

Cost of Living support in Carlton Colville, Kessingland and surrounding villages plus East Suffolk wide initiatives 2023 Dec 2023 Edition

Overview

In light of the challenges residents are facing with the cost of living, we have created a document of the various support services available.

There may be residents facing several challenges at once. For example, a short-term requirement for food caused by a longer term financial issue. In these instances, referrals to support services for both issues is encouraged.

The sources of support listed below aren't exhaustive and indeed, there is likely to be more provision added as the cost of living situation continues but hopefully this helps your organisation to signpost and support people you work with. I'm aware that there are probably lots of projects I'm not aware of yet. If you are offering something not listed below, please do get in touch so we can add it into the next edition.

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How residents can get in contact with agencies

- Ease the Squeeze
 - Ease the Squeeze is East Suffolk Council's response to the rising cost of living
 - There are different projects and support available to help those in need
 - If you need help, please visit; <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/>, call 0333 016 2000 or email col@eastsuffolk.gov.uk
 - There is lots of support on the page as well as a referral form to ask for help
- Citizens Advice East Suffolk
 - Available on the phone on 0808 2787 866; 10am-2pm Monday-Friday
- Social Care
 - If the resident has a social worker involved or there are unmet care needs they can call social care on 0808 800 4005.

How you as an organisation can get in contact with key agencies

- Ease the Squeeze
 - You can make a referral via https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Cost_of_living_help_referral
 - You can also phone through referrals on 0333 016 2000
 - If you need general advice, please email gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk, the local Communities officer
- Citizens Advice East Suffolk
 - Available on the phone on 0808 2787 866; 10am-2pm Monday-Friday
- Social Care
 - If the resident has a social worker involved, there are unmet care needs or if you have a safeguarding concern please call social care on 0808 800 4005.
- Suffolk Information Partnership
 - If your organization is a member of the SIP then you can refer through the Warm Handover scheme. When the referral is made, the organisation receiving the referral won't need to ask for information again as it is already on the system.

You can view partners who are part of the SIP here:

<http://suffolkinformationpartnership.onesuffolk.net/partners/>

You can either refer someone in (with consent to share their information). Alternatively, you can encourage them to self refer.

Support for Residents

1. Food

Foodbanks, Community Larders/Fridges and Good Neighbour Schemes.

- IP17 Good Neighbour Scheme Saxmundham. Emergency food parcels and social supermarket. Call 0333 335 5266 to refer (with consent)
- Kessingland Community Fridge. For residents of Kessingland only. Based in the library, Marram Green. Available during library opening hours, please check for details.
- Leiston Good Neighbour scheme. Tailored support. Call 07724 777465 between 9:00 and 17:00 Mon to Fri.
- St Mary’s Community Larder/Foodbank (St Mary’s Church, Halesworth) Sat/Mon/Wed 10:00-11:30
- Waveney Food Bank – (Lowestoft doesn’t require vouchers to be issued in advance, staff will complete one on attendance.) Call 0808 208 2138 for vouchers if needed.
- St Luke’s Church Beccles open Mon 14:00-15:00 and Fri 14:-15:30 (plus the church Social Supermarket each Saturday)
- 5E Bevan Street, Lowestoft open Mon, Wed and Fri 10:00-12:00
- The Larder on the Hill (Membership based social supermarket) Bloodmoor Community Centre, Carlton Colville. Opening 1st December, more details will be published here [BloodMoor Hill Community Centre | Community Centre](#)



Some local churches offer food support in emergencies too.

Free School Meals and Holiday Food Provision

- If you believe a family may be entitled to **free school meals** but is not currently receiving them, you can find more information and apply here. [Apply for free school meals - Suffolk County Council](#). Entitlement to Free School Meals also triggers other entitlements such as Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)
- **HAF – Holiday Activity and Food Programme.** This is a national government initiative, administered by ESC and SCC and run by local providers. Children attend a session of at least 4 hours in the major holidays, take part in enriching activities and physical activity and are provided with a hot lunch and snacks. Children are eligible if they are entitled to free school meals, classed as vulnerable or a refugee. Activities are incredibly varied and include junior zookeepers, crafts, drama, sports. The schools should notify all families that would be entitled to this programme but if the families haven't heard please encourage them to ask.

