

Approved to Ride course February 2023



Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

# Statement of Assurance

2022- 2023

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 **Suffolk**  
County Council





*Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Launch*

## **Welcome to our Statement of Assurance 2022 - 2023.**

The Statement of Assurance reflects our performance and achievements as a service over the last financial year. We always feel a sense of pride when compiling the report as it highlights the fantastic work of our dedicated staff. All of whom demonstrate professionalism, enthusiasm, and dedication for what they do, no matter what role they play in Suffolk Fire and Rescue, making us incredibly proud of our service.



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Fire Incident February 202



## 1 Foreword

This Statement of Assurance details the financial, governance and operational arrangements which were in place for the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Authority during the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. It has been produced in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework 'Guidance on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England.'

I am satisfied that the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Authority ensured that its business was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money was properly accounted for and used efficiently and effectively. I am further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been fully met.

I am extremely proud of the fire and rescue service we provide and of the people who work so hard to keep our communities safe.

During 2022/23 the Service had a major incident called during July's spate conditions, attending a high number of fires in the open. Whilst the Service has achieved much, it has not been without its challenges and managing changing risks will form a key part of our future planning, which have been set out in the Service's Community Risk Management Plan.

I remain committed to developing the Authority so that it continues to provide an effective, efficient, and resilient service which looks after the people who work in, live in, and visit our great county.

Councillor Andrew Reid  
Cabinet Member for Public Health,  
Public Protection and Communities  
Suffolk County Council



## Introduction

As Chief Fire Officer of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service I am pleased to introduce our Statement of Assurance for 2022/2023.

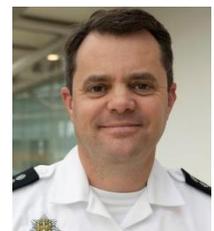
The Statement is a requirement under the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#) (revised May 2018). It reinforces my continued commitment to providing our communities with clear information about how our Fire and Rescue Service keeps people and local businesses safe from fire and other emergencies, through effective governance and the efficient management of public funds.

When emergencies do occur, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service provides a 24/7 operation in line with legislation, to deal with a wide range of incidents including fires, road traffic collisions and a variety of other, more unusual emergencies that pose a risk to the community.

Our Protection activity is designed to offer advice to support local businesses, as well as undertaking enforcement action where necessary, to keep people safe in buildings across Suffolk. We work closely with partners and the community to prevent road traffic collisions and fires in the home and, when they do occur, we strive to reduce their consequences and promote a quick recovery.

We continue to work closely with other partner agencies to maximise the benefit of public spending. Together we ensure Suffolk remains a safe county to live and work in.

Jon Lacey  
Chief Fire Officer and Executive  
Director for Fire and Public Safety





## Our Values

The leadership in SCC is underpinned by the WE ASPIRE organisational values, which have also been adopted by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). These values helped us deliver the council’s priorities for Suffolk throughout 2022 and 2023 through ethical leadership.



- Wellbeing:** We look after ourselves, each other, and the planet
- Equality:** Respecting, valuing, embracing, and celebrating everyone’s unique differences
- Achieve:** We are the best we can be
- Support:** We work as one team
- Pride:** We are passionate about making a positive difference to the people and place of Suffolk
- Innovate:** We believe in making every penny count, every minute matter and reducing environmental impact
- Respect:** We give and earn respect
- Empower:** We empower, encourage, and motivate



### National Fire Chiefs Council Core Code of Ethics

The National Core Code of Ethics for fire and rescue services has been developed in partnership with the NFCC, the Local Government Association, and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. It helps to support a consistent approach to ethics and improve the organisational culture and workforce diversity for Fire and Rescue Authorities across the country.



Our Vision in SFRS is that we are all: **Swift to Serve, so Suffolk is a place where people lead safe and fulfilling lives.**

**Our Priorities** are the areas we focus our activities and resources on. We collaborate with our communities and partners every day to prevent emergencies, working together to ensure that Suffolk continues to be a place where people lead safe and healthy lives.

- **Preventing** fires and other emergencies from happening.
- **Protecting** people and property.
- **Responding** to fires and other emergencies quickly and effectively.
- **Valuing** our people so they can focus on making Suffolk safer.
- **Delivering** value for money making best use of our resources.



### 3 Statement of Assurance

Fire and rescue authorities must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and show how they have had due regard to the expectations set out in their Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). Statements of assurance should be open and transparent, demonstrating accountability to communities who expect to know how these services are provided.



*On Call recruit's course February 2023*

This document outlines how Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Authority, including its Fire and Rescue Service, has delivered the requirements contained in the National Fire and Rescue Framework and the authorities Community Risk Management Plan during 2022-23.

### Governance

The Fire and Rescue Authority for Suffolk is Suffolk County Council (SCC), consisting of 75 elected councillors who represent the county. Most of the Authority's daily business is through SCC's Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service for the period of this report was Councillor Andrew Reid, who was appointed as the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection in June 2021.

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for ensuring that Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) operates in accordance with the law. It must ensure public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used efficiently and effectively. The Fire and Rescue Authority also has a duty to continually improve the way in which its functions are carried out and must collaborate with other blue light emergency services.

The council publishes its Annual Governance Statement through the Audit Committee. This sets out the Council's governance arrangements, which apply to, and include Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.

Performance is assured through several routes, including SCC Corporate and Joint Leadership teams, the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Steering Group, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Performance Assurance Board and external agencies such as the Home Office and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue. Monitoring of performance is undertaken via various methods, including:

- Quarterly Performance Assurance Board
- Corporate and Joint Leadership team meetings
- Internal and external audits

Political engagement with fire and rescue service representative bodies, including the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Fire Officers' Association (FOA), the Fire and Rescue Services Association (FRSA) and Unison, is managed through the Fire Service Joint Forum. The Forum is a cross-party councillor group supported by the Chief Fire Officer and senior staff. It is chaired alternately by the Cabinet Member and a representative from the FBU, FRSA or FOA.



## 4 Risk Management

Risk is the potential for an emergency to occur that may threaten life or cause damage or harm to people, property, or the environment, including impacts on critical infrastructure or protracted demand on emergency service resources.

To understand what risk looks like in our county, we have undertaken extensive research, using expert analysis by our partners in SCC and evidence from national data. We have also drawn on local incidents and feedback and learning from significant local and national events, to help identify and assess our foreseeable risks. Our risk profile is reviewed every year to inform our priorities, set our objectives and measure our performance.

Our operational risk teams support all aspects of SFRS by providing information on risks within our service area, enabling our teams to access risk information, coordinating risk visits, and providing site-specific risk information on our mobile data terminals.

- We monitor agreed performance measures with progress reported at our quarterly Performance Assurance Board, The SCC Fire Service Steering Group and the SCC Joint Leadership team.
- Creating service wide and local community risk service plans which review the local risks and horizon scan to assess future potential risks to the communities and county.
- Our annual Service Plan will outline key priorities for delivery against our Community Risk Management Plan.
- We use learning from incidents and other events, both locally and nationally, to improve our service delivery.
- Using learning from National Operation Learning and Joint Operational Learning to ensure continuous improvement in our service.

The Suffolk Risk Map summarises some of the core risks that impact Suffolk, including areas susceptible to flooding, major roads, mass attendance events (such as Latitude Festival), seaports, rail networks and airfields.



