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Customer Engagement and Safety Strategy

2021 to 2025

Working together towards
a safer Kent and Medway



Kent Fire &
Rescue Service

together

Introduction

Our Customer Engagement and Safety strategy is one of six programmes which sets out our priorities over the next four years. It outlines how we will help people stay safe in their homes, on the roads, where they work and in places of education, whoever they are.

Over the past five years we have seen a 12% reduction in the number of fires across Kent and Medway. And we've seen fewer people killed on our roads. We aim to continue this trend as we work towards a future where no one is killed or seriously injured by a fire or other emergency.

For the first time, we have brought together our protection, prevention, customer experience, collaboration, equality of access to services and engagement work into one strategy. We recognise that each of these areas needs to work closely to be more effective and efficient. In 2020 we reorganised to create a directorate which aligns all of these teams to drive our change agenda.

We recognise we are on a journey. We will build on the changes we have made by transforming our services over the next four years.

Customer, inclusion, technology, engagement and collaboration are at the heart of our strategy. These themes run through every element of our action plan, helping us to deliver our strategic intentions by 2025.

Our priorities and key objectives

Our priorities are:

Matching services to needs

Our customers are the reason we exist. We serve a hugely diverse community of people who live, work and travel through Kent and Medway. Over the next four years we aim to design our services so they are tailored to meet all our customers' needs and are accessible to everyone.

A safer built environment

We take our role as a fire safety regulator seriously, working tirelessly to minimise risk. We will support businesses, government and our partners to make buildings safer for our customers, ensuring they are designed and maintained to reduce the likelihood of a potential fire. The more fires we prevent, the safer our customers and our built environment will be.

Preventing and minimising harm

Early intervention helps save lives and reduces harm. It's core to our role as a fire and rescue service. Working with our customers, we will focus on promoting behaviours which help keep our communities safe. Early intervention is crucial in stopping fires and other emergencies from happening. We will seek to minimise harm through safeguarding people at risk, which is central to our goal of saving lives.

Working together with our customers to create a safer built environment and promote behaviours which ensure no one is killed or injured by a fire or other emergency

The strategy is designed to support the organisation's overall Safety Plan, in particular:

- Promoting behaviours which help you to stay safe and well in your home.
- Supporting businesses to help people to stay safe in their buildings and comply with legislation.
- Encouraging you to adopt behaviours which keep you safe on the roads.
- Helping you and the broader community to stay safe from harm caused by accidents, natural events or people intending harm.

We also want to work with partners to address health inequalities and improve the physical and mental wellbeing of people living in Kent and Medway.

Strategic Assessment and Action Plan

Starting in summer 2020, we held a number of workshops and seminars across the organisation, along with seeking feedback from our partners, which has led to the creation of our 2021-2025 strategy.

Our Customer Engagement and Safety strategy is accompanied by an assessment which brings together all of the insight, evidence and data we've used to develop this blueprint.

We have developed an action plan which is a 'live' document and will be updated regularly by the Customer Engagement and Safety strategy board. The action plan outlines the activities we need to complete to implement the strategy.

The following success measures, drawn from CPS 2025, will be used to monitor progress against our key deliverables across 21/22.

Our priorities and key objectives

Matching services to needs

- Increase access to all of our services
- Increased customer insight to improve our services
- Tailored services designed to meet the needs of all our customers, whoever they are
- Using the latest technology to engage with customers through targeted campaigns

A safer built environment

- Improve the safety of buildings through targeted and effective auditing and consultations
- Use smart, connected technology to make buildings safer
- Explore and implement new technology to enable effective mobile working

Preventing and minimising harm

- Create tailored prevention products and services through partnerships
 - Improve our education services to make customers safer
 - Embed effective behavioural change methods and messages in all our work
 - Develop new road safety, water safety and arson prevention services with partners
-

Matching services to need

We're here for everyone.

We pride ourselves in how we work with our customers. It's core to who we are. Four years ago we set out on a journey which put customers at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the changes we have made. We have seen high levels of customer satisfaction, improved engagement and we've embedded an authentic approach to inclusion.

This priority seeks to make a step change in how we design services so they are bespoke to meet the needs of all our customers, internally and externally. By 2025 we will have transformed our offer. We aim to remove barriers to accessing our services. We will ensure our products are tailored to work for everyone. And new technology will help us target customers through effective campaigns.

