OUR CRMP 2024-2027

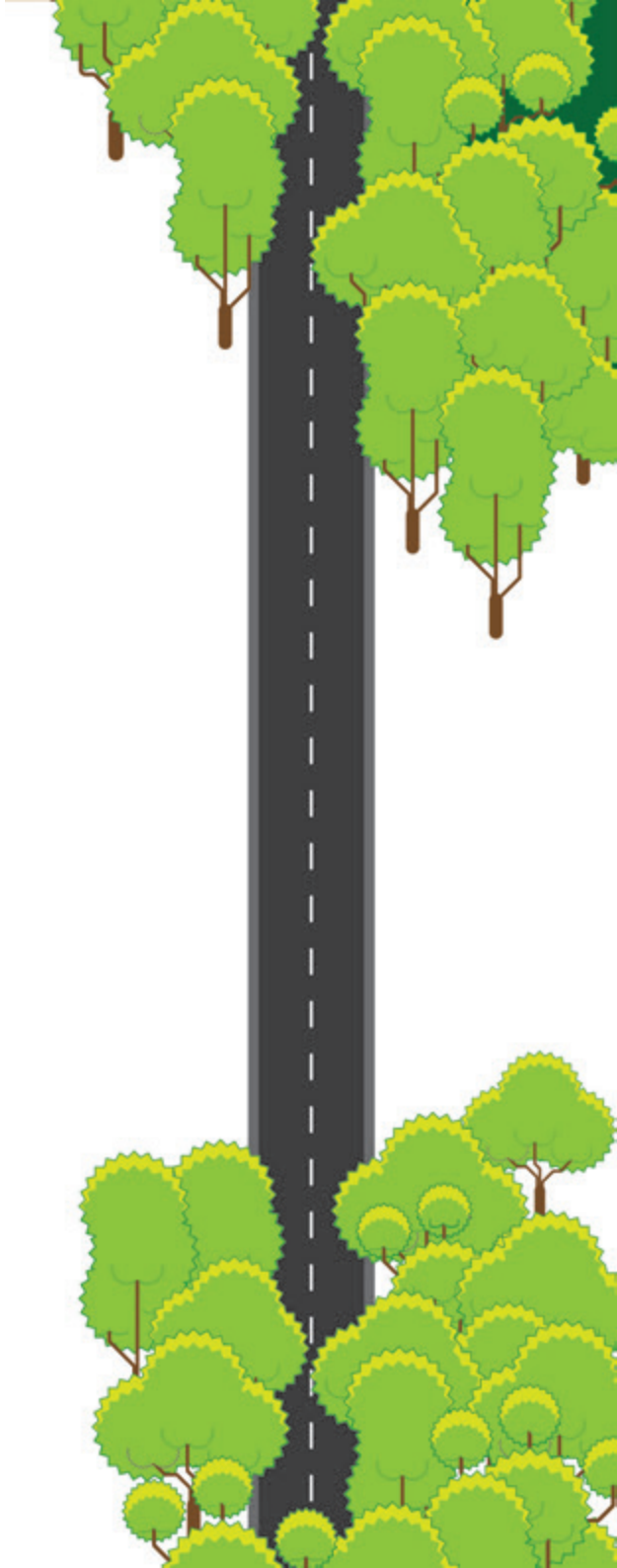
OUR COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service



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Foreword

Welcome to our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-2027. Our CRMP drives our work to deliver our vision of making the West Midlands safer, stronger and healthier.

The CRMP is the foundation of Our Strategy 2024-2027. It identifies how we plan to use our resources to prevent fires, protect people and business and respond effectively to emergencies. It details how we use our finite resources effectively to provide our diverse communities with risk-based services.

We take account of current, foreseeable risks as well as changing and emerging risks our communities may face.

Our most recent risk analysis highlighted key themes, including an increase in, disruptive events from cyber-attacks to severe weather, new and emerging technologies, and vulnerability linked to the impact of the cost of living.

We have used data and evidence-based decision making to improve continually each area of our service. We have also listened to your feedback to our 2023 consultation, which you will see has influenced our CRMP.

Most people who responded expressed high or total trust in West Midlands Fire Service, and also rated our services as excellent or good. We are committed to maintaining this trust, and to continually improving our services to best meet the needs of our communities.

The evolving risk landscape, alongside a challenging financial picture, means we must keep adapting our services, and we are dedicated to maximising the benefits for our communities and providing value for money. We are also committed to finding sustainable ways to maintain an effective CRMP.

Our people are vital to delivering a successful CRMP. We aim to foster a resilient, positive, caring and diverse work environment so our highly-trained staff, founded on the right skills and behaviours, can deliver the best possible services with professionalism, courage and pride.



Simon Tuhill
Chief Fire Officer
West Midlands Fire Service



Councillor Cathryn Bayton
Chair of the West Midlands
Fire and Rescue Authority



Introduction

What is a Community Risk Management Plan?
Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) sets out how we plan to mitigate foreseeable fire-and-rescue-related risk using available, but finite, resources. Resources include people, skills, money, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and data.

The National Fire and Rescue Framework 2018 requires each fire and rescue authority produce a CRMP that:

- reflects up-to-date risk analyses of all foreseeable fire-and-rescue-related risks
- demonstrates how response, prevention and protection activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on communities, in a way that makes best use of available resources
- outlines required service delivery outcomes, including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks
- sets out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- covers at least a three-year time span and will be reviewed and revised as often as required, so the authority can deliver the requirements set out in the framework
- reflects effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners
- is easily accessible and publicly available.

We also know that the best way to keep our communities safe is to ensure that our decision making is based on a sound evidence base and effective risk analysis, as well as feedback from our communities through our rigorous and inclusive consultation process. Our CRMP is the process through which we review our understanding of risk and identify opportunities to continually evolve and adapt our approach to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities. This understanding of risk is the foundation of our strategy, and it informs everything we do.

From July to September 2023, our CRMP consultation campaign led to more than 5,600 people sharing their views on key themes across prevention, protection, response, sustainability and our people. Within this document you will find an overview of the outcomes from our consultation and our resulting commitments to our communities.

Our approach
Our research and data help us understand who's most at risk from fire and other incidents, and when and where they happen. This data also helps us to identify opportunities to improve, and use our resources more effectively and efficiently to help those who need it most.

But there's a lot more to consider - things like climate change, building and infrastructure developments, technology, world events, changes in health, social or economic issues. These all shape the risks our communities face now and are likely to face in the future.



We use the NFCC Community Risk Management Planning strategic framework to shape and inform our approach. This includes:

- defining scope - we are seeking to identify, assess and effectively manage foreseeable risks facing our communities
- hazard identification – we use risk registers, incident data and horizon scanning to build a picture of foreseeable hazards that may impact our communities
- risk analysis – we determine the level of risk an identified hazard may have, by considering the likelihood and the consequences of the hazard occurring
- decision making – CRMP-based decisions are made to ensure control measures are in place to prevent or mitigate identified risks
- evaluation – we must then understand if the CRMP is achieving the desired outcome, so we monitor and evaluate all risk management decisions to determine their effectiveness
- data and business intelligence – we use data to support all elements of the CRMP process, to support evidenced-based and intelligence-driven decisions
- stakeholder and public engagement – how we manage risk directly impacts our communities and stakeholders. It is therefore key to be transparent with, seek feedback from, and raise awareness of our CRMP process with our communities. We carry out extensive public, partner and staff consultations at least every three years
- equality impact assessments – how we manage risk within our communities must be fair, support equality and not discriminate. We therefore complete equality impact assessments throughout all relevant steps of the CRMP process, from public consultation to risk management decisions and control measures.

Building on this and other best practice to shape our own methodology, we have developed the following CRMP principles:

- to continue to evolve our delivery of risk-based services aligned to the needs of local communities
- to create opportunities and make the best use of our resources to effectively manage changing risk
- to sustain our delivery of risk-based services to local communities
- maintain and enhance our 'outstanding' response services
- to enable sustainable and resilient services for now and the future
- maintain and expand our offer to partners and communities, delivering services which are in communities' interest
- manage Health and Safety considerations within existing arrangements, ensuring safe systems of work
- deliver with our staff the most effective CRMP.

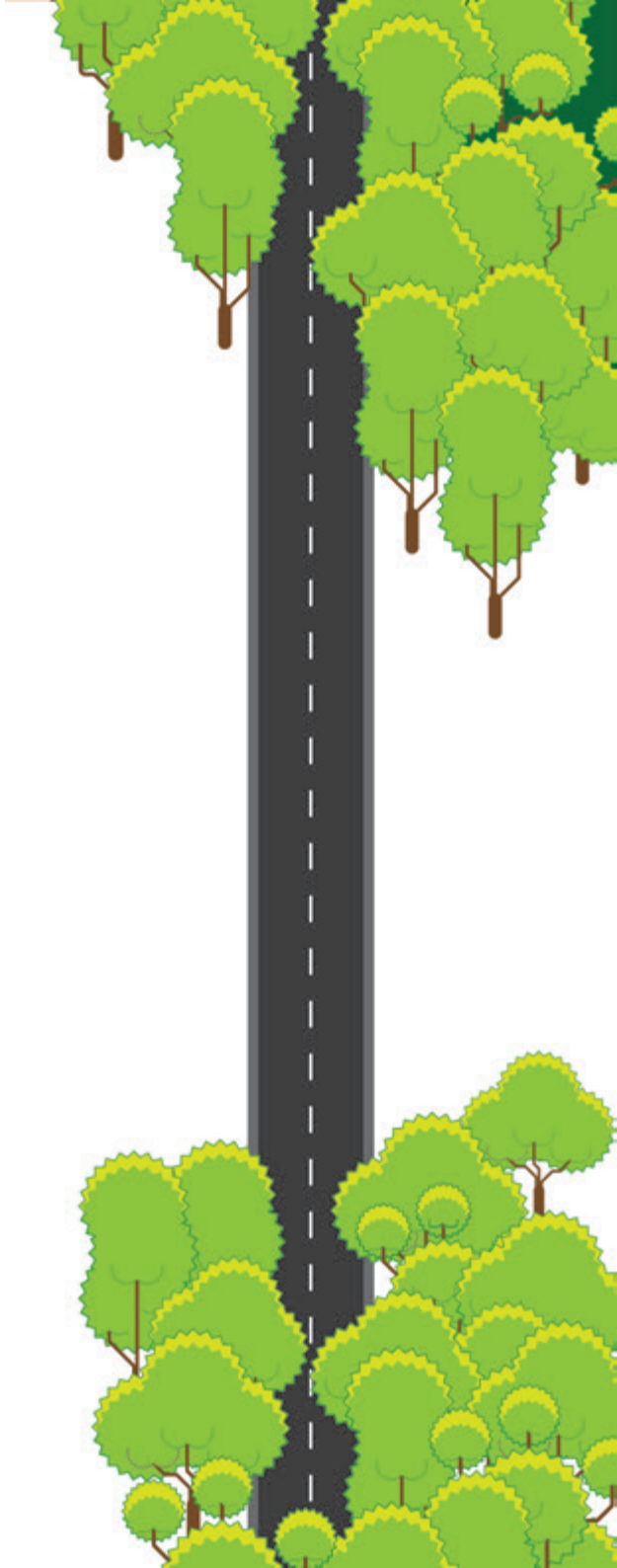
The **CRMP process** captures and summaries the process we follow, placing a key emphasis on the review of risk that informs everything we do:



Throughout this process we:

- use **data** going back several years to understand and model which sections of our communities are most at risk from fire and other incidents
- monitor trends and work out where certain types of incidents happen most across the West Midlands, to **map** out where we locate our resources and where to focus our prevention and protection activities.
- This data helps us to spot potential opportunities to adapt our services, to allocate resources differently and to focus our interventions
- keep up to date with studies and **research** taking place around the world and commission our own. We apply our professional judgement and incorporate relevant findings into our own planning
- keep a close eye on many **external factors** which might affect or influence how we deliver our strategy. These include social issues, technology, politics, the economy and environmental issues, as well as legal and ethical considerations
- undertake **future forecasting**, to look beyond our three-year planning cycle. For example, how might the population grow and change? What are the emerging social or health issues? And what can we learn from global risks, such as climate change or pandemics, or from unprecedented events and international emergencies?
- use tried and tested industry-standard **risk management tools** to inform our decision making
- **constantly assess** whether the measures we have in place match events and incidents to which we're likely to respond. Are we targeting our prevention activities where we need to? And, if the worst does happen, are our response arrangements and resources appropriate? This process allows us to identify any potential gaps and future development opportunities.

This document, our CRMP, outlines our approach to community risk management planning, provides an overview of the key evidence and data sets that we have considered when assessing risk, and how this informs our approach, and the commitments we make to continual improvement in the delivery of our strategy based upon our ever-evolving understanding of risk.



ABOUT WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE



WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service

West Midlands Fire Service

West Midlands Fire Service is the second largest fire and rescue service in England, serving an area of 902km2 and a population of more than 2.9 million people.

We have 38 fire stations situated strategically across the West Midlands conurbation, as well as other sites such as our headquarters, SafeSide experiential learning centre and Transport and Engineering Workshops. These are staffed by more than 1,350 firefighters and officers, supported by some 55 fire control staff and around 370 specialist support staff.

We make use of a range of different vehicles and specialist equipment to ensure we are able to respond to emergenciess, including 41 Fire Engines (PRLs), 19 Brigade Response Vehicles and several specialist vehicles such as hydraulic aerial platforms.

We respond to much more than just fires, with rescues, road traffic collisions and other emergencies now making up a bigger proportion of our responses than fires.













In 2023 we...

Attended almost **30,000** incidents*



Completed over **30,000** Safe and Well Prevention visits*



Completed around **8,000** Safe and Strong Protection visits*



Provided site specific risk information for over **1,000** high risk premises*



Attended high risk incidents within **5 minutes** on average.







*Numbers are approximate

About the West Midlands conurbation

We serve some of the most diverse and multi-cultural communities in the country, spread across seven local authorities – Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Our neighbouring brigades are Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Staffordshire FRS, Warwickshire FRS and Shropshire FRS.



Our area contains some of the country's most deprived communities, where socio-economic and health factors mean the risk of fire and other emergencies is particularly high. At the same time, our major urban centres and industrial areas contain some of the highest risk infrastructure in the UK.

There are more than 1,190,900 homes including over 570 tall residential buildings, and 101,000 non-domestic properties in the West Midlands, such as workplaces or commercial buildings.

In the West Midlands ...

...Birmingham has the highest population density and Solihull has the lowest.

...The population is more ethnically diverse than that of England.

...The tech economy is the fastest-growing in the UK.

...Four of the six higher education institutions are ranked among the best in the world.

...132,000 students are studying core subjects at universities.

...Birmingham International Airport schedules flights to 124 destinations.

...1,478,700 vehicles are registered across the region.

...In addition to the existing vast rail network, the development is on-going of the High-Speed Rail network.

Health Risks

Most areas in the West Midlands have a greater level of socioeconomic deprivation than the national average.

Almost 1 in 5 people in the West Midlands area has a limiting or long- term illness or disability. This is higher than England overall.

Inequalities are particularly high among urban and industrial communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities in both risk factors and outcomes.

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF RISK



WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service

Our understanding of risk

We need to consistently evolve and adapt to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities, so the most important element of our CRMP process is the reviewing and understanding of risk. Our risk analysis process is fully integrated within our strategic and resource planning to ensure key priorities are informed and driven by evidence. This understanding allows us to adopt suitable methodologies to identify, assess and profile risk and vulnerability against the population. Following this we address the risk within different sections of society by employing a range of risk reduction measures which are proportionate and tailored to the needs of the individuals and groups targeted. The level of support we offer to individuals and businesses is driven by the presence of known factors which increase vulnerability, with greater prevention and protection measures being offered to those who we can evidence are at a greater risk of fire and other emergencies. All of this will help to create a West Midlands that is safer, stronger and healthier.

Understanding our communities

To help understand risk within the West Midlands and identify those who are most vulnerable from fire and other risks we need to understand our communities. The conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age impact our physical and mental health (WMCA, 2020). It is important to understand the underlying causes of poor health and inequalities (the 'causes of the causes').

These could include getting a good start in life, educational attainment, our jobs and incomes, our homes and where we live, our friendships and sense of purpose and belonging. These wider determinants of health have been shown to be the main drivers of health inequalities which in turn have led to some communities being more badly affected by risks, such as COVID-19.

Understanding vulnerability and the 'causes of the cause' can therefore help to determine the level of risk which exists. This includes looking at historic incident data alongside a range of other people and place datasets to identify characteristics present within our communities that have the strongest relationship with an incident occurring.

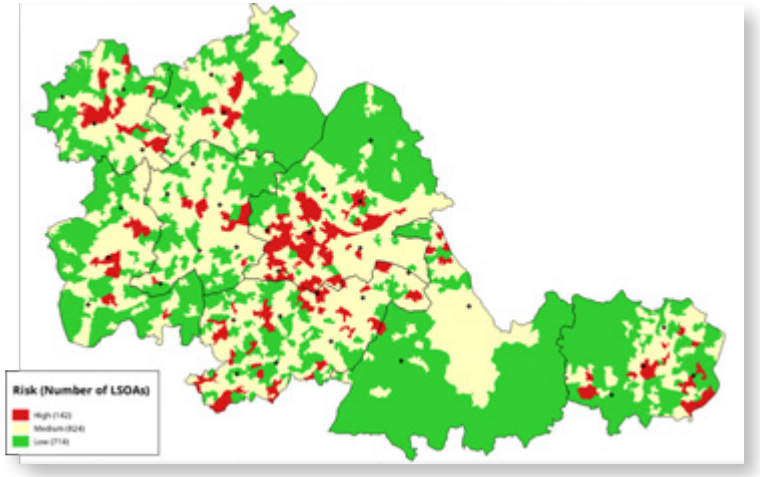
Based on local and national datasets, we know there is a significant overlap between the health inequalities and social determinants that reduce life expectancy and those that increase risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies. We consider key factors including age, income, employment status, health deprivation and education in line with the indices of multiple deprivation, which measures relative levels of depravation of small areas or neighbourhoods. We can then map this to highlight where our highest through to the lowest risk areas in our communities exist. This helps us to understand whether our resources are in the right place and where to target our prevention, protection and response activities.



Greater prevention measures are then offered to those who we can evidence are at a greater risk of fire and other emergencies. This approach enables risk control measures to be effectively targeted at the right people and have the maximum effect in reducing the vulnerability and risk present.

We determine high, medium and low risk areas of the West Midlands through Area Risk Mapping (ARM) based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and census variables, which we can evidence contribute to the level of vulnerability and risk. This forms part of our planning assumptions when determining the highest risk communities in certain areas of the West Midlands, which allows us to put in place suitable prevention and protection measures in these areas to reduce the risk. We also use incident data alongside this to ensure the ARM is validated through using real incident data such as fire deaths and injuries.

Area Risk Mapping (ARM) showing high, medium and low risk areas



Data and business intelligence

Data and business intelligence are utilised to ensure decision making throughout the community risk management planning process is evidence based and intelligence driven. Our data hub provide data analysis, modelling, mapping and research. We use extensive data sets, both internal and external to help to continually assess and inform our understanding of risk and use our resources effectively.

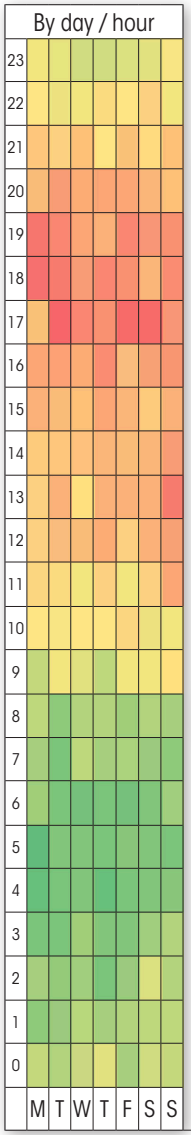
We have adopted risk analysis methodologies and learning from the NFCC's definition of risk project, which formulated evidence-based and consistent national methodologies for assessing and understanding community risk, including fires in people's homes (domestic dwelling fires) and road traffic collisions.

