

## PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2019

### FIRE AND RESCUE INCIDENT STATISTICS: ENGLAND, APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018

---

#### REPORT OF AREA MANAGER COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT

---

##### Purpose of the report

1. To present a comparative analysis of key operational performance indicators (PIs) within County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) against national performance data contained within one of the national reports published annually by the Home Office.

##### Background

2. The report 'Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics: England, April 2017 to March 2018', published by the Home Office presents a range of statistics about the incidents attended by fire and rescue services (FRS) across England in 2017/18 including both fires and non-fire incidents and details on fatalities and non-fatal casualties arising from those incidents.
3. This report compares our strategic PIs relating to key aspects of the operational performance of the service against the national data published by the Home Office.
4. This report only covers the incident related statistics from the Home Office report but fire prevention data from the Home Office data tables released in November are also included.

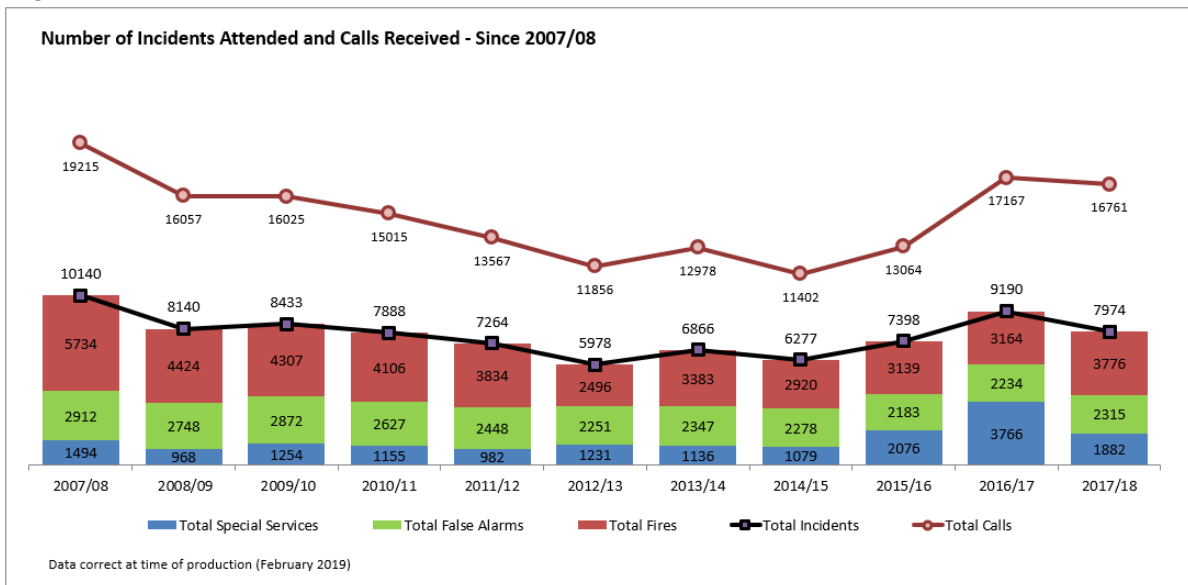
##### Comparative analysis

5. An overview of key strategic operational performance indicators that are readily comparable to the data within the national reports are presented within the report. Some datasets are not directly comparable with our performance measures but noted where this is the case.
6. To make it easier to compare CDDFRS with other FRS, the data is expressed either as a value per head of population or number of property types (e.g. per 10,000 population).

## Total calls and total incidents

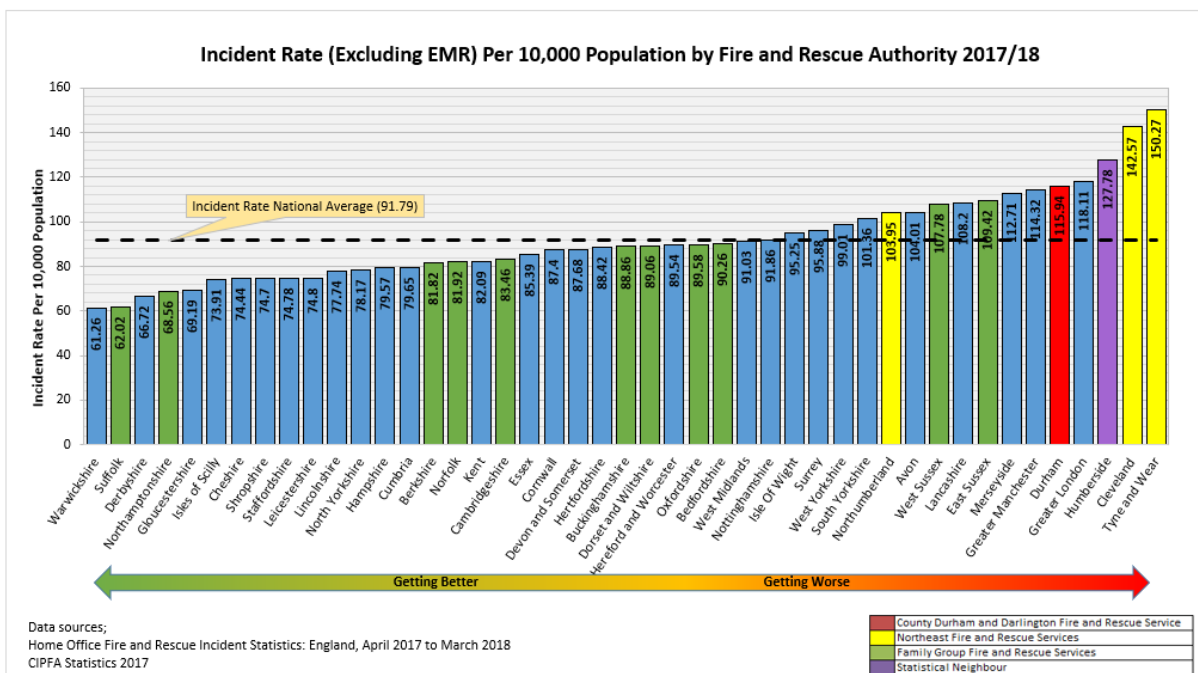
7. Figure 1 below shows the total calls and incidents attended by CDDFRS over the past 10 years.

**Figure 1**



8. Fire and rescue services nationally attended 564,827 incidents in England during 2017/18, 1% higher than the previous year. In CDDFRS, total incidents attended decreased by 13%, mainly due to a decrease in non-fire incidents, the majority being emergency medical response (EMR) calls.
9. In terms of incident rates (excluding EMR) per 10,000 population, CDDFRS was 26.3% higher than the national average, placing CDDFRS 5<sup>th</sup> busiest as figure 2 below shows. This compares to CDDFRS being 8<sup>th</sup> busiest in 2016/17.

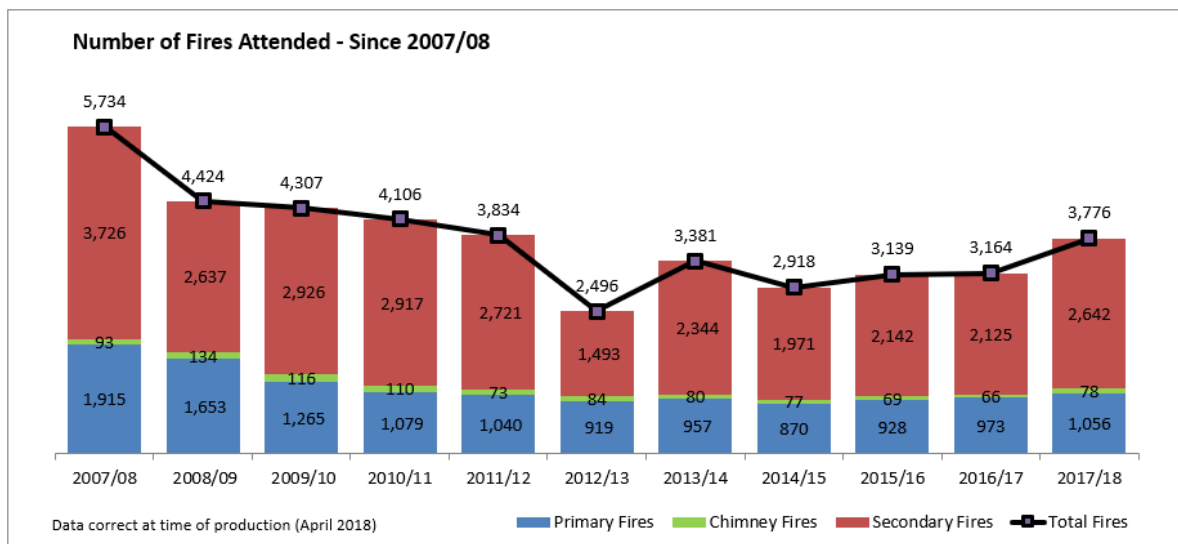
**Figure 2**



## Total fires attended

10. Nationally the total number of fires attended by FRSs has decreased, falling 44.9% from 293,920 in 2007/08 to 154,445 in 2012/13. Since then the total number of fires has been broadly stable ranging from 171,329 in 2013/14, 155,042 in 2014/15, 162,273 in 2015/16, 161,997 in 2016/17 to 167,150 in 2017/18.
11. In CDDFRS there is a similar picture with the number of fires attended reducing by 34.1% since 2007/08, falling to a low in 2012/13, then broadly following the same pattern as the national figures.

