



Integrated Risk Management Plan

2020 - 2023



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



Safest People, Safest Places

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Foreword

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring the public in County Durham and Darlington are protected from all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that they may face. The Authority does this by making provision, through County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS), for sufficient prevention and protection activities and ensuring that an effective and resilient emergency response provision is maintained.

The Authority also has a statutory responsibility, under the Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004), to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that outlines how CDDFRS will mitigate and address the risks our communities face. In 2018, CDDFRS developed a comprehensive methodology for assessing these risks, which is outlined in our Community Risk Profile (CRP) 2019/20 – 2021/22.:

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Mitigating the risks outlined in our CRP is also constrained by the funding available to us. Since 2010/11, the Authority has seen a £7.8m reduction in the funding we receive from government and a reduction in our overall budget of almost £3m.

We expect the Authority to continue to face a very challenging financial climate going forward, as further cuts to government funding are made. This is exacerbated by restrictions on the amount of income we can raise through council tax and predictions of significant pressures on spending. The next three years are therefore likely to require further innovation and

changes to the way we operate and deliver our prevention, protection and emergency response services.

Within this IRMP we have outlined a number of commitments to the communities of County Durham and Darlington in order to offer reassurance that they are, and will continue to be provided with the best possible fire and rescue service (FRS). We also stress our commitment to playing our part in tackling climate change and the impact this will have on our local environment and surrounding communities by taking active steps to reduce our carbon footprint.

We will need to review all aspects of the organisation and seek to work collaboratively where there are benefits in doing so. Some of the risks that our communities face are extremely complex and require mitigating actions from a range of our partner organisations. Collaboration also has the potential to deliver more efficient, effective and resilient support services.

CDDFRS has a history of adapting and dealing well with adversity throughout this prolonged period of austerity. Putting our staff at the heart of everything we do and developing and maintaining a positive organisational culture will help to ensure that we continue to be successful, despite these many challenges. We are committed to delivering a professional, innovative and effective FRS, as we continue to work towards our vision of "safest people, safest places".



Councillor John Robinson
Chair, Combined Fire Authority
(CFA)



Stuart Errington
Chief Fire Officer
(CFO)



Executive summary

This document sets out the strategic plan for County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority and provides a conduit to our other strategic planning documents. The document explains how we are accountable to our local community through the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) and links to a wide spectrum of local community groups.

Our CRP, which is reviewed annually, comprehensively describes our greatest risks. This then feeds the localised district profiles (<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>) followed by the IRMP planning process.

The IRMP clearly sets out how we identify, assess and manage existing and emerging risks, while also providing links to our more detailed CRP, local district-based profiles and six strategic priorities, as well as highlighting the challenges faced by our Fire Authority over the next three years.

Our IRMP summarises how, through efficient, effective and innovative prevention and protection activities, we aim to keep our communities safe from harm. It covers all of the activity that we are engaged in to exploit opportunities and reduce the risk associated with providing a professional FRS to the communities of County Durham and Darlington.

Once we have identified our risks, we look to focus on how we can best prepare ourselves in order to prevent incidents occurring and protect people from them, while also planning the most effective way to respond, all of which are covered within our six strategic priorities. Our Community Risk Management (CRM) section will focus on a number of key areas over the next three years.

We have developed a range of options to meet our response plan over the next three years that will enable us to respond in an uncertain financial climate and continue to deliver an effective response to the public across our Service area. We have aligned our responses to the areas of greatest risk and set out standards to

measure how we perform.

Ensuring that we have a highly skilled and professional workforce is a key priority for the Service, and our plans include the use of the apprenticeship levy and career progression framework to develop staff. We are seeking to address diversity in our workforce through a range of innovative methods, as we recognise that we need to have a workforce reflective of our community.

Since our last IRMP, we have explored further the possibility of working closer with other regional FRSs and emergency services to enable us to better protect the public we serve, particularly the most vulnerable members of our community, while providing value for money.

We have published a medium-term financial plan (MTFP), which considers a range of possible financial scenarios in an uncertain future. The Service has plans that balance the budget in the short term, and contingencies for the medium to long term.

Our plans are developed in consultation with the community and partner agencies, as well as our staff and their representative bodies. We are committed to listening to your views and will hold a consultation exercise every year on our plans for the immediate future.



What is an Integrated Risk Management Plan?

When national standards of fire cover were removed by the government in 2004, it became the responsibility of individual UK FRSs to evidence how they intended to identify, manage and respond to the risks within the communities they served. It is a legal requirement for every Fire Authority to produce a publicly available IRMP covering at least a three-year time span.

The requirements of an IRMP are set out in the 'Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018', which states that each authority must ensure the following five priorities are met:

1. To be accountable to communities for the service they provide;
2. To identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
3. To make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
4. To develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.
5. To collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;

The National Framework also says that IRMPs have a statutory responsibility to include a number of areas. These are summarised below.

- Reflect up-to-date risk analyses of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
- Demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities;

- Outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
- Set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRO) 2005;
- Cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary;
- Reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
- Be easily accessible and publicly available.

CDDFRS published a three-year plan in 2017 to cover the period up to March 2020. The purpose of this document is to meet the statutory requirements listed above for the next three years. We will monitor progress and review the measures set out in this document on an annual basis to ensure the IRMP process is fully integrated into our overall strategic planning process.



Vision & Values

Our vision is simple:

We want to have the **safest people** and the **safest places**.

To respond effectively to the challenges that we face as an FRS, we need to be clear on our strategic direction. A defined vision, strategic priorities, values and behaviours are key to us doing this. During 2016/17, we undertook a full review of these, which resulted in the following:

Our strategic priorities:

The Authority is focussed on identifying, assessing and managing risks while ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to reduce the number of emergency incidents and the associated risk of injury or death across our Service area.

To help us to achieve our vision, we have six strategic priorities:



Our values:

These values are known in our organisation as the **PIE** values and describe the ethos of CDDFRS.

Professional



Innovative



Effective



Our commitment to you is that we will always aim to be the best FRS in the UK. In order to achieve this there are certain behaviours that we expect from our staff. How well our staff are demonstrating these behaviours as part of their day to day job is assessed within our bespoke appraisal system.

The range of these behaviours falls into four areas, known as the 4Cs:

- How we approach **challenges**
We will approach challenges with flexibility, enthusiasm and motivation, passion, determination and resilience.
- How we **collaborate** with others
We will be approachable, supportive, encouraging and inclusive, and value development when collaborating.
- How we **conduct** ourselves
We will conduct ourselves in a manner that is honest, trustworthy, reliable, accountable, consistent and respectful.
- How we drive **change** across the organisation to make a difference
We will drive change by being creative, resourceful, courageous, original, clear and focused.



