



Public Health Suffolk



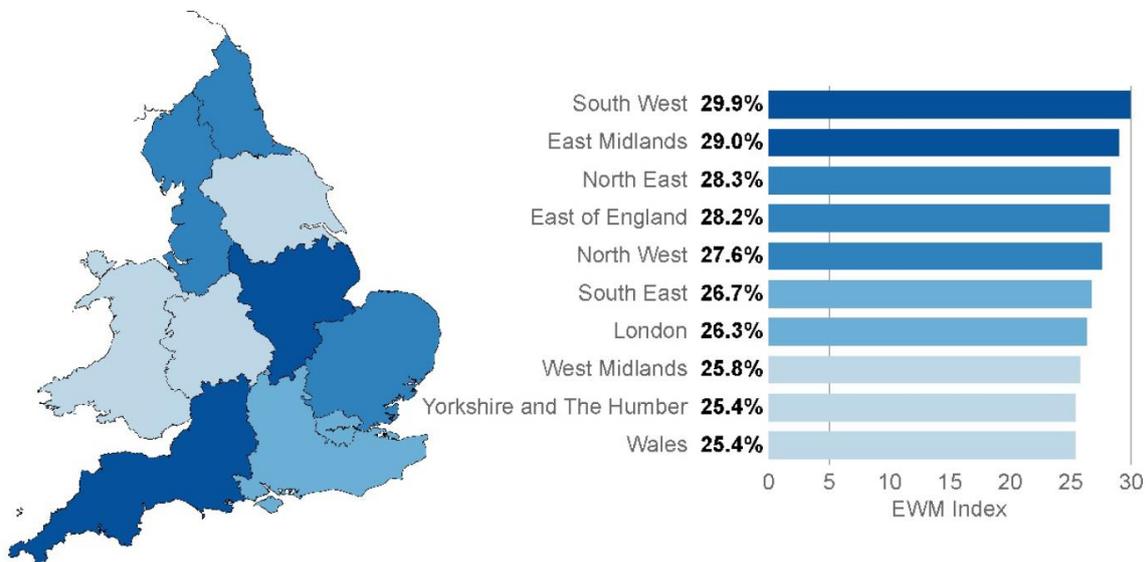
End of Year Report 2015/2016



Warm Homes Healthy People provides a Suffolk wide support mechanism for people in need of help during the cold weather.

Impact of winter weather.

An estimated 43,900 excess winter deaths occurred in England & Wales in 2014/15 (Office for National Statistics), the highest number since 1999/2000. The World Health Organisation estimates around 30% of that number are **directly** related to living in a cold home. The map below gives the National Picture.

