

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Annual Report 2017-18

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Forward



Welcome to West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's (WSFRS) Annual Report.

This report covers the financial year from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and highlights how WSFRS performed in the key areas of protection, prevention and emergency response.

Our performance data is also available on the WSFRS section of the West Sussex County Council website where you can access other documents, including our new Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018-22. These documents set out how the service is organised to support communities, how our assessment of risk on data analysis is based, and gives our professional judgement of existing and predicted risks.

I am very proud of our fire and rescue teams and am confident they will continue to provide the very best service possible for our communities both now and in the future, with a leading role at the heart of the county council.

Debbie Kennard

Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities

Introduction



The Chief Fire Officers Vision Statement

Vision statement: 'A fire and rescue service focused on the delivery of a value for money response, prevention and protection service operating to the highest performance standards to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to West Sussex. Continuous improvement is at the heart of everything we do.'

Our Annual Report reflects the work we are carrying out on behalf of the fire authority to achieve a safer and stronger community.

The fire service plays a key role at the heart of WSCC's Communities and Public Protection Directorate, supporting the council's Future West Sussex Plan. This plan will help enable a safer, stronger and more resilient community.

This Annual Statement of Assurance gives an overview of some of our agreed key areas of performance and highlights how the fire service, along with our partners, are striving to deliver a first class service to our residents.

In addition to this Statement of Assurance we also have an Annual Report which will help you see how we are measuring our success and working towards continual improvement.

When you need us, rest assured, our professional teams will continue to deliver the first-class service West Sussex expects and deserves.

Gavin Watts

Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer

Could you join us and help your community?

We continue to urgently need more on call firefighters in our communities. There are many reasons for taking on the role including satisfaction at helping your community, learning new skills - and you are paid too. For more information see www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire

The community we serve

West Sussex is home to more than 836,000 people, according to the Office for National Statistics.

The four largest towns are Bognor, Crawley, Horsham and Worthing and 42% of the county's population, and more than half of businesses, are located in rural areas.

Arun District has the highest proportion of residents, with 19%, while Adur, the smallest district, has the lowest, at almost 8%.

Almost 480,000 people, a little over 57% of the county population, are of working age. Almost 187,000 (22%) are over retirement age.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service headquarters, as well as that of West Sussex County Council, are in Chichester.

The county includes part of the South Downs National Park and coastal areas.

It has a number of stately homes, including Goodwood, Petworth House and Uppark, alongside Arundel Castle and Bramber Castle.

More than half of our county is protected countryside, including the South Downs National Park. In addition, large areas of the county are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The county is the second most wooded in the UK – 19% woodland compared to the national average 9%.

As well as major road and rail links, Gatwick Airport, which has 42 million passengers each year, is also located in the county.

While the county is generally prosperous, low pay is a feature of the rural economy, and there are areas of deprivation.

Our leadership team

Debbie Kennard was appointed Cabinet member for Safer Stronger Communities in 2017. Following the appointment of the new senior leadership team, work has been progressing with Debbie to develop new priorities for the fire and rescue service to base its activity on over the next three to five years.

Debbie continues to ensure she engages with people from all levels of the fire and rescue service.

Over the period of this report the service saw a significant change in roles at senior leadership level.

Chief Fire Officer Sean Ruth and Deputy Chief Fire Officer Lee Neal retired after providing the fire service many dedicated years of service between them.

Gavin Watts was appointed as Director of Operations and Chief Fire Officer, with Neil Stocker stepping into the role of director of public protection and Deputy Chief Fire

