



Statement of Assurance

2018 - 2019



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



Safest People, Safest Places

Foreword

This statement of assurance is published to demonstrate how County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, has met its commitments to our communities across County Durham and Darlington in providing an efficient and effective fire and rescue service (FRS) during 2018/19.

Having the 'safest people and safest places' is at the heart of everything we do as a FRS and is the golden thread running through every aspect of our work, whether that is responding to emergencies or undertaking wider prevention and protection activities around our risk and demand profiles.

During 2018/19 the fire and rescue sector continued to face significant financial and governance challenges, and this has resulted in County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) looking for innovative ways to deliver our core workstreams which includes strategic collaborative projects. As a service we have continued to use innovative methods in the recruitment of personnel and in our drive to continuously improve our culture and leadership style.

Although 2018/19 saw an increase for the second year in the number of accidental dwelling fires, we are extremely pleased to report the lowest number of injuries resulting from this type of incident and we will continue to work with partners to identify those people most at risk from experiencing and being injured in a dwelling fire. The success of our collaborative approach to community safety especially through our safe and wellbeing visits (SWV) is making a real difference to our communities. We will continue to analyse and develop our approach in this area, working with our partners on innovative solutions to further reduce accidental dwelling fires and the harm they cause.

The Service continues to experience high levels of demand from deliberate fire activity across many areas of County Durham and Darlington and there is a strong link with areas of deprivation and continuing austerity. In 2018/19 we saw a slight decrease in deliberate primary fires, however a significant increase in the number of deliberate secondary fires was observed. Although the commitment to partnership working has so far been excellent, we all recognise these problems are complex. We will continue to influence a strong partnership approach in these areas and continue to evaluate all of the activity undertaken.

Throughout 2018/19 we have continued to invest in a different business fire safety model where our emergency response crews continue to deliver some of the highest numbers of fire safety audits in the country, continue to support our central Business Fire Safety Team and gain knowledge of building complexity that would support an operational incident.

The 2018 High Court Ruling of contraventions of Working Time Regulations from Close Proximity Crewing influenced a significant piece of work looking at our emergency response provision to ensure that we continue to have compliant shift systems with the right resources in the right places at the right times. Our IRMP consultation from November 2018 to February 2019 was based on the removal of our Day Crewing Plus stations and adapting our emergency response delivery model to one that delivered Service wide improvements to our response standards. We will continue to evaluate how risk and demand profiles across our Service are changing to ensure they meet the needs of our communities.

As Chair of County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority and Chief Fire Officer of CDDFRS, we are satisfied that, during 2018/19 our business has been conducted in accordance with proper standards and law and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. Additionally, we are satisfied that the Authority has done everything within its power to comply with the requirements of the 2018 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.



Cllr John Robinson
Chair of the Fire Authority



Stuart Errington
Chief Fire Officer

Our Focus

Our vision is simple

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

Our strategic priorities

The Authority is focussed on identifying, assessing and managing risks whilst also 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.



Our values

We have stated values which describe the ethos of CDDFRS, how personnel should carry out their role on a daily basis and how our staff should be perceived by the public. These values are known in our organisation as the **PIE** values.

Professional



Innovative



Effective



We aim to be the best FRS in the UK, and we therefore expect our staff to portray certain behaviours. How well our staff are demonstrating these behaviours as part of their day to day job are assessed within our bespoke appraisal system. The range of these behaviours fall into four areas:

- **How we approach challenges**

We will approach challenges with flexibility, enthusiasm, motivation, passion, determination and resilience.

- **How we conduct ourselves**

We will conduct ourselves in a manner that is honest, trustworthy, reliable, accountable, consistent and respectful.

- **How we collaborate with others**

We will be approachable, supportive, encouraging, inclusive and value development when collaborating.

