EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

2025 - 2030

Reducing Risk, Saving Lives - Together

LOYALTY SERVICE COURAGE

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Foreword

Chair of East Sussex Fire Authority Amanda Evans

I am proud to serve as the Chair of East Sussex Fire Authority. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service has a simple purpose: Reducing Risk, Saving Lives – Together.

I want to ensure that this core purpose is at the front of our minds when we make decisions, and this plan sets out how this can be done.

The Authority has experienced first-hand the challenges which face all public authorities and services. Members have made difficult decisions to ensure the financial sustainability of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) in order for us to keep investing where it is needed most.

We know the importance of working with other organisations and understanding how East Sussex and Brighton and Hove could change in the future.

This plan sets out how we will continue to build on our success for the benefit of our communities.

Chief Fire Officer Mark Matthews

I am pleased to present our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Understanding our communities is vital for us – we are not complacent when making decisions about our resources or assume what has worked elsewhere in the country will work here. We are unique in so many ways which affect the way we approach reducing risk.

For example, the number of high-rise buildings is much greater than many services of a similar size. The majority of our residents live along our coast, and we have many beautiful rural communities with different needs. While we have no motorways, we have miles of smaller roads, criss-crossing the countryside.

We remain committed to delivering Prevention, Protection and Response activities to reduce risks in these areas.

We are committed to building on our successes.

We have one of the fastest emergency responses in the country. We continue to visit homes, offering critical safety advice and support as well as enforcing fire safety legislation in a proportionate way to ensure residents are safe in their homes.

We deliver a comprehensive suite of youth engagement activities. This includes a thriving Fire Cadets programme, working with youngsters from all different backgrounds. We invite you to share your thoughts and feedback on this work over the coming years.

Introduction to our Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2030

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is governed by East Sussex Fire Authority - a statutory body made up of local councillors which oversees the policy and service delivery.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities.

This includes producing a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

This plan identifies risks facing the community, such as the risk of a fire in homes, business, having a road traffic collision or risks to the environment.

It then describes what we will do to reduce those risks, for example to run safety initiatives, and how we will respond to fires and other emergencies within our available resources.

In short, it is a key planning document and describes how we will keep our residents, and those that work or travel through our area, safe over the coming years.

A CRMP should have a lifespan of at least three years and be developed in consultation with the public, fire and rescue staff, local partners and representative bodies.

Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004:

"Fire and Rescue Authorities must work to prevent fires, protect people and property from fires, and respond to other emergencies.

They should also educate the public about fire safety and take steps to reduce the risk of fires happening."

In addition to these legal duties, we closely follow the Fire Standards Board professional standards and other sources of good practice, such as His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). HMICFRS independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and fire and rescue services, and how well they manage their people – in the public interest.

This CRMP sets out how we will achieve our refreshed Core Purpose:

Reducing Risks, Saving Lives – Together.

It is focused on improving public safety, reducing the number of incidents, and saving lives, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our communities. We can only deliver this by working together with our own staff, partners, other public bodies and the communities we serve.
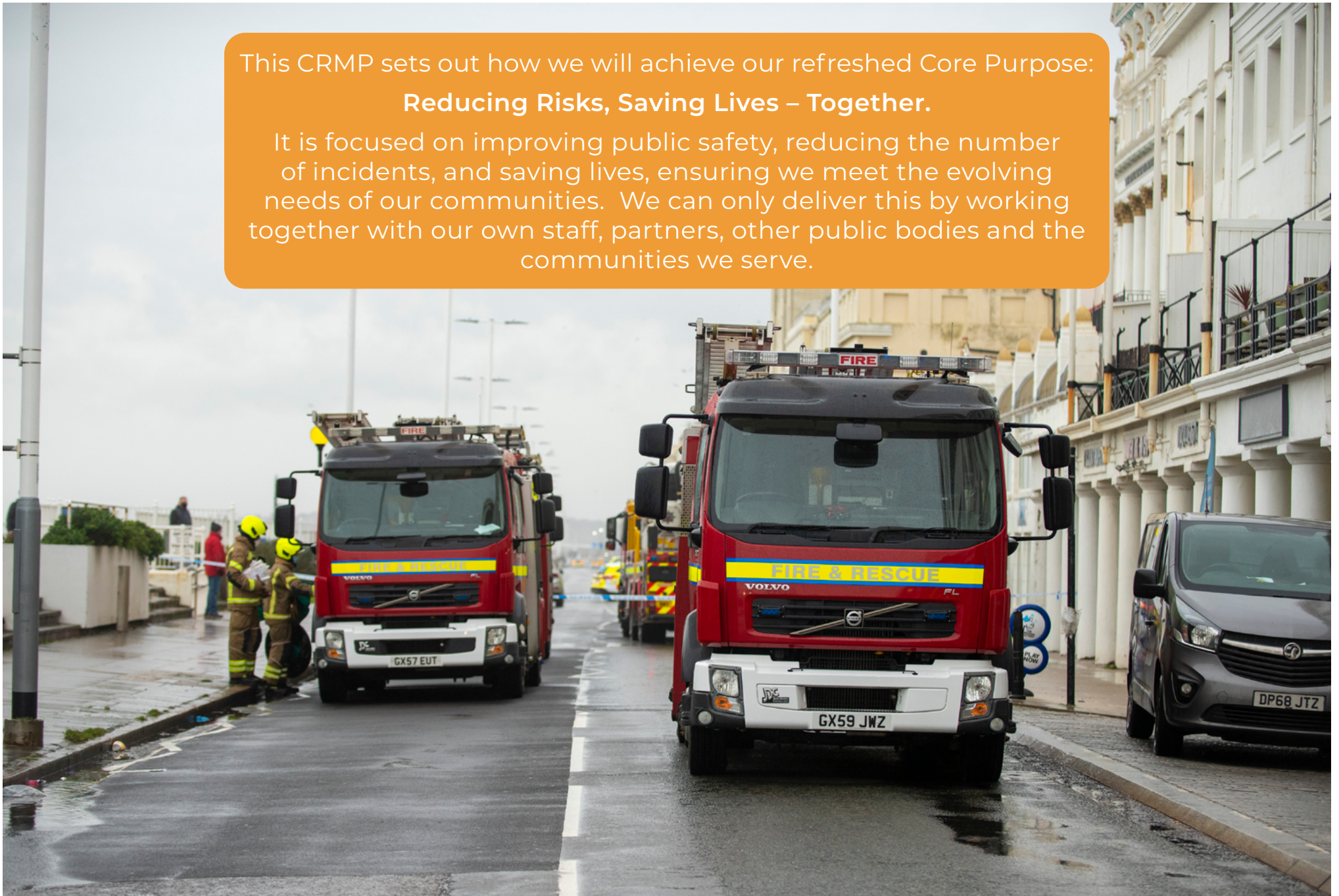
Our Purpose, Values and Priorities

We have refreshed our Core Purpose and Values.

Our new purpose reflects better what we stand for and how all the activity across our Service is directed to improving how we serve the public.

We are here to **reduce risk and save lives**, and we do that better **together** when we work closely with the public, our communities and our partners.

Our Values are our guiding behavioural principles that shape our Service's culture, support our decision-making and set expectations on everyone in relation to our conduct and the way in which we work with each other and with our communities.

We have reviewed our values of Pride and Accountability, with Integrity and Respect.

We still hold these to be true. Our work to continually improve our Service culture, and our professionalism in everything we do, has resulted in us expanding our driving values that now become embedded within our badge.

Empathy

Selflessness

Perseverance

Adaptability

These qualities inform the five Service priorities we will focus on:

1. Delivering our Community Offer

2. Refining the Enabling Offer

3. Achieving Financial Sustainability

4. Sustaining a High Performing Workforce

5. Improving Service Performance

OUR PRIORITIES

DELIVERING OUR COMMUNITY OFFER

ACHIEVING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

REFINING OUR ENABLING OFFER

SUSTAINING A HIGH PERFORMING WORKFORCE

IMPROVING SERVICE PERFORMANCE

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY

RESPECT

ACCOUNTABILITY

ADAPTABILITY

PRIDE

PERSEVERANCE

EMPATHY

SELFLESSNESS

OUR PURPOSE

REDUCING RISK, SAVING LIVES – TOGETHER

EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
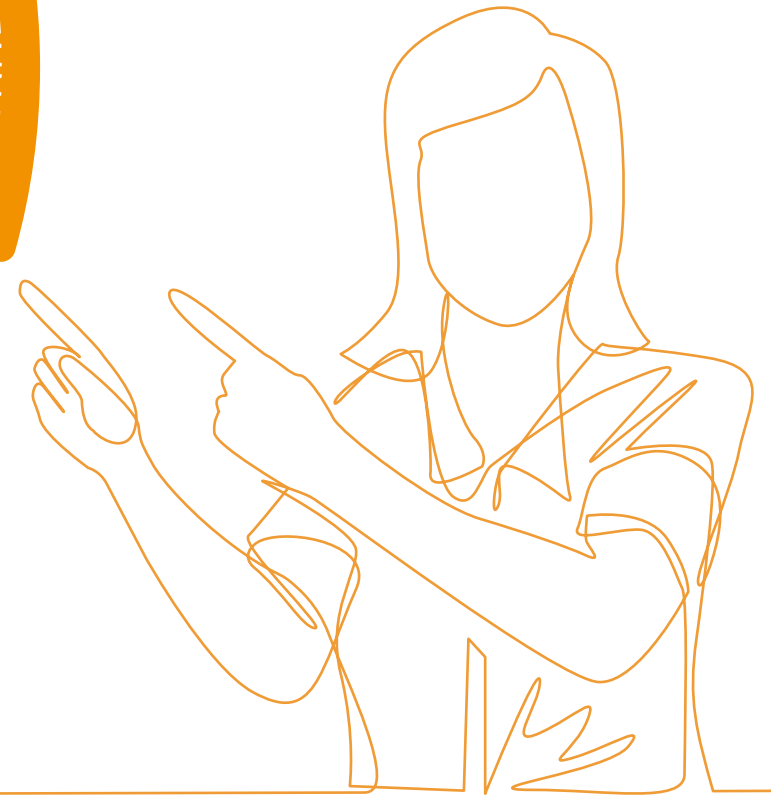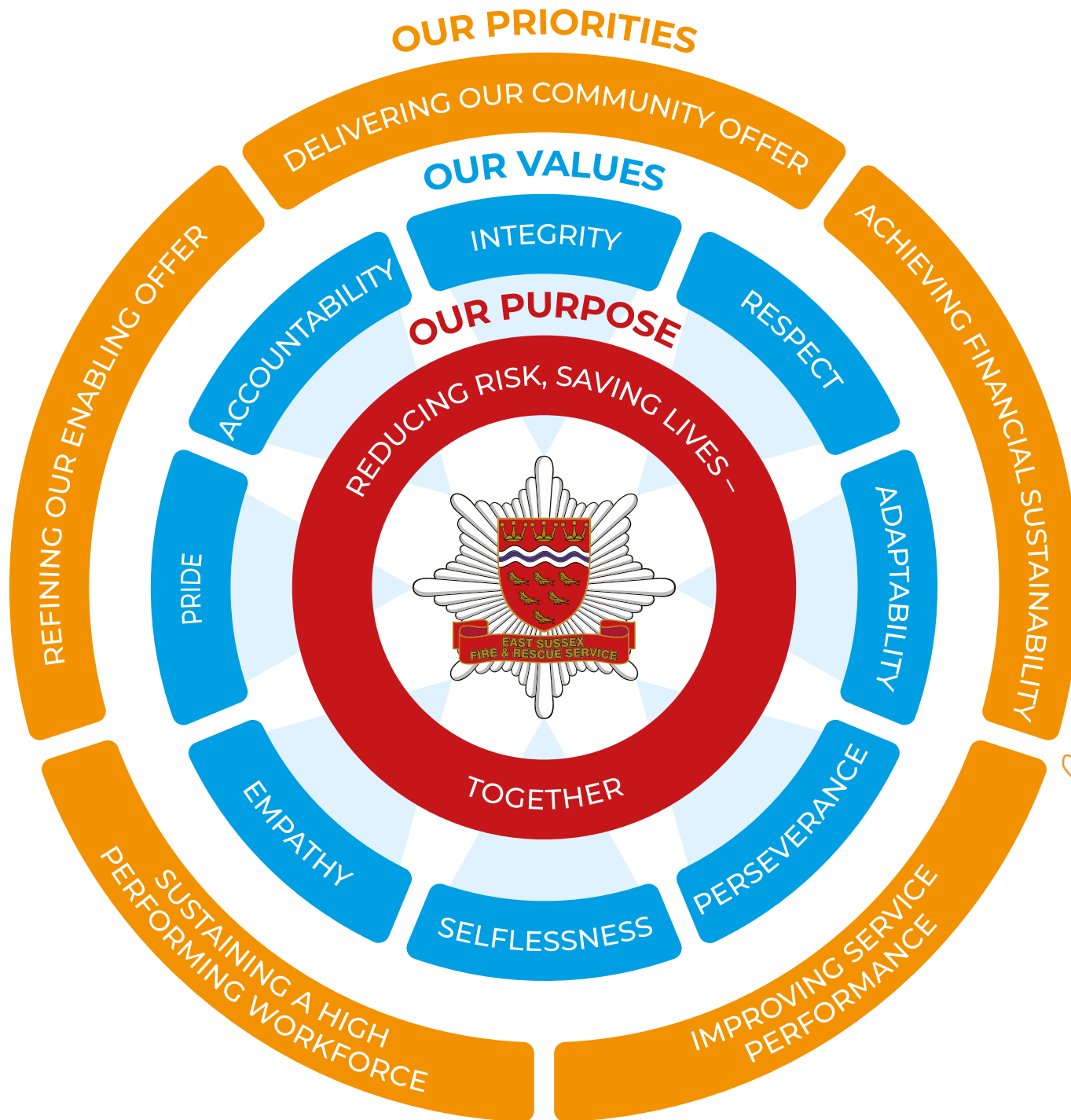
Service Priority 1

