



FIRE & HEALTH - WORKING TOGETHER

REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES -
PROMOTING SAFER, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES



“An Excellent Authority”

VISION, STRATEGY AND BEACON STATUS

WHY FIRE AND HEALTH?

"I envisage that sometime in the future, every firefighter in Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service will become a role model and ambassador for health in the community."

This statement made by the Chief Fire Officer Tony McGuirk, outlines Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's commitment to the public health agenda.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has made community safety and reducing health inequalities its key business priorities. Our role has changed from "making communities safer from fire" to "promoting safer, healthier communities".

Fire deaths and injuries have a strong link with social deprivation and health inequalities. It was for this reason that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service extended its partnership working with the health sector.



"An Excellent Authority"

WHAT'S IN YOUR GUIDE?

VISION AND STRATEGY

BEACON STATUS

HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKS

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

ADVOCATES

HEALTH TRAINERS

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

FIRE SUPPORT NETWORK

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND STATION INITIATIVES

CONTACT INFORMATION

VISION & STRATEGY



"An Excellent Authority"

VISION AND STRATEGY

Our Vision: *“Making Merseyside a safer, stronger, healthier community.”*

Our Mission: To work in partnership to provide an excellent, affordable service to all the diverse communities of Merseyside that will:

Reduce Risk Throughout the community by protective community safety services.

Respond Quickly to emergencies with skilful staff who reflect all the diverse communities we serve.

Restore Maintain and improve the quality of life in our communities.



Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has a mature and ambitious vision for reducing health inequalities, backed by strategic leadership at the highest level, innovative approaches and systems, and the commitment of an enthusiastic and flexible workforce.

The FREE Home Fire Safety Checks, Advocate Scheme, and Youth Engagement Programmes, coupled with the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service strong brand, ensure that these initiatives reach communities that might otherwise be excluded from local public health services. Merseyside’s system for data collection and capture also opens exciting opportunities for effective data sharing and social marketing creates excellent partnership working.



“An Excellent Authority”

BEACON STATUS



Beacon
Authority

Gold Sponsor



2008 - 2009

Reducing Health Inequalities

Merseyside Fire
Rescue Authority



"An Excellent Authority"

BEACON STATUS

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has won its "THIRD" Beacon Award, this time for Reducing Health Inequalities. It is the only Fire Service in the country to win three Beacon Awards. It has previously been awarded Beacon Status for Services for Older People and Children at Risk – early intervention.

Merseyside is one of only six authorities across the UK to receive this Beacon Status for its role in improving public health. The award means Fire Services and other agencies from all over the world concerned with the health agenda can learn more about Merseyside's successful health programmes.

Merseyside was one of just nine who were shortlisted for the theme Reducing Health Inequalities. Those shortlisted have been put through a stringent assessment that has included site visits and presentations.

Chief Fire Officer Tony McGuirk said: "We are absolutely delighted by this news. We have clearly demonstrated that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is committed to a wider role in improving public health. Our health improvement work is wide ranging and innovative, so much that several of our projects have already been taken up by Fire Services across the country and beyond. This award will help us to share our excellent practices even further and is a credit to everyone who has been involved, both within the Fire Service and our many partners in the community."



Chief Fire Officer
Tony McGuirk.

More than 40 Advocates work within their local communities, targeting vulnerable people who are likely to die in a fire. Factors include old age, mobility, sensory difficulties, communication barriers, lifestyle – drugs and alcohol and lack of support from agencies. The Advocates use their wide variety of skills, knowledge and partnership working to help these vulnerable groups reduce the likelihood of a fire.



Liverpool Primary Care Trust has trained six Advocates to become Personal Health Trainers to complement their current roles.

They will help to identify and encourage people through behaviour change to rethink their unhealthy lifestyles for a healthier way of living whilst using the support from various agencies.

Merseyside was commended for its commitment to health and well-being by promoting healthy living schemes.

They include:

- A Community Fire Station with a market garden where local youngsters have grown their own fruit and vegetables.

- Outreach gyms at the Community Fire Stations for various agencies to use to help promote rehabilitation after ill health and health promotion.

Liverpool Primary Care Trust and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation are working to address smoking prevalence throughout Merseyside. Smoking cessation groups meet at community fire stations where they are offered support and advice to give up smoking.

Fire Service staff have access to physiotherapy, free fresh fruit and use of the outreach gyms.



Station Manager Rob Taylor from the Community Fire Safety Team said: "The timing of this award could not be better.

During 2008 we have welcomed Fire Services from all over the world to Merseyside for the World Firefighters Games. This has been another opportunity to promote to others how and why a modern Fire & Rescue Service can have a wider impact on people's lives."



"An Excellent Authority"

In the 18 months leading up to the Games, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service offered the community a chance to improve their health and lifestyle through sport initiatives such as promoting tandem bikes for those who are visually impaired, free skateboarding and BMX taster sessions, and firefighters delivering 1,600 hours of rugby union coaching and sessions."



Joan Brookman from Liverpool Primary Care Trust said: "This may seem like an unusual partnership but the link between fire deaths and health inequalities are inextricably linked. We are really pleased to be working closely with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. This partnership working is helping to build overall public health capacity and add flexibility to the services that we provide, making them more tailored and accessible to our population."



Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has also received an additional award for "demonstrating a holistic approach, excellence and innovation across a wide range of services". Merseyside was one of only four Local Authorities, that applied for Beacon Status, to receive this additional excellence accolade.



HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKS



"An Excellent Authority"

HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKS

In 1999, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service reviewed the way in which it was carrying out the business of saving the lives of people on Merseyside. We can cite numerous examples of families escaping safely from fire in their home because a smoke alarm fitted by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service alerted them or a neighbour to react.

Firefighters from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service will provide every household on Merseyside with a FREE Home Fire Safety Check.

This service includes:

- Installing a FREE 10 year smoke alarm
- Fire safety advice including a fire escape plan

To date, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has visited over 400,000 households. This service can be arranged at the householder's convenience (including weekends and evenings) and can be delivered in English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Somali or British Sign Language.

A woman has contacted Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service to say a big thank you to Blue Watch Low Hill for their valuable advice during a Home Fire Safety Check. Janet Brown was visited by the crew on June 14th 2008, a first time visit, and had smoke alarms fitted.

Watch Manager Joe Cunliffe said: "The Home Fire Safety Check was generated by calling on properties not visited by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service as identified on the Goldmine database.

"Less than 24 hours later firefighters were called back to the property in Tuebrook after a fire broke out. The fire was accidental and involved the immersion cupboard in the bedroom. The smoke alarms operated and the occupants managed to get out of the property. One female was taken to hospital suffering from slight smoke inhalation."

Mrs Brown contacted Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Control (MACC) following the fire to say thank you. She said that without the information given to her during the Home Fire Safety Check she would have not known what to do. She felt Watch Manager Joe Cunliffe in fact saved her life.



FREE smoke alarms being fitted by two firefighters whilst carrying out a Home Fire Safety Check.



"An Excellent Authority"



COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY



"An Excellent Authority"

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

Following an initial Home Fire Safety Check from firefighters, if the household is deemed to be a “high risk” or if the crews feel they can offer a further service from the Community Fire Safety Team, the household (with their permission) will be referred to the Community Fire Safety Team.

The Community Fire Safety Team consists of a Core Team for each of the five districts of Merseyside - Liverpool, St Helens, Knowsley, Wirral and Sefton, which has partnerships and contacts with other agencies e.g. Social Services, Local Councils, Primary Care Trusts and Housing Associations etc.

The main role of the Community Fire Safety Team is to reduce the risk of fire in the home. Often the risk of fire is one issue in a complex web of problems that an individual may be suffering. In these cases Community Fire Safety Teams are able to convene multi-agency case conferences where the specific needs and problems of the individual are discussed and resolutions sought, not always necessary fire-related but health-related.

The department has a toolbox to reduce the risk of fire which consists of:

- Flame retardant throws
- Flame retardant bedding packs
- Deep fat fryers
- Red smoke alarm covers for the partially sighted
- Smoke Xscapes (prone to arson related attacks).

Other activities carried out by the Community Fire Safety Team:

- Talks to schools, nurseries
- Fire Safety In the home talks to community groups
- Attend events, chip pan demonstrations, generate Home Fire Safety Checks and deliver fire safety advice, now linked into health.



Community Fire Safety Team attending an event in Pensby, Wirral.



