



## PRESS RELEASE FROM The Blue Lamp Trust

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### Support the Bobby Scheme appeal for the “CO-Be Alarmed” national campaign

The Bobby Scheme is calling on businesses in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to raise £10,000 for carbon monoxide detectors to protect vulnerable and elderly people in their own homes across the region this winter.

Known as the silent killer, carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that cannot be seen or smelt without a CO detector, putting lives at risk every year, especially as fires and boilers which run on gas or oil are switched on for the winter. Fitting a CO detector remains the best way to protect family and homes against CO poisoning.

#### **The Bobby Scheme’s 2020 “CO-Be Alarmed” campaign**

This week is Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week, so the Bobby Scheme plans to raise £10,000 this winter to buy and install up to 800 CO detectors across the region and are appealing for support from local businesses and individuals to help fund the initiative.

Qualified Bobby Scheme fitters visit homes to give safety advice and, if necessary, to fit CO detectors free of charge in the most effective places around the home to offer the greatest protection for residents.

Theresa Pratt, General Manager of the Blue Lamp Trust, the charity which funds and supports the Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, said: “We are running this appeal in conjunction with CO Awareness Week and Energy UK’s “CO – Be Alarmed” campaign to reduce the number of deaths and injuries that happen every year due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

“If we can raise enough for 800 detectors, that means we can provide our service throughout the winter when the risk from CO is at its height.”

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Despite the potential dangers of CO, [66% of UK households](#) are without a working detector. According to the [NHS](#), CO poisoning causes around 60 deaths each year in England and Wales. People who are particularly vulnerable to CO poisoning include:

- Those with chronic heart disease
- Anyone with respiratory problems
- Pregnant women
- Babies and young children

During Covid19 lockdown, the elderly and vulnerable people who are living alone and spending more time indoors are at particular risk of CO poisoning. This is why Bobby Scheme fitters are paying particular attention to CO detectors during their home visits.

CO can be produced by any fossil fuel burning device, from gas cookers and oil boilers to wood burners, so many homes and rental properties could be harbouring a potentially deadly appliance, especially as they get switched on after a summer of disuse. However, some simple steps can help protect against CO leaks:

- Ensure ventilation in the home, especially chimneys, is not blocked
- Get appliances serviced regularly to ensure they are in good working order
- Know the [signs of CO poisoning](#) and know what to do if symptoms appear

## **The Blue Lamp Trust**

Since 2011, The Blue Lamp Trust has been a leading national provider of training and assessments for taxi licence applicants and private hire car drivers for over 130 licensing authorities. The service is now provided via Blue Lamp Trust (Services) Ltd, which is wholly owned by The Blue Lamp Trust. The trust also offers ongoing training to meet legal responsibilities, including Disability Awareness training, also via Zoom.

Income made by the not-for-profit organisation goes to fund the Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, an initiative to improve home safety and security for the vulnerable and elderly.

Any businesses or individuals interested in sponsoring CO detectors can visit the campaign's donations page at <https://bluelamptrust.org.uk/bobby-scheme-landingpage/> or phone 0300 777 0157.

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## **Notes to Editor**

### **Photograph caption:**

*To be confirmed.*

## **The Bobby Scheme**

Supported by the emergency services and local authorities, The Bobby Scheme provides a free service to elderly and vulnerable people, promoting crime prevention and fire safety initiatives. For over 20 years its trained fitters, who are all vetted by Hampshire police, uniformed and carry ID cards, visit homes to carry out full home crime-prevention surveys, give reassurance and offer specific crime-prevention advice to improve safety. They also fit locks, spyholes, door chains and smoke alarms where needed.

## **The Blue Lamp Trust**

The Blue Lamp Trust, based in Eastleigh, provides driving assessments and other training for taxi licence applicants and fleet driver training nationwide. Through its activities it funds and operates The Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

**Contact:**

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