

Tips if you have hearing, sight or mobility issues

Hearing difficulties

Special smoke alarm equipment is available free of charge from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for any Bedfordshire resident who has impaired hearing.

The alarm is a mains powered unit with battery backup and consists of a smoke detector that when activated, sounds as a normal detector with a wireless link to a strobe light situated by the bed. Linked to this, a vibrating pad is placed under the pillow or mattress to wake the deaf person to escape from the fire if it is activated. This and the home smoke alarms fitted on the ceilings can be linked to each other so that when one goes off, they all go off.

SMS Text Service

If you cannot make voice calls, you can contact the 999 emergency services by SMS text from your mobile phone. Emergency SMS is part of the standard 999 service which has been designed specifically for people with hearing loss or difficulty with speech. You will only be able to use this service if you have registered with emergency SMS first.

To register, **text 'register' to 999**. You will get a reply – then follow the instructions you are sent.

Sight difficulties

Unplug and then check electrical leads regularly by touch. If they are frayed or faulty don't plug them in or switch them on. If electrics are giving off a burning smell, turn them off and unplug them immediately. You may also want to consider placing a tactile indicator along your escape route to make it easier to find the exit.

Mobility issues

Use a walking stick to reach your alarms to test them, however, if it is difficult and puts your balance at risk, ask somebody to do it for you.

Make sure you have easy access to any mobility aids you may need, such as a walking stick, hand rails or frame.

Ensure that you do use the mobility aids that you have access to and use of.

If you would like to receive a visit to your home or receive advice by telephone, please contact us with your name, address and telephone number mentioning 'Dementia Safety First'.

By email safeandwell@bedsfire.gov.uk

By telephone 0333 399 0031



Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service