

# Hot Weather and Summer Preparedness

VCSE Hot Weather Champions

22nd April 2026

Sue Webster - RBK



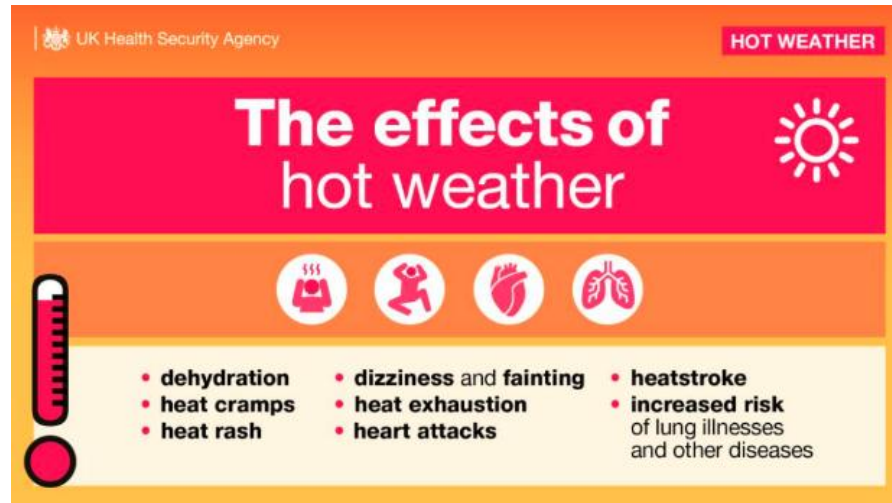
# Aims of the session

To understand:

- The role of a 'hot weather champion'
- which groups are most vulnerable to the impacts of hot weather
- how hot weather events can impact health
- how to keep cool
- the actions that need to be taken for summer preparedness and in the event of different heat-health alerts
- where the relevant resources can be found for VCSEs

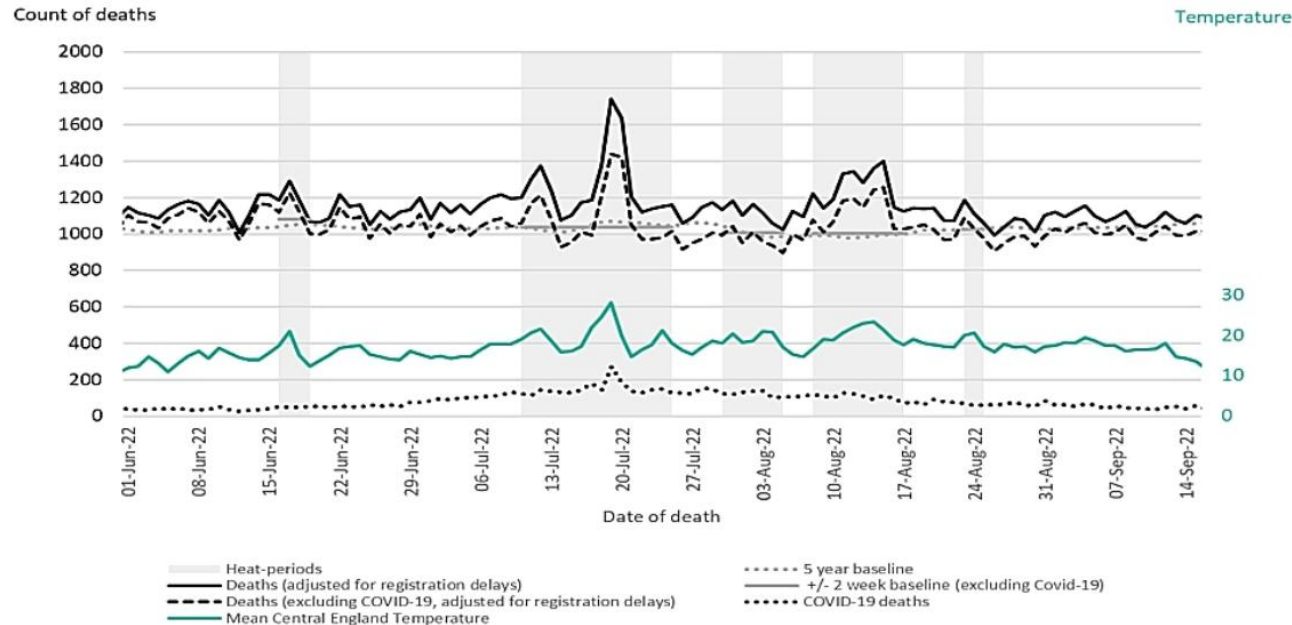
# What is the role of a hot weather champion?

