

Safe and Well Evaluation

Conducted for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Ruth Weir, Research Fellow

Dr. Gina Yannitell Reinhardt, PhD, Impact Evaluation Lead

ImpacTeam, Catalyst Project, University of Essex

1 Introduction

In August 2018 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) introduced *Safe and Well* visits to replace the previous home safety visits. The *Safe and Well* Visits were similar to the previous intervention, with key differences that officers could now offer assistive technology, home security advice and referrals to other support and guidance.

The University of Essex have been assisting ECFRS to evaluate the new *Safe and Well* Visits. This report analyses feedback collected regarding the new visits, the process of evaluation and the impact on the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs).

2 Aims and Objectives

Analysis of the first five months of *Safe and Well* was carried out in February 2019 and is available to view here:



Safe%20and%20Well%20workshop.ppt

From January 2019 onwards, a new recording method was introduced, whereby feedback forms were entered directly onto monthly downloads from CRM. This report therefore analyses all of the feedback that has been returned since this new recording scheme was introduced.

The report aims to:

- Measure the impact of the *Safe and Well* visits by analysing feedback from those receiving a visit;
- Identify any limitations in the current feedback process;
- Analyse the impact of *Safe and Well* visits on the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs);
- Make recommendations on how to streamline the evaluation process in the future.

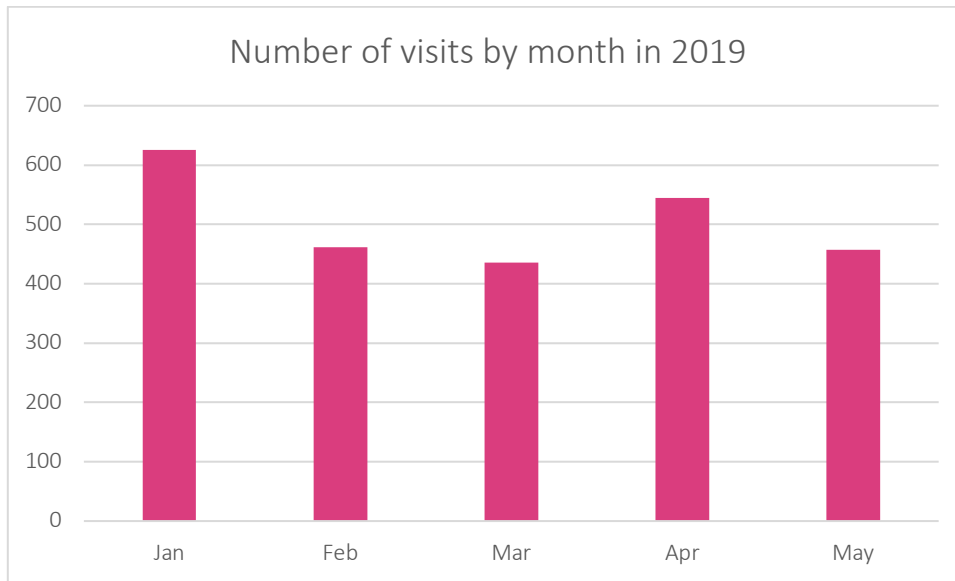
3 Data and Methodology

Between January and May 2019 there were 2525 *Safe and Well* visits. After each visit an evaluation form was given to the resident. The resident then returned the completed form either by post, or by giving it directly to the officer. Kieron Moir, Home Safety Operations Manager, decided which officer would take each approach with the residents they visited.