“An Excellent Authority”

ADVOCATES



“An Excellent Authority”

ADVOCATES

After our Home Fire Safety Check initiative had been running for a suitable time and the data from fatal fires investigations studied, it became obvious that those most vulnerable in society were still falling victim to fires in their homes. It is a sad fact that fire discriminates.

Research has shown that those most likely to be at risk from fire, whether accidental or deliberate, are in the lower socio-economic groups. The risk from fire is 16 times higher amongst children in the lower socio-economic group compared to children in the highest. Arson rates are 30 times higher in poorer areas with a 15 times increased chance of death compared to affluent areas.

As an organisation, the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service was failing to gain access to this section of the wider community. It was therefore decided to employ non-uniformed personnel with specific knowledge in those sections of the community who were most likely to experience a fire.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service now has an extensive Advocacy Service, which includes specialists to assist the Community Fire Safety Department

OLDER PERSONS ADVOCATE

This member of the team has a client group of older people and is based within their district of Merseyside.

Their main aim is to generate Home Fire Safety Check referrals for this client group. These can be generated from attending events, presentations and talks, flu clinics and through contact with other agencies, (Age Concern, Social Services, Energy Efficiency Advice Centre etc).

Due to their work with external partners, awareness of the Home Fire Safety Check service is promoted.

This is crucial to carry out joint partnership working so no individual slips through the net, in relation to fire or health-related problems. All avenues are addressed when carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks and signposting is crucial in some cases.



Maureen Justice, our Older Persons Advocate, giving fire safety advice to a couple in their home.

Signposting to The Department for Work and Pensions can sometimes lead to an increase in their pension or benefits, which allows for a warmer, safer and healthier lifestyle.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL AWARENESS DEPENDENCY ADVOCATE TEAM



This team consists of three advocates, with specialist knowledge and previous experience of working with substance misusers, alcoholics and people from underprivileged backgrounds. Their role is to identify potential in this community.



“An Excellent Authority”

Often people with issues surrounding substance misuse are reluctant to have any involvement with organisations.

The advocate's role is to engage and aim to work with this group to promote Home Fire Safety Checks and reduce the risk of accidental fires within the home as they lead such chaotic lifestyles.

Alcohol and drugs, whether prescribed or non-prescriptive, play a significant factor in causing 70% of fire deaths on Merseyside.

To achieve our aim of reducing this figure, the Drug and Alcohol Awareness Dependency Advocate Team has developed crucial partnership links with Drug and Alcohol Agencies, Hospitals and other organisations to help provide treatment and secure Home Fire Safety Checks.

This link has helped to reduce fires, encourage individuals to trust and take up the Home Fire Safety Checks and encourage individuals to look at their lifestyle and, in some cases, make changes to benefit their health and well-being.

DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING ADVOCATES

The deaf and hard of hearing community, and also older people who have had a change in their lives due to hearing loss, are looked after by the two Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocates.

Their main aim is to promote Home Fire Safety Checks within this community, to point out the dangers of fire and to discuss a plan of escape within their home. The advocates have a great understanding of the deaf community as they are part of this community themselves.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service provide Deaf Smoke Alarms for the deaf community in conjunction with many partner agencies, Deaf Society, Local Councils and Housing Associations are also linking into this idea and providing Deaf Smoke Alarms for their tenants.

These alarms consist of a vibrating pad and flashing light which is connected to a pager system to alert the person in the event of the activation of the smoke alarm.

Also part of their role is to provide signposting services to relevant agencies that could assist the individuals/families with their various needs.

Other agencies can provide other equipment and services for their homes in order to assist an individual to make their life easier and stress free.



Deaf Advocates with a Hard of Hearing Dog they met whilst carrying out their Home Fire Safety Check.

BILINGUAL ADVOCATES

The Bilingual Team delivers fire safety information within communities, whose fire language or culture is not English. The Bilingual Advocates have a great understanding of their particular communities, needs and their cultural issues.

The Bilingual Team looks after all the Home Fire Safety Checks, talks, and generates their referrals within their communities. They tackle any issues in relation to fire, cooking, smoking and alcohol issues. Due to cultural issues, if a female is required to carry out Home Fire Safety Checks, this can be arranged. The Bilingual Team work closely with other Advocates and departments and also external agencies to help break

down cultural barriers not only in relation to fire awareness but accessing all types of services.

One of the Bilingual Advocates is trained as a Personal Health Trainer and is able to signpost and help with all issues in relation to health and well-being.

"Smarter way to beat crime."

Nazma Ahmed, one of our Bilingual Team, received an award in recognition for her contribution to the Bangladeshi Community at the Channel S Awards 2008. Nazma was one of three individuals nominated for the Northern category and did very well indeed in winning the award.

Channel S television station serves the Bangladeshi Community and brings to the forefront the rich culture, beliefs and traditions of the British Bangladeshis.

The awards were held in Walthamstow, London, earlier this year.



Nazma with representatives from MF&RS and her husband at the awards ceremony.



"An Excellent Authority"

DISABILITY ADVOCATES

The Disability Advocates have contacts with various agencies that can assist and provide information and aids to those who have mobility difficulties. They have contacts in partnership agencies that can help provide funding (if necessary) for improvements with their home environment.

This can be ramps for ease of exit in case of an emergency, or key turners with someone who has dexterity problems and has problems opening a door.

By working closely with the partnership agencies, they have access to those vulnerable groups and individuals and can generate Home Fire Safety Checks by attending meetings and events. The Advocates work closely with other Advocates and departments and also offer their expertise and knowledge, as well as signposting to other agencies.

Two of our Disability Advocates are trained as Personal Health Trainers.

PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN THEIR HOMES

Since April, 2005 we have carried out 38 full installations. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has also provided 38 Portable Stand Alone Units out in the community at 37 addresses (one address has two units). We have eight

units in stores with seven addresses identified for these units.

Over 1,600 beneficiaries to date have benefited from the "Protecting The Most Vulnerable in Their Homes" Team.

The project was awarded first prize in the Strictly Regeneration Awards 2007 in the Excellent in Innovation category.

The project was also shortlisted in this year's APSE Awards in September 2008 in the Best Community Initiative category.

All the systems and portable units are situated in Liverpool with the exception of two (one full in Knowsley and one portable on the Wirral) the Innovation Fund was used to purchase this equipment.

SPRINKLER STORY

Our very first portable unit was given to a lady who had a host of medical problems and was a careless smoker (evidence of burn marks everywhere). She had a private carer who was bullying her and taking her money at the least pretence. She was forcing her to buy cheap cigarettes from abroad and often sent her children to the flat to borrow money.

She only had one socket in her kitchen which she used for her electric kettle and her washing machine. The plug was extremely tight and she used to use a spoon to lever it out when she needed to plug in the washing machine.

cylinders in the bedroom as she used a calor heater in the living room.

We were able to contact Social Services who in turn involved the Police. Eventually the private carer disappeared and she was given proper carers from a reputable company. We arranged for the Housing Association to fit extra double sockets in her kitchen. We also arranged for the company to call and collect all the empty butane cylinders.

She was extremely grateful for the intervention by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, and her health and well-being improved for a short while. Sadly she passed away recently due to cancer.



Sprinkler Advocate Ron Kelly installing one of the sprinkler systems.

REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER ADVOCATE

Working with asylum seekers and refugees on Merseyside, the advocates help them to become safer from fire. However, as a result of performing this role, this group experience wider benefits, including that of reducing health inequalities.

Asylum seekers and refugees are a very disadvantaged group in society and a number of issues contribute to increasing their health problems. Many asylum seekers for example, experience mental health problems including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Asylum seekers are often marginalised in society and this exacerbates their health problems. For example, difficulties in getting access to healthcare due to dispersal, poverty, isolation, lack of knowledge of their environment, racism and a fear of the authorities. These factors are also additional barriers to choosing healthy lifestyles.

This role improves fire safety awareness and allows Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service to carry out Home Fire Safety Checks. This includes providing fire safety advice and a risk assessment which may overlap with health issues (e.g. cooking methods, smoking, drinking, medication, disability issues, elderly and issues with children).



"An Excellent Authority"

Signposting to other agencies or referring people to appropriate services plays an important role.

The main benefit is overcoming isolation, increasing integration, and alleviating effects of health and mental health problems through access to services and social interaction.



Jenny Welsh, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Advocate, at an event.