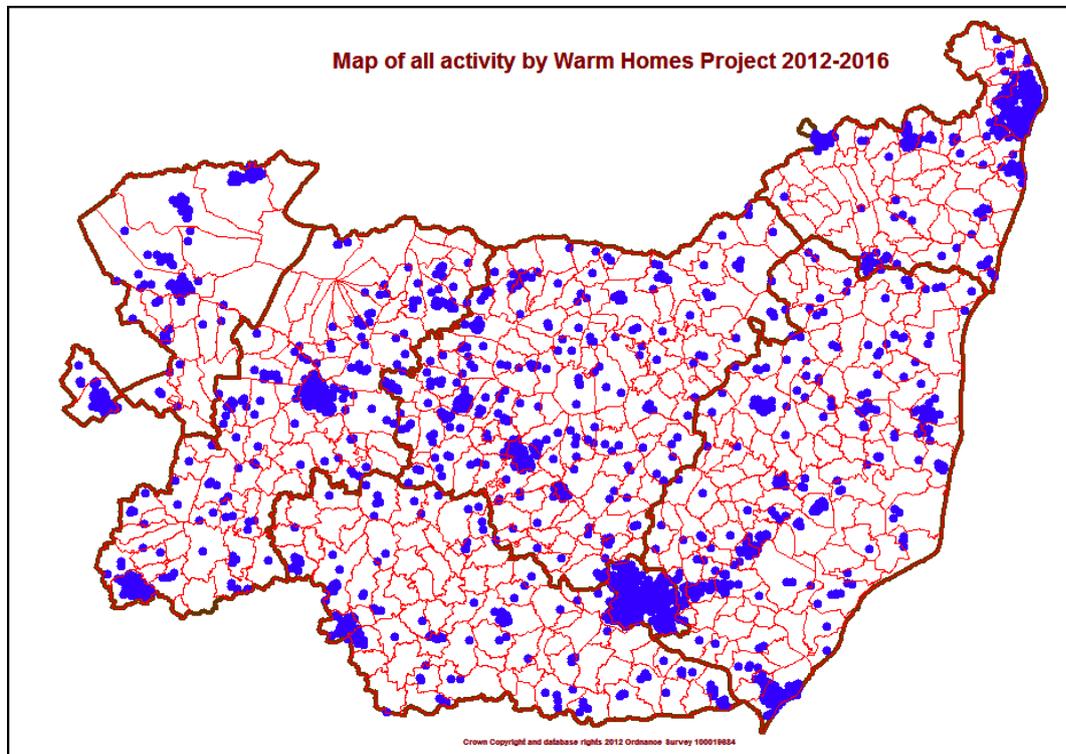


Source: Office for National Statistics

In Suffolk the most recent figures are from 2013/14 and show that there were **243 excess winter deaths**. However, for each excess winter death there are on average 8 hospital admissions (National Energy Action 2015), so approximately 2000 for Suffolk. The majority of excess winter deaths occur in those over 75. With an ever aging population and Suffolk having an above average age per person, there exists a potentially serious population vulnerability. **The cost of this to the health system** is conservatively estimated by Age UK to be in the region of **800 million pounds**.

What we deliver

Since the launch of Warm Homes Healthy People we have provided advice, signposting and funded direct measures for 3200 households. The map below shows the distribution of our activities across Suffolk.



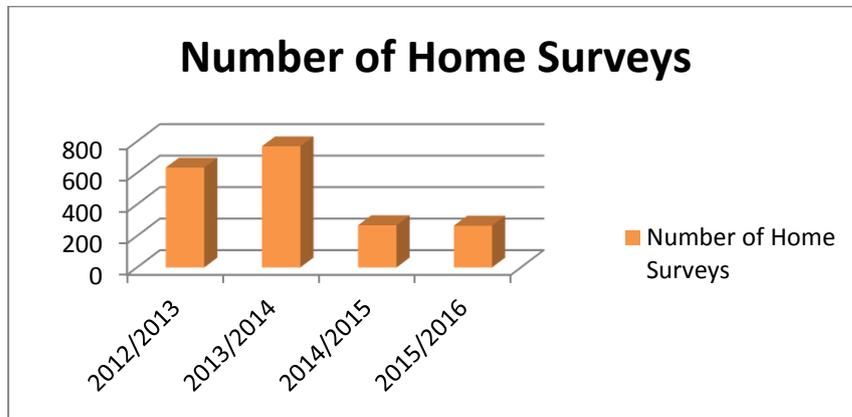
Our core service includes;

- Year round dedicated helpline for clients and referral partners
- Free home energy surveys
- Client access to emergency fuel payments (October to April)
- Temporary loan heaters in heating crisis
- Free draught proofing materials.
- Grants to help pay for emergency heating repairs and when funding available more extensive support for heating improvements
- Access to ECO funded insulation grants
- Access to interest free loans to help with heating related issues and oil deliveries (through Eastern Savings & Loan Credit Union)
- Client access to a handyman service to install basic draught proofing (provided by Orbit Care & Repair)
- General advice and sign-posting

