# Competences to Support Home Fire Safety Visits based on the Person-Centred Framework (DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION)

# 1. Purpose and Scope

This document defines the competences required by those who carry out Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) based on the Person-Centred Framework (PCF)[[1]](#footnote-2). As defined by the PCF, the HFSV should be seen as a single approach which includes both the Home Fire Risk Check and the Safe and Well Visit; these are fully compatible and are parts of the same pathway approach to fire prevention. The primary purpose of the Home Fire Safety Visit should be to mitigate and reduce fire risk whilst trying to change some of the riskier behaviours that may affect or increase exposure to increased fire risk.

This document provides guidance for use by fire and rescue services to inform training and workforce development for HFSVs. The scope covers the HFSV from crossing the threshold to completing the visit. It does not include securing and arranging appointments. It is the responsibility of local services to implement and quality assure any training developed from this guidance.

**This draft version, collaboratively developed through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), is for consultation with the sector. This version follows review and refinement by prevention colleagues from 65% of UK fire and rescue services.**

Competences are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours. The level of definition is intended to be enabling, not prescriptive, to give fire and rescue services clarity over the scope needed to adopt the PCF without attempting to define all the detail.

Competence is needed to carry out functions which have useful outcomes. The following functions are required to conduct targeted engagements with individuals and household groups:

* **Engage and assess**: Helping people to live safer lives by observing the situation, engaging to make every contact count and identifying risks based on a person-centred framework, drawing on standardised core components of the HFSV
* **Intervene to mitigate**: Solving problems and making referrals to partner agencies including safeguarding to mitigate risk
* **Reflect and report**: Reflecting on your practice and keeping records during and following the visit to support evaluation of effectiveness, operational handover, improvement of practice, and outcomes for individuals.

The HFSV is the recommended approach to achieving these outcomes. Further details of the functional analysis, which places these functions in a wider context, are given in the appendix.

This document will help fire and rescue services to meet requirements of the Prevention Fire Standard[[2]](#footnote-3), in particular in the following areas:

* adopt a person-centred approach that places the individual and the community it serves at the core of its prevention activity
* recruit, train, and develop employees and volunteers, working with others where relevant, to establish and maintain a competent and professional prevention workforce.

# 2. Competences

To be competent to carry out a person-centred Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV), you need:

* Knowledge, including knowledge of policy, procedure, applicable legislation, locally available services, the principles of person-centred fire risk assessment and effective fire risk control measures.
* Skills, including the ability to deliver a person-centred fire risk assessment, identify and implement effective fire risk control measures, and fit fire risk reduction equipment, along with communication and engagement skills, motivational and behaviour change skills, customer service skills, and record keeping skills.
* Behaviours, including offering personalised support, showing respect and compassion, enabling positive behaviour change, and offering coordinated support, backed by the Core Code of Ethics[[3]](#footnote-4), or equivalent.

These competences apply to each component of fire safety in the home, including but not limited to the core components of the HFSV defined in the Person-Centred Framework (PCF). At the time of writing, these are:

1. Home Fire Detection (smoke and heat) incorporating Assistive Technology
2. Fire Safety in the Home (kitchen, candles and escape planning)
3. Fires and Heaters (safer heating)
4. Clutter and Hoarding
5. Arson/Deliberate Fires
6. Smoking-Related Fires
7. Medicines and Medical Devices
8. Electrical Safety.

## 2.1 Knowledge

You need to know and understand:

* The Person-Centred Framework (PCF) for Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)
* Your local policy, procedures and guidance for delivering HFSVs or equivalent
* Your responsibilities relating to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)[[4]](#footnote-5)
* Your responsibilities relating to Health and Safety[[5]](#footnote-6)
* Your responsibilities relating to Safeguarding[[6]](#footnote-7).

To engage with and understand people, you need to know and understand:

* How you are perceived by others, in the context of public perceptions and expectations of fire and rescue services
* Your diverse local communities, their differing and changing needs and expectations and the implications for the way you engage with them to provide advice and to influence behaviour
* Your local accessibility statement
* The content of digital and printed material that you provide to occupants, as determined locally
* Risks to your own and colleagues’ welfare in a HFSV, and techniques for managing your own safety, including local lone working arrangements.

