

## Report Template on the Leeds Warm Homes Healthy People Fund

### **Executive Summary**

Leeds City Council was awarded £232,800 from the Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People Fund to assist vulnerable people during the 2011-12 winter.

The bid was comprised of a crisis and strategic heating fund administered by Care & Repair to repair and service heating and hot water systems in vulnerable households, a fund to allow Groundwork Leeds to provide additional face to face assistance through their Green Doctor service, a community grants fund administered by Leeds Community Foundation allowing local community groups to bid for funds for projects assisting vulnerable people over the winter period and an emergency box scheme, also administered by Leeds Community Foundation.

The schemes proved popular and allowed our third sector partners to support 355 vulnerable households across Leeds with repairs and improvements. These interventions brought direct health and wellbeing benefits, for example to people who had previously been unable to afford repairs, and were consequently living in unheated homes, and in one case, allowing a pensioner to return home from hospital earlier than would otherwise have been the case. The fund also supported 33 community projects including advocacy support, luncheon clubs and drop-in events around the city.

We felt that overall the scheme was very successful, because it helped the city to support vulnerable people who would have been difficult, if not impossible to assist through existing grants and schemes. Whilst we would urge the Department of Health to run similar schemes for future years, we feel that an earlier lead time would have allowed us to organise the scheme more effectively. We would also like the funds to monitor future schemes more closely.

## **Scheme Summary**

Leeds City Council successfully bid for £232,800 of the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund. The fund supported four main projects, reflecting different needs that were known to arise within the City in winter.

*Fig 1: Expenditure and outputs*

<b>Project Lead and focus</b>	<b>Funds Received</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Key Outputs</b>
<b>Care &amp; Repair Leeds</b> – Crisis and Strategic Heating Fund.	£130,000	Emergency repairs to heating and hot water systems and provision of temporary heating.	Supported 265 households with emergency repairs/servicing.
<b>Groundwork Leeds</b> – Green Doctor Additional assistance fund.	£13,200	Energy efficiency support for additional households over winter, some with additional measures.	Supported 90 households, 63 with additional measures.
<b>Leeds Community Foundation</b> – Grassroots Community Grants Fund.	£61,986	Direct grants for community events and services supporting vulnerable people over the winter period.	33 Community projects supported.
<b>Leeds Community Foundation</b> – Emergency Boxes Fund	£25,141	Emergency boxes of food distributed to vulnerable households	Approximately 200 boxes to be distributed during the next cold spell.
<b>Leeds City Council</b> Promotion Fund	£2,473	Miscellaneous Promotion of projects	Production of 1,500 Thermometer Cards
<b>Total</b>	<b>£232,800</b>		

## **Scheme Elements**

### **Care & Repair**

Failing heating systems are a well known problem for vulnerable people, particularly around winter time when vulnerable households are least prepared to cope with the strain and cost of repairs. Whilst in theory such problems could be dealt with by Government grant schemes such as Warm Front, in reality such schemes now have highly restrictive eligibility criteria which miss out a large number of people on low incomes in need of assistance. Lead times are long, additionally making the scheme unsuitable for vulnerable people who could be left for long periods without heating or hot water. To combat this problem, Care & Repair received £130,000 to provide emergency repairs to heating and hot water systems, temporary heating until repairs were completed and heating servicing to prevent systems from breaking down.

Care and Repair is well known within the community for helping people to stay in their own homes and has built up a network of trusted engineers and tradesmen that vulnerable people can rely on. Because of this, the fund has been extremely popular and by the end of March a total of 265 vulnerable households had been assisted. The average cost of the repairs provided was £485, and three trusted local contractors were used, providing additional benefits to the local economy.

The clear need for this support was demonstrated by the provision of help to people who had been without heating or hot water for long periods of time. Additionally, one person would have remained in hospital for a considerable period of time as his heating was broken, making his home too cold to return to.

#### Case Study 1

*One woman contacted Care & Repair as she was having problems with two systems: a warm air system which kept breaking down and a water heater which was not working properly.*

*The contractor serviced and repaired the warm air system with WHHP funding, which allowed the client to have heating. The hot water system was beyond repair and needed replacing as parts were obsolete. Because the project was able to cover the cost of the heating repair, other grant funding was sufficient to replace the hot water system without her needing to pay a contribution .*

#### Case Study 2

*A woman in her late 80's and bedbound was referred to Care & Repair by the Council/NHS Joint Care Management Team because her combination boiler was not working correctly, the water temperature was inconsistent and the radiators were not heating the room.*

*In the first instance we provided an oil filled radiator to keep her bedroom warm whilst contractors were instructed to visit. The woman told the contractor to repair the boiler as she did not want the upheaval of a replacement boiler. This was very difficult as the boiler was 20-25 years old and parts were very difficult to obtain. After some investigation the boiler was repaired. She was happy with the outcome and the house is much warmer.*

