



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

2025-2028



www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk

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کی خوش پسند پر غور کر سکیں

Punjabi

جے تہانوں ایس لکھت دی سی ہو شکل یا زبان وچ لو دے تے مہرانی کر کے سہ دے مال رابطہ کرواں جے اسی تہادی
درخواست تے غور کر سکے

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Arabic

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى نسخة من هذا المستند بتنسيق أو لغة بديلة، فيرجى الاتصال بنا حتى
نتمكن من النظر فيه طلبك.

Kurdish

ئەگەر پێویستت بە وەشانێکی ئەم بەلگەنامەیە هەبێت، یان زما نێکی جیاواز
تکایە پەیوەندیمان پێوە بکە. ئەو دەتوانین داواکارییەکەت ڕەچاوە بکەین.

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WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Welcome to Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's latest Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This plan outlines the key challenges and risks facing our communities and our strategies to address and reduce these risks over the next four years. We will use our resources in prevention, protection, and emergency response to target the most vulnerable and keep Staffordshire's communities safe.

FOREWORD

We believe that the best way to keep people safe from fires and other emergencies is to prevent them happening in the first place. To mitigate risks, we focus on fire prevention and protection, particularly for those people most at risk in our communities. Our fire stations, fire engines, and firefighters provide a high-quality, timely response to emergencies.

Our plans align with national expectations for a modern, effective, and inclusive fire and rescue service. The Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Local Government Association (LGA) expect a modern, effective, efficient, and inclusive service, as outlined in various HMICFRS inspection reports, NFCC's Fit for the Future report and the Government's white paper on fire sector reform.

We are committed to serving our communities and working with partners to provide the highest level of service and value for money. This involves all emergency services collaborating efficiently and effectively, preventing incidents, and being closely involved in their communities. We will continue to build on this by working with Staffordshire Police, our partners in the NHS and local authorities.

Despite financial challenges, we are prepared for the future. Over the past three years, we have become more data-driven and evidence-based. Investing in our people remains crucial, as our success relies on them. We are committed to supporting all of our staff and fostering a diverse, inclusive workplace founded on dignity, respect, and fairness. Our People Strategy 2023-2026 ensures our staff are supported, receive the best training, and have opportunities to develop and grow.

Leading this professional and hardworking team is an immense privilege. I am proud of how our teams have faced the challenges of the past few years, including the Covid pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, wildfires and flooding, major incidents, and providing increased support to the NHS.

Thank you to everyone who has communicated with us and provided feedback during consultations. We have listened to what you have told us, and this Community Risk Management Plan reflects your contributions.

I would like to assure you that we will continue striving for improvement and working together to make Staffordshire the safest place to be.



Rob Barber,
Chief Fire Officer

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN?

As required by the government’s [Fire and Rescue National Framework](#) for England each fire and rescue service must produce a high-level Community Risk Management Plan which explains how they will use their resources to respond to and reduce the risks they have identified in their local area.

As part of our planning process, we identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks across Staffordshire and use this information to plan how to control these risks, respond to emergencies and deliver our fire prevention and protection activities in the most efficient and effective way. This means we can make sure we have the right people and resources in the right places at the right time to protect **our communities, our environment** and **our people**.

When developing our Community Risk Management Plan, we must ensure we:

- Consider the fire and rescue-related risks which could affect Staffordshire.
- Show how we will work to prevent fires and other types of emergencies and explain how we will respond to incidents to reduce the impact on

our communities. We will also work with other organisations to do that in the most efficient and effective way.

- Explain how we will use **our people**, fire engines and equipment to reduce risk and respond to emergencies.
- Explain how we will ensure we comply with and enforce the law that sets out how businesses and organisation manage fire safety in their buildings.
- The plan will last for at least three years and be updated as often as is needed to reassure you that we are still doing what we need to do to keep **our communities, our environment** and **our people** safe.
- Show that we have listened to **our communities** and those organisations that have an interest in what we do as we write our plan, including representative bodies and staff associations.
- Be easy for people to access and be available to everyone.

This Community Risk Management Plan sets out the **priorities**, which support our vision of ‘**making Staffordshire the safest place to be**’ and are driven by our assessment of the risks across the county. Ensuring that our communities are protected by a first-class fire and rescue service is at the heart of everything that we do. We recognise that delivering on these **priorities** will depend on collaboration, co-operation and effective communication.

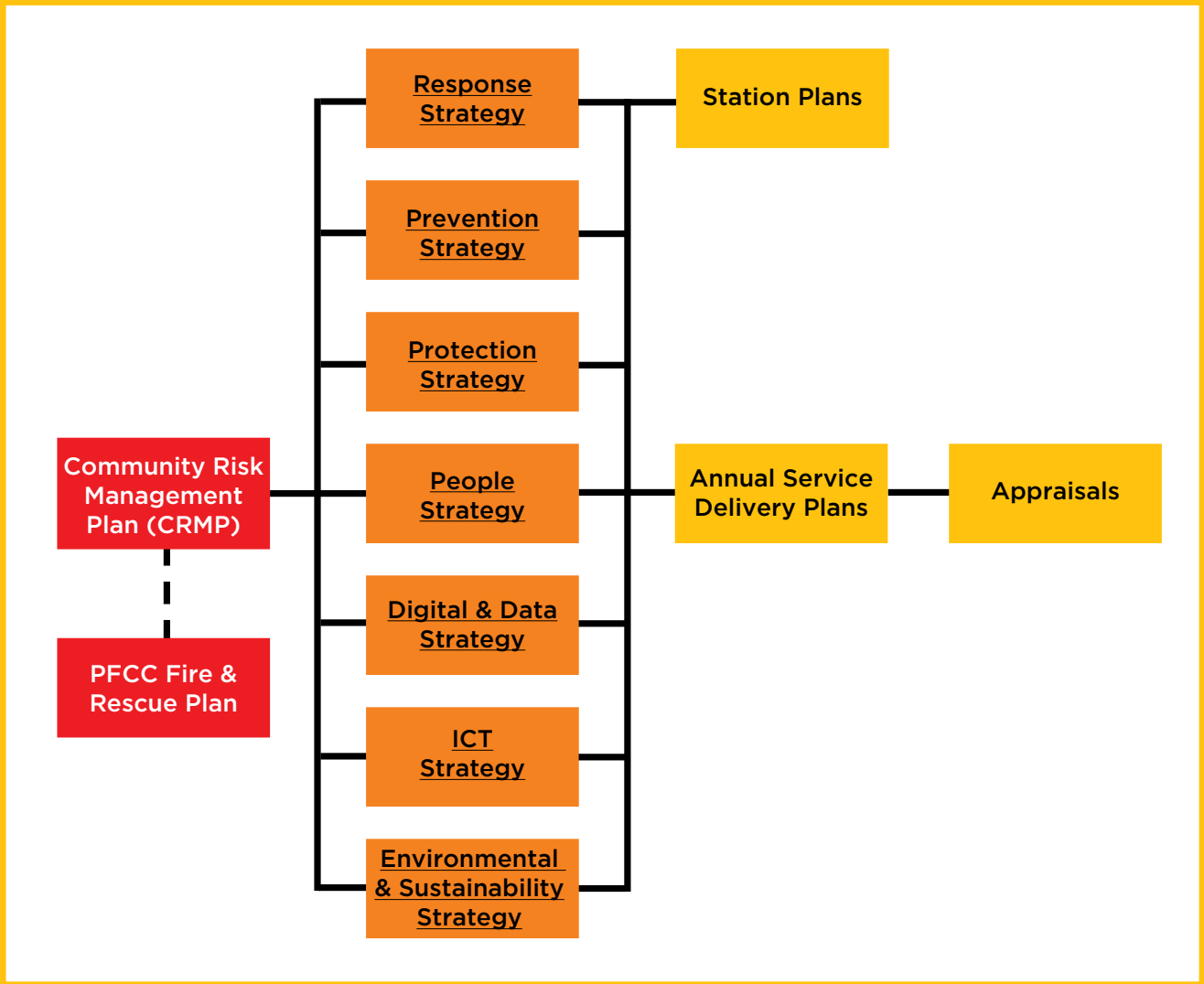
OUR STRATEGIES AND PLANS

Through our planning process, we should be able to evidence and clearly demonstrate why something should be done and importantly to identify how it will make a difference.

Underneath this Community Risk Management Plan sits a hierarchy of more detailed strategies, departmental and station plans which cover all parts of the Service and even link to our

appraisal system. This helps everyone in our organisation to understand risks, what we can do to reduce their impact and how the work they do supports the Service’s **priorities**.

We ensure that our plans are simple to understand, revised annually and based on realistic and achievable expectations.





GOVERNANCE

Staffordshire Commissioner

From 1 August 2018, in addition to overseeing Staffordshire Police, the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime became responsible for the governance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service with responsibility for ensuring the local community is protected by an effective fire and rescue service and holding the Chief Fire Officer to account for delivering that vision.

The Commissioner must produce a Fire and Rescue Plan setting out the strategic vision, priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue service in the county. In developing the **priorities** in our Community Risk Management Plan, we have considered the strategic objectives set out in the Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan 2025-2028 and how our plans can support these.

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Over the next four years, we have opportunities to build on our achievements. I know everyone in the Service cares passionately about Staffordshire, and are dedicated to keeping us all safe. My plan for the next four years is to do everything I can with my team to allow them to do just that.

”



**Staffordshire Commissioner
for Police, Fire & Rescue and
Crime Ben Adams**

ASSURANCE

Both the Commissioner's plan and this Community Risk Management Plan are subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. Regular public performance meetings are held which include reports on our performance ensuring progress against local and national performance indicators remains on track.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires us to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. We do this by publishing an annual **Statement of Assurance**, which we use as a reporting

mechanism to let you know how we are doing and tell you about progress against the objectives in our Community Risk Management Plan. We will continue to do this and we will also use it as an opportunity to keep you informed about our plans once we fully understand the impacts of the challenges we face.

The coming years are expected to be highly challenging and uncertain. Therefore, we will continue to explore various scenarios to understand and prepare for potential issues. This

effort will guide our consultation, engagement, and negotiation processes, enabling us to allocate resources and shape our services to ensure the best possible outcomes for **our communities, our environment and our people**.

You can read our latest **Statement of Assurance** on our website – [click here](#).

OUR VISION



OUR VISION
Making Staffordshire the
safest place to be

OUR VALUES



OUR PRIORITIES



This Community Risk Management Plan outlines our **priorities**, driven by our assessment of county-wide risks, to support our vision of ‘**making Staffordshire the safest place to be**’. At the heart of everything we do is our commitment to providing our

communities with a first-class fire and rescue service. Our people are incredibly important to us, and we aim to maintain a diverse, flexible, skilled, and well-supported workforce.

OUR VALUES



Core Code of Ethics

Our culture is never static and continues to evolve as our organisation adapts to the challenges and demands placed upon it. The culture in the Service is very important to us all and we are utilising the principles of the Core Code of Ethics to base our behaviours on. We believe the Core Code of Ethics will help us serve our communities and make our Service an even better place to work. It will help everyone to display and promote good behaviours. Everyone in our Service is expected to follow it. This includes those working with, or on behalf, of the Service. The ethical principles have been produced specifically for fire and rescue services by the NFCC, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour, as seen in our framework.

Putting our communities first: We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity: We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect: Making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership: We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexibility and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI): We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI within both the Service and the wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

These ethical principles should be considered within all our activities, policies, procedures and plans. We continue to work hard as a service to embed a positive culture, identify, and address the challenges faced by the Service through our workforce planning board.

The full document can be found here [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services – England](#)



Our Statement of Intent

The Service published its Statement of Intent, recognising that, like all organisations, we face challenges, yet we embrace individuals with both visible and invisible differences, holding all staff to the highest standards in supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion.

It sets out the Service's approach in dealing with inappropriate behaviours, aiming not to stifle but to encourage positive conversations on equality, diversity, and inclusion within teams. Its purpose is to support staff to feel comfortable in raising concerns regarding inappropriate behaviours. This statement, aligned with the Core Code of Ethics, constitutes key elements of the Service's strategy to promote positive cultural change.

Safeguarding

“

We believe in protecting both adults and children from harm at all times, ensuring everyone feels safe. Safeguarding encompasses actions that promote independence, well-being, and freedom from abuse and neglect. It is essential that everyone we engage with knows they can let us know if they are experiencing harm.

We want everyone who has contact with the service to use the services we offer in safety. We want parents and carers who have contact with our Service to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well-being and keeps them safe.

While the Area Manager of Prevention, Protection, and Partnerships oversees safeguarding within our organisation, it's important to recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, regardless of their role or level of authority.

Our safeguarding policy aids staff, apprentices, and volunteers in addressing safeguarding concerns they encounter, whether in their professional capacity or in their personal lives. We all have a responsibility to ensure safeguarding and prevention of abuse.

”



Michelle Hickmott,
Assistant Chief Fire Officer



Safeguarding governance and reporting:

We have formed an internal safeguarding board comprising senior leaders, managers across the Service and designated safeguarding leads, with defined terms of reference. We have appointed a dedicated Safeguarding Prevention Manager and Safeguarding Lead following a review of our Prevention team.

Our safeguarding policy is regularly reviewed and updated whenever

new legislation or guidance is published and the policy is subject to a full consultation process every three years. We publish a quarterly safeguarding report which helps improve our understanding by sharing learning outcomes and lessons learned.

We also participate in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board, contributing to annual reports, audits, safeguarding adults reviews and partner meetings.

Training:

The Service ensures all our staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding duties with various training packages to support them. The level of training will depend on an individual's role and responsibility within the Service.

The NFCC National Operational Guidance Framework guides and informs our safeguarding responsibilities. We use the NFCC Safeguarding Self-Assessment

Toolkit and Fire Standard to bolster our safeguarding processes.

We follow a robust process when identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns within the community and within the workplace. Our Prevention teams will continue to work with some of the families and individuals, making referrals to partners to ensure appropriate support and assistance is provided.

Safer Recruitment

Fire and rescue authorities have been included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) since July 2023, making all employees eligible for standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Hence, we have reviewed our DBS checking procedure

and implemented any necessary changes.

These checks are essential for fire and rescue services to help safeguard colleagues and the public, and maintain professional standards

Domestic abuse in the workplace – our pledge

At Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, we firmly believe that there is never an excuse for domestic abuse. It is unequivocally wrong – no-one has the right to harm or mistreat another person. We will not tolerate domestic abuse in the workplace nor will we ignore it when it affects our employees.

We recognise our duty to support any employee who is a victim of domestic abuse and to protect our staff from the risk of violence or further abuse from partners, ex-partners, or family members while at work. We are committed to raising

awareness about domestic abuse and fostering a positive attitude toward combating it. We will identify and train domestic abuse champions to respond sensitively and non-judgmentally to any employee experiencing domestic abuse.

Additionally, we will promote the availability of support for individuals exhibiting abusive behaviour, especially for those willing to make positive changes in their relationships. These healthy relationship programmes are designed to create change and foster positive relationship behaviours through a goal-oriented approach.



OUR PRIORITIES

In developing this Community Risk Management Plan, we have engaged with our local communities, key partners and stakeholders and listened to what our staff have to say in order to better understand how we can improve the Service's effectiveness and

efficiency and support our workforce in the best way possible.

Our strategic priorities align with those of the Staffordshire Commissioner Ben Adams as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Plan.



Our Communities

What we aim to do – Reduce the risks to our local communities from fire and other emergencies through a combination of our prevention, protection, and response activities, helping to make Staffordshire a safer place to live, work, and visit.

We will do this by:

- Helping our communities to understand the risks from fire and other emergencies and how they can take measures to ensure their own safety and be more resilient
- Collaborating with our partners across the county to share information, develop a comprehensive understanding of community risks, and identify the individuals and properties most at risk
- Focusing on these risks to ensure our actions have the greatest positive effect on community safety
- Engaging and listening to all of our communities in order to understand their needs and use this knowledge to help improve the services we deliver.



