

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service



Annual Statement of Assurance 2022-2023



 **Warwickshire**
County Council



Our Vision

“To make Warwickshire the best that it can be, now and in the future”

Our Mission



**Keeping
people safe
in their
homes**



**Keeping
people safe
in their
environment**



**Keeping
people
safe when
they are
travelling in
and through
Warwickshire**



**Keeping
people safe
in their
workplace**

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Introduction

Welcome to Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) Annual Statement of Assurance 2022/23.

2022 has been a busy and exciting year for WFRS as we developed our new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). Over the summer months we ran an extensive public consultation to gain valuable information from our local communities to help develop our Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy 2022-2027. Following feedback from our consultation our strategy was approved by the Fire Authority and published shortly after. Our strategy sets out our Vision and Mission and our Strategic Priorities for the five-year period.

[The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#) requires us to report on our progress against our CRMP and we provide this through the Annual Statement of Assurance (ASoA). This year's ASoA is the first since the publication of our strategy and gives us the opportunity to update you on our journey.

We hope you find this statement interesting, and that it provides you with the assurance that we are meeting our statutory duties and working to make Warwickshire the best it can be, now and in the future.



Cllr Andy Crump
*Cabinet Member for
Fire & Community Safety,
Warwickshire County Council*



Ben Brook
*Chief Fire Officer,
Warwickshire Fire & Rescue
Service, Warwickshire
County Council*



About Us

WFRS is a County Council Fire and Rescue service, which discharges fire and rescue functions on behalf of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority (WFRA).

The service is also supported by key specialist services which are gathered into WCC Resources Directorate.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Profile



We have **17** fire stations.



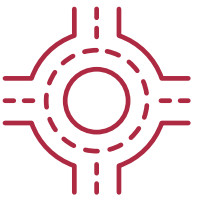
We have a fleet of **37** response vehicles, of which **23** are fire engines.



We employ approximately **500** people, of which **390** are operational firefighters.



Warwickshire is strategically located, covers **1,975 sq. km**, and has a population of **596,773**.



The county has an extensive road network spanning **4,130 km**, including **140 km** of motorways.



Our operational budget for 2022/23 is **£24m**, of which **£22.2m** is spent on our people.

