South Ayrshire Council

Report by Assistant Director - People
to Partnerships Panel
of 9 February 2022

Subject: **Local Performance Report: Scottish Fire and Rescue**

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1.   Purpose

1.1   The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Partnership Panel with information about the mid-year performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in South Ayrshire.

2.   Recommendation

2.1   It is recommended that the Panel scrutinises the 2021/22 mid-year performance report of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in South Ayrshire and provide feedback to the Local Senior Officer.

3.   Background

3.1   The Police and Fire and Rescue Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 created a national police force and a national fire and rescue service. The implications of the legislation for local authorities are that the Council will:

- Comment on SPA and SFRS Strategic Plans;

- Contribute to the preparation of the local plan for police and local fire and rescue plan and approve the plans;

- Monitor the delivery of police and fire and rescue functions in the area and make recommendations for improvement; and

- Provide feedback to the Local Police Commander and the Fire and Rescue Service Local Senior Officer.

3.2   The Local Fire Plan for South Ayrshire was agreed at Leadership Panel on 19 September 2017. Performance is reported twice yearly and this report relates to the mid-year performance.

4.   Proposals

4.1   The Local Senior Officer, Ian McMeekin, has provided the attached performance report (Appendix A), National Incident Statistics for 2020/21 (Appendix B), SFRS Annual Performance Review (Appendix C), a briefing on Fire and Smoke Alarms in Scottish Homes (Appendix D) and a covering paper (Appendix E) which Panel

members are invited to scrutinise and provide feedback on. The Local Senior Officer will be in attendance at the Panel meeting to discuss both the performance information and the update information.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Human Resources Implications

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

    8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations*

    8.2.1 If the recommendation is rejected then there is a risk that the Council is considered to not have discharged its responsibility under the Police and Fire and Rescue Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 in terms of scrutinising local performance.

9. Equalities

9.1 The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

10. Sustainable Development Implications

10.1 *Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)* - The proposals in this report do not represent a qualifying plan, programme, policy or strategy for consideration for SEA. There exists therefore no obligation to contact the Scottish Government Gateway and no further action is necessary. An SEA has not been undertaken.

11. Options Appraisal

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12/

12.   Link to Council Plan

12.1   The matters referred to in this report contribute to Commitments 1 and 6 of the Council Plan: Fair and Effective Leadership/ Leadership that promotes fairness; and A Better Place to Live/ Enhanced environment through social, cultural and economic activities.

13.   Results of Consultation

13.1   There has been no consultation on the content of this report which relates to performance of an external organisation.

Background Papers   **Report to Leadership Panel of 19 September 2017 - Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan for South Ayrshire**

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Date: 1 February 2022

South Ayrshire Performance Report
1st April 2021 - 31st December 2021

SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

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COUNCIL

South Ayrshire Performance Report

Table of Contents

Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan Priorities

The Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan has been developed to set out the priorities and objectives within South Ayrshire and allows our local authority partners to scrutinise the performance outcomes of these priorities. We will continue to work closely with our partners in South Ayrshire to ensure we are all **"Working Together for a Safer Scotland"** through targeting risks to our communities at a local level.

The plan has been developed to complement key partnership activity embedded across South Ayrshire's Community Planning Partnership. Through effective and co-ordinated partnership working we will seek to deliver continuous improvement in our performance and effective service delivery in our area of operations.

The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for South Ayrshire identified six areas for demand reduction and is subject to regular monitoring and reporting through the Partnership Panel. A summary of the priorities and current activity is detailed below with further detail and analysis contained within this performance report.

	Accidental Dwelling Fires	Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Unintentional Injury and Harm	Deliberate Fire Setting	Non-Domestic Fire Safety	Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
Ayr East	5	0	5	13	2	42
Ayr North	13	2	7	79	8	74
Ayr West	9	1	6	20	4	108
Girvan & South Carrick	6	0	9	4	6	76
Kyle	4	2	5	23	1	41
Maybole, North Carrick & Coylton	2	0	6	22	3	66
Prestwick	7	0	6	42	2	48
Troon	5	1	5	50	1	29
Total Incidents	**51**	**6**	**49**	**253**	**27**	**484**
Year on Year Change	-15%	20%	26%	13%	93%	8%
3 Year Average Change	-8%	-23%	-18%	6%	3%	-3%
5 Year Average Change	-4%	-9%	-9%	4%	2%	0%

About the statistics within this report

The activity totals and other statistics quoted within this report are published in the interests of transparency and openness. They are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review. Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be a difference in the period totals quoted in our reports after local publication which result from revisions or additions to the data in our systems. The Scottish Government publishes official statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.
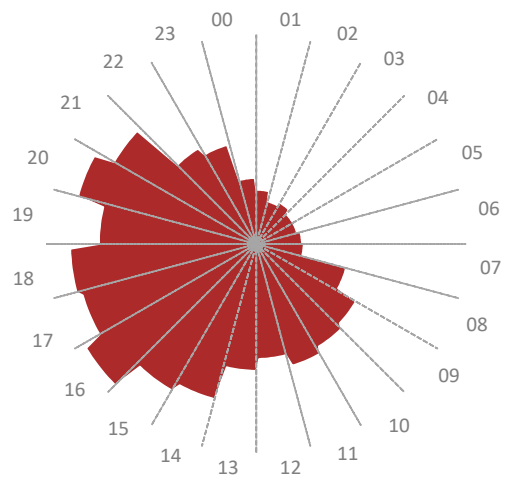
Activity levels have reduced by more than 5%

Activity levels have reduced by up to 5%

Activity levels have increased overall
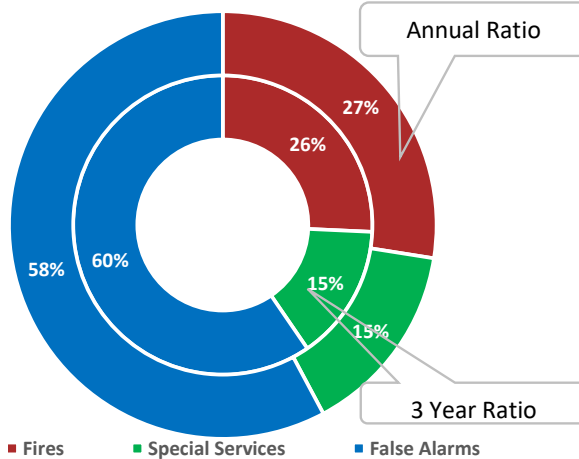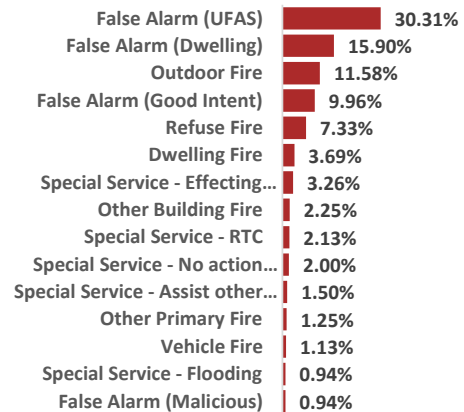
South Ayrshire Delivery Activity Summary

439 fires primary & secondary — ↑ 12%

235 special services — ↑ 15%

923 false alarms — ↑ 4%

1.597 total number of incidents — ↑ 7%

6 fire casualties — ↑ 20%

49 non-fire casualties — ↑ 26%

Home Fire Safety Visits Carried Out **597**

129 Fire Safety Audits Carried Out

RDS availability **64.29%**
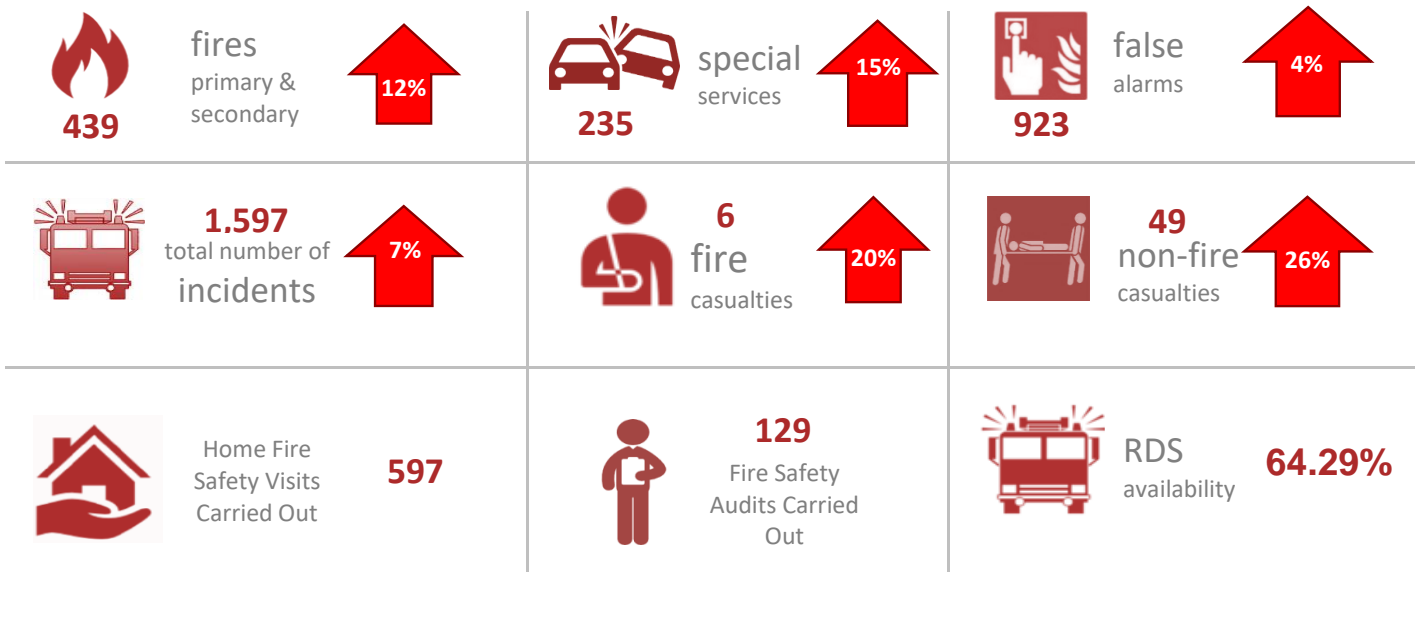
Activity by Time of Day

Hour (am)	Total	Hour (pm)	Total
Midnight	39	Mid-day	68
1am	32	1pm	75
2am	26	2pm	95
3am	28	3pm	100
4am	25	4pm	118
5am	25	5pm	107
6am	27	6pm	110
7am	28	7pm	93
8am	55	8pm	109
9am	68	9pm	97
10am	71	10pm	66
11am	75	11pm	61

Incidents by Classification

Annual Ratio

27%
26%
15%
15%
58%
60%

3 Year Ratio

- Fires
- Special Services
- False Alarms

Top 15 Incident Types by % of Total Incidents

Incident Type	%
False Alarm (UFAS)	30.31%
False Alarm (Dwelling)	15.90%
Outdoor Fire	11.58%
False Alarm (Good Intent)	9.96%
Refuse Fire	7.33%
Dwelling Fire	3.69%
Special Service - Effecting…	3.26%
Other Building Fire	2.25%
Special Service - RTC	2.13%
Special Service - No action…	2.00%
Special Service - Assist other…	1.50%
Other Primary Fire	1.25%
Vehicle Fire	1.13%
Special Service - Flooding	0.94%
False Alarm (Malicious)	0.94%

Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fires

Performance Summary

	Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
	-15%	-8%	-4%

Accidental Dwelling Fires to Date

Year	Value
2016/17	63
2017/18	63
2018/19	66
2019/20	64
2020/21	60
2021/22	51
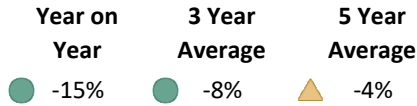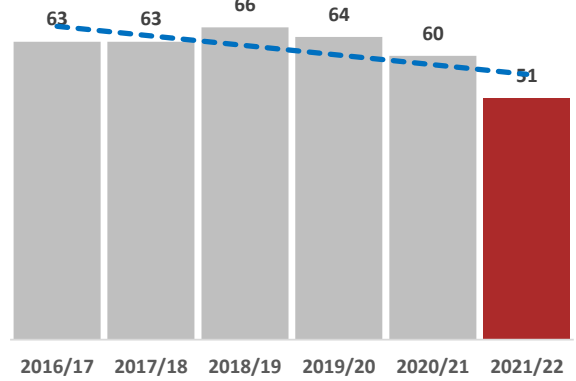
Accidental Dwelling Fires by Ward Area

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	5
Ayr North	13
Ayr West	9
Girvan & South Carrick	6
Kyle	4
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	2
Prestwick	7
Troon	5
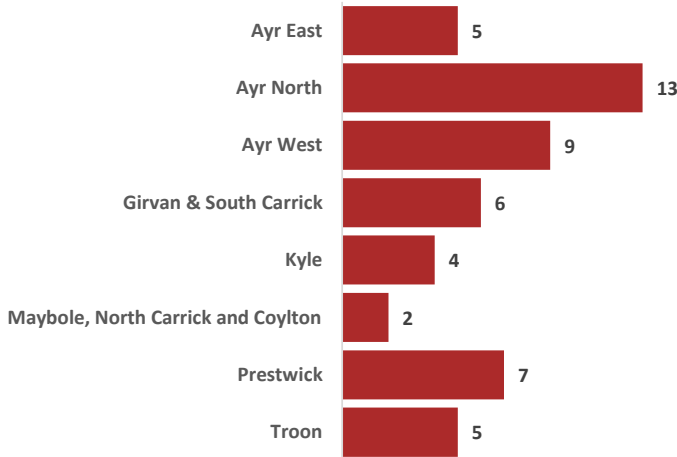
Severity of Accidental Dwelling Fires

No Firefighting Action 43%

Direct Firefighting 31%

Extent of Fire Damage

Category	Percentage
Not applicable	35%
Limited to item 1st ignited	37%
Limited to room of origin	14%
Limited to floor of origin…	6%
External Roof Only	2%
Roof space only	2%

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	4.0
Ayr North	7.5
Ayr West	5.3
Girvan & South Carrick	5.4
Kyle	2.9
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	1.7
Prestwick	4.8
Troon	3.4
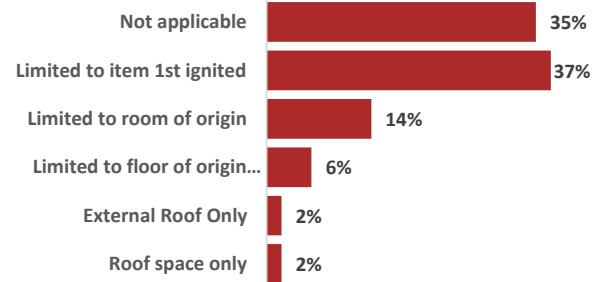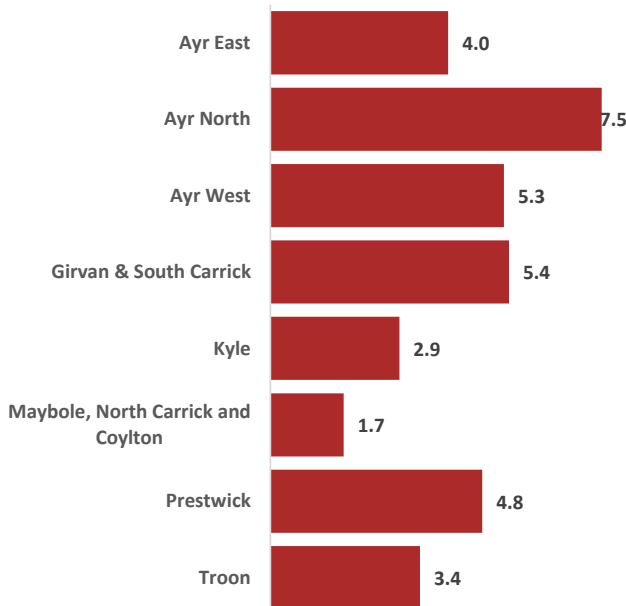
Automatic Detection & Actuation

Detection Present 84%

Detection Actuated 67%

Calls Made via Linked Alarms 10%

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

Area	Value
East Ayrshire	4.2
North Ayrshire	7.9
South Ayrshire	4.5
Ayrshire	5.6
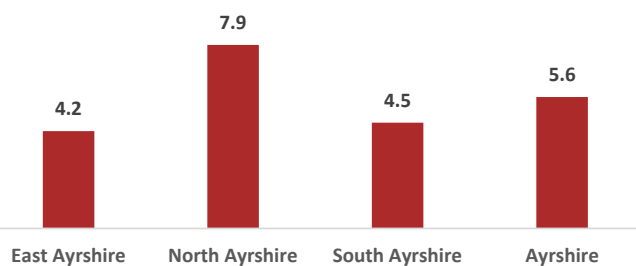
Human Factors

29% Distraction

8% Alcohol/Drug Impairment
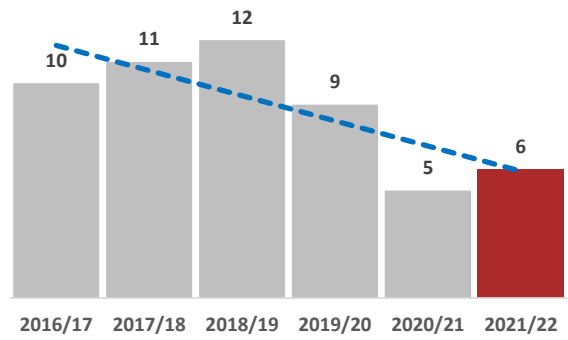
Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

Performance Summary
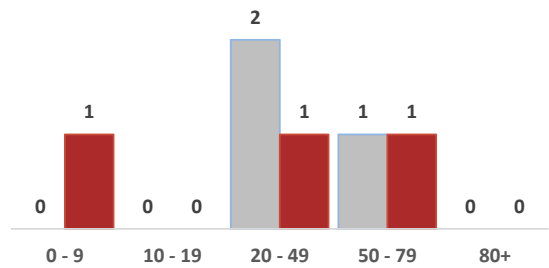
Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
◆ 20%	● -23%	● -9%

Fire Casualties by Ward Area

Ward	Value
Ayr East	0
Ayr North	2
Ayr West	1
Girvan & South Carrick	0
Kyle	2
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	0
Prestwick	0
Troon	1

Casualties Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

Ward	Value
Ayr East	0.0
Ayr North	1.2
Ayr West	0.6
Girvan & South Carrick	0.0
Kyle	1.5
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	0.0
Prestwick	0.0
Troon	0.7

Casualties Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

Area	Value
East Ayrshire	0.41
North Ayrshire	0.88
South Ayrshire	0.53
Ayrshire	0.62

Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties Year to Date

Year	Value
2016/17	10
2017/18	11
2018/19	12
2019/20	9
2020/21	5
2021/22	6

Age / Gender Profile

Male 50%   Female 50%

Age	Value 1	Value 2
0 - 9	0	1
10 - 19	0	0
20 - 49	2	1
50 - 79	1	1
80+	0	0

Extent of Harm

First Aid at Scene	5
Hospital Slight Injuries	1
Hospital Serious	(blank)
Fatal Injuries	0

Type	Value
Shock	1
Asphyxiation	3
Slight Burns	1
Breathing difficulties	1

Unintentional Injury or Harm

Performance Summary

	Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
	◆ 26%	● -18%	● -9%

Non-Fire Casualties by Ward Area
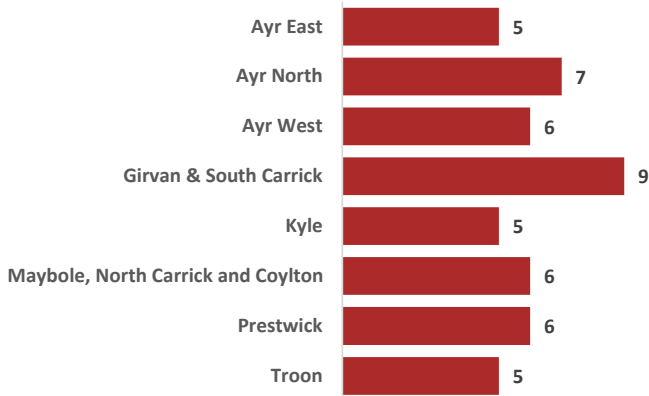
- Ayr East — 5
- Ayr North — 7
- Ayr West — 6
- Girvan & South Carrick — 9
- Kyle — 5
- Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton — 6
- Prestwick — 6
- Troon — 5

Casualties Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

- Ayr East — 4.0
- Ayr North — 4.1
- Ayr West — 3.5
- Girvan & South Carrick — 8.1
- Kyle — 3.7
- Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton — 5.0
- Prestwick — 4.1
- Troon — 3.4

Non-Casualties Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

- East Ayrshire — 2.5
- North Ayrshire — 4.6
- South Ayrshire — 4.4
- Ayrshire — 3.8
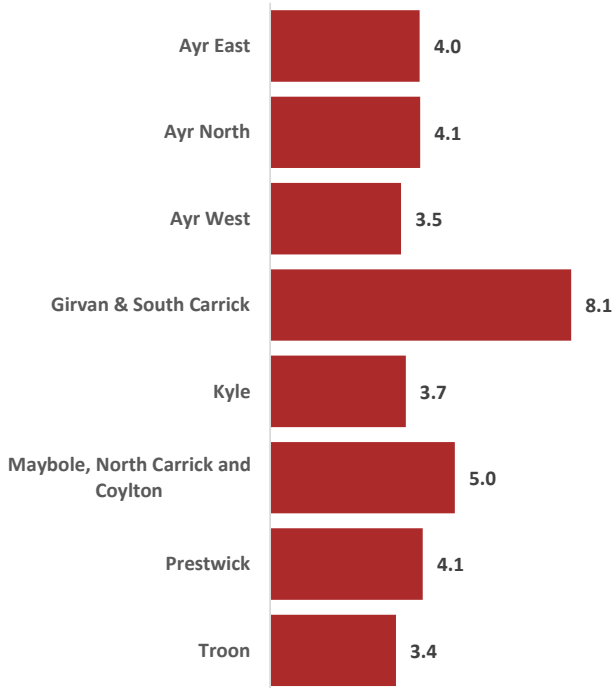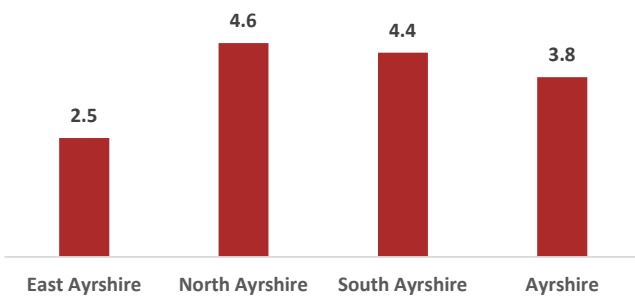
Special Service Casualties Year to Date

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
86	125	87	81	39	49

Age / Gender Profile

52% (Male) 48% (Female)

Age	0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 49	50 - 79	80+
Male	0	4	7	12	2
Female	0	1	5	13	4

Extent of Harm

2 First Aid at Scene	24 Hospital Slight Injuries
12 Hospital Serious	6 Fatal Injuries

Road Traffic Collision 51%

Water Rescue 0%

Assisting Other Agencies 41%

All Other Incidents 8%
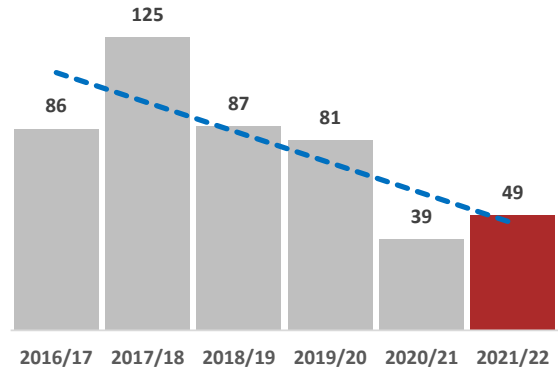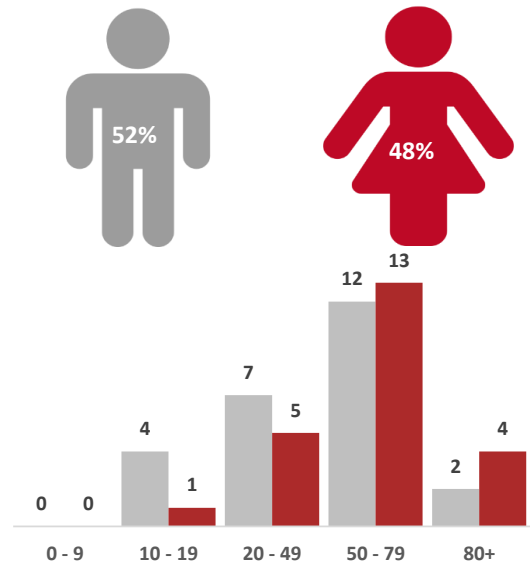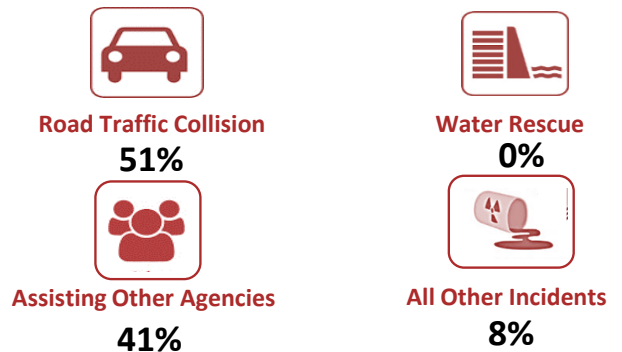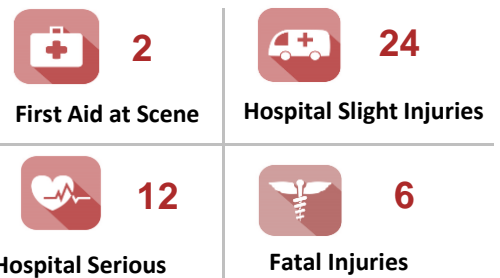
Deliberate Fire Setting