To understand and assess risk of fire in the home, you need to know and understand:

* The main causes of fire in the home and how to assess the associated fire risk by delivering a person-centred fire risk assessment
* Person factors which impact risk, including physical health, mental health, learning disabilities, mobility, sensory impairment, age and frailty
* Behaviour factors which impact fire risk, including smoking, taking medication, substance use and bedtime routines
* Home factors which impact risk, including property layout, fire protection, state of maintenance and repair, clutter, egress, and the social environment which is how people interact with the physical environment and with one another
* The standardised core components for person-centred HFSVs, including the current NFCC position statements regarding the minimum scope for each component
* Other components defined in your local approach for assessing fire risks or wider risks as part of person-centred HFSVs, including health checks
* Safety standards applicable to the core components and any local components of HFSVs
* Your responsibilities with respect to the safeguarding fire standard[[7]](#footnote-8), which includes statutory safeguarding duties, and any applicable local safeguarding arrangements
* The principles and practices for engaging other agencies to improve your understanding of occupants’ needs.

To ensure the delivery of interventions that mitigate risk, you need to know and understand:

* The locally preferred hierarchy of risk control for mitigating risk in the home, which may be ERICP as suggested by the PCF[[8]](#footnote-9) in line with National Operational Guidance
* The professional boundaries that define what interventions fire and rescue services and other organisations can deliver to make physical changes and encourage behavioural change
* Options for interventions to reduce fire risk relevant to each of the core and local components of the HFSV, including:
  + the principles and practices for engaging with, signposting and making referrals to other agencies, including for health support
  + techniques for delivering brief advice to influence positive behaviour change in different contexts
  + techniques for mitigating fire risk in line with the locally preferred hierarchy of risk control for mitigating risk in the home.

To reflect on your practice and keep records, you need to know and understand:

* Current standards and guidelines for keeping records during and following the visit, including:
  + your responsibilities for data protection under GDPR, including your organisation’s privacy notice
  + your local policies and procedures for record keeping.

## 2.2 Skills

To engage with and understand people, you must be able to:

* Prepare for the visit, in collaboration with others where necessary, in line with local procedures and guidance
* Deliver a clear introduction to help occupants understand what the HFSV is
* Put occupants at the centre of HFSV by asking them what they want, listening and responding to their needs and concerns
* Provide relevant advice, education and recommendations to occupants through:
  + face-to-face discussion
  + digital and printed material about fire safety in the home
  + other digital and printed material to meet local requirements, including your organisation’s privacy notice
* Check people’s understanding of, and ability to access, all information provided
* Work before, during and after HFSVs with personnel internally and with partner agencies or family, friends or carers for joint visits, including for safeguarding issues
* Manage yourself, your personal resilience, and the risks to yourself and colleagues associated with other people and the environment of a HFSV.

To understand and assess risk of fire in the home, you must be able to:

* Use observations, questioning and listening skills
* Take a person-centred approach to fire risk assessment by considering the impact of person, behaviour and home factors on fire risk
* Assess the risk of fire associated with each of the core components of HFSVs and any other components of local relevance.

To ensure the delivery of interventions that mitigate risk, you must be able to:

* Define interventions that meet the unique needs of the occupants to mitigate the identified risks using the locally preferred hierarchy of risk control
* Decide whether to provide, recommend or make referrals for these interventions by using your understanding of professional boundaries
* Make referrals internally and to partner agencies to make behavioural or physical interventions to reduce risks
* Encourage people to access help and support from other agencies and signpost or refer them if they choose to seek support
* Deliver brief advice to encourage positive behaviour change that enables people to reduce risk
* Deliver verbal and written fire safety advice to address each core component and control risk
* Make changes in the property to mitigate fire risk
* Provide, fit, test and/or recommend fire risk reduction equipment including smoke alarms and equip occupants to use and maintain equipment effectively.