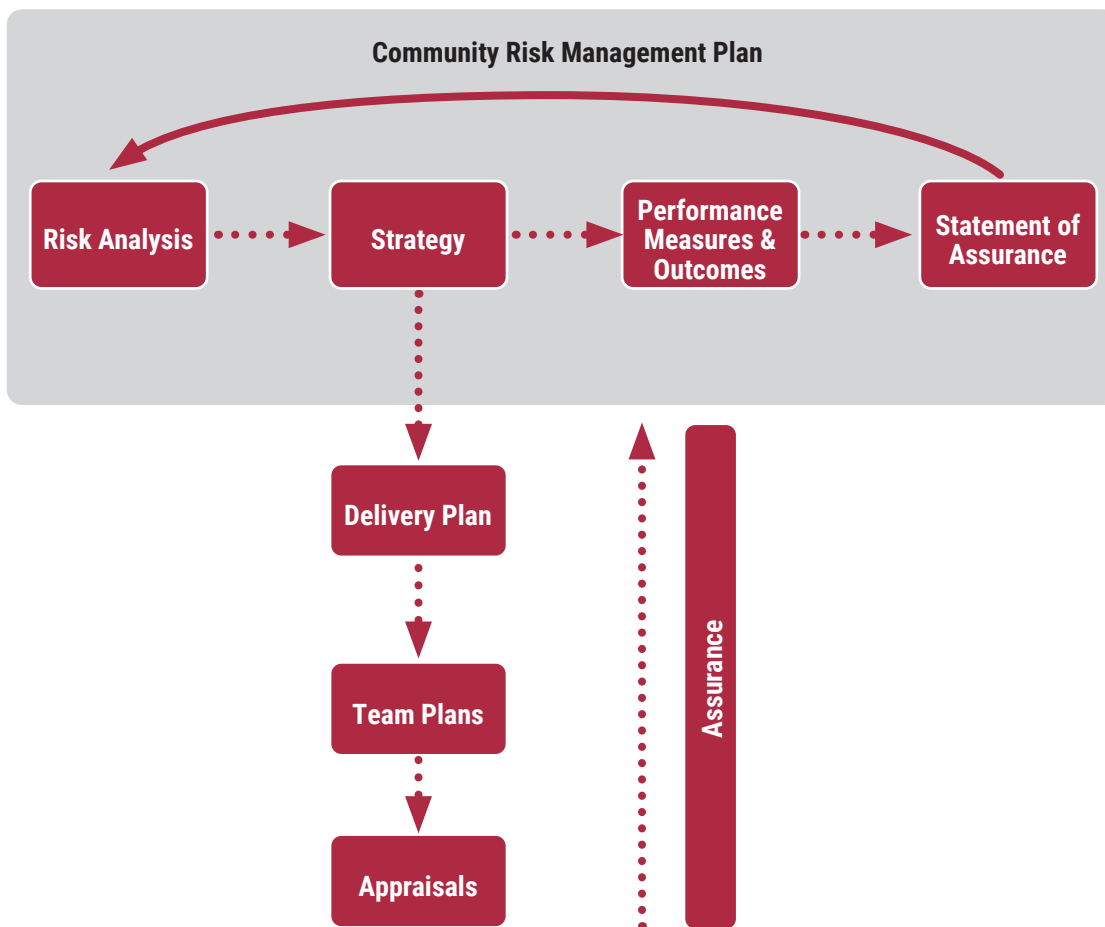




Our Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027

Each fire and rescue authority has a statutory duty to produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). Our CRMP is made up of four component parts, and when combined set out the key challenges and risks facing our

communities, how we intend to mitigate them, and how we assure that we are achieving the desired outcomes. It demonstrates how we use our Prevention, Protection and Response integrated approach to achieve our mission.



Our Risk Analysis

The methodology we use to identify, analyse, and prioritise risk within our communities.

Our Strategy & Associated Plans

Our priorities, and the plans and actions that we will take to mitigate and reduce risk.

Performance Measures & Outcomes

The methods we use to assess the effectiveness of our actions.

Assurance

The arrangements we have in place to assure ourselves and our communities that the information on which we base our decisions and deliver our services is evidence based, effective & efficient, and reduces risk.



Our Risk Analysis

We are continually reviewing and updating risk and whilst developing our CRMP for 2022-27 we took the opportunity to completely review our risk analysis methodology using the NFCC Strategic Risk Management Process. Our risk analysis is now developed using

17 different hazard data sets providing a much richer analysis that enables us to pinpoint risk within Warwickshire. This is our evidence base that enables us to identify where we need to act to address the challenges that our communities face.

Our Hazard Data Sets



Prevention

- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Lone Households
- Long Term Health Problem or Disability
- Over 65s (registered to a GP)
- Active Adult Social Care Users
- Households in Fuel Poverty
- Hospital to Home Collections



Protection

- High Risk Buildings
- Unwanted Fire Signals



Response

- Dwelling Fires
- Other Primary Fires
- Secondary Fires
- Non-Domestic Fires
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Special Services (ex RTC)



Climate

- River Flood Zone Coverage (Fluvial)
- Surface Water Flood Zone Coverage (Pluvial)

Everyone is responsible for managing risk within our service and our governance arrangements enable us all to identify, analyse and manage risk, from strategic risk, to risk that is identified and managed daily by our people who are closest to our communities.

Our risk management processes facilitate the recording of risk and provide the mechanism

for risk review, risk mitigation and risk escalation. The Service Risk Register is managed by Risk Leads and where necessary, risks can be escalated to the Community Risk Management Board and where applicable onto the Strategic Risk Register (SRR). The SRR is reviewed quarterly at WCC Corporate Board and Cabinet and is reported annually to the WCC Audit and Standards Committee.



Our Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy and Associated Plans

It is our strategy and associated plans that provide our direction of travel and the actions we need to take to mitigate risk and address our challenges. Our strategy sets our integrated approach through our prevention, protection, and response arrangements and identifies our areas of focus for the five-year period. Here are some of our achievements during the 1st year of our new strategy.