Delivering our Community Offer

Our prevention, protection and response services are at the heart of what we offer to our community and underpin all that we will be doing in our CRMP.

Strategic Intentions 2025/26

Understanding the risks of fire and other emergencies

We will identify and understand risks in the community, ensuring we have an effective Community Risk Management Plan.

We effectively gather, maintain and share a good range of risk information, and use the outcomes of operational activity effectively to build an understanding of risk.

Preventing fires and other risks

We will build safer, healthier, stronger and more resilient communities reducing the harm from fire and other emergencies.

Every fire, road traffic collision, or other emergency we respond to leaves behind more than physical damage—it impacts people, families, and communities. While our response capability remains critical, it is through prevention that we create lasting change.

Our approach to prevention prioritises risk, working effectively with others to reduce it and evaluating the work we carry out.

Protecting the public through fire regulation

We will reduce the impact of fire in the built environment, keeping our community and firefighters safe.

We will identify and reduce as many risks as possible during every interaction with the public, improving fire safety in and around the buildings where people live, work, visit and stay.

We will target high-risk buildings effectively, carrying out consistent, good quality audits and quality assuring our protection activity.

We will have a positive approach to enforcement, adapting to new legislation and working closely with other agencies.

Responding effectively to fire and other emergencies

We will prepare and plan for emergencies to ensure we can respond safely and effectively.

We will ensure our response arrangements are appropriate to meet current and emerging risk levels as identified in our CRMP.

We will meet response standards, work to improve availability of fire engines, implement national operating guidance promptly and ensure staff have a good understanding of how to command incidents safely.

Risk information will be up to date and accessible.

We evaluate operational performance, sharing and considering learning effectively with partners, locally and nationally.

Responding to major and multi-agency incidents

We work with our Sussex Resilience Forum partners to ensure a joined-up response to and recovery from significant disruption, including major and multi-agency incidents.

We will enhance our work with our local communities and third sector to improve societal resilience to disruption such as flooding, water incidents and fires.

Service Priority 2

Refining our Enabling Offer

It is critical we align our enabling services (such as, People Services, Information Technology, Estates and Fleet Management) to our community offer to ensure we have the right people, processes and equipment. Our front-line teams cannot operate without effective professional services.

Strategic Intentions 2025/26

Getting the right people with the right skills

- We will ensure we have trained and competent professional staff carrying out the functions we need now and into the future.
- We will continue estate modernisation to ensure they are safe and fit for purpose and support flexible ways of working for our increasingly diverse workforce.
- We will continue to invest in our fleet of emergency service vehicles to ensure they meet the needs of our communities and the risks they face.
- We will use digital, data and technology to improve productivity and effectiveness, including investment in new, existing and shared systems.
- We will review and continue to improve occupational health and wellbeing services to our staff to ensure the effective management of absences.
- We will continue to improve workforce planning, supported by a greater understanding of workforce skills and capabilities.

Service Priority 3

Achieving Financial Sustainability

We continue to invest in people, estate and equipment, exploring new funding opportunities and maintaining the community offer. We will set out, through our Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), how we will balance our budget over the next 5 years, achieve financial sustainability and manage financial risks to maintain our community offer as far as is possible within the available funding.

Strategic Intentions

Making best use of resources and making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future

- We effectively review and allocate resources to risks, comparing costs with those of other services.
- We will understand our financial challenges and have a clear plan for the use of our reserves providing the best value for money.
- We will become a more efficient service by ensuring our finances and our resources are well managed, with effective estates and fleet plans linked to this CRMP.
- We will seek to reduce the cost of running our estate, generate additional income and look at ways to collaborate with our communities and partners.

Service Priority 4

Sustaining a High Performing Workforce

We want our Service to be a place where people enjoy and feel valued in their work, where they are treated with dignity and respect.

Our people are multi-skilled professionals, who support multiple agencies in both response and during risk reduction activities. The professional standards we aspire to increase our effectiveness, protect everyone involved and ensure a reliable service for the public.

Strategic Intentions

Promoting the right values and culture, and developing leaders

- We will lead the Service in understanding and developing a continually improving culture through campaigns, training and engagement.
- We will embed professional standards to deliver consistent, high-quality work, and tackle unacceptable behaviour.
- We will ensure fair treatment of employees and a reliable service for the public, promoting diversity and inclusion.
- We will continue to address potential disproportionality in recruitment and retention, developing and supporting high potential staff and working to improve the diversity of our leadership.

Service Priority 5

Improving our Service Performance

With a modernised performance framework, we will evidence how we deliver our purpose of reducing risk and saving lives – together. This will be delivered through implementing a refreshed intelligence led, performance management system, to deliver improved decision making, enhanced outcomes, improved performance, and reduced effort and waste.

Strategic Intentions

Managing performance

- We will identify and implement improvements to the Performance Management Framework, leading to more efficient processes and greater alignment to internal governance structures.
- We will effectively manage and monitor the performance of individuals and workforce productivity.
- We will continually improve our Service performance using intelligence from HMICFRS inspections, audits, risk and NFCC standards.

About East Sussex and Brighton and Hove

Understanding our communities is vital to delivering effective services. This fact file highlights key information which influences our assessment of risk and our planning.
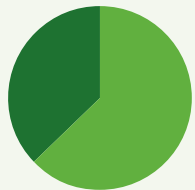
GEOGRAPHY

We cover an area of 696 square miles.

696² miles

Borders Kent to the north and east, Surrey to the north-west and West Sussex to the west.

East Sussex contains 5 districts – Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden.

63% of East Sussex is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

We have the South Downs National Park and over 50 miles of coastline, some of which is designated 'heritage coast'.

We have significant amounts of wooded areas including the Ashdown Forest.

BUILDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

There are no motorways, very few dual carriageways and many rural roads. Road conditions are poor for the volume of traffic and this increases the risk of collisions.
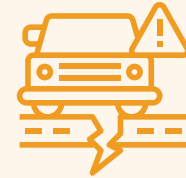
We have over 12,000 medium and high-rise residential buildings in our area, the second highest number in the country (second only to London), with over half of these being within Brighton and Hove.

There are a significant number of graded/listed buildings and thatched properties.

Sports venues include the Amex Stadium in Brighton and Hove.

The number of households is projected to grow faster than the population as household size continues to reduce.
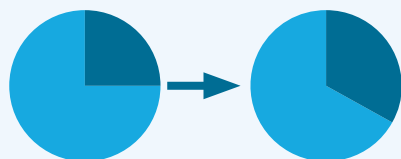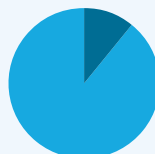
PEOPLE

We provide services to more than 820,000 people who live across the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove area.

Our population in East Sussex is projected to grow by 68,800 to 627,700 between 2020 and 2035. Our biggest increase will be in the number of people aged 60+, compared with little change in younger age groups.

Our area attracts around 37 million tourism visits each year.

Brighton and Hove is by far the area's most ethnically diverse district, with 11% of the population belonging to an ethnic minority. This is twice as diverse as any of the districts within East Sussex.

The over 65s now represent more than a quarter of the county's population and are projected to make up nearly a third of all people by 2034.

Numbers of people aged 85+ are projected to increase by 76% over the same period, as the post-war 'baby boomers' reach their mid-80s.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

General health across the county is good, with over 80% classed as good or very good.
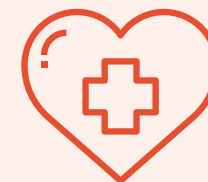
5.5% of people are deemed to have bad or very bad health, largely in the areas of Hastings and Bexhill. Areas with the lowest proportions include Forest Row and Wadhurst.

The proportion of people whose day-to-day activities are limited is 20% with 8% of our population stating that day-to-day activities are limited a lot.

Higher proportions of people whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot are largely concentrated along the coastal areas.

The prevalence of dementia is increasing and, in East Sussex, is much higher compared to England.

The number of people aged 75–84 and 85+ is expected to rise by 78% and 80% respectively over the period to 2043. Districts like Rother already have nearly a third of residents aged 65+. This matters because age is a factor in the risk of fires in the home.

At the other end of the spectrum, Brighton and Hove is a younger, highly diverse city with complex housing and transient populations. With over 11% identifying as not White British, and nearly one-third of households privately rented (the highest rate outside London), the City requires a bespoke approach to community engagement and housing risk management. Younger generations are more likely to embrace emerging technology such as solar charging, and the increasing use of e-bikes with lithium-ion batteries.

Population growth and density are uneven. Brighton and Hove is the seventh most densely populated local authority in the South East, while Wealden ranks among the least. Some areas – such as Hove, Newhaven, and Pevensey – are experiencing sharp increases in population density, changing the local risk landscape at pace. This means we need to be agile and flexible with the services we provide.

Although East Sussex may be considered affluent, this masks inequality. Hastings is one of the most deprived towns in the UK, with high unemployment, low average income, and varying housing conditions. Parts of Eastbourne face similar challenges. Across the region, deprivation correlates with increased fire risk and reduced resilience to disruption.

Health inequality is a major concern. Hastings has one of the highest adult smoking rates in England (25.8%). Dementia prevalence in East Sussex exceeds both regional and national averages, and life expectancy varies dramatically – with up to a 12.7-year gap between the most and least advantaged communities. These disparities require focused, coordinated, place-based prevention strategies.

What this means

There is an increased demand for medical assistance, tailored prevention activity, and increased vulnerability in fire and other incidents in the communities in which you live and work.