- A hot weather champion is a designated individual(s) within an organisation responsible for coordinating preparedness and response actions during high-temperature alerts
- They act as the focal point for implementing heat plans, ensuring the safety of vulnerable individuals, and disseminating guidance and information to prevent heat-related illnesses



# Daily all-cause excess mortality in the 65 years and over during the Summer 2022

Figure 1. Daily all-cause excess mortality in the 65 years and over age group during the Heat-Health Alerting season 2022 (1 June to 15 September) in England

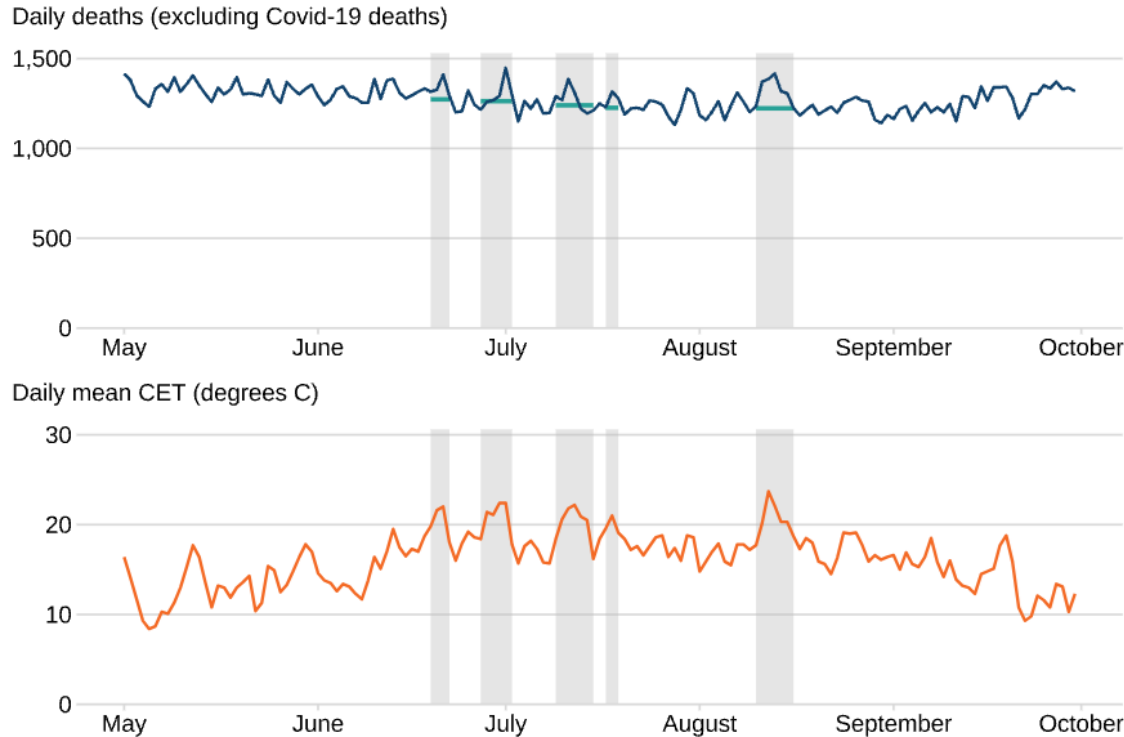


It is important that organisations ensure they have heat response plans in place as well as longer-term adaptation strategies to mitigate the impacts across all sectors to reduce the number of avoidable deaths during adverse heat events in the coming years

[Heat mortality monitoring report: 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

# Daily deaths and daily mean temperature, England, summer 2025

**Figure 1. Daily deaths and daily mean temperature, England, summer 2025**



**Figure 1** shows daily deaths and daily mean CET across the summer period, with grey shading indicating the 5 heat episodes.

