



Kent Fire &
Rescue Service

sprinklers 

- safer people
- safer homes
- safer schools



Kent Fire & Rescue Service Sprinkler Campaign

Briefing Pack For Members



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Campaign overview
3. Sprinkler benefits
4. What is a sprinkler system?
5. How do sprinklers operate?
6. Types of sprinklers
7. Installation
8. Costs
9. Legislation
10. Insurance
11. Sprinklers for schools
12. Sprinklers – the facts
13. Questions & Answers
14. Sprinkler Awareness Research
15. Residential Sprinkler System Qualifying Criteria
16. Sprinkler Funding Eligibility Flow Chart
17. Copy of Sprinkler Campaign Leaflet – latest design (as at 03.09.07)
18. Local Government Association – ‘Counting The Cost’
19. Chief Fire Officers Association:
 - ‘Guidance on the provision of sprinklers in schools’
20. London Fire & Rescue Service DVD





1. Introduction

In January 2006, the Government announced £11.4 million grant funding for fire and rescue authorities in England over the period April 2006 to March 2008 to support fire prevention work, including community fire safety, arson reduction and work with children and young people.

The highest proportion of funds have been allocated to areas with higher numbers of vulnerable people and above average death rates, whilst recognising that all authorities contain some pockets of deprivation.

The funds are designed to support the achievement of the national PSA targets on accidental fire deaths in the home and on arson reduction, with a particular focus on reducing inequality in the impact of fire and meeting the floor target (*no fire and rescue authority to have accidental fire deaths more than 1.25 times the average by 2010*).

There is an expectation from Ministers that authorities will focus available resources on projects delivering effective risk reduction through working with vulnerable groups, in particular:

- Older people
- Children and young people
- Ethnic minorities or faith groups
- People with learning or physical disabilities
- People with mental illness, alcohol or drug abuse problems
- People in temporary accommodation or other poor housing

Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority has been allocated a total of £255,773 for 2006-08 (£127,887 grant in 2006/07 and £127,887 grant in 2007/08).





2. Campaign overview

As part of its on-going drive to reduce fire-related accidental deaths and injuries, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA) supports the installation of sprinkler systems in all properties – particularly domestic dwellings that house high risk and vulnerable individuals.

KMFRA is campaigning locally and nationally for legislation to require sprinklers in new homes and schools. We also advocate the retrospective fitting of sprinklers in existing properties.

Government announces sprinkler recommendation for all new and refurbished schools

Jim Knight, the Minister of State for Schools announced on 26 February 2007 in the House of Commons that it would now be policy for sprinklers to be fitted in all new and refurbished schools.

New schools (or those which undergo a major refurbishment using public money) will have to complete an analysis using a risk assessment tool to determine whether they should be fitted with a sprinkler system.



Objectives

- Improved understanding of the benefits of sprinklers amongst local MPs and key decision makers to support their lobbying of government for a change in building regulations
- To dispel many of the myths associated with sprinklers amongst the various stakeholders and change current perception through a dedicated PR/ marketing campaign and a series of benchmarking exercises
- Planners, architects and developers start to incorporate sprinklers at the construction design stage
- Developers start to promote sprinklers as a selling point by offering them as an option in every premises
- The establishment of a 'Safer Home' award scheme to further promote the installation of sprinklers in homes throughout Kent & Medway
- The complete allocation of the government funding by March 2009 towards the installation of sprinkler systems in the homes of vulnerable people in Kent with the aim of providing at least one per local authority district



**Kent Fire &
Rescue Service**



Target Audience

- Influencers – (opinion formers) MPs/MEPs, Councillors, Non Government Organisation Heads, Thames Gateway Developers etc
- Specifiers - Architects, Registered Social Landlords, NHS Trusts, Council Planners, Thames Gateway Developers etc
- Contractors – builders, construction companies (primarily those who work with Registered Social Landlords), Thames Gateway Developers etc



