

TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE LAST UPDATE

£ 479,759.33

TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE PLAN FIRST APPROVED

£5,706,663.20

AREAS OF FOCUS



SUPPORTING HOUSEHOLDS IN CRISIS

Since last update

Foodbanks Mapped

Foodbanks | 3 Pantries | 14

Household Support Fund - Housing Cost Support

51 Households | £60,000

Alternative Fuel (AF) Payments

438 Applications Paid | £87,600

Energy Bill Support Scheme (AF) Payments

242 Applications Paid | £96,800

Warm Spaces: Winter Warmth Grants

27 VCSEs Supported | £43,257.88

New Resources for Staff

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

Cost of Living Webpages

Views 900+

Communications Campaigns

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

Opportunities to see generated 1,000,000+

Since plan first approved

Homelessness Prevention Fund

77 Households | £56,147.94

Discretionary Housing Payments

173 Households | £144,165.06

Domestic Abuse Support

109 Households, inc 67 families

Free activities for low income families (HAF)

7419 activities

Homelessness Preventions & Reliefs

245 Prevented | 65 Relieved

Financial Inclusion Support & Funds Secured

284 referrals received | £116,760.89

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Digital Inclusion Support

18 Sessions | 23 users

Additional Council Tax Support

Ctax Support £118,445.83
Transitional Protection £21,753.74

Resilience Grants for VCSE's

13 VCSEs Supported | £51,901.68

NEET Support for Young People

12 Individuals Supported

Affordable Private lets through CSL

58 New Affordable Tenancies

Private Sector Renovation Grants/ Loans

10 Households | £35,061.99 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 | IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Kindly provided by Minding The Gap Local (MTG)

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.