

Our plans for protecting people in Berkshire 2020 to 2023



Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service





Introduction



The law says that all fire and rescue services must make sure all buildings are safe from fire.



The law does not apply to homes that are privately owned.



Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service does this through work that includes:



- looking at the plans of new buildings or buildings that are being changed



- carrying out checks to make sure the fire safety in buildings is good.



To support the law the Government has written **a set of rules** that all fire and rescue organisations must follow.



The law says fire and rescue services:



- must check that buildings in their area are safe



- can tell building owners to make their buildings safe by following fire safety rules



- must check buildings used by businesses, so lives and buildings are protected



- should work closely with other organisations to give good fire safety advice.



This work is important as the Government is keen for local organisations to work closely with local fire and rescue services.



The **three** most important things Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service do are:



Prevention

The work we do to **prevent** fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place.



Protection

The work we do to **protect** local people at **risk** when **fire safety rules** are not met.

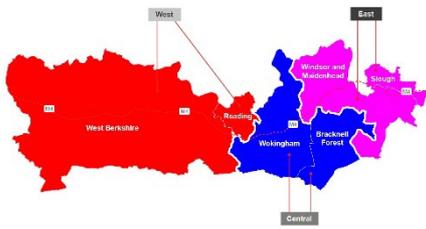


A **risk** is something which can lead to harm.



Response

The work we do to **respond** to fires and other emergencies.



About Berkshire

Berkshire is a county in Southern England where nearly **1 million** people live.



It has many historical buildings, including **Windsor Castle**, 1 of the places where the Royal Family live.



There are lots of businesses in Berkshire, many of them in the IT sector.

£37 billion



Berkshire's businesses made **thirty-seven billion pounds** in **2017**.

20,000

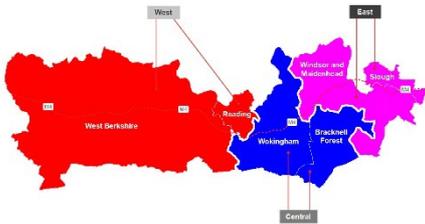


500 businesses and **twenty thousand** people work in the Slough Trading Estate, the largest of its kind in Europe.



Businesses like to work in Berkshire because:

- it is close to London

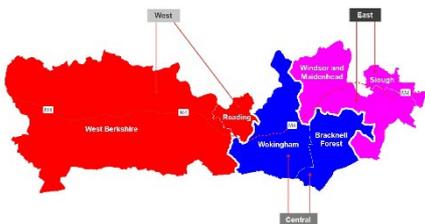


- it is easy to get to other parts of the UK as the M4 motorway runs through the county.



The new Crossrail line and a bigger Heathrow airport could mean even more businesses move to Berkshire.

50,000



Since **2012**, the number of people living in Berkshire has increased.

There are now **over fifty thousand** more people who live in the county.



In Berkshire, some wages and house prices are high.



As there are lots of businesses in Berkshire, we must have a **Protection Plan**. The plan will help to increase fire safety in Berkshire.



This plan is about **protecting** local people at risk and making sure that buildings meet **fire safety rules**.



Fire safety rules are the things that must be done to keep a building safe from fire.



Grenfell Tower Fire



Sadly, we cannot look at fire safety without thinking about the awful events at **Grenfell Tower** on **14 June 2017**.



The Grenfell Tower Fire was so serious that the Government set up the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry** on **14 September 2017**.



The **Grenfell Tower Inquiry** was set up to look closely at events before and after the fire.



To find out more about the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry** go to www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk



After the Grenfell Tower Fire, **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority** wrote a 4-step plan to increase fire safety in Berkshire.



Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is a group of local councillors who make all the big choices about the local fire and rescue service.

£600,000



We put aside **six hundred thousand pounds** to increase the fire safety of buildings across Berkshire.



We checked tower blocks and buildings in Berkshire with **cladding** made from **Aluminium Composite Materials**.



Sometimes **cladding** is used to cover the outside of buildings.



Some buildings such as tower blocks have **cladding** made from **Aluminium Composite Materials**.



Not all **cladding** is made from **Aluminium Composite Material**.

There are other types of material which are not safe.



So we need to carry out tests to check if the **cladding** is safe.



The building checks that we did helped us to update our plans.



Step 1 – We set up a team to inspect all **157** tower blocks in Berkshire.



