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Measures for Rough Sleepers in Extreme

Weather Extreme weather conditions over the last week have seen the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

(SWEP) actioned as temperatures dropped below freezing.

In line with national guidance, the Protocol aims to help rough sleepers during periods of extreme weather.

SWEP comes into force when the

forecast predicts temperatures will drop to zero degrees Celsius or below for three consecutive nights and will end when the temperature is no longer freezing.

SWEP is a national initiative that gives Local Housing Authorities the responsibility to temporarily accommodate anyone homeless in severe weather conditions, regardless of the usual restrictive criteria that would apply under normal weather conditions.

Councils will accommodate homeless people regardless of priority need, intentionality or other usual exclusions, anyone who is sleeping rough is eligible.

The Council's Housing Solutions Team will arrange the most appropriate accommodation available at the time.

As usual, homeless individuals will be given advice and assistance to assist them to secure alternative accommodation where possible.

Anyone sleeping rough on the streets, or anyone worried about someone sleeping on the streets, can phone either of these numbers to report where the individual is.

Housing Solutions Service at the Town Hall on 024 7637 6376 during office hours or the Out of Hours service on 024 7638 2153 at other times.

Cllr Chris Watkins, Council Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing, said: "*The weather has worsened over the last few days and we know rough sleepers are particularly at risk of harm when temperatures drop, and we are*



committed to helping them get the support they need.

"If you are worried about anyone, please get in touch as soon as possible using the above contact details, due to the freezing conditions and this will be kept under review in the coming days."

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Combat Loneliness in

2025

Many people will this month be looking ahead to another new year of loneliness.

Loneliness is the state of being distanced or isolated from other people, it can result from social isolation, so it is important for people to have opportunities to connect with others.



Loneliness can affect

anyone at any stage of their life. It's not just about being alone, although being alone can increase feelings of loneliness – it's subjective and what might constitute loneliness for one person wouldn't be for another.

Loneliness affects people of all genders, ages and backgrounds, and can have a huge impact on an individual's health. It can increase the risks of high blood pressure, coronary heart disease and stroke, and can also be a risk factor for developing depression later in life.

There are many ways to make a small connection with others. Here are a few ideas:

- · Smile at someone
- Pause for a five minute chat
- Share lunch with colleagues (in-person or online)
- Say hello to your neighbour
- Meet a friend for coffee

There are also a number of resources and services available on a local and national level to those who are struggling with loneliness, including:

Wellbeing for Warwickshire – a website that provides support for loneliness and mental health

Key Ring – A community links service for those who are experiencing social isolation and/ or would like one-to-one support to access and engage in the local community **NHS** – information from the NHS on how to deal with loneliness.

Living Well – Warwickshire County Council's website that brings together information and services to help you look after yourself and other people

Councillor Margaret Bell, Warwickshire County Council's portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Health said: "There are many ways to start making connections with others and improve your wellbeing, such as learning a new skill, looking for local clubs and community groups, meeting friends in person or over a video call, as well as the many support services we have in the County."

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/loneliness to find out more about loneliness support in Warwickshire.



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Leicester Animal Aid

Those who visit Leicester Animal Aid in search of their next four-legged friend often ask staff at The Charity whether the end of lockdown caused a surge in animals given up



for adoption. The answer is a bit more complex than just numbers and it may surprise you.

Since the pandemic, The Charity has seen an increase in stray dogs admitted to the Centre via the dog warden. An even bigger trend is that dogs who come into Charity's care, because their current owners can no longer look after them, are under-socialised and more anxious than ever before.

Enrichment is an important part of animal rehoming, and it can really help a dog (or cat) to settle. The term 'enrichment' simply means putting training plans, fun activities and positive interactions (both human and animal) in place to make an animal's life fulfilling and rewarding. Laying special scent trails for dogs and doing Free Work (where a dog explores interesting objects like snuffle mats, Kongs and even upturned cardboard boxes) can help to build a dog's confidence. It also makes the most of their natural curiosity. Cruz (pictured below) is a twoyear-old, male, German Shepherd/Rottweiler who has been particularly responsive to training due to the intelligence of his breed and his strong bond with kennel staff.



All dogs are different, of course, and encouragement in the shape of a tasty treat or two can make all the difference. The Charity is grateful for support from the local community but not everyone thinks of treats as something that is needed and used daily. High value treats in the shape of hot dog sausages, squeezy cheese, meat snacks and pate really make training easier and more rewarding for animals.

Could you help? The Charity gratefully welcomes donations of training treats and wet food. They have a wish list available on their website at leicesteranimalaid.org.uk/wishlist The Charity also has an Amazon Wish List where kind supporters living further afield can request



items to be delivered to the Centre from the comfort of their own homes.

For animals like Cruz, these kind donations from animal-loving supporters make all the difference.



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Keeping Kids Healthy Over Winter Months

Local health organisations in our area are encouraging parents and carers to get in the know about the best ways to prevent pesky bugs from making their little ones poorly this winter.

With coughs, colds and tummy bugs in infants and children on the rise at this time of the year, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB) and Leicester Hospitals

have teamed up to create new online winter wellness hubs on the Health for Under 5s and Health for Kids websites.

The hubs have lots of articles and advice on how to avoid getting ill and when and where to go for help if kids do become unwell. What's more, all the content has been put together by trusted NHS health professionals, including doctors and nurses and contains advice on how to find local support.

Dr Louise Ryan, GP clinical lead for children and young people for LLR ICB, said: "We know how worrying it is when your child gets ill.

> "We want to help parents and carers to easily find the advice they need and feel confident about when to seek further medical help if it's needed, especially as it can also be a really busy time of year in GP practices and hospitals.

> "There are so many things you can do to reduce the likelihood of getting poorly; things like prioritising vaccinations, adopting healthy habits, and encouraging good hand hygiene all help."

To view the children's winter wellness hubs, go to: https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/leicestershire/ collections/staying-well-over-winter/ for advice



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Special Visitors for Aspire in Arts

Nuneaton art-based charity Aspire in Arts had some very special guests at a recent youth session they hosted.

The Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire Tim Cox, three Deputy Lieutenants, the Leader of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Cllr Chris Watkins, and the Deputy Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedworth, Cllr Bhim Saru, all attended the session.

Aspire in Arts work in Nuneaton to provide positive and creative activities for young people aged 8-25 years, and they also run a youth centre at Gallery Common, which has been going for over 10 years.

The delegation met with the Director of Aspire in Arts, Kirsty Lowrie, and Amina Mamoojee, who took the group on a tour of the building which the charity has recently taken over in Abbey Street in Nuneaton, and were able to chat with



many of the young people who benefit from the charity's activities.

The Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, Tim Cox, said: "The past couple of weeks have been a great opportunity to meet some extraordinary residents from across the county and celebrate their selfless approaches in going above and beyond for others.

"There are many people in Warwickshire who make outstanding contributions but unfortunately go unnoticed. If you know of someone that deserves to be recognised, then *I encourage you to consider nominating them* for an honour or award so they too can be officially acknowledged and celebrated for their remarkable achievements."

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