

Report to	North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority	
Date	20 July 2026	
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer	
Contact Officer	Jonathan Blyde, Corporate Planning and Performance Manager	
Subject	Performance Monitoring, April 2025 to March 2026	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide members with an update on performance for the period 1 April 2025 – 30 March 2026 (financial year 2025/26). The performance measures reflect the five key principles outlined in the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) for the 2025/26 financial-year and include commentary on emerging trends and future actions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Improved Workforce Attendance Amid Growing Workforce

- i. Overall sickness absence reduced from 5.13% to 4.98% in 2025–26, while total staffing increased by a net 30 employees to 979.
- ii. Both short-term (1.09%) and long-term (3.89%) absence reduced year-on-year, indicating sustained improvement in absence management.

3. Rising Incident Demand, with Fires a Key Driver

- i. A total of 6,611 incidents were attended (+1.8% year on year; +8.1% above the three-year average).
- ii. Fire incidents increased by 13.1%, driven primarily by higher activity in Q1 and Q2, while False Alarms and Special Service Calls both decreased, marking the first annual reductions in several years.

4. Lowest number of Accidental Dwelling Fires, but Increased number of Casualties

- i. Accidental Dwelling Fires fell to 322, the lowest level since 2017–18 (4.7%).
- ii. However, injuries rose by 24% and there were two fatalities, highlighting a continuing need to prioritise vulnerability focused prevention, particularly around cooking safety and smoke exposure.

- 5. Prevention Activity Shifted Strongly Toward Risk Based Targeting**
- i. 19,376 Safe and Well Checks were delivered, exceeding the target by 1,876.
 - ii. Importantly, high risk checks increased to 28.4% of all activity (up from 25.4%), reflecting a strategic shift away from volume toward risk-based impact, supported by NHS Exeter data and revised referral management.

OBSERVATIONS FROM SERVICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 6. The Service Leadership Team requested an analysis of the number of occasions on which the Service achieved, or did not achieve, the minimum daytime level of available appliances, taking into account any changes to the minimum threshold over time. To enable a consistent comparison, historic data have been assessed against the current minimum daytime availability of 18 appliances.
- 7. The analysis indicates that in 2021/22, when measured against the current minimum threshold, there was only one occasion where daytime appliance availability fell below this level. This increased in subsequent years, with a peak of 11 occasions recorded in 2023/24 where availability fell below the current minimum. Since that point, the number of such occurrences has reduced year-on-year.
- 8. In addition, the average number of appliances available during the daytime has shown a steady increase across the period from 2021/22 onwards, indicating an overall improvement in appliance availability during core hours.
- 9. The Service Leadership Team also requested clarification on the impact of changes to the parameters communicated by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in relation to the definition and recording of wildfires since 2018; to support consistent and meaningful comparison, figures have been retrospectively calculated in line with the current definition, with additional narrative provided to aid interpretation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the content of the Performance Monitoring Report.**

BACKGROUND

10. The Authority is required to work to reduce risk and address the safety of its communities and to do so in a sustainable manner. The CRMIP outlines the principles against which the Authority measures its performance. Focussing on five key principles the performance is reported on a quarterly basis, with a focus on key risks and emerging trends.

INFORMATION

11. The Performance Report is a quarterly report, assessing performance for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, with comparisons made to the previous financial-year (2024/25).

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Demonstrates the Authority's performance against the improvement and well-being objectives in the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2025-26.
Budget	Allows activity and key risks to be considered at part of the budget setting process.
Legal	Supports the Authority, as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to demonstrate how it is taking all reasonable steps, in exercising its functions, to meet its well-being objectives.
Staffing	Reporting is aligned to the CRMIP 25/26 and includes an update on staffing matters.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	No implication identified.
Risks	Demonstrates how the Authority is managing its delivery against community risks.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Performance Monitoring Report:
April 2025 – March 2026



Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Our People Principle



1 Sickness Absence

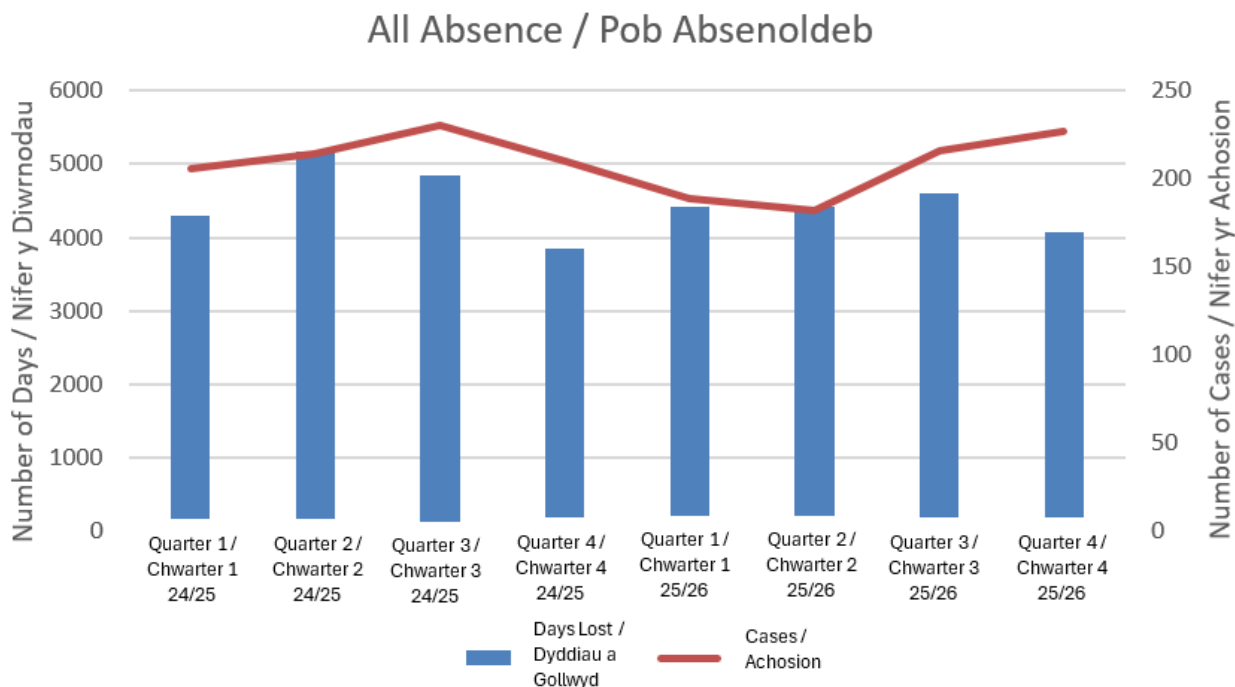
The Service encourages all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work because of ill health.

Total time lost to sickness absence in 2025/26 was 4.98%. This is a reduction compared with the previous year of 5.13%, indicating an overall improvement in attendance.

979 individuals were employed by NWFRS as at 31/03/2026, which is an increase of 30 people from the same period in 2024/25.

Please note that throughout the report, the number of cases in the year to date (YTD) will not be a sum of the quarters as some individuals' absences will span across quarters. There may also be fluctuations in the numbers reported from quarter to quarter because of changes to employee data.

a. All Sickness Absence



Overall, days lost due to sickness absence has remained at a relatively similar level during quarter 1 to 3 of 2025/26, with the number of days lost during quarter 4 being at its lowest for this year, and at a similar level to quarter 4 of

2024/25. However, in contrast, the number of absence cases has increased during quarter 3 and 4. Although both days lost and cases increased slightly during Quarter 3 2025/26, they remained below the levels recorded in Quarter 3 of the previous year. This improvement has occurred alongside an increase in overall staff numbers, indicating a continued positive trend in managing sickness absence across the Service.

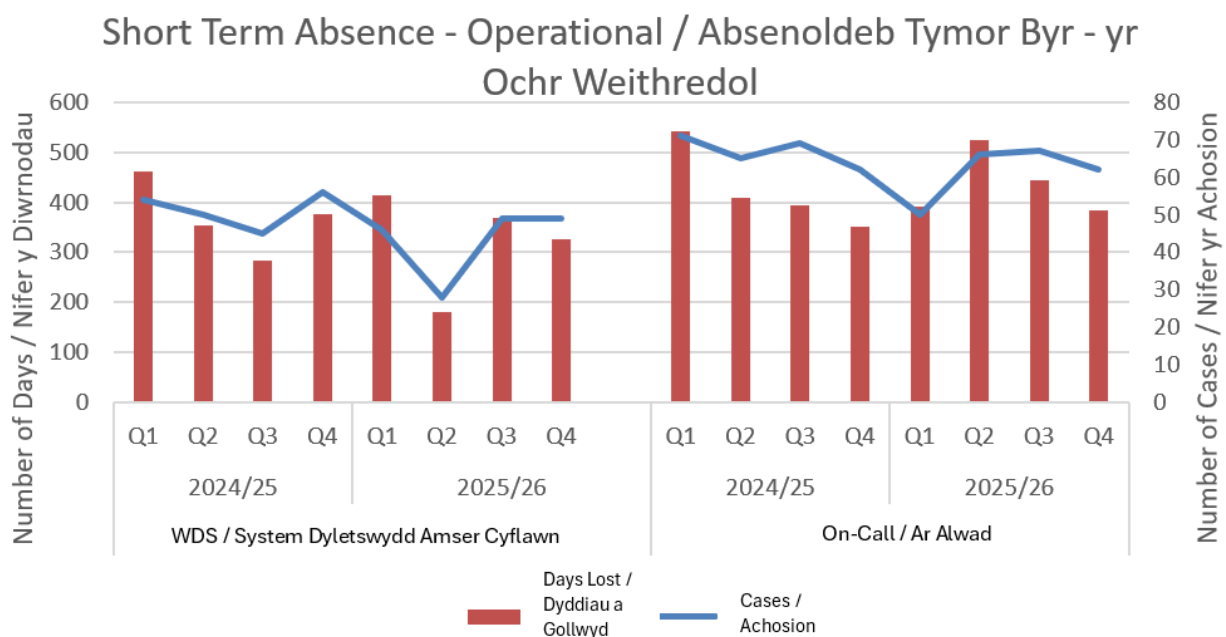
Short term means individual periods of sickness of 27 calendar days or less.

Long term means individual periods of 28 calendar days or more.

1.2 Short Term Sickness

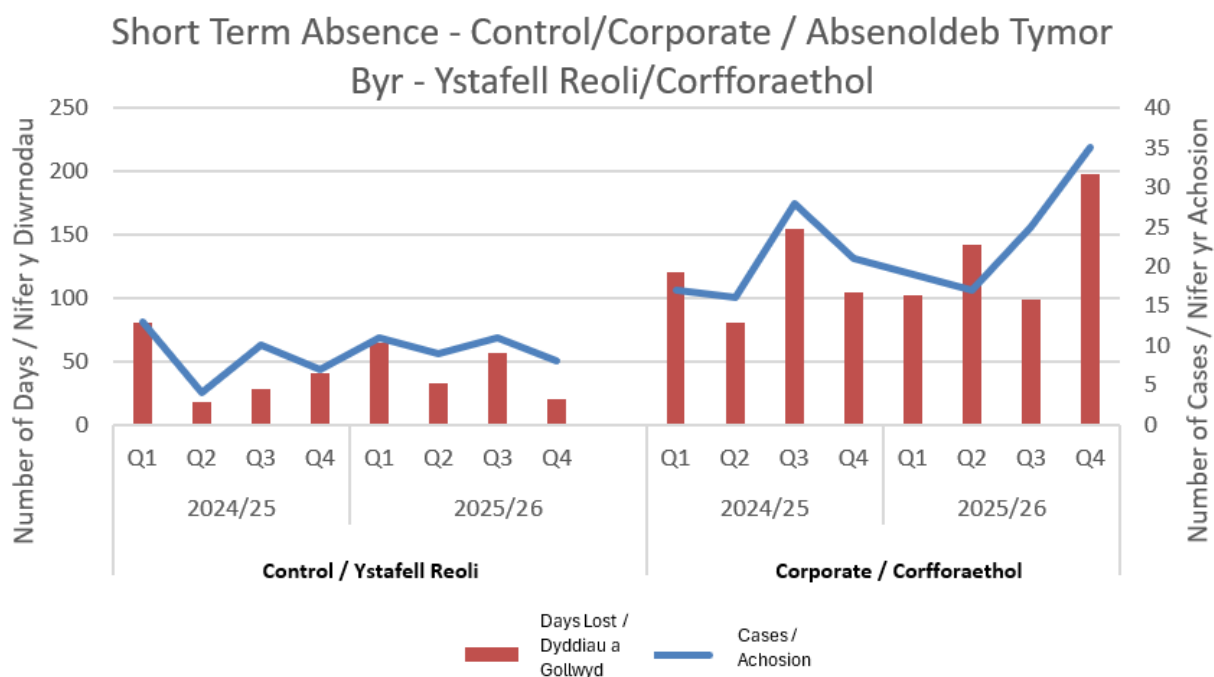
Short term absence accounted for 1.09% of total time lost across all duty types during 2025/26, which is a reduction from 1.12% during 2024/25.

Overall, the number of days lost due to short term sickness remained relatively consistent throughout 2025/26. Quarter 1 recorded the highest number of days lost at 973, while quarter 2 saw the lowest at 880 days. Short term sickness cases were lower in quarters 1 and 2, increasing in quarters 3 and 4 to an average of 153 cases.



(WDS - includes all wholtime operational staff, such as station based, rural and flexi duty officers.

SLT have been split so operational members of SLT are included within wholtime figures, and Heads of Departments are included within Corporate Departments).



Short-term sickness cases and days lost reduced in quarter 4 across wholetime, on-call and control duty systems, with the exception of corporate staff, where both cases and days lost increased. Across 2025/26, short term absence levels fluctuated across all duty types, with no consistent upward or downward trend.

Wholetime staff accounted for 34% of total days lost due to short term sickness across the year, with an average absence duration of 7.5 calendar days per employee.

On-call staff, who make up 51.3% of the workforce, accounted for an average of 46% of short-term absence cases. Case numbers remained broadly similar across quarters 2, 3 and 4; however average duration of absence increased to 7.13 calendar days, up from 6.3 calendar days in 2024/25.

Corporate staff accounted for 21.3% of short-term absence cases during quarter 4, with increases in both cases and days lost compared with previous quarters. Across 2025/26, Corporate staff represented 14.4% of all short-term absence, with an average absence duration of 5.6 days.

Top 3 Short Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

Absence Reason		Cases	Lost time %
1	Cold/Flu	30	13.04%
2	Musculoskeletal - Upper Limb	7	8.73%
3	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	2	3.56%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

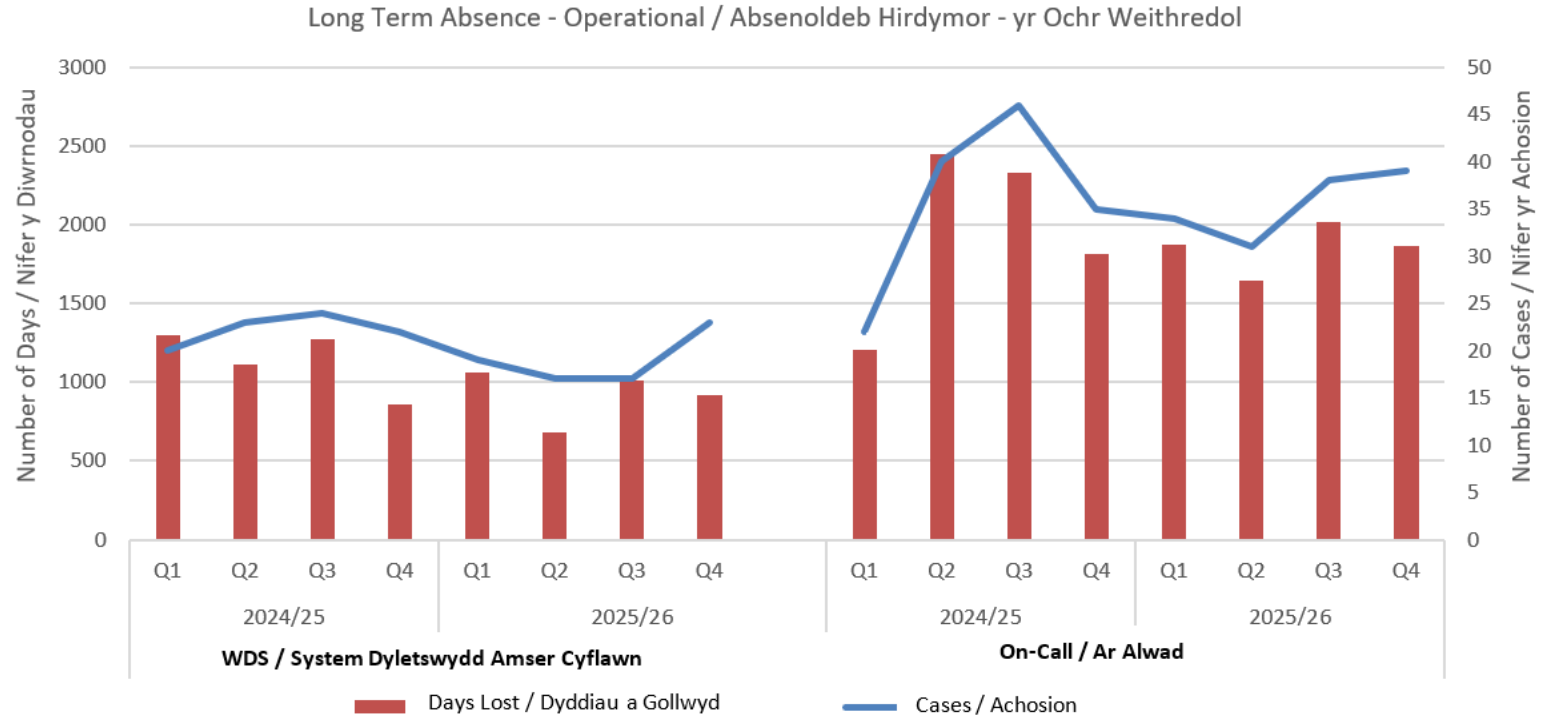
Cold/flu continued to be the most common cause of short-term sickness absence in quarters 3 and 4, accounting for 22.1% and 13.04% of time lost respectively. This was a significant increase from quarters 1 and 2, where cold/flu accounted for 3.4% and 8.4% of time lost. Regardless of the increase in cases in quarter 3 and 4, absences related to cold/flu lasted on average 4.4 days.

This trend aligns with information published by NHS England, which reported in October 2025 that the flu season had affected the NHS more than a month earlier than usual, with case levels three times higher than previous years.

All Musculoskeletal conditions accounted for 24.9% of short-term absence cases during 2025/26, with an average duration of 9 days, with upper limb cases the most reported from this category (9.44%) followed by lower limb (8.37%) and back and spinal (7.09%). Service funded physiotherapy and alternative physical therapies continue to be widely used, particularly for lower limb, shoulder, neck and back conditions, supporting early intervention and absence prevention.

1.3 Long Term Sickness

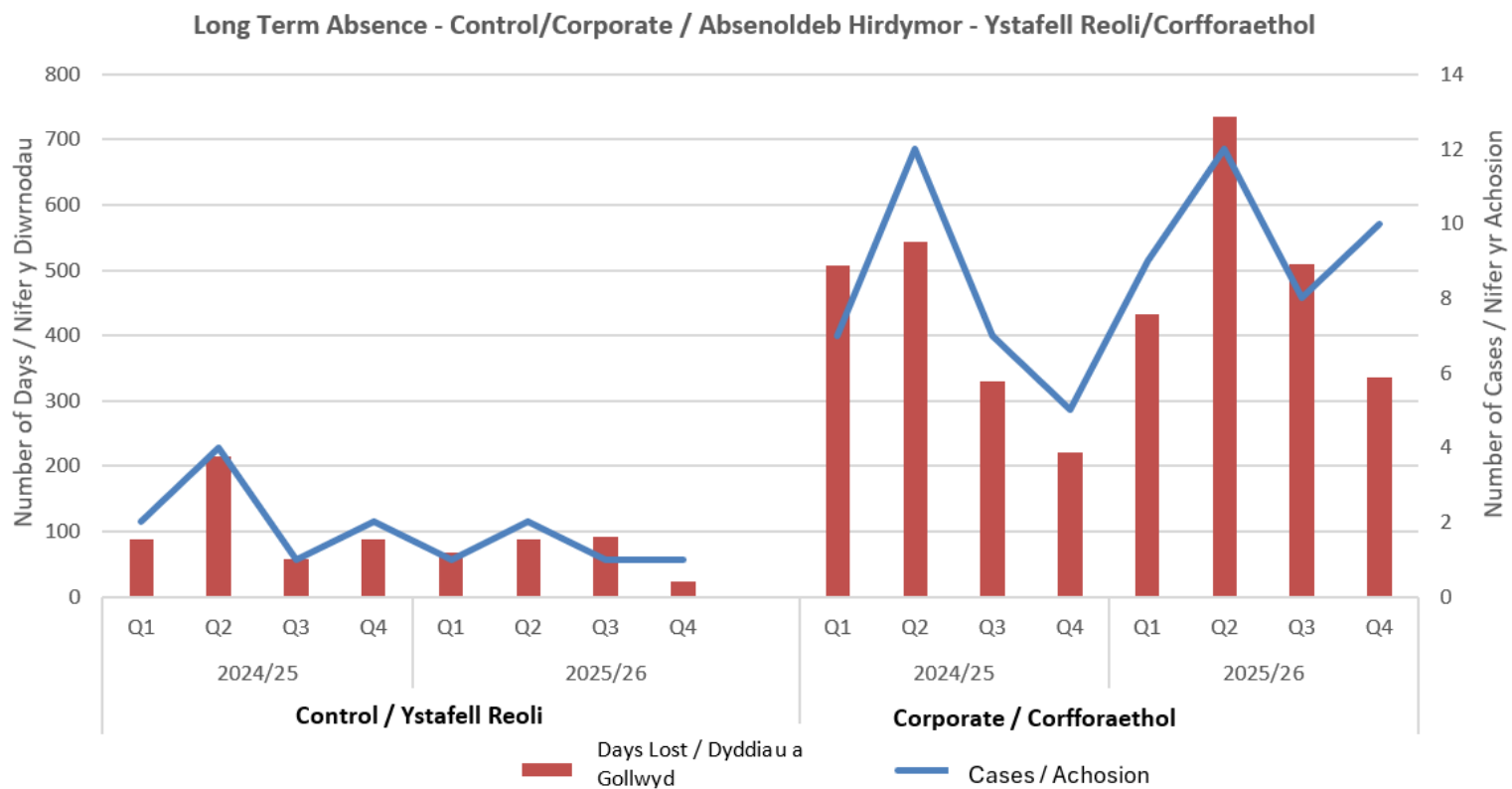
Long term absence accounted for 3.89% of total time lost across all duty types during 2025/26, which is a reduction from 4.06% during 2024/25. While quarter 3 recorded the highest number of days absent due to long term sickness during the past year, quarter 4 saw an overall reduction in days lost but an increase in the number of cases.



Long-term absence days for wholetime staff fluctuated throughout the year; quarter 4 saw reduction of 100 days compared with quarter 3, however it also

recorded the highest number of wholtime cases since quarter 3 of 2024/25. Across 2025/26, the average duration of long-term sickness absence for wholtime staff was 44 days.

There was a reduction in the days lost due to long term sickness for on-call staff during quarter 4, however the number of cases stayed at the same level as quarter 3. On-call absence accounted for 54% of all long-term absence, with average absences lasting 52 days.



Long-term absence cases and days lost for Control staff remained stable across quarters 1, 2 and 3 before reducing in quarter 4.

Long term sickness absence for corporate staff, in terms of number of cases and days lost, increased significantly in quarter 2 before reducing again in quarter 3. Although the number of days lost continued to decrease in quarter 4, the number of long-term sickness cases among corporate staff rose again during this period.

Overall, corporate roles account for 15.2% of the Service's establishment and represented 13.2% of all long-term sickness absence cases during 2025/26. The average duration of long-term sickness absence for corporate staff was 51.5 days.

Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost Time %
1	Mental Health – Stress	11	16.29%
2	Musculoskeletal - Upper Limb	7	12.15%
3	Musculoskeletal - Lower Limb	7	11.13%

Lost time % is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers.

Mental Health – stress and Musculoskeletal – lower limb continues to be within the top 3 reasons for long term sickness during quarter 4, with absence due to musculoskeletal – upper limb exceeding absences due to failed medical/fitness test for the first time in the current year. Whilst absences due to musculoskeletal – upper limb reasons haven't increased during quarter 4, the number of employees who been absent long term due to failed medical/fitness testing has reduced from 7 cases each in quarters 1, 2 and 3 to 4 cases in quarter 4, which demonstrates an overall improvement with employee fitness levels.

Mental health due to stress has remained the most common cause of long-term sickness absence, accounting for 15.6% of long-term absence during 2025/26. The average duration of absence of this nature was 54 days.

Additional mental health and wellbeing support continued to be rolled out throughout 2025/26, complementing existing occupational health, employee assistance and physiotherapy services that have been in place for several years. This includes training in Mental Health First Aid, bystander intervention training, suicide awareness and critical incident debriefing as well as increased resources and signposting information for staff.

During 2025/26, there were 68 long term sickness cases relating to musculoskeletal upper and lower limb conditions, resulting in a total of 3,159 days lost. These absences often relate to recovery following surgery and the requirement for employees to regain full fitness, strength and range of movement before returning to an operational role. Where appropriate, modified duties and phased returns continue to be used to support earlier and safer returns to work.

All Wales Comparison

The average shift days lost per person for all absence (short and long term) on an All-Wales basis was 13.17 shift days per person for wholetime uniformed staff, 20.5 shift days per person for Control staff, and 14.58 shift days per person for Corporate staff.

In comparison with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services, North Wales had the lowest shift days lost per person due to both long- and short-term absences across the three duty types reported out of all three services.

Number of shifts/days lost due to sickness	SWFRS	MAWWFRS	NWFRS
Wholetime uniformed staff	14.96	10.48	11.66
Fire control staff	22.83	32.08	8.19
Corporate staff	19.32	12.93	8.5

Note, the All Wales data is for the period April 2024 to March 2025 with the most recent update published in October 2025. The data set only reports on absence data for wholetime, control and corporate staff and doesn't include on-call or retained data.

Our Prevention Principle



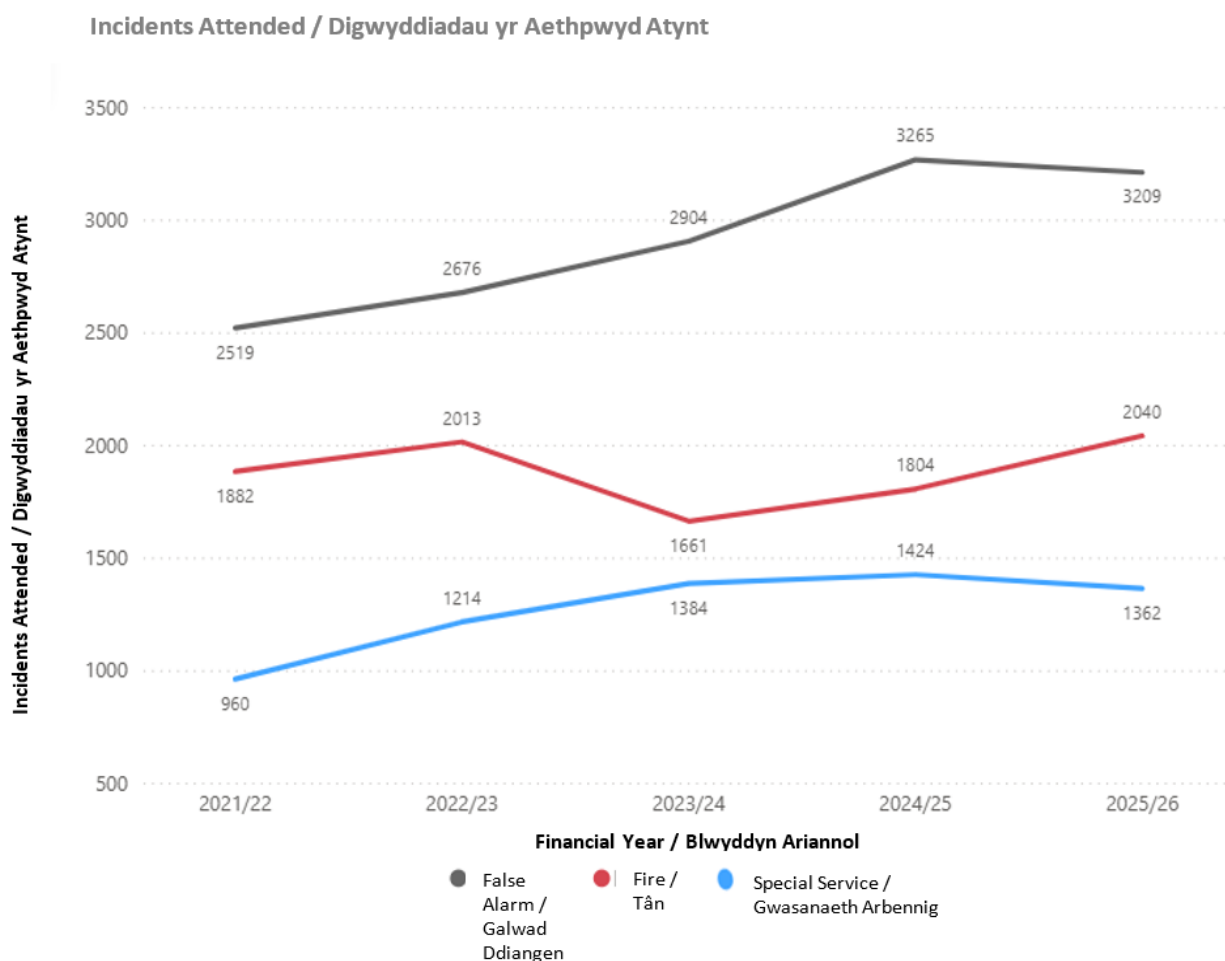
2 All Incidents

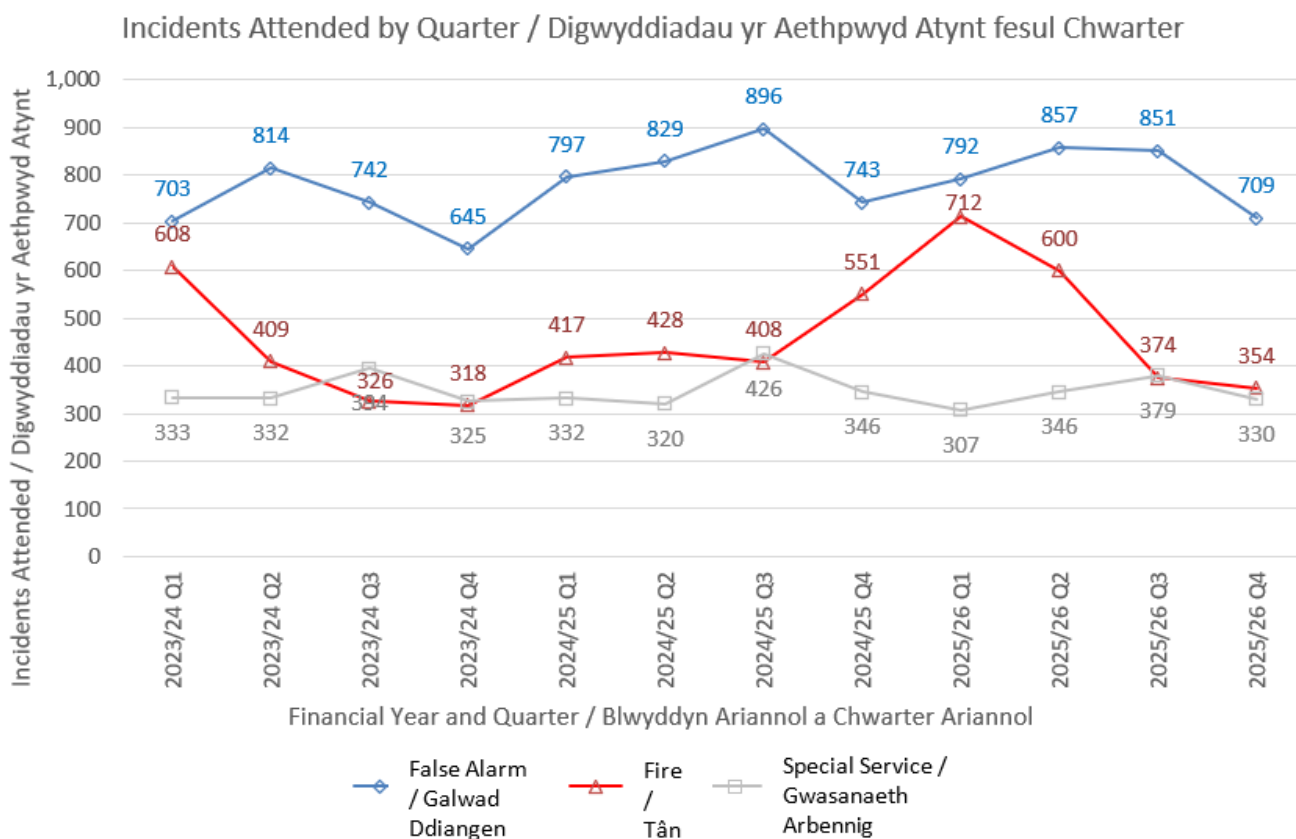
All Incidents – **6,611** incidents were attended during the financial year 2025-26, which is a 1.8% increase from the 6,493 incidents attended during 2024-25. This is also 8.1% higher than the 3-year average of 6,115.

Fires – **2,040** fires were attended during 2025-26, which is an increase of 13.1% from 1,804 attended during 2024-25, and 11.7% higher than the three-year average of 1,826. This is due to the number of fires attended in Q1 & Q2 being close to the upper limit of what the service would normally expect. Levels then returned to a similar rate to previous years, throughout Q3 and Q4.

False Alarms – **3,209**, a decrease of 1.7% from 3,265 reported during 2024-25, but 8.9% higher than the three-year average of 2,948. Whilst the levels of False alarms have steadily increased over previous years, 2025-26 has shown the first annual decrease since 2017-18.

SSCs – **1,362**, Special Service Call incidents were attended in 2025-26, a decrease of 4.4% from the 1,424 attended in 2024-25. The number of special service call incidents attended has shown annual increases over previous years, however, 2025-26 has shown the first decrease since 2020-21.



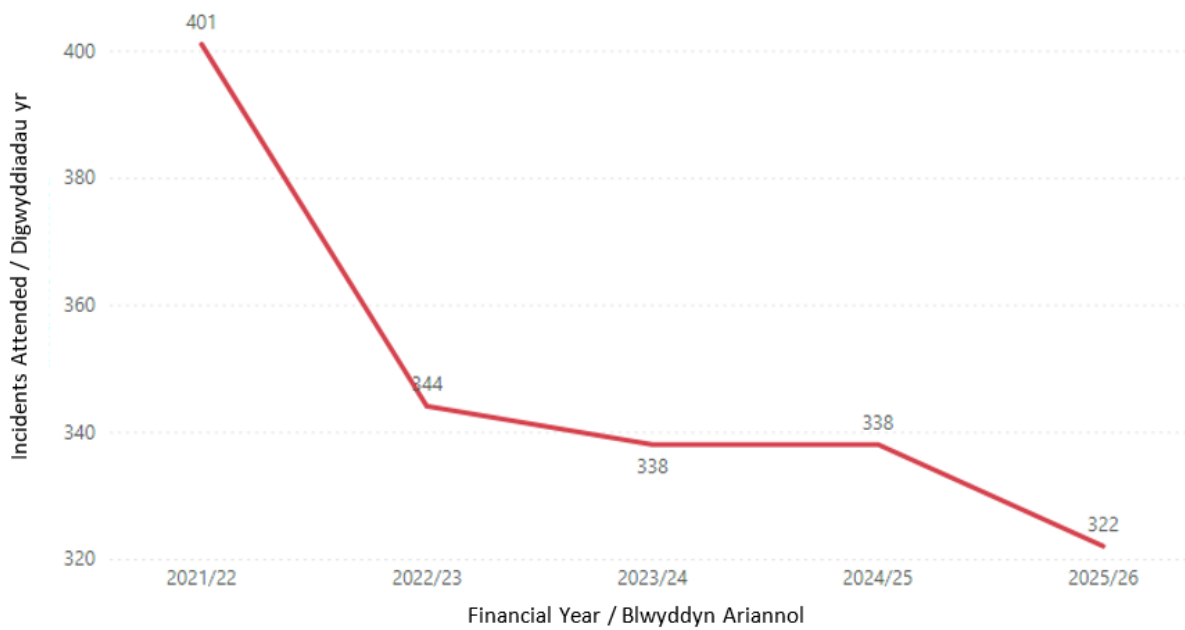


3 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

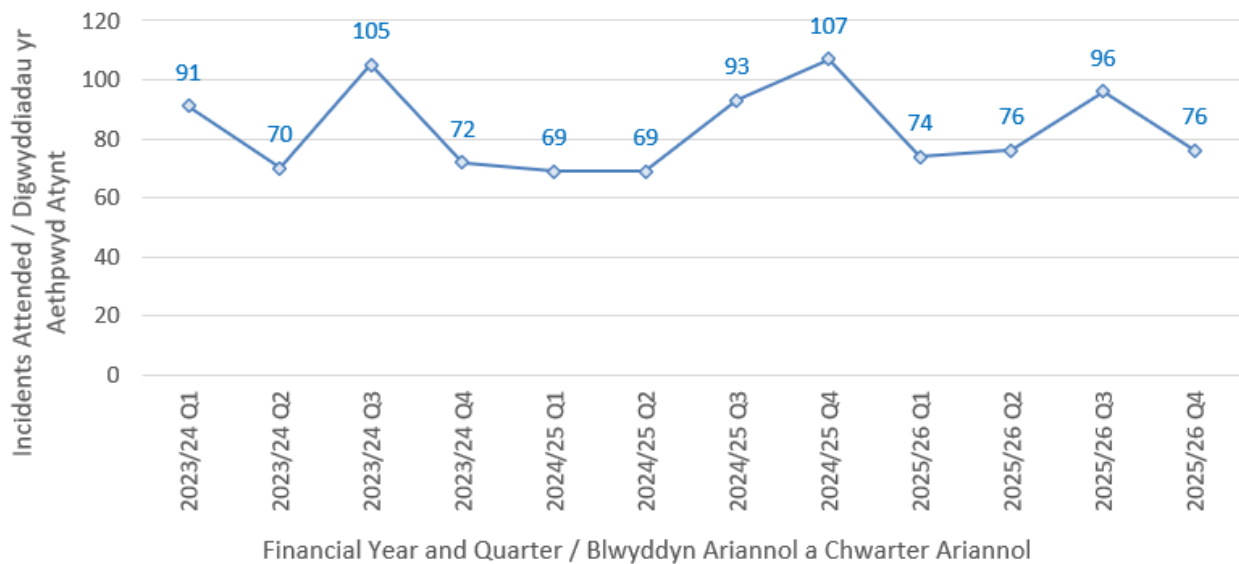
322 accidental dwelling fires were attended in 2025-26, which is a 4.7% decrease from 338 in 2024-25.

