



Hammersmith & Fulham  
Safeguarding Adults Board

# Home fire safety

**Guidance for professionals:  
identifying risk & taking  
preventative action**

# Why does home fire safety matter?

## Fire fatalities in Hammersmith & Fulham

Since 2019, Hammersmith & Fulham has experienced four fatal fires which have come to the attention of the Hammersmith & Fulham Safeguarding Adults Board.

As a result, raising awareness of fire risks in the home and ways to mitigate them is a key priority for the SAB.

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**The SAB have developed a 7-minute briefing based on the learning from Safeguarding Adults Review into the death of 'Alison' - why not take this to your next team meeting for discussion?**



**Data from the London Fire Brigade indicates that the majority of people who die or are seriously injured in fires have common vulnerability and risk factors.**

A third of the people that die in fires every year are looked after by a carer, whether that is a family member, friend or a professional carer\*.

Older people, people with disabilities, people with visual and hearing impairments, and people who may be vulnerable for other reasons such as drug or alcohol use, all need careful consideration when it comes to fire safety.

This is because they may not be able to respond to a fire as quickly or have reduced ability to escape..

\*LFB Data.



# Identifying risk

**Any history of fire or near misses**



**Person smokes regularly**



**Use of portable heaters placed close to furniture or fabrics**



**Hoarding and clutter, which may obstruct exit routes**



**Unsafe use of candles, incense sticks or oil burners**



**E-scooters or e-bikes blocking exits or being left to charge overnight**



**Burn marks on carpets, furniture, or clothing**



**No working smoke alarms in property**



**Use of emollient or skin creams**



**Presence of specialist medical equipment**



**Leaving hob on when not cooking or leaving cooking unattended**



**Inappropriate use of BBQs, such as on balconies in high-rise buildings**

# Home Fire Safety Visits

The London Fire Brigade offer a service where they will visit a person at home to provide personalised advice about home fire safety.

Partners and agencies who work or engage with **very high risk** people should refer them immediately for a HFSV. **A new 24-hour phone number is available** for this purpose and agencies can call **0208 536 5955** to book an immediate HFSV. This will ensure that the concern will be addressed within four hours.

LFB would categorise an individual as being **very high risk** if they have **all of the following six characteristics**:

- ⚠ smoker
- ⚠ living alone
- ⚠ over 60 years old
- ⚠ in receipt of care (informal, formal or both)
- ⚠ no working smoke alarms in their home
- ⚠ user of mobility aids, or chair/bed bound

A very high risk individual can also be identified if they are at risk or are a victim of **arson**. In all other cases where it is felt that a HFSV is needed, partner agencies should call **0800 028 4428**, where they will be asked a series of triage questions to determine the risk, which will determine how quickly the person receives a HFSV from a local crew.

Not everyone will need a home visit, and those who fall into a lower risk category can use the online [Home Fire Safety Checker](#).

**Did you know that the LFB will attend an incident even where the fire has already been put out?** This can help ensure that all potential risks for future fires have been identified and referrals to partner agencies made where appropriate



# Sharing the risk

Multi-agency communication is key to managing the risks for any case, including those where the risk of fire has been identified.

Different practitioners often receive different pieces of information, and so sharing what we know allows us to see the full picture.

Coordinated multi-agency responses should seek to ensure timely information sharing around risk and development of shared risk management plans. These conversations will help in identifying ways forward via shared decision making and responsibility with a view to achieve improved outcomes for the adult at risk via their involvement and engagement in the process. Fire risk should also be addressed within a person's care plan, including things like using flame retardant bedding, appropriate management of emollient and skin creams, and how to care for people who smoke.



## Have you considered the persons capacity to make decisions about fire safety?

This includes considerations of fluctuating capacity and [executive function](#).



## Do you know how to refer to the High-Risk Panel?

The High-Risk Panel aims to support professionals in managing the most challenging and concerning cases.

Referrals can be made to the panel where all other avenues have been explored and there continues to be a significant concern about the well-being and safety of the adult.

To find out more about how to refer [visit the LBHF website](#).



**Remember:** all multi-agency meetings, decision making and escalation processes must be formally documented.

# Find out more:

The London Fire Brigade have lots of information available on their website.

[LFB Home Fire Safety Guide](#)

[LFB A Carers Guide to Home Fire Safety](#)

[LFB Getting the Right Fire Detection System](#)

[HF Safeguarding Adults Review - Alison](#)



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