelessness Preventions and Reliefs

**Mid Suffolk** 153 Prevented | 56 Relieved

**Babergh** 144 Prevented | 43 Relieved

#### Domestic Abuse Support

**Mid Suffolk** 95 Households, inc 47 families

**Babergh** 109 Households, inc 67 families

#### Tenancy Support & Funds Secured

**Mid Suffolk** 201 referrals received | £47,323.12

**Babergh** 226 referrals received | £78,808.29

## BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

#### Additional Council Tax Support

**Mid Suffolk** £131,004.62

**Babergh** £140,710.00

#### Digital Inclusion Support

**Mid Suffolk** 8 sessions | 9 users

**Babergh** 8 Sessions | 17 users

#### VCSE Forums

Two forums delivered in partnership with Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice

**47 Participants** **34 Organisations**

#### Resilience Grants for VCSE's

**Mid Suffolk** 22 VCSEs Supported | £77,014.00

**Babergh** 13 VCSEs Supported | £51,901.68

#### NEET Support for Young People

**Mid Suffolk** 7 participants

**Babergh** 12 participants

#### Affordable Private lets through CSL

**Mid Suffolk** 17 New properties | 34 total

**Babergh** 20 New properties | 48 total

#### Private Sector Renovation Grants/ Loans

**Mid Suffolk** 14 Households | £50,019.12 Awarded

**Babergh** 7 Households | £20,983.99 Awarded

## CASE STUDY | THE IMPACT OF LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE

### Kindly provided by Sudbury & District Citizens Advice

Anne\* is a 61 year old woman who attended Sudbury & District Citizens Advice, she was feeling isolated, suffering from extreme anxiety, depression and struggling to leave her home.

She lived alone in a one bed social housing flat and was struggling to support herself. She had little money to buy food after paying her bills. In arrears with energy payments, she wasn't using any heating. Desperate to manage, she had been paying the minimum against her overdraft and credit card. She had reached crisis point that morning. She had little food in the house, her Direct Debits were due to be taken the next day which would leave her with no money, in addition her kettle had broken that morning and she did not know how she would afford to replace it.

Citizens Advice immediately referred her to Storehouse Foodbank for a food parcel delivery, meeting her immediate need for food.

A Local Welfare Assistance (LWAS) application was made for her as, due to her anxiety, she was unable to make the application herself.

Anne was advised to contact her GP to ask for help with her anxiety and depression, and was also given contact details for the local Community Depot to replace her kettle and possibly get a wardrobe, which she also did not have.

Citizens Advice then considered how they might help her with her household budget. She already received Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Employment Support Allowance, but not Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Details of the PIP Helpline were given to her along with an application pack to give her further information, support was offered to complete this if needed.

### THE IMPACT

Anne felt relieved that she had been able to talk to someone about all the difficulties she was facing rather than having to go to different people for help with different problems.

The LWAS payment went a long way towards easing her current financial situation, giving her a feeling of being a little more in control of her life, at least in the short term. She is going to apply for PIP and return to Citizens Advice for help with this. If successful this will improve her situation in the longer term. When she returns, Citizens Advice will also try to encourage her to pursue help with her debt situation, to prevent this from escalating.

\*Names changed to preserve anonymity of participants.

## CASE STUDY | THE IMPACT OF LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE

### Kindly provided by Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice

George\* is a single man in his mid 60s. He had worked all his life, however had taken early retirement due to ill health. George took a lump sum from his private pension to see him through until he received his Statutory Pension and Private Pension, which were due a year after he took retirement. He is not digitally enabled, and therefore cannot deal with statutory organisations online.

Due to the high cost of living, the lump sum George took ran out out far sooner than expected, 3 months early. Suddenly, he was unable to pay his rent or other bills and was very worried about getting into debt. George is a council tenant, and visited Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) about his concern over his rent and council tax. MSDC put a hold on payments for the time being, to give George the opportunity to seek help, and signposted him to Citizens Advice to get his financial issues resolved.

George then got in touch with Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk, as he had no money and was unsure as to how he was going to afford to live until he got his pension payment, which at this point was not due for 2 months.

George had reservations about wanting help, as he had never been in receipt of benefits or other support, and felt he wasn't entitled to anything. However, our adviser reassured George that many people were experiencing the same issues as him, and it was OK to need help sometimes.

