

ACH Birmingham Establishes Fire Safety Induction for Tenants

Fire safety knowledge is always a priority in any environment yet as many of our tenants attempt to adjust to a new and unfamiliar culture, alongside difficult language barriers, they are often unequipped to deal with emergency situations which may require contacting local emergency services.

In Birmingham our support team has added the '**Welcome to the West Midlands**' package to their tenant induction process which is supported by the **West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS)**. Officers from the WMFS now visit ACH Birmingham on a weekly basis where they lead a 45-minute presentation for new tenants which introduces fire safety and the relating services they offer.

The partnership was formed with the help of WMFS team leaders Robert Coles and Vikki Holland who have helped to organise a fire and safety introduction package that is accessible to non-English speakers.

Culturally-Responsive Advice

Information presented at the fire safety talk is supported by a number of visual aids which simply but effectively illustrate ways to avoid fire in the home and the essential steps to take if a fire does occur – this approach helps to deal with initial language barriers which are further supported by translated welcome leaflets available in a number of different languages.

The presentation also allows the WMFS presenters to use their knowledge and experience as Vulnerable Persons Officers (VPOs) to identify individuals who require further assistance and support that is available even when they move from assisted into **independent living**.

This new partnership allows our organisation to develop a thorough and inclusive induction process which clarifies fire safety regulations and the services available for our tenants. Building a direct connection with the local fire service in Birmingham encourages our tenants to confidently engage with the local community through direct contact with accessible emergency services.

The important knowledge gained from these WMFS presentations complements our existing induction process which describes the other support services offered by our organisation:

- Available **education and training** courses

- Support in accessing health services
- Financial advice
- **Repair and maintenance** property services
- Legal advice