



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**To: The Chair and Members of the Devon &
Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority**

(see below)

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Your ref :
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Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Wednesday, 10 November, 2021

A meeting of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10.00 am in the Committee Rooms, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)**
of the previous meeting held on 29 September 2021 attached.
- 3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**
Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE

4 Questions and Petitions from the Public

In accordance with [Standing Orders](#), to consider any questions and petitions submitted by the public. Questions must relate to matters to be considered at this meeting of the Authority. Petitions must relate to matters for which the Authority has a responsibility or which affects the Authority. Neither questions nor petitions may require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information. Questions and petitions must be submitted in writing or by e-mail to the Clerk to the Authority (e-mail address: clerk@dsfire.gov.uk) **by midday on Friday 5 November 2021.**

5 Addresses by Representative Bodies

To receive addresses from representative bodies requested and approved in accordance with Standing Orders.

6 Questions from Members of the Authority

To receive and answer any questions submitted in accordance with Standing Orders.

7 Minutes of Committees

a People Committee (Pages 7 - 12)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Bown, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2021 (attached).

RECOMMENDATION that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

b Audit & Governance Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Healey MBE, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2021 **to follow**.

RECOMMENDATION that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

c Community Safety Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 **to follow**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a). that any recommendation in relation to the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027 be considered in conjunction with item 8 below; and
- (b). that, subject to (a) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

8 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27 (Pages 13 - 134)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/21/25) attached.

- 9 **Firefighters Pensions Schemes - Immediate Detriment Framework (Pages 135 - 140)**
Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/21/26) attached.
- 10 **Confirmation of Members' Allowances Scheme 2022-23 (Pages 141 - 146)**
Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/21/27) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Best, Biederman, Bown, Brazil, Dr. Buchan, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Corvid, Drear, Hannaford, Healey MBE, Long, McGeough, Napper, Parker-Khan, Peart, Prowse, Radford, Randall Johnson (Chair), Redman, Roome, Scott, Shayer, Thomas (Vice-Chair) and Vijeh.

NOTES

1. **Access to Information**

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the “Please ask for” section at the top of this agenda.

2. **Reporting of Meetings**

Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.

Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

3. **Declarations of Interests at meetings (Authority Members only)**

If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:

- (i) disclose at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a “sensitive” interest – the nature of that interest; and then
- (ii) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.

If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have an interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (i) and (ii) above.

Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.

Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.

	NOTES (Continued)
4.	<p><u>Part 2 Reports</u></p> <p>Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.</p>
5.	<p><u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u></p> <p>Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.</p>
6.	<p><u>Other Attendance at Committees)</u></p> <p>Any Authority Member wishing to attend, in accordance with Standing Orders, a meeting of a Committee of which they are not a Member should contact the Democratic Services Officer (see “please ask for” on the front page of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.</p>

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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

29 September 2021

Present:

Councillors Randall Johnson (Chair), Best, Biederman, Bown, Brazil, Dr. Buchan, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Corvid, Drean, Healey MBE, Long, Napper, Parker-Khan, Peart, Radford, Roome, Scott, Shayer and Thomas (Vice-Chair).

Apologies:

Councillors Hannaford, Prowse, Redman and Vijeh.

DSFRA/21/15 Minutes

a Authority Annual Meeting 29 June 2021

The Minutes of the Authority Annual Meeting held on 29 June 2021 were signed as a correct record.

b Authority Ordinary Meeting 29 June 2021

The Minutes of the Authority Ordinary Meeting held on 29 June 2021 were signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/21/16 Minutes of Committees

a People Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Bown, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2021 which had considered, amongst other things:

- appointments to the Internal Disputes Resolution Panel;
- future scrutiny arrangements for the Committee;
- a progress report on the Service People Strategy;
- an update on firefighter annual fitness testing; and
- the annual Diversity and Recruitment report 2020.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

b Community Safety Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2021 which had considered, amongst other things:

- future scrutiny arrangements for the Committee;
- a report on match-funding for domestic fire suppression systems; and
- development of the Community Risk Management Plan.

The Authority Chair advised that the recommendation at Minute CR/21/3 (Match funding of Domestic Sprinklers), together with the item later on the agenda for this meeting on a proposed amendment to Financial Regulations, had been deferred pending development of a policy to address match-funding of domestic fire suppression systems. This would be submitted to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minutes DSFRA/21/18 and DSFRA/21/21 below)

c Audit & Governance Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Healey MBE, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2021 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on the Authority Financial Statements for the 2020-21 financial year;
- interim audit findings on the Authority's 2020-21 Financial Statements;
- an internal audit report for the 2020-21 financial year;
- an internal audit progress report for the first quarter of the 2021-22 financial year;
- the Local Pension Board Annual Report 2020-21; and
- a report on application of the Authority's policy in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minute DSFRA/21/19 below).

d Resources Committee Public Minutes

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **MOVED** the public Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on Treasury Management performance during the first quarter of the current (2021-22) financial year;
- a report on Service financial performance during the first quarter of the current (2021-22) financial year;
- proposed revisions to the Capital Programme 2021-22 to 2023-24 (note: the proposed revisions were summarised in an appendix to the Minutes);
- the Reserves Strategy 2021-22 (note: a copy of the Strategy, as initially considered by the Committee, was included with the agenda for this meeting);
- future scrutiny arrangements for the Committee; and
- a report on the financial performance of Red One Ltd. during the first quarter of the current (2021-22) financial year.

RESOLVED

- (i). that the recommendations at Minutes RC/21/3 (Revision to Capital Programme 2021-22 to 2023-24) and RC/21/4 (Reserves Strategy 2021-22) be approved; and
- (ii). that, subject to (i) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minute DSFRA/21/24 below)

DSFRA/21/17 Authority Governance Processes

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Councillor Brazil had requested an item included on the agenda for this meeting as follows:

“Following the Authority’s AGM in June and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and, subsequently, the appointment of Authority Member non-executive directors to the Board of Red One Ltd., the Authority should debate the operation of its governance arrangements and also the direction in which the Authority is moving”.

Councillors Brazil, Biederman, Long, Dr. Buchan and Roome spoke to this item and expressed views that, with appointments to senior positions (e.g. Committee Chairs etc.) going to the majority political party, the Authority no longer seemed as collegiate as in previous years and that this could have a detrimental effect.

DSFRA/21/18 Development of Community Risk Management Plan - Proposals for Authority Engagement

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/21/20) on the requirement for the Authority to have a Community Risk Management Plan (formerly Integrated Risk Management Plan) and on proposals to secure full Member engagement in development of a draft Plan prior to public consultation.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Authority meeting initially scheduled for 15 December 2021 be held at 10.00hours on 10 November 2021 to enable a draft Community Risk Management Plan to be approved for public consultation purposes;
- (b). that the remaining proposals as detailed in report DSFRA/21/2 for Authority engagement in development of the draft Plan be endorsed.

DSFRA/21/19 Statement of Accounts 2020-21

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer (DSFRA/21/21) to which was appended the Authority’s Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2021.

The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 required the Accounts to be approved (following a public inspection period) by 30 September 2021.

The Regulations also required the Accounts to be published, together with the external auditor's final findings, by the same date. The external auditor had not been able to issue its final findings, however, as information was still awaited in relation to the audit of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Consequently, as provided for by the Regulations, it would be necessary to publish a notice to this effect and stating that the Statement of Accounts and final audit findings would be published as soon as the latter was available.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Authority's Statement of Accounts 2020-21 as appended to report DSFRA/21/21 be approved;
- (b). that the Treasurer be authorised to publish a notice, in accordance with Regulation 10(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) advising that it is not possible to publish the final Statement of Accounts by 30 September 2021 and that these will be published as soon as practicable following receipt of the external auditor's final findings.

(See also Minute DSFRA/16(c) above and Minute DSFRA/20 below).

DSFRA/21/20 2020-21 Annual Statement of Assurance (FINAL)

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/21/22) to which was appended the final Statement of Assurance for 2020-21.

The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended), together with the Fire & Rescue National Framework for England, required each fire and rescue authority to produce an annual statement of assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. Although primarily backward looking, the Statement also features an action plan to address, in the forthcoming financial year, any issues identified as part of the review process.

The draft Statement had been approved in principle by the then Audit & Performance Review Committee on 5 March 2021 after which it had been submitted to the external auditors alongside the Authority's Statement of Accounts for 2020-21. Comments received from the external auditors had been addressed as part of the final Statement now presented.

RESOLVED that the final Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21 as appended to report DSFRA/21/22 and required to accompany the Statement of Accounts 2020-21 be approved and published on the Authority's website.

(See also Minute DSFRA/21/19 above).

DSFRA/21/21 Amendment to Financial Regulations

Note: this item was deferred by the Chair to a future meeting pending production of a policy framework for the match-funding of domestic fire suppression systems.

(See also Minute DSFRA/21/16(b) above).

DSFRA/21/22 Resources Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Appointments

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/21/24) on:

- a proposed revision to the Terms of Reference for the Resources Committee on responsibility for assisting in development and subsequent monitoring of the Service Environmental Strategy; and
- vacancies on the Resources Committee resulting from the appointment of Authority Member non-executive directors to the Board of Red One Ltd.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Terms of Reference of the Resources Committee be amended as indicated in paragraph 1.4 of report DSFRA/21/24;
- (b). that the following appointments be made, the term of office to be until the Authority Annual Meeting in 2022:
 - (i). Councillors Chesterton and Thomas to the vacancies on the Resources Committee;
 - (ii). Councillor Shayer to replace Councillor Thomas on the Audit & Governance Committee.

DSFRA/21/23 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information.

DSFRA/21/24 Resources Committee 9 September 2021 Restricted Minutes

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

(Councillors Radford and Shayer each declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of being Authority-appointed non-executive directors to the Board of Red One Ltd. Councillors Radford and Shayer both left the meeting and took no part in the decision on the item).

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **MOVED** the restricted Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 which had considered a report on the financial performance of Red One Ltd. for the first quarter of the current (2021-22) financial year.

RESOLVED that the restricted Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minute DSFRA/21/16(d) above).

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.50 am

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PEOPLE COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

14 October 2021

Present:

Councillors Bown (Chair), Clayton (Vice-Chair), Hannaford, Peart and Thomas.

Also in attendance in accordance with Standing Order 39:

Councillor Randall Johnson.

Apologies:

Councillors Best and Brazil.

* **PC/21/7** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that, subject to Minute *PC/21/1 (Minutes) being amended to read:

“**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the former Human Resources Management & Development Committee meeting held on 3 March 2021 be signed as a correct record. **Note:** this Committee replaced the Human Resources Management & Development Committee on 29 June 2021.”

the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2021 be signed as a correct record.

* **PC/21/8** **People Strategy Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/6) on progress to date in implementing the approved People Strategy 2019-2022.

In summary, of the 53 initial areas of focus identified in the strategy, all but six were now operating and progressing. The implementation of Pay for Availability (P4A) had secured greater flexibility for on-call contracts. Flexible whole-time contracts had not progressed for several reasons as outlined in the report including:

- limited capacity of the project team;
- the establishment of a National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) “Working Patterns” project to look at, amongst other things, whole-time duty systems. This would, in turn, potentially impact on any Service initiative around, for example, direct entry to support greater diversity in leadership roles;
- the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on cross-sector secondments.

The Service's ambition to address direct entry to support greater diversity in leadership roles had not progressed as this area of work had subsequently emerged as an NFCC initiative. Consequently, the Service would take its lead from that work when complete. In addition, the Service needed to focus on supporting established career pathways rather than introducing alternative career pathways.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, the Service ambition to support a range of cross-sector secondments to improve learning and development had not progressed, with the exception of secondments to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and support for the South West Ambulance Services Trust (SWAST).

The Service ambition for braver, positive action practices was equally impacted by Covid-19. Plans for a refreshed approach, featuring the use of an outreach practical assessment vehicle, were currently being revived.

A 'Connecting to Communities' project planned before Covid-19 had been paused but was now being revisited, in particular linking with the renewed approach to prevention work being undertaken by wholetime crews.

These areas would remain an area of focus in the longer term (including the successor People Strategy to be implemented from 2022) and would be informed by the outcomes of the current inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and a workplace review (to include a comprehensive staff survey) to commence in the first quarter of 2022-23.

The Committee received further information on the following areas that had progressed since the previous report:

- **Leadership:** a number of face-to-face, "Leading Conversations" had been held for middle managers across operational and support teams. The sessions featured, amongst other things, discussions on strategic priorities and psychological safety.
- **Inclusion:** work was in progress to integrate the NFCC Core Code of Ethics into the communication and learning strategy. A Fairness and Respect toolkit had been launched, as part of the Fairness and Respect policy, to support staff who may experience, witness or manage bullying and harassment and to provide more data on informal or previously unreported incidents. The "Safe to..." initiative, a multi-layered intervention to support inclusive leadership, positive behaviours and effective teams, continued to be progressed. An Aging Workforce Group had been established to inform actions needed to support retention, succession planning and sustainability in service delivery as part of the next iteration (2022-26) of the People Strategy.
- **Ways of Working:** in addition to the introduction of flexible on-call contracts, a new Workforce Planning Board had been established to review, monitor and plan appropriate actions across stakeholders to forecast and address vacancies and emerging needs in recruitment in support of succession planning and sustainability of service delivery.

- **Learning and Development:** Leadership and Management apprenticeships were underway and a wider Apprenticeship strategy developed to support a cohesive and sustainable approach to utilising levy spend in developing both new starters and existing staff.
- **Health, Safety and Wellbeing:** In addition to the “Safe to...” initiative, a “Just Culture” had been embedded in the Service Health & Safety policy. Foundational learning and engagement with operational management teams was complete and engagement with operational crews was underway. The Service assessment against the National Police Wellbeing Service (Oscar Kilo), a framework of clear statements to ensure has robust and proactive wellbeing provision for employees, had been completed and was awaiting peer review. Additionally, a mental health and well-being intervention framework had been developed to support managers and staff.

* PC/21/9

Performance Monitoring Report

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/7) on Service performance during April to June 2021 against the following strategic priorities as approved by the Authority at its ordinary meeting on 29 June 2021:

Strategic Priority 3(a): ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively. Key Performance Indicators associated with this strategic objective and summarised in the report were:

- operational core competence skills (breathing apparatus; incident command; water rescue; working at height/in confined spaces; maritime; driving; and casualty care). The Committee had resolved to monitor at 95% (based on a three-month average) and to request more detail if competency against any core skill fell below this;
- workforce planning (a six-monthly measure on the adequacy of plans to ensure the filling of vacancies with the right candidates);
- health & safety;
- near miss events;
- personal injuries;
- sickness due to accident at work (note, the Service was below average when compared to the national average);
- vehicle incidents;
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR);

- sickness and absence, benchmarked as appropriate against other fire and rescue services and seeking to secure a reduction in quarterly absence figures for short- and long-term sickness. These measures included:
 - shift days lost by sickness for all staff types (benchmarked against other fire and rescue services); and
 - mental health (including stress interventions); and
- fitness testing (measuring of the percentage of operational staff passing the annual fitness test and three-yearly medical).

Strategic Priority 3(b): increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect communities served, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure the Service is a fair place to work and where organisational values are a lived experience. Key Performance Indicators associated with this strategic objective and summarised in the report were:

- diversity. An annual measure looking to see a year-on-year increase in relation to:
 - % female staff;
 - % BAME;
 - % Female senior roles;
 - % BAME senior roles;
 - % LGBT senior roles.
- promoting inclusion, developing strong leaders, living the values (including bullying, harassment and discrimination and grievances, capability and disciplinary actions). Associated performance measures were extracted from external (e.g. HMICFRS) and internal staff surveys, working towards a year-on-year improvement.

Strategic Priority 3(c): recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention. Key Performance Indicators associated with this strategic objective were:

- Pay for Availability (P4A) benefits. As P4A was still to be fully implemented, it was intended to have performance metrics linked to its impact on increasing on-call recruitment in due course.
- Employee recruitment and retention. This featured as part of the Annual Diversity report. Consequently, to avoid duplication, it was proposed that this should be removed from the performance report to this Committee.

- Employee engagement. This would measure an increase in participation in both internal and external staff surveys. It was proposed that this should be included in future versions of the annual report.

In debating this report, the following issues were raised:

- that, in the next report, the Committee would expect to see an improvement against water safety core competence given that this was reported at 90.9%. It was acknowledged, though, that the current report indicated the rationale for this, which was expanded on in the meeting together with information being provided on measures to address this;
- that, in reporting near misses, it was important to encourage accurate reporting so as to improve the Service safety culture. An appropriate reporting measure for near misses could, however, be helpful;
- that there would be benefit in having a measures to assess the impact of the introduction of smaller-type appliances on vehicle incidents;
- that future reporting of fitness testing should include only those staff for whom a fitness test was required;
- that a measure be developed to determine the percentage of on-call fire stations for which the Service was aiming to introduce the Pay for Availability contract. It was noted, however, that issues relating to collective agreements meant that the Service was not seeking to mandate the adoption of Pay for Availability for all stations;
- that the RAG rating included in the table summarising all performance against the key indicators for each strategic priority was helpful but could be further improved by an additional “direction of travel” column.

RESOLVED

- (a). that future reports include an annual measure on grievance, capability and discipline;
- (b). that diversity statistics be reported, separately, in an annual report to avoid duplication;
- (c). that a measure regarding Service aspiration for the adoption of the Pay for Availability duty system be developed and reported to the next meeting;
- (d). that the Service Strategic Safety Committee be asked to consider an appropriate measure for reporting on near-misses, with the outcome to be reported to the next Committee meeting; and
- (e). that, subject to (a) to (d) above, the report be noted.

* **PC/21/10** **Application for Retirement and/or Re-employment**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/8) on a request for the re-employment (on a zero-hours contract basis; on the same paygrade as prior to retirement, less flexi-officer allowance) of an Area Manager following retirement. This would assist with development of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27 and was supported by the Service Executive Board.

The Authority's approved Pay Policy Statement 2021-22 required all requests for re-employment following retirement to be approved by this Committee for Station Manager to Area Manager (or non-uniformed equivalent) posts.

RESOLVED that the request for re-employment following retirement as set out in paragraph 2.3 of report PC/21/8 and summarised above be approved.

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.10 pm

Agenda Item 8

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/21/25
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	10 NOVEMBER 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	DRAFT COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-2027
LEAD OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That, subject to incorporation of any amendments as may be agreed at this meeting, the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27 as appended to this report be approved for consultation purposes.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires Fire and Rescue services to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan. In line with guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council and the recently published Fire Standard the Service is fulfilling this requirement by producing a Community Risk Management Plan (“the Plan”).</p> <p>The Plan covers the next five years and provides an overview of the foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks faced by the communities in Devon and Somerset and identifies the plans for tackling those risks through prevention, protection and emergency response activities.</p> <p>The range of incidents and activities attended by the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”) is extremely broad and has increased over recent years. The role of the Service is to horizon scan and identify emerging risks and trends both across our communities and to its staff. The Service will ensure it considers within the Plan any emerging risks over the next five years and evaluates evidence to inform, support and develop the resilience of both the Service and the communities of Devon and Somerset.</p> <p>The document to be published for consultation purposes will be enhanced with suitable graphics and drafting modifications addressed. Any amendments as agreed by the Authority at this meeting will also be incorporated.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	N/A
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	The Service needs to use a range of activities and approaches to ensure equality of access in terms of its messaging, provision of services and employment. Working with individuals, representatives, groups and organisations from specific communities as well as in partnership with other statutory bodies such as County Councils, District Councils and the Police is essential to successfully meeting community needs.

	<p>A full equality impact assessment will identify any disproportionate impacts on groups of people within the communities of Devon and Somerset. This will be further developed following any changes recommended by the Community Safety Committee.</p> <p>In terms of the draft Plan now presented, the proposed actions to mitigate the risk contained in the Plan do appear to have a positive impact on all members the community - some more positive than others, but all leading to a safer place in which to work and live. No negative impacts have been identified to date.</p> <p>The current Equality Impact Assessment for the draft Plan is appended to this report.</p>
APPENDICES	<p>A. Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027</p> <p>B. Strategic Risk Analysis</p> <p>C. Equality Impact Assessment (November 2021)</p>
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Report CSC/21/6 (Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27) to the Community Safety Committee meeting on 2 November 2021 (together with Appendix A and Appendix B to that report).</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (“the Authority”) is responsible for ensuring that the communities of Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are protected and supported by an effective and efficient fire and rescue service – the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”).
- 1.2. The Authority has a statutory duty to assess and plan for threats and risks to the communities it serves. All fire and rescue services maintain a response capability to ensure that they can respond, along with partners as required, to foreseeable risks identified at a local, regional and national level. This requirement is met through the Community Risk Management Plan (“the Plan”), where key challenges and risks are identified together with how it is proposed to mitigate and address these risks.
- 1.3. The Service has an integrated approach to keeping its communities safe through prevention, protection and response activities. The Service aims to meet the requirements of over 1.8m people. In doing so, the Service will always seek to prevent incidents from occurring but when needed will also respond effectively and efficiently to minimise harm and economic loss.
- 1.4. Through the Plan the Service demonstrates how its protection, prevention and response activities have and will be used collectively to prevent and/or mitigate fires and other incidents to reduce the impact on communities (including the business sector), firefighters and to promote economic wellbeing.
- 1.5. The Plan should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Strategic Risk Analysis. This Analysis outlines future trends anticipated in the next five years and top level plans aimed at keeping communities and staff safe.
- 1.6. This report, together with the attached Community Risk Management Plan and Strategic Risk Analysis, have been considered by the Community Safety Committee at its meeting on 2 November 2021. The comments and proposals stemming from the Community Safety Committee meeting have been incorporated into the draft CRMP as attached to this report at Appendix A.

2. THE COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 2.1. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires each fire and rescue service to prepare an Integrated Risk Management Plan. In line with guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council and the recently published Fire Standard, the Service is fulfilling this requirement by producing a Community Risk Management Plan (“the Plan”). This Plan provides an overview of how the Service will align its activities to keep people safe from fire and rescue-related risks by balancing its resources across Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response. The Plan is underpinned by strategic duties and responsibilities including the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

- 2.2. The Plan now proposed covers a five-year period from 2022- 2027. It provides an overview of fire and rescue-related risks faced by the communities in Devon and Somerset and identifies the plans for tackling those risks through our prevention, protection and emergency response activities. The Plan provides the strategy to helping keep Devon and Somerset communities, its environment, homes and people safe from fire and other emergencies. The Service will ensure it considers any emerging risks over the next five years and evaluates evidence to inform, support and develop the resilience of both of services provided and the communities served. The impacts of extreme events can be devastating and far reaching for communities, therefore the Service will seek to improve community resilience through successful engagement and partnership working.

3. THE COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

- 3.1. This is the process by which each fire and rescue service assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in their area and drives how resources are used in the most effective way to save lives, improve public safety and reduce emergency incidents. The planning is a continuous process with three main stages.
- Stage 1 – identifying and assessing risk;
 - Stage 2 - managing and reducing risk; and
 - Stage 3 - measuring performance and evaluating impact.
- 3.2. In development of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027, the following Service priorities (as approved by the Authority) were used as key drivers:
- Priority 1: Targeted prevention and protection activities to reduce risks in communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing, and supporting the local economy;
 - Priority 2: Service operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in the Community Risk Management Plan;
 - Priority 3: the Service is recognised as a great place to work: its staff feel valued, supported, safe, and well-trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.
 - Priority 4: The Service is open and accountable, using its resources efficiently to deliver an effective, sustainable service that demonstrates improving public value.
- 3.3. The range of incidents and activities the Service attends is extremely broad and has increased over recent years along with the equipment needed to deal with each incident type. This range of incidents and emerging risks have been the focus in developing the five-year Plan now presented. In addition, the Service recognises its roll in horizon scanning to identify newly emerging risks and trends across both communities and its staff.

3.4. By examining data and listening to staff, partners and those who live and work in Devon and Somerset as part of a pre-engagement process, the Service has sought to identify the key fire and rescue-related risks and how it can work with its partners and communities to reduce those risks. The findings from these engagement events have been reflected in the draft Plan now presented.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. The Plan now presented has been the subject of extensive pre-engagement with both the Authority and key stakeholders including communities served, Service staff and partners. It has been informed both by analysis of incidents attended in recent years and by horizon scanning of newly emerging risks and trends across both communities and staff.

4.2. The Plan and associated Strategic Risk Analysis were considered by the Community Safety Committee at its meeting on 2 November. Any comments or proposals from that meeting will be reported to this meeting for consideration by the Authority alongside the Plan.

4.3. The Authority is now invited:

(a) to consider the draft Plan now presented,; and

(b) subject to incorporation of any amendments as may be indicated at this meeting, to approve the Plan for the purposes of public consultation.

4.4. Responses from the public consultation will be reported to a future meeting of the Authority to inform a decision on adoption of a final Community Risk Management Plan for 2022-27.

LEE HOWELL
Chief Fire Officer

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DRAFT

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027

“Together we will work to end preventable fire and rescue emergencies, creating a safer world for you and your family.”

This document outlines who we are and what we do. It sets out the key challenges and patterns of incidents that we experience and anticipate in the future. Specifically, it then highlights the risks facing our communities and how we intend to reduce these over the life of this plan. We then identify the resources that we have available to us to achieve our priorities and we end the document by seeking your views on our approach.

Supporting this Community Risk Management Plan is a Strategic Risk Analysis document and an Equality Impact Assessment which should be read alongside this document. It should also be noted that the Community Risk Management Plan is a strategic document. If there are significant changes proposed in the future that will have an impact on community risk, additional proportionate consultation will be undertaken in the same way that proposed changes to the Service Delivery Operating Model were consulted on in 2019.

This document explains how your fire and rescue service has assessed risk and outlines our plans to mitigate this for the next five years. Visit www.dsfire.gov.uk for details of how to provide your feedback.

About Us

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring that the communities of Somerset and Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay, are protected and supported by an effective and efficient fire and rescue service. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is the organisation put in place by the Authority to deliver its duties and responsibilities. It is the largest non-metropolitan fire and rescue service in England, covering almost 4,000 square miles. We protect 820,000 households, 74,000 businesses and a further 1.1 million visitors a year. Our service area has a network of over 13,000 miles of roads, 90% of which are smaller, rural roads and country lanes, and 700 miles of coastline. We have 332 emergency response vehicles and 1,915 dedicated staff.

Each fire and rescue authority has a statutory duty to produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) – this document. Our draft CRMP sets out the key challenges and risks facing our communities and how we intend to meet and reduce them. It demonstrates how our protection, prevention and response activities have and will be used collectively to prevent and/or mitigate fires and other incidents. This integrated approach will keep you safe and reduce the impact of emergencies on people, businesses and the local economy. We protect over 1.8m people and we will always seek to prevent incidents from occurring; but when you need us, we will respond quickly to minimise harm and economic loss.

Prevention

We believe that prevention is better than cure. We aim to stop fires and incidents happening in the first place. By doing this we not only reduce the suffering caused but also save money, for ourselves and our partners, such as the police, ambulance service, local councils and the National Health Service.

We provide home fire safety advice so that you can keep yourself safe. For most people this is through targeted social and traditional media to influence behaviour. We deliver free home safety visits to people most at risk of fire.

- We deliver home safety visits, education and campaigns.
- We work with partners to deliver road safety advice, education and campaigns.
- We work with partners to deliver water safety advice and equipment.

Our prevention and protection teams will increasingly use community partnerships as well as internal and external learning to identify trends and emerging risks to target prevention strategies. We plan to better understand local risks and help us focus our activities on those most at risk of fire and high risk locations, taking a prevention first approach. We will develop local risk management plans, involving staff, partners and communities, to help us shape and improve the service we provide.

We work with our partners to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable people by signposting appropriate help, advice and services, and helping them with basic crime prevention measures. Reducing the potential for slips, trips and falls, and reducing the likelihood of a fire, means that vulnerable people can carry on living independently in their homes.

More people are killed and seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) than in fires. With roads such as the M5, A30, A38 and A303 in our Service area, road traffic collisions form a significant part of our emergency response and we aim to educate drivers.

One in four of our residents are aged 65 years or over¹, and 60,000 of those are over 85 years. As the population ages we expect to see greater numbers of older people living with some form of impairment, many of whom will be living alone and in relative isolation given the rural nature of much of our area. (54% of the victims of fires in the home live alone, making living alone the most common factor).

Employment levels are relatively high and there are many affluent areas across the two counties. However the average hourly rate in Devon and Somerset is £9.15, significantly lower than the national average of £14.00². Those on a lower income tend to live in areas of deprivation, where the likelihood of a fire in their home is higher than those living in less deprived areas.

Help us to help you stay safe by following the advice on our website (<https://beta.dsfire.gov.uk/safety?home>).

If you have paying guests, you will also need to ensure you comply with the law - guidance is available <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/do-you-have-paying-guests>

¹ Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates

² From NOMIS labour market statistics

Protection

We carry out risk based fire protection activities guided by a risk-based approach, completing fire safety checks (lower risk premises) and fire safety audits (higher risk premises) at business premises. We work with partners to ensure fire safety in high-rise buildings and to ensure that public events are safe. The devastating fire at Grenfell Tower, London raised several significant questions over building regulations, how fire safety regulations are enforced in such premises and how the fire and rescue service respond to fires in high-rise residential premises.

We continue to focus our protection resources on the inspection of high-rise buildings and protecting buildings and the area around them. We will continue to adopt recommendations from the Grenfell Public Inquiry. We have 163 buildings within the Devon and Somerset area of buildings of six floors or above.

We are also involved in influencing the safety of buildings even before they are built. We work closely with architects, planners and owners, advising them how to maximise the safety of occupants, the public and our firefighters through technical solutions and building design. This work includes encouraging the use of sprinklers in higher risk buildings like high-rise properties, schools and residential care homes.

We work hard to support local businesses to help them reduce fire risk and be compliant with their legal responsibilities. We are the enforcing body for fire safety prosecutions and continue to take action against those who break the law. Fire protection laws are there to keep people safe whenever they enter a public building or business. We are here to help those responsible for these buildings meet the legal standards and to help them protect businesses from fire. We undertake fire safety audits based on our risk based inspection programme.

Response

Our response to emergencies is designed to get the right equipment to the right place as quickly as possible. It requires highly trained firefighters, with modern equipment, supported with risk information to respond safely. We have about 1,600 frontline operational staff and 83 fire stations across Devon and Somerset.

Our Emergency Response Standards (ERS) allow us to monitor how often we arrive within our target attendance time to dwelling fires and Road Traffic Collisions (RTC).

Our aim is for an appliance to attend dwelling fire incidents within 10 minutes of the emergency call being answered, and RTCs within 15 minutes.

The rural nature of our service area means this isn't always going to be possible, so our target is to achieve the ERS for at least 75% of eligible incidents.

On average, we arrive at an emergency in about nine minutes from answering the call.

We have:

- 13 wholetime fire stations (crewed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by immediately available wholetime firefighters and often supported with on-call firefighters)
- 68 on-call fire stations (crewed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by firefighters who are on call and respond to the fire station within five minutes of a call being received)
- two volunteer fire stations (crewed by on-call firefighters)

As well as responding to fires and road traffic collisions we also undertake a wide variety of specialist rescues, working with the police, HM Coastguard, Environment Agency and many other organisations. Examples include:

- rescuing people from height or below ground
- rescue of extremely overweight people or support to the ambulance service
- other rescues (like from lifts, cliffs, mud)
- rescuing large animals that are trapped
- people trapped within or under structures or large vehicles
- flooding
- chemical and hazardous response
- marine firefighting

All our firefighters are trained in casualty care. This is vital and means that when we are the first to arrive at an emergency we can provide immediate, and potentially lifesaving, first aid.