Performance Summary

	Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
	◆ 13%	◆ 6%	◆ 4%

Deliberate Fires Year to Date

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
206	221	215	226	224	253
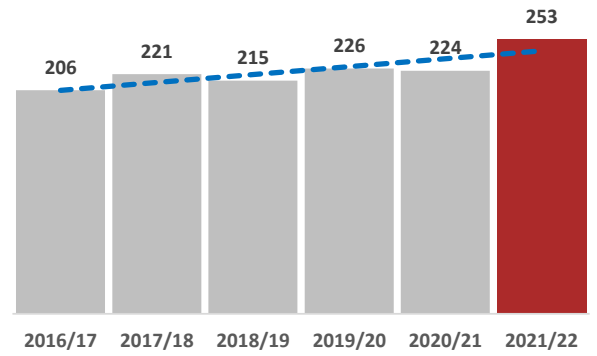
Deliberate Fires by Ward Area

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	13
Ayr North	79
Ayr West	20
Girvan & South Carrick	4
Kyle	23
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	22
Prestwick	42
Troon	50
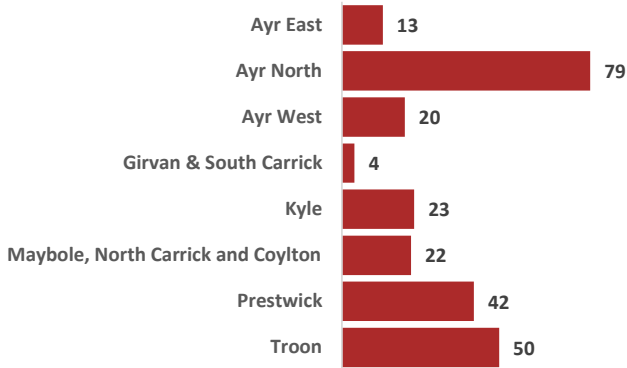
Deliberate Fires Compared to Operational Activity

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
All Incidents	1,384	1,523	1,484	1,631	1,475	1,597
All Deliberate Fires	206	221	215	226	224	253

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	10.5
Ayr North	45.8
Ayr West	11.8
Girvan & South Carrick	3.6
Kyle	16.9
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	18.3
Prestwick	28.9
Troon	34.0
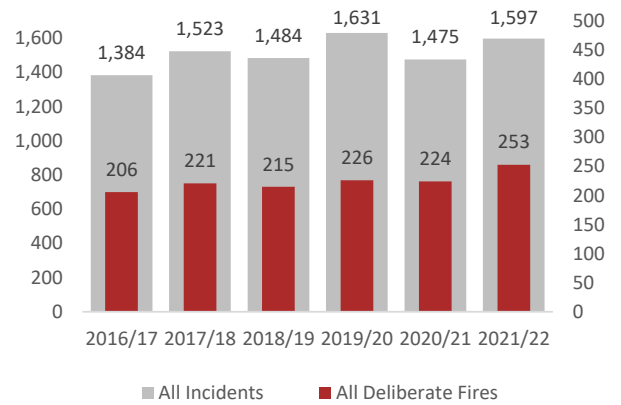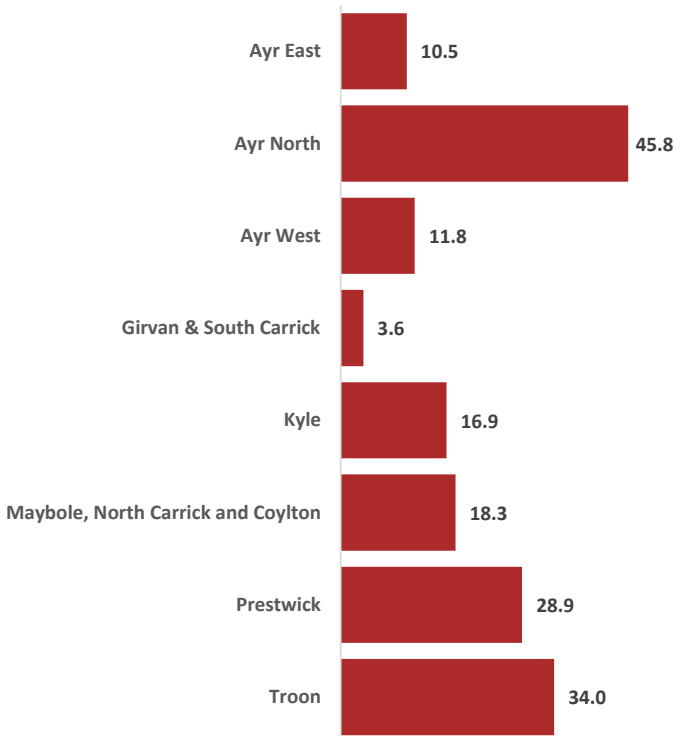
Deliberate Fires by Classification

Year	Primary	Secondary
2021/22	12%	88%
2020/21	11%	89%
2019/20	10%	90%
2018/19	10%	90%
2017/18	15%	85%
2016/17	11%	89%

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

Area	Value
East Ayrshire	41.1
North Ayrshire	34.8
South Ayrshire	22.5
Ayrshire	33.1
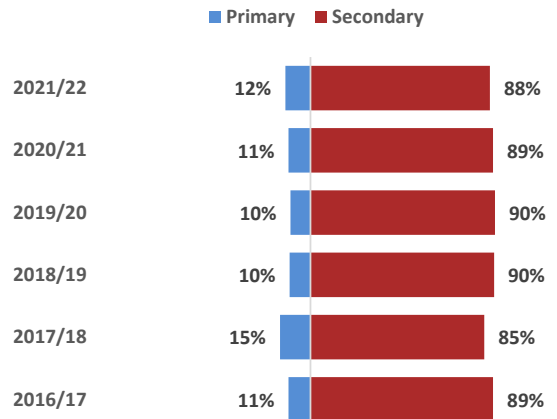
Secondary Fire Ratio by Activity Type

Type	Value
Refuse	39%
Other Secondary	61%
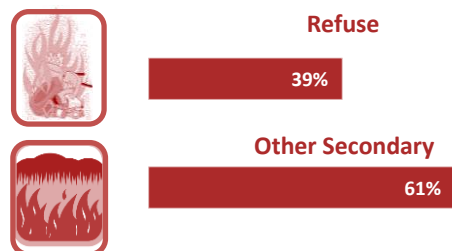
Non-Domestic Fire Safety

Performance Summary

	Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
	◆ 93%	◆ 3%	◆ 2%

Non-Domestic Fires by Ward Area

Ward	Value
Ayr East	2
Ayr North	8
Ayr West	4
Girvan & South Carrick	6
Kyle	1
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	3
Prestwick	2
Troon	1

Non-Domestic Fires Year to Date

Year	Value
2016/17	25
2017/18	24
2018/19	25
2019/20	26
2020/21	14
2021/22	27
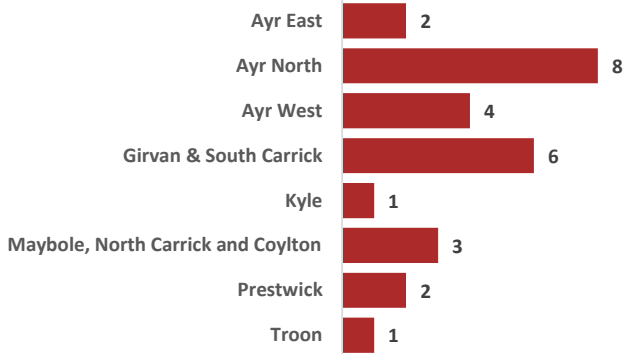
Non-Domestic Fires by Nature of Origin

- Accidental 78%
- Deliberate 18%
- Not Known 4%

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

Ward	Value
Ayr East	1.6
Ayr North	4.6
Ayr West	2.4
Girvan & South Carrick	5.4
Kyle	0.7
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	2.5
Prestwick	1.4
Troon	0.7
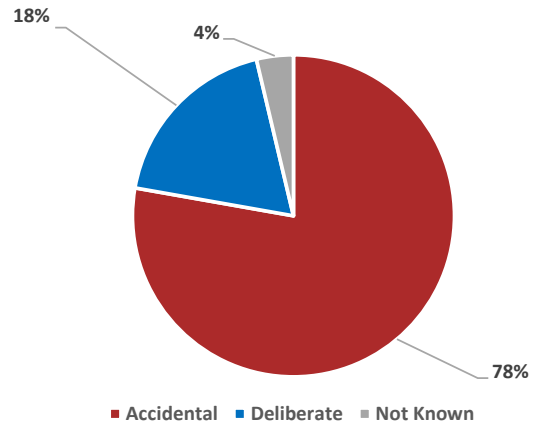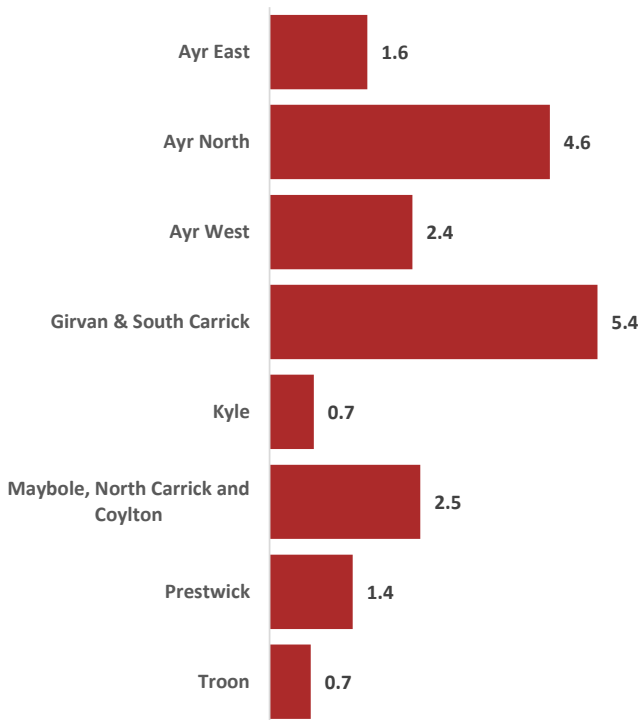
Non-Domestic Fires by Premises Type
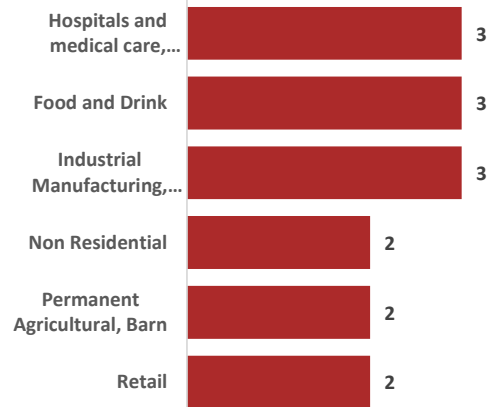
Premises	Value
Hospitals and medical care,…	3
Food and Drink	3
Industrial Manufacturing,…	3
Non Residential	2
Permanent Agricultural, Barn	2
Retail	2

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

Area	Value
East Ayrshire	2.6
North Ayrshire	1.5
South Ayrshire	2.4
Ayrshire	2.2

Extent of Fire Damage

Extent	Value
Not applicable	11
Limited to item 1st ignited	8
Whole building	1
Limited to room of origin	2
Limited to floor of origin (not…	2
Limited to 2 floors (not…	1
Roof space and other floors(s)	1
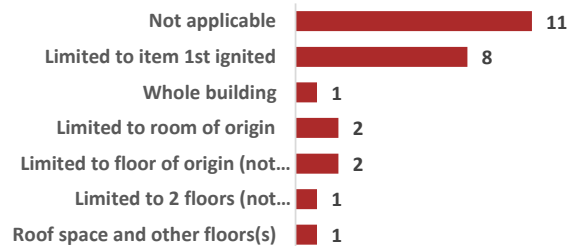
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Performance Summary

Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
◆ 8%	△ -3%	△ 0%

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Year to Date

Year	Value
2016/17	490
2017/18	520
2018/19	525
2019/20	587
2020/21	447
2021/22	484
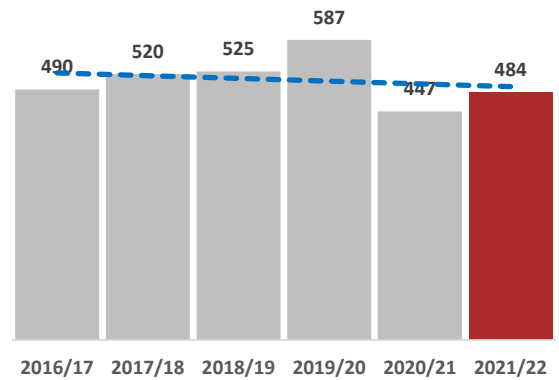
Unwanted Fire Alarms Signals by Ward Area

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	42
Ayr North	74
Ayr West	108
Girvan & South Carrick	76
Kyle	41
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	66
Prestwick	48
Troon	29
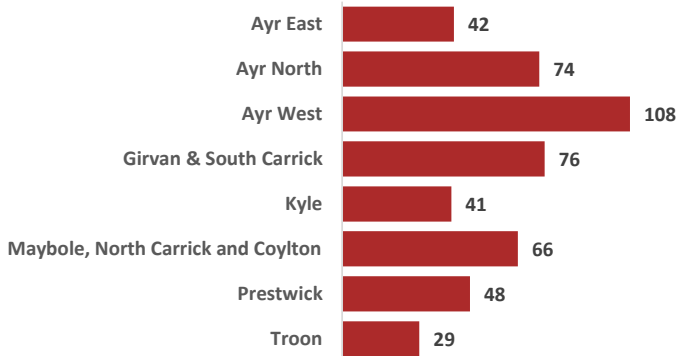
UFAS Percentage Against all Incidents

Year	All Incidents	UFAS Activity
2016/17	1,384	35%
2017/18	1,523	34%
2018/19	1,484	35%
2019/20	1,631	36%
2020/21	1,475	30%
2021/22	1,597	30%

Legend: ■ All Incidents ■ UFAS Activity

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - South Ayrshire

Ward Area	Value
Ayr East	34.0
Ayr North	42.9
Ayr West	63.8
Girvan & South Carrick	68.7
Kyle	30.1
Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton	54.9
Prestwick	33.0
Troon	19.7
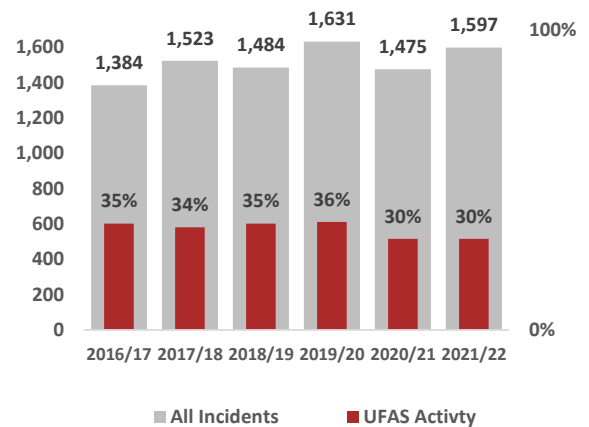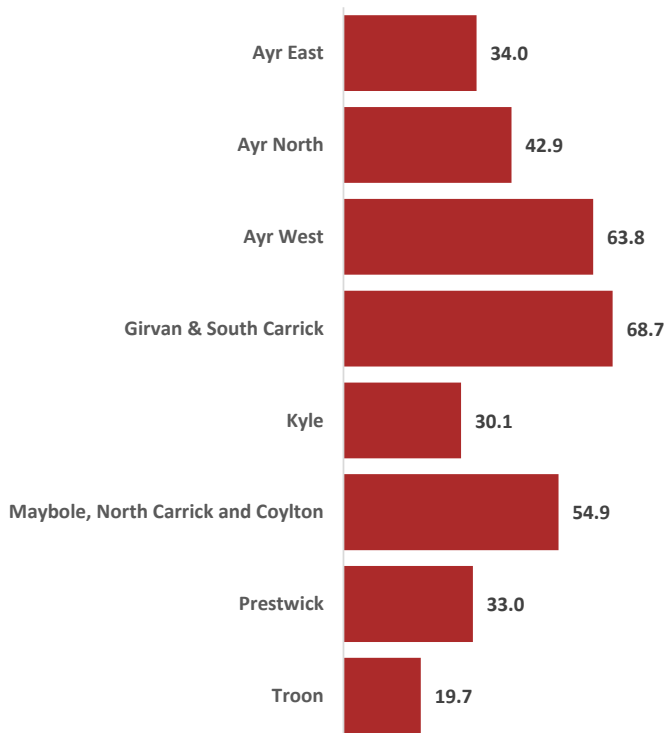
UFAS Percentage Against all False Alarms

Year	All False Alarms	UFAS Activity
2016/17	840	58%
2017/18	952	55%
2018/19	932	56%
2019/20	993	59%
2020/21	885	51%
2021/22	923	52%

Legend: ■ All False Alarms ■ UFAS Activity

Incidents Per 10,000 Population - Ayrshire

Area	Value
East Ayrshire	39.2
North Ayrshire	38.4
South Ayrshire	43.0
Ayrshire	40.1
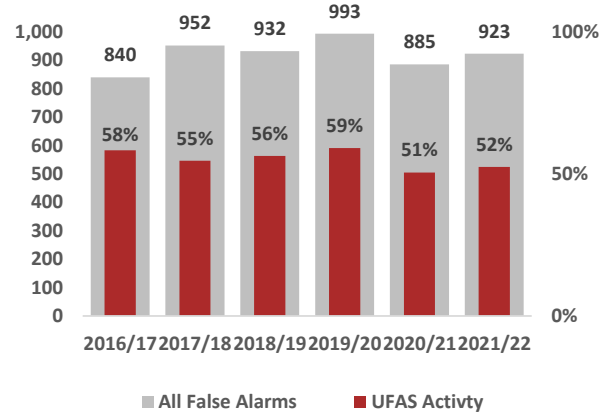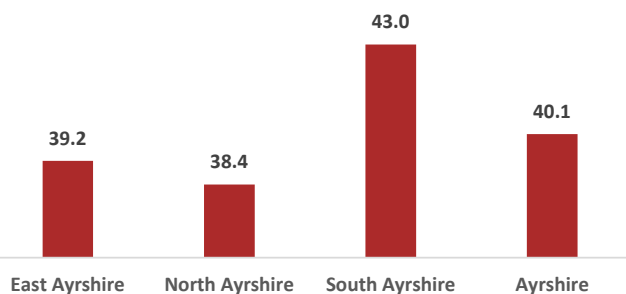
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals - Top 5 Premises

Premises	Value
Education	18%
Retail	12%
Residential Home	12%
Hospital, Medical care	11%
Other Residential	11%
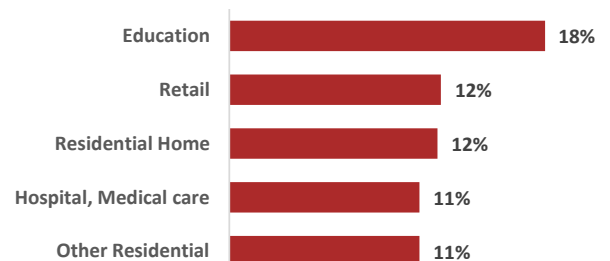
Home Fire Safety Visits

597

Home Fire Safety Visits Carried Out

Smoke Detectors Fitted During Home Fire Safety Visits

Percentage of High Risk Home Fire Safety Visits Carried Out

49%

Percentage of Visits Carried Out Following Attendance at an Incident

20%

Fire Safety Audits

Fire Safety Audits Carried Out

129

New Audits
73%

Re-Audits
0%

Post Fire Audits
12%

Complaint Audits
5%

Broadly Compliant **23%**

Areas of Improvement **73%**

Notice of Deficiencies **2%**

Enforcement Notice **2%**

Prohibition Notice **1%**

Retained Duty System

Appliance Availability	Mon - Fri (08:00 - 18:00)	Mon - Thu (18:00 - 08:00)	Weekend (Fri 18:00 - Mon 08:00)	Total
Ayr	63.45%	92.86%	86.08%	81.58%
Maybole	85.33%	96.66%	92.00%	91.56%
Girvan	48.16%	76.25%	56.45%	60.57%
Colmonell	1.66%	67.31%	52.38%	42.22%
Troon - 1	77.70%	93.49%	89.93%	87.47%
Troon - 2	4.77%	41.99%	18.72%	22.31%
South Ayrshire	46.85%	78.09%	65.93%	64.29%
Ayrshire	70.18%	96.28%	90.41%	86.36%

Total Mobilisations	Total Time Deployed	No. of Personnel	Contracts
134	0	11	775%
143	0	12	950%
70	0	7	575%
20	0	5	500%
102	0	11	8.5

Glossary of Terms

Term - **What it means**

ADF
Accidental Dwelling Fire

CSET
Community Safety Engagement Toolkit is a internal IT system used to record home fire safety visits and community safety activities

FSET
Fire Safety Experiential Training is a bespoke training programme developed by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Ayrshire and delivered to community planning partners to raise awareness of fire safety within the domestic environment

HFSV
Home Fire Safety Visit

PDIR
Post Domestic Incident Response, a term used by Prevention and Protection Directorate to indicate actions taken following attendance at a fire or other incident in the home. PDIRs include amongst things the offer of a free follow-up home fire safety visit

Primary Fires
These include all fires in buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures or any fire involving casualties, rescues or fires attended by five or more appliances

RDS
Retained Duty System. Professional on call firefighters who may have other primary employment responsibilities outside the Fire and Rescue Service but respond to emergency calls within their local area as and when required

RTC
Road Traffic Collision

Secondary Fires
These are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or fire or more appliances attend. They include fires in single derelict buildings

Special Service
Calls to incidents which are not fires or false alarms such as RTCs, rescues, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials or the provision of assistance to other agencies

UFAS
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. When an automatic fire detection and alarm system is activated as a result of anything other than an actual fire the activation is classed as a false alarm. If an attendance is made to such an event by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, then the event is recorded as an UFAS incident

SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics
(Scotland)

2020-21

An Official Statistics
publication for Scotland

29 October 2021

Working together for a safer Scotland

Contents

This publication and associated statistics are now designated as Official Statistics.

This means that it is produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. It is produced free from any political interference.

In 2019 the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was named in legislation as a Producer of Official Statistics which allows us to classify this series.

This publication is accompanied by the following documents:

- Tables and Charts Workbook
- Guidance Notes on Statistics
- Statistical News 2020-21

1. Main Points

All incidents

- **85,582** incidents attended, of which:
    - **55.8%** were false alarms
    - **29.4%** were fires
    - **14.8%** were non-fire incidents

Fires

- **25,147** fires attended, up 2.6% on last year
    - **4,661** dwelling fires, down 4.7%
        - **4,141** of these were accidental, down 5.1%
        - **60.9%** of accidental dwelling fires started with a cooking appliance
        - **71.7%** of dwelling fires were confined to the original item
    - **1,816** vehicle fires, down 13.5%
    - **9.2%** increase in outdoor fires (excluding road vehicles)

Non-fire Incidents

- **12,693** non-fire incidents attended, down 11.8%, of which:
    - **3,735** were for effecting entry or exit to a property, down 6.4%
    - **1,596** were road traffic collisions, down 32.7%

False Alarms

- **47,742** false alarms, down 10.2%
- **46,820** false fire alarms, down 10.5%, of which:
    - **35,809** were due to detecting apparatus, down 13.6%
    - **9,517** were due to good intentions, up 10.2%
    - **1,494** were malicious, down 32.0%

Fatal Fire Casualties

- **53** fatal fire casualties, up from 27 last year
  - Over ten years, up 2.0%
  - **44** of these occurred in dwelling fires
- **75.5%** of fatal fire casualties were male
- **Over 5** times higher rate of fatal casualties in the most deprived areas than in the least deprived over the last 8 years

Non-fatal fire Casualties

- **1,017** non-fatal fire casualties, down 1.0%
- **366** casualties per 1,000 fires when alcohol or drugs is a suspected factor in the fire and 139.5 without (ten-year averages)
- **5.4 times** higher rate of non-fatal casualties in most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas over the last 8 years

Non-fire Casualties

- **323** fatal casualties (down from 438), of which:
  - **60** were in road traffic collision attendances, down from 82
  - **34** were suicides, down from 51
- **1,864** non-fatal casualties, down 42.0%

2. Summary

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) attended 85,582 incidents in 2020-21. This is a reduction of 7.0% from 2019-20 (92,072). This change is largely associated with societal and economic changes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Factors such as national lockdowns and changes in the operation of business have had an impact on many of our incident categories and will be discussed throughout this report.

There were 25,147 fire incidents in 2020-21. This is a 2.6% increase on last year (up from 24,498). Fire incident categories are close to historic averages, with the exception of road vehicle fires, which decreased by 13.5%. The change also compromises of a decrease of 4.7% in dwelling fires and a 9.2% increase in outdoor fires (excluding road vehicles).

False alarms make up the largest share of incidents attended. This has decreased from 53,177 last year to 47,742 in 2020-21 (10.2% reduction).

False alarm incidents were substantially lower during national lockdowns where businesses were closed and people were encouraged to work from home.

Non-fire incidents attended in 2020-21 decreased from 14,397 last year to 12,693 (11.8% reduction). During the Covid-19 pandemic, some categories of non-fire incidents decreased to below what would be expected in an average year.

For instance, SFRS attended 32.7% less road traffic collisions in 2020-21 than last year. This is likely to have been caused by travel restrictions throughout the pandemic and fewer people commuting to places of employment.

The breakdown of incidents shifted over a ten-year period from 2009-10 to 2019-20. Due to changes in non-fire incidents and false alarm incidents during the Covid-19 pandemic, this breakdown appears to have shifted even further for 2020-21.

The percentage of non-fire incidents has risen from 11.1% in 2009-10 to 14.8% in 2020-21. Fires have decreased from 37.3% of incidents attended in 2009-20 to 29.4%, while false alarms have increased as a share of activity from 51.6% to 55.8%.
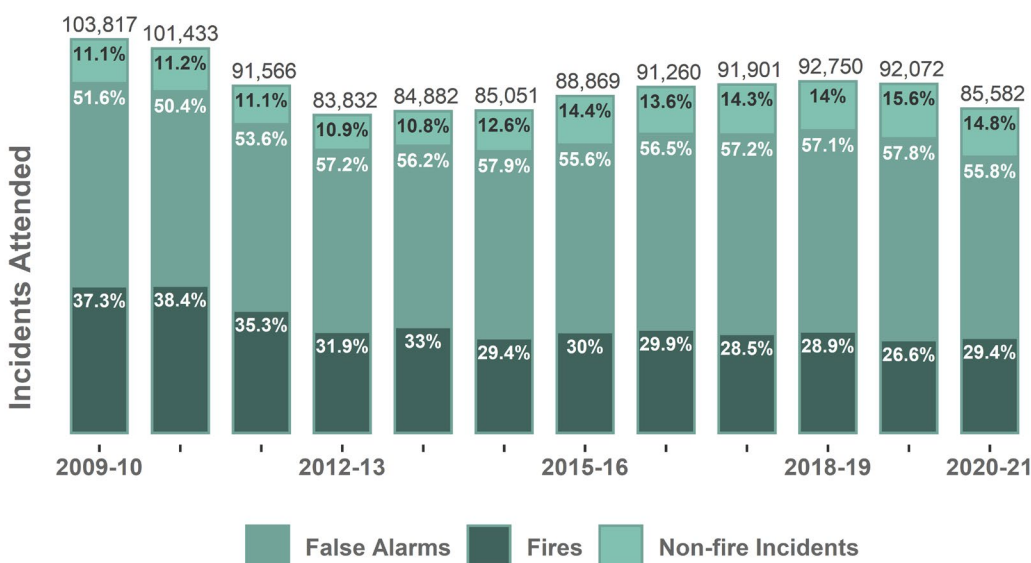

Figure 1: Total number of incidents attended with percentage share by type

Fatal Casualties Attended

There were 382 fatal casualties in incidents attended by SFRS in 2020-21, an 18.6% reduction on last year. The number of fire fatalities has increased from 27 last year to 53 this year. Although this appears to be a large increase, figures vary considerably between years.

There has been a decrease in the number of fatalities in all types of non-fire incidents, with 2019-20 having a total of 438 fatal casualties in non-fire incidents and 2020-21 having a total of 323 fatal casualties.

The number of fatal casualties at suicide incidents attended by SFRS decreased considerably from 51 in 2019-20 to 34 in 2020-21 (33.3% reduction).

The number of fatal casualties at road traffic collisions attended by SFRS decreased from 82 in 2019-20 to 60 this year (26.8% reduction).

At 'Effecting Entry or Exit' incidents, there was a 16.7% reduction of fatal casualties, with 150 incidents recorded in 2019-20 and 125 recorded in 2020-21.
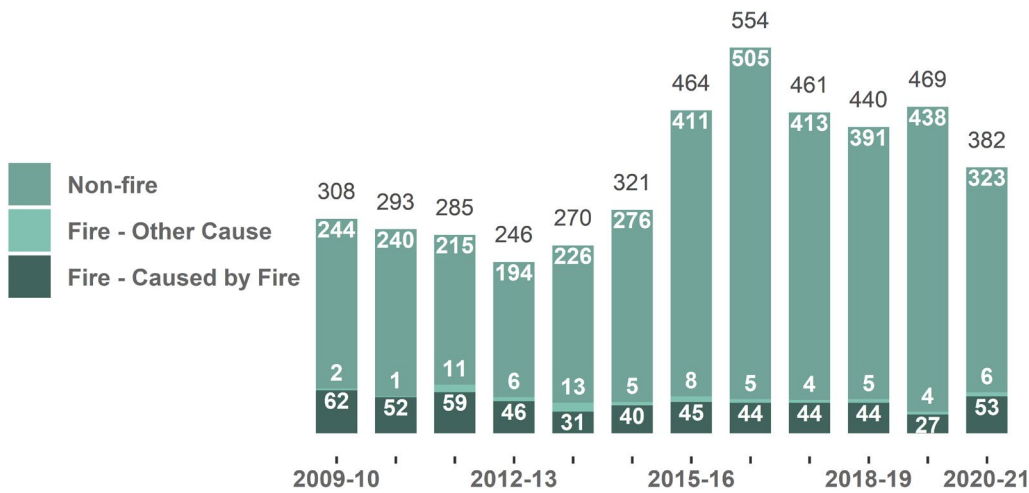

Figure 2: Fatal Casualties Attended

Non-fatal Casualties Attended

There was a notable reduction (32.0%) in the number of non-fatal casualties attended by SFRS crews from 2019-20 (4,238) to 2020-21 (2,881).

There were 1,017 non-fatal casualties in fires (1.0% reduction on last year) and 1,864 non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents (42.0% reduction on last year).

The number of non-fatal casualties in road traffic collisions attended by SFRS decreased considerably from 1,642 last year to 895 this year (45.5% reduction).

Furthermore, there was a decrease of 33.7% in the number of non-fatal 'Effecting Entry or Exit' incidents from last year, with 624 recorded in 2019-20 and 414 recorded in 2020-21.
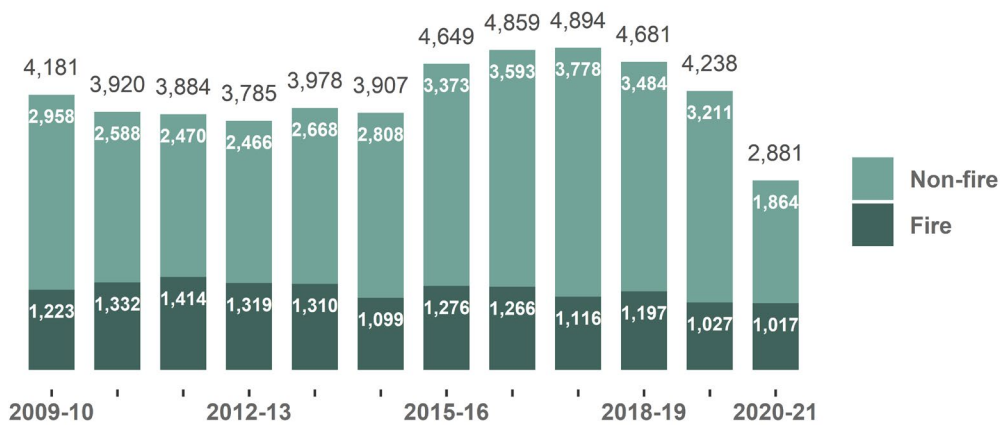
Figure 3: Non-fatal Casualties Attended

3. Fires

There was an increase of 2.6% in the number of fires attended in 2020-21, increasing from 24,498 last year to 25,147.

The term 'primary fire' is used to describe fires which result in harm to people, require five or more fire appliances, or fires which take place in buildings, vehicles and some outdoor locations. The total number of primary fires has reduced by 4.4%, with 9,852 recorded last year and 9,416 in 2020-21. This figure has steadily reduced since this series began. Over the last ten years, the number of primary fires has reduced by 28.4%.

Dwelling[1] fires have also been consistently reducing over the last ten years, with a 25.9% reduction since 2010-11. There has been a 4.7% reduction in dwelling fires from last year (4,890) to this year (4,661). Fires in other buildings have decreased by 13.2% from 1,980 last year to 1,718 in 2020-21.

Vehicle fires have decreased from last year, with 2,099 recorded in 2019-20 and 1,816 recorded this year. This is a 13.5% reduction.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, travel restrictions meant that there were less vehicles on the road and so, a reduction in vehicle fires was to be expected.

While primary fires have reduced, the number of secondary fires has increased slightly from 14,090 in 2019-20 to 15,130 this year (7.4% increase).

Secondary fire incidents can be influenced by a number of socioeconomic and environmental factors meaning incidents tend to fluctuate each year, with no clear overall trend. The number appears to have levelled off within the past five years and over a ten-year period, this figure has reduced by 37.5%.

The total number of outdoor fires (excluding road vehicles) increased by 9.2% from 14,973 to 16,351 in 2020-21.

Outdoor fires vary considerably each year and are often dependent on weather conditions. There is no overall trend in outdoor fires over the last ten years.
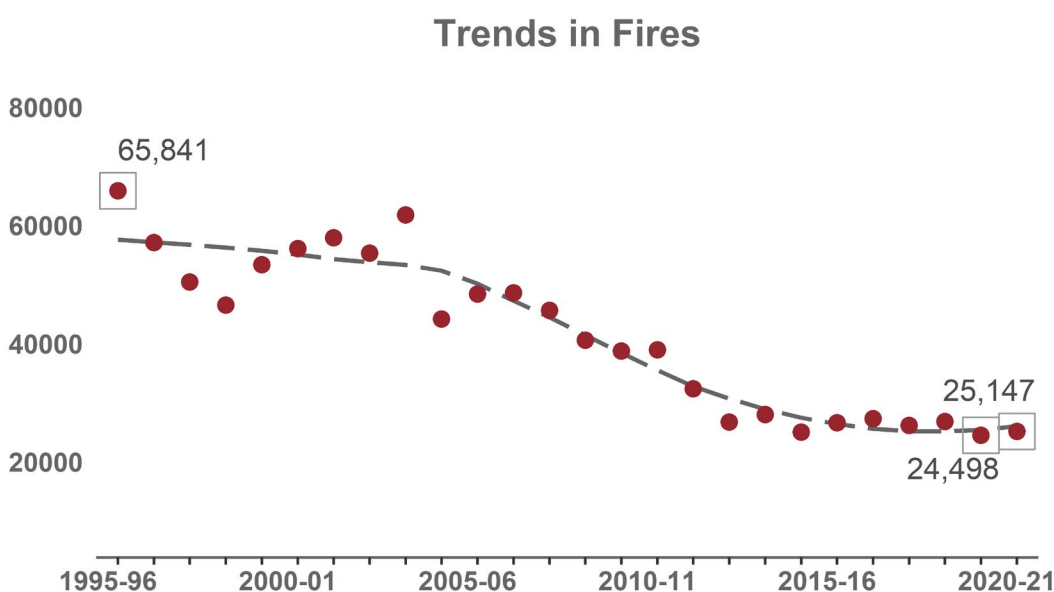
Trends in Fires

Figure 4: Long-term trend in the number of fires. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

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[1] Dwellings are properties that people ordinarily live in such as houses and apartments, please see the guidance notes document for a full definition.

Trends in Primary Fires

Dwellings

Other Buildings
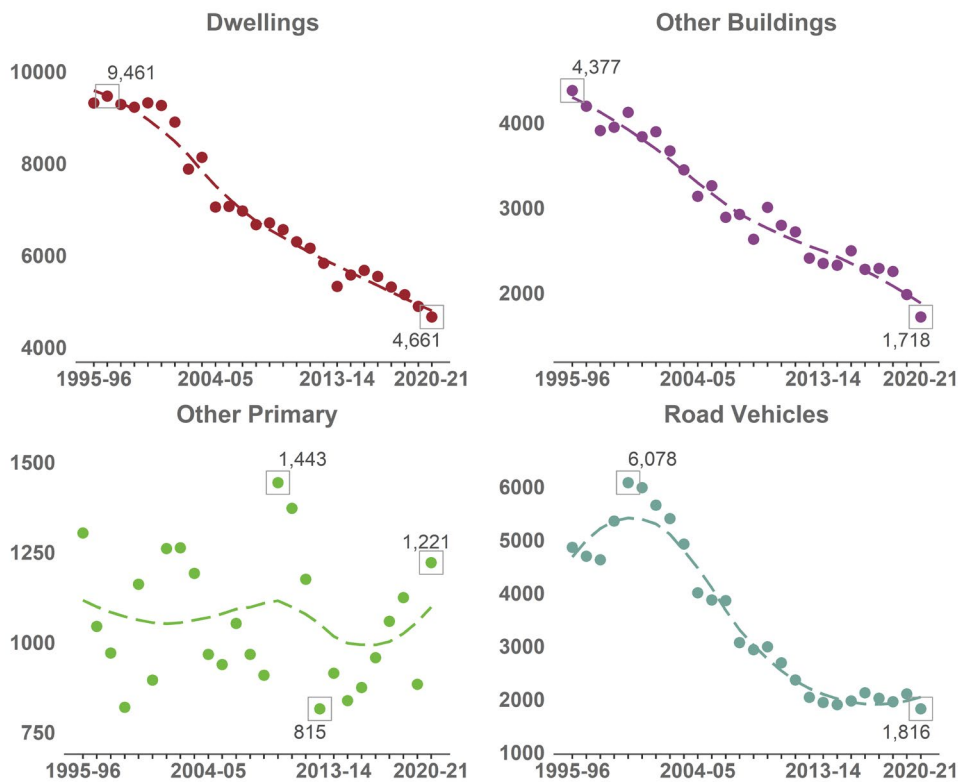

Other Primary

Road Vehicles

Figure 5: Primary fire trends. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. There are instances where the most recent value is also the minimum value.
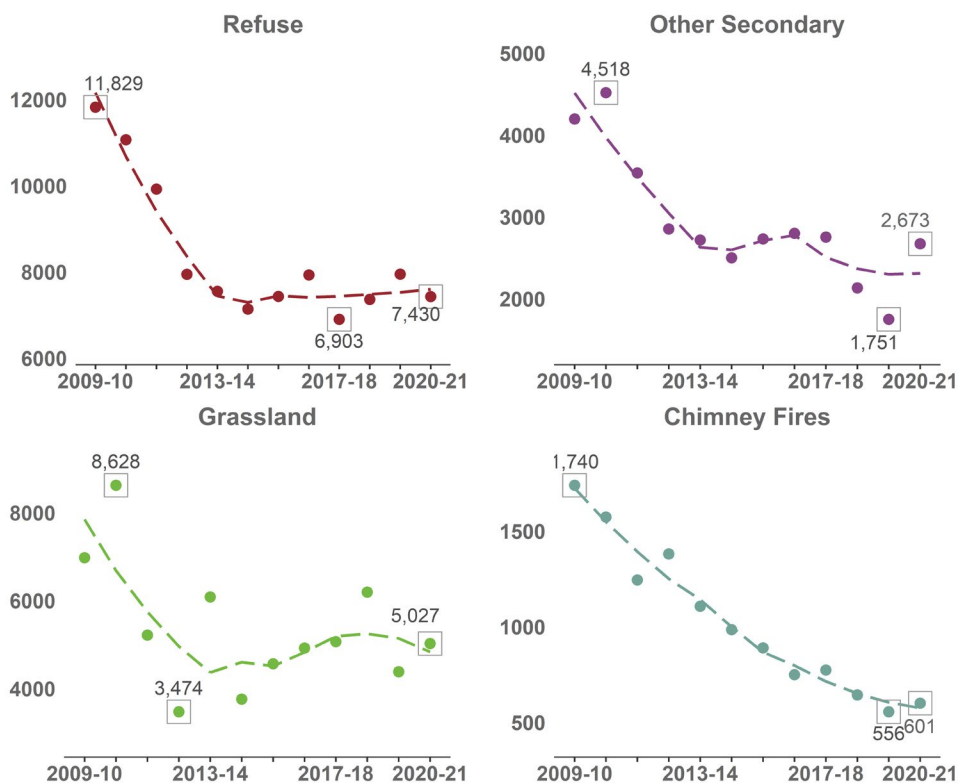
Trends in Secondary and Chimney Fires

Refuse

Other Secondary

Grassland

Chimney Fires

Figure 6: Secondary fire trend. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

Great Britain Comparisons

Across Great Britain[2], there have been similar trends in the number of fires since the early 2000s, with there being a consistent decline in the number of fires per million population in each nation.

This trend appears to have levelled off since the early 2010s. In 2020-21, there were 4,601 fires per million population in Scotland. This figure is substantially higher compared to England (2,672 fires per million population) and Wales (3,258 fires per million population).

Primary fire rates have continued to decrease in each nation. In 2020-21, Scotland has recorded 1,723 primary fires per million, compared with England which has reported 1,095 and Wales which has reported 1,198.

Similarly, dwelling fires have consistently reduced each year in each nation. However, Scotland recorded 375 more dwelling fires per million population than England in 2020-21 and 379 more than Wales.

Two of the most relevant factors influencing fire rates at a national level are the urban-rural profile and the relative deprivation of communities, which goes some way to explaining the differing rates.

See pages 12 and 13 for more details on these factors.

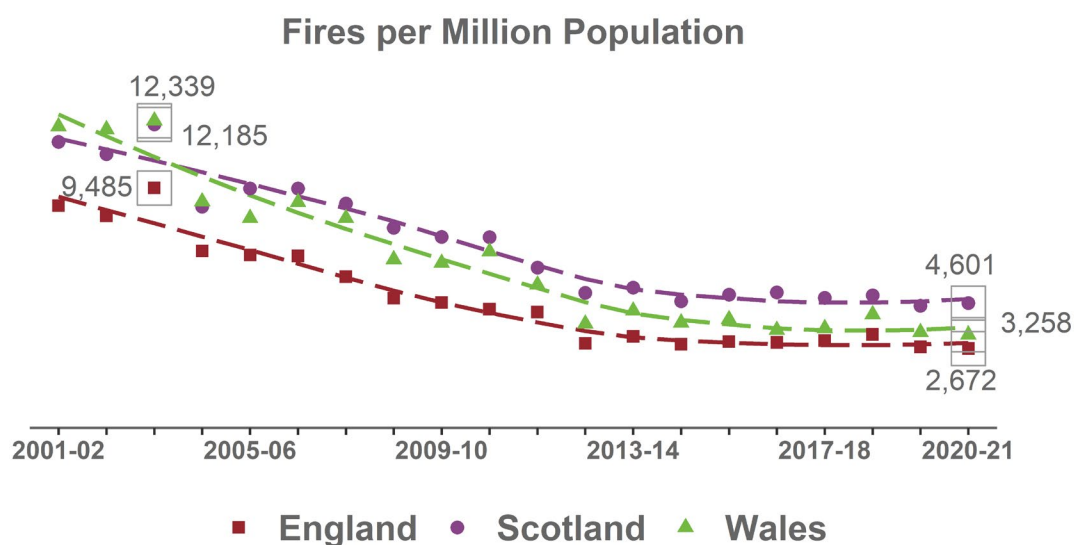### Fires per Million Population

Figure 7: Fires per million population in Great Britain. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

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[2] Scottish population figures used throughout this document were sourced from National Records of Scotland. Fire statistics for England and Wales were sourced from the Home Office and the Welsh Government. Comparable statistics for Northern Ireland are not available.
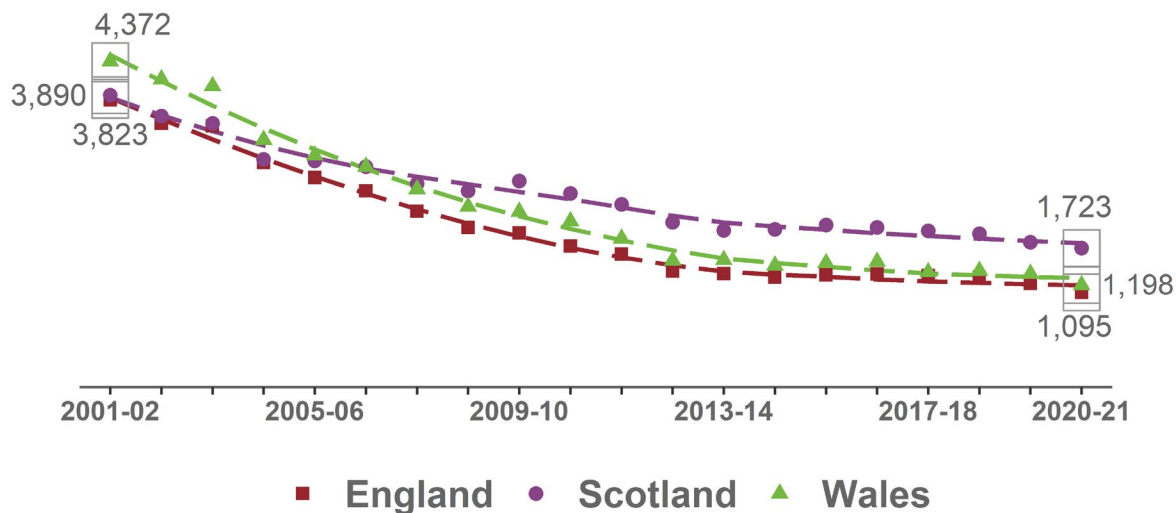
Primary Fires per Million Population

Figure 8: Primary fires per million population in Great Britain. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.
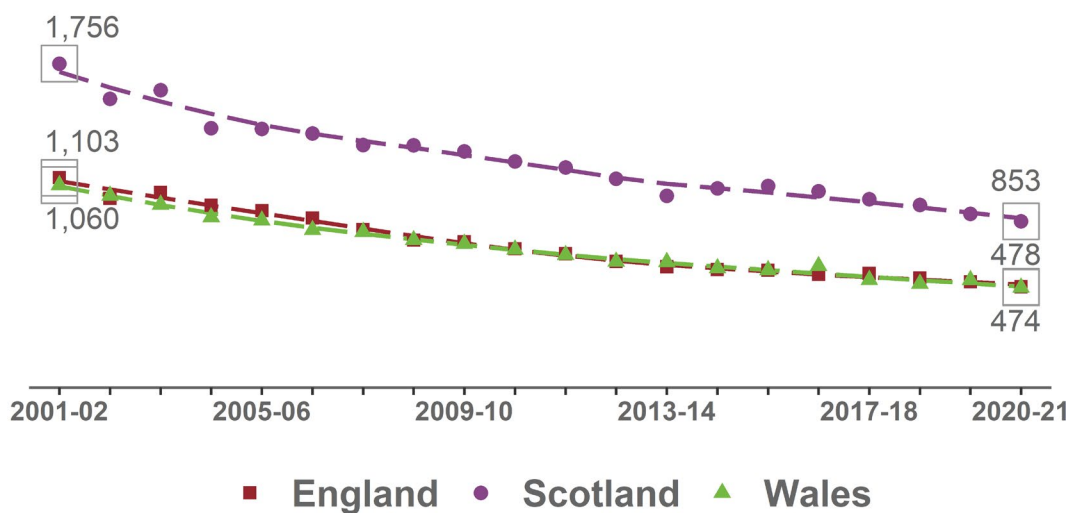
Dwelling Fires per Million Population

Figure 9: Dwelling fires per million population in Great Britain. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

Motive

In 2020-21, 57.5% of fires in Scotland were recorded as having been deliberately[3] set. Figure 10 shows how the proportion of deliberately set fires varies by incident category.

Deliberate dwelling fires are relatively rare at 11.2% of the total, whereas secondary fires have 79.7% classed as deliberate fires in 2020-21.

There were 6,220 deliberate refuse fires, which is 83.7% of total refuse fires in 2020-21. Similarly, 3,725 grassland fires were classed as deliberate, which is 74.1% of the total.

The number of accidental dwelling fires has decreased from 4,365 to 4,141 (5.1% reduction) from 2019-20 to 2020-21, which is the lowest in this series and 20.5% lower than ten years ago (5,209 in 2010-11).

Deliberate dwellings fires have decreased slightly from last year, with 525 recorded in 2019-20 and 520 recorded in 2020-21 (1.0% decrease).

Over the last ten years, there has been a notable reduction in the number of deliberate dwelling fires, with a 52.0% reduction from 2010-2011 to this year.
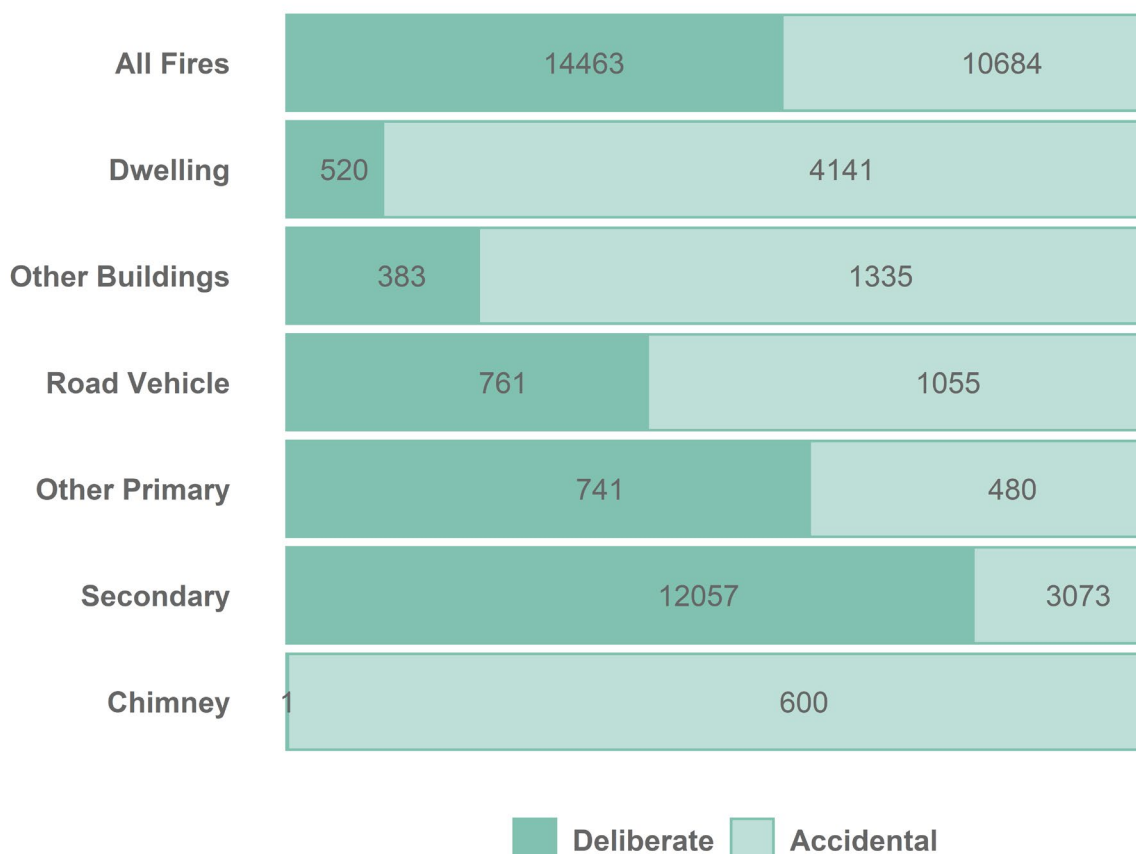

Figure 10: Fires by motive, 2020-21. Written values represent the number of fire incidents in each category.

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[3] Fires classed as 'Deliberate' should not be interpreted as necessarily resulting from arson or criminal intent.

Dwelling Fires

In 2020-21, 44 out of 53 (83.0%) fatal fire casualties and 876 out of 1,017 (86.1%) non-fatal casualties occurred in dwelling fires and so, it is important that we understand the factors relating to safety in dwelling fires.

Ignition Source

Similar to previous years, the main source of ignition for accidental dwelling fires was cooking appliances, with 60.9% resulting from this source.

Electricity supply was the second highest source (7.5%) and other domestic style appliance (excluding cooking and heating appliances) was the third highest (7.1%). A further 6.4% were smoking related.

Impairment

In 16.1% of accidental dwelling fires in 2020-21, impairment through use of alcohol or drugs was suspected to have been a contributing factor. Such incidents have a much higher casualty rate, .

Spread of Fire

In 2020-21, 45.1% of dwelling fires resulted in smoke or heat damage only and 26.6% were confined to the item first ignited. 8.4% of dwelling fire incidents involved the fire spreading beyond the initial room. Incidents where dwelling fires had an area of damage greater than 5 square meters accounted for 12.4% of dwelling fires.

Smoke Alarms

1,163 dwelling fires occurred in a property without a smoke alarm (down from 1,290 in 2019-20), which amounts to 25.0% of the total (down from 35.9% ten years ago). Incidents where there was a smoke alarm present which raised the alarm has risen from 40.9% of incidents ten years ago to 52.2% in 2020-21.

This will be largely due to a higher uptake of smoke alarms across the time period. Out of the 541 incidents where a smoke alarm was present but did not operate, 56.7% were due to the detector not being close enough to the fire.

Deprivation (SIMD[4])

As shown in figure 11, deprivation is strongly associated with the rate of dwelling fires. The 20% most deprived areas of Scotland have a rate of dwelling fires 4.6 times higher than the 20% least deprived and just over double the Scotland average rate.

Dwelling fire rates have reduced over time for each deprivation quintile resulting in relatively similar proportions seen in the last eight years.

In the eight-year period, 2013-14 to 2020-21, there has been a 12.1% reduction in the most deprived areas and a 20.3% reduction in the least deprived areas. These figures vary each year as the totals can fluctuate.

Similarly, for secondary fires, the most deprived 20% have a rate 4.3 times higher than the least deprived 20% and 1.9 times higher than the Scotland average.
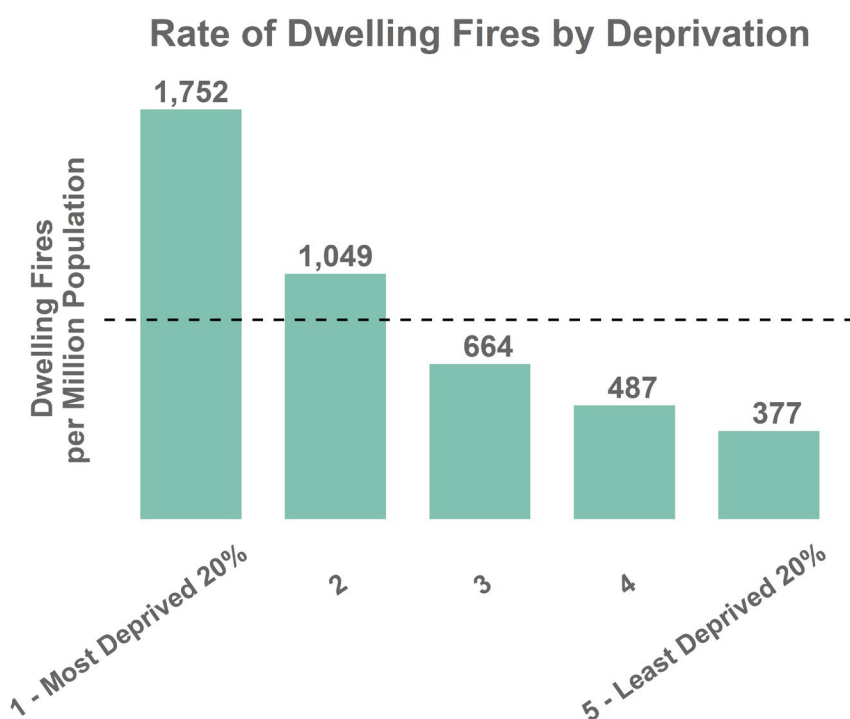
Rate of Dwelling Fires by Deprivation

Figure 11: Rate of dwelling fires per million population by level of deprivation, 2020-21. The Scotland average is 853.

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[4] Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

Urban-Rural[5]

Large urban areas of Scotland have a rate of dwelling fires per million population that is 1.8 times higher than remote rural areas and 1.3 times higher than the Scotland average.

Other urban areas have a rate just above the Scotland average, whereas the four more rural areas have a rate below the Scotland average.

Dwelling fire rates are decreasing much faster in urban areas than in rural areas and so, these urban-rural proportions have gradually changed over time. In the last eight years, the average Scotland rate has decreased from 999 to 853 (14.6% reduction).

The rate for large urban areas has reduced by 22.4% and the rate for accessible rural areas has reduced by 32.8%. It should be noted that accessible rural areas have decreased by 24.9% just in the last year. Reductions in other areas in the last eight years have been below average.

Other urban areas have reduced by 2.8%, accessible small towns by 7.2%, remote small towns by 8.9% and remote rural by 6.4%.

Annual figures fluctuate but long-term trends show that inner cities account for a large proportion of incidents as well as the reduction over time. Within the last year, accessible rural areas have also contributed to this reduction.
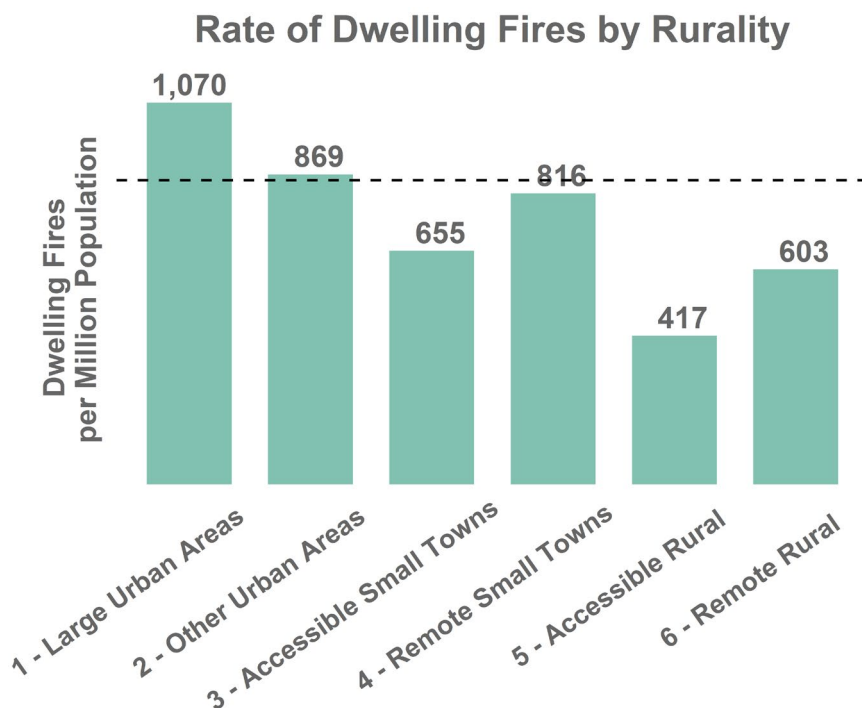
Rate of Dwelling Fires by Rurality

Figure 12: Rate of dwelling fires per million population by level of rurality, 2020-21. The Scotland average is 853.

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[5] Scottish Government Urban Rural Six Fold Classification

Local Authority Comparisons

The number of incidents and casualties vary across the 32 local authority areas of Scotland. We use rates adjusted for population or the number of dwellings to more fairly compare these areas.

Accidental Dwelling Fires

There was an average of 156.0 accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 dwellings in Scotland. Dundee City had the highest rate at 247.9 per 100,000 dwellings, followed by West Dunbartonshire at 225.9 and Inverclyde at 225.0. Orkney Islands had the lowest rate at 35.1.
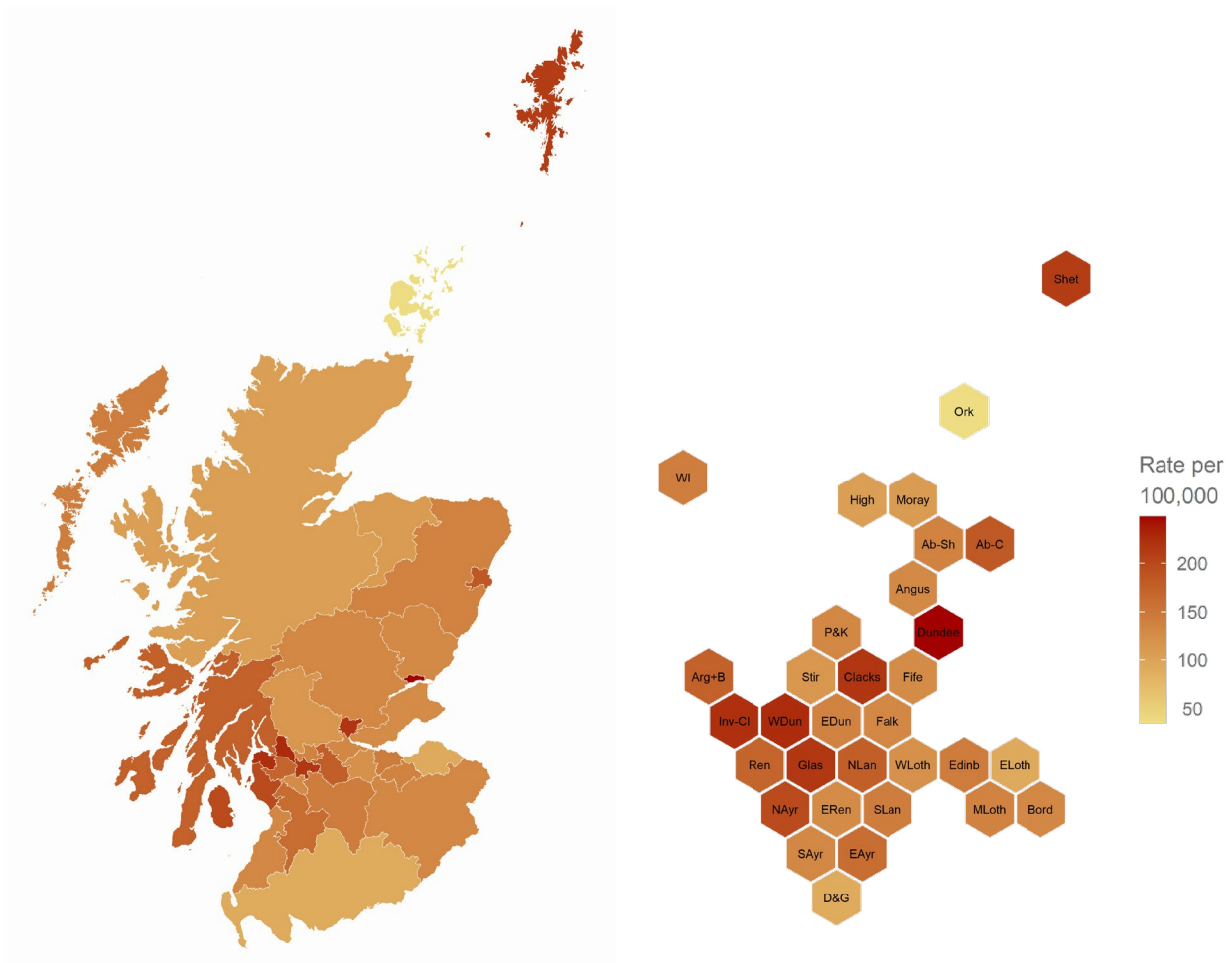

Figure 13: Accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 dwellings, choropleth and area normalised cartogram 2020-21

Deliberate Fires

Fires recorded as deliberately set varies considerably across Scotland, with the highest rate in Scotland being 578.8 deliberate fires recorded per 100,000 population in Inverclyde and the lowest rate being 26.8 in Orkney Islands.

In 2020-21, the Scotland average is 231.9 deliberate fires per 100,000 population. As can be seen from figure 14, deliberate fire setting is more frequent in the more urban local authority areas and west of the Central Lowlands.
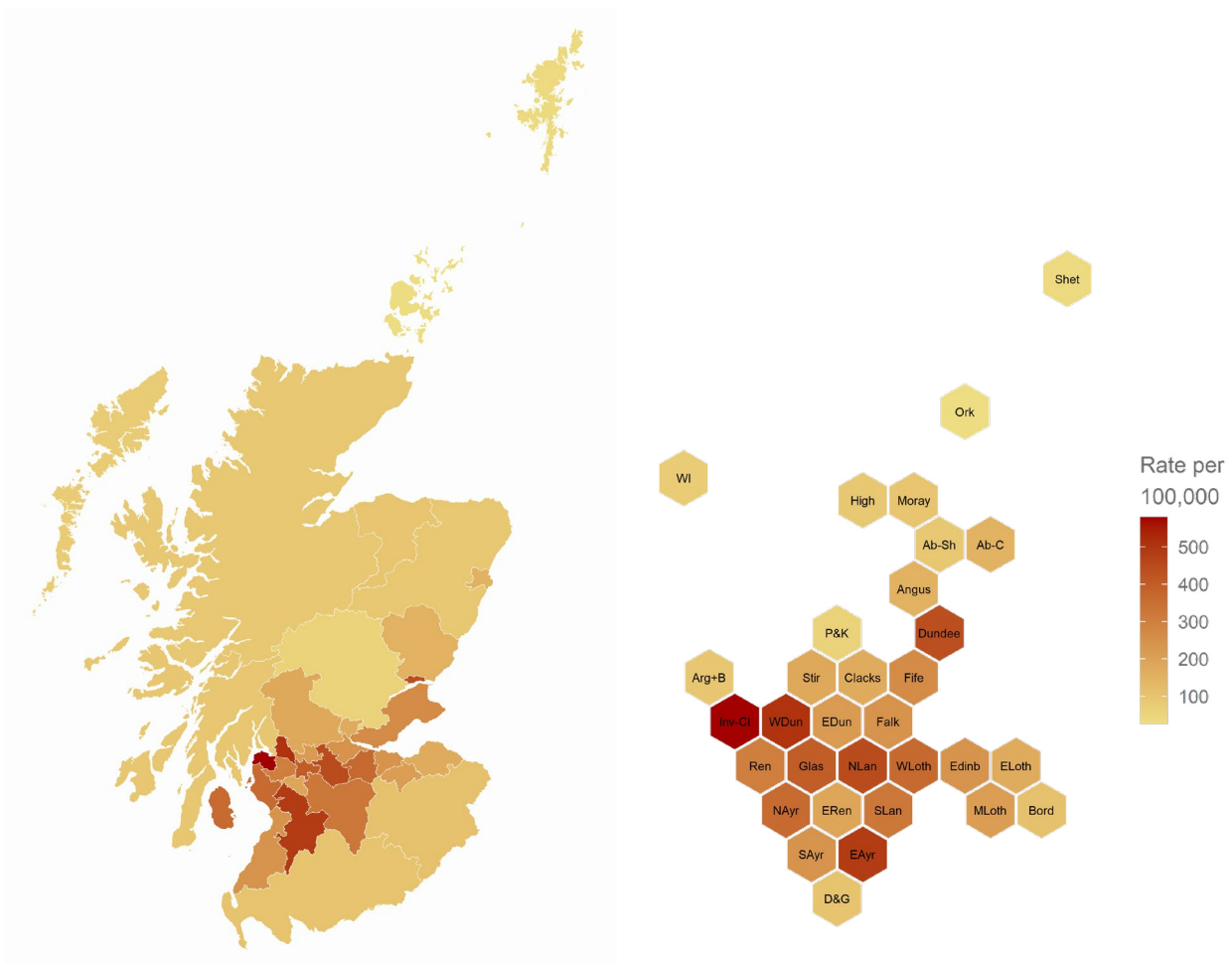

Figure 14: Deliberate fires per 100,000 population, choropleth and area normalised cartogram 2020-21

For more local authority graphs and statistics please see the downloadable tables and charts workbook.

4. Casualties in Fires

There were 53 fatal fire casualties in 2020-21, up from 27 last year. Although this appears to be a large increase, annual totals have varied considerably in the past. The ten-year average for fatal fire casualties is 44. This figure in 2019-20 was unusually low compared to this average (1.6 times lower).

The figure for 2020-21 is 1.2 times higher than this average. Figure 15 shows the long-term decreasing trend in this total. Of the 53 fatal fire casualties, 44 (83.0%) occurred in dwelling fires, 2 (3.8%) in other buildings and 5 (9.4%) in road vehicles.

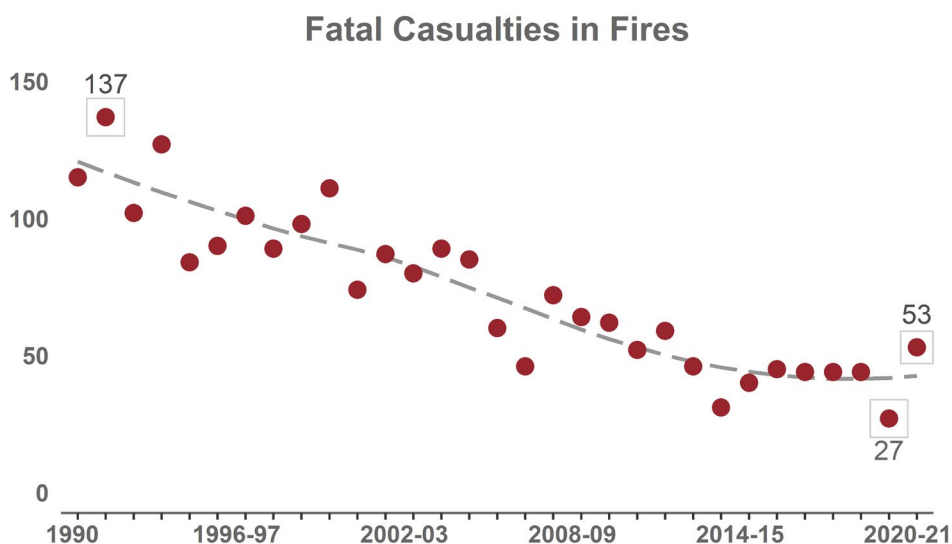### Fatal Casualties in Fires

Figure 15: Long-term trend in the number of fatal fire casualties. Note that the series changed from calendar year to financial year after 1993. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

Fire fatalities often appear in clusters throughout the years. This has occurred for many years and is not a new phenomenon. Due to this, total fire fatality figures appear to be volatile between years.

Figure 16 shows the 13-week rolling average of fire fatalities from 2015-16 to 2020-21. The peaks of the chart represent these clusters of fire fatalities.

The total fire fatality figure for a year is dependent on whether these peaks fall within that year. For instance, the chart shows that in 2019-20 there is a peak very close to the beginning of the fiscal year.

If this peak were to have occurred slightly earlier in the calendar year, it would have occurred at the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Consequently, the total fire fatalities figure for 2019-20 would have been considerably lower and the total for 2018-19 would have been higher.

This highlights that clusters of fatalities have a large influence on the total fire fatality figure for a year and so, large variations between years are to be expected.
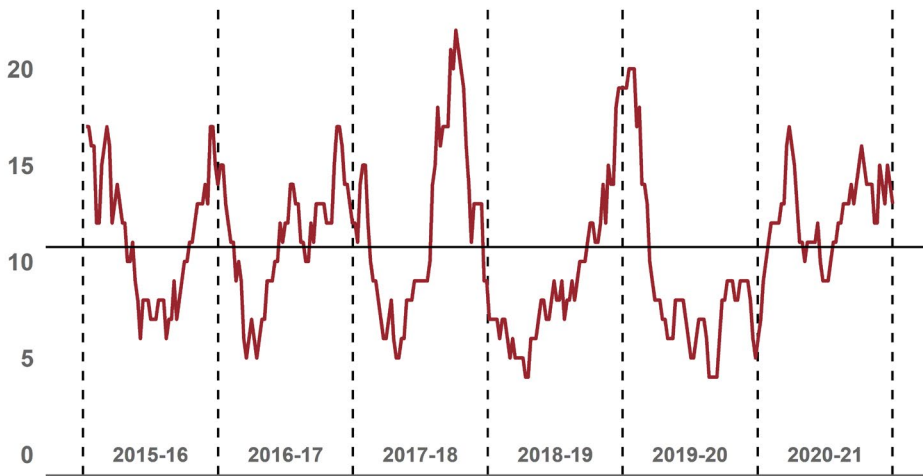
Fire Fatalities - 13-Week Rolling Average

Figure 16: Fire Fatalities as a 13-week rolling average. The horizontal black line represents the average of the 13-week rolling values. Vertical dashed lines represent the change in fiscal year.

In 2020-21, there were 1,017 non-fatal fire casualties, down from 1,027 last year (1.0% reduction). This is the lowest number of non-fatal fire casualties recorded since this series began.

Over the last ten years, there has been a 23.6% reduction in the number of non-fatal casualties. Figure 17 highlights the decreasing trend in non-fatal fire casualties since the early 2000s.

876 (86.1%) of these casualties occurred in dwelling fires, 74 (7.3%) occurred in other building types and 22 (2.2%) occurred in road vehicles.

The number of non-fatal casualties in all deliberate fires decreased from 167 last year to 156 in 2020-21 (6.6% reduction). The number of non-fatal casualties in all accidental fires increased from 860 in 2019-20 to 861 this year (0.1% increase).

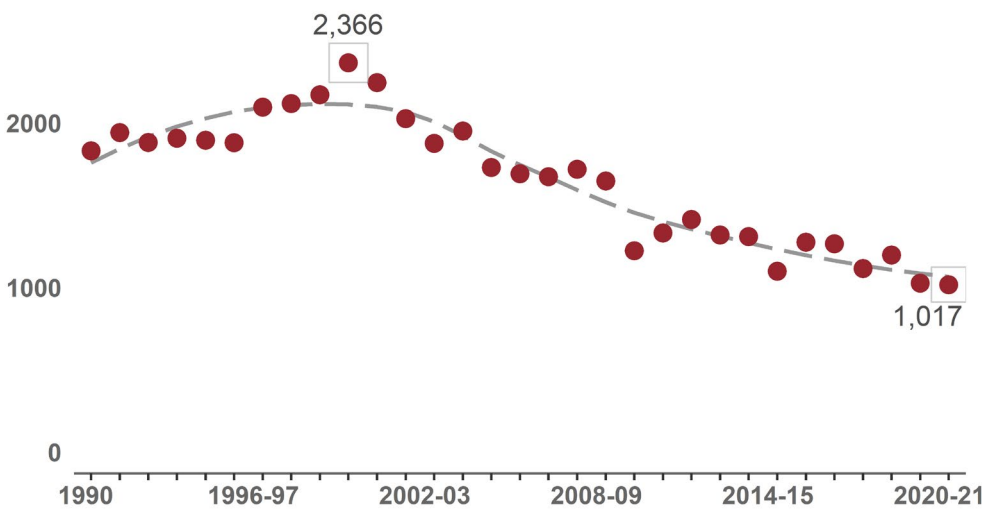## Non-fatal Casualties in Fires

Figure 17: Long-term trend in the number of non-fatal fire casualties. Note that the series changed from calendar year to financial year after 1993. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent value is also the minimum value.

In 2020-21, 693 casualties required treatment, down from 808 last year (14.2% reduction). 324 casualties were given no treatment at the scene but a precautionary check was recommended. This is up from 219 in 2019-20 (48.0% increase).

Of those who required treatment, 350 casualties attended hospital, down from 367 last year (4.6% reduction).

The primary cause of injury in fires was being overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes at 50.1%, with burns accounting for a further 14.0% and a combination of burns and being overcome by gas or smoke accounting for a further 2.0%.
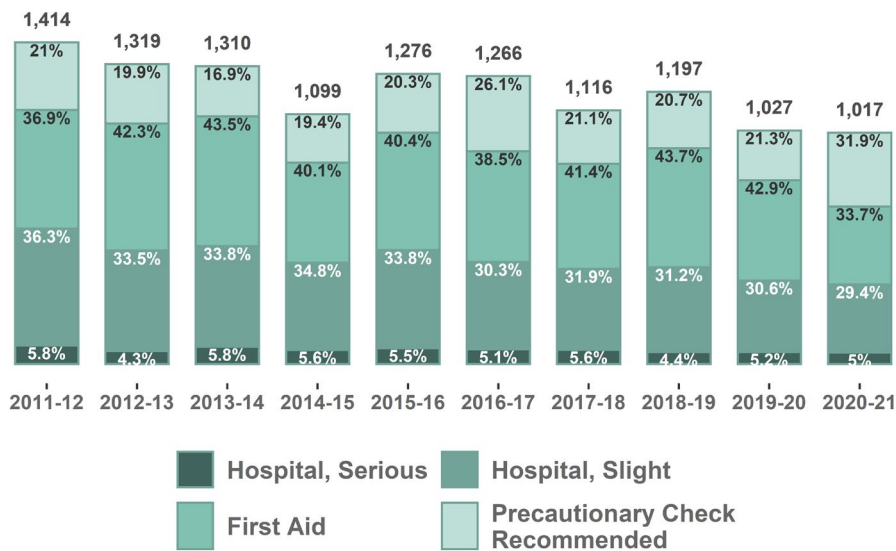
Treatment of Non-fatal Casualties

Figure 18: Treatment of non-fatal casualties with percentage share by type

Great Britain Comparisons

The number of fatal casualties in fires varies each year. Figure 19 shows that overall, there has been a downward trend in fatal fire casualties per million population since the early 2000s across all nations.

Scotland has consistently had higher fatal fire casualties per million than England and Wales. Differing demographic, deprivation and urban-rural profiles of each nation are likely factors in explaining the different rates.

Fatal Fire Casualties per Million Population

Figure 19: Fatal fire casualties per million population in Great Britain. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

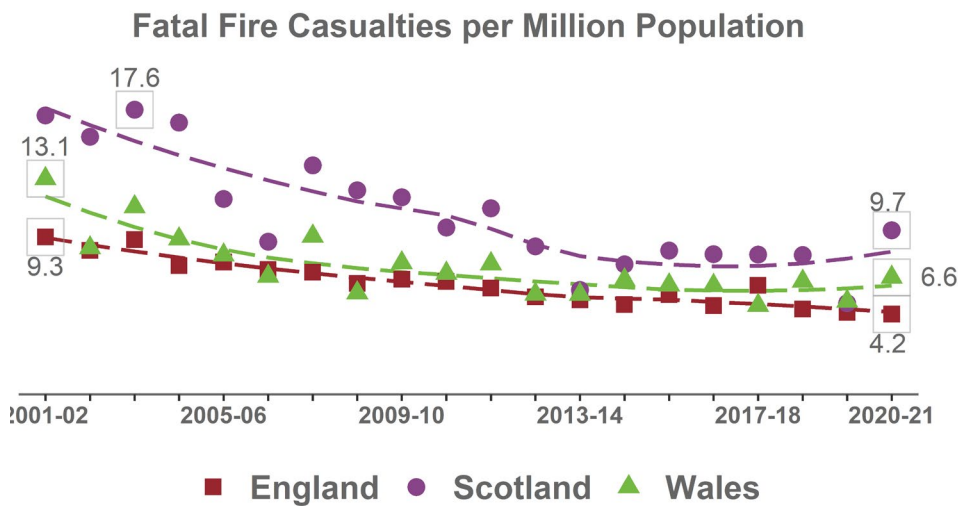**Hospitalised Non-fatal Fire Casualties per Million Population**

Figure 20: Hospitalised fire casualties per million population in Great Britain. Values displayed on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent value. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

Casualty Profile

Age

Figure 21 shows the strong relationship between age and rates of fatal casualties. The rates for those over 40 are all above the Scotland average. After age 79 the rate is considerably higher, with those aged 80-89 having a rate more than triple the Scotland average and those over 90 years of age having a rate over five times higher.

Those aged 0 to 39 years are below the Scotland average, with those aged 5 to 16 years having a rate less than a tenth of the Scottish average. Those aged 0 to 4 years have a rate of zero. One-year figures can vary a lot and so, ten-year average figures have been used to ensure that comparisons are robust.
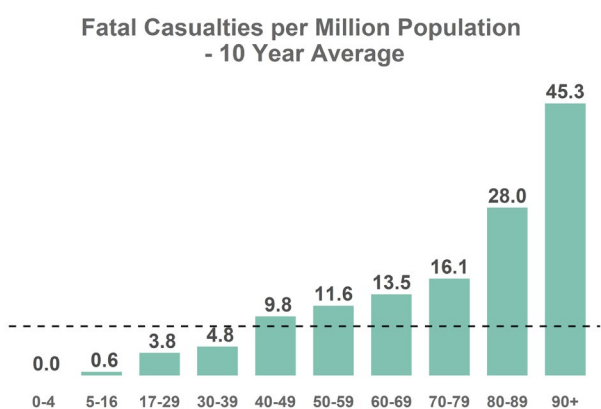
**Fatal Casualties per Million Population
- 10 Year Average**

Age	Rate
0-4	0.0
5-16	0.6
17-29	3.8
30-39	4.8
40-49	9.8
50-59	11.6
60-69	13.5
70-79	16.1
80-89	28.0
90+	45.3

Figure 21: Ten-year average rate per million population of fatal casualties by age band. The dotted line represents the average figure of 8.4

**Non-fatal Casualties per Million Population
- 10 Year Average**

Age	Rate
0-4	114
5-16	55
17-29	287
30-39	240
40-49	241
50-59	226
60-69	186
70-79	213
80-89	385
90+	705
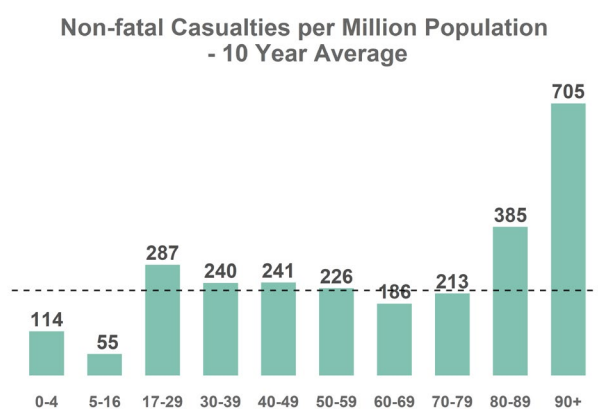
Figure 22: Ten-year average rate per million population of non-fatal casualties by age band. The dotted line represents the average figure of 220.4

The relationship between age and rate of casualty is not as strong for non-fatal casualties as it is for fatal casualties.

There are similar rates for those over 80, with those aged 80-89 having almost double the rate of the Scotland average and those over 90 having a rate over three times the average.

In contrast to fatal casualty rates, those aged 17-29 have a rate 1.3 times above the Scotland average and those aged 60-69 have a rate 0.7 times less than the Scotland average.

People under the age of 16 years have a rate below the Scotland average, with those aged 0-4 years having a rate just over half of the average and those aged 5-16 years having a rate 4 times less than the Scotland average.
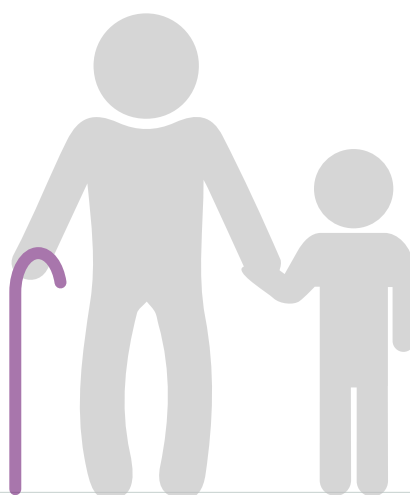
Gender

Of the 53 fatal casualties in 2020-21, 40 were male (75.5% of fatalities). Similar to previous years, there is a distinct difference between genders in the rate of fatal casualties per million population. The total rate of fatal casualties per million population was 9.7 in 2020-21.

The rate of male fatal casualties was considerably higher in comparison at 15.0 fatalities per million population. The rate of female casualties was considerably lower than the overall rate at 4.6 fatalities per million population.

There is a similar gender difference seen in non-fatal casualty rates, however the difference is smaller. In 2020-21, the total rate of non-fatal casualties was 184.6 casualties per million population.

The rate of male non-fatal casualties was 207.9 and the rate of female non-fatal casualties was 150.7 casualties per million population.

Deprivation

There is a relationship between deprivation and fire casualty rates in Scotland. For fatal casualties, the most deprived 20% has a 5.1 times higher fatal casualty rate than the least deprived 20% and 1.9 times higher than the Scotland average.

The least deprived 20% is considerably below all other areas with a rate that is 2.8 times less than the Scotland average.

A similar situation is seen for non-fatal casualties. The most deprived area has a rate of non-fatal casualties 5.4 times more than the least deprived 20%.

Rate of Fatal Casualties by Deprivation

Figure 23: Eight-year[6] average rate of fatal fire casualties per million population by level of deprivation.
The Scotland average is 7.6. Eight years of data was used to ensure a fair comparison.
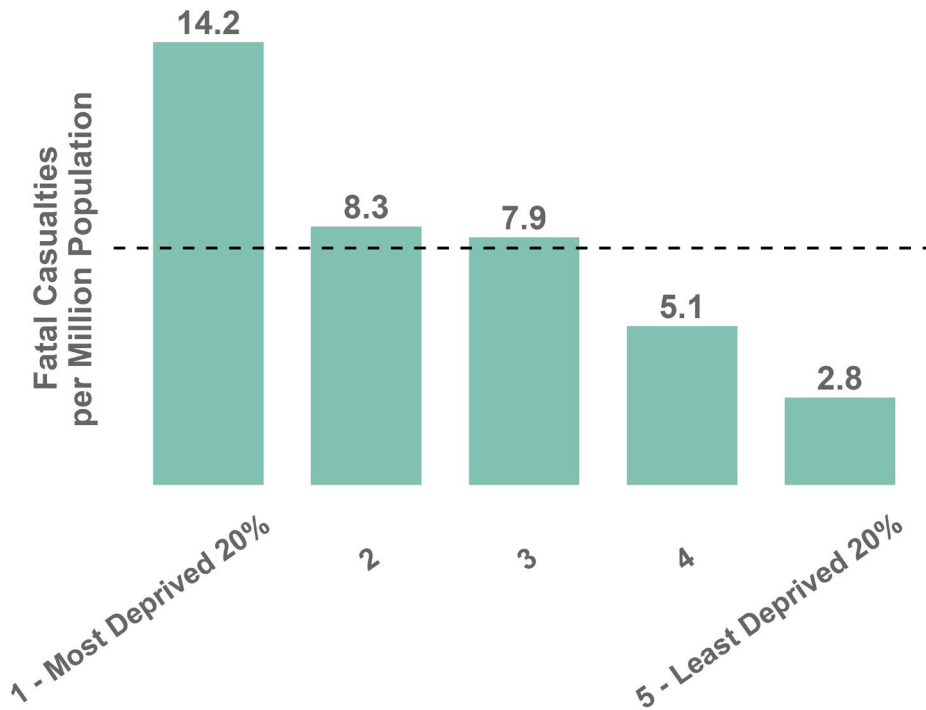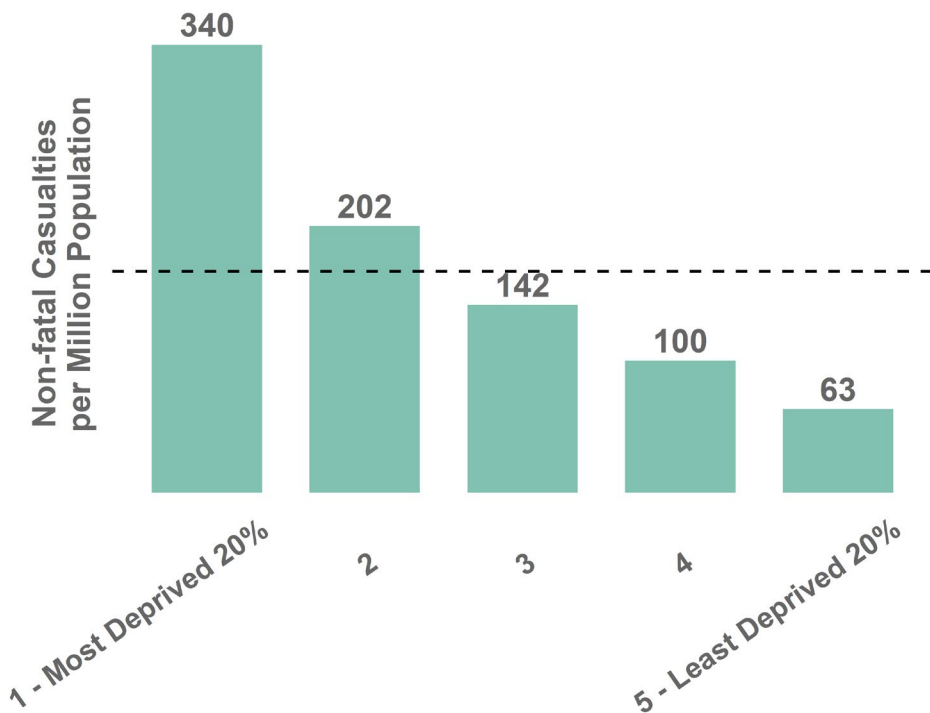
Rate of Non-fatal Casualties by Deprivation

Figure 24: Eight-year average rate of non-fatal fire casualties per million population by level of deprivation.
The Scotland average is 167.9. Eight years of data was used to ensure a fair comparison.

[6] An eight-year average is used as the annual totals vary substantially and multiple years of data is needed to produce robust statistics

Deprivation is a very clear factor in the historic casualty profile regardless of gender or age. This comes out clearly in figures 25 and 26. Please note, these charts are presented to highlight the historic casualty profile only, each bar should not be interpreted as the true risk of any individual or group.

Figure 25 shows that for fatal casualties, there is a clear link between deprivation and fatal casualty rate. Regardless of age or gender, those in the most deprived 20% areas have a higher rate of fatal casualties per million population. Over the age of 50, males have a much higher rate of fatal casualties regardless of deprivation.

Females over 80 and in the most deprived areas have a much higher rate of casualty than females over 80 in less deprived areas, with the least deprived 20% having a casualty rate far below average. In contrast, in all areas males over 80 have a higher than average deprivation rate.

Those over 90 have not been included in this chart due to the higher number of casualties and low population rates resulting in some areas exceeding 100 fatal casualties per million population. There have been 15 fatal casualties in those aged over 90 in the last eight years, of which 9 were male. Of the 15 fatal casualties in over 90s, 12 were in SIMD quintiles 3 or 4.

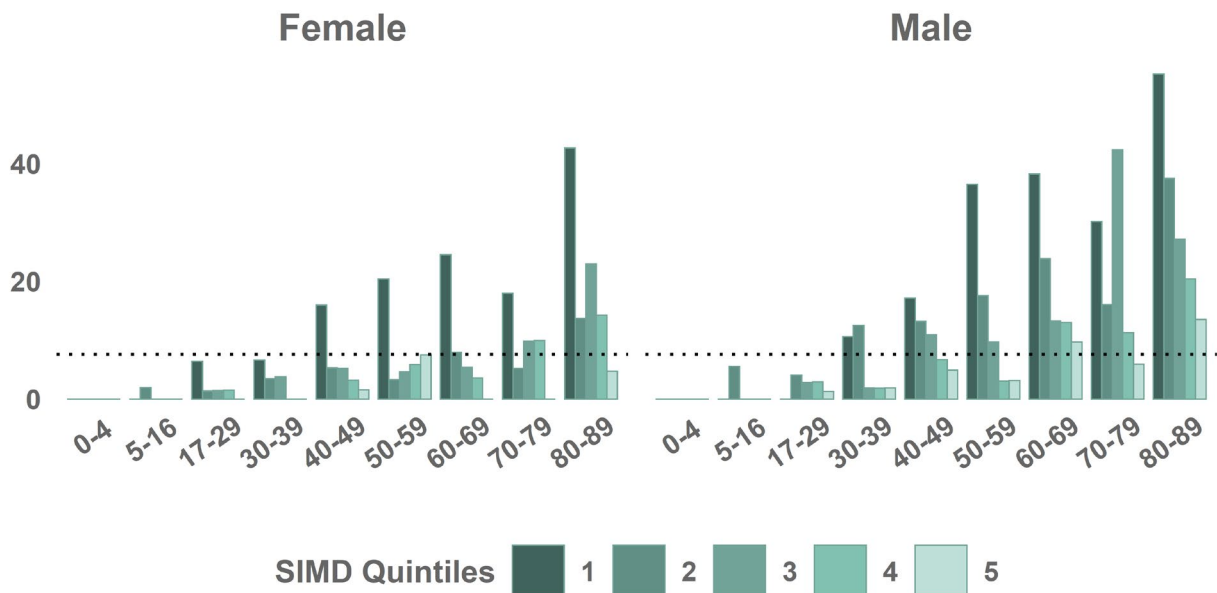## Fatal Casualties per Million Population - 8 Year Average

Figure 25: Fatal fire casualties per million population by gender, age and by level of deprivation where 1 is the 20.0% most deprived areas and 5 is the 20.0% least deprived areas. The horizontal line represents the Scotland average (7.6)

For non-fatal hospitalitised casualties, the rates are higher for all adults in the 20% most deprived areas, except for males who are aged over 90. Males in the 40% most deprived areas have higher rates than females, with all males above age 17 years in SIMD quintile 2 being above the Scotland average.

Hospitalised Casualties per Million Population - 8 Year Average
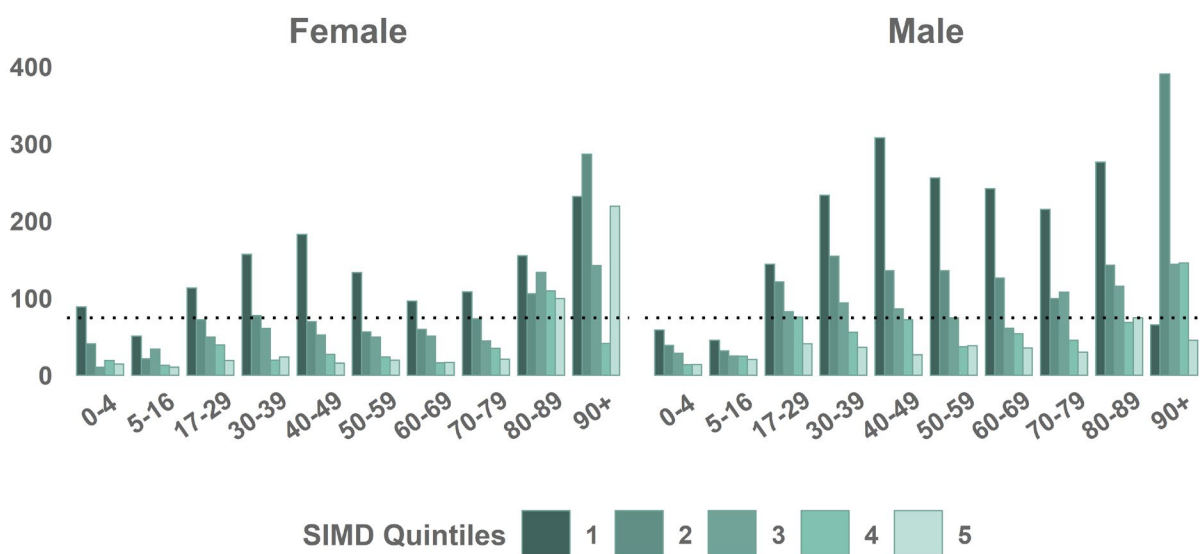
Figure 26: Hospitalised fire casualties per million population by gender, age and by level of deprivation where 1 is the 20.0% most deprived areas and 5 is the 20.0% least deprived areas. The horizontal line represents the Scotland average (77.7).

Impairment

Impairment using alcohol or drugs was suspected to have been a contributing factor in 16.1% of accidental dwelling fires. These fires have higher casualty rates, with an average rate of 12.3 fatal casualties per 1,000 fires in the last ten years.

This is compared to the 2.6 fatal casualties per 1,000 fires where impairment was not suspected.

There were 366.0 non-fatal casualties per 1,000 fires with such impairment, compared to the 139.5 without.

These averages are based on ten years of casualty data as there is no clear trend in recent years and the relatively low number of casualties means that a longer-term average is fairer.

In 2020-21, there were 8 fatal casualties in accidental dwelling fires where impairment by alcohol or drugs was suspected and 216 non-fatal casualties.

Urban-Rural

The rate of non-fatal casualties is 1.7 times higher in the most urban areas compared to the most rural.

The non-fatal casualty figures vary each year. In the last eight years, rates have been decreasing proportionally faster in the most rural areas.

The most rural areas have seen a decrease of 51.1%, while the most urban areas have seen a decrease of 42.3%. Overall, the Scotland total has decreased by 36.4% since 2013-14.

Rate of Non-fatal Casualties by Rurality

Figure 27: Eight-year average rate of non-fatal fire casualties per million population by level of rurality. The Scotland average is 167.9. Eight years of data was used to ensure a fair comparison.

The situation differs for fatal casualties. The rate of fatal casualties per million population is 1.7 times higher in the most rural areas compared to the most urban areas.

The three categories of most remote areas (remote small towns, accessible rural and remote rural) all have higher than average rates of fatal casualties per million population, yet all have lower than average rates of non-fatal casualties.

Rate of Fatal Casualties by Rurality
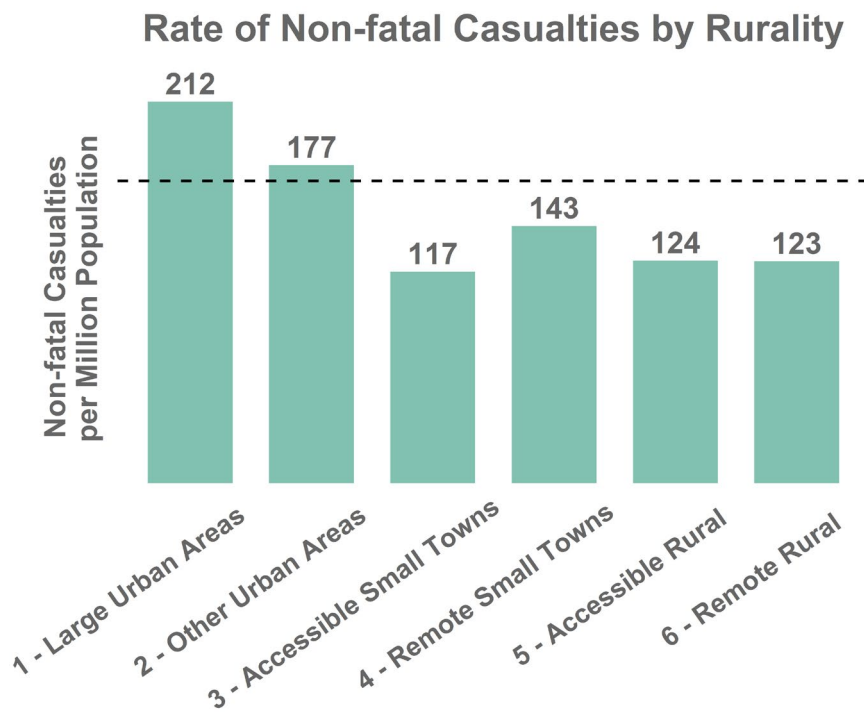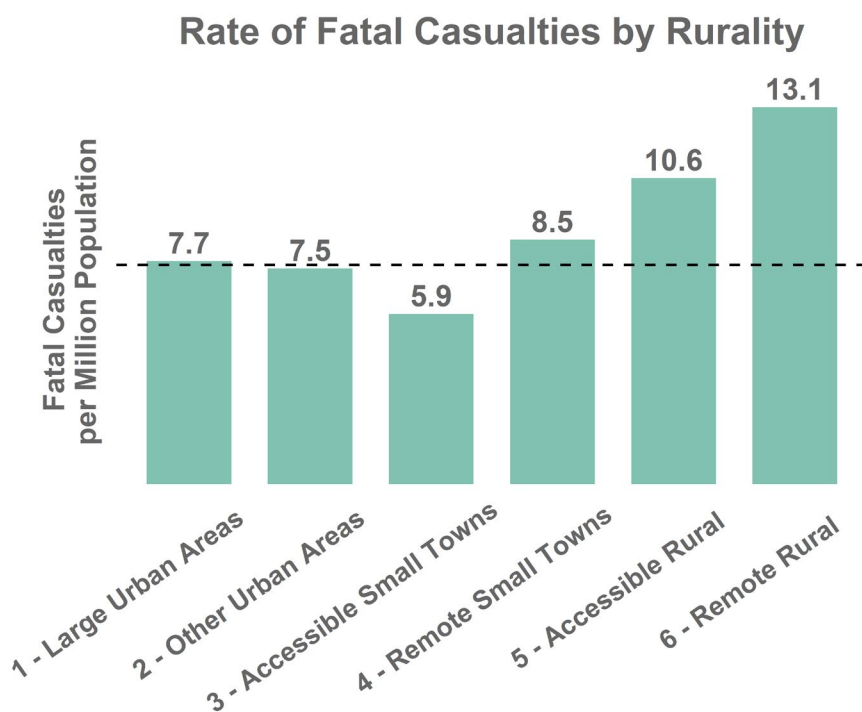

Figure 28: Eight-year average rate of fatal fire casualties per million population by level of rurality. The Scotland average is 7.6. Eight years of data was used to ensure a fair comparison.

5. Non-fire Incidents and Casualties

In 2020-21, there was 12,693 non-fire incidents recorded, down from 14,397 last year (11.8% reduction). Although this is a relatively large reduction from last year's figures, the figures for this year could be unusually low due to the restrictions that were imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The restrictions led to limited travel, closure of buildings and changes in human behaviours. Consequently, some non-fire incident categories have reduced more substantially than would have been expected when compared to previous years' figures. Figure 29 shows the overall trend of non-fire incidents, showing the figure levelling off and remaining relatively stable from 2015-16.

Pre-pandemic working arrangements recognised wider partnership working in dealing with known casualties. However, throughout lockdown periods, SFRS had reduced involvement in these cases, particularly during multi-agency incidents. In following reporting guidance, SFRS personnel did not report any casualties where there had been no direct involvement.

There has been a large decrease in the number of road traffic collisions attended by SFRS, with 1,596 recorded in 2020-21, compared to the 2,372 recorded last year. This is a reduction of 32.7%.

Covid-19 restrictions meant that people could not travel as freely within the country as they did before the pandemic and so, there was less traffic on the roads. Due to this, low overall figures are to be expected.

Lift release is a further sub-category of non-fire incident where Covid-19 restrictions appear to have had an impact on operational attendance. There has been a 44.5% reduction on last year's figures, reducing from 748 to 415 in 2020-21.

Effecting Entry or Exit incidents decreased from 3,992 last year to 3,735 in 2020-21 (6.4% reduction). Similarly, Assist Other Agencies incidents reduced by 7.8%, from 1,259 in 2019-20 to 1,161 this year. See figures 31 to 36 for trends in major non-fire incident categories.
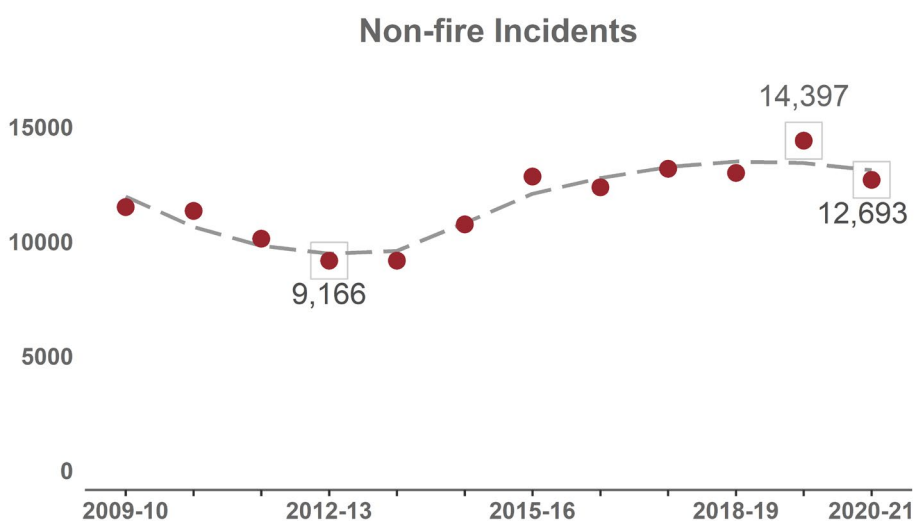

Non-fire Incidents

Figure 29: Trends in non-fire incidents. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

Non-fire Fatal Casualties

Non-fire Non-fatal Casualties

Figure 30: Trends in the number of non-fire casualties. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. For non-fire non-fatal casualties, the most recent value is also the minimum value. Changes in operational procedures during the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted casualty figures. See page 27 for explanation.

There were 323 non-fire fatal casualties in 2020-21, a decrease of 26.3% from last year's 438 fatalities. This figure had increased consistently in previous years due to increasing inter-agency cooperation.

There were 1,864 non-fire non-fatal casualties in 2020-21, a decrease of 42.0% from last year's total of 3,211.

