

**Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service**

**Equality and Diversity Annual Report**  
**April 2013 to March 2014**

## Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French or Somali please contact us at Diversity team, MF&RS Headquarters, Bridle Road , Bootle, Liverpool L30 4YD.Telephone 0151 296 4422 or email [diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk).

Arabic - หากคุณต้องการคัดลอกในภาษาอาหรับภาษาเบงกาลี, จีน, ฝรั่งเศสหรือโซมาเลียกรุณาติดต่อ ทีมเราที่หลากหลาย MF และอาร์เอสสำนักงานบึงเหียนถนน Bootle ลิเวอร์พูล L30 4YD โทรศัพท์และ 0151 296 4422 หรืออีเมล [diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:diversityteam@merseyfire.gov.uk)

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**Foreword** (Photograph of DCFO Garrigan, to be inserted here)

I am pleased to introduce Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's (MFRA) first Equality and Diversity Annual Report which includes the progress made against our Equality and Diversity Action Plan. In 2013 we set out to integrate our Equality and Diversity priorities into our day-to-day work to ensure all areas of MFRA consider Equality and Diversity when delivering services; whether that is focused on increasing the diversity of our workforce or developing fire and rescue services to be more accessible and responsive to the needs of our diverse communities. This report provides a snapshot of the excellent progress we have made to truly embed Equality and Diversity across our organisation and achieve positive outcomes for our diverse communities, particularly the most vulnerable.

We have a strong commitment to Equality and Diversity at MFRA, which has been recognised through the achievement of Excellence in the National Equalities Framework, a standard that provides local authorities with a structured way of improving Equality and Diversity outcomes for local communities. Our aim is to maintain excellence and our commitment to tackling inequality is a key focus in the current economic climate, where we are compelled to do more with less. It is important to place a greater emphasis on understanding our diverse communities to enable us to be more efficient and focus our resources on those most at risk and hardest to reach. These are often minority groups protected by the Equality Act 2010. Our wider responsibilities for fire protection and prevention mean it is critical to ensure our services are accessible to all and that we fully understand the impact that our policies and services may have on those community members.

I am immensely proud of our achievements to date and our commitment to Equality and Diversity, especially the work undertaken by our staff and the support provided by our Authority Members and partner agencies, who work

tirelessly to make the communities of Merseyside safer and as importantly stronger.

***Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Phil Garrigan***

**Welcome** (Photograph of Cllr Ayres to be inserted)

This Annual Equality and Diversity report provides us with an opportunity to celebrate the progress we have made in delivering against our Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16, report on key data in relation to equality and highlight some notable examples of good practice which demonstrate our continued commitment to removing inequalities and promoting Equality and Diversity.

As Authority Lead for Equality and Diversity, I work with the Diversity and Consultation Manager to ensure that we are embracing and promoting equality in all areas of the organisation and that we continually challenge ourselves to be a better employer and service provider. One way of doing this is the development of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16. We have worked hard to ensure that all parts of the organisation recognise the valuable contribution we all make to Equality and Diversity and we all strive to deliver against our action and to monitor and scrutinise performance. This report shows the good progress that has been made in year 1 (2013/14) of our Action Plan.

Our challenge going forward will be to continue to deliver high quality services with fewer resources. The key to maintaining positive outcomes will be to continue to reinforce the message that considering Equality and Diversity brings practical business benefits by enabling us to develop services that are appropriate to the needs of our communities and the staff we employ.

I hope you will enjoy reading the report and learning more about our Equality and Diversity work, if you have any feedback on this report or feel we could work with your organisation to improve outcomes for the people of Merseyside in terms of fire, safety and rescue please do not hesitate to contact us [wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk) or 01512964422.

**Councillor Robbie Ayres – Authority Lead Member for Equality and Diversity  
2013/14.**

**Note:** Although Cllr Murray is now the Lead, Cllr Ayres was for 2013/14

## Introduction

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is currently going through a period of unprecedented change. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Reviews (CSR) of 2010 and 2013 introduced reductions in public sector spending that are having a significant impact on MFRA, requiring us to do more with less. In this context, it is vital that the Fire and Rescue Authority maintains a clear commitment to Equality and Diversity and to maintaining the quality of the services it provides.

As a front line emergency service and employer we have a dual responsibility to promote Equality and Diversity as an integral part of the way in which we protect our communities and to support our staff. This is set out clearly for all public bodies within the Equality Act 2010; a simplified piece of legislation which incorporates nine major pieces of legislation into one Act and the supporting Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Authority is committed to ensuring that equality is a priority and it does everything that it can to meet and, where possible, exceed the legislative requirements. The PSED requires us to give **due regard** to three specific aims:

- I. The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- II. The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic<sup>1</sup> and persons who do not share it
- III. The need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who don't

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<sup>1</sup> Protected characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or nationality origin & colour), religion and belief (including no religion), sex, sexual orientation. MFRA also includes Socio-economic disadvantage as a vulnerable group



In order to demonstrate **due regard** MFRA considers the three aims of the general duty above when making decisions as an employer and service provider regarding:

- Developing, evaluating and reviewing our policies
- Designing, delivering and evaluating services, including fire and rescue provisions
- Commissioning and procuring services from others

This report provides an insight into the progress made against MFRA's Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013 to 2016 for year 1 activities, 2013-14. It also supports MFRA's commitment to meeting the Equality Act and the PSED in relation to the 3 specific PSED. This report helps us to meet the following requirements to:

- Publish information, at least annually to demonstrate our compliance with the Equality Act and PSED
- Prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable objective that we think should achieve the three aims of the Equality Duty and the Equality Act
- Publish equality information and objectives in a manner that is accessible to public

Section 1 of this report focuses on our achievements in relation to the first year of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 and our progress against our Equality Objectives (which form part of our Integrated Risk Management Plan). It includes case studies that highlight outcomes resulting from our Equality and Diversity actions, illustrates the ways in which those outcomes relate to the demographics of our staff and communities and shows how the outcomes directly support the achievement of our four Corporate Aims.

- Excellent Operational Preparedness
- Excellent Operational Response
- Excellent Prevention and Protection
- Excellent People

Section 2, provides more background details on the make-up of our communities and our workforce. We have produced the data as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

### **Governance and Performance Management**

Delivery of the Action Plan is led by the Diversity and Consultation Manager and coordinated through our departmental and senior managers and our Diversity Action Group (DAG). The DAG is made up of departmental representatives and the Authority Lead Member for Equality and diversity and it meets quarterly to discuss and monitor progress against the Action Plan. The group also receives presentations on topical Equality and Diversity themes and DAG members have an opportunity to attend external conferences and improve their understanding of Equality and Diversity and how it impacts on MFRA services. The DAG is also critical in reviewing Equality Impacts in relation to MFRA services, policies, and projects through a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Process.

The Diversity and Consultation Manager also holds regular Equalities Engagement meetings with the Representative Bodies (trade unions and staff associations), to ensure that they are aware of the Equality and Diversity developments in the Authority and have an opportunity to contribute to the consideration of the ways in which Equality and Diversity influences the provision of fire and rescue services.

Performance against the Equality and Diversity Action Plan is scrutinised at two levels. The first is through the Strategic Equality Group (SEG), which is

chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and made up of senior managers representing all departments of the organisation. It meets on a quarterly basis to review progress made and provide assurances to the Authority on that progress. The Second level of scrutiny is through the Authority's Performance and Scrutiny Committee made up of Elected Members who review MFRA's Equality and Diversity progress on a six Monthly basis. Reports to this committee are made public via MFRA website:

[www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/asp/pages/fire\\_auth/authorityContent.aspx](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/asp/pages/fire_auth/authorityContent.aspx)

## Our Equality Objectives

### Equality Objectives 2013/14

Our Equality Objectives are an important part of our Integrated Risk Management Plan and are integral to our approach to providing services to those people and communities who need them most. The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is a three year plan setting out the Mission and Aims of the Fire and Rescue Authority, concentrating on the core objectives and key priorities. The IRMP makes high level statements in line with organisational risk, the National Framework, Equality and Diversity and the Authority's budget.

We set our Equality and Diversity Objectives as part of our 2012 -15 Integrated Risk Management Plan and took particular care to ensure they were part of our primary objectives rather than standing alone. The Objectives also contribute to our Public Sector Equality Duties and are monitored on a quarterly basis through the Authority's Strategic Equality Group and six monthly through reports to our Performance and Scrutiny Committee. The overall targets relate to 2017 and beyond, here we report on progress towards these targets in 2013-14.

### Equality Objective 1

In the past ten years Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has reduced accidental fires in the home by 37%

**Action:** We will continue to build on this work through the use of our customer insight (Vulnerable Person Index) modelling and our station planning process to target individuals at risk

**Target:** To reduce accidental fires in the home and the deaths and injuries they cause on Merseyside by a further 5% by 2017.

**How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Age and Disability:** We know through extensive research that some of the people at highest risk from fire are also covered by the nine protected characteristics that form part of the Equality Act 2010, for example elderly and disabled people. Our activity focuses on reducing risk for vulnerable people.

### **Current Progress**

*At the end of 2013/14, the Equality and Diversity target for Accidental Dwelling Fires (fires in the home) has been narrowly missed by 20 incidents (2%). High levels of accidental dwelling fires during the first three quarters of the year have contributed to missing the target of 1136. A review of the Home Fire Safety Strategy will take into account this Equality & Diversity objective. This includes working to target our Home Fire Safety Checks at the most vulnerable people in our communities.*

### **Equality Objective 2**

We will reduce risk for people who live in rented properties across Merseyside

**Action:** By continuing to build productive relationships with Registered Social Landlords

**Target:** To cut accidental kitchen fires in social housing by 5% by 2017.

**How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristics – Age and Disability, Socio-Economic Disadvantage:** We know that people who live in rented properties often have other needs and fall within the protected characteristics. We've worked well with Registered Social Landlords to protect their residents, but some of the higher risk people live in privately rented accommodation and we want to help them too.

