



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru
South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Strategic Plan 2020-2030

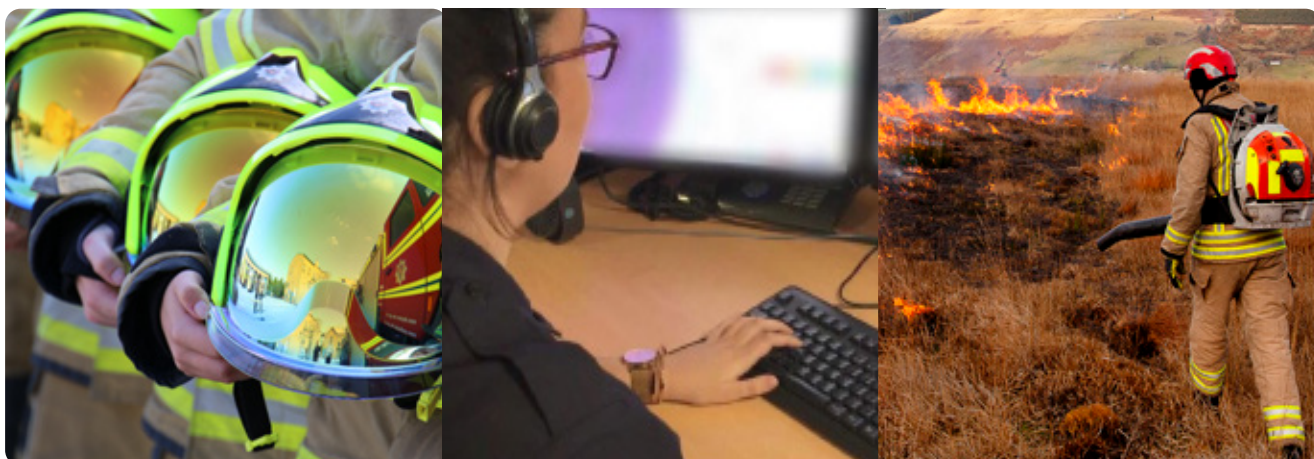
APRIL 2023 - YEAR FOUR UPDATE

**RAISING AWARENESS
REDUCING RISK**

This document is also available in Welsh

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Foreword



Huw Jakeway QFSM
Chief Fire Officer
South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



Councillor Steven Bradwick
Chairperson
South Wales
Fire and Rescue Authority

Welcome to the fourth annual progress update of our Strategic Plan 2020-2030.

Working in partnership with colleagues in other frontline services and partners in other sectors, we aim to protect and serve our communities across the 10 Unitary Authorities of South Wales, and the thousands of visitors to the beautiful area of South Wales.

The plan communicates how we will ensure we achieve our vision of making South Wales safer, by reducing risk, through actions and delivery against our Strategic Themes and Objectives. To ensure progress remains on track, the work of the Service is and will continue to be scrutinised and reviewed by our Fire and Rescue Authority.

This update reflects on the progress the Service has made over the past year, including progress on the two new objectives added last year and key areas of focus.

In December 2022, I commissioned a review of our culture, discipline processes and historic discipline cases. Following a fact-finding period and convening of an Independent Appointment Panel, Fenella Morris King's Counsel (KC) has been confirmed as the independent Chairperson for the review. Throughout 2023, this will be at the forefront of our minds and communications as we engage with the review team. It is anticipated that the Chairperson will present their findings and recommendations at the end of this calendar year.

There are many challenges that we're facing as a Service, but I am certain that by working together we will overcome them and any others that this year has in store for us.

CFO Huw Jakeway QFSM

A full-page photograph of firefighters in training. Two firefighters in brown and yellow protective gear are climbing a tall metal extension ladder leaning against a brick wall. A third firefighter is on the ground, assisting with the ladder. The ground is wet and reflective. In the background, a fire engine and other training equipment are visible.

Training & Development

At Cardiff Gate Training and Development Centre, crews learn new skills in a realistic environment, always working as part of a team.

Our Strategic Themes

The table below sets out the eight Strategic Themes which are the foundation for our Strategic Plan 2020-2030. Our annual improvement objectives are built within these themes, which also structure our priorities and planning as we work to deliver on our mission statement:

“To make South Wales safer, by reducing risk.”

We have mapped these themes to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFGA) to demonstrate how our priorities contribute to the seven well-being goals.

Strategic Theme	What we will do	Strategic Theme	What we will do
Keeping you Safe 	Focussing on prevention work to help reduce the need for you to call us	Protecting our Environment 	Carrying out our activities in a way that helps sustain the planet for our future generations
Responding to your Emergency 	Ensuring we respond quickly and effectively when you need us	Using Technology Well 	Continually look to use the latest technology where it can improve our service to you
Working with Partners 	Working with the South Wales PSBs and other partners to deliver a fire and rescue service that meets your needs	Valuing our People 	Supporting a diverse workforce that represents your community, is well trained and motivated to deliver our service
Engaging and Communicating 	Ensuring all our communities and staff are involved in helping us provide an excellent service	Continuing to Work Effectively 	Ensuring our service provides value for money and is clearly accountable

Well-being Statement

The sustainable development principle of the WFGA states “**All Public Services should act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**”

We are committed to meeting our duties under the WFGA. As we develop our Strategic Themes, which are the high-level priorities shaping our plan, the WFGA goals are considered to ensure we contribute to their achievement. The Seven Goals are:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A Wales
of vibrant
culture and
thriving
Welsh
language



A prosperous
Wales



A
healthier
Wales



A more
equal
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales

The WFGA also identifies the following **five ways of working** which we must consider and act in accordance with when planning and making decisions:

- Balancing short term needs with **long-term** needs – Taking a longer-term view in our Strategic Plan 2020-2030 allows us to consider how future trends and changes will impact the public and our services, including climate and demographic change
- Putting resources into **preventing** problems – Our preventative activity ranges from working with businesses and building owners to make premises safe to working with individuals and groups to change behaviour, all with the aim of preventing need for an emergency response
- Using an **integrated** approach, balancing social, economic, and environmental needs – Our planning process is undertaken collectively by involving various stakeholders including our staff, our partners and member of the public, to ensure the impact of proposals are fully explored
- **Collaborating** with others to help meet well-being objectives – We work with a wide range of partners at a strategic and local level
- **Involving** others to reflect the diversity of an area – Our consultation and engagement activities ensure there are opportunities to contribute views and ideas.



