



**Local
Insight**

Northamptonshire Insights Winter Wellbeing Report

January 2023

Winter Well-being

This **winter** can be one of the hardest seasons to get through for the most vulnerable in our communities due to **social isolation** and the **cold**

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Introduction

This report was produced by Northamptonshire Community Foundation using community mapping and reporting tool Local Insight. This tool has been developed by OCSI and makes use of open data to help councils, funding bodies, charities and community organisations make informed funding and policy decisions. It brings in up-to-date data drawn from the Census, the Department for Work and Pensions, deprivation indices and other sources. This report may also include reference to other sources and data. Note that data will change regularly as information is updated on Local Insight. This report was correct at the date of publication.

Winter can be a lonely and worrying time. With many older and vulnerable people living alone in addition to the ongoing public health crisis, many people are still cautious about leaving their homes. The uncertainty of the coming winter months will lead to increased social isolation again this year.

Definition of Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is the condition by which a household is unable to afford to heat (or cool) their home to an adequate temperature. It is caused by low income, high fuel prices, poor energy efficiency, unaffordable housing prices and poor quality private rental housing.

In England, the 'Low Income, Low Energy Efficiency' indicator is used to determine official fuel poverty. Under this, a household is considered fuel poor if; they are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below, and when they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the definition of fuel poverty is if a household spends more than 10% of its income on fuel costs and if the remaining household income is insufficient to maintain an adequate standard of living.

Impacts of Fuel Poverty

- Cold homes can cause and worsen respiratory conditions, cardiovascular diseases, poor mental health, dementia, and hypothermia as well as cause and slow recovery from injury.
- Illnesses linked to cold, damp, and dangerous homes cost the NHS more than £2.5 billion a year. This equates to £6.9m a day (up from £3.6m a day in 2016).
- Fuel poverty impacts people's physical health by causing higher levels of inflammation, measured by fibrinogen, a blood-based biomarker. Elevated fibrinogen levels have been strongly linked to higher risk of coronary heart disease, heart attacks, stroke, and an increased risk of death.
- 7,409 winter deaths caused by cold homes in the UK, based on a 10-year average. Excess winter deaths stood at 15,069 people for 2021-22, with 21.5% attributable to living in cold conditions.
- Fuel Poverty can also lead to people taking days off work.

- Financial stressors such as being behind on mortgage payments, being heavily indebted, and experiencing fuel payment difficulties also increase the risk of experiencing mental ill health.
- In a study of young people aged 11-18, more than one in four were at risk of developing mental health problems, in comparison to 1 in 20 who had a history of living in warm housing.

Populations at Risk in Northamptonshire

*All data represented is covering county wide for Northamptonshire

Pensioners

Throughout Northamptonshire there are approximately 12,900 (9.1%) pensioners claiming pension credit (Local Insights Nov 21), who we expect to be impacted by the cold weather, an increase in energy bills which presents additional increased risk to social isolation and slipping into poverty.

Hot spot wards for this include Northampton Town Centre (Northampton) 39.7%, Billing & Riverside (Northampton) 24.9%, Victoria (Wellingborough) 30.4%, Kettering Town Centre (Kettering) 31.9%

Private pensioner households with no car or van (Census 2011)	Households of one pensioner (Census 2011)	State pension claimant (DWP Nov-20)	Pension credit claimant (DWP Nov-21)
20,570	31,250	127,736	12,907

Fuel Poverty

In the wider community approximately 38,200 (Local insights 2020) across Northamptonshire (18,300 in North Northants, 19,900 in West Northants) face the reality of fuel poverty, meaning that they need to spend more than 10% of their income to heat their home to an adequate standard of warmth.