Data analyst reports cover all incidents, helping us to identify and understand the key risks and significant changes, so that we can target the 'what, who, when, where and why' of the following:

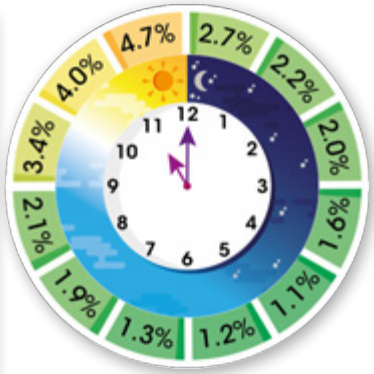
- Accidental Dwelling Fires
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Fires in non-domestic buildings
- Secondary Fires
- Deliberate Primary Fires
- Weather impact
- False Alarms
- Strategic Risk Analysis
- Special Service Calls



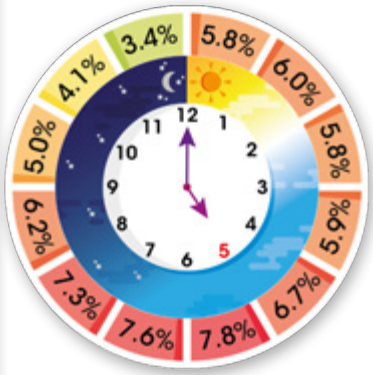
Accidental Dwelling Fires (April 2019 - March 2024)



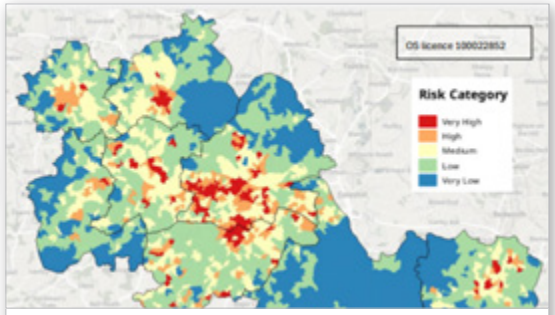
Almost 65% of fires took place between 11am and 10pm.



Accidental Dwelling Fires By Hour (am)

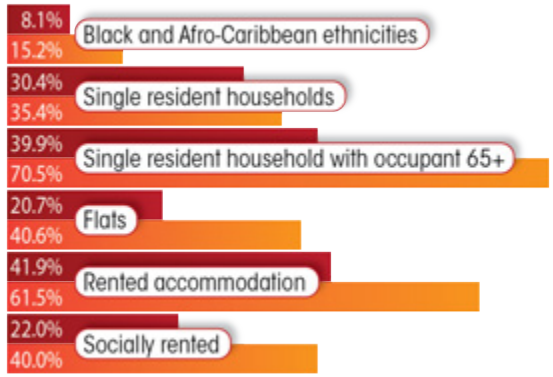


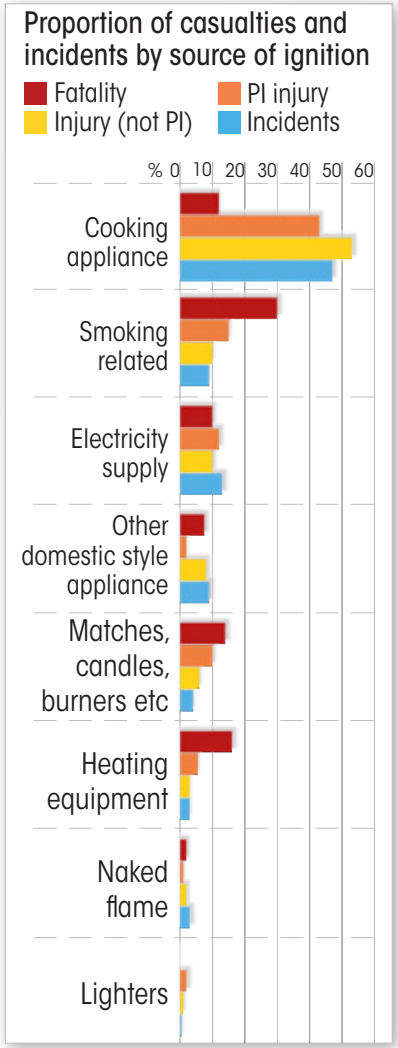
Accidental Dwelling Fires By Hour (pm)



2023-24 had the lowest number of accidental dwelling fires since our records begin in 1998-99. This map shows the locations.

Groups of individuals who are most at risk of fire injury are likely to be deprived. Factors associated with deprivation include low income, limited employment opportunities, low educational attainment, poor physical or mental health. Our data shows the below groups are over represented in the data compared to census percentages.





55% of fires start in the kitchen. 46% of those are cooking fires

Cooking fires accounted for 50% of casualties including 11.8% of fatalities

Almost 10% of house fires are smoking related and of those, 30% resulted in fatalities

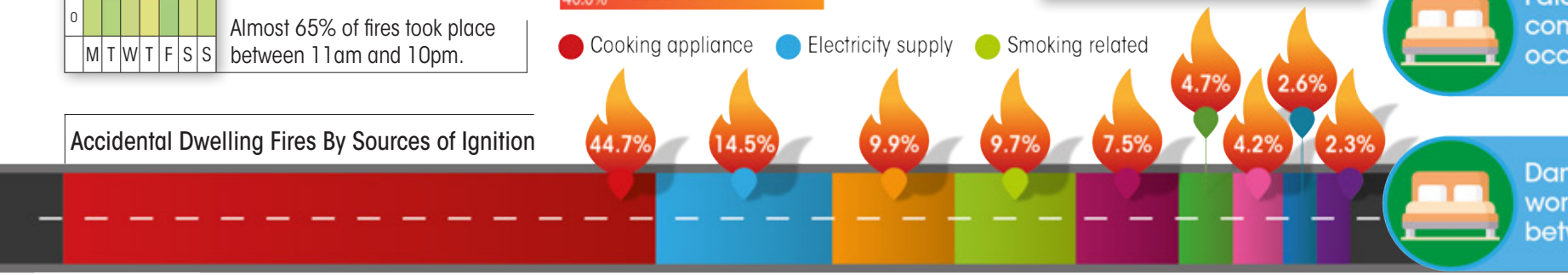
21% of bedroom fires are smoking related

Bedroom fires have increased in the last 3 years. Those caused by heating equipment increased in 22/23

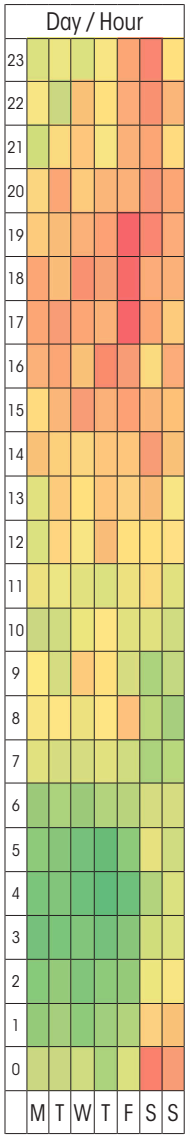
Fatalities most common when occupants are asleep.

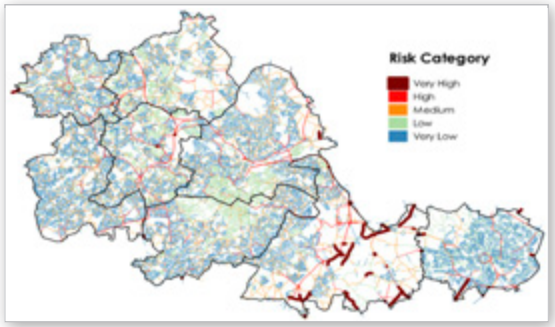
Damage to property worse when incident between midnight - 08:00

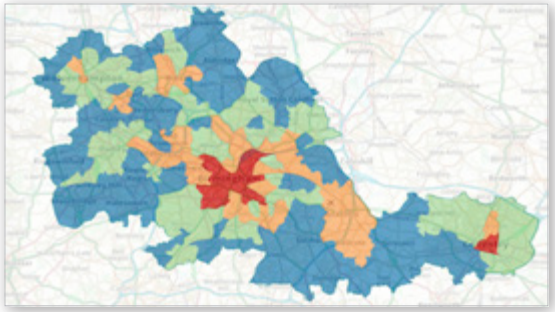
Accidental Dwelling Fires By Sources of Ignition



Road Traffic Collisions (April 2017 - March 2022)





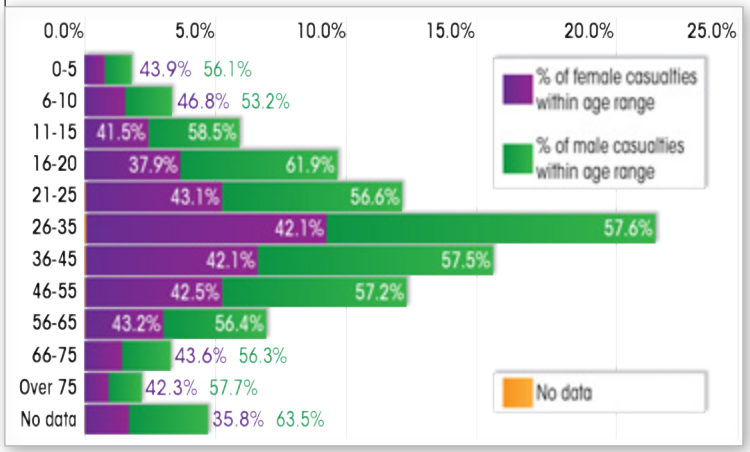


In the West Midlands:

- 35.0% of all incidents took place on A-roads.
- 44.4% of those were fatal.
- A-roads are just 8.2% of the road network.
- 69.6% of RTCs were on single carriageways.
- 85.4% of RTCs occurred on a 30mph road.
- 74.9% of fatal RTCs were on a 30mph road.

Over the last five financial years (2017-18 to 21-22), WMFS has attended **13,010** RTCs, involving **22,545** vehicles resulting in **11,202** casualties, including **120** fatalities.

Proportion of casualties by age range, with casualty gender by age range.



- While 7.8% of RTCs take place on 40 mph roads, they account for 14% of RTC fatalities.
- The M6 saw 77.8% of motorway incidents.
- 1.5% of all motorway RTCs were fatal.
- Almost 2/3 of RTCs took place at a junction.
- 63% of fatal RTCs were away from junctions.
- 44.2% of RTCs and 43.8% of injuries were in Birmingham.

Vehicle type	Cars	Goods vehicle	Pedal cycle	Motorcycle	Taxi/private hire	Bus, coach & mini bus	All other
% of all RTCs	92.9%	10.7%	10.6%	7.5%	3.1%	2.3%	1.7%
% of fatal RTCs	80.2%	15.2%	6.2%	17.3%	1.2%	4.9%	2.9%

RTCs peak between November and January, and are lowest around Spring / early Summer

47.7% of WMFS-attended RTCs took place on Friday, Saturday or Sunday

Nearly a 1/3 of fatal or serious RTCs took place between 3pm-7pm.

46.1% of fatal collisions took place between 6pm - 1am.

RTCs involving goods vehicles and motorcycles are more likely to be fatal.

1.2% 2017/18 — 3.2% increase in electric and hybrid vehicles involved in RTCs — 4.5% 2021/22

Collisions resulting in young people being injured or killed have reduced by 18.5%

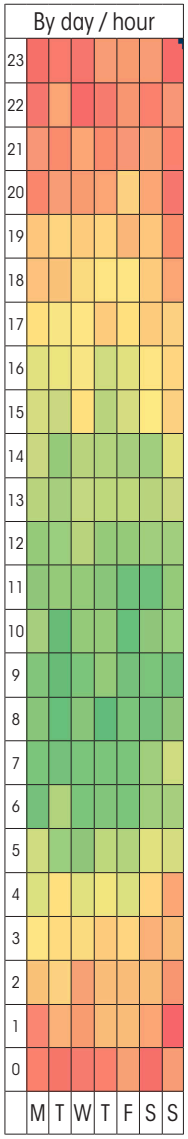
Over half of casualties were the driver or rider of the vehicle

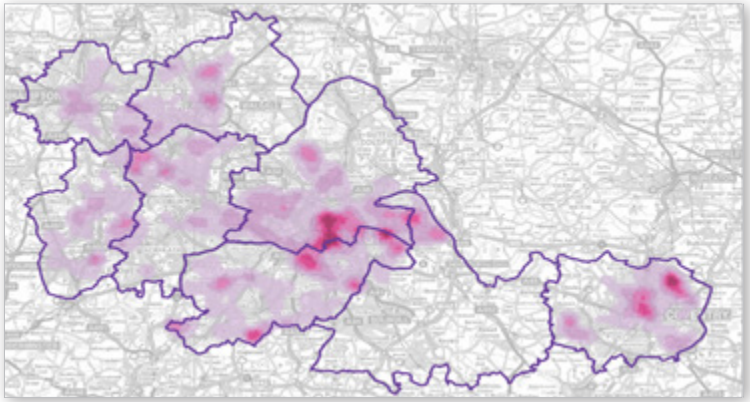
Top 5 contributory factors to all types of RTCs.

- 35.7% Pedestrian failed to look properly
- 16.7% Careless or reckless driver/ in a hurry
- 14.4% Driver or rider failed to judge other persons path or speed
- 10.2% Poor turn or manoeuvre
- 8.4% Exceeding speed limit

Alcohol impairment contributed to **9.1%** of fatal collisions.

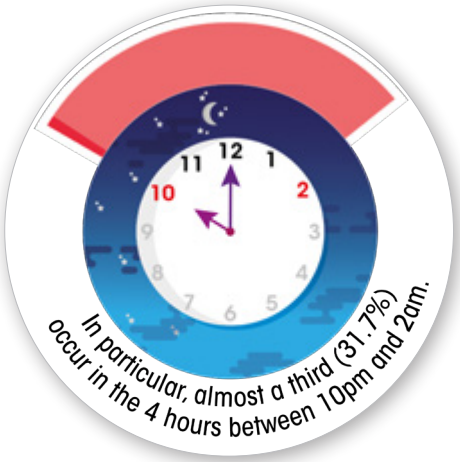
Deliberate Primary Fires (April 2015 - March 2020)





The map shows that the main hotspots for deliberate primary fires over the last five years were in the Bordesley Green / Saltley areas of Birmingham North, with further high density areas in Lea Hall in Birmingham and Wood End / Henley Green in Coventry.

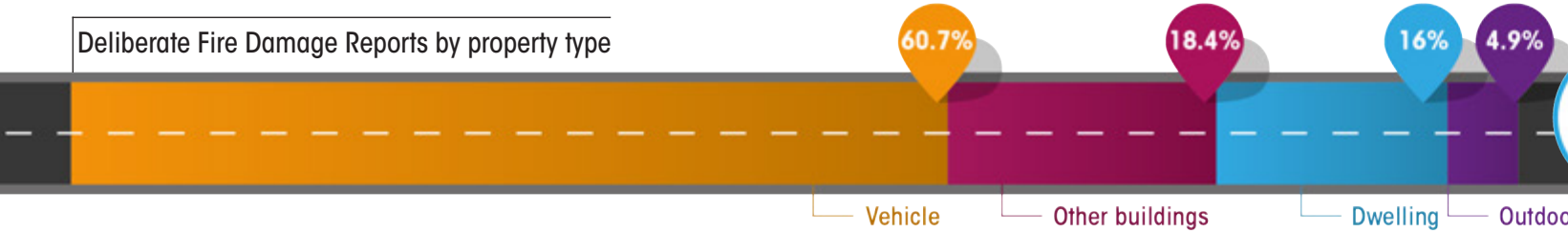




Deliberate primary fires tend to be higher during the Spring and Summer months.



Deliberate Fire Damage Reports by property type



Over a 5 year period there were 6,494 deliberate primary fires in the West Midlands.

Over the last 10 years, deliberate FDRs have reduced by 40.8%

Vehicle fires accounted for over half of all incidents.

In the last five years, 4.7% of deliberate primary fires resulted in casualties.

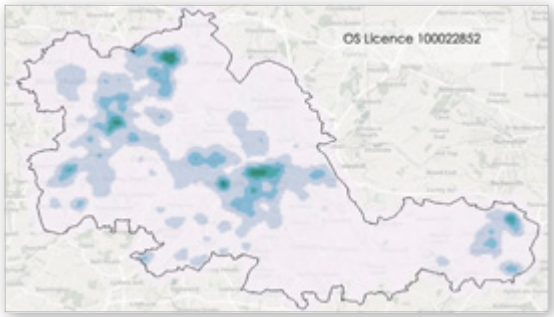
58.6% of total casualties resulted from fires at dwellings.

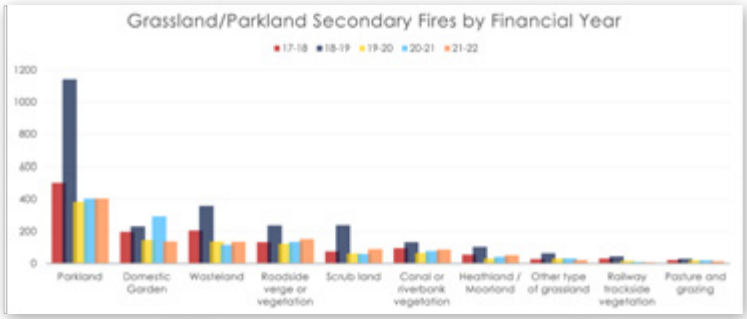
28.8% of total casualties resulted from fires at other buildings.

Dwelling fires were those most likely to result in serious injuries or death.

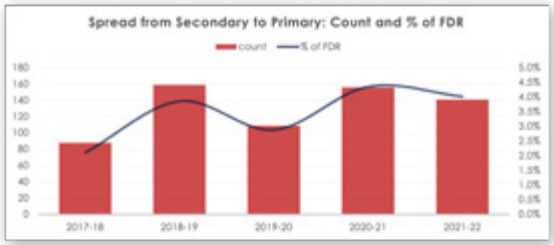
Injuries sustained were more likely to be serious or fatal if there wasn't a working smoke alarm.

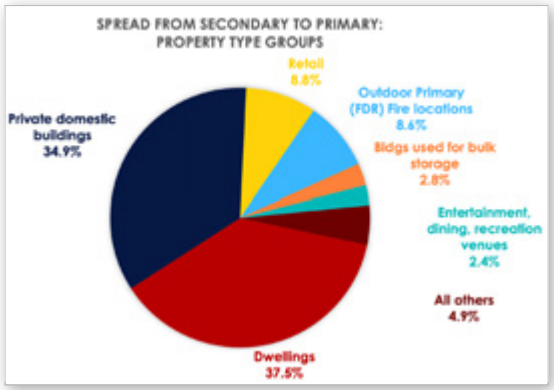
Secondary Fires (April 2017 - March 2022)

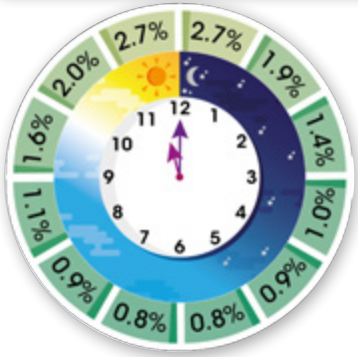




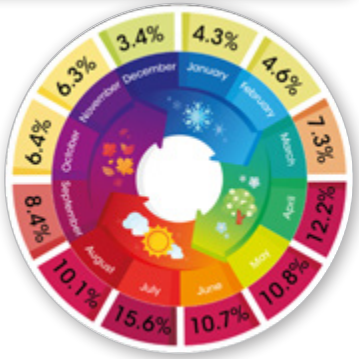
There were **653** instances where a secondary fire spread to nearby properties, causing a fire. Though still low, numbers have been following an increasing trend both locally (see below graph) and nationally.





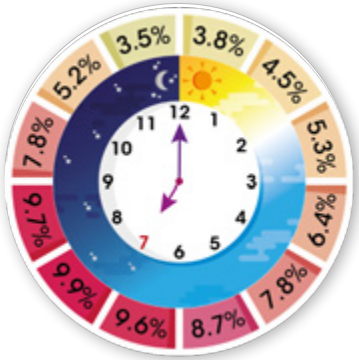


Secondary Fires By Hour (am)



Secondary Fires By Month

Secondary fires tend to be highest in the drier, warmer months of spring and summer. April to August accounted for 59.4% of incidents.



Secondary Fires By Hour (pm)

Secondary fires have the potential to not just spread to nearby properties but also seriously damage or destroy large numbers of them.

Secondary fires by property type



Secondary fires have the potential to not just spread to nearby properties but also seriously damage or destroy large numbers of them.

Secondary fires are very weather dependent, and an increase in extreme weather events such as heatwave and drought are likely to result in an increase in Secondary fires.

In the last five years WMFS crews have attended 30,583 secondary fires.

On average, secondary fires were attended by just one appliance (BRV or PRL).

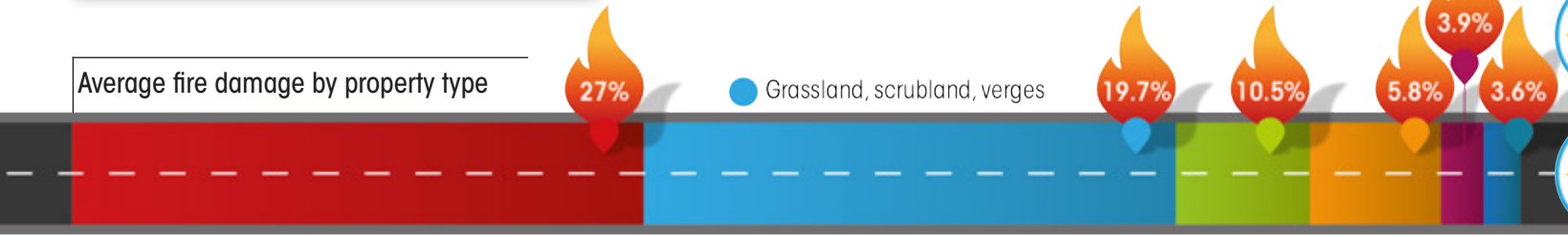
On average, an appliance spent just over 24 minutes at the scene of a secondary fire.

