

## Surviving Winter Report 2019/20



### Summary of appeal and grant distribution

During the winter of 2019/20 Dorset Community Foundation (DCF) **raised £85,980** through the Surviving Winter Appeal from 358 donors, including 152 who have supported the appeal previously, 97 new donors and 109 anonymous donors. The appeal raises funds to support older and vulnerable people in Dorset who are in fuel poverty and especially encourages those in receipt of the Winter Fuel Allowance who feel they can manage without it, to consider donating to the appeal. We would like to thank BBC South Today for excellent coverage of the appeal, Ridgewater Energy for contributing to the cost of our appeal leaflet, and Dorset Council, BCP Council and Wessex Water for covering the appeal in their magazine's. Gift Aid of £9,413 is retained by DCF as a contribution to the costs incurred in running the campaign.

Many older people are at risk if they cannot afford to adequately heat their homes, particularly if they have health conditions that are exacerbated by the cold. In 2019/20 **£47,600 of funding was distributed to 238 Dorset residents** in fuel poverty by awarding Surviving Winter grants of £200. 85% of recipients had a health issue or disability. The grants enable older and vulnerable residents to switch on their heating and pay for fuel bills. Remaining funds will be used for grants next winter, whilst the appeal starts to generate new donations.

Recipients can be identified as fuel poor because they are finding it hard to meet the cost of adequately heating their home. This could be because of low income, the cost of energy (e.g. expensive prepayment meters), the type or age of the heating system (e.g. oil or wood is costly) and/or poor energy efficiency. Those aged 50 - 59 are eligible if they are finding it hard to heat their home and also have health conditions, are on the highest level of benefits and have little chance improving life circumstances. The decision to include vulnerable people below 65 is based on feedback from Citizens Advice that that people under 65 with additional health and disability issues are often unable to access other discretionary funds and grants available to those over pension age. The evidence also shows that as more people in this age group now claim Universal Credit, there is a likelihood they will experience greater financial hardship than previously. 128 (54%) of recipients were aged 50 – 65.

***“I live alone am disabled due to accident and suffer lasting effects from cancer. My house is cold due to two old storage heaters. I have no money to improve my heating or lifestyle, the cold makes my disability worse. The grant will help me deal with the added costs of trying to keep warm this winter.”***

Two organisations work in partnership with the Foundation to distribute Surviving Winter grants. Citizens Advice in Dorset (CAID) awarded 222 grants and the Centre for Sustainable Energy awarded 16 grants. They receive a contribution of £5 per grant awarded toward their costs. (We also make a £500 contribution to Purbeck Citizens Advice to support the costs of the Fuel Poverty Advice Line.) In many cases a Surviving Winter grant was part of a range of support provided. The Centre for Sustainable Energy delivers the Healthy Homes Dorset project, which offers advice on energy efficiency, free cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and new heating systems or boilers. Citizens Advice offer holistic support around fuel poverty including checking benefit entitlements and helping with claims, advice on ways to reduce the costs of utilities, applying for other grant support, housing and debt advice services, and signposting to relevant support services such as the Macmillan advice service.

## Analysis of Surviving Winter grants in 2019/20

### Age

Age bracket	Number of grant recipients
50 – 59	52
60 – 69	106
70 – 79	54
80 – 89	24
90+	2

### Location

Post code	Post code area	Number of grant recipients	Area
BH1	Town Centre, Springbourne, East Cliff	-	
BH2	Bournemouth Central, West Cliff	-	
BH3	Talbot Woods, Winton	-	
BH4	Westbourne, Branksome Woods	-	
BH5	Boscombe, Pokesdown	1	
BH6	Southbourne, Tuckton, Wick	2	
BH7	Littledown, Iford		
BH8	Malmesbury Park, Queens Park, Strouden Park, Townsend, Holdenhurst, Throop	2	
BH9	Winton, Moordown, Throop, Muscliff		
BH10	Kinson, East Howe, Northbourne, Redhill, Ensbury Park, Wallisdown	3	
BH11	Kinson, Bear Cross, West Howe, Wallisdown	4	<b>Bournemouth: 12</b>
BH12	Branksome, Alderney, Upper Parkstone, Wallisdown, Newtown	6	
BH13	Canford Cliffs, Sandbanks, Branksome Park	2	
BH14	Lower Parkstone, Lilliput, Penn Hill	5	
BH15	Town Centre, Hamworthy, Oakdale	7	
BH16	Upton, Turlin Moor, Lytchett Minster, Lytchett Matravers	8	
BH17	Canford Heath, Creekmoor	3	
BH18	Broadstone	1	<b>Poole: 32</b>
BH19	Swanage, Studland, Langton Matravers	14	
BH20	Wareham, Wool, Bere Regis	27	<b>Purbeck: 41</b>
BH21	Wimborne, Corfe Mullen	6	
BH22	Ferndown, West Moors, West Parley	4	
BH23	Christchurch, Mudeford, Highcliffe	9	
BH31	Verwood, Three Legged Cross	-	
SP6	Fordingbridge	1	<b>Christchurch &amp; East Dorset: 21</b>
DT1	Dorchester	15	
DT2	Dorchester	11	

