THE PLAN

Making West Midlands Safer 2011-2015



The information contained in this document can also be provided in other formats including Braille, audiotape and large print.
Please call
0121 380 6678.

To book a Free Home Safety Check in your home, by your local firefighters Freephone **0800 389 5525** or register via

www.wmfs.net

Further information about the work of the West Midlands Fire Service may be found by visiting our website:

www.wmfs.net

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INTRODUCTION

Joint foreword from the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman of the Authority

This four year plan sets out our strategic direction for 2011-2015 and provides a framework for the delivery of our services.

The reputation and brand of West Midlands Fire Service is quite rightly held in high regard and recognised as making a significant contribution to "Making West Midlands Safer." Our communities can rely on us when they are most at risk through the delivery of core services of prevention, protection and emergency response.

It is a tribute to the professionalism and commitment of our staff that we are always available to deliver these services, as well as responding to national and international emergencies and threats as they occur. We look forward to the challenge of providing essential services for major events such as the 2012 Olympics, which will affect a much wider area than just London. We will continue to invest in the latest technology and equipment in order to keep our fire fighters safe and provide a world class service.

There have been significant changes within the Fire and Rescue Service over recent years, in the way we are organised and the services we provide. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announced a 25% reduction in formula grant funding for the UK Fire and Rescue Service over the next four years. This challenging financial position means we will have to make tough choices and look at different ways of doing things, using new and innovative approaches to continue delivering excellent services. The public quite rightly expect high quality, value for money services and we will continue to deliver these.

Our 'Building upon Success' programme, launched in May 2010, consists of a wide ranging in-depth review of all areas of our service and will ensure the people who deliver and need our services will ultimately shape our success.

Through our work with Local Strategic Partnerships, Community Safety Partnerships and Health and Wellbeing Boards, we will continue to improve the quality of life and support the delivery of local priorities. We have a strong track record of working with our communities and as a trusted and reputable partner we support agendas that are much wider than risk from fire.

Through the delivery of the priorities set out in this document and the ongoing dedication of our staff, we will continue to contribute to economic prosperity, protection of the environment and making the West Midlands safer for everyone.





Vijith Randeniya OBE
Chief Fire Officer
West Midlands Fire
Service



Councillor David Hinton
Chairman
West Midlands Fire &
Rescue Authority

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We will be recognised as the World's best

Fire Service.

OUR SERVICE AREA

The West Midlands Fire Service covers an area approaching 92,000 hectares (350 sq. miles) and provides a fire and rescue service to a population of over 2.6 million people made up of the following proportion of ethnicities:

- White 77%
- Asian or Asian British 14.6%
- Black African/Caribbean or Black British 4.4%
- Mixed Origin 2.6%
- Chinese 0.9%
- Other 0.8%

The map opposite shows the location of our community fire stations and fire safety centres which cover the cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton and the Metropolitan Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell Solihull and Walsall.

With our partner agencies we support the priorities of Local Strategic Partnerships, Community Safety Partnerships and Health and Wellbeing Boards. The map opposite also provides an overview of community priorities in each of these local authority areas.





