

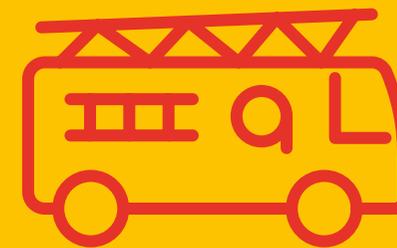
West Sussex Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2026



PREVENTION



PROTECTION



RESPONSE



PEOPLE

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West Sussex Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2026



Our Community Risk Management Plan



Duncan Crow
Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, West Sussex County Council

A message from the Cabinet Member

Welcome to West Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority's Community Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2026.

I am honoured to be your Cabinet Member with responsibility for our fire and rescue service, and I am committed to ensuring that our service helps keep you, our communities, safe.

As an integral part of West Sussex County Council (WSCC), West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) carries out extensive work across a broad range of programmes to help all of us who live and work within the county to live safer, stronger lives.

Following an extensive public consultation with you, our residents, this Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) sets out the direction of our fire and rescue service over the course of the next four years. In preparing it, we have listened to residents, staff, our emergency service partners and other interested stakeholders to ensure we are continuing to deliver a service that reflects the requirements of our communities across West Sussex.

Our CRMP sets out the fire and rescue service's strategic priorities and the steps that the service will be taking to implement these new programmes of work, to help ensure that West Sussex continues to be a safe place to live and work.

Watch an
introduction
from the Cabinet
Member on
our website.



“Continuing to deliver a service that reflects the requirements of our communities across West Sussex.”

Our Community Risk Management Plan



Sabrina Cohen-Hatton
Chief Fire Officer,
West Sussex Fire and
Rescue Service

A message from the Chief Fire Officer

I am delighted to be able to share with you our plans for your fire and rescue service.

Our Community Risk Management Plan sets out in detail who we are as a service, the work that we carry out, and the steps that we take to try and prevent emergency situations from arising in the first place, as well as the measures that we have in place to respond to an emergency situation.

This document really does form the cornerstone of our service, setting the direction of each of our teams over the course of the next four years to ensure that we remain a strong and resilient service, there for you when you need us most.

A key part of the preparation of this Community Risk Management Plan is understanding risk. From there we can work out what steps need to be taken to manage that risk. This helps us to work out where we need our staff and resources, so we can respond to high-risk incidents and plan how to deliver our vital prevention and protection work.

This plan sets out how we plan to address those risks that we deal with on a day-to-day basis here in West Sussex, as well as identifying new and emerging trends that will impact how we deliver our work.

The last few years have shown us that the world is always changing, and it is for that reason that we constantly review and assess the risks in our county to help mitigate those risks and help ensure our communities remain strong and resilient.

Watch an
introduction
from the Chief
Fire Officer on
our website.



“To ensure that we remain a strong and resilient service, there for you when you need us most.”

Community Risk Management Plan methodology

It is a statutory requirement for all fire and rescue services to produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which identifies and assesses all current and foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in our communities and ensures that arrangements are put in place to prevent or respond to these risks.

This is to ensure that all fire and rescue services produce, review and update their CRMP in line with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidelines and in consultation with key stakeholders within their organisation and the community, making the CRMP accessible and publicly available as well as aligning to the strategic priorities of the county council.

We also review and respond to the findings of inspections from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The CRMP methodology is one that all fire and rescue services must use to ensure that appropriate resources are available with the emphasis placed on prevention, protection, response and its people, taking into consideration the risk profile in West Sussex.

We will identify and consider all foreseeable and existing strategic, operational and community risks relevant to the service.

In doing so we will also consider national, regional, and local influences, taking account of local and national policies.

We will consider the needs of the community, our stakeholders and all our partners through consultation to include consideration of their existing plans and risks.

To achieve this we have a number of key stages which look internally at WSFRS data sources and externally working with our partners.

The CRMP process includes ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review to promote continuous learning and improvement. It's implementation is supported by a Community Risk Management Framework (pictured right), with governance, assurance and performance reviews at each level.

The CRMP feeds into the Community Risk Delivery Plan (CRDP). This is owned by the Chief Fire Officer and outlines the implementation of the CRMP projects and proposals over the life of the document, with detailed annual objectives for the current year.

The CRMP is supported by service plans that further describe how the service reduces the identified risks and focuses resources on activities where they will have

the greatest impact on reducing risk and vulnerability within our communities. It also highlights proposals for areas where we could improve the delivery of our service over the lifespan of the document.

The service plans feed into Local Risk Management Plans (LRMPs) which focus on community risk for a specific area and align our resources to the risks in the local community. Through community engagement this enables efficient planning and management of actions to reduce the identified risks.



Community Risk Management Plan methodology

What is risk?

The NFCC have defined risk as a combination of the likelihood and consequences of hazardous events.

Risk is the potential for an emergency to occur, that may threaten life, cause damage or harm to people, property, or the environment, including an impact on critical infrastructure, or protracted demand on emergency service resources.

We identify, assess and research our foreseeable risks, drawing on local incidents, feedback and learning from significant local and national events. This is reviewed every year to identify our priorities, set our objectives and measure our performance.



National Framework and West Sussex Data

The government sets out priorities for Fire and Rescue Authorities through the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018). [The framework is available from our website.](#)

Safer West Sussex Partnership

The [Safer West Sussex Partnership](#) is the multi-agency strategic community safety executive which aims to reduce crime and disorder, vulnerability and inequality through a series of cross cutting strategic priorities and county wide work streams.

West Sussex Life

West Sussex Life is a statistical report providing a range of information about West Sussex and [is available from our website.](#)

Statement of assurance

We must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in our CRMP. Our annual statement of assurance [is available from our website.](#)



Statutory responsibilities

Like all Services, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is empowered, guided, and governed by a number of bodies and external pieces of legislation:

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Regulatory Reform Order 2005

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Policing and Crime Act 2017

The Government also sets out expectations on its priorities for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) through a national framework – the latest version in 2018 requires FRAs to:

- » **Make appropriate provision for fire prevention/protection activities and response to fire/rescue related incidents**
- » **Identify and assess the area's full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks**
- » **Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision**
- » **Be accountable to communities for service provision**
- » **Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse**



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is the professional voice of the UK fire and rescue service. It drives improvement and development throughout the UK FRS, while supporting strong leadership – including for the devolved administrations.



The Local Government Association is the national membership body for local authorities, that works on behalf of councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government.



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of fire & rescue services, in the public interest.

Our vision, mission, priorities and values

Our Vision

Our WSFRS vision is we are all: **Proud to Serve.**

Our Mission

We work with our communities and partners every day to prevent emergencies, helping everyone to be safe and to improve lives in West Sussex. Emergencies will always happen and when they do, we are ready to respond as quickly as possible to help people in their time of need and to save lives.

We empower and support our people to be the best they can be, to deliver to the highest standards when serving our communities and to uphold the values of our fire and rescue service.



Strategic Priorities

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

There are five strategic West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service CRMP priorities:

1. **Preventing fires and emergencies from happening**
2. **Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be**
3. **Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively**
4. **Have a safe and valued workforce**
5. **Making best use of resources**

West Sussex County Council Priorities

Our Strategic objectives support the county council priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2021-2025. It is organised around the following four priorities with an underpinning theme of climate change.

- » **Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations**
- » **A sustainable and prosperous economy**
- » **Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential**
- » **Making the best use of resources**

Our Council Plan

Our Council Plan is WSCC's corporate plan for 2021-2025 and is [available to view on our website.](#)

Our Values

We have five core values, developed with our employees, which are central to successfully achieving our vision and corporate plan priorities.



Proud to be customer-centred: we put the customer central to everything we do.



Listen and act upon: we listen to each other and act on what we say.



Honest and realistic: we are honest and realistic about what we can achieve.



Trust and support: we trust and support each other to achieve our goals.



Genuinely valued: we feel our contribution is valued and our achievements are recognised.

Our Core Code of Ethics

We have adopted the national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England.

The code of ethics has been developed in partnership with the NFCC, Local Government Association (LGA), and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners to support a consistent approach to ethics, including behaviours, by fire and rescue services in England.

The Core Code sits alongside the Code of Ethics Fire Standard developed by the Fire Standards Board and sets out five ethical principles. These should be considered within all FRS activities, policies, procedures and plans:

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 both within the FRSs 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.



FfF proposes 11 areas of improvement that span the breadth of fire and rescue service business, from risk planning, prevention and protection, through to recruitment and retention of staff, developing an inclusive fire service culture and how services work with others to improve safety in communities.

These have been reflected within the corresponding service plans to ensure that the delivery within West Sussex is aligned to national improvements across the sector.

NFCC Code of Ethics

Fit for the Future

Fit for the Future (FfF) lays out a proposal for establishing a common picture, vision, for the future of fire and rescue services in England.

Its purpose is to identify what needs to change, using a sound evidence base and then identify how that change could be delivered, by supporting its implementation across all services.

This initial concept was developed in partnership by the NFCC, the National Employers (England) and the LGA; and is further developed in conjunction with fire sector leadership.



Fire Authority structure, assurance and governance

WSCC is the Fire Authority for WSFRS and is responsible for:

- » Firefighting and rescue
- » Protecting people and property from fire
- » Promoting fire safety in the home
- » Providing special services for emergencies

WSFRS is linked to a range of key strategic planning areas of WSCC that aids a holistic approach to keeping residents safe. These

include emergency management, transport and infrastructure planning, the design of support for vulnerable people, flood risk management and the overall place shaping and democratic ownership of an area.

Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and evidence how they have actioned due regard to the expectations set out in their Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Decisions relating to the fire and rescue service and transformation plans of the service are subject to scrutiny by the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee which was established at the full county council meeting on 17 December 2019.

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Governance Structure

Full Council Chair: County Chairman



Fire Authority structure, assurance and governance



It is essential that the service understands how it is performing against its primary responsibilities. As well as submitting incident and operational data to HMICFRS for analysis and review, we achieve this locally through our Performance Assurance Framework (PAF), under which performance targets are set, measured and reported, by collating various datasets from different sources into a single dashboard.

The PAF examines performance on a quarterly basis across the four elements of service provision, corporate health, priority programmes and risk through a suite of core and service measures. This allows the service to respond and make informed decisions to ensure service aims and objectives are achieved through being intelligence and evidence led.

These measurements are fed back through a governance framework to ensure performance is monitored at both officer and at a political level, leading to an open and transparent organisation. As well as holding officers to account, the framework also enables scrutiny of the political leadership and decisions of Cabinet and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for fire.

The framework ensures the service is intelligence and evidence led and therefore has the ability to react early when performance is not to the required level. Additionally, the service will be able to celebrate success where it has delivered to a high standard and made a difference to the public and business in the county.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has statutory responsibility for the inspection of the police forces, and since July 2017 the fire and rescue services, of England and Wales. HMICFRS is headed by the Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services and its remit includes responsibility to assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and leadership of the Fire and Rescue services in England.

Key Achievements from our last IRMP (2018-2022)

Improved and focused scrutiny for fire with a clear delineation between performance and assurance. Dedicated Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee launched and supporting Performance & Assurance Framework (PAF).

New, efficient and flexible, ways of working. Operational improvements in County Crewing and the Service Delivery Centre matching resources to risk. Use of technological advances such as virtual meetings, interviews and learning and flexible/home working arrangements.

Integration of local and national learning. Continued implementation of National Operational Learning (NOL) identified outcomes.

Increased transparency in recruitment and workforce processes. Revised policies and processes around transfers and moves, talent management, leadership and management and promotions.

Modernising our operational equipment and firefighting tactics. Introduction of 12 tonne fire engines, PhotoVoltaic (PV) stop as well as fog nails and smoke curtains as key examples of responding to emerging risks from operational learning.

Improved oversight of decision making and improvement projects and programmes. Organisational Assurance and Governance

(OAG) team implemented as a technical Programme Management Office to drive efficiency and provide internal assurance.

Service wide improved approach to safeguarding. New and wider training and procedures further help identify and safeguard vulnerable people through direct and collaborative prevention activity, supported by the creation of a multi-agency officer role and a Safe and Habitable Homes Forum to review multi agency complex housing cases.

