

Practice Exemplar – Wheatley Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework

Name and Timescales

The Wheatley Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework is an ongoing partnership initiative. 2018 was the first full year that the Framework was in place.

Summary

This partnership between the Wheatley Group (WG) and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) provides the overarching fire safety approach taken by WG for its residential properties. The Framework provides guidance and strategic direction to bespoke approaches tailored for specific groups, i.e. multi-storey flats, which underpin it. It promotes fire safety and prevent fires in the homes of WG customers. Pioneering fire safety products and services are provided to those who are considered as high risk following an SFRS home fire safety visit. This operates within west of Scotland, mainly Glasgow.

Need for Initiative

We know that hundreds of preventable fire deaths and injuries occur in homes throughout the UK. As Scotland's leading housing, care and property management group, we want to ensure our homes are maintained to be as safe as possible.

WG recognises the need to build upon already existing good practice and further enhance fire safety. The development of the Framework is one example of how we strive to do this. Development and implementation of the Framework strengthens and builds upon existing fire safety and prevention measures that are already embedded within WG through our unique, long-standing partnership with SFRS. The introduction of a Group-wide approach to managing and mitigating the risks from fire provides us with a strong platform for sharing learning and best practice across all parts of Wheatley.

Aims and Objectives

The key aim of our Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework is for our homes and communities to be safer. We want to be recognised as sector leaders in the prevention of death and injury from fire incidents within WG homes. The Framework also contributes towards the strategic drivers Customer Service Excellence and Asset Growth & Diversifying Our Income, sitting within 'Investing in our Futures', Wheatley group's wide five year strategy.

Delivery

The development and implementation of the Framework highlights our ambition to define and set new standards for excellence around fire prevention and mitigation. We have integrated our approach to fire prevention and set it out against four 'Pillars', areas of focus, within the framework:

- **Preventing and Protecting:** We know the best way to prevent fires is to identify and change risky behaviours to ensure a robust and proactive approach to repairs, maintenance and investment in homes.
- **People and Communities:** We are committed to co-creating local solutions with local people. We design and deliver services that are informed by a real understanding of the factors that put our tenants, customers and properties at risk of fires.
- **Partnerships and Collaboration:** We know we cannot work in isolation if we are to prevent and mitigate the risk of fire. We are committed to working collaboratively with partner organisations to keep our communities safe.
- **Pioneering Products and Services:** We always strive to drive innovation in all we do and that includes our approach to fire safety. Our approach to identifying and investing in new, innovative products and services is informed by analysing data and intelligence available to us.

Successes and Challenges

Successes:

- Our communications team have been promoting SFRS Home Fire Safety Visits across our digital and print communication channels which has led to the delivery of over 2,000 visits to our customers this year. This has resulted in over 600 high risk customers being identified and referred onto the Fire Safety Team. Our Fire Safety Officers are in the process of visiting these customers, providing additional support including fire retardant bedding, misting machines and letter guards. As a result of the Framework, the number of Fire Safety Officers within the team has increased from 2 to 4, which allows it to be imbedded and utilised throughout the organisation more effectively.

Challenges:

- The development of a GDPR compliant information sharing protocol with SFRS was a challenge. However this has been worked on and overcome, with an information sharing protocol being finalised with the legal team.

Impact/Change

Data is collected to understand and demonstrate the impact the Framework is making. The 6 month period from 1 April – 30 November 2018 is shown below, which shows considerable improvements.

- Fires reduced from: 287 to 242 (-16%)
- False alarms reduced from: 353 to 285 (-19%)
- Home fire safety visits increase from: 999 to 1959 (+95%)

This data continues to be collated to ensure that the Framework is relevant and making a positive impact on fire safety throughout the WG.

Reflections

2018 was the first full year of the roll out and delivery of the Framework. The creation of our Performance Management Framework and regular meetings with partners has been instrumental in delivering this approach. WG's approach to fire prevention is recognised as best practice by senior SFRS colleagues – and this Framework further enhances that.

Additional Information

The Wheatley Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework is available upon request.

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