2. Essential Items

Sanitary Products

- **Free sanitary products can be collected from:**
 - Foodbanks and Community larders
 - Police stations in East Suffolk
 - Schools have available supplies for students (term time only)
 - Kessingland Library (other libraries may also have a supply)

Cleaning and other hygiene products can be accessed through the foodbanks. For further information please visit [East Suffolk Period Poverty » East Suffolk Council](#)

School Uniform

- **Lowestoft Uniform Bank** provides free primary and secondary school uniform for schools in the Lowestoft and CCKS Community Partnership areas. It is run by Russell Lord and based at Bloodmoor Community Centre in Carlton Colville. It is open most Thursdays from 9am till 12md and 3pm till 5pm. More information and opening hours can be found on their FB page here [Lowestoft Uniform Bank \(facebook.com\)](#)

Baby/Children's Items

- **Baby Basics Lowestoft** provides free baby supplies to families in need, including a newborn pack with all the essentials. babybasicslowestoft0@gmail.com, 01502 537798, Gunton Baptist Church, Montgomery Avenue, Lowestoft, NR32 4DZ

- **Way Up High.** Free children and baby clothing box. Referral must come through a professional. wayuphigh.preloved@gmail.com 181-183 London Road South, Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 0DR

Mobility and Home Aids

- 24 hr personal, wearable, alarm system for vulnerable or frail residents. The resident presses the button and will be immediately connected to call handlers who will assess the situation and get help if required. This service is run by **Norse on behalf of ESC**, please note it isn't free but is low cost. 0345 040 2020, ESN.Info@ncsgrp.co.uk, <https://norsegroup.co.uk/partnerships/east-suffolk-norse>
Out of hours: 0800 440 2516

Pet Supplies

- Kessingland Parish Council have set up a local **RSPCA Pet Food Pantry** with supplies for cats, dogs, birds and small animals. They can also help connect pet owners, struggling to fund vet bills, with RSPCA support. Foodbanks often have pet food as well, though please check in advance.



Staying Warm (also see fuel and energy below)

- **Winter Warmth Packs.** This scheme is run by The Warm Homes team at Suffolk County Council in partnership with the District/Borough Councils. Referrals must be made by a professional, there is no way to self refer. This is a non means tested scheme. Residents can apply for a ready made pack containing hat, scarf, gloves, fleece blankets, hot water bottles etc or they can choose a bespoke pack up to £65 in total value. This pack could include all of the above but also duvets, electric blankets and heat saving items for the house. Referrals can be made here [Winter warmth pack referral - My East Suffolk](#)

- **Warm Homes Scheme.** This is run by the same team as above. There are grants available to install central heating, insulate properties and make them more energy efficient. There is a means testing process for all of the above.

3. Financial Support

Helpful websites that enable residents to help themselves in the first instance.

- www.entitledto.co.uk comprehensive and accessible benefits and tax credits calculator
- www.gov.uk/tax-codes Gov website to check resident is on the correct tax code
- www.gov.uk/marriage-allowance Gov website on marriage allowance. If both partners are working/one partner is working and one not earning enough to pay tax, they can donate their tax free allowance to their spouse.
- www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/eastsuffolk/ Information on council tax reduction options and Discretionary Housing Payments East Suffolk Council residents.
- www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs Gov information on tax free childcare, up to 30 hours free childcare for 2 year olds (criteria apply) and free childcare for residents on Universal Credit. This is separate to the universal offer of up to 15 hours of free childcare for 3 and 4 years olds.

Financial Support Services

If someone is in crisis financially there is short term help available but please also refer for longer term support as well, otherwise the cycle tends to repeat itself.

- The **Financial Inclusion Officers** are based within the Communities Team at East Suffolk Council. They will carry out a full financial assessment with residents to ensure that they are receiving the maximum income possible. If required they will assist with budgeting, accessing grants and alternative utility tariffs and signpost on to more specialist support. Referrals are taken through the Ease the Squeeze pathway.
- **Citizen's Advice** are able to help with a wide range of financial issues; accessing benefits and tax credits, managing debt including liaison with creditors, IVA/bankruptcy and accessing emergency grants. **01502 518510 / 01502 717715**
- **Christians Against Poverty** provide debt counselling and the CAP plan, one payment a month which Cap then distribute to creditors. They also run the CAP money course which helps people learn budgeting and stay debt free as well as general life skills.

- **Suffolk Coastal Area** - Telephone: 0800 328 0006. Email: info@capuk.org
- **Lowestoft and Waveney** - Lowestoft Community Church, The Depot 8 Hadenham Road, Lowestoft, NR33 7NF. 01502 537527

4. Financial Support – Potential Grant Schemes

Most of these schemes are means tested and require the resident to complete an assessment process and provide evidence of their situation. Unless you are confident this is an extraordinary, short-term need, please always refer the resident for longer term financial help as well as the crisis grants.