17,191 were recorded as accidental (56.2%) and 13,392 as deliberate (43.8%)

Secondary fires were at their highest in 2018-19, since 2011-12, due to the Summer heatwave of 2018.

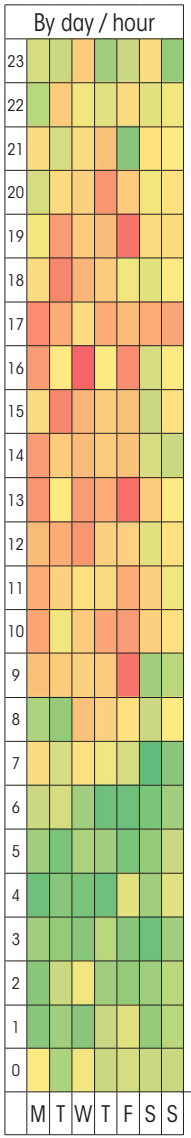
Over a quarter of the incidents for July 2018 (27.4%) took place in July.

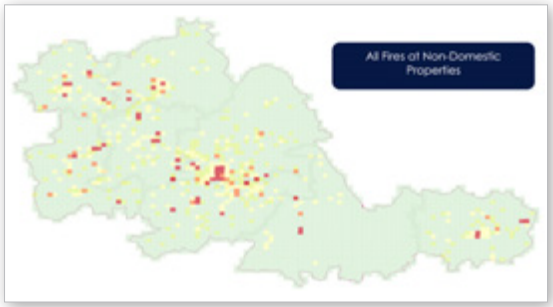
Average fire damage by property type



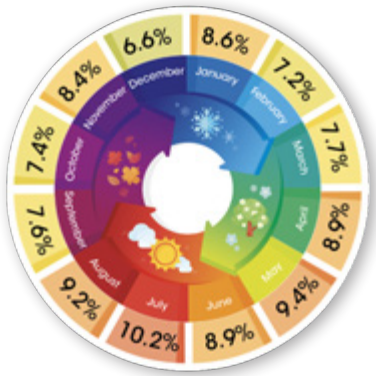
Farming (intentional burning out of control) Derelict building Derelict vehicle Road furniture & other secondary items Refuse bonfire

Fires in Non-dom Buildings (April 2018 - March 2023)





- As at 31st of March 2023, there were **101,010** non-domestic properties in the West Midlands.
- In **8.4%** of incidents, there were means of escape problems with blocked and locked exits.
- There were more casualties in incidents where the exits were locked compared to where there were no visible concerns.



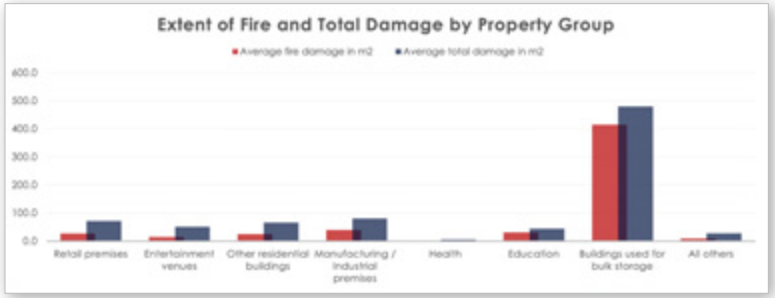
Fires in non-domestic premises by month

Overall, over half of fires (55.2%) took place between 10am & 8pm.

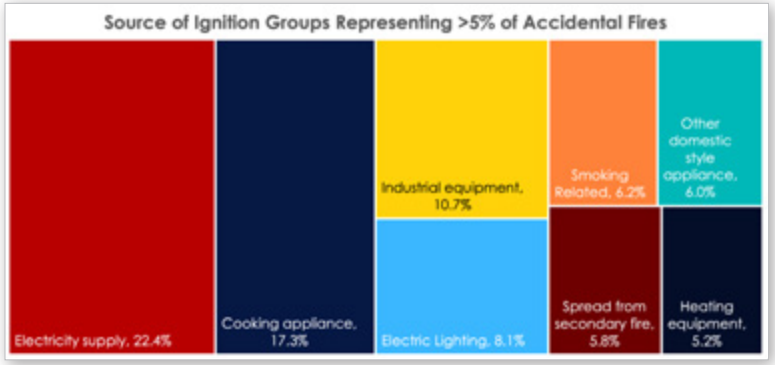
Most common property types for accidental fires at top 4 locations

Kitchen	Process / Production room	Other	External structures
• Student hall of residence 14.0% (47) • Fast food and takeway outlet 10.4% (35)	• Metals manufacturers, fabricators and stockholders 11.9% (26) • Vehicle repair and servicing garage 7.3% (16)	• Pub 8.4% (14) • Beauty salon or beauty services 4.8% (8)	• Pub 6.7% (12) • Other type building related to retail or commercial services 3.9% (7)

- Buildings used for bulk storage incurred the most average fire and total damage. These premises accounted for 3.3% of fires (83 incidents).



- The economic and social cost of fires at non-domestic properties, in the West Midlands in the last five years, was over £323m, while the economic and social value was over £602m.



2018-2023: 2,513 non-domestic property fires. 1,941 were accidental and 572 were deliberate.

Vehicle repair and servicing garages accounted for 13.4% of all retail premises fires.

Only 9.2% of vehicle repair and servicing garages had smoke alarms fitted...

...compared to 78.3% of supermarkets, which is the second highest property type.

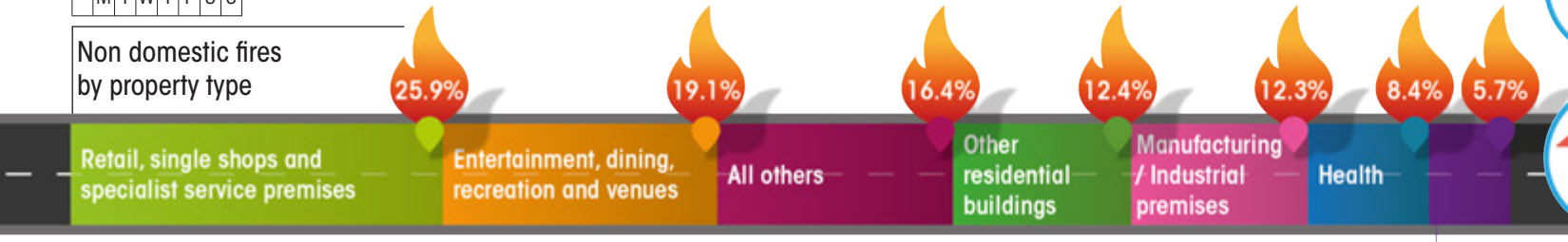
49.3% of accidental fires in retail premises were caused by faults in systems or appliances.

Pubs continue to incur the highest number of overall incidents. Of 104 , 37 were deliberate.

Fast food and takeaway outlets accounted for the highest number of accidental fires

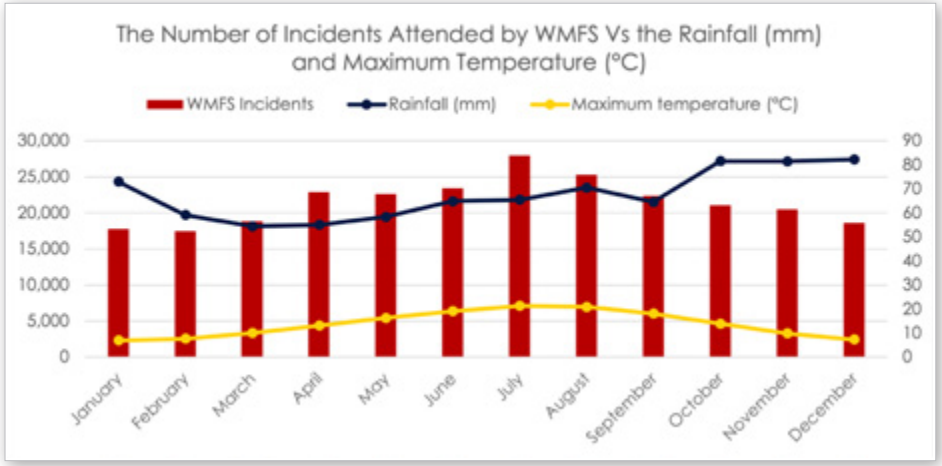
There were 250 fires at vacant or void buildings, representing 9.9% of nondomestic fires.

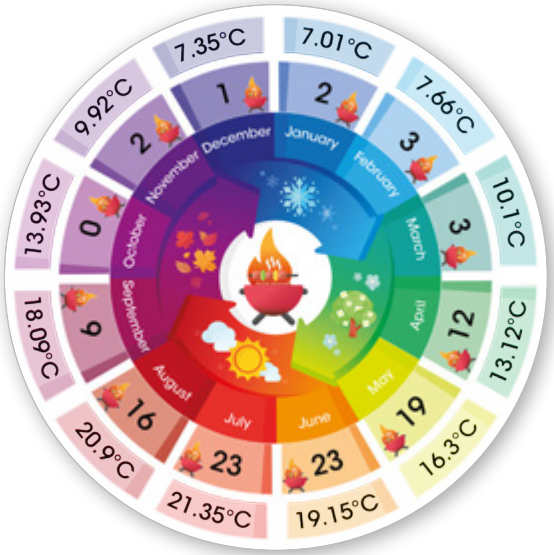
Non domestic fires by property type



Weather Impact Report (April 2012 - March 2023)

The maximum temperature follows a similar trend to the number of incidents attended per month. Incidents increased in 2018/19; this was largely due to an increase in Special Service Calls (SSC) and Secondary Fires (SEC), which are both likely related to dramatic weather conditions throughout the year. There were **7,622 secondary fires in 2018/19** which is the highest total over the 11 years analysed.





WMFS Attended Barbecue Fires (SEC) Vs Maximum Temperature (°C)



WMFS has attended more flooding incidents during summer, with **34.8%** of incidents occurring during these months. The increase of incidents is likely due to surface water flooding which is prone during the summer due to the ground becoming dry and baked, meaning rainwater is unable to pass through the hard soil.



Two significant heatwaves have occurred in the last 11 years, during 2018/19 and 2022/23.

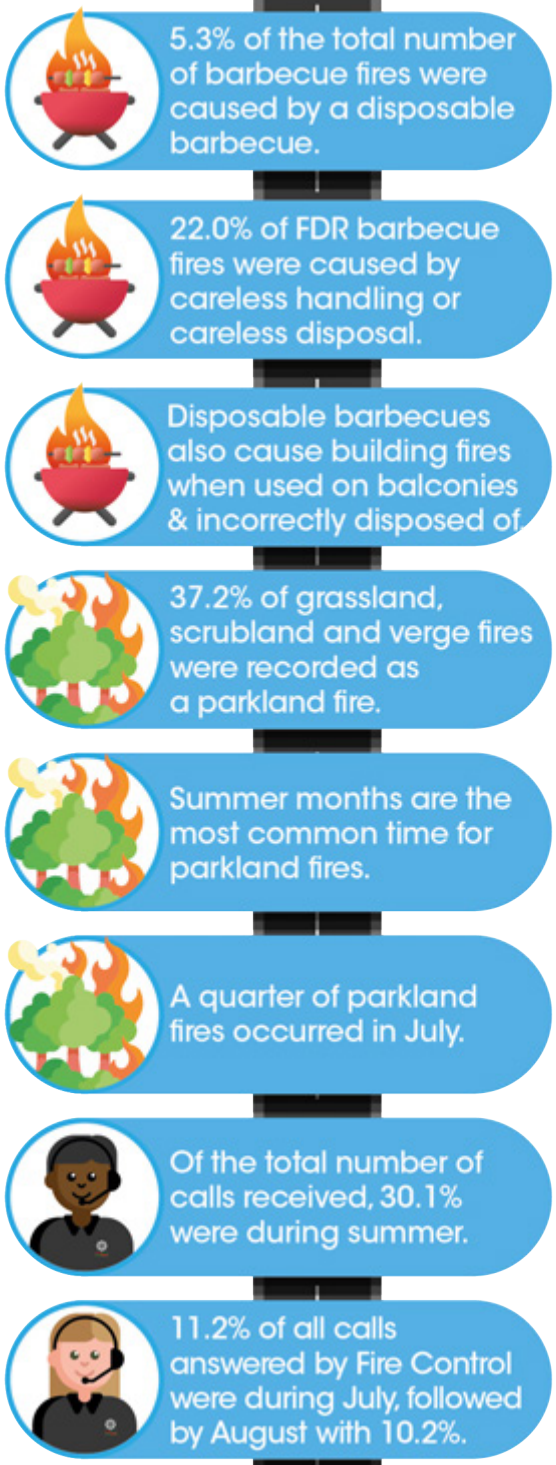
The maximum number of appliances in attendance at one time during the summer of **2018** was **35**; this was for **1st of August 2018**.



The maximum number of appliances in attendance at one time was **41**; this was on the **19th of August 2022**.



Parkland Fires per Month



False Alarms (April 2019 - March 2024)

On average **36.4% of all incidents attended** each year between April 2019 and March 2024 **were false alarms.** False alarms are all calls where the fire service was not required, and therefore the call was a false alarm. They are broken down into three categories:

False Alarm Equipment – this category is for when a call was initiated in response to either fire alarm (including domestic smoke alarms) or firefighting equipment (e.g. sprinklers) operating, but there is no fire when firefighters arrive.

64.4% - False Alarm Equipment

Domestic

- Almost 80% of false alarms due to equipment were at dwellings.
- There has been a 26.9% increase in incidents since 2019-20
- Flats were the most likely type of dwelling to have a false alarm due to equipment (71.5% of incidents).
- The reason most recorded for FAEs in dwellings was activation by accident or a contaminant including smoke (63.7%), in particular cooking/burnt toast (37.2%).

Non-domestic

- There has been a 11.1% increase in the last five years and an 8.5% increase last year compared to 2022-23.
- Just under half (48.3%) of FAEs at non-domestic properties took place at buildings in the Health group, including 46.3% at hospitals, though these incidents have reduced in the last three years.
- Nursing/care homes were the property type with the most incidents, accounting for 33.4% of all non-domestic FAEs
- Incidents in retail premises have been increasing each year, reaching their highest level in the last five years with 108 reported in 2023-24.
- 65.6% of FAEs at non-domestic properties were caused by accident/contaminants, including 14.9% by cooking or burnt toast.

False Alarm Good Intent – this category contains all calls to the fire service, where we were not required, however the caller believed there was a genuine emergency.

31.3% - False Alarm Good Intent

- Tend to be highest in the summer, mainly due to controlled fires e.g. bonfires, they were slightly higher at the weekend, and they peaked between 1500 and 2200.
- Outdoors false alarms were most often (74.3%) the result of a nearby fire, mainly controlled burning though
- 80.0% of good intent false alarms were either outdoors or at dwellings.
- Birmingham accounted for 41.5% of good intent false alarms.

False Alarm Malicious – this category contains all malicious calls to the fire service, or when equipment has been activated maliciously e.g. someone manually operates a break glass device to get the fire service to respond for no reason.

4.3% - False Alarm Malicious

- There were 2,122 malicious false alarms attended by crews in WMFS area in the last five years, and more than half as many (1,672) unattended.
- Both attended and unattended malicious false alarms were highest between May and September, and were highest at the weekend.
- Malicious calls peaked between 1800 and 2100, when 23.0% of calls were received.

Automated Fire Alarm (AFA)
Fire Control will receive calls to AFAs actuating via an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC), from a member of the public ringing 999 or from an automated system known as an autodialler. Fire Control will try to establish if this is a genuine incident.

Between April 2019 - March 2024, there were 69,478 Automated Fire Alarms (AFAs).

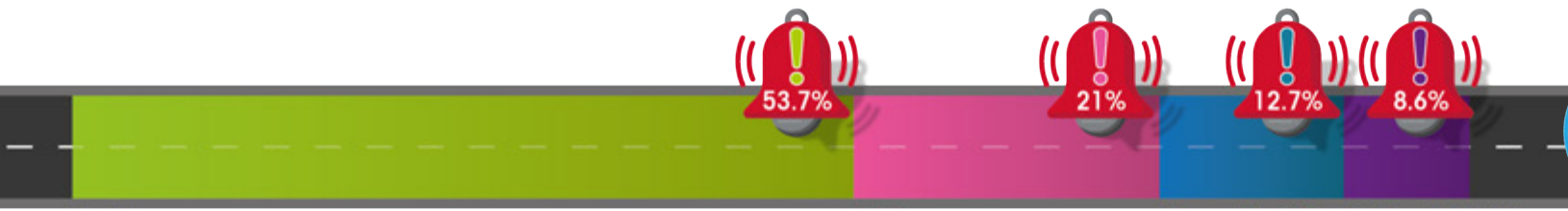
Between April 2019 - March 2024, there were on average 38 AFA calls per day.

98.3% of those AFAs were false alarms. Just 1.4% resulted in a fire.

68.8% of AFA calls were not attended.

AFAs tended to be lower at the weekend compared to the rest of the week.

AFAs were highest between 0900 and 1500, when 31.6% of calls were received.



Strategic Risk Analysis (April 2021 - March 2024)

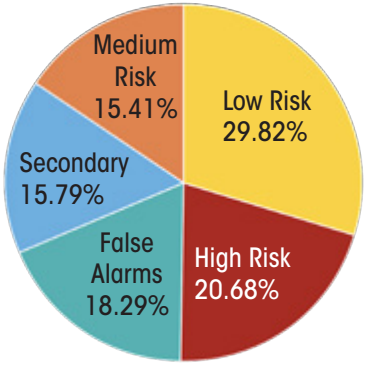
Examples of high, medium and low risk incidents

High risk:
Road traffic collisions and accidental dwelling fires

Medium risk:
Vehicle fires

Low risk:
Automated fire alarm and other incidents where there is no risk to people or property.

Incident Breakdown Attended By WMFS By Risk Category



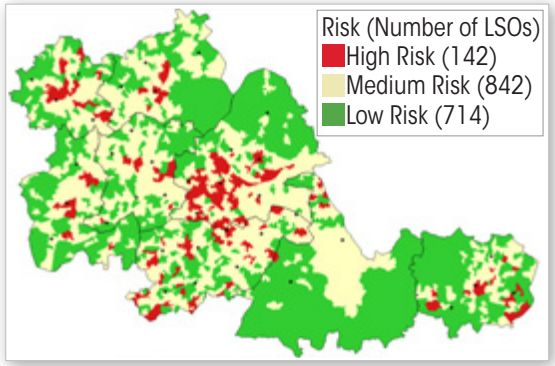
Median attendance times

High Risk 4 mins and 54 secs
Medium Risk 5 mins and 30 secs
Low Risk 5 mins and 6 secs
Secondary Fires 6 mins 26 secs
False Alarms 5 mins and 32 secs

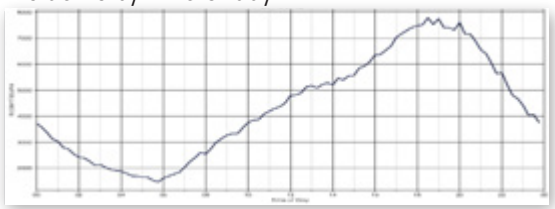
The map below shows where the most incidents are happening across the West Midlands area – the darker the red, the greater the number of incidents:



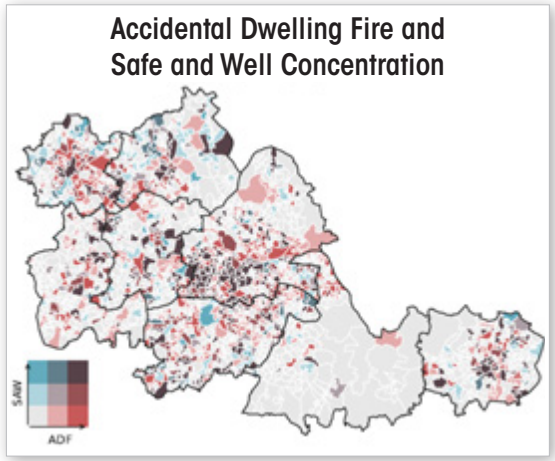
The map below, developed using Merseyside Fire and Rescue FRAM methodology, shows high, medium and low risk areas across the West Midlands. It incorporates information such as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Dwelling Fire activity, Fire Deaths and Injuries.