Long-term



Preventing



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement

The Socio-Economic Duty 2021

Since March 2021, public bodies in Wales have had to consider how strategic decisions affect those who live in less favourable social and economic circumstances, for example, experiencing poverty or unequal access to services such as transport. Such disadvantage can result in inequalities of outcome including poorer health, lower educational attainment, and less favourable work opportunities. We therefore give due regard to socio-economic disadvantage in making strategic decisions, which contributes to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFGA) goals.

We carry out an Integrated Assessment when developing projects, amending or writing policies, designing initiatives/campaigns, etc, and these assessments are kept under review to ensure our activities are truly inclusive. By addressing any barriers to accessing our services, our focus is on the people we serve.

Community Risk Management Plans (CRMPs)

Each of our 47 Fire and Rescue Stations produces an annual CRMP including an assessment of demographics, to better understand the communities they serve, and local risks/priorities including building/premises risks, water, and roads. These plans also highlight community activities and initiatives that are planned and delivered locally and support the work of Public Service Boards (PSBs).

Our Public Service Boards (PSBs)

We continue to work with and support the PSBs in our area. PSBs have a responsibility to prepare and publish local well-being plans and report annually on their progress to show how responsibilities under the WFGA are being met.

We always consider the long-term implications of our actions and how we can be effective members of our PSBs, collaborating and taking an integrated approach to delivering services, to help people feel safe and well in their daily lives.

Our work with the PSBs demonstrates our commitment to the sustainable development principle of the WFGA, the seven goals of the WFGA and applying the five ways of working.

The structure of our PSBs has changed, as five authorities combined to form Gwent PSB in 2021 and Bridgend PSB and Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB merged from April 2023. We will continue to engage at a strategic and local level with the new PSB structures.

Please click on the relevant logo below to visit a PSB website.



Keeping You Safe

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible Wales

What does this mean?

Our work to prevent emergencies is supported by an evidence-led programme of campaigns, interventions, and activities, many of which are instigated and delivered by our station personnel. Every fire and rescue station develops an annual Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) focussed on community needs and underpinned by local knowledge. This is supported by monitoring of known and emerging risks to protect those most at risk. Key to our success is working with partners, coordinating activities, and sharing information. This ensures we are responsive and effective, with many of our risk reduction activities acknowledged as innovative.

By Keeping You Safe, we will work to reduce the risk of fire and related injuries in domestic, business and other premises. Work to reduce deliberate fires, including wildfires and refuse, and on water safety will ensure communities are able to enjoy outdoor environments in safety. Our road safety initiatives will make road travel safer.



**Focussing on
prevention
work to help
reduce the
need for you
to call us**

We will keep you safe by:

- Reducing the impact of false alarms on our resources
- Reducing the number of fires in the home and understanding the causes and behaviours of them
- Reducing the number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)
- Reducing the number of deliberate fires
- Improving safety in and around water
- Improving fire safety in buildings in our communities

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Incidents attended
- Resource demands
- Risk reduction activities in domestic, business and other settings

What we have done in 2022-2023

We continued to identify premises attended multiple times due to activation of automatic alarms, working with owners/managers to address issues identified and providing home fire safety advice to residents.

We carried out a review to understand individuals and groups most at risk of accidental fires at home and we updated our process for targeting home safety activity. This will help us to focus risk reduction on those most vulnerable in their communities.

Referral pathways from our partners for home fire safety checks have been refreshed as we continued to promote our risk reduction activity. Plans to introduce an all-Wales online home fire safety self-assessment tool are nearing completion – this will provide tailored advice to individuals including the offer of a visit to those identified at high risk.

We continued to roll out the 30-20 Options programme, a joint initiative with Go-Safe and Welsh Government to deliver behavioural change as road speed limits are reduced. By the end of February, we had interacted with 547 drivers at 28 events and evaluation indicates a positive impact. Cycle safety messages have been introduced into our presentations working with Go Safe and Gwent and South Wales Police Forces, to highlight drivers' responsibilities to cyclists.

Our five-year Water Rescue Strategy 2021-2026 set out our plan to ensure water rescue resources can reach any location within 30 minutes. This is vital for our capability to respond to inland water rescues, including flooding incidents which are expected to increase with climate change. This year we moved into Phase 2 focussing on our capability to enter slow moving shallow water to assist in rescue from flooding. The aim is for all Wholetime fire and rescue stations to have water first responder capability over the next two years.

Our wildfire response was tested in July and August with over 500 grass fires attended during a prolonged period of high temperatures and low rainfall. However, the impact was contained in key South Wales Valleys communities where the Healthy Hillside project is active. This is an established partnership with Natural Resources Wales, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales. For more information visit our [website](#).

What we will do in 2023-2024

Continue to work with partners on initiatives to reduce the number of deliberate fires – this will build on already successful partnerships and ensure safety messages achieve the broadest reach across the communities of South Wales.

Find new ways to promote safety messages – for example, we will be creating new interactive “games” to engage with children and promote home safety.

Work to understand those who are at most risk in our communities – by understanding risk within our communities, we can ensure our risk reduction resources are better targeted and reach those who need our support the most.

Explore opportunities to improve our capture of information on buildings and other settings – by developing our fire investigation capability, high-rise audit programme, land management plans and collection of information by crews at operational incidents, we will make our communities safer and improve firefighter safety.

Promote water safety awareness amongst our communities – we will target locations and groups at greater risk by sharing information with our partners.

Expand our road safety 30-20 Options, Seatbelt Options and Domino initiatives – our initiatives will continue to promote the messages of our Fatal Five campaign highlighting the main contributory factors that cause serious RTCs.

Responding to your Emergency

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A resilient
Wales



A healthier
Wales

What does this mean?

Our response begins with a call to our Joint Fire Control (JFC). We will gather key information so that we send the right equipment and people to deal with the incident. Our experienced Joint Fire Control personnel support the caller during their emergency and provide ongoing support to the attending crews throughout the event, to secure a safe outcome.

Ensuring our response is effective depends on our crews being available and appropriately trained so they are ready to deal with the incidents they face. Our Training department ensure that courses are delivered to prepare our crews for current and future demands.

Our On-Call firefighters live in the communities they serve. With 27 of our 47 fire and rescue stations fully crewed by On-Call firefighters and a further nine Wholetime fire and rescue stations supplemented by On-Call crews, our focus on a continuing recruitment programme ensures this capability is maintained.

This focus on responding efficiently and effectively to any emergency provides assurance that we are ready to meet the changing needs of our communities, from an ageing population to the effects of climate change new technology such as electric vehicles.



