

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Overview Details			
Function /Department	Strategy and Performance	Date Of analysis	
Title and overview of what is being assessed / considered.	Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024-27	Review Date	
Who will be affected by this activity? (Please tick)		Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Author of Equality Impact Analysis	Michelle Kirk Deb Appleton	Equality Analysis quality assured by (Member of the POD team)	

The purpose of undertaking an equality impact analysis and assessment is to understand the potential and/or actual impact that a service or policy may have on protected groups within the Equality Act (2010). The protected groups are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and / or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic disadvantage (Although not one of the 9 protected groups MFRA recognise that Socio-economic disadvantage affects many deprived communities within Merseyside.)

People who are protected from discrimination on the basis of any of these characteristics are described in this document as belonging to one or other “protected group”. In addition, equality analysis can be applied to groups of people not afforded protection by the Equality Act, but who often face disadvantage and stigma in life in general and when trying to access services & employment opportunities. Such groups include homeless people, sex workers, people who misuse drugs and other groups who experience socio economic disadvantage & others. This

template has been developed following consultation with staff and other external stakeholders including reference to the National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [equality impact assessment toolkit](#) as well as the [Maturity Models and Workforce Good Practice Frameworks](#) developed by the NFCC which MFRS will use to underpin EIAs as wider work on improvement.

MFRS have also created the [ED&I Assurance Checklist](#), which is a useful outline of ED&I factors that staff need to consider to help demonstrate minimum legal compliance, making the most of ED&O opportunities and minimising risk for the organisation. This checklist can be used when preparing plans, discussing new services and organisational change.

Impact Analysis	
1	<p>What evidence have you used to think about any potential impact on particular groups? (Please highlight any evidence that you have considered to help you address what the potential impact may be)</p> <p>Also include an introduction here giving background the purpose of the Policy, SI etc. that is being assessed. (A good place to start is the introduction and purpose of the document)</p> <p>Example evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONS Census data • Regional or local demographic information • MFRS reports & data. • NFCC Reports/Guidance • Home office/Local government Reports • Risk Assessments • Staff survey results • Research / epidemiology studies • Updates to legislation • Engagement records or analysis <p>NFCC Equality of Access documents – We encourage you to click on the following link to</p>
	<p>The key proposals in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024/27 are listed below and are the basis for the completion of this EIA.</p> <p>This draft EIA sets out to review the proposals and to ascertain their impact on people, both in the diverse communities of Merseyside and within our organisation.</p> <p>This document articulates in detail the different risk groups in Merseyside, the strategic intent of the Service to mitigate risks and what impact the CRMP will have.</p> <p>There will be separate EIA's carried out in relation to any of the proposals below that may have the potential to impact staff in terms of equality.</p> <p>Overall, the proposed actions will have a positive impact on our staff and all members of the community. No negative impacts were identified.</p> <p>We will continue to review and monitor any potential opportunities for equalities impacts.</p> <p><u>Our Proposals</u></p> <p><i>Increasing resources and improving response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing fire engines from 32 to 34 • Reintroducing a Small Fires Unit • Maintaining fire engine availability

access a series of 'equality of access documents', developed by the National Fire Service Council (NFCC) & reference the data and information highlighted.

Some aspects of these documents will help you provide information, awareness, and data to support:

- Integrated Risk Management Plans
- Service delivery strategies
- Positive action and recruitment plans
- Workforce improvement plans
- Community engagement activities
- and will prompt conversations within the workplace.

Each document provides a significant amount of data and information, including research undertaken and risk-based evidence, and then goes into some ideas for actions which Services can use based on the information and their individual circumstances

- Enhancing water rescue capability through introducing either a sub-surface drone or a diving team
- Work with the Local Resilience Forum to recognise, plan for and respond to the challenges faced by fires involving alternative fuels.

Working smarter

- Enhanced mobilisation
- Using improved technology in the MFRS Control Room, such as 'Aura@, and '999 Eye'
- Using Watch Managers to carry out different duties that add value and respond to incidents in a different way.

Adding value in Merseyside

- Working in areas of higher risk to educate and inform the communities in those areas about known and foreseeable risk.
- Continuing to assist NWAS in relation to cardiac response and expanding this to people who have had falls.
- Targeting Prevention work toward those most likely to die in a fire and the areas of highest deprivation.
- Introduce a new framework for fire safety related enforcements and prosecutions.

The wider picture

- Using the new Training and Development Academy for national and international training
- As lead authority for National Resilience, we will work with the Home Office on the programme to refresh the current National Resilience assets.
- Achieving Net Zero by 2040

Preparing our plans

When writing the Community Risk Management Plan our approach is broken down into three themes that all make a difference to the safety of people, buildings and places in Merseyside:

Risk – We identify people, buildings and places where there is a likelihood of an emergency incident happening that would have a potentially serious effect on our communities. For example, we work with the people responsible for buildings and locations to help to reduce that risk and we plan and review how we would deal with an emergency if it did occur.

Demand – We use information about incidents that have happened in the past and analyse how we have responded to them, to better understand what happened and how efficient and effective we have been. For example, this enables us to plan to respond effectively and efficiently to similar emergencies that occur in the future.