3.1 Feedback Forms

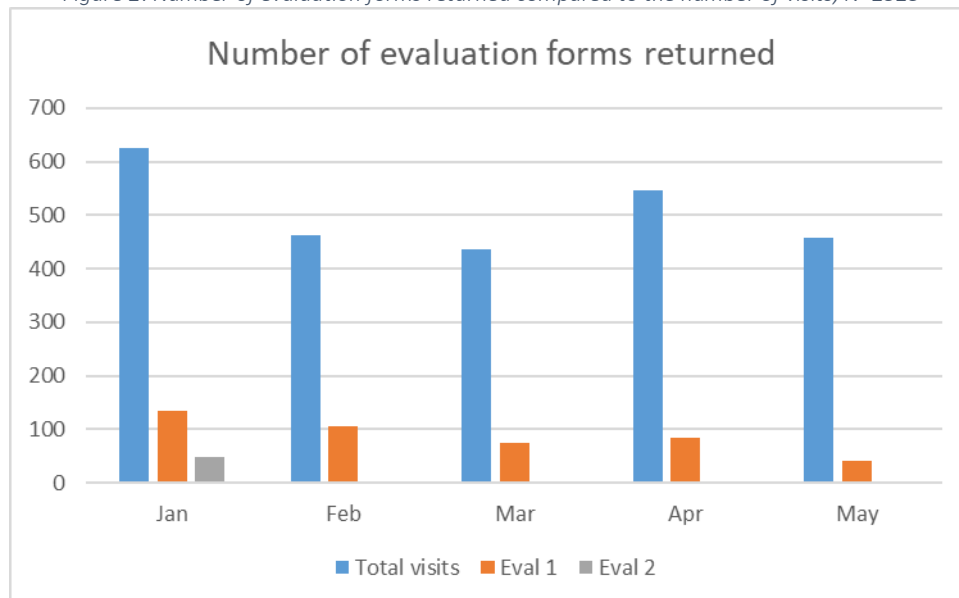
Each visit was recorded on the CRM system. After each month the visits for that month were downloaded from CRM to Excel, and responses from any returned forms were added to the visit details. Three months after the visit, an Evaluation-2 feedback form was sent to all those who had responded to Evaluation-1. Figure 1 breaks down the visits to show the number that took place in each month.

Figure 1: Number of visits by month in 2019, N=2525



Of the 2525 visits, 423 Evaluation-1 forms were returned and 49 Evaluation-2 forms were sent back. This therefore shows a 17% return rate of Evaluation-1. As Figure 2 illustrates, Evaluation-2 forms have only so far been returned regarding visits that originally took place in January, though we expect further forms to be available soon.

Figure 2: Number of evaluation forms returned compared to the number of visits, N=2525



A recent training session was organised by the new manager of the *Safe and Well* Officers. The session explored reasons officers were not distributing evaluation forms and asked them for feedback on the current questions. Question re-design is under way.

3.2 ADF Impact

A final step in the analysis was to identify whether the *Safe and Well* visits have had an impact on the number of ADFs following the visit. To do this, visit data from CRM was joined to ADF incident data.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Feedback form results – Evaluation-1

Figure 3 illustrates the change in confidence residents reported when comparing before and immediately after their visit. A resident's 'confidence for living safely from fire' was generally the same or improved, with the largest number reporting no change, followed by an increase in confidence score of 1 and then 2. Very few residents reported a decrease in confidence. A similar pattern was observed for burglary and falls, but there were more who saw no change in confidence for living safely from a fall. This may well be because they were not identified as being at risk of a fall. We therefore recommend that going forward, CRM includes data on whether the resident was advised on fall risk. Then analysts can restrict any analysis of perceived increases in confidence for living safely from a fall to only those who were noted to be at fall risk.