Alignment, involvement and engagement through national fire sector programmes of work. Continued focus on alignment with National Operational Guidance (NOG) and national Fire Standards with clear supporting processes and plans, leading a regional operational programme to drive operational consistency.

Workforce planning and recruitment of people with the necessary skills and capabilities needed to carry out the IRMP. Creation of a number of roles including a Wellbeing Manager and a Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, as well as improved capacity in all service areas to meet activity required in the IRMP.

Implementation of technological solutions across all performance areas to improve accuracy and consistency. New IT systems

for performance monitoring (PowerBi) and an updated prevention and protection system (Farynor) introduced to drive local activity across the service through new Local Risk Management Plans.

Improved focus on enforcement and business engagement. Introduction of dedicated resources to support priority Business Fire Safety areas through technical expertise relating to, and collaborating with, both joint regulators and residents.

Efficiencies through collaboration across control function with Surrey and East Sussex Fire Services. Information sharing and tri-service mobilisation through Joint Fire Control.

A workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. Introduction of a Core Behaviour and Standards Framework, a Dignity and Respect Framework and commencement of work on adopting the NFCC Code of Ethics.

A more structured appraisal procedure and monitoring mechanisms. Implementation of performance conversations/appraisals with development areas feeding into training and development, ensuring standards of behaviours expected from all staff, including leaders, are embedded in line with NFCC Behaviour framework.

Identifying and assessing risk

We will identify and consider all foreseeable and existing strategic, operational and community risks relevant to the service. In doing so we will also consider national, regional, and local influences, taking account of local and national policies.

We will consider the needs of the community, our stakeholders and all our partners through consultation and include consideration of their existing plans and risks.

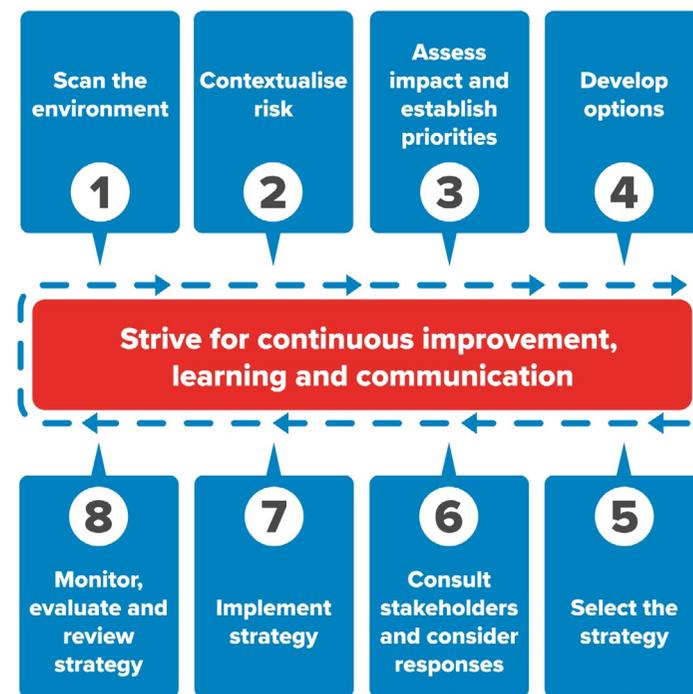
To achieve this we have a number of key stages which look internally at WSFRS data sources and externally working with our partners. These include:

- » **Horizon scanning for local, regional, and national influences which may affect service objectives**
- » **Critical fire risk maps**
- » **WSCC strategic mapping tool**
- » **Community Risk Data displayed in Power Bi and LRMP**
- » **Data produced in our Statement of Assurance and West Sussex Life**
- » **Ongoing engagement with personnel/staff across WSFRS and WSCC**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a legal duty on WSCC and the Fire Authority to assess the impacts and likelihood of potential hazards and risks to the residents and environment of West Sussex, to prepare plans, train in the use of, and exercising of, the plans as individual agencies and collectively with multiagency partners. This is to ensure we are able to respond and support the recovery from disruptive incidents and events.

Both authorities also have a legal duty to ensure that business continuity arrangements are in place to deliver their critical functions in times of crisis and disruption.

Within West Sussex, we have a Resilience and Emergencies Team (RET) that operates 24/7 on behalf of WSCC and the Fire Authority to ensure that the organisations are trained and prepared to respond to events that impact on the safety of residents and business continuity. This includes engagement and support to multi-agency and partnership working, to ensure the safe operation and execution of planned events and co-ordinating the activities of the organisation in responding to, and recovering from, significant events.



Watch a video from our risk and improvement team on our website.



Identifying and assessing risk

The [National Risk Register \(NRR\)](#) sets out the range of risks and challenges we face, which have the potential to cause significant disruption to the UK.

This includes national and malicious events, including environmental hazards, human and animal health, and major accidents.

This explains what the government and partners are doing to mitigate these risks, as well as information and advice for the public.

The Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) is a partnership of organisations across East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove. It includes the emergency services, local authorities, Environment Agency and health providers along with voluntary organisations and utility providers.

The SRF assesses the non-malicious risks that are most likely to happen, the impact these would have across the county and ensures that adequate planning, response and recovery arrangements are in place. These plans include pandemic outbreaks, which formed the basis of our response to the unprecedented events triggered by COVID 19.

The SRF also publishes a [Community Risk Register \(CRR\)](#), to inform people about local risks in their communities. This allows a resilient approach to preparation for emergency situations that may affect homes, communities and businesses.

The top risks identified in Sussex in the CRR are:

- » **Pandemic**
- » **Coastal flooding**
- » **Inland flooding**
- » **Severe weather**
- » **Fuel shortage**
- » **Loss of critical infrastructure**
- » **Animal disease**
- » **Coastal pollution**
- » **Industrial accidents**
- » **Transport accidents**

More information is available on the Community Risk Register.

The mitigating factors influencing the risk appetite of the fire and rescue authority are informed by five main activities:

Prevention and Protection activity

Emergency response demand

Fire and rescue service emergency response times

The weight and appropriateness of our response to emergencies

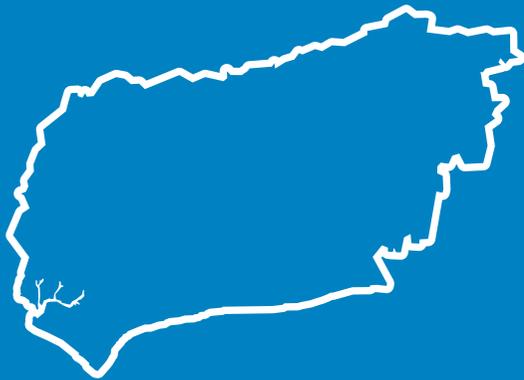
Resilience

i.e. Service resources that remain available when fire engines and firefighters are committed to ongoing incidents

Any significant change to these factors would reflect a change in the risk appetite of the fire and rescue authority. As such, these factors have been used to help define the proposals for consideration in this plan in our [Strategic Assessment of Risk](#).

Our county

The county of West Sussex has a population of just under 860,000 people. It is made up of seven districts: Adur, Arun, Chichester, Crawley, Horsham, Mid Sussex, and Worthing. It operates a two-tier system of local government.



West Sussex population
858,852



Men

48.6%



Women

51.4%

Population by age

0-9	98,993
10-19	92,323
20-29	83,906
30-39	101,210
40-49	112,653
50-59	122,632
60-69	101,776
70-79	87,820
80+	7,532



Ethnicity

93.8% of the West Sussex population are white.

Projected population growth

Population is expected to increase by **20.4% by 2039**. The largest increase is in the over 65 age group. To accommodate this we expect to see nearly **50,000** further homes being built over this period with the majority in the next 10 to 15 years.

To ensure our communities continue to receive the best possible service from us, we are striving to embed diversity and inclusion into our culture and at the heart of all of our decision making processes.

Our county



Over half of the land area in the county is designated as protected countryside, the largest area of this being the South Downs National Park.

The West Sussex population is 'super-ageing'. This means that the population is ageing faster than the rest of the UK population. People aged 65 and over currently make up 23% of the population and this is predicted to reach 30% by 2041. There will be more people living longer with multiple long-term conditions.

This is likely to lead to an increase in demand for services both in terms of preventing and attending fires, particularly as people are encouraged and assisted to live independently at home.

Although West Sussex is considered to be one of the less deprived areas, and a popular place to live, visit and retire to, there are pockets of significant deprivation and areas with complex needs, including five small areas falling in the 10% of the most deprived areas in England. Many of these are also areas of concern to partners in other agencies. Deprivation is clearly linked to higher risk of fires. Being a single parent, never in paid work, living on your own and being deprived were the top factors associated with higher rates of fire in the home.

There are areas within West Sussex where misuse of alcohol and adult smoking are higher than the national average, both of which present significant fire risk factors, with smoking often a factor in the cause of fire that lead to death.

Social renting is also a dwelling fire risk factor; higher in houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) particularly for those of three or more storeys.

Mental health related factors have been identified in many of the recent dwelling fire fatalities in West Sussex, including dementia, hoarding, and undefined mental health issues.

West Sussex is largely a prosperous county, attracting cutting edge technologies as well as more established commerce. West Sussex is largely a small firm economy with around 85% employing fewer than 10 people, though Crawley has one of the higher proportions of large businesses with over 250 or more employees.

An economic partnership known as the 'Gatwick Diamond' includes Horsham, East Grinstead, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and Crawley. This is home to businesses including aviation, aerospace and defence, advanced manufacturing and engineering, financial and professional services, life sciences, health technologies, food and drink. Many are drawn to or stay in the area because of their proximity to Gatwick Airport.

Our county



Covers 769 square miles

More than 50% of land designated as protected countryside, the largest area of this being the South Downs National Park

8000 heritage buildings

1% heathland

11 household recycling centres

Around 50 miles of coastline

The infrastructure, natural and built environment within our county is incredibly diverse. The county is a mix of 42% rural area and 58% urban, which are home to more than 70 high rise buildings.

Significant sites across the county include Shoreham Port and harbour, Littlehampton harbour, business parks, and significant public sector administration centres. We now have a significant wind farm (Rampion Wind Farm) offshore with an associated electricity substation at Bolney.

West Sussex has a wealth of listed buildings, which all have their own unique risks and challenges. These buildings are identified with heritage markers on our fire appliance mobile data terminals (MDT) which provide specific information for crews, with the larger properties having specific operational plans.

With increasingly high summer temperatures comes the increased risk in heat-related deaths and of fire in the open, with advice issued to residents to ensure they do not inadvertently put themselves and others at risk of fire.

The county is the second most wooded in the UK – 19% woodland compared to the national average of 9%. With increasingly high summer temperatures comes the increased risk of wildfires. Wildfires can require significant resources to resolve the incident, with the added challenge of water resources that are often scarce in these locations. We will continue to work closely with water companies to ensure the supply of adequate firefighting water.

Parts of the coast, and low-lying flood plains, include areas of national and international importance for conservation and recreation and are also some of the most developed coastlines in the UK. They are vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding caused by surface water as well as river and coastal flooding. We will continue to monitor and work with partners on risks such as Pagham Spit.

Waste processing and recycling sites pose a significant fire risk and there have been a number of waste site fires both within West Sussex and nationally. These fires tend to be very resource intensive for the fire and rescue service and have wide reaching impacts both during and after the events for residents and agencies alike.

Transport

West Sussex has a number of major roads, mainline railway services and an international airport.

There are a number of road improvements schemes underway with plans for more in the future in Chichester, Arundel, Worthing and Lancing. With complex commuting patterns and summer tourist traffic to some significant events such as motor racing and equestrian events, congestion can be an issue at peak travel times year-round, and also in the summer on roads leading to popular destinations. This can impact on how quickly we can reach emergency incidents.

Due to the planned housing developments within West Sussex in the next 20 years, it is predicted that car ownership will also increase. Along with commercial and industrial developments within West Sussex and a planned increase in travel and tourism, this will result in more cars on the roads and a potential increase in road traffic collisions.