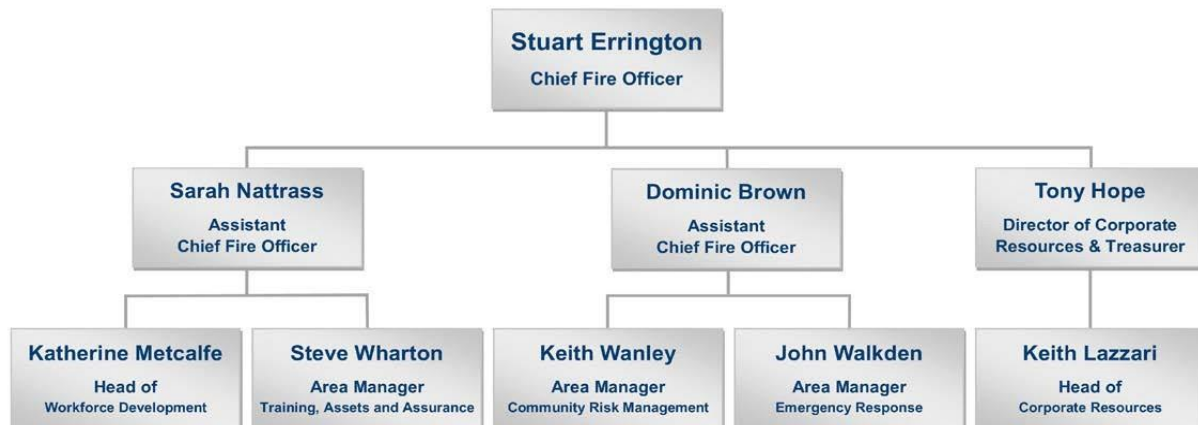
- **How we drive change across the organisation to make a difference**

We will drive change by being creative, resourceful, courageous, original, clear and focused.

Overview of our fire and rescue service

Overview of our structure

The Service Leadership Team (SLT) provide the senior executive officer function within the Service. The Fire and Rescue Authority delegates to the SLT, the effective management of the organisation and its resources, the delivery of the primary corporate, operational and support services and the execution of the statutory responsibilities. The SLT comprised of:



The communities we serve

Our community

CDDFRS is situated in the heart of the North East of England, bordered to the north by Tyne and Wear, and Northumberland, Cumbria to the west, Cleveland to the south east and North Yorkshire to the south.

We protect a population of 630,009 who occupy 285,135 households and 18,628 business premises across an area that covers approximately 2,432 km²/939 miles².

The city of Durham and town of Darlington are the major centres in our Service area, with both situated on the east coast main line and close to the A1(M).

Other medium sized towns each presenting their own risks and challenges are Bishop Auckland, Chester-Le-Street, Consett, Crook, Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee, Seaham, Spennymoor and Stanley.

Our natural environment

The area is one of huge contrast and diversity with a rich history and heritage in coal and iron mining, farming and heavy railway industry.

From the North Pennines in the west to the Durham Heritage Coastline in the east it includes landscapes, habitats and features of local, national and international importance.

Whilst the central and eastern areas of the region are densely populated; in contrast, the western side of the Service area, bordering with Cumbria and North Yorkshire is very rural and presents a significant wildfire risk.

Our built environment

Over the last 25 years the traditional industries, such as coal mining and steel manufacturing have disappeared. These have been replaced by high-tech factories and modern business parks in towns such as Peterlee and Sedgefield. Further regeneration is taking place in other local areas such as Darlington, Spennymoor and Bishop Auckland.

Approximately 20% of housing in the County is in social sector ownership with the majority concentrated in South and East Durham. The current stock is predominantly made up of terraced and semi-detached houses, with the proportion of flats and detached houses in the County lower than the national average.

The area has some significant transport networks including accessibility by rail via the East Coast mainline, by road via the A1 (M) and A19 and by air via Newcastle and Durham Tees Valley International Airports.

Durham has a world class University which has been a leading centre of scholarship for over 100 years with the students and graduates making a significant contribution to the local area and its economy. Throughout 2018/19 the student numbers and provision accommodation has continued to grow. The specific risks associated with high levels of student numbers and accommodation are outlined in our Community Risk Profile.

