

Press Release

For immediate release: 11 November 2021

Report outlines the problems described by those facing food insecurity

A Healthwatch Shropshire report highlights the experiences of people in South West Shropshire who are living with food insecurity. As part of a pilot project, funded by Shaping Places for Healthier Lives programme, they worked with Shropshire Council Public Health, Citizens Advice Shropshire and the Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance members to hear from individuals and families with lived experience of food insecurity and those who work to support them.

Following the pilot project a detailed plan was submitted to the Shaping Places for Healthier Lives programme, supported by the Health Foundation in partnership with the Local Government Association. Following a rigorous process, Shropshire Council have been awarded £300,000, over 3 years, to tackle food insecurity in South-west Shropshire.

The key recommendations in the report include:

- The public and voluntary sector need to work in partnership to create services which are accessible and easy to navigate.
- Improved communication to support more joined up working across the community and public sector,
- Referral pathways to be streamlined to make sure people are able to access the right support at the right time
- Develop ‘wrap around’ support for people who are in financial need to prevent them reaching crisis

The full report can be found here: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2021-11-11/food-insecurity-project-south-west-shropshire>

Lynn Cawley, Healthwatch Shropshire Chief Officer, said, “We are delighted to have played a part in the project ensuring that the voices of those experiencing food insecurity are at the heart of this work and we are really looking forward to seeing how this funding makes a difference to the health and wellbeing of those living with food poverty.”

Rachel Robinson, Director of Public Health Shropshire, said, “The findings from those with a lived experience of food insecurity are especially stark and highlight this growing problem and its impact on people’s health and wellbeing. I endorse the recommendations highlighted in the report and the need to work together with communities, the voluntary sector and with partners to tackle the stigma and issues raised through the research”

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, service users, carers, and the general public

about services including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children's services. It also has statutory powers that it can use to influence service provision by encouraging improvements.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

Healthwatch Shropshire is one of a network of 148 Local Healthwatch in England. It is supported by a national organisation, Healthwatch England.

It has a team working in community engagement, plus a volunteer programme, a visit programme to health and social care premises and an associate membership scheme to involve the public in its work. It also has a signposting service to help people access health and social care services and support.

Healthwatch Shropshire also provides the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) for Shropshire. The IHCAS service provides information, advice and, if necessary, can support people through the NHS complaints process.

Shaping Places for Healthier Lives: About the grant programme

Shaping Places for Healthier Lives funds strong local partnership projects that aim to make changes to local systems that will encourage better physical and mental health, and that will be sustained beyond the lifetime of the grant programme. [Shaping Places for Healthier Lives: About the programme | Local Government Association](#)

This project is part of the Shaping Places for Healthier Lives programme supported by the Health Foundation in partnership with the Local Government Association. The programme provides local councils with funding to work with partners from their local area to improve health and address health inequalities. The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK. The LGA is the national voice of local government, working with councils to support, promote and improve.

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