



## **Fire and Rescue Authority Plan** **2013-14**

Draft

# **What do you think of our plan?**

**We would welcome any views that you have on the content of this plan or the way in which Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority delivers its services.**

**If you have any comments or would like to contact us about any issue, please visit our website at [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk)**

**Alternatively, for general enquiries, please call 0845 122 4454**

**or email [info@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:info@hwfire.org.uk)**

**You can also follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/hwfire>**

**or find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/hwfire>**

**Alternatively you may write to:  
Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters  
2 Kings Court  
Charles Hastings Way  
Worcester  
WR5 1JR**

**If you would like this information in an alternative language or format such as large print or audio, please contact us on 0845 12 24454.**

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**Foreword by the Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Chief Fire Officer**

To be completed once ratified by the FRA.

## **Our Authority**

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's purpose is to ensure that there is an effective Fire and Rescue Service across the two counties. The Authority consists of 25 Elected Members (19 from Worcestershire County Council and 6 from Herefordshire Council), who oversee the work of the Fire and Rescue Service in delivering this service. They set the budget and approve the overall direction for the Service. Supporting this, the role of senior officers is to be responsible and accountable for service delivery throughout the Service, to monitor Service-wide performance and retain oversight of Service activity.

Committee Diagram to be inserted

## **Your Right to Know**

### **Access to Information**

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service collects and maintains information and data to enable us to carry out our statutory duties. A great deal of information on the Service is already available in the public domain through our Publication Scheme. Service staff will help you to obtain the information you want unless disclosure would be against the law. You have a right to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which gives you a general right of access to recorded information held by the Service. The Act is designed to ensure greater accountability, as well as to promote a more open culture. If you want to know what personal information is held about you, you can make a request under the Data Protection Act 1998. To find out more, please follow the link: [Your Right to Know](#)



## Our Service



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service covers a geographic area of almost 400,000 hectares (over 1,500 square miles). It has some of the most sparsely populated rural areas in the country and around 740,000 people reside in the two counties, predominantly in Worcestershire.



The Service employs over 700 people, most of whom are highly trained Firefighters, working at more than 30 locations across the two counties.



Locations include 27 Fire Stations, a Service Headquarters in Worcester, three District Headquarters (on fire stations), an Operational Logistics Centre in Malvern and a Training and Development Centre and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facility in Droitwich Spa.



We receive about 12,000 emergency calls each year and attend approximately 6,500 incidents.



We attend some 1,800 fires



We attend nearly 600 road traffic collisions.



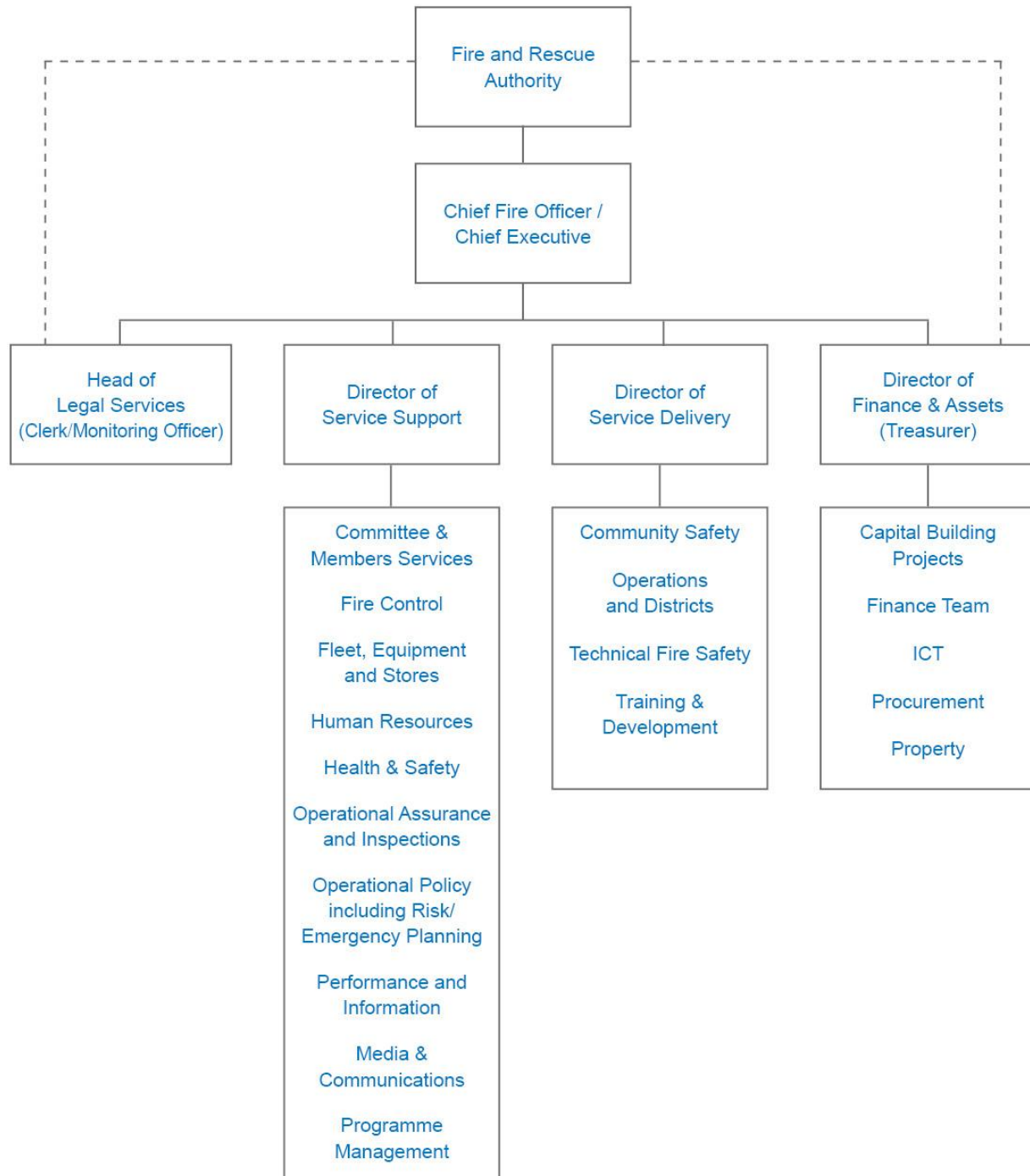
While we make sure we are able to respond to emergencies effectively and safely, we are also concerned with trying to prevent those emergencies happening in the first place.



We work with our partner agencies and our local communities and businesses to make sure that foreseeable risks are reduced as far as possible.

## How we deliver our services

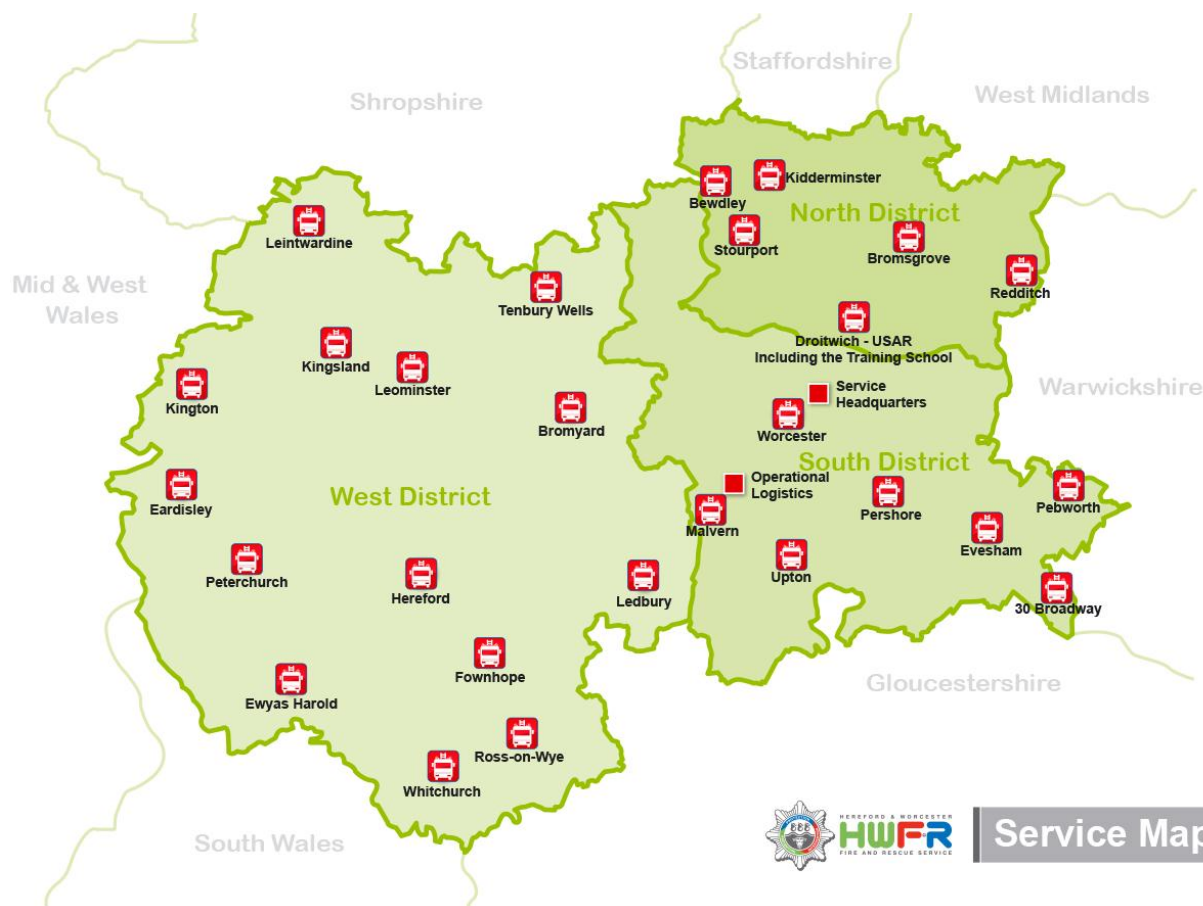
Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority approve the overall direction for the Service which is led by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and the Senior Management Board (SMB). They act as the accountable body for the Service and hold officers of the Service responsible for their area of activity. Our services are organised into three Directorates: Service Support, Service Delivery and Finance and Assets:





## Delivering our services through our three Districts

The Service is organised across three geographic Districts: North, South and West, which helps us to provide a balanced response to reducing community risk throughout the two counties.



The three Districts are served by 27 Fire Stations strategically located across the two counties to provide an appropriate response as soon as an emergency call is received.

County	2011-12				2012-13			
	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total
Herefordshire	671	376	720	1767	453	468	628	1549
Worcestershire	2178	1133	2779	6090	1317	1230	2547	5094

The five busiest Fire Stations are permanently crewed 24 hours a day (Wholtime WT). Three other Fire Stations are permanently crewed during the day (Day Crewed, DC) and by On-Call Firefighters (Retained, RDS) during the night. The other nineteen Fire Stations are crewed by On-Call Firefighters who live locally to the Station and can respond quickly should they be called.

For the new development of a combined Police and Fire Station in Bromsgrove, the Authority has agreed to change Bromsgrove from April 2014 to a new self-rostering crewing system. Day Crewing Plus (DCP) consists of normal Wholtime crewing of the station but with a different crewing structure. The new duty system will not affect the type or speed of response from the new station.



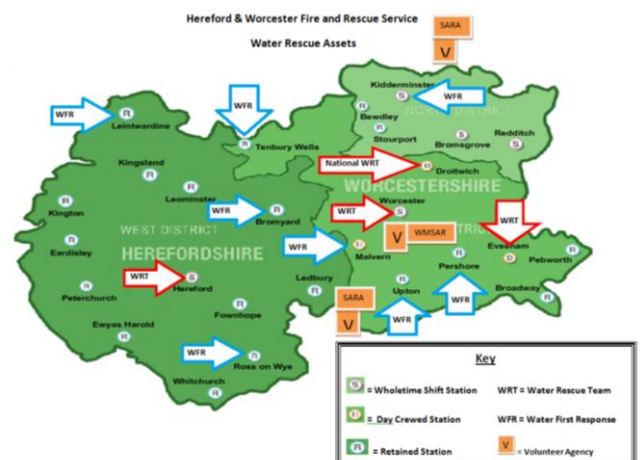
## Herefordshire and Worcestershire Summary

	Area (hectares)	Population (estimate 2010)	Households (estimate 2010)
<b>North Worcestershire</b>			
Bromsgrove	21,700	93,400	39,300
Redditch	5,400	78,700	35,400
Wyre Forest	19,500	98,100	43,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,600</b>	<b>270,200</b>	<b>118,500</b>
<b>South Worcestershire</b>			
Malvern Hills	57,700	75,400	33,000
Worcester	3,400	94,800	43,200
Wychavon	66,300	117,000	51,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>127,400</b>	<b>287,200</b>	<b>127,300</b>
<b>Herefordshire</b>			
Herefordshire	218,000	179,300	80,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>218,000</b>	<b>179,300</b>	<b>80,800</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>392,000</b>	<b>736,700</b>	<b>326,600</b>

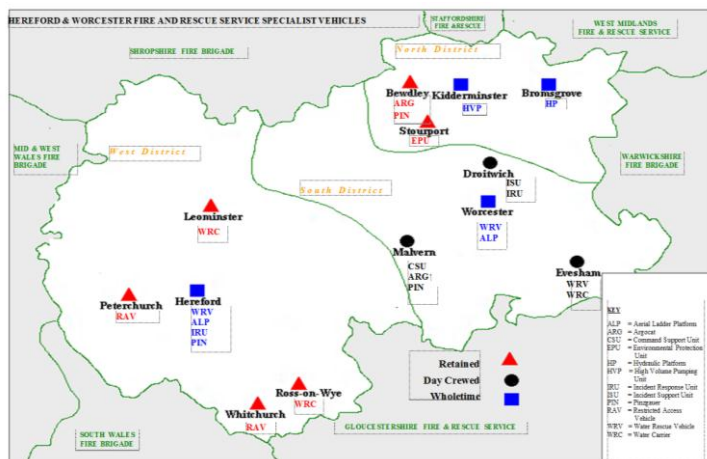
We receive over 12,000 emergency calls each year requesting assistance at a wide variety of incidents, including property and countryside fires, road traffic collisions, collapsed structures, water rescues, hazardous materials and animal rescues. In all, we attend just over 6,500 incidents each year – over 125 incidents every week.

Some of the key specialist resources are: 3 specialist boat teams with 8 Stations designated as Water Rescue First Responders throughout the two counties, a specialist rope rescue team at Malvern, an environmental protection unit at Stourport, two Aerial Ladder Platforms located at Hereford and Worcester Fire Stations and several different vehicles providing off road firefighting at several locations throughout the Service area. To find out more, please follow the link:

[Our Vehicle Fleet](#)



## NEED NEW DISTRICT BOUNDARIES ON MAPS!



We host one of 20 national Urban Search and Rescue ([USAR](#)) specialist units. This team is based at Droitwich Spa and is a national resilience resource, which is also available for local deployment if required. We also host two mass decontamination units located at Hereford and Droitwich Spa and two High Volume Pumping Units located at Kidderminster Fire Station.

## **Wider Influences and Pressures Affecting Our Service**

To plan ahead, we've looked at what changes might affect our two counties in the forthcoming years, especially what might have an impact on how we deliver our services. Some of the main issues we've considered are set out below, and they give a good picture of what our Service will be dealing with over the next few years. Three issues stand out: the economic situation, population growth and the changing environment.

### **The Economic Situation**

Possibly the most pressing issue is the economic situation. Nationally, we are in a period of austerity which might take a long time to get through. At the same time costs are rising for everyone and about a fifth of households in the two counties are living in relative poverty. Issues like these are of particular concern to the Fire and Rescue Service, because those households most affected are more likely to be at higher risk of fire than others. These issues are also more prevalent in areas experiencing high levels of relative deprivation. National and local research shows that there is a strong link between deprivation and fire.

For the Fire and Rescue Service itself, there are also economic challenges due to reductions in funding for Fire and Rescue Services, that are being asked to find more effective ways to use what they have available. The Service has already made substantial savings but we expect to have to make more significant savings over the next few years at least. We are exploring new ways of dealing with the issues, and our task is to do so in ways that maintain excellent services to our communities.

### **Population Growth and Change**

The second issue is population growth and change. Both counties are growing and by 2020, there are likely to be around 784,000 people living here. The largest change is predicted to be an increase in the number of older people; there are currently about 205,600 people aged 60 or over (about 1 in 4 of the total population), and this is likely to rise to 242,000 by 2020, or almost 1 in 3 of the total.

Research into the categories of people who are more likely to have fire incidents at home include older people, so we are working closely with many local agencies to make sure that our fire prevention activity is targeted at these groups.

### **The Changing Environment**

The third issue is the changing environment. The weather appears to be increasingly unpredictable, and we expect to see an increasing tendency towards more extreme weather with more periods of flood, storm and drought. Many parts of the Authority's area are vulnerable to the risk of flooding, and flooding could become more frequent. In such a large rural area, much of our natural and agricultural landscape is also vulnerable to fire should there be extended periods of drought. These issues can have severe impacts on the environment, homes, businesses, travel and insurance costs, as well as being a serious risk to life and the safety of firefighters.

The pace of technological change is also considered, with the potential for significant advances in safety and firefighting technology, as well as rapid change in communications technology. At the same time, medical advances are helping people to live longer than ever before. Other issues considered include the cost of housing in rural areas, changing public expectations of what they want from fire and rescue services and the potential for increasing industrial action, social unrest and growing threats of terrorism.

The shape of the fire and rescue service may also be changing: it is likely to be doing more prevention work as the number of incidents it needs to attend continues to fall; some fire and rescue services may find it more effective to combine their services with others; or other organisations may be more involved in delivering some of what the fire and rescue service currently delivers, such as home fire safety activities.

## About our Districts

### North District

North District provides its services across the District Council areas of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove, Redditch and part of Wychavon. Whilst being the smallest of our Districts by area, it has the highest population density, with the majority of the population living in the four largest towns of Redditch, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Droitwich.



The District has a relatively high proportion of residents aged 65+ years, representing one in five of all individuals. This is projected to increase to more than one in four within the next 20 years. The area is generally prosperous, though there are several pockets of deprivation, notably in the urban areas of Kidderminster and Redditch. The landscape is characterised by the river valleys of the Stour and Severn to the west of the District, while the M5 and M42 motorways are key features to the east.

The area is served by six Fire Stations, with Redditch Fire Station the second busiest after Worcester Fire Station in the Service. In 2012-13, Redditch Fire Station attended 924 incidents, 32% of all incidents attended by North District.

	Fire Stations		Number of front-line fire engines				Specialist Vehicles
			WT	DC	RDS	Total	
<b>North District</b>	<i>Bewdley</i>				1		Argocat, Pinzgauer
	<i>Bromsgrove</i>	1			1		Hydraulic Platform
	<i>Kidderminster</i>	1			1		High Volume Pumping Unit
	<i>Redditch</i>	1			2		
	<i>Stourport</i>				1		Environmental Protection Unit
	<i>Droitwich</i>			1	1		Incident Support Unit, Incident Response Unit
			3	1	7	11	7

#### Call Profile:

District	Fire Stations	2011-12				2012-13			
		Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total
	Bewdley	97	16	29	142	32	32	35	99
	Bromsgrove	221	132	277	630	137	157	290	584
	Kidderminster	302	159	362	823	157	156	336	649
	Redditch	384	184	591	1159	255	193	476	924
	Stourport	129	46	111	286	86	47	109	242
	Droitwich	141	89	192	422	80	100	174	354
<b>North</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>3462</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1420</b>	<b>2852</b>





## South District



South District covers the District Council areas of Worcester, the majority of Malvern Hills and part of Wychavon. The area is almost three times geographically larger than North District and has large rural areas, with extensive areas of agricultural land and open countryside, notably the Vale of Evesham and the Malvern Hills. The cathedral city of Worcester with around 95,000 residents is the largest urban area in the two counties and is the predominant employment, retail and tourism centre.

Like North District and the two counties as a whole, the District has an increasingly ageing population, which will place greater demands on health, housing and other public services in the coming years. Although a relatively affluent area, there are some significant disparities between the quality of life for people living in different localities, especially in terms of prosperity, health, crime and educational attainment. Within Worcester, in particular, there are six localities that fall within the most deprived 10% of all local areas<sup>1</sup> in England. They are:

- Old Warndon, east of Cranham Drive
- Tolladine
- Brickfields
- South-West Gorse Hill
- Cranham Primary School area
- Warndon, Windermere Drive



Seven Fire Stations are located in South District, with Worcester Fire Station area the busiest of all 27 Fire Stations, attending around 1,200 incidents a year.

	Fire Stations	Number of front-line fire engines				Specialist Vehicles
		WT	DC	RDS	Total	
<b>South District</b>	<i>Broadway</i>			1		Water Rescue Vehicle, Water Carrier Argocat, Pinzgauer, Command Support Unit
	<i>Evesham</i>		1	1		
	<i>Malvern</i>		1	1		
	<i>Pebworth</i>			1		
	<i>Pershore</i>			1		
	<i>Upton</i>			1		
	<i>Worcester</i>	2		1		Water Rescue Vehicle, Aerial Ladder Platform
		2	2	7	11	7

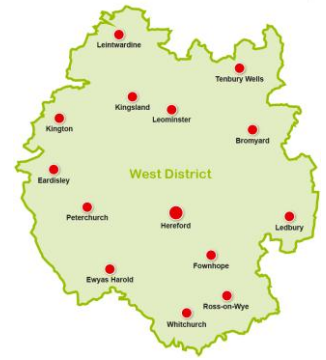
### Call Profile:

District	Fire Stations	2011-12				2012-13			
		Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total
<b>South</b>	Broadway	12	14	33	59	12	13	16	41
	Evesham	119	85	215	419	97	72	165	334
	Malvern	163	68	230	461	67	75	229	371
	Pebworth	15	6	13	34	15	9	9	33
	Pershore	79	28	65	172	34	41	70	145
	Upton	34	37	33	104	23	34	31	88
	Worcester	446	251	620	1317	297	269	595	1161
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>2566</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>2173</b>

<sup>1</sup> Six Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Worcester are within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England (source: 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation). An LSOA is a small geographical area made up of around 1,500 residents; there are 32,482 LSOAs in England.

