

## **Poslingford Parish Council Report - May 2022**

Report from Nick Clarke, Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook (West Suffolk District Councillors)

### **Council Tax Rebate Grant**

WSC have identified that more than 63,000 West Suffolk households could be eligible for the grant. To date they have paid the grant to 48,127 of these households while they have another 2,285 (as at midnight 12 May) that are going through mandatory checks before getting their payment. This means that 80 per cent of eligible households have either already been paid or are in the process of receiving their grant.

#### ***Households on direct debit***

West Suffolk Council (WSC) are already in the process of administering over £6.3million of the Rebate Grant to more than 42,000 households whose residents pay their Council Tax by direct debit. Where the direct debit payee information is different to the name(s) we hold on our files for that address, payments may take slightly longer to check and process. Those who signed up to direct debit and have had their first successful Council Tax payment by direct debit before the end of April 2022 will receive their grant by the end of this month (April 2022). New direct debit payers still awaiting their first successful direct debit payment will be able to check our webpage <https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/counciltax/council-tax-rebate-grant.cfm> to see when they will receive the grant.

#### ***Households not on direct debit***

This still leaves over 16,000 households who don't pay by direct debit and for whom we hold no bank details.

Anglia Revenues Partnership will be writing to these residents encouraging them to complete a simple, secure online form so we can get the rebate grant to them as swiftly as possible. But there is no need for residents to wait for their letter. Instead, they can complete the form online at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/WSrebate](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/WSrebate)

Eligible residents have until 31 May 2022 to complete the online form. After this date, any eligible households will have the rebate grant applied to their Council Tax bill to reduce their payments for the rest of the year. This is expected to take place around mid-June after which a new bill for a lesser amount will be sent out. We will then work with any residents who due to their circumstances end up in credit on their Council Tax account, to get the Rebate Grant transferred into their bank accounts as soon as possible.

If residents chose to complete a claim form and provide bank details, then the payments are subject to mandatory pre-payment checks designed to reduce the risk of fraud. If no issues are highlighted during these checks, then the process from claim to payment should take up to 10 working days.

## ***Discretionary grant***

West Suffolk Council has also received £270,300 to administer discretionary grants to those who we and our partner organisations identify as vulnerable and likely to be the most impacted by rising energy prices and the increased cost of living. This will include residents in band E-H properties who for Council Tax purposes are considered to be 'severely mentally impaired' and those who receive a Disability Reduction or Local Council Tax Reduction. There will also be a hardship scheme that people can apply to.

We will update you again when these discretionary schemes are launched.

## **Ukraine Support in and around Clare**

It is good to see the speed and response to getting this group up and running.

It has been fantastic to hear of the generous spirit of so many local people offering to share their homes with those who have lost so much.

Nick Clarke has been working with people locally who have not just taken guests in but are also actively creating a refugee support group. Last week he went to Small Town (café) to the first coffee morning providing the opportunity for both Ukrainians and the host families to meet. Special mention to Antonia and Sarah who have worked so hard.

There were a lot of phone numbers being shared, questions being asked and answered and help with forms given.

There is so much to do. Schooling seems to be one of the biggest challenges.

## **Festival of Suffolk**

The Festival of Suffolk is being led by the Suffolk Lieutenancy with the aim of shining a spotlight on all aspects of Suffolk life and to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The events that are taking place across Suffolk can be viewed on the Festival of Suffolk website, see here: [www.festivalofsuffolk.org](http://www.festivalofsuffolk.org).

We are seeing many celebrations being organised across the villages and town in our area. Lots free events being organised by volunteers. Let's hope the sunshines and people are able to get out and be together and celebrate.

The Women's Tour stage finishing in Bury St Edmunds on 6 June and the Business Expo at Haverhill Leisure Centre on 1 July. If you, or the groups organising the events in your area, would like to promote an event on the Festival of Suffolk website then please complete and return the attached form to [kate.paul@suffolkcf.org.uk](mailto:kate.paul@suffolkcf.org.uk)

## **The Queen's Green Canopy**

The Queen's Green Canopy is a unique tree planting initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee. All tree planting by West Suffolk Council in 2022 is being recorded and submitted to the Woodlands Trust as a contribution towards the Queen's Green Canopy and tree planting will commence again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year. More information about the Queen's Green Canopy is available here: [The Queen's Green Canopy \(queensgreencanopy.org\)](https://queensgreencanopy.org) and SALC has also produced an information page which parish and town councils may find helpful: [Queen's Green Canopy – Suffolk – SALC](#).

## **Consultations**

There are currently [consultations](#) open on new proposals for the West Suffolk Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Conditions Policy Handbook; and on the draft recommendations emanating from the interim Community Governance Review 2021/22. The consultations are open until 18 May 2022 and 30 June 2022 respectively.