#### Case Study 3

*An 80 year old woman was ready to be discharged from hospital following treatment, but was unable to return home because it was discovered that there was no heating or hot water. The heating system had not been working for some time. We arranged for the system to be repaired using partial funding from this scheme.*

*The woman was discharged later that week to a warm home, with hot water.*

#### Case Study 4

*A 96 year old woman was referred by her social worker because she was seriously at risk after repeatedly leaving her gas fires on all night. She did not want to have central heating.*

*We supplied 3 oil filled radiators with timers and thermostats which enable them to be used safely and economically.*

#### Groundwork Leeds

Groundwork Leeds is an organisation that is experienced at providing free and practical support on energy efficiency and other grants to residents in their own home. Their Green Doctor Service provides vulnerable households with a comprehensive energy assessment advising them of the best way to:

- Reduce their energy bills through behavioural change
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Prevent condensation damp and mould
- Refer them to grant assistance

The Green Doctor advises clients of other local support agencies and their services as well as which energy efficiency measures are practical.

The scheme also provides households with some measures such as draught-proofing, hot water tank jackets and reflective radiator panels, all fully installed. It was decided to use £13,200 Warm Homes Healthy People funding to install measures normally unavailable such as secondary glazing and pipe lagging to some of the 90 homes visited.

*Fig 2: Additional measures funded through the Warm Homes Healthy People Fund*

<b>Additional Measure</b>	<b>No of Installations</b>
Acrylic Secondary Glazing	47
Mastic Sealant	5
Pipe Lagging	11

#### Case Study 5:

*A resident of a large Victorian property in Harehills, living on a low income with a family of four, contacted the Green Doctor for a visit and subsequently had measures such as reflective radiator panels and energy efficient light bulbs installed. The resident also mentioned that the property has large single glazed windows that drain the heat from the main living spaces. After assessing the state of the windows the Green Doctors decided they were ideal for secondary glazing panels.*

*The Green Doctors installed 19 large 4mm acrylic panels in the main living rooms and bedrooms using the fund.*

*The resident said "The secondary glazing has been fantastic, it's hardly noticeable and we can really feel a difference in both warmth and noise".*

## Case Study 6

*An 83 year old pensioner, who lives alone, was referred to the Green Doctor by his family. The team were able to install reflective radiator panels, energy efficient light bulbs and powerdowns at the property. His daughter and grandson were also present and benefited from the advice provided. After talking with the family, it was made clear that there were problems with the wooden single glazed windows in the kitchen. The Green Doctor team later revisited and fitted acrylic secondary panels paid for through the fund. The resident was very pleased with the result.*

### Leeds Community Foundation

Leeds Community Foundation was awarded £61,986 to provide small grants to local community groups for projects that would assist vulnerable people during the cold weather. All applicants were asked to submit a brief proposal outlining their project and funding requirements.

The Foundation is well known in the Leeds voluntary and community sector and has previously provided grant support to community groups. Because of their trusted position within the community, Leeds Community Foundation were able to mobilise extremely quickly and generate high quality applications. From the start the scheme was popular and £61,986 was distributed to various groups to facilitate such activities as:

- Multi lingual assistance to assist non-English speaking households to address fuel poverty.
- A scheme to target hard to reach residents who have difficulty accessing services due to challenging behaviour and to provide them with energy assessments, fuel bill advice and signposting to other assistance.
- A luncheon club scheme to deliver two hot meals a week to housebound elderly residents over the winter period.
- Winter warmth awareness days at Leeds Kirkgate market including winter cookery lessons, information on keeping warm and access to a family health worker. This included transport for housebound people.

As a condition of the grant, organisations reported their key outcomes, for example how many people were helped and what additional services they received. (For a list of the schemes supported and the outcomes they achieved, see Appendix 1.)

In addition to the community grants fund, the Foundation also received £25,141 to assemble and distribute emergency boxes for residents who would have found it difficult to get out during the cold weather. Organisations applying for the community grants fund were asked whether they would be able to distribute these to vulnerable people, and again we received a positive response. In addition to this, Leeds Community Foundation was able to raise a further £8,690 through voluntary Winter Fuel Allowance donations to provide a further £3,690 for the emergency boxes

scheme and to pay for administration costs of this and the Community Grants Scheme.

Although cold before Christmas, late winter was milder than normal and although most of the items such as blankets and clothing had already been sourced, it was considered inappropriate to distribute them during a period of relatively mild weather. These have therefore been securely stored, along with the remaining funds, in anticipation of distributing the boxes prior to severe cold weather next winter.