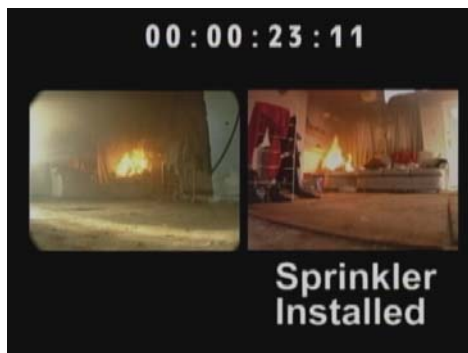
- S**afeguarding future generations
 - P**reventing serious injury
 - R**esidential and domestic sprinklers
 - I**nnovative technology and design developed over 100 years
 - N**eat and unobtrusive
 - K**eeping the community safe
 - L**ifestyle – freedom of design
 - E**nvironmentally friendly
 - R**egulated by the industry
 - S**afety for the firefighter
-
- S**aving life and property
 - A**cknowledged by the fire service and other agencies
 - V**alidated by insurance companies
 - E**ngineered solutions
-
- L**ow maintenance costs
 - I**nternationally accredited
 - V**igorous third party quality control
 - E**N/BS standards regulating the industry
- SUPPORT SPRINKLERS AND SAVE LIVES!!**





3. Sprinkler benefits

- Sprinklers can not only protect lives but they can also reduce damage to property in the event of fire and help reduce the overall cost of fire to either the homeowner or the organisation providing the housing
- Operation of a sprinkler system will rapidly control a fire, raise the alarm and reduce the rate of production of heat and smoke, allowing time for occupants to escape
- Modern residential sprinklers are small, neat and unobtrusive
- Generally a system for a new property would be 1-2% of the total build cost
- Sprinklers control//extinguish 99% of fires
- Sprinklers control 60% of fires using 4 sprinkler heads or less
- Significant reduction in property loss
- Potential for financial benefits arising from insurance premium reduction
- Can trade off protection afforded by sprinklers against the need for other fire safety measures



THERE HAVE BEEN NO DEATHS IN THE UK IN A PROPERTY FITTED WITH A WORKING SPRINKLER SYSTEM

Did you know....

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service was the first fire service in the UK to advocate and introduce domestic sprinkler systems at a new housing estate at Studley Green, in Trowbridge in 1999.

The sprinkler protection was installed in 212 properties - the first large-scale installation of residential sprinklers in a social housing project in Europe. The sprinkler protected homes form one part of a £10million project to redevelop the pre-cast reinforced concrete former Council properties on the Studley Green estate.



4. What is a sprinkler system?

- A sprinkler system consists of a number of heads fixed to a water supply. The heads can cover all or only selected areas of a building
- Sprinklers are individually heat activated. They are connected to a network of piping which is filled with water under pressure. When a fire occurs it raises heat levels in the room and reaches a critical temperature at which point the sprinkler over the area of fire will be activated. The result is to keep a fire from reaching potentially dangerous and life-threatening proportions and giving early detection. Sprinklers operate automatically in the event of the fire, even if the building is unoccupied, releasing water directly over the source of heat and sounding the alarm



rew play stop

- Only those heads in the immediate area of the fire will operate although many people falsely believe that every head will actuate at the same time. If the fire develops then this will activate further individual heads until the fire is extinguished or contained
- Research carried out by bodies such as the Fire Sprinkler Association (FSA) indicates many people believe that, in the event of fire, a sprinkler system would flood their whole property/room and cause more damage than the fire. According to the FSA, property damage is on average 86% less compared to the fire being put out through normal firefighting action
- A correctly designed and installed sprinkler system can detect and control a fire at an early stage of development and activate an alarm. Operation of the system will rapidly control a fire and reduce the rate of production of heat and smoke, allowing time for the occupants to escape to safety. Sprinklers protect not only lives but also reduce the overall expenditure of fire by minimising damage



5. How do sprinklers operate?

- Sprinklers are simple devices that are individually operated directly by the heat from a fire
- When a fire starts a plume of hot gases rise to the ceiling. If a sprinkler is present, a glass bulb or solder link gets hot and at a specific temperature (typically 68°C) breaks releasing a cap and allowing water to flow onto a specially designed diffuser
- The diffuser breaks up the water flow into carefully controlled droplets, which penetrate the fire plume and cool the burning material below its ignition point, thus putting out the fire
- Only sprinkler/s directly over the fire are operated
- The sprinklers are connected to pipework, usually filled with water, which is supplied either from the water mains or from a storage tank via a pump
- When a sprinkler operates the flow of water in the pipework operates a flow switch, which in turn operates an alarm system
- The flow of water is small, usually less than 1/100th the water used by the Fire and Rescue Service
- Sprinklers do not go off accidentally and are only triggered by real fires
- Sprinklers are very reliable and only 1:16,000,000 exhibit any form of manufacturing defect

1) heat from the fire causes the glass bulb to break

2) this releases the cap

3) water is released onto the diffuser

4) water puts out the fire

(as pictured – right)





6. Types of sprinklers

Wet Pipe

These are the most common systems and are used in buildings where there is no risk of freezing. They are quick to react because water is always in the pipes above the sprinkler heads.

