



## **PRESS RELEASE FROM The Blue Lamp Trust**

Contact: Theresa Pratt

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### **Donations to Bobby Scheme appeal for carbon monoxide detectors exceeds target after just one week**

A local charity has raised nearly double the amount it asked for in an appeal to buy 800 carbon monoxide detectors, thanks to the generosity of businesses across the region.

The Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight initially aimed to raise funds to buy 800 carbon monoxide (CO) detectors to be installed in the homes of the elderly and most vulnerable across the area.

But less than a fortnight after launching its appeal to coincide with national Carbon Monoxide Awareness week and Energy UK's "CO-Be Alarmed" campaign, Theresa Pratt, General Manager of the Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, thanked locally based businesses for their overwhelming support.

Donations quickly passed the campaign's original target thanks to donations, one of the most substantial coming from Chandler's Ford based Ageas Insurance.

"The donation from Ageas Insurance is incredibly generous," said Ms Pratt. "This, along with other significant donations from our supporters, will allow us to install 1,400 CO detectors, almost double our target, in people's homes over the coming months and potentially save the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society."

She added: "These donations come at a particularly important time. During the Covid-19 lockdown, the elderly and vulnerable people who are living alone and spending more time indoors are at particular risk of carbon monoxide poisoning from devices such as gas cookers, boilers, wood burners and gas heaters."

Along with other businesses, Ageas has been a long-term supporter of the Bobby Scheme. It sponsors a van for one of the scheme's teams of mobile fitters to visit homes and carry out full home crime-prevention and safety surveys, give reassurance and fitting security and safety devices where necessary.

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Ageas CEO Ant Middle said: "Carbon monoxide is the cause of far too many preventable deaths in the UK and as a provider of home insurance, protecting people in their homes is particularly close to the heart of Ageas. Coming together with other local donors to support this campaign was important to us and we commend the support that the Bobby Scheme provides to the vulnerable in our local community."

### **The silent killer**

Known as the "silent killer", CO is a colourless, odourless poisonous gas produced when fossil fuels are incompletely burnt. In the home, CO can come from gas cookers and fires, oil and gas boilers and wood burners, putting the life of residents at risk, Fossil fuel burning appliances should be properly maintained and checked, especially if it has not been used for a period.

Homeowners can take steps to help protect against leaks, such as ensuring proper ventilation and routine equipment services, but the presence of a CO detector offers peace of mind that any CO present will be detected and trigger an alarm, saving lives.

At a time when people are required to spend more time at home, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, and as colder weather arrives, having a CO detector is more important than ever.

Any business or individual 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:**

Theresa Pratt, General Manager of the Bobby Scheme will be available for interviews about this story.

For comment from Ageas, please contact Ageas Press Officer Laura Downton:

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For an interview with Theresa Pratt, please see the contact details below.

### **Photograph caption:**

Ageas CEO Ant Middle (right) and Bobby Scheme fitter Kevin Lloyd-Spencer by an Ageas sponsored van outside the insurance provider's Chandler's Ford headquarters.

### **The Bobby Scheme and the Blue Lamp Trust**

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 Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is managed and part-funded by the not-for-profit organisation The Blue Lamp Trust funds. Since 2011, the 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.

**Contact:**

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