The number of non-fire non-fatal casualties has been decreasing steadily since 2017-18 but this is the largest reduction that has been seen within one year.

As previously discussed, there has been a reduction in non-fire incidents attended this year which is likely to have been caused by the Covid-19 lockdown and social distancing restrictions.

With less incidents attended, it is likely that the large reductions in fatalities and non-fatal casualties is partly attributed to the Covid-19 restrictions.

There was a large decrease in the number of fatal and non-fatal casualties resulting from road traffic collisions attended to by SFRS crews in 2020-21.

There were 895 non-fire non-fatal casualties resulting from these road traffic collisions (45.5% decrease from the 1,642 recorded in 2019-20) and 60 fatalities (26.8% reduction from 82 recorded in 2019-20).

There has also been a considerable decrease in the number of suicide or suicide attempts attended by SFRS resulting in casualties, with 34 fatalities (down from 51 in 2019-20) and 17 non-fatal casualties (down from 27 in 2019-20).

Road Traffic Collisions

Incidents

2,945

1,596

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Non-fatal Casualties

2,204

895

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Fatal Casualties
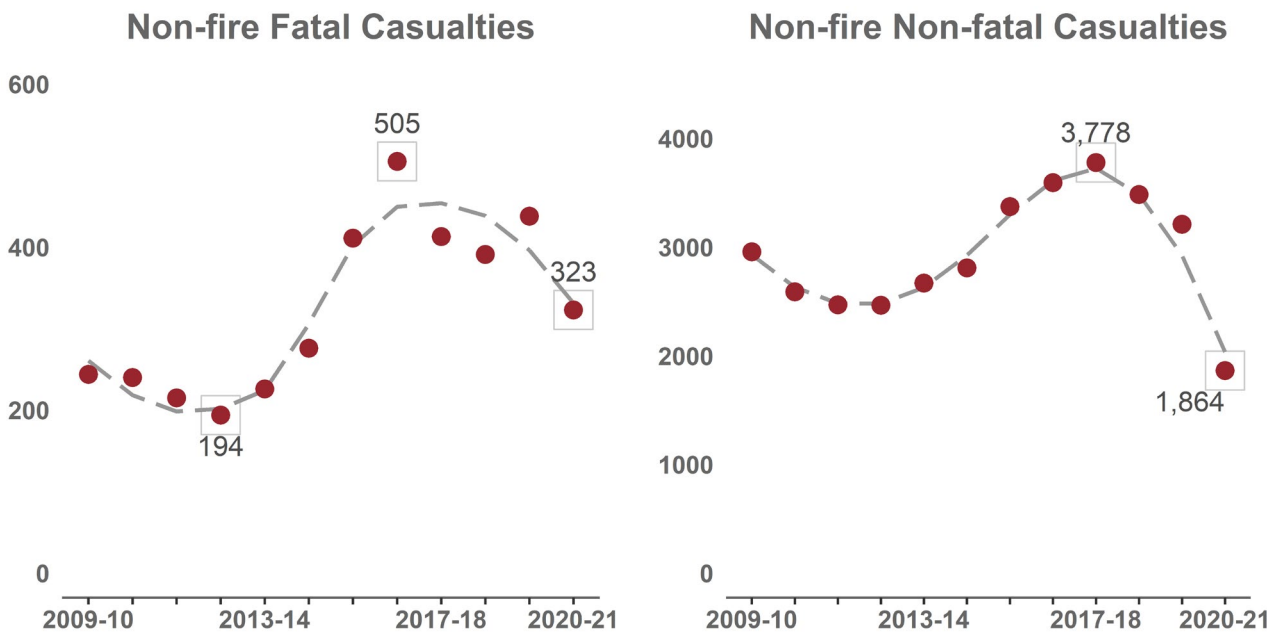
123

60

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Figure 31: Trends in the Number of Road Traffic Collisions. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

Flooding and Rescue or Evacuation from Water

Incidents

2,615

1,847

1,123

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Non-fatal Casualties

58

39

31

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Fatal Casualties

36

30

14

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Figure 32: Trends in the Number of Flooding Incidents. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

Medical Response

Incidents

538

342

245

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Non-fatal Casualties

284

121

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

Fatal Casualties

130

7

15

2009-10   2013-14   2017-18   2020-21

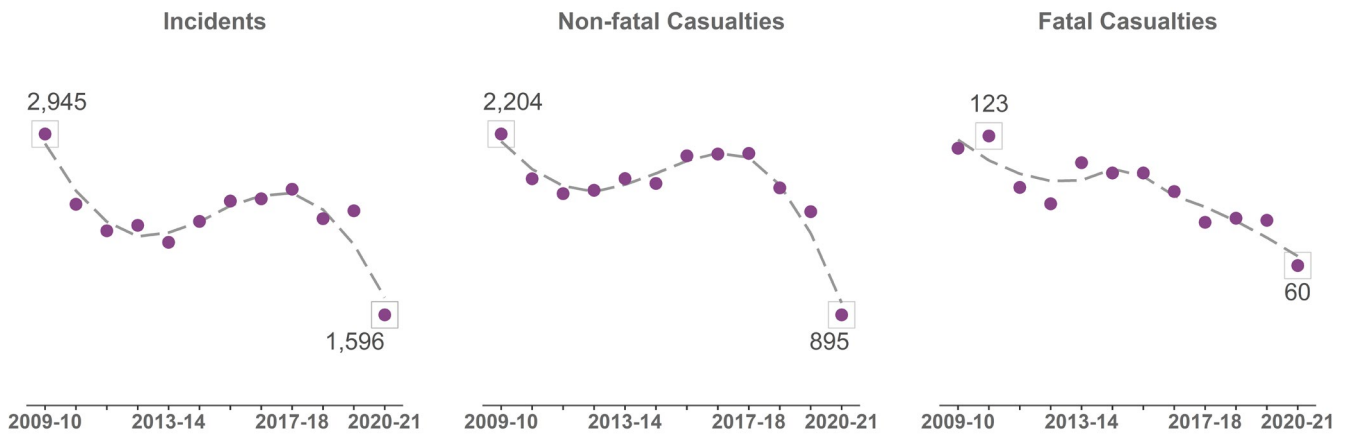*Figure 33: Trends in Number of Medical Incidents. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. There are instances where the most recent value is also the minimum value. Changes in operational procedures during the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted casualty figures. See page 27 for explanation.*

Suicide (including attempts)

Incidents	Non-fatal Casualties	Fatal Casualties
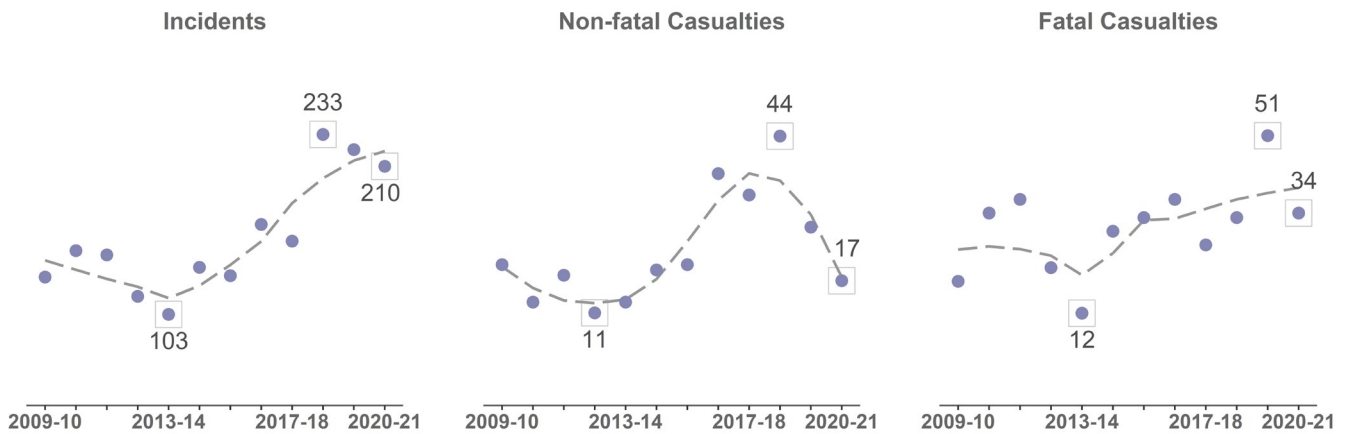
Figure 34: Trends in Suicide (including attempts). Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values.

Effecting Entry or Exit

Incidents	Non-fatal Casualties	Fatal Casualties

Figure 35: Trends in Effecting Entry or Exit. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. Changes in operational procedures during the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted casualty figures. *See page 27 for explanation.*

Assist Other Agencies
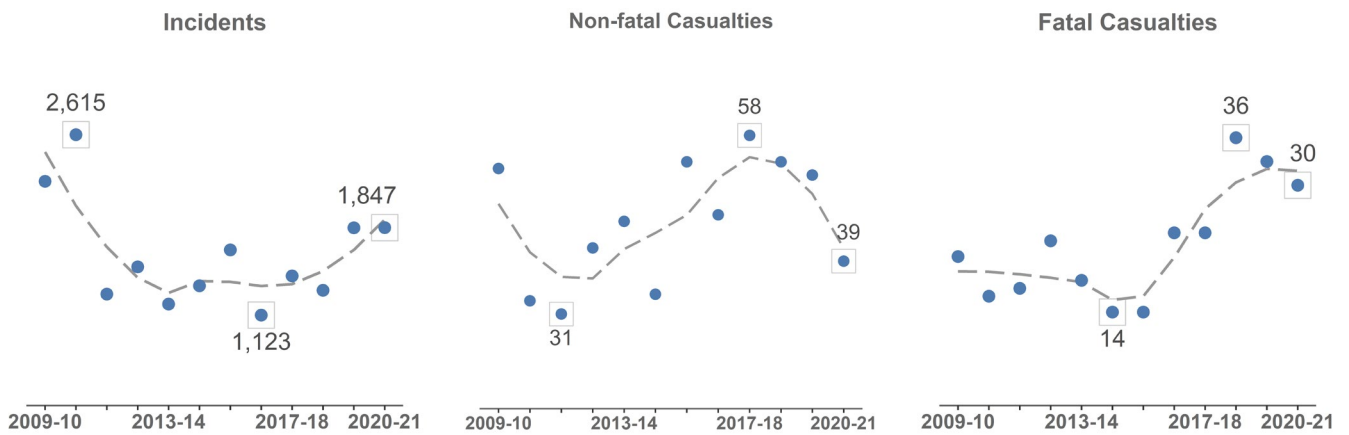
Incidents	Non-fatal Casualties	Fatal Casualties

Figure 36: Trends in Assist Other Agencies. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. Changes in operational procedures during the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted casualty figures. *See page 27 for explanation.*

6. False alarms

In 2020-21, there were 47,742 false alarms, down from 53,177 last year (10.2% reduction). Of these, 46,820 were fire false alarms. This is considerably lower than last year's 52,302 (10.5% reduction) and the lowest recorded value in this series.

Fire false alarm incidents where detecting apparatus has raised an alarm is the main cause of this reduction. In recent years, there was an upward trend in this type of false alarm. However, this year the number of fire false alarms due to apparatus has decreased to 35,809. This is a 13.6% reduction from 41,467 recorded in 2019-20.

This large reduction is likely due to the closure of non-domestic premises during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This is shown in figure 38, where it is shown that false alarms in dwellings remained relatively consistent, when compared to previous years' figures, but false alarms in other buildings has dropped substantially.

Fire false alarm attendances caused by raised alarms from detecting apparatus accounts for 41.8% of all incidents attended this year. This is down from 45.0% in 2019-20.

Fire False Alarms
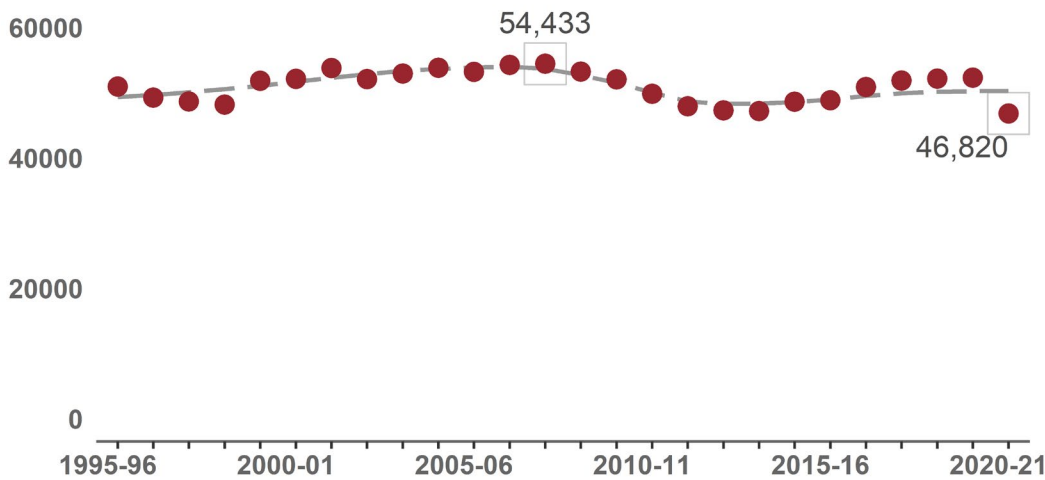
Figure 37: Long-term trend in fire false alarms. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent value is also the minimum value.

Figure 38 shows that an increase in fire false alarms due to apparatus was the cause of the overall increase up until the mid-2000s, shown in figure 36.

This trend levelled off in the mid to late 2000s and appeared to continue increasing until this year when the figure decreased again.

The number of fire false alarms accounted for by good intent remained stable until about 2009-10 and then began to decrease slowly.

This year there has been an increase in the number of good intent fire false alarms compared to recent years.

The number of malicious fire false alarms has steadily decreased since the late 1990s and continued to decrease from 2019-20 to 2020-21.
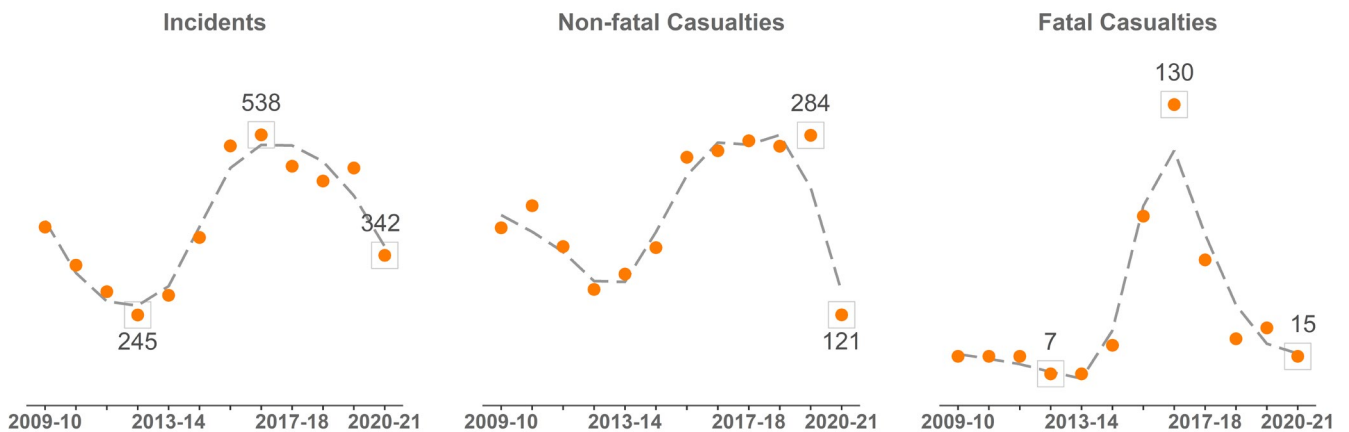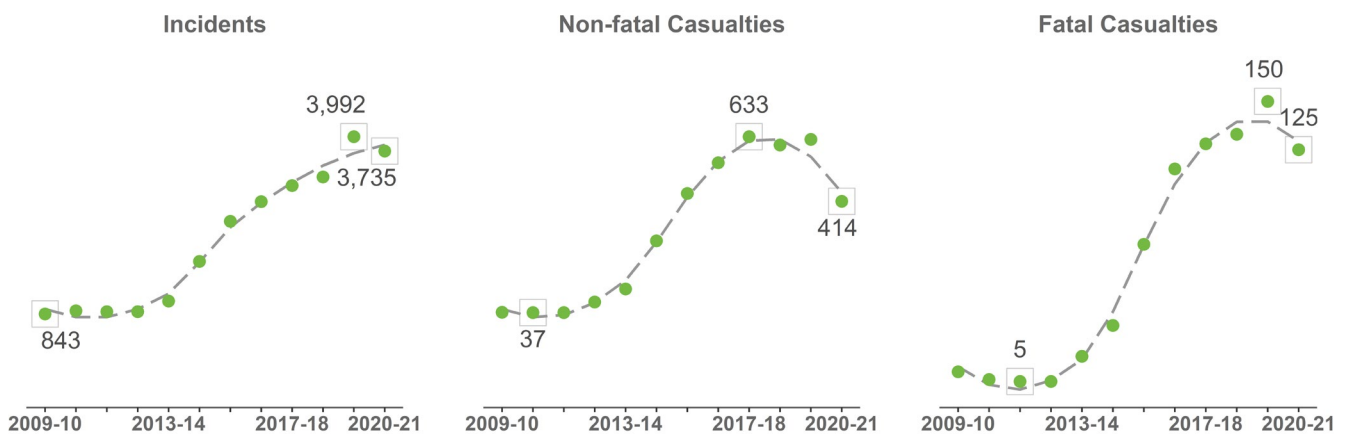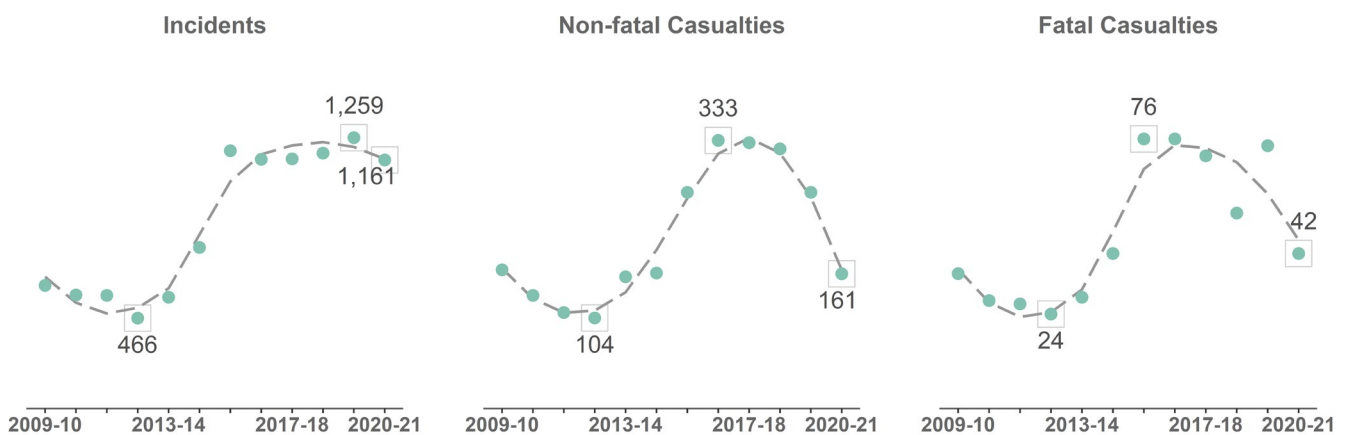
Trends in Fire False Alarms
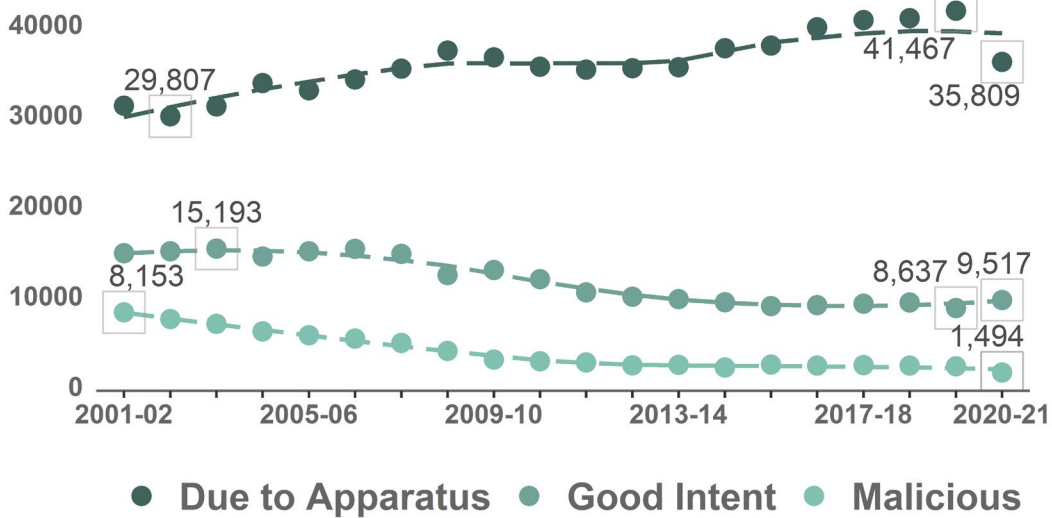
Figure 38: Trends in cause of fire false alarms. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. There are instances where the most recent value is also the minimum value.

The main cause of increasing fire false alarms is due to apparatus false alarms in dwellings. The total number of apparatus false alarms in dwellings is 13,325, a decrease from 13,859 recorded in 2019-20 (3.9%). This is up 43.0% from ten years ago.

The number of apparatus false alarms in other buildings has remained more stable over the last ten years. Malicious false alarms have reduced in dwellings over the last ten years from 782 to 300 in 2020-21 (61.6%) and good intent false alarms has decreased from 4,479 to 3,535 (21.1%).

Trends in Fire False Alarms due to Apparatus

Figure 39: Trends in the location of fire false alarms due to apparatus. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. There are instances where the most recent value is also the minimum value.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals, commonly referred to as UFAS, describes a potentially avoidable false alarm signal from a workplace, either from an automatic fire alarm or from a person. In previous years, these signals had steadily increased, from 26,394 incidents in 2013-14 to 29,285 in 2019-20 (10.9% increase).

Within the last year this figure has reduced substantially to 23,733 (19.0% decrease from last year). The number of fire alarm signals that are not UFAS has remained relatively stable over the last few years.

There has been an increase of 0.3% from 2019-20 (23,017 incidents) to 2020-21 (23,087 incidents). With the overall number of fire false alarms decreasing in Scotland this year, this suggests that the main reason is due to a large decrease in the number of unwanted fire alarm signals.

The Covid-19 pandemic could have influenced this figure as most offices were closed and home-working was encouraged. This means that less people were in workplace buildings and so, less opportunity for an unwanted signal to be triggered.

Trends in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
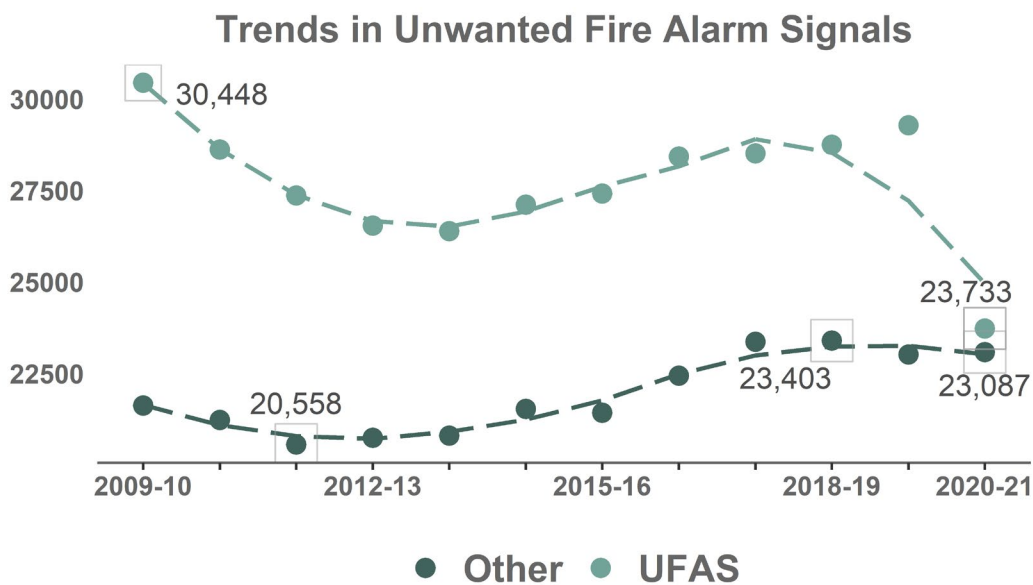
Figure 40: Trends in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) and Other fire alarm signals in Scotland. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. There are instances where the most recent value is also the minimum value.

Local Authority Breakdown

Figure 41 shows a breakdown of UFAS by local authority. UFAS are considerably higher in urban areas such as Glasgow City (rate of 655.9 per 100,000 population).

Dundee City (rate of 622.9 per 100,000) and City of Edinburgh (rate of 568.2 per 100,000 population).

This is because there are typically more offices and workplace buildings in urban areas.

