

## **Malvern Hills District Council Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for Rough Sleepers 2014/14**

This Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for rough sleepers sets out the arrangements that Malvern Hills District Council has in place to ensure people are not at risk of dying on the streets during cold weather. The SWEPs arrangements are triggered when the night time temperature is predicted to be zero degrees or below for three consecutive nights.

Each year during the coldest winter months, the County (Worcestershire) operates a Night Assessment Centre (NAC) that provides single homeless people with a safe and warm place to stay whilst they are assisted with finding accommodation and support. To find out more please open this link: <http://www.stpaulshostel.co.uk/night-assessment-centre>

The NAC provides overnight accommodation from 9.30pm to 7am and they are running a free breakfast club between the hours of 7am and 8.30am (closed for two weeks over the Christmas period). This year it is being hosted by:

Worcester YMCA  
Henwick Rd  
St Johns  
Worcester  
WR2 5NS

The NAC is open from Monday 25 November 2013 to Sunday the 17 of March 2013.

An agreement has been reached whereby rough sleepers from the Malvern Hills district can access the NAC on the understanding that Malvern Hills District Council (the Council) remains responsible for any homeless application arising from placement. Referrals to the NAC are accepted from any agency, or a rough sleeper can self refer.

If you are contacted by a rough sleeper or believe someone is at risk due to sleeping rough during severe weather then you should take prompt action to ensure they have access to shelter by contacting our homelessness agent Festival Housing Association (Festival) on 01684 579354 or email: [housingoptions@festivalhousing.org](mailto:housingoptions@festivalhousing.org)

## The procedure for the duty officer at Festival

1. Each night before leaving work the housing options team at Festival check the BBC website for the five day forecast. The website address is [www.bbc.co.uk/weather](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather)

If the forecast shows that there is a forecast for 3 consecutive nights or more of a minimum temperature of zero degrees Celsius or lower then this procedure is activated.

2. Should a call be received during normal office hours (9am-5pm Monday to Friday) from either a rough sleeper, or an external agency about any person who is sleeping rough that night, and it is appropriate for that client, then contact with the NAC is made via Worcestershire Link Up. Telephone **01905 723732** email [naccordinator@stpaulshostel.co.uk](mailto:naccordinator@stpaulshostel.co.uk)

Note: ALL referrals for the NAC must be made before 5pm each day. Referrals CANNOT be accepted without a completed Link Up Initial Referral Form. Clients can also just turn up on the night before 9.30pm and spaces will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

3. Out of normal office hours – A duty officer appointed by Festival must contact the NAC through the YMCA on 01905 423197 to enquire about spaces. If there is space at the NAC that the client will accept, the duty officer must make the necessary arrangements including, if necessary, an offer to arrange a taxi for the client to get to the NAC.  
Note: access to the NAC will not normally be allowed after midnight due to the disruption to other clients.
4. Festival's housing options team must arrange to undertake a full assessment of the client's needs/risks the following morning and where appropriate make a referral to the Worcestershire Homeless Intervention Team (WHIT) who can offer outreach support, essential items, and as a minimum can offer to carry out quarterly welfare checks.  
Note: Worcester City Council will not accept a homeless duty if the client is from Malvern Hills district, just because they have been in the Night Assessment Centre.
5. If the client is unable, unwilling, or it is not appropriate for them to go to the NAC, then subject to a satisfactory risk assessment completed by Festival an offer of a room in a hostel (YMCA or St Paul's) should be considered. Bedding should be provided from the emergency packs together with tea and coffee facilities.
6. If there is no room in a hostel or the client potentially poses a risk to other hostel residents, or simply if it's the best available option the client can be offered bed and breakfast accommodation. Again the housing options manager at Festival must be alerted in the morning so

that a full assessment of the client's needs and a referral to appropriate services is made.

7. If all of the above options are refused and the client wishes to continue to sleep rough, it is a matter for the owner of the land or the building being used to take action to remove them. The council's housing function is to offer or obtain alternative shelter should the client wish, not to move them on.

The overarching principal is to ensure that rough sleepers are offered shelter in accommodation that is acceptable and appropriate for them in times of severe weather.

The NAC is open from 9.30pm until 7.00am. Clients are expected to present themselves by no later than 8.30pm to give them the best chance of finding a bed space, unless they pre-booked. The NAC can accommodate up to 24 people.

## **Useful contacts**

Festival Housing Association (Festival) on 01684 579354 or email: [housingoptions@festivalhousing.org](mailto:housingoptions@festivalhousing.org)

Worcestershire Link Up on 08443 460014 or [info@worcslinkup.co.uk](mailto:info@worcslinkup.co.uk)

NAC manager: [Ginette.Sadler@stpaulshostel.co.uk](mailto:Ginette.Sadler@stpaulshostel.co.uk)  
Telephone 01905 723732

Web-page for the NAC:  
<http://www.stpaulshostel.co.uk/night-assessment-centre>

Worcester YMCA, Henwick Rd, St Johns, Worcester WR2 5NS on 01905 423197 or Website: <http://www.ymcaworcester.org.uk/>

Ginette Sadler – WHIT outreach worker 07889 707271

Housing Team at the council email: [Housingenquiry@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:Housingenquiry@malvern hills.gov.uk)