Our People

What we aim to do – Develop a diverse, healthy and highly professional workforce and support them so that they are motivated and empowered to improve the way we deliver our services.

We will do this by:

- Investing in our people by providing them with the equipment, training and skills to keep them safe, encourage innovation and inspire our future leaders
- Encouraging honesty and openness, inspiring individuals to express themselves and treat one another with kindness and respect
- Promoting a positive and supportive workplace culture committed to improving everyone's health, fitness and wellbeing
- Engaging with our communities to improve the diversity of our workforce.



Our Environment

What we aim to do – Reduce our carbon footprint, therefore protecting our environment and contributing to building more resilient, healthy and sustainable local communities. And, we aim to ensure that the built environment across Staffordshire is as safe as possible for everyone and that our ways of working contribute to a cleaner, healthier and positive environment for our people and our communities.

We will do this by:

- Implementing initiatives and working practices which will minimise our environmental impact and help us make more efficient use of our resources
- Influencing partners and key stakeholders to ensure that all buildings in Staffordshire are safe for residents, workers, visitors and our firefighters
- Ensuring we are equipped to address new and emerging risks from incidents such as flooding and wildfires, and supporting other agencies and emergency services in responding to the impact of climate change.

THE COUNTY OF STAFFORDSHIRE



Staffordshire Population

 **1,134,500**

Number of households

 **485,600**

Ethnicity

91.3% of people are White

4.8% of people Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh

1.9% of people are Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

1.2% of people are Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African

0.8% of people are of Other ethnic group

General health

Very good health 44.8%

Good health 35.3%

Fair health 14.0%

Bad health 4.5%

Very bad health 1.4%

Household deprivation

Household is not deprived in any dimension **47.4%**

Household is deprived in one dimensions **34.0%**

Household is deprived in two dimensions **14.9%**

Household is deprived in three dimensions **3.6%**

Household is deprived in four dimensions **0.2%**

Disability

Disabled under the Equality Act **19.3%**

Not disabled under the Equality Act **80.7%**

Geography

Staffordshire is a landlocked county in the West Midlands, covering 2,713 square kilometres. It borders the fire and rescue service areas of Cheshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Leicestershire, Hereford and Worcester, and Shropshire.

The largest city in Staffordshire is Stoke-on-Trent, an independent unitary authority. Lichfield also has city status, although it is much smaller. Other major towns include Stafford, the county town, as well as Burton-upon-Trent, Cannock, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Leek, and Tamworth.

Like much of the UK, our local economy has transitioned from traditional manufacturing and heavy industry to being more service-oriented. Key industries now include logistics, higher education, research and development, tourism and hospitality, creative and cultural businesses, construction, and business services. Staffordshire hosts several national distribution hubs and large industrial sites.

The county has two universities, Keele University and University of Staffordshire, along with several further education colleges specialising in fields such as engineering, agriculture, animal management, horticulture, and construction. Significant research

locations include Keele University Science Park and Staffordshire Technology Park.

Staffordshire also boasts heritage sites like Lichfield Cathedral, Shugborough, Boscobel House and numerous environmental sites of special interest. The National Memorial Arboretum, located in Alrewas near Lichfield, serves as a site of national remembrance. Its mission is to honour the fallen, acknowledge service and sacrifice, and promote pride in the armed forces, emergency services and civilian community.

Staffordshire has major growth plans, with approximately 30,000 new homes and about 20,000 new jobs expected over the next decade. The county's infrastructure includes major roads like the M6 and A500, key rail routes, and extensive rivers and canals.

Staffordshire is incredibly diverse, contrasting its industrial heritage with vast wild moorlands and rural farmland. Residents and visitors can enjoy country parks such as Chasewater and Cannock Chase, an area of outstanding natural beauty.



Demographics

The area of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, overseen by the Fire and Rescue Authority (Staffordshire Commissioner Ben Adams), has a population of around 1.2 million. Over 80 per cent of Staffordshire is classified as rural, with a quarter of the population residing in these areas.

The population is ageing, with the 65 and over age group expected to increase by 122,300 and the 85 and over group by 44,500 by 2035. By 2037, 35 per cent of residents will be aged 65 or over. This poses significant challenges for the fire and rescue service, as those over 65 are most at risk of having an accidental house fire.

About six per cent of the population are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with the most prevalent groups being White other, Indian, and Pakistani, particularly in Stoke-on-Trent and East Staffordshire. Around 20 per cent of county residents have a disability, with higher rates in Stoke-on-Trent. Apart from Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire is divided into the local authority areas of Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield,



Newcastle-under-Lyme, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands, and Tamworth. These districts vary in levels of deprivation, with Stoke-on-Trent having significant levels, and pockets in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Burton-upon-Trent, and Cannock. The map* above illustrates the areas of multiple deprivation, with darker areas indicating higher levels.

*This material has been reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data with the permission of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office.© Crown copyright. Licence Number: AC0000808051

“

Staffordshire is a complex and diverse place and our approach to keeping our communities, our environment and our people safe reflects this.

”



**Glynn Luznyj,
Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

So, what does this tell us?

- Our size, geography and rurality present challenges around travel (distances, times and the nature of the roads), and for ensuring even access to our services across the county
- An ageing population requires a wider range of interventions to minimise the need for emergency response
- The higher levels of deprivation can indicate inequalities in access to health, education and others services which can affect the wellbeing of our communities



HOW WE IDENTIFY RISK

Our resources are strategically positioned to ensure we can respond to incidents promptly and safely. Through our planning process, we continually monitor and assess the risks within Staffordshire to maintain flexibility in our approach and identify opportunities for improvements that will enhance the safety of our firefighters and communities.

We work with other fire and rescue services, as well as partner organisations, to identify new and emerging risks. This intelligence is used to prepare our firefighters for the types of emergencies they may encounter.

This helps us to:

- improve our knowledge of vulnerability
- identify those most at risk
- understand the needs of our diverse communities
- prepare for future challenges
- align our resources to risk.

We use and develop data-driven tools and models to monitor, assess, and anticipate future risk and demand. These tools support our risk planning by incorporating social and demographic data, local infrastructure plans, industrial strategies and lessons from past emergency incidents.

When planning how to effectively combine our prevention, protection, and response activities, we consider:

- How the risks facing our communities and firefighters are changing
- The challenges posed by Staffordshire’s size, geography, and rural travel
- The sustainability of buildings and assets
- The benefits of new technologies and tactics.

We will continue to invest in our operational training to effectively address foreseeable risks facing our firefighters.

In planning our response to risk, we work closely with partners like Staffordshire Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service and the Environment Agency. We contribute to the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum’s risk assessment process, which compiles a community risk register based on local, regional, and national risk.

We participate in the Staffordshire Resilience Forum via the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit, engaging in joint exercises and training. This allows us to assess our readiness against the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles when a crisis occurs.

COMMUNITY RISK PROFILE

Purpose and Objectives

Our Community Risk Profile considers fire and rescue-related risks to our community and fulfils the requirements of the government’s [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#), which directs every fire and rescue authority to thoroughly evaluate risks of local, cross-border, multi-authority, and national significance to inform effective mitigation strategies.

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The national framework emphasises assessing risks beyond traditional firefighting, including natural disasters, industrial incidents, transportation accidents, and deliberate acts. Adhering to the framework ensures our risk assessment is thorough, consistent, and aligned with best practices.

The Service defines risk as the “combination of the likelihood and consequence of a hazardous event,” supporting the NFCC’s definition and strategic risk management framework.

National definition of risk

On behalf of all UK fire and rescue services, the NFCC’s Community Risk Programme Definition of Risk Project established a comprehensive risk framework for the UK fire and rescue service, encompassing an approach that fosters the consistent

identification, understanding, and assessment of potential risks.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to adopting these methodologies and models. By doing so, the Service aims to consistently measure the likelihood and consequence of incidents occurring. This will facilitate a deeper comprehension of existing risks, enabling appropriate and effective mitigation strategies to be implemented.

One of the most important things we must do is demonstrate how we intend to reduce or mitigate the risks to our local communities and contribute to national, cross-border and multi-agency incidents.

If a risk is identified, it doesn’t mean it will definitely happen. Identifying emerging issues and changing risks helps highlight any actions we need to take.

Our strategic assessment of risk involves consideration of:

- Historical incident data
- National risk (Resilience Direct)
- Community risk register
- Corporate risk
- Operational risk
- Infrastructure and environmental
- Emerging risk.



Overview

Working in collaboration with the NFCC, National Operational Guidance (NOG) and other key stakeholders we have developed a fire and rescue risk profile for Staffordshire. Applying analysis and statistical modelling we have:

- Analysed incident and response data of all incident types attended by the Service
- Identified multiple data sources relating to fire and other risks, such as population and demographics, building and road network data
- Applied random forest modelling to determine risk scores, and to identify which characteristics have the strongest relationship to the likelihood of incidents occurring. For instance, we know that there is a strong relationship between levels of deprivation and the likelihood and consequence of dwelling fires
- Assessed these relationships and considered how we apply these to the risk profile for Staffordshire.

National Risk Register

The National Risk Register (NRR) is a public version of the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA), evaluating serious risks to the UK. These encompass a wide range of threats to safety, health, infrastructure, and more, whether accidental or deliberate. The NRR outlines 89 risks across nine themes, including terrorism, cyber threats, accidents, societal, and environmental risks. It assesses each risk's likelihood and impact, presenting a 'reasonable worst-case scenario' to guide preparedness efforts. This allows the Service to understand the national risks and how they may impact locally. The most significant risk recorded is a further pandemic and every other risk may impact fire services directly or indirectly. However, all risks will impact our communities. Other risks identified that will impact on our response as a Service include terrorist and CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) attacks, large transportation incidents (rail, vehicle and aviation), and large fires and explosions including on COMAH (control of major accidents hazards) sites.

The NRR for 2023 can be accessed using this link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-risk-register-2023

Staffordshire Community Risk Register

The Staffordshire Community Risk Register (CRR) serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it guides contingency planning, emergency planning and business continuity management efforts in Staffordshire, ensuring resources are concentrated to address the risks effectively. Secondly, the publication of the CRR aims to provide reassurance to the people and communities of Staffordshire that there is a well-established and proactive risk assessment process in place to manage potential hazards.

There is cross-over between the local and nationally identified risks. However, local specific risk includes; local accidents on motorways and major trunk roads, and railway accidents. The Staffordshire CRR can be accessed using this link:

www.staffordshireprepared.gov.uk/Know-your-risks/Know-your-risks.aspx

Specific risks

Domestic dwelling fires

Sadly, every year, we witness devastating fires in people's homes that result in injuries and fatalities.

Domestic property fires have brought significant and widespread consequences, impacting individuals, families, and communities alike. Immediate effects include the destruction of property, loss of personal belongings, and the potential for injuries or loss of life. Beyond these immediate impacts, residential fires can also have latent effects such as trauma, displacement, and financial strain, exacerbating the challenges faced by those affected.

Furthermore, the longer-term damages to communities can include social disruption, decreased property values, perpetuating the cycle of hardship.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024, there were 1,795 accidental dwelling fires, resulting in 15 fatalities and 76 injuries.

We have utilised the NFCC's '**Domestic Dwelling Risk Model**' to gain a comprehensive understanding of the level of risk in people's homes across Staffordshire.

This model measures both the likelihood and consequence of such incidents occurring. The measures consider both life and property, with fatalities or significant injuries indicating a high consequence for life risk. The severity for property consequence is determined by the extent of damage, such as fire

spreading to the entire building.

The overall consequence rating is a combination of both life and property aspects, providing valuable insights into the risk posed by dwelling fires in the county, informing prevention activities and areas of focus for staff which are defined from very high to very low.

Reducing accidental dwelling fires is crucial for preserving lives and property. By minimising these incidents, we can mitigate the risk of injury and loss of life within communities. Ultimately, fostering a safer environment through fire prevention measures enhances overall community well-being and resilience.

Collaborating with partners to prosecute deliberate fire setters is essential for upholding public safety and deterring future arson incidents. By working together with police and community organisations we can ensure that those responsible for intentionally setting fires are held accountable for their actions.

Prosecution not only serves as a form of justice for victims but also sends a clear message that deliberate house fires will not be tolerated in our communities. Furthermore, actively assisting in the evidence gathering processes of prosecution helps prevent the escalation of the number of fire-related crimes and protects lives and properties from harm.

Through coordinated efforts, we can effectively address this threat and promote a safer environment for everyone.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

We have adopted the NFCC Domestic Dwelling Risk Model to help us identify those properties that are more likely to have a fire. Our staff can then target the highest risk homes in their areas, ensuring prompt & appropriate assistance.

Offer an additional level of help and support to the most vulnerable individuals through an extended safe and well process.

Fully adopt and implement the Prevention Fire Standard along with regular reviews.

Following the introduction of the NFCC's Person Centred Framework, we will ensure that we provide appropriate training and support to all staff that conduct home safety fire visits, so all have the skills, knowledge and attributes to provide an excellent service to help keep people safe in their homes.

Using risk profiles derived from a range of sources including, fire service Census data and the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Develop and maintain partnerships with other agencies, who can refer vulnerable people in to us for a safe and well visit.

Adopt the nationally agreed & developed online Home Fire Safety Check tool.

Sharing fire safety and prevention messages through a variety of online platforms.

Understand vulnerabilities and risks of those we visit and ensure appropriate support is put in place.

Ongoing participation in partner agency boards and steering groups.

Deliver Olive Branch training to partners who visit vulnerable members of our communities in their homes to raise awareness of fire safety issues and ensure that a safe and well visit is offered to those who need it most.

Conduct safe and well visits jointly with relevant partner agencies to maximise impact.

Responsive actions

Conduct fire investigations to enhance our understanding and recognise trends.

Conduct reviews of fatal or serious incidents and participate and support safeguarding Adult and Domestic Abuse-related death reviews to facilitate learning and improvement.

Comprehensive learning from operational incidents and training, including the adoption of National Operational Guidance.

Reflect and learn from post-incident questionnaires.

Fires in non-domestic buildings

Fires in non-domestic buildings include properties like warehouses, offices, hotels, bed and breakfasts, nursing/care homes, homeless shelters and student accommodation.

Fires in non-domestic buildings can pose a significant risk to property, individuals, and businesses. Understanding site-specific fire hazards and implementing preventive measures are essential for protecting businesses, employees, and visitors.

Such incidents can lead to devastating consequences, such as property damage, business disruption, and even loss of life. From offices and factories to commercial establishments and public buildings, the threat of fire can affect a diverse range of workplace settings.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024 Staffordshire Fire and Rescue

Service attended 729 fires in non-domestic premises, resulting in one fatality and 14 injuries.

The NFCC has also introduced its risk methodology for other building fires to evaluate and measure risk in non-domestic premises which can be applied to local fire and rescue services' data.

Using national fire service incident data, this model has determined which building types are more likely to be involved in a fire and which have or have the potential to have more serious consequences. Premises of a higher risk include prisons, hospitals, care homes, and hotels.

We use our risk-based inspection programme in order to understand which sites are at highest risk and target these to ensure we have relevant information to assist in an emergency response situation. We also carry out regulatory fire safety inspections to ensure legislative compliance, offering support or guidance where required.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Reduce the risk to our business community from fire via our risk-based inspection programme of audits in higher risk premises.
Further enhance the skills of our Protection teams to ensure our protection staff are skilled to deal with issues in the highest risk buildings.
Ensure our protection resources are best placed to deal with the highest risks.
Introduce quality assurance processes to ensure that our protection activity is effective and consistent.
Incorporate NFCC other buildings risk methodology into our risk-based inspection programme, utilising this intelligence-led, risk-based approach to target premises which pose the greatest risk to life in the event of fire.
Promote regulatory compliance by engaging with and educating local businesses.
Maximise capacity to deliver protection activities by utilising operational crews to conduct fire safety compliance checks.
Ensure that all staff engaged in protection activities possess the requisite qualifications and competence to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
Align our protection activity with national fire standards and best practice, carrying out timely re-evaluations of our gap analyses as necessary.

