



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Community Safety Committee

2022 FATAL FIRES REVIEW

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 24 March 2023

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the fatal fire incidents that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) attended in 2022.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of this report.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The fire fatalities discussed within this report are per calendar year, in which 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2022 is the focus.
- 1.2 Not all incidents discussed within this report have yet to be heard via His Majesty's Coroner's Inquest and as such it must be noted that the information contained within this report is based on what is available at the time of writing.
- 1.3 Within the 2022 calendar year, there has been an increase in fire fatalities within the county from the preceding four years (Table 1); seven incidents resulted in eleven fatalities within 2022.

Table 1

Calendar Year	Number of Fire Fatalities	Number of Incidents
2022	11	7
2021	7	7
2020	4*	3
2019	6	7
2018	10	7

*Note: an incident in 2019 resulted in a death in 2020, due to length of time spent in hospital receiving treatment

- 1.4 Whilst any fire fatality is a tragedy, it is an opportunity for NFRS to learn lessons and where necessary, adapt its approach to prevention and response activities.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Of the seven fatal incidents within 2022, one fatal fire incident occurred in January 2022, with two fatal incidents in March 2022, one in July 2022, one in November 2022 and two in December 2022. All fatalities were within domestic premises.
- 2.2 Of the seven fatal incidents within 2022, three incidents took place in the Ashfield District, three incidents took place in Nottingham City, and one in Broxtowe.
- 2.3 Of the eleven fire fatalities within 2022, five fatalities were adult females, four were adult males with the remainder being female infants. Five of the fire fatalities were over the age of 65; the youngest adult fatality was 28-years

old, with the oldest being 91-years. The infant children were aged one and three-years old.

- 2.4 Six of the seven incidents were determined as accidental causation (Table 2), with one being deliberate ignition and under Police investigation.

Table 2 Fatal Fire Causation

Incident	Causation
1	Candles/T-Lights
2	Electric Blanket
3	Candles/T-Lights
4	Electric Blanket
5	Deliberate Ignition – under Police investigation
6	Naked flame ignition, not considered deliberate
7	To be confirmed pending further enquiries

- 2.5 The CHARLIE-P fatal fire profile, NFRS person centric risk assessment, was reviewed by Nottingham Trent University in 2021 to ensure this still fits the demographic of fatal fire or serious fire injury incidents NFRS attend.

- 2.6 NFRS’s fatal fire (CHARLIE-P) profile was examined against the seven incidents within 2022. An outline of CHARLIE-P is below. Three of the eleven fatalities lived alone, and all had underlying medical conditions, mobility impairments or mental health issues. Four of the fatalities were known smokers, with at least two having care and support packages.

Prem ID (if known) Or Address:		Circle as appropriate for each CHARLIE P descriptor. Add the score and place total in bottom box. Please scan and send to Admin for addition to CFRMIS if not completed on tablet.				Date: _____ Service No: _____ Stn No: _____ Job No: _____
Score	Score	1	2	4	8	10
	Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
C	Care and support needs	No care or support needs	In receipt of comprehensive care and support package	Support in place but not deemed adequate	No support in place but concerns for health and welfare	No support in place but significant concerns for health and welfare
	Cooking	No concerns	Meal/drink preparation completed by others	Prepares own food and drink but concerns identified by others or regularly uses hot oil	Preparing own food and drink but repeated episodes regarding safety	Actual incident requiring support of others prior to safe and well visit
H	Hoarding	1-2 CIR	3 CIR	4-5 CIR	6-7 CIR	8+ CIR
A	Alcohol use	Not used	Signs of alcohol use no concerns	Signs of alcohol use some concerns	Signs of alcohol being used Query dependency?	Concerns alcohol use may impact upon fire safety, including escape
R	Reduced mobility	Independently mobile	Walks with support	Requires mobility aid or history of falls e.g. stick or frame	Unable to walk e.g. wheelchair user	Cared for in bed
L	Lives alone	Lives with others	Lives alone but fully independent	Lives alone with daily support	Lives alone with occasional visitors or social contact	Lives alone – no visitors or social contact
I	Inappropriate smoking	Non-smoker	Occasional smoker aware of safety	Regular smoker aware of safety	Occasional smoker unaware of safety	Regular smoker – unsafe smoking practices
E	Elderly	Under 40	41-50	51-64	65-79	80+
	Electrical	No concerns	Some risks identified but resolved during visit	Risks identified, client to resolve	Risks identified and client would need assistance to resolve	Poor understanding and dangerous use of electrics
P	Previous signs of fire	No signs	Evidence of historic burn marks	Evidence of recent near miss fires – would respond to alarm	Evidence of recent near miss fires – would not respond to alarm	Previous fire within the last 12 months
Score 1-20: LOW RISK		Score 21-34: MEDIUM RISK		Score 35+: HIGH RISK		TOTAL SCORE: _____