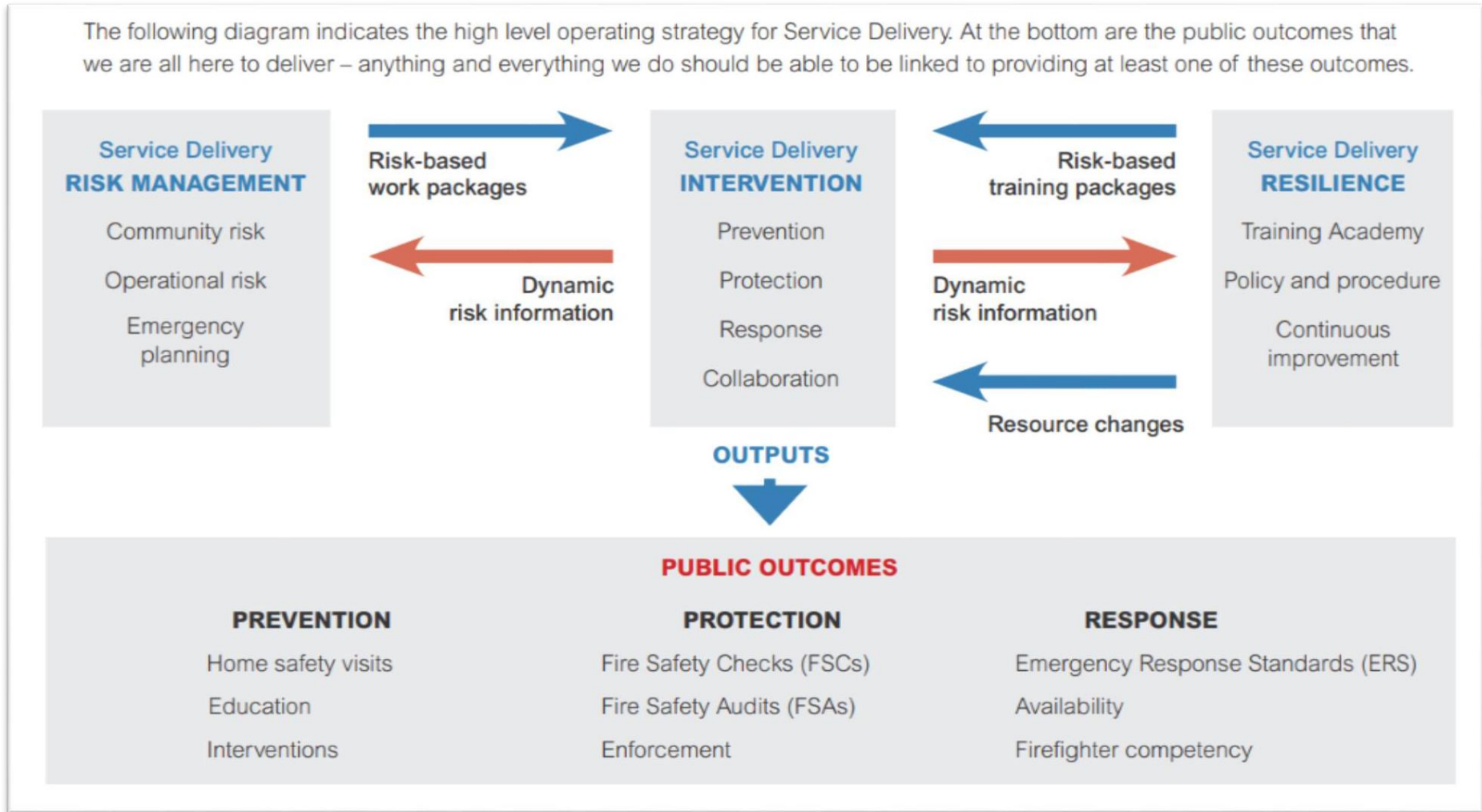
We also operate medical co-responder schemes at 20 of our fire stations, where trained firefighters attend medical emergencies at the request of the ambulance service. More recently, we have supported the ambulance service with firefighters driving ambulances during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have a statutory duty to assess and plan for threats and risks to our communities. All fire and rescue services maintain a response capability to ensure that we can respond with our partners to foreseeable risks, such as those identified at a national or regional level.

We have specialist rescue capabilities and additional specialist vehicles at various locations that will support incidents where a higher level of intervention is needed, such as mass public decontamination. We also have two specialist marauding terrorist attack teams. More information about us and how we use our resources is available on our website www.dsfire.gov.uk

Fighting fires and attending other emergency incidents is inherently dangerous. We need to ensure that we assess the risks faced by our staff and introduce control measures to reduce the risks as much as possible. We will continue to carry out operational assurance and learning to understand significant risks, providing our firefighters with access to a suite of guidance and risk information when attending incidents.

The diagram below shows how our work connects our planning activity to improved public outcomes. In essence, we use risk management to inform what needs to be done by whom, where and when. We train our staff and have effective policy and procedures to ensure that our prevention, protection and response arrangements make people safer.



Looking back

This plan provides an overview of fire and rescue-related risks faced by the communities we serve, and outlines how we will address them through our prevention, protection and emergency response activities. It's our strategy for the next five years to help keep your community, your environment, your home and you safe from fire and other emergencies.

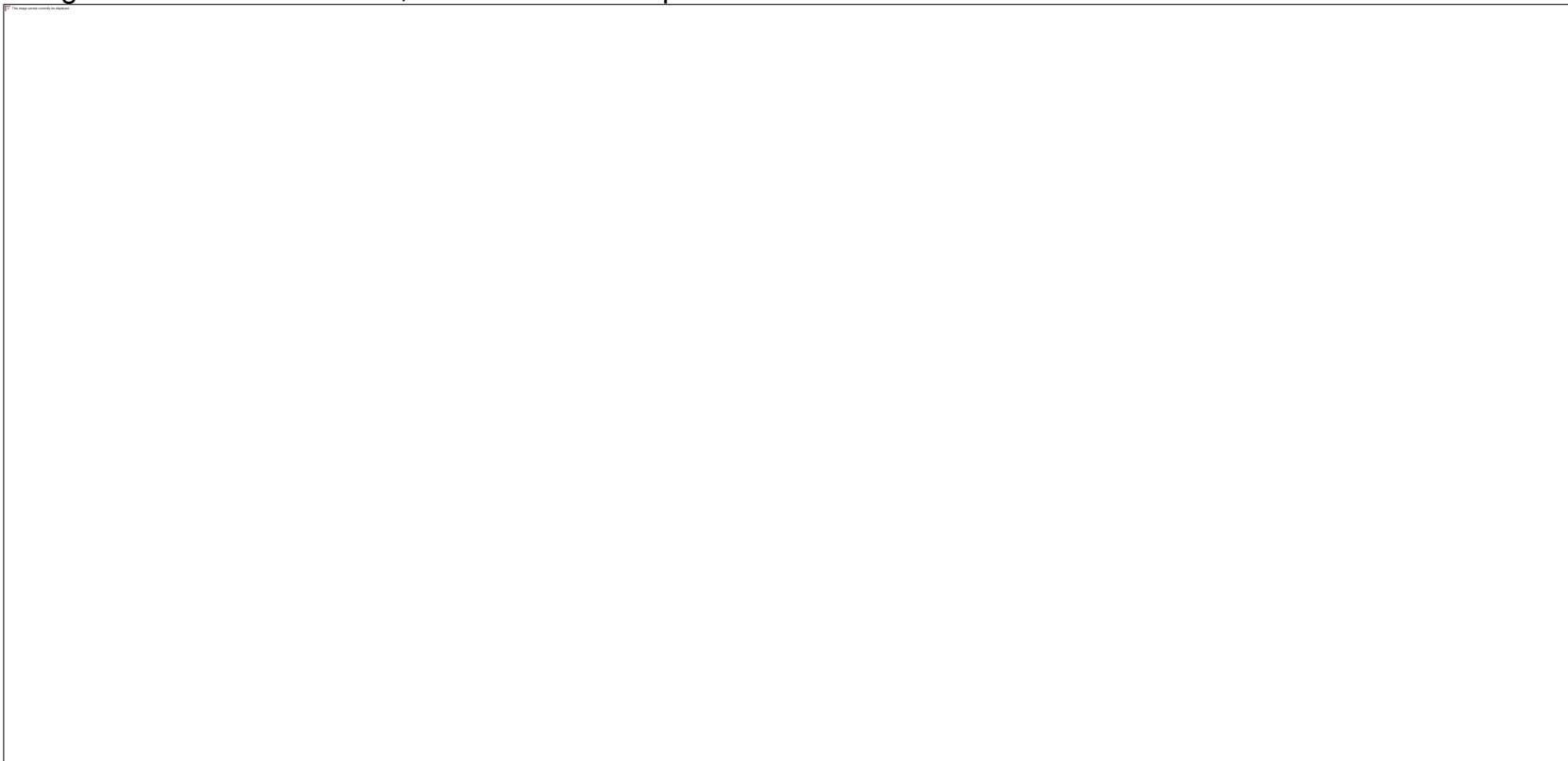
Since our last risk management plan (Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018 – 2022), we have seen a lot of change and improvements. We have relocated Topsham and Budleigh Salterton crew to Clyst St George and Exmouth. We moved fire engines and created new on-call sections at Middlemoor and Clyst St George stations, removed nine fire engines whilst maintaining operational cover and reducing costs. We have invested £3million in our on-call model to support us better match resource to risk. We have also invested in rebuilding Chagford, Brixham and Plymstock fire stations. We have bought 35 new vehicles including 15 front line fire engines and 20 specialist vehicles. We identified a need to improve our ability to get to locations off-road, so five of the new specialist vehicles are equipped to deal with this, and have improved our wildfire response.

We have introduced a new on-call duty system called Pay for Availability (P4A), meaning we pay our on-call firefighters by the hour for their availability. Compared to the previous system, this approach allows more flexibility on the hours each person needs to commit to and enhances their pay. We have established Community Responders (on-call firefighters who are also special constables) at three locations in Devon, with the ability to deliver a wider range of services at an overall reduced cost to the public. We have also supported the ambulance service by providing firefighters to drive ambulances during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The expectations on fire and rescue services have increased as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire and Manchester Arena terrorist attack. External inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was introduced in recent years and their reports are published on their website. Recommendations from these incidents and HMICFRS will continue to be adopted in our own resilience and preparedness arrangements.

We will consider any emerging risks over the next five years, evaluating evidence to inform, support and develop the resilience of our service and communities. The impacts of extreme events can be devastating and far reaching, so we will work with our communities and our partners communities become more resilient.

This chart shows the total incidents in Devon and Somerset that the Service attended each year (2015/16 to 2020/21). The total is shown along with the number of fires, false alarms and special services attended.



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The range of incidents that we attend is extremely broad and has increased over recent years, as has the equipment needed to deal with each incident type.

How this plan has been informed

When preparing this plan, we asked residents, businesses and our staff about the dangers they face and how we could help them feel safer. We did this with an online survey and an online forum, both also available to participate in over the phone, and received nearly 1,700 responses.



By looking at our data and listening to what our staff, partners and those who live and work in Devon and Somerset have told us, we have sought to identify the key fire and rescue-related risks and how we will work with our partners and communities to reduce those risks. The findings from this engagement have been considered in the development of this plan.

What are the risks?

As a result of engaging and listening to the public, partners and our staff we have a much better understanding of the risks we want to manage. Like all fire and rescue services, we are required to look at the risks faced our communities. This is so that we can make sure that we have the best plans in place to reduce the likelihood of those risks becoming incidents, while also having the right people, skills, equipment and tactics in place to respond if an incident happens.

The table below gives a summary of the risks we have identified through our data analysis, consultation and historical records etc.

Risk category	Identified risks
Fires	Dwelling fires High-rise buildings Large commercial, industrial and agricultural fires Hospitals and residential care homes Heritage property fires Secondary fires Fires on-board vessels False alarms
Transport	Road traffic collisions
Specialist rescues	Rescues from height and confined space Rescues from water Animal rescues
Hazardous materials	Hazardous materials sites and incidents (including responding to collapsed structures and bomb or terrorist attacks)
Environment and climate change	Severe weather events including flooding response and water rescue
National risks	Major emergencies Resilience and business continuity
Health and wellbeing	Medical response and health-related incidents

Key: Core operational activities and statutory duties 
 Other operational activities 

The main focus of this externally facing report is to outline what the risk is to our communities and what our action is to mitigate these. Action is delivered through Departmental and Individual plans that have been align with our Priority 1 (prevention and protection) and Priority 2 (emergency response) activity. A series of charts are provided in the following pages that provide more detail on these risks.

Whilst the external risks are outlined in some detail within this document, there are also some internal risks that we will need to continue to manage if we are able to respond effectively. For example, if our staff are not well trained or not provided with suitable equipment we will not be able to respond effectively. Similarly, if we have limited financial resources, we will need to continue to focus our resources on areas where this has the greatest impact. These risks are addressed in Priority 3 and 4.

It is worthy of note that this Community Risk Management Plan provides a high level overview of the risks and our main effort to reduce these.

Looking forward - future risk

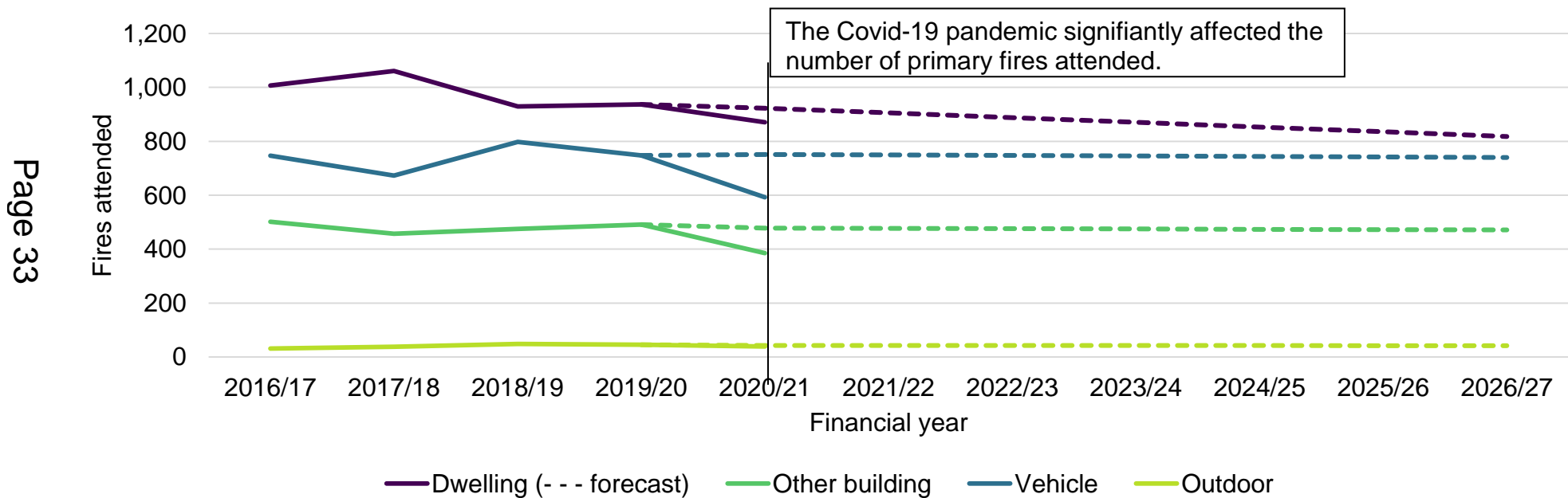
We also recognise the need to identify emerging and future risks and trends across our communities and to our staff. For example, electric vehicles and the potential 'self-drive' vehicles, domestic and commercial battery energy storage systems, bio mass fuel plants and the government's agenda for renewable energy, modern building construction methods, future pandemics and an increasing use of e-cigarettes. To help us prepare we will link to national operational learning and review our position against national operational guidance. We will also collaborate with other fire and rescue services, the national fire chiefs' council and other blue light partners.

Fires

The following graphs show the number of fires we attend each year, the causes and the impact of fire on communities and individuals. They also indicate the trends we may expect by 2027 (based on the past being an effective indicator of the future). As indicated in the risk table presented earlier, fires continue to be a significant risk. The following chart shows the number of primary fires attended (by type of fire). We have also developed a trend line to indicate a possible level of forecasted risk which can be used to anticipate demand.

Number of primary fires attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on the 10-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



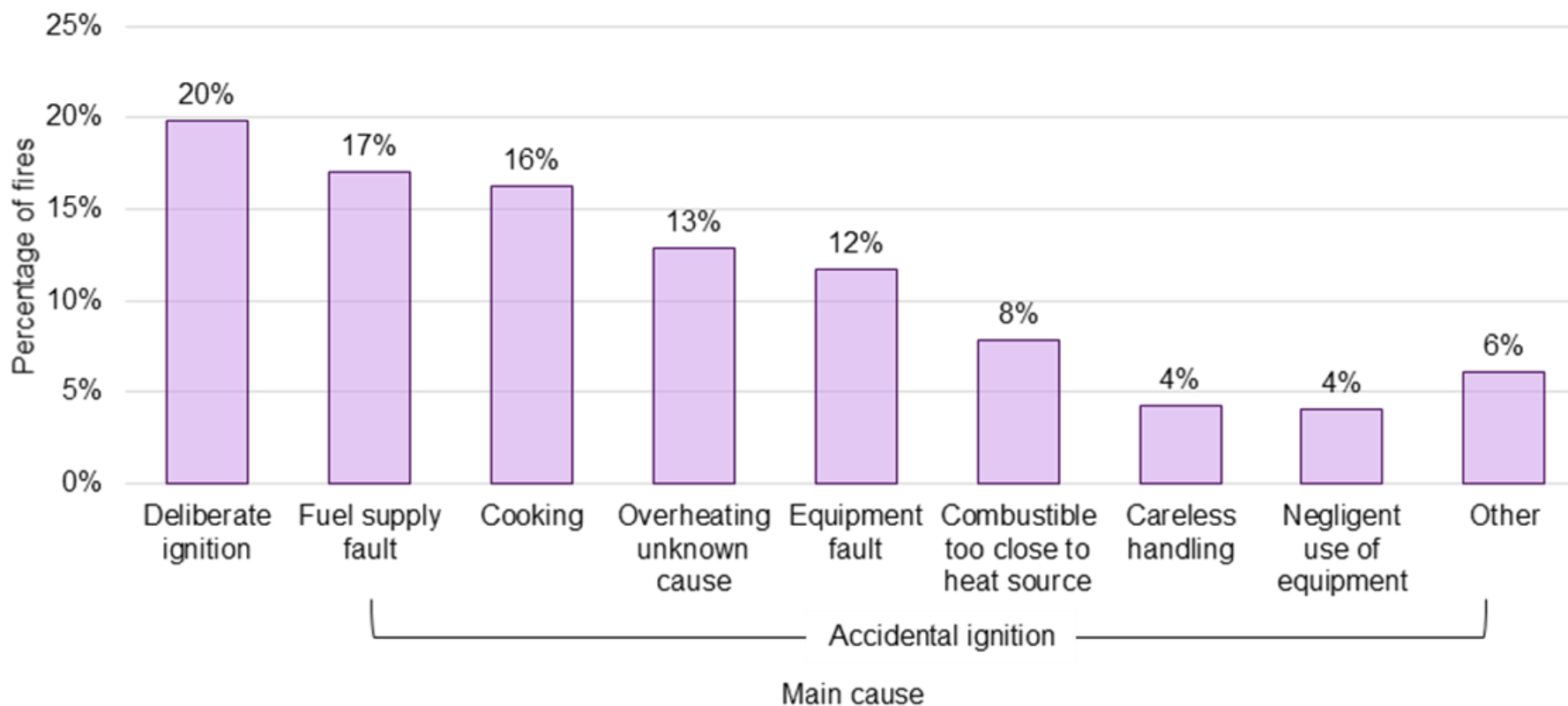
The chart shows data for the four high level categories of primary fire attended: dwelling, other building, road vehicle and outdoor location. The forecasts are based on 11-years of historic data, from April 2009 to March 2020. We have excluded the 2020/21 financial year from our calculations as the COVID-19 pandemic had an exceptional effect on some of our incident levels. The forecasts indicate that we are likely to see a continuation of the downward trend in dwelling fires, while primary fires in other buildings, vehicles and outdoor locations are likely to remain at a relatively consistent level. This information helps us to understand what our future operational demand may look like.

The chart below shows the proportion of primary fires attended by the main cause of the fire for the period April 2016 to March 2021. Deliberate ignition, faulty fuel supply and cooking being the most prevalent. This type of data is used to inform our community safety messages

Between April 2016 and March 2021, over three-quarters of primary fires (80%) started accidentally. Fuel supply fault (17%) and cooking (16%) were the most common accidental causes. We use this information as a focus for our communication campaigns. Other causes include, overheating (cause unknown), equipment fault and combustibles placed too close to a heat source.

Proportion of primary fires attended by main cause, April 2016 to March 2021

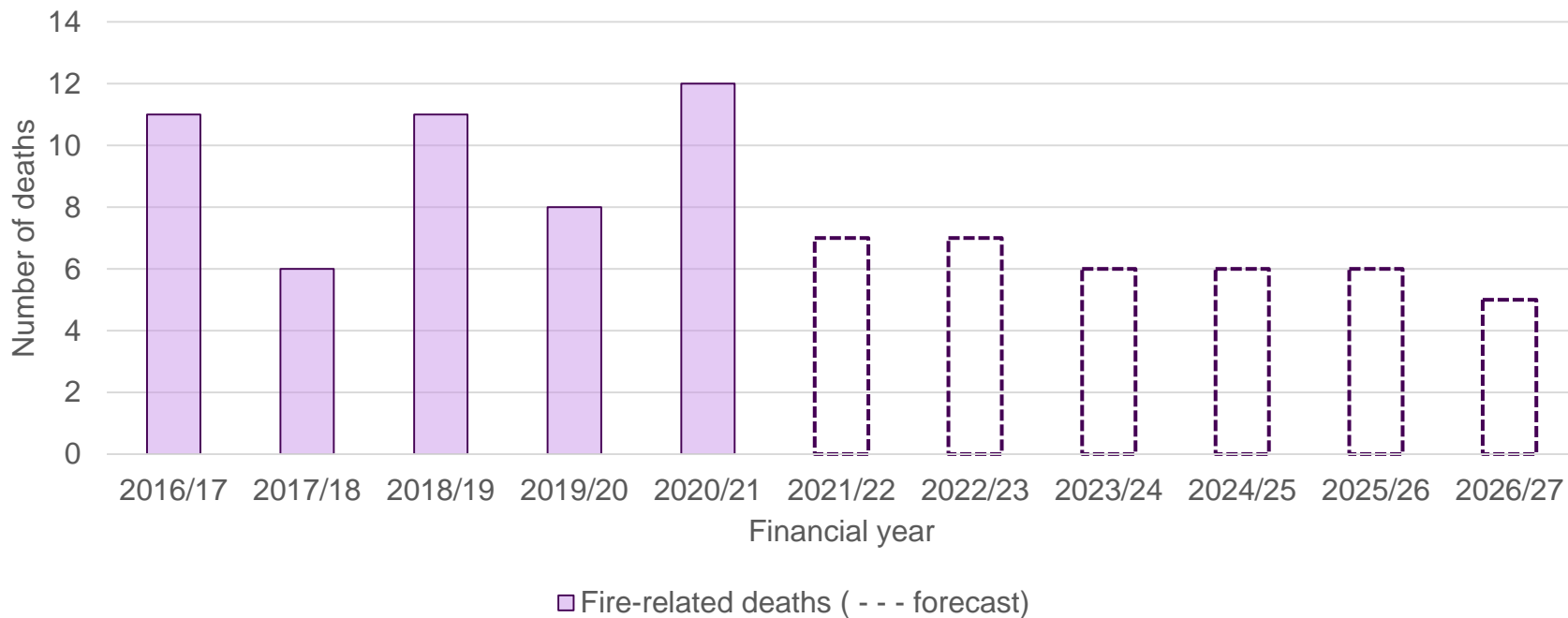
Includes incidents where a specific main cause category has been identified



The chart below shows the number of fire related deaths for each financial year for the period 2016/17 to 2020/21. For the period 2021/22 to 2026/27 a forecast of fire related deaths is shown. Any fire death is a tragedy for those affected and we are committed to reducing fire deaths and injuries. Our resident population is circa 1.8m people.

Number of fire-related deaths in our area, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020.



Primary fire risks in more detail

Dwelling fires: most fire-related deaths and injuries occur when there is a fire in a home, so we need to make sure that we are working effectively to reduce the number of fires and limit their severity when they do happen.

Evidence from national and local studies suggests that, while the overall risk of fire in the home is low, some people are at greater risk from fire than others. We undertake research and analysis to identify the lifestyle and environmental factors that are most commonly associated with fires and related deaths and injuries.

We understand from our recent survey that our communities are concerned about increases in housing stock. The Office for National Statistics estimates that by 2025 the population of Devon and Somerset will have increased by 5%, and that by 2043 it will have increased by 14%³. We are expecting to see more than 78,000 new homes built in our two counties by 2031⁴, with most of this development focused around urban areas.

The Home Office publication *'Detailed analysis of fires attended by fire and rescue services, England, April 2020 to March 2021'* states "by combining Incident Recording System (IRS) and English Housing Survey data, Home Office statisticians have calculated that you are around eight times more likely to die in a fire if you do not have a working smoke alarm in your home."¹³

High-rise building fires: Seventy-two people died after a fire engulfed Grenfell Tower, a west London residential high-rise building. More than 200 firefighters and 40 fire engines responded to the fire, and 151 homes were destroyed in the building and the surrounding area.

The fire has impacted nationally on fire services' prevention, protection and emergency response arrangements, and will continue to do so as lessons are learnt, and recommendations from both the public inquiry and Independent Review of Building Regulations are implemented.

Large commercial, industrial and agricultural fires: these incidents can pose significant societal, economic and environmental risks to our communities and can require large numbers of our resources, meaning that they may not be available to respond to other incidents. Whilst the life-risk at these incidents is generally lower than at dwelling fires, undertaking firefighting activity in large and often complex buildings can pose a high risk to our firefighters.

³ Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates

⁴ Office for National Statistics household projections for England

Hospitals and residential care home fires: while the likelihood of a significant fire in hospitals, residential homes and other health care acute services⁵ is low, the potential severity of an incident in a setting that accommodates many people with greater levels of vulnerability due to health and wellbeing issues is high. The buildings are often large and complex and our response can be challenged due to hazardous materials and processes that may be present.

Hotel and guest house fires: similar to hospitals and residential care homes, hotels and guest houses have the potential for significant loss of life in the event of fire. This is largely because many people are sleeping in an unfamiliar environment and are likely to be less aware of the layout of the building.

Heritage building fires: losing any historic building or landscape to fire, storm or flood would be a significant loss to local, and in some cases national or even international heritage. The effects can be far reaching, including loss of unique features and irreplaceable art, and the economic impact on local communities.

Fires on-board vessels: although the Service does not have an offshore firefighting responsibility, we do have a duty to respond to fires in vessels alongside (next to land). These incidents can be hazardous because of the way vessels are constructed. Getting in and getting out is difficult, and fire can spread easily by conduction through metal bulkheads and air handling machinery.

Flooding/Wildfire: the impact of global warming on the environment can also be seen in the increase in wildfires globally. More locally, Devon and Somerset has two major national parks within our area and we need to ensure we have sufficient resources in place at the right time to minimise the impact on affected communities. At the same time, the Fire and rescue Service has experience that it can bring to bear to support others who are charged with the responsibility for reducing the impact of flooding.

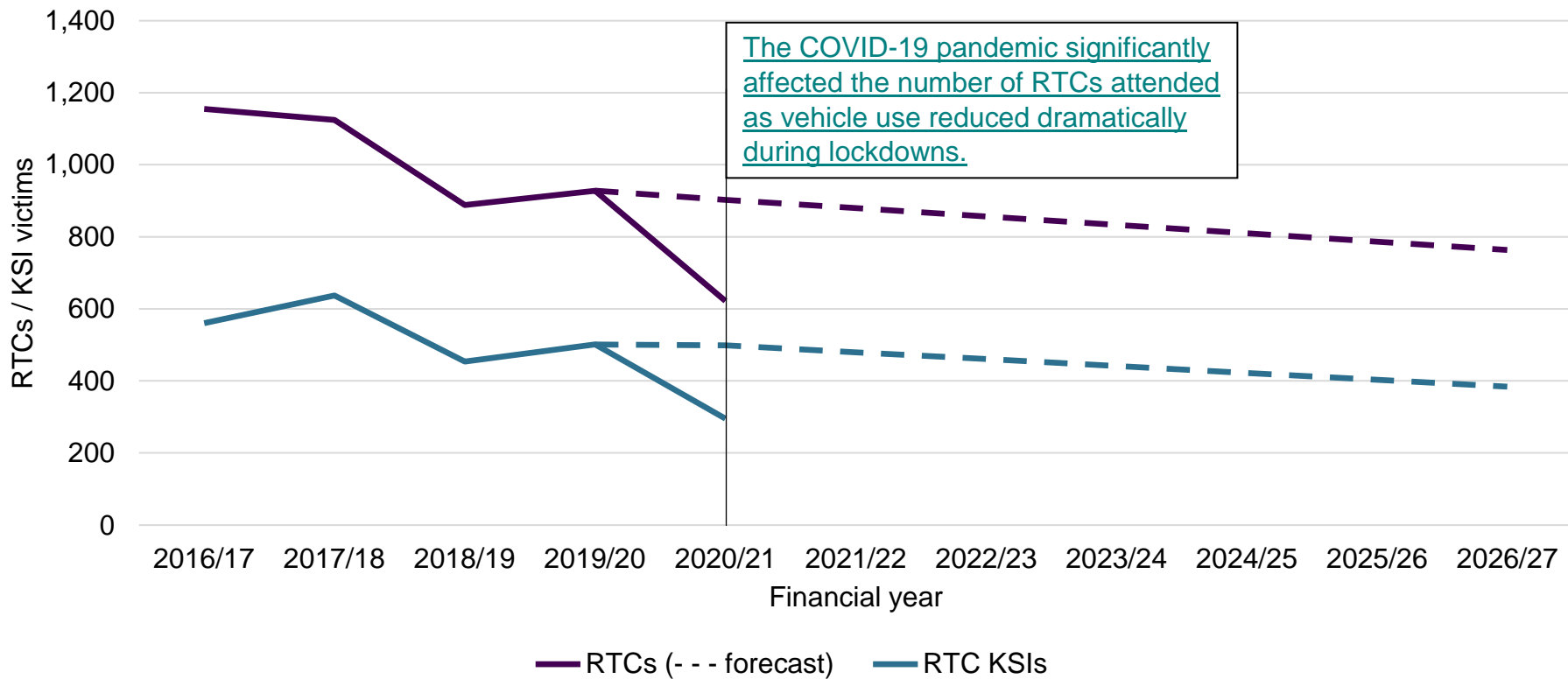
Road Traffic Collisions

Drawing from our main risk table, the chart below shows the number of road traffic collisions attended and the number of people killed and seriously injured per financial year. For the years 2016/17 to 2020/21 the actual number recorded is shown. For the years 2020/21 to 2026/27 a forecast is shown. On occasions, we have Road Traffic Collisions which result in a fire as a result of fuel coming into contact with an ignition source. Where vehicles catch fire that are not involved in Road Traffic Accidents, we record these separately.

Number of RTCs attended and KSI victims, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 10-year period from April 2009 to March 2020

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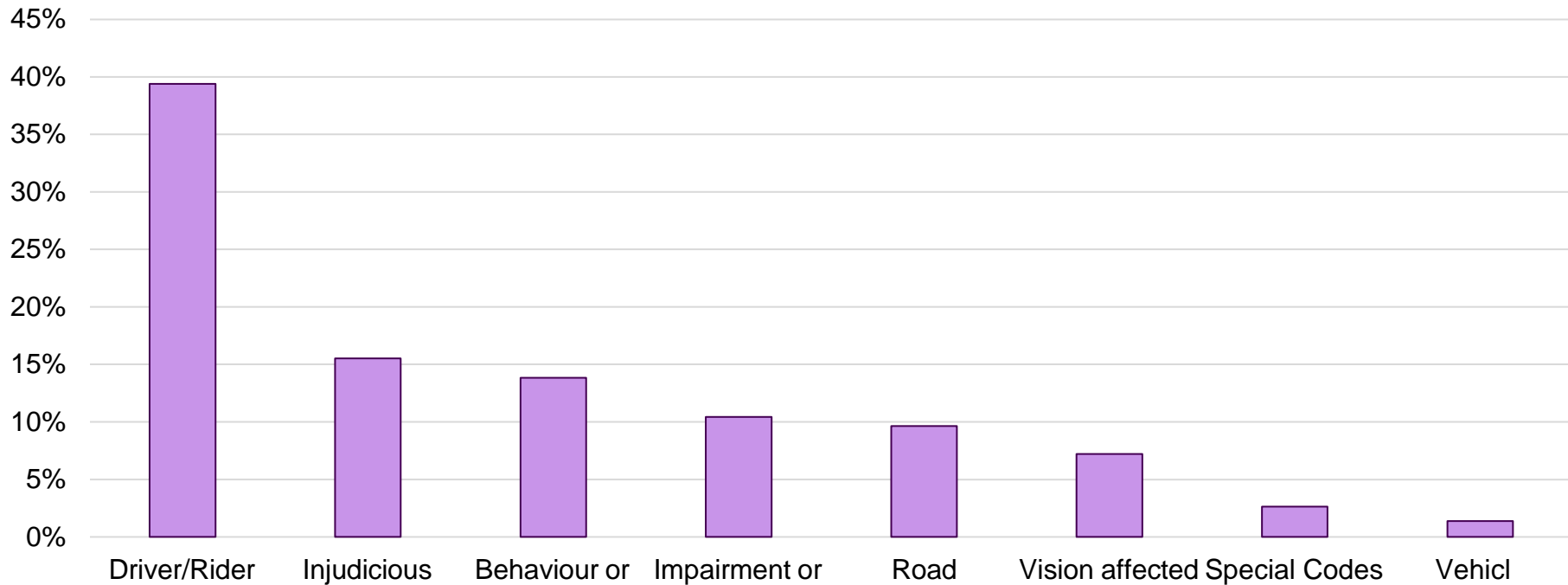


¹¹ KSI – Killed or seriously injured (requiring hospital treatment) victims at incidents we attended based on our understanding at the point the incident concluded.

The chart below shows that almost 40% of RTCs have “Driver/Rider error or reaction” as a contributory factor and about 15% of RTCs have “Injudicious action” as a contributory factor [Injudicious can be defined as “showing very poor judgement; unwise.”]. Special Codes relate to specific endorsement and ‘penalty points’. The contributory factors present in more than 10% of RTCs are “Behaviour or inexperience” and “Impairment or distraction”.

Proportion of RTCs by contributory factor, South West England, April 2015 to March 2020

Source: Department for Transport data table - RAS50012: Contributory factors for accidents by English region and country

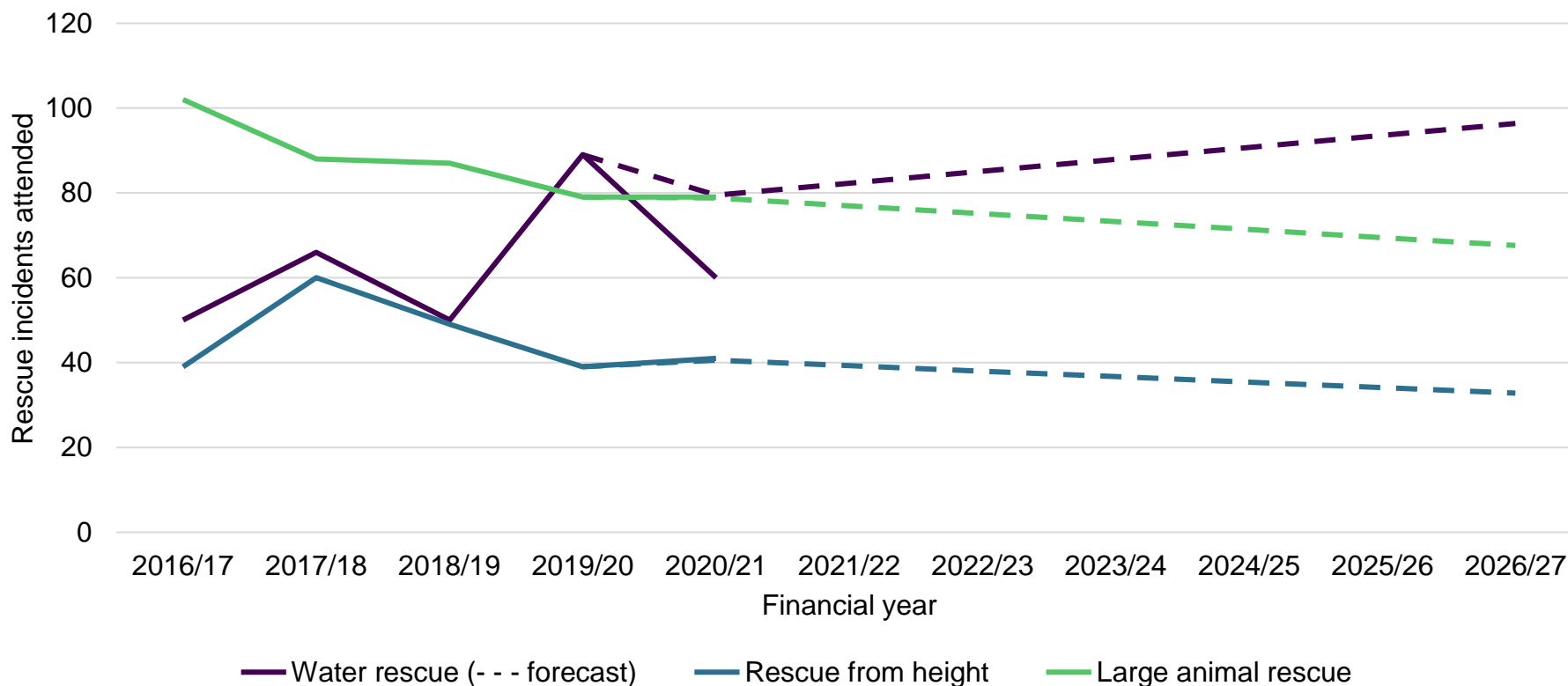


Specialist rescues

In the following chart, it can be seen that water rescue incidents have seen an upward trend from 50 incidents in 2016/17 to 90 incidents in 2019/20 (which was a very wet year). Water rescue activity is forecasted to continue due to the effect of climate change. Rescues from height incidents have generally seen a downward trend from 60 incidents in 2017/18 this is forecast to continue to fall to less than 40 incidents per year by 2026/27. Large animal rescue incidents have fallen from more than 100 in 2016/17 to 80 in 2020/21. This trend is forecasted to continue.

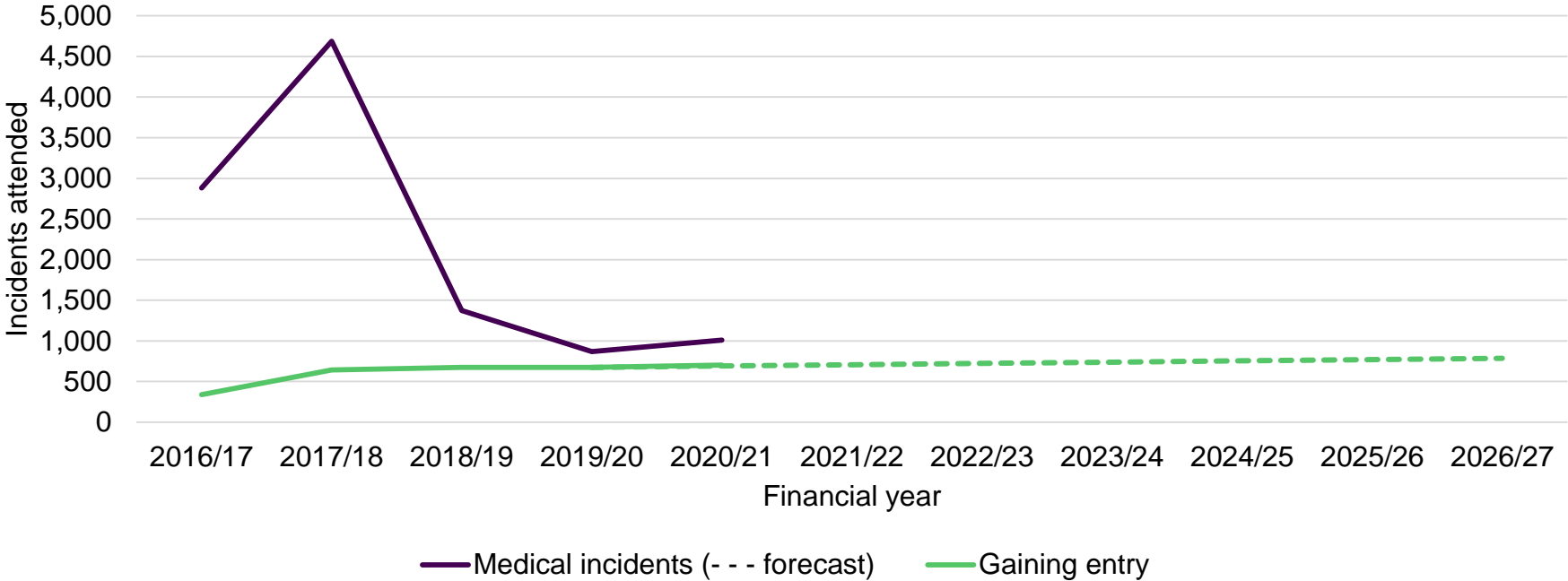
Number of specialist rescues incidents attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020



Number of medical related incidents attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Medical pre-Covid-19 forecast unavailable due to changes in policy
 Gaining entry pre-Covid-19 forecast based on three-year period from April 2017 to March 2020



¹³ [Detailed analysis of fires attended by fire and rescue services, England, April 2020 to March 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/detailed-analysis-of-fires-attended-by-fire-and-rescue-services-england)

Equality impacts

Research and information indicates some additional considerations in relation to fire risk. *'An investigation into accidental fatal fires in the South West of England' Report (2013-17)* identified eight characteristics which increase the likelihood of fire death: mental health issues, alcohol use, drug use, smoking, poor housekeeping, limited mobility, living alone and low income. Certain groups of people are more likely to face these challenges than others. For example, elderly people are more likely to have limited mobility and live alone – over half of victims in dwelling fires live alone.

Devon and Somerset have a growing and ageing population, with one in four of the 1.8 million residents aged 65 years or over⁸. We expect to see greater numbers of older people living with some form of impairment, many of whom will be living alone and in relative isolation given the rural nature of much of our area. (54% of the victims of fires in the home live alone, making it the most common factor.)

⁵ www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/service-types#acute-services

Over the next 20 years the population of Devon and Somerset is likely to change, with the office for national statistics estimating that by 2025 the population will have increased by 5% and that by 2043 it will have increased by 14%⁹.

Communities look very different across our counties and includes complex patterns of urban and rural deprivation across our service area. We know that the 10% most deprived areas have rates of fire nearly six times higher than those in the least deprived areas.

Deprivation consists of more than just poverty. Poverty is not having enough money to get by on whereas deprivation refers to a general lack of resources and opportunities. Pay inequality, poorer health outcomes and unemployment are a good indicator of the level of risk of fire in the home. Those with a lower income tend to live in areas of deprivation, where the likelihood of a fire in their home is higher than those living in less deprived areas.

Low quality or older housing doesn't tend to have the same advantages as modern homes with fire safety features, such as fire doors and hard-wired alarm systems. Other factors such as rising house prices and the prevalence of second homes in some areas can increasingly push people on lower incomes into poorer quality housing.

Private rented homes are more likely to be damp, less likely to have at least one working smoke alarm and were more likely to contain hazards such as infestations and electrical dangers that pose a risk to life.

Poorer health outcomes from behaviours such as smoking or substance misuse also tend to be higher in these areas, leading to an increase in the causes of fire such as smoking in bed or leaving appliances unattended.

The most deprived areas in our Service are concentrated around Plymouth, Torbay and Sedgemoor.¹⁰

Although we have a lot of information about how age or disability and fire risk are linked, certain characteristics like ethnic background, English as a second language, sexuality and religion, are not routinely captured within the data recorded and analysed by the Service. We need to capture and analyse more data and review our prevention, protection and response interventions to ensure that our services meet the needs of everyone and that no one is disadvantaged.

To ensure we serve all those in our communities and provide equal access to our services, we consider the makeup of our communities when making decisions and developing prevention interventions and engagement opportunities.

An Equality Impact Assessment of this draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027 is published alongside this plan.

⁸ Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates

⁹ Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Action – what we will do to reduce the risks faced by our communities

The following high level actions will be undertaken to mitigate the risk anticipated by 2027 to better protect the public. These will be built into the annual planning cycles for each of the five years of this plan.

As part of the annual budget setting process, areas for investment will be identified and consideration given by the Fire Authority. As well as setting the operating budget for the Service, the Fire Authority also scrutinise performance of the Service (e.g. decisions made in 2019 following a specific public consultation on the Service Delivery Operating Model).

The Fire Authority have agreed four strategic priorities which guide the Chief Fire Officer, Directors and Department Heads in everything they do. These are:

The Service is committed to four strategic priorities:



Strategic priority 1 - Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and support the local economy.



Strategic priority 2 - Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response service to meet the local and national risks identified in our Integrated Risk Management Plans.



Strategic priority 3 - Our Service is recognised as a great place to work. Our staff feel valued, supported, safe and well-trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.



Strategic priority 4 - We are open and accountable and use our resources efficiently to deliver a high performing, sustainable service that demonstrates improving public value.

Priority 1: Our targeted prevention and protection activities reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing, and supporting the local economy.

We will continue to do the following.

- Deliver home safety visits to those most at risk of fire, raising their awareness, developing escape plans, fitting smoke alarms and providing a range of other safety equipment including misting systems and sprinklers.
- Engage with residents providing prevention advice and education.
- Work with partnership organisations to raise awareness of the services we provide and reduce risks such as wildfire, road safety and fires on vessels.
- Engage in national projects looking at changes to fire safety legislation to ensure we deliver a protection service that is aligned to changing national standards.
- Work with business owners and responsible persons to ensure they comply with fire safety regulations by:
 - carrying out fire safety checks and audits
 - working with local authority partners and carrying out operational risk inspections at the highest risk sites
 - providing advice and guidance on the issues and measures they can take to prevent false alarms, During 2019/20 false alarms accounted for 38% of the incidents that we attended – having the potential to draw resources away from higher life risk incidents like fires and road traffic collisions
 - responding to concerns about fire safety in buildings from partner agencies, members of the public and operational firefighters.
- Use a range of data to identify high risk and high priority buildings and to inform our risk based inspection programme, improving the accuracy of the information used.
- Address the risks identified following the Grenfell Tower fire. We formed a specialist high rise building team in 2020, working closely with partners in local authorities and other housing providers to improve safety in these buildings, such as promoting the use of sprinklers.
- Continue to support national and local campaigns to raise awareness, provide advice and reduce risk.
- Act as a key consultee in building regulations applications.

What we plan to do:

- 1.1. Further define our community safety campaigns to make sure we have a clear annual set of campaigns to influence people taking safer actions to prevent incidents, promote home fire safety visits, reinforce the benefits of smoke detectors, domestic sprinklers, mist suppression systems, and advise about what to do during an incident.
- 1.2. Enhance our efforts to communicate road safety messages to those most at risk to reduce death and injury.
- 1.3. Review the effectiveness of our road safety education events and initiatives, delivered across Devon and Somerset in collaboration with partners including Learn to Live, Survive the Drive, Biker Down and My Red Thumb.
- 1.4. Increase communication campaigns to educate building owners about the impact of false alarms on the fire service and their business.
- 1.5. Work with those who are responsible for flood defence planning to support flood prevention effort using our experience in responding to water rescue and flood incidents.
- 1.6. Engage closely with planning authorities to ensure that the housing growth includes domestic sprinklers or/water mist suppression systems in high risk housing to ensure that these buildings are safer for people.
- 1.7. Improve our use of data and intelligence to more effectively target those people most at risk of fire.
- 1.8. Improve our learning from serious incidents to identify how we can improve our prevention and protection work.
- 1.9. Increase our work with partners to help communities prepare themselves for severe weather events, by providing training and storage for equipment.
- 1.10. We will prepare for the impact of climate change on our communities (wildfire, flooding etc.) and work with partners to reduce the impact.

Priority 2: Our operational resources provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in this plan.

What we will continue to do.

- Ensure we have the right fire engines and equipment in the right place at the right time to match the risks faced by communities.
- Develop tactical plans specific to individual sites, which set out the right number and type of operational resource (such as water supplies), salvage plans and how we work with the owner (or custodian) and other emergency services to deal effectively with the incident.
- Invest in our fleet and equipment strategy ensuring that our fire engines, special appliances and equipment meet modern standards for efficiency and meet the risks identified in communities.
- Invest in our information and communications technology to ensure we are able to support the delivery of front line services.
- Increase our work with partners to provide life-saving water safety equipment at locations with a high number of drownings, similar to the work carried out at Exeter Quay in 2021 to provide reach poles and throw lines.
- Work with partners in local resilience forums to plan and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to major incidents, severe weather and national emergencies
- Have a working at height and confined space capability at key stations located across our Service area.
- Continually review operational procedures in line with national guidance and best practice to improve and refine our response to commercial, industrial and agricultural fires.
- Develop our team of hazardous material and environmental protection advisers (HMEPA) ensuring that they are trained and equipped to identify hazardous materials present at incidents, assess the risk posed by those materials and advise the incident commander.
- Investigate fires to identify probable causes and support police where arson is suspected.
- Support the provision of high volume pumping equipment for use in local and national flooding.
- Support the National Resilience Capabilities Programme which can provide support across the country in the case of a national emergency.
- Provide emergency medical response in support of the ambulance service to communities through our co-responding stations.
- Improve our operational assurance process to ensure that we learn from incidents and continue to improve.

What we plan to do.

- 2.1. Use our new Management of Risk Information (MORI) system to better provide accurate, relevant and timely information to operational crews responding to incidents.
- 2.2. Review the location and type of specialist appliances, equipment and capabilities to ensure that resources are matched and prioritised to risk, and to explore opportunities for collaboration.
- 2.3. Review specialist vehicles and equipment used at RTCs to ensure that we have the right capability and are in the right locations to provide an effective operational response.
- 2.4. Improve our off-road capacity by introducing all-terrain vehicles with firefighting capability
- 2.5. Review the use of environmental protection units (EPUs) at incidents involving hazardous materials and chemical spillages to ensure that they are correctly located and provide the capability needed to deal with incidents effectively.
- 2.6. Review how we respond to gaining entry requests in support of the police and ambulance service to ensure that we are providing this service efficiently.
- 2.7. Review how we assist the ambulance service to move extremely overweight patients in emergency situations to ensure the best use of resources and the best outcome for patients.
- 2.8. Review and introduce new capabilities to deal with incidents in high-rise buildings. For example the smoke hoods we now carry on our fire engines to assist evacuation in smoke filled escape routes.
- 2.9. Review our flood response capability to ensure that our resources are matched to risk and need.

Priority 3: Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service is recognised as a great place to work: our staff feel valued, supported, safe, and well-trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.

What we will continue to do.

- Improve staff safety through continuous improvement.
- Provide staff with access to counselling and mental health support services.
- Carry out operational exercises to ensure that our staff are familiar with the risks and are able to practice procedures.
- Develop and train specialist responders for terrorist incidents.
- Train and exercise our operational crews and commanders to deal with large scale multi-agency incidents using the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) principles.
- Develop our specialist officers (water incident managers) trained to deal with flood incident management.
- Carry out exercises to test our business continuity plans.

What we plan to do

- 3.1. Provide occupational health screening and defusing to support the wellbeing of staff who have been involved in traumatic incidents.
- 3.2. Further develop our defusing service, which helps staff to mentally recover from traumatic incidents, to cover suicide-related incidents.
- 3.3. Evaluate the training of operational crews, who have an identified risk in their area, in maritime firefighting techniques and procedures.
- 3.4. We will enhance our 'Safe to' approach to encourage psychological safety so that we can learn from our experiences and generate a culture of constructive challenge at all levels.
- 3.5. Review, update and improve policies, procedures, training, specialist advice and equipment to support operational crews in successfully resolving hazardous materials incidents.
- 3.6. Create a more diverse workforce and engage communities to help us do this
- 3.7. Develop our next people strategy to support us

Priority 4: We are open and accountable, using our resources efficiently to deliver an effective, sustainable service that demonstrates improving public value.

What we will continue to do.

- Work in collaboration with partners in other public sector organisations and neighbouring services, to address multiple risks across legislative boundaries.
- We will continue to carry out operational risk inspections at the highest risk sites up to 15km cross-border].
- Tailor our approach to enable us to identify those most in need of our support and to deliver services that meet their needs effectively.
- Work in partnership with neighbouring fire services to cope with high numbers of calls during extreme flooding events.
- Continually review our business continuity plans to ensure minimum impact on the delivery of our services should a business continuity event happen.

What we plan to do.

- 4.1. In addition to preparing for the community impact of climate change (wildfires/flooding etc.), we will minimise our own impact. Our [Environmental Strategy](#) sets out how we plan to reduce our impact on the environment. We aim to reduce our impact on the environment and deliver efficiency savings from improved practices.
- 4.2. Invest in our estate ensuring that our buildings meet modern standards for energy efficiency and have suitable training facilities for operational crews to maintain their competence.
- 4.3. Capture more data to inform our learning, enabling us to consider the impact on individuals and communities and to refine the range and depth of our services.
- 4.4. Engage more with community groups, businesses and through established networks. We will carry out effective and meaningful engagement activities with our staff, partners, wider stakeholders and communities by offering a range of opportunities for them to get actively involved, have their say and work with us to help shape and improve the service we provide.
- 4.5. Increase our focus on equality of access to our services, recognising the diversity of our communities.
- 4.6. Share resources widely with emergency, local authority and public health partners and seek to learn from commercial partners.
- 4.7. Following repeated attendance at unwanted fire alarms, we will explore options to reduce the costs to the Service.
- 4.8. We will review and evaluate our approach to reducing unwanted fire alarms.

Summary table of our actions mapped against our risks (Not: these are in addition to the work we are currently undertaking).

Risk category	Identified risks	Proposed Actions
Fires	Dwelling fires High-rise buildings Large commercial, industrial and agricultural fires Hospitals and residential care homes Heritage property fires Secondary fires Fires on-board vessels False alarms	Action 1.1. Action 1.6. Action 1.7. Action 1.8. Action 2.1. Action 3.6. Action 4.4. Action 4.5. Action 1.6. Action 1.8. Action 2.8. Action 2.1. Action 4.4. Action 1.7. Action 1.8. Action 2.1. Action 4.6. Action 1.4. Action 1.7. Action 1.8. Action 2.1. Action 1.1. Action 1.6. Action 1.7. Action 1.8. Action 2.1. Action 1.7. Action 1.10. Action 2.4. Action 2.1. Action 1.7. Action 2.1. Action 3.3. Action 1.4. Action 2.1. Action 4.7. Action 4.8.
Transport	Road traffic collisions	Action 1.2. Action 1.3. Action 2.1. Action 2.3.
Specialist rescues	Rescues from height and confined space Rescues from water Animal rescues	Action 2.1. Action 2.2. Action 1.10. Action 2.1. Action 2.2. Action 2.9. Action 2.1. Action 2.2.
Hazardous materials	Hazardous materials sites and incidents (including responding to collapsed structures and bomb or terrorist attacks)	Action 1.7. Action 1.8. Action 2.1. Action 2.5. Action 3.5.
Environment and climate change	Severe weather events including flooding response and water rescue	Action 1.5. Action 2.1. Action 2.4. Action 2.5. Action 2.9. Action 4.1. Action 4.2.
National risks	Major emergencies / Resilience and business continuity	Action 2.1. Action 4.3.

Resources available

The Service receives funding each year from a combination of local taxation business rates (NNDR) and council tax (precept) as well as receiving central government grants. This funding is used to pay for our day-to-day expenses such as our workforce, fuel, heat and light, and to provide the systems, resources and infrastructure needed to support our services.

Total funding as of 2020/21 of £74.2 million for the financial year 2020/21 from the following sources.

- Council tax £54.8 million
- Non-domestic business rates £13.0 million
- Central government grants £6.4 million

There are also financial reserves to help pay for specific projects and to reduce the amount we need to borrow.

- The total net cost of running Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service for the 2020/21 financial year is £74.2 million, which equates to approximately £41 a year per person. These costs cover:
 - Workforce £66.2 million
 - Premises and fleet £7.4 million
 - Other £13.5 million
 - Income **£12.9 million***

*such as Government grants for Covid, Fire Protection Grant, Mobile Communications, Urban Search and Rescue.

The Service continues to make affordable and sustainable capital investments, such as the re-development of our estate and fleet.

The Service is required to deliver a balanced budget, meaning outgoings do not exceed income. We will use the resources available in the best way to minimise the impact of risk to our communities. Further information about spend, including the medium term financial plan¹⁴ is on our website.

¹⁴ <https://beta.dsfire.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-spend>

Measuring and evaluating impact

The Service provides performance information on our website¹ and Authority committees scrutinise performance as does the fire service inspectorate (HMICFRS). We have also agreed an evaluation framework that is based on established good practice (College of Policing) and this is built into commissioning and portfolio management arrangements.

Consultation Process

The Service is seeking to understand the views of our communities, residents, businesses, staff and visitors, regarding this draft Community Risk Management Plan on behalf of the Authority.

This draft plan is now open to public consultation until **Friday 14 January**. At the end of the consultation period, the responses will be put into a findings report by an independent third party before being analysed by the Service in January and February 2022. The community plan will then be updated where appropriate.

The final plan will be presented to Authority members so they can make an informed decision when approving the final Community Risk Management Plan at the full meeting in early 2022.

The Community Risk Management Plan needs to be agreed and in place in April 2022.

Please read this plan and complete the questions on page **XX / or link**.
Need the document in another format or language? Call us on **XX or email XX**

¹ <https://beta.dsfire.gov.uk/About-us/our-performance>
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Strategic Risk Analysis

(Supporting the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027)

This document directly supports the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and should be read in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires each fire and rescue service to prepare an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). We name our IRMP the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and it is an overview of how we will align our services to keep people safe from fire and rescue-related risks by balancing our resources across Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response. The CRMP is framed by our statutory duties including those within The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The CRMP planning process enables each service to assess foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in their area and to decide how to use resources in the most effective way to save lives, improve public safety and reduce emergency incidents. The planning is a continuous process with three main stages.

Stage 1 – identifying and assessing risk

To understand what risk looks like in Devon and Somerset we have reviewed data from partners at a local level as used national data sets, we have considered incidents attended in the past and forecasted future trends. We also asked people across Devon and Somerset about risk in their area, who they think is most at risk and what, if anything, they feel anxious about. This has helped us to better understand priorities and perceptions of risk and, where relevant, we will highlight this feedback throughout the CRMP.

Stage 2 - managing and reducing risk

We have assessed our current arrangements for managing each risk. We have also considered how we can work together with our communities and partners to continue to reduce the fire and rescue related risks over the next five years to keep everyone as safe as possible. We organise our work under three interrelated activities.

Prevention: preventing fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place.

Protection: The Service has a statutory duty to ensure that a range of buildings, other than private homes, comply with fire safety regulations.

Response: responding to and dealing with fires and other emergencies promptly, safely and effectively.

Stage 3 - measuring performance and evaluating our impact

We will monitor the impact of our activities so that we understand the most effective and efficient ways to manage the risks in our area. We will regularly report our performance so that our staff and those who live or visit our area can see how we are doing.

Performance measures help us understand how individual and collective efforts contribute to achieving our objectives, and how we might need to alter our activities.

Identification of risks

What are the risks? The table below gives a summary of the risks we have identified. On the following pages we explain these risks and how we are managing them.

Core operational activities and statutory duties	
Risk category	Identified risks
Fires	Dwelling fires High rise buildings Large commercial/industrial and agricultural fires Hospitals and residential care homes Hotels and guest houses Heritage property fires Fires on board vessels Secondary fires False alarms
Transport	Road traffic collisions
Hazardous materials	Hazardous materials sites and incidents (including responding to collapsed structures, bomb/terrorist attacks)
National risks	Major emergencies Resilience and business continuity
Other operational activities	
Risk category	Identified risks
Specialist rescues	Rescues from height and confined space Rescues from water Animal rescues
Environment and climate change	Severe weather events including flooding response and water rescue
Health and wellbeing	Medical response and health-related incidents

Identified risks and how we plan to reduce them

Risk category: fires

Risk identified: dwelling fires

Why is it a risk?

Most fire-related deaths and injuries occur when there is a fire in a home, so we need to make sure that we are working effectively to reduce the number of fires and limit their severity when they do happen.

Incident statistics

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020², there were 1,108 fire-related deaths³ in dwellings in England, including 31 within our service. This equates to 3.6 deaths per million residents within our service area compared to the average within England of 4.0 deaths per million residents.

There were 11,617 serious injuries⁴ in dwelling fires in England, including 402 within our service area. While there has been a very slight downward trend in dwelling fire injuries nationally, there has been a slight upward trend in injuries in our service area. This equates to 46.2 serious injuries per million residents within our service area compared to the average within England of 41.8 serious injuries per million residents.

² Based on pre-covid era from April 2015 to March 2020

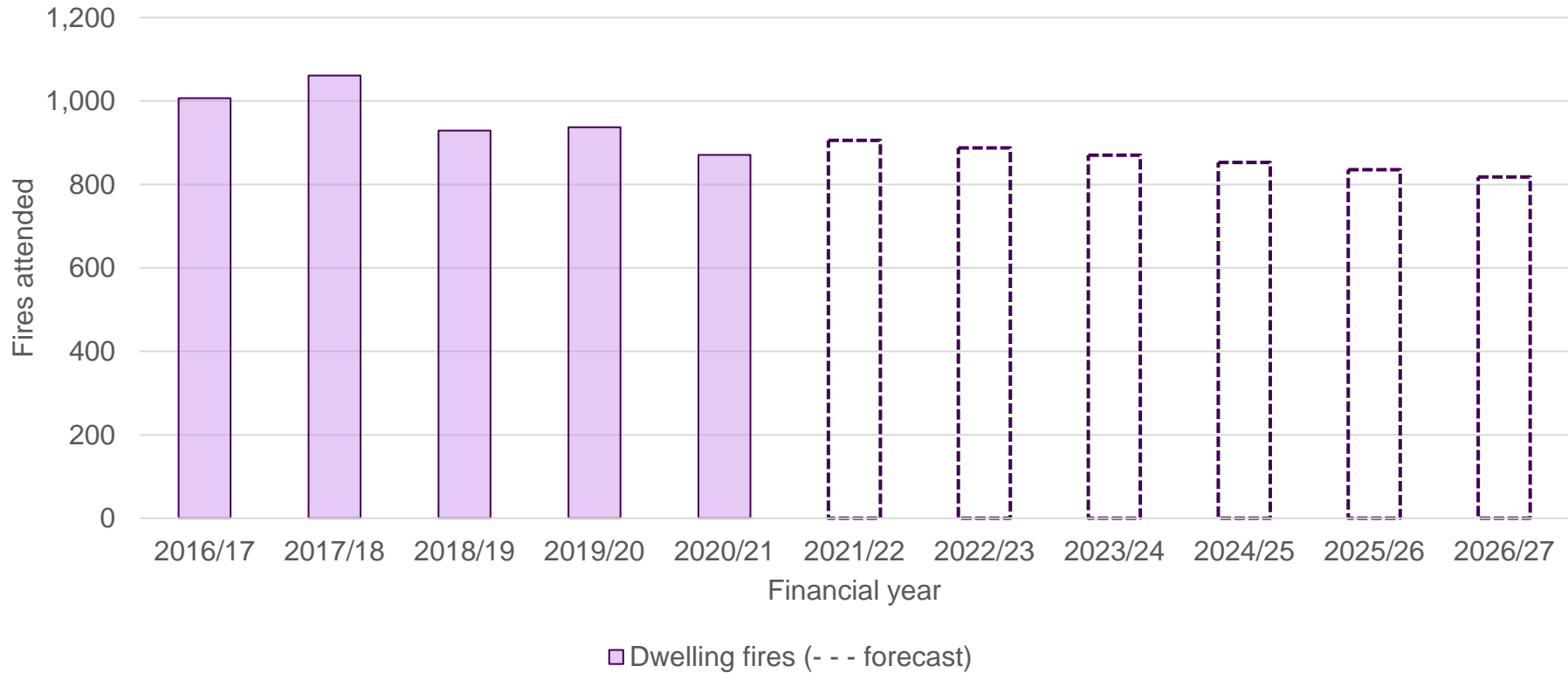
³ A fire death is reported when the cause of death is suspected or confirmed to be a direct result of the fire. Figures may be subject to change if a Coroner rules that a death that was suspected to be fire-related was caused by something other than fire.

⁴ A serious injury includes any non-fatal victim that attended hospital in an ambulance because of the incident, the injury may not be as a direct result of the fire.

Over the same period, there were 150,645 in England, including 4,893 in our service area. There has been a downward trend both nationally and within our service area, with our forecast⁵ indicating that this is set to continue.

Number of dwelling fires attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 10-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



⁵ Based on data submitted to the Home Office Incident Recording System April 2010 to March 2021 (pre-COVID). Note that there is a 95% confidence interval associated with the forecast.

Who or what is at risk?

Evidence from national and local¹⁰ studies suggests that, while the overall risk of fire in the home is low, some people are at greater risk from fire than others. Common lifestyle, health and behavioural risk factors identified as being influential include:

- Living alone (over half of the people that die in dwelling fires in our area live alone)
- Challenges such as limiting long-term illness, mental health difficulties or mobility issues
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs (both prescription and illicit)
- Smoking
- Poor housekeeping, such as hoarding
- Not having a working smoke alarm (people that do not have a working smoke alarm are around eight times more likely to die in a dwelling fire¹²)

We know that the factors above are often more prevalent in certain groups, for example:

- Older people are more likely to experience health and mobility issues
- People living in rented properties
- People living in areas with high levels of deprivation, including those with high levels of unemployment, crime and poor educational attainment

¹⁰ <https://beta.dsfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/Themes%20in%20accidental%20fire%20deaths%202013-2017.pdf>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/detailed-analysis-of-fires-attended-by-fire-and-rescue-services-england-april-2020-to-march-2021/detailed-analysis-of-fires-attended-by-fire-and-rescue-services-england-april-2020-to-march-2021>

Risk identified: high rise buildings

Why is it a risk?

Seventy-two people died after a fire engulfed Grenfell Tower, a west London residential high rise building. More than 200 firefighters and 40 fire engines responded to the fire. 151 homes were destroyed in the building and the surrounding area.

The fire has impacted nationally on fire services' prevention, protection and emergency response arrangements, and will continue to do so as lessons are learnt, and recommendations from both the public inquiry and Independent Review of Building Regulations are implemented.

The immediate aftermath of the fire saw a multi-agency response to both reassure residents and assess the fire safety of these buildings, based on national government guidance.

High rise buildings present a higher risk due to their construction and lengthy escape routes. This makes it harder to evacuate the building and can increase the complexity of the firefighting.

Incident statistics

National data on high-rise¹⁶ fires is not readily available, however, during the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there has been a slight downward trend in the number of fires within purpose-built flats over four storeys high^[1], this has also been reflected in our service and our forecast suggests that this is likely to continue.

It is notable that in our service area, there was a distinct drop in these fires during 2018/19 and 2019/20, we think that it is likely that this is related to heightened awareness following the Grenfell Tower fire and the targeted intervention work that we undertook. As numbers appear to have increased to previous levels during 2020/21, our forecasting has excluded 2018/19 and 2019/20 as they appear to be exceptions.

Over the past five years, there have been 328 casualties^[1] in purpose-built flats over four storeys in England, including 34 within our service area. Of the casualties within our service area, one was a fatality and 14 required treatments at a hospital.

¹⁶ A high-rise building is defined as a building of more than 18 metres.

