



**Suffolk  
Fire and Rescue  
Service**



# Service Plan

## 2016-19

### Follow us



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# Introduction

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Suffolk's fire and rescue service has an established reputation locally, regionally and nationally for being a low-cost, well-performing Service. We have remained one of the most cost-efficient Services in the country through continuously reviewing what we do and how we do it. Our future plans build on this reputation by aligning our resources against each of our priorities, which in turn support our ambition of Suffolk being a 'place where people live safe and fulfilling lives'

We have achieved much in the last year but there is still much we want to do to continue to provide the best possible Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response services to people across our county.

We continue to work closely with our blue light partner organisations at Suffolk Constabulary and the East of England Ambulance Service. We are increasingly working with partners to promote and support healthy lifestyles and we will take advantage of the synergies and linkages within the wider Public Health and Protection Directorate in the County Council.

The fire and rescue service has been an outstanding success story over the last 10 years in terms of the proactive protection and prevention work carried out in the community. This has assisted in reducing the demand for 999 services.

The story in Suffolk largely reflects the national trend, with reductions in the number of 999 calls, fire deaths and injuries in the last 10 years, although current evidence suggests we are starting to see a levelling out of 999 demand in recent years.

We hope you find this plan informative and if you would like further information then please visit the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service website [www.suffolk.gov.uk/emergency-and-rescue](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/emergency-and-rescue)



**Councillor Matthew Hicks**

*Cabinet member for  
the Environment*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Hicks'.



**Mark Hardingham**

*Chief Fire Officer  
Suffolk Fire and  
Rescue Service*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Hardingham'.

# Our culture

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In making our plans, agreeing priorities and delivering our services, it is important that our people have the knowledge and skills to do their jobs safely and effectively. It is also vital that we consider how we act, present ourselves, treat each other, lead our teams and manage our performance.

Our behaviours and attitudes form a big part of how successful we are as an organisation and we have committed to using the Council's ASPIRE values framework to support our culture.

**A** – Achieve: *"We are the best we can be"*

**S** – Support: *"We work as one team"*

**P** – Pride: *"We take pride in and are proud of what we do"*

**I** – Inspire: *"We model the ASPIRE values"*

**R** – Respect: *"We give and earn respect"*

**E** – Empower: *"We empower, encourage and motivate people"*



# Equality and inclusion

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Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service play an important role in supporting the Council's equality objectives. Our objectives are:

1. Firefighter recruitment will be supported by positive outreach events, and we will strive to encourage more successful applications from under-represented groups.
2. We will continue to encourage people from under-represented groups to become Community Fire Safety Volunteers – so as to help us to raise awareness of fire safety within local communities.
3. We will continue to improve access to our fire stations and use these to help us, our partners and other agencies to engage and support vulnerable people and our communities. This will include carrying out access audits for our fire stations in partnership with the county council's staff groups, continuing our work to fit improved door access systems and providing better welfare facilities.
4. We will seek to share more fire stations with our blue-light partners where this is advantageous and supports the continuation of access to services for local people.
5. We will continue to increase our expertise and the confidence of staff in undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (how we ensure that changes to policies and procedures are considered fully before adopting them) and we will include equalities and inclusion training within all staff development programmes





# Our vision

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It is our vision to make Suffolk *a place where people live safe and fulfilling lives*. This means that deaths and injuries from fires and road traffic collisions are as low as possible; levels of fire related crime are low; businesses are aware of their responsibilities regarding fire safety and people feel safe in their own homes.

It means Suffolk will be a place where fire stations, firefighters and the outstanding reputation of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is used to support and enable communities

to develop the capacity and ability to improve their quality of life.

Our purpose is to provide effective and efficient fire and rescue services that meet the public's expectations, our legislative requirements, and which are delivered by safe, professional and well trained people.



# Our role

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## Prevention

We work closely with many partner organisations to promote community safety, healthy living and fire prevention. We focus on vulnerable groups such as the elderly, those with limited mobility, families with young children and young drivers at greatest risk of being involved in road traffic collisions.

## Protection

We ensure business owners meet their fire safety protection responsibilities. We do this by enforcing the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which focusses on ensuring people are safe from fire when at work or in public buildings. We work with Suffolk businesses to support them to develop and grow in a way that is safe from fire and is sustainable.

