



**THAW**

*Tackling Household Affordable Warmth*

# Annual Review 2018

**‘To work for households in all Orkney communities to reduce levels of fuel poverty and achieve affordable warmth’**

## Chair's Report

THAW Orkney has had both a challenging and stimulating year: challenging, along with all charities, as we continually seek funding; stimulating, as partnerships have widened and developed and become stronger to collectively tackle fuel poverty. April 2017 saw the completion of THAW Orkney's effective pilot Pipeline Project that operated in tandem with Care and Repair and the Orkney Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Following a successful application to the European Social Fund through Orkney Islands Council in February 2017, an award of £170,000 was available for 2 years with local partners providing an additional £170,000 matched funding to establish the **WellBeing Orkney** project. The contract was due to start in April 2017 but a delay until July 2017 created a cashflow problem and we thank Orkney Islands Council's for providing a loan of £20,000 loan to ease the situation and the local funding partners for their instrumental contributions.

WellBeing Orkney saw its first client in October and to date has assisted 152 households. THAW overall assisted almost 300 households (c.650 individuals) with, among other things: energy advice and information, behaviour change, tariff switching, income maximisation, supported referrals to the national programmes and local agencies and the allocation of 100 Cosy Home Packs.

As well as the help from our partners we are grateful to the staff for their hard work and dedication without whom the work would not be done. We are especially pleased with the caring way with which it is carried out.

Board members previous and current have given their time, interest and advice willingly and THAW thanks them for this. A special mention goes to Caron Jenkins and to Robert Leslie who served as Chair until September 2017. Their knowledge and expertise were invaluable in helping THAW to develop.

Another challenging year lies ahead: not only to secure on-going funding but also while we are aware of the Scottish Government's efforts towards ensuring everyone has a warm home, THAW's concern that potentially the new proposed Minimum Income Standard within the Energy Efficient Scotland consultation may disadvantage households in island and rural areas.

I commend this annual review to you as THAW continues to believe that the coordinated holistic pipeline approach gives a unique and comprehensive service to the communities of Orkney.



**Janice Annal, THAW Orkney Chair**

## The statistics behind the clients:

### Where our clients are from:

In the last 12 months **295 households**, involving around 650 individuals, have been assisted by THAW staff:

- **55%** from Orkney mainland
- **45%** from other Orkney isles

**93** individual staff **island visits** have been made for home visits or public drop-in advice and information events

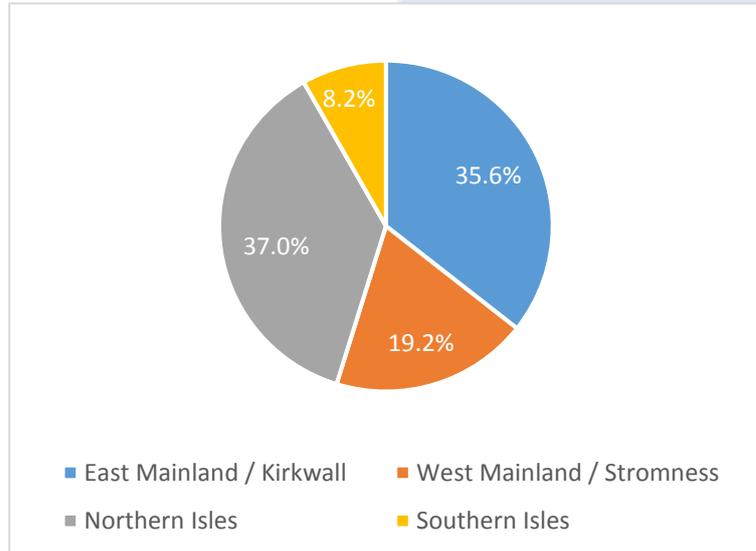


Figure 1

### The Levels of Support our clients require:

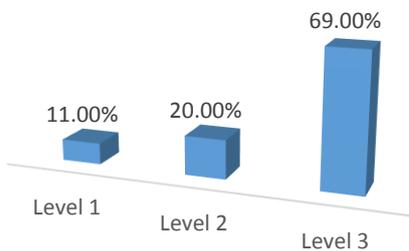


Figure 2

**Level 1: Information** – a ‘one-off’ enquiry from a client

**Level 2: Information & Advice** – more than one contact but short-term clients who we have been given in-depth information and specific advice.