Local Welfare Assistance Scheme

Run by Suffolk County Council. Must apply online. Grants of up to £300. One application per 6 months

Suffolk Local Welfare Assistance Scheme - Suffolk County Council

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (LWAS) is available for residents most in need. LWAS can provide support around **Fuel vouchers** (for gas and electricity meter top ups) redeemable at East of England Co-ops (NB: these cannot be used by British Gas customers), **Cash payments** towards utility/food costs, **Essential household furniture and large kitchen goods** (1 item), **Supermarket vouchers**.

To receive help from LWAS you must:

- Be able to demonstrate you are in financial hardship
- Live in Suffolk
- Be 16-years old or over (living independently)
- Not be subject to immigration control or have no recourse to public funds
- Have a combined household income of £27,500 a year or less?
- Have less than £1,500 available in any current and/or savings accounts across the household
- Have not made an application in the previous 6 months

The scheme is not intended as emergency support and only one application can be made per household. LWAS is not intended as long-term support. The quickest way to make an application is via the webform, using your smartphone, tablet or computer. If you have all the information required to make an application the webform will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

For more information about the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme and to make an application please visit the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme webpage: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/suffolk-local-welfare-assistance-scheme/>

Heating oil is covered through the Surviving Winter Grants available through Suffolk Community Foundation.

5. Fuel, Energy and Utilities

With the large increase in costs in recent months many of our residents are struggling to pay gas/electric bills or to fund the minimum purchase of heating oil (on average 500 litres). Thankfully there is help

Surviving Winter Grant

The Surviving Winter Scheme offers support payments to those who need additional financial help to heat their homes properly, eat properly, stay active and keep in touch with their family and community. The payments will be distributed in partnership with local Citizens Advice and Warm Homes Healthy People. The grant scheme can make a grant payment to energy provider (gas / electricity) OR pay for 500L of heating oil. It is open to all Suffolk residents. There is a basic means assessment.

survivingwinter@ipswichcab.org.uk. More information can be found here.

[Surviving Winter – Citizens Advice Ipswich](#)

Suffolk Oil Loan Scheme.

Eastern Savings & Loans is a Credit Union. They offer an interest-free loan of up to £500 for heating oil for Suffolk residents. This enables residents to meet the minimum purchase requirements for most oil companies. Residents will need to open an ECLCU account first at a cost of £5 (£2 admin fee and £3 minimum deposit). The account costs £1 every 4 weeks to maintain. Residents can apply for a loan the same day as opening the account and repayments are made weekly. This loan is interest free and can be up to £500. www.eslco.co.uk

Community Oil Buying

Oil Clubs in Suffolk can negotiate a cheaper price. Community Action Suffolk's community oil buying scheme offers pre-payment and Direct Debit schemes, but not 'buy now, pay later'. Residents get the benefit of a bulk purchase price and fewer tankers on the road benefits everyone.

Energy Company Grants – Tackling Energy Debt

British Gas customers with energy debt and could provide a grant worth up to £1,500.

For non BG customers: Individual & Families fund offers grants to anyone with energy debt between £250 and £750. Residents don't need to be a British Gas customer to apply.

<https://www.britishgas.co.uk/british-gas-energy-support-fund.html>

EDF, EON and Octopus also have grant schemes available. It is quite likely other companies do too and there should be information available on the company website.

Help with Water bills

Both Anglian Water and Essex Suffolk Water have programmes to help residents struggling to pay bills. These include the installation of a water meter rather than paying a flat rate (individuals and small families

are likely to benefit from this, the resident has the right to go back to a flat rate within two years if they feel they aren't better off). There are also social tariffs for people on certain benefits/tax credits, help with debt and bill capping for people that use a lot of water (likely big families or residents with a medical condition).

www.eswater.co.uk/help

www.eswater.co.uk/services/extra-support/financial-support/watersure

www.anglianwater.co.uk/services/water-meters

www.anglianwater.co.uk/account-and-bill/tariffs-and-charges/lite

Vulnerable residents and their carers can call **0800 232 1963** and request an Extra Care Assessment

Help with Broadband

Most major internet companies have social tariffs for those on low incomes. More information can be found here

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/compare-broadband-deals/broadband-social-tariffs/>

Charity Grants

East Suffolk Council, CAB and some local charities have prepayment vouchers that can be issued for gas/electric or grants that can be paid directly to an energy company. Residents would need to meet specific criteria and these grants are limited to the most in need and subject to a strict means assessment.

