

**CIRCULATION DOCUMENT
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**Appendix 1 - Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2013-16: Year 2 Status Report
Q3 and Q4 Activity**

Prevention and Protection			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
13	11	2	0

Green Highlights

1.Community Engagement Actions :

1.4 : Increase targeted Interventions, targeting those Protected groups at most risk first using the customer insight and census demographics

Operational fire crews continue to use the status reports (lists of addresses to target) to reach people who have never been visited previously by MFRA. The Home Safety Strategy is currently under review and this will potentially dictate where the operational crews deliver their HFSC visits and who received priority. The Prevention Team (SHQ) are currently reviewing the status reports to ensure that they identify and target any individuals who are at risk of fire in the home through the use of data sharing protocols with our partner agencies. The changes in priorities will be clarified and reinforced through individual meetings with Watch Manager (Prevention SHQ) and Operational Crew reference holders (Watch Managers, Green Watch).

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1.6: To deliver crew based training, to help MFRA staff to understand their communities better and to explain why there is a need to gather Equality Monitoring information and how it's used.

Home Fire Safety Refresher training has been delivered to all operational crews and advocates during 2014 which included awareness and education in respect of collecting data for the purpose of equality monitoring. As part of the Home Safety Strategy for 2015-2016, Prevention Team (SHQ) are part of a working group designing a new HFSC form for iPads which will include questions around the relevant protected characteristics and further briefings will be delivered to support crews.

2. Youth Engagement Actions :

2.1 To review the E&D profile for those applying for Princes Trust/Beacon/Cadets & those successful at gaining a place and use the intelligence to help recruit & engage with hose groups who are not fully represented:

The team welcomes those children and young people who are not always fully represented and to that end we have engaged with several same sex couples, young people with sometimes multifaceted needs such as ADHT & Asperger's Syndromes. Fire Cadets are delivered in two Merseyside areas, Formby and Liverpool City Centre: due to the demographics, Archbishop Blanch girls school (Liverpool) has a fantastic mix of ethnicity whilst Formby is a mixed team of all white boys and girls. MFRS were unable to choose the schools to work with as this Fire Cadet model is managed through Youth United, this can sometimes limit the ability for MFRS to proactively recruit from all protected groups. Staff have received E and D support to help manage the needs of diverse groups to help ensure their time on youth programmes is as inclusive as possible. The recent assessment for the Matrix Standard has endorsed the excellent work that is delivered through the Youth programmes and cited the commitment to equality, diversity and social inclusion as being of particular strength. More detail around the outcomes and achievements of diverse students on our youth programmes will be focused on in the E and D Annual Report.

2.2 To actively develop engagement activities for Disabled young people working with partners to build sustainable programmes of engagement in Princes Trust/Beacon/Cadets and use of Fire Fit Hub as and where appropriate.

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Beacon & Prince's Trust have been successful throughout 2014/15 working with children & young people with special needs. Hugh Baird College commissioned MFRS to run two Beacon Projects, one team specifically for young people with a wide range of disabilities. Staff have been inspired and humbled by the strength of each young person in overcoming their disabilities in completing the challenging tasks and activities, it has been overwhelming for all staff involved. One parent of a Beacon student stated ***“ I can honestly say that on a personal level, my daughter has never enjoyed such a worthwhile experience as the Beacon Project her certificates take pride of place in our house and she enthuses about the project to all her family and friends”***

The team have also delivered a Beacon primary to those young people aged 9-11 years transitioning to secondary school. Three Princes Trust teams have been delivered during the year, included those learners diagnosed with Asperger's and number with different mental health problems (including a self-harming, bipolar and obsessive compulsive disorders), one student had Cerebral Palsy. All were able to successfully take part in the 5 day residential in North Wales which demonstrates how inclusive the programmes are for all disabilities. The teams will continue to be inclusive in their recruitment and delivery of Children and Young people programmes.

3 Enforcement and Prosecution Actions :

3.1 Using Equality Monitoring data to establish whether any Protected group is more at risk of prosecution and enforcement – review the current engagement with at Risk groups

Progress is being made around the development of equality monitoring forms to help capture equality data. Gathering and analysing this data will commence during 2015/16 to establish whether any Protected group is more at risk of prosecution and enforcement. To gain a statistically significant result it would be preferable to use a complete 12 month spread of data and so this action will continue into year 3 and be reported on in March 2016

3.2 Develop an engagement strategy for each protected group where required to support them with protection work

Community Fire Protection (Protection) has submitted a report to the Strategic Management Group (SMG) which proposes a re-structure of the function of Protection in order to fit with the Service's 2020 vision. The proposal offers a tiered structure of technical fire safety officer positions which align to the new CFA National Competence Framework for Business Fire Safety Regulators. Approval had already been received to progress with recruitment against the new structure in order to prevent future gaps in the Protection Succession Plan and it was agreed that selection would include positive action in order to encourage applicants form a more diverse background Protection was particularly interested in attracting Asian candidates given the relatively high proportion of enforcement action that the Service taken on Asian Businesses in order to better meet the needs of the local business community.

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Whilst the process was successful in attracting a few applicants from a diverse background unfortunately the quality of these candidates on this occasion, did not meet the Service's minimum requirements, however, Protection are likely to have further vacancies early next year which will provide an opportunity to review the positive action process in order to identify and implement improvements ready to re-run the positive action for the next round of intakes. In much the same way as MFRS has successfully used specific advocate roles in Community Fire Prevention previously. This will help MFRS to engage more actively with the Asian community to support them with further education and advice around fire safety legislation. In addition to this we are organising a National Chief Fire Officers Association seminar on Engaging with Minority Ethnic Businesses (planned for September 2015). The conference will be an opportunity to gather best practice and support from other organisations on how best to engage with those minority communities that are at most risk of enforcement or prosecution- this action will be carried over into Year 3 for completion.