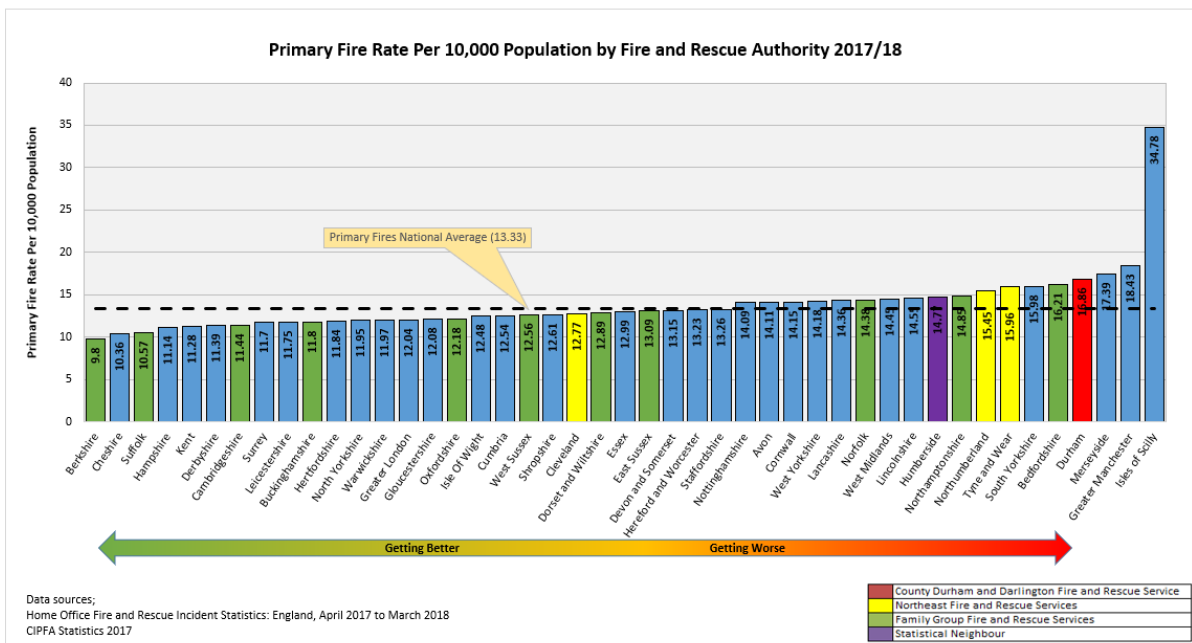
**Figure 3**



## Primary fires

12. Primary fires are fires with one or more of the following characteristics:
  - all fires in buildings and vehicles that are not derelict or in some outdoor structures;
  - any fire involving casualties or rescues;
  - any fire attended by five or more appliances.
13. Nationally, primary fires have been on a long-term downward trend, decreasing 36% over the last 10 years. Despite the size of this decrease over 10 years, the latest annual decrease has only been 1%, with 74,118 in 2017/18 compared to 74,913 the year before.
14. Although the latest annual decrease was 1%, there was some variation across primary fire types, namely: an increase in other outdoor fires (4%) and dwelling fires (1%) and a decrease in other building fires (2%) and road vehicle fires (5%).
15. The decrease in primary fires in CDDFRS over the last 10 years has been greater than the national decrease. The CDDFRS reduction was 45% compared to the 36% national reduction. The latest annual variance saw an 8.6% rise in primary fire in CDDFRS compared to the 1% reduction nationally.
16. In 2017/18 the number of primary fires that occurred within CDDFRS was higher than the national average and ranked CDDFRS with the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate nationally. This was compared with 10<sup>th</sup> the previous year. Figure 4 shows the CDDFRS performance relative to other FRS.

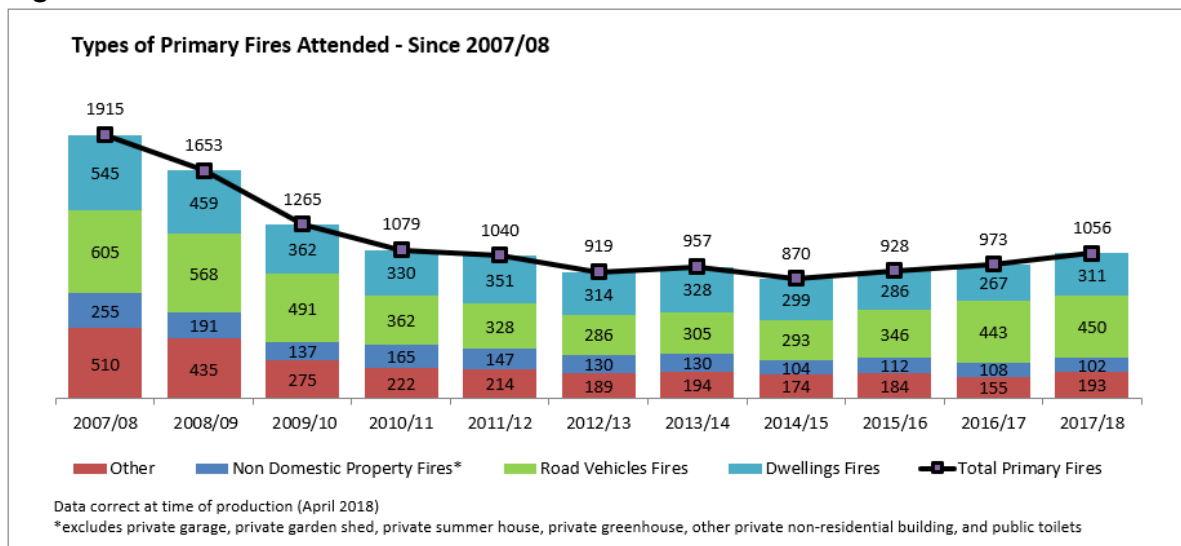
Figure 4



Primary fires types

17. In CDDFRS, despite the longer-term trend of fire reduction, fires have risen steadily over the past 4 years as figure 5 shows. The increase is mainly due to a rise in road vehicle fires which accounted for 42.6% of all primary fires in 2017/18. 66.6% of all road vehicle fires were deliberate.

