Foreword
Birmingham North Operations Commander Dean Thomas
Birmingham South Operations Commander Marc Hudson

Welcome to the first quarterly update (2019/20) for Birmingham North and South Commands. Firstly, I would like to introduce myself as the new Birmingham Operations Commander, Marc Hudson. I have worked for West Midlands Fire Service for 19 years in a number of different roles across the organisation. I very much look forward to working alongside all of you, continuing to make the communities of Birmingham safer, stronger and healthier.

Throughout April and June teams from across Birmingham have been working hard and have targeted the areas of concern highlighted from the analysis of our previous quarter. Our teams have made some excellent and positive progress against our key performance indicators, where we have seen significant progress in a number of areas, most notably accidental dwelling fires and the continued reduction in unwanted fire signals from HMP Birmingham.

The dedication of all teams to our response, prevention and protection activities has resulted in all but one of our key performance indicators being well within target.

This briefing paper will provide you with a summary of some of the excellent work that has been done in response, prevention and protection and the positive impact the command has made in these areas, whilst also continuing to strive towards making our communities safer, stronger and healthier.
# Birmingham Command Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change graphs and table</th>
<th>Jun 19</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accidental Dwelling Fires</strong></td>
<td>196</td>
<td>177</td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberate Derelict Building Fires</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberate Dwelling Fires</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberate Non-Domestic Fires</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberate Rubbish Fires</strong></td>
<td>176</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberate Vehicle Fires</strong></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deaths in Accidental Dwelling Fires</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Injuries in Accidental Dwelling Fires</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Safe &amp; Well Partner Referrals</strong></td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Safe &amp; Well Checks</strong></td>
<td>4,577</td>
<td>na</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Safe &amp; Well Points</strong></td>
<td>33,857</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average Safe &amp; Well Points</strong></td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accidental Non-Domestic Fires</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52</td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>False Alarms (Equipment)</strong></td>
<td>636</td>
<td>646</td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>False Alarms (Equipment) in a</strong></td>
<td>503</td>
<td></td>
<td><img src="green.png" alt="Green" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>False Alarms (Equipment) in a Non-</strong></td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Risk-based Attendance Standard (Cat 1)</strong></td>
<td>279</td>
<td>300</td>
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</table>
At the heart of our response is our average risk-based attendance time of 5 minutes, we know through academic studies on survivability that if we can get to someone within 5 minutes the chances of them surviving a significant incident increase.

We are pleased to report that during April to June we have consistently over performed against our average risk-based attendance time, with April averaging at 4 minutes and 27 seconds; which is really great news.

As a service we continue to focus on seeking further improvements to ensure that we get to those who need us most within the quickest time possible. We have recently invested in updating Sat Navs on frontline vehicles and also a new alerting system on stations which alerts station personnel to the address and nature of the emergency call before they reach the fire appliance; speeding up the time it takes to mobilise to the incident.
**Incidents**

Crews from across Birmingham attended a kitchen fire in a block of flats in Pemberley Road, Acocks Green. Upon arrival, it was apparent that the damage and impact on other residents could have been significantly worse had it not been for the successful activation of the newly fitted sprinkler system.

The arrival of the first fire engine within 4 minutes ensured that all occupiers affected by the fire had evacuated safely from the building.

Crews from Erdington were mobilised in the early hours to a large van on fire on Wood End Lane, Erdington.

Crews worked extremely to bring this large fire under control where they utilised their specialist equipment, which included breathing apparatus and hose reels.

Crews worked alongside Birmingham City Council and Highways to remove the waste and vehicle which ensured minimum disruption to local residents.
The Hydraulic Platform (HP) based at Highgate has been mobilised to a number of incidents within the quarter including:

The rescue of a builder suffering a broken leg from the second floor of a domestic property. West Midlands Fire Service worked alongside our partners, West Midlands Ambulance Service Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) to safely lower the patient to the ground for transportation to hospital.

Removing a section of glass from a 4th floor window at Birmingham City University, keeping students, staff and the public safe. The University sent a letter thanking the team for the quick response and demonstration of great competence, stating that they represented the Fire Service impeccably. Within the letter and as a token of their appreciation, they made a £2000 donation to the Firefighters Charity.
Ladywood attended a complex incident which required specialist trained crews rescuing a casualty from the sixth floor of a scaffolding frame; crews were hampered by torrential rain which made the rescue even more challenging.

Ladywood Crews, WMFS Technical Rescue & West Midlands Ambulance Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART) worked closely together which resulted in a complex and multi-faceted incident brought to a successful conclusion.

Billesley Fire Crews made their television debut after rescuing a small puppy and resuscitating it using the new animal oxygen therapy equipment carried on frontline appliances.

In June, the High Volume Pump (HVP) with a crew from Sheldon Fire Station and Command Officers from Birmingham were mobilised to join the National rescue effort to reduce the water level and protect national infrastructure in Wainfleet, Lincolnshire.