During this work we:

- gave information to over **four thousand seven hundred** local people about fire safety



- visited all buildings in Berkshire with **cladding** made from **Aluminium Composite Materials**.



Step 2 – We worked with building owners, local councils and residents to help them follow government rules.



Step 3 – We will look at the information from the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry** and change the way we work.



At the time of writing this **Protection Plan**, we have reached **Step 3**.



The Grenfell Tower Fire has led to a lot of unplanned work.



An important part of this **Protection Plan** is making sure that tower blocks in Berkshire are safe.



Step 4 – After the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, we may need to change the way we work.



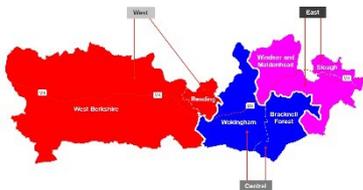
Increasing fire safety



Royal Berkshire Fire Authority has been looking at how large building and development plans could change fire safety in Berkshire.



In **Step 1**, we employed **10** new Fire Safety Officers to make our team stronger.



The team will help us carry on with our Protection work in Berkshire.



All the Fire Safety Officers go on training to better understand fire safety issues.

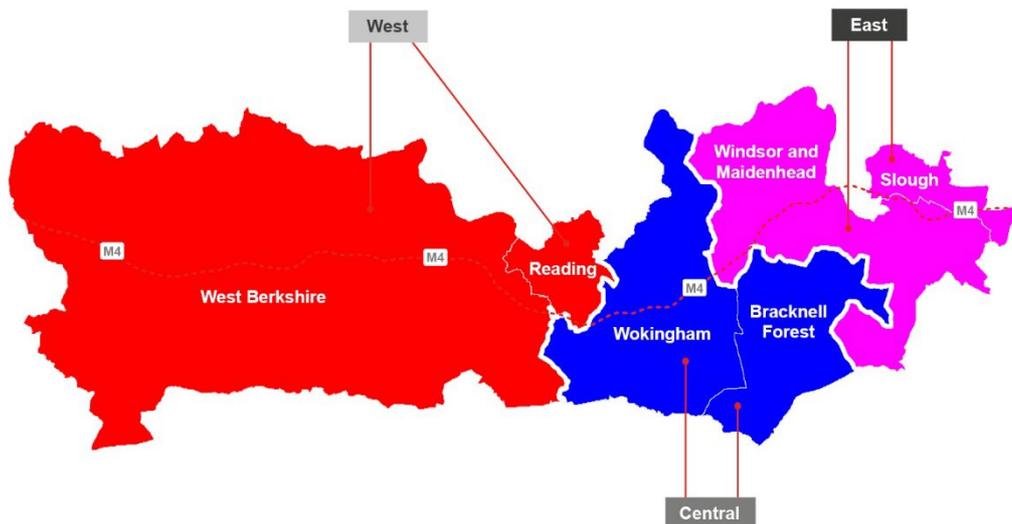


And we paid for **2** Fire Safety Officers to study **Fire Safety Engineering**.



Fire Safety Engineering looks at ways to make buildings safe from fire when designed and built.

Since **2017** we have set up **3 Fire Safety Hubs** to support our fire safety work around Berkshire.





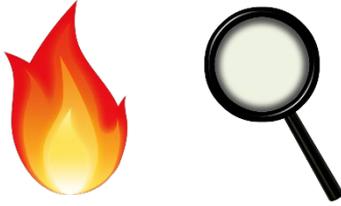
3 Protection Teams work in **3** local areas to better understand local **risk**.



Each hub in Berkshire has its own **Local Safety Plan** to make sure they can manage local **risk**.



A **Local Safety Plan** is a plan that says how we will keep local people safe.



Fire safety checks



Before **2017** we did a lot of fire safety checks. We found that most of the buildings we checked were safe.



So we needed to check more buildings that were not safe.



We changed the way we work, so we now visit more **high-risk** buildings to check that people are safe.



2,817



Since **April 2017**, we have carried out over **two thousand eight hundred** fire safety checks.



The extra work we had to do after the **Grenfell Tower Fire** meant it was harder to carry on with our usual work.



Over the last few years, we carried out more checks at buildings with fire safety problems.



Since **2016 to 2017**, we have supported more building owners to follow **fire safety rules**.



If building owners do not follow **Fire Safety rules**, they can be fined and go to prison.



