

AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB GOGLEDD CYMRU



NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE PANEL** will be held
MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 14:00 hrs.
virtually **via Zoom**

Yours faithfully,
Gareth Owens
Clerk

AGENDA

1. Apologies

2. Declaration of Interests

3. Notice of Urgent Matters

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 June 2025

5. Matters Arising

6. Welsh Government Consultation regarding the Governance Arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales, for information

7. Annual Performance Assessment 2024-25, for endorsement

8. Performance Monitoring Report Q1 2025-26, for endorsement

9. Biodiversity Report and Plan, for endorsement and approval of publication

10. Urgent Matters

To consider any items which the Chair has decided are urgent (pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972) and of which substance has been declared under item 3 above.

PART II

It is recommended pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 12 to 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EXECUTIVE PANEL

Minutes of the **Executive Panel** of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Monday 16 June 2025, virtually via Zoom. Meeting commenced at 14.00hrs.

Councillor

Cllr Dylan Rees (Chair)
Cllr Paul Cunningham (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Carol Beard
Cllr Chris Hughes
Cllr John Ifan Jones
Cllr Paul Rogers
Cllr Gareth Sandilands
Cllr Dale Selvester
Cllr Antony Wren

Representing

Ynys Môn County Council
Flintshire County Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Anglesey County Council
Wrexham County Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Flintshire County Council

Also present:

Dawn Docx
Helen MacArthur
Justin Evans
Anthony Jones
Mike Plant

Llinos Evans
Dafydd Edwards
Gareth Owens
Dan Stephens
Marian Lloyd Rees
Lisa Allington

Chief Fire Officer
Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Area Manager - Performance, Planning
and Transformation
Head of Corporate Communications
Treasurer
Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser for Wales
Atebol - Translator
Executive Assistant

1.0 APOLOGIES

Councillor

Cllr Alan Hughes
Cllr Rondo Roberts

Representing

Denbighshire County Council
Wrexham County Council

ABSENT

Councillor

Cllr Gareth A Roberts

Representing

Gwynedd County Council

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3.0 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 CFO Docx submitted a notice to discuss the appointment of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer posts which would be a Part II item.

4.0 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2025

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025 were submitted for approval. A proposal was made that they were a true and accurate record of proceedings. This was seconded and passed with all in favour.

4.2 RESOLVED to:

- i) **approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.**

5.0 MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 Feedback was requested in relation to paragraph 6.8, item 3, whereby Members had stated that they would seek financial assistance from the Welsh Government (WG) in relation to the Independent Culture Review.
- 5.2 CFO Docx confirmed that North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) were working closely with WG on cultural improvement, and that WG had funded Grievance and Discipline training which had recently been delivered to the Service Leadership Team (SLT), Human Resources (HR) and Middle Leaders. The session had resulted in confirmation that the policies the Service had been using met all best practice standards which was very positive. It had been a very useful session that all concerned had benefitted from. The Service continued to work with WG in relation to additional assistance.

6.0 INDEPENDENT CULTURAL REVIEW INTO NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

- 6.1 The CFO advised that, in addition to the Strategic Improvement Plan, the Cultural Improvement Board had already commenced, and its membership included the Chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) and Cllr Sharon Doleman as the Member Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Champion, along with representatives from the Welsh Government. The WG were working with the Service to recruit an external person to also sit on the Cultural Board in order to provide independent challenge.
- 6.2 AM Mike Plant presented the update on the Independent Cultural Review into the Service and confirmed the next steps on the cultural journey of the Service.

- 6.3 A Member highlighted the challenges of building trust within the Service, asked if any external providers would be involved in this improvement journey, and if there were any accreditations that could be achieved as a result. The CFO confirmed that some work with external providers had taken place in the past and negotiations were in place for an independent person to sit on the Cultural Board. The Unions were also involved in every possible aspect of this cultural journey.

6.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) **Note the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan, and**
- ii) **endorse the next steps on the cultural journey of NWFRS.**

7.0 CHIEF FIRE AND RESCUE ADVISOR AND INSPECTOR FOR WALES - INSPECTION REPORT

- 7.1 ACFO Anthony Jones presented to Members the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor and Inspector for Wales (CFRAIW)'s Inspection Report entitled 'Inspection of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to consider the effectiveness of its response to domestic dwelling fires'.
- 7.2 It was noted that the CFRAIW, Dan Stephens, had previously completed thematic inspections of operational effectiveness of South Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services in 2024, and published inspection reports in October 2024 and January 2025 respectively.
- 7.3 Dan Stephens was welcomed to the meeting and highlighted to Members that the inspection report was extensive and in parts, quite technical. The substantive issues had therefore been captured in the executive summary. The purpose of the inspection had been to establish how effective the Service was in its response to domestic dwelling fires and this incident type had been selected as it represented the highest volume life risk incident to which the Service responds and presented the greatest risk to firefighters, trapped occupants and their homes.
- 7.4 Members were briefed on the methodology behind the report, and noted that the findings were broadly similar to those of South Wales and Mid and West Wales.
- 7.5 Mr. Stephens advised that, had a graded judgement of performance been made using the HMICFRS grades applied in England, albeit not using an identical methodology, the performance of all three FRS's would have been assessed as inadequate. The underlying reason for this was that much of the of the structural firefighting training delivered by the Service reflected tactics partially introduced in the late 1990s, several of which were not scientifically proven at the time or designed for use within the UK.

- 7.6 This situation had been compounded in North Wales by the withdrawal of legacy Service Operational Policy and Procedure Orders and their replacement with Aide Memoirs as a precursor to the full implementation of National Operational Guidance. This had been done for the right reasons, but the Service faced some significant resourcing challenges particularly with Supervisory and Middle Manager roles in functional areas, making it very difficult to keep pace with the demands of risk critical issues such as the implementation of National Operational Guidance.
- 7.7 Mr. Stephens noted that a substantial and sustained increase in training would be required for firefighters, but that this could not be at the expense of risk reduction activity such as home safety visits. He had written to the Cabinet Secretary setting out his concerns in that regard.
- 7.8 In conclusion, the CFRAIW stressed that the observations made in his report were not intended to be, and should not be taken as, a criticism of the Service's firefighters, Officers or their training instructors. The levels of engagement with all staff throughout the inspection had been excellent and all involved had been very receptive to the adoption of evidence-based tactics and enhancements to the operational assurance process.
- 7.9 A Member asked if the Service was confident that the recommendations could be met within the stipulated timeframe, and ACFO Jones responded that work in this area had already commenced; however, availability of resources was a significant challenge and posed a real concern.
- 7.10 A Member wondered if the Fire Service College being privatised had contributed to the issues highlighted, and Mr. Stephens responded that whilst it had not helped, ultimately it was within the gift of the three Welsh fire and rescue services to collaborate and develop both policy and training. It was fundamental that the right training facilities be made available to do this and this should be progressed as a priority, and Mr. Stephens commended CFO Docx for her commitment to provide a first-class training facility for North Wales. He urged Members to fully support the CFO in her ambition to deliver the most effective structural firefighting training facilities in the UK.
- 7.11 It was asked if the CFRAIW was happy with the timescale for the development of the training centre, and whether he was able to become involved himself in its development. Mr. Stephens responded that in terms of the fast-time actions, steps were being taken to address those, such as developing policy, which was both necessary and positive. Assistance had been provided in that regard and would continue to be. He recognised that any capital project took a substantial investment in time, resources and money and could not happen quickly, although he had no doubt that the Training Centre would be delivered. Any financial support by way of capital that the WG could make available to the Authority, and there was a very strong case for the Authority to have that training centre, would be fully supported by the CFRAIW.

7.12 The Chair asked if he had understood correctly that the resources required by the Service were around middle management and the CFRAIW confirmed that it was. The number of established Station and Group Manager roles in the Service was driven by the minimum numbers necessary to populate the operational cover rota. This was not the same as the numbers required to meet the organisational workload. Whilst resourcing was outside the scope of the inspection, the limited managerial resource available to the CFO was undoubtedly a challenge. That said, there was clearly a limit to the amount of funding that could be levied to the local authorities.

7.13 The CFO thanked Mr. Stephens for his in-depth work in this area. Having him conduct an independent review had been extremely helpful and was a clear statement that although hard work and willingness to deliver within the Service was second to none, what was possible to achieve within the timescale provided was a challenge.

7.14 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the content of the report; and**
- ii) note that the action plan has been put in place to consider the recommendations of the CFRAIW's inspection.**

8.0 PERFORMANCE MONITORING, APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025

8.1 ACFO Anthony Jones presented the Performance Monitoring Report for April 2024 to March 2025. Members were advised that this report provided comparative data relating to the Authority's 'Our 5 Principles for keeping communities safe' for the 2024/25 financial year. The report also contains commentary on activity and proposed activity associated with the principles.

8.2 The detail contained within the report in relation to sickness absence and automatic fire alarms was highlighted.

8.3 Members felt that overall, the prevention work being carried out was positive; however, the Chair noted that the HMICFRS had recently highlighted an issue in Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service where there had been a backlog of 7000 home safety visits. One of those people waiting for a visit had subsequently died in a fire. He noted that the Performance Monitoring Report stated that the completion rate for high priority safe and well checks had declined due to a combination of operational and strategic factors. He asked what the percentage for carrying out safe and well checks within target was for the Service.

- 8.4 ACFO Jones responded that many vulnerable people were referred from partner agencies and these referrals were then assessed and prioritised based on those most in need of support. A significant increase in the number of agency referrals had been experienced by the Service in 2024 resulting in a backlog of high priority referrals which posed a risk both to the individual concerned and the Service. Steps had been taken to deal with this backlog, and to improve the quality and appropriateness of referrals which had in turn fostered stronger relationships with partner agencies.
- 8.5 ACFO Jones confirmed that the exact data in terms of percentages was not to hand, however a performance dashboard had been developed to prioritise safe and well checks for the most vulnerable, and the need to improve response times to carry out checks for those at most risk was a priority for 2025-26 in relation to prevention activities.
- 8.6 The Chair requested that month by month percentage data be included within future reports so that this area could be more closely monitored by Members.
- 8.7 A Member asked if preventative measures in relation to educational activity were targeted around antisocial behaviour, and how the data within the report compared UK-wide. ACFO Jones responded that, in relation to engagement with young people, an intensive programme of targeted school visits was carried out alongside the delivery of Phoenix programmes, targeted to work in collaboration with schools to help some of the more challenging young people. Fire safe sessions were also delivered through Dangerpoint and were specifically designed to work with young people who were demonstrating early indications of fire setting activities.
- 8.8 Thanks were given to the CFO, ACFO Jones and other representatives from the Service for their attendance at the Prestatyn Pride event held last weekend.
- 8.9 A Member praised the work of the Phoenix course and felt that they should be commended for the exemplary work carried out by them. It was also asked if there were any plans to extend the cadet scheme. ACFO Jones responded that the cadet programmes were a valuable part of youth experience and there had been many occasions where these youngsters had gone on to work for the fire service. However, the cadet courses were run by volunteers and so there were challenges in finding people able to commit to the time required to run a cadet course.

- 8.10 Members were pleased to note that the numbers of RDS availability appeared to have increased slightly during the day. However, there remained one RDS station that had been off the run for over 12-months, and it was asked what could be done to rectify this. ACFO Jones responded that the response team had reorganised their structure to help focus on those areas of most challenge which had resulted in an incremental increase in weekday availability. The challenge was that once a firefighter left, it took a couple of years to replace them with someone trained to a similar level of skill and competency. This was a national issue for on-call services, and recruitment and retention were a constant challenge that was being worked on continually.
- 8.11 The Treasurer noted the increase in false alarm incidents and wondered if there were plans in place to address this further. He also noted that wildfires were at their highest level. ACFO Jones responded that there was often an increase in wildfires when the weather had been particularly dry during the controlled burning season. However, the Service's ability to respond had been positive. In relation to false alarms, the Service was seeing the biggest increase in relation to domestic dwellings and partnership working was being targeted to mitigate the response challenge that this created.
- 8.12 RESOLVED to:**
- i) Note the content of the Performance Monitoring Report; and**
 - ii) Request that data be included in future reports on how many high priority safe and well checks are being completed within the 28-day target.**

9.0 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 ACFO Anthony Jones delivered the Strategic Risk Management paper which provided Members with an update in relation to the Risk Appetite Statement and an overview of the Authority's Strategic Risk Register.
- 9.2 It was asked if the risks highlighted in the CFRAIW report needed to be included within the Risk Register, and ACFO Jones responded that they were already included within the Departmental Risk Registers rather than being strategic risks.

9.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) note the Strategic Risk Register.**

10.0 URGENT MATTERS – PART II

- 10.1 As notified at the commencement of the meeting, a Part II item was put forward for discussion by the CFO in relation to the recruitment of two ACFO posts to the Service.

- 10.2 Members were advised that the Service had recently advertised two ACFO posts, both locally and nationally, and a number of applications had been received both internally and externally which was pleasing as it meant that the Service remained an attractive place to work. Longlist interviews were being undertaken on 17 June 2025, with shortlist interviews to be held on 27 June 2025.
- 10.3 The CFO advised that panel members were required for the shortlist interviews and that these had to be Members from the Executive Panel. Representatives from Anglesey, Flintshire and Conwy had already been secured, but representatives from Wrexham, Gwynedd and Denbighshire were still required. If any Members from these local authorities were available on 27 June 2025, and were able to attend Headquarters in person, they were asked to advise Members Services at the earliest. It was stressed how important these appointments were for the Service and that there was a need to make the right choices.
- 10.4 A Member asked if there was a process in place for checking the social media accounts for candidates, and the CFO responded that whilst references were always taken up, social media had not been checked in the past. However, it was recognised that these were high profile posts and that people needed to have confidence in their leaders so the legalities of looking into it on this occasion would be explored.
- 10.5 A Member asked how involved the Unions would be in the process, and the CFO responded that the media assessment and psychometric testing was in place and that she would work out how the views of employees could be represented.

Meeting closed: 15:35 hrs

Report to	Executive Panel
Date	15 September 2025
Lead Officer	Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Dawn Docx
Subject	Welsh Government Consultation regarding the Governance Arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To bring to Members' attention the publication of a public consultation around future Governance Arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in Wales.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Note the contents of the consultation; and**
 - ii) **Agree to attend a workshop to scrutinise the proposals and submit a response drafted on behalf of the Authority, setting out Members' views regarding the proposals.**

BACKGROUND

- 3 The existing governance arrangements for FRS in Wales were established through the three Combination Orders in 1996. These established the current Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) and the pooled funding mechanism via a levy from each constituent Local Authorities.
- 4 In 2018 Welsh Government (WG) published a white paper entitled "Reform of Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales" Some Members will recall that after a period of consultation it was decided to progress only the proposals around funding, but these did not come to fruition due to the pandemic in 2020.
- 5 In 2024 WG intervened in South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) and replaced the FRA with Commissioners. In that same year Audit Wales undertook a review into governance arrangements of the FRS in Wales. In response to these two events WG has been considering options for change and have recently published some new proposals around FRS governance in Wales.

INFORMATION

- 6 The 12-week consultation was planned to be carried out over the summer, but with a delayed publication date this period will now extend into the Autumn.
- 7 The Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning has engaged with the Chairs, Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) and Trade Unions by means of the Social Partnership Forum (SPF) where, as one might expect, there were a variety of opinions about the proposals. The Cabinet Secretary reminded members that the proposals in the paper covered changes that could be introduced now, within this Senedd term, rather than options that would require primary legislation in the next Senedd term.
- 8 The proposals are set out around three themes:
 - a) The Membership of FRAs or Boards.
 - b) Funding
 - c) Inspection of FRSs
- 9 The consultation started on the 29 August 2025, and it was shared with all public bodies in Wales - [Reform of fire and rescue authorities in Wales 2025 | GOV.WALES](#)
- 10 It is proposed that a workshop should be held with Members to determine their views and to formulate their response to the consultation.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This paper presents proposals which seek to improve governance arrangements around FRSs in Wales.
Budget	The mechanisms for agreeing the budget for FRSs may cause a reduction in funding.
Legal	These proposals can be actioned within the current combination orders and do not require primary legislation.
Staffing	Any budget reductions could have staffing implications.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	N/A
Risks	The reduction of members appointed by local authorities could reduce the local scrutiny of FRSs.

Report to	Executive Panel
Date	15 September 2025
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Mike Plant, Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation
Subject	Annual Performance Assessment 2024/25



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to Members of the Executive Panel the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for 2024/25.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is required under section 15 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to publish an assessment of its performance. The assessment should be undertaken on an annual basis and published by 31 October each year. In addition, Schedule 1 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 requires an annual report showing how the Authority has progressed against its well-being objectives.
- 3 The Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for the period 2024-2029 and the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 24/25 were approved on 15 July 2024 and focus on the five key principles of prevention, protection, response, people and environment.
- 4 The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) sets out the Authority's objectives for each financial year, including how it will fulfil its obligations under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- 5 The APA is contained within Appendix 1 of this report, providing an overview of activity for the full year and confirming progress against the Authority's stated objectives.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Note and endorse the contents of the Annual Performance Assessment for the period 2024/25 for approval by the Authority.**

BACKGROUND

- 7 The Authority approved its CRMP 2024-2029 at its meeting of 15 July 2004. The CRMIP for 2024/25 sets out the planned improvements and objectives against which the Annual Performance Assessment is undertaken.
- 8 Whilst the regulations are not prescriptive on the form and content of the performance assessment, for consistency in reporting and accountability the following approach has been adopted:
 - Evidence of the processes that the Authority has followed to discharge its general duty to improve as expressed in its improvement plan;
 - A summary of the Authority's assessment of its achievement against the improvement objectives;
 - A statement of performance as measured by all statutory Performance Indicators;
 - Details of other performance information and its use, including the results of peer review, any assessments made by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and other sources of qualitative information including benchmarking data;
 - An assessment of performance by comparison with the Authority's performance in previous years and with other comparable bodies (including other Fire and Rescue Authorities) so far as this is reasonably practicable;
 - Details of the ways in which the Authority has exercised its powers of collaboration during the reporting year including details of whether a collaborative activity has achieved its intended outcomes; and
 - Any statements of activity that the Authority has issued as a result of any reports issued under Section 19 of the Measure received from the Auditor General for Wales in that reporting year.

INFORMATION

- 9 The draft APA for 2024/25 is set out in Appendix 1. This provides an overview of the resource available to the Authority to deliver its services including 44 operational stations, 54 fire appliances and 949 personnel.

- 10 During 2024/25 a total of 14,535 emergency calls were received resulting in 6,489 incidents being attended. Notably this included 1,804 fires, 3,264 false alarms and 1,421 non-fire emergencies including road traffic collisions. In addition, the Service carried out 20,021 safe and well checks in homes across North Wales as part of our commitment to keeping the communities safe.
- 11 The report contains a progress update against each of the five principles set out in the CRMIP.
- 12 The Authority is a signatory to the All Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter which provide a framework for improving safety in the home to reduce the number and impact of domestic dwelling fires. Where fires do occur, the charter promotes an effective and professional response.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The publication of the APA is a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Budget	The CRMIP underpins the budget setting process and aligns to departmental plans.
Legal	The publication of the APA is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Staffing	Our People Principle aims to support the development and maintenance of a highly skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The APA will be published in English and Welsh.
Risks	The CRMIP outlines who we support and addresses the risks faced by our communities.



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Annual Performance Assessment 2024–25

Published Autumn 2025

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

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Welcome to the first annual review of our 5-year Community Risk Management Plan.

This Annual Performance Assessment reflects on our progress during 2024-25, the first year of delivering our new five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-29. It marks an important milestone as we continue our journey towards making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit, while ensuring that our Service reflects the diverse communities we serve.

This has been a year of both progress and change. Alongside increasing operational demands and the challenges posed by wildfires, severe weather events, and modernising our infrastructure, we have placed greater emphasis on building an inclusive, supportive, and engaged workforce. Through new forums and initiatives, we are giving staff more opportunities to share their views, shape our culture, and ensure our values are at the heart of everything we do.

During 2024-25, we completed 20,021 Safe and Well Checks — exceeding our target and helping protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. Working closely with the NHS, local authorities, and voluntary organisations, we have strengthened our ability to identify those at greatest risk and provide targeted prevention and safety support where it is needed most.

We have also made important progress in shaping our future. The Training and Development Centre Project continues to advance, with land secured and construction planned for completion in 2029. At the same time, our Fleet Decarbonisation Plan reflects our commitment to sustainability, introducing Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) to reduce emissions across our operations.

This year, we responded to 6,489 incidents, including 1,804 fires, and, sadly, recorded three fire-related fatalities. These figures remind us why our work — across prevention, protection, and emergency response — remains so vital.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any suggestions for improving our reporting. Our contact details can be found on the final page of this report.



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority



Chief Fire Officer



Fire Authority Chair

Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit

Legal Requirements For Reporting

The Authority considers public accountability and transparency to be of vital importance in all aspects of its relationships with local communities, partners, and organisations, and welcomes the opportunity to publish performance information.

Each year the Authority is required to publish an assessment of its performance in accordance with the legislation which can be found [here](#).

About North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

There are 28 elected members of the [North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority](#). The Service, led by the Chief Fire Officer, is made up of many different departments which all contribute to the running of the fire service. More information about how the service operates can be found [here](#).

About North Wales

Knowing about North Wales today helps the Authority plan to make positive changes for the future. Information about the area which the Service helps protect can be found [here](#).



Resources and Activity

Below is a summary of activity levels during 2024-25.

Fire Stations	Front Line Fire Engines	999 Calls Handled	Fire Service Staff (as on 31 March 2025)
 44	 53	 14,535	 949 (headcount)
Emergency Incidents Attended	Fires	False Alarms	Non-Fire Emergencies
 6,489	 1,804	 3,264	 1,421

Incident data can be subject to minor change.