Responsive actions

Apply a consistent, fair, and proportionate approach to enforcement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order).
Use our legal powers of enforcement and prosecution appropriately and suitably to ensure public safety.
Meet our obligation to respond to statutory fire safety consultations from other regulatory bodies.
Work with premises responsible persons at premises to reduce excessive levels of unwanted fire calls.
Work together with other regulators and stakeholders to reduce risk.
Ensure continuous improvement through effective evaluation of protection activities.





Tall building fires

Tall buildings present an increased fire risk due to factors like their height, occupancy density, and potential for complex structure with limited access or egress.

The Grenfell Tower fire in London in 2017 serves as a tragic reminder of the potential consequences of inadequate fire safety measures in a high-rise residential building.

The incident at Grenfell Tower brought to light critical issues found in tall buildings that may escalate fires. Inadequate compartmentation, lack of fire-resistant materials, and insufficient evacuation plans can be amongst the factors that can contribute to the rapid spread of a fire, and hinder rescue efforts.

Staffordshire has over 40 residential tall buildings and an additional number of tall commercial buildings over four storeys in height. These incidents can be challenging to control and evacuate due to extended vertical distances and limited access for firefighters. This emphasises the importance of stringent fire safety regulations, regular inspections, and comprehensive fire safety systems, including sprinklers, fire alarms, and evacuation procedures.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK
Preventive actions
We endorse and support the fitting of new and retrofitted sprinkler systems in tall commercial and residential buildings.
Introduction of a building safety regulator.
Tall buildings are included in our risk-based inspection programme, as well as the annual inspection plans for response crews to carry out familiarisation visits to premises.
Responsive actions
The Service has fully adopted the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 requiring the responsible person(s) of tall buildings to provide key information to us so that we can ensure relevant safety information is available to operational crews. This online platform will assist with operational pre-planning to ensure fire crews have the most relevant and up to date information to hand.
In 2024, two new aerial ladder platforms were deployed to strategic locations within the county to enhance response to tall building incidents.
The introduction of the Building Safety Act aims to improve cooperation and coordination among responsible parties, potentially easing enforcement against non-compliance. It also seeks to ensure residents have comprehensive access to fire safety information within their buildings.
The introduction of a Building Safety Regulator imposes heightened requirements for recording and sharing fire safety information, ensuring a continuous record throughout the lifespan of a building.



WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK
Preventive actions
Our Communications team monitor weather conditions and will send out relevant safety messages on our website, messaging and social media platforms to assist and inform the public.
A range of equipment is provided to crews to handle incidents near infrastructure as well as in rural settings.
Our Safe+Sound Programme educates young people and children, adapting content to address partners’ safety concerns. Weekly programs feature timely videos with localised content to address identified issues.
The on-station delivery of Safe+Sound is tailored to local needs. For instance, in Stoke-on-Trent, the police include topics on anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their delivery, recognising it as a local issue and using the programme to educate children on the subject.
Responsive actions
We work with community safety partnerships to reduce ASB and fire setting within our communities, and to remove excess fuel.

Outdoor fires (secondary fires)

Outdoor fires, also known as secondary or nuisance fires, are smaller incidents that may be bin fires, bushes or refuse which cause not only a blight on communities, but also tie up our resources so that they may not be available for more serious incidents.

These incidents can quickly spread to properties or escalate into wildfires, posing significant environmental and resource challenges. Outdoor fires, exacerbated by intense weather,

easily spread to other dry fuel, as seen in Staffordshire during the 2018 and 2022 heatwaves.

Outdoor fires and larger wildfires place considerable strain on our firefighting resources. Effective prevention, public awareness, and rapid intervention are crucial to managing risks and protecting **our environment** for residents, and visitors to Staffordshire.

From April 2020 to April 2024, the Service attended 7,310 secondary fires, with demand peaking during warmer periods, significantly straining fire service resources.

Vehicle fires

Road vehicle fires are primary fires occurring in vehicles used for transportation on public roads, including cars, vans, buses, motorcycles, lorries, and heavy goods vehicles.

The risks posed by vehicle fires to firefighters are distinct, primarily due to the potential for significant amounts of harmful smoke and products of combustion, rapid fire spread, and toxic smoke entering the atmosphere.

With the introduction of high-voltage batteries in modern electric and hybrid models, these hazards may be further exacerbated. Additionally, the close proximity of incidents to busy road networks and highways increases the potential for secondary incidents. To effectively mitigate these risks, ongoing training and a thorough understanding of vehicle technology are critical for ensuring firefighter and public safety.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024, the Service attended 1,492 vehicle fires. Around 40 per cent of the vehicle fires we attend are believed to be deliberate acts. This highlights the ongoing need to understand underlying patterns and maintain collaborative efforts with the police and other stakeholders, gathering evidence to assist in reducing the risks arising from these incidents occurring.



WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Improve our understanding of electric vehicle and hybrid technology to inform improved methods of responding to incidents involving these types of vehicles.

Maintain latest electric vehicle and hybrid crash data to support response and best practice methods of electric vehicle management.

Responsive actions

Offer training and equipment to crews on effective techniques for tackling vehicle fires, aiming to mitigate environmental impact.

Use the Service’s data systems and other intelligence to identify areas where vehicle fires occur, sharing with partners as required.

Provide the latest crash data for all vehicle types to support effective response mechanism for response crews.

Road traffic collisions

Each year, residents of Staffordshire, as well as people from other areas, experience deaths and serious injuries on our county's roads.

Road traffic collisions (RTCs) are a significant threat to public safety and a major concern for communities. These incidents can have devastating consequences, including injuries, fatalities, and substantial economic costs. It is crucial to understand and mitigate these risks to ensure safer roads and protect lives.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024, we responded to 2,978 RTCs, resulting in 2,032 injuries, and 65 fatalities. However, the actual numbers of incidents, fatalities, and injuries are likely higher, as the fire service does not attend all RTCs.

The NFCC has developed a model for evaluating and measuring the risk of RTCs, similar to the approach used for assessing dwelling fires. This model uses data which includes all RTCs involving fatalities or serious injuries, not just those attended by the fire service. This comprehensive approach offers an opportunity to apply the model to local data for better risk assessment and mitigation.

Furthermore, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is a member of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP). This partnership analyses and educates the public about the risks of RTCs on behalf of local services and authorities. Its goal is to improve road safety and achieve a sustained reduction in the number of RTCs.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Adopting the NFCC RTC model will help us better understand local risks and ensure our resources are properly allocated.

Road safety Safe+Sound events are delivered at locations identified by the SSRP providing a coordinated approach to risk mitigation.

Responsive actions

Two enhanced rescue pumps with advanced capabilities and equipment for handling significant RTCs will be introduced into the Service.

All appliances are equipped with state-of-the-art vehicle information software so that they can respond to incidents and deal with them effectively.

The Staffordshire Safer Road Partnership identifies key road user groups, guiding the Service in delivering targeted road safety education, engagement, and training to reduce risks and enhance community understanding in problem areas.

Reviewing of dynamic crew mobilisation to support early phase intervention at road traffic ensures timely incident management.



Climate change

The implications of climate change, potentially increasing the frequency and intensity of wildfires and wide scale flooding, require fire and rescue services to adapt their strategies and resources to cope with these evolving threats. Both wildfires and floods can lead to significant economic and environmental damage, necessitating effective firefighting techniques and post-fire recovery efforts to minimise these impacts.

Events such as wildfires and flooding have a significant impact on UK fire and rescue services, creating increased demand and requiring substantial resource allocation. These events often necessitate the large and sustained deployment of personnel and equipment, straining resources, especially when multiple fires or flooding incidents occur simultaneously or coincide with other emergencies.

Large-scale events such as these often require joint efforts among various agencies, including local fire and rescue services, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency. Effective communication and cooperation are vital for a coordinated response. The diversion of resources to combat wildfires can also impact the ability of fire and rescue services to respond to other emergencies.

Overall, the effects of climate change present complex challenges for fire and rescue services in the UK, demanding specialised skills, and effective collaboration to minimise the risks to lives, property, and natural resources.

Flooding and water rescue

Widespread flooding can devastate communities and we have observed tragic drownings in lakes and waterways across Staffordshire.

Flooding, exacerbated by climate change, poses significant risks to our communities and our environment. As global temperatures rise, extreme rainfall events have become more frequent and intense, increasing the likelihood of floods. In the UK, floods have had devastating consequences, threatening individual safety, damaging infrastructure, and disrupting vital services.

Between April 2020 to April 2024, the Service attended 110 water rescues involving six fatalities and 40 non-fatal casualties.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service plays a crucial role in responding to flood emergencies, performing water rescues, and ensuring public safety. However, the increasing frequency and severity of floods may stretch the Service's resources and capabilities. When flooding occurs, we may be required to carry out rescues, evacuations,

and property protection operations, often simultaneously across widespread areas. The logistics of deploying resources efficiently in flood-affected areas adds complexity to the already challenging emergency response efforts.

The nature of flooding presents unique risks and challenges for firefighters. Operating in floodwaters exposes personnel to hazards such as strong currents, submerged debris, and contaminated water, which can lead to injuries or illnesses. The dynamic and unpredictable nature of floods requires continuous monitoring and adaptation of response delivery to ensure the safety of both responders and affected communities.

It is important we focus on building resilient communities and improve disaster preparedness. Building strong relationships with local authorities, environmental agencies and our communities helps to improve the effectiveness of response efforts and recovery operations, ultimately reducing the impact of future flood events.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Working with partners to develop multi-agency flood plans and response plans for flood-prone areas.

Continuing collaborative efforts with key partners for training and equipment provision.

Water safety signs placed at prominent water risk sites offer information, advice, and guidance to enhance safety.

Education packages are offered to schools across the county in line with our education delivery plan.

Conducting targeted and intelligence-led water safety campaigns, aligned with weather patterns.

The Safe+Sound weekly programmes feature timely videos with localised content, such as frozen water safety, in response to incidents.

Reporting areas of notable practice or learning via national or collaborative bodies (National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning).

Work with partner agencies during the emergency and recovery phase of incidents to evaluate incidents through debriefing sessions and organisational learning processes.

Arrangements are underway with the Canal & River Trust to train the education team and volunteers in their water safety package. This will enable Safe+Sound to incorporate water safety messages into their educational offerings for various demographics within communities.

Responsive actions

All stations are equipped for shallow water rescues.

Maintain swift water rescue, flood rescue technicians and boat capability at strategic locations.

The Service currently operates two Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) boats equipped for water rescue.

Maintain our national resilience high-volume pump and hose layer capability.

Deploy specialist water rescue resources to assist in the rescue and evacuation of those affected by flooding.

Deploy high-volume pumps and hose layer to mitigate the impact of flooding locally or nationally.

Utilise drone assets for reconnaissance and situational awareness during wide area flooding.



Wildfires

Wildfires have the potential to rapidly escalate and spread over vast areas, leading to significant disruptions to life, property, and infrastructure.

Warmer temperatures, prolonged droughts, and shifting precipitation patterns are contributing to increasingly drier conditions across the UK, heightening the risk of wildfire ignition and of its rapid spread across rural areas. These environmental changes can result in habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, and the release of large amounts of carbon dioxide and products of combustion into the atmosphere and spread across a wide area.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service plays a critical role in responding to wildfires, but the increasing frequency and severity of these events present challenges in resource allocation, firefighter safety, and containment efforts. Between April 2020 to April 2024, the Service

responded to 59 wildfires, resulting in significant environmental damage and requiring substantial resources for resolution.

Implementing effective wildfire prevention measures, such as sustainable land management practices, early detection systems, and community education, is essential to mitigate the risks and build resilience against the growing threat of wildfires driven by climate change. Fire and rescue services play a key role in educating communities and providing support to affected residents. We are increasingly involved in wildfire prevention and mitigation activities, such as public education on fire safety, and reducing the risk and impact of wildfires.

Continuous improvements in wildfire incident recording mechanisms, along with ongoing investments in training and equipment, aim to enhance support for operational crews. Staffordshire has tactical advisors available for use nationally, using their skills, knowledge and experience to assist in the tackling of wildfires across the UK as needed.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Targeted prevention campaigns to educate in problem locations.

Use the wildfire risk score sheets developed with our partners to obtain a more detailed and localised understanding of wildfire risk across Staffordshire.

Our Safe+Sound Programme educates children and young people, adapting content to address partners' safety concerns. Weekly programs feature timely videos with localised content to address identified issues.

Responsive actions

Comprehensive learning from operational incidents and training of crews, including the adoption of National Operational Guidance.

Adopted a consistent approach to the recording of wildfire incidents to understand where they start and inform our prevention activities.

Design and implement an annual wildfire exercise to test incident responses, involving partner agencies and neighbouring fire and rescue services to enhance joint working practices.

Strategically position off-road vehicles and wildfire-related equipment across the county to ensure swift and timely intervention capabilities.

Undertake a wildfire vehicle/equipment review during the life of this Community Risk Management Plan to ensure continued effective response to wildfire incidents is available.





Rail network

Staffordshire is a key area in the UK's rail network, serving as a vital corridor for both passenger and freight traffic. The West Coast Main Line, one of the busiest routes in the UK, runs through the county connecting London to Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Scotland. The county's strategic location and the presence of major rail routes guarantee a high level of both passenger and freight traffic.

Extensive cross-country passenger services run through Staffordshire, linking the south-west and south-

east of England with the Midlands, the north, and Scotland. Local and regional services serve key towns and cities within the county, including Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford, Lichfield, and Tamworth.

Staffordshire is also crucial for the UK's freight network, with substantial volumes of goods transported through the county on key freight routes. The presence of major logistics hubs and industrial areas in and around Staffordshire ensures a significant amount of freight traffic is routed through the county, making it a vital corridor for freight transportation.

Air traffic

Staffordshire itself does not have any major commercial airports within its borders, but residents and visitors can access several nearby. Birmingham Airport, is located about 30-40 miles away and Manchester Airport, about 50-60 miles north, is one of the busiest airports in the UK with extensive connections, and therefore many flights daily are passing through Staffordshire airspace.

Staffordshire does, however, host several private airfields that cater to general aviation, private pilots, and small aircraft operations. Tattenhill Airfield near Burton-upon-Trent

is a notable facility, offering services for general aviation, flight training, and private aircraft operations. Halfpenny Green Airport, also known as Wolverhampton Halfpenny Green Airport, located in south Staffordshire and serves the broader region, accommodating general aviation, flight training, and private flights.

Additionally, smaller private airfields in Staffordshire include Abbots Bromley Airfield, mainly used for private and recreational flying, and Otherton Airfield near Penkridge, a grass airstrip serving microlights and light aircraft. These airfields play a vital role for aviation enthusiasts, private pilots, and small aircraft operations within the county.

False alarms (UwFS)

Unwanted fire signals pose significant challenges to fire and rescue services on multiple fronts. They divert critical resources away from genuine emergencies. Every false alarm response ties up personnel and equipment that could otherwise be deployed to save lives and protect property during real fires or other emergencies. This diversion can delay response times to actual incidents, potentially escalating the severity of emergencies.

Financially, the costs associated with responding to false alarms are substantial. These include fuel expenses, maintenance costs for vehicles and equipment, and the

expenditure of personnel resources. Over time, the cumulative impact can add strain to essential fire and rescue services, potentially limiting investment in other areas.