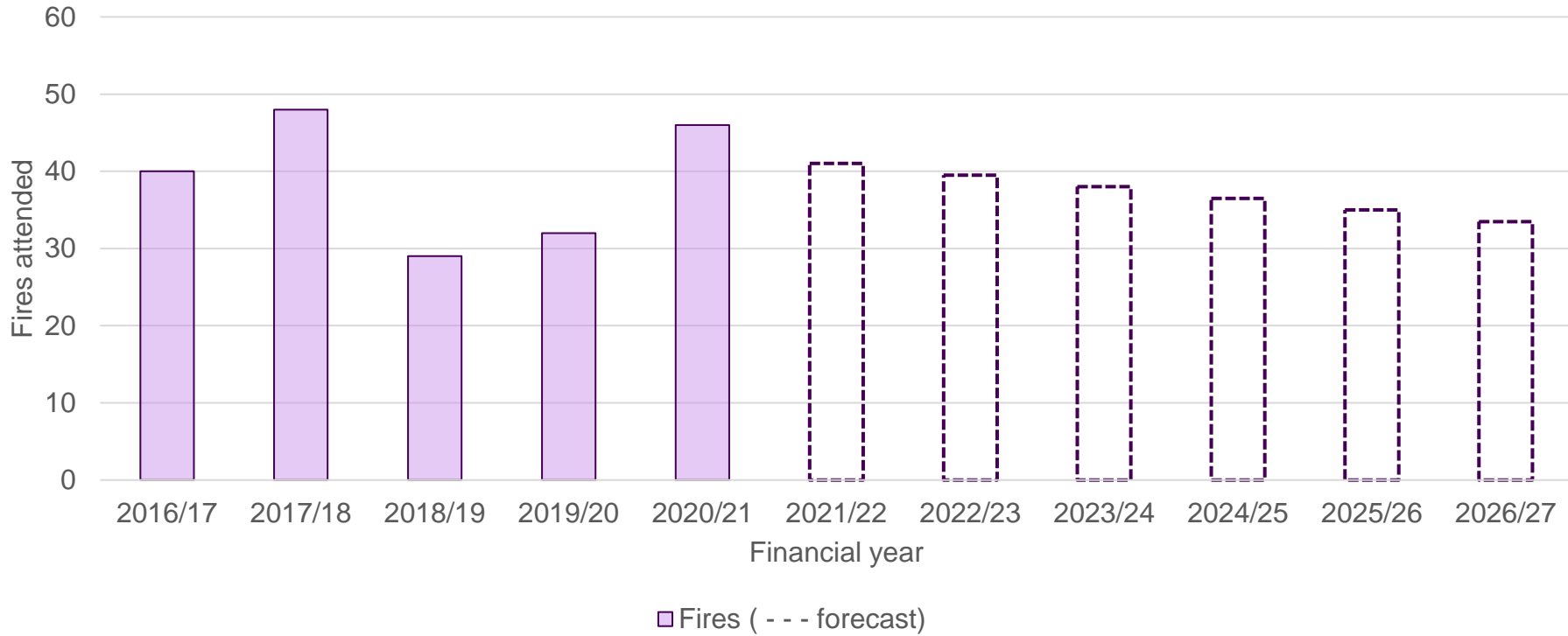
^[1] Based on IRS dwelling types: Purpose Built High Rise (10+) Flats/Maisonettes, Purpose Built Medium Rise (4-9) Flats/Maisonettes

^[1] Includes fatalities and injuries of any severity level

Number of fires attended in purpose built flats of four or more storeys, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 8-year period from April 2010 to March 2018

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Who or what is at risk?

There are approximately 160 high rise buildings across our service area with the majority located in the urban areas of Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay along with the larger towns in the two counties.

Risk identified: large commercial, industrial and agricultural fires

Why is it a risk?

Business insolvency is at record levels across the UK. In 2019, 5,625 businesses closed in our service area (9.2 per cent of all enterprises). The impact of Covid-19 means that there is potential for arson and commercial fraud to increase¹⁹. The Association of British Insurers estimates that 29 per cent of all commercial fire claims in the UK can be considered as 'deliberate'.

Diversification in agriculture with more solar farms, battery storage and conversion of farm outbuildings into accommodation or light industrial units changes the risk of fire in rural locations.

Incident statistics

These incidents often require a significant amount of operational resource over a long period of time, on average lasting around five hours and requiring six fire engines.

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there have been 13,153 fires within premises of this type²⁰ within England, including 618 within our service area. Both nationally and within our service area, around 14% of these incidents are recorded as being started deliberately.

During the same period, one death and 11 serious injuries were reported within our service area. National statistics on deaths at these premises is not readily available.

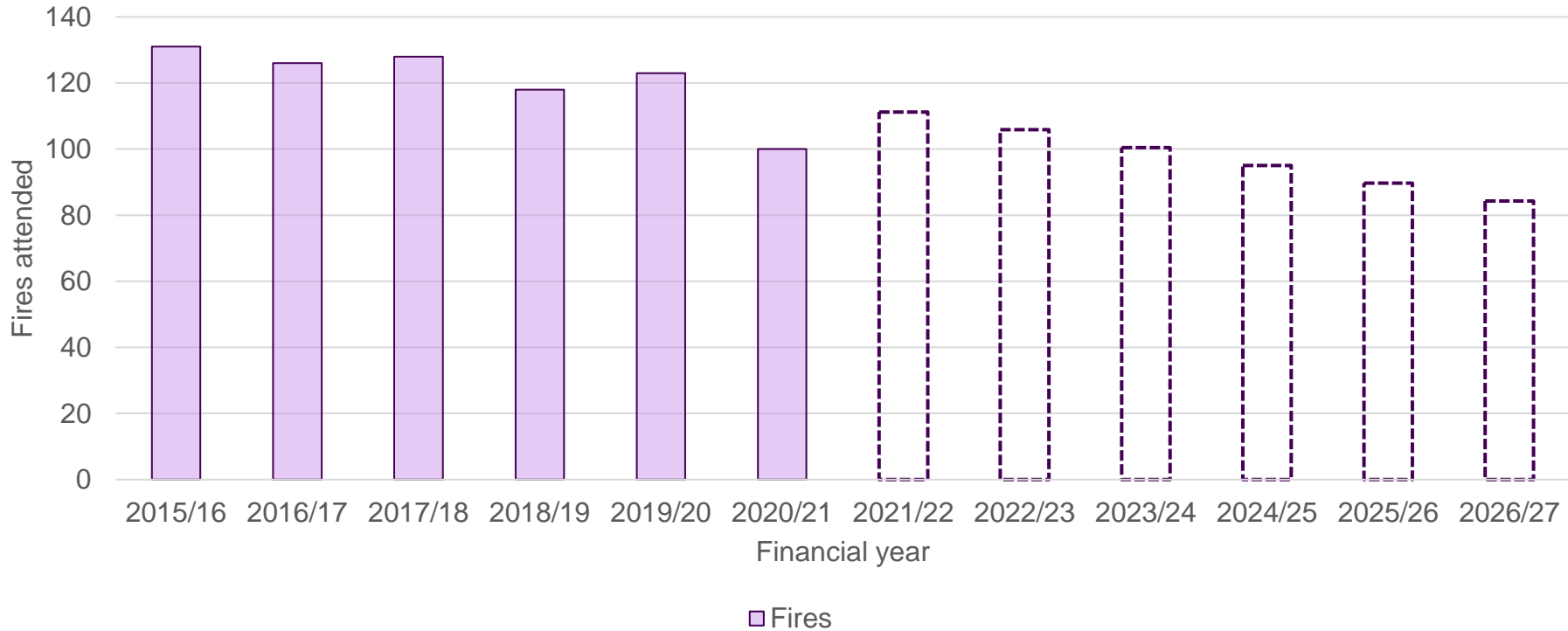
Our forecast indicates that incident levels are likely to continue in a downward trend over the coming years.

¹⁹ Office for national statistics business demography data

²⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021262/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0304-300921.xlsx based on Industrial and Agricultural categories (definition within publication)

Number of fires attended in large commercial, industrial and agricultural premises, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



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Who or what is at risk?

Incidents at large premises can cause disruption to local services. For example, road or rail closures, or having to relocate waste processing to an alternative facility. Smoke from these incidents can impact local residents, crew safety and the environment and can sometimes lead to temporary evacuation of residential areas.

Depending on the scale of damage to the building and business there is a potential impact on the local economy and services including loss of employment.

Risk identified: hospital and residential care home fires

Why is it a risk?

Premises that have the potential for significant loss of life in the event of fire will be at the forefront of our risk-based approach to planning and delivering our services.

Hospitals, health care acute services²¹ and residential care homes accommodate many people with greater levels of vulnerability due to health and wellbeing issues. This means that while the likelihood of a significant fire is low the potential severity is high, with the possibility of multiple deaths and injuries.

Our response to fires in such buildings can be challenging due to hazardous materials, processes and often complex layouts and/or extended travel distances between entry and exit point.

There are around 75 hospital and medical care facilities within our service area and 730 registered residential care homes.

Incident statistics

National statistics are not readily available for this breakdown of incidents however we can compare hospital and medical related incidents levels. During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there have been 3,260 fires in hospitals and medical care facilities²² in England, including 92 within our service area. Of the incidents in our area, there was one death and four serious injuries.

Our forecast indicates that incident levels are likely to remain relatively steady over the coming years.

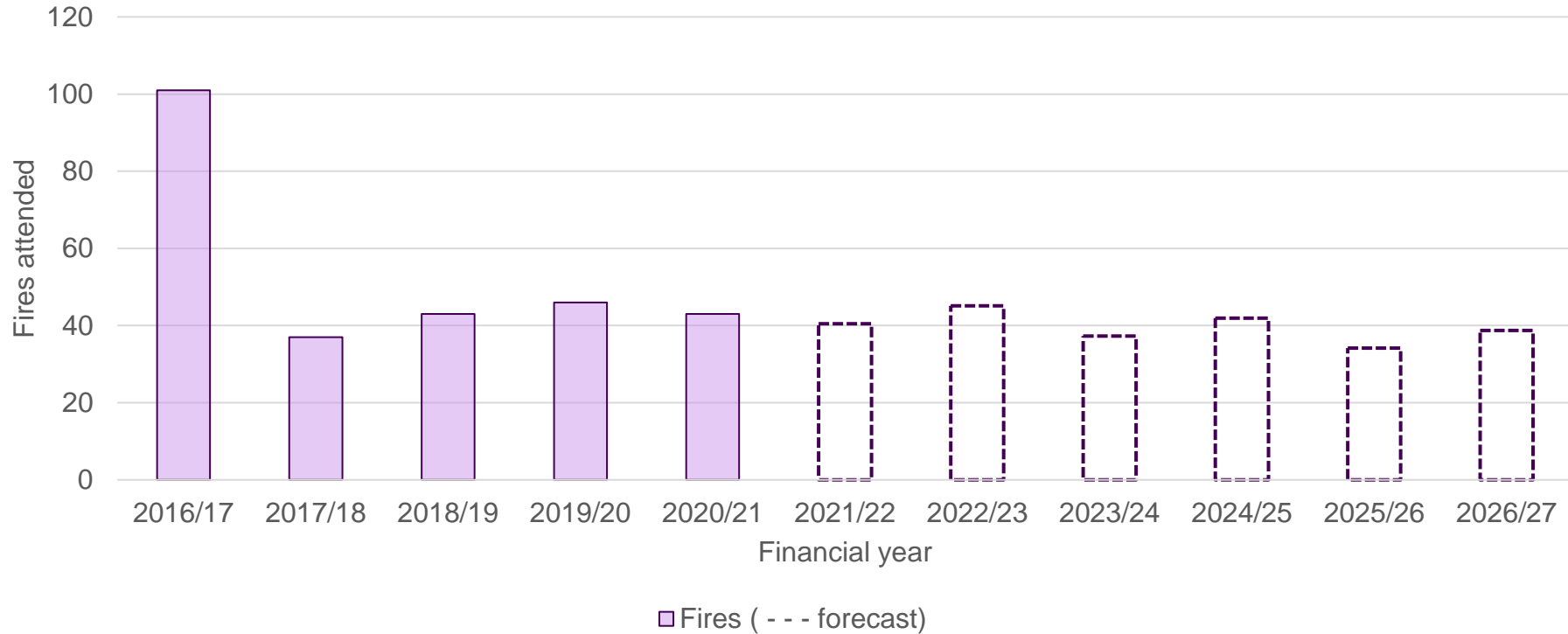
²¹ www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/regulations-enforcement/service-types#acute-services

²² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021262/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0304-300921.xlsx based on Hospital and Medical Care category (definition within publication)

Hospital, acute medical services and residential care home fires, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 10-year period from April 2010 to March 2020

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Who or what is at risk?

Hospitals, health care acute services and residential care homes accommodate many people with greater levels of vulnerability due to health and wellbeing issues. These issues may make it more complex to evacuate a building if there is a fire and could mean that they are less able to cope with smoke inhalation and consequences of fire.

If there is a significant incident in one of these settings it may have an impact on the wider community as services need to be relocated or vulnerable people need to be moved to new care facilities.

Risk identified: hotel and guest house fires

Why is it a risk?

Similar to hospitals and residential care homes, hotels and guest houses have the potential for significant loss of life in the event of fire. Hotels and guesthouses have guests sleeping in unfamiliar surroundings, in the event of a fire they may be less aware of the layout of the building than they would if they were at home.

Incident statistics

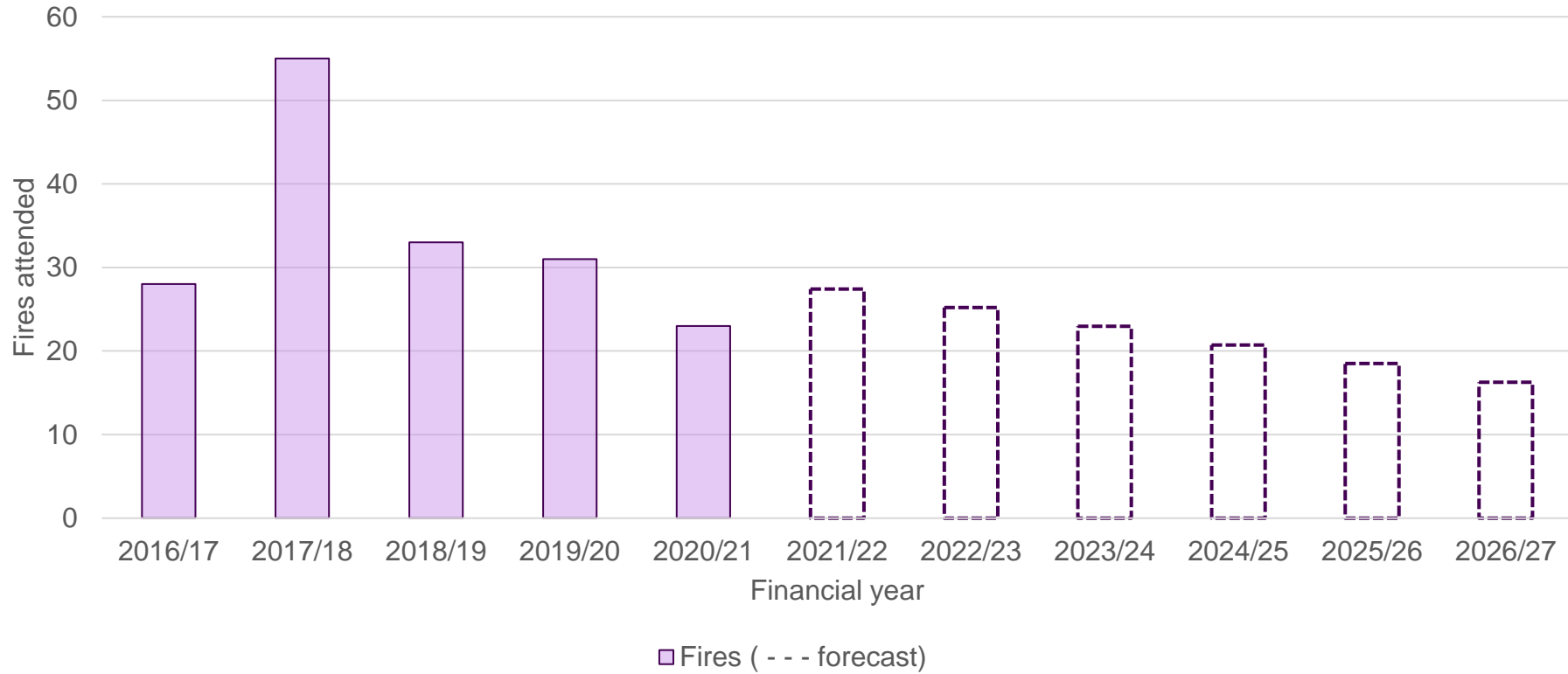
Over the past five years, there have been 3,151 fires in hotels and boarding houses²⁵ within England, including 193 within our service area. Of the incidents within our area, one death (note this was sheltered housing – not self-contained) and 15 serious injuries were reported. National statistics on deaths at these premises is not readily available.

²⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021262/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0304-300921.xlsx based on Hotel, boarding houses, hostels etc. category (definition within publication)

Hotel, hostel and boarding house fires attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 10-year period from April 2010 to March 2020

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Who or what is at risk?

Guests and staff could potentially be at risk should a fire occur. There may also be an economic impact on the local community should there be a significant fire, with potential loss of employment.

Risk identified: heritage buildings

Why is it a risk?

Losing any historic building or landscape to fire, storm or flood would be a significant loss to local, and in some cases national or even international heritage and can have a range of impacts.

- Many of the buildings, structures and landscapes have unique features or contain irreplaceable works of art of local and national significance.
- There are approximately 8,000 thatched properties in our service area (6,000 are listed)²⁶. In most cases, the damage to a thatched property after a fire is significant and has a major impact on the occupant.
- There are an average of 12 property fires involving thatch a year, this may not seem significant but they require a minimum of eight fire engines per incident and require an average of over 3,700 firefighter hours²⁷ per year.

Who or what is at risk?

Considerable impact on the local economy - many of these buildings are a significant reason for visitors to come to the local area and provide employment for residents.

These incidents present a significant challenge to our resources drawing them away from more urban areas of higher risk into the rural areas where most thatch properties are located.

²⁶ The thatch estimate is based on English Heritage figures and that about 75% of thatched premises nationally are believed to be listed.

²⁷ Five-year average 2015-19 (pre-COVID)

Risk identified: secondary fires

Why is it a risk?

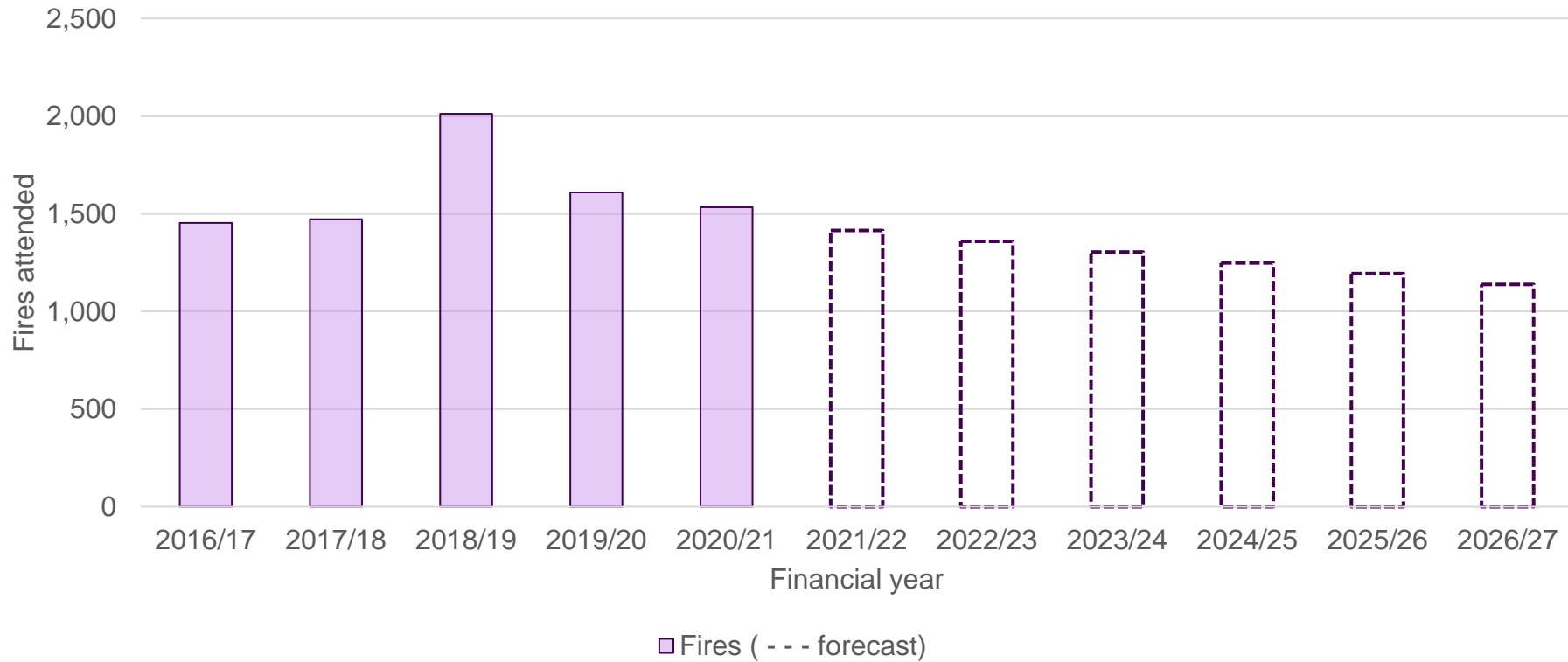
We use the term secondary fires to describe the majority of outdoor, grassland and refuse fires. These types of incidents can have an impact on the environment and local economy and can reduce the availability of fire engines to respond to incidents with a higher risk to life. We also are expecting significantly more wildfires in the years ahead as a result of climate change so need to ensure that we are equipped to deal with an increase in this risk type.

Incident statistics

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there were 445,066 secondary fires in England, including 7,911 in our service area. There has been a downward trend in these incidents, both nationally and within our service area and our forecast suggests that this is likely to continue.

Secondary fires attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



Who or what is at risk?

While there is no direct life-risk associated with this category of incident²⁸ they can tie up resources, preventing them from attending other incidents that may have a greater level of risk.

Large grass fires can have a significant impact on the environment damaging natural habitats, endangering wildlife and affecting air quality in residential areas.

²⁸ If an injury is reported a the fire will be reported as a primary incident.

Risk Identified: fires on board vessels

Why is it a risk?

With 659 miles of coastline Devon and Somerset has many harbours and estuaries as well as being home to the largest naval dockyard in Western Europe at Devonport.

Although the Service does not have an offshore firefighting responsibility, we have a duty to respond to fires in vessels alongside and within county boundaries. The Service attend an average of 12 fires on vessels each year.

Incidents involving vessels in the marine and inland waterway environment are not commonplace for fire and rescue staff; they can be complex to deal with, range from incidents involving small vessels to large sea-going vessels, and can include military vessels.

A fire on a vessel is a hazard because of the way vessels are constructed; getting in and getting out is difficult, and fire can spread easily through conduction via metal bulkheads and air handling machinery.

Risk identified: false alarms

Why is it a risk?

An unwanted or false alarm is 'a fire alarm (signal) resulting from a cause other than a fire'.

The impact of false alarms is significant.

- Unwanted alarms divert the fire service away from attending real emergencies.
- Responding to unwanted alarms creates unnecessary risk to fire crews and members of the public when fire engines are driven under 'blue light' conditions
- Occupants of buildings that have frequent unwanted alarms get used to them and may delay their response, or worse not respond at all, to a real emergency
- Unwanted alarms disrupt other prevention activities (like home safety visits and arson reduction activity) and firefighter training.
- These calls have a financial impact for our Service, as we must send vehicles and firefighters when they may not be needed.
- Repeated false alarms can have a significant impact on a business's productivity due to continual interruptions.

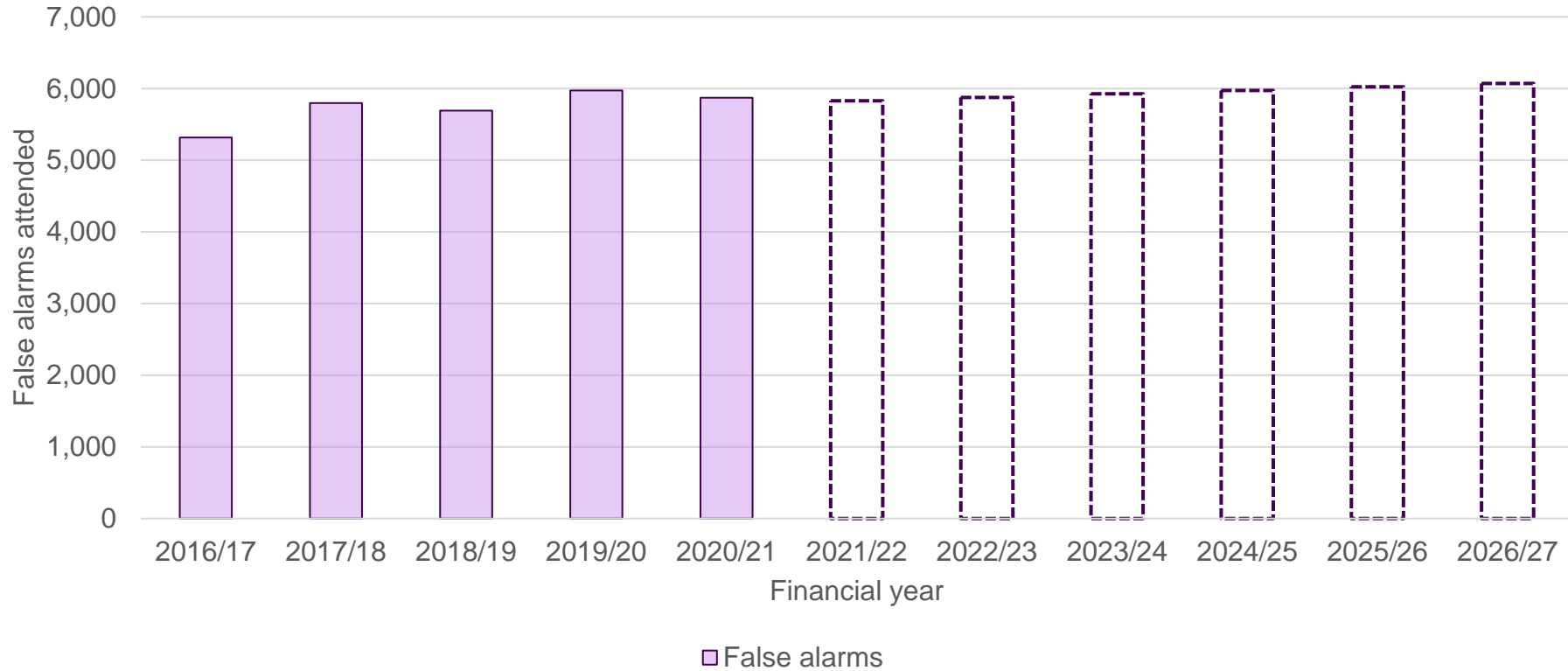
Incident statistics

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there were 1,127,279 fire false alarms in England, including 27,758 within our service area. There has been an upward trend in the number of false alarms attended over this period, both nationally and within our service area. Our forecasts suggest that there will be a slight upward trend in the number of fire-false alarm incidents that we attend over the coming years.

The 2019/20 financial year saw false alarms account for 38% of the incidents that we attended. The greatest proportion of false alarms are AFAs actuations, accounting for around 70% of false alarm incidents that our service attends.

Number of fire-false alarms attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



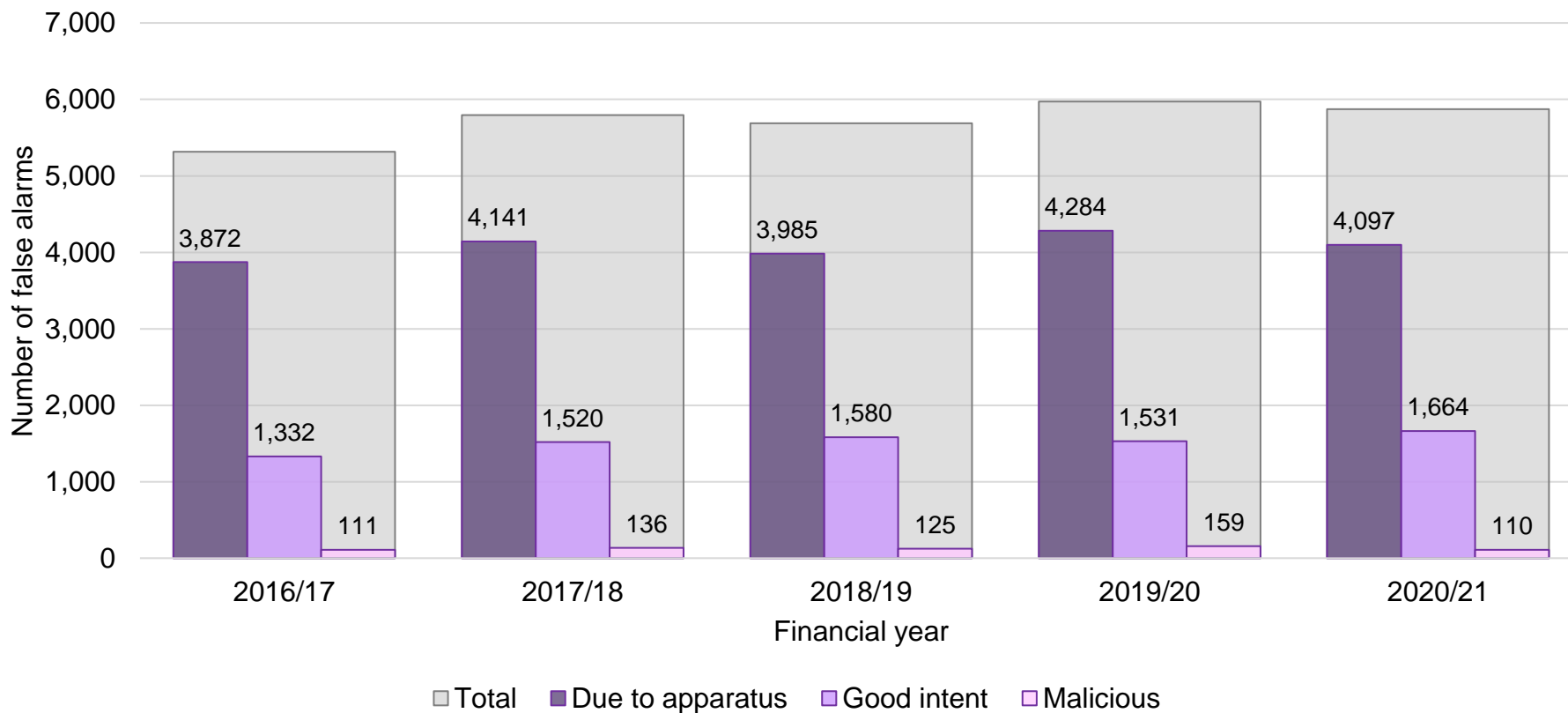
There are three high-level categories of fire false alarms:

Due to apparatus calls are where a fire alarm or fire-fighting equipment operate (including accidental initiation by persons) in error we refer to these as (AFAs).

Good intent calls are made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would be attending a fire.

Malicious false alarms are made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident.

Number of fire-false alarms attended, by category



Who or what is affected?

While these incidents do not carry a significant risk in themselves, the knock on impact of our resources being committed to responding calls that turn out to be false alarms means that they may not be available to respond to another, more serious incident. This can mean that we have to send a resource from further away, extending the time that it takes us to arrive at the incident.

Occupants of buildings where there are repeat false alarms become complacent, and may be at risk if there were to be a real fire.

Risk category: transport

Risk identified: road traffic collisions (RTC)

Why is it a risk?

Our service area has a network of over 13,160 miles of roads (5% of the UK road network). Most of these (90.4%) are smaller, rural roads and country lanes with only 1.7% are major roads.

In our engagement survey, people told us that road traffic collisions are a real cause of concern and anxiety in their communities, and it remains a key priority for us.

In the five years from January 2015 to December 2019 there were 17,013 crashes³¹ in the Devon and Somerset area. In 3,189 of these crashes at least one person died or was seriously injured (KSI).

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, fire services in England attended 153,077 RTCs, however there has been a downward trend over this period.

Incident statistics

In our service, we attend RTCs where a person is physically or medically trapped or where the vehicle needs to be made safe. An average of 8,000 firefighter hours per year are spent at these incidents.

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, we have attended 5,555 RTCs. As with the national data, our service has seen a downward trend over this period and our forecasts suggest that this is likely to continue over the coming years.