## Emergency Response

We provide a 999 emergency response service 24/7 all year round, to the communities of Suffolk and its visitors. We work closely with other emergency services and neighbouring fire services to deal effectively with incidents both in Suffolk and across our borders.



# Our priorities

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## **Community Risk Reduction**

We will work with stakeholders, partners and communities to reduce the risk of death and injury to people and damage to property and the environment through effective Prevention and Protection activities.

## **Emergency Response**

We will maintain resilient arrangements to ensure we have the right fire stations, firefighters, fire engines and equipment at the right place and at the right time to meet our statutory and discretionary responsibilities and the appropriate expectations of the public.

## **Call Management and Incident Support**

We will continue our collaboration with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service to deliver an effective and efficient 999 Combined Fire Control.

## **Health and Safety**

Firefighting is inherently risky - we will maintain and improve our arrangements for meeting our statutory health and safety responsibilities, reducing the number and seriousness of accidents to our staff and reduce levels of sickness absence by focusing on improving our health and safety culture.

## **Training and Development**

We will use our training and development facilities at Wattisham training centre to ensure our firefighters are amongst the best trained in the UK and that they continue to be safe, professional and competent.

## **Corporate Health**

We will seek to continuously improve our leadership, capacity, communications, relationships, organisational culture, use of resources and underpinning processes to ensure they help us meet community expectations. We will promote diversity, equality and fairness in all that we do. We will achieve these aims within the financial constraints that are impacting on all public services with a focus on collaboration and working with other blue light services.

## **Community Capacity**

We will work with Suffolk communities and partners to ensure the most vulnerable people are able to help themselves, or be provided with help, to maintain and improve their safety and quality of life.



# Our Fire Service

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## Map of fire stations in Suffolk



2015-16 Budget

**£22,303,895**

Annual cost per head of population

**£25.49**

## Facts and figures

We have a number of fire engines and specialist vehicles throughout the county:

### Fire Engines



**47**

Of which;

6 Smaller compact fire engines

6 Pump rescue tenders

3 Enhanced rescue tenders

### Special Appliances



**24**

including;

3 Water rescue appliances

2 4x4 Unimogs

2 Aerial appliances

We employ:

### Full-time firefighters



**208**

### On-Call firefighters



**424**

### Support staff



**59**

In 2015-16 we carried out:

**1242**

Safer Home visits

**743**

Risk Based Inspections

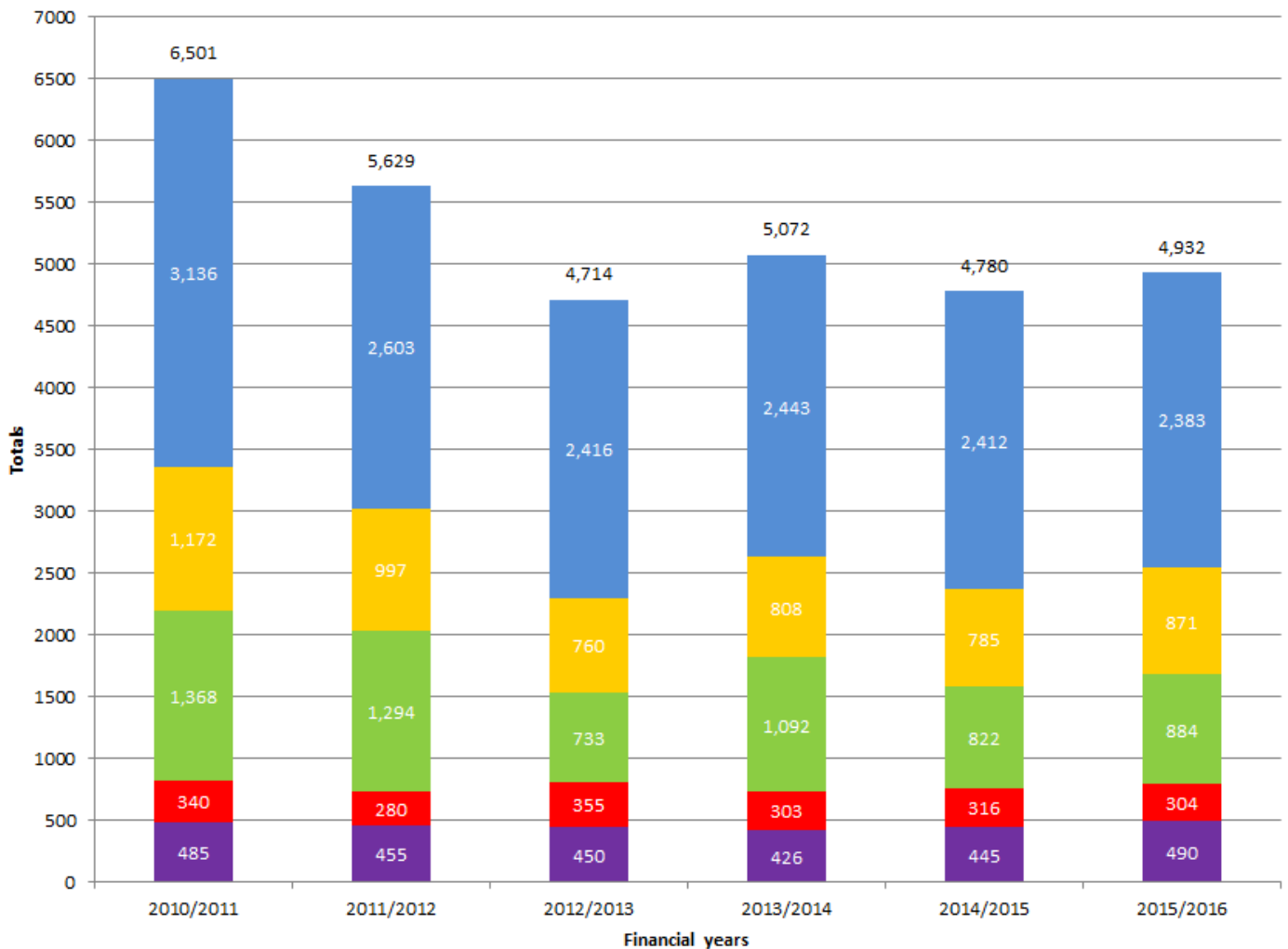
## Incidents Attended

The chart below shows incidents attended since 2010/11.

This indicates a small increase of incidents for 2015/16 compared to the previous year and follows the general trend over recent years of a plateau in activity.

## Chart Key

- **False Alarms**  
Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's), false alarms with good intent (e.g. smoke seen), false alarm malicious (e.g. broken manual break glass point).
- **Primary Fires**  
All property and vehicle fires
- **Secondary Fires**  
Any fires that fall outside the 'Primary' category, e.g. rubbish, bins, wasteland
- **RTC**  
Road Traffic Collisions
- **Special Services**  
Hazardous materials, other rescues, assisting other agencies etc.



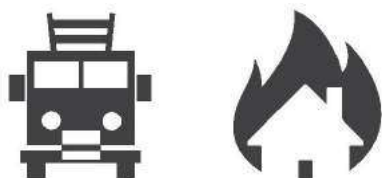
## Response Standards

The graphics below show our response standards.

### 2015 — 2016

#### Standard 1

1st appliance committed to building fire within 11 minutes



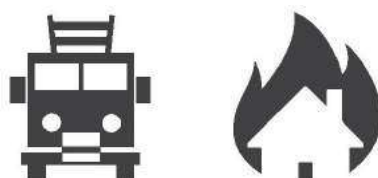
**73.90%**

**599**

First fire engine attended a property fire within 11 minutes 73.90% of the time, measured against 599 incidents

#### Standard 2

2nd Appliance Committed to Building Fire within 16 minutes



**77.54%**

**373**

Second engine attended a property fire within 16 minutes 77.54% of the time, measured against 373 incidents

#### Standard 3

1st Appliance Committed to an RTC within 13 minutes



**72.60%**

**277**

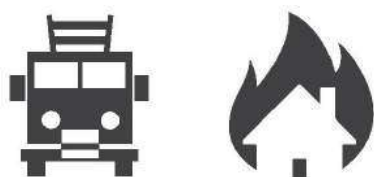
First fire engine attended a Road Traffic Collision within 13 minutes 72.60% of the time, measured against 277 incidents