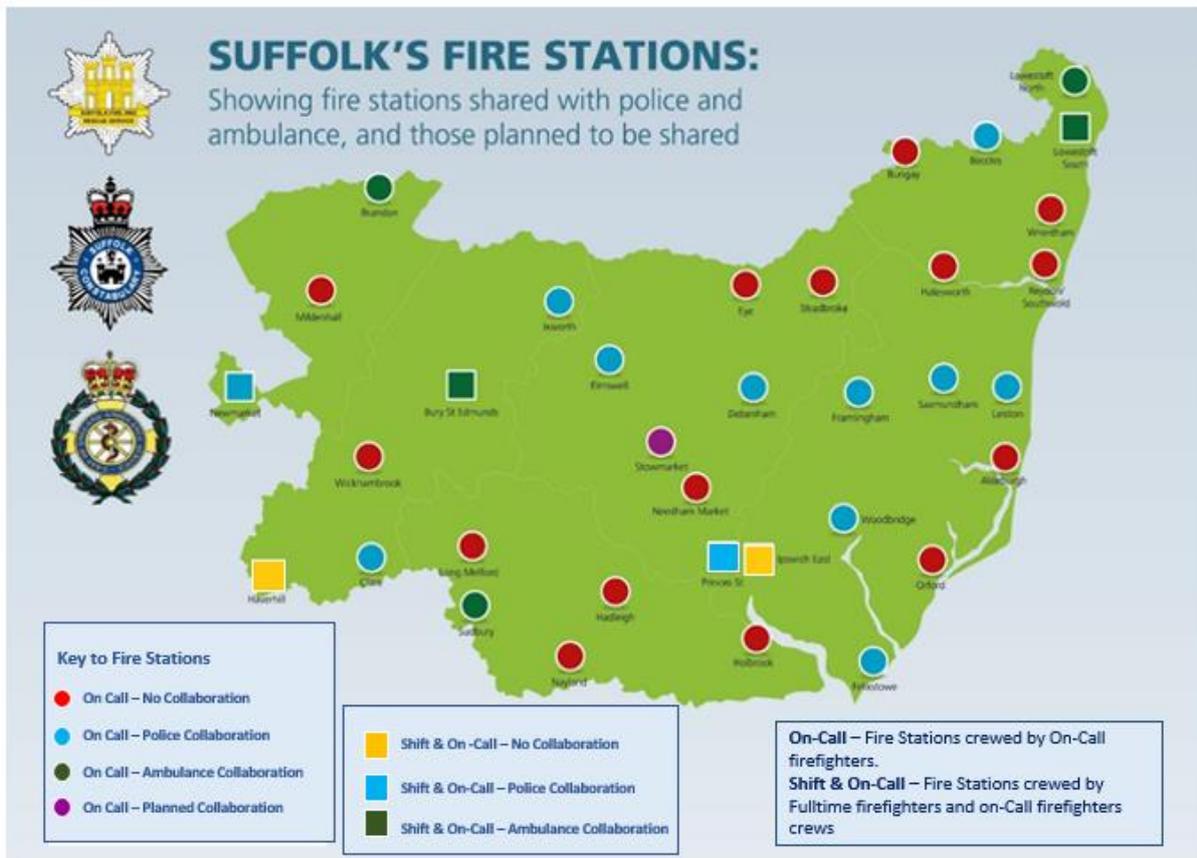


## 5 Your Fire and Rescue Service

The service is run by a management team headed by the Chief Fire Officer Jon Lacey and governed by the Fire Authority with our Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection Councillor Andrew Reid.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has 35 fire stations located strategically in Suffolk’s largest towns and villages (see map below). All stations have On-Call crews, whilst four stations situated in Bury St Edmunds, Lowestoft South, Ipswich East, and Ipswich Princes Street, are crewed around the clock, seven days per week by Shift firefighters and On-Call firefighters. Two additional stations at Haverhill and Newmarket are ‘day crewed’ from Monday to Friday and only revert to On-Call at night and at weekends.

To support the On-Call stations, we provide County Day Crewing (CDC), which enables firefighters to be sent to any fire station to support local crewing arrangements during weekdays, when On-Call firefighter availability is more challenging.



We currently employ 587 operational staff, some of whom have dual contracts, which means they have various roles, including being part of the On-Call crew for their local station.

We have 29 flexible duty operational officers who undertake daily leadership functions, providing operational response at larger and more complex incidents.

We have 87 support roles across the service in essential operational and business support areas, including Fire IT, Fleet and Equipment, Health and Safety, Wellbeing, Training Performance, Prevention and Protection. These roles are in line with SCC pay and grading arrangements.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service operates a fleet of 151 vehicles, including 43 fire engines and a range of other vehicles and equipment to help ensure an efficient and effective response to incidents.



Sudbury Field Fire August 2022

### Service overview 2022 -2023



**35 Fire Stations**



**587 Operational Staff**



**43 Fire Engines**



**87 Support Staff**



**6440 Incidents**



**2825 Home Fire Safety Checks**



**2960 False Alarms**



**895 Fire Safety Audits**



**2051 Total Fires**



**326 Ambulance Assist**



**317 Road Traffic Collisions**



**139 Animals Rescues**



**1115 Special Service**



**78 Safeguarding Referrals**

Full performance data on pages 12-16



## 5 How we serve our community

We focus our activities and resources on our priorities, working in collaboration with communities and partners every day to prevent emergencies and make Suffolk a safer place. Our key priorities are:

### Prevention

Our prevention activities keep people safe in their homes from fire and other risks. Working with partners, such as our local authorities, district councils, police, and other agencies, we have:

- Worked in a proactive, targeted, and effective way.
- Taken an inclusive approach and tailored our services to meet the requirements of Suffolk's communities.
- Better understood the risk in and to our communities.
- Used prevention activity to reduce harm and save lives in relation to fire, road safety and water risk.

### In 2022-23 we:

- Delivered a range of Prevention programmes to enhance community safety.
- Doubled the number of Specialist Prevention Practitioners in our Delivery Team.
- Increased the number of Home Fire Safety visits delivered by our Practitioners and Operational staff.
- Increased the number of Safe and Well visits to enable older and vulnerable people to live independently and safely in their homes by reducing the risk of fire.
- Contributed towards Suffolk's road safety as a member of the Road Safety Partnership and delivered road safety education for vulnerable road users including:
  - Biker Down – A motorcycle safety course as part of the FireBike scheme.
  - It Can Wait – A pre and young driver road safety intervention package aimed at 15-18yr olds to reduce the use of mobile phones by drivers.

- Trained our staff to a high level of Safeguarding awareness to support helping the most vulnerable in society and continue building on our already strongly embedded safeguarding culture.
- Created new Data Sharing agreements and formal information sharing processes with key partners to aid in targeting our activities at the most vulnerable.
- Continued to support the Children and Adult Safeguarding boards, the Modern-Day Slavery Panel, and Serious Hoarding case reviews.

### Moving Forward we plan to:

- Continue delivering our CRMP and Service priorities.
- Onboard and advertise Safelincs – the Online Home Fire Safety Check' to aid in home fire safety education and help us to prioritise the most vulnerable.
- Support and utilise local risk knowledge held by fire stations to target our resources.
- Continue increasing the number of Home Fire Safety and Safe and Well visits we complete to reduce the amount and impact of fires in the home.
- Utilise our new Partnership Manager to build relationships with Diverse Community groups and create a network to share Prevention education as widely as possible.
- Continue to work in partnership and collaborate with other agencies in the county to increase our contribution to a safer Suffolk.
- Promote 'STAYWISE', a free national online educational tool to help educate children in fire, water, and road safety. Accessible to the emergency services, teachers, and parents.

*Our performance data can be seen on pages 12-16*



## Protection

Our Protection team has continued to work with local businesses and individuals who are responsible for protecting people from fire in their premises to ensure that they comply with fire safety regulations.

Commercial buildings require specific fire safety measures to protect employees and other occupants. This legislation is used to enforce the regulations when necessary.

We also have a statutory duty to respond to building consultations, licensing applications and fire safety concerns raised by businesses and the public.



Protection High Rise Exercise

### In 2022-23 we have:

- Continued our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). Premises are selected for audit based on the risk they may present to those who work, visit, or use the building. In the 2022-23 financial year we completed 895 audits and completed 480 building regulation consultations.
- We increased the number of premises that had unsatisfactory inspections indicating we are inspecting more premises that are non-compliant.
- We adopted the NFCC (National Fire Chiefs Council) national guidance for 'Competency framework for Fire Safety Regulators' and developed programmes for our Protection Officers to ensure they have the right skills, competency, and technical knowledge to carry out inspection audits to the highest standard.
- Invested our Protection Uplift Grant received from Government to improve the competency and consistency of our Protection team by employing a Training Manager.
- Used some of our Protection Uplift Grant funding to improve the quality and accessibility of our data, which allows us to focus, and performance manage our activity.
- Completed all audits on buildings over 18 metres tall as part of the Government's Building Risk Review and started implementing the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower inquiry.
- Held multi-agency Impact Days which involve Protection, Prevention, Police and Local Authority Housing Officers regularly targeting premises in a different Suffolk town. Impact Days' supply education, advice and support for premises owners and managers.
- Successfully taken legal action in two prosecutions where building owners have not complied with the legislation, 4 more investigations are ongoing. We increased the size of our Directorate Investigation Team to 2 personnel, giving us more capacity to take on prosecutions and make unsafe buildings safer.
- Trained more officers to complete fire investigations, enabling us to learn from incidents and contribute to national statistics and trends.
- Focused activity on reducing unwanted fire signals, working with the premises, and providing guidance and advice.
- Trained response staff to undertake initial audits, giving them added skills and increasing our audit activity.
- We prepared for new government legislation; The Fire Safety Act 2021, the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the Building Safety Act 2022. Making changes to our website to give up to date information to members of the public.
- Worked with regional colleagues and the NFCC to prepare for the new Building Safety Regulator anticipated for 2023/24.
- Investigated how we use our data to develop an evaluation strategy for our activity.

*Our performance data can be seen on pages 12-16*



## Moving forward we plan to:

- Continue our focussed efforts on our Risk Based Inspection Programme, targeting those buildings with the highest risk.
- Adapt to the requirements of the new Fire Safety Act 2021, which came into force in May 2022, and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, which came into force on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023.
- Continue to monitor and work with premises owners and managers to reduce the amount of Automatic False Alarms we attend.
- Continue to work in partnership with district and borough councils on building and significant infrastructure plans to ensure legislation for fire safety is adhered to and offer relevant advice.
- Conduct business engagement events and multi-agency impact days.
- Train our officers to the highest standards, investing to enable some to become engineers to a Level 5 standard, ensuring we continue to supply the best possible advice to developers and building owners.
- Engage with developers to ensure early guidance is provided at the planning stage for a building for the fire safety arrangements.
- Support and further develop the Regional Building Safety Regulator role, working with the NFCC and regional partners.
- Support the introduction and implementation of the Building Safety Act 2022.
- Develop strategies to evaluate our work and impact.
- Work closer with our water function department to consult plans for Solar Energy and Battery Energy Storage Systems.
- Develop a strategy to protect our heritage buildings in Suffolk.
- Work with responsible persons and freeholders to remediate buildings where necessary.
- Consider how we adapt our policies and procedures in line with the changing technologies and the built environment.
- Increase the number of Level 3 qualified staff to improve the quality of our inspection of simple premises.

