

Affordable Warmth Plan

Supporting Amber Valley's more vulnerable residents to stay warm affordably
(March 2016)

The Affordable Warmth Plan

Summary

This document updates the strategy previously published in 2013 and supplements the Council's statutory Home Energy Conservation Act report that was approved in March 2015 [Amber Valley 2015 HECA Report](#).

In delivering the plan the Council works closely with a wide range of organisations from statutory agencies to the voluntary sector. The Council's role has shifted to more focus on those households that are in most need whilst providing signposting information to households about what help might be available from Energy Suppliers and Insulation/Heating contractors with less focus on volume based insulation schemes. According to Government figures 5509 or 10.3% of households are in fuel poverty. [2013 sub-regional fuel poverty data](#)

Priorities will continue to be around helping identifying vulnerable households, having systems that support effective referrals between organisations, securing investment into the Borough and being able to show outcomes from this work.

The importance of being able to keep warm to health and wellbeing is understood far more widely. NICE guidance <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng6> was published in 2015 setting out what was expected in terms of the links between health and cold homes. The Borough Council's positive approach to working with Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Derbyshire County Council to identify the most vulnerable households has been recognised and rewarded by Government in 2015 with the Council being one of 9 areas awarded specific funding to build on this work.

It is likely that in delivering the next phase of the Government's National Fuel Poverty Strategy [Cutting the cost of keeping warm](#) there will be a greater role for Councils to be able to identify and support fuel poor households although the detail is not yet known.

Being able to keep warm is closely linked to households' ability to pay and therefore links to services that provide financial advice and support will be essential. The plan articulates the activities of the Council that will continue to support the County Anti-Poverty Strategy.

What have we achieved?

- Improved referral mechanisms to ensure that residents with housing needs are referred to Council and partner services
- Worked with organisations to sign post to debt and benefit advice
- Secured £100,000 funding from the Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Department of Energy and Climate Change in recognition of our developed partnership working that has already been used to support 74 households referred from a variety of partners
- Used the branding below on the side of Commercial vehicles including Waste and Recycling vehicles.

AMBER VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL HELPING KEEP YOUR HOME WARM 01773 841339



Future Activity

The Council will continue to work with Derbyshire County Council, NHS and others to identify households that need support to keep warm and work with partners to deliver a range of services from simple advice, to heating replacement. The Council has a valued relationship with the Home Improvement Agency run by Metropolitan that provides client support.

Case Study

The Council was contacted about a resident whose home was in such poor state that services were potentially being withdrawn including NHS staff that were treating his ulcerated legs and other health conditions. Working with a range of organisations both statutory and voluntary officers are quickly able to support the owner to clear out the property, overhaul amenities and install heating. In doing this services were retained and his medical condition improved considerably.

The Council will continue to work with Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authority Energy Partnership to maximise the help and assistance that is available to residents through their 'Healthy Homes' scheme that is funded by Derbyshire County Council Public Health. The Council will work with partners to try and secure external resources for energy advice in the home, a function that the Council is unable to provide.

The reality is that many of the referrals are not just about affordable warmth and involve wider issues of disrepair and can be complex to resolve. Keeping warm will continue to be a key message to generate referrals and housing's role in supporting Health and Social Care integration and preventative services to keep people at home should be increasingly significant.

Funding secured from external partners will be carefully used and matched with other funds to ensure that as many people as possible can be helped. Funding that is available will be targeted at those that need it most, especially where there is a clear health benefit.

The Council has been particularly successful in developing relationships with GP practices which has seen a regular flow of referrals for housing related help, especially in accessing heating improvements and it is hoped that this can be developed further.

The following action plan sets out activities that will form the detailed delivery. The Plan provides a framework. The Housing Team business plan will have more specific actions to show how the Plan will be delivered. Monthly meetings are undertaken with the Cabinet Member to update on progress.

Priority	Desired Outcomes	Activities
Identify residents that most need support	The residents that most need help receive support, options and access to keep warm receive it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with NHS and DCC to raise awareness • Work with voluntary sector to support identification of vulnerable clients • Work with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service to identify the most vulnerable households • Seek to develop improved working relationships with organisations supporting families on low incomes • Use data held to support identification of clients within limitations of Data Protection Act
Have systems in place that ensure that vulnerable households can be identified and successfully referred	Using and developing existing systems work with partners to ensure that that vulnerable households are referred in the most effective way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with DCC First Contact to optimise the effectiveness of the referrals process • Work with neighbouring Councils within Southern Derbyshire to have a shared hub to make it easier for health colleagues to make referrals • Set out for residents and partners services that are available • Work with partners to complete an audit of NICE guidance on Excess Winter Deaths and seek a shift to ensure guidance is being followed.
Resources are secured to help those in need	Opportunities are maximised to secure direct investment in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with LAEP to optimise the delivery of the Healthy Homes service in Amber Valley • Work with partners to deliver the DECC funding, matching with other external sources to maximise the outcomes from the funding • Work to maximise the opportunities through the launch of the next phase of Energy Company Obligation and Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy • Work with organisations to seek to secure resources for home energy advice visits in the home
Demonstrate outcomes from delivery of the plan	Maintain momentum and sustainability for the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of means to demonstrate the value to the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Borough