**Ensuring
we respond
quickly and
effectively
when you
need us**

We will respond to your emergency by:

- Responding effectively when you need us
- Doing all we can to make sure that our On-Call Duty System (OCDS) crews are available
- Training our firefighters, Joint Fire Control staff and other staff to respond to current and future risks in our communities

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Calls received and incidents attended
- Recruitment activities
- Training and development activities

What have we done in 2022-2023

In August, we held our first 'On-Call Firefighter Recruitment Month', highlighting the On-Call firefighter role and promoting a range of activities, vacancies and events. During the year we held almost 40 recruitment events, with station personnel carrying out additional local promotion of vacancies. By the end of February 2023, we had recruited 107 On-Call firefighters compared with 57 recruits in 2021-2022.

We carried out recruitment exercises for Auxiliary Firefighters and Auxiliary Joint Fire Control staff to ensure we can continue to meet our statutory duties and legal requirements to provide an emergency fire and rescue provision to the communities of South Wales.

We have also reviewed our experience of working through the Covid-19 pandemic, identifying lessons learnt so that better ways of working are maintained.

This year's exercise programme has focussed on scenarios based on locally identified risk with groups of fire and rescue stations responding to briefs that have included: fire in a block of flats, Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) involving multiple vehicles and chemical incidents at commercial premises. In total 144 exercises have taken place to test our response and support our local community risk management plans (CRMPs).

In May we carried out a training exercise collaborating with Medserve, Welsh Ambulance Services (NHS) Trust (WAST), South Wales Police and Cardiff University School of Medicine. RTC scenarios provided 200 students with realistic training opportunities and significant positive feedback was received.

We replaced three rescue tenders in our fleet with new vehicles, upgraded to Type C water rescue capability. The new appliances, deployed to Pontypridd, Ely and Merthyr Fire and Rescue Stations, enhance search capabilities and non-powered boat rescue operations, including flood response.

The JFC Review proposed five recommendations for implementation. We have appointed a new Head of Control and on-site welfare facilities have been improved. Work will continue in the coming year on addressing remaining recommendations.

We completed a minor equipment replacement project including wet weather work gear, reciprocating saws and battery operated RTC equipment.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Develop and introduce new specification 4x4 fire appliances – to enhance our response capability with additional agility.

Ensure our systems for recording and sharing risk information effectively supports our activities – reviewing our collection and collation of information will confirm information is available when needed by those who need it when it is needed.

Conduct research into emergency response to fires involving electric vehicles – this will support our development to meet changing risks and demands.

Review the structure of JFC and recruitment activities – so that we can continue to guarantee an efficient and effective response to emergency calls by our experienced and trained team.

Ensure our training programmes prepare our personnel for future challenges – in addition to considering operational training and future demands on the Service, we will support staff in their chosen career development pathways.

Explore opportunities to increase the delivery of online training to develop operational competence – this will allow training to be delivered more flexibly, integrated with operational activities, and reduce the requirement for travel to a central venue.

Promote vacancies through expanded social media use and face-to-face engagement activities – through a calendar of Firefighter Fit sessions and participation in careers fairs, we will raise awareness of career opportunities.

Working with Partners

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A globally
responsible
Wales



A prosperous
Wales

What does this mean?

Well-established partnerships help us to deliver service improvements for the communities of South Wales. Collaboration with others means that we avoid duplication of resources, making best use of public money. It also creates a better experience for the public as our understanding of other organisations and services increases – we can signpost to other providers and they can refer to us.

Our partnerships and collaborations are regularly reviewed to ensure effective use of resources and maximise benefits achieved. As partnerships progress we seek opportunities for further cooperation.

As a statutory partner on the Public Service Boards (PSBs) within our service area, we support delivery of Well-being Plans and local priorities to ensure our activities deliver long-term improvements to people in our communities. Many of our fire and rescue stations are a focus for community activity and have valuable relationships with local groups, while our Fire Crime Team works closely with Community Safety partners to reduce crime and disorder.

Delivering outcomes against this theme will further embed partnership working in our activities.



Working
with South
Wales PSBs
and other
partners to
deliver a fire
and rescue
service that
meets your
needs

We will work with our partners by:

- Working with PSBs to support our communities
- Working with our partners to deliver our services where they are needed
- Reviewing and evaluating our existing partnerships

We measure our progress by monitoring

- Partnership agreements and activities
- Engagement with PSBs
- Our range of partnerships and collaborations

What we have done in 2022-2023

As well as working with a range of partners to reduce the occurrence and impact of wildfires on our communities, we began a project to share data with Public Health Wales to better understand the effect of wildfires on the incidence of respiratory conditions.

The Service's Fire Crime Team supports local action on community

safety, including providing support in response to domestic violence referrals to deliver target hardening and arson reduction resources in collaboration with police and local agencies. The Team also monitors deliberate fire setting and works with stations and Community Safety Partnerships to monitor deliberate fire setting, identifying and addressing any trends identified.

Our engagement with community partners has included use of station facilities for meetings by groups such as Age Connect and NHS Falls Clinics, and work with local partners on initiatives including prevention of drowning. In Caerphilly, we collaborated with partners at Springfield on an employment programme and general recruitment of On-Call and Wholetime firefighters.

In June 2022, in partnership with Save a Life Cymru and Welsh Ambulance Services (NHS) Trust (WAST), the Service launched its first defibrillator initiative across all 47 Fire and Rescue stations. This placed defibrillator units at all stations and in the heart of communities.

The Service's Senior Management Team and Representative Bodies have agreed the operating principles for effective Flexible Rostering. The system will be reviewed annually by a joint working party or at the request of any of the parties concerned, as appropriate, to ensure the principles outlined continue to be effective. This will enable optimum crewing levels through advance planning and flexible deployment of station-based staff in a way that matches resources to demand.

We continued to support the current Primary Authority Schemes (PASs), working in partnership with businesses and social housing partners to achieve national consistency in delivering fire safety advice and regulatory activity. This includes work with Community Housing Cymru to provide advice to their members across Wales.

Our Resilience and Planning team coordinate an event planning group for major events, leading development of the process to capture and risk assess events so they can be managed appropriately

What we will do in 2023-2024

As PSBs launch their Local Well-being Plans 2023-2028, we will ensure our continuing engagement – this will enable us to better understand the challenges faced by our communities and to support those most in need.

Map our current partnership working activities and data sharing agreements – this will help us to identify and develop new opportunities for collaboration.

Review and enhance relationship with Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners and National Resilience in Wales - to ensure cohesive and collaborative approach to risks, threats and harm to our communities in line with emerging risks.

Reviewing our working arrangements with external agencies to ensure suitable support for our mental health provisions for staff – to ensure we offer our staff an effective range of support.

Engaging and Communicating

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A more
equal Wales



A Wales of vibrant
culture & thriving
Welsh language

What does this mean?

