



Bromley

Well

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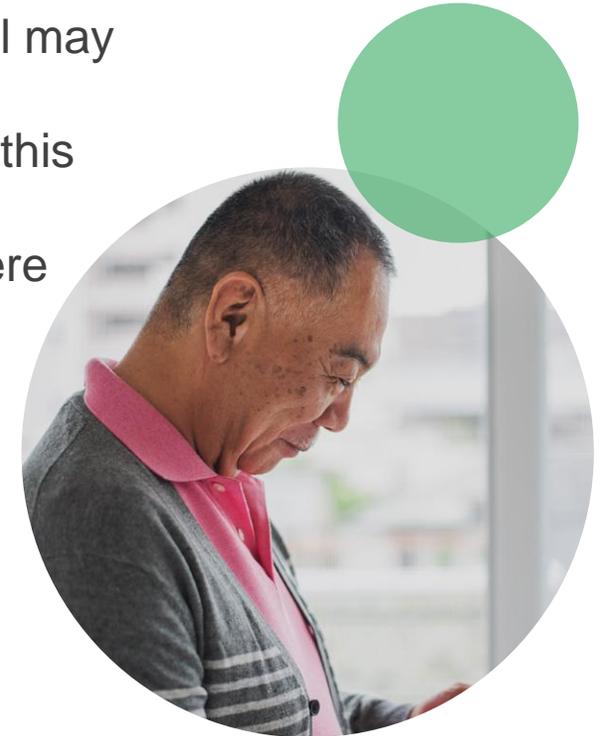
Cost of Living: current position and available support

David Walker, CEO BTSE (Bromley Well) O
Bromley VSE 2 November 2022

Current Context – an unfolding crisis

National Picture

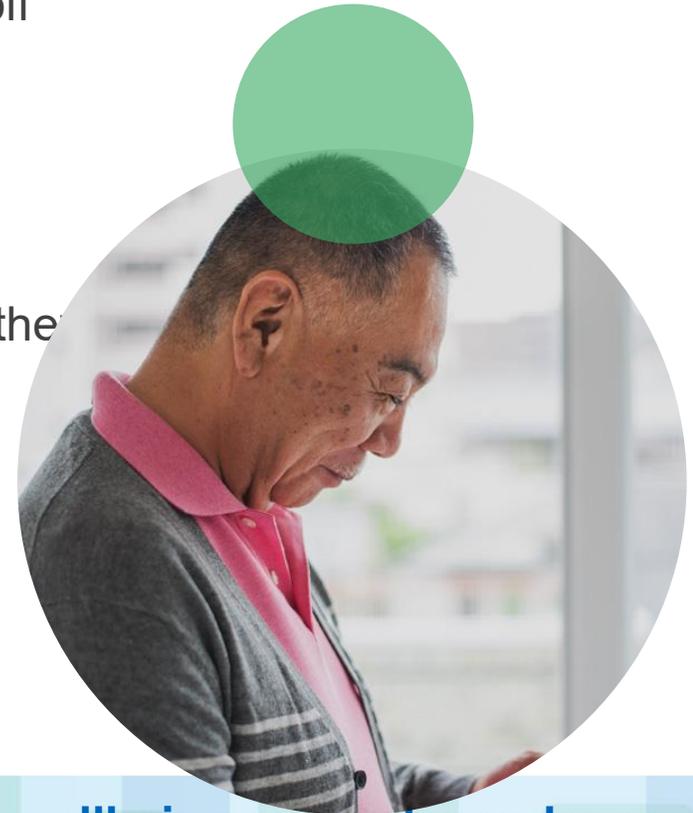
- Inflation predicted to reach 13% this winter by BoE
- Real inflation much higher for those on fixed incomes: elderly, disabled
- Fuel Cap increase announced end August - **average** household bills estimated to rise from £1971 pa to £2,500 from 1 October. Further increase in April may take this over £5000 pa
- Estimated that one in three households nationally will be in fuel poverty this winter
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that half of 2.4m people in severe poverty are disabled
- Scope has calculated that disabled on average spend £583 more pcm
- Heating or Eating a reality for many – significant implications for health