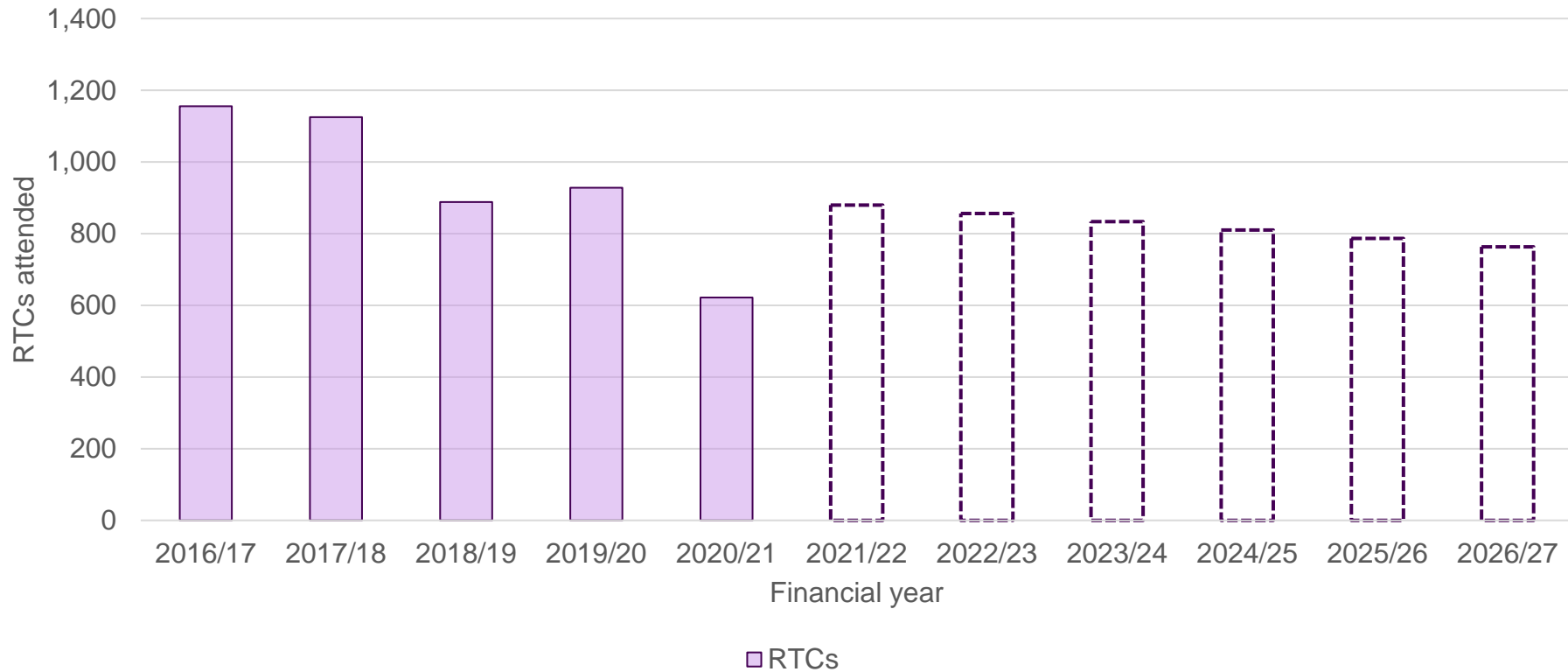
These incidents resulted in 2,835 people being killed or seriously injured³³.

³¹ From Police STATS 19 data

³³ Based on our understanding at the time of the incident.

Number of RTCs attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



Who or what is at risk?

Nineteen per cent of people killed on the roads are aged between 16 and 25. Almost a quarter of those seriously injured are also in this age group³⁵.

Men between the ages of 16 and 30 are the highest risk group.

³⁵ Police STATS 19 dataset

Risk category: specialist rescues

Risk Identified: rescues from water

Why is it a risk?

Specialist rescues are not statutory responsibilities for fire and rescue services, but there is an expectation and a need for our communities and partner agencies to be supported at these incidents. We also have legislative and regulative requirements that apply when attending statutory duty incidents involving flooding, confined space and working at height.

Water safety

Drowning is one of the UK's leading causes of accidental death. Each year more than 300 people drown after tripping, falling or just by underestimating the risks associated with being near water. Many more people are left with life changing injuries in water related incidents.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the lead government department for major flooding in England. However, responding agencies report to a range of government departments, requiring co-ordination in the event of flooding over a wide area.

Incident statistics

Tragically, on average, around 400 people drown around the UK every year and a further 200 take their own lives on our waters.

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, our service attended 1,353 flooding incidents of which 162 were rescues from water, 96 of these were from vehicles. Our forecast suggests that we may see an upward trend in these incidents over the coming years.

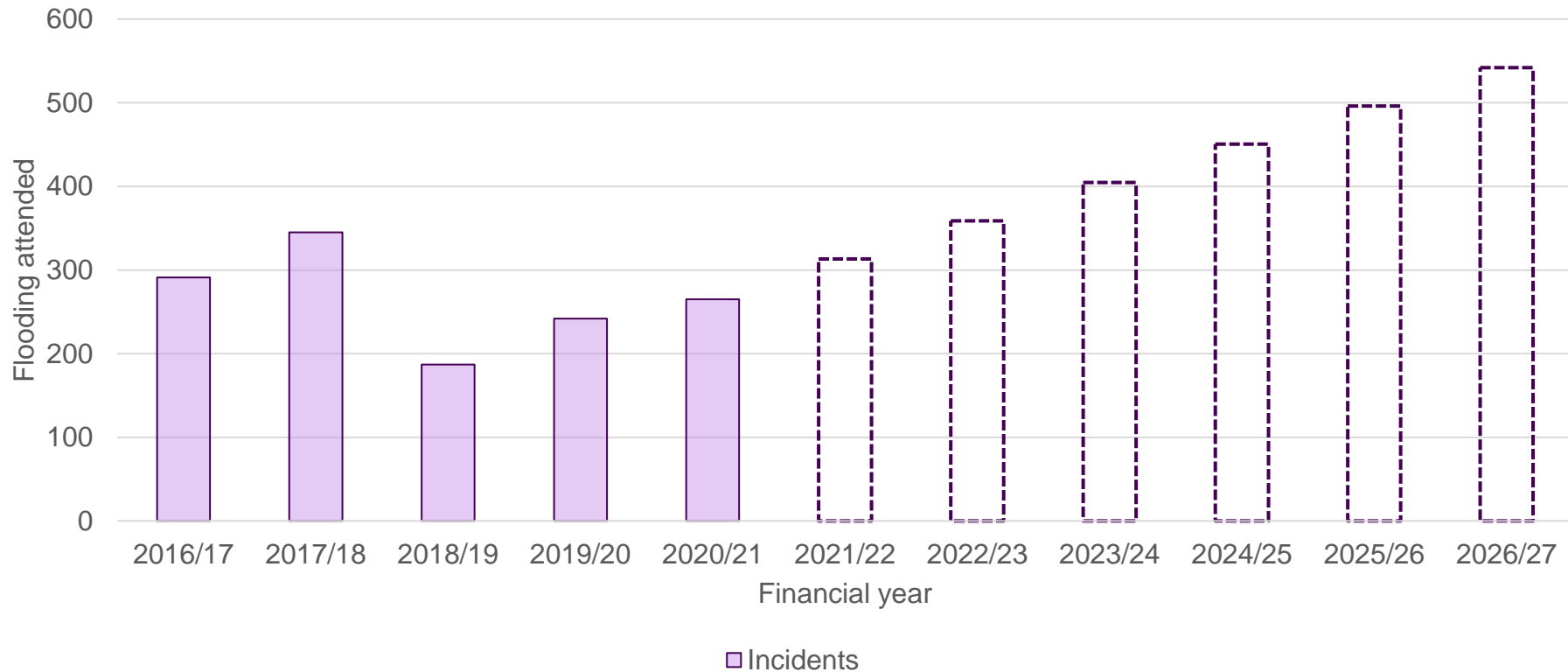
Based on national figures from the WAID database, during the 2020 calendar year there were 176 accidental drownings in England of which 10 were in our service area.^[1] Sixty-eight people accidentally drowned on the coast and 90 (just over half of the drownings) took place in lakes/rivers/ponds/streams/canals/harbours.

^[1] 2020 Annual Fatal Incident Report, [Annual reports and data - National Water Safety Forum](#)

Number of flooding incidents attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020

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Who or what is at risk?

National statistics show that more people drowned from falling into water whilst walking or running than from swimming. Nearly 80% of accidental drowning victims were male and 50% of accidental drowning victims aged 25-34 in 2020 had reported presence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Rescues from height and confined spaces

Why is this a risk?

Every time we receive an emergency call for assistance, we want to make sure we can respond promptly, safely and effectively. To help us do this, we prepare, plan and train for all kinds of emergencies including maintaining a capability for working at height and confined space to ensure the safety of our staff as well as attending these types of rescues.

Incident statistics

There are an average of 50 rescues from height per year across our service area and approximately 80 animal rescues from height or depth.

Animal rescues

Why is this a risk?

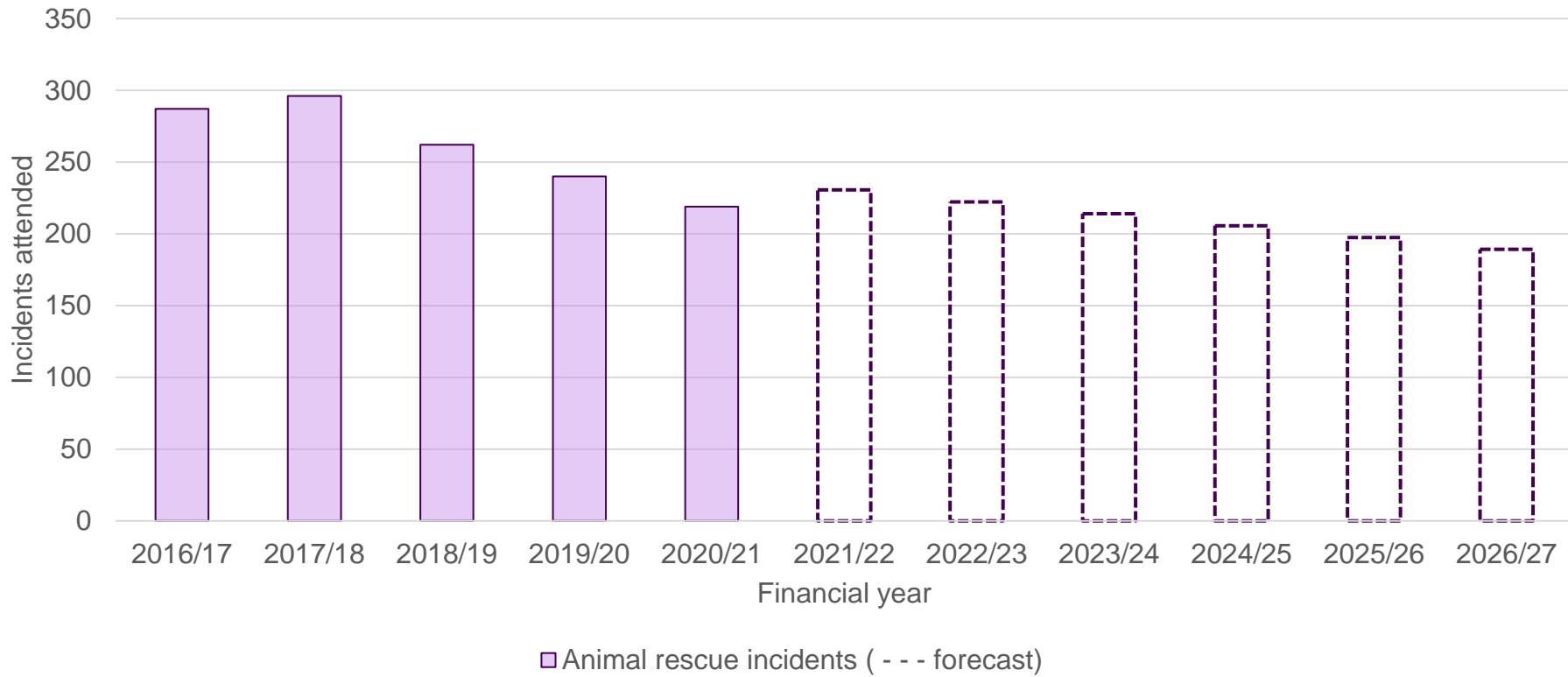
Our service area is largely rural, and we are often called upon to help rescue animals including wildlife, pets and livestock. While we do not have a duty to respond to these incidents, we do attend if there is likely to be a risk to a member of the public if they attempt to rescue the animal themselves or if an animal is trapped in a location that is particularly challenging to access.

Incident statistics

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, there were 23,451 animal rescue incidents in England, including 1,325 within our service area. While there has been a slight upward trend nationally during this period, our service has seen a very slight downward trend.

Number of animal rescues attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2009 to March 2020



Who or what is at risk?

These incidents generally pose a low risk to human life and can draw resources away from attending more serious incidents, requiring resources to be sent from farther away and potentially extending the time it takes us to arrive.

Risk category: hazardous materials

Risk Identified: hazardous materials sites and incidents

Why is it a risk?

The potential risks of hazardous chemicals and other dangerous substances, which can cause serious injuries to people and damage to the environment include:

- explosive substances
- gases
- flammable liquids and solids
- oxidising substances
- poisonous substances
- radioactive substances
- corrosive substances.

There are a small number of industries whose products or activities could have a serious impact on people's health and safety or a damaging effect on the environment in the event of an accident.

- Those industries that could be extremely hazardous are also subject to specific safety regulations. Thirteen sites across our service area are covered by the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations.
- There are also three licensed nuclear sites – Devonport Dockyard and two at Hinkley Point.

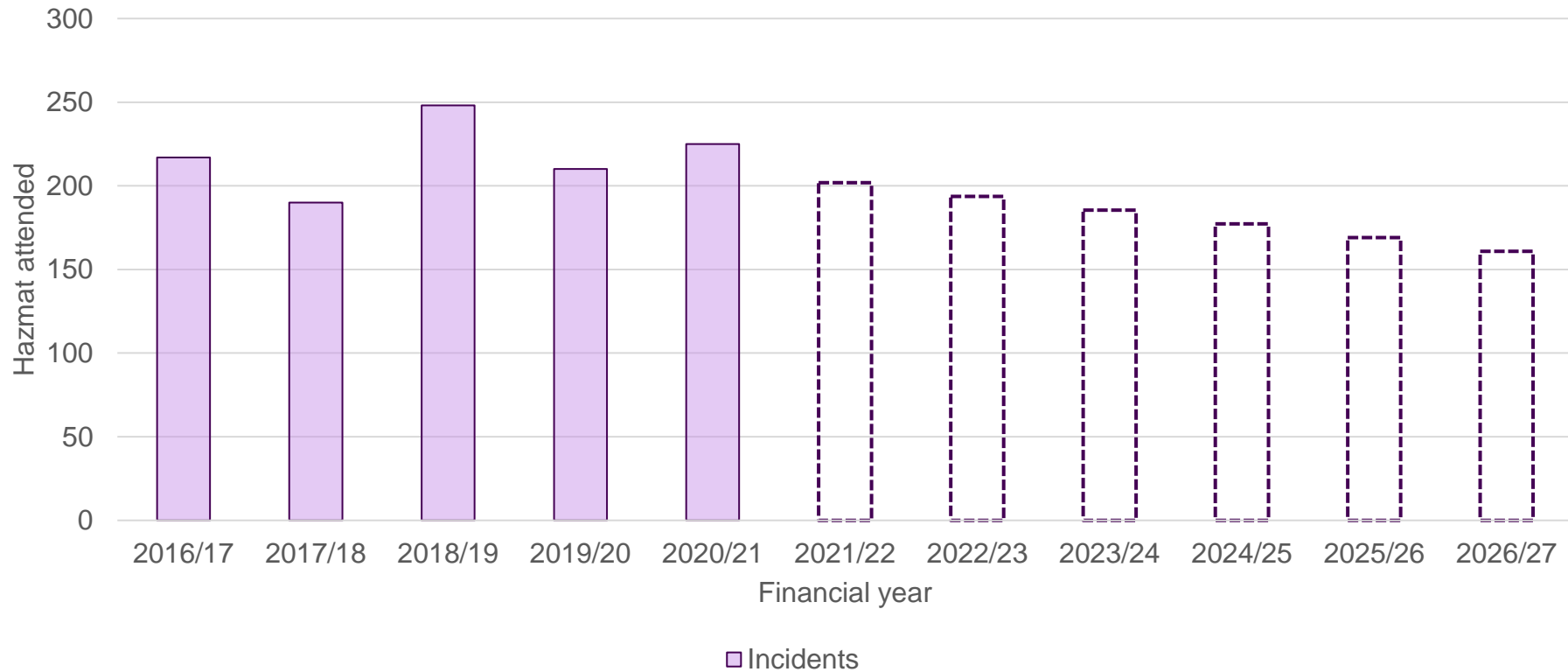
Incident statistics

During the five-year period from April 2015 to March 2020, we attended 1,138 hazardous material incidents, of these 556 were from spills or leaks. Our forecast suggests that we are likely to see a reduction in these incidents over the coming years.

While the number of hazardous material incidents is relatively low, we have to deal with incidents that have an element of hazardous materials and environmental protection risk on a regular basis. For example, fuel spills from road traffic collisions and materials containing asbestos at many domestic and commercial fires. The Service attends an average of 60 suspected carbon monoxide poisoning incidents each year.

Number of hazardous material incidents attended, including forecast to 2026/27

Pre-Covid-19 forecast based on 11-year period from April 2015 to March 2020



Who is at risk?

There is emerging evidence that repeated exposure to hazardous materials may have a long-term health impact on firefighters, including an increased risk of developing some forms of cancer. Pollution from industrial and transport incidents involving such substances may require people to be evacuated from their homes and may lead to adverse effects on water courses and air quality. Contamination could spread to agricultural land and wildlife populations. Tackling these incidents requires specialist equipment and training and often takes a considerable time to bring under control.

Risk category: environment and climate change

Risk identified: extreme weather events, flooding and wildfires

Why is it a risk

Why it's a risk and who or what it affects

We need to consider the likelihood of severe weather events when designing the our overall operational capacity and resilience.

With increasing global temperatures, the UK is experiencing an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Among the most serious events are storms and gales, extreme temperatures, heavy snow, drought and flooding. These can have a severe local impact on both the natural environment with the loss of valuable habitats, and on local communities with disruption, damage to property and potential for injury and loss of life.

A continuing pattern of warmer, drier summers, warmer, wet winters and more periods of intense rainfall and storms is predicted. With significant areas of wide, low-lying river valleys across both counties, the risk of flooding (including flash flooding) is likely to increase.

In fact, over the last decade the Service has seen an increase in the number of incidents linked directly to extreme weather events. This has had a significant impact on overall incident numbers year-on-year, with the operational activity focused within short timeframes and not spread out across the year.

During the winter of 2013/14 almost 45 square miles of the Somerset levels was under water, cutting off a number of communities.

Who or what it affects?

- people living and working close to areas at risk of flooding
- people travelling during severe weather events
- businesses in areas at risk of flooding
- areas susceptible to wildfire including heathland, moorland and woodland

Risk category: national risks

Risk identified: Major emergencies, resilience and business continuity

Why it's a risk and who or what it affects

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) requires emergency services, local authorities, the environment agency and health providers to work together to make sure they know how to respond in a major incident. This includes joint risk assessment, planning, training and exercising. The act also requires consultation with utilities, transport services and voluntary sector responders.

The definition of a major incident is "an event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency".

Large scale incidents have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities. For public sector and emergency service providers this impact can often be two-fold, as the demand for our services can increase as a result of the crisis or disaster, but at the same time, we can also be hit with the same pressures as other organisations on the ability to maintain services over sometimes extended periods. Such as during Covid-19.

This requires us to have well tested contingency plans in place with our Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners for the local impact of national and major emergencies which are identified in the community risk registers for each LRF and include:

- natural and environmental hazards (such as severe weather events like wide scale flooding)
- cybercrime and fraud
- human and animal disease
- terrorism including marauding terrorist attacks
- social disruption
- major accidents and system or infrastructure failures.

National Resilience

The National Resilience Capabilities Programme was introduced in 2003 to strengthen the country's ability to handle emergencies and crises. The Programme enhances the capability and capacity of the fire and rescue service to respond to a range of incidents as well as a providing a national coordination facility, and includes equipment and capability to support:

- mass decontamination
- urban search and rescue - able to respond to any major unstable or collapsed structure
- firefighting and flood relief with High Volume Pumps (HVPs)
- enhanced logistical support.

Risk category: health

Risk identified: medical response and health related incidents

Why is it a risk?

As part of the wider emergency service community, we understand the pressures that our police and ambulance services face with limited resources and high levels of demand. To support our colleagues in the police and ambulance service and to help keep our communities safe we have 20 co-responder stations that have the capability to respond to medical emergencies. We also support the police and ambulance service to gain entry to properties where it is considered that there may be a medical issue or risk to life.

The number of people aged 90+ are expected to double in size by 2043³⁷. The risks associated with ageing will increase the demand for medical response.

Incident statistics

During the 2019/20 financial year we attended over 150 suicide related incidents.

During the same period, we have attended 14,483 medical incidents. Between April 2017 and March 2020, we have attended 1,991 gaining entry incidents

Who is affected?

We know from our analysis that many of the people that we engage with through our community safety activities are also affected by health-related issues.

Mental health problems are common across all sectors of society. It is estimated that in any one year approximately one in four British adults experiences at least one diagnosable mental health disorder. The increase in mental health issues puts additional pressure on health services and results in increasing numbers of suicides.

Health related incidents and particularly those linked with suicide can have a significant impact on the crews attending.

³⁷ ONS mid-year population estimates

Glossary

Appliance – The general term used to describe all firefighting vehicles, including the standard fire engine or pumping appliance

AFA – Automatic Fire Alarm. An emergency call automatically generated by remote monitoring equipment in non-domestic premises.

Arson - The criminal act of deliberately setting fire to property.

Capital reserves – A sum of money set aside to help fund investment in our assets (vehicles and buildings). We save previous years' underspends, so we don't need to borrow more money in the short-term.

Community risk - The risk of unwanted events that might occur in the community, which Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service aims to reduce. Includes fires, road traffic accidents and other incidents that the Service might respond to.

Co-responders - on-call firefighters who receive enhanced training and respond to medical emergencies in their communities in support of the ambulance service.

ERS – Emergency Response Standard, A risk based target for response times and number of personnel to attend all relevant emergency incidents in Devon and Somerset.

Gaining entry - an initiative where firefighters assist the ambulance service to get into properties where they suspect there is an unconscious or unresponsive casualty inside.

Hazmat – Hazardous materials like chemicals, fuel spillages, substances that can cause harm to persons and or environment.

HMICFRS – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services. The body that independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the police and fire service.

Incident - An event requiring fire service assistance.

ICT – Information and Communications Technology. A term used to cover any item of equipment that is used to send or receive information electronically.

Local Resilience Forum – are multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. These agencies are known as Category 1 Responders, as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act. They work to identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities.

National resilience – The National Resilience Programme was introduced in 2003 to strengthen the country's ability to handle emergencies and crises. The national resilience assets are owned by the fire and rescue services which host them. Servicing of the vehicles and procurement of equipment for them is managed centrally.

The programme delivers:

- mass decontamination
- urban search and rescue
- high volume pumping capacity
- operational logistics and support
- long term capability management.

On-call firefighters - Firefighters recruited to be available on-call close to their local fire station for a certain minimum number of hours per week, plus regular training. They carry a pager to call them to the fire station when an incident happens in their area. Many have other full time employment or a lifestyle that enables them to commit a certain number of hours per week to be on-call. They are paid by the hour for each hour they commit to be available; we call this 'pay for availability'.

Operational Risk - The risk of unwanted events that might occur to the Service while carrying out its operations. Includes firefighter occupational accidents or illness.

Prevention – Activity associated with fire safety in the home and community.

Primary Fire - Fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures.

Protection – Sometimes referred to as 'Business Safety'. This activity is linked to the advice and guidance for regulated premises and enforcement of the Regulatory Reform Order 2005.

Psychological safety - An environment where staff feel included, safe to learn, safe to contribute and safe to challenge.

Resilience – The ability to respond to major or larger incidents whilst maintaining the core service provision. This is made possible through effective emergency planning and flexible resource arrangements.

Revenue spending – Our day-to-day expenses such as salaries, heat, fuel and uniforms.

Risk analysis – The process of examining in detail the risks that could affect the communities in Devon and Somerset.

RTC – Road Traffic Collision. An incident involving vehicles on the highway.

Safeguarding - Protecting an individual's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Secondary fire - The majority of outdoor fires, including grassland and refuse fires.

SSC – Special Service Call. Non-fire related incidents requiring the attendance of an appliance or officer. Examples include flooding, animal rescues, lift releases and hazardous materials.

Wholetime – Permanent contract operational personnel.

Data sources:

CRMP

Office for national Statistics :

- mid-year population estimates
- household projections for England

Indices of multiple deprivation

NOMIS labour market statistics

Department for Transport data table RAS50012

DSFRS Incident data

Data Sources Strategic Document

National Fire Statistics

[Themes in accidental fire deaths 2013-2017 \(dsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.dsfire.gov.uk/themes-in-accidental-fire-deaths-2013-2017)

[Detailed analysis of fires attended by fire and rescue services, England, April 2020 to March 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021262/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0304-300921.xlsx)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021262/fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0304-300921.xlsx

Office for national Statistics:

- Business demography data
- mid-year population estimates

[Annual reports and data | National Water Safety Forum](#)

Environment Agency Flood Zone 2

English Heritage Listed building data

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DEVON &
SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

APPENDIX C TO REPORT DSFRA/21/25

Equality Impact Assessment

Community Risk Management Plan
2022-2027

Devon & Somerset
Fire & Rescue Service

November 2021

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1 SUMMARY

For a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to impact on those it serves, it needs to make the community safer, evidenced by data, and reduce feelings of concern that people have. The way in which the Service does the work to make that happen, impacts on its staff.

From the CRMP pre-consultation, concerns about dwelling fires and RTC feature at the top of concerns in the community, together with concerns about help not being available when needed such as limited Firefighter availability and slow response times. The concerns people have, or their likelihood to take action to mitigate risks, depends on their level of risk awareness and their feeling of being responsible. Respondents to the pre-engagement survey more often than not, had done 'nothing' in relation to mitigation of risk.

The impact risks will have on people, both in the community and in the organisation, can be mitigated by preparing communities for incidents through raising awareness, supporting resilience and providing training/equipment. Reassurance that DSFRS has the resources and expertise to provide a sufficient and timely response is key. When participants of the survey were asked about what the Service could do to reduce concerns, the largest single theme was around being more engaged or pro-active with communities. This was followed by promoting the work DSFRS does more, improving the website and having more/enough staff available. Business owners believe that DSFRS need to consult with businesses more regularly to support them in managing risks.

This document articulates in detail the different risk groups in Devon & Somerset, the strategic intent of the Service to mitigate risks to these groups and what impact the proposed Community Risk Management Plan will have on these groups.

Overall, the proposed actions to mitigate the risk contained in the CRMP will have a positive impact on all members of our community. Some more positive than others, but all leading to a safer place to work and live. **No negative impacts were identified.**

2 PURPOSE

Equality legislation, in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty, requires public services to assess the impact of changes made to processes and services to ensure any impact and equality-related risks on staff and community are identified and mitigated. This assessment identifies whether changes suggested within the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027 will have a disproportional impact on people with certain protected characteristics.

In line with our values and code of ethics, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service takes this duty further by undertaking a full People Impact Assessment to ensure impact is known and mitigating actions are identified whether or not it involves people with protected characteristics. This assessment involves completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), an evidence based analysis tool which is completed to ensure and evidence that the service does not unlawfully discriminate and that it positively fosters good relations with underrepresented groups, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011.

Undertaking the EIA and equality of access assessments helps to ensure the CRMP process is:

- Mitigating the risk of inequality and/or discrimination detrimentally impacting a risk group or individuals;
- Eliminating the risk of unconscious bias and/or discrimination inadvertently influencing decision making and/or resource allocation;
- Fully considering and understanding the needs and expectations of diverse communities and groups (including employees);
- Ensuring the FRS is meeting its legislative duties linked to supporting equality and inclusivity; and
- Supporting the strategic objective, the FRS will have embedded within its overall strategy, of ensuring inclusivity in all the services provided to its communities and employees.

This EIA is based on perceptions of both the community and staff of the Fire & Rescue Service as expressed in the pre-consultation questionnaire and online community. These perceptions will be taken into consideration when drafting the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027 and the actions which mitigate the risks identified.

A public consultation will take place late 2021 to ensure that the information provided by communities in Devon and Somerset has been accurately interpreted and are reflected in the CRMP. Consultation results will inform an updated EIA used for decision making towards the final version of the CRMP. When the final version is agreed, the EIA will also be finalised, reflecting the impacts of the plan as it is put in place and any actions which need to be monitored.

3 Equality Risk & Benefits Analysis methodology

The CRMP relates to a Fire & Rescue Service's external and internal operating environment, the risk groups in its community i.e. people within communities, firefighters, assets or things that could be harmed.

This ERBA considers the impact of the changes on all groups affected, namely:

- All communities in Devon and Somerset counties
- Visitors to the counties
- Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue members of staff
- Fire Authority Members
- Devon and Somerset Local Authorities
- Emergency and Blue Light Service Partners
- Other Community Partners
- Representative bodies

In April 2021, DSFRS commissioned DJS Research Ltd (DJS) to support an engagement process. DJS provided support in three core ways:

1. Management and delivery of a qualitative online community with a selection of key audiences which DSFRS had identified a requirement to hear from in-depth
2. Analysis of quantitative data generated by a survey designed, delivered and hosted by DSFRS
3. Provision of telephone surveys to ensure accessibility of the above survey to those who were unable or preferred not to complete the survey online – these were carried out by a team of specialist telephone interviewers.

To ensure that this engagement was open to as many Devon and Somerset residents as possible, no quotas were set on participation and no upper limit to the number of responses was instituted.

The survey was open from 8 April to 20 May 2021 and garnered 1,694 responses. This includes a number of participants who were supported to complete the engagement survey by telephone as well as those who completed online.

Due to on-going restrictions as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) it was not possible to undertake face-to-face engagement events in a safe and practical way. Instead, the survey was hosted on the DSFRS website and utilised a responsive design to ensure accessibility on all devices (e.g. smartphones and tablets as well as laptop or desktop computers). In addition, a dedicated phone number for the engagement was shared through posters and press releases. The engagement itself was promoted via a range of channels by the DSFRS team.

In addition to the result from the above mentioned survey, this analysis has been written with input from the documents listed in Appendix 2.

The analysis is also based on community profiling and an analysis of attended incidents over the past five years in the affected communities, including RTC incident data (IRS/SORT) for

period 01/05/2016 to 28/02/2021 and Stats 19 data (collected by police) taken from MAST online for period 2015-19 (inclusive).

Details of the population in relation to protected characteristics was retrieved from census (2011) data and estimates based on the census data as 2021 census data was not available at time of publishing this ERBA.

Although there is some data on sexual orientation from the 2011 census, this was limited to **registered** same sex partners (same sex marriage was not legal at the time of the census). Registered partnerships only concerns a small percentage of the LGBT population. No further data was available, but the distribution of registered partnerships suggests that LGBT population percentage is higher in urban areas. To ensure their opinions are included in the consultation, specific LGBT groups need to be approached.

4 Devon & Somerset Communities

The first step when considering a strategy for service delivery is to identify whether there are good reasons for interventions. In the context of managing risks, there may be specific demographics, health issues or socio-economic problems that may make action worth considering. Interventions should tackle as directly as possible the identified socio-economic problems (4.3) and specific public concerns (4.4), together with the specific causes and consequences of the risk. Consequently, options should be generated that address both the risk itself, as well as the concerns that have been expressed.

4.1 Demographics

The counties of Devon and Somerset cover an area of 10,170 km² (3,926 square miles), mainly rural areas containing large towns and cities located remotely from each other. 1,762,900 people live in the area, resulting in a population density of 173 per Km², one of the lowest in England.

Both counties contain a large number of small towns and villages connected by a network of B and C class roads and a complicated network of narrow lanes. Agriculture is the dominant land use across the region. Across both counties are a number of high and often remote areas which include Dartmoor and Exmoor.

The total coastline which falls under the jurisdiction of DSFRS is 659 miles, divided between the north and south coasts of Devon and the north western perimeter of Somerset.

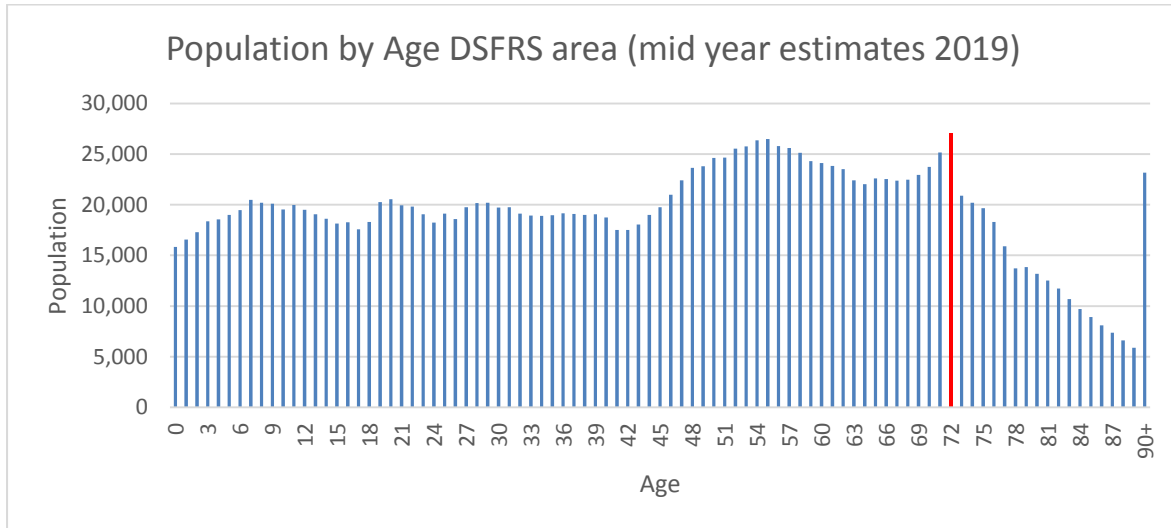
The population of Devon and Somerset is expected to grow by just over 100,000 in the next decade, partly as people are living longer due to improvements in healthcare and technology. This means that the profile of the population of both counties will alter.

