

Shropshire Council Housing Initiative Update

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260205 or Martin Timmis, Head of Prevention and Protection on 01743 260285.

1 Purpose of Report

This report updates Members on the initiative, which commenced in July 2012, with Shropshire Council Landlord Services.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to note the contents of this report.

3 Background

The Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) has recognised older people as a vulnerable group that is expanding within Shropshire. As part of the Precision Prevention Strategy to target this group, and making best use of existing resources, a data sharing partnership was launched in July 2012 with Shropshire Council Landlord Services (SCLS).

SCLS took over the former Shropshire Council Housing stock and now manages around 1,500 properties throughout Shropshire.

SCLS provides names, addresses and telephone numbers of tenants of Council managed dwellings aged 75 years or more. This data is used to prioritise a home fire safety visit, as the over 75s are considered a priority vulnerable group. Research shows that people in this age group are at a higher risk of suffering the effects of a domestic fire and the Service hopes to reduce this through targeted visits.

4 How the Partnership Works

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service receives data securely on a monthly basis. From this data a pre-determined number of residents is chosen, based on address and capacity of the station. A letter is sent to tenants explaining the partnership, what to expect from a visit and how to opt out, if they do not wish to be visited. Operational crews then attempt to contact householders that have not opted out.

The initiative was initially piloted in the Bridgnorth fire station area.

5 Activity Levels

In the first three months, 108 visits were attempted with 93 “successful” visits completed (86%). Three tenants were not in when fire crews attempted to visit / make appointments.

Only six tenants have refused a visit, mainly stating they already have smoke alarms and feel they know enough about fire safety. One person had been admitted to a nursing home and one had died. Below is a table showing the total for each visit outcome.

Visit outcome	Total
Home fire safety visit completed	93
Not in for appointment	3
Declined a visit	6
Other	2

In the main, we have received positive feedback; fire crews have said residents have been receptive to the information and visit.

Fire crews have also given positive feedback, stating they feel it is a good way of working and communicating with their community.

6 Expanding the Initiative

Following the early success in the Bridgnorth pilot, wholetime firefighters from Telford Central have started visiting SCLS managed homes in Shifnal.

Personnel from Oswestry will start making visits in their area in the New Year.

7 Financial Implications

There are no costs beyond those within existing budgets.

8 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

9 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Human Resources 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

10 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.