Achievements 2017 to 21

- Established a Customer Experience and Behaviour Change team
- Developed an evaluation framework
- Developed a new customer promise
- Moved from communications to engagement to build relationships with customers
- Refreshed our brand and introduced a tone of voice to improve accessibility
- Benchmarked customer service and customer-centric culture
- Grown our digital following to 300,000+ customers

Where next?

Our action plan builds on the changes we've made over the last four years:

Embed the customer centric culture across the organisation

Develop and implement a customer experience plan

Create customer profiles to help design services which meet the needs of everyone

Carry out customer audience mapping exercises

Continue to develop processes and procedures to ensure excellent customer service

Review options on how we offer and tailor our services to our customers

Equality of access research and action plan for people with protected characteristics and customer groups

Equality of access research and action plans on the relationship between poverty and accidental dwelling fires

Review and establish standards for the quality of service provided by all teams

Deliver the customer and engagement work stream of the equality, diversity and inclusion programme

Build relationships with agencies and partners, sharing our equality, diversity and inclusion insights to support improvements in services

Review our services and look at ways to deliver more efficient products by collaborating with other agencies

Explore opportunities to share and integrate datasets with partners in the health sector

Enhance processes to monitor, review and evaluate the benefits and outcomes from collaboration activities

Develop a prioritised action plan using the equality of access research and knowledge acquired through community engagement

Embed the Service's brand refresh project to reach new audiences

Create a digital customer experience platform to enhance our services

Develop a new website focused on accessibility to improve the service we provide to customers

Deliver a web to print portal to improve efficiency

Review the use of social media, marketing and customer segmentation

Develop new targeted campaigns to help make our customers safer

Embed the full potential of the intranet to support teams to be more efficient and effective

Continually review the processes for internal communications and engagement

Continue to create targeted communications, segmenting internal audiences to improve two-way communications

Improve social listening to enhance how we support campaigns and operational incidents

Embed engagement campaigns which recognise digital poverty and reach customers on channels other than social media

Review the volunteers scheme following successfully securing Investing in Volunteers award

Review the delivery of events in a post-Covid-19 world

Create a process for planning and managing events

Define service level standards for our engagement activities

What does success look like?

We are always striving to be better at what we do, and by 2025 we will be succeeding in key areas:

- Our offers will meet customer needs. And they will be easily accessed by everyone, whoever they are
- We will have increased our understanding of behaviours that contribute to life risk and use that knowledge to design interventions that we know will help our customers lead safer lives
- All our services will be designed to reflect changes in society. Our services will be regularly reviewed and kept up-to-date
- There will be a consistent customer-centric culture in all parts of the organisation
- We learn from customer visits, making changes to our services and our approach
- As a learning organisation we will keep working to ensure we have effective, assertive and safe teams that are tested as competent and are licenced to act on the Service's behalf
- Our services are evaluated to ensure they help to promote safer customer behaviours and to support continuous improvement
- Better at what we do, with an improved understanding of our customers. Delivering a high standard of inclusive engagement, communications and volunteering
- We will be inclusive of all our customers and continue to build a diverse workforce through our engaging content and communications
- Using the latest technology available to us to engage with our customers at a higher level than we've done before. Intuitive technology that helps us predict behaviour to support the prevention and protection agenda
- Highly productive and motivated teams with a well-established culture within the organisation, thanks to the influence through communication, enabling our people to work and volunteer for a modern thinking FRS
- Events that deliver quality engagement with specific target audiences, using technology to enhance customer experience, behaviour change and education
- Strong reputation as forward thinking, modern emergency service seen as a pioneering service by our partners and customers

How will we measure performance against our objectives?

The indicators below will be used by teams, together with a range of other local measures, to monitor progress towards achieving our objectives.

Description	Indicator
Engagement and service level standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of people/groups engaged/accessing services • Organisational survey results • Benchmarking from charities and voluntary groups, for example, Pride in Care • Feedback from community groups • Establishment of service levels • Annual targets agreed using the baseline figures
Organisational motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of unplanned absence • Levels of retention • Organisation surveys • Team engagement and culture • Embedded culture of inclusion
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer and team surveys to understand the reputation of the volunteer scheme • Clear results of the strategic work delivered by the volunteers • Develop new opportunities for the volunteer scheme to support and deliver strategic objectives • Achievement of the Investing in Volunteers award by 2022 • Levels of volunteer retention and inactivity
Levels of co-creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved evidence of co-creation
Institute of Customer Service benchmarking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ServiceMark accreditation – the national standard recognising an organisation's achievement in customer service
Evaluation of interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of interventions that have been evaluated • Target: All new interventions consistently evaluated by 2025. Plan-Do-Study-Act process consistently applied and evaluation activities planned in.
Customer behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes of the evaluation process looking at behaviour changes before and after the intervention • Reduction in risk and/or incidents
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer focus and behaviour change training delivered to all our teams
Evidence-based decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised process established and clear examples of key decisions being evidence based
Customer personas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer personas developed for key services and used across the organisation
Audience mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of our target audiences, where they are, who they are and their needs

A safer built environment

The tragic fire at Grenfell Tower highlighted the need for major improvements to the built environment. Since then we have developed a new approach to Building Safety, which has led to significant improvements.

