






Hertfordshire County Council  
Extreme Weather  
**Health** Action Card

Document Control		
<b>Title:</b>	Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Extreme Weather - Health Action Card	
Version	Date	Aim of this Action Card
V 1.0	10/06/22	The aim of this action card is to promote awareness and set out the actions to be taken by Hertfordshire County Council and key partners, when alerted to hot/cold-health watch at specific trigger levels, to ensure that interventions to protect vulnerable people are put in place.
V 1.1 Updates to font. Pictures changed to tables to ensure the information is readable by anyone using a screen reader. Major Incident Plan added	14/06/22	The action card is split into two sections. The first part relates to <u>heat</u> . The second part relates to <u>cold</u> .  The national weather plans are designed as good practice guides, the contents are illustrative. They're still to be used as the overarching guide and this document should be read in conjunction with these: <a href="#">National Heatwave Plan</a> <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a>  This document isn't intended to replace any existing emergency plans.  Hertfordshire LRF flood plan remains: ➤ <a href="#">Multi-agency Flood &amp; Reservoir Inundation Plan</a> HCC Incident Response Plan remains: ➤ <a href="#">Hertfordshire Incident Response plan</a> Hertfordshire LRF Major Incident Framework remains: ➤ <a href="#">LRF Major Incident Framework</a>  This is a <b>local health</b> adaptation and contains local Public Health Advice.  The Resilience Teams focus remains around extreme weather at alert level's 3-4. PH will support on communications (warn and inform) and promotions around health-related planning on all watch levels and will support the IMT response at 3-4 from a health point of view should command and control be stood up.
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<b>Plan Owner:</b>	Jim McManus – Executive Director of Public Health Alex Woodman – Executive Director of Community Protection & CFO Community Protection
<b>Resilience Board Sign off:</b>	15/06/2022
<b>Associated HCC Plans:</b>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">             Incident Response            Plan v4.0.pdf         </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;">             Major Incident            Framework (version 1)         </div> <div style="text-align: right;">             Herts MAFP version            2.6 March 2018.pdf         </div> <div>           HCC Incident Response Plan             Hertfordshire LRF Major Incident Framework             LRF Multi-agency Flood &amp; Reservoir Inundation Plan         </div>

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## Section 1: Introduction

### Ownership, Roles & Responsibilities of this Action Card

This document has been written by HCC Public Health, in partnership with Community Protection Resilience Team.

The Head of Public Health Emergency Response will accept responsibility for the maintenance of this plan and will continue to work in partnership with the Resilience Team. A local Command-and Control structure will likely be stood up should a level 3 or 4 incident be declared.

For preparedness, local stakeholders are advised to sign up to the Met Office heat/cold-health watch alerts system by clicking [here](#) .

### Activating of this Action Card

The Hertfordshire extreme weather health action card will be triggered by electronic alerts received from the Met Office. It will be the responsibility of the relevant council departments and third-party agencies, to assure the Director of Public Health that they are taking actions in partnership with other community providers, to deliver information and support to frontline staff and vulnerable people in the community to minimise heat/cold-health risks.

### Governance

Separate to this action card, the Local Authority, as a provider and commissioner of services as well as a Category 1 responder within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, has a wide range of roles and responsibilities across all levels of the national hot and cold weather plans.

NHS and Local Authority commissioners, together with multi-agency Local Resilience Forums, should satisfy themselves that providers and stakeholders take appropriate action according to the heat / cold -health watch alert level in place and their professional judgements.

Elected Members, especially those with portfolio responsibility for health have important strategic overview and scrutiny functions as well as community engagement and decision-making roles.

### National Guidance updates

**May 2022:** Documentation relating to COVID-19 has been removed from the National Heatwave Plan & webpage. This is now being replaced by the ventilation guidance which will be available shortly on the Gov covid webpage. A review is being undertaken as part of a national adaptation programme – a single adverse

weather plan for England is currently being developed, this will amalgamate the cold, heat and flooding guidance and will be published April 2023.



Section 2:

Hertfordshire County Council  
Extreme Weather  
**Health** Action Card  
(Hot)

### Heatwave Response Levels

A Heat-health watch system operates in England from 1 June to 15 September each year. During this period the Met Office may forecast heatwaves, as defined by forecasts of day and night-time temperatures and their duration.

The heat-health watch system comprises of five main levels, from 0 - 4. This heat-wave action card will be triggered by these levels of alert with specific actions to be taken at the local level. The table below lays out the alert levels:

Level 0	<b>Long – Term Planning – All Year</b>
Level 1	<b>Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme – 1<sup>st</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> September</b>
Level 2	<b>Heatwave is Forecast – Alert and Readiness – 60% risk of heatwave in the next 2 to 3 days</b>
Level 3	<b>Heatwave Action – Temperature reached in one or more Met Office national severe weather warning service regions</b>
Level 4	<b>Major Incident – Emergency Response – Central Government will declare a level 4 alert in the event of severe or prolonged heatwave affecting sectors other than health</b>

#### **Level 0: Long-Term Planning**

Long-term planning includes year-round joint working to reduce the impact of climate change and ensure maximum adaptation to reduce harm from heatwaves. This involves influencing urban planning to keep housing, workplaces, transport systems and the built environment cool and efficient.

#### **Level 1: Heatwave and summer preparedness**

Summer preparedness runs from 1 June to 15 September when a Level 1 alert will be issued. The extreme weather plan will remain at Level 1 unless a higher alert is triggered. During the summer months, social and healthcare services need to ensure that awareness and background preparedness are maintained by implementing the measures set out in the [national heatwave plan](#) and local action health action card.

#### **Level 2: Alert and readiness**

This is triggered as soon as the Met Office forecasts that there is a 60 per cent chance of temperatures being high enough on at least two consecutive days to have significant effects on health. This will normally occur 2 to 3 days before the event is expected. As death rates rise soon after temperature increases, with many deaths occurring in the first two days, this is an important stage to ensure readiness and swift action to reduce harm from a potential heatwave.

**Level 3: Heatwave action**

This is triggered as soon as the Met Office confirms that threshold temperatures have been reached in any one region or more. This stage requires specific actions targeted at high-risk groups.