Staffing

At 31 March 2025	Full time equivalent strength	Headcount of individual staff
Wholetime Operational (WDS)	283.00	283
Retained Operational (RDS/on-call)	364.80	487
Corporate Services	144.08	148
Control	30.75	31
Totals	822.63	949

Please note the 949 headcount figure quoted above, equates to 887 people. This is due to individuals who are employed by the Service in more than one role or position. For example, a control operator could also work as an on-call firefighter.

Over half of the personnel employed by the Authority are categorised as on-call firefighters.

What is Expected of the Fire Authority

Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales

Fire Prevention	must arrange for fire safety to be promoted in their area. This would include informing people about fire prevention and advising them how best to react if a fire does break out.
Fire Safety Enforcement	have a duty to enforce fire safety in non-domestic premises, for example, hotels, schools, shops and offices. This duty includes exercising powers to issue alteration, enforcement and even prohibition notices if they find that fire safety arrangements in premises are unsatisfactory.
Emergency Response	must make arrangements for receiving 999 calls and for sending trained and equipped personnel to extinguish fires and protect life and property at those fires. They must also make arrangements for rescuing people from road traffic collisions and for protecting them from serious harm.
Planning for and Responding to Other Emergencies	must make arrangements for the mass decontamination of people after chemical, biological or radio-active incidents, and for rescuing people from trains, aircrafts and collapsed buildings. They must also be prepared to assist with large-scale emergencies (including terrorist attacks) elsewhere in the UK. As 'Category 1' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act, fire and rescue authorities also have duties relating to large-scale events that threaten serious damage to the welfare of people, wildlife, the environment and primary supply chains.
Flooding and Inland Water Emergencies	must make arrangements to respond to incidents of flooding or water rescue which pose a direct threat of death or injury.
Equalities	must work towards eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with different protected characteristics.
Welsh Language	treat the Welsh and English languages equally, promoting the use of Welsh and complying with defined Welsh language standards.
Continuous Improvement	must set objectives continuously to improve what they do and publish information about their improvement and performance.
Future Planning	must work towards improving people's social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being, as well as working in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the needs of future generations.

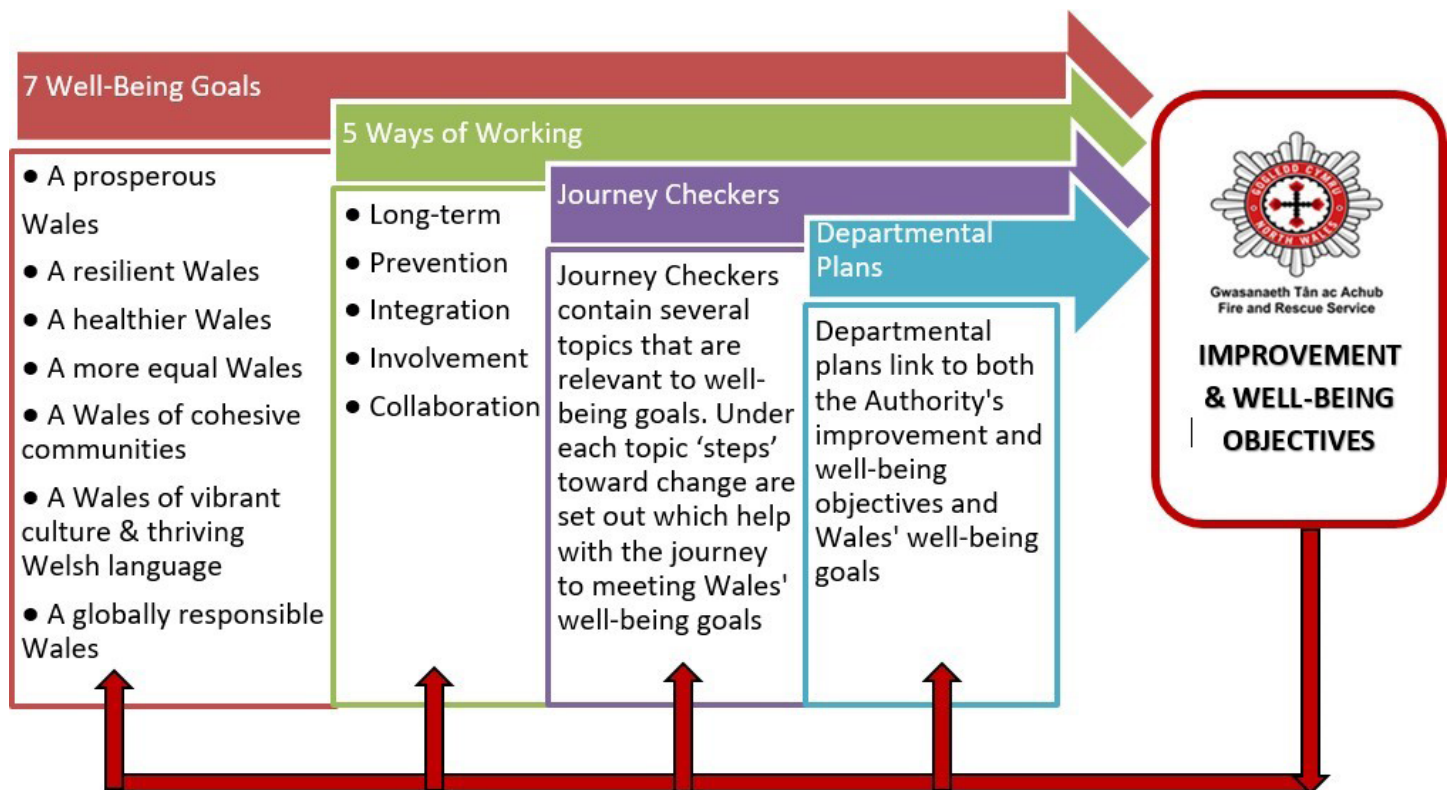
You can read more about our statutory obligations [here](#).

Progress Against Improvement and Well-being Objectives

This section describes the progress the Authority made towards meeting its long-term improvement and well-being objectives during 2024-25. The Authority is required to publish this assessment of its own performance for 2024-25, and the statutory performance indicators for the same year, by 31 October 2025.

In April 2021 the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) approved the 'Community Risk Management Planning' (CRMP) as a [Fire Standard](#) for English Fire and Rescue Services. Although Fire and Rescue Services are devolved to Welsh Government, all Fire and Rescue Services within Wales have adopted the NFCC guidelines to publish a CRMP.

The Authority have incorporated the NFCC recommendations into its annual reporting cycle, and have updated its previous long-term plan with a new five-year [Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29](#). The Authority's new Five Principles have replaced the existing seven long term improvement and well-being objectives.



During 2024-25, work was undertaken to ensure the well-being objectives were embedded throughout all departmental plans where applicable.

The [Annual Governance Statement for 2024-25](#) provides an overview of the governance arrangements as well as confirming a work plan for 2025-26.

Once approved and published, performance against the forward work plan will be monitored through the Service Leadership Team's Performance Board.



People Principle

Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.

Ensuring a highly skilled workforce by recruiting, developing and retaining a motivated and bilingual workforce that represents and champions the diversity of the communities we serve.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A Wales
of vibrant
culture and
thriving
Welsh
language



A more equal
Wales



A prosperous
Wales

Achievements in 2024–25

Action 1: Implement the recommendations for improvement following the 2023 Fire Family Staff Survey.

A Fire Family Staff Survey Project Group was established with the purpose of identifying opportunities to form part of an action plan for improvement, following feedback received.

This group, made up of staff from across the Service, reported on a regular basis to the Service Leadership Team.

An action plan is in progress and is communicated to all staff on a regular basis.

Activities completed so far include:

- Introduction of wearing 'role indicators' as part of the operational uniform.
- The preparation of a new engagement area on the intranet.
- Adjustments to the annual award ceremony.
- Engagement activities with crew manager workstreams.
- New 'Shine a Light' feature in the internal Service newsletter, where colleagues can recognise the work of their peers.

Work continues to set up plans for the future of the group, and new members, in preparation for the next staff survey due Autumn 2025.

Action 2: Adopt the new All Wales Fire and Rescue Service People and Organisational Development Strategy for 2025–2030 that will provide a framework for innovative thinking and working to support continued collaboration and partnership.

The final version of the People and Organisational Development strategy has been approved by the All-Wales Group. Objectives agreed between the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services included:

- Workforce planning
- Culture and Inclusion
- Health and Well-being
- Innovation and Technology
- Future Leaders

The draft version has been sent to the Assistant Chief Fire Officers for their comments.

Action 3: Introduce a new ‘Staff Culture Engagement Forum: Empowering Culture in our Service’ – to continually evolve and develop our cultural journey.

The workplace culture has been the focus of many of our activities recently, with several key initiatives taking place across the Service, as well as heightened external scrutiny.

During July, the Service, along with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, jointly appointed Crest Advisory to facilitate an independent cultural review.

Alongside this external review, volunteers were sought to participate in a new Staff Cultural Engagement Forum, to actively be part of the cultural improvement journey within the Service, to assist with identifying and implementing improvement plans that align with our core values and help to cultivate and facilitate an inclusive, supportive and effective working environment.

There was a great response to this appeal, which enabled the forum to be represented by a wide selection of staff from across different departments, stations and functions.

The Forum established strong links with the Fire Family Staff Survey Project Group and reported directly to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee, to ensure every decision made by the Service was rooted in accountability and transparency, with a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

The Forum also worked alongside the Transformation Team, other departments, and representative bodies to choose areas of focus and to identify matters that need raising to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee.

Following the publication of the report from Crest Advisory, a cultural board was set up which is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer. Going forward, it will work closely with staff networks, Staff Engagement Groups, the Fire Family Staff Survey Project Group, as well as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee. The goal to ensure the process is as collaborative and inclusive as possible, where everyone has a voice in shaping the future of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Action 4: Provide excellent occupational health and welfare support to ensure that Attendance Management within the Service is a positive and supportive process in order to improve attendance.

A tender process was undertaken during the year to acquire the provision of services of a new occupational Health provider. Notification was issued to all employees about the transfer of health information records from the existing provider to the new, successful company.

Additional HR support was put in place for a short period of time, to minimise any impact and address any decisions that would typically be covered by an occupational health referral.

HR specialists undertook regular station visits, Siop Siarad sessions, Online Training, and meetings to ensure all employees continued to be supported during the transition period.

Work is ongoing with the Health, Fitness, and Well-being team to ensure a comprehensive suite of support is available to all staff. This includes networking with outside organisations such as Mind, the Firefighters Charity, 2 Wish, and other blue light services such as North Wales Police. A new short guide has been created for staff and line managers to utilise following the outcome of the cultural review, as well as video packages produced with the help of Corporate Communications.

Action 5: Ensure a safe and competent workforce through efficient and effective development, maintenance and circulation of operational policies and procedures.

Work with Policies and Procedures continues with six policy suites being authorised to move forward to either consultation or publication at each six-weekly formal meeting of the Service Leadership Team. A further department has engaged in a brand-new policy proposal, while the two departments with the largest set of policy suites (Human Resources, and Finance and Procurement) are close to the completion of their full set of documents. In terms of strategy, timelines are now being established early in the policy development process via the dedicated Process Guide; this involves the identification of a formal Service Leadership Team meeting as a target to approve a policy suite for consultation and is proving successful in focusing the policy owner to undertake in a timely manner.

Work continues with the ICT Department to make the policy interface on the internal H&Wb more user-friendly. Equally, the Welsh language policy area has been populated with the documents that have been returned by the translation service, these now all being on the latest template and in the correct format, ready for proof-reading.

Action 6: Ensure that all relevant operational risk information is collated, recorded, impact assessed and communicated to operational personnel.

Personnel from the Service chaired and attended the 'Renewable Energy Working Group' branch of the North Wales Local Resilience Forum. The purpose of this group is to identify new and existing high-risk sites within the North Wales area. An extraordinary meeting was organised to provide a formal consultation response to a Battery Energy and Storage System site in the Gwynedd area.

Operational risk visits were undertaken as planned and a review of the Port of Holyhead is currently ongoing.

Action 7: Provide opportunities for learning Welsh and promote activities in line with our commitment to being a bilingual organisation.

In November, members of the Fire Service attended a 'Promoting Bilingualism within the Service' conference, which was organised by North Wales Police. The event, which was aimed at encouraging bilingual practices in both public and private sectors, gave an exciting array of discussions, strategies, and case studies showcasing the successful integration of Welsh into the workplace, media, education, and community life.

To improve and help identify Safe and Well Checks completed in Welsh, a new question specific to Welsh language choice was added to the online Safe and Well Check referral form.

The annual Welsh Language Standards monitoring report was approved by Fire Authority members at the meeting on the 21 October 2024 and is available to view [here](#).

We serve a bilingual community, and our one Service operates in two languages, giving our residents the opportunity to work locally in their local language.

Action 8: Consult with key stakeholders to develop a design proposal for the new Training and Development Centre resulting in a final plan being submitted to the Fire Authority for approval.

The Training Centre project was established to respond to operational and financial risks associated with current training arrangements and to provide a fit-for-purpose facility that meets the long-term needs of the Service. The project began in 2022, and the land purchase was completed during October 2024.

At the Fire Authority Meeting on the [21 October 2024](#), the Authority were presented with 4 options to consider:

- Option 1: Maintain existing facilities with minor refurbishments.
- Option 2: Invest in upgrading existing facilities.
- Option 3: Develop a new centralised training centre to meet core training needs.
- Option 4: Develop a comprehensive multi-hazard, multi-agency training centre.

The Authority approved, in principle, option three, and were committed to maintaining the momentum of the development, with a focus on affordability and sustainable financing options.

It was identified that there will be a need for additional resources to support this project and job adverts will be advertised early next year for a Deputy Project Manager and a Project Support Officer.

It is envisaged that the build completion will be during 2029.

Action 9: Deliver the second year of a three-year operational training strategy to all operational staff.

The draft training plan for 2025-26 was reviewed and agreed, before being published on the Service Intranet.

Feedback received on courses undertaken in quarter one has been very positive, and feedback that highlighted areas for potential improvement have been shared with the appropriate manager for action.

Operational personnel have attended the Fire Service College to undertake:

- Breathing Apparatus Instructor Course
- RTC Instructor Course
- Compartment Fire Behaviour Techniques Instructor Course

These skills will improve service course delivery and flexibility within the team of Service instructors.

An audit of the current training strategy implementation has been undertaken by an external provider and the report have been provided to the Service. The report has given a substantial rating across several training areas and the overall performance of the Training and Development Department.

The audit report also highlighted a number of recommendations, and these will form part of the training departmental action plan for 2025-26.

Action 10: Cultivate a workplace environment that embraces equality, diversity and inclusion. This will strengthen our ability to deliver a high-quality service and support to the public during emergencies.

In advance of the service's Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29 consultation, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer produced an Equality Impact Assessment to identify different equality interest groups. 70 organisations and community groups were contacted during the initial communication to help promote the consultation and encourage people to provide feedback. In addition, 12 focus groups were organised to ensure the service captured feedback from different equality interest groups across North Wales. The offer of 'in person' sessions proved very effective, especially amongst people that don't speak Welsh or English as a first language, and people that are unable to submit feedback online because they either do not use or are unable to use the

internet and social media. The feedback captured helped the EDI Officer to create a comprehensive [Equality Impact Analysis Report](#) which offers assurance with regards to strategic direction, decision making and legal compliance.

In preparation for the service's wholetime firefighter recruitment campaign during June 2024, a range of positive action activities were organised, which involved 'experience days' and 'Firefit' sessions. The campaign set out to target people that are currently underrepresented in the workforce as a way of encouraging a wider and more diverse pool of people to apply for future firefighter roles.

Other activities included:

- Celebrating Windrush day in July, with an organised event at the Rhyl Community Fire Station.
- A Pastoral care session tailored for new trainee apprentice firefighters which took place in July.
- The first of the Women in the Fire Service's 'Walk and Talk' event during August.

The [Strategic Equality Action Plan 2023-24](#) was approved by Fire Authority members at the meeting on the 20 January 2025.

Action 11: Improve the health, fitness and well-being of staff through the provision of advice and information, active monitoring and education.

The Service recognises that it exposes its staff to both physically and mentally stressful situations and supporting them is key to ensuring a safe and healthy workforce. Therefore, a dedicated Health, Fitness and Well-being team work to support staff by promoting healthy lifestyle choices, and by providing advice and support across the domains of well-being.

Following the appointment of the new occupational health provider, meetings were held to share good practice and discuss the possibility of testing a new referral and return to work process.

Discussions were also held regarding the process for when operational staff fail their annual fitness tests. As a result, Occupational Health staff will now implement a scoring system which will ensure appropriate action is taken, allowing quicker intervention where necessary.

The team also work closely with the Human Resources department to reduce periods of sickness due to mental health related illness and to assist those employees who have been off work with mental health issues to aid in their return to work.

Attendance at the Blue Light Mental Health Symposium in January focused on culture, family support and suicide prevention. The keynote speaker shared some useful tools that the Service are now looking to adopt, including a family support toolkit as used by the Ambulance Service, a Hope Programme Online Learning Tool, and the Firefighters Charity Suicide Guide.

Public Services students at Coleg Menai in Llangefni were given a taste of our fitness testing and wellbeing consultation process as part of their assignment work. Many of the students expressed a keen interest in joining the service and some individuals have

confirmed that they will be applying for retained firefighter roles at nearby stations. This was a great opportunity to work within our community to offer health advice, show the standards within our service and promote recruitment.

Other completed actions included:

- Hosting an Older Persons Suicide Prevention Workshop at Rhyl Community Fire Station.
- Organising an internal competition promoting physical activity across the Service.
- Attendance at community engagement events at Porthmadog, Dolgellau and Rhyl fire stations during December offering free blood pressure checks and advice on health and well-being.

Action 12: Review the career progression promotion gateways and implement a comprehensive appraisal process integrating 360-degree feedback.

The requirement for a 360-feedback appraisal process has been thoroughly explored during the year. This will enable staff to identify their strengths and any areas for improvement, leading to enhanced self-awareness, as well as promoting transiency and improving employee retention.

An extensive period of research was undertaken, looking to other Fire and Rescue Services for examples of best practice, and then meeting with a short list of potential suppliers to show case their products and talk through the benefits it would bring to the Service.

Following a comparison of product ability and costings, a decision was made to purchase and proceed with the Appraisal360 software. Further meetings were held with Appraisal360 to progress the implementation of their system, and to ensure they are on a procurement framework.

The 360-software platform is now ready to be rolled out to members of the Service Leadership Team in line with the original plan.

Action 13: Prevention staff will receive training and awareness in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Modern Slavery, Child Exploitation and Domestic Violence to provide a more effective service to the communities we serve.

Training sessions continued each month to continuously develop knowledge within the Fire Safety Prevention teams.

Topics included:

- Organised Crime Groups and County Lines
- What is Neurodiversity?
- Solo Protect Training
- Females addicted to Gambling

Mandatory '[Ask and Act](#)' training sessions were undertaken in line with Welsh Government guidelines. This must be completed by all members of staff every two years.

Action 14: Business Fire Safety Staff and Operational Firefighters will be trained in accordance with the National Fire Chief's Council Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators working towards registration within the Contextualised Auditor's Register.

A number of Operational Firefighting staff have undertaken Skills for Justice level 2 qualifications, whilst Business Fire staff have undertaken a mix of qualifications to gain the Level 3 Certificate, the Level 4 Certificate, and the Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety.

There are a number of modules that personnel have completed in relation to these qualifications which includes Building Regulations, and Legal Training for the Diploma.

A member of staff is currently working towards the Fire Engineering Technician qualification, which is a Level 5 qualification.

A number of Continual Professional Development courses have also been provided to ensure continual learning and commitment to the development of staff in the Protection environment.

Notably following Grenfell, fire doors have become an even greater topic than they were before due to those failings, therefore, all staff completed a fire door inspection course.

A number of staff have also completed the Health Technical Memoranda course, which is in relation to the auditing of Healthcare sites, and this was completed in collaboration with South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

This training is continual to comply with the National Fire Chiefs Council Competency Framework, specifically the Continual Professional Development aspect of that framework.

Action 15: Operational staff will receive relevant training and qualifications to enable them to undertake business safety checks in line with nationally agreed guidelines.

A Meeting was held in Mid Wales for the All-Wales Fire Safety working groups. This was to ensure continuity across Wales for the audit process for operational crews.

Developments have been made to the Fire Safety database system to ensure the input of information is easier for operational crews to complete and therefore being recorded more accurately.

A training package was developed and rolled out across operational staff on how to complete the new 'Short Business Audit Form'.

A Fire Safety door inspection course was provided by an external provider, which gave valuable insight into good and bad examples of fire doors.

One of the Business Fire Compliance Officers successfully completed their Level 4 Diploma (Fire inspectors) qualification.

A training plan has already been developed for next year, to ensure training can be progressed as soon as the year 2025-26 begins.

Action 16: Identify and maximise potential through effective people management and development, leading to a high-performance culture, where people value and respect each other.

Staff took part in the National Fire Chief's Council Middle Leader Programme. This included sessions focusing on:

- The importance of self-awareness, personal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threat (SWOT) analysis, and Joharis window.
- Other Learning styles, such as the 70/20/10 model.
The 70-20-10 model is a framework for learning and development that suggests how individuals acquire new knowledge and skills. It proposes that 70% of learning comes from on-the-job experiences, 20% from social interactions, and 10% from formal training.
- What is inclusive, and role-modelling inclusive behaviours.
- The Shannon and Weaver model of communication
- Janet Starr's 4 levels of listening.

In January, the Service began to trial a new and inclusive approach to interviews for roles advertised both internally and externally. This initiative is part of our ongoing commitment to creating a supportive and equitable recruitment process for all candidates.