**Level 3: Information, Advice & Support** – clients who require significant and generally on-going support

The levels of support our clients need will always vary depending on their particular circumstances. It is note-worthy that around 90% are in the highest categories of support levels with almost **7 out of 10** households requiring the most intensive at Level 3

### Switching Energy Supplier:

Of the 38 client households who decided to switch supplier and tariffs with THAW’s support, the **average** saving per household is

**£350** pa / **20%** of their annual energy costs

In cash value this totals

**£13,370** pa



Figure 3

## The statistics behind the clients:

### Supported Referrals:

THAW's approach to clients is holistic, involving each aspect that has an impact on a household. We brand these under the **3 Ps**: The **P**erson, the **P**roperty and the **P**ennies. We work closely with partners to ensure all three aspects are addressed as fully as possible.

The following is a snapshot of the main agencies to which households have been referrals:

Agency	Number of Households
Firefly Energi	64
Warmworks	28
Citizens Advice Bureau	51
Care and Repair	32
Others	17

Figure 4

### Fuel Poverty Levels:

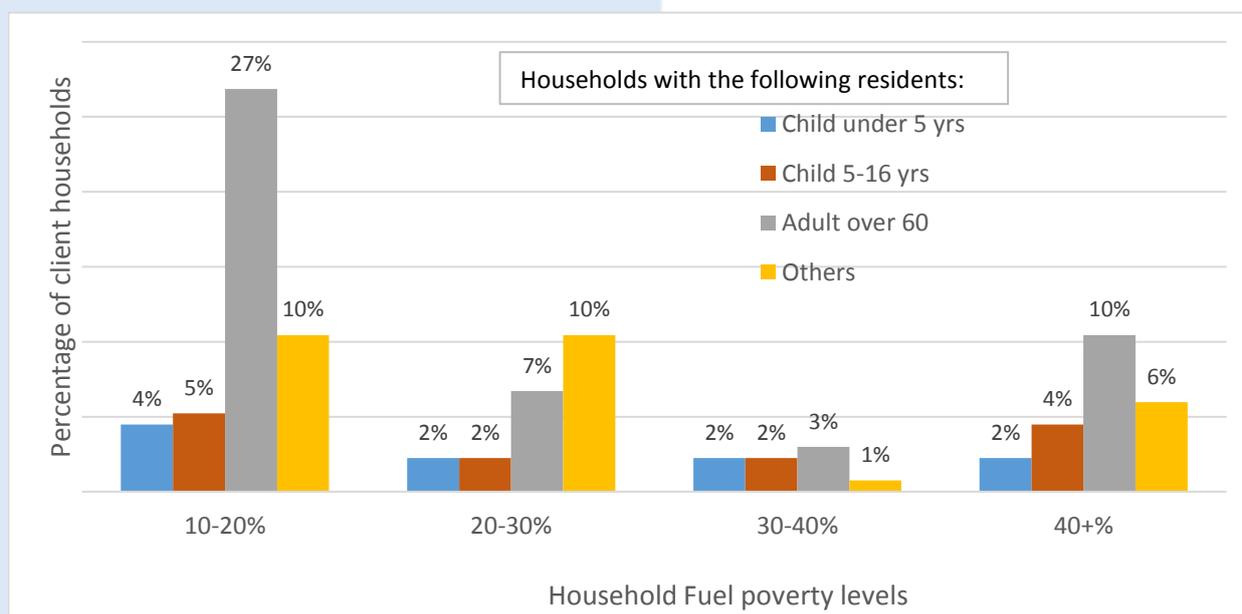


Figure 5

Of those households that experience fuel poverty to some degree:

- **Over half** are in the category of 'extreme fuel poverty' (ie 20%+) and
- **1 in 5** households in fuel poverty are experiencing it to a level of **40%+** (which does not have a formal category)
- **47%** of fuel poor households involve a householder **aged 60 years or above**

## How we've helped our clients:

### Clients A & B

Clients A & B's fuel bills were very high with an inefficient heating system. Client A has a severe health condition which limits her mobility and she feels the cold a lot more now than previously.