Figure 3: Change in confidence level before and after the visit, N=423

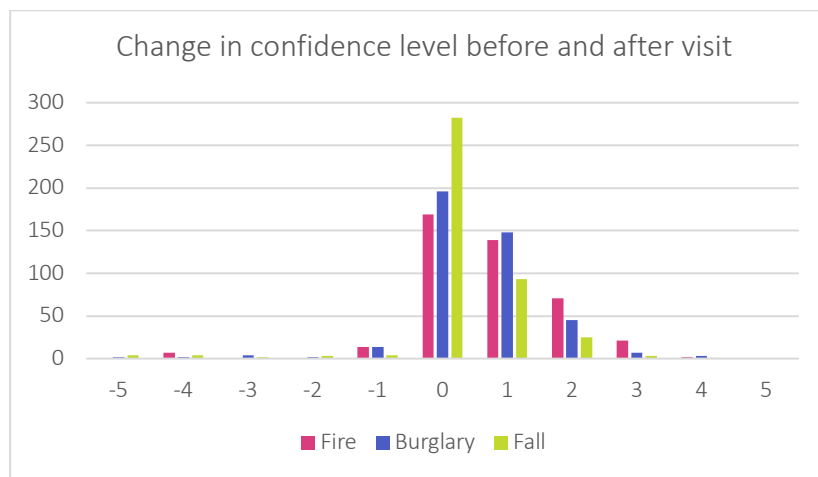


Figure 4 demonstrates that a substantial majority of those receiving visits would recommend a *Safe and Well* visit to family and friends. Few feedback forms stated anything critical about the visits. We therefore recommend that going forward, questions be refined to probe more deeply the possibility for improvement in various areas of visit delivery.

Figure 4: Would you recommend a Safe and Well visit to friends and family, N=423

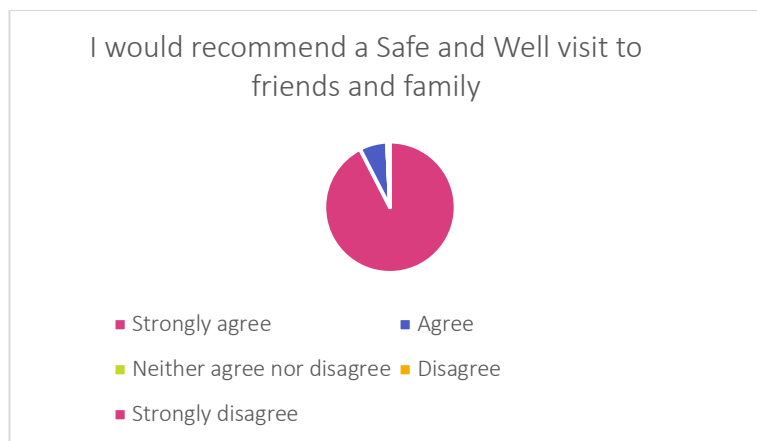
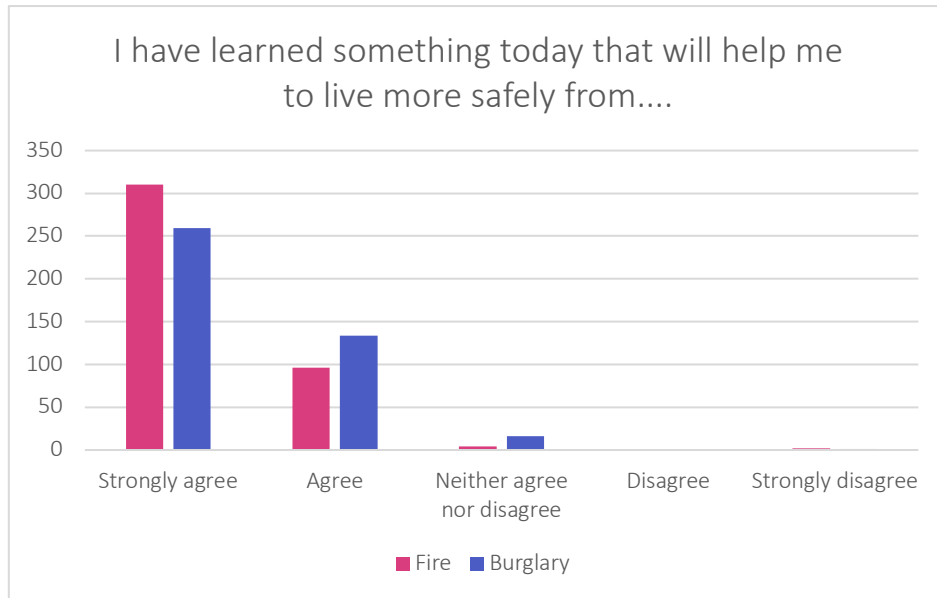


