

As winter approaches, health and social care services in Warwickshire are reminding residents of ways they can keep warm and well and help vulnerable and elderly people to do the same.

This winter, local partners including NHS Warwickshire, Warwickshire County and all District Councils, Act on Energy, voluntary organisations and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service are once again joining together to establish a Warm and Well campaign to support residents through the cold season.

As part of Warwickshire's Warm and Well campaign, a free phonenumber – 0800 988 2881 – provided by Act on Energy, will be open Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm to offer information on reducing fuel bills, affordable warmth, what to do if heating systems break down and debt advice.

John Linnane, Director of Public Health at NHS Warwickshire and Warwickshire County Council, said: "As the winter approaches and the temperature drops, we need to make sure that people – particularly the vulnerable and elderly – are prepared for the cold

Around 273 people in Warwickshire die each winter as a direct result of not keeping warm during cold weather. Staying warm can save lives.

"There are simple things people can do to help themselves keep warm. Keep internal doors closed to trap heat in each room. Have at least one hot meal a day and wear layers of clothing. People should also contact their energy supplier to find out about any social schemes they may be offering to help financially."

"It's also very important for people to check on elderly or vulnerable relatives or neighbours over the winter to see that their homes are warm enough, they are wearing appropriately warm clothing and that they are getting a hot meal."

Cllr Claire Watson, Chair of Warwickshire's Affordable Warmth Working Group, said: "Last year was a terribly cold winter with temperatures plummeting and staying low for unusually long periods and we have to be ready for similarly harsh conditions. Clearly this has health implications so we want people to know that help is at hand this winter to stay warm." For further information on the campaign visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/keepwarm