Wet systems are required for multi-storey or high-rise buildings and for life safety.



Alternate

As the name suggest Alternate systems can have the pipes full of water for the summer and be drained down and filled with air (under pressure) for the winter. This is important for buildings that are not heated.



Dry pipe

The pipes are filled with air under pressure at all times and the water is held back by the control valve. When a sprinkler head opens, the drop in air pressure opens the valve and water flows into the pipework and onto the fire. Dry pipe systems are used where wet or alternate systems cannot be used.

Pre-action

Like dry pipe systems the pipes are filled with air but water is only let into the pipes when the detector operates (e.g. smoke detectors). Pre-action systems are used where it is not acceptable to have the pipes full of water unless there is a fire.



Deluge and recycling

These are not strictly sprinkler systems and are only used in special cases for industrial risks.



7. Installation

A residential fire sprinkler system is designed specifically for the domestic environment. The sprinklers themselves are small, neat and blend in with the décor. In fact they look much like modern light fittings. They are available in a range of colours and finishes and even concealed models can now be obtained.



The heads are connected through a system of pipes to the water mains or an alternative secure source of water. Most rooms require only two sprinkler heads to afford complete protection.

The process of installation is similar to putting in central heating and will cause no more inconvenience.

8. Costs

- The cost of a system is dependent on the size of the property and whether the system is installed during the construction stage or is fitted retrospectively
- Residential fire sprinklers are not expensive, costing less than 2% of the cost of an average new house – or about the cost of good carpeting
- Annual maintenance costs for sprinklers vary depending on the size of the property and the number of sprinkler heads. Costs charged by installers start at £75 for a small dwelling



9. Legislation

- Approved documents accompanying the Building Regulations in England and Wales make specific reference to the use of sprinklers
- Certain multi-storey buildings over 30metres high should be fitted with sprinklers to meet Approved Document B standards

When sprinklers are installed there may be significant benefits. For example: the installation of sprinklers should allow buildings to be built closer together (half the spacing is required) to adjoining premises. This is a major benefit where site space is limited.

Other provisions in the document regarding travel distances for escape can sometimes be extended and certain requirements in respect of access for the fire service may be varied.

There may also be the possibility for savings in construction and building cost by relaxation of certain passive fire protection measures.

The guidance issued to interpret the Building Regulations now recognises the use of sprinklers for life safety. There may also be circumstances where the long-awaited Fire Safety Order (which has replaced most existing fire legislation in England and Wales) will result in employers or property owners using sprinkler systems to satisfy their Duties under the Order.



10. Insurance

At the moment only some insurance companies offer discounted premiums for domestic properties and schools.

Zurich in particular offers discounts for schools fitted with approved sprinkler systems. This equates to approx 65% off the fire element of the premium and reduces the excess, currently £250k for Kent County Council to nil.

Insurance premium discounts are just part of the equation and account needs to be taken of the disruption to education, loss of coursework, stress and other management issues that large fires within schools cause.

Lympne School at Lympne near Folkestone was destroyed by fire on 13 September 2006 after a blaze broke out in a light fitting. The 230 pupils and staff were evacuated from the building and no-one was hurt in the incident.

More than 60 firefighters spent several hours tackling the blaze but could not save the building or its contents which meant the entire school had to be relocated to a temporary building. Their new school - which includes the installation of sprinkler systems - will not be completed until the summer of 2008.

Although they do not currently offer discounts for general domestic properties, sprinklers installed within 'high-end' homes, which are usually assessed individually, would be taken into account when establishing premiums.

Other insurance companies state that as sprinklers are not currently 'common' within domestic properties there are no established discounts, however, they are continuously looking at changes within the market.