Although an increase in the number of ADFs attended was seen in 2025-26 Q3, during Q4 the number returned in line with the earlier half of the year, resulting in the overall annual number of accidental dwelling fires continuing to decrease, and 2025-26 having the lowest number that the service has recorded for any year since 2017/18.

Accidental Dwelling Fires by Quarter / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi



Accidental Dwelling Fires by Quarter / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi fesul Chwarter



The average response time of the Service during 2025-26 (excluding Late Fire Calls) was 13 minutes. This is based on the time of call to the arrival of the first appliance.

Whilst the average response times in Ynys Môn (Anglesey) and Gwynedd appear slower than other areas, this is in line with the patterns we would expect, due to the infrastructure and geography in these areas, when compared to Conwy, Sir Ddinbych (Denbighshire), Sir y Fflint (Flintshire) and Wrexham (Wrexham), where there are multiple wholtime stations, denser road networks, shorter distances and more urban demand.

County / Sir	ADFs / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi	Year on Year / Blwyddyn ar ôl Blwyddyn	Average Response Time / Amser Ymateb ar Cyfartaledd	
Anglesey / Ynys Môn	40	⬆️	3	00:16
Conwy / Conwy	55	⬇️	-6	00:11
Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	53	⬆️	6	00:12
Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	64	⬇️	-1	00:12
Gwynedd / Gwynedd	48	⬇️	-12	00:17
Wrexham / Wrecsam	55	⬇️	-3	00:11
Total / Cyfanswm	315	-13	00:13	

Throughout 2025-26 quarter 4, a reduction in response times was seen across all unitary authority areas in North Wales, other than Flintshire.

County / Sir	ADFs / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi	Year on Year / Blwyddyn ar ôl Blwyddyn	Average Response Time / Amser Ymateb ar Gyfartaledd	
Anglesey / Ynys Môn	12	↓	-1	00:13
Conwy / Conwy	10	↓	-14	00:15
Denbighshire / Sir Ddinbych	12	↓	-2	00:14
Flintshire / Sir y Fflint	16	↑	2	00:14
Gwynedd / Gwynedd	17	↓	-1	00:18
Wrexham / Wrexham	7	↓	-13	00:09
Total / Cyfanswm	74		-29	00:14

4 Leading Causes of Accidental Dwelling Fires

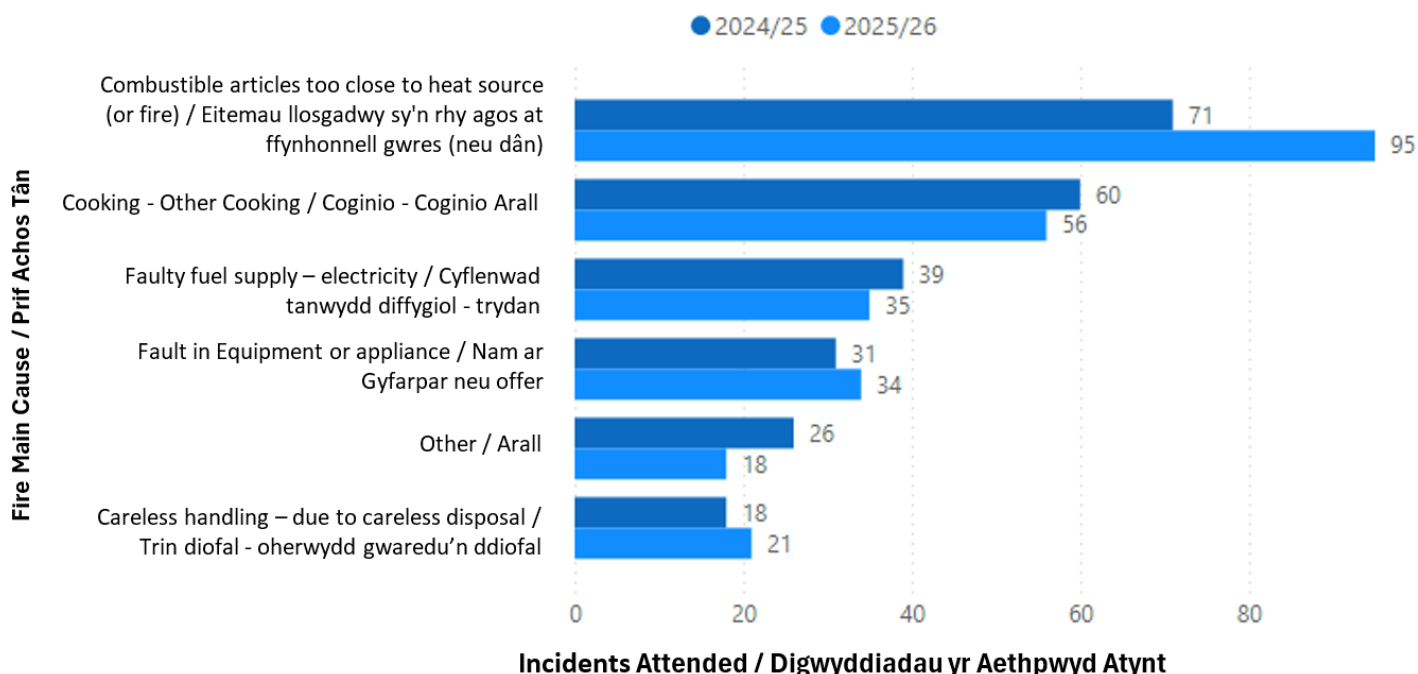
During 2025-26 the most common cause of ADFs was '**Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)**', which was responsible for 30%, or almost 1 in 3 ADFs attended in the year. This represents an increase in both the number and proportion of ADFs with this cause, from 2024-25. Out of the last 10 years, 2025-26 had the highest number of ADFs (95) caused by this.

Other causes of ADFs which showed an increase in 2025-26 included:

- 'Fault in Equipment or appliance', which increased from 31 (9% of all ADFs) in 2024-25, to **34 (11% of all ADFs)**.
- 'Careless handling – due to careless disposal', which increased from 18 (5% of all ADFs) in 2024-25, to **21 (7% of all ADFs)**.

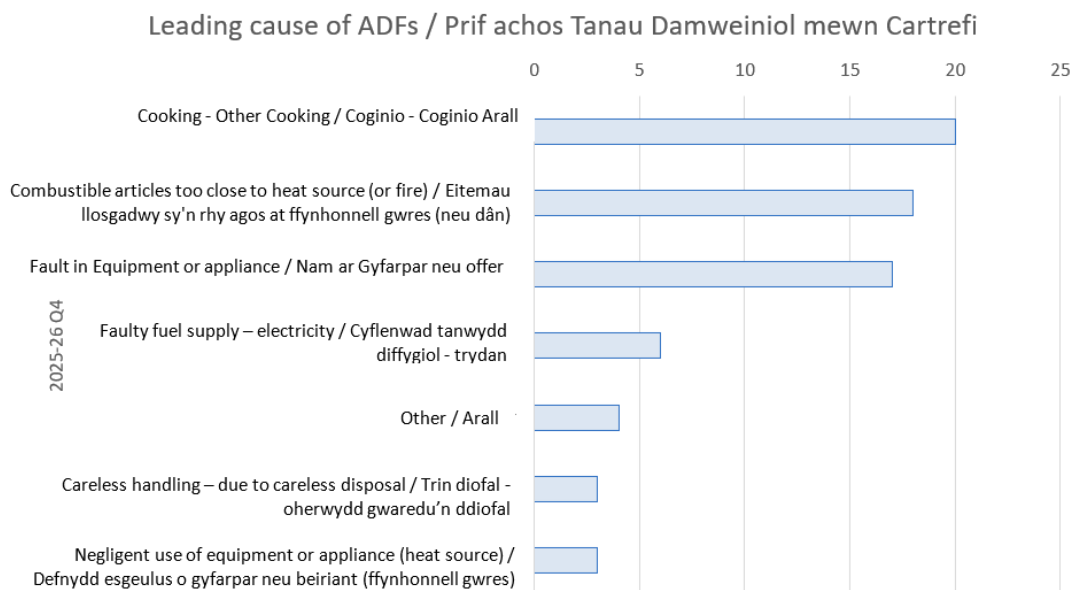
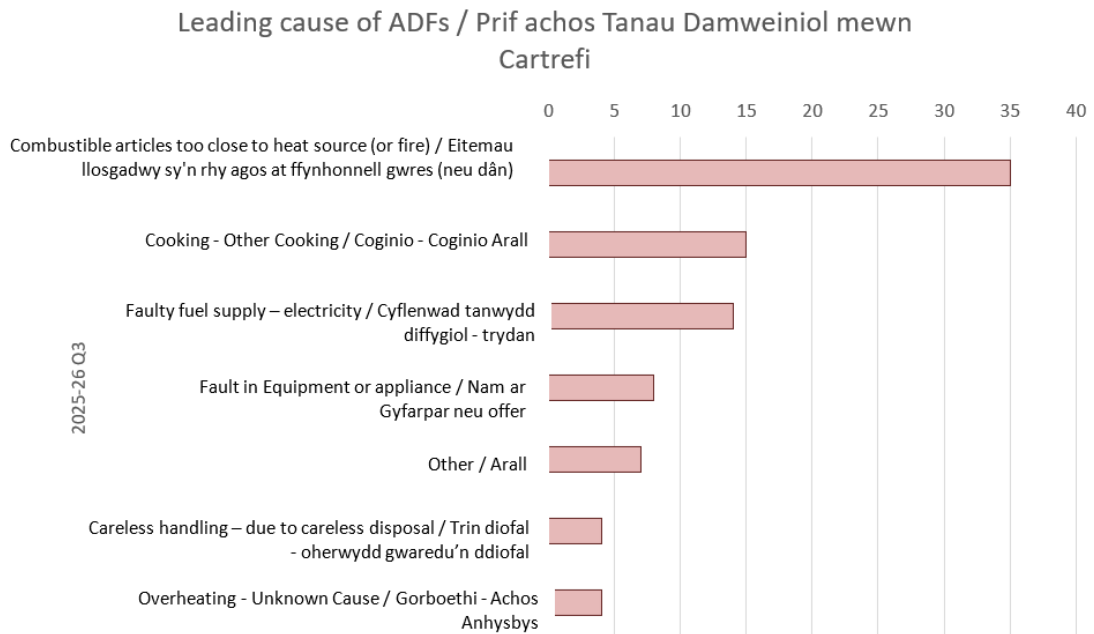
Despite this, a few main causes saw a decrease in the year. These included:

- 'Faulty fuel supply – electricity', which decreased from 39 (12% of all ADFs) in 2024-25 to **35 (11% of all ADFs)**.
- 'Other', which decreased from 26 (8% of all ADFs) in 2024-25 to **18 (6% of all ADFs)**.



When reviewing the leading causes of Accidental Dwelling fires in each quarter throughout 2025-26, **Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)** showed as the cause for 35 ADFs in Q3, which is an unusually high volume. During Q4, however, this reduced to **18** which is within the range normally seen in any quarter.

Cooking – other cooking was the leading cause of ADFs in Q4 2025-26, responsible for **20** (26%) of the ADFs attended in this period.



Action taken to date:

The Prevention Team and Campaign Steering Group have been proactive in their approach to dealing with the leading causes of accidental dwelling fires. Several social media messages, such as "Fire Kills" and videos on the danger of leaving cooking unattended, have been shared across all platforms.

NWFRS Prevention Team have encourage multi-agency carers and support workers across the region to subscribe to receive targeted prevention advice and literature direct their email addresses via 'Gov Delivery'. This has enabled the Prevention Team to share important cooking/kitchen safety information and share our referral information in order to generate referrals for those most at risk.

Fire crews continue to use Exeter data when carrying out SAWCs, to target those over the age of 65, who statistically are at a higher risk of being involved in a kitchen Fire.

Further Actions:

International Day of Older Persons – with the prevention team, partner agencies and various support staff from across the Service conducting Safe and Well Checks, targeting those most vulnerable and highlighting the importance of not leaving cooking unattended and keeping combustible items away from a heat source and cooking appliance.

The Prevention Team are currently trialling an innovative cooker safety product called 'Pippa'. The small detection unit, which is located above a cooker, uses AI to detect the early signs of heat and fire, alerting the occupier of a sudden rise in temperature. The unit also has the ability to alert a family member or carer through a mobile phone app.

5 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

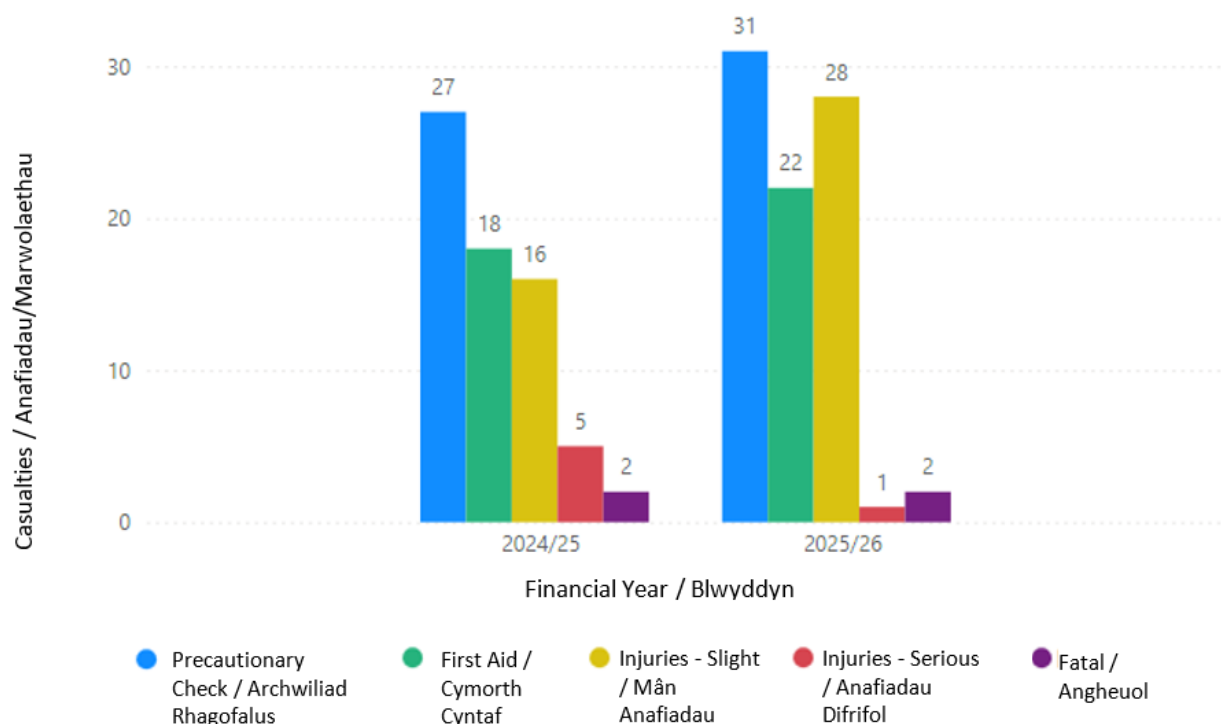
84 people sustained injuries at **57** ADFs during 2025-26. Sadly, **two** people were recorded as fatalities as a result of ADFs.

The number of people injured as a consequence of an ADF increased in 2025-26 by 24% from 68 in 2024-25, and the number of ADFs which caused injuries increased by 7.5% from 53 in 2024-25.