### **The Scheme and the Cold Weather Plan**

All of the partner organisations involved have agreed to adopt the Cold Weather Plan, and Groundwork and Care and Repair Leeds will be distributing the information guide to their clients. The community grants fund was distributed on the understanding that those groups and organisations benefiting from it would take into account the Cold Weather Plan and publicise the information guides to their clients.

All the partners and participants in the scheme have been invited to the launch of the Keeping Warm in Yorkshire and the Humber project hosted by Rotherham District Council, which aims to provide an internet resource to local community groups and professionals with cold weather information.

### **Cross Referrals through the Fund**

It was agreed to strengthen referral processes between the parties to ensure that the vulnerable people contacted were given as much help as possible by signposting residents to the other partners and, in the case of Leeds Community Foundation, publicising the partner services and their contact details to its client groups.

As the lead partner of the project, Leeds City Council was also keen to ensure that referrals were made to its Wrap Up Leeds free insulation scheme to provide additional value to the project itself and to vulnerable residents. All partners were therefore required to promote Wrap Up Leeds to their clients along side their respective projects.

### **Conclusions**

- The scheme allowed us to respond to some severe seasonal needs which we would otherwise have had difficulty in meeting. Because of the partnership links that we already have with community organisations, we were able to use the funds straight away to produce a tangible improvement to the health and wellbeing of some of Leeds' most vulnerable residents.
- We believe that the funding provided led to significant health and quality of life improvements, but we were unable to monitor this due to the timescales involved and lack of funding for monitoring.
- We could have benefited from a longer lead in time to allow all projects and services to be in place ahead of the worst cold weather. For the community grant fund in particular, we had to publicise the project, receive and evaluate applications and distribute the funds after the success of our bid had been

confirmed. This meant that the groups didn't have the funds available to them until early February.

### **Recommendations**

- That the Department of Health support a similar fund each winter, with guidance for local authorities to work closely with local community delivery partners.
- That the Department of Health allows additional funds to monitor the success of different approaches in order to target spending effectively in future.
- That any bidding processes are concluded by September at the latest to allow fund recipients to provide support throughout the winter.

Appendix 1: Projects assisted through the community grants fund

Community Scheme	Grant	Helped
<b>Advocacy Support</b> – provided one to one support on accessing fuel poverty help to non English speakers.	£2,500	60
<b>Advocacy Support</b> – organised five events on fuel poverty initiatives to migrant communities.	£2,500	40
<b>Armley Helping Hands</b> – Organised a new designer to produce a leaflet focusing on surviving in winter which was distributed to 200 people. The staff and volunteers received training on care and repair so that they are better equipped to support the service users. Health and wellbeing programme delivered over 8 weeks to 12 people incorporating diet, daily food goals, exercise and COPD awareness.	£1,160	200
<b>Belle Isle Winter Aid</b> – Completed visits to 50 of most vulnerable clients and made phone contact with 350 second level dependent clients. Provided 10 emergency shops, 15 dentist/doctors' appointments. Distributed 30 sets of shoe ice grippers. Provided 50 carbon monoxide detectors. Distributed 802 winter warmth leaflets.	£2,500	802
<b>Caring Together in Woodhouse</b> – Spent £600 on duvets and good quality bedding. Organised Feel Good day on 30th March provided door to door transport and lunch for 100 elderly people. Day attended by other organisations: police, pensions service etc to provide advice. Organised line dancing and aromatherapy sessions. Students from Leeds University did singing and dancing.	£1,070.00	100
<b>Fairfield Community Partnership</b> – Hot meals provided for 40 people at the Friday lunch club for an 8-week period. Produced flyers to distribute locally to raise awareness of project in the community.	£572.50	40
<b>Foundation</b> – Spoke to clients to identify their needs during the winter period. Purchased clothing to keep families warm: baby grows, under layers, flasks etc. Supported families in emergency accommodation over a couple of months. Project has citywide reach and supported 60 people.	£2,000	60
<b>Healthy Living Network</b> – Project around cooking healthy winter food including courses and one off sessions for elderly people.	£2,463	90
<b>Holbeck Elderly Aid</b> – Distributed 1000 good neighbour leaflets and 1000 winter warmth leaflets during February and March. Delivered workshops on keeping warm and well. Funding covered cost of senior volunteer delivering 50 hampers provided by Eversheds to clients in February and March.	£2,000	1000
<b>Housing 21</b> – Events and winter information sessions for tenants and other local people.	£905.80	220
<b>Leeds CAB Otley</b> – The bureau was able to offer an extra half day session each week for eight weeks, offering advice on benefits and affordable warmth on a one to one basis. The real benefit was being able to spend adequate time with each client. As a result they would like to offer this service each year in Autumn, subject to funding.	£1,221.56	150
<b>Leeds Federated Housing</b> – Completed 102 energy assessments and collected data to support service users more effectively. Distributed powerdown sockets and energy saving booklets. Registered people for warm home grants, reported damp and referred to other support agencies. On 2 occasions organised for meter boxes to be moved to allow easier access.	£2,250.00	102
<b>Leeds Irish Health &amp; Homes</b> – Provided hot meals on Mondays and Fridays to housebound clients from the middle of February to the end of March, mainly to elderly people and vulnerable young people with mental health problems in the East Leeds area.	£1,193	20
<b>Middleton Elderly Aid</b> – Produced 2 newsletters on winter warmth to highlight support in the area. Sent out thermometers and offered loft clearance. The funding allowed staff to increase their hours to provide more intensive support.	£2,389	700
<b>Neighbourhood Network Team</b> – Provided blankets and knitted goods to vulnerable local people.	£500	500
<b>New Wortley Community Centre</b> – Hot meals provided for older vulnerable people on a Thursday and people with addictions on Friday for eight weeks in	£2,484	50



