

# FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY NEWS



**SEPTEMBER 2017**

Please find below information from your Member representative on South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, Cllr Pat Haith



## Applications open for Stronger Safer Communities Reserve

**South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority has made money available to support the work of local communities to prevent fires and other emergencies.**

Community groups and charities are being invited to submit an expression of interest to access the funding, which has been set aside from the Authority's reserves. There have been two previous rounds of funding.

The maximum amount of funding available for each project is £100,000 and the minimum amount is £5,000. Projects should run for up to two years.

The latest funding will be allocated for projects which meet one of the following areas:

- Water Safety
- Excluded Groups – including BAME and faith communities, LGBT and Roma communities
- Mental Health
- Arson
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Health and Social Care

The closing date for applications is 29 September 2017.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email [ttranter@syfire.gov.uk](mailto:ttranter@syfire.gov.uk)  
Visit [www.syfire.gov.uk](http://www.syfire.gov.uk)



## **South Yorkshire community groups to benefit from latest round of fire funding**

Charities and community groups are being invited to bid for the latest round of funding made available by the county's Fire Authority.

The application process will open on 1 September and close at midday on 29 September for the third round of South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority's Safer Stronger Communities Reserve fund, which aims to support the work of local communities to reduce fires and other emergencies.

The maximum amount of money available for each project is £100,000 and the minimum amount is £5,000. Projects should run for up to two years. More than 40 projects were given grants as part of two previous open bidding processes.

The latest funding will be allocated for projects which meet specific criteria, which include tackling water safety, arson and road traffic collisions. Other key priorities include working with those with mental health issues, people from excluded groups including BAME and faith communities and health and social care issues.

Further information on the Fund is available [HERE](#)

### **Pictured at the Round 3 launch event**

Michelle Kielty – Progression Manager Crisis Skylight

Councillor Jackie Satur SY Fire & Rescue Authority

James Kowacz – Learning Manager Crisis Skylight



## Virtual reality latest weapon to cut South Yorkshire road deaths



The fire service is unleashing the latest cutting edge technology to curb road deaths in South Yorkshire, by harnessing virtual reality to switch young drivers on to common dangers.

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue has funded ten virtual reality headsets which will be coupled with hard hitting 360 degree videos to give road users a dramatic first-hand insight of what it's like to be at the centre of a devastating fatal collision.

Fire service safety officers will work together with South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership to use the state-of-the-art kit at school visits and community events in the hope that the shocking footage makes young people think twice about their behaviour on the roads.

Users will wear a virtual reality headset and experience a full crash scene extrication from the arrival of the emergency services, while being talked through the process by a paramedic.

Steve Helps, head of prevention and protection, said: *"We are always looking to use the latest technology to help our work to make people safer. Virtual reality offers us a unique ability to put members of the public at the heart of dramatic situations, which we hope they will never have to go through for real. By giving people a hard-hitting, realistic experience, we think we can change people's behaviour and save lives."*

Joanne Wehrle, Safer Roads Manager at South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership, said: *"Young people are over represented in our casualty statistics and are more likely to be involved in a road traffic collision due to their inexperience and their attitudes towards risk. The Safer Roads Partnership delivers a number of interventions for young drivers and car users to raise awareness of the dangers and challenge attitudes towards road safety, in a bid to encourage safer behaviours. The use of virtual reality is an exciting development which I hope will help us to engage with more young people and instil a clear road safety message, helping to save further injuries and loss of life amongst this vulnerable group of road users."*

### Virtual Reality (cont'd)

Factors involved in road deaths commonly include inappropriate speed, using a mobile phone, not wearing a seatbelt and drink/drug driving.

The headsets won't just be used to target young drivers- with further 360 content being developed to combat other causes of fatal collisions, such as driver fatigue.

In figures announced by the Safer Roads Partnership last month, 2016 saw 4,396 casualties arising from 3,053 collisions on the roads in South Yorkshire.

Of these, 579 people were seriously injured and 3,780 were slightly injured. Sadly, 37 people were killed.