The West Sussex rail network includes links to Gatwick, Waterloo, Brighton and Portsmouth. Level crossings are a common feature along the lines and typically closed for three minutes at a time, although this can be extended according to the proximity of trains and time of day. Tunnels offer significant firefighting challenges. Significant rail tunnels include Balcombe and Clayton Tunnels in the east of the county.

A dedicated airport fire service is based at Gatwick responding to all aircraft emergencies within the airport boundaries. In 2019 46.6 million passengers passed through the airport on 141,935 departures and 141,990 arrivals. Additionally, there are private airports at Shoreham and Goodwood each with their own fire service. Alongside aircraft emergencies, the main high-risk areas relate to fuel storage and refuelling facilities.



15603 miles of road network

1 stretch of motorway, the M23

Other major roads include A23, A24, A27, A259, A272 and the A29.

Gatwick Airport, which employs 24,000 staff

Smaller airports at Shoreham and Goodwood

Good transport links with London. Mainline rail services between Brighton, Southampton and Portsmouth.

Horizon scanning for risks

WSFRS is a member of the NFCC Business Continuity Group and has its own internal Horizon Scanning and Emerging Risks Group.

There are a number of other hazards and threats that carry a risk impact, including hazardous materials, human and animal health, loss of critical infrastructure and major accidents and we must plan for and respond to these risks.

Climate change

Over the coming years, we are likely to see rising temperatures and sea levels and an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Severe weather can take a variety of forms, including heavy rain or snow, strong winds and extreme temperatures, causing significant problems and disruption.

Pandemics

We continuously monitor a broad range of potential risks and have robust business continuity arrangements in place. COVID-19 has had far-reaching implications for our service, but we have policies and procedures in place to help mitigate disruption. It is recognised that COVID-19 will have longer term impacts on the service, including:

- » an impact on funding in years to come;
- » changing processes and expectations as we continue to learn to live with the virus;
- » ongoing physical and mental health implications.

Vehicle technology

An increase in electric vehicles and the development of automated vehicles will have implications on the vehicle related incidents we attend and how we safely deal with them.

Risks arising from renewable energy source technologies

The increased use of renewable energy sources has given rise to a number of different risks. For example, the risks posed to the public and firefighters from solar farms and large-scale energy storage (batteries) facilities. This will impact the types of incidents we attend and how we safely deal with them.

Gatwick Northern runway

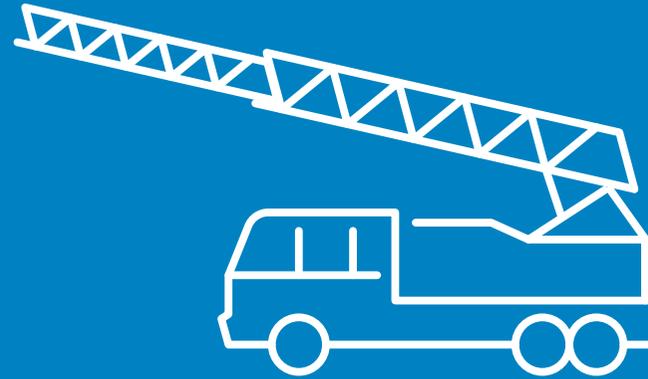
The proposed second runway at Gatwick could lead to an increase in demand on WSFRS prevention, protection and response activity.



Our service



35 fire engines



28 special appliances



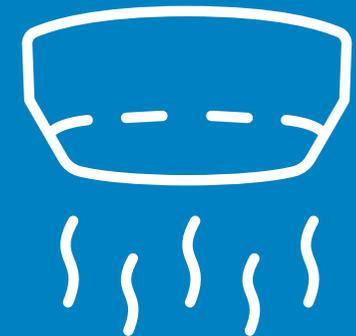
3 protection centres
with fire safety specialists and
fire investigation teams.



25 fire stations



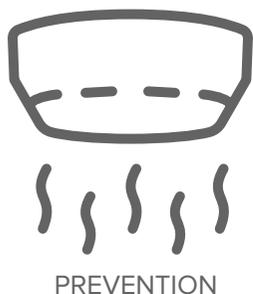
750 staff
638 operational staff,
112 specialist support roles.



Prevention teams
including targeted education
and community volunteers.

Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening

Our Prevention priorities are to reduce the volume and severity of emergencies we attend each day as well as helping to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the people and communities most at risk.



Our targeted programmes are aimed at keeping those who are most vulnerable safe. They are designed to help adults, children and communities to fulfil their potential and support a prosperous economy through reducing risk, injury and property damage.

We will use an intelligence led, risk based approach and build upon our existing partnerships, to target the most vulnerable and those who are most at risk from fire and other emergencies within our community.

As the county's population continues to grow, we anticipate an increase in the demand for support. We know that 17% of our population have a limiting long-term illness and 23% are aged over 65.

Our risk reduction activities will be maximised by using specialist staff to work with our target groups, whilst working

collaboratively with partner agencies including the police, social care, adult mental health and general practitioners.

1.1 We will always place the resident at the centre of our activities and together we will reduce accidental dwelling fires, deliberate fires, and influence road users to adopt behaviour that will make them safer.

Our reputation as a trusted organisation means we are well placed to be a 'Samaritan', supporting people who are in danger of coming to harm.

Working with those most vulnerable and at risk

We use a range of information to ensure that our activities are intelligence led and reach those who need our help the most. Age, health, lifestyle factors and deprivation can play an important part in identifying who is living with an increased risk. For example, over the last decade in West Sussex 40% of those who lost their life as a result of a fatal fire in their home were aged 85 and over, of which a high proportion had care and support needs. Our data tells us that older people living alone with care and support needs are

at a greater risk of an accidental dwelling fire and we will continue to prioritise them.

To be able to deliver our prevention role our staff and volunteers need to be competent and appropriately trained.

1.2 We will further develop our capacity using our frontline staff.

This increased capacity will extend our reach beyond our traditional high risk urban areas into the more remote parts of our county and enable us to play a wider role in strengthening our communities.

Our Safe and Well Visits will target those who are identified as being at an increased risk. Visits will always be tailored to the specific needs of the household and may be completed by our fire crews, volunteers, or specially trained Community Fire Safety Officers.

1.3 We will continue to ensure that those persons most at risk will be prioritised so that they receive the quickest response.

Watch a video from
our Prevention team
on our website.



Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening

We are committed to ensuring that our residents receive the information needed to keep their household safe. We are also committed to making every contact count and therefore provide advice and guidance on a range of health and wellbeing issues, as well as fire prevention. Our staff are trained to identify vulnerability and support individuals where a non-fire related concern is identified, we work alongside our partners to ensure that the right support is offered depending upon the residents' needs. We work closely with WSCC Trading Standards and other partners to reduce the impact of rogue traders, scammers, modern slavery and other criminal acts which are targeted towards vulnerable people.

We will also prioritise those who live in the rural parts of West Sussex. We know that 42% of our population live in a rural area and historically our data shows that they have an increased risk of fire. We will work with the rural community to increase their understanding of fire safety awareness and deliver Safe and Well Visits to those that need them.

Modern buildings should be designed to prevent fires from causing harm to occupants. Systems such as fire alarms and sprinklers should enable residents to evacuate a building safely during an emergency. Our colleagues in business fire safety ensure that

buildings are compliant to the law, but we also recognise that residents have a part to play in keeping themselves and others safe. We will continue to offer Safe and Well Visits to all residents within high risk residential buildings and undertake joined up engagement with the occupants where necessary to increase fire safety awareness.

Children and young people

Alongside our Safe and Well Visits we will continue to work with children and young people to increase their understanding of the dangers of fire and how they can actively prevent them.

1.4 We will continue to visit local authority schools in West Sussex to increase the understanding of the dangers of fire. This extends our reach into homes that we would not otherwise engage with. This gives children and young people a sound and solid foundation of fire safety knowledge that they can utilise throughout their lives.

Using our influence as trusted role models, we will continue to deliver targeted education and engagement programmes to vulnerable young people.

We will continue to work with people who demonstrate fire setting behaviours to

educate them about the dangers of fire and divert them away from the activity. Where necessary we will share information with other agencies to ensure that people remain safe.

Arson and deliberate fires

We attended 414 fires in 2020-21 which were deliberately lit. As deliberate fires occur at different rates across the county, we will empower local stations to target activity through their Local Risk Management Plans.

Where someone is identified as being at a particular risk of arson, our specialist Community Fire Safety Officers (CFSOs) undertake an immediate Safe and Well Visit to help keep that person safe. We will ensure that the appropriate support is provided, including specialist equipment if needed.



Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening

Road safety

The number of people killed and seriously injured on the county's roads has been reducing each year, yet there is still work to be done to ensure that all road users are kept safe.

Data provided by the DVLA shows that 10.5% of all driver's licences are owned by 17 to 24-year olds in the UK. Our incident data shows that younger drivers are far more likely to be involved in an accident than older drivers, with this age group involved in 18.5% of all road traffic collisions in West Sussex.

The degree of disproportionality reduces as the age group increases, with 65 to 74-year-olds holding 12.1% of all the UK's drivers licences, yet are involved in just 7% of all road traffic collisions in West Sussex. This demonstrates that we need to continue working with young people to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads.



Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening



As a central member of the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) we have delivered the Safe Drive, Stay Alive campaign to over 120,000 new drivers in the 17-24-year old age range, since 2006, focussing on the Fatal Four (driver distraction, speeding, drink / drug driving and not wearing a seatbelt) as the main causes of death and serious injury in a road traffic collision.

1.5 We continue, with our partners in the SSRP, to deliver campaigns to the road user groups who are most likely to be killed or injured.

Another example is Biker Down, which provides crucial first aid and safety awareness training to motorcyclists. Both these programmes were redesigned in 2020 to enable them to be delivered

virtually and continue to educate and inform, despite COVID-19 restrictions.

1.6 We will, using local incident data, deliver targeted road safety campaigns throughout the year as part of LRMPs. Together we will reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads.

Working with communities to improve water safety

West Sussex has a coastline across the south of the county as well as several major waterways and these are utilised for both leisure and business activities.

We are already experiencing the impacts of climate change with heavier rainfall

increasing the number of flooding incidents we have to deal with.

Whilst the number of required water rescues remains relatively low (in 2020-21 we were required to complete 18 rescues of people who had got into difficulty) the number of flooding incidents has been consistently high. In total, we attended 819 flooding incidents in the period 2018 to 2021 to provide assistance.

Many of these incidents could have been avoided with better awareness, for example not driving a car through any expanse of water without first knowing how deep it is. Drowning is one of the UK's leading causes of accidental death.

We will, therefore, continue to work with partners to produce educational materials and increase the understanding of water safety to reduce the number of incidents that require an attendance from the fire and rescue service.

An increased focus on the way we review, quality assure and evaluate our work will support us in demonstrating the effectiveness and efficiency of our prevention activity. This will result in continuous improvement to ensure that we meet the needs of our communities, adapting as their needs change.

Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 states that owners, managers or operators of businesses have a responsibility to make sure that premises reach the required standards and employees are provided with adequate fire safety training.



The Fire Safety Team supports businesses to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other legislation, so that building owners or managers minimise the risk of fire, understand duties and continue to manage and maintain the arrangements required within the order.

With more than 35,000 non-domestic properties in West Sussex, keeping the county safe is complex. The WSFRS Fire Safety Team supports public safety and business resilience, by providing support and advice to premises, such as hospitals, care homes, hotels and other businesses so that fire safety plans can be effectively managed.

Watch a video from
our Protection team
on our website.



Risk Reduction

We will continue to work with others to identify and minimise risk during the design stage of any building through our responses to consultations for building regulations and licensing. As building designs and construction methods evolve we continue to develop our own in-house expertise and specialist knowledge to ensure that the built environment in West Sussex is designed to be as safe as possible.

We are proud of our team of specialist staff who continually undertake education and enforcement action with those who are responsible for keeping buildings and their occupants safe from fire, but we believe that any frontline staff who work for us should have an understanding of the features of the built environment that are there to keep people safe from fire and the consequences if these features are missing.

This enhanced understanding ensures our team are more effective in keeping buildings and vulnerable occupants safe from fire, and mitigating the consequences of fire should it occur.