UwFS can impact community trust and cooperation. Persistent false activations may desensitise residents to alarm signals, leading to delayed responses or disregard during genuine emergencies.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service attended 12,217 false alarms, accounting for 34.8 per cent of all attended incidents. A significant number of these incidents occur in domestic premises, presenting an opportunity to address fire safety concerns and occupier vulnerabilities.

WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

Improve awareness and guidance for the management of multi-occupancy premises.

Develop improved stakeholder relationships to improve awareness and minimise the frequency of unwanted false alarms and identify prevention methods through education and engagement.

Responsive actions

Our unwanted fire signal policy ensures our resources are only sent to high risk premises, e.g. hospitals and care homes, and allows resources to remain available for more serious calls.

Our protection teams monitor and offer support and guidance to premises experiencing false alarms to prevent them happening in the future.



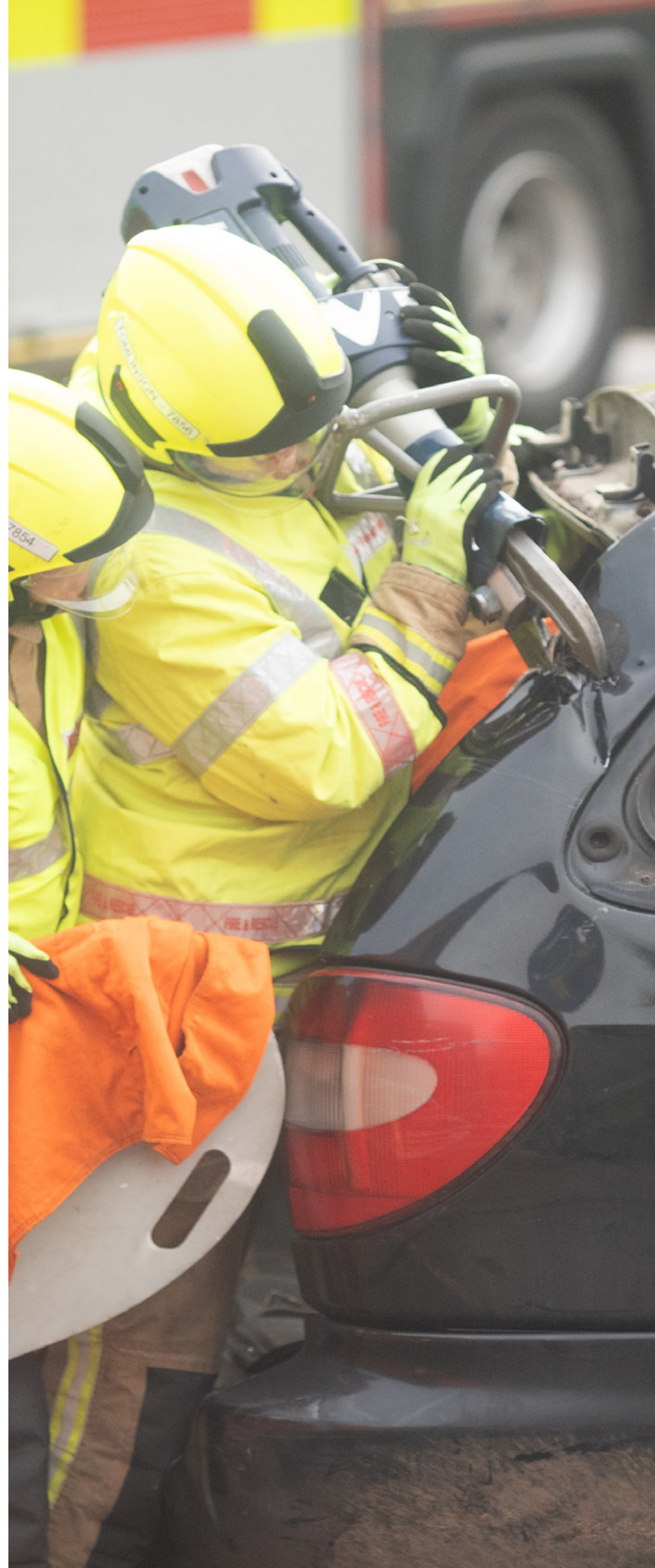
Special service incidents

Special service incidents cover a wide range of occurrences such as jewellery removals, animal rescues, hazardous chemical incidents, industrial accidents, extrications and supporting other fire and rescue services and emergency services.

Given the diverse range of incidents we respond to, the Service remains committed to preparing for the various risks we encounter. This involves ongoing training, comprehension, and equipment enhancement to ensure crews can effectively manage incidents wherever they arise.

We monitor local and national trends to identify where new types of interventions may be needed, and explore suitable equipment or skills to be able to deploy a quality service to the public as necessary.

Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2024, the Service responded to 5,833 special service calls across Staffordshire. We work with partners and industry to minimise the need for our assistance and to make homes, communities and workplaces as safe as they can be.



WHAT WE DO TO MITIGATE RISK

Preventive actions

We routinely analyse the types of calls for special services and demand data to anticipate future resource needs, taking action as needed.

Review of specialist appliance deployment based on demand analysis and predicted risk, and evaluate their locations within the Service to maximise benefit to our communities.

Include key stakeholder demands and carry out analysis to help predict future special service call demands in conjunction with partner agencies.

Responsive actions

Animal rescue and rope rescue capability is available from specially-trained teams located across the Service to deal with a range of incidents in any geographical location.

Hazardous chemicals detection, identification and monitoring equipment, resource, and training is available within the Service and can be mobilised across the UK via the national resilience network.

Maintain correct methods of premises entry to support the ambulance service during their response to medical incidents.

Emerging threats and vulnerabilities

Recognising and identifying areas of vulnerability and new and emerging risks present ongoing challenges to the Service, requiring constant adaptation and readiness. As the Service's responsibilities extend beyond traditional incidents, these new and evolving risks demand our increased attention.

Specific emerging risks include factors like new technologies, battery energy storage facilities, climate change, and the financial pressures on communities. Proactively addressing these risks is crucial for the Service to effectively

safeguard lives, property, and critical infrastructure.

To manage these complexities, the Service will adopt national research, data models, guidance from organisations such as academia and the NFCC. Utilising these resources will enable the Service to gain a thorough understanding of emerging risks in order to tailor our emergency response, prevention and protection strategies to ensure the safety of both firefighters and the communities they serve.

Battery energy storage systems

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) present significant risks to fire and rescue services, primarily due to their potential for fire and explosion. These incidents can be challenging to extinguish using conventional methods and may require specialised firefighting techniques and equipment. The high energy density and chemical composition of these batteries contribute to intense and persistent fires, posing serious safety risks to firefighters and surrounding communities.

In addition to fire risks, BESS incidents involve complex electrical hazards. These systems operate at high voltages, exposing responders to risks of electrical shock or

electrocution during firefighting operations. Safely isolating and de-energising the system is crucial to prevent further complications and ensure the safety of personnel involved in emergency response.

Managing BESS incidents also requires careful coordination and collaboration among multiple agencies. Fire and rescue services must work closely with system operators, manufacturers, hazardous materials teams and guidance from the NFCC to develop comprehensive response plans. Pre-incident planning to assess risks, establish response protocols, and train personnel accordingly is important to minimise risks.

BESS incidents have the potential to have long-term environmental implications. Fires involving battery

systems can release toxic fumes and hazardous chemicals, posing risks to air, soil, and water quality. Fire and rescue services consider environmental protection measures during firefighting operations and collaborate with environmental agencies to minimise environmental damage and ensure proper clean up

post-incident.

Addressing these risks requires ongoing training, investment in national guidance for dealing with this incident type, and continuous adaptation to advancements in battery technology to enhance safety and resilience in handling BESS emergencies.

Cost of living

Recent data indicates a rising proportion of fuel-poor households within the county, with Stoke-on-Trent having the second-highest proportion of fuel-poor households among unitary and local authorities nationally. Amid the rising cost of living, financial constraints may elevate fire risks for households and individuals, potentially increasing the number of dwelling fires the Service attends.

To address these heightened risks, it's crucial for the Service to implement targeted interventions, educate on fire safety practices, and provide advice with suitable referrals to households and individuals

requiring further support to minimise the risks to their households.

The NFCC reported that nationally, for the year ending March 2022, fires caused by candles – which have a high proportion of deaths and injuries – reached their highest numbers in a decade. This suggests a potential change in behaviour, with more people using unsafe heating methods that heighten the risk of accidental fires. Additionally, financial pressures may lead people to unsafe cooking practices, neglecting appliance maintenance, improperly storing flammable materials, and being unable to afford smoke alarms, further increasing fire risks.



Cyber security

Cyber security has a profound impact on fire and rescue services, influencing both operational efficiency and data security. As organisations increasingly rely on digital technologies for communication, incident management, and resource allocation, we become vulnerable to cyber threats that can compromise critical systems and operational readiness.

The interconnected nature of modern firefighting and rescue operations means that cyber-attacks can disrupt communication networks and information systems essential for emergency response. Attacks targeting communication infrastructure or incident management platforms can hinder real-time coordination between responders, delaying response times and potentially compromising public safety during emergencies.

The protection of sensitive data is crucial for fire and rescue services. This includes personal information of personnel, operational plans, and incident reports. Any cyber breach could lead to unauthorised

access, data theft, or manipulation of critical information, undermining operational integrity and eroding public confidence and trust. Ensuring robust cyber security measures, such as encryption, access controls, and regular security audits, is essential to safeguard sensitive data and maintain operational confidentiality.

Furthermore, cyber security incidents can have financial and reputational implications for fire and rescue services. Recovering from a cyber-attack involves significant costs for investigation, system restoration, and potential legal liabilities. To mitigate these risks, the Service prioritise cyber security as an integral part of its operational planning and management. This includes investing in data security training for personnel, adopting robust cyber security policies and procedures, and collaborating with experts to stay informed about emerging threats and best practices.

By enhancing cyber security resilience, fire and rescue services can effectively protect their operational capabilities, maintain public trust, and ensure the safety and security of communities they serve.

Alternatively fuelled vehicles (AFV)

These are vehicles that are powered by fuels other than petrol or diesel. Where two or more fuel sources power a vehicle, it is referred to as a hybrid. The term most commonly refers to hybrid electric vehicle, which combine an internal combustion engine and one or more electric motors. However, this term includes other mechanisms to capture and use energy.

AFVs can be powered by:

- High voltage fuels cells (batteries)
- Compressed natural gas (CNG)
- Liquid natural gas (LNG)
- Bio-fuels
- Hydrogen fuel cells
- Rechargeable batteries.

The identification of the presence of an AFV is an important part of information gathering and relevant skills and tools can assist in this.

Electric vehicles (EVs) and lithium-ion batteries

The rapid increase in the numbers of electric vehicles on UK roads presents fire and rescue services with several distinct challenges. One of the primary concerns is the safety hazards associated with lithium-ion batteries used in EVs. These batteries can undergo thermal runaway if damaged or improperly handled, leading to fires that are difficult to extinguish with traditional methods. The batteries in e-scooters and e-bikes are of great concern, rather than those in cars and vans. Fire and rescue services must be equipped with suitable techniques tailored to manage these high-energy density battery fires safely. The risk of battery re-ignition post-suppression further complicates firefighting efforts, requiring ongoing monitoring and cooling.

High-voltage electrical systems in EVs pose electrocution hazards to responders during rescue operations. Personnel have specialist knowledge to safely extricate occupants from EVs and mitigate electrical risks

effectively. Understanding vehicle isolation procedures and collaborating closely with manufacturers or technical experts is essential to safely manage incidents involving EV electrical systems.

Beyond operational challenges, the rapid evolution of EV technology necessitates continuous learning and adaptation by the sector. Keeping abreast of advancements in EV design, battery technology, and charging infrastructure is crucial for maintaining effective emergency response capabilities. Collaboration with EV manufacturers, industry stakeholders, training providers and the NFCC is essential to develop and update best practices and procedures that reflect the latest developments in EV technology.

Whilst EVs offer environmental benefits and are increasingly common on our roads, they introduce new complexities and risks for fire and rescue services. By collaborating with various stakeholders, we can improve our readiness to handle EV-related incidents safely, ensuring the protection of both responders and the public in these evolving emergency situations.



National infrastructure projects

Significant changes to our major road and rail infrastructure introduce unique challenges in terms of emergency response and fire safety. During the construction phase of projects, we must consider the need for specialist resources for effective fire suppression and rescue operations, particularly in complex environments like tunnels, bridges, and depots. The complexity of such projects may necessitate enhanced training and equipment for firefighters to handle incidents specific to the road and railway environment.

Once operational, new major road and rail routes introduce potential

risks of accidents, derailments, or collisions, demanding advanced response capabilities. The scale of such projects and their potential disruption to local communities can also impact the availability of fire services, requiring strategic planning to ensure sufficient coverage and resources.

Adequate collaboration between the fire service and key stakeholders, comprehensive risk assessments, and ongoing training are crucial to better understand and mitigate these risks. This approach ensures the safety of the road and rail infrastructure, staff, fire service personnel, and surrounding communities.

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete is a reinforced form of autoclaved aerated concrete, commonly used in roofing and wall construction. In Europe, it became popular in the mid-1950s as a cheaper and lighter alternative to conventional reinforced concrete. RAAC is still found in UK public buildings, such as schools and hospitals, and potentially in various other types of buildings. Structural issues with RAAC began to emerge publicly in the UK in the 1990s. Concerns increased following reports of a roof collapse at a British primary school in 2018, which occurred without warning. Its properties make it difficult to identify issues before a collapse, prompting the Department for Education to issue emergency closures for several schools to protect pupils.

The NFCC is working with the Government to identify buildings containing RAAC so that robust pre-planning can take place. RAAC poses multiple risks to fire and rescue services due to its potential for sudden structural collapse during fires, exacerbated by the material's permeable nature and the added weight from firefighting water. This can lead to the closure of entire buildings or sections, impacting planned escape routes and compromising structural fire resistance.

Fire and rescue services may also face incidents where RAAC structures collapse, necessitating rescue operations. These challenges underscore the critical need for proactive safety measures and specialised response protocols when dealing with RAAC in emergency scenarios.

Health emergencies or pandemics

Global health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasise the need for fire and rescue services to be prepared for health emergencies. Responders may face challenges in providing emergency medical care while maintaining the safety of its staff to carry out required interventions. Enhanced infection control measures and collaboration with health authorities are essential to mitigate risks during public health emergencies.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service played a pivotal role in supporting communities and frontline efforts. Our personnel underwent specialist training and were deployed to assist health services in the coordination and delivery of vaccinations and supporting the NHS. This support helped alleviate pressure on the healthcare system and ensured

improved access to medical care for those in need, especially those in remote communities.

We engaged in community outreach initiatives to support vulnerable individuals and those shielding during lockdowns. Our teams delivered essential supplies, medications, and food parcels to elderly or isolated residents who were unable to access necessities due to restrictions. This outreach was crucial in providing practical assistance and ensuring the well-being of community members facing heightened isolation and vulnerability during the pandemic. The adaptability of fire and rescue services collaborating with other agencies, and the commitment to public service were instrumental in navigating the challenges posed by Covid-19 and ensuring comprehensive support for communities across Staffordshire.



Terrorist attack

The threat of terrorism profoundly impacts fire and rescue services, necessitating specialised preparedness and response capabilities to effectively mitigate risks and manage emergencies.

Terrorist incidents may involve complex and coordinated attacks that pose significant challenges. Operational readiness ensures fire and rescue services can respond swiftly and decisively to protect lives and secure the incident scene.

Ensuring the safety of responders is paramount during terrorist incidents. Fire and rescue services conduct rigorous assessments of risk to identify potential hazards. Personnel are trained in coordinated response where collaborative efforts with police, intelligence agencies, and other emergency services are crucial. Joint operations ensure a cohesive approach to managing the incident, optimising resource deployment, and safeguarding the public.