GM Guy Keen from Protection was a guest presenter at the Wirral Accessible Britain Challenge Conference in October 2014, the conference was an opportunity to make communities more inclusive and accessible by engaging and working with disabled people to remove barriers that get in the way of them contributing fully and actively in every day public life. The presentation provided an overview of the Fire Safety Legislation and the importance of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and Procedures.

4. Hate Crime Actions

4.4 Monitor and Review the impact of the Hate Crime Policy, SI and deliver awareness training. Provide regular reports to SEG and DAG on the Hate Crime incidents:

Hate Crime training was rolled out across 2014 to all operational stations. Operational crews were given awareness training in hate crime, reporting, safe havens and target hardening and arson incidents.

All stations have signage to identify Safe Haven locations. St Helens use Safer in Town stickers. Safe Havens are available for anyone in danger or in need of refuge, they are often used by the most vulnerable people in our society, as the statistics for Safe Haven activations show below :

Safe Havens have been formally activated on 11 occasions:

- 2 x homeless and frightened
- 1 x Assault –sought refuge
- 1 x Person in pain with bruising

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1 x Vehicle attacked by youths
1 x Person feeling suicidal
1 x seeking help after hospital discharge
2 x persons chased by group
1 x male lost
1 x female with no abode
1 x child being hit at home.

Total persons seeking help = 14 (11 adults, 3 Children : 11 male and 3 female)

- Many hundreds of target hardening referrals are acted upon by MFRA during any year, one case study involved supporting a family from Toxteth who were suffering from racial hate crime, the property was attacked twice in 2 days, the second involving an attempt with petrol was thwarted by a letter box plate fitted by MFRS staff.
- MFRS continue to attend Hate Crime Sub Group for Merseyside Hate Crime group hosted by the Police Crime Commissioner and we attended several high profile hate crime initiatives in 2014/2015.
- Hate crime reporting forms are now integrated into the Safeguarding and Safe Havens data reporting systems which will ensure that more detailed Hate Crime information can be captured and reported on more accurately during year 3.

5. Road Safety Actions

5.3 Build District Partnerships with authorities and community groups around Drive to arrive and other road safety thematic campaigns working collaboratively in each District.

CFOA held its inaugural Road Safety Conference in Nottingham in October. The two day conference was an unprecedented success and helped forge stronger relationships with road safety partners and stakeholders. MFRS supported the charity BRAKE during their Road Safety week in November. All districts across Merseyside held events in support of BRAKE. MFRS is continuing to support Liverpool City Council with its 20 Effect campaign and took part in an event in Liverpool city centre where we engaged with the public, passing on road safety messages and highlighting that most residential roads in Liverpool are now 20mph

The RTC Reduction Team has withstood major change within its make-up, never the less the team has supported

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crews across the service delivering road safety interventions such as Suddenly from Nowhere and Drive to Arrive (youth offenders). Delivery in schools has been well received with year on year revisits now occurring (Woodchurch High). A rolling programme is in place with Liverpool Youth Offending Service, bringing young people onto stations as part of YOS “Choices and Consequences” programme. The crashed car on a trailer is frequently requested, most recently being utilised by crews at station 20 delivering a rolling road safety program to students from Birkenhead College, all supported by the RTC Reduction Team.

6. Home Fire Safety Actions:

6.1 To Review the HFSC Equality Monitoring information collected to ensure up to date questions and consistent responses answers are recorded in Capita.

6.2 Review the HFSC leaflets and information given out to the public about Equality Monitoring and Equality related information such as Deaf alarms and update in line with best practice.

6.3 Utilise Browse Aloud technology (on the prevention Website page and iPad) to enable HFSC to be conducted with diverse communities where English isn't their first language

The Prevention Team (SHQ) are currently designing an equality monitoring form for gathering appropriate information to support our requirement to monitor the impact and delivery of services to the Protected groups covered by the Equality Act 2010. The implementation of iPads that will enable Operational Crews to encourage occupants to complete the equality monitoring information (which can often be seen as sensitive) directly onto the iPad in confidence.

The Prevention Team (SHQ) are currently reviewing the leaflet ‘Reading This May Save Your Life’ as there are emerging issues and more up to date safety advice that needs to be included. Prior to approval, the Diversity and Consultation Manager and Corporate Communications will be consulted to ensure that the relevant messages are included in the correct format. The leaflets will also consider the most up-to-date information around what fire safety support is available for those who are Deaf, blind or have hearing or visual impairments.

Further work is planned in year 3 to develop communication guidance for staff to help them engage with people with different disabilities and learning difficulties.

The Prevention Team (SHQ) are represented on the iPad Working Group and the recent Web Design workshop to ensure that Browse Aloud is included corporately, but contributes and ensures that the key fire safety messages are

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included in the scheme.

Amber Highlights

6.5.1 To produce an Equality Monitoring report on the HFSC Equality Data currently held as at 31.03.14 and use as a benchmark.

Fire Service Direct (FSD) will run an equality monitoring report after 31.03.15 and benchmark with report from 31.03.14 to establish if the HFSC refresher training has had any impact and increased the amount of data collected by operational crews and advocates.

6.5.2 To then produce annual Equality Monitoring reports thereafter to monitor where improvements are being made across districts/stations

The Prevention Team (SHQ) will ensure that as part of the Home Safety Strategy 2015-2017 an annual equality monitoring report will be produced to highlight the preventative work that is carried out through the delivery of HFSC visits and the subsequent referrals to those identified as high risk and vulnerable.

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Assets and Environment			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
1	1	0	0

Green Highlights

8. Access Audit Actions

8.1 Deliver the recommendations outlined within the Access Audit ensuring that high priority risks are carried out first.