For more road safety advice visit [www.sysrp.co.uk](http://www.sysrp.co.uk)



#### Did you know you can watch all Authority meetings LIVE?

All Fire Authority meetings are open to the public and are broadcast live on the internet. Visit [www.southyorks.gov.uk](http://www.southyorks.gov.uk). You can also view previous meetings.

Whilst viewing the meeting you can contribute comments and debate proceedings with other viewers via CoverItLive or Twitter.

#### Follow the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority on Twitter



@syFireAuth

### Sprinklers save Rotherham supermarket from fire

Fire officers are repeating calls for businesses to fit sprinklers, after the devices saved a Rotherham supermarket from suffering a serious blaze.



South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue firefighters attended the incident at Asda Rotherham, Aldwarke Lane in July after a fryer caught fire in the cafe.

But the fire was already out when crews from Rotherham and Dearne stations arrived, there was virtually no fire or water damage and the store was quickly reopened- all thanks to sprinklers which had been fitted to suppress the fire.

Business Fire Safety Manager Amy Jenkinson, said: "The fire suppression systems installed by Asda were sophisticated, worked effectively and completely extinguished the fire. There is no doubt that having sprinkler systems like this in place can save businesses massive amounts of time and money by limiting losses of stock and custom in the event that a fire does occur."



### **Sprinklers (cont'd)**

Sprinklers are the most effective way of ensuring that fires are suppressed or even extinguished before the fire service can arrive. They save lives and reduce injuries, protect firefighters who attend incidents and reduce the amount of damage to both property and the environment from fire.

Currently, only commercial premises greater than 20,000m<sup>2</sup> must have sprinkler systems installed.

SYFR adopted a position statement last year which specifically advocated the use of sprinklers and other fire suppression systems in non-domestic premises and high-risk residential settings.

### **Deputy Chief Fire Officer appointed**



South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority (SYFRA) has appointed a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer following an extensive recruitment process.

Martin Blunden beat off competition from a strong field of external candidates to secure the position permanently, which he had been fulfilling on a temporary basis since January.

Martin joined SYFR in April 2015 as Assistant Chief Fire Officer with more than 20 years experience across three different fire and rescue services, having started his career in Buckinghamshire in 1992.

Martin, aged 49, is also the National Fire Chief's Council lead for national operational learning, helping to ensure that learning from incidents that firefighters attend is shared effectively across the sector.

He was recently appointed Chair of the UK Fire & Rescue Service football section.

As part of his new role, Martin will be responsible for delivering the commitments set out in the service's Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017-20 and leading its collaboration work with other emergency service partners.

Fire Authority Chair, Cllr Linda Burgess, said: "I would like to congratulate Martin on his appointment. The panel was particularly impressed with Martin's recent achievements in South Yorkshire, his vision for the future of our Service and his impressive experience from across the fire sector."

### **Rotherham teen completes life changing youth course to make grandma proud**

A brave Rotherham teen who overcame bereavement and surgery to **complete a fire and police led youth course**, has credited the scheme with turning his life around.



Jake Richardson, aged 18, from Maltby has just landed his dream job as a fitter with transport giants Stagecoach after completing the Prince's Trust Team Programme, led by South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and South Yorkshire Police.

Jake's stunning achievement followed a desperate few months, as he struggled to deal with the loss of his beloved grandmother who sadly passed away and a burst appendix which needed major surgery. Both events occurred whilst he was taking part in the 12-week programme which is designed to boost the life chances and employability of 16-25 year olds.

Jake said: "My life took a dramatic change at around eight years old as my stepdad, who had been in my life for most of that time, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Alongside my mum being disabled, this meant I had to grow up and be more mature from a very young age.

"Caring for my parents did take my childhood away from me as I never really had many friends in school and I was always at home caring for my family. I felt isolated from a young age. We still did things as a family, but it sometimes felt like my experience wasn't the same as everyone else's. Not that I would change my childhood, as it has made me the young adult I am today.