## West District

West District covers part of Malvern Hills District Council area and the whole of Herefordshire, which is one of the most rural and sparsely populated counties in England. With just 0.8 people per hectare, Herefordshire has the fourth lowest population density of all 150 top-tier Local Authorities in England. Just over a half of the population live in the city of Hereford and the five main market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. The remainder live in smaller settlements and villages scattered throughout the county, often in relatively remote and hard to reach locations.



The District is served by 14 Fire Stations strategically located in Hereford City and the five market towns, with other Stations forming a chain along the border with Shropshire and Wales. Hereford Fire Station is the busiest Station in the District, attending around 700 incidents each year.

Fire Stations		Number of front-line fire engines				Specialist Vehicles	
		WT	DC	RDS	Total		
West District	Bromyard			2		Water Rescue Vehicle, Aerial Ladder Platform, Incident Response Unit, Pinzgauer	
	Eardisley			1			
	Ewyas Harold			1			
	Fownhope			1			
	Hereford	2		1			
	Kingsland			1			
	Kington			1			
	Ledbury			2		Water Carrier	
	Leintwardine			1			
	Leominster			2		Restricted Access Vehicle	
	Peterchurch			1		Water Carrier	
	Ross on Wye			2		Restricted Access Vehicle	
	Whitchurch			1			
	Tenbury Wells			2			
		2	0	19	21	8	

### Call Profile:

District	Fire Stations	2011-12				2012-13			
		Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Grand Total
West	Bromyard	42	28	39	109	39	32	38	109
	Eardisley	22	11	12	45	14	19	11	44
	Ewyas Harold	25	11	11	47	8	16	7	31
	Fownhope	12	10	11	33	12	8	6	26
	Hereford	288	141	407	836	188	151	361	700
	Kingsland	23	20	8	51	25	22	5	52
	Kington	16	10	4	30	11	14	5	30
	Ledbury	64	30	56	150	31	37	64	132
	Leintwardine	13	3	3	19	10	6	3	19
	Leominster	70	41	79	190	40	51	42	133
	Peterchurch	26	12	5	43	11	10	4	25
	Ross-on-Wye	54	31	75	160	43	68	69	180
	Whitchurch	16	28	10	54	21	34	13	68
	Tenbury Wells	36	18	8	62	25	32	12	69
West	Total	707	394	728	1829	478	500	640	1618



## Our Strategy

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has an overall strategy known as 'Our Strategy'. This approach sets out a single clear core purpose, built on strong foundations and linked by three driving principles.

The core purpose is a clear statement of our intent:

**"We will provide our communities with sustainable, high quality firefighting, rescue and preventative services."**

It recognises that we will do everything we can to ensure that we maintain a high quality service now and in the future.

In delivering the core purpose, we have adopted three firm principles against which everything we do will be measured and judged:

- **Ensuring Firefighter safety**
- **Ensuring Community safety**
- **Ensuring the delivery of quality services**

Underpinning this approach is the Authority and Service – our people, our assets and resources, our services and our plans – providing a strong foundation to build upon.

Our Senior Management Board (SMB), led by the Chief Fire Officer, is responsible for delivering the Strategy throughout the Service and shows enduring strong leadership, with managers and operational commanders each delivering their parts of the Strategy. The Fire and Rescue Authority will ensure that the Strategy is focused and delivered in ways that are clear and understandable for our Communities across the two counties.

The diagram below illustrates our approach:

## Our Strategy



## Our Values

We are committed to the nationally recognised values of the Fire and Rescue Service which are embodied throughout the Service by our approachable and strong leadership through their hands-on approach and their wish to lead from the top by example. Our values represent the spirit in which all personnel pursue our organisational aims and objectives, to ensure that the service we provide is effective, equitable and positively supports the Communities we serve.

### We Value Diverse Communities

- We are committed to serving all parts of our communities
- We recognise that diverse needs, expectations and risks need diverse solutions
- We remove barriers to entry and seek true diversity to reflect the communities we serve

### We Value Our Fire and Rescue Service

- We are passionate about maintaining our great reputation
- We focus on priorities by setting clear objectives and accountabilities
- We provide the right service at the right time and in the right place

### We Value Our People

- We promote safety and well-being of our staff and others
- We are committed to developing our people
- We work in an inclusive and ethical way
- We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make
- We respect and see difference as a strength

### We Value Innovation, Change and Learning

- We encourage critical and lateral thinking and welcome constructive challenge
- We take responsibility for improving our performance
- We develop ourselves and others to achieve our full potential



## Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2020 Overview

Our recent joint approach with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service for Operational Assessment identified the need for the Service to work on a longer term approach to Integrated Risk Management Planning. Called the “Community Risk Management Plan” (CRMP), this will provide a new overarching framework and will demonstrate clearer links to the Service’s Prevention, Protection and Response Strategies. The development of the new CRMP has also provided us with an opportunity to dovetail risk planning with Our Strategy and to deliver the requirements of the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#) published in 2012.

We have called the new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) the Community Risk Management Plan 2020 for two main reasons: one is that we want to make it really clear that it’s about making communities safer and the other is that we want to look further ahead to 2020 rather than just the three years that we traditionally plan for, which will help to show the direction we are heading in and enable us to track our progress over a greater length of time.

Extending the lifespan of the CRMP will help the Service align to the 2020 Vision perspectives that other public sector and Fire and Rescue Services are adopting. As a benefit of extending the CRMP lifespan, the Service will no longer publish an annual action plan but instead, will have high level “outcomes to achieve” by 2020, which will be supported by both a 3 year action plan and an annual Statement of Assurance as required by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.



The inclusion of corporate risk and value for money into the new CRMP will allow the public to more fully understand the relationship between the operating constraints of the future and how this might affect service delivery in their respective communities. The development of the new CRMP also presents an opportunity to engage staff and stakeholders in both content and implementation. This will involve a wide stakeholder group including local Council elected Members, representative bodies, staff, multi-agency partners and community representatives.

Over the next seven years to 2020, we want to be able to show that:

- our prevention, protection and response services are being delivered to their best effect
- our Fire Stations are equipped and crewed in the best ways to tackle risks in local areas
- our work with other Fire and Rescue Services, other Emergency Services, local organisations and local communities is giving us more capacity to deliver the most effective service
- there is wider community engagement and greater involvement with local Council Members of HWFRA in setting priorities and decision making, ensuring that there is more public scrutiny of our services and how we deliver them.

### Outcomes might include...

By 2020, we have...

- Revised and achieved our attendance standards
- Matched resources to predicted demand
- Implemented the most appropriate working arrangements for our staff
- Introduced more flexibility to make best use of our staff
- Increased the use of volunteers
- Developed appropriate response arrangements for all calls for assistance
- Developed the most efficient governance arrangements
- Improved the provision and use of our property
- Developed more effective Community Safety with our partners
- Become more energy efficient with less impact on the environment



## Our Partners

Like many Fire and Rescue Authorities across the country, we're involved in a wealth of partnerships although the partnership landscape has changed significantly due to the financial climate. Limited resources mean that we need to consider the overall community benefits surrounding our involvement in each partnership and based upon this; we target those partnerships where we can make the most impact.

We believe that by working with other organisations and with local communities, we can share our experiences and understanding, find new and better ways of delivering services and make a greater impact in tackling the many complex issues facing our two counties. We work with all the local Councils and Health Authorities, the other Emergency Services, local business organisations and a host of voluntary and community groups. With many of these organisations we work in formal partnerships but we also work with them on a day-to-day basis where appropriate. We also ensure that we are represented appropriately at all levels, from local Station Commanders and Community Safety Officers to the Chair of the FRA and the Chief Fire Officer.

Much of our work with partners is about keeping communities safe: this ranges from preparing Community Safety Strategies and plans for the future through to putting joint safety events together on the ground. For instance:

- we work with other Emergency Services in the [West Mercia Local Resilience Forum](#) (WMLRF) to prepare contingency plans in the event of a major incident
- we work with the Police and other public services in Community Safety Partnerships preparing local safety plans
- we organise and participate at joint events like the Emergency Services Village at the Three Counties Show and local fire awareness and road safety campaigns
- we encourage community involvement in our Service through local volunteers and organisations, such as the Young Firefighters Association.

We're also working closely with others to make sure we make the best use of our resources. For instance, we share facilities at four of our Fire Stations with ambulances from the West Midlands Ambulance Service and we're currently in the process of creating a new joint Police and Fire Station at Bromsgrove.

Some of the formal partnerships we're involved in include:

- Local Strategic Partnerships, such as Herefordshire Partnership and Worcestershire Partnership
- Community Safety Partnerships, such as the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board
- West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (WMLRF)
- Safer Roads Partnership in West Mercia

## Formal agreement between HWFRS & Red Cross

In early 2013, we signed a formal agreement with the British Red Cross outlining how the partnership between the two organisations will work in the future. This included the range and scope of assistance, as well as legal and financial considerations. The British Red Cross has been supporting HWFRS since 2006, with their volunteers attending some of our more serious fires or other emergencies to offer practical or emotional support to those affected by the incident, as well as welfare to our front line Fire Service personnel. Both of our organisations are committed to helping prevent emergency situations arising but when a fire or other disaster does occur, the complementary services we provide can ensure those affected get the best possible support.



## Our Performance

### 2012-13 Performance

Below is a summary of annual performance against the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-13.

2012-13 saw a 15.5% reduction in total incidents compared to the previous financial year. Although Special Service incidents have increased due in part to the flooding in June-July 2012 and November 2012, the overall numbers of fires have reduced as the expected seasonal increase in secondary fires during the summer has been negated by the predominantly wet weather conditions during the first two Quarters of 2012-13. False alarms have remained consistent with previous year's totals.

Each individual Key Performance Indicator for 2012-13 was tested against the tolerance levels expected for the cumulative Quarters 1-4 data and only one was out of tolerance at the end of the financial year, which was the percentage of Building Fires first attended within 10 minutes of the time of call.

### Sickness-All Staff

All staff sickness has decreased in 2012-13 when compared with 2011-12. This is mainly due to a year by year decrease in the non-uniform staff sickness which has compensated for the increase in Wholetime sickness when compared with the previous year. The decrease in non-uniform sickness when compared with the previous year was mainly due to decreases in long term non-uniform sickness.

Our sickness rate of 7.2 shifts/days lost per head to all staff sickness in 2012-13 represents the average level of sickness absence for the past five years (7.8 shifts/days lost per head) and also compares favourably with the predicted year end County Council sickness absence figures of 7.1 for Worcestershire County Council in the same period (Herefordshire is not available).

### Family Group 4 Comparisons

Family Group 4 is a collective of 18 broadly similar Fire and Rescue Services in the United Kingdom that have agreed to share data for comparative purposes.

Analysis of 2012-13 comparison data showed that HWFRS was the best performing Service in six indicators compared to the other services. The Service was also above average in the majority of indicators and was in the top three best performers in 12 out of the 23 indicators available for comparison purposes.