Prevention

We are identifying the most vulnerable people in our communities and improving their safety, health, and wellbeing through targeted prevention activities directly linked to vulnerability and risk.

Our Focus

To ensure our interventions are targeted according to risk.

Our Achievements

- We have introduced a new Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy (2022-2027) that outlines our new Universal, Targeted and Specialist Prevention Offer.
- We have reviewed our systems and processes and introduced an automated process that identifies partner agency referrals according to risk.
- We have implemented a process to monitor and review the levels and completion of Safe and Well interventions.
- We have delivered a training programme to support our staff in the use of our risk analysis, enabling them to target their interventions.
- We have designated a Mental Health lead in the Prevention team that is strengthening relationships with relevant partners to improve referral pathways.

We are ensuring that our people and relevant partners have the necessary skills and capabilities to deliver a wide range of prevention activities to improve community safety.

Our Focus

To work with partners linked to rural fire safety including farms.

Our Achievements

- We have provided Farm safety guidance to the Rural Crime Team, Rural Crime Advisors, Fire Comms and the National Farmers Union (NFU), Rural Watch members and wider.
- We have established stronger links with Police Local Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the rural areas for example Shipston on Stour.
- Of our targeted interventions none of the sites experienced arson related incidents again between September 2022 and April 2023.





We are adopting a collaborative approach, sharing information, and learning with relevant stakeholders and partners to improve organisational performance and community safety achievements.

Our Focus

To review fire incidents that result in significant injury or loss of life.

Our Achievements

- We have implemented a new Significant Fire Investigation Review (SFIR) system and that includes a SFIR panel that examines and captures incident learning in collaboration with partners.
- We have reviewed 6 cases that meet the SFIR criteria between April 2022 and Mar 2023.
- As a result of these reviews, we have captured learning and shared this with relevant partners.
- In relevant cases we have delivered fire safety awareness training to partners and/or commissioned service providers.

We are pro-actively engaging with and supporting relevant partners in reducing identified community risk, for example road traffic collisions.

Our Focus

To work with the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership (WRSP) to deliver targeted road safety interventions in line with the partnership 10-year strategy to reduce deaths and serious injuries in Warwickshire.

Our Achievements

- We chair the newly formed Warwickshire Road Safety Post Collision Group (WRSP) which are focusing on how to improve response by partners to incidents.
- We have commenced a piece of work with the partnership focusing on low level road traffic collisions with no injury to see if there is a correlation between those and subsequent catastrophic incidents. We look forward to the results of this study in 2023/24.

We are ensuring that our people can act on safeguarding concerns and have the necessary skills and knowledge to do so.

Our Focus

To review and further develop our safeguarding foundations. This involved reviewing policy and procedure and ensuring that we have the right mechanisms in place to support and enable our staff in their safeguarding role.

Our Achievements

- We have made a commitment to safeguarding and this has been published on our [website](#).
- We have a new Safeguarding Policy that is aligned to NFCC Guidance.
- We have assigned strategic and dedicated safeguarding leads.
- We have developed eLearning packages for Level 1 and Level 3 Safeguarding Training.
- We have developed a training delivery programme that will ensure all our staff are appropriately trained by Apr 23.

We are evaluating our integrated approach to ensure its effectiveness in reducing risk.

Our Focus

During 2022/23 our focus was on the initial phase of our evaluation drive. We needed to review our approach to evaluation and develop a methodology that can be used by all our people and applied consistently to our activities.

Our Achievements

- We have developed an evaluation toolkit with support from the Fire Service Consultation, Research and Evaluation Officers Group.
- We have piloted the toolkit on our Safe & Well visits.
- We have developed a programme for implementation during 2023/24.



Protection



We are identifying, through our Risk Based Inspection Programme those premises that pose the greatest risk and effectively targeting our resources to protect the built environment.

Our Focus

To embed and resource our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) using an integrated approach.

Our Achievements

- We have reviewed our RBIP and updated it in line with NFCC agreed methodology targeting life risk/sleeping risk premises.
- We have developed a systematic approach to the allocation of workloads within our specialist team to ensure inspections and audits are prioritised according to risk and allocated according to competence.