Key features of the new interview approach include:

- Relevant Reading Materials: Candidates invited to interviews will receive a link to no more than five key reading documents. These documents will have direct relevance to the interview questions, ensuring candidates are well-prepared and informed.
- Pre-Interview Preparation Time: on the day of the interview, candidates will be allocated a 30-minute period to review the questions and take notes. This will take place in a designated room with a member of staff present for support.
- Evaluation: a link to an online form will be sent to all applicants via email to collect feedback at the end of each recruitment campaign.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation governing workplace health and safety in Great Britain. Work related incidents and near misses are monitored through the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee. Whilst it is not currently mandatory, public bodies are encouraged to include a summary of their health and safety performance in their annual reports.

Health and Safety

Safety event reporting statistics during financial year 2024/25



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service



18% increase in accidents

289 safety events were reported between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, which compares with **307** in total for the comparable period in 23/24. This is a **6%** decrease.



103

Near Misses reported



47

injuries reported



34%

of injuries resulted in time off work



15

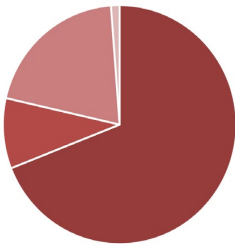
reports of White Fleet vehicle damage



73

reports of Red Fleet vehicle damage

Vehicle Accident Type



Forward: **79%**

Reverse: **11%**

Stationary: **10%**



Prevention Principle

Working with partners to help make communities safer.

Reducing risks to our communities, especially for those people who may be more vulnerable, through our established intervention programmes such as Safe and Well Checks and the Phoenix Project.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales

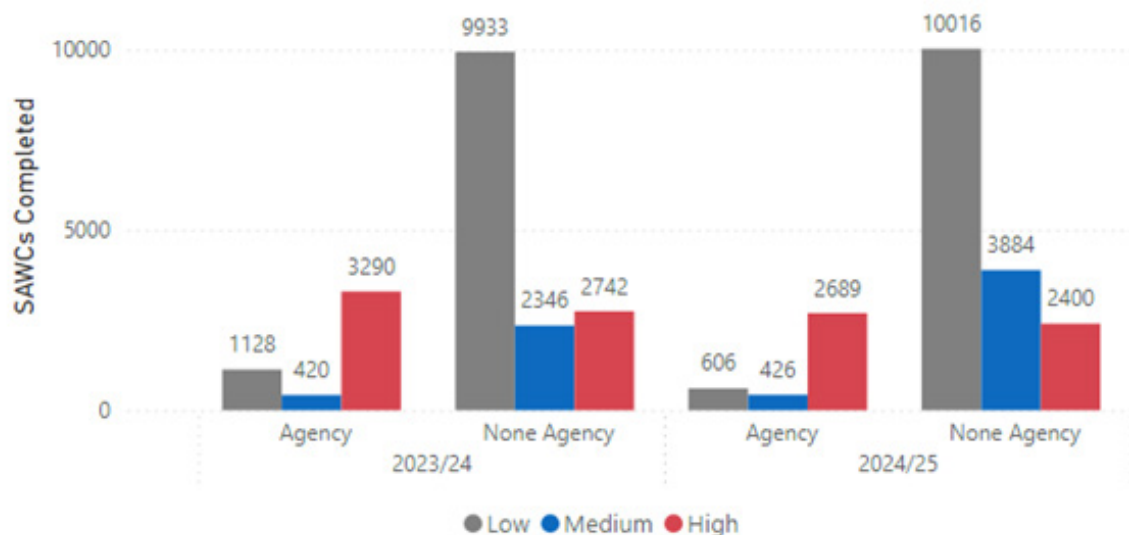
Achievements in 2024-25

Action 1: Deliver 17,500 Safe and Well Checks across North Wales to those identified as being most vulnerable to fire in the home, keeping people alive and safe from fire.

A total of 20,021 Safe and Well Checks were completed by the Service across the communities of North Wales, of which:

- **5,089** (25.4%) were High priority, with **2,689** (52.8% of high priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **4,310** (21.5%) were Medium priority, with **426** (9.9% of medium priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **10,622** (53.1%) were Low priority, with **606** (5.7% of low priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.

A total of **3,721** Safe and Well Checks completed were referred to the Service from an Agency, this equates to 18.6% of the total checks completed.



Action 2: Utilise partnership data to refine our risk-based approach to Safe and Well Checks, targeting those over the age of 65 who are most vulnerable from fire in the home.

A data sharing agreement with all three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales and the NHS has been completed, which allows the NHS to share data sets for people aged 65 and over with the Fire and Rescue Service in their area.

The performance analysts have used this data to create interactive dashboards and maps, which show areas where the most vulnerable people live in local communities. The performance analysts have adapted the maps to identify the following age groups:

- Aged 65 and over
- Aged 75 and over, and
- those aged 85 and over

Our wholetime and day crewed operational fire personnel undertake prevention activity using this information to target households where an occupier is aged 65 and over and may be at more risk from fire happening in the home.

Members of the Prevention Team have also been attending Wholetime Duty and Day Crewed Duty stations to join the duty Watches' daily prevention allocated activity. This will assist in the sharing of information and help promote best practice and has enabled quality assurance to take place on the standard of Safe and Well Checks, as well as on the information issued.

Personnel from the Fire Safety department visited Control operators and delivered a presentation on severe hoarding following a case they were involved with. In this case, the occupier was extremely isolated, embarrassed, and unwilling to engage with services. However, with patience and exceptional communication skills, they were able to build trust and rapport with the homeowner. Through this connection, the individual gradually allowed other agencies to step in, enabling a multi-agency approach to improve the situation. Control teams regularly receive vulnerable adult referrals, and this session provided valuable insight into the real-life challenges faced on the ground.

In this case, the occupier was extremely isolated, embarrassed, and unwilling to engage with services. However, with patience and exceptional communication skills,

they were able to build trust and rapport with the homeowner. Through this connection, the individual gradually allowed other agencies to step in, enabling a multi-agency approach to improve the situation.

Action 3: Work with our partners to deliver effective Community safety interventions targeting our most vulnerable people in our most challenging areas.

The Campaign Steering Group continued to meet monthly to prioritise fire prevention activities within the community. The Corporate Communications departments have promoted these campaigns across all social media platforms.

Prevention staff continued engagement sessions with external partners to help ensure we receive only the most targeted Safe and Well Check referrals.

Examples of partnership engagement included meeting with:

- The Community Mental Health Team located at Ysbyty Alltwn
- Adult Social Services
- Occupational Therapists
- Housing associations, and
- North Wales Police's project "Clear Hold Build" team.

The Service continued with its innovative collaboration with the British Red Cross. Volunteers use specially adapted vehicles, stocked with practical support items such as clothes, blankets, and hygiene packs, and can attend different kinds of emergency incidents to support people involved in crises such as domestic fires, floods or major incidents.

The Service has recently partnered with [Safelincs](#) to provide online advice and guidance to reduce risk of fire in the home. The Online Home Fire Safety Check has been developed with the support of all UK Fire and Rescue Services, and the National Fire Chiefs Council.

During January, Dŵr Cymru declared a major incident when a water main burst at their Bryn Cowlyd Water Treatment works. This affected the water supply to over 38,000 properties within the Conwy area. The Service joined a multi-agency response to help identify vulnerable people. Fire crews including those at Llandudno, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, and Abergelge, as well as staff from our Prevention department, were busy out in our communities, helping to deliver bottled water to those in need and assisting at the water pick up points designated by Dŵr Cymru.

Action 4: Develop a new youth initiative to deliver early interventions with effective outcomes, focusing on personal resilience and protective factors amongst the children and young people of North Wales.

Staff from the Prevention, and Phoenix teams have been working together with colleagues from Blue Watch, Rhyl on a two-day intervention course for Denbighshire Youth Services.

This two-day intervention course was provided for Denbighshire Youth Services as part of a six-week programme called 'SKITTLES'.

The course was hosted at Prestatyn, and Rhyl Fire Stations, with the programme aimed at individuals aged 16-18 years who are presented as homeless. The programme aims to engage young people in positive activities, empower them and encourage them to become more involved with their communities. It also looked to provide information, advice and guidance to the young people to help them make informed choices.

There were discussions about the consequences of actions, in particular anti-social behaviour, deliberate fire setting, and hoax calls, as well as talks about safety in the temporary accommodation they live in.

At the end of the six-week programme attendees will have learnt how to develop healthy relationships, achieved a qualification in food hygiene, and basic first aid, and learnt more about fire safety awareness, the consequences of actions and the role of the fire service.

Action 5: Proactively promote road safety education, engaging with partners and carrying out campaigns within the local community, to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

During April, a successful engagement and education day for motorcyclists was held at Corwen Fire Station. The Biker Brew event brought together representatives from Motorcycle Mental Health, North Wales ROSPA, Bloodbikes Wales, Bikesafe, and North Wales Police Road Traffic Motorcycle officers. The aim was to connect with motorcyclists and offer advice and information in an informal setting over a 'cup of tea / paned'.

All the agencies who attended said they had good engagement with those in attendance, and that they all benefitted.

In July, the Operation Ugain Team delivered educational roadside presentations to drivers exceeding the 20mph limit, and were joined by pupils from Ysgol Eifion Wyn in Porthmadog.

Deputy Head of Prevention said: "Data shows there has been a 32% drop in casualties on restricted roads in Wales since its introduction and separate evidence from insurers show a 20% fall in claims".

During August, a Biker Down course was held at Rhyl Fire Station, with Officers from North Wales Police's Roads Crime Unit in attendance to show their support. BikerDown is a free course teaching people how to keep an injured motorcyclist alive until an ambulance gets there should they arrive at the scene of a motorcycle collision. The workshop consists of three modules – managing the scene of the incident, casualty care, and rider skills.

During August, a partnership exercise was held at Colwyn Bay Fire Station as part of our work to help manage the emerging risk of electric or alternatively fuelled vehicles.

Staff from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service joined with colleagues from North Wales Police's investigation unit, officers from the Traffic department, and representatives from Flintshire County Council for an information sharing event.

Action 6: Work closely with external stakeholders to prevent accidental drowning in North Wales, providing consistent guidance for the safe enjoyment and management of activities in, on and around water.

Water safety events took place during April to mark National Drowning Prevention Day, along with members of the Cliff Rescue Coastguard, Mud Rescue Coastguard, and Canoe Wales. Three events were hosted at Llyn Tegid (Bala), Llyn Padarn (Llanberis), and Plas Madoc Leisure Centre (Wrexham).

The aim of all these events was to promote the water safety message, 'Float to Live', to help raise awareness of how people can help themselves if they were to struggle in water, and how to enjoy the water safely. Each of the three events featured a crewed water rescue boat on display and demonstrations on how to use a throw line and perform CPR.

The severe weather during December saw North Wales multi-agency responders working tirelessly to protect our communities and minimise the impact of Storm Darragh.

Representatives of the local resilience forum which includes emergency services, local councils, Natural Resources Wales, and other agencies and partners met regularly in the run up to and during the severe weather to coordinate the response.

With a rare red warning for wind issued by the Met Office during the storm, reflecting potentially life-threatening conditions, the UK Government took the decision to use the emergency alert system for the first time in Wales to warn people about incoming Storm Darragh. About three million people across Wales and south-west England received the alert on their mobile phone. The Met Office's red warning was accompanied by flood warnings from Natural Resources Wales.

Over the course of the weekend, our control operators received 202 calls related to the severe weather, with 188 of these received at the height of the storm's impact. The Service attended a wide range of incidents across the region, including those involving dangerous structures due to the wind, fallen trees, impacted electrical installations, and house fires caused by electrical issues and internal/external flooding incidents – including driving through flood water.

Action 7: Review activity monitoring reports products and develop self-service dashboards to support delivery of our prevention, protection and response activities.

The Authority Performance Monitoring report was changed to reflect the new Community Risk Management Plan and the new 'Five Principles' that have now been adopted.

The Performance Analysts undertook Microsoft Power BI training, which has allowed the creation of interactive dashboards and data visualisation techniques on a range of incident and fire safety data.

These changes to data presentation have led to better analysis and an improved understanding of specific trends.

Self-service dashboards have been rolled out to senior managers, providing them with more up to date information on emergency incidents across North Wales, allowing them to make dynamic decisions.

This work will continue into next year to increase the number of dashboards being used, and research into additional mapping software that can be utilised to improve on current data visualisation tools.



Protection Principle

Making businesses safer together.

Providing businesses with expert guidance on fire protection to help ensure the safety of buildings, employees, and customers, thereby supporting businesses to grow. High-risk buildings are prioritised for inspections, contributing to overall public safety.

Well-being goals met:



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Achievements in 2024-25

Action 1: Review our current Risk Based Inspection Programme and ensure we have an informed and rationalised regime that is intelligence driven to identify the relevant risk classification for all our premises across North Wales.

An All-Wales meeting was held to ensure consistency across Wales for the audit process and operational fire crews.

Following a period of testing, a Short Business Audit Form has been developed and is now being used by Fire Safety staff. A training package for the Short Business Audit Form has been distributed to fire station personnel, which has been well received.

Following a review of the Response department, work was undertaken to implement a series of new roles, including eight new Station Commanders. They have now received training to enable them to audit work activity in their own area.

A full roll out to all fire station personnel in the use of this form is expected to be completed next year.

Action 2: Continue to deliver an intelligence led Risk Based Inspection Programme to reduce injury and death from fires in domestic and non-domestic premises.

The Service continued its risk-based inspection programme and support of premises throughout the North Wales area in order to reduce the risk of fire. This is done through auditing, education, and issuing formal notices.

We experienced some challenges in the retention of fully trained Business Fire Safety staff at the beginning of the year, and it has proved a challenge to achieve departmental targets due to the loss of some personnel and as some fire safety audits can take longer

than others due to the complexities of the building, follow-up visits being required, or notices and support having to be provided.

During the final quarter of the year, an All-Wales meeting took place to ensure all three Fire and Rescue Services provided consistency and adhered to the All-Wales Business Fire Safety Group Business Plan 2024-29. This is harder to manage when staff are attempting to gain competency as there are elements of shadowing involved. Only fully competent staff can undertake and complete complex audits.

The Service is part of an All-Wales approach that supports the Joint inspection Team responsible for the audit of tall buildings following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017.

Action 3: Develop Business engagement through training our staff and share industry advice to reduce incidents of fire.

Development work was undertaken to the fire safety information system to make it easier for operational crews to input their findings following a fire and safety visit.

Further improvements were made to the in-house training package for operational crews to bring the process in line with the new hot-spotting strategy.

Several action days took place towards the end of the financial year, in Bangor, and in Flint as part of a multi-agency collaboration with the Police, Immigration, Compliance and Enforcement Agency, and the Housing and Trading Standards. As a result of this work, several prohibition notices were served.

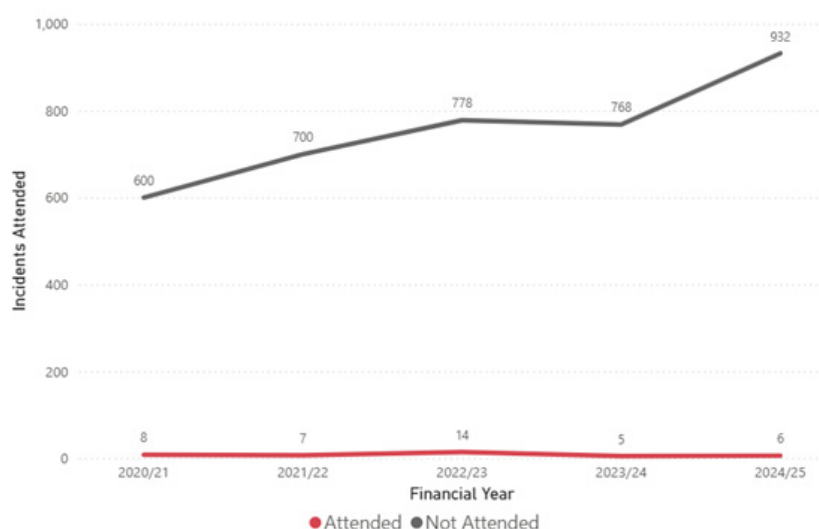
Action 4: Analyse the impact of automatic fire alarms on the use of our resources and their impact in a non-domestic environment.

During quarter two, analysis was undertaken by the Performance Team to look at the rise in commercial automatic fire alarms (AFA), and a report was presented to the Service Leadership Team.

The graph shows the number of Commercial AFA calls attended and not attended during the first half of the last five financial years. It is possible to see that there is generally an upward trend in the number of incidents not attended.

When a call of this type is answered by Control, there are protocols in place which dictate whether an emergency appliance is dispatched, or whether information is provided to the caller.

A trial is currently underway amongst several fire stations, whereby they will undertake a fire safety check of commercial buildings in their station ground area. This is alongside senior fire officers who have received training on how to audit those fire safety forms which have been electronically submitted.



Action 5: Work with local communities across North Wales to reduce the number of Wildfire incidents.

The re-launch of the Wales Wildfire Board's #WildfireWise campaign brought together the three fire and rescue services across Wales, together with their partners, to build on the experience gained over the last decade in dealing with the impact of wildfires.

The campaign encourages the public to be 'Wildfire Wise' and commit to simple precautions and a little extra care to ensure we can continue to enjoy our beautiful countryside and keep our communities safe from the devastating effects of wildfire.

Wildfires continue to present a danger to our environment, economy, and communities, not only here in North Wales but across the country, and so it is important for us to be involved in promoting this initiative. By working together with our communities to share our knowledge, we will hopefully provide a better understanding of the damage they can cause, and what we can all do to limit accidental fires from happening.

The campaign encourages people to be more vigilant when out enjoying the countryside and to be proactive in reporting suspicious activities that can lead to fires through raising awareness about the potential dangers of wildfires. It encourages members of our communities to respect our countryside and play their part in safeguarding our environment and keeping our communities safe. You can learn more about the campaign [here](#).

Number of wildfires attended by financial year:

Financial Year	April to June	July to September	October to December	January to March	Total
2020/21	20	2	0	2	24
2021/22	10	2	1	21	34
2022/23	16	18	1	0	35
2023/24	11	2	0	1	14
2024/25	1	3	1	35	40

New lightweight wildfire personal protective equipment was issued to all operational staff to reduce the impact of fatigue during these sometimes-prolonged incidents.

A working group has been established to identify a suitable vehicle with off-road capabilities which can transport personnel and equipment safely to the scene of the operation.

Action 6: Adopt the 4Ps approach, Prepare, Pursue, Prevent and Protect, when tackling arson, working closely with multi-agency partners and the communities we serve.

The Arson Reduction Strategy has been reviewed, and the Arson Reduction Team has been reorganised, with Arson reduction work redistributed to other areas of the Service.

We continue to work with key partner agencies on any sites of identified high risk from Arson.



Response Principle

Providing an effective emergency response.

Being ready to respond when you need us: to protect what matters to you, to save lives, reduce harm, and protect homes and businesses.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A more equal
Wales

Achievements in 2024-25

Action 1: Continue to develop an option with staff, stakeholders and the Fire Authority, that delivers the aims and objectives of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) for implementation during 2024-25.

The ECR Task and Finish group, chaired by a member of staff and attended by sixteen colleagues working at various levels, areas and departments within the Service, including the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), met on numerous occasions, during which they discussed and researched several emergency response models.

Regular updates on how work has been progressing were provided at the following Fire Authority meetings:

- [15 April 2024](#)
- [17 June 2024](#)
- [15 July 2024](#)
- [20 January 2025](#)

Following the Fire Authority meeting on 20 January 2025, officers were further directed to work with representative bodies on a model that would release sufficient resources that could be used differently to provide a more efficient and effective emergency cover model across North Wales.

A working group of FBU representatives and the Transformation Team revisited an idea that the FBU had suggested earlier in the year, and this has been developed with a draft report expected to go to the next Fire Authority meeting on the 28 April 2025.

Action 2: Support our Firefighters to deliver an effective operational response, through the research and development of modern equipment, risk assessments and guidance.

To help protect staff against toxic fire contaminants the Service has introduced a new Breathing Apparatus washing procedure. A new Breathing Apparatus washing machine is now fully operational at Rhyl fire station, and a schedule of annual washes is now in place.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is the first service in Wales to carry out annual and post fire washes. This allows the Service to continue to work towards reducing contaminants exposed to its firefighters.

New particulate flash-hoods are also being distributed to all stations. This garment conforms to the '[Protective Clothing for Firefighters EN13911](#)' – flash hood for firefighters and, in addition to providing a far greater level of protection from contaminants, it meets the requirement for limited flame spread, radiant heat, and convected heat.

Inflatable tents have been purchased and have been placed within all Welfare Units to enable personnel to change into clean fire kit / workwear where necessary at emergency incidents.

Action 3: Cascade the benefits of Microsoft 365 to all of our people in the Service.

The beginning of the year saw the first fire station successfully migrated to 'OneDrive' and 'Microsoft Teams'.

Work continued to migrate all fire stations and departments, and a Cyber Security working group was established.

All planned actions were completed except Control migration, which was postponed due to a spate of wildfires which occurred at the same time the migration was planned. The transformation group was also postponed due to competing priorities, and the intranet development remains on hold while waiting for input from the Fire Family working group.

However, work will continue into the next year to ensure these actions are completed and work continues to progress.

Action 4: Continue to develop and introduce the Emergency Services Network into North Wales to ensure that we have a secure, robust, interoperable and modern communication system across the region.

The Service's ICT Team have been attending the All-Wales Emergency Services Network User Group meetings, which provide regular updates on the progress and status on the Emergency Services Network, along with providing a channel in which the Service can provide input as the project moves forward.

The Service have and are liaising with one of the Emergency Services Network leads for the North Wales area in facilitating access to some of our sites, providing signal information in areas of poor coverage.