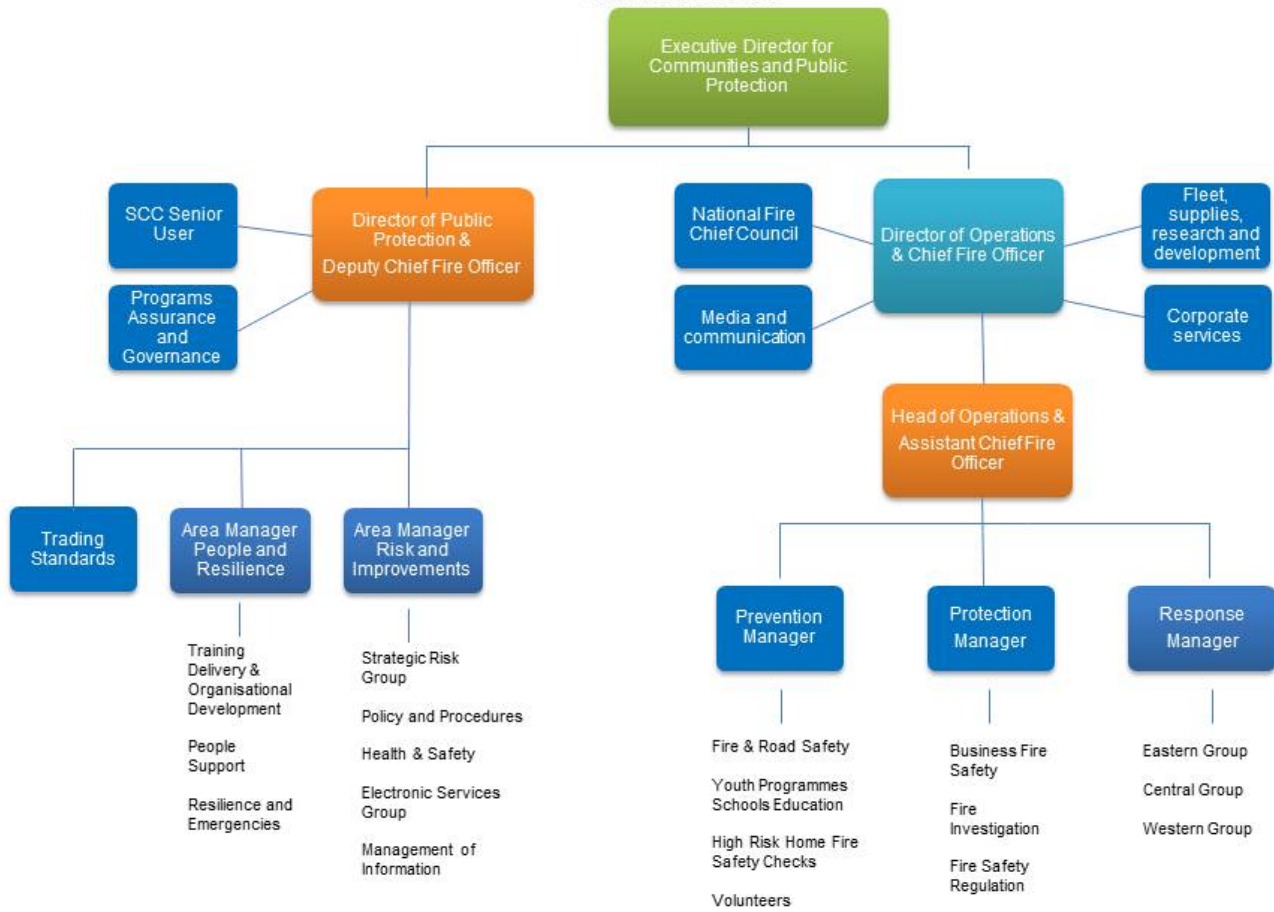
officer. Kieran Amos was appointed to Assistance Chief Fire officer and is responsible for operations protection and prevention.

Two new area managers, Jon Lacey and Jon Simpson, joined Adrian Murphy in July completing the team of six senior leaders with responsibilities for Risk and Improvements, People and Resilience and Response. Fire service structure chart is on the following page.

During the year the team has responded to a number of challenges, including preparing for the new Home Office Inspectorate program that will start to inspect fire and rescues service in 2018.

The Grenfell incident has also presented some challenges with increased activity in the areas of protection. The team is now developing action plans around the priorities set by the fire authority in the new Integrated Risk Management Plan.

West Sussex County Council Fire & Rescue Service
Functional Structure



Your Fire and Rescue Service

Prevention

We play a valuable role teaching children about fire prevention and road safety, from primary school age upwards.

We have developed specialist learning materials to ensure we engage with children at the most appropriate level and can communicate information in a format they will be able to retain and share with others.

Last year we had contact with 18,018 pupils during 386 School Education Visits. We also saw 3,690 pupils through Junior Citizen events across the county.

Firefighters can be positive role models for young people. We work in partnership with a number of organisations to discourage anti-social behaviour and last year 99 children were referred to our Firewise programme, which helps young people understand the potential consequences of experimenting with fires.

We also run an innovative FireBreak programme, in partnership with County Council colleagues from Youth Services. It is aimed at young people aged between 12 and 14 and actively encourages students to become positive role models within their communities.

Students attend a fire station over five consecutive days, working alongside uniformed firefighters on a structured programme of events that combine classroom-based activities and practical training to promote teamwork, social awareness, self-discipline and to help reduce negative influences.

We ran eight of these courses during the year, working with a total of 89 students, including a tailor-made course for a special needs school.

Keeping you safe

Our safety and prevention work is helping to reduce the number of serious incidents we are called to attend.

We work with a variety of partners and constantly review the best ways of supporting the people we come into contact with to help build safer, stronger and more resilient communities.