We are ensuring accurate risk information is available to those that need it when they need it.

Our Focus

To ensure our replacement risk management system strengthens the way in which we provide risk information for operational personnel.

Our Achievements

- We have reviewed our digital requirements to enhance the integrated delivery of our services. A procurement process for a replacement risk management system has been conducted, a contract awarded, and implementation is due for completion during 2023/24.

We are strengthening our specialist Fire Protection capacity to ensure that we have a sustainable staffing model.

Our Focus

To review our training provision and provide our specialist Fire Protection Team with the support and training required to deliver our RBIP.

Our Achievements

- We have reviewed training and competence, commissioned an external training provider, and developed a programme to provide training for all staff across a range of fire safety areas.
- We have developed a robust training and development programme for staff within our specialist team supporting progression and retention.
- We have more members of our specialist team certified as competent enabling the delivery of more high-risk audits and inspections. Compared to the same 6-month period in 2021/22 we have delivered an increase of 331%.
- We have undertaken Building Regulations staff development, and as a result the number of consultations responded to within the statutory timeframe has increased.
- We have identified additional training needs that will strengthen our service offer going into 2023/24.



We are developing our people to utilise more of our workforce to reduce community risk.

Our Focus

To train more of our people to enhance our integrated approach and improve our service offer.

Our Achievements

- We have developed an Integrated Protection Project that is being delivered over 3 phases to build capacity, develop skill sets and increase productivity.
- We have begun Phase 1 of this project, training five cohorts (60+ individuals) in Level 3 Fire Safety qualification. Once the training programme is complete, this will enable the service to increase the number of inspections being conducted within our RBIP.

We are supporting businesses to help themselves and encourage a strong fire safety culture.

Our Focus

To review our existing business fire safety engagement and communication arrangements and develop a plan that will enhance our service offer.

Our Achievements

- We have re-designed our [Fire Safety for Businesses webpage](#).
- We have developed a communication and engagement plan, and we will be delivering fire safety engagement sessions to our highest risk premises starting in 2023/24.
- We have created stronger links with Warwickshire County Council partners that provides support and communications to reduce risk for vulnerable groups in assisted and supported accommodation.





Response



We are resourcing to risk, to provide a risk based, effective and efficient response because our communities expect us to be there when they need us.

Our Focus

Through our CRMP planning process we will review our risk analysis methodology and commission an independent review of our service profile.

Our Achievements

- We have re-developed our risk analysis methodology modelling 17 hazard data sets across each Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in Warwickshire this has provided a richer evidence base enabling us to pinpoint our risk.
- We have begun the process of commissioning an independent analysis of our service profile, this verification will help drive our future resourcing to risk programme.
- We are introducing a "Resourcing to Risk Programme Board" to manage and drive our future programme of work.
- We have embarked upon a procurement exercise to explore the use of software for risk-based resource deployment.

We are ensuring our people have the necessary skills and competencies to deliver prevention, protection, and response activities because we are committed to keeping our community and people safe.

Our Focus

To enhance our organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that our people and our communities are supported in the best way.

Our Achievements

- We have trained approximately 60 Response Officer in the necessary skills and competencies to deliver Level 3 (non-complex) Building Fire Safety Audits.
- We have produced a range of training to enable our response teams to respond to the varied range of incidents we may be required to attend.
- We have designed, developed, and delivered a modular based training programme "Competency to manage" which provides training in the use of systems that support the delivery of activities.



We are strengthening our specialist response capability and developing our people in response to the broadening nature and increasing variation of the types of incidents we attend.

Our Focus

To review our capability in response to water related incidents.

Our Achievements

- We created a working group to review of our water capability.
- The review has identified a boat specification that will provide enhanced capability and greater flexibility.
- We have carried out a procurement process and we are due to take delivery of a new boat during 2023.
- We have started to explore the procurement and implementation of drones for use at operational incidents.

We are ensuring accurate risk information is available to those that need it when they need it.

Our Focus

To replace the outdated Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) on all front-line appliances and future-proof the supporting infrastructure to provide up-to-date critical information to the crews on the ground.