## **Current Progress**

*At the end of 2013/14 there were a total of 219 accidental fires in properties owned by registered social landlords, and the Equality & Diversity target of 237 has been met.*

### **Equality Objective 3**

We will continue to engage with young people in vulnerable areas

**Action:** Through our award winning youth engagement programmes

**Target:** Reducing deliberate anti-social behaviour fire setting by 5% by 2017.

**How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristics – Age, Socio-Economic Disadvantage:** The anti-social behaviour of a minority of young people can impact most on the elderly and on other young people too. We want to help young people become good role models for others in their area and help older people feel safer in their homes.

## **Current progress**

*For the second year running MFRA have achieved the Equality & Diversity target of 5767 incidents, ,current incidents are down to 512 , 640 incidents less than the target.*

## **How was this achieved - case study to be included**

### **Equality Objective 4**

We will work with at-risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions across Merseyside

**Action:** To work towards achieving the local target of reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions

**Target:** Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions by 37.5% by 2020.

**How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Age:**

Young people are at a particularly high risk of being killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions. We want to have a positive impact on this group and help to keep them safer on the roads, whilst also monitoring road traffic collision risks in relation to young and old across all five districts and responding accordingly.

**Current progress**

*The target in relation to road traffic collisions has been achieved for the third year running. However, the number of injuries was 97 over the target. We are currently rolling out a programme of engagement with schools, presenting our “Suddenly from Nowhere” education package. We also work with all the young people we come into contact with through Prince’s Trust and Beacon Programmes to instil road safety messages.*

**Equality Objective 5**

Our aim is to create a strong cohesive organisation which is positive about rising to the future challenges we face.

**Action:** Our aim is to increase the representation of all minority groups within the communities of Merseyside in the Fire and Rescue Service

**Target:** Ensuring all future firefighter recruit courses have a minimum make up of 20% female and 8% black minority ethnic employees by 2017.

**How this impacts on Equality and Diversity: Protected Characteristic – Gender**

**and Ethnic Origin:** We’d like our workforce to better represent the makeup of our communities and we will work to encourage applications from under-represented groups when we carry out any recruitment.

## **Current progress**

*No uniformed recruitment has taken place over the life of the previous IRMP but a Positive Action recruitment programme will take place in 2014/15 when we plan to recruit firefighters.*

*Our Workforce equality analysis shows that there has been a 1% change in our gender split since last year, with 1% more females working at MFRA than last year, making a whole workforce split of 79% Male and 21% females.*

*Note: Changes have been made to Objective 5 for operational year 2014/15 and these will be reported on in Annual report 2014/15*



## **Part One – Equality and Diversity Activities and Outcomes 2013/14**

## **Equality and Diversity Activity and Outcomes 2013- 2014**

Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16 identifies key objectives and actions designed to ensure that we continuously improve against our diversity agenda and deliver against our PSED requirements and Equality Objectives.

The Action Plan is a living document which sets out our actions in relation to Equality and Diversity for each of the Authority's Corporate Aims. The plan spans three years and progress is monitored on a quarterly and six monthly basis. Having the Action Plan in place ensures that: We have a transparent means by which we can demonstrate our commitment to Equality and Diversity (in relation to our staff and our communities) in a way that allows interested parties to hold us to account and measure our progress in relation to:

- The extent to which our services meet differing customer needs
- The extent to which we are able to attract, retain and develop a talented workforce from across all sections of the community

This part of the report focuses on the key outcomes delivered in the first year of our Action Plan, including case studies which help bring the Action Plan to life. In addition, this section provides information on who we have delivered some of our key services to in relation to the demography of Merseyside and also the make-up of our workforce and the extent to which that reflects the local demography.

To demonstrate how Equality and Diversity is mainstreamed and embedded across the organisation, progress has been documented using the four key organisational aims; *Excellent Operational Preparedness, Excellent Operational Response, Excellent Prevention and Protection and Excellent People.*

## Excellent Operational Preparedness

***“To provide our firefighters with the training, information, procedures and equipment to ensure they can safely and effectively resolve all emergency incidents.”***

We provide our firefighters with the training, information, procedures and equipment to ensure they can safely and effectively resolve all emergency incidents with our diverse community groups. The Equality and Diversity Action Plan reflects this work with a number actions. Progress in 2013/14 includes:

**Learning and assessment** -A project has been set up to review the learning and assessment strategy including our e-learning packages for operational staff to complete as part of their core training. The project has included initial work on an Equality Impact Assessment, reviewing training, assessment and delivery methods to make sure it is accessible for all staff. Work will continue in years 2 and 3 of the Action Plan to embed this practice

**Equipment research and development** -Equality Impact Assessments are conducted as standard for all major equipment research and development work streams to ensure that the equipment can be used effectively by all members of staff. This includes reviewing the impact of purchasing equipment such as breathing apparatus, communication sets, forced entry equipment and protection clothing and ensuring the needs of all staff, including female firefighters, are considered in the testing and purchasing of equipment.

**Risk based information** -A cross departmental review of the way we collect and manage risk information about domestic properties took place during 2013/14 and has resulted in a revised service instruction to ensure that all risk based information remains accurate and valid, to aide operational staff with

accessing properties where there might be additional risks, such as people using oxygen cylinders.

## Excellent Operational Response

***“To maintain an excellent emergency response to meet risk across Merseyside, with safety and effectiveness at its core.”***

The Operational Response function ensures that the Authority is able to meet its legal duties to respond to fires and other emergency incidents, with a particular focus on the readiness and availability of the workforce, appliances, stations, and equipment. Our aim is to respond appropriately and in a timely manner to those emergencies and that when we do so our firefighters, procedures and equipment are safe and effective.

Equality and Diversity Action Plan year 1 progress for response includes:

- Conducting Equality Impact Assessments that consider the equality and diversity consequences of reducing resources (including appliances and firefighters) and the impact of changes on response times, focusing closely on the Protected Characteristics. In addition, work has taken place to assess the equality impacts of proposals to merge fire stations and this work will continue in year 2 of the Plan. It is important to make sure that any decisions about changes to Operational Response are considered carefully and that there are no disproportionate outcomes in terms of response times and service for any particular protected equality group. Outcomes of the assessments included targeting more free HFSCs to those geographical areas where response times may increase slightly, especially for those residents aged over 65.
- Providing flexible working solutions for staff to accommodate changes to shift patterns, where possible. Of those applications received from operational staff two thirds were from men and the majority were from those staff aged 31 to 40.

- Improvement to firefighter facilities involved conducting 22 Access Audits on stations to assess what improvements were required to ensure the facilities were accessible for all staff. The outcomes from the audits have helped us to prioritise improvements to changing and rest facilities for female firefighters and to make the stations' community areas more accessible the public.
- Equality briefings and training have been delivered to firefighters and other staff on stations, to provide a greater understanding of how Equality and Diversity impacts on the stations work on a day-to-day basis and to ensure staff are given opportunities to gain more knowledge about Equality and Diversity to support them when working with their diverse communities. Further visits are planned for 2014/15.  
(case study 5 will insert here)

## **Excellent Prevention and Protection** (Case Study 1 will insert in this section)

***“To work with our partners and our community to protect the most vulnerable through targeted local risk reduction interventions and the robust application of our legal powers.”***

We recognise that fire has a socio-economic dimension. Those at highest risk from fires include older people, people who are disabled, people with alcohol or drug dependencies, or those who suffer from mental ill health conditions or live alone. Young people are more at risk of being involved in a road traffic collision and may also be the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan has been developed in conjunction with our partners and staff to ensure we take account of the needs of those most vulnerable to fire and other emergencies. Progress for year one includes:

**Vulnerable Person Index** – This has been developed out of a Customer Insight project designed to help MFRA understand risks and needs present within the community and identify the most vulnerable individuals. This Index is used for intelligent targeting of prevention services (such as Home Fire Safety Checks) based on risks and needs. The project developed tools that give us an in-depth understanding of citizens and the communities that they live in.

- *The Index* uses personal data shared by partners. This helps us identify individuals who are particularly vulnerable. We then use de-personalised information to direct fire crews to the most vulnerable households to deliver targeted Home Fire Safety Checks and visits.
  
- In addition;

- *Community Profiles*, identify groups of citizens with similar characteristics. This is used to target community initiatives based on the risks, needs and priorities within particular locations, such as local authority wards.

Progress has been made during 2013/14 in rolling out this work across all areas of MFRA. This has enabled targeting of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) which are our primary means of reducing risk in the home towards the most vulnerable people and communities.

- The people most vulnerable to fire typically have a number of the following factors present:
  - Older Person (i.e. over 65)
  - Lives Alone
  - Disability (Physical or Sensory)
  - Mental Health issues
  - Known to carers
  - Lifestyle factors such as smoking, binge drinking, and substance misuse.

The Vulnerable Person Index has helped MFRA target its limited resources and develop a new Home Fire Safety Strategy. It is important to note that the effectiveness of the Vulnerable Person Index is dependent on information and data being shared by partner organisations and work continues in all areas of Merseyside to encourage information sharing, which will allow us to identify more vulnerable people.

- **Home Fire Safety Check Equality Monitoring**- Work has been carried out during 2012/13 in relation to improving our equality monitoring data collection when delivering Home Fire Safety Checks. Training for staff



on the importance of data collection and how we can use it has played an important role in this action and future annual reports will monitor the improvements in the collection of data from those visits.