All of the above is on top of the government Cost of Living and Cold Weather Payments, Energy Bills Support Scheme, Warm Homes Discount, and Winter Fuel Allowance for those eligible. More information on these payments can be found here [Benefits and financial support if you're on a low income - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

6. Community Venues

Warm Welcomes

Within the CP area

<p>Pakefield Church in conjunction with Bloodmoor Hill Community Centre</p>	<p>Bloodmoor Hill Community Centre, Dale End, Carlton Colville, NR33 8WA</p>	<p>Starting 14th December</p> <p>Thursdays 12noon till 3pm with light lunch</p> <p>Fridays 3pm till 6pm with after school snacks.</p>														
<p>Southwold and Waveney Valley Regeneration Society Ltd – Southwold Library</p>	<p>5/6, The Old Hospital, Field Stile Road, Southwold, IP18 6LD</p>	<p>Warm Welcome is open during Southwold Library Opening Times:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="694 994 1417 1715"> <tr> <td>Monday</td> <td>Closed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday</td> <td>1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday</td> <td>1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Friday</td> <td>1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saturday</td> <td>0930 - 1300, 1400 - 1700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sunday</td> <td>1100 – 1600</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Canteen will be serving the free hot meals between 11am - 2:30pm Tuesday - Saturday.</p>	Monday	Closed	Tuesday	1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800	Wednesday	1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800	Thursday	1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800	Friday	1000 – 1300, 1400 – 1800	Saturday	0930 - 1300, 1400 - 1700	Sunday	1100 – 1600
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<p>Kessingland Parish Council</p>	<p>Marram Green, Hall Road,</p>	<p>Monday 10am-2pm</p>														

Kessingland
NR33 7AH

Wednesdays 1pm – 5pm

In surrounding areas

DANES	161 Rotterdam Road, Lowestoft, NR32 2EZ	Tuesday 10am to 2pm Thursday 10am to 2pm
Gunton Community Hall	Hollingsworth Road, Lowestoft, NR32 4AY	Monday 5pm to 9pm (men only) Wednesday 10am to 3pm
St Andrews Church	Roman Road, Lowestoft, NR32 2DQ	Thursdays 10 am to 4 pm
St Peter and St John's Church	Kirkley Church Hall, St Peter's Road, Lowestoft NR33 0LJ	Tuesdays 1:30 to 4 Wednesdays 10 to 4
Seagull Theatre	The Seagull - 19 - 75 Morton Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0JH	Tuesday-Friday 9am to 3pm
Re-Utilise	209 Whapload Rd, Lowestoft NR32 1XQ	Friday 10am to 4pm
Lowestoft over 60s Centre	8 Clapham Road South, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1QS	10:00 – 15:30 Monday and Friday

Oulton Community Centre	Meadow Road, Lowestoft, NR32 3AZ	Monday-Tuesday 10am to 2pm
Halesworth Day Centre		Fridays 10 am to 3pm Will be open Thursdays after Christmas
Bungay Community Library	Wharton St, Bungay NR35 1EL	Mon 9 to 2, Tues 9 to 4, Weds 9 to 4, Thurs 9 to 4, Fri 9 to 4, Sat 9 to 4
Bungay Community Support	28 Wingfield St, Bungay NR35 1EZ	TBC
Waveney Centre	New Market, Beccles NR34 9HE	Monday-Saturday 10am to 2pm

Warm Welcome spaces are more than that they are places with a warm welcome, where people can get a free cup of tea and coffee and someone to chat to. Some venues have activities and even meals. We endeavour to keep the list up to date but things occasionally change so please ask the resident to confirm details before travelling.

This list is large but there's lots more! Parallel initiatives are happening all across Suffolk.

- **Rural Coffee Caravan** are mapping Warm Spaces including all the ESC funded Warm Rooms. Information on other venues can be found here. [Map - The Rural Coffee Caravan](#)
- **Suffolk Libraries** are also opening their doors as Warm Spaces/Warm Rooms. Contact your local library for more information.

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7. Mental Health Support

Research has shown that poverty and mental ill health are intertwined, each feeds the other. As the cost of living increases it's very likely that we will see an increase in mental illness, especially so soon after the pandemic. Supporting someone to care for their mental health doesn't just impact that person's wellbeing, it impacts their family, their economic security, community safety and statutory resources.