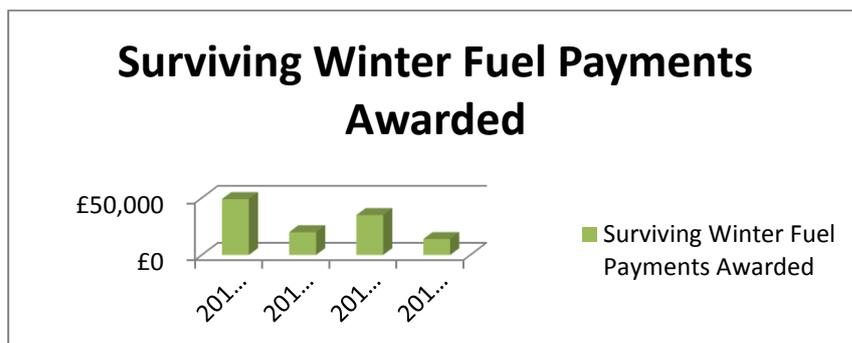
Progress

Since its launch, the Warm Homes Healthy People project has strived to match our service as closely as possible to the needs of the most vulnerable residents. We began targeting all households over 65, but soon recognised the need to focus in on those with health conditions exacerbated by cold homes. Our in-the-home surveys are critical to properly identify a household’s needs, and research shows that advice given in the home is most likely to be acted upon in the long term.

The graph below shows how the number of surveys has reduced as we have tailored our project to meet need.

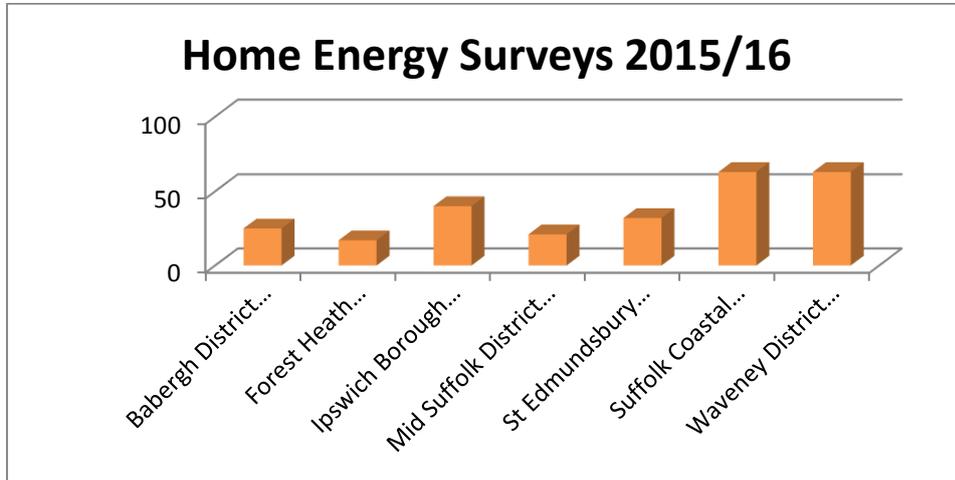


Similarly as we have been able to offer more funding for capital measures we have reduced our expenditure on surviving winter fuel payments. Our aim is to future proof homes against high energy costs by insulating and putting in more efficient heating systems rather than using the “sticking plaster” of a fuel payment. This remains as an emergency measure for those who would otherwise ration their heat. The drop in oil prices since 2014/15 has also helped our funds go further.