This priority is a crucial area of focus. Making buildings safer for all our customers is core to our role and our vision.

As the fire safety regulator for Kent and Medway we will audit all high risk buildings by 2025. We will work with businesses to raise standards, ensure premises are well designed and work with partners to use technology which will make our customers safer.

Achievements 2017 to 21

- Doubled the number of fire safety audits completed
- Training all Building Safety Inspectors so everyone has a Level 4 diploma in fire safety
- Our Fire Safety Inspection programme was awarded the highest rating by an independent audit
- Introduced an out of hours duty fire safety manager to support customers 24/7
- We made our website content more accessible to customers
- Restructured our teams to meet the challenges of new legislation

Where next?

Our action plan builds on the changes we've made over the last four years:

Put the residents' voice at the heart of our Building Safety work

Meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council competency framework for protection

Continue to develop a multifunctional and resilient Building Safety team which allows officers to carry out audits and building consultations

Work with the public and private sector to adopt a 'smart cities' approach to new developments to allow connected technology to support the care of customers with additional needs e.g. wearable monitors giving bio feedback for people living with dementia which indicate falls

Share our insights with the public, private and third sectors to support improvements in the built environment, including the conversion of town centre buildings to residential use

Work with the fire protection sector to develop expertise following the introduction of new fire safety legislation

Continue to grow our relationships with Building Safety partner agencies to make the built environment safer

Review the processes used for sharing risk information and technical knowledge with operational crews

Complete the Building Risk Review of tall buildings and share insights with partners

Implement a project to share data between teams to help keep our customers safe

Assess the impact of new fire safety legislation, developing or aligning processes/resources as necessary

Implement a project to reduce the number of unwanted automatic fire alarm calls

Review the Building Safety portal to provide clear advice and information to help customers live and work in safer buildings

Support the National Fire Chiefs Council with the protection policy, process and guidance reviews to improve best practice

Review the key performance indicators used to measure the performance of Building Safety

Work with minority ethnic business groups to understand the barriers to engagement and compliance

Research and develop new ways of engaging with businesses to encourage compliance

Explore how we can use the primary authority scheme to support the safety of customers and meet our wider objectives

Review the Safer Living and Safer Care initiatives to help customers living in residential care and supported housing lead safer lives

Review the Building Safety career development pathway to boost retention

Invest in fire engineering apprenticeships to build competence up to and continuing to degree level to improve succession planning

Promote fire engineering roles to women and minority ethnic groups to bring different perspectives and help us better understand our customers' needs

What does success look like?

We're are always striving to be better at what we do, and by 2025 we will be succeeding in key areas:

- Multi-skilled, professional and flexible team that can provide a great service to the public to ensure people are kept safe within the built environment. Identifying and developing the leaders and Fire Engineers of the future within Building Safety
- Our Building Safety services will be fully tailored, accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of all our customer
- Strong and effective working relationship with Housing Associations and the Care community
- Strong and effective working relationship with government, the building safety regulators, partner agencies and internal teams. Sharing insights and ensuring we all work together to provide the best service to ensure our customers' safety
- Efficient teams, able to work remotely and able to focus on the safety of customers by spending less time on administration
- Our customers will be using improved technology to keep vulnerable residents safe
- Wide corporate understanding of the differing needs of our community through community engagement and research. Easy to access services designed flexibly to cater for those needs. Different packages in place for specific groups

Image



Specialist

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Persons • Other Regulating Authorities • Fire Risk Assessors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecutions • Enforcement Notices • Regulated stands • Operation Liaison (firefighter facilities and hazards in buildings) • Fire engineering principles under BS. 7974 |
|--|--|