Our Achievements

- We have a project team dedicated to the MDT Replacement Project.
- We have completed the WFRS Azure/Cloud environment enabling timely updates of all critical data to the MDTs remotely.
- We have replaced all outdated MDTs on front-line appliances providing up-to-date risk information including enhanced features.
- We have fitted all appliances with routers and antennas providing enhanced Wi-Fi capability and increased signal strength at an incident.
- We have embarked on a Digital Engagement Programme with 3 areas of focus, Digital Enablement, Digital Communication and Digital Culture.





Our Performance & Outcomes

Throughout our CRMP planning process we worked hard to ensure our plans were clearly linked to our strategic priorities and that all actions had measurable outcomes. We began to further develop our performance management system with dashboards that our people have access to, so that they can observe and manage the impact of their actions. This is an approach that we will continue to develop into 2023/24 whereby we intend to adopt a project management style to the delivery of our plans to ensure the final phase of review, outcomes and evaluation is strengthened.

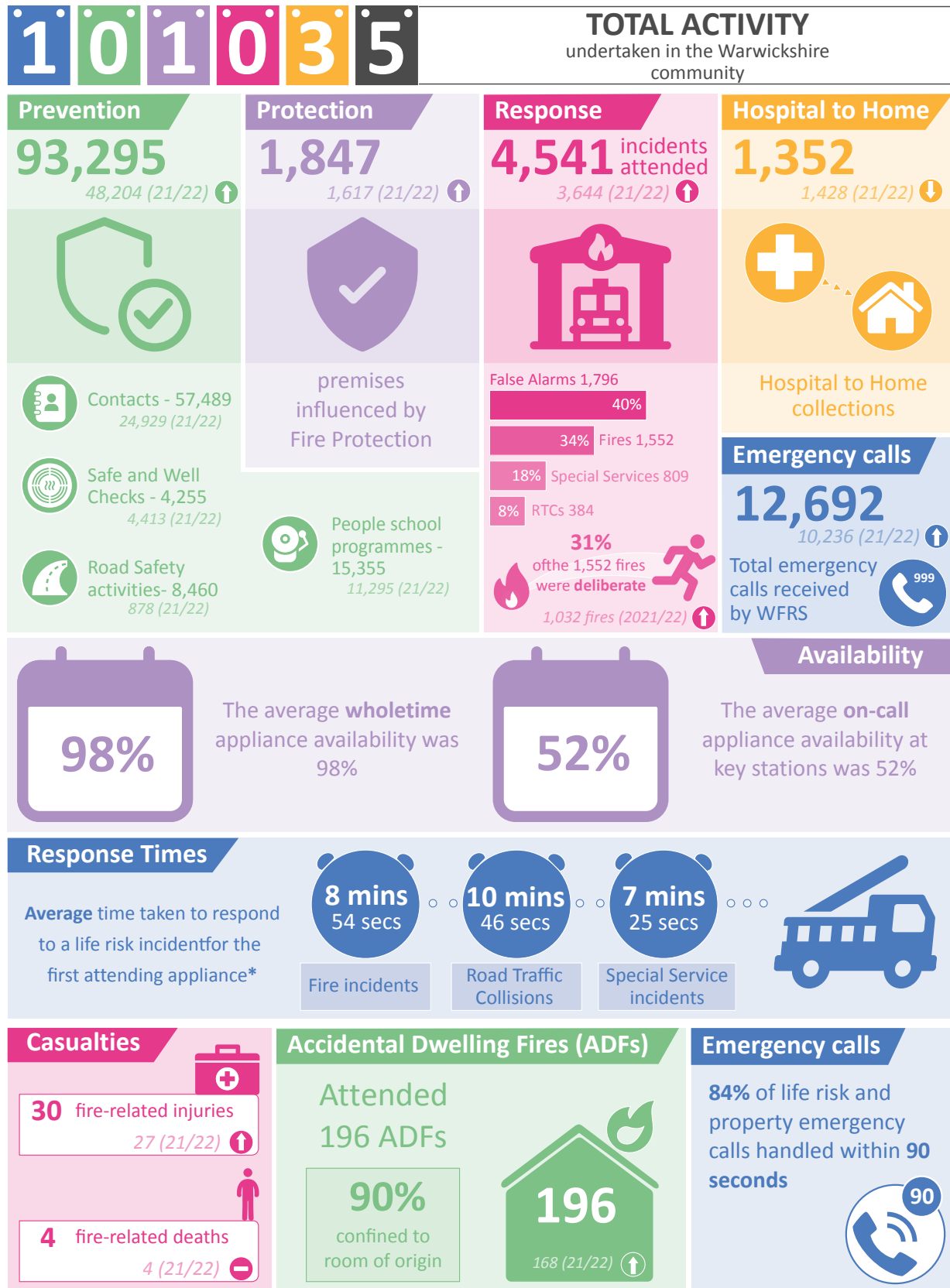
Our year end is concluded with a look back over the year and our Annual Performance is presented to The Resources & Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee. We review our performance against our key business measures, and we also compare our performance to the other 44 English FRSS.