Rural areas have much lower rates, for instance Orkney Islands has a rate of 165.2 per 100,000 population.
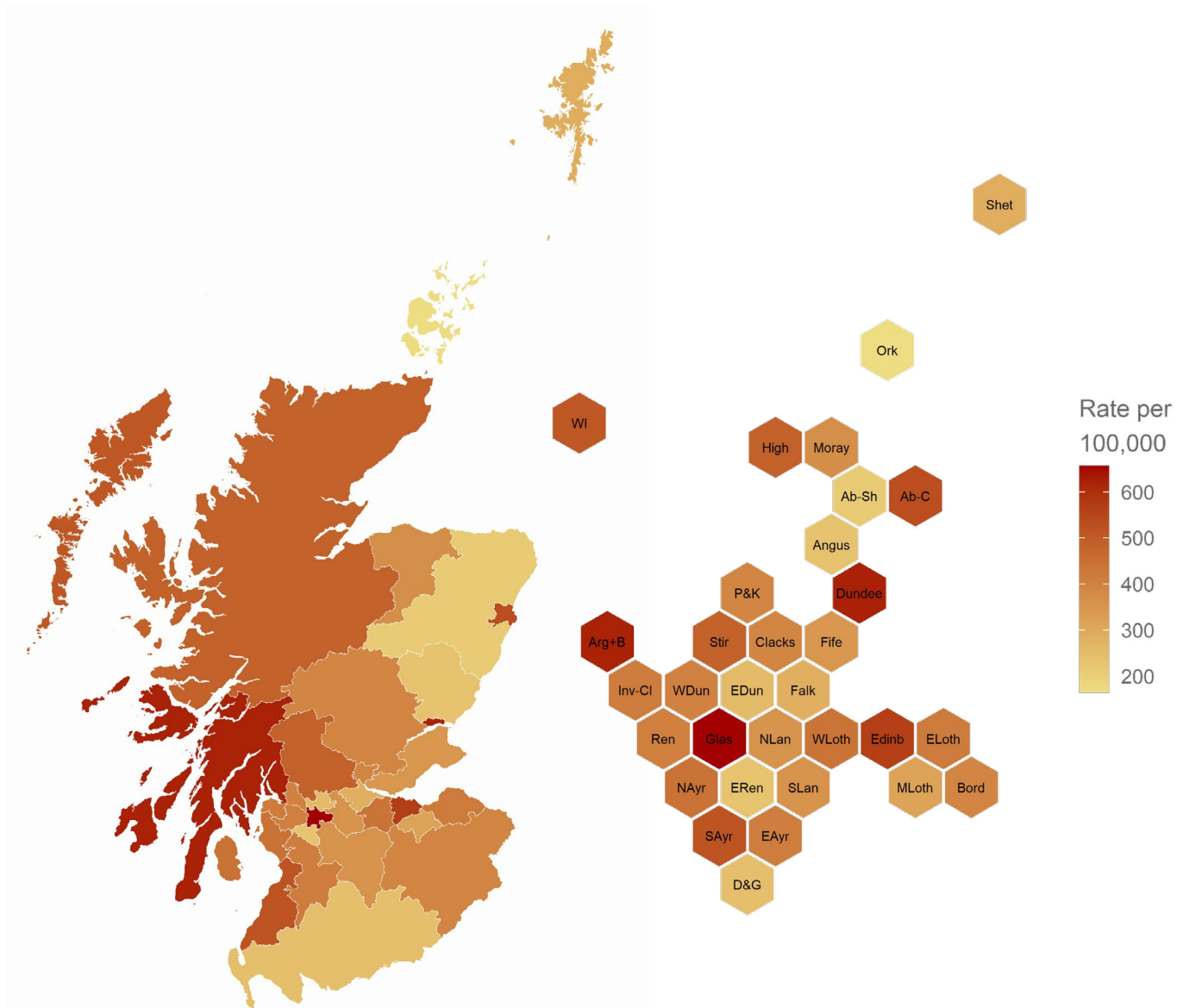
Figure 41: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) per 100,000 population, choropleth and area normalised cartogram 2020-21

Great Britain Comparisons

Despite the reduction in numbers of fire false alarms, there is still a notably higher rate of fire false alarms per million population in Scotland than in England and Wales.

While all nations have seen a reduction in the number of fire false alarms, there has been a bigger reduction in England and Wales than in Scotland. This has widened the gap between the rates of fire false alarms between Scotland and the other nations.

However, this year, with the reduction of fire false alarms in Scotland, the gap appears to be closing slightly. In 2020-21, Scotland has a 124.1% higher rate than England, compared with 132.6% reported last year.
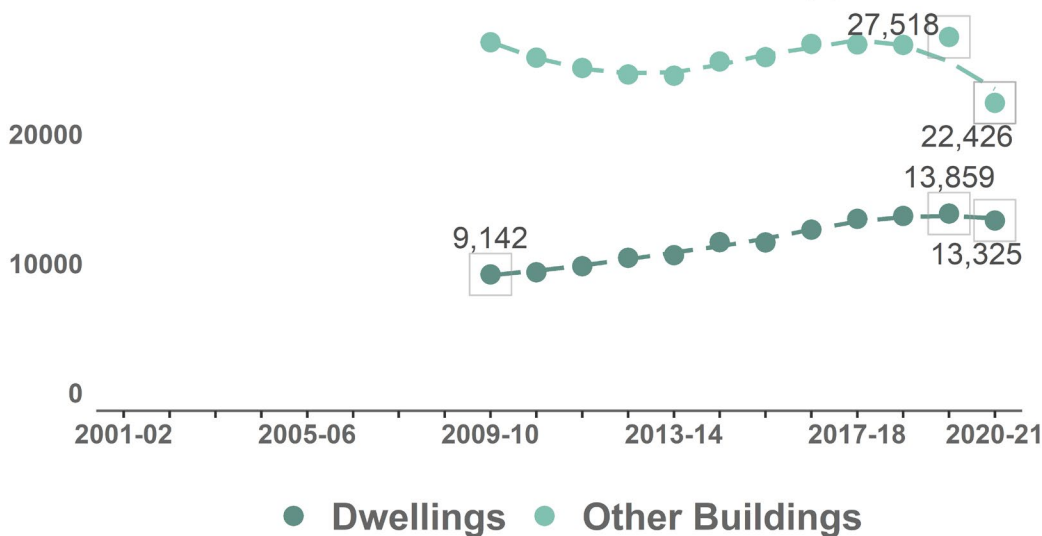
Fire False Alarms per Million Population
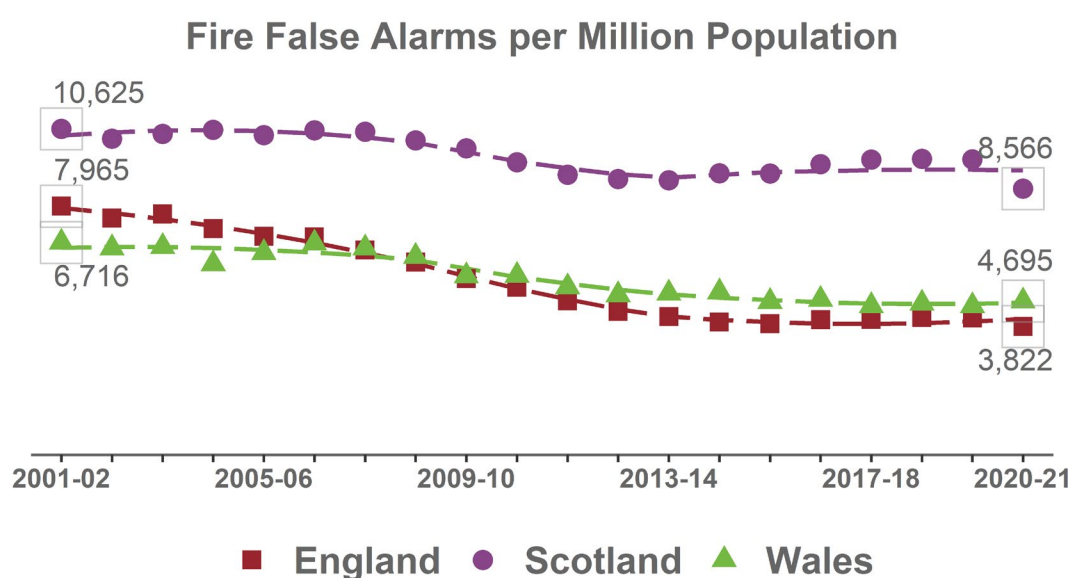
Figure 42: Trends in the fire false alarms by nation. Values displayed in boxes on chart represent the maximum, minimum and most recent values. In this case, the most recent values are also the minimum values.

It should be noted that while Scotland saw a decrease in fire false alarms during the pandemic, England and Wales did not. Currently, England and Wales manage unwanted fire alarm signals differently from Scotland.

This means that, in general, England and Wales attend to less of these signals.

This year Scotland has attended 19.0% less of these signals than in previous years.

This suggests that the main reason for the difference in Scotland compared to England and Wales is due to the difference in the handling of unwanted fire alarm signals.

Appendix A – Key for Local Authority Maps

Key	Local Authority
1	Aberdeen City
2	Aberdeenshire
3	Angus
4	Argyll and Bute
5	Clackmannanshire
6	Dumfries and Galloway
7	Dundee City
8	East Ayrshire
9	East Dunbartonshire
10	East Lothian
11	East Renfrewshire
12	Edinburgh, City of
13	Na h'Eileanan Siar
14	Falkirk
15	Fife
16	Glasgow City
17	Highland
18	Inverclyde
19	Midlothian
20	Moray
21	North Ayrshire
22	North Lanarkshire
23	Orkney Islands
24	Perth and Kinross
25	Renfrewshire
26	Scottish Borders
27	Shetland Islands
28	South Ayrshire
29	South Lanarkshire
30	Stirling
31	West Dunbartonshire
32	West Lothian

Cartogram Local Authority Key

Key	Local Authority
Ab-C	Aberdeen City
Ab-Sh	Aberdeenshire
Angus	Angus
Arg+B	Argyll and Bute
Clacks	Clackmannanshire
D&G	Dumfries and Galloway
Dundee	Dundee City
EAyr	East Ayrshire
EDun	East Dunbartonshire
ELoth	East Lothian
ERen	East Renfrewshire
Edinb	Edinburgh, City of
WI	Na h'Eileanan Siar
Falk	Falkirk
Fife	Fife
Glas	Glasgow City
High	Highland
Inv-Cl	Inverclyde
MLoth	Midlothian
Moray	Moray
NAyr	North Ayrshire
NLan	North Lanarkshire
Ork	Orkney Islands
P&K	Perth and Kinross
Ren	Renfrewshire
Bord	Scottish Borders
Shet	Shetland Islands
SAyr	South Ayrshire
SLan	South Lanarkshire
Stir	Stirling
WDun	West Dunbartonshire
WLoth	West Lothian

An Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

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The next edition of Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics bulletin and associated documents is scheduled for release on 31st October 2022.

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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

2020-2021

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SCOTTISH
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CONTENTS

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Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Annual Review Report for 2020/21

This report is structured around the ten priorities outlined in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 and captures information on some of the key activities that have been carried out to meet these requirements between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. This report covers this period specifically, however, in line with the Annual Performance Review Meeting date of October 2021, we have included some information outwith this time to provide a broader picture of some of the topics covered.

There is no doubt that it has been a challenging year. We have faced competing risks – the Covid-19 pandemic, the risks of climate change, inequality and the desire to strengthen partnership working; but we were quickly able to use our existing business continuity planning to establish new ways of working that allowed us to continue to deliver our services to the people of Scotland, see page 17. Not only did we deliver a critical emergency response, but in many cases, our staff went above and beyond to ensure the wellbeing of the communities we serve. You can read more about how they did this on page 20.

Despite the challenges faced this year, prevention has remained a key focus and we've swiftly adapted practices, procedures and processes to ensure that we could continue to prevent emergencies from happening before they occur. One of our main prevention initiatives is targeted safety messaging and this year saw lockdown change Scotland's risk profile almost overnight as people were urged to stay at home to prevent the spread of the virus. This safety measure did, however, have the potential to impact upon the number of fires in residential properties. In recognising this new risk, we launched the *Make the Call Campaign*. This initiative was a hard-hitting appeal to carers, family and friends of those who are at risk of serious injury or even death because of an accidental fire in their home. You can read more about how we delivered the campaign and its reach on page 7.

The pandemic impacted our ability to deliver our traditional Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV). To limit virus transmission between firefighters and members of the public, we were forced to suspend the majority of home visits. Although, we continued to visit households most at risk of fire and conducted safe HFSVs for them, we knew we could do more and turned to digital methods to engage with householders across the country. You can read more about our Home Fire Safety Questionnaire and our *Fire Safety in the*

Home – Self Assessment on page 8. Similar adaptations for the advice and support we provide to non-domestic properties were also made. You can read more about our Remote Auditing Procedure on page 9.

Partnership working remains at the core of what we do and the importance of it has become even clearer during the pandemic. We have been working towards developing our broader contribution to public sector outcomes in response to changing national and community risks. To further support this we have been developing a major project around better understanding the changing nature of risk at community levels across the country and what that will mean in terms of future service provision. The Community Risk Index Model (CRIM), part of our Service Delivery Model Programme, is being developed to support this and we will begin to see the outputs of this critical piece of work during 2021/22, read more on page 29.

Alongside the Scottish Government and blue light partners, we remain a key player in the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), which will deliver the new Emergency Services Network (ESN) across Great Britain. Despite previous delays, it is currently anticipated that implementation in Scotland will commence in 2024. Significant planning will be required to enable the SFRS to play its part in the national roll out.

Similarly, work continues to deliver our new Command and Control system that will enable integration of our three Operations Control Centres. Whilst the pandemic has impacted upon delivery, the Project Team continue to drive the work forward and have adapted plans to have the new system in place in 2022.

We are also working closely with our partners to plan for the delayed UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) event taking place in Glasgow in November 2021, co-ordinated through the UK government, see page 12.

Despite the challenges of Covid, we continue to support Scotland's transition to a net zero carbon economy through partnership working and in leading by example through our high-profile assets in communities across the country. You can read about our *Climate Change*

Response Plan 2045 and *Carbon Management Plan 2020-25* on page 37. This same commitment is also evident in our approach to our Wildfire Strategy. These incidents can have a devastating impact upon the countryside and release large quantities of carbon into the atmosphere. You can read more about the new Strategy and our collaborative working to tackle this issue on page 11.

Work has also continued to reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals received by the Service. Each year there are thousands of incidents across Scotland which are attributed to fire alarm system actuations. Of these incidents around 97% require no intervention by us and are recorded as Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). Throughout the pandemic, we amended the number of fire appliances sent to fire alarm actuations in non-domestic premises. This was to alleviate potential availability pressures on frontline services and to minimise crews mixing with one another and with members of the public. For the same reasons, we made temporary amendments to crewing levels on fire appliances across Scotland. These changes in our approach to operational delivery have generated many benefits including freeing capacity to do more to address risk within our communities, whilst safeguarding services to the people of Scotland. Both approaches remain under regular review in order to achieve the most dynamic response to the changing needs of the communities we serve. You can read more about this approach and the work of our newly formed UFAS Review Board on page 31.

Our staff remain our most important asset and we strive to have a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. We have continued to connect with under-represented groups throughout the year to help diversify our workforce. These initiatives have included: targeted information events for our Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender communities across Scotland; continuation of the Career Ready Scheme; our Modern Apprenticeship Scheme; and our work to develop as a Corporate Parent, see pages 39 to 43.

In support of our commitment to equality, diversity and human rights and inclusion, a revised set of Equality Outcomes were published in April 2021, along with the biennial mainstreaming Report. Our

Equality Partnership Group remains the key means of mainstreaming equality across the organisation. You can read more about the work they lead, including our Guide to Disability, our new Employee Networks and the provision of free sanitary provisions on page 42.

We care deeply about the health and wellbeing of our people. On page 44 you can read about some of the measurements we have put in place to protect their physical health during the pandemic. We also recognise the importance of good mental health. We launched our Mental Health Strategy in June 2020, alongside a suite of mental health resources that were readily available for our staff to support them throughout these unprecedented times. This became particularly important where home working became a more 'atypical' standard working practice. These resources will be maintained post-pandemic, and it is hoped will help protect our workforce from the as-yet unknown long-term effects and impact of this period.

From a financial perspective, it has been recognised by ourselves and Audit Scotland that we have a substantial capital backlog investment requirement (£389million in 2017), particularly within our property estate. 61% of community fire stations are over 30 years old, and 52% have been assessed as being in a poor or worse condition. In addition, in 2019, we identified a further urgent issue in relation to an obsolete method of roof construction (Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete). These roofs remain present in 14 fire stations, and have been identified as a safety risk due to the potential for roof collapse. Temporary emergency measures have been put in place, with recurring resource costs. However, the safest and most cost-effective long-term solution in most cases is to rebuild these stations. This would require a total potential investment of approximately £70 million. Scottish Government has provided additional capital expenditure of £4.35 million to invest in our stations and other assets, a welcomed investment which will be prioritised to areas of the greatest need.

The CRIM project will support us in ensuring that our assets are deployed in the most effective manner across Scotland, and that our investment in facilities is appropriately targeted, consistent with the Scottish Government's recently published draft Infrastructure Investment Plan. If realised, our plans could form a significant social and economic renewal programme for communities where we have facilities located.

Overall, the pandemic has resulted in both savings and additional costs for the Service over the year. In some cases, savings made in 2021/21 will result in additional 'catch up' costs in 2021/22. While the sum of these issues was challenging we saw throughout the pandemic a remarkably positive commitment among our staff to work with us to adapt our working practices to ensure we continued to protect the communities of Scotland.

As we look to the future, we recognise that Covid-19 has also provided us with a unique opportunity. At some point the pandemic will be over. However, it may not be possible or appropriate to return to how things were prior to the pandemic. As such, work has been undertaken to develop a Recovery, Reset and Renew Routemap that will support our change ambitions moving forward, see page 18. The Routemap provides us primary and supporting themes which will serve as a filter to examine the impact across the organisation as new continuous improvement objectives are developed.

We trust that you find this report both insightful and reassuring regarding our actions to meet the priorities of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016. We hope it offers further evidence that, despite the many challenges we have faced this year and will face in future years, we remain committed to improving the wellbeing and safety of the people and communities of Scotland.

Kirsty Darwent
Chair, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board

PRIORITY 1 – PERFORMANCE MEASURES

"The SFRS must, in discussion with the Scottish Government, specify appropriate performance measures to support its Strategic Plan, for the delivery of outcomes relating to the strategic priorities and objectives set out in this Framework."

Following the introduction of our Strategic Plan (2019-2022) in October 2019, a revised Performance Management Framework was published in April 2020, alongside the commitment that we would review this document on a yearly basis.

The Framework outlines how we will manage our performance so that we achieve the outcomes and objectives set within the Strategic Plan. The Framework contains corporate performance indicators that are used to monitor performance.

To support continual improvement and effective performance management, work then began in September 2020 to review the 2019/20 Performance Management Framework. Attention was paid to the measures we identified and the targets we had set to ensure they remain relevant and current.

A programme of engagement with key stakeholders was undertaken and a series of key performance questions were used to inform the further development of our indicators. In response to feedback received through the engagement process, the narrative of the Framework was streamlined to ensure the document was more concise and user friendly. Additionally, some amendments were made to our suite of corporate indicators to strengthen our performance reporting activity. The revised *Performance Management Framework 2021/22* was published in May 2021.

Our progress towards the delivery of our Strategic Outcomes and Objectives is enabled through the development of a Three-year Programme of Work which informs our Annual Operating Plan during that period. Introduced last year, the Programme provides a greater oversight of our actions that contribute towards the Strategic Plan and has improved our business and resource planning through increased collaboration and oversight across Directorates.

The flexibility of the new Programme has been of benefit throughout the reporting period. Due to the conflicting resource requirements experienced during the pandemic and the need to create capacity to support the change agenda for the Service, our Annual Operating Plan 2020/21 was subject to two reviews this year. This ultimately resulted in a streamlined plan that focused upon critical business requirements. That same approach was carried forward into the development of the *Annual Operating Plan 2021/22* which was published in April 2021.

Work has continued to strengthen our performance management processes using our corporate Performance Management System (PMS). The system aims to improve evidence-led decision making, support robust challenge and scrutiny, and evidence SFRS contribution and progress towards organisational and community outcomes. Performance reporting for both the Annual Operating Plan (via the Corporate Risk and Performance Report), Quarterly Performance Reports and Risk Reports are now produced via the PMS.

"The SFRS should fully contribute to improving the safety and well-being of Scotland's communities and must continue to build on the successful focus on prevention. It should ensure that there is a clear process for working with partners to identify the risks faced by communities and individuals, so that the SFRS can target activity on a risk-based approach and where it can most effectively improve safety and contribute to addressing inequalities within and between communities."

Our role will always be to attend emergency incidents when they occur. However, we also strive to stop these incidents occurring in the first place and, as such, fire prevention sits at the very heart of what we do. We work closely with our partners to identify risk and target our prevention activity to ensure we can help make Scotland as safe as we can.

COVID-19, and the ensuing lockdown which began in March 2020, brought many unprecedented challenges to our prevention work, impacting Scotland's risk profile overnight. With people being urged to stay at home, the potential for more fires in Scottish residential properties increased considerably. The early identification of this risk helped to inform a swift response. We developed guidance to empower local areas to act to meet the needs of their communities by operating within a set of core principles. On a national level, we developed an engagement strategy which required innovation to counter the unique circumstances of the pandemic.

In recognising the new risks, our aim was to continue to engage with people across Scotland and to prevent an increase in dwelling fires. We relied, as always, on the dedication of our staff and the support of our partners.

Building on the success of previous community safety initiatives, we ran a targeted engagement campaign focusing on five key areas: cooking; smoking; smoke and heat alarms; electrical safety; and establishing a night time routine. Key elements of the campaign included:

- TV, radio, press, online and social media advertising
- A downloadable COVID-19 Home Fire Safety Checklist
- Virtual HFSVs
- Our '5 Quick Questions' questionnaire
- Our motivated team of staff who continued to deliver thousands of activities throughout the pandemic

Our fire safety TV advert, developed with partners at STV creative, was seen by 54% of adults in Scotland. 78% of those adults were over 60 – one of our target groups – and 1 million adults saw our advertising via social media and online advertising.

As new trends emerged, we refocused our community safety messaging. In Autumn, in response to an increase in fire fatalities and serious accidental dwellings fires, our messaging was adapted to target people over 50 who: smoked and who either lived alone; had mobility issues; or used medical oxygen. These criteria were based on fire investigation analysis.

The resultant *Make the Call campaign* launched with a national radio advert and was supported by partner organisations across the community safety sector. Make the Call was a hard-hitting appeal to carers, family and friends of those who are at risk of serious injury or even death because of an accidental fire in their home.

The campaign appealed to communities to help save a life and consider home fire safety when checking in on vulnerable neighbours, friends and family members during lockdown and to put them in touch with us wherever possible using our free HFSV phoneline.

Our staff, who worked at Community Hubs, engaged with the public throughout the campaign, distributing 109,000 leaflets and 10,000 posters. This was followed by TV, press and social media campaigns in October 2020. Our Make the Call radio advert reached almost 2 million adults in Scotland, being heard 16.5 million times. The social media campaign reached a combined Scottish audience of over 600,000, whilst the television advert reached 43% of Scottish adults (with 70% of those over 60). Make the Call newspaper adverts reached 32% of C2DE[1] adults in Scotland (and 40% of C2DE adults over 50).

A COVID-19 Home Fire Safety Checklist was developed to run in conjunction with the TV campaign. As it was deemed unsafe to use traditional methods of delivering leaflets, this downloadable resource was shared widely across websites and social media accounts by ourselves and 60 of our partners – being viewed on social media over 400,000 times.

Home Fire Safety Visits

Our HFSVs are a vital tool in our prevention agenda. However, following Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance, which was put in place to protect the safety of communities and our staff, all HFSVs, other than those identified as safety critical, such as where there is no detection present, were suspended at the beginning of lockdown. They were later made available to those households deemed to be at higher risk.

In the absence of physical visits, we developed a Home Fire Safety Questionnaire - a short questionnaire used by our staff to telephone households across Scotland, helping to cover key fire safety risks. This questionnaire was just one of the ways we continued to engage with the public during the pandemic. We carried out 7,132 such engagement activities between March and October 2020 and as well as calling households, we fit smoke alarms (when we were able to do so) and carried out post domestic incident responses - where we engage with residents, and share safety messaging, after a local fire.

In the absence of a full programme of HFSVs, we introduced an online *Fire Safety in the Home – Self Assessment*. This allowed anyone who visited the web page to answer a series of questions and receive personalised fire safety information for their home. The simple assessment could be carried out on behalf of a neighbour, family member or friend. Following extensive promotion via social media, our online tool had over 11,500 views over the year.

Since the launch of COVID-19 campaigns and online resources, we have been contacted by other UK Fire and Rescue Services who are interested in using these tools.

Youth Volunteer Scheme

As well as using our usual channels to deliver our seasonal safety campaigns, this year our Youth Volunteers (YVs) promoted our Firework and Bonfire Safety Campaigns. Our YVs promoted preventative messages in schools, as well as the local community to communicate directly to their peers.

This group of young people are very much the face of the SFRS, hailed as positive role models in their communities for their volunteering contributions. YVs are actively encouraged to take part in the planning and participation of various events and activities to create positive social change that is of benefit to the wider community, as well as to the young people themselves.

Launched in February 2020, our *Youth Volunteer Scheme (YVS)* creates opportunities to improve life chances and empower young people. Already we have created ten schemes with a capacity to engage 200 young people (YP) and plan to develop a further five with capacity extending to 300 YP. Six schemes are fully established and are currently engaging with the 66 YVs that were welcomed to the SFRS prior to COVID-19. The remaining four will come on line when appropriate under COVID-19 rules.

Since March 2020, the scheme has moved to online engagement. Various lesson plans from the syllabus were created and adapted to allow our volunteers to meet digitally and continue their learning with us. The six 'live' cohorts kept in touch with their volunteers via digital channels to provide some peer and adult support, promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Creative sessions were held with YVs having quizzes online, setting social media challenges,

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1   C2DE is the socio demographic group which is most often at risk from fire, including those who depend on welfare for income, pensioners, and residents in areas of multiple deprivation.

and working in partnership with other national youth organisations to develop learning. The six local schemes designed youth messaging around COVID-19, supporting Scottish Government messages about social distancing, clap for carers and keeping in touch with those feeling isolated.

A weekly online chat service was set up to allow YVs and Volunteer Youth Instructors (VYI) to meet with a member of the national Community Safety Engagement Team to help keep updated and connected.

Together with their instructors, YVs were actively involved in developing Phase 2 of the YVS syllabus - Responsible Citizens. Recruitment processes have concluded for the VYIs who will support the new local schemes to be implemented once face to face activity can begin again. We currently have 30 active VYIs, with a further 42 who will begin their role as new schemes are implemented in other areas.

Crucial to the success of YVS is partnership work with many organisations including Police Scotland, Fearless, Young Scot, YouthLink Scotland, Enable, Army Cadets, RNLI, National Fire Cadets, LGBT Youth Scotland and Save a Life Scotland. The National Community Safety Engagement Team continue to work with partners to further progress the development of YVS. One project ongoing is exploring a dedicated reward scheme for YVs in partnership with Young Scot.

Smoke Detection

Another important prevention tool is smoke detection within the home.

Following a consultation on fire and smoke alarms undertaken by the Scottish Government, the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 will be amended to reflect a new level of requirement for these vital pieces of equipment. The amended standard was originally due for implementation in February 2021 but has been extended to 2022 due to the impact of COVID-19. The new standard will cover all homes, with the existing standard required in private rented housing to be extended to all tenures of housing.