Merseyside has a resident population of some 1.38 million. Although we have pockets of affluence for example in West Wirral and North Sefton; large areas of Merseyside fall within the highest ratings of social deprivation; with all local authorities in Merseyside being in the top 30% of most deprived in England.

It is vital to understand the communities we serve, both in terms of deprivation, diversity and community profiles. It helps with our strategic planning of services and district planning for our prevention work. A number of reporting tools such as Customer Insight (Vulnerable Person Index) and Demographics of Merseyside reports provide us with intelligence about our communities.

Appendix 1 provides the full statistical breakdown of the HFSC's delivered, but in summary: A total of 48,604 Home Fire Safety Checks were delivered across Merseyside during 2013/14, nearly a third of those visits were delivered in Wirral. 13% were at a property where a disabled person lived. This is lower than the Merseyside disabled population figure of 23%. However it should be noted that this figure could be higher if more people disclosed information and equality training for staff is currently taking place will assist with this.

36.4% of HFSCs were delivered to households with occupants aged over 65. The Merseyside over 65's population is 17.5%. Our Home Fire Safety Strategy focuses heavily on delivering HFSC to the over 65's, as older people are more at risk from fire the high proportion of HFSC delivered during 20-13/4.

81% of HFSC are delivered to households of White ethnicity, the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households receiving an HFSC was 2%, lower than the average Merseyside population of 5.5%. The “not stated” and “not known” figures are high and may well include members of the BME community. Work is in place to encourage disclosure of information about ethnicity during HFSCs.

It is both a legislative requirement and good practice to know the composition of the communities we serve so that issues of under-representation can be addressed and needs provided for. Even in equality areas where there is no legal requirement to monitor, it is good practice for Fire and Rescue Services to know whether its services are accessible and used by all groups. Further details on the demography of Merseyside can be found in our Profile of Merseyside (Demography, Equality and Diversity) report [\[insert link\]](#)

- **Fatal fires –2004 /2005 to 2013/2014-**Over the past decade we have (through extensive prevention work) significantly reduced the number of accidental fire deaths and injuries across Merseyside. Deaths across Merseyside regularly exceeded 20 a year until the introduction of widespread prevention work and the introduction of Home Fire Safety Checks. With the introduction of fire prevention, fire deaths have gradually reduced over time.

Analysis of fire death data over the last 10 years shows that a total of 80 fire deaths have occurred. Further equality monitoring analysis shows the following:

- The largest number of fire deaths (20) occurred in the 75 to 84 age group
  - Concerning the over 65s, a total of 40 fire deaths took place in this age group, this equates to half of all fire deaths over a 10 year period.
  - There is no particular gender bias in fire fatalities and racial profiling also suggests there is very little difference in risk between different racial groups.
  - Smokers materials account for 54% (43) of the total fatalities
  - Wirral have had the highest number of fatalities over the last 10 years with 25, Liverpool closely followed with 24.
- This type of analysis helps us with our work on the Vulnerable Person Index and enables us to identify the types of people we need to target prevention work at to reduce fire deaths.
- **Specialist Fire Safety Support** – As MFRA continues to identify the most vulnerable and high risk members of the community through our targeted home safety strategy our staff in the Community Fire Prevention teams ensure that individuals with health, mobility or sensory issues (such as hearing loss) and those who use English as a second language receive the appropriate interventions. These include, smoke detectors with a vibrating pad and flashing strobe, fire retardant throws and bedding packs, using Language Line to reinforce fire safety education and heat detectors to keep vulnerable individuals safe from accidental fires in their home.
  - **Equality monitoring of enforcements and prosecutions** - Work has commenced on capturing and monitoring Equality information about the makeup of those people and organisations who may be subject to Fire Safety enforcements and prosecutions in relation to the properties and businesses for which they are responsible. This work will help us to monitor the ethnicity and cultural backgrounds of those organisations

to assess the impact of our prosecution and enforcement policies and practices and to determine whether we need to do anything differently.

- The main area of concern for Community Fire Protection was the potential impact of enforcement and prosecutions on protected groups, notably on Asian-run businesses. The Authority has been able to develop some pragmatic solutions in order to obtain a greater understanding of the risk through monitoring and analysis and commenced work on an engagement strategy. The progress of this strategy has developed through research and collaboration with peers in the Chief Fire Officers Association Protection Task Group in the North West, assessing the effectiveness of our plans through the benefit of their experience. Consequently we have bolstered and where necessary, adapted our plans to focus on areas of proven effectiveness for example, we will be completing a trial of the web-based 'Browse Aloud' translation facility for elements of our correspondence, we have aligned our business support objectives with the Equality and Diversity Action Plan and will be undertaking a positive action campaign to encourage suitable candidates from the Asian community to apply for imminent vacancies expected within the Protection team.
  
- **Youth Engagement** – Youth Engagement teams have received specific diversity and cultural awareness training to enable them to support our youth volunteers and to make programmes fully accessible to diverse youth groups, including those with physical and mental disabilities. (Case study 2 will insert in this section)
  
- **Princes Trust** - MFRA runs five Prince's Trust twelve week development programmes, all of which are for young people. These programmes as well as benefitting the young people are also committed to delivering

community engagement activities with our diverse communities, including supporting homeless charities, working with different cultures and faith groups, supporting disabled community groups and gaining a greater understanding of hate crime across their districts.

Some of their work so far includes the following:

- The Training and Development Academy Team
  - The team attended drama sessions with adults with learning difficulties and delivered Karaoke and bingo activities for OAPs with dementia
  - They held an interactive session with asylum seekers and refugees at Asylum Link. Students engaged with families and discovered many reasons why they were either seeking asylum or refugee status. This session served to clarify many of the preconceptions often held by young people within our society and helped them to understand the complexities of the issues that affected the service users.
- The Bootle and Netherton Team
  - The team provided a visit to Chester Zoo for children from a Crosby special needs school and also held an event day with Royal British Legion patrons.
  - They delivered a garden project with and for residents of St. Nicholas Care Home, Crosby.
  - They took part in an educational trip to meet residents of the Chinese community to support Chinese New Year,
  - They also delivered an event with homeless people at The Whitechapel Centre. Staff and students from Bootle and Netherton fundraised to buy food packages to take to the Whitechapel Centre in Netherfield, where they distributed the parcels to users of the centre, engaging with them and

finding out the different circumstances that had resulted in them being homeless. The students found this extremely enlightening and thought provoking.

- The Bromborough Team

- The team has carried out work on the Butterfly Park, to support conservational and environmental activities
- They supported Wirral Autistic Society with a visit to the Blue Planet Aquarium
- They also held a raffle and bingo in support of older members of our community in support of Age UK

- The Huyton Team

- The team delivered an existing garden project for Huyton Resource Centre for the Elderly
- Volunteers were given placements at the Guide Dog Society to understand more about the good work the organisation does.
- The team carried out a sports day with Inside Right, a programme for medically discharged ex-service personal finding it difficult to adjust to civilian life.
- Took part in Road/Car Awareness demonstration for fire/police and ambulance Services
- Staff and students organised a Christmas party for families temporarily residing at Ronald McDonald House in the grounds of Alder Hey Hospital. This was a sensitive environment and time of year for the students to organise an event and a lot of planning and consideration resulted in a successful party enjoyed by family, staff and patients.

- The Toxteth Team
  - The team delivered a Christmas party at Waverley Care Home for residents
  - A Halloween arts and crafts session for Children from a diverse area took place within Liverpool at the Toxteth Firefit HUB
  - The team delivered a Brazilian themed carnival event at the Firefit HUB
  - They delivered fire awareness and sports sessions for adults with learning difficulties
  - Staff and students from the Team assisted in the organisation of two events to bring together different communities within the Toxteth and Dingle areas of Liverpool. Many cultural differences were taken into consideration during the planning stages and the Halloween and Brazilian themed evenings were successful in bringing together residents in a fun environment.
  
- **Road Safety and Young People** – MFRA supports and works in partnership with other road safety partners including the Merseyside Road Safety Officers Group, Merseyside Road Safety Partnership Group, Road Safety GB, BRAKE and the Police. This has been instrumental in helping MFRA officers to develop an excellent road safety engagement package in conjunction with local authority road safety practitioners. The package, called “Suddenly from Nowhere”, is designed to engage with young people in school years 10, 11 and 12 as these age groups are at the most risk of being involved in a road traffic collision. MFRA has made a commitment to offer this free road safety engagement to all schools across Merseyside. All fire crews have received training to enable them to

deliver the package and to establish relationships with schools to deliver the road safety packages.

MFRA has continued to engage with the hard to reach members of our community by working with the Youth Offending Scheme in delivering road safety interventions to groups and individuals. MFRA has also delivered road safety engagement to all of its Beacon<sup>2</sup> and Prince's Trust groups.

Nationally, MFRA is represented on the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) road safety practitioner's forum and is involved in developing best practice, by sharing initiatives that are used across the country such as the MFRA "Suddenly from Nowhere" package and training– (quote from Youth leader about Drive to Arrive will insert here)

- **Hate Crime** – Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's:
  - Disability
  - Race or ethnicity
  - Religion or belief
  - Sexual orientation
  - Transgender identity

A policy covering hate crime and its associated effects has been developed by MFRA. This policy covers hate crime, third party reporting, Safe Havens and target hardening. The policy is underpinned by supporting guidance and instructions for staff. In order to

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<sup>2</sup> The Beacon Course is designed to give students the opportunity to take part in an educational learning experience outside of the school or peer group environment. The projects are delivered one day a week over a 12 week period with the aim of encouraging self-development of the students by instilling fundamental Fire Service principles of self-discipline, leadership, and teamwork. Provide safe, fun & enriching experiences. Develop wider key skills in communication, problem solving & how to work with others.



implement the policy efficiently a training package has been developed and will be rolled out to all crews during 2014.