The Service has and continues to provide input on areas of poor coverage and has assisted in the collection of signal coverage data to help populate the signal maps which will assist in the design and construction of the Emergency Services Network.

Action 5: Conduct a review of our specialist vehicles, other than fire engines, that respond to emergencies.

During April 2024, the first meeting of the Aerial and Technical response review project working group took place, looking into recommendations of how to develop our Aerial and Technical response capability to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of our community now and in the future.

This review has been prompted by our ageing Aerial fleet and technical response units.

The purpose of the group was to research, develop, and evaluate a range of operational special appliance replacement options.

Recommendations for a new Aerial Ladder Platform appliance will be sought from the Service Leadership Team during early next year.

Action 6: Develop a new station management framework to support our managers to deliver an efficient and effective emergency service.

Following on from several consultation events held across the Service area, a new station manager response structure was introduced from the 1 January 2025.

These new roles take over the overall responsibility for station areas, including recruitment and availability, operational assurance, and the delivery of operational preparedness.

With experienced Service personnel moving back into fire stations, it is envisaged that there will be better lines of communication, enhanced service delivery, and partnership working.

A monthly review process has been put in place, reporting to the Service Leadership team.

Action 7: Embed and enhance the Operational Quality Assurance Process.

Operational Assurance at Incidents are completed by attending Flexi Duty System officers who are expected to operationally assure their colleagues and Supervisory Managers at operational incidents; for example, the flexi-duty manager mobilised to an incident will, on arrival, assess the incident. If they do not take over command of the incident or undertake a supporting role as part of the incident command system, they may adopt the role of Operational Assurance Officer. Following the incident, they record the outcome on the appropriate electronic recording systems.

All station-based teams receive operational assurance visits; the content and scope of the latter will be planned by the Operational Assurance Group who consider a range of issues such as current operational issues, specific risks identified, and past performance.

The Station Manager (Incident Command & Driving School) is responsible for the compilation of a mentoring list; this will indicate all incident commanders requiring a mentor to be assigned to them when attending operational incidents. This list is updated and submitted to Control on a monthly basis.

Debriefs are a key component of continuous improvement. Debrief management is essential to ensure a robust and consistent means of capturing the outcomes of the monitoring and review of operational tasks and activities. Hot debriefs continue to be held at the scene following all operational incidents and training scenarios, while the content of hot debriefs held following operational incidents is recorded on the Post Incident Form. Incidents of note requiring a structured debrief are identified by the Operational Assurance Team, by attending Flexi Duty System officers, by the Control Management Team, or by attending Incident Commanders.

Action 8: Introduce the National Fire Chiefs Council National Fire Control Guidance in our Joint Control Centre, to ensure strong and resilient fire control arrangements.

A Strategic Gap Analysis (SGA) has been undertaken by the Control Management Team, and the SGA Tool on the National Chief Council Committee (NFCC) has been updated. The SGA informs us of the areas in which we are Partially Compliant, Compliant, and Non-Compliant. The next step is to formulate a plan to identify changes and how to implement them in the Control Room environment, ensuring alignment with National Occupational Guidance requirements for Operational Fire Crews. The Control Management Team continue to attend National Organisation Guidance meetings with the Response Team, and also Nationally with other Fire and Rescue Services in order to ascertain best practice.





Environment Principle

Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.

Adopting eco-friendly practices in our daily operations to cut down on carbon emissions and other environmental impacts and raise environmental awareness amongst our staff and our communities.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales

Achievements in 2024–25

Action 1: Review stock items and develop working practices to minimise waste.

Work is progressing to review all items held in Stores – this will be an on-going task, with plans to implement periodic stock takes to monitor the movement of items.

A stock review was completed at 'Unit 8b, Conwy' and all non-stock items have now been removed.

Amendments have been made to the stock IT system and collaboration has taken place with other departments to ensure the correct processes are being adhered to.

Challenges with staffing within the department has meant this action hasn't progressed as planned.

Action 2: Develop the Social Values and Sustainable Procurement Strategy.

Work towards this action remain in the early stages and work will continue into the next year.

Action 3: Introduce necessary infrastructure for our diesel vehicles to run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, a sustainable alternative with zero Scope 1 carbon emissions.

A copy of the [Fleet Decarbonisation Plan](#) went to Fire Authority members in July 2024.

This report outlines how the Service proposes to eliminate [Scope 1 emissions](#) arising from transportation.

Action 4: Expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points network across our estate.

The Service began a trial of allowing staff who drive their own electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles to charge them at fire stations. The trial was open to any employee, as part of the Service's commitment to helping colleagues shift to more sustainable modes of transport. The requirements were to simply install the [Clenergy EV app](#) onto a mobile phone, and then a code will be issued allowing access to the EV charger network, where you will be able to charge your vehicle. The cost per kilowatt hour will be set at the price it costs the Service.

The Service will continue to monitor grant funding opportunities as they arise.

Action 5: Continue to retrofit insulation to our building estate.

This work was successfully completed during the period. A survey was undertaken of our estate to determine where roof voids were lacking insulation, and Facilities had insulation fitted at all identified locations. We do not believe there is any scope for further work of this nature.

Action 6: Develop plans and explore funding opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from our buildings to meet the Welsh Government's 2030 Zero Carbon Emissions ambition.

Under Welsh law, the Service is required to mitigate the operational carbon footprint it produces by 2030.

A Fleet Decarbonisation plan was reviewed by Authority members at the meeting on the [15 July 2024](#), with the most notable measure being a proposal to substitute diesel with a sustainable biofuel, Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). Following a successful trial, a pilot storage tank and dispenser have been deployed at Deeside Fire Station, with a further eighteen identified sites to follow. The plan also proposes changes in the procurement of cars and vans, as well as staff travel patterns.

Action 7: Monitor and report to the Welsh Government our carbon output on Greenhouse gas in respect of energy, water and waste.

Data was submitted to the Welsh Government as intended during the first two quarters of the year. Data was also provided during quarter three but was delayed due to other workloads.

Data has been collated up to January 2025 for both electricity and gas usage.

The supplier invoices for February and March were received during April 2025, and so this data is still being collated.

Full electricity and gas consumption figures, along with their associated costs, will be provided to the Environmental and Climate Change Manager, and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer lead when all data has been received by the Facilities department. This is expected to be in May 2025.



Performance Information Summary

The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015 introduced three statutory performance indicators that accompany locally collected sector indicators.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:	2024-25	
	Number	Rate
Fires attended	1,804	26.07
False alarms attended	3,264	47.17
Road traffic collisions	255	3.69
Other emergency incidents attended	1,166	16.85
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population		
Fire deaths and injuries	49	7.08
Deaths and injuries arising from fires started accidentally	45	6.50
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population		
Dwelling fires confined to room of origin	308	87.01%
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended		

All Wales Sector Indicators

Sector indicators were introduced for 2015 and agreed to be collected and shared by all three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

ALL WALES		2024-25				
SECTOR INDICATORS:	North Wales FRS		Mid & West Wales FRS		South Wales FRS	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Deliberate fires	538	7.77	1,516	16.62	3,820	24.48
Accidental fires (or motive not known)	1,266	18.30	1,499	16.43	1,588	10.18
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population						
Fire related fatalities	3	0.43	4	0.44	9	0.58
Injuries caused by fires	46	6.65	42	4.60	46	2.95
Fire related fatalities in accidental dwelling fires	2	0.29	2	0.22	8	0.51
Fire related fatalities in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.06
Fire related injuries in accidental dwelling fires	21	3.03	33	3.62	32	2.05
Fire related injuries in deliberate dwelling fires	2	0.29	3	0.33	2	0.13
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population						
Dwelling fires	354	10.58	447	10.15	631	8.93
Accidental fires in dwellings	338	10.11	412	9.35	582	8.24
Deliberate fires in dwellings	16	0.48	35	0.79	49	0.69
AFA false alarms in dwellings	1,600	47.84	1,601	36.35	2,434	34.46
Where the rate is based on 10,000 dwellings						
Fires in non-domestic premises	144	4.23	131	3.20	261	4.99
AFA false alarms in non-domestic	324	9.53	656	16.01	3,597	68.73
Where the rate is based on 1,000 non-domestic premises						
Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm was not fitted	44	12.43%	212	47.43%	215	34.07%
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended						



The Dwelling Fire Response Charter in 2024-25

During 2012 the three Welsh fire and Rescue Authorities jointly developed an all-Wales Charter to ensure that wherever people live in Wales, they can expect to be helped and supported to remain safe from fire in their homes. They should also be able to expect that if a fire does break out, they will receive a prompt, effective and professional emergency response to their call for assistance.

The Charter makes seven specific commitments that the Fire and Rescue Authority will:

1. Take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.
2. React quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.
3. Attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.
4. Deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.
5. Help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.
6. Investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.
7. Strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

The following pages provide information about our compliance with these commitments during 2024-25.

For consistency, we use a standard narrative for reporting against the Charter each year and only update the figures within the narrative framework.

1. We will take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.

We are committed to taking the lead in maintaining a downward trend in the incidence of dwelling fires and associated casualties in Wales.

In 2024-25 we provided advice and encouragement to people on how they can prevent fires from starting in their home and how they can keep themselves safe from fire.

Our prevention activity included delivering 20,021 SAWCs to householders, and 11,563 children and young people at key stages 1 - 4 received a fire safety talk.

During 2024-25 we attended 338 accidental dwelling fires. As a consequence of those fires, there were 2 recorded fatalities, but 21 people sustained injuries. The number of accidental dwelling fires in the FRA area has remained consistent, with 338 accidental fires also attended during 2023-24.

The number of accidental dwelling fires in the FRA area remains at their lowest level in the past five years.

2. We will react quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.

We are committed to reacting quickly and efficiently when emergency 999/112 calls are put through to us by the operator.

Our emergency fire control facility remains available around the clock every day of the year, with special arrangements in place for a seamless transfer of calls from one control facility to another in the event of serious disruption or a surge in the number of calls coming in at the same time.

Sophisticated mapping and electronic systems help us to: a) identify the location of the reported incident and b) send the most appropriate available resource to attend the incident.

In 2024-25, we handled a total of 14,535 emergency 999/112 calls. We were able to obtain enough information about dwelling fire incidents to alert the appropriate initial response within 90 seconds on 83.3% of occasions and between 91 and 120 seconds on 7.8% of occasions.

However, we know that the speed of call handling – although important – is not the only relevant yardstick. Knowing where our services are needed



requires specialist skills to effectively glean information from callers who may, for example, be unfamiliar with the area they are in, be frightened or in distress, be very young, or have communication or language difficulties.

Another important skill is recognising when a caller is abusing the 999/112 system by falsely claiming that there is an emergency when, in fact, there is not. It is a criminal offence

to knowingly make false calls to the emergency services. Sadly, that does not seem to deter a minority of people who tie up the 999 lines and divert services away from people who may be in a genuinely life-threatening situation. Every time we turn out to one of these malicious false alarms, it wastes both time and money, and places the rest of the community at higher risk.

In 2024-25, we received 99 malicious false alarms. In 35.4% of cases, we were able to establish that these calls were not genuine and so avoided needlessly mobilising resources to attend.

3. We will attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.

Once we have answered the emergency 999/112 call and allocated the most appropriate resources to make up the initial attendance at the incident, our next priority is to get to the incident quickly, safely and properly equipped to deal with it.

Response times can be found [here](#). These times include the time it takes for personnel to turn in to the fire station as well as the travel time. As a result, a number of things can affect the speed of response figures, including the urban/rural geography and the nature of road networks in the area.

Speed of response to dwelling fires is extremely important, but we cannot over-emphasise the importance of preventing those fires from happening in the first instance, and of having at least one working smoke alarm fitted and a pre-planned escape route in case a fire does occur. However, if a dwelling fire has occurred, we ensure that our firefighting crews are properly equipped to deal with it.

We equip our firefighters with high quality personal protective equipment and firefighting equipment. We require them to be operationally fit and healthy and we make sure that their skills are routinely tested and exercised. We also routinely check that the way our crews dealt with incidents was in accordance with accepted firefighting procedures.

We take the safety of our firefighters very seriously, given the nature of the work that they undertake. In 2024-25, our crews attended 1,804 fires in a variety of different types of premises and at outdoor locations. Whilst fighting those fires, 6 operational staff received an injury.



4. We will deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.

We are committed to dealing with fires effectively, efficiently and professionally. To this end, we equip our highly trained fire crews with the right skills, knowledge, information, firefighting equipment and command support so that whatever the circumstances of the dwelling fire, they will be correctly prepared to deal with it.

In 2024-25, of all the dwelling fires that we attended, 87% were successfully contained within the room of origin, without spreading any further. Although a number of factors could contribute to this statistic that would be outside the control of the attending crews such as how long it took for someone to discover the fire in the first instance, whether

or not internal doors had been shut to help prevent the spread of the fire, and how far away from a fire station the dwelling was located, we still consider this to be a reasonable indicator of our firefighting success.

We recognise the importance of research and equipment improvements, and ensure that we invest time and effort in staying in touch with the latest developments.

We also take very seriously the professional image of the fire and rescue service. We place great emphasis on the personal qualities and attributes of all our operational staff, as well as their physical and psychological fitness and the high standard of their operational and management training.

We encourage all our staff to adhere to a set of core values that was adopted nationally by the UK Fire and Rescue Service. This expresses our commitment to valuing service to the community, people, diversity and improvement.

5. We will help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

We are committed to helping to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

A fire in the home can leave people feeling extremely vulnerable.

When people have lost their possessions, they will have need for practical as well as emotional support. When people have been injured or killed in the fire, the experience can affect whole communities as well as the individual and his or her immediate friends and family. For this reason, the fire and rescue service's role in supporting communities does not end when the fire was extinguished and everyone was accounted for.



In all cases, the cause of the fire will be investigated and carefully recorded. Every detail of how and where the fire started, how far it spread, any special circumstances, and any particular factors that contributed to the fire will be recorded as a source of future learning, research and monitoring.

If there are reasons to believe that a fire was started deliberately in a dwelling, either by someone living there or by someone else, this will be followed up with the police and other relevant agencies.

In some premises, such as blocks of flats or houses occupied by a number of different tenants, the post-incident investigations might indicate that a landlord had failed to ensure the necessary level of fire safety. Our specialist fire investigators might then be involved in a criminal investigation and court proceedings.

If a fire is found to have started accidentally, we might undertake some form of community safety activity or campaign in the vicinity, offering advice and reassurance by way of free SAWCs.

6. We will investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.

We always investigate the causes of dwelling fires. In many cases the cause and origin of a fire will be very clear and straightforward, but in others a more in-depth, forensic investigation will be required to ascertain the most likely cause of the fire. In 2024-25, 19 dwelling fires were recorded as having an unknown cause.

If a crime is suspected, the investigation of the fire will be conducted with the police. People suspected of deliberately setting fire to a dwelling are likely to face criminal prosecution, although in some cases this may not be the only course of action available, for example if the fire was started by a young child or by a person attempting suicide.

In 2024-25, we attended 354 fires in dwellings, of which 16 were found to have been started deliberately.

In some residential premises, such as flats and houses of multiple occupation, the communal and shared areas are covered by regulations that require whoever is responsible for those premises (such as the landlord or the premises manager) to have good fire safety arrangements in place.

Failure to do so can lead to the closure of the premises and prosecution of the responsible person with the prospect of imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

As an enforcing authority, we ensure that responsible persons fulfil their obligations under this legislation, and can select from a range of enforcement options available to us, depending on the seriousness and risk posed by the contravention.

In 2024-25, no enforcement notices, prohibition notices, formal cautions or prosecutions were concluded during the year.



7. We will strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

We continuously strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

Under legislation, Fire and Rescue Authorities are classed as 'Welsh Improvement Authorities' and are expected to routinely review and continuously improve their own performance through a formal process of setting, implementing and reporting against annual improvement objectives.

We do not limit our improvement activity to this formal annual process; high standards and continual improvement form an integral part of our everyday running of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Examples of improvement activities that go on include:

- Responding positively to peer reviews, audits and inspections.
- Responding positively to consultation responses, feedback from stakeholders, complaints and compliments.
- Learning from our experiences, such as from post-incident debriefs, reports of accidents, or 'near misses'.
- Contributing to working groups, sharing good practice, and learning from research undertaken.
- Taking opportunities to learn from, and with, other organisations through partnerships, committees, boards and professional associations.
- Planning for potential challenges in order to maintain our operations, such as through business continuity management processes.
- Planning for potential challenges to future service delivery, such as through local resilience forums.
- Continuously developing the technical and professional skills of our staff.
- Maintaining and renewing our physical and computerised assets such as our equipment, vehicles, buildings and technology.



What Others Said About Us

Audit Wales – Well-being Objectives

Their report can be found [here](#).

Other Information

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External information sources used in compiling this document:

- [Wales Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics](#)
- [Wales Future Trends Report \(2021\)](#)

Intervention in the event of failure or potential failure to comply:

The Welsh Government has powers of intervention:

- under section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the National Framework. In such cases, section 23 – Intervention Protocol would apply.
- under section 29 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is at risk of failing, to comply with the Measure. However, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, Welsh Ministers may only intervene after they have offered voluntary support to the Authority under section 28 of the Measure.

Consultations

Each year the Authority seeks the opinions and views of the North Wales public and other stakeholders as part of its process of developing its strategic plans and objectives.

Public consultations are listed below:

Title	Consultation	Publication	For year
Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-26	Autumn 2024	Spring 2025	2025-26
Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	2024-29
Emergency Cover Review	Summer/Autumn 2023	Winter 2023	2023-24

Recent staff surveys are listed below:

Title	Consultation	
Crest Advisory Cultural Review	Autumn 2024	23 August – 11 October 2024
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2023	18 September – 16 October 2023
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2021	18 October – 08 November 2021



Glossary and Definitions

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 involve 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 are those that would normally occur on 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.

Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

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.

Wildfires

A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by four or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for six hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.

Special Service Incidents (other emergency incidents)

These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:

- Local emergencies e.g. flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc.
- Major disasters.
- Domestic incidents e.g. water leaks, persons locked in or out etc.
- prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.

Fire Deaths (fire related)

This is where a person whose death is attributed to a fire even if the death occurred weeks or months later. There are also occasional cases where it becomes apparent subsequently that the fire was not the cause of the death. These figures are therefore subject to revision.

Fire Injuries

For consistency after April 2009 across the UK, fire casualties are recorded under four categories of severity:

- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious.
- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight.
- The victim was given first aid at the scene only, but required no further treatment.
- A precautionary check was recommended – the person was sent to hospital or was advised to see a doctor as a precaution, but having no obvious injury or distress.

False Alarm (general guidance)

Where the Fire and Rescue Service 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 attended and does not need to be reported.

Malicious

These are calls made with the intention of getting the Fire and Rescue Service to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

Good Intent

These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the Fire and Rescue Service really would attend a fire or special service incident.

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)

These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm equipment or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the Fire and Rescue Service as part of a standing arrangement, with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.

Have your say

We are always looking for ways to improve our service and to present information that is meaningful. In order to help us to do this we want to ensure your views are considered when delivering our activities and keeping you informed. So, if you have any comments about this assessment, or how we might improve our future annual performance assessments, we would very much like to hear from you.

Other versions of this document are available

- In paper and electronic formats.
- In Welsh and English.
- In accessible formats through our website.

Write to us



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Report to	Executive Panel	
Date	15 September 2025	
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer	
Contact Officer	Mike Plant, Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	
Subject	Performance Monitoring, 1 April 2025 – 30 June 2025	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide members of the Executive Panel (the Panel) with an update on performance for the period 1 April 2025 – 30 June 2025 (quarter 1 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 Compared to the same period in 2024/25, fire incidents have increased to 712 (417 in 2024/25). Whilst this represents an overall increase of 70.7% the increase for primary fires is 24% and secondary fires is 130%. The increase in secondary fires reflects the dry weather conditions experienced with fires in the open driving the increase.
- 3 Accidental dwelling fires have marginally increased this quarter by 5.8% compared with the same period last year, with a total of 73 incidents attended.
- 4 Attendance at special service calls decreased by 8% year on year to 306 which included 67 road traffic collisions.
- 5 Work continues to support our communities with a total of 4,722 safe and well checks completed during the period. Although a decrease in overall terms of 5.7% for the same period in 2024/25, the focus remains on medium and high priority visits. In addition, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) remains committed to education through school visits, the provision of the Phoenix course and individual interventions to address fire setting.

RECOMMENDATION

6 It is recommended that Members:

i) Note the content of the Performance Monitoring Report.

BACKGROUND

7 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

8 The Performance Report for the period 1 April 2025 – 30 June 2025 is set out in Appendix 1. Unless otherwise stated, all figures are based on the first quarter of the 2025/26 financial-year, with comparisons made to the same period of 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

Monitoring Report: April 2025 – June 2025



Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Our People Principle



1 Sickness Absence

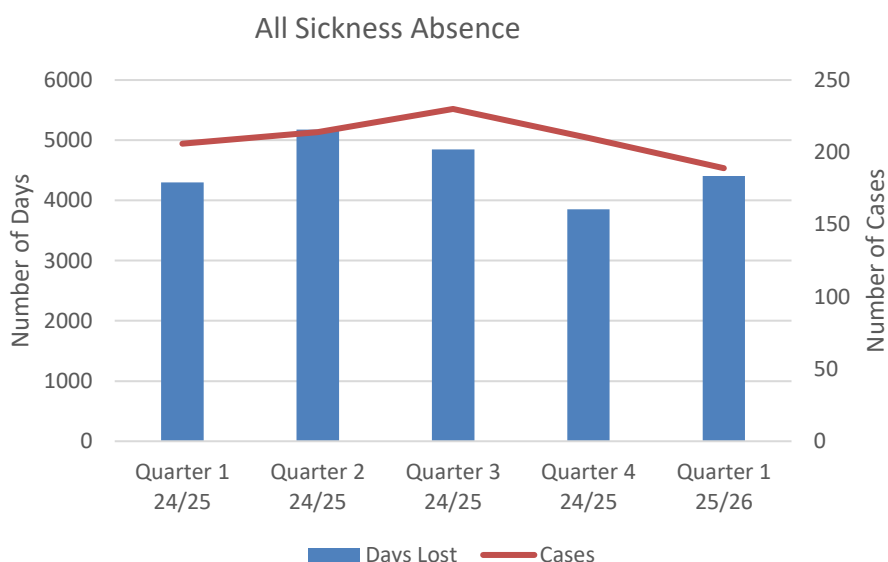
The Service aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work because of ill health.