The areas where we have achieved top performance in Family Group terms include:

- All Deliberate fires per 10,000 population
- All Secondary Fires
- Primary Fire Fatalities per 100,000 population
- Number of deaths in accidental dwellings per 10,000 population
- Number of calls to malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population
- Number of deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population

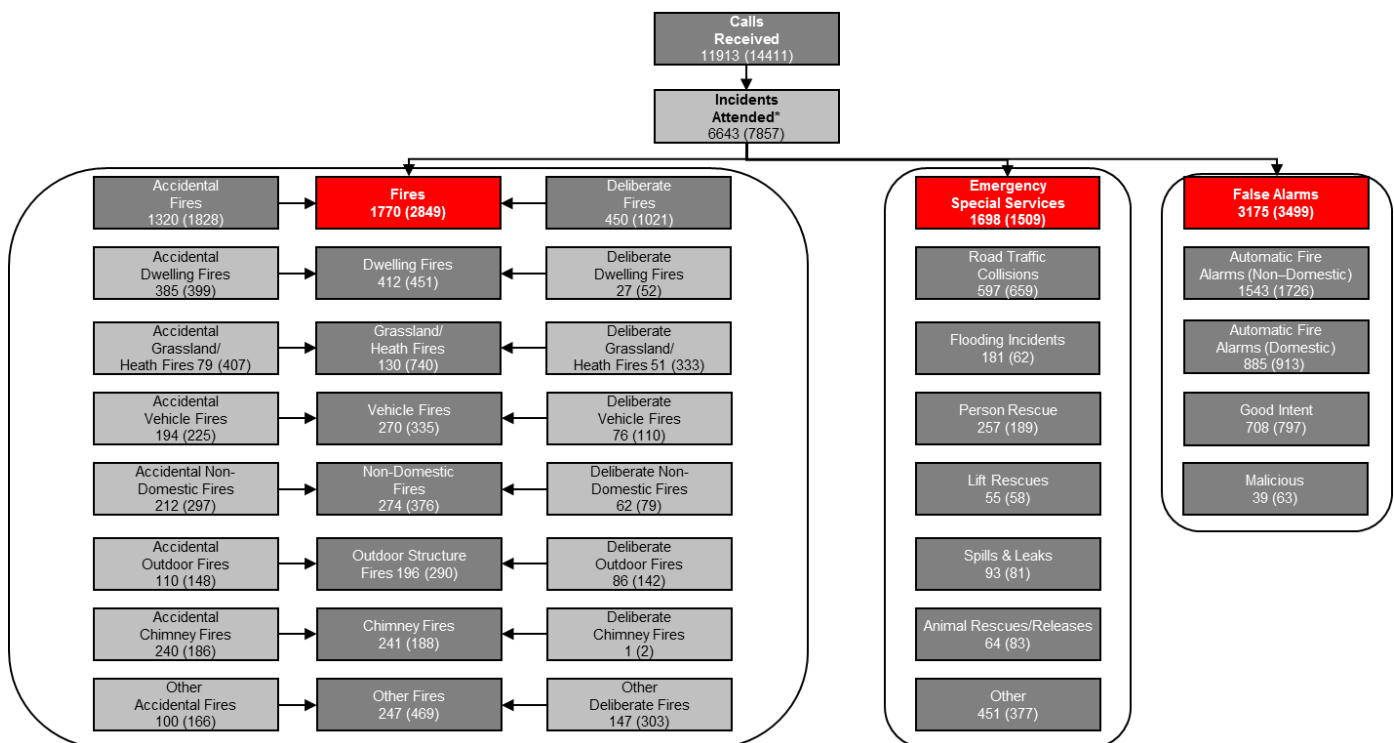
The areas where there is further improvement required in comparison with the other Family Group 4 members include:

- Injuries from primary fires per 100,000 population
- Accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings
- Injuries from accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population
- The percentage of fires attended in dwellings where no smoke alarm was fitted



## Summary of 2012-13 Incidents

The table below shows the breakdown of incidents attended by the Service last year, with the 2011-12 equivalent figures shown in brackets.



Person rescue includes evacuations, rescue from water, effecting entry/exit and other rescues.

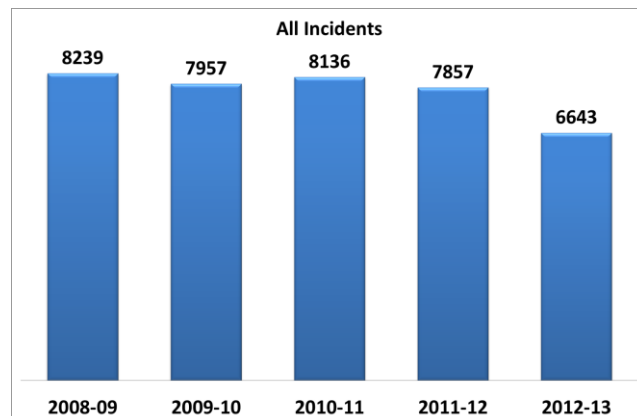
\*Incidents attended within Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) area only - the Service also attends incidents in other FRS areas



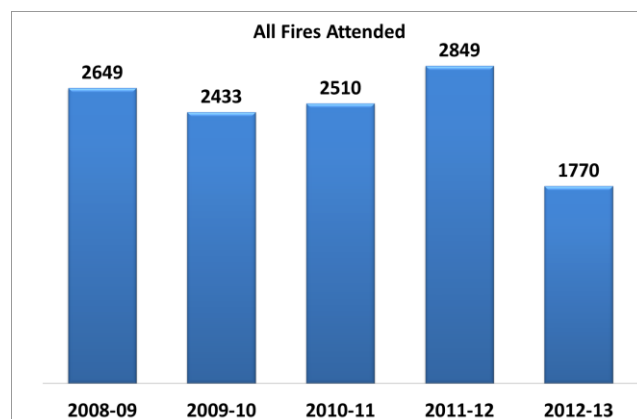


## Incident Trends

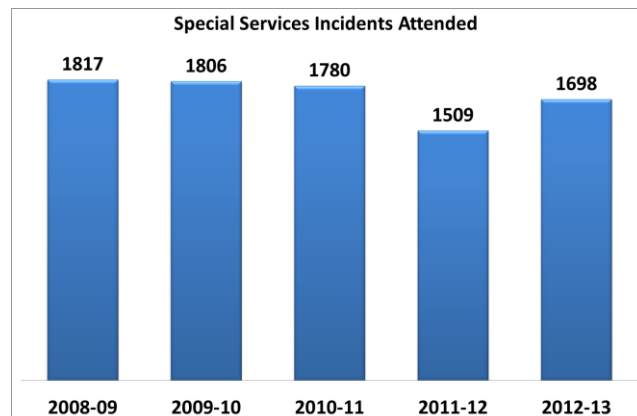
Fire Control received 11,913 calls in total throughout 2011-12; this represents a 17% decrease in calls received from 2011-12 in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Of these calls, we attended 6643 incidents in 2012-13, compared with 7857 incidents in 2011-12. This is due to special services being less visible than fires hence less multiple calls regarding individual incidents than for fires which have seen a large reduction.



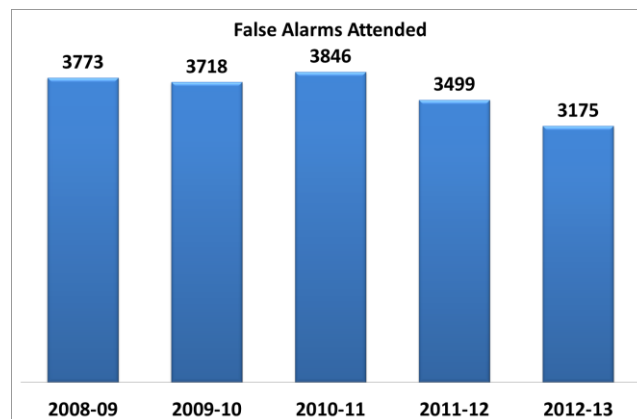
Overall numbers of fires attended were down by 38% in 2012-13 (1770 compared with 2849 in 2011-12). The main reason for this was due to the usual seasonal increase in secondary fires being negated by the predominantly wet weather conditions during the summer 2012. Primary fires were down 20% and secondary fires were down 55% from the last 5 years average. Chimney fires increased by 28% compared with 2011-12 but have increased by only 2.5% on the average number of chimney fire incidents attended in the last 5 years. This increase was due to the cooler weather conditions particularly towards the end of 2012.



Special services incidents (incidents other than fires or false alarms including road traffic collisions, flooding, person rescues, lift rescues, spills/leaks, animal rescues) attended were up 13% in 2012-13 compared with 2011-12 (1698 compared with 1509 in 2011-12). This increase was mainly as a result of the spells of wet weather compared with the previous year due in part to the flooding and other water related incidents in June-July 2012 and November 2012. Other Special Services included year on year increases in making safe (not RTC) and rescues and evacuation from water, also linked to the spate conditions.



The total number of false alarms attended has decreased by 9% in 2012-13 compared with the previous year (3175 compared with 3499 in 2011-12) and also when compared with the average over the last five years. The Service has seen a reduction in all categories of false alarm in 2012-13 compared with the previous year. Monthly spikes in July and November 2012 were caused by increases in the number of false alarm good intent and automatic false alarms (AFA's) which can be partially attributed to increases from flooding false alarms in July and November and bonfires and other controlled burning false alarms in November.



As a result of the Interim AFA policy, the total number of attendances (Appliances and Rescue Appliance) to AFA's reduced from 3339 in 2011-12 to 2608 in 2012-2013. There have been 731 fewer attendances at AFA's as a result of the application of the interim policy.

## Our Work Completed in 2012-13

In the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan last year, we outlined our Service's priorities and objectives. Below are the highlights of some of the exceptional results that we achieved and some of the initiatives that the Authority completed under the "Our Strategy" Framework.

### We will deliver this through

- Ensuring firefighter safety
- Ensuring community safety
- Ensuring the delivery of quality services

## Ensuring Firefighter Safety

### Operational Training Review:

We implemented the agreed changes that resulted from the review of the operational training strategy and provision in 2011-12. This included reviewing Department skills profiles so that budgets could be aligned for 2013-14, operational refresher training, officer competencies and Middle Management promotion workbooks.

### Strategic Training Facilities (STFs):

The new Strategic Training Facility at Evesham was completed in January 2013, which includes LPG system hot-fire training scenarios. It is now fully operational and all Breathing Apparatus Instructors (BAI's) have been trained to use it. The next part of the overall project is to enhance the LPG hot-fire facility at Kidderminster and work commenced on this project in January 2013. January 2013 also saw the commencement of works at Peterchurch to deliver a wood burning hot-fire training facility. The planned Kingsland project has been delayed and it is hoped that a solution for this fourth training facility will be progressed during Summer 2013, by which time there will be three training facilities up and running.



### Exercise Cerberus:

In March 2013, the Service ran a large training exercise designed to test the Service's capability of responding to three challenging emergency incidents occurring within a short time span.

A brief overview of the three scenarios is outlined below:

- Incident involving a factory fire with structural collapse and trapped persons
- Incident involving sandwich panels and a chemical release within a factory
- Incident requiring mass casualty decontamination.

The exercise was a huge success and provided an excellent opportunity to deal with challenging simultaneous incidents and involved a wide cross section of staff from the Service, student volunteers and partner agencies.



### **Retained Duty System (RDS) On-Call Firefighters:**

As a vital part of the Service's delivery, it is important that we continue to recruit and retain our On-Call (RDS) staff across the two counties and in particular in areas that are more remote and less populated. Over the last year, a considerable amount of work has been carried out in recruitment. A Recruitment Officer has been appointed and a working group set up to discuss recruitment issues/share positive experiences with a number of our RDS employees. We have been working closely with Managers and Media and Communications to promote the role of a RDS Firefighter for recruitment purposes and our last couple of campaigns have resulted in a number of press articles and radio interviews.