Our heritage

Tourism plays an integral part in the local economy. There are over 260 ancient monuments in the County including Durham Cathedral and Durham Castle that are classified as World Heritage sites. Other key attractions include Beamish Museum, the North Pennines (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and the Durham County Cricket Ground at Chester-Le-Street attracting thousands of visitors each year.

In addition, within the Service area there is a mixture of mining and farming heritage, as well as the remains of a Roman Fort at Binchester and heavy railway industry, particularly in the southeast of the area. The Darlington Railway Museum commemorates this important railway heritage. The arts are also a key attraction in the Darlington area with the opening of the newly refurbished Hippodrome Theatre and Arts Centre.

The risks we face

Social risk

County Durham and Darlington has some areas with high levels of deprivation, with some being in the top 100 in England. Other social risks include age, gender, ethnicity and health & wellbeing. Further details on these key areas can be found in our Community Risk Profile

Environmental risk

There are a number of specific risks within the area that could significantly impact on our communities. There are industrial sites classified as upper tier sites under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations in Newton Aycliffe, an ethylene pipeline entering the northern end of County Durham and passing southwest into Cleveland; National and Local Transmission natural gas pipelines crossing the County; Durham Tees Valley International

Airport; the port of Seaham; major road routes (A1M, A19 and A66) as well as the East Coast Mainline railway.

2018/19 again saw County Durham and Darlington experiencing severe weather during the winter months leading to increased risk to vulnerable people in our communities and presenting a challenge in the way we deliver our critical services. Flash flooding also impacted heavily on local communities. Around 4,500 people including 1000 domestic dwellings are at risk from river flooding across the County and borough of Darlington. The main high-risk areas are Bishop Auckland, Durham City, Darlington Town Centre, Stanhope and Lanchester with other areas at risk in the Tees Valley to the South of Darlington including Hurworth and Croft. The Service works with partners across the LRF to ensure that these higher risk people and properties are kept informed and encouraged to use current information services to remain safe.

2018/19 saw some significant wildfires occur across the country and CDDFRS supported a national response. The service has a significant risk of wildfire across the western side of the service which would have a dramatic impact on the local economy, farming, tourism and the environment. In 2018/19 we reviewed our section 13/16 with all of our cross-boundary neighbours where the possibility of a cross border wildfire event was recognised.

Economic risk

Austerity and subsequent recessions continue to impact on the local economy with engineering and component manufacturing seeing by far the highest number of redundancies. The largest employment areas are the urban centre and edge of town business/industrial parks in Durham City, Darlington Borough, the south of Newton Aycliffe (mostly traditional manufacturing) and to the west of Peterlee (automotive manufacturing and call centre activity). The foremost locations for knowledge-based employment are Durham City and Darlington Borough reflecting the presence of major hospitals, a university, various colleges and County and Borough Council Headquarters.

Darlington and Durham City comprise of large scale industrial, commercial and residential sites that present a diverse range of risks. These areas also have a large number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and several large housing estates.

Risks beyond our borders

The Service responds to and attends incidents beyond its borders both regionally and nationally. We have a clear understanding of the cross-border risks that may occur where we need to deploy our resources in emergency situations or where the impact of an incident in another area could impact on our communities. In 2018/19 we reviewed all of our Section 13/16 agreements to enable us to provide mutual assistance to our neighbouring services and share risk information to allow us to deal with these incidents effectively.