DT6	Bridport	19	
DT7	Lyme Regis	-	
DT8	Beaminster	1	
DT9	Sherborne	23	<b>West Dorset: 69</b>
DT3	Weymouth Chickerell, Broadwey, Radipole, Osmington, Preston, Littlemoor, Portesham, Abbotsbury, Langton Herring	10	
DT4	Weymouth Weymouth town centre, Melcombe Regis, Wyke Regis	21	
DT5	Portland, Fortuneswell, Easton, Southwell, Weston, The Grove	10	<b>Weymouth &amp; Portland: 41</b>
DT10	Sturminster Newton	-	
DT11	Blandford Forum	7	
SP6	Fordingbridge, Burgate, Alderholt, Rockbourne, Damerham,	1	
SP7	Shaftesbury, Compton Abbas, Fontmell Magna, Donhead St Andrew, Donhead St Mary, Berwick St John, Motcombe	10	
SP8	Gillingham, Stour Provost, East Stour, West Stour, Kington Magna, Buckhorn Weston, Milton on Stour	4	<b>North Dorset: 22</b>

### Circumstances of recipients

Of the 238 recipients, 203 (85%) told us they had health problems:

- 17 had some form of cancer
- 109 told us they had a long-term health condition or disability (including Arthritis, Asthma, COPD, Respiratory conditions, Cardiovascular condition)
- 77 said they had a mental health issue, for some this was in addition to physical health issues

124 (52%) recipients live in a hard-to-heat home and 169 (71%) had high fuel costs, a number of these being on prepayment meters. (Hard to heat homes might include those with no access to mains gas and using more expensive alternatives such as oil, electricity, coal and bottled gas; those of non-traditional constructions such as non-cavity walls, and Park homes.)

190 recipients (80%) receive a means-tested benefit, including 63 on Universal Credit, 86 on Pension Credit and 46 on Employment and Support Allowance indicating that they are under 65 and unable to work due to long term health issues.

### Examples of Individual Personal Circumstances

<b>Health conditions and disabilities</b>
Wife has multiple physical disabilities, poorly insulated property, issues with damp, will use grant to heat their home.
Client is registered disabled and housebound. Because of her complex needs client need to have heating set high. This leads to high bills.
Having chemotherapy; relies on oil-fired central heating – expensive; family have to help out with bills.
Recently diagnosed with brain tumor; lives in a large hard-to-heat flat’ treatment makes him feel cold.
Health conditions effected by the cold (Arthritis, Asthma, COPD), finding it hard afford to heat property, will use grant on fuel
Wife disabled with severe arthritis and COPD, also have autistic teenager; have just been living in one room.
<b>Low Income</b>
Carer for 2 disabled adult children, so depending on Universal credit plus Carers Allowance. Prepayment meter; has had to borrow from friend to top-up.
On a low income – part time hours vary – when reduced cannot afford to top-up prepayment meter.
On Employment and Support Allowance, has to keep thermostat at 12 degrees to save money.
Living in temporary accommodation on UC with depression and diabetes.
<b>Hard to heat homes</b>
Cold property with damp issues, old heating system, Client in Fuel Poverty, will use the grant towards heating property
Old property, listed, so cannot have insulation installed; hard-to-heat and prone to condensation.
Boiler broke several years ago and has been unsuccessful applying for schemes to get a replacement, so uses electric heating. Mould and damp in property. (Client referred to Healthy Homes Dorset scheme for home improvement work).
Client is being supported by a friend, they are struggling to afford calor gas, health condition effected by the cold.

### Feedback from beneficiaries

***“Both my wife and I are in poor health with limited mobility, our house is north facing and very cold and expensive to keep warm, the grant will help us as we are on a limited income”***

***“It will allow me to keep warm in very cold weather as my mobility makes it difficult to keep warm”***

***“The grant plus my Warm Homes Discount enables me to afford to pay my heating bills in January and February, otherwise I cannot keep my park home warm”***

***“I live in a rural location without access to mains gas so I have to heat my home with oil and is very expensive, heating costs are a large proportion of my income and the grant helps towards this”***

***“It will enable me to have my heating on a little longer or to have additional heat if needed”***

***"I am on a low income and my flat has storage heaters which are not efficient and very expensive; the grant will help me meet my electric bills.***

***"I have no mains gas and reliant on electricity and coal for my heating - my home is very cold. The grant will help me pay for coal this winter."***

***"I am on a low income but need to stay warm due to my ill health and awaiting heart surgery, this will help pay my bills"***

***"the grant will allow me to keep heating on more than once every two days and significantly reduce the adverse impact the cold has on my health condition. I will also be able to cook more hot meals"***

***"My mobile home is very draughty; the oil-fired boiler does not work very efficiently but I cannot afford to replace it. The bills are very high, this will help"***

***"It will enable me to heat my home adequately and not always be worrying about fuel bills"***

***"I'm struggling immensely on UC and this would give me the confidence over the winter to keep warm"***

***"I am 94 and need to keep warm, I'm on a low income and this grant will help enormously"***

***"It's important for me to keep warm because of my health, we live in a listed building that is a Housing Association flat and insulation is poor the grant will really help to make a difference"***

***"I can turn the heating on feeling confident that I have some extra money to cover the cost and not go further into my overdraft"***

***Dorset Community Foundation would like to thank all those who donated to the 2019/20 Surviving Winter Appeal, many of whom are regular donors to this Appeal. Grateful thanks are also extended to Citizens Advice in Dorset and The Centre for Sustainable Energy for their assistance in distributing Surviving Winter grants, and all the organisations and individuals who helped us to distribute leaflets and raise awareness of both the appeal and the grants available. We simply could not reach the people who need our help without you.***