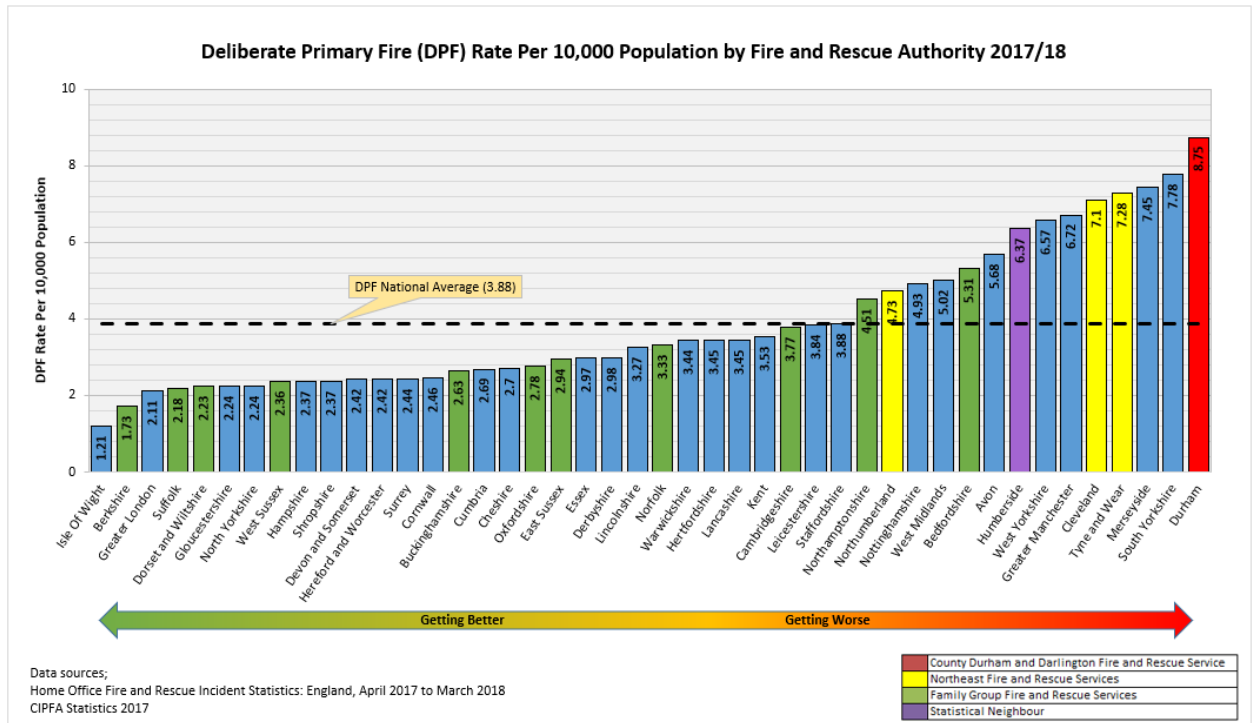
Figure 5



## Deliberate primary fires

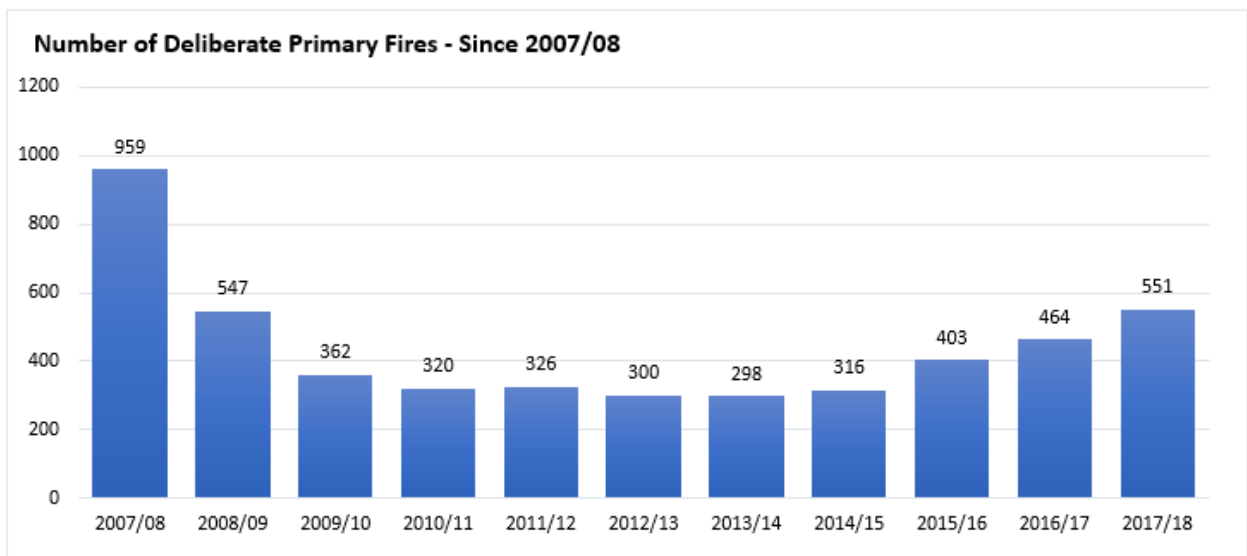
18. There were 19% more deliberate primary fires in CDDFRS during 2017/18 than the previous year. Nationally there was a 3% reduction. In CDDFRS the number recorded per head of population was 126% higher than the national average as shown in figure 6. This also shows that CDDFRS has the highest rate of deliberate primary fires nationally. In the previous year CDDFRS had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate. 55% of deliberate primary fires during 2017/18 in CDDFRS occurred in road vehicles.