Hot spot wards include Kettering Avondale 21.4%, Rixon (Wellingborough) 24.8%, Billing and Riverside (Northampton) 24.7%, Delapre (Northampton) 25.3%

Households in Fuel Poverty Northamptonshire	Households in Fuel Poverty West Northants	Households in Fuel Poverty North Northants
38,171	18,314	19,857

Multiple Indicators of Deprivation

In Northamptonshire, there are roughly 93,300 households across the county that fall under at least one of the four indicators of deprivation. Over 1000 household experience all four of these indicators:

- All adult household members have no qualifications
- At least one household member is out of work (due to unemployment or poor health)
- At least one household member has a limiting long-term illness
- The household is living in overcrowded conditions

Area ward hotspots include Blackthorn & Lings (Northampton) 3,296 households, Kings Health & Spencer (Northampton) 3,939 households, Queensway (Wellingborough) 4,037 households, Kettering Avondale (Kettering) 4,774

Household is not deprived in any dimension (Census 2011)	Household is deprived in 1 dimension (Census 2011)	Household is deprived in 2 dimensions (Census 2011)	Household is deprived in 3 dimensions (Census 2011)
131,085	93,387	50,366	11,862

Households suffering multiple deprivation (Census 2011)
1,030

Renew 169 Wellbeing Café



About the group

Renew169 cafe offers a quiet shared space where it is OK to not be OK. The overall objective is to offer a safe space where people with emotional/mental health difficulties are welcomed, with an aim to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

What we Funded

We recognise that some of our visitors, particularly those who are older are cold when they attend the Cafe and sometimes stay for an extended period to keep warm. They may not say that they are cold directly as this information is often kept hidden. We would like to provide simple, hot snacks e.g. soup, toasties and follow this up with classes on nutrition and some exercise classes e.g. seated exercise to ensure people keep moving

What did participants think?

"R has taken part in previous Cooking Good community sessions in Towcester. He was very pleased with the exercise sessions in this Winter Wellness series. This was 'a bit of booster' and helped him to 'feel good and more supple'. 'It's all part of keeping active', he said about this. The exercises were very suitable for his age and ability. He attended every one of the Winter Wellness sessions."

What Impact did it have?

Improved Mental Health & Wellbeing

Number of people for whom the treatment/programme was successful or likely to be successful	24
Number of people reporting increased self-esteem and confidence	12
Number of people reporting a reduction of stress, anxiety and/or symptoms of depression	12
Number of people reporting increased resilience and/or self-care	12
Number of people reporting improved mental health or wellbeing	12

Improved Nutrition

Number of people reporting increased skills and knowledge	12
Number of people reporting improved physical health or wellbeing	10
Number of people reporting improvements in their diet to be more healthy and balanced	10
Number of people reporting improved access to healthy food	10

Improved Physical Health and Wellbeing

Number of people for whom the treatment/programme was successful or likely to be successful	24
Number of people reporting improved physical health or wellbeing	10

Favell Day Services



About the Group

Provide day care and support for adults with physical disabilities. This consists of social interaction, leisure, and recreational activities, all to improve life experience and social isolation.

What we Funded

We would like to help our members with their winter utility bills so they are not worried about putting their heating on to keep warm at home, and also buy additional warm clothing. Nearly all were eager for help towards their winter heating bills especially as the continuing price increase for gas and electric.

What did participants think?

When we initially spoke to one of our members about their requirements for warm items, they said they didn't need anything and would rather her portion of the funds be spent on others. We since found out that when she wasn't with us, she was often sat at home, immobile, watching TV. We suggested to her that if this was the case, a heated blanket may benefit her as it would cheaper to use than to heat her whole house all day.

What Impact did it have?

Improved Physical Health and Wellbeing

Number of people for whom the treatment/programme was successful or likely to be successful	15
Number of people reporting improved physical health or wellbeing	15
Number of people participating in sport, exercise and leisure activities	12
Number of people reporting that they are more physically active	4

Improved Mental Health & Wellbeing

Number of hours of respite care provided	15
Number of people reporting improved mental health or wellbeing	15
Number of people reporting a reduction of stress, anxiety and/or symptoms of depression	15
Number of people reporting increased self-esteem and confidence	6
Number of people reporting increased resilience and/or self-care	2

Winter Wellbeing Fund

Winter Well-being

Northamptonshire Community Foundation's Winter Well-being Appeal tackles fuel poverty to keep older and vulnerable residents in our county experiencing financial hardship, fed, warm and well each winter. This annual appeal has been running since 2010 and has raised £255,231 during its lifetime to protect some of the most vulnerable members of our local communities.

Money raised will be awarded in the form of grants to local community groups and small charities whose activities protect and help older people who may be vulnerable and in supported environments.

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WinterWell-being2022>