Besides the people living and working in both Devon and Somerset, the counties have high numbers of visitors and holiday makers each year (1.1m in 2017), which means that at certain times (mainly in spring and summer) and places (coastal resorts, Exeter) the number of people present is far more than the census data for population would indicate.

Age

Of the total population, 24% were aged 65 and over with 3% (just under 60,000) aged over 85. 19% of the population was aged under 18 in June 2019.

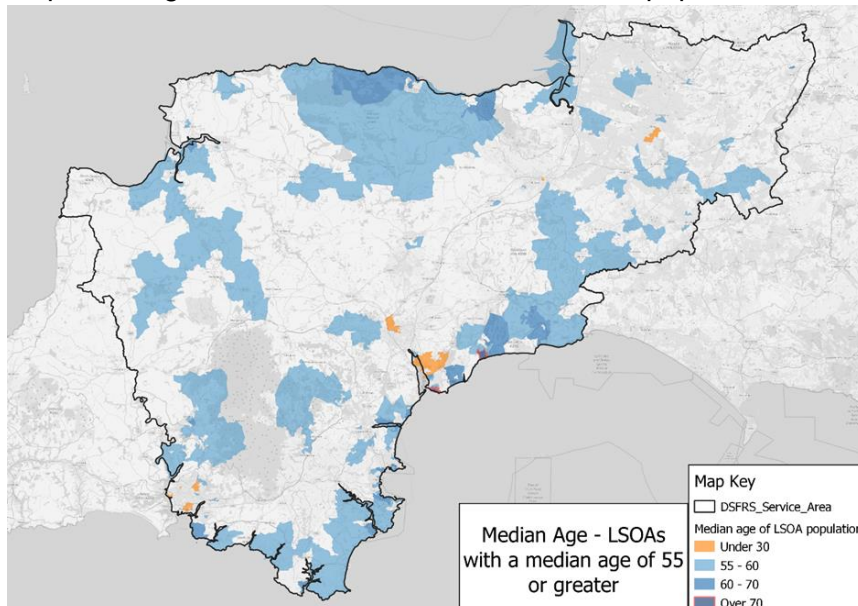
The most common age as estimated by ONS was 72, for the 2019 mid-year estimates this was those born between July 1946 and June 1947 i.e. almost immediately after the end of WW2.



This distribution partly reflects the attraction of the counties as a retirement destination, and also the post-war baby-boom generation reaching retirement age.

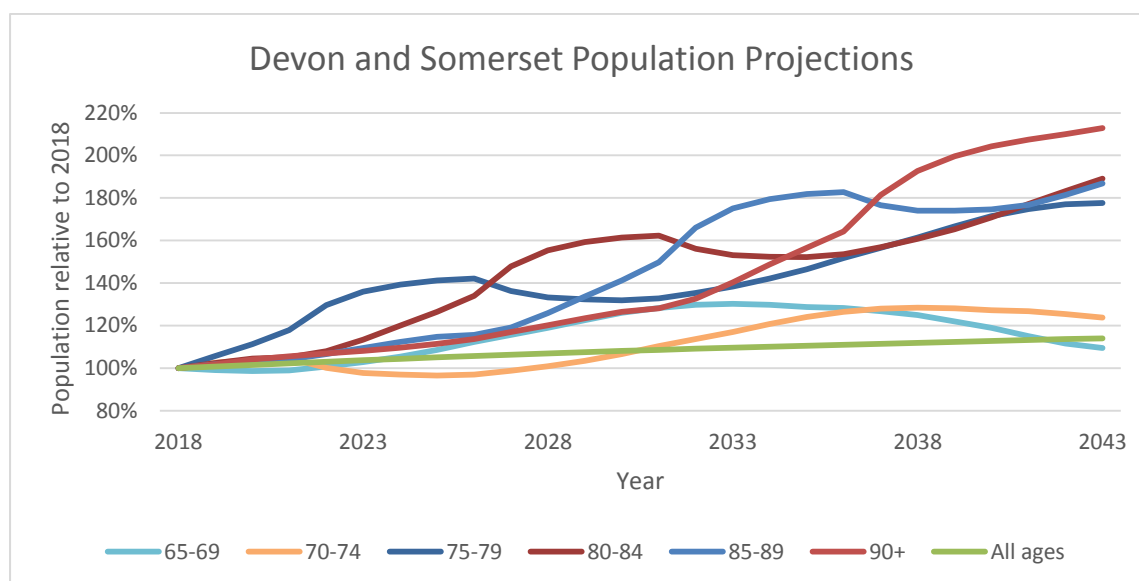
There are slight variations between areas. Compared to rural areas (West Devon 24-28%, Somerset 24-26%, South Hams 29%, East Devon 31% and Torbay, 27%), urban areas with universities or areas with large military establishments or large, prestigious schools tend to have a lower percentage of people 65+ (Plymouth 19%, Exeter 16% and Yeovil 19%).

Map showing areas where more than 50% of the population are over the age of 55 and over.



Over the next 20 years the population of Devon and Somerset is likely to change. Office for national statistics estimate that by 2025 the whole population will have increased by 5% and by 2043 it will have increased by 14%. This increase is not uniform across all areas and age groups.

The very elderly age groups are likely to increase most significantly as the post war 'baby boom' generation age (the pattern on the chart below are that group moving up through the ages). The population aged 75-79 is likely to increase by about 40% in the next few years, while by 2043 the population aged 90+ is likely to be more than twice the size it is now.

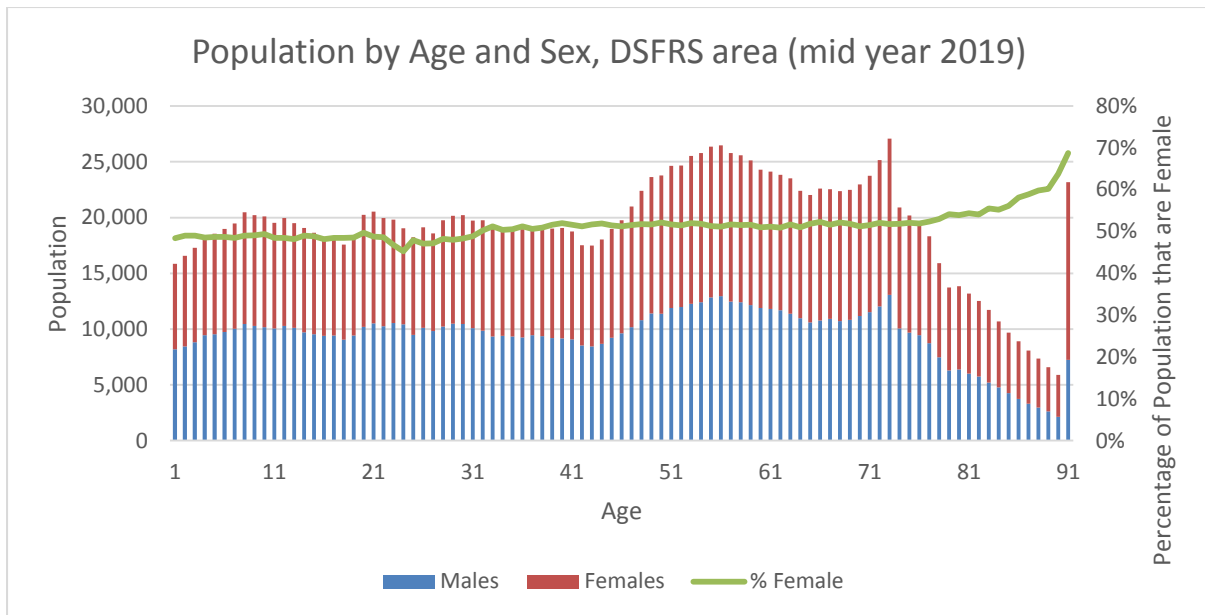


Similarly the population is likely to change in different ways in different parts of Devon & Somerset, Exeter is likely to see the lowest rise in 90+ population (but will still see an 80% rise), while Torrington is forecast to rise by 140%.

The ageing population has particular implications for public and care services. Projected estimates, based solely on demographic change, suggest that the number of those over 65 years with limiting long-term illness will increase significantly. There are increases predicted for diabetes, obesity, heart attacks, stroke and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) as well as conditions such as falls, dementia, depression, visual and auditory impairments.

Gender

The population aged distribution is not uniform between the sexes, with the oldest ages seeing higher percentage of residents who are female with more than two-thirds of people aged over 90 being female. This is likely linked to the greater life expectancy of women compared to men.

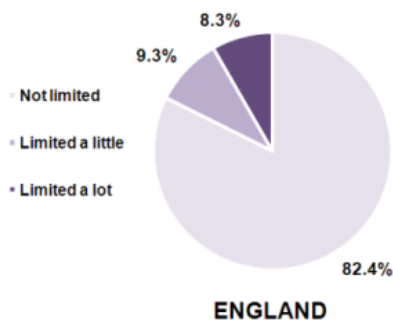


The fact that there are more women in older age groups and that many elderly are living on their own, means that a disproportionate amount of those living on their own will be women.

Disability

As a measure of disability, the Census asks a question about having activities limited because of a health problem or disability.

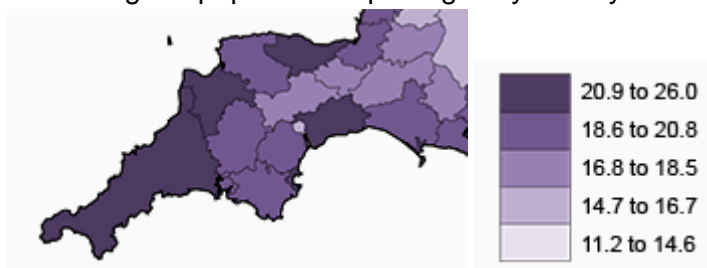
In 2011, the 8.3% of the population of England indicated they were limited a lot and 9.3% said they were limited a little.



In the Southwest those percentages were 8.3% and 10.2%. However, within the counties of Devon and Somerset in 2011, a higher percentage of 19.8% of the population indicate they had a long-term condition or disability which limited their day-to-day activities a lot or a little. There are differences between areas and these relate closely to areas with greater density of older people.

Exeter, which has also got one of the highest densities of younger people, has an 'activities limited by a long term health condition or disability'-percentage of 16.7%. This is the lowest of all areas. Torbay, with 24%, is the highest, followed by West Somerset (23.8%).

Percentage of population reporting daily activity limitations in 2011.



A higher proportion of women than men report having a long term health problem or disability.

As with the increase in the population of people 65+, there will be increases in the percentage of the population reporting a long term health problem or disability, both mental and physical.

Mental health issues are also on the rise in the general population. Data released in May 2021 from the Office for National Statistics, reveals that depression rates have doubled since the COVID-19 pandemic began and forewarns of a growing mental health crisis in the UK. Particularly concerning is that those in more precarious economic positions or burdened by existing inequalities – young people, women, clinically vulnerable adults, disabled people and those living in the most deprived areas of England – have been disproportionately affected. Despite increasing rates of depression, diagnoses by GPs fell by almost a quarter, suggesting access to mental health care is in decline. Reduced access to care will have long-term implications on mental health and put even greater pressure on health services (source: The Health Foundation).

The percentage of the working age population with a learning disability is likely to remain fairly stable.

The Office of National Statistics published data in 2020 that indicates that people living with a disability are mostly either owner of a house they live in or are renting social housing. The percentage of house ownership increases with age to 61% for the 60-64yrs age group. The 45-49yrs group is the largest group in relation to living in social rented housing, just over 30%. Of the 25-29yrs age group 30% lives with their parents compared to 25% of those without a disability. This drops to 15% in the next age group up.

Marital status and Pregnancy and Maternity

The census of 2011 indicated that in Devon and Somerset 16-20% of the population in rural areas was single, 22-32% in urban areas. Around 50% of the population was married (with Exeter at 38% due to its student population) and around 15% divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved. At that time 12-16% of the population was widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership (11% in Plymouth and Exeter). The latter group is expected, in line with the ageing population, to

increase. Social trends, with younger generations' changed attitude to being single, may also lead to increases in the 'single' group (source: Psychology Today 22/10/2018)

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force in December 2005 allowing same-sex couples to register their relationship for the first time. Since 2006 the Office for National Statistics has published annual statistics on civil partnership formations.

Devon & Somerset are broadly in line with the national average in terms of rates of civil partnership per head of population. Rates tend to be higher in larger urban areas (such as Bristol, Plymouth and Exeter). Male partnership formation also tends to be more prominent in large cities. In 2011, rates of same sex civil partnerships were between 0.15% and 0.25%. Much has changed since then, not least social acceptance towards same sex relationships and implementation of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, and it is expected that the proportion of same sex relationships will be much higher within the 2021 census data.

Birth rates have decreased in both Devon and Somerset, which, together with an ageing population, will result in a rapid increase of that part of the population aged 65 and above i.e. at retirement age. This is likely to result in difficulties with recruitment of people to staff our On Call station in certain areas.

Sexual Orientation and Transgender

The 2017 Annual Population Survey estimates that 2.0% of UK adults identified themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual (LGB), representing a statistically significant increase on the 1.5% figure of 2012. The population aged 16 to 24 were the age group most likely to identify as LGB (4.2%). More men (2.3%) than women (1.8%) identified themselves as LGB.

The South West was the region that saw the largest change in the percentage identifying as LGB over the last five years, from 1.4% in 2012 to 2.4% in 2017. The percentage of people who identified as "other", meaning they do not consider themselves to be heterosexual or straight, bisexual, gay or lesbian, was 0.6%.

In 2017, around 69% of those identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) stated they had never married or entered into a civil partnership. This is a higher percentage than those identifying as heterosexual or straight (34%). Those who had a legal marital status of single may be in same-sex cohabiting couples. In the UK, 0.5% of families were same-sex cohabiting couple families in 2017.

There are no official estimates of the numbers of transgender people at a national or local level. However, in a Home Office-funded study, the Gender Identity Research and Education Society estimated between 0.6% and 1% of the UK adult population experience some degree of gender variance.

Ethnic background

Ethnic group classifies people according to their own perceived ethnic group and cultural background. According to the Census, 2011, about 97.7% of the population in our counties

identify as White (94.9% 'White British' and 2.8% other white backgrounds). On average, only 2.3% identify as People of Colour.

In the urban areas ethnic diversity is more common with Exeter (11.7%) being most diverse, followed by Plymouth (7.1%) and Taunton Deane (6.5%). Rural areas vary between 3 and 6%.

After 'other white' backgrounds, 'Mixed/multiple ethnic groups' and 'Asian/Asian British' tend to be the largest groups of ethnic minority population. Larger groups are found in Exeter and Plymouth and sizeable groups in South Somerset, Taunton Deane and Torbay.

Larger groups of Gypsy and Traveller residents were found in the Mendips and Taunton Deane, Plymouth and South Somerset. Some of these residents, due to their travelling culture, may have moved since. However, many may either rent their accommodation or own their own land.

Brexit will have affected EU workers who were working in our counties and many may have returned to their home countries since. The 2021 census will confirm whether this is the case.

English as a second language

Language and being able to communicate effectively is vital to many different aspects of life. For the Service, this could impact when calling 999, applying for a job or interpreting Fire protection requirements for a business owner. Being able to communicate can provide someone with the ability to find their place in the world and protect themselves against the risk of fire or road traffic incidents.

Being able to speak, read and understand English will contribute to a safe living and working environment for themselves and others. But also the potential employment opportunities that people have with the Fire Service, through people being able to make the most of the skills they have, they can contribute more to the economy of an area and safety of those living in it. Being able to talk with those around helps to reduce barriers and improve community cohesion.

At the time of the 2011 Census, 2.5% of the resident population identified themselves as having a main language other than English, higher percentages are found in urban areas like Exeter (7.5%), Plymouth (3.7%) and Taunton Deane (3.5%). Rural areas vary from 1.3 to 2.7%.

Approximately 4 out of 5 residents who had a main language other than English indicated that they could speak English 'well' or 'very well'. Highest concentrations of people who could not speak English well or at all were found in the counties' principal urban areas.

Religion

On average 62% of the Devon and Somerset population identified as Christian in 2011. Christianity is slightly more prevalent in older people. Some of the highest concentrations are

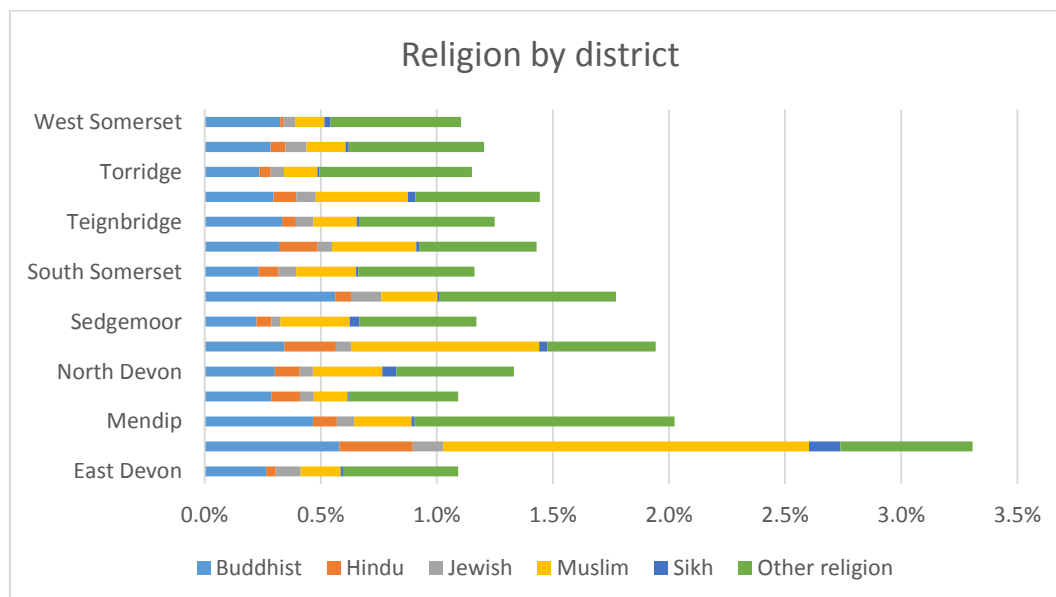
in areas with an older population particularly East Devon, South and West Somerset (all around 65%). The lowest concentrations are found in Exeter (54%) and Plymouth (58%).

0.3% identify with the Buddhist religion, two thirds of which were born in the UK and around a third born in Asia. The highest concentrations can be found in Exeter, South Hams and the Mendips. All other areas vary from 0.2-0.3%.

The proportion of people identifying as Muslim is the second highest after Christian with 0.4%. Half of those are of Asian ethnicity and around a quarter are White. Just over half identify as English/British. The highest concentrations are in urban areas like Exeter (1.6%), Plymouth (0.8%), Taunton Deane and Torbay (both 0.4%).

0.1% are of Hindu religion, with the majority being Indian. Around 6 in 10 were born in Asia and less than half identifying as British/English. Residents are mainly concentrated in and around urban areas, particularly parts of Taunton and Yeovil.

0.1% define themselves as Jewish.



Other religions together, including paganism, cover a population of between 0.5-0.8%. In Exeter 1.1% has an 'other religion'. Pagans notably reside in and around Glastonbury and Totnes.

Deprivation

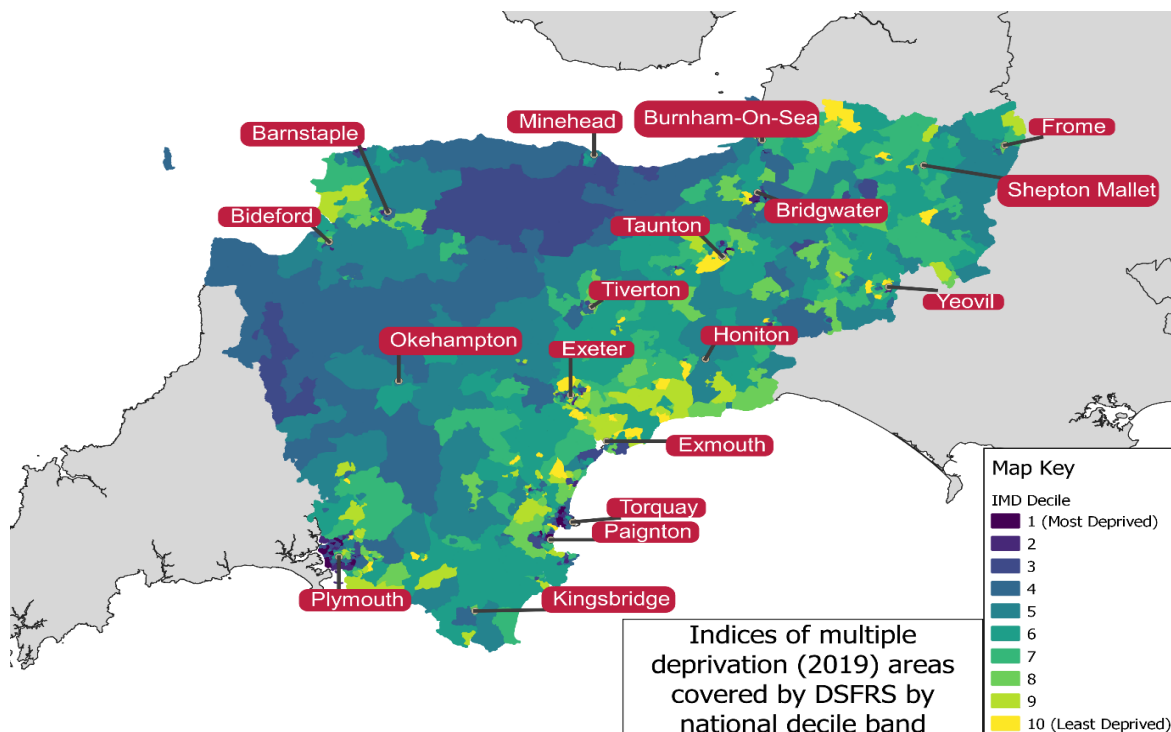
The Indices of Deprivation provide a relative measure of deprivation in small areas. It is based on the concept that deprivation consists of more than just poverty. Deprivation refers to a general lack of resources and opportunities. The Indices of Deprivation is the collective name for a group of eight indices which all measure different aspects of deprivation.

The domains used in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 are:

- Income

- Employment
- Education, Skills and Training
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment

All the small areas in England can be ranked according to their Index of Multiple Deprivation score; this allows users to identify the most and least deprived areas and to compare whether one area is more deprived than another. An area has a higher deprivation score than another one if the proportion of people living there who are classed as deprived is higher. An area itself is not deprived: it is the circumstances and lifestyles of the people living there that affect its deprivation score. And it is important to remember that not everyone living in a deprived area is deprived – and that not all deprived people live in deprived areas.



In 2019, Devon has become marginally less deprived since 2015 when compared to the national picture. The most deprived areas in Devon are in the wards of Ilfracombe Central, Barnstaple Central Town and Forches & Whiddon Valley in North Devon. These three areas are in the most deprived 10% of all areas in England. There is a noticeable north-south division with much of East Devon, Exeter, South Hams and Teignbridge being less deprived than North Devon, Torridge and West Devon.

Since 2015, Exeter, Mid Devon, South Hams and Teignbridge have become relatively less deprived. The remaining Devon district areas have remained relatively static. Torridge is the most deprived district in Devon. Levels of deprivation affecting children and older people are below the average for England. Children in Somerset face greater income deprivation than older people

Somerset generally is better than the national average in terms of overall levels of deprivation. Since 2015 there has been a slight shift towards greater deprivation in Somerset relative to the rest of England, particularly in relation to the quality of housing. The number of 'highly deprived' neighbourhoods in Somerset, categorised as being within the 20% most deprived in England, increased since 2015.

The highest levels of deprivation are found within Somerset's larger urban areas with the most deprived area of Somerset being the Highbridge South West area of Sedgemoor. The least deprived area is in the Sampson's Wood area of Yeovil, which falls within the 1% least deprived in England.

4.2 Health

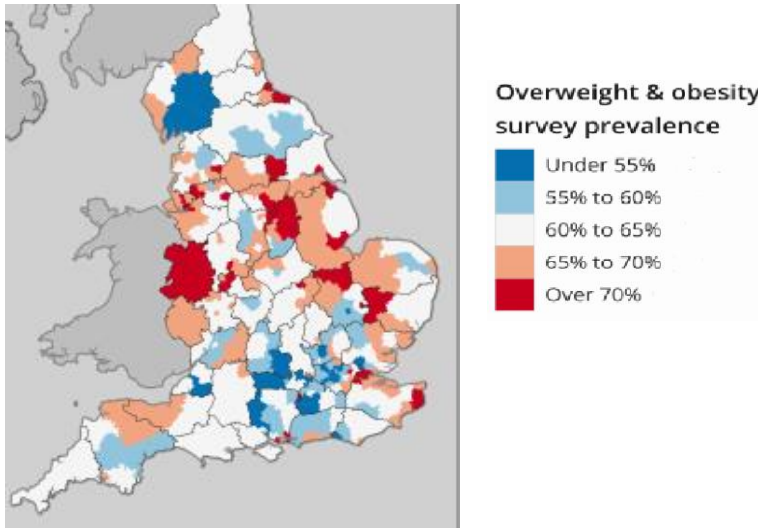
In the 2011 Census, around four in five residents considered themselves to be in good or very good health, while 5.5% described their health as bad or very bad, in line with the regional average and slightly below the England and Wales mark of 5.6%. There are particular areas, e.g Plymouth and Torbay, where that percentage rises to 6.5-7.6%. Mainly those over the age of 65 report bad or very bad health.

As the new census 2021 data is not available at the time of publication of this document, we cannot be sure how these figures have changed since then. However, in view of the pandemic, particularly around the long term effects of Covid, and the increasing population of those aged 65 years and over, it is likely there will be an increase in the proportion of the population who will describe their health as bad or very bad.

Since 1993 the proportion of adults in England who are overweight or obese has risen from 52.9% to 64.3%. The proportion who are obese has risen from 14.9% to 28.0%. The proportion of adults who are overweight or obese in Devon is below the national average and show that there is fluctuation between rural and urban, and deprived and less deprived areas.

The picture in Somerset is different where 66.1% of adult residents are overweight or obese and the Somerset District with the highest rate is Sedgemoor in which 70.8% adults are overweight or obese.

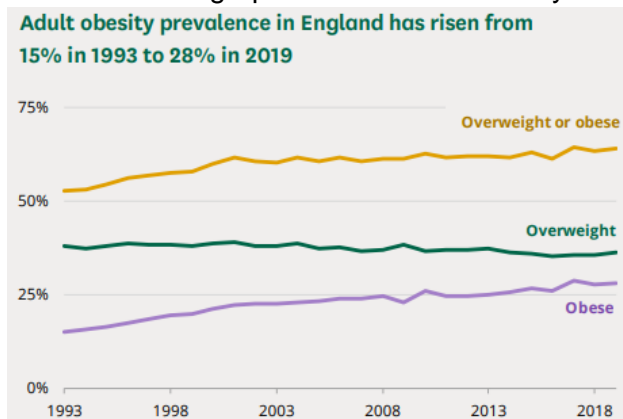
Excess weight in England: adults 2018/2019



Excess weight in adults (the percentage either overweight or obese) is not equally distributed among social groups:

- Deprivation: in the most deprived areas in England, prevalence of excess weight is 9 percentage points higher than the least deprived areas
- Disability: among people with disabilities, excess weight is 10 percentage points higher than among those without disabilities.
- Ethnicity: Black people have the highest rates of excess weight, and White British people have higher rates of excess weight than all other ethnic groups except Black.
- Education: among people with no qualifications, rates of excess weight are 12 percentage points higher than among people with level 4 qualifications or higher (i.e. a degree).

From the below graph it is clear that obesity is on the rise

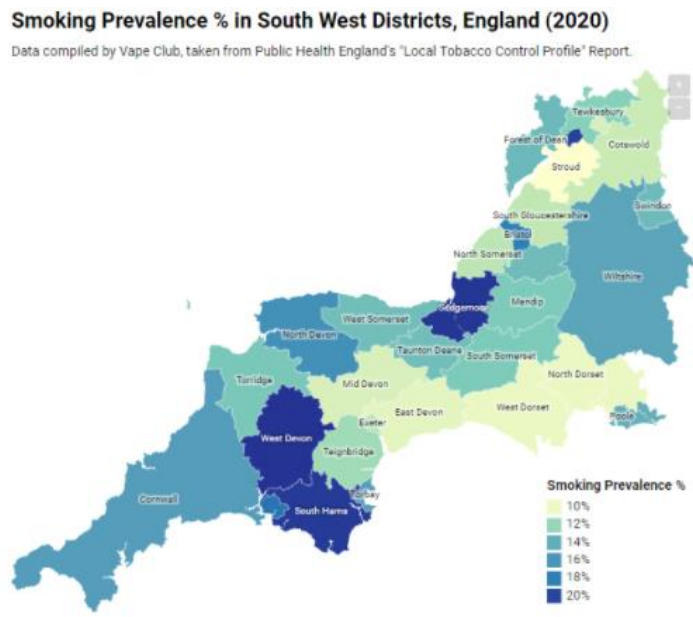


The obesity epidemic, affecting both adults and children across the UK and our counties, results for the Service in more requests from ambulance services in relation to extrications for health reasons and co-responding incidents.

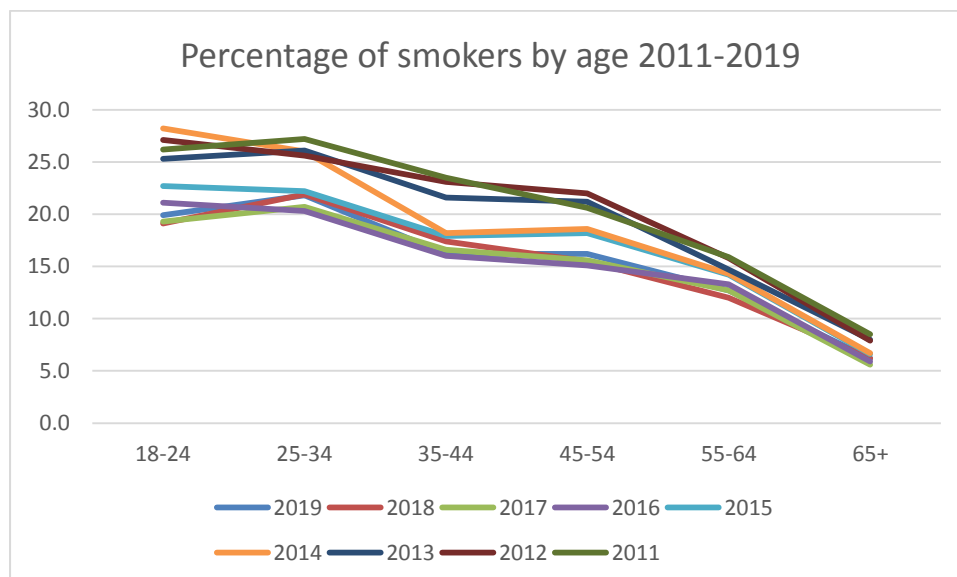
The Southwest region has more smokers than expected from the England average (13.9%) for the population, according to official figures released by Public Health England on 7th July 2020. The best performing area in Devon and Somerset is East Devon with only 10.3% of people being smokers.

The worst performing part of the South West is West Devon, which has the greatest prevalence of smokers with 20.6%. This is followed by Sedgemoor with 20.5%.

The map shows smoking prevalence by district



The amount of people smoking has been decreasing and in the Southwest the percentage of the population by age who smoke is shown in the graph below:



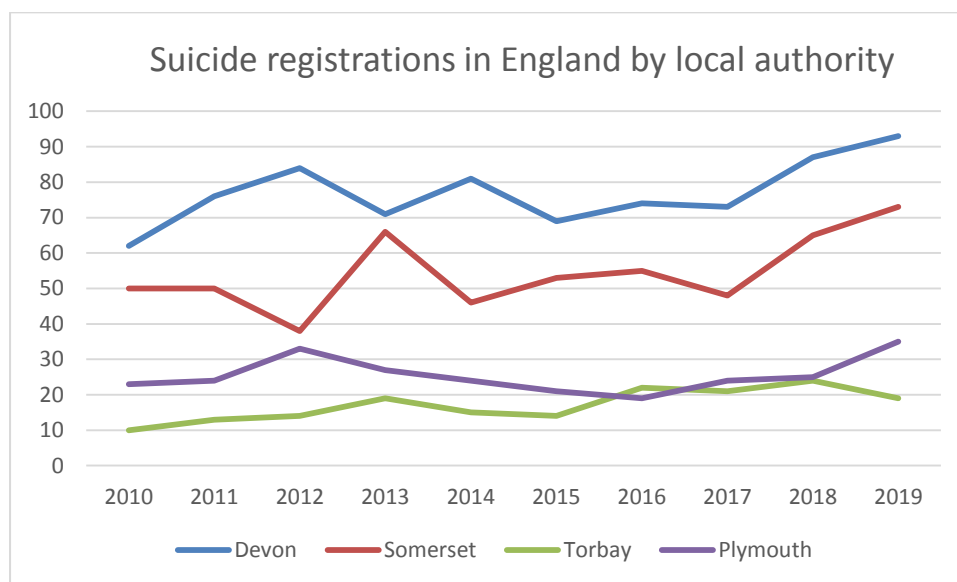
Mental health problems are common across all sectors of society. It is estimated that in any one year approximately one British adult in four experiences at least one diagnosable mental health disorder. Mental health issues can both originate from and lead to alcohol and drug abuse.