The collaborative nature of countering terrorism requires seamless communication and cooperation among agencies. Fire and rescue services participate in regular inter-agency exercises and training drills to enhance coordination and interoperability. These efforts strengthen preparedness

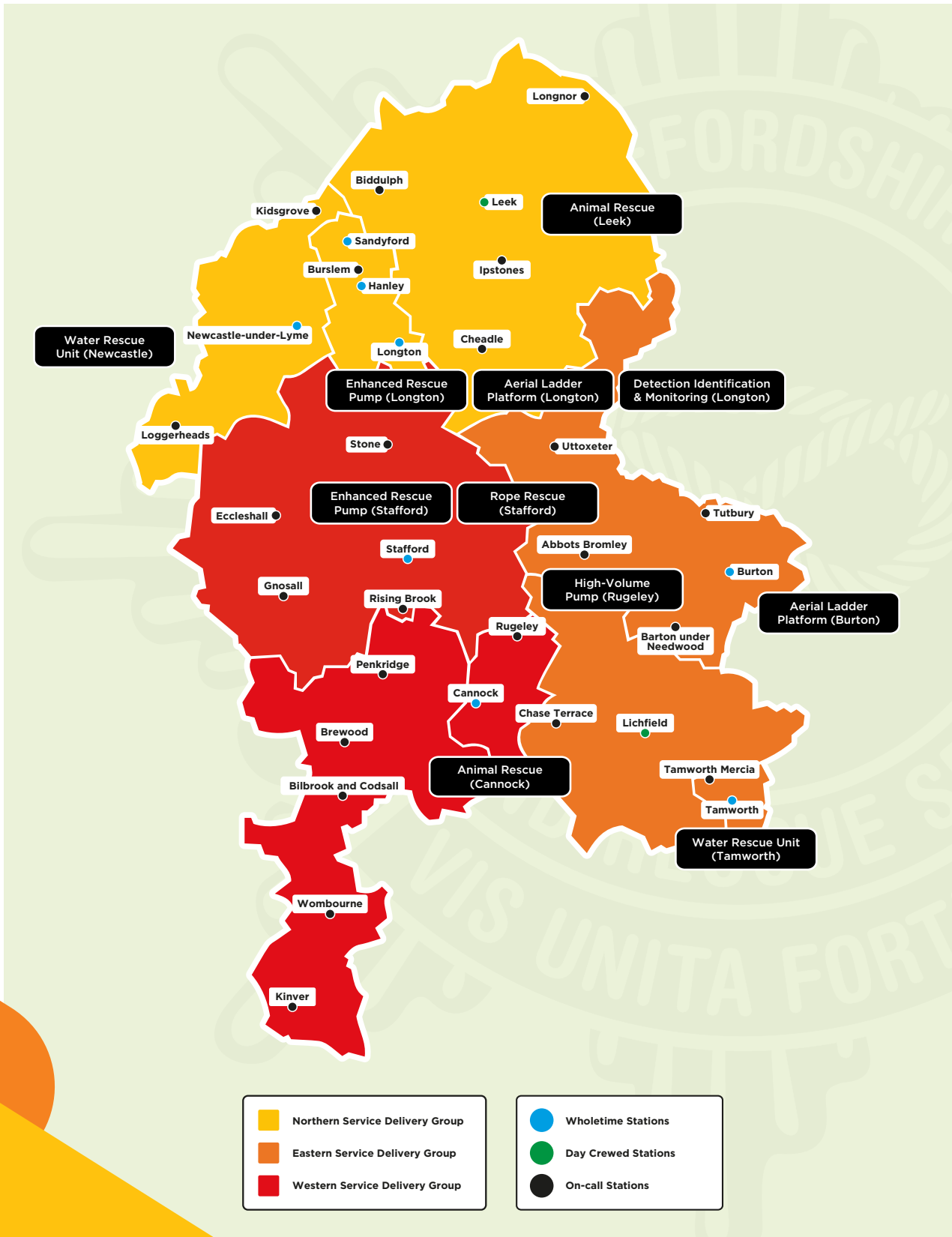
and improve the ability to respond effectively to dynamic and evolving threats. Additionally, maintaining public trust and confidence is vital. Fire and rescue services play a critical role in providing support and reassurance to affected individuals and communities during and after terrorist incidents to aid in recovery.

A special team of firefighters has been trained to operate under the conditions of a terrorist incident. Emergency services work closely with the security services and Government to identify threats and provide effective warning, informing and response planning. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service supports this with a cadre of national inter-agency liaison officers (NILOs), who work closely with emergency service partners, and currently provides a local and national capability for mass casualty injuries and decontamination processes.

Adapting to the ever-changing landscape of terrorism requires ongoing vigilance and adaptation. Fire and rescue services remain vigilant, staying informed about intelligence updates, threat assessments, and best practices. By investing in training, resources, and collaborative partnerships, fire and rescue services enhance their capacity to protect communities, mitigate risks, and respond effectively to the threat of terrorism.



YOUR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

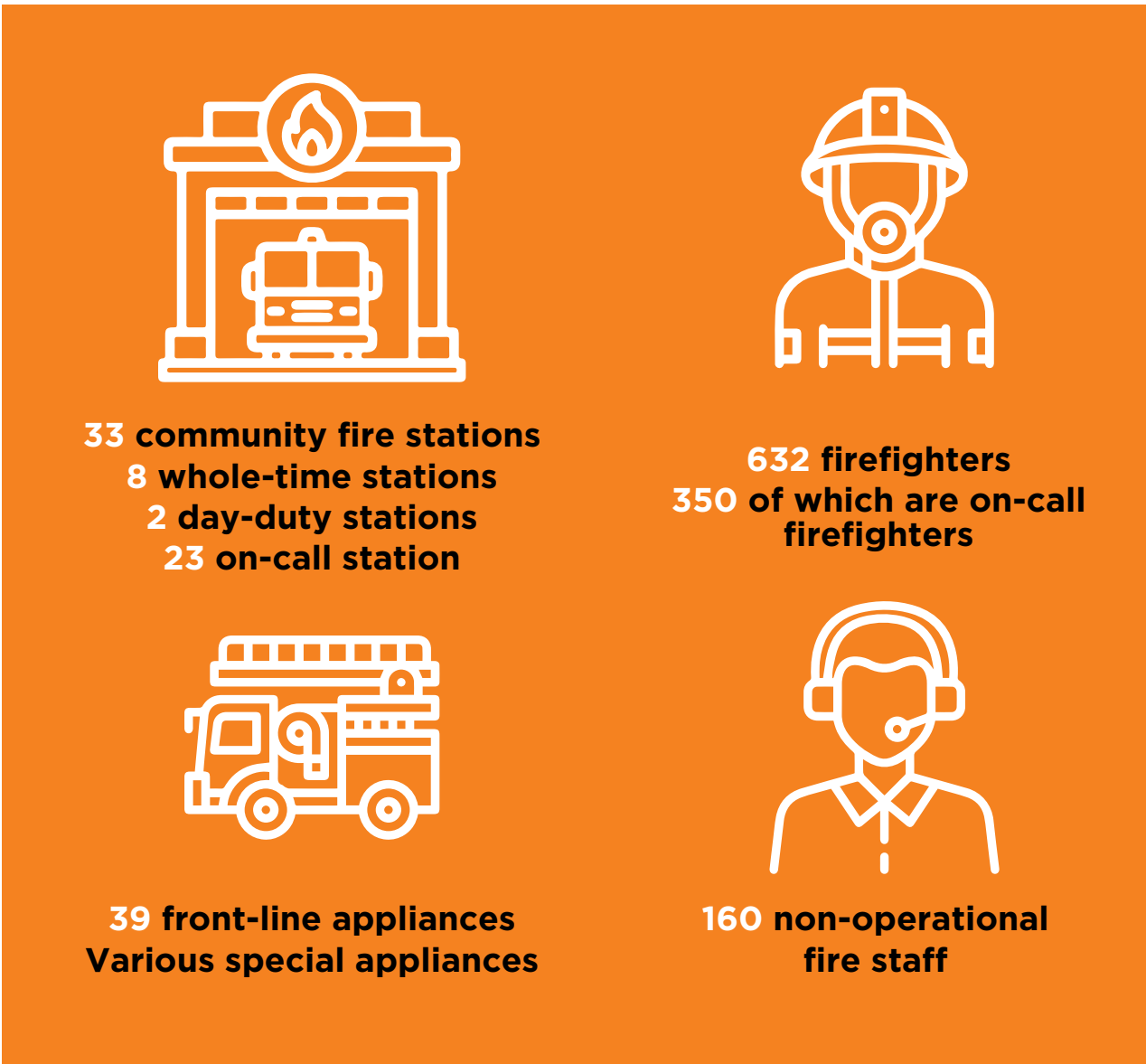


Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service keeps people and places safe and helps reduce risks by using a range of prevention, protection, response and resilience resources and activities, in our homes, workplaces and in our communities.

We have 33 community fire stations across the county, with headquarters and a learning and development centre in Stone, and a combined Fire and Police Transport and Engineering site (JETS) at Trentham Lakes, Stoke-on-Trent.

Our workforce includes 632 firefighters, 350 of whom are on-call, and over 160 non-operational fire staff providing various functions such as business support, risk planning, learning and development, performance reporting and ICT.

Our fire stations consist of eight whole-time stations, two day-duty stations, and 23 on-call stations, with some on-call watches based at whole-time and day-duty stations. This combination provides 39 front-line appliances and various special appliances, supporting both local and national resilience.



OUR RESOURCES AND HOW WE USE THEM

Prevention

You know that, in an emergency when you dial 999, we will respond. However, we would much rather help prevent fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place. The aim of our prevention activities is to reduce the number and severity of incidents we attend daily, by helping improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the people and communities of Staffordshire. Our vision is to ‘make Staffordshire the safest place to be’, aspiring to achieve zero preventable fire deaths. Our prevention activities are delivered by dedicated prevention teams and operational crews, working with partner agencies including the police, social care, adult mental health, and local authorities. These partnerships help us identify the most vulnerable people in our communities, so that we can be more efficient and effective by targeting our resources where they are needed most.

Helping our most vulnerable Home fire safety visits

We deliver thousands of home fire safety visits (HFSV's) each year. This is part of a nationally-recognised approach taken by fire and rescue services, whereby considering health, social and lifestyle factors alongside fire risks, we will be able to provide support and advice where needed. Amongst many initiatives the Service also utilises the NFCC's Risk

Profiling Methodology for identifying those domestic dwellings most at risk from fire and proactively targets these premises for a HFSV. The aspiration is to offer all domestic dwellings classified as very high risk a HFSV by 2028. Our personnel have targets for the amount of HFSV's they should complete.

During a HFSV we will discuss:

- home fire detection and assistive technology
- general fire safety advice (e.g. candles, cooking)
- personal escape planning
- electrical safety (faulty appliances, lithium-ion batteries)
- safer heating (open fires, heaters)
- deliberate fires (fire setters, arson)
- smoking-related fires (smoking, smoking in bed, e-cigarettes)
- clutter and hoarding (matrix, firefighter safety)
- medicines and medical devices (medical oxygen, emollients).

In addition to conducting HFSV's, we work closely with many partner organisations who can also contribute to improving the wellbeing of an individual, following a referral from us such as a request for an assessment of needs or sign posting to a smoking cessation service, dementia group etc. During these visits, we speak to residents about a wide range of topics, such as fire safety, physical and mental health and wellbeing, in addition to fitting fire detection and additional safety equipment where required.



Falls Response Team

In December 2022, the Service embarked on a project to provide a ‘falls response’ service in Staffordshire. This was requested by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board to provide a resource to assist in the community where a patient has fallen but is uninjured and is unable to get up by themselves.

If a patient remains on the floor, it can lead to life changing impacts and potentially a long stay in hospital. By responding in a timely manner, deterioration can be prevented and the patient can continue to live independently.

Calls for assistance are from West Midlands Ambulance Service, who pass suitable calls to the NHS's ICC - Integrated Care Coordination Centre in Staffordshire which has the ability to provide a community based ‘urgent care response’ for various clinical conditions. Falls response is one part of this.

The ICC then triage the call and may dispatch a community-based response from providers across

the county, which include our health partnership team.

To respond to these incidents the Service has set up a team covering the hours of 8am until 7pm each day, 365 days a year. They are trained to carry out the role and are equipped with specialist lifting equipment to assist fallers.

Following a successful pilot from December 2022 to March 2023, full funding for this service has been granted until at least December 2024. From a fire prevention perspective, this initiative brings the Service into contact with some of the most vulnerable people in Staffordshire, who also exhibit numerous risk factors associated with fire and as such they will receive a complete HFSV from staff whilst they are there, referring onto partners as necessary.

The project has been a massive success and the falls team have assisted a significant number of people and prevented countless condition deteriorations through timely intervention, reaping untold benefits for the individual and the NHS.

Home from Hospital

In December 2023, we launched a new initiative to help vulnerable people return home from hospital and to help alleviate pressures on the NHS. The Service was requested by Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT) to assist with winter pressures.

MPFT had identified that there were difficulties getting vulnerable patients home in a timely manner to coincide with ongoing care arrangements, which could lead to readmissions to hospital when patients were discharged using traditional patient transport services. Our specially-appointed Fire and Health Partnership Technicians collect patients from the Royal Stoke University Hospital and transport them to their homes across Staffordshire and 'settle them in'.

Once home they are given personalised care and attention, and offered potentially life-saving support:

- home fire safety checks, including the fitting of fire detectors
- appropriate, comfortable seating and toilet access
- checking their lighting, heating and water
- testing lifeline alarm system (if they have one)
- basic security checks
- ensuring they have access to a phone and charging facility
- removing obstacles and other trip hazards
- providing refreshments.

The Home from Hospital service currently operates from the Royal Stoke University Hospital where the 'Integrated Discharge Hub' identify

suitable patients and allocate the job to our Fire and Health Partnership technicians.

Following a successful pilot from December 2023 to March 2024, the fully-funded service has been continued until at least 31 March 2025. The project has been particularly successful and the team have assisted a large number of patients, expediting discharges from hospital thereby alleviating pressure on the NHS, alongside a negligible readmission rate.

“

This incredible service has supported more than 1,423 patients* since December 2023 and in most cases the patient was returned home within an hour of the request.

This responsiveness has enabled beds at Royal Stoke University Hospital to be released earlier in the day and ensure our older patients who live alone are home before dark and feel settled back at home, with the assurance they are both safe and warm.

”

Hayley Bishop, Director of Integrated Discharge at Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

*As of 31st October 2024

Educating children and young people

The Service has an education delivery plan, in which we aspire to interact with children in each key stage throughout their school life. This is delivered through a blended approach by Safe+Sound staff, operational crews, fire staff, Fire service volunteers and specialist teams, plus access to other resources such as StayWise and Learn Live.

Our operational teams will endeavour to deliver educational packages to identified schools within their areas on an annual basis.

Safe+Sound

As part of our education delivery plan, we created Safe+Sound to educate Key Stage 2 children about safety in a fun and interactive way with our live delivery across Staffordshire and the Stoke on Trent for Year 5 children, and our weekly

online programmes for all Key Stage 2 children. We use technology to improve the way we deliver our messages to ensure they have the maximum impact. This has already proved successful with our Safe+Sound interactive pods, which provide an immersive learning experience for children to encourage them to be safe and make positive lifestyle choices. We work with partners to deliver workshops on various topics such as fire safety, road safety, water safety, internet safety, emotional wellbeing, smart money, rail safety, and CPR. Our weekly online programmes are delivered via the Learn Live channel, and are for Key Stage 2 children, with all previous programmes available to view on demand, alongside special programmes for Key Stages 1, 3 and 4 and a water safety package, which are all available on the [Learn Live](#) channel.