**Level 4: National emergency**

This is reached when a heatwave is so severe and/or prolonged that its effects extend outside health and social care, such as power or water shortages, and/or where the integrity of health and social care systems is threatened. At this level, illness and death may occur among the fit and healthy, and not just in high-risk groups and will require a multi-sector response at national and regional levels.

## Section 3: Heatwave actions for Hertfordshire County Council departments and key partners for stages 0-4

Heatwave Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
For Adult and Social Care / Environment & Transport & Sustainable Growth / Resources		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leads to ensure that appropriate heatwave advice is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 0 to 4 and that the Council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any heatwave.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group (see appendix two for key messages).</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching national plan (<a href="#">example action card actioned below</a>)</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Resilience Lead, to ensure that this action card is circulated to appropriate leads.	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the Heat-wave plan for England <a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to heatwave</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of hot weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss heatwave preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all frontline staff are made aware of the health dangers of the hot weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms by encouraging them to read the <a href="#">advice for health and social care professionals</a></li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that services have business continuity plans in place and implement as required. Ensure relevant organisations are aware of guidance: <a href="#">advice for care home managers and staff</a>:</li> <li>• Ensure they have cascaded the <a href="#">national heatwave plan</a> for England and they have read HCC Extreme Weather Health Action Card so they are fully prepared</li> <li>• Ensure teams have more in depth, service relevant, operational level action plans to compliment this action card. Example care home card below.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="475 546 533 607" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Heatwave Action Card Care homes.doc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for care home managers and staff</a></li> <li>➤ <a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for health and social care professionals</a></li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with heatwave awareness and planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1 &amp; 2 actions including</li> <li>• Communicate heatwave alerts to commissioned services and confirm preparedness</li> <li>• Increase advice to social care staff by following this advice</li> <li>➤ <a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for care home managers and staff</a></li> <li>➤ <a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for health and social care professionals</a></li> <li>• Provide advice, in conjunction with national guidance and public health, to clients, vulnerable and community groups</li> <li>• Check that providers/services have arrangements in place for high-risk clients to receive visitor/phone call checks</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Ensure provided and commissioned services are taking appropriate actions</li> <li>• Reminder to providers/services to implement arrangements for visit/phone call checks to high risk individuals</li> <li>• Reminder to providers/services Advise carers to contact GPs if concerns re health</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Check indoor temperature in residential care settings</li> <li>• Staff to help/advise clients in line with UKHSA guidance</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact and provide it to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 and 3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the Council's Incident Management Team or Cabinet Office <b>(if requested)</b>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the Council's Incident Management Team and only when national alert levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Leads to contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Leads to contribute to a debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period.</li> </ul>	

Heatwave Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
For Communications		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communications Resilience Lead to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory warning and informing duty and ensures that the public, clients, services, and businesses are advised appropriately regarding preparedness and response for heatwaves.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group. (See appendix one for key communications messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching national plan</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Communications Senior Manager, HCC Press Office	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the <u><a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></u></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to heatwave</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of hot weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that both the council's website and intranet site are updated with advice on preparing for, and responding to, heatwaves. <u><a href="#">Beat the heat: staying safe in hot weather - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></u> / <u><a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></u></li> <li>• To work with other council depts with heatwave responsibilities and local NHS comms leads to prepare messages, press releases, social media campaigns etc., for other heatwave alert levels.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that key, targeted messages are issued to public and stakeholders regarding a level 2 alert including press releases, social media etc</li> <li>• Ensure that the council's internet and intranet sites are updated regarding a level 2 alert</li> </ul>	

<b>Level 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that key, targeted messages are issued to the public and stakeholders regarding a level 3 alert including press releases, social media etc</li> <li>• Ensure that the council's internet and intranet sites are updated regarding a level 3 alert</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the council's Incident Management Team or Cabinet Office <b>(if requested)</b>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the council's Resilience Team and only when national alert levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period (if requested)</li> </ul>	

Heatwave Actions, Roles and Responsibilities	
Public Health	
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Health portfolio / service leads to ensure that appropriate heatwave advice is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 0 to 4 and that the council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any heatwave.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group. (see appendix two for key public health messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching national plan</li> </ol>
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Head of Public Health Emergency Response to ensure that this document with accompanying action card is circulated to appropriate PH service leads across all areas.
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)
<b>Level 0</b>	<p>Leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the Heat-wave plan for England <a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to heatwave</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of hot weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss heatwave preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure appropriate advisory messages have been prepared</li> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded the <a href="#">national heatwave plan</a> for England and have read HCC Extreme Weather Health Action Card</li> <li>• Work with partners on risk reduction awareness including large event organisers (PH Events Team to pick this up in collaboration with the LRF and Head of PH Emergency Response)</li> <li>• Head of Emergency Response to ensure the HCC Extreme Weather Action Card document is reviewed annually, cascaded, and stored appropriately on resilience direct</li> </ul> <p>Leads to ensure:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded the national <a href="#">heatwave plan for England</a> and this local extreme weather action card document to all relevant HCC services</li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with heatwave awareness and planning</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1 &amp; 2 actions</li> <li>• Communicate public heatwave messages and alerts to commissioned services and confirm preparedness</li> <li>• Increase advice to staff (liaising with Corporate Communications)</li> <li>• Support other council depts, including communications, with appropriate advice and guidance</li> <li>• Provide advice, in conjunction with national guidance and public health, to clients, vulnerable and community groups (liaising with Corporate Communications)</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Ensure commissioned services are taking appropriate actions</li> <li>• Support the council's response, particularly communications</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Remind staff to help/advise clients in line with "Advice for Health and Social Care Professionals" guidance</li> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b></li> </ul> <p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify all D&amp;Bs of a level 3 via OTCG / HPB contact group. (warn and inform list held on PH Resilience Direct)</li> <li>• Support the Resilience Team / Cabinet Office with the Incident Management Response</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Ensure commissioned services are taking appropriate actions</li> <li>• Support the council's response, particularly communications</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Remind staff to help/advise clients in line with "Advice for Health and Social Care Professionals" guidance</li> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b></li> </ul> <p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notify all D&amp;Bs of a level 4 via OTCG / HPB contact group. (warn and inform list held on PH Resilience Direct)</li><li>• Support the Resilience Team / Cabinet Office with the Incident Management Response</li></ul>
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stand down will be advised by the Council's Resilience Team and only when national alert levels have returned to Level 1</li><li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li><li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period</li></ul>