Our communities need a fire and rescue service which has flexibility and agility to meet changing risk, which we will ensure through our CRMP.

We continue to work with health, blue light services and community safety partnerships to explore other opportunities to reach vulnerable communities.

We continue to work effectively across multiple agencies, to share information and data to develop an understanding of community risks and vulnerabilities.

About East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

We do more than just respond to fires and other emergencies. We also work to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place and protect people and property. By doing these things, we are Reducing Risk, Saving Lives – Together.

Every Contact Counts - Risk Reduction through Prevention and Protection

Whenever we are in contact with the public, our partners and our communities, we can help reduce risk – that's what we mean by Every Contact Counts.

Our efforts in our Prevention and Protection teams are aligned and coordinated through our risk-reduction approach.

Examples of our work include:

- Inspections and audits of commercial premises
- Home Safety Visits
- Station Open Days
- Safety in Action to educate children alongside our partners
- Targeted fire, road and water-related initiatives and campaigns

How we provide Emergency Cover

The locations of our fire stations, the resources they have, and their staffing models are informed by a significant amount of data. This includes things like a community risk profile and historical incident demand information. This Plan is built on this information. You can read more about our different duty systems on page 52.

Our Impact

Each year we publish an Impact Report, detailing how our work has improved lives.

You can read the report here: www.esfrs.org/impact

Our Year
2024-2025

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Making East Sussex Safer Together

OUR PEOPLE
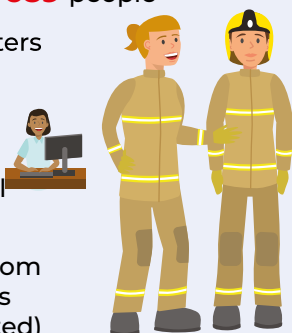
ESFRS employs a total of **689** people

334 Wholetime Firefighters

183 On-call Firefighters

172 Support Staff

10.4% Of our operational workforce are female

3.3% Operational staff from underrepresented groups (where ethnicity was stated)

OUR FLEET

29 Pumping Appliances

30 Special Appliances

ASSURANCE

99.5% Wholetime availability

50.6% On-Call availability

FINANCE

£49.9m Annual budget

£1.9m Ongoing savings

COLLABORATION

Joint Fire Control with West Sussex and Surrey FRSs

Shared site with Sussex Police

SOCIAL REACH

18K followers X

12K followers (Facebook)

2520 followers (Instagram)

2446 followers (TikTok)

169K Nextdoor members

624 YouTube subscribers

92 Signed up to Bluesky

PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

499 Safeguarding Referrals identified and referred to relevant agencies.

9,067 Home Safety Visits (HSVs).

394 of which were Child HSVs.

53 Children referred to our Firewise programme.

108 Fire awareness engagement sessions with Carers, to **1,733** Carers.

98 Property checks to support Homes for Ukraine guests

2,641 Water Savvy Water Safe

320 Go Drive

YOUTH INCLUSION

3 Fire Cadet Units with

47 Cadets

3,915 Children attending Safety in Action events

575 Children attended our Holiday, Activities and Food (HAF) sessions

INCIDENTS

10,873 Emergency call answered by Control staff

98% answered within 10 seconds

90 seconds average call handling time

9,421 Incidents attended

675 Deliberate fires

366 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)

1 Fatalities in ADFs

20 Injuries in ADFs

445 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)

75 People killed or seriously injured in RTCs attended by ESFRS

3,693 Emergency Special Services including

956 assisting Ambulance and police

372 Flooding and water incidents

171 Animal assistance

51 Bariatric Rescues

185 Over the border mobilisations

40 Incidents involving suicide attempt

PROTECTION ACTIVITY

504 Fire safety audits carried out

865 Business Consultations

1,117 Fire safety checks by operational crews last fiscal year

120 Non - domestic property fires

12% Reduction compared to the last 5 years average

25% Reduction in incidents between 2009/10 and 2024/25

Looking Back - Planning for a Safer Future – Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2020-25

Planning for a Safer Future was the previous plan, then known as an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

It comprised of 33 workstreams, focused on crewing, special appliances and false alarms. The table below provides a high-level summary of the key workstreams.

We have further developed five areas which are included in our new CRMP objectives (indicated by *).

Workstreams	What we did	Outcome
Enhancements to On-Call Duty System.*	Review of barriers to recruitment and retention of On-Call firefighters.	The new overtime policy, streamlined recruitment and new pay rates improve the recruitment and retention of On-Call firefighters.
Review the policies in place to provide operational cover to ensure they are efficient and effective.*	Review and update of the Combined Crewing Policy.	Firefighters from different watches and stations are brought together to crew appliances.
Central co-ordination and oversight of crewing.*	Introduction of a Resource Management Team (now Logistics and Control Support).	A centralised view of crewing enables crewing changes to be managed improving appliance availability.
Review the efficiency of the Day Crewed model.*	Duty patterns and number of staff were assessed and reviewed.	Self-rostering introduced crewing efficiencies.
Review the resources at Eastbourne Fire Station to meet the risk profile.	Replacement of the Aerial Rescue Pump with dedicated Aerial Ladder Platform at Eastbourne.	Improved crewing flexibility enables better aerial appliance capability.
Introduction of the 2-phase transition to new Unwanted Fire Signals Policy.	We no longer attend fire alarms operating in low-risk commercial premises at any time, unless we receive telephone confirmation that there is a fire.	Reduced disruption of false alarms to our training, fire safety and community safety work and emergency cover.

You can read the formal "close down" report here: **Agenda for Fire Authority on Thursday, 6th February, 2025, 10.30 am - Modern Council** or use this QR code

Looking Forward - Developing our 2025-30 CRMP

Developing and maintaining a CRMP requires a structured approach to understanding and addressing key factors and risks.

We have used the Fire Standards Board (FSS-RMP01) and the National Fire Chiefs Council's CRMP Framework to ensure we develop our plan in line with good practice.

In the simplest of terms, we bring together local intelligence, national insight, and professional expertise, alongside the experience of partners and Government, and both national and local risk registers to look for patterns and trends.

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is focused on improving public safety, reducing the number of fire incidents, and saving lives. To achieve this, we take a dynamic and holistic approach to risk assessment, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our communities. This means we will make changes to our approach as risk changes.

- www.firestandards.org/standards/approved/community-risk-management-planning-fss-rmp01
- www.nfcc.org.uk/our-services/community-risk-programme/community-risk-management-planning-strategic-framework

We use equality impact assessments to ensure our work is fair, supports our equality ambitions and are non-discriminatory.
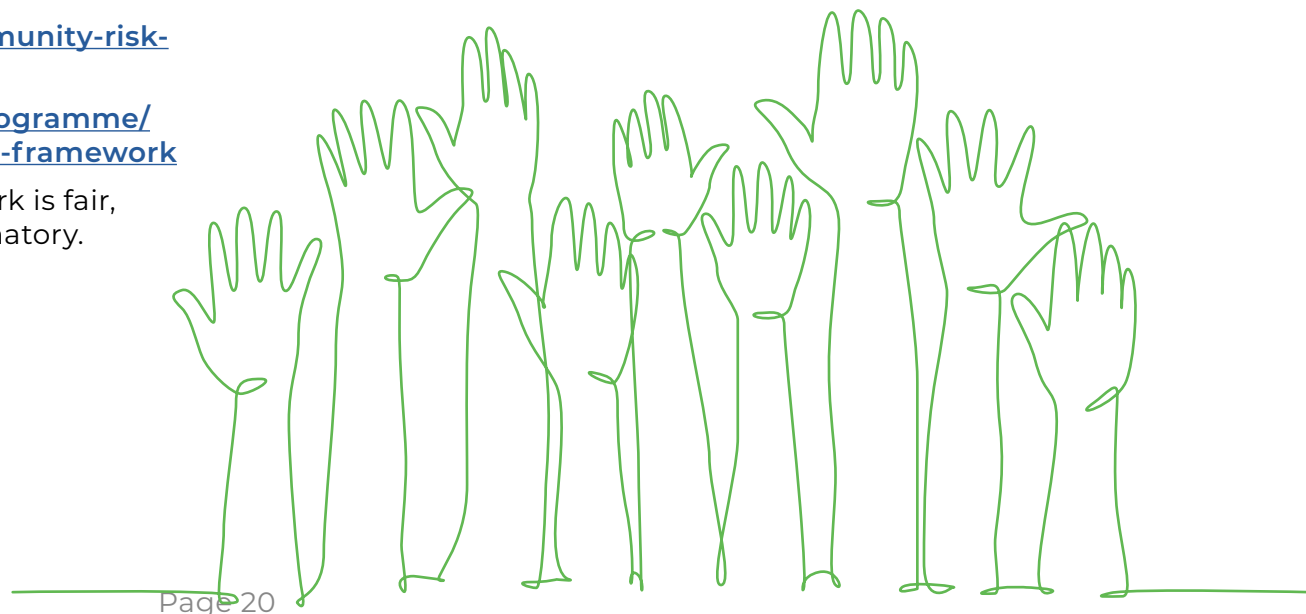
Your voice in our work

We actively engage with the public, communities, representative bodies and partners to gather insights, feedback and strengthen community involvement in shaping our work.

This means we can better target our prevention work, such as school and home safety visits, our protection work, such as fire safety inspections, and our response to emergencies to reduce risk and save lives - together.

This CRMP has a 3-5-year term, it will evolve during that time and be reviewed to adapt to emerging changes including how risk changes and how we are funded. We will produce an annual delivery plan, aligned to our Service Priorities and identify any further consultation with the public and other partners.

In the next sections we set out how we build our understanding of risk, and develop proposals for how we will reduce risk and save lives – together.

Emerging Issues and Risks

This section highlights national changes which contribute to our operating environment:

1. **Government Policy, Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation**
2. **Changing Legislative Requirements**
3. **Financial Uncertainty**

Government Policy, Devolution and Local Government Reform

Changes to local and national priorities and funding allocations can impact strategic planning.

In February 2025, the Government announced the Devolution Priority Programme with Mayors to be elected by May 2026. Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government. This is achieved by creating a new strategic authority covering a region, usually overseen by an elected mayor. Sussex and Brighton are included in the Devolution Priority Programme, and we are working closely with our partners to understand how this may affect how we work.