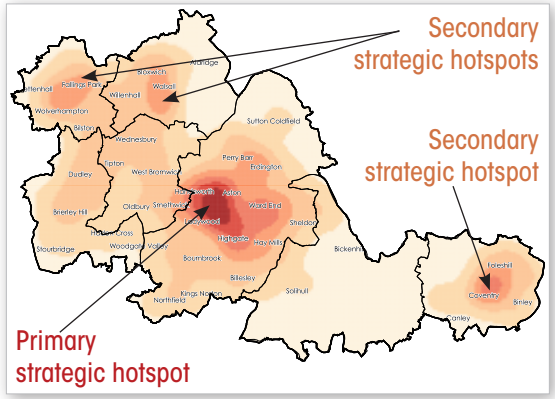


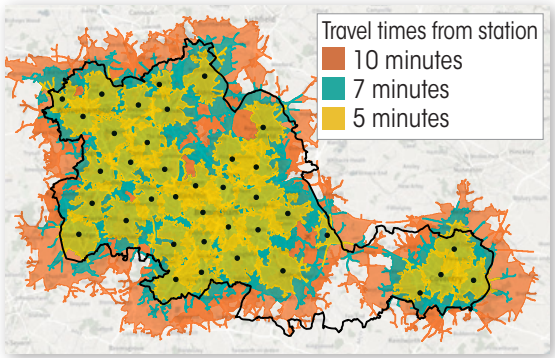
The line chart below identifies the volume of incidents by time of day.



The map below compares the volume of Safe and Well visits and accidental fires by Lower Super Output (LSO) areas.







On average there are 3 appliances at incidents. This varies by time of day, with 5 in attendance at the peak.

Over 4/5 of RTCs attended feature a casualty.

There are 10 fatalities for every 1,000 road traffic collision incident.

There are 2 fatalities for every 1,000 fire incidents.

Fatalities appear most common towards the early afternoon around 1430.

The task of predicting future trends is becoming more challenging.

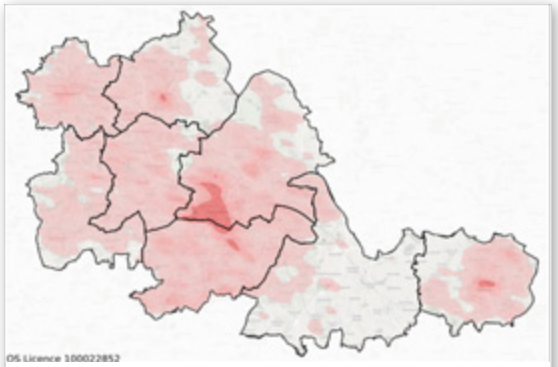
Climate change is creating more volatile weather and bringing greater uncertainty.

The unpredictable weather is causing fluctuating demand for emergency response.

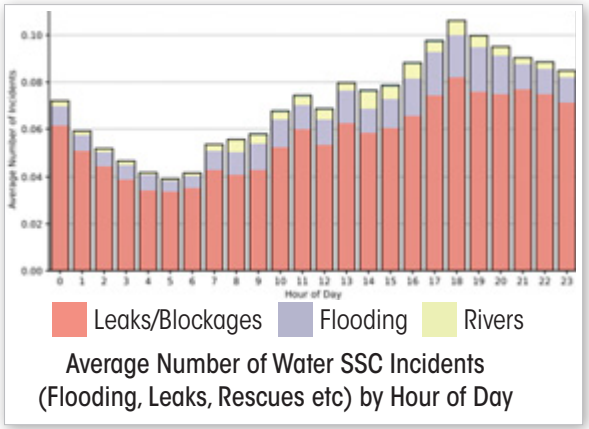
Generally the summer months see the highest amount of incidents.

Summers with heatwaves result in significant spikes in incidents.

Special Service Calls (April 2009 - March 2024)



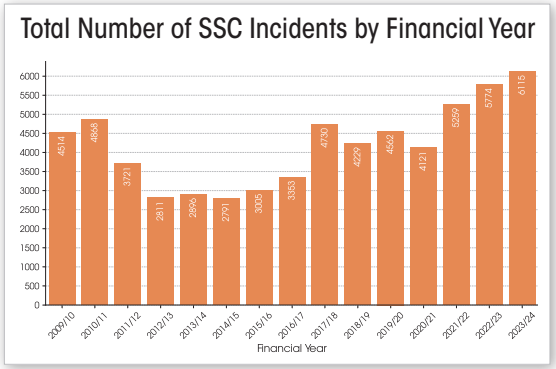
Hotspots of Water Special Service Call Incidents (Flooding, Leaks, Rescues etc) 2009/10 - 2022/23



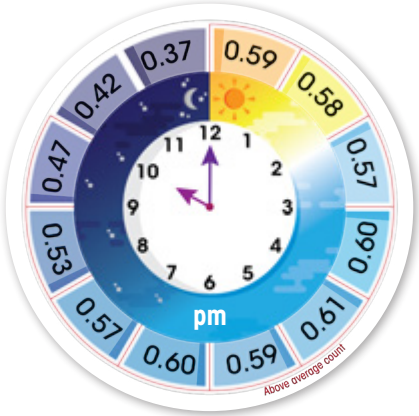
Average Number of Water SSC Incidents (Flooding, Leaks, Rescues etc) by Hour of Day



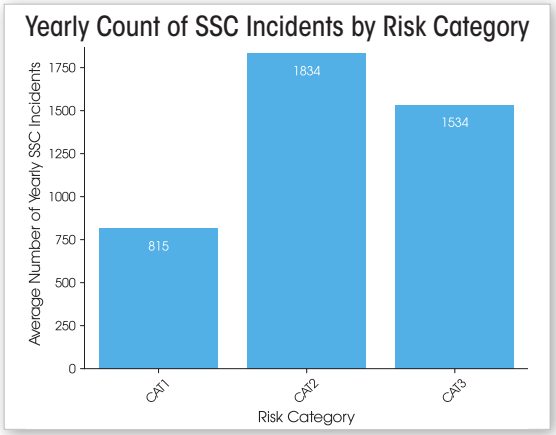
Average Number of Water SSC Incidents by Month

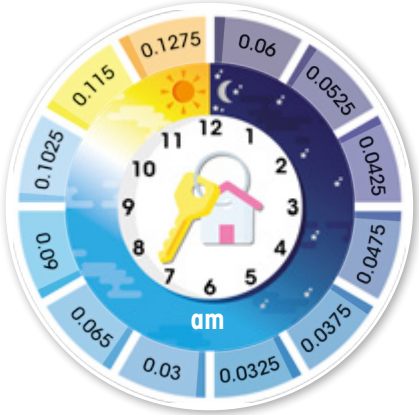


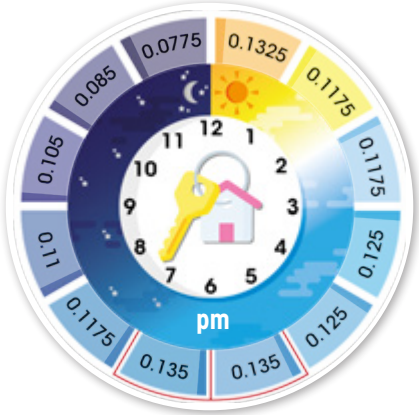




Average Number of Water SSC Incidents (Flooding, Leaks, Rescues etc) by Hour of Day







Average Number of Lock In / Lock Out SSC Incidents by Hour of Day 2009/10 - 2022/23

Special Service Calls are non-fire incidents requiring the attendance of an appliance or officer. They include:

- Providing emergency medical assistance.
- Rescuing individuals from serious harm, in the event of an emergency.
- Emergencies resulting from events such as hazardous material incidents or spills/leaks.
- Emergencies which have occurred as a direct result of severe weather e.g. flooding.
- Emergencies resulting from road traffic incidents

Identify trends

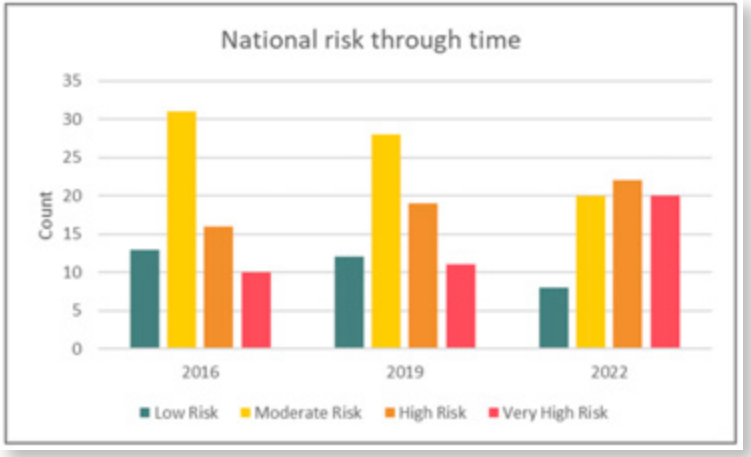
Through our strategic risk analyses, incident reports and performance dashboards we are able to identify annual and temporal trends in all incidents reported to WMFS. This enables us to identify opportunities to develop how we allocate esources as well as target interventions that will assist in risk mitigation.

Risk registers

We use local, national and international risk registers and reports to help identify key emerging risks, assess capability, identify emerging themes and prioritise resources, risk preparation and mitigation. These documents include the local West Midlands Local Risk Assessment, the National Risk Register and the Global Risk Report.

The National Risk Register is a key component of the UK's emergency preparedness framework. By identifying, assessing, and prioritising risk over time, the national risk register highlights potential hazards ranging from natural events, such as wildfires and floods, to man-made incidents such as industrial fires or terrorism.

Drawing from historical incidents, expert opinions, and predictive simulations, the risk register provides insights to enhance strategic planning, resource allocation, and operational readiness. This ensures that we are proactive in our training, equipment, and preparedness efforts to address the most likely and impactful threats identified in the assessment. Risks are often represented using a colour-coded system, indicating their severity based on a combination of likelihood and impact. A risk's likelihood identifies the probability of its occurrence, while its impact describes the potential consequences. The severity of national risk is intensifying, transitioning from Low and Medium levels to High and Very High categories, as shown in the bar chart below.



The purpose of the risk assessment process is to identify, analyse and evaluate risk to inform how we need to plan and prepare. A crucial element of the risk management process is to carry out a capability assessment to understand if there any capability gaps in preparing for or responding to the identified risks. We do this with multi-agency partners as part of the Local Resilience Forum risk assessment group, as well as internally for more fire-and-rescue-specific risks.

Research

We seek to complement findings from our analysis with credible research. This includes conducting a literature review of global academic work in relation to community risk. This, along with professional judgement, will be applied to research findings which will be incorporated into our CRMP where appropriate.

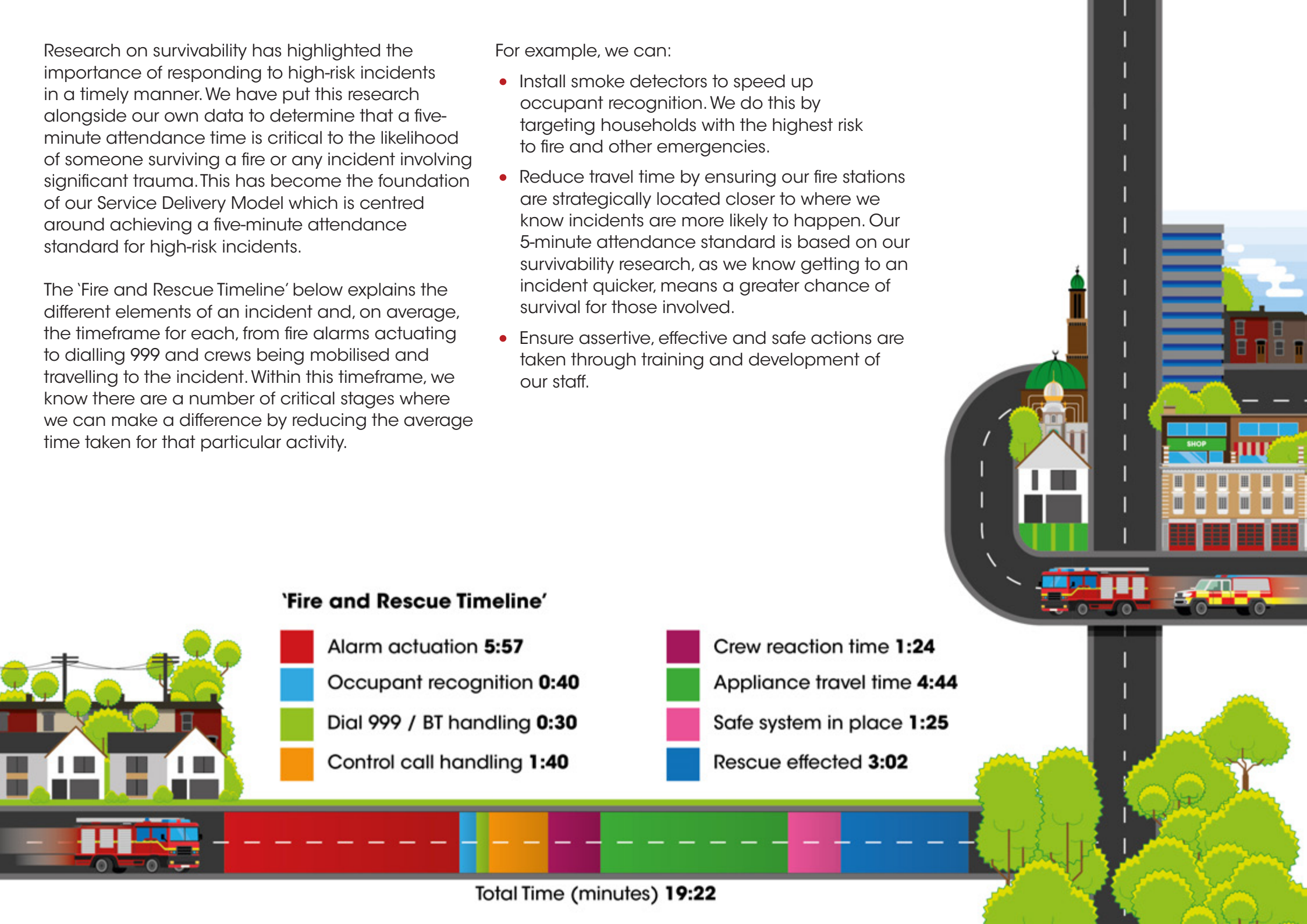


Research on survivability has highlighted the importance of responding to high-risk incidents in a timely manner. We have put this research alongside our own data to determine that a five-minute attendance time is critical to the likelihood of someone surviving a fire or any incident involving significant trauma. This has become the foundation of our Service Delivery Model which is centred around achieving a five-minute attendance standard for high-risk incidents.

The 'Fire and Rescue Timeline' below explains the different elements of an incident and, on average, the timeframe for each, from fire alarms actuating to dialling 999 and crews being mobilised and travelling to the incident. Within this timeframe, we know there are a number of critical stages where we can make a difference by reducing the average time taken for that particular activity.

For example, we can:

- Install smoke detectors to speed up occupant recognition. We do this by targeting households with the highest risk to fire and other emergencies.
- Reduce travel time by ensuring our fire stations are strategically located closer to where we know incidents are more likely to happen. Our 5-minute attendance standard is based on our survivability research, as we know getting to an incident quicker, means a greater chance of survival for those involved.
- Ensure assertive, effective and safe actions are taken through training and development of our staff.



'Fire and Rescue Timeline'

- Alarm actuation **5:57**
- Occupant recognition **0:40**
- Dial 999 / BT handling **0:30**
- Control call handling **1:40**
- Crew reaction time **1:24**
- Appliance travel time **4:44**
- Safe system in place **1:25**
- Rescue effected **3:02**

Total Time (minutes) **19:22**

External environment

In developing our CRMP it is important we have a good understanding of the external environment and how this may influence our work and the delivery of our strategy. Within this element we consider the social, technological, economic, environmental, political, legal and ethical factors that my impact on, or present opportunities within, the CRMP process.

Area	Detail	
Political	• Local and National Elections • Fire Reform White Paper • WMCA/PCC • WMCA Trailblazer Devolution Deal	• Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 Recommendations • Manchester Arena Bombings Inquiry Recommendations
Environmental	• Climate Change (Including CCC Risk Assessments) • Environment Act 2021 (and Office for Environmental Protection) • WMCA Net Zero Five Year Plan and 2041 Target	• WMCA Air Quality Framework and Implementation Plan • National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England
Social	• Ageing Population • Health Inequalities • Cost of Living Crisis	• HMICFRS Spotlight Report on Culture and Values
Technological	• AI • National Data Strategy	• Electric vehicles/ Lithium-Ion Batteries • Modern Methods of Construction
Legal	• Fire Safety Act • Levelling Up and Regeneration Act • Procurement Act • Serious Violence Duty • Minimum Service Level Act	• Independent Public Advocate (Victims and Prisoners Bill) • Social Housing (Regulation) Act and Renters (Reform) Bill
Economic	• Future Local Government Financial Settlements • Inflation and recession/slow economic growth	• Overall Public Spending Impacts • Birmingham City Council S114



Organisational intelligence

We make sure we capture and share learning internally, regionally and nationally to enable continuous improvement in service delivery. We continually debrief incidents and policies, identify organisational themes at the earliest opportunity, and ensure we act on learning identified. This helps us to effectively manage emerging risks and keep our staff safe.

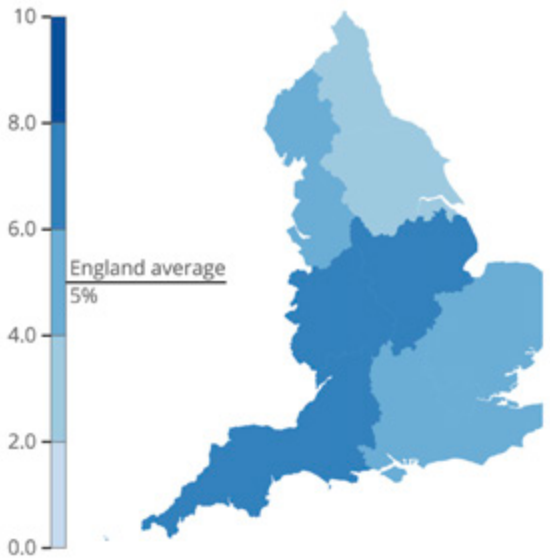
A recent example of this is intelligence gathered in relation to an increase in lithium-ion battery incidents. This information was gathered from our staff, as well as from national learning, and meant we were able to gain a better understanding of the risk and develop training for our staff and educational resources for the public to help mitigate this risk.

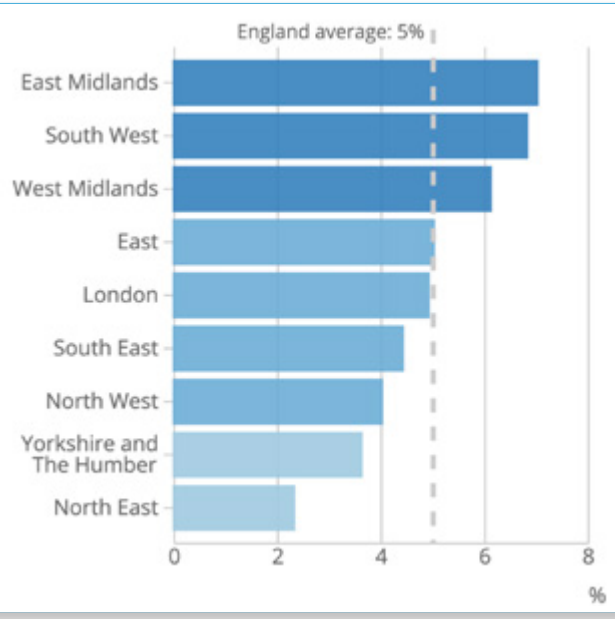
Horizon scanning and forecasting

In this section we look beyond our three-year planning cycle to understand the potential future requirements of our CRMP. This includes understanding population demographics, social, economic and health conditions, along with analysis our crews' incident attendance time. We also consider longer-term risks and their potential impacts, such as climate change.

