



DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE

# Partner Newsletter

## Update from our Prevention Team

Our newsletter contains information to help you and the people you work with, and support, to stay safe.

### Home Fire Safety

Safe & Well has been rebranded to Home Fire Safety. The service we provide hasn't changed – it just has a new name. We want to help the public, and our partners, to understand that our focus is on fire risks within the home, rather than a wellbeing advisory service. We will still signpost other services via SAIL. Please keep an eye out for new literature and branding as below:



### Home Fire Safety Referral Portal

Our Home Fire Safety portal is changing too! We need to gather more risk & vulnerability information to help us prioritise our visits. Our new online referral portal will be launched in the coming weeks. When making referrals using the portal, it is important for partners to answer as many risk questions as possible. This will make sure that the referral is risk scored accurately. The referral form also enables partners to include contact details. This is important as it helps us to contact you if we need additional information or support, or need to arrange joint visits.

### Changes to Partner Codes

We are also removing individual partner codes & replacing them with sector codes. All partners will be contacted soon with guidance on how to use the new referral portal and their new sector referral code. Many partners have been using incorrect codes, or have not known their code, and there has been additional administrative burden – there has also been a very long list to scroll through! The intention is to ensure that the referral process will be more straightforward for all partners and DWFRS staff.

### Dates for Your Diary

**National Road Safety Week:** 16–22 Nov **CO Awareness Week:** 17–23 Nov (Led by All Party Parliamentary Group Carbon Monoxide Group) **White Ribbon Day:** 25 Nov **Electrical Safety Month:** November

## Electric Scooters

E-bikes & scooters are becoming increasingly popular & with that comes a fire safety concern related to their charging, storage & disposal. Most are powered by lithium-ion batteries which can be charged in the home. On occasion, there is a risk that batteries can fail and lead to a rapidly developing fire. Lithium-ion battery fires are becoming more common so it's vital that the public understand what to look for when buying items such as e-bikes & mobility scooters. Storing or charging these devices on escape routes or in communal areas should be avoided. More information [here](#)

## Smoke Alarm Testing

The National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) recent monthly theme was smoke alarm testing. Here are some things to consider:

**Will you hear your smoke alarms beep if you're asleep?** Only if one's nearby!

Have at least one on every level of your home and test them regularly

**Smoke alarms will only save your life in the event of a fire if they are working.**

Make sure you test yours at least once a month and replace them every 10 years. As per manufacturer's instructions, ours last for 10 years.

**Take responsibility for your household's safety.** Fit working smoke alarms on every level of your home.

**Press to test your smoke alarms.**

It could just save your and your loved one's lives. #PressToTest #DWFRS



## Talks/Attendance at Events

We are keen to get out & about and spread our fire prevention messages. If you have an event where it would be beneficial for an HFS advisor or member of the prevention team to come and speak, please email our partnerships officer: [natalie.waters@dwfire.org.uk](mailto:natalie.waters@dwfire.org.uk)

## Emollients

The NFCC has developed an informative & impactful video regarding the risks of emollients. Anyone supporting or caring for those using emollients can view the video [here](#).

## Identifying a Cold Home

It might not always be obvious that occupiers are living in a cold home. It's important to have an open & honest conversation with any occupier to understand their situation. The following may be helpful indicators:

The primary heating source is not mains natural gas; broken or draughty doors & windows; more traditional heating methods e.g. storage heaters; or evidence of mould & condensation. There may also be an indication of financial issues and, if so, help is often available via utility suppliers, or referrals can be made to our **SAIL partnerships** – these include organisations that may be able to help. Where a cold home is identified during a Home Fire Safety visit, we can provide occupiers with a winter warmth pack & advice on how to stay warm. More information can be found [here](#).

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**Remember, in the event of a fire:  
Get out, Stay out and Call 999.**

# Guest Blog

## Helping Dorset Residents Save Energy, Keep Safe and Warm

Peter Bywater – Managing Director, Ridgewater Energy

Warmth, health, and energy efficiency shouldn't come at the cost of financial strain—yet rising fuel bills makes this a reality for many. In Dorset, Ridgewater Energy delivers funded schemes that combine expert advice, practical improvements, and lasting impact, helping residents cut bills and enjoy healthier, warmer homes.

### Free Support for Local Households

Several funded initiatives are available to vulnerable households at no cost, including:

- SGN Dorset Help for Warmth: FREE Keep warm items like heated throws, energy saving and water saving devices, condensation advice, boiler services, carbon monoxide alarms (list not exhaustive).
- LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership): FREE energy-saving devices, gas boilers and Kitchen appliances.
- Healthy Homes Dorset: FREE cavity wall & loft insulation and heating improvements.

### Who's Eligible?

These schemes support a wide range of residents, including those on low incomes, in receipt of an eligible benefit, or suffering poor health. Eligibility may also extend to families with children under 5, people over 65, pregnant women, and members of the armed forces (past or present). Funding is subject to availability and scheme criteria. This list is not exhaustive.

### Why It Matters

Helping reduce fuel poverty and lower energy bills, supports better health outcomes, as warmer homes can significantly reduce risks associated with cold-related illnesses and it also helps mitigate the stress households currently face.




Building a Net Zero Future

### Building a Net Zero Future

Ridgewater Energy also manages larger retrofit projects, including for heat pumps, solar panels, and high-efficiency electric heating – supporting Dorset's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050.

By engaging in community talks, collaborating with local organisations, and delivering practical resources, the team facilitates changes at a household level.

If you'd like us to attend an event, or if your clients could benefit from these schemes, please get in touch:

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