CARER TRAINER ADVOCATE

The role of this Advocate is to deliver home fire safety awareness to anyone who is visiting a person's home, particularly if they are vulnerable. This group could include GPs, Midwives, Community Nurses, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Health Visitors, and Community Health Mental Health Nurses, Domiciliary Care Workers, Volunteer Workers, Home Helps, Meals on Wheels, Befrienders, Housing Officers, Housing Scheme Managers, Home Shoppers, Education Services Officers and Mobile Hairdressers.

They support or care for a wide range of service users and include factors such as:

- Age
- Physical Disability
- Mental Health
- Ex-offenders
- Single Parents
- Drug and Alcohol Dependency
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments

The training is FREE and takes two hours to complete. The Carer Training Advocate will either visit the organisation's premises or will conduct training at a Community Fire Station.

The training is certificated and the content has been mapped across to the City & Guilds Health & Social Care NVQ Levels 2 and 3. This information is printed on the reverse of the certificate.

STUDENT ADVOCATE

The Student Advocate's role involves working with the student community making them aware of the dangers of fire and trying to encourage them to make their homes a safer place to live in by changing lifestyle choices which can adversely affect health and trigger serious fire risk.

There are large numbers of students living across Merseyside who are known to have a very busy lifestyle. Moving to university is the first move away from home for a lot of students. Their lifestyle factors can often involve a lot of drinking, partying and unhealthy eating and their homes can also become untidy and cluttered due to shared living.

The role involves improving students' awareness of fire safety by giving presentations within universities and carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks: this includes providing fire safety advice and a plan of escape. Very often the Home Fire Safety Check will reveal health issues (e.g. cooking methods, smoking, drinking, medication and disability issues). The students will be made aware of all the help that is available from partnership agencies.

Partners include:

- Each of the universities
- Citysafe
- Liverpool Student Homes
- Cosmopolitan Housing
- Merseyside Police
- Accommodation Managers
- Student Services
- Safety Officers
- Student Unions
- Primary Care Trusts
- Fag Ends
- Drink Aware

The aims of working with students directly are to improve their knowledge of fire safety awareness within the student community, awareness of the costs and dangers involved in malicious calls, improved living conditions, and awareness of services that are available to them in relation to health and lifestyle issues.

SAFER COMMUNITIES ADVOCATE

This Advocate deals with the underlying issues surrounding social deprivation in the poorest areas of Merseyside. The Advocate is working with the housing stock holders to improve the quality of housing in areas of high deprivation.



"An Excellent Authority"

Working with Local Councils, our Antisocial Behaviour and Arson Reduction Advocates are helping to improve local areas by removing fly-tipping, rubbish, derelict cars, and improving facilities such as street lighting.

This will ultimately lead to communities becoming safer and stronger, and will hopefully recreate community spirit and promote the concept of communities looking after each other.

As the theme is health related, we have compiled five tables which detail the top 5 most deprived Super Output Areas in each of the five Merseyside districts.

The IMD index 2004 utilises the "Health Deprivation & Disabilities" title as a measuring tool. This index was updated in December 2007, therefore the figures opposite are now slightly dated (but not too much difference will be found to present date).

All Super Output Areas are identified by an ID number and within each table the parent wards and station area have been included. A road alongside each Super Output Area has been selected at random to give you an idea of its location.

A list of all streets within the relevant Super Output Area can be made available if required.

The three columns under "Health Ranking" indicate the order of ranking, (where 1 = the most deprived), under the health domain only.

The health ranking levels do not indicate an area's position in the main IMD index (2004).

KNOWSLEY				Health Ranking		
SOA / ID	Parent Ward	Sample Road in SOA	Station Area	District Ranking	Mersey Ranking	National Ranking
E01006447	Northwood	Kennlewood Avenue	E6	1	13	21
E01006436	Kirkby Central	Burnard Crescent	E6	2	40	74
E01006469	Page Moss	St Davids Road	E3	3	43	79
E01006448	Northwood	Gilsecroft Avenue	E6	4	44	80
E01006413	Stockbridge	Whitehorn Drive	?	5	51	93

SEFTON				Health Ranking		
SOA / ID	Parent Ward	Sample Road in SOA	Station Area	District Ranking	Mersey Ranking	National Ranking
E01007009	Linacre	Oriel Road	C1	1	60	115
E01007010	Linacre	Kings Road	C1	2	77	173
E01007007	Linacre	Strand Road	C1	3	97	233
E01006950	Cambridge	Albany Road	N7	4	172	541
E01007003	Linacre	Dryden street	N4	5	7003	547



"An Excellent Authority"

ST HELENS				Health Ranking		
SOA / ID	Parent Ward	Sample Road in SOA	Station Area	District Ranking	Mersey Ranking	National Ranking
E01006873	Town Centre	Park Road	E1	1	52	94
E01006909	Bold	Hammersley Avenue	E1	2	140	396
E01006830	Thatto Heath	Upland Road	E5	3	148	424
E01006816	Parr	Waring Avenue	E1	4	159	499
E01006871	Parr	McCormack Avenue	E1	5	207	680

WIRRAL				Health Ranking		
SOA / ID	Parent Ward	Sample Road in SOA	Station Area	District Ranking	Mersey Ranking	National Ranking
E01007128	Birkenhead & Tranmere	South Claughton Road	W1	1	4	7
E01007124	Bidston & St J	Fender Way	W4	2	6	9
E01007133	Bidston & St J	Duke Street	W1	3	8	15
E01007122	Bidston & St J	Laird Street	W1	4	9	16
E01007293	Rock Ferry	Brougham Avenue	W1	5	19	29

LIVERPOOL				Health Ranking		
SOA / ID	Parent Ward	Sample Road in SOA	Station Area	District Ranking	Mersey Ranking	National Ranking
E01006646	Everton	Conway Street	C4	1	1	2
E01006704	Kirkdale	Easby Road	C1	2	2	4
E01006778	Kirkdale	Marsh street	C1	3	3	6
E01006679	Princes Park	Beamont Street	S6	4	5	8
E01006515	Riverside	Upper Frederick Street	C2	5	7	13



“An Excellent Authority”

HEALTH TRAINERS

Merseyside
Fire

Rescue
Service



“An Excellent Authority”

HEALTH TRAINERS

The role of a Health Trainer originated from the 2004 Government White Paper, Choosing Health. The Government decided by 2006 to provide fully trained Health Trainers who would provide support to the deprived areas within their individual communities.

Liverpool Primary Care Trust was given the opportunity to pilot this scheme in 2006 and has so far trained 12 Health Trainers. They have joined forces with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, due to the link between fire, its unfortunate consequences and health. Last year Liverpool Primary Care Trust trained six Fire Service Advocates (High Risk, two Disability, Bilingual and two Drug & Alcohol Advocates) to become Personal Health Trainers.

The Advocates, whilst working within their communities, with established partnership links and carrying out high risk Home Fire Safety Checks have access to vulnerable groups/ individuals with various health, mobility and well-being issues.

Health Trainers provide one-to-one support for an individual who wishes to change their current lifestyle, whether it is to become more physically active, give up smoking or just to choose a healthier lifestyle.

The Health Trainer will be able to signpost individuals to organisations which can assist the individual to achieve their goal, and they will work alongside them to offer support to the individual.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Health Trainers work alongside Liverpool Primary Care Trust Health Trainers to provide the best service for an individual to make a change to their unhealthy lifestyle, and hopefully reducing the effects of having a fire within their home.

St Helens Primary Care Trust has trained six firefighters and two volunteer staff up to NVQ Level 2 signposting Health Trainer level and two Advocates to NVQ Level 3 Personal Health Trainers.



Health Trainer Advocates.



"An Excellent Authority"



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



"An Excellent Authority"

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has an extensive range of Youth Engagement activities promoting social inclusion and health promotion with young people.

Those involved learn about healthy eating, smoking risks, dangers of drugs and alcohol use, sexual health and unwanted pregnancy. Alongside this there are also partnerships with health organisations that are specifically designed to tackle health issues with young people.

Here, you'll find an outline of the Youth Engagement Activities; each activity is described with outcomes and the impact on health.



PROGRAMMES:

- FIRE FIT KIDS
- STREET CAGE SOCCER
- L.I.F.E. PROGRAMME
- SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER
- BEACON PROJECT
- DIG IT PROGRAMME
- STREET HEAT DRAWING THE LINE
- E.A.R.L.Y.
- PRINCES TRUST VOLUNTEERS
- LIVESAFE 60s + YOUTH INITIATIVE
- DRIVE 2 ARRIVE

FIRE FIT KIDS

Age Range

Years 1 – 6 Primary
Years 7 – 11 Secondary

Activity/Venue(s)

Fire Fit kids is a project that aims to create a fun environment where young people engage with local firefighters utilising physical training as the vehicle. During the classes, the young people are introduced to their local firefighters. This creates a positive environment and has the effect on the young people recognising and acknowledging their local firefighters and to deliver a valuable safety message into the community via the school pupils.