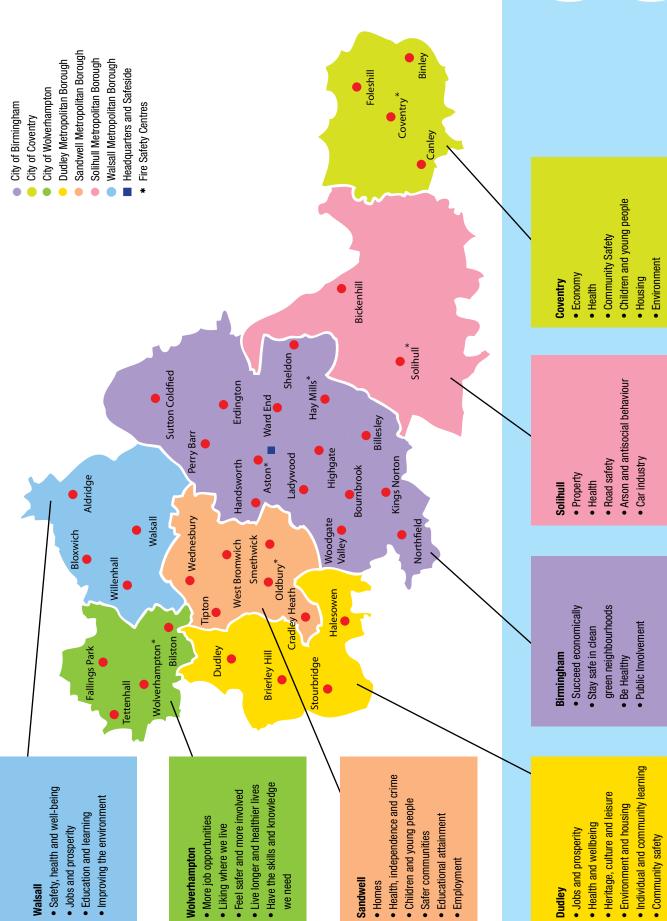








THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE -THEIR PRIORITIES



we need

Sandwell Homes

Dudley

ABOUT US

We all work towards 'Making West Midlands Safer' through providing a quality service to reduce risk by preventing, protecting and responding. Our guidance on how to achieve this comes from The Department of Communities and Local Government and is currently set out in the National Framework document. The services we provide and the way in which we deliver them may change in the near future, as the impact of the Localism Bill on the Fire and Rescue Service becomes clearer.

The West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority is made up of Members of the seven Councils in the West Midlands and they set the direction for the Service in the best interests of the people we serve.

Our strategic leaders form a Corporate Board to ensure we work towards achieving our key priorities:-

- Communities and Partnerships
- People
- Response
- Value for Money

and so achieving our goals of:-

- Preventing fires and other emergencies through community involvement and education
- Protecting property and people by providing advice and enforcing appropriate legislation
- Responding effectively to emergencies when needed.









WE HAVE GREAT PEOPLE ACHIEVING GREAT THINGS

What We Do

Every day West Midlands Fire Service undertakes a range of activities in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the communities we serve. Further information on any of these and more can be found by visiting our website **www.wmfs.net**.

- Undertaking free Home Safety Checks (HSC) in order to provide advice and guidance to occupants about how to reduce the risk of a fire occurring in the home, and what actions to take to get out safely should a fire occur.
- Undertaking inspections of non domestic premises on a risk based approach, to ensure fire safety legislation is being complied with.
- Handling emergency 999 calls from members of the public and providing the most appropriate level of resources to deal with a wide range of incidents. Working in close collaboration with other agencies and responding services such as the Police and Ambulance Service and Environment Agency.
- Educating children on a wide range of community safety issues using our 'state of the art' Safeside Interactive Safety Centre in Vauxhall Road, Birmingham and the Red Hot Education Station experience at Handsworth Community Fire Station.
- Working with partner agencies to educate members of the community on the hazards associated with a wide range of topics such as fire, road safety and dangerous driving, as well as the benefits associated with healthy lifestyles.











The Challenges We Face

The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review outlined a 25% reduction in government funding for the UK Fire and Rescue Service over the next four year period commencing in 2011. The West Midlands Fire Service will receive the largest reduction in Government grant funding of £7.7 million in 2011/2012 and £2.5 million in 2012/13. The challenge we face is to continue to make measurable service improvements with reduced resources by doing more with less.

Delivering essential services with the current and possible future cuts presents a significant challenge to us and will require the combined commitment and dedication from all our staff, so that we continue to deliver our vital world-class services to the people of the West Midlands.

We have set out to achieve this through delivery of the 'Building upon Success' programme which began in May 2010. This is the Service's four year transformation programme which will enable the delivery of a more flexible and agile Fire and Rescue Service for the future.









How Our Plan is Informed - Engagement

In Summer 2010 the Service undertook a programme of consultation and communication both internally with staff and externally with our communities. The purpose of this was to gather opinion about what the Service should look like in the future and inform us of what our priorities should be. Over 6,000 ideas were generated as part of this activity and the following were highlighted to us as important services by our communities:

- Response and Fire Control: responding to all types of incidents including road traffic collisions, hazardous materials and major incidents
- Protection: Keeping the public safe from fire in public places
- Provision of Specialist Rescue Teams
- Prevention through educating our communities
- Safety in the home
- Performance Standards

It is important we provide a service which meets our communities' needs and expectations. We will ensure these important services continue to inform our future strategic direction and service delivery.