Heatwave Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
For Children Services (Early years and education settings)		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children Services portfolio leads to ensure that appropriate heatwave advice is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 0 to 4 and that the Council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any heatwave.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the council's Resilience Team, or any other group as requested. (see appendix three for key Children Services messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching national plan</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Children Services Resilience Lead, to ensure that this plan with accompanying action card is circulated to appropriate service leads across all areas.	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<u>Leads to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the Heat-wave plan for England <a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to heatwave</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of hot weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss heatwave preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<u>Leads to ensure:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded the <a href="#">national heatwave plan</a> for England and have read HCC Extreme Weather Health Action Card</li> <li>• Ensure establishments such as nurseries and schools are aware of the <a href="#">national heat-wave plan</a> and guidance for <a href="#">teachers and professionals</a>.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years, education settings and children social care managers should be fully prepared to mitigate the increased risk to health of the pupils</li> <li>• Special schools pose an increased risk. They should be provided with additional PH support if necessary. The Head of Health Protection <a href="mailto:Geraldine.Bruce@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Geraldine.Bruce@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a> can be contacted in these circumstances</li> <li>• Ensure that schools are taking appropriate action to plan and prepare for a heatwave</li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with heatwave awareness and planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1 actions</li> <li>• Communicate the level 2 alert to all early years, education settings and children's social care to seek assurance that schools are taking appropriate action in preparing for a potential heatwave</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Communicate the level 3 alerts to schools</li> <li>• Ensure that schools are taking appropriate action in dealing with the impact of a heatwave</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the Council's Incident Management Team &amp; Cabinet Office if required</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the council's Resilience Team and only when national alerts levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period</li> </ul>	

Heatwave Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
Resilience Team		
<b>Role</b>	<p>Preparedness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise departments of the requirements of the <a href="#">National Heatwave Plan</a> and this HCC Extreme Weather Health Action Card document</li> <li>2. In Partnership with PH Emergency Response, seek assurance that departments receive Heat-Health Alerts, have undertaken appropriate planning and are able to carry out the actions allocated to them</li> <li>3. In partnership with PH Emergency Response, work with Corporate Comms to ensure appropriate advisory warn and inform messages pre-prepared</li> </ol> <p>Response</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Monitor Heat-Health Alerts and extreme heat warnings and escalate or disseminate, as appropriate</li> <li>5. Resilience Team in partnership with PH Emergency Response will agree the appropriate action(s) to be undertaken in the event of a Level 3 or 4 Heat-Health Alert</li> <li>6. Act as the conduit to the LRF and wider multi-agency partners</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Resilience Manager	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the Heat-wave plan for England <a href="#">Heatwave Plan for England 2022</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific actions</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific actions</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Potential actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share situational awareness internally</li> <li>• Issue public health advice internally or externally</li> <li>• Consider establishing the Incident Management Team in line with the Incident Response Plan</li> <li>• Consider sharing situational awareness and/or public health advice with multi-agency and LRF partners</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declare a major incident in line with the Major Incident Framework</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that departments are stood down following any internal or external response to a Level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Ensure that HCC contributes to any multi-agency or external debrief held as a result of the response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• In partnership with PH conduct and facilitate an internal debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period</li> </ul>	

## Section 4: Extreme Heat

Severe weather can take a variety of forms and at times can cause significant problems and disruption to normal life. Over the coming years we are likely to see rising temperatures and sea levels and an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events in the UK because of climate change.

Excessive exposure to high temperatures can kill. During the summer heatwave in Northern France in August 2003, unprecedentedly high day- and night-time temperatures for a period of three weeks resulted in 15,000 excess deaths. The vast majority of these were among older people.

In England that year, there were over 2,000 excess deaths over the 10-day heatwave period which lasted from 4 to 13 August 2003, compared to the previous five years over the same period.

**Extreme heat** is dangerous to everyone. A heatwave in the UK is defined by the Met Office as a period of three consecutive days with daily maximum temperatures meeting or exceeding the heatwave temperature threshold. This threshold varies throughout the UK. For the East of England the day time daily maximum threshold is 30°C and the night time minimum threshold is 15°C (these temperatures could have significant effect on health if reached on at least two consecutive days and the intervening night). See link for more information re temperature thresholds for different regions [What is a heatwave? - Met Office](#)

A heatwave can have a detrimental effect on public health and lead to increased mortality. Climate change means heatwaves are likely to become more common in England. Rising temperatures increase the frequency and intensity of heat waves, and it is predicted there will be 7,000 heat-related deaths every year in the UK by 2050 without further adaptation measures. Heatwaves also contribute to increased incidence of cardiovascular and respiratory disease. Statutory services have a duty to protect Hertfordshire's residents from heat-related harm to health, setting out what should happen before and during periods of severe heat and ensure there are preparations in place for both individuals and organisations to reduce health risks and provide specific measures to protect at-risk groups.

The Met office **extreme heat warnings** launched in July 2021, focuses on impacts to the general population as well as disruption to infrastructure, AMBER and RED warning only, closely coordinated with UKHSA heat health alerts in England. It can be extended across the UK in consultation with devolved administrations.

### Impacts of Extreme Weather

- Increased mortality rates.
- Increased hospital admittance.

- Greater impact upon vulnerable members of society including those over 65, those suffering from mental ill health, people who are bed bound, people taking certain types of medication, babies and young children under 4yrs.
- Identified vulnerable individuals/populations may require increased home visits, etc.
- Additional support for residential care homes and institutional settings.
- Some workplace settings may be unsustainable.
- Disruption to public transport, with secondary impacts on service provision.
- Possibility that any heatwave may lead to water shortage.
- Increased demand on mortuary space and coroner with increased numbers of deaths at home.
- Difficulty in maintaining appropriate temperature in residential care establishments including hospitals.
- Potential increase in demand for social services from vulnerable members of the population.
- Becoming housebound and being unable to obtain food and/or medical supplies.