Increases in deaths above the baseline (shown by the turquoise line) can be observed for each heat episode.

There is additional variation within the daily deaths series that is not associated with heat episodes.

[Heat Mortality Monitoring Report, England: 2025](#)

Who is most at risk from becoming seriously unwell during hot weather?

# Those at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell in hot weather

- older people (aged 65 years and over)
- babies and young children, particularly those aged 5 years and under
- people with health conditions
- pregnant women (evidence suggests potential risk of preterm birth)
- people on certain medications that potentially affect heart or kidney function, mobility or cognition
- people who are already ill and dehydrated (eg. from diarrhoea and vomiting)
- people who experience alcohol or drug dependence
- people who live alone and may be unable to care for themselves
- people who are physically active and spend a lot of time outside
- those who work in jobs that require manual labour or extensive time outside
- people experiencing homelessness, including rough sleepers and those who are unable to make adaptations to their living accommodation

What environmental factors can increase heat health risk indoors?

# Heat health risks - environmental indoors

Indoor environments can affect the risk of heat exposure. Poor building design and inadequate heat management systems contribute to unnecessary heat exposure.

Factors contributing to indoor overheating:

**Dwelling type** - flats are more likely to overheat than houses, particularly living rooms

**Floor area** - bigger residences are less likely to overheat than smaller ones

**Window type** Large windows increase indoor temperatures

**Orientation** - south/west facing receive the maximum solar gain

**Top floor/loft** - heat rising and heat transfer from uninsulated roofs

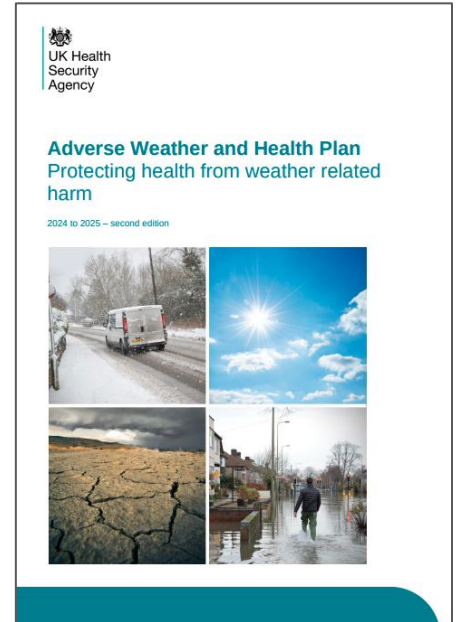
**Urban location** - 'urban heat island effect' higher risk

**Building construction and insulation** - concrete absorbs heat, high levels of insulation without sufficient ventilation can prevent heat from escaping during the summer

**Lack of shade** - no exterior awning, blinds or shrubs and trees

# Know your role in the UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan

- Everyone is advised to be familiar with the updated [UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan 2026/27](#) and [Heat - GOV.UK](#) resources and share the links with staff, volunteers and providers so they can ensure they know what actions need to be taken and when
- You should also be familiar with any plans your organisation has in place and [Health and Safety Executive - Temperature](#)
- Action depends on the level of the '[Heat-health alert](#)'
- We all have a role in preparedness and response
- We need to be clear on our actions and who to link in with during hot weather spells as necessary



What actions can you take to stay safe in the heat?

Hot weather can cause some people to become unwell through overheating (becoming uncomfortably hot), dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. **we**

- keep out of the sun at the hottest time of the day, between 11am and 3pm
- if you are going to do a physical activity plan to do these during times of the day when it is cooler such as the morning or evening
- keep your home cool by closing windows and curtains in rooms that face the sun
- if you do go outside, cover up with suitable clothing such as an appropriate hat and sunglasses, seek shade and apply [sunscreen](#)
- drink plenty of [fluids](#) and limit your alcohol intake
- check on clients, family, friends and neighbours who may be at [higher risk](#) of becoming unwell, and if you are at higher risk, ask them to do the same for you
- know the symptoms of [heat exhaustion and heatstroke](#) and what to do if you or someone else has them
- [Beat the heat: keep cool at home checklist - GOV.UK](#)