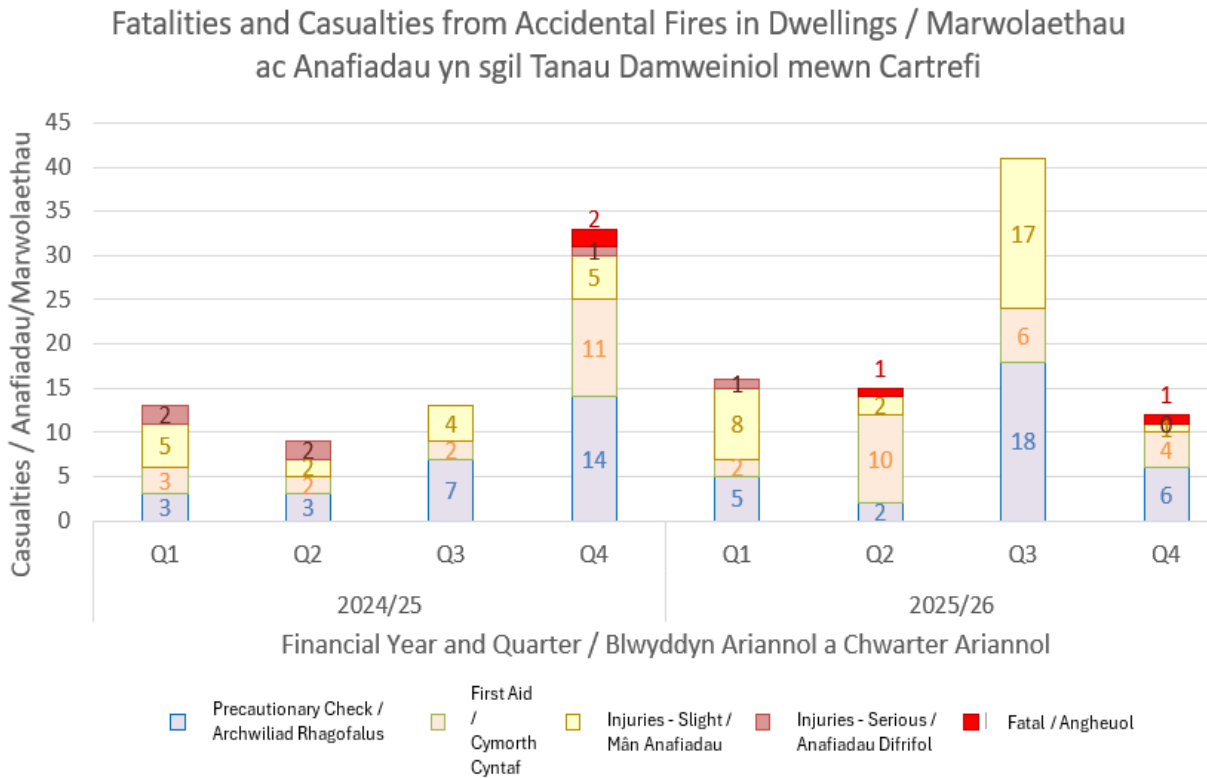
The most common injury type was 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation', which was responsible for 39 of the casualties (46%). 'Breathing difficulties (other than Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation)' was the second most common injury type, responsible for a further 18 (21%) of the casualties.

During 2025-26, a larger proportion of the casualties sustained Slight injuries (rising from 24% in 2024-25 to 33% of all casualties reported in the year). In contrast, serious injuries became less frequent, falling from five cases in 2024-25 to one in 2025-26.

Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings



Throughout 2025-26, the largest proportion of casualties from ADFs was recorded during Q3. This the period when the largest number of ADFs were attended, however the number of casualties recorded in Q3 was far higher than the amount typically seen in proportion to the number of ADFs. In Q4, the volume of ADFs attended reduced, resulting in less than half of the number of ADFs with casualties as seen in the previous quarter (from 21 in Q3, to 10 in Q4), with 12 casualties.



6 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **280** (87%) of the accidental dwelling fires attended during 2025-26.

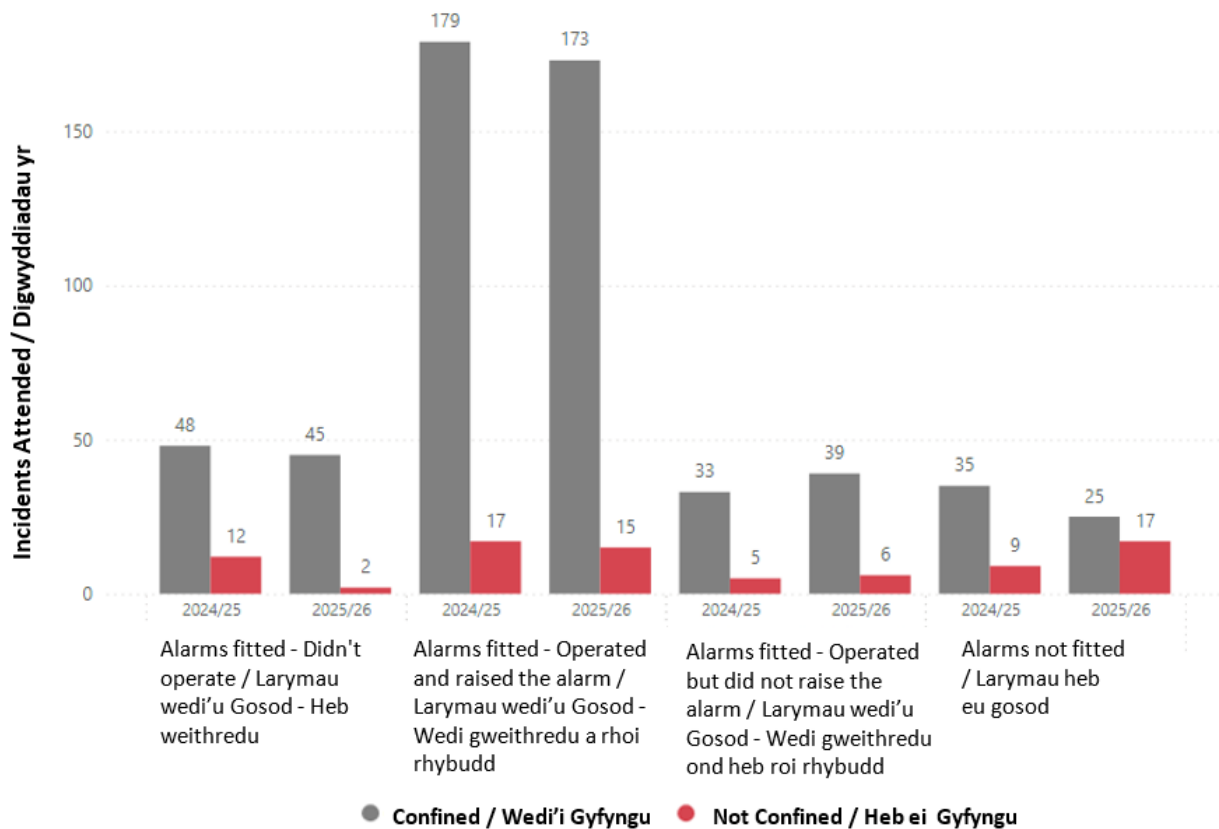
Alarms operated and raised the alarm at **188** (58%) of the ADFs attended during the year. Of these 188 ADFs, the fire was confined to the room of origin for **173** (92%).

Alarms were not fitted at **42** (13%) of the ADFs attended.

Of the 322 ADFs attended, **282** were confined to the room of origin, and **40** were not confined.

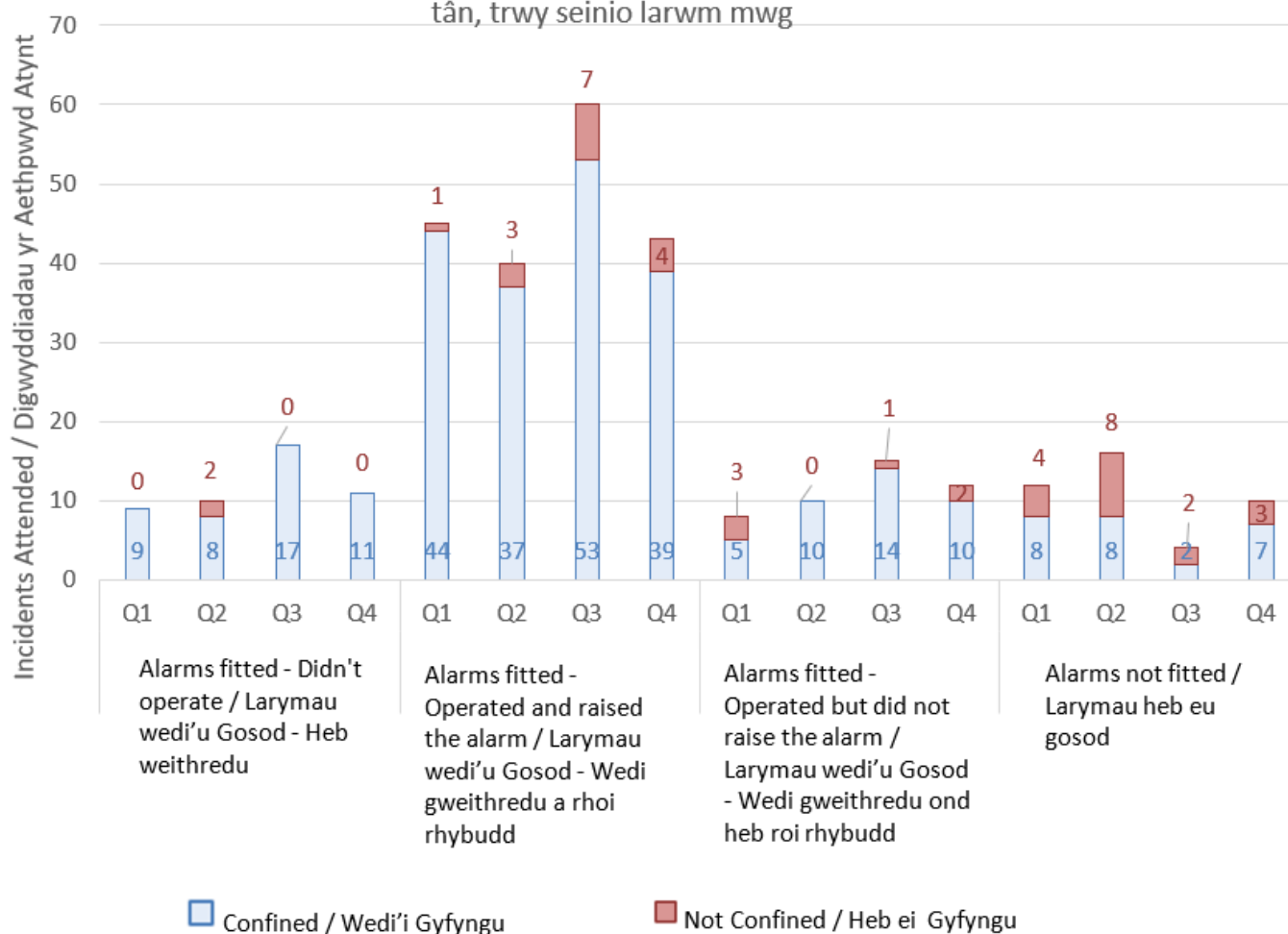
Out of the 282 ADFs which were confined to the room of origin, **173 (61%)** were incidents where alarms had been fitted, and raised the alarm.

Accidental Dwelling Fires confined to room of origin, by smoke alarm activation / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi wedi'u cyfyngu i'r ystafell lle cychwynnodd y tân, trwy seinio larwm mwg



Throughout 2025-26, although Q3 saw the largest number of ADFs attended, it is worth noting that Q3 showed the largest number of ADFs which were confined to room of origin, and where an alarm was fitted and raised the alarm, whilst also showing the lowest number of incidents where alarms were not fitted. In Q4 the number of ADFs returned to a level more consistent with the first half of the year, and with more similar proportions relating to fire containment and alarm activation.

Accidental Dwelling Fires confined to room of origin, by smoke alarm activation / Tanau Damweiniol mewn Cartrefi wedi'u cyfyngu i'r ystafell lle cychwynnodd y tân, trwy seinio larwm mwg



Actions taken to support the most vulnerable to fires in their homes:

During the 2025/26 financial year, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) completed 19,376 Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs), exceeding the annual target of 17,500 by 1,876 checks. Of those completed, 5,493 SAWCs were assessed as high risk, representing 28.4% of total SAWC activity.

Recognising the need to increase the proportion of high-risk interventions, a number of measures have been implemented. These include requiring operational crews to prioritise high-risk referrals, alongside NWFRS involvement in the development of an All-Wales risk stratification and scoring approach to support more consistent and targeted identification of vulnerability.

Targeted, Data-Led Prevention Activity

During Quarter 3, Wholetime (WT) and Day Crewed (DC) stations undertook targeted prevention activity using Exeter data shared by the NHS. This dataset identifies households with residents aged 65 years and over, with additional stratification at 75+ and 80+. This approach enabled crews to

proactively target SAWCs towards age groups that are statistically at greater risk of harm from fire.

Referral Waiting List Arrangements

During Quarter 3, SAWCs were temporarily removed from the referral waiting list as a method of allocation. During this period:

- High- and medium-risk referrals were completed by High Safety Support Workers (HSSWs); and
- Low-risk referrals were completed by Wholetime Day Safe Response (WDSR) staff.

In Quarter 4, this approach was revised. Crews are now required to use the referral waiting list as the primary source for SAWC activity, with Exeter data retained as a secondary or contingency option.

This change was introduced in response to the increasing volume of referrals on the waiting list, including a number that had become overdue. The revised approach ensures that operational activity is focused on those assessed as most at risk within the community, rather than prioritising lower-risk SAWCs to achieve numerical targets. This addresses concerns that previous arrangements had resulted in activity volume being prioritised over risk-based impact and quality.

Ongoing Prevention Oversight

Hot-spotting activity continues to be undertaken following incidents, with post-incident prevention responses proportionate to the level of identified risk.

The Prevention Team continues to maintain oversight of SAWC delivery through weekly monitoring meetings, enabling active management of performance and emerging risks.

The Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continues to work in partnership with Corporate Communications to proactively promote fire, road, and water safety messaging across all appropriate media platforms, supporting wider prevention and public safety objectives.

Engagement with Children and Young People:

Phoenix

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of courses run	4	4	6	6
Number of CYP	33	29	55	55
% behaviour improvement reported	80%	78%	66%	73%
% positive feedback	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Agored Cymru	70%	70%	62%	92%
% CYP completed course	88%	86%	67%	92%

Work is progressing on an all-Wales basis, to enable the Phoenix programme to support delivery of the NFCC Early Interventions Framework, in line with national prevention and early-intervention priorities.

Kings Trust

All required policies and procedures relating to the King's Trust Award are now in place, and the Service has achieved accredited centre status.

Q4 Educational visits to schools

Schools Visited = 9
Pupils = 810

TRM training completed in Q4.

Fire cadets

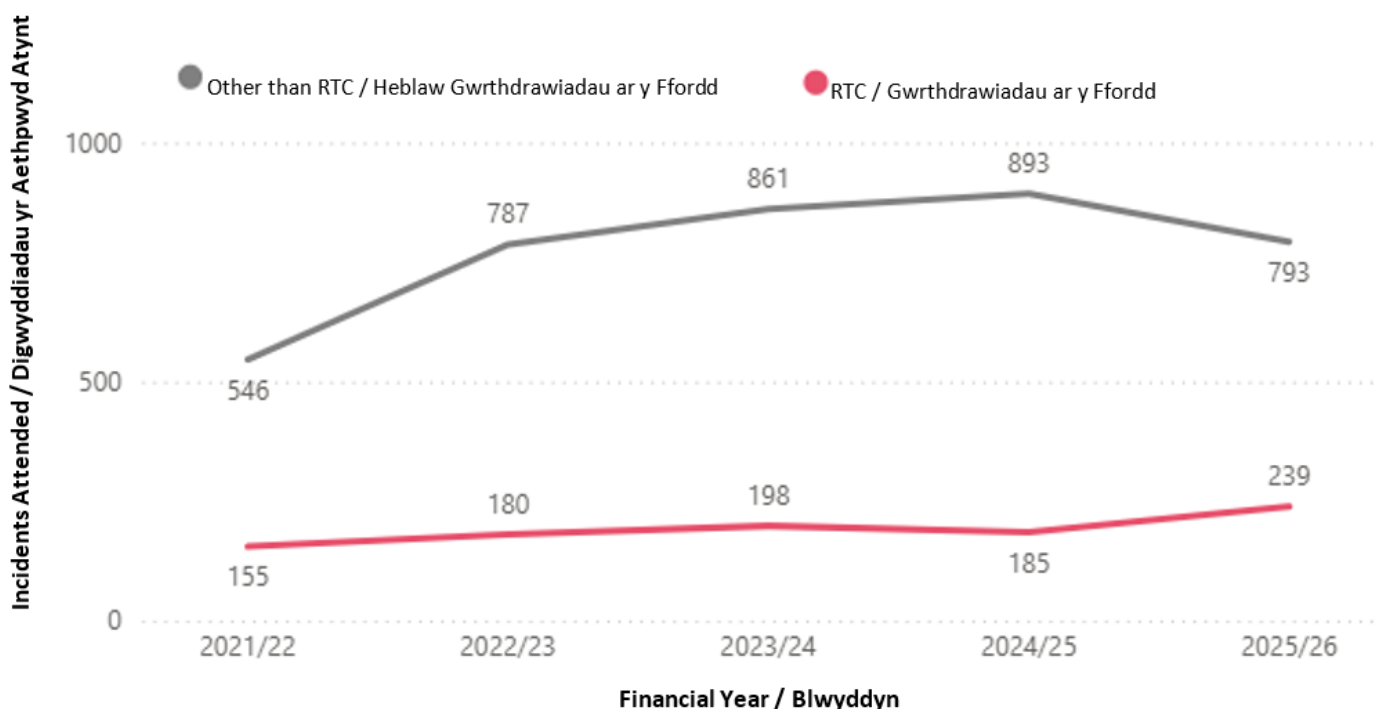
Fire Cadet provision continues to operate at units based in Amlwch, Bala, Chirk, and Tywyn.

The Menai Bridge Fire Cadet Unit is currently temporarily closed following the departure of the unit lead from the Service. Expressions of interest have been received from other operational staff, and options to re-establish the unit are being actively explored.

7 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

A total of **1,362** special service calls (including Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)) were attended in 2025-26, which is 4.4% lower than the 1,424 attended in 2024-25.

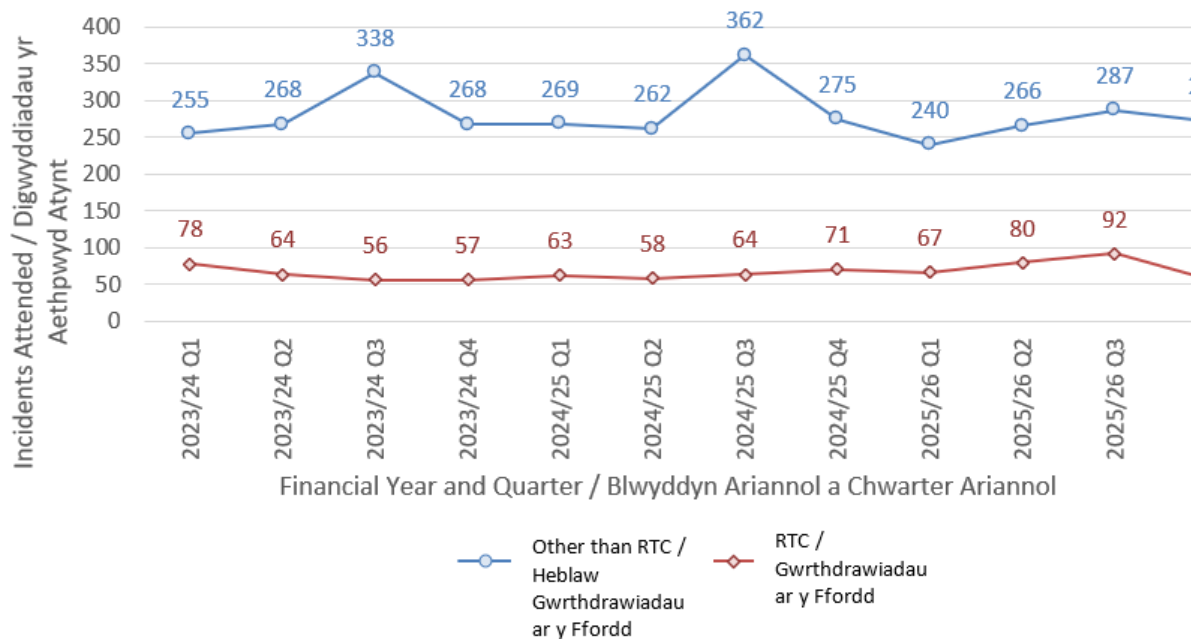
Whilst the number of 'Other than RTC' incidents have decreased by 8.8% with **1,065** incidents attended, there has been increased attendance at RTCs, which saw a 16% increase with **297** incidents attended in 2025-26 compared to 249 during 2024-25.