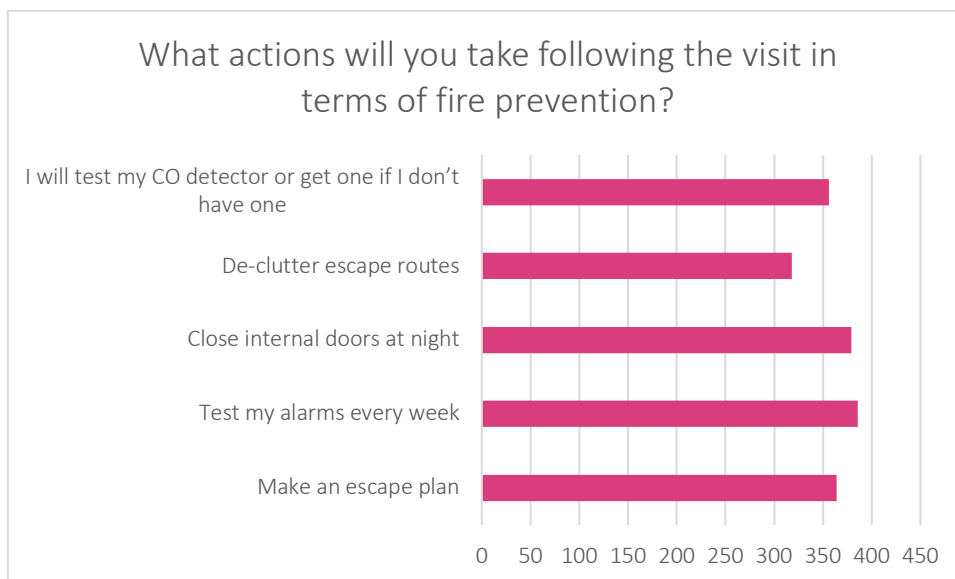
Figure 5 highlights the generally positive reception of the visits, with nearly all respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they had learnt something about fires and burglary, and with no respondents disagreeing in any way.

Figure 5: Have you learned something that will help you live more safely, N=423



When asked about the likelihood of taking up any of 5 potential fire-prevention actions following the visit, the action residents report being most likely to take was to test alarms weekly, followed by closing internal doors at night, testing a CO detector and making an escape plan. De-cluttering escape routes, the least likely action, was still chosen by more than 300 respondents (Figure 6).

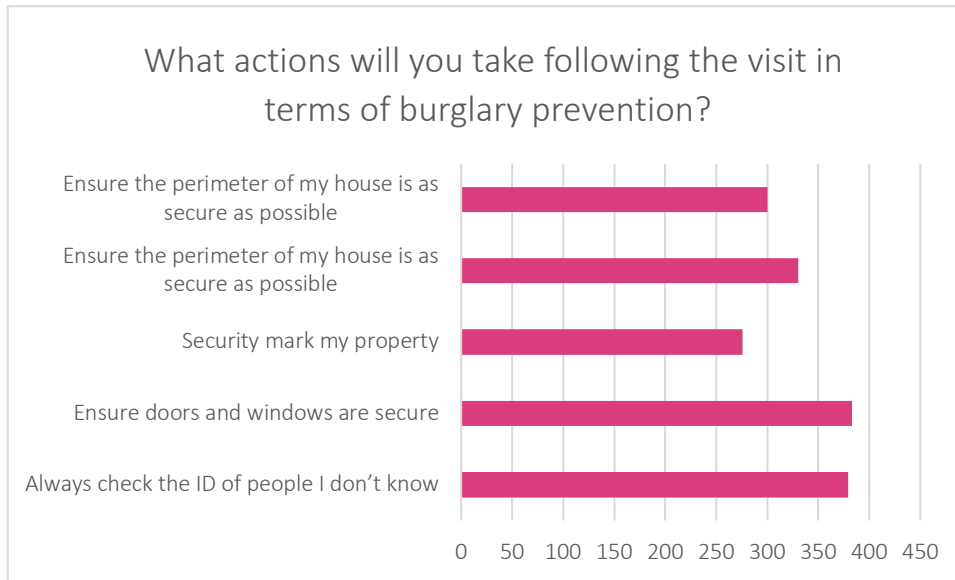
Figure 6: What actions will you take following the visit in terms of fire prevention, N=423



It is worth noting that this question only asks about the resident's intention, and therefore may indicate a bias toward wishing to please the officer, rather than indicating actual future behaviours.