**Figure 6**



19. Since 2007/08 deliberate primary fires in CDDFRS have fallen by 43% compared to a 57% decrease seen across England.

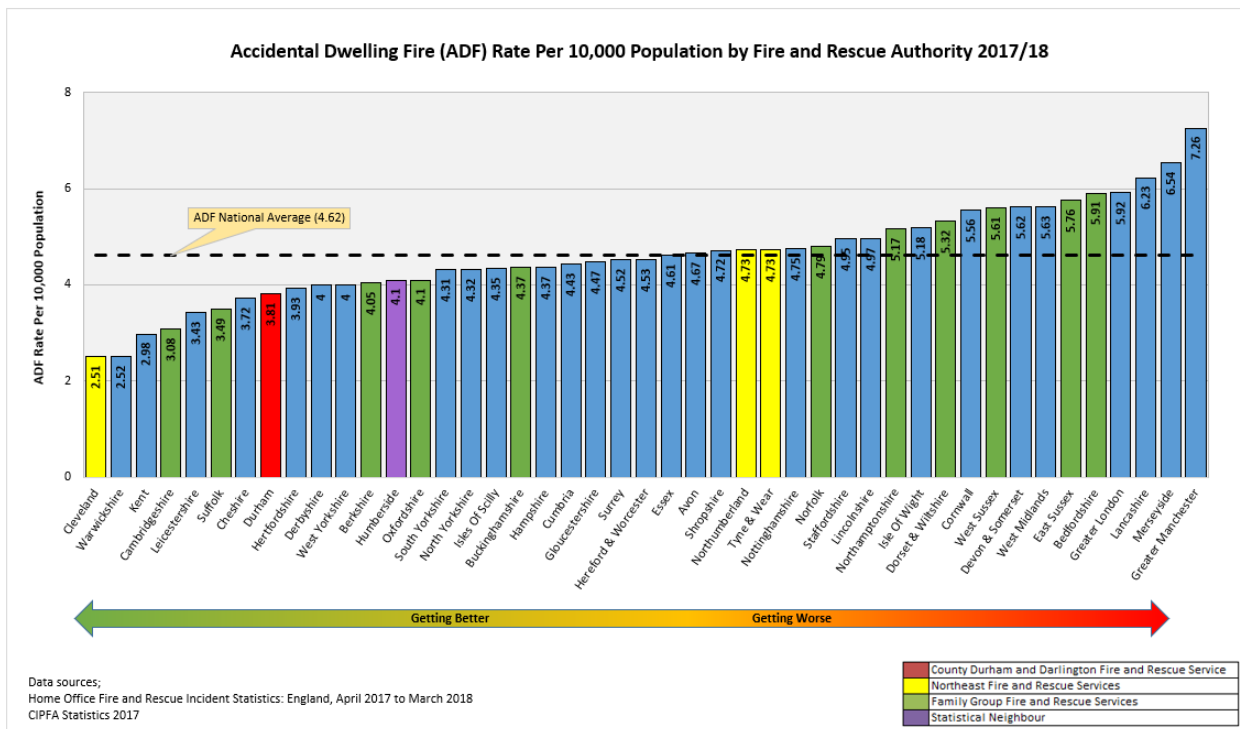
**Figure 7**



## Accidental dwelling fires, injuries and fatalities

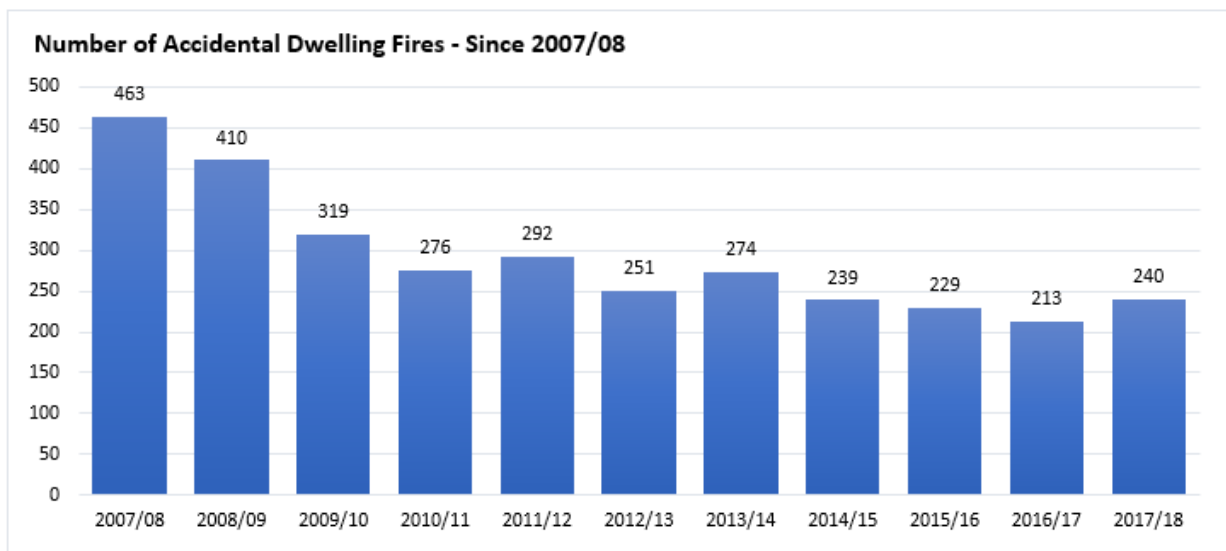
20. Accidental dwelling fires (ADF) in England increased by 1% between 2016/17 and 2017/18 with CCDFRS showing a 13% increase, with CDDFRS being the 8<sup>th</sup> best performing service in England, shown in figure 8. This compares to 5<sup>th</sup> best performing for the previous year.

**Figure 8**



21. The longer-term trend nationally shows since 2007/08 there has been a 20% decrease in ADFs, with a 48% reduction in CDDFRS as shown in figure 9.

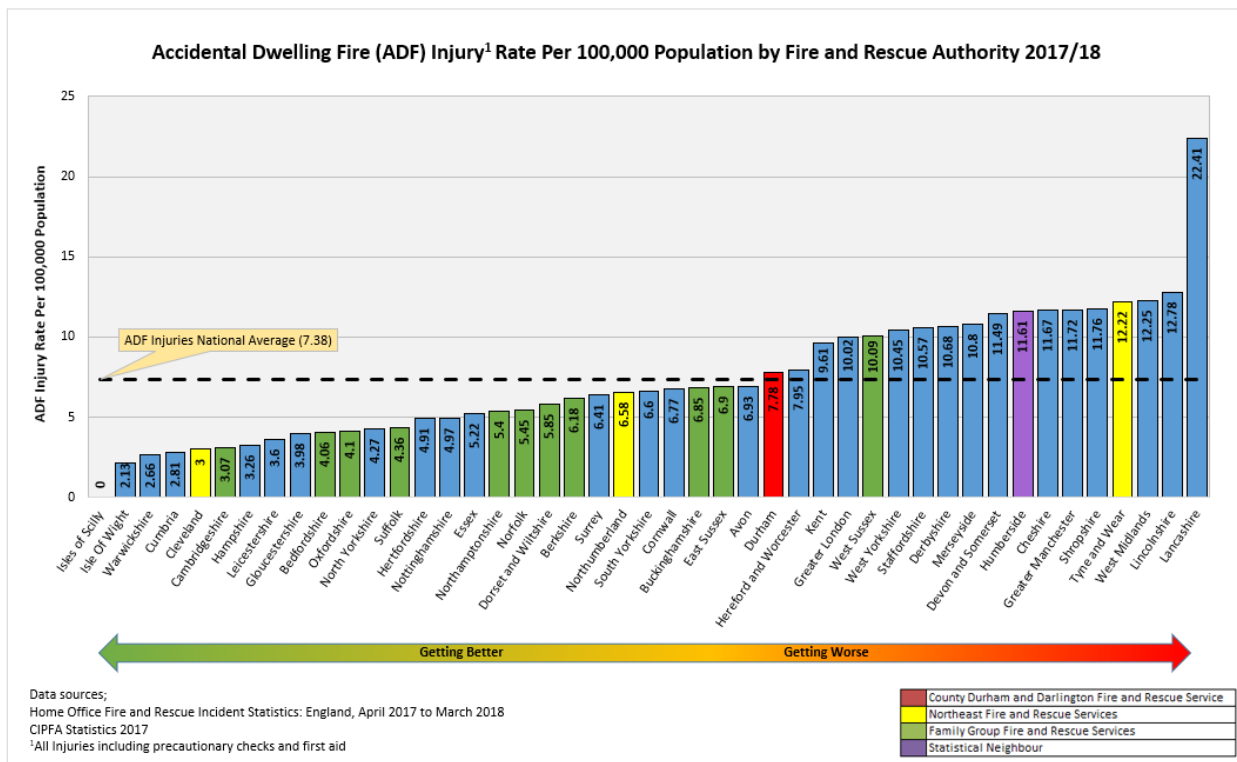
**Figure 9**



22. In CDDFRS, the number of all accidental dwelling fire injuries increased by 6.5% between 2016/17 and 2017/18 compared to a 1.1% increase nationally. However, those requiring hospital treatment within CDDFRS reduced from 24 in 2016/17 to 20 in 2017/18. Figure 10

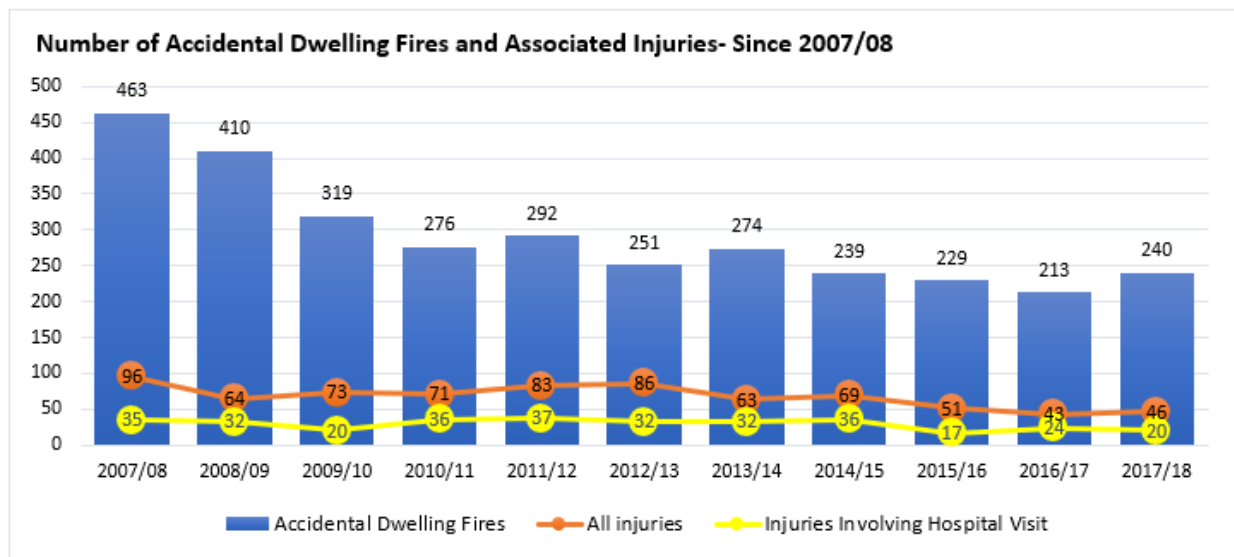
shows the injury rate per head of population for every FRS. CDDFRS is just above the national average.