The package was developed after consultation with partners such as Mencap Liverpool, Liverpool City Council Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and Merseyside Police. The policy was introduced after consideration of the recommendations from the Government Action Plan on hate crime called 'Challenge It, Report It, Stop It'. Members of the public can report a hate crime/incident at any station due to them being enabled as third party reporting centres.

Hate Crime, especially when fire is used as a threat or weapon, has a detrimental effect on the communities of Merseyside and so all Fire Stations are hate crime reporting centres and MFRA staff visit victims and potential victims to make their homes safer from any attempts to cause fires.

Linked to hate crime is the concept of Safe Havens. These are locations where anyone can seek assistance if they feel threatened. All fire stations will become Safe Havens in 2014 with 10 already formally classed as Safe Havens (6 Wirral, 1 Liverpool, and 3 St Helens). On a number of occasions fire stations have been used as Safe Havens and support and assistance has been offered to vulnerable people as a result.

## **Excellent People**

***"To develop and value all our employees, respecting diversity, promoting opportunity and equality for all."***

We develop and value all our employees; respecting diversity, promoting opportunity and equality for all. The Equality and Diversity Action Plan provides a platform for all departments of MFRA to identify key actions to help embed Equality and Diversity in their day to day work. This section is dedicated to demonstrating positive outcomes in relation to the people who work within our organisation. Achievements include:

- **Access Audit** – MFRA recognises that fire stations do not just exist for incident response but have a vital role in prevention and protection. Historically, few people would say that fire stations were inviting places with fire appliances barely visible behind closed doors. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's vision is of true community hubs that provide a range of services working together to make Merseyside safer and stronger. An extensive Access Audit project was undertaken during 2103/4 which saw 22 Audits being completed and reports produced prioritising work on stations to make them more accessible for the community and to improve the working facilities for all staff in stations, particularly Female Firefighters. Year 2 of the Action plan will now focus on implementing the Access Audit report recommendations.
- **Review of Service Headquarters Office Space-** An employee forum from all levels and ranks in the organisation was given the opportunity to input into the design of refurbished offices to make them more suitable workplaces for all staff. This project involved reviewing the needs of staff with different disabilities, including considering those with hearing impairments in aiming to make the offices less noisy and considering staff with visual impairments in relation to having clearly defined coloured sections for meetings and working spaces. The introduction of improved hearing loop systems for conference facilities also ensures that meetings with staff and the public are accessible to all.

- **Equality Monitoring of our Authority Members<sup>3</sup>** – The Authority is committed to providing facilities and services to help ensure Authority Members can fulfil their roles and access all meetings and activities. This year has seen the introduction of Equality Monitoring forms for Members to complete. The questionnaire ensures that we are aware of anything which we may need to know, to enable us to make reasonable adjustment or access arrangements for Authority Members.
- **Appraisals** - Every employee has an annual appraisal. This ensures that all staff have the opportunity to discuss their role and work with their line manager to plan their training and development needs and aspirations. The process is also used to discuss any disability needs and reasonable adjustments required. Figures show that during 2013/4 98% of appraisals were returned with the 2% not completed being for those staff who were on long term absence from work. The People & Organisational Development department is in the process of addressing the training needs identified.
- **Revised Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance & online forms and training** – As described in previous sections, the purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to ensure we do not discriminate in the way in which we provide (or remove) services and in matters relating to employment. Impact Assessments help us ensure that where possible, we do all we can to promote equality and good relations between different groups. This supports our commitment to the PSED and Equality Act 2010. MFRA has had a well embedded process for EIAs for some time, however significant work took place during 2013/14 to review the Equality Impact Assessment process to ensure it is fit for purpose, is streamlined and simple to use. A new electronic tool has been developed, following extensive feedback from staff, to support completion and recording of EIA information. It is hoped this will save

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<sup>3</sup> The Authority is made up of 18 elected councillors from the five councils that make up Merseyside.

time for the authors of EIAs. Revised step-by-step guidance has been produced and held on the staff intranet Portal to aid those new to EIA work. Training will be rolled out on a needs basis during year 2.

- **Disability Support and Reasonable Adjustments** – MFRA provides support for staff who disclose a disability or who become disabled whilst in employment. A new Reasonable Adjustment Record has been piloted during year 1 for a range of support including, dyslexia, diabetes, long term health conditions, hearing impairments and cancer support. The Reasonable Adjustment Record will be reviewed with users and line managers during year 2 and rolled out with guidance and training across the whole organisation.
- **MY View Human Resources (HR) System** – The implementation of a new integrated HR and payroll self-service system has been Equality Impact Assessed to ensure that it supports the needs of our staff and those former members of staff who access the system for pension information. The system is also an opportunity for MFRA staff to update their own Equality Monitoring Information on a self-service basis, which will ensure accurate and up to date monitoring information is available.
- **Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data**  
MFRA collect core information about employment directly relevant to equalities. This helps MFRA to understand the make-up of the workforce and any key equality issues arising from that, as well as assessing our performance in terms of employment and this enables us to take action where needed. The Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data Report [[MFRA Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2013](#)] was introduced as a result of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan in 2013. It supports managers and staff by providing employment related

equality monitoring statistics, useful when reviewing services and policies and conducting EIAs. The analysis also enables MFRA to publish key equality information to show compliance with the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Key employment related information:

- There are 1,156 staff employed by MFRA , 28% of which are in support staff roles and 67% are uniformed /operational staff
- 79% of staff are Male and 21% are Female
- Support staff have close to a 50% split male to female
- Operational staff have a gender split of 95% male to 5% female
- 74% of staff are aged 41 and over
- 5.6% of staff and MFRA have declared a disability (Lower than the UK average of 20%)
- 95% of staff are White British and 2.94% are Black or minority Ethnic (lower than Merseyside average of 5.5%)
- When looking at internal recruitment, women have a 58% success rate in recruitment compared to a 42% success rate for men (posts recruited into in 2013/14 have all been support staff/non-operational roles)
- When considering external recruitment there is almost an even 50/50 split in applications from women and men and men are slightly more successful by 0.5%.

MFRA aims to benchmark workforce figures to national figures through a current project being run by the Women's in Fire Service UK.

Monitoring gives equal opportunities credibility and integrity and it is the basic foundation for evaluating the extent of diversity within an organisation. The results of equality monitoring can inform the effective use of resources, improve competitiveness by attracting and retaining staff, and enhance

service delivery. It can therefore make a valuable contribution to strategic planning processes.

Equality Data contributes to a pool of information that helps MFRA meet the diverse needs of staff (for example in relation to provision of catering options or facilities for prayer or contemplation, or reasonable adjustments) to allow them to do their job.

### **Staff Engagement Survey**

Work has commenced on planning and delivering the new MFRS Staff Survey; **Your Service Your Voice**, currently being rolled out during June/July 2014. The survey will enable staff across MFRS to provide anonymous and confidential feedback on a number of key organisational practices and has had the full endorsement from all 4 Representative bodies. More will be reported on this action and the outcomes of the staff survey during 2014/15's annual report.

### **Equality and Diversity Activity 2013/14– Standards and Awards**

We understand the importance of external validation and support for our Equality and Diversity work. There are a number of types of accreditation and awards that we have already achieved or have been working towards during 2013/14 and some are a long term commitments which require a high degree of resources. The work so far in this area includes:

#### **Jobcentre Plus (JCP) Two Ticks Award**

MFRA has continued to achieve the Two Ticks awards each year since 2002, through demonstrating evidence of the following five commitments:

- 1) To interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job and to consider them on their abilities
- 2) To discuss with disabled employees , at any time but at least once a year what we can do to make sure they develop and use their abilities

- 3) To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment
- 4) To review these commitments every year, assess what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans

### **Disability Standard**

The Disability Standard is the world's only business-led benchmark for disability developed to help organisations to measure their performance and provide support for disabled customers, service users and employees. The standard helps to identify what is positive about the organisations and what developments the organisation would benefit from. MFRA was awarded the Silver standard in 2010, and was ranked 26 out of 106 organisations that year. Further work will take place in 2014/15 to review our position against the newly revised standard.

### **Local Government National Equality Framework**

The National Equality Framework is used as a self-assessment tool, a national benchmark, a means of facilitating consistent external challenge and an opportunity to identify and draw out learning and good practice to share throughout the sector.

It is designed to support systematic and structured improvement, and can help organisations deliver improved services.

The framework:

- is intended to inform decision making about services that aim to be more tailored to diverse needs

- contributes to the evidence base that underpins the reasons for changes to service policy and delivery – for example, why services are prioritised in the way they are
- will help an organisation to enhance its reputation
- supports and complements effective community engagement and empowerment
- will help to promote high standards of customer care and insight
- provides a standard approach to the integration of equalities into service policy and planning
- will help organisations to meet their statutory duties.

MFRA was awarded an “Excellence” rating in 2010. Since then the Equality Framework has undergone a 'light touch' sector-led refresh to take into account the recommendations from the Public Sector Equality Duty review, around focusing on outcomes, embedding equality into policies and establishing better connections with the newly refreshed Equality Delivery System. A desk-top exercise took place during 2013/14 to establish any gaps in our evidence in meeting the revised standard and work will commence during the next 12 months for re-assessment in 2015/16



## **Equality and Diversity Events in 2013**

MFRA introduced its first Diversity Calendar in 2013, the document was designed to provide staff with the opportunity to gain awareness of diverse and cultural events both locally and nationally. The calendar was and continues to be, instrumental in supporting staff in identifying suitable community events to celebrate and attend to spread safety messages to hard to reach people and more vulnerable communities.