When asked about the likelihood of taking up any of 5 potential burglary-prevention actions following the visit, the action residents report being most likely to take was to secure doors and windows, following by checking IDs of unknown people. Security marking property, the least likely action, was still chosen by more than 250 respondents (Figure 7).

Figure 7: What actions will you take following the visit in terms of burglary prevention, N=423



4.2 Feedback forms – Evaluation-2

At the time of analysis there were only evaluation returns for January 2019 and the return rate was 49, so it should be noted that this section is based on analysis of quite a small sample of the number of residents visited. Figure 8 shows that 3 months after the visit, most residents showed no loss in confidence across all categories. More respondents demonstrated a reduction in confidence than in Evaluation-1, which could be due to increased awareness dispelling ignorance about risk. We therefore recommend a follow-up question be added to the feedback survey that probes this issue in greater depth.

Figure 8: Change in confidence level before and 3 months after the visit, N=49

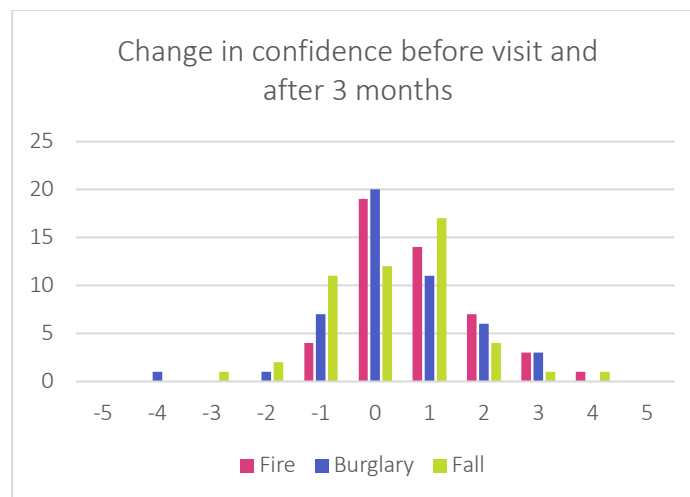


Figure 9 and Figure 10 show that in terms of actions from their visits, respondents were most likely to report to have tested their smoke and CO detector regularly, and to secure their windows and doors. They are least likely to have stopped using box plugs. The option of stopping the use of box plugs was not an element of Evaluation-1, so we recommend that the two evaluations be amended to be as consistent as possible.

Figure 9: What have you done as a result of your Safe and Well visit - fire, N=49



Figure 10: What have you done as a result of your Safe and Well visit - burglary, N=49



4.3 Free text comments

There were a number of free text comments made in response to open-ended questions. The majority were complimentary of the service, and many officers received individual compliments. We note 5 key themes in the comments.

4.3.1 Some residents remarked that they believed *Safe and Well* visits could **benefit others in the community**:

"Please don't stop this service. You must be saving so many lives!"

"This was an excellent visit and the member from the Fire Service was very polite and helpful. I would definitely recommend your Service to members of the Aged club we belong to."

"Thank you for providing this service and we will promote this to friends and neighbours."

"Officer was very friendly and knowledgeable. I will be recommending the service to friends. Very useful. Would it be possible for Officer or a colleague to give a presentation at the Chelmsford Older Person Information Day - where I heard about the service? Do other districts have similar events?"

"Feel there needs to be more publicity about this service so more people are able to keep safe in their homes, especially as this service is free and there should be no price on safety!"

"I was very pleased with this visit and was not aware of this service. A flier through letter boxes would make more people aware. My sincere thanks to Officer for a professional and courteous visit."

4.3.2 Other residents highlighted **what they learned from the visits**:

"This was an excellent and thought-provoking visit. Well done to Officer who visited."