**Kent Fire and
Rescue Service
customer groups**

Building Safety services

**Priority
Groups**

- High Risk Business Owners
 - Sleeping Accommodation premises
- Pre-planned inspections of buildings that have been classified as high risk (such as Care Homes and Sheltered Accommodation that have been predicted to be likely to have a fire) Alleged Fire Safety Concerns (an identified fire safety issue by a customer or other regulators)
 - Risk Reduction Initiatives (focusing on at risk occupants or business type identified by risk and fires that have occurred)

Targeted

- Business owners
 - Business managers
- Pre-planned inspections of buildings identified in our Risk Based Inspection Program (such as shops, offices and factories)
 - Campaigns (in line with the NFCC fire safety messaging)

**Universal
Services**

- Business start ups
 - Event organisers
 - Approved Inspectors
 - Local Authorities
 - Licence holders
- Building Fire Safety advice and enquires
 - Business and Property Protection Portal
 - Events Safety and Safety Advisory Groups (SAG's)
 - Licensing Consultations (including licences for HMO's, Marriage Premises, Licensing Act)
 - Building Regulation Consultations
-

How will we measure performance against our objectives?

The indicators below will be used by teams, together with a range of other local measures, to monitor progress towards achieving our objectives.

Description	Indicator
Quality Assurance: Assessing the appropriateness of actions taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % reduction in the number of rejected enforcement notices
Audits completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of audits completed
Building regulations consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of building regulations consultations completed within 21 days from receipt. • Target: 95%
Inspections in high risk premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of all our effort and activity directed into high risk premises
Levels of enforcement actions and successful prosecutions (where appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in enforcement action and successful prosecutions (where appropriate) • Benchmark % of minority ethnic business owners where enforcement action has been taken
Team performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of people from the fire inspection team regularly completing building regulations consultations
Inspectors third party accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of colleagues with third party accreditation in line with NFCC competency framework for protection • Target: all inspectors* with third party accreditation by 2025 (Level 4 diploma) *all inspectors who have worked in the department for two years or more
Compliance levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in compliance in buildings that Housing Associations and the Care community are responsible for
Number of unwanted automatic fire alarm calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % decrease in the number of unwanted automatic fire alarm calls • Target: 25% reduction in false alarms that we attend in buildings where passive and active technology is installed
Number of fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % decrease in the number of fires in regulated premises • Target: 25% reduction in fires that we attend in buildings where passive and active technology is installed
Productivity levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Safety concerns (response to within LPI) • Point incident audits • Number of audits completed per inspector • Building consultations (meeting LPI)
Compliance levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in compliance in buildings that Housing Associations and the Care community are responsible for

Preventing and minimising harm

Our prevention work helps reduce harm and saves lives. We are working towards a future where no one is killed or seriously injured by a fire, a road crash a water rescue, or life risk.

Over the past four years we have made large-scale changes to safeguarding and prevention, which have helped drive better services for our customers.

This priority focuses on transforming our educational programmes, making a step change in our approach to safeguarding by providing additional support to customers through schemes such as 'safe havens'. And by working with industry to develop smart technology which will make our customers safer.

Achievements 2017 to 21

- Delivered more than 70,000 Safe and Well and Home Fire Safety visits
- Provided safety messaging to more than 275,000 school children
- High level of safeguarding awareness amongst our teams
- Developed our quality assurance processes
- Supported customers through the delivery of hot meals, prescriptions and food during COVID-19
- Developed 'The Byrnes family' product to engage and educate young children and their families about safety

Where next?

Our action plan builds on the changes we've made over the last four years:

Work with industry to develop new home, road and water safety technology to keep customers safe

Finalise and implement the risk stratification for Customer Safety to ensure our prevention work targets people most at risk

Develop a competency framework for Customer Safety and share with the National Fire Chiefs Council

Evolve and tailor the Safeguarding training we give to everyone who works or volunteers here to reflect changes in society

Create 'safe havens' within KFRS buildings to give customers a space to get mental health support

Review how we can work with agencies and partners to help prevent suicide

Roll out training to the whole organisation on behaviour change so that this becomes part of the culture of our teams and how we operate

Develop performance reporting capability for safeguarding, Safe & Well, Home Fire Safety visits and firesetter interventions

Develop arson prevention campaigns and sign up to the Fire Stopper initiative to reduce the number of deliberate/arson incidents

Review Safe and Well visits and Home Fire Safety visits to continue to improve the services we provide to customers

Develop themed campaigns and action weeks to increase the number of Safe and Well visits and Home Fire Safety visits carried out

Review our approach to engagement with Safe and Well referrers

Research smoke alarm testing frequency and review the advice we provide

Develop a process for Safe and Well case management to provide a better experience for customers