Much of this work is concentrated on those who, statistically, are most at risk from fire injuries in the home. This can include the elderly and people with mental or physical health issues.

In the year ending March 2018 our operational crews and Community Fire Safety Officers carried out 4,959 High Priority Safe and Well Visits, to those deemed most at risk.

The total number of all Safe and Well visits carried out over the year was 9,534.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is a trusted organisation which can give us more open access to some individuals. To ensure we can provide the most appropriate help, our staff have been given safeguarding training to help them identify a wide range of issues.

Where required, we can refer people to other organisations we work with, or other relevant departments within West Sussex County Council.

Last year we raised safeguarding concerns about more than 129 people and referred 618 individuals to other services or sources of support.

That work is carried out alongside our traditional fire safety role, which in 2017/18 saw us:

- Install 4,153 ten-year smoke alarms
- Provide 2,865 Telecare linked smoke alarms
- Hand over 293 deaf alarm systems
- Support 84 domestic violence cases with specialist equipment and advice
- Use retardant spray to protect furniture in the homes of 29 smokers
- Provide 1,017 other items of detection and protection equipment, which includes fire aprons or blankets for vulnerable smokers with limited mobility

We also carry out drop-in events to deliver safety measures to wider audiences. These included testing 354 electric blankets last year, 102 failed as they were unsafe.

What We Do

The prevention work we carry out saves lives and can help identify additional support for vulnerable residents.

Community Fire Safety Officers, or local crews, will often return to a property after an incident to offer additional advice and support and to help residents consider how the risk of future incidents can be reduced.

We can install smoke alarms or may suggest residents consider telecare linked smoke detectors. We will also refer residents to additional sources of support.

For example, in one incident, crews were called to a fire via a telecare linked smoke detector. When they arrive they found a small fire caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette. The resident who was in his 90s had dementia and was completely unaware of the fire. The crew dealt swiftly with the fire and removed the lady to safety. They then updated the telecare provider and contacted the gentleman's son to reassure them that all was well. After the incident the crew referred the gentleman to additional support via the WSFRS safeguarding process. During a follow up visit further recommendations were made to his family and carers and he was provided with a smoking blanket/apron and the area where he smoked was sprayed with fire retardant spray.

One of our specialist staff was invited to attend a multi-agency safeguarding meeting along with a Social Worker, Safeguard Enquiry Officer, Mental Health Nurse, GP and Community Officer to support a resident who had a very high level of fire risk. This resulted in joint agency visit. During the visit the gentleman agreed to the installation of extra smoke detectors and took on board the safety advice. His support worker later reported that he had changed the home environment around and had even purchased several additional safety items including a fire blanket for the kitchen.

Other agencies also ask WSFRS for help. For example, a social worker requested a Home Safety Visit and specific advice for a resident, who they believed had a very high level of fire risk. The visit took place the same day and a telecare linked smoke detector was installed. Later the

same day the lady had a fire, starting in a microwave in her kitchen. The linked smoke detector provided the earliest warning for the occupier and an early 999 call being made, which kept the lady safe and reduced fire damage to her home.

Road safety

As a fire and rescue service we deal with the consequences of road traffic collisions on a daily basis.

We work closely with our national and regional partners to do everything we can to reduce the number, and severity, of such incidents.

One of our key road safety collaborations is the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP), a partnership which includes Brighton & Hove City Council, East and West Sussex County Councils, Highways England, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services and Sussex Police.

All of the organisations in the SSRP work together to help make the roads of Sussex safer and, since April 2015, the SSRP has been fully funded through the Speed Awareness operational surplus, where drivers detected speeding are offered the opportunity to take an educational course rather than have a penalty fine and points on their driving licence.

Road Traffic Collisions – Over the course of last year there were 1901 reported injury RTCs. Sadly 24 people lost their lives, 455 people were seriously injured and a further 2054 people suffered slight injuries.

More information can be found following this link:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/road-accidents-and-casualty-data/>

We are not asked to attend all collisions but we were called to 628 incidents last year and carried out work to remove casualties 109 times.

We work hard with a number of partners to try to reduce this number through initiatives such as Safe Drive Stay Alive.

Working with young road users

Almost 8,000 young people from local schools and colleges attended our hard hitting road show Safe Drive Stay Alive. The show is delivered in partnership with staff from Sussex Police, SECamb, NHS and seriously injured victims, relatives of those who have been killed on our roads.

It brings to life difficult messages to make young people aware of their responsibilities as new, and potential drivers, or as passengers travelling with their friends, and of the devastating consequences that can occur otherwise.

We also engaged with motorcyclists through our Bikerdown programme, which promotes rider safety at events across the county and helps make motorcyclists aware of what to do in the event of a collision as well as the courses and advice available to them. This is delivered in partnership with our Police colleagues.