The Calendar includes:

- Over 240+ important dates, including holy days, special events, festivals health awareness and fire safety days and bank holidays
- Quotes on life and a diversity perspectives are included for every month
- There is a special focus for each month (e.g. Deaf Awareness Week, Road Safety Week )
- Photographs depicting diversity in action across MFRS and its Districts

Some of the key events from 2013's calendar were:

### **Liverpool Pride 2013**

Over 50 staff and their families attended the Liverpool Pride event on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2013. The theme for the event was "Holding out for a Hero". MFRA staff showed their support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) communities across Merseyside by marching through Liverpool and provided entertainment with cage football for young people and our FireFit climbing wall and the smoothie making bike. Fire prevention information was available from Liverpool district staff who attended with Lilly the Pink our fire engine designed especially to promote cancer awareness support.

## **Older Person's Day (part of Fire Safety Week)** (case Study 6 will insert here)

The fact that someone is twice as likely to die in a fire after the age of 50 means fire and rescue services engage with older people every single day. Often, however, the impact of our prevention work in keeping them safe, well and independent goes unnoticed and sometimes our partners are unaware of the contribution we can make to the health and well-being agenda, particularly at times of year when we know we can make a real difference.

MFRA celebrated United Nations Older People's Day on 1st October 2013 by mobilising over 1000 members of staff during Fire Safety Week to help some of our most vulnerable people stay safe as winter approached, by delivering targeted Home Fire Safety Checks.

We joined with national partners such as Age UK, the British Heart Foundation and the WRVS in celebrating the contribution older people make to society under the slogan **Full of Life**. These events included a Tea Room style lunch and Fire prevention talk and a tour of the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Heritage and Education Centre. This was organised in conjunction with Age UK. Other events included a Bingo and poetry afternoon at Birkenhead Community Fire Station. The key aims of the day were to celebrate older people living active and independent lives, to raise awareness around dementia, to highlight services available to older people and to promote fire safety and overall wellbeing during the winter months.

There was also an event held at Whiston Community Fire station organised jointly with Age UK Knowsley, the event allowed older people to pop in for a cup of tea and fire prevention advice.

## **International Day of Disabled People**

The International Day of Disabled People has been celebrated across the world since 2009. Its introduction followed decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to people with disabilities,

including the change from viewing people with disabilities as objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as people with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

This day was chosen as a key event for MF&RA to celebrate following significant research to suggest that disability plays an important factor in increasing the risk of fire and fire-related Injury. Between 2004/05 and 2013/14 80 people died in Accidental Dwelling Fires. Of these, 39 (49%) were recorded as having a disability. Further research shows that the gender split is 19 (49%) female and 20 (51%) male. 36 (45%) fatalities were above the age of 70, however the 45-49 age group were identified as having the greatest count of fatalities with 11 overall.

The makeup of our districts shows that Merseyside has a significantly higher proportion of disabled people at 23% when compared to the UK at 20% - 1 in 4 people are considered to have a disability that impairs their daily life.

The importance of MFRA staff engaging with disabled members of our community is part of making our services fully inclusive and supportive of the needs of disabled people. Carrying out joint events between disabled and non-disabled people is a powerful approach to understanding and appreciating difference and helps to provide staff with a useful insight into the importance of inclusivity.

MFRA in conjunction with other Blue Light services and Daisy UK, delivered a Blue Light Services Games which saw a total of 100 competitors coming together to take part in Inclusive games events, including Blind Football, Wheelchair Basketball and Indoor New Age Curling. The event also delivered

demonstrations of Paralympic sports to local primary school children and was supported by Michelle Lewis MBE.

**Safer Internet Day** – took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014 with a theme of "Let's create a better internet together". It involved our ICT department working with staff at the Firefit Hub in toxteth, and Prince's Trust development programme teams to highlight the need for young people to be internet safe. The Firefit Hub encouraged young people from more deprived areas to use the centre and the free Wi-Fi. This was especially important from a social media aspect. Prince's Trust has now also designed lesson plans to highlight internet safety which will be used with all future teams.

## **Conclusion**

**I hope you have enjoyed reading our 2013-14 Equality and Diversity Annual Report and can appreciate the commitment MFRA has to tackling inequality, tailoring our Services to meet the needs of our diverse Communities and treating our Staff and Service users fairly.**

**If you would like to learn more about our work, or have any questions please contact**

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**Phil Garrigan**

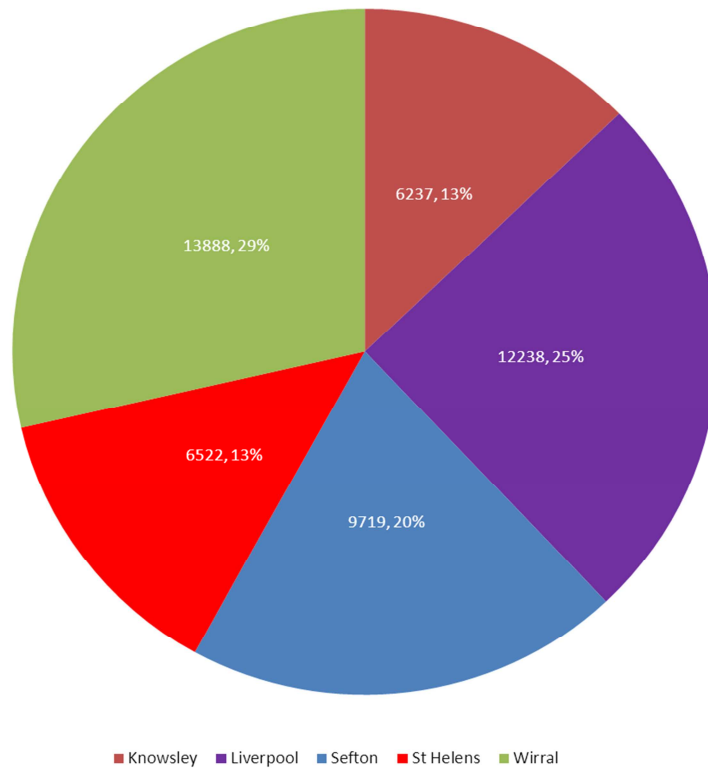
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

## **Section 2 – Supporting Information**

## Appendix 1

### HFSC delivered by district

Home Fire Safety Checks by District



<sup>4</sup>Table 1 provides a breakdown of Home Fire Safety Checks completed according to Community Profile; the table identifies that no single profile received preferential treatment as the Home Fire Safety Checks completed are roughly in line with the proportions of Merseyside that the profiles constitute.

Table 1: HFSC delivered by Community Profiles

Community Profile	HFSC Completed	% Completed
1 - Wealthy over 50 population living in semi-rural locations <i>(12.5% of Merseyside)</i>	6750	13.89%
2 - Wealthy retirees <i>(4.8% of Merseyside)</i>	2580	5.31%
3 - Middle income residents living in privately owned properties <i>(17.3% of Merseyside)</i>	8927	18.37%
4 - Average income older residents <i>(11.9% of Merseyside)</i>	5466	11.25%
5 - Students Living in City Centre Locations <i>(1.8% of Merseyside)</i>	413	0.85%
6 - Young families living in privately owned semi-detached homes <i>(11.5% of Merseyside)</i>	6186	12.73%
7 - Young families with high benefit need <i>(16.7 % of Merseyside)</i>	7641	15.72%
8 - Residents living in social housing with high need for benefits <i>(6.3% of Merseyside)</i>	3349	6.89%
9 - Transient population living in poor quality housing <i>(3.6% of Merseyside)</i>	1796	3.70%
10 - Younger, urban population living in high levels of deprivation <i>(13.7% of Merseyside)</i>	5496	11.31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48604</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 2 shows the breakdown of Home Fire Safety Checks in relation to those households with disabled occupants. Of the 48,604 carried out 13% were at a property where a disabled person lived. This is lower than the Merseyside disabled population figure of 23%. However it should be noted that this figure could be higher if more people disclosed and equality training for crew members will aid this work

<sup>4</sup> The Customer Insight Community Profiles classifies Merseyside into 10 groups in terms of their socio-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour. The titles devised for each segmentation are merely descriptive not prescriptive. These are used by MF&RS in a similar way that customer segmentation such as MOSAIC or ACORN is used by other organisations.