About our Service area

We look after the areas of County Durham and Darlington, which cover approximately 939 square miles with a population of 630,009, and protect 285,135 households and around 18,628 business premises.

We have 15 fire stations spread across five districts, as can be seen in the map opposite. These districts are Darlington, Derwentside, Durham, Easington and Wear and Tees, all of which come with their own unique challenges and risks.

We border four other FRs (North Yorkshire, Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyne & Wear) and one Fire Brigade (Cleveland), and provide mutual cross-border support to one another if and when required.

All of our emergency calls are received by our fire control operators based in our control room at Service headquarters in Belmont. They then assess the risks before mobilising a pre-determined set of resources, or where necessary, send the additional engines and specialist appliances that are required to deal with the incident.



Health

Life expectancy has improved for males (78.1) but reduced slightly for females (81.4) - both are still behind the England average.

Social Isolation

In County Durham, estimates suggest that around 22,000 people aged 18-64 are socially isolated (7%).

Adults

The number of people aged 65 and over has increased by 26.4% between 2001 to 2015, rising to 103,400 residents.

Children

Within our area, the level of child poverty is worse than the England average (20.1%), with 23.9% of children under 16 years living in poverty (2014).

Dementia

Estimates suggest that over 6,600 people in County Durham aged 65+ have dementia.

Mental Health

The number of adults assessed with mental health needs increased by 34.1% between 2010/11 and 2015/16.

About our communities

We recognise that we can only provide an effective service to our communities if we understand the diversity within them and enable our workforce to meet their needs and concerns.

Our CRP highlights the challenges faced by the public relating to deprivation, health and wellbeing, as well as the make-up of the demographic in relation to age, gender and ethnicity.

Our rural communities cover a significant geographical proportion of the Service area, with some individuals extremely hard to reach and therefore at more risk of vulnerability, which is why we deliver our service in the way we do.

We know that living in isolation can have a negative impact on a person's health and wellbeing. We have also witnessed first-hand how poor-quality housing can exacerbate a range of underlying health conditions, from falls and poor mental health to hoarding and excessive alcohol and substance misuse.

Health inequalities remain persistent and pervasive, with levels of deprivation being significantly higher and life expectancy lower than the national average.

[Our commitment to you is](#) that we will reduce the risks to vulnerable people in our communities by operating a mutual referral pathway with partner agencies. We aim to identify and target the most vulnerable members of our communities with the highest proportion of our safe and wellbeing visits (SWV) aimed at these individuals.

Recent examples of this include the use of a number of datasets associated with elevated risk. This involves profiling geographical areas, businesses, dwellings and individuals by combining data from past incident activity and other demographic data such as age, deprivation and lone households.

We will continue to receive high-risk and safeguarding referrals from partner agencies such as community nurses, social workers, carers and social housing providers that work in the communities on a daily basis and are therefore in a unique position to signpost vulnerable individuals to us.



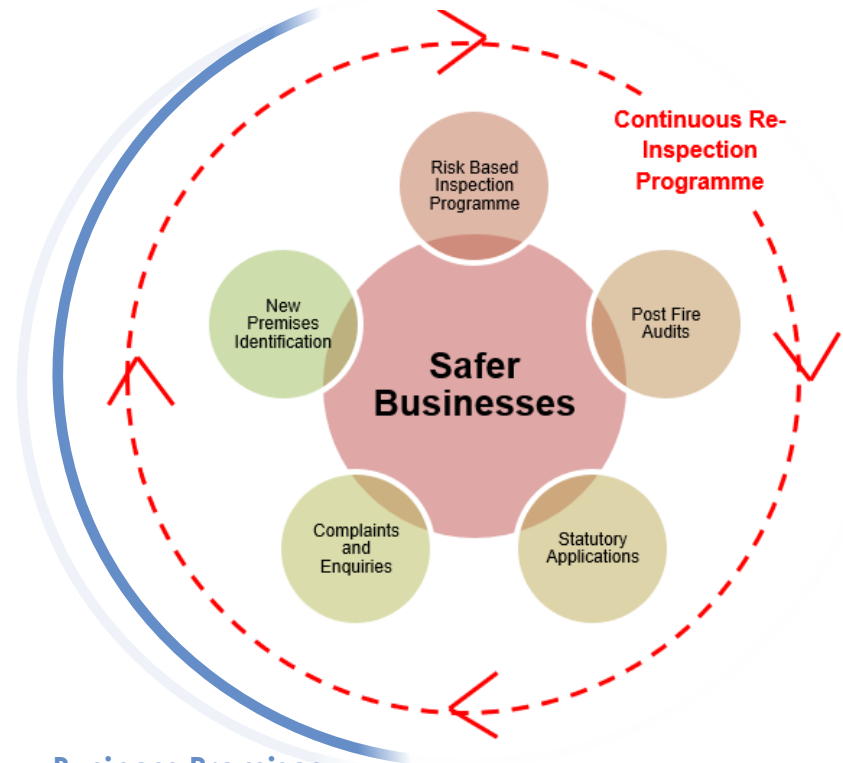
Reaching our most vulnerable people and property

Dwellings

In order to determine those members of our communities that are most susceptible to having a fire within their home, we use the **Dwelling Fire Risk Analysis Pyramid** below (see our CRP for more detail).

This innovative methodology uses a range of datasets that allows us to assess people and property in terms of risk levels, with level one being the most vulnerable, and level five the least. This analysis ensures we focus our SWVs in the right areas, to the right people, at the right time.

Our commitment to you is that at least 80% of all SWVs are targeted towards the most vulnerable members of the community whilst also ensuring that those residents deemed to be at greater risk as a result of a SWV will be revisited within a 12 month period.



Business Premises

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) states that Fire and Rescue Authorities must make provision for promoting fire safety, including fire prevention. In order to do this we have a management strategy that includes a locally determined risk-based inspection programme for enforcing compliance with the RRO. These inspections are carried out by our central Business Fire Safety team and operational crews depending on the level of risk.

When aiming to keep business premises safe from fire, we adopt a cyclical process that we call the **Business Identification Process** above, (see our CRP for more detail).

Our commitment to you is that we will identify and engage with local businesses to ensure the appropriate levels of fire safety measures are in place through the use of a number of different sources of information as well as regularly inspecting business premises.

How are we performing?

The Fire Authority regularly monitors the performance of the organisation through the Service's Performance and Programme Board. [Our commitment to you is](#) that we will track performance using a mix of performance and management indicators, which are set against localised targets.

Prevention and Protection

Community Safety

- Within the last three years, we delivered almost 60,000 SWVs, 98% of which were completed by our operational crews;
- 84% of these visits were targeted towards high-risk people or places, of which 2,173 were referrals from partner agencies;
- As a result of the SWVs, we made 3,027 onward lifestyle referrals to our partners in health.