Changing Legislative Requirements

The role of the Fire Authority is to ensure it carries out its statutory responsibilities and that the functions provided by the Service are delivered economically, efficiently and effectively and meet the needs of the communities we serve. New legislation introduced after the Grenfell Inquiry continues to impact our work.
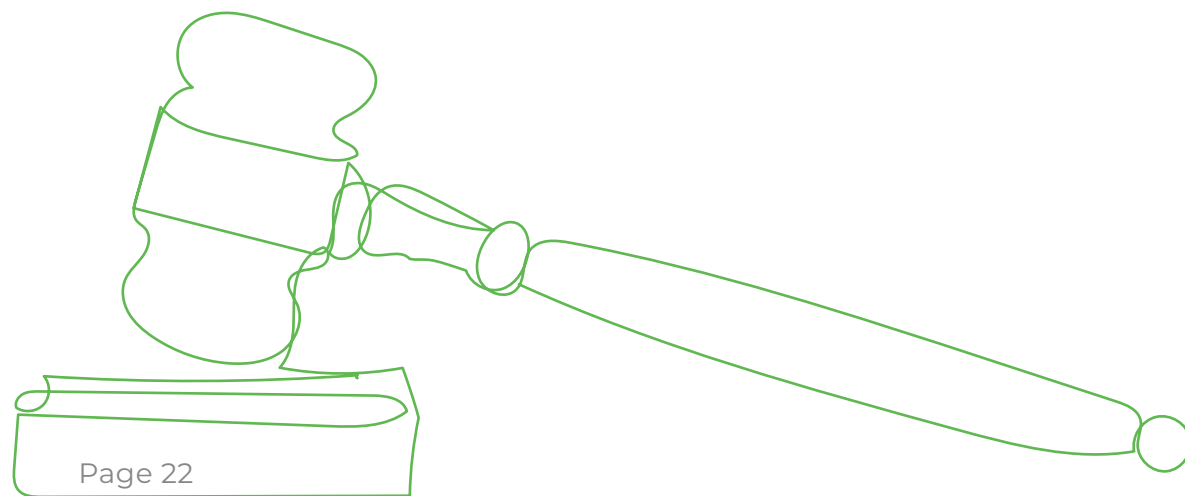
| Key Legislation	Our Role
Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004	Provide fire safety advice in order to reduce the risk of death, serious injury and property related losses to the community. Make provision for rescuing people in the event of road traffic collisions and for protecting people from serious harm arising from road traffic collisions.
Fire Safety Legislation including: • Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) • Fire Safety Act 2021 • Building Safety Act 2022. • Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022	We support responsible persons, duty holders, business and communities to fulfil their legal duties in maintaining the safety of relevant persons who may be present on their premises.
Civil Contingencies Act 2004	We are a designated Category 1 responder and help create the Sussex Community Risk Register by working as part of the Sussex Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The LRF considers National Risks identified by the Government in the National Risk Register. By combining National, Local and fire and rescue service-specific risks, we work together to plan for emergencies. Read more about the LRF Preparing for an emergency - Sussex Resilience Forum	Sussex Police
The Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007	This legislation focuses on specific activities we need to consider and make provision for, including specialist rescue, call handling, information gathering, training, and responding to incidents outside of its geographical area.
Equality Act 2010	This includes requirements to prevent discrimination against employees and service users as well as consideration of the public sector equality duty to take account of any adverse impact on those with protected characteristics e.g. disability, race or sex.
Serious Violence Duty	This requires Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), police, justice agencies, health, education, and local authorities to collaborate and plan together to reduce and prevent serious violence in their local areas.

Financial uncertainty

There is significant uncertainty about funding for local government, including Fire & Rescue Services (FRS), after 2025/26. The Government is carrying out a series of reviews covering how much funding is allocated to FRS nationally, how that funding is shared between each FRS, and how much of that funding comes from business rates. We expect that this will result in a three year funding settlement from 2026/27 to 2028/29., but we won't know how much funding we will get until later in 2025. Our current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts the need to make further savings to balance our budget in 2026-27 and over the next five years. Through our work in the Achieving Financial Sustainability service priority, we are developing options for savings of up to £4m. We will be reviewing our forecasting as the Government provides further information about the finance settlement through the summer and autumn.

You can find our current MTFP and other key financial information on our website

Financial Information | East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
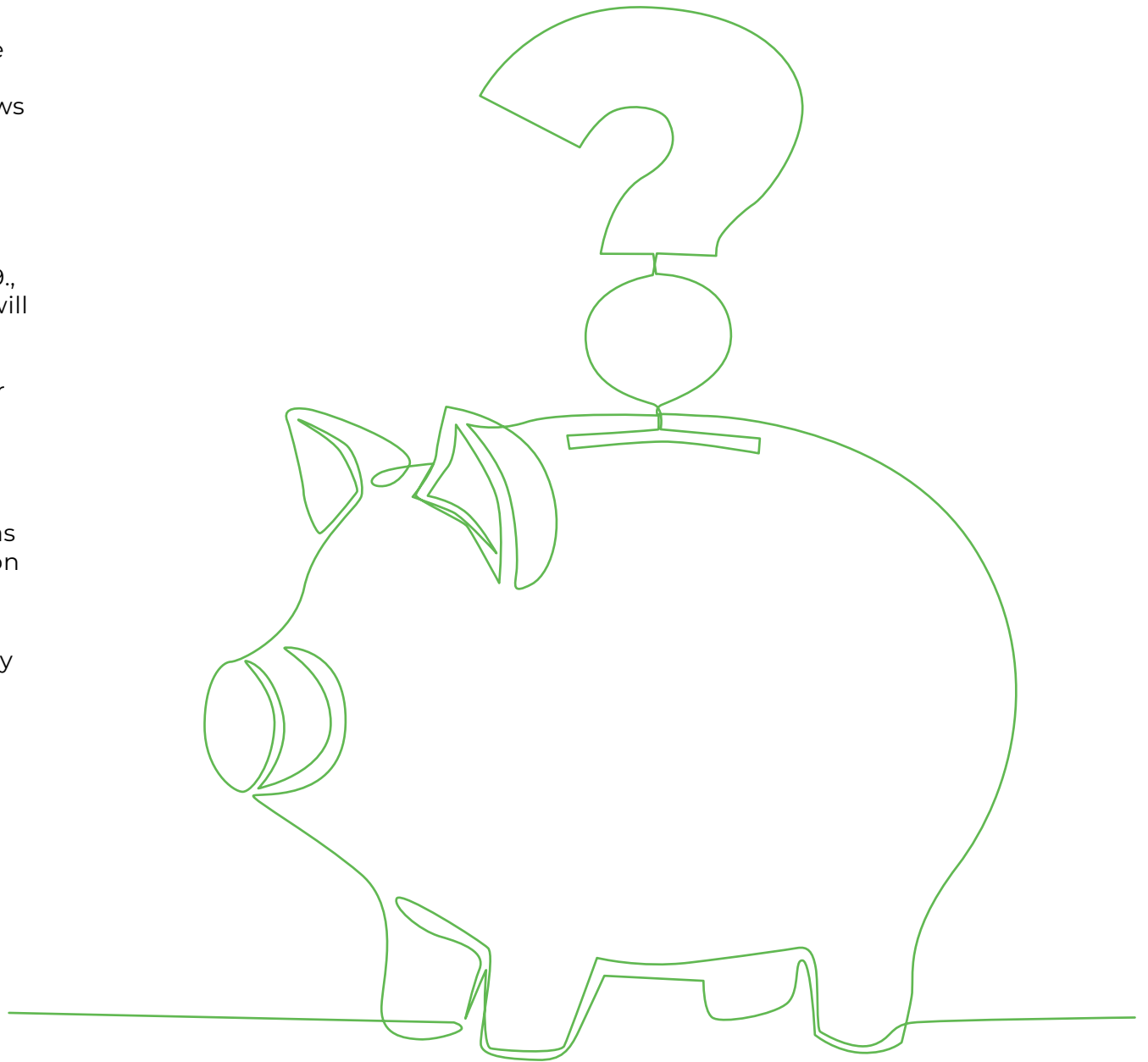
Identifying and Assessing Community Risks

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is focused on improving public safety, reducing the number of incidents, and saving lives. To achieve this, we take a dynamic and holistic approach to risk assessment, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our communities.

We separate our risk analysis into the following key areas:

Incident risks

Environment and climate change risks

Water risks

Road risks

Community and societal risks

Evolving and emerging risks

Our assessment of risks process is based on NFCC guidance and aligned to National Operational Guidance and the CRMP Fire Standard.

Building Our Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR)

We use a wide range of assessments to build our understanding of risk, including:

- Analysis of historical incident data.

- Predictive modelling to understand the impact of changes to our resources, such as removing fire engines or changing crewing arrangements.

- Consideration of how local changes can affect response and resilience across the wider Service area.

Built Environment
Residential/Commercial

Population

Health

Natural
Flooding/Wildfire

Heritage

Transport
Road/Rail etc.

Strategic Assessment of Risk

Water
Coastal/Inland

Prevention & Protection
HSVs/Fire Safety Audits etc.

Response
Historic/Actual   Future/Predicted

Special
Ops/Firefighter
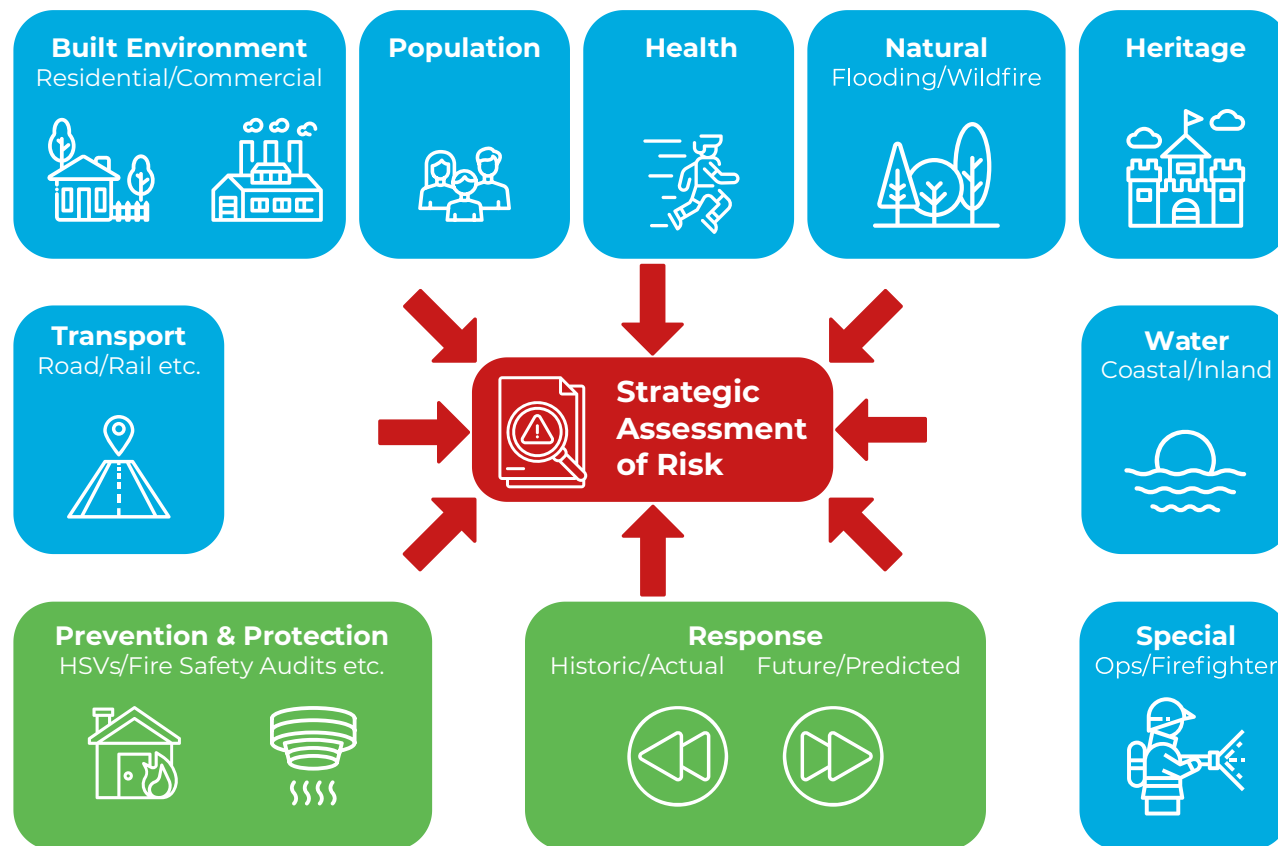
To fully understand the risks facing our communities, we also consider:

- Socio-demographic factors, such as age, health, and lifestyle, that influence vulnerability

- The distribution of vulnerable groups across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove, including geographical risks like rural isolation

- Patterns in the frequency, severity, and type of incidents, especially those classified as life-critical

- The location of our fire stations, the number of fire engines at each site, crewing systems, and associated costs

- How our actual response times compare with our response standards

- Appliance mobilisations, availability, and resilience across the Service

This combined information helps us continually assess and refine how we deliver our prevention, protection, and response services.

