

TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE LAST UPDATE

£ 623,304.11

TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE PLAN FIRST APPROVED

£6,277,775.77

AREAS OF FOCUS



SUPPORTING HOUSEHOLDS IN CRISIS

Since last update

Foodbanks Mapped
Foodbanks | 4 Pantries | 4

Household Support Fund - Housing Cost Support
59 Households | £60,000

Alternative Fuel (AF) Payments
645 Applications Paid | £129,200

Energy Bill Support Scheme (AF) Payments
343 Applications Paid | £137,200

Warm Spaces: Winter Warmth Grants
29 VCSEs Supported | £48,260.53

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
63 Households | £45,933.25

Free activities for low income families (HAF)
7419 activities

Discretionary Housing Payments
141 Households | £121,607.30

Homelessness Preventions & Reliefs
247 Prevented | 89 Relieved

Domestic Abuse Support
95 Households, inc 47 families

Financial Inclusion Support & Funds Secured
263 referrals received | £102,029.98

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

IP14 Wellbeing Grants for VCSE's
8 VCSEs Supported | £42,071.45

Digital Inclusion Support

11 sessions | 10 users

Additional Council Tax Support

Ctax Support £113,219.25
Transitional Protection £16,738.88

Private Sector Renovation Grants/ Loans

19 Households | £76,725.62 Awarded

VCSE Forums

Two forums delivered in partnership with Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice

47 Participants 34 Organisations

Resilience Grants for VCSE's
22 VCSEs Supported | £77,014.00

NEET Support for Young People

7 individuals supported

Affordable Private lets through CSL
50 New Affordable Tenancies

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)

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

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