Advice and information for all drivers can be found on the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership website www.sussexsaferroads.gov.uk

Protection

Our Business Fire Safety team works across West Sussex to help keep customers, staff and our crews as safe as possible.

We carry this out by:

- advice
- audit
- enforcement

Business owners, and those responsible for business premises, have a legal responsibility for ensuring their places of work are safe (Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005).

We advise businesses to increase their understanding of fire safety requirements and to help them comply with their duties and responsibilities.

Safe working businesses help the economy to thrive and prosper so we produce targeted information and support. To help businesses, we host fire safety information events and offer face-to face guidance.

When we audit a business we carry out a thorough examination to establish how well they are managing fire safety on the premises. This includes checking fire safety measures to ensure they are suitable and sufficient for the site and type of business, and that proper warning systems are in place.

We aim to work in partnership with our business communities to prevent problems from occurring. However, where significant breaches of Fire Safety legislation occur we issue formal enforcement notices and will prosecute where there is a wilful disregard for public safety or risk to life.

We carried out inspections on a risk based programme, targeting those most at risk in the case of a fire, these included care homes, residential schools and public spaces with large numbers

of people. Following the disaster in London at Grenfell Tower a full inspection programme was completed to all 55 high rise residential tower blocks, none of which contained the same cladding in London. We continue to work with landlords to support identified improvements and to respond to future guidance from the 'Independent review of building regulations & fire safety' and the 'Grenfell public enquiry'.

We also responded to over 350 referrals from business partners and members of public on a risk based approach. 100% of these were satisfactorily resolved.

Last year we carried out 434 fire safety audits. Many of these premises were found to require general improvements and 331 were issued with a notice of deficiencies and/or corrective action plan to advise and ensure they became fully compliant.

Where premises were found to require more serious improvements or where there was resistance to compliance, formal enforcement notices were issued to 16 establishments including restaurants, takeaways and residential flats. Where immediate action was required to some of these establishments to reduce the risk of fire, seven prohibition notices were issued.

The provision of water supplies and access requirements for fire engines at fire incidents were assured, with in excess of 3,500 planning applications, these were examined and commented upon to ensure new buildings or changes to existing building infrastructure provided the required facilities. In addition, 4,416 hydrant inspections were carried out and 68 hydrant defects identified and repaired.

With new and evolving building infrastructure of commercial buildings in the county, 899 building consultations were examined and commented upon. An additional 278 licensing applications were received, reviewed and assessed to ensure fire safety standards are satisfactory.

Fire investigations were carried out at all fires by fire crews; however 66 fires required our specialised team to carry the investigation. The teams worked alongside police and community teams to reduce fire risk or support police with arson prosecutions.

Further information on business responsibilities, and on the high quality training we can provide, are available on the Business Safety section of our website at www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire.

Response

What we do

We place significant importance on preventing fires and other emergency incidents, we direct our efforts to keep people safe in their homes and places of work through our protection activities, however incidents will still occur that require us to respond day or night, throughout each year.

These incidents range widely from fire's, road traffic collisions or people trapped in other ways for example aircraft accidents, rail incidents, building collapse etc, we also attend flooding, water rescues, animal rescues, terror related incidents and other emergencies including major disasters.

How we perform

We attended a total of 9241 incidents last year, of which 1080 were significant fire calls and 628 were calls to road traffic collisions. Thankfully there were no fire fatalities within this same period.

We aim to provide a timely response to any incident in the County, based upon our current emergency response standards for fires and critical special services, which include incidents such as road traffic collisions. The speed and weight of our response is based upon the initial description of the incident type we have been called to. Pre-determined resources will be mobilised via the Sussex Control Centre to that incident type and then further assessments are made by responding officers to request additional resources if required.

Although the timeliness of the response is important, the service we provide when we get there is equally vital in how efficiently and effectively we can resolve the incident. Our crews are our greatest asset and are very well trained and equipped to deal with this wide range of emergencies.

These same response crews also help to provide some of our prevention activities, such as our 'safe and well visits'.

Our key performance challenges

On-call availability

Much of our performance is directly linked to the overall number firefighters and fire engines we have available to respond to emergency incidents.

Our response staff are both wholetime and on-call, also known as retained firefighters, meaning they may have other employment and are paid to respond to their local fire station when alerted to crew a fire engine, unlike the wholetime staff who permanently crew a fire engine either 24/7 or for a day shift only, dependent upon their crewing system.