For example, Office for National Statistics (ONS) projections show the populations of all regions within England are projected to grow and have a greater proportion of people aged 65 and over by mid-2028. The West Midlands has one of the top three highest projected population changes, with a 6.1% change over a 10-year period. Statisticians have commented that *"This information is particularly important for anyone planning local services – for example, opportunities and services for older people."*

Office for National Statistics (ONS) population projections

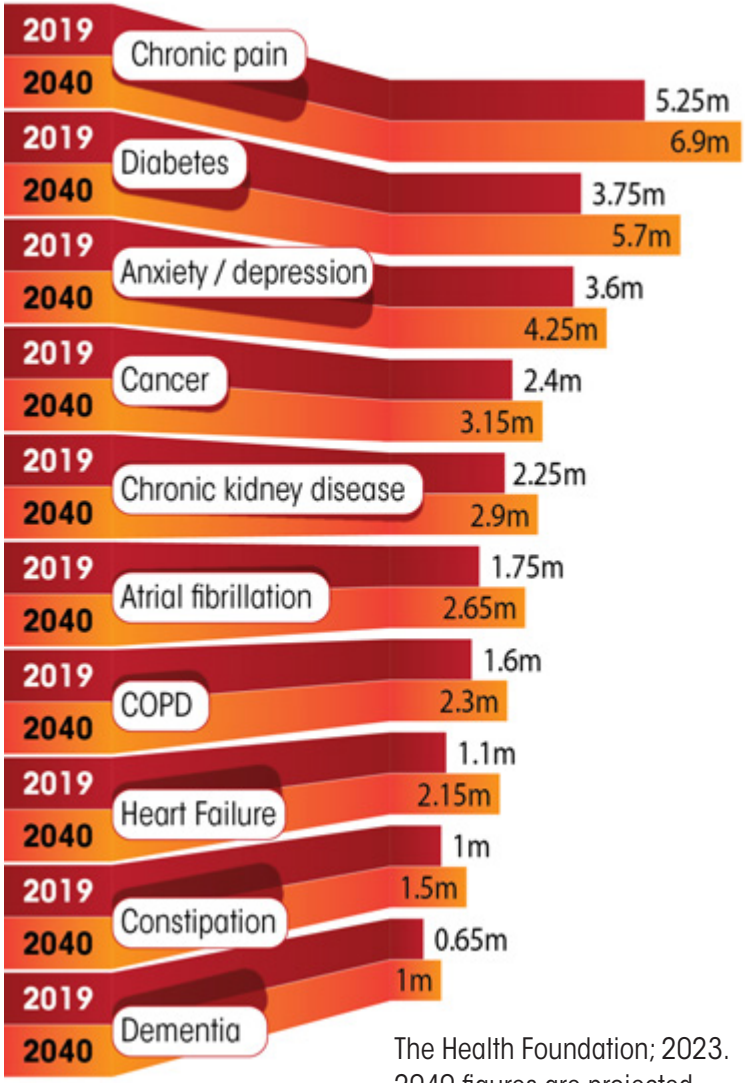




Source: Office for National Statistics – Subnational population projections.



In England, 9.1 million people are projected to be living with major illness by 2040, 2.5 million more than in 2019. This is an increase from almost 1 in 6 to nearly 1 in 5 of the adult population. This will be particularly significant knowing the strong link between the health inequalities and social determinants that reduce life expectancy and those that increase risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies.



The Health Foundation; 2023. 2040 figures are projected.

New and emerging risks

Our understanding of risk continues to evolve. We continually assess risk to inform our decision making and, throughout our CRMP process, risk analysis is integral. Our latest risk analysis has identified the following key themes:

- Business continuity and resilience
- Emerging technologies
- Cost of living crisis
- Sustainability and Net Zero

The majority of people who responded to our 2023 consultation agreed with our assessment of emerging risk.

Business continuity and resilience

We have seen an in increase in disruptive events which may impact the West Midlands in a range of ways. These could be local, national or international events including protests, international disputes, social disruption, supply chain issues, loss of utilities, climate change and cyber-attacks.

The UK Government Resilience Framework highlights the changing risk landscape, stating " ... crises will have far reaching consequences and are likely to be greater in frequency and scale in the next decade than we have been used to. We have a responsibility to prepare for this future."

The UK report of the Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning depicts a similar outlook, stating "*The UK's risk management system must adapt to ensure that we are prepared for the evolving extreme and systemic risks on the horizon to protect us today and into the future*" and concludes that "*the UK must be better at anticipating,*



preparing for and responding to a range of challenging risk scenarios, including those which it has never experienced before."

In line with the Fire and Rescue National Framework, we must put in place arrangements to prevent and mitigate these risks as well as having effective business continuity arrangements to ensure these risks do not impact our ability to deliver our key services. We have strategic business continuity plans in place to minimise risk and manage the impact of disruptive events, many of which we have used extensively over the last five years, including:

April 2018	Industrial Action Planning (local re contracts)
March 2019	EU Exit Planning
Jan 2020	COVID-19 Pandemic
April 2021	Operation Forth Bridge
July 2022	Heatwave and Drought
Sept 2022	Operation London Bridge
Nov 2022	Industrial Action planning (national re firefighter pay)
June 2023	National 999 outage

Our strategic risk analysis has also shown how climate change is bringing about greater uncertainty and creating more volatile and unpredictable weather, with resulting fluctuations in demand for emergency response. The increase in secondary (outdoor) fires in 2022/23 was likely due to the prolonged heatwave during the summer months.

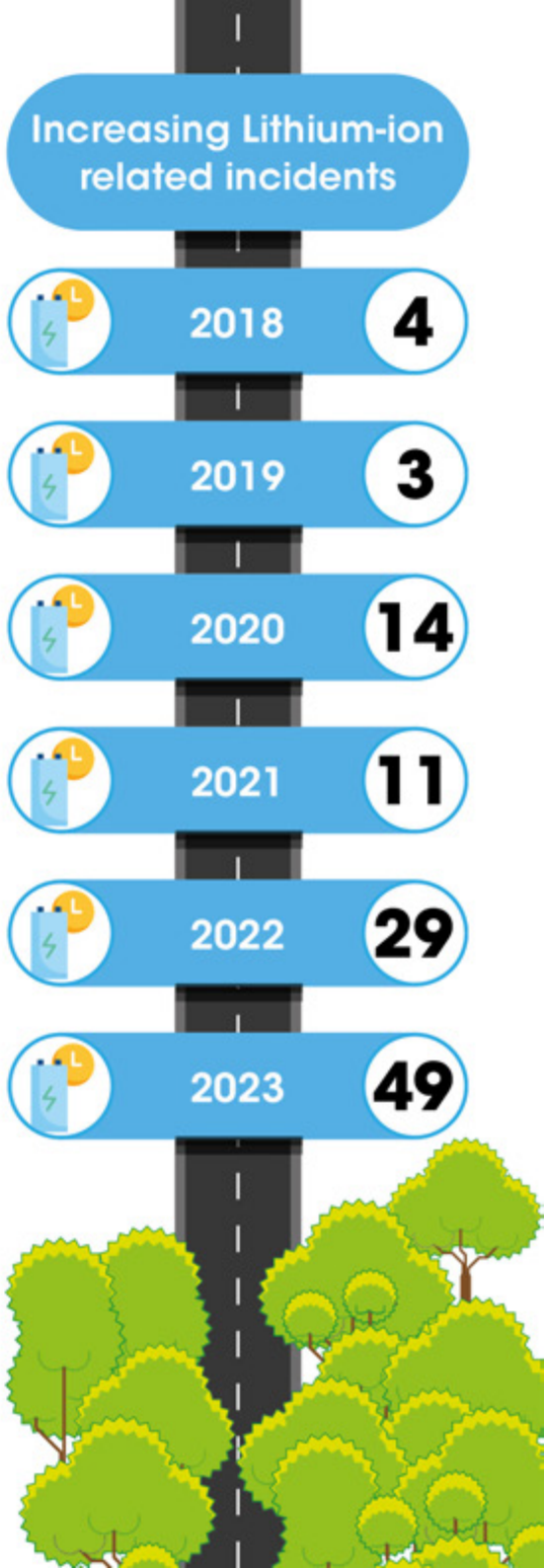
In addition to an increased likelihood of disruptive events, national and global risk registers also appear to show the severity of existing risk intensifying. We can therefore expect the risk landscape to continually evolve, with disruptive events continuing to increase in frequency, scale and impact within the West Midlands. To effectively assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning, we need to assess our existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the risk management planning process. This is something we do continually. However, we will now be completing a comprehensive review of all of our resilience arrangements to ensure we can meet the resilience landscape of the future.

Emerging technologies

The drive for sustainability to negate climate change is creating emerging technologies such as lithium-ion Batteries, hydrogen, large energy storage systems and new building construction methods.

An NFCC report in 2021 stated lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries are responsible for around 48% of all waste fires in the UK each year, costing the economy £158 million annually.

Li-ion batteries in electric and hybrid vehicles can present a challenge to firefighters if the vehicles are involved in road traffic collisions or catch fire due to the collision/faults, etc. The NFCC is supporting fire and rescue services across the UK to identify a suitable solution to deal with the associated issues, anticipated to become a significant risk in the future.



The RAC estimates that there are currently around 980,000 zero-emission Battery Electric Vehicles (EVs) on UK roads - with an additional 600,000plug-in hybrids.

The growth of the EV and alternate fuel market is expected to accelerate in the coming years, as the UK prepares itself for the ban on new petrol and diesel vehicle sales.

Projected UK figures are 23.2 million by 2032 (55% of all vehicles), increasing to 49.0 million (100%) by 2050.

Cost of living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis is exacerbating underlying social inequalities that we know increase our communities' risk to fire and other emergencies.

This will see vulnerability continue to rise, leading to increased community risk and a potential increase in frequency and severity of incidents incident we attend.

The global Risk Report (GRR) serves as a crucial tool for identifying and understanding significant threats on a worldwide scale, vital for both national stakeholders and emergency services. It outlines the most severe risk anticipated in the immediate two-year period as well as over a longer ten-year timeframe, encompassing challenges from natural events to complex man-made situations.

Most of the severe global risks identified impact WMFS. Specifically, the cost-of-living crisis and extreme weather identified on the two-year time span are of concern, along with the climate-related risks in the ten-year timespan.



Global Risk Report, 2023.



Sustainability and Net Zero

WMFS recognises that not only do our activities impact on the environment, but changes in the environment may impact on the type, frequency and severity of incidents we attend. Sustainability is not solely focused on the environment, but is a service-wide eco system where opportunities are found by working together, streamlining processes and ways of working, leading to a more effective and efficient service. As role models within our communities and to meet external targets, we see sustainability becoming an overarching theme across all elements of our strategy, enabling all areas of the service to adapt to or adopt new approaches to ensuring safer communities.

Assessing our current capability

In this step we aim to review our existing capabilities in terms of the control and mitigation measures we have in place, and whether they are proportionate to the foreseeable hazardous scenarios to which we are likely to respond. A key tool we use in making this assessment is the 'bow tie risk assessment'. This allows us to place the hazardous scenario at the centre and, on one side, assess whether our prevention activities are targeted to the underlying causes that may contribute to a hazardous scenario being realised. On the other side, we assess whether our response capabilities are appropriate to effectively mitigate the risk should the hazardous scenarios occur. This process allows us to identify any potential gaps and highlight future development opportunities.



EFFECTIVELY MANAGING RISK



WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service

Effectively managing risk

We manage and reduce the risks and vulnerabilities posed to communities and businesses, from fire and non-fire emergencies, through delivery of prevention, protection and response activities and services. We apply an integrated and evidence-based approach to community safety (prevention), fire safety inspection and enforcement (protection), and emergency response arrangements (response) to support our vision. In delivering our services, we take into account the diverse needs of our communities.

The outcomes of our Community Risk Management Plan delivered through our prevention, protection and response activities are designed to:

- reduce loss of life in fires and other emergency incidents
- reduce the number and severity of injuries in fires and other emergency incidents
- educe the number of fires and other emergency incidents occurring
- reduce the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents
- give the greatest opportunity for people and the region to prosper.

This will be through:

- managing the level of risk and vulnerability in our communities
- ensuring compliance with Health and Safety laws
- safeguarding the environment and heritage (built and natural)
- providing value for money
- identifying opportunities to work with other agencies to reduce demand on wider public services.

And achieved by:

- identifying and assessing existing and potential risks to communities within the West Midlands
- identifying the most vulnerable and at-risk individuals within the West Midlands
- ensuring that appropriate risk control measures are in place
- evaluating the effectiveness of prevention, protection and response arrangements
- identifying and assessing existing and potential risks to our employees, to ensure they have the resources to perform their roles
- identifying opportunities for improvement and determining policies and standards for prevention, protection and response
- determining resource requirements to meet these policies and standards
- dealing with incidents in an assertive, safe and effective way.

The following sections will detail how we use our prevention, protection and response functions to effectively manage risk.



PREVENTION



WMFS
West Midlands
Fire Service

What is prevention?
Prevention is about preventing fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies, by providing targeted education and interventions to reducing vulnerability and support safer and healthier communities.

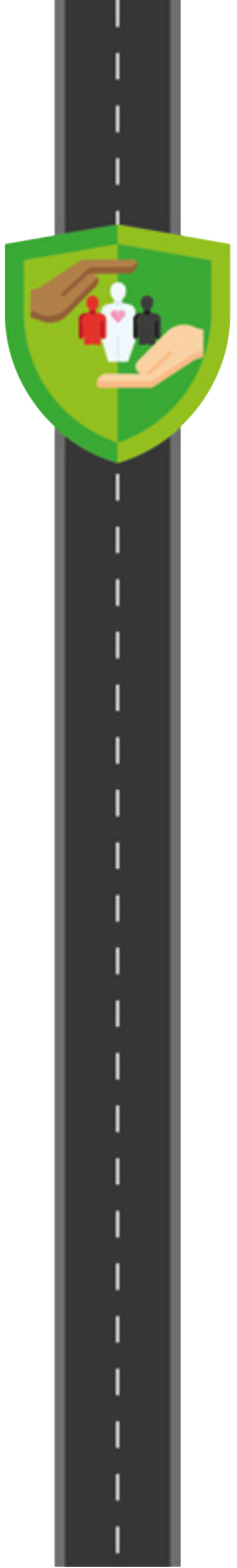
How do we identify risk?
We know there is a significant overlap between the health inequalities and social determinants that reduce life expectancy and those that increase risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies. These overlapping issues include:

- dementia
- fuel poverty
- smoking
- worklessness
- living in an area of deprivation
- mobility
- mental health
- poverty
- physical health
- alcohol/substance dependency
- obesity
- hoarding behaviour
- isolation
- sensory impairment
- degenerative or long-term medical condition
- poor housing
- access to community services

Every contact that WMFS has with the community is an opportunity to reduce health inequalities. In 2010 Professor Sir Michael Marmot published his Fair Society Healthy Lives report. It highlighted that underlying health inequalities, social determinants, poverty, and deprivation have a significant impact on life expectancy.
The review concluded that reducing health inequalities would require action on six policy objectives:

- give every child the best start in life
- enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- create fair employment and good work for all
- ensure healthy standard of living for all
- create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
- strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

During 2012-14 there was a growing understanding within WMFS that the same social determinants have an impact on risk of fire and other emergency incidents. Therefore, tackling the underlying environmental, social and life-style choices, ie the 'cause of the cause' will contribute to reducing the risk and vulnerability to fire and other emergencies.



In 2014, WMFS published the report 'Improving Lives to Save Lives' that detailed the contribution the service makes to reduce health inequalities. The report was launched alongside an accompanying short film at a conference where Professor Sir Michael Marmot was the keynote speaker. This work was recognised by Professor Sir Michael Marmot when he gave 'Marmot Status' to WMFS in 2016. Our work was also recognised by the Royal Society for Public Health who awarded WMFS in 2016 for our wider health inequalities work.

During 2020, The Health Foundation published the 10-year update to the Marmot Review. 'Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On' provides updated figures and analysis of the progress against the measures used in the 2010 report. It concludes that:

"From the beginning of the 20th Century, England experienced continuous improvements in life expectancy but from 2011 these improvements slowed dramatically, almost grinding to a halt. For part of the decade 2010-2020 life expectancy actually fell in the most deprived communities outside London for women and in some regions for men. For men and women everywhere, the time spent in poor health is increasing."

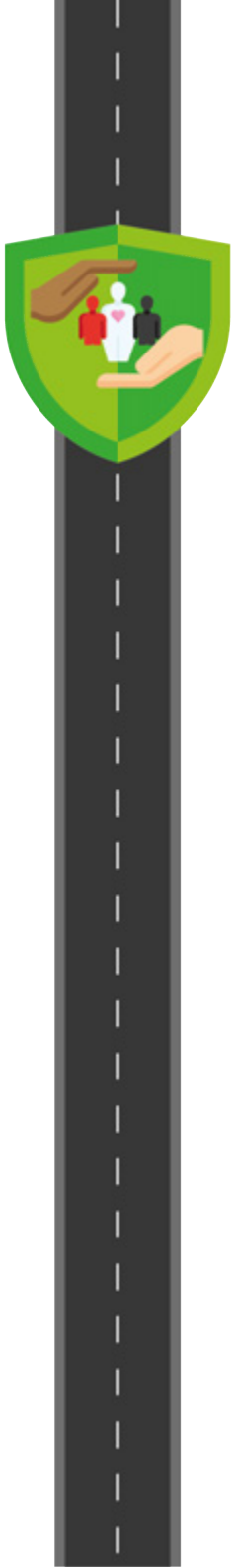
The service has the following strategic prevention objectives:

We will:

- prevent fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies
- focus on reducing health inequalities for our most vulnerable as a means of reducing risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies
- educate the community to reduce their risk and vulnerability to fire and other emergencies
- collaborate and work in partnership with other organisations to reduce the risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies.

We use a collaborative partnership approach to engage with a wide range of individuals, groups, and professionals to support, guide and educate our communities. It uses a targeted and evidence-based approach in the delivery of prevention activities to enable the organisation to achieve its vision of making the West Midlands safer, healthier, and stronger.

We take a 'life course' approach to targeted and universal services that seek to reduce risk and vulnerability to fires and other emergencies which we attend and improve health, wellbeing, and quality of life.



Our Prevention Activities	Overview
Safe and Well (universal and targeted)	Online, telephone and face-to-face visits providing vital fire safety information, general safety and health or well-being advice
Fire Safety Tutoring (targeted)	Qualified fire safety tutors work with children and young people who show an unhealthy interest in fire.
Key Stage 2 Education – SPARKS (universal)	The SPARKS presentation is delivered by firefighters to Year 4 pupils, covering smoke detectors, escape plans, emergency calls, fire hazards, pedestrian and car safety and more.
Key Stage 2 Education - Smart Choices (universal)	A programme that teaches children about life skills, personal safety, travel safety, good citizenship, water safety, road and car safety and staying safe in the home.
Key Stage S3/4 Education - Your Choice: Feel the Heat (universal and targeted)	Training aims to explore deliberate fire setting and the consequences to the environment and to society.
Key Stage S3/4 Education - Your Choice: On the Road (universal and targeted)	Training aims to consider the consequences of anti-social driving behaviours and features discussions around driving under the influence, recognising peer pressure and more.
Key Stage 4 - Every Choice Counts (universal and targeted)	This session is to empower young drivers/passengers to develop their own coping strategies to handle risky situations as well as becoming a responsible driver/passenger.
SEND Education (targeted)	Tailored sessions for children and adults with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND)
Fire Cadets based at our fire stations (universal)	This group aims to provide young people with the opportunity to develop their skills and coordination through training and discipline. Covering a range of practical skills.
Safeguarding (universal)	It is our policy to protect, safeguard and promote the welfare of the children, young people, and adults with whom we come into contact
WMFS website (universal)	Our website has a comprehensive range of information and guidance available to support citizens, organisations and professionals, formal and informal carers, in reducing risk and vulnerability
Fire Safety E-Learning for Professionals and Carers and Fire Safety Guidance for Professionals and Carers (universal)	This is predominantly for those working with adults with care and support needs, to provide professionals that work outside of the fire sector with the knowledge and understanding of risk and vulnerability to fire, how to assess and mitigate this, including making referrals to WMFS for professional support.



Prevention Activities

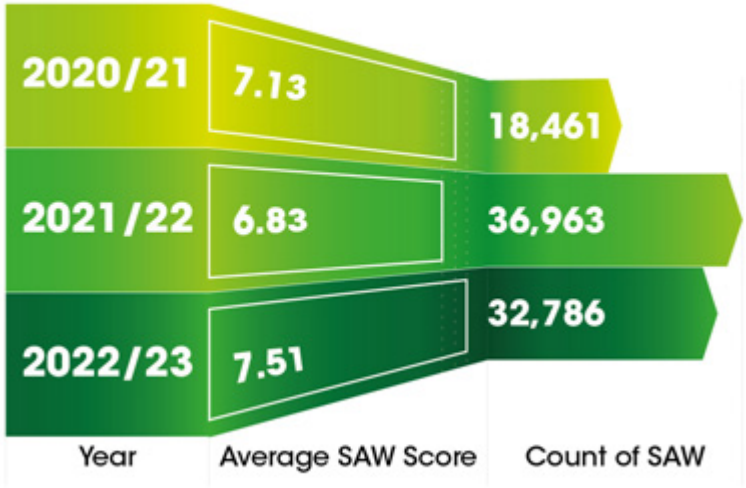
How do we manage the risk through our prevention activities?

The prevention activities we deliver set out the way we apply a universal, targeted and evidenced-based approach to reduce people's vulnerability to the types of emergencies we attend.

