

Partnering in Fire Prevention

**NORTH YORKSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

July 2023

Fire does discriminate



Welcome to the fourth edition of our newsletter sharing with partners the work NYFRS are doing to keep our communities safe from fire. Previous editions can be found on our website alongside other resources for partners www.northyorksfire.gov.uk/your-safety/safe-at-home/home-fire-safety-partnerships

The Fire Service alone cannot keep communities safe. Since the last edition we have been working to train partners about our preventative Safe and Well visits discussing when and how to refer a person vulnerable to fire. Pictured later in the newsletter are the team of Occupational Therapists from York Hospital who we visited in June, thank you for your time!

In this edition of Partnering in Fire Prevention we will be providing an update on the referrals we have received from you so far this year, and demonstrating why they make a difference to the work that we are able to do. We have asked some of our most prolific referrers to write testimonials about their experiences of using Safelincs and working with the Fire Service. There are also updates on changes in the NYFRS Prevention team and a spotlight feature on our Fire Safe scheme. The prevention themes we will be focusing on this coming quarter is a regular feature, and while it may seem too soon to be thinking about heating your home in the winter it won't be long before we are promoting chimney fire safety again! If you are doing any community engagement events which we could help support please do let us know.

Referrals received

It is positive to see the number of new referrers for Safe and Well visits each month; there have consistently been over 20 new referrers each month since the new year.

Sadly we also know that some of our consistent referrers are moving on to new roles. We wish you all the best, but please make sure to include Safe and Well visits as part of your handover to a colleague!

An analysis of referral data highlights how important agency referrals are to the Fire Service. The data it is based on comes from the first quarter of 2023, when NYFRS made 1,039 Safe and Well visits. 422 were at the request of home owners or occupiers, and 442 were at the request of an agency. The risk is calculated based on the answers provided in the Safe and Well visit questionnaire.

Every one of those 442 referrals from an agency helped us to keep people safe. Each home will have received person centred safety advice to reduce the risk of a fire starting and make sure they have a plan should the worst happen. Without a referral it is unlikely we would have made contact with them. Additionally, home owner referrals are more likely to be classed as low or medium risk while referrals from agencies are more likely to be at high or very high risk. Referrals from you ensure that we are using our resources to target those most vulnerable to fire.

Prevention Updates

New members to the team

Since the last edition of the newsletter we have undergone many staff changes in the Prevention team.

Congratulations to Station Manager Dave Dixon who has moved into a district manager role in Craven. Watch Manager Adam Farrow successfully completed a promotion process to become a Station Manager and is now Station Manager for Prevention. Community Safety Officer Keir Bascombe has a temporary role as a Fire Fighter in York, and Community Safety Officer Nick Gregory will shortly be leaving to take up a temporary Crew Manager role at our Training Centre. Although nobody has left the service, all these changes do highlight the importance of using Safelincs as a referral tool to ensure your referral makes it to the right person without delay. We would also like to introduce to our new Head of Early Intervention and Prevention, Vicky Coe.

Welcome to Vicky

In April North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service welcomed Vicky Coe as the new Head of Early Intervention and Prevention. Vicky is originally from Devon and has worked and volunteered at strategic and tactical levels to keep individuals and communities safe from crime and other harm, for over 20 years. As a former Community Safety Partnership Manager, she led bids to secure significant funding to benefit local communities, and she also has a track record of working with a range of partner organisations to deliver effective (and at times award winning) change. Vicky is a former volunteer and gave 10 years to working



Safe and well referral partners

We now have over 20 organisations, charities and teams signed up to our partnership.

Since our last edition we would like to welcome Care for All, City of York Falls Prevention, Elderflower Home Care Team, Guardian Angel Carers York, NYC Living Well Smoke Free, the Safer Hambleton Hub and Warm and Well.

If your organisation would like to sign up, just visit our website to find out more <https://www.northyorksfire.gov.uk/your-safety/safe-at-home/home-firesafety-partnerships>

You can email us at Prevention@northyorksfire.gov.uk

late at night and during the early hours of the morning within a busy night time economy, as a Street Pastor. She became a Director and Chair of that Charity, but left those roles to relocate to North Yorkshire.

About her new role Vicky said "It is such a privilege to lead North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Prevention Team and as someone who isn't a Firefighter, I was so grateful that an opportunity existed to apply for a leadership position within the service. What made me want to apply, was my experience of working directly with some of the team as everyone was always so friendly, professional and completely driven to keep people safe. Since I started I've been humbled by the work of our team's Community Safety Officers, Public Safety Officers, LIFE instructors and Watch Managers, along with all of the prevention activity carried out by the broader service every day across North Yorkshire. I'm really excited to work with the Prevention Team, the whole service and all of our partners to continue the wide range of exceptional work to keep our communities safe.