Our on-call staff are highly dedicated and provide us with potentially 27 of our total 35 fire engines in West Sussex. There is however a national challenge in recruiting and retaining on-call staff, which directly impacts upon the availability of our on-call fire engines. This is due to a

number of factors such as: an overall reduction in the number of incidents they might attend; the restrictions in attracting people to the role, based upon catchment, pay and support from local employers, also the significant availability and training demands we require of the role. We are trying to improve this situation by better supporting and working with our on-call staff, with the introduction of 3 new retained liaison officers. We are also currently developing and implementing a number of new projects that will improve working arrangements and create better opportunities for our on-call staff.

Geographical or incident location issues

Where incidents occur in more rural, low risk areas, the likelihood is that the nearest fire engine will be at an on-call fire station, which may not be available. The nearest and quickest available response will always be dispatched to an incident but in these rural areas the road travel distance is also likely to be greater and the road conditions slower, which may affect the response times of fire engines attending the incident. Our work to improve overall on-call availability will help us improve our response standards, particularly in these more rural locations.

Another issue we encounter that impacts upon our response times is incomplete or inaccurate address details from 999 callers, which can often delay our crews responding to the incident location.

We are continuously working with the Sussex Control Centre to improve the incident location information and mobilising arrangements.

Firefighter safety and effectiveness

As incidents decrease there is an increased risk that operational experience may decline. Also the risks we respond to are becoming ever broader and more complex. We therefore continuously aim to improve our operational capability by investing in new evidence based training for our staff and by applying new technologies in our equipment and vehicles. The aim of this continuous improvement is to enhance the safety of our crews, in dealing with this wide variety of incidents and in delivering better outcomes for our community.

We are developing our vehicle fleet to ensure the most effective use of available funding, to take advantage of the latest technologies and to lessen the environmental impact of our activity. We are also making improvements across our fleet to provide all of our crews with access to the most up-to-date equipment. This includes buying and delivering a new Aerial Ladder Platform based centrally in the County at Horsham Fire Station. These specialist vehicles enable us to carry out rescues from tall buildings and provides us with high level firefighting water jets.

[Insert picture of Horsham's new ALP](#)

Incidents of note in 2017/18

Rowlands Road, Worthing

Crews were mobilised at 15:10 on 20 May 2017 to a kitchen fire in a flat above a shop in Worthing. Crews tackled a difficult and developing fire throughout the afternoon where an aerial vehicle was used to access the roof.

The use of a drone was really useful to the Incident Commander's tactical plan and crews were praised for their hard work.

Gala Bingo should be recognised for their support throughout the incident for providing welfare facilities for our crews.



Rowfant Business Park

Crews were mobilised to a cylinder fire at Rowfant Business Park at 01:16 on 26 June 2017. Initial attendance was two fire engines and at the height of the fire 10 were used including the Gatwick foam tender which proved invaluable as it is able to project a large quantity of foam over a long distance.

We worked together with crews from East Sussex and Surrey fire and rescue services as well as other emergency responders. A drone was used and provided excellent aerial footage enabling the Operational Commander to make best use of available resources.



Glider stuck in tree

At 14:53 on 18 September 2017, Sussex Control Centre received an emergency call to a hang glider and pilot who had crashed into trees at Devils Dyke.

Crews were sent to the incident with a further specialist rescue team who specialise in rescues from height.

Due to the complexity of the incident additional officers were also ordered for incident command and tactical decision making.

The crews were faced with a complex rescue of a pilot and his hang glider which had crashed and was precariously wedged within the tree canopy between two trees on the north side of the South Downs situated on a steep slope. The pilot was approximately 20-25 metres above the ground hanging from his harness.

We worked with South East Coast Ambulance supported by their Hazard Area Response Team Sussex Police and Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance helicopters.

Fire and Rescue teams established a safe working area for all agencies and undertook what was without doubt a technical, complex and specialist rescue. The rescue was successfully completed with the pilot being returned to the ground. He was taken to hospital for precautionary examination.



Iping Common

Crews were mobilised at 11:28 on 28 February 2018 to a heath fire at Iping Common. The first appliance booked in attendance from Midhurst and asked for a further three fire engines. This incident then escalated to eight fire engines and two water carriers. The fire affected approximately 30 hectares of heathland before it was extinguished.

Sussex Wildlife Trust were grateful to the fire service and for the opportunity to attend the debrief. They confirmed that the fire has not damaged the reserve and the risk to neighbours was avoided.



Water shortage

West Sussex County Council including the fire and rescue service provided help and support to villages who lost their water supply during March 2018.

Water shortages hit parts of Mid Sussex and Crawley as a result of severe cold weather which caused issues such as water leaks as frozen pipes thawed.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and staff from the county council helped to ensure that households in the affected areas had a regular fresh drinking water supply. More than 2,500 bottles of water were distributed to vulnerable local people.

This included going door to door handing out water supplies, checking what support people needed and checking water supply problems.