11. Sprinklers for Schools

- 1500 reports of fires in un-sprinklered schools each year
- More school fires are being deliberately set during the day-time which potentially increases the risk of injury to those present. This is particularly the case where the fire starts in unoccupied areas and is allowed to develop before it is seen. Some types of school construction can allow the fire to travel through voids and break out at points some distance from the fire
- If a fire occurs the cost will typically be £100,000
- The frequency of a fire in a school is 1 every 10 years
- Injuries from fire in schools for 2002 were 46 of which 19 were for precautionary checks



- A school fire will not only cause damage to the building structure (including specialist facilities i.e. science lab/drama facilities) but may also destroy resources and irreplaceable student work
- It may also disrupt exams and affect results in the period following the fire
- Staff time will be taken up with finding new accommodation (which may require planning permission), resources and often temporary facilities will not be suitable or will incur additional costs
- Any temporary facility may be more vulnerable to arson (particularly of concern if the initial fire was due to this and the offender is still at large)
- Schools are increasingly being used by other community groups who may not be as familiar with layout or be present at odd hours. Their welfare needs to be ensured and managed
- Schools are also getting bigger
- Arsonists are getting more daring
- Parents and the wider community also suffer from effects directly and indirectly



12. Sprinklers – the facts

Effective: Fire sprinklers are by far the most efficient and effective safety devices available, having a better than 99% success rate in service world-wide.

Early alarm: Over 50% of all fire casualties are either young or old, or physically incapacitated and cannot properly help themselves. Fire sprinklers sound the alarm when they go off so, at the very least, they greatly extend the time available for escape or rescue.

Inexpensive: Residential fire sprinklers are not expensive, costing less than 2% of the cost of an average new house – or about the cost of good carpeting.

Reliability: They are designed to last for 50 years and records show that the chance of accidental operation in service is 1:16,000,000 (one in sixteen million). Less than your chance of winning the lottery!

Operational facts: Each sprinkler is individually triggered directly by the heat of the fire, and the system will have gained control of the fire long before the fire service is even notified. Only the sprinkler directly affected by the fire goes off - NOT all of them.

Limited water damage: Sprinklers use much less water than the fire service because it tackles the blaze immediately which means it has a much smaller fire to deal with than the one which crews are faced with when they arrive.

Easy to install: Modern residential sprinklers are small, neat and unobtrusive and visitors are seldom able to spot them – indeed concealed versions are now available. They all come in a variety of finishes and colours and can be made to match any décor.

Construction trade-offs: Under new Building Regulations, the benefits of using sprinkler systems has been recognised and may allow more design freedoms.





13. Questions & Answers

What do they do?

A correctly designed and installed sprinkler system can detect and control a fire at an early stage of development and activate an alarm. Operation of the system will rapidly control a fire and reduce the rate of production of heat and smoke, allowing time for the occupants to escape to safety. Sprinklers protect not only lives but also reduce the overall expenditure of fire by minimising damage.

How do they work?

Sprinklers are individually heat activated. They are connected to a network of piping which is usually filled with water under pressure. When a fire occurs it raises heat levels in the room and reaches a critical temperature at which point the sprinkler over the area of fire will be activated. The result is to keep a fire from reaching potentially dangerous and life-threatening proportions and giving early detection. Residential sprinklers operate automatically in the event of the fire, even if the householder is not home, releasing water directly over the source of heat and sounding the alarm.

Do they lead to water damage?

The amount of water which is put onto a fire by fire service hoses in an unsprinklered building is much more than that discharged by a sprinkler. During a fire, only the sprinkler's closest to the fire activate, limiting the total amount of water needed to suppress a fire.

Who would benefit from them?

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority is encouraging local authorities and builders to consider fitting sprinklers in dwellings that house particularly high risk and vulnerable individuals, in order to provide greater protection from fire. These could include multi-occupied premises and bedsits, social housing, sheltered housing, residential care premises and other housing for special needs and at-risk groups such as the elderly, infirm and physically disabled.

How much do they cost?

Residential fire sprinklers are not expensive, costing less than 2% of the cost of an average new house – or about the cost of good carpeting.

The cost of a system is dependent on the size of the property and whether the system is installed during the construction stage or is fitted retrospectively.

Other factors including what the building is made of, what is stored within it, what you use it for and how good the water supply is also affect costs.



What about smoke?