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OUR INTENTIONS - 'BUILDING UPON SUCCESS'

We will continue to work in a way that brings our Core Values to life and ensure they are the foundation of everything we do. Our Plan will be delivered by us all and we will all know what is expected of us as part our Individual Performance Development Reviews.

A great deal of time and energy has been dedicated to the 'Building upon Success' programme and we are proud of what we have achieved so far, as efficiencies begin to be realised. 2011/12 will see the implementation of further back office savings, the re-organisation of fire safety inspecting teams to allow for efficiencies and better ways of working; the trial of an alternative approach to dealing with calls generated by Automatic Fire Alarms and the introduction of more efficient staffing arrangements.

The uncertainty of our budget situation for years three and four (2013- 2015) means we do not know exactly what impact this will have on the Service. These future years will see more innovative approaches to the way in which we deliver our services. However, our commitment to our communities remains the same, to make the West Midlands safer for everyone who lives, works, visits and travels within the area.

Our communities have needs far wider than rescue from fire or road traffic collisions. Our dedicated, highly skilled staff will work with our communities to achieve positive outcomes across the range of our core services of prevention, protection and response.

Building upon









OUR PREFERRED VISION

Our Communities

As a Fire and Rescue Service we meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve. Through provision of education, community safety, enforcement and emergency response services we minimise the impact of fires, emergencies and our organisation on the environment.

We are a high performing; ethical organisation with effective leadership at all levels, providing quality, value for money services to our communities. We work effectively with partners, and engage with our communities.

Our People

We are an employer of choice where all our people are valued. We succeed as individuals and together as a team we maximise our impact as a public service. We recognise and reward the achievement of our staff. We deliver our services by having a professional highly skilled workforce who are capable of responding to changing and challenging times, are innovative, motivated, flexible, qualified and fulfilled. Our standards and performance are achieved by our collective and individual commitment to continuous improvement, personal development, responsibility and accountability.

Our Reputation

The West Midlands Fire Service is judged by others to be a successful organisation whose mission is to make West Midlands Safer. Our external assessments tell us we are good at what we do. We want to be recognised for being great.

Our Aspiration

By providing better public services and ensuring the West Midlands is safer – we will be recognised as the world's best fire service.

THE DETAIL

Further information about the work of West Midlands Fire Service may be found by visiting our website: **www.wmfs.net**











OUR OUTCOMES

Through our work we will make a significant contribution towards the following outcomes:

- Reduce the number and severity of fires, injuries and deaths
- Reduce the severity of road traffic collisions, injuries and deaths
- Ensure that at all times we are well-prepared in order to respond to all incidents including major threats and emergencies
- Work with partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of our local communities
- Protect business from risk of fire in order to support the economy
- Reduce the number of malicious calls and false alarms
- Deliver Value for Money and improve our services by making best use of all of our resources
- Deliver services in a responsible and sustainable way to reduce the impact of our work on the environment
- Ensure high levels of public satisfaction and confidence in our services so that people feel safer









STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

How We Will Target Our Resources To Deliver Our Outcomes

In order to deliver our outcomes we have developed a number of Strategic Objectives for each of our four priority areas of Communities and Partnerships, People, Value for Money and Response. Each of the Strategic Objectives describes in very broad terms where we will target our resources and effort in making West Midlands Safer. By working in partnership with others we will work towards achieving our objectives. How we intend to do this is detailed in our supporting strategies and action plans.

Communities and Partnerships

We recognise there are communities and individuals who are more at risk from safety related issues in the home, including fire.

Working with our partners we will tackle a range of issues including healthier living, anti-social behaviour, supporting independent living and safer business premises. This multi-agency approach will produce the best results for members of the communities we serve.

Vulnerable People

We will:

- Reduce the number of fires, deaths and injuries.
- Work with partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of our local communities.

Road Safety

We will:

 Promote and work with responsible partners and other stakeholder groups to improve road safety through structured and targeted action to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured.

Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour

We will:

• Improve the quality of life within local communities by preventing and reducing the effects of arson and anti-social behaviour.









