

**Easy Read**

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
De Cymru



South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service

# South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

## What we did in 2021 to 2022



This document was written by **South Wales Fire and Rescue Service**. It is an easy read version of ‘**South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Annual Improvement Plan – How we did in 2021-2022.**’

**December 2022**

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 30**.



Where the document says we, this means **South Wales Fire and Rescue**. For more information contact:

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# Introduction



We are South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.



We are one of the largest fire and rescue services in the UK.



In 2021 to 2022 we received over 32 thousand emergency calls. We helped at over 17 thousand situations.



We serve some of the busiest communities in Wales. We want to keep the people of South Wales safe from fires and other dangers.



We help people by putting out fires. We also help with other problems like road accidents and when people are in danger in water.





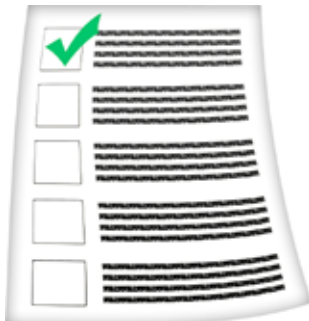
We have been working on ways to make our service better.



To do this we thought about what our communities need. We worked with other partners and with our communities.



This document is about the things we worked on from 2021 to 2022.



It tells you what we have done to make our service better.



When you have read this document, we want you to tell us what you think. [You can fill in our survey here.](#)



Your views are important to us. They help us make better plans for the future.

# About us



This year, we had a new South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. We also had 14 new members.



The South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority makes sure that we run our service well. The Chairperson is in charge of meetings.



We had over 1600 staff working for us. This included firefighters, people who answer emergency calls, and support staff, like people who look after our vehicles or work in finance.



We have 47 fire stations.



We shared 9 stations with other **emergency services**.

**Emergency Services** are services to call in an emergency like Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance.



We worked in new ways during the Covid-19 pandemic. We need to carry on using some of these new ways of working. This could be by having meetings or giving training online.

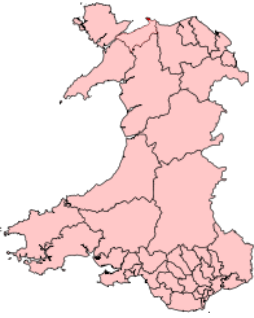


This will make our services easier for people to use. It will also be better for the **environment**.



The **environment** is where we live. It includes the land, the sea, the air, and everything that lives in and on it. For example: plants, animals and fish.

# Our area



**The area we serve includes the cities of Cardiff and Newport, large valley towns, smaller places, and the coast.**



Over the last 10 years the number of homes in the area increased. Most of all in Newport.



Most new homes only had 1 person living in them.



We know that older people who live on their own are more at risk. We have worked with partners to do more to help them.



There are over 600 schools in our area with over 240 thousand pupils. We visit local schools to give fire safety talks.





We give advice in universities about home safety. This helps people living away from home for the first time.



There were heatwaves in Summer 2022, with **wildfires** causing damage.

A **wildfire** is an unwanted and uncontrolled fire in forests or countryside. They spread quickly and can be hard to put out.



Some places had flooding after the heatwave.



There are over 35 thousand businesses in our area. We give advice and check they are following fire safety rules.

# What we did in 2021 to 2022

We worked on **8 areas** in 2021 to 2022:



## 1. Keeping you safe



Focusing on prevention work to help reduce the need for you to call us.



We started new ways to track and reduce **false alarms**.

**False alarm calls** are when we leave to attend to an emergency but when we arrive there is no emergency.



We talked about **false alarms** with hospitals, schools and housing associations.

We restarted giving extra advice on being safe at home. This includes:



- Help to stop smoking.



- The danger of **carbon monoxide**.

**Carbon monoxide** is an invisible chemical that is harmful.



- Reducing the chance of crime.



- Reducing falling at home.



We gave road safety advice to over 200 people each month.









We worked with other groups to find ways to reduce fires started on purpose.



In the Rhondda we worked with partners on the **Healthy Hillsides project** to look after our hillsides better for wildlife.



We worked with others to:

- Help reduce **wildfires**.
- Stop people behaving badly.
- Make bonfire night safer.



We helped clear areas where people had left piles of rubbish. This was to reduce the chance of someone starting a fire there.





We did talks about safety at home with cooking, electrical and candle safety.



As part of the High-Rise Working Group, we talked about the safety of tall buildings. And gave advice.



We improved our water rescue skills and training. We will train all stations to help rescue people from flooding.



With the **Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)** we gave training on being safe near rivers and canals.



We got funding to start the **River Usk Trackway project**. This will mean that a boat can launch close to Newport city centre to help with flooding.



## 2. Responding to your emergency



Making sure we respond quickly when you need us.



We recruited **On-Call firefighters** faster. We gave them a plan to prepare for their training course.



**On-Call firefighters** are firefighters that are ready and available to go into work if they are needed.



We worked with other fire and rescue services to help each other take emergency calls during busy times.



In February 2022 we began **On-Call Support** so that we have cover when needed.



We improved training for **On-Call firefighters**.



We did 2 big training exercises with more than 10 fire engines in 2021. We plan to do more of these in different places in the future.



### 3. Working with our partners



Working with the South Wales **Public Services Boards** and other partners to deliver a fire and rescue service that meets your needs.



**Public Services Boards** are services that form a group to work together and make public services better. Services like local councils, the NHS, police, fire and rescue and charities.



We helped workers in NHS Wales and Ambulance Services during the Covid-19 pandemic.



We drove ambulances, gave vaccines, and worked at vaccination centres. Over 100 of our staff volunteered to help.



We met with **Public Services Boards** to make sure we gave help where needed. We also met with local communities.



We worked with the Welsh Government and fire and rescue services in Wales to make buildings safer. We worked more with hospitals to reduce risks.



We gave advice about **false alarms** and building safety.



We were trained by Cardiff Telecare Service on how to install and link smoke, heat and **carbon monoxide** detectors in their customers' homes.





We showed Western Power Distribution staff how to install smoke alarms.



Care and Repair gave us training about their services so we can refer people to them.



We provided training for ambulance staff visiting high risk homes. We set up an easy way for them to refer people to us.



We gave training to NHS staff about the risk of fire.



We gave housing associations advice about fire doors.



## 4. Communicating better

**Getting better at giving information to our staff and communities, so they can help us do a good job.**



**Communicating** means how we give people information. It includes things like speaking, writing, events, videos, and **social media**.



**Social media** is ways of sharing information on your phone or computer. For example, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



We made an app for our staff that tells them our news and information. We will ask staff what they think about it to make this better.



We know that some people might not be able to get information over the internet. So, we told people information in ways that did not need a computer. This included using leaflets, newspaper adverts, radio and TV, banners, and having events.



We put video equipment in all our stations so we can meet online. This helps us to share information.



We did more on our website and on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. We got more followers and reached more people.



We used video calls to give talks to learners aged between 5 and 16 years old.



We did the **Bernie Pantomime** for over 1 thousand learners across 18 schools. This teaches pupils about the danger of grass fires.



## 5. Looking after our environment



Doing our work in a way that helps the planet.



We have new people to help us make our **environment** plans better. We measured how much power we use in our buildings. We are using more **electric vehicles**. And putting charging points at more places.



**Electric vehicles** like cars and vans use electricity to run. They are better for the **environment**.



We replaced a lot of our leaflets with messages on social media. We know that some leaflets must stay so that everyone can get the information.



We recycled more paper at our stations. We printed less and ordered less paper.



We had more meetings online, and we gave more training online to reduce the need to travel.



We looked at a system to collect rainwater for us to use for things like cleaning fire engines and cars.





## 6. Using technology well



**Looking at using better technology to improve our service to you.**



We used mobile tablets more for recording what we do. We plan to do this more. We started using mobile devices on fire engines. This means we can record information about community safety and incidents – like fires and car accidents.



