



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Statement of Intent

Definition of Risk

Dwelling Fires

May 2024



PREVENTION

Introduction

The information articulated in this Statement of Intent will help Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) identify how it will target its prevention activities.

HWFRS defines risk as a combination of the likelihood and consequences of hazardous events. This aligns with the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) Definition of Risk.

As well as using the NFCC Definition of Risk, a range of other risks have been considered, which are important to understand when looking at areas presenting the greatest threat or harm of life.

This information will help the Prevention team to plan how best to deliver its preventative services to help prevent dwelling fires. To help us define what we mean by ‘vulnerable’, we have identified and analysed the factors that put people at an increased likelihood of requiring an intervention or response from the Service.

We do recognise that fires occur in businesses, agricultural buildings, vehicles, and open spaces etc. but we have concentrated on dwelling fires because these are more likely to result in death or injury.

HWFRS therefore defines risk as a combination of the likelihood and consequences of a hazardous event.



Who is at Risk?

We have explored the factors that increase the likelihood of dying in a dwelling fire, as well as the factors that put people at greater risk of having a dwelling fire. Whilst incident data is important, this information is not to be viewed in isolation.

It is important to understand what makes an individual most at risk of injury or death, following a domestic dwelling fire and a variety of datasets and intelligence was also utilised to support the development of this statement. This included the interrogation of national datasets as well as reviewing local intelligence and trends.

Individuals who are at risk of dying in a fire

National Home Office Data for fire fatalities and injuries state that there are factors that put individuals at a higher risk of dying in a fire.

An interrogation of the Service's historical incident dataset and an analysis of national data, including Home Office data, identified that in the case of a fire, individuals who are at highest risk of **dying in a fire** are those **over 65, living alone**, with **reduced mobility**, a disability, or an impairment due to drugs and/or alcohol and smokers.

Individuals over the age of 65 represent the largest proportion of fire fatalities in HWFRS area over the last 10-year period. Whilst the data extracted using the NFCC Method doesn't put this age group as the one most likely to have a fire, if this groups of individuals do have a fire, the consequences are likely to be much more severe.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire have an ageing population and by 2026, the proportion of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase to 209,000, representing more than one in four of the total population (25.9 percent)

Individuals who are at risk of having a fire

An interrogation of the Service's database, which provides details on operational incidents attended by fire crews, and an analysis of national data, including Home Office data, identified that individuals who are at highest risk of **experiencing a fire** are those **under the age of 60** (historical Service incident data identifies the age group 45 – 55 as having the highest proportion of fires), **who are living alone**, with a **long term illness or disability**, or individuals who live in **deprived areas**.

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service provide fire safety advice to everyone. A Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) can be carried out for the more vulnerable such as the elderly, people living alone and those with reduced mobility.

Working together with our partners, we help provide a signposting service aimed at improving the lives of vulnerable or disadvantaged people.

For further information about a FREE Home Fire Safety Visit call us on 0800 032 1155.

An online Home Fire Safety Check can also be completed by accessing our Service Website: www.hwfire.org.uk/advice/book-a-home-fire-safety-visit/

Further Information

For further information please visit www.hwfire.org.uk or to request a Home Fire Safety Visit, the online Home Fire Safety Check Form can be accessed directly via our website: www.hwfire.org.uk/advice/book-a-home-fire-safety-visit/



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