Updates on Airflow Mattresses

Our January edition of Partnering in Fire Prevention highlighted the potential risk of airflow mattresses.

Since then we have been raising awareness of the risk during our partnership training sessions like the one pictured here that took place with the Occupation Therapists at York Hospital. Community Safety Officer Amy Jenkinson-Worthy led an online seminar during Safeguarding Week about the risks of air flow mattresses.

Through one of our partnerships Watch Manager James Hopkin has acquired an airflow mattress. He is keen to film a controlled burn of the mattress with our virtual reality cameras. This will help us learn more about the behaviour of an air flow mattress during a fire, but will also be used as a training tool for all our staff by highlighting the dangers and potential risks associated with them. We can then confidently pass this information on to the users of air flow products via our Safe and Well visits and through partner education too.

The VR goggles are becoming an increasingly popular engagement tool which we have managed to incorporate into Fire Service training, youth education and open days.



NYFRS FireSafe Programme.

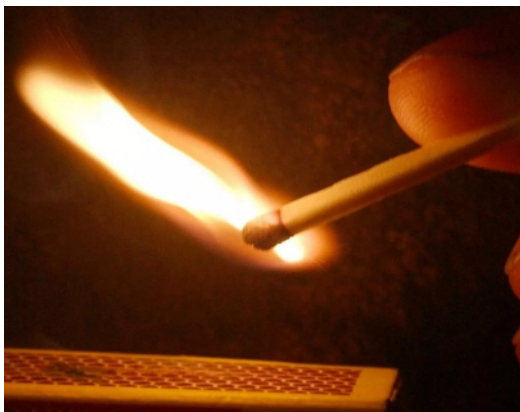
Have you heard of our FireSafe Programme?

The programme is designed to work with children and young people up to the age of 18 who play with fire or who have set fires. Without help and guidance, fireplay behaviour can become increasingly serious and lead to injury and damage to property. Early intervention can significantly reduce the chance of this behaviour continuing.

Our advisors will work with the child/young person and can include the family to educate on the dangers of playing with or using fire and the consequences of its misuse. The intervention is usually conducted at home but can be carried out in other appropriate locations and to groups if suitable.

Our advisors don't scare children through using shock tactics. It has been proven that education and having an understanding is more effective at changing fireplay behaviour. Each session is tailored to suit the child's individual needs and abilities and the number of visits will also vary depending on the child's needs.

If you are concerned about a child or young person get in touch with us immediately by contacting us on 01609 780150 or filling in our referral form found on our website [FireSafe Referral - North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service \(northyorksfire.gov.uk\)](http://northyorksfire.gov.uk)



Testimonials from Referrers

Thank you to Jess Hallatt, a Care Co-ordinator for the ProActive Care Team and Helen Chafer, a Falls Prevention Practitioner for the City of York Council for their contribution to this edition of the Partnering in Fire Prevention newsletter. As regular users of the Safelincs online home fire safety check tool we wanted to ask their honest opinions on what their experiences of referring to the Fire Service have been like and what benefits a Safe and Well visit can bring to their customers.

Jess Hallatt

My name is Jess Hallatt, and I am a Care Coordinator for the ProActive Care Team based in Harrogate. We are a team of two Care Coordinators and three Occupational Therapists (OTs) who visit older adults and housebound patients who are physically, socially, or digitally excluded from traditional health service provision. Our team helps patients increase their independence, reduce falls, prevent crisis, prevent hospital admissions, identify unmet needs, meet their goals, record future healthcare preferences as well as aiming to reduce barriers patients face in accessing other services.

My role as a Care Coordinator consists of tasks such as booking appointments, ordering equipment, reviewing patients, and making referrals to other services. I regularly make referrals to the fire service when the OTs identify risks to patient safety. For example, when working with people who are unable to get out of bed, we provide basic fire safety advice then refer on to the fire service to create personalised emergency evacuation plan. We also refer when we issue items of pressure relieving equipment to reduce the risk of pressure ulcers (also known as bed sores) as these are often filled with air, which can be an accelerant in the event of a fire. If the person smokes, has reduced mobility and uses flammable medicated creams, the risks increase. By making the referral the person can get specialist advice empowering them to make safe choices.

The whole team and I find the referral process to Fire Service's Safe and Well visits very easy to

do and means we can complete a referral in just a couple of minutes using the online form. This is huge benefit when I have several referrals to complete. Sometimes we have patients that require joint visits with a member of our team and the Fire Service team which requires effective communication and cooperation. We see ourselves continuing to work together with the Fire Service into the future to ensure that the safety of our patients is paramount.

