



Please reply to:

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Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service,
 Headquarters
 Pirehill, Stone
 Staffordshire ST15 0BS

Telephone: ██████████

Email: ██

Date: 8th February 2021

Mr A. Haigh
 Senior Coroner Staffordshire South
 Coroner's Office
 1 Staffordshire Place
 Stafford ST16 2LP

Dear Mr Haigh

Regulation 28 Report – Neil-Barre-2020-0237, Sylvia-Griffiths-2020-0238

In response to your letter received on the 17th November 2021 outlining your findings following the inquest into the death of Neil Barre, and the inquest into the death of Sylvia Griffiths, I would like to provide an overview of the work Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is undertaking in response to your concerns raised in the Regulation 28 reports.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service will be conducting a fatal fire review of the case. This will involve your findings from the Coroner's inquest along with a review of partnership and prevention activity the fire and rescue service conducts in cases such as this.

The fatal fire review will involve Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service along with key partner agencies and will aim to capture any multi agency learning from this tragic event. Following which the identified learning will be used to review our prevention and partnership activity in order to ensure the potential for further deaths of this nature are prevented.

The learning will also be shared with other fire and rescue services nationally through our national prevent networks also aimed at raising awareness of cases such as this and to share best practice to ensure prevention activity meet the needs of our communities.

Due to current COVID 19 restrictions the fatal fire review will be taking place virtually W/C 22 February 2021 all actions and learning will be recorded. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service will ensure a record of the learning is shared through the Coroner's office for your awareness by the 1st March 2021. It is proposed the learning will also be shared with local partner agencies along with fire and rescue services nationally on the above date.

Due to the tragic nature of these events we are keen as a service to ensure we take every step in preventing future fire deaths by working closely with partner agencies and consistently reviewing our approach to prevention activities. By doing this we try to ensure our most vulnerable members of the

██ **Chief Fire Officer**





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community are identified and protected at the earliest opportunity using equipment and technology available providing a safer environment to live.

Additionally – Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service run a scheme called ‘Olive Branch’. This scheme provides training to people who are in contact with, or visit vulnerable members of communities within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. It encourages them to identify potential fire hazards and other risks in the home. In addition it highlights how to refer vulnerable people onto Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service for Safe and Well advice.

Olive Branch was launched in February 2011 after a report by the coroner investigating the death of [REDACTED], and has since been adopted by other local authorities and Fire Services. The primary aim of the Olive Branch Programme is to reduce the number of accidental dwelling fires, fire-related deaths and injuries across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

The training is free and we will deliver to groups of any number at either their premises or at venues supplied by us across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. We aim to train all persons involved with caring for the elderly, disabled and vulnerable on a daily basis in how to identify hazards and to understand how to deal with these risks and to refer them on to the appropriate organisation. Each session lasts minimum of 1.5 hours and each delegate receives a certificate of attendance.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service work closely with partner agencies and Olive Branch training has recently been redeveloped to accommodate our ever changing community needs. The findings from the investigation into the death of Sylvia Griffiths and Neil Barre will be fed into these training sessions, particularly the availability and use of fire/smoke alarms that are designed for people suffering with dementia. These training sessions will also be used to improve communication with groups who provide domiciliary and reinforce feedback regarding people who may not be using the special equipment provided to them.

Thank you for raising your concerns and providing us with the findings from your inquest, as a sector we will make every effort to learn from this tragic event in order to prevent further potential deaths and injuries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Howard Watts'.

Howard Watts
Director of Prevent & Protect