Current Context – an unfolding crisis

Bromley Picture

- Crisis already with us (presents significant capacity issues)
 - SPA queries for energy debts up 347% Jan-June 2022 over previous six months. Huge increase from September
 - 60% increase in food bank vouchers (25% now repeat users for a 'one-off' service)
 - 11% increase in housing issues
 - Selce estimate **1 in 4 Bromley Households in fuel poverty this winter**
 - Real concerns cited by many service users:
 - “My benefits have only gone up by pennies and my heating bill has doubled”
 - “I was told that my anxiety and arthritis don’t affect me enough, but how can the tell by assessing me over the phone?”
 - “I wouldn’t know where to start [with an IT task]”
- (Bromley Mencap focus group March 2022)



Statutory Assistance Available

National Assistance

- £400 toward bills over 6 month regardless of household income from October taken directly from bills
- Council Tax Rebate (Band D and below): £150 from London Borough of Bromley
- Cost of Living Allowance: £650 means tested benefits
- DLA: £150
- Winter Fuel Payment for pensioners: £100 and £300 to help pay heating bills.
- Household Support Fund: LBB one-third of funding for pensioners (administered by Age UK B&G) already distributed but some support direct from LBB
- Further information can be found at:
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment>
- Warm Homes Discount of £140 for those on low incomes <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/low-income>
- WaterSure and WaterHelp - up to 50% <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help/account-and-billing/financial-support/waterhelp>

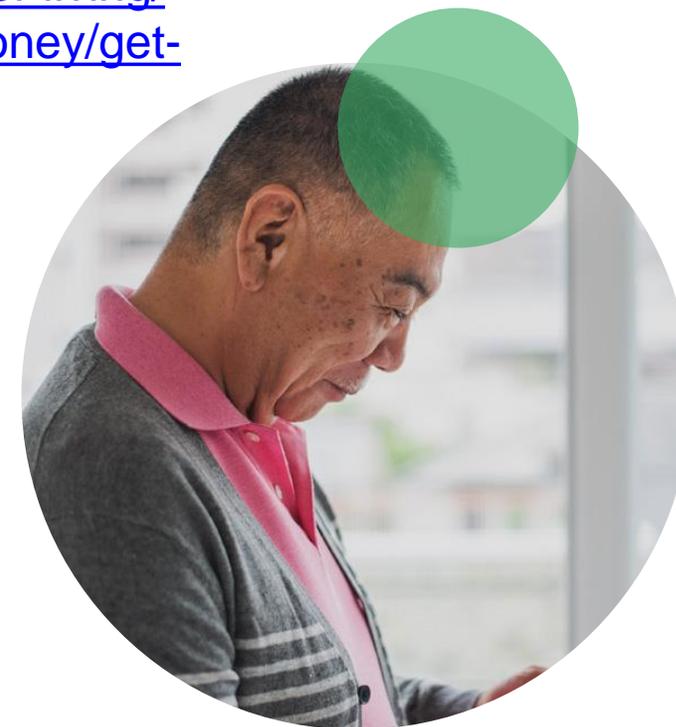
Issue is awareness and those eligible being able to claim

Advice and other help available

Bromley Well and partners

- SPA Monday to Saturday 0808 278 7898. Outreach details on our Website.
<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/>
- Cost of Living Guide <https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/our-services/cost-of-living/>
- National Citizens Advice <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/get-help-with-the-cost-of-living/>
- Age UK <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/>
- Selce (South East London Community Energy) www.selce.org.uk
 - Keen to support more people in Bromley
 - Can advise on bills, discounts, debt, energy saving measures
 - Priority Register scheme

Next few months/year will be very difficult for staff and service users



How to contact Bromley Well

Bromley Well

To find out more about the services covered in this presentation please telephone or email using the following details:



Freephone 0808 278 7898



spa@bromleywell.org.uk

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Bromley, Kent BR1 1RH



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