"We feel the visit by Officer was extremely worthwhile. We were made aware of a number of actions we hadn't previously considered. Great service and very professional. Will recommend to anyone. Well done and thank you."

"From Dad and Mum. xxxx has learning difficulties and we were struggling to get her to take action re her fire safety. Thanks to Officer - she is willing to comply. Five stars, thanks."

"Thank you for our service to the community. I didn't know about it until a fire across the road from me. What an eye opener this visit was. I will try and follow the advice given. I know it needs re-educating myself which I am intending to do. Thank you to Officer, he is a very good educator."

"I have 2 lots of stairs which I feel less confident about as I get older which reflects the lower mark. Living safely from fire and secure from burglary - I don't think that nowadays you would ever be 100%. I am pleased that I booked the visit and Officer was friendly, polite and answered all my questions in an informative manner."

“Brilliant service/visit by an experienced and very friendly member of staff. Advised of risks/dangers and strategies for safety in the home - all explained in a helpful way. Perhaps village Road Shows might help to target other risk groups?”

“I found Officer to be very helpful. He gave me a few tips which I have taken on board. I would like to say I feel 100% confident referring fire. However, when joined (semi-detached) everyone has to be vigilant.”

“I found the visit very informative and reminded me of how to deal with cooker fires (fat catching light). Also how to deal with an emergency should a fire occur when I'm in bed at night and how to escape from window if absolutely necessary. Visit was very, very useful.”

4.3.3 Some residents explained **why their confidence ratings were not higher**:

“I put a ‘2’ for the safe from a fall questions because of my medical problems. I don’t think I can do anything to stop my knee collapsing and therefore falling. I have only put a ‘3’ for the burglary questions because I have done all I can to prevent it but apart from electrifying my door handles I can’t stop nasty people from attempting to get in. Officer was very good and helpful. I hope he enjoyed the mince pies!!”

“I have always been very safety conscious and can’t say that I have learned anything new but the visit has made me aware that I need to pull my socks up and carry out precautions more carefully and regularly.”

“I would love to tick all boxes as 5 but don’t want to tempt fate. Since being widowed I have tried to draw up my own risk assessment. It was good to have an expert’s eye and tips. A brilliant scheme that I’m sure would benefit most people. Keep up the good work. Thank you.”

4.3.4 Others concentrated on the **professionalism and kindness of the visiting officers**:

“Officer was very helpful, knowledgeable and friendly. Wish all callers were as helpful and professional.”

“Officer was top notch, 10/10.”

“The gentleman that came round was very polite, very smartly dressed and efficient he answered any question we had and I would highly recommend him.”

“Officer was very pleasant and helpful mum got lots of advice from him. Very nice man.”

“Officer was professional, kind and informative. He asked me lots of questions and gave me a lot of advice. I would definitely recommend him.”

“Thank you for my visit from Officer. Very helpful and polite. Satisfied.”

“The kindness and professionalism of Officer excelled. He could not have been more helpful.”

“Officer did a very good job, clearly explained hazards and fitted a new fire alarm in a bedroom for children.”

"I would like to tell you of home fire safety technician: thoroughly professional, very friendly lady. As I am profoundly deaf she talked me through the visit to ensure I felt so much more secure and confident. Thank you."

4.3.5 And finally, many residents expressed their general **support of the Safe and Well initiative**:

"Thank you for providing this service. Really helpful."

"I am so pleased with all the information I was given today. The officer was really informative and very thorough in all the checks. I am very pleased and extremely grateful for this visit. Thank you."

"Officer was very helpful and took his time to explain in detail about how we can be safe at home. I will definitely recommend the Service."

"It was good to meet someone who understood dogs and how they may react to alarms and fire engines."

"We spoke about fire safety, smoking and locking up. Well done Officer! Many thanks."

"Most efficient service. Very beneficial, especially to elderly persons."

"Very grateful to Officer for his excellent advice and clear explanations. A highly professional and pleasant young man."