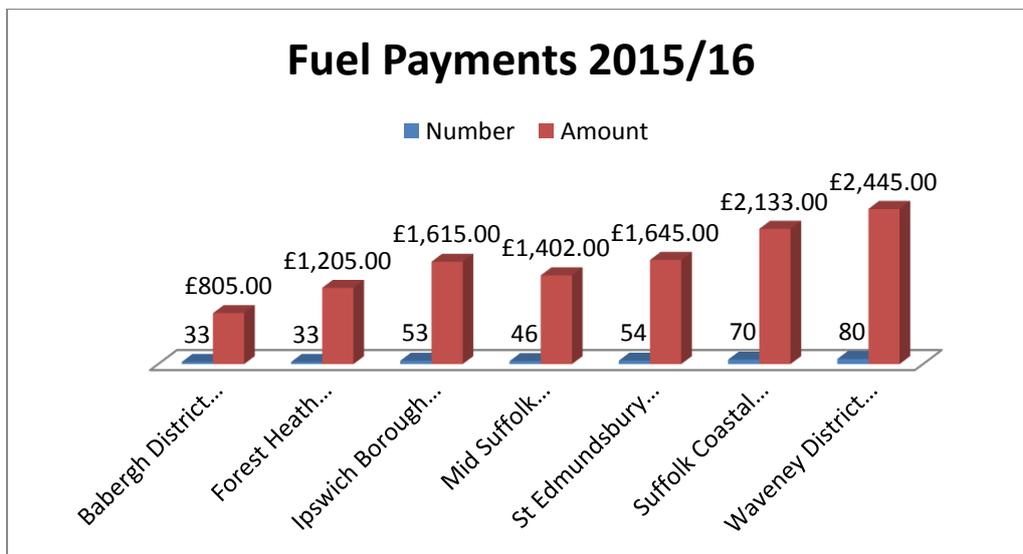


Key activity in 2015/16

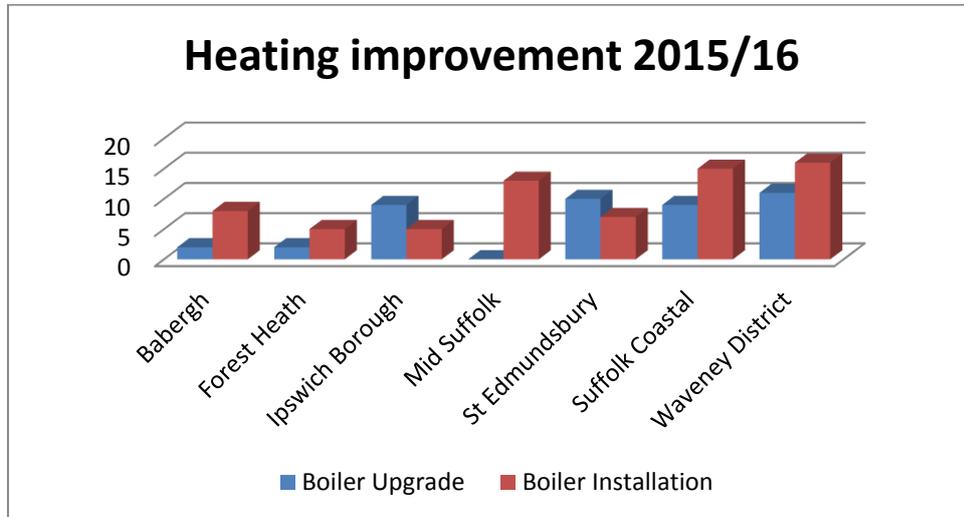
Surveys. Overall survey numbers were **420 compared to 330** the previous year.



Emergency fuel payments £11,250 for 165 households in 2015/6 compared to £14,200 for 209 households in 2014/15. Criteria tightened due to limited funding.



Heating improvements have been ongoing using the funding streams identified below.



Funding

Central Government funding for fuel poverty initiatives has gone and we are currently reliant on bidding for funds on an ad hoc basis. 2015/16 was a particularly successful year for us and we were awarded **£1.6 million** from the Department of Energy & Climate-Change (DECC) to fund 270 **first time central heating** systems and **£325,000** from National Energy Action (NEA) to fund replacement boilers, **heating improvements** and insulation for 114 households with health conditions and low income. This was match funded with £50,000 from Public Health Suffolk. Lastly we were successful in winning **£50,000** from Scottish Power to **help families with children**, health conditions and low income with heating and insulation. **The outcomes from this will mostly be delivered in 2016/17.**

There was funding available for **insulation** in 2015/16 via the Energy Company Obligation and we signpost all clients who could benefit from this programme to preferred suppliers. In 2015/16, 50 households were referred for loft insulation and 23 for cavity wall insulation.

We ran a pilot project in Stanton funded by another NEA bid to insulate and provide first time central heating to 24 **park homes** occupied by retired households. Park homes are generally poorly insulated and this project provided much needed improvements to a small number of vulnerable

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residents. The grant was £100,000 and brought in match funding for 14 gas connections and central heating systems from National Grid's affordable warmth scheme. Evaluation of the health impacts will be undertaken in 2016/17.

A separate energy efficiency project providing DECC grant aid for solid wall insulation, not targeted to fuel poverty clients, also helped a number of clients to have this expensive but effective wall insulation. Final outcomes will be available next year.

Suffolk Public Health continue to fund the core staff and administrative costs and in 15/16 we continued to use funds carried forward as commitment to support external wall insulation with grants of £1000 per household and emergency boiler repairs where the need for timely intervention prevented the more usual but lengthy routes for repair.