Smoke damage is a major cause of loss in fires. In serious cases smoke is the main cause of death. Sprinklers wash the larger particles out of smoke reducing its density and toxicity. In addition the water cools the smoke making it less harmful.



Aren't sprinklers unsightly?

Modern sprinklers are specially designed to meet the needs of architects in offices, hotels, shops, hospitals and prestige buildings. They are compact and elegant. In most buildings the public are usually unaware sprinklers are fitted.

Miniature sprinklers are little bigger than a 50p piece and are neat and robust. They can be fitted with ceiling rosettes and painted to match any colour scheme.

Concealed sprinklers are recessed and covered by a flat plate flush with the ceiling. They are unobtrusive and almost invisible. Concealed sprinklers are ideal for clean areas, where there is restricted headroom or vandalism is a problem.





14. Sprinkler Awareness Research

In preparation of the summer campaign launch, Springboard Marketing Limited, an independent, Kent-based marketing company, was appointed to work with us and raise awareness of the benefits of sprinklers both prior to and during the campaign.

In order to evaluate existing opinions, Springboard recently undertook research to help understand the level of people's sprinkler knowledge.

Please find attached a copy of the questionnaire and accompanying letter plus our findings.

Outputs from the findings will structure the campaign, identifying the key messages we need to address whilst providing PR material and media opportunities.

The research will be repeated annually to track perception improvement.



**Kent Fire &
Rescue Service**

sprinklers

• safer people
• safer homes
• safer schools



To «Title» «First_Name» «Surname»
«Job_Title»
«Organisation»
«Address_1»
«Address_2»
«Address_3»
«Town»
«County»
«Postcode»

Dear «Opening_salutation»

RE: OUR CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS – YOUR HELP NEEDED

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority has been committed over many years to fire prevention and risk reduction. Our programmes have proved extremely effective in reducing fire deaths and casualties across Kent and Medway, although there is still an unacceptable number of these.

We support the installation of sprinkler systems in all properties – particularly domestic dwellings that house high risk and vulnerable individuals. Our recent fire prevention activities have contributed to the significant reduction in the number of household fires, helping Kent and Medway to achieve the lowest rate of deaths and casualties nationally over the last four years.

This summer we will be launching our awareness campaign to promote sprinklers so that, in the future, they are offered at the design stage and considered as a selling point to the home owner. We also want to dispel myths such as 'they go off accidentally' and 'they are too expensive'.

We have appointed Springboard Marketing Limited, an independent, Kent-based market research company, to work with us and raise awareness of the benefits of sprinklers both prior to and during the campaign. In order to evaluate existing opinions, Springboard will be undertaking research to help understand the level of people's sprinkler knowledge.

Please find attached a questionnaire which we would be grateful if you could complete. This research is being carried out under the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct with all responses treated in the strictest confidence.

Questionnaires can be completed online at www.kent.fire-uk.org/consultation. Alternatively you can complete the hard copy enclosed and fax to Kate Murrell at Springboard Marketing on 01732 352304 or mail to FREEPOST TN2451, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2BR. Or, if you would prefer to answer over the telephone, please contact Kate on 01732 363399. If you need any help completing the survey or require a large print copy, Springboard will be more than happy to assist you.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and helping us to improve the safety of people in Kent and Medway. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated and prove useful in shaping our future Sprinkler Campaign which we will keep you updated on.

In the meantime, if you require any further information regarding the campaign or sprinklers in general, please contact me or visit www.kent.fire-uk.org.

Yours «Closing_salutation»

Paul Grout
Director Service Delivery

Enc. Sprinkler Campaign – Awareness Questionnaire

Headquarters

The Godlands
Tovil
Maidstone ME15 6XB

Contact

Kate Murrell
Direct line

01732 363399

E-mail

Kate.Murrell@springboard-marketing.co.uk

Our ref

T 01622 692121

F 01622 698350

Date 1 May 2007

Direct Fax

01732 352304

Your ref



**KENT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
SPRINKLER AWARENESS QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name:		Telephone Number:	
Organisation:		Email:	
Job Title:		Address:	

Category

For administration purposes							
Architect		Builder		Council		MP/MEP	
NGO		NHS		Planner		RSL	Other

The Fire and Rescue Service is keen to provide a fair and professional service to all members of society. We are asking the questions above for monitoring purposes only. Your individual details will be treated confidentially and will not be used for any other purposes.

