WEST SUSSEX FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
PREVENTION STRATEGY

PREVENTION | PROTECTION | RESPONSE
2019 - 2022
**Introduction**

The overarching objective of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) is to help individuals, communities and businesses to be safer, stronger and more resilient.

People know they can rely on us in times of emergency. This strategy sets out our direction and commitment to working in partnership to reduce death, injury, economic loss and contribute to community wellbeing through our wider prevention activity.

Our prevention role has already become so much broader than fire and road safety. We will continue to develop our role and our workforce to support communities with a response to the greatest areas of risk, threat and harm. This will include the promotion of health and wellbeing.

Data, risk modelling, intelligence from local partners and local knowledge, including from communities, will be used to drive our activities with a focus on where we can make the most difference. The outcome of the data and risk modelling will be set out as priorities in the Service’s Integrated Risk Management Plan.
**Our focus**

Through joined up delivery of our prevention, protection and response functions we will focus on:

- Keeping people safe in their home, at work and in public spaces
- Keeping people safe when they travel
- Maintaining and improving our residents’ wellbeing
- Preventing emergencies and helping residents prepare for them
- Delivering our statutory duties

Our communities’ needs are varied; we will rank the type of engagement and service provided to help people live longer, happier and healthier lives based on the severity of those needs. Those who are at the highest risk of coming to harm or who are unable to help themselves will be our top priority.

The people who have most need for our services tend to be the same people who place demands on our partners’ services so it makes sense for us to be working together. For example, people who are most likely to die in a house fire have poor health and are most likely to be victims of crime.

On the roads the people who are most at risk from death and injury are drivers aged 16-24 and 65+, riders of powered two wheelers and motorists driving as part of their job.

Firefighters are seen as excellent role models for children and young people. Within West Sussex we embrace this role seeking to influence the behaviour and attitudes of children and young people equipping them with life skills to keep them safer and improve their longer term opportunities.
Along with our Resilience and Emergencies Team colleagues we will support communities to be prepared for emergency situations and mitigate the damage when it cannot be avoided.

In addition we will actively be working with Children, Adults, Families, Health, Education and Trading Standards colleagues to support those who are most vulnerable and improve the health and wellbeing of people within West Sussex.

We are well placed to protect vulnerable adults and children from being victims of crime by acting as the eyes and ears on the ground for other organisations and sharing data and intelligence when we see signs and symptoms of people who are at risk, from dangers such as child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery and extremism.

We know we can make the most difference for our residents by working with others rather than on our own.
What we will deliver

We will make people safer through delivering programmes in schools, businesses, homes and within communities.

How we will make people safer and improve their health and wellbeing.

- Health and wellbeing promotion
  - Falls prevention
  - Promoting fitness and smoking cessation
  - Mental health awareness (including dementia awareness)
  - Drug and alcohol abuse prevention awareness,
  - Road safety awareness
  - Water safety awareness

There are a range of ways that we can assist people to live independently more safely. These include:

- Identifying risks within their home and dealing with them, either through using our skills and knowledge or by signposting them to one of our partners, and safeguarding them as appropriate
- Fitting specialist detection and protection equipment, including alarms suitable for the hard of hearing, heat sensors, fire retardant spray and smoke alarms linked to a call centre who mobilise a fire crew automatically

- Providing information or suggesting lifestyle changes
- Offering very simple advice, such as having a cup of water near to hand may help someone who is less mobile urgently extinguish a dropped cigarette
- Involving families and friends where ongoing support is needed

Diagram:

- Person at risk identified
- WSFRS assist?
  - Yes: Referral required?
    - Yes: WSFRS undertake risk assessment, provide advice, install specialist equipment, refer to relevant partner if wider issues identified.
    - No: WSFRS continues to monitor risk through incident monitoring and follow up visits.
  - No: WSFRS Re-assess needs, provide further intervention if needed.
- Referral Required?
  - Yes: WSFRS refer person to relevant partner for support. Make a safeguarding referral where appropriate.
  - No: Referral Required?
Crime prevention

There is a range of ways that we can assist people to avoid becoming victims of crime

- Identifying evidence of rogue traders, scamming and other forms of economic crime, child sexual exploitation, PREVENT and modern day slavery
- Arson prevention
- Working with young firesetters

We recognise that not everybody is comfortable asking for support or is aware of the services that we offer. These tend to be the people who are most in need of our services. So we will build relationships with their friends, family and neighbours to improve their awareness and understanding of the services we can provide.

