



Rotherham Warm Homes Healthy People Evaluation

November 2012 - April 2013

Acknowledgments

The project team would like to acknowledge and thank the partners involved in the development and implementation of the project. Partners have been accommodating to meeting the timescales involved in the delivery of the work. Partners have continued to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the tackling fuel poverty. We would also like to thank the Department of Health for offering Rotherham funding for the second year running to allow the development of the work taken place.



Foreword



Living in a cold home has huge negative impacts on health and causes unnecessary misery for many people. We know that too many people in Rotherham live in fuel poverty and suffer poor health as a result. This is why fuel poverty and excess winter deaths are a priority of the Health and Wellbeing Board in Rotherham.

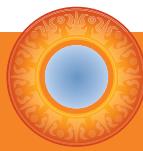
This is the second year Rotherham been successful in securing funding from the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund. The funding has acted as a catalyst to developing a strong collaboration of local stakeholders. More importantly it has ensured we have been able to help vulnerable people across the borough access measures and enable them to live in warmer homes.

As chair of the Health and Wellbeing board and with an interest in climate change and the environment I am delighted to be involved in this work. The opportunities brought about by the Warm Homes Healthy People funding will continue to be developed and ensure those most vulnerable to the health impacts of cold homes will be reached and supported.

Councillor Ken Wyatt JP

Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board

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Executive Summary



Living in a cold home has significant implications on the health and wellbeing of residents across our borough, particularly the most vulnerable. People with an existing chronic health condition or disability, the very young or older people are more at risk from the negative impacts of living in a cold home.

Fuel poverty levels rose to over 6 million in 2012 in the UK. The failure to tackle this issue will result in increased strain and burden on the NHS and social care in the form of GP visits, hospital admissions and excess winter deaths. Currently, there is an average of 2,500 excess winter deaths in the Yorkshire and Humber region each winter.

Background

The Department of Health's 'Warm Homes Healthy People' Fund aims to support local authorities and their partners in reducing health and illness in England due to cold housing in the winter. This is the second year Rotherham has been successful in securing funding. In total Rotherham has received £215,747 over the two years.

The Warm Homes Healthy People funded work links to a number of local strategies and priorities and has helped to raise the profile of the need to address fuel poverty and excess winter deaths using a multi-agency approach. This work delivered during November 2012 to April 2013 has continued to build upon the multi-agency partnership developed since the initial 2011/12 application. The funding has enabled partners to offer support to the most vulnerable members of the Rotherham community including: older people, families, deprived communities, people living in poor housing stock and those with long term conditions including mental ill health.

Aim

To support a variety of projects that together will reduce illness, morbidity and excess winter deaths amongst vulnerable people living in cold damp homes.

Objectives

- *Raise the awareness of both householders, particularly the most vulnerable and staff, of the problems associated with fuel poverty, poorly insulated housing and associated health impacts*
- *Support householders to improve thermal efficiency of their home through practical measures and advice and maximise access to benefits*
- *Provide practical measures through home safety checks and warm packs to offer immediate benefit in cold weather*

Outputs

- *2000 warm packs distributed to adults and children across Rotherham with a focus on vulnerable households*
- *More than 140 households supported by handy persons services*
- *Over £40,000 of extra benefits identified*
- *Energy best deal and energy efficiency training for front line staff*
- *Energy and health, and Green Deal awareness raising for the public and local workforce*
- *Increase in the number of local voluntary and statutory organisations engaged in supporting people to keep warm during the winter months.*



Background



Living in a cold home has significant implications on the health and wellbeing of Rotherham residents, particularly the most vulnerable. People with an existing chronic health condition or disability, the very young or older people are more at risk from the negative impacts of living in a cold home.

Fuel poverty levels rose to over 6 million in 2012 in the UK, with 18.2% of householders in Rotherham living in fuel poverty. The failure to tackle this issue will result in increased strain and burden on the NHS and social care in the form of GP visits, hospital admissions and excess winter deaths. Currently, there is an average of 2,500 excess winter deaths in the Yorkshire and Humber region each winter.

The effects that living in fuel poverty and a cold home can have for communities are widespread. As well as physical health, fuel poverty is known to negatively impact on mental health, social isolation, educational attainment, the condition of housing stock and 'blight' a neighbourhood

Strategy



Tackling fuel poverty and reducing excess winter deaths is one of the six key priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board in Rotherham. This is being supported by a number of key strategic documents including the Rotherham's Warmer Homes Strategy (RWHS) which brings together directorates and stakeholders with a responsibility for housing and health. The strategy recognises current financial challenges facing residents and organisations, and changes to legislation and structures that may worsen fuel poverty. A coherent and holistic approach has been adopted aiming to reduce levels of fuel poverty in Rotherham, spanning the remits of all the main partners including: health services; Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC); energy suppliers; and, the voluntary community sector. The vision of the RWHS is: *To enable and provide opportunity for all Rotherham residents to live in warmer homes.*

The local implementation of the Cold Weather Plan (CWP) is devolved into two documents, the RWHS and the NHS Rotherham Winter Plan. Operationally the two plans complement each other and engage the services and organisations required at the different levels of the CWP.

The funding



The Department of Health 'Warm Homes Healthy People' Fund (WHHP) was established to support local authorities and their partners in reducing death and illness in England due to cold housing in the coming winter. In doing so will support local areas to meet the aims of the 2012 CWP. Expectations of the funding were that a multi-agency approach to tackle these aims would be developed and include statutory, voluntary and community sector partners. WHHP funding was expected to supplement other national and local funding to support more people at risk from cold weather.

This is the second year Rotherham has been successful in securing funding. In total Rotherham has received £215,747 over the two years. In 2012/13 Rotherham secured £134,472. This was less than the original application requesting £165,500. However the sum of national applications for the funding exceeded the £20m available in the fund. Therefore in order to maximise the spread of funding available to as many successful proposals from Local Authorities across England as possible, all successful bids were reduced by 19%.

The 2012/13 project has continued to build upon the multi-agency partnership developed since the 2011/12 application. The funding has enabled partners to offer support to the most vulnerable members of the Rotherham community including: older people, families, deprived communities, people living in poor housing stock and those with long term conditions including mental ill health.