Business Fire Safety

- We carried out 6,378 fire safety audits between Apr 16 and Mar 19, 86% of which were completed by our operational crews;
- 1,337 business regulation consultations took place during the same period, while we also reviewed 631 licensing applications.

Fire Hydrants

- On average, our operational crews carried out 5,617 inspections of fire hydrants on an annual basis.

Response

- The total number of emergency calls that we have received within the last three years is 50,258, which equates to an average of 16,753 each year;
- Deliberate fires accounted for 8,007 of the overall number of incidents. Breaking it down even further, 1,493 were primary fires, while 6,514 were secondary fires;
- We attended 701 accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) during the same period – these resulted in three deaths and 58 injuries that required hospital treatment;
- There were 354 fires in commercial premises, which resulted in only four injuries requiring hospital treatment;
- We responded to 1,004 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) between Apr 16 and Mar 19;
- The total number of false alarms we received was 7,052. Of this number, 2,279 were caused by automatic fire alarms within commercial premises, whereas 254 were malicious in nature;
- Special Service calls account for 3,488 incidents, with some of the most frequent incidents involving gaining entry into property, assisting other agencies and flooding.

Click here for more detailed information on our performance over the last three years: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/performance>

Achievements and Innovation

The Service is immensely proud of the fact that it has led the way nationally with an award-winning Firefighter Apprenticeship Scheme, which was launched in 2017.

In 2018, the Service welcomed its second cohort of Apprentice Firefighters, who completed their first year in August 2019, with a third cohort beginning their journey on the scheme in September 2019.

The scheme itself was recognised at the Training Journal Awards in London, being named as The Best Apprenticeship Scheme in the UK, while the Service remained one of the Top 100 employers of Apprentices in the UK and the only blue light service to feature in the list.

2018 also saw the development and launch of our Career Progression Framework to develop staff, horizontally as well as vertically into effective and supportive leaders.

The Service is a Disability Confident Employer and holds the Better Health at Work Award at Continuing Excellence status, which demonstrates our commitment to the wellbeing of our workforce. Meanwhile, we are also proud to have signed the Armed Services Covenant and are currently working towards Gold status.

2019 also saw the Service win Fire & Rescue Service of the Year at the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards, reflecting the hard work and commitment of every member of staff within CDDFRS.

Our commitment to you is that we will continue to strive for excellence in everything we do through encouraging our staff to achieve through innovation.



Governance

How are we accountable to communities for the service we provide?

Locally

Our CFA consists of 25 elected councillors; 21 from Durham County Council (DCC) and four from Darlington Borough Council (DBC). The Authority is the legal body with the statutory duties and responsibilities for:

- Ensuring the Service is effective and efficient;
- Setting the strategic direction, policies and procedures of the Service;
- Holding the Chief Fire Officer to account.

The fire authority has a number of subcommittees with delegated powers that look at specific areas such as the finances of the fire authority.

Our commitment to you is that we will provide additional scrutiny in a range of areas, including health and safety, prevention, protection, equality and diversity, as well as young people through having representatives from the fire authority as member champions within specific areas.

We have representatives on all 14 of the Area Action Partnerships in the service area, who link directly with elected members and community representatives across County Durham and Darlington.

We publish our Annual Governance Statement; Statement of Accounts and Performance as well as all of our other strategic documents on our website for the public to scrutinise: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/financial-governance>

Statement of Assurance

The annual Statement of Assurance aims to provide the necessary accountability and transparency to the people of County Durham and Darlington, and evidence that their FRS continues to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the 'Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018' and our own IRMP process.

It also details the measures taken to assure our communities that the CFA's performance is efficient and effective in relation to finance and governance. It measures operational assurance to demonstrate that our services are delivered in line with our statutory responsibilities and with due regard to the expectations set out in our IRMP, including cross-border, multi-authority and national incident arrangements.

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/statement-assurance>

Nationally

In July 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) extended its remit to include inspections of all 45 FRs in England (now known as HMICFRS).

The HMICFRS assessment examines the Service's effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. It is designed to give you information about how your local FRS is performing in these three key areas, in a way that is comparable with other FRs across England.

The inspection process for CDDFRS was conducted during the summer of 2019 and the findings are published on the inspectorate website, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/fire-and-rescue-services/>

Our commitment to you is to act upon these findings to ensure we continue to provide the best possible fire and rescue service we can to the communities of County Durham and Darlington.



How we identify risk

How do we identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks our areas face?

When determining how we identify risk, we do so through consideration of a number of key documents, all of which feed into our 'Community Risk Identification Process' detailed opposite. We consult with partner agencies and other responder organisations to help us to better understand the risks in our community.

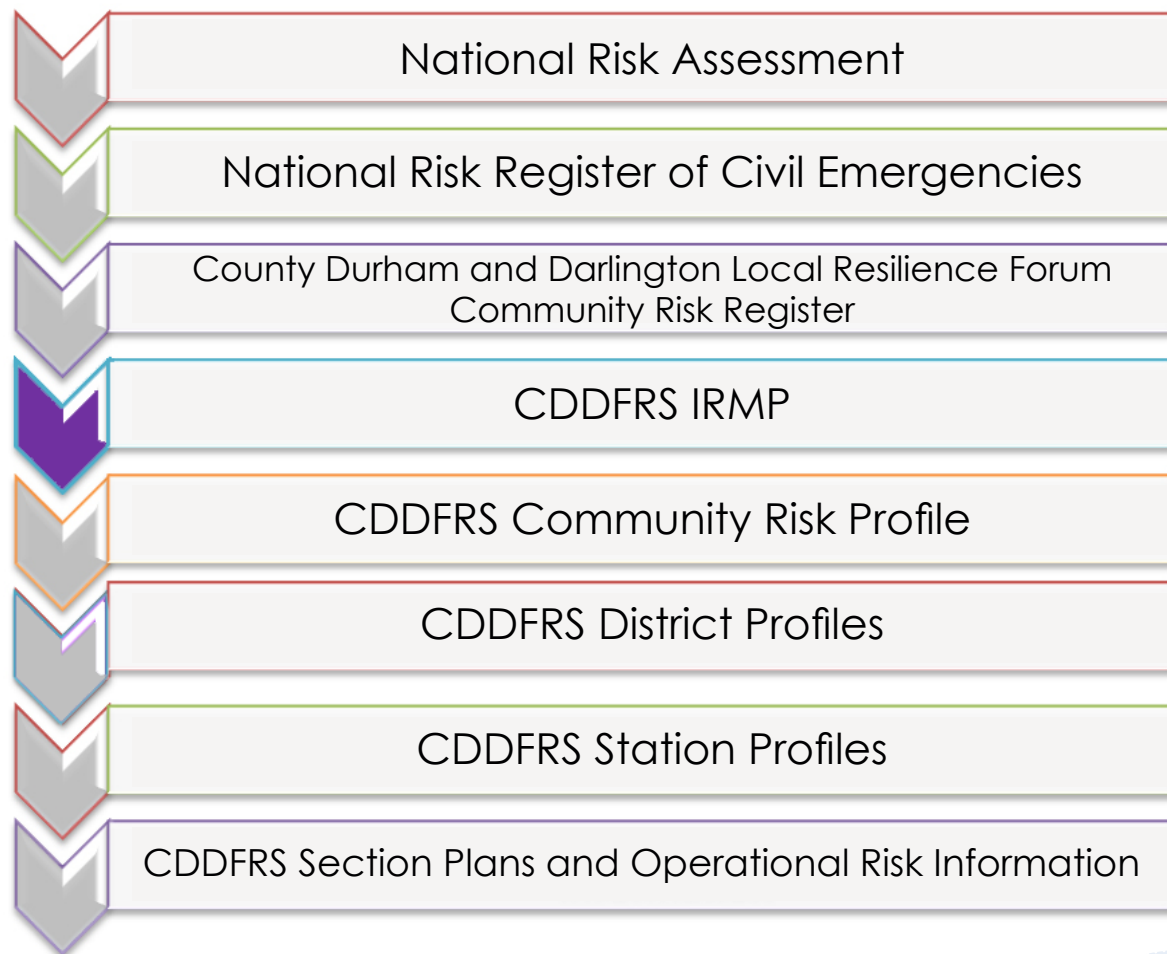
Our CRP provides an in-depth piece of research and analysis of the incidents we have attended over previous years, and the risk of emergency incidents occurring in the future.