Vulnerability – we use information that we and other organisations collect to identify the types of people who would be most likely to have a fire or other emergency and who would be most likely to suffer harm. This could be because of personal characteristics such as age or illness, or something that might be related to where people live, work or visit such as high levels of deprivation. For example, we use this information to provide services, on our own and with others, to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies.

The priorities within the plan have been determined by a number of influences including:

- The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Fire Safety Order 2005
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- HMICFRS State of Fire Reports
- The future needs of the Service

		<p>General communications and guidance from the following have been considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFCC Access to Services and Employment • National Standards • Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Equality Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Assurance Checklist and the associated ED&I action plan. <p>You can read more about the data and information, including research undertaken and risk-based evidence within the CRMP document.</p> <p>It should also be noted this Equality Impact Analysis of the CRMP plan will serve to complement other EIAs completed across the Prevention, Protection, Operational Preparedness and Response functions.</p> <p>Any future EIAs undertaken will use this document as the first point of reference.</p>	
2	<p>Do you have all the evidence you need in order to make an informed decisions about the potential impact? (Please tick)</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you feel that you have enough evidence, then you will not need to undertake any engagement activity.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you feel that you do not have enough evidence to make an informed decision, then you will need to undertake engagement activity with the staff or members of the public as applicable</p>

<p>3</p>	<p>What engagement is taking place or has already been undertaken to understand any potential impact on staff or members of the public?</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <p><u>Public</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Focus groups • Public Forums • Complaints, comments, compliments <p><u>Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff events / workshop • Existing staff meetings / committees • Staff Networks • Representative Bodies • Annual Staff Survey questions 	<p>Consultation and Engagement</p> <p>The CRMP has been developed with a programme of engagement and consultation.</p> <p>Following approval of the draft CRMP at the Budget Authority meeting a twelve-week consultation process took place from 4th March to 27th May 2024.</p> <p>The consultation process included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the draft CRMP 2024-27 on our website • Publicity regarding the launch of the consultation process was published on the Authority website, Portal, Facebook, Instagram, Next-door and X • One public forum for all districts of Merseyside (33 people took part). This followed the five initial public engagement forums that took place in October 2023 • Distribution of the CRMP to over 100 strategic partners and other interested parties • Distribution of the CRMP to community contacts and a meeting with those contacts (17 people attended) • Meetings with staff Representative Bodies – Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Fire Officers Association (FOA), UNISON and UNITE • Principal Officer talks with staff and engagement with Staff Network Chairs • Senior officers discussing the plan with partner organisations. • An online questionnaire on our website for the public and staff (69 responses) <p>Feedback following consultation.</p> <p>This EIA has been updated following a review of the consultation outcomes. The public forums, when considering the proposals presented to them, were reminded to consider the nine protected characteristics, plus socio-economic disadvantage which the Authority also includes.</p> <p>In summary, there were high levels of agreement with all of the proposals and agreement that the proposals were advantageous to all protected groups.</p> <p>There was some general feedback with regards to the document itself with 89.55% of respondents finding it easy to read.</p>
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<p>4</p>	<p>Will there be an impact against the protected groups as described in the Equality Act (2010)?</p> <p>Summarise what impact there may be against each of the protected groups. Embed or provide a hyperlink to any reports or electronic files to which you are referring.</p> <p>Please remember when considering any possible impacts, these may be positive or negative and that there may be different impacts for our own staff when compared to those possible impacts on members of the community. Please detail clearly if the impacts are for staff or the wider community.</p> <p>It is also important to note that there may not be an impact on some of the protected groups if this should be the case, please tick the not applicable box.</p> <p>If there is no impact, please state that there is no impact.</p>	<p>What is the actual or potential impact on age?</p> <p>POSITIVE IMPACT</p> <p>The age profile of Merseyside, as of the latest data, shows a diverse demographic distribution. Here's a detailed breakdown:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total Population: Merseyside's population is approximately 1.4 million people. 2. Age Distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children (0-15 years): About 17.2% of the population falls within this age group, which is slightly lower than the national average of 18.3%. ▪ Working Age (16-64 years): This group makes up the majority, comprising 67.4% of the population, which is higher compared to the national average of 62.9%. ▪ Older Adults (65+ years): This segment represents 15.5% of the population, which is lower than the national average of 18.7% (Liverpool City Council) (Office for National Statistics). 3. Median Age: The median age in Merseyside is approximately 40.6 years, aligning closely with the UK's overall median age of 40.7 years (Office for National Statistics).

Common Fire Risks Age Profile and Mitigation Strategies developed & implemented by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS)

This demographic profile indicates a relatively youthful working-age population compared to the national average, which can influence community services and economic planning, including fire safety and risk management strategies. Addressing the needs of a diverse age range is crucial for effective community engagement and service provision. The increased risks are highlighted as follows:

Older Adults (65+)

- **Mobility Issues:** Difficulty evacuating quickly.
- **Cognitive Impairments:** Potential for forgetfulness, such as leaving cooking unattended.
- **Higher Incidence of Chronic Illnesses:** May affect the ability to respond to emergencies.

Children (0-15)

- **Lack of Awareness:** Less knowledge of fire hazards and evacuation procedures.
- **Dependence on Adults:** Reliance on adults for evacuation in case of fire.

