

## Link-up to improve fire prevention in Nottingham homes



**The organisations will work together on fire prevention plans for vulnerable tenants**

A more targeted approach to fire prevention in houses across Nottingham city is to be introduced after separate projects with Nottingham Trent University led to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Nottingham City Homes joining forces to enhance community safety.

With just under half of the injuries caused by fires in Nottingham city between 2009-11 taking place in Nottingham City Homes properties, the organisations will work together to create profiles of vulnerable tenants to include in their plans for fire prevention, such as home safety checks and smoke alarm installation.

The connection came about through two individual Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) with Nottingham Trent University. While Nottingham City Homes has been assessing the impact of their Decent Homes programme, which included the installation of smoke alarms, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service has been investigating the effectiveness of their community safety initiatives and determining whether they fit the needs of those they serve.

Tom Simpson, the KTP associate working with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Currently we collect detailed information on accidental house fire incidents, specifically regarding the location and the cause of the fire. However, only limited information is available regarding the circumstances of the individuals involved.

"On the other hand, Nottingham City Homes have the information on the individuals in the property, but the exact cause of the fire is more difficult for them to obtain. By sharing this information, in accordance with data protection, we'll both have a much more accurate and detailed picture of many house fire incidents in the city."

Dr Néstor Valero-Silva, from Nottingham Business School, has been working on the Decent Homes Impact Study with Nottingham City Homes to assess the social and economic impact of their work. He said: "Around a quarter of the properties in Nottingham city are managed by Nottingham City Homes so they are a major part of the community, and therefore a major part of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's target group."

Vic McMillen, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service group manager, said: "This project fits in very well with our new initiative to direct time and money towards helping those people who are at greatest risk to stay safe in their homes. Partnerships with organisations such as Nottingham City Homes are essential to identifying the people who are most vulnerable so that we can make them our priority, and we thank Nottingham Trent University for providing the opportunity to further improve our work with Nottingham City Homes."

Viv Brunsden, head of the Emergency Services Research Unit at the university's School of Social Sciences, has been working with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service on their KTP. She said: "We always intended to put both organisations in touch with one another in this way. However we didn't necessarily anticipate how much the two projects have in common and that there would be ways of working across these that enhanced both projects and also delivered long term benefits for the organisations and the community."

Nottingham Trent University is currently celebrating 25 years of KTPs, which are sponsored by the government and research councils and encourage businesses to use the knowledge, technology and skills available within the UK's knowledge base. The Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service KTP is on-going, while findings from the Nottingham City Homes' Decent Homes Impact report were used successfully to resubmit for funding previously taken away by the government.

For further information on accessing Nottingham Trent University expertise, email the Grant Capture Team or telephone them on 0115 848 8169 to discuss how your company can benefit from Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.



**KTP associates Tom Simpson (NFRS) and Alice Jones (NCH) facilitated the link-up**

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**Dr Néstor Valero-Silva, Nottingham Business School**