School assemblies are created to discuss all areas of fire safety and the Fire Service in general. This can lead to and create more Home Fire Safety Checks in the local community. This project is held in primary and secondary schools across Merseyside.

- Delivered by firefighters in schools
- 20-40 minute sessions
- Encourages responsibility
- Builds self-discipline and self-esteem
- Contributes to the health and well-being of the individual
- Allows for positive contribution to the community

Outcome/Impact on Health

- Over 3,500 children have taken part in Fire Fit Kids.
- It has now been embedded into eight schools in Merseyside.
- Statistically significant results in many key outcomes such as BMI and waist circumference.
- Improved cardiovascular fitness and time spent in sports.
- An impressive mean attendance rate of 86% was achieved.



Youngsters taking part in Fire Fit.



“An Excellent Authority”

FIRE FIT KIDS

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- Reduces time spent on sedentary behaviour such as watching television and spending time on the computer.
- Builds self-discipline and self-esteem.
- Encourages responsibility.
- Increases knowledge of healthy foods and nutrition.



Children eating fresh fruit.

MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition and... Do It!)

Fire Fit Kids and MEND are designed to expose teenagers to the benefits of regular exercise and the practice of healthy habits.

These programmes use firefighters to share their knowledge, enthusiasm and experience to improve the motivation, knowledge and fitness of the community's youth.



STREET CAGE SOCCER

Age Range
8 - 16 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and Street Cage Soccer have created a valuable partnership delivering soccer coaching to young people within the communities across Merseyside, utilising firefighters and service volunteers to assist Street Cage Soccer in all areas of the initiative. The new freestyle soccer craze has proven to be a massive hit with all young people in the region. The partnership has given the opportunity to break down many barriers and bring the young people together within their communities in a positive, structured physical activity.



Street Cage Soccer winner's presentation.

The focus of the project was to reduce antisocial behaviour and create enjoyable and meaningful activities for young people. The sessions are for three hours and do require physical exercise and all the health benefits related to playing and training for football. One of the unique aspects of the project is that the facilities are taken to the young people and they are made to feel safe in this environment. One of the major problems the city is facing is the reluctance of young people to move out of their own areas because they feel safe.

The scheme is currently being used in the following areas of Merseyside: Birchfield Kensington, Starfields Dingle, Somali Centre Lodge Lane, Caribbean Centre, Filton Road Huyton and Kensington Sports Centre.

Outcome/Impact on Health

- 1,000 young people engaged in Street Cage Soccer.
- 30% will demonstrate a reduced incidence of engaging in crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 30% of young people will have an increased understanding about physical health and relevance of diet, smoking, drug use and drinking.



"An Excellent Authority"

STREET CAGE SOCCER

- 25% will demonstrate a better understanding and acceptance of other cultures in their communities.
- Participants from asylum seeker to refugee communities display 25% more mental well-being about their future in Liverpool.
- 20 young people will enter formal training, further education or employment.
- 30 young people will become local volunteers.
- 25 community groups (a minimum of 12 from BME) will have demonstrable evidence of increased capacity and effectiveness after the project is complete.



Street Cage Soccer tournament.

L.I.F.E. AND BEACON PROGRAMME

Age Range

13 - 19 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

The programme is designed to engage with young people aged between 13 and 19. The course can be adapted to suit the needs of the client, from a single day up to a one week course.

It runs mainly during the holiday times to keep young people actively engaged. It is based in Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Youth Engagement establishment at Derby Road, Kirkdale, Training & Development Academy in Croxteth, and St Helens Fire Station or more locally to suit particular needs throughout the school year.

Depending on the duration of the course, participants will take part in a selection of activities to raise awareness of:

FIRE SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Hoses, fire extinguishers, ladders, breathing apparatus, search and rescue, smoke alarms, fire escape plans, hoax calls, arson, bonfire safety and first-aid.

TEAM BUILDING AND OUTDOOR PURSUITS

Numerous problem solving tasks, energisers and communication games.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Smoking, sexual health, health specialist for drug and alcohol issues.



Young people involved in a hose exercise.



"An Excellent Authority"

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- Improved sexual health
- Improved confidence, self-esteem and mental well-being
- Improvements in diet, nutrition and lifestyle choices
- Improvements in personal development and better prospects of gaining employment in the future
- Beacon and L.I.F.E. creates a health is wealth community by increasing economic growth and economic development as 80% of those who attend the courses go on to gain full-time employment, start training or go to college three months after completing their personal development course.

These programmes allow the users to be able to make their own decisions about choices which impact on their health and well-being. The Beacon and L.I.F.E. programme is tailored to meet the Department of Health's Choosing Health strategy which targets reducing obesity, increasing exercise, encouraging and supporting sensible drinking, improving sexual health and improving mental health.

These programmes are personalised with sensitivity and flexibility, and are crucial to the good health and well-being of the local community.

Examples of written feedback we have received from teachers and parents include:

"The young people who have been very shy and have low self-esteem; the feedback has increased their confidence"

"The young people with behavioural and attitude problems, the feedback confirms that often the course has motivated them, given them many skills that they couldn't achieve while at school."

SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER**Age Range**

11 - 16 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

Currently this project runs in a number of secondary schools across Merseyside in areas where antisocial behaviour affects the Fire Service, and the health and well-being of the surrounding community.

Individual firefighters work in these schools one day per week as part of the school community for 13 weeks.

This is an intensive programme designed to remove barriers between young people and the Fire Service.

Topics include:

- Personal, social, health and education lessons
- Physical fitness sessions
- Firefighting activities
- Retain students in mainstream education
- One to one mentoring
- Signposting pupils to further education and employment

Outcome/Impacts on Health

- Some of the activities include the Fire Fit Kids programme.
- Increase in exercise and awareness around health risks, healthy eating and meal design where young people and children have to put together a healthy meal for the firefighters.
- Talks on road safety, safe driving and passenger safety, safety in the home, being socially responsible and the risks of smoking and drinking.



Steve Atkinson, School Liaison Officer in Parklands High School.



"An Excellent Authority"

DIG IT

Age Range

13 - 19 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

During 2005 it was identified through intelligence reports from the Joint Agency Group meetings that there was a rising trend of antisocial behaviour related incidents in the South Wirral area. Myles Platt, Station Manager of Bromborough Fire Station, Andy McKeown, Neighbourhood Inspector, local councillors and outreach workers from young people's services met at the Fire Station to discuss the lack of diversionary activities for young people in the area.



Station Manager Myles Platt with some of the young people from the Dig It Programme.

An area of land to the rear of the fire station was identified along with a small building to be set up as market garden, sensory garden, and community room with a view to providing a site for outreach teams to involve young people in daytime and evening time activities centred around design, planning, cultivating, selling, cooking and preparing food and produce. A stall is reserved on the local farmers market for the selling of produce.

Funding was received by the local area forums, the Community Safety Team, local business, and the Ugli (Urban Green Land Initiatives) project. Local housing associations contributed expertise and funding. Local young people submitted a bid for funding themselves. Equipment and assistance have been provided by Merseyside Police, particularly in the provision of equipment seized from drug raids.

The project has culminated in the provision of a community room complete with a kitchen facility, a polytunnel, raised planting beds, a pond and sensory garden, and a lawned relaxation area.

Up to 50 young people from the South Wirral area use the project and are instrumental in the running of the site.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- Through reduction of antisocial behaviour-related incidents are measurable through intelligence analysis

- Creates ownership of the project and healthier lifestyle, by physically digging the gardens, learning to cook and use the produce that has been grown
- Connection to the local firefighters and station
- Positive activity for young people
- Teambuilding
- Encourages responsibility.

STREET HEAT DRAWING THE LINE

Age Range

Aimed at Key Stage 3 and 4 school children

Activity/Venue(s)

This interactive education pack is aimed at Key Stage 3 and 4 school children, and a multi media educational resource produced by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, in partnership with Liverpool Academy and Liverpool Culture Company to deter young people from engaging in anti-social fire, attacks on firefighters and hoax calls.

This innovative resource will provide teachers and Youth Offending Teams with a valuable resource that directly links to the PSHE curriculum.