All the facilities for female fire fighters that were recommended in the Access Audit report have been completed, including additional facilities at TDA. Quotes have been requested for stations identified as requiring priority 1 Disability Access work. The work will commence during 2015/16 and reported on as part of the E and D action plan year 3 activities.

An access audit has been carried out on the SHQ refurbishments and JCC, the majority of the items identified will be picked up within the current refurbishment and some of the work has already been completed i.e. Tea points have had the worktops lowered and access to reception has been re-designed to allow disabled access.

Work has commenced on the preparation for the new conference facilities including the installation of a hearing loop which is fully integrated with the audio visual system. Progress is being made with the planning of hearing loops in the new SHQ reception and visitors building and car park access.

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Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
6	5	1	

Green Highlights

9. Recruitment Actions :

9.1 Set up a joint working group to review the current recruitment and assessment practices and benchmark to sector.

Project Board has been established to review firefighter recruitment incorporating positive action. The 16 new recruits start April 2015 and all aspects of the process are to be debriefed and a full report to the project board in the next 3-4 months. This will enable good practice to be gathered and benchmarks set for future firefighter recruitment.

9.1.2 Review how Fire-fighters job roles are assessed on recruitment or promotion in relation to Equality and Diversity values, skills and social empathy and emotional intelligence.

Job roles are based on nationally agreed competency frameworks and our service values. One of the requirements is to demonstrate commitment to diversity and equality.

9.2 Review, research and develop positive action practices that will support our Values & and help to achieve our Equality objectives.

A positive action team was set up April 2014. This has included reviewing all practices, researching new ideas and setting a strategy for the recruitment which has just been completed. A full debrief of positive action is booked for April 2015. Results will be provided to the FF project board.

9.1.3 Carry out an EIA in relation to the Recruitment Policy, Procedures and Selection methods for all recruitment exercises including any promotions (for all contract types) and address any particular areas for

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development.

This has been ongoing throughout the year in relation to recruitment and will be concluded over the next few months once debriefs and reviews of all stages of the firefighter recruitment process are completed. Review of promotions EIA will be considered in year 3.

12. Critical Incident Debriefings and support.

12.1 Set up appropriate review procedures/debriefs to gather feedback following critical incidents to assess how the application of the policy is supporting all equality groups of staff and provide update to SEG annually.

In relation to critical incidents, we are now in the position of having 4 officers who are qualified to train staff in mental health first aid, this includes the service Chaplain. There are assessment criteria monitored by the senior occupational health officer and this is reported on the OH portal pages to provide meaningful feedback on the process.

Amber Highlights :

11.0 Understanding implications of an Ageing workforce.

11.1 Ensuring that all decisions and policies are fully considering how best to support operational staff in relation to working longer in a physically demanding role e.g. Fitness and Wellbeing needs to be integrated into work routine and consider equality implications.

In consultation with Diversity and Consultation Manager, OH have undertaken a full EIA assessment of a new service policy and agreed further actions from this assessment.

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Operational Preparedness			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
3	1	2	
<u>Green Highlights</u>			
13. Learning and Assessment Actions :			
13.1 to Carry out a Full EIA on the Training delivery and Assessment processes to review how we cater for all learning styles and requirements and ensure packages have the necessary materials, equipment and time to cater for all learning needs			
<p>This will be completed with the assistance of the Diversity and Consultation Manager. The first TDA Equality and Diversity educational workshop was delivered to key staff in March 2015. The workshop is in 2 stages, stage one is to provide staff with the knowledge about the Equality Act 2010, the responsibilities we have as an organisation to ensure that our training and development and assessment processes/procedures are fair and support staff with different requirements, especially those with a disability or long term health condition (e.g. diabetes) or cognitive/learning disability (e.g. dyslexia). Workshop 2 will focus on carrying out EIAs for key aspects of TDA work to establish if there is any requirement to make changes to the way we deliver training, development or assessment at the TDA.</p>			
<u>Amber Highlights :</u>			
13.2 Produce E and D assessment and training packages for operational personnel			
This action has been carried over to year 3 for completion.			

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Operational Response			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
3	1	2	
<u>Green Highlights</u>			
15.1 Design the 'After the Incident' Advice forms and put onto the MF&RS Website.			
After the Incident Forms have been approved by SMG and is being tested on the website .			
Amber Highlights:			
15.2 Use Browse Aloud to interpret document into the top 10 languages used across Merseyside.			
5.3 Liaise with Reprographics to have suitable packs produced in the top 10 languages which can be given to crews to be kept on appliances for future reference.			
The Service Instruction is currently being finalised before being placed into consultation. Once leaflets are live on the system, the Browse Aloud facility will be activated. Liaison with reprographics is ongoing and production costs are yet to be approved prior to approving production.			
NOTE: Operational Response staff have also been integral to the delivery of a number of key E and D activities such as positive action, welfare and fitness, flexible working panels. All impact positively on E and D			

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Legal , Governance and Democratic Services			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
5	3	2	
<u>Green Highlights :</u>			
<p>27. Capture equality profiles of all Members appointed to the Authority, and identify any reasonable adjustments required. All Fire Authority Members for 2014/15 have completed an E&D Questionnaire, with the aim of identifying if any Member requires any reasonable adjustments to be made in order to assist them in the undertaking of their role. The questionnaire will continue to be used for subsequent years, to capture the equality profile and any reasonable adjustments required, for any new Members joining the Authority; and for current Members to identify any changes in circumstances.</p> <p>27.2 Publish the outcomes annually as part of the Equality and Diversity annual report. The outcomes of the E&D Questionnaire for Members will be provided to the Diversity & Consultation Manager, for inclusion in the Equality and Diversity Annual Report</p>			

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ICT			
Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
3	2	1	

Green Highlights

28.1 Monitor ICT developments in conjunction with diversity manager. New technologies to be reviewed to establish benefits from DAG perspective.