The Government monitors risks that the UK could face through the National Risk Assessment process, led by the Cabinet Office, and through other relevant risk assessment and horizon-scanning processes. These risks are outlined in the National Risk Register, which can be accessed via the following link: [National Risk Register](#)

We work with partners on the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum (LRF), in addition to close joint working with the Cleveland and Northumbria LRF, to identify very high and high risks through the Community Risk Register (CRR) and ensure relevant emergency plans are in place. We play an active role in leading and supporting the work of the LRF ensuring

that everything possible is being done to protect the community. [County Durham Community Risk Register](#)

The Service also plays a full part in the National Resilience Programme which makes resources available from across the entire country to deal with major emergencies, wherever they occur. The resources we maintain to support this programme include High Volume Pumps (HVP), 3 HVP ancillary modules reducing the need for mobilisation of additional HVPs to any large incident in the region, Mass Decontamination Equipment and hazardous materials specialists who are trained to detect, identify and monitor chemicals at major incidents. In 2018/19 the Service further developed its business continuity plan that supported the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to ensure all national resilience assets were available whenever the Service experienced a business disruption, particularly around pandemic flu, industrial action and a significant power outage.

Our people & resources

The following table shows the number of established posts in the service as at 31 March 2019:

Employee Group	Establishment (FTE)
Wholetime duty system firefighters	303
On-Call firefighters	168
Fire Control	19
Corporate	86
Total	576

Up to the 31 March 2019 the Service had a front-line fleet of 27 fire engines, 18 specialist appliances plus a range of off-road four-wheel drive vehicles to help deal with an ever-increasing range of incident types, including:

- Aerial Ladder Platforms for performing rescue at height;
- Specialist Rescue Unit for road traffic collisions, structural collapse and animal rescue;
- Water Rescue Boats and Flood Response Units for water related incidents;
- HVP, Foam Unit and Bulk Water Carrier to provide water and foam;
- Incident Response Unit and Environmental Protection Unit for hazardous material incidents;
- Incident Command vehicle and welfare unit to support large protracted incidents;
- 4x4 targeted response and wildfire vehicles to access hard to reach areas.

Our staff operate from 15 fire stations, a Headquarters and with a 999 Command and Control building in Belmont, a Training Centre and Technical Services Centre in Bowburn.



Our services to the community

The primary legislation associated with fire and rescue services in England and Wales is the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 which sets out the statutory responsibilities of the Authority for providing a FRS that has the people, equipment and training needed to carry out the following core functions:

Promoting fire safety (community safety) – the provision of information, advice and interventions on the prevention of fires, restricting spread of fires in buildings and means of escape from fires. Our firefighters and other front-line staff undertake more than 18,000 SWV each year, carry out fire and road safety talks in schools and work with partner agencies to inform our communities about fire and road safety.

Fire safety regulatory enforcement (business fire safety) – Our firefighters and fire safety officers undertake inspections of workplaces providing advice and guidance to owners and occupiers to enable them to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, ensuring our communities are safe, using advice, audit and enforcement action where necessary.

Emergency response – We respond to emergencies including fires, road traffic collisions, air and rail crashes, water rescues and flooding, hazardous chemical incidents and many other types of emergencies. Our firefighters regularly train, maintain and test equipment to ensure they remain operationally ready to respond to emergencies at all times.

We also work closely with our partners such as Durham Constabulary, the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), local councils and our neighbouring FRS as part of the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles (JESIP) to ensure we can respond effectively and competently to any emergency.

Governance arrangements

Your fire and rescue authority

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority is a combined authority created by the Durham Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996.

Membership comprises of twenty-one elected councillors from Durham County Council and four from Darlington Borough Council. The Authority is a legal body with statutory duties and responsibilities. The Authority is responsible for setting the strategic direction, policies and priorities of the Service.

Our legal responsibilities

The primary legislation governing the FRS is covered by the following:

- [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
- [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Service \(Emergencies\)\(England\) Order 2007](#)
- [Localism Act 2011](#)
- [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#)

The main legislative provisions which determine the functions of the Fire and Rescue Authority include the following:

- Promoting fire safety
- Extinguishing fires and protecting life and property
- Rescuing people from road traffic collisions (and a large range of other risks determined through the Emergencies Order)
- Responding to other types of emergencies
- Enter into 'reinforcement' schemes with other fire authorities for mutual assistance
- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning; and in this regard to:
 - Put in place emergency plans
 - Put in place business continuity management arrangements

- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
- Share information with other local responders to enhance coordination; and,
- Cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework

The 2004 Fire and Rescue Services Act states that Fire and Rescue Authorities must have regard for the National Framework for England that sets out the Governments priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. The National Framework outlines the high-level expectations and it does not require a detailed account of operational matters which are best determined locally.