Total time lost, for NWFRS, due to all sickness absence has increased from 4.51% during quarter four to 5.12% during quarter one of the current year, although this remains lower than the same period in the previous year.

946 individuals were employed by NWFRS as at 30/06/2025, which is an increase of 35 people from the same period in 2024/25; however total time lost due to all sickness absence is slightly lower from the previous year, demonstrating a continued improvement in sickness absence levels.

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 as a result of changes to employee data.

1.1 All Sickness Absence



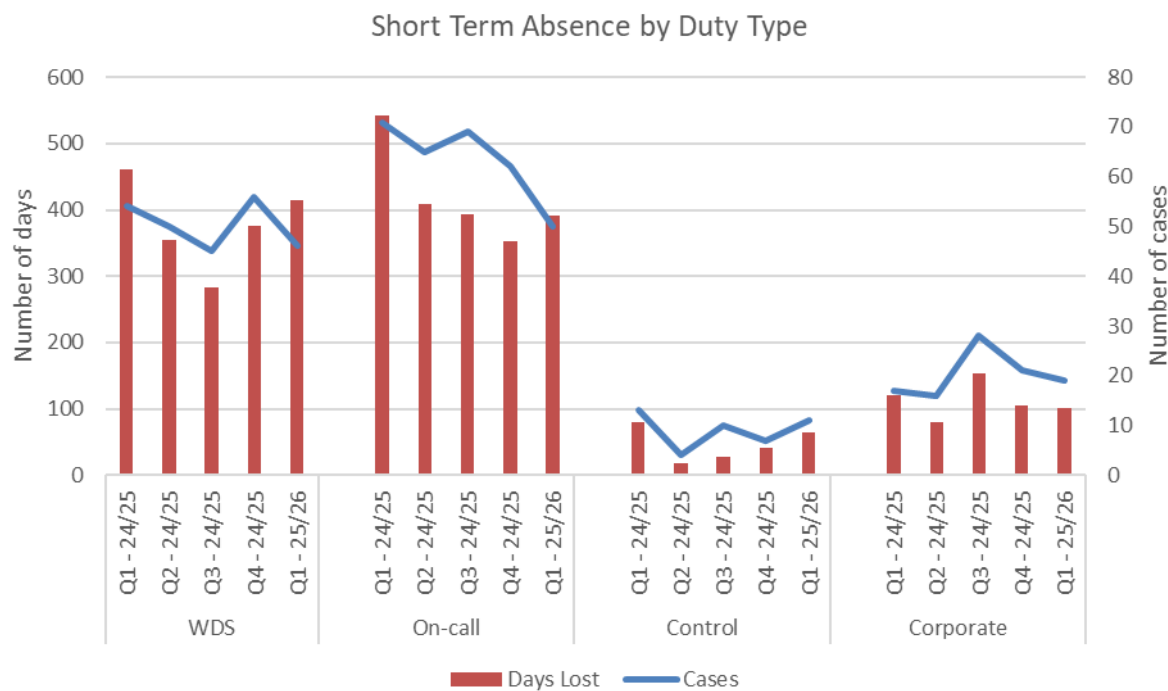
Whilst the number of days lost due to absence in quarter one of 2025/26 has increased compared with the previous quarter, the number of overall cases remains at the lowest across the past year. The overall number of days lost during quarter one of the current year is slightly higher than the days lost in the same period in the previous year. There has been an increase in the number employed.

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

On average over the full year of 2024/25, short term absence accounted for 1.12% of all time lost.

Short Term Sickness during quarter one of the current year equated to 1.13% of time lost, which is a reduction compared with 1.47% of time lost across all duty types during quarter one of the previous year.



(*Wholtime - includes all operational staff, such as station based, rural and flexi duty officers)

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

Whilst the number of cases of short-term sickness from employees on both the wholtime duty system and on-call duty system have reduced in quarter one from quarter four, the number of days lost during quarter one has increased for both. 37% of the short-term sickness cases by employees on the wholtime duty system was due to musculoskeletal absence, with these absences lasting an average of 10.2 calendar days per employee.

Within the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness Absence Report from April 2024 – March 2025, musculoskeletal reasons accounted for 29% of all sickness absence reasons, with musculoskeletal reasons being the highest reason for all absence for employees on the wholetime duty system (32%) and on-call duty system (35%).

15% of the short term sickness cases during quarter one of the current year were reported as being due to gastroenteritis and an additional 7% were due to gastrointestinal reasons. This reason for absence was high during quarter one and quarter two of the previous year and continues to be a prevalent reason for short term sickness. (Gastroenteritis refers to inflammation of stomach and intestines often caused by infection whilst gastrointestinal describes the entire digestive tract)

Top 3 Short Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost time %
1	Musculoskeletal - Upper Limb	12	13.67%
2	Musculoskeletal - Lower Limb	12	13.57%
3	Musculoskeletal - Back and spinal disorders	9	8.32%

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

The top three reasons for short term absence based on the number of cases during quarter one of 2025/26 has changed from the reasons during 2024/25, with musculoskeletal related absence being the top three reasons. Cold/flu reasons were the highest reason for short term absence throughout the 2024/25 year, however this reason accounted for only 3% of time lost to absence during quarter one in the current year.

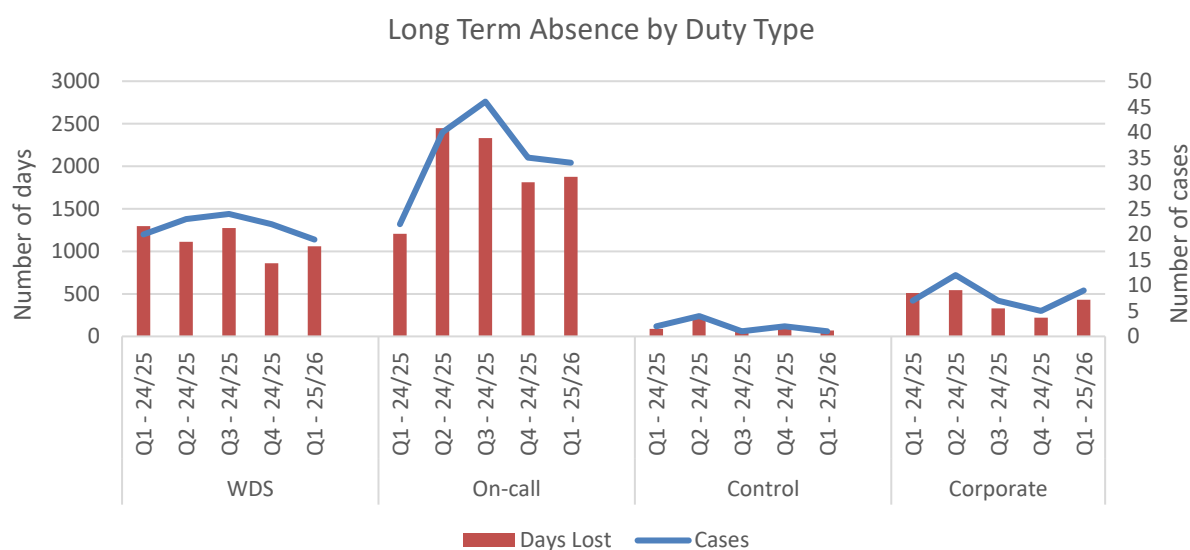
Time lost due to absence for musculoskeletal upper and lower limb reasons account for 13.67% and 13.57% respectively of all short-term sickness during quarter one. 76% of all musculoskeletal short-term sickness was reported by employees on the wholetime duty system and on-call duty system.

Whilst there has been a noted increase in short term musculoskeletal absence reasons during quarter one, it is also noted that employees accessing physiotherapy treatments provided by the Service has also increased by approximately 50% during quarter one when compared with the same period in the previous year.

1.3 Long Term Sickness

On average over the full year of 2024/25, long term absence accounted for 4.23% of time lost.

Long term sickness accounted for 3.99% of time lost across all duty types in quarter one, compared to 3.49% in quarter four and 3.78% in quarter one of the previous year. The number of days lost due to long term absence during quarter one has increased compared with quarter four, whilst the number of cases has generally reduced or remained at similar levels, with the exception of cases in corporate roles, which has increased during quarter one.



Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (by cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost Time %
1	Musculoskeletal - Lower Limb	14	20.64%
2	Mental Health - Stress	12	17.64%
3	Failed Medical/Fitness Test	7	10.6%

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

The top three long term sickness absence reasons have remained similar into quarter one of 2025/26 as that during 2024/25.

Musculoskeletal – Lower limb absence continues to account for the highest number of cases and lost time. Absences due to this reason include employees who are awaiting surgical intervention or are recovering from surgery but due to the physical nature of operational roles, employees must have fully recovered before returning to work to avoid further exacerbation or injury. Absence due to any musculoskeletal reason during quarter one lasted an average of 50.3 calendar days per employee. Employees are considered for modified duties where applicable, to aid a return to work and as a pathway to returning to full duties.

Mental health absence is recorded separately to identify the different reasons of poor mental wellbeing - stress, anxiety, other (which includes phobia, bereavement, trauma/PTSD) and depression are the most common mental health reasons recorded within the Service. Overall, during 2024/25, all mental health absences accounted for 19% of all absence cases; this is lower than the 23% reported in the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness report from April 2024 to March 2025.

Long term absence due to mental health - stress continues to be within the top three absence reasons for long term sickness for quarter one. The number of cases of long-term sickness due to stress has again increased to 12 during quarter one, compared with seven during quarter four, however the days lost during quarter one has not exceeded the days lost during quarters two and three of 2024/25.

Whilst the Service has seen an increase in mental health cases, this is also reflective across the country, as reported by NHS monthly statistics bulletin. Adults accessing mental health support has increased from 1.1 million in July 2023 to 1.4 million in July 2024.

Support is provided to employees who are absent due to mental health and musculoskeletal reasons, including access to occupational health, employee assistance programme and physiotherapy treatment. Signposting to external agencies, such as the Firefighters Charity, Parabl and other specific services is also provided to employees.

1.4 All Wales Comparison

The average shift days lost per person for all absence (short and long term) on an All-Wales basis was 11.62 shift days per person for wholetime uniformed staff, 17.72 shift days per person for Control staff, and 14.76 shift days per person for non-operational 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	13.54	9.54	9.02
Fire control staff	23.70	16.66	12.19
Non-operational staff	21.24	10.40	10.09

Note, the All-Wales data is for the period April 2023 to March 2024 with the most recent update published in October 2024 and only reports on absence data for wholetime, control and corporate staff and does not include on-call or retained data.

Our Prevention Principle



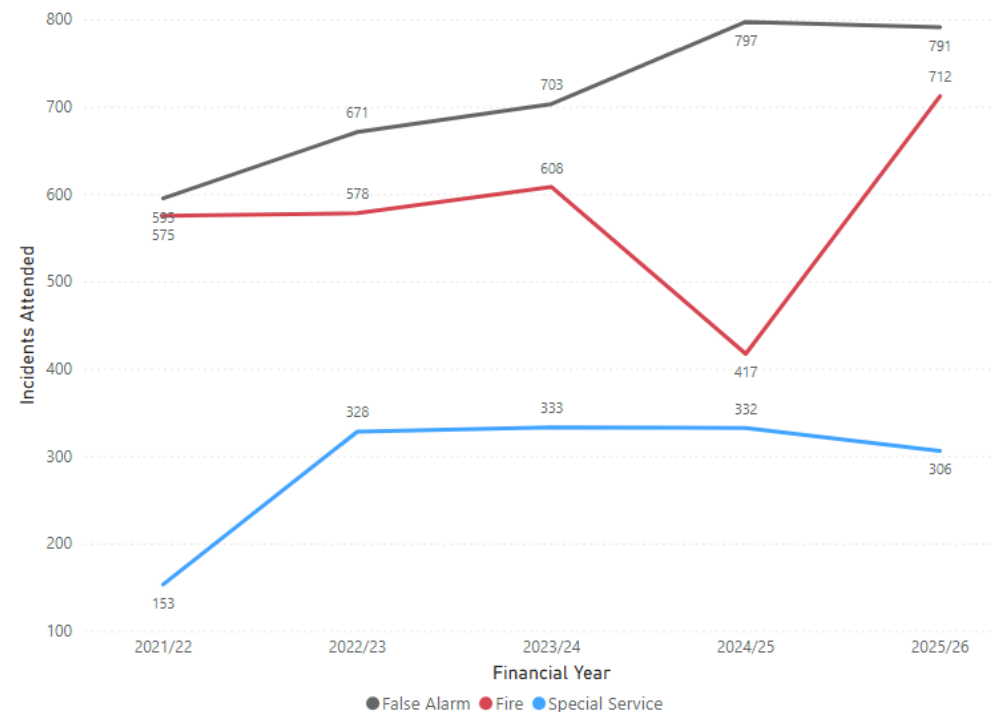
2 All Incidents

All Incidents – **1,809** incidents were attended during the first quarter of the financial year, which is a 17.0% increase. This is also 13.9% above the 3-year average of 1,589.

Fires – **712**, an increase of 70.7%, and 33.3% more than the quarter one three-year average of 534.

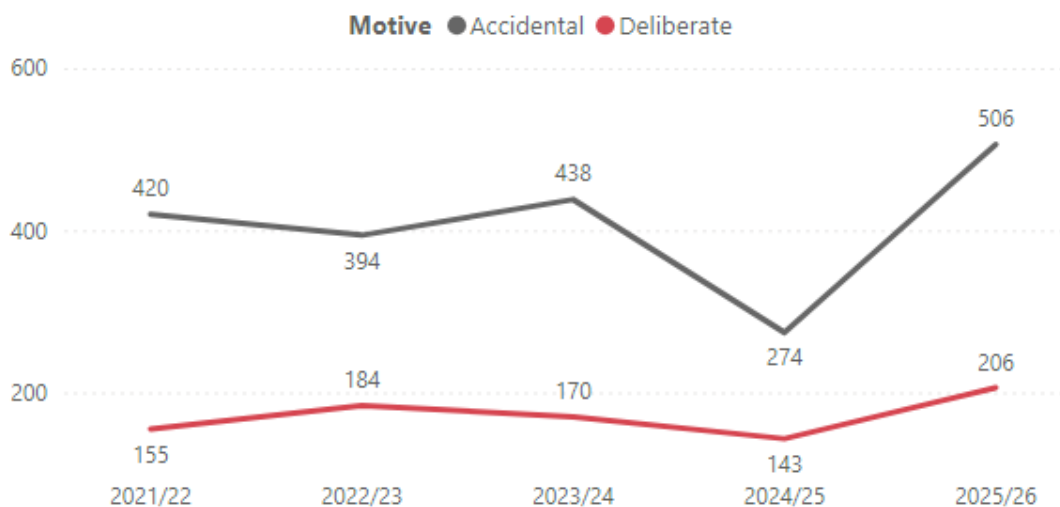
False Alarms – **791**, a decrease of 0.8%, but 9.3% more than the quarter one three-year average of 724.

SSCs – **306**, a decrease of 7.8%, and 7.6% less than the quarter one three-year average of 331.

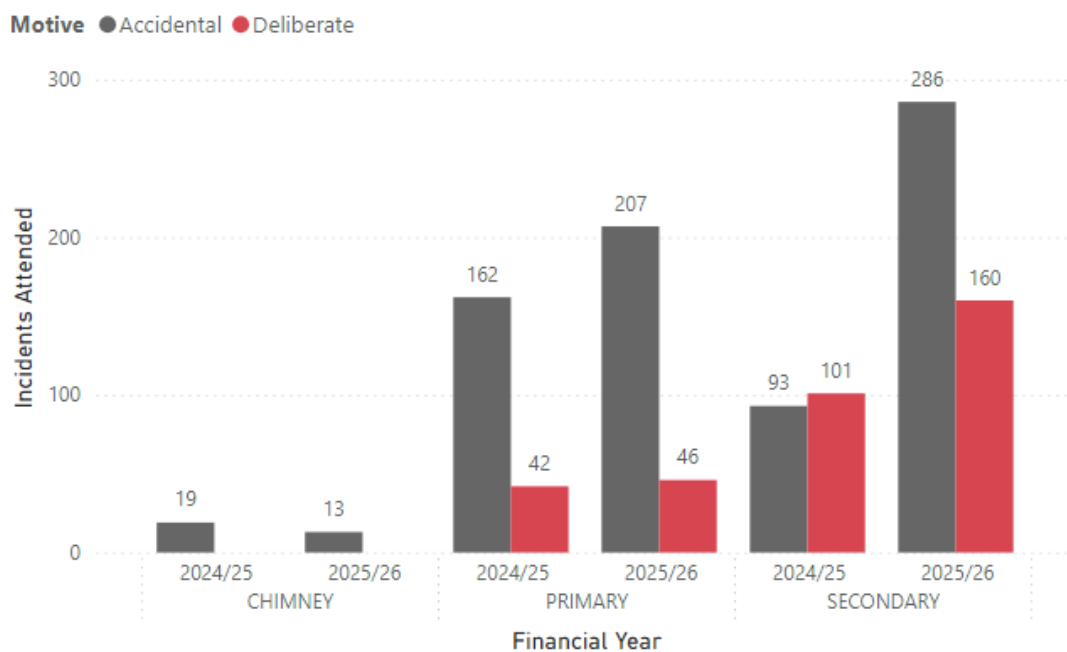


3 Fires, by Category and Motive

712 fires were attended; a 70.7% increase from 417.



	Accidental	Deliberate	Total	+/-
Primary	207	46	253	24.0%
Secondary	286	160	446	129.9%
Chimney	13	0	13	-31.6%



Actions taken to date:

At the close of quarter one, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) completed a total of **4,722** Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs). Efforts remain focused on improving both the volume and quality of referrals through strengthened collaboration with partner agencies.

To enhance the targeting of those most at risk from fire, NWFRS has continued to engage with key stakeholders including Carers Outreach, Welsh Water, SP Energy, Care & Repair, Dementia Support Services, Victim Support, and the Conwy & Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership Steering Group. These bespoke engagement sessions have supported the delivery of more effective and risk-informed prevention activity.

In terms of youth engagement:

- **1,520** children and young people received fire safety education during the last financial year, despite reduced capacity due to one Educationalist being on maternity leave.
- **Four** Phoenix courses were delivered, engaging **33** young people, with **29** successfully completing the programme—demonstrating strong retention and impact.

NWFRS also contributed to wider community safety through:

- A multi-agency day in Penrhosgarnedd, supporting local engagement and visibility.
- Ongoing planning with North Wales Police under the Clear, Hold, Build framework to address community vulnerability and resilience.

Public-facing campaigns have been strategically deployed across social media platforms, focusing on:

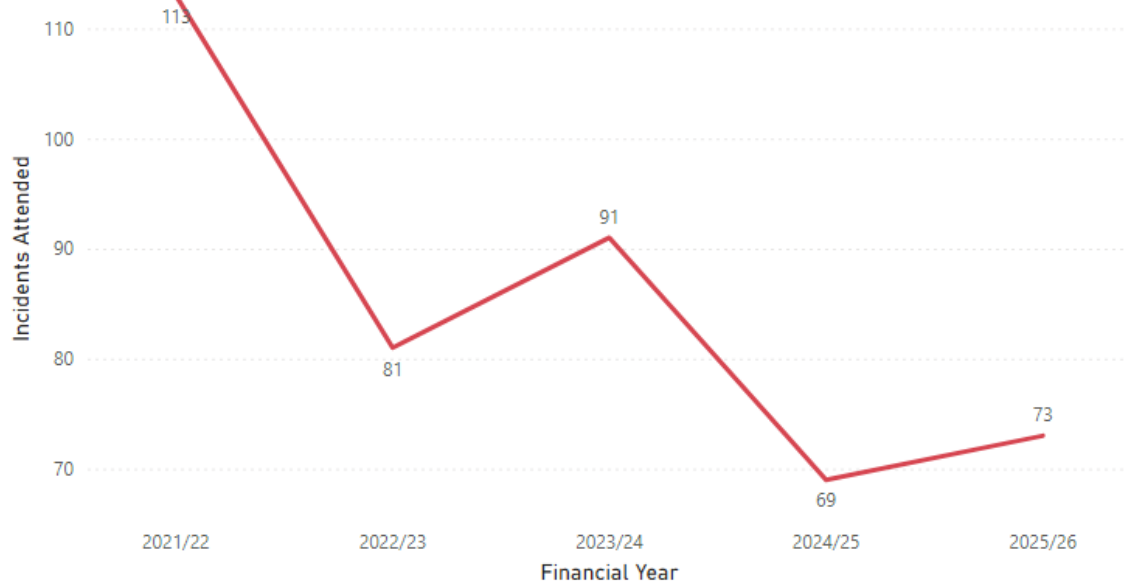
- Kitchen Safety
- Summer Safety
- Disposable BBQ Safety

These campaigns aim to reduce seasonal and behaviour-related fire risks through targeted messaging and community education.

4 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

73 accidental dwelling fires were attended, a 5.8% increase from 69.