#### Heatwaves and Extreme Heat At-risk groups from heat

There are certain groups that are more at-risk during a heatwave due to complex factors:

- Older people (especially those over 65 years old)
- Individuals with chronic or severe illnesses
- Young children (especially those under 5 years old)
- People with a serious chronic condition (especially heart or breathing problems)
- People with mobility problems: for example, people with Parkinson's disease or who have had a stroke
- People with serious mental health problems
- People on certain medications, including those that affect sweating and temperature control
- Homeless individuals (including those who sleep in shelters as well as outdoors)
- Individuals with alcohol and/or drug dependence
- Individuals affected by environmental factors and overexposure (e.g. living in heavily urban areas, children and adults taking part in organised sport)
- Individuals whose employment requires them to work outdoors (e.g. construction, grounds maintenance, etc)

It should be noted that in a moderate heatwave, it is mainly the at-risk groups mentioned above who are affected. However, during an extreme heatwave such as the one affecting France in 2003, fit and healthy people can also be affected.



Section 5:

Hertfordshire County Council  
Extreme Weather  
**Health** Action Card  
(Cold)

Alerts, Warnings & Information for Cold Weather

A cold -health watch system operates in England from 1 November to 31 March each year. During this period the Met Office may forecast cold weather, as defined by forecasts of day and night-time temperatures and their duration.

The following methods are in place:

- Met Office forecasts and data. These will trigger levels of response from the NHS, central and local government, and public health systems, and communicate risks.
- The National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) operates all year round to warn the public of severe weather expected over a 5-day period. These warnings cover rain, snow, ice, wind and fog. NSWWS alerts can be seen [here](#):

Cold Weather Response Levels

Level 0	<b>Long – Term Planning – All Year</b>
Level 1	<b>Winter Preparedness and Action Programme – 1st November – 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>
Level 2	<b>Severe Winter Weather is Forecast – Alert and Readiness</b> – Mean temperature of 2°C. or less for a period of at least 48 hours and / or widespread ice and heavy snow are predicted, with 60% confidence
Level 3	<b>Response to Severe Winter Weather</b> – Severe Weather Action. Severe winter weather is now occurring: mean temperature of 2°C or less and / or widespread ice and heavy snow
Level 4	<b>Major Incident – Emergency Response</b> – Central Government will declare a level 4 alert in the event of severe or prolonged cold weather affecting sectors other than health

**Level 0: Year-round planning to reduce harm from cold weather**

This emphasises that year-round planning is required to build resilience and reduce the impact of cold weather. This level of alert relates to those longer-term actions that reduce the harm to health of cold weather when it occurs (e.g. housing and energy efficiency measures, and long-term sustainable approaches to influence behaviour change across health and social care professionals, communities and individuals).

These measures can also address other important health, sustainability and inequalities issues, such as addressing fuel poverty, building community resilience, providing employment opportunities, reducing carbon emissions, and the burden on health and social care services

**Level 1: Winter preparedness and action**

Level 1 is in force throughout the winter from 1 November to 31 March and covers the moderate temperatures where the greatest total burden of excess winter death and disease occur. This is because the negative health effects of cold weather start to occur at relatively moderate mean temperatures (4-8°C depending on region) and there are normally many more days at these temperatures each winter.

Actions described at this level should be being taken throughout the winter to protect and improve health. Preparations should also be in place to protect health and ensure service continuity in the event of severe cold, and for episodes of heavy snow and/or widespread ice.

### **Level 2: Alert and readiness**

Level 2 is triggered when the Met Office forecasts a 60% chance of severe winter weather, in one or more defined geographical areas for a period of at least 48 hours. Severe winter weather is defined as a mean temperature of 2°C or less and/or heavy snow and widespread ice.

Although there are usually fewer days at these low temperatures, the risk of negative health impacts increases as the temperature falls. Reactive action to prevent harm to health and manage business continuity by services would be proportionately more important during a prolonged period of severe winter weather. Aside from cold temperatures, snow and ice are associated with an increase in injuries and severe disruption to services.

### **Level 3: Severe weather action**

This is triggered by the arrival of severe winter weather. It indicates that severe winter weather is now happening and therefore an imminent impact on health services is expected.

### **Level 4: National emergency**

This is reached when cold weather is so severe and/or prolonged that its effects extend outside health and social care, and may include for example power loss, transport problems or water shortages, and/or where the integrity of health and social care systems is threatened. At this level, multi-sector response at national and regional levels will be required.

The decision to go to a level 4 is made at national level and will be taken in light of a cross-government assessment of the weather conditions, co-ordinated by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office).

## Section 6: Cold Weather actions for Hertfordshire County Council departments and key partners for stages 0-4

Cold Weather Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
For Adult and Social Care / Environment & Transport & Sustainable Growth/Resources		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leads to ensure that appropriate <a href="#">cold weather advice</a> is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 0 to 4 and that the council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any cold weather.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the council's Resilience Team, or any other group as requested. (see appendix for key cold weather messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching National Cold Weather <a href="#">Plan</a></li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Resilience Lead to ensure that this plan with accompanying action card is circulated to appropriate service leads across all areas.	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the cold weather plan for England <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to cold weather</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of cold weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss cold weather preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded <a href="#">the national cold weather plan</a> for England and have read this HCC Extreme Health Weather Action Card</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england</a></li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematically work to improve the resilience of vulnerable people to severe cold</li> <li>• Ensure that all staff are aware of the <a href="#">the national cold weather plan</a> and this HCC Extreme Weather Action Card document and know how to spot signs and symptoms of adverse reactions to the cold.</li> <li>• Use home-visits as opportunities to identify vulnerable people and work with at risk individuals to discuss winter preparedness</li> <li>• Ensure that clients and colleagues have taken advantage of influenza and other vaccination programmes</li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with cold weather awareness and planning</li> <li>• Ensure care homes are aware of the cold weather plan and are planning for potential cold weather</li> <li>• Check clients room temperature (if visiting) and ensure that they have at least one room that meets recommended room temperatures (see appendix five)</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0 &amp; 1 actions</li> <li>• Communicate cold weather alerts to commissioned services and confirm preparedness</li> <li>• Increase advice to services / staff by following this advice</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england</a></li> <li>• Provide advice, in conjunction with national guidance and public health, to clients, vulnerable and community groups</li> <li>• Check high risk clients have visitor/phone call arrangements in place</li> <li>• Consider how forecast weather conditions may impact on your work</li> <li>• Make sure that staff are prepared for an influx of weather-related injuries and illnesses.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-2 actions</li> <li>• Ensure commissioned services are taking appropriate action</li> <li>• Reminder to providers/services to implement arrangements for visit/phone call checks to high risk individuals</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder to providers/services to advise carers to contact GPs if concerns re health</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Check indoor temperature in residential care settings</li> <li>• Staff to help/advise clients in line with UKHSA guidance</li> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact and provide it to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the Council's Incident Management Team and Cabinet Office (if requested)</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the Council's Resilience Team and only when national alert levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the cold weather period</li> </ul>	