**UK Health Security Agency**

## Beat the heat

**Plan ahead**

- Check the weather forecast and the news
- Plan ahead to avoid the heat
- Schedule activities to cooler times of the day

**Keep yourself cool**

- Drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol
- Wear sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses
- Cool your skin with water and slow down

**Find somewhere cool**

- Close blinds and curtains during the day
- Go indoors or outdoors, whichever feels cooler
- Avoid closed spaces like stationary cars

**Be safe**

- Be on the lookout for signs of heat related illness
- Look after yourself and check in with others
- Stay safe when swimming
- Get help. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999

For more information go to: [gov.uk/ukhsa/beat-the-heat](https://gov.uk/ukhsa/beat-the-heat)

# Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke

**Heat exhaustion** occurs when the body overheats and cannot cool down. **Heat exhaustion** does not usually need emergency medical attention if you cool down within 30 minutes. If you do not take action to cool down, heat exhaustion can lead to **heatstroke**.

Common symptoms of **heat exhaustion** include:

- tiredness
- weakness
- feeling faint
- headache
- muscle cramps
- feeling or being sick
- heavy sweating
- intense thirst

**Heatstroke** is where the body is no longer able to cool down and the body temperature becomes dangerously high.

Common symptoms of heatstroke include:

- confusion
- lack of co-ordination
- fast heartbeat
- fast breathing or shortness of breath
- hot skin that is not sweating
- seizures

**Heatstroke** is a medical emergency. If you think someone has **heatstroke** you should dial 999 and then try to cool them down.

See:

[Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - NHS](#)

# Weather-health alerts



## Weather-Health Alerting system registration form

Please complete the form below to register to receive both the Heat-Health Alerts (HHA) and Cold-Health Alerts (CHA). The alerts are year-round with the core HHA season running from 1 June to 30 September; and the CHA season running from 1st November to 31st March. The Weather-Health Alerting system, which is managed by UKHSA in partnership with the Met Office, underpins the Adverse Weather and Health Plan which brings together and builds on the previous Heatwave Plan for England, first published in 2004, and the Cold Weather Plan for England, first published in 2011.

Users will be able to specify which region they wish to receive alerts for, with the ability to be notified for one region only or multiple regions as required by the user.

The current Heat-Health Alerts and Cold Weather Alerts issued by the Met Office will cease to operate on the 1 June 2023. Therefore, please share this form with anyone you think should be registered to receive these alerts.

Your contact information is used to deliver requested updates

UKHSA is obliged to comply with data protection law with regard to the processing of personal information. For further information on how UKHSA collect and use your personal information, please see – UKHSA privacy notice - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukhsa-privacy-notice/ukhsa-privacy-notice#about-ukhsa>

Register to receive alerts:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=mRRO7jVKLkutR188-d6GZn06Ss-xPLpCuYeyOZ-eFiFUMEVIMDRTOE5FVzFFM0NXNjFMWUIWMkJVMCQIQCN0PWcu>

# What needs to be done

Those in VCSEs should prepare for and respond to each Weather-Health Alert type:

- actions to consider [all year round](#) to support summer preparedness
- actions to consider for [pre-summer readiness](#) and summer preparedness
- actions to consider for a [yellow alert](#)
- actions to consider for an [amber alert](#)
- actions to consider for a [red alert](#)

Actions are based on the 'Heat-Health' alert level:

**Make sure you receive the Heat-Health Alerts**

Register to receive Heat Health Alerts if not already done so: [Weather-Health Alert sign up](#)

*(The Heat Health Alert is operational year-round. However, the core alerting period is between 1st June and 30th September. Alerts will be issued outside of the core alerting period if required)*

# Actions to take now

- **GREEN** - No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact and health
- At this time, it is important that organisations ensure that they have reviewed the up to date guidance, have plans in place and are prepared to respond should an alert (yellow, amber, or red) be issued
- Register to receive Weather Health Alerts if not already done so: [Register for Heat-Health alerts](#)