There are many factors that help us to shape our objectives and plans, with the views of our staff, communities and stakeholders at the heart of ensuring we identify the priorities that matter. There are a wide range of interests to consider, from crews on the frontline and the staff who support them, to the communities we serve and the partners we work with. Communication is a key priority in making sure there is awareness of the work we undertake, the challenges we face, and the purpose of our activities.

We will make sure that our communities and staff are involved in helping us provide an excellent community service, by offering a range of opportunities for our staff and citizens to help shape our activities now and in the future. We will also look to gain more views on how we share information.

Feedback from recent consultation highlighted the need for better communication of our responsibilities and activities and promotion of how our communities can be involved.



Ensuring
all our
communities
and staff are
involved in
helping us
provide an
excellent
service

We will engage and communicate well by:

- Involving our communities and make sure they have their say in what we do
- Helping to keep our communities safe by delivering safety education and attending community events

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Responses received to surveys and engagement initiatives
- Engagement via our Stakeholder Register
- Local community activities
- Engagement with the Shout forum, our internal staff communication sessions

What we have done in 2022-2023

We have produced a Communications and Engagement Strategy which is being implemented. Our website and social media platforms have been expanded, and stations' Facebook pages have been reinvigorated for more engagement with our communities. When schools share updates with us on social media following school visits, we thank them or share posts on our social media channels.

Our fire and rescue stations are once again hosting events and activities, from engagement with youth groups to acting as a venue for Falls Clinics in collaboration with National Health Service (NHS) colleagues. As our stations are embedded in their local communities, we are keen to seize opportunities to further develop this role and will be working with PSBs and other partners.

We have liaised with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales regarding digital exclusion, particularly focussing on our socio-economic duty, as the most vulnerable may be excluded from accessing information via digital platforms for a variety of reasons.

Non-digital methods are considered in each major campaign plan and referenced in our Communications and Engagement Strategy. Methods employed, such as for our Christmas safety campaign and Wholetime firefighter recruitment campaigns, include use of billboard vehicles, leaflets, brochures, newspaper adverts, radio and TV, outdoor banners, and face-to-face engagement events.

We will be consulting on a Service recruitment strategy, incorporating National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) best practice guidance. Development of monitoring and evaluation processes continues to ensure the effectiveness of our recruitment activity.

The 2022 Wholetime Duty System (WDS) recruitment campaign saw an increase in the proportion of female applicants from 10% the previous year to 12%. Overall almost 14% of female applicants were successful and offered a WDS post compared with just over 6% of male applicants.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Expand and promote channels that enable our staff and stakeholders to provide feedback and comment on our plans and services – by developing and promoting new engagement and consultation mechanisms, we will improve our capacity to receive feedback from staff and members of our communities.

Improve coordination of our involvement in community events and activities, providing support for fire and rescue stations – this will help our stations in developing their local involvement and role within their communities.

Share more information on the range of activities undertaken by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service – the responsibilities of a modern fire and rescue service are wide ranging and, as a public body in Wales, we also have a role in delivering on a broader agenda, particularly in respect of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Launch a standardised engagement toolkit for use across the Service – this will provide resources for planning, delivering, and evaluating events and other engagement activities.

Protecting our Environment

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A globally Responsible Wales



A healthier Wales



A resilient Wales



A Wales of cohesive communities

What does this mean?

We know that our activities have an effect on the global and local environment, and we are committed to minimising any negative impacts. Our Carbon Reduction Plan 2023-2030 will continue the work of our initial plan covering 2018-2023 by setting out our programme to meet Welsh Government's mandate for a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. This includes consideration of the resources we use – from reducing, reusing and recycling, to evaluating the environmental consequence of our procurement decisions. The impact of climate change is evidenced by changes to the demands we face: more frequent and prolonged periods of extreme weather are expected to increase wildfires and flooding. This can only be tackled by effective partnerships, so we continue to collaborate with key partners to understand and address these challenges.

We have a strong community focus to our work, making the natural environment safe and accessible. Knowledge of protected sites and support for local action is key, from working with schools to supporting local partnerships.



Carrying out our activities in a way that helps sustain the planet for our future generations

We will protect our environment by:

- Reducing the usage of single use materials
- Expanding the use of electric vehicles
- Reducing our energy use and our carbon footprint
- Considering how our activities impact on the environment
- Reducing the amount of waste produced

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Our Carbon Reduction Plan and progress towards becoming carbon neutral
- Our fleet and provision of electric vehicle (EV) charging points
- Business travel miles
- Waste produced

What we have done in 2022-2023

Our Sustainability Engagement Strategy has been finalised and is being implemented, with information being made available for our staff and the public. The strategy will help to shape our engagement and promotion of our activities, including progress on reducing our carbon footprint. We have calculated our carbon footprint using Welsh Government's carbon footprint methodology, in line with other public

bodies so that comparisons can be made. We have also compared our emissions with our baseline emissions for energy, fleet, supply chain, and business mileage from our baseline year of 2018-2019 where we have seen a decrease of 14%.

We increased green spaces on our sites with the introduction of trees and additional planting. An example is the work carried out at Ogmere Vale Fire and Rescue Station where, with support from the local authority, the well-being area used by staff has been extended and trees planted. It will provide additional resource for our work with the local community with outdoor activities, such as supporting forest schools.

Our fleet has expanded to 41 EVs, including 25 cars and 14 vans. These vehicles are more efficient than the diesel vehicles they have replaced and they help us reduce carbon emissions of travel and reduce pollution from tailpipe emissions. We now have EV charging points at 12 sites with a further 26 locations to be completed by the end of May 2023.

A new waste management contract is being finalised. This will enable us to monitor our waste streams.

Implementation of a new print facility contract has allowed us to replace our multi-function printers at Headquarters, Occupational Health and Cardiff Gate Training and Development Centre with new, more efficient models that will provide tracking of print volumes. From 2018-2019 to 2021-2022 we reduced our purchase of A4 copier paper by 43%.

Rollout of new drying technology in all fire and rescue stations continues with 17 stations completed to date. This technology is dry sensitive and will “auto shut-off” once materials are dried, saving energy and reducing costs. Work will be carried out at the remaining 10 On-Call fire and rescue stations.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Review developments in fuel and other technologies to identify opportunities that might be beneficial to the Service’s fleet asset replacement policy and procurement strategy – to evaluate and progress our aspiration for a greener fleet.

Implement an accredited Environmental Management System – so that we can gain recognition for our environmental practices and demonstrate our commitments to sustainability, consideration of environmental impacts, compliance with legislation, and environmental protection.

