



# News Release

Issued on: Monday 25 September 2023

## Encouraging Students to Stay Safe for National Student Fire Safety Week

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is proud to support the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Student Fire Safety Week campaign for 2023. As students in Leicestershire gear up for the start of the university year, LFRS is urging them to prioritise safety, both in their accommodation and during their social activities.

National Student Fire Safety Week serves as a crucial reminder for students to remain vigilant and fire-aware as they embark on their university journey. The transition to independent living, whether in rented properties or university halls of residence, presents new responsibilities, including fire prevention and awareness.

Ashraf Hajat, Group Manager of Community Safety and Safeguarding, has emphasised the importance of fire safety awareness for students: "When living away from home, it's crucial to identify potential fire hazards and implement preventative measures. Many fires in student accommodations start in the kitchen, often due to distractions. We urge students to prioritise safety when cooking and follow our advice below."

In line with the Fire Kills Campaign, LFRS offers the following advice to help students stay safe:

1. Ensure you have working smoke alarms in your accommodation.
2. React quickly and evacuate safely when the fire alarm sounds. Do not cover any smoke alarms.
3. Stay focused when cooking.
4. Avoid overloading sockets and keep electrical items away from hazards like curtains, paper, and water.

5. Know your escape routes for a quick but safe exit.
6. Consider using fragrance sprays or reed diffusers instead of candles for a pleasant atmosphere.
7. If you smoke, ensure cigarettes are extinguished properly. Or if you use e-cigarettes, be sure to only use the charger supplied to prevent the battery from exploding.
8. Know your rights and who to speak to if you spot a potential fire risk.
8. In the event of a fire: Get out, Stay out, and Call 999.

For more student fire safety tips, visit the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service website at [www.leics-fire.gov.uk/your-safety](http://www.leics-fire.gov.uk/your-safety). Ashraf Hajat added, "Each university and college has a person responsible for accommodation and fire safety. If you spot a fire risk or have any concerns, make sure you speak up."

In addition to fire safety, LFRS is also encouraging students to stay safe near water during Fresher's Week as part of the 'Don't Drink and Drown' campaign. This national campaign, led by the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK), emphasises the importance of making responsible choices, looking out for friends, and avoiding water hazards when under the influence.

Watch Manager for Community Safety, Kate Garrigan, says, "People tragically die each year because they've entered the water under the influence, sometimes deliberately or more often, completely by accident. Alcohol and drugs can seriously impede your ability to survive in water. If you've had a drink, stay away from the water."

Most people who drown when under the influence, have done so by falling in whilst walking alone near water. We are urging people to consider their actions when heading home and #BeAMate so everyone gets home safely."

The 'Don't Drink and Drown' campaign is aimed at reducing alcohol-related drownings, with a focus on September and December, known for higher incidents due to university terms and festive celebrations.

To stay safe, RLSS UK encourages everyone to:

1. Stay safe.
2. Plan a safe route away from water.
3. Look after one another.

For more information and resources on the 'Don't Drink and Drown' campaign, visit [www.rlss.org.uk](http://www.rlss.org.uk).

Stay safe, make good choices, and enjoy your university experience responsibly.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

Interviews can be arranged through prior arrangement with Corporate Communications on the details below.

**About the Service**

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service provides emergency response, prevention and protection services from 20 stations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Its headquarters is based in Birstall, Leicester.

During 2021/22, we attended a total of 8,259 emergency incidents, including 1,968 fires and 707 road traffic collisions. A total of 12,938 Home Safety Checks were completed and we fitted 3,546 smoke alarms. 233 schools were visited as part of the Service's schools programme, delivering fire and road safety education to 6,724 pupils.

The Service's prevention, education, enforcement and inspection programmes have resulted in significant reductions in the number of incidents attended.

**Contact:**

Corporate Communications

Direct: 0116 210 5756

[Corporate.communications@leics-fire.gov.uk](mailto:Corporate.communications@leics-fire.gov.uk)