

## What support is available?

The forum gave us an opportunity to come together and share insight on the support available locally for those in hardship, as well as discuss the challenges people are facing.

Below is a brief summary of the available support discussed during the forum, with details of how to access this. Alongside this are details of support relating to some of the gaps identified, appreciating that while this support may not completely mitigate these issues, it may still be of benefit.

### Information on the cost of living

Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Council webpages	For those able to access the internet; the Mid Suffolk Cost of Living webpages contain lots of information on the support available to people locally, there is a designated page for energy costs. <a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits/cost-of-living-support/">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits/cost-of-living-support/</a>
Suffolk Infolink	<a href="https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6">https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6</a>
Suffolk County Council	<a href="https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/cost-of-living-support">https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/cost-of-living-support</a>
Help for Households	Government pages detailing the support available nationally with the cost of living. <a href="https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/?utm_campaign=H4H_UK&amp;utm_medium=Search&amp;utm_source=Google&amp;utm_content=Brand&amp;gclid=CjwKCAiA85efBhBbEiwAD7oLQK-3AZAM5I4d7-o0WB-ma_qdFa3t7xcJcd0lwQvxDqATu1flhlnP9RoC9iEQAvD_BwE&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds">https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/?utm_campaign=H4H_UK&amp;utm_medium=Search&amp;utm_source=Google&amp;utm_content=Brand&amp;gclid=CjwKCAiA85efBhBbEiwAD7oLQK-3AZAM5I4d7-o0WB-ma_qdFa3t7xcJcd0lwQvxDqATu1flhlnP9RoC9iEQAvD_BwE&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds</a>
Soda's Cost of Living Dashboard	Soda produce a monthly dashboard monitoring the impact of the cost of living across Suffolk, this can often be drilled down to more local levels. <a href="#">Cost of Living - Healthy Suffolk</a>

### Financial Support

Local Welfare Assistance	<a href="https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/suffolk-local-welfare-assistance-scheme">https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/suffolk-local-welfare-assistance-scheme</a>
Household Support Fund	<a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/money-advice-and-support/household-support-fund/">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/money-advice-and-support/household-support-fund/</a>
British Gas Energy Fund	<a href="https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/">https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/</a>
Other energy provider grants	<a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/</a>
Social landlords	Some social landlords also have hardship funds, including Flagship, Samphire, Newtide, Housing 21 and Havebury, and Orwell.
Industry benevolent funds	<a href="https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/">https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/</a>

### Support with Items

Stowmarket Relief Trust	Application must be via a referral agency. These are listed at: <a href="https://www.srtonline.co.uk/">https://www.srtonline.co.uk/</a>
The Rope Trust	Application must be via a referral agency. More information at: <a href="https://www.theropetrust.org.uk/">https://www.theropetrust.org.uk/</a>
Forge Church Furniture Bank	<a href="https://www.forgechurch.com/for/">https://www.forgechurch.com/for/</a>
Forge Church Moses project	<a href="https://www.forgechurch.com/for/">https://www.forgechurch.com/for/</a>
Winter Warmth	A referral must be made by professional or someone who works for a voluntary sector organisation <a href="https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/i-want-to-help/winter-warmth-referral/">https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/i-want-to-help/winter-warmth-referral/</a>
Hopestead	Grants for furnishings for new Flagship (including Samphire and Newtide) tenants who have been homeless. <a href="https://www.hopestead.org/">https://www.hopestead.org/</a>
Suffolk Baby Bank	Can provide clothing an essential items for babies and children, including uniform. <a href="https://www.suffolkbabybank.co.uk/">https://www.suffolkbabybank.co.uk/</a>
Library 'help yourself' racks	<a href="https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/advice/be-kind-in-kind">https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/advice/be-kind-in-kind</a>

### Improving financial capability

The Mix	The Mix have an online Money Works course for young people to support with budgeting. <a href="https://www.themix.org.uk/get-involved/skill-up">https://www.themix.org.uk/get-involved/skill-up</a>
Multiply Suffolk	<a href="#">Realise Futures</a> are currently delivering Multiply Suffolk which supports people over 19 to build every day numeracy skills, including free courses on money management. <a href="https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=RAJbS9_g1qs">https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=RAJbS9_g1qs</a>
Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk	Services include advice on benefits, financial capability, debt, housing, employment and more. <a href="https://midsuffolkcab.org.uk/">https://midsuffolkcab.org.uk/</a>
Anglia Care Trust	Providing debt support, as well as a range of other issues including domestic abuse and supported housing. <a href="https://angliacaretrust.org.uk/">https://angliacaretrust.org.uk/</a>

## Food support

Foodbanks mapped on Suffolk Infolink	<a href="#">Suffolk Infolink</a> .
St John's Pantry	Open every Thursday morning from 9.30 – 11am. Held in The Ark on King William Street. £3 per bag. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsNeedhamMkt">https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsNeedhamMkt</a>
Pantry on the Porches	Many Churches and community groups run a “pantry on the porch” where ambient food is readily available in community spaces for those in need to help themselves. Pantries are available in Debenham, Hesselton, Beyton, and Eye among other village locations.
Stowmarket Pop Up Shop	Runs every Wednesday 10:30am - 12:00pm from the Catholic Centre, Stricklands Road, IP14 1AP.
Too Good to Go	<a href="https://toogoodtogo.co.uk/en-gb/consumer">https://toogoodtogo.co.uk/en-gb/consumer</a>
Registering for free school meals And Holiday Activity and Food Programme	Low income families can check their eligibility and apply for free school meals <a href="#">here</a> , which also then ensures they receive information on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, and other wrap around support.