**Figure 10**



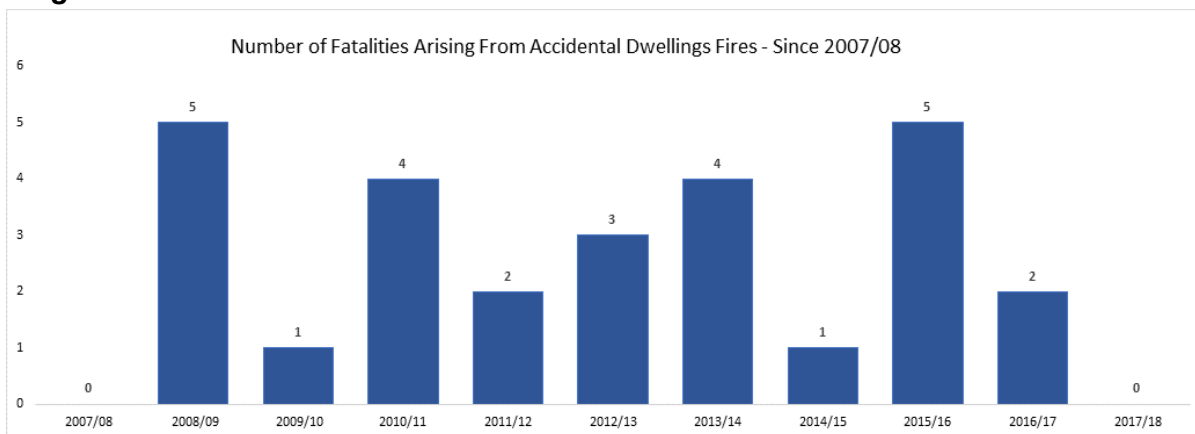
23. Since 2007/08 there has been a 35% national reduction in injuries arising from accidental dwelling fires. This compares to a 52% reduction in CDDFRS with serious injuries comprising of hospital visits falling by 43%. Figure 11 shows the number of accidental dwelling fires and associated injuries.

**Figure 11**



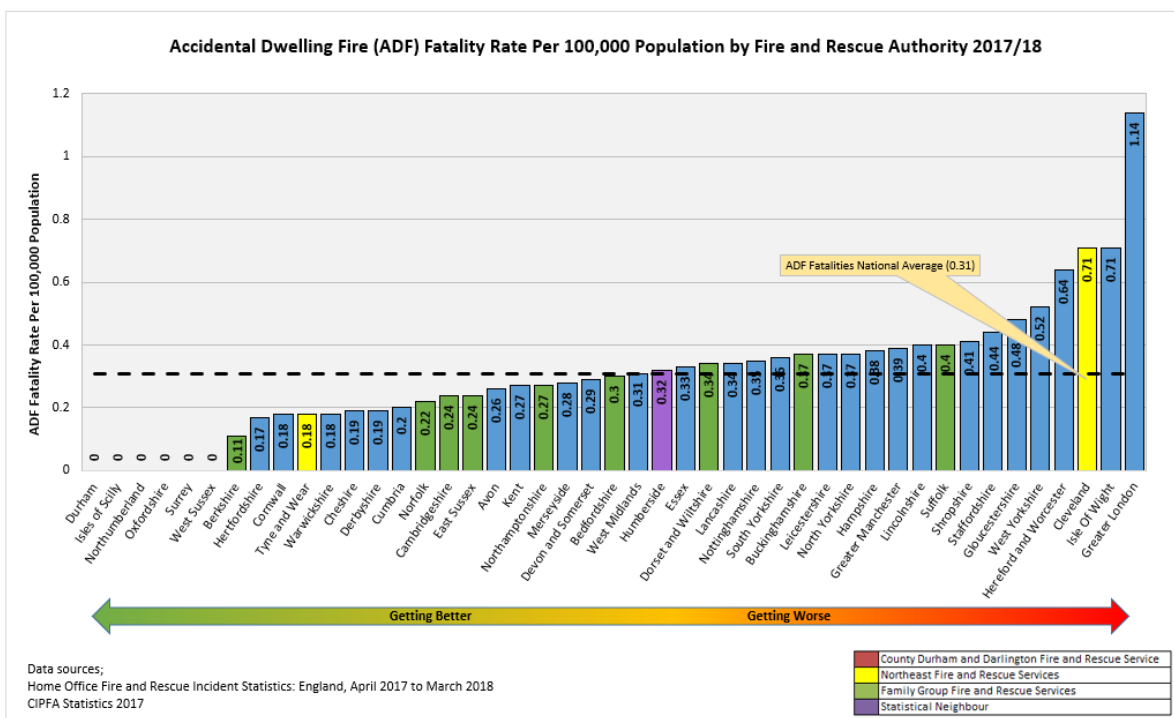
24. The number of accidental dwelling fire fatalities in England increased by 33% to 243 during 2017/18. This was mainly attributed to the Grenfell Fire in which 71 people died. CDDFRS had zero accidental dwelling fire fatalities during 2017/18.

**Figure 12**



25. In 2017/18, the fatality rate in accidental dwelling fires for CDDFRS, per head of population, is zero with the national average at 0.31 as figure 13 shows.

**Figure 13**

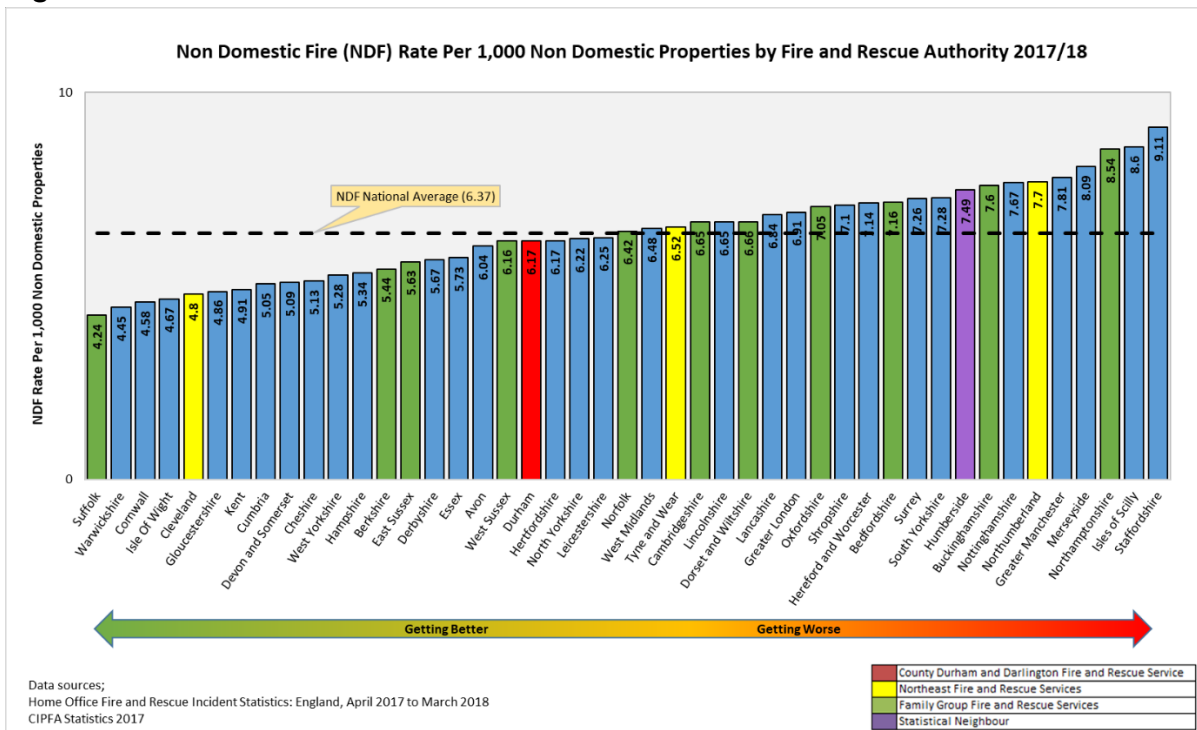


**Primary fires in non-domestic properties**

26. The number of fires in non-domestic premises nationally has fallen 33% since 2007/08 with CDDFRS seeing a 53% reduction in over the same period. The latest annual change in CDDFRS was a 3% rise compared to a 2% reduction nationally. The fire rate per head of population for 2017/18 is below the national average ranking CDDFRS 19<sup>th</sup> nationally, as shown in figure 14. The rank in 2016/17 was 20<sup>th</sup>.