The key priorities established by the framework are:

- The identification and assessment of a range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks including those of a cross border, multi authority and/or a national nature;
- The provision for prevention and protection activities and the appropriate response to incidents within County Durham and Darlington;
- Collaboration with the communities of County Durham and Darlington and a wide range of partners both locally and nationally to deliver a fire and rescue service;
- Ensuring effective business continuity arrangements are in place which include the provision of national resilience assets;
- Being accountable to the communities of County Durham and Darlington for the service we provide through an annual Statement of Assurance. ([current and previous versions](#))

The full 2018 document can be found at the following link: [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)

Management of Risk

The Fire Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

The National Framework requires the formulation of an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which captures and publishes the Fire and Rescue Authorities plans to meet current and future risks to our communities.

The framework provides that the Fire and Rescue Authority must hold their Chief Fire Officer to account for delivery of the FRS, also that the Authority must have in place arrangements to ensure that their decisions are open to scrutiny.

IRMP is a process introduced by the Government to provide a modern, flexible approach to the provision of FRS based upon locally identified need, aligned to risk and demand. The assessment of risk is the initial stage of the IRMP process and requires quantitative and

qualitative analysis of hazards and threats. The processes we have adopted use a combination of risk modelling software, historical data and professional judgement to make an assessment of impact and consequence with likelihood that an event will occur, ensuring that a thorough and complete analysis has been completed.

The IRMP sets out how we manage risks identified in the Community Risk Profile, that are also aligned to our Service strategies to effectively manage that risk over the period.

Organisational governance

The Authority, as a public body, places significant emphasis on ensuring that effective governance arrangements are in place.

Governance is concerned with how the Authority manages its affairs on a day to day basis including business practices, standards of conduct and overall management procedures.

We have adopted an over-arching Organisational Assurance Framework based on the KPMG '3 lines of defence' model which forms an important part of our Authority's governance model.

[Organisational Assurance Framework](#)

The Authority operates in accordance with a Code of Corporate Governance that sets out the approach it takes to ensuring it operates in accordance with appropriate standards and frameworks. The Authority's Code of Corporate Governance is available below:

[The Code of Corporate Governance](#)

The Authority published an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that sets out the key governance issues that the Authority has identified during the financial year. The Authority works towards mitigating these risks as part of its approach to ensuring an effective governance framework is in place.

[Annual Governance Statement](#)

Financial Assurance

The Authority places significant importance in ensuring that its financial management arrangements are in line with the expectations of a public body.

An annual, independent audit is undertaken to review the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which summarise the financial position of the Authority at the end of the financial year and its performance throughout the year.

In 2018/19 due to uncertainties around government settlement figures, the Service undertook a range of "reasonable worst case" planning assumptions exercises which reflected reductions in government grants at 5%, 10% & 15%, aligning them to fluctuations in the medium-term financial plan and highlighting possible options to the Authority.

The primary function of the external auditor is to express an opinion as to whether the Authority's financial statements are free from material misstatement. However, the auditor also has responsibility for assessing whether the Authority has reliable systems of control in place and

the arrangements for securing, economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources.