Aim



To support a variety of projects that together will reduce illness, morbidity and excess winter deaths amongst vulnerable people living in cold damp homes.



Objectives



This proposal includes a variety of projects that, jointly, will reduce illness, morbidity and excess winter deaths amongst vulnerable people living in cold damp homes.

- Raise the awareness of householders towards the problems associated with fuel poverty, poorly insulated housing and impacts on health
- Support householders to improve thermal efficiency of their home and maximise access to benefits
- Improving housing stock through Government funded schemes such as Community Energy Saving Partnerships (CESP) and Carbon Energy Reduction Target (CERT)
- Explore methods of data sharing between statutory, voluntary and private sectors in order to target resources more effectively and efficiently
- Targeted groups are given access to information with regard to fuel efficiency measures and financial vulnerability enabling them to live in warmer homes
- Vulnerable groups including families and people with long term conditions including mental health are supported
- Provide practical measures through home safety checks and warm packs to offer immediate benefit in cold weather
- Provide out of hours assistance to residents living in social housing through winter months
- Skilling up front line staff to support their clients with appropriate and actionable advice and information on relevant initiatives to stay warm and well.

Target Audience



A key aim of the 2011/12 work was to build on the learning from the Keeping Warm In Later Life project (KWILLT) and focussed on supporting older vulnerable people to access support to keep warm and well during the winter months. KWILLT was a research study funded by the National Institute for Health Research (see www.kwillt.org for more details). Through the development of the RWHS, local priority setting work, development of the Warm Well Families research study, local and national evidence it was apparent that children and young people are also at risk from the negative impacts that living in a cold home may have on health and development. Therefore this year's WHHP project aimed to build on the successful collaboration developed from the 2011/12 project and expands the network of stakeholders to include organisations and departments working with young children and families.

Project Partners



Stakeholders from voluntary and statutory sectors were involved in delivering the project demonstrating the commitment to reducing health morbidity and deaths associated with people living in cold homes. The project aimed to enhance the provision that the existing stakeholders offered to the Rotherham community. The main project partners included:

- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- NHS Rotherham
- GROW
- Age UK
- Yorkshire Housing
- Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
- Sheffield Hallam University

This evaluation will focus on the achievements of the 2012/13 funding.

Project Delivery & Outputs



All project partners were involved in the development of the initial proposal for the funding. This process was accomplished efficiently as the main project partners were already engaged following the 2011/12 work. Organisations known to existing stakeholders who were working with children and young people were approached to be involved in the project. The original project targets shown in appendix 1 were included in the project proposal for the funding.

The information below summarises outputs from each partner.

Age UK

Age UK Rotherham received a combination of funding from: WHHP; Age UK national campaign 'Wrapped Up'; and, EoN to deliver their winter offer. Clients who were supported were from the existing Age UK database and new clients from: one stop shop; hospital after care; self-referrers; befriending services; families and neighbours; community outreach events; campaigns on the local radio; and, links to the Met Office level 4 emergency alerts.