Work has also continued towards meeting our challenging diversity targets as part of four On-Call (RDS) recruitment campaigns during 2012-13. Before the start of an RDS recruitment campaign, the Recruitment Officer meets with each Station Commander to discuss and plan what will be done in regards to promoting recruitment at Stations in their cluster. The discussion includes what positive action activities can be undertaken for each of their Stations. These activities will sometimes be dependent on the location of the Station but examples include targeting residential areas where there is a high proportion of ethnic minorities living there (displaying posters in shops within those areas) or having articles written about a female Firefighter sent out as a press release to try and encourage females to apply. The results of this discussion are recorded on a Station Recruitment Plan, which is reviewed at the meeting for the next campaign in order to evaluate the effectiveness of any activities.

### **Operational Policy:**

Work continued during 2012-13 on reviewing operational policies and managing the intelligence and debrief systems. Other areas of work included significant progress being made around Protective Security with software purchased to take account of written/email documentation and work supporting a regional interagency Water Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to which a number of agencies have now signed up to.

### **Health and Safety (H&S):**

The Operational Assurance review of our operational service delivery in 2012 found that there is a clear strategic management commitment and focus to the continuous improvement of Health, Safety and Wellbeing. This was demonstrated by recent organisational restructures which strengthen the links, between Health and Safety, Operational Policy, Operational Assurance, Fleet, Training and Human Resources. Other work in 2012-13 was concerned with looking into issues around breathing apparatus such as policy, equipment and people.

### **FireFit Success:**

In 2012-13, the Service celebrated the completion of a successful FireFit Challenge, an initiative inspired by London 2012 to encourage Firefighters, Fire and Rescue Service staff as well as people in the local community to get more active and raise some funds for charity at the same time. In August 2011, HWFRS decided to take part in the FireFit Health Challenge and gave itself the task of completing 5,250 miles on foot, boat or pedal power between then and the start of London 2012. This distance represented the equivalent mileage that the Olympic torch would travel from Beijing to London. Since then, nearly 50 separate FireFit events have taken place across the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, involving hundreds of people and raising over £45,000 for charity. The local branches of the Young Firefighters Association also benefitted from monies raised during the challenge.



A mix of people took part, from a group of older residents in Redditch who held an egg and spoon race, to a youth club in Pershore that held a Paddle, Plod and Cycle event. Staff from across the Service area also took up the Challenge, with a Firefighter completing the London Marathon, a Crew Commander completing the Marathon des Sables in the Sahara, a Station Commander completing the Great North Swim and HWFRS's Chief Fire Officer taking part in a cycle event in the Manchester Velodrome. Like London 2012, the FireFit Challenge has left a lasting legacy, with stronger community links and more people appreciating the benefit of becoming more active, fitter and healthier. It also presented an opportunity to offer Fire Safety advice to a wide range of people at the many different events held over the last year.



## Ensuring Community Safety

### Community Safety Review:

In 2012-13, the Service delivered the outcomes of the 2011-12 review of Community Safety, which sought to identify methods for targeting the Service's resources more effectively in this area. The [Signposting](#) service was also very active and there were a number of campaigns conducted during the year including: road safety, chimney fires, winter safety bonfire night and Christmas safety.

### Vulnerable People

We also understand our wider role in the community and our community safety work extends into schools, voluntary groups and partner organisations and we visit vulnerable and elderly people in the comfort of their own homes via our Home Fire Safety Checks (4,816 visits in 2012-13). This theme of targeting those at greatest risk involves analysis of key risk data to identify those most vulnerable to fire. We also expect there to be potentially more vulnerable people living in our communities in the future, because of their age, health or other personal circumstances, or because of where they happen to live and we will further target resources and align our work streams to the key theme of 'vulnerable and elderly' in 2013-14.

### Technical Fire Safety (TFS) Review:

During 2012-13, work continued on a restructure with TFS delivery by operational areas which included basic inspection of low risk premises. This was driven by central government to reduce the burden of these inspections. Other work included working with Shropshire FRS to identify best practice, particularly around TFS training for Flexi Duty System (FDS) Officers and exploring more cost effective alternatives to the Fire Service College for training.

### New District Structure:

Following reviews of the District Structures conducted in 2011-12, these reviews were implemented across all three Districts in 2012-13. The new District structure was welcomed by operational staff, as they felt that it provided a clearer identity to their roles and responsibilities, simplified communication and decision making across the Service and there is now a better support structure in place than previously. In South District at Malvern Fire Station, the off road vehicle and rope rescue vehicle were put in service. In West District, a multi-agency approach led by the Environment Agency addressed a pile of burning chipped wood.

### Flexible Staffing and Crewing Arrangements-Gartan Availability System:

In February 2013, operational staff received training from Gartan Technologies on the new Wholetime Rota Management System to replace our Management Information System (MIS). This new system is designed to give real-time information on staffing and Fire Engine availability. Whilst the initial intention with this new Gartan module is to replace the basic functions of the MIS, the Gartan system is an adaptable and fluid programme which will be further developed to assist personnel with the efficient running of the Service. With constructive feedback and consultation with Gartan, over time, the system will be tailored to the needs of the Service and improved through regular updates.

### The Young Firefighters' Association (YFA):

For many years the Service has hosted its own Young Firefighters Association, with well-established units based at both Droitwich and Redditch. The Young Firefighters Association is viewed by the Service, the community and political leaders as an excellent method of engaging, supporting and mentoring young people from a wide variety of backgrounds to become responsible, self-disciplined young adults. Each year the local YFA attend over 50 events across the two counties, where the young people contribute to safety initiatives, open days, civic events and a variety of community days.



### **Delivering Risk Management Planning in 2012-13:**

Understanding and reducing risk lies at the heart of the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan and our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) sets out our plans for tackling risk. Our Action Plan for 2012-13 continued the implementation of three of the previous year's priorities and identified two new priorities. These were achieved in 2012-13 with some work continuing into 2013/14.

### **Strategic Risk Review (SRR) and Fire Cover Review (FCR):**

The 2011-12 IRMP identified specific elements of fire cover within the Service, including resources, which would be reviewed in 2011-12 and in 2012-13 we considered fire cover across the remainder of the Service. This involved significant engagement with staff to produce a more strategic document with options beyond the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) up to 2020. To plan ahead to 2020, we looked at what changes might affect our two counties in the forthcoming years and especially what might have an impact on how we deliver our services. The new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2020 will be progressed in 2013-14 and will show the impact of change geographically and how the Service's Prevention, Protection and Response activities are being used to ensure that Community risk levels are managed in an integrated way.

### **Shropshire Collaboration:**

In 2012-13, we continued to develop further opportunities to collaborate with Shropshire and Wrekin Fire & Rescue Authority (SWFRS); in particular around the Operational Assessment, a major peer review of our operational service delivery. This process identified several areas within both HWFRS and SFRS that have the potential for further collaborative working, such as Incident Command/Management and these opportunities were investigated during 2012-13. Following acceptance by both Authorities of the Review Findings, we are now working on the implementation of the recommendations in 2013-14.

### **Road Traffic Collision (RTC) Equipment:**

During 2012/13, we reviewed the provision of road traffic collision equipment and also a wider review of equipment carried on all Fire Engines across the Service.

As part of the strategy to respond to RTCs involving large vehicles and heavy machinery, the Incident Support Unit (ISU, a specialist Fire Engine based at Droitwich) had maintained enhanced equipment termed "Ultra Heavy Rescue" for the last nine years. Unfortunately the travel times for deployment of this equipment across both counties had led to long delays in the equipment being available on scene. The Service subsequently developed a plan to upgrade the capability of two normal Scania Fire Engines with an "Ultra Heavy Rescue" capability and phase out the requirement for the Incident Support Unit to provide this provision. This was a very cost effective option in the long term and did not cost significantly more than a normal Fire Engine.



Service Delivery users have now successfully taken receipt of the two new Ultra Heavy Rescue Pumps/Fire Engines (UHRP) with an enhanced upgraded rescue capability. They will be based at Droitwich and Hereford and offer a significant improvement in provision across the counties. This has also meant that two other RDS Stations, at Leintwardine and Ewyas Harold in Herefordshire, have received improved RTC equipment provision as a result of the displaced equipment from Droitwich and Hereford due to the UHRP's.

Service Delivery also worked with Service Support to supply a clear user specification and requirement for the future, to enable the development and subsequent improvement where appropriate of our provision across the counties. Currently, the majority of Stations have a full complement of "heavy" rescue equipment; however some Stations only have "standard" rescue equipment. This currently provides an adequate level of response to RTCs and ensures every Fire Engine has the ability to tackle most RTCs. It is the ambition that all 27 locations will have a "heavy" rescue capability as a minimum standard and that potentially a further two UHRPs may be procured in the longer term to complement the existing two. Service Support are currently scoping out the costs and viability of this and looking at how it would fit into the existing RTC equipment contracts and Fire Engine/fleet replacement program over the next few years.

**Bromsgrove Police and Fire Station:**

We are currently developing a new combined Police and Fire Station in Bromsgrove, working in partnership with West Mercia Police. Working together is not only more effective and efficient for both organisations but has also helped to reduce delays and costs in building works. Work commenced in Autumn 2012 and is progressing well, with the foundations and main structure complete and is set to be delivered within the project timescales for opening in the Spring of 2014. Alongside the building work, a Working Group has been established to address the new crewing system Day Crewing Plus (DCP). This consists of normal crewing of the station during the day but with an additional on call element during the night. Further collaborative opportunities are also being explored, with consideration towards shared infrastructure, at Redditch and in other locations across the area.

**New Fire Stations:**

During 2012-13, we made significant progress to replace those Fire Stations which have reached the end of their serviceable life or were in need of substantial refurbishment. This included work to convert the Operational Logistics site at Betony Road into a temporary Fire Station to allow the construction of the new Malvern Fire Station, which has now commenced. The design for the new Worcester Fire Station is complete and it is hoped that this project will move forward over summer 2013. The service is in discussions with partners in Hereford and Redditch over potential locations for new stations in these areas.

**Facilities Management:**

We also reviewed how we manage our facilities, ensuring that maintenance work at our premises was targeted to deliver the best value. This included individual premises action plans, electrical remedial works and essential annual survey works. This forms part of a full Property Review undertaken during 2012 and will continue with a revised Asset Management Plan proposed for 2014.



## Ensuring the delivery of quality services

Placed at the heart of everything that we do, is the need to deliver a quality service to our Communities. We are always seeking to make improvements and we continue to listen closely to any comments that you make about improving our Service. Areas that we are improving include:

### Restructure of Human Resources (HR) and Equality & Diversity (E&D):

The HR team was restructured in May 2012 and the new structure is now embedding within the organisation. With the addition of two new members of staff in key positions, this will be an on-going process throughout 2013-14. The roles of the new teams are detailed below:

- **HR Administration Team:** Manage payroll, recruitment, staff movements, leavers, employee information, interpretation of terms and conditions of employment, for example, annual leave entitlements and administration of employment details, such as CPD payments.
- **Professional Advisory Team:** Provides specialist HR advice to specific Districts and Departments relating to management of employees such as Equality and Diversity, grievances, disciplinaries and performance management. They also provide advice relating to attendance management processes and occupational health referrals, maternity, paternity leave and family friendly policies. In addition, the team develop policies, toolkits and the delivery of workshops to assist Managers in the application of HR policies. In 2012-13, policies that were reviewed included Discipline, Grievance, Capability and Disability.