They also delivered water to central pick-up points and directly to care homes and other services which rely on water. The county council's meals on wheels service also delivered water alongside its normal service.

The county council as a whole worked together with water companies to support residents and businesses to get back to normal.

People

Our Training, Development and Assurance (TDA) team are responsible for the delivery and commissioning of all learning and development requirements within WSFRS.

Our primary role is to ensure that we have a safe, competent and well trained workforce that can deliver a first class service to our residents. Key training requirements include, but are not limited to the following: wholetime and on call recruit training, breathing apparatus, road traffic collisions and incident command.

Core Training Delivered 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2018

Course Type	Number of Courses	Number of Students	Number of Training Days
Wholetime Recruits	3 Courses:	35 Students:	183 Training Days in report period.
On Call Recruits	3 Courses	30 Students	30 Training Days
Breathing Apparatus Initial	4 Courses	26 Students	44 Training Days
Annual Breathing Apparatus Refreshers	64 Courses: Mod 1A (Heat & Smoke) 33 Courses Mod 1B (Compartment Fire) 31 Courses	384 Students: Mod 1A 176 Students Mod 1B 208 Students	64 Training Days:
RTC Initial	2 Courses	15 Students	8 Training Days
HazMat Initial	2 Courses	13 Students	6 Training Days
Incident Command	31 Courses: ICS Level 1 Requal/Re-assess: 24 Courses ICS Level 1 Initial: 3 Courses ICS Level 2 Requal 3 Courses ICS Level 2 Initial:	99 Students: ICS Level 1 Requal/Re-assess: 70 Students ICS Level 1 Initial: 14 Students ICS Level 2 Requal 11 Students ICS Level 2 Initial:	55 Training Days: ICS Level 1 Requal/Re-assess: 29 Training Days ICS Level 1 Initial: 15 Training Days ICS Level 2 Requal 6 Training Days ICS Level 2 Initial:

	1 Course	4 Students	5 Training Days
Emergency Response Driver Training (ERDT)	114 Courses:	114 Students:	194 Training Days:
Wade Rescue	15 Courses: Wade Refresher: 14 Courses Wade Initial: 1 Course	127 Students: Wade Refresher: 121 Students Wade Initial: 6 Students	17 Training Days: Wade Refresher: 14 Training Days Wade Initial: 3 Training Days
IECR	10 Courses: IECR Refresher: 8 Courses IECR Initial: 2 Courses	60 Students: IECR Refresher: 47 Students IECR Initial: 13 Students	18 Training Days: IECR Refresher: 8 Training Days IECR Initial: 10 Training Days

To support this training we also utilise the realistic facilities at the Fire Service College.

2017/18 Fire Service College Courses

Course Type	Number of Courses	Number of students
Live Fire Training	3	32
Level 1 Incident Command Consolidation	4	35
Wholetime Recruits Consolidation	3	35
Level 2/3 Incident Command	6	9

The TDA team have also completed the new two yearly Maintenance of Competence (MOC) programme in 2017/18, this combines the 34 maintenance of knowledge

modules and the 22 maintenance of core skills modules. This included the completion of **7940** supporting e-learning courses.

Another successful wholetime recruitment campaign was completed in August 2018. This resulted in 24 new wholetime employees joining the service, 25% of whom were women. This brings the number of female wholetime employees to 7.9% which compares to 5.5% as a national average.

Four new members of staff have joined WSFRS from neighbouring fire and rescue services following a competitive promotion process, this includes three Station Managers and one Watch Manager.

Eight on call assessment days were facilitated by People Support, this resulted in three on call initial courses for 30 new recruits.

The below table details the number of starters and leavers for wholetime and on call staff during 2017/18.

Contract Type	Starters	Leavers
Wholetime	24	25 (15 Retirements)
On Call	47*	43 (4 Retirements)

These figures show that our 2017/18 recruitment activity was aligned to the numbers of employees leaving the service. The main reason for wholetime leavers was retirement, whereas on call leavers were mainly due to personal reasons.

*30 new recruits were trained during 2017/18; however a further 17 were employed to undertake training from April 2018 onwards.

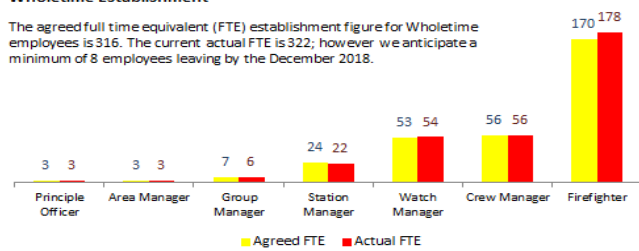
Workforce Data

The following workforce data represents WSFRS performance measures in relation to The People & Culture Development Strategy. This data provides helpful information and evidence to support the strategy and the action arising from it. It will also help us to measure the ongoing progress of the action plans that support delivery of the strategy.