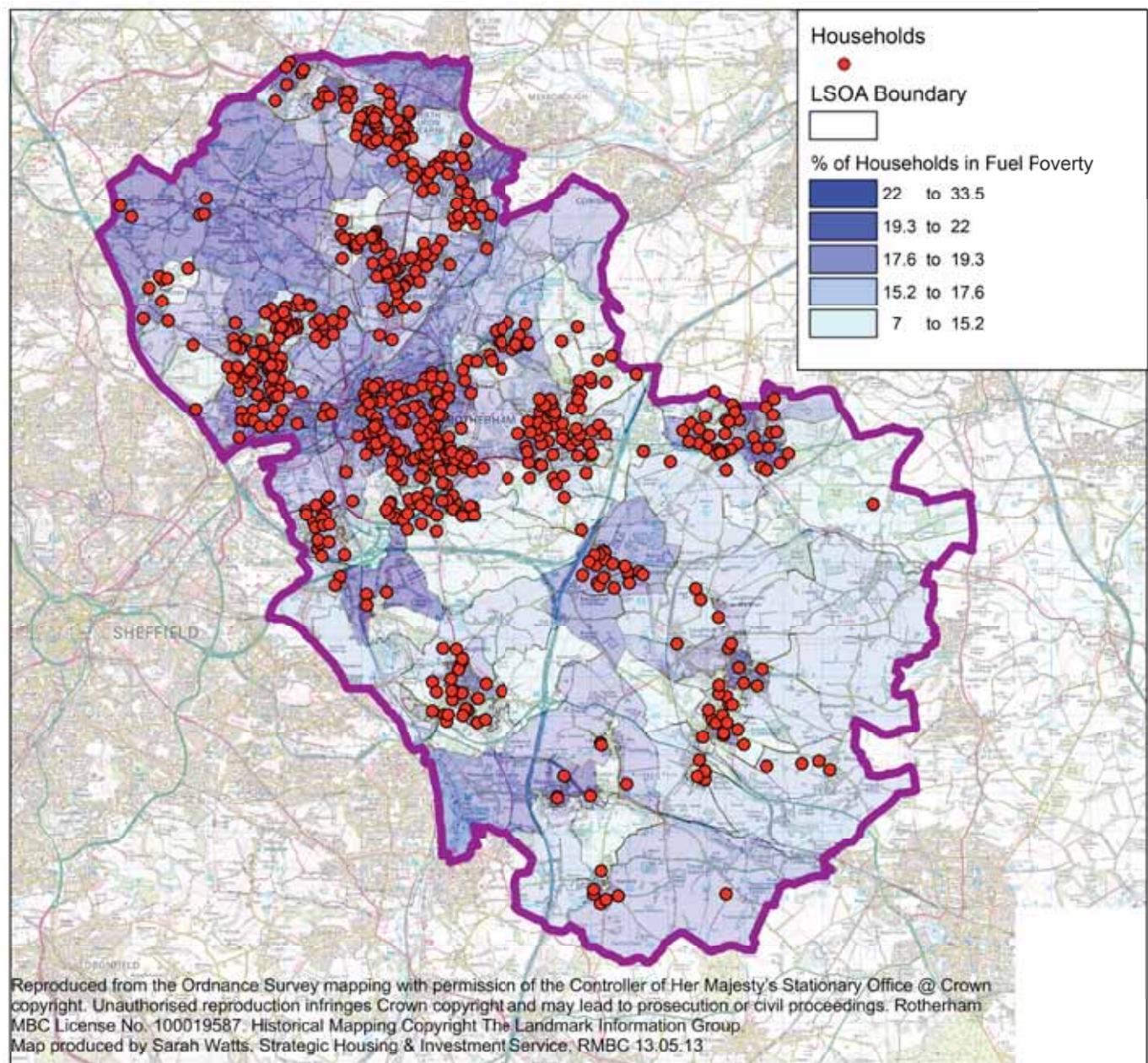


Age UK Rotherham have also continued their partnership with South Yorkshire Community Foundation to deliver their surviving winter campaign to householders through the redistribution of winter fuel payments. This was the second year Age UK Rotherham have been involved in the WHHP work and all staff now promote energy efficiency all year round, furthermore 4 handy persons staff have been trained to offer energy efficiency checks and fitting small scale measures. Throughout winter 2012/13 Age UK have provided householders with:

- Information packs about how to keep warm (n=987)
- Tips and advice on heating your home effectively
- 'Keeping warm' packs that include a blanket, socks, mug and a thermometer (n=300)
- Practical handyman help to make sure understand your heating system and are energy efficient to maximise the warmth and minimise the cost (n=100)
- Advice and information about additional payments and entitlements available for older people including Warm Home Discount and small grants to help with bills.

The map below (fig 1) highlights the geographical areas where clients, who received support were from and the levels of fuel poverty in these areas. A large proportion of clients lived in areas typically in high levels of fuel poverty however the map also indicates there is a need to support people with energy efficiency and keeping warm advice in all areas of the borough.

Figure 1 Age UK Clients and percentage of households in fuel poverty



Yorkshire Housing

The Home Improvement Agency (HIA), Yorkshire Housing (YH) purchased and put together 2000 (1800 adults and 200 children's) warm packs that were distributed via all the project partners. The warm packs cost £10.00 each and included:

Adults

- Hot water bottle
- Blanket
- Socks
- Soups
- Flask
- Thermometer
- 10 top tips for staying warm.

Children's

- Socks
- Blankets
- Hats and gloves
- Soups
- Microwaveable
- Thermometer
- 10 top tips for staying warm

YH also distributed 880 warm packs to organisations and community groups including:



Mencap



Reema (Rotherham Ethnic Minority and Others)



Groups working with dementia sufferers



Salvation Army



Carers groups working with adults and children



BME mental health groups



Over 50's clubs



Vulnerable older people living in the Harley area

Through distribution of the warm packs YH engaged with these new and existing partner organisations. Clients from Mencap and black and minority ethnic groups have since been in contact with YH to access their repairs service. This is particularly important as it demonstrates the trust that has been built between the organisations, as the clients suffer from mental health issues and low confidence so to contact an organisation themselves is a major achievement.

As a HIA, YH offer small scale repairs to the properties of vulnerable householders, and 40 householders requested the handy person's service through this funding. Through the WHHP funding YH extended their existing provision to target communities where translators were required. These communities are considered to be more at risk from the health impacts of the cold weather and rarely access the services of the HIA.

15 householders identified through the WHHP work have been referred to one of the utility company's replacement boiler service.



This is the second year Yorkshire Housing have been able to access Warm Homes Healthy People funding from the Department of Health and Rotherham MBC. The money has enabled us to get over the door steps of some of the most vulnerable people in our community to give them energy saving advice and small home improvements.

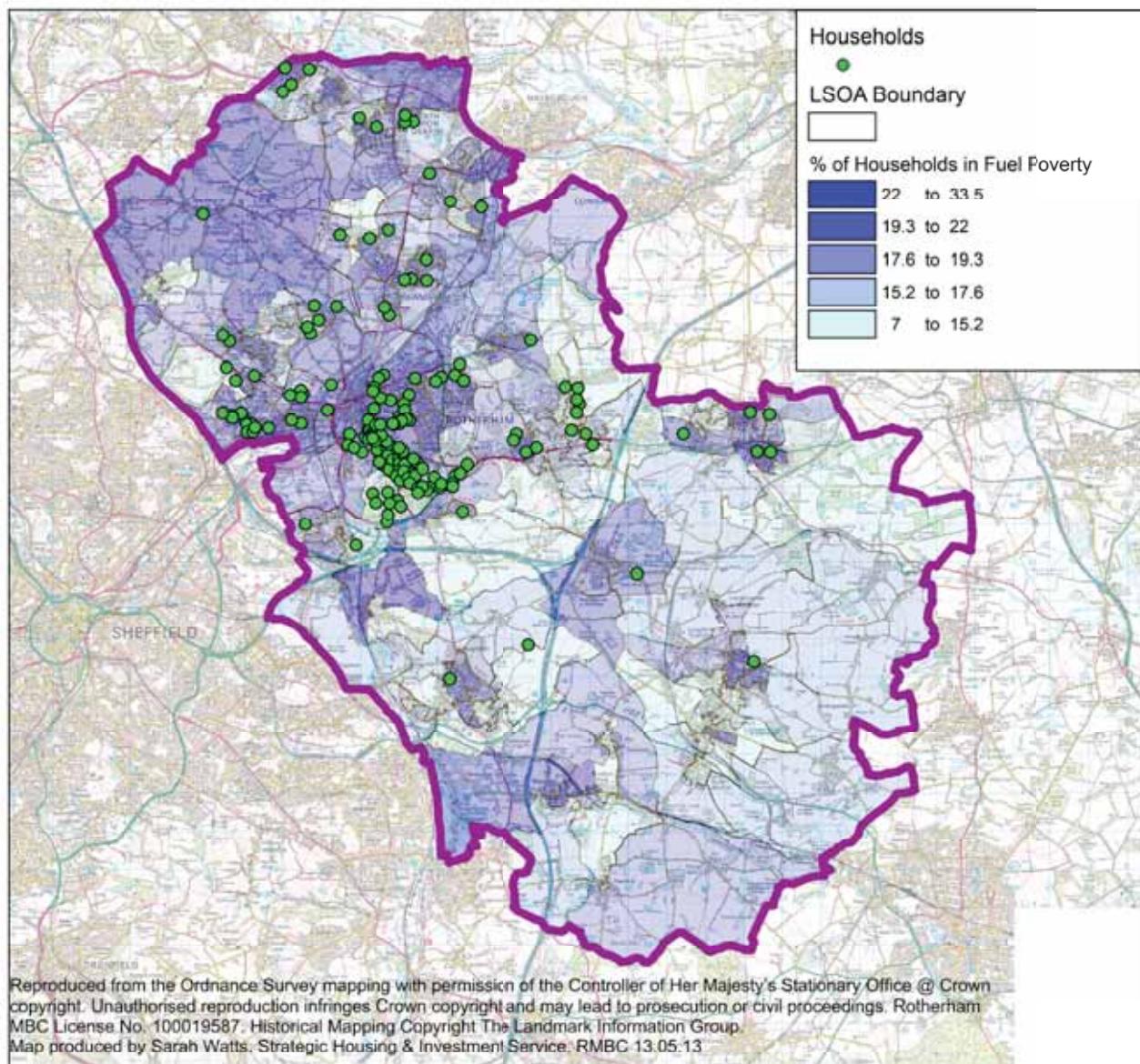
Angela O'Neil
NEEDS ADVICE SUPPORT OFFICER

Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau

The WHHP money funded additional advice hours to support clients in ensuring they were on the best energy deal to save money. Targeted approaches using fuel poverty and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data provided by RMBC, allowed Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) to target the energy best deal advice offer to existing clients living in areas of most need. Specific work targeting Asian communities was led by a RCAB worker from this ethnic group. Outreach sessions have been held at Rotherham Hospital and in the town centre. Further outreach weekly sessions are being held in more remote areas of the borough to target and support householders who do not access RCAB's town centre services.

RCAB worked with 258 clients from December 2012 to March 2013. The clients supported through this work were in many aspects similar to the population makeup as identified in the 2011 Census. Figure 2 demonstrates where clients from across Rotherham lived, not all were from areas with high level of fuel poverty.

Figure 2 RCAB Clients and percentage of households in fuel poverty



- A relatively high proportion of clients indicated they were from an ethnic minority group (20.4%). Most clients were working age (91% 17-64 years) but were not working.
- Most clients had an income of less than £999 per calendar month and around half were earning less than £600 per calendar month.
- Approximately one third of clients had dependent children and the largest group seen were single people with no children.
- 29.2% indicated they were disabled or had long term health conditions.
- The financial gains made for all clients totalled £42,788, with most of this financial gain for identified benefits

RCAB staff have commented how being involved with this work has led to them increasing their knowledge on energy efficiency and energy best deal advice. This has enabled them to bring the subject up into more of their routine consultations and contact with clients.

RCAB have delivered training to frontline workers from the Parenting Team and GROW. Some WHHP clients responded to RCAB's core satisfaction survey and their responses will be examined to determine how satisfied they were with the advice they received. Results from this survey will be available later in 2013.

GROW

GROW are a voluntary sector organisation who aim to provide a unique holistic service that enables Rotherham women and their families to make informed choices. GROW have distributed 200 (100 adults and 100 children) warm packs to service users which workers have established relationships with. The packs have enabled GROW workers to begin discussions very quickly about cold homes, fuel poverty, debt etc.

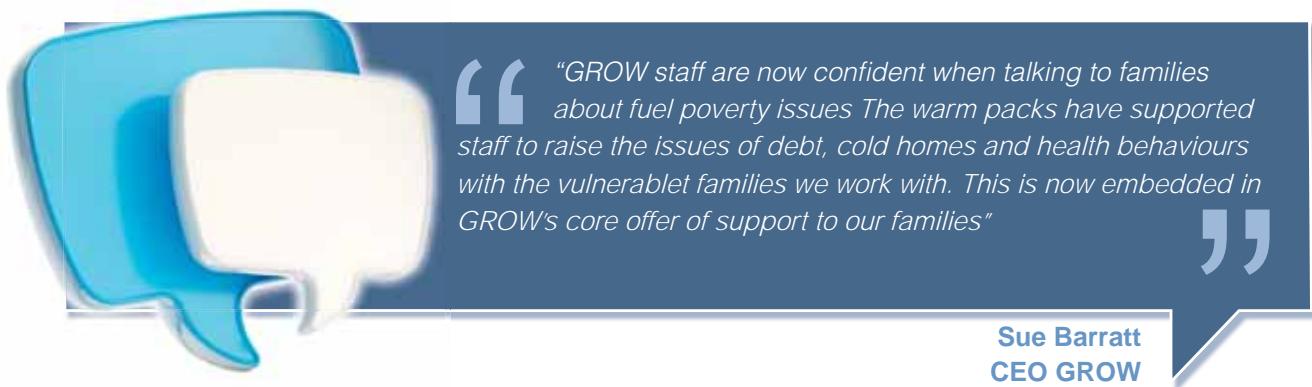
Feedback around the warm packs has been collected from GROW staff and the families who have received them. Below are just a few of the comments that have been received.

"The warm packs have significantly helped family members by providing them with the essentials they need to effectively keep warm and reduce costing by saving on fuel when using these items." (GROW staff)

"The children in the family have really enjoyed the characterised fleecy blankets and the cuddly warmers" (GROW staff)

"Some of our service users wrapped the items in the children's packs for extra Christmas presents due to the difficulty in affordability for gifts" (GROW staff)

"Thank you so much for the blankets, they are very useful and the gloves and microwave bags were a very pleasant surprise! Thanks" (Family)



Nine members of GROW staff attended training facilitated by RCAB. This training, the resources given and previous work undertaken have raised the confidence of GROW workers around talking to families about cold homes, heating, damp homes, healthy eating, and energy savings.

GROW workers used mobile phones and internet connected lap tops on home visits checking tariffs and switching energy providers. On occasions workers have negotiated with suppliers to reduce tariff and payment schemes.

When required GROW workers have supported families to seek specialist support for their debt – CAB, RMBC Money Advice. If families are able GROW have supported them to access the National Debt Line website/helpline in order to promote empowerment of families to resolve issues themselves.

Future work and added value

GROW have applied for funding to the Pfizer Foundation to further develop the work of supporting families to deal with living with fuel poverty further.

