

Support service returns to help keep people well this winter 2023-24

Shropshire Council is pleased to announce the return of the Winter Support Service for a fourth year. During the coming months the service will assist residents who may need a little additional support (aged 18+) to maintain their independence and remain well at home and following a hospital discharge.

The Winter Support Service which goes live on 13 November 2023 until 31 March 2024 has been reinstated to support people to avoid a health and care crisis over the winter period.

Shropshire's Winter Support Service will be run by Shropshire Council in partnership with the **British Red Cross, Shropshire Mental Health Support, Age UK Shropshire Telford and Wrekin, Oswestry Qube, The Mayfair Centre, The Royal Voluntary Service** and, new to the partnership this year, we are delighted to welcome **Hands Together Ludlow**.

What will the service provide?

The service will connect people to a range of support including:

- Collection and delivery of medications
- Shopping and delivery
- Wellbeing "check in and chat"
- Companionship for isolated or lonely people
- The expertise of a Mental Health Outreach Worker
- Signposting towards meal provision
- Community transport (subject to local availability, fees may apply)
- Cost of living advice and support
- Connectivity into wider support offered across the voluntary, community and public sector

It will also ensure safe and supported discharges home from hospital. This includes:

- Transport returning home from hospital
- Settling people in at home following discharge from hospital
- Simple aids and equipment following hospital discharge

Shropshire's Winter Support Service does not offer a crisis response or personal care but will work as part of the health and care system to ensure people get the support they need through appropriate referrals and signposting to local sources of support. Shropshire's Winter Support Service is part of the council's commitment to support people to remain both physically and mentally well, particularly during the winter months.



Councillor Cecilia Motley, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, said:

"We know that the winter months can be very challenging for many people, in particular those who are often isolated, and who's health and wellbeing maybe at risk of deteriorating.

"As a council we are committed to supporting those who are most vulnerable, to stay as safe and well as possible, during this time.

"It is so encouraging to know, that since our winter support service began, we have been able to help or signpost almost 900 individuals to a wide range of support, which in turn, has really helped to improve their health and wellbeing. This is a testament to the dedication of our partners, who have worked extremely hard to ensure those who are most in need, get the right support.

"I would encourage anyone who is struggling to cope with day to day life or anyone who may know someone who is, to get in touch with us. We are here to help."

How do I find out more?

From 13th November 2023 individual residents, their families and those who support people across Shropshire's communities can call the Winter Support Service helpline on **0345 678 9012** to find out more and be referred where appropriate. The phonenumber will be open Mondays-Fridays, 9am to 5pm.

Last year, the winter support service received 249 referrals. Of these 176 were from people who lived alone and 117 were for people aged 81-90+. The service improved residents' health, wellbeing and independence which prevented and reduced:

- Isolation and loneliness for residents
- Physical health and mental wellbeing from deteriorating
- Avoidable hospital admissions
- Escalation of residents' health and wellbeing difficulties and crisis situations

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Further support with Cost of Living

With the economic situation continuing to impact many of us, we understand that many people are worried about rising costs.



In addition to the Winter Support Service and to help support those affected by the cost of living crisis, Shropshire Council is working with partners to bring together key resources so that everyone is signposted to the best place to get support in Shropshire.

A dedicated website has been developed to help people:

- Check if they are getting the right income
- Use the free benefits calculator
- Check if they are eligible for Council Tax support
- Find out how they could reduce their energy costs
- Get help in finding a job
- Access mental health support
- Find lots more help and advice

You can find out more here: [Cost of living help | Shropshire Council](#)

For those who can not access information and support **online**, can visit their nearest [Shropshire Local or Customer Access service](#), most of which are in the local library. Call 0345 678 9000 to find out your nearest location.

Further information

Over 1700 types of support were provided to 900 individuals since Winter Support Service began.

Positive feedback from customers and organisations:

“I felt so much better that someone was calling me and knowing someone cared and would support me. I’m not sure how I would have coped without the calls.”

“I was so glad to have the rails as it has given me more freedom to move around the house.”

“Mrs H needed help to get to medical appointments. She joined Dial-a-Ride and we are now taking her for her physio appointments for the next six weeks.”

“The resident reports that having support was helpful in keeping her motivated and reduced her feelings of loneliness.”

“It was nice to have someone that could offer the support and was willing to help.”

"Thank you so much for ringing, it's really made me feel like I'm not on my own"

“Mrs A was very isolated at home and she now comes into our social groups each week on our Dial-a-Ride transport.” (A quote from VCS partner organisation)



"I just wanted to let you know that following your help, I've managed to get more disability money and a seat put into my shower and I'm very grateful and wanted to let you know."

