

Inspiring Communities - Spring 2024

Breckland Council <breckland@public.govdelivery.com>

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Through **Inspiring Communities**, Breckland Council continues to be a place where people can **thrive**, with **strong** communities and **excellent** services working **collaboratively** to improve health outcomes for our residents.

Our quarterly newsletter shares highlights, updates and case studies with our colleagues, partners and elected Members, that showcase the impact Inspiring Communities is making within our district.

Inspiring Communities Programme Funded for a Further 3 Years

Breckland Council has committed a further £1.2 million to continue the Inspiring Communities programme, which initially launched in 2020.



On the back of saving the health system £1.8m annually through our early intervention programme, this funding is for a further 3 years and continues to prioritise domestic abuse, reducing social isolation and loneliness and raising awareness around mental health.

Additionally, new projects will be launched to promote wellness, employment, skills development and a change to the Breckland Mobile Food Store will see a pop-up pantry model implemented to provide resilience to this food offer.

Continuation of the programme demonstrates the Council's unwavering commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of residents.



Mattishall Community Hub Goes From Strength to Strength Thanks to Spark Fund Grant

Mattishall Community Hub received £500 from Breckland Council's Spark Fund, to offer regular meetings and a warm, friendly space for local residents, especially those who may be isolated, lonely, bereaved or new to the area.

Since its launch, over 70 local residents have attended at least one session, with 25-30 regular visitors. It provides a place to meet, share interests and form new friendships, as well as facilitating one-off community events, both independently and in cooperation with other village organisations. The service is free of charge to ensure that it is accessible to all. The funding was primarily spent on venue hire, free refreshments, advertising and promotion, and practical items to run the sessions. .

Additional funding has recently been awarded from the Awards for All scheme (National Lottery), which will secure the Hub's continued activity beyond 2024.

Contact Us to Find Out More About our Spark Fund Grant Scheme



Community Transport Grant Facilitates Access to Life Saving Treatment

An underspend from our 2022-23 Community Car Scheme budget has been re-invested into a pilot grant scheme open to VCSE organisations, who have identified transport as a significant barrier for residents accessing services in the district.

This scheme empowers organisations to provide alternative community transport solutions for those unable to attend medical appointments or engage in local activity, to improve their wellbeing. Grants of £500 per organisation have been awarded so far to 13 successful applicants.

Funds have been used across Breckland to support residents to access life saving cancer treatments; specialist brain procedures; and attend social events in their community to support their sense of independence and connectivity, for improved health and well-being.

A small amount of funding remains for a community organisation who would like to join this initiative. Contact us for more information.

[Contact the Communities Team](#)

Nourishing Norfolk Food Hubs Support Breckland Residents Experiencing Hardship

Nourishing Norfolk, alongside partners including Breckland Council, provide healthy and affordable food to those who are struggling, through their network of food hubs across both the district and county.

Hubs in Breckland include the Breckland Mobile Food Store, The Burrell Shop, Dereham Food Cabin, The Pantry at Kenninghall and Watton Food Hub.

Food Hubs can support residents experiencing vulnerabilities and will do their best to accommodate their needs. For example, a resident who had recently fled domestic violence with her children had no ID, no proof of address and little money, presented to a Breckland Food Hub, where they were welcomed.

The usual sign up request of proof of ID was bypassed and an initial shop was enabled through £50 Household support fund store credit. Staff made the resident a cup of tea and spoke with them to ensure that all avenues of local help were being accessed. Referrals were made to other sources of help for clothing and household furniture.

After an initial few shops and general chats, the resident was missing work and being around people they felt safe with. A volunteering opportunity was taken at the Hub



and if their children were out of school, they too were welcomed when the hub wasn't open to the public and were given small tasks, which helped them to feel welcome in the community and safe to be out and about. The resident fed back that the children were much more engaged since they were useful in the hub.

The resident also reported that they feel so welcome by the community that they couldn't imagine living elsewhere, and has now been offered a part-time paid job, because of the volunteering - they are overjoyed. Having to reach out for food and being made so welcome on that first visit made asking for and accepting further help possible and didn't make them feel like a victim or feel embarrassed.

If you're aware of a resident experiencing a high level of need, they should contact the appropriate statutory service such as their GP, social care service, non-emergency Police on **101** or Emergency Services **999**.

