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**Leaflet aimed at showcasing support for pensioners this winter has been launched**

The *Just about Managing this winter* leaflet produced by REACH Community Projects partnership with The Link and Citizens Advice West Suffolk has this week been launched. The leaflet, funded by Town, District and County Councillor Joe Mason, is aimed atpensioners who may be experiencing financial hardship and provides key information about what support is available locally.

There has been some concern about how the changes to the distribution of The Winter Fuel Payment (WFP) will affect people in our community, with many pensioners who were already *Just About Managing* struggling even more.

The leaflet lists what REACH can assist with, including completing benefit applications (like Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Pension Credit and Blue Badge), Reductions, Social tariffs, emergency food and debt and budgeting advice. It also lists local warm spaces and community support available such as The Link.

**Saffron Carter, Engagement and Advocacy Lead at REACH** **said** that “winter can be the most difficult time of year for many, especially with the changes to WFP, although some will be eligible for pension credits, the low threshold for eligibility will mean that pensioners who need support may not qualify. It is vital we ensure everyone is aware of what excellent support is available in Haverhill. We have produced a leaflet to make certain this information is as accessible as possible and have asked all town councillors support us with distributing them across the town and within their wards.”

**Councillor Joe Mason said** "The cost-of-living crisis is still with us, and as utility bills and grocery costs continue to rise, many people are being forced to make difficult choices. Unfortunately, some who are eligible for benefits remain unaware of them or feel deterred by the application process. This includes pensioners who may qualify for Pension Credit, other benefits, or social tariffs but are not yet accessing them.

In Haverhill, we are fortunate to have wonderful organisations like REACH and Citizens Advice, which provide vital support and guidance. We’re also lucky to have The Link on the High Street, where people can drop in for a friendly chat and practical advice.

I’m proud to support this initiative to raise awareness, and to highlight the outstanding support in the community these organisations consistently give.

Getting the message out about what support is available can be a challenge, but I encourage everyone in the community to share information in these leaflets and posters with family, friends, and neighbours. By doing so, we can ensure that more people connect with REACH, Citizens Advice, or The Link to find out if they’re eligible for support that could make a real difference in their lives."

**Helen Cullup, Manager of The Link said “**The Link is open most week days to offer a safe warm space for the community, with volunteers available to work alongside customers supporting them by offering a listening ear, completing simple forms and signposting or introducing to relevant organisation, and of course with tea and coffee readily available.”

**Ends**

Saffron Carter (Engagement and Advocacy Lead)

[saffron.carter@reachhaverhill.org.uk](mailto:henry.wilson@reachhaverhill.org.uk)

07469 206778 / 0800 009 6710

Emma Wikins (Comms)

[emma.wilkins@reachhaverhill.org.uk](mailto:emma.wilkins@reachhaverhill.org.uk)

07435 740112 / 0800 009 6710

[www.reachhaverhill.org.uk](http://www.reachhaverhill.org.uk/)

*REACH Community Projects (registered charity 1169108) was founded in 2010 by Henry Wilson MBE, a lifelong resident of Haverhill. The charity aims to relieve and prevent financial hardship whilst tackling the causes. As well as operating a foodbank (part of the Trussell Trust national network) and providing emergency aid (help with utilities, basic bedding, and kitchenware through partnerships with other organisations), REACH works longer term with clients to help them rise above and out of their crisis. This includes offering debt and budgeting advice (Reach is part of the Community Money Advice network), signposting clients to other appropriate support (help with mental health, homelessness, legal advice etc.) and supporting clients in other ways including helping them to complete forms, apply for jobs, accompanying them to court hearings and more.*

*For further information, contact Emma Wilkins, Communications Team Leader, REACH Community Projects.*