Our computerised HR System (HR Connect) is constantly being developed to help the organisation obtain appropriate information that adds value to areas such as absence management, disciplinary and administration processes. An audit was conducted in 2012-13 on HR Connect to ensure all information and workflow patterns were correct.

### Shared and Linked Fire Control with SFRS:

In March 2012, following the cancellation of the nationally led Regional Fire Control Project, the Service was successful in its national grant application bid to Government for £1.8m, to support the implementation of our new Fire Control at Service Headquarters. The provision of a new state of the art Fire Control system places the Service at the leading edge of call management and mobilising technology and improves the way in which the Service identifies and sends the closest Fire Engine to an incident saving valuable time. This project was delivered in Autumn 2012 and sees many benefits for the Service and Community, including Fire Control staff being able to work in an improved environment and location, with new technology and up-to-date mobilising equipment. New Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) across the fleet improve the information available to Firefighters on Fire Engines at incidents, with a full mapping system. The new Fire Control was officially opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire in March 2013. The total running costs savings for the new Fire Control Project will amount to £67,000 in 2013/14.

### Information & Communications Technology (ICT):

During 2012-13, the Internet bandwidth was increased (at reduced cost saving of 47%) to support Retained Station access and improve access for other users.

### Media & Communications (M&C)

In 2012-13, we conducted a detailed review incorporating the whole structure of the M&C team, including feedback from Districts to ensure that opportunities for improvement could be fully realised. Recommendations are due to be implemented in 2013-14.

### Excellence Awards

In April, 2013, we held a Service Excellence Awards to formally recognise and reward staff for the outstanding contribution and dedication they give to the Service and our wider communities. The evening acknowledged the achievements of many of our colleagues and some of our partners during 2012-13. This was in addition to the Celebration of Success events in both Hereford and Worcester in 2012-13.



## **Fleet Management**

### **Rope Rescue Vehicle:**

The new dedicated Rope Rescue Vehicle for carrying specialist equipment for incidents, such as rescues from height or from underground (adapted from a current vehicle already in our fleet and quicker to mobilise to incidents with the equipment already on board) went into service in 2012-13, along with a new Landrover for Malvern which is used for off road duties.

### **Rural Rescue Vehicles:**

Following an extensive review of our Fire Engines in our rural Fire Stations, we made significant progress on this project in 2012-13, agreeing design and user specifications with multi pump Retained Stations to be considered first. We are now looking to go out to tender to purchase five rural rescue vehicles in 2013-2014.

### **USAR Water Rescue Vehicle:**

The Service increased its water rescue capability due to the addition of the Water Rescue Vehicle (WRV) based at USAR. The WRV is identical to other Service assets and consists of a 4x4 Mercedes Sprinter van, which is used to transport an extensive range of equipment, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and two boats (3.8m and 4.4m). The crew can respond and deploy as a stand-alone unit and it can be crewed by up to five trained operators.



Dependent on the crewing and skill levels the team deploys with, they can now offer a wide range of responses from the smaller 3.8m boat to a multiple larger boat response, with the ability to enter the water and effect rescues or to assist with flood evacuations. Crews from any of the four WRV Stations (Worcester, Hereford, Evesham and USAR in Droitwich Spa) can work with each other's vehicles, boats and equipment, therefore offering a greater level of resilience across the Service.

## **Equipment Management**

### **Procurement of New Defibrillators:**

In February 2012, the Service's Senior Management Board made the decision to extend the provision of defibrillators throughout the Service. An additional 26 units were procured giving a total of 38 across the Service. The process of fitting one at every Service location was completed during 2012/13. At Fire Stations the defibrillator is located on a Fire Engine and forms part of the trauma provision, for use within the Communities, as well as for our own staff. At locations that are staffed, such as Service HQ or Training Centre, the presence of the defibrillator is advertised on the appropriate national websites, which enables members of the public to identify the location of their nearest unit in the event of an emergency. The Service will not be directly responding to any calls to provide medical care but will have the equipment available for use whenever necessary or called upon.

### **Procurement of New Fire Fighting Technology-Thermal Image Cameras (TIC's):**

During 2012/13, the Service purchased new Thermal Image Cameras. Feedback from operational crews has indicated thermal image cameras greatly enhance their ability to deal with fires in compartments and as such, are recognised as an essential item of operational equipment. Previously, provision across the Service was limited to selected Fire Engines. In response to the feedback from crews and in order to enhance Firefighter safety and operational effectiveness, the new programme allows for one TIC to be provided to the majority of front line Fire Engines and in all cases one per Station. The roll out of the cameras started in 2012-13, with all relevant Fire Engines completed during 2013-14.



### **Procurement of New Equipment to Deal with Cable Entanglement:**

Incidents have occurred nationally involving Firefighters becoming entangled within electricity and other cables whilst tackling compartment fires, with potential serious consequences. The Service has moved to provide equipment to deal with this type of scenario and has carried out trials locally and with regional partners to determine the correct equipment provision. By the end of 2012/13, crews entering compartment fires wearing Breathing Apparatus will be provided with cable cutters and rescue knives. In addition, a further set of heavy duty cable cutters will be provided to all Breathing Apparatus emergency teams. This equipment will fill a gap in existing provision and demonstrates the Service's commitment to learn from national incidents and whilst it will not prevent entanglement, it will ensure that crews have the best capability to free themselves should it happen.

### **Operational Logistics:**

The HYDRA Hydrants Asset Management System was purchased and will become fully operational in 2013. HYDRA is the leading hydrant management solution in the UK Fire and Rescue Service used by more than 30 Fire and Rescue Services. It provides reliable hydrant information including the location of all water supplies sources near to an incident, their detailed characteristics and effectively manages other aspects, such as routine inspections, defect management and abandonment. It also records information about hydrant ownership, location/status and repairs. This was an investment in the Service's infrastructure and was funded from an organisational saving following a water rebate. Additionally, an Electronic Catalogue System was trialled so that all Stores stock could be ordered online. This will be implemented in 2013-14.

### **ICP Work Wear:**

In 2012-13, following a significant amount of feedback from across the Service, approval was given for a change of work wear colour dependent upon role without any increase in spend within the contract. The new work wear is due to be introduced in June 2013 and the newly enhanced Bristol Uniforms Wardrobe Management System (WMS) will be used to facilitate the process so there will be very little impact on staff time.





## Assurance of Service Delivery

### Annual Audit Letter 2011/12

The latest external Audit and Value for Money reports by the Audit Commission found that the actions taken by the Authority and Service were financially robust, were delivering efficiencies and were securing value for money. A summary of the key messages are set out below.

The key messages in the Audit 2011/12 were as follows:

- i) The Authority has taken appropriate account of the current economic climate and the plans are supported by detailed and robust assumptions.
- ii) The Authority has a sound understanding of the current financial environment and undertakes robust planning for the medium and long term.
- iii) There is a strong link between the Authority Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- iv) Scenario planning around the level of grant funding has been undertaken and considered within the Authority's detailed medium term financial plan, to ensure that reserves are sufficient to meet future expenditure.
- v) The Authority historically closely monitors its expenditure and does not exceed budget levels.
- vi) The Senior Management Board (SMB) provide clear leadership on spending priorities and demonstrate a clear understanding of the resource requirements of the Service.
- vii) The Service has challenged the existing delivery arrangements of the Community Safety and training provision and has implemented changes.
- viii) Performance management is strong and appropriately challenged.
- ix) The Authority benchmarks its performance with other Authorities to identify areas for improvement. Efficiencies have been made and efficiency plans continue to be implemented.
- x) The Authority is implementing a Command and Control system following the cessation of the central FiReControl planned arrangements.

### Value for Money

The District Auditor issued an unqualified Value for Money Conclusion on 28 September 2012, as his work did not identify any matters which would lead him to believe that the Authority did not have proper arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The District Auditor was satisfied on the basis of his work that in all significant respects Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2012.





## Operational Assessment (Op 'A')

In 2012, the Operational Assessment, a major peer review, coordinated and led by the LGA, of our operational Service Delivery was undertaken. It was designed to provide assurance that the Service's operations were efficient, effective and robust. The review found that the Service continues to make progress with considerable improvements in many areas and a good overall performance.

### Op 'A' Findings

The review team found that the Service continues to move forward positively, has made considerable improvements in many areas and that overall performance has been good.

Among the key strengths identified were:

- the open, confident and approachable leadership style and culture of the Chief Fire Officer and his senior managers, with a clear direction and professional focus, which is well understood and supported by staff,
- the clear commitment to Health and Safety and its focus on continuing improvement, which ensures that all aspects of safety and safe systems are well embedded at every level,
- the investment in operational training and development focused on key risk areas, including capital investment in new facilities, such as the strategic training facilities, to support and improve training capacity,
- in those Service areas that have undergone significant change and restructuring like Fire Control and Human Resources, staff are keen, involved and highly motivated.

Nevertheless, while the assessment identified many strengths, it also raised some areas that need to be examined further, to make sure that the Service can keep improving as a Service and as an employer.

Some areas to be addressed were:

- the need to ensure close and continued management of the risks associated with financial planning, in the light of current and future budget reductions,
- the need to ensure that the management of major projects and cross cutting programmes is mainstreamed into 'business as usual',
- the need to fully embed Member involvement and public consultation in strategic planning and decision making.

The overall conclusions are positive. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is a well-run, organised and motivated Fire and Rescue Service. It benefits strongly from its highly competent and enthusiastic staff and its sound relationship with its Members. While the financial uncertainties facing the Service will continue to be challenging, there is a confidence that officers and Members will work together to realise opportunities for improvement, including collaboration.

### Improvement through Collaboration

The Op 'A' review process identified several areas within both HWFRS and SFRS that have the potential for further collaborative working. The areas represent strategic thematic areas that may benefit from a partnership approach. These opportunities were investigated during 2012-13 and following approval by both Authorities, we are now working on the implementation of these recommendations.





## Our Work to be Completed in 2013-14

### Key Service Priorities and Objectives 2013-2020

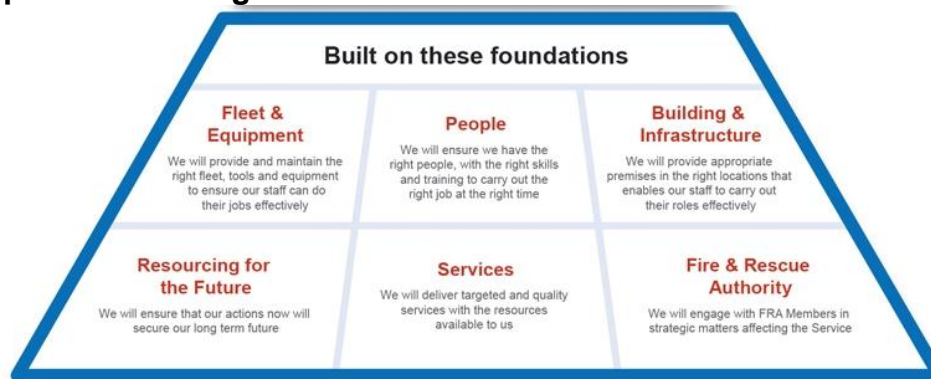
Over the next seven years, it is possible that we will see a significant reduction in staff/resources and therefore, as well as identifying our key priorities and objectives, we will also have to identify what we are not going to do.

In terms of key priorities, the following headline objectives have been identified for the three directorates and will be progressed during 2013-14.