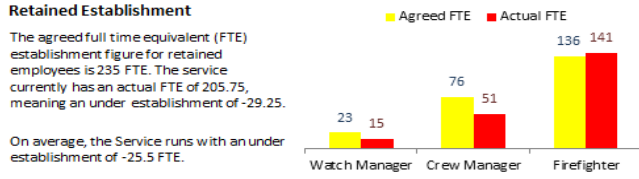
Wholetime Establishment

The agreed full time equivalent (FTE) establishment figure for Wholetime employees is 316. The current actual FTE is 322; however we anticipate a minimum of 8 employees leaving by the December 2018.

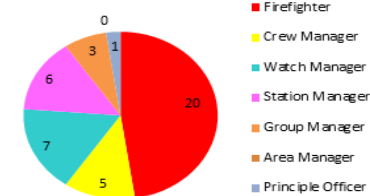


Retained Establishment

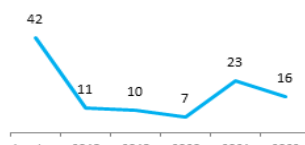
The agreed full time equivalent (FTE) establishment figure for retained employees is 235 FTE. The service currently has an actual FTE of 205.75, meaning an under establishment of -29.25.



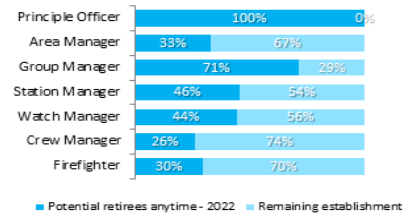
Potential Retirees



A total of 42 employees can retire at any time with a further 67 forecasted to potentially retire by the end of 2022.

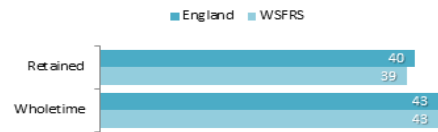


This graph shows a retirement forecast up to 2022 as a percentage of the current establishment. More than half of employees currently in middle to senior management positions can retire by December 2022.



Age

At WSFRS the average age for Wholetime employees is 43 and for Retained employees is 39. These figures correlate with the national averages for England.



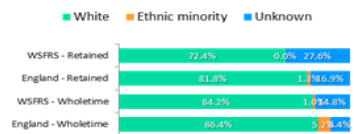
Gender

	Male		Female	
	WSFRS	England	WSFRS	England
Wholetime	92.1%	94.5%	7.9%	5.5%
Retained	97.1%	95.5%	2.9%	4.5%

At WSFRS 7.9% of Wholetime employees are female compared to 5.5% nationally and 2.9% of Retained employees are female compared to 4.5% nationally.

Ethnicity

At WSFRS 1% of Wholetime employees are from an ethnic minority compared to 5.2% nationally 0% of Retained employees are from an ethnic minority compared to 1.3% nationally. It is worth noting the ethnicity of a significant proportion of employees at WSFRS is unknown.



Integration and Collaboration

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 now places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together.

We have set up a Collaboration and Integration Board to make sure we explore opportunities that arise. This is one of four key boards set up to implement the work from the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

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 see the benefit of working with other fire and rescue services to save money. Examples include joint procurements such as uniforms and thermal imaging camera.

Home Office Inspectorate

Changes were announced to the inspection regime of fire services in 2017. This expanded the remit of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary to become HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is in the second wave of services to be inspected. It is anticipated the inspection will take place in late 2018.

Inspections will allow the public to see – from a small number of easy to understand categories – how well their local fire & rescue service is performing and improving year on year.

Inspections will aim to:

- Facilitate the improvement of the services provided by FRSs so that they may reduce the risks faced by local communities.
- Establish good practice and areas for improvement.
- Improve accountability of fire & rescue services to the communities they serve.

Inspections will be risk-based and proportionate, with rounded inspections and graded judgments. The inspection regime will focus on three areas: effectiveness, efficiency and leadership. Fire services will be judged in the following categories: outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.

One Public Estate (OPE) is a national programme, jointly managed by Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association, that brings public sector organisations together. By working in partnership we can look at how we can use our land and buildings collaboratively to:

- Improve public services to residents, visitors, employees and businesses in the county.
- Renew and rationalise the public estate so there is a reduction in the amount of money we spend on buildings.
- Free up much needed land for the development of housing, commercial and employment space.
- Support local economic growth.
- Generate capital receipts and income.