Whilst this is an increase over the previous financial year, it is important to note that this is still 8.8% less than the three-year average of 80, and is also significantly less than the number of ADFs attended during the financial years prior to 2024/25.



5 Leading Causes of Accidental Dwelling Fires

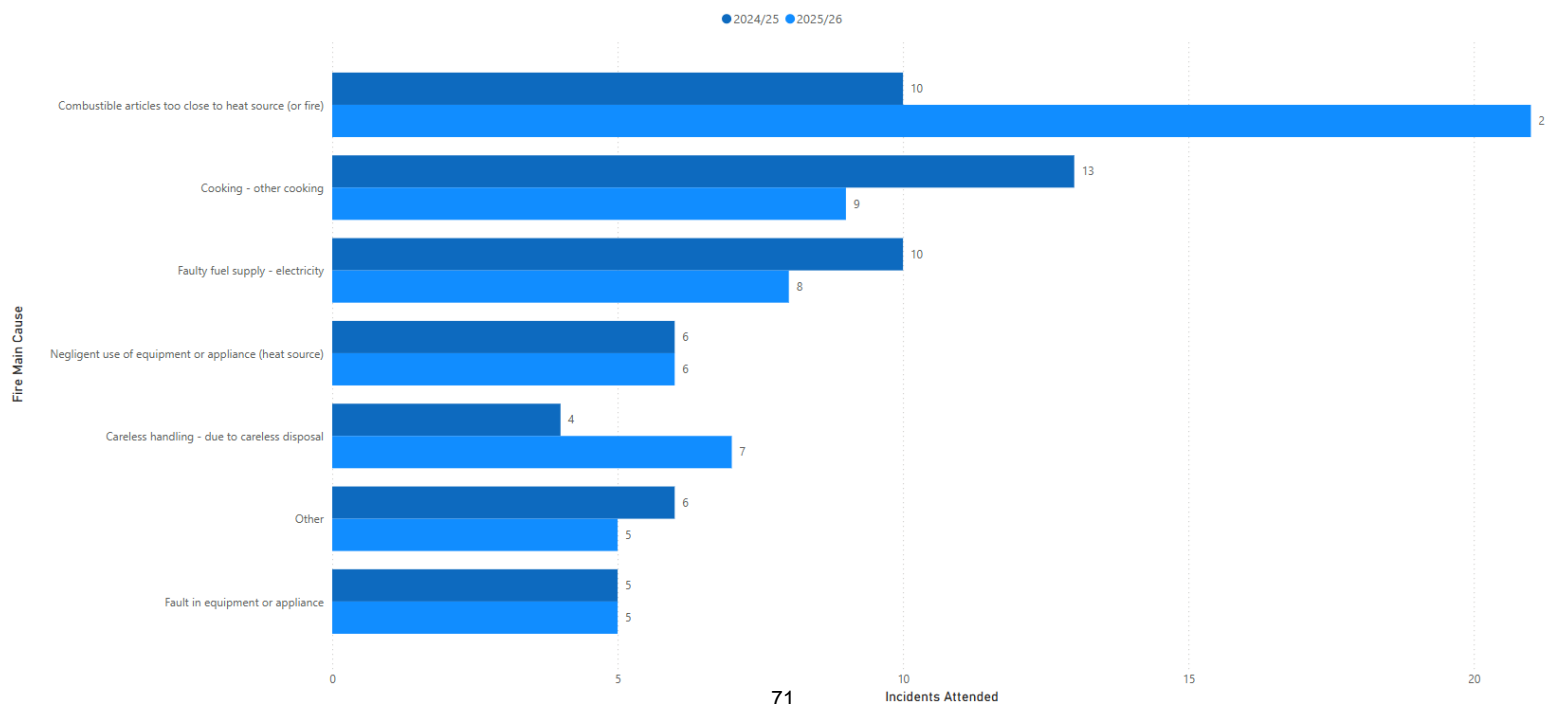
There were numerous main causes of ADFs during the course of the quarter. The most common was 'Combustible articles too close to heat source (or fire)', which showed a 110.0% increase from 10 to **21**.

Other main causes which saw an increase or remained consistent with the same period of last year included:

- 'Careless handling – due to careless disposal', which increased 75.0% from four to **seven**.
- 'Negligent use of equipment or appliance (heat source)', which remained consistent at **six** incidents.
- 'Fault in equipment or appliance', which remained consistent at **five** incidents.

Despite this, a few main causes saw a decrease during this quarter. These included:

- 'Cooking – other cooking', which decreased by 30.8% from 13 to **nine**.
- 'Faulty fuel supply – electricity', which decreased by 20.0% from 10 to **eight**.
- 'Other', which decreased by 16.7% from six to **five**.



Action taken to date:

Prevention is working with Corporate Communications to develop social media messages and short videos focused on the risks of placing articles too close to heat sources. All Home Safety Support Workers (HSSWs) have been briefed to inform and educate residents and Station Commanders have cascaded the message to operational crews.

Campaigns and Initiatives

Key messaging distributed via GovDelivery to members of the public who have signed up.

Cooking Safety Campaign (21st – 27th April)

A focused campaign promoting safe cooking practices.

Additional guidance issued to fire stations regarding the emerging trend of Air Fryer misuse. Information delivered through Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs).

Dementia Action Week

A series of activities and engagements during Dementia Action Week:

Participation in a Dementia Walk, fostering interaction with local dementia groups and carers and promotion of fire safety resources tailored to the needs of people living with dementia and their carers.

Carers Week

Engagement with Carers Wales to raise awareness of SAWCs and interventions for carers and the people they support.

Summer Safety Campaign

Public engagement through events and digital platforms focusing on seasonal safety risks with targeted messaging around fire safety and disposable BBQs.

Further Actions:

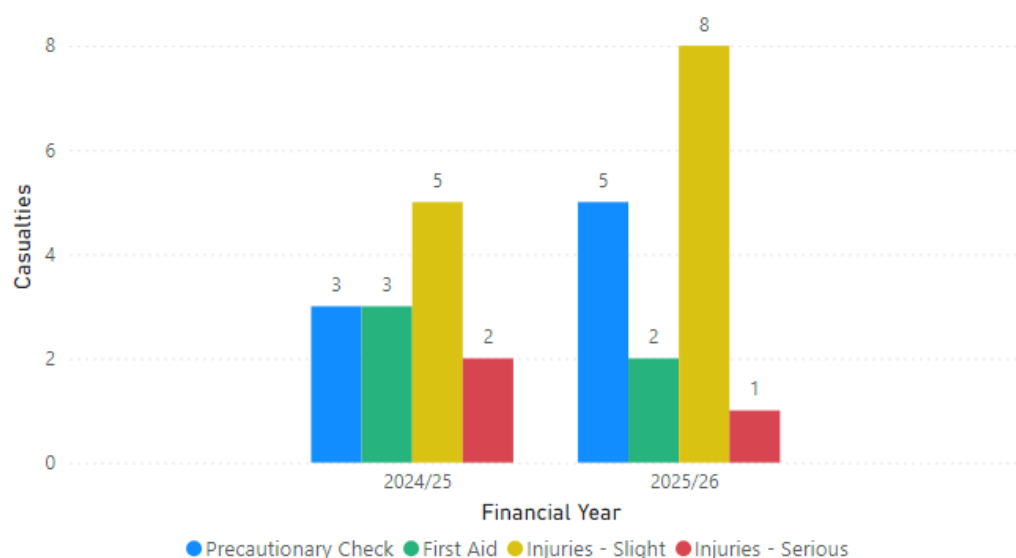
A further cooking campaign is planned for September.

Ongoing targeted campaigns based on emerging trends and the Campaign Steering Group.

6 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

16 people sustained injuries at **13** ADFs. No fatalities were recorded during the quarter.

The number of people injured as a consequence of an ADF has increased 23.1%. The number of ADFs where an injury was recorded has also increased by 18.2%.



Of the **16** casualties, **12** (75.0%) were 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation', **one** had 'breathing difficulties (other than 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation)', **one** sustained slight burn injuries, and **one** had a 'combination of burns and overcome by gas/smoke'. The **one** other casualty's injury type was recorded as 'Other'.

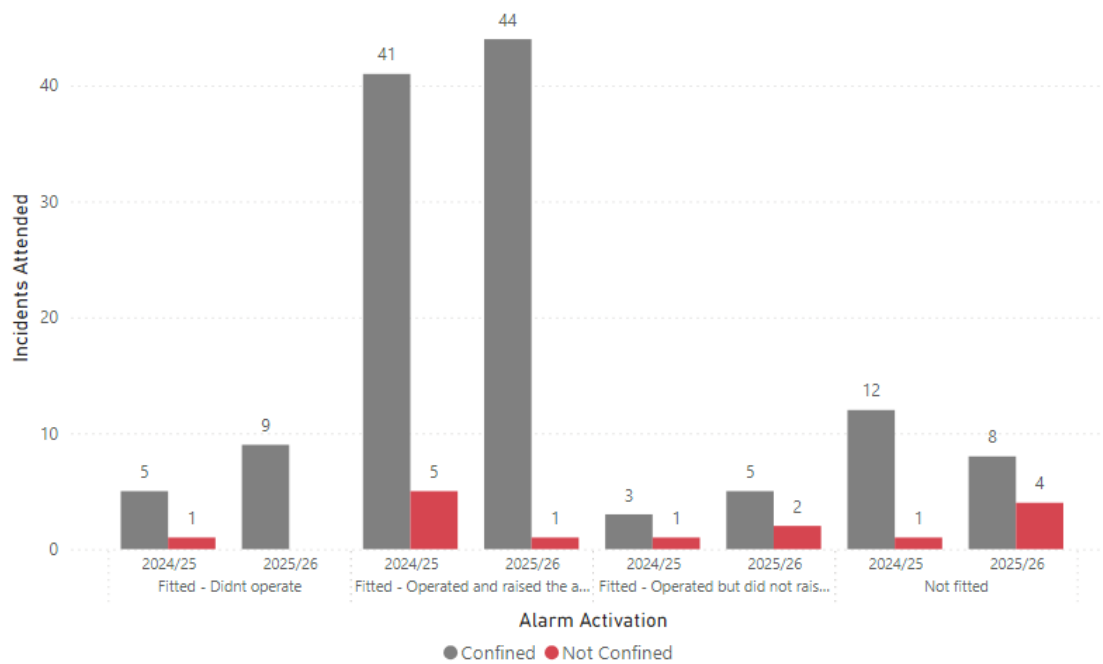
7 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **61** (83.6%) accidental dwelling fires attended.

Alarms operated and raised the alarm at **45** (61.6%) ADFs.

Alarms were not fitted at **12** of the ADFs attended.

Of the 73 ADFs attended, **66** were confined to the room of origin, and **7** were not confined.



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

Wholetime and Day Crewed stations now deliver two hours of targeted prevention activity using NHS Exeter data to identify households with residents aged 65+, 75+, and 80+, enabling focused SAWCs for those most at risk.

Post-incident hot spotting continues to inform tailored response levels.

The Campaign Steering Group is working with Corporate Communications to promote fire, road, and water safety across media platforms.

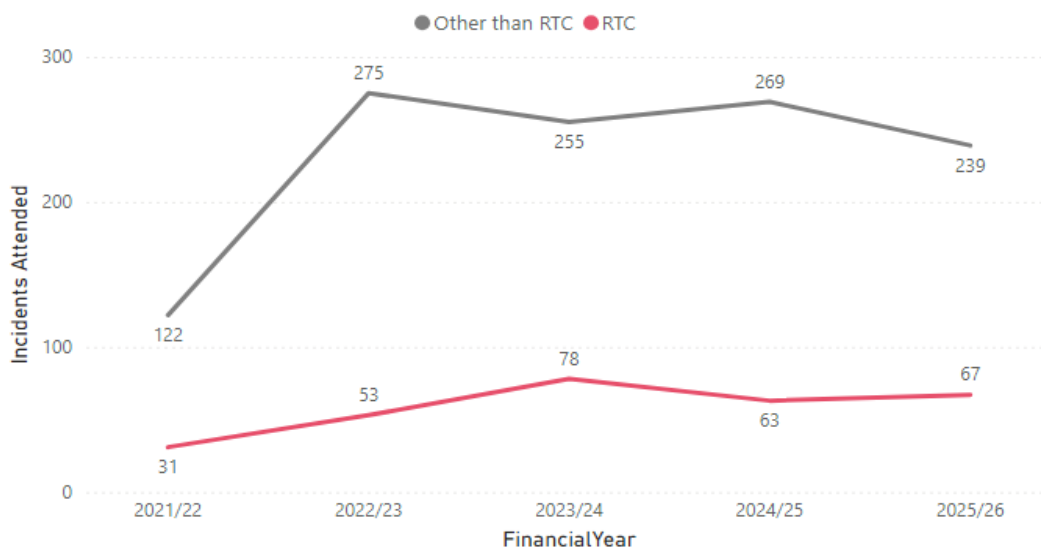
Educational Engagement – Q1:

- Primary Schools: **10** visits, **490** pupils
- Crucial Crew: **6** events, **790** pupils
- Cylch Meithrin: **3** visits, **70** children
- Deliberate Fire Assembly: **1** session, **170** pupils
- Phoenix: **4** courses, **33** attendees (**29** completions)
- Fire Setter Interventions: **36** referrals
- DangerPoint: **1,850** young people and **631** public visitors engaged via Home Safety scenario.

8 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

A total of **306** special service calls (including Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)) were attended. This is a decrease of 7.8%.

The number of RTCs attended increased slightly with **67** incidents attended.



Leading SSC categories (other than RTC) included:

- **116** 'Assist other agencies' incidents – an increase of 7.4% from 108.
- **31** 'Other rescue/release of persons' incidents – an increase of 19.2% from 26.
- **18** 'Effecting entry/exit' incidents – an increase of 20.0% from 15.
- **10** 'No action (not false alarm)' incidents – this remained consistent with the quarter one total from last year.

Despite this, one category did have a **decrease** in the number of incidents attended:

- **16** 'Lift Release' incidents – a decrease of 5.9% from 17.

Actions taken to date:

Prevention delivered nine sessions of *Olivia's Story*, engaging **274** young people aged 16–25, including outreach at Coleg Cambria and Army Cadet training camps. The team also collaborated with NWP on introducing Prime Markings to improve biker safety and co-delivered a speed awareness session at Prestatyn High School.

Operation Ugain conducted **470** roadside engagements targeting 20mph speeders, with **33** prosecutions. Welsh Government funding has been extended due to positive outcomes in reducing KSIs.

Two *BikerDown* sessions reached **35** motorcyclists, covering scene management, first aid, and accident prevention. The team supported Operation Darwin/Apex and hosted a multi-agency *Biker Brew* event in Corwen, a high-risk route for KSIs.

Water safety campaigns (*#BeWaterAware*, *Float to Live*) were promoted via social media and public engagement in Bangor. Training was delivered to DangerPoint rangers and Year 6 pupils at Ysgol Garnedd.

The *Spot the Dangers* child safety campaign raised awareness of water hazards through interactive sessions in schools and community groups.

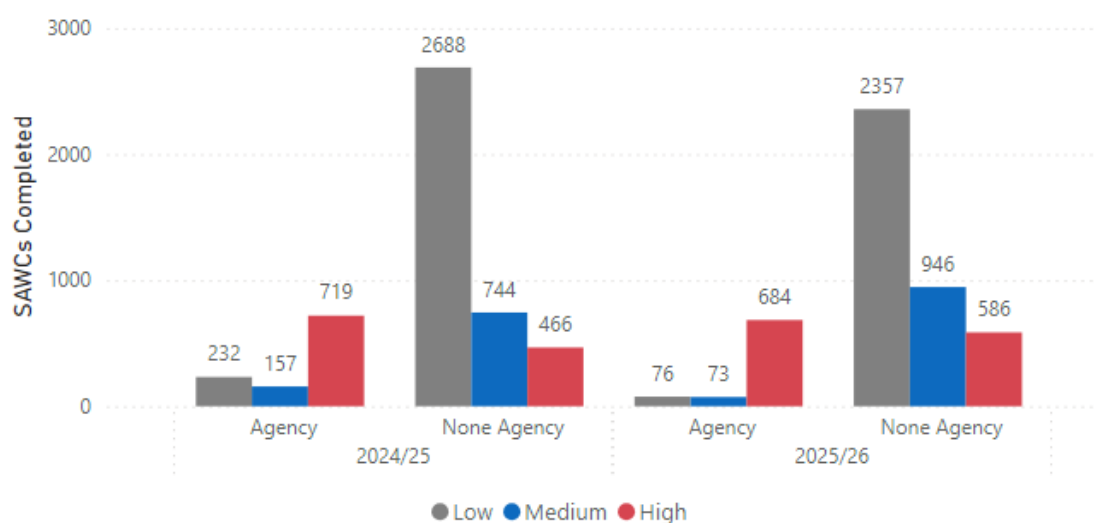
9 Safe and Well Checks

A total of **4,722** SAWCs were completed, of which:

- **1,270** (26.9%) were High priority, with **684** (53.9% of high priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **1,019** (21.6%) were Medium priority, with **73** (7.2% of medium priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.
- **2,433** (51.5%) were Low priority, with **76** (3.1% of low priority checks completed) coming from a partner agency.

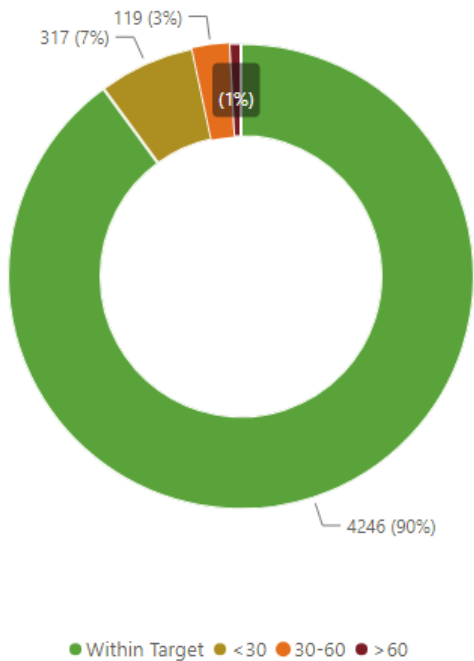
A total of **833** SAWCs completed were referred to the Service from an Agency – this equates to 17.6% of SAWCs completed.

There has been a **5.7%** decrease in the number of SAWCs completed compared with the same period last year, however, there has been a **7.2%** increase in the number of high priority SAWCs completed, and a **13.1%** increase in the number of medium priority SAWCs completed. The reduction in SAWCs completed is therefore on the back of a reduction in the number of low priority checks completed.

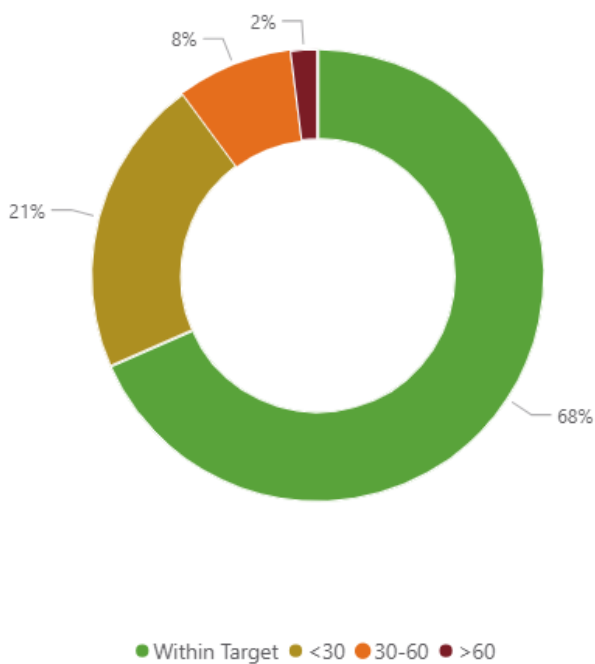


During quarter one, 90% of all SAWCs were completed within their target completion date. This equates to 4,246 of the SAWCs completed during the quarter.

All Checks by Days Over Target Completion



High Priority Checks by Days Over Target Completion



Actions taken to date:

Prevention staff continued engagement sessions with external partners to help ensure we receive only the most targetted referrals for SAWCs. Examples of those engaged with during quarter one include engagement with Carers Wales.

The Prevention Department has undertaken changes to the role of the Partnership Managers who have moved from area led responsibility to functional led responsibility. These being management of Home Fire Safety Support Workers, the management of partnership activity and engagement, and Safeguarding.

Information provided to stations regarding the correct recording of high, medium, and low risk occupiers and SAWCs has been issued and has impacted on recording.

Exeter data is used by wholetime stations to target those who are more vulnerable i.e 65 years old + when planning station prevention activities.

Prevention staff monitor all incidents on CadView in Tri-weekly meetings to establish if SAWCs have been carried out. Follow up actions are undertaken to ensure all incidents have SAWCs conducted and/or additional visits from HSSWs as required.

Quality assurance of SAWC have been undertaken to ensure good practice has been shared with whole-time and day crewed stations.

A new methodology of recording actions taken by prevention staff has been introduced to ensure all emerging trends and incidents of note have actions undertaken and completed.

Wholetime crews are undertaking two hours prevention activities to meet the six SAWCs per day target. Meetings with the Station Commanders and provision of information to enable them to performace manage targets of SAWCs undertaken by whole day crews.

