



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

# Adverse Weather and Health Plan

## Protecting health from weather related harm

2025 to 2026



# Contents

1. List of abbreviations .....	6
2. Acknowledgment.....	9
3. Executive summary .....	11
4. Strategy.....	14
4.1 Goals .....	14
4.2 Principles .....	14
4.3 Objectives.....	15
5. Governance .....	16
5.1 Management and governance of the AWHP .....	16
6. Adverse Weather and Health Plan implementation.....	18
6.1 The plan .....	19
6.2 Supporting evidence document .....	21
6.3 Guidance .....	21
6.4 Weather Health Alert System .....	23
7. Action areas to improve local planning.....	24
7.1 Service delivery .....	25
7.1.1 Guidance implementation .....	25
7.2 Capacity building .....	25
7.2.1 Training materials .....	25
7.2.2 UKHSA operational webinars .....	26
7.2.3 Making Every Contact Count programme (MECC).....	26
7.2.4 All Our Health eLearning sessions – climate change module.....	26
7.2.5 AWHP MicroTeach.....	26
7.3 Organisational arrangements.....	26
7.3.1 Emergency Preparedness Resilience Response (EPRR) arrangements.....	27
7.3.2 Exercises.....	27
7.4 Communication.....	27
7.4.1 Communications materials .....	28
7.4.2 Communications toolkit.....	28
7.4.3 Focus groups and customer insights.....	28
7.4.4 Weather Ready campaign .....	29
7.4.5 Media engagement.....	29
7.4.6 CCHS digital service .....	29
7.5 Risk management.....	30
7.5.1 Horizon scanning.....	30
7.5.2 National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) .....	30
7.5.3 National Risk Register (NRR) .....	30
7.5.4 Local risk assessment and community risk registers.....	31

7.5.5 Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC)	31
7.6 Early warning systems	31
7.6.1 Weather Health Alert System	31
7.6.2 Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)	32
7.6.3 Flood Guidance Statement	33
7.6.4 CAS and National Patient Safety Alert safety alerts	33
7.7 Research and data analysis	33
7.7.1 Official statistics	33
7.7.2 UKHSA adverse weather-related mortality reports	34
7.7.3 UKHSA weekly all-cause mortality reports	34
7.7.4 Surveillance	34
7.7.6 Public health outcomes framework	34
7.7.7 Research collaborations	35
7.8 Quality assurance	35
7.8.1 Quality management system	35
7.8.2 Auditing	35
7.8.3 Monitoring and evaluation	35
7.8.4 AWHP PowerBI Dashboard	35
7.8.5 Quality assurance at local level	35
7.9 Policy development and accountability	36
7.9.1 Climate Change Act 2008	36
7.9.2 National Adaptation Programme and long-term resilience	37
7.9.3 Parliamentary accountability	38
7.9.4 AWHP annual reports	38
7.9.5 Other relevant legal mechanisms	38
8. Target populations and health inequalities	40
9. Activities and timeline	41
9.1 Activities	41
9.2 Timeline	42
10. Monitoring and evaluation	43
10.1 Monitoring	43
10.2 Evaluation	43
11. Sustainability	44
11.1 Total economic costs of heat-related mortality	44
11.2 Benefit to cost ratio and return of investment	44
12. Appendices	46
Appendix 1. Delivery groups	46
National delivery	46
Regional delivery	49
Local delivery	51
Other governmental departments, agencies, and regulators	55

Academia, societies and professional organisations .....	58
Voluntary and community services .....	59
Business and retail sector .....	61
Public .....	61
Appendix 2. Heat guidance.....	62
Appendix 3. Cold guidance.....	64
Appendix 4. Flood and drought guidance.....	66
Appendix 5. Activities.....	67
Appendix 6. Monitoring .....	71
Appendix 7. Cascade of Weather-Health Alerts.....	74

## Version control

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of change</b>	<b>Description</b>
1.0	20 March 2025	Publication	Not applicable

# 1. List of abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
ADPH	Association of Directors of Public Health
AWHP	Adverse Weather and Health Plan
BS EN	British Standards European Norm
CAS	Central Alerting System
CB	Capacity building
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act
CCHS	UKHSA Centre for Climate and Health Security
CERC	Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CM	Communication
CO	Cabinet Office
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms
CRR	Community Risk Register
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
DfE	Department for Education
DfT	Department for Transport
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
DPH	Director of public health
JDRA	Joint dynamic risk assessment
DsPH	Directors of public health
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
e-lfh	e-learning for healthcare
EA	Environment Agency
EEHP	UKHSA Extreme Events and Health Protection
EPRR	Emergency preparedness, resilience and response
EW	Early warning system
FFC	Flood Forecasting Centre
FGS	Flood Guidance Statement

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
FPH	Faculty of Public Health
H&SC	Health and Social Care
HPRU	Health Protection Research Unit
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HWB	Health and wellbeing board
ICB	Integrated care boards
ICP	Integrated care partnership
ICS	Integrated care system
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JSNA	Joint strategic needs assessment
LA	Local authority
LGA	Local Government Association
LHRP	Local health resilience partnership
LRF	Local resilience forum
Met Office	Meteorological Office
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MECC	Making Every Contact Count
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses
MR	Midterm report
NAP	National Adaptation Programme
NEA	National Energy Action
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NIHR	National Institute for Health and Care Research
NRR	National Risk Register
NSRA	National Security Risk Assessment
NSWWS	National Severe Weather Warning Service
OA	Organisational arrangements
OGD	Other government departments
OHID	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
ONS	Office for National Statistics

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
PD	Policy development
PHE	Public Health England
PIRU	Policy Innovation Research Unit
PWS	Public Weather Service
QMS	Quality Management System
RAP	Reproducible Analytical Pipelines
RD	Research and Data Analysis
RED	Resilience and Emergencies Division (MHCLG)
RM	Risk management
QA	Quality assurance
SCG	Strategic co-ordination group
SD	Service delivery
SED	Supporting Evidence Document
SOP	Standard operating procedure
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Association
UKHSA	UK Health Security Agency
VCS	Voluntary and Community Services
VCSEP	Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership
WHA	Weather Health Alerts

## 2. Acknowledgment

Cross-government collaboration is essential to the success of complex, multi-departmental policies and programs. As highlighted in the [2024 report by the Committee of Public Accounts on cross-government working](#), effective cooperation between departments and agencies can greatly enhance the delivery of outcomes and ensure better value for public spending. By learning from challenges such as data-sharing and resource allocation, we can promote a more coordinated approach to policy implementation to protect health from adverse weather.

Collaboration with voluntary and community sector organisations and academia is equally vital to the success of any comprehensive plan. These sectors bring unique perspectives, expertise, and innovative approaches that complement governmental efforts. By engaging with third sector organisations, community groups, and academic institutions, we ensure that our work is grounded in research, evidence-based practices, and the needs of society.

This plan is made possible thanks to similar collaborative efforts, involving contributions from key steering members and their organisations. Future iterations of the Adverse Weather and Health Plan (AWHP) will continue to expand collaborations with its delivery groups, including the business sector, and foster closer engagement with the public.

We would like to extend our gratitude to AWHP steering group organisations for their invaluable contributions and support. Their guidance has been instrumental in shaping the development and implementing this plan.



A full list of the steering group members, implementation team, and contributors to the AWHP guidance development, will be created in this implementation year and made available on gov.uk.

## 3. Executive summary

The Adverse Weather and Health Plan (AWHP) delivers our commitment under the National Adaptation Programme to develop a single plan, bringing together and improving current guidance on weather and health. The plan, first released in April 2023, brought together and built on the Heatwave Plan for England, first published in 2004, and the Cold Weather Plan for England, first published in 2011.

The AWHP 2025 to 2026 has been developed based on our experience in implementing the plan over the last 2 years, including feedback from users of the plan and the recommendations of the AWHP reports. The AWHP continues to build on existing measures taken by government, its agencies, the NHS England and local authorities, to protect individuals and communities from the health effects of adverse weather and to build community resilience.

The plan outlines the important areas where the public sector, voluntary sector, health and social care organisations and local communities can work together to maintain and improve integrated arrangements for planning and response to deliver the best outcomes possible during adverse weather events.

This is an ambitious plan which seeks to support local and national organisations to prepare, build and respond to future adverse weather events to protect lives and promote health and wellbeing in order to:

- prevent the increase in years of life lost due to adverse weather events
- prevent mortality due to adverse weather events
- prevent morbidity due to adverse weather events
- reduce the use of healthcare services due to adverse weather events

Achieving these goals will also support actions to reduce wider health inequalities and protecting those most at risk from the impacts of adverse weather and climate change.

The AWHP programme of work is underpinned by:

- the plan itself
- the [supporting evidence document \(SED\)](#) published in parallel, which is a summary of the scientific evidence supporting the plan
- the [guidance and support materials](#), available in GOV.UK and listed in Appendices 2 to 4 (Appendix 2 (Heat), Appendix 3 (Cold), Appendix 4 (Flood and Drought))
- the [Weather Health alerts](#) (heat and cold), developed in collaboration with the Met Office

To be successful, the plan will need to be implemented and delivered by a range of groups and organisations working in partnership across sectors and at different levels of government. There are eight delivery groups: national delivery, regional delivery, local delivery, other governmental departments, academia, third sector, private sector and the public.

The plan itself is a mechanism for national, regional and local planners to support their strategies and operations, being technical in nature. Information to the public and concrete actions for implementation partners, are provided in the AWHP Guidance, as well as its action cards.

The plan has adapted the International Organisation for Standardisation 7 quality management principles as guides to support future quality improvements in local and national plans and responses. These are people focus, leadership, engagement of people, process approach, improvement, evidence-based decision making and relationship management.

Additionally, the plan sets out nine action areas for delivery including:

- service delivery
- capacity building
- organisational arrangements
- communication
- risk management
- early warning systems
- data analysis
- quality assurance
- policy development and accountability

The plan establishes mechanisms for implementation monitoring as well as a system of regular reporting. A timetable (section 9.2) is included for future revisions and updates to the supporting materials accompanying this plan.

This year's edition of the plan has been expanded to include:

- a review of the AWHP guidance and SED development process
- further clarification on the AWHP role in improving long-term resilience

As a key mechanism in NAP3, the plan enhances long-term resilience by strengthening the health and social care sectors' preparedness for adverse weather as part of a wider cross-government approach to climate adaptation. It integrates climate resilience into health and social care planning, ensuring essential services remain operational during adverse weather events while aligning with broader government strategies on infrastructure, housing, and emergency preparedness. More information can be found in section 7.9.2.

Health is a devolved responsibility in the UK, and this document only applies to the health and care system in England. Some UK-wide institutions may have a role in adverse weather planning in England. However, this does not confer responsibility on them for adverse weather planning. This remains a responsibility for devolved governments elsewhere in the UK, unless formally agreed between these institutions and devolved governments. Through the actions of the AWHP, we endeavour to strengthen our collaboration with devolved nations in preparing and responding to extreme weather events that impact multiple UK nations.

The AWHP is supported by several key pieces of UK legislation that provide a legal framework for preparedness, response, adaptation and mitigation of the health impacts of adverse weather events that are further detailed in section 7.9.

## 4. Strategy

### 4.1 Goals

The plan is focused on achieving the following four goals:

- G1. Prevent the increase in years of life lost due to adverse weather events
- G2. Prevent mortality due to adverse weather events
- G3. Prevent morbidity due to adverse weather events
- G4. Reduce the use of healthcare services due to adverse weather events

The monitoring of these goals is defined in Appendix 6.

### 4.2 Principles

The plan has adopted the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) seven quality management principles to take a more structured approach to improving the quality of our plans and guidance. These principles also establish the foundation for the quality management system (QMS) according to the [BS EN ISO 9001:2015](#) that is currently under development:

- P1. People focus (adapted from customer focus)
- P2. Leadership
- P3. Engagement of people
- P4. Process approach
- P5. Improvement
- P6. Evidence-based decision making
- P7. Relationship management

The principles are referred to throughout the plan to illustrate their alignment with specific implementation activities, such as P6 evidence-based decision making. Achieving these will help us to better meet the populations' needs and measure our progress towards achieving the 7 quality management principles.

More information regarding the [ISO quality management principles](#) including their rationale, benefits and possible actions is available online.

## 4.3 Objectives

To meet the goals defined above, the plan activities will be focussed on the following 9 objectives:

- O1. Service delivery – to develop a comprehensive methodology framework for updating and reviewing guidance and evidence under the AWHP
- O2. Capacity building – to continue to deliver a series of capacity building events to support actions from the public health, healthcare and social care sectors
- O3. Organisational arrangements – to develop a product for local-level planning and AWHP implementation
- O4. Communication – to continue to support the development of UKHSA CCHS's digital portal to increase accessibility of the AWHP, guidance, evidence and WHA for end users
- O5. Risk management – to implement an adaptive risk management framework for adverse weather events
- O6. Early warning systems – to implement Weather-Health Alert survey following amber and red alert periods
- O7. Research and data analysis – to publish official statistics on heat-associated mortality and official statistics in development on cold-associated mortality
- O8. Quality assurance – to implement of the AWHP Quality Management System
- O9. Policy development and accountability – to publish of the second AWHP annual report

These objectives illustrate the important elements that form the basis for how local and national programmes might be developed in future to ensure that comprehensive arrangements are in place to protect the public from harm from adverse weather events.

These high-level objectives will be met by the implementation of range of activities described in appendix 5 which together constitute a delivery programme for the AWHP to help the nation achieve its national goals defined in section 4.1.

## 5. Governance

Successful delivery of the plan relies on collaboration across multiple sectors, including the UK government, local authorities, regional bodies, voluntary sector, and health and social care organisations (P1, P7). Keeping the population healthy in the face of adverse weather and long-term climate change is a shared responsibility, extending beyond any single organisation or level of government. Many critical actions, such as ensuring safe and resilient housing, fall outside the health and care system but are essential to protecting public health and strengthening national preparedness.

The AWHP collects adaptation activities with respect to impacts on health and wellbeing across health and social care networks and clarify the systems of implementation, accountability, monitoring and evaluation across the different levels of government. Future iterations of the plan will provide a collection of case studies of such adaptation activities (P2, P4, P7).

A list of key stakeholders involved in the delivery of responses to adverse weather events at national, regional and local level, and their role and responsibilities are defined in Appendix 1.

### 5.1 Management and governance of the AWHP

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Extreme Events and Health Protection (EEHP) team, located within the Centre for Climate and Health Security (CCHS), is responsible for developing, reviewing and supporting the implementation of the AWHP and associated guidance and evidence, and for managing the weather and health early warning system (P2).

Delivery of many aspects of the plan lies outside the remit of UKHSA, as indeed does accountability for implementation of many of the activities or programmes. The AWHP defines a governance model, considering current legal frameworks for stakeholders, and in light of the limits of UKHSA's own responsibilities. The AWHP however, does attempt to define these responsibilities if key health goals are to be achieved, and if we are to prevent or reduce the harms posed by adverse weather events, now and in the future (P2).

UKHSA will continue to work across all levels of government and with stakeholders to improve capacity and skills and highlight responsibilities for protecting health and reducing the harms posed by adverse weather events in light of organisational responsibilities.