- Engage response staff in more Protection activities.
- Use our website and social media channels to communicate important messages about the legislation changes and to host and support NFCC campaigns for fire safety.
- Play an active role in the NFCC consultation of guidance documents.



*Protection Safety Audit November 2022*





## Response

SFRS aim to respond quickly, safely, and effectively to every emergency. To help us do this, we plan, prepare and train for a variety of emergencies including fires, flooding, road traffic collisions, specialist rescues and incidents involving hazardous materials. To maximise the effectiveness of this response, the majority of interventions and specialist rescues are undertaken in collaboration with other agencies, such as the Ambulance service, Police, Highways Agency and Coastguard.

As well as responding to incidents, our crews are committed to improving the safety of Suffolk and all those who visit the County. They do this by undertaking a wide variety of prevention and protection activities within both our private and business communities to reduce occurrence or mitigate the effects of such events.

To be effective when emergencies do occur, fire stations, fire engines, specialist resources and equipment are located across Suffolk to provide the appropriate level of emergency response cover. Their locations, supported by personnel across a range of duty systems, ensure an efficient emergency response is provided for our smaller towns, parishes, and villages alongside the more built-up areas of Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, and Lowestoft.

Our response to emergencies is therefore designed to get the right equipment to the right place as quickly as possible. This requires highly trained firefighters with modern equipment, supported with the latest risk information to enable them to respond safely and efficiently.

Whilst SFRS continues to ensure attention is given to the most vulnerable groups and to our highest risks, we are committed to improving safety and improving outcomes for everyone across all our communities, thus ensuring that all those who reside and work within Suffolk can live safe and fulfilling lives.

As the risk profile of the county continues to change year on year, our station-based teams are also adapting. They are increasingly engaged in community safety and prevention activities and use education and intervention to maximise public safety. As part of this work SFRS have introduced performance monitoring to maximise activity and evaluate its impact.

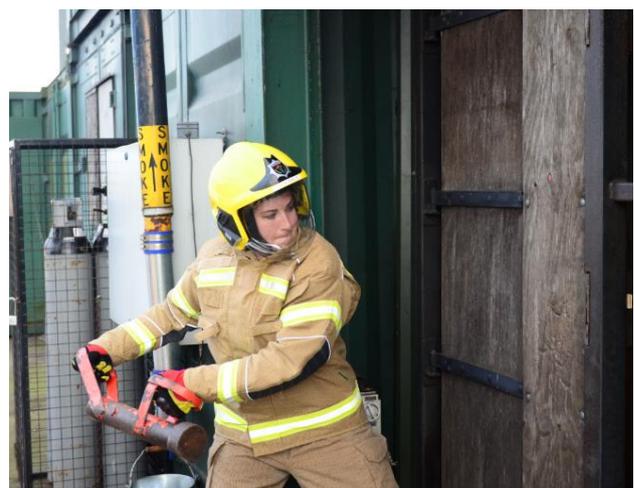
The following are some of the national and locally led initiatives the teams provide:

- **Home Fire Safety Visits**
- **Fire Protection Audits at businesses**
- **Compliance Checks and risk-based inspections**
- **Specialist public safety advice regarding water and ice safety as well as wildfire**

This work is set to develop and grow, enabling us to reach those most in need of our support and focus on the highest risks in the community.

We continue to develop the skills of our staff and utilise our resources, to provide the best possible service effectively and efficiently to our communities.

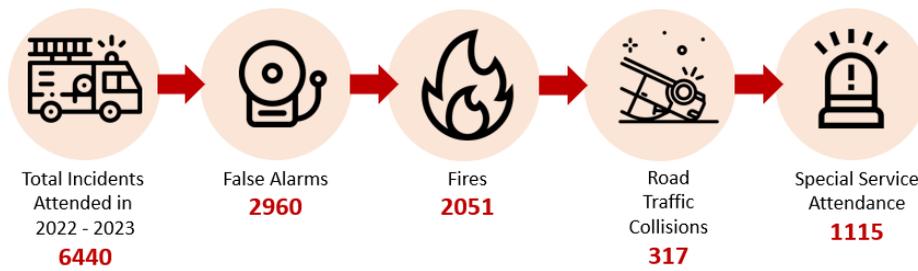
Supporting station availability is the County Day Crew, who help ensure key stations are available during peak operational hours from Monday to Friday. This is supplemented by a global approach to crewing ensuring our resources and appropriate skills are redirected where needed.



*Firefighter - On-Call Approved to Ride course*



## In 2022-23 we responded to:



## In 2022-2023 we have:

- Focused on recruiting firefighters for our On-Call duty system and integrated further new recruits into our wholetime crews.
- Commenced a review of our On Call system to provide family friendly and flexible shift systems aimed to improve recruitment, retention, and availability.
- Successfully opened two modern and efficient joint Fire and Police stations at Princes Street in Ipswich, and Stowmarket.
- Built upon our multi-agency and cross border exercising to improve our response to local and emerging risks, including high rise fires.
- Responded to severe weather events including wildfires caused by record breaking temperatures across the Eastern Region.
- Seen an increase in our Special Service assists, providing support to the East of England Ambulance Service and the Police.
- Continued to support our regional neighbours, responding where required.
- Established additional performance measures against which activity will be monitored.
- Introduced advancements in new equipment and personal protective equipment, ensuring that our firefighters have the most up-to-date equipment, enabling them to work safely and effectively.

## Moving forward we plan to:

Meet our commitments within the Response area of the [Community Response Management Plan 2023-2027](#).

**Emergency Response Standards.** Implement our new Emergency Response Standards and provide the required transparency through reporting processes in addition to regular review against national risk guidance.

**Emergency Response Fleet.** Review the response provided by our current assets in line with emerging risk, such as severe weather events, and ensure our provision meets the requirements of Suffolk and our national commitments.

**Working with our partner services.** We remain committed to providing a skilled, capable, and engaged workforce that can rise to meet the diverse challenges that face our communities by working effectively in close collaboration with partner agencies and our emergency service partners.

To support the above, we intend to continue to:

- Promote a positive and inclusive culture through understanding and education with our community
- Review the role of the firefighter to ensure efficient and effective use of our people
- Undertake targeted community safety and business engagement
- Prioritise resource where it is necessary to meet risk
- Measure performance to evaluate the effectiveness of the work we are undertaking
- Train our staff to respond to existing and emerging risks safely and effectively.
- Monitor and manage our staff physical and mental wellbeing.



## 6 Our Performance in 2022-23

SFRS is committed to providing the most effective and efficient response to our community. We review how well we are achieving this ambition by using various performance measures, which we report back to the service and to Suffolk County Council via its Corporate Leadership Team.

We monitor our data carefully to identify our successes and areas where we need to focus more resources to drive continuous performance. The data will always be subject to other factors, and their influence can cause fluctuations, so we must look at trends historically and consider recent changes. An example of this is the Covid-19 pandemic, where we had to consider changes to how people worked and travelled during lockdown to help give a more accurate way of assessing our performance.

### Response Standards

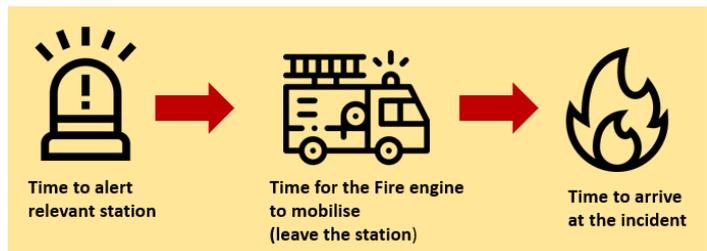
We have three performance standards for our Speed of Response, which measure how long it takes for fire crews to get to an incident. There are no nationally specified standards for fire services to respond to emergencies, and different services have various measures, response times and targets. In Suffolk, we endeavour to meet our locally agreed standards 80% of the time.

Current Response Standards					
RS	Description	Target	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1	First fire engine to a property fire within 11 minutes	80%	69%	67%	69%
2	Second fire engine to a property fire within 16 minutes	80%	73%	70%	74%
3	First fire engine to a road traffic collision within 13 minutes	80%	70%	66%	64%

### How do we measure Speed of Response?

Currently, the Speed of Response data is broken down into three steps, which are used in combination to give us the overall time.

We start the clock on the time it takes to alert the relevant station, how long it takes for the fire engine to mobilise (leave the station) to the time of arrival to the incident



We are looking at different ways in which we can continue to improve our performance in this area to meet our targets.

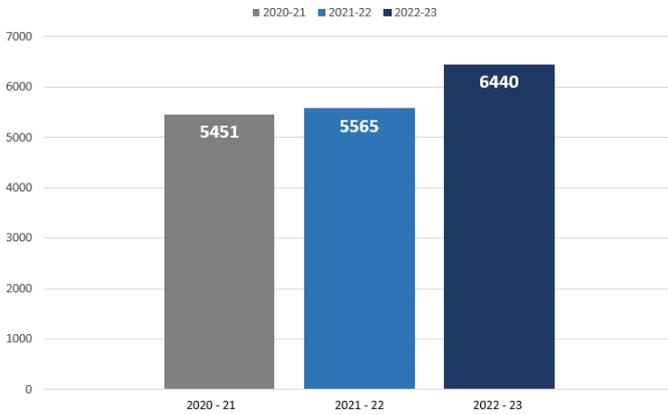
During this reporting period, the response standards were reviewed as part of the Community Risk Management Plan consultation to align the service with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) risk methodology guidance . The reviewed response standards will come into practice in the new financial year 2023-24.



