



News Release

Issued on: Friday 28 April 2023

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service - the First Fire Service to be Fully Accessible to Deaf People

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service are the first Fire and Rescue Service in the country to become fully accessible to Deaf people.

The Service is now registered with 'SignVideo' which is available to deaf BSL users via web or app. SignVideo is a remote interpreting company offering Video Relay Services, Video Remote Interpreting and BSL/English Translation Services.

Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, Callum Faint, said: "We are extremely proud to be one of the first Fire and Rescue Services to be able to fully reach our Deaf communities. It is so important to us that we make our advice as accessible to as many people as possible."

In July 2022, all emergency services became accessible through 999 BSL. This allows deaf people to make a telephone call to 999 emergency services through a SignVideo interpreter.

However, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service recognised they were attending a number of emergencies where firefighters were unable to communicate with the deaf person.

Following on from this, the Service introduced iPads on all of their fire appliances, which have the SignVideo app installed on them. This allows firefighters to connect to a SignVideo interpreter when they are in contact with a deaf person.

Callum Faint, added: "This app is a brilliant way to allow our firefighters to ask life-saving questions when they are at an emergency incident involving a deaf person. Additionally, its a great tool to be used in non-emergency situations, when our Community Educators may be giving potentially life-saving fire safety advice while conducting their home safety checks.

“This on-demand accessibility across the whole Service is vital in ensuring the safety of our Deaf communities.”

Jenny Forrest, Business Development Manager from SignVideo, said:
“SignVideo by Sorenson are proud to be supporting Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in becoming the UK’s first fully accessible Fire Service. They have done this by breaking down the communication barriers that were faced by Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and Deaf members of the community.

“SignVideo by Sorenson proudly supports Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in ensuring the safety of the Deaf community members that they serve.”

You can use SignVideo on a computer, smartphone or tablet. If you are using a smartphone or tablet, you will need to download the free SignVideo App, available for both Android and Apple devices.



Please note that you will need to have a good internet connection in order to use SignVideo.

Callum Faint, concluded: “Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service are committed to being fully accessible to deaf people, so that we can best protect you, helping to create ‘safer people and safer places’.”

To contact Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in a non-emergency through SignVideo, you can make a general enquiry between 9am and 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am and 4.30pm on Friday. You can do this via the SignVideo app by selecting the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service logo, or by visiting our website (www.leics-fire.gov.uk) and clicking the SignVideo link under the ‘Contact Us’ page. A SignVideo interpreter will then appear on your screen to interpret your conversation.

For more information about SignVideo, please visit, www.signvideo.co.uk/, where they have a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

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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

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