Some sections of the plan, such as the evidence base and associated guidance are being developed in collaboration with partners under other schemes of funding such as the NIHR Health Protection Research Units and developed in collaboration with various UKHSA workstreams, including CCHS work on the Health Effects of Climate Change

The strategic direction of the AWHP is overseen by a multi-agency steering group, which will continue to provide strategic direction on the development, and effective and timely delivery of the plan. The group includes local, regional, and national level stakeholders, as well as stakeholders experienced in preparedness, policy, science, and response to adverse weather events. The steering group will meet at least two times per year to review the annual progress report and oversee the development of subsequent iterations of the plan (P2, P5, P7).

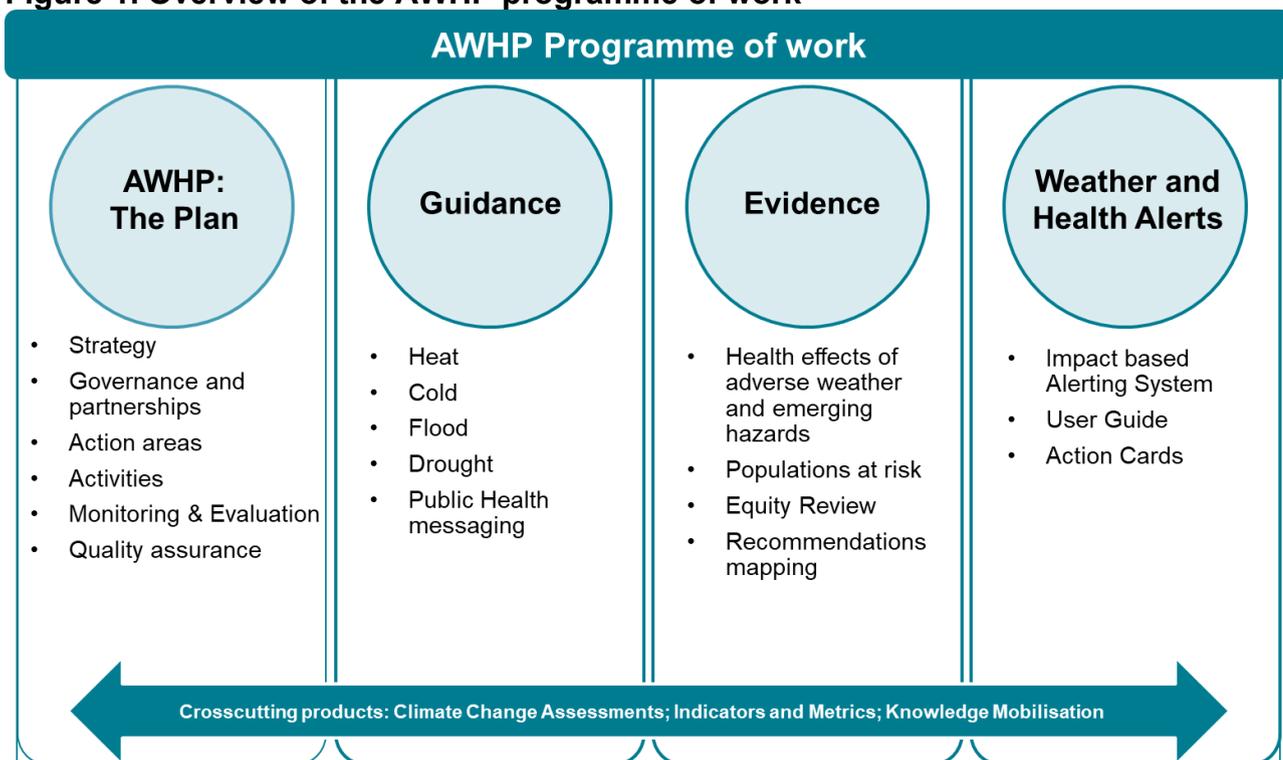
The annual report to the steering group will review all elements of the plan and make any recommendations for improvements and changes to ensure the plan remains fit for purpose against future adverse weather events in the context of wider climate change (P5).

## 6. Adverse Weather and Health Plan implementation

The AWHP programme of work is underpinned by:

- the plan itself
- the [supporting evidence document \(SED\)](#) published in parallel, which is a summary of the scientific evidence supporting the plan
- the [guidance and support materials](#), available in GOV.UK and listed in Appendices 2 to 4 (Appendix 2 (heat), Appendix 3 (cold), Appendix 4 (flood and drought))
- the [Weather Health alerts](#) (heat and cold), developed in collaboration with the Met Office

**Figure 1. Overview of the AWHP programme of work**



**Text equivalent of Figure 1. Overview of AWHP programme of work**

The plan:

- strategy
- governance and partnerships
- action areas
- activities
- monitoring and evaluation
- quality assurance

Guidance:

- heat
- cold
- flood
- drought
- public health messaging

Evidence:

- health effects of adverse weather and emerging hazards
- populations at risk
- equity review
- recommendations mapping

Weather and health alerts:

- impact-based alerting system
- user guide
- action cards

Cross-cutting products:

- climate-change assessments
- indicators and metrics
- knowledge mobilisation

## 6.1 The plan

The plan is a technical document designed to provide a structured and actionable framework for national, regional, and local planners in developing their strategies and operations.

As a well-structured plan, it incorporates clear goals, specific objectives, defined activities, measurable indicators, and evaluation mechanisms to ensure effective implementation. A strong plan should be evidence-based, outcome-oriented, and adaptable, qualities that the AWHP embodies through its detailed risk management approach and alignment with broader climate adaptation policies.

Key components include structured guidance for decision-makers, performance metrics to assess impact, and a system for continuous improvement based on feedback and evolving risks. The plan itself serves as a strategic mechanism, while operational details and public-facing information are provided in the AWHP guidance and action cards, ensuring clarity in roles, responsibilities, and implementation steps.

The 2025 to 2026 plan covers the following National Risk Register (NRR) 2025 weather-related hazards, with a significant impact on health:

- heat (high temperatures and heatwaves)
- cold (low temperatures and snow)
- flooding (coastal flooding, fluvial flooding, surface water flooding)
- drought

The plan also covers an additional hazard not covered by the NRR 2025: thunderstorm asthma.

Further integration of the plan with the following natural and environmental hazards will be covered in future iterations of the plan:

- wildfires
- poor air quality

The plan does not cover the following natural and environmental hazards:

- humanitarian crisis overseas – natural hazard events
- disaster response in the Overseas Territories
- other natural and environmental hazards, such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes or space weather

Significant documents that underpin and support the implementation of the plan include the supporting evidence collection (published separately), guidance and support materials which are available in [Appendix 2](#) (heat), [Appendix 3](#) (cold), [Appendix 4](#) (flood and drought), and the Weather-Health Alerting system that was successfully implemented in 2023 (P4, P6).

The plan will be implemented according to the nine objectives and areas of action (section 7). The important milestones of the plan are defined in an operational timeline (section 9.2) (P4, P5).

The plan includes year-round engagement workshops, exercises and preparation webinars with local stakeholders and, as such, the timeline will support regional and local organisations in developing and updating their plans. The plan also outlines how we propose to evaluate implementation of the plan and the reporting periods for these.

The plan aims to improve long-term planning and commissioning at all implementation levels. In addition, it promotes a change of focus from response and recovery to resilience and preparedness (P3, P4).

## 6.2 Supporting evidence document

The plan is underpinned by a comprehensive overview of evidence describing the impacts of adverse weather and climate change on health and wellbeing (P6). The SED presents an overview of current evidence on health risks from adverse weather and identifies specific population groups that are likely to be at greatest risk.

The SED:

- explores the impacts of adverse weather and climate change on health and wellbeing
- considers the health effects of cold, heat and flooding as well as emerging hazards of storms, drought and thunderstorm asthma
- examines those populations at particular risk to adverse weather events
- presents a comprehensive list of actions and recommendations arising from a series of national policy plans and studies from a wide range of sources to give a comprehensive picture of the sorts of actions which may need to be taken by different delivery groups as a contribution to solving the challenges posed by adverse weather in the context of climate change

The second edition of the SED, published in March 2024, was informed by UKHSA Health Effects of Climate Change (HECC) report which was published in December 2023. Future publications will examine the implications of this recent report in more detail.

The AWHP Equity Review, published alongside this edition of the plan, addresses in more detail the implications for health inequalities of adverse weather.

## 6.3 Guidance

A key element underpinning the AWHP is a series of guidance documents for both health and social care professionals and the public. These have been derived from published evidence and best practices material, including evidence synthesised in the SEDs. The guidance documents and support materials are published online.

Importantly, the guidance documents describe actions to be taken before and during periods of adverse weather in England. They detail what preparations individuals, communities, and local, regional and national organisations can make to reduce health risks. There is also guidance material which includes specific measures to protect those considered more vulnerable to the impacts of adverse weather events, such as people who are sleeping rough (P1, P6, P7) and supporting materials including checklists and posters designed to help mobilise action.

The full list of available guidance and support materials is included in the appendices. The appendices specify the materials' target population, audience, organisations responsible for the review, date of latest review and when the next review is going to take place.

Since the publication of the first edition of the AWHP in April 2023, UKHSA has updated most of its guidance and related materials covering heat, adverse cold and flooding. This was referenced in the most recent [AWHP Annual Report 2023 to 2024](#), which states a total of 35 products were released, including 17 guidance documents, 7 action cards and 11 summary action cards. In the subsequent months, there has been a number of further products released, including [Flooding and health: advice for frontline responders](#) and updated guidance on [Supporting vulnerable people before and during hot weather: social care managers, staff and carers](#).

The AWHP and Weather Health Alert system user guide is available in 'easy-read' versions and 'Beat the heat' guidance has been translated into the eleven most commonly spoken languages in Britain. British Sign Language versions have also been produced to improve accessibility and uptake of public health messaging. Feedback has been sought via a range of routes and primary research has been commissioned and undertaken to support further development of the guidance.

The process of guidance development methodology is currently under review. A new methodological framework, outlining a systematic process for identifying and updating guidance and supporting evidence documents, is currently being developed. This included:

- completion of an internal audit of previous work on the AWHP guidance to identify improvements for future updates in 2025
- methodology review completed by quarter 3, 2025 to 2026
- updates to heat guidance in quarter 4, 2027 to 2028
- updates to cold guidance in quarter 2, 2028 to 2029
- updates to flood and drought guidance in quarter 3, 2028 to 2029

More detailed information can be found in Appendix 2, 3 and 4.

While work is ongoing on development of this methodology there may be the need to conduct minimal revisions to guidance documents, if the evidence so requires. Additionally, the scope of heat guidance materials for people sleeping rough will be expanded to include wider definitions of homelessness.

Although originally planned to be concluded by 2026, each guidance document will include a section focussed on long term planning and adaptation measures needed to increase resilience to impacts of adverse weather. These will now be included in the broader process of guidance development.

There is also ongoing work to ensure that development of future guidance documents is prioritised according to need by population group, setting and hazard. Through collaborating with internal teams (for example, UKHSA's Behavioural Science and Insights Unit) and external organisations (for example, academic partnerships through the NIHR-funded Health Priorities Research Unit) work will commence on development of performance indicators to evaluate the impact of existing and future guidance.

## 6.4 Weather Health Alert System

Early weather-health alerting systems have been shown to be one of the most cost-effective actions which countries can take to protect health and reduce harm in the light of adverse weather events. For many years, England has delivered such a service in respect of adverse cold and heat. One of the most significant developments initiated in 2023 was the start of a new Weather-Health Alert system set up by UKHSA in collaboration with the Met Office, bringing together heat and cold alerts into one overarching plan. The Weather Health Alerting System is now publicly available and accessible on the [UKHSA Data Dashboard](#).

The Weather-Health Alert System serve as an authoritative voice for alerts on adverse weather events (heat and cold) that may have an impact on health. The Weather-Health Alert System is made up of the Heat-Health Alerts and Cold Health Alerts that are issued and cascaded to:

- the public via news, social media or by the platform itself
- the Cabinet Office, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), and other government departments and agencies
- NHS England
- UKHSA and regional teams
- local authorities, including the directors of public health, LFRs and local health resilience partnerships (LHRPs)

More information on the cascade of Weather-Health Alert System can be found on Appendix 7.

On receiving an alert, users are directed to appropriate advice and guidance based on the alert type. Users can register for the alerts they wish to receive (for example, a particular region) and will obtain relevant information on the current alert period direct from the platform (P4, P6).

Early indications are that users have appreciated the development of the new system and numbers now receiving the new alerts directly have increased substantially – over 40,000 active users are currently signed up for Weather-Health Alert email service compared to approximately 7,000 to the previous version.

The Weather-Health Alert System is supported by a [user guide](#), and a series of action cards that provide sector-specific suggested actions by alert type. More details are provided in section 7.6.1 on the Weather-Health Alert System and early warning system.

## 7. Action areas to improve local planning

The plan seeks to address 9 action areas:

- service delivery (SD)
- capacity building (CB)
- organisational arrangements (OA)
- communication (CM)
- risk management (RM)
- early warning systems (EW)
- research and data analysis (RD)
- quality assurance (QA)
- policy development and accountability (PD)

Additionally, to meet the goals of this plan, local organisations and partnerships should consider developing local health and resilience plans outlining how they will protect their local populations from the impacts of adverse weather events. Local organisations can model their plan along 9 action areas of the plan.

These local plans should build on existing strategies and business resilience plans. Local organisations should check to see that their plans cover the 9 action areas to help ensure preparation for and resilience to future weather events.

Further information about the action areas is set out in the following sections. Organisations and partnerships should be clear as to their roles and responsibilities for longer term preventive planning as well as preparing for, and responding to future adverse weather events. Ideally these will be agreed at partnership level as between integrated care partnerships (ICPs), health and wellbeing boards (HWBs) and local resilience forums (LRFs), as appropriate locally. This will help to ensure ownership and accountability for preparedness and response and for long term planning.

UKHSA already runs a series of regional and national engagement events with local partners to consider how to keep local populations safe and well in light of adverse weather events. The AWHP, the associated weather-health alerting system and aligned guidance are key to supporting local partners in their efforts.

For the coming year, UKHSA will consider how local partners can be further supported to develop robust resilience and preparedness plans to help achieve the health goals of this plan and how we can better monitor such developments nationally.

Nevertheless, it is important to reiterate the need for longer-term strategic planning as part of the process of preparing for adverse weather events. These should be part of an ongoing dialogue across all parts of the wider local (and national) system to ensure the longer-term changes that may need to be made to protect the population from climate or adverse weather events (for example to infrastructure or housing), including improvements to healthcare settings and other caring facilities.

## 7.1 Service delivery

National and local organisations and partnerships should have up to date service delivery plans which cover preparedness, resilience, and response to adverse weather events. These should consider the latest cold, heat and flooding guidance and should be reviewed considering the guidance and evidence presented in the AWHP. Each organisation should also ensure that their local planning is updated to specifically take account of the weather and health alerting service, and actions issued with this plan.

### 7.1.1 Guidance implementation

It is the responsibility of the delivery groups to consider and implement the guidance referred to in appendices 2, 3 and 4 as appropriate to their local situation. Additionally, all local health and social care systems and organisations should ensure that weather-health alerts are being disseminated across their system appropriately and that staff are aware of the actions to take at appropriate alert types in the associated guidance.

Furthermore, it is the responsibility of all local organisations to update and align their local guidance in accordance with the latest available guidance presented in this edition of the plan (Section 6.3) and associated materials.

## 7.2 Capacity building

All health and social care staff shall be prepared for adverse weather events and understand the impacts these have on health and wellbeing. They should understand the actions which need to be taken individually and organisationally to ensure the safety and health of their clients and patients during such events and the preparations that need to be taken in advance.