During 2025-26, the numbers of SSC incidents attended did not follow the same trend as observed in previous years. In both 2023-24 and 2024-25, a large increase in non-RTC SSCs attended was seen during Q3, however, in 2025-26, whilst there was still an increase during Q3 in the number of non-RTC SSC incidents attended, this was a smaller increase than previous years showed.

In contrast, however, the number of RTC SSCs attended, showed an increase in Q3, to 92, which is beyond the levels that would normally be expected in a quarter. In Q4, this reduced to 58, which is within the range that might normally be expected.

Special Service calls by quarter / Galwadau Gwasanaeth Arbennig fesul chwarter



Leading SSC categories for the duration of 2025-26 (other than RTC) included:

- **545** 'Assist other agencies' incidents – an increase of 2.4% from 532 recorded during 2024-25.
- **103** 'Effecting entry/exit' incidents – an increase of 33.8% from 77 recorded during 2024-25.
- **79** 'Other rescue/release of persons' incidents – a decrease of 14.1% from 92 recorded during 2024-25.
- **71** 'Lift Release' incidents – a decrease of 9% from 78 recorded during 2024-25

Leading SSC categories recorded during 2025-26 Q4 (other than RTC) included:

- **149** 'Assist other agencies' incidents – a 2.6% decrease from 153 recorded during Q3.

- **30** 'Effecting entry/exit' incidents – a 15.4% increase from 26 recorded during Q3.

Both of these categories remained in the top leading causes of SSC incidents attended, throughout each quarter of 2025-26.

Actions taken to date:

Road Safety

Olivia's story

During Quarter 4, the Olivia's Story road safety intervention was delivered to 970 college students, supporting targeted engagement with young people around the risks associated with road use and driver behaviour.

Op Atal Team

The Operation Atal team continues to work in partnership with North Wales Police (NWP) to educate drivers on the Fatal Five causes of serious road traffic collisions. During Quarter 4:

- 1,640 roadside presentations were delivered; and
- 79 drivers were issued with driving-related prosecutions following enforcement activity.

BikerDown

One Biker Down session was delivered during Quarter 4, resulting in engagement with 17 participants. The programme continues to provide specialist safety advice aimed at reducing motorcycle-related casualties.

Other Ongoing Road Safety Activity

In addition to the above, NWFRS continues to undertake a range of road safety initiatives, including:

- Working in partnership with North Wales Police on the launch of Operation Apex, which includes the introduction of new PRIME road markings on two roads in North Wales to assist motorcyclists in safely negotiating bends; and
- Developing targeted engagement resources to support older drivers, recognising changing risk profiles within this group.

Water Safety – Quarter 4 Update

Water Safety Pilot Scheme

The NWFRS / Swim Wales / Ffit Cymru Water Safety Pilot was launched on 12 February 2026. The launch event was well attended, with 30 pupils participating in the Swim Safe initiative.

The session comprised a full programme of dry-side and pool-based activity, delivering key water safety principles to Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, including:

- Stop and think
- Stay together
- Float
- Calling 999 in an emergency

Since launch, the pilot has engaged with a total of 93 pupils.

The initial focus is on establishing a strong delivery model within Conwy County, before wider rollout across North Wales.

Plans are currently in place to deliver a Swim Safe event in Anglesey as part of Be Water Aware Week at the end of April. This will support future collaborative work with Anglesey schools to further embed the *Find Your Float* message.

An internal communication has been issued to recruit additional staff to support the pilot, with over 10 members of staff expressing interest to date. Training for participating staff is scheduled to commence in early May.

Be Water Aware Campaign

As part of Be Water Aware Week, the following activity is planned:

- Local crew engagement at Betws-y-Coed, Llangollen, Llanberis, and Rhyl on 2 May;
- School-based engagement in Anglesey during the same week; and
- A week-long social media campaign focused on water safety awareness messages.

ROSPA Conference

An abstract has been submitted jointly with Swim Wales in response to a request to present at the ROSPA Conference in Birmingham in October. The submission reflects partnership working and shared learning in relation to water safety and prevention activity.

DangerPoint

Work is underway to enhance the DangerPoint water awareness section. NWFRS is funding the purchase of a water safety demonstration tank, similar to that currently used by the Service.

A meeting with DangerPoint has been arranged for 14 April 2026 to support collaboration and development of the dedicated water safety space.

River and Sea Sense

A joint River and Sea Sense event is planned for 25 July 2026 to coincide with World Drowning Prevention Day. Activity will take place at local inland water sites, including:

- Bala Lake
- Llyn Padarn
- Llangollen

This event will support coordinated, place-based water safety messaging in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

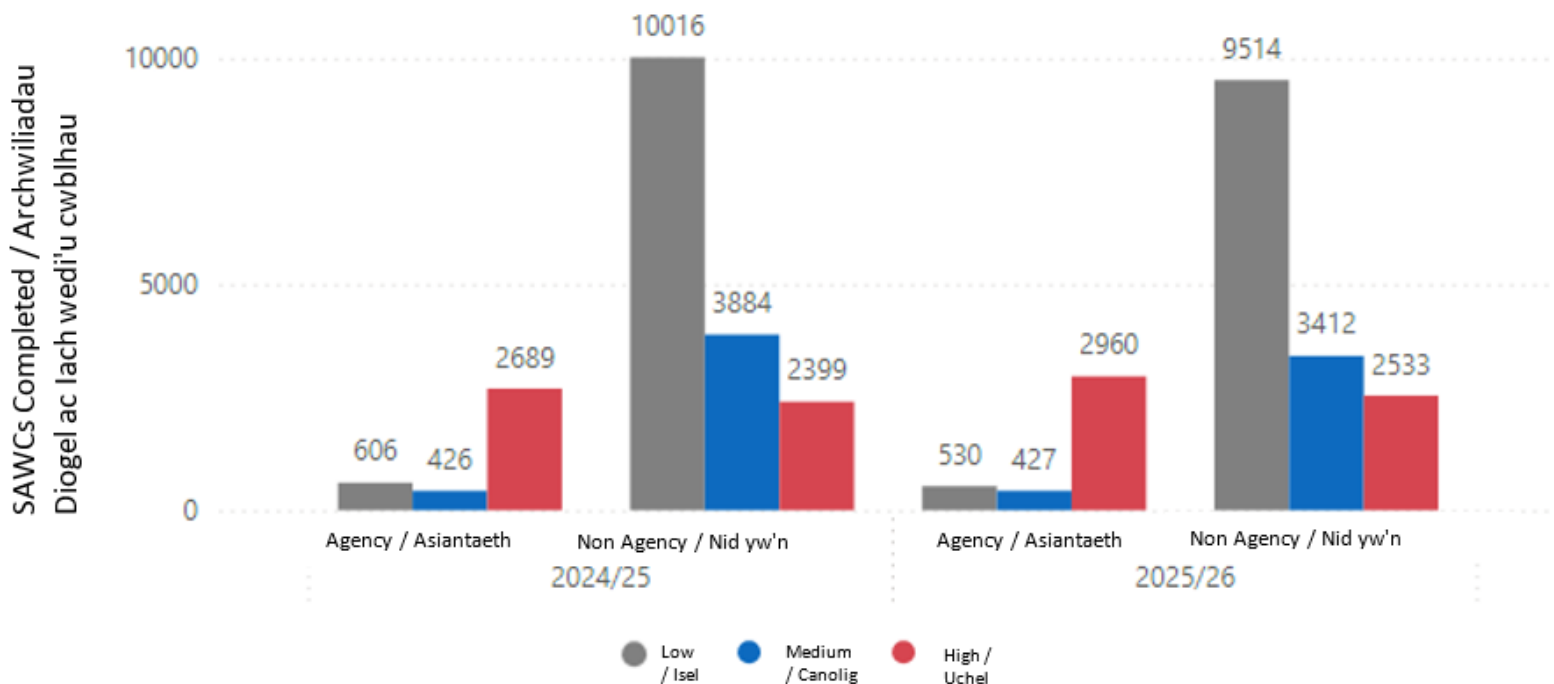
8 Safe and Well Checks

A total of **19,376** SAWCs have been completed throughout 2025-26, of which:

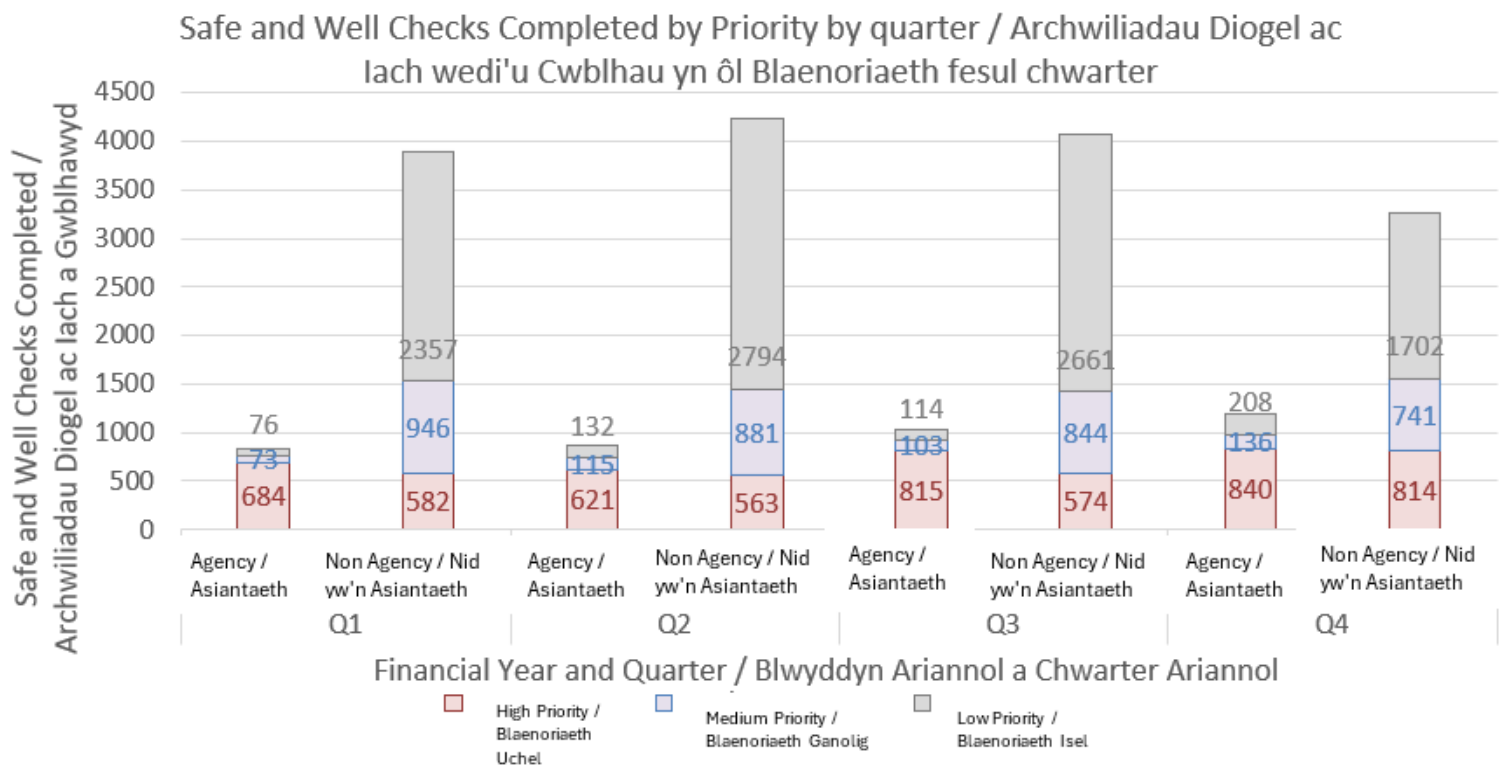
- **5,493** (28.3%) were High priority, with **2,960** (53.9% of high priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **3,839** (19.8%) were Medium priority, with **427** (11.1% of medium priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **10,004** (51.6%) were Low priority, with **530** (5.3% of low priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.

A total of **3,917** SAWCs completed during this year were referred to the Service from an Agency – this equates to 20.2% of SAWCs completed.

Although there has been a **3.2%** decrease in the total number of SAWCs completed in 2025-26 when compared to 20,020 completed during 2024-25, there has been an increase in the number (5,493 in 2025-26 compared to 5,088 in 2024-25) and proportion (28.3% of all SAWCs completed in 2025-26, compared to 25.4% of all SAWCs completed in 2024-25) of **high priority** SAWCs completed.



During 2025-26 Q4, a total of **4,441** Safe and Well checks were completed, which is lower than the 5,111 completed during the previous quarter (2025-26 Q3), however, **37.2%** (1,654 out of 4,441) of these were recorded as High priority checks, which is an increase from 27.2% (1,389 out of 5,111) high priority checks completed in 2025-26 Q3.

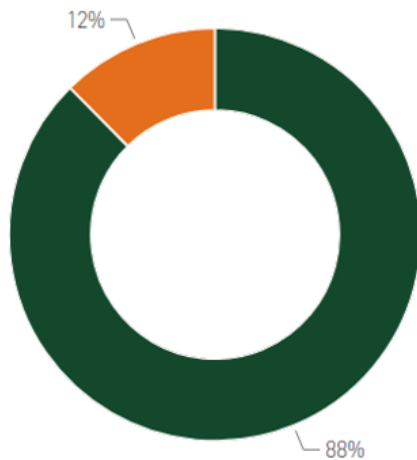


A total of 1,192 (8.0%) SAWCs were conducted in Welsh during quarters 1 – 3.

88% of all SAWCs completed during 2025-26, were completed within their target completion time.

Of the SAWCs completed during 2025-26 which were High priority, 67% were completed within their target completion time.

All Checks by Days Over Target Completion / Pob Gwiriad yn ôl Dyddiau Dros Gwblhau Targed



● Within Target / O fewn y Targed
● Outside Target / Tu allan i'r Targed

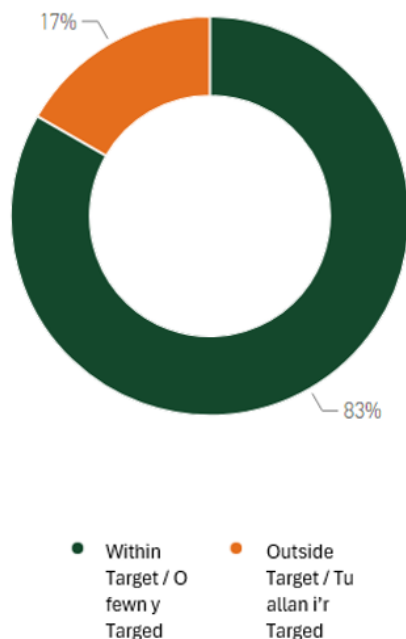
High Priority Checks by Days Over Target Completion / Gwiriadau Blaenoriaeth Uchel yn ôl Dyddiau Dros Gwblhau Targed



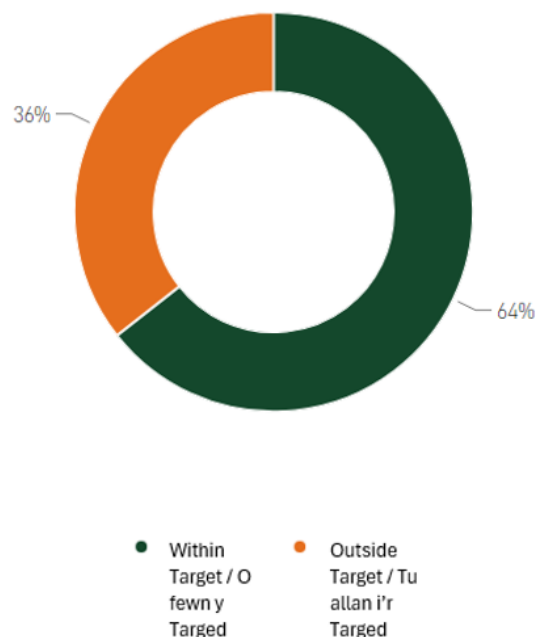
● Within Target / O fewn y Targed
● Outside Target / Tu allan i'r Targed

During quarter 4, across all priorities of Safe and Well checks completed, 83% were completed within the target completion time. 64% of the High Priority Safe and Well checks completed in quarter 4, were completed within target, which is an improvement from Q3 where 62% of the high priority checks were completed within the target.

All Checks by Days Over Target Completion / Pob
Gwiriad yn ôl Dyddiau Dros Gwblhau Targed



High Priority Checks by Days Over Target
Completion / Gwiriadau Blaenoriaeth Uchel yn ôl
Dyddiau Dros Gwblhau Targed



Actions taken to date:

Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs)

During the 2025/26 financial year, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) completed 19,376 Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs). This exceeded the annual target of 17,500 by 1,876 checks.

Of the total SAWCs completed, 5,493 were assessed as high risk, representing 28.4% of overall SAWC activity. A number of measures have been implemented to improve the proportion of high risk SAWCs completed, including:

- Prioritising high risk referrals for operational crews; and
- Contributing to the development of an All Wales risk stratification model to improve consistency and targeting.

Targeted Prevention Activity

During Quarter 3, Wholtime (WT) and Day-Crewed (DC) stations undertook targeted prevention activity using Exeter data (shared by the NHS). This dataset identifies households with occupants aged 65+, 75+, and 80+, enabling crews to

focus SAWC delivery on demographic groups known to be at increased risk from fire.

Management of the Referral Waiting List

In Quarter 3, SAWCs were temporarily removed from the referral waiting list as a delivery method. During this period:

- High- and medium-risk referrals were completed by High-Safety Support Workers (HSSWs); and
- Low-risk referrals were completed by Wholetime Duty System Rural (WDSR) staff.

In Quarter 4, this approach was revised. Crews are now required to:

- Use the referral waiting list as the primary source to identify SAWC activity; and
- Use Exeter data only as a secondary or contingency option.

