

News Release

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Celebrate Safely This Halloween

People across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are being urged to celebrate safely this Halloween.

The Celebrate Safely campaign aims to encourage people to only call 999 in an emergency, reduce the number of complaints about Halloween related anti-social behaviour, promote better fire safety and encourage people to trick or treat respectfully.

This includes only trick or treating at houses clearly happy to be involved, respecting elderly neighbours and not playing pranks on unsuspecting individuals.

The Celebrate Safely partnership involves Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Rutland County Council and the district and borough councils.

Superintendent Rich Ward from the Contact Management Department is encouraging the correct use of 999 calls after last year's Halloween led to the most incidents recorded by the police for four years.

He said: "We want people to enjoy Halloween, but only if it doesn't cause alarm or distress to other people, so we're asking trick or treaters to respect people's wishes and only go where they are welcome. We also ask that they don't play tricks on people that cause them to report it to the police.

"These days, people often decorate the outside of their homes if they are happy to have trick or treaters or look out for our pumpkin posters and respect those homes with the 'No Thanks' message."

Last year (2017) Leicestershire Police received an unprecedented number of calls on 31 October. During the 24 hour period across Halloween, 527 emergency 999 were made to the police and 1,025 incidents were created, which is the highest number of incidents recorded in Leicestershire in a single 24-hour period for four years.

The Halloween Trick or Treaters posters can be downloaded from the Leicestershire Police website:
https://leics.police.uk/media/uploads/library/file/Halloween_no_thanks_2018.pdf

Ivan Ould, Leicestershire County Council cabinet member for community safety, said:

“Leicestershire County Council's IMPACT team will be working with young people in areas of the county by spreading the message to keep safe and not get involved in anti-social behaviour.

“We want young people to enjoy the evening without causing distress to others so please respect people's wishes over the Halloween period.

“Halloween should be a fun event for all. We want to reassure communities that their decision to celebrate or not will be respected.”

The fire and rescue service is also encouraging parents to be extra vigilant with candles and fancy dress costumes.

Wayne Gale, Station Manager at Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, said: “Halloween is a great opportunity to celebrate and should be fun for all to enjoy. Whether out and about or at home celebrating, we want everyone to enjoy themselves safely.

“Our top tips for staying safe this Halloween are to make sure fancy dress costumes and masks are labelled as flame-resistant, don't use flammable materials to make home-made costumes and be especially careful about using bin liners as capes.

“We also encourage the use of flickering LED candles rather than real candles in pumpkins so children aren't exposed to naked flames and to limit the risk of fire.

“We ask you to pay close attention to all aspects of your safety during this festive period, including the above, and visit our website for more information on how to keep you and your family safe.

A few minutes of your time could help protect you, your family and your friends as well as your property and belongings.”

Deputy City Mayor Cllr Piara Singh Clair said: “We are fortunate to have so many wonderful festivals and events taking place in Leicester at this time of year.

“By working with partners from the police and fire and rescue service we are able to share some simple safety messages and help ensure that people make the most of these celebrations while keeping themselves and their property safe.”

For more tips on how to celebrate safely this Halloween people are encouraged to visit the fire and rescue service's website <http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk/whats-happening/current-campaigns/celebrate-safely/>

Anyone who wants to report antisocial behaviour in Leicester, Leicestershire or Rutland can call Leicestershire Police on 101 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

ENDS

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.

The Service's prevention, education, enforcement and inspection programmes have resulted in significant reductions in the number of incidents. In the last ten years, fire-related incidents have reduced by 43 percent.

During 2016/17, the Service attended 694 road traffic collisions, of which 148 were extrications from vehicles, in addition to 2,259 fires. 272 schools were visited as part of the Service's schools programme, delivering fire and road safety education to pupils. Staff organised or took part in 1,613 community safety events, promoting fire and road safety and arson prevention, and 145 Virtual Fatal Four (VF4) events as part of the Service's young drivers' road safety project.

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