1) What are your initial thoughts on sprinkler systems in buildings? (Please tick as many as required)

Save lives	<input type="checkbox"/>	React quickly to fire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extremely reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discrete	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood properties/buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ugly appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not needed if smoke alarms are installed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complex installation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Require costly servicing/maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go off accidentally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>

2) Where has your existing knowledge of sprinklers been gained? (Please tick as many as required)

Word of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Previous experience (please comment further)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company literature	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Media	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Website	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

3) In your current role, do you have influence on the specification or installation of sprinkler systems?

Yes: **No:**

3a) If yes, have you ever requested sprinkler systems to be specified or installed?

Yes: **No:**



3b) If yes, what are your reasons why?

--

If no, what are your reasons why? (Please tick as many as required)

Expensive		Flood properties/buildings	
Not required by customer		Not needed if smoke alarms are installed	
Ugly appearance		Require costly servicing/maintenance	
Complex installation		Other (please state)	
Ineffective			

Additional comments:

--

4) How often do you think sprinklers operate accidentally and may cause damage to people's homes?

Often		Sometimes		Never		Don't Know	
-------	--	-----------	--	-------	--	------------	--

5) The cost of installing a sprinkler system varies depending on the property and its access to the mains water supply. How much would you estimate a sprinkler system costs for a new-build, standard three bedroom detached property with access to the mains water supply?

Under £500		£500-£1,000		£1,001-£5,000		£5,001-£10,000		£10,000 +	
Don't Know		Other (please state)							

6) How much would you estimate it costs to retro fit a sprinkler system to a similar property?

Under £500		£500-£1,000		£1,001-£5,000		£5,001-£10,000		£10,000 +	
Don't Know		Other (please state)							

7) What do you think the average cost of damage caused by a house fire is? (based on a standard three bedroom detached property)

Under £10,000		£10,001-15,000		£15,001-£20,000		£20,001-£25,000		£25,100-£30,000		Don't know	
---------------	--	----------------	--	-----------------	--	-----------------	--	-----------------	--	------------	--

8) What do you think the average cost of damage to a business caused by a fire at its premises is (including economic cost of injuries and fatalities)?

Under £20,000		£20,001-30,000		£30,001-£40,000		£40,001-£50,000		£50,001-£60,000		Don't know	
---------------	--	----------------	--	-----------------	--	-----------------	--	-----------------	--	------------	--



9) What would you expect your annual cost of servicing a domestic sprinkler system to be?

Under £100	£101-£200	£201-£500	£500 +	£1,000 +	Don't know
------------	-----------	-----------	--------	----------	------------

10) Would you expect reduced insurance premiums in properties fitted with sprinkler systems?

Yes:		No:	
------	--	-----	--

11) Overall, do you think sprinklers should be fitted in homes of vulnerable people and schools?

Always		Sometimes		Never		Other (please explain)	

If so why?

12) What industry/corporate events do you attend?

--

13) Are you aware of any future social housing developments in Kent?

Yes:		No:	
------	--	-----	--

If yes, in what location? What is the name of the developer?
--

14) Do you have any further comments regarding sprinkler systems?

--

15) Are you happy to receive further information about the Sprinkler Campaign?

Yes:		No:	
------	--	-----	--

Thank you for your time. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated and prove useful in shaping Kent Fire & Rescue Service's future Sprinkler Campaigns.

This questionnaire is available electronically via www.kent.fire-uk.org/consultation.

Alternatively completed questionnaires can be faxed to; 01732 352304 or mailed to; FREEPOST TN2451, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2BR.



15. Residential Sprinkler System Qualifying Criteria

INTRODUCTION

The primary long term aim of Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) Sprinkler Working Group (SWG) is to reduce fire related deaths and injuries in the home by raising the profile of sprinklers, eliminating misconceptions and increasing the number of sprinkler installations in certain specific premises types around the County. This document supports item 3 of the SWG terms of reference, establishing a set of qualifying criteria for the installation of domestic/residential sprinkler systems (RSS) in the homes of the most vulnerable in Kent and Medway.