To reflect on your practice and keep records, you must be able to:

* Reflect on all aspects of the visit, including what you have learnt from and with others, to make and recommend improvements to practice
* Keep timely and accurate risk-focused records to support subsequent evaluation of effectiveness, operational handover, improvement of practice, and outcomes for individuals
* Complete records in accordance with organisational policy, procedure and guidance
* Uphold responsibilities to data protection.

## 2.3 Specific Knowledge and Skills for HFSV Core Components

Position statements in the Person-Centred Framework[[9]](#footnote-10) set out specific knowledge and understanding required to assess and mitigate risk for each of the eight core components. Details of the position statements for core components are maintained by the NFCC.

Fire and Rescue Services maintain position statements for other components included in local HFSVs, relevant to local risks and partnerships.

## 2.4 Behaviours

### Introduction

Behaviours are those needed to be person-centred, which is defined in the Person-Centred Framework[[10]](#footnote-11) to mean:

* affording people dignity, respect and compassion
* offering coordinated support
* offering personalised support
* being enabling.

The behaviours needed to enable these characteristics are backed by the Core Code of Ethics in England or equivalent in the devolved administrations. These also complement the NFCC’s People Strategy and Leadership Framework[[11]](#footnote-12), defining specifically the behavioural competencies required for successful HFSVs. Similarly, to the Leadership Framework with its contra indicators, the HFSV behaviours describe both effective and ineffective behaviours.

#### Affording people dignity, respect & compassion

Whenever someone interacts with services, they should always be treated with dignity, respect and compassion. These “experience standards” are basic human rights.[[12]](#footnote-13)

Effectiveness in this area is about being interested and interesting when engaging with occupants through participation and involvement to improve upon the situation people find themselves in in their home. It’s about getting better by reducing risks.

#### Offering co-ordinated support

It’s not just individual encounters that matter – services should offer or be part of coordinated support across multiple episodes and over time if needed.  Coordination is particularly crucial when an individual’s circumstances are changing and are being seen by a range of local partners.[[13]](#footnote-14)

Being effective in this area is about collaborating, working together by joining forces tocooperate and participate whilst holding yourself and others to account by being responsible to someone or for some action through being morally compelled or duty-bound to do something.

#### Offering personalised support

Because we are all different, person-centred support is tailored to the needs and aspirations of each individual, not standardised to their condition or circumstances. It means that the things that are important to the person receiving support and their family are discussed and form the basis of the advice we provide and the support that we give.[[14]](#footnote-15)

Being effective in this area is about ensuring that a quality service is provided, to the set standards and is a merit to yourselves, your team and the whole fire service that you represent.

#### Being enabling

The starting point for being enabling is seeing people as assets, not burdens, and seeking to support them to recognise, engage with and develop their sense of resourcefulness, and to build on their unique range of capabilities. Being “enabling” means that systems and services orientate themselves towards supporting people to recognise and build upon their strengths and/or to recover from setbacks or negative episodes so that they can live an independent and fulfilling life.[[15]](#footnote-16)

Being enabling involves being decisive in the choice or judgment made about something, making quick and definite decisions that encourage occupants’purposefulness and resoluteness. It’s also about using an enabling approach, equipping occupants to practise risk-reducing habits in order to develop skills and behaviours that reduce fire risks.

### Our Behaviours

Improving

Engaging

Collaborating

Being Accountable

Service Quality

Service Delivery

Decisiveness

Empowering

Core Code of Ethics

The diagram above summarises the behaviours required to deliver the person-centred characteristics. Central to this approach is the Core Code of Ethics, which the behaviours build upon. For each characteristic, two critical behaviours have been identified and these are described in detail below, explaining the effective and ineffective behaviours, those that contribute to a person-centred approach and those that counter. The principle of defining effective and ineffective behaviours aligns with the approach taken in the Civil Service competency framework[[16]](#footnote-17).

