



READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	7 th Oct 2022		
REPORT TITLE:	Fire Service Winter Planning for Vulnerable Residents		
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ORGANISATION:	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 With rising prices of household items, food and energy comes challenges particularly to those on low incomes and who have other vulnerabilities. Both statutory and non-statutory services are planning what support they can offer over the winter period. The Fire Service is also looking at what support can be offered to residents through the winter, and how we can join with other partner organisations to plan to meet the needs of the community.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That partner agencies support the Fire Service to promote the activities set out in Paragraph 4 below and add to their existing pathways and processes where possible.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

With regards to fire safety winter brings different risks which we need households to be aware of and be educated on managing safely such as:

- In England there are an average of 65 fires a year caused by electric blankets which may rise with increased use this winter due to the energy prices rises. There are safety messages around safe use which we need to get out to the public.
- On Average there are two fires a day caused by heaters and 7700 chimney fires per year in England. There is a possibility more people may start using chimneys and different forms of heating this winter in a bid to save money. So its important people are reminded how to use heaters safely, for example getting chimneys swept each year prior to using.
- It's typical for people to increase candle use in the winter and as such this increases the risk of domestic fires caused by candles. Frequency increases also around festivals where candles and fireworks are used.
- Carbon Monoxide risks are present at all times of year but increase over winter with increased use of heaters. Risks may rise if people skip servicing of boilers. Many of the public are unaware of what CO is, don't have detectors and don't know the symptoms of CO poisoning. More info, training and support can be found [here](#)

4. THE PROPOSAL

We request the support of partner agencies to promote the below and add to their existing pathways and processes where possible:

- We would like the support of other partner agencies to share safety messages via their social media. They can do this by following us and sharing winter safety messages.
- We request partners to advertise and promote our Safe and Well visits. Partners can refer directly or residents can self-refer info on how can be found [here](#)
- Joint working on making every contact count and for others to share their winter plans with us so we can signpost appropriately to others when we are doing our home visits.
- We have Winter Safety leaflets online and also printed copies for partner agencies to share the safety messages. Contact safeandwellwesthub@RBFRS.co.uk for printed or find online [here](#)
- We have our Adults at Risk Training which is a free lives online or in person session on fire safety in the home aimed at professionals who work in the community. We need as many people to attend these so they can identify fire hazards in homes and take appropriate mitigations to keep people safe. Information can be found [here](#)

5. CONTRIBUTION TO READING'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy has the following five priorities:

1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
3. Help children and families in early years
4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

5.2 The above proposal will support all the above by keeping people safe and healthy in their homes over this winter period.

6. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Not applicable

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Not applicable

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Not applicable

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Not applicable