The 2018/19 annual Statement of Accounts was considered and approved by the Authority's Audit and Risk Committee prior to being published. [Statement of Accounts](#)

The accounts are audited by independent external auditors who provide a view on the information contained in the accounts being 'true and fair'. The auditor considers whether the Authority has demonstrated it has delivered value for money prior to signing the audit statement. [Annual Audit Letter – audit of accounts](#)

Operational Assurance

Our Organisational Performance Framework is underpinned by our Operational Assurance Framework that sets our approach to quality assuring that we can respond effectively and competently to the range of incidents we may be called to attend. A number of key performance indicators are used to monitor performance of our emergency response arrangements. Managers at all levels are accountable for managing the day to day performance of their fire stations overseen by their District Teams and the Emergency Response Manager. The Operational Assurance Group (OAG) scrutinise performance and report, by exception, to the Performance and Programme Board (PPB) and the Service Leadership Team. Members play a key role in scrutinising performance through regular reports and presentations to the Performance Committee and the full Fire Authority. [Operational Assurance Framework](#)

In 2018/19 our Operational Readiness Audits (OpeRA) assessed the operational readiness of our stations across six areas (Premises, Appliances, Equipment, PPE, Personnel and Practical Skills). District Management teams undertake quarterly audits of their stations.

The OAG exists to monitor, report and act on the outcomes from active monitoring, incident debriefs and national operational learning. Membership of the group is drawn from a cross-section of key departments with the chair of the OAG reporting bi-monthly to the PPB. Outcomes from multi-agency debriefs are routinely shared.

Community & Business Safety (Prevention & Protection) Assurance

All prevention activities carried out by the central business fire safety team are subject to both internal and external annual quality assurance, as well as performance being reviewed at all Section meetings with an overview provided at PPB. In 2018/19 we have maintained our ISO 9001 accreditation.

A comprehensive Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) exists to support our protection activities, underpinned by an ISO9001 accredited Quality Management System. The RBIP is underpinned by a full suite of procedures and practice notes which give guidance to staff enforcing statutory fire safety legislation. We have taken account of our legal duties and guidance borne from the Fire and Rescue Services Act and the Fire Safety Order, National Framework, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Local Government Association (LGA) Circulars and any other relevant guidance. External ISO audits provide assurance that we are doing what we say we will do.

The RBIP & Annual Audit Workload Programme are refreshed annually using intelligence gained from a range of sources including national guidance, statistical data, as well as local and

national trends. As well as local intelligence gained from engagement with partners and post incident audits, we also utilise the specialist CFRMIS (Community Fire Risk Management Information System) software to inform the RBIP.

A well-established Operational Risk Information (ORI) inspection process and programme exists to capture important information on risks that firefighters may face when responding to emergencies. This information is made available via appliance mobile data terminals (MDT). Processes exist to ensure premises risks identified by fire safety inspectors are shared with emergency response managers for onward dissemination to our firefighters.

Health & Safety Assurance

As a Service we have an established suite of key health and safety (H&S) performance indicators that enable us to closely monitor performance at all levels. The indicators cover areas such as personal and vehicle accidents, near misses and cause for concerns. Staff across the Service can access the information via SharePoint and the performance management software. The Assurance Manager produces a monthly H&S report which is reported to the SLT and Fire Authority. It is also discussed at the Joint H&S Committee which is attended by the Fire Brigades Union.

In 2018/19 we experienced an increase in the number of accidents to personnel when compared to the previous year, however we are able to report that majority of these accidents were of a very minor nature and did not require additional medical treatment or absence from work. Conversely, we saw a slight increase in the number of vehicle accidents, with many of them being of a minor nature and occurring during slow speed manoeuvres.

Our Operational Assurance Framework illustrates how the learning outcomes from internal and external events identified through accident investigations, debriefs, active monitoring reports and stakeholder engagement are implemented via forums such as the OAG, PPB, the Corporate Wellbeing Group and the quarterly joint H&S Committee. Information is shared with staff via H&S Newsletters and H&S Newsflashes.

Our operational active monitoring and debrief processes have H&S at their core and are managed within the same section as H&S and use the OSHENS software system to track actions arising.

Measuring and evaluating H&S performance is a key part of the OHSAS 18001 standard for which we have held accreditation for over 8 years. We actively respond to safety events when they do occur, ensuring learning is acted upon.