THAW provided energy efficiency advice regarding the heating and as they were in receipt of PIP, they decided that Warmworks would be a good programme with THAW acting as third-party support. They have secured through this grant funding an air-to-water system which is more energy efficient and cheaper.

Electricity costs were £244.00 a month and, following THAW's advice and support, they switched supplier, saving £800 for the year. THAW also provided a Cosy Home Pack and helped enable a successful application for council tax reduction from which they received a backdated payment of £1,600.

### Client C

Client C, a social housing tenant, with two young children was finding the storage heating system very expensive to run and the windows in the property draughty. She had a prepayment meter and THAW contacted her energy supplier as third-party support, applying on her behalf for the Warm Homes Discount (£140), which she received.

THAW also liaised with her social housing provider and reported that the windows were draughty which they promptly sealed. In addition, THAW made an application to the Orkney Charitable Trust Christmas grant on her behalf which was successful.

Following these outcomes, the client revealed she was struggling to service a large debt. A referral to the Citizens Advice Bureau assisted to update her benefits details, provided advice on paying off the debt and helped her apply for Income Support and Child Disability Living Allowance. Finally, as the client was moving to a new house by this point THAW assisted in transferring the credit on her prepayment meter to the new property.

### Client D

Client D's wife had died a number of years ago, had recently undergone a major operation and suffered from memory problems due to his medication and was finding his heating expensive.

The client was on a single rate meter with a small supplier for his electricity and electric heating even though he had a separate heating meter. THAW assisted switching to a new energy supplier, saving £144 for the year and allowing him to apply for the Warm Homes Discount the following year, which was unavailable with his original supplier.

He made a successful application and received Attendance Allowance and the Severe Disability Premium on his Pension Credit, giving him an extra £509.37 a month. He was referred to Occupational Therapy for support, to Care and Repair for draughtproofing and to Firefly Energi for future heating and insulation upgrades. The client was also provided with a Cosy Home Pack.

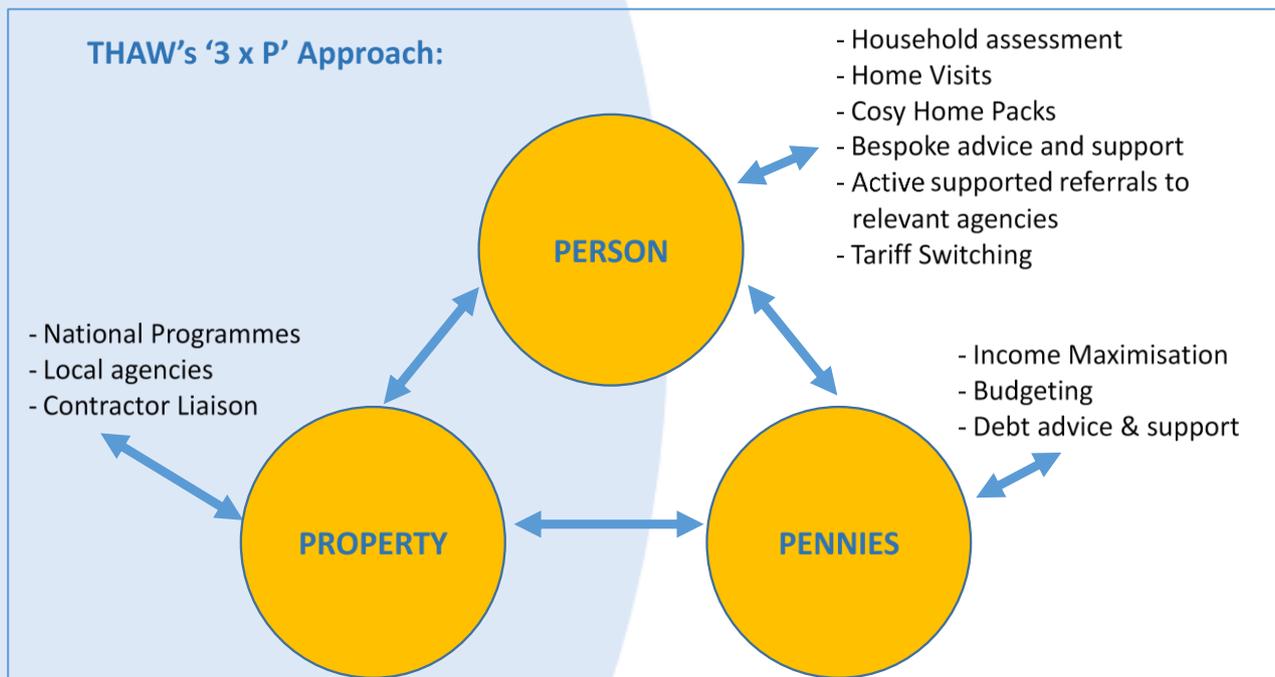
## Comments on our Services:

"Thank you so much for all you have done for us. We really do appreciate everything."

"Thank you so much for taking the time to come over to visit me last week. It was very informative and useful. I think you both have helped me save money and have a more comfortable home. So, thank you so much."

*"We cannot thank you enough and highly recommend THAW for the brilliant service they provide"*

*"We just wanted to say thank you for the help and support you've given us. We really appreciate all your hard work and we're using all the things in the cosy home pack. It felt like Christmas receiving all those goodies."*



*"To all at THAW. I am enormously grateful for your expert help. Your actions have had a huge and immediate improvement to my situation. Thank you!"*

*"I feel I must write a letter to thank THAW.....for all your wonderful help, I have been disabled for 15 years and [name] has helped reduce our council tax banding. I had no idea this was even an option. It will be a huge help to us with things being so tight.....found a better electricity supplier again saving us a fair amount of money.....referred us to the national schemes re our heating.*

*....in fact any person we have dealt with at THAW have been awesome, able to explain things, provide reassurance and all have been very knowledgeable.*

## Governance and Staffing 2017-18

### Trustees

Janice Annal (*Chair*)

Erik Firth

Ian Garman (*Treasurer*)

Mark Hull

Caron Jenkins (*resigned November 2017*)

Robert Leslie (*resigned September 2017*)

Adele Lidderdale (*co-opted May 2018*)

Imogen Sawyer (*Vice Chair*)

John Ross Scott

Doreen Sinclair

Rhoda Walker (*co-opted March 2018*)

(*Peter Rickard - Secretary*)

### Honorary Legal Advisor

Georgette Herd

### THAW Orkney

#### WellBeing Orkney Staffing

#### Based in THAW

Michael Butler, Support and Development Officer (*from October 2017*)

Kate Fereday Eshete, Project Administrator (*from September 2017*)

Stacy Johnston, Senior Support and Development Officer

Peter Rickard, Manager

#### Based in Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau

Fiona Bradley, WellBeing Support Adviser

Catherine Hine, WellBeing Support Adviser

## Thank you

Our grateful thanks to all those who have contributed to THAW Orkney this year



**EUROPE & SCOTLAND**  
European Social Fund  
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

Without their support THAW would not have been able to achieve so much:

- The European Social Fund award through Orkney Islands Council of £85,000
- The partnership of matched funding organisations contributing £85,000:

*The National Health Service Orkney, The Robertson Trust, The Ronald F Slater Charitable Trust, Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau, Eday Partnership, Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre Development Trust, Sanday Development Trust, Stronsay Development Trust, Orkney Housing Association Ltd, Firefly Energi, S & J D Robertson Group Ltd and the Community Councils of Papa Westray, Evie and Rendall, Kirkwall and St Ola, Orphir and Shapinsay*

- The Warm Homes Fund of £25,000 through Orkney Islands Council to fund the 200+ Cosy Home Packs
- Organisations who have arranged fund-raising events and referred their clients for THAW advice and support
- Individuals who have generously made personal donations to further THAW's work of tackling fuel poverty and social and financial inclusion
- The Advisory Group members who have diligently met bi-monthly to advise on the impact and development of the project

## Further information

Further copies of this report can be obtained from THAW's website:

<http://www.thaworkney.co.uk/>

THAW can be contacted via email at:

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