The pack is designed to be delivered by:

School Fire Liaison Officers, School Teachers, Youth Engagement Teams, Youth Leaders, Police Officers, Anti-Social Behaviour Advocates, and School Arson Reduction Advocates.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- Contributes to the health and well-being of the individual
- Allows for positive contribution to the community
- Reducing antisocial behaviour
- Crime and Disorder Awareness
- Rebuilds self-worth and self-esteem.

Through discussion based learning, it encourages mental well-being, promoting self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence. It discourages fire-related antisocial behaviour by looking at the consequences of scenarios.



"An Excellent Authority"

E.A.R.L.Y. (Educating Alternative Reaching Local Youth)

Age Range

16 - 25 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

Key work with young people is benefiting from an innovative self-development accredited programme developed and run by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, although outside agencies will deliver the sessions.

The E.A.R.L.Y. programme is a 12 week full-time scheme and is a significant commitment for all those involved.



Young people taking part in team-building exercise at a Community Fire Station gym.

It is completely free and is open to anyone who is aged 16-25 years old and unemployed. It is delivered from Old Swan, Kirkdale and Speke Community Fire Stations. It is being funded by Working Neighbourhood Fund and the young people are referred through Connexions.

The course is supported by Liverpool Community College, Merseytravel and the Criminal Information Agency. Each team includes young people from a wide range of backgrounds, capabilities, social, ethnic and cultural mix.

The course comprises of:

- 60 hour outward bound residential course
- Nine weeks of development and learning activities
- Three week community project
- One week work placement
- Health specialist advice (drugs/alcohol/sexual health)
- CV, writing, interview techniques and careers advice
- Fundraising challenge
- Final presentation evening

Outcome/Impact on Health:

The participants can achieve the following qualification as a result of their participation in this programme:

- First Aid Certificate
- Food and Hygiene Certificate
- Youth Achievement Award (Bronze, Silver or Gold)
- Fire Awareness Certificate
- Teambuilding Certificate
- Wider Key Skills (problem-solving and improving own learning and performance)
- Drive 2 Arrive Certificate

Students also receive information to raise awareness about sexual health, drugs and alcohol, fire safety and Drive 2 Arrive.

PRINCE'S TRUST VOLUNTEERS

Age Range

16 - 25 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

The Trust works with young people marginalised through lack of qualifications, a criminal conviction or unemployment i.e. groups that the Fire Service often has great difficulty engaging with. A partnership approach with The Princes Trust is an effective way of reaching these key groups.

The programme involves team-building, capacity building, encouraging young people to make progress from unemployment into work, training or higher education.

To help us deliver our current programme more effectively, forge new partnerships, and respond effectively to change in legislation, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has centralised the delivery of all programmes through a young people's centre of excellence and dedicated Youth Engagement Team.



"An Excellent Authority"

The advantages are:

- A specialist team with the right skills and experience
- A strategic management approach to ensure our core objectives are achieved
- Ease of management and reducing the demand on Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Training and Development Academy staff and resources
- Development of partnership programmes to be delivered at local Community Fire Stations across Merseyside.

The project has also expanded our work with partners:

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service believes that opportunities for partnerships should be continually developed and should include the public, private and voluntary sectors.

With the development of these engagement and exclusion programmes, existing and potential partnerships will continue. They include Local Education Authorities, Crime and Disorder Partnerships, Youth Inclusion Programmes and Youth Offending Teams.

The voluntary sector has already shown that it can play an important role in developing a fire safety community. Existing partners include Merseyside Society for the Deaf, Fire Support Network,

Merseyside Branch of the British Red Cross, Age Concern and Merseyside Fire Museum.

The volunteers of Merseyside Fire Service Museum are assisting in the delivery of these programmes. The support from this group has contributed greatly to the positive outcomes that have been achieved on this programme.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service welcomes discussions with the private sector regarding sponsorship opportunities for these valuable projects. Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service currently delivers the team programme at Bootle/Netherton, Huyton and Toxteth Fire Stations, with potential to expand later on this year.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

The health topics that are covered as part of the programme are: sex education, HIV and Aids, drugs and alcohol, good nutrition, eating disorders and keeping fit with Everton FC and St Helens Rugby Club.

The aim of the programme is to assist as many team members as possible to achieve City and Guilds certification, which, currently has a 100% success rate. Over 80% go into employment, further education and training within three months of leaving the programme.

LIVESAFE 60s+ YOUTH INITIATIVE

Age Range

10 - 11 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

The Livesafe 60s+ Youth Initiative is a hugely successful project that is now in its sixth year in Merseyside. It is one of the leading Community Fire Safety Programmes in the country.

The initiative is aimed at working primarily with Year 6 pupils to increase the level of fire safety within their homes, and the homes of their grandparents, other relatives and family friends.

With the help of young people the initiative is helping to reduce the number of fire-related deaths and injuries within Merseyside communities.

The pupils are given a fire safety presentation about the importance of smoke alarms in the home and the dangers of smoking and cooking.

The initiative encourages pupils to identify relatives and family friends who would benefit from having a FREE smoke alarm and a FREE Home Fire Safety Check.

As a reward for their help, the young people are given prizes for the different number of referrals that they obtain. The top 14 young people for the quarter also get the opportunity to be involved with a treat day.

The treat day allows the young people to become junior firefighters for the day, working as a team, building their confidence, and having an energetic day of firefighting activities, including physical exercise. This initiative is run by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service staff and the presentations are given within the schools.



One of the young people learning first aid on their treat day.



"An Excellent Authority"

Outcome/Impact on Health:

This project has received national and international recognition for the way it enables young people to make a positive contribution to safety in their own communities.

The fire safety message is of utmost importance ...smoke alarms and PHSE for pupils helping others in their communities. Last financial year, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service interacted with more than 8,000 young people and generated 4,728 Home Fire Safety Check referrals.

Poulton Lancelyn Primary School

Lee Langton from the Livesafe Team, said: "This is the largest number of referrals received from one school. We were amazed by all their efforts that we wanted to return to the school to say thank you.

"A Certificate of Achievement was presented to the school and the three pupils with the highest number of referrals went to the Training & Development Academy for special fire experience."



Chief Fire Officer Tony McGuirk at the Treat Day Celebration.

DRIVE 2 ARRIVE

Age Range

14 - 25 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

The project is delivered both independently by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and as part of the wider partnership approach to reduce killed or seriously injured.

A hard-hitting road safety awareness programme that:

- Involves awareness of seat-belts, consequences of showing off, mobiles, drugs and drink driving
- Was developed with young people and a Road Safety Officer

It aims to reduce the number of young people killed or seriously injured as a result of Road Traffic Collisions (to meet Government targets for killed or seriously injured KSI reductions).

The project includes wider social issues including the use of alcohol and drugs among young people and personal health and safety and predominantly targets risk groups. This project is portable and can be delivered at any venue, i.e. youth provisions, schools, colleges, including Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

Killed or serious injuries on Merseyside have reduced significantly as part of a partnership approach. Excellent feedback has been received from all partners involved with project delivery.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is currently awaiting outcomes from an academic evaluation conducted by the University of Liverpool demonstrating the effectiveness of this intervention.



Learning how to drive safely.



"An Excellent Authority"

FIRE SUPPORT NETWORK



"An Excellent Authority"

FIRE SUPPORT NETWORK

Age Range

Open to all age groups

Activity/Venues(s)

Merseyside Fire Support Network (MFSN) is a registered charity which was set up with the help and support of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service in 2001. The work helped contribute to the Fire Service achieving Beacon status.

Merseyside Chief Fire Officer, Tony McGuirk, is Chairperson and Trustee of the charity.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's contribution to the services is through 250 local volunteers based in 26 local Community Fire Stations across Merseyside, working on various fire reduction initiatives including:

- Access funding for fire reduction work and community initiatives not available to Fire Authorities
- The use of volunteers with local knowledge and expertise
- Flexibility and ability to react and take up new initiatives at short notice
- Help in changing culture by joint working and programmes.



The charity is currently developing several projects in conjunction with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service around sport diversionary activities, working with the community and religious groups to bring different religious and ethnic groups together through sport to promote social inclusion and foster community cohesion, as well as utilising religious and community festivals.

They will recruit and train youths taking part in projects to become trained coaches. There is already a pool of MFSN Youth Volunteers supporting Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Youth Projects.