Health and Well-being

We will:

 Work with partners and engage with the "Public Health England" health and wellbeing boards, in order to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and reduce the impact of potentially damaging lifestyles and behaviours.

Environment

We will:

- Adapt and invest where necessary to ensure we have adequate resources and technologies to deal with incidents caused by severe weather and others relating to climate change.
- Embed carbon management (and mitigation technologies) throughout the organisation in order to reduce our carbon emissions, carbon footprint and energy costs and make best use of partnerships to maximise our impact in this area.
- Protect the natural environment by preventing fires and where fires and other incidents have occurred, to minimise the environmental impacts.

Protection - Advise and Enforce

We will:

- Continue to advise and enforce on fire safety issues across the West Midlands in line with current legislation.
- Consult and liaise with partners including the Health and Safety Executive, Building Control Bodies and Licensing Task Forces to achieve safer premises and preserve the built environment in the West Midlands.
- Continue to improve the information and intelligence provided to emergency crews, enabling them to deal effectively with incidents and keep them safe.
- Continue to improve the accuracy of information provided to emergency crews.







People

We are an organisation that embraces diversity through our staff, the way we engage with the public, and how we build and deliver our services. By understanding and acknowledging individual difference, we can create environments and deliver services that include everybody.

Our people trust and respect each other and those we serve.

Innovative, Creative and Accountable Leadership

We will:

- Develop and grow leadership at all levels and support the organisation in attracting and retaining people with effective leadership skills.
- Support all employees in identifying, acquiring and maintaining knowledge and skills required to deliver organisational objectives.

Recognised, valued and engaged staff who are safe and healthy at work

We will:

- Ensure that reward and recognition packages are in place to attract and retain a highly skilled, high performing and flexible workforce.
- Support our employees to enable them to achieve and maintain excellent health and safety at work.
- Provide flexible employment conditions and working patterns that balance both the needs of the diverse workforce and the Service.

Organisational Development

We will:

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships and partnerships to support our people with the sharing of ideas, best practice and learning across professional and organisational boundaries to bring about improvement.
- Actively seek innovative, creative and value for money solutions for maximising the capacity and capability of our workforce.

Our People and the services we provide reflect the needs of our Community

We will:

 Ensure effective strategies are embedded in all we do to support the service in achieving equality outcomes for our diverse communities and workforce.

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"Make a real impact on saving lives and protecting our local community in an emergency"







Our service is shaped by our risk analysis and our understanding of the West Midlands and its diverse communities.







Value for Money

We are committed to providing a high quality, value for money service and already have a sustained track record of delivering service improvements. We recognise the need to place a greater emphasis on Value for Money, if we are to respond to external influences and the challenges we face in delivering the high quality services expected by our communities with less resources.

Value For Money

We will:

- Improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of all our activities, making best use of all of our resources to ensure our communities receive a Value for Money service.
- Pursue greater economies of scale and synergy in all of our activities, by eliminating waste, unnecessary bureaucracy and making best use of technology and all our resources.
- Explore possible opportunities for generating income from external sources.

Asset Management

We will:

• Ensure all of our assets are appropriate community focused, energy efficient and fit for purpose and are professional workplaces of which we can be proud.



Response

By making sure we have the right people in the right place at the right time, with the right skills and equipment, we will make a real impact on saving lives and protecting our local community in an emergency.

Deal Effectively with Incidents

We will:

- Plan in conjunction with partner agencies and organisations for emergency situations including both generic incident types and special risk sites and scenarios.
- Deal safely and effectively with incidents and respond to emergencies with clearly defined performance standards and by providing appropriately trained crews, equipment, procedures, information and vehicles.
- Use our learning from the incidents which we and others attend. Utilise our data, information and intelligence to ensure we continuously improve our prevention, protection and response activities in order to develop the Service.
- Explore, develop and deliver a range of response options, utilising innovation and alternative concepts including intervention and operational command and control, to ensure safe systems of work are employed and an effective response to our communities needs.











