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**BASW England’s Cost-of-living campaign briefing for members**

This briefing outlines the issues we are highlighting and how you can take action.

As the cost-of-living crisis worsens, BASW England are highlighting policy changes we think would help mitigate the impact of rising energy bills and wider costs that many are facing.

Below we outline three policy areas affecting both social workers as well as the people they work with.

At the end of this briefing we have also included a template letter that you can use to lobby your MP in support of social workers and those struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

**Issues affecting social workers.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What do we want?** | **Why do we want it?** |
| 60p car mileage | Social work practitioners who use their cars for work are absorbing the impact from the rising cost of fuel, leaving them facing real term pay cuts.  The rate set by the Government is 45p per mile. This rate has not been updated since 2011. The rate needs to rise immediately to 60p per mile as our [SASW colleagues have also been lobbying for](https://www.basw.co.uk/media/news/2022/jun/sasw-campaigns-increase-mileage-allowance). |
| Improved remote working allowances | Currently there are strict rules for who can claim tax relief for home working. If you are working home for lengthy periods through choice due to covid then you can no longer claim tax relief like you were able to before.  BASW England believe that the safety of the social worker workforce is paramount and that covid rates remain incredibly high.  Because of this we want to see a return to covid protocols relating to the remote working allowance. |
| Increased, accessible bursaries for students | In June 2022 we saw that bursaries were to be frozen for an eighth year running.  Community Care reported that “many students were facing financial difficulties, including housing costs, meaning some were having to sell possessions or turn to family or friends for support.”  As our colleagues in BASW Cymru have successfully done in Wales, we are raising our voice to demand that Government increase bursaries to reflect the increases to inflation and so that no one must worry about the cost-of-living during their studies.  We also want to see the system overhauled so that bursaries are accessible to all students that want them. |

**Lobby your MP – use this letter template**

Find how who your local MP is and how to contact them here: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/Commons>

**{YOUR FULL ADDRESS}  
{YOUR POSTCODE}  
{DATE}**

Dear **{MP NAME}**,

My names is **{YOUR NAME}** and I am a constituent here in **{OUR CONSTITUENCY}**. I am writing to you today as a member of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) who is greatly concerned about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on social workers and the people they work with. This is something that’s particularly important to me as **{EXPLAIN KEY REASONS AND ANY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE INFORMED THIS}**.

BASW England are urging MPs and the Government to take action to address these issues head on.

We already know from a BASW survey that 43% of social workers will struggle to pay their own bills, with a quarter also fearing that they will need to use a food bank soon.

Social workers play an integral part in improving lives for many people by helping with social and interpersonal difficulties, promoting human rights and wellbeing. Social workers protect children and adults with support needs from harm.

BASW England are campaigning across three issues and we would encourage you to come and discuss these with some of our members.

For social workers, we want to see:

* Reintroduction of remote working allowances that we saw during the start of the covid pandemic to keep our workforce safe.
* Increased and accessible bursaries for all students, ensuring social work remains a viable prospect for all.
* 60p car mileage that reflects the increased cost of travelling for work.

I would like for you to let me know what you think about these issues and how you will be supporting social workers and the people they support during these difficult times.

If you would like to meet members of BASW and discuss how you can better support social workers, please contact [england@basw.co.uk](mailto:england@basw.co.uk)

Yours faithfully,

**{YOUR NAME}**