Develop an open dialogue with staff on our carbon reduction position and the challenges we face – by engaging and involving colleagues across the Service, we will increase awareness of our activities and encourage innovative solutions.

Agree and define the standard requirements of a sustainable building – in the longer term, this will ensure our buildings are resource-efficient and environmentally responsible throughout their life cycle.

Using Technology Well

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A resilient
Wales



A globally
responsible Wales



A healthier
Wales

What does this mean?

Technology is embedded in our work, from supporting operational firefighting techniques and equipment to the back-office systems that deliver business services and record our activities. It allows us to work effectively, providing insight and delivering efficiency gains. We keep our use of technology under constant review to ensure we are using the most suitable hardware and software in keeping our communities safe. While our priority is to use the best technology to record and monitor emergency calls, send the right vehicles and crew to you, and help us at the scene of the emergency incidents themselves, there are further benefits to our staff. For example, better connectivity helps to join up staff at our fire and rescue stations and other locations, reducing the need to travel, helping the environment, and reducing road risk.

In an increasingly digital world, we must be responsible in our use of technology and data management. Our systems therefore continually develop to ensure security of data while assisting our activities.



Continually
look to use
the latest
technology
where it can
improve our
service to
you

We will use technology well by:

- Using the most suitable technology and equipment to improve our services
- Reviewing the standard and use of technology and equipment across the service

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Cyber security incidents
- Online meetings
- Helpdesk calls

What we have done in 2022-2023

Developed our personal development review and learning management system. This is delivered via Core, our HR portal, to provide an integrated system for all staff.

Our media studio is now complete and has already been used to produce videos from livestream events for On-Call and Black History Months. It is anticipated that the facility will be used to produce further videos for campaigns.

A training package for new Thermal Imaging Cameras (TICs) has been developed and rolled out. Upgrade to the new lighter, smaller cameras also provides better quality images.

Migration of users to Microsoft Office 365 will be completed by April 2023. This has already provided new opportunities for collaboration and enabled transition to Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings. This facility provides more efficient communication within the Service and has reduced travel for meetings.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Explore the use of digital devices to promote new and innovative working practices

- use of portable devices for recording information and updating records could deliver sustainable efficiencies in data management.

Review the Service's Management Information System to ensure data is available for monitoring and planning activities - ensuring data is available when needed is essential for planning and the delivery of services.

Exploring technology to expand our suite of risk reduction activities - use of technology can increase our risk reduction reach through efficiencies and engaging a wider audience.

Enhance and grow the recently introduced electronic Risk Based Inspection Programme for non-domestic premises, based on the risk to life safety of relevant persons - this will support pre-planned visits to check compliance in accordance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.

Continue the programme to upgrade all servers - replacing or upgrading servers will enable us to review applications and reduce costs while increasing efficiency and security.

Develop a messaging system that will enable Occupational Health to confirm appointments via text messages and receive updates on those successfully received - this will improve efficiency and reduce the number of missed appointments.

Valuing our People

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A more equal Wales



A healthier Wales



A prosperous Wales



A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language

What does this mean?

We recognise and value our people as the most important asset in achieving our objectives and delivering excellent service to our communities. To succeed we need the right people, with the right skills and values, in the right place at the right time. Our workforce should also represent the communities we serve, be diverse, and have access to development opportunities to ensure they have rewarding careers.

To achieve this, we must champion our culture, live by our values, and facilitate a high performance, talented, skilled, diverse, and motivated workforce. Recent scrutiny has highlighted the importance of demonstrating our values in our interactions with each other and our communities. The Chief Fire Officer has commissioned an Independent Culture Review which is expected to complete by the end of 2023. While we will not pre-empt the findings and recommendations of the Review, we will continue our work to ensure the Service demonstrates the values we stand for.

We will develop a wide-ranging approach to improving employee well-being to reduce sickness absence and focus on health and fitness promotion. Whether an employee or volunteer in the Service, everyone has a key role in keeping our communities safe.



Supporting a diverse workforce that represents your community, is well trained and motivated to deliver our service

We will value our people by:

- Attracting a workforce that reflects and represents our communities
- Developing our people by identifying training and development opportunities
- Supporting our people to feel well, healthy and happy at work
- Delivering on the recommendations of the Investors in People (IiP) report
- Encouraging and supporting a bilingual culture across the Service

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Staff turnover, retention and recruitment
- Personal review – engagement score
- Staff absence
- Attacks on crews and other traumatic incidents

What we have done in 2022-2023

We streamlined the On-Call recruitment process so that successful applicants begin initial training sooner. A new On-Call Development booklet gives a four-week plan prior to the initial course. This has improved retention as recruits were better prepared.

We commenced work on a new Pathways project to embed the development of skills, knowledge, and capabilities for all staff across the Service. This project focuses on the leadership development for all levels within the Service and across all functions and links to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Leadership Framework, taking full account of our liP feedback. The cornerstone of this is the Personal Review process.

Our new learning management system, the e-Hyb learning and development portal, was launched in March 2023. This hosts all non-technical or “soft skills” and development, including Leadership, Resilience, Difficult Conversations, etc. This is integrated into our online staff portal. The e-Hyb portal will also deliver tailored training for line managers on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Our Neurodiversity Network, launched in 2022, brings together a range of support and resources to support individuals, including the introduction of a Neurodiversity Assessment that can be completed as a self-referral. This can identify reasonable adjustments to assist with the work environment, including guidance on ICT accessibility, support from our Occupational Health team or the Service’s Employee Assistance Programme.

The Well-being Delivery Group continues to promote health and well-being, for example, raising awareness of support available via our employee assistance programme, and menopause awareness. We continue to explore expansion of our network of Mind/Mental Health Champions with the intention to increase the network by 30 members.

We began a four-year programme to extend and improve facilities at 10 of our On-Call fire and rescue stations. Work has started at Pontycymmer Fire and Rescue Station and will begin at Treorchy Fire and Rescue Station will follow in Summer 2023.

We continued to be part of a “Community of Practice” hosted by Academi Wales to share ideas and best practice on implementing a bilingual culture in the workplace. This supports our commitment to the Well-Being of Future Generations goal of “a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language” and our statutory obligations under the Welsh Language Standards.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Review and raise awareness of the Service’s full range of employee benefits programmes - to ensure support available to all staff is promoted and accessible.

Ensure all staff have access to a learning pathway - so that all employees can build their knowledge and skills to support their career with the Service.

Reshape our equality, diversity and inclusion framework to meet the needs and challenges of a modern fire and rescue service - this will ensure our services and processes are fair and accessible.

