**Suffolk Information Partnership and Warm Handover Update**

**December 2020**

**New partners**

A big welcome to the following organisations who have joined the Warm Handover Referral Scheme since our relaunch meeting on 8 October. They are ready and waiting to take your referrals so click on the links to find out what they do and how they can support your clients:

* [RealiseFutures, Work Well Suffolk Coaching Service](https://www.realisefutures.org/work-well-suffolk), providing one to one health, wellbeing, employability, and skills support across the county for people with autism, mental health and learning disabilities
* [ihAg](https://www.ihag.co.uk/) (Ipswich Housing Action Group), providing housing, money, debt advice and support for those at risk of homelessness across Suffolk
* [Stour Valley Vineyard Storehouse Foodbank](https://stourvalleyvineyard.org/storehouse/), covering Sudbury and the surrounding area
* [Restitute](https://restitute.org/), supporting the people who care for survivors of sexual or violent crime
* [Volunteering Matters](https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/), partnering with communities to tackle social isolation and loneliness, improve health, and develop skills and opportunities for young and old across Suffolk
* [SPOT Wellbeing](https://spotwellbeing.com/), a team of Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists working with adults in Suffolk to improve and maintain their mental and physical wellbeing, promote healthy living and prevent ill health. They are a non-profit organisation, and all their services are free of charge

We are also finalising these organisations and they will be on the referral form very soon:

* [Newmarket Open Door](https://newmarketopendoor.org.uk/), providing homeless and vulnerable young people with supported housing and training opportunities in Newmarket, two Charity Superstores and Training Centres in Newmarket and Mildenhall, and the local Foodbank to support the wider Newmarket community
* [Raedwald Trust](https://www.raedwaldtrust.com/), a partnership of alternative provisions delivering education to pupils of all ages across Suffolk who require personalised bespoke education pathways
* [Suffolk Coastal Debt Centre](http://www.saxstjohns.org.uk/christians-against-poverty/), covering an area from Blythburgh to Woodbridge, from Earl Soham to the coast

You can find a full list of partner organisations you can refer to on the Warm Handover referral form at <http://suffolkinformationpartnership.onesuffolk.net/partners/>

If you want to hear about the services provided by the partners who were at the relaunch meeting you can view them at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkUhaLyupZo&t=3629s>. You can also find a demonstration of how to complete the referral form at 1 hour 34 mins.

**Orbit, housing adaptions and Disabled Facilities Grants**

We were sorry to say goodbye to Orbit at the end of November when they ceased to provide the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service. Orbit has now been removed from the referral form.

The good news is that the service, with many of the Orbit staff, is still available. It is now called Independent Living Suffolk (ILS) and is managed by Suffolk County Council, with the staff joining the Adult and Community Services Directorate working alongside Customer First and the adult social work teams. ILS will shortly be added to the Warm Handover referral form.

Independent Living Suffolk will continue to provide assessment and support to people applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and they offer the following services:

* Advice and information about housing options
* Occupational therapy service
* Home adaptations
* Grab rails
* Advice and information about paying for work

The contact telephone number for the service remains unchanged: 0800 121 7711, but they have a new email: ILS@Suffolk.gov.uk. More information can be found on [Suffolk InfoLink](https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/service.page?id=qTJ-OhbxSkM&localofferchannelnew=0).

**Local Welfare Assistance Scheme**

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme Team have asked us to promote the service so that it can reach anyone in need before the end of March 2021. You will need to make a separate referral to the LWAS as you cannot use the Warm Handover to do this. Many of you are already Gateway Partners and can make referrals this way. If you would like to become a Gateway Partner please email localwelfareassistance@suffolk.gov.uk

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (LWAS) has been set up to help those in need of essential household furniture, white goods, fuel vouchers for gas and electricity top ups, and supermarket vouchers, due to encountering financial hardship related to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Between December 2020 and March 2021, using Winter Grant Scheme funding, the LWAS is being extended to include applications for a payment contribution towards gas, electric, and water utility bills, other fuel costs, and items that help keep people warm such as winter coats and bedding.

Many people in Suffolk were already in financial hardship, but Covid-19 has compounded this further and the LWAS Team would appreciate your support, referrals, and onward cascade of this information to any other key organisations to become gateway partners for the LWAS and make referrals for those in need.

All applications should be made [via the online LWAS application form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=7GqcEEZQlUqPPIT2O6GK9JLiXhvReJ9HsDWjT5Y-A6RUOVQ0NklENFo3WEI0SlBCWDIzRDcwSFNHQyQlQCN0PWcu) for security reasons, as for those applications where we are asked to make a payment contribution you will need to provide bank details for the client. Applications must be completed by a gateway partner and we do not accept referrals direct from the public.

All applications must explain how the applicant has encountered further financial pressure due to Covid-19. This could be experiencing redundancy/furlough, shopping more frequently and locally which has increased expenditure, taking taxis rather than public transport, additional cost on heating the home, additional cost for food due to children being at home more, increased spend on sanitising products, not being at work due to risk to their health, not being able to find/secure work due to Covid, or the impact of lockdown on a domestic abuse victim.

You can read the LWAS guidance at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/coronavirus/2020-12-03-LWAS-Guidance-v.4.pdf](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/coronavirus/2020-12-03-LWAS-Guidance-v.4.pdf), which includes the full eligibility criteria and items available under the scheme.

If you have any questions, please contact localwelfareassistance@suffolk.gov.uk

Please pass this on to other organisations that support people facing hardship at the current time.

**Digital health and social care in Suffolk and NE Essex**

Healthwatch Suffolk is seeking your help to reach people about their experiences of accessing digital NHS or social care support. Leaders of local NHS and social care services wish to understand more about how increasing digital and/or remote access to care and support may be impacting on those who find it harder to connect with services in this way.

The project will help to increase awareness and understanding about the unique challenges people and communities may face when they are asked to access services or support in a digital way. The project will lead to co-produced guidance for the health and care system about things that must be considered when designing, changing, or commissioning new services.

If you are in touch with people or communities who may find it harder to access digital care, please contact the team at Healthwatch Suffolk. You can sign-up to take part in the project [here](https://healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk/digitalhealthandcareform/), get in touch by email (research@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk) or call freephone 0800 448 8234.

When you sign-up, someone from the Healthwatch team will contact you for a conversation about your experiences (and those of people you know or support) and the issues associated with digital exclusion. The team will be able to talk with you about how the research can make sure the voices of people you support are included.

There is also the opportunity to take part in an online workshop with Healthwatch Suffolk on 17th December 2020 from 10am. Please ask for details using the contact information above.

**Next meeting**

The next Suffolk Information Partnership meeting takes place on Thursday 21 January 2021 from 10am – 12pm. It will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams and you will be able to join the meeting from 9.45am.

We will be looking ahead to what we want the Partnership to achieve in 2021 and how we can support you to support your clients. Please send suggestions, agenda items and requests for a Teams meeting invitation to kate.turner@suffolk.gov.uk.

Thank you for reading and please share with your colleagues and teams.