



# PRESS RELEASE

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## PLAN A SAFE ESCAPE!

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is urging people to make an emergency escape plan to have the best chance of getting out the house safely if the worst should happen.

Working smoke alarms can give you the warning you need to get out of your home in a fire but blocked exits, locked doors and unfamiliar surroundings can significantly reduce the time it takes to escape.

This month, just taking some simple steps can help keep you and your loved ones safe:

### ***Plan your escape route:***

- Plan an escape route in advance
- Take a few minutes to practise the plan with everyone you live with or guests visiting you
- The best escape route is the normal way in and out of your home
- Make sure exits are kept clear at all times
- Keep door and window keys in a safe place - make sure everyone in the household knows where they are
- Once you are safely out of the house, don't go back in for anything – get out, stay out and call 999

### ***If you are a carer for someone:***

- If the person you care for has sight, hearing or mobility difficulties, or they use oxygen, make sure they are registered with their local fire and rescue service. This will mean that a fire crew is made aware of their circumstances in the event of an emergency
- When planning an escape route, take into account any difficulties they may have and help they may need getting out of the house
- Consider the use of available support (e.g. assistive technology, telecare etc.)

### ***If you live in a block of flats:***

- Make sure you know what the fire safety procedures are for your premises
- Do not use lifts if there is a fire
- Make sure that communal corridors and stairways are kept clear

### ***If there is a fire and your escape route is blocked:***

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**ROYAL BERKSHIRE**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer
- Before you open a door, check if it's warm. If it is, don't open it – fire is on the other side
- Get everyone into one room, ideally one with a window and a phone
- If you have a phone, call 999 and explain that you are trapped
- Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke, then open the window and shout "fire!"

Iain Harrison, Group Manager for Prevention at RBFRS, said: "Having working smoke alarms and knowing your escape plan in an emergency can help keep you and your loved ones safe.

"Ensuring that you test your smoke alarms once a week and have one fitted to every level of your home is essential because even breathing small amounts of toxic smoke could leave you unconscious, so every second counts when escaping from a fire.

"If you have dependants or someone less able to care for, it could take more time to escape. Make sure you're always prepared, your exits are clear and that everyone knows what to do if the worst should happen. Remember – get out, stay out and call 999!"

**ENDS.**