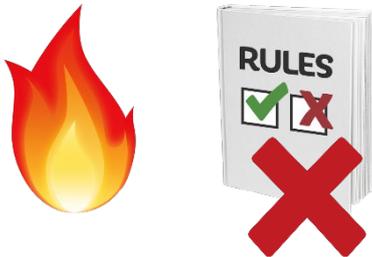
We looked closely at the fire safety checks carried out over the last **2 years**.



This work told us we were checking the buildings where:



- people are at high risk



- **fire safety rules** are not followed.



We have noticed that **restaurants and cafes** with poor food standards may not follow fire safety rules.



We are also going to find out if buildings with **low energy ratings** and **poor health and safety ratings** do not follow fire safety rules.



We will also look at the **information** we have about fires in buildings that have already happened.



This information will help us to check **high-risk** buildings.



We have learned a lot about **risk** from the reports about **Grenfell Tower**.



If a building follows good **fire safety rules**, it should stop the fire from spreading.



But the **cladding** on **Grenfell Tower** burned very quickly.



So we may need to do different fire safety checks in the future.



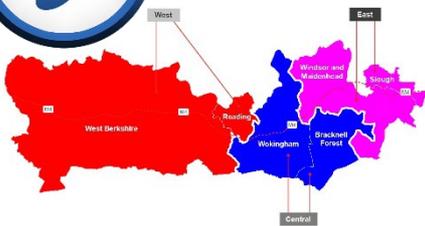
How we work



Our local fire safety teams will get better information about the buildings in Berkshire that are not safe.



We also collect information about fire safety in small local areas where people live.



This information will tell us the local areas that are most at risk of fire.



Better Business for All

Better Business for All is a Government plan to support local businesses and help them to grow.

Since **2017** we have helped local businesses in Berkshire to follow **fire safety rules** by:



- working with local businesses during Business Safety Week



- working with local businesses at **Pub Watch** meetings



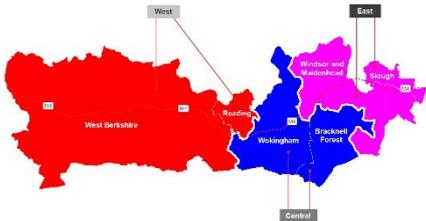
- holding fire safety events for small businesses



- talking to local businesses about fire safety issues



- running a fire safety campaign in tower blocks.



Our **Fire Safety Hubs** will support **Better Business for All** by giving local businesses the advice and information they need to follow fire safety rules.



A review of national **fire safety rules** means we may need to change the way we work in the future.



We will always follow any changes to national **fire safety rules**.

We will support businesses to follow **fire safety rules** by:



- filling in a short form when we check a building



- carrying out joint checks to high-risk buildings with the local council.



Working with other organisations



Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service works with:



- Radian Housing Group



- University Partnerships Programme



- Ramsay Health Care.



As part of this work **Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service:**



- gives **fire safety advice** to businesses that need it the most



- supports businesses to grow



- support staff to be fire safety experts.



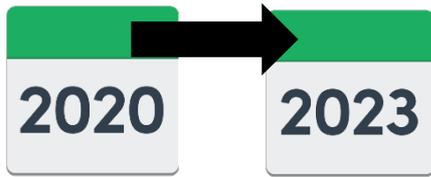
Thanks to our work with local organisations, we are getting better at finding buildings at **risk**.



In **2019** we started working with **Childbase Partnership**.



If the risk is high, we want to start **new partnerships** with other organisations and businesses in the future.



There are **2** ideas in our **2020** to **2023** **Protection Plan:**



Idea 1 – We will change our timetable of checks to look closely at the:



- buildings that may not meet fire safety rules because the owners do not follow other rules like food safety



- building owners that are not likely to follow **fire safety rules**.



Idea 2 – We will change how we work as **building regulations** and **fire safety rules** change.



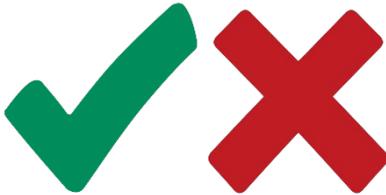
Building regulations are **fire safety rules** that must be followed.



After reading this **Protection Plan**, please answer the **2 questions** over the next **2** pages.



Question 1 – Do you agree that we should improve our timetable of checks to make sure **fire safety rules** are followed?



Yes or No?

Please give us any other feedback in the box below:





Question 2 – Do you agree that we should change how we work as **fire safety rules** change?



Yes or No?

Please give us any other feedback in the box below:



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