The above compares with the performance standards for 2014/15, shown below;

### 2014 — 2015

#### Standard 1

1st appliance committed to building fire within 11 minutes



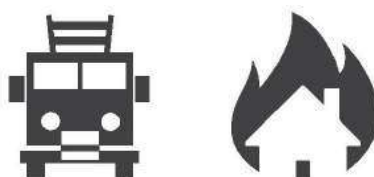
**64.81%**

**645**

In 2014-15 the first fire engine attended a property fire within 11 minutes 64.81% of the time, measured against 645 incidents

#### Standard 2

2nd Appliance Committed to Building Fire within 16 minutes



**71.98%**

**389**

In 2014-15 the second fire engine attended a property fire within 11 minutes 71.98% of the time, measured against 389 incidents

#### Standard 3

1st Appliance Committed to an RTC within 13 minutes



**77.85%**

**316**

In 2014-15 the first fire engine attended a Road Traffic Collision within 11 minutes 77.85% of the time, measured against 316 incidents

The data shows that response standards 1 and 2 have improved and 3 has declined slightly in the last 12 months when compared to the period 2014/15.

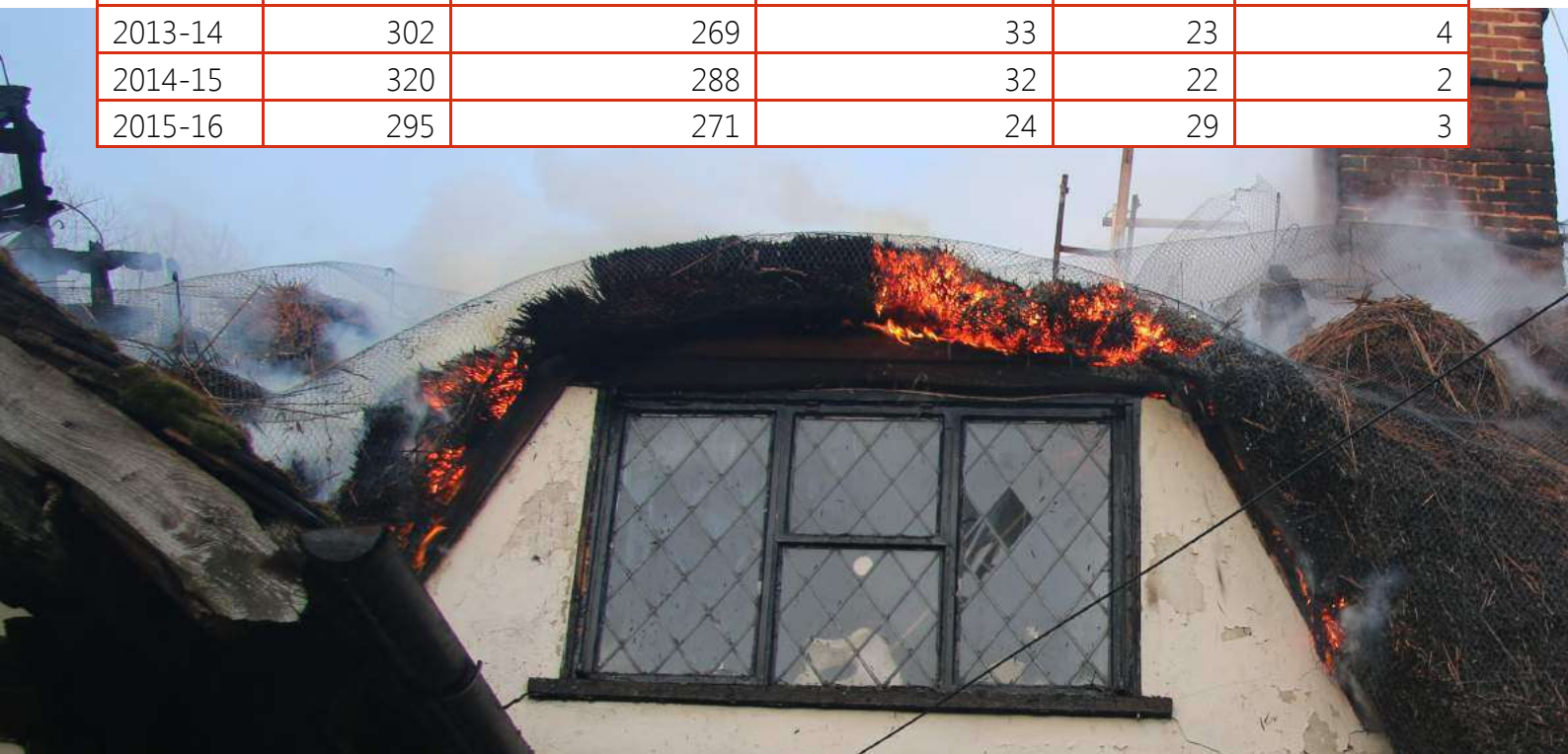
## Fatality and Casualty

The table below shows the numbers of fatalities and casualties over the last 5 years.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Fire Fatalities	8	2	3	6	4	5
Fire Casualties	52	42	24	34	41	47
Road Traffic Collision Fatalities	11	14	13	17	9	19
Road Traffic Collision Casualties	178	154	194	195	185	151
Other Special Service Fatalities	13	11	10	9	16	15
Other Special Service Casualties	35	30	38	34	50	30

The table below shows the number of casualties and fatalities as a result of just dwelling fires over the last 5 years.

Dwelling Fires 2010-2016					
Year	Total	Accidental or Cause Unknown	Deliberate or Other Cause	Injuries	Fatalities
2010-11	420	363	57	34	5
2011-12	356	322	34	31	1
2012-13	299	280	19	14	2
2013-14	302	269	33	23	4
2014-15	320	288	32	22	2
2015-16	295	271	24	29	3