GROW is seeking funding to support families living in disadvantaged areas to engage with a Ministry of Food healthy eating programme where the worker will also work with families to shop for the meals (on a budget) and work in their homes to replicate the dishes, buying cooking utensils as required.

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) distributed 45 warm packs to local children's centres and 20 directly to vulnerable householders that were identified as living in fuel poverty during a home safety check. Home safety checks are carried out by fire community support officers, operational fire fighters and vulnerable person's advocates, during the checks advice is given to householders promoting fire safety and fitting free smoke alarms where needed. Where householders are classed as vulnerable due to drug and alcohol misuse, mental health or mobility issues etc, they receive follow up visits from specialist trained staff where they can be further assessed if other resources are needed to help keep them safe for example flame retardant bedding or throws. SYFR are acknowledged as being a trusted service by the general public and are increasingly becoming involved in supporting various health agendas including keeping warm in the home and Making Every Contact Count (MECC).



“We know that the ways some people keep warm in their homes can be a cause of house fires, putting them at risk of serious injury or even death. This misuse maybe because they don't understand the risk or because for some it is the only way they think they can keep warm. Being involved in the WHHP work has added value to the offer SYFR can give to the householders by allowing our staff to refer to other services who can help people with their heating and ensure they are safer during the winter months”

Pete Jones
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OFFICER, SYFR

Rotherham MBC – Parenting Team, Children and Young Peoples Service

The WHHP funding has enabled the development of work targeting families. The Parenting Team in RMBC have distributed 77 warm packs, 36 children's and 41 adults to the families which Parent Support Advisors are currently supporting. The families all live in either social housing or private rented in deprived areas of Rotherham. Families supported by the Parenting Team have complex needs, they often live transient lifestyles and many are in debt and have low self-esteem. The families have stated:

'I have found the blankets for the children really useful, in keeping them warm when they are sat watching TV or reading'.

11 Parent Support Advisors undertook training from the RCAB in energy debt advice and best deal. As a result of the training two families have been referred to RCAB for energy advice. Both families found the information useful and as a result one of them has managed to secure their tenancy and agree payments for their arrears of fuel.

It has been identified that the vulnerability, low incomes and childcare issues of many of the families it is difficult for them to visit local financial advice services. Therefore an iPad and dongle is being purchased to allow the parenting staff to support families with appropriate energy and debt advice

within their own home.
Rotherham MBC

21,000 copies of a Warm Homes Healthy People magazine were distributed to all social housing tenants across the borough. This magazine covered a range of information including health and financial advice, energy saving tips, heating maintenance and contact numbers of local support and assistance. A range of press releases and communications were sent out throughout the winter months to raise awareness of the issues and schemes available to help residents.



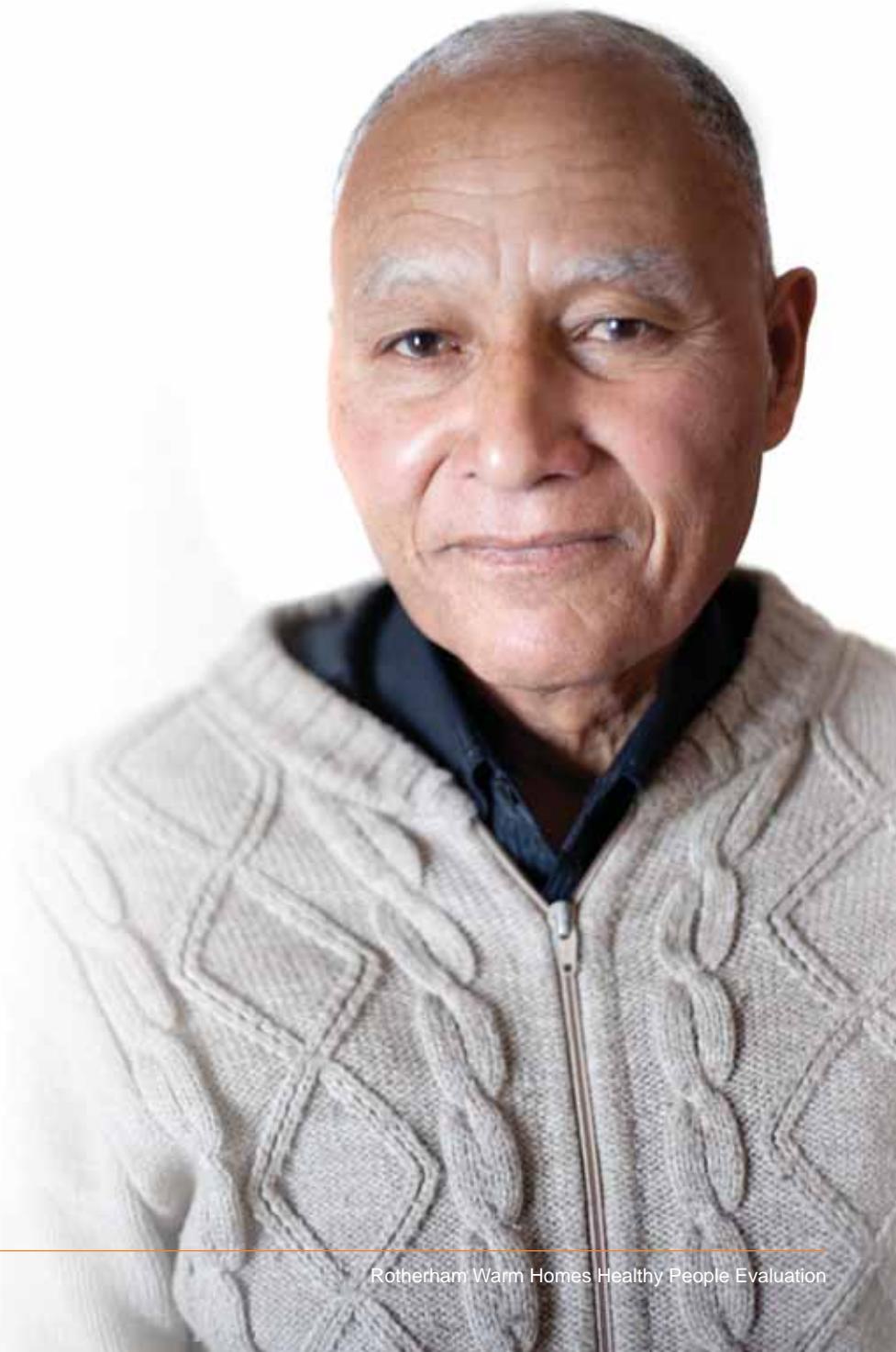
Green Deal Summit

A Green Deal Summit event aiming to raise awareness about the Governments Green Deal initiative was held in April at the New York Stadium in Rotherham 70 delegates attended the event representing voluntary and community organisations, private landlords, letting agents, elected members, disadvantaged neighbourhood managers, installers, strategic directors and front line staff. Speakers were from the Department of Energy and Climate Change, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, National Energy Action and Sheffield Hallam University.