Table 2: HFSC delivered to households with disabled occupants

Disability	Total	%
Yes	6335	13.0%
No	28485	58.6%
Not Stated	11518	23.70%
not known	2266	4.66%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>48604</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 3 shows the breakdown of HFSC in relation to those households with occupants over 65 being 36.4%. The Merseyside average over 65's population is 17.5%. Our Home Fire Safety Strategy focuses heavily on delivering HFSC to the over 65's, as older people are more at risk from fire the high proportion of HFSC delivered during 20-13/4

Table 3 – HFSC delivered to households with occupants over 65

Over 65	Total	%
Yes	17705	36.4%
No	21498	44.2%
Not Stated	7428	15.28%
not known	1973	4.06%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>48604</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 4 shows the breakdown of HFSC in relation to Ethnicity, 81% of HFSC are delivered to households of White Ethnicity, BME Households receiving an HFSC is 2%, lower than the average Merseyside population of 5.5%. The "not stated" and "not known" figures are high and may well include members of the BME community. Work is in place to encourage disclosure of information about ethnicity during HFSC



Table 4 – HFSC by ethnicity

HFSC Merseyside		
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
White British	38829	79.9%
White Irish	102	0.21%
White Other	374	0.77%
Black African	119	0.24%
Black Caribbean	33	0.07%
Asian British	22	0.05%
Asian Indian	88	0.18%
Asian Pakistani	37	0.08%
Asian Other	106	0.22%
Mixed White Asian	13	0.03%
Mixed White Black African	25	0.05%
Mixed White Black Caribbean	30	0.06%
Chinese	250	0.51%
Chinese Other	84	0.17%
Mixed Other	33	0.07%
Not Known	1	0.00%
British Other	50	0.10%
Not Stated	8369	17.22%
Other	39	0.08%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>48604</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Helpful Documents for further reading

[MFRA Equality and Diversity Priorities Action Plan 2013-2016](#)

[MFRA Diversity Calendar 2014](#)

All of these documents can be found at [www.Merseyfire.gov.uk/About us/Equality and Diversity](http://www.Merseyfire.gov.uk/About us/Equality and Diversity)

[Demographics profile of Merseyside V 1.6 and Addendum for Disability data V1.6](#)

[Reaching our diverse community's booklet](#)

[MFRA Public Sector Equality Duty Report with Workforce Demographics 2012](#)

[MFRA Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2013](#)

[Historical Analysis of Fatalities in Accidental Dwelling Fires between 2004/05 and 2013/14](#)

The following are available on request:

Customer Insight profiles maps

Deprivation Mapping

## Key Contacts

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For Diversity Action Group details please go to [www.merseyfire.gov.uk/About us/Equality & Diversity](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/About-us/Equality%20&%20Diversity)/Diversity Action Group Members

For Strategic Equality Group details please go to [www.merseyfire.gov.uk/About us/Equality & Diversity](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/About-us/Equality%20&%20Diversity)/Strategic Equality Group Members

**CASESTUDIES**

The following Case studies are linked to various stories and achievements contained within the main body of this report. Once the report is approved by SMG and Authority the case studies will be used in the final design of the glossy report and will be interspersed throughout the report together with Photos following guidance from the design company. The section of text in the case studies in purple can be used for shortened versions of the case study where space is limited.

## **Case Study 1 – Wireless Smoke Alarms fitted for vulnerable Merseyside man**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

A man who has a hearing impairment that makes him potentially more vulnerable to fire had new specialist smoke alarms fitted following work by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. The new smoke alarms emit a sound which is more likely to be heard by those with hearing difficulties but can also alert neighbours through a wireless Wi-Safe2 set up, helping the man in case a fire were to occur.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

“The gentleman in this case has previously had many fire incidents involving cooking. The gentleman was hard of hearing. His neighbours rang the Fire Service on many occasions and saved his life. We have now installed wirelessly-linked smoke alarms. The alarm going off in a neighbour's property also offers an extra level of protection for this occupant.”

Maria Manning, Community Prevention Officer at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

## **CASE STUDY:**

A man who has a hearing impairment, which made him potentially more vulnerable to risk if a fire occurred had new specialist smoke alarms following work by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

The new smoke alarms emit a sound which is more likely to be heard by those with hearing difficulties but can also alert neighbours through a wireless Wi-Safe2 set up.

The FireAngel alarms, which communicate wirelessly, were provided by Sprue Safety Products and were fitted by our staff at a property in the Bootle area.

Maria Manning, Community Prevention Officer at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, said: "The gentleman in this case has previously had many fire incidents involving cooking. On occasions the gentlemen put the chip pan on whilst under the influence of alcohol and fell asleep. The gentleman was hard of hearing and was unable to hear or respond to the smoke alarms. His neighbours rang the Fire Service on several occasions and saved his life.

"We have now installed the new wirelessly-linked smoke alarms with an additional low frequency sounder designed to alert the young, elderly or those under the influence of drink or drugs, which is the first in Merseyside. The occupant in this case said, when we tested the new alarms at his property, 'I can hear that' with a smile, so we know this can make a real difference. The alarm going off in a neighbour's property also offers an extra level of protection for this occupant to help him escape if a fire does occur."

Watch Manager Mark Jones said: "The individual's situation was discovered by firefighters who highlighted it to our community fire prevention and protection team and department. Firefighters and other staff are in the

communities of Merseyside each week but if you have concerns about a neighbour in relation to fire safety contact 0800 7315958."

## **Case Study 2 Princes Trust Individual Michel NCube**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

Mitchel Ncube came to England but struggled to find an opportunity for work. He wanted to gain further employment and qualifications. That's where the Prince's Trust Team programme at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service came in. Now his confidence has grown and he is studying at a college.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

"When society tells you, you can't, the Prince's Trust and Merseyside Fire & Rescue offers you a gateway of hope, possibility and self-confidence to take on the world and thrive for greatness."

Mitchel Ncube, 18.

### **CASE STUDY:**

Mitchel came to the UK In November 2013 to re-join his Mum who had been living here for 14 years after studying at Liverpool University and going on to become a Social Worker.

Mitchel lived with his aunt and stayed in his home country to complete his schooling. However, at age 16, his Mum convinced him to move to England, to the city of Liverpool, to continue his education in the hope of gaining a university place – his dream is to become a lawyer.



On arriving in the UK Mitchel with the assistance of his Mum began looking what was out there and unfortunately they were unable to find anything suitable. However, his stepfather suggested Wirral Metropolitan College as a place for Mitchel to go, meet people and see what they had to offer. It was at this point they mentioned the Prince's Trust personal development programme which was delivered in partnership with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS).

Mitchel joined the course and completed it. He was presented with his certificate on completing the course at Birkenhead Community Fire Station.

Mitchel Ncube, who is 18-years-old and lives in Norris Green, said: "Before the programme, I had just recently moved from South Africa to England and tried to find somewhere to continue my schooling, but unfortunately this had no positive outcome. My step-father told me about the Prince's Trust course and, for the sake of not staying at home until September, I went for it. I told myself I could use this course to get a brief introduction into how life is like as a student in England, and I saw the course as an opportunity to keep my brain active."

The Prince's Trust Team programme is run by our Service for young people aged 16 to 25-years-old who are not in employment, education or training. The 12-week course is aimed at developing young people's skills to strengthen their job prospects.

At the end of the programme and especially at his final presentation Mitchel was recognised as being an ideal candidate to become a Prince's Trust Young Ambassador.

Mitchel attended an interview panel and has recently been informed he was successful in becoming an Ambassador and started training.

This will be an opportunity for him to deliver speeches to large corporate businesses and, importantly, to other young people to inspire them to move their lives forward.

At this moment Mitchel is attending a Sports & Leisure Level 2 with Wirral Met to fill his time but is returning to formal education to gain his A Levels in the hope of gaining a university place to study Law.

## Case Study 3 Princes Trust Team Programme

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### SHORTER VERSION:

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's (MF&RS) 12-week Prince's Trust Team programme gives young people the skills and confidence to broaden their horizons, improve their prospects and contribute to their communities. Run by MF&RS staff at community fire stations across Merseyside, the programs improve outcomes for young people who are not in education, employment or training as well as for their communities too.

**ALTERNATIVE VERSION:** The Prince's Trust Team programme, run by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service staff at community fire stations across Merseyside, has succeeded in actively recruiting young people from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs for a course, based at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub.

### QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:

"This work was all about breaking down barriers and about providing young people with the same opportunities to access learning and opportunities within our Service and accessing our community fire stations. We aimed to, and succeeded in, actively recruiting young people from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs for our Prince's Trust course, based at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub."

**Karen Metcalf, who is the Youth Manager at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.**

**OR:**

“Recognising our communities and embracing the ethnic variety within MF&RS Prince’s Trust teams, we celebrate and identify differences. MF&RS actively engage with local diverse groups and joining the Prince’s Trust Team is seen locally as a stepping stone for all young people to achieve positive outcomes for them to thrive and go on to lead productive lives.”

**Karen Metcalf, who is the Youth Manager at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.**

**CASE STUDY:**

Breaking down barriers and widening access to allow a wider breadth of the community to work with, learn from and subsequently support the aims of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS) has taken place.

One of the areas this has been succeeded in is the Prince’s Trust Team programme, run by the Fire and Rescue Service at community fire stations across Merseyside.

The Prince’s Trust Team Programme is a 12-week course run at fire stations across Merseyside for young people aged 16 to 25-years-old who are not in employment or education. It is aimed at developing young people’s skills to develop their communication; problem-solving and teambuilding skills to enable young people to improve their lives moving forward. During the course they complete a week-long residential stay, a four-week community project and two weeks of work experience.

Teams of young people on the course also raise money for the community project which they complete during the 12-week course.

Karen Metcalf, who is the Youth Manager at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, said: “This work was all about breaking down barriers and about providing young people with the same opportunities to access learning and opportunities within our Service and accessing our community fire stations. Demographically Merseyside is becoming more diverse and this needs to be recognised. We aimed to, and succeeded in, actively recruiting young people from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs for our Prince’s Trust course, based at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub.

“All young people are also introduced to a Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Equal Opportunity statement and consideration was given to an available prayer room, especially on residentials, washing facilities, dietary requirements and suitable attire for presentations to improve access to what we provide and to help young people.

“Recognising our communities and embracing the ethnic variety within MF&RS Prince’s Trust teams, we celebrate and identify differences. MF&RS actively engage with local diverse groups and joining the Prince’s Trust Team is seen locally as a stepping stone for all young people to achieve positive outcomes for them to thrive and go on to lead productive lives.

“We want to help young people to get their lives working by giving them the opportunity to gain the skills and confidence they need to move on, and have fun in the process.