There is an ongoing need to ensure that all staff working with patients and clients are trained both to understand the impact of adverse weather events – such as extreme heat and cold – on bodily functions and to be alert to the physical and mental signs of impact on health.

All staff should be made aware of the Weather-Health Alerting service and the good practice actions which follow on from these.

### 7.2.1 Training materials

A range of UKHSA guidance and training resources for staff and the public are freely available and described in appendices 2, 3 and 4.

In addition, training materials about both climate change and adverse weather and health are freely available, including slide sets, e-learning and third-party hosted accredited courses such as Massive Open Online Courses.

## 7.2.2 UKHSA operational webinars

UKHSA organises operational preparedness webinars ahead of the summer and winter season, in collaboration with other national and local partners, to provide updates to the different delivery groups and stakeholders on latest guidance and what is expected ahead of the specific season. In future, UKHSA may organise additional capacity building webinars to improve the knowledge of partners on specific hazards or on AWHP implementation and associated guidance and weather health alert system. UKHSA is currently reviewing the format for its AWHP launch webinars to reduce length and improve utility for audience members.

## 7.2.3 Making Every Contact Count programme (MECC)

Teams will endeavour to consider opportunistic approaches to signpost potentially vulnerable patients to appropriate services when they present for other reasons, for example the [Making Every Contact Count](#) (MECC), developed in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. It provides frontline staff with behavioural change interventions training. It focuses on providing an informed choice for individuals but with the understanding of the wider determinants of health approach.

## 7.2.4 All Our Health eLearning sessions – climate change module

[OHID's All Our Health framework](#) is a call to action to all health and care professionals to embed prevention within their everyday work. Through educational materials, tools and resources, All Our Health helps professionals make an even greater impact in preventing illness, protecting health, promoting wellbeing and reducing health inequalities. The [climate change module](#) is a bite-sized session to give health and care professionals an overview of climate and health. It includes evidence, data and signposting to trusted resources to help prevent illness, protect health and promote wellbeing.

## 7.2.5 AWHP MicroTeach

The AWHP Micro Teach is an online, asynchronous course designed to enhance understanding and application of the AWHP. It provides an overview of the plan's key components, the weather hazards it addresses, and how to access current guidance on the GOV.UK website. The course also encourages participants to assess and improve organisational processes in line with the AWHP.

# 7.3 Organisational arrangements

At both local and national level there are numerous organisations and partnerships, operating as part of the wider health system, which are responsible for preparing for and responding to adverse weather events which might impact on health and wellbeing.

Individual organisations at all levels of the delivery chain will consider the implications of this plan and guidance as they continue to focus on keeping people safe and well from adverse weather events. They will review how they participate in wider national or local emergency preparedness and resilience arrangements within the auspices of the Civil Contingencies Act and the Local Government Act.

### 7.3.1 Emergency Preparedness Resilience Response (EPRR) arrangements

In light of the information published in this plan, associated guidance and lessons learned from previous incidents, national organisations delivering EPRR functions will continue to work in collaboration and assure themselves that protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are up to date.

### 7.3.2 Exercises

Where possible, the delivery groups both national and locally shall regularly test the robustness of their EPRR plans through regular 'table-top' and other 'real-time' planning exercises. It is the responsibility of each organisation to ensure that preparedness and response plans are drawn up, tested, and updated. These exercises can be simple small group discussion-based meetings through to complex multi-agency events held with the support of the relevant lead authority.

## 7.4 Communication

A range of robust and resilient communication methods and approaches are required to ensure effective:

- inter-organisational and intra-organisational communication and dissemination of information in the planning for and response to adverse weather events
- communication with staff so they are aware of what to do in advance, and for accurate and timely information and guidance during an incident
- communication and dissemination of public health messages to the public
- communication and dissemination to at-risk and vulnerable groups and those groups who are underserved or otherwise often 'hidden' from service providers

Delivery groups should review their current communication materials and dissemination material considering this plan and associated guidance and test these out as part of their regular exercising. Testing in partnership with service users from at-risk groups is encouraged to ensure that communication and dissemination approaches promote accurate understanding of health risks from adverse weather, and support mobilisation to action where appropriate.

Described below are a range of materials that are available to support some of these communication activities. UKHSA will be seeking to develop case studies for future plan iterations.

### 7.4.1 Communications materials

A range of communication resources that support action by hazard, and that support a shift from emergency planning to adaptation are available within the guidance in appendices 2 (heat) and 3 (cold).

### 7.4.2 Communications toolkit

If applicable, delivery groups, should develop a suite of weather and health communications tools, specifying what is communicated, to whom, when, how and why. These toolkits should raise awareness of how exposure to adverse weather and excessive low or high indoor temperatures affects health and what preventive action people can take, both throughout the year and during adverse weather events. The plan guidance and evidence should support these communications toolkits.

The toolkits should also highlight activities to mobilise individuals and communities to help to protect their neighbours, friends, relatives, and themselves against avoidable health problems during adverse weather events. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that important public health messages reach vulnerable groups and those who care for them (for example, caregivers of the chronically ill, parents of young children) in a suitable and timely way, and that people in these groups are able to act on advice provided. This should be founded on engagement and partnership with at risk groups. General public health messaging and advice on financial support and benefits can be found on GOV.UK.

### 7.4.3 Focus groups and customer insights

Different organisations and partnerships may wish to engage focus groups to test behavioural messages to improve heat risk perception and protective behaviours in older adults. Customer insight surveys can also be used to understand how guidance is used and acted upon (or not) by different population groups during an adverse weather event.

Moreover, building robust partnerships with the delivery groups enhances the effectiveness of communication and intervention strategies, ensuring that messages reach and resonate with the intended audiences, thereby promoting safer behaviours across all weather hazards. UKHSA regularly conducts a series of focus groups and customer insights to develop tailored messages for this plan, Weather-Health Alert System and associated guidance. For example: the UKHSA Hot Weather Communications Toolkit was updated based on behavioural and customer insight (IPSOS and MORI surveys) with recommendations to address identified barriers in older adults:

- workshops on the continued development and improvement of the Weather-Health Alerts (WHA) system, delivered by colleagues at the University of Surrey who have been commissioned by UKHSA to evaluate the impact-based WHA system
- UKHSA commissioned Discovery Research, an independent research agency, to explore the [experience of social care practitioners in relation to extreme temperatures](#)
- the UKHSA/HPRU ECH Flooding and Health Workshop to ensure that UKHSA resources on flooding and health guidance meet the needs of end users
- UKHSA-conducted focus groups and supporting interviews with adults aged over 64 years to explore attitudes towards extreme heat in response to the 2022 heatwave and help inform recommendations for updating messages communicating risks
- feedback surveys on the UKHSA capacity building events

More details are available in the accompanying [evidence document](#).

#### 7.4.4 Weather Ready campaign

The [Weather Ready campaign](#) is a year-round campaign run by the Met Office. It provides the latest and expert seasonal guidance and tips for public on how and why they need to prepare for the weather. The guidance material is produced in partnership with UKHSA and the Cabinet Office through whom the guidance material is further disseminated to the public.

Members of the public visiting the Met Office website for the latest weather forecast can also access up-to-date, expert seasonal advice from carefully selected organisations to help them prepare for and respond to the weather, to stay safe and protect their homes and businesses.

#### 7.4.5 Media engagement

Delivery groups should actively work with the local and national media to get advice to people, both before, during and after an adverse weather event.

#### 7.4.6 CCHS digital service

In 2022, CCHS engaged with cross-sector stakeholders to better understand the challenges and support needs of those working on climate and health in the health and social care system. As a result, CCHS is creating a digital service on the .GOV website to provide scientific information to partners at all levels. The CCHS digital service collates evidence on climate and health impacts, key risks and equity considerations. It provides summaries, tools and signposts relevant guidance and advice.

The CCHS digital service will be formally launched in March 2025. The first topic, [Heat](#), is already available. Further topics are to be developed and added this year.

## 7.5 Risk management

Management of risk both within organisations and sharing of risk across organisations is a fundamental feature of an overarching weather and health plan and links with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act. Nationally, UKHSA, as a Category 1 responder works closely with partners across government to advise on health risks arising from adverse weather events and then supports partners to help manage these risks in the most effective manner. Locally, risk management will often be led by local directors of public health.

### 7.5.1 Horizon scanning

The Met Office provides nowcasting, short-range, medium-range and extended-range weather forecasts. These forecasts provide the foundations for early warning systems, supporting preparedness for adverse weather events.

UKHSA and Met Office meet at least weekly during the Weather Health Alert seasons, to discuss possible escalation of Weather Health Alerts and the possible involvement of OGD in the Joint Dynamic Risk Assessments (JDRA) conducted by both organisations. More information on the JDRA and how it is conducted can be found on the [Weather-Health Alert System: user guide](#).

### 7.5.2 National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA)

The government monitors the most significant emergencies that the UK could face over the next 5 years through the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA). This is a confidential assessment, conducted every year, that draws on expertise from a wide range of departments and agencies of government. The National Risk Register (NRR) is the public version of the assessment.

### 7.5.3 National Risk Register (NRR)

The NRR provides an updated government assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different malicious and non-malicious national security risks (including natural hazards, industrial accidents, malicious attacks, and others) that may directly affect the UK and its interests over the next 2 years.

In addition to providing information on how the UK government and local responders manage these emergencies, [the National Risk Register 2025](#) also signposts advice and guidance on what members of the public can do to prepare for these events.

The AWHP is flagged as one of crucial governmental plans to protect the nation's security from 'high temperatures and heatwaves' as well as 'low temperatures and snow'.

## 7.5.4 Local risk assessment and community risk registers

Alongside the national level risk assessments, local tiers are required to produce a specific risk assessment that reflects, as far as possible, the unique characteristics of each area. The government provides guidance to LRFs on how to interpret the risks in the NSRA and NRR to help with their local assessment of risk. This ensures that risk assessments at all levels of government are integrated, and underpins coherent emergency planning throughout the country.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the local Government Act also requires emergency responders in England and Wales to co-operate in maintaining a public Community Risk Register (CRR). These [CRRs are approved and published by LRFs](#), which include representatives from local emergency responders as well as public, private and voluntary organisations. Each local council publishes its CRR on its website.

## 7.5.5 Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC)

If relevant, organisations should have robust arrangements in place to address specific communication requirements during major emergencies. Those arrangements should be based on the [6 principles of CERC](#):

- be first
- be right
- be credible
- express empathy
- promote action
- show respect

## 7.6 Early warning systems

Early weather and health warning systems lie at the heart of robust adverse weather and health plans and guidance. These systems, which the [United Nations](#) has shown to be one of the most single most cost-effective actions which countries can take to improve civil preparedness for adverse weather events, have been in place in England for heatwaves since 2004.

### 7.6.1 Weather Health Alert System

The heat-health alerts operate from 1 June to 30 September and the cold health alerts operate from 1 November to 30 March. An out of season alert may still be issued if impacts from adverse weather on health (heat and cold) are expected.

Both systems are based on the Met Office forecasts and data and use a colour coded matrix system to convey the impact and likelihood. Depending on the type of alert, a response will be triggered to communicate the risk to the NHS England, government, and public health system. Advice and information for the public and health and social care professionals, particularly those working with at-risk groups. This includes both general preparation for hot and cold weather and more specific advice when a severe heatwave or cold periods have been forecast. Delivery groups should implement year-round planning and use the guidance in advance of the summer and winter.

The platform aims to cover the spectrum of action from different groups. In general terms:

#### Green (preparedness)

No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact and health; business as usual and summer or winter planning and preparedness activities continue.

#### Yellow (response)

These alerts cover a range of situations. Yellow alerts may be issued during periods of heat or cold which would be unlikely to impact most people, but could impact those who are particularly vulnerable. Or a yellow alert could be issued where significant impacts are possible but the confidence the forecast conditions is low. Therefore, it is vital users read the whole alert to ensure full understanding of the situation.

#### Amber (enhanced response)

An amber alert indicates that weather impacts are likely to be felt across the whole health service, with potential for the whole population to be at risk. Non-health sectors may also start to observe impacts and a more significant coordinated response may be required.

#### Red (emergency response)

A red alert indicates significant risk to life for even the healthy population.

The Weather Health Alerts are cascaded to the groups previously mentioned, as defined in Appendix 7. The details of the Weather Health Alert System can be found in the [user guide](#).

## 7.6.2 Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)

The Met Office also issues weather warnings through the National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) for severe weather that has potential for impact to the UK and uses a colour coded matrix system to convey the impact and likelihood of those impacts to occur. A NSWWS warning alerts the public and emergency responders of a severe weather warning that has a likelihood of low, medium and high impact across various sectors causing widespread disruption such as damage to property, infrastructure and power lines, travel delays and cancellations, loss of water supplies and in the most severe cases, danger to life. UKHSA's Weather-Health Alerting System is aligned with the Met Office NSWWS.

### 7.6.3 Flood Guidance Statement

The Environment Agency and Met Office Flood Guidance Statement (FGS) is a 5-day risk-based product for England and Wales. It is produced by the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC), and it shows the forecast level of flood risk for the coming 5 days for surface water, river, groundwater and coastal flooding. The FGS provides an assessment of the reasonable worst-case scenario for flood impacts.

### 7.6.4 CAS and National Patient Safety Alert safety alerts

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Central Alerting System (CAS) is a web-based cascading system for issuing patient safety alerts, important public health messages and other safety critical information and guidance to the NHS England and others, including independent providers of health and social care. CAS alerts may also be issued by DHSC and NHS England.

UKHSA may issue a National Patient Safety Alert or Urgent Public Health Message alerts in response to an adverse weather event, mainly related with health and social care staff wellness.

## 7.7 Research and data analysis

The plan, guidance, and associated evidence is underpinned by an ongoing system of surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation based on both real-time and retrospective data analysis on the health effects of adverse weather. UKHSA with partner agencies, such as NHS England, run systems to help give early analysis of the effects of adverse weather on health (including syndromic surveillance) as well as on the associated impacts on healthcare and social care services. UKHSA is working to continue to improve the timely production of reports of the impacts of adverse weather on health (heat and cold) with partner agencies. UKHSA also commissions research on weather and health topics to inform future policy and guidance.

### 7.7.1 Official statistics

[UKHSA collects and publishes statistics](#) related to planning, preventing and responding to adverse weather events, such as close monitoring of deaths from all causes or more specific aspects such as [National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports](#) and vaccination update. From 2025 UKHSA Official Statistics and Official Statistics in Development will be published for mortality associated with adverse weather.

## 7.7.2 UKHSA adverse weather-related mortality reports

UKHSA (and previously Public Health England) have published annual heat mortality monitoring reports each year since 2016. The reports give estimates of heat-associated deaths during heat episodes in each summer. These reports will now be badged as Official Statistics going forward starting with the report on summer 2024. A new report will also be published in the autumn of 2025 reporting cold-associated mortality estimates and are planned to be badged as Official Statistics in Development. These reports will be available on the gov.uk website.

## 7.7.3 UKHSA weekly all-cause mortality reports

UKHSA provides [all-cause mortality surveillance](#) updates based on information provided by the General Registry Office (GRO). These reports include details of the weeks in which observed deaths from all causes were higher than a threshold, which is calculated using a European-wide algorithm called [EuroMOMO](#). It can be used to identify weeks when factors such as infectious disease activity or extreme temperature may have caused higher mortality rates than expected.