Mitigation Strategies undertaken by MFRS

- **Home Safety Visits:** Focus on households with those who are more vulnerable who live in poorer areas, elderly residents and families with young children.
- **Fire Safety Education:** Tailored programmes for schools other educational places and senior centres.
- **Installation of Safety Devices:** Ensure information is provided to reduce this risk of fire and ensuring that working smoke alarms and

other fire safety measures are installed in the homes of those who are more vulnerable to fire including those over the age of 65.

By addressing these age-specific risks, MFRS aims to enhance overall fire safety in the community.

Conclusion

People in this group are likely to fall into our vulnerable category. The number of people aged over 65 is increasing significantly across Merseyside. People are living longer but live with poor health for longer. Young people are more likely to be involved in fires relating to anti-social behaviour.

Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response, improved technology and enhancing water rescue capability is aimed at protecting people (both old and young) in this group.

Tailored engagement will ensure that all members of our communities are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them whether they are old or young.

We will help save more lives and improve equality of life by supporting Northwest Ambulance Service in relation to cardiac response and expanding this to people who have falls.

The new Training and Development Academy will provide accessible facilities for staff and visitors.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

<p>What is the actual or potential impact on disability?</p> <p>POSITIVE IMPACT</p> <p>In Merseyside, the profile of the disabled population highlights significant aspects relevant to understanding fire risks and implementing safety measures. The most recent disabilities statistics provides useful direction as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Proportion of Disabled Individuals: Liverpool, a major part of Merseyside, has one of the highest proportions of disabled people in England, with approximately 23.8% of its population reporting some form of disability. This is notably higher than the national average of 17.7% (Office for National Statistics) (Office for National Statistics). • Types of Disabilities: Disabilities include physical impairments, sensory impairments (such as vision or hearing loss), cognitive impairments, and mental health conditions. Each type can influence the specific fire risks and safety needs. <p>Common Fire Risks for Disabled Individuals and Mitigation Strategies developed and implemented by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS)</p> <p>In Merseyside, the disability factor is a significant consideration in fire risk management. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) identifies individuals with disabilities as a vulnerable group with potentially higher fire risks. This increased risk stems from several factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility Issues: People with physical disabilities may find it difficult to evacuate quickly during a fire, increasing their risk of injury or fatality. MFRS has tailored their prevention strategies to address these challenges, such as installing specialised smoke alarms with vibrating pads or flashing lights for those with hearing impairments. 	<p>Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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- **Cognitive Impairments:** Individuals with cognitive disabilities might not respond appropriately to fire alarms or may not understand evacuation procedures. MFRS provides targeted education and support to ensure these individuals are adequately prepared for emergencies.
- **Home Safety Visits:** MFRS conducts home safety visits, particularly focusing on households with vulnerabilities such as those with disabled residents. These visits aim to identify and mitigate fire risks, install fire safety devices, share information with relevant partners and provide tailored advice to improve fire safety in these homes.
- **Community Engagement and Education:** MFRS actively engages with local disability organisations to raise awareness and educate disabled individuals on fire safety. This collaborative approach helps ensure that the specific needs of disabled people are met, enhancing their overall safety.
- **Fire Service Legislative Awareness:** MFRS has made information available on the public facing website that informs those responsible for premises such as high rise building of their responsibilities to ensure suitable measures are in place to assist those who require assistance to be able to evacuate a building in the event of a fire. This has been reinforced by a number of engagement workshops and safety engagement initiatives.

By integrating these focused strategies, MFRS aims to reduce fire-related risks among disabled residents and enhance their safety and preparedness in case of fire emergencies.

Conclusion

Living with a disability may increase the chances of experiencing poor health and social isolation.

People in this group are likely to fall into our vulnerable category.

		<p>Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and enhancing water rescue capability is aimed at protecting people in this group. Effective response affects risk to life and serious injury. This could have a greater impact to people within this group.</p> <p>Tailored engagement will ensure that all members of our communities are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.</p> <p>We will help save more lives and improve equality of life by supporting Northwest Ambulance service in relation to cardiac response and expanding this to people who have had falls.</p> <p>The new Training and Development Academy will provide accessible facilities, including a 'Changing Places' facility for disabled staff and visitors.</p> <p>The CRMP report is accessible and is available in alternative formats. The report is available to the public on the website and has an option to translate the content into their required language.</p> <p>Although the document has been written in plain English, it would be beneficial to consider the use of Easy Read to ensure documents are even more accessible.</p> <p>You can read more about our consultation within the CRMP document.</p>	
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on gender reassignment?</p> <p>POSITIVE IMPACT</p> <p>The profile of the gender reassignment and transgender population in Merseyside is reflective of the broader trends observed in England and Wales. According to the 2021 Census, around 0.5% of the population in</p>	<p>Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

England and Wales identified as having a gender different from their sex registered at birth.

This includes trans men, trans women, non-binary individuals, and those with other gender identities ([Office for National Statistics](#)) ([Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust](#)). In relation to specifically Merseyside approximately 0.23% of people in the **Northwest**, which includes Merseyside, reported that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth.

