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**MEDIA RELEASE  
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### **BABERGH'S CRACKDOWN ON BENEFIT FRAUD CONTINUES**

Babergh District Council's anti-fraud campaign has produced further successes in the last week. On Friday January 3rd Sudbury Magistrates made Community Punishment Orders totalling 450 hours against 3 local people who were found guilty of benefit fraud.

Bob Southgate, Babergh's Head of Revenues, welcomed the sentences "Not only do these people now have criminal records and have to pay costs, but they must now put in about 3 months worth community service in the next year. That will not be an easy punishment to fulfil."

One case involved a married couple who failed to declare the rental income they received from property they owned, whilst claiming housing and Council Tax benefits on the property that they themselves rented. Both partners must now complete 175 hours each.

In the other, again involving a second property, the owner pleaded guilty admitting that he had falsely claimed benefit because he "needed to pay the mortgage on that second home."

"The successful conclusions to both cases are the result of thorough investigations by Babergh's Benefit Fraud Investigations Team" said Bob Southgate. "The basic message to those committing fraud is that we will both find you out and will prosecute you."

In two other cases heard during the same session the Magistrates issued a fine of £200 plus costs of £225 against one defendant, the other, a sixty five year old man received a conditional discharge because of his family circumstances. ENDS

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