## Community support

Meet up Mondays	<a href="https://ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk/meetupmondays-home/">https://ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk/meetupmondays-home/</a>
Warm Spaces	<a href="https://ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk/map/">https://ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk/map/</a>
The Mix drop in activities	<a href="https://www.themixstowmarket.org/whats-on/dropin">https://www.themixstowmarket.org/whats-on/dropin</a>
Social Prescribers	Social prescribers can support people who are socially isolated or lonely to engage with community services. People can self refer, or referrals can be completed by a professional with permission, in the Stowmarket/ Needham market area referrals can be sent to C4h.suffolk@nhs.net or by calling them on 01394 332265. More information here <a href="#">Social prescribing and community outreach services - NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB</a>
Good Neighbour schemes	Different schemes have different offers of support to isolated members of their communities. Some schemes include community transport <a href="https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/projects/suffolk-good-neighbour-network/">https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/projects/suffolk-good-neighbour-network/</a>
Community Transport	Communities Together East Anglia provide accessible community transport across Suffolk to people of all ages, and are based in Stowmarket. <a href="https://www.communitiestogethereastanglia.org/community-transport/">https://www.communitiestogethereastanglia.org/community-transport/</a>

	<p>You can also search for community transport services on <a href="#">Suffolk Infolink</a>, although we appreciate the filters are not perfect.</p> <p>Borderhoppa provides community transport in the North of the Mid Suffolk district <a href="http://www.borderhoppa.org/">http://www.borderhoppa.org/</a></p> <p>Botesdale and Rickingham Good Neighbour Scheme also runs a community transport service: <a href="https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=TPCpdAPC-1Q">https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=TPCpdAPC-1Q</a></p> <p>Eligible households are able to claim back travel expenses under the <a href="#">Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme</a>.</p>
Suffolk Libraries – Sessions for under 5's	<p>Suffolk Libraries run a range of events and activities in warm spaces for a range of audiences, including for those with children under five. <a href="https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on?library=stowmarket-library&amp;days=0&amp;type=pre-school">https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on?library=stowmarket-library&amp;days=0&amp;type=pre-school</a></p>

## Mental health support

Suffolk Mind	<p>Suffolk MIND have a variety of free resources to support people with their mental health <a href="https://www.suffolkmind.org.uk/advice-information/free-courses-and-support-for-you-in-2023/">https://www.suffolkmind.org.uk/advice-information/free-courses-and-support-for-you-in-2023/</a></p>
Suffolk User Forum	<p>An independent mental health user led involvement, peer support and advocacy organisation. <a href="https://www.suffolkuserforum.co.uk/">https://www.suffolkuserforum.co.uk/</a></p>
Wellbeing Suffolk	<p>People can self-refer to <a href="#">Wellbeing Suffolk</a>, who also deliver free training sessions to businesses and organisations. Those in crisis can call 111 to speak to a trained mental health professional.</p>
Kooth	<p>Provides free anonymous online counselling and emotional support for 11-25 year olds. <a href="https://www.kooth.com/">https://www.kooth.com/</a></p>

## Digital Accessibility

Suffolk Libraries	<p>Public access computers which are free to use, iPads are available to loan with data, staff are available to assist.</p> <p><a href="https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/visit/in-the-library/using-library-computers">https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/visit/in-the-library/using-library-computers</a></p> <p>They also run Tea and Tech</p> <p><a href="https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/tea-and-tech-advice-and-support-session">https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/tea-and-tech-advice-and-support-session</a></p>
Digital Skills Sessions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are running Digital Skills sessions in selected libraries across the district.</p> <p><a href="https://www.babergh.gov.uk/the-council/digital-journey/digital-skills-events/">https://www.babergh.gov.uk/the-council/digital-journey/digital-skills-events/</a></p>
Social tariffs	<p>While not exclusive to Mid Suffolk, many households are not aware of the social tariffs for broadband and phone use, residents on a low income may be able to access these tariffs to reduce their bills.</p> <p><a href="https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/costs-and-billing/social-tariffs">https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/costs-and-billing/social-tariffs</a></p>

## Support with energy/ heating

Surviving Winter	<p>Can support with fuel vouchers to top up prepayment meters, and with oil deliveries.</p> <p><a href="https://www.citizensadviceipswich.org.uk/surviving-winter/">https://www.citizensadviceipswich.org.uk/surviving-winter/</a></p>
Warm Homes Suffolk	<p>Supporting private tenants and owner occupiers to improve the energy efficiency of low rated EPC properties through grant funding.</p> <p><a href="https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/">https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/</a></p>
Oil Buying Clubs	<p>Community Action Suffolk operate an oil buying syndicate for households across Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, which reduces the upfront cost of oil for households through bulk purchasing.</p> <p><a href="https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/business-support/community-oil-buying-bulk-lpg/">https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/business-support/community-oil-buying-bulk-lpg/</a></p> <p>There are also other oil buy clubs, people can find a local one here: <a href="https://www.oil-club.co.uk/search?term=suffolk#results">https://www.oil-club.co.uk/search?term=suffolk#results</a></p>
Eastern Savings and Loan	<p>Offer an interest free oil loan of £500 to support with the upfront purchase of oil, funded by East Suffolk Council but available across Suffolk. This is subject to availability and a small membership fee.</p> <p><a href="https://www.eslco.co.uk/products-and-services/loan-products/suffolk-oil-loans/">https://www.eslco.co.uk/products-and-services/loan-products/suffolk-oil-loans/</a></p>

Fuel Vouchers	Citizens Advice can refer households for fuel vouchers if they are risk of disconnection. Households can either call their <a href="#">local office</a> , or the Suffolk Advice Line on 0808 278 7868 for a referral.
National Energy Action	Have a helpline for those who cannot heat their homes and resources to help people with costs: <a href="https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/">https://www.nea.org.uk/get-help/</a>