Anticipating Foreseeable and Emerging Risk

While historical incident data helps us understand where hazardous events have occurred in the past, it doesn't capture the full picture. Realised risk shows us what has happened – but to protect our communities effectively, we must also anticipate what could happen.

To develop a forward-looking risk profile, we layer additional data from both internal and external sources, including:

- Population projections and socio-demographic trends

- Predictive modelling and scenario planning

- Insights from local partners and national fire sector intelligence

- We also actively monitor emerging risks, such as:

- The potential impacts of climate change, including wildfire and flooding

- The rise of new technologies, such as electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and energy storage systems

- Societal shifts, such as an ageing population, housing density changes and widening health inequalities

We also consider our ethical and social values in our decision making. We often have to take difficult decisions asking ourselves what is the decision which best serves the public, with the resources we have, and with the risks we face.

www.esfrs.org/strategic-assessment-of-risk

Aligning with National Approaches

We continue to learn from national and international work including the HMICFRS, and the National Risk and Community Risk Registers mentioned in the next section.

One key element is the NFCC and its Community Risk Programme. This includes the development of risk methodologies for:

- Domestic dwelling fires
- Other building fires
- Road traffic collisions
- Broad assessments of the social and economic value of fire and rescue services

We will review these and adopt or adapt them where appropriate.

National and Regional risks

National Risk Register

The National Risk Register 2025 is the public version of the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA), which is the Government's assessment of the most serious risks facing the UK.

It provides the Government's updated assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a broad range of risks such as terrorist attacks, cyber-attacks and wildfires, that while unlikely to occur, could have a significant impact.

The Government shares risk information to support those working to build the UK's resilience plans, preparation and responses.

Sussex Resilience Forum

We are a member of the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF). Organisations work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The SRF is responsible for developing and testing emergency plans and procedures. In this way we can make sure we meet our duties specified under the Civil Contingencies Act and drive down risk.

- Category One responders – agencies that are likely to be involved at a local level at an emergency. These are statutory Emergency Services (Ambulance, Coastguard, Fire and Police), Local Authorities, Health Authorities and the Environment Agency
- Category Two responders – Utilities, Transport Operators and the Health & Safety Executive
- Voluntary sector organisations and military are also involved in this work but fall outside of these categories

As a Category One organisation we have a legal duty to plan for Emergencies. Category Two agencies have an obligation to cooperate with Category One responders. Both levels of responders have an obligation to take due regard to the voluntary sector in preparing plans to improve the resilience of the county to deal with major emergencies.

The SRF maintains a Community Risk Register to look at the likelihood and impact of a range of hazards for Sussex and plans the response to mitigate these risks. This also informs how we prepare our operations and business continuity planning.

What this means

Your community is kept safer as we work with partners to help prevent emergencies and return to normal as quickly and effectively as possible.

As part of the SRF, you can feel confident we can get additional support if necessary, including from partners in neighbouring areas, the military, and central government.

You can be assured that we have well-rehearsed Business Continuity Plans in place for risks which could affect our day-to-day services. These include power cuts, cyber threats, fuel shortages and staff shortages.

Incident Risks

Understanding the demand for our emergency response service, (our "operational demands") is vital, however incident numbers alone do not tell the whole story. They are a snapshot in time of our 999 calls and need to be analysed alongside other data and intelligence.

This section highlights the types of incidents which have historically made up the majority of our emergency response work. This helps us understand what resources may be needed in different geographical areas at different times, as well as helping target risk-reduction activities.

Over the last few years, the number of fire-related incidents have gone down, but we still have difficult, large and serious fires. Other types of emergencies are becoming more common. This shift is something we are watching and we now work more closely with other emergency services.

Fact-file

- Analysis from a five-year period (2018-2023) shows we attend around 10,000 incidents each year (there has been a drop in 2024/25 with 9,422 incidents attended)

- 37% of all incidents happen in the Brighton and Hove area. Hastings continues to show over-representation, with 14% of incidents but only 11% of the population

- By comparing the average number of incidents occurring within each station area by the crewing arrangement of the local station, it can be seen there is overlap between each duty system i.e. there are some day-crewed station areas that have more incidents than some wholetime shift areas, and there are some On-Call areas which are busier than some day-crewed areas

- Around 813 incidents each year are classified as 'critical' – involving fires, serious road traffic collisions (RTCs), or life-threatening emergencies – with each resulting in an average of 1.1 casualties

- Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) remain a persistent threat – particularly in rural areas. Over the five year period (April 2018 – March 2023), there have been 100 fatal RTCs in our Service area

- Timing patterns vary. Most fires occur between 5pm and 8pm, while special service calls (e.g. rescuing people stuck in lifts or flooding affecting electrics in a building), peak between 11am and 6pm

Key trends over the five-year period from 2018-2023

Types of incidents		Trends	Impact on Service
Dwelling fires (e.g. fires in homes)	↓	4.9% of all incidents we attend Reduced by 22.2% Average of 495 per year.	We continue to target those most at risk of fire to continue this trend.
Secondary fires (e.g. outdoor fires, including grassland and refuse fires)	↑	8.5% of all incidents we attend Increased by 7.5% Average of 867 per year.	This figure includes a spike in incidents due to the hot summer of 2022. We are prepared for similar conditions in the future, particularly with the effects of climate change. This impacts both our operational response and our prevention work.
Assisting other Agency calls (e.g. helping paramedics gain access to a home to reach a patient)	↑	2018/19 = 4% of incidents which we attended 2022/23 = 10.7% of all incidents we attended. We attended 1,146 in 2022/23, an increase of over 200% over the five-year period.	Largest shift in call profile over the five-year period. These calls can use a great deal of resources – both staff and time. We manage the impact of these.
Effecting Entry (e.g. someone locked in or out of their home)	↑	These have also increased by 50% over the five-year period.	We manage the impact of these.
Hazardous Materials	↑	While relatively small in number, these have increased by 162% over the period.	We ensure our staff are trained and equipped to deal with these effectively.

Types of incidents		Trends	Impact on Service
Flooding (causes include rain, burst water mains, or pipes in homes affecting electrics)	⬆	Incidents have increased by 31%.	We prepare for increased flooding demand as climate risks and vulnerabilities grow.
Road Traffic Collisions (we are not required at all RTCs – some are only attended by other agencies)	⬇	4.2% of all incidents we attend. Whilst all collisions have decreased by 8% overall, our attendance to RTCs has reduced by 18.3%. Average of 430 per year.	We continue to target those most at risk to continue this trend.
False Alarms	⬆	Accounted for an average of 46% of incidents. False alarms caused by apparatus (e.g. faulty alarm systems) represented a third of all incidents. There was also increase in malicious false alarms by 27%.	This change means we no longer attend low risk premises unless there is confirmation of a fire. This has led to a recent reduction in this area but we continue to target false alarms.
Other		**Trends**	**Impact on Service**
Standbys (crew travelled to wait at another fire station when that fire engine wasn't available to be sent out in an emergency)	⬆	Standbys have increased significantly, however some crews are turned back to their station minutes after being sent somewhere else to provide cover. We need to assess the impact of these crew movements.	We ensure that fire engines are in the areas of greatest risk according to the time, day and season.

In addition to understanding changes that have happened over time, the following sections focus on community risks and specific incident types.

Road Risks

Road Traffic Collisions are one of the leading causes of fatalities in the UK.

We have a statutory responsibility to rescue those involved in Road Traffic Collisions. These can be complex incidents, and we need to take into account new technology such as the increasing number of electric vehicles.

East Sussex has no motorways and limited dual carriageways.

We have a lot of A roads and rural road networks, especially in the north and east of the county, that are quite narrow and windy. This contributes to higher RTC risk and delays to emergency attendance. With increased tourism related traffic this is made worse during summer months, particularly during school and bank holidays.

As a fire and rescue service, we are called to RTCs in certain circumstances such as when a person is trapped in a car. This means that we attend about 25% of all RTCs in our area. We use data from other sources to understand the fuller picture of road risk.

According to the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP), over the five years (April 2018 and March 2023) on average there were 1,787 road traffic collisions in our area involving injuries, ranging from slight through to serious (26%) and fatal (11%) injuries – this equates to 100 fatal collisions over the five years.

What this means

Despite there being a relatively small chance of you or someone you know being involved in an RTC, we have an increasingly important and wide role in rescues, fires and other incidents on our roads.

New technology such as electric vehicles present challenges for which we must train and prepare. Extreme weather can change road conditions in a matter of minutes. We also have ongoing risks through areas where animals and roads meet, such as the deer on the Ashdown Forest.

Whether you are a pedestrian, passenger, cyclist, rider or driver, we will continue to engage you through road safety campaigns and through our work with partners so we can improve safety.

We will continue to provide specially trained staff and equipment to work jointly with other emergency agencies including Sussex Police and the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb).
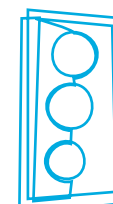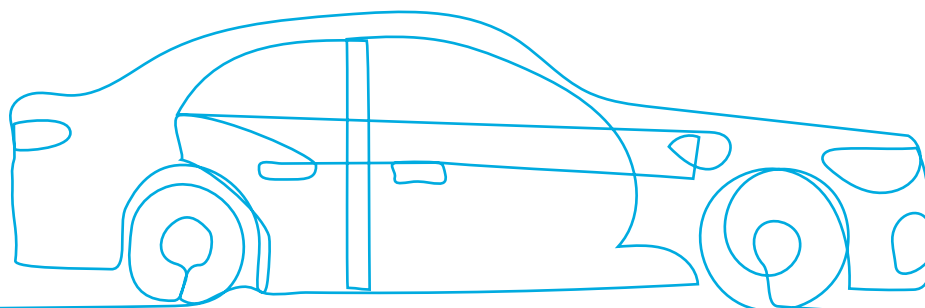
Environmental & Climate Change Risks

We work closely with our Environment Agency partners to identify and jointly reduce environmental risk.

The SRF identifies climate change as an overarching factor that increases the likelihood and severity of many of the acute risks outlined in its Community Risk Register. Climate change means that extreme weather incidents are becoming more common and more severe. It refers to a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures.

The Met Office provides projections for climate change.

"Across the UK, we expect to see:

- Warmer and wetter winters
- Hotter and drier summers
- More frequent and intense weather extremes

Climate change will make these conditions more likely. The UK's weather will continue to be variable, but we will see more of this type of weather."[2]

It adds that in the future we could see hot conditions in the summer becoming more intense, creating even hotter summer weather and more intense downpours during summer. There would be more rainfall in winter storms with greater potential for flooding.

When considering how much the UK climate could change, the Met Office has compared our climate in 1990 and projects that by 2070:

- Winters are between 1 and 4.5°C warmer
- Winters are up to 30% wetter
- Summers are between 1 and 6°C warmer
- Summers are up to 60% drier (depending on region)
- Hot summer days are between 4 and 7°C warmer.

Wildfires

Wildfires are becoming a bigger risk in the UK, and we must ensure we work to prevent incidents and respond to them, as well as support communities affected by them.

We cover a wide array of green spaces, grassland, and forests. All of these are vulnerable to wildfires both from extreme heat, and human activity. Vulnerability is increased after long periods of high temperatures.

There is particular concern about wildfires at what is described as the "rural-urban interface" i.e. where roads, homes and workplaces are on the edge of or inside of these green spaces, grasslands and forests.

The National Forest Inventory programme monitored woodland and trees and their maps show the location and type of woodland across our area which helps us to understand if there are any particular areas at risk from wildfires. This helps inform our planning.

[2]https://weather.metoffice.gov.uk/climate-change/climate-change-in-the-uk

Flooding

In the UK currently about 1 in 6 homes is at risk of flooding. This could be from a range of sources, and even if a property has never flooded in the past, this does not mean that it is not at risk.

