



LEICESTERSHIRE FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

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BRAUNSTONE BLUES OFFER FREE LIFE SKILLS TO RESIDENTS



More than 200 people in Braunstone, Leicester have attended bespoke sessions aimed at providing residents with valuable life skills.

The sessions, suitably called 'Life Skills', are delivered by a multi-service team called, Braunstone Blues.

Braunstone Blues are a team made up of dedicated staff from the three blue light services; Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire Police and East Midlands Ambulance Service.

The team work with partner agencies and residents of Braunstone, to create a healthier, safer and more secure community, by educating and directing residents to appropriate support services. By conducting home visit checks and delivering appropriate campaigns, the team aim to reduce the number of emergency calls in the area.

Life Skills has now become a valuable part to Braunstone Blues demand reduction work.

Edd Rodgers, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Watch Manger and Manager for Braunstone Blues, said: "Life Skills is so important for creating community resilience and getting people to communicate their emotions appropriately. We give residents the knowledge they need to make informed life decisions, as well as spreading our 'healthy, safe, and secure' messages to help reduce the number of 999 calls in the area.

"During the sessions, we identify any barriers in their lives that are affecting them, whether that might be mental health, financial or lack of aspirations and we look at how they can overcome these barriers. We encourage residents to feel more positive and to take control of their lives, by helping them to make decisions and increasing their self-confidence."

The sessions cover aspects of social, cognitive and emotional skills including; using assertive communication, negotiation, critical thinking and problem solving, as well as addressing stress management and self-esteem and promoting team working.

Edd Rodgers, added: "We are delighted that so many people have already been on our Life Skills sessions, but we want to reach out to more people across Braunstone. It is a really valuable session, only lasting a few hours and it can really help you to live a more empowered life."

Braunstone Blues have been working with The Winstanley School in Braunstone, to deliver Life Skills sessions to their Year 8 pupils.

Gareth Williams and Dave Bennett, Co-Heads of The Winstanley School, said: "We want all of our students to shine in our community. The sessions with the Braunstone Blues covered the very important life skills of communication, critical thinking and problem solving; all geared to enabling our students to become positive role models in school and the local community, building cohesion and leadership for future generations."

One student from Winstanley School, said: "The exercises taught me a lot. They were interesting and showed me things that I had not thought about and made me think about life skills. It was very good."

Life Skills recipients, said the sessions have made a difference to their lives and community, with 94% saying the session has improved their life skills. Of the attendees, 85% said, 'they could now change their community for the better', compared to just 52%, who said they could before they attended.

Former Braunstone resident, Daniel Arnold, who has attended Life Skills, said: "How this session is run, is how I now see my life. I really enjoyed the session, and I hope that people see the benefit and take away these skills to make their lives better."

Braunstone Blues run Life Skills sessions every couple of months. Look out for more dates advertised on their Facebook page.

For more information on the Braunstone Blues team and details of the next Life Skills, visit, www.braunstoneblues.org or follow the team on Facebook: [@braunstoneblues](https://www.facebook.com/braunstoneblues), Twitter: [@braunstoneblues](https://twitter.com/braunstoneblues), and Instagram: [braunstoneblues](https://www.instagram.com/braunstoneblues).

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Notes to editors:

1. To find out more about Braunstone Blues please contact Braunstone Blues on 07800 709 802 or [Braunstone.blues@lfrs.org](mailto:braunstone.blues@lfrs.org)
2. You can follow Braunstone Blues on social media:
Facebook: [@braunstoneblues](https://www.facebook.com/braunstoneblues)
Twitter: [@braunstoneblues](https://twitter.com/braunstoneblues)
Instagram: braunstoneblues

About the Braunstone Blues

In May 2015 Braunstone Blues was established. This is a dedicated team consisting of a Watch Manager and a Community Safety Advisor from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service; Police Constable, and Police Community Support Officer, from Leicestershire Police; and a Paramedic from East Midlands Ambulance Service. The team has since extended to a second Paramedic and an Occupational Therapist.

999 demand data from all three services was analysed and it was found that the small geographical area of Braunstone produced close to 4,600 999 calls every year. This was roughly a 56% EMAS, 40% Police, and 4% Fire. The population of the area was 15,700 people living in 6,000 homes. This was shown to be the highest area of demand in all of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The team work with partners and residents of Braunstone to deliver a healthier, safer and more secure community by educating and directing residents to appropriate services via a home visit service and delivering appropriate campaigns, to reduce the number of emergency calls in the area.

There are four main streams of work for Braunstone Blues; Home Visits, Community Events, working with high demand users and running Life Skills sessions in the community.

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