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PARTNERING FOR PROTECTION

Electrical Safety First joins Ageing Well in Wales

More than half of all domestic fires in Wales arise through electricity – and UK adults over 60 are ten times more likely to die in a fire than someone aged 17 to 24.

That's why leading safety Charity, Electrical Safety First has joined forces with the Ageing Well in Wales partnership programme, which is hosted by the Office of the Older People's Commissioner for **Wales**.

“We have undertaken a range of research around the electrical safety of older people, which has not previously been seen as a priority”, explains Phil Buckle, Chief Executive of Electrical Safety First. “But as our lifespan increases, people tend to remain in properties for longer. This often means regular home safety checks are forgotten and appliances tend to be older.”

In 2015, the Charity published a report '*A Shock to the System: Electrical Safety in an Ageing Society*', which took a UK-wide perspective on this issue. It found that almost two thirds of households comprised of couples over 60 live in accommodation which fails basic electrical safety standards.

“We wanted to see if the picture gathered in our UK investigation held for the devolved nations and, having previously looked at the situation in Scotland, we are now undertaking research with Swansea University to review electrical safety for older people in Wales”, adds Phil. “We are delighted to be joining the Ageing Well in Wales Partnership. Their range of networks to support the sharing of knowledge and innovation - to improve the lives of older people in the country - will help us raise awareness of this critical issue”.

Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Sarah Rochira, said: "I'm delighted that Electrical Safety First has joined Ageing Well in Wales. Promoting awareness amongst older people of how to use electrical products safely in their home contributes towards many of the key goals of Ageing Well, including falls prevention and developing age-friendly environments. By working together we can help ensure that Wales is a good place to grow older for everyone."

The Charity is currently lobbying the Welsh Government on the need for detailed research on electrical fires in the home, including improvements on the way fire data is gathered, to ensure effective protection strategies can be established

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Editor's Notes

- Electrical Safety First is the leading campaigning charity dedicated to preventing deaths, injuries and damage caused by electricity.
- The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people across Wales.

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