Additionally, in order for a property to flood, it does not need to be located near a river or the sea, or even in low-lying areas. Flooding affects properties across the UK in different ways, with climate altering weather patterns for the future, it is expected that more areas of the UK could become at risk of flooding.

What this means

Weather-related emergencies such as flood and wildfires can be complex and happen very quickly.

Individuals, groups, organisations, and networks can all play a meaningful part in preparing for and recovering from these events, should they happen.

We proactively engage with our partners, including the Sussex Resilience Forum and Local Authorities.

Our operational fleet is agile in responding to weather-related problems, like high-capacity water pumps for floods and off-road vehicles for wildfires in remote areas.

The Service must continue to appropriately train staff and provide a specialist response capability.

Water Risks

Drowning

We work with partners to prevent accidental drowning and we train to ensure we can safely carry out rescues.

A drowning incident happens quickly and without warning. It has a devastating impact on families and many people will survive a drowning incident but are left with life changing injuries.

East Sussex and Brighton and Hove have one of the highest number of accidental drownings in the UK. East Sussex's 55-mile coastline and its close proximity to London, Brighton and Hove alone attracts more than 11 million visitors each year. We have other attractions along the coast, including 3 traditional seaside resort piers.

Along with the coastal risk, East Sussex also has many rivers, lakes, marshes and reservoirs. Heavy and intense rainfall causes flash flooding in inland areas, and fast-moving water and surges pose risks to drivers. The additional impact of climate change must be considered due to rises in sea level and the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

Areas such as Lewes, Rye and Uckfield are at high risk from fluvial (e.g.river) or surface water flooding.
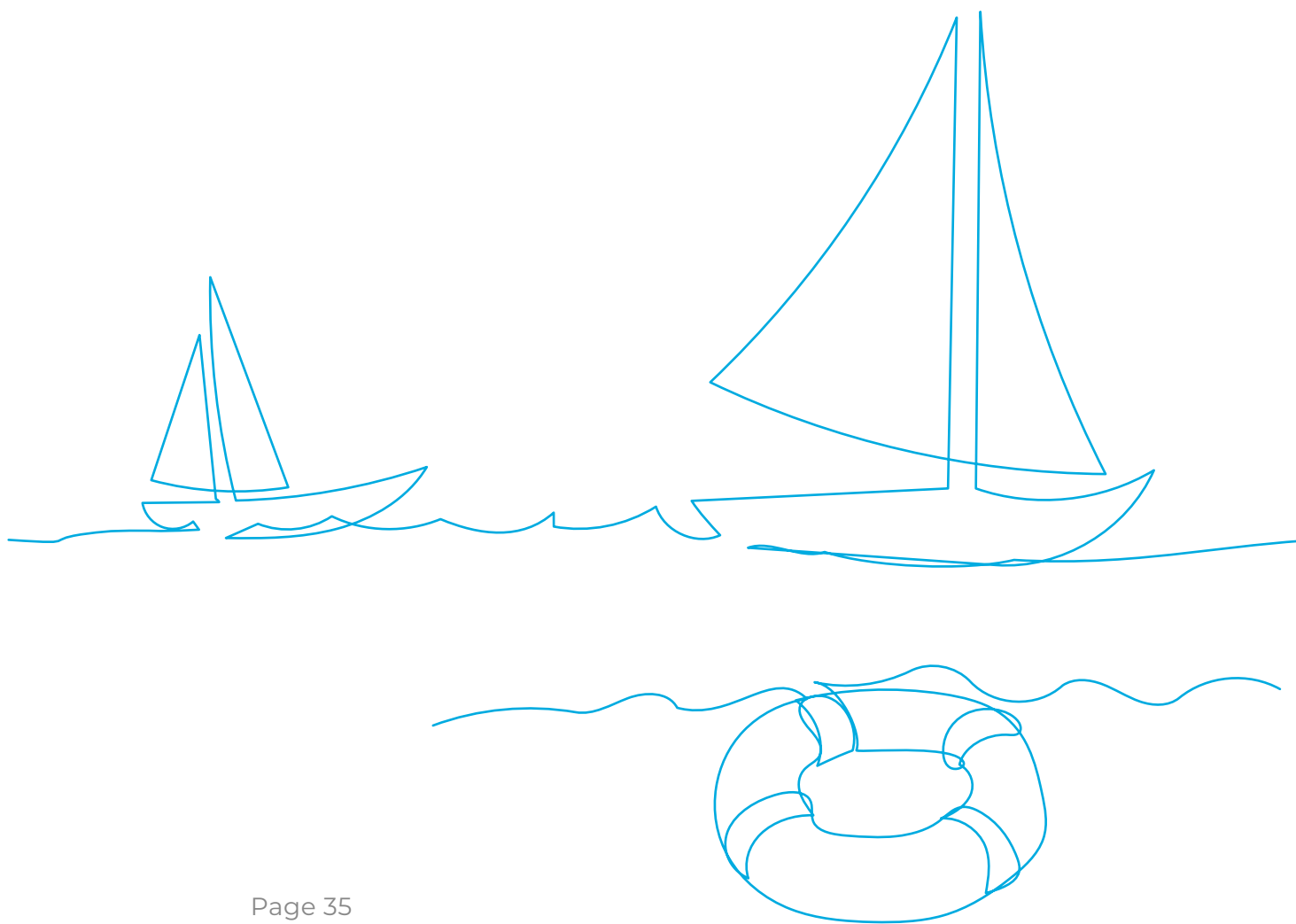
CASE STUDY – DANIEL'S STORY

Daniel became separated from his friends during a November night out and fell, unnoticed into the River Ouse.

A random 999 call sparked a major, multi-agency rescue and Daniel was rescued alive after a police helicopter located a faint heat source. He had been in the water for around 90 minutes.

Go to www.esfrs.org/daniels-story or use the QR code to take you to a video.

It weaves together his story, his family's reaction when they got the call and the events of the evening from the perspective of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service personnel who rescued him along with those of our emergency service colleagues.

The aim of the film is to highlight how easily this sort of thing can happen and to try and prevent it from happening so regularly.

89% of men who died after going missing on a night out were found dead in the water.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental death in the UK

Water shortages

Water disruptions include burst water mains, supply disruption, and contamination. Across the Southeast of England, approximately 70% of our water supply comes from groundwater and in some areas in Sussex such as Brighton, 100% of the population rely on the Brighton chalk aquifer for their water supply. Therefore, contamination of groundwater could have a major impact. Depending on the severity of the incident a multi-agency emergency may be declared.

There could also be a significant impact on health and food provision, as well as an impact on the capabilities of fire and rescue services. We play an active role in delivering the SRF's Water Supply Disruption Plan.

We work with partners to plan and to increase our resilience. During incidents we may increase the number of fire engines covering the affected area. We take measures to ensure firefighters still have access to water. For example, our fleet of vehicles includes a water carrier and a dam which means water can be transported in bulk to wherever we need it.
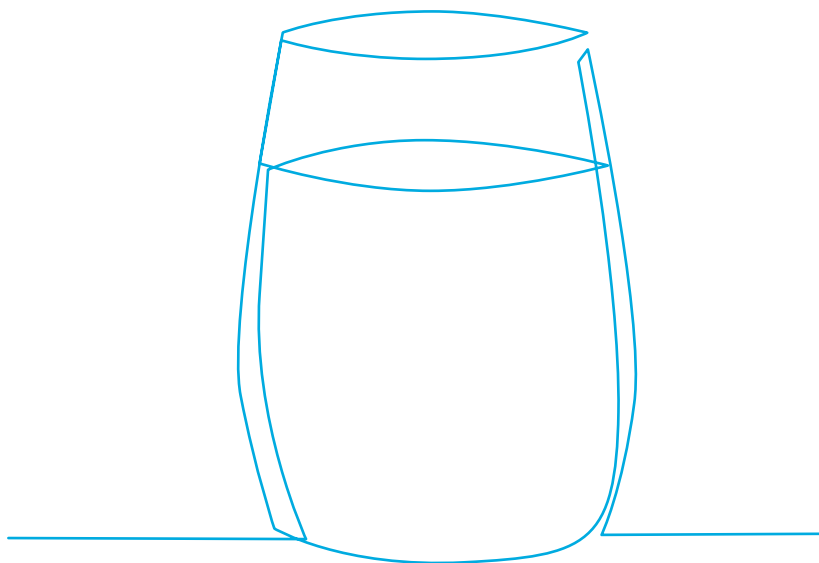
What this means

As with the Environmental and Climate Change Risks, individuals, groups, organisations, and networks can all play a meaningful part in preparing for and recovering from these events should they happen.

We work as part of the Sussex Resilience Forum and engage with our communities to support community resilience.

We encourage our communities to engage with us and our partners, including the Sussex Resilience Forum and Local Authorities to build community resilience

Community and Societal Risks

We continue to improve our understanding of those who are most at risk of fire and harm to keep individuals and our communities safe. Societal resilience to disruption is about working to create social value and achieve a more resilient UK. It cuts-across prevention and response activity and fire service engagement in local resilience forum preparations for more significant incidents. It also provides our contribution to the 'whole of society approach' to resilience.

The National Risk Register 2025 identifies that successful community resilience approaches are often based on connection and relationships. Deepened partnerships between statutory responders and the communities they serve can provide benefits and positive outcomes before and during emergencies.

Further to this the National Risk Register sets out that emergency responders should:

- Develop a broad understanding of their communities, including the health, social, financial and environmental impacts that could occur from the materialisation of risks and the capacity and capabilities that exist within the community to support official preparedness, response and recovery activity, where appropriate.

- Seek ways to build community resilience so that individuals and groups are better able to deal with emergencies when they occur; this in turn can help to reduce the pressures on emergency services who can then focus their resources on vulnerable groups and those most in need.

We will work more closely with national agencies, local voluntary organisations, local Infrastructure organisations and charities to support societal resilience to disruption.

People, Places and Economic Pressures

We serve over 820,000 residents living in urban, coastal and rural communities and each present distinct risk profiles. Our risk planning, and the approaches we take to prevent, protect and respond are shaped by the people we serve, the environment in which they live and evolving hazards.

Case Study – Risk of Fire

We know that some people in our communities are more at risk of a house fire due to the challenges they face.

People who are more at risk of fire include:

- People aged 65+
- Pensioners who live alone
- People in rented accommodation
- Single parent families
- People who have a hearing impairment or are blind/partially sighted
- Elderly people with a limiting long-term condition
- Smokers

Behaviours such as drug use (including medication) and harmful use of alcohol can also increase someone's risk. This is why we have developed our risk-reduction activities which include:

- Referrals from other organisations and individuals including NHS, carers and local authorities
- "Coming to Notice" process so trained staff can easily alert our specialist teams that someone may need support
- Provision of specialist equipment such as vibrating smoke alarms for those with a hearing impairment
- Partnership work with local authorities to provide half term activities for children

Housing

Housing stock across the region is mixed and often ageing.

Many properties – particularly in coastal towns – are timber-framed, converted into flats, or registered as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). These factors increase fire risk and complicate evacuation, detection, and containment.

We have one of the highest number of high-rise residential buildings (7 or more floors) outside of London, with the vast majority in the City:

- 232 Brighton and Hove
- 56 in Eastbourne
- 59 in Hastings and Rother
- 4 in Lewes

In addition to these figures, we have 41 High Rise Commercial Buildings, of which 27 are in Brighton and Hove with the remainder in Hastings and Eastbourne.

We are working to establish an accurate picture of the risk profile and number of medium rise buildings, based on the official definition of 4-6 floors. The number is over 11,000.

Urban housing density (especially in Brighton and Hove) amplifies risk, while rural housing in districts like Wealden presents logistical challenges in response times and resource availability. Ongoing housing developments and regeneration schemes are changing population concentrations faster than ever – something the Service must continuously adapt to.

