

**BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS MEDIA
RELEASE**

How your council can help you with the cost of living - 2022

Support packages to combat the cost of living, energy bills and council tax are all available through Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, with our staff here to direct residents to the help they are entitled to.

Many schemes and rebates have been announced in 2022 to ease the financial burden on people across the UK as well as in our districts. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are urging residents to check they are [receiving the support they are entitled to](#), including the funds below.

To help with the rising cost of energy bills, the [Council Tax Energy Rebate](#) provides a £150 payment which is not repayable, to households in bands A-D. Payments have already been made to more than 66,000 households in these bands, with arrangements being made for the remaining recipients. The scheme has now been expanded and the discretionary scheme will offer up to £150 to those people not eligible for the main scheme but in need of financial help to cover the cost of energy bills.

The discretionary element of the Council Tax Energy Rebate is open to people in different council tax bands who may be paying rent and energy bills but are not liable for council tax such as those in a house of multiple occupation (HMO), those in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit, those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction, or other exceptions.

Applications for this funding close on 4 September 2022, so the council is encouraging anyone struggling to check if they are eligible and apply.

Residents can apply to pay less council tax through the [Council Tax Reduction](#) housing benefit. Using the councils' online calculator, they can find out whether they would be entitled to a 95% reduction in their council tax bill.

There is also the [Household Support Fund](#) (HSF), a £170,000 pot split between both councils, which is available to help meet the cost of many household expenses. Those in financial hardship can get help paying for food and essential household goods, including school uniforms, equipment, and household energy bills.

Cllr John Ward, leader of Babergh District Council, said:

“We know how tight things are for people right now – and household budgets are set to be squeezed further over coming months. We are here to help our residents and communities and want to ensure people understand the range of support available and how to access it. Combating the cost of living is one of our top priorities, so I urge

anyone who thinks they may be entitled to this help to check our website for more information.”

Cllr Suzie Morley, leader of Mid Suffolk District Council, said:

“The wellbeing of our communities and residents is of the utmost importance, which is why we have these schemes in place, with many of them being paid directly to households. The HSF and Council Tax Reduction are fantastic resources which let us reach those in our districts with support where other nationwide funds might not.

“Making sure everyone can afford to live and work in our districts is front of mind for the councils, and we are working to ensure we can tackle the cost of living both now and in the coming months and years.”

These steps are in addition to the national schemes already introduced and coming into effect this winter. The widest reaching of these is the £400 energy bills support payment; this replaced the previous £200 payment announced and will not have to be repaid. The payment will be split over six months and paid to all households with a domestic electricity meter, starting from October 2022. Those with pre-payment meters will have the money applied to their meter or paid via a voucher. Additionally, there is:

- A £650 [cost of living payment](#). Paid directly into claimant bank accounts by DWP, it is split into two payments (paid in July and October) for households in receipt of universal credit, income-based jobseekers’ allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, income support, working tax credits, child tax credit or pension credit
- A £300 pensioner cost of living payment. All pensioner households will receive this as a top-up to their annual winter fuel payment in November/December 2022, and in addition to the payment above
- A £150 disability cost of living payment. This is a direct payment in September for those receiving disability living allowance, person independence payment, constant attendance allowance or war pension mobility supplement.

For more information visit www.babergh.gov.uk or www.midsuffolk.gov.uk.

To apply for the HSF, or for further details, residents can email householdsupportgrant@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or telephone 0300 123 400.

Further details of Government payments and guides on what support residents may be entitled to are available [on their website](#).

In addition to the support available from BMSDC and Government, Suffolk County Council also have a collection of support under the [Local Welfare Assistance Scheme](#) from trusted gateway partner organisations. These include services for health, education, domestic abuse and drug and alcohol abuse.

Mid Suffolk councillor contacts:

- Cllr Suzie Morley (Con), Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Customers, Digital Transformation & Improvement, tel: 01449 711306, Suzie.morley@midsuffolk.gov.uk
- Cllr Andy Mellen (Green), Mid Suffolk Green and Liberal Democrat Group Leader and spokesperson for Finance, mob: 07790 992619, Andrew.Mellen@midsuffolk.gov.uk

Babergh councillor contacts:

- Cllr John Ward (Ind Con), Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, mob: 07802 414981, John.ward@babergh.gov.uk
- Cllr Simon Barrett (Con), Babergh Conservative Group Leader, mob: 07801 766814, Simon.Barrett@babergh.gov.uk

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Further information:

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils communications team