To support this:

2.1 We will develop and train our response crews with fire safety training and fire investigation qualifications and skills to ensure they can deliver low risk fire safety and undertake initial fire investigation.

These skills will provide our crews with greater awareness of the built environment and fire dynamics which will improve our overall firefighting strategy, operational assurance, data gathering and protection/prevention activity.

2.2 We will ensure our prevention, protection and response teams work closer together so that an inclusive approach to local risk management.

Our protection and prevention specialists can support the recommendations for any tailored solutions to fire risk to highly vulnerable people within the home environment including the provision of specialist alarms or telehealth.

There will always be a number of buildings in West Sussex with unique design features or contents which present hazards, risks and challenges to operational staff when called to respond to emergencies. We will continue to ensure that our firefighters have

Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be

accurate and up-to-date knowledge and information to manage hazards they are called to deal with. This also involves staff familiarisation visits where effective plans are developed, evaluated and confirmed.

Our premises risk management team will continue to support our station-based staff in this activity, ensuring that training exercises are carried out at sites with the highest level of risk. The delivery of these exercises will form part of our LRMPs.

Our teams manage data gathered on over 2,500 premises. Mobile data terminals on our fire engines allow firefighters to have access to safety critical property-based hazard information at the scene of an incident – including specific plans for fire service operations, incorporating multi-agency emergency planning with partners and other key stakeholders, which are reflected in WSFRS policies and procedures.

This ensures that service plans are fully integrated into multi-agency emergency plans.

The Fire Safety Team works proactively to deliver a risk based inspection programme to target high risk and vulnerable premises that include residential care homes, high rise living, residential schools, hospitals,

hotels, large population public spaces and complex premises, such as Gatwick Airport.

We will be reviewing our risk based inspection programme in line with the NFCC community risk programme to ensure that it effectively targets risk for West Sussex and aligns to the new Protection Fire Standard, Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Act 2021.

We continue to review our policies and procedures, particularly within higher risk occupancy residential blocks, including specialised housing, extra care, older people housing and student accommodation, in line with the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower recommendations and the subsequent changes in regulation, to ensure life risk is continually prioritised in our protection work.

We will continue to communicate and engage by holding business fire safety events, sending out messages through social media and on WSCC's website to promote a wider public understanding and share risk information, both seasonal and reactive, to inform people of their responsibilities. To support this we maximise partnership working to promote shared messaging, helping businesses to help themselves.

We will make better use of technology and digital media to ensure our protection messages are as effective as possible. We will work with NFCC and Northampton University to develop a new virtual reality fire safety training tool that will help improve basic fire safety standards in workplaces and gather crucial data on compliance.

Where buildings are unsafe and not compliant with legislation, and where there are serious fire safety concerns identified, we will act firmly on our duty to enforce fire safety improvements. In some circumstances we will prosecute those responsible for serious breaches.

We are members of the British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association. We support the provision of sprinklers in commercial and domestic settings.

We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Fire Investigation with East Sussex, Surrey and Kent FRS to show our commitment to continuously improve our understanding of fire science and investigation techniques. We will create a new reporting framework that ensures critical fire investigation and incident reviews are conducted to help inform future prevention

Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be

and protection strategy based on the behaviours of people and buildings in fire.

Our plans for reducing risk in the community are dependent on our understanding of risk. We recognise that this understanding can always be improved.

We will develop our understanding of risk in general and in specific areas by:

- 2.3 Ensuring that the knowledge we gain from fire investigation fully informs our understanding of risk and is used to improve protection, prevention and response activities.**
- 2.4 Fire Investigation Officers identifying risks and causes of fire. Learning from these incidents provides our prevention and protection teams with important information that helps to prioritise inspection programmes and safety messages.**
- 2.5 Working effectively with other regulators and agencies to reduce risk. There are multiple examples of multi-agency engagement and information sharing.**

One example would be joint enforcement to identify and improve premises that are dangerous and uninhabitable and where safeguarding concerns are evident, such as modern slavery.

Regulation and enforcement

All buildings should be designed and maintained so they are safe from fire; however, we know this isn't always the case. This can be seen in national incidents such as Grenfell Tower, which, along with other similar cases, indicate that some methods of construction in residential properties exist that are likely to mean that these buildings fail in the event of a fire. As such, we have specifically targeted a full Building Risk Review of all our high-rise buildings over 18m, which are now included within our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) for Fire Safety audits and also our Premises Risk Management programme. This ensures we capture critical risk information essential to support safe systems of work for firefighters and other key responders during emergency incidents.

Education, information and partnership

working are crucial to our Protection Strategy. We recognise the need for better regulation and will aim to increase the number of primary authority partnerships within the housing and care sector.

- 2.6 We will work with the NFCC, Asian Fire Service Association and Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to understand about disproportionate enforcement and develop a toolbox for better regulation and enforcement in the future.**

We have increased business engagement and education resources, including an investment in Primary Authority Partnership Schemes (PAS) with local providers and closer working with county council risk assessments, with a designated protection post established to manage and develop these evolving partnership arrangements.

We will continue to drive compliance with fire safety legislation by inspecting those buildings where the likelihood or severity of any fire is greatest. Where we identify serious, life-critical, failings in buildings, we will take immediate action to make safe, whilst also actively pursuing prosecutions against those responsible for such failings.

Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be

Responding to false alarms places an unnecessary burden on business owners and occupants, whilst increasing the demand on our emergency response services, reducing the overall effectiveness and resilience of our resources.

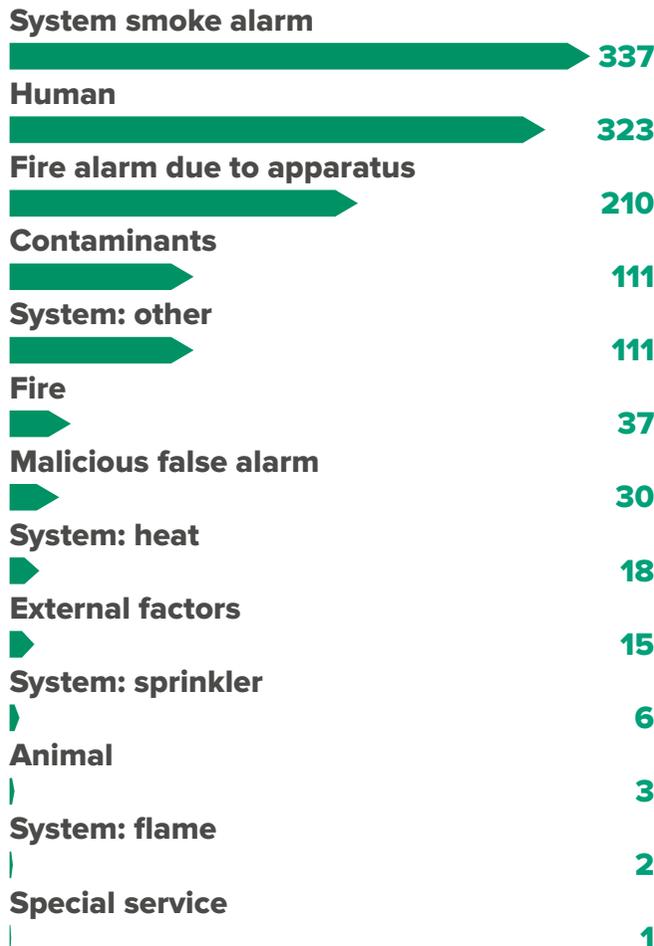
The following data shows the number of false alarms received by WSFRS between April 2018 and March 2020.

On average, we respond to and attend just over 23 unwanted fire signals every week.

- 2.7 We will take a risk based approach where, in low risk commercial properties, we will no longer automatically respond to fire alarm actuations. This approach would be managed through our Joint Fire Control.**
- 2.8 We will develop and introduce a charging scheme for responding to false alarms to promote the appropriate management and maintenance of automatic fire alarm systems.**
- 2.9 We will make use of the latest developments in technology to reduce the impact of false alarms - both for businesses and the fire and rescue service.**

If a fire is confirmed we will always respond by sending the nearest fire engine.

Attended false alarms by type



28.4% of all false alarms or unwanted fire signals



= 4,800 hours*
 ...in lost time that could be put to fire prevention and training instead of attending false alarm calls.

*approximately

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Our overarching objective is to help our residents and businesses to be safer, stronger and more resilient through prevention and protection activity.

However, it is inevitable that emergencies will occur, and when they do, it is important that we are able to react by matching our resource to the risks. This ensures we are ready to respond quickly with a safe, competent and well-trained workforce, in order to help people and save lives.

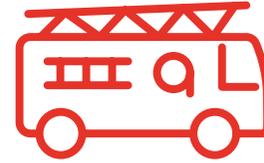
Firefighting and Rescue Philosophy

3.1 We will develop a firefighting and rescue strategy that builds upon the previous introduction of new firefighting equipment and tactics.

This strategy will underpin our risk-based approach to equipment development, policy and operational training, ensuring that firefighter safety, public safety and environmental protection are at the centre of our operational capabilities.

We respond to a variety of emergencies, which include fires, road traffic collisions, specialist rescues, flooding and hazardous

materials incidents. In order to respond to these incidents we have a modern fleet of fire engines, a range of vehicles with specialist capabilities, and industry-leading equipment for our firefighters.



RESPONSE

Firefighters are often the first emergency responders in attendance. They can be required to deliver emergency first aid treatment to preserve life in a range of situations.

3.2 We will enhance our Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) capability by providing suitable training, equipment and personal protective equipment required to all operational staff.

Our Joint Fire Control (JFC) with Surrey and East Sussex fire and rescue services is where highly trained control room staff deal with emergency calls, mobilising the nearest and quickest vehicles to incidents.

JFC also continually assess those resources dynamically and according to risk.

3.3 We will continue to improve JFC arrangements through the use of technological solutions.



Watch a video from our Response team on our website.



Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

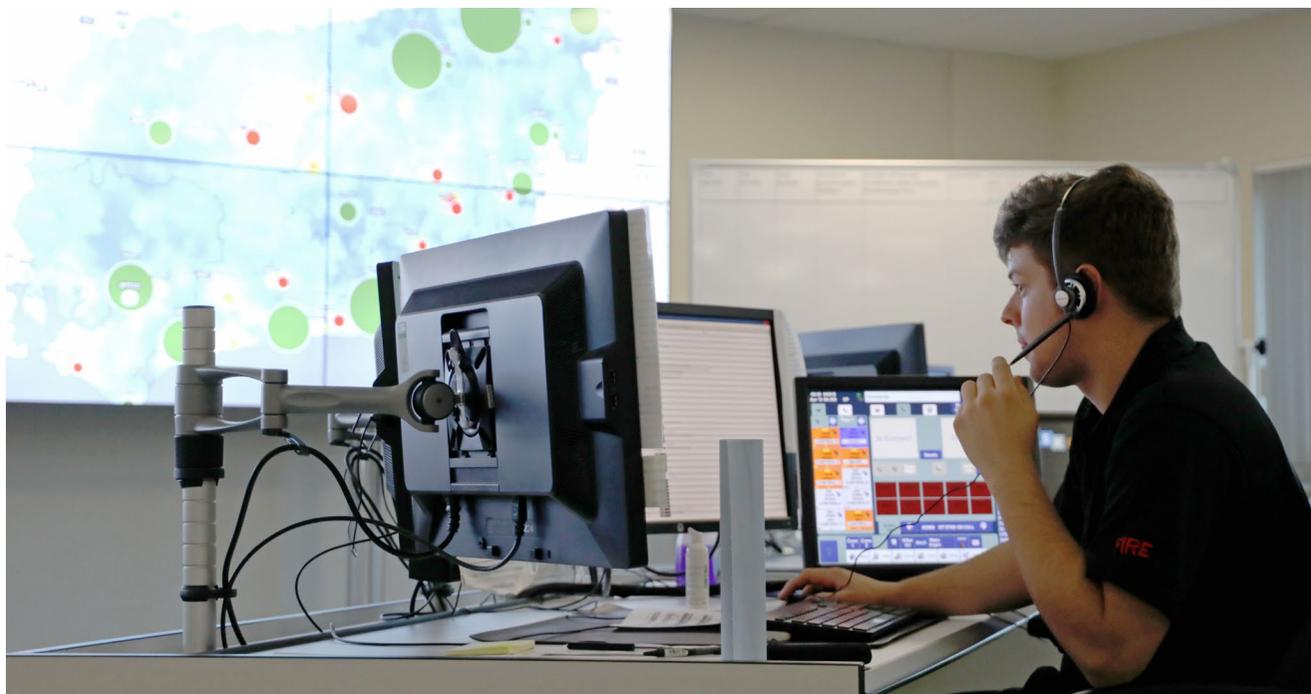
We have in place robust monitoring and debriefing processes which allow us to analyse all aspects of operational work. This provides the assurance that we are continuously improving the safety and effectiveness of our crews.