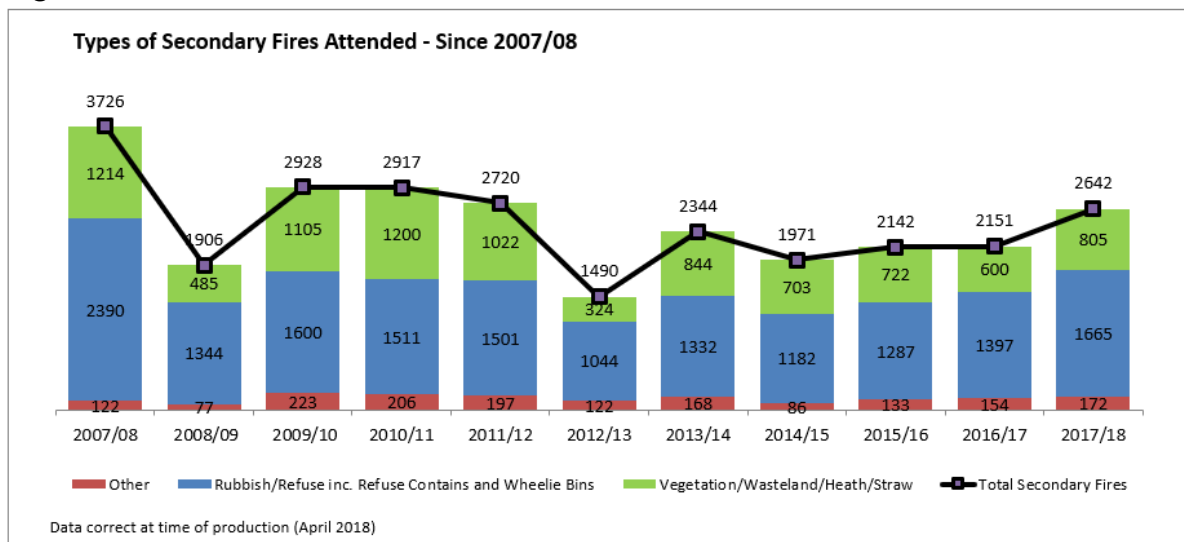
Figure 14



Secondary fires

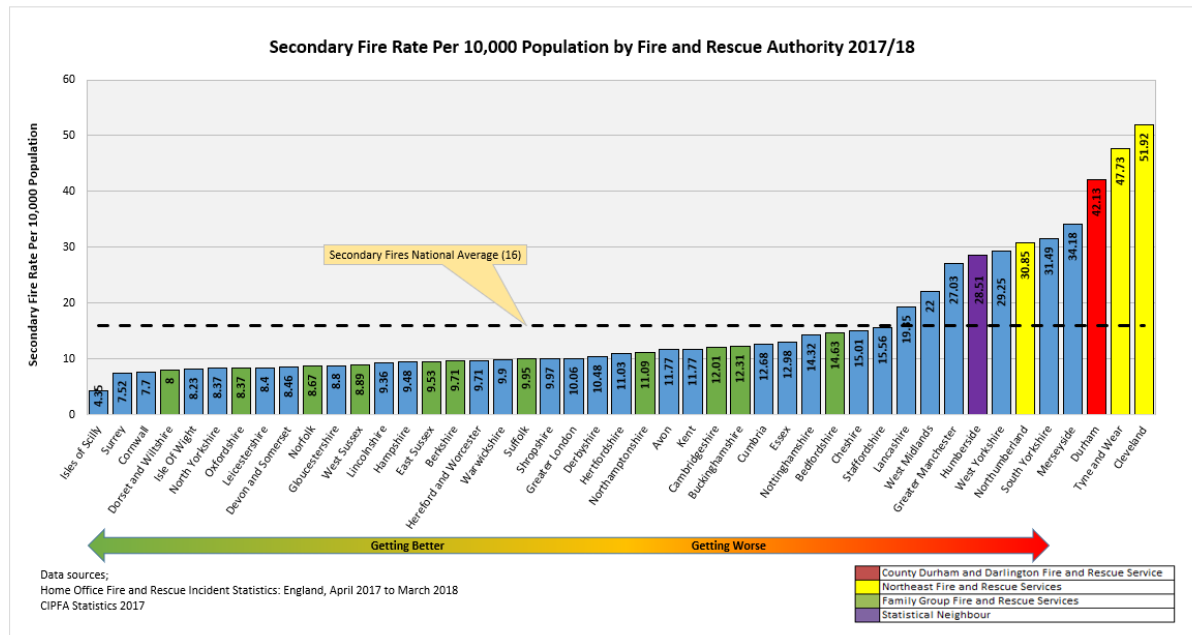
27. Secondary fires can broadly be thought of as smaller outdoor fires, not involving people or property. Of the 167,257 fires attended nationally in 2017/18, 89,038 were secondary fires. For England, this was a 7% increase on last year compared to a 23% increase for CDDFRS. Nationally, secondary fires have reduced by 48% since 2007/08. In CDDFRS, secondary fires reduced by 29% over the same time period. However, since 2014/15 secondary fires in CDDFRS have increased annually as shown in figure 15.

Figure 15



28. Secondary fires are an issue for all FRS in the north east, with CDDFRS 3rd worst performing in England, but performing better than Tyne & Wear and Cleveland, as shown in figure 16.