Continuing to Work Effectively

Supporting the following Well-being Goals:



A prosperous
Wales



A Wales of vibrant
culture & thriving
Welsh language



A healthier
Wales

What does this mean?

We will be clearly accountable to the public by making sure that our communities understand the risks in their area. We will inform the public of what we are responsible for delivering through partnership arrangements, and how we plan to do this. This Strategic Plan gives citizens the opportunity to understand our objectives and the opportunity to contribute to this plan by providing feedback. Our Annual Improvement Plan will inform the public of our progress in achieving these objectives and the scope for further improvement. As pressure on public finances continues, we will pursue all feasible opportunities to identify efficiencies and to keep costs down while discharging our core duties effectively.

Our aim is to maximise value for money while improving our service. We will ensure that we continue to implement new and better ways of working, monitoring our activities by a rigorous process of internal audits and benchmarking against other fire and rescue services.



Ensuring
our service
provides
value for
money and
is clearly
accountable

We will continue to work effectively by:

- Being clear and publicly accountable
- Maximising value for money while improving our service
- Developing new ways of working

We measure our progress by monitoring:

- Outcomes of internal and external audit programmes
- Benchmarking against other fire and rescue services
- Audit Wales opinion on financial statements
- The number of complaints and compliments received

What we have done in 2022-2023

Seventy audit days were carried out under our internal audit programme to provide an assessment of assurance and compliance across 12 different areas: three received substantial assurance and three received reasonable assurance. The remaining six reports are awaited. All action points raised within each of these audits are being implemented.

We have reviewed and compiled documentary evidence of the Service's response to the pandemic for future reference.

While future procurement of a finance system is being considered in

terms of procedure and timescales, our existing system is being upgraded which will provide value for money and system benefits.

The new Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facility at Whitchurch Fire and Rescue Station was completed in March 2023, providing a base for Wales USAR.

We reviewed our training courses to maximise attendance by the migration of theory elements to online instructor led training. Water rescue courses and breathing apparatus (BA) courses have been redesigned with further to follow.

What we will do in 2023-2024

Prepare and plan for the impact of The Procurement Bill and Public Procurement & Social Partnership Bill – this will ensure we are compliant with public procurement regulations to ensure efficiency, transparency, and flexibility.

Review and amend procedures following any future legislative changes in Wales – to ensure we can discharge our duties as a regulatory body.

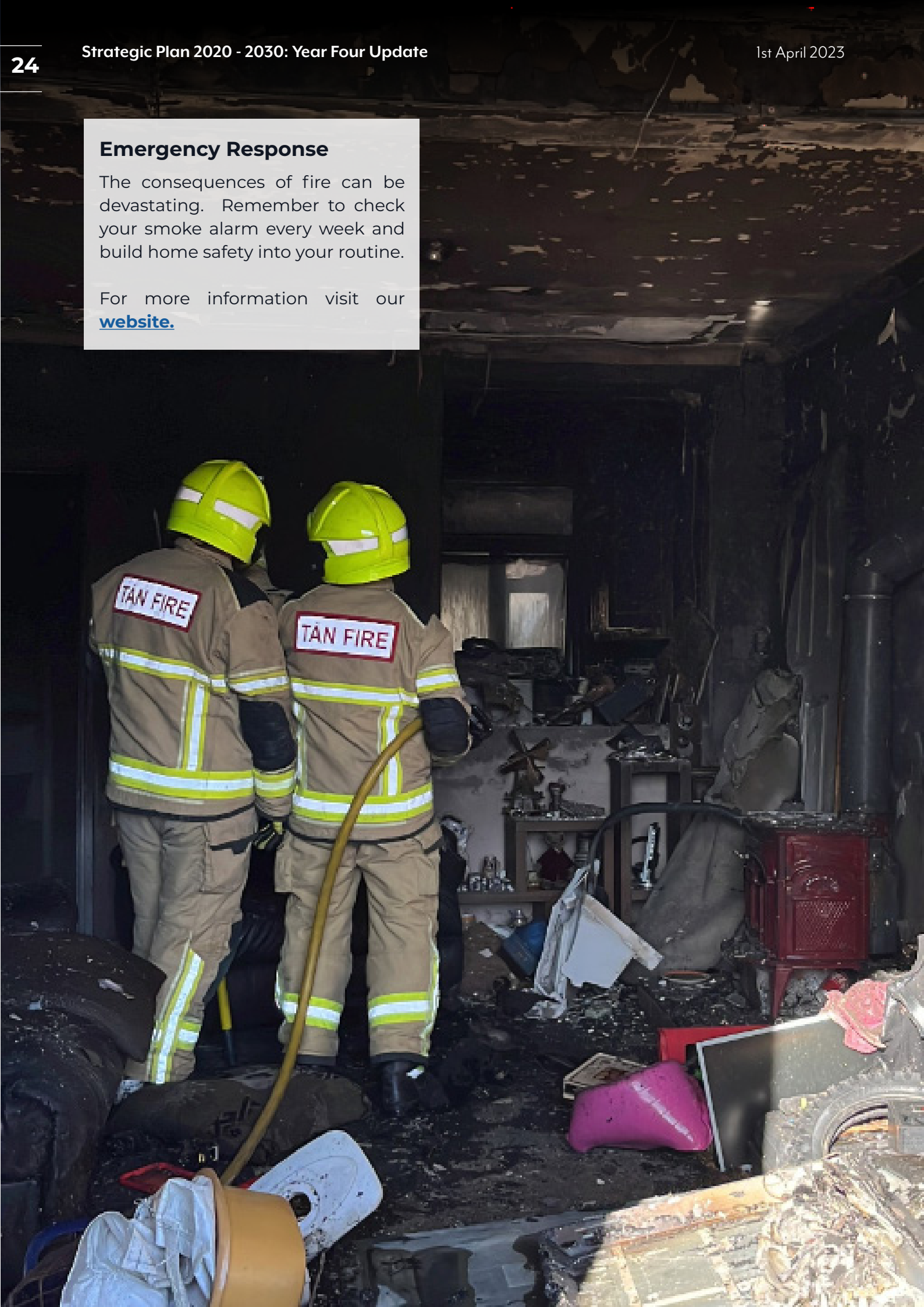
Review our disposal procedures – to ensure our assets, from vehicles to furniture, are managed throughout their lifecycle.



Emergency Response

The consequences of fire can be devastating. Remember to check your smoke alarm every week and build home safety into your routine.

For more information visit our [website](#).



2021-2022 Statistics Overview



32,455 calls received by Joint Fire Control for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service area, including:

993 calls referred to other agencies.

2,081 did not require emergency response and were dealt with by Joint Fire Control.