If someone comes to see you about practical issues, taking the time to ask them (gently) how they're feeling and offering support with emotional needs, could make all the difference.

Mental Health Support in our Communities:

- **The Wellbeing Service (NHS)** A gateway to further support, courses and groups to improve wellbeing and tackle mental ill health. 0300 123 1503. [Mental Health, Wellbeing and Emotional Support \(wellbeingnands.co.uk\)](https://www.wellbeingnands.co.uk)
- **Norfolk & Waveney Mind**, 0300 3305488. Includes the Young People in Mind Service for age 14-25 year olds.
- **Suffolk Mind** includes Counselling, GreenCare, Waves, Suffolk Work Well, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). 0300 111 6000

There are lots of groups across East Suffolk providing support for people with particular health conditions and life situations. More information can be found on the Suffolk Infolink website listed below or by contacting the Communities Team.

8. Other Support Available to Residents

Suffolk Infolink Community Directory is a great resource for support services, charities, statutory agencies, health bodies, community groups and more. [Suffolk InfoLink](#). Alternatively please email me on gemma.fraser@eastsoffolk.gov.uk and I'll try and find you an answer.

9. More on Ease the Squeeze

We held a series of workshops over the summer for staff, Councillors and partners to identify challenges, map existing activity and new ideas against our four priority themes:

- Money
- Food and Essentials
- Energy and Fuel
- Housing

More than 70 new project ideas emerged from the workshops, from which 12 priority projects were identified, many of which have been described above. East Suffolk Council has committed more than £300,000 to the Ease the Squeeze programme to date and we are hoping to secure more funding. We want to work with public sector partners, Town and Parish Councils, local voluntary organisations, community groups and businesses to deliver the best support that we can to residents.

Read on to find out more about the projects coming soon...



EASE THE SQUEEZE EASTSUFFOLK COUNCIL

ARE YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, WORRIED ABOUT THE COST OF LIVING?

We are helping East Suffolk **Ease the Squeeze** on the cost of living by making it easier to access the support available.

If you can't access the website at home, you can contact us by phone on 03330 162000 or we have **digital champions** who can help you to get on line.

Appointments are available at the Marina Centre on Tuesdays and Thursdays (10am – 4pm) and at desks within Halesworth, Aldeburgh, Woodbridge and Felixstowe libraries, please call 03330 162000 to book.

For information about cost of living support visit:
WWW.EASTSUFFOLK.GO.UK/SQUEEZE

We have set up new pages on our website to provide information, advice and links to organisations that can help:
[Ease the Squeeze on cost of living » East Suffolk Council](#)

We have developed a contact form for people who need help to access food and essential household items, to manage their money and with housing issues:
[Cost of living referral - My East Suffolk](#)

We have three Financial Inclusion Officers who can help with benefits checks, grant applications, budgeting, advice about debts and general money support. If debts are multiple or complex, we will refer on to our close partner Citizens Advice East Suffolk.

Cooking on a Budget classes

We are funding **Cooking on a Budget classes** aimed at giving families the skills and confidence to cook healthy, balanced meals on a tight budget. Ideally these classes will include some locally grown ingredients – potentially those grown from the Field to Fork starter kits (see next page)!

Participants would eat together following the ‘Cooking on a Budget’ class and receive take home family food packs and recipe cards to enable them to practice their new found skills. They will also be encouraged to stay in touch with each other for ongoing support. We would like to evolve the Cooking on a Budget sessions into ‘Cook and Share’ sessions in community venues (F23) as people become more confident in their cooking skills. Participants could also access a piece of low energy cooking equipment (see below).

Low Energy Cooking Kit / Kettle Packs

ESC Officers have identified that a proportion of the population don’t have the facilities and/or cannot afford to heat food and are therefore living off sandwiches and cold food. This project will involve purchasing a stock of energy efficient **microwaves**, small and large **slow cookers** and one and two ring **electric hobs** for distribution. We will provide an energy card alongside the items to help mitigate any additional energy costs and a relevant recipe book to accompany their new equipment. We’ll also provide an email address and phone number for ongoing support with using their items.

We will also be providing ‘**kettle packs**’ of food items for people who only have access to boiling water from a kettle and for various reasons can’t use the cooking items above. The need for this was proven through the Access Community Trust pinkorange project during the pandemic.