2022/23 was significantly impacted by periods of extreme weather, which in turn has had an impact on our performance. Positively, Warwickshire remains in the upper and second quartile for most of the measures and the following infographics feature some of our statistical highlights over the year.





Statistical Highlights 2022-23



*WFRS have a target to respond to 75% of calls within 10 minutes. This target was not met in the 2022/23 financial year when 64% of appliances arrived at life risk or property incidents within the 10 minute target.

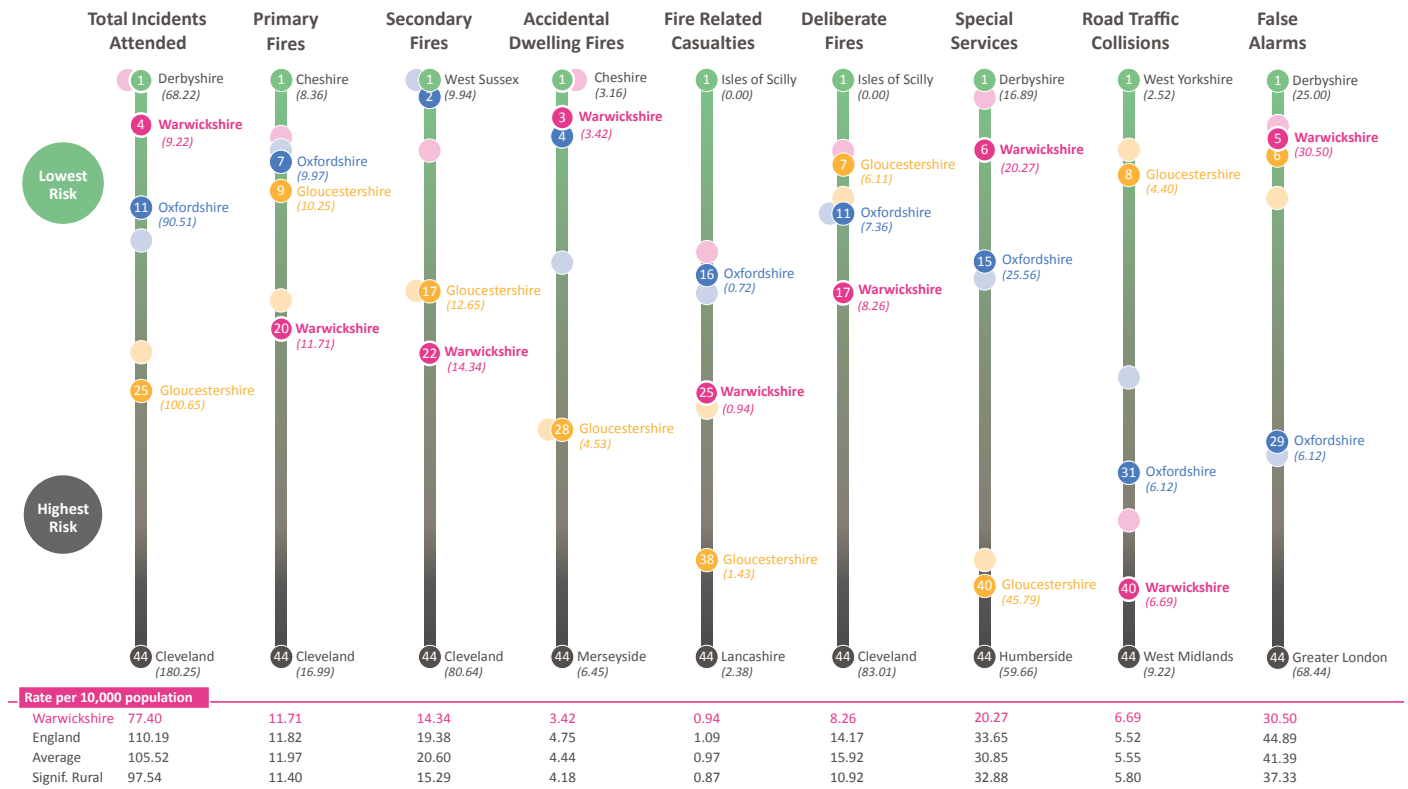
Data sources: Firecrest, Fire Service Rota, Vision, WFRS Prevention Team & WFRS Performance Tracker. Report produced by the Business Intelligence Team.