### Affording people dignity, respect & compassion

#### Engaging

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Ensure occupants engage fully with the purpose of the visit supporting them to make sense of the importance in a manner that respects their background and culture | Make limited effort to create clarity for the visit to occupants, leaving people to make sense of this on their own without any respect to their background or culture |
| Negotiate and positively influence occupants successfully – jointly agree ways to stay safe | Lack insight into different motivators and agendas of occupants – neglect the need to jointly agree ways to stay safe |
| Communicate in a succinct, engaging manner and justify your rationale when needed | Communicate in technical language, not clarifying where needed and contradicting yourself when challenged |
| Confidently engage with occupants to generate commitment to safety | Miss opportunities to engage, leaving safety concerns unaddressed |
| Be open and inviting to views of occupants and actively listen, responding to their needs and concerns | Set out a course of action and apply it without listening and adapting to occupants |

#### Improving

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Seek and encourage ideas and improvements to deliver better person-centred approaches | Restrict changes that do not integrate or align with person-centred approaches |
| Identify step changes that quickly transform safety for occupants | Allow approach to become outdated and out of step with evolving changes and occupants’ needs |
| Effectively capture, utilise and share insight and views from a diverse range of occupants to ensure better delivery of home fire safety visits | Fail to effectively capture, utilise and share insight appropriately in the development of home fire safety visits |
| Be willing to meet the challenges of complex changes, encouraging and supporting occupants to do the same | Resist changing own approach in response to new demands - adopting a position of “we’ve always done things like this” |

### Offering co-ordinated support

#### Collaborating

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Demonstrate genuine care for occupants | Neglect to maintain relationships during complex visits |
| Actively involve colleagues and partners to deliver better person-centred safety options through collaboration | Struggle to manage or ignore partners’ agendas |
| Seek constructive ways to stay safe in discussions, challenge assumptions and remain willing to compromise when it is beneficial to progress | Dismiss occupants’ ideas or actions and refuse to compromise, stay wedded to one outcome |
| Deal with conflict in a prompt, calm and constructive manner | Show lack of concern for occupants’ and partners’ perspectives |
| Change ways of working to facilitate collaboration for the benefit of occupants and partners | Continue to work in set ways that make collaboration complex for occupants and partners |

## Being Accountable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Know and recognise your own limitations | Fail to understand where boundaries occur |
| Work effectively with different organisations and groups to source solutions to improve safety for occupants | Take a narrow view on options for delivering person-centred safety solutions |
| When and if follow up visits are carried out, recognise when safety improvements are not being made | When and if follow up visits are carried out, fail to raise issues when safety improvements have not been made |
| Learn about occupants’ needs within the context of our communities | Take no steps to learn who occupants are or to understand their interests and concerns |

#### Offering personalised support

### Service Delivery

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Take a leading role and support occupants to build confidence in their ability to stay safe | Overly focus on task delivery at expense of motivating and building occupants’ capability |
| Promote resilience and responsiveness by being open and honest about challenges, and the actions required to address issues | Overlook the impact of challenges and the impact on occupants |
| Take responsibility for delivering expected safety outcomes on time and to standard, giving credit to occupants, colleagues and partners | Give little or no support to occupants, colleagues or partners in managing problems and obstacles to improving safety |

## Service Quality

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Clarify and describe the different needs of occupants to support improvements in safety | Be unclear and confuse occupants about ways to stay safe |
| Use occupants’ and partners’ insights to determine and drive improvements in safety | Fail to involve occupants and partners sufficiently in staying safe |
| Exemplify positive person-centred behaviours and promote a culture focused on ensuring occupants’ needs are met | Take little action when occupants’ needs are not being met |
| Promote adherence to relevant policies, procedures, regulations and legislation | Pay little attention to highlighting and explaining the need for compliance |

#### Being enabling

### Decisiveness

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Ensure occupants’ involvement and consultation where necessary and take decisive action when required | Fail to follow a broad consultation process when coming to key decisions |
| Strive for unity with occupants around the steps to be taken to improve safety, making decisions by pragmatically weighing the complexities involved against the need to act | Make expedient decisions that offer less resistance or risk to yourself rather than decisions that are best for occupants |
| Base your decisions on observations of the situation, recognising patterns and trends in a wide range of evidence and data, drawing key conclusions | Come to conclusions that are not supported by evidence |