Our commitment to you is that we will provide an overview of those risks identified and where each risk sits in terms of severity, which in turn will allow us to plan how to utilise our resources in the most effective way to save lives, improve public safety and reduce emergency incidents.

The first stage of our risk assessment methodology used within the CRP is to identify incidents that can cause harm to the people, environment and economy within our communities, using various data sources and tools.

We utilise a nationally recognised risk assessment matrix based on a reasonable worst-case scenario, with an assessment of a possible upper and lower range in order to come to definitive scoring.

Community Risk Identification Process



How we manage and respond to risk

We manage the risk to our communities in several different ways, which can be broadly categorised as:

Prevention and Protection (Proactive)

[Our commitment to you is](#) that we will continue to do a significant amount of proactive work to prevent adverse events from happening and as a result, reduce the risk to our communities.

Our community safety activities cover a broad range of risks detailed within our CRP. Meanwhile, our Business Fire Safety work involves us visiting commercial premises to conduct fire safety audits, as well as consulting on building regulations and licensing applications where necessary.

Response (Reactive)

[Our commitment to you is](#) that if and when an event does occur, we will be fully prepared to respond in order to mitigate any impact caused.

The Service has a **Corporate Risk Register** that looks at risks to our business (service provision and financial). These risks are monitored with measures put in place to ensure we can fulfil our role as an FRS protecting the communities of County

Durham and Darlington. Where areas of risk are identified, they are included in and addressed through one of our strategic priorities. The purpose of these priorities is to define a simple practical framework to manage risk, while highlighting how the Service intends to mitigate these risks on an ongoing basis through a detailed action plan.

Although the Service makes every effort to avoid incidents

from occurring through its proactive work, we are also realistic in acknowledging that we will always be required to respond to emergency incidents. Where this is necessary, however, we ensure control measures are in place to mitigate the impact on everyone involved.

Through this process, we are committed to evaluating and reviewing all of our work, implementing continuous improvements along the way.

What are the risks we have identified?

Domestic dwelling fires

Every year, we experience fires in people's homes that are devastating for those people involved and can cause injury and death.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Identify those people most at risk/vulnerable
- Conduct SWVs, fit smoke alarms and provide fire-retardant equipment
- Refer people to other agencies where vulnerability is identified
- Arson reduction and fire setter interventions
- Attend national events to establish best practice
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to dwelling fires

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond to 70% of all dwelling fires within eight minutes
- Provide advice after the fire and carry out hot strikes
- Utilise support, if required, from Red Cross Fire Victim Support Teams
- Investigate the cause of fires at the appropriate level in partnership with the police
- Where appropriate, submit post-incident safeguarding referrals
- Conduct performance-management processes to identify trends in incidents

Non-domestic properties including heritage risks and waste disposal sites

Every year, we experience fires in places such as offices, factories, commercially operated residential premises, heritage buildings and waste disposal sites.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Use data to understand which premises present the highest risks
- Deal with complaints and enquiries
- Carry out fire safety audits to ensure compliance with the RRO
- Adopt a continuous re-inspection programme based on risk levels
- Use enforcement action where required
- Work with businesses to ensure they keep their premises safe
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to these types of incidents

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond to 70% of all non-domestic property fires within eight minutes
- Investigate the cause of fires at the appropriate level in partnership with the police
- Carry out post-fire audits to offer advice
- Consider enforcement action where necessary
- Deal with complaints
- Charge businesses for Unwanted Fire Alarms
- Work with partners to mitigate the impact of these incidents on the environment
- Ensure we have secured appropriate water supplies, to aid firefighting



Flooding and water rescue

Widespread flooding can devastate parts of the community and leaves an impression for years beyond an event. We have also seen some tragic drownings in our waterways over the years.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Develop flood plans and provide operational risk information crews
- Work with partners to prepare for flood risk
- Campaign to members of the public to educate them about the dangers posed by bodies of water
- Work closely with the Environment Agency (EA) to share ideas
- Make a specialist water rescue team available to respond locally and nationally
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to water related incidents

Reactive measures

We will:

- Work with partners to protect and maintain critical infrastructure in times of flooding
- Prioritise and respond to domestic flooding calls and assist if appropriate
- Deploy a specialist water rescue team to perform rescues and evacuation of people affected by flooding
- Work with other agencies to help to protect areas at immediate risk of flooding
- Deploy High Volume Pumps, where appropriate, to areas most affected
- Where appropriate, assist other agencies during missing persons searches

Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)

Deaths and serious injuries on the road affect County Durham and Darlington residents each year.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with our key strategic partners to reduce risk through education
- Utilise local and national data sets on RTC numbers and type
- Train RTC ambassadors to campaign locally
- Attend national and local working groups that share best practice
- Provide crews with the latest technology to meet the modern methods of vehicle construction
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to RTCs