Where appropriate we will share learning nationally through the Joint Operational Learning (JOL) and the National Operational Learning (NOL) platforms. In conjunction with Surrey and East Sussex partners, we will implement NOG as the foundation for our operational response and operational fire standards. This ensures that National Operational Guidance (NOG) remains foremost in our thinking, contributing to improved firefighter safety.

We continually monitor and review all our activities to ensure we provide the most appropriate response to the risks faced by local communities and businesses.

The work our firefighters carry out is not limited to responding to 999 calls, but also includes vital prevention and protection activity to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place.

To ensure this activity is prioritised efficiently, each fire station has developed an LRMP based on comprehensive,



detailed community risk data which is reviewed and updated annually.

3.4 We will continue to develop and evolve our LRMPs, working with key partners, to reduce community risk and improve firefighter safety.

Our firefighters also carry out site-specific risk information checks, visiting businesses to give crews the awareness

and risk information they need to safely deal with any incidents that may occur.

The majority of the incidents we respond to can be adequately resolved through the flexible deployment of personnel on one or two of our fire engines. In ensuring that these fire engines are available, we will use a variety of different crewing and duty systems to efficiently align availability with risk and demand.

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

23 fire engines

located at retained stations



8 fire engines

Located in wholtime stations

4 fire engines

Located in day crewed stations

Our fire stations and our firefighters

Our fire stations are crewed by both wholtime and retained firefighters.

Immediate response stations

Six immediate response fire stations, crewed by wholtime staff, five of which also have an additional retained crew.

Retained

Retained firefighters respond to emergency calls within their local area from either their home or main employment.

Day crewed stations

Currently maintain an immediate response capability 7am - 7pm, Monday to Friday. Outside of those times they are crewed by retained firefighters.

Current percentage of retained availability by station type

» Retained-only station



» Retained at a wholtime fire station



» Retained at a day crewed station

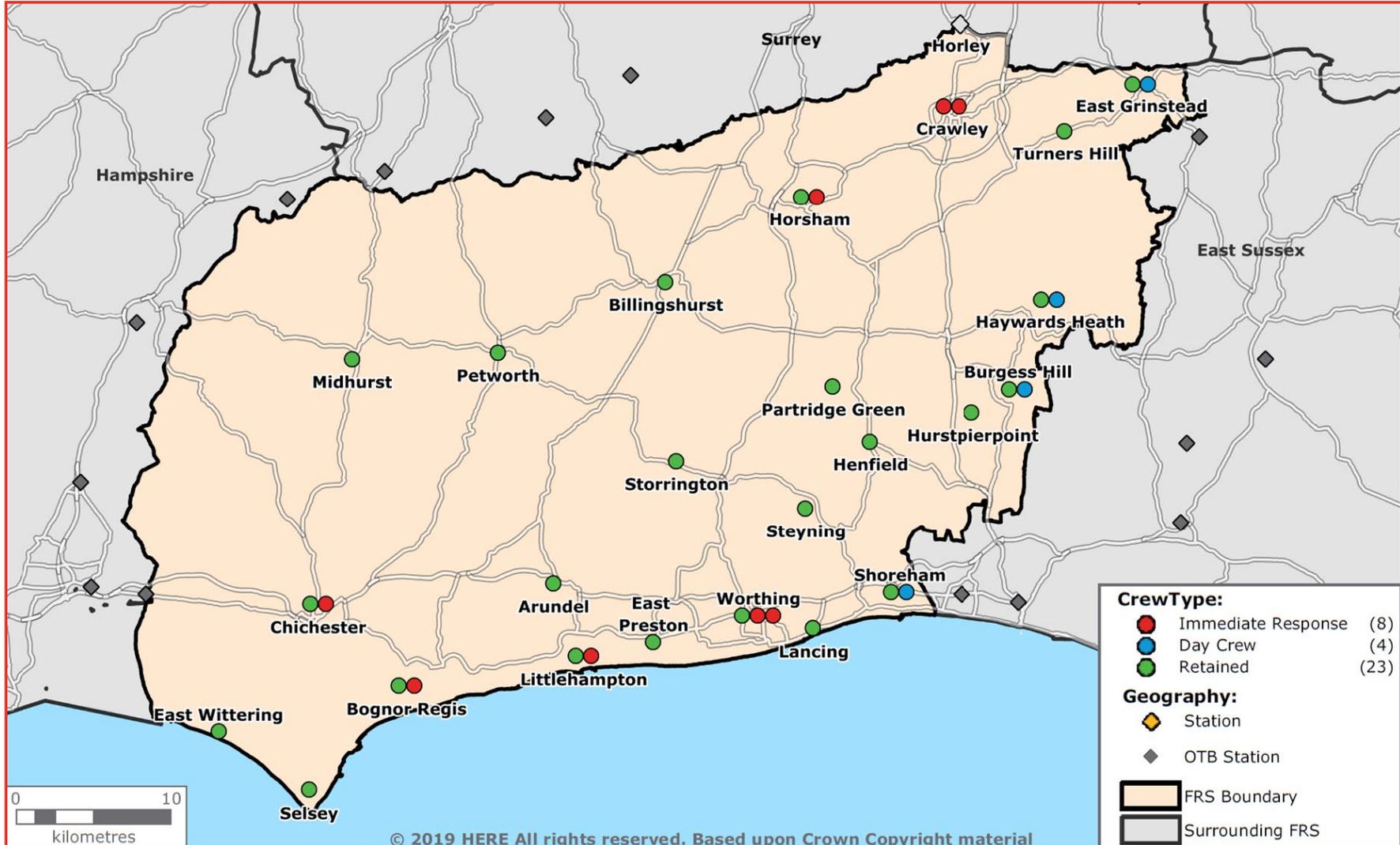


Responding across borders

We respond by sending the quickest fire engine to every incident. On some occasions a fire engine from a neighbouring fire service may be the first on scene as we operate border-less mobilising with our neighbouring services.

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

WSFRS Station locations



Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Our retained firefighters provide the most efficient and effective means for us to deliver our service in rural, low activity geographical areas. Nationally there is a challenge with retained firefighter recruitment and retention. We find that there are less people who work or live close enough to a fire station that can commit to being available for emergency calls at times when we need them, in particular during the day time.

3.5 We will work with staff to develop and implement an operational response model to maximise retained availability in strategic geographical areas aligned to community risk.

On a day-to-day basis, we address any potential gaps in cover by efficiently using our Crewing Optimisation Group (COG) in a dynamic and targeted way. COG is a team of wholtime firefighters who operate from varying rural locations, 7am - 7pm Monday to Friday. This is to make sure we have fire engines available where we need them, when we need them.

3.6 We will enhance and modernise our provision to seven days a week 7am - 7pm cover to align our resources to risk and to enhance our rural prevention and protection activity.

Our comprehensive review of risk and incident data demonstrates there is no significant change to daytime risk or demand during both weekday and weekend periods. In fact Saturdays represent our busiest period.

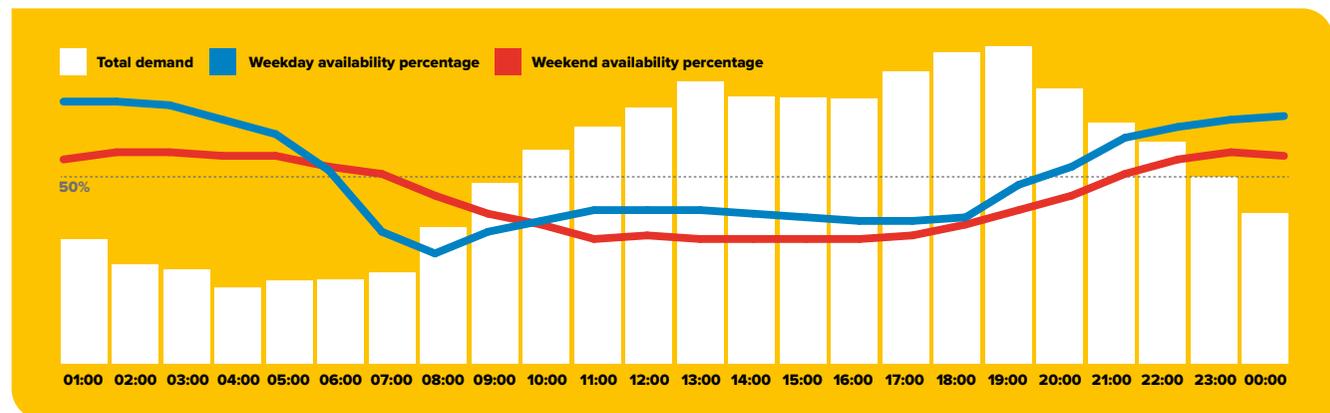
Our four Day Crewing Stations at Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Shoreham currently maintain an immediate response capability 7am-7pm Monday to Friday. During this time they also undertake protection and prevention activities.

Fire engines crewed by retained firefighters at the four Day Crewing Stations are typically the least available type of resource.

3.7 We will extend the current day crewing model at these stations to provide immediate response cover and protection and prevention activity 7am - 7pm, 7 days per week with a new flexible crewing model.

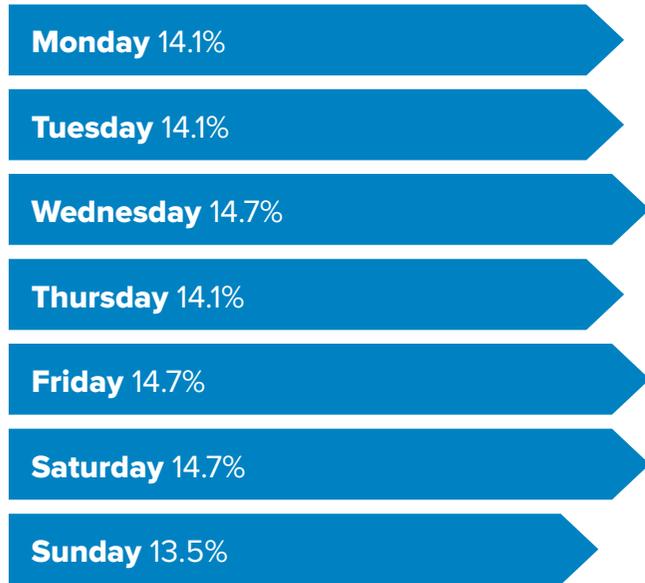
These changes will provide greater flexibility and capacity for completing Safe and Well Visits, delivering community safety events, and working with businesses to support their fire safety responsibilities. These changes will also improve emergency response performance by 13 seconds to all incidents across West Sussex.

Retained and day-crewed pump availability by hour: 2018/19 and 2019/20



Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Average weekday incident demand

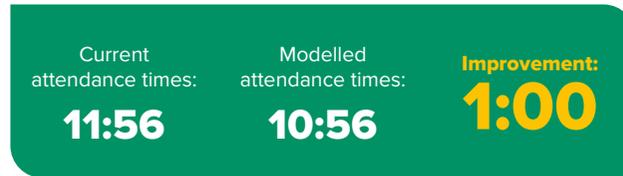


As shown in the data above, demand is highly consistent across all days of the week.