Road safety

We are committed to reduce the numbers of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. We currently support road safety education and risk reduction initiatives through our membership of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, identifying opportunities to work together and ensure road safety delivery is as efficient and effective as possible.

The Young Driver Education Programme workshops, delivered with partner agencies, aim to reduce accidents involving young drivers. Our education team works closely with the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership delivering Safe+Sound events for young drivers. Events are primarily delivered in areas identified as having a high number of young

people involved in collisions, or at high risk of having a collision.

The SSRP commission road safety officers to deliver education in the highest risk schools, meaning some schools do not get this input. They share this information with us and we can utilise operational crews to deliver the KS1 package for road safety in schools as per the education delivery workplan'

We are also running a pilot to provide safety information to 'mature drivers' during HFSV's. This will hopefully be rolled out wider in the next couple of years.

We are also looking at protection officers promoting 'driving for better business' when they are out auditing business premises.

Use of new technology

We will also explore the use of new technology to improve the way we deliver our messages to ensure they have the maximum impact. This has already proved successful with our Safe+Sound interactive pods, which provide an interactive and immersive learning experience for children, young people and other groups to encourage them to be safe and make positive lifestyle choices.

We collaborate with various partners and share data to better understand

risks and vulnerabilities in our communities. This includes working with emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, and other public and business sector partners. By doing so, we can identify and prepare for current and emerging risks, improving our response to emergencies. This comprehensive approach helps us enhance public services and helps us evaluate how to deliver our prevention services more efficiently and effectively.

Protection (fire safety)

The future for our teams and the wider Service is to deliver community-centric services that promote and maximise the social impact of our interventions. We aim to ensure the effective and responsible use of public resources, including finances and personnel to maximise impacts on communities and provide a value for money Service.

Our vision is to '**make Staffordshire the safest place to be**', aspiring to achieve zero preventable deaths and injuries. We aim to accomplish this through effective prevention and protection activities, focusing on education, engagement, early intervention, and ultimately

enforcement where all other avenues have been explored. When completing audits, dependant on the level of non-compliance we will take the necessary enforcement action in terms of advice, prohibition or prosecution in line with the national enforcement management model.

When significant fire safety deficiencies are found, we will take formal enforcement action, including prosecuting negligent business owners under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 where we feel the risk from fire is significant.

We will employ a targeted and evidence-based approach in delivering protection activities to help the Service achieve its vision. This effort will be fundamentally driven by the risk-based inspection programme.

Other safety campaigns

Throughout the year, we also we deliver preventive campaigns, such as 'Don't be blamed for the flames' helping reduce deliberate fires, road and water safety, business support, and highlighting risks associated

with living alone with the aim of reducing deaths and injuries caused by fires and other emergencies.

These campaigns are often timed to coincide with holiday and festive periods and likely periods of warm or wet weather.



Delivering fire protection activity

The Service will start to involve operational crews in protection activities, enabling them to identify fire safety deficiencies and take necessary action at medium and lower-risk premises that may not comply with legislation, thereby increasing the safety of Staffordshire communities.

Over the next few years, the Service will adapt its ways of working to ensure a consistent and methodical approach to protection activities. The Service seeks to maximise the time our fire safety inspecting officers spend on risk-based inspection programme audits, focusing on the highest risks as defined by the latest NFCC guidance that we follow.

We conduct regular audits and inspections of buildings to verify ongoing compliance with fire safety regulations. These audits assess various aspects such as fire safety management practices, the functionality of fire safety equipment, and the effectiveness of emergency procedures. Through these inspections, we ensure that buildings maintain robust fire safety standards over time, enhancing resilience against fire risks and supporting prompt and effective responses in the event of non-

compliance to improve public safety.

The Service will embed and maintain the risk-based inspection programme, ensuring it remains up-to-date and that we address risks in a timely and proportionate manner. While we do not have the capacity to audit every building in Staffordshire subject to fire safety legislation, we will focus on those that present the highest risks in terms of societal, community, firefighter safety, environmental, and heritage impacts.

Sampling of medium and lower-risk buildings to assess fire safety compliance across the area will aid in fostering a positive fire safety culture throughout Staffordshire's built environment.

We will respond to all requests from partner agencies and members of the public reporting fire safety concerns within a given premises. We will endeavour to investigate complaints within 72 hours of them being received into the Service.

Our protection officers will provide advice and guidance to owners and managers of businesses and non-domestic premises to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation, to keep their staff and customers safe and help their businesses to grow, thus enhancing the economy by keeping businesses in business.

Training and national direction

We will prioritise recruitment and retention to maintain fully-established teams equipped with the necessary support and skills to fulfil the needs of the communities we serve.

Focus will be on staff development, ensuring that personnel have access to essential courses and can obtain qualifications in line with the NFCC's Competency Framework, enabling them to perform their roles effectively. Where applicable, we will also ensure competence by including personnel on appropriate auditors' registers.

We will continue to horizon scan and stay informed about national trends and issues, including emerging technologies impacting on our protection work. We will monitor new guidance and planned legislation to ensure we are prepared to adopt and implement new procedures and practices promptly when it is identified nationally as best practice. Additionally, we will share necessary information with key stakeholders across Staffordshire to help them remain compliant with legislation and improve community safety efforts.





Risk-based inspection programme (RBIP)

The RBIP is a strategic approach designed to optimise fire safety efforts by prioritising inspections according to risk levels. It begins with a thorough risk assessment process that evaluates key factors such as building classification, occupancy, and potential consequences of a fire.

This assessment categorises buildings into different risk levels based on their inherent fire risks and the potential impact of a fire on life, property, and the environment. Once buildings are categorised, the RBIP focuses resources on high-risk structures where the consequences of a fire could be most severe. These buildings undergo more frequent and detailed inspections to ensure compliance with fire safety regulations, assess the effectiveness of fire protection measures, and identify any deficiencies that could compromise safety.

Central to the RBIP's effectiveness

is its data-driven approach. We focus our fire safety inspection programme on those premises at the highest risk of fire, by using intelligence systems and data to build up a detailed profile that tells where our highest risk buildings are. Inspectors prioritise inspections where they can have the greatest impact in reducing fire risks. It plays a crucial role in safeguarding lives, protecting property, and enhancing community resilience against the threat of fires by focusing efforts where they are most needed and effective. We have fully adopted this approach for inspection and will continue to use NFCC's risk modelling into the future, informing the deployment of resources to the right places, making communities safer. Our protection team will audit all very-high and high-risk premises as per the schedule set out in the policy. Information our protection officers gather from fire safety visits will help us plan and improve our response to fires and other emergencies.

Unwanted fire signals (UwFS)

Reducing false alarms is crucial for the Service to optimise resource allocation, maintain operational readiness and foster strong community partnerships. By addressing the root causes of UwFS and implementing effective prevention, protection and education strategies, we can mitigate these

challenges and better focus on protecting lives and property.

By working with homes and businesses we are able to look to reduce the numbers of unwanted fire signals that we receive. This ensures that response resources are available more of the time to be deployed where they are needed to make positive interventions to make our communities safer.



Fire investigations

Investigating the cause of a fire plays a vital role in informing future prevention and protection activity. Investigative staff meticulously examine the fire scene, gather evidence and analyse data to establish how and where the fire started.

Understanding the root cause of the fire is crucial for insurance claims, legal proceedings, and implementing preventive measures to mitigate future incidents. It provides valuable insights into potential vulnerabilities or hazards that need to be addressed to enhance fire safety and prevent similar occurrences.

After a fire in a business premises our protection officers will carry

out a separate 'post-fire inspection to verify compliance with fire safety regulations. Inspectors assess whether the building met the required standards for fire resistance, had adequate fire suppression systems, and adhered to a range of legislative requirements. If a fire has occurred it is likely the premises' fire risk assessment was not suitable and sufficient. Identifying any non-compliance issues during inspections prompts corrective actions to bring the building up to standard, enhancing overall fire safety and ensuring buildings are better prepared. They play a pivotal role in the recovery process, guiding decisions that promote safety, resilience, and community confidence in the aftermath of an incident. Post-fire inspections are actioned within 72 hours of receipt.

Sprinklers

Sprinkler systems play a crucial role in enhancing safety across various environments both domestic and commercial by providing reliable fire suppression capabilities

Sprinkler systems are highly effective at controlling and suppressing fires in their early stages. They detect a fire and activate automatically, releasing water directly onto the affected area. This rapid response can prevent fires from spreading and escalating, significantly reducing the damage to property and potentially saving lives.

They provide a constant and reliable firefighting capability, even in situations where occupants may be unaware of a fire or unable to respond immediately and are designed to target specific areas

affected by fire, minimising water usage and property damage. This approach not only enhances firefighting efficiency, but also reduces the environmental impact and restoration costs following a fire.

Furthermore, sprinkler systems contribute to building resilience and business continuity by limiting fire damage and allowing operations to resume more quickly after a fire.

The Service will continue to champion the use of sprinkler systems in both new and existing premises deemed suitable via the community sprinkler project to ensure that people, premises and infrastructure can be suitably protected in an efficient and effective manner. This includes lobbying at a national level for their inclusion in domestic dwellings (including tall buildings).

The built environment

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service act as statutory and non-statutory consultees across various critical aspects related to buildings, ensuring compliance with stringent fire safety standards and regulations.

We play a pivotal role in the assessment of building plans under building regulations, involving reviewing proposed developments to ensure plans are compliant with fire safety requirements, encompassing provisions such as adequate means of escape, fire-resistant materials, and effective fire detection and alarm systems. By providing expert input during the planning stages, we can help mitigate fire risks and ensure buildings are designed with the safety of occupants and firefighters in mind.

Additionally, we are consulted during the planning application process for new constructions or substantial alterations to existing buildings, assessing potential fire hazards associated with proposed developments and recommending measures to mitigate risks. This includes ensuring that buildings allow for safe access by fire appliances, provision of sufficient water supplies for firefighting purposes, and incorporation of fire-resistant construction materials where necessary.

Recent legislation changes and new legislation also requires us to consider, and to work with an

understanding of how these changes impact on plans for, and ongoing safety of high-risk residential buildings.

We will work to build relationships with the Building Safety Regulator, to develop a successful understanding of their role in helping us make Staffordshire safe, and how we can help each other in that aim.

Our involvement ensures that fire safety considerations are integrated from the outset of building projects, promoting safer environments for all across Staffordshire. There is a statutory requirement to respond to building regulation applications within 15 working days.

Licensing and safety certifications for buildings that accommodate public gatherings or high-risk activities include evaluation of fire safety measures within these premises to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to provide a secure environment for occupants.

We continue to review the findings from independent enquiries into incidents such as Manchester Arena, the Grenfell Tower fire, applying lessons learned to improve our fire safety strategies and policies, ensuring our teams are well-trained and equipped. We will continue working with planning authorities, building control, approved inspectors, and architects to influence the design of buildings with fire safety in mind, addressing risks from modern construction methods like cladding or timber frames.



Emergency response

The overarching purpose of response is to deploy safely to operational incidents, with professionally trained staff, appropriate equipment and suitable vehicles. It is important that our staff uphold the high levels of public trust in every intervention that they have, both in the workplace and with our communities.

We currently have the following priorities:

1. Developing our teams and individuals:

We will develop our teams and individuals in areas such as problem solving, decision making and supporting individuals to raise ideas to improve processes fostering innovation.

2. Monitor and react to performance:

There is a clear set of response performance measures, which are reviewed on a monthly basis. We will ensure the individual outcomes are monitored and we shall react and implement actions to improve any unacceptable performance issues.

3. Innovation:

There has been many areas of good practice in problem solving and innovation from our departments in areas such as equipment and training. Developing our teams and individuals will allow us to implement positive ideas which move the Service forward in the use of technology and new practices, which will support the environment, firefighter safety and aid in resolving incidents more efficiently.

4. Climate crisis:

Implementing the Service's environmental strategy in relation to vehicles, equipment, property and during incidents. Everyone has a part to play, for response, there are some crucial elements where we can support a reduction in the Service's carbon footprint and improve our environment.

5. Collaboration:

Wider collaboration and strengthening of local partnerships. There will be more stations under review to move to a shared estates model, being pragmatic and understanding which stations fall under the wider estate's strategy. Early engagement is essential to make sure opportunities are not missed.

6. Training:

Improving our training implementation and recording processes will help in continuing to implement more flexibility with how we train, building upon the outreach work and challenge the rationale for all our training model to ensure it is fit for purpose.

7. Response Model:

Resourcing to risk. We will review our current response model to ensure it is fit for purpose and flexible in all areas, using an intelligent approach to measuring our response availability and how we mobilise our appliances to communities.



Training

Our Learning and Development (L&D) department is dedicated to providing top-tier training to staff, adapting to changes in work practices and new technologies. The Service's goal is to equip local delivery groups with fully trained individuals, ready to excel in the workplace. Enhancements to the new firefighter courses will make training more interactive and hands-on, utilising a range of environments both within the county and at the Fire Service College to effectively transfer knowledge and skills. We will standardise on-call core training to ensure consistency across the Service.

The Service aims to increase the number of emergency fire appliance drivers and trained on-call firefighters where quality delivery remains a top priority. Simplified processes for recording competence and development will be reviewed and implemented, with realistic expectations across the workforce.

The L&D department has successfully expanded outreach training, specifically supporting on-call staff and benefiting those in more remote locations. The development of training packages and the increased use of the HQ training environment are enhancing the training experience for personnel.

It is encouraging for the Service to see the growing interest in national competitions with other fire and rescue services challenging each other and sharing learning with all staff are offered the opportunity to participate. A positive Ofsted report on our apprenticeship programme will help us review and improve this area as the Service hosts a further trainee course during 2025.

The Service's incident command team will further develop outreach work, ensuring assessment scenarios are linked to local risk sites and regional/national learning. Multi-agency learning and collaboration will be emphasised, feeding into operational assurance days to maintain the knowledge and education provided by L&D.

Service delivery

Development of the Service's four key measures will continue to be a priority: health and safety of crews, availability of appliances, frequent and quality training on station, and attendance times to incidents. Training locally will need to adapt to new processes, technologies and equipment and encourage inclusiveness on all aspects of station life. Whilst a focus for L&D will be to offer the best trained individuals to local delivery groups, it is the focus of stations to ensure all individuals are operationally ready for assessments, providing support for individuals on the job.

Productivity for all staff is a key objective. The measuring of productivity is underway, ensuring the Service is making the best use of time across all shift patterns. The Service will look to address any processes, such as supervisors time completing administration, including

making the recording of work easier through technological improvements and development. The use of dynamic and analytical risk assessments is embedded to reduce accidents and support a strong health and safety culture. Special appliances and national resilience assets will continue to be a focus, creating stronger links regionally and nationally, improving training, exercising and auditing.

The encouragement of ideas and healthy challenge is advocated to help the Service problem solve issues and share all the positive aspects at local level, fostering an inclusive culture service-wide.

The support of individuals through the United Kingdom Rescue Organisation challenges and new breathing apparatus set testing at the Fire Service College will help to understand the skills of the Service and ensure that it has the most up-to-date equipment for use operationally, making Staffordshire safer.





Innovations in response

Numerous projects continue to be developed by the Service's Emergency Response Team (ERT), including the introduction of new aerial ladder platforms (ALPs) to the Service, enhanced rescue pumps, new breathing apparatus (BA) sets, the clean concept initiatives which look at improving safety for operational personnel, and implementing a range of industry leading personal protection equipment (PPE). ERT focus on project timing plans, sharing them with all staff and coordinating with other departments to prevent delays. The clean concept is integral to all response work, starting with a three-phase approach to improve the cleaning of equipment and PPE. The clean cab principles will be implemented in new appliances as

they arrive into Service, altering how we don BA sets but reducing health risks for all operational staff.