The HVP at Sheldon is part of National Resilience arrangements and has the capability to move up to 7000 litres of water per minute.

This excellent piece of equipment, alongside our highly trained and committed crews definitely made a significant impact on protecting the communities of Lincolnshire.
**Preparedness**

We pride ourselves in ensuring that our crews have the best equipment, PPE and training so that they can be assertive, effective and safe when undertaking their response duties.

As part of the services commitment to operational excellence our crews regularly train for all eventualities which include local station based training and 104 large scale exercises across the West Midlands every year. These exercises are an opportunity for us to test the response and skills to realistic scenarios, using, where possible, real life venues that are deemed high risk in the event of a fire.

Over this period Woodgate Valley have been working with Highways England to improve joint working on our motorway networks, with practical demonstrations of how they turn and manoeuvre vehicles and what equipment they carry, including modesty screens for traumatic incidents.

Crews are using the latest thermal imaging technology and training facilities at Handsworth Community Fire Station to search for live casualties.
Between April and June teams from across Birmingham visited over 4500 homes, delivering vital Safe and Well visits to some of the most vulnerable people within our communities.

Safe and well visits are key in our prevention strategy and focus on keeping people Safe in their home from fire related injuries through safety advice and installation of equipment such as smoke alarms and improving their wellbeing through referrals to partner agencies, ensuring that every contact we make counts.

In addition to the thousands of smoke alarms that we have installed free of charge, we have also provided specialist items of equipment to those who are most vulnerable & susceptible to fire within their home; this could be through poor health, lifestyle choices or susceptible from fire through crime.
Our prevention activities do not stop at Safe & Well visits; our teams work with local schools and colleges providing bespoke interactive educational sessions to key stage 1 right through to Key Stage 4 – delivering key messages which include safety in the home, safety on the road and also impacts of ASB and deliberate fire setting.

Handsworth Fire Station seen to the right delivering key safety messages.

Crews from across Birmingham have also been working alongside partners such as West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council and Highways to promote safer driving; the two examples below are great examples of how partners working together can make a real difference.

Operation ‘Close Pass’ will feature in a documentary on channel 5 towards the end of the year.

Working alongside our partners, this campaign led by teams at Woodgate Valley Fire Station promotes the dangers of driving too close to cyclists and providing education to drivers.
Safety on the roads – our priority!
Ladywood White Watch delivered a road safety awareness day at Ladywood Station, inviting local schools to take part in 3 different activities.
This involved Lorry safety with DHL providing a HGV so the children could look at blind spots and safety around lorries. Birmingham city council also attended focusing on crossing the road safely using different crossing points and the crews at the station delivered education around child seat safety, wearing a seatbelt and pedestrian safety.
Over 100 children attended from the schools and the day was a great success.

Parents & Young People learn lifesaving skills together
Families in Kings Norton have taken part in a 6-week family fire experience which aims to build positive relationships between parents and their children and to promote safety in the home.
Our protection activity ensures local businesses are safe from fire and can therefore thrive and continue to contribute towards growing a stronger economy for the West Midlands.

The investment in Fire Safety Officers on all fire stations across Birmingham in conjunction with the dedicated business support vehicle (BSV) has seen significant reductions in false alarms and non-domestic fires. In addition to this, all firefighters have now been upskilled in fire safety, which has increased the number of fire safety referrals to the dedicated Fire Safety Officers.

An example of some of the great protection work being conducted within Birmingham where crews from Ladywood Fire Station, working alongside businesses have seen a significant reduction in calls for both False Alarms and fires in non domestic properties; which has come as a result of a dedicated action plan which focused on these key areas.

Through interrogation of data, buildings with high levels of calls were visited with support of our BSV, delivering Safe & Strong visits, fire safety referrals and prevention and protection education.

From our data we also recognised a trend of city centre hotels having repeat incidents and again these hotels were targeted by Ladywood crews.

Through the hard work of crews at Ladywood, over the course of the action plan, accidental non-domestic fires have reduced by 33% and false alarms by 31%.
Look Forward

We are really pleased with our performance and recognise that this is a reflection of the commitment and dedication of our staff working alongside our partner agencies.

Our focus as we move forward is to continue to build upon our previous successes, with a particular focus on minimising injuries in accidental dwelling fires and reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our road networks through road safety education; our approach to this will be evidence based and seeking every opportunity to work alongside our partners to provide a joined-up value for money service.

As we continue to move forward, we will continue to review and understand our risks to ensure we are meeting the challenges of our communities in and around Birmingham. By using evidence, we make sure we are positively reducing risk and vulnerability.

Our new command structure will build on the positive and successful foundation already created and being delivered across the west midlands. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and all our partners with increased engagement and flexibility.