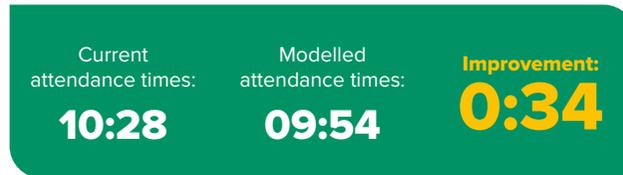
Our modelling of five day crewing against seven day crewing shows a improvement in overall response times of 13 seconds to all incidents across West Sussex.

The following data demonstrates the modelled improvements to response times to all incidents in the Mid Sussex and Adur geographic areas, which is where our four day crewing stations are located.

Mid Sussex District



Adur District



Response to terror related incidents

We have the capability to respond to a terrorist incident 24/7. Our operational staff have received specialist training and equipment to respond to a terrorist incident and support our partner agencies.

These teams are supported by specially trained firefighters and officers within our Operational Recovery Team. They provide specialist firefighting capability and support other emergency responders in the treatment and evacuation of casualties from hostile environments.

These teams are also supported by National Incident Liaison Officers (NILOs). This liaison role has particular emphasis on multi-agency support, which is founded upon national Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) operating principles.

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Flooding and High Volume Pump (HVP)

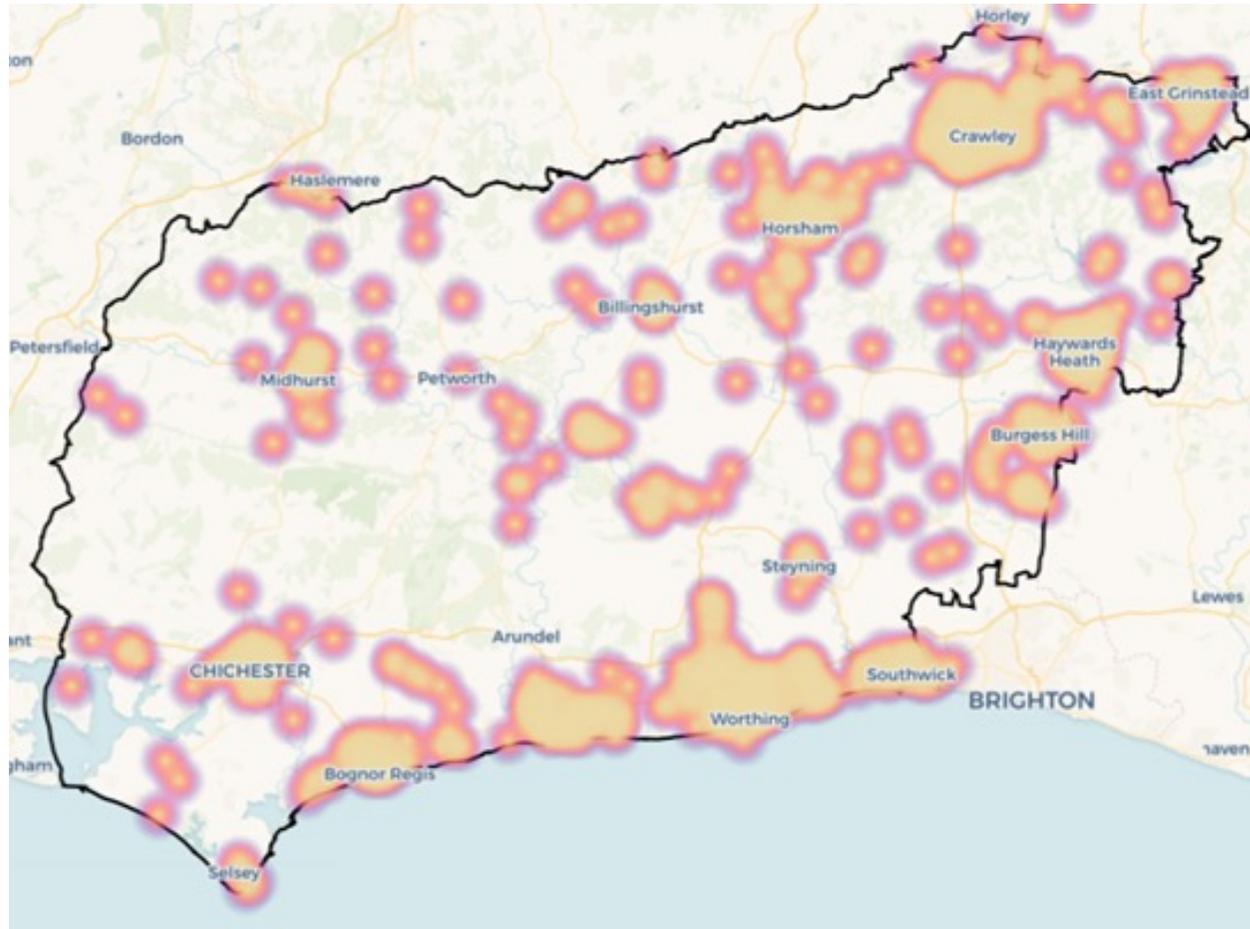
Extreme weather can take a variety of forms, including heavy rain or snow, strong winds and extreme temperatures, causing significant problems and disruption.

Over the coming years, we are likely to see rising temperatures and sea levels in line with climate change predictions, and an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

We have specialist wade, swift water response teams and boat operation teams geographically positioned across the county.

We have one of the UK's specialist HVP units. This is a key national asset with dual capabilities. It can be deployed to clear floodwater, but also to support firefighting operations. This enhances the county's business continuity and resilience planning and keeps us at the forefront of the national UK flood response.

As temperatures rise, there is further risk during the warmer summer months of an increase in wildfires.



We have a number of officers who have undergone specialist training to become national Tactical Advisors in water/flood rescue, wildfire and waste fires. These officers can be deployed nationally by the Fire and

Rescue Service's National Control Centre upon request from an affected service under the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF).

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Specialist capability

There are a range of potential incidents that, due to their location or complexity, require additional equipment for their resolution. These include fires where there is poor road access, accidents involving heavy goods vehicles, aircraft or trains, fires that require a specialist media for extinguishing, or fires distant from water supplies.

In addition to our fleet of 35 fire engines, we have a range of specialist vehicles located across the county. They are:

Four wheel drive (11 vehicles)

Based at Selsey, Chichester, Midhurst, Bognor Regis, Petworth, Littlehampton, Horsham, Shoreham, Crawley, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead.

Four wheel drive with Environment Agency equipment

Based at Storrington.

Water carrier (two vehicles)

Based at Petworth and Burgess Hill.

Incident Command Unit

Based at Haywards Heath.

Command Support Unit

Based at Bognor Regis

Heavy rescue tender (three vehicles)

Based at Chichester, Worthing and Crawley.

Breathing Apparatus Support Unit (two vehicles)

Based at Chichester and Horsham.

Boat (two vehicles)

Based at East Wittering and the Technical Rescue Unit.

Unimog

A specialist all-terrain multi-purpose vehicle based at the Technical Rescue Unit.

WSFRS drone

Based at the Technical Rescue Unit.

High volume pump

Based at Bognor Regis.

Aerial ladder platform (two vehicles)

Based at Worthing and Horsham.

We have invested in specialist equipment to allow us to deal with the full range of foreseeable incidents. These include, PV Stop, which allows us to safely deal with fires involving solar panels that generate electricity whenever the sun is shining, and smoke hoods to assist with safely evacuating residents of buildings where smoke is blocking escape routes.

3.8 We will undertake a risk-based review of our specialist capability and asset requirements to ensure they are fit for purpose, both now and for the future.

3.9 We will undertake a further consultation on any significant changes to our response arrangements.

Our Technical Rescue Unit

There are also incidents where a specifically trained specialist response is required, including:

- » Confined space rescues
- » Hazardous materials incidents for rescues or environmental protection
- » Rescues at height
- » Animal rescues
- » Rescues from rivers and at flooding incidents
- » Terrorist incidents

To support these, we maintain a specialist Technical Rescue Unit made up of wholtime firefighters with additional training, that are available 24/7.

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Collaboration

We have an excellent track record of working in partnership to help us achieve our organisational goals.

As part of WSCC we benefit from joint procurement to achieve economies of scale, but there are also much wider benefits of our collaborative work with WSCC partners. This includes being able to work closely with both children's services and adult social care where there are safeguarding concerns, as well as wider community safety issues through our work with Public Health, Trading Standards and the Resilience and Emergencies Team.

We work particularly closely with our neighbouring services; Surrey, East Sussex and Kent fire and rescue services, collectively known as our 4Fire Partnership.

Key areas of collaboration include our Joint Fire Control with our partners at Surrey and East Sussex fire and rescue services, National Operational Guidance and Operational Alignment Programme.

We also work closely with our partners within Sussex, for example, the SWSP



which brings together Community Safety Partnerships and other organisations to provide a co-ordinated approach to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in the county. We also work with district and borough councils and telecare providers.

Our response to emergencies often involves joint activity with other blue light services. By working collaboratively with a range of partners such as police, ambulance, cross border fire and rescue services and community groups, we can tackle complex problems and increase our capability and capacity more effectively.

We also work in collaboration with South East Coast Ambulance Service and other health care providers to support and improve the lives of West Sussex residents and improve community resilience.

A key driver for this is the Policing and Crime Act 2017, which introduced a duty on the police, fire and rescue and ambulance services to keep collaboration opportunities under review and, where it is in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness, to put those collaboration opportunities into practice. We will always seek to collaborate when this will produce the best outcome for our residents. [More information can be found on our website.](#)

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

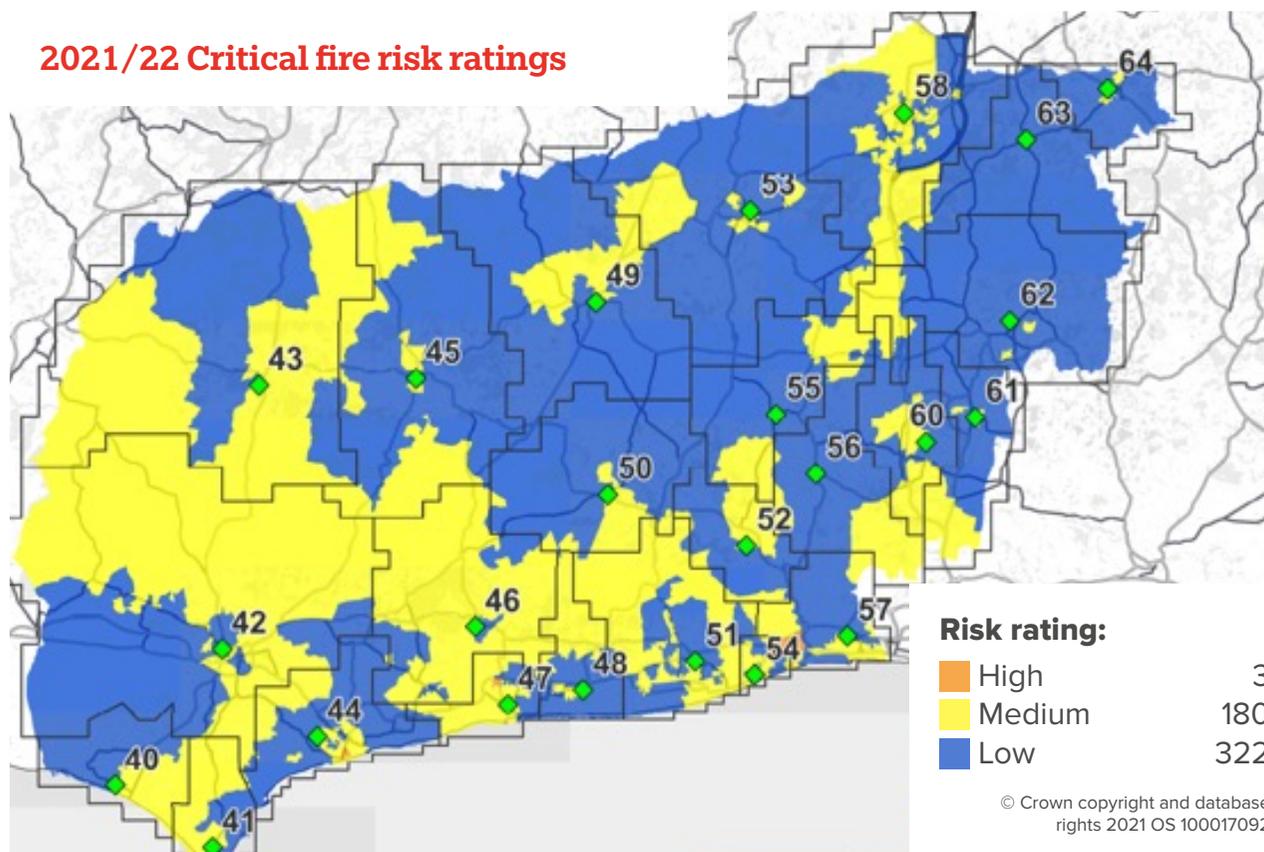
Emergency Response Standards

We measure our attendance time to critical incidents to identify if there are any ways in which we can improve. This includes considering factors such as the location of fire engines, fire stations, risk in the county and travel distance around the county.