## Suffolk Fire and Rescue Performance Measures 2022 – 23

The following tables provide an overview of our performance in the financial year 2022 – 23. All data was correct at the time of writing but could be subject to change pending outcomes of ongoing investigations.

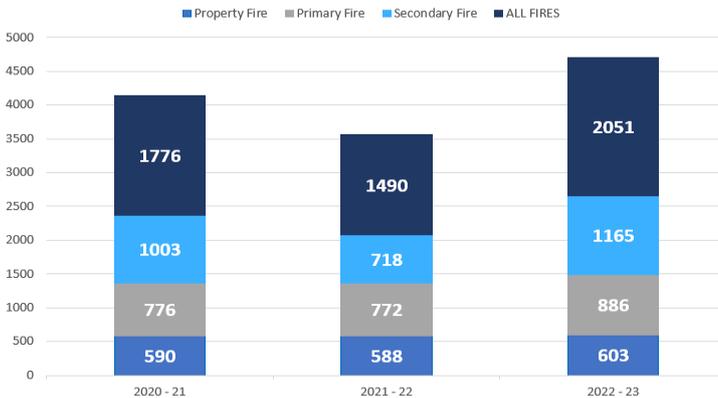
### ALL INCIDENTS ATTENDED



The number of incidents attended has increased since last year. The increase is linked to the summer spate conditions where we saw an increase in incidents of fires in the open.

We have increased our rural prevention work to include wildfire prevention, thatch prevention and water prevention.

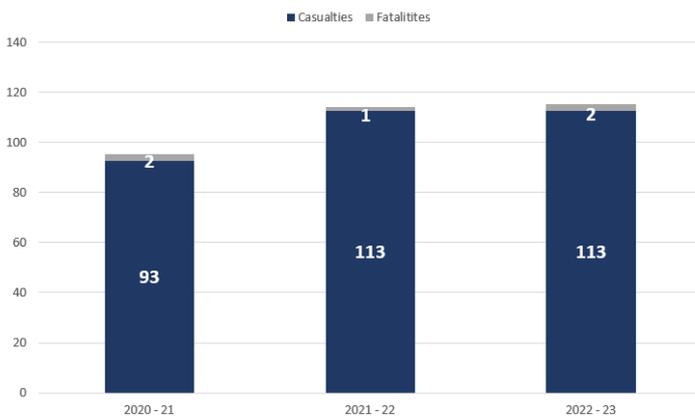
### FIRES ATTENDED



The number of fires has increased with fires out in the open accounting for the majority of the increase. During summer spate conditions our crews tackled unusually high numbers of fires on heathland, farmland, and local parks.

We will be monitoring summer spate conditions in 23-24 to identify any trend areas, hot spots, or vulnerable areas.

### FIRE FATALITIES & CASUALTIES

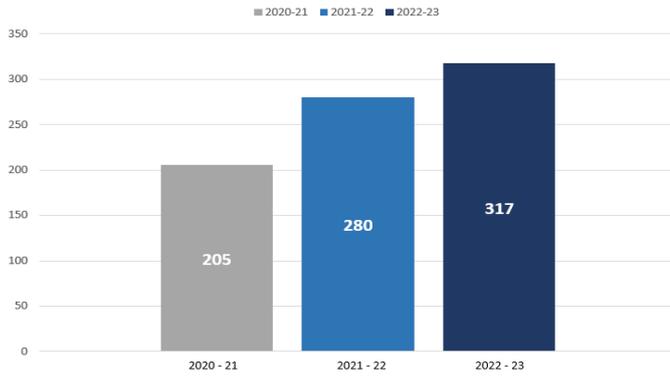


The fire casualties remained the same for this reporting year. The majority of casualties were treated for slight injuries or first aid at scene with only 10% having serious fire related injuries. These include minor burns and smoke inhalation.

For a service, no fire fatality is ever acceptable. We have an increase this year, with 2 fatalities related to fire.



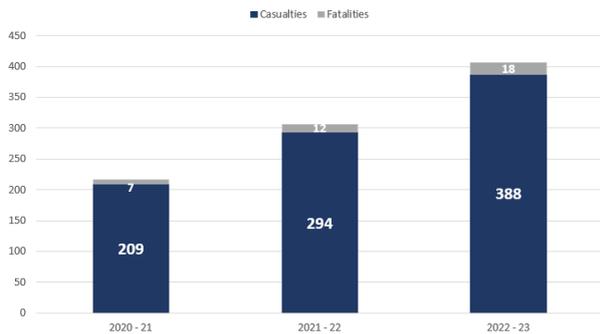
### ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS



Road Traffic Collisions have increased this year. Contributing factors are, increased traffic on the road, increased highways work being undertaken to improve Suffolk’s infrastructure and increased population.

2022-23 has seen an increase of visitors to our county for tourism, festival events such as Latitude and day trips, with people choosing to return back to Suffolk after the popularity of staycations post lockdown.

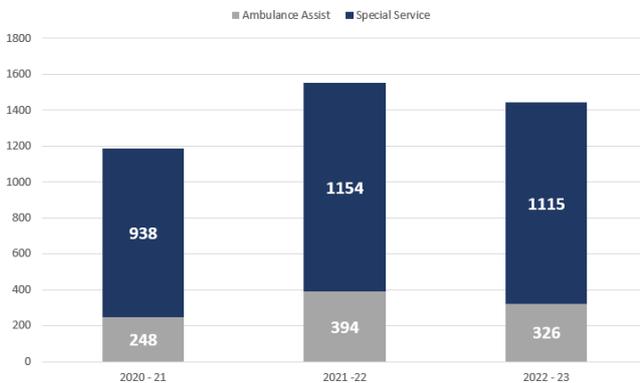
### ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION FATALITIES & CASUALTIES



The increase in Road Traffic Collisions fatalities and casualties reflects the overall increase in incidents.

The highest percentage of Road Traffic Collision related deaths and casualties was during the summer period which corresponds with increased road use during peak holiday periods.

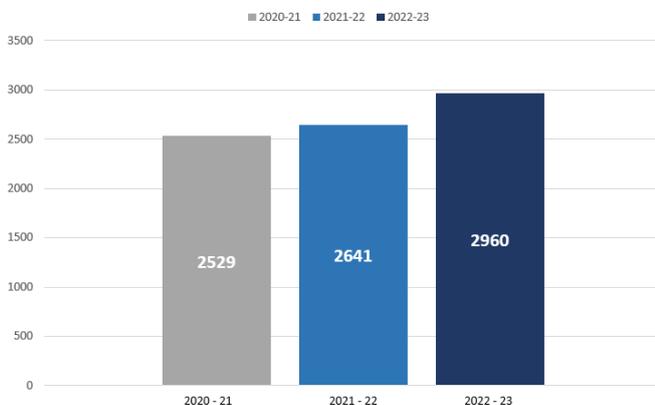
### SPECIAL SERVICE ATTENDANCE



Special Services are non-fire related incidents, such as rescue of persons, utility issues, water rescue and assisting other agencies.

2022-23 has seen a slight decrease in our Special Service attendance and ambulance assist.

### AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS



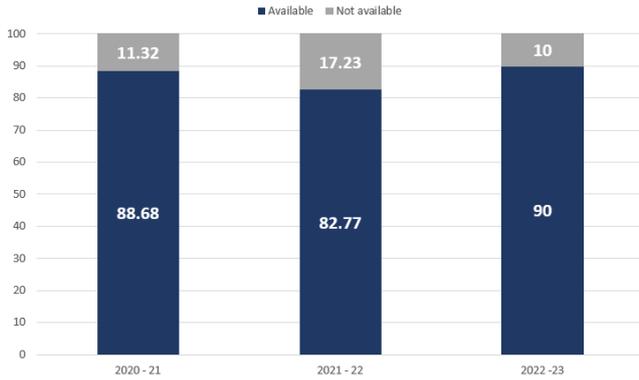
Automatic Fire Alarms made up 46% of the service’s callouts in 2022-23

Work continues to be carried out to reduce the occurrence of false alarms with many of these being in our residential tall buildings and public service buildings such as hospitals.

Only a small number of these calls are found to be actual fires. In these circumstances, the callout is re-categorised as a fire.



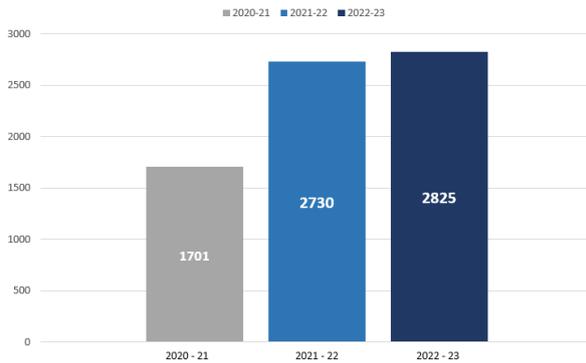
### ON-CALL AVAILABILITY PERCENTAGES



On-Call availability has shown an increase in 2022-23. On-call availability is still an issue during the core working day and we appreciate all businesses who release their staff to help keep Suffolk safe, with a special mention for all the work carried out during the summer spate conditions.