Cold Weather Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
Communications		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communications Resilience Lead to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory warning and informing duty and ensures that the public, clients, services, and businesses are advised appropriately regarding preparedness and response for cold weather.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group as requested. (See appendix for cold weather messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching National Cold Weather <a href="#">Plan</a> (see appendix six for key communications messages).</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Communications Senior Manager, HCC Press Office	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the cold weather plan for England <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a></li> <li>• Ensure that both the Council's website and intranet sites are updated with advice on preparing for, and responding to, cold weather.</li> <li>• To work with other council depts. with cold weather responsibilities and local NHS comms leads to prepare messages, press releases, social media campaigns etc., for other cold weather alert levels.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to ensure that both the council's website and intranet sites are updated with advice on preparing for, and responding to, cold weather.</li> <li>• Continue to work with other council depts. with cold weather responsibilities and local NHS comms leads to prepare messages, press releases, social media campaigns etc., for other cold weather alert levels.</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that key, targeted messages are issued to public and stakeholders regarding a level 2 alert including press releases, social media etc.</li> <li>• Ensure that the council's internet and intranet sites are updated regarding a level 2 alert</li> </ul>	

<b>Level 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that key, targeted messages are issued to the public and stakeholders regarding a level 3 alert including press releases, social media etc.</li> <li>• Ensure that the council's internet and intranet sites are updated regarding a level 3 alert</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the council's Incident Management Team and Cabinet Office</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the council's Resilience Team and only when national alert levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the cold weather period</li> </ul>	

Cold Weather Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
Public Health		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Health portfolio leads to ensure that appropriate cold weather advice is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 1 to 4 and that the council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any cold weather.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group as requested. (see appendix for cold weather messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching National Cold Weather <a href="#">Plan</a> (see appendix seven for key public health messages)</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Head of Public Health Emergency Response to ensure that this plan with accompanying action card is circulated to appropriate PH service leads across all areas.	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<p>Leads to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the cold weather plan for England <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to cold weather</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of cold weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss cold weather preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure appropriate advisory messages have been prepared</li> </ul> <p>Circulate <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a> and Extreme Weather Action Card document to PH portfolio leads.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners on risk reduction awareness including large event organisers (PH Events Team to pick this up in collaboration with the LRF and Head of PH Emergency Planning)</li> <li>• Head of Emergency Response to ensure the HCC Extreme Weather Action Card Plan is reviewed annually, cascaded, and stored appropriately on Resilience Direct.</li> </ul> <p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded the <a href="#">national cold weather plan</a> for England and the local extreme weather action plan to all relevant HCC services</li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with heatwave awareness and planning</li> <li>• Work with partner organisations to ensure that cold weather planning features within wider resilience planning</li> <li>• Consider how winter plans can help reduce health inequalities, target high risk groups and address the wider determinants of health</li> <li>• Work with partners and staff on risk reduction strategies (e.g. influenza vaccination programme).</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate advisory messages have been prepared</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-1 actions</li> <li>• Communicate public heatwave messages and alerts to commissioned services and confirm preparedness</li> <li>• Increase advice to all council staff with occupational health team (liaising with Corporate Communications).</li> <li>• Support other council depts, including communications, with appropriate advice and guidance</li> <li>• Provide advice, in conjunction with national guidance and public health, to clients, vulnerable and community groups (liaising with Corporate Communications).</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	Leads for PH settings/services to ensure:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-3 actions</li> <li>• Ensure commissioned services are taking appropriate actions</li> <li>• Support the council's response, particularly communications</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Remind staff to help/advise clients in line with "Advice for Health and Social Care Professionals" guidance</li> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b></li> </ul> <p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify all D&amp;Bs of a level 3 via OTCG / HPB contact group. (warn and inform list held on Resilience Direct)</li> <li>• Support the Incident Management Response &amp; Cabinet Office</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads for PH settings/services to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0, 1, 2 &amp; 3 actions</li> <li>• Ensure commissioned services are taking appropriate actions</li> <li>• Support the council's response, particularly communications</li> <li>• Activate business continuity plans (if surge in demand)</li> <li>• Remind staff to help/advise clients in line with "Advice for Health and Social Care Professionals" guidance</li> <li>• Compile report on actions taken and any impact to the Resilience Team <b>(if requested)</b></li> </ul> <p>Head of Public Health Emergency Response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify all D&amp;Bs of a level 4 via OTCG / HPB contact group. (warn and inform list held on Resilience Direct)</li> <li>• Support the Incident Management Response</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the Council's Resilience Team and only when national alerts levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the cold weather period</li> </ul>	