This change was implemented in response to increasing waiting-list volumes, including a number of overdue referrals. The revised approach places greater emphasis on targeting those assessed as most at risk, rather than focusing on lower-risk SAWCs to meet numerical targets. This responds to concerns that previous arrangements were incentivising activity volume over quality and risk-based impact.

Post-Incident and Ongoing Oversight

Hot-spotting activity continues to be undertaken following incidents, with varying levels of post-incident response applied depending on risk and context.

The Prevention Team continues to monitor SAWC activity through weekly meetings, ensuring performance oversight and responsiveness to emerging issues.

The Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continues to work closely with Corporate Communications to proactively promote fire, road, and water safety across all relevant media platforms.

Waiting List

Priority	Within Target	Outside Target	Total
High	295	415	710
Medium	96	86	182
Low	132	22	154
Total	523	523	1,046

The SAWC waiting list continues to present a risk to the organisation, particularly in relation to overdue high-risk referrals. However, mitigation measures are in place, and the overall volume of referrals is now reducing on a quarterly basis.

Waiting List Referrals by Quarter

- Q2: 1,620
- Q3: 1,479
- Q4: 1,046

As at the end of Quarter 4, there were 1,046 referrals remaining on the waiting list. This represents a reduction of 433 referrals compared to Quarter 3.

The waiting list is currently being managed collectively by:

- WT and DC operational crews;
- HSSWs;
- WDSR staff; and
- Staff working on modified duties.

It should be noted that staffing capacity was impacted during Quarter 3, with:

- One HSSW promoted into a Prevention Manager role; and
- Two HSSWs on long-term sickness absence.

This has had an impact on SAWC completion levels during Quarter 4.

To mitigate this, WDSR staff were encouraged to increase the volume of telephone-based SAWCs, and all WT and DC watches have now been formally requested to undertake medium- and high-risk SAWCs from the referral waiting list.

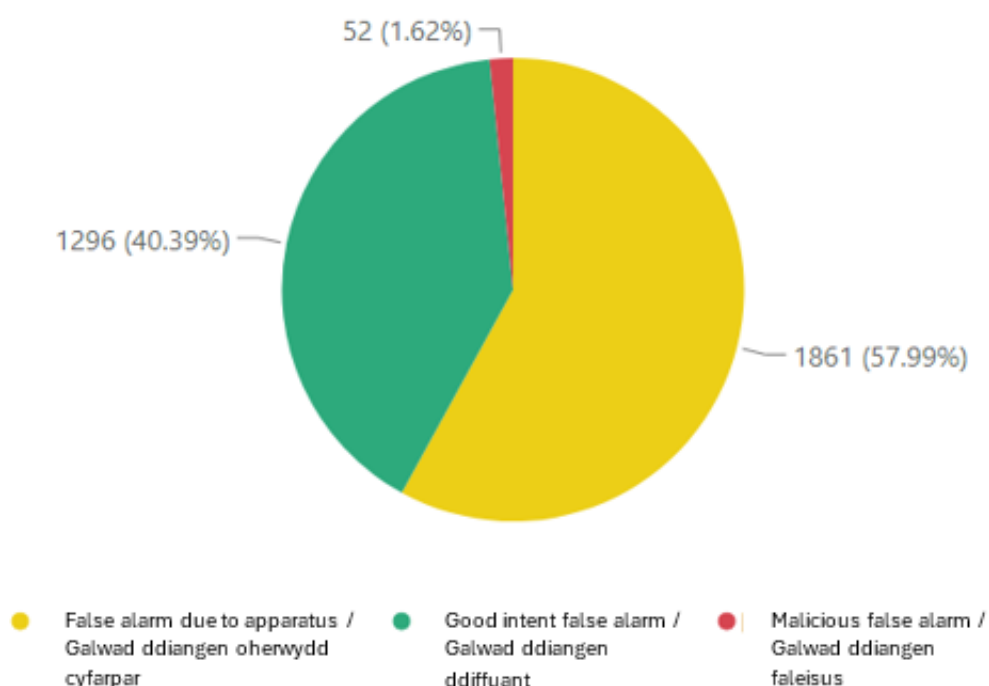
Our Protection Principle

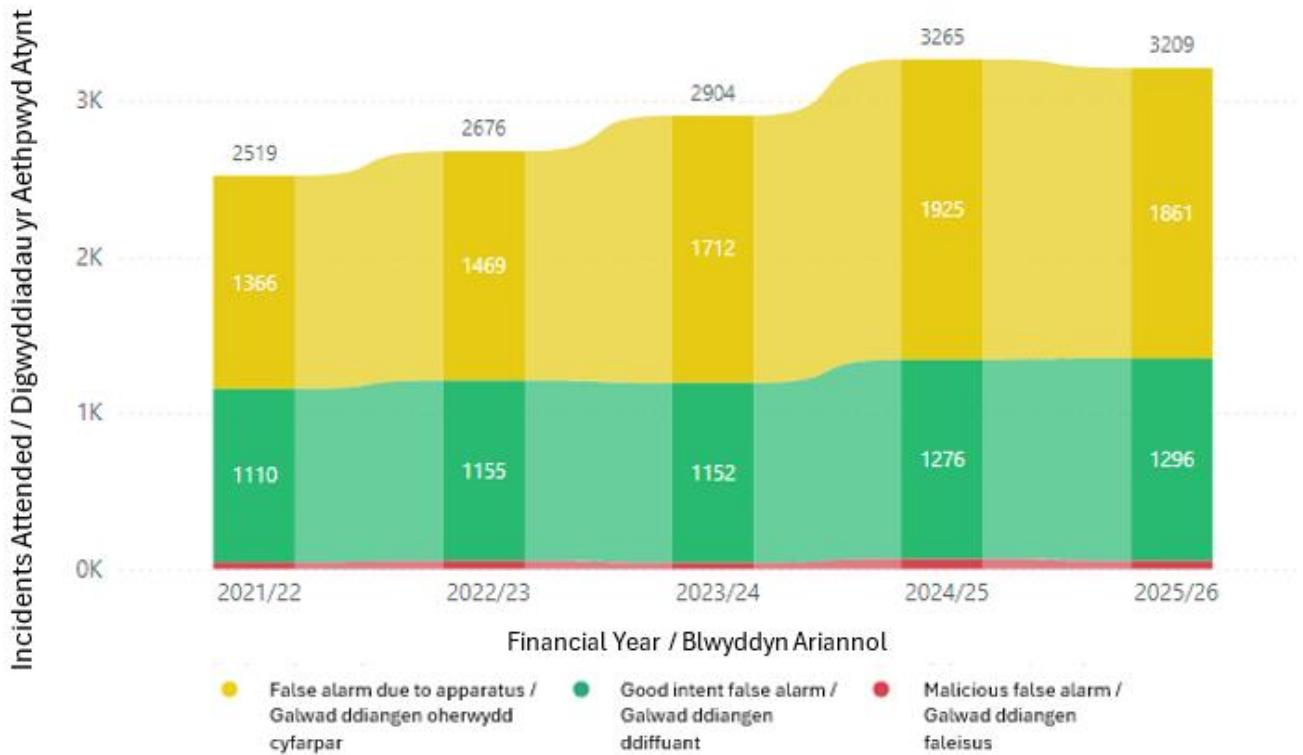


9 False Alarms

A total of **3,209** false alarms were attended throughout 2025-26, which is a decrease of 1.7% from 3,265 in 2024-25. This total is inclusive of false alarms attended across all property types.

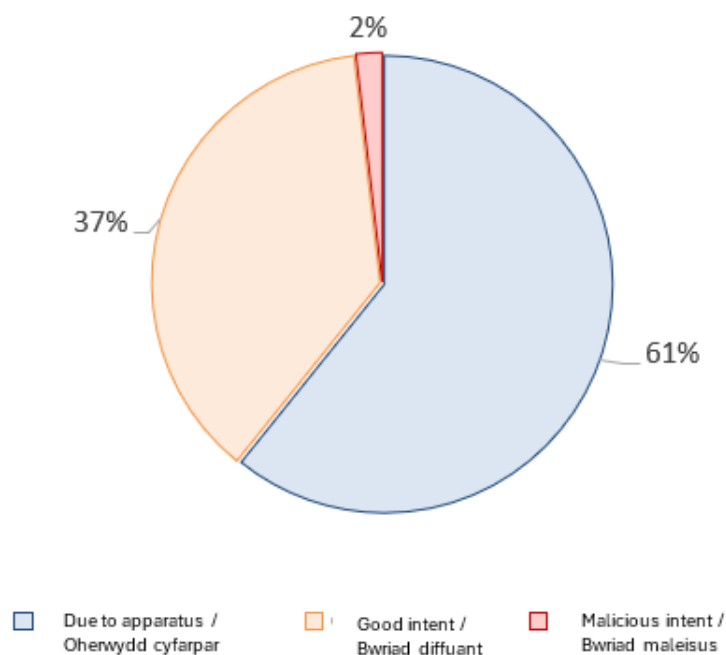
An increase has been recorded in Good Intent False Alarm incidents attended, with a 1.6% increase recorded from 1,276 to **1,296**. A reduction can be seen in Malicious false alarms, which decreased 18.8% from 64 to **52**, and also in Fire alarm due to Apparatus incidents, which decreased 3.3% from 1,925 to **1,861**.



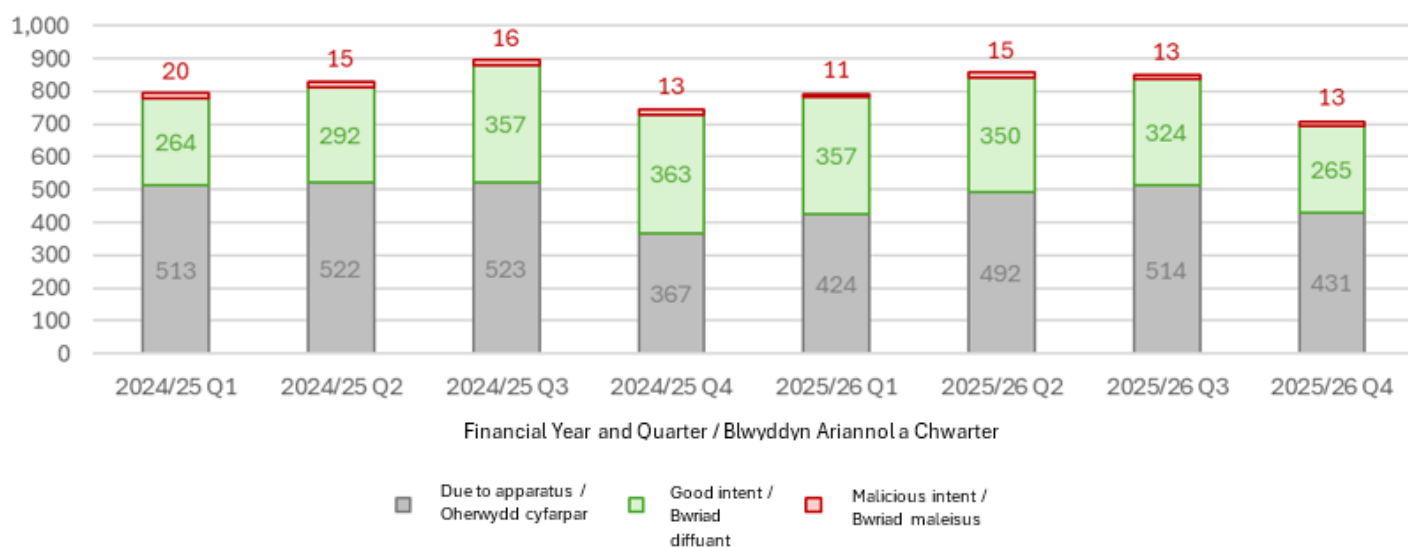


Throughout 2025-26, the number of false alarms attended during Q2 and Q3 were higher than in Q1 and Q4, which is similar to the pattern seen throughout 2024-25.

2025/2026 Q4 False Alarms / Galwadau Diangen 2025/2026 Ch4

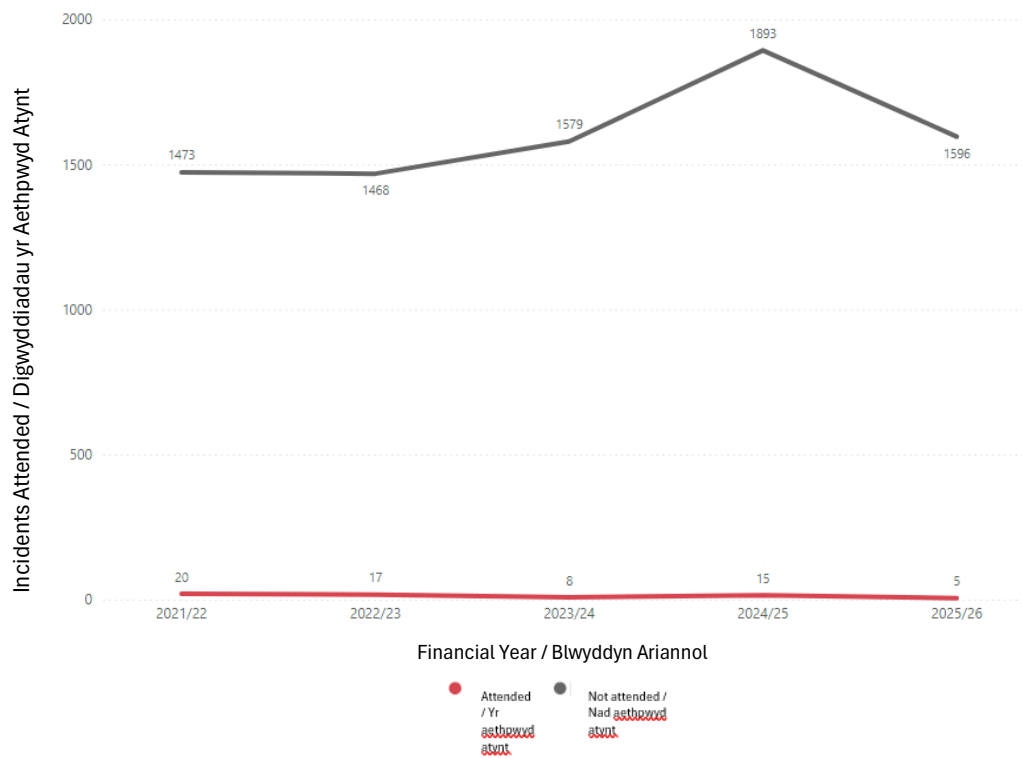


False Alarms by Quarter / Galwadau Diangen yn ôl Chwarter

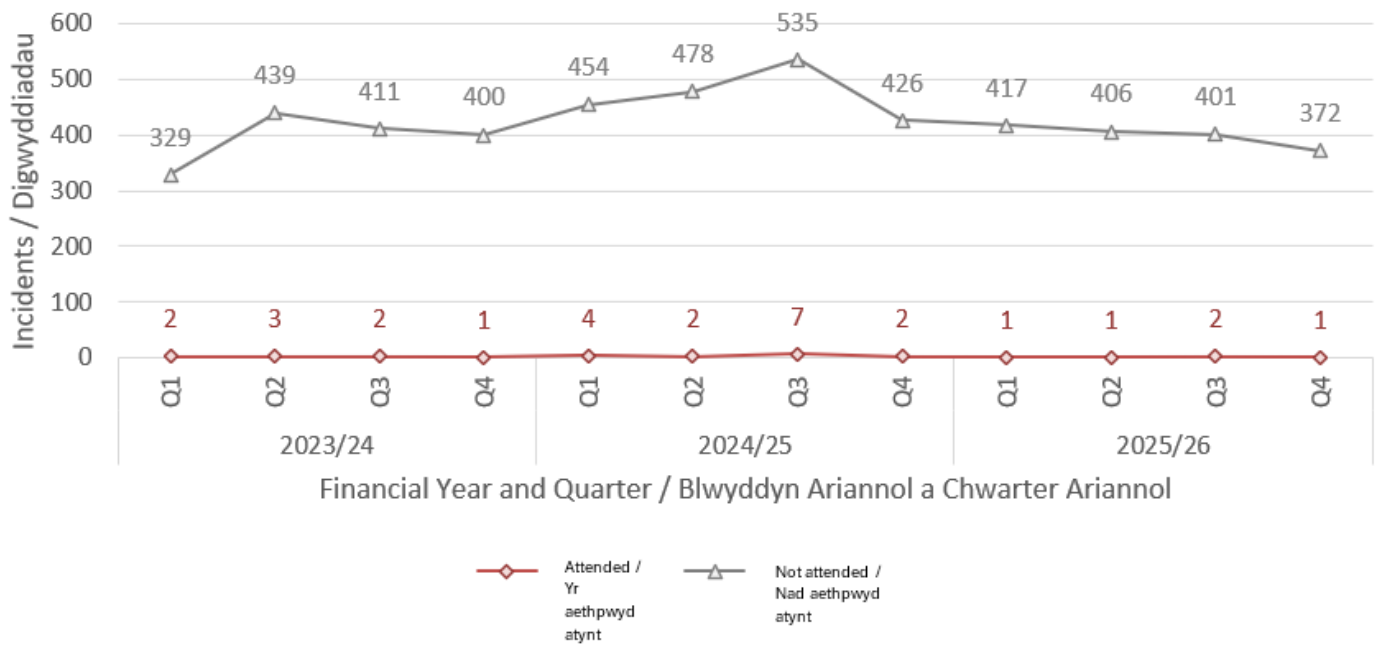


10 Commercial AFA calls

1,601 Commercial AFA calls were received during 2025-26. All bar **five** were incidents that were not attended. The number of commercial AFA calls received has shown a continued decrease throughout 2025-26.