9,986 repeat calls relating to incidents already in progress.



17,501 incidents attended



5,565 fires including:

614 accidental dwelling fires

1,073 grass/wildfires

2,496 refuse fires

71.3% of fires attended were deliberate



8,367 false alarms in response to:

4,937 automatic fire alarms

3,169 calls made with good intent

261 malicious calls



3,569 Special Service calls including:

859 road traffic collisions

32 water rescues

2,678 other emergency incidents*

Risk reduction activity included:



1,117 school visits



8,122 home safety checks







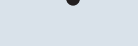


702 fire safety audits

* Includes assisting other agencies, rescues from height.

Strategic Performance Indicators

It is important that we evaluate our performance to ensure that we are as efficient and effective as possible. Therefore we set annual targets against Welsh Government's Strategic Indicators and monitor our performance against these during the year. Our targets for 2023-2024, detailed below, were agreed by South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on 13th February 2023 based on an evaluation of incident trends.

	Financial Year 18-19	Financial Year 19-20	Financial Year 20-21	Financial Year 21-22	Financial Year 22-23*	5 Year Trend	Financial Year 23-24 Target
Fires attended	6,898	5,482	5,481	5,565	6,031		5,889
False alarms attended	7,847	7,858	8,324	8,367	8,746		8,315
Road Traffic Collisions attended	1,112	995	643	859	848		858
Other Special Service Calls attended	2,062	2,569	2,275	2,711	3,079		2,868
Deaths and Injuries arising from all fires	71	84	49	62	63		62
Deaths and Injuries arising from accidental fires	55	64	42	53	52		52
Percentage of Dwelling Fires contained to the room in which they originated	82.50%	84.20%	82.23%	83.81%	82.65%		85.00%

* Data correct at 29th June 2023 – these are not full year figures and are subject to change



Fire Safety Education

We believe the best way to reduce risk is through education and prevention, that's why our specialist Education and Youth Services teams teach children and young people across the South Wales Service area about the importance of fire safety.

Our Budget 2023-2024

Our Service is funded by the 10 unitary authorities we serve, based on the population of each area. In 2021-2022 the cost was equivalent to 92p per person per week, unchanged from the previous year.

In the last two years, we have delivered our services within budget and will continue to identify efficiencies.

TOTAL BUDGET 2023-2024	£89,375,480
Employees	£56,418,972
Pensions	£12,284,683
Premises	£6,336,855
Supplies and Services	£5,755,273
Support	£5,069,223
Training	£1,776,112
Transport	£1,619,040
Contracted Services	£1,152,085
Income	-£1,036,763

Around two thirds of our budget is assigned to staff and related costs, excluding pensions.

EMPLOYEE BUDGET 2023-2024	£56,418,972
Operational staff	£41,862,959
Corporate staff	£10,065,206
Control staff	£1,515,587
Other staff costs (Includes overtime, travel and other staff related costs.)	£2,975,220

With 47 stations and over 1,600 staff, we are there in an emergency for:

- 10 unitary authorities covering 2,800 sq km with 3.7 sq km of inland water
 - Over 650,000 households and 1.5 million people
- Businesses in South Wales, including over 36,000 businesses already in contact with us

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
– costs 92p per person per week

Developing Our Plan

Our annual planning process evolves year on year as we identify opportunities to involve others and communicate developments. We take every opportunity to review our plans and the progress we are making, and to consider the longer-term impact of our activities.

We regularly meet with our Senior Management Team to consider all fire and rescue related risks that could affect the communities of South Wales to determine ways to effectively work on preventing these risks from harming those within our communities.

We also consider our budgets and the laws that impact us, to make sure that we focus our work in the right areas. We then develop more detailed plans for each year, which become our objectives. We consult with our staff, our communities, and our partners before finalising our objectives.

Our objectives are delivered via business plan tasks which are regularly reviewed and monitored. We provide regular reports on our progress against these tasks to our Fire and Rescue Authority. Fire and Rescue Authority papers are published on our website and can be accessed [HERE](#).