Cold Weather Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
For Children Services (Early years and education settings)		
<b>Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children Services portfolio leads to ensure that appropriate heatwave advice is disseminated, that commissioned services are aware of, and prepared for, extreme weather planning requirements at levels 1 to 4 and that the Council is prepared to respond to and manage the impact of any heatwave.</li> <li>2. Actions should be noted or logged at all levels of response and, <b>if requested</b>, situation reports should be compiled and forwarded to the Council's Resilience Team, or any other group as requested. (see appendix for cold weather messages)</li> <li>3. This action card is to be circulated to appropriate service leads across relevant areas and used as a high-level summary reminder. Local services are advised to have their own more detailed operational specific accompanying action plans to sit alongside this card and overarching National Cold Weather <a href="#">Plan</a></li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	Children Services Resilience Lead, to ensure that this plan with accompanying action card is circulated to appropriate service leads across all areas.	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the cold weather plan for England <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a></li> <li>• Work within your organisation and with partner organisations to ensure that systems are developed to support the identification and sharing of information with people who may be vulnerable to cold weather</li> <li>• Ensure frontline staff are aware of the health dangers of cold weather and know how to recognise signs and symptoms</li> <li>• Frontline staff should use every opportunity including clinic attendances and home visits to identify vulnerable people and discuss cold weather preparedness</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that vulnerable clients are receiving the benefits that they are entitled to</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full preparedness by ensuring they have cascaded the <a href="#">national cold weather plan</a> for England and read the local extreme weather action card</li> <li>• Teams to have more in depth, service relevant, operational level actions plans to compliment this action card</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all staff are aware of this HCC extreme weather action plan and are aware of associated risks to health for pupils and know how to spot signs and symptoms of adverse reactions to the cold</li> <li>• Actively promote and ensure that children and colleagues have taken advantage of influenza and other vaccination programmes</li> <li>• Ensure that schools are taking appropriate action to plan and prepare for cold weather</li> <li>• Early years, education settings and children social care managers should be fully prepared to mitigate the increased risk to health of the pupils</li> <li>• Special schools pose an increased risk. They should be provided with additional PH support if necessary. The Head of Health Protection <a href="mailto:Geraldine.Bruce@hertfordshire.gov.uk">Geraldine.Bruce@hertfordshire.gov.uk</a> can be contacted in these circumstances</li> <li>• Advise and support the voluntary sector, vulnerable and community groups with heatwave awareness and planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-1 actions</li> <li>• Communicate the level 2 alert to all early years, education settings and children's social care to seek assurance that schools are taking appropriate action in preparing for a potential cold weather</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-2 actions</li> <li>• Communicate the level 3 alerts to schools</li> <li>• Ensure that schools are taking appropriate action in dealing with the impact of cold weather</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>Leads to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue all level 0-3 actions</li> <li>• Comply with any additional requests from the Council's Incident Management Team and Cabinet Office</li> </ul>	
<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand down will be advised by the Council's Resilience Team and only when national alerts levels have returned to Level 1</li> <li>• Contribute to any debrief held as a result of response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Contribute to a debrief following the end of the cold weather period</li> </ul>	

Cold Weather Actions, Roles and Responsibilities		
Resilience Team		
<b>Role</b>	<p>Preparedness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Resilience Team in partnership with PH Emergency Response will advise departments of the requirements of the <a href="#">National Cold Weather Plan</a> and the HCC Extreme Weather Health Action Plan</li> <li>2. The Resilience Team in partnership with PH Emergency Response will seek assurance that departments receive cold-Health Alerts, have undertaken appropriate planning and are able to carry out the actions allocated to them</li> <li>3. The Resilience Team in partnership with PH Emergency Response will ensure that Corporate Comms have appropriate advisory warn and inform messages pre-prepared.</li> </ol> <p>Response</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Monitor cold-Health Alerts and extreme cold warnings and escalate or disseminate, as appropriate.</li> <li>5. The Resilience Manager in partnership with the Head of PH Emergency Response will agree the appropriate action(s) to be undertaken in the event of a Level 3 or 4 cold -Health Alert.</li> <li>6. Act as the conduit to the LRF and wider multi-agency partners.</li> </ol>	
<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	HCC LRF Manager	
<b>Objective</b>	Action (where relevant)	Actioned
<b>Level 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the cold weather plan for England <a href="#">Cold Weather Plan for England 2021</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Level 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific actions</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific actions</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>Potential actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share situational awareness internally</li> <li>• Issue public health advice internally or externally</li> <li>• Consider establishing the Incident Management Team in line with the Incident Response Plan</li> <li>• Consider sharing situational awareness and/or public health advice with multi-agency and LRF partners</li> <li>• Declare a major incident in line with the Major Incident Framework</li> </ul>	
<b>Level 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>	

<b>Stand Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that departments are stood down following any internal or external response to a Level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• Ensure that HCC contributes to any multi-agency or external debrief held as a result of the response to a level 3 alert or higher</li> <li>• In partnership with PH conduct and facilitate an internal debrief following the end of the Heat-Health watch period</li> </ul>	
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## Section 7: Cold Weather and Snow

The winter period sees a significant rise in the number of deaths and rates of illness primarily due to heart and lung conditions as well as infectious diseases such as influenza and norovirus and accidents such as falls. The evidence is clear that most of the health burden attributable to the cold occurs at a relatively high mean outdoor temperature (4 to 8°C depending on region), which increases the emphasis on year-round planning. Although global temperatures are gradually rising with climate change, the UK's population is aging, and so cold weather death rates are expected to remain high, therefore preventing excess deaths remains a public health priority.

Similarly, the impact of cold weather on health is well recognised. Every year there are many avoidable deaths each winter in England primarily due to heart and lung conditions from cold temperatures rather than hypothermia. An estimated 28,300 excess winter deaths occurred in England and Wales in the 2019/20 winter. The reasons more people die in winter are complex and interlinked with inadequate heating and poorly insulated housing and health inequalities as well as circulating infectious diseases, particularly flu and norovirus, and the extent of snow and ice.

### At risk groups from cold

Include:

- Older people, especially those aged over 65
- Infants and children aged under 4
- Pregnant women
- People with learning difficulties
- People at risk of falls
- People with reduced mobility / the housebound
- People living in deprived circumstances
- People living in poor housing e.g. mouldy homes
- The homeless / housing insecure
- People living in fuel poverty
- Marginalised and socially-isolated individuals

## Section 8: Appendix - Heatwave Messages

### **Appendix 1 – Communications: Heatwave Messages**

These are the core messages to be broadcast as official UKHSA warnings alongside national and regional weather forecasts. They may be expanded or otherwise refined in discussion with broadcasters and weather presenters.

#### **Level 1: Summer preparedness and long-term planning**

No warning required unless there is a 60 per cent probability of the situation reaching Level 2 somewhere in the UK within the next three days, then something along the lines of:

“If this does turn out to be a heatwave, we’ll try to give you as much warning as possible. But in the meantime, if you are worried about what to do, either for yourself or somebody you know who you think might be at risk, for advice go to NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk/summerhealth](http://www.nhs.uk/summerhealth). Alternatively ring NHS 111.”