<b>Service Support</b>	<b>Service Delivery</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Assets</b>
<b>Human Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Planning</li> <li>• Staff Wellbeing</li> <li>• Conditions of Service</li> </ul> <b>Operational Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilising Control</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Fleet and Equipment</li> <li>• Operational Guidance</li> </ul> <b>Corporate Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRMP</li> <li>• Operational Assurance</li> <li>• Partnership Working</li> <li>• Committee Services</li> <li>• Corporate Communications</li> </ul>	<b>Operations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability</li> <li>• Training and Competence</li> <li>• Intelligence</li> </ul> <b>Community Risk and Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Community Risk - four key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– accidental fire deaths and injuries</li> <li>– arson</li> <li>– vulnerable and elderly</li> <li>– road safety</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Finance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory Accounting</li> <li>• Budget Setting</li> <li>• Budget Monitoring</li> <li>• Creditor Payment and Income Collection</li> <li>• Capital Programme</li> </ul> <b>Asset Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Projects</li> <li>• Property</li> <li>• ICT</li> <li>• Procurement</li> </ul>



## Delivering our priorities through our foundations



### Fleet and Equipment

#### Service Support Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020

To continually review the Service's fleet and equipment strategies to ensure the organisation is providing the right fleet, tools and equipment to so that staff can do their jobs safely and effectively at all times.

#### Fleet:

Our Fleet Strategy requires that all vehicles and equipment are rigorously tested and maintained throughout the year. Regular servicing not only extends the life of our fleet but also confirms that everything remains reliable and as safe as possible. The strategy ensures that new Fire Engines are purchased every year to replace older vehicles.

During 2013-14, we will complete a number of vehicle projects, including:

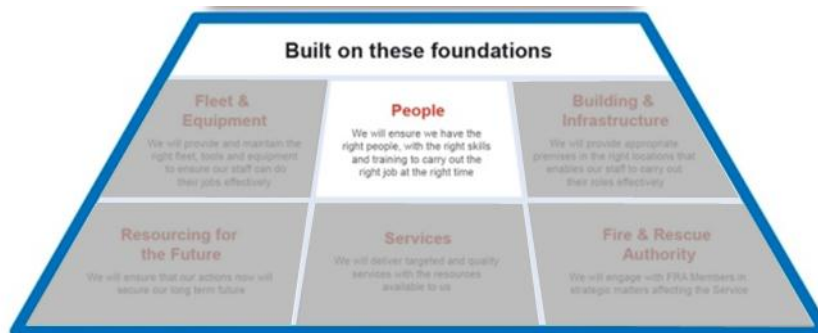
- Rural Rescue Vehicles due to go out to tender
- Malvern Command Support Unit (CSU)-Due for replacement - a working group has been set up to consider the new CSU for Malvern in 2014 and Fleet have been provided with a user specification.



#### Equipment:

An Electronic Catalogue System was trialled in 2012-13 so that all Stores stock could be ordered online and this will be implemented in 2013-14. Also, last year, approval was given for new work wear dependent upon role and this will be introduced during June 2013.

## People



Placing people at the forefront of what we do is vitally important in delivering a high quality Service. The Service provides a framework for employing, the right people, with the right skills and training, to carry out the right job, at the right time.

### Service Delivery Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020

#### Service Delivery – Community Risk & Training

##### Training

This will involve responding to national factors, such as the findings of the judgement on Warwickshire County Council following the Atherstone on Stour incident. At a regional level, Training and Development will continue to explore collaborative opportunities to share training expertise and facilities with Shropshire FRS. Whilst at a local level, we will examine the potential replacement of the RedKite competency record with Gartan. The coming year will see work completed on three Strategic Training Facilities and provide opportunities for Training & Development (T&D) to support District and Station based staff to train in purpose built training rigs. Firefighter safety will feature prominently in T&D activities, as we consider the opportunities to develop further tactical ventilation and compressed air foam systems.



### Service Support Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020

#### Human Resources (HR)

##### Pensions

To implement all new rules and guidance relating to new Pensions legislation in line with national and local guidance and support staff with their understanding and personal requirements with regard to Pension administration.

##### Workforce Planning

To continuously review the skills and appropriate staffing levels in all areas of the organisation in line with organisational business requirements and financial capability.

##### Staff Wellbeing

To actively support staff in all areas of personal health, fitness and wellbeing to support a fit and healthy workforce.

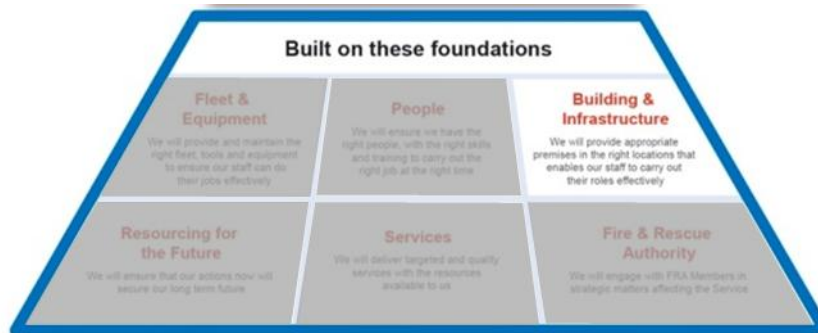
##### Sickness Management and Reducing Absenteeism

Existing knowledge in HR is capitalising on the learning brought in from new staff from outside the organisation, to improve organisational capability, capacity and best practice to manage and reduce absenteeism and sickness even further. There is a clear strategic management commitment and focus to the continuous improvement of Health, Safety and Wellbeing. Further benefits will be gained by closer links with HR with regards to occupational health, sickness absence, psychological safety, sickness levels and fitness, to improve management information, trend data and processes regarding the "health of the organisation".

##### Conditions of Service

To consult and implement where necessary changes to conditions of Service in line with National and local agreements.

## Building and Infrastructure



The Service is working at the forefront of improving public services, at a time of considerable financial constraint. Working with our public sector partners in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, we are finding new ways of using our assets, such as land and buildings, in ways that are transforming how services are delivered.

### Finance & Assets Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020 - Asset Management

#### Capital Projects

To progress through to completion the capital Fire Station Replacement Program and develop the Asset Management Strategy with a capital supported proactive maintenance program.

#### New Fire Stations and Collaboration with Other Public Sector Partners on Estates

The Service is a key partner in the Worcestershire Capital & Asset Property Steering Group. This group developed a single internet-based map of public sector property assets across Worcestershire, as part of the 'Total Place' initiative. Following on from this, Worcestershire was awarded Accelerated Pathfinder status along with five other partnership areas in the UK. The accelerated Pathfinder work developed a small number of opportunities presenting the potential for joint and collaborative use of public assets. The development of the joint Police and Fire Station at Bromsgrove is one of these projects and further collaborative opportunities are also being explored with consideration towards shared facilities at Redditch and in other locations across the area.

#### Bromsgrove Police and Fire Station

It is anticipated that the new combined Fire and Police Station and DCP crewing system (which consists of normal crewing of the station during the day but with an additional on call element during the night), will go live simultaneously in spring 2014. The final selection of staff to work the new crewing system, contract, agreements and protocols should be completed by summer 2013, thus allowing sufficient time to manage the transfer and movement of staff and facilities in the interim period.

#### Malvern Fire Station

Construction work for a new fire station in Malvern commenced in May 2013, with a substantial re-design and development of the existing site. The Station staff, fleet and equipment have been temporarily relocated to our Operational Logistics site in Malvern, which has enabled significant savings to be made in equivalent temporary arrangements. The project is due for completion in early summer 2014.

#### Worcester Fire Station

A proposed design for a new fire station in Worcester was completed in March 2013 and it is hoped that an arrangement for the delivery of this project will be secured during the summer. The project includes vastly improved staff welfare arrangements and training facilities.

#### Property

To ensure that the organisations property portfolio is maintained to an acceptable standard and that improvement in safety, efficiency, sustainability and energy management are managed appropriately.

#### ICT

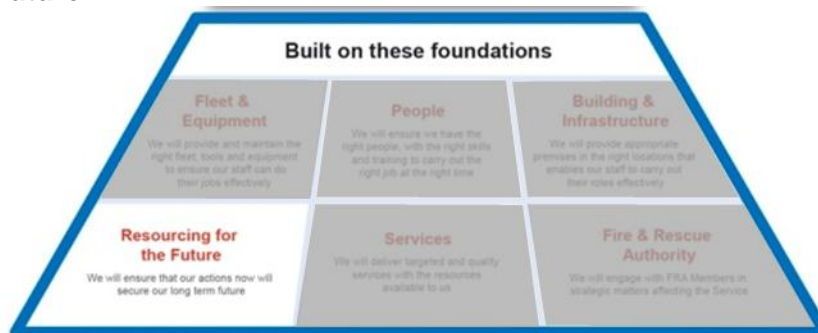
To ensure that critical systems are supported and that the ICT network is resourced appropriately to facilitate the needs of the organisation. To support the implementation and running of the next phase of development for the new Fire Control.

#### Procurement

To develop processes and systems which will ensure that the organisations procurement activity is compliant, ethical, competitive and provides best value.



## Resourcing for the Future



## Financial Information

This section shows what the Authority spends and breaks this down into the ongoing running costs and major capital investments.

### Summary of our workforce

(as at end of March 2013)

Fulltime Firefighters	43%
On-Call Firefighters	37%
Support Staff	17%
Fire Control Staff	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>721</b>

### Summary of our resources

(as at end of March 2013)

- 27 Fire Stations
- 43 front line Fire Engines
- 22 specialist vehicles including all-terrain vehicles and boats
- Training Centre
- Fire Service Headquarters
- Mobilising Centre
- Operational Logistics Centre
- Urban Search and Rescue Centre



### What the Service costs

	2013/14 Budget £m
Employees	23.3
Running costs	3.8
Fleet and equipment	2.4
Premises	1.7
Capital financing	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.549</b>

### How the Service is paid for

Council tax	20.9
Council tax freeze grants	1.1
National non-domestic rates	10.4
Revenue support grant	0.2
Special grants (New Dimensions)	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.549</b>

For the third year running, the cost of the Fire and Rescue Service to the average household in Worcestershire and Herefordshire (band D council tax) £73.64

In common with other public services, the Fire Service is facing major cuts in funding over the next few years, which will result in major changes in the way the Service is provided. It is likely, therefore, that the cost of the Service will reduce significantly over this period.

### Capital investment

This table provides details of the Authority's estimated investment in major capital schemes, such as major building works and purchase of Fire Engines. Unlike revenue expenditure, which is mostly funded through grant, this is funded through borrowing with only a small proportion funded through central government grants.

	2013/14 £m
Vehicles and equipment	1.0
Premises	6.9
ICT systems	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.5</b>

## **Finance & Assets Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020**

### **Finance**

#### **Statutory Accounting**

Ensure that accounts are produced in accordance with all relevant accounting standards and the Code of Practice and that these are completed in accordance with the required timelines and legislation.

#### **Budget Setting**

Ensure a prudent, balanced budget is produced annually for the approval of the FRA and that this supports the Service Planning process and that Reserves are maintained at an appropriate level.

#### **Budget Monitoring**

Continually develop the provision of adequate management information to assist and support Budget Managers in monitoring their expenditure against the budget and advising on the prudence and legality of this expenditure.

#### **Creditor Payment and Income Collection**

Support the continued provision of the Service by ensuring the payment of bills in a timely manner to creditors and ensuring that income is recognised and collected from all relevant third parties promptly.