The hearing loop solution has been installed in the Fire Control training room. The solution will be demonstrated to the Diversity and Consultation Manager once the supplied headsets become available. Design of the hearing loop solution for the new conference wing is underway and will be available in all public conference rooms. This will be signed off once the Fire Control demonstration has taken place. A meeting took place with supplier/ICT and Diversity Manager 4th March 2015 for them to explain the overall proposed Audio Visual solution including the hearing loop solution.

28.2 Digital Inclusion. Roll out of Public Wi Fi to Stations for Staff use and as a resource in Community Rooms. Provision of additional Community Internet at the Toxteth Hub.

An upgrade to the Wi-Fi hardware is required to enable guest/community Wi-Fi at stations. The hardware will be ordered in the new financial year and dates for the work will be scheduled as part of the ICT Continuous Service Improvement meeting. Appropriately secured guest Wi-Fi is now provided at the Toxteth Firefit Hub. There are no plans to roll a wider community service out at this time.

Amber Highlights

28.3 Promote online safety for children and Young people. To work closely with our Princes Trust, Beacon Teams and Cadets to ensure that online safety, including Cyber Bullying, is included as part of lesson plans.

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A session has been prepared and will be presented to the Princes Trust in take in May 2015.
Discussions are also underway to establish if this would be a suitable item to involve Fire Cadets in.

Strategy & Performance (including Corporate Communications and District Managers Actions)

Actions planned for Year 2	Green Year 2 actions Completed <u>or</u> Year 2/3 actions in progress and on target for completion during year 3	Amber Year 2 actions started but not completed	Red Year 2 actions not yet started
10	8	2	

Green Highlights

17. Review and develop further E and D education and awareness support for FF , Staff, Line Managers and Authority Members (Year 2 and 3 activity)

Whilst training and development on Equality and Diversity is tailored and delivered to meet specific needs on request, it is an area which will be a primary focus for the Diversity and Consultation Manager to develop further in Year 3. A desk top audit has commenced to review what currently is on offer through the Learn Pro and Alchemy on-line training systems and including other standard training programmes. The next stage is to look at the training and educational needs for all levels of the organisation and to contact external training providers to develop a corporate training programme for roll out in 2016/17.

19.1 E and D Annual reporting on achievements and best practice – celebrating our diversity at MFRA

The 2013/14 Annual report was delivered on time and to budget and has helped the organisation to demonstrate its achievements around the E and D agenda and action plan. Plans are in place to start developing the Annual Report for 2014/15 ready for release during late summer.

20.1 Staff Survey: Understand staff concerns and experiences more clearly so that MFRA can prioritise future developments and celebrate its positive achievements. Undertake a Staff Engagement survey

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Significant resources have been deployed in this action area over the last 2 quarters. The staff survey was conducted in July 2014, 68% of staff completed responded, the results were shared with staff in October 2014. A total of 35 meetings took place from 14th November 2014 to 29th January 2015 and a total of 135 staff (59 Uniformed, 44 Support and 1 Authority Member) attended the meetings which were entirely voluntarily. This represents a total of 9% of the total MFRS staff population. Care was taken to ensure that all staff could attend any meeting which covered different locations and times to help make them as accessible as possible for all. The meetings were well publicised and additional meetings were put in place where dates weren't convenient for different groups. Meetings were communicated through staff emails, message of the day and via Managers.

The staff that attended represented many of the different staff groups across the organisations including different roles, different levels and different working patterns.

SMG were also encouraged to meet with their teams to share the results of their survey for their own functions and with their managers to discuss any possible actions that may help to improve staff engagement.

The focus groups were run using appreciative enquiry methods. A standard set of questions were developed to help manage the meetings, encourage open feedback but more importantly, to provide solutions and ideas to help fix the big problems the survey raised.

SMG were briefed on the results and outcomes of the focus group meetings on the 31st March through a special SMG meeting. Following that meeting short terms commitments/actions will be developed and shared with staff in May and longer term complex cultural change issues will be considered at future SMG Meetings.

Work has commenced on developing a communication plan for the staff survey and will be implemented in Q1 of year 3.

21.2 Equality Framework - To prepare stakeholders in delivering equality and diversity activities to support our excellence peer assessment and self-assessment

A desk top review has been carried out against the revised CGLA Equality Framework (Nov 2104) to assess our position against the extended standard. The standard has changed significantly, the excellence level has been raised and is seen as harder to achieve. SEG has agreed to put the plans for an assessment back to 2016 to allow time to prepare and develop any areas that require improvement. A joint DAG and SEG workshop is planned for 22nd April to review the actions required to achieve "excellent" status. Functions will be setting their own priorities to work on during Year 3 in preparation for a Framework Peer Assessment.

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Amber Highlights

16.3 Develop a MFRA community Consultation and Engagement strategy (year 2 and 3 activity)

The Consultation and Engagement strategy is being developed to incorporate the communications strategy/policy. Work has commenced on an initial draft and will be finalised during the next quarter.

Part of this action was to develop further relationships with local community groups/networks and partners to enable us to consult on major changes to services and gather views and feedback from a diverse group of Merseyside communities. The Community Forum has been set up with a total 25 members registered. Two meetings have taken place in Dec 2014 and March 2015, both had a variety of groups attending including: Wirral's Older People's Parliament, RNIB, Merseyside Society for the Deaf, Black History Month/Global Diversity Partnership and Daisy UK. The meetings have been extremely useful and have covered a wide range of topics including: Fire Support Network services, HFSC information and referral procedures, consultation process and discussions around the district plans and IRMP. The group has worked well with district staff in identifying additional opportunities to work collaboratively on joint diversity initiatives.

