



SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROTOCOL (SWEP)

1. Introduction

Within its duties as a local authority, Copeland Council aims to ensure that vulnerable people are protected and provided for during the winter cold season, when extreme cold temperatures for extended spells can threaten the safety and wellbeing of some people living in the borough.

This document sets out the mechanism by which rough sleepers in Copeland can access accommodation and support during periods of exceptionally cold weather when a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) is activated.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) advise that SWEPs should be activated by a weather forecast predicting three consecutive nights, or more, of a temperature of zero degrees Celsius or lower.

Copeland Borough Council is the organisation responsible for co-ordinating SWEP

Copeland Borough Council will provide accommodation and make referrals for support for rough sleepers during periods of exceptionally cold weather in accordance with Department for Communities and Local Government and Homeless Link guidance.

2. Aims of service

1. To prevent loss of life

2. To reduce rough sleeping to as near zero as possible by:

- Using SWEP to engage with entrenched rough sleepers with a local connection who would normally be resistant to coming inside

- Using SWEP to engage rough sleepers who do not have a local connection with relocation services

3. Service Provision

The service will be provided in accordance with DCLG & Homeless Link guidance on cold weather provision. Three nights of temperatures of zero degrees or below will trigger the provision. The provision will cease once night time temperatures rise above zero degrees in accordance with the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol, which forms part of this agreement.

The housing options team will be responsible for checking the five day forecast every day before 10:00. The measurement must be taken from the BBC Weather Website (fed directly from the MET Office). This is the link: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/forecast/2132>

The senior housing options advisor is responsible for making the decision to activate and deactivate SWEP. Once a decision has been taken it will stand until the following day's check. The service will be reviewed on a daily basis. SWEP will normally be deactivated when a forecast predicts two or more consecutive nights of a temperature of one degree Celsius.

In the absence of the senior housing options advisor, housing options advisors will make the decision to activate SWEP.

Accommodation will be provided within the borough, this may be bed and breakfast, it is important that the service user is made aware that this accommodation will only be provided during the extreme weather conditions.

The SWEP will run from 1 December 2012 to 28 Feb 2013.