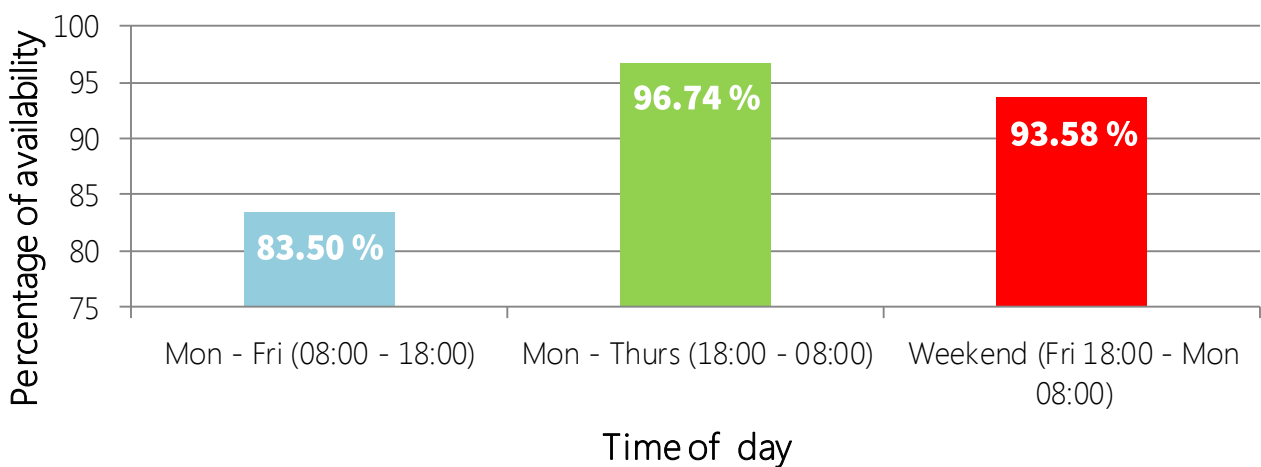


**On-Call Fire Engine Availability**

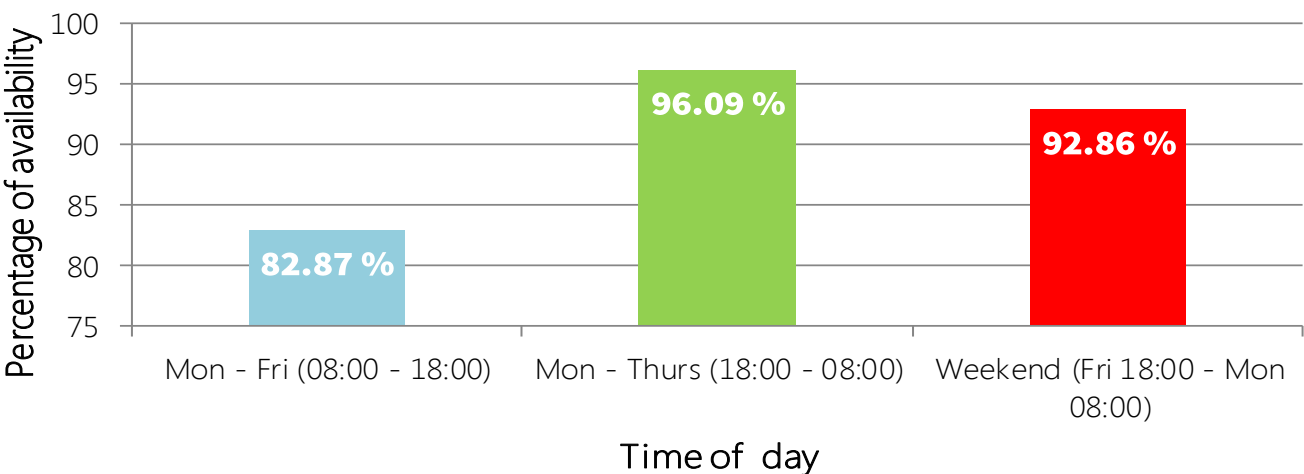
Availability of on-call fire engines is very good at nights and weekends. Performance reduces during the day Monday to Friday, when some on-call firefighters are unavailable due to other work commitments. The Service is progressing a number of initiatives to improve the availability of on-call fire engines.

Below is the comparative graph for January 2015 to January 2016. It shows a slight improvement in the availability of our on-call firefighters from 2014-15, as shown in the graph at the bottom of the page.

The average availability of the Service’s on-call fire engines in the 12 month period from January 2015 to January 2016.



The average availability of the Service’s on-call fire engines in the 12 month period from January 2014 to January 2015.



# How we decide what we do

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What the Fire Service does is influenced by a number of factors:

## **Statutory Responsibilities**

The Service has a range of statutory responsibilities, including those through the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2005, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

## **Central Government**

The [National Framework](#) for the Fire and Rescue Service sets out the Government's expectations for fire services. The Framework sets out three priorities:

- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks in their areas, make provision for prevention activities and respond to incidents appropriately
- Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.

## **Suffolk County Council**

The County Council has a clear set of priorities:

- Raise educational attainment and skill levels
- Support the Local Enterprise Partnerships to increase economic growth
- Maintain roads and develop Suffolk's infrastructure
- Support those most vulnerable in our communities
- Empower local communities

These, together with the Service's statutory responsibilities, shape how Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service provide services to local communities.

# Our performance

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We regularly monitor our performance using a range of measures that cover key aspects of the Service. Some aspects of performance are set out earlier in this plan. Areas of good practice and those that require improvement are highlighted using feedback from the public, our staff, internal reviews or through peer challenge and audit. Assurance of our performance is provided through our annual Statement of Assurance which is available on our [website](#).



# What we did In 2014—2016

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## **New Appliances**

We continued to invest in new vehicles and technology in order to ensure older fire engines and equipment were replaced as planned, and opportunities were sought to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

We purchased 6 "Compact" fire engines which were 2 tonnes lighter and smaller than traditional vehicles. Our 2 water carriers were replaced, these vehicles provide essential support to operational crews where water supplies are limited. A partnership was established with the Environment Agency to provide an Operational Support Unit at incidents that could cause environmental damage, such as oil spills and chemical leaks.

The FireBike scheme was launched, funded by the Copdock Classic Motorcycle Club. The motorbike is used in numerous ways to enhance motorcycle safety education and is part of the Biker Down programme which aims to raise motorcyclist's safety awareness.

## **New Equipment**

15 Positive Pressure Ventilation Fans were brought into the Service. These are used to ventilate buildings to clear heat and smoke, reducing damage and assisting firefighter's

to effect rescues and extinguish the fire.

During rescue efforts in buildings firefighters normally use Thermal Imaging Cameras to assist their search. We purchased 50 cameras this year replacing old models and improving capability and performance.

We installed defibrillator equipment on every fire engine. This life saving equipment will be used in cardiac emergencies and supports firefighters and the public at incidents.

Our Light Portable Pumps were upgraded. These are carried on the majority of fire engines to help firefighters pump firefighting water from locations where a fire engine can't access and to assist with the removal of flood water.

General Purpose Gloves used by firefighters are simple but essential safety equipment. Our new gloves provide greater protection from cuts and injuries whilst improving grip and dexterity.



## Animal Rescue

We have completed a review into our operational response to Large Animal Rescues and have incorporated training to the national best practice standard. This has involved additional specific training to identified stations (Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds & Ipswich) and supplying enhanced equipment to deal with a range of rescues involving Large Animals.

## JESIP

The national Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme training was delivered to all firefighters in the Service this year. The training was undertaken with colleagues from the other emergency services and has been designed to ensure that closer working and joint communication takes place at major or complex incidents.





## Woodbridge, Clare and Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), Suffolk Police, The East of England Ambulance Service (EEAS), and Suffolk County Council have an established history of working together to deliver effective and efficient public services.

During the past year the collaboration has seen the Blue Light Integration programme open newly renovated joint facilities with the Police in Woodbridge (August 2015) and Clare (September 2015). We have also created a new shared facility with East of England Ambulance Service at our Bury St Edmunds Fire Station. (June 2015)

This brings the total number of shared stations to 10 with plans to establish a further 7 combined stations over the next 3 years.

In addition to seeking opportunities to rationalise our estates portfolio with other emergency services, we are also looking to develop other opportunities to collaborate.

This includes a joint Community Safety department with Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council, the creation of three Emergency Services Cadets groups and the development of co-responding arrangements with the EEAS to respond to medical emergencies.

## NOGP

Working under the direction, supervision & guidance of the National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP), the 'Collaborative Partnership' produced 146 individual pieces of Operational Guidance. These are tactical documents derived from the Strategic Guidance produced by NOGP. The revised guidance will assist Services to work together across borders now that all are working to the same operational guidance. 141 pieces of operational guidance have now passed through the Suffolk working group with only 5 pieces remaining for the last meeting in May 2016. The programme will be delivered on time and in line with regional services.



# Our plans for 2016—2019

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## **Improving On-Call Firefighter Availability**

We will continue with our extensive programme to maximise the availability of our on-call firefighters and fire engines across Suffolk. The work includes:

- Improving the recruitment, retention and development of on-call firefighters
- Reviewing the terms and conditions of employment of our on-call firefighters to ensure the contractual arrangements are flexible and support improved availability
- Reviewing the operational arrangements that govern and support the safe availability and use of on-call firefighters
- Establish a pilot co-responding scheme with East of England Ambulance Service
- Extend the number of emergency service cadet schemes
- Establish a single, shared Prevention team between Fire, Suffolk County Council and Police
- Continue to seek out further opportunities for collaboration across Police, Fire and Ambulance services
- Consider the opportunities that arise from the draft Policing and Crime Bill

## **Blue Light Collaboration**

We will continue to work closely with Suffolk's blue light partner services and meet the proposed new statutory requirement for emergency services to collaborate.

In particular we will:

- Continue with our shared blue light estates programme at Felixstowe, Saxmundham, Stowmarket, Beccles, Ipswich and Mildenhall

## **Integrated Risk Management Plan – Implementation**

Following the consultation and subsequent decisions on the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan we will work with staff and representative bodies to implement the outcomes. We will establish a dedicated team to focus on the successful delivery of the programme of work and establish effective arrangements to manage the change process and review the outcomes after the implementation has taken place.



## Sizewell C - Consultation

We will ensure that we provide an effective response to the Stage 2 consultation for Sizewell C. We will do this by working closely with partner organisations, both through the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit and the Suffolk Resilience Forum.