[Find a Food Hub](#)



Community Health Worker Project Extended for Another Year

The Community Health and Wellbeing worker project started in February 2023, with the aim of bridging the gap between residents and community-based services, by tackling health and social care inequalities.

Thanks to funding from the Breckland Health and Wellbeing Partnership, this has now been extended for another year. The project has been welcomed within the Watton community and has seen significant impact in reducing the inequalities, therefore an additional 50 houses have been added to the 225 household cohort.

This service sees Officers visiting pre-determined addresses in the area, which serves as a preventative approach to addressing the household's needs, instead of being a reactive service responding to crisis. This enables the community to receive the right support at the right time, preventing escalation of need.

The Community Health and Wellbeing Officers work closely with Breckland Council, Watton Medical Practice and voluntary and statutory services, to provide a holistic approach to the household's needs and enhance their quality of life.

[Find out more about the project](#)

New All Age Social Prescriber for Mid-Norfolk PCN, Hosted by Breckland Council

Our Social Prescribing team is expanding to include an All-Age Social Prescriber, who will work with families and young people aged 11 -19 years (or age 25 if there are Special Educational Needs) within the Mid-Norfolk PCN. This includes patients registered at Oak and Gurney and Theatre Royal



PCN. This includes patients registered at Orchard Surgery and Theatre Royal Surgery in Dereham, Mattishall & Lenwade Surgery, Toftwood Surgery, Shipdham Surgery or North Elmham Surgery.

Just as adults benefit from the holistic and non-medical approach of Social Prescribing, so do children and young people. Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) can support them in a range of ways, including connecting them to community- based opportunities, working in a multi-disciplinary way to ensure that needs are met in a way that makes sense to children, young people and their families.

Receiving support at the earliest opportunity and being able to maintain their own physical health and mental wellbeing, means that children and young people are less reliant on services, ensuring future health and wellbeing and strengthening community connections.

To find out more about Social Prescribing and how to access the service, visit our web page.

[**Visit our Social Prescribing web page**](#)

Social Prescribing Testimonial

"I was so pleased that on my behalf you have been successful in applying against my blue badge refusal. It will make such a difference to both our lives. It means it's one less obstacle for us to overcome, in the challenging task of getting out.

We both said how professional and helpful your meeting was, irrespective of the outcome. We appreciated the kind way you spoke to us... You have made my year!"

- Social Prescribing service user



Two Years of War in Ukraine

24th February marked the second anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, which was launched on 14th March 2022. Government has announced that Guests will be able to apply for an 18 month extension and new visas issued will be for 18 months, instead of 36 months.

There are currently has 53 sponsors hosting 73 adults and 25 children across Breckland, whilst a further 33 adults and 28 children are living independently within the district. Breckland Council has two dedicated Ukraine Officers, supporting guests with welfare and housing support, as per our statutory requirements.

Testimonial

"Thank you for all the support and help for our family, we so happy that we now have a place to live and we can start to build normal life here, with Ukraine in our hearts".

- Homes for Ukraine Guest

Early Intervention Support

As central government's Household Support Fund round 4 draws to a close, over 750 households in Breckland have been awarded funds since April 2023, to support with essential costs including food and utilities.



Whilst another 6 months of funding has been announced, the Council will continue to support residents struggling with their finances to access information and support from local organisations, to maximise their income and address debt, for longer-term solutions.

On 5th March, alongside colleagues from Norfolk County Council, we held a free cost of living event at the Charles Burrell Centre in Thetford, to help connect residents to services which can help with budgeting and wellbeing.

This one-off event sits alongside our district-wide welfare offer, which includes our multi-agency Collaboration meeting for voluntary and statutory services working in Breckland. Partner services have access to our discretionary Early Intervention Fund, which awards payments of up to £300 to individuals or families who are experiencing

which awards payments of up to 2000 to individuals or families who are experiencing exceptionally difficult circumstances of hardship, or who have complex needs which can't be addressed elsewhere.

Residents can self-refer or be referred with consent via our Welfare Support referral form.

Impact of £1million Inspiring Communities Programme 2021-24



Getting in touch



For more information about any of these services, please email community@breckland.gov.uk or visit our website: www.breckland.gov.uk/inspiring-communities

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