Devon's population compares well nationally and to similar areas when looking at indicators of physical health, but compares much less favourably when we consider measures of

mental health. General indicators of wellbeing and happiness seem really good – but like overall life expectancy in Devon, can mask the experience of those whose mental health outcomes are poor. Inequality exists in just the same way for mental health as for physical health, with the added disadvantage that mental illness and physical illness often co-exist, leading to significantly worse outcomes.

In Somerset 1 in 24 adults over the age of 65 is diagnosed with dementia. The 65+ diagnosis rate of 4.09% in Somerset is slightly lower than the England average of 4.27% but slightly higher than the average rate in the South West of 4.02%. 5.8% of the population in Devon is living with dementia. Considering the ageing population, this is likely to increase.

The increase in mental health issues puts increased pressure on health services and results in increasing numbers of suicides. We have also established a link between mental health and risk behaviours that lead to fires and other incidents. Mental health issues also affect staff, resulting in decreased performance, more absences and, sadly, some suicides.

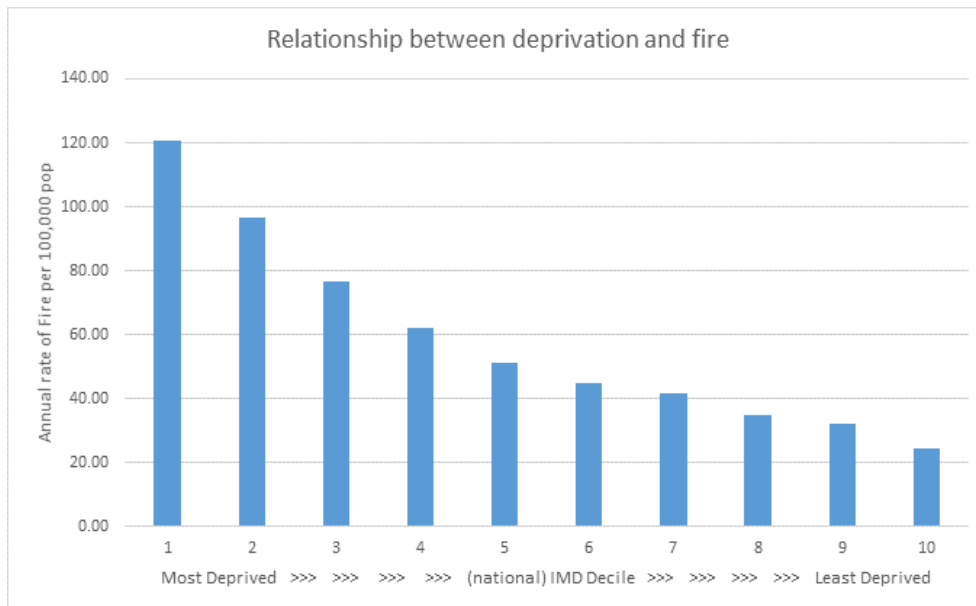


Although the Fire Service doesn't necessarily get involved when a suicide is reported, under certain circumstances crews are called out to assist. Dealing with suicide incidents is traumatic for crews and can result in mental health problems.

4.3 Socio-economic considerations

In relation to the services provided by Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, specifically the 'responding to fire and road traffic collisions', various socio-economic issues are highlighted by the data captured and monitored, including MOSAIC data.

For example, data shows us that the rate of fires in the 10% most deprived areas (column/decile 1) have rates of fire nearly 6 times higher than those in the least deprived areas (column/decile 9/10) and almost 3 times the number of fires in deciles 5/6/7.



Fire

Our data shows that two groups of households have a rate of dwelling fires well above the average. These are:

- residents who **rent** inexpensive city homes in central locations. A relatively high proportion are in the latter half of their working lives, but people from all generations live in these **budget housing** options. The group also includes some families with young or adult children.
- retired people aged over sixty-five who live in accommodation that is modestly sized. The majority now **live alone**. These properties are small and often have one or two bedrooms. Many **rent** their homes from local authorities or housing associations, and a smaller number own their homes outright

Three further groups of households have a rate of dwelling fires well above the average. These are:

- households bringing up children, who have limited incomes and budget carefully. Many of these affordable homes are **rented** from local authorities or housing associations; others have been purchased with a mortgage.
- young single people in their twenties and thirties who rent affordable living spaces. Levels of movement are high, and accommodation is **rented in low-value properties**, usually terraced houses or flats
- young people enjoying city lifestyles, they moved to their current addresses relatively recently. Most are well educated and either have university degrees or are in the process of gaining them

The five groups with the highest rates of fire in the home have the lowest rates of home ownership, '*renting properties*' features in all five groups. It is worth noting here that people from an ethnic minority background also have the lowest rates of home ownership. The housing crisis, captured [in a report from 'Shelter'](#) only adds to the problem of rented, low cost, unsafe and overcrowded living situations.

Renting a property, with the responsibility of fire risk mitigation being with the landlord, leads to many residents not mitigating risk themselves because they don't know what else they could do or feeling it is not their responsibility. The English Housing Survey 2018-19 (EHS),

suggested overcrowding is more common for renters and is more common in ethnic minority households compared to White households, with Black and Asian families twice as likely to live in housing that is severely overcrowded. Private rented homes were less likely to have at least one working smoke alarm and were more likely to contain hazards such as damp, infestations and electrical dangers that pose a risk to life.

Those groups who have the most fires also have a disproportionate number of cooking fires. 'Lone adult' households experience a much greater proportion of fires starting in the kitchen. More than 75% of fires in households recorded as 'Lone person over pensionable age' start in the kitchen.

Although certain protected characteristics are not captured within the (MOSAIC) data used by the Service, people with particular characteristics are more likely to be included in the MOSAIC groups without a specific mention e.g. people from specific ethnic backgrounds are more likely to live in low cost, rented accommodation in urban areas.

Other research and information indicates some additional considerations in relation to fire risk. 'An investigation into accidental fatal fires in the South West of England' Report (2013-17) identified 8 characteristics which predict fire death; **Mental health issues, alcohol use, drug use, smoking, poor housekeeping, limited mobility, living alone, low income.**

When this is linked to protected characteristics we get a picture which may not necessarily reflect in the data held by the Service, mainly because certain data is not collected. The information provided below is not exhaustive and research is ongoing.

Impacts on groups in relation to 8 characteristics which predict fire death	
All information and categorisation is from NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment documents , unless otherwise indicated	
LGBT	
Older LGBT people are more likely to engage in harmful health behaviours such as drug use, frequent alcohol consumption and smoking in comparison to older non-LGBT people. The prevalence of alcohol and other substances in many traditional LGBT venues, combined with the long-term impact of minority stress, means that alcohol and drug consumption rates are significantly higher than the general population. This can have a lasting and significant effect on physical health, mental health, and overall life expectancy. Smoking rates are significantly higher among the LGB population. 18.8% of heterosexual people smoke, this compares to 27.9% of lesbians, 30.5% of bisexual women, 23.2% of gay men and 26.1% of bisexual men.	
Neurodiversity	
Many people with neurodiverse conditions, like dyslexia and autism, may have had previous 'bad experiences' and may also be reluctant or not know how to access services. Children and adults with autism are approximately twice as likely to die from drowning as members of the general population (Schendel et al. 2016). Research has also found that autistic children have later development in relation to understanding dangerous situations, may prefer to be alone, may tend to wander and have 'hide' responses to loud noises or fear.	

Hoarding disorder often coexists with other conditions (ADHD is the most common condition diagnosed alongside Autism Spectrum Disorder). There is correlation between ADHD and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) as risk factors for hoarding disorder although it is important to be clear these neurodiverse conditions do not cause hoarding.

Black communities

Black people can be subject to a range of interlinked factors that can contribute to social and economic deprivation, including higher rates of unemployment, experience of hate crime and racism, impact of structural inequalities and poor mental health. The evidence suggests some Black people may be at more risk of fire because of their prevailing social or economic history and current discrimination. Suicide rates are higher among young men of Black African, Black Caribbean origin, and among middle aged Black African, Black Caribbean and South Asian women than among their White counterparts.

Black men were reported to have the highest rates of drug use and drug dependency than other groups.

Research undertaken in the Greater Manchester area between 2010 and 2015 considered ethnicity recorded against fire injuries. "From the cross-tabulation analysis of the numbers of different accidental dwelling fire types by community and cultural groups over the period 2010 to 2015 within the Greater Manchester area it appeared that: Overall the Black or Black British ethnic group had the highest likelihood of fire injury risk, followed by the White British / Irish / Other and Other Ethnic groups.

Although statistically at lower risk of smoking and alcohol related fire injuries, the study found Black people were at a heightened risk of injury from cooking related fire injuries, nearly double the injury rate of the next nearest group, White/Irish. Evidence suggests some Black communities may not be used to cooking on gas and often cook food by deep frying. There is significant evidence to suggest that recently arrived migrants were in a very different (high risk) position to those whose families had lived in the UK for a number of generations.

While many Black and Minority ethnic led businesses had awareness of some regulations affecting them, many felt there were barriers which prevented them from fully complying. These barriers include not being aware of where to access information, how to access support (or trusting support available), language and cultural barriers and negative perception towards Local Authority officers based on previous experiences.

English as a second language

In England, adults from a Bangladeshi and Pakistani background, primarily those in the older age groups, were the most likely not to speak English well or at all. Around 1 in 4 people from an Asian background are in persistent poverty and are they are more likely to live in areas of deprivation

Many Roma speak one of the many Romani dialects as a first language, and they usually speak the language of their countries of origin as a second language (e.g. Slovak or Romanian). Some Roma who speak English may need interpreters to help explain information. There is also often misunderstanding and mistranslation in terms of cultural context. Levels of educational attainment are generally low in Roma communities (often as a result of forms of discrimination in schools), and many Roma adults are illiterate making written communication inappropriate for Roma community members. Research during the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted that only 3% of Roma could access online forms for applications, and less than 20% of Roma families were able to offer any sort of home schooling due to lack of technology. Especially older Roma people may have no education, live on low income and are unlikely to engage with services. Evidence suggests Roma people prefer not to raise issues for fear that other agencies may get involved.

Finally, language barriers can often be a key factor as to why a business is unable to comply with regulations. Many Black and Minority ethnic led businesses felt that it would be helpful to have access to information in their native language, in plain English or in a pictorial way that would be easier to understand.

Ethnic Minority Background

In 2016 to 2018, 17% of households (3.9 million) in England lived in social housing (they rented their home from a local authority or housing association). Black African (44%), Mixed White and Black African (41%) and Black Caribbean (40%) households were most likely to rent social housing out of all ethnic groups (Indian (7%), Chinese (10%), and White Other (11%) households had lower rates of renting social housing.

As a group, ethnic minority households are also much more likely to rent privately than White British households and to spend a higher proportion of their incomes on rent, regardless of whether they rent from a social or private landlord.

Their housing tends to be of lower quality, particularly among households of Pakistani origin, and evidence suggests overcrowding is more common, especially among households of Bangladeshi origin. Overcrowding affects ethnic minority households disproportionately, 30.9 per cent of people who have emigrated from Pakistan or Bangladesh live in overcrowded accommodation.

Gypsy & Travelling communities

In its December 2017 update the EHRC reported that: 'Gypsies, Travellers and Roma were found to suffer poorer mental health than the rest of the population in the UK and they were also more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression.'

There are no official statistics on substance abuse among Gypsies and Traveller communities (Papadopoulos & Lay, 2007). However, there is a wealth of anecdotal evidence that it is a growing problem (Parry et al., 2004). Exclusion and

discrimination against Gypsy and Traveller communities may be linked to a growing trend of substance abuse within such communities, with alcohol likely being the biggest problem (Parry et al, 2004). Smoking is identified as a strong part of the cultural, ethnic, and individual identity of the Roma. Those who live on sites can be faced with overcrowding, having to share kitchens, bathrooms and toilets. Waste collection is likely to be non-existent on temporary and illegal sites.

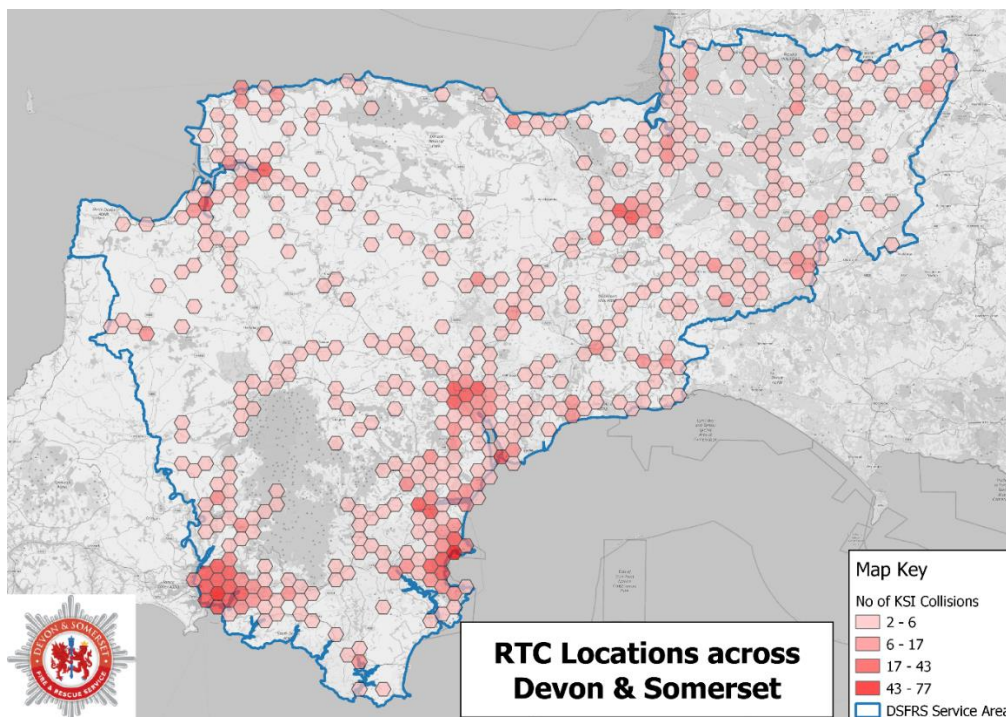
Gypsies and Travellers who are homeless are likely to face the constant threat of eviction. They may face poor living conditions without access to clean water or electricity and are thus the most vulnerable community members. Members of travelling communities are more likely to have seasonal and/or low paid work.

Road Traffic Collisions

In a normal year DSFRS attend between 900 and 1000 RTCs per year. Of these approximately 20% require DSFRS crews to carry out a rescue using specialist extrication equipment. There is slight seasonality to RTCs with the autumn and winter seeing generally higher levels than spring/summer. A more significant pattern to the volume of RTCs is present by time of day with the evening peak seeing the highest levels of incidents.

DSFRS don't attend all RTCs as many collisions involving pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists do not require a fire service attendance.

Below is a map of incidents for the period 2015-2021.



The map indicates that collisions where people get killed or seriously injured are more prevalent in urban areas.

It is a well-known fact that particularly younger people are more likely to be involved in road traffic collisions, despite making up just 11% of the population of Devon and Somerset, people aged 16 to 25 account for 19% of those killed on the roads and 24% of those seriously injured.

For almost all age groups men are at higher risk than women, with the rate of 'Killed or Seriously Injured' for men between 16 and 30 more than 90 per 100,000 population per year making them the highest risk group. Men aged 16-19 are three times as likely as average to be killed or seriously injured on the roads.

As vehicle repair issues and poor driving skills are a causal factor in a number of Road Traffic Collisions, it is reasonable to assume that the higher risk for people from ethnic minority background communities may be linked to limited funds and in some cases recent arrival in the UK and familiarity with UK traffic conditions.

5 Public concerns

Assessing the level of public concern can assist the creation of policy choices that address these concerns directly and can greatly improve policy choices and the public's acceptance of them, particularly where they are personally affected/impacted. The public will hold genuine views and concerns about risk, even if they have a non-expert level of technical understanding.

5.1 Community Concerns

From the engagement with the members of our community a few matters were highlighted in relation to concerns.

Concern about 'High occurrence' incidents, with potential significant *personal* impact, like dwelling fire and RTC feature at the top of concerns in the community, together with concerns about help not being available when needed i.e. limited Firefighter availability and slow response time. These concerns are likely to be as a result of fear of the risk consequences and to a certain level of trust in risk management.

Those from ethnic minority backgrounds, those over the age of 75, those who identify as having a disability and those who identify as being members of a number of specific audience groups were more likely to say they were anxious about risks in their local community. This could be for reasons of familiarity and experience of the risk and equity of the consequences.

The risks considered 'high' on the national risk register, i.e. pandemic and terrorist attacks are at the bottom of the list of concerns of those living in Devon and Somerset. When considering risks arising in the local area in the next five years, participants of the research mention climate change and extreme weather most after increased traffic. Concerns regarding risk appear to be driven by environmental factors e.g. where people live, their background or health.

Those in rural (29%) and coastal (31%) regions are more likely to cite extreme weather, drowning and water safety. Younger participants are more likely to cite incidents as a result of decreased mental health or those with learning difficulties as being very likely.

People who identify as having a disability are much more likely to cite 'trapped persons' (27%) as very likely, as are families (28%) and people with poor mental health (38%). Those in rural areas are more likely to cite 'animal rescue' and are more likely to cite 'limited firefighter availability' as very likely. So do the elderly (85+), people with mobility issues, people with poor mental health, people known to other agencies, people living alone, those living in poverty and those identifying as substance abusers. These concerns could be as a result of familiarity and experience of the risk and to a certain extent, lack of control of the risk.

In relative terms, road traffic collisions, considerations around an ageing population, crime, pressure on emergency services and English as a second language are of the greatest concern in the community. The community are concerned about an ageing population due to the increased pressure it puts on emergency services. But also, for the elderly themselves in terms of lacking the necessary support and being physically or emotionally isolated.

In 2019 to 2020, MHCLG's English Housing Survey collected data on whether people felt safe from fire in their homes. The data show that:

- Most people feel safe in their home and do not fear that a fire will break out.
- A small proportion - 5% - felt unsafe and feared that a fire would break out.
- Renters were more likely to feel unsafe at home than owner occupiers.
- Those who live in low (11%) and high (21%) rise flats were more likely than those who live in other dwelling types (e.g. houses) (2-6%) to feel unsafe in their homes.
- Those aged 16-24 were more concerned than all other age groups.
- Those from an ethnic minority background were more concerned than those from a White background.

It is likely that all these findings are related. For example, younger people and those from an ethnic minority background are more likely to be renters and renters are more likely to live in flats.

Renters were more likely to agree that they did not feel safe at home because they fear that a fire may break out. Social renters were more concerned, with 1 in 10 agreeing with the statement, compared to 7% of private renters. Owner occupiers were the least likely to agree that they did not feel safe at home due to the fear of a fire breaking out (3%).

Respondents in purpose built flats (low rise and high rise) were more likely than respondents in almost all other dwelling types to feel unsafe in their homes. In 2019 to 2020, 21% of those in high rise flats and 11% of those in low rise flats felt unsafe in their home. Rates for those who live in other dwelling types were much lower. For example, 5% of those in small terraced houses and 4% of those in bungalows agree that they did not feel safe at home because they feared a fire breaking out.

These aspects of concern are important as they will help direct the Fire Service response and the communication strategy.

5.2 Control over exposure to risk

As people tend to be more concerned if they feel they have no control over the risks involved it is important to consider how the organisation can respond to ensure they feel more in control through mitigating actions.

Generally, we see apathy across the community accessed for the survey. Mitigation is most likely among the mobility group but more specifically, it is where the respondent has a specific need that they've had to particularly plan for, be this to do with health (such as mobility) or a symptom of where they live (i.e. a thatch house). If no 'specific need' is involved, mitigation is driven by a respondent being 'in the know' either through experience from work or having sought advice from the fire service.

There was a strong sense that individuals *should* take responsibility for reducing their own risk – although this was held much more strongly by members of the public and Council representatives (27%) than by DSFRS partners (15%) DSFRS operational staff (17%) and support staff (20%).

However, respondents are more likely to have done 'nothing' in relation to mitigation of risk than to have taken a proactive approach. Other than get a smoke alarm, they were not clear what else they should do or they are unable/unwilling to do anything because they assume it is someone else's (i.e. a landlords) responsibility.

Nearly all participants in the 'mental health', 'sensory' and 'English as Second Language' groups within the research have done 'nothing' to mitigate risk.

A key barrier to any further, proactive contact is that those asked were generally unaware of what further information and advice they can obtain from the fire service.

For those in social housing, regardless of protected characteristic, there is a strong sense that mitigation isn't their responsibility but that of the housing association.

5.3 Trust in risk management by the Service

Trust is based on understanding what falls within the person's or organisation's responsibility and them then fulfilling those expectations (regularly). Understanding of FRS responsibility links to the likelihood of people connecting or engaging with the Service in relation to those responsibilities. Events in the last few years, including Grenfell and Manchester Arena, and their coverage in the news affects the public perspective on whether they can expect the Fire Service to fulfil their duties.

There is an overwhelming sense of recognition, gratitude and admiration for the Service. It is generally accepted that DSFRS do an important job, providing an essential service. Overall, the vast majority of respondents were aware of the full range of responsibilities undertaken by the fire and rescue service. Among specific audiences, people with learning disabilities and those for whom English is a second language were significantly less likely to be aware of the Service's responsibility around a number of areas. There is an opportunity to raise awareness of the 'wider' role of DSFRS i.e. the organisation does more than incident response.

Any negativity is generally driven by not 'seeing' DSFRS or a negative past experience.

There were some participants of the survey (no link by protected characteristic) who would be hesitant to contact the fire service, even if they knew they needed advice, perceiving they would be wasting the service's time. Ringing 999 is a step too far and awareness of an alternative is low. For some communities, there is an inherent lack of engagement with "authoritative" public sector organisations, due to historic mistrust and discrimination experienced by those communities. Distribution of information within these communities is likely to be through trusted gatekeepers, visibility, and continuity from the Service is expected.

The Ethnic Minority/English as Second Language group is more likely to provide comments about the Service needing to raise their profile but it is unclear what specifically drives this.

Where engagement has been successful in the past, e.g. community events and home visits, it has been accessible and approachable: a two way process with the opportunity for discussion.

Social media is key to improving engagement for most, but not all. Some don't have or wish to have access. Targeted visits, as already carried out on a risk basis, have an overall positive impact for groups at risk of fire, including the elderly and people with disabilities.

There are some personal barriers to engagement, such as access to technology (Internet/mobile signal); physical isolation; personal willingness to ask for help; hearing issues; being housebound either due to health or COVID-19; hearing; shyness; or fear of raising an alarm and panic. However, these personal barriers don't fall specifically within a category of people. Rather the takeout is a 'one size fits all' approach will not work. The internet, Facebook specifically, will suit the majority but other approaches will also need to be used. Distribution of information within some communities is likely to be face to face, through trusted gatekeepers, being visible and being there regularly.

Within the mental health group there are some personal barriers to engagement, reiterating the need for a mixed approach to communication, education and raising awareness. The Sensory group is more likely to need help and assistance to install smoke alarms and don't necessarily rely on the Fire Service for help with this.

In the Elderly group it is evident there is a commitment to independence with about half saying someone in their household would be able to install a fire alarm. It suggests this group would be less likely to actively seek help. Members of this group also express concerns about their peers who lack a support network or have slipped through the net. Although this group are 'active' online there is some expressed preference for telephone.

Business owners are aware that there are risks to their business around safety and compliance and they think they know where to look for support. However, they also believe that the Service needs to consult with business more regularly. This is not something they feel they have experienced.

The 'Engaging with Diverse Businesses Rapid Evidence Review 2018' found that approximately 5% of small/medium enterprises within the UK are led by an owner, partner or director from a Black and Minority ethnic background and are more likely to be concentrated in specific industry sectors, such as distribution, hotels and restaurants. The proportion of migrants establishing their own business is increasing, with migrants to the UK more likely to set up their own business compared to their UK born counterparts.

While many Black and Minority ethnic led businesses had awareness of some regulations affecting them, many felt there were barriers which prevented them from fully complying. These barriers include not being aware of where to access information, how to access support or trusting support available, language and cultural barriers and negative perception towards Local Authority officers based on previous experiences.

Some Black and Minority ethnic led businesses found compliance with regulations to be burdensome and potentially costly. In addition, it was felt that there is a lot of duplication as different regulatory bodies ask for the same or similar information. While Black and Minority ethnic led businesses often do not feel they are treated differently by inspectors to non-Black and Minority ethnic businesses, they feel that regulatory bodies should be more sensitive towards cultural factors, for example, avoiding inspections during religious holidays or festivals and being more respectful of their culture and faith.

Finally, language barriers can often be a key factor as to why a business is unable to comply with regulations. Many Black and Minority ethnic led businesses felt that it would be helpful to have access to information in their native language, in plain English or in a pictorial way that would be easier to understand.

Heteronormative assumptions and both the experience and fear of discrimination prevents LGBT people from accessing mainstream services. Research therefore suggests LGBT people have a preference for and are more engaged with specialist organisations. Social isolation resulting from the need to transition is prevalent and hate crimes have risen against the transgender group and much hateful social media is generated, sometimes led by influential public figures. The offer of Home Fire Safety Visits and other engagement opportunities needs to be understood and bespoke for individuals, and employees carrying out the checks are sensitive to individual needs and circumstances.

One in ten respondents (8%) said that there was something the Service could do to make it easier for them to access services. The largest single theme was around being more engaged or pro-active with communities (25%). This was followed by promoting the work the Service does more (24%), improving the website (14%) and having more/enough staff available (12%). The top three issues raised are all around communication and outreach.

5.4 What is needed?

Intelligence around language, culture and location will help drive targeted information campaigns, engagement activity and inform recruitment practices such as positive action. Therefore, significant work needs to be done around incident and employment related ethnicity and cultural background data. Without the direction that informed use of data would give the Service's efforts will be hampered and it will be difficult to ensure equal access to our services. The Service also needs to use a range of activities and approaches to ensure equality of access in terms of its messaging, provision of services and employment.

Increased engagement and working with individuals, representatives, groups and organisations from specific communities, as well as in partnership with other statutory bodies such as County Councils, District Councils and Police is essential to successfully meeting the needs their communities.

6 DSFRS Workforce

In 2018, HMICFRS, scored the Service as 'good' in relation to preventing fires and other risks, protecting the public through fire regulation, responding to national risks and getting the right people with the right skills. This indicates that, overall, staff are well equipped and trained to do their work and they do it well. Considerations around the impact the CRMP will have on staff and communication and engagement implications, can only be given when the CRMP has been drafted and changes to services or ways of working become apparent. Therefore, only what is currently known about the workforce is captured here.

As of 31 March 2021, DSFRS workforce composition was as follows. Overall in the Service the female representation was 13.9% of the workforce. Within the operational categories this proportion was 6.1% for the On Call group and 6.2% for the Wholetime staff. The proportion of female staff in the Support staff group is 44.5% and in the Fire Control staff group 75%.

Not taking into account the 5% of individuals who have chosen not to state their ethnic background, currently the Service's workforce consists of 2.7% ethnic minority staff. The Fire Control staff group is most diverse with regards to minority ethnic representation with 7.5% and 0% 'not stated'. The Support Staff group is the next highest with 4.0%, but with 'not stated' of 5.9%.

Excluding all 'white' groups, the representation of People of Colour (Black, Asian, mixed, other) in the Service is 0.8%. The community percentage in most areas is 1.5-2.5%, but more in urban areas (Exeter 7%, Plymouth 3.8%). In the Southwest as a whole, that percentage is 4.6%.

The identification as LGBT (anything else than Heterosexual), with 2.2% identifying within this category, closely reflects the community average of 2.2%.

Besides on average 5% of individuals who have chosen not to state whether they have a disability (visible or invisible), currently 2.6% of the Service's workforce has declared a disability. This is far below the average of 11% within the community. In view of the physical nature of the role it is not surprising that only 1.8-2.4% of operational staff indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability. Within the Fire Control staff group the percentage of 7.5% is much nearer the community average. In the Support group the percentage is 5.1%.

Some of DSFRS staff engaged with the CRMP survey to give their views. In relation to the work the Service undertakes and the importance of undertaking it, 70% of operational and 71% support staff feel that 'working with our communities to help them understand how to keep safe and avoid an emergency situation' is very important.

However, compared to the overall survey respondents (63% 'very important' overall), only 50% of operational staff felt that 'co-responding with the ambulance service' was important. Although, in general among respondents to the survey, there was a strong sense that individuals should take responsibility for reducing their own risk only 17% of operational staff and 20% of support staff felt this way.

The general public were also significantly more likely to say that they were anxious compared to those with a relationship to the Service.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

Strategic Intent through the CRMP and the effect on different groups.

With the Strategic intent for the next five years laid out in the CRMP we can expect that certain groups of people will be impacted more than others.

This section looks at the expected impact of the suggested actions on a strategic level.

Strategic intent to reduce risks:

- Take a 'prevention first' approach to all risks
- Focus response activity on statutory requirements
- Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans
- Improve data and intelligence
- Improve engagement with communities and businesses
- Increase collaboration with partners
- Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices
- Reduce our impact on the environment
- Improve staff safety through continuous improvement

Further detail:

Take a 'prevention first'-approach to all risks

Firstly, we intend to continue in taking a 'prevention first' approach to all risks, because preventing incidents from happening is always better than having to respond to incidents which, on many occasions, have life changing effects on those involved.

This approach will have a particular positive impact on those who have higher risks of having fires or are more likely to be killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions as identified in the sections earlier in this document e.g. elderly residents, younger men, those living in areas of deprivation etc. It is not expected this approach will have a negative impact on any members of our community or specific groups.

It is recognised that people with mental health issues or learning disabilities may not be always as able to fully benefit from certain prevention activities, so we will tailor those activities and, ultimately, we will respond when incidents occur.

Focus response activity on statutory requirements

Where we have to respond, we will focus/prioritise our response activity on statutory requirements such as fires and road traffic collisions and ensure our staff are fully trained to undertake the work which is required.

Focussing our response activities on our statutory requirements will have a positive impact on those groups of people who are at higher risks of having a fire or being involved in an

RTC as they will get an effective and timely response to assist them and, where possible, reduce the impact of the incident on them.

Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans

Considering the size of the Service and huge variation of geography and the people living in our counties, a blanket approach in delivering and targeting our services is not possible in an area as large as Devon and Somerset.

Therefore, the Service will develop Local Risk Plans to better understand vulnerabilities and the impact of hazardous events on individual communities present in defined areas within our counties. These plans will account for those who live in those areas and their needs to ensure everyone get the support, information and guidance they need.

Local Risk Plans will be positive for communities and, especially, smaller communities with certain ethnic backgrounds, disabilities or other characteristics, which would be lost if a county wide plan approach was taken. Local plans can address local issues and needs better.

Improve data and intelligence

For the Local Risk Plans to be specific enough to better understand local risks and help focus our activities on the most vulnerable people and high risk locations, detailed data is required. To this end we need to improve data and intelligence. We will do this by working with partner organisations to share data, but also we will start asking for more data when we engage with members of the community.

Some ethnic and religious groups, people with English as a second language or those with particular sexual or gender identities may find it difficult to understand the reasons for collecting this data or may not be willing to share it. Also, some of our staff may have similar concerns in that they may have to collect personal data, sometimes in difficult circumstances, and may be lacking awareness around the importance of the data in providing services to the community. Clear information for members of the public and training for staff will be essential in ensuring that any negative impacts are negated.

Despite the above, especially those groups who we have limited information on e.g. religious, minority ethnic background, sexual and gender identity, will benefit from us having a better insight in their risks and needs in that we will be better able to address those and providing a more personalised service.

Improve engagement with communities and businesses

Engagement with communities and businesses doesn't only provide us with data and intelligence. It also allows for greater understanding what guidance, information and support is needed.

Actually providing our prevention and protection services in a way which is appropriate for the groups and individuals involved, culturally and socially, is essential. In a lot of circumstances this engagement is face to face and needs to be in a location which allows for the most effective exchange. Depending on the purpose of the engagement, this can be at fire stations or schools, sports facilities, community centres, businesses or places of religion.

A person- or community-centred approach will be positive for those groups who are less likely to take initiative to connect to the fire service for support. These could be people from particular ethnic backgrounds, those with English as a second language and refugees. Visits

to retirement villages, schools for those with sensory needs and religious communities also provide targeted prevention messages or support.

Increase collaboration with partners

Both 'improving data and intelligence' and 'improving engagement with communities and businesses' rely heavily on collaboration with partners with sharing data between services like police, ambulance and fire service, but also with various organisations which represent and look after the needs of specific groups e.g. Age Concern.