4.4 Post visit ADFs

By linking the *Safe and Well* visit data to the recorded ADF data, it was found that since the project began there had been 5 incidents of ADF that had occurred within six months after a property had received a *Safe and Well* visit. When compared to the same period the year before, when home safety visits had taken place, there were only 3 ADFs within six months of a home safety visit. This is too small a sample to be able to conduct any statistically significant analysis, but it may be worth reviewing the following incidents, to see what ECFRS might be able to learn from them:

Incident 21993588

Loughton – IG10 3LQ

The victim was 75+, had a working smoke alarm, a home owner, had been classified medium risk. ADF 101 days after *Safe and Well* visit. No injuries were reported.

Incident 21998301

Chelmsford – CM3 5FZ

The victims were 16-24 and 40-54, they had a working smoke alarm, were home owners and had been classified as low risk.

ADF 157 days after *Safe and Well* visit. No injuries were reported.

Incident 21995055

Saffron Walden – CB11 3HX

The victim was 75+, living alone, had a sensory related disability, had no working smoke alarm, social housing and had been classified as high risk.

ADF 105 days after *Safe and Well* visit. No injuries were reported.

Incident 21993205

Frinton – CO14 8PP

The victim was 75+, living alone, had a sensory related disability, was in social housing and had been classified as high risk. Referred by ECFRS.

ADF 83 days after *Safe and Well* visit. No injuries were reported.

Incident 21891872

Basildon – SS14 1PN

The victim was 75+, living alone, was a home owner and had been classified as high risk.

ADF 59 days after *Safe and Well* visit. No injuries were reported.

It is possible that ADFs are more likely to be reported after a *Safe and Well* visit due to heightened risk awareness, rather than due to heightened ADF incidence (that is, fires are reported from these homes because people are more concerned about reporting them, not because fires are more likely to occur). It is also possible that ADF incidence is not affected by the *Safe and Well* visits, but that a person's risk of injury due to ADF decreases. These possibilities warrant further investigation as conclusions cannot be drawn based on the limited numbers to date.

5 Summary of findings and recommendations

5.1 Key findings

The main findings from this analysis are that the *Safe and Well* visits have been very well received, have generally increased the confidence of residents and have led to a change in practice for most of those receiving the visit.

Going forward there are some questions that could be rephrased or changed in order to evaluate the service more critically. The next section offers some recommendations on how to achieve this.

5.2 Recommendations

Change the channel through which feedback is sought.

A number of issues have led to a low response rate of feedback forms. After discussion with officers, it seems that part of this problem has been that officers feel uncomfortable in asking for feedback and giving the form out, particularly when they have to then wait for the resident to complete the form. They are also concerned, quite rightly, that waiting for the form could bias any response. Mosaic analysis has found that the channel that the priority groups respond best to are telephone or postal surveys. Going forward the team have therefore discussed the trial of telephone feedback, possibly using volunteers, where residents will be asked questions before and after the visit. It is recommended that the team try this new method for a three-month period and then analyse and evaluate the responses.

Revisit and revise evaluation questions

The team have already begun to revisit the evaluation questions. The current questions (see appendix) ask about burglary and falls. Since these are no longer funded elements of the visits, the need for questions on these elements is no longer a priority. This therefore means a shorter survey, using only questions on fire, could be adopted.

Specific issues are:

- The falls questions should be evaluated primarily for those who have mobility issues.
- Questions need to be more critically phrased. For instance, rather than asking about good elements of the visit, ask what could be improved versus what shouldn't be changed.
- Rephrase the question regarding intended behavioural changes to be less suggestive – possibly open-ended to allow residents to volunteer their own expected changes.
- Develop a follow-up question on confidence to probe lower numbers, such as asking people to elaborate on why they answered the confidence question the way they did.
- Align evaluations consistently, such as asking about box plugs in both evaluations.

Consider selecting a sample of residents to conduct more in-depth interviews

To gain more in-depth information about the impact of the visits on residents it might be useful to regularly conduct a small sample of in-depth interview. This will inform future survey design and service delivery and develop case studies.

Consider using a toolkit, such as the University of Essex Spotlight toolkit, to design longer term evaluations.