## 7.7.4 Surveillance

### 7.7.4.1 Syndromic Surveillance

UKHSA routinely monitors outputs from real-time syndromic surveillance systems including calls to NHS 111, GP in and out of hours daily (weekdays only) consultations and emergency department attendances, for the impact of adverse weather-related morbidity using a range of syndromic health indicators. Information on adverse weather-related illness will be included in routine [weekly surveillance reports published by UKHSA](#); these provide a source of intelligence on how severe the effects are and how well services are responding to them.

### 7.7.4.2 Influenza surveillance

UKHSA routinely analyses and collates influenza data from a variety of sources producing a [national flu report](#) once a week during the winter season and [a yearly overview report of influenza surveillance results](#) from the winter period.

### 7.7.4.3 Norovirus surveillance

UKHSA will continue to monitor outbreak reports from hospitals and laboratory reports of cases of norovirus throughout the winter and will publish a [weekly norovirus bulletin](#).

## 7.7.6 Public health outcomes framework

The [public health outcomes framework](#) sets out desired outcomes and indicators to help us understand how well public health is being improved and protected. A number of indicators in the outcomes framework can be linked to long-term planning for severe heat and heatwaves. OHID will publish data on an online tool that allows local authorities to compare their achievements with other areas.

### 7.7.7 Research collaborations

Appendix 1 provides more information on current research collaborations as well as the possible establishment of future partnerships to develop research to meet evidence needs.

## 7.8 Quality assurance

UKHSA is formalising the quality assurance system it is running and the guidance for local areas focussing on improving their own quality assurance. This is aimed at ensuring the plan remains effective and is being efficiently delivered in an equitable manner across all sections of the community on which it is impacting. It will encompass data analysis and monitoring (section 10.1) and also include specific elements for quality monitoring.

### 7.8.1 Quality management system

A quality management system (QMS) for the AWHP is currently being implemented in accordance with the BS EN ISO 9001:2015.

### 7.8.2 Auditing

After establishing the QMS, UKHSA will conduct regular internal audits to its conformity and in alignment with the BS EN ISO 19011:2018 guidelines for auditing management systems.

### 7.8.3 Monitoring and evaluation

More information on the plan's monitoring and evaluation can be found on section 10. This forms the basis of our work, as noted previously, to ensure that the plan is effective, efficiently delivered and equitable.

### 7.8.4 AWHP PowerBI Dashboard

The AWHP PowerBI Dashboard provides an interactive visualisation of monitoring indicators mentioned in Appendix 6. This business intelligence tool provides the academia, health and social care professionals, policymakers and the public itself information on the level of progress of the AWHP implementation.

### 7.8.5 Quality assurance at local level

The plan has outlined 9 action areas against which organisations and partnerships can review their current plans with a view to improving their effectiveness and ensuring that longer term strategic actions for preparation and resilience are addressed as well as more immediate response activities. The weather and health alerting service has been updated and the registration process has changed.

All NHS and local authority commissioners with LRFs should also review and audit the distribution of the new weather and health alerts across the local health and social care systems to ensure the alerts reach those that need to take action, and to ensure appropriate action is taken. The consequent actions to be taken are outlined in Appendix 7, but all areas are still developing their services under the Integrated Care Partnerships and Systems.

Local areas need to adapt their review and audits to their specific situations and confirm the cascade systems are working appropriately. Particular care should be taken to ensure independent care homes, hospitals and healthcare providers are made aware of plans and of the specific risks and advice for their patients, residents and staff. Directors of public health will also wish to assure themselves that other local institutions (such as schools) are receiving alerts and are clear as to the actions to be taken consequent to receiving an alert.

## 7.9 Policy development and accountability

Appendix 1 outlines the responsibilities of organisations at national and local level on policy development in respect of weather and health and wider issues relating to climate change. Through this plan, UKHSA will continue to work with partner organisations at national level to support a coordinated response to the challenges of climate change, adverse weather and health issues.

This could include providing advice and guidance for policy development in non-health sectors, for example the impacts of expected changes in the climate on housing stock and health, including the health impacts of overheating and relevance to building standards and regulations. The AWHP SED also provides more detail on the policy, legal and accountability mechanisms related to the AWHP implementation.

At local level, it is up to local health champions to ensure that local policies and approaches are consistent with national guidance and with an approach that prioritises health. For example, the adoption of low-emission zones to reduce air pollution from road traffic or ensuring that new housing developments have sufficient green and blue infrastructure which can help reduce the impact of urban heat islands.

### 7.9.1 Climate Change Act 2008

The Climate Change Act 2008 is the UK's foundational legislation for addressing climate change, setting legally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring that the country is prepared for climate-related risks. A key provision of the act is the duty placed on agencies to adapt to the impacts of climate change, recognising that climate resilience is essential to maintaining economic stability, public health and environmental sustainability.

Under the act, the government is required to conduct a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) every 5 years, evaluating current and future risks posed by climate change to various sectors, including infrastructure, health, biodiversity and the economy. In response to these assessments, the government develops National Adaptation Programmes (NAPs) which outline sector-specific adaptation strategies for national departments, public agencies and local authorities. These strategies ensure that government bodies are not only aware of climate risks but are also actively taking steps to mitigate their impact and enhance resilience.

The act also grants powers to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) and its Adaptation Sub-Committee, which provide independent advice and scrutiny on the UK's progress in adapting to climate change. Public agencies, including local councils, health authorities, and regulatory bodies, are expected to integrate adaptation measures into their policies, planning, and service delivery.

This includes actions such as strengthening flood defences, improving water resource management, enhancing building regulations to account for overheating risks, and developing policies to protect vulnerable communities from extreme weather events.

## 7.9.2 National Adaptation Programme and long-term resilience

The third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3), published in 2023, outlines the actions that government departments will take to address risks identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment. As part of its ambition to implement these actions effectively, NAP3 recognises the potential of existing local and regional infrastructure and channels to facilitate a shift towards prevention and long-term planning for climate adaptation. However, to fully harness this potential, a clear governance framework is required—one that defines policy frameworks, clarifies responsibilities across the system, sets enforceable standards, and identifies the levers available to drive and support adaptation efforts.

NAP3 identifies 5 mechanisms which government will use to address risks related to health, communities and the built environment:

- the National Planning Policy Framework | MHCLG
- building regulations | MHCLG
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy, Policy Statement and Roadmap | Environment Agency
- Adverse Weather and Health Plan | UKHSA
- Publicly Available Specification 2030-2035 | TrustMark

In addition, NAP3 identifies in its 4.2 Chapter (Health and Wellbeing) a series of interventions aimed at mitigating climate-related health risks. To address overheating, the government has implemented new regulations, such as the Approved Document O of the Building Regulations, to limit excess heat in residential buildings. It is also reviewing the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to enforce safety standards, including those related to overheating, by 2030.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is incorporating climate adaptation into its net-zero retrofit programs, ensuring existing homes and buildings are upgraded to withstand extreme temperatures. To safeguard water quality, Defra is working with the Drinking Water Inspectorate to uphold high standards under the Water Supply Regulations and conducting periodic reviews of drought plans to secure household and business water supply.

NHS trusts and integrated care boards are incorporating climate adaptation strategies into their green plans, and NHS facilities are updating resilience standards by 2025. The government is also enhancing food safety through increased monitoring of climate-related risks, with the Food Standards Agency conducting horizon-scanning and surveillance to address rising threats from pathogens and toxins. In education and justice, the Department for Education is developing climate action plans for schools, prioritising sustainable drainage systems and natural shading, while the Ministry of Justice is researching climate impacts on prisons to pilot targeted interventions by 2027.

### 7.9.3 Parliamentary accountability

Governmental departments and agencies will continue to fulfil their policy requirements by providing ministerial briefings and answering parliamentary questions (PQs).

Existing local and regional infrastructure and channels can be used to support a shift to prevention and longer term planning on climate change adaptation activities. However, to do this requires a clear governance framework across the system which gives clarity about local policy frameworks and responsibilities for delivery across the system, standards to be delivered, and the levers which exist and how to leverage that support.

### 7.9.4 AWHP annual reports

The AWHP Annual Report will serve as a comprehensive yearly assessments of the activities conducted that year. More information on the AWHP Annual Report can be found on section 10.2.

### 7.9.5 Other relevant legal mechanisms

The SED provides further details in Section 1.1.1 (Policy and Legal Context) about the legal mechanisms used to implement the Adverse Weather and Health Plan (AWHP), which have not been detailed in this document. These include:

- National Health Service Act (NHS) 2006
- Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
- UK National Leadership for Risk Identification, Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery (2023)
- Equality Act (2010)

In addition, the following legal mechanisms also support the implementation of the plan:

- Health and Social Care Act (2012)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- Housing Act (2004)
- Flood and Water Management Act (2010)
- Health Protection (Notification) Regulations (2010)
- Local Government Act (2000)
- Public Health (Control of Disease) Act (1984)

## 8. Target populations and health inequalities

Some groups of people are especially vulnerable to the health effects of severe weather conditions, such as very hot or cold weather. At-risk groups include older people, the very young and people with pre-existing medical conditions as well as those whose health, housing or economic circumstances put them at greater risk of harm from adverse weather.

While actions taken by health and social care sector during adverse weather events may relieve part of the health impacts, multi-agency action is required to address wider determinants of health, such as socioeconomic inequalities, fuel poverty and housing energy efficiency.

The [supporting evidence document \(SED\)](#) for this plan, as well as the AWHP Equity Review and Impact Assessment, provide more information on which groups may be at particular risk from heat and cold.

The SED provides more information on the approach to elucidate gaps and recommends areas for further development and implementation within the plan (supporting evidence, chapter 3). This includes a delineation of groups known to be at greatest health risk from exposure to the adverse weather hazards with which the AWHP is concerned.

An equity review analysis was published alongside the second iteration of the AWHP in 2024. The review supports UKHSA's requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to report on the potential impacts of the AWHP on different populations. It does so using NHS England's CORE20PLUS framework to identify populations at potential risk (including those with protected characteristics).

The review considers:

- population characteristics contributing to differences in health risks from adverse weather
- differences in how people from different groups engage with information on health risks from adverse weather
- differences in how and why people from different groups are mobilised to act on information provided to them

The Equity Review outlines a series of next steps spanning work to improve understanding of vulnerability and sources of resilience to adverse weather between different populations, strengthened approaches to consultation and engagement, and improvements to monitoring and evaluation. The review will be updated on a periodic basis to reflect changes in the evidence base on differential health risks between population groups following exposure to adverse weather, and in the event that new evidence emerges to suggest inequitably distributed population level impacts from the implementation of the AWHP.

## 9. Activities and timeline

### 9.1 Activities

UKHSA has identified a range of activities to be implemented mostly by UKHSA in support of delivery of this plan. The list of activities considers the recommendations of the plan's supporting evidence, the recommendations of the plan's reports, as well as drawn from other internal analyses undertaken since publication of the AWHP in April 2023.

As described in the SED, certain recommendations are directed to a wide range of organisations. It is for them to consider these recommendations, and how they might guide long-term strategic planning. Nevertheless, UKHSA has considered the various recommendations and taken these into account, where appropriate, in its development of its activities.

We have listed these activities in Appendix 5, in accordance with the following:

#### Activity code

To allow a simple link between the SED Recommendations and the AWHP monitoring framework.

#### Action areas

Those areas identified for developing plans as per section 7.

#### Description

Information on the activity itself and what it aims to accomplish.

#### Delivery groups

Definition of the level of delivery group, as defined in Appendix 1.

#### Accountable organisation

Those organisations responsible for leading on the delivery of key actions identified.

#### Other organisation

Organisations that may support the activity's implementation.

#### Quarter

Expected quarter of completion of the activity. The quarters are divided by the trimester of the AWHP implementation:

- Q1 – April to June
- Q2 – July to September
- Q3 – October to December
- Q4 – January to March

### Reference

Code of AWHP document use as a reference to this activity. The code MR references the AWHP midterm report, the code SED references the AWHP SED recommendations, and AR references the AWHP Annual report.

## 9.2 Timeline

The following timeline highlights indicative significant dates for the 2025 to 2026 plan implementation. These dates may be subject to change due and stakeholders will receive updates on any changes throughout the year.

**Table 1. Timeline of events for the 2025 to 2026 plan implementation**

Date	Plan implementation
Q4 2024/2025	AWHP 2025 to 2026 publication
	AWHP 2025 to 2026 launch webinar
	End of Cold-Health 2024 to 2025 alerting season
Q1 2025/2026	UKHSA heat mortality monitoring report publication on summer 2024 (Official Statistics)
	Adverse heat 2025 preparedness webinar
	Start of Heat-Health 2025 alerting season
Q2 2025/2026	Cold weather 2025 to 2026 preparedness webinar
	End of Heat-Health alerting season
Q3 2025/2026	UKHSA cold mortality monitoring report publication on winter 2024 to 2025 (Official Statistics in Development)
Q3 2025/2026	AWHP Annual Report 2024 to 2025 webinar
	Start of Cold-Health alerting season
	AWHP Guidance and evidence review framework
	Local-level planning and AWHP implementation product
Q4 2025/2026	AWHP 2026 to 2027 publication
	AWHP 2026 to 2027 launch webinar
	End of Cold-Health 2025 to 2026 alerting season
	Implementation of the AWHP QMS system

# 10. Monitoring and evaluation

## 10.1 Monitoring

The plan will be monitored according to the indicators defined in Appendix 6. The indicators are organised by:

- monitoring code
- indicator type (contextual, activity, output, outcome, impact)
- description of indicator
- source organisation
- metric used
- when the indicator should be monitored
- linked activities, referencing the respective activity code
- global indicator being met (SDG indicator or Sendai Framework indicator)

Current routine data sources use surveillance data and a small number of impact reporting processes (for example indicators of presentations to health services during alerting episodes) and may not capture process or delivery indicators at regional or local level. Where available, UKHSA will provide disaggregated data by region, gender, ethnicity and age on relevant indicators.

UKHSA has a PowerBI real-time monitoring platform, to track implementation progress at national, regional level available [here](#).

## 10.2 Evaluation

UKHSA publishes an annual report, during the third quarter of each year.

The report addresses:

- short description of the implementation progress by AWHP pillars
- indicators analysis
- recommendations for improvement in future plan iterations

The annual report will also include important conclusions from audits conducted on the plan.

The impact of the plan will be evaluated in more detail after 5 years, under a post-test design, where the outcome and impact indicators of the plan will be compared with other nations in the UK and Europe. Moreover, UKHSA, with its partners, will be using a variety of methods to evaluate the more immediate impacts of the plan to ensure that processes outlined in it, such as the dissemination, distribution and operation of the weather-health alerts.

# 11. Sustainability

The plan will continue to receive continuous improvements, building on the lessons learned from its previous editions, as well as internal audit reports.

The supporting evidence document also provides a recommendations mapping, summarising a series of further actions which would support climate change mitigation and adaptation. These recommendations should be implemented according to the available resources and should be considered as part of long-term strategic planning across the different delivery groups.