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Communities & Partnerships

- Vulnerable People
- Road Safety
- Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Health and Wellbeing
- The Environment
- Advise and Enforce

People

- Innovative, Creative and Accountable Leadership
- Recognised, valued and engaged staff who are safe and healthy at work
- Organisational Development
- Our People and the services we provide reflect the needs of our Community

OUR PRIORITIES, DESIRED

CORE

MPROVEMENT OUTC Ensure high levels of public satisfaction and confidence in our **PRIOF** services so that people feel safer Deliver services in a responsible and sustainable way **COMMUNITIES &** to reduce the impact of our **PARTNERSHIPS** work on the environment Mak

Reduce the number of malicious calls and false alarms

PEOPLE



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RESP

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Deliver Value for Money and improve our services by making best use of all of our resources

OUTCOMES AND CORE VALUES VALUES OMES Response • Deal Effectively with Reduce the number Incidents and severity of fires, injuries and deaths RITIES Reduce the severity of road traffic collisions, injuries and deaths **RESPONSE** Ensure that at all times we are well-**CORE VALUES** prepared in king order to respond to all idlands incidents including major fer threats and VALUE FOR emergencies ФИО **MONEY** Work with partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of our local communities Protect business from risk of fire in order to support the economy Value for Money • Delivering a Value for Money Service Asset Management **VALUES**

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Our Service is shaped by our risk analysis and by our understanding of the West Midlands and its diverse communities. In this way we are able to plan and allocate resources to ensure we are managing risk as effectively as possible. We identify and target those members of the community who are at highest risk.

Our prevention activity has impacted upon reductions in the numbers of fires in the home and other emergency incidents. Our resources are strategically placed to meet demand across the area, so we can target those most at risk through prevention and protection and achieve appropriate levels of response for all types of incidents.

Our analysis of risk enables us to target our core services in the following ways:

- Prevention we work with local people to educate them about the dangers of fire and other hazards, either directly or through partner agencies to address local area priorities. Through identifying the most vulnerable households we can continue to target our work and ensure we have the greatest impact.
- Protection we carry out audits of premises and examine plans for new buildings to ensure fire safety standards are high. By targeting our highest risks we can ensure people are safe in the workplace and in their daily activities. We are also able to better understand the risk our firefighters may face if a fire occurs.
- Emergency Response we constantly monitor how we respond to fires and other emergencies to ensure our resources are used in the best, most cost effective way. We also consider the scale and nature of events that we may have to respond to in the future. As part of this process we review the use of different vehicles and approaches, working with partners and communities more effectively. We also examine the range of skills our firefighters need to function safely and effectively.

More information can be found on our website at

 $www.wmfs.net/Our_Performance/Integrated_Risk_Management/$

which will be updated periodically to reflect the dynamic nature of the area and the people we serve.







PERFORMANCE

How Do We Know We Are Delivering Our Outcomes?

It is crucial the organisation is working to deliver the best possible service to the public. To allow us to do this we monitor and measure our performance and ensure systems are in place to show we are continuously improving.

Key performance indicators and targets are in place to enable us to drive up our performance, build upon our successes and demonstrate improvement. These targets are aligned to the priorities and outcomes detailed in this Plan. Further information can be found on our website – www.wmfs.net.

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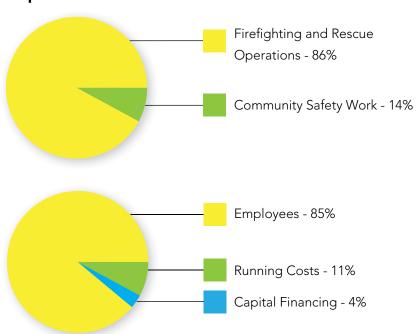
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2011/2012

How much will the Service cost in 2011/2012?

The total net budget requirement for the Fire Service in 2011/2012 is £111.5m. This mainly relates to firefighting and rescue operations and community fire safety work.

The majority of expenditure relating to the net budget requirement of £111.5m are mainly employee costs, a further analysis is shown below.

Expenditure



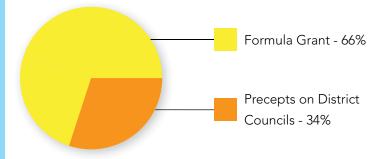


How will the Service be funded in 2011/2012?

The resources to fund the net budget requirement of £111.5m comes in the form of a formula grant from the Government (£73.2m) and Precepts on District Councils (£38.3m).



Financing





Balances and Reserves

The Fire Authority must consider the level of general balances it wishes to maintain before it can decide the level of Council Tax to charge in any year.