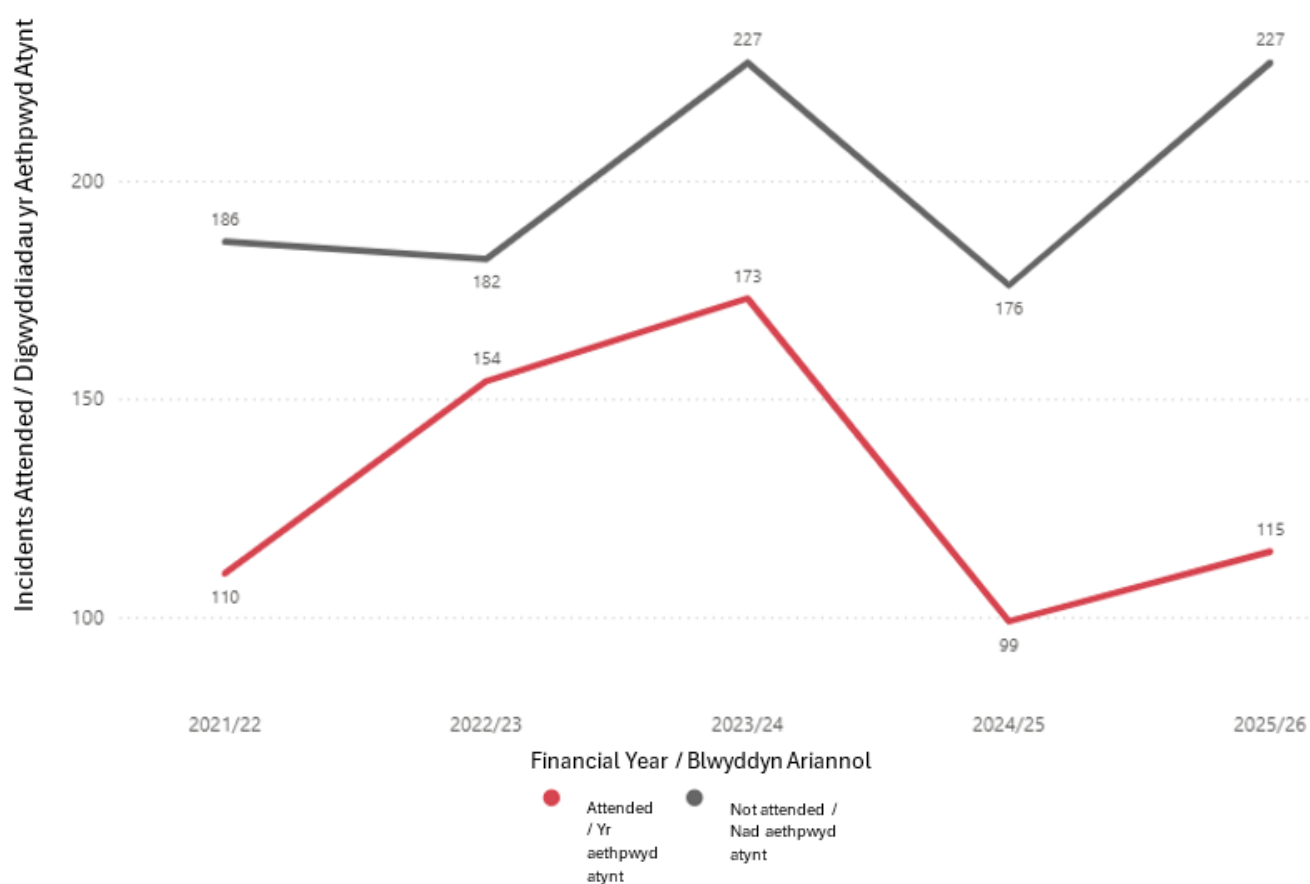
Commercial Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Calls / Galwadau System Larwm Awtomatig Masnachol



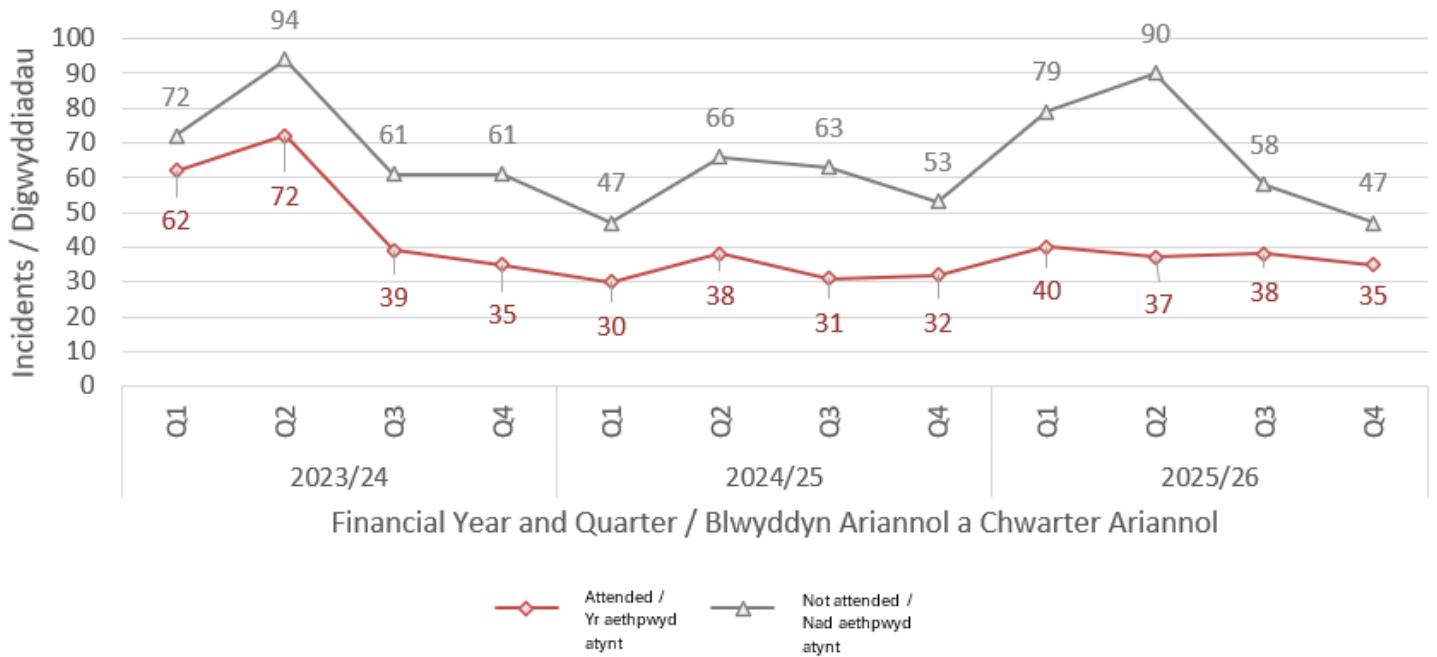
11 Hospital AFA calls

424 Hospital AFA calls were received throughout 2025-26, which represents an increase of 17.8% from 360 during 2024-25. Of the AFA calls received in 2025-26, 274 (64.6%) were not attended. Despite the increase in number of calls, the proportion not attended has remained stable, aligned to 64% from the previous year.

Although the total number of hospital AFA calls received throughout the whole year was an increase on previous years, this was largely driven by higher volumes during the first half of the year, and in particular during Q2 when 127 were received. During Q3 and Q4, the number of hospital AFA calls reduced substantially, with Q4 receiving 82 Hospital AFA calls in total.



Hospital Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Calls by Quarter / Galwadau System Larwm Awtomatig gan Ysbyty fesul Chwarter

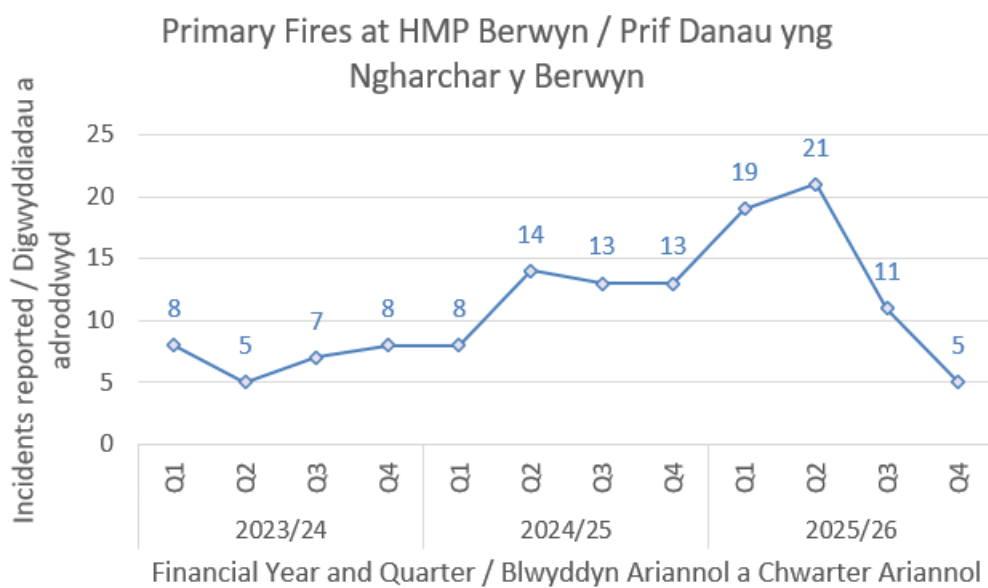
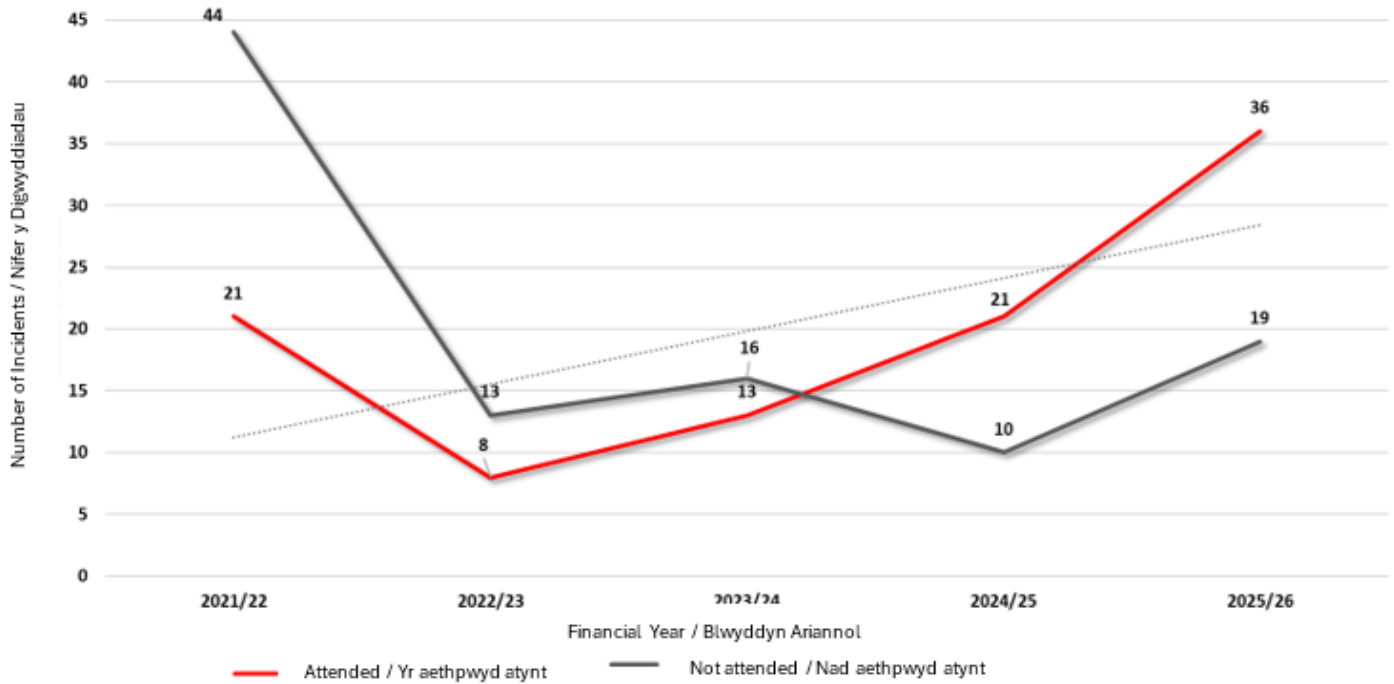


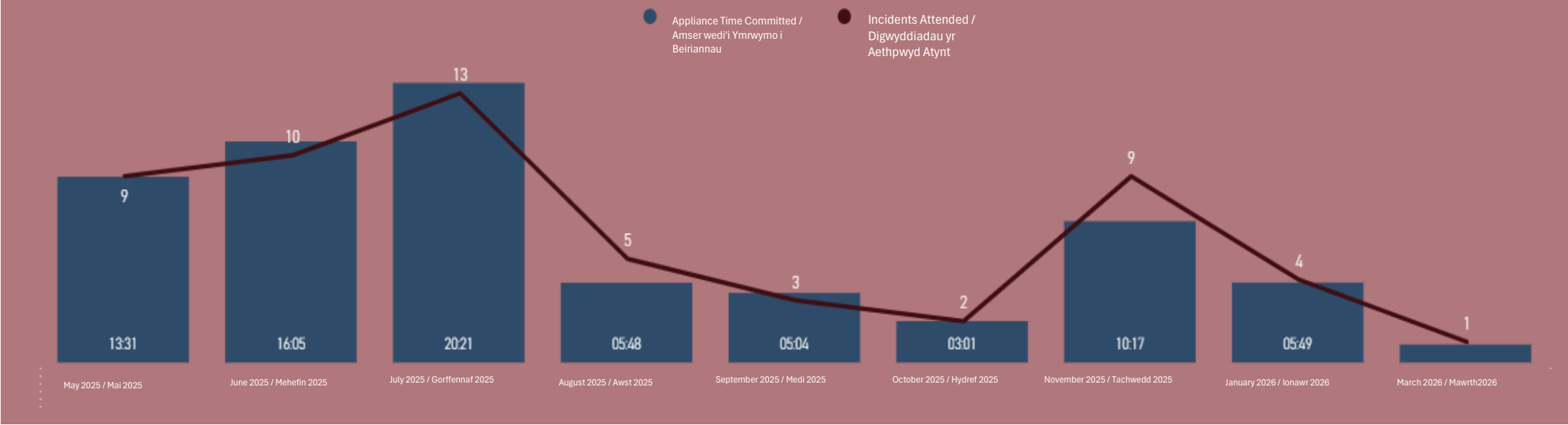
Actions taken to date – Hospitals:

Incidents attended is still low due to a continued collaboration between NWFRS and BCUHB, with NWFRS now having started a cyclical auditing regime across the estate to solidify working arrangements and to ensure the most high-risk environments are the estates being audited. Protection has begun a comprehensive and professionally structured audit framework covering documentation related to testing, drills, and maintenance activities. The framework covers regulatory compliance, operational assurance, and evidence-based reporting.

12 HMP Berwyn

56 primary fires were started deliberately at HMP Berwyn in the reporting period - this is an increase of 17% (from 48 primary fires reported during 2024-25), however, a notable reduction in incidents has been seen from Q3, with Q4 recording 5 fires (the lowest number reported in any quarter since Q2 2023-24).





Actions taken to date – HMP Berwyn

Incident volumes at HMP Berwyn continue to fluctuate, reflecting the adaptive behaviour of individuals who deliberately manipulate or repurpose electronic devices to create ignition sources. Following the introduction of a revised vape product, which initially resulted in a significant reduction in related incidents, there has been a subsequent shift in the methods used to initiate fires. This has included the continued use of older vape models, the dismantling of kettle bases, and more recently, attempts to interfere with newer “tamper-resistant” vape devices.

These emerging risks have been escalated to the device manufacturer, who is currently undertaking remedial action to address the identified vulnerabilities and further strengthen product safety features.

Analysis of incident data also indicates a temporal pattern, with a higher frequency of incidents occurring on specific days of the week. These align with periods when individuals receive payments and are required to settle debts, most commonly on Thursdays and Fridays. In some cases, fires are deliberately set as a means of avoiding debt repayment or instigating relocation within the establishment. As existing ignition methods are mitigated or removed, it is anticipated that further attempts to identify alternative ignition sources will continue.

A review has been completed of the Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA) of pumping appliances, and officers who are assigned to respond to confirmed incidents of fire in the building, informed by the incident data for the last 12 months. Consideration was given to the range of incidents, the times of the calls and range of ignition sources. The review concluded that the current levels of resource deployed to each incident should remain the same, despite the reduction in number of incidents, however, this will remain under close review, to ensure that the service minimises the risk of harm to individuals, whilst ensuring that the resource made available is proportionate to the risks.

The Service will maintain close partnership working to identify and respond to emerging ignition methods. Given the underlying drivers, it is expected that incident volumes will continue to rise and fall over time, requiring ongoing monitoring, risk assessment, and adaptive prevention strategies.

Our Response Principle



13 RDS Station Availability

The below table shows the average pump availability for all RDS Stations between 06:00 and 18:00. The availability is broken down by month, showing the respective weekday and weekend/bank holiday availability.

The table is representative of all RDS watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of RDS Stations Availability 06:00-18:00																	
Day/Month	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Jul	Aug	Sep	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4	Whole Year
Weekday	6	6	5	6	6	4	6	5	6	7	7	6	7	7	6	7	6
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	14	14	12	13	11	12	12	12	12	11	9	11	11	11	10	11	12
Overall Average	9	9	7	8	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	9	8	7	8	8
2024/25	7	7	6	7	6	7	6	6	6	7	9	7	10	9	9	9	7

Please note that availabilities have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The below table reflects the number of RDS starters and leavers during quarter two, compared to the same quarter of last year. Many of the RDS Leavers this quarter have migrated to the WDS.

Year	Starters	Leavers	Position Headcount at Year End	Headcount (single role only)
Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	86	65	487	425
Apr 2025 – Mar 2026	88	71	512	427
+/-	2	6	25	2

Starters – the number of RDS starters from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts.

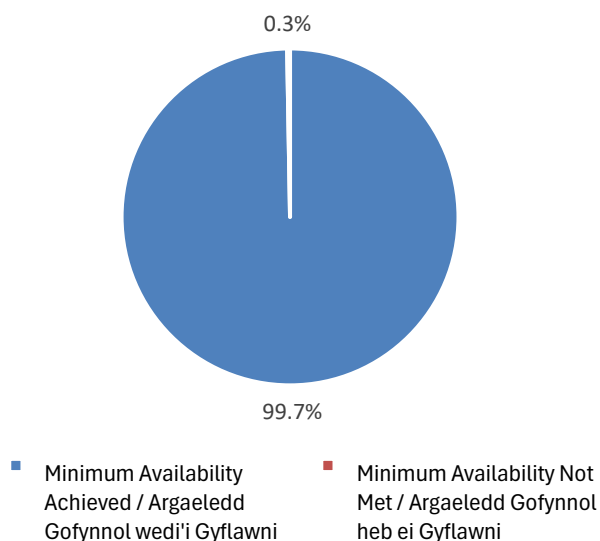
Leavers - the number of RDS leavers from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts, or migrations to the WDS.

Position Headcount at Quarter End – the number of RDS positions that are filled, including those who have more than one role.

Headcount (single role only) – the number of individuals who are on the RDS only i.e., those who do not have two roles in the Service.

14 Planned 18 Pump Availability

Minimum Availability Achieved / Argaeledd Gofynnol wedi'i Gyflawni



	Min. Availability achieved	Min. Availability not met
Weekdays	252	1
Weekends/Bank Hols	112	0

Daytime appliance availability during 2025–26 was consistently above the minimum target, with one isolated exception occurring on a weekday in Quarter 2.

Despite the temporary reduction below the minimum daytime 18-pump level on that date, sufficient operational coverage was maintained throughout the Service, with all areas within the 16 Grouping Plan appropriately covered.