## 11.1 Total economic costs of heat-related mortality

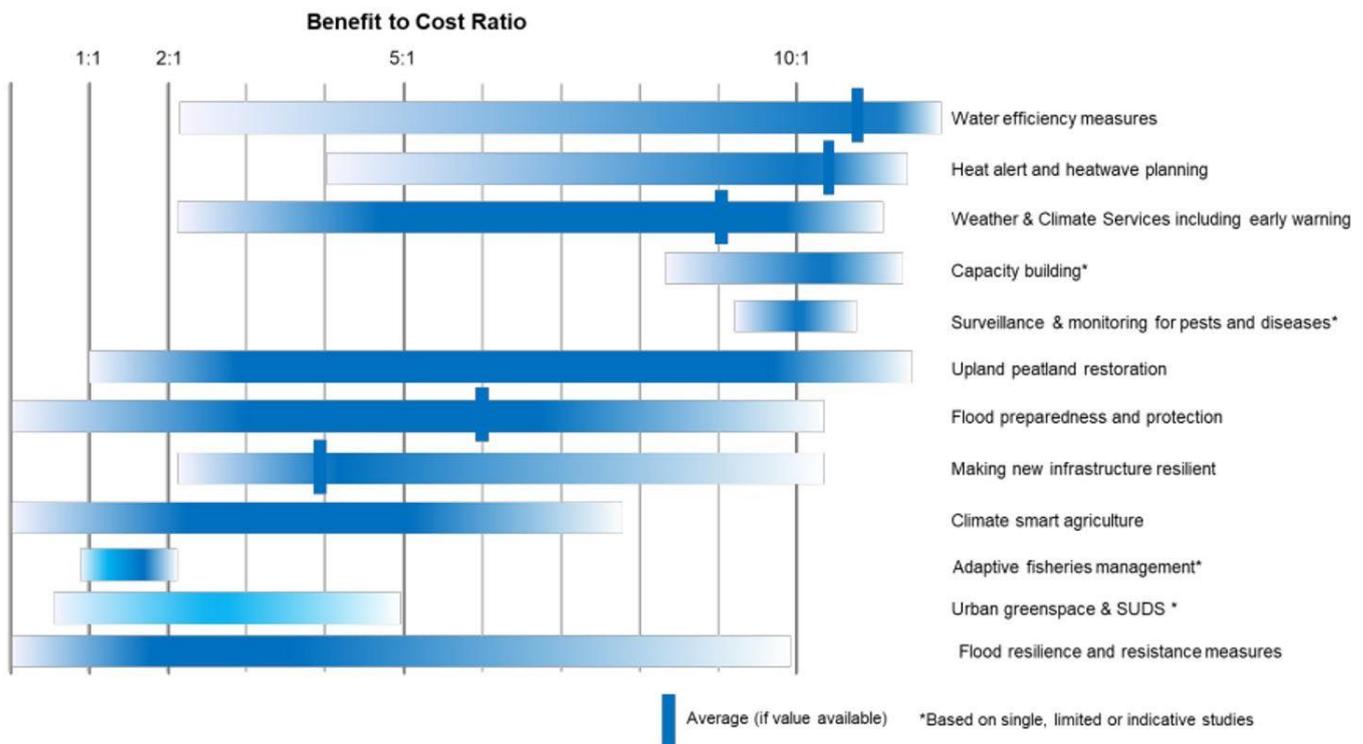
The projection of total economic costs of heat-related mortality from climate change and socio-economic change in England in this decade amounts to approximately £6.4 billion pounds per year, according to the [Monetary Valuation of Risks and Opportunities in CCRA3 \(table 42\)](#).

## 11.2 Benefit to cost ratio and return of investment

The [Monetary Valuation of Risks and Opportunities in CCRA3](#) also identifies many early adaptation investments that deliver high value for money. The benefit-cost ratios typically range from 2:1 to 10:1, meaning every £1 invested in adaptation could result in £2 to £10 in net economic benefits. Some of them relate to the plan's implementation:

- heat alert and heatwave planning – above 10:1
- weather and climate services including early warning – above 10:1
- capacity building – around 10:1

**Figure 2. Benefit to cost ratios for adaptation for selected CCRA3 risks**



The [Economic Value of the Met Office Study](#), conducted by London Economics and published in August 2024, quantifies the economic benefits of the UKHSA’s Weather Health Alerts system. The study estimates that, over the next decade, these alert systems will provide a present benefit of approximately £1.9 billion due to avoided cold-related deaths and around £110 million from avoided heat-related deaths.

## 12. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Delivery groups

The plan will be implemented and delivered by a range of groups and organisations working in partnership across sectors and at different levels. There are 8 delivery groups referred to in the plan including national delivery, regional delivery, local delivery, other governmental departments, academia, the third sector, private sector and the public. This section outlines the primary roles and responsibilities of the groups and organisations in relation to adverse weather and health (P2, P7).

#### National delivery

The organisations in this section have different responsibilities in relation to adverse weather planning, guidance, and health. Some organisations also have roles in operational delivery in response to adverse weather events alongside regional and local colleagues.

##### UKHSA

UKHSA provides expert public health advice, support and services tailored to local needs. UKHSA is a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, providing specialist advice and support to emergency services, NHS England, Local Authorities, communities, and the wider public.

UKHSA provides specialist adverse weather advice and guidance to health and social care professionals, other emergency responders and the public via GOV.UK, NHS England, and MetOffice websites, as well as targeted communications during a Weather Health Alert.

UKHSA is responsible for the preparation, review, and publication of overarching adverse weather and health plans. This includes monitoring and evaluating plan implementation using the current legal frameworks and organisational arrangements defined herein. UKHSA will ensure that the plan, and its associated guidance and platforms are widely communicated using a variety of channels.

##### Cabinet Office

The Cabinet Office (CO) has an important role at local and national level response as a Category 1 responder. The CO is the lead government department for central response and supports government departments in working together effectively when responding to an emergency. It does this by creating crisis management arrangements that are understood and used across all central government.

During a Weather Health Alert escalation, the Cabinet Office COBR Unit coordinates response functions. Depending on the alert, a Summer or Winter Resilience Network meeting is scheduled with OGDs to discuss the level of impact expected across sectors, which is then used to determine national and regional emergency response activities.

CO coordinate joint dynamic risk assessment (JDRA) meetings as the situation develops with feedback from OGDs on whether the alert and its associated warnings need to be modified or prolonged based on weather forecast and response needs.

### Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

DHSC is responsible and accountable for the delivery of co-agreed plans and commitments such as the delivery of the health elements of the [National Adaptation Programme \(NAP\)](#). This includes the development of a single adverse weather and health plan under section 5.6 of the NAP. DHSC sets the strategic remit and priorities for UKHSA including through an annual remit letter.

DHSC also holds responsibility for policy decisions regarding excess weather-related morbidity and mortality monitored and reported by relevant UKHSA teams. UKHSA develops actions with regards to health harms from climate change and outline activities to be delivered over a 5 year period.

During escalated adverse weather events (Weather Health Alerts with high impact and medium or high likelihood), DHSC coordinates health and social care sector response activities between UKHSA and the NHS England. DHSC's role includes but is not restricted to coordinating health and social care sector JDRA and response in partnership with UKHSA and NHS England, and delegating parliamentary responses and updates.

### Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)

As part of DHSC, OHID brings together expert advice, analysis and evidence with policy development and implementation to shape and drive health improvement and equalities priorities for government. OHID works across government, the healthcare system, local government, and industry to achieve these aims, particularly with a focus on health improvement, reducing health disparities and preventable risk factors affecting the health of the population.

They lead the development and implementation of healthcare services policy framework, to ensure it is shaped and driven in health improvement and equalities priorities for the government.

OHID produces [official statistics](#) for use across the government, the health system and wider. These statistics can be used by all organisations to monitor the population health outcomes, but also to monitor the effectiveness of public health initiatives and impacts of adverse weather events through various markers and publications.

OHID also has regional roles which are covered later in this section.

### NHS England

NHS England is a Category 1 responder, and it is responsible for NHS emergency preparedness resilience and response (EPRR) in healthcare delivery in England. NHS England is required to ensure that organisations have system-wide emergency plans for a range of incidents including preparation for adverse and extreme weather events.

The NHS England EPRR plans are linked with UKHSA weather guidance and alert systems to ensure the health system has prepared ahead of seasonal weather warnings, as well as during an adverse weather alert. This aims to protect patients, employees and the public in need for medical assistance from weather related harm. In situations of severe weather disruptions to health care delivery, DHSC and the Cabinet Office coordinate emergency activities, ensuring support is provided to ease NHS England pressures.

NHS England provides national leadership for improving health care outcomes and supports the local [integrated care systems \(ICSs\)](#).

### Met Office

The Met Office is the UK's national weather service and a Category 2 responder. Its Public Weather Service (PWS) provides forecasts for the public to help them make informed decisions about their everyday activities.

The Met Office issues weather warnings through the National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) for severe weather that has potential for impact to the UK. The NSWWS is covered later in the sub-section on early warning systems. The Met Office ensures adverse weather alerts are disseminated to government departments and agencies responsible for cascading weather warnings to minimise the impacts of adverse weather events in several sectors.

UKHSA and the Met Office delivered a dedicated platform for Heat-Health Alerts in May 2023 and the Cold Health Alerts in October 2023. UKHSA and the Met Office carry out horizon scanning to assess level of weather impacts forecasted over a 3-month period as well as weekly review.

During an adverse or adverse weather event with a with high impact (and medium or high likelihood) on health, they issue an alert with information on the level of probability of impact and for which regions within England. UKHSA is responsible to cascade the alert information to government departments, health and social care sectors, local authorities and the public to ensure the alert is well communicated with guidance and actions to protect public health and reduce pressures on the health and social care sector.

### Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA supports the delivery of governmental policy and how it is shaped and delivered through partnership at the local level.

The LGA provides a range of practical support to local councils to enable them to exploit the opportunities that the approach to improvement provides. The LGA produces guidance and provides advice to councils, allowing them to respond effectively to adverse weather events (as well as providing other support).

The LGA also represents the interests of local authorities at national level, supporting development of relevant plans and policies that affect them, and that they will deliver as part of their devolved responsibilities.

### Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

MHCLG is responsible for delivering housing, supporting communities, overseeing local government, and planning and building safety.

MHCLG's Resilience and Emergencies Division (RED) play a significant role in strengthening local communities, by providing a link between central government and local partners in preparing for, responding to and recovering from incidents and emergencies. They are an essential part of CCA structures, with emergency response operations locally, working closely with the Cabinet Office's COBR Unit and lead with governmental departments and across LRFs.

MHCLG are the lead for LRFs coordination. LRFs are multi-agency partnerships made up of Category 1 and 2 responders from local public services, including the emergency services as well as local voluntary organisations.

As part of the NAP, DHSC, MHCLG and UKHSA work in partnership on how best to tailor respective commitments and actions such as improving housing conditions to address overheating in buildings and prevent ill health.

### Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Defra is the lead department for the flooding capability workstream, working closely with both the Environment Agency and Cabinet Office. During flood events and emergencies. Defra provides daily situation reports detailing impact of flood event in areas affected, transport disruption, updates from lead governmental bodies such as MHCLG, Department for Transport, DESNZ, DCMS and agencies such as the Environment Agency, with reports on actions and communications.

UKHSA supports Defra flood relief plans, focussing on health impacts communications, as well as disseminating guidance material to healthcare sector. Defra is lead government body for coordinating working groups across governmental and executive agencies to develop strategies and actions based on the climate risks and opportunities reported in the [UK Climate Change Risk Assessment](#).

## Regional delivery

The UKHSA and OHID have regional teams and functions as well as its national functions described earlier in this document. The expertise from these 2 organisations is critical for the health protection (UKHSA) and health improvement (OHID) functions. Both organisations work closely with regional organisations and local organisations (including local authority Directors of Public Health, health and social care providers and third sector organisations) to ensure that the plans made for response as well as longer term adaptation or mitigation to adverse weather are comprehensive and alert to the risks derived from severe weather events.

The detail of this section focuses primarily on those organisations that have responsibilities in public health, healthcare, and social care service delivery. There are other relevant organisations within planning for adverse weather events that have responsibilities additional to those listed here that must ensure that they have adequate plans in place to protect service delivery and adaptation measures to mitigate the impact of adverse weather events.

Many organisations mentioned in this plan have different organisational boundaries that may not align to each other. There will be overlaps and differences between organisations and the approaches that these regional and local delivery arms take. It is for regional and local colleagues and organisations to ensure that they are cognisant of these boundaries and ensure they engage comprehensively with others within their footprint.

### [UKHSA pan-regional Health Protection Teams](#)

The UKHSA has 9 regions in England:

- North East
- North West
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- East Midlands
- East of England
- West Midlands
- South East
- South West
- London

[UKHSA regional teams](#) lead UKHSA's regional role in emergency planning, resilience, and response, which contributes to national resilience before and in times of crisis. They work closely with directors of public health, integrated care boards (ICBs), local resilience forums (LRFs), to integrate health protection measures into wider emergency response strategies. Their role extends beyond immediate incident management – they actively support resilience planning which ensures local healthcare systems can withstand adverse weather events. They also contribute to the assessment of adverse weather risks as part of the development of community risk registers. UKHSA regional teams also support training exercises alongside health and emergency services, testing response capabilities and constantly improving regional preparedness.

### [OHID regional](#)

OHID's regional teams support the delivery of national and regional priorities for prevention and health inequalities and ensure that there is a joint approach to public health, building strong interfaces with different teams and areas of public health across the regional system. OHID's regional teams are focused on delivering strategies for health improvement, which include the impact of the built environment in health and wellbeing. OHID Regions provide a single point of access to the full range of OHID's specialist skills and knowledge to support the implementation of public health initiatives at local and regional levels within a nationally consistent framework.

## Local delivery

It is the responsibility of each local area to ensure that preparedness and response plans are created, tested, and regularly monitored to ensure high quality services, and to protect health and wellbeing of their populations, patients and clients during adverse weather events.

This plan provides recommendations for local authorities and their NHS partners. Local authorities should consider the actions and activities in this plan and adapt them as appropriate to their local needs.

Local authorities and the NHS England should use the plan as a guide for wider adverse weather planning and other climate change adaptation arrangements. Local teams from integrated care boards, NHS England and UKHSA will support, advise, and help to coordinate these adaptation arrangements as required by local areas and appropriate for their demographics.

All local authorities, NHS commissioners and their partner organisations should consider the suggested actions in this plan and familiarise themselves with the alerts. Local adverse plans and climate change adaptation plans should be reviewed accordingly with the recommendations of this plan and associated guidance.

It is the responsibility of each local area to ensure that preparedness and response plans are drawn up and tested. While not an exhaustive list, these responsibilities include:

- taking a system-wide, strategic approach to protect the health of their population, patients, clients, and workforce during adverse weather events (linking with structures including LRFs, LHRPS, ICSs and others), working together to deliver clearly defined plans that implement
- developing plans of action to reduce exposure to adverse indoor temperatures (either hot or cold)
- developing a specific and detailed plan for how they will protect the most vulnerable people in their local areas in the case of adverse weather events
- ensuring that health and social care providers, and their associated systems, have preparedness plans in place for a variety of adverse weather events
- delivering training and planning for professionals and staff across their services in response to adverse weather
- ensuring that their estates, facilities and other physical infrastructure are prepared for the impacts of a variety of adverse weather events, including –
  - ensuring the wellbeing of patients, clients and their workforce in these settings
  - ensuring that service delivery can continue in each of those adverse weather events
- developing a framework and plans for how voluntary, community and third sector organisations will meet all these requirements for the services that they deliver on behalf of health and social care commissioners or systems

More detail on these responsibilities, and how they should be actioned in relation to specific types of adverse weather incident, can be found in accompanying action cards that will be developed alongside this plan.

### [Integrated care systems \(ICSs\)](#)

ICSs are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and social care services, and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area. ICSs bring partner organisations together to improve outcomes in population health and healthcare, tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access, enhance productivity and value for money and help the NHS support broader social and economic development.