Helen Chafer, Falls Prevention Practitioner

City of York Council's **Falls Prevention Service** is a free service for residents worried about falling in their home or who have experienced a fall.

As a preventative service, it aims to reduce the risk of falls or further falls, and to help people stay independent in their own home for as long as possible.

The service has been running for six years, starting as a pilot scheme and expanding city-wide to meet demand.

It's run by the Healthy and Sustainable Homes Team which has a Senior Officer, four Falls Prevention Practitioners and two Joiners.

Residents can self-refer and Council staff can make referrals.

When the referral has been made, a practitioner will arrange a home visit to assess it. We ask the residents what their concerns are and look to see what adaptations, equipment, help or advice would help.

The most common items we install include grab rails, additional banister rails on stairs or bathroom equipment like toilet frames or aids to help people get in and out of their bath or shower more safely.

We can also commission the Council's building services team for other adaptations such as adding half steps or railings.

Referrals to other agencies

We frequently refer customers to other agencies including North Yorkshire Fire Service (NYFRS). During the home assessment, we always see if a customer has a smoke alarm in their home and check if it's been fitted correctly and is tested.

Often we find that they are fitted but haven't been tested for years or that some people don't have them at all. If we think the customer would benefit from a referral to NYFRS, we talk to them about this.

Referrals are quick and easy via Safelincs.

If the customer gives us permission to make the referral, it only takes a few minutes to do it online.

Residents feel safer in their homes having the appropriate fire or smoke alarms and knowing that we work together. Following a referral, they usually give positive feedback. They are usually quite impressed that the fire crew turn up in the engine – they say it gives the neighbours something to talk about!

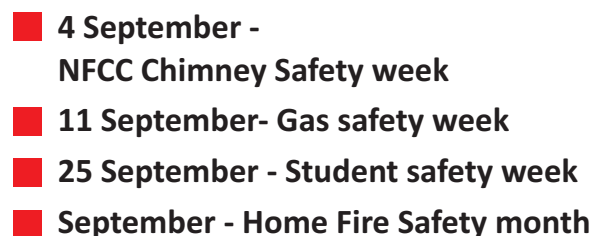
If you are interested in learning more about the Falls Prevention Service, visit –[Falls Prevention Scheme City of York Council](#), email us at reducingfalls@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 552300.

Prevention Campaigns for July – September

To ensure the safety messages we are providing are relevant and have the most impact we follow a fire prevention campaign calendar which reflects different seasonal activities.

From April until September we will be focusing on the risk of wildfire and outdoor fire safety but there are also some national campaign weeks that we will be supporting.

We shall be sharing information about all of these campaigns on our social media accounts, please share them to your own pages. If you are holding any events in support of these weeks please get in touch if you would like the Fire Service to attend too.

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- 4 September - NFCC Chimney Safety week
 - 11 September- Gas safety week
 - 25 September - Student safety week
 - September - Home Fire Safety month

A Review of Fire Related Fatalities and Severe Casualties

In May 2023 the Home Office published their in-depth review of fire-related fatalities and severe casualties in England. In the foreword Sarah Gawley, Interim Director of Fire notes that;

“Over recent decades there has been a substantial and welcome reduction in fire-related fatalities and casualties in England”

The following extract from the review demonstrates why partnership work is so important; spotting unsafe behaviours early can potentially change the outcome.

“As a large proportion of fires (145 of 185) were identified as being caused by human behaviour, the risk of a fatal fire could potentially be mitigated against by spotting unsafe fire behaviours early. The most common potentially risky behaviour was smoking (110 victims), along with discarding cigarettes inappropriately (56 of 201 victims), and careless or risky use of materials that may cause fire (79 victims). There were some cases of hoarding and poor housekeeping among fatal fire victims, which may have contributed to the outcome of the fire (46 victims)”.

The review found that 47 victims had previously had contact with a Fire Service, 26 had a home fire safety check or a Safe and Well visit. There were 154 victims where there was no contact with a Fire Service or it was unknown. Over half of these people though had some level of impairment that was known about which made them more vulnerable to fire. If they had been referred for a Safe and Well visit the outcome could possibly have been different which is why we continue to raise awareness among partners about what behaviours can increase the risk of a fire starting or of somebody surviving a fire.

The full report can be found here:

Research and analysis

An in-depth review of fire-related fatalities and severe casualties in England, 2010/11 to 2018/19

Updated 16 May 2023

Coming next time

The fifth edition of our newsletter “Partnering in Fire Prevention” will be published in October 2023 and will mark our one year anniversary!

It will contain an update on Safe and Well referrals and information about our autumnal prevention calendar themes which will include Dark Nights and Chimney Fire Safety.

Please contact us with suggestions about what else you would like to see included.



Contact us: Prevention@northyorksfire.gov.uk or call 01609 780150