She submitted a Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (LWAS) application for him, so he could get a bit of extra help financially. She then submitted a food parcel request, to tide him over for the next few days, until he received his LWAS payment. An application was also submitted for Discretionary Housing Payment and Council Tax Reduction

The adviser also spoke with George about computer training, as he had expressed, he would like to be able to get online. He wanted to get through the next 2 months first, but once he was in receipt of his pension payments, he would like to learn some new skills. Our adviser explained the opportunities Realise futures could offer, and he will look to do a course with them in the near future.

### THE IMPACT

The advice George received prevented an immediate crisis and enabled him access support to tide him over financially until his pension came through, giving him increased control over his finances and also reducing the stigma associated with getting help. George is also now more aware of the support available to him financially and how to access training to get online and develop his digital skills.

\*Names changed to preserve anonymity of participants.

## CASE STUDY | IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Kindly provided by Minding The Gap Local (MTG)

### BABERGH

Sam\* self-referred himself onto the MTG Local in January 2023 as a 17-year-old economically inactive young person from Sudbury. He joined the project initially seeking support to get an apprenticeship in plumbing. A Youth Re-engagement Adviser at the SCC confirmed that she had been aware of Sam's NEET status since September 2022.

At the initial sign-up meeting in February Sam advised that his desire was to pursue a plumbing apprenticeship, however he had been struggling to secure this since leaving college. He said he would also consider the construction industry. With the support of MTG Local Sam updated his CV and started to search for an apprenticeship within the plumbing supplies industry.

By March we had encouraged Sam to broaden his options and, as a result, Sam started to look for employment while waiting for an appropriate apprenticeship opportunity to arise. Sam was supported to consider businesses local to him that he might be interested in and he completed an application to a local garden centre as well as other businesses. Sam adapted his personal statement and CV to match the roles he was applying for.

Before the end of March Sam was very excited as he had been offered a job in a Siemens factory. He used the technique that had been modelled to him by his keyworker earlier on that month of looking at a local map of businesses and going through employers' websites until he had found a vacancy that interested him. Sam was offered employment as a Parts Assembler. At the end of his first day he sent a message to his key worker to advise that he had enjoyed his first day and had got on well with his new colleagues.

### THE IMPACT

We met up with Sam two weeks after he had commenced work to complete the project exit paperwork. He advised that he was really enjoying his job, he was already exceeding the targets which meant he would receive bonus remuneration. He was excited for the future and was still aiming to enter the plumbing trade but had decided to work to save for driving lessons so he could become more employable.

\*Names changed to preserve anonymity of participants.

## CASE STUDY | IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Kindly provided by Minding The Gap Local (MTG)

### MID SUFFOLK

Amy\* is 18 years old (from Mid Suffolk) and was referred to the project by Realise Futures as they felt they could not support her with her job searching. She had been unemployed since leaving college after realising she didn't enjoy the course. Amy has ASD and felt this had been an issue in the work trials she had completed so far.

Amy's goal was to find employment as she wanted to help her mum financially and have more of a purpose. Amy had applied to some local coffee shops but felt let down when she was led to believe she had gained employment only to be told that the management had chosen someone else. MTG Local worked with her to develop her existing CV and helped her to apply to various roles in Stowmarket.

Together they also explored other job roles, outside Stowmarket, but in locations where she could use the train for travel. Amy applied to Tesco to fulfil an internet shopping role in Stowmarket, but this meant Amy would miss the local bus home and was worried about walking home after a later shift. So, other Tesco stores were explored. One position with Tesco.com became available in Bury St Edmunds doing the very early shifts. Amy realised that she would have to catch the train by 5am but would be home safely in the daytime. Amy stated she was prepared to do this as it was important to her to help her mum financially.

Amy sent the application, reviewed her CV and prepared for an interview. She attended an interview and was offered the job on a temporary basis for three months. Amy found the first couple of weeks stressful as she adjusted, but she has quickly engaged in the work. Her keyworker met Amy at end of June – this was her 3 month sustainable outcome check which coincided with the end of her temporary employment contract. Amy was so pleased to share that Tesco have offered her a permanent job working for Tesco.com but she has also been training in three other areas within the store and is enjoying the variety of work. Amy has been doing overtime which she enjoys, as she is able to boost her income during the time she would otherwise be waiting for her train.

### THE IMPACT

Amy said that on reflection, although she has struggled to engage with people and finds social situations difficult, she has developed her confidence and ability to work at the checkout and has really liked engaging with people for those short periods of time. This work environment is helping her to develop her confidence and ability to build more relationships with others

\*Names changed to preserve anonymity of participants.