Common Fire Risks for Gender Reassignment Individuals and Possible Mitigation Strategies

Considering gender reassignment and the associated fire risk in Merseyside involves understanding the unique vulnerabilities that transgender individuals might face, particularly those undergoing gender reassignment. Several factors can increase fire risk for this group:

1. **Social Isolation and Stigma:** Transgender individuals may experience social isolation and stigma, which can lead to living situations that are less secure and more prone to fire risks. Isolation can also mean less access to community support and resources for fire safety.
2. **Mental Health Challenges:** The stress and mental health challenges associated with gender dysphoria and the transition process can affect an individual's ability to maintain safe living conditions, potentially increasing fire hazards in their homes.
3. **Economic Hardship:** Transgender individuals often face economic hardships due to discrimination in employment, leading to living in poorer housing conditions with outdated or faulty electrical systems and heating, which are significant fire risks.

Possible Mitigation Strategies for consideration

Targeted Home Safety Visits

- **Risk Assessment:** Conducting home safety visits specifically targeting homes of transgender individuals, particularly those in transition or living alone, to assess and mitigate fire risks.
- **Installation of Fire Safety Equipment:** Providing and installing smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, and other safety devices in homes that lack these essentials.

Community Engagement and Education

- **Collaborations with Transgender Organisations:** Partnering with local transgender support groups and health services, such as CMAGIC (Cheshire and Merseyside Adult Gender Identity Collaborative), to spread fire safety awareness and distribute educational materials ([Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust](#)).
- **Tailored Fire Safety Programmes:** Developing fire safety programmes that address specific risks faced by transgender individuals, ensuring the content is inclusive and accessible.

Support Services

- **Mental Health Support:** Working with mental health services to ensure transgender individuals receive comprehensive support, reducing the impact of mental health issues on fire safety.
- **Emergency Planning:** Assisting in the development of personalised emergency evacuation plans that consider the unique needs of transgender individuals, including mobility issues and other health concerns.

Conclusion

Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and tailored engagement will ensure all members of our

		<p>communities are treated fairly and receive information and guidance which is applicable to them.</p> <p>The new Training and Development Academy will provide facilities that are appropriate for all staff and visitors irrespective of their gender.</p> <p>There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on marriage and civil partnership?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>The increase of appliances from 32 to 34 and the introduction of the small fires unit may have a positive impact on our firefighters as it could open up opportunities to explore different flexible and family friendly ways of working.</p> <p>Tailored engagement will ensure that all members of our communities are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.</p> <p>There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/></p>
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on pregnancy and maternity?</p> <p>POSITIVE IMPACT</p> <p>Considering the specific fire risks associated with pregnancy and maternity in Merseyside requires understanding the unique vulnerabilities that pregnant women and new mothers might face. Here are several factors and the initiatives undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) to mitigate these risks:</p>	<p>Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Increased Fire Risks During Pregnancy and Maternity and Mitigation action undertaken by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

1. **Limited Mobility:** Pregnant women, especially in later stages, and new mothers might have limited mobility, making it more challenging to evacuate quickly in case of a fire.
2. **Fatigue and Stress:** Pregnancy and caring for a newborn can lead to increased fatigue and stress, which might affect attention to fire safety measures such as turning off appliances or ensuring candles are extinguished.
3. **Presence of New Hazards:** The presence of additional electrical appliances (e.g., baby monitors, bottle warmers) and potential clutter due to baby items can increase fire hazards in the home.

Mitigation Strategies undertaken by MFRS and continue to do so.

MFRS conducts targeted home safety visits to homes with pregnant women and new mothers. These visits aim to:

- Identify and mitigate fire risks by installing smoke alarms.
- Provide tailored fire safety advice.
- Ensure that escape routes are accessible and free from clutter.

Community Outreach Programs

MFRS works with local health services and community groups to:

- Educate pregnant women and new mothers on fire safety.
- Distribute fire safety materials that are easy to understand and implement.
- Offer workshops or sessions focused on fire prevention and safe practices in the home.

		<p>Support for Vulnerable Groups</p> <p>MFRS includes pregnant women and new mothers in their broader strategy to support vulnerable groups by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing additional support and resources to ensure they feel confident in managing fire safety. • Look to collaborate with organisations such as local maternity services to reach and support these individuals effectively. <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The new Training and Development Academy will provide facilities for nursing mothers.</p> <p>Tailored engagement will ensure that all members of our communities are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.</p> <p>There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on race?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>The race and ethnicity profile of Merseyside is diverse and reflects a range of communities. Based on recent data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. White Population: The majority of Merseyside's population identifies as White, with about 84% of residents falling into this category. This includes those identifying as White British, Irish, and other White backgrounds. 	<p>Not applicable</p> <input type="checkbox"/>

2. **Asian Population:** Asian communities make up around 5.7% of the population. This includes Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and other Asian groups.
3. **Black Population:** Black or Black British communities constitute approximately 3.5% of the population, including Black African and Caribbean backgrounds.
4. **Mixed and Other Ethnic Groups:** Individuals of mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds represent about 3.5%, and other ethnic groups make up 3.3% of the population ([Ethnicity facts and figures](#)) ([Office for National Statistics](#)).