#### **Capital Programme**

Produce a three year forecast of the Service's capital expenditure, ensuring its affordability and the prudence and sustainability of Service plans.

#### **Working with Businesses on Risk and Insurance**

In 2013/14, we will consider closer links to benefit the Service between Health & Safety, risk and insurance and the Human Resources Department which will continue to drive down the cost of personal injury claims through improved information on claims history and injury and illness statistics.



## Services



One of the key challenges of any organisation is ensuring that resources are used appropriately and effectively. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has always endeavoured to target its resources at areas of greatest need and we will continue to do this by examining a range of risk information and ensuring our preventative strategies are appropriate and effective.

We have invested in Firefighter training to ensure that our emergency response staff and equipment are able to provide a high quality service at all times, even in the most challenging of situations.

### Service Delivery Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020

#### Service Delivery - Operations

##### Availability

Effective and flexible management of all Station based staff. For RDS this is shift, contract and duty management, availability, recruitment and development. For Wholetime this is leave management, working practices, flexible delivery of on duty staff and succession planning.

##### Training and Competence

This objective is linked to the Training and Development Centre and local intelligence risks via joint training with other Stations/Fire and Rescue Services. It includes competence in specialist Fire Engines and all assets/key skills.

##### Intelligence

Review and expansion of the existing intelligence program, incorporating new risks of all varieties. Embed foundation knowledge of lower level risks, water supplies and topography. This is linked to the forthcoming delivery of station based Technical Fire Safety (TFS).

##### Animal Rescue

Two large animal rescue bases are to be established in the Service during 2013-14 and we have recently purchased a training horse for practising large animal rescues.



#### Service Delivery – Community Risk & Training

##### Community Risk

The Department will need to respond to the outcome of the national pilot on [Primary Authority Schemes \(PAS\)](#) which has the potential to have a significant impact on resources and capacity. Work will continue to progress with Shropshire FRS at a regional level to share good practice and expertise between Technical and Community Safety teams. At a local level, the Department will be embedding its new structure and aligning its work streams to the four key themes of:-

- Accidental fire deaths and injuries
- Arson
- Vulnerable and elderly
- Road safety.

Alongside which, the Department will be piloting a youth engagement scheme to work within local communities. This theme of targeting those at greatest risk will be extended into how Home Fire Safety Checks are undertaken, as the Department implements Pin-Point, which draws upon key risk data to identify those most vulnerable to fire.

Other areas of work will be Technical Fire Safety training for operational crews that will be co-ordinated by Operations and Community Safety work, which will focus on the ageing population.



## **Service Support Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020**

### **Operational Support - Mobilising Control**

To progress development of a West Mercia Fire Control mobilising capability in partnership with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. HWFRS and SFRS have already met to discuss Phase 2 of the Fire Control mobilising project and a project board has been identified.

### **Shared and Linked Fire Control with SFRS**

The Fire and Rescue Authority has also entered into a formal agreement via a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority to ensure a single resilient Command & Control (C&C) infrastructure operated from two locations (Worcester and Shrewsbury). In delivering the longer term objectives of the MoU, the key areas for improvement involve the sharing of data, information, procedures and the development, testing and implementation of robust contingency plans by both Services, to secure business continuity during the transition period to a single C&C solution. There is a clear desire and capability for collaboration in this area with SFRS, which could result in an improved service, resilience and cost savings moving forward. By linking our Fire Control software with SFRS, there will be increased capacity and resilience, and it will also achieve lower revenue costs, leading to significant savings by 2014/15 for both Authorities.

### **Health and Safety**

To ensure that HWFRS arrangements for ensuring the Health Safety and Welfare of its employees and those who interact with the Service are fit for purpose at all times, including fitness standards and arrangements for supporting personal wellbeing.

### **Operational Guidance**

To continually review and develop current operational guidance in accordance with local and national guidance and in response to incident debriefs.

### **Operational Collaboration with Emergency Services/Other Organisations on Service Delivery**

The Service has excellent involvement with the [West Mercia Local Resilience Forum](#) (WMLRF) which helps to inform the process needed to complete the requirements of the new National Framework document. The collaborative culture that already exists between HWFRS and SFRS Operations Departments, in support of their LRF work, is also helping to drive further collaborative working in this and other Departments.

### **Corporate Services**

#### **Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)**

To develop a comprehensive seven year CRMP in partnership with Shropshire FRS, which identifies HWFRS strategic business objectives up until the year 2020.

### **Operational Assurance**

To deliver an on-going schedule of internal thematic reviews into organisational activities and Service Delivery designed to ensure continued Firefighter safety, Community Safety and quality services.

### **Partnership Working**

To continually explore and improve partnership opportunities.

### **Corporate Communications**

To continually develop and review our internal and external communications arrangements to ensure accurate and timely exchange of information at all times, as well as effective and appropriate consultation with the diverse communities we serve.

### **Operational Assessment (Op 'A') Next Steps**

Following approval by both Authorities, the next steps will be to:

- incorporate findings from the self-assessment, together with the Op 'A' review team's findings, within the FRA's Annual Statement of Assurance (to be published later this year);
- prepare a detailed action plan for implementation of the Op 'A' findings for consideration by Audit Committee
- Officers and the Chair of the FRA will enter into a determined dialogue with Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority (SWFRA) to establish how best to deliver collaborative working in the key strategic areas.



## Internal Operational Assurance (OA)

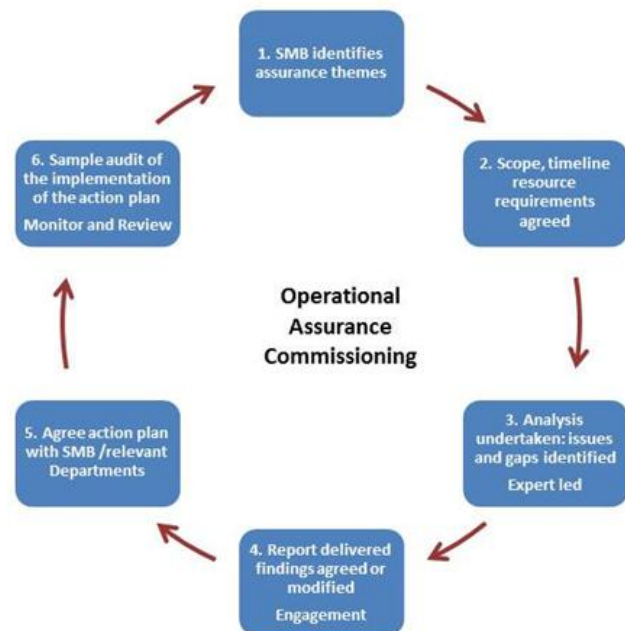
In 2013/14, HWFRS will introduce an Internal OA process that will allow the Service to effectively evaluate whether we “provide our communities with sustainable high quality Firefighting and Rescue Services.”

This will be delivered via three strands:

- Operational Assurance of Delivery (OAD)
  - Incident ground evaluation
- Operational Assurance of Readiness (OAR)
  - Training standards, Station standards, equipment standards, exercise standards
- Operational Assurance of Service Support (OAS)
  - The effectiveness of support service contribution.

This will provide the necessary evidence to support the operational performance component of the Statement of Assurance; an annual requirement now made explicit in recent changes to the National Framework.

OA is designed to improve outcomes in Firefighter and Community Safety and to tangibly improve the quality and delivery of our service to partners and communities. Resources needed for OA will be identified from existing capacity and will be dependent on the nature and scope of the review to be undertaken. It is anticipated that OA will be directed through the Senior Management Board (SMB), with OA being delivered via a commissioning model (see diagram). To support this arrangement, it is expected that an OA working group will be required, along with agreed of reporting lines



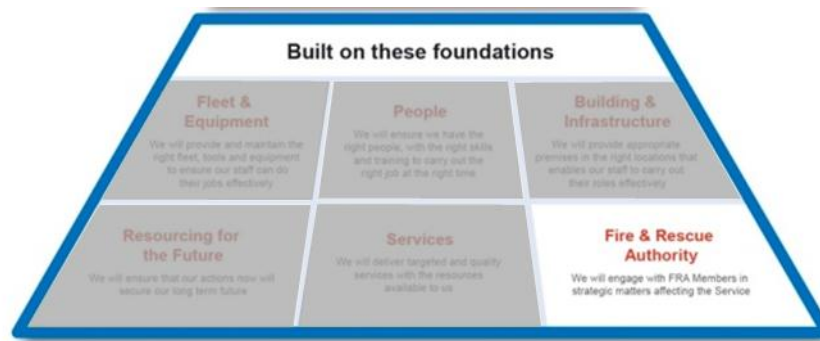
To determine a start point for OA within the Service, a gap analysis will be undertaken during 2013-14 by the Group Commander OA, which will identify the Service's current position in relation to assurance. It will absorb recent judgements such as the Atherstone-on-Stour Inquiry, the Service's Op 'A' report, thematic reviews and other on-going OA work currently being undertaken by Departments. Once complete, gap analysis findings will be used to determine the prioritisation and scheduling of OA within the Service.

Emerging areas of review are:

- OA Delivery-Risk Information, Active Incident Monitoring
- OA Readiness-Health and Safety Processes, Station Based Training
- OA Support-Child Protection, Fleet



## Fire & Rescue Authority



Elements of the Authority's role are to:

- Set the strategic direction of the Authority and monitor Service Delivery
- Set the Annual Budget and Council Tax precept levels
- Approve the Service's plans, policies and strategies, including statutory plans such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan and the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan
- Approve the composition of the Committees of the Authority and develop and maintain a scheme of delegated or reserved powers.

### Member Champions:

The Authority also has several Members who are nominated as Lead Members (Member Champions) for various areas of Authority business such as Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and Risk Management.

These Member Champions were reviewed during 2012-13 and also one representative from each political group was appointed as a Member Development Champion, to promote the training and development amongst their Groups and the Authority.

### Service Support Strategic Objectives 2013 – 2020

#### Committee Services:

To continually develop and review our Corporate Governance arrangements and engagement with FRA Members to ensure appropriate and well informed corporate decision making.







## Consultation

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2020 will set out the broad objectives to ensure our available resources are aligned to the areas of greatest risk within our community.

To plan ahead to 2020, we have looked at what changes might affect our two counties in the forthcoming years, especially what might have an impact on how we deliver our services. To help us understand some of the issues we have used expert analysis from our partners in Local Authorities and have taken account of the findings of the Chief Fire Officers Association's 'Fire 2020' research project. This looked at what changes the future may hold and the potential implications they may have for Fire and Rescue Services. We have also held workshops with some of our own Officers and Members from the Fire and Rescue Authority to get a view on the specific issues of concern for the Fire and Rescue Service.

We have considered some of the main issues and they give a good picture of what our Service will be dealing with over the next few years. Three issues stand out: the economic situation, population growth and the changing environment, we will be conducting further analysis of the impact of these issues during 2013-14.

We will report on progress, bring issues to your attention, ask for views and aim to gain your approval, support and understanding for our future plans via our Fire Authority meetings and website.

Further consultation arrangements during 2013-14 will include:

- Community and stakeholder involvement
- Public interaction and challenge
- Internal feedback sessions

In the meantime, we always welcome any views that you may have, at any time. If you have any comments or would like to contact us about any issue, please visit our website at [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk). Other ways to contact us are identified on page 2 of this document.

