

NEWS RELEASE

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SURVIVING WINTER APPEAL

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It is estimated that nearly 700 people die each year in Essex from causes directly attributable to the cold and poor living conditions. 90% of winter deaths are of people aged over 65 and this age group, of which there are some 250,000 in Essex, are particularly vulnerable during the winter months.

Deaths from hypothermia are rare, but cold weather and poor heating can contribute to deaths caused by circulatory diseases (responsible for 41% of all recorded deaths by natural causes) and by respiratory diseases (13%). For any degree colder than 20C, mortality rises by one to two per cent.

Essex Community Foundation is calling on all who can afford to forego their Winter Fuel Payment (WFP), to donate the money to help those who struggle to stay warm and healthy during the coldest weather.

The WFP is a universal payment of £250 made directly into the bank accounts, during November and December, of every person over 60 on the electoral roll. If a small number of people feel that they could donate their Winter Fuel Payment, with gift aid, a significant amount could be raised to help those most at risk (example: £250 + Gift Aid 28% = £320).

The money raised by the Surviving Winter Appeal will be used to support local charities and community organisations who can reach the people most in need of help during the winter months, making sure they can afford to stay warm, eat well and remain mobile, as well as help them in practical ways such as ensuring they can attend doctor's appointments, get to the shops and maintain an active social life.

Bishop of Bradwell, The Right Reverend Laurie Green, is supporting the Community Foundation's Appeal. "This is a wonderfully imaginative and innovative idea which deserves our full backing. It is a way of helping those in real need," said Bishop Laurie. "There is something slightly uncomfortable about receiving Government support for something as basic as winter fuel when you are not in need."

To make a pledge now and donate your Winter Fuel Payment when you have received it, please e-mail Steve Mackenzie : steve@essexcf.org.uk or send a cheque directly to Steve at Essex Community Foundation, 121 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0QT. Donations can also be made on-line at www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

[Ends]

(254/191110)

For further information contact

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Essex Community Foundation was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen more than 4,000 grants totalling £16 million awarded to Essex based charities and community groups. Funds are distributed on behalf of a wide range of donors who want their charitable giving to be accessible to local charities. www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Community Foundations are independent charities committed to supporting projects that engage local people. Since the 1980s, a nationwide network of Community Foundations has developed, endorsed by many major public figures and leading companies.

There are 1000's of charities and voluntary groups working for the community to create a richer society for all. Community Foundations build endowed funds and make grants to these organisations.

- There are 57 local Community Foundations in the UK covering 94% of the population
- Collectively they manage endowed funds values at circa £220 million
- In 2007/08 Community Foundations distributed grants totalling £66 million and funded 20,500 voluntary organisations and community groups

SURVIVING WINTER APPEAL

I/we would like to donate my/our winter fuel allowance to the Surviving Winter Appeal.

Name

Address

.....

Post Code

Email

If you are a UK tax payer, Essex Community Foundation can reclaim Gift Aid ie 28p on every £1 that you give – at no extra cost to you. Please sign below if you want Essex Community Foundation to reclaim tax on this donation.

Signed Date

Please return this slip with your donation to: Essex Community Foundation, 121 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 0QT

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The Surviving Winter Appeal is managed by
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