#### **Level 2: Alert and Readiness**

The Met Office, in conjunction with UKHSA, is issuing the following heatwave warning for [regions identified]:

“Heatwaves can be dangerous, especially for the very young or very old or those with chronic disease. Advice on how to reduce the risk either for yourself or somebody you know can be obtained from NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk/summerhealth](http://www.nhs.uk/summerhealth) , NHS 111 or from your local chemist.

#### **Level 3 and 4: Heatwave Action/Emergency**

The Met Office, in conjunction with UKHSA, is issuing the following heatwave advice for [regions identified]:

“Stay out of the sun. Keep your home as cool as possible – shading windows and shutting them during the day may help. Open them when it is cooler at night. Keep drinking fluids. If there’s anybody you know, for example an older person living on their own, who might be at special risk, make sure they know what to do.”

### **Appendix 2 – Key Heatwave ACS/PH/Environment Health Messages**

#### **Stay out of the heat:**

- Keep out of the sun between 11am and 3pm
- If you have to go out in the heat, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat and light scarf

- Avoid extreme physical exertion
- Wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes

**Cool yourself down:**

- Have plenty of cold drinks, and avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks
- Eat cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high-water content
- Take a cool shower, bath, or body wash
- Sprinkle water over the skin or clothing, or keep a damp cloth on the back of your neck

**Keep your environment cool:**

- Keeping your living space cool is especially important for infants, the elderly or those with chronic health conditions or who can't look after themselves
- Place a thermometer in your main living room and bedroom to keep a check on the temperature
- Keep windows that are exposed to the sun closed during the day, and open windows at night when the temperature has dropped
- Close curtains that receive morning or afternoon sun, however, care should be taken with metal blinds and dark curtains, as these can absorb heat – consider replacing or putting reflective material in-between them and the window space
- Turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment – they generate heat
- Keep indoor plants and bowls of water in the house as evaporation helps cool the air
- If possible, move into a cooler room, especially for sleeping
- Electric fans may provide some relief, if temperatures are below 35°C<sup>2</sup> seek advice from Infection Prevention Control Nurse before advising the use of fans in social care settings.

**(Longer-term)**

- Consider putting up external shading outside windows
- Use pale, reflective external paints
- Have your loft and cavity walls insulated – this keeps the heat in when it is cold and out when it is hot
- Grow trees and leafy plants near windows to act as natural air-conditioners

**Look out for others:**

- Keep an eye on isolated, elderly, ill or very young people and make sure they are able to keep cool
- Ensure that babies, children, pets, or elderly people are not left alone in stationary cars

- Check on elderly or sick neighbours, family, or friends every day during a heatwave
- Be alert and call a doctor or social services if someone is unwell or further help is needed

**If you have a health problem:**

- Keep medicines below 25 °C or in the refrigerator (read the storage instructions on the packaging)
- Seek medical advice if you are suffering from a chronic medical condition or taking multiple medications

**If you or others feel unwell:**

- Try to get help if you feel dizzy, weak, anxious or have intense thirst and headache; move to a cool place as soon as possible and measure your body temperature
- Drink some water or fruit juice to rehydrate
- Rest immediately in a cool place if you have painful muscular spasms (particularly in the legs, arms or abdomen, in many cases after sustained exercise during very hot weather), and drink oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes.
- Medical attention is needed if heat cramps last more than one hour
- Consult your doctor if you feel unusual symptoms or if symptoms persist

**Appendix 3 – Key Heatwave Children’s’ Services Messages**

**Outdoors:**

- On very hot days (i.e. where temperatures are in excess of 30°C) children should not take part in vigorous physical activity
- Children playing outdoors should be encouraged to stay in the shade as much as possible
- Loose, light-coloured clothing should be worn to help children keep cool and hats of a closed construction with wide brims should be worn to avoid sunburn
- Thin clothing or sunscreen should be used to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes
- Children must be provided with plenty of cool water and encouraged to drink more than usual when conditions are hot

**Indoors:**

- Windows and other ventilation openings should be opened during the cool of early morning or preferably overnight to allow stored heat to escape from the

building – it is important to check insurance conditions and the need for security if windows are to be left open

**Overnight:**

- Windows and other ventilation openings should not be closed, but their openings reduced when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep rooms cool whilst allowing adequate ventilation
- Use outdoor sun awnings if available, or indoor blinds, but do not let solar shading devices block ventilation openings or windows
- Keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum during heatwaves
- All electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers should be switched off when not in use and should not be left in ‘standby mode’ – electrical equipment, when left on, or in ‘standby’ mode generates heat

**Which children are likely to be most affected by high temperatures?**

- Children’s susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those who are overweight or who are taking medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Children under four years of age are also at increased risk.
- Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible to temperature extremes. The school nurse, community health practitioner, family health visitor or the child’s specialist health professional may be able to advise on the particular needs of the individual child. Schools need to provide for children’s individual needs. Support staff should be made aware of the risks and how to manage them.

**Appendix 4 – Key Heatwave Resilience / PH Events Team Messages**

**Heatwaves and large public events:**

- Summer is a time for people to get outside and enjoy themselves. Large scale public events, such as music and arts festivals; sports events; and national celebrations are held up and down the country every summer providing enjoyment to millions of people.
- Local agencies are generally well equipped to plan and deal with such events. There is well-trying and tested guidance. However, the effects of excessive heat and sun exposure are sometimes not highlighted enough.
- Large public events increase exposure to heat and direct sunlight and can make organisational responses more difficult. Individual behaviours often change (for example, people may be reluctant to use the toilet facilities due to the long queues and so purposely reduce fluid intake). At many large events, people get into a good position to see the event and then reduce fluid intake and heat

avoidance behaviours so as not to lose their spot. This can lead to heat-related illness, dehydration and/or collapse.

### **Heat health advice during Ramadan:**

- Many members of the Muslim community may be fasting during the daylight hours in the month of Ramadan. All local areas should familiarise themselves with the dates of Ramadan each year and build appropriate actions into their local plans if it falls during the summer months. It is common to have one meal just before sunrise and an evening meal after sunset during Ramadan. During hot weather, dehydration is a common and serious risk. It's important to balance food and fluid intake between fasts and especially to drink enough water.
- If you start to feel unwell, disoriented or confused, or collapse or faint, advice is to stop fasting and have a drink of water or other fluid. This is especially important for older adults, those with poorly controlled medical conditions such as low/high blood pressure, diabetes and those who are receiving dialysis treatment. The Muslim Council of Britain has confirmed that breaking fast in such conditions is allowable under Islamic law. Also make sure to check on others in the community who may be at greater risk and keep an eye on children to ensure they are having a safe and healthy Ramadan.
- Guidance has been produced to help ensure that members of the Muslim community have a safe and healthy Ramadan – [Ramadan Health Guide: A guide to healthy fasting](#) produced in association with the NHS with further information available on [NHS Choices – Healthy Ramadan](#).