By working closer and removing duplication of engagement between partners, more vulnerable people can be identified and supported. This will be positive, especially for those who we may not be reaching at the moment, but who do engage with some of our partner organisations. Any data sharing agreements will be entered into with strictest adherence of privacy legislation to ensure the data is not used for any other purpose than intended.

Although no negative impact is expected, if in the development of our Local Risk Plans negative impact is identified, some of the mitigating actions which need to be put in place may also rely on collaboration with partners e.g. police constables with On Call fire response capabilities.

Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices

Where we can improve ways of doing things to save money, without the increased risk to life, we will do so. Any savings will be invested again in ways that ensure both our communities and Firefighters are safer in the end, for example new equipment, training, engagement opportunities with the community and prevention and protection resources.

As these savings will enable us to deliver better services, everyone in our counties is impacted positively, but particularly those who are most vulnerable and at risk of fire and road traffic collisions. No negative impact has been identified in the context of the proposed CRMP, but every proposal in relation to savings will have its own equality impact assessment to ensure this is fully considered.

Reduce our impact on the environment

The environment affects each and every one living in our counties, but not in equal measure. Global warming and rising sea levels affects our coastal communities more with flooding and storm damage, severe weather like heavy rain affects those living near rivers or lower sections in our counties with increased and extended flood occurrences, but can also have serious implications on those who live on land without the necessary infrastructure e.g. some traveller sites which become muddy, polluted and inaccessible for emergency services.

Reducing our impact on the environment will, therefore, be positive for everyone, not just those in our counties.

Improve staff safety through continuous improvement

Staff safety is vital to ensure an effective response and providing a 'prevention first' approach. We invest a lot of time and effort to recruit, train and retain our staff so that they can give the response required for the needs of the communities.

By improving staff safety, both physically and mentally, staff can do their jobs well and have a longer and more satisfying career. This improves the service our communities receive from us, making Devon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit.

Impact Assessment

The below table shows the expected impacts of the strategic intent headings on all the protected characteristic groups. The responses below are based on research conducted by DJS Research Ltd that included focus groups, questionnaires and telephone calls and other additional research (see Appendix 1).

The table below shows the feedback from the different groups based around the strategic intent headings measured against the impact of the proposals in the CRMP (either negative, neutral or positive). There were mainly positive impacts, some neutral however no negative impacts were identified

<i>Feedback from groups</i>	<i>Impact of CRMP proposals</i>
Age	
<p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks From our community engagement we know that there was a good knowledge of what things they could do at home to prevent a fire from occurring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke alarms • Not having curtains where unnecessary • Having spark guards • Having chimney's swept • Not overloading electric sockets • Fire guards • Extinguishers • Alarm systems <p>There was no mention of testing smoke alarms.</p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements Some (elderly) people may, if their smoke alarms sounded and there was a fire, stay in the house and wait for the fire service to get there rather than evacuate the property.</p> <p>All of the group said they would look for items before leaving their home. Things such as animals or handbags. Some said there was a possibility they might have grandchildren staying with them.</p> <p>None of the participants had an evacuation plan in place. However, most know where their keys are and have methods in place like leaving keys in door locks. None had walked their evacuation route.</p> <p>Some of the participants felt like there should be further communication and reinforcement of evacuation, especially where fire extinguishers were available. They felt like having a fire extinguisher present gave mixed messages for example they felt they should tackle a fire.</p> <p>The group felt more information about shutting doors when they went to bed or about cluttering would be helpful. None of the group knew that we offered free home fire safety visits. They did not think we let people know about them or carbon monoxide alarms.</p> <p>From research we gathered that children and young people may be more inclined to capture 'footage' of an incident using their mobile phone and may place themselves at a greater risk of injury when doing so in the extra time it takes for the fire crew to reach the scene. Younger people may have a greater appetite for risk and therefore be more inclined to 'have a go' at tackling a dwelling fire.</p> <p>Some of our elderly customers may, on balance, have greater difficulty perceiving the degree of danger in an ADF (e.g. "The fire is only in one room and has not spread".)</p>	<p>Positive</p>

<p>Older residents may also have greater difficulty in both comprehending and acting on our survival advice. Those with hearing impairments may also find it harder to receive instructions given on the phone or in person.</p> <p>Improve engagement with communities and businesses More and tailored engagement will ensure that members of communities and owners of businesses get the information and guidance which is applicable to them whether they are old or young.</p> <p>Increase collaboration with partners By working with partners it will be easier to identify those who are vulnerable in relation to fire risk (elderly) and road traffic collisions (younger people) and engage with them to reduce the risk.</p> <p>Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Improved practices remove duplication and any savings, both financially and resources, will ensure we can reinvest those to reach more vulnerable people, many of them elderly. However, with road traffic collisions the focus will be more on younger men.</p> <p>Reduce our impact on the environment We want to leave a better world for our younger generations.</p> <p>Improve staff safety through continuous improvement Our staff are, in line with the population of our counties, ageing and staff safety is pertinent to keep them fit and healthy to continue their support to our communities.</p> <p>Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans and improve data and intelligence</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Neutral</p>
Disability (all forms, visible or invisible)	
<p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements and take a prevention first approach to all risks</p> <p>Effective response affects risk to life and serious injury. This could have a greater impact on those with mobility or mental health issues given their vulnerability statistically to be injured or killed in fire, and on people with mobility issues given that they may have greater difficulty escaping a fire.</p> <p>Between April 2013 and March 2017, of the 90 people who died in an accidental dwelling fires in the South West of England, 33 (36.7%) were known to have mobility issues that affected their ability to escape the fire.</p> <p>Mental Health: The fatal fires analysis highlights mental health issues as a contributory factor to accidental dwelling fire deaths. Ten of the 90 people who died in an accidental dwelling fires in the South West of England between April 2008 and March 2017 were suffering from mental health issues.</p> <p>It is likely that the fire risk factor 'mental health' combines learning disabilities and other mental health conditions like depression. It is unclear whether learning disabilities on their own have any fire risk.</p> <p>Smoking (and Mental Health): Devon County Council's Mental Health needs assessment (2013) also identifies that mental health service users exhibit rates of smoking at significantly higher than that found among the general population. Between April 2008 and March 2017, in the South West of England 29% of the accidental fatal dwelling fires were caused by smoker's materials.</p> <p>People with learning difficulties may also have difficulties perceiving risk or danger and comprehending instructions given by fire officers. We also explored how any inability to recognise risk or danger could have significant implications for us as a fire and rescue service in respect of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 the ability to listen, comprehend and act on instructions given (particularly by telephone). 2 Potentially greater levels of panic and anxiety which may be exacerbated by the arrival of crews using lights and sirens. 3 Potential injury due to evacuation in a highly anxious state. 4 Inappropriate extinguishing attempts e.g. dowsing an electrical fire with water. 	<p>Positive</p>

<p>Residents with medical disabilities relating to breathing could have much greater difficulty managing issues relating to smoke inhalation. Some residents may be in receipt of end of life care in their home and may not want to, or be able to be rescued easily.</p> <p>From community engagement we know that most people with learning disabilities which would put them at particular risk of fire or not responding to a risk appropriately, are likely to have an increased level of support or live-in/sleep-in support. The above point of having difficulties perceiving risk or danger and comprehending instructions given by fire officers was confirmed.</p> <p>Some people with learning disabilities don't respond appropriately to a fire/smoke alarm, sometimes as a result of sensory overload, and not evacuate the property. This has implications if the fire service has a delayed arrival. Technical solutions may not be effective and solutions to assist evacuation may come down to an effective handling use of a carer who knows the individual well and their likely response to the alarm. Individuals with Down Syndrome also are more likely to suffer hearing loss.</p> <p>As with children (research has identified), some adults with slight hearing impairments may not hear smoke alarms due to the particular pitch. It may be that as a result of that a neighbour calls the emergency services, with a delay, and that further delay of the arrival of the appliance is therefore detrimental.</p> <p>None of the disabled members of the community we spoke to had evacuation plans, even though several had severe mobility issues.</p> <p>People with hearing aids take them out at night so are unlikely to hear the smoke alarm. So this issue doesn't only affect the profoundly deaf. Some elderly people do not want to admit or do not realise they have hearing issues. If they live with someone the other person may be able to hear the alarm though. Hearing issues of varying degrees can also cause difficulties in reporting an incident.</p> <p>Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans and increase collaboration with partners In the development of these plans, the needs of those community members with disabilities can be better addressed as a result of identification of where those vulnerable people live on a smaller scale and working with local partners.</p> <p>Improve data and intelligence and engagement with communities and businesses Increasing the data we use in understanding what makes people vulnerable, and using the data we already have better, will ensure we can more effectively identify and support those who need us most e.g. those with certain types of disabilities.</p> <p>Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Improved practices remove duplication and any savings, both financially and resources, will ensure we can reinvest those to reach more vulnerable people, many of them with disabilities which severely affect the way they can respond when a fire happens.</p> <p>Reduce our impact on the environment</p> <p>Improve staff safety through continuous improvement Our staff are, in line with the population of our counties, ageing and staff can have a longer life, without disability, when we improve staff safety and adjust working practices in a way that they are less impactful physically.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>
Sex or gender	
<p>Overall, there is no indication that any of the strategic intentions will have a significant or disproportionate impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices</p>	<p>All neutral</p>

<p>Reduce our impact on the environment</p> <p>However, gender does impact significantly on risk and protective factors for mental health and expression of the experience of mental distress. Mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, attempted suicide and self-harm are more prevalent in women than men, while suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, anti-social personality disorder, crime and violence are more prevalent among men.</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements There is some evidence from our Fire Control operators and operational crews that men are more likely to ‘chance’ returning to their home to either rescue possessions or deal with the fire and, as such, may be at a greater risk of sustaining injury in a fire situation.</p> <p>In addition, a disproportionate amount of road traffic collision involves younger men.</p> <p>Improve staff safety through continuous improvement As most of our operational workforce is male, improving staff safety will as a result mainly affect men.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	
<p>Overall, there is no indication that any of the strategic intentions will have a significant or disproportionate impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Reduce our impact on the environment Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks However, sexual orientation does impact significantly on risk and protective factors for mental health and expression of the experience of mental distress. And older LGBT men are more likely to live on their own.</p>	<p>All neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	
<p>Overall, there is no indication that any of the strategic intentions will have a significant or disproportionate impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Reduce our impact on the environment Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks However, people who live alone, rather than those who live with partners, are at higher risk of accidental fires and deaths in those fires with more than half (49 of 90) accidental dwelling fire deaths being someone who lived alone.</p>	<p>All neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	
<p>Overall, there is no indication that any of the strategic intentions will have a significant or disproportionate impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks</p>	<p>All neutral</p>

<p>Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Reduce our impact on the environment Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements However, expectant and new mothers could potentially be at risk when escaping from a fire, as emergency evacuation may be difficult due to reduced agility, dexterity, coordination, speed, reach and balance. Expectant mothers are at greater risk of harm to their unborn child resulting from trauma. Mothers will also face the additional difficulty of evacuating babies and/or young children. However, families have a lower likelihood of having a fire in the first place, with lone adults most at risk.</p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p>Race or ethnic background</p>	
<p>Other than 'Focus response activity on statutory requirements' impacts on this protected characteristic will be significant overall, as we aim to increase our data and intelligence for ethnic minority groups both to identify their risk of fire, or RTC, and get to understand their needs in terms of our service to them. Much of the evidence for this area was sourced from an Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) Publication on working with diverse communities http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1374154430.pdf</p> <p>Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Reduce our impact on the environment Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks Research indicates that households with an ethnic minority background had higher odds of not owning a working smoke alarm, with Asian households least likely to do so. Households from multi-ethnic and low income areas are most likely to have suffered a fire in the last 12 months.</p> <p>Together with low ownership of smoke alarms other factors affecting risk in ethnic minority communities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of hot oil and naked flames in cooking • Low fire safety awareness • High rates of smoking in some communities • Lack of motivation to plan what to do if a fire did occur <p>Candles for religious worship/cultural events. There may be underrepresentation of smoke alarms in Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Bosnian homes. Overcrowding at religious venues (if there is no escape plan, delayed response could be an issue). Religious dress in some faiths can be flowing which when combined with cooking and candles could be a potential issue.</p> <p>Language barriers for most ethnic minorities (particularly new migrants and elderly). This could cause a potential problem if some people were afraid or worried about calling 999 or accessing fire safety information.</p> <p>Overcrowding in homes and lack of installed fire alarms – Congolese, Ethiopian</p> <p>Eritreans – some refugees may suffer psychologically – this may cause issues in an emergency situation. Kosovans, Kurdish are likely to have suspicions of people in uniforms.</p> <p>Hot oil and naked flames in cooking, low fire safety awareness and high rates of smoking amongst Nigerian communities.</p> <p>Polish, Portuguese communities may have low fire safety awareness, high rates of overcrowding and smoking. Somalians potential fire hazards include smoking, poor housing and overcrowding. Recent migrants may be suspicious of people in uniform due to personal experiences.</p>	<p>All Positive</p> <p>Positive</p>

Vietnamese may have a lack of smoke alarms, possible overcrowding, lack of awareness around fire safety and language barriers.

Many migrants arrive into basic accommodation, share rooms/accommodation, live in caravans etc. Many migrants are shy and not open to community groups. They may not see safety information or understand it. They have to concentrate hard when they are learning a language and fully focus to understand. Undocumented immigrants may be affected as they may hide, be fearful to leave the property, or live in squalid conditions with the potential for high fire spread.

From engagement with the Gypsy and Traveller Community we know that this community mainly lives on Council-run sites, tolerated/permissive sites or privately owned land and don't travel that much. Those who live and work at fairs, are the exception as they do travel a lot. Irish Travellers are often only on the mainland for certain periods as they own land in Ireland. In those periods they do move around stopping several weeks at a time in fields, car parks and private land without permission.

The complex nature of how varying groups within the Gypsy and Traveller community live and their customs, gives rise to a need for tailored interventions to reduce the likelihood of incidents and respond to any incident that may occur.

All these specific risks are recognised and addressed in the specific [Fire Safety Leaflet for Gypsies & Travellers](#)

Engagement with members from other underrepresented communities confirmed that very few members of ethnic communities have smoke alarms and there are various issues around requesting help/support. Within certain communities, the wife/husband would phone each other if a fire was to break out rather than phone 999. Or they may ring a trusted outside contact.

Some communities would not know which number to call if a fire was to break out. However, some communities may not contact emergency services even if they know the number, as they would see the fire service as an authority and wouldn't want to get into trouble for saying the wrong thing.

A lot of individuals would blame themselves if a fire was to break out and would be concerned of the repercussions if they were required to call the emergency services. Some may fear they will be blamed for a fire because of their ethnicity.

Language issues may also play a part in some instances when people may not call 999. We have found through our own engagement that in some Muslim households, traditionally the woman tends to look after the home and may have limited English language skills so may call their husband rather than the emergency number. This may lead to a delay in reporting the incident and the woman may not do anything or be able to explain the situation until her husband comes back. Some Muslim women would want to completely cover their head/body before evacuating their homes. This could delay evacuation and endanger an individual or family.

Some may not know who to call and in some cultures people may try to put fires out themselves as they come from areas where they have experience that nobody shows up either because there is no fire service, there is an intermittent or very long response time or the fire service does not attend certain neighbourhoods.

Some may not call for help as they expect that all emergency services show up, which is what happens in the US. Perceptions of how the Service operates may be influenced by American television series/films. For example, Illegal immigrants might not call for help if they think the police may turn up.

Black Caribbean communities often cook with gas lit stoves using gas cylinders and there is a possibility that when they migrate to the UK they may continue to cook using this method. Cylinders are kept in doors and next to/under the stove. There is evidence of this in London so there could be a possibility if safety information is not reaching people it could be happening in our Service area. It is likely that this is also dependent of the kind of housing i.e. rented or privately owned.

More targeted engagement within our own communities will build trust, identify risks, and help us to support and raise awareness of personal risk.

Lack of fire safety awareness and different languages may be a barrier.

<p>In cultures where extended families all live together there would not necessarily be a problem with elderly family members because they would not be left on their own. In some cultures, and with child carers in the UK, children are encouraged to cook and they sometimes cook on stoves.</p> <p>Some communities/elders engage in a different way. The Service may be relying on children, who get Fire Safety Awareness training at school, to pass knowledge on. However, it may be the case that when children get home and talk to their parents that they are discouraged by the parent to follow the advice due to distrust from the parent in the Service or the feeling it doesn't apply to them as they are not White British.</p> <p>Improve data and intelligence Incident Data is not recorded against 'ethnic background' of the owner/occupier of the property, which leads to a lack of understanding of how big the issues of fire and fire related injuries/deaths are in particular communities. Improved data will address this shortcoming and also allow for more effective engagement with specific communities.</p> <p>It is also unclear how likely certain communities are to request support from the fire service due to a possible distrust of outsiders or what services are used by communities. There may both be an under recording of incidents, but when they are recorded, they are not recorded against any ethnic background.</p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p>Religion and belief</p>	
<p>Other than</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements Improve staff safety through continuous improvement Reduce our impact on the environment</p> <p>impacts on this protected characteristic will be significant overall, as we aim to increase our data and intelligence for religious groups in a similar way as we aim to do for ethnic minority groups both to identify their risk of fire, or RTC, and get to understand their needs in terms of our service to them.</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks As some religions have customs which involve burning candles or incense throughout the day</p> <p>In the same way as Race & Ethnic background is impacted the following are impacted Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	
<p>Overall, there is no indication that any of the strategic intentions will have a significant or disproportionate impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Focus response activity on statutory requirements Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Reduce our impact on the environment Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p> <p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks However, gender reassignment and transgender people are at increased risk for some mental health problems – notably anxiety, depression, self-harm and substance misuse – and more likely to report psychological distress than their cisgender counterparts. Mental Health issues is one of the 8 factors indicating higher risk of having a fire.</p>	<p>All neutral</p> <p>Positive</p>
<p>Carers (protected by association)</p>	

<p>Other than Reduce our impact on the environment impacts on this protected characteristic will be significant overall in a similar way as to those in the 'age' and 'disability' groups.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Take a prevention first approach to all risks Focus response activity on statutory requirements Develop detailed local risk management and reduction plans Improve data and intelligence Improve engagement with communities and businesses Increase collaboration with partners Deliver efficiency savings from improved practices Improve staff safety through continuous improvement</p>	<p>Positive</p>

Appendix 1

This Equality Impact Assessment has been written with input from the following documents and sources:

- [NFCC Equality of Access to Services and Employment documents](#)
- CRMP Fire Standard
- Fatal Fires Report
- Devon County Council – Facts & Figures
- Experian Mosaic
- Office of National Statistics (ONS) data including 2011 census data, population estimates and Annual Population Survey data. 2021 Census data not available at time of publication of this document.
- [National Risk Register](#)
- [HM Treasury - Managing risks to the public: appraisal guidance](#)
- Covid Staff Survey 2021,
- HMI Covid report
- Public Health England - Ageing in coastal and rural communities
- [south somerset equalities profile 2019.pdf \(southsomerset.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs303ew>
- English Housing Survey, 2019 to 2020: feeling safe from fire
- <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03336/SN03336.pdf>
- [Working with Diverse Communities Handbook](#)

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Agenda Item 9

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/21/26
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	10 NOVEMBER 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	FIREFIGHTERS PENSIONS SCHEMES – IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT FRAMEWORK
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the issues as outlined in this paper, the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to adopt the Immediate Detriment Framework on behalf of the Authority to process immediate detriment cases pending enacting of the remedy legislation.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>In December 2018, the Court of Appeal ruled that certain provisions of the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme 2015 were discriminatory on the grounds of age. This case is referred to as the McCloud/Sargeant ruling.</p> <p>Following the ruling, the Government consulted on proposals to remedy this position, which would require statutory changes. At its extraordinary meeting on 20 April 2021, the Authority approved – based upon legal advice it had commissioned together with Home Office guidance - a methodology for addressing “immediate detriment” cases pending any legislative change.</p> <p>The Government subsequently published the Public Services Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill (“the Bill”) to give effect to its proposed remedy earlier this year. Following this, the Local Government Association (LGA) commissioned legal advice on a framework to assist fire and rescue authorities process immediate detriment cases, based upon an understanding of the remedy provisions in the Bill.</p> <p>This paper now advises of production of this Immediate Detriment Framework (“the Framework”) which the LGA recommends is used by all fire and rescue authorities to process immediate detriment cases pending enactment of the Bill.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Compensatory aspects arising from use of the Framework will be met, initially, from general reserves. All other costs will be borne by the Firefighters’ Pensions Schemes.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Use of the Framework is intended to address immediate detriment cases arising from the age discriminatory provisions of the Firefighters Pensions Scheme 2015

APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Report DSFRA/21/11 (“Firefighters’ Pension Scheme (FPS) – Age Discrimination Remedy) to the Authority extraordinary meeting held on 20 April 2021 and the Minutes of that meeting.</p> <p>Report DSFRA/21/11 (“Firefighters Pension Scheme Immediate Detriment Cases – Further Considerations”) to the Authority ordinary meeting on 29 June 2021 and the Minutes of that meeting.</p> <p>Immediate Detriment Framework joint statement issued by the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigades Union.</p> <p>Immediate Detriment Framework Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>Immediate Detriment Framework – Guidance for Fire & Rescue Authorities in their role as Scheme Managers</p>

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. In December 2018, the Court of Appeal ruled that certain provisions of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (FPS 2015) were discriminatory on the grounds of age. This case is referred to as the McCloud/Sargeant ruling.
- 1.2. Following the ruling, the Government consulted on proposals to remedy this position, which would require statutory changes. At its extraordinary meeting on 20 April 2021, the Authority approved – based upon legal advice it had commissioned together with Home Office guidance - a methodology for addressing “immediate detriment” cases pending any legislative change (Minute DSFRA/82 refers).
- 1.3. Subsequently, at its ordinary meeting on 29 June 2021, the Authority resolved to amend its Voluntary Scheme Pays arrangements to allow for individual taxation issues associated with immediate detriment cases to be addressed as required (Minute DSFRA/21/11 refers).

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1. Earlier this year, the Government published the Public Services Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill (“the Bill”) to give effect to its proposed remedy to the age discrimination issues arising from the FPS 2015. Following this, the Local Government Association (LGA) commissioned legal advice on a framework to assist fire and rescue authorities process immediate detriment cases, based upon an understanding of the remedy provisions in the Bill.
- 2.2. The resultant Immediate Detriment Framework (“the Framework”) is in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the LGA (representing employers i.e. fire and rescue authorities) and the Fire Brigades Union (“the FBU”). The LGA has issued guidance on use of the Framework. Fire and rescue authorities are encouraged to adopt the Framework, pending enactment of the remedy legislation, to mitigate against the likelihood of the FBU supporting its members in future employment tribunal claims associated with this issue. In this respect, though, it should be noted that the MoU stipulates, at paragraph 1.4:

“Nothing in the MoU shall be interpreted to mean that the FBU will not initiate or support legal proceedings on behalf of any Member whose case **is not** dealt with in accordance with the Framework or that timetable”.

3. FRAMEWORK PROVISIONS

- 2.3. The position previously adopted by the Authority provided only for addressing immediate detriment cases for individuals coming up to retirement, in line with the [then] Home Office guidance.
- 2.4. The Framework, however, provides for both individuals coming up to retirement (referred to as Category 1 in the Framework) **and** individuals who have retired and have benefits in payment or who did not qualify for ill-health retirement under the 2015 FPS but would under the 1992 FPS (referred to as Category 2) to elect to receive benefits under their legacy pension scheme rather than the FPS 2015.

2.5. To be eligible to elect to receive legacy benefits under the Framework, individuals must be “in scope” i.e. they **must** meet **all** of the following conditions:

1. They must have pensionable service under FPS 2015 in the period beginning 1 April 2015 and ending 31 March 2022 (the remedy period).
2. That service would have been pensionable service under FPS 1992 or FPS 2006 but for the person’s failure to meet the condition relating to the person’s attainment of normal pension age by a specified date. (i.e., they are unprotected or tapered members).
3. They must have been, on 31 March 2012 or any earlier day, in service in any employment or office that is pensionable service under:
 - (a). a public service legacy scheme,
 - (b). a judicial legacy scheme or
 - (c). a local government legacy scheme.
4. There must not be a continuous break of 5 years or more without any pensionable service in the schemes listed in condition 3, from the last day of pensionable service in condition 3 to the first day of pensionable service in condition 1.

2.6. The Framework also provides for individuals who elect to receive benefits from a legacy scheme:

- For both Category 1 and Category 2 individuals, to receive compensation for:
 - interest on the shortfall in retirement lump sum and past pension payments;
 - any excess pension contributions made by the individual (based on a “best estimate” calculation);
 - any annual allowance charge which has arisen only as a result of the individual being transferred to the FPS 2015; and
 - any unauthorised payment incurred by the individual, which they would not have otherwise had to pay but for transfer to the FPS 2015.

It should be noted that the above compensation payments are deemed an “employer payment” which cannot be met from the pension fund account. The Authority has the legal power to make such payments, though, by virtue of Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Article 7(7) of the Localism Act 2011 (Commencement No. 6 and Transitional, Savings and Transitory Provisions) Order 2012. Any such compensation payments would be met in the first instance from reserves held by the Authority but it is understood that the government will subsequently reimburse authorities for any compensation payments made in accordance with the Framework.

- For Category 2 individuals, to revisit the commutation decision (in relation to lump sum) made at the time of their retirement.

2.7. Finally, the Framework sets out precise timescales that must be adhered to in the event of an individual electing to use the Framework provisions.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AUTHORITY

- 4.1. Following the McCloud/Sargeant ruling, it was recognised that:
- legislative change would be required to address the discriminatory provisions of the FPS 2015; but
 - pending this legislative change, fire and rescue authorities should nonetheless take all steps available to them to address immediate detriment cases without unnecessary delay.
- 4.2. The Authority previously adopted a stance to address immediate detriment cases based on Home Office advice available at the time and legal advice it had commissioned. Subsequently, following publication of the Public Services Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill, the LGA and FBU developed a Framework to address immediate detriment cases, based on an understanding of the remedy provisions of the Bill.
- 4.3. While the Framework has now been produced and is recommended for adoption by fire and rescue authorities, there remain some outstanding issues that it is felt prudent to address, notably:
- the legal power for a fire and rescue authority to allow a Category 2 individual to revisit the commutation decision made at the time of retirement. Clarification has been sought from the LGA on this issue; and
 - the capacity of this Authority's pensions administrator (West Yorkshire Pension Fund - WYPF) to process immediate detriment cases in accordance with the provisions and, specifically, the timeframes as set out in the Framework. This may require additional resourcing on the part of WYPF which in turn could impact on fees charged to this Authority (and other authorities for which WYPF acts). As with the compensation payments, however, it is understood that the government will subsequently reimburse authorities for any additional charges incurred as a result of processing immediate detriment cases under the Framework.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. This remains a complex area arising from the Government's reform of pension schemes in 2015 and a subsequent legal ruling that certain aspects of that were age discriminatory.
- 5.2. The Government has now published the Public Services Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill in which it sets out its intended remedy to these matters. Subsequently, the LGA and FBU have agreed a Framework – based on an understanding of the remedy provisions in the Bill - to enable immediate detriment cases to be processed by fire and rescue authorities pending enactment of the Bill, thereby avoiding unnecessary delay (as recommended in the McCloud/Sargeant ruling) and mitigating against the likelihood of further litigation on this matter.

- 5.3. While the Framework affords a comprehensive and credible path forward, there are still a few areas where further clarification is required. On this basis, the Authority is asked to delegate authority to the Chief Fire Officer to adopt the Framework, subject to satisfactory assurance on those issues identified in paragraph 4.3.

MIKE PEARSON

Director of Governance & Digital Services

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/21/27
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	10 NOVEMBER 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2022 - 23
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>(a) <i>that the Authority confirms its Scheme of Allowances (including the rates of basic and special responsibility allowances as set out in Table 1 of Section 2 of this report) to operate for the 2022-23 financial year;</i></p> <p>(b) <i>that it be noted that the Scheme provides for annual uprating of allowances in accordance with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the "Green Book"); and</i></p> <p>(c) <i>that the Clerk to the Authority be authorised to publicise details of the Scheme so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Regulations require the Authority to have in place its own Scheme for the payment of a basic allowance to each of its Members. The Authority may also provide for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances and reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenditure.</p> <p>The Regulations also require the details of any such Schemes to be confirmed and published by the Authority for each financial year in question.</p> <p>This report details allowances currently payable and invites the Authority to confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2022-23 financial year.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Provision will be made within the Revenue Budget 2022-23 for the payment of allowances at the rates together with any anticipated increase (based on the pay award for staff conditioned to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services ("the Green Book")).
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	The content this report is considered compatible with equalities and human rights legislation.
APPENDICES	Nil.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>The Local Authority (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003.</p> <p>The Local Authorities (Companies) Order 1985.</p> <p>Report DSFRA/20/8 ("Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Approved Scheme of Members' Allowances 2020-21"), together with report of Independent Consultant, to the Authority budget meeting on 18 February 2020, together with the Minutes of that meeting.</p> <p>Report DSFRA/20/21 ("Confirmation of Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22") to the Authority meeting on 16 December 2020, together with the Minutes of that meeting.</p>
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1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 The Local Authority (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 require the Authority to make a Scheme of Members Allowances that:

- **must** provide for payment of a basic allowance to every Member of the Authority (to recognise the time commitment of all Members and cover incidental costs such as postage, telephone calls etc. in connection with Authority duties); and
- **may** provide:
 - for payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for those Members undertaking additional roles (e.g. Authority and Committee Chairs); **and**
 - payment of travel and subsistence expenses in relation to Authority duties.

1.2 The Regulations also require the Authority to confirm its Scheme of Allowances for each financial year in question and for this information to be published in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.

2. **BASIC, SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CO-OPTEE ALLOWANCES**

2.1 At its budget meeting on 18 February 2020 the Authority considered a review of its Allowances Scheme ("the Scheme") as conducted by an independent consultant and determined – in accordance with the review recommendations - rates payable for basic and special responsibility allowances (SRAs) in the 2020-21 financial year (Minute DSFRA/40 refers).

2.2 Subsequently, at its meeting on 16 December 2020, the Authority (in considering the Scheme to apply for the 2021-22 financial year) resolved, amongst other things:

- that the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to Authority-appointed non-executive directors to the Board of Red One Ltd. should be £6,305 per annum, for the reasons as set out in paragraph 3.1 of [report DSFRA/20/21](#); and
- that the Scheme of Allowances be amended for 2021-22 and future years to provide for the annual uprating of co-optees allowances in accordance with any proposal agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services ("the Green Book").

[\(Minute DSFRA/64 refers\)](#)

2.3 The rates of allowances payable during the 2021-22 financial year are shown in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1 – 2020-21 Rates for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances

Type of Allowance	Amount per annum £
Basic	2,786
Special Responsibility (payable in addition to basic allowance)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Chair (5 x basic) 	13, 930
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Vice-Chair 	6, 915
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Chairs 	4,100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority-appointed non-executive directors to the Board of Red One Ltd. 	6,305
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Local Pensions Board (Firefighters' Pensions Schemes) (0.15 x basic) 	418
Co-optees	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Persons as required by Section 28(7), Localism Act 2011 	100 per each standards issues with which they are involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Employer Representative appointed to the Local Pensions Board in accordance with the provisions of Section 102(3), Local Government Act 1972 and Section 13(1), Local Government & Housing Act 1989 	500

- 2.4 It should also be noted that, under the Scheme, only one SRA is payable (at the highest rate), irrespective of how many qualifying posts an individual Member may hold.
- 2.5 As previously referenced, the Scheme also provides that the rates as set out in Table 1 above should be uprated automatically in accordance with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (“the green book”). At the time of drafting this report, no pay award had been agreed for 2021-22 although provision has been made in the approved Revenue Budget for this financial year. A similar provision will also be made in the Revenue Budget for 2022-23.
- 2.6 On this basis, the Authority is asked to confirm the rates of basic and special responsibility allowances to be payable in 2022-23 as set out in Table 1 (subject to any automatic, annual, uprating).

3. REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

- 3.1. The Allowances Scheme also provides for the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses as shown in Tables 2 and 3 overleaf.

Table 2 - Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

	Rate per mile	
	First 10,000 miles	Above 10,000 miles
Cars	45p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p

- 5p per passenger per mile (up to 4 passengers);
- 20p per mile bicycle allowance

3.2. The annual uprating mechanism for reimbursement of travel expenses is by reference to rates published by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). It should be noted that "home-to-Service Headquarters" journeys are classified by HMRC as taxable, with any tax element being deducted at source.

Table 3 - Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Subsistence Expenses

Breakfast	£7.00
Lunch	£10.00
Tea	£4.00
Evening meal if returning home after 8.00pm	£12.00
Evening meal if staying overnight	£22.00

3.3. The rates payable for subsistence expenses are referenced to the rates and conditions on reimbursement of expenses as per Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service employees in force at the time.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. The Authority Scheme was last subject to a major review in 2019 to inform the Scheme to operate for the 2020-21 financial year and the associated annual uprating mechanism to apply for subsequent years up to and including 2023-24. The next major review should take place in 2023 to allow sufficient time to inform the 2024-25 budget setting process.

4.2. The Authority is now asked to consider this report and in accordance with the relevant Regulations to:

- (a). confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2022-23 financial year;
- (b). authorise the Clerk to the Authority to publish the rates so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services

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