



PREVENTION



Partner Newsletter

Summer 2025

Issue #03

Welcome to the third edition of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) Prevention Partners Newsletter.

This edition focuses on kitchen fire safety and outdoor safety in response to significant incidents the Service has attended since the last Newsletter.

We appreciate the support we receive from all our partners across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Kitchen Fire Safety:

Around 60% of fires in the home start in the kitchen.

To stay safe, it's crucial to install the right type of alarm. Smoke alarms are ideal for most rooms, but kitchens are different as they can be smoky and steamy rooms, therefore a heat alarm is recommended. Unlike smoke alarms, heat alarms detect rapid temperature changes, avoiding false alarms from cooking steam

or smoke, e.g. burnt toast. If there are concerns around how the occupier will react/self-evacuate, smoke alarms linked to telecare are recommended. Assistive technology can make their kitchen safer.



A gas cooker locking valve can also be requested if there is a risk of the cooker being unintentionally turned on or left on, [Locking cooker valves](#)

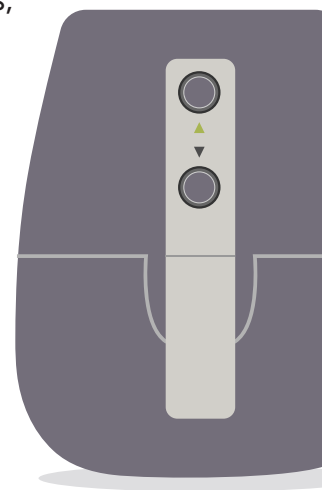
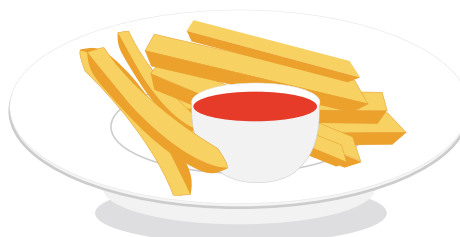
- [Cadent Gas Ltd](#)

Kitchen fire safety concerns to look out for include:

- Signs of scorch marks
- Incidents of leaving cooking unattended
- Towels and other combustible items stored on or near the hob
- A build-up of fat and grease
- Overloaded electrical sockets and/or old/damaged electrical equipment

Following an increase in use of air fryers, we have put together some guidance:

- ✓ Never place your air-fryer on a tea towel or other soft, flammable surface.
- ✓ Don't cook in a non-ventilated area or under over-counter cupboards.
- ✓ Don't let the air fryer hot air ventilation openings blow into electrical outlets.
- ✓ Pull the air fryer away from the wall - you need to leave space around the air fryer for the vent to circulate and open windows if you don't have an extraction fan.
- ✓ As with other cooking items, ensure it is free from fat residues and as with other electrical items – unplug when not in use!





Outdoor Fire Safety

Bonfires can be a fire risk so we'd always recommend looking for alternative ways to get rid of any household waste. But if you do decide to have a bonfire, please follow our advice here:

- Discuss it with your neighbours beforehand.
- Don't build a bonfire too far in advance of the day as it can encourage anti-social behaviour.
- Avoid having bonfires during dry spells, if you must have one, follow our bonfire safety advice
- Build the bonfire away from sheds, fences and trees.
- Check there are no cables (for example telephone wires) above the bonfire.
- Ensure there is a suitable barrier around the bonfire to keep spectators at least five metres away.
- Always check that no children or animals are hiding in the bonfire before lighting.
- Don't burn aerosols, batteries, tyres, canisters or anything containing foam or paint – many produce toxic fumes and some containers may explode, causing injury.
- Don't use petrol, paraffin, diesel, white spirit or methylated spirit to light the bonfire.
- Keep some buckets of water nearby in case of an emergency and to damp down after the event.

Storing Fuel Safely at Home

Many people store petrol or other fuels at home for use in lawnmowers or other appliances.

We recommend:

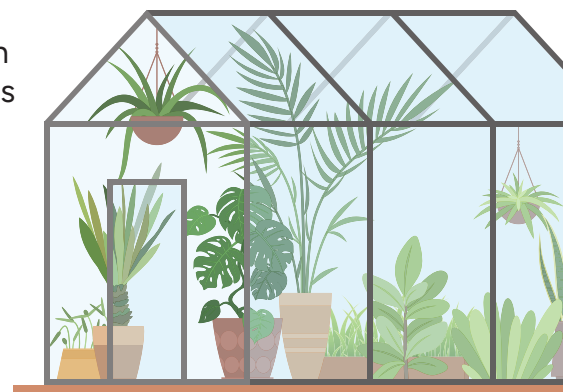
- Using containers designed for storing fuel, avoid having a large amount and do not store in living areas.
- Do not overfill the container – check the markings on the side.
- Never smoke when handling fuel and ensure the area is free of any potential heat/ignition sources.
- Decant your fuel in an open area that is well ventilated. This can help to stop the fumes from building up.
- If you store more than 30 litres of fuel at home, you must inform your local Petrol Enforcement Authority.
- Keep out of reach of children.