Our approach to working with residents must be to ‘Make Every Contact Count’. When we make contact with a resident we must use the opportunity to ensure that person is aware of the full range of services available to them.

We will make the most of every opportunity to work with our partners using our resources as effectively as possible to deliver joint objectives, by spreading safety or health and wellbeing messages either directly or via groups who can pass them on to as many people as possible, such as front line staff from other organisations.

Where our risk data aligns to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) campaign schedule we will actively support the campaign either through community events or via social media. The approach to campaigns will be proportionate to the risk, reflect our available resources and the best way to engage with the target audience. The WSFRS annual campaign schedule will reflect the Integrated Risk Management Plan and be set out in the annual Business Delivery
Plan. Any additional or local campaigns must be data led and support our strategic aims. We will work with the corporate communications team to develop campaign resources that are matched to the method of delivery and target audience.

There are many internal and external agencies and teams who are working with us to get the message across and reduce the level of risk. Some of those are Sussex Police, Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, Age UK, Public Health, Prevention Assessment Teams, Community Safety Partnerships and telecare providers.

When it comes to fire safety many of the highest risk people are known to another agency. We will raise awareness amongst our partners of the early warning signs in order for them to make referrals to us. Warning signs include no working smoke alarm, burn or scorch marks, electrical/gas appliances in poor condition, hoarding and fire setting behaviour. We will also train our staff to identify people who are seen by our partners as most in need of support and make referrals to them.
How we will deliver

Our Prevention activity will be assigned to and delivered by the most appropriately skilled personnel. Where the risk is at a lower level or the target audience is a large group (universal) the activity will be delivered by our fire crews supported by volunteers.

It will always be our aim to optimise the delivery that can be undertaken by these groups and we will empower front line personnel to deliver a wide range of prevention activity to support their local communities. Where there is a higher level of risk or slightly smaller groups it will be delivered by personnel who have received additional training or by specialist staff from within the Prevention Team.

Where there is a very high level of risk and the individual needs are complex (targeted) this work will be delivered by personnel within the Prevention Team. If the level of risk is very high and the level of expertise required is beyond that of WSFRS the case will be referred to one of our partner agencies.

All personnel will be appropriately trained to deliver the prevention work and the training will be regularly refreshed in line with the maintenance of competence programme for firefighters. Prevention training will be mandatory for all firefighters.

Our specific programmes of Prevention will include Safe and Well Visits, Firewise and School’s Education. Our generic Prevention programmes for fire, road and water safety will be delivered through community events, work in partnership and via social media engagement.
Outcomes

Our preventative work supports The West Sussex Plan by delivering the following outcomes:

**To give children the best start in life**

- Referrals of children at risk and their families for early support or immediate assistance where a safeguarding issue is identified.

- Young people equipped with knowledge to help them make informed choices to keep themselves safe.

**To champion the economy**

- Our road safety awareness work is aimed at reducing those requiring emergency care and preventing life changing injuries in addition to keeping the roads within our county open.

- Delivering prevention services to individuals whose home is owned by a business.

**To support independence in later life:**

- By working closely with health and social care professionals we will help support those who are frail, elderly or have specific conditions that make them most at risk in the event of a fire and or from other harm.

- The advice and equipment we install will help keep people safe in their homes and reduce the injuries requiring hospital admission.

- Communities involved in decision making, equipped with specialist support and volunteers taking care of their own community.
**Measuring success**

We will measure the impact of our preventative work by identifying changes in behaviour both in the long and short term.

We use both quantitative (figures) and qualitative (case studies) data to show outcomes. Our evaluation captures changes in attitude and behaviour (before and after) as well as whether the risk is reduced and/or managed, whether people feel safer and how far they’ve progressed against their targets. It is collected from a range of methods, including telephone and online surveys as well as direct written feedback from the individuals and partners we work with.

We will also undertake quality assurance to ensure that the desired level of service delivery is maintained. It will also enable the end to end process to be reviewed for consistency and effectiveness.

The results of our work will be regularly monitored and published in our Annual Report and Statement of Assurance document and this strategy will be reviewed annually.

**Reference documents:**

- The West Sussex Plan 2017-2022
- WSCC Road Safety Framework
- The Maintenance of Competence Framework
- NFCC framework
- Safeguarding Adults and Children at Risk SOP