## Empowering

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effective Behaviour / Culture Contributors  People who are more effective are likely to… | Ineffective Behaviour / Cultural Counters  People who are less effective are likely to… |
| Act as an effective sounding board for occupants | Invest little time to develop occupants’ capabilities |
| Empower occupants, ensuring effectiveness and growth in their risk-reducing habits | Seldom provide feedback and fail to seize opportunities for occupants to be empowered |
| Recognise the scope of own authority and empower occupants to make decisions | Create confusion by omitting to inform occupants of relevant information that would inform their decisions |
| Find ways for occupants to learn and improve their understanding and habits towards risk reduction | Maintain a rigid view, missing opportunities for occupants to learn or to improve their understanding and habits |

# Appendix. Functional Model

The working group that developed this document started with an analysis of the activities, or “functions”, of prevention. The functional model is shown below. The methodology used is consistent with the Guide to Developing National Occupational Standards, NOS (revised June 2011)[[17]](#footnote-18) which considers functional analysis to be “an essential process in defining occupational competence”.

The functional analysis places the HFSV in a wider context, ultimately linked to living in safety by minimising harm and the risk of harm from a variety of hazards. The scope of the current document is just the functions highlighted with red borders in the functional model below, not the whole of the model.

The working group recognised the importance of the ongoing behaviour of the public in maintaining community safety, and described this as “the public minimising the risk of harm in their daily lives by adopting safe behaviours, and creating and maintaining a safer environment, recognising their personal characteristics and how these impact on risk.” This is shown on the top right-hand side of the functional model below.

Prevention work is defined as “educating, and learning with, the public to minimise the likelihood and impact of incidents”. This activity results in the outcomes set out in the Fire Standard for Prevention. It is shown in the middle of the model.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

A number of functions contribute to this, one of which is “supporting the reduction of incidents of fire, fire injuries, fire fatalities and damage to property through targeted engagement with individuals and household groups”. This can be seen in the middle of the model, towards the top. The HFSV is the currently preferred approach to this targeted engagement with households and individuals.

This function is then disaggregated, as shown, into:

* Arranging appointments to engage individuals and household groups (out of scope)
* Conducting targeted engagement with individuals and household groups (in scope).

Delivering interventions may also be carried out by fire and rescue services, within defined professional boundaries, as part of a HFSV. This is also in scope of this document, and is part of the following function:

* Providing and maintaining technical solutions, including assistive technology, in line with personal factors to minimise the likelihood and impact of incidents.

The functional analysis then identified the following functions for which competence is required to conduct targeted engagements, not shown on the model above:

* **Engage and assess**: Helping people to live safer lives by observing the situation, engaging to make every contact count and identifying risks based on a person-centred framework, drawing on standardised core components of the HFSV
* **Intervene to mitigate**: Solving problems and making referrals to partner agencies including safeguarding to mitigate risk
* **Reflect and report**: Reflecting on your practice and keeping records during and following the visit to support evaluation of effectiveness, operational handover, improvement of practice, and outcomes for individuals.

This document defines the competences you need to achieve the functions of a HFSV.

1. <https://www.ukfrs.com/guidance/person-centred-framework> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/prevention-fsd-pre01/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.ukfrs.com/sites/default/files/2021-05/CoreCodeofEthicsEnglandFRSMay21_0.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <<add reference to responsibilities relating to GDPR>> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <<add reference to responsibilities relating to health and safety>> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. <<add reference to responsibilities relating to safeguarding – is this the fire standard, link elsewhere?>> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/safeguarding-fsd-pre02/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. ERICP means Eliminate, Reduce/Replace, Isolate, Control, Personal Protective Equipment, and is suggested by the PCF (<https://www.ukfrs.com/guidance/person-centred-framework>) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. <https://www.ukfrs.com/guidance/person-centred-framework> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. <https://www.ukfrs.com/guidance/person-centred-framework> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/NFCC%20Guidance%20publications/Workforce/NFCC\_Leadership\_Framework\_Final.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Affording people dignity, respect & compassion, as described in the PCF [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Offering co-ordinated support, as described in the PCF [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Offering personalised support, as described in the PCF [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Being enabling, as described in the PCF [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/436073/cscf_fulla4potrait_2013-2017_v2d.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/304239/nos-guide-for-_developers-2011.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)