Greenhouse/Shed - Heaters

To safely use heaters in greenhouses and sheds and to minimise fire risk:

- Ensure heaters are in good working order, kept away from flammable materials, and used in well-ventilated areas.
- Avoid faulty or damaged heaters and always follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Consider electric heaters with trip switches and proper ventilation for gas heaters.



Ebike and Scooter Fire Safety

E-scooters are generally powered by lithium batteries and are supplied with a battery charger that plugs into a normal household mains socket. To mitigate fire risk please follow this guidance.

- Do not charge an e-scooter where it could prevent you from safely leaving your home if a fire breaks out.
- Avoid storing or charging e-scooters on escape routes or in communal areas of multi-occupied buildings. We recommend you store and charge e-scooters in a shed or garage separate from your home and away from combustible or flammable materials.
- Use only the charger supplied or a replacement authorised by the manufacturer and follow their instructions for storage, charging and maintenance.
- Do not overcharge your battery. If it is hot after intensive use, let the battery cool before charging it. Only charge batteries while you are awake and alert so that if a fire should occur you can respond quickly. Do not leave batteries on charge while you are asleep or away from the home. Do not cover chargers or battery packs when charging as this could lead to overheating. Batteries should never be exposed to extreme temperatures (keep them out of direct sunlight when not in use).
- Do not overload socket outlets or extension leads. Be aware of the warning signs – extreme heat, bulging, lumps or leaks, hissing or cracking sounds, and/or a strong smell. Immediately turn off and unplug the charger, remove to a safe place and consult with the manufacturer.
- If the device starts smoking or catches fire: raise the alarm, get out, stay out and call 999 immediately.



Further advice on all these topics can be found at www.hwfire.org.uk/advice

Signposting Case Study

The below case study shows how we can work together to identify those in our community who may need additional support and signposting to effectively reduce their risks.

- 48-year-old male with alcohol addiction, self-neglect and unsafe smoking.
- HWFRS operational crew attended a cooker fire caused by unattended cooking.

HWFRS and Partner Actions:

- ✓ Heat alarm fitted in kitchen and additional smoke alarms in bedroom and lounge at time of incident.
- ✓ Housing Association contacted and joint visit arranged.
- ✓ At this visit fire retardant bedding, mat and blanket provided.
- ✓ Hearing impaired alarm fitted in bedroom connected to vibrating pad and strobe light as concerns occupier would not respond to standard alarms at night.
- ✓ Advice given about reducing risk and consent gained to refer to social care and Cranstoun for support.

Outcome is no further incidents attended at this property.



Launch of Fire Safety Intervention Scheme

Prevention is proud to announce the launch of the Fire Safety Intervention Scheme. This has replaced the Juvenile Firesetters Scheme and has been updated and improved to align with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance. The intervention provided by the Service is aimed at children and young people up to the age of 18 who:

- Are considered to have an 'unusual' or 'unhealthy' fascination with fire.
- Have been involved, or at risk of becoming involved, in firesetting behaviour or have any other specific issues relating to fire or firesetting which may be helped through a home visit and one-to-one intervention.

The intervention aims to:

- Raise awareness of the dangers of fire.
- Illustrate the consequences of firesetting behaviour.
- Teach young people how to control the trigger factors that lead to firesetting.

Talking to a young person early on is vital to stop the firesetting habit as soon as possible; early intervention and education can reduce the chances of it happening again. The intervention, which is delivered by the Prevention Engagement Officers, provides advice and support which is tailored to the child or young person's behaviour, interests and understanding.

To make a referral, please contact the Prevention team for advice on:

0800 032 1155

or email: firesetters@hwfire.org.uk

Further information can be found on our Service website – [What is the Fire Safety Intervention Scheme?](#)

FREE Home Fire Safety Visit

A Home Fire Safety Visit is a FREE home safety visit that is tailored to an individual's needs.

The visit includes a home safety check to help reduce the risk of fire in the home, including the checking and fitting of smoke alarms where required. This includes alarms suitable for those with a hearing impairment and giving advice on a fire escape plan.

How can I arrange a visit?

Complete your FREE online Home Fire Safety Check now by visiting - www.safelincs.co.uk/hfsc/

If you'd like to download and send us a Referral Form for a Home Fire Safety Visit please click [here](#).

If you need any advice or support with regards to signposting or HFSVs, or any of the items mentioned in this newsletter, contact the Prevention Team on **0800 032 1155** or email signposting@hwfire.org.uk