TARGETING

Those identified as being at particular risk from fire generally lack the resources, ability or understanding to provide a good standard of fire safety in their homes themselves. Identified vulnerable groups are currently targeted by KFRS through Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) and local partnership working. Key vulnerable groups identified within the County include:

- Older people
- Children and young people
- Ethnic minorities or faith groups
- People with learning or physical disabilities
- People suffering long term illness
- People with mental illness, or alcohol or drug abuse problems
- People in temporary accommodation and deprived households

Where Community Fire Safety (CFS) initiatives and partnership working are unable to provide an adequate level of fire safety in identified vulnerable households, it is proposed that, as a last resort, KFRS will fund the installation of 'retro-fit' or 'new build' RSS.



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Vulnerable people may be identified and referred to KFRS for consideration for RSS from various sources. These may include partner organisations, health, social services, associations and trusts that place vulnerable persons in social housing (LHA), education, the voluntary sector, other emergency services, KFRS operational crews and Community or Technical Fire Safety teams.

To enable effective intervention measures to be taken and the subsequent allocation of resources to reduce identified fire risks, applications from vulnerable people referred to KFRS will be considered in liaison with the referring organisation. To assist in the consideration process (CP) and to justify the outcome, applications and referrals will be measured against the KFRS eligibility flow chart (see appendix A) in conjunction with any additional risk information gathered.

Where the installation of RSS is thought to be justified, the applicant will be recommended for assistance in order of priority. If appropriate and where possible, those referred should be allocated either a designated 'safe home' or an RSS in partnership with LHA's. As it is anticipated that most referrals will come from LHA's, an even spread of RSS provision and resource allocation should be ensured.

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

In order to establish justification for the installation of RSS's, certain aspects will need to be carefully considered at the application stage and during the CP. As RSS applications are likely to be received locally at district fire safety offices, the CP will be undertaken by the local Fire Safety District Manager (FSDM). This should be done in liaison with the referring organisation. Examples of elements that will need to be considered are listed below:

- Type of accommodation (private/rented etc...)
- Co-operation of LHA (subsequent tenants)
- Potential for vandalism
- Potential for detrimental publicity

In order to ensure uniformity and consistency of the CP in each fire safety district, each final application will be completed by the FSDM also using local partner organisation information in conjunction with KFRS incident and 'at risk register' data and professional judgement. The flow chart (Annex A) should be utilised to assist in the process and to consider any additional 'non-human' factors mentioned in the list above.

Length of residency term

In order to get maximum benefit from limited resources, premises allocated RSS and 'safe homes' will need to be occupied by those identified as most vulnerable for as long a term as possible. Any applications from long and medium term tenancies should therefore be given weighting by the FSDM during the CP. Additionally, LHA's should ensure that where ever possible, when vulnerable tenants move out, the RSS protected premises or 'safe home' is allocated to subsequent higher risk tenants.



FINANCIAL & COMMERCIAL FACTORS

'Sifting' requests for RSS from those with a purely commercial interest will not be straightforward as the process will rely on the honesty and integrity of those applying for assistance. Age Concern has a similar problem when determining eligibility for services such as 'Handy-van'. Generally, it is accepted that vulnerable people who require fire safety assistance are more likely to be disadvantaged, deprived and underprivileged. Additionally, where referrals are made from partner organisations such as Social Services, there is more likely to be evidence to support any application. As funding for RSS installation is limited, the potential for match funding will always need to be taken into account by the FSDM when considering applications for RSS's.