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond to 75% of life-risk RTCs within 11 minutes
- Respond with appropriate resources to RTCs to effect rescue, mitigate the risk from fire and other related risks, and assist partners in resolving the incident
- Respond to non-life risk RTCs on request to help to make the scene safe



Hazardous materials and industrial incidents

Hazardous materials can present a risk to the public from a range of sources including road transport, industrial sites and malicious use by terrorists or organised criminal groups.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with industry to ensure safe practices
- Conduct fire safety audits of premises across the Service area
- Work with the police to understand the threat from terrorism and organised criminality
- Exercise and train with our partners to prepare for a range of eventualities
- Train a range of tactical advisors to provide expert advice
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to these types of incidents

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond with specialist equipment and personnel to help to resolve the incident
- Seek specialist advice from national centres where required
- Work with partners to mitigate the impact of hazardous materials on the environment

Malicious attacks, terrorist incidents and major public events

The UK faces a serious and sustained threat from terrorism. In regard to major public events, there are a number held locally that attract large crowds of people into concentrated areas.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with the police to understand the threat from terrorism
- Be ready to respond nationally to events outside of the Service area
- Learn from similar events of this nature that have occurred both within the UK and internationally
- Train a range of tactical advisors and commanders to provide expert advice
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to these types of incidents

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond with appropriately trained and equipped specialist teams to effect rescue and casualty care for victims
- Use fire crews to support the work of specialist teams where appropriate
- Seek specialist advice from national centres where required
- Deploy National Incident Liaison Officers to provide a unified approach with key partners
- Ensure measures are in place to support staff welfare post-incident



Air and rail incidents

Fires and accidents on the transport network not only present an immediate threat to life and property, but can also have a long-lasting impact on infrastructure and our communities.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with our partners to help to improve safety within the transport industry
- Understand the main flight paths and rail networks within our area
- Conduct operational exercises at high-risk sites/ locations
- Collect information and develop plans on our highest transport risks so that we are prepared to respond
- Conduct regular evaluation of our training in relation to air and rail incidents we attend

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond to incidents with sufficient resources to effect rescue, deal with fire and other hazards, and assist with casualties
- Request support of specialist fire and rescue teams such as Urban Search and Rescue where appropriate
- Work in partnership to mitigate the impact of such incidents and facilitate recovery

Height

Incidents at heights could occur in many different formats and anywhere across the Service area. The dangerous nature of dealing with such incidents leads to an increased risk of injury to anyone involved.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work closely with partner agencies such as mountain rescue, coast guard and other FRs
- Provide a specialist capability to respond to the most challenging rescues
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to height rescues

Reactive measures

We will:

- Deploy specialist line rescue teams supported by additional fire crews to effect rescues
- Utilise specialist engines such as the aerial ladder platform to assist with rescues
- Work in partnership to assist with the resolution of incidents
- Support other agencies to assist vulnerable persons involved in height incidents



Wildfire

Wildfires can quickly escalate and spread across large areas, causing major disruption to life, property and infrastructure.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with landowners and responsible authorities to reduce the risk of widespread wildfires
- Promote the potential dangers of starting fires in rural locations such as barbeques or campfires
- Train our staff to provide expert advice
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to wildfires

Reactive measures

We will:

- Deploy appropriate resources to contain and extinguish wildfires
- Deploy specialist wildfire personnel and equipment as appropriate
- Request assistance from other agencies and organisations for specialist equipment as required
- Consider mutual aid requests where necessary to assist with large or protracted incidents

Building collapse

County Durham and Darlington has a mining history that has left parts of the area at high risk from structural collapse. There are also risks posed at incidents where buildings are damaged by fire or explosion. Incidents of this nature can be life-threatening and disruptive to the community.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Engage with building control to understand where the risks are within our communities
- Work closely with the national resilience USAR capability
- Utilise derelict buildings to carry out training
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to building collapse

Reactive measures

We will:

- Deploy appropriate resources and personnel to effect rescue and secure unstable structures, where appropriate
- Request the support of specialist fire and rescue teams such as Urban Search and Rescue if required
- Work with partners to provide advice and additional equipment to aid incident resolution



Primary and secondary fires other than buildings

Many of these incident types have a significant community impact, as well as being a drain on the fire service resource that could be deployed elsewhere.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Provide dedicated arson reduction staff to reduce the number of deliberate fires
- Work with partners to reduce the burden on all agencies
- Work with authorities to prosecute those guilty of arson or deliberate fire-setting
- Develop and evaluate campaigns, education packages and initiatives
- Utilise data analysis software to highlight hotspot areas
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work in relation to primary and secondary fires

Reactive measures

We will:

- Consider the deployment of targeted response vehicles, where appropriate, to reduce the demand on other front-line resources
- Conduct arson/ environmental audits with partners in areas subject to high operational activity
- Investigate the causes of fires in partnership with the police
- Conduct Service-wide and local performance management measures to help to identify problem areas or trends

Animal rescue

As a predominantly rural area, we are inevitably called to incidents where animals are in distress.



Proactive measures

We will:

- Provide equipment and training for crews
- Work with partner agencies to keep animals safe in the service area
- Maintain a specialist animal-rescue capability
- Attend national and regional learning events to share best practice
- Learn from specialist vets in how to deal with different types of animals
- Conduct regular evaluation of our work to reduce the number of animal rescues we attend

Reactive measures

We will:

- Respond with specialist animal rescue teams to effect rescue
- Work in partnership with other agencies to help to resolve incidents
- Request other specialist teams and equipment as needed to assist with the incident
- Seek specialist advice where required
- Work with partners to mitigate the impact of disruption to the public from animals on our roads



Prevention, protection and response

How do we make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue-related incidents?

Our commitment to you is

that we will demonstrate how our prevention, protection and response activities address the fire and rescue-related risks that have been identified during our IRMP process in greater detail. Our key strategies outline the measures we have in place and actions we intend to take to ensure we are doing everything we can to keep our communities safe. We also have a range of other support strategies which assist in the delivery of our Service, which includes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, ICT, and Assets and Assurance.



Community Safety Strategy

In line with our identified risks, our Community Safety Strategy will target the most vulnerable people and those at higher risk in our community. To meet Section 6 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, we work with partners to focus on the following key areas:

- Reduce fire deaths and injuries in the home through targeting the most vulnerable while continuing to develop our SWVs;
- Reduce the number of arson and deliberate fires being set through the provision of a dedicated team to focus on reduction and fire-setting initiatives;
- Strengthen our partnerships with other agencies to ensure best practice is achieved;
- Continue to evaluate and improve our campaigns by learning from others;
- Work on initiatives to improve water safety, especially in our hotspot areas;
- Continue to educate young people and develop our Fire Cadet schemes.