These standards measure the time taken from us receiving your 999 emergency call to the time that our first (and when relevant second) fire engine arrives at the incident. For critical special service incidents, such as road traffic collisions we have a 13 minute response standard for all areas of the county.

Our current Emergency Response Standards (ERS), which came into effect on 1 April 2009, are based on assessing levels of critical fire risk within the county into very high, high, medium and low categories and prioritising the fastest response to critical incidents in the areas of greatest community risk.

2021/22 Critical fire risk ratings



First fire engine response standards

- Very high risk: less than 8 minutes**
- High risk: less than 10 minutes**
- Medium risk: less than 12 minutes**
- Low risk: less than 14 minutes**

- 70% target**
- 92% target**
- 89% target**
- 92% target**

Benchmark: 89% target

Second fire engine response standards

- Very high risk: less than 11 minutes**
- High risk: less than 13 minutes**
- Medium risk: less than 15 minutes**
- Low risk: less than 17 minutes**

- 71% target**
- 91% target**
- 83% target**
- 84% target**

Benchmark: 83% target

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

We define the critical fire risk for each Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in the county.

LSOAs are made up of output areas and are created from census data by the Office of National Statistics and are the lowest level at which census estimates are provided. LSOAs align to local district boundaries.

The risk score for each LSOA is derived from three years weighted historical data, drawing on information from:

- » dwelling fire rate, taking the number of households into account
- » other critical building fires
- » dwelling fire casualties rate taking the population into account
- » the level of deprivation from the national index of multiple deprivation.

A rolling three years of data is used as the basis of the critical fire risk. This allows us to keep our focus on the most vulnerable residents and those communities at highest risk, ensuring our resources are used efficiently to achieve the best possible outcomes.

3.10 We will maintain our existing ERS while we undertake a review based on the new national risk methodology which is currently being developed by the NFCC. When complete, we will consult with you if any changes to our ERS are proposed.



Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively

Incident demand in West Sussex was at its highest level for five years in 2019/20, an increase of 11.8% from 2015/16.

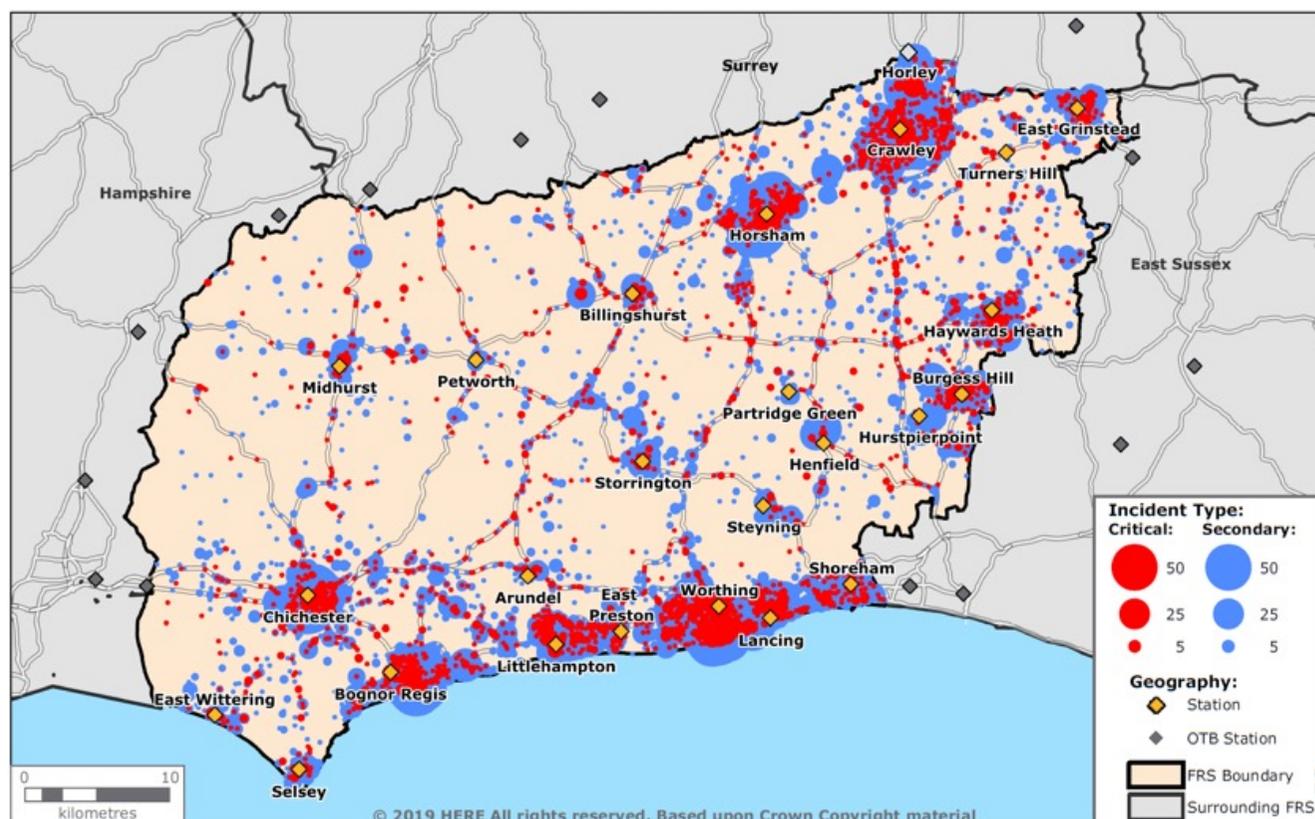
The highest incident concentrations for all incident categories are typically in the urban areas, with particularly high density of incidents in Worthing and Crawley. Many critical special service incidents occurred along the road networks due to road traffic collisions.

The following map shows the location of our critical and secondary incidents across West Sussex, where:

- » Critical incidents are incidents likely to involve significant threat to life, structures or the environment.
- » Secondary incidents are incidents unlikely to involve significant threat to life, structures or the environment.

Geographical distribution of critical and secondary incidents

Two year sample period:
April 2018 - March 2020



Strategic Priority 4: Have a safe and valued workforce

At WSFRS, we work with our communities and partners every day to prevent emergencies, and help everyone to be safe in West Sussex. Emergencies will always happen and when they do, we are ready to respond as quickly as possible to help people in their time of need and to save lives. Our core strength in achieving this is through our people who are “proud to serve” and work for an organisation connected closely with its communities and who are genuinely committed to keeping people safe and saving people’s lives.

Our overarching aim is to empower and support our people to be the best they can be, deliver to the highest standards when serving our communities and uphold the values of our fire and rescue service.

We want our organisation to be a great place for our staff to work, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and able to work in an empowered, collaborative and innovative way to support our communities. We aim to strengthen our ability to provide an excellent service by seeking to understand the perspectives and needs of everyone in our communities, promoting inclusion and creating a fair and equal place to work.

Our people objectives incorporate the six areas of improvement outlined in the NFCC People Strategy and our WSCC People Framework.

4.1 Strengthen leadership and line management skills to support organisational cultural change, talent management and service delivery to the public.

4.2 Develop our cultural values and behaviors within an environment of psychological safety which makes WSFRS a great place to work.

4.3 Provide high quality training and development opportunities that meets the needs of our staff, our desired culture, our service model needs and ensures performance improvement of services to the public.

4.4 Strengthen our ability to provide an excellent service by attracting a broad range of people who come from different backgrounds to help us respond more effectively to our different communities.

4.5 Continue our work on creating a fair and equal place to work.

4.6 Continue to support the health, wellbeing and ways of working for all our staff.

Our People workstreams will be underpinned by the WSFRS Core Values and the NFCC Code of Ethics.



PEOPLE

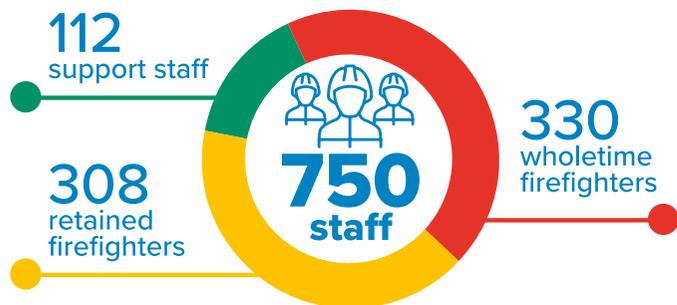


Watch a video from our Development and Operational Training team on our website.



Strategic Priority 4: Have a safe and valued workforce

Staff strength by role group



NFCC Code of Ethics



Our core values

More details around our core values are detailed [earlier in this document](#).



We are committed to the development of our staff and provide opportunities for training, development and qualifications that enable high performance and career progression, within a supportive environment.

Our training is delivered face to face and through blended learning and is reviewed to assess accessibility and supports neurodiverse conditions.

4.7 We will develop an enhanced, team-based requalification programme for all operational staff, including those in specialist roles.

The completion of the new state of the art training centre at Horsham will provide the best possible training and development environment for all new recruits and will ensure the new live fire training facilities increase the quality and frequency of this safety critical training for our firefighters.

The new training and development centre will allow for improved regional FRS and multi-agency collaboration, in line with national and local requirements through the JESIP. This will include enhanced incident command training and development to support NOG and regional operational alignment through the use of improved, up to date, technology and facilities.

Based on risk management planning and key national developments, the level of water rescue and medical trauma care training, and emergency response driver training, will continue to align with the Fire Standards Board requirements.

The health and wellbeing of our staff is our priority. We support this through a range of methods such as mental health first aid, post incident debrief, personalised online health and wellbeing support and an employee assistance programme. This supports our staff and their families.



Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources - Budget and finance

We are an integrated part of WSCC. There is no additional precept for the fire and rescue service on your council tax bill in West Sussex. The fire and rescue budget is considered as part of the wider provision of county council services.

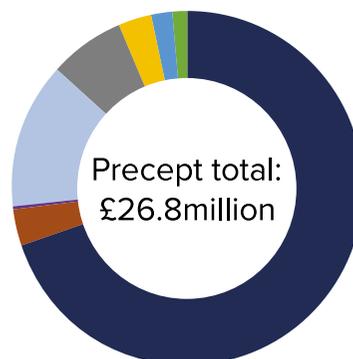
WSCC provides a number of central functions for WSFRS. These shared resources demonstrate value for money for residents as well as a standardised approach. These include provision for payroll, pensions, human resources administration and organisational development, occupational health services, IT and communications, facilities management and estates maintenance, rates and utilities, insurances, legal advice and procurement services.

Through the fire and rescue service improvement plan, resources have been increased within HR, Performance and IT, but remain within the county council teams. Best value and high-quality services in all these areas are sought and achieved council wide.

Financial management for the fire and rescue service in areas including assets and estate, revenue provision, debt, and treasury management are covered under arrangements for the whole of the county council and are not reported solely for the fire and rescue service.

The fire service's total budget, delivering front line services for the 2020/21 financial year was £26.8 million.

