



<b>LEADERS BOARD</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
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## Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People Fund

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### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Shropshire Council Scrutiny Committee Report (October 2011) estimated up to 30% of the local population is at risk of fuel poverty. Shropshire has a high proportion of older people (26%), a low proportion of social housing (14%), a high percentage of owner occupied housing (80%) and a disproportionate number of older detached 'hard to heat' houses (40%). It is expected that there would significant effects on the health and mortality rates of vulnerable people in cold weather.
- 1.2 The Department of Health established the Warm Homes Healthy People fund as part of this year's Cold Weather Plan. Shropshire submitted a bid for £126, 938 which was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The funding will be used to deliver the Shropshire Heatsavers, Warm Homes Healthy People Project, which will provide co-ordinated support to people at risk of death and serious health problems from cold weather, in partnership with agencies and the voluntary sector..
- 1.3 The proposal was developed by a task group of Shropshire Council Officers in liaison with partners from Shropshire PCT and the Voluntary and Community Sector via the VCS Assembly.
- 1.4 Shropshire has a dispersed rural population. It is assumed travel and transport will be problematic in cold weather. The primary aim is to increase resilience within the home reducing dependence on services being delivered 'to the door' or accessed via transport.
- 1.5 The project is based on;
  - Engaging community based agencies via awareness raising training
  - Extending the Shropshire HeatSavers project
  - Responding to high risk situations with practical help
  - Increasing community involvement in support for vulnerable people

The allocation of funds to deliver the project is being co-ordinated by Shropshire Council.

## **2. Main Aims of the Project**

- 2.1 Provide coordinated assistance to people at risk from severe cold weather, by extending the existing Shropshire Heatsaver scheme to become a proactive 'resource hub' for the winter period
- 2.2 Engage a wide range of partner agencies to extend and supplement local initiatives to support a greater number of people at risk
- 2.3 Reduction of deaths and health problems caused by cold weather through co-ordination of assessments of vulnerable people at risk
- 2.4 Reduction of hospital admissions related to cold homes and cold weather through awareness raising and community support activity.
- 2.5 Reduction of the effects of rural isolation on Fuel Poverty through co-ordinated contact, assessment and community support to vulnerable people. (47% of Shropshire's population live in rural areas).
- 2.6 The information and learning gained from this project to be fed into ongoing development work to increase the scope and effectiveness of local responses in future years,

## **3. Targeting**

- 3.1 Key groups of vulnerable people include those who are or have:
  - Frail elderly especially living alone
  - Pre-existing cardiovascular or respiratory illnesses and other chronic medical conditions
  - Severe Mental Illness and Dementia
  - Arthritis and limited mobility
  - Learning difficulties
  - Young children
  - Living in deprived circumstances and poor housing
  - Affected by fuel poverty and rural isolation

## **4. Milestones**

- 4.1 Overall Targets to be achieved by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 are
  - 1500 enquiries to Shropshire Heatsavers
  - Assessment of up to 1000 vulnerable older people with a focus on isolated communities and high fuel poverty areas
  - HeatSavers Awareness training for 20 groups (400 people) who work with or have community contact with those who are vulnerable.
  - General availability of Open Source training
  - Store Cupboard Cookery and Healthy Eating programme for 150 people (cross generational)
  - Emergency heating and fuel cost grants for up to 94 people
  - Increase access to Community Council fuel buying scheme for 120 people

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Activities to provide emergency heating commenced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December to be available during the holiday period. All other activities will commence in early January.