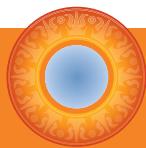


Department of Energy and Climate Change

Funding of £336,000 was successfully received from DECC to provide loft and cavity wall insulation to approximately 320 private sector householders who have not been able to access measures supported by Warmfront or would not benefit from the Government's Energy Company Obligation programme. To date, in excess of 130 householders have been identified and 158 measures are being offered. A programme of works is anticipated to commence before the end of May 2013. Additional marketing, through local press and radio as well as door to door, will assist with identifying additional householders who will be supported with the remaining monies and it is anticipated that the programme will be completed by the end of September 2013 to enable householders to benefit from the improved thermally efficiency of their homes over the 2013/14 winter period



Challenges, Opportunities and Recommendations



Partners were approached to indicate key opportunities and challenges that the WHHP funding and project has presented to their organisation. On the whole partners were very appreciative of the funding and commented about the extended benefits the project had brought to their organisation.

Opportunities

- Developing and strengthening partnerships with other local and national organisations
- Raising the skills and knowledge of their staff about the health impacts of living in cold homes, energy and debt advice, interventions available to support people
- The extended winter period and low temperatures enabled organisations to continue their project delivery
- Welfare reform means many people are preparing to save money and therefore were open to energy saving and best deal advice
- Involvement of organisations specifically working with families and purchasing children's warm packs enabled organisations to work with families
- A dialogue between partners to promote opportunities for attending community events and hosting town centre stalls
- Use the Winter Warmth resources to promote the whole offer from the warm homes healthy people work rather than individual organisations promoting their own individual services
- Changes to the welfare system will mean more householders are at risk of falling into fuel poverty, targeting food banks and clients linked to the hardship funds will ensure more vulnerable householders will be supported
- Warm packs gave an incentive to engage people with services own offer
- Partners involved are trusted locally in the information they provide which helped to promote the messages
- WHHP funding enabled services to attract funding from other sources

Challenges

- Timescales linked to the funding application process restricted partners from being more inventive and making best use of available data e.g. Energy Performance Certificates
- Limited capacity of organisations to deliver extra services brought about by the WHHP funding on top of their own priorities and the priorities of other funders
- Data sharing between statutory organisations could have enhanced and enabled targeted work
- Limited engagement with contractor partners and a housing association meant some funding had to be reallocated to other organisations
- Timescales linked to project delivery restricted activity and planning time, some services were ready to deliver in September / October
- Communication between partners about the different opportunities to support households was sometimes ad hoc and lost in the priorities of different organisations

Recommendations

- Standard survey and data collection tools given to clients from all partners to establish key data in order to better target services if money comes available in the future
- Host an event early in the development of outputs with front line staff not just managers to establish their concerns and best practice to help residents , to better engage front line staff and ensure they are aware of the whole offer
- Provide unisex blankets in the warm packs and include porridge rather than just cup a soups
- Continue to develop relationships with children's services
- Align awareness raising with an opportunity to carry out energy efficiency improvements that will contribute towards tackling fuel poverty and creating a warmer home.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Original Project Targets



Rotherham Citizens Advice



Supporting a minimum of 236 households through;

- 3 x training sessions for front line workers or family groups in ensuring they understand rights around energy companies, looking at the most effective way to identify the best price for energy delivery and some basic training in budgeting
- Providing advice hours to support 2 families per week 1st November – 31st March

Age UK



A minimum of 1,200 older person households will be offered:

- Home visits to give advice on energy efficiency/ maximise use of heating systems and practical help e.g. fitting heat conserving measures,
- Information packs about how to keep warm and provision of warm packs;
- Emergency support service to ensure essential supplies are in place in the event of extreme adverse weather;
- Advice and information by phone, appointment and home visit to provide access to maximise income and reduce energy costs including benefits checks, better energy deals etc.

Wilmott Dixon



Develop an approach for sharing intelligence between agencies in order to support vulnerable tenants



Provide out of hours emergency cover for social housing tenants across the borough

Yorkshire Housing



Household visits to targeted communities to include the provision of 1000 warm packs for older people and 150 for families



Offering home safety checks and one to one behavioural advice utilising new intelligence to identify suitable clients



Support GROW and children's service at RMBC with referrals for priority families



Undertake small scale essential repairs to boiler / heating systems

GROW

- Will work with a minimum of 80 families who are at risk of suffering from the harmful effects of cold homes (included in this figure are isolated women living on their own)
- Supporting service users to access appropriate partner agency support whilst ensuring they understand and benefit from all information offered
- Work with CAB to develop staff awareness and facilitate activities

Social Housing Association partners

- Targeted advice hours offered to vulnerable tenants living in social housing

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue

- Incorporate the distribution of warm packs within the Home Safety Checks undertaken across the borough particularly supporting the most vulnerable.