MFSN was the first voluntary group set up in the country to support a local Fire Authority and is undoubtedly the largest and most experienced in the UK, having supported several other Local Authorities in the past to set up similar organisations. It expects that, increasingly, to gain Beacon Authority Status, it will have to demonstrate its



Condemned electric blankets.

joint work and partnership with the Voluntary Sector. The charity also offers comprehensive consultancy service to Fire Authorities.

The "Winter Warm Campaign" was held solely in the Knowsley district and was sponsored by Knowsley Housing Trust, Asda and Knowsley POPIN Service in 2007, but this is expanding to cover Merseyside this autumn.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

30 electric blankets were tested with 20 replaced.

In previous campaigns a substantial amount of people were becoming increasingly concerned about the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. There are around 40 deaths a year from carbon monoxide and Merseyside Fire Support Network is actively seeking funding to distribute carbon monoxide detectors at each event.

The "Winter Warm Campaign" is always run during September and is probably one of the largest campaigns on Merseyside Fire Support Network's calendar of events. The campaign was essentially designed to substantially reduce the amount of fires caused by faulty electric blankets, whilst enabling the charity to make contact with some of the most vulnerable sectors of the community.



"An Excellent Authority"



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES



"An Excellent Authority"

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

The objective of Occupational Health Services is to promote and facilitate the maintenance of the highest possible standards of health and fitness, both physical and mental, for service employees.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Occupational Health Services Team:

- Develop, implement and manage Fire Service policies and strategies in the areas of occupational health, health promotion, Firefighters' Pension Scheme and LGPS medical discharges, reviews and appeals and sickness pay and conditions.

MEDICAL REVIEWS

The provision of medical services, with effect from June 1st 2006, has been provided by a Consultant Occupational Physician and Nurses who the Authority directly contract for their professional services.

The medical staff undertake the following reviews for the Fire Service:

Pre-employment medicals – performed for all employees

Health Screenings – primary health screenings are the three yearly health screening for operational staff. These are compulsory medicals for firefighters conducted by the Occupational Nursing Staff. Firefighters over the age of 40 are referred to see the Service Consultant Occupational Physician if clinically indicated. The Service offers voluntary tri-annual health checks for all staff.

Medical Reviews by Physician or Nurse.

Long-Term Sickness - attend medicals.

Other duties and rehabilitation duties - all personnel who are placed on other or rehabilitation duties by the Occupational Health Services are reviewed as considered clinically appropriate.

Clinical checks - are conducted when medical staff request that employees are further reviewed following a return to their usual role.

Early intervention reviews - cases of well-being related illness or due to an injury (on or off duty). Reviews shall enable access into Occupational Health or Well-being Services for the employee.

Management Referrals - are conducted by an individual's Line Manager over health, well-being or capacity of workload for the said individual.

LGV Licence Medical - employees who are LGV licence holders are required to attend a medical every five years once they reach 45.

Eyesight Screenings - the Service provides eyesight screenings for employees under the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations and for uniformed staff for fire ground aids to vision.

Health Advice Clinic Appointments

- are available to all staff on request for an assessment of blood pressure, cholesterol, eyesight, hearing, or their fitness.

In addition to the extensive range of health screenings and medical reviews that are performed, there are a range of services available to employees to assist them maintain or achieve health and to care for their well-being.

Physiotherapy Services

The Service shall make available to employees as an early intervention the provision of physiotherapy treatment, supplied by 10 practices that are geographically spread over 12 locations throughout the county area.

Early Intervention Diagnostic Assessment & Investigation

Where employees are experiencing undue delay in accessing NHS referrals for diagnostic tests, such as X-rays or MRI scans or for consultant specialist referrals, the Service provides an early intervention to Fairfield Independent Hospital, the preferred provider under this procedure.



"An Excellent Authority"

Medical Financial Assistance

Similarly, where employees are experiencing undue delay in the provision of treatment and/or surgery under the auspices of the NHS then the Service shall provide a loan of up to £5,000 as medical financial assistance to facilitate access to appropriate treatment services.

Total Fitness Rehabilitation Exercise Referrals

In partnership with Total Fitness, the Occupational Health Services can refer employees for a rehabilitation exercise referral programme at a Total Fitness Exercise, Hydrotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre.

Massage Rehabilitation Clinic

Employees may be referred for massage therapy at the Training & Development Academy, or to a Wirral site, to assist them in their rehabilitation to return to their usual role.

WELL-BEING SERVICES:

Counselling Services

Employees experiencing difficulties due to stress, anxiety, depression, or a similar 'mental health' problem can contact AXA ICAS (Independent Counselling and Advisory Services), the service Employee Assistance Programme provider, on 0800 072 7072. Staff may also be referred to the Service Counsellor via OH Services or the Specialist Nurse Advisors.

Specialist Nurse Advisors Health Assessments

The Service will facilitate an early intervention and the provision of assessments and support from Specialist Nurse Advisors, who are qualified Community Psychiatric Nurses, for employees who may be experiencing difficulties due to stress, anxiety, depression, or a similar well-being issues.

Early Intervention Occupational Health Reviews

The Service will undertake early intervention reviews with the Occupational Health Services for staff who, when booking unfit for work, indicate a well-being related illness. These reviews shall enable proactive intervention of the above services and shall provide the employee with early medical advice, including whether they should seek assistance from their General Practitioner if appropriate.

Health Promotion

In addition to these services, Occupational Health Services promote health and well-being through specific health initiatives, such as the campaign for the provision of influenza inoculations, and the publication of Occupational Health Bulletins, and contributions to the Service Hotline bulletins or quarterly Hot News magazine.

Smoking Cessation Support

The Service, through its Occupational Health Services and organisations such as Sefton HS Primary Care Trust and the Roy Castle Lung Foundation Fag Ends group support employees with smoking cessation initiatives.

Occupational Health Services supports the development of support services for employees who may require health assistance through service providers such the Benenden Healthcare Society.

Rehabilitation

Based on advice from the Occupational Health Services, the Service provides the facility for employees to return to work on a rehabilitative basis. Staff returning to work on a rehabilitative basis shall undertake useful work matched to the capability of the employee and the requirements of the Fire Service.

The work shall conform to any medical recommendations, from the Fire Service Occupational Health Service, concerning the types of activities that can or cannot be undertaken by the employee.

Rehabilitative returns are available for both operational and support staff.

Operational staff on a rehabilitative return to work shall perform such duties at their home station.

The Service shall accommodate rehabilitative operational staff on other duties based on the day working pattern, on the flexi-time day staffing system. The Service accommodates staff on day related other duties by offering working hours between 07:00 and 21:00 hours, on Monday to Sunday, if appropriate work is available to staff on a rehabilitative return to work.

Their attendance in terms of working days and/or hours may be adjusted based on medical advice from Occupational Health; Shift-related other duties will not be permitted.

MACC staff shall return to work on other duties to MACC Centre.

Support staff may return to work on rehabilitative other duties based on medical advice. These other duties may be in a different department, with the objective of an early return to their usual area of work. Based on medical advice employees may work reduced hours or days, or possibly both, on a phased basis with the objective of returning to their full contractual hours and duties.

In all cases the Fire Service will observe the advice provided by the Occupational Health Services.

Sickness Pay

Occupational Health Services manages the Fire Service sickness pay and conditions procedures. It monitors the expiry of entitlements to sickness pay at full and half rate pay, taking appropriate action in accordance with Service procedures.



"An Excellent Authority"

Attendance Incentive Award Scheme

Occupational Health Services are responsible for the management of the Attendance Incentive Scheme, involving the operation of the Monthly Prize draws and annual Attendance Incentive Awards Evening that culminates in the winning of a car.

Future areas to be looked into:

- Firefit conference
- Fire Rescue Service Men & Work Haynes Mini Manual
- Stress Policy
- Divergence of Medical Opinion Procedure
- Dyslexia Training
- Well-being DVD
- Life Scan
- Firefighters working in Water
- Mobile Medical Van Unit
- Health Checks
- Lifestyle Survey and Healthier Organisation
- Fitness Standard – Service PTI
- Diabetes Policy

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE – SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Search and Rescue Team operate a co-responder scheme with Mersey Regional Ambulance Service, the first Metropolitan Fire Service to carry out this life-saving initiative.

The team is specially trained to respond to Category A calls, such as cardiac arrests, within a predetermined radius of their base. This covers some of the most deprived areas found in the country where health inequality is prevalent.

The scheme began in 2004 and within a predetermined radius of their base. In the first three months alone, the team was called out on 179 occasions, recalled before arriving on the scene 149 times, and arriving at the scene before paramedics on 18 occasions, by anything up to 18 minutes.