We need to take into account the growth and diversity of land and buildings to which fire safety legislation applies.

What this means

Fire safety laws are complex and we continue to support people who are responsible for ensuring they meet regulations, for example in shared spaces, like hallways and stairwells, in blocks of flats.

We continue to take action when there are breaches in fire safety legislation, either intentionally or due to a lack of understanding.

Changes in fire safety legislation need to be effectively and consistently shared by those responsible for buildings, to those living and visiting them. We will continue to improve understanding and awareness of these changes.

There is an increased need for public reassurance and guidance, particularly in high rise buildings and those where cladding still needs to be removed. We will continue to play our part in making this a reality.

Evolving and Emerging Risks

We know there are new and changing risks out there that could affect how we operate. These include alternative fuels, battery storage sites, new ways to generate electricity, electric vehicles, and the latest building methods.

Naturally there is an overlap with risks we have already described.

Housing pressures

Overall, the population in our area is forecast to increase by an additional 4% up to 2033 and a further 3% to 2043. This could place additional pressure on densely populated areas such as Brighton and Hove and Hastings with the potential for new high-rise building development and conversion of commercial to residential use to meet demand. These can present a high risk to residents' safety and impact our services.

Age and health

With reduced public funding, services within adult social care and the health sector are at risk of being reduced. This poses a potential risk to our Service as this could increase vulnerability in the community or increase demand to respond to health-related emergencies. This may be further enhanced due to the ageing population.

Climate changes

Extreme weather conditions are forecast to increase and become more frequent. The main types of severe weather that need to be considered are storms, gales, low temperatures, heavy snow, heatwaves and drought. Snow has caused major disruption in recent years, and 2018 was the hottest summer on record for England. Due to East Sussex poor road network this means it is especially sensitive to weather events.

Areas such as Lewes, Rye and Uckfield are at high risk from fluvial or surface water flooding.

The wildfire risk is rising in the South Downs, Ashdown Forest, and across the Weald, demanding new tactics, partnerships, and community awareness.

Technology, Digital and Artificial Intelligence

Emerging risks from lithium-ion battery storage systems, electric vehicles, and renewable energy installations pose new challenges in fire behaviour and suppression. These risks are not yet fully understood but will demand proactive training, equipment development, and strategic foresight.

Artificial intelligence (AI) offers both opportunities and risks. AI applications can help us become more efficient, but its flaws include factual inaccuracies and cyber security issues.

Information and cyber security

Cyber-attacks have the potential to cause widespread disruption to critical services and systems and are on the increase.

A cyber-attack can be carried out by nation-states, individuals, groups, or organisations and target computer information systems, infrastructure and computer networks.

They can steal, alter, or destroy data and personal information, by 'hacking' into a susceptible system.

We continue to update and test our systems to ensure we are as prepared as we can be, but we are not complacent. We work closely with the Sussex Resilience Forum, and with our partners, to better understand the risks and how to mitigate them.

The consequences include:

- Disruption to normal activity
- Personal information held on computers may be misused
- Viruses that may infiltrate our information technology systems

- Delays in reaching people who need us

- Disruption to the way we work

- Data and information may be stolen, damaged or corrupted.

- Possible irreparable damage to information technology infrastructure

Strategic Assets and Special Considerations

Our area includes numerous high-risk or strategically sensitive sites – from COMAH-registered premises and major ports to heritage assets and nationally significant events.

Annual events such as Brighton Pride, Eastbourne Airbourne (air show), and Lewes Bonfire are unique to our area and place acute, localised demand on resources and require multi-agency coordination.

We also face cross-border risks from neighbouring counties and major infrastructure, including Gatwick Airport, Shoreham Port, and energy distribution facilities. The Service maintains a high level of operational preparedness through strategic partnerships, resilience planning, and business continuity arrangements.

See our Strategic Assessment of Risk 2024/25 for further information.

What this means

We will continue to support individuals, groups, organisations, and networks understand the actions they can take to make themselves safer

The Service needs to be resilient and agile to adjust to these evolving risks, we will continue to provide the right training and equipment for staff, and support for communities in response to persistent and changing risks.

Our CRMP Objectives

Responding effectively to fire and other emergencies

The role of the Fire and Rescue Service response is evolving.

Climate change, population growth, complex buildings, and new hazards require services that are flexible, scalable, and innovative. We must be ready to respond to fires and floods, but also to chemical incidents, major cyber disruptions, and humanitarian crises.

We want to continue to deliver fast, effective, and compassionate emergency response - protecting life, property, and the environment while supporting resilient communities through professionalism, adaptability, and trust.

Response is at the core of the Fire and Rescue Service's identity. It is the capability that ensures help is available - immediately, expertly, and reliably - when people face life-threatening emergencies. Whether dealing with fire, flooding, rescues, hazardous materials, building collapses, or supporting multi-agency incidents, response remains a vital lifeline to the public.

We will deliver improvements to provide a proactive, flexible, and sustainable emergency response model so we can respond to the full range of risks including fire, water, road and environmental.

By strengthening operational resilience, enhancing On-Call firefighter availability, building community trust, investing in people and equipment, and maintaining a value-driven approach, we will protect lives, property, the environment and support national resilience.

What we will do during this CRMP

Strategic Objectives - What we will do	What this means to you	How we know it's made a difference
Year 1-2		
We will review and make recommendations on our "Special Capabilities", including the most appropriate location and staffing model for specialist vehicles e.g. wildfire vehicles and our water carrier, and for national resilience assets e.g. High Volume Pump. We will review and make recommendations on the number of "spare" fire engines and what they are used for e.g. as a replacement on station when maintenance or repairs are being carried out. We will review the functionality and capability of central teams which manage crewing and the deployment of staff, implementing and evaluating any changes. We will make recommendations on how best to utilise available On-Call firefighters to provide emergency cover. We will make recommendations to improve crewing resilience at Lewes and Crowborough Community Fire Stations, particularly when there is sickness or other unplanned events. We will review the way in which Fire Officers (Station Manager and above) work, including their rota pattern, specialisms e.g. Fire Investigation, levels of incident command and other duties. We will provide recommendations for approval. We will review and assess the impact of attending Special Service incidents e.g. assisting ambulance, and make recommendations for potential changes. We will review our Standby policy to ensure it is being delivered in the most effective way and reflects risk. We will review our response to extreme weather events predicted to occur more often.	An effective and resilient life risk response. An On-Call duty system that is sustainable and supports availability. A strengthening of communities, increasing resilience and trust Continued investment in our people and equipment aligned to evolving and emerging risks. Our facilities, fire engines, special appliances, equipment and other resources are allocated on a risk-based approach, to support our response capabilities now and in the future. We continue improving productivity and efficiency in our ways of working. This means we make better decisions on Standbys, when crews only travel to wait at another fire station when that fire engine isn't available to be sent out in an emergency.	% of accidental dwelling fires confined to room of origin Percentage of On Station first responses within 10 minutes Percentage of On-Call first responses within 15 minutes Percentage of emergency calls answered within 10 seconds Time between control receiving a 999 call and being mobilised

Year 3-5
We will review the response we provide from our stations.
We will review our duty systems to ensure they operate to ensure they are productive and efficient.
We will review the numbers of officers and officer specialisms needed to reduce unnecessary work for our officer teams.
The evaluations conducted in years 1 and 2 will inform further workstreams.

Protecting the public through fire regulation

We will continue to identify and reduce risk during every interaction with the public, improving fire safety in and around the buildings where people live, work, visit and stay.

Through our Prevention and Protection risk reduction activities we will continue to identify the highest risk people and premises and provide an appropriate response to reduce the risk to our employees and the community to the lowest level practicable.

What we will do during this CRMP

Strategic Objectives - What we will do	What this means to you	How we know it's made a difference
Year 1-2		
We will deliver 500 audits and 1000 Fire Safety Checks to those most at risk of fire, monitoring effectiveness and carrying out quality assurance. We will embed our new approach to risk and incorporate Home Safety Visits and Site Specific Risk Information policies into one overarching policy containing risk reduction activities. We will use learnings from incidents of significance including Grenfell Public Inquiry to improve our enforcement of the Fire Safety Order (FSO) and our advice to the community. We will improve the skills and training for specialist staff by identifying career pathways, accessing national resources and providing peer support. We will continue to review the effectiveness of the Enforcement Management Model, following the latest guidance and regulatory changes.	A reduction in the risk of fire in industrial and commercial premises. Improved quality of living conditions by addressing safety concerns in high-risk premises. A strengthening of communities, increasing resilience and reducing risk.	We will monitor: Number of industrial and commercial fires Number of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) % of UwFS calls to properties covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 that become Primary fires Number of audits of high-risk premises completed

Strategic Objectives - What we will do	What this means to you	How we know it's made a difference
Year 1-2		
We will manage relevant legislative, guidance and other changes across the Service through the Legislative Change Board. We will evolve and improve our annual assessment of risk process by improving our risk information accuracy and the volume of risk information on our system. We will review our partnerships to ensure they deliver results, including exploring the sharing of specialist teams and functions. We will continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency through consultations on all high-risk waste sites in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove on Fire Prevention Plans for permitted waste and recycling premises.		Number of satisfactory and unsatisfactory audits. Number of fire safety checks completed
Year 3-5		
We will identify and assess opportunities to share functions and specialist teams whenever possible, with our neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services and further afield. This will include joint training, consultation and legal teams. We will review the number and success of prosecutions and legal action for lessons learned to implement continuous improvement. We will work in partnership with other Fire and Rescue Services and other regulators to improve efficiencies and enhance effectiveness.		

Preventing fires and other emergencies

Every fire, road traffic collision, or other emergency we respond to leaves behind more than physical damage—it impacts people, families, and communities. While our response capability remains critical, it is through risk reduction that we create lasting change. The communities we serve are evolving, with increasingly complex social, economic, and health challenges that influence risk. These challenges demand a shift from reactive to proactive approaches.

Our role goes beyond reducing fire risk, as many risks associated with fire are similar to other factors—it is about working in partnership to address the broader issues that contribute to vulnerability, such as age, health, housing, and social isolation.

We reduce risk through our ongoing programme of activities including:

- Youth engagement including Fire Cadets, Safety in Action and engagement with school.
- Free Home Safety Visits – we visit people in their homes to deliver support and advice, providing smoke alarms, including specialist alarms, to those who are eligible.
- Road safety – we work with Sussex Police and other partners in the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership as well as road safety charities to reduce road risk for those who are most vulnerable.
- Arson Reduction – we work with local authorities and Sussex Police to identify high risk areas and individuals to reduce incidents and the impact of deliberate fire setting.
- Befriending and Personal Resilience – delivered by our Community Volunteers who support individuals through regular contact and advice.
- Community Resilience – we work with partner agencies, charities and communities to encourage and enhance community resilience by providing support and guidance in our campaigns and public-facing activities.

What we will do during this CRMP

Strategic Objectives - What we will do	What this means to you	How we know it's made a difference
Year 1-2		
We will carry out a comprehensive review of our ongoing prevention activities and make specific recommendations for approval. We will deliver 9,000 home safety visits to those most at risk of fire, monitoring effectiveness and carrying out quality assurance. We will develop new information sharing agreements and work with Adult Social Care, GP practices and the NHS to better target Home Safety Visits. We will seek additional funding to support our Fire Cadets programme. We will improve our advice for the public and deliver these in new campaigns which will be evaluated for effectiveness. We will improve training for our staff to make risk reduction work more effective. We will review our "After the Incident" survey, sent to members of the public involved in incidents, to improve our understanding of how we can prevent future fires.	There will be a reduced risk of fire, injury, and death from fire. A strengthening of communities, increasing resilience and reducing risk through targeted prevention activity. We will focus our resources on the most effective prevention activities so you get the support and advice you need when you need it. The voice of those affected by fire and other emergencies is heard as we seek to improve. You get the most up to date advice about how to keep you and loved ones safe.	We will monitor: Number of Accidental Dwelling fires Number of deaths and injuries in primary fires Number of Home Safety Visits % of Home Safety Visits to vulnerable people Number of Primary and deliberate fires % of accidental dwelling fires confined to room of origin Number of incidents attended
Year 3-5		
Implement and evaluate the review of our activities. Review how we work with health and other partners to find new ways to prevent fires and other emergencies. Refresh our multi-agency working to ensure we continue to prioritise the reduction of fire deaths and injuries. Review how we support communities to prepare for emergency situations by helping them develop their own resilience.		