SUPPORTING THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

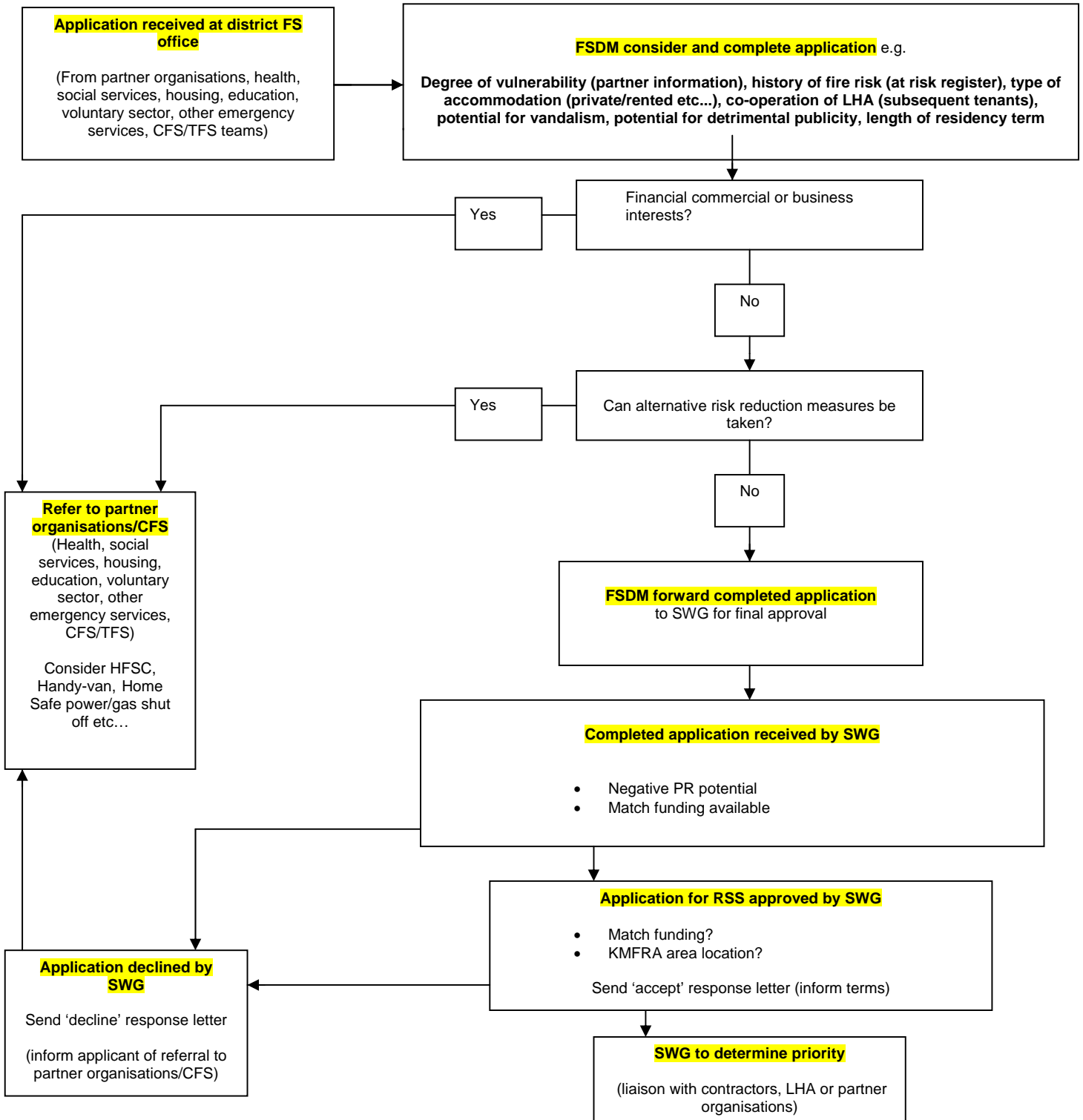
During the application process or where an application for an RSS is declined by the FSDM, the applicant details will be passed to relevant partner organisations or other KFRS community safety departments to be considered for alternative fire safety interventions such as HFSC's, the installation of smoke alarms, gas and/or power shut-off devices or Handy Van/Home Safe referral. The partner organisation or department in receipt of the referral will be responsible for contacting the applicant where this occurs.

FINAL REVIEW AND RESPONSE

Once the FSDM has undertaken the CP and where the fully completed application for RSS is calculated to be justified, the FSDM will forward the application to the SWG for final review. The SWG will consider strategic factors such as the availability of match-funding, geographical location and overall priority before sending the appropriate response letter to the applicant (copied to the FSDM and the referring organisation). If an application is declined by the SWG at the final stage of the process the applicant details will be passed to relevant partner organisations or other KFRS community safety departments to be considered for alternative fire safety interventions mentioned above. Again, the partner organisation or department in receipt of the referral will be responsible for contacting the applicant where this occurs.



16. Sprinkler Funding Eligibility Flow Chart





Kent Fire &
Rescue Service



Documents/DVDs following:

17. Copy of Sprinkler Campaign Leaflet – latest design (as at 03.09.07)

18. Local Government Association – ‘Counting The Cost’

19. Chief Fire Officers Association:

- ‘Guidance on the provision of sprinklers in schools’

20. London Fire & Rescue Service DVD