- 2.7 Of the seven fatal incidents, four addresses were known to NFRS regarding previous interactions, three addresses were not known to NFRS:
- Address 1 – ten fire incidents since 2017, all being related to cooking and classified as false alarms. In response to these, six safe and well visits were carried out between 2017 and the fatal incident, in which faulty smoke alarms were replaced by NFRS, discussions held around implementing a lifeline and raising concerns over care needs. Telecare implemented and in use, with an NFRS Occupational Therapist attending the address in June 2019 to provide specialist input.
 - Address 2 – a safe and well visit was conducted at the address in June 2022, after a referral from a social worker. This noted complex medical needs of the occupier and a referral was made to telecare for a monitored smoke alarm and fall sensor.
 - Address 3 – in March 2022, NFRS received a referral from the social worker of the occupier, due to concerns over smoking in bed. In April 2022, a safe and well visit was carried out in which flame retardant bedding, linen and throw was issued.
 - Address 4 – In October 2021, NFRS received a referral for the address from EMAS. In November 2021, a safe and well visit was carried out in which the smoke alarms present were found to be working and sufficient and a telecare system in place. A flame retardant throw was issued, with a second issued in January 2022, at the request of family.
- 2.8 NFRS continues to utilise the Serious Event Review Group, which is convened as soon as is reasonably practicable after a fatal fire has occurred, to manage the Service's response and to learn lessons to inform future working practices. The group's responsibilities include planning for immediate prevention activities to take place, deciding on the most appropriate internal and external communication messages, interrogating systems to ascertain any case history and if the individual(s) was known to NFRS, and ensuring that the welfare needs of attending crews have been met.
- 2.9 Community Reassurance and Engagement (CRaE) activities take place immediately following a fatal fire to take advantage of the local community's heightened awareness of fire safety. Where a serious but non-fatal incident takes place, CRaE activity will still be considered and are often completed.
- 2.10 Of the fatal incidents which took place in 2022, each received a CRaE and resulted in a total of 1,972 properties being contacted regarding fire prevention advice. Of these properties, 458 safe and well visits were conducted, with 324 smoke alarms fitted. A further 27 safe and well visits were scheduled for after the CRaE activity. 1,165 properties were left with safety leaflets due to no answer on knocking and 70 addresses accepted advice and testing of their current smoke alarm provision, with literature left regarding future safe and well visits.
- 2.11 An Occupational Therapist has been seconded to NFRS from 2020 and continues to work closely with Prevention and Fire Investigation Officers to

identify trends and areas for collaborative working between NFRS and the NHS. This is to prevent future fires, injuries and ultimately fatal incidents and improve a person's standard of living where required.

- 2.12 Efforts will continue to educate partner organisations of the CHARLIE-P profile and when appropriate, referrals should be made to the Service.
- 2.13 The Arson Reduction Investigation Team (ARIT), which incorporates Fire Investigation Officers, is under the leadership of Prevention, to enable closer working relationships and the appropriate sharing of knowledge, information and expertise to highlight vulnerable persons within Nottinghamshire.
- 2.14 ARIT and Prevention staff will continue to focus on safety messages via social media platforms, linked to fire investigations, where criminal and coroner limitations allow.
- 2.15 ARIT has embedded links with Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Trading Standards, concentrating on electrical appliances and white goods which cause fires, which is continued year upon year to highlight trends and feed information back to manufacturers to allow for recall notices to be issued as appropriate.
- 2.16 The NFRS website and Prevention pages are now more accessible to users with disabilities, thereby helping a wider audience access the NFRS safety messages and referral scheme.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implication arising from this report.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The Prevention Department will be liaising closely with the Service's Inclusion Manager and Equalities Officer to ensure that prevention messages are suitable for all communities.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a duty on NFRS in respect of the delivery of its services to communities.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

Collaboration activities between Safer Houses, Trading Standards and Nottinghamshire Police will continue to be upheld.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER