

A VITAL service offering support to new parents who are struggling to afford essentials for their babies is being run by a church.

A vicar is putting baby clothes on a clothes rack and smiling

The North Shields Baby Bank, based at St John's Church Percy Main, in North Tyneside, has helped more than 60 families since its launch in the summer with items including nappies, wipes, clothing and baby formula.

Revd Lee Cleminson, Vicar of St John's, said: "We've all heard of food banks and know what a valuable lifeline they are for people struggling.

"However, as a result of parents discreetly contacting the vicarage, asking for help, there was a clear need for a similar scheme which supplied basic baby items.

"One mother who came to the church for help explained that she was having to choose between charging her electric meter and buying nappies for her beautiful newborn baby boy.

"She was desperate and said she never, ever thought she'd see herself in this position."

He added that the service was supported by 'really generous' donations from the local community.

"It is going to be a long hard winter for a lot of people with the rising costs of energy, and new parents are going to be struggling," he said.

One Baby Bank user said: "I was caught out when my baby girl arrived early and as I was discharged from hospital, a local community worker contacted the Baby Bank at St John's on my behalf as I had nothing.

"The volunteers provided me with the most beautiful baby bundle. I was so overwhelmed with what had been done, not only for me but for my innocent baby girl. If it wasn't for the help of the Baby Bank, I don't know what I would have done or where I would have turned."

The project secured £4,935 towards the cost of setting up and the initial running costs from a local housing association, Karbon Homes.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/stories-blogs-and-features/church-opens-baby-bank-lifeline-new-parents-struggle-make>