

Partnership Matters

Issue 2 Winter 2009

Welcome to this second edition of Partnership Matters, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service's quarterly newsletter for our partners.

Working with others is at the heart of everything we do, from emergency response to reducing the risks to our communities. These partnerships have enabled us to provide an effective and efficient service to the people of Wiltshire and Swindon, while often helping us to achieve innovative solutions to local issues.

We have much to report on this occasion, from our forthcoming IRMP consultation to a new partnership with the RSPCA to achieve our rural safety strategy.

I hope you find this newsletter helpful - if there is something you would like to know more about, or an area you would like us to focus on in future, our contact details can be found on P4.



Andy Goves
Chief Fire Officer

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Have your say on future of Service

How Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service will develop between now and 2015 is currently being looked at – and all partners are invited to have their say in the process.

The Service has set up a project delivery team to deliver its new Business Plan for 2010-2015, which will incorporate the new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

These documents underpin everything that the Service does, from identifying operational priorities to making sure the right resources are in the right place at the right time.

Ultimately, we have to identify the main risks facing our communities and, in writing our new Business Plan, we want to encourage the widest range of views and the most innovative ideas on how to reduce these risks.

During 2009, we will be carrying out a thorough consultation with our staff, elected members on the Fire Authority, our partners and other key stakeholders.

This whole project is an important step towards making strategies for the next five years and should be seen as a real and exciting opportunity for everyone to have their say in what will drive Wiltshire FRS forward in its aim of providing safer, stronger and more resilient communities within Wiltshire and Swindon.



If you would like to know more about the forthcoming consultation or to register a specific interest as a stakeholder, please contact the consultation hotline on 01380 732982 or e-mail consultation@wiltsfire.gov.uk

The newsletter of Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service

Your safety: our priority

Helping the vulnerable to protect their homes

Home fire safety checks are offered as a free service to those identified as most at risk in our community. We work with a range of partners to identify these people and generate referrals.

Target groups include:

- Single parent families
- Homes with lone pensioners
- Homes where an occupant has a long term limiting illness or a physical/mental impairment
- Homes with a high Indices of Multiple Deprivation score
- Homes where adult occupants have never worked
- Homes deemed a higher risk by virtue of their location and distance from the nearest fire station

We work closely with local authorities and groups including Age Concern, Primary Care Trusts, British Oxygen and other deliverers of care in the home. One key partnership is with parish councils, as they are often uniquely placed to identify at-risk people within their communities, while the Bobby Van Trust will carry out home fire safety checks on our behalf when they identify suitable premises.

We have also developed a common risk assessment/trigger form with Wiltshire County Council, Swindon Borough Council and the Primary Care Trusts to ensure that the target groups are identified as quickly as possible.

Where we receive requests for home fire safety checks that do not fall within the target groups, we will provide the homeowner with an information pack that will enable them to carry out a check for themselves.



Black Dog campaign launched

In December, the Safe Drive Stay Alive partnership launched the Black Dog road safety campaign – named after the mythical animal that is often blamed for causing road traffic collisions.

Safe Drive Stay Alive brings together the Fire & Rescue Service, the police, and local road safety campaigners.

The Black Dog campaign takes the crumpled remains of a car involved in a fatal road traffic collision to key locations, so that all drivers can see the potential consequences of driving thoughtlessly or carelessly.

It is now hoped to take the car to specific locations, such as schools, military bases, town centres and other roadside services.



Giving medical care in emergencies

Twelve of our retained fire stations currently provide a co-responding scheme, which allows them to attend Category A medical emergencies when a clinical response is some time away.

Firefighters are trained to provide a paramedic level of first aid until an ambulance arrives.

Co-responding stations are: Bradford on Avon, Cooper Avon, Cricklade, Ludgershall, Malmesbury, Melksham, Mere, Pewsey, Ramsbury, Tisbury, Warminster and Wootton Bassett

The scheme, which focuses on rural communities, is delivered in partnership with Great Western Ambulance Service.

In 2008, a total of 695 co-responding calls were attended by FRS personnel.

Firefighters get artificial horse for animal rescue training

A life-sized mannequin horse has been bought by Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service to help firefighters train in animal rescue. The 'horse', which is 15 hands high, has been funded by the Wiltshire branches of the RSPCA, who have contributed a total of £14,000 to support rural safety in the county.

Specialist animal rescue equipment is also being purchased, and over 60 firefighters from Stratton and Amesbury are being trained in animal rescue techniques.

Chief Fire Officer Andy Goves said that the RSPCA funding demonstrated the epitome of partnership working to improve services to the community. "We carried out a thorough review of our rural safety procedures last year, and it became clear that we needed to make a large-scale investment in more specialist equipment and training."

The Wiltshire Mid branch of the RSPCA contributed £11,000 towards the equipment, with a further £3,000 given in total by the North Wiltshire and South Wiltshire & District branches.

Wiltshire Mid treasurer Andy Sheppard said: "We had a presentation by Watch Manager Tom Brolan about the work carried out by the Fire & Rescue Service in helping the rural community, and we were very impressed by the obvious dedication and commitment to providing the very best service possible to the local community by creating a designated animal rescue unit."



CFO Andy Goves and Andy Sheppard of the RSPCA with the mannequin horse

"The three Wiltshire branches of the RSPCA are delighted to support the Fire & Rescue Service in this way, and we are confident that the equipment and training funded by our contribution will make all the difference to how animal rescues are carried out in future."

Preparing for the worst...

What would happen if a military aircraft crashed on a remote village, with debris falling onto homes and the nearby railway station?

This was the scenario played out at the old RAF Chilmark site last Autumn, when the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum tested its responses to a major emergency.

Over 400 first responders were involved in the exercise – for Wiltshire FRS, ten appliances and several support units were in attendance on the Friday.

Multi-agency Gold and Silver command teams were established at the tri-service control centre in Devizes and at the scene. To make the 'disaster' as realistic as possible, actors were made up as the dead and injured; 'wounded' people had to be rescued from crashed cars, collapsed buildings and a badly damaged train; and local newspaper and radio journalists turned up at the scene.

The Fire & Rescue Service is always looking at ways of applying its training in the most effective ways – 'on site' exercises have recently been held at Great Western Hospital in Swindon, Purton oil depot, Rudloe Manor at Corsham and Erlestoke Prison.

In each case, the Service worked with on-site personnel and other agencies to test a full range of emergency responses.