For the purposes of adverse weather planning, ICSs and its constituent statutory groups and local health and social care organisations, including local authorities, NHS organisations and others, should ensure that there is adequate consideration and planning for broad regional co-operation and planning for adverse weather events to protect patients and clients.

ICSs are constituted of 2 core statutory groups:

- integrated care partnerships (ICPs) – shared group of the ICB, all upper-tier local authorities and local partners focused on improving the health, wellbeing and care of the population within its remit
- integrated care boards (ICBs) – focused on meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging provision of health services in the ICS area

ICPs and ICBs both have statutory remits that require protection of public health and service delivery in the event of adverse weathers events. As a Category 1 responder, the ICB must lead on the development of local resilience plans to ensure delivery affecting one or multiple areas within their footprint and creating strategies and approaches to ensure health and wellbeing of the public, patients and staff. It is for these ICB areas to define and develop these approaches. NHS England and ICBs will co-ordinate health services at the LRF level, and ICBs will ensure co-ordination across local ICSs. The LHRP and local EPRR planning groups facilitate this partnership working.

Local authorities in the [Integrated Care System](#) area are responsible for social care and public health functions, as well as other vital services for local people and businesses. ICBs and ICPs will support, advise, and help to coordinate these arrangements as required, and will need to consider the effects of adverse weather events on the broader population groups in their footprints.

### [Local authorities](#)

Local authorities are local government authorities with varying levels of remit, dependent on the level of responsibility devolved to them. Responsibilities for elements of planning for adverse weather events are devolved to local authorities, though depending on local arrangements these may take place in other fora, or delivered by or in partnership with other local or regional organisations or providers.

Local authorities are Category 1 responders under the CCA and have duties to discharge as part of the act. Local authority county councils and unitary authorities are responsible for social care, public health (in partnership with and supported by OHID, UKHSA and directors of public health), emergency planning and housing, among many other responsibilities. These functions and others are critical for health and wellbeing of their population but also ensuring continuity in the services they provide in adverse weather.

Local authorities must undertake their own local planning, as well as contributing to and taking forward regional plans and other plans as part of LRFs, ICPs and other planning structures. Local authority county councils and unitary authorities are responsible for the delivery and management of adult and children's social care in their local area. As such, local authorities are responsible for developing plans to ensure that these services are resilient in the event of adverse weather that risks the delivery of these services or the health and safety of their clients. This includes those that may provide services on their behalf.

Two-tier local authorities will need to ensure that both tiers understand their individual and collective roles and responsibilities in mitigating against, preparing for and responding to adverse weather events and coordinate their plans accordingly. These roles and responsibilities should be clearly reflected in their own local planning and staff need to be aware of their roles, and that of their services, in the event of adverse weather.

### Social care providers

Social care in England includes both adult social care and children's social care. Local authorities are responsible for assessing an individual's needs and, if eligible, funding their care. Care may be provided by a wide range of organisations including independent home and residential care providers and voluntary sector organisations. Some people employ personal assistants to provide their care and support.

Care or support may be provided in care or nursing homes (residential care) or in the individual's own home (domiciliary care). Children's social care provides care and support to children with physical or learning disabilities and looked after children. Adult social care provides care and support to adults with physical or learning disabilities, or physical or mental illnesses.

### Local resilience forums (LRFs)

Local resilience forums (LRFs) bring together emergency planning and response arrangements run by local government, the NHS, and other partners to prepare for and respond to adverse weather events such as cold weather, heatwaves, and flooding. To coordinate a multi-agency response during severe incidents, LRF's convene a strategic coordinating group (SCG) to ensure an effective, collaborative approach.

LRFs are multi-agency partnerships comprising Category 1 and Category 2 responders, as well as voluntary organisations within local areas, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). They play a critical role in ensuring resilience by developing, maintaining, and regularly reviewing community risk registers (CRRs) to assess, mitigate, and prepare for region-specific hazards, aligning local emergency planning with the National Risk Register (NRR).

This ensures that risks such as extreme weather events are systematically evaluated, and appropriate preventive measures are in place.

LRFs also adapt, review, and audit the distribution of weather alerts across local health and social care systems – ensuring independent care providers and frontline responders receive timely information and can take appropriate actions immediately upon issue. They should seek assurance from organisations and key stakeholders that recommended actions outlined in weather alerts are being implemented effectively.

Local areas should tailor and integrate this guidance into their own procedures, ensuring alignment with specific local needs and requirements. It is the responsibility of each LRF and local authority to develop, test, and refine preparedness and response plans to maintain operational readiness. LRFs facilitate strategic coordination of commissioning, planning, and response at the local level, in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and guidance issued by the Cabinet Office, DHSC, UKHSA, NHS England and MHCLG.

### Local Health Resilience Partnerships (LHRPs)

LHRPs are a local strategic forum for joint planning for incidents and consist of local health organisations to deliver on national EPRR strategies in the context of local risks. These partnerships will support the health sector's contribution to the multiagency planning through the LRFs.

LHRPs ensure that the health sector in local areas co-ordinate multi-agency planning and response, based on their responsibilities and the remits of agencies and providers in that local area. This includes representatives from directors of public health (as part of local authorities), and regional directors of public health (as part of OHID). LHRPs are not a statutory organisation and accountability for EPRR remains with individual organisation.

### Directors of public health (DsPH)

DsPH are responsible for public health, within their local authority and have a number of statutory and non-statutory duties, particularly in health protection, health improvement, and healthcare public health.

DsPH are responsible for exercising their local authority's functions in planning for, and responding to, emergencies that present a risk to the public's health. This includes plans and responses to adverse weather events, and DsPH will use the AWHP to support the delivery of these responsibilities in their local areas.

It is the responsibility of the DsPH to provide leadership on this emergency preparedness and response, but also to work through LRFs to ensure that effective and tested plans are in place for the wider health sector to protect the local population from risks to its health. DsPH also work with colleagues in their local authority on children and adult social care services, as well as NHS colleagues, and should ensure that their resilience planning activities include continuity for these services.

Vulnerable populations within specific footprints must have explicit plans in place to ensure their unique needs are planned for. Additionally, DsPH should create their plans in a way that are cognisant of differential impacts on health, and health inequalities in local populations of their local authority footprint.

### Health and wellbeing boards (HWBs)

HWBs act as forums for commissioners across the NHS, social care and public health systems and are responsible for Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) and health and wellbeing strategies to inform commissioning. Engagement with these boards for the long-term strategic preparation for health impacts related to climate change mitigation and adaptation is critical.

This will help to reduce the risks and harness the opportunities to improve health more holistically which will include aspects such as tackling the poor-quality housing.

HWBs are statutory committees of local authorities, and ICB and ICPs must have regard and build on the work of HWBs. HWBs must be engaged in adverse weather planning to ensure that communities, business, civil society organisations and the wider system are engaged and prepared for the nature of adverse weather plans when implemented. These organisations and groups must collaborate on a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. All organisations must carefully consider the needs of vulnerable groups within their local populations. DsPH also sit on the HWB for their area, and this is a statutory requirement.

## Other governmental departments, agencies, and regulators

The UK government as a whole is responsible for keeping the population healthy and well. Each of the organisations covered in this action have roles, responsibilities, functions, or policies in place that support health and wellbeing of the public, patients or clients during adverse weather events. While these are not explicitly part or mapped across directly to the detail of this plan, these roles, responsibilities, functions or policies are adjunct to work in this area and should link into the detail and broad approaches of adverse weather planning.

This section describes these roles, responsibilities, functions, or policies broadly. More detail can be found with the relevant government departments and organisations below.

### Care Quality Commission (CQC)

CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. CQC ensures health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourages care services to improve. CQC covers the issue of safe environments for people who use services as part of our quality assessment framework. The CQC reviews this within the 'safety' and 'well-led' domains, which are 2 of the 5 domains CQC looks at when it assesses quality. The CQC highlights the issue of adverse weather, and appropriate emergency planning and preparedness to the providers it regulates through various channels, including signposting to guidance, and coverage on social media channels during adverse weather events.

The CQC assesses this preparedness in:

- regulation 12 – safe care and treatment
- regulation 15 – premises and equipment
- regulation 17 – good governance

#### Ministry of Defence (MoD)

The MoD and the armed forces can deliver a critical resilience function in the case of serious or significant events across the UK, including those as a result from adverse weather, when civil capabilities and capacities are overwhelmed by an incident. If civil authorities require assistance, then military aid to the civil authorities (MACA) allows them to draw upon specific expertise held within defence, to deliver additional capacity to local responders and organisations, or intervene directly in the most serious events. Further details of military support to civil capabilities in the event of serious or significant events can be found in the [Joint Doctrine Publication](#).

#### Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

DESNZ holds responsibility for the UK government's energy resilience in the event of weather-related hazards, as well as other civil contingencies and disruption to energy supplies.

[DESNZ publishes detailed guidance for the resilience of UK energy supplies](#) in the event of adverse weather emergencies.

DESNZ is also responsible for areas including fuel poverty and policies relating to that, such as winter fuel allowances and other policies initiatives to support consumers and organisations to maintain stable temperatures or environments during adverse weather events.

#### Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

DWP keeps people healthy and well through welfare payments and benefits initiatives when they are unable to work or require additional support. Their responsibilities play an important role in health and wellbeing and services support population health protection work. As well as welfare and benefits, DWP also administers the Warm Home Discount Scheme, Cold Weather Payment and Winter Fuel payment.

Public health messages from UKHSA, NHS England and AgeUK are distributed alongside the information regarding DWP services. These messages provide a crucial function in ensuring that some of the most vulnerable people in the UK are receiving advice on how to stay well during adverse weather events.

#### Environment Agency (EA)

The EA is an executive agency of Defra responsible for regulating major industry and waste, treatment of contaminated land, water quality regulations, fisheries, managing of riverways and improving conservation and ecology in England.

EA is also responsible for managing flood risk and support the local flood authorities that prepare and protect local communities from flood events and their recovery.

### Health Safety Executive (HSE)

HSE is the UK's national regulator for workplace health and safety, their responsibility is to develop guidance and deliver standards to prevent work-related death, injury, or ill-health. They are an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the DWP.

The HSE's role in ensuring that places of work are able to maintain safe environments for the workforce is critical. All settings and organisations in this plan must comply with these

regulations and plan for eventualities in adverse weather to ensure the health and wellbeing of all who work in services in these settings or work in them to ensure service continuity.

### Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

The MoJ is responsible for prisons and justice and must put in place plans to protect prisoners and staff in jails in the event of adverse weather. These plans will need to be developed to balance the considerations of prisoner and staff wellbeing as well as safety, security and order.

### Department for Transport (DfT)

It is the responsibility of DfT and its executive agencies (such as National Highways and Network Rail) to create guidance and plans to respond to the effects of adverse weather on travellers and transport infrastructure.

### Department for Education (DfE)

DfE is responsible for: teaching and learning for children in the early years and in primary schools and secondary schools, apprenticeships, further education and higher education, as well as supporting children and young people to achieve more, and that local services protect children.

It is for the DfE to support local authorities, schools and higher education institutions to develop tools and approaches to adverse weather to ensure that learners of all ages are able to stay well and enjoy a positive learning environment.

### Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

SAGE provides scientific and technical advice to support government decision makers during emergencies. While many emergencies can be handled locally without the need for assistance from central government, sometimes the extent, scale, duration, severity, and potential complexity of an emergency mean that assistance and/or support is required.

SAGE is activated by the Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR) in response and/or recovery for certain level 2 or 3 emergencies requiring expert technical or scientific advice, or other criteria leading to the activation of SAGE as determined by COBR. Adverse weather and associated level 2 or 3 emergencies may require activation of a SAGE group.

### Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)

Medicines, healthcare products and blood components for transfusion require careful storage and have specific requirements around the environmental conditions for their use, particularly relating to temperature (though this will vary by product or medicine). The MHRA has guidance, regulations and requirements about storage of medicines, medical products and blood components.

## Academia, societies and professional organisations

### Health Protection Research Unit (HPRU)

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) HPRU consists of 14 HPRUs across England, each HPRU undertakes high quality research that is used by UKHSA to keep the public safe from current and emerging public health threats.

The NIHR HPRU in Environmental Change and Health is a partnership between the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UKHSA, the Met Office and University College London. It undertakes a programme of research and training to improve understanding of the impacts of climate change and other environmental challenges on health, the actions needed to protect health, and the opportunities provided by policies aimed at reducing emissions of greenhouse gases for the improvement of health overall.

The NIHR HPRU in Emergency Preparedness and Response is a partnership between King's College London, UKHSA and the University of East Anglia. The mission of this HPRU includes the development of research to minimise the impact of emergencies, such as episodes of majorflooding, heatwaves, and climate change.

### Other academic partnerships

In October 2022, UKHSA launched our Centre for Climate and Health Security (CCHS) to lead UKHSA's climate health activity, providing a focus for partnerships and collaborations with academia, local authorities and other public sector organisations. The creation of this centre will also streamline the academia engagement with UKHSA on the topics of climate change, weather and health.

The UKHSA's academic partnerships provide rich sources of research and data on which the UKHSA can provide clear evidence for its interventions to support public health and adverse weather planning. This information is critical to ensure that interventions are effective, and to provide research that supports the minimisation of health impacts of emergencies.

Current partners include:

- partners previously mentioned in the HPRU subsection
- Imperial College London
- University of Bristol
- University of Brighton
- University of Surrey
- University of Exeter
- London School of Economics
- University College London
- University of the West of England
- Newcastle University
- Oxford University
- University of Leeds
- University of Glasgow

### Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH)

The ADPH represents DsPH on public health policy at the local, regional, national and international and provides a professional network for DsPH to collaborate, and to share ideas and best practice. These networks and guidance provide direction and support for colleagues in local areas to implement strategies and adaptation activities for adverse weather.

### Royal Colleges

Medical Royal Colleges are professional bodies in the UK that set curricula for doctors in training, organise elements of supervision and set standards for medical practitioners for all doctors within that specialty.

Medical Royal Colleges provide strategies for ensuring the work of their practitioners is sustainable and resilient to climate change, including adverse weather. They do this by updating curricula, providing bespoke training and providing best practice examples and resourcing to support their members to practice effectively in the context of a changing climate.

### Faculty of Public Health (FPH)

The FPH's role is to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities and national populations. For adverse weather, they support public health practitioners with data, research and best practice to support the development of strategies to protect populations in defined geographical areas, ensuring protection of the whole population in that area (including specific attention to vulnerable populations).

## Voluntary and community services

UKHSA encourages voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to use this plan to develop their own local plans. There are sector specific guidance and action cards available to help in planning and preparation for adverse weather.

UKHSA also encourages the VCS to connect with their local authorities, ICSs, local NHS trusts, commissioners or other relevant bodies identify the opportunities and any gaps in their planning, and how their respective system can work effectively together for adverse weather planning.

NHS England and local authority commissioners and providers should take opportunities for closer partnership working with these groups.

VCS covers a wide variety of organisations from those with a very specialist focus on a specific condition or type of provision, organisations focusing on a specific client group or community, broader-based providers, emergency response organisations, campaigning organisations, representative groups, community centres. The broad range of support different groups can provide should be considered at all levels of planning and response, and it is important that VCS partners are involved at the earliest opportunity, as trusted links take time to build.