For more detailed information, see the Community Safety Strategy and the associated action plans: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Business Fire Safety and Fire Investigation Strategy

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) gives us a statutory obligation to enforce fire safety legislation under the RRO. We are fully committed to this, which is why our Business Fire Safety Strategy will focus on the following key areas:

- Continue to reassess our delivery model to ensure we have the correct level of resources in place to fulfil our statutory obligations;
- Ensure we are fully focused on legislative compliance to assist us with keeping businesses and their employees safe;
- Conduct detailed risk profiling of business premises to ensure they are visited by our team in a timely manner;
- Adopt national fire investigation standards and practices to make sure what we do is correct while also protecting us from challenge;
- Work with partner agencies to develop how we approach fire investigation, train our staff and best utilise our fire investigation search dog.

For more detailed information, see the Business Fire Safety Strategy and the associated action plans: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>



Emergency Response Strategy

In line with our identified risks, our Emergency Response Strategy will focus on the following key areas:

- Continually review the disposition and range of available personnel and resources;
- Offer our Retained Duty System (RDS) support and development to fulfil their role;
- Ensure we are fully prepared for national resilience response;
- Ensure we are fully prepared to respond within our own Service area;
- Provide suitable and sufficient risk information;
- Make sure robust operational assurance is in place;
- Review and adopt National Operational Guidance (NOG);
- Plan for major incidents through testing and exercising.

See also 'How we allocate resource to risk' on page 26.

For more detailed information, see the Emergency Response Strategy and the associated action plans: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

People Strategy

We employ in the region of 565 staff, with the majority of our workforce employed in an operational capacity. Our Workforce Plan identifies the strategic challenges faced by our staff and the actions we will undertake to meet those challenges.

As an employer, our aim is to develop a diverse workforce and ensure that our PIE values and behavioural framework help us to develop a working environment where everyone can feel engaged, valued and respected, whatever their background.

We invest in organisational development ensuring that our staff have the required skills, competencies and behaviours to meet challenges now and in the future.

In line with our identified risks, our People Strategy will focus on the following key areas:

- Ensure our workforce has the capacity, structure and sustainability to meet our future needs;
- Develop leaders who can perform in managerial and strategic roles and work effectively with partners;
- Ensure our workforce is highly trained in order to fulfil the vast array of demands placed upon them;
- Develop clear, consistent and structured talent management processes to ensure we can make use of skill sets across all areas;
- Provide support for the fitness and wellbeing of our workforce and reward positive performance;
- Support the development of a positive and inclusive culture that encourages continuous improvement;

For more detailed information, see the People Strategy and the associated action plans: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>




Barnard Castle
Emergency Services
Main Reception



How do we collaborate?

How do we collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service that we provide?

Collaboration Strategy

We have several collaborative arrangements in place between our Service and other local Fire and Rescue services as well as other emergency services.

We have joint governance structures with Durham Constabulary and also with other regional FRSs. This is to ensure collaboration is considered at both a strategic and tactical level. We will continually assess our collaborative arrangements to ensure that they provide either improved value for money – which ensures our services are more cost-effective – or result in improved outcomes. This will then ensure a better service is provided, including a reduction in the level of risks and/or demand within our communities to ensure the public are safer while living and working in County Durham and Darlington.

Our strategic intent is that collaboration will underpin our approach to service delivery. We will identify strategic partners who have a compelling common purpose for collaboration to ensure mutual commitment

is given towards shared goals. Although we have a duty to collaborate, we will only do so when it provides benefit to your FRS as outlined above.

Some examples of current collaboration:

- Bowburn Training Centre - Durham Constabulary, the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS), Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) and other partners use our state-of-the-art training centre at Bowburn,
- Shared Stations - we share several of our Service estates' premises with Durham Constabulary. In Barnard Castle, we have built the only Quad emergency service station in the country, housing Fire, Police, Ambulance and Mountain Rescue personnel. This has provided greater opportunities for emergency service interaction and is a central emergency service point for this rural community.
- Tri-Service responders – alongside Durham Police and the North East Ambulance Service at Stanhope, we provide tri-responders which is an innovative way of responding to emergencies.

For more detailed information, see the Collaboration Strategy and the associated register: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/serviceplans>



How do we manage our finances?

Medium Term Financial Plan

Since 2010, the Service has managed a £7.8m reduction in government funding without impacting on fire cover until 2019. Our 2019/20 revenue budget is now almost £3m less than it was in 2010.

We, along with other public sector organisations, face an uncertain financial future. We will always plan ahead in order to ensure we can balance the budget over the medium term, taking account of our planned expenditure and future levels of government and local funding.

Our current MTFP covers the period from 2019/20 to 2022/23, and has been calculated based on the assumption that government funding will continue to reduce by 5% each year, council tax will increase

by 3% in 2019/20 and 2% each year thereafter, and pay awards and inflation will increase by 2% each year. Based on these assumptions, we have a significant shortfall in funding from 2020/21 onwards.

In order to balance the budget, we need to identify £1.531m of savings over the MTFP period.

To achieve this, we have undertaken a full review of our emergency response provision and have identified savings options for implementation over the MTFP period.

Following robust analysis of the potential impact of our proposals, we believe that these options will have the least impact on

the level of risk within County Durham and Darlington. It is our policy to trial options in the year prior to implementation to receive feedback from staff and to ensure that they are workable before proceeding to full implementation.

In addition to changes to emergency response, we are considering alternative options including structure changes, governance changes and further collaboration with the police, neighbouring FRs and other partners.

For more detailed information, see the Medium Term Financial Plan [link](#).

Allocating resource to risk

[Our commitment to you is](#) that we will allocate resources to risk in order to provide the best possible service to the community.

Who are our people?

Our workforce is made up of the following:

- 254 wholtime firefighters / 168 RDS firefighters;
- 40 other operational staff, including those based at headquarters and flexible duty officers;
- 19 fire control operators;
- 78 corporate staff.

Where do they work?