## Investment and Innovation in vehicles, equipment and firefighter clothing

We will continue to invest in our fire engines, specialist vehicles, operational equipment and personal protective equipment for firefighters. This approach will support the effective delivery of services to communities and support firefighter safety. In particular we will:

- Replace the Service's three Command Support Vehicles, used to support the command of larger incidents
- Consider opportunities for the introduction of smaller rapid response type fire engines based on local risk and resource

- Introduce new firefighting equipment and techniques such as, cold-cutting technology, battery operated road traffic collision equipment and offensive use of positive pressure ventilation
- Provide all fire engines with new mobile data terminals
- Continue to work with the collaborative firefighter clothing project to support the provision new firefighter clothing when our current contract ends
- Work with the Chief Fire Officer's Association, other fire and rescue services and partner organisations to derive benefits from national and regional research and development and collaborative procurement

## National Operational Guidance

We will continue to support and benefit from the national arrangements in place for developing a suite of national operational policy and guidance. Implementation of these arrangements in Suffolk provides a consistent national approach for dealing safely and effectively with emergencies.



## Making the best of Digital

We will work closely with the Council's digital team to ensure we provide digital services so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so, whilst those who can't are not excluded. We will provide the facility for customer interactions to take place through lower cost channels, while at the same time maintaining or improving customer experience. In particular we will:

- Improve our use of social media
- Provide excellent internet-based mapping information to display 999 incidents and fire station information
- Provide interesting, useful and engaging information to the public about how we are performing
- Review and improve the information provided on the Service's website

## Reducing False Alarms

Close to 50% of the 999 calls we attend turn out to be false alarms. We will carry out a further review of the false alarm calls we attend to enable an informed decision to be taken about how we can reduce the number of false alarm calls. We will also look at a series of options about if and how we should continue to respond to those calls that on most occasions turn out to be false alarm calls.

## Leadership and Culture

Government are expected to publish a review into the culture of the fire and rescue service. We will establish a plan to consider the findings from this review and carry out a review of culture and leadership in our Service, as part of the wider County Council. We will seek to carry out the review in partnership with representative bodies and to ensure there are clear recommendations for improvement. We will then work with officers, staff, firefighters and representative bodies to collectively implement the findings.





### **Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)**

ESMCP is a cross-government programme to replace the existing mobile communications service for the three emergency services with a new commercial system based on 4G. The intended scope will include 50 fire and rescue services, 44 police forces and 13 Ambulance Trusts.

A range of other civil contingency user organisations will also join ESMCP as second tier users. Overall this means that the system is likely to have approximately 300,000 users.

Fire Service transition on to the new network is due to begin with the mobilisation phase in 2016/17 and will be complete by January 2020 by which time all fire services will be in a steady state. The steady state will last until the end of the financial year 2032 by which point a retendering of the contracts will have taken place.

We will continue to be part of the national and regional programme management arrangements to ensure that the programme

is successfully introduced across the blue light services in Suffolk.

### **Performance Management**

We will continue to improve our performance management arrangements, including resources, as part of the wider County Council performance management function. In particular we will:

- Effectively manage performance in the right areas, be assured about the quality of our data, ensure the data and performance is presented in a way that is easy for people inside and outside the Service to use and understand.
- Invite a further external peer challenge of our Service in 2017
- Support the development of a national data set for the fire and rescue service, and use that data set, alongside others, to benchmark our own performance
- Work with the Home Office to support any future inspection programme for the fire and rescue service.



## Shift System

We will continue to review and change the shift systems and crewing arrangements for firefighters and officers to ensure we have arrangements that secure a resilient, flexible and efficient delivery of service. In particular we will:

- Review the Incident Command response arrangements for Service and Area Commanders linked to a proposed reduction in the number of Brigade Commanders
- Implement the outcome of the review of Group and Station Commanders
- Review the current shift systems at both day crew and full time fire stations and explore the opportunities for improved alternative shift systems – the aim being to establish a resilient shift system which provides full time support to improve the availability of on-call firefighters Monday to Friday during the day.







TEST IT



**“Gosh, the holidays have been busy!  
Please press to test I’m still in good voice.”**



