

**Fire and Rescue Home Safety brief to the Economic and Community Development PDS Panel meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011**

I have been asked by the BaNES Community Safety team to give a brief talk on Fire & Rescue Service approach in managing community risk

If I may firstly look at the historical perspective.

Within our community there used to be a general polarisation of views and agendas – crime belongs to the police, the council has a wide portfolio, and fire does well fires, car crashes and of course cats up trees.

Each agency would work hard to resolve their world and their targets, today things are much more different.

Following on from a lead set by BaNES Council's Community Safety team agencies today are working together more closely, more supportively and more cross discipline than ever before.

As a society we tend to ascribe artificial boundaries to what in truth is a complete broad spectrum issue.

Breaking these boundaries is key to successful management of community risk.

Many of the indicators of risk that the FRS and other agencies use would use also indicate risk or triggers for other organisations.

Social deprivation, fuel poverty, substance miss use, to name but a few there are a whole range of issues that bring multiple agencies together supporting an individual.

We can now profile incidents statistically and determine the community and societal risk factors, this allows us to effectively target our resources and interventions on a mapping based system.

We utilise a whole range of data to analyse risk

- Mosaic – social demographics, lifestyles and behaviour traits.
- Indices of child wellbeing
- Top 20% Areas of social deprivation
- Percentage change and proportion reports
- And of course our own Incident data

This profile information along with our incident data we share with the council community safety team on a regular basis.

Thanks to the BaNES Community Safety team our deliberate fire data now also sits alongside ASB data giving a more complete picture of ASB related activity.

### **Home Safety Visits**

One intervention we have is the home safety visit; this provides a series of scalable packages.

- 1 – Risk Assessment and information package – Very Low Risk
- 2 – Home Safety Visit – standard package Crews – Low to Moderate Risk
- 3 – Home Safety Visit level 2 – Bespoke package specialist team for High and Very High Risk.

Since 2007 we have completed almost 7500 home safety visits in BaNES, and almost 1800 in the last year.

Despite all this activity there were 91 accidental dwelling fires in BaNES during 2010/11, and it is this along with a number of other community safety issues such as water safety that we are working hard to address.

### **Partnership working:**

We now work supportively with a number of agencies such as the fantastic village agent's scheme in the Chew Magna area, which has just been successful in gaining continued funding, where their interactions in the community generates referrals for us.

Working with Somer Housing the largest social housing provider in BaNES is providing some fantastic support for both agencies as well as gaining unprecedented access to home safety advice to their clients.

Each new tenancy will receive fire risk assessment information, FRS will embed community safety staff into Somer staff training, and provide a referral scheme for higher risk properties.

Working in support of the affordable warmth scheme we were able to provide an informal assessment, information and referral advice whilst conducting our Home Safety visits, in a hope that we could influence excess winter deaths, as well as reducing domestic fires.

Safeguarding Adults and Children is another key area of activity, where we are able to report issues of concern as well as playing an active part in the adults, and children's safeguarding boards, and the adults safeguarding quality assurance group which we chair.

We work with and support a number of other agencies such as:

Age concern- They have a home from hospital scheme which refers people newly returning home from hospital. They also offer our service generally to their customers.

Banes community alarms- providers of the telecom care systems.

Adult care social work team

Bath Islamic society- provides support for the Islamic community and also runs awareness for non- Islamic community.

Care and repair- provides low cost repair services for older people, fit alarms and generate referrals for us.

Way ahead care

Guardian homecare

Care South- all 3 provide domiciliary care for older people in their homes.

Deafplus and vision plus- provide support to deaf and hard of hearing people and visually impaired people.

Family placement team- Foster care placement team.

Developing Health and Independence- Drug and alcohol counselling and support

Intermediate care teams- banes- team of nurses occupational therapists and physiotherapists who treat people in their homes to lower hospital admissions.

Banes PCT, child safety equipment- We provide a service of fitting child safety equipment for the PCT.

Southside family support- based in Twerton providing all manner of family support and domestic violence support.

Specialist Drug Advisory Service- prescribers and counselors form people suffering with addictions.

### Fire safety awareness

To date, 15 of these agencies have received fire safety awareness training. This involves members of staff being up skilled so that they are able to recognise fire risk and remove it when they enter peoples home to carry out their normal day job. This translates to around 140 staff members.

If the risk is too great or the situation too complex they are also given a method of referring their client to the fire service for further intervention from us.

### Emerging Risks

Its not just our managing a static situation we also have to be aware of new and emerging risks for example :

There has been a noticeable increase in the amount of fires involving ceramic hobs in the bath area. 5% of fires in Bath 2009/10 involved materials other than food stuff being left in the hob area.

This included shopping, linen baskets and a high chair tray and shows how modern flush cookers are being utilised as work surfaces in compact modern kitchens resulting in controls being inadvertently activated.

We are also recognising an increasing trend for example that younger adults people alone in the home are more susceptible to distraction fires.

### Engaging with the public

We complete in excess of 140 home visits in Banes every month.

We visit all schools in the Bath area at year 5, age 9- 10. during this visit we address smoke alarms, escape routes and false alarms.

We have just piloted our first visit to Key stage 3 children, age 13- 14. This looks at the modern role of the fire service and the consequences of playing with fire.

We attend fete's and fun days, engaging with the public, answering questions and offering Home Safety Visits.

We present displays to the public involving RTC's and cooking fires.

We were involved in a number of safety demonstrations at the universities in Bath with the aim of reducing cooking fires.

Last year we assisted the police and ambulance to launch operation tonic, the drink driving campaign in the centre of bath with a televised RTC involving 2 vehicles and a drunk driver.

We do group presentations, such as the 'Spring into life' event where 50 people came together in the Chew Valley to listen to various agencies talk is one example.

We also presented at the Drug and Alcohol action team's annual conference and the Child safety seminar organised by Avonsafe

We engage with the public through our partner agencies.

Our work to date across BaNES has delivered a 23% reduction in accidental kitchen fires compared to 2009/10 figures.

This not only does this make the public safer, but also when combined with the work of our technical fire safety team helps protect valuable heritage buildings from damage by fire.

Moving forwards we will continue to work with the whole range of key partners such as the BaNES community safety team to work to increase public safety across a whole range of local issues.

Thank you.

Denis McCann  
Unitary Manager  
Bath & North East Somerset  
Avon Fire & Rescue Service