## Consideration should be given to:

- **Identifying those at risk**
- **Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) and/or hot weather plans** - Working with partner agencies, providers, and businesses to coordinate BCPs and/or hot weather plans, ensuring vulnerable and marginalised groups are appropriately supported.
- **Workplace champions**
- **Training plans** - Develop a training plan to ensure that staff are aware of the local hot weather plans and are engaged in preparing for hot weather.
- **Data sharing agreements** - Ensure appropriate data-sharing agreements or protocols are in place to allow organisations to share data or intelligence where appropriate.
- **Monitoring** - Consider ways to monitor interventions to manage the risk of hot weather to evaluate their effectiveness locally.
- **Environmental improvements** - Identify the local and national support available to make environmental improvements and help individuals you care for to access such support.

## Yellow Alert (Response)

- Yellow alerts may be issued during periods of heat that would be unlikely to impact most people, but ***those who are particularly vulnerable (for example, the elderly with multiple health conditions and on multiple medications) as they are likely to struggle to cope and where action is required within the health and social care sector specifically***
- ***Take action per action cards and RBK Action Plans***

### See:

- [Action card for voluntary and community sector](#)
- [Summary action card for voluntary and community sector](#)
- [Hot weather and health: supporting vulnerable people](#)
- [Beat the heat: hot weather advice](#)
- [UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan](#)
- [RBK Coping with extreme weather](#) webpages

# Amber Alert (Enhanced Response)

- An amber alert would represent a situation in which the expected impacts are likely to be felt across the whole health service, with potential for the whole population to be at risk and where other sectors apart from health may also start to observe impacts, indicating that a coordinated response is required
- ***Take action per action cards and RBK Action Plans***

## See:

- [Heat-Health Alert action card for the voluntary and community sector](#)
- [Heat-Health Alert summary action card for the voluntary and community sector](#)
- [Hot weather and health: supporting vulnerable people](#)
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- [RBK Coping with extreme weather](#) webpages
- [UKHSA communications toolkits](#) - hot weather toolkit will added

# Red Alert (Emergency response)

- A red alert would indicate significant risk to life for even the healthy population
- Severe impacts would be expected across all sectors with a coordinated response essential
- ***Take action per action cards and RBK Action Plans***

## See:

- [Heat-Health Alert action card for the voluntary and community sector](#)
- [Heat-Health Alert summary action card for the voluntary and community sector](#)
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# Everyone has a role to play: Questions?

- Does your organisation have a list of people who are vulnerable in a heatwave? Service user/clients and staff
- How is this list used in a heatwave and by who?
- Who will support vulnerable people and how?
- Do you need to link in with colleagues in other organisations eg: NHS, RBK?
- What actions will be taken to ensure that any front line staff know how to support vulnerable people in a heatwave but also to keep themselves safe?
- Have you shared this guidance on what to do with your team and do your team members know what to do?

# Summer preparedness - resource links

All staff are advised to be familiar with the updated [Adverse Weather and Health Plan 2026/27](#) and resources and share the links with staff and providers so they can ensure they know what actions need to be taken and when.

“Beat the Heat” - [Guidance for the public](#) (translations, easy read and BSL video available)  
Hot weather and health guidance for:

- [Hot weather and health: supporting vulnerable people](#)
- [Supporting people who are homeless or sleeping rough](#)

**UK Health Security Agency**

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**Be safe**

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- Look after yourself and check in with others
- Stay safe when swimming
- Get help. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999

For more information go to: [gov.uk/ukhsa/beat-the-heat](https://gov.uk/ukhsa/beat-the-heat)

# Resources

- [Hot weather risks and their impact on health - GOV.UK](#)
- [UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan \(AWHP\) - GOV.UK](#)
- [AWHP Supporting Evidence](#)
- [Weather Alerting System](#)
- [Public health impact of drought: advice for the public - GOV.UK](#)
- [Flooding: health guidance and advice - GOV.UK](#)
- [Heat summary - Chapter 10: wildfires and health - GOV.UK](#)
- [Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings - GOV.UK](#)

[Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) - Temperature](#)

[RBK Coping with extreme weather](#) webpages