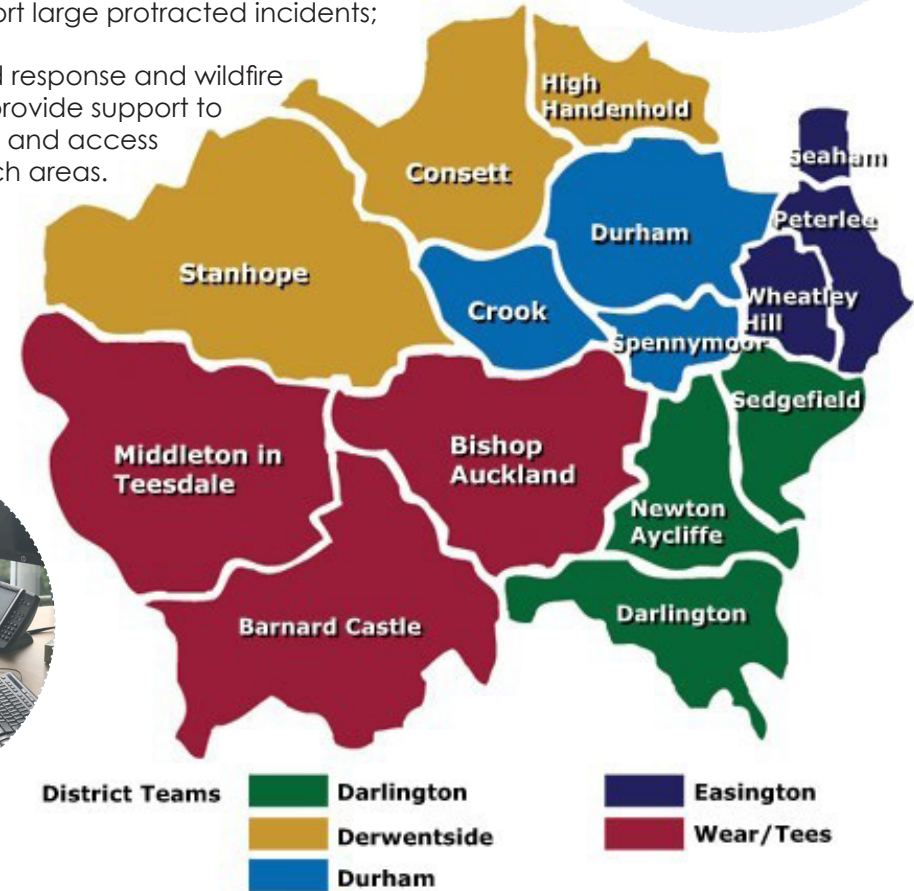
They are based out of our 15 fire stations (see map opposite), our Service headquarters in Belmont and a training centre and technical services centre located in Bowburn.

What resources do we have?

We have a fleet of 26 front-line fire engines in addition to specialist engines and a range of off-road four-wheel drive vehicles to help to deal with those risks identified throughout our IRMP process. These include:

- Aerial ladder platforms for performing rescue at height;
- A specialist rescue unit for RTCs, building collapse and animal rescue;
- Water rescue boats and flood response units for water-related incidents;
- A high-volume pump, foam unit and bulk water carrier to provide water and foam at large incidents;

- Incident response, environmental protection units for hazardous material incidents;
- An incident command vehicle and welfare unit to support large protracted incidents;
- 4x4 targeted response and wildfire vehicles to provide support to the front line and access hard-to-reach areas.

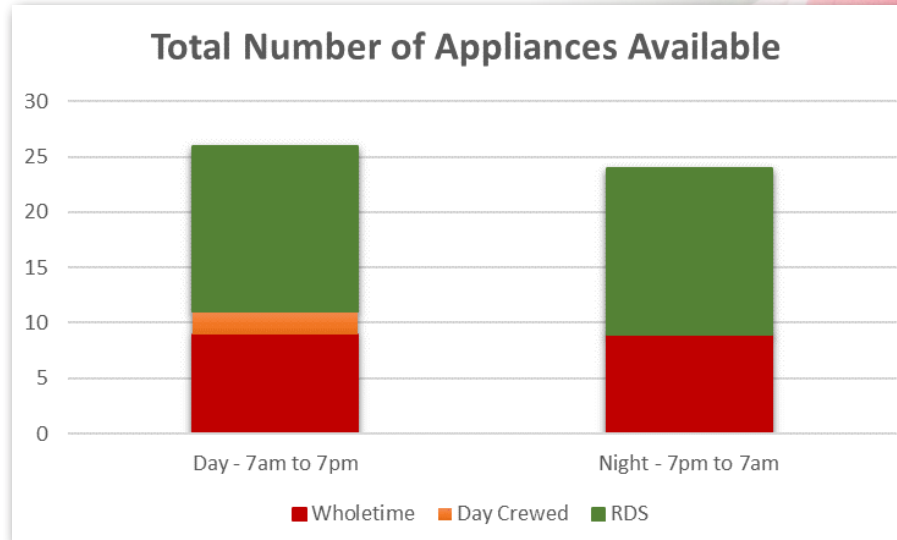


The distribution of our fire stations across the Service area ensures we are able to provide the optimum level of response in those areas deemed to be of greatest risk. Each of the stations are resourced with appliances and specialist equipment that match the levels of risk and demand in that part of our Service area.



Appliance availability

Our maximum appliance availability from 7am to 7pm is 26 whilst between 7pm and 7am it is 24.



Degradation plan

Our degradation plan considers a range of local and national events. These include the reasonable planning assumption of responding to two simultaneous incidents of 5 pumps or one large incident of 10 pumps.

The degradation plan also provides the strategic location of the number of required appliances for normal business. Management intervention is enacted when the Service reaches a heightened state of appliance availability, this is defined at below 15 appliances.

Response standards

Response standards

Our response standards for the next 3 years are:

- **Dwelling fires** – we will attend 70% of dwelling fires in eight minutes and 90% in 11 minutes
- **Non-domestic property fires** – we will attend 70% of non-domestic property fires in eight minutes and 90% in 11 minutes

Our response to dwelling and non-domestic property fires has been derived from previous national response standards, the fire service emergency cover toolkit [FSEC] and a four-year study into actual response data within CDDFRS.

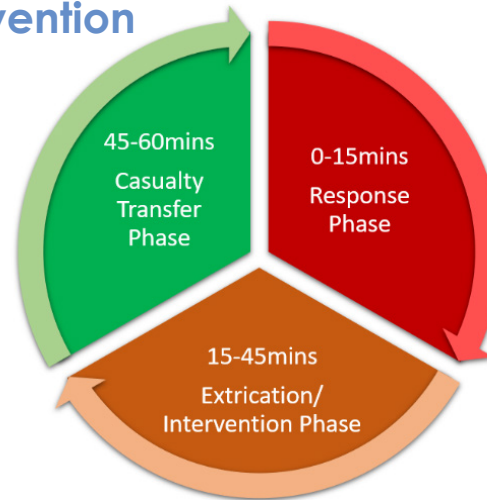
How we have performed?

Year	Dwelling Fires		Non-domestic Property Fires	
	8 mins	11 mins	8 mins	11 mins
2016/17	71.5%	92.5%	56.0%	82.1%
2017/18	66.2%	93.2%	72.3%	86.7%
2018/19	67.6%	87.3%	50%	88.9%

- **RTCs** – we will attend 75% of RTCs in 11 minutes and 90% in 15 minutes

Our response to RTCs is based on the golden hour intervention model for trauma care, where extrication is recommended to take place within 15 minutes and no more than 45 minutes after the collision occurring to maximise the chance of casualty survival.

