

Action and Communication plan		
	Department for Work and Pensions activity	South Kesteven District Council activity
<b>Pensioners in receipt of Housing Benefit</b>  <b>Nationally = 120,000</b>  <b>SKDC = 419</b>	<p><b>Rollout of pensioner Housing Benefit claims to Pension Credit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct contact to around 120,000 pensioner households</li> <li>• Building on the findings of a recent trial where DWP invited pensioner Housing Benefit households in ten Local Authority areas to claim Pension Credit as well. DWP aim is to apply the lessons from this trial and extend the approach to all Local Authorities in the coming months.</li> </ul> <p><b>Data sharing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the best possible sharing of information so that each resident receives the benefits to which they are entitled.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Awareness activities by the Benefits and Cost of Living Team:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work with DWP and other partner organisations such as Age UK and Citizen's Advice to explore ways to reach out to eligible pensioners and help them to make a Pension Credit claim.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in driving a national Pension Credit promotion campaign and awareness-raising;</li> <li>• Internal communication with all customer facing teams – specifically Benefits, Cost of Living, Council Tax, Customer Service and Housing;</li> <li>• External communications due to be issued through the communications team;</li> <li>• Targeted communication to be issued to those 419 pensioner residents in receipt of Housing Benefit.</li> </ul> <p><b>Targeted Support undertaken by the Cost of Living Team:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To contact the 419 pensioner residents in receipt of Housing Benefit to assess eligibility for Pension credit.</li> <li>• In addition, the following activities would take place for each pensioner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Budgeting support – income and expenditure analysis;</li> <li>○ Council Tax Support assessment (22 are not currently receiving this);</li> <li>○ Council Tax balance check and advice if required (where there is an outstanding balance);</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eligibility review for other financial support such as foodbank and third sector.</li> <li>○ Housing Support Fund voucher assessment (and award where eligible);</li> <li>○ Referral for “Better Housing, Better Health” – a service supporting residents to keep warm, stay safe and live well in their homes: <a href="http://Home - Better Housing Better Health (bhbh.org.uk)">Home - Better Housing Better Health (bhbh.org.uk)</a></li> <li>○ Referral to Citizens Advice for Energy Advice Appointments</li> <li>○ Rent balance check and advice if required (where there is an outstanding balance);</li> <li>○ Warm home discount eligibility - The scheme will re-open again in October 2024 - <a href="http://Warm Home Discount Scheme: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)">Warm Home Discount Scheme: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>. This is a one off £150 discount from electricity bills. The utility provider must be signed up to the scheme, and residents will qualify if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ receive <a href="http://the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit">the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit</a>; or</li> <li>➤ <a href="http://are on a low income">are on a low income</a> and have high energy costs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Cohort 1 – 419 pensioner residents:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of Living Team are working through the list using the gov.uk pension credit checker (as we have the income for these residents) to determine pension credit eligibility.</li> </ul>

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All residents in receipt of State Pension Only <b>and</b> in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support	<p><b>Those identified to qualify for pension credit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of Living Team will contact by phone and support with the completion of a pension credit application (with the residents agreement).</li> </ul> <p><b>Those identified who for not qualify for pension credit but have low household income:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of Living Team will collate a list and contact the resident to see if they would benefit from help from the Household Support Pensioners Fund.</li> <li>We have £39K funding which would be issued via vouchers to the resident.</li> <li>Conversations will include advice about attendance allowance and social tariffs</li> <li>If we are not able to make contact by phone then we will send out a letter.</li> </ul>
<b>Cohort 2 – 263 pensioner residents:</b>  All residents in receipt of State Pension Only <b>and</b> Disability Benefit/Carers <b>and</b> in receipt of Housing	The same actions as above (once all residents in cohort 1 have been contacted)

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<b>Cohort 3 – 429 pensioner residents:</b>  All residents in receipt of State Pension Only <b>and</b> Private Pension <b>and</b> in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support		The same actions as above (once all residents in cohort 1 & 2 have been contacted)
<b>Cohort 4 – 272 pensioner residents:</b>  All residents in receipt of State Pension Only <b>and</b> Disability Benefit/Carers <b>and</b> Private Pension <b>and</b> in receipt of Housing		The same actions as above (once all residents in cohort 1, 2 & 3 have been contacted)

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Benefit and/or Council Tax Support		
South Kesteven Pensioner Tenants		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have 2,010 SK Pensioner tenants</li> <li>• Of those, 535 tenants have been identified to be in receipt of HB/CTS and are included in the list of residents above</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct contact to all 1,475 pensioner tenants not in receipt of Housing Benefit;</li> <li>• Letters will be sent asking them to contact the Cost of Living Team so they can determine whether they are eligible for further assistance and financial support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resident meetings across 14 venues within the district:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stanton Close: 19<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>• Meadow Close: 25<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>• Witham Place: 2<sup>nd</sup> October (General and Sheltered Housing)</li> <li>• Manners Street: 9<sup>th</sup> October</li> <li>• Riverside: 16<sup>th</sup> October (General and Sheltered Housing)</li> <li>• Edmonds Close: 23<sup>rd</sup> October</li> <li>• Hilary Close: 30<sup>th</sup> October</li> <li>• Emlyn Gardens: 6<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Greyfriars / Grange / Priory Court: 13<sup>th</sup> November (General and Sheltered Housing)</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rectory Close: 20<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Church View: 27<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Archers Way: 4<sup>th</sup> December</li> <li>• Manor Court: 11<sup>th</sup> December</li> <li>• Essex Road: 18<sup>th</sup> December</li> </ul>