Benchmarking Operational Performance 2022/23

Summary of where Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service ranks against certain key incident categories, in comparison to the other English Fire & Rescue Services. Information for 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 has been taken from multiple sources; please see full report for more information. Following 2021/22's very positive report, unfortunately 2022/23 was significantly impacted by periods of extreme weather, which have in turn had a negative impact on Warwickshire's performance.

2021/22 rank for comparison



Home Office, Fire Incident Statistics - YE March 2023

Governance

Making sure our governance arrangements are delivering our services effectively and efficiently.

Governance is about how we ensure we do the right things, in the right way, at the right time to deliver our priorities. It is made up of all the systems, processes, culture, and behaviours which direct and control the way in which we work. It demonstrates how we engage with our communities and our accountability to them.

The Service's overall governing body is WFRS. The Authority makes sure the Service carries out its statutory duties as set out in the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#), and the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#). During 2022/23 we also developed our new Assurance Management Framework (see attached appendix), please refer to this document if you would like any further information on our governance arrangements.

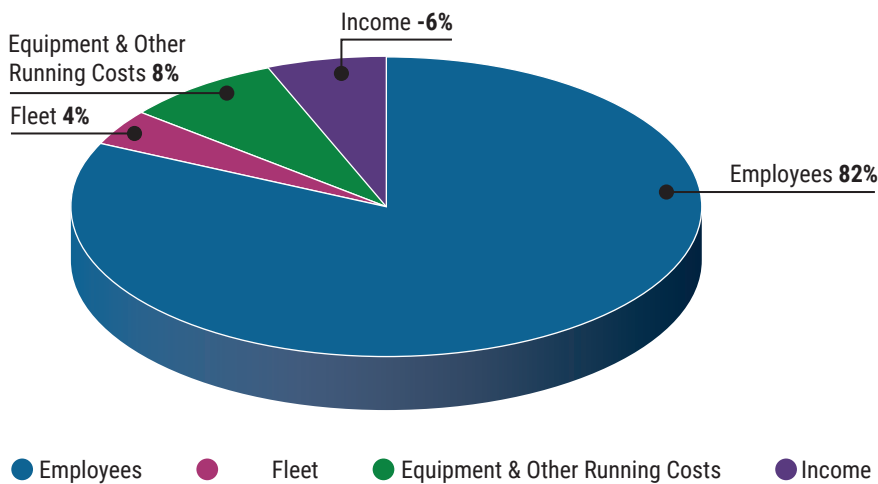


Finance

Ensuring our financial arrangements are in order and providing good value for money.

The Service operates within the [WCC Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) and The Authority approves a medium-term financial plan each year. This sets out the resources needed to deliver our services and agrees an annual budget. WFRS is an integrated part of WCC and receives a range of services provided via central corporate functions or procured contracts. The service's net controllable revenue budget for 2022/23 is £24m and we concluded the year with a 1% underspend.