The Community Risk Management Plan for 2023-27 has On-Call sustainability as a priority.

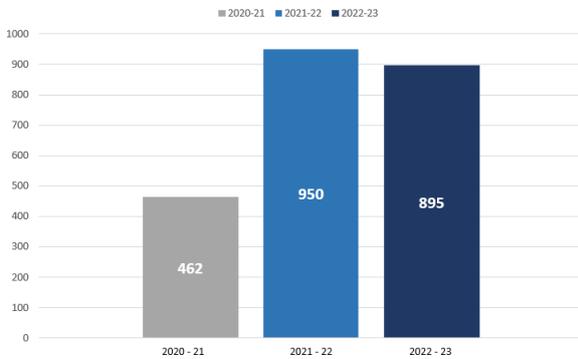
### PREVENTION HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS



2022-23 has seen an increase again in our Home Fire Safety Visits.

This increase is a combination of the additional investment in the department, with new Prevention Practitioners employed, improved premises management systems and useable data to ensure we are targeting the right people in the right areas.

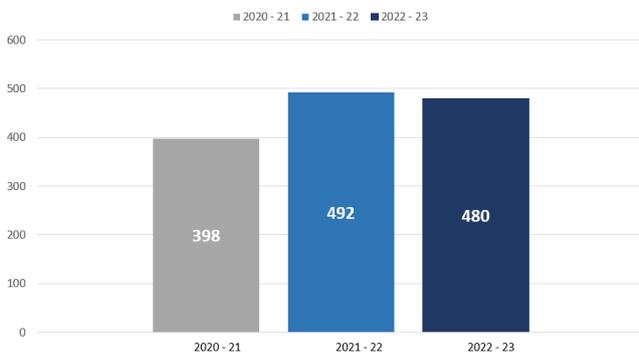
### PROTECTION FIRE SAFETY AUDITS



The Protection team have seen a slight decrease in Fire Safety Audits.

March was a particularly busy period for the team dealing with enforcement notices and Cardinal Lofts.

### Building Regulations Full Consultations

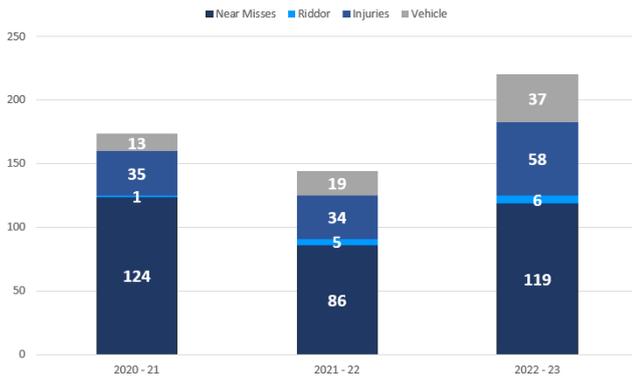


It is essential that Suffolk Fire and Rescue is fully consulted on all relevant matters during the design and construction phases and that its advice on the fire safety measures for the building or development is incorporated if appropriate into the final design.

This year SFRS carried out 480 full building regulation consultations across Suffolk.



### ACCIDENTS & NEAR MISSES



We recognise the importance our staff play in maintaining good health and safety in the workplace. Last year we concentrated on improving Health & Safety understanding throughout the service and how to report an accident or near miss.

The resulting improved communication in how to report accidents and near misses has seen an increase in reporting of accidents, enabling us to focus on positive people-centric Health & Safety culture at all levels.

## Performance

Effective performance first involves identifying the organisational direction and defining necessary actions. Then by monitoring, maintaining, and improving performance, it can be used as a key tool for delivering better outcomes which are service driven, efficient, and effective.

### In 2022-23 we have:

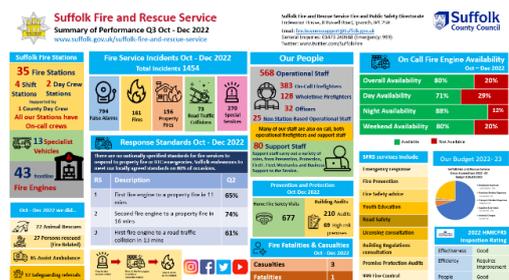
- Implemented the Performance Framework.
  - 15 Performance measures which the service is accountable for at Suffolk County Council Fire Steering Group.
  - Ensured that the Performance Assurance Board now provides governance and scrutiny to the service performance.
  - Published our quarterly performance information on Suffolk Fire and Rescue web page via Suffolk County Council website.
  - Improved data analysis tools for managers to support the Local Risk Management Plans and the Community Risk Management Plan.
- Ensured that HMICFRS recommendations are implemented and monitored.

### Moving forward we plan to:

- Review how we report our performance to our community via our website.
- Continue to focus on our three core functions of Prevention, Protection and Response.
- Conduct evaluation of performance in all aspects of the service to drive improvement and allow us to continue to keep Suffolk safe.
- Use performance to assist the service in delivering on our HMICFRS recommendations.
- Use performance to support Stations Local Risk Management Plans, so they can target resources at the risk areas in their local community and where it is most needed.
- Use performance to support the Community Risk Management Plan and ensure we deliver the best value for Suffolk.

Quarterly performance information can be found on the website:

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service - Summary of Performance](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service)





## External and Internal Assurance

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is subject to internal and external assurance in the form of Performance Assurance, audits, action plans and inspections. Such assurance helps us manage our delivery and ensures the processes we use are effective and efficient, providing us with the tools to support the service ambitions and strategic priorities.

Internal assurance gives us a method to monitor how our processes work and ensures that we are implementing relevant recommendations from internal and external learning.

SFRS also ensures that processes are audited internally. Findings are reported via the Operational Assurance Board with action trackers in place for improvements to identify and share good practice.

The Service is also subject to external scrutiny from the Home Office, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Service (HMICFRS).

### Our HMICFRS inspection

His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service Inspection for SFRS took place in February 2022. The inspection lasted six weeks, during which inspectors carried out an onsite and virtual inspection. The formal report was published in January 2023.

There are four possible outcomes of ratings from the inspection: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate (serious failings in policy, practice, or performance)

The Inspectorate reported that it was a pleasure to revisit Suffolk Fire and Rescue and he was grateful for the positive and constructive way the service engaged with the inspection.



**Effectiveness**  
**Score - Good**

How effective are we at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

It was noted that we have made improvements since our last inspection. These are most notable in how the service protects the public through the regulation of fire safety, and how it gathers risk information and makes this available.



**Efficiency**  
**Score - Requires Improvement**

How efficient are we at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?

Innovative practice was highlighted for our use of QR codes which give staff instant access to record and review lessons learned from operational incidents, training, and exercises.



**People**  
**Score - Good**

How well do we look after our people?

The inspectorate commended the changes made to improve our culture, values, behaviours, and wellbeing, noting that staff now feel more empowered.

Improvements are needed in allocation of staff across prevention, protection, and response, including how we identify, support, and ensure our development and promotion process is open transparent and fair.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is one of the top performing County Council Fire and Rescue Services and we are commended for the changes and improvements we have already made.



## 7 Our People

Our People are our most valuable asset in terms of delivering our service to the residents of Suffolk. We need our staff to have the right skills, qualities, values and attitude to ensure that we can meet the needs and expectations of our communities across Suffolk.

We want to ensure that SFRS is a great place to work, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and can work in an innovative, empowered, and collaborative way to support our communities.

The Service is committed to ensuring we are seen as an employer of choice for everyone within our communities, promoting inclusion, diversifying staff, and creating a fair and equal place to work.

Your service is made up of operational and support staff.

- **On-Call firefighters make up the majority of our firefighters, responding to emergency calls within their local area either from home or their place of work.**
- **Wholetime firefighters are shift-based, some working days and nights and others working only day shifts.**



*Approved to Ride course February 2023*

- **We have a whole time County Day Crew that work holistically around the county to increase coverage where required.**
- **Support Staff carry out a variety of roles including Fleet Maintenance, Fire IT, Business Support, Prevention, Protection and Performance.**

Many of our shift firefighters and support staff are On-Call firefighters.



*Support Staff Fire IT 2022*



**In 2022-23 we have:**

- Completed an organisational restructure to improve efficiency and increase focus on areas such as recruitment, project management, and external assurance.
- Implemented a new governance model to support delivery of our organisational processes.
- Implemented recruitment champion program to improve our recruitment and retention for our On Call stations.
- Co-designed and delivered service wide Inclusive Fire Service inclusion workshops for all firefighters.
- Created and recruited a lead EDI officer role to build our inclusion awareness.
- Introduced inclusive Service Progression guidance to support internal staff with multiple routes to progression.
- Provided further support to Ukraine with donations of Water Rescue equipment following flooding caused by the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam.
- Donated a Saxon Fire Engine to Ipswich Transport Museum to preserve our heritage vehicles for the people of Suffolk.
- Hosted a number of apprenticeships, internships, graduates and work experience colleagues.