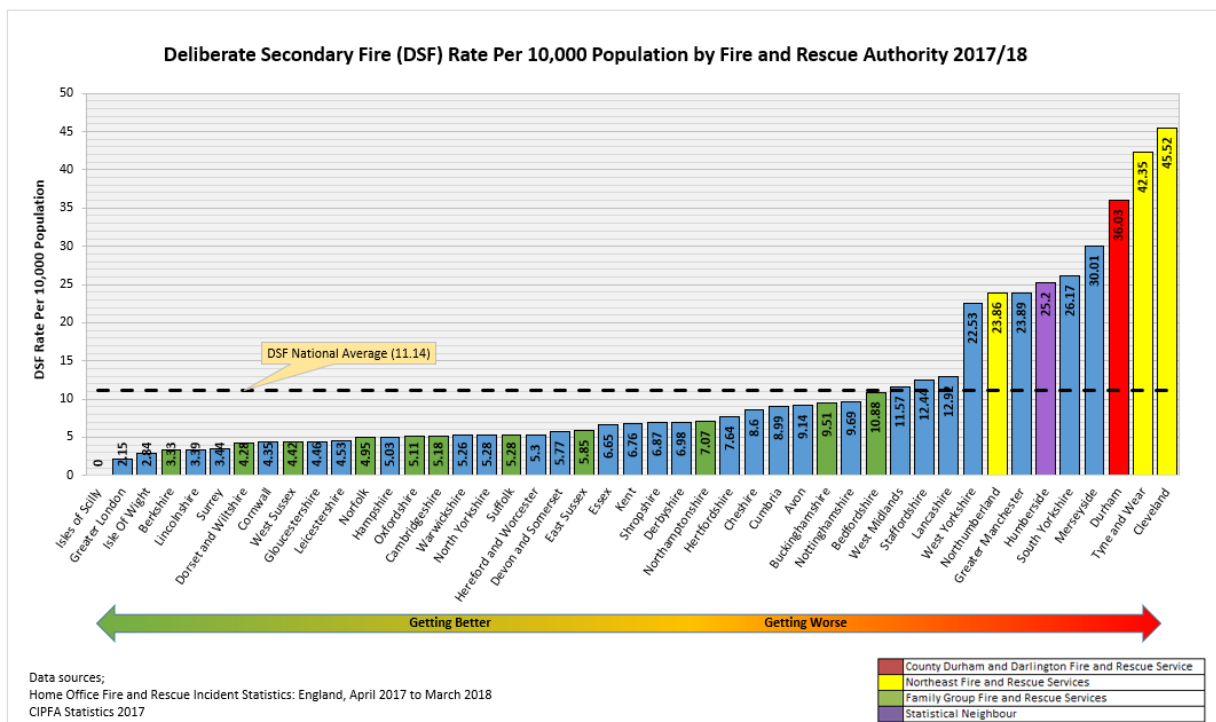
**Figure 16**



**Deliberate secondary fires**

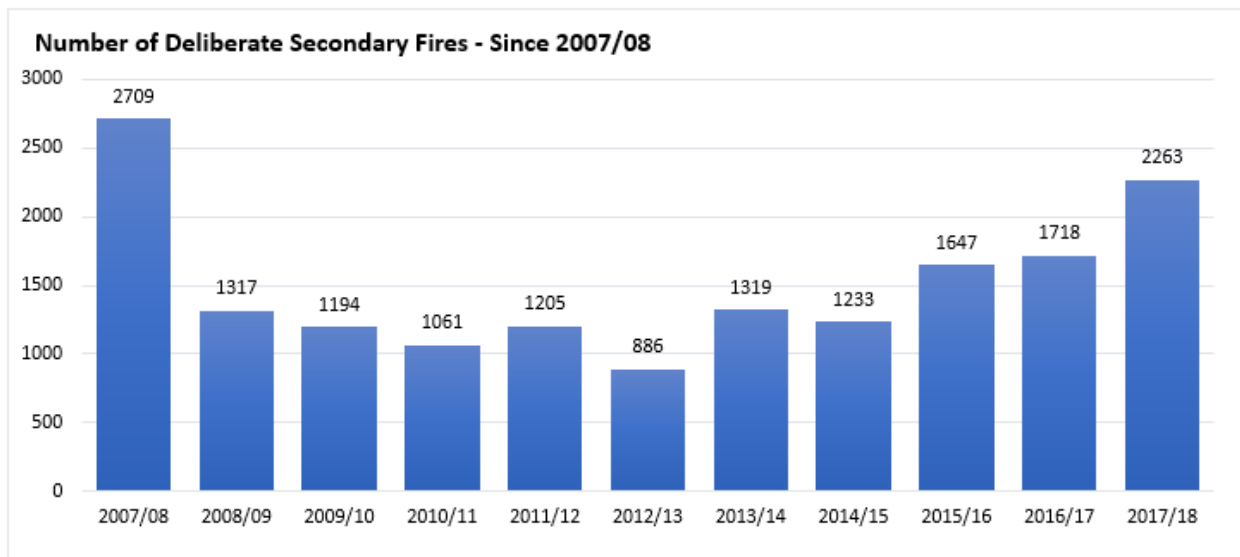
29. There were 32% more deliberate secondary fires in CDDFRS during 2017/18 than the previous year, compared to an annual increase of 10% nationally. The number recorded per head of population was 224% higher than the national average ranking CDDFRS 3rd worst performing nationally. Figure 17 shows the national performance for deliberate secondary fires.

**Figure 17**



30. Nationally, since 2011/12 there has been a 33.3% reduction in deliberate secondary fires, however in our area these have risen by 87.8% as figure 18 below shows.

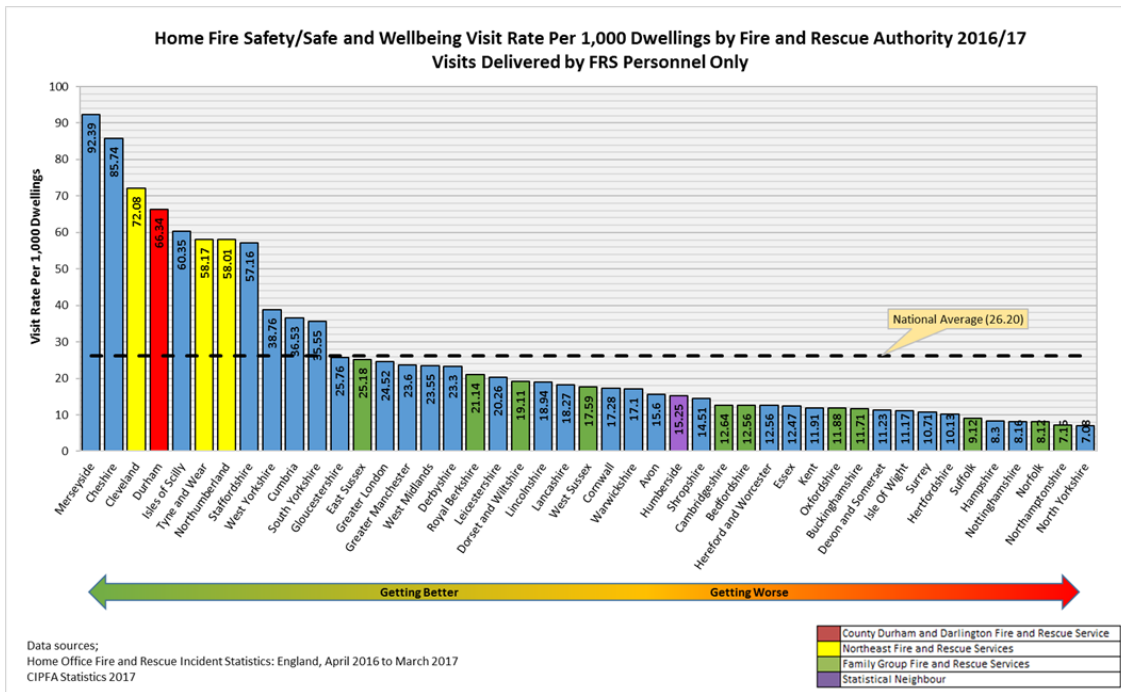
**Figure 18**



### Home fire safety checks/safe & wellbeing visits

31. FRSs completed 576,040 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and/or Safe & Wellbeing Visits (SWV) in 2017/18, 2.39% less than last year.
32. In contrast, CDDFRS completed 19,545 HFSC/SWV in 2017/18, a 3.33% increase on 2016/17. In 2016/17, to reflect the move from HFSCs to the broader, more comprehensive safe and wellbeing visits which take longer to undertake, the annual target was reduced from 20,000 to 18,000. This target was also repeated for 2017/18 and despite this lower target, this still placed us 4<sup>th</sup> best performing FRS in the country, in terms of HFSC/SWV per 1,000 dwellings as figure 19 shows.

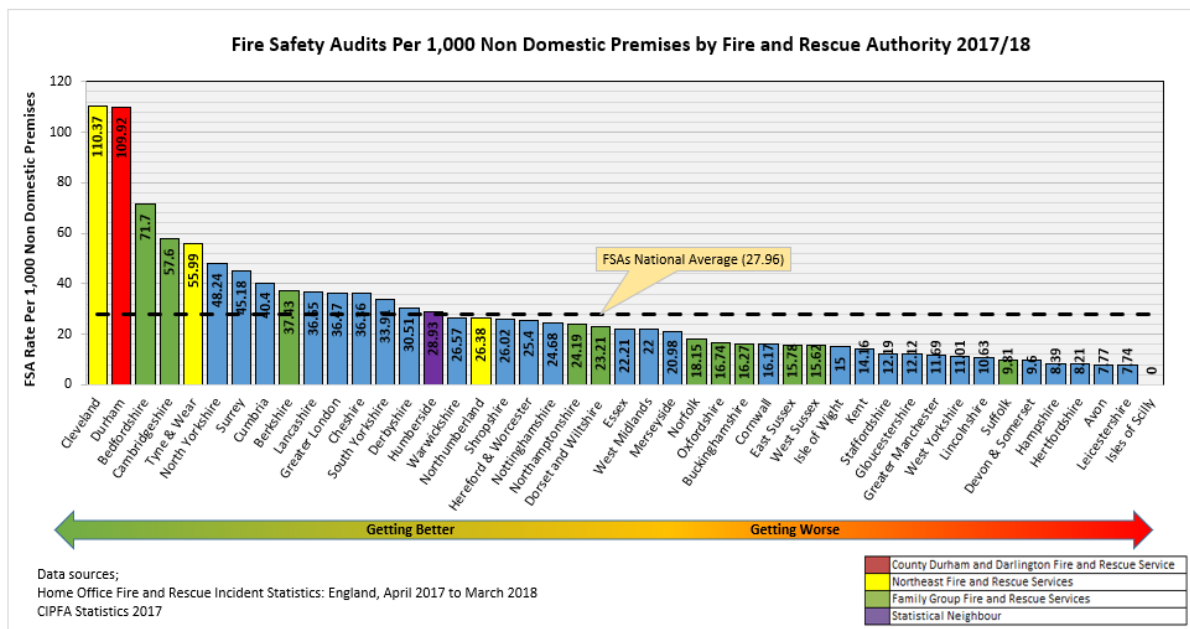
Figure 19



### Fire safety audits

33. Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver their enforcement duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO) through locally determined, risk-based programmes of audit/inspection visits to non-domestic premises.
34. Nationally, FRs carried out 49,423 Fire Safety Audits (FSA) in 2017/18, 8.9% less than the previous year and 39.7% lower than 2011/12. CDDFRS staff undertook 2,136 FSAs in 2017/18, slightly higher (3.4%) than the previous year but 152.4% more than 2011/12 (846 FSAs). 2011/12 has been used for comparative purposes due to the unavailability of data nationally going back any further as this is no longer published by the Home Office.
35. This rise is because in previous years, the volume of fire safety audits undertaken in CDDFRS was limited by the capacity of staff working in the Fire Safety Team. The strategy to utilise operational crews to undertake fire safety audits has proved successful contributing to CDDFRS becoming the second-best performing service in the country with regard to the number of FSAs carried out on non-domestic properties, as shown in figure 20. In 2016/17 CDDFRS had the highest delivery rate.