Most of these incidents were for breathing difficulties or chest pains, three were relating to fitting, one to someone who had fell unconscious and one for abdominal pain.

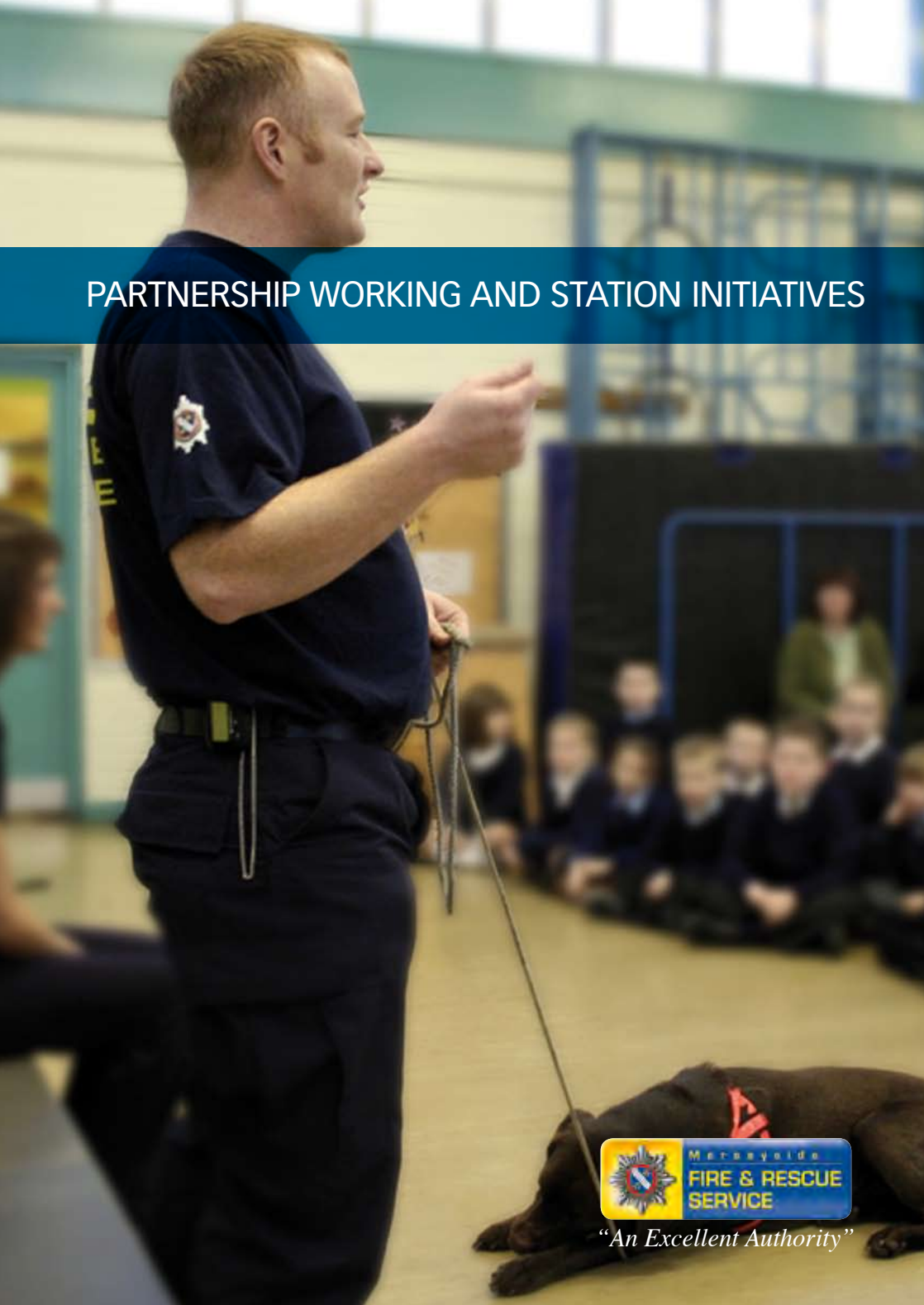
The initiative was independently evaluated by a team led by Professor John Ashton, who was at the time the North West Regional Director of Public Health commented:

“The treatment given on these occasions ranged from arresting haemorrhage, airway management, dressing wounds and providing oxygen therapy, clearly there have been many patients benefiting from this scheme.”



“An Excellent Authority”

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND STATION INITIATIVES



“An Excellent Authority”

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND STATION INITIATIVES

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has a comprehensive partnership strategy and strong track record of using partnerships to maximise our results, with partnerships at both regional and national level.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service was awarded the Healthy Communities category of the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) and Health Service Journal (HSJ) Sustainable Communities Awards 2007.

The above awards celebrate excellence in partnership working that meet the social, economic and environmental needs of a community, and improves social cohesion and inclusion for present and future generations.

This partnership working has broadened and improved the community engagement of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. There are now more than 120 formal partnership arrangements with other organisations and over 80 informal partnerships. The majority of these partnerships are to deal with community safety issues, and partnerships include Primary Care Trusts, Social Services, Housing Trust/Associations, Care Providers and Charities which help vulnerable people and to tackle the health inequalities gap.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service sits on the Primary Prevention Group for Liverpool Primary Care Trust. This group is brought together to impact on all areas of health which can help prevent disease. This work impacts on all areas aims to increase the life expectancy of the population of Liverpool. This group is working towards Local Area Agreement targets with issues surrounding health inequalities.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service brings time, resources, flexibility, a different perspective and in-depth knowledge of the communities it serves. Its involvement helps the Primary Care Trust to deliver a service which meets the needs of the public.

We are currently forging similar links with the other Primary Care Trusts in the same areas to ensure we can extend our already positive influence on the health and well-being of the public throughout Merseyside.

The method by which Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service interacts with the five districts on the 'Health and Well-being' blocks of the LSP varies. All District Managers sit strategically within the LSP with some on the Executive and others on Strategy & Commissioning Groups.

Last year, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service hosted a Cross Sectoral Health Intelligence Partnerships event at the Training & Development Academy. This helped to highlight its commitment to reducing health inequalities and to forge new and innovative links with the health communities. This event has allowed us to introduce new initiatives such as having health professionals based on Community Fire Stations on a permanent basis in areas where health inequalities are prevalent.

COMMUNITY ROOMS AND GYMS BASED ON ALL COMMUNITY FIRE STATIONS

The community rooms and gyms based on all 26 fire stations are open to the general public, organisations, groups and various activities. They include:

- Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation Smoking Cessation Classes (see separate sheet).
- Speech and therapy group classes.
- HealthWell-being and Healthy Eating Groups for Older People with Diabetes.
- Practice meetings for GP Surgeries. Management from surgeries discuss all matters in relation to health within their surgeries.
- Wirral Primary Care Trust ran health checks for taxi drivers at Birkenhead Fire Station, where blood pressure was taken, diet and nutrition advice was discussed and general overall health advice. This proved a great success.
- Wirral Primary Care Trust ran a multi cultural event at Birkenhead Fire Station on all health-related issues.



"An Excellent Authority"

Liverpool Primary Care Trust runs a regular Diabetes Group giving guidance on all aspects of diabetes from education to controlling diabetes. Any new members are asked to sign up for a Home Fire Safety Check.

Age Concern and Liverpool Primary Care Trust have arranged to have Health Trainers based at Speke Fire Station. This allows them to access one of the major deprived areas within South Liverpool and has a two-pronged advantage, Fire Service personnel can access them, as well as the general public.

Belle Vale Fire Station has received £25,000 from Active City and Liverpool City Council to provide Techno Gym equipment. Belle Vale does not have any leisure facilities within the area and Active City and Liverpool City Council, along with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, highlighted the potential of a gym being based within the community.

The gym is due to open shortly and will be open to various organisations and the public. Active City and Liverpool City Council are looking to continue to put funding towards updating the gyms on Fire Stations in the Liverpool area.

A retired community group referred by GPs for heart rehabilitation is using the gym at Speke Fire Station.

WIRRAL HEARTBEAT

Age Range

Open to anyone

Activity/Venue(s)

Wirral Heartbeat is a registered charity established in 1991 to assist the excellent work of Wirral Heart Support Centre (Wirral Primary Care Trust) in the rehabilitation of local people who have suffered heart attacks or who have heart-related health problems.

Thanks to the partnership between Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and Wirral Heartbeat in 1999, the first Outreach Gym in Heswall Community Fire Station was established. This venue has been followed by the opening of further gyms on all Wirral Community Fire Stations.