Increased Fire Risks and Race/Ethnicity and Mitigation action undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Addressing the fire risk associated with race and ethnicity in Merseyside involves understanding the specific vulnerabilities that different ethnic groups might face. These risks can be influenced by socioeconomic factors, housing conditions, and access to fire safety resources. Here are some key considerations and initiatives by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service:

Key Considerations

1. **Socioeconomic Factors:** Ethnic minorities often face economic challenges that can lead to living in higher-risk areas with older or substandard housing. This can increase the likelihood of fire incidents due to faulty electrical systems, poor heating, and overcrowding.
2. **Language Barriers:** Language differences can hinder effective communication of fire safety information and emergency procedures. Ensuring that fire safety materials are available in multiple languages is crucial.

3. **Cultural Practices:** Certain cultural practices related to cooking, heating, and religious ceremonies may pose specific fire risks that need to be addressed through tailored fire safety education.

To address the above risks, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service implements several initiatives:

1. **Targeted Home Safety Visits:** MFRS conducts home safety visits in high-risk areas, which often include ethnically diverse communities. These visits aim to identify and reduce fire hazards by installing smoke alarms and providing tailored fire safety advice.
2. **Community Engagement:** MFRS works closely with local community leaders and organisations to disseminate fire safety information effectively. They hold workshops and provide educational materials in multiple languages to ensure accessibility and understanding.
3. **Collaboration with Ethnic Organizations:** MFRS collaborates with ethnic community organisations to address specific cultural practices that might increase fire risk, such as the use of candles or traditional cooking methods. They offer guidance on safe practices to mitigate these risks.
4. **Support Services:** MFRS includes ethnic minority communities in their broader support strategies, ensuring they have access to resources and services that enhance their fire safety and overall well-being.

BAME Business and Fire Risk

In addition, Fire risk management for BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) businesses in Merseyside requires special considerations to address specific vulnerabilities and ensure safety. It should be noted that the percentage of BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) businesses in Merseyside is reflective of broader trends in the UK. As of recent data, around 6.1% of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the UK are

majority-led by individuals from ethnic minority groups. This figure provides a useful benchmark for understanding the representation of BAME-led businesses within Merseyside, as similar patterns are often observed regionally ([Ethnicity facts and figures](#)) ([RWinvest](#)).

Merseyside has seen significant initiatives to support BAME entrepreneurs. For instance, the Liverpool City Region has launched a Race Equality Programme aimed at addressing structural inequalities and enhancing the support for BAME businesses. This programme includes measures to improve access to business support and funding, aiming to create a more inclusive economic environment ([Liverpool Combined Authority](#)).

The growth of new businesses in Merseyside, including those led by BAME individuals, has been strong. In 2023, a record number of 15,150 new businesses were formed in the region, indicating a robust entrepreneurial spirit despite economic challenges ([RWinvest](#))

Here are the key identifiable risks:

Factors Contributing to Increased Fire Risk

1. **Location and Infrastructure:** BAME businesses are often located in older buildings or areas with higher fire risks due to outdated infrastructure and insufficient fire safety measures.
2. **Language Barriers:** Owners and employees of BAME businesses might face language barriers, making it challenging to understand and comply with fire safety regulations.
3. **Awareness and Training:** There may be a lack of awareness or training on fire safety practices within these communities, increasing the risk of fire incidents.

Initiatives undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS)

MFRS has implemented several initiatives to support fire risk management for BAME businesses and will continue to do so:

Community Risk Management Plan: MFRS's Community Risk Management Plan includes targeted actions to address the needs of diverse communities, including BAME businesses.

Partnership with Local Organizations: MFRS works with local BAME organisations to improve fire safety awareness and ensure that businesses have access to necessary resources and support.

By addressing these specific needs and working closely with community partners, MFRS aims to enhance the safety and well-being of ethnic minority communities in Merseyside. For more detailed information, you can visit the MFRS website and related resources.

Conclusion

Areas within Merseyside with higher levels of social deprivation and diversity in relation to Race identified by our Community Profile maps will benefit from our tailored engagement, targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, and improving response.

Tailored engagement will ensure that all members of our communities are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.

The CRMP report is accessible to all and available in different languages.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on religion and / or belief?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>The religious belief profile of Merseyside reflects a diverse range of affiliations, influenced by both historical and contemporary demographic changes. Here are the key points based on recent data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christianity: Christianity remains the predominant religion in Merseyside, though its proportion has decreased over time. In recent census data, about 46% of the population identified as Christian, aligning with broader trends across England and Wales where there's been a notable decline in the number of people identifying as Christian (Office for National Statistics) (Commons Library). 2. No Religion: A significant portion of Merseyside's population identifies as having no religion. This group has been growing and represents about 37% of the population. This trend is part of a broader secularisation seen across the UK (Office for National Statistics) (Commons Library). 3. Islam: Muslims form a smaller but notable part of the community, with around 6% identifying as Muslim. This includes diverse groups within the Muslim community, contributing to the cultural and religious diversity of the area (Office for National Statistics) (Commons Library). 4. Other Religions: Other religious groups, including Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jews, each make up about 2% or less of the population. Additionally, there are small communities practicing other religions like Paganism, Jainism, and Rastafarianism (Office for National Statistics) (Commons Library). 5. Age and Religion: The Christian population tends to be older, with fewer young people identifying as Christian. Conversely, those reporting no religion are generally younger, reflecting 	<p>Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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changing attitudes towards religion among younger generations ([Office for National Statistics](#)).