Figure 20



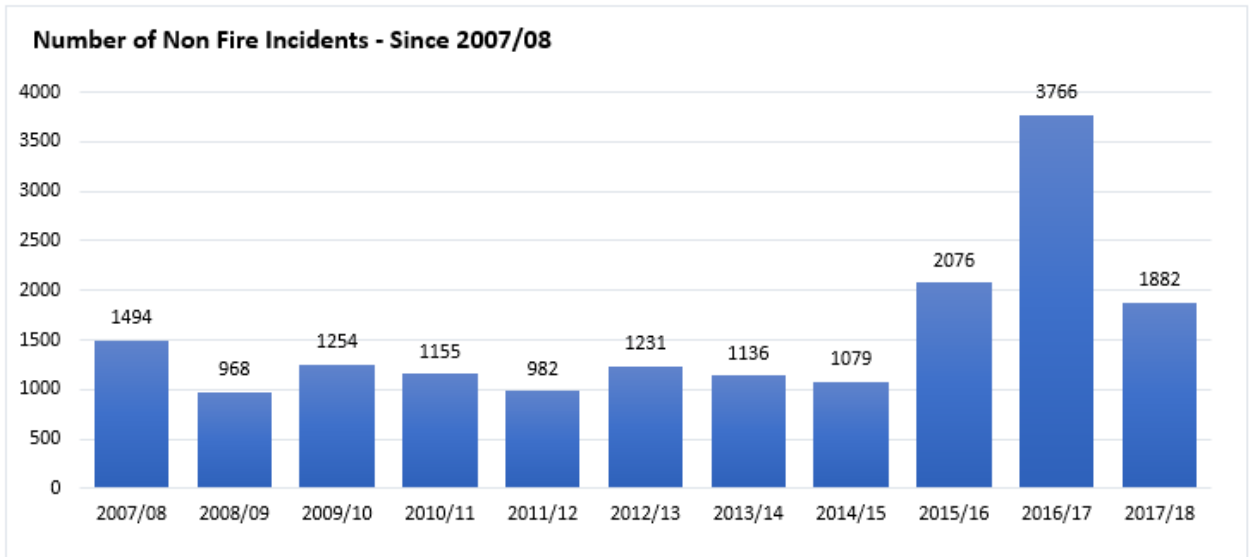
36. This achievement reflects the Service's extensive work with businesses and organisations to help keep people safe at work or when visiting a workplace such as a hotel or shop. CDDFRS does this by offering fire safety advice to businesses and conducting an audit programme on workplace fire safety risk assessments.

**Non-fire incidents**

37. FRSs attend many types of incidents that are not fires, for example flooding incidents, road traffic collisions, rescuing animals and effecting entry/exit. For the first time, in 2016/17 FRSs attended more non-fire incidents than fires. There has been a 1% decrease in the number of non-fire (also known as Special Service) incidents attended by FRSs from 174,560 in 2016/17 to 172,052 in 2017/18.

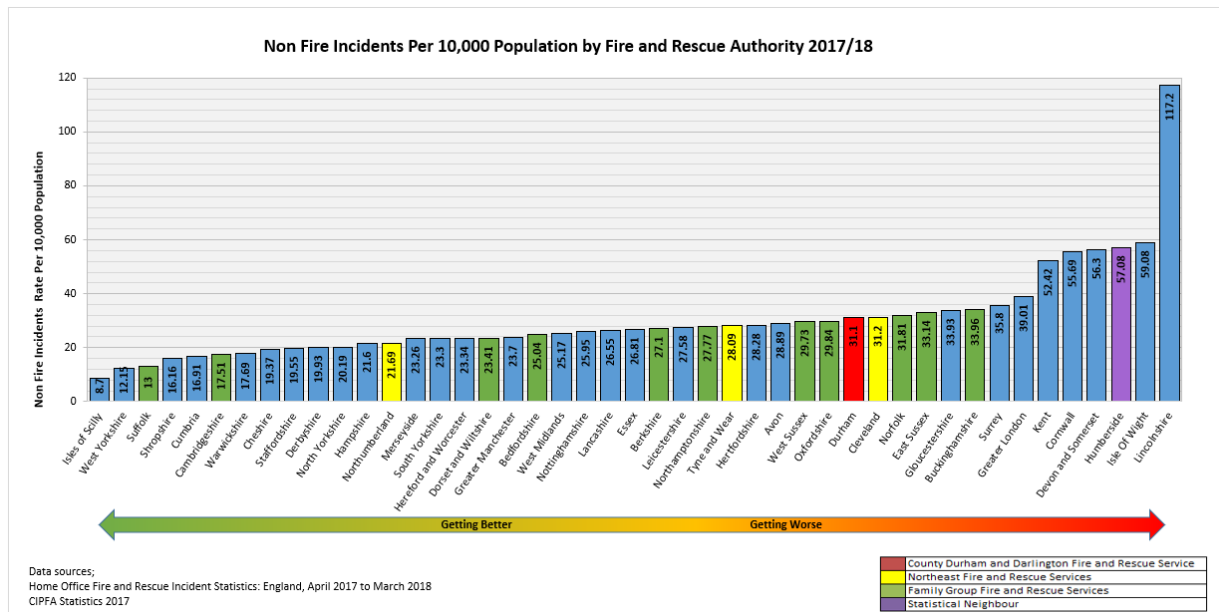
38. The decrease in non-fire incidents nationally was driven to a large extent by decreases in medical co-responding or emergency medical response (EMR) incidents. Between 2016/17 and 2017/18 however, there was a 28% decrease in the number of medical incidents attended falling from around 46,000 to around 33,000. In CDDFRS, non-fire incidents have decreased by 50.1% from 2016/17 to 2017/18 as in figure 21.

**Figure 21**



39. In terms of non-fire incidents per 10,000 population, CDDFRS was 14<sup>th</sup> busiest as shown in figure 22.

**Figure 22**



## Summary

40. The comparative analysis presented in this report highlights the advantages of considering performance compared to other FRS as well as against our own targets or against previous years.
41. The analysis has reinforced where we know we are performing strongly, such as being the second-best performing FRS for delivering fire safety audits (figure 20) which has resulted in a 53% reduction in non-domestic property fires since 2007/08 and current performance being better than the national average (figure 14). We are also the 4<sup>th</sup> best performing in terms of delivering HFSC/SWV (figure 19), an investment which has resulted in a 48% reduction in ADFs since 2007/08 (figure 9), a 52% reduction in all ADF injuries (figure 11) and CDDFRS being well below the national average for ADFs making us the 8<sup>th</sup> best performing FRS in England (figure 8).
42. However, it also highlights the challenges we face in terms of deliberate primary and secondary fires, where we sit 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom nationally for deliberate secondary fires (figure 16) and bottom nationally for deliberate primary fires (figure 6). The increase in deliberate fires in our area is something the Service has been aware of, with the Performance and Programme Board scrutinising it in depth after 'calling-in' deliberate fires early in the year. Deliberate fires are a concern across the whole of the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside as can be seen in figures 6 and 17. We are working hard to better understand the root causes and working with partners to invest resources where they will have the biggest impact on performance.
43. Consequently, the outcomes from this analysis are helping us to better understand the risks in our communities, how we are performing and informing us where best to invest our limited resources to improve performance going forward, it also supports our efforts to measure and improve staff productivity.

## Recommendations

44. Performance Committee members are requested to:
  - a. Note and comment on the content of the report.

Keith Wanley, Area Manager, 0191 3755630