VCS providers that specialise in health and social care are vital and many of these will already be well linked into the health and care system; however, the wider voluntary and community sector (for example, community centres, recreational groups, social groups, parish councils in rural areas and neighbourhood forums in urban areas) can also have an important role to play, particularly for example in reaching vulnerable people not already engaged with statutory services – these organisations are much less likely to be linked in with statutory bodies or providers and may need information to understand their role and why adverse weather planning and response is relevant to them.

The wider VCS can also be involved as a provider of resources, such as equipment (blankets, sleeping bags, stoves), facilities (emergency accommodation) or people (volunteers, signposting). Strong links with local older people's forums are essential, providing partners with information to help identify and support those most at risk.

Local infrastructure organisations and local umbrella bodies are a good initial route into the local voluntary and community sector. They can communicate messages, identify organisations that represent communities and co-ordinate partnerships of sector bodies.

Some national VCS organisations that have roles in adverse weather preparedness and response are listed here. This is not presented as an exhaustive list but rather as an indication of organisations offering support. There will also be organisations and charities that provide specific levels of support in local or regional areas.

#### [Voluntary Community Sector Emergencies Partnership \(VCSEP\)](#)

VCSEP is hosted by the British Red Cross and help to build local, regional, and national systems and processes to bring together organisations inside the sector and beyond. These ensure that organisations understand each other's needs and capabilities prior, during and in the recovery stage of an emergency. They have information and links from various government agencies including the UKHSA and voluntary sector organisations to cold and heat guidance for the public.

#### [British Red Cross](#)

The British Red Cross provides practical, local and emotional support to people around the UK. In the event of adverse weather events, the British Red Cross provides preparation advice, how to respond to an emergency and stay safe during adverse weather events.

#### [Town and Country Planning Association \(TCPA\)](#)

The TCPA works to support people and organisations to create healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for all. This includes publishing research, training, influencing policy and supporting delivery of actions and best practice.

#### [AgeUK](#)

AgeUK is a charity focused on supporting older people in a variety of difficulties and emergencies that they may face. In the event of adverse weather, they provide wellbeing support to those affected.

### Homeless Link, Shelter and Crisis

Organisations such as Homeless Link, Shelter and Crisis provide invaluable support to homeless people in the UK. In the event of adverse weather, these organisations provide support directly to homeless people on staying safe in those conditions.

### National Energy Action (NEA)

The affordable warmth charity, National Energy Action (NEA), has previously worked with other partnership referral schemes across the country with frontline staff. NEA advocates asking 3 main questions at contact assessment stages to identify those who are at risk of living in fuel poverty and in cold homes.

## Business and retail sector

The plan also provides recommendations for the business and retail sectors. In future iterations of the plan, UKHSA will wish to work with the private sector to consider how to develop guidance for businesses, companies, and small and medium enterprises and to strengthen public-private partnerships to improve the nation's resilience to adverse weather events. This will require the establishment of links with organisations representing the voice of major industries and small and medium-sized enterprise associations.

## Public

The public, encompassing individuals and community groups, plays a pivotal role in disseminating information, promoting awareness, and engaging in preventive actions that align with the AWHP's objectives. By leveraging the collective action of the public, the actions of this plan can significantly extend its reach and effectiveness, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive timely guidance and support. The engagement of the public through focus groups, feedback surveys and collaboration with grassroot partners may facilitate a more integrated and community-centric response to adverse weather, enabling a coordinated effort that amplifies the impact of existing measures and introduces innovative strategies for health protection and climate adaptation, in alignment with the P1 (people focus) and P3 (engagement of people) of this plan.

## Appendix 2. Heat guidance

Full guidance available at the [Hot weather and health: guidance and advice](#). The public advice is also available in BSL and 11 other languages.

Name	Type	Target population	Audience	Organisation(s)	Latest review	Next review
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during hot weather: social care managers, staff, and carers</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable people	Care home managers	UKHSA, DHSC	Mar 2024	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during hot weather: healthcare professionals</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable people	H&SC professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	Mar 2024	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during hot weather: people homeless and sleeping rough</a>	Guidance	People homeless and sleeping rough	Local authorities, third sector	UKHSA, LGA	Jul 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Looking after children and those in early years settings before and during hot weather: teachers and other educational professionals</a>	Guidance	Children	Teachers and related professionals	UKHSA, DfE	Jul 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings</a>	Guidance	Event participants	Event organisers	UKHSA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Guidance on running events safely</a>	Guidance	Event participants	Event organisers	HSE	N/A	N/A
<a href="#">Beat the heat: staying safe in hot weather</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Beat the heat: keep cool at home checklist</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Beat the heat: poster</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Hot weather risks and their impact on health</a>	Slide set	Public, vulnerable people	H&SC, third sector	UKHSA	March 2025	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert action card for commissioners</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Local authorities	UKHSA, LGA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28

Name	Type	Target population	Audience	Organisation(s)	Latest review	Next review
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert summary action card for commissioners</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Local authorities	UKHSA, LGA	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert action card for providers</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	H&SC professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	Mar 2024	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert summary action card for providers</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	H&SC professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert action card for the voluntary and community sector</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Third Sector	UKHSA, VCSEP	May 2023	Q4 2027/28
<a href="#">Heat-Health Alert summary action card for the voluntary and community sector</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Third Sector	UKHSA, VCSEP	May 2023	Q4 2027/28

## Appendix 3. Cold guidance

Full guidance available at the [Cold weather and health: guidance and advice](#). The public advice is also available in BSL and 11 other languages.

Name	Type	Target population	Audience	Organisation(s)	Latest review	Next review
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during cold weather: for adult social care managers</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable people	Care home managers	UKHSA, DHSC	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during cold weather: healthcare professionals</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable people	Healthcare professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Supporting vulnerable people before and during cold weather: people homeless and sleeping rough</a>	Guidance	People homeless and sleeping rough	Local authorities, third sector	UKHSA, LGA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Looking after children and those in early years settings before and during cold weather: teachers and other educational professionals</a>	Guidance	Children	Teachers and related professionals	UKHSA, DfE	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Top tips for keeping warm and well this winter (print version)</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	Age UK, NHS England, UKHSA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather (poster)</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert action card for commissioners</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Local authorities	UKHSA, LGA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert summary action card for commissioners</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Local authorities	UKHSA, LGA	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert action card for health and social care providers</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	H&SC professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert summary action card for hospitals and other healthcare settings</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Healthcare professionals	UKHSA, NHS England	Oct 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert summary action card for care homes and other residential settings</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Social care professionals	UKHSA, DHSC	Oct 2023	Q2 2028/29

Name	Type	Target population	Audience	Organisation(s)	Latest review	Next review
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert summary action card for services delivering care to people in their homes</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Social care professionals	UKHSA, DHSC	Oct 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert action card for the voluntary and community sector</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Third sector	UKHSA, VCSEP	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Cold-Health Alert summary action card for the voluntary and community sector</a>	Summary action card	Vulnerable people	Third sector	UKHSA, VCSEP	Sept 2023	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">Health risks of cold homes: data sources</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable, at-risk	LAs, H&SC, DHLUC	UKHSA	Jan 2019	N/A
<a href="#">Cold weather risks and their impact on health</a>	Slide set	Public	H&SC, LA	UKHSA	March 2025	Q2 2028/29
<a href="#">NICE guideline NG6: Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes</a>	Guidance	Public, vulnerable, at-risk	H&SC	NICE	Mar 2015	N/A
<a href="#">Helping to prevent winter deaths and illnesses associated with cold homes – a quick guide for home caremanagers</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable, at-risk	Social care	NICE	N/A	N/A
<a href="#">Quality standard QS 117: Preventing EWD and illnesses associated with coldhomes</a>	Guidance	Vulnerable, at-risk	H&SC	NICE	Mar 2016	N/A

## Appendix 4. Flood and drought guidance

Full guidance available at the [Flooding: health guidance and advice](#) and [Public health impact of drought: advice for the public](#).

Name	Type	Target population	Audience	Organisation(s)	Latest review	Next review
<a href="#">Flooding and health: public advice</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	Oct 2024	Q3 2028/29
<a href="#">Flood-health action card for commissioners</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Local authorities	UKHSA, LGA	March 2025	Q3 2028/29
<a href="#">Flood-health action card for health and social care providers</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	H&SC professionals	UKHSA, DHSC, NHS England	March 2025	Q3 2028/29
<a href="#">Flood-health action card for the voluntary and community sector</a>	Action card	Vulnerable people	Third sector	UKHSA, VCSEP	March 2025	Q3 2028/29
<a href="#">Flooding and health: advice for frontline responders</a>	Guidance	Public	NHS, LA, H&SC, BlueLight services, third sector	UKHSA	Oct 2024	Q3 2028/29
<a href="#">Public health impact of drought: advice for the public</a>	Public advice	Public	Public	UKHSA	Jul 2022	Q3 2028/29

## Appendix 5. Activities

Activity code	Action area	Description	Delivery group	Accountable organisation	Other organisations	Quarter	Reference
PL24SD07	Service delivery	Organisations should also ensure that their local planning and relevant guidance are updated to specifically take account of the weather and health alerting service and AWHP actions	Local	N/A	MHCLG, LGA, NHS England	All	SED24R10, SED24R21, SED24R22, SED24R31
PL25SD01	Service delivery	To develop a comprehensive methodology framework for updating and reviewing guidance and evidence under the AWHP	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3	AR23G1, AR23E2
PL24CB01	Capacity building	To host the Adverse cold preparedness webinar	National	UKHSA	Met Office, NHS England, DHSC, MHCLG, DESZN, AgeUK, ADPH, VCSEP	Q2	SED24R09, SED24R15, SED24R59, SED24R76
PL24CB02	Capacity building	To host the Adverse heat preparedness webinar	National	UKHSA	Met Office, NHS England, DHSC, MHCLG, ADPH, VCSEP	Q4	SED24R09, SED24R13, SED24R15, SED24R18
PL24CB03	Capacity building	AWHP pre-recorded operational webinar	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	SED24R09, SED24R13, SED24R15, SED24R18
PL25CB01	Capacity building	AWHP MicroTeach	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	SED24R09, SED24R13, SED24R15, SED24R18
PL25OA01	Organisational arrangements	To develop a product for local-level planning and AWHP implementation	National	UKHSA	MHCLG, LGA, ADPH, VCSEP	Q3	AR23P3, SED24R02, SED24R10, SED24R14, SED24R15, SED24R20, SED24R30, SED24R31, SED24R33, SED24R34, SED24R67
PL25OA02	Organisational arrangements	To deliver an annual exercise with key partners on cold preparedness	National	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office, DHSC, MHCLG, NHS England, VCSEP	Q2	SED24,R08
PL25OA03	Organisational arrangements	To deliver an annual exercise with key partners on heat preparedness	National	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office, DHSC, MHCLG, NHS England, VCSEP	Q1	SED24,R08
PL25OA04	Organisational arrangements	Establish the Thunderstorm Asthma Expert Working Group	National	UKHSA			N/A
PL24CM01	Communication	Review of the public UKHSA Heat-Health Communication materials	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	SED24R08, SED24R11, SED24R16, SED24R24
PL24CM02	Communication	Review of the public UKHSA Cold-Health Communication materials	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q2	SED24R08, SED24R43, SED24R44, SED24R46, SED24R52, SED24R55

Activity code	Action area	Description	Delivery group	Accountable organisation	Other organisations	Quarter	Reference
PL24CM11	Communication	To engage with regional and national media partners before and during adverse weather events	National / Regional	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office, DEFRA, MHCLG, DHSC	All	SED24R08, SED24R16
PL25CM01	Communication	Development of UKHSA CCHS's digital	National	UKHSA	N/A	All	SED24R08, SED24R11, SED24R16, SED24R24
PL25CM02	Communication	Define methods to collect data in terms of media engagement	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q2	AR23P6
PL25CM03	Communication	User survey to collect feedback from users of our heat mortality Official Statistics	Public	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	N/A
PL24RM01	Risk management	Horizon Scanning - UKHSA and Met Office meet at least weekly during the Weather Health Alert seasons	National	UKHSA	Met Office	All	N/A
PL25RM01	Risk management	Implement an adaptive risk management framework for adverse weather events	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	N/A
PL25RM02	Risk management	Contribute to adverse weather risk assessment for NSRA and NRR as required	National	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office	All	N/A
PL24EW01	Early warning systems	Review of health impacts over the heat and cold seasons to inform review of alerting thresholds, and to inform JDRA process and decision making process.	National	UKHSA	Met Office	Q4	MR23WHA1, SED24R11
PL24EW03	Early warning systems	Explore the addition of further specific action cards and guidance to be included with alert emails for providers, commissioners, third sector and national government departments.	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	MR23WHA7
PL24EW05	Early warning systems	To conduct hot weather JDRA	National	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office, DHSC, MHCLG	Q1/Q2	SED24R12
PL24EW06	Early warning systems	To issue cold-health alerts	National	UKHSA	Met Office	Q1/Q2	SED24R36
PL24EW07	Early warning systems	To conduct cold weather JDRA	National	UKHSA	Met Office, Cabinet Office, DHSC, MHCLG	Q3/Q4	N/A
PL24EW08	Early warning systems	To issue heat-health alert	National	UKHSA	Met Office	Q3/Q4	N/A
PL24EW09	Early warning systems	To issue National Patient Safety Alert safety alerts	National	UKHSA	HSE, MHRA	Q1/Q2	SED24R19
PL25EW01	Early warning systems	To implement Weather-Health Alert survey following amber and red alert periods	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	AR23WHA3
PL25EW02	Early warning systems	Refining alerting information provided to users on UKHSA Data Dashboard to be more complete: include overall risk scores	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q2	AR23WHA1

Activity code	Action area	Description	Delivery group	Accountable organisation	Other organisations	Quarter	Reference
PL25EW03	Early warning systems	Exploring technical capability and user needs to assess possibility of delivering WHA at smaller geographic resolution	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	AR23WHA4
PL25EW04	Early warning systems	Publication of monitoring and evaluation recommendations for the weather health alerting system	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	AR23WHA2
PL25EW05	Early warning systems	Reviewing and updating User Guide to reflect any changes to the alerting system or accessibility of WHA pages on the UHSA Data Dashboard	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q2	A23WHA2
PL24RD03	Research and data analysis	UKHSA heat-related mortality report, published as Official Statistics, following RAP principles and Code of Practice for Statistics	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	SED24R35
PL24RD04	Research and data analysis	UKHSA cold-related mortality report, published as Official Statistics in Development, following RAP principles and Code of Practice for Statistics	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3	SED24R35, SED24R39, SED24R63
PL24RD05	Research and data analysis	Syndromic surveillance heat indicators	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1/Q2	SED24R12
PL24RD06	Research and data analysis	Syndromic surveillance cold indicators	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3, Q4	SED24R39
PL25RD01	Research and data analysis	Heat mortality visualisations on UKHSA Data Dashboard Climate section	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	AR3WHA2
PL25RD02	Research and data analysis	Publish first multiple-year epidemiological analysis report for heat mortality	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	N/A
PL25RD03	Research and data analysis	Explore surveillance of morbidity and healthcare usage impacts of heat and cold	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	N/A
PL25RD04	Research and data analysis	Explore feasibility of using forecast data to generate dynamic mortality predictions for use in JDRAs	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	N/A
PL25RD06	Research and data analysis	Work with surveillance partners to understand emerging trends and hazards (e.g. Thunderstorm Asthma or flooding)	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	N/A
PL24QA03	Quality assurance	Review of the AWHP PowerBI platform	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	SED24R28, SED24R64
PL25QA01	Quality assurance	Conduct Internal Audit on the SED development process, adapting UKHSA Guidance standards	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	AR23E3