"My early problems meant that I often had a short temper, which in turn made school difficult. All of my attention was on my family and not on the lessons I was in. I failed all my subjects, even though I now see what my focus should have been on. If I could go back to school and re-do everything I would.

"After I finished school my life started to get better. I went to college and studied motor vehicle service and repairs Level 2 which I passed with a merit. I planned to do level 3, but I failed my Maths and English for a second time, which really affected my confidence.

"One of my friends then got me a job in the shop where he works, but the role just consisted of stacking shelves day after day. I hated it, it wasn't for me. But then I got a new chance with my future, all thanks to the Prince's Trust Team Programme which I heard about through my girlfriend's dad.

"So I came for the interview where I first met the course leader, John Daley, who gave me a tour of the fire station where it is based and explained what would be happening during the course. I knew this course would help me with my professional career.

"The Prince's Trust course was the greatest experience of my life and it gave me more confidence and enthusiasm for learning. The course included a work placement with Stagecoach in Rawmarsh, where I carried out tasks such as servicing, changing interior lights and steam cleaning. It was easily my favourite part of the course.

"But then my entire world was ripped from underneath me as during the placement, my grandma sadly passed away. She was my inspiration in life. Her death destroyed me and it felt like my whole world had just stopped with no warning. It knocked me back to rock bottom, my confidence was gone and I was getting ready to quit the course and just be on my own. But I decided to continue with the course to make my grandma proud. I know she would be proud of me now.

"This all followed surgery on my appendix, which had to be removed during week 5 of the course. They had burst and risked poisoning my blood. But I was determined to continue with the community project because I didn't want to let my Princes Trust team leaders and other team members down. So I went into hospital on the Friday and then was back with the team on the Monday.

**Prince's Trust (cont'd)**

"I am so grateful to Prince's Trust Team Programme for allowing me to have this great opportunity, and especially to our team leaders John Daley and Rhian Oxley for everything they have done for me on the course. Without their support I never could have completed it."

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and South Yorkshire Police teamed up with the Prince's Trust to deliver the Team Programme two years ago. During that time around 100 young people have benefited from the 12 week personal development course for unemployed 16 – 25 year olds, offering work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week.

The courses are based at fire stations and are the only programmes of their type in the country to be jointly delivered by fire and police services. For more information or to sign-up, email [princestrust@syfire.gov.uk](mailto:princestrust@syfire.gov.uk)

**Fire funded projects deliver big returns for local people**

Fire Authority funded community projects have helped to deliver millions of pounds worth of public savings, a major independent study has found.

Research carried out by social return on investment specialists found that projects delivered through South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority's Stronger Safer Reserve Fund produced nearly £5 million worth of benefits to local people.

The fund was set up by the Fire Authority to support the work of local communities to reduce blazes and other emergencies. More than 40 projects were given grants from money set aside from the Authority's reserves.

Researchers measured the impact of eight of those projects for their impact on reducing fires, plus other social, environmental and economic measures.

Projects reviewed included 'Barnsley Babies'- a scheme which sees midwives deliver fire safety and other healthy living advice to pregnant women in the borough.

The 'Dementia Fire and Home Safety Project' saw coordinators in each of South Yorkshire's four districts promote fire safety to a range of organisations working with people living with dementia and their carers.



### Fire funded projects (cont'd)

'Safety Circles' saw the fire service work with Rotherham charity SpeakUp to help people with learning difficulties to live more independent lives, by improving their understanding of issues like kitchen fire safety, escape routes and what to do in an emergency.

Steve Helps, head of prevention and protection, said: "Our community safety staff have worked closely with charities and community groups to make sure money granted to them to support our work makes a clear and measurable impact. Our work to make local people safer is well established, but we believe that by continuing to work with other agencies, we can make further reductions in fires, deaths and injuries."

Fire Authority Chair Cllr Linda Burgess, said: "The Authority believes that charities, community organisations and other local groups can play an important part in supporting the work of the fire service to make our communities safer and stronger. Members are rightly pleased that the investment we have made in our communities has been proven to be delivering real and far-reaching benefits for local people."