We have an established programme of proactive station inspections, undertaken jointly with the FBU, and internal audits led by the Assurance Section to provide assurance on the effectiveness of our H&S management arrangements. Our OpeRA also provide a further level of quality assurance.

A copy of the 2018/19 annual H&S report can be found here [Service H&S report](#)

Training Assurance

Our District Management teams are responsible for quality assuring the competency levels of their staff and ensuring that the competency recording system is kept up to date. Outcomes of the quarterly district audits are reported to the Emergency Response Manager.

The OpeRA framework is used to provide assurance of operational readiness of all our fire stations and includes dip-sampling of training records and also themed practical exercises undertaken at the Training Centre to further quality assure the competency of firefighters.

All internal and external delegates attending our training courses and development days are invited to complete evaluation forms. These are analysed by the Training Manager and used to inform improvements in delivery.

In 2018/19 our training section maintained the ISO 9001 accreditation for its quality management systems.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities like County Durham and Darlington FRS have a legal obligation to comply with the general equality duty. This incorporates nine protected characteristics age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

To meet our statutory obligations, when exercising our functions, we must aim to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In addition to the general duty, all public sector bodies are required to meet specific duties which are incorporated into the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires us to:

- Publish diversity information annually to demonstrate our compliance with the general duty;
- Prepare and publish specific and measurable equality objectives.

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in both the service we deliver to the community and the employment of our staff. EDI is about understanding and respecting differences and ensuring the right people receive the right services. We also understand that a diverse workforce with individuals who can offer different skills, experience and knowledge will benefit us as an organisation and ensure we are able to meet the needs of the diverse community we serve.











We have published our strategic commitment to EDI and our equality objectives in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This is a public declaration and commitment of how we plan to meet the duties placed upon us by equality and diversity legislation and best practice, in managing our staff and meeting the needs and wishes of our local population.
















Our EDI action plan runs alongside the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and members of our EDI group are responsible for developing and implementing the action plan. [Further information regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.](#)

Collecting and analysing equality data is an important way of developing our understanding about our employees and communities. We produce an [annual equality reports](#) that shows how we comply with the general equality duty as well as publishing our gender pay gap, both of which are available on our website.

Our performance during 2018/19

The following tables provide an overview of our performance during 2018/19. The latest statistics on fires, casualties, false alarms and non-fire incidents attended by all fire and rescue services in England are available online: [Fire Statistics - England](#)

Service Performance Indicators	2018/19	2017/18	Direction of Travel from previous year
PI 01 - Deaths Arising from Accidental Fires in Dwellings (2 awaiting outcomes from coronial inquests)	1	0	
PI 02 – Primary Fires	1024	1058	
PI 03 – Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires	248	240	
PI 04 - Injuries Arising from Accidental Dwelling Fires	14	20	
PI 05 - Total Secondary Fires	2914	2646	
PI 06 – Number of Response Standards Met	3	4	
A. Dwelling Fires Attended Within 8 Minutes (Target 70%)	67.6%	66.2%	
B. Dwelling Fires Attended Within 11 Minutes (Target 90%)	87.3%	93.2%	
C. Non-Domestic Property Fires Attended Within 8 Minutes (Target 70%)	73.3%	72.3%	
D. Non-Domestic Property Fires Attended Within 11 Minutes (Target 90%)	88.9%	86.7%	

E. Road Traffic Collisions Attended Within 11 Minutes (Target 75%)	85.8%	84.7%	
F. Road Traffic Collisions Attended Within 15 Minutes (Target 90%)	95.9%	95.8%	
PI 07 – Number of Safe & Wellbeing Visits	20131	19558	
PI 09a Deliberate Primary Fires	480	551	
PI 09b Deliberate Secondary Fires	2533	2263	
PI 10a Primary Fires in Non-Domestic Premises	117	120	
PI 10b Primary Fires in Non-Domestic Premises (Enforced under the FSO by CDDFRS)	81	59	
PI 11a Fire Control Calls Received and Mobilised within 90 seconds	87.8%	88.7%	
PI 12 Retained Availability on Stations	71.6%	73.4%	
PI 14 False Alarms Caused by Automatic Fire Detection	813	751	
PI 17 Number of Fire Safety Audits	2179	2135	
PI 42 - Proportion of Safe & Wellbeing Visits to High Risk People/Properties	83.0%	82.3%	
PI 69 – Number of Accidents to Personnel	20	11	
PI 70 The Number of Hydrant Inspections	5521	5149	
PI 71 Number of Vehicle Accidents	26	30	

