



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.

Prevention Partner Conference

Thank you to those who have already registered for our conference on either 15th or 16th September. Registration will close on 14th August 2026.

Emollients: New Evidence and the Science Behind the Risk

Chris Bell – Assistant District Commander Risk Reduction, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service and NFCC Lead for Emollient Skin Products and Dr Sarah Hall – De Montfort University

Understanding Fire Behaviour, Risk and Real-Life Lessons

Station Manager Dan Joslin – Training Centre, DWFRS

Home Fire Safety and Partnership Working

Sarah Moore – Home Fire Safety Manager, DWFRS

There are spaces available for Trowbridge but space for Dorchester is limited so please register asap before it is full. You can register at: <https://bit.ly/49CywKA>

Community Group Drop-in Sessions

Do you know of any community groups that offer drop-in sessions for people in your community? These can be lunch clubs, art groups, social activities like games or bingo or similar. If so, we'd love to come along and talk to the people who attend and help them to learn more about staying safer from fire. We are particularly focussing on groups that older men, who may live alone might attend, as data shows that this is a group that is particularly at risk. Get in touch with our Partnerships Officer if you run a group and would be interested in having us attend to chat to attendees.

Testing Smoke Alarms

Taking a moment out of the day to test a smoke alarm really can make a difference. Having a working smoke alarm gives the best chance of being alerted early if a fire starts. We fit free smoke alarms where needed during Home Fire Safety Visits. But it is important to remember to test them.

We encourage residents to set a reminder, or test alarms at the same time each week



when a regular task like putting the rubbish out needs to be done. Having partners share this message can really help – can you help spread the word to the people you work with and/or support? Alarms can be tested using household items such as wooden spoons or a broom handle.

It only takes 2 minutes to test an alarm and it could save a life.

Home Fire Safety Awareness Sessions

If you or your team would benefit from knowing more about Home Fire Safety, how to make referrals for Home Fire Safety Visits, or how we can work together to keep people safer from the risk of fire in their homes, please request a Home Fire Safety Awareness Session. We can tailor sessions to your needs and share information that might just help to keep someone you care for or support safer. Please email our [Partnerships Officer](#) to discuss. Also, look out for new content coming soon to our website about a range of topics that will support you with keeping people safer in their homes.

Protecting Resident's Gardens

As the hot weather continues, the Service has shared some information about protecting gardens from the risk of fire. The below are some tips and things to look out for that may be useful to share with those you work with or support:

- Prune trees so that the lowest branches are six to ten feet above the ground.
- Don't put cuttings over the fence onto any adjacent heathland – it will just add to the fire risk near your property.
- Remove dead vegetation and other items from under your decking and within ten feet of the property.
- Consider removing any plants that contain oils and resins etc, especially if they are close to your home; alternatively, plant them in moveable pots.
- Create separation between trees, bushes and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets etc.
- During hot, dry spells, ensure that your garden is maintained regularly where possible, and consider using 'grey' (waste) water for watering plants and lawns. That way, even if there are limits on the use of hosepipes etc, the ground can be kept damp.
- Consider the position of any garden sheds and their proximity to the property. Where possible, use a fire-retardant paint on fencing and wooden structures.

Some Tips Shared on our Social Media

Do you have enough smoke alarms?



Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home to make sure smoke can reach them quickly in a fire.

#FireKills

Stay cool in the kitchen.

Always keep an eye on your cooking, especially when you fry and grill.



#CookSafely

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

Could you help someone rebuild their life?

BCP Council is looking for volunteer mentors to support people moving on from homelessness through its Home Support Together programme.

Volunteer mentors provide friendly, one-to-one support to people who have recently moved into accommodation, helping them build confidence, develop independence and settle into their new home.

The role is flexible, requiring just a couple of hours each week, and full training, DBS checks and ongoing support are provided. No previous experience is necessary – just patience, compassion and a desire to help others thrive. By becoming a mentor, you can make a lasting difference to someone's journey while gaining valuable skills and helping strengthen your local community.

To find out more or register your interest, visit:

www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/communities/home-support-together



The Prevention Team is keen to work with partners across Dorset and Wiltshire to keep residents safer in their homes. If you have content you would like to share in this newsletter that can help with this goal, please contact our **Partnerships Officer**.

Guest Blog

No Home for Smoking

Michael McEwan, Public Health Practitioner – Tobacco Control

Public Health–Prevention and Communities, Swindon Borough Council

Smoking remains one of the leading causes of accidental fires in the home, with potentially devastating consequences for individuals, families & communities. Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue service attend many smoking-related fires each year, including in the Swindon area. Tragically, these incidents can result in significant property damage and loss of life. Additionally, Action on Smoking and Health estimates that these destructive blazes amount to £1.29 million of local public expenditure.

Whilst individuals that smoke should follow essential fire safety guidance such as avoiding smoking in bed, around home oxygen equipment, or near materials smeared with emollient creams, the best means of protecting yourself is to stop smoking. Every cigarette avoided prevents a source of ignition, and, quitting smoking enhances your health. Within weeks quitters report breathing easier and greater energy.

Vitally, you are three times more likely to successfully quit with support from your local stop smoking service (LSSS). They offer evidence-based treatments such as vapes, medications and nicotine replacement therapy, alongside encouraging behavioural support from trained professionals. Whether you live in Swindon or elsewhere, you can find your nearest LSSS by entering your postcode on the NHS Better Health website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-health-services/stop-smoking-support-services>. **Quit smoking today for a healthier you and a safer home environment.**