Breakdown of precept for West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service



● Response	£18,714,398
● Strategic risk and improvement	£863,067
● Assurance and governance	£107,295
● WSCC fire fleet and equipment	£3,585,476
● People and Operational Training	£1,824,846
● Prevention	£832,795
● Protection	£492,954
● Resilience and emergencies	£353,459

How your money is spent

In addition to the existing base budget, the county council agreed further funding over a three-year period to deliver the improvements required following the HMICFRS inspection report. In 2020/21, the fire improvement plan spent £2.3m, which is in addition to the spend shown in the graph.

Most of the budget is invested in frontline services including firefighting, rescue operations and community safety activity. Resources are managed carefully, working in partnership and constantly monitoring the effectiveness of the service's work. Plans are developed to allocate resources according to the available budget. Over the past few years changes have been made to the service and put in place a number of programmes that delivered substantial change to the way the service works in order to meet pressures on budgets.

During 2020/21 we received fire specific grants relating to:

- » Protection specific grants
- » COVID fire specific grant
- » Public health grant
- » Airwave Firelink grant
- » Pensions grant
- » Marauding terrorist attack grant

In addition the county council received county council COVID grants, which supported additional spend relating to COVID-19. We monitored activity through the Business Continuity Action Team (BCAT) and expenditure was made through the county council.

Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources - Estates and assets

We have six stations that have crews present 24 hours a day known as wholetime; four stations where the crew are there 7am-7pm (day crewed) and fourteen stations that are retained only. All of our wholetime and day crewed stations, with the exception of Crawley, also have a retained crew.

Our Technical Rescue Unit is currently based at a former fire station site in Horley, which also includes a residential training centre. In addition, there is a central maintenance workshop and 3 satellite workshops based at fire stations.

We have developed an 'Orange Guide' for fire stations, this guide provides guidance on the level of provision and specification within new build and refurbished fire stations for WSCC. The guide includes 7 overarching principles:

- » Provide modern, professional working environments
- » Encourage greater diversity, dignity and inclusion
- » Improve opportunities to work better with partners
- » Be designed to meet the needs of the community and the service
- » Be operationally efficient, effective and secure

- » Be sustainable and environmentally friendly
- » Offer flexible space

A review of existing estate has been undertaken and recommendations made in prioritising improvements to facilities, based on these principles.

- 5.1 We will develop and deliver an Estates Improvement Plan which clearly sets out the prioritisation of work to address the gaps between current condition of stations and that recommended through the Orange Guide.**
- 5.2 We will improve the layout of our buildings to support equality and diversity.**
- 5.3 We will continue our work to minimise any risk from contaminants to our firefighters.**
- 5.4 Ensure the new station at Horsham includes a modern design standard, which is capable of supporting a more diverse workforce in the future, becoming a blueprint for the fire estate.**

We will continue to respond to emerging UK legislation regarding exposure to contaminants in the workplace, and specifically the processes to be followed in order to reduce the risk to firefighters.



Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources - WSFRS Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station

One of the key projects in the programme is the WSFRS Training Centre and Horsham Fire Station.

This new industry-leading facility will be a significant step forward for the service ensuring we continue to meet the needs, demands and risks of our communities and staff. The fire and rescue sector is continually learning with incidents such as the Grenfell Tower tragedy highlighting new and emerging hazards which we, as a service, must be able to respond to.

Training more firefighters is important to meet the recruitment levels required in the coming years.

To facilitate this, the site includes state-of-the-art live fire training, delivering the most realistic training possible for firefighters.

Other training will include: rescue at height; road traffic collision, rope rescue and hazardous materials.

It will also provide a modern, multi-agency incident training suite aimed at providing expert training in incident command.

Work began on site, off the A24 at Highwood Mill, in Autumn 2021. It will also be home to a brand-new 24-hour fire station for Horsham.

The new fire station will incorporate all the best practice around firefighters' health and wellbeing, including improved contamination management for firefighters returning from incidents.

The new facility has an emphasis on renewable energy sources, such as solar panels and air source heat pumps providing heating, as well as electric vehicle charging points in-line with the county council's drive to become carbon neutral by 2030.



Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources - Climate and sustainability



Climate Change is one of the biggest challenges we will ever face in our county. Human activity has already led to 1°C of global warming from pre-industrial levels. This is resulting in damaging impacts on lives, infrastructure and ecosystems already being felt by communities across West Sussex.

As part of WSCC, we share, support and contribute to the vision, strategies and plans around climate and sustainability.

Minimising environmental impacts is a key part of managing operational incidents, such as preventing water run-off contaminating sensitive water courses, or being aware of the direction and extent of a smoke plume from a fire. These and similar activities align with and support WSCC initiatives in areas such as air quality along with protection and enhancement of habitat for vital species across the county.

WSCC's climate change vision is:

“In 2030, WSCC is carbon neutral and climate resilient, using our limited resources wisely. WSCC has enabled positive actions and behaviours across our county to mitigate and adapt to climate change”

WSCC is committed to becoming a more sustainable organisation and wants sustainability

to be more central to the way everyone works. The approved climate change strategy is intended to provide a framework which will shape and influence all day-to-day activity. The strategy also sets five priority commitments to:

- » Mitigate the effects of climate change by reducing carbon emissions (aligning with an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2030)
- » Adapt and be resilient to a changing climate
- » Source and use resources sustainably
- » Support and grow our local green economy
- » Transform how we work

Our guidance for refurbishing, or building new fire stations includes recommendations for embedding carbon reduction and sustainability into the design and construction, through methods such as:

- » maximising the performance of the components and materials
- » optimising daylight and natural ventilation, minimising the use of all resources
- » reducing the demand for energy and water use during construction and the life cycle of the building
- » minimising waste and carbon dioxide emissions during construction and the life cycle of the building.

Strategic Priority 5: making best use of resources - climate and sustainability

Management of our fleet is governed by a dedicated Fleet Asset Management Plan. This is updated annually to reflect the changing nature of environmental and sustainability issues.

Our prime focus is to supply WSFRS with vehicles that meet the needs of the service at an operational level combined with ensuring we align ourselves with WSCC policy.

We pay particular attention to value for money ensuring we aspire to meet emissions and sustainability objective of protecting and enhancing the environment in-line with WSCC policy.

Within the cycle of this CRMP we will:

- 5.5 Remain up-to-date with new technology, ensuring that fleet replacements meets the corporate aim to reduce emissions**
- 5.6 Continue to introduce alternative powered vehicles into the fleet in line with replacement schedule**
- 5.7 Monitor and report on existing fleet emissions and manage fleet disposal to support county council emission targets**

To underpin all of this, a Sustainability Appraisal and a Climate Change Assessment are required for all transformation projects and procurements. These include appraisal and impact monitoring of areas such as:

- » Improving local air quality
- » Minimising the risk to people and property from extreme weather events, including consideration of our changing climate
- » Reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases
- » Reducing energy consumption and the demand for fossil fuel-based energy
- » Providing or enabling technological solutions to avoid the need for travel
- » Prioritising sustainable transport options
- » Reducing waste and increasing waste recovery and recycling
- » Enhance, protect and sustain the natural environment
- » Adapting to climate change to build resilience



Our public consultation

In November 2021, we undertook a public consultation on our proposals to further help identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community and asked for comments and views.

All comments received were considered and assisted us in the development and final production of our new 2022-26 CRMP.

[A summary of the responses we received can be found on our website.](#)

The consultation was undertaken in accordance with WSCC guidance and the Government's Code of Practice on consultation and the outcomes were reported to the council's Cabinet Members. The final document was approved by Full Council in March 2022.

As part of this public consultation we asked our staff, residents in our local communities, and other stakeholders six questions. During the 10-week consultation period we also engaged with MPs, WSCC Members, district



and borough councils, town and parish councils, as well as community groups, interfaith organisations and business forums.

A mid-point review was held to analyse the responses already received and to look at areas that required a more targeted engagement approach. This saw us target underrepresented groups of people to ensure they had the opportunity to take part in the consultation.

Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, we were able to facilitate some face-to-face engagement sessions, both

with elected representatives at council meetings, and members of the public during pop-up engagement sessions held at a number of the county's libraries.

A CRDP will be developed to support the prioritisation and implementation of the CRMP projects and objectives over the four-year life of the plan. Annual delivery plans will be prepared for each year.

Service plans for protection, prevention, response, people and assets, that further describe how the service reduces the identified risks have been developed.

LRMPs are then utilised in setting individual performance objectives, allowing a clear "golden thread" between the CRMP and individual daily activities.

The Organisational Assurance and Governance team will oversee implementation and delivery of each CRMP workstream.

Further detailed work will be undertaken in relation to the individual equality impact assessments, planning assumptions, policy implications, delivery timeline and implementation options for each proposal. This will be drawn up and designed in partnership with our staff.

Summary of Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Across the five strategic priorities, and four WSCC priorities, there are 38 objectives to be achieved in the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan.

Strategic Priority 1: Preventing fires and emergencies from happening.

Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations and helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.

- 1.1 Place the public and communities at the centre of our activities.**
- 1.2 Develop our capacity, through our front line staff, volunteers and the front line staff of partner agencies.**
- 1.3 Prioritise those who have the highest risk.**
- 1.4 Provide school children with fire safety education and deliver programmes so children and young people can make safer decisions and fulfil their potential.**
- 1.5 Strengthen and grow our partnerships, working together to keep the individuals and communities safer.**
- 1.6 Deliver targeted community safety campaigns to address the risks identified.**

Strategic Priority 2: Protecting people, firefighters and property by making buildings as safe from fire as they can be.

Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations and help promote a sustainable and prosperous economy.

- 2.1 Develop and train our response crews with fire safety and fire investigation qualifications.**
- 2.2 An inclusive approach to local risk management.**
- 2.3 Knowledge we gain from fire investigation informs our understanding of risk.**
- 2.4 Fire Investigation Officers identify risks and causes of fire.**
- 2.5 Working effectively with other regulators and agencies to reduce risk.**
- 2.6 Develop a tool box for better regulation and enforcement.**
- 2.7 Using a risk-based approach, no longer automatically respond to fire alarm actuations at low risk commercial properties.**
- 2.8 Develop and introduce a charging scheme for responding to false alarms.**
- 2.9 Use of technology to reduce the impact of false alarms.**

Summary of Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Strategic Priority 3: Responding to fires and emergencies quickly and effectively.

Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations and helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.

- 3.1** Develop a firefighting and rescue strategy that is fit for the future.
- 3.2** Enhance our Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) capability.
- 3.3** Use of Joint Fire Control collaborative technological solutions.
- 3.4** Develop and evolve our LRMPs, working with key partners.
- 3.5** Co-develop an operational response model to maximise retained availability.
- 3.6** Enhance and modernise COG provision to seven days a week 7am - 7pm.
- 3.7** Enhance Day Crewed immediate response cover activity 7am - 7pm, 7 days a week.
- 3.8** A risk-based review of our specialist capability and asset requirements.
- 3.9** Consultation on any significant changes to our response arrangements.
- 3.10** We will maintain our existing ERS while we undertake a review.

Strategic Priority 4: Have a safe and valued workforce.

Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.

- 4.1** Strengthen leadership and people management skills.
- 4.2** Develop our cultural values and behaviours within an environment of psychological safety.
- 4.3** Provide high quality effective training and development opportunities.
- 4.4** Attracting a range of people who come from different backgrounds to help us respond more effectively to our different communities.
- 4.5** Creating a fair and equal place to work.
- 4.6** Support the health, wellbeing and ways of working of our staff.

Summary of Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Strategic Priority 5: Making best use of resources.

Making the best use of resources.

- 5.1** Develop and deliver an Estates Improvement Plan.
- 5.2** Improve the layout of our buildings to support equality and diversity.
- 5.3** We will continue our work to minimise any risk from contaminants to our firefighters.
- 5.4** Horsham, which is capable of supporting a more diverse workforce in the future, becoming a blueprint for the fire estate.
- 5.5** Remain up-to-date with new fleet technology.
- 5.6** Introduce alternative powered vehicles into the fleet.

Accessibility

If you require any of the information in this document in an alternative format, please contact us on 01243 786211 or via email at yourfireservice@westsussex.gov.uk

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and have an NGT texting app installed on your computer, laptop or smartphone, you can contact us on 18001 01243 786211.

All data correct at time of publication.



www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire

