

# Council staff praised for efforts during snow

☒ Heroic staff have been praised for their outstanding efforts to protect vulnerable older people in the Capital.

The praise has come from the City of Edinburgh Council's Health, Social Care and Housing leader, Councillor Paul Edie.

He was speaking after being told of many inspirational stories about the great lengths staff had gone to keep the city's vulnerable citizens safe and protected.

Councillor Edie said: "The stories I have heard about staff, not just battling their way into work, but managing to carry on with their daily tasks of caring and supporting our most vulnerable citizens has been truly amazing.

"They are working round the clock, doing long shifts and braving treacherous weather conditions, to ensure that support is provided to those who are most in need.

"Many have given up spending time with their own families to come in on their days off to provide cover at our care homes and our team of volunteer 4x4 drivers have worked through the clock to ensure out of hours care services are provided.

"These examples demonstrate a fantastic degree of commitment and show that in many, many cases staff and volunteers have literally gone that extra mile."

Some of the many stories of Health, Social Care and Housing staff include:

– Community Alarm Telecare Staff (CATS) responding to a call about a 97-year-old man who had suffered a stroke, managed to get him hospital treatment after getting through heavy snow with lifting equipment

- A home help who spent four hours walking eight miles through the snow to get to her frail elderly client
- Council volunteers who have been working through the night driving home helps to extremely vulnerable older people to ensure they had the regular care service they rely on
- Care home staff who have been working much longer shifts to cover for colleagues who can't get in to ensure continuity of care and legal staffing levels for the Council's care home residents
- Staff who have been redeployed from day care services to help pack and distribute the emergency supplies for vulnerable people
- The emergency social work service who have been at the end of a phone operating round the clock
- CATS staff also alerted police when they found an 80-year-old man was missing from his home and found wandering by police outside in the cold wearing only light clothing

There has also been praise from many carers and their families about the efforts of health and social care staff in continuing to provide services over the past two weeks. Feedback has also been very positive from vulnerable people who have received emergency supplies provided by the Council – so far 73 have been delivered.

Councillor Edie also repeated calls for the community to keep an eye out for vulnerable neighbours.

He said: "I would urge everyone to offer a helping hand or even just a friendly face to neighbours who may be in need. Social responsibility in action doesn't cost anything but can make a real difference to someone's life.

"Checking if an elderly neighbour upstairs would appreciate a pint of milk from the shops when you are going anyway would only take a minute. Or they may simply appreciate a friendly chat but don't want to bother anyone."

Anyone who is concerned about someone who they feel should be getting assistance can contact the social care direct team at the Council on 0131 200 2324, and staff there will arrange appropriate follow up. In the evenings and weekend contact can be made with the out of hours service at 0800 731 6969.