

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.

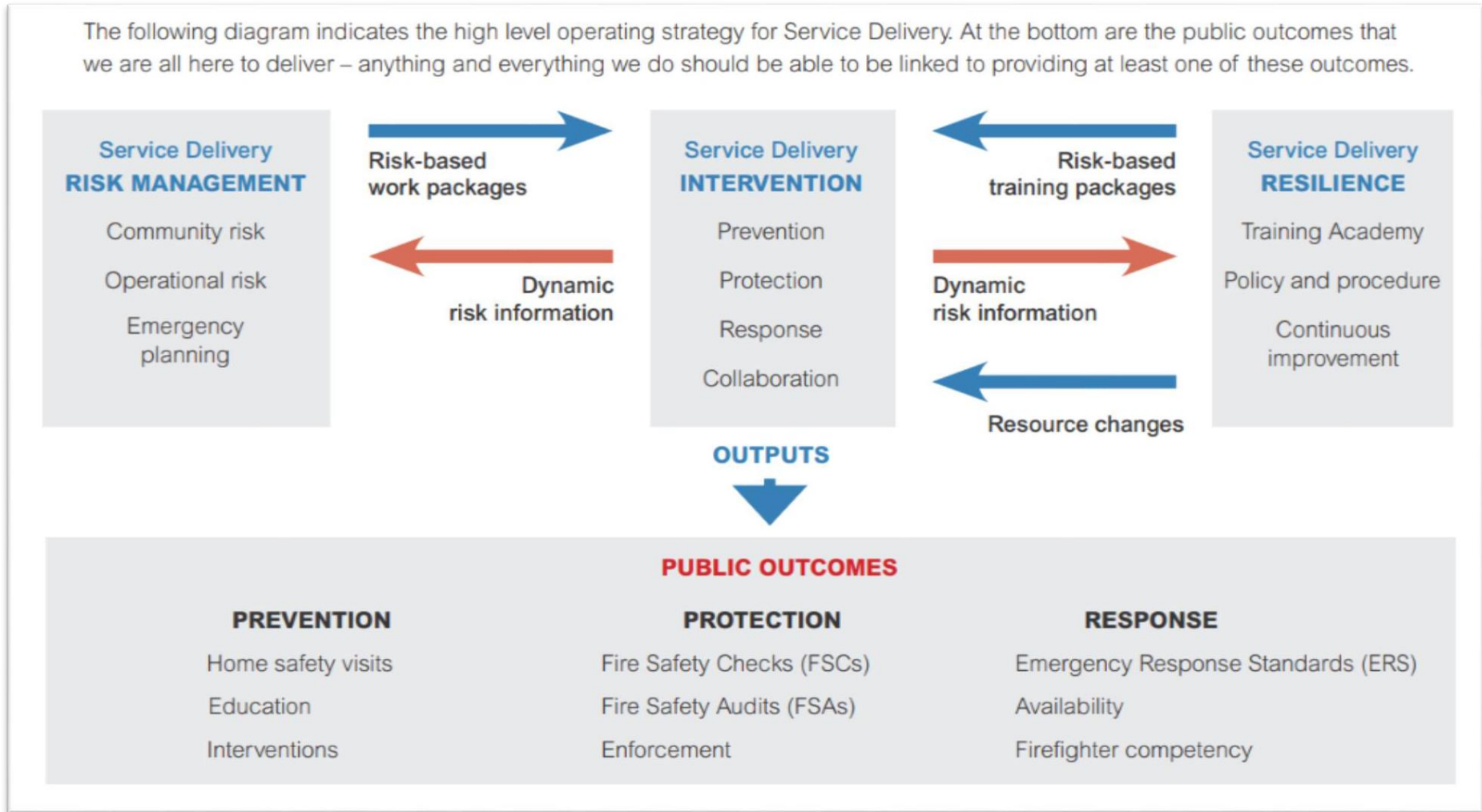
We also operate medical co-responder schemes at 20 of our fire stations, where trained firefighters attend medical emergencies at the request of the ambulance service. More recently, we have supported the ambulance service with firefighters driving ambulances during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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.

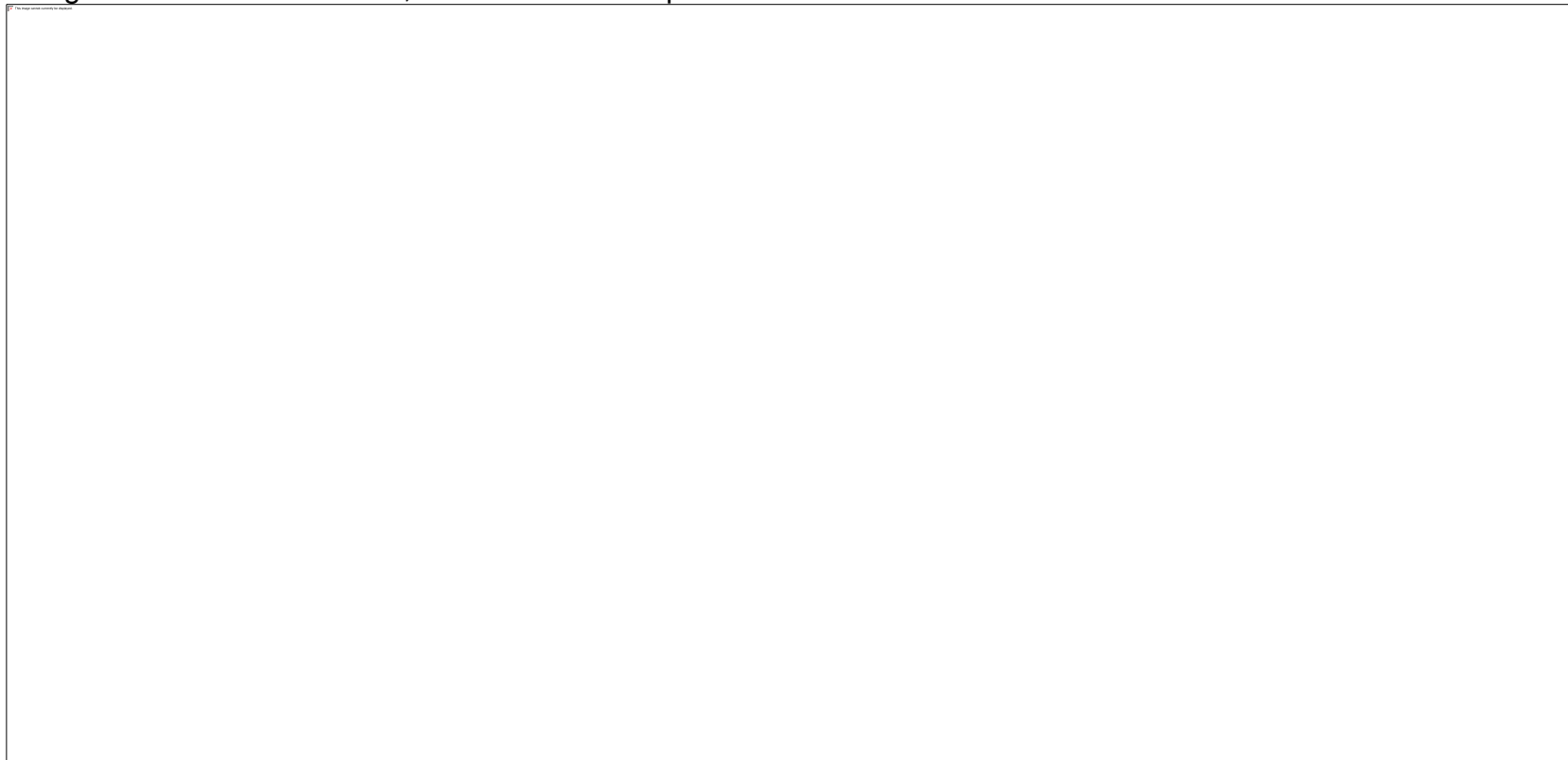
Since our last risk management plan (Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018 – 2022), we have seen a lot of change and improvements. We have relocated Topsham and Budleigh Salterton crew to Clyst St George and Exmouth. We moved fire engines and created new on-call sections at Middlemoor and Clyst St George 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.



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

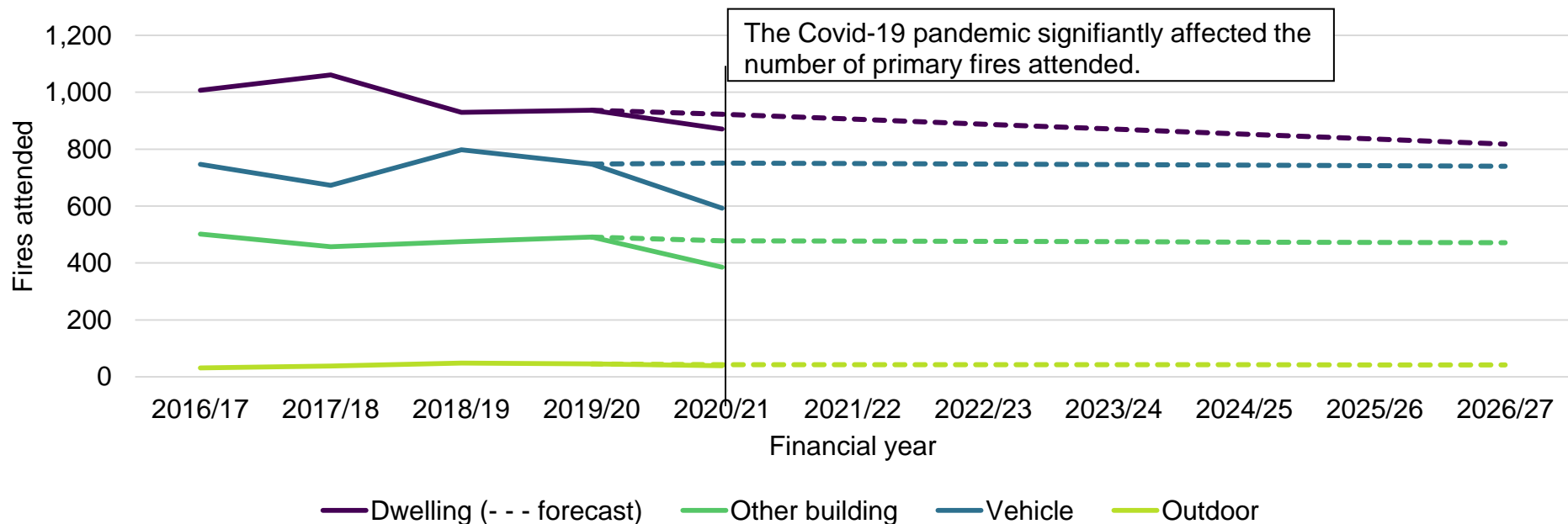
We also recognise the need to identify emerging and future risks and trends across our communities and to our staff. For example, electric vehicles and the potential 'self-drive' vehicles, domestic and commercial battery energy storage systems, bio mass fuel plants and the government's agenda for renewable 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



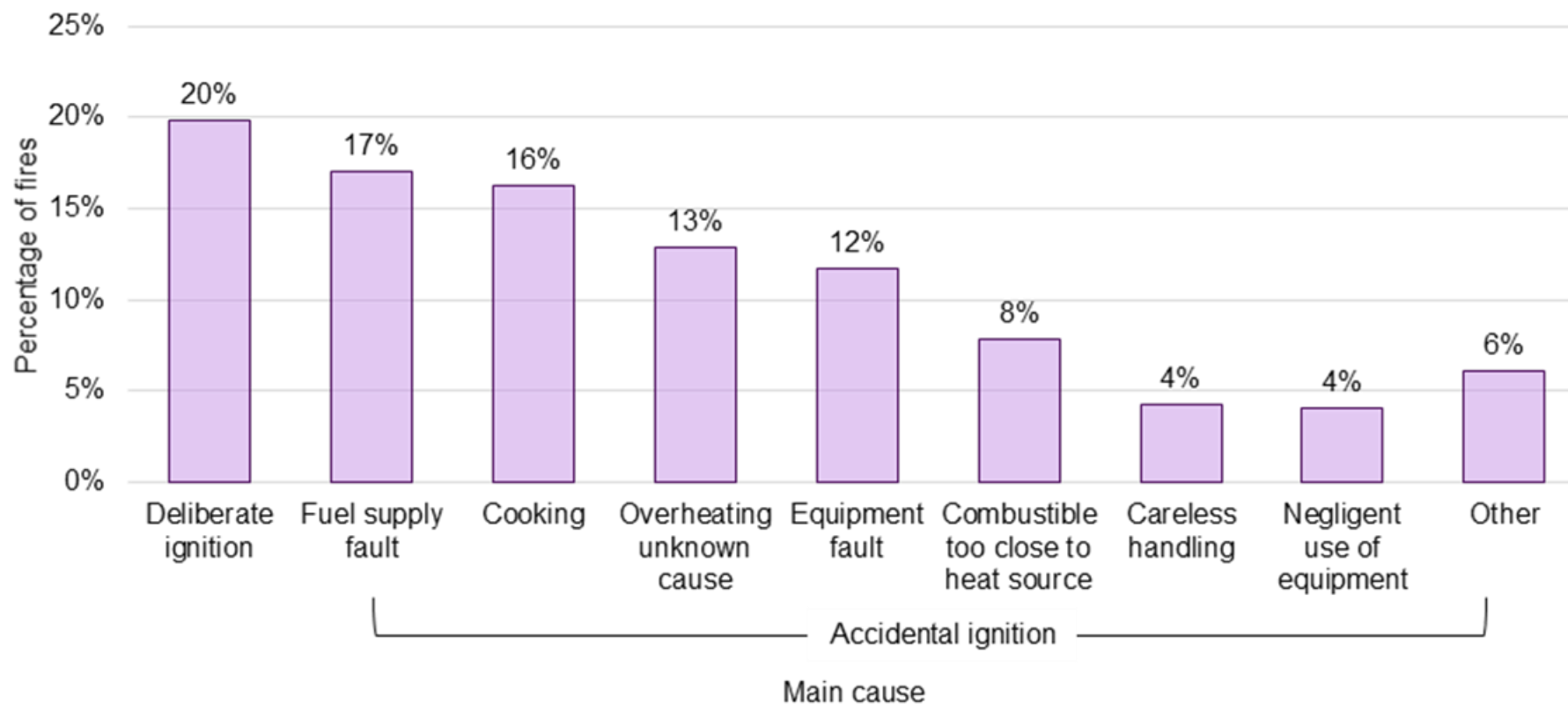
The chart shows data for the four high level categories of primary fire attended: dwelling, other building, road vehicle and outdoor location. The forecasts are based on 11-years of historic data, from April 2009 to March 2020. We have excluded the 2020/21 financial year from our calculations as the 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

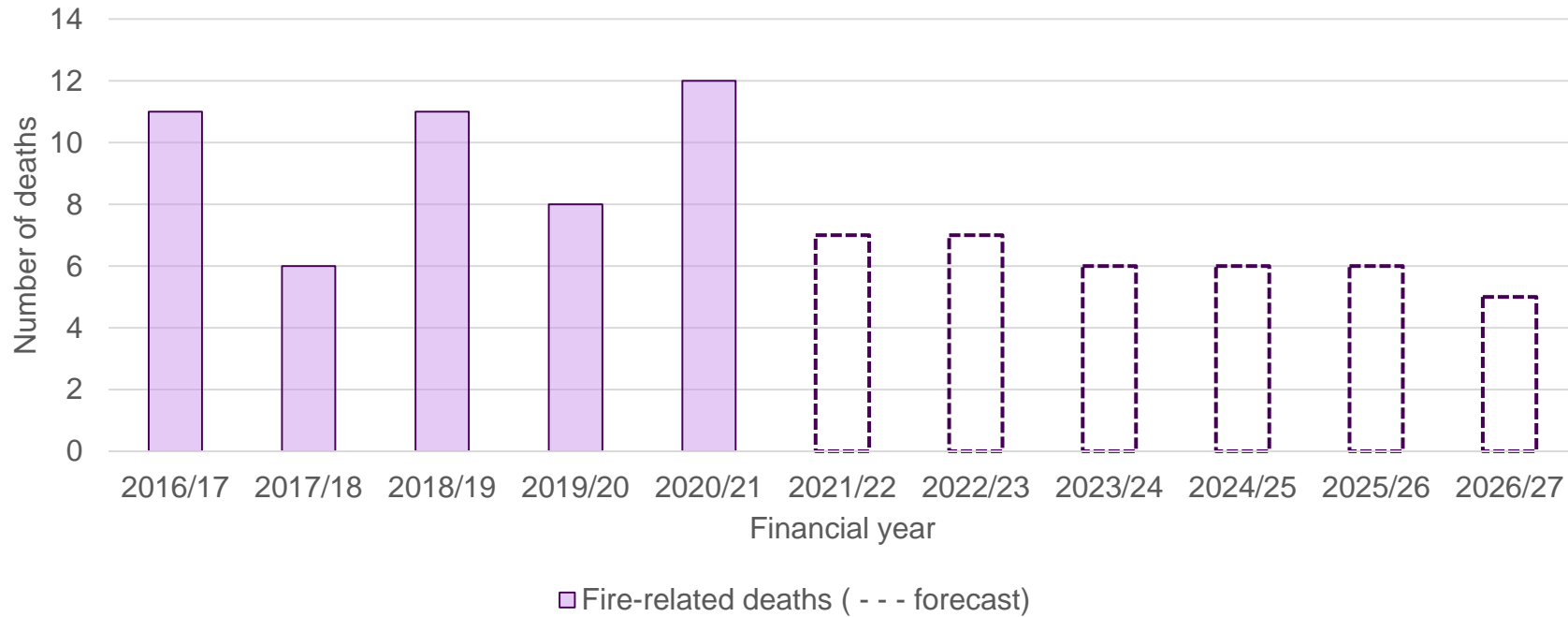
Includes incidents where a specific main cause category has been identified



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.

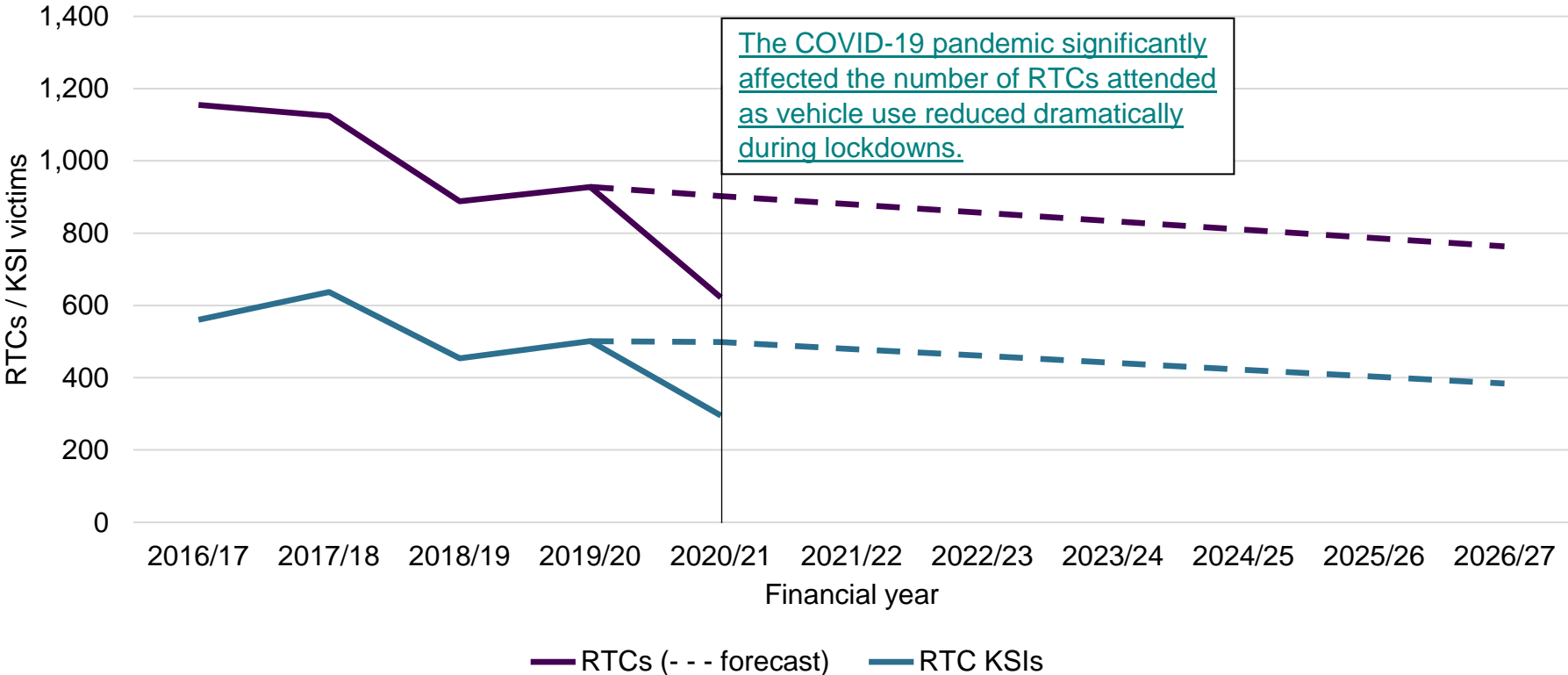
Flooding/Wildfire: the impact of global warming on the environment can also be seen in the increase in wildfires globally. More locally, Devon and Somerset has two major national parks within our area and we need to ensure we have sufficient resources in place at the right time to minimise the impact 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



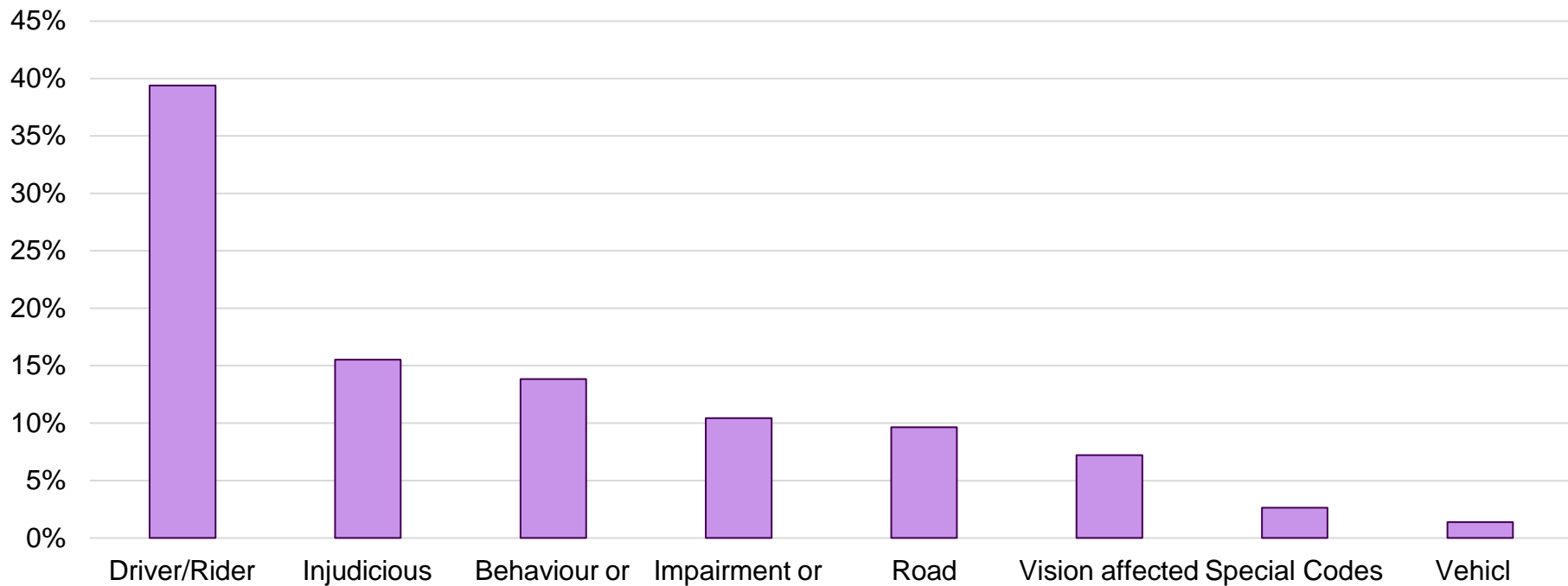
11

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

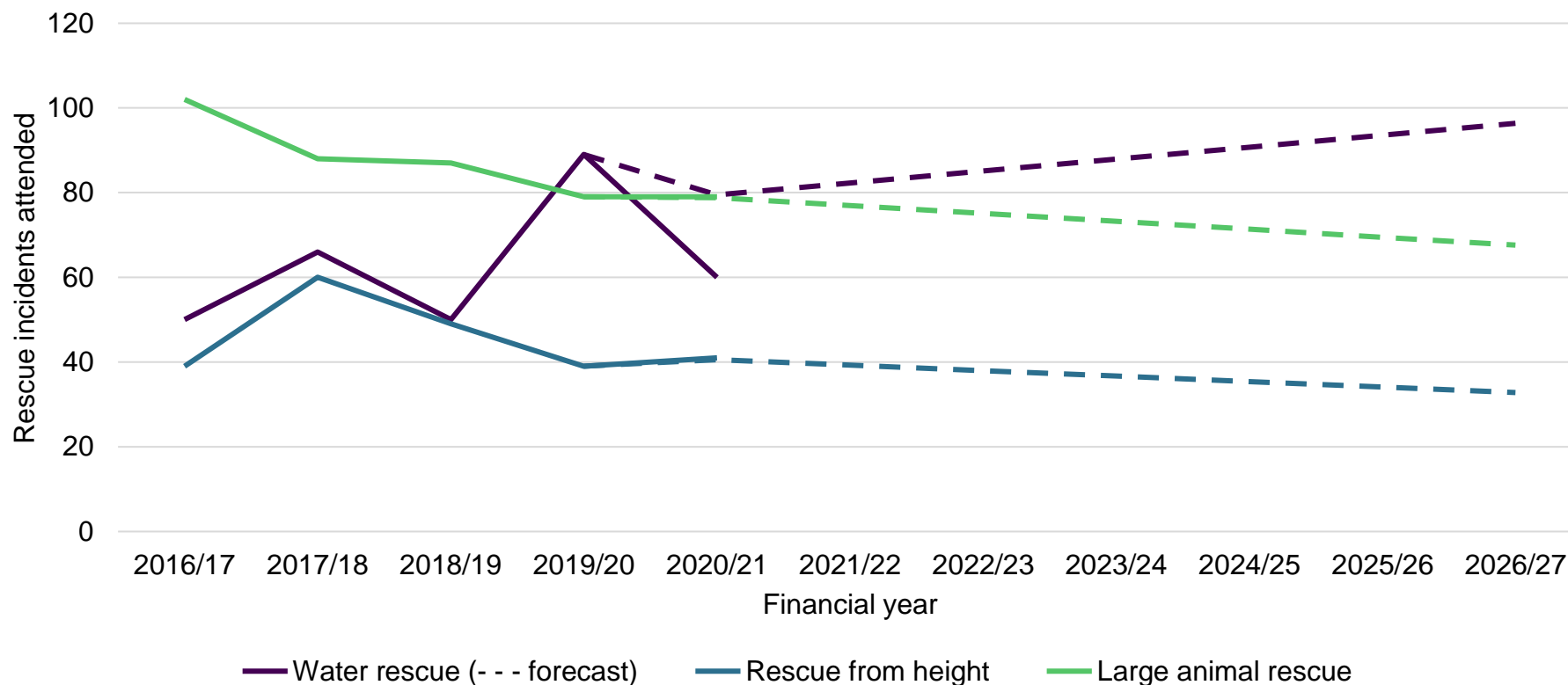


Specialist rescues

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.

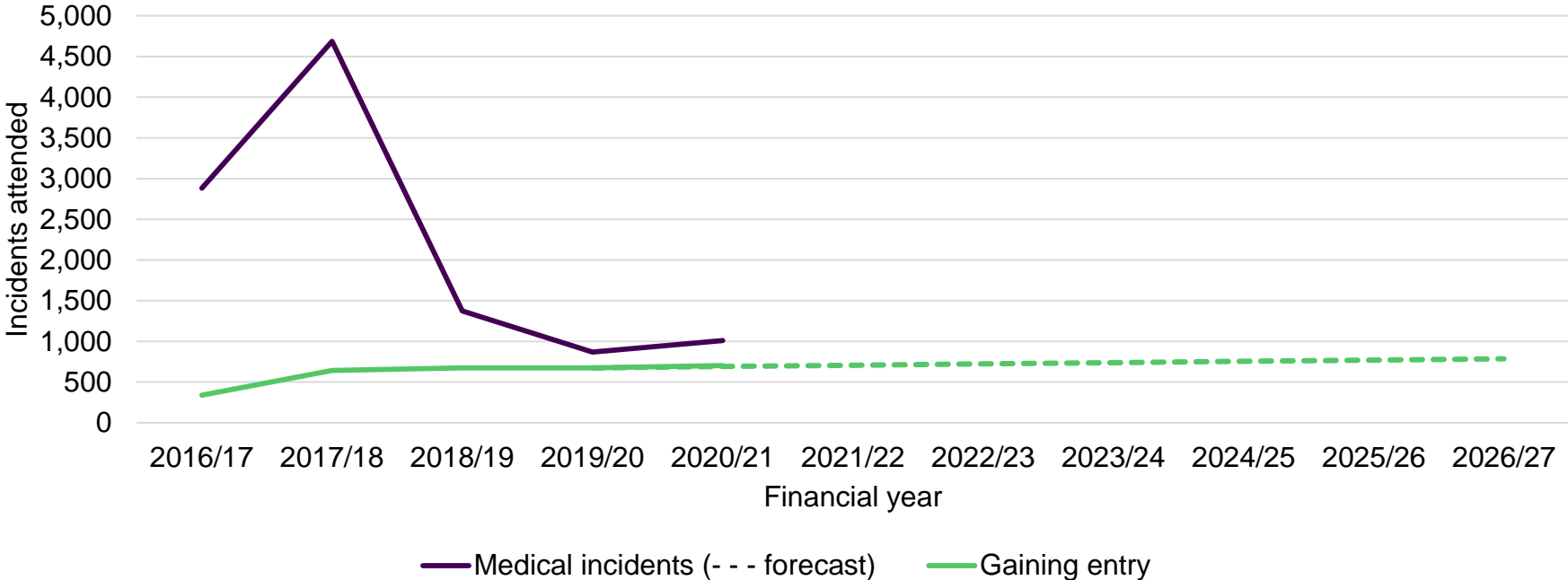
Number of specialist rescues incidents attended, including forecast to 2026/27

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.

Health and wellbeing	Medical response and health-related incidents	Action 2.1. Action 2.6. Action 2.7. Action 3.1. Action 3.2. Action 3.4
----------------------	---	--

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>
35 | Page