6. **Geographic Concentrations:** Religious affiliation can vary significantly by locality within Merseyside. For example, areas like Knowsley have higher proportions of Christians, while more urban areas may have greater religious diversity and higher numbers of people identifying with no religion ([Commons Library](#)). Furthermore, the concentration of the Muslim population in Merseyside is a significant aspect of its demographic profile. Key Areas with High Muslim Populations in Merseyside (a) **Liverpool:** As one of the largest cities in Merseyside, Liverpool has a diverse population, including a significant number of Muslim residents. The city is known for its cultural inclusivity and has various mosques and community centres serving the Muslim community (b) **Sefton:** This area also has a notable Muslim population, supported by local community initiatives and religious facilities and (c) **Knowsley and St. Helens:** These regions have smaller but growing Muslim communities, reflecting the wider dispersion of Muslims across Merseyside.

Increased Fire Risks and Religion and Belief and Mitigation action undertaken by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

Considering the fire risk associated with different religious beliefs requires understanding the specific practices and rituals that may increase fire hazards. Here are several factors and considerations based on various religious practices and how Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) can address these risks:

Key Considerations for Different Religious Practices

1. **Use of Candles and Incense:**
 - Many religions, such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and others, involve the use of candles and incense in worship and rituals.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk: Candles and incense pose a fire risk if left unattended or placed near flammable materials. <p>2. Festivals and Celebrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Festivals like Diwali (Hinduism), Hanukkah (Judaism), and Christmas (Christianity) often involve the use of candles, fireworks, and decorative lights. ○ Risk: Increased use of electrical decorations and fireworks can lead to electrical fires and accidental ignitions. <p>3. Cooking Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Religious and cultural celebrations often involve extensive cooking, sometimes with traditional methods that may involve open flames. ○ Risk: The use of open flames and high heat can increase the risk of kitchen fires. <p>Mitigation Initiatives undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and will continue to do so:</p> <p>Targeted Fire Safety Campaigns</p> <p>MFRS continue to conduct targeted fire safety campaigns around major religious festivals and celebrations. These campaigns can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of fire safety literature in multiple languages. • Specific guidance on the safe use of candles, fireworks, and electrical decorations. <p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Engaging with religious and community leaders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide fire safety education tailored to specific religious practices. 	
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- Conduct fire safety workshops in places of worship and community centres.

Home Safety Visits

Offering home safety visits to households and looking to increase visits especially during festival seasons, to:

- Install and check smoke alarms.
- Provide advice on safe cooking practices and the use of candles and decorations.

Collaborative Efforts

Working with local councils and religious organizations to:

- Ensure fire safety regulations are followed during large gatherings and religious events.
- Facilitate fire safety audits of places of worship and community halls.

By implementing these strategies and working closely with religious communities, MFRS can effectively reduce fire risks associated with religious practices and celebrations in Merseyside.

Conclusion

Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and tailored engagement will ensure all members of the community are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.

The new Training and Development Academy will provide facilities to practice religion or belief.

		<p>There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on sex (gender)?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>In Merseyside, the sex and gender profile reflect a diverse population. According to recent data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Ratio: There are approximately 94.7 males for every 100 females. • Gender Identity: Around 0.52% of individuals who answered the sex question as female and 0.56% of those who answered as male identified as transgender. This is consistent with national trends. • Transgender Age Distribution: Younger age groups, particularly those aged 16 to 24, are more likely to identify as transgender. <p>For more detailed data, you can refer to the Office for National Statistics and the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Equality Diversity & Inclusion Report.</p> <p>Addressing fire risk associated with sex and gender involves recognizing specific vulnerabilities and ensuring tailored safety measures. Here are some key considerations:</p> <p>Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Roles: Women are often primary caregivers and may spend more time at home, increasing their exposure to potential fire hazards in the kitchen and living areas. 	<p>Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/></p>

- **Mobility Issues:** Pregnant women might have limited mobility, affecting their ability to evacuate quickly in an emergency.

Men

- **High-Risk Behaviours:** Men might engage in higher-risk behaviours, such as smoking or using power tools, which can increase fire risks.

Transgender Individuals

- **Social Isolation:** Transgender people may face social isolation and economic hardship, leading to living in higher-risk areas with less secure housing.
- **Access to Resources:** Ensuring transgender individuals have equal access to fire safety resources and information is crucial.

Mitigation action being undertaken and to be considered in the future.

- **Education and Outreach:** Tailored fire safety education campaigns for different gender groups.
- **Home Safety Visits:** Personalized visits focusing on high-risk households, including those of pregnant women and transgender individuals.
- **Community Engagement:** Collaboration with gender-focused organisations to spread fire safety awareness.

For further details and resources, you can refer to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and [Office for National Statistics](#).