A Separate Faith Forum is being developed in conjunction with our Chaplain, Bill Sanders. Meetings have taken place with the Merseyside Police Jewish Faith Chaplain and the Church and Society Director for the Liverpool Anglican church. The purpose of the Forum is to consult on matters around fire and faith to build further relationships with other faith leaders to enable MFRA to work collaboratively supporting communities. The Diversity and Consultation Manager is seeking an invitation to attend the next Merseyside Police Faith forum.

18.1 Disability Disclosure for staff at MFRA

Disability support guidance has been trialled with the Youth Engagement staff and will be evaluated and rolled out to all staff and managers during 2015/16. The reasonable adjustments guidance for managers and staff has also been tested over the last 12 months with Occupational health team's support. This is now in an evaluation phase and will be rolled out across the organisation during 2015/16.

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District Highlights

The following section provides members with an update on what District Prevention staff and fire crews have been doing to support diversity across their communities during Quarters 3 and 4 , the reports cover a variety of updates around some of the following areas :

- Targeted campaigns and activities with diverse groups (age, disabled and ethnicity etc.)
- Data sharing protocols
- Events and partnership
- Training and education
- Work with the 9 protected groups (covered by the Equality Act 2010)

Liverpool District Highlight

Community engagement: A number of Fire Safety talks have been delivered to various groups across Liverpool targeting the elderly in sheltered accommodation.

Campaigns: February was national cooking safely month. The Liverpool Prevention Team and operational crews completed a targeted campaign to target 2 accidental dwelling fire kitchen fire hotspots in Liverpool. During the campaign, 66 HFSC's were completed and 253 properties were leafleted.

March's national campaign was focused around smoke alarm testing with the clock change on 29th March being used as a prompt. During week beginning 23rd March, all Liverpool Fire Crews and Prevention staff handed out a bespoke leaflets reminding people to test their alarms. On Friday 27th March, Prevention Staff along with young people from the Toxteth Princes Trust Team where at Liverpool One promoting the campaign and handing out leaflets to remind people to test their alarms.

Following a fire fatality in the Toxteth area, a post fire campaign was completed utilising approximately 45 MFRS staff from Prevention Teams across Merseyside and Operational Fire Crews. Partner agencies also attended the campaign. 42 HFSC's were completed. To aid the campaign, Liverpool Council provided a volunteer translator

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from the Romanian community as a large number of the residents in the target area were Romanian. Bespoke Fire Safety Leaflets in Romanian were also issued.

Training: Prevention staff have attended a Learning Disability Seminar, Mental Health Awareness training and a workshop around working with Roma Families.

Partnership Working – GM Ryder and SM Kay attend regular meetings with the Merseyside Police Liverpool Command Team. Intelligence is shared at these meetings which enables a collaborative response to hotspot areas. In March, fire crews will be utilising status reports to target the Kensington area which has been highlighted as a crime hotspot.

SM Kay has met with Road Safety leads from the Council and Merseyside Police to explore the options to promote our **RTC reduction messages**.

Talks are underway with partner agencies in relation to setting up a homework club at the FireFit hub in conjunction with Liverpool Football club. Young people will attend the hub, complete any homework they may have, have a healthy snack, play football or assist with meal preparation and then have a healthy meal.

Sarah Wyatt has arranged for the following groups to utilise community rooms on Liverpool Fire Stations:

- Adult Mental Health In-house Services (City Centre), 3 days a week for 6 months
- Libyan Community– Weekends for 12 months
- Yemen Community– Weekends for 12 months

Young person engagement: Mike Buratti delivered a talk to the Toxteth Fire Cadets in relation to ASB in the Community and how it affects the Fire and Rescue Service.

At the start of this year, MFRS recruited 12 apprentices, 4 of which have joined the Liverpool Prevention Teams. We would like to welcome the 4 young people to the team who so far are progressing extremely well.

Safe Havens – All Liverpool Station are now Safe Havens. This project has been set up in conjunction with Liverpool City Council.

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Sefton District Update

Engagement around different Ages: All crews from across Sefton took part in Older Persons day on the 1st of October 2014, this year's activities proved to be a big success with in the region of 150 Home fire safety checks being completed which generated engagement with some occupancies of high risk, these cases were highlighted and have now been referred on to Sefton Prevention Advocates who will address these identified issues. It is great when we get staff from all different departments within MF&RS volunteering to assist in making the older, more vulnerable members of our community safer from fire.

An event at the Salvation Army in Southport targeted an over 60's weekly event and highlighted some additional groups which the crews from Southport Area can now continue to have regular contact with. Following trend analysis of RTC's within Sefton, two main factors were identified, Females in their 20's and over 65 senior road users. Through this intelligence areas within the district were targeted to provide awareness around safer driving. Sefton Prevention team targeted a number of vulnerable occupants who were subject to arson threats.

Crews from Bootle & Netherton attended Queen Elizabeth Court in Litherland to speak with the elderly residents living there. Prevention Advocates also visited a number of elderly occupiers that have been referred as being high risk and also spoke to members of the community about looking after the elderly members of our community at an event at Hugh Baird College.

Southport Community Fire Station held a pensioners Christmas dinner on Christmas day, assisted by local volunteers and an off duty firefighter who drove a service minibus to collect those attending. The pensioners enjoyed a hearty Christmas dinner, bingo, presents delivered by Santa and entertainment from a suitably aged DJ. This event was valuable as it provided company for others who otherwise may have been on their own.

Engagement With Disabled People:

A young woman was targeted by youths in the South Sefton area due to her disability, this led to her being bullied by local youths and being shot with a BB gun. Prevention Advocates visited the property, spoke with both mother and daughter and provided fire safety and fire survival advice and installed smoke alarms and a letter box lock. The referral was receive through our partnership work with Merseyside Police and has been treated as a Disability Hate Crime

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Engagement on Gender Reassignment: As part of the Hate Crime Awareness training delivered to all crews across Sefton, training focussed on individuals who have been targeted due to their gender reassignment and as a result have been a victim of Hate Crime.

Engagement around Marriage: Sefton District Team has been working with the council's public health department and Safeguarding board to identify and assist with trafficking and forced marriage across the district

Engagement on Pregnancy/Maternity: Katarzyna Pietruczuk, Sefton's Polish speaking Advocate has worked with Eastern European mothers at Parenting 2000 in Litherland and Southport to raise awareness of the services we can provide, including home safety advice and referrals to partner agencies for additional support where required.

Partnership events have been held in conjunction with Halfords, SMBC, MF&RS and Police at Halfords Aintree and Halfords Southport, whereby child car seat safety advice was given to parents by Sefton Council staff, home fire safety advice was given by the Prevention Team, Road safety advice was given by operational crews and Police community support officers to give general safety advice to members of the public.

Engagement on Ethnicity and Race: Sefton's district management team work closely with the Gypsy & Traveller Steering Group, which is a multi-agency group consisting of ourselves, police, housing standards, environmental health, education welfare etc. to assist with accommodating the gypsy and traveller groups to live harmoniously within the community of Sefton, and action any issues which may develop as well as creating introductions to developing the ability to deliver home safety advice to a hard to reach community

Operational crews and the district Prevention Team regularly attend our Gypsy and Traveller sites to show a presence and complete Environmental Impact Assessments

Over the past 12 months the district has witnessed a number of race related hate crime incidents

Redgate Primary in Formby has a number of children attending from the Gypsy and Traveller community, home and fire safety talks have been delivered to the students by the Prevention Team and Operational crews as another way of engaging and embedding our message within this hard to reach group
Home safety talks have also been given to parents from the Eastern European community on home fire safety at

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“International Day” in Cambridge Children’s centre, Bootle as well as parents at a “Sporty stay and play” event which was held at Bedford children’s centre to families from the Eastern European community

Engagement with different Genders : MFRS has seen the introduction of 2 schools involved with the Cadets scheme, Formby High has been chosen as one of the two schools who will participate in running a full year’s cadet curriculum, and as an additional positive the scheme has seen a full take up on its allocation and out of the 20 cadets signed up, 15 are female

The three groups below provide referrals to the district prevention team to provide home safety awareness, including F.A.C.E visits to their children, as well as the prevention team providing referrals into these groups, having identified females at risk through involvement at incidents involving domestic violence attended by the Arson Reduction Team.

Referrals to MF&RS for support to families who may be high risk and require interventions being implemented to keep the families safer from fire are being provided through Venus who provide a range of services for women and families in South Sefton. Swan is service run by women for women based in the Sefton area The Outreach Service is for women who cannot access Swan’s community based services due to severe anxiety, depression, agoraphobia or emotional issues. Swan support women to regain confidence and develop their individual potential, helping them integrate into their local communities. MF&RS works in conjunction with SWAN and receive referrals to help support their clients who require fire safety advice for themselves or their families

SWACA (Sefton Women and Children’s aid) - SWACA is a registered charity that provides specialist care and support to women and children in the Sefton community that have been affected by domestic abuse or violence. MF&RS support this group and will refer some of our high risk clients to them for additional support if we feel they need it. SWACA will sometimes refer to MF&RS if a client’s property requires target hardening or safety devices being installed to keep them safer from potential fire.

Socio Economic Disadvantage: As part of Electrical Safety Awareness week the Prevention team combined with Crosby’s operational crew to deliver electrical safety advice to a vulnerable group of adults at 21 Church Walk in Seaforth

The Trussell Trust Food bank Network has fed 346,992 people nationwide (2012-13), and has over 380 Food

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banks providing emergency food to people in crisis nationwide. Crews across Sefton as part of our prevention strategy within the are building up relationships with these resources and offer our assistance to help them provide the emergency support to those families in need, and at the same time provide the fire safety message to keep them safe in their home.

It is recognised that families who require this level of support will cut corners due to financial hardship, and that will include safety within their home, e.g the replacing of aging electrical equipment, boilers, cookers etc., which can present a substantial fire risk within the home if neglected, our participation will assist with engaging with families in need.

Community Engagement:

Throughout the year teams across the district have delivered the following themed awareness campaigns:

- UK Road Safety Week is: 'Be Safe Out There'
- Child Safety Week
- Safer Cooking Campaign
- Chimney Fire Safety Week
- Fire Door Safety Week
- Gas Safety Week
- UK Ageing Safely Week
- Tick Tock Test clock change weekends
- Electrical Safety Week
- Candle Safety Week
- Fire Safe at Christmas

Following a fatal incident in Southport, Sefton held a reassurance campaign in the Kensington Road area. Approximately 262 properties were leafleted and then visited. 84 HFSC's were completed at the initial campaign which resulted in 3 HFSC's generating high risk scores and having a high risk intervention completed by Sefton Advocates in the afternoon

Prevention staff assisted by the crews from all 4 stations continue to work with local partner agencies to identify and deliver required interventions to the more vulnerable occupants, whether this is due to Age, Mobility, and Ethnicity

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During October crews and the Prevention team completed activities around Older Persons Week and then turned their focus toward the run up to the Bonfire period, in addition community engagement will focused on advising occupants to test their smoke alarms when changing their clocks

Crews and prevention teams have delivered safety messages for Electrical Safety and Candle Safety as part of focussed activities

Hate Crime Activities :

Safe Havens have been introduced to all community fire stations in Sefton to help protect people when they are at their most vulnerable. Community fire stations across Sefton have been designated as Safe Havens for members of the public who feel threatened, intimidated or at risk.

The signs were launched at an unveiling at Bootle and Netherton Community Fire Station and have also been installed at Crosby, Formby and Southport community fire stations. The signs have been funded through the Sefton Safer Communities Partnership, which is made up of partners including Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS), Merseyside Police and Sefton Council.

Safe Havens are easily identified by an illuminated sign on the stations that can be seen at night. If firefighters are not at the station, people can still call for assistance for an emergency situation by using the yellow station phone located on the front of the buildings. They will also provide people with the opportunity to report hate crime or domestic violence should they feel that this action is appropriate.

The launch was attended Jane Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside and local councilors.

Road Safety Activities :

Following equality monitoring trend analysis of RTC's within Sefton, two main factors were identified, Females in their 20's and over 65 senior road users. Through this intelligence areas within the district were targeted to provide awareness around safer driving. Sefton Prevention team targeted a number of vulnerable occupants who were subject to arson threats.

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Knowsley District Update :

Safe Havens – All 3 stations in Knowsley have now been launched as official Safe Havens. Kirkby and Huyton were also utilised during the bonfire period on key nights by partners as a special Safe Haven for young people who required support/assistance.

EU Older person's day – On 1st October Knowsley participated in the older persons HFSC day which took place in Kirkby and Huyton. Over 200 properties were visited, with over 100 HFSCs being carried out at properties never visited before and where residents are aged over 65.

Bonfire period – Target hardening for hate crime and arson victims.

Advice and information was sought from partners to ensure we were meeting the needs of the protected group in our plans. Considerations were made for the protected groups throughout the planning process and during the bonfire period when we were undertaking any activities.

Healthy Homes – Knowsley Council's Healthy Homes Project was launched in September and since then they have referred over 200 people to MFRS who require our services. The Healthy Homes Project is delivered in partnership with MFRS (we assisted in their training, have supplied cobranded uniforms, a service vehicle and 1 Prevention Advocate 1 day a week), and as part of their service they conduct a short fire safety check which is then passed to MFRS if any needs have been identified.

Since the project started 3,200 homes have been visited as part of the initiative, which aims to improve both the living conditions and health and wellbeing of residents. This has resulted in over 1,100 referrals to other agencies including Care and Repair, Knowsley Works and Family and Community Education who can provide solutions and support. Many residents have been referred for energy efficiency advice, smoke alarms and housing issues.

Healthy Homes aims to tackle common issues that residents may be experiencing, such as living in damp conditions, having difficulty managing household bills or disabled residents struggling to get around without adaptations to their home. These can all have a significant impact on health, wellbeing and general happiness.

Electrical safety week – 10-14 Nov - All week crews targeted properties in Knowsley which had never had HFSCs before and had occupiers aged over 65. During their visits they emphasised the electrical safety messages and delivered electrical safety leaflets.

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Safer Knowsley Partnership Domestic Violence Campaign - Knowsley fire appliances have been branded with campaign posters and support line contact numbers in support of the campaign aimed to promote the reporting of domestic violence in Knowsley and give victims and perpetrators support to prevent it happening again.

The Prevention team were revisiting properties where occupants aged over 65, have had electrical fires in the past. On 13th November Huyton Fire Crew, Knowsley Prevention and the Knowsley Healthy Homes Team visited properties in the Stockbridge Village area, offering Home fire safety checks alongside Healthy Home advice and promoting the electrical safety messages. Stockbridge Village was chosen as a target area due to the number of accidental house fires that had occurred in the area in 2013-14 that were caused by Electrical items. Teaming up this information with the properties in the area that had never had HFSCs before and had occupants aged over 65, meant that the teams were targeting the most vulnerable and at risk groups of electrical fires. During the campaign they conducted 9 HFSCs, spoke to over 20 residents and delivered the Electrical safety messages to 50 homes.

Knowsley Prevention Staff attended Race equality and cultural competence training where they were trained on:

- Discrimination and Inequality
- Culture and its complexities
- Culture, Values and Beliefs: Understanding their impact on action, behaviour and practice
- Develop culturally sensitive, inclusive and accessible service.

Speak up services REVIEW – Knowsley’s main third party reporting service has been identified as needing updating. MFRS have been assisting with the review and will be part of the new service that will link into safe havens and many other areas where it didn’t previously – i.e. businesses.

Polish residents event – Villages Housing arranged an event for all Polish residents in the Knowsley area. Numerous services attended to offer advice and information to the residents through an interpreter. MFRS attended providing advice on HFSC, ASB, hate crime, safe havens and many other services.

Crucial crew – Knowsley prevention is supporting the “crucial crew” event at the end of March which will see around 20 primary schools attend a weeklong event where agencies/authorities etc. provide brief scenarios for the children on the services they provide or a particular aspect of their service which they think is important for children to know.

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Apprentices started in January, whole prevention department and Knowsley district have been supporting them and assisting with their training in prevention and other aspects of MFRS.

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St Helens District Update:

Community Engagement :

Neighbourhood Fire-Fighters have delivered Road Safety Presentations to approximately 838 young people in the period October to December. A further 15 Road Safety Presentations to Cowley High School Pupils and St Helens College Students have been carried out since January 2015.

During the third quarter of 2014-15 prevention staff and crews have conducted 2 reassurance campaigns following the 2 fatalities in the district, 1 in Eccleston and 1 in Newton. They visited approximately 241 properties and conducted 93 Home fire safety checks in Eccleston and 180 properties visited and conducted 93 home fire safety checks in Newton.

A further reassurance campaign was carried out in February following a fatality in Eccleston's area, we completed 66 Home Fire Safety Checks and leafleted 123 properties.

We continue to work with the travelling community within the district, conducting site visits with the Traveller Liaison Officer in St Helens Council.

The referral process is continuing to be reviewed with AGE UK.

The team continue to be involved in The Staying Home Project with Helena, this should hopefully see all occupiers over 85 within the district being referred in to MFRS for a high risk home fire safety check.

We will shortly be commencing the school grassland presentations, further updates will be provided for future reports.