In order to set a balanced budget in 2011/2012 the Authority assumed no movement in general balances. The actual level of general balances at 31st March 2010 was £4.690m. The Authority holds general balances as funding to meet any unforeseen events which it may need to respond to. Interest is earned on any unused balances.

In addition, as part of the closedown of accounts process, consideration needs to be given to the level of earmarked reserves required. These are amounts set aside to meet specific anticipated future demands. The level of earmarked reserves at 31st March 2010 was £12.787m. Interest is earned on any balances until expenditure is committed against the demands identified.

Capital Expenditure and Funding

In 2011/2012, the Authority plans to spend £3.625 million on capital projects.

A planned capital expenditure analysis is shown below:

	£m
Vehicles	2.809
Land & Buildings	0.615
Equipment	0.201

A forecast of resources to fund the capital programme in 2011/2012 is shown below: –

	£m
Capital Grants	2.915
Revenue Funding	0.710

The Fire Authority did not undertake any borrowing to help purchase assets during 2009/10, borrowing in earlier years meant that as at the 31st March 2010, the Authority had total loans of £47.264m (the interest and principal on any loans needs to be met from future revenue budgets). The value of fixed assets held by the Authority as at 31st March 2010 which the loans had helped fund was £146m, of which approximately 94% related to land and buildings and 6% related to vehicles and equipment.

Medium Term Financial Plan

The cost of delivering the service was considered as part of the Authority's 2011/12 budget setting process. However due to restrictions in public sector expenditure there will be further reductions in Government grant which will have an impact on service objectives.











CONTACTS

If you would like to obtain further information about any aspect of this Plan, please contact us, using one of the methods shown below:

Strategic Planning Improvement and Risk Team West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters 99 Vauxhall Road Birmingham B7 4HW

0121 380 6678

SPIRiT@wmfs.net

If you have access to the Internet, **www.wmfs.net** provides everything you need to know about the services we provide, our performance, fire safety advice and recruitment.

For further information about your Fire Service, you can contact our customer care service by:

Public Relations Team West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters 99 Vauxhall Road Birmingham B7 4HW

Customer Care Hotline – **0121 380 7404** (24 Hour answerphone)

contact@wmfs.net









OTHER FORMATS

The information contained in this document can also be provided in other languages as well as other formats including braille, audiotape and large print.

Please call **0121 380 6678** (24 hour answerphone).

Arabic	هذه المعلومات متوفره بلغات واشكال اخرى. ارجوك اتصل 6679 380 0121
Bengali	এই তথ্যটুকু অন্যান্য ভাষায় ও বোঝার উপযুক্ত অন্যান্য নমুনায় (ফর্মাটে) দেয়া যাবে। অনুগ্রহ করে 0121 380 6679 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।
Chinese	我們可用其它語言和其它版式提供這份資料,請致電 0121 380 6679。
Czech	Tyto informace mohou být k dispozici v jiných jazycích a formátech. Zatelefonujte prosím na 0121 380 6679
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French	Ces informations peuvent être mises à votre disposition dans d'autres langues et sous d'autres formats. Veuillez appeler le n° 0121 380 6679
Gujarati	આ માહિતી અન્ય ભાષાઓમાં અને આકારોમાં પૂરી પાડવામાં આવી શકે છે. કૃપા કરી 0121 380 6679 પર ફૉન કરો.
Kurdish	ئه م زانیاریانه به زمان و شیّوازی تریش ده سته به ر ده بیّت. تکایه په یوه ندی بکه به 0121 380 6679
Polish	Niniejszą ulotkę informacyjną otrzymać można również w innych językach i formatach. Bliższe informacje tel. 0121 380 6679
Punjabi	ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਬਣਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਬੋੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ: 0121 380 6679
Russian	Эта информация может быть воспроизведена на других языках и в других формах. Позвоните по телефону: 0121 380 6679
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Urdu	یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں اور دوسرے انداز میں بھی دستیاب کی جاسکتی ہے۔ براہِ مہر بانی اس نمبر پر فون سیجئے 6679 380 0121

Vietnamese Tin tức này có thể được cung cấp trong ngôn ngữ và hình thức khác.

Làm ơn điện thoại số 0121 380 6679