*Young Adult Network Awards 2023 – Fire Service Apprentice*

**Moving forward we plan to:**

- Deliver all actions within the HMI Culture and Values report.
- Review On Call working practices to support flexible recruitment.
- Introduce and promote an independent reporting line alongside SCC whistleblowing provision.
- Explore opportunities to increase equity of conditions and opportunity across duty systems.
- Improve retirement support with a dedicated retirement pathway to reflect the service they have given to SFRS and the people of Suffolk.
- Review findings and create actions from our staff survey.
- Review and relaunch our corporate values alongside our People Strategy.



*Suffolk Fire and Rescue Annual Awards Ceremony October 2022*



## Health & Safety

Firefighting, responding to emergencies, training and other public safety-related activities present risks to employees. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for our employees and the public we serve that exceeds minimum legal and statutory obligations.

Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing team works closely with managers, staff, and representative bodies. Focus on firefighter safety is front and backloaded, evidenced through investment in training, PPE, fire engines, equipment, innovative firefighting technologies, operational guidance and learning from incidents to inform new, safer approaches.



‘Safe systems of work’ are established for operational incidents, training, and general non-operational work activity, based on national guidance. The systems contain key risk and control measures along with supporting information to assist firefighters with resolving operational incidents effectively and safely. They also underpin training, assessment, and the development of staff.

In 2022-23, 58 personal injuries were recorded, an increase from the 34 recorded in 2021-22. There were 37 vehicle accidents, an increase of 19 from 2021-22, analysis has shown this is due to increased activity. 6 accidents were reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) in 2022-23, representing a slight increase of one when compared to reportable incidents in 2021-22.

Staff reported 119 near-miss events in 2022-23, an increase of 33 when compared to the 86 near-miss reports in 2021-22. Near-miss events are circumstances where staff report a potential hazard but where there is no associated accident or injury. Staff are encouraged to report near-miss incidents to help reduce the risk of future accidents.

### Moving forward we plan to:

Continue to focus on the principle that we all have a personal and collective responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe through our behaviour, attitude, and actions. The importance of writing, reviewing, and producing effective policies and procedures is significant but will, in addition, seek to promote a positive, people-centric health and safety culture at all levels.

We have a business plan for the Health and Safety team which includes, as its main objective, improving Health and Safety Culture. We will survey all of our staff in 2023-24 and again in three years’ time. This will be measured using a HSE Health and Safety culture tool.



## 7 Training, Learning and Development

Operational training, learning and development remains at the heart of our Fire & Rescue Service. Training is provided throughout the year, to all our operational firefighters, Officers, and Support teams, ensuring we are able to provide highly skilled personnel who are able to conclude operational incidents safely and effectively, across Suffolk and beyond.

2022 -2023 has seen significant investment with the opening of our new training centre at Wattisham, which houses additional classrooms, office space, changing facilities and an inclusive welfare area. This has improved both the site and the training experience we are able to offer to the 1500-2000 students/visitors we cater for each year.



*Wattisham New Training Centre 2023*

Our tactical firefighting facility became operational at the end of 2022 and now forms an integral part of our continued improvement to provide realistic training. 2023 has also seen the introduction of a dedicated Incident Command (IC) team, which will oversee all of our IC training, at all levels.

Collaboration with regional services and partner agencies is important to us. Areas in which our Training, Learning and Development team currently collaborates with partners include incident command training and assessment, driver training, technical rescue training, breathing apparatus training for local industry firefighting teams, Rail Incident Officer training for Network Rail, and trauma training with our East of England Ambulance Service colleagues. We also participate in multi-agency exercises through our Local Resilience Forum and work closely with the MOD.



*Operational Breathing Apparatus Training 2023*

### Moving forward we plan to:

- Continue to seek and act on feedback from those using our training centre to develop our 17-acre site to enrich the learning environment.
- Continue to imbed and understand neurodiversity needs, within the learning environment, supporting all, to fulfil their career aspirations.
- Continue to collaborate with our blue light partners, to ensure lessons learnt from Major incidents are imbedded in future training, to support ongoing improvement/safety.
- Continue our partnership ethos of working, to ensure efficient and integrated working.
- Use accurate data to shape our training calendar against seasonal risk.



## 7 Wellbeing of our People

Our people are at the heart of our service, and none of what we do would be possible without our professional, highly skilled, and well-developed workforce. Ensuring their wellbeing, positive morale, and purposeful engagement is vital and strengthens the service we provide to you.

The signing of the Mental Health at Work Commitment demonstrates the importance of mental health and wellbeing within the service, providing tools and a framework to support the proactive approach to mental health and wellbeing.



*Emergency Services Mental Health Symposium 2022*

This work is linked to Suffolk County Council’s strategy and tools for wellbeing including an employee assistance program and access to the SCC Occupational Health contract, which has a specific Fire Service consideration. We are currently in the process of implementing a programme of support for all colleagues following a critical incident or traumatic exposure, utilizing the peer support mechanism Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). CISM is a peer led support process following traumatic exposures to limit and mitigate the development of longer-term mental health conditions.



Ensuring our staff can look after their mental and physical health is a key priority for us. We have mental health first aiders, access to SCC Mental Health Tool kits and focused training on mental health, alongside accessible fitness guidance for all staff. Our staff can also access specialist counselling services, and we have specific support through the Firefighters Charity.

Focus on firefighter safety is imperative, and we have invested in training, PPE, fire engines, equipment, and innovative firefighting technologies.

We have a dedicated Wellbeing Officer who is committed to promoting a positive mental health culture via awareness initiatives, promotion of physical fitness, and staff training. They are key to developing a culture committed to health and wellbeing.

As part of National Best Practice, firefighters are required to undertake a fitness test annually. We offer this test through a variety of methods, including the bleep test. The Wellbeing Officer provides support to help operational staff with their physical fitness to ensure the national fitness standard is met and guides non-operational staff who want to improve their general fitness and health.



## 7 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) both in the service we deliver to our community and our staff, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect to help make the service an employer of choice. We believe that a diverse workforce with individuals who offer different perspectives, skills, experience, and knowledge will benefit us as an organisation and ensure we can meet the needs and reflect the community we serve.



*On-Call Pass out Parade March 2022*

We know we have room for improvement in some areas of our EDI including:

- Increasing the diversity of applicants applying for roles across the service.
- Understanding how we can attract more diverse applicants to make us an employer of choice.
- Understanding how we can change ways of working to improve retention of staff.
- Reducing the risk of domestic fires by increasing Home Fire Safety Visits to hard-to-reach communities.
- Improving staff's confidence and skills in engaging with different communities.

### **In 2022-23 we:**

- Continued engagement with Suffolk Pride.
- Attended the Asian Fire Service Association Summer and Winter conferences.
- Held a refugee virtual voices session with Ukrainian refugee to raise staff awareness.
- Recruited a dedicated EDI Officer position to help support our commitment to drive EDI within the service.
- Worked through our Community Engagement Officer to ensure our harder to reach community groups are involved in events and consultations and given the opportunity to contribute.
- Supported Suffolk Women in Fire Together, held a Women's Day 2023 celebration supported by allies from Suffolk Fire and Suffolk County Council.
- Supported prevention work and community engagement with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups including discussions around GRT History month.



## 8 Financial Performance

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is required under the Local Government Act 1999 to account for all public money and to ensure it is used efficiently and effectively. As part of Suffolk County Council, the Service follows the Council's financial procedures for budget setting, monitoring and production of final accounts

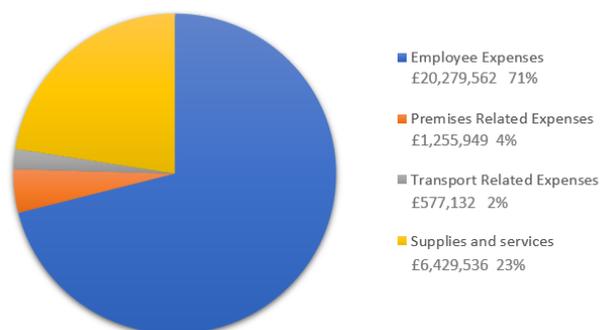
Suffolk County Council's Annual Statement of Accounts is examined by external auditors. The auditors' report also reviews arrangements to ensure the use of public resources is economical, efficient, and effective.

Ensuring we have an efficient service that offers value for money underpins everything we do.

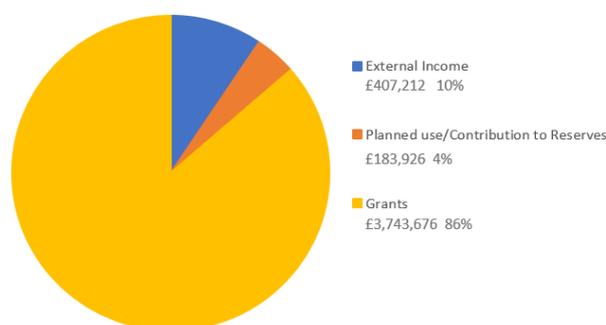
The statement of Accounts and External Auditors Letter are published on Suffolk County Councils website:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/budget-council-tax-and-finance/council-accounts/>

**Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service**  
Gross Expenditure 2022-23 Budget £28,542,179



**Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service**  
Gross Income 2022-23 Budget £4,334,814



### Fire and Public Safety Capital Programme Schemes

Capital Scheme	Description and how the scheme helps deliver against Directorate objectives
ICCS (Incident Command and Control System) Replacement	The existing Incident Command and Control system in the combined fire control centre is being upgraded. This is being led by Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service and is due for completion early 2023-24.
Operational Equipment	An established ten-year capital replacement programme ensures the Council replaces existing equipment that is at its end-of-life. The equipment ensures firefighters can respond safely and effectively to the wide range of incidents identified in the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
Vehicle Renewals	A fifteen-year fleet renewal programme which ensures that vehicles reaching their end-of-life are replaced in line with the fleet strategy. During 2022-26 this investment will replace twenty fire engines, several operational officer response support vehicles and vehicles for on call firefighter support and specialist functions.