ERT is focused on developing measures to fully understand the lifecycles of all equipment, determining its location, assessing if it is fit for purpose, and identifying the reasons behind equipment loss or damage. This effort includes encouraging problem-solving to design out issues that operational crews may identify. Testing of hydrants continues with support provided to stations to meet the Service's legal obligations.

The Service has introduced a streamlined process for PPE maintenance, while the BA maintenance team will support the introduction of new BA sets and processes to ensure compliance. A program of auditing Service procedures will be enhanced as a key initiative.

Operational assurance

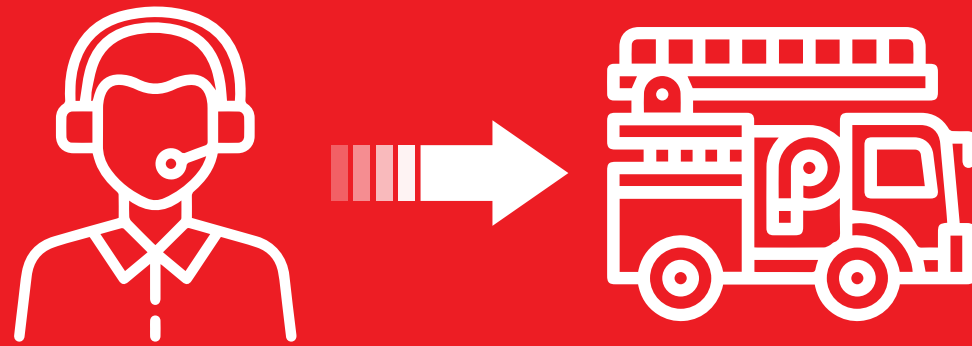
Operational assurance teams continue to ensure that clear and embedded processes are in place so that all notable practices and identified learning from incidents, exercises, and training exposures, both locally and nationally, are captured and shared with relevant personnel and departments. This effort aims to lead and improve Service policy and procedure, linking directly to operational assurance and performance monitoring guidance as well as the National Operational Guidance (NOG) good practice guide.

The strategic gap analysis for NOG will be a key focus with a comprehensive review process established. A more robust process has been developed to manage internal and external action plans, including debrief actions, with stakeholder involvement.

The alignment of Service policy and procedure to NOG has been completed during 2024. Following this, the team's focus will shift to four key areas:

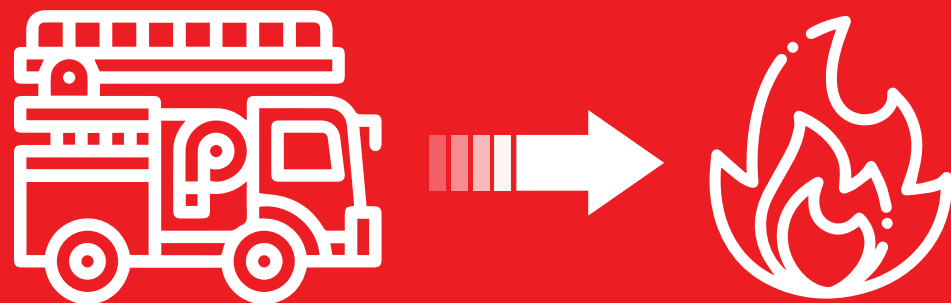
1. Embedding: continuously seeking opportunities to utilise NOG based information to lead, guide, or inform
2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I): ensuring content meets ED&I standards and providing NOG materials in various styles and formats to meet the diverse needs of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's workforce.
3. Assurance: establishing systems and procedures to record the usage and understanding of NOG-based materials.
4. Review: initiating periodic reviews, continuing reactive reviews, and completing strategic gap analysis as required by the NFCC.

Our response time is made up of the following sections and has specific measures:



Target of 80-85 seconds for category 1 incidents

Phone call answered time to fire engine mobilised time measured by Fire Control



An achievement target of 80%

Based on the standard of high risk: 8 minutes, medium risk: 10 minutes and low risk: 18 minutes.

Shared services

The Service collaborates with Staffordshire Police to deliver shared services including supplies, logistics, occupational health and a joint transport and engineering facility. Our corporate communications, estates, finance, human resources and procurement teams moved to a

collaborative model with the police in 2019 creating more shared functions.

Where practical and cost effective the Service also works with partner organisations offering and providing shared facilities and response hubs for fire, police, ambulance, health, local authorities and free space for voluntary groups at our community fire stations.

Fire control room

We share a fire control facility with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), resources are swiftly mobilised based on proximity and suitability to ensure an appropriate response level.

The Service collaborates with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that the shared fire control team feels fully integrated with both organisations. We are involved in the training and supporting of new fire control recruits, incorporating them into an inclusive team.

New meeting structures are ensuring operational issues are resolved, performance is measured at a tactical and strategic level, and partners are held accountable through the strategic assurance board.

Engagement with fire control staff remains a priority. Goals are to simplify processes and support a

unified approach for both fire and rescue services, resolving technical issues, including the development of sector-leading ICT systems and processes to support incidents.

Fire control command training is delivered, and command assessments have been facilitated to ensure those leading the function are competent and confident in managing control room operations.

We also collaborate with other responders and partners to achieve effective coordination and assistance at incidents, mobilising suitable resources according to the incident type.

National resilience assets and specialist advice are accessible through National Coordination Advisory Framework protocols and fire control action plans. Emergency call management protocols ensure the accumulation of necessary information for informed decision-making regarding resource allocation for a safe and effective incident resolution.

Fleet and equipment

Joint Emergency Transport Services (JETS) keep the Service's fleet in suitable condition for operational readiness, and offer expertise in researching new technologies and vehicles, collaborating with the NFCC and regional groups to exchange and develop ideas. They will help enhance the reserve fleet and streamline vehicle changeover processes.

It is imperative that the Service maintains a modern fleet of vehicles that meet the Service's needs, prioritising staff welfare, safety, incident requirements, and compliance with environmental laws.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) will play a crucial role in integrating vehicle and equipment needs.

JETS have introduced measures to gauge current performance and established a new single point of contact within the Service's ERT to address current issues speedily and ensure a fleet fit for the future.

A new fleet board will review JETS' performance and support any areas requiring improvement, with the development of measures being essential to understanding current performance and identifying areas for growth.

Technology and data

In this rapidly changing digital era, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is dedicated to embracing innovation and harnessing technology to drive progress for both our communities and our people.

As a public sector organisation, our focus on innovation and our progressive nature are essential to meeting the evolving needs of our communities and providing efficient, transparent, and person-centric services to improve the quality of life for those who live, work, and visit Staffordshire.

Our ICT strategy outlines a transformative approach that

integrates both existing and new technologies while fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By adopting proven and cutting-edge solutions, we aim to enhance operational efficiency for our service delivery personnel, optimise resource allocation across the Service, and deliver exceptional value for money to our stakeholders.

We aim to leverage cloud-based technologies to transform business processes, enhance collaboration, and enable agile decision-making for remote staff in Staffordshire. By integrating ICT with our digital and data strategy, we will unlock new opportunities and help drive innovation.

Emergency preparedness

We support the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit, which coordinates multi-agency training and plans for complex incidents with significant impacts on our county, such as pandemics, widespread flooding, or terror-related events.

We have robust business continuity plans to handle major disruptions, including floods, cyber-attacks, pandemics, and building losses. These plans are regularly tested to ensure our resilience and ability to respond effectively to catastrophic events.

The national resilience programme provides equipment and trained personnel that can be deployed nationwide to incidents overwhelming local resources. We possess high-volume pumping equipment, enhanced logistical support vehicles, and detection identification and monitoring teams for unknown chemicals. Additionally, we have trained waste fire and wildfire tactical advisors who offer expertise within Staffordshire and can respond nationwide if needed.

Our buildings

Our building portfolio includes 35 premises, with 21 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) buildings and 14 residual buildings. The PFI buildings are managed under two outsourced contracts (10 and 11 buildings respectively), while the in-house facilities management team maintains the residual buildings.

The estates team is also collaborating with the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office on joint projects with Staffordshire Police, like those at Hanley and Tamworth. Staffordshire Police's Stoke-on-Trent North and Tamworth local policing teams are based at Hanley fire station and Tamworth fire stations respectively. The police also have facilities at Abbots Bromley, Barton-under-Needwood and Chase Terrace fire stations. Similar arrangements are also being considered at

Kidsgrove, Kinver, Stone, Penkridge, Rugeley and Uttoxeter.

The estates team has recently completed the refurbishment of a number of our fire stations and others are in the pipeline. These projects include improvements in stations' interiors, including new kitchen, gym, watch office, communications room, locker rooms, PPE stowage room, and appliance bay drainage. Operational activities continued uninterrupted during these refurbishments. Alongside major refurbishments, other investment programs ensure all residual fire stations are maintained and fit for purpose.

To reduce the carbon footprint, the estates team is exploring the installation of solar panels at our headquarters and has added electric vehicle charging points for a pilot project. The results will guide future scalability.



SERVICE TRANSFORMATION AND OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Service transformation programme

Service transformation is crucial in guaranteeing that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service remains capable of providing a 'modern, efficient, and sustainable level of service to the public, that prioritises the safety of both our staff and our communities.'



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The Deputy Chief Fire Officer oversees the Service's transformation programme, and will consider how transformation can best support our Priorities of **our communities, our environment** and **our people**.

The transformation board, formed in February 2022 with representatives from various Service areas, aims to transform the Service and ensure financial sustainability. It meets regularly to monitor progress, evaluate an action plan, and provide recommendations through governance channels.

Several work streams aligned with the Service's medium-term financial strategy have already been completed, including a high-level management restructure, minimum staffing of four on whole-time fire engines, reviews of operational exercises and incident command, outreach training, and the 'on-call nine-point plan' to improve fire engine and crew availability.

We have also initiated additional work streams, such as the 'clean concept' to reduce firefighter exposure to fire contaminants and a project to review standards and accreditation for fire investigation officers.

The transformation programme is expected to achieve recurring savings of approximately £1 million for the Service. Developments and innovation over the past four years have seen the following improvements which continue to support our priorities in this Community Risk Management Plan.



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Our People



“Providing the right training and skills and inspire our future leaders.”

On-call support officers were introduced to enhance fire engine and resource availability. They work with departments like human resources, learning and development, and the communications team to recruit, train, and ensure availability of staff to crew local fire engines.

The Service received a ‘good’ overall rating for its operational firefighter apprenticeship programme, with ‘outstanding’ recognition in areas such as ‘behaviour, attitudes,’ and ‘personal development’.



“A working environment where staff feel accepted and can be themselves.”

We have adopted the Core Code of Ethics, consisting of five key principles that form the basis for fostering a positive culture and addressing inappropriate behaviour.



“A more diverse workforce.”

We have recruited a positive action coordinator to promote diversity and facilitate applications from underrepresented groups in our communities.



“Commitment to improving staff’s health, fitness and wellbeing.”

We have invested in the Thrive mental health and wellbeing support app for our staff and trained a group of employees to serve as mental health first aiders.

The Service earned foster-friendly accreditation from The Fostering Network, aiding organisations in actively supporting fostering.



Our Communities



“Work with partners to share information and identify those most at risk.”

Establishing a Falls Response team in collaboration with the NHS, Integrated Care Board (ICB), and Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT).



“Prioritise risk to ensure our activities have the most impact.”

We are focused on visiting every vulnerable household which we have identified through our analysis of risk by 2028. We are also moving to a ‘Get out Stay out’ message across our fire safety campaigns.



“Our activities are targeted where they are needed most.”

Successful collaborative building projects in Hanley and Tamworth bring together Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Staffordshire Police in shared facilities, aiming to enhance community safety.





Our Environment



“Develop targeted activities to be more efficient and reduce our impact on the environment.”

The clean concept aims to minimise crew exposure to post-fire contaminants by implementing cleaning, containing, and control measures to prevent contaminants from reaching our appliances and workplaces.



“Help build safe and sustainable communities.”

Introducing our new Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 2022-2027, prioritising pollutant reduction, enhanced air quality and work environments, and lowering our carbon footprint.



“Using innovative ways of working and advances in technology.”

Using innovative ways of working and advances in technology, we have developed an online Safe+Sound programme for schools which can be viewed in school or at home on demand. Our Safe+Sound live events utilise our immersive, interactive pods and enable schools to visit a local fire station and receive a variety of safety and life skills workshops from ourselves and our partners in one central location.



“Making sure that buildings in Staffordshire are safe now and in the future.”

Working with local housing providers, 19 out of 42 identified blocks over five storeys have been equipped with sprinkler systems through our community sprinkler project.

Ensuring functional fire hydrants is vital for firefighters to access water sources for fire suppression and public safety. Crews at all 10 whole-time stations are trained to assist hydrant technicians in testing the 39,000 hydrants across Staffordshire.

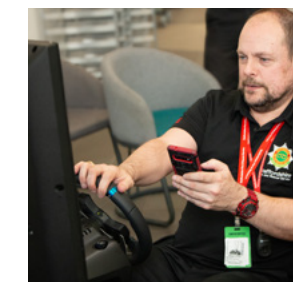
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Whenever feasible and suitable, we will seek opportunities to collaborate with partners such as the police, local authorities, and other emergency services. We aim to jointly deliver certain activities when it clearly adds value to our communities. Additionally, we will continue to explore opportunities for sharing premises and information where it is mutually beneficial, enhancing community safety, reducing the demand on public services, and minimizing our environmental impact.

We collaborate with partners and share information, data, and intelligence to enhance our understanding of risks and vulnerabilities within our diverse communities. This collaboration also helps us identify current and emerging risks to our organization and prepare our firefighters for potential emergencies.

We gather information from various groups, including other emergency services, the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, local authorities, the NHS, and numerous public and business sector partners. This comprehensive approach provides a unified perspective and a richer understanding. It enables us to develop more relevant, efficient, and effective public services.

Our Partners



OUR FUNDING AND HOW WE SPEND IT

The Staffordshire Commissioner is responsible for the finances of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service which is funded through a combination of income from business rates, central government grants and through its share of council tax, called the precept. The Service also generates other smaller sources of income through rents, fees and charges, investments, and sharing sites with Staffordshire Police.

How we spend our money is scrutinised by Staffordshire Commissioner Ben Adams and the robust governance arrangements established for the authority. This includes quarterly reporting through to the strategic governance board and also scrutiny by the finance panel which is part of the independent ethics, transparency

and audit panel. External and internal audits are carried out to provide a further level of assurance for the communities of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

The net budget for 2024/25 was set at £50.1m and is forecast to increase to around £55m by 2028 as per the latest medium-term financial strategy (MTFS). We aim to put every penny of our budget to the best use possible, with the commissioner expecting every pound of taxpayers' money invested in fire and rescue to be spent wisely and for the Service to continue to seek efficiencies. How this is spent is shown on the next page.

The MTFS will be reviewed and updated annually during the four-year period of this Community Risk Management Plan to ensure that the links are maintained to ensure delivery of our key service priorities.

What we will do:

- Continue to review expenditure to ensure value for money is being achieved
- Commit to more collaborative working with all partners, delivering value-for-money for local people and taxpayers, through working together with all partners
- Review ways of working, through shared approaches to estates, procurement and training, employment arrangements and mobilisation of fire engines
- Continue with our transformation journey to ensure that we are efficient and effective and ready for the financial challenges ahead.

What are the risks:

- Pay increases for staff are above inflationary levels
- The Government reduce funding for the fire and rescue sector or council tax is not increased in line with the MTFS
- Funding for the additional cost of pension schemes has to be met locally and is not funded by central Government
- Increased costs due to loss of staff or the impact of climate change resulting in higher demand or loss of staff.