Ivan Annibal, from Rose Regeneration and Rocket Science who led the research, said: "We were very pleased with the outcomes of this research. They demonstrate that the fund has built local capacity for the longer term through its grants. Using our Social Value Engine which provides a comprehensive assessment of the value of a whole range of social outcomes we were able to work with the team managing the fund to identify its achievements in the round. They have been very impressive indeed."

Applications will soon open for the third round the fund. The maximum amount of money available for each project is £100,000 and the minimum amount is £5,000. Projects should run for up to two years.

The latest funding will be allocated for projects which meet specific criteria, which include tackling water safety, arson and road traffic collisions. Other key priorities include working with those with mental health issues, people from excluded groups including BAME and faith communities and health and social care issues. For more information email [ttranter@syfire.gov.uk](mailto:ttranter@syfire.gov.uk) or visit [www.syfire.gov.uk](http://www.syfire.gov.uk)

[View the full SSCR evaluation report](#)



## South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue scoop double award win

WM Nicola Hobbs with the Master Cutler , Richard Edwards

Staff members of South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue are celebrating after picking up two awards at the Cutlers' Company Police and Fire Service annual awards.

The fire service received both the individual and group awards in recognition of exemplary service for the second year running.

Watch Manager Nicola Hobbs won the individual prize for her involvement and impact on the diverse communities of South Yorkshire, going above and beyond her role. She has been instrumental in supporting the Fire Cadet programme throughout the seven cadet branches in South Yorkshire and has been heavily involved with the Prince's Trust and the Cutlers Better Learners, Better Workers programme. Nicola donated her £250 cash prize to Sheena Amos Youth Trust.

Community Fire Safety Officers and the High Risk Coordination Team took home the group award for their service to the people of South Yorkshire. The team fits tens of thousands of smoke alarms each year, helping to reduce the number of accidental dwelling fires in the homes of some of the most vulnerable people in society. They donated their £250 cash prize to Barnsley Animal Rescue.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Martin Blunden said: "These award wins are a great achievement for the fire service and provide well deserved recognition for the hard and varied work our staff do to keep the public of South Yorkshire safe."

The awards, which took place in the Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield, were presented by the Master Cutler, Richard Edwards

### Fire service calls on partners to do more to prevent needless house blaze deaths

The fire service is calling on public bodies and health partners to do more to help prevent needless deaths, after revealing more than 50 people have died in house fires in South Yorkshire since 2011.

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue says that although it now attends fewer house fires than at any time in its history, the number of people dying in serious blazes has stubbornly refused to decline.

That's because many of the people who die are not always known to the fire service, which prevents firefighters and safety officers putting things in place to stop fires.

Fire chiefs have launched the '[Fire Safe Together](#)' campaign to help tackle the problem, calling on GPs, social care teams, drug and alcohol services and other partners to work with them to identify those most at risk.

Head of prevention and protection Steve Helps, said: "There are some common factors involved in almost all of our recent fire deaths, such as hoarding, loneliness, substance misuse and mental health issues. Often, those who died were already known to at least one agency, whether it's a landlord, doctor's surgery, council or social care team. Sadly, in most cases, they were not known to us.

"If we had known about them, we could have done something to help. We could have prevented another needless death. We might have kept someone's loved one alive."

Since 2011, 53 people have died in house fires in South Yorkshire. Nearly three quarters (71%) of those deaths occurred in house fires which started accidentally.

Many of those who died (61%) were older people aged 50 or over, with fire service investigations finding that issues such as hoarding, drugs, alcohol and mental health problems frequently contributing to the fires starting. Half of those who died lived on their own.

The fire service says the best way for partners to help is to sign-up to become a 'Safe and Well' partner. This is a scheme which aims to improve how the fire service and local organisations work together to effectively identify and reduce hazards for people most at risk.

Common measures to protect those most at risk include fitting smoke alarms, providing flame retardant bedding and installing misting systems to suppress fires.

For more information about the scheme and to [ask about your organisation signing up to become a partner, click here](#)