WFRS Revenue Budget 2022/23



Source: Warwickshire County Council Unit 4 Financial System

We follow an annual financial cycle that provides assurance that our financial management arrangements meet the highest standards. Further information on our financial arrangements can also be found within our Assurance Management Framework (see attached appendix).



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

HMICFRS support our 3rd Line of Defence within our Assurance Management Framework providing an external independent assessment of Effectiveness, Efficiency & People. HMICFRS commenced its third round of inspections in January 2023 and WFRS was included in the preliminary inspection schedule which began for us in March 2023. Following a ten-week inspection process our inspection report was published in September 2023 just prior to publishing our AoS. We are therefore pleased to be able to include an update on our inspection progress.

Overall Summary

| Outstanding | Good | Adequate | Requires improvement | Inadequate |
|-------------|------|-------------------------------------|---|------------|
| | | Understanding fire and risk | Preventing fire and risk | |
| | | Responding to fires and emergencies | Public safety through fire regulation | |
| | | Responding to major incidents | Best use of resources | |
| | | Promoting values and culture | Future affordability | |
| | | | Right people, right skills | |
| | | | Promoting fairness and diversity | |
| | | | Managing performance and developing leaders | |



Progress since our last inspection

| Inspection March 2021 | Inspection March 2023 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cause of concern 3 | Cause of concern 1 |
| Areas for improvement 41 | Areas for improvement 26 |
| Notable practice 0 | Notable practice 1 |

WFRS are extremely proud of the progress that we have made and HMICFRS recognise that progress has been made in most areas since our last inspection. There is however more work to be done and we have robust plans in place for 2023/24 as we continue through our improvement journey. You can read the full inspection report [here](#)





Assurance Declaration

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Statement of Assurance, we hope it informs and assures our communities and other relevant stakeholders that we are meeting national operational, financial and governance expectations; and that we are meeting the requirements set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

We are committed to continuing to provide an excellent level of service to you, our communities, whilst continuing to meet our statutory requirements. Our Annual Statement of Assurance enables us to keep you informed on our journey and we welcome any views you may have on the content of this Statement. If you have any comments or would like to contact us about any issue, please visit our [website](#) where you will find full contact details along with links to further information about our services and activities.

Andy Crump
Cabinet Member
for Fire and Community Safety

Ben Brook
Chief Fire Officer



Further Information

This statement includes links to relevant documents published on our website and elsewhere, which may help you to further assess our effectiveness.

Fire & Rescue Authority's operate within a clearly defined statutory framework and there are key legislative documents defining these responsibilities.

| Statutory | Purpose |
|---|---|
| Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 | Sets out the responsibilities of Fire and Rescue Authorities. There are 4 key responsibilities that we must make provision for. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• extinguishing fires in our area• protecting life and property in the event of fires in our area• rescuing and protecting people in the event of a road traffic collision, and• rescuing and protecting people in the event of other emergencies. |
| Civil Contingencies Act 2004 | Provides a clear framework that sets out the roles and responsibilities of organisations with a role to play in preparing for and responding to emergencies in the UK. Fire & Rescue Authorities are a Category 1 responder under the Act. |
| Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order 2005 | The Order is designed to provide a minimum fire safety standard in non-domestic premises. Any person who exercises some level of control for premises (the 'responsible person') needs to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and ensure that people can escape safely if a fire does occur. |
| Fire and Rescue National Framework for England | The national framework sets out the government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities. The government has a duty to produce the framework and keep it current. Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the framework in carrying out their duties. |
| Community Risk Management Plan | The CRMP identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community, looks at the resources we have in place and the activity we need to undertake to meet these risks and improve safety. |
| Local Resilience Forum | A requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to ensure that there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi agency response to emergencies which may have a significant impact on communities. |

In summary these statutory requirements set out the FRA's responsibilities for.

- Provision of fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents.
- Emergency preparedness and multi-agency response.
- Fire safety advice and law enforcement.
- Assessment and management of risk
- Accountability

For more information visit:

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fireandrescue



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To have your say on Council services and
priorities you can take part in our ongoing
consultation and engagement at

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**For help to understand this
information please contact us on
01926 410410**

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