



Arson Control Forum

Topic	Arson
Title	The Bobby Van /Sanctuary Room Scheme
Service	Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
Region	South West
Date	2nd August 2010

Issue

How to ensure people suffering from domestic violence are safe in their own homes.

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service rigorously pursue a policy of protecting the most vulnerable people in their society. Working in partnership with our colleagues at the Domestic Violence Unit at Swindon Borough Council and alongside the Bobby Van Trust we are able to provide a robust service that covers both fire protection and offers some degree of security to those under threat.

Actions Taken

An appropriate room, usually on the first floor when possible will be selected and the security of that room will be improved.

Improvements include:

- Changing the door to a secure fire door which opens inwards.
- Fitting a five lever lock with a thumb turn and thumb turn bolts.
- Windows are fitted with sash jammers to prevent them being forced open
- A mobile phone is kept in the room or a panic button that connects to the police is installed.
- The loft hatch is secured so entry cannot be made via the ceiling.
- A fire extinguisher and extra smoke detectors are also fitted.
- In extreme case when the room has to be on the ground floor, window bars can be fitted to windows.

Fire and Rescue Service control are notified of any known address and the room within the property is identified from the front or rear of the house so the location of the room may be passed to the fire crew, as ladders will be the only way to access the room quickly. The PDA is raised to three pumps and an officer and the response is reviewed after six months.

Summary of Benefits Realised

These preventative measures mean that the victim and the family do not have to leave the area or be re-housed and they are able to maintain their lives within their communities whilst their children's schooling is not affected.

The upheaval and financial cost of re-housing can be avoided and the person under threat is offered a place of safety for the family, should an incident occur.

The relevant emergency services are mobilised promptly and the initial attendance can be raised appropriately to cope with the threat.

Should any rescue be necessary, information held on file regarding the physical location and access point to the sanctuary room ensures an accurate response to rescue.

Contact

If you require any further details about the points raised in this case study, please contact:

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