

Rossendale Affordable Warmth Grant 2016 /17

Introduction

In 2016/2017 Lancashire County Council made funding available to district councils to deliver high impact affordable warmth interventions to individuals who are the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. The total amount available to Rossendale was £27,979. The project was delivered in partnership with St Vincent's Home Care and Repair Team.

Aim of the fund

Ultimately, the funding aimed to reduce levels of death and illness over the winter months and to improve people's wellbeing; as a consequence see a reduction in hospital admissions and a demand for health and social care services.

Beneficiaries and Vulnerable Groups

Being on a low income, living in thermal inefficient home, having higher heating needs, and high fuel costs can all increase the risks of living in a cold home. The funding is aimed at the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. This could include a wide range of individuals who are at serious risk of, experiencing poor health and wellbeing due to a cold home.

On the 5th March 2015 the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published its new guidance '[Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes](#)'. It indicates the following groups to be particularly vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home:

- people with cardiovascular conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (from new-born to school age [up to age 5])
- pregnant women

Additionally the NICE guidance highlights that living in a cold home may have a greater effect on people who have to spend longer than an average amount of time at home. This could include those with chronic health conditions, including terminal illnesses. In the case of damp, children under the age of 14 years are the group judged most vulnerable due to their susceptibility to asthma¹.

Eligibility for Funding

¹ Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Households were able to access funding if they met at least one of these health vulnerabilities and an affordability issue had been identified. Such as:

- Someone being in receipt of means tested benefits
- The CSE fuel poverty calculator being completed - this is completed where a household is receiving more than £1,000.
- A 'declaration' by the Local Authority or health / social care professional that affordability issues are present.

Breakdown of spend

The project was completed May 2017; the following is a brief over view of how the money has been spent.

Homes receiving Affordable Warmth measures	25
Types of measures completed	Loft Insulation 2 Replacement boiler 10 Draught Proofing 4 Radiator Reflector panels 1 Replacement fire 1 Carpet 1 Boiler and pipe work 1 Central Heating 1 Gas Fire Servicing 1
Number of persons with chronic health conditions or terminal illness	19
Number of hospital visits over 12 months	109 (19 people)
Number of GP visits over 12 months	67 (15 people)
Number of homes with children	2
Number of persons over 65	14
Location of homes	Whitworth 3, Bacup 11, Haslingden 10, Rising Bridge 1
Total amount of funding (minus 10% management fee)	£29,979
Total costs of contribution from Affordable Warmth	£26,554.26
Total match funding generated	£8,339.44
Total costs of interventions provided	£34,893.70

Case Studies provided by St Vincent's

Case Study 1

Ms B was a 64 year old spinster who lived alone. Our client was prone to respiratory problems, had very poor mobility and struggled to keep warm due to her confinement in her own home. The lady contacted Rossendale Council for help with repairs to her 13 year old boiler which was not working. The council referred the case on to St Vincent's Homecare & Repair who arranged for a plumber to visit to assess her boiler. It was found that the boiler had a number of leaks and some of the parts were corroded due to the age of the boiler. In view of this the only feasible option was to replace the boiler.

Client had little in the way of savings and therefore unable to cover the cost of a replacement boiler. St Vincent's were able to raise the funding required to replace the boiler through the Lancashire County Council Affordable Warmth scheme and a number of other charities.

Ms B was very grateful for the help she received and is now able to keep warm and comfortable in her home.

Case Study 2

Mrs H was 70 year old widow who lived alone. A number of years ago, client was diagnosed with lung cancer resulting in part of her lung being removed and now very susceptible to chest infections. Client also suffered from arthritis and had poor mobility.

Mrs H had a boiler fitted under the Warmfront scheme in 2007 which had been very problematic over the last few years. The boiler was serviced every year under a heating scheme and had to be repaired on numerous occasions. However, when contractor last called, client was advised they are unable to carry out the repair as replacement parts were obsolete and recommended a replacement boiler. Mrs H was already an existing client of St Vincent's and contacted us for help. We arranged for one of our contractors to call who also confirmed boiler needed to be replaced.

Client was unable to cover the full cost of replacing the boiler but could afford to make a small contribution. St Vincent's therefore managed to secure funding from the Lancashire County Council Affordable Warmth scheme, Npower Health Through Warmth scheme, Gas Safe scheme & Scottish & Southern Electric scheme. We also arranged to install radiator reflector panels which would enable the heat to be retained within the property.