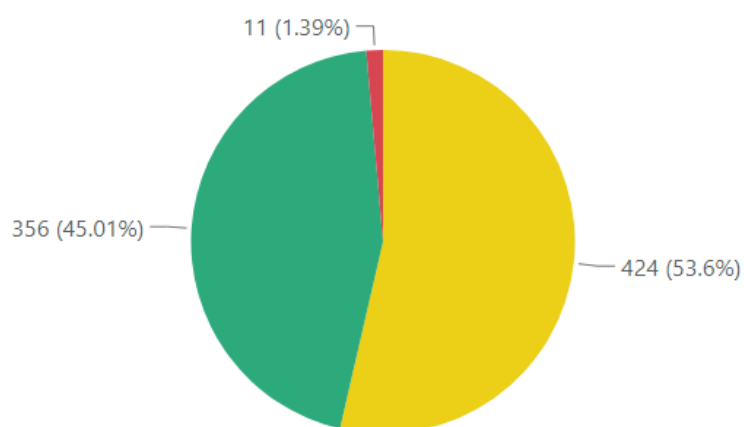
Our Protection Principle



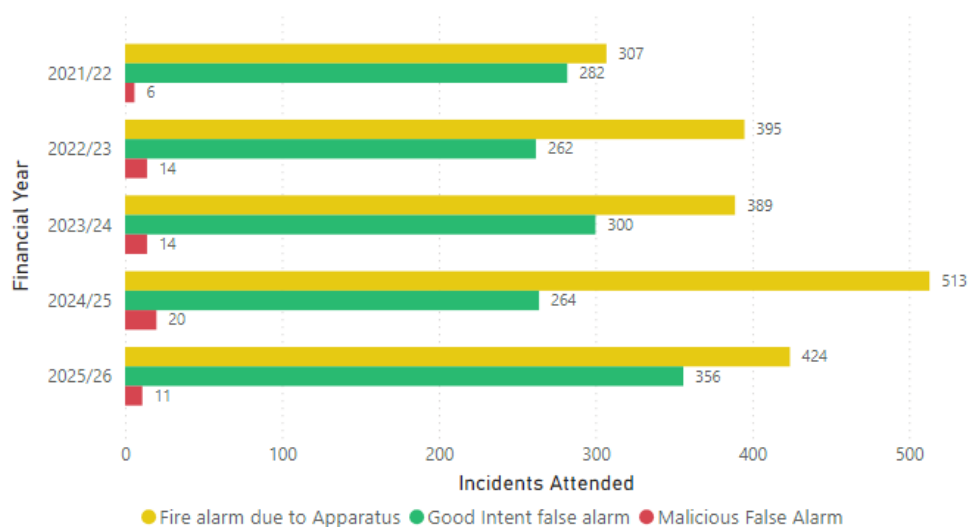
10 False Alarms

A total of **791** false alarms have been attended, which is a decrease of 0.8%. This total is inclusive of false alarms attended across all property types.

A rise has been recorded in Good Intent False Alarm incidents attended, with a 34.8% increase recorded from 264 to **356**. Despite this, a reduction can be seen in Malicious false alarms, which decreased 45.0% from 20 to **11**, and also in Fire alarm due to Apparatus incidents, which decreased 17.3% from 513 to **424**.

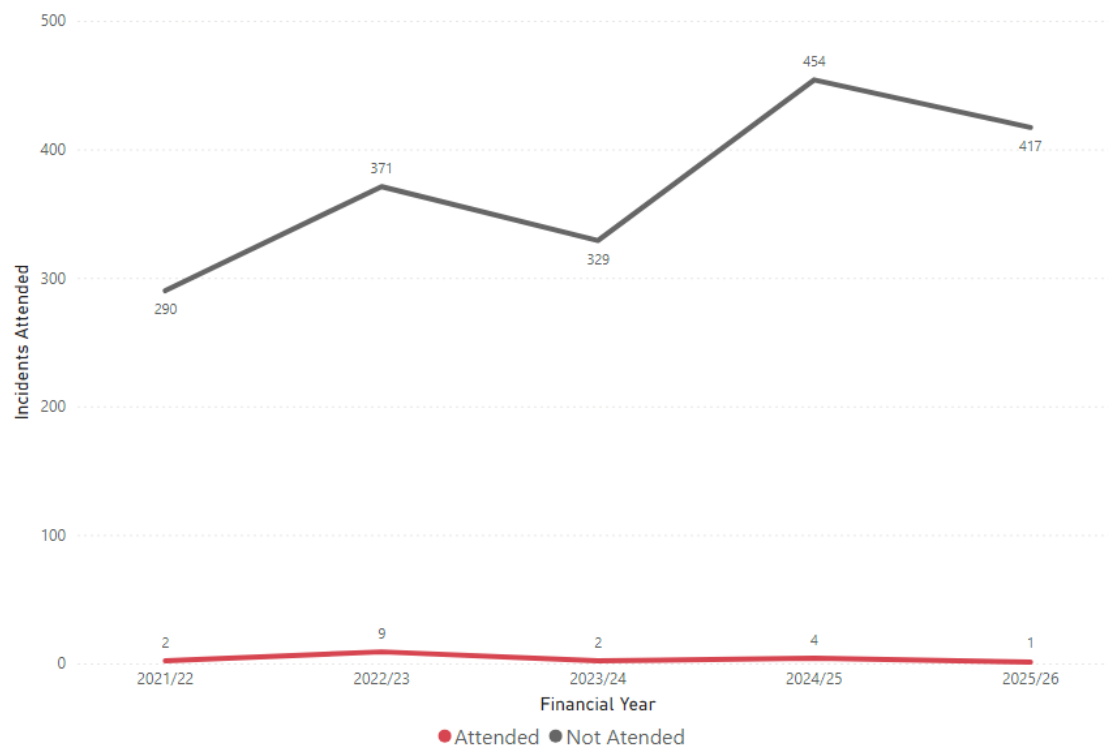


● Fire alarm due to Apparatus ● Good Intent false alarm ● Malicious False Alarm



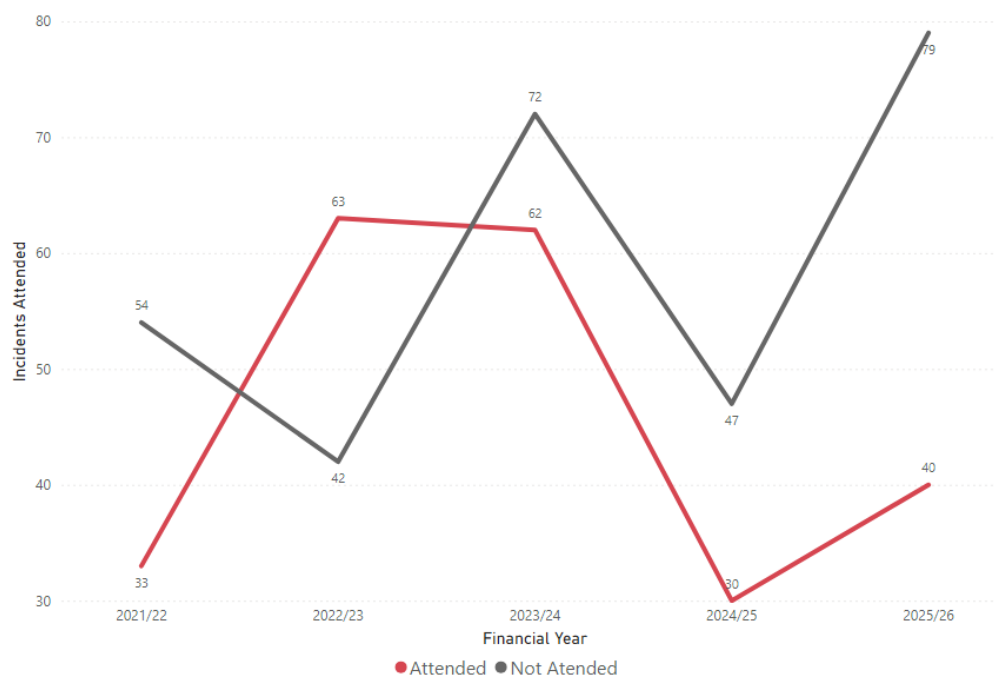
11 Commercial AFA calls

418 Commercial AFA calls were received during the reporting period. All but **one** were incidents that were not attended.



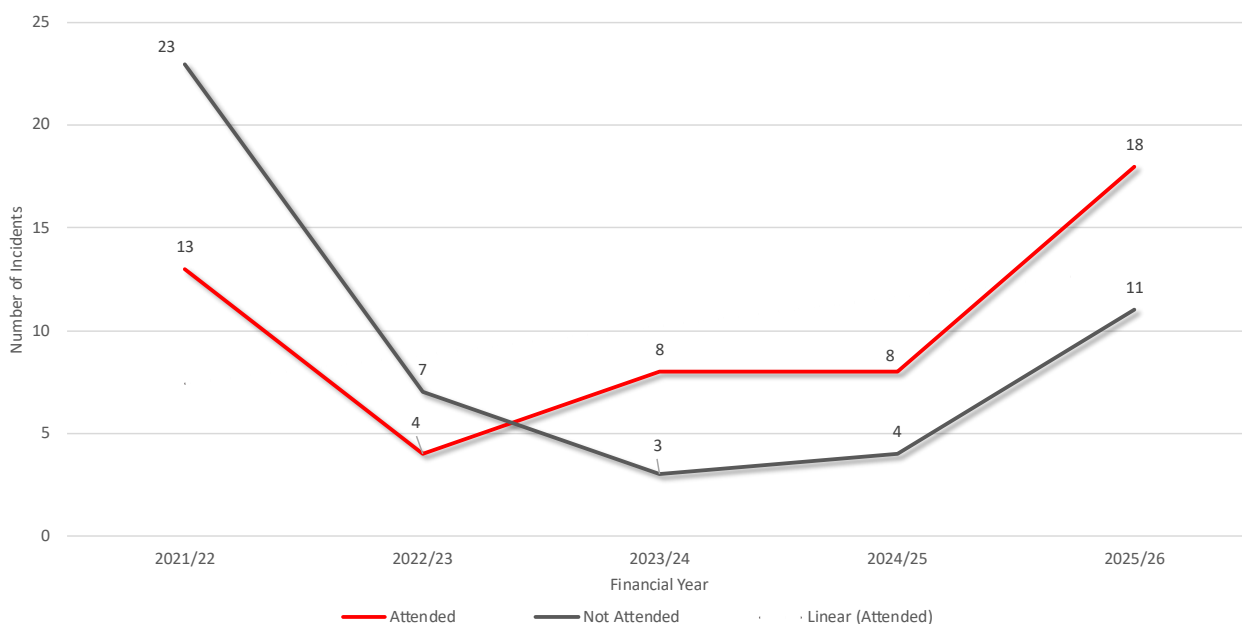
12 Hospital AFA calls

119 Hospital AFA calls were received. Whilst this was not the highest number of calls received during any quarter one period from the last five financial years, this quarter did see the highest number of Not Attended incidents.



13 HMP Berwyn

29 primary fires were started deliberately at HMP Berwyn, and of these **18** were attended - this is 125.0% more than last year.



Actions taken to date – Hospitals

Although there has been a surge in calls at hospitals over the reporting period, the calls attended are relatively stable and shows that the triage on site is working. Continued collaboration between partners is showing dividends.

Actions taken to date – HMP Berwyn

Again, a surge of calls and attended fires due to a known issue with disposable vapes being used for ignition purposes. This problem will be reduced with the introduction of an anti-tamper vape, which has been escalated to begin roll out during August due to the swell in incidents.

Our Response Principle



14 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	April	May	June	Q1
Weekday	6	6	5	6
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	14	14	12	13
Overall Average	9	9	7	8

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

The below table reflects the number of RDS starters and leavers during the quarter, compared to the same quarter of last year.

Quarter	Starters	Leavers	Position Headcount at Quarter End	Headcount (single role only)
Apr 2024 - Jun 2024	19	17	466	418
Apr 2025 - Jun 2025	16	10	493	431
+/-	-3	-7	+27	+13

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

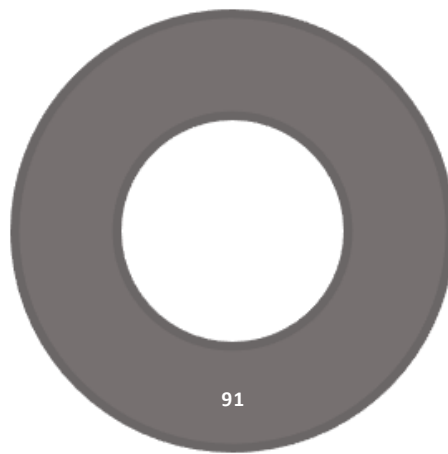
Leavers - the number of RDS leavers from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts, or migrations to the WDS.

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.

15 Planned 18 Pump Availability

■ 100% Pump Availability Met ■ 100% Pump Availability Not Met



Number of Days Planned Availability Achieved	
100% Pump Availability Met	
Weekday	61
Weekend/Bank Holiday	30

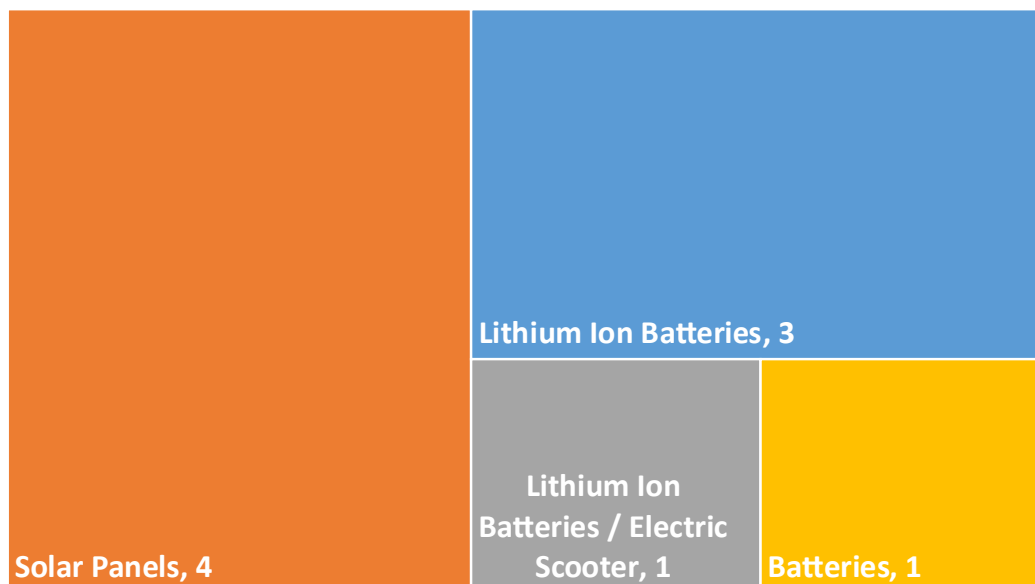
16 Emerging Technologies

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 below table summarises attended incidents relating to emerging technologies. This data covers the period of April 2025 to June 2025 and includes all incident categories.



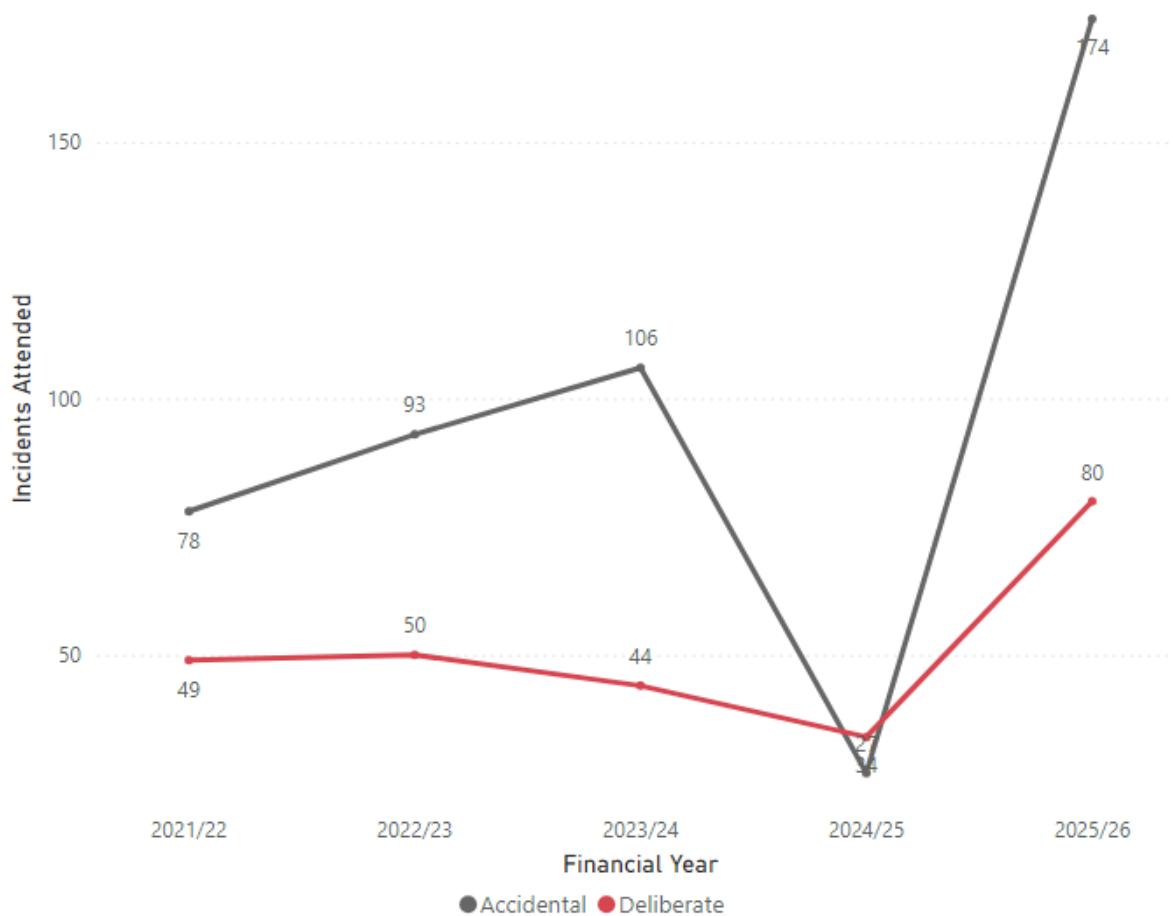
N.B. In some cases, the cause has been assumed rather than confirmed due to the nature of the incident.

Our Environment Principle



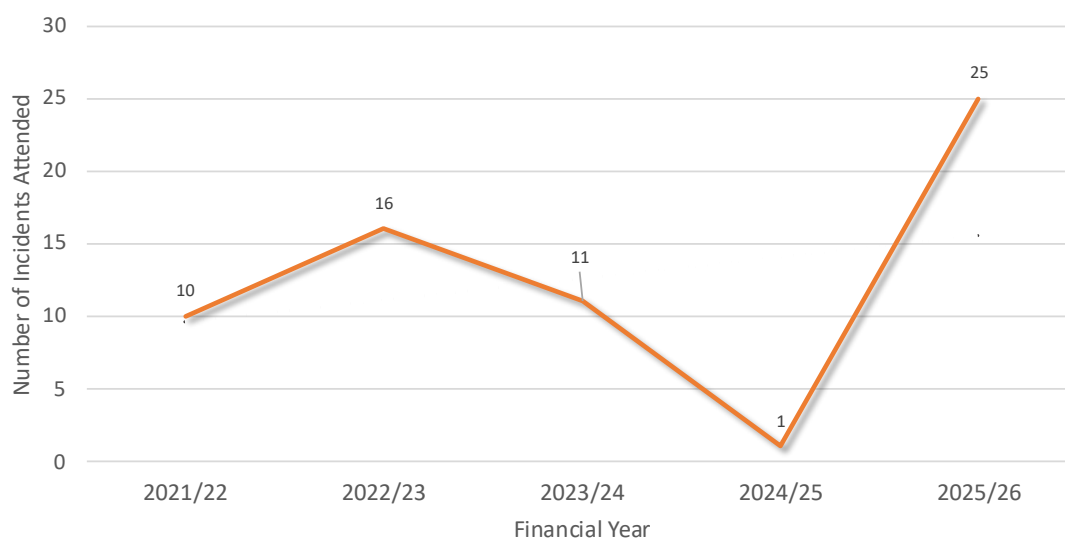
16 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

254 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded during the quarter, a 316.4% increase from 61. This is 115.3% above the three-year average of 118.



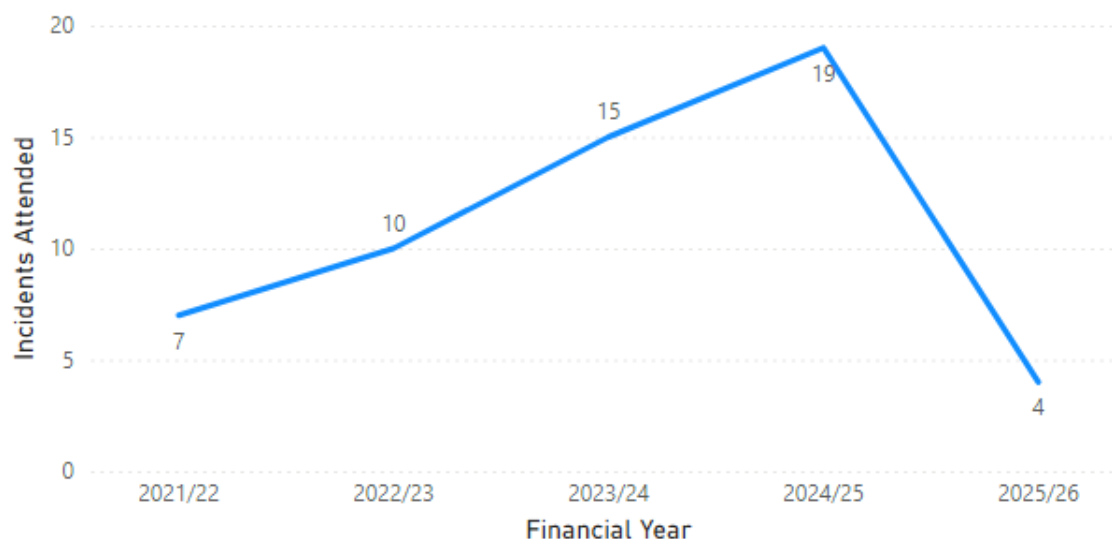
17 Wildfires

25 wildfires were attended during the quarter. This is an increase of 2400.0% and 177.8% above the three-year average of nine. As a result, the time spent monitoring wildfire incidents increased to over **606 hours**, compared with almost eight hours during the same period of the previous year.