There are toolkits available that can help inform evaluation design. Some are static PDF documents available for download online, whilst others are interactive platforms that guide users through decision making processes. We recommend exploring these options when designing evaluations for Safe and Well and other initiatives moving forward.

6 Appendices



Home Safety Evaluation Form 1

Section A: Before your Home Safety Visit

Please tick the number that you most identify with in answer to each question

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most confident and 1 being least confident:

1. How confident do you feel that you are living safely from fire in your home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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2. How confident do you feel that you are living securely from burglary in your home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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3. How confident do you feel that you are living safe from having a fall at home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Section B: How was your visit?

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box

4. The Home Safety Technician who visited me was friendly, polite and professional

Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5. I would recommend a Home Safety Visit to friends and family

Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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6. I have learned something today that will help me to live more safely from fire at home in the future

Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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7. I have learned something today that will help me to live more securely from burglary in the future

Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Section C: What did we talk about?

Please read the questions carefully and tick all boxes that apply

8. What actions, if any, will you take to live safer from fire following your Home Safety Visit?

Make an escape plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Test my alarms every week	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close internal doors at night	<input type="checkbox"/>	De-clutter escape routes	<input type="checkbox"/>	I will test my CO detector or get one if I don't have one	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Other (fire)									
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9. What actions, if any, will you take to live more securely from burglary following your Home Safety Visit?

Always check the ID of people I don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure doors and windows are secure (Lift, lock Remove)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Security mark my property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure the perimeter of my house is as secure as possible	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider security lighting for my property?	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Other (security)									
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10. Are there any other actions you will take following your Home Safety Visit?

Empty response box for question 10.

Section D: After your Home Safety Visit

Please tick the number that you most identify with in answer to each question

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most confident and 1 being least confident:

11. Following your Home Safety Visit, how confident do you feel that you are living safely from fire in your home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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12. Following your Home Safety Visit, how confident do you feel that you are living securely from burglary in your home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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13. Following your Home Safety Visit, how confident do you feel that you are living safe from having a fall at home?

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
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14. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, we hope you found your Home Safety Visit useful.

Every answer you have provided enables us to evaluate the Home Safety Service, helping us to continue to grow and develop more effective ways of helping people in Essex to live more safely at home.

If you have any further comments, or questions, please don't hesitate to contact us by calling 0300 303 0088 or emailing us at HFSV@essex-fire.gov.uk

Home Safety Evaluation Form 2

Section A: Re-visiting your Home Safety Visit									
Please tick the number that you most identify with in answer to each question On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most confident and 1 being least confident									
1. How confident do you feel that you are living safely from fire in your home?									
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. How confident do you feel that you are living securely from burglary in your home?									
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How confident do you feel that you are living safe from having a fall at home?									
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section B: Did our visit help to you to live more safely?									
4. Since my Home Safety Visit, I have taken the following actions on the advice of the Home Safety Officer who visited my home.									
I close internal doors at night	<input type="checkbox"/>	I test my smoke alarm & CO alarm regularly	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have stopped using my box plugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have created an escape plan and shared it with other residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have purchased a CO alarm	<input type="checkbox"/>
I always check the ID of people I don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	I ensure doors and windows are secure (Lift, lock Remove)	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have security marked my property	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have ensured the perimeter of my house is as secure as possible	<input type="checkbox"/>	I ensured that my security lighting was fit for purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>



Other									
5. How helpful was your Home Safety Visit in enabling you to live more safely and securely at home.									
Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither helpful or unhelpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unhelpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very unhelpful	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I have accessed further support/assistance following my Home Safety Visit (tick all that apply)									
Help to stop smoking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help to stop drinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help with feeling lonely	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help with heating my home	<input type="checkbox"/>	Further help with home security	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help living with or supporting someone living with dementia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Having assistive technology fitted in my home, such as a grab rail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Help avoiding scams and doorstep fraud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Other</u>			

8. The further support, information or advice I have accessed has helped me to live more safely and well in my home.									
Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither Agree nor Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Home Safety Service