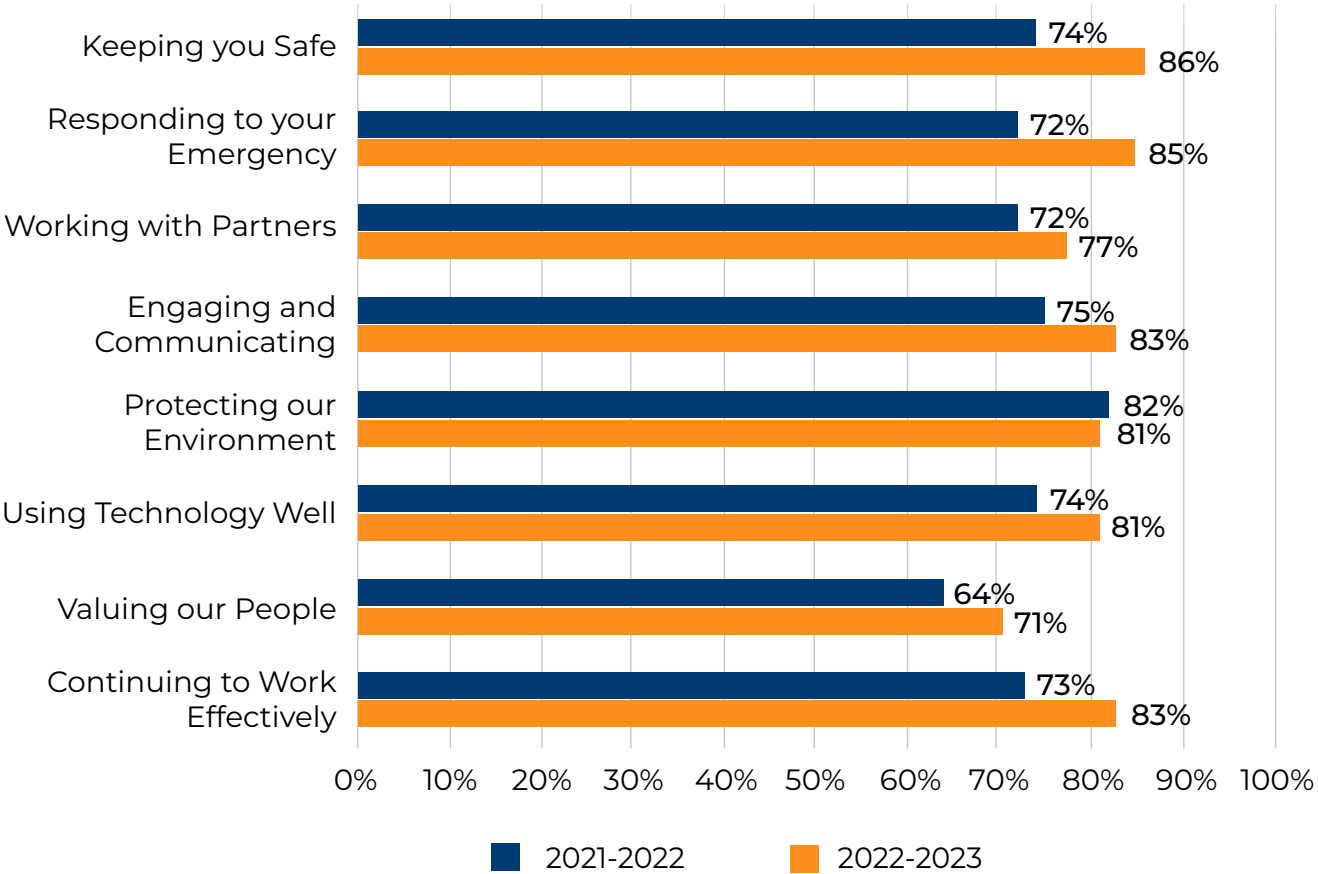
Consultation and Engagement

Each year we survey our staff, the public, and our partners to assess their views on our proposed objectives for the new financial year. Feedback received is reported to the Fire and rescue Authority, the Senior Management Team, and to managers in departmental planning meetings to ensure in-depth consideration of responses. As well as providing a measure of agreement with our objectives, we identify key issues and themes raised, producing a response document which is published on our website. From the consultation, priorities may be amended or refocussed. Where necessary, we provide additional explanation of the background to and purpose of proposed activities.

This year our survey ran from 21st October 2022 to 13th January 2023. The key results were:

- Engagement with the survey was higher with 227 respondents providing feedback compared with 157 in 2021-2022, an increase of 44.6%.
- Overall, there was strong agreement with our Strategic Themes and proposed Objectives with 81% of all responses indicating they strongly or somewhat agreed. Agreement increased for seven out of eight Strategic Themes with “Protecting our environment” reducing by just 1%.

Our Strategic Themes and Objectives will therefore remain unchanged for the coming year.



Agreement with Strategic Themes and Objectives – Comparison of consultation responses

Key Points Raised by Consultation

Improve the Annual Improvement Plan & Consultation – A number of respondents felt that the consultation survey was too long and required reading the full plan in order to respond. We will therefore be reviewing our consultation processes with greater emphasis on capturing local concerns and priorities, and finding ways to make our plans more accessible.

Increase support for Partners – We are finding new and innovative ways of working in partnership which is reflected in our plans for 2023-2024. To support this activity, we are exploring various means of support, including mutual training and signposting or promotion of services such as home fire safety checks.

Improve recruitment and retention – Comments focussed on On-Call personnel and career development. On-Call availability, including recruitment, remains a key objective and we will continue to promote opportunities. Career development in the Service will be supported by the recently launched e-Hyb learning and development portal along with the Development Pathways scheme, open to all staff, to support continuing development or progression to a leadership role.

Improve working conditions at Joint Fire Control – Recommendations of the recent Joint Fire Control review are being implemented and progress will be monitored.

Better communication of our environmental and carbon reduction activities - An update of our Carbon Reduction Plan for 2023-2030 is being launched and will be supported by a communication strategy to inform staff and public of our activities. Nominated Carbon Reduction Champions within the Service will be key to this action.

A full response to issues raised by respondents to the consultation survey can be found on our website.

The Context of this Plan

We are required to comply with a range of legislation relating to public sector bodies and specifically to Fire and Rescue Authorities. These legal requirements provide context for our plan for 2023-2024 alongside our overarching mission “To make South Wales safer by reducing risk”.





Fleet & Engineering

Our rescue tenders are on the front line of our emergency response. The latest additions to our fleet are upgraded to support our water rescue capability.

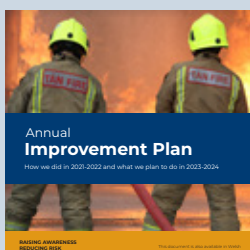
Other Plans and Strategies

We have developed other strategies and plans that support the achievement of our overall strategic aims:



[Our Strategic Plan 2020-2030](#)

This document sets out our longer-term strategy to ensure we deliver an effective and sustainable service. It introduces the eight Strategic Themes covered in this update.



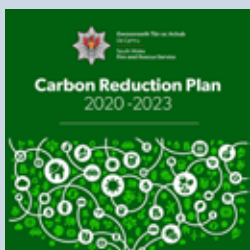
[Our Annual Improvement Plan 2022-2023](#)

Each year we look back at the previous year to review the impact of our planned improvement activities, and also look forward to the coming year by presenting an outline of proposed actions for public consultation.



[Our Strategic Equality Plan 2023-2026](#)

Setting out our equality objectives for the next three years, this plan details how we will work toward our commitment to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do.



[Our Carbon Reduction Plan 2020-2023](#)

This plan sets out how we will continue to improve the ways in which we use our resources to ensure the least harm to our environment.



[Our Welsh Language Monitoring Report](#)

This document sets out our action to comply with our duties under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Welsh Language

We are committed to effectively serving those who choose to communicate via the medium of the Welsh language. In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards 2015, the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority has received a Compliance Notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner setting out the Welsh Language Standards that apply to the Authority. This [Compliance Notice](#) is published on our website and gives details about what services citizens can expect to receive in Welsh. We seek to engage with Welsh speakers and learners to improve the overall standard of our service provision.

Alternative versions

We publish a “quick read” version of this plan and both versions are available on our website with “Speak the website” audio facility. If you would like this information in another format, please [contact us](#).

Have Your Say

We are always looking for ways to improve our services and to present information that is meaningful. In doing this, we want to ensure that your views are considered when delivering our activities and reporting on them. For regular updates and invitations to take part in future consultations and surveys, contact us to join our Stakeholder Register.



Write to us

Service Performance & Communications
South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Forest View Business Park,
Llantrisant, CF72 8LX



Website

www.southwales-fire.gov.uk



Email us

hys@southwales-fire.gov.uk



Call us

01443 232000



@SWFireandrescue



@SWFireandrescue



@sw_fire_and_rescue

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English.
We will respond equally to both and will reply in your language of choice without delay.



Fire Cadets

Our Fire Cadet programme promotes self-discipline, teamwork and citizenship in a fun and challenging environment. As well as developing social skills, participants can work towards a recognised BTEC qualification.

Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru



South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

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