There are a number of projects that West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is part of through the One Public Estate West Sussex Partnership including:

- Burgess Hill: This project will see the redevelopment of a number of sites within public sector ownership at The Brow. Proposals include the creation of a new tri-service blue light centre,

new housing and commercial space to support regeneration in the area.

- Drayton Depot: A combined highways, transport and emergency services facility. This will provide fleet maintenance facilities for WSCC, as well as three fire and rescue services (West Sussex, East Sussex and Surrey) Surrey Police, Sussex Police and SECamb. Full feasibility, viability and designs are underway with a view to work starting on site early in 2019.
- Horsham: Two projects are underway, the first of which is a new combined blue light centre to provide operational and training facilities for WSFRS and Sussex Police. This project will release current blue light sites to enable Horsham District Council to delivery their planned regeneration of Hurst Road.
- Littlehampton: This project will be delivered in two phases. The first phase will deliver a new tri-service blue light operational centre with accommodation for fire, police and ambulance services. The second phase will bring together a number of sites at Maltravers/Fitzalan Road for a new public services hub, health provision and housing.

Events of note



As a service we are invited to attend a number of national and local events throughout the year. These include attending the service of remembrance in London as well as local services across the county.

We also hold our annual Christmas carol service at Chichester Cathedral where staff and the public are invited to attend.

This year we welcomed in the new High Sheriff of West Sussex by attending the ceremony in Lewes.

Throughout the year we undertake several charity events across the county these include charity car washes, the three peaks challenges and other events to raise money for local and national causes.

We also hold community open days across the county for the public to come into fire stations and meet the crews and experience what it is like to be a firefighter. We also promote community and fire safety advice.

At the end of all our whole time courses the recruits organise a charity event to raise money for the firefighters charity and a chosen local good cause. This year was a ladder climb event that was the equivalent of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro (5895m) in just two hours. The recruits raised over £1000.

Our awards/medals



Each year firefighters are honoured at a medal service held at Arundel Castle. Our Chief Fire Officer Commendations recognise people from across West Sussex for outstanding service to their communities. Those singled out for their courage, dedication and selflessness in the last year included members of the public and serving firefighters for their actions both on and off-duty. Long service certificates along with long service and good conduct medals were also awarded.

The awards also recognised organisations and partners who have supported the fire service throughout the year, alongside volunteers and individuals who have contributed to the firefighters charity.

What people thought about us

After every incident we attend we send out a customer feedback survey, overall 100% of respondents were satisfied with the way the fire service dealt with their incident. 96% of respondents were very satisfied with our service.

Among the comments received:

FANTASTIC SERVICE, THANK YOU. FRIENDLY, EFFICIENT AND HELPFUL. WE FELT THEY HAD JUST SAVED OUR HOUSE FROM BURNING DOWN. YET THEY APOLOGISED FOR GETTING DIRTY FOOT PRINTS ON THE FLOOR!

FRIENDLY AND REASSURING. DID A THERMAL IMAGING CHECK OF THE FLUE FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP OF THE HOUSE. CONFIRMED IT WAS NOT A CHIMNEY FIRE.

THEY WERE ALL CALM AND COLLECTED AND EACH MEMBER WAS SO DEDICATED. I MAINTAINED CONVERSATION WITH TWO OF THEM WHO UPDATED ME WITH PROGRESS OF THE EVENT. WHEN I VISITED THEM AT THE STATION THEY WERE ALL VERY WELCOMING.

THEY WORKED AS A COHESIVE TEAM. THEY DID NOT LEAVE THE HOUSE UNTIL I WAS COMPLETELY SATISFIED THERE WAS NO DANGER. EXCELLENT SERVICE.

It is also important we listen to residents when things have not gone so well.

THE SERVICE SEEMED SLOW TO ARRIVE, PROMPTING ME TO CALL A SECOND TIME. THE DELAY SEEMED TO RESULT FROM OUR LOCATION ON THE BOUNDARIES OF THREE COUNTIES, WHICH WAS CONCERNING.

THEY WENT PAST OUR DRIVE TO START WITH AND HAD TO TURN AROUND.

To make sure we do even better for our communities, we will continue to evaluate our customer base and develop a customer strategy. We will do this by looking at ways we can more effectively engage with local people to understand their needs.

Contact us

To find out more on West Sussex Fire and Rescue please follow the link to our website:
<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-rescue-service/>

Your views and comments on this Annual Report are very welcome.

If you have feedback or any questions please get in touch with us.

By email: **wsfrs@westsussex.gov.uk**

By telephone: **01243 786211**

Or write to us at:

**West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service headquarters
Northgate
Chichester
PO19 1BD**

In addition, members of the community can get involved with our work and get updates through our Facebook and Twitter pages, through their local county councillor and through WSCC's local County Local Committee meetings.