The Outreach Gyms enable patients who have completed their cardiac rehabilitation programme to continue exercising in a safe and friendly environment.

Derek Noble, Chairman of the Wirral Heartbeat Charity, said: "We are extremely grateful for the co-operation and assistance we have received at all levels from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. It is a much-needed facility and is the final piece of the puzzle as all the Fire Stations on Wirral now have an Outreach Gym."

Outcome/Impact on Health:

Currently the Outreach Gyms attracts between 1,500/1,600 visits per month.

The impact on health:

- Reducing obesity and improving diet and nutrition
- Participants increase their rates of exercise
- Participants eat a healthier diet
- Keeping weight under control
- Blood pressure is checked regularly
- Learn to deal with anger and stress which can trigger an attack



Heartbeat Gym member.

ROY CASTLE LUNG FOUNDATION - SMOKING CESSATION CLASSES ON STATIONS

Activity/Venue

Community Fire Stations within Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service are now being utilised for Smoking Cessation tutorials, this is particularly prevalent within the Knowsley District.

Knowsley has one of the highest mortality rates for lung cancer in the country. In 2004-2006, lung cancer mortality was 81% above national levels and in some parts of the borough it was nearly 200% higher.

More than 90% of lung cancer deaths are smoking related, either directly or indirectly.

In 2006, a survey was commissioned by Knowsley Primary Care Trust to measure smoking prevalence across Knowsley at electoral ward level, which provided robust estimates but it proved too costly to repeat regularly.

During discussions with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and Knowsley Primary Care Trust in June 2007, a possible alternative to estimating smoking prevalence was based on Home Fire Safety Checks that were carried out.



"An Excellent Authority"

Methodology

Data was obtained from the HFSCs at an electoral ward level of geography detailing the number of smokers in each household where a check had been undertaken during 2006. Based on this information, Knowsley's Public Health Intelligence Team calculated the number of smokers per 1,000 households. The results from this analysis were then compared with the smoking prevalence survey undertaken in Knowsley.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

In 2006, data from the HFSCs showed that there were 540.6 smokers per 1,000 households in Knowsley. Across the Borough there was a wide variation in the results ranging from 222.2 per 1,000 in Roby electoral ward and 763.0 per 1,000 in Northwood. The variations demonstrate an expected link to deprivation, i.e. more smokers in deprived areas than less deprived areas. Formally comparing the two data sources shows that there is a strong correlation between the smokers per household rate and the smoking prevalence survey.

Figure

In addition to this analysis, the same procedure was undertaken but took data from the Home Fire Safety Checks undertaken from January 2000 to May 2007.

Next Steps:

Decide on the time period to use. Probably use annual data, as the correlation was strong, so therefore the estimate is robust:

- Decide on whether to transform data (e.g. logarithmic scale) to improve accuracy of estimate and / or calculate a direct prevalence rather than a smoker per 1,000 households' rate
- Look at other estimators, not just linear regression
- Roll out across Merseyside
- Possible use of the HFSC data in the performance framework of the Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- Look at other possible collaborations with Public Health and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service via the HFSCs or other sources of data.

The utilisation of the HFSC data will be used as a robust means of measuring smoking prevalence levels in Knowsley, as well as other areas in Merseyside.

This piece of work also demonstrates the importance of partnership working and will lead to the targeting of interventions at an electoral ward level of geography as a result of the intelligence produced.

Outcomes from Smoking Cessation classes at Kirkby Community Fire Station:

- A total of 53 people have participated in Smoking Cessation classes to date
- 19 quit
- Two self reports
- 13 to follow-up
- 19 failed to quit.

This represents a success rate of 35% at present which will possibly grow once all outstanding data is collated. Though the initiative is still in its infancy, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is committed to progressing its work with the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation.



ROY CASTLE LUNG FOUNDATION – SMOKING

Janine Drew, Corporate Fundraising Manager revealed the following:

Activity

Each year in the UK, approximately 200 people die in house fires caused by smoking materials and 38,000 contract lung cancer. Working in partnership with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has the following aim to promote and improve health and community safety by providing advice together with education and encouragement for smokers to quit, and reducing the number of fire deaths and injuries related to smoking materials and the incidence of lung cancer.

We deliver tobacco awareness courses to children and young people across the North West covering issues such as growing tobacco and production of tobacco products, advertisement and promotion of tobacco products to children and young people, as well as health implications of tobacco smoking and benefits of stopping.

We provide on-going support for young people who make the positive decision to stop smoking.



“An Excellent Authority”

Outcome/Impact on Health:

Deliver assembly presentations (jointly branded with Kids against Tobacco Smoke KATS) to primary and secondary schools across Merseyside - this delivers both partners' messages, promotes KATS, Fag Ends and home fire risk checks.

We also work with the Arson Reduction Officers during their courses at school.

We deliver sessions on the Beacon Project Courses (part of the Youth Engagement Team programme) to raise awareness about tobacco issues.

How these programmes reduced Health Inequalities

Stopping young people from starting to smoke as well as supporting those who wish to stop this will have the biggest impact on lung cancer statistics in the future. However, in the meantime, it is vital that we continue all the aspects of the work.

Janine has been instrumental in the establishment of the partnership between the Foundation and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. Things are progressing well and both parties are working on future developments.

STARTRIGHT PROGRAMME**Age Range**

5 – 8 year olds

Activity/Venue(s)

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has been presented with a Sustainable Communities Award for its work in improving health. Merseyside's entry focused on the Startright Programme. The programme offers support in lifestyle and weight management for children aged 5 – 8. The programme runs from Birkenhead, Upton and West Kirby Community Fire Stations in partnership between the Fire Service and Wirral Primary Care Trust.

The programme is tailored for children at risk from health problems due to obesity. It is run from fire stations to help de-medicalise the condition and provides children with strong, positive role models – firefighters.

The 12 month programme includes one to one sessions with children and family members. The consultation process starts with a fire station visit. Further consultations are practical based looking at issues such as diet and exercise.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- Children who were not eating breakfast regularly, are now doing so
- Eight children increased their consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Seven children reduced the amount of TV to less than an hour a day
- All parents are now checking food labels for nutritional values
- Eight out of nine parents are using council leisure facilities compared with just one at the beginning of the programme
- Fourteen children took part in the programme
- Children are maintaining or reducing their weight.



Some of the children from the Startright Programme.

ALL FIRED UP

Age Range

Teenagers

Activity/Venue(s)

All Fired Up runs from Wallasey Community Fire Station where teenagers, referred by their GP, will have access to a personal trainer, modern gym facilities, dieticians and healthy cooking classes.

It is a partnership between the Confidential Adolescent Service (CAS) Wirral Primary Care Trust and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

The young people will meet at the fire station once a week over a 12-week period where they will be provided with information, advice and inspiration to get fit, eat well and increase energy.

Wirral Heartbeat provides the cardiovascular gym equipment and Wirral Healthwise encourages the youngsters to get hot in the kitchen and create culinary delights which can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Outcome/Impact on Health:

- A combined weight loss of over 50kg
- Children were taking part in more structured sporting activities
- Fruit and vegetable consumption increased
- Positive impact on self-esteem
- Children are maintaining or reducing their weight.

Doreen Phoenix, from St Georges Medical Centre, who is co-organiser of the project, said: "This is a much needed local service which has been well received by the local community. It has brought together a number of varied services all committed to helping young people in our area."

The scheme now has a waiting list of referrals. It is in this area of support, education and mentoring where Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service excels in reducing health inequalities.



"An Excellent Authority"

CONTACT INFORMATION



“An Excellent Authority”

CONTACT INFORMATION

Beacon Team Reducing Health Inequalities

Station Manager
Rob Taylor
0151 296 4616
07837 655 539

Watch Manager
Tony Harland
0151 296 4614
07967 371 696

Beacon Co-ordinator
Natalie Thomas
0151 296 4415
07837 655 597

Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement Manager
Emma Dodd
0151 296 4609
07811 167 955

Fire Support Network

Fire Support Network Manager
Linda Mitchell
0151 296 4452

Occupational Health Services

Occupational Health Manager
Paul Blanchard-Flett
0151 296 4000

All based at:

Merseyside Fire & Rescue
Service Headquarters
Bridle Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L30 4YD



"An Excellent Authority"



"An Excellent Authority"

Bridle Road
Bootle
Liverpool
Merseyside
L30 4YD
t: 0151 296 4000

www.merseyfire.gov.uk