Feb and March. Total of 50 people supported. Produced flyers to distribute to the local area and other local organisations to raise awareness of the project.		
<b>Otley Action for Older People</b> – 300 people were given advice and information. They went through their database of 900 people and identified 300 more vulnerable people, telephoning them to ask what help they needed. This Included shopping, taking them to doctors' appointments and general help with understanding bills and finding cheaper power suppliers.	£1,700	300
<b>Renew, Archway</b> – Provided activities for low income families with young children and teenage parents on keeping warm.	£2,000	200
<b>South Leeds Community Radio</b> – Produced radio programmes about keeping warm, including advice, interviews and case studies.	£2,491.10	1000
<b>St Vincent Support</b> – St Vincents provided fuel poverty and energy awareness training to staff as well as winter cookery lessons for their clients. They also ran a scheme offering hot food for the homeless who could drop in any day of the week. They put on some presentations to their debt team (they have 3 debt advisors) on energy awareness and swapping energy providers etc.	£2,250	300
<b>Stanningley and Swinnow</b> – They distributed warm clothing packs including short sleeved vests, no sleeved vests, longjohns, longjanes, gloves, hats, scarves and thermal tights. These were available at the lunch club, bowling club and dance group. Out of 225 members, 150 of them chose to take the warm clothing packs.	£2,060	150
<b>STEP (Supporting Elderly People)</b> – Held two information events at St Andrews Church. They had free lunches for the members and bingos and gave out leaflets (with information about STEP). Each person was given a fridge magnet with STEP contact details on too. They invited other organisations such as Care and Repair to provide information. Approximately 90 people attended the two lunches.	£2,000	180
<b>West Indian Family Counselling</b> – The group were able to put on additional lunches at their lunch club throughout February and March and arranged home deliveries of hot food for 10 people. They also held a Winter Warmth information event attended by 38 elderly people.	£1,711	48
<b>Zest</b> – Organised winter warmth awareness days, winter cookery sessions and shopping trips.	£2,315	930
<b>Feel Good Factor</b> – Have trained community health educators to advise local community groups on winter wellbeing.	£800	100
<b>Middleton Community Group</b> – The group targeted 250 homes and as a result provided a set of 4 radiator panels to over 170 homes. The remaining stock has been handed over to Middleton Elderly Aid for its handyman to distribute and install, where a need is identified.	£1,500	250
<b>Hamara</b> – Supported older people to live independently with safety checks, shopping and hot food delivery. Also provided activity sessions.	£2,000	30
<b>Shantona</b> – Shantona held 7 luncheon clubs where they held energy efficiency talks. They also had 1:1s with some families advising them on how to apply for extra funding. They organised shopping trips with identified families on low income. A special "soup day" was held where people learned how to make nourishing and healthy winter soups for their families.	£2,000	20
<b>Parivar Lunch Club</b> – shopping service for elderly.	£2,000	20
<b>Rafikhi Divine Direction for Children</b> – expanded delivery of hot food and clothes.	£1,500	500
<b>Moyes Centre</b> – 6,000 leaflets covering winter warmth issues were distributed. Also delivered emergency meal parcels to 75 people. By working closely with three local luncheon clubs for the elderly, the group has compiled data which will help with the development of a meals-on- wheels service in the area.	£5,000	75
<b>Restore Counselling Service</b> – Provided winter support to Polish people living in Leeds.	£750	
<b>Chapelton CAB</b> - 24 people/families directly benefited from the grant. The CAB worked with 4 local organisations (Reach, Black Health initiative, Shantona & People in Action) offering dedicated appointments for their clients and advising on benefits, tariff checks and switching energy suppliers.	£2,200	65