Evolve our burns and scalds campaigns to reach new audiences

Review our education offer to reflect changes in society

Develop our online education offer for schools to meet customer needs

Review the primary and secondary school programmes

Explore options to deliver interventions for pre-school children right through to young adults and youth groups

Research and evaluate the firesetters programme to ensure it reflects current issues and customer needs

Establish a process for capturing customer feedback for education and firesetters

Develop personal resilience programme and support networks for lone workers

Implement and embed quality assurance processes to meet service level standards

Review the work of Safe & Well call representatives to improve quality and performance

Build strong relationships with community safety partnerships and task forces to ensure the service's objectives are prioritised as part of our common activities

Implement a partnership approach to water safety to reduce the number of water related deaths and injuries across Kent and Medway

Support the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership's vision zero strategy by developing initiatives and engagement to reduce road crashes

What does success look like?

We're are always striving to be better at what we do, and by 2025 we will be succeeding in key areas:

- Increased and sustained performance. Able to evidence that we provide high quality services to our customers
- Increased customer focus: our offers meeting customer needs. They will be inclusive and easily accessed by all our customers, and support target audiences. We will increase our understanding of how to design person centred services and the behaviour factors that contribute to fire risk
- Together with everyone who works here, develop a positive learning environment to help stretch development and maintain wellbeing, to deliver better services for our customers
- Effective collaboration with all our partners including the task force, community safety partnerships and the third sector that meet the Service's objectives. And all partners understand the range of services that we provide



Kent Fire and Rescue Service customer groups

Customer Safety services

High risk

Identified as needing highly specialist services, often on a long-term basis, for example:

- People who live with dementia
- People with mobility impairments
- People with sight or hearing loss
- People with long-term health conditions
- People under 18 with an interest in fire

- Safe and Well visits and follow ups
- Firesetter visits and follow ups
- High risk customer referrals from other agencies
- Partnership working with charities and local authorities

Protected characteristics

Identified through impact assessments – people with specific protected characteristics or community groups with limited access to our services, for example:

- LGBTQ+
- Roma community
- Travellers

- Personalised visits designed to meet needs of the customer group
- Long-term, intensive engagement
- Partnership working with charities

Kent Fire and Rescue Service customer groups

Customer Safety services

Target

Identified as requiring specific services and campaign messages, for example:

- Customers living in tall buildings, care homes or sheltered accommodation
- Young drivers
- Smokers

- Firefighter tactical assessment visits
- Home fire safety visits
- Campaigns
- Social marketing initiatives
- Road safety initiatives
- Advocacy through other agencies

Universal

Identified as requiring general safety advice and campaign messages, for example:

- People under the age of 18
- Adults not identified in another customer group
- People moving into Kent

- Website and social media
 - Home safety online self-assessments
 - School visits
 - Fire station open days
 - Awareness campaigns
-

How will we measure performance against our objectives?

The indicators below will be used by teams, together with a range of other local measures, to monitor progress towards achieving our objectives.

Description	Indicator
Measures on behaviour change as part of case management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of performance data and behaviour change that needs to be captured and identification of the baseline so that future targets for improvement can be agreed
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation is always planned and completed as part of the Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle as we review or introduce new prevention programmes or activities. Measured through audit and case studies.
Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and well: Increase customer feedback and maintain results • Education and firesetters: establish mechanisms to identify baselines and report performance
Cancellation rate for Safe and Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % decrease in the number of cancelled Safe and Well visits
Planned reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of all the planned reviews of our education products
Access to our education resources and sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of customers accessing our education resources and sessions
Establishment of baseline data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer feedback • Quality assurance (education, Safe and Well, firesetters, safeguarding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work completed to allow us to identify the baseline and set future targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and Well and Home Fire Safety visits: Increase customer feedback and maintain results. • Education and firesetters: establish mechanisms to identify baselines and report performance • Improvement in quality on the baseline • % increase in the number of Safe and Well visits carried out • % increase in the number of Home Fire Safety visits carried out
Team and individuals' performance	
Access to our education resources and sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of customers accessing our education resources and sessions
Number of referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of referrals
Number of agencies and partners that we work with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % increase in the number of agencies/partners that we work with
Productivity levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of service level standards
Competency framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KFRS prevention competency framework developed by 2022

Lone worker resilience and wellbeing

- % reduction in levels of unplanned absence
- Organisational survey

Safeguarding

- New training completed and rolled out to everyone who works and volunteers here