“We aim to continuously develop knowledge around the needs of diverse community groups in relation to their residential experiences and requirements and this expands to the 12-week programme and their placements.”

## **Case Study 4 Firefighter Helps Vulnerable People**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

Chris Allan was a Crew Manager with Green Watch when they were called to a suspected fire at a property in St Helens. There was no fire and the call-out was a due to faulty smoke alarm. The occupier was an elderly man and his wife who were looking after their middle-aged daughter who had learning difficulties and the early onset of Alzheimers. Chris, recognizing their vulnerability, helped direct them to dedicated support and advice for the family.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

"I quickly became aware of the impact the whole situation was having on the daughter as she was suffering from the early signs of shock. I highlighted dedicated support and advice and signposted the occupiers to other services as this was a sensitive situation with sensitive issues."

Watch Manager Chris Allan.

### **CASE STUDY:**

Firefighters visit homes across Merseyside and work in the community each week. At times they can meet people who may be more vulnerable to fire, people who sometimes do not have support or do not know how to access support available.

Chris Allan was a Crew Manager with Green Watch when they were called to a suspected fire at a property in St Helens. When firefighters arrived it was clear there was no fire and the call-out was a due to faulty smoke alarm.

The occupier was an elderly man and his wife who were looking after their middle-aged daughter who had learning difficulties and the early onset of Alzheimers.

Chris said: "I decided to carry out one of our free Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and, in line with our Service's approach, fitted new smoke alarms as the family looked vulnerable and distressed.

"I quickly became aware of the impact the whole situation was having on the daughter as she was suffering from the early signs of shock. My own personal experience of providing support to a family member with Alzheimer's was invaluable in helping me to direct sensitive but focused support for the daughter and her distressed family.

"I highlighted dedicated support and advice and signposted the occupiers to other services as this was a sensitive situation with sensitive issues."



## Case Study 5 Older Peoples Day

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### SHORTER VERSION:

As part of the first Fire Safety Week staged by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, more than 200 older people attended special events to support UK Older People's Day on October 1. The events included activities at the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Heritage and Education Centre in Bootle where elderly people were offered a range of help and advice on fire safety. Another event was held at Birkenhead Community Fire Station where more than 80 older people had the chance to play Bingo and listen to poetry reading as well as get fire safety advice. Elderly people were also given fire safety advice at an event in Whiston. The key aims of the day were to celebrate older people living active and independent lives, to raise awareness around dementia services available to older people and to promote fire safety and overall wellbeing during the winter months.

### CASE STUDY:

As part of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's first ever First Safety Week (30<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October) a series of events were organised to highlight the importance of fire safety in the home.

For the first time, 90 office staff from MF&RS Service Headquarters and Authority Members joined Prevention Advocates and fire crews to visit 4,619 properties in communities across Merseyside in one day to highlight the importance of having a working smoke alarm. A total of 1,398 Home Fire

Safety Checks (HFSCs) were completed across Merseyside as part of the week.

There were a number of other events organised as part of the week including a “Chip Pan Amnesty”. Regenda Housing Association provided the Deep Fat Fryers, which our prevention staff were able to distribute to vulnerable tenants in Wirral in exchange for their chip pans. Fire prevention officers were also able to distribute free oil-filled radiators to those who had unsafe heating to reduce the risk posed by both.

Tuesday the 1<sup>st</sup> October was UK Older People's Day, so fire safety events were also organised specifically to target older members of our communities. These included an event at the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Heritage and Education Centre, organised in conjunction with Age Concern. Age Concern members were invited to the Heritage Centre and given a guided tour of the fire service memorabilia, vintage machines and equipment. There was then a “Tea Room”-style lunch provided during which MF&RS fire safety staff were on hand to give fire safety and advice about keeping warm safely in the winter. Other events included a Bingo and poetry afternoon at Birkenhead Community Fire Station. The key aims of the day were to celebrate older people living active and independent lives, to raise awareness around dementia services available to older people and to promote fire safety and overall wellbeing during the winter months.

There was also an event held at Whiston Community Fire Station organised jointly with Age UK Knowsley, the event allowed members pop in for a cup of tea and Fire Safety advice.

## **Case study 6 Beacon Project**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

One of the Beacon Project courses aimed to engage with a group of young people and adults with learning difficulties as well as giving participants an opportunity to take part in a learning programme. A course was staged for a group that were between 16-years-old and 32-years-old. It aimed to and succeeded in developing wider key skills in communication, problem solving and how to work with others as well as providing safe, fun and enriching experiences.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

“Our approach is about targeting areas and people where we can really make a difference, no matter what part of the population of Merseyside they are from. The Beacon Project also aims to engage and educate young people to create fire safe citizens with improved social responsible behaviour.”

**Suzy Tosi, Beacon Project team leader.**

## **CASE STUDY:**

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service works throughout the year with young people and other groups within society.

Among the courses run by the Service is the Beacon Project, a 12-week, one day a week, course, usually aimed at young people who are 13 to 19-years-old, who may be experiencing difficulties in engaging with school or with their peers.

One of the Beacon Project courses aimed to engage with a group of young people and adults with learning difficulties, as well as giving participants an opportunity to take part in a programme of learning.

A course was staged for a group that were between 16-years-old and 32-years-old.

Suzy Tosi, Beacon Project team leader, said: “Our approach is about targeting areas and people where we can really make a difference, no matter what part of the population of Merseyside they are from.

“Amongst our main aims for this particular course and group were the following - to develop wider key skills in communication, problem solving and how to work with others as well as providing safe, fun and enriching experiences. The Beacon Project also aims to engage and educate young people to create fire safe citizens with improved social responsible behaviour.

“As most of the 13 students had learning difficulties, activities were very demanding for many of them. But all students were willing to participate in

everything asked of them, which showed a willingness to take on new activities and challenge themselves.

“All students also gained a completed certificate, First Aid certificate and external ASDAN certification. They were also educated in: Safety in the Home, Smoke Alarms, Bonfire & Fireworks Safety, Road Safety, Water Safety, and Hoax Calls.”

The course ran from September to December 2013.

## **Case Study 7 Inclusive Games**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

A sporting event was organised to **mark the UN's** International Day of Persons with Disabilities and International Day of People with Disability on December 3, 2013. The event was organised by MF&RS and Daisy UK, with help from Fire Fit volunteers. **Pupils from Windsor Community Primary School, in Toxteth, also cheered on the teams and got to meet Guide Dogs at the event as well as learn about different sports. The day demonstrated sport can be beneficial to everyone, regardless of ability.**

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

**“This is the first Inclusive Games we have held and its focus was to provide a level playing field for disabled and non-disabled people from across Merseyside in a safe and fun atmosphere.**

**“Vulnerable people including those with disabilities are a key focus area for our Service and our firefighters and staff work with people living in homes across Merseyside to help to make them safer and reduce the risk and chance of them experiencing a fire.”**

**Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan.**

**OR:**

“It was a great day and a superb event – I’d really like to thank Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub for their help and work to stage the event.

“My goal is the inclusion of all disabled people to reach their true potential and this is to be done by breaking down the barriers within society. The Inclusive Games event on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities really helps towards this goal.”

Dave Kelly, who is managing director of Daisy UK.

### **CASE STUDY:**

Teams from Daisy UK, Guide Dogs, Firefighter and Volunteers and members of our Youth Engagement Team were invited to take part in the day which was held at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub and saw disabled and non-disabled teams, using wheelchairs and blindfolds to create a level playing field, competing against each other in events such as Wheelchair Basket Ball, Goal Ball, Blind Football, wheelchair Obstacle Race and Tug of War.

There were also sporting demonstrations throughout the day including Jujitsu and a Paralympic sports demonstration for the local schools who were invited to attend.

**Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS) staff from the Youth Engagement Team and the members of the Prince’s Trust Team programme, which is run by MF&RS at community fire stations across Merseyside took part.**

**Diversity and Consultation Manager Wendy Kenyon said: “We continue to work with vulnerable people to understand their needs. This helps us make communities safer from fire. This event illustrates some of the great work that**

the organisations involved in the games do to support disabled communities and to help empower them to participate fully in public life.

**“We have also been working with our staff to help them gain a greater understanding of diversity so they can develop more ways to engage with vulnerable members of the community who are more at risk of experiencing a fire.**

**“The event also provided an opportunity for our Prince’s Trust Team programme staff as it will help them introduce more inclusive places for young people on the courses run at community fire stations across Merseyside.”**

Dave Kelly, who is managing director of Daisy UK and lost his sight at the age of 30, said: “It was a great day and a superb event – I’d really like to thank Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub for their help and work to stage the event.

“My goal is the inclusion of all disabled people to reach their true potential and this is to be done by breaking down the barriers within society. The Inclusive Games event on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities really helps towards this goal.

“My aim is to support our disabled community through the transition from inactivity to activity, school leaving age to adulthood, education to meaningful employment and beyond. Through the mediums of sport, education and employment, we support our community in achieving what mainstream society typically assumes impossible for someone with a disability.”



The Toxteth Fire Fit Hub, located on Upper Warwick Street, Toxteth, is a unique project which has seen the creation of a Youth Zone with sporting facilities as part of the Myplace scheme, which provides world-class facilities for young people from across Liverpool. Annual membership is available for young people for the site. More information can be obtained by calling the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub on 0151 296 6800.

## **Case Study 8 Chip Pan Amnesty**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

Fire Safety Week saw deep fat fryers handed to older residents in Wirral as part of a “chip pan amnesty”. Housing group Regenda funded 30 deep fat fryers to help make people safer from the risk of experiencing a fire. The amnesty started with residents of the Independent Living Communities, but was later rolled out to other identified vulnerable residents. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service funded a number of other deep fat fryers being distributed during Fire Safety Week across Merseyside including ones distributed across the St Helens district.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

"Working on this initiative with Regenda has allowed us to make contact with some potentially vulnerable local people, help them to live and cook more safely and also offer them fire safety advice in their own homes. Cooking-related fires are a major cause for call-outs for the Service, and we are keen to do anything we can to help people stay safe."

**Jenny Welsh, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Wirral District Prevention Manager.**

## **CASE STUDY:**

As part of the Fire Safety Week held in September 2013, District Prevention teams, across Merseyside distributed deep fat fryers in exchange for chip pans to help reduce the risk of fires starting in the kitchen.

One of those amnesties saw MF&RS working with housing group Regenda as part of a "Chip Pan Amnesty" for Regenda tenants across Wirral.

The partnership was set up to establish a referral process for occupants of Regenda properties, in particular those identified as vulnerable, living in sheltered accommodation and owning a chip pan. This was part of MF&RS drive to reduce accidental fires in homes.

Regenda provided our prevention teams with a number of referrals for tenants who they had identified as vulnerable. Prevention staff carried out Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) and were able to exchange chip pans, for a deep fat fryer.

In total there have been 45 HFSCs completed from the referrals received from Regenda staff who, as a result of the training given by MF&RS prevention staff, are now able to identify vulnerable tenants. Referrals have been received for Wirral, St Helens and Liverpool districts.

Jenny Welsh, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Wirral District Prevention Manager, said: "Working on this initiative with Regenda has allowed us to make contact with some potentially vulnerable local people, help them to live and cook more safely and also offer them fire safety advice in their own homes.

"Cooking-related fires are a major cause for call-outs for the Service, and we

are keen to do anything we can to help people stay safe. This is why kitchen and cooking fires were a key focus day of our first ever Fire Safety Week, which ran between September 30 and October 4 in Wirral and across Merseyside. Chip pan fires can develop very quickly, producing thick smoke that can disorientate people in their own homes. We advise people use deep fat fryers instead of chip pans. Free fire safety advice is also available by calling 0800 731 5958."

Dave Morrell, Regenda's Health and Safety Manager, said: "Chip pan fires can happen in seconds, and can have a devastating effect. The aim of our amnesty is to encourage our residents to use safer cooking methods, by providing them free of charge with a far safer piece of equipment - a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer that still allows them to cook their own chips, but without the risk of ignition."

## **Case Study 9 Safe Havens in Liverpool and Wirral**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

Two men were helped by firefighters at Liverpool City Community Fire Station in St Anne Street, Liverpool, after they feared for their safety. The station is a Safe Haven and the two were given a short-term sanctuary as well as advice from Police who also attended the station after firefighters activated their Safe Haven procedures. There are also Safe Havens at all six community fire stations in Wirral and staff there have also helped people who feel threatened, intimidated or at risk.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

“A safe haven is a place where anyone feeling vulnerable or at risk can go to if they feel under threat of harm. As our fire stations are in the heart of our communities it seemed obvious that we would embrace this idea and seek to embed the initiative across Merseyside supported by our Community Safety Partners.”

**Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan.**

**OR:**

“Our firefighters are experienced in dealing with the public during and at traumatic times and are highly trained in first aid and trauma care. This

initiative allows us to ensure we are best able to serve our communities no matter what the circumstances."

### **Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan.**

#### **STARTS:**

As our fire and rescue service works with vulnerable people and fire stations are in the heart of communities we wanted to do more to help those in need.

The Safe Havens, initiative approved by Wirral Community Safety Partnership, saw the six community fire stations across Wirral designated as Safe Havens.

They are identified by an illuminated Safe Haven sign that can be seen at night, and are accessible to members of the public who feel threatened, intimidated or at risk.

They also provide those individuals with the opportunity to report Hate Crime or Domestic Violence should they feel that this action is appropriate.

Since its launch, the initiative has helped people in Wirral to have a short-term place of sanctuary while partners were contacted to help the individuals further.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service staff have a set procedure to follow to ensure the incident type warrants a 'safe haven activation' and is dealt with accordingly. Our firefighters are experienced in dealing with the public during and at traumatic times and are highly trained in first aid and trauma care. This initiative allows us to ensure we are best able to serve our communities no matter what the circumstances.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan said: “A safe haven is a place where anyone feeling vulnerable or at risk can go to if they feel under threat of harm. The idea stems from work done in London following the death of a teenager who tragically lost his life in an altercation at a local shop in 2008. His family believed that local places should be safe places to go when someone is feeling threatened and have encouraged shopkeepers and businesses to take positive steps when faced with young people in need of help. This initiative became ‘Safe Havens’.

“As our fire stations are in the heart of our communities it seemed obvious that we would embrace this idea and seek to embed the initiative across Merseyside supported by our Community Safety Partners.

“Our firefighters are experienced in dealing with the public during and at traumatic times and are highly trained in first aid and trauma care. This initiative allows us to ensure we are best able to serve our communities no matter what the circumstances.”

Group Manager Paul Murphy, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service district manager for the Wirral, said: “A person in distress and in need of sanctuary can approach one of our community fire stations and ask for help and a place of safety. Members of the public already consider our community fire stations as places to call on for help. This was highlighted during the period of civil disturbance in 2011 when staff from McDonald's in Birkenhead sought refuge at Birkenhead Community Fire Station in Exmouth Street when their premises were under attack – this initiative formalizes that approach.”

At night time, if firefighters are at the station the Safe Haven will be illuminated. If firefighters are not at the station, during daytime or night time,

assistance can be called on for an emergency situation by using the yellow station phone located on the front of the buildings.

The Wirral Community Safety Partnership includes Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Merseyside Police and Wirral Council.

**THIS LAST PART CAN BE CUT IF THIS IS TOO LONG:**

The Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner Jane Kennedy said: "Most people report crime to the police but for those who can't, or feel too vulnerable, there will now be somewhere to turn. The Safe Haven initiative is a fantastic example of agencies working with the police to support victims of crime within their own communities. They provide an additional refuge for those who may be extremely vulnerable and enable them to access the help they need, when they need it most."

Schoolboy Jimmy Mizen was murdered after a yob hurled an oven dish at him in a London bakery in May 2008.

The 16-year-old victim, who had gone to the shop to buy sausage rolls, bled to death after a one-and-a-half-inch shard of glass cut blood vessels in his neck, in May, 2008. A man was jailed for life in March 2009 for the murder.

More information can be found about the Jimmy Mizen Foundation at <http://www.jimmymizen.org/>



## **Case Study 11 Supporting Campaign against Domestic Abuse across Knowsley**

Shorter version in purple text.

Longer version further below.

### **SHORTER VERSION:**

Three fire appliances in the Knowsley district were branded to help support the Choices campaign against domestic abuse. It is part of the Service's work with the Safer Knowsley Partnership which paid for the awareness imagery and messages on the fire appliances. The aim was to highlight the message about "Choices" to a wider section of the population and communities across Knowsley.

### **QUOTE IF REQUIRED ON PAGE:**

"We want to get this message out to as many people as possible and using fire engines is a highly visible way for us to do this. We want to let both men and women know that they don't have to accept domestic abuse – they have a choice."

Sheena Ramsey, joint Chair of the Safer Knowsley Partnership.

### **CASE STUDY:**

Three fire appliances in the Knowsley district were branded to support the Choices campaign against domestic abuse in 2014.

It was part of the Service's work with the Safer Knowsley Partnership which paid for the awareness imagery and messages on the fire appliances.

As part of the high profile campaign, the fire appliances have been branded with the message “Domestic abuse – it’s all about choices”.

It was part of the latest phase of the campaign focusing on getting the message out and about around Knowsley. As well as fire appliances, the message can be seen on taxis, buses and roadside adverts across the borough.

The aim of the campaign is to encourage victims to take the first step and report domestic abuse and inform perpetrators that they have a choice and they can get help to change their behaviour. Help really is only a phone call away.

Sheena Ramsey, joint Chair of the Safer Knowsley Partnership, said “We do not underestimate how difficult that first call will be, but it is the right thing to do.

“We want to get this message out to as many people as possible and using fire engines is a highly visible way for us to do this.

“We want to let both men and women know that they don’t have to accept domestic abuse – they have a choice. Help and support is available for victims and offenders. We’re encouraging victims to take the first step to report the abuse and offenders to take the first step to help stop the cycle of abuse.”

The Safer Knowsley Partnership consists of Knowsley Council, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Probation Trust, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Clinical Commissioning Group, Knowsley Housing Trust and Villages Housing. They also work with other agencies including Knowsley Domestic Violence Support Services.

Group Manager Gary Oakford, Knowsley District Manager, said: “We are delighted to support the Safer Knowsley Partnership and the messages on the appliances will be seen by many people in the community throughout the campaign.”

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including verbal, psychological, emotional, social, financial and sexual, as well as physical.

Call Knowsley’s Domestic Violence helpline on 0800 953 4433 for help and support. Alternatively, Knowsley Domestic Violence Support Services offer a range of support and programmes to help both victims and offenders – call 0151 548 3333.

Additional quote

**RTC Reduction - Quote: About “Suddenly from Nowhere”**

As a little experiment, after the Suddenly from Nowhere presentation, we purposefully did not mention seatbelts when we got into the mini bus to see if the young people would put them on without being reminded. Usually, including the trip to the fire station, we’ll have to repeatedly ask young people to ‘clunk click’. However, immediately after your session we didn’t have to say a word. Obviously their behaviour was re-inforced and the session was discussed further but I just wanted you to be aware what you say sinks in and has a positive effect.”

