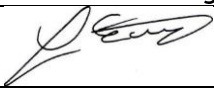


## Adverse Weather: Supporting Hamlet Users

<b>Services covered by this policy:</b>	General Pre-school Children's Service	The Hamlet at Home Adult Services
<b>Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:</b>	Senior Management Team	
<b>Date approved:</b>	23/04/2024	
<b>Approved by:</b>	Lorraine Ewing	
<b>Signed:</b>		
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	2 yearly	

### A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

### B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it

To ensure that during adverse weather, The Hamlet:

- Maintains a safe and healthy environment for all Hamlet Users
- Minimises the disruption caused by adverse weather
- Responds efficiently to any changes in the Hamlet User's health

Cold weather can put people at greater risk of ill-health and even death primarily because it increases the probability of complications from existing disease, and of injury due to falls.

Many people who use our services are vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. Those at risk include:

- people with cardiovascular (heart and circulation) conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with learning and/or physical disabilities
- young children (particularly those aged under 5 years)
- people on a low income

This policy is for supporting Hamlet Users only. Staff can refer to the Adverse Weather Policy for specific arrangements applying to staff.

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**C. Scope of this policy**

- The Hamlet Users
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff
- The Hamlet Volunteers
- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

**D. Policy**

The Hamlet Charity has clear continuity plans in place and will work closely with staff to ensure that continuity of care is maintained, and that both Hamlet Users and staff remain safe. Management will put mechanisms in place to identify Hamlet Users who may be vulnerable and who need additional support during adverse weather.

The Hamlet Charity will maintain an awareness of possible adverse weather conditions by using trusted information sources, such as the Meteorological Office (Met Office) and local media. On receiving information from any source that severe weather conditions may be imminent or forecast, the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service will be accessed to determine the threat level.

The Hamlet Charity will ensure that there are ambient temperature areas within The Hamlet buildings and these will be maintained at an acceptable level between 15-25°C to maintain the comfort and safety of Hamlet Users.

**E. Procedures and monitoring****The National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)**

- Management will keep up to date with weather alerts to ensure that robust business continuity plans are in place. This must be done by following updates from local radio and social media sources as well as from the Met Office. Best practice would be to ensure registration on the email alert service.
- Management will refer to the GOV.UK 'Cold Weather and health: guidance and advice' for guidelines around expectations, dependent on the level of severity of the weather warning

**Supporting Hamlet Users to Remain Safe and Well During Adverse Weather**

The Hamlet Charity will support Hamlet Users to remain safe and well and will consider the following procedures when delivering services:

**Diet and Nutrition**

- Ensure that hot drinks are available during cold weather periods and that Hamlet Users are kept hydrated during hot weather.

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- Food is a vital source of energy and helps to keep the body warm, so The Hamlet Charity will ensure that nutrition and hydration are considered within the Support Plan and that they are reviewed, where appropriate, to ensure that the Hamlet User has plenty of food and drinks in line with their agreed plan and dietary needs.

### Activity and Excursions

- Where possible and safe to do so, support the Hamlet User to keep as active as possible
- If the Hamlet User plans to go out of the building, then this will be risk assessed. The resulting measures put in place will aim to reduce the risk and raise the awareness of the Hamlet User about the hazards of the adverse weather.

### Temperature Considerations

Staff must support the Hamlet User to choose appropriate clothes for the weather and encourage them to wear several light layers of warm clothes (rather than one chunky layer) and appropriate footwear or consider the use of blankets.

Staff will be aware that their view of the temperature may be different from the Hamlet Users', as staff are more active and working which may keep them warmer and thus, less aware of the temperature

In addition, vulnerable or ill Hamlet Users may require a higher ambient temperature than normal to maintain functions and, therefore, staff should consider each Hamlet User and their needs separately

### Environmental concerns

The Hamlet Charity will be aware of the potential for particular environmental issues from different adverse weather situations and will risk assess the potential impact on Hamlet Users. Risks could include flooding, wind damage, snow, ice, lightning. The results of the risk assessments will inform the Business Continuity Plan.

### Hot Water Bottle Use

In general, hot water bottles should not be necessary when the room temperature is regulated to suit individual needs and The Hamlet Charity provides an ambient temperature. However, it is acknowledged that some Hamlet Users may choose to have a hot water bottle as part of their routine.

- Caution should be taken when Hamlet Users lack the capacity and cognition to safely use a hot water bottle and staff must complete a risk assessment.
- Rubber products perish. Therefore, the Hamlet User will need to replace the bottle regularly, each winter or every second year, depending on how much it is used and how well it is stored.

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- Staff must inspect the hot water bottle carefully. If there are any signs of leaks or cracks, if it is damaged or brittle, it must not be used. A simple way to check for leaks is to put cold water in the bottle first
- If a hot water bottle is being used, it will be covered by a protective cover over the bare rubber inner and filled in a manner which is safe for staff, and eliminates the risk of scalding in the event of failure of the bottle
- The water temperature in the hot water bottle should not exceed 80 degrees Celsius, and the surface of the hot water bottle should feel warm to the touch but not hot. It is important to check the seal once filled by pressing the bottle and checking the stopper for leakage
- Staff are to be mindful of hot water bottle placement and Hamlet User comfort levels.

### Premises Considerations

Heating area's of the buildings to at least 15-25°C in winter poses minimal risk to the health of a sedentary person, wearing suitable clothing.

Entrances and exits will be cleared and/or gritted in addition to other high risk areas in the event of ice/snow. Adequate supplies of resources should be available.

Throughout the year, The Hamlet will:

- ensure heating systems are maintained and regularly serviced
- ensure that blankets, heaters and other supplies are available

### Promotion of Health

Management will discuss and promote the uptake of the flu and Covid-19 vaccines, for both staff and Hamlet Users.

All care staff will be aware of monitoring for early signs of winter illnesses and respond in a timely manner.

### Continuity Planning

Management will ensure that continuity plans:

- Include how disruption to the service will be minimised in the event of adverse weather. This must include essential deliveries and collections such as stock and waste.
- Detail how large-scale communications to family members and other stakeholders will be delivered in the event of adverse weather (e.g. during a closure to visitors for example)
- Consider how coordination between partnerships and other agencies will work and support not only The Hamlet Charity, but other local parties

## F. Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references

- The Care Act 2014

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- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

**This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.**

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