18 Flooding

There were **four** flooding incidents attended, a 78.9% decrease from 19, and 11 incidents less than the three year average of 15.



One flooding incident attended was to make a location safe, **one** was to provide advice only, and another **two** incidents were attended to pump out.

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.

Report to	Executive Panel
Date	15 September 2025
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Tim Christensen, Environment and Climate Change Manager
Subject	Biodiversity Report and Plan



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To seek a recommendation for formal approval and adoption of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service)'s statutory Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Report (2022-2025) and the associated Biodiversity Action Plan (2025-2028), ensuring compliance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The legislative framework for environmental protection in Wales is undergoing a fundamental shift. The new Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill moves beyond the existing duty to "maintain and enhance" biodiversity to an explicit objective to "halt and reverse" its decline. This change elevates biodiversity from a compliance exercise to a core strategic consideration for the Service.
- 3 The review of the 2022-2025 period demonstrates the Service's competence in meeting this challenge. Key achievements include the trial of sustainable Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel and the phase-out of persistent "forever chemical" firefighting foams to protect water quality.
- 4 The proposed 2025-2028 Action Plan represents a step-change in ambition, moving from compliance to proactive leadership in nature recovery. Flagship initiatives include a "Greening Our Stations" programme to convert at least 15% of suitable mown grassland to wildflower meadows, a robust 2-for-1 tree replacement policy, and the adoption of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) principle for all new capital projects.

RECOMMENDATION

- 5 It is recommended that Members:
- i) **Endorse the draft Biodiversity Report and Plan for approval by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority); and**
 - ii) **Approve the publication of the Report and Plan on the Service's website until it has been considered for ratification by the Authority.**

BACKGROUND

- 6 The Authority has a statutory duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to "maintain and enhance biodiversity" and promote ecosystem resilience. This is reinforced by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, with this plan directly contributing to the "A Resilient Wales" national goal. The legislative landscape is intensifying following the Senedd's declaration of a nature emergency. The new Environment Bill (June 2025) will establish a legal objective to "halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity," raising the standard for compliance. This plan is designed to proactively align the Service with this higher standard.

INFORMATION

- 7 The Service has made significant progress by embedding biodiversity within its overarching Environmental Strategy 2023-2030. This approach has delivered notable achievements:
- **Strategic Integration:** Biodiversity co-benefits are now delivered through core decarbonisation plans for power, heat, and fleet, demonstrating a mature, holistic approach.
 - **Pollution Prevention:** The phase-out of environmentally persistent fluorosurfactant foams has been initiated, and sustainable, palm oil-free HVO fuel is being trialled to avoid contributing to deforestation.
 - **Habitat Enhancement:** Pollinator-friendly habitats have been created at eight fire stations through a revised grounds maintenance contract, and swift nesting boxes have been installed at two stations in partnership with the North Wales Wildlife Trust.
 - **Evidence-Based Management:** A comprehensive Tree Inventory across all 47 sites has been completed, alongside a risk assessment for Ash Die-back, enabling a targeted and proactive management plan.

8 The new action plan moves beyond foundational work towards delivering ambitious, measurable nature recovery. Key commitments include:

- **Habitat Creation:** A "Greening Our Stations" programme will convert a minimum of 15% of suitable mown grassland to wildflower meadows or for native tree planting by March 2028.
- **Species & Habitat Safeguarding:** The Ash Die-back management plan will be implemented, replacing every removed tree with two new native trees. A formal "Biodiversity Net Gain" principle will be adopted for all new capital projects from April 2026, ensuring developments leave nature in a better state.
- **Embedding Culture:** A mandatory environmental e-learning module for senior staff will be launched, alongside a staff-led "Biodiversity Champions" network.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The plan directly supports the national goal of "A Resilient Wales" by maintaining and enhancing a biodiverse natural environment with healthy, functioning ecosystems. It embodies the five ways of working (long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, involvement) outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Budget	Cost of planned biodiversity enhancements to the Service estate is £10,000 over three years. The adoption of Biodiversity Net Gain for future capital projects will be integrated into project planning and costing from the outset, representing an efficient, preventative approach to managing environmental impact rather than a retrospective cost
Legal	Approval is a legal necessity to fulfil the Service's statutory duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The plan's proactive stance ensures the Service is well-prepared for the heightened requirements of the forthcoming Environment Bill, mitigating the risk of future non-compliance and scrutiny from the new Office of Environmental Governance Wales (OEGW).
Staffing	None
Equalities / Human Rights / Welsh Language	None
Risks	• Legal non-compliance • The plan actively manages physical and financial risks. The Ash Die-back plan mitigates the health and safety risk of falling trees on Service property. Similarly, phasing out "forever chemical" foams prevents future land contamination, avoiding potentially significant remediation costs and liabilities.



Environment (Wales) Act 2016: Part 1 – Section 6
The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

Biodiversity Report and Plan September 2025

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Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh

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1. Introduction And Strategic Context

1.1. Our Commitment to a Resilient Wales

- 1.1.1. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (“NWFRS”, “the Service”) is fundamentally committed to protecting the communities, heritage, and unique natural environment of North Wales. This commitment is integral to the Service’s core mission of “Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit”. The health and resilience of our ecosystems - from the mountains of Eryri to our coastlines and urban green spaces - are inextricably linked to the safety and well-being of the people we serve. Healthy ecosystems provide essential services, including clean air and water, flood mitigation, and support for livelihoods, which are all critical components of community resilience.
- 1.1.2. This document serves as the Service’s statutory Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Report for the period 2022-2025. It transparently details the progress made since the publication of the 2022 report and sets a clear, ambitious, and integrated path forward through a new Action Plan for 2025-2028. It demonstrates how the Service is embedding environmental stewardship into every facet of its operations, from strategic estate management to frontline emergency response.

1.2. Legislative and Policy Drivers for Action

- 1.2.1. The Service’s actions are guided by a robust and evolving legislative framework in Wales, which places a clear responsibility on public bodies to lead in environmental protection.
- 1.2.2. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 establishes the primary statutory driver for this report. Part 1, Section 6 of the Act places a duty on all public authorities to “seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems”. This duty requires the Service to embed consideration for biodiversity not only in direct land management but also in all policies, plans, programmes, and day-to-day activities.
- 1.2.3. This duty is reinforced by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which sets out a national vision for a sustainable Wales. This report directly contributes to the “Resilient Wales” goal: a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems. Furthermore, the development and implementation of the actions within this plan are guided by the Act’s five ways of working: ensuring a long-term perspective, focusing on prevention, integrating biodiversity with other objectives, collaborating with partners, and involving stakeholders in the process.

- 1.2.4. The legislative and political context has continued to mature since 2022. The Senedd has declared a nature emergency, and a recent Audit Wales report has highlighted that many public authorities have not demonstrated sufficient priority in complying with their biodiversity duties.
- 1.2.5. In response, the Welsh Government introduced the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill in June 2025. This landmark legislation significantly strengthens the existing framework. It establishes a new independent oversight body, the Office of Environmental Governance Wales (OEGW), to ensure public authorities comply with environmental law.
- 1.2.6. Crucially, it also introduces a clear “environmental objective” for Wales, which includes “contributing to halting and reversing the decline in biodiversity”. This shift from a duty to “maintain and enhance” to an active responsibility to “halt and reverse” decline raises the standard for compliance and public expectation. This 2025 report is therefore designed not only to meet existing duties but to proactively align the Service with this more ambitious and urgent national agenda.

1.3. An Integrated Environmental Strategy

- 1.3.1. Recognising that environmental challenges are interconnected, the Service has moved beyond treating biodiversity as a standalone issue. The Environmental Strategy 2023-2030 provides the overarching framework that integrates biodiversity considerations across all areas of environmental performance. This strategy acknowledges that the Service’s most significant impacts and opportunities lie within its core functions: how it powers its buildings, fuels its vehicles, and manages its resources.
- 1.3.2. This Biodiversity Report and Action Plan is therefore a central component of this wider strategy, supported by a suite of dedicated implementation plans that serve as primary delivery mechanisms for biodiversity co-benefits. These include:
- Power Decarbonisation Plan
 - Heating Decarbonisation Plan
 - Fleet Decarbonisation Plan
 - Waste Reduction Plan
 - Residual Carbon Emissions Plan
- 1.3.3. By implementing these plans, the Service is not only reducing its carbon footprint but also tackling key pressures on habitats and species. This integrated approach ensures that biodiversity is embedded in major capital and operational decisions, fulfilling the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and delivering a more effective and holistic response to the climate and nature emergencies.



2. Review of Progress (2022-2025)

2.1. Delivering on Our 2022 Commitments

2.1.1. This section provides a transparent account of the actions undertaken by the Service between November 2022 and November 2025 to meet the commitments set out in the previous Biodiversity Report and Action Plan. The table below summarises progress against each action:

Table 1: Progress Against 2022-2025 Biodiversity Action Plan

NRAP Objective	Action from 2022 Plan	Summary of Progress (2022-2025)	Outcome / Evidence
1. Engage and Support	Develop policy to replace the Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP).	A comprehensive Environmental Strategy 2023-2030 and five supporting decarbonisation and waste reduction plans have been developed, consulted on, and formally adopted.	Published Environmental Strategy and associated plans.
2. Safeguard Species & Habitats	Undertake new-build or major refurbishment works to BREEAM certification where feasible.	The principle of sustainable development, including protecting ecological features, continues to guide all capital works.	All relevant projects are assessed against BREEAM or equivalent sustainability standards.

3. Increase Resilience & Restore Habitats	Implement the Grounds Maintenance and Biodiversity Enhancement Contract (commenced April 2020).	The contract has been fully operational, delivering a reduced cutting regime at designated sites to promote pollinator habitats.	Contract management records; photographic evidence of habitat changes at eight fire stations.
4. Tackle Key Pressures	A risk assessment to the Service's Ash Trees from Ash die-back to take place by the end of 2023.	The risk assessment was completed as planned. Findings have been analysed and a management plan is being implemented.	Internal risk assessment report and management plan.
	End the use of long-chain (C6 and C8) fluorosurfactant firefighting foams.	A programme for the phase-out and certified disposal of existing stocks is underway, with procurement of fluorine-free alternatives in progress.	Procurement records and disposal plans.
	Continue ongoing work around Wildfire and Arson Prevention.	The Wildfires lead and Arson Reduction Team have continued extensive partnership work with landowners, NRW, and Police to reduce wildfires.	Partnership meeting records; public engagement campaign materials (e.g., Llantysilio).
5. Improve Evidence	Maintain and update the Biodiversity Inventory of the NWFRS estate.	The inventory, including a photographic log from 2021, is maintained by the Facilities Management Department and updated as projects are completed.	Digital inventory and photographic records.
	All trees to be recorded in a Tree Inventory (ongoing).	A comprehensive inventory of all trees across the 47-site estate has been completed, recording species, location, and condition.	Completed Tree Inventory database.
6. Governance	Present reports prepared under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to the Fire and Rescue Authority for approval.	This report and its associated action plan will be presented to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for formal approval prior to publication.	Authority meeting agendas and minutes.

2.2. Case Studies in Biodiversity Enhancement

- 2.2.1. Beyond the strategic actions, the Service has delivered several tangible projects on the ground that enhance local biodiversity and engage communities:
- 2.2.2. **Grounds Maintenance and Habitat Creation:** In line with the Grounds Maintenance and Biodiversity Enhancement Contract, the grass cutting regime was significantly reduced at eight fire stations: Abergele, Chirk, Conwy, Flint, Harlech, Llanfairfechan, Prestatyn, and Rhosneigr. By shifting from fortnightly cuts to a simple spring and autumn cut, these areas have been allowed to grow throughout the spring and summer, providing a vital habitat and food source for pollinators and other insects.
- 2.2.3. **Protecting Species:** In partnership with the North Wales Wildlife Trust, we installed clusters of swift nesting boxes at Colwyn Bay and Llanfairfechan fire stations in December 2023. By offering a protected space for breeding, nesting boxes contribute to the conservation of swifts, who are loyal to their nesting sites and return to the same locations year after year. Swifts are colony nesters, so installing multiple nest boxes close together can encourage the formation or expansion of colonies, making them more resilient.
- 2.2.4. **Community and Partnership Engagement:** As well as ongoing partnership work through the North Wales Resilience Forum, the Service has supported pan-Wales collaborative initiatives, most notably Operation Dawns Glaw and the associated #WildfireWise campaign. These multi-agency efforts, involving partners like Natural Resources Wales, police forces, and local authorities, ensure a consistent and efficient approach, delivering tailored safety messages to the public to prevent accidental fires and providing technical guidance to landowners on safe land management.



2.3. Embedding Biodiversity in Core Service Functions

- 2.3.1. The Service's most significant contributions to biodiversity in this reporting period have been achieved by integrating environmental considerations into large-scale strategic and operational changes. The decarbonisation of the Service is now the primary driver of positive biodiversity co-benefits, demonstrating a mature and holistic approach to environmental management.
- 2.3.2. The Service's Fleet Decarbonisation Plan is aimed at tackling one of its largest sources of emissions. A successful test of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) has been completed, and a station-based trial is now underway with a view to a full rollout. Critically, the procurement policy for HVO specifies that it must be derived entirely from waste biomass, with no palm oil content, to ensure it creates no "land use additionality". This conscious decision prevents the Service's fuel demand from contributing to the conversion of natural habitats into agricultural land for biofuel crops, a major driver of biodiversity loss globally.
- 2.3.3. The Power Decarbonisation Plan prioritises the installation of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems on the rooftops of fire stations and other buildings. The Service aims to install solar panels at the majority of its sites. By generating renewable energy on the existing built footprint of its 47 properties, the Service reduces its reliance on grid electricity and mitigates the pressure to develop large-scale solar farms on greenfield sites, thereby preserving land for nature and agriculture.
- 2.3.4. The Waste Reduction Plan sets a target to eliminate single-use plastic items such as cups and cutlery from all sites by 2025. This action directly reduces a key source of plastic pollution that can harm terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. The broader strategy of moving up the waste hierarchy—prioritising prevention, reuse, and recycling—minimises the volume of waste sent to landfill, reducing the associated habitat loss and pollution from landfill sites.
- 2.3.5. The Service has committed to ending the use of long-chain fluorosurfactant firefighting foams. These substances, often known as "forever chemicals," are highly persistent in the environment and can bioaccumulate in wildlife, causing significant ecological harm. Phasing out these foams and replacing them with fluorine-free alternatives is a critical preventative action to protect the water quality and ecosystem health of North Wales.
- 2.3.6. The work of the Service's dedicated Wildfires lead officer and the Arson Reduction Team represents a primary biodiversity protection function. Through proactive engagement with farmers on the Heather and Grass Burning Code and multi-agency partnerships to tackle deliberate fire-setting, the Service is directly protecting thousands of hectares of irreplaceable habitat from catastrophic damage each year. This preventative work is one of the most effective contributions the Service makes to safeguarding the resilience of ecosystems across North Wales.

2.4. Building Our Evidence Base

- 2.4.1. To ensure future actions are targeted and effective, the Service has completed two foundational evidence-gathering projects outlined in the 2022 plan.
- 2.4.2. Tree Inventory: A comprehensive inventory of trees across the entire NWFRS estate is now complete. This inventory provides a detailed baseline of the number, species, location, and general condition of the Service's tree stock. This data is essential for developing a strategic approach to tree management, identifying opportunities for new planting, and calculating the carbon sequestration value of the estate's green infrastructure.
- 2.4.3. Ash Die-back Assessment: As planned, a risk assessment of all Ash trees on the estate was completed by the end of 2023 to evaluate the impact of Ash die-back disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*). The assessment identified trees that pose a potential risk to property or people and has informed the development of a specific management plan. This plan will guide the safe removal of dangerous trees and, crucially, ensure that they are replaced with suitable native species to maintain canopy cover and habitat connectivity.





3. Biodiversity Action Plan (2025-2028)

3.1. Our Ambition for Nature Recovery

- 3.1.1. This Action Plan sets out the Service's specific, measurable, and time-bound commitments for the next three years. It builds upon the progress and learning from the previous period and accelerates action in line with the heightened urgency of the nature emergency. The plan is structured around the six core objectives of the Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP). It also aligns with the national ambition to protect and effectively manage at least 30% of Wales's land and sea for nature by 2030 ("30 by 30"), demonstrating how the Service's estate can contribute to this collective goal.
- 3.1.2. A key principle of this plan is the integration of biodiversity with wider environmental objectives. Many of the actions outlined below will not only enhance habitats and support species but will also contribute to the Service's decarbonisation and climate adaptation goals.

3.2. Actions to Meet the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) Objectives

- 3.2.1. The following table details the specific actions the Service will undertake between 2025 and 2028 to deliver on its biodiversity duty and contribute to the NRAP objectives.

Table 2: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Action Plan 2025-2028

NRAP Objective	Action from 2022 Plan	Summary of Progress (2022-2025)	Outcome / Evidence
1. Engage and support participation	Develop and roll out a mandatory environmental awareness e-learning module for senior staff.	To embed a baseline understanding of the Section 6 duty and the importance of biodiversity across the entire workforce, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.	75% of designated staff complete the module by March 2027.
	Launch a staff-led "Biodiversity Champions" network.	To empower enthusiastic staff to lead on local initiatives, promote awareness, and provide feedback from the ground up, fostering greater involvement.	At least one champion appointed in each of the three geographical areas (West, Central, East).
2. Safeguard species and habitats	Implement the Ash Die-back Management Plan.	To safely manage the risks from diseased trees while ensuring a net gain in canopy cover through a strategic replacement planting programme using diverse, native species.	All high-risk trees managed by end of 2026; 100% of removed trees replaced on a 2-for-1 basis by 2028.
	Formalise policy for ecological surveys at sensitive sites.	To ensure that any works near designated sites or areas of known ecological value (e.g., Great Crested Newt habitat near St Asaph HQ) are preceded by appropriate ecological assessment to prevent harm.	Policy integrated into standard operating procedures for all capital and maintenance works by April 2026.

3. Increase resilience and restore habitats	Launch a "Greening Our Stations" programme.	To convert a significant portion of low-value amenity grassland into habitats that support biodiversity and sequester carbon, directly contributing to NRAP and decarbonisation goals.	Minimum 15% of mown grassland across suitable sites converted to wildflower meadows or used for native tree planting by March 2028.
	Install new biodiversity features across the estate.	To provide targeted support for specific species by creating nesting, roosting, and hibernation sites across a wide geographical spread of Service properties.	A minimum of 10 new features (e.g., bird boxes, bat boxes, insect hotels, log piles) installed by March 2028.
4. Tackle key pressures	Complete the phase-out of long-chain fluorosurfactant firefighting foams.	To eliminate a significant source of persistent environmental pollution from Service operations, protecting water quality and ecosystem health.	100% of legacy foam stocks are replaced and disposed of via certified waste streams by March 2027.
	Enhance partnership work on wildfire prevention.	To continue protecting large-scale habitats from fire damage through targeted education and engagement with landowners and the public.	Regular attendance by the Service at North Wales Resilience Forum Environmental Risk Group Meetings within the report period.
5. Improve evidence	Conduct an estate-wide survey for Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).	To build on the existing Japanese Knotweed control programme by identifying and mapping other high-risk INNS to inform a comprehensive management plan.	Survey completed and INNS management plan produced by March 2028.

6. Governance and support	Adopt a "Biodiversity Net Gain" (BNG) principle for all new capital projects.	To move beyond mitigating harm to ensuring that all major new developments leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before, aligning with best practice.	BNG requirement included in all relevant tender documentation for capital projects initiated from April 2026 onwards.
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4. Governance, Monitoring, and Future Outlook

4.1. Measuring Our Impact

4.1.1. To ensure the successful delivery of the 2025-2028 Action Plan and to demonstrate accountability, the Service will implement a robust monitoring framework. This framework will track progress against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) detailed in Table 2, shifting the focus from simply completing tasks to measuring tangible outcomes for biodiversity. Key metrics will include:

- Hectares of habitat restored or created through the "Greening Our Stations" programme.
- Number and type of new biodiversity features installed.
- Percentage of staff who have completed the mandatory environmental awareness training.
- Number of capital projects where the Biodiversity Net Gain principle has been applied.

4.1.2. This data-led approach will allow the Service to assess the effectiveness of its interventions, adapt its strategy where necessary, and provide clear evidence of its contribution to nature recovery in Wales. This directly addresses the need, identified by Audit Wales, for public bodies to have effective measures to understand their progress towards environmental objectives.



4.2. Accountability and Reporting

- 4.2.1. The governance structure for delivering this plan will ensure clear lines of responsibility and oversight. The day-to-day delivery of biodiversity actions is administered through the Environmental and Energy Conservation Section of the Facilities Management Department, in conjunction with the Environment and Climate Change Manager. Overall accountability rests with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer responsible for the Environment portfolio.
- 4.2.2. The Service will publish its next statutory Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Report before the end of 2028, in accordance with the three-year reporting cycle mandated by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

4.3. A Continuing Commitment to a Nature-Rich Wales

- 4.3.1. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service recognises that its duty to protect the environment is a continuous journey, not a short-term project. The climate and nature emergencies demand sustained, ambitious, and integrated action from all sectors of society. This report and action plan represent a significant step forward in the Service's commitment, embedding biodiversity into the heart of its strategic planning and daily operations.