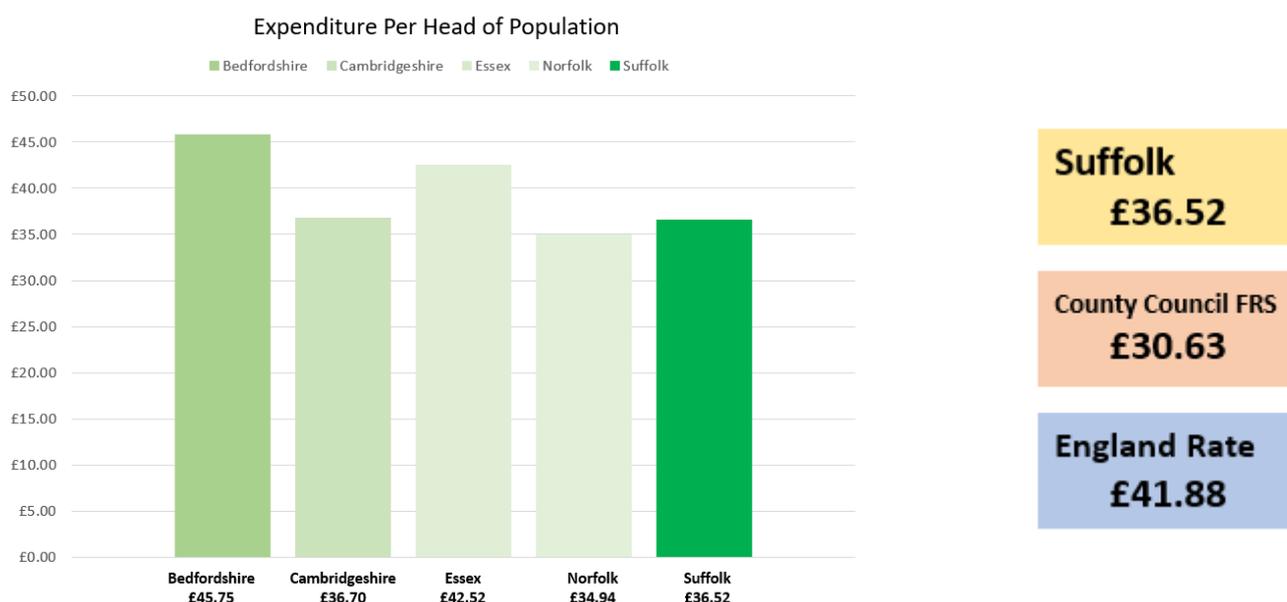


Capital Scheme	Description and how the scheme helps deliver against Directorate objectives
IT Equipment	An established ten-year capital replacement programme ensures the Council replaces and updates fire service-specific ICT equipment; this includes alerters, availability systems and mobilising equipment, all of which are integral to how the services are provided.
SFRS Property Improvement	A ten-year capital renewals programme is in place to ensure the Council maintains a fit-for-purpose property portfolio. As well as fire stations, the portfolio includes the training centre at Wattisham airfield and training towers at fire stations and work otherwise out of scope of corporate property maintenance, PFI contract and blue-light collaboration property development.
Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs)	An established ten-year capital replacement programme ensures the Council replaces existing equipment that is at its end-of-life. MDT's are a computer placed on all fire engines and specialist vehicles, they provide an electronic communication system with the emergency control room and a wealth of operational information including high risk, operational procedures, hydrant locations and mapping.
EV Charging Infrastructure	A programme of works to establish Electric Vehicle Charging points across Suffolk Fire and Rescue properties for use by the service and members of SCC to support the change to an Electrified Fleet to complement Suffolk's Climate Pledge.

## How we compare nationally

Annual financial and performance data for all fire and rescue services are published, enabling comparisons to be made between each fire authority. In comparison to other fire services, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service consistently provides value for money and is performing well.

Average Expenditure per Head of Population regional comparison:





## 9 National Resilience

National Resilience is our capacity and capability to work together with other responders to deliver a sustained and effective response to major incidents and emergencies.

We work closely with the SCC Joint Emergency Planning Unit; this arrangement ensures that the service is well-prepared and joined up with other partnerships to help keep our communities safe and prepared.

Plans are established for responding to major incidents at sites such as the Sizewell B Power Station or for off-site emergencies. Our Risk and Resilience Manager continually engages with our wider partners to ensure we are closely aligned and can work effectively together.

Regional training with other fire and rescue services, police and the ambulance service supports operational readiness through Joint Operating Principles or a wider response to both terrorist and major multi-agency incidents.

SFRS is an active member of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which aids us in meeting our obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act. Our service hosts two key roles of the LRF; Partnership Manager and Planning Officer roles.

Service risk management arrangements align with the local community and national risk registers, ensuring that we have the appropriate response and have recovery plans and resources to meet these risks and our duties. The plans are reviewed and exercised periodically through the LRF.



*Exercise Bigfoot, Bury St Edmunds April 2022*



## 10 Partnerships and Collaboration

### Our Partnerships

We worked in collaboration across various work streams with our partners, including our Joint Fire Control with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and as the service delivery area of Suffolk County Council's Fire and Public Safety Directorate.

We collaborate closely with our Suffolk partners to provide prevention education and advice to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, enable the vulnerable to live safely in their homes and support and improve the lives of the community.

We are partners on both the Adult and Children's Safeguarding boards and have a formal process for information sharing with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). SFRS is also a member of the Multi-Agency Modern Day Slavery Network and has been involved in the development of training films for partner emergency services and the wider professional network.

Emergency Service Cadets are an important part of our Fire and Police family. The Cadets get the chance to develop skills in firefighting and policing, develop qualities of positive leadership and good citizenship and influence the shape of the community and the fire /police service. Cadets are run jointly by volunteers from SFRS and police personnel.

### Our Collaborations

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has an excellent history of working together with our Suffolk partners, including undertaking joint activity with blue light services and our regional Fire services. We actively develop our relationships with our partner organisations to promote and deliver services and provide value to the community and improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

### Combined Fire Control

The Fire Control is facilitated through Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Service and has been in operation for more than ten years. It is established under a Fire and Rescue Services Act Section 16 agreement which details its governance, performance, and funding.



Combined Fire Control employs 'dynamic mobilising' protocols, and staff are empowered to deviate from the pre-determined attendance, should the need arise based on professional judgement. This flexibility can result in resources sent to an incident being increased or decreased, depending on the intelligence gathered during the call-handling phase of the emergency.

Mobilising systems enable Controllers to receive calls for help and allocate fire engines and other resources to attend to emergency incidents. Our Combined Fire Control has committed to implementing new mobilising technology. The new technology is two years overdue with a revised "go live" of early 2024. Technological and financial challenges with the technology provider have driven Suffolk Fire Service to undertake a review into the joint arrangements with recommendations due to be made to the Fire Authority in September 2023.



## Shared Estates Programme

Since 2014, SFRS has established an emergency service shared estates programme, where we have developed several of our fire stations to share with our police and/or ambulance colleagues. We now share 18 stations with our blue light partners.

The refurbishment of Princes Street Fire Station in Ipswich was completed in June 2022 and allows the Service and Suffolk Police to operate a 24-hour shared premise.

We are very proud of the new facility and our joint estates programme is one of the most significant examples of what can be achieved by pooling resources and working together for Suffolk.

The station was opened by HRH Princess Anne who unveiled a plaque and chatted with Suffolk Fire and Rescue and Suffolk Police about their roles and how the joint space has helped work within Ipswich.



*HRH Princess Anne opening Princes Street Fire Station*



## Stowmarket Fire Station

The first new build station in Suffolk was opened on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023, in Stowmarket and is a state of the art emergency services hub and the latest in the programme of joint blue light hubs across Suffolk. It is the latest to join the other blue light hubs across Suffolk and the first new build.

The building has a range of green credentials contributing towards our Community Risk Management Plan Climate Priority, including 14 electric vehicle charging points, an air source heat pump system, insulation informed by thermal modelling and photovoltaic panels.

The new station is ideally placed to enable easy access to the local road network helping to ensure a swift response to emergencies.

In addition to creating more efficient public sector estates, we are assessing how the sharing of other resources and information can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services to the public.



## Cross Border Collaboration

Suffolk has borders with three counties – Cambridgeshire, Essex, and Norfolk. We work closely with them and our regional partners, carrying out joint operational exercises that ensure our border firefighters and our service have the most up-to-date training in risk areas, enabling them to carry out incident response safely and effectively.

## Suffolk Partnerships

We also work closely with our internal partners within Suffolk including Felixstowe Docks, Adastral Park, Mildenhall Airbase and Suffolk Search and Rescue, carrying out various exercises that ensure we can provide safe and effective incident response when required.



*Rescue Training SULAR – River Orwell Ipswich March 2023*



# 11 Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP)

SFRS has a statutory duty to consult on and publish a Community Risk Management Plan as detailed in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

The CRMP identifies regional and national risks that are current, foreseeable, and emerging and could have an impact on our county. We aim to respond to those risks effectively and efficiently, becoming more agile and flexible in our approach to work and using our skills and experience to strengthen community safety.

## Our Priorities



People

- Review our On-Call sustainability
- Recruit and retain non-operational support staff
- Continue to grow an inclusive and diverse workforce



Prevention

- Develop our home safety prevention work.
- Increase prevention work in rural communities
- Focused prevention work for our hard-to-reach communities



Protection

- Provide advice and guidance on new legislation, ensuring compliance and enforcement of new laws
- Develop our work in the built environment
- Support the National Fire Chiefs Council in establishing the Health & Safety Executive Building Safety Regulator



Response

- Implement revised response standards
- Ensure our emergency response fleet can mitigate emerging risks
- Use our resources to meet a wide range of community needs in partnership with others
- Match our resources to risk



Climate

- Support SCC with the delivery of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan
- Transition to a zero emissions fleet
- Review our training, equipment and firefighting methodology to enable the service to adapt and respond to the effects of climate change

Our Current CRMP is available on our website:

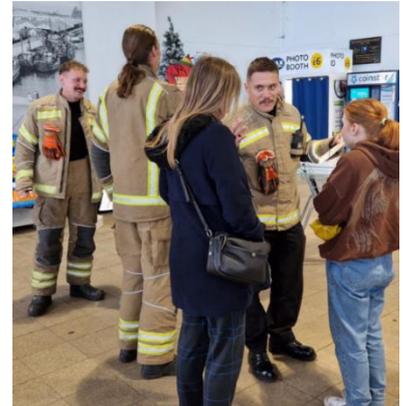
[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2023-27](#)



The CRMP is supported by the National Fire Chiefs Council, and our CRMP must be in line with NFCC guidance.

SFRS had several key stages that needed to be carried out during our consultation period which started in May 2022, including:

- Public Consultation – Engagement and consultation with our communities across Suffolk.
- Engagement and consultation with staff across Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.
- Engagement and consultation with our stakeholders
- External Data analysis



*CRMP Consultation November 2022*

The consultation included questions about five specific proposals related to:

- Updating how response times are reported to include from the time of call and focus on the areas of highest risk, such as dwelling fires.
- Addressing climate change to support Suffolk County Council’s ambition to be a carbon-neutral authority by 2030, with a view to introducing more non-fossil fuel vehicles in the fleet.
- Developing preventative safe and well visits, including continued work with the National Farmers’ Union to tailor advice to rural and farming communities.
- Assessing how the service works with partner agencies, such as supporting the ambulance service, when appropriate and if capacity and resources allow for this.
- Reviewing the recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters and specialist support staff to ensure Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service remains a diverse employer of choice.



*Henley Field Fire July 2022*

Work on each of the proposals will now take place in the four years through to 2027 and will include further staff and public engagement, as well as being informed by the consultation responses

Our service will continue to prioritise preventing fires and other emergencies from happening and protecting people and property when they do, responding quickly and competently to any incident.

We will focus on Prevention, Protection and Response actively to ensure this is reflective of our current and future demands, meeting the risks and the expectation of the community we serve and achieve our ambition of making Suffolk a place where people continue to lead safe and healthy lives.



## 12 Future Planning

How we plan, set our priorities, and deliver your service will be reviewed this coming year as we move into delivery of our new Community Risk Management Plan.

To do this we use a risk evaluation cycle:



Other influences on our planning will be the HMICFRS inspection report and implementing the recommendations for improvements.

This work will enable the service to analysis and appraise emerging risks, matching our resources to those potential risks, meaning we are better equipped to serve our communities.

Suffolk has various risks which are dealt with on a day-to-day basis. The rural nature of Suffolk can make some rural areas difficult to access. In addition, farms, rural businesses and heritage buildings can have specific fire risks.

Other risk areas within Suffolk are thatched properties, wildfires, and flooding, all of which are affected by climate change and severe weather.

In July 2022, we declared a major incident in relation to fire in the open, which caused significant disruption in Suffolk, which saw firefighters attending 66 incidents in 2 days.

When looking to the future we also need to factor in emerging risks. Emerging risks are varied and when appraising Suffolk’s there are some very specific to our county such as:



**Climate Change & Extreme Weather**

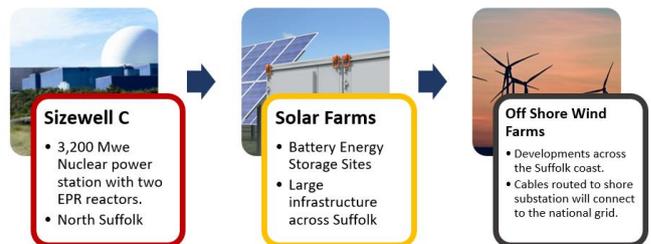
- Increasing variants in extreme temperature and weather conditions
- Supporting delivery of SCC’s Suffolk Climate Emergency Action Plan



**Ageing Population**

- An increase in age and associated health conditions may also result in risk of fire.
- Commitment to strengthen our partnerships to effectively deliver our prevention programmes.

### Nationally Significant Infrastructure projects





## 13 Legislation

### Our Legal Responsibilities

Our responsibilities as an emergency service are set out in the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and various other legislation as listed below, included are links to all relevant documents.



*Approved to Ride course February 2023*

#### Fire Services Act 2004

The act replaced the Fire Services Act 1948 with a new framework to ensure fire and rescue services were better able to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Act clarifies the duties and powers of Fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety.
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires.
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies such as flooding or terrorist attacks.

Do other things to respond to the needs of their communities and the risks they face.

#### Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The Act imposes a clear set of roles and responsibilities to those organisations with a role in preparing for and responding to emergencies.

Under part one of the Act, emergency services and local authorities (defined as category one responders) have a legal obligation to assess risk, plan and exercise for emergencies and undertake business continuity management.

We are involved in ongoing partnerships to plan multi-agency responses to major incidents. This work involves carrying out risk assessments and producing emergency plans which are tested and continually updated.



## Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. Their current priorities are:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents.
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their communities face.
- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide.
- Be accountable to the communities they serve.
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible, and diverse.

## Fire and Rescue Services Emergencies (England) Order 2007

The Emergencies (England) Order 2007 outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 for fire authorities. The duty requires fire authorities where provision of resources has been made by central Government to respond to incidents both within and outside the authority area involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

## The Equality Act 2010 and 2020

The public sector equality duty requires public bodies to have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their roles.

The Equality Act 2020 replaced previous legislation and created a legal framework providing clearer streamlined law that is more effective at tackling disadvantage and discrimination. The Act protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

## Fire Safety Act 2021

The Fire Safety Act clarifies the scope of the Fire Safety Order to make clear it applies to the structure, external walls (including cladding and balconies) and individual flat entrance doors between domestic premises and the common parts of a multi-occupied residential building.

## Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 implemented the majority of the recommendations made by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry in its Phase 1 report which required a change in the law. The regulations seek to improve the fire safety of blocks of flats in ways which are practical, cost effective for individual leaseholders and proportionate to the risk of fire. The regulations came into force on 23 January 2023.



## Building Safety Act 2022

This Act makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers, and protections – so homes across the country are safer. It delivers far-reaching protections for qualifying leaseholders from the costs associated with remediating historical building safety defects, and an ambitious toolkit of measures that will allow those responsible for building safety defects to be held to account.

The Act creates three new bodies to provide effective oversight of the new regime: the Building Safety Regulator, the National Regulator of Construction Products and the New Homes Ombudsman. Together these changes mean owners will manage their buildings better, and the home-building industry has the clear, proportionate framework it needs to deliver more, and better, high-quality homes.

## Links and other legislation:

[Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan 2019-22](#)

[The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)

[Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999](#)

[Audit Commission Act 1998](#)

[Regulation 11 of the Accounts and Audit \(England\) Regulations 2011](#)

[SCC Priorities](#)

[The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

[The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

[The Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)

[The Localism Act 2011](#)

[The Health and Safety Act at Work, etc. Act 1974](#)

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Peer Challenge Report 2017](#)

[Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Suffolk Report](#)

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Assessment of Risk 2018-2021](#)

[Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2019-22](#)

[Home Office National Statistics](#)

[Police and Crime Act 2017](#)



*Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Protection Team March 2023*



## 14 We are listening ...

### Share your views and feedback.

You can visit our website for further information:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/>

You can use our online contact form to leave any feedback:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/about-suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/contact-fire-and-rescue-with-non-emergency-queries/>

Call **01473 260588**, this service is available Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Fridays from 9am to 4pm.

Or write to us at:

**Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service**  
Endeavour House  
8 Russell Road  
Ipswich  
IP1 2BX

**In an emergency  
you should always  
dial 999**