We began changing our computer systems in Summer 2021 so that we can work better. We got a better system to keep information about our vehicles like our vans and fire engines.



We used computers to help people join in at large meetings, events and training days.



This helped people to ask and answer questions and helped us to collect the results.



## 7. Valuing our people



Supporting the **diverse** people who work for us and training them well.



**Diverse** means we are not all the same. For example, people in Wales:

- come from different backgrounds and cultures
- have different abilities
- believe different things
- have different sexual identities
- make different choices about how they live their lives
- are different ages.



Our stations helped people find out more about our jobs. We encouraged our **fire cadets** to think about working for us.

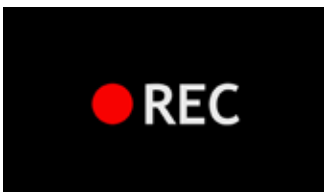
**Fire cadets** are young people aged 13 to 16 years old. They meet once a week, wear uniforms and learn firefighting skills.



We held events online in which firefighters shared their stories.



We started checking if our policies and activities think about **diverse** groups.



We began using a new system to record meetings with staff. This has helped us to talk about job goals and well-being.



We worked on our well-being project. We will train our managers on the main ideas.



We made well-being areas in some of our buildings. We worked with staff to do this. We plan to make areas in more places.



A group met every 3 months to talk about staff well-being.



## 8. Working in the best way



**Making sure we do our work to the highest standard but at the lowest cost.**



We finished checking the wages we pay our staff and we have told them about any changes. We will make sure that every staff member gets the right level of wages.



We used more information about how we work. This helps us to understand where we are needed and how we can make communities safer.



We looked at how **Joint Fire Control** work. We began to make changes to help staff. **Joint Fire Control** is where emergency calls are answered.



We looked at how to make sure we are available when we are needed. The way we plan for this is called **Flexible Rostering**. We will check this is working well every year.

# Have your say



**We want to hear your views about our activities and information. It will help us make our services better.**



We would like you to tell us what you think in our survey [Have Your Say 2022 here](#).

## Write to us:



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Llantrisant  
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**Email us:** [hys@southwales-fire.gov.uk](mailto:hys@southwales-fire.gov.uk)





**Website:** [www.southwales-fire.gov.uk](http://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk)



**Call us:** 01443 232000



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**Twitter:** [SWFireandrescue](https://twitter.com/SWFireandrescue)

**Instagram:** [sw\\_fire\\_and\\_rescue](https://www.instagram.com/sw_fire_and_rescue)



You can contact us in Welsh or English. We will reply in the language you have used.

# Hard words

## Communicating

Communicating means how we give people information. It includes things like speaking, writing, events, videos and social media.

## Diverse

Diverse means we are not all the same. For example people in Wales:

- come from different backgrounds and cultures
- have different abilities
- believe different things
- have different sexual identities
- make different choices about how they live their lives
- are different ages.

## Electric vehicles

Electric vehicles like cars and vans use electricity to run. They are better for the environment.

## Emergency Services

Services to call in an emergency like Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance.

## Environment

The environment is where we live. It includes the land, the sea, the air, and everything that lives in and on it. For example: plants, animals and fish.

## **False Alarm Calls**

False alarm calls are when we leave to attend to an emergency but when we arrive there is no emergency.

## **Fire cadets**

Fire cadets are young people aged 13 to 16 years old. They meet once a week, wear uniforms and learn firefighting skills.

## **On-Call firefighters**

On-Call firefighters are firefighters that are ready and available to go into work if they are needed.

## **Public Services Boards**

Public Services Boards are services that form a group to work together and make public services better in an area of South Wales. For example: local councils, the NHS, police, fire and rescue and charities.

## **Social Media**

Ways of sharing information on your phone or computer. For example, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

## **Wildfires**

A wildfire is an unwanted and uncontrolled fire in forests or countryside. They spread quickly and can be hard to put out.