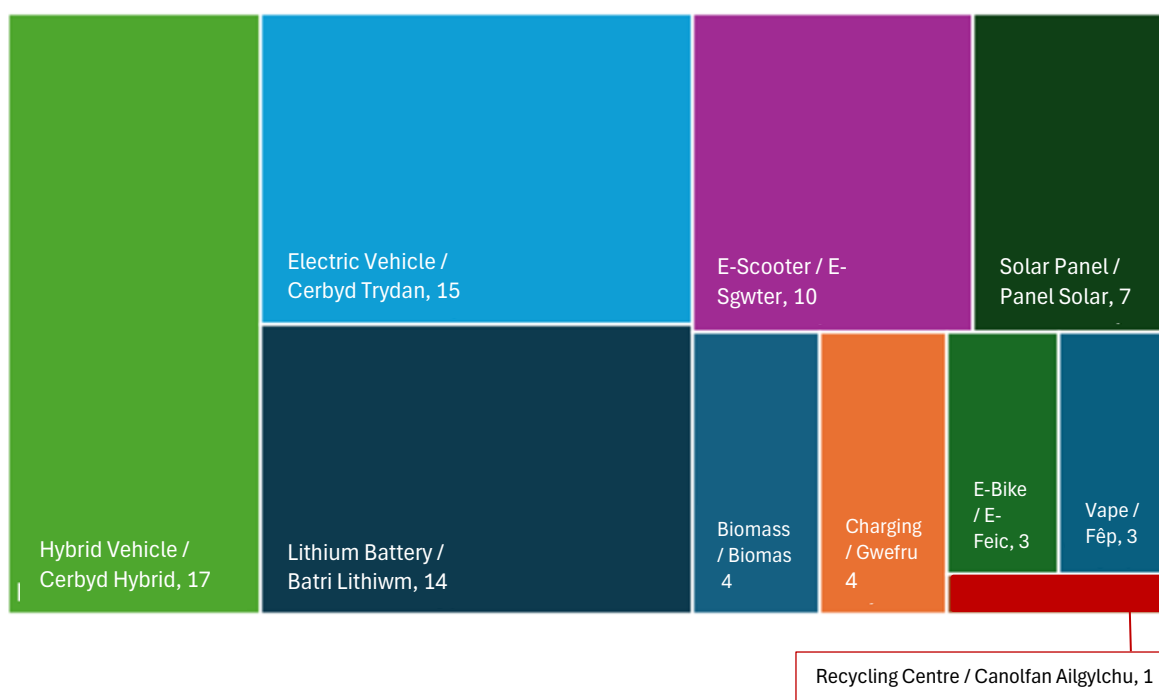
16 Emerging Technologies

As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

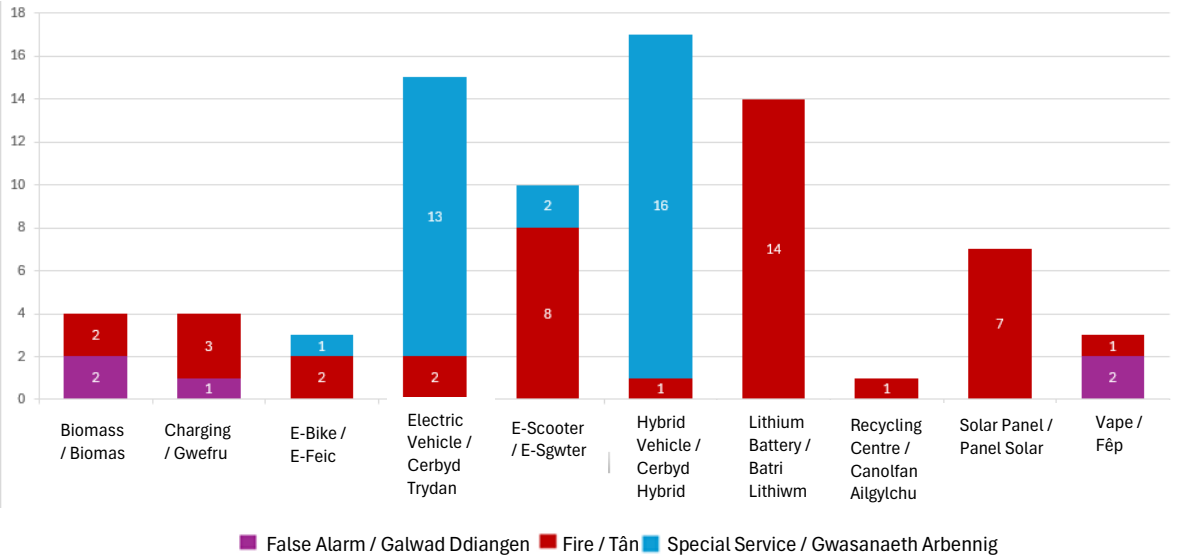
- Electric Vehicles
- Wind Farms
- Devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries

As many of these technologies are not currently captured within the Home Office's Incident Recording System (IRS), key word searches are conducted on incident logs in order to find the relevant incidents. Following a machinery of government transfer whereby the responsibility for Fire shifted from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), work is currently being undertaken by MHCLG and FRSs across the UK to integrate these technologies into the new incident recording system known as the Fire and Rescue Data Platform (FaRDaP). Incidents recorded before the implementation of FaRDaP will still need to be extracted using key word searches.

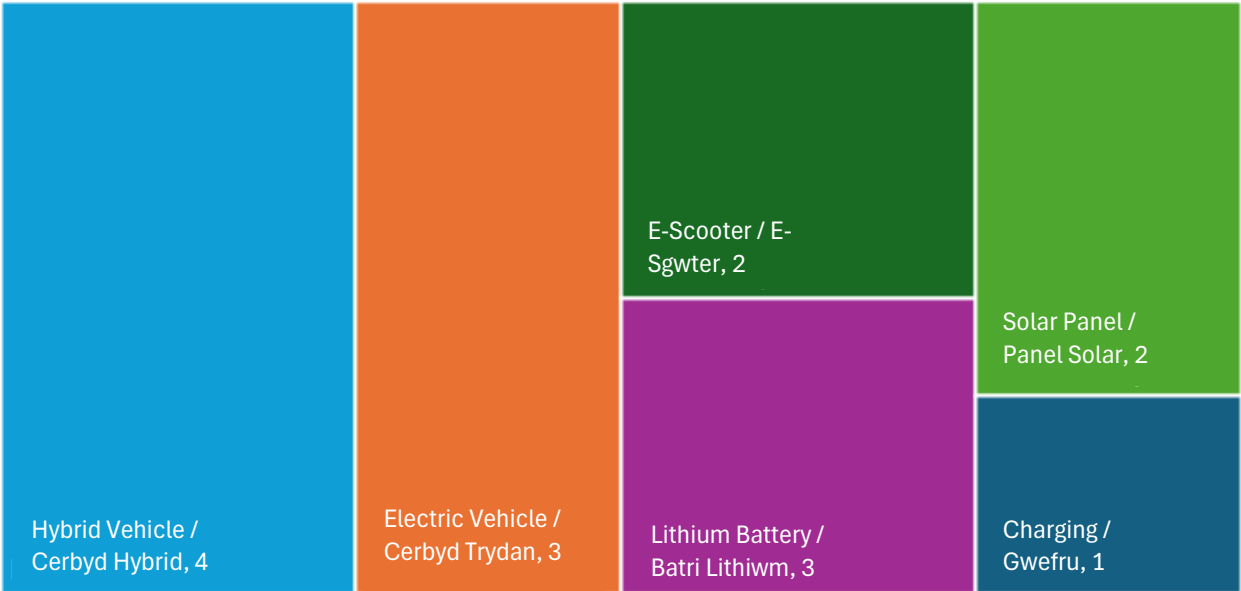
The following summary shows the number of incidents attended during 2025-26, where a specific emerging technology was stated in the incident logs. This includes SSCs, however, this excludes deliberate fires.



Although Electric vehicles and Hybrid vehicles feature heavily in the above figures for 2025-26, the following chart demonstrates that most of these incidents were not fire calls.



When reviewing the incidents which were attended during 2025-26 Q4, the data shows the same leading categories of emerging technology, as seen across the whole of the year.



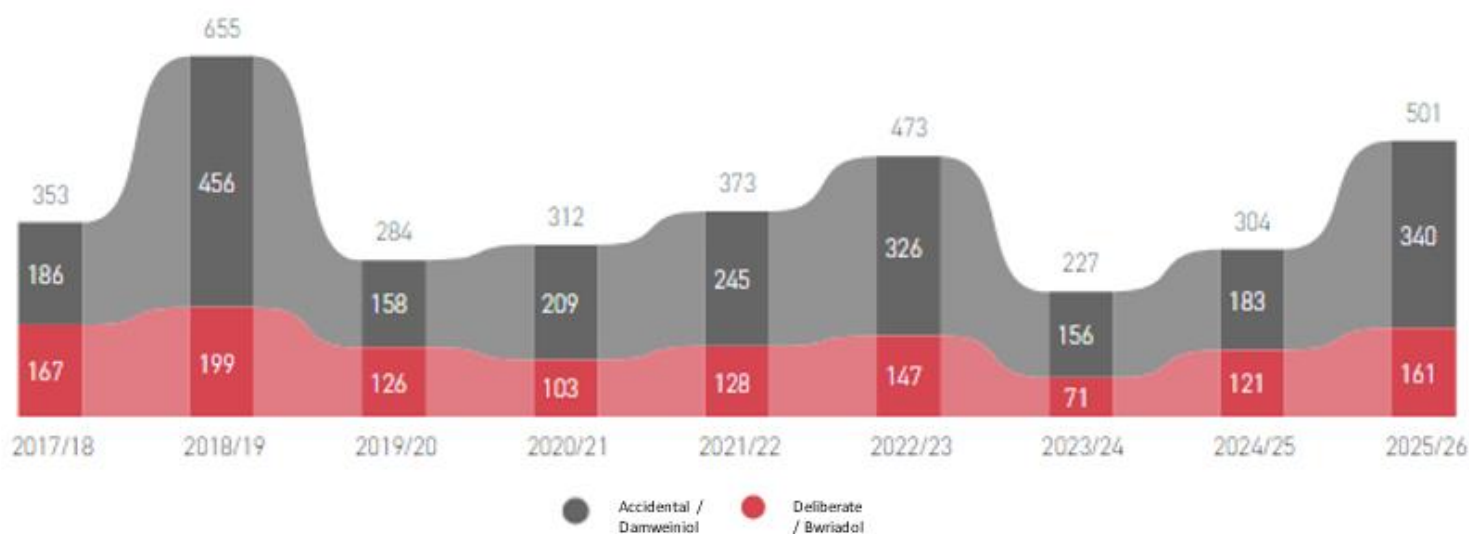
N.B. In some cases, the cause has been assumed rather than confirmed due to the nature of the incident.

Our Environment Principle



15 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

501 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded throughout 2025-26, a 65% increase from 304 recorded during 2024-25.



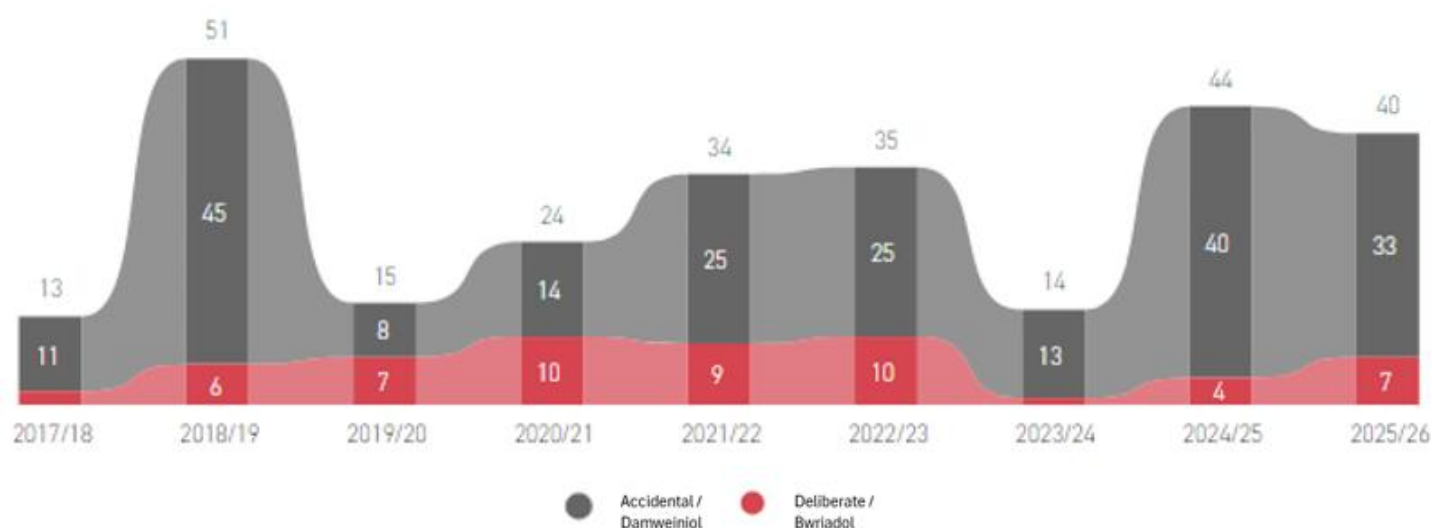
Throughout 2025-26, the largest number of Grassland fires were recorded in Q1, with 254 (50.7%) of the total recorded for the year occurring in this period.

16 Wildfires

The total number of wildfires reduced from 44 in 2024–25 to **40** in 2025–26, representing a decrease of 9%. Accidental wildfires declined from 40 to 33 incidents over the same period (a reduction of 18%).

However, the number of deliberate wildfires increased from four to seven incidents. As a result, deliberate fires represented a significantly greater proportion of all wildfires, increasing from around one in ten incidents in 2024–25 to almost one in five in 2025–26. This change indicates a shift in the profile of wildfire causes, despite the overall reduction in incident numbers.

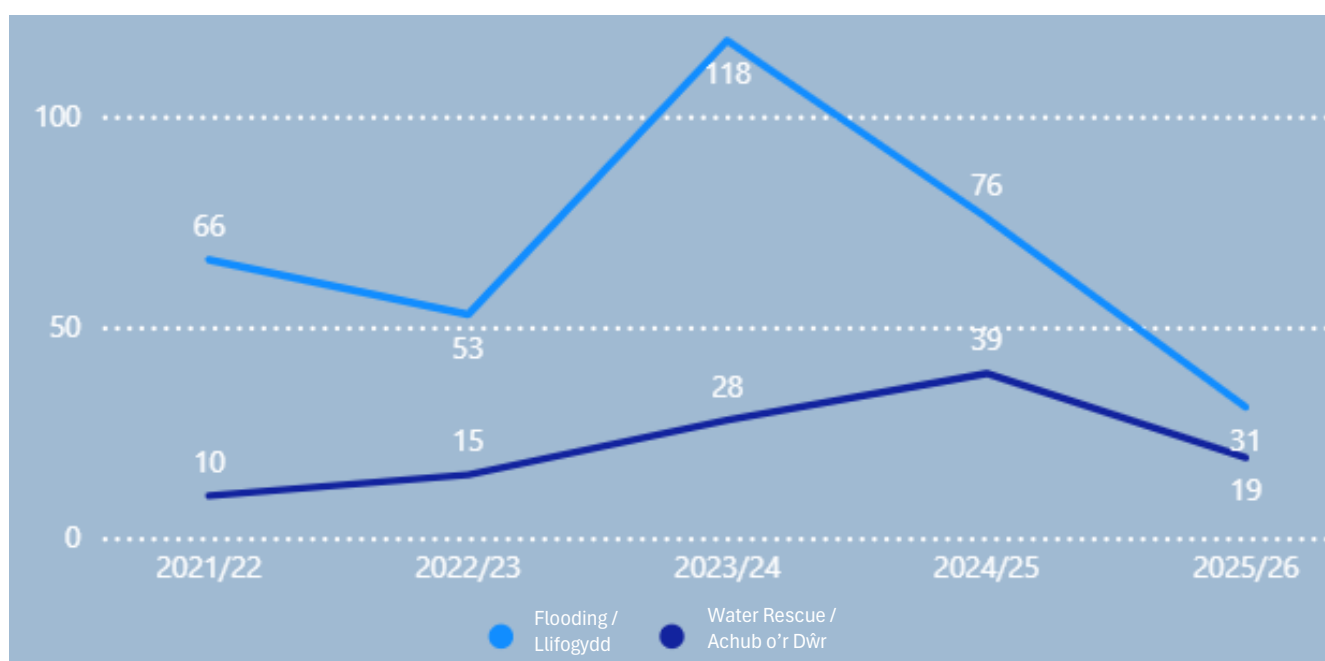
It should be noted that the definition and operational parameters used to classify wildfires have evolved over the period presented. To ensure consistency and enable meaningful comparison over time, the figures shown in this report have been calculated in line with the current definition of a wildfire, with historic data retrospectively re-analysed and aligned to these parameters.



17 Flooding

A clear reduction in flooding and water rescue incidents was seen in 2025–26 compared to recent years. Flooding incidents decreased markedly from 76 in 2024–25 to **31** in 2025–26, representing a reduction of almost 60%. This follows a peak in flooding activity in 2023–24, when 118 incidents were recorded, and continues the downward trend evident since that point.

Water rescue incidents also reduced in 2025–26, falling from 39 to 19 incidents compared with 2024–25, a decrease of just over 50 per cent. This reduction follows a period of sustained increase between 2021–22 and 2024–25.



Glossary

Fires	All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.
Primary Fires	These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc. Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involved casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.
Secondary Fires	Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires. Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances. Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc.
Chimney Fires	These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself. Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.
Special Service Incidents	These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include: a) Local emergencies e.g., flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc; b) Major disasters; c) Domestic incidents e.g., water leaks, persons locked in or out etc; d) Prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.
False Alarm (general guidance)	Where the FRS attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed. Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having been attended and does not need to be reported.
False Alarms - Malicious	These are calls made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

False Alarms – Good Intent	These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would attend a fire or special service incident.
False Alarms - AFA	These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm apparatus or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the FRS as part of a standing arrangement, i.e., with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.
Building - Dwellings	A property that is a place of residence, i.e., occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostel and residential non-permanent structures.
Building - Non-Residential	Properties such as hospitals, offices, shops, factories, warehouses, restaurants, cinemas, public buildings, religious buildings, agricultural buildings, railway stations, sheds, prisons.
Building - Other Residential	Properties such as hotels, hotels and residential institutions B&Bs, Nursing/care homes, student halls of residence.
Vehicle (Road and Other Transport)	Road vehicle, rail vehicle, aircraft, boat.
Outdoor	Fields, grassland, woodland, refuse containers, post boxes.
Wildfires	A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by 4 or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for 6 hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.
Short Term Sickness (STS)	Absences 27 calendar days and under.
Long Term Sickness (LTS)	Absences 28 calendar days and over.