OUR SPENDING 2024/25 - £50.1M



EMPLOYEE COSTS

£34.1M



PREMISES,
TRANSPORT, SUPPLIES
AND SERVICES

£9.2M



CAPITAL FINANCING
COSTS

£6.8M

FUNDING FOR THE SERVICE COMES FROM:



COUNCIL TAX PAID
BY LOCAL RESIDENTS

64%



BUSINESS RATES
FUNDING

21%



REVENUE
SUPPORT GRANT

15%



Our performance measures

It is important that we review our plans and performance regularly to ensure that we are targeting our activity appropriately and consistently improving and innovating our prevention, protection and response activities.

Our service delivery groups ensure that best practice is identified and shared by scrutinising our performance at a local level.

Our performance is provided by a number of strategic scrutiny boards (both internally and via the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office), which provide challenge ensuring we continue to deliver the most efficient and effective service whilst keeping our communities and firefighters safe.



His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS)

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) is the independent inspectorate of both police forces and fire and rescue services within England.

HMICFRS looks at each fire and rescue service and assesses and reports on how **effective** and **efficient** its services are, as well as **how well they look after their people**.

Through its inspections, HMICFRS enables the public to see how well their local service is performing and improving.

HMICFRS gradings are similar to those used by Ofsted for school inspections. In previous inspections services would attract a rating of: **outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate**.

Recently, in HMICFRS's latest round of inspections an additional grade of '**adequate**' has been introduced. This brings the assessments in line with those of policing and enables HMICFRS to state more precisely, where it considers improvement is needed and to assist in highlighting good performance more effectively.

HMICFRS measure fire and rescue services against the '**characteristics of good performance**'. These 11 characteristics describe the levels of performance needed for a service to achieve a grade of '**good**'.



When considering our priorities and plans for this Community Risk Management Plan, it is important that we incorporate the findings of HMICFRS into our planning, ensuring that we continue to drive the positive practices identified and addressing the areas for improvement.

We have developed an action plan to address the findings identified by HMICFRS during our inspections

and to help us identify and make improvements across the Service, in order to make things better for our staff and our communities.

The progress of this action plan is scrutinised internally through our governance structure, and by the Staffordshire Commissioner Ben Adams..

Inspection reports are available to the public via the HMICFRS website: hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk












Round 3 inspection report

‘We are outstanding at responding to major incidents’

Our latest HMICFRS report was published in September 2024 and inspectors have graded us at outstanding at responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

The report follows a full inspection during spring 2024 in which inspectors graded us against 11 areas, the majority of which were graded as good. The inspectors state we have made progress since the last report and highlight ten areas where they have seen improvements.

Our HMICFRS inspection gradings (2024)*

Outstanding	Good	Adequate
 Responding to major incidents	 Understanding fire and risk	 Preventing fire and risk
	 Responding to fires and emergencies	 Public safety through fire regulation
	 Best use of resources	 Promoting fairness and diversity
	 Future affordability	 Managing performance and developing leaders
	 Promoting values and culture	
	 Right people, right skills	

*HMICFRS measure fire and rescue services against the 11 characteristics of ‘good’ awarding potential gradings of Outstanding, Good, Adequate, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

- Two areas of promising practice were highlighted:
- One was the area in which we received our outstanding grading and this was how we work well with the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) to provide a preventative and a reactive response to multi-agency or
 - The second was our work with the NHS for our falls response team and home from hospital service. The full report can be accessed [here](#).





Response to HMICFRS Values and Culture Report

In March 2023, HMICFRS published a spotlight report on '[Values and Cultures in Fire and Rescue Services](#),' which states there is bullying, harassment and discrimination in every fire and rescue service in England.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying or discrimination, which is clearly detailed in our statement of intent and we have adopted the Core Code Ethics. Our people are at the heart of our Service and we are committed to ensuring that each and every member of staff has a positive experience at work. We are clear that there is no place for bullying, harassment or discrimination at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The report makes 35 recommendations to improve culture in fire and rescue services and we are making significant progress in meeting these recommendations. We are also following the [NFCC Culture Action Plan](#). Our progress against these recommendations is monitored through regular performance meetings and governance boards, with reports to HMICFRS as required.

To read the full report visit: hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk

HMICFRS thematic inspection of the handling of misconduct

HMICFRS published its thematic report 'Standards of behaviour - The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services' on the 1 August 2024.

The Service was one of 10 fire and rescue services to take part in this thematic inspection back in November 2023 which focused on misconduct and improving values and culture in across fire and rescue services nationally.

In this report, HMICFRS said that most fire and rescue services have taken steps to improve standards of behaviour and root out misconduct. But the inspectorate found there are still pockets of abhorrent behaviour, and it has called for further improvements to make sure misconduct is handled effectively.

Across the 10 services inspected, the inspectors found:

- occurrences of unacceptable behaviours including sexist, racist and homophobic language were most common within watches
- there is a widespread lack of confidence in misconduct processes which prevents staff, particularly women, from speaking out
- supervisors and managers are not sufficiently trained to manage staff performance, poor behaviour and welfare issues. Staff that manage and investigate misconduct need the right training

- services need to learn from their misconduct cases to prevent it happening in future.

HMICFRS have also provided 15 recommendations for all fire and rescue services and the senior leadership team are working to review and implement any changes required across our Service.

These findings reinforce the importance that we have a positive culture within the Service and we are constantly looking to improve the support we give our staff, increase diversity to be reflective of our local communities and ensure our organisation is a place where people enjoy coming to work.

On receiving the published report, Chief Fire Officer Rob Barber took the opportunity to emphasise and remind staff of the standards of behaviour we expect, and that there is no place for unacceptable or discriminatory behaviour within our Service. Staff are encouraged to raise their concerns if they experience, or witness, any such behaviour and reminded about the independent reporting line 'Say So' where concerns can be shared anonymously.

To view the report in full please [click here](#).

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Due to the nature of what we do, there are many people across Staffordshire and beyond with a vested interest in how we go about things. Key stakeholders include:

- Members of the public
- Business owners and managers
- Local councillors and politicians
- Our employees
- Unions and representative bodies.

Members of the public can be categorised into various sub-groups depending on their situation (and may fall into more than one at any given time). Examples include those at high risk of fire, individuals living in particular types of accommodation, residents of specific areas and seldom-heard groups.

Consultations are typically conducted when we need feedback on specific issues or topics to inform our decision-making. Although similar to a consultation process, the outcomes of our questions during an engagement exercise may not directly inform the final decision. Instead, they help us understand perceptions and views, and consider the impact on different groups, allowing us to tailor our communication strategies accordingly.

We will clarify the intended outcome at the start of each process and strive to gather responses from a diverse and broad representation of our communities. The methods of consultation and engagement will vary depending on the proposal or topic.

The increased use of technology and social media allows us to seek views effectively and efficiently, but we recognise that some people may prefer written and printed consultations.

The choice and form of consultation and engagement depend on the issues under consideration, the stakeholders involved, and the available time and resources. The time frame for consultation and engagement exercises will depend on the nature and impact of the proposal. If a shorter timeframe is necessary, we provide a clear rationale.

We follow these principles for our consultations:

- We will conduct a stakeholder impact assessment to identify affected groups
- Design a proportionate and targeted consultation/engagement plan
- Clearly state the nature of the consultation or engagement
- Adjust the timeframe for consultation and engagement based on the proposal's nature and impact.

Three-rider trial for on-call crews

As part of its ongoing transformation work, the Service has considered ways in which it could use its on-call crews in a more flexible and efficient way. This initiative aims to prevent incidents from escalating, and reduce the risk to the public.

The concept is to mobilise a crew of three to make quicker interventions to improve community safety when they would otherwise not have been mobilised. This is not about reducing costs, it's actually an investment aimed at improving outcomes for our communities, while using our staff to the best of their abilities in the most effective and efficient manner. A crew of three will have the potential to implement early lifesaving actions throughout the whole of Staffordshire.

It is an expectation that every effort is made to maintain a minimum crew of four on all front line on-call fire appliances within Staffordshire. There are times when it may not be

possible and in those circumstances a crew of three will be mobilised to an incident. They will be used as the closest appliance available and be sent to a range of incident types.

A three-person crew must include:

- One crew member qualified as an initial Incident Commander, level 1
- One crew member qualified as an emergency response driver and breathing apparatus wearer
- One crew member qualified as a breathing apparatus wearer.

Fire control and our systems integration team have worked together to ensure that the correct mobilisation criteria will be achieved with the selected crewing requirements. The crewing requirements are a Service priority for maintaining firefighter safety.

Consultation with key stakeholders including representative bodies and all operational crews has taken place and a trial is ongoing across the Service.

The trial has already demonstrated crews are attending nine minutes and 45 seconds quicker than waiting for the next crew of four to be available.



CONSULTATION RESPONSE

After consulting with the public, partners, and stakeholders from 14 August to 5 November 2024, we were pleased to see a significant increase in responses compared to our previous consultations for the 2020-24 Safety Plan and its extension in 2023. We received a total of 1,535 formal responses to our consultation.

We would like to **thank** everyone who took the time to engage with us, helping to shape a fire and rescue service that aims to deliver the best outcomes for **our People, our Communities and our Environment**.

The responses we received broadly reflected the diversity of Staffordshire's population, allowing us to assess community needs more effectively and place them at the core of our decision-making and activities over the next year four years and help us improve service delivery to those most in need.

We have taken proactive steps to reach out to 'seldom heard' groups during this consultation period engaging through community engagement events and reaching out to partners working with the most vulnerable people across Staffordshire. Response from the older population, those with a disability or from a minority ethnic background are closely representative of our community demographic.

We are pleased to hear that overall confidence amongst **our Communities** is high and the majority of people said they felt able to:

- Keep themselves safe and reduce the risk from fire at home or at work; and
- Evacuate safely and get help in an emergency.

However, whilst the majority are confident in being able to access help and advice to keep a vulnerable family member or friend safe, confidence levels are lower here than the other categories.

“We will work to improve our communications and community awareness.”

We have evaluated the responses received during our CRMP consultation period and our full analysis themes can be read in the CRMP Consultation Report, which can be found on our website www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk

We have listened to what our Communities say. They are telling us they want us to **do more** to:

- Prevent incidents happening in the first place
- Work with vulnerable people
- Carry out fire safety inspections of buildings including high rise.

“We will continue to evolve our strategies to ensure we are focussing on prevention of the incidents which would have the most impact, considering the highest risks and the most vulnerable people.”

Three riders' trial

We told you: The Service strives to crew our on-call appliances with four or more firefighters. This is not always achievable all of the time so for those occasions that we have three suitably-trained firefighters available, the Service can mobilise them to emergencies to make lifesaving interventions more rapidly whilst the next nearest fully-crewed appliance is on the way.

This approach is currently under trial and has seen positive results including a faster attendance by over nine minutes on some occasions.

We asked: Do you agree that the Service should continue with this approach?

You said: Whilst 83 per cent of respondents are in favour of continuing this approach it was clear that there is a valid concern about the safety of our firefighters and our communities and a view that this is a means of cutting costs and achieving efficiencies.

“

Whilst there has been a great deal of discussion about the three-person crewing trial, it has always been about using our on-call staff as an extra resource to be deployed to emergencies rather than waiting for the next nearest fully-crewed appliance. This only happens when they are naturally limited to a crew of three.

It is not about reducing on-call crew sizes, nor is it a cost-saving exercise. It is an additional investment which utilises a crew of three to achieve a faster response to emergencies and to make quicker interventions at emergency incidents which improves public safety.

”



Home from hospital and falls response teams

We told you: Our home from hospital initiative sees our fire and health partnership technicians assisting with hospital discharges by collecting patients from the Royal Stoke University Hospital and transporting them to their homes across Staffordshire, making sure they are settled in safely. This initiative brings us into contact with vulnerable people so we can also help keep them safe from fire.

The Service's falls response team provides support to people suffering 'non-injury' falls at home, assisting patients in getting up and ensuring that they receive the necessary care to maintain their well-being and reduce the likelihood of complications.

Both projects have proved highly successful, with our teams assisting many individuals resulting in significant benefits for both the individuals and the NHS. So as not to affect the availability of our emergency fire crews, we have recruited a dedicated team of fire and health technicians to provide these services.

We asked: Do you agree that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service should be delivering these services?

You said: 82 per cent of respondents were in favour of us delivering these services as they can recognise the benefits of helping the most vulnerable and keeping them safe. Whilst we stated that specialist team and externally funded there were still concerns that this work could be detracting our fire fighters from core functions and impacting on our emergency response.

“ We will continue to provide these valuable services to the community for as long as we are funded to do so. The community can be rest assured the teams conducting these duties are not in firefighting roles and as such there no impact on our emergency response. ”

Monitoring our availability

We told you: Whilst our ambition remains that our fire appliances are available 100% of the time, we are proposing to more intelligently monitor when a fire station's performance falls below expected levels so we can proactively help them to improve their availability.

We asked: Do you agree that the Service should adopt this approach?

You said: 90 per cent of respondents said yes, we should be adopting this approach. However, responses did reveal some confusion as to what we actually mean by this and there was a view that this could be seen as a pre-text to close on-call stations or as part of a wider cost-cutting exercise.

“ Our aim is to have all of our fire appliances available 100 per cent of the time, but this is not always possible. To support the increase of availability, we are proposing to introduce a trigger for intervention measure, which will allow us to intervene and offer additional support to fire stations to increase their availability. ”

These triggers will be based upon our knowledge of historical incident demand and the level of risk which exists in each area. This will allow us to focus targeted support to those areas which will have the greatest overall benefit to the communities of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. This approach does not seek to amend existing response arrangements, reduce establishment levels or realise any other significant change in the way on-call appliances are currently crewed across the Service. ”



COME AND WORK FOR US

Firefighters

As a firefighter, you will contribute to a safer Staffordshire. Our firefighters not only fight fires, they assist the most vulnerable throughout the county, ensuring their safety in homes, workplaces, and communities. They engage with young people, serving as role models to promote safer and healthier lifestyles. Our firefighters come from diverse backgrounds but share a common passion for protecting, serving, and supporting our communities.



Non-operational fire staff

There are lots of non-operational functions across the Service which support our frontline crews and who bring a range of expertise and skills in professional, technical, planning, and administrative services. Staff work across various departments, including learning and development, our contact centre, ICT, performance and assurance, prevention, protection, fire and health partnership and risk planning teams. Additional departments such as human resources, finance, estates, procurement and corporate communications, are shared with Staffordshire Police.



On-call firefighters

On-call firefighters are paid, part-time responders who handle emergencies like full-time firefighters, fitting this role around their main jobs. They respond from home or work and play a crucial role in providing emergency services and promoting fire safety in Staffordshire.



Alert goes off

If an emergency is called in during their on-call period, they will be notified by their alerter.



Go to fire station

They will then make their way to their local fire station, whether this is from their home or work.



Respond to emergency

When at the station, they will then kit up, get in the fire engine and respond to the emergency.

Join us to make a difference!
Find more information about the various career opportunities on our website –
staffordshirefire.gov.uk/careers

OUR FUTURE PLANS

Your opinion matters to us

We invite all partners and stakeholders to share their views during our planning process, especially on new projects and changes to emergency response. Community involvement is crucial in shaping our plans effectively. Your feedback helps us understand expectations and improve our services. It influences our planning, addressing future challenges and ensuring the best outcomes for Staffordshire.

We encourage individuals, partners, and local groups to contribute to the development of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service’s future. To participate in our consultation on future plans and projects, email us at: consultation@staffordshirefire.gov.uk or visit our website: www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk You will also find additional information about our services and activities on our website.

THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read our Community Risk Management Plan. We hope that by reading it you have come to understand how what we do contributes to ‘**making Staffordshire the safest place to be**’ and that the Service puts our **communities, our environment** and **our people** at the heart of everything we do.

As our plans develop over the next four years we will continue our conversations with **our communities, our people**, representative bodies, partners and key stakeholders so that you can help us ensure that the services we provide are fit for purpose and we continue to improve in everything we do.







Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

Contact

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www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk