

Annual Service Review

2021-2022



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Hereford & Worcester
Fire Authority

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Unless stated, figures used in this Review are as at 31 March 2022, rounded to the nearest 100 where appropriate. Population figures are updated to mid-2021 (the latest available).

Foreword

We are pleased to introduce our Annual Service Review for 2021-2022. We hope it helps you to appreciate the wide range of work we do to keep our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire safe from fire and other emergencies.

The Review is a look back over the last twelve months (April 2021 – March 2022) focusing on some of the highlights and main events of the year.

Over the year, our 24/7 emergency response service dealt with fires, road traffic collisions, flooding and many other emergencies. We attended 7,419 incidents, up by 6% on last year. While the number of fires attended was down by 4%, there was a 19% rise in the number of Special Services incidents. This is largely accounted for by a 32% increase in the number of road traffic collisions attended following the gradual relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.

We also carried out many other activities to reduce risk and improve community safety, such as home fire safety visits, inspecting buildings and enforcing fire safety legislation.

While most people are aware of our upfront work in emergency response and our protection and prevention work with businesses and communities, we've also been busy behind the scenes:

- At the beginning of the year, we launched the new Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2025 and developed three new Core Strategies setting out how we will deliver the aims and priorities of the CRMP through our Response, Protection and Prevention services.
- We outlined our commitments to our communities and staff in relation to Covid-19, as restrictions are gradually relaxed and we all try to live with Covid-19.
- This year the HMICFRS carried out their latest inspection of the Service, and their report in December 2021 highlighted some good areas of work and also some areas for improvement, which we have been addressing.
- We signed up to the NFCC's Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Service and set out our strategic equality objectives in support of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments.

We've focused on some of the highlights and main events of last year in this Review, but you'll find a lot more about the wide range of our work on the [News and Events](#) page of our Website.

This Review sits alongside our Annual Service Plan for 2022-2023, which is a look-ahead to what we're planning to do over the next twelve months. You will find the Plan on our [Publications](#) page.

Finally, we'd like to thank our Members and staff for their continued professionalism and dedication to keeping our communities safe during what has been another challenging year.



Councillor Kit Taylor,
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Jonathon Pryce, Chief Fire
Officer / Chief Executive

The Service in 2021-22



Core Purpose

“Keeping people safe from fire and other risks – responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.”



Staff
Members
693
(770 roles)



25

Fire
Stations



Fire
Engines
41



Budget

£35.3 Million



Population
791,700*

355,600*
Households



Area in
Hectares
392,000



Road length
in Miles
4,755



44,375*
Businesses



* Mid-2021 estimates

Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25

At the beginning of April 2021, we launched the new [Community Risk Management Plan 2021-25](#) (CRMP). The CRMP is our overall strategy for keeping people, their homes, communities and the environment safe from fire and other emergencies with the resources available to us.

It looks at the fire and rescue-related risks facing the communities we serve, and sets out our high-level plans for tackling those risks through our emergency response, protection and prevention services over the next four years (2021-2025).

The CRMP also highlights our plans for supporting our workforce and maintaining value for money.



Supporting the CRMP are five additional documents providing more detailed information on fire and rescue-related risks across the two counties:

- [Economy](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Transport](#)
- [People & Places](#)
- [2020 Risk Review](#)

Alongside the CRMP, we have prepared three Core Strategies, which set out how we will deliver our core functions over the term of the CRMP. More details on the next page.



Core Strategies

In line with our Purpose, Vision and Mission, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) is committed to putting the community first by keeping people safe from fire and other risks and protecting the most vulnerable. To support the delivery of the [Community Risk Management Plan](#) (CRMP), during the year we prepared our three core strategies – [Response](#), [Protection](#) and [Prevention](#) – which set our direction for the next four years (2021 – 2025).

Response

Availability

Making sure we have the right assets available at the right time

Competence

Ensuring we have suitably trained and competent staff to respond safely and effectively

Intelligence

Having the right level of accurate information available to deal with any foreseeable risk

Protection

Promoting Fire Safety

Promoting fire safety in commercial and other public premises through guidance and consultation

Increasing Compliance

Carrying out fire safety inspections and giving advice to businesses to help them meet fire safety regulations

Investigating and Enforcing

Investigating the causes of fire and enforcing compliance where breaches of fire safety regulations are found

Prevention

Reducing Risk

Developing our understanding of risk and targeting our prevention work at those people and areas most at risk of fire and other emergencies

Awareness and Education

Providing our communities with advice and guidance to help to increase awareness of the potential dangers of fire and other risks, and supporting education initiatives to promote risk reduction among vulnerable groups

Other Highlights and Events 1

COVID-19 RESPONSE



The year saw the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the virus, though, with the increase in vaccinations and greater awareness of how to stay safe and protect others, the lockdown restrictions across England have been gradually removed. This has enabled an opening up of businesses and public spaces as people try to get used to living with Covid-19.

The Service continued to adopt a safety-first approach to Covid-19 throughout the year. With appropriate risk assessments, personal protective equipment and safe working practices, we were fully able to maintain our emergency response services. Our staff were able to start returning to the workplace with appropriate safety and security measures in place since mid-summer. We were also able to start carrying out more Home Fire Safety Visits and Fire Safety Inspections.

Living With Covid-19 – Our Commitments

- To deliver high quality, sustainable prevention, protection and response services to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- To proactively protect our communities and limit the spread of Covid-19.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff in the pursuance of their duties.
- To support the activities of others in the protection of our communities.
- To ensure effective business continuity, procurement and recovery arrangements are in place throughout the sector.
- To support a return to normality or restoration of core services within HWFRS and to the wider community.

Partnership Working

Throughout the year, the Service continued to work collaboratively with partner agencies, including West Mercia Police, local authorities and with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of our Fire Alliance.

Through partnership working we aim to add value to the work of others, realise efficiencies (for example, through joint procurement), and enhance the overall effectiveness of our services.

HMICFRS



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services published their second inspection report in December 2021.

It highlights areas of good performance, such as how we respond to major and multi-agency incidents and protect the public through fire regulation, but it also details areas where improvements can be made, such as how efficiently we use our limited resources and how we support and develop our people.

The inspectors were encouraged by all the improvements we have made since their last inspection, and we are well underway in working through new action plans to address all issues raised in the latest report.

You can read the full report by clicking here: [HMICFRS inspection report](#)

Other Highlights and Events 2

CORE CODE OF ETHICS FOR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

In addition to our own set of Values, we are guided by the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England.

The Code sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour. This will help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.

The ethical principles have been produced specifically for Fire and Rescue Services by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



Putting our communities first

We put the interests of the public, the community, and service users first.



Integrity

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



Dignity and respect

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.



Leadership

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.

We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.



Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI, both within the FRS and the wider communities in which we serve.

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

Two major fires tackled in Kidderminster

Two major fires at industrial units in Kidderminster in September and December 2021 proved to be not only a true test of our firefighting skills, but also our multi-agency working alongside West Mercia Police, the local authorities, neighbouring fire and rescue services, local residents and the media.



The first incident at Park Street involved just about every fire station in the Service attending at some point to put the fire out promptly and minimise disruption to the local area.

The second major incident at the Hoo Farm Industrial Estate created plumes of smoke and dust that could be seen for miles around. Heavy rain, strong winds and flying debris in the wake of Storm Barra added to the task of extinguishing the fire and making the remaining structures safe. This was successfully achieved over several days through the great teamwork and the professionalism of everyone involved.



The Year In Numbers: Response



7,418

**Total number
of Incidents
attended**

↑ 6% Increase
(400 incidents)

This is 400 incidents more than last year,
largely due to a 19% increase in the
number of Special Services incidents.

**Calls to Fire
Control**

16,212



↑ 29% Increase
(3,617 calls)

Note that calls now include duplicate calls
for some incidents reported.



**1,604
Fires**

↓ 4% Decrease
(58 incidents)

↓ 1,117
**Accidental
fires**

8% Decrease
(91 incidents)



↑ Deliberate
fires
487

7% Increase
(33 incidents)



**535
Primary
Building fires**

↑ 8% Increase
(38 incidents)



**744
Outdoor
Fires**

↓ 10% Decrease
(84 incidents)



↓ 38 45% Decrease
**Non Fatal
casualties from
fire incidents**

In 2021-22 the fire fatality rate in
Herefordshire & Worcestershire
remained at **0.38 per 100,000** population

↑ Increase since 2020/21
↓ Decrease since 2020/21

Continued ...

The Year In Numbers: Response



2,385
Special
Service
Incidents

↑ **19% Increase**
(376 incidents)



32% Increase
(162 incidents)



663
Road
Traffic
Collisions



4% Increase
(13 incidents)

355
Assisting
other agencies



**Animal
Rescues**
126 ↓

1% Decrease (1 incident)



134 **Flooding
Incidents**

22% Decrease
(37 incidents)



**Rescues
from water**
73 ↓



32% Decrease
(32 incidents)



3,429
False
Alarms

3% Increase
(84 incidents)



2,558
False Alarms
due to
Apparatus



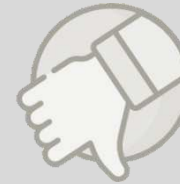
7% Increase
(167 incidents)



811
Good Intent
False Alarms



12% Decrease
(109 incidents)



60
Malicious
False Alarms



76% Increase
(26 incidents)



↑ Increase since 2020/21

↓ Decrease since 2020/21

The Year In Numbers: Protection



RBIP */ Visits
Post Fires
1,086



Building Reg.
Consultations
468



Enforcement
65

Licencing
Applications.
324



Fire
Investigation
101



Twitter
46,939



Media
Campaigns
31

**RBIP = Risk-Based Inspection Programme*

The Year In Numbers: Prevention



Safe & Well
Visits
1,107



Home Fire
Safety Visits
1,392



Equipment
Only Visits
803

Signposting
Referrals
352



Safeguarding
Referrals
112



Firesetter
Referrals
39



Referrals from
External Agencies
2,245



Calls Taken By
Prevention Team
2,714

Incident Breakdown by District

North District



Population
287,300



126,600
Households

North District covers 180 square miles across northern Worcestershire with the majority of people living in the towns of Redditch, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Droitwich. It has five fire stations, the busiest of which during the year was Wyre Forest attending 1,143 incidents or 40% of incidents in the District.



2,980
Total number of
Incidents attended



673
Fires



932
Special Service
Incidents



1,375
False
Alarms

South District



Population
310,800



142,000
Households

South District covers 490 square miles with most people living in the city of Worcester and the two towns of Malvern and Evesham. It is served by six fire stations including Worcester, the busiest station in the two counties, attending 1,316 incidents or 55% of incidents in the District during the year.



2,522
Total number of
Incidents attended



478
Fires



810
Special Service
Incidents



1,234
False
Alarms

West District



Population
193,600



87,000
Households

West District covers the whole of Herefordshire. About a third of the population live in the city of Hereford, with most people living in smaller communities across the rural county. It has 13 fire stations, the busiest of which was Hereford attending 983 incidents or 56% of incidents in the District.



1,916
Total number of
Incidents attended



453
Fires



643
Special Service
Incidents



820
False
Alarms

Service highlights - 1

Prevention



Safe & Well Visits

Despite Covid-19 restrictions over the year, the Prevention team and operational crews carried out over 2,500 face-to-face [Safe & Well](#) visits and 100 phone consultations with those who are most vulnerable to fire.



More than 3,000 Year 11 students attended our road safety scheme held at local Fire Stations this year. **Dying 2 Drive** is aimed at reducing death and serious injury among young road users and soon-to-be young drivers.

Community Safety Events

Our Prevention directorate supported many local events to promote fire safety throughout the year, including working with local GPs to generate Safe and Well Check referrals for vulnerable people.



PREVENTION

Protection

Fire Safety Training

We have trained a further 40 staff to increase the number of fire safety inspections of commercial premises and created a 24/7 response model to deal with fire safety matters.

Fire Safety Premises Database

Collaborative work has enabled us to increase our commercial premises database to over 40,000 premises, improving our targeted guidance and inspection programmes.



Response

Despite the pressures of the Covid-19 pandemic, we maintained our frontline emergency response services throughout the year, including tackling two of the largest fire incidents in recent memory: both at industrial estates in Kidderminster (see page 8).

We also hosted a High Volume Pump (HVP) training event on behalf of National Resilience at the Wyre Forest Hub. HVPs are essential for moving large volumes of water at incidents such as flooding following intense periods of rain.

Other highlights include:

- continued growth of the Firefighters Apprenticeship programme
- introduction of a second Incident Command vehicle and increased drone capability



- planning underway for a new joint Fire and Police Hub at Redditch
- Worcester fire station provided a base for the British Transport Police

Service highlights - 2

Training

Essential training across the whole Service continued despite Covid-19 restrictions, including compartment fire behaviour and recruit training.

We have also:

- introduced a comprehensive induction programme to support staff recently promoted.
- explored opportunities to recruit qualified paramedics to lead and develop our First Responder Emergency Care and trauma training, which will also enhance our collaborative work with ambulance crews at incidents.

Fire Investigation

We have invested in fire investigation training for our frontline Commanders and specialist fire scene investigators. This is an important area of our work, helping to reduce the human and financial costs of fires, reducing arson and educating against accidental fires. Over the year, our investigations have supported numerous successful prosecutions following deliberate fires.



Fleet & Equipment

Over the year, we introduced 4 new fire engines and a new restricted access vehicle – total cost: £1.4 m.

We also purchased £180,000 worth of new equipment including:

- 8 new ladders,
- new 22mm hose reels,
- new high-pressure airbags,
- New fitness equipment, and
- 4 light portable pumps



Incident Command Training Centre

Based at Worcester fire station, our new Incident Command suite offers state-of-the-art training facilities. With the aid of dedicated simulation software, the Centre provides an immersive experience for firefighters at all levels to develop key skills, technical understanding, command confidence and team work in a safe environment. Together with work on a new

training framework and competency schedule to ensure staff have access to up-to-date training aligned to [National Operational Guidance](#), the Centre will help to drive operational excellence across the Service.



Our People, Our Values

Staff Structure



The Service is led by the Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive with the support of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), made up of Directors and Assistant Directors. The Service employs 693 full-time and part-time members of staff, who work in 770 roles. Firefighters make up approximately 80% of the workforce, assisted by professional teams providing support and enabling services such as financial, human resources and legal services. The 24 Fire Control firefighters are the frontline for receiving emergency calls and deploying crews to incidents. There are also 17 active volunteers supporting community safety activities.

Our Values



Supporting our values and our people, this year we:

- implemented a hybrid working trial for office-based roles to support new ways of working,
- invested in a bespoke professional development programme for our leaders with access to online development tools, and
- launched a new personal development policy for all staff to apply for sponsorship to undertake any type of professional development.
- signed the Mental Health at Work Commitment

You can read more on the [Our Values](#) page of the Service website.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Gender Balance



This is an improvement from 16% female - 84% male ratio recorded in March 2018

Ethnic Minority Representation



This is a slight fall from 7% ethnic minority representation in the Service at March 2021

Staff Sickness



6.59 days/shifts** were lost per person in 2021-22, an increase over the 3.75 recorded in 2020-21, mainly due to a rise in days lost to surgery/recovery and mental health related issues.

* 2011 Census

** excludes Covid-19 related sickness

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

In 2020, we published our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan](#), which aims to promote equality, diversity in all aspects of our work and in our services to the wider community.

This year, we have set out our new [strategic equality objectives](#) across four key areas:

- **Our Organisation:** leadership and corporate commitment
- **Our Communities:** understand, engage and build good relationships
- **Our People:** develop, engage and understand
- **Our Partners:** working together

In addition, three Members of the Fire Authority became EDI Champions to promote, support and drive improvements; we have used our technology and individual plans to improve dyslexia support; and we held our first online event to mark International Women's Day featuring two prominent female leaders from the Police and Fire sectors.



Review of Training Performance and Culture

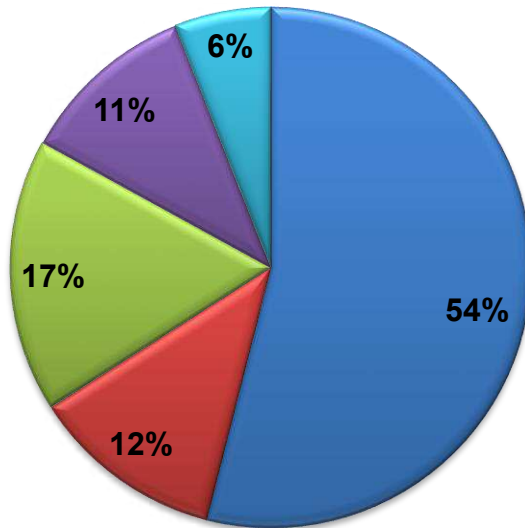
With the support of an educational consultant, surveys and focus groups involving over 250 members of staff, we have reviewed our learning requirements as part of our Digital Transformation aims.

Outcomes include:

- A new e-learning authoring tool and Learning Management System to support staff in their pursuit of operational excellence, including enhanced training material in compliance with National Operational Guidance and the Fire Standards Board,
- the launch of the Service's first ever webinar programme providing a platform for all staff to share expertise, knowledge and experience,
- increased focus on creating a learning culture that supports all staff, including anyone with neuro-diverse learning requirements.

Finance 2021-22

Fire Authority Budget 2021-22



Total: £35.3 million

- £18.9m - Uniform Staff
- £4.3m - Support Staff
- £6.1m - Fleet, Equip., ICT & Property
- £4.0m - Fixed Costs
- £2.0m - Other

How the Service was funded

H&W Council Tax	£24.5m
Funding Grants	£ 7.5m
Retained Business Rates, etc.	£ 1.9m
Special Grants	£ 1.0m
Fire Authority Reserves	£ 0.4m

£35.3m

The annual cost of the Service for the average Council Tax Band D household was £87.69 or just over £1.68 per week.

Contact us ...

We always welcome any views or comments on our reports and plans, so if you want to contact us about any issues, please visit our website at www.hwfire.org.uk where you will find full contact details along with links to further information about our services and activities.

If you have any general enquiries, please call 0345 122 4454 or email us at info@hwfire.org.uk.

You can also follow us on Twitter www.twitter.com/hwfire

or find us on

Facebook www.facebook.com/hwfire

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