We have attended St Helens Town Hall for the Winter Warmth Campaign alongside partner agencies such as Age UK, St Helens Council Home Improvement Team, Health Improvement Team, St Helens Senior Voice, Scottish power and St Helens Citizen Advice Bureau.

We will shortly be attending our first meeting with the Social Inclusion Group and are now on the mailing list to be informed of anything that falls within their remit.

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We have commenced our school presentations for the Springwatch Campaign. Figures will be available for the for the amount of young people for the next meeting.

We have also made a child safeguarding referral to the Children's Safeguarding Team following concerns on a visit.

Training to support Diverse Communities :

Prevention Staff and Operational Crews have received child sexual exploitation training on the district, Mental Health First Aid Training, Cadet Training and Counter Terrorism Training.

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Wirral District Update:

Christmas-themed Birkenhead Community Fire Station Open Day (Socio-Economic / Age)

Birkenhead Community Fire Station opened its doors to the community on Saturday 13th December. The open day, organised in partnership with Stronger Communities Initiative Assembly saw a wide variety of activities on offer such as arts and crafts activities and Santa's grotto. Members of the public were able to watch operational demonstrations using the crash car, as well as observe a rescue from the search and rescue team. Road safety and fire safety messages were emphasised throughout the event and the police were on hand to offer crime prevention advice.

All attendees were offered a warm and healthy lunch, and children visited Santa were provided with a gift. Over 400 people attended throughout the day, which was completed free to the public as donations were provided by local businesses. Great feedback was received from the public about the day in what is a very deprived area of Wirral, and an area which has historically seen high levels of ASB.

Cheshire & Wirral Partnership (CWP) NHS Trust Project (disability)

Q3 Saw the information sharing protocol implemented with CWP and MFRS. CWP securely transferred details of their clients to MFRS, which include those accessing services due to drug/alcohol issues, mental health problems, and dementia and learning difficulties. The addresses were then sifted, and arranged into separate status reports organised by station area. Every fire crew on Wirral received a presentation explaining the project, the client group that the data refers (which is anonymised). A number of 'campaign days' were organised in December where crews worked through the status report lists to offer HFSC's to properties on the list. More information will be provided in January and an evaluation of the project will be completed towards the end of March.

Winter Warm Campaign (Age / Disability)

MFRS Wirral launched our Winter Warm Campaign this year in partnership with Wirral Council and other key partners. The project has seen MFRS personnel advise members of the public about safe heating methods and provide equipment for vulnerable and elderly people to replace dangerous heating equipment.

MFRS has received £3000 in funding towards this work from Wirral West and Wallasey Constituency committees to support the campaign, as well as Winter Warmth packs provided by Healthy Homes Team. The project will see MFRS working closely with key partners including WBC Constituency Teams, Healthy Homes Team, Age UK Wirral, Magenta Living, Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group and Energy Projects Plus helping older people to

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stay safe and warm in their houses, reducing social isolation and protecting the most vulnerable as temperatures drop.

Vulnerable or elderly occupants who are identified as utilising dangerous or inadequate forms of heating will be able to exchange this for an oil filled radiator from MFRS as part of the scheme as well as receive Winter Warmth packs containing fleece blankets, flasks and advice about staying safe and warm. MFRS will provide a Home Fire Safety Check and other safety equipment as required such as mattress toppers. Occupants would then be referred for help from partner agencies to deal with longer term issues e.g. for help managing fuel bills, adaptations or other ongoing support.

The project is helping to promote closer working relationships and better identification of vulnerable/socially isolated people and getting them linked in with services, as well as addressing fire safety issues around wintertime such as unsafe forms of portable heaters, or inappropriate use.

Bonfire Plan (social-economic / age)

Wirral's bonfire plan was a success which had significant impact on our communities, particular those in deprived areas. Additionally, work was undertaken with Wirral Older People's Parliament to get across safety messages and reassurance to older members of the community who may be experiencing isolation at this time of year. In the run-up to Bonfire Night around 700 people attended a free "Port of Horrors" event in the car park of Spaceport in Wirral. The event included fire safety advice, trampoline fitness sessions, Fire Support Network Cage Football, free dental health checks, Hoylake Hand to Voice signing choir and information on other services for families. The Army provided scouse and refreshments for those who attended. An art competition was also run for school children before the event to create a fire safety poster, and the Mayor of Wirral Councillor Steve Foulkes announced the winners of the competition who later attended a firefighter experience day as a prize.

Other Community engagement work :-

- Older People's Day Information Event in partnership with Wirral Older People's Parliament (1st Oct)
- Large Scale 2 day Road Safety Event, where over 540 16-18 year old students from 3 secondary schools received education and demonstrations around road safety (20th-21st Nov)
- Attendance at Accessibility Conference (10th Oct)
- Series of Fire Safety talks with disability group at Wirral Met College
- Joint working with Vulnerable Women's Group Tomorrow's Women Wirral for Alcohol Awareness Event.
- Preparatory Work and meetings for 'Dementia Friendly Community' Project in Heswall in 2015.

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Education and Training :

All Fire Crews in Wirral will this year have received 'Choosing Health' training delivered by Wirral Community NHS Trust.

A home fire safety awareness training session was delivered to Age UK volunteers working in the community with people with dementia in February.

A presentation was given to the Wirral Dementia Forum for people with dementia, their carers and agencies working with this group, raising awareness about fire safety in the home and generating high risk referrals.

Community Events :

A number of community events were attending this quarter engaging with minority communities, including events to celebrate both the Bangladeshi and Chinese New Year's. A number of referrals were received for Home Fire Safety checks for members of these communities who had previously not accessed our services.

MFRS also be attended an 'Over 60's Fair' organised by Wirral West MP, Esther McVey on 27th March which last year was attending by around 700 older people.