RMBC Housing Services

- Offering practical winter advice to 21,000 social housing tenants via newsletter
- Provide advice to 7,000 tenants during Gas Safe inspections and offer referral mechanism, where necessary

Rotherham MBC and NHS Rotherham

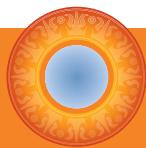
- Winter warmth focussed private rented landlords newsletter
- Manage small scale emergency fund to enable vulnerable householders to receive repairs and or replacement of boilers/heating appliances/etc
- Leaflets and thermometer cards
- 'Improving Health and Homes Summit'

Rotherham MBC Parenting Team

- Targeted work with 50 vulnerable families
- Developing cooking skills - 'winter warmers on a budget'
- Attend awareness raising sessions with targeted families and champion efforts to prioritise keeping warm and well

Appendices

Appendix 2 - Case Studies



Each partner has provided a case study from their work. These case studies aim to provide value and examples of the real like achievements the Warm Homes Healthy People funding has had for Rotherham's communities

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Case Study

Age UK

About the Person

Mr and Mrs L are older people that live in the former pit village of Thurcroft. They are 83 and 78 respectively and live in an old former mining semi-detached property. Mr L is generally in good health and Mrs L suffers with a health condition, but they both report that they do “feel the cold”.

What was the Situation

Mr L initially contacted Age UK Rotherham at the beginning of November 2011 about problems with an ill fitting UPVC door that allowed both a draught and rain through it. A Handyperson was sent out to investigate and work was done to lower the door in order to prevent this. The Handyperson who is very experienced and who has worked for Age UK Rotherham for a few years noticed their home was a little cold and informed the clients that in the near future we were hoping to launch our Winter Warmth Projects and were waiting to hear about funding which would enable us to provide further information about products to help keep their home warmer and make it more energy efficient. The couple were very enthusiastic about this and telephoned Age UK Rotherham in December to refer themselves to the project.

What did age UK do to make a difference

Once the projects started the Handyperson subsequently revisited Mr and Mrs L to ensure they got the benefit of free products that were available and would make a considerable difference to the warmth of their home. The Handyperson talked to them about keeping warm throughout the colder months and explained the benefits of energy efficiency. He then conducted a survey on the property and identified both UPVC doors both front and back were draughty from the bottom of the door. He removed the lower plastic sills to both doors and fitted, without drilling the ‘Stormguard PVC Door brush seals’. He further noticed a large gap underneath the internal door to the living room and fitted an ‘Under Door to Floor’ draught excluder. Mr L and the Handyperson then proceeded to check the internal lights and replaced older non energy efficient bulbs in both the hallway and the living room with new energy efficient ones.

What outcomes were achieved

Mr and Mrs L were both extremely pleased with this work and reported that since the Handyperson visit they “have noticed a considerable improvement with the draughts especially in the hall” and they “Feel warmer in the living room”.

They both were delighted with the service and very much wanted to say:

“We have noticed a considerable improvement with the draughts especially in the hall”

“Feels warmer in the living room”

“We appreciate what he did and that he did a marvellous job”.

Case Study

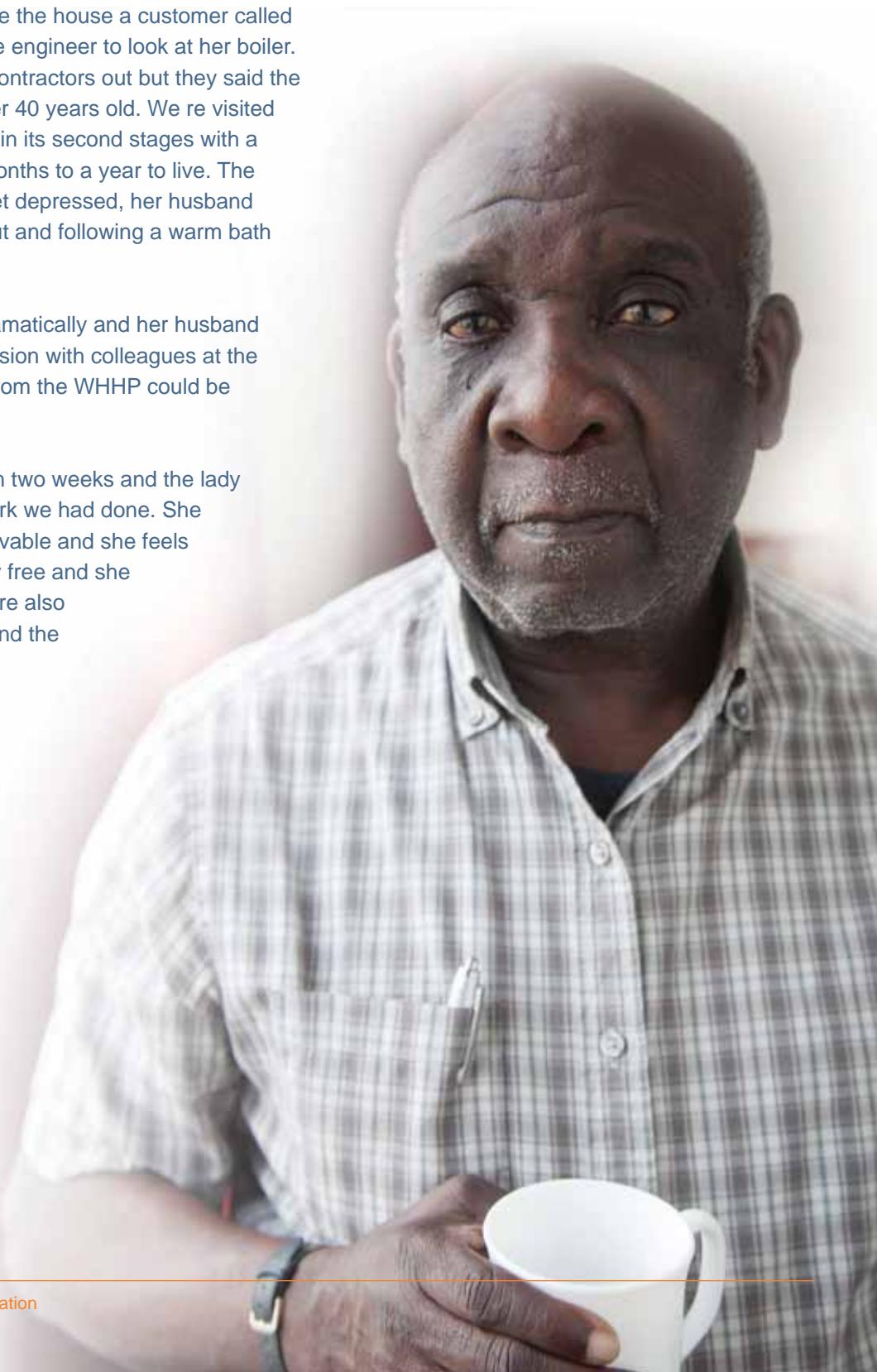
Yorkshire Housing

Yorkshire Housing

Frozen and not wanting to leave the house a customer called to see if we knew any Gas Safe engineer to look at her boiler. We sent one of our approved contractors out but they said the boiler was too old as it was over 40 years old. We re visited and found that she had cancer in its second stages with a diagnosis giving her about 6 months to a year to live. The cold was causing the lady to get depressed, her husband said she never wanted to go out and following a warm bath she just wanted to go to bed.

