

COLSHAW FARM SNOW ANGELS



Snow Angels is a social enterprise which develops community based projects helping to support older people to live independently in the community through a network of volunteers. Our projects also enable communities to build community resilience and self-help and support at-risk groups in times of emergency, such as extreme cold weather or flooding.

- The benefits of our projects include:
- Support for vulnerable people and at-risk groups to live independently in their community
 - Increased health and well-being and reduction in emergency admissions to hospital
 - Decreased social isolation and loneliness

- Increased volunteering
- Improved partnership-working between local community organisations
- Mobilisation of additional help to support emergency plans
- Development of community resilience and climate change adaptation

The social enterprise was established following a successful pilot in Northwich during the winter of 2011/12. The scheme is designed with the local community to meet specific needs although there are some key features including: Volunteers are recruited and trained to a common set of standards including adult safeguarding, lone working, safe winter driving. Volunteers are provided with hi-vis jackets, ID badges and equipment and carry out a range of tasks to support customers including clearing snow, shopping, collecting prescriptions, providing transport to health appointments etc.



The project at Colshaw Farm in Wilmslow is mainly funded through an investment of £25,000 from People’s Heath Trust - using money raised by HealthReward through the Health Lottery, and has also received £5,000 from Riverside Housing Association and is a two year project which started in November 2013.

HEALTH MOT

The Health MOT event on Colshaw Farm, welcomed local MP George Osborne to promote local services available to older people in the local area.

The event organised by Snow Angels offered a range of information and services including blood pressure checks, advice on housing, budgeting, energy efficiency and caring for an older person in their own home.

George Osbourne MP said

“A bad case of winter flu can really knock a healthy person for six so it is easy to imagine how dangerous it can be for the elderly, particularly if they have other health conditions. I am delighted to lend my support to this fantastic initiative by the Snow Angels and Dr Ahmed”

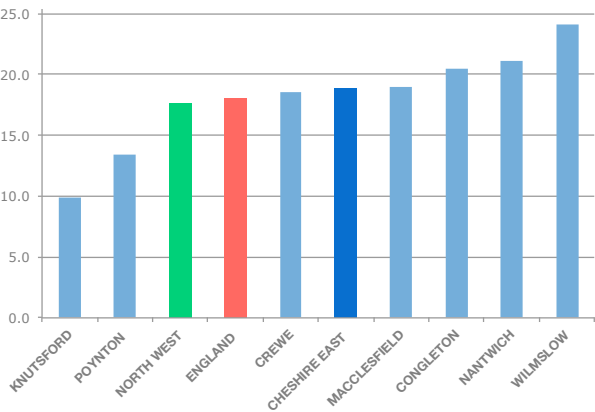


The Open Arms Centre on Howty Close, hosted a range of stalls from organisations such as Carers4All, Citizens Advice Bureau, Alzheimer’s Society, the Stroke Association and Age UK Cheshire East

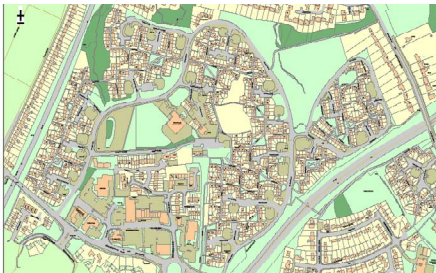
Colshaw Farm Angels supports older people by regularly checking that they are not in any difficulties, safeguarding their homes from trip hazards, clearing snow so they can get out, delivering food and medicines, and advising people on how to reduce their outgoings so that they can afford essential heating, lighting and food. The project is a partnership with Groundwork Cheshire who provide a Green Doctor service in the community providing energy advice through home visits and training volunteers.

The project has been designed to meet the needs and aspirations of local people and to reflect the challenges of the local environment. The project reflects consultation with local people, the residents and tenants group (CETRA) and other community groups as well as discussions with Riverside Housing Association, Groundwork Cheshire, and Cheshire East Council. Cheshire East had a higher rate of excess winter deaths than both the North West average and the average for England and Wilmslow has the highest rate within Cheshire East. The area also has a lower rate of flu vaccinations amongst older people.

EXCESS WINTER MORTALITY INDEX



RADBURN DESIGN



The estate presents specific challenges – it is based on the Radburn design where homes are linked by pathways with roads running along the outskirts of the estate. In addition the estate was built on an incline which has meant that the pathways contain numerous steps and ramps. This means that older people in particular are socially isolated during wintry conditions as the snow is not cleared on the pathways and they are worried about falling.

Colshaw Farm is a fairly small estate of 770 properties. The initial consultation with the older people in the community demonstrated that they felt socially isolated, they have concerns about the level of unemployment, and that they can become housebound during the winter during snow and ice on the footpaths between the properties. Whilst they were optimistic that the vast majority of people living in the community would like things to improve for everyone they also feel that there is a level of apathy about getting involved - they also expressed concerns that younger people are not as involved as they could be.

The project is managed by a local resident who works closely with CETRA and an older people’s group. We have forty volunteers and about half of these are young people from Wilmslow High School supported by Cheshire East Youth Support Service.

Activity	Numbers
Training sessions for volunteers	14
Visits to properties for energy saving measues	75
Introductory visits to older and vulnerable people	112
Snow clearing activities	259
Support visits, including shopping, etc.	552
Mentoring sessins with volunteers	30
Steering group meetings	40



OUTCOMES

"The service from Snow Angels is excellent"

"I feel supported and I know they are there if I need them"

"Really pleased with the gritting last winter"

"Talking to community members, feeling part of the community"

"The happiness of feeling like you have helped someone."

"The thought of knowing that I can leave them smiling"

"The joy I get from giving them time to have a conversation"

"I have cleared residents pathways hoping they will feel safer leaving the house during the winter months."