Prevention – continual improvement

In 2022, to more effectively manage risk through Safe and Well visits, we started to monitor 'risk points' identified during a visit rather than the total number of visits completed - the higher the risk points, the higher the risk that household may be from fire or other emergencies. This approach means we are targeting higher risk households and have a greater opportunity to reduce risk and health inequalities.

By targeting households with greater potential risks and tailoring interventions to their specific need, we maximise the effectiveness of our prevention work, as evidenced by the rising average risk score over the last three years.



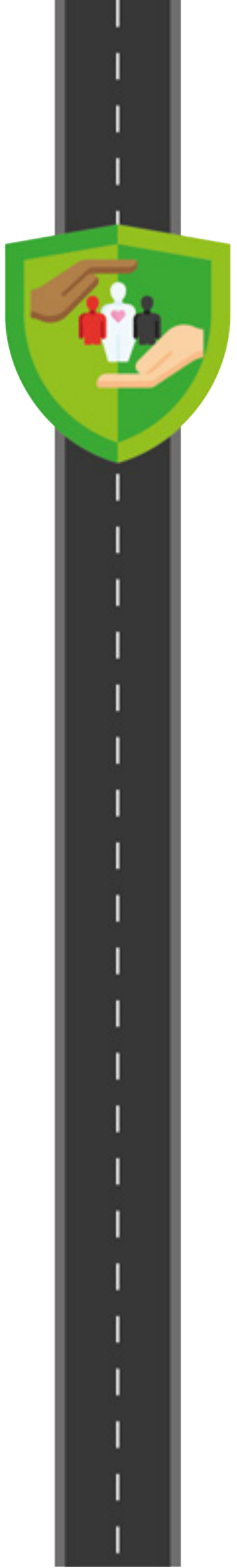
Consultation

We continue to use our resources and manage risk more effectively. This includes listening to your feedback to help shape what we deliver. We found from our consultation that the most common reasons for not using our prevention services included not knowing what is available, followed by not knowing how to access services.

As part of the consultation, we also asked what risks you thought we should consider as well as how we could make you safer. You highlighted increased community engagement, climate and environmental advice, the cost-of-living crisis, electric/battery safety, and water safety.

We are doing the following to address your feedback:

- we have reviewed our Safe and Well content, to include additional information and advice in relation to heatwave, battery safety, flooding and wildfire risks. This will be published in April 2024
- we have already launched new battery charging safety advice on our website, which can be found here
- we are developing a 'Proactive Prevention Policy' which will mean we will be able to use the latest data to target those we think would benefit the most from our services – as we know a barrier is not knowing what we offer.
- we are reviewing and developing our community engagement plan. We know this has been impacted by COVID-19, so we will now re-build our local community relationships and networks to deliver more valuable community engagement
- we recognise the cost-of-living crisis has potentially made vulnerable people more vulnerable, so our advice and guidance is tailored based on what we've found – e.g. safely heating your home.



PROTECTION



WMFS
West Midlands
Fire Service

What is protection?
Our protection work is all about protecting life and property (including heritage sites), making businesses and the economy stronger, and communities safer. We also advise companies on fire safety legislation, to keep their staff and customers safe and help their businesses to grow. Where necessary we can go further and take enforcement action, including prosecution where we feel the risk is significant.

How do we identify risk?
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority is one of the Enforcing Authorities for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other associated fire safety legislation within the West Midlands. We proactively audit higher-risk premises and apply enforcement principles to reduce risk. These include tall buildings, residential flats, hospitals, schools and high-risk businesses. We also consider historical fire statistics and the likelihood of a fire occurring in specific types of premises/occupancies.

There are many factors that may influence risk in these premises, which are identified and evaluated during visits. We consider any past enforcement action and intelligence/concerns from internal and external agencies and use our regulatory powers where appropriate. Enforcement from intelligence-led audits considers the needs of our prevention and response teams to manage the risk through an integrated approach. This includes community objectives e.g., safeguarding.

Educational Protection Activities	Overview
Safe and Strong	These are visits carried out by members of our fire safety team. We assist businesses to reduce the risk from fire, support them to keep their businesses in business, and support strengthening the economy whilst providing public reassurance and confidence. WMFS Safe and Strong
West Midlands fire safety training	We provide training for businesses to support and enhance awareness of their requirements under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
Website	Our website provides a suite of information to educate businesses on their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and practical advice on how to reduce risk from fire.
Primary Authority Partnerships	We develop effective partnerships with businesses to improve fire safety enforcement advice. Primary Authority Register
Campaigns	We undertake prevention campaigns in line with the NFCC campaign schedule and using local intelligence.



Sprinklers	We encourage the installation of Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) where persons or premises are identified as being 'high risk'.
Safety Advisory Groups (events)	We advise on fire safety when public events are being planned, to support both firefighter and public safety.
Water	We inspect, test, and repair hydrants, so that water provision is available for use in event of a fire.
Heritage	We take steps to help protect local heritage assets, including buildings and their contents. We advise on risk-based solutions to balance fire safety and heritage conditions in buildings.

Enforcement Protection Activities	**Overview**
Fire Safety Audit	This is the primary activity we undertaken to reduce risk in the built environment. Audits will be identified through a proactive, risk-based inspection programme or reactively if we receive submission of a fire safety concern.
Campaigns (Audit Sampling)	Intelligence is used to target audits, e.g. information that a particular type of premises/occupancies is at risk from fire.
Licensing	We work to reduce risk through managing all aspects of licence applications (e.g. for fireworks, petroleum and explosives) and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation
Planning and Buildings Regulations	We reduce risk through carrying out consultation activity in relation to building regulation applications, water provision and access planning applications and fire engineering solutions for complex developments.
Fire Engineering	We are responsible for supporting the work of our Planning and Building Regulations Team where applications consist of complex developments and fire engineered solutions.
Case Management	We are responsible for the effective management of all fire safety investigations and preparing legal cases.
Out of Hours	We provide a 24/7 capability delivering statutory obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

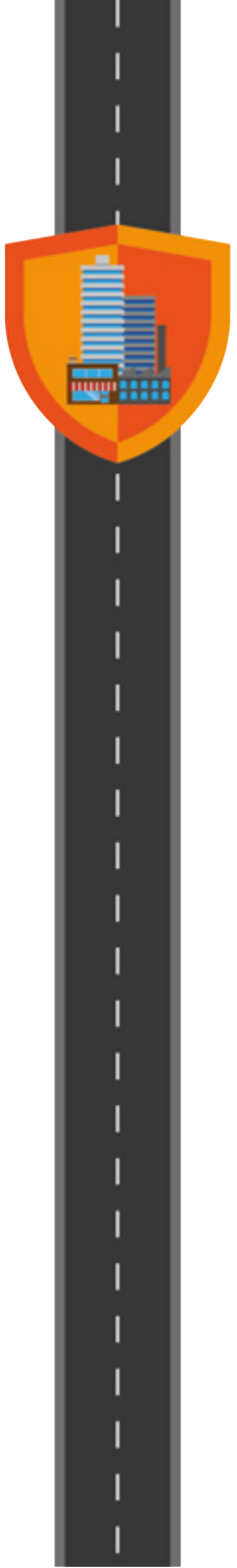
Protection – continual improvement

As our communities evolve, so does the built environment. With constant changes to our towns and cities, including larger, taller and more complex buildings our Protection Services strive to ensure the places in which we live, work, or visit are safe. Through engagement, education and enforcement, our Fire Safety teams deliver targeted interventions to support premises understand their legal duties and manage any risks to ensure the safety of everyone and support economic growth.

We use a digital system to evaluate the service being delivered through the Safe and Strong visit and audits. This collects quantitative and qualitive information to support the improvement of delivery and ensure the services are being delivered in the most appropriate way. Where necessary and appropriate, thematic reviews of risk-based intervention delivered by our protection staff take place to ensure the desired outcome is being achieved and risk in the built environment is being reduced.

We continuously review processes which support the implementation of projects across the sector. We are delivering continual improvement through:

- Digital and data transformation
- Enhancing data collection,
- Increasing efficiency and productivity
- Improving products and services.
- Reducing unwanted fire signals
- Limiting the impact and disruption of false alarms on business
- Reducing unnecessary risk and time to crews and the public whilst responding to false alarms
- Tall Buildings
- Reducing the chance of a fire occurring and keeping the building and residents safe.



Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) project
Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) are required to be installed in certain premises to give early warning of a fire to the occupants so they can evacuate. We know the majority of AFAs are false alarms and have taken steps to ensure we respond proportionately to such calls to reduce wasted time and keep resources available to respond to real emergencies. Where we do respond to an AFA, we want to utilise the flexibilities offered by our blended fleet to send a smaller vehicle with fewer staff.

We have re-categorised our AFA incident types based on risk. Fire Control have been able to use our existing dynamic mobilisation process which uses available information to send the most appropriate resources to achieve a proportionate response to AFA incidents, not sending a fire engine where possible.

AFA next steps
We will develop our approach based on continual analysis. We have found there were over 1,000 AFA calls for incidents at care homes between April 2019 and March 2023, 99.1 per cent of which were false alarms and none of the fires resulted in casualties or people being rescued. Therefore, our approach to AFAs will now extend to Residential Care Homes, where we will dynamically mobilise to AFAs 24/7, maintaining a proportional level of response. All changes take place with extensive engagement and training with all relevant stakeholders.

Consultation
We found that the majority of those who had used our protection services rated them as either excellent or good.

During our consultation, we asked members of the public living in tall buildings if they were aware of the new Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022. We found that most residents living in tall buildings haven't heard of these new regulations. Of those who have heard of the regulations, the majority thought they made them safer. Our staff also felt the new regulations have made communities safer.

When asked how we can keep tall building communities safe from fire, the most common answers were community engagement, advice leaflets, new legislation and sprinkler systems.

As a result of this feedback, we will:

- educate and inform residents of tall buildings of the fire safety measures in their building through a targeted campaign
- prioritise education of vulnerable residents in tall buildings through our Safe and Well visits
- prioritise fire safety in tall buildings through auditing and regulation, reflected in our protection auditing strategy
- engage with the Housing Association Forum and Local Authorities to make them aware of the outcomes of our public consultation, in particular the thoughts of their residents
- regularly inspect residential tall buildings to gain operational information and check basic fire safety measures through our site-specific risk information inspection strategy.



RESPONSE



WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service

What is response?
Our response function aims to continuously improve and meet the expectation of our community by delivering a highly skilled, competent emergency response, that enables incidents to be resolved assertively, effectively and safely.

Our Service Delivery Model (SDM) ensures we can meet the performance requirement to get the right resources to the right place at the right time. It is also flexible enough to adapt to changing risk over time, whilst being resilient to consider foreseen and un-foreseen events which may limit our available resources.

Our response to fires and other emergencies continued to be graded 'outstanding' by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. We were delighted that our understanding of risk of fire and other emergencies, and overall effectiveness, were also rated 'outstanding' for the first time.

This result highlights how our professional, highly-skilled and highly-trained firefighters respond assertively, effectively and safely to a wide variety of incidents, 24/7. They protect lives and properties, keep businesses in business and help keep the West Midlands' transport networks flowing.

Our consultation showed that the majority of those who had used our response services rated them as excellent or good and did not highlight any barriers to accessing our response services.

To determine our resource requirements to meet the needs of the community and reduce risk and vulnerability, we consider several factors which are discussed in the following section.

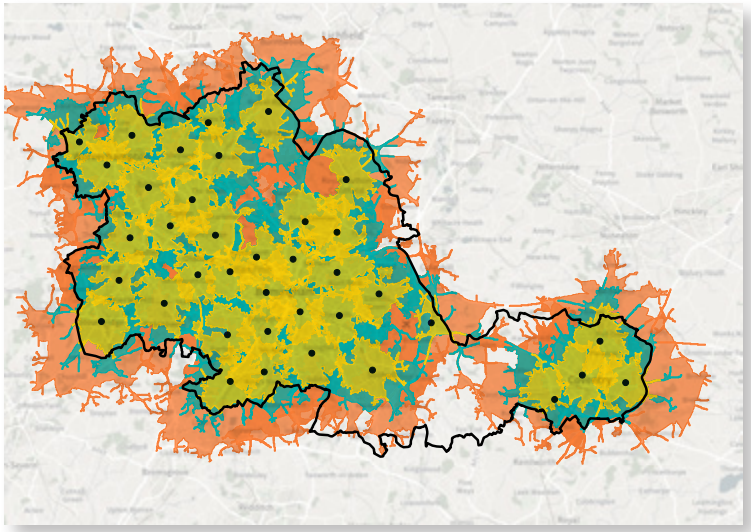
Incident Risk Category	Description	Fire Appliance Attendance Standard
Category 1 High Risk	This category comprises those incidents that present the most significant risk to life, for example house fires, road traffic collisions and water rescue incidents.	5 minutes
Category 2 Medium Risk	The category comprises those incidents where there is a potential life risk (either through incident severity or the type of property affected), but there is a reduced likelihood of this risk being realised	7 minutes
Category 3 Low Risk	This category is made up of those incidents where there is a significantly reduced risk to life, for example the provision of advice only or animal rescues.	10 minutes
Category 4 Secondary Fires	These include fires in the open or fires where houses are not involved, eg fires in fields, gardens, woods, grass, rubbish and skip fires.	20 minutes
Category 5	False alarms	



Resource locations

Now we know how quickly we need to respond to incidents in order to increase the chance of survival, we can make sure our fire stations are located in the right places, to enable us to manage risk effectively. The map below shows our 38 fire stations across the West Midlands. The colours around the stations (Isochrones) show different travel times based on historical vehicle data to show projected coverage that can be achieved from these locations.

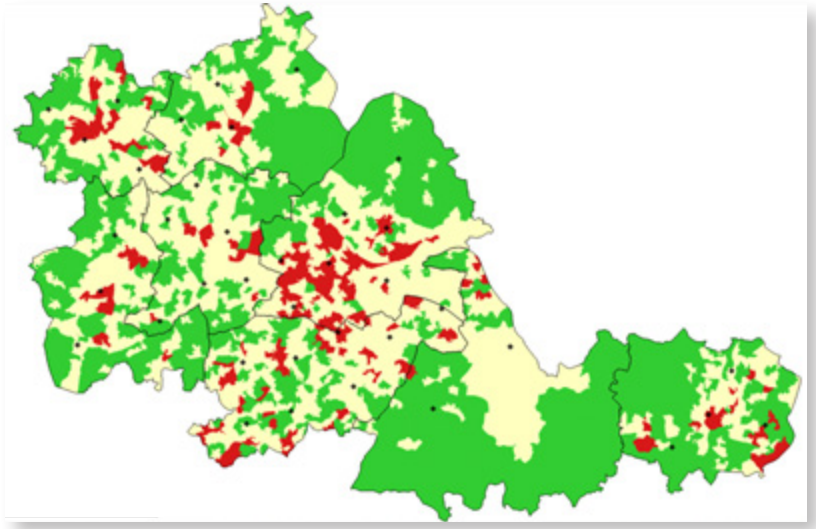
We know where our most vulnerable communities are based on our risk analysis. The map below shows where our high, medium and low risk areas are, based on real incident data, as well as factors we know directly relate to fire risk. You will see that our fire stations are located so that we are able to reach the highest risk areas within 5 minutes. Our stations are also spread geographically across the West Midlands, so we are able to reach all our communities quickly when they need us most – achieving one of the fastest response times in the UK.



5-minute response times

7-minute response times

10-minute response times



High (142)

Medium (824)

Low (714)

How we manage risk through our response activities

Our resources:

- 38 fire stations
- approx. 70 vehicles, including fire engines, 4x4 brigade response vehicles and business support vehicles which attend automatic fire alarm activations, providing advice and support to businesses to make them safer.

Based on local and national risk and capability assessments, we have a number of specialist capabilities including:

- High volume pumping unit – this enables us to move large volumes of water in a short space of time, to support incidents such as major fires or flooding
- Detection, identification and monitoring teams – at some incidents, it is vital to know if hazardous materials are present, where they are, and which materials are involved. This information enables early, accurate decisions to be taken about the decontamination and/or treatment of involved people, as well as levels of Personal Protective/ Respiratory Equipment for responders
- Mass decontamination – this capability provides the ability to decontaminate members of the public that may have been contaminated following the release of a hazardous substance. Each decontamination sector can decontaminate up to 300 people per hour
- Hydraulic Platform (HP) - These appliances have three main purposes – to act as a water tower, a rescue tower and an observational tower. They enhance our response to a variety of incidents including Tall Building fires.
- Drones – unmanned aerial systems that improves situation awareness at incidents.

Some of our staff have additional skills including;

- Hazardous Material Advisers (HMA) who provide specialist advice in relation to any incident involving a hazardous material, such as chemicals
- National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILOs) who are specially-trained to provide advice and support to multi-agency partners on our capability and capacity to safely resolve incidents
- Scientific Advisor who provides additional specialist advice in relation to incidents that involve chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials.

Technical Rescue Unit

Our Technical Rescue Unit deals with local, regional and national incidents that require additional equipment, training and knowledge. There are three Technical Rescue stations strategically located across the West Midlands to ensure that we have the right staff with the required skills and competencies available to respond 24/7. Many of the skills that the technical rescue teams provide are delivered to recognised standards which require constant maintenance, including:

- Technical Rescue Advisors
- rope rescue
- water rescue and flooding
- terrorist attacks
- animal rescue
- bariatric rescue
- Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).



Fire Control

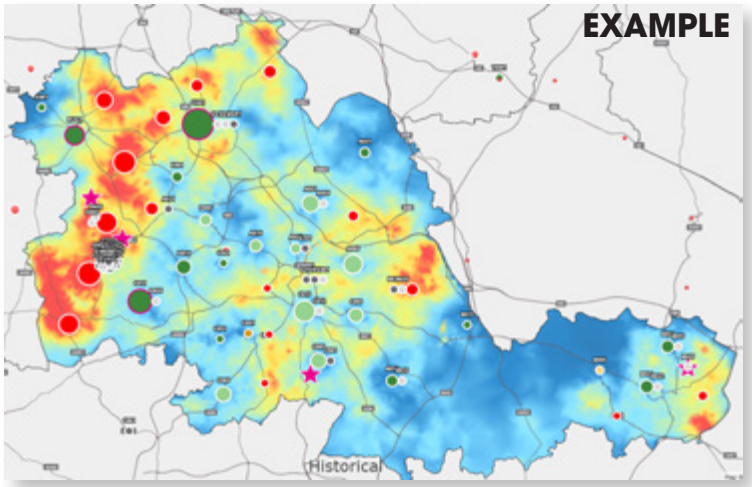
WMFS hosts a fire control shared with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Resources are mobilised using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support the mobilisation of the nearest appropriate resources, which are flexibly mobilised to ensure a correct level of response.

We work collaboratively with other responders and partners to achieve inter-operability and intra-operability, to effectively respond and assist at incidents. Appropriate resources will be mobilised depending on the incident type. National Resilience Assets and specialist advice will be available via National Coordination Advisory Framework (NCAF) protocols and Fire Control Action Plans. Arrangements are in place for Emergency Call Management (ECM) which involves accumulating sufficient information to make informed decisions about the resources required to achieve a safe and effective conclusion of the incident.

Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT)

The Dynamic Cover Tool helps us to manage risk on a daily basis by providing a real-time visual aid for Fire Control resource managers, to support their decision making onmaking on appropriate positioning of resources to improve emergency cover dynamically. The DCT uses thousands of historical incidents and other data to determine a base layer of risk.

By effectively distributing our resources in relation to risk we can achieve an average median attendance time of under five minutes for high-risk incidents. The tool allows us to assess the potential impact of moving a resource before making the decision to move it. The tool therefore helps us minimise risk, monitor coverage, maintain or improve response times and make efficient and effective use of available resources.



Dynamic Mobilising

Resource requirements to deal with a range of incidents are set out in our mobilising policy or national guidance. We recognise that not all incidents will be the same and so allow flexibility in what resources we send. Fire control can dynamically mobilise to increase or reduce the resources attending based on the level of risk following intelligence from the caller or other sources. This supports a proportionate level of response for all incidents.

Last year, we used 999eye (see below) 1,268 times to help support increased situational awareness and a proportionate response. Fire control dynamically reduced attendance to incidents on 1,252 occasions last year, meaning those resources could remain available for other high-risk incidents or prevention activity. Fire control also dynamically increased attendance to 659 incidents last year, meaning more resources could get to the incident more quickly. This is important as we know there is a correlation between not only attendance time and survivability, but also damage sustained. In addition to the importance of attendance time, we also know the importance of the sending the right volume of resources to effectively manage an incident and reduce damage sustained.

999eye
999eye enables 999 callers, with compatible mobile devices, to securely send video footage or images of incidents to fire control. The live footage offers instant 'on-scene eyes' to our operators, helping them to assess the situation and to send the appropriate resources.