Her character had changed dramatically and her husband was worrying. Following discussion with colleagues at the council it was agreed funding from the WHHP could be used to pay for a new boiler.

The work was carried out within two weeks and the lady called to thank us for all the work we had done. She said the difference was unbelievable and she feels her last months would be worry free and she wanted to go out again. We were also asked us to do extra work around the house and garden fence.



Case Study

GROW

GROW case study 1

A single mum with 2 children, she has previously been involved in a domestic violence relationship which has impacted on her mental health and had detrimental effects on her children.

Mum has struggled to maintain a secure tenancy and has recently moved into private accommodation which is 2 bus rides away from her children's schools.

Mum finds it difficult to manage her finances and budget accordingly and has needed additional support with this.

Recently mum had her benefits suspended due to failure to attend her JSA appointment, this was because mum had no funds to get to her appointment and now needs to make a new claim. This has left mum and her 2 children in an extremely vulnerable situation and resulted in the family being left in crisis. Mum has no close family or friends that she can turn to for support, her Dad who is the only close relative she has any contact with has terminal cancer, which adds additional pressure and stress.

On 2 occasions GROW have had to provide mum with funds for fuel as the family were in their home without any fuel supply or means of obtaining any for a number of days. This funding was secured to help in emergencies from RMBC.

GROW Case Study 2

Support was given to a family regarding damp issues in property which included phone calls made to the local housing authority to liaise and advocate on their behalf to ensure that there was recognition of the problems causing hardship to the family.

Historically this family has a record of not engaging with help offered and found it difficult to communicate their point of view and worries.

Contact made with Rentokil to arrange times and dates for work to be undertaken to evaluate seriousness of damp and to measure up for calculation of remedial work.

Further phone calls to Rentokil were made to arrange times and dates for remedial work and to ensure that the family had an understanding of what work needed to be done.

The work was carried out successfully and the family were supported with information and advice regarding issues with condensation, fuel economy and budgeting advice.



Case Study

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

Home Safety Check 1 scheduled to visit a property in Thurcroft 21/01/13

A Home Safety Check was conducted at this address by our Fire Community Support Officers, upon conducting this visit with the residents the initial findings were of concern to escalate this up to our Home Safety Check 3 process with our Vulnerable Persons Advocate. Below are details from the visit as passed to our Rotherham Vulnerable Persons Advocate. The house is a Council property which belonged to her grandmother, she no longer lives there but the granddaughter is now resident there with her boyfriend and 4 children. The oldest child is 7 yrs old. The boiler is leaking upstairs; this has caused the floor boards and ceiling to rot. There are also no internal doors downstairs and only 2 doors upstairs but do not shut and there are no handles on them.

The resident has telephoned the Council regarding the boiler and doors and have been told that they will come out and so far they haven't. This house is in a poor state of repair and needs the Council help to make it liveable. There is a hole in the living room to upstairs through the ceiling. Potentially if there was a fire in the living room it could spread through the ceiling into their "designated safe room". Social services are involved and they have a family support worker. The baby has been in hospital with breathing problems. They now smoke outside due to the child's respiratory problems. The front door was blocked with a push chair. If there was a fire to start the smoke would spread quickly and therefore would not be able to get out or make themselves safe upstairs due to the state of the doors.

Actions Taken:

Fire Community Support Officers:

Completed a Home Safety Check. Linked alarms already fitted. Gave warm packs for each individual and as they have no doors to keep rooms downstairs warm. Advised resident will pass this onto VPA who may be able to get the Council out to rectify the problems.

Advised due to no internal doors and the risk of injury being high, they need to switch electrical items off and make sure there is a low risk of fire happening. We gave out 2 adult's warm packs and 3 children's warm packs and also winter warmth leaflet for energy advice/support.

Vulnerable Persons Advocate:

Contacted Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Response Team – 01709 382121 – they advised they will assess the boiler within 24hrs – 21/01/12 and look to fix the ceiling hole.

Contacted Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Housing Team - 01709 336040 – They had advised Vulnerable Persons Advocate that the resident has to call in themselves to refer the missing doors and then possibly need to provide a written letter. Vulnerable Persons Advocate spoke with resident and explained what we have done so far to support and reiterated the advice given from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council that they needed to contact the Council to rectify problems and gave resident direct contact number to do this.

Vulnerable Persons Advocate to follow up with a courtesy call in 1 week's time.

Case Study

Rotherham MBC – Parenting Team

Roma Slovakian families. A focus of our work for the warm homes project was on the Roma Slovakian population. This population is increasing in Rotherham and historically have been difficult to engage with and subsequently offer support to. However, due to the warm homes funding we were able to offer cooking sessions to 33 families. Jamie Oliver's Ministry Of Food were commissioned to run the sessions which entailed information on creating 'winter warmers on a budget'. A translator was required in order to run the sessions which were held at a local Children's Centre.

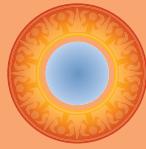
The feedback from families was very positive. As a result of the sessions a Parent Support Advisor has run two workshops (12 people to each session), to share advice and information around energy advice. It has also allowed the Parenting Team to facilitate further workshops with this Slovak community on debt advice and completing job applications as well as offer sessions on effective parenting strategies.

We intend to run more cooking sessions for vulnerable families in order for us to approach the subject of keeping warm.

"The cooking sessions and warm packs have proved to be a great way for my team to engage with families from ethnic populations we have not worked with before. There have been many wider benefits from the cooking sessions that we may not have been able to achieve without the WHHP funding."

Victoria Morris, Parent Support Advisor Team Manager.





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