

Man in hospital following fire in Livingston



A man was taken to hospital after fire struck in the bedroom of a house in Livingston last night.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) crews were sent to Ferguson Way in response to an emergency call made around 7:45pm and they arrived to find several people outside the two-storey terraced property.

The incident commander, Acting Watch Manager Brendan Stutt, said: “Four firefighters in breathing apparatus entered the building. The fire was inside a bedroom on the first floor and our team used two high pressure jets to extinguish it.”

He continued: “Oxygen therapy was provided to three men who appeared to be suffering from the effects of breathing in smoke and they were passed to the care of paramedics following the arrival of an ambulance.”

Two of the three men treated for the effects of breathing in smoke were neighbours who rushed to help when they saw smoke coming from a window.

They rescued the third man from the room while a fellow neighbour – a woman – helped them to safety from the doorway. She sustained a minor shoulder injury in the process.

The male occupant of the house was taken by ambulance to St John’s Hospital but the others declined further treatment.

Watch Manager Stutt added: “When fire strikes in a home it’s vital that people get early warning so they can get out, call 999 and wait for help to arrive.

“The actions of the neighbours at this incident clearly helped ensure the man who was inside the property got to safety and also meant that firefighters could get to the scene quickly and bring it under control.

“Their quick thinking and courage certainly prevented a much more serious incident. This fire could have resulted in a tragedy and it must remind us all never to take fire safety for granted.”

The fire began when smoking materials caused fabrics to ignite and SFRS is clear on the need for smokers to recognise the risks of fire and take simple steps to prevent them from starting.

Cigarettes and other smoking materials are a common cause of fire within the home, with the combination of smoking and alcohol known to be a potentially lethal mix.

Watch Manager Stutt explained: “Fire really can strike anywhere so we all need to recognise the risks and take action to make it less likely to happen to us.

“It’s important people know never to smoke in bed or even if they’re tired and sitting in a chair, as it’s just too easy to dose off and start a potentially horrific fire.

“For exactly the same reason the combination of smoking and alcohol can be a lethal one. If people are under the influence it’s particularly important they don’t put themselves at risk and make sure any smoking materials are fully out.”

Firefighters cleared smoke from the property before leaving the scene around 11pm, but SFRS crews returned to the area today (Wednesday) to provide reassurance to residents and offer free home fire safety visits.

The visits are a key part of the Join Scotland’s Fight Against Fire campaign and help householders reduce the chance of fire happening or causing tragedies.

Arranged for a time that is convenient for the resident, they allow local firefighters to highlight common hazards and help people take simple steps to address them.

With early warning known to be vital if a fire does happen, the SFRS crews also check smoke alarms are working and even provide and install the devices if they are found to be needed.

Free home fire safety visits are available from SFRS by calling the freephone number 0800 073 1999, by texting 'FIRE' to 80800 or by filling in an online form at www.firescotland.gov.uk.