Conclusion

		<p>Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and tailored engagement will ensure all members of the community are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.</p> <p>The increase of appliances from 32 to 34 and the introduction of the small fires unit may have a positive impact on our firefighters as it could open up opportunities to explore different flexible and family friendly ways of working.</p> <p>There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>	
		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on sexual orientation?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>The sexual orientation profile of Merseyside, based on the latest data from the 2021 Census, indicates that the majority of the population identifies as heterosexual, while a significant minority identifies with various LGB+ orientations.</p> <p>Key Statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexual/Straight: Around 89.4% of the population aged 16 years and over identified as heterosexual or straight. • LGB+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other): Approximately 3.2% of the population identified as LGB+. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gay or Lesbian: 1.5% ○ Bisexual: 1.3% ○ Other Sexual Orientations: 0.3%, including identities such as pansexual, asexual, and queer. 	<p>Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

		<p>Age and Gender Distribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age: People who identified as LGB+ tended to be younger, with over half aged between 16 and 34 years. • Gender: Females were slightly more likely to identify as LGB+ (3.32%) compared to males (3.00%). Females were also more likely to identify as bisexual, while males were more likely to identify as gay or lesbian. <p>Trends and Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger age groups, particularly those aged 16 to 24, showed higher proportions of LGB+ identification. • In the context of gender, women in younger age groups were significantly more likely to identify as bisexual compared to men. <p>These statistics provide a snapshot of the sexual orientation landscape in Merseyside, reflecting broader trends seen across England and Wales. This data helps in understanding the diversity and distribution of sexual orientations within the region, which is crucial for tailoring public services and support programs.</p> <p>For more detailed information, you can visit the Office for National Statistics (Office for National Statistics) (Office for National Statistics) (Office for National Statistics).</p> <p>Addressing fire risk associated with sexual orientation in Merseyside requires understanding the unique vulnerabilities and challenges faced by the LGB+ community. While specific data on fire risk directly related to sexual orientation might not be available, several factors can influence fire safety among LGB+ individuals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social and Economic Vulnerabilities: 	
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- **Discrimination and Marginalization:** LGB+ individuals may face discrimination and marginalisation, leading to economic hardships and housing instability, which can result in living in higher-risk areas with inadequate fire safety measures.
 - **Mental Health:** Higher levels of stress and mental health issues, prevalent among LGB+ individuals due to societal pressures and discrimination, can impact their ability to maintain safe living environments.
2. **Support Networks and Community Engagement:**
- **Isolation:** LGB+ individuals, particularly those not openly out, may experience social isolation, reducing their access to community support and fire safety information.
 - **Targeted Outreach:** Engaging with LGB+ support groups and community centres to provide tailored fire safety education can be crucial.

Mitigation action being undertaken and to be considered in the future.

Community Engagement and Education

MFRS can collaborate with local LGB+ organizations to:

- Conduct fire safety workshops and seminars specifically tailored for the LGB+ community.
- Distribute fire safety materials through LGB+ community centres, bars, and events.

Home Safety Visits

Consider targeted home safety visits can help identify and mitigate fire risks in the homes of LGB+ individuals. These visits can include:

- Installation of smoke alarms.

- Guidance on safe cooking practices and the use of electrical appliances.

Mental Health and Support Services

Working with mental health services to:

- Address the specific needs of LGB+ individuals, ensuring they receive support to maintain safe living conditions.
- Provide resources and counselling to reduce stress and improve overall well-being.

By recognising the unique challenges faced by the LGB+ community and implementing targeted strategies, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service can enhance fire safety and reduce risks for all residents. Collaboration with local LGB+ organisations and tailored educational initiatives are key components in this effort.

For more detailed resources and information, you can visit the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service website and the [Office for National Statistics](#).

Conclusion

Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and tailored engagement will ensure all members of the community are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.

The new build project will consider accommodation and facilities that are appropriate for all irrespective of their sexual orientation.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

		<p>What is the actual or potential impact on Socio-economic disadvantage?</p> <p>POSITIVE</p> <p>The socio-economic profile of Merseyside highlights several key aspects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deprivation: Merseyside, particularly Liverpool, faces significant levels of deprivation. The area ranks high on national measures of deprivation, indicating challenges such as low income, unemployment, and poor health outcomes. 2. Employment and Education: There are disparities in employment rates and educational attainment, with higher levels of unemployment and lower educational achievements compared to national averages. 3. Housing: Housing quality and affordability are concerns, with many residents living in older housing stock that may require upgrades. 4. Health: Health inequalities are prevalent, with higher rates of long-term illnesses and lower life expectancy in some areas. <p>For more detailed statistics and data, you can visit the Liverpool City Council's Key Statistics and Data page (Liverpool City Council).</p> <p>Key Risks and Mitigation action being undertaken and to be considered in the future.</p> <p>Socio-economic disadvantage in Merseyside significantly increases fire risk due to several factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Quality: Lower-income households often live in older, poorly maintained properties with outdated electrical systems and heating, raising the risk of electrical and heating-related fires. 	<p>Not applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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2. **Fuel Poverty:** Inability to afford proper heating can lead to unsafe heating practices, like using portable heaters or open flames.
3. **Awareness and Education:** There may be less access to fire safety education and resources.
4. **Fire Safety Measures:** Financial constraints may prevent the installation of adequate fire safety measures like smoke alarms.

Mitigation Strategies undertaken by MFRS and continue to do so

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) employs several strategies to mitigate these risks:

- **Home Safety Visits:** Targeted visits to disadvantaged households to identify and mitigate fire risks.
- **Fire Safety Education:** Providing fire safety education and resources to low-income communities.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborating with local organizations to improve fire safety awareness and resources in economically disadvantaged areas.

Conclusion

People in this group are likely to fall into our vulnerable category. Our targeted prevention activity, increase in resources, improving response and tailored engagement will ensure all members of the community are treated fairly and get the information and guidance which is applicable to them.