It works by sending, with the 999 caller's permission, a text message containing a link to their smartphone. Once clicked, a one-use-only live stream is established that allows footage or images to be sent directly to the control room. Last year, 999eye was used over 6,800 times.

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)
Our inspection process allows for crews to provide local risk assessments for domestic, commercial or industrial premises around the hazards, response requirements, safety considerations and operational information. SSRI is one process we adopt to manage operational risk. The SSRI does not manage the prevention or likelihood of an incident but helps us to understand the risks and hazards a site may present and in turn, puts mitigation plans in place to reduce the consequences should an emergency incident occur.

We process operational risk information effectively to intelligently mobilise a level of response that is relevant to the risk and mitigate consequence.

Provision of Operational Risk Information System (PORIS) is the process we have adopted to generate a risk rating during SSRIs. This risk rating is an indication of the level of risk a site will present to us in the event of an emergency incident. PORIS splits the risk into six main categories:

- firefighter
- environment
- economic/other
- heritage
- community
- individual/societal

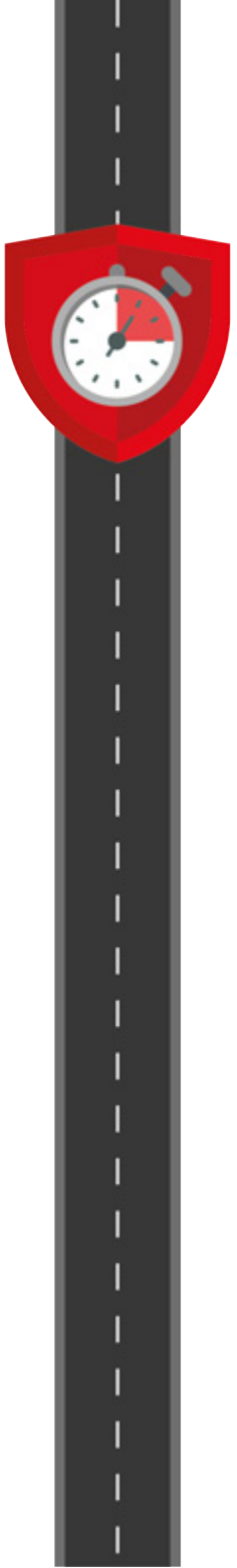
Dependant on how each of these categories is graded during PORIS, an overall risk rating is then generated. The risk rating will determine how frequently the site is re-visited.

Technology
We are always seeking to provide intelligent services to our communities through our digitally empowered workforce. We continually enhance and transform services to our communities, underpinning them with innovative and digital solutions, enabling the delivery of our strategy.

Simulated incidents though exercising
WMFS schedules frequent exercises to test the capability of the organisation, teams and individuals in a controlled environment to achieve operational excellence. Simulated incidents ensure that the policies and procedures employed mirror a real incident and provide staff with the opportunity to respond safely, assertively and effectively to emergencies. These exercises range in scale and could include single or multi-agency partners.

Our exercises are informed by a number of factors to ensure they are intelligence and risk led, including:

- organisational intelligence
- learning from post event analysis
- community and Site-Specific Risk information (SSRI)
- joint work with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF)
- joint working with other emergency service partners
- emerging opportunities
- new or significant revisions to operational policies and procedures
- local and/or individual development needs
- national, regional and cross-border learning identified

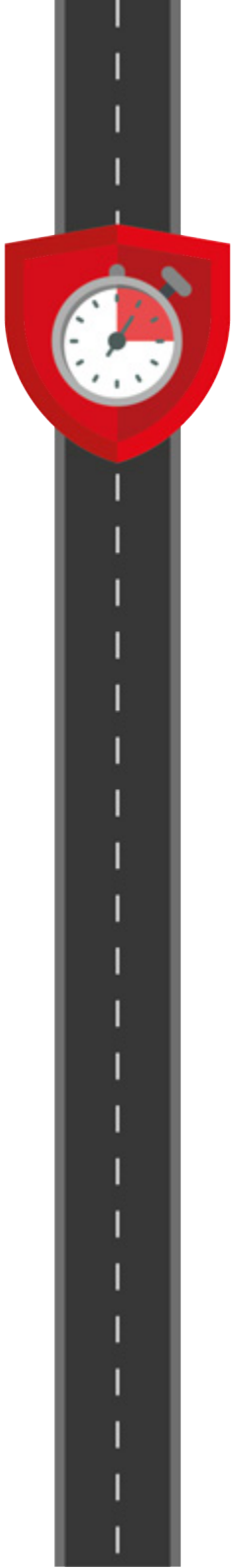


Following all exercises, a debrief will take place to highlight learning opportunities to enable us to continually improve.

Transport Engineering Workshops
Transport Engineering Workshops provide daily maintenance and repairs to all fire service vehicles and equipment. This available 24hrs a day, 365 days of the year enabling maximum operational fleet availability to keep our communities safe.

Collaboration
We know that working collaboratively can help effectively manage risk, build resilience and provide an efficient and effective service to our communities. We work with multi-agency partners within the West Midlands Local Resilience Forum, as well as other fire and rescue services in our region and across the country.
Some examples include:

- 'Buddy' resilience arrangements with a number of UK fire and rescue service control rooms. These arrangements mean that we can redirect calls to another control room if call volume exceed our own call-handling capacity
- 'Operation Willowbeck' is the name for a national call redistribution process that enables an affected fire control to receive support from other control rooms when call volumes exceed their own call-handling capacity
- Mutual assistance agreements with other fire and rescue services (known as section 13 and 16 arrangements) are in place with our neighbouring fire and rescue services, which means we will support each other where required
- The West Midlands Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is a multi-agency partnership that plans and prepares for incidents and emergencies. We are an integral part of the LRF and support all workstreams and sub-groups
- National Resilience arrangements are in place to provide specialist capabilities, personnel and resources which enhance the ability of the sector to respond effectively to large-scale or critical incidents across the UK.



Response – continual improvement

Risk-based crewing
As part of our last community risk management planning cycle, we identified that a large proportion of the incidents we responded to were low risk - for example, relatively minor traffic collisions or outdoor fires. This enabled us to explore a new, more proportionate way of responding and a more flexible way of mobilising to incidents.

Innovatively, this enabled staff to select right number of crew and vehicle to send to low-risk incidents based on their knowledge and experience. We call this risk-based crewing (RBC), as it means the incident is resourced appropriately and proportionately, based on risk.

Our new approach was rolled out as part of our business-as-usual operations. As well as allowing us to better match our resources to risk, RBC reduces disruption for our staff, keeps more of our appliances available to respond to high-risk incidents and frees-up time for vital training, prevention activity and protection interventions. Since RBC was introduced, there has been a significant increase in the total number of appliances that are available to respond to incidents across the West Midlands.

Road traffic collisions

We identified that Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) have increased over a three-year period. However, 20% fewer casualties needed rescuing (extricating from the vehicle). Whilst road incidents are increasing, the majority of RTCs to which we responded did not require a rescue. Based on extensive data analysis, we updated the risk category and the resources that are sent to lower-risk RTCs where we are confident no-one is injured or trapped.

The resources sent to lower-risk RTC incidents was changed to support a proportionate level of response. Evaluation of these changes over a 12-month period shows that we are now using our resources more effectively. For almost 70 per cent of low-risk RTCs, we now effectively respond to them with one vehicle, whereas previously we would send at least two vehicles for 65 per cent of RTCs.

Consultation

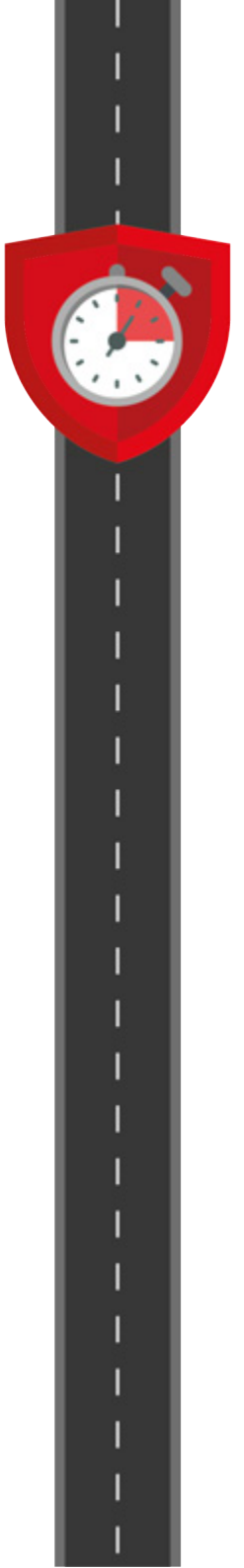
It was reassuring to find that in our most recent consultation, you agreed with our assessment of emerging risks. In particular you highlighted the below as risks we should consider:

- electric vehicles and charging
- climate and environmental concerns
- Li-ion batteries and storage.

As part of our consultation, we also asked you to prioritise a number of sustainability factors. Based on the average ranking, how we prepare for the future scale and frequency of climate-related emergencies ranked in the top position. We also found that the public generally felt unprepared for disruptive events such as energy shortages, mobile network disruption and power outages.

We are doing the following to address your feedback:

- we have analysed a decade of weather-related incidents to identify trends and impacts on the service and provide a more in-depth understanding of climate and environmental change. This will help us to understand long-term trends and adapt accordingly
- to ensure we manage emerging risks and future risks effectively, we are establishing an Emerging Risk Stakeholder group. This will comprise key functions from across the organisation and draw on external expertise where required. The group will monitor and respond to emerging risks to ensure we are coordinated and proactive in anticipating, assessing, preparing, and responding to these new risks
- we have developed operational procedural guidance, risk assessments and training material for batteries, electric vehicles, battery energy storage systems (BESS) and hydrogen. We now have an electric vehicle containment unit which will be used to safely manage RTCs involving electric vehicles with damage and potential to enter thermal runaway (a process where a battery temperature increases beyond control and internal chemical reactions cannot be stopped). This resource will be used within the West Midlands as well as supporting our regional fire and rescue services
- we will work with our Local Resilience Forum partners to understand how we can support community preparedness and increase resilience to disruptive events.



PEOPLE



WMFS
West Midlands
Fire Service

People – staffing our Service Delivery Model

Having the right people, with the right skills and behaviours is a vital part in maintaining our Service Delivery Model (SDM). At the core of our work, we aim to deliver the best possible level of service to the people of the West Midlands in order to make them safer. Our staff receive specialist training, personal protective equipment and resources to keep them safe and deliver the best service to the community.

Our strategic approach not only prioritises physical health and safety, but it also nurtures mental and emotional wellbeing. To create a happier and more supportive workplace culture the promotion of health and wellbeing is embedded throughout everything we do. We aim to foster a resilient and positive work environment.

Firefighters face a unique set of challenges and pressures. From demanding physical tasks to witnessing traumatic events, the nature of their work and colleagues that support them, can take a toll on their overall wellbeing. It is crucial we support our staff in maintaining positive mental health, which will effectively enhance their ability to effectively serve and protect our communities.

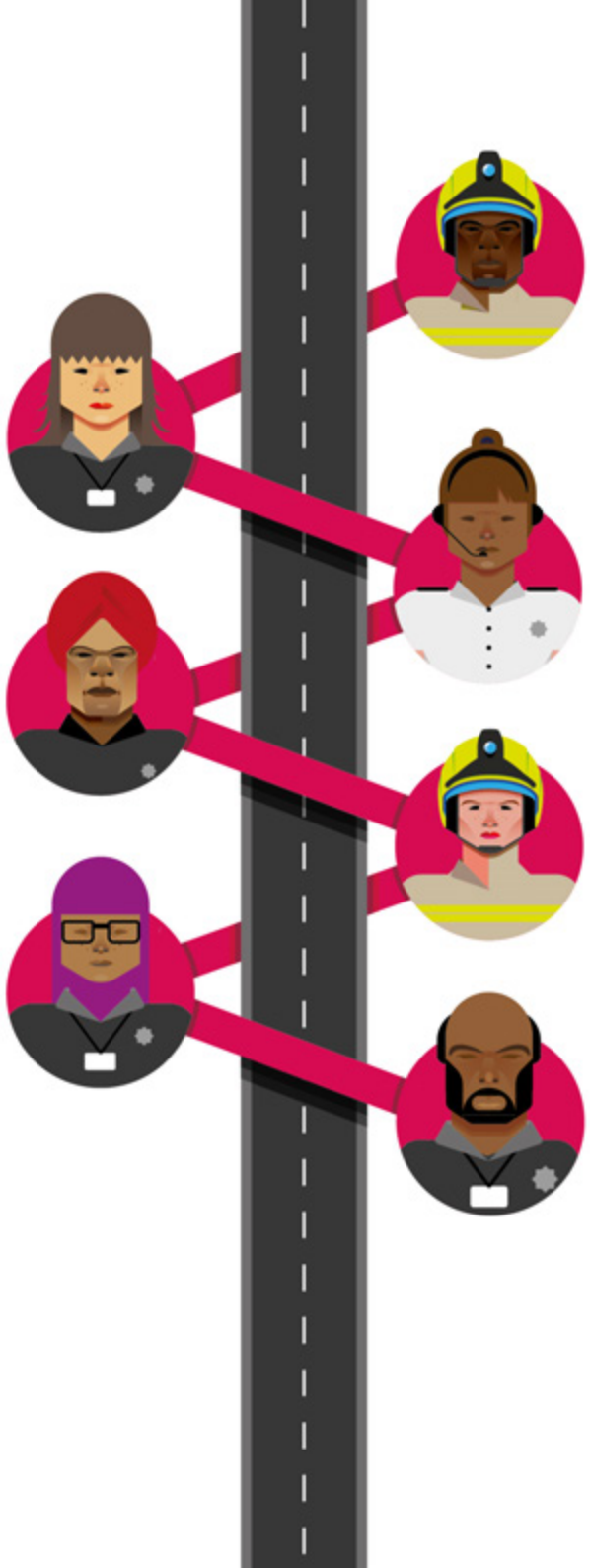
West Midlands Fire Service is fully committed to meeting the diverse needs of the communities we serve, and we recognise that having an inclusive and diverse workplace is a vital part of achieving this. The business case for a diverse work force at all levels has been long established. Research has shown that teams and organisations with a good level of diversity are more creative, flexible and effective.

We are committed to making sure that equality and diversity is integrated into all areas of the service and risk reduction strategies within our communities. We will ensure that we provide suitable, accessible and effective services and facilities free from unlawful discrimination, prejudice or stereotyping.

People – Continual Improvement

Trainee Firefighter Development Programme
To ensure we are setting our staff up to succeed, and after an internal review, we have extended our Trainee Firefighter Development Programme from eight to 12 weeks to ensure our firefighters are equipped to meet the needs of society. The longer course allows us to spend more time with trainee firefighters understanding and honing the skills required to begin their journey in our communities.

Inclusive recruitment
Organisations can take steps to encourage applications from under-represented groups and can undertake activities to prepare potential candidates for selection if a group has been under-represented in the organisation for at least two years. This is called positive action. We have introduced two posts within our people function to ensure a sustained, diverse recruitment pipeline now and into the future.



These staff members are responsible for positive action and community outreach, which involves:

- initiating and managing positive action interventions and identifying new recruitment opportunities
- developing targeted recruitment activity to raise awareness of employment opportunities and support potential applicants, providing advice and guidance
- building networks of both internal and external partners to support firefighter recruitment
- working with station personnel to manage and drive attendance at taster days and meet and greet sessions.

Consultation

As part of our consultation, we asked you to prioritise a number of sustainability factors. Honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour was rated first most frequently. We are pleased that over 90 per cent of the public either completely or largely trust us.

We know that having a workforce that is representative of the community we serve helps us manage risk and deliver our services more effectively. Having a diverse workforce gives us an opportunity to offer a wide range of skills, ideas, knowledge, and abilities, that will benefit the communities within the West Midlands. When we asked you how we could attract more people from groups that are currently under-represented in our workforce, your top three suggestions were:

- 'Have a go' taster sessions
- improved information on the role of a firefighter
- attendance at job fairs.

We also asked if you thought there were any perceived barriers for people wanting to join the fire service. Most respondents did not think there were any barriers. However, of those who did, the most common barrier was the perception of the role of a firefighter.

We are doing the following to address your feedback:

- running 'Firefighter Insight' workshops for women to find out more about the role of a firefighter, fitness requirements and hear from existing female firefighters
- we will continue to deliver 'taster sessions' to provide an opportunity to find out more about the role and requirements of being a firefighter
- increasing our attendance at careers and jobs fairs, and we will trial hosting our own careers fair
- we have developed meet and greet sessions for those who are considering the role, which will provide an opportunity to find out more about the role of a firefighter.
- we will further develop our relationships with colleges across the West Midlands that run public service courses
- we are updating and expanding the recruitment information on our website and on the 'Become a Firefighter' portal
- we have created a West Midlands Fire Service Recruitment Facebook page, so we can regularly share updates about the role of a firefighter and recruitment
- we are developing a firefighter apprenticeship scheme
- we are trialling female only fitness sessions.



OUR CRMP UPDATE 2025

OUR COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

WMFS
West Midlands Fire Service



2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

PREVENTION	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
We have reviewed our Safe and Well content, to include additional information and advice in relation to heatwave, battery safety, flooding and wildfire risks. This will be published in April 2024.	We listened to feedback from the community and updated our Safe and Well content. This was launched alongside our CRMP in April 2024.
We have already launched new battery charging safety advice on our website, which can be found here.	We were able to quickly update our website with the prevention information the community told us they wanted.
We are developing a 'Proactive Prevention Policy' which will mean we will be able to use the latest data to target those we think would benefit the most from our services – as we know a barrier is not knowing what we offer.	We have access to data which would enable us to better target those we think that would benefit from our prevention services. We are currently in the process of establishing a trial to help us evaluate if this approach would benefit the community and help reduce risk. We are also in the process of reviewing who accesses our prevention education initiatives, using data to understand those who are not and how we can support them.
We are reviewing and developing our community engagement plan. We know this has been impacted by COVID-19, so we will now re-build our local community relationships and networks to deliver more valuable community engagement.	Operations and Prevention will work with the wider departments to develop a framework to support engagement which will seek to identify community, voluntary and faith sector organisations WMFS can connect with, to strengthen our work in respect to prevention and response.
We recognise the cost-of-living crisis has potentially made vulnerable people more vulnerable, so our advice and guidance is tailored based on what we've found – e.g. safely heating your home.	We have updated our website and continue to monitor and review the information you need to keep you safe.



2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

PROTECTION	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
Educate and inform residents of tall buildings of the fire safety measures in their building through a targeted campaign .	WMFS.net has information provided on it for residents and those that have responsibility to manage and maintain the building.
Prioritise education of vulnerable residents in tall buildings through our Safe and Well visits .	A trial using Acorn data sets will help us to identify vulnerable people in tall building, to ensure effective targeting.
Prioritise fire safety in tall buildings through auditing and regulation, reflected in our protection auditing strategy.	We have closer working relationships with partners and an accessible portal allowing those responsible in managing and maintaining buildings to communicate directly with WMFS any issues or deficiencies on their premises relating to fire safety.
Engage with the Housing Association Forum and Local Authorities to make them aware of the outcomes of our public consultation, in particular the thoughts of their residents.	WMFS respond to fire safety concerns from members of the public. We engage with local councillors, housing associations, WM safety housing group and local authorities.
Regularly inspect residential tall buildings to gain operational information and check basic fire safety measures through our site-specific risk information inspection (SSRI) strategy.	Information is provided through fire safety concerns mechanism from operational crews following SSRIs.

2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

RESPONSE	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
We have analysed a decade of weather-related incidents to identify trends and impacts on the service and provide a more in-depth understanding of climate and environmental change. This will help us to understand long term trends and adapt accordingly.	An overview of the Weather Impact Report can be found within the CRMP document. We also recognised the risks we face are increasingly complex and the external landscape is fast evolving. We have therefore continued to look further ahead at issues such as climate change and have developed a 20-year community risk forecast which will support strategic decision making going forward.
To ensure we manage emerging risks and future risks effectively, we are establishing an Emerging Risk Stakeholder group. This will comprise key functions from across the organisation and draw on external expertise where required. The group will monitor and respond to emerging risks to ensure we are coordinated and proactive in anticipating, assessing, preparing, and responding to these new risks.	Progress has been made in establishing the Emerging Risk Stakeholder Group, which we plan to officially launch in April 2025 alongside our 20-year Community Risk Forecast. Additionally, we are strengthening collaboration with fire and rescue services across the country to enhance the sharing of community risk information and best practice.