Supporting Information

Consultation and Engagement

Our Communications, Engagement and Consultation Strategy 2024-27 creates a framework in which we operate.

Public engagement and consultations are a vital part of our work.

We want to make sure the voices of members of the public, local groups and businesses, and our partners are heard when we are making important decisions and deciding what work to prioritise.

We have made the following promise.

We will:

- Ensure you have the opportunity to influence our strategic and tactical plans

- Increase the quality of engagement with you

- Ensure equality and inclusion is a prime consideration when delivering engagement and consultation to ensure no group or individual is disadvantaged.

Each consultation has its own communications and engagement plan to ensure we deliver against this, using activities including face to face events, online events, posters, media, social media and newsletters.

Equality Impact Assessment

Equality impact analysis (EIA) is a tool which assists the Service in ensuring that our policies, practices and decisions are fair, meet the needs of staff and our community and that they are not inadvertently discriminating against any protected group.

The process involves considering the potential impact on different groups of people on the basis of the protected characteristics included in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.)

Carrying out EIA allows us to determine whether there may be any adverse impact on particular groups and take appropriate action to mitigate this wherever possible.

We regularly screen all our policies and procedures, and consider the potential impact of any new initiatives, or when making decisions about current or future services.

Our Promise - Equality and Inclusion

We welcome and appreciate differences

Diversity helps create the strongest team possible for our service and helps us connect more easily with everyone in the communities we serve.

Simply put, it makes us more effective and efficient.

We continually develop our relationships with partner groups, so we are able to "hear" those whose voice might be quieter.

This is everyone's responsibility, and we work hard to make sure that Every Contact Counts and every opportunity is taken to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Value difference

We will understand our workforce and community, drive positive change and outcomes keeping the whole of our community safer.

Be visibly inclusive

Demonstrating inclusive behaviour and leadership throughout the organisation.

We will be known for valuing our workforce and the communities we serve.

Be attractive and accessible to all

We will foster good relationships and be able to engage effectively with diverse communities.

Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

We need to meet our obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and consider how our policies and decisions affect people with protected characteristics e.g. age, race and disability.

Community Compass Advisory Group

As a public service, we have a legal and moral duty to build relationships, foster goodwill and challenge discrimination. It is our aim to be a powerful advocate for the diverse communities that we serve, to be a truly inclusive organisation and an employer of choice for all.

Our leaders engage with a panel of independent advisors for the benefit of the whole community, providing the Service with independent advice and acting as critical friends to support our ambition to constantly improve the service that we deliver.
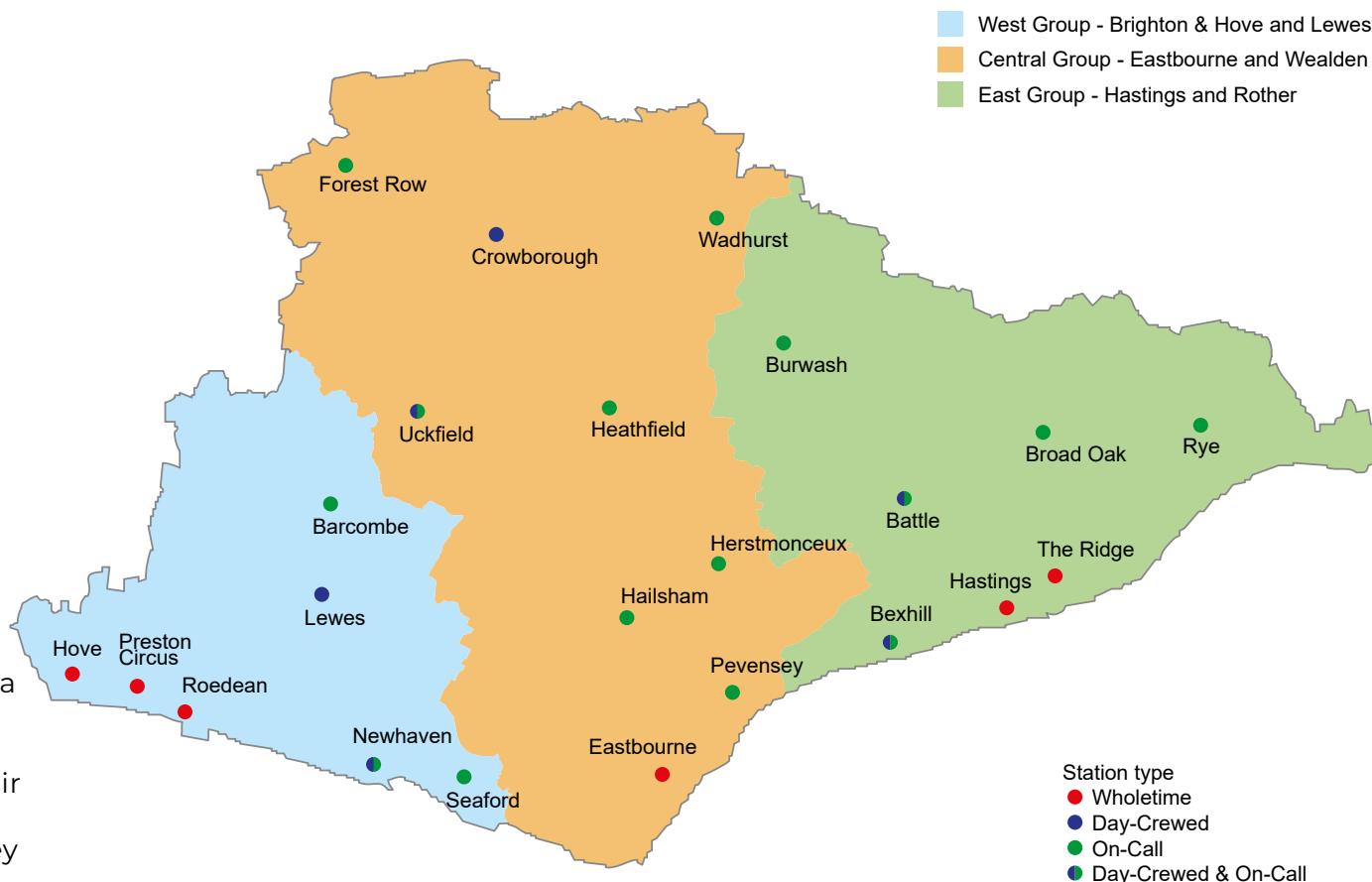
Read more:

www.esfrs.org/ccag

Explaining our Duty Systems

Wholetime shift system - Our highest risk areas are covered by wholetime shift fire stations where firefighters are available for immediate turnout 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This duty system is found at our higher risk and busier areas such as Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton.

Day crewed – Our smaller town areas are covered by Day Crewed Stations where firefighters work daytimes in the week and are available for immediate turnout. At other times, firefighters are available from home and are mobilised via a paging alert system. This duty system is operated in towns such as Uckfield, Crowborough, Lewes, Bexhill, Battle and Newhaven.

On-Call – In more rural and lower risk areas, firefighters are available from home/work via a paging alert system. On-Call firefighters have primary employment but respond within five minutes of the station to incidents during their agreed availability hours. This duty system is operated in areas such as Heathfield, Pevensey and Forest Row.

Some Day Crewed stations also have an On-Call section, who provide availability for additional fire appliances and special vehicles.

West Group - Brighton & Hove and Lewes
Central Group - Eastbourne and Wealden
East Group - Hastings and Rother

Forest Row
Wadhurst
Crowborough
Burwash
Uckfield
Heathfield
Broad Oak
Rye
Barcombe
Battle
Herstmonceux
The Ridge
Hailsham
Hastings
Lewes
Bexhill
Hove
Preston Circus
Pevensey
Roedean
Newhaven
Eastbourne
Seaford

Station type
- Wholetime
- Day-Crewed
- On-Call
- Day-Crewed & On-Call

Glossary of terms

Accidental Dwelling Fire (ADF) - A fire in a domestic property started unintentionally.

Assets - Everything we own or lease that is used to deliver the services we provide - fire stations, vehicles, equipment, workwear, technology and offices.

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) - A system that warns people of a possible fire by automatic or manual means.

Consultation - a formal survey or way of collecting views from our audience.

Deploy/deployment - when we allocate a fire engine or vehicle to a specific area.

Deprivation - the absence of essential resources needed for a decent standard of living, including things like money, education, healthcare and housing (see Index of Multiple Deprivation [IMD]).

Sussex Resilience Forum - A multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, from across Sussex.

False Alarm - A call to an incident that does not require our attendance, for example where an alarm is being tested, a smoke alarm is sounding due to a failing battery or a fault in the system.

Joint Fire Control - Often referred to as the control room. This is where emergency calls are received and call handlers allocate the appropriate response (i.e. the number of fire engines) and/or provide appropriate advice.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - An independent body that assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, and people aspects of police forces and fire and rescue services.

Home Fire Safety Visit - A free service we offer to people who may be at increased risk of, or from, fire.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) - The IMD is a government tool in England that measures relative deprivation across small areas. It assigns scores from 1 to 10 based on factors like income, education, health and crime.

Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) - An alternative name for Community Risk Management Plan.

Modelling - The use of data, calculations and simulations to predict or estimate various factors related to fire and rescue services, such as demand, resource, response times and effectiveness.

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) - A tablet device used by firefighters on our fire engines that provides crucial information, such as specific risks present at certain sites we may need to attend.

National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) - The professional voice of the UK fire and rescue service (FRS). NFCC drives improvement and development throughout the UK FRS.

Non-domestic- This is a building that is not a home or house.

On-call Firefighter - on-call firefighters live or work within around five minutes of a fire station and are paged when there is an incident. This means they're not based at the fire station full time.

Representative Body (also Trade Union) - this is a membership organisation for employees to join if they wish. They are in place to protect and advance the interest of their members.

Resources - This is what we can send to respond to an incident – such as fire engines, equipment, firefighters etc.

Special Service Calls - When our staff and equipment are employed for services other than firefighting, those services will be referred to as a 'Special Service Call'. Examples include rescuing people trapped in lifts and water leaks affecting electrics in a property.

Specialist vehicle - vehicles that are not our normal fire engines, including boats, and aerial ladder platforms.

Stakeholder - a person with an interest or concern in something, or have a role in an organisation's success.

UK Resilience Framework - An analysis that focuses on the UK's ability to anticipate, assess, prevent, mitigate and respond to, and recover from, known, unknown, direct, indirect and emerging civil contingency risks.

Unwanted Fire Signals - A false alarm occurs when an AFA activates without an actual fire, often due to environmental factors, system malfunctions, or human error. When we respond to such false alarms, they are termed Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS).

Wholetime Firefighters - our wholetime firefighters work regular shift patterns. They respond to emergencies and carry our prevention and protection activities.

Wildfire - Large uncontrolled fires occurring in open natural vegetation. A wildfire incident usually requires more than 4 fire engines, covers an area of 1 hectare or more, takes more than 6 hours to extinguish and has flames longer than 1.5 metres.