There is nothing to indicate that the actions within this plan would have a detrimental impact on people with this protected characteristic.

ACTION PLAN

What actions need to be taken in order to mitigate the impacts identified in sections 3,4 and 5?					
Impact	Action Required	Integrated existing work (yes/no) outline	Target Date	Responsibility	
Age	Use This EIA to influence engagement and corporate communications activities. Use this EIA to influence other EIA's and action across the various functions of MFRS. Highlight key activities as part of case studies within the annual report.				
Disability -		Yes	June 2025	Community Engagement Advisor, Corporate Communications Team	
Pregnancy and Maternity -					
Race					
Gender reassignment					
Marriage and civil partnership					
Religion and / or belief					
Sex (gender)					
Sexual orientation					
Carers					
Other					
Deprived communities/socio economic					
How will these actions be monitored and where will the outcomes be reported?					
(Please describe below) - Updates will be provided to the Culture and Inclusion Board					

Completed by (Please print name /Designation)	Michelle Kirk	Signature Date	08/02/24 12/06/24
Quality Assured by (Please print name /Designation)	MJ	Signature Date	

Name of responsible SLT member (Please print name /Designation)	Deb Appleton	Signature Date	08/02/24
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Bibliography and Guidance documents

This bibliography provides details of all the documents and reports included within this EIA or the EIA guidance. The bibliography will also include Hyperlinks to other useful documents, reports, data, and webinars on our portal page or links direct to the websites which you may find helpful when completing your EIA. **Please note, that this is a live document, do not use an old copy of this form to complete a new EIA. Please ensure that you download a new copy from the portal, as the bibliography and links will be updated regularly to ensure you have access to the most recent data, articles and training.**

Documents referenced and hyperlinked within the form.

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [equality impact assessment template](#)

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)

National Fire Chiefs Councils (NFCC) [Maturity Models and Workforce Good Practice Frameworks](#)

This document provides insight into the NFCC Maturity model and provides guidance on the following areas:

- Leadership Development
- Recruitment
- Learning Organisation
- Blended Learning
- Performance Management
- Employee Recognition
- Talent Management
- EDI
- Well Being
- HR Analytics

[Equality Diversity & Inclusion Resource Library](#)

The ED&I resources Library is located on the ED&I portal page and provides a suite of documents (detailed below) from a wide variety of sources, they may be internally produced reports or guidance, toolkits or data produced by the NFCC or partners. A list of the documents can be found below or you can access the complete library [here](#).

Disability related support including:

- [AFSA - Let's talk workplace disability](#)



Gender Related Resources including:

- [Fast Facts for patients – Menopause](#)

Pregnancy and Maternity Related Resources

Religion and Belief related resources including:

- [AFSA – 2021 Workforce Religion and belief Toolkit](#)

Sexual Orientation Related Resources

[AFSA Workforce Positive Action Toolkit](#)

[Dementia Friendly Emergency Services Guidance](#)

[NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment](#) which includes:

- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Actions for the Vulnerable Rehoused Homeless
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Black Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Neurodiversity
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for LGBT Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People from Asian Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for the Roma Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People Living with Dementia
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for People Living in Rural Communities
- NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment for Emerging Migrant Communities
- NFCC Community Risk – CRMP Equality Impact Assessment

These can also be found on the [NFCC website](#)

NFCC Toolkits

The NFCC have also created a number of toolkits to provide help and guidance these can be found here on the [NFCC website](#) or via the links below in the ED&I Resource Library

The toolkits currently available include:

- [Collecting and Disseminating of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data Toolkit](#)



- [Gender Diversity Toolkit](#)
- [Neurodiversity Toolkit](#)
- [Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Staff Networks Toolkit](#)

Webinars

[NFCC Lunch and Learns](#) which include.

- Neurodiversity
- Trans Visibility in FRS
- Racial Equality
- Bite Size techniques to avoid burnout
- Being part of the LGBT Community

Other useful Links and documents

[ED&I Annual Report](#) this report included our Staffing data, Gender and BAME Pay Gap analysis and recent reporting against our 5 Equality Objectives

[Diversity Events Calendar](#) the diversity calendar is helpful to understand what key dates are taking place throughout the year to assist with community engagement

[Knowing our Communities Data](#) this is a suite of documents, which provides data within each of the local Authorities, by different protected groups which include Age, Disability, Religion and Ethnicity.

Service Instruction 0877 Resources to support managers and staff to implement the Equality & Diversity Policy

- [Appendix 1 - Disability in the workplace information for staff and managers](#)
- [Appendix 2 - Reasonable Adjustments Support for staff & managers in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 3 - Access to Work Support for staff and managers in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 4 - Supporting people with Dyslexia in the workplace](#)
- [Appendix 5 - Supporting Staff during the Menopause](#)
- [Appendix 6 - Guidance for supporting employees returning from maternity; breastfeeding in the workplace Operational Firefighters](#)
- [Appendix 7 - Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender \(LGBT\) staff in the Workplace](#)
- [Appendix 8 - Supporting Transgender staff in the Workplace](#)
- [Appendix 9 - Neurodiversity in the workplace](#)

[2021/22 Fire Statistics](#) this includes workforce data published by the government