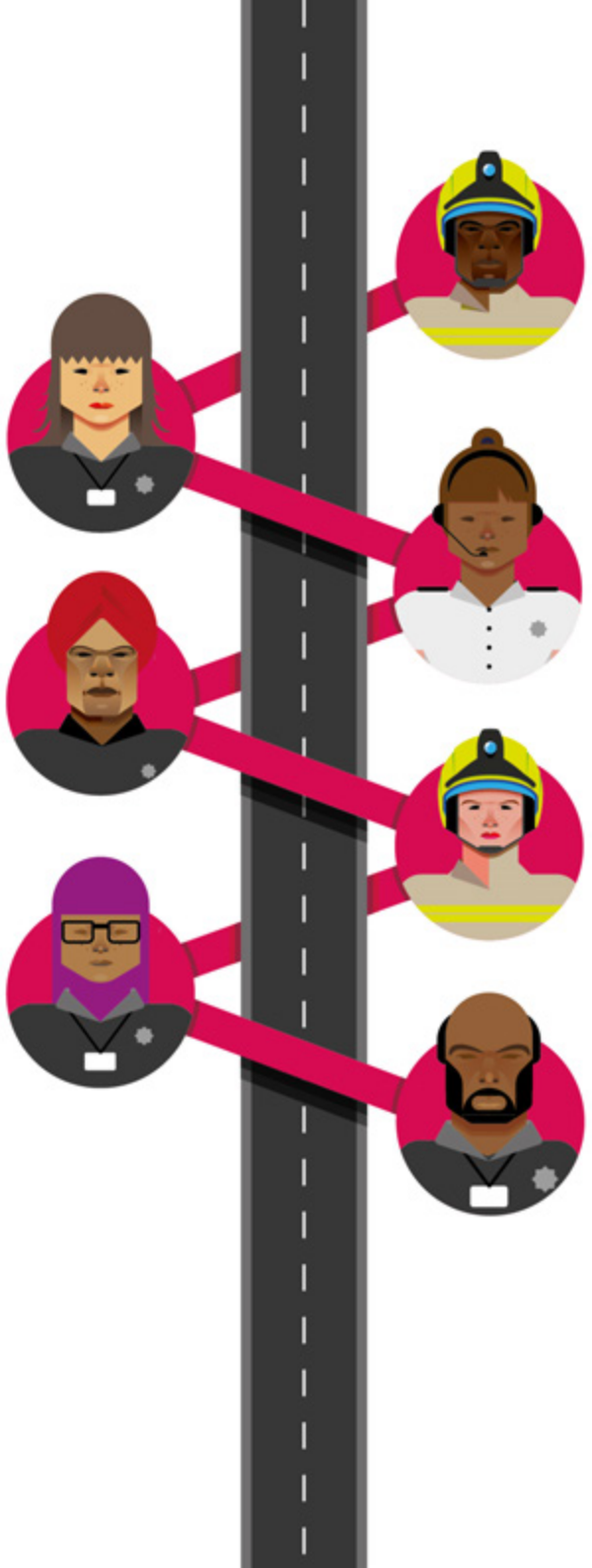
2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

RESPONSE	
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We will work with our Local Resilience Forum partners to understand how we can support community preparedness and increase resilience to disruptive events.	The West Midlands Local Resilience Forum has secured innovation funding to strengthen partnerships with local voluntary and community sector organisations, leveraging their expertise to maximise community resilience. The funding will also enhance recovery capabilities by bringing together key partners and strengthening resilience arrangements.



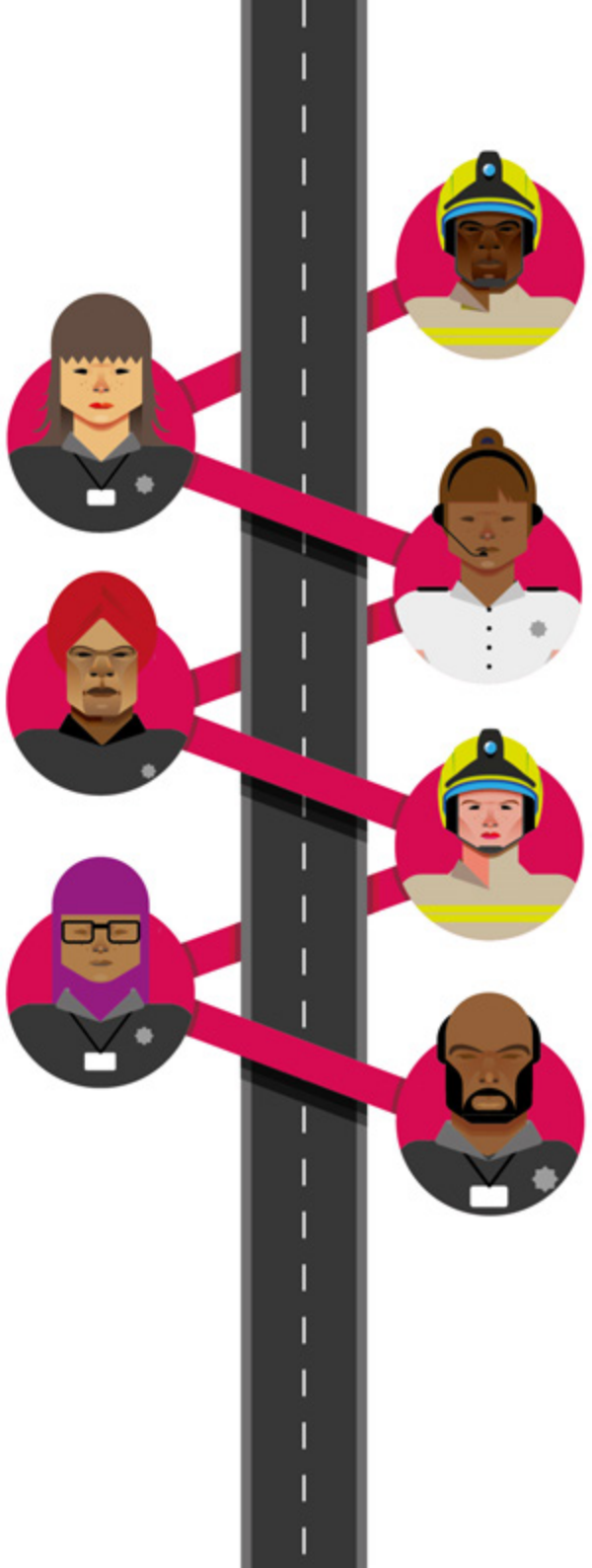
2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

PEOPLE	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
Running 'Firefighter Insight' workshops for women to find out more about the role of a firefighter, fitness requirements and hear from existing female firefighters.	Working in partnership with the DWP, 'Women in the Fire Service' sessions are facilitated by the Recruitment Team. These workshops provide an insight into the firefighter role and provide potential candidates the opportunity to meet existing firefighters and learn from their experiences.
We will continue to deliver 'taster sessions' to provide an opportunity to find out more about the role and requirements of being a firefighter.	Taster sessions are facilitated by crews at our fire stations, supported by the Recruitment Team. Sessions have been held at Highgate and Foleshill, with plans to roll out to other stations.
Increasing our attendance at careers and jobs fairs, and we will trial hosting our own careers fair.	The Outreach Coordinator attends careers fairs across the West Midlands. These include schools, colleges, job centres, and jobs fairs. Attendance at the fairs is monitored through the use of a QR code. This information will be used to understand the demographic data of any applicants. Historically attraction from the Coventry area has been difficult and therefore we have targeted attendance at careers fairs across Coventry.
We have developed meet and greet sessions for those who are considering the role, which will provide an opportunity to find out more about the role of a firefighter.	Monthly meet and greet sessions take place at Fire Service Headquarters. Potential applicants are provided with information about the Service, the firefighter role, and the selection process. Applicants also have the opportunity to meet a watch from a local fire station.The sessions are targeted at our underrepresented groups. Data shows that the percentage success rates of those attending a meet and greet session are double that of the overall applicant pool.



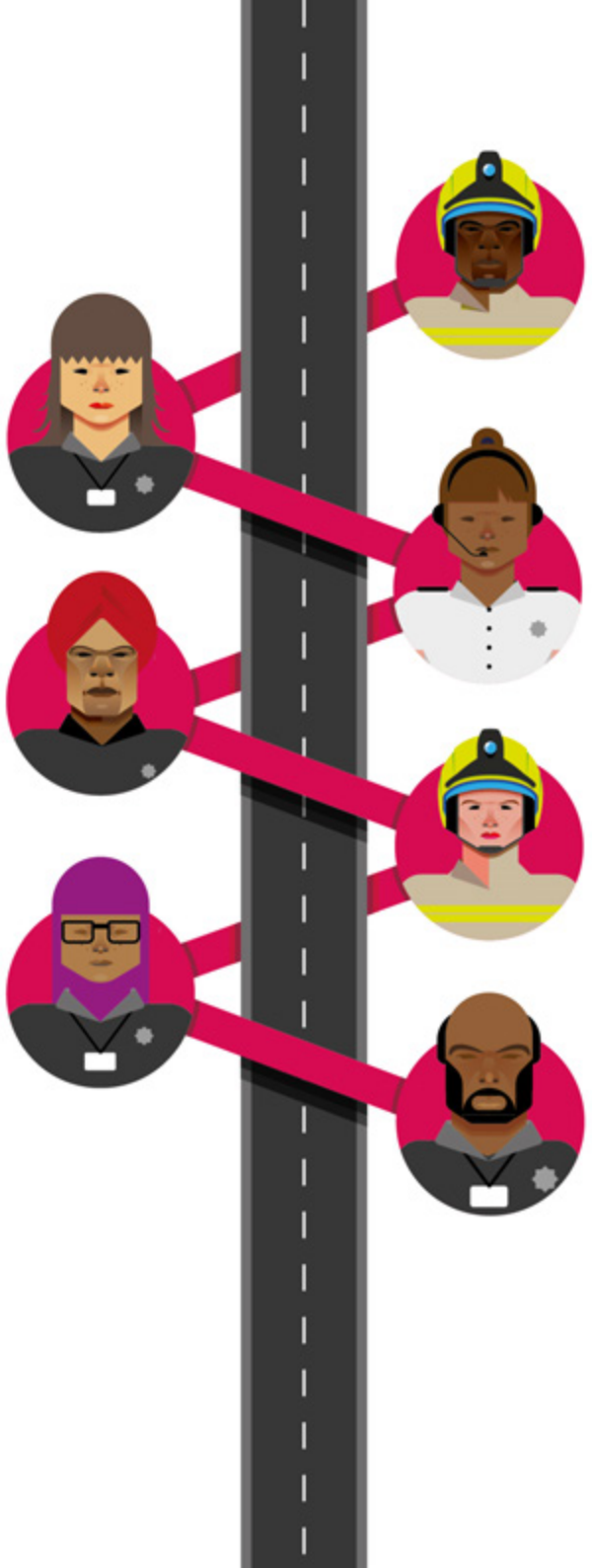
2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

PEOPLE	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
We will further develop our relationships with colleges across the West Midlands that run public service courses.	The Recruitment Outreach Coordinator actively engages with nine separate colleges across the West Midlands who run the Public Service Course. Each cohort of learners receive input about the Fire Service and what the Service has to offer, as well as insight into the selection process. Students have the opportunity to handle fire service equipment and learn more about the role of a firefighter. Students who attend the course are under 18 years of age and therefore not yet able to apply, however many have indicated their intent. Future applicant rates will be monitored.
We are updating and expanding the recruitment information on our website and on the 'Become a Firefighter' portal.	All of our recruitment marketing materials have been updated with a refresh of the imagery we use. The 'Be a Firefighter' portal has been updated, and information and messaging across all of our platforms, including social media, is consistent and standardised.
We have created a West Midlands Fire Service Recruitment Facebook page, so we can regularly share updates about the role of a firefighter and recruitment.	West Midlands Fire Service Recruitment Facebook page is now up and running. 40% of followers are female. Our most recent posts are regularly being viewed over 1500 times and being shared by followers.



2025 CRMP Update: Update Against Consultation Outcomes

PEOPLE	
What we said we are doing to address consultation feedback	**Progress to date**
We are developing a firefighter apprenticeship scheme.	WMFS has appointed an Apprenticeship Manager. An application to become an Employer Provider is due to be submitted at the end of February. If approved, all trainee firefighters will be completing the Operational Firefighter apprenticeship programme. This will commence in September 2025. Work is ongoing with the Trainee Firefighter Development Programme team and Operations to ensure that the training programme is aligned to the apprenticeship standard.
We are trialling female only fitness sessions.	Female only fitness sessions are up and running and are held on a regular basis. Candidates who attend these sessions are more successful during the practical selection test stage of the recruitment process. When considering the data, 75% of those who attend the fitness sessions go on to be successful, compared to 50% pass rate for those who do not attend the sessions.



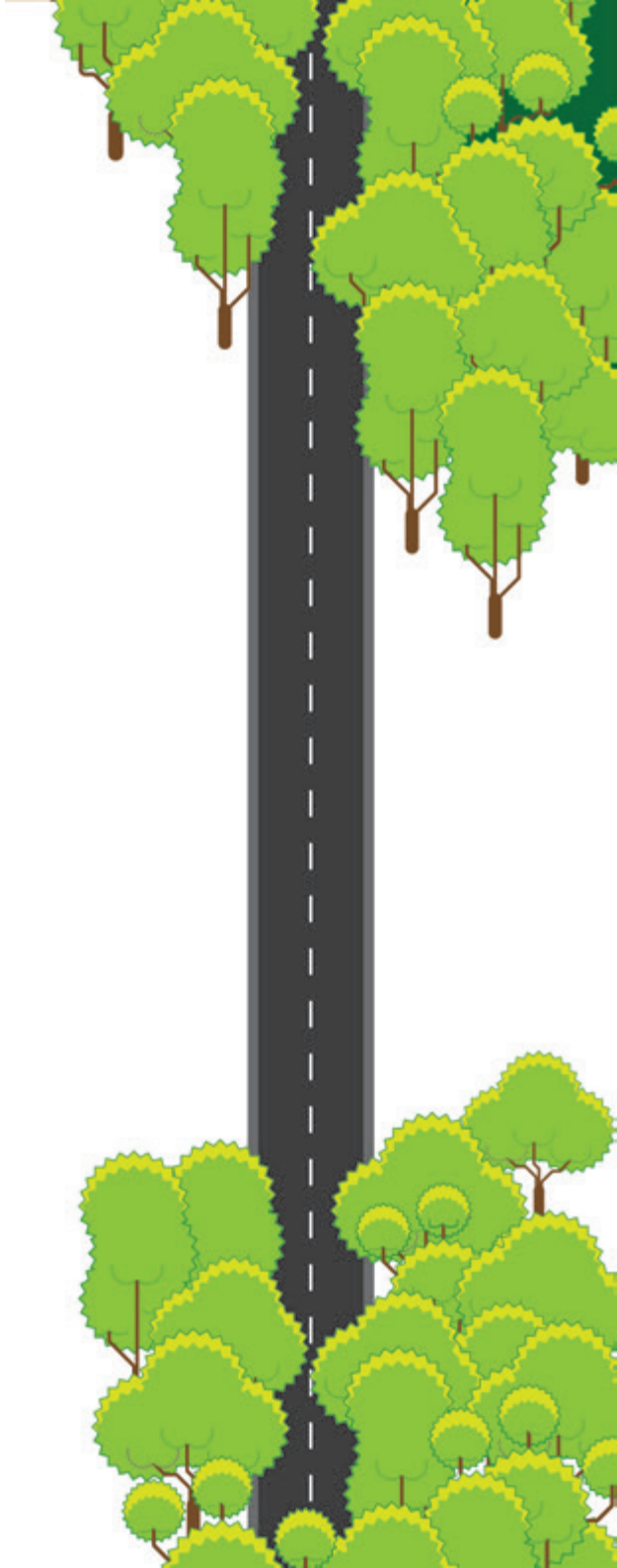
2025 CRMP Update: Look Ahead

The risks we face are increasingly complex and the external landscape is fast evolving. The decisions we make now in responding to this will have a lasting impact on how we are able to effectively manage risk 5, 10, 20 years from now. Therefore, it is important we look to the future, seeking to best understand how our risk landscape may evolve overtime. This will ensure that decisions we make now, will not have lasting unintended consequences.

For this reason, in April 2025 we will be publishing a 20-year Community Risk Forecast (CRF), which will be updated each year to ensure it remains current. This Risk Forecast will cover a wide range of areas and consider the long-term risk which may impact the West Midlands conurbation and what this means for West Midlands Fire Service. The CRF will be used going forward to inform strategic decision making, ensuring we are able to position ourselves to best support our communities both now and in the future. It will future proof us ensuring we are prepared and resilient to meet the changing risk landscape.

A brief overview follows of the key themes that will be explored in the first issue of our CRF

Natural and environmental hazards and climate change
Increase in frequency and severity of extreme weather events, sustainability.
Community and society
Social inequalities, cost of living, deprivation, societal polarisation, misinformation, unrest.
Transportation and infrastructure
Major developments e.g. HS2. Aging infrastructure, disruptions, innovation and automation.
Built environment
Highrise developments, climate change adaptation, new developments and methodologies.
Emerging technologies
Opportunities and risks e.g. AI, cyber, automation and robotics.
Significant disruptive events
Increase in disruptive events, critical services, supply chains, aging infrastructure, polycrisis, resilience, overseas conflict.
Malicious threats
Changing methodologies, sophistication and frequency.
Economy
Inflation, cost of living, green economy, economic downturn.



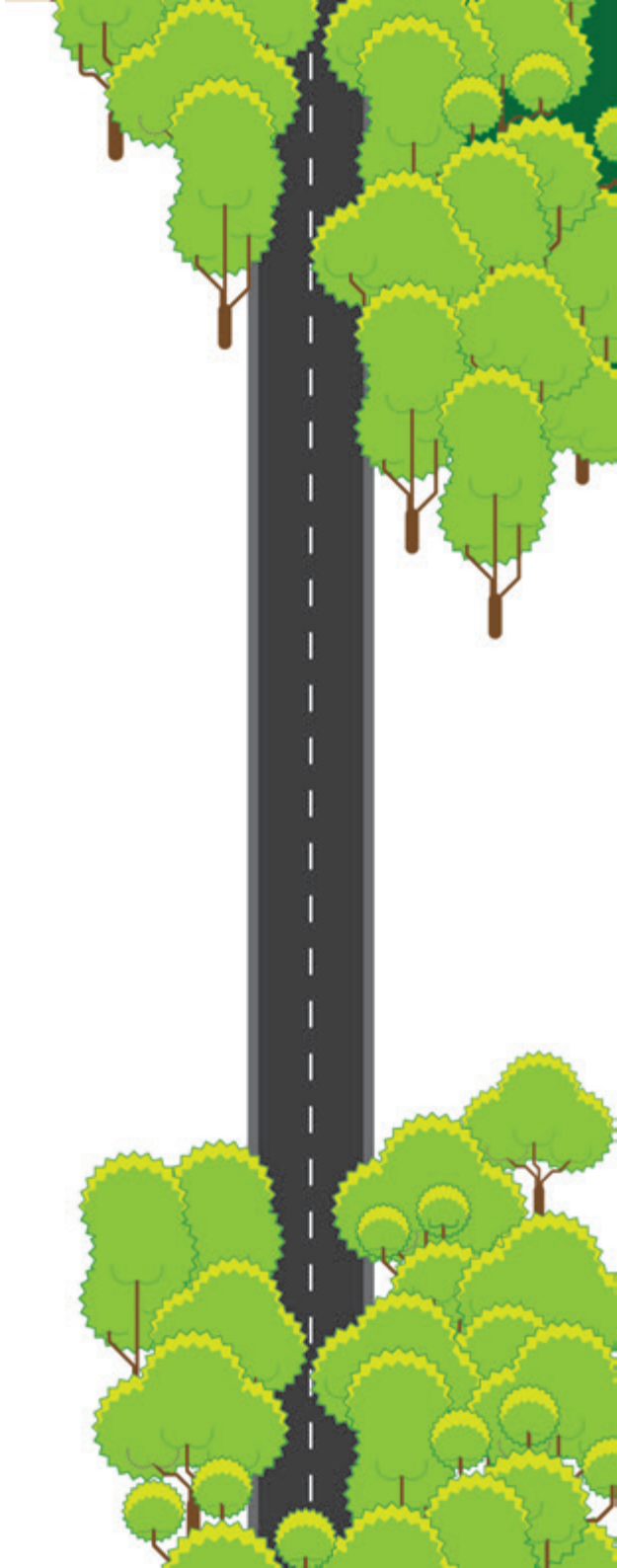
2025 CRMP Update: Look Ahead

Our Service Delivery Model

An example of the type of work this will support is looking at areas such as our Service Delivery Model. We know that with an aging estate, financial uncertainty and sustainability targets, our SDM is becoming more and more unsustainable in its current form. Yet alongside this, we know risk continues to evolve, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities whilst presenting new and emerging hazards that test our response capabilities.

Considering this, we need to ensure that we can sustain an effective and efficient response model that meets the needs of our communities that is both sustainable now and in the future.

Understanding how our communities may evolve over the next 20 years is key to this and other key strategic decisions.



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West Midlands Fire Service

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