## Section 9: Appendix - Cold Weather Messages

### **Appendix 5 – Recommended minimum indoor room temperatures for winter**

**Heating homes to at least 18°C (65F) in winter poses minimal risk to the health of a sedentary person, wearing suitable clothing.**

#### **Daytime recommendations:**

- the 18°C (65F) threshold is particularly important for people **65 years and over or with pre-existing medical conditions**; having temperatures slightly above this threshold may be beneficial for health

- the 18°C (65F) threshold also applies to **healthy people (1 –to 64 years)\***; if they are wearing appropriate clothing and are active, they may wish to heat their homes to slightly less than 18°C (65F)

### **Overnight recommendations**

- maintaining the 18°C (65F) threshold overnight may be beneficial to protect the health of those **65 years and over or with pre-existing medical conditions**; they should continue to use sufficient bedding, clothing and thermal blankets, or heating aids as appropriate
- overnight, the 18°C (65F) threshold may be less important for **healthy people (1 to 64)\*** if they have sufficient bedding, clothing and use thermal blankets or heating aids as appropriate

\*There is an existing recommendation to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Advice is that rooms in which infants sleep should be heated to between 16 to 20°C (61 to 68F)

### **Appendix 6 – Communications Cold Weather Messages**

These are the core messages to be broadcast as official UKHSA warnings alongside national and regional weather forecasts. They may be expanded or otherwise refined in discussion with broadcasters and weather presenters.

#### **Level 1: Winter preparedness and action**

This is in force from 1 November to 31 March and indicates that actions should be taking place to protect health from cold weather, and that preparations should be in place to ensure service continuity in the event of severe winter weather. No warning is required, unless the situation worsens to warrant a level 2 alert. A spell of chilly weather might warrant a message along the lines of:

“If this does turn out to be a spell of severe cold weather, we’ll try to give you as much warning as possible. But in the meantime, if you want advice about protecting your health from the cold go to the winter health pages at NHS Choices ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)). If you are worried about your health or that of somebody you know, ring NHS 111.”

#### **Level 2: Alert and readiness**

The Met Office, in conjunction with UKHSA, is issuing the following cold weather warning for [regions identified]:

“Severe cold weather can be dangerous, especially for the very young or very old or those with chronic disease. Advice on how to reduce the risk either for yourself or somebody you know can be obtained from the winter health pages at NHS Choices ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) or from your local chemist. If you are worried about your health or that of somebody you know, ring NHS 111.”

### **Level 3 and 4: Severe cold weather action/emergency**

The Met Office, in conjunction with UKHSA, is issuing the following severe cold weather advice for [regions identified]:

“Make sure that you stay warm. If going outside make sure you dress appropriately. If indoors, make sure that you keep your heating to the right temperature; heating your home to at least 18°C in winter poses minimal risk to your health when you are wearing suitable clothing. If there is anyone you know who might be at special risk, for example, an older person living on their own, make sure they know what to do to stay warm and are well stocked with food and medications. If you are worried about your health or that of somebody you know, ring NHS 111”

### **Appendix 7 – Key Public Health Cold Weather Messages**

Contact your GP or pharmacist if you think you, or someone you care for, might qualify for a free flu jab. There are four flu leaflets: one general, one for pregnancy and, one for people with learning disability, and one about children.

**Free flu vaccinations** are available for those who:

- Are aged 65 or older
- Are aged two, three or four years old (but not five years or older) on 31 August 2015
- Are children of school years reception 1, 2, 3 and 4
- are pregnant
- Have a serious medical condition such as chronic heart, lung, neurological, liver or kidney disease, or diabetes
- Have a weakened immune system due to HIV or treatments that suppress the immune system such as chemotherapy
- Have had a stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA) or post-polio syndrome
- Are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility (not prison or university halls)
- Are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill

**Keep your home warm, efficiently and safely:**

- Heating your home to at least 18°C in winter poses minimal risk to your health when you are wearing suitable clothing (see page 40 for full advice).
- Get your heating system and cooking appliances checked and keep your home well ventilated
- Use your electric blanket as instructed and get it tested every three years. Never use a hot water bottle with an electric blanket
- Do not use a gas cooker or oven to heat your home; it is inefficient and there is a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and this can kill
- Make sure you have a supply of heating oil or LPG or solid fuel if you are not on mains gas or electricity – to make sure you do not run out in winter

**Keep in the warmth by:**

- Fitting draught proofing to seal any gaps around windows and doors
- Making sure you have loft insulation. And if you have cavity walls, make sure they are insulated too
- Insulate your hot water cylinder and pipes
- Draw your curtains at dusk to help keep heat generated inside your rooms
- Make sure your radiators are not obstructed by furniture or curtains

**Look after yourself:**

- Food is a vital source of energy and helps to keep your body warm so have plenty of hot food and drinks
- Aim to include five daily portions of fruit and vegetables. Tinned and frozen vegetables count toward your five a day
- Stock up on tinned and frozen foods so you don't have to go out too much when it's cold or icy
- Exercise is good for you all year round and it can keep you warm in winter
- If possible, try to move around at least once an hour. But remember to speak to your GP before starting any exercise plans
- Wear lots of thin layers – clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are particularly good and maintain body heat
- Wear good-fitting slippers with a good grip indoors and shoes with a good grip outside to prevent trips, slips and falls
- Make sure you have spare medication in case you are unable to go out
- Check if you are eligible for inclusion on the priority services register operated by your water and power supplier.

**Look after others:**

- Check on older neighbours or relatives, especially those living alone or who have serious illnesses to make sure they are safe, warm and well.

**Get financial support:**

- There are grants, benefits and sources of advice to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills. It's worthwhile claiming all the benefits you are entitled to before winter sets in.