

PR 7527

For Immediate Release

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CALLING ON RESIDENTS TO HELP CLEAR WINTER SNOW

Volunteers throughout the county are being called on to help clear snow and ice from Derbyshire's roads and pavements this winter.

Derbyshire County Council would like to hear from residents and farmers willing to help keep their communities safe when bad weather hits.

Town and parish councils and other community groups are being asked to rally local people to join the council's Snow Warden Scheme.

Each council or group will get a free delivery of up to a tonne of bagged grit, be given training and advice on how to clear snow and ice safely and be kept up-to-date with specialist weather reports.

Farmers and others with ploughing or gritting equipment are also being asked to work as contractors to help keep their local roads on the move from October to next April.

Anyone taken on as a contractor will get £200 for signing up plus get extra payments for call outs.

Snow wardens get involved in:

- clearing snow and ice from their community's pavements
- reporting local weather conditions through the council's website
- co-ordinating volunteers to clear snow and distribute grit
- reporting empty grit bins.

Farmers and contractors need to:

- provide their own equipment
- be available to work 7am to 7pm, seven days a week – although extra help may be requested if conditions are particularly severe
- arrange appropriate insurance
- be able to respond to a call out within 90 minutes.

Councillor Simon Spencer, Derbyshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure, said: "While it may seem early to be preparing for winter, especially with our recent stretch of warmer weather, the reality is it's not far off. We have to start planning now to make sure we have the right resources in place so we are ready when colder conditions arrive.

"We look after around 3,500 miles of roads and pavements and grit around half of them. These include our major roads, routes where there is only one way in or out of an area, major bus routes and roads serving emergency services' bases. But we can't be everywhere, which is why our volunteers and contractors are a vital resource, particularly in our more rural communities."

Councillor Spencer added: “We need people to sign up so we can make sure they have any materials and training they need, and while it’s never too late to join up I’d encourage anyone who’d like to volunteer to get in touch as soon as possible.”

Last year 62 town and parish councils helped clear snow and ice from pavements and footpaths along with 52 farmers and contractors helping protect their local communities.

Staff at 72 schools county schools also volunteered to clear snow and ice from outside their school gates to help make it safer for students to get inside school grounds.

Town and parish councils and other community groups interested in volunteering can find out more at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/snowwardens. To sign up to the scheme email: snow@derbyshire.gov.uk

For information about the farmers and contractors scheme and to sign up go to www.derbyshire.gov.uk/snowvolunteers.