Other 2018/19 achievements include:

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 Year at the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards, reflecting the hard work and commitment of every member of staff within CDDFRS.

Other achievements in 2018/19 include:

- In partnership with Durham Constabulary and Groundwork Northeast, last week we won **Outstanding Community Contribution** at the National Street Games Awards for a sporting initiative in Peterlee aimed at creating positive changes in the lives of disadvantaged young people.
- **Highly Commended** in the Large Employer of the Year Category at The National Apprenticeship Awards.
- **Better Health at Work – Continuing Excellence 2019**
- **Bronze Award** at National Payroll Giving Excellence Awards.
- Apprentice FF Connor Moir and Administrator Juliet Gallon both won **Apprentice of the Year** in their respective categories at the Apprenticeship Achievement Awards at New College Durham, this year Natalie Cammock from the Communications Team has been shortlisted for **Higher Business Admin Apprentice of the Year** which is announced at the end of this month.
- Our communications team were runners up in the category of **Blue Light Communications Team of The Year** at The Public Sector Communications Awards.
- Shortlisted in the category of **Supporting Armed Forces Talent** at the CIPD North East Awards
- **“Tonight”**, is the One Darlington awards where Darlington Red Watch and Olivia Thompson (from control) are shortlisted in the **Public Service Hero** category for their contribution to the fire on Skinnergate in Darlington and a particularly harrowing fire survival call (respectively)Our future plans

Our Future Plans

The last few years has seen some of the most significant cuts to public spending ever known. This means to continue offering a first-class FRS to people living, working and visiting County Durham and Darlington we must be innovative and do things differently. This means collaborating with partners more, looking at ways we can enhance and widen the traditional firefighter role, changing the way we recruit our people and developing our culture.

Details on our future plans which includes our consultation on the next 3-year IRMP can be viewed here: <https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/service-plans>

Our community engagement

How you can become involved

You can get involved with the work of the Fire Authority by attending the public meetings that are held regularly by the Authority at our Headquarters. You can find out more about the Fire Authority, its work and access documents from previous and future meetings on our website via this link: [Combined Fire Authority information](#)

We value the views of our communities to ensure we are providing the service you need. We consult formally on the ways in which we propose to deliver services through the IRMP consultation document where this and more ore information about our plans and priorities can be found on our website. www.ddfire.gov.uk You can also find us on social media by searching for @CDDFRS

Access to information

CDDFRS is committed to being open, accountable and transparent to the population it serves and the general public as a whole. The Service is constantly striving to develop a culture of greater openness and awareness. It is important that information of public interest is widely and easily available.

More information on our arrangements in respect of access to data and information can be found on our website via the following link: [Access to Information](#)

How to pay a compliment or make a complaint

We aim to make it as easy as possible for people to let us know their views. Through listening and learning we improve the quality of the services we provide and encourage and recognise good practice by our staff.

We want to hear from people if they:

- Would like to compliment us on a job well done;
- Have a suggestion on how we might improve services;
- Feel we have fallen short of their expectations;
- Feel we have fallen short of the standards we set ourselves in dealing with complaints.

There are several ways in which you can compliment, comment or complain about our services either:

Online via our website: www.ddfire.gov.uk

By phone: 0845 305 8383

By email: ServiceHQ@ddfire.gov.uk

By post: County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service HQ
Belmont Business Park, Durham DH1 1TW