Activity code	Action area	Description	Delivery group	Accountable organisation	Other organisations	Quarter	Reference
PL25QA02	Quality assurance	Conduct Internal Audit on one guidance development process, using UKHSA Guidance standards	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q1	AR23G2
PL24PD01	Policy development and accountability	Ongoing support to PQ replies and other parliamentary enquiries on climate change and adverse weather	National	UKHSA	DHSC	All	N/A
PL25PD01	Policy development and accountability	Publication of the AWHP Annual Report	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3	SED24R28, SED24R35
PL25PD02	Policy development and accountability	AWHP Annual Report webinar	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3	SED24R68
PL25PD03	Policy development and accountability	Explore mechanisms that allow the AWHP to integrate feedback from delivery groups	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q4	AR23P2
PL25PD04	Policy development and accountability	Development of acknowledgment section in GOV.UK for the AWHP Steering Group, Implementation team members and people involved in guidance reviews	National	UKHSA	N/A	Q3	AR23P5

PL – Plan | SD – Service Delivery | CB – Capacity Building | OA – Organisation Arrangements | CM – Communication | RM – Risk Management | EW – Early Warning System | RD – Research and data analysis | QA – Quality Assurance | PD – Policy development and Accountability | MR – Midterm report | SED – Supporting evidence document | R – Recommendation | G – Guidance | WHA – Weather-Health Alerts | E – Evidence

## Appendix 6. Monitoring

Code	Type	Indicator	Source	Metric	When	Linked activities	Global indicator
PMCT001	Contextual	Children in absolute low-income families (aged 16 and under)	DWP   ONS	Number and %	Annual	N/A	SDG 1.2.2
PMCT002	Contextual	Children in relative low-income families (aged 16 and under)	DWP   ONS	Number and %	Annual	N/A	SDG 1.2.2
PMCT003	Contextual	% Households living in fuel poverty under the Low-Income LowEnergy efficiency (LILEE) indicator definition	Fuel Poverty Statistics, DESNZ	%	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMCT004	Contextual	% of EPC certificates awarded that year which are grade C or above	MHCLG statistical releases	%	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMCT005	Contextual	% of UK house stock likely to be considered 'Cold Homes'	Fuel Poverty Statistics, DESNZ	%	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMCT006	Contextual	% of private and social tenants as overall tenure types	English Housing Survey, MHCLG	%	Annual	N/A	N/A
PMCT007	Contextual	% of occupied dwelling stock that have had problems with damp in last year (modelled)	English Housing Survey, MHCLG	%	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMCT008	Contextual	Number of households initially assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness and owed a statutory homelessness duty	MHCLG	Number	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMAC001	Activity	% of UKHSA recommendations acted on in a period of 1 year	UKHSA	%	Annual	N/A	N/A
PMAC002	Activity	% of UKHSA recommendations acted on a period of 5 years	UKHSA	%	Mar 2028	N/A	N/A
PMAC010	Activity	Review of the public UKHSA Heat-Health Communication materials	UKHSA	Yes/No	Annual	PL24CM01	N/A
PMAC011	Activity	Review of the public UKHSA Cold-Health Communication materials	UKHSA	Yes/No	Annual	PL24CM02	N/A
PMAC026	Activity	UKHSA heat-related mortality report, published as Official Statistics, following RAP principles and Code of Practice for Statistics	UKHSA	Yes/No	Annual	PL24RD03	SDG 1.5.1/13.1. 1 SF A-2
PMAC027	Activity	UKHSA cold-related mortality report, published as Official Statistics in Development, following RAP principles and Code of Practice for Statistics	UKHSA	Yes/No	Annual	PL24RD04	SDG 1.5.1/13.1. 1 SF A-2
PMAC030	Activity	Develop comprehensive methodology framework for updating and reviewing guidance and evidence under the AWHP	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25SD01	N/A
PMAC031	Activity	Develop product for local-level planning and AWHP implementation	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25OA01	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMAC032	Activity	Deliver annual exercise with key partners on cold preparedness	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25OA02	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2

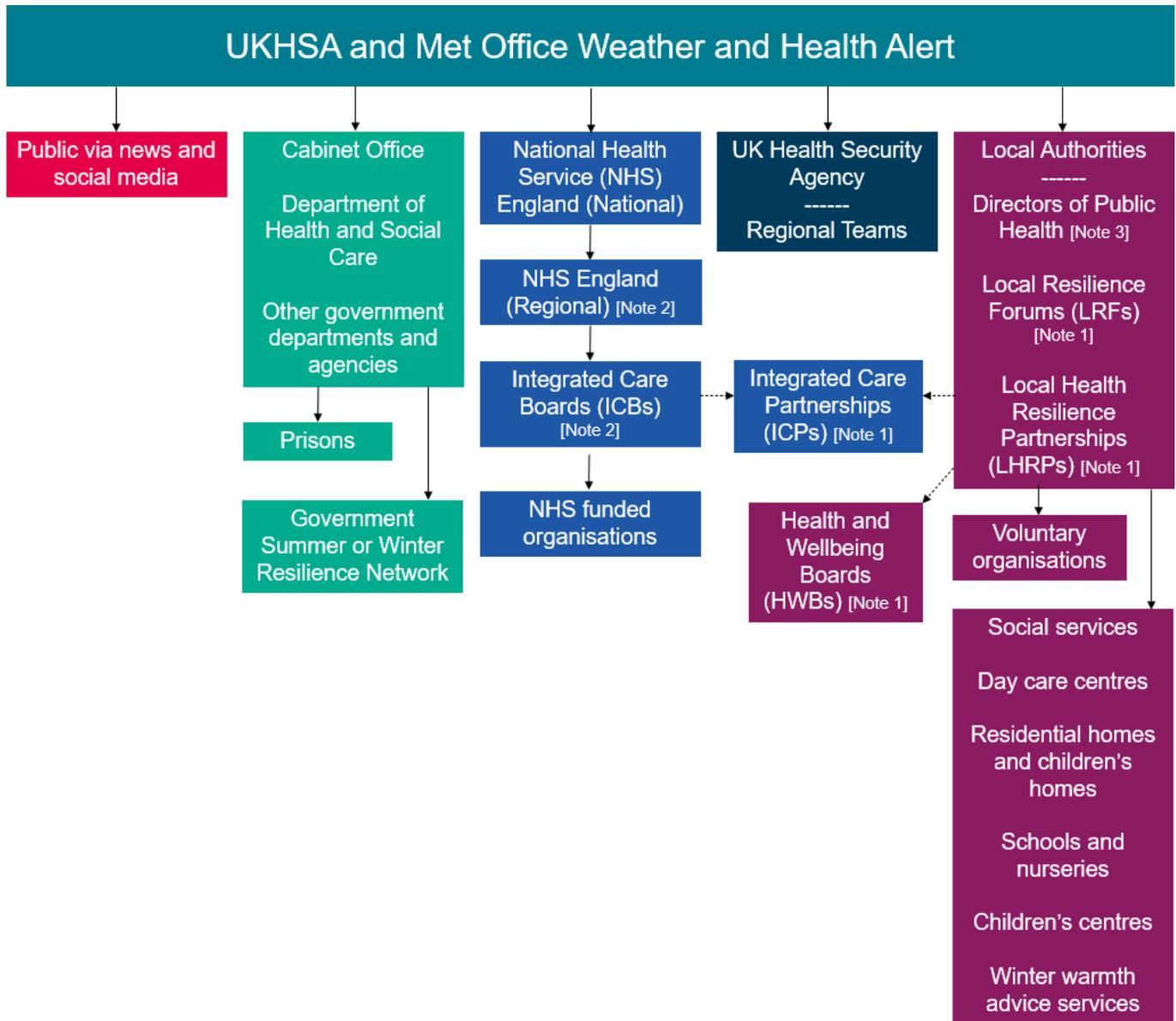
Code	Type	Indicator	Source	Metric	When	Linked activities	Global indicator
PMAC033	Activity	Deliver annual exercise with key partners on heat preparedness	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25OA03	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMAC034	Activity	Establish the Thunderstorm Asthma Expert Working Group	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25OA04	N/A
PMAC035	Activity	Methods to collect data in terms of media engagement developed	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25CM02	N/A
PMAC036	Activity	Implement an adaptive risk management framework for adverse weather events	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25RM01	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMAC037	Activity	WHA section of the UKHSA Data Dashboard updated to include overall risk scores	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25EW02	SF G-2
PMAC038	Activity	Publication of monitoring and evaluation recommendations for the weather health alerting system	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25EW04	SF G-2
PMAC039	Activity	Heat mortality visualisations on UKHSA Data Dashboard Climate section	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25RD01	SDG 1.5.1/13.1. 1 SF A-2
PMAC040	Activity	Publication of the first multiple-year epidemiological analysis report for heat mortality	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25RD02	SDG 1.5.1/13.1. 1 SF A-2
PMAC041	Activity	Conduct Internal Audit on the SED development process, adapting UKHSA Guidance standards	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25QA01	N/A
PMAC042	Activity	Conduct Internal Audit on one guidance development process, using UKHSA Guidance standards	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25QA02	N/A
PMAC043	Activity	Publication of the AWHP Annual Report	UKHSA	Yes/No	Annual	PL25PD01	N/A
PMAC044	Activity	Development of acknowledgment section in GOV.UK for the AWHP Steering Group, Implementation team members and people involved in guidance reviews	UKHSA	Yes/No	Mar 2025	PL25PD04	N/A
PMOU001	Output	Number of registrations to receive AWHP operational webinar recording	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24CB003	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU002	Output	Number of registrations to adverse cold preparedness webinar	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24CB001	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU003	Output	Number of registrations to adverse heat preparedness webinar	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24CB002	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU004	Output	Number of engagements with national media partners before and during adverse weather events	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24CM11	N/A
PMOU005	Output	Number of Horizon Scanning – UKHSA and Met Office meetings	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24RM01	SF G-2
PMOU006	Output	Number of hot weather JDRA	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24EW05	SF G-2
PMOU007	Output	Number of hot cold-health alerts	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24EW06	SF G-2

Code	Type	Indicator	Source	Metric	When	Linked activities	Global indicator
PMOU008	Output	Number of hot cold weather JDRA	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24EW07	SF G-2
PMOU009	Output	Number of hot heat-health alert	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24EW08	SF G-2
PMOU010	Output	Number of National Patient Safety Alert safety alerts issued	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24EW09	SF G-2
PMOU011	Output	Number of registrations to the AWHP Annual Report webinar	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24QA02	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU012	Output	Number of PQ replies and other parliamentary enquiries on climate change and adverse weather	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24PD01	N/A
PMOU013	Output	Number of households claiming cold homes payment	DWP	Number	Annual	N/A	SDG 11.1.1
PMOU014	Output	Information on number of views and downloads of the AWHP related materials added to the annual report of the AWHP	UKHSA	Yes or No	Annual	N/A	N/A
PMOU015	Output	% of LRFs that have at least one representative registering for training sessions or webinars	UKHSA	%	Annual	N/A	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU016	Output	Number of different countries represented in webinars hosted by UKHSA to an international on weather and health	UKHSA	Number	Annual	N/A	N/A
PMOU017	Output	Number of registrations to the AWHP MicroTeach	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL24CB002	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMOU018	Output	Number of answers to the user survey on the heat mortality Official Statistics	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL25CM03	N/A
PMOU019	Output	Number of answers to the Weather-Health Alert survey following amber and red alert periods	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL25EW01	N/A
PMOU020	Output	Number of registrations to the AWHP Annual Report webinar	UKHSA	Number	Annual	PL25PD02	N/A
PMOT001	Outcome	Population vaccination coverage: flu (at-risk individuals)	UKHSA	%	Annual	PL24RD10	N/A
PMOT002	Outcome	% of LRFs with updated and published community risk register on heat, cold and flooding risks	UKHSA	%	Annual	PL24OA001	SDG 13.1.3 SF E-2
PMIM008	Impact	Years of life lost due to heat	UKHSA	Years of life lost	Annual	PL24RD03, PL24RD04	SDG 1.5.1/13.1.1; SF A-2
PMIM009	Impact	Rate of mortality due to heat	UKHSA	Deaths per million	Annual	PL24RD03, PL24RD04	SDG 1.5.1/13.1.1; SF A-2
PMIM010	Impact	Rate of emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over	OHID	Rate per 100,000	Annual	N/A	SDG 1.5.1/13.1.1
PMIM011	Impact	Number of published peer-review papers referencing AWHP or associated guidance	MEDLINE	Number	Annual	N/A	N/A

PM – Plan Monitoring | CT – Contextual | AC – Activity | OU – Output | OT - Outcome | IM – Impact | PL – Plan | SD – Service Delivery | CB – Capacity Building | OA – Organisation Arrangements | CM – Communication | RM – Risk Management | EW – Early Warning System | RD – Research and data analysis | QA – Quality Assurance | PD – Policy development and Accountability | SDG – Sustainable Development Goal | SF – Sendai Framework

## Appendix 7. Cascade of Weather-Health Alerts

Figure 3. Typical cascade of Weather-Health Alerts



[Note 1] LHRPs, HWBs and ICPs are strategic and planning bodies, but may wish to be included in local alert cascades.

[Note 2] NHS England Regional Teams and ICBs should work collaboratively to ensure that between them they have cascade mechanism for Heat-Health Alerts to all providers of NHS funded services both in business as usual hours and the out of hours period in their area.

[Note 3] UKHSA would be expected to liaise with DsPH to offer support, but formal alerting would be expected through usual local authorities channels.

### **Accessible text equivalent for Figure 3. Typical cascade of Weather-Health Alerts**

UKHSA and the Met Office Weather-Health Alert is issued and cascaded to:

- the public via news and social media
- the Cabinet Office, DHSC and other government departments and agencies
- NHS England
- UKHSA and regional teams
- local authorities, including the directors of public health, LRFs and local healthresilience partnerships (LHRPs)

The Cabinet Office, DHSC and other government departments and agencies cascade the alert to:

- the government summer or winter resilience network
- prisons

The NHS England national team cascades the alert to NHS England regional teams. The NHS England regional teams then cascade the alert to the Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). The ICBsand local authorities work closely within the Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs). ICBs cascadethe alert to the NHS funded organisations.

Further points to note on this cascade are that UKHSA would be expected to liaise with directors of public health to offer support, but formal alerting would be expected throughusual local authority channels.

Local Health Resilience Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards, and IntegratedCare Partnerships are strategic and planning bodies, but may wish to be included inlocal alert cascades.

NHS England regional teams and ICBs should work collaboratively to ensure that between them they have a cascade mechanism for weather and health alerts to all providers of NHS funded services both in business as usual hours and the out of hoursperiod in their areas.

Local authorities, including the directors of public health, LRFs, LHRPs cascade the alert to:

- health and wellbeing boards (HWBs)
- social services
- day care centres
- residential homes and children's homes
- winter warmth advice services
- community and voluntary organisations

# About the UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

UKHSA is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.

© Crown copyright 2025

Prepared by: UKHSA Extreme Events and Health Protection

For queries relating to this document, please contact: [awhp@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:awhp@ukhsa.gov.uk)

Published: March 2025

Publishing reference: GOV-17945



You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit [OGI](#). Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.



UKHSA supports the  
Sustainable Development Goals