The District and Boroughs also support the project with annual contributions to fund additional administrative support (the scheme currently employs an apprentice), postage and telephone etc.

Collaboration with Health

The main aim of the project is to reduce ill health linked to cold homes and reduce pressure on the local health system; reducing hospital admissions, re-admission and delayed discharge, reduced demand for GP services. Setting targets for reducing and measuring the impact is challenging.

The project has teamed up with East Coast Community Health and University Campus Suffolk to carry out **research** into the health impacts of our interventions. This exciting research will help us to quantify the impact we can have.

Raising the profile of the work we do is key to receiving referrals from professionals who have trusted contact with them. Our Health Liaison Officer spoke to over 250 health professionals ranging from community health teams, physiotherapists, health visitors, community matrons, paediatric nurses, geriatric nurses, district nurses, neurological health teams, mental health, patient flow teams, and GP's. Referral numbers especially those from health professionals also shows year on year growth.

In addition we work with patient groups and attend 7 flu clinics, patient participation groups, rehabilitation classes and similar.

We worked with 13 GP surgeries in a pilot to mail letters to their most vulnerable patients, typically those on their COPD, Unplanned admissions and over 75's list. This resulted in over 3000 vulnerable patients being contacted to make sure their home is adequately heated.

We are in the process of reviewing what we deliver in Suffolk against the **National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance** to identify gaps and an action plan. Moving forward the project will be looking to work towards making sure all recommended quality standards are met in Suffolk. Key areas for future consideration include,

- **A coordinated approach to winter planning** involving all of the relevant parties, local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Adult & Community service and local NHS providers.
- A greater importance placed on referrals into the Warm Homes Healthy People project, either by mandatory referrals for the vulnerable or embedded referral mechanisms.
- **Working in partnership to establish some form of data sharing** agreement to help identify individuals at risk and provide a suitable intervention.

Examples of Who we helped

Ipswich family: Couple with four children living in a mid terrace property with storage heaters, 2 "loft insulation and no insulation in the cavity walls. Fuel is paid via a prepayment metre at £10-20 a week for electricity and £4-5 for gas.

The family is on a low income. The father earns just over £10,000 a year and the family claim working tax credits and child tax credits.

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The nine year old child has been diagnosed with ADHD and it is likely that this is autism, his health is being monitored. His mother (carer) suffers from asthma. She takes medication for this and uses an inhaler.

WHHP works completed include cavity wall insulation, loft insulation first time gas central heating and £100 towards fuel this winter.

Estimated savings are £848 each year and over life time of boiler £10,177 and a carbon saving of 7,260 kg. Advice has also been given on fuel switching to achieve further savings. It would be very interesting to review this case in 12 months time to see the impact the scheme has had.

A recently-bereaved widower, living alone in Lowestoft: When she contacted us she was suffering from stress, depression, she wasn't sleeping and felt she had no one to turn to. Her heating wasn't working so we loaned her some temporary heating. She hadn't had any hot water for 10 years when she contacted us. Her G.P. believed that her health was being exacerbated by her living conditions and noted that the client felt that she could not face another winter like the previous year. We helped the client with new heating and wall insulation. After it was completed she rang to say that she was "over the moon" and that the work had been a "life saver" She couldn't believe that she at last had a warm home and hot water.

Single person households with health conditions: The two people pictured below have benefited a fully funded replacement boiler and a fully funded first time central heating system consisting of 6 radiators. Both households had numerous health conditions including a stroke and cancer diagnosis in both cases.



Feedback from both ladies has been overwhelmingly positive,

“The new boiler is absolutely fantastic, I’m really pleased and it’s much easier to work. It’s very accessible, the installers were very pleasant, efficient and it was done in a few days. Having this new boiler is such a relief”

“The new heating system is wonderful, within 10minutes of turning the heating on the whole house was warm, my bathroom used to be very cold”

Challenges Ahead

Public Health funding is agreed on a year by year basis, and we are seen as a cross cutting theme under the restated strategy. Funding going forward will cover staffing and administration and we need to continue to bid for funds to deliver measures.