Golden Hour Trauma Intervention



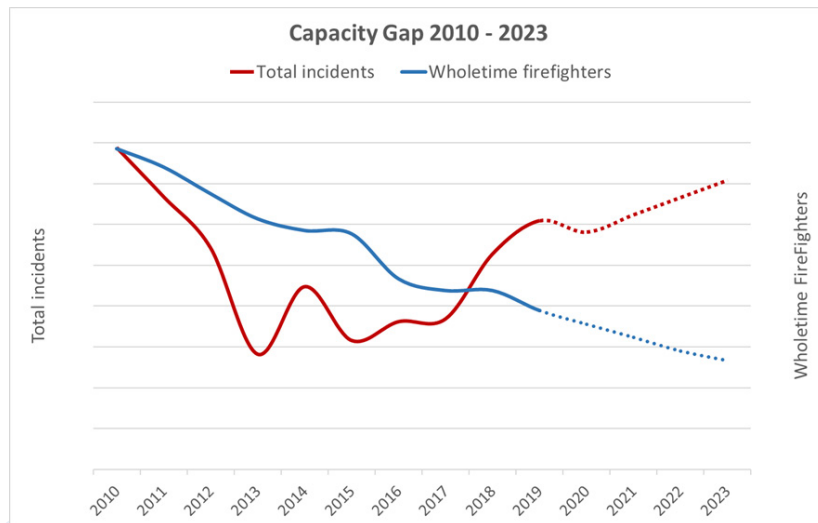
How we have performed?

Year	RTC's	
	11 mins	15 mins
2016/17	81.6%	94%
2017/18	84.7%	95.8%
2018/19	85.8%	95.9%



Our action plan for the next three years

The significant financial challenges that we face require us to continually review the way we deliver our services, so that we can continue to provide the best possible FRS within the budget that we have available to us. If our assumptions are correct about the further reduction in funding that we receive from government and an increase in demand for our services, we will face significant pressures over the next three years. The number of incidents we are responding to has steadily increased whilst the number of firefighters we have to deal with them has reduced as can be seen in the diagram below.



If our performance is to continue to improve, it is therefore even more important that we:

- Continue to innovate to remove bureaucracy, improve efficiency and find new ways of working to free up capacity;
- Explore all opportunities for collaboration that improve value for money, improve outcomes and/or reduce risk for our communities;

- Ensure our resources are allocated in the most appropriate way to maximise the impact we can have on the risks that our communities face.

We realise that our staff are our greatest asset, and we need to ensure they have the right skills and are available in the right places at the right time to carry out their roles effectively.

Our commitment to you is that we will continually review the way that our staff are deployed in order to provide the most efficient and effective arrangements for the delivery of our services. We will do this while also recognising the particular challenge that recruiting RDS firefighters presents to us across certain areas of the Service, which is why we will review our recruitment needs and practices to maximise fire engine availability.

While reviewing the emergency response part of our Service is important, we also intend to do so within a wider framework that considers the optimum organisational balance of resources and staffing.

Our commitment to you is that we will regularly review and update the equipment that is provided to our firefighters to ensure they have the most effective tools to do their job. We will continue to consider new technologies and equipment that make our emergency response more effective, efficient and safer for firefighters.



Our commitment to you is that based on the current information available to us, the following proposals will be considered in the coming years. The most current risk and demand modelling data available at the time and the results from public consultation will inform the strengths and impacts of each proposal:

In 2020/21, the following options would be considered:

- Implementing day crewing on a permanent basis at (Newton Aycliffe) and (Seaham);
- Implementing the 4&2 model at (Durham) on a permanent basis if the trial proves successful;
- Implementing the change to (Spennymoor) where the day crewing engine becomes a wholetime engine on a permanent basis if the trial proves successful;
- Introduce a charging system for certain businesses when we attend multiple unwanted fire signals to their premises if the trial proves successful;
- Review the crewing arrangements at our two appliance RDS stations and trial the opportunity of introducing TRVs to these stations;
- Carry out a further review of the structure at middle and strategic manager levels to take account of any opportunities that collaboration may present for further efficiencies;
- Undertake a further review of the governance arrangements for the Fire Authority;
- Implement any changes suggested through the collaboration projects undertaken with Tyne and Wear FRS and Northumberland FRS.

In 2021/22, the following options would be considered:

- Implementing the outcomes of the review of the crewing arrangements at our two appliance RDS stations and introduce TRVs if the trial proves successful;
- Introduce a trial of riding with four at some single-pump wholetime stations.
- Implement an amended structure at middle and strategic level if the review provides appropriate opportunities;
- Implement any changes suggested through the governance review;
- Implement any changes suggested through the collaboration projects undertaken with Tyne and Wear FRS and Northumberland FRS.

In 2022/23, the following options would be considered:

- Implement the changes of riding with four at some single-pump wholetime stations if the trial proves successful;
- Implement any changes suggested through the collaboration projects undertaken with Tyne and Wear FRS and Northumberland FRS.

Consultation

In order to identify risk we will use a nationally recognised risk assessment framework. Once identified we then manage these risks using various methods of prevention and protection activities while also responding to incidents where necessary, and our outstanding performance tells both ourselves and our communities that our approach is very successful.

The challenges we face over the next three years, however, will require us to adapt, change, innovate and think differently. This is why, within this IRMP, we have outlined a number of proposals that we intend to develop as an organisation in order to protect local communities and respond to emergencies.

Engagement with the residents of County Durham and Darlington and other key stakeholders is vitally important if we want to ensure that our community is a safe place to live and work.

Why do we consult?

As a public funded body, it is essential we seek the views of the people we serve. Your views will help to shape and focus your FRS's activities for the next three years and inform development of the IRMP. We would like to know what you think of our proposals contained within this document.

The more informed we are by your views, the more able we are to meet your aspirations and deliver positive outcomes for the communities of County Durham and Darlington.

During our annual consultation exercise, we will aim to consult with a representative sample of the community we serve. This means consulting with as many of the population across County Durham and Darlington as possible. Our aim is to receive as many responses as we can to ensure the sample size is robust, which means we can be confident in the findings of the consultation.

How do we consult?

At the end of every year, we carry out a brief survey.

This year's survey asks key questions and is available to complete:

- On our website;
- On our Twitter feed;
- On our Facebook page;
- During our SWVs;
- At public events and meetings.

We consult over a period of 12 weeks, with the next set of results available in March 2020.