Our work to implement the new standard is well underway. The Scottish Government provided £678,956 in the 2019/20 financial year to allow us to purchase interlinked smoke and heat alarms, and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. A further £38,685 was later spent in 2020/21

on alarms, with significant funding provided to purchase ladders to facilitate the installation of the new equipment.

A Safe System of Work has been developed to ensure safe methods and procedures are followed when staff are fitting to the new standard. Additionally, guidance documents and training is available to our staff covering the technical and procedural aspects of fitting to the new standard. To support the accurate recording of smoke, heat and CO alarms, and other assets such as fire-retardant bedding held at areas, a new Asset Management Application was introduced during the reporting period.

The new detectors procured will enable SFRS to fit to the new standard of detection in all 'High Risk', owner-occupied properties. The roll-out programme to fit the new standard of detection began in Autumn 2020 and concluded in February 2021. Following moving into Level 3 of the of the COVID-19 Restriction Levels in April 2021, staff across Scotland have been fitting to the new standard.

Remote Auditing for Regulatory Compliance

As well as providing safety advice to householders and members of the public, we have a duty to regulate non-domestic buildings in terms of fire safety in accordance with Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. This work is delivered through a risk based inspection program incorporated within our *Fire Safety Enforcement Policy Framework*.

The challenges presented by the pandemic led to reduced engagement between April and September 2020. On-site audits presented a risk to our officers and the community through potential transmission of the virus and, as such, were limited. Additionally, many difficulties existed within premises, depending on the nature of that business, in introducing COVID-related protective measures as some had the potential to conflict with day-to-day fire safety measures within buildings. Reductions in staff numbers due to sickness or isolation, particularly in the care sector, could affect abilities to manage evacuations should a fire occur.

Recognising these challenges and engaging with local Fire Safety Enforcement (FSE) teams, a working group was established to consider the introduction of virtual and/or telephone audits. Following a pilot process, a Remote Auditing Procedure, incorporating best practice and lessons learned, was launched. This allowed continued engagement with dutyholders to manage fire risks, and

support the prioritisation of any risk critical premises that would require further enforcement intervention.

The policy is now well established and can be flexibly applied where restrictions prevent our FSE teams from entering premises unnecessarily. Furthermore, the Policy supports FSE work across the more remote areas of Scotland to ensure fire risk within our communities is managed in line with the priorities set out within our Framework. We continue to respond to risk critical intelligence and are developing strategies to realign activities to meet the requirements of our framework.

Partner Engagement

The challenges presented during the pandemic have demonstrated the good working arrangements with partners to positively improve community safety. The creation of the NHS Louisa Jordan Hospital in Glasgow was an outstanding example of bringing partners together to create a temporary facility designed to treat those affected by the pandemic.

This involved, amongst other things, the enhancement of fire safety measures in an existing building that utilised local and national FSE teams, Operations staff and the Fire Engineering Team to ensure those resorting were safe from fire and bespoke attendance arrangements could be made to deal with any incident.

The revision of our Memorandum of Understanding with the Care Inspectorate improved communications across the country to react to new care premises and ensure those most vulnerable, who needed support, could receive it at the earliest opportunity.

SPOTLIGHT
EXPANDING OUR FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

This year, the Fire Investigation Section (FI) expanded their team by welcoming a Fire Investigation Dog Team (FIDT). This new resource supports our FI teams and improves our capabilities and performance.

A specially trained canine called Phoenix and his handler are now nationally available to support FI teams at fire scenes where it is suspected that ignitable liquids may have been used as an accelerant.

The benefits of a trained fire investigation canine asset are recognised across the fire investigation sector and we are one of the few fire and rescue services in the UK to have such an asset at our disposal.

Phoenix and his handler have demonstrated that they are more efficient and effective at detecting the presence of ignitable liquids in complex fire scenes than specialist equipment or the nose of a human fire investigator.

The FIDT provides the capability to ensure that a comprehensive fire scene investigation is undertaken. This enhanced capability supports safeguarding of our investigative processes by detecting key supporting evidence that may be crucial to the investigation and form part of the final Fire Investigation Report. The evidence documented within the report is shared with partners in Police Scotland and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service, and can be used as evidence where an SFRS Fire Investigation Report is part of criminal justice proceedings.

The FIDT can be utilised for community safety engagement, providing both a proactive and reactive role. They are available to support our Community Action Teams when they are discussing anti-social behaviour or wilful fire-raising activities. The Team can also provide trauma support for victims of fire. Phoenix is trained to interact and, where appropriate, will offer comfort and support for individuals or families who may have suffered injury or loss at a fire-related event.

PRIORITY 3 – RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE

"The SFRS should work with other public-sector partners to evolve a holistic and dynamic process of identification, evaluation and assessment of community risk and Best Value in order to prioritise and target its use of resources to ensure an appropriate response to incidents across Scotland and support improved outcomes for communities. As part of this approach, the SFRS should promote optimal command, control, communication and tri-service co-operation in response to incidents."

Working alongside our partners to develop an appropriate response to incidents is a crucial element of our role and you will see many examples of this type of working throughout this document. It is also one of the central themes of the development of the new SFRS Operational Strategy.

The Strategy commits to improve community resilience through collaboration with our partners in the public sector. This commitment to joint working is a key aspect within the six Concepts of Operations that form it.

Wildfire response is the first of our Concept of Operations to be developed. It focuses on the opportunities and benefits of working in partnership with stakeholders in the private and third sector. This approach will maximise opportunities for us and our partners through the enhanced command, control and communications arrangements of a tri-service approach, responding to, and managing, wildfire incidents.

Wildfires have a devastating impact upon the countryside. They destroy natural habitats for wildlife and release large quantities of carbon into the atmosphere from the smoke they produce where peatlands are involved. We have developed a Concept of Operations and new *Wildfire Strategy* that focuses on the need to prevent these fires from happening, and ensuring that when they do, the response is as efficient and effective as possible.

During the reporting period, a multi-departmental Wildfire Implementation Group has been established and initial actions given to all members: a Wildfire Strategy awareness document has been created by our Communications Team; the Asset Management Team has carried out research work to identify and procure suitable PPE for a Wildfire response that can be used at multiple

incident types; and work has been carried out to identify the equipment and vehicle needs for the two tiers of Wildfire Response Stations, with the procurement process set to begin very soon.

We continue to actively seek opportunities to work collaboratively with our public-sector partners to identify and deliver secure and trusted digital solutions. To do

this we held discussions with the NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) to organise 'Vizathon' - an event which considered existing Wildfire data and used dashboards to interrogate that data. Due to the impact of the pandemic, there were significant delays in starting this project, however, it took place in June 2021.

The development and delivery of the necessary training for wildfire response, in accordance with the National Fire Chiefs Council Framework for response stations, has been identified and four additional Wildfire Tactical Advisors were added to our cadre of specially trained officers who will support Incident Commanders across the country.

We continue to chair the Scottish Wildfire Forum and work closely with our partners. A significant part of the Forum's work has been the assistance provided to Scottish Government to develop the Scottish National Risk Assessment for Wildfires which will appear in Scotland's Risk Preparedness Assessment.

Partnership working has been equally as crucial in relation to our involvement in the Conference of the Parties (COP26) event. These conferences allow for multi-lateral discussion of climate change matters and rotate annually around the five United Nations (UN) regional groups. In November 2021, the Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow will host this year's event. It is anticipated it will be the largest international summit held within the United Kingdom, with estimated numbers of 150 Heads of State being accompanied by over 30,000 delegates.

We remain an important partner in supporting the safety and security of COP26 and have a statutory requirement, as detailed within the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), to plan for, respond to and recover from such national events.

Additionally, our planning includes the protection of our business as usual emergency response arrangements.

SPOTLIGHT
IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS AT MAJOR INCIDENTS

Incidents at Grenfell Tower and the Manchester Arena identified that a dedicated Emergency Services InterControl Talkgroup (ESICTL) should be introduced to improve the flow of communications at any major or critical incident.

The Talkgroup was commissioned by the Home Office and has been introduced across the United Kingdom.

We have worked closely with Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service to put procedures and processes in place to share information should an incident of such magnitude occur within Scotland.

Operational Assurance

Operational Assurance (OA) is a vital component in the analysis of pre-incident preparedness, during-incident performance and post-incident debrief information, with a primary aim to continue the enhancement of the safety of our firefighters. It is vital that we review our activity at incidents and allow our colleagues across the Service and other UK fire and rescue services to benefit from any lessons learned.

Over the reporting period, valuable learning has been shared through a variety of channels including: 12 Frontline Updates – an internal publication that allows us to share internal and external learning events across the SFRS; two operational debriefs for significant events attended by the SFRS; and an OA seminar for Board members and strategic managers.

To further support the gathering, analysis, progression and sharing of operational learning, we have developed an electronic tool called the Operational Assurance Recording and Reporting System (OARRS).

The system launched in November 2020 and will allow learning to be collected from station audits, incident reviews and incident debriefs by providing a direct link between our staff and OA department.

Our OA processes and governance have been further strengthened over the course of the year through the publication of the: Operational and Event Debriefing General Information Note; OARRS guidance; and the During Incident Operational Assurance General Information Note.

SPOTLIGHT
DOCUMENT CONVERSION PROJECT

A project team was established in January 2021 to review and update our operational documents which provide risk critical information and operational procedures to our staff on the frontline.

The updated converted documents will be made available on tablets and mobile phones to enhance accessibility and improve firefighter safety at incidents.

The project will provide us with a sustainable document suite that:

- produces a governance pathway for document production
- provides enhanced legal compliance by maintaining currency of documents

- aligns operational procedures with National Operational Guidance
- links seamlessly with related training and learning materials

As part of the project, operational staff were asked for their feedback, via a survey, about the current suite of operational documents. The survey received 549 responses across all Duty Groups.

To date, over 800 documents have been examined and categorised to ensure no information is omitted during the conversion project.

Firefighting in Buildings will be the first document to be launched after a period of consultation and familiarisation.

Command and Control Futures (CCF) Project

Work continues to progress the implementation of our new Command and Control Mobilising System that will enable integration of all three of our Operations Control Centres. The system will deploy bespoke technology that will significantly enhance both community and firefighter safety.

Whilst the pandemic has had an adverse impact on the delivery timeline, and is clearly out with our control, the project team has continued to drive the programme forward, taking a proactive approach to minimise delays as much as possible. Working with French contractor, Systel, we have adapted plans and increased resources to have the new system in place in all three Operations Control centres by mid-2022.

Despite the challenges of the last 12 months, considerable progress continues to be made including establishing accreditation for the Airwave Code of Connection, conducting staff training and continuing user-testing.

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)

We continue to be involved in the ESMCP and are one of the three Scottish Emergency Services reporting to the Scottish Government. The ESMCP was established by the Home Office to manage the replacement of the current Airwave Tetra Communications network currently used by the UK's emergency services.

We have an active cross-directorate working group at tactical level and a Project Board at strategic level led by the Assistant Chief Officer of Service Development.

The Programme has undergone a review and it is anticipated that the transition to the Emergency Services Network from Airwave will take place in the summer of 2024, with the decommission of Airwave planned for the end of 2026.

"The SFRS should support effective multi-agency emergency planning and response arrangements including contributing fully to the work of Regional and Local Resilience Partnerships in assessing risk; and preparing, planning for, responding to and recovering from major catastrophic incidents and threats. When working with other responders, the SFRS should play a key role in building community resilience and protecting both Scottish and UK critical infrastructure assets."

Maintaining service delivery during COVID-19: Early Stages

Our main purpose is to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on prevention, protection and response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.

To effectively support this strategy during the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic, three main governance routes were established, all of which fed into the SFRS Gold Group (our Strategic Leadership Team):

- **COVID-19 Tactical Action Group (COTAG)** – established to ensure that we continued to operate efficiently and effectively, whilst maintaining a high standard of service delivery through effective business continuity planning. This included ensuring that all areas of the Service were prepared and equipped to maintain service delivery safely, in the challenging conditions presented by COVID-19.
- **Forward Planning and Recovery Group** – established to consider recovery methodology and a structure to support and aid us to return to a new normality. It was recognised that through the working and learning developed by this group there was an opportunity to review and, where necessary, improve current processes to maintain the delivery of services in an efficient and effective manner; ultimately assisting the organisation to continually improve.
- **Health and Welfare Group** – established to provide resources and tools to safeguard the health and welfare of our staff.

Navigating COVID-19: Our Current Approach

From the 25 May 2020, the Senior Management Board was confirmed as the primary method of ensuring robust strategic oversight and decision making to support our response to and recovery from COVID-19. The Board, known as COSMB, resumed responsibility to build upon the initial work delivered by the COTAG.

COSMB acted as the strategic SFRS group responsible for overseeing and coordinating all activity related to Reset and Renew arrangements associated with COVID-19. The group has continued to ensure our values are adhered to and are evident in our decision making.

Both the COTAG and COSMB, have been supported by our COP26 Team. The team, which was originally established to oversee several national events that were due to take place throughout 2020/21 were re-purposed, in part, as the CoTeam. This new direction saw them support COVID-19 response management arrangements, with a focus on protecting frontline services and supporting firefighter safety.

The CoTeam were heavily involved in the preparation and promotion of the processes that were developed to ensure that our operational staff could still safely protect the communities of Scotland.

In June 2020, the underpinning General Information Note, Pandemic Station and Operations Control Standards, was issued. This document provided a framework for operational managers and staff to consider the necessary steps to enhance safety during the pandemic. It has the overarching aim of supporting and encouraging staff to remain safe within their workplace by promoting positive behaviours and

culture. It has continued to be reviewed and developed in line with Scotland's changing operating environment.

Additionally, 27 Task Cards were produced, each providing step-by-step guides to carry out operational tasks safely.

The team helped to prepare the daily and weekly COVID-19 reports that were, and continue to be, shared with our Strategic Leadership Team and Scottish Government. These briefs monitor our progress against COVID-19 related workstreams; report appliance availability figures; and highlight the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases within the Service.

In October 2020, when Scotland encountered a second wave of COVID-19, the COTAG was re-established ensuring robust strategic oversight and decision making to support our response to and recovery from COVID-19.

During December 2020, in response to the negative impact of additional COVID-19 variants, COTAG enacted the COVID-19 Advisory Unit (CAU) to support and advise management teams across the Service. The CAU utilised Scottish Government and Public Health guidance to support the application of COVID-19 mitigations according to local, regional or national viral prevalence.

Recovery, Reset and Renew Routemap

It is recognised at a national, international and global level that COVID-19 is likely to remain part of our way of life for a considerable period. Therefore, many of the changes and new processes that have been implemented in response to COVID-19 may require to be maintained for the foreseeable future and perhaps even permanently.

At some point the pandemic will be over and life will return to a more normal posture. However, it may not be possible or appropriate to return to how things were prior to the pandemic. We remain focused on responding to the challenges of COVID-19; however, we recognise that a reset and renew phase is an important element of the overall process.
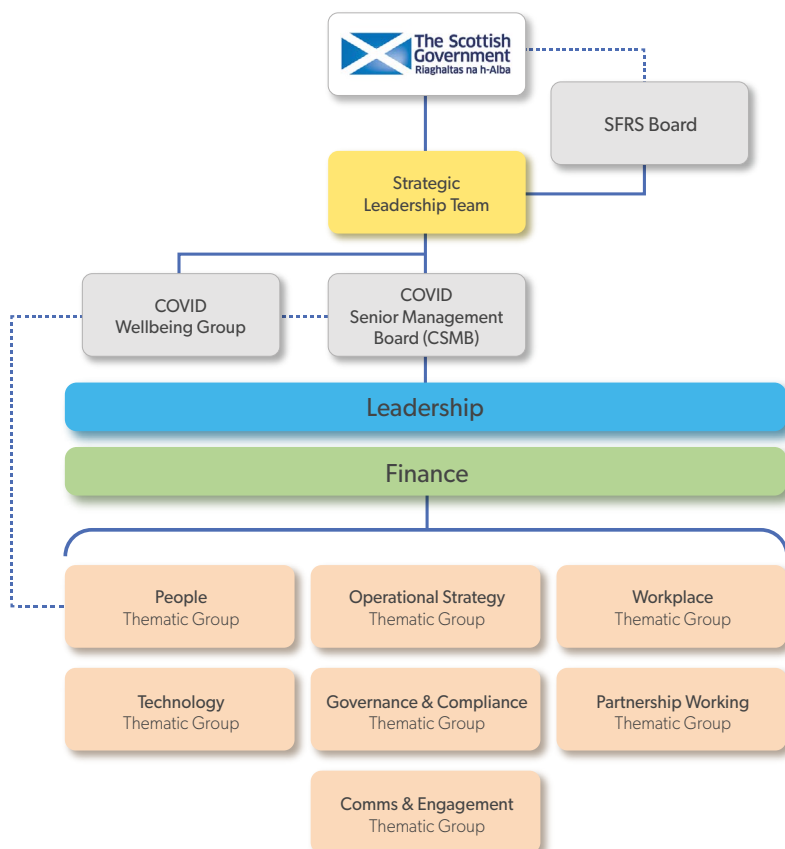
In July 2020, we developed the routemap for navigating COVID-19 and delivery of the associated Reset and Renew Agenda. The Routemap centres around our organisational values of Safety, Teamwork, Respect and Innovation and is underpinned by the SFRS COVID-19 Operating Principles of: Safe; Person Centred; Evidence Based; and Clearly Communicated. The SFRS Routemap is aligned with the strategy and guidance provided by Scottish Government and specifically the COVID-19 Framework for Decision Making.

The Routemap was reviewed, updated and approved by the COSMB in May 2021. A key element of the update was the acknowledgement of the significant organisational experience developed from our pandemic response to date. It was also recognised that any rush to return to 'normal' working would most likely undermine much of the fantastic work delivered, and could potentially compromise operational and organisational resilience. Additionally, to support our change ambitions, a further overarching principle of Recovery was identified to complement the existing Reset and Renew principles.

These amendments resulted in the creation of the SFRS COVID-19 Routemap to Delivering Recovery, Reset and Renew, which outlines the following fundamentals:

- **Recovery** – dealing with non-critical backlogs that have developed over the period i.e. training, recruitment, equipment testing, property maintenance, etc
- **Reset** – returning any adapted operating processes and approaches, where appropriate, to their pre-pandemic position and/or posture
- **Renew** – the implementation of new working processes and practices based on experience and knowledge gained from the pandemic or from other improvement processes and methodologies

As well as adding the new principle of Recovery, the eight primary themes were reviewed and updated to ensure that they remained fit for purpose and accurately reflected the key areas of need.

Those updated key themes and are now confirmed as:

- People and Leadership
- Workplace
- Operational Strategy

- Governance and Compliance
- Technology
- Finance
- Communications and Engagement
- Prevention, Protection and Partnership Working

In support of the primary themes, a suite of supporting themes has been developed. These themes, which will be continually reviewed, will serve as a filter to examine the impact across the organisation as new continuous improvement objectives are developed.

Communicating our COVID-19 approach

It was crucial that our approach to managing COVID-19 was shared with our staff. Our Communications and Engagement Team reprioritised all work during the period to ensure that staff received clear, concise and timely information regarding the impact of COVID-19 at work.

Two communications strategies were developed – one to support the tactical response and the other to support the reset, renew and recovery work in terms of how we will respond, in the longer term, to the lessons learned throughout the pandemic.

As a result, the team introduced regular staff and manager briefings, and dedicated COVID-19 sections on iHub and Sharepoint, so that all staff could access relevant information without the need to be in one of our premises. Additionally, staff heard directly from our Chief Officer via regular Q&A sessions which were broadcast.

Significant work was undertaken to support the COVID-secure status of buildings and communicate the role and responsibilities of staff in ensuring they take appropriate action to mitigate any spread of infection. This included developing posters, videos and information booklets, as well as reinforcing messaging through staff briefing emails.

The function conducted a series of workshops with staff to capture their experiences of COVID-19 to help inform the workstreams identified through reset and renew.

An SFRS Employee Facebook group was established, as well as employee networks with virtual groups of colleagues from across the Service to help staff keep in touch.

SPOTLIGHT
SUPPORTING LOCAL RESILIENCE PARTNERSHIPS DURING COVID-19

During the unprecedented period of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became more important than ever to work with partners to help support the most vulnerable people in society and the communities we serve.

Throughout this time of need, our staff continued to go above and beyond the call of duty to offer increased support and assistance. In addition to receiving formal requests via local authorities, community partnerships and other agencies, they have often taken it upon themselves to respond to individual and/or community needs across the country.

Colleagues in Lanarkshire launched a series of initiatives to help the elderly and vulnerable during COVID-19. Members of the South Lanarkshire Community Action Team, along with two colleagues from Clydesmill Fire Station, worked closely with South Lanarkshire Council's Community Wellbeing team in delivering prescriptions. The partnership reached out to 250 voluntary groups, including the elderly person's charity LEAP.

Prescriptions have also been delivered across Renfrewshire and Midlothian, and as far afield as Orkney. Stirling firefighters have helped deliver hand sanitisers to the vulnerable and Renfrew Community Fire Safety Team collected essential toiletries for patients and medical staff.

As well as food and prescription deliveries, there are those who have stepped in to provide social support within their communities. Ayrshire's Community Action Team provided support for the elderly and vulnerable through vital befriending calls. A new helpline for people in Glasgow who needed support during the pandemic was fully supported by the Glasgow Community Action Team where staff supported a virtual help desk by responding to calls.

Members of the East Administration Team helped regions within the East Service Delivery Area by taking on additional training and duties to help keep the Community Safety Engagement Toolkit up to date and supporting those in need to stay safe by sending out reminder letters for Home Fire Safety Visits.

Work has been undertaken to help support local foodbanks who have been significantly impacted during this time. Crews at Blairgowrie Community Fire Station worked with their local Tesco to generously provide more than three full shopping trolleys worth of essential items to Perth and Kinross Foodbank, and crews at Port Glasgow donated shopping vouchers to a local voluntary group to assist those struggling.

Group Commander (GC) David Girrity (Edinburgh City) and his wife Jennifer prepared and cooked 120 meals in 8 hours in their volunteer roles in Eyemouth where they live. The couple offered their assistance in preparing food for the Eyemouth Responders Team, which is part of Scottish Borders Council's Resilient Communities Initiative. Food is donated to the local project by members of the public, supermarkets and government funded initiative and volunteers then cook meals which are delivered to people in the community.

In Angus, with thanks to a multiagency project to reduce fire risks during the COVID-19 pandemic, community walk rounds took place across the area to help safety teams spot fire hazards

Stirling firefighters worked with Doune's Deanston Distillery, who had diversified, to help deliver dozens of cases of hand sanitiser to care homes throughout Stirling and Clackmannanshire. Perth firefighters raised money to organise a rainbow 'Thank You NHS" flag to fly above the station and donate to the Tayside Health Fund.

GC Scott Gibson, who is a football coach for an under-14 female team, helped to inspire young athletes to keep fighting fit with weekly social media challenges, including keepie-ups with a toilet roll. These challenges helped keep the team active and engaged during lockdown.

GC Tommy Keay joined an innovative project led by Dumfries and Galloway Libraries to keep children entertained over lockdown by reading interesting and educational tales to them over Facebook. His recital of Frances the Firefly, a story that includes important fire safety messaging for young people, was watched by more than 400 children and families.

Watch Commander Danielle MacGillivray, from the Western Isles, called upon a team of young stars, including her son, to help create a fun and informative video on how families can stay safe at home. Each were set a task of simple safety measures such as testing smoke alarms, ensuring candles are fully extinguished, switching off plugs, and making sure doors within the home are closed. These compiled into a brilliant video highlighting some key fire safety advice. Similarly, retained Firefighter Amy Gerrard (Lerwick) created fire safety home education packs, for children of all ages.

PRIORITY 5 – PARTNERSHIP

"Community planning and partnership working with other services and communities should be embedded throughout the SFRS. Building on its existing Engagement Strategy, the SFRS should proactively seek collaborative opportunities and innovative ways of working in partnership with other blue light services/key stakeholders to improve outcomes for communities and should ensure effective stakeholder engagement in its approach to all its work including partnership working."

Teamwork is one of our core values and we acknowledge the wide-ranging benefits partnership working can bring. Many partnerships are now fully embedded and span a full range of services, you'll see examples in many sections of this report.

For the purposes of Priority 5, we will focus on the work of the Reform Collaboration Group (RCG).

The RCG, comprises both the Chairs and Chief Officers of all three emergency services and meets on a 6-monthly basis. The RCG Officers Support Group, comprising of Directors and senior managers, meets quarterly to ensure progress is being made on agreed projects.

Eight areas of collaboration have been identified to take forward. Some of these projects are new and are still at a developmental stage, whilst others are more established:

Joint Asset Sharing

This project has been established for several years and managed by a Joint Assets Sharing Group to develop a systematic approach to considering opportunities for station co-location.

Currently there are 834 stations operated by the Emergency Services (356 SFRS, 349 Police Scotland, and 129 SAS). There are now 51 locations where at least two of the three emergency services share indoor space.

There are several further locations which are used as tactical deployment points where, for example, an ambulance can be mobilised from a fire station. Some of these, and other locations, are shared with other partners e.g. Councils, the DVLA, or the Coastguard Agency.

In addition to exploring shared property opportunities, we are exploring how we may work together on a joint Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and shared workshops. We have a joint Automatic Vehicle Location System contract agreed and are working towards a contract for consumable spares.

Emergency Service Network

The Emergency Services Network Programme Board was established to manage the changeover to a new emergency communications network. The Programme has undergone a review and it is anticipated that the transition to the Emergency Services Network from Airwave will take place in the summer of 2024, with the decommission of Airwave planned for the end of 2026.

Mental Health Response

This project will seek to scope out how services can reduce the emergency demand of, and better support individuals with, mental health problems.

Staff Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of our staff is paramount and we recognise that good mental health is just as important as good physical health. We launched our Mental Health Strategy in June 2020 and continue to work in collaboration to develop *the Lifelines project* and explore opportunities to work collaboratively across the tri-services. This initiative delivers a tailored mental health and resilience framework for emergency and first responders in Scotland.

Leadership Development

This project seeks to identify and deliver areas of collaborative leadership development. Areas being explored include the development of a shared competency framework and joint leadership and command training.

Demand and Capacity

The three Services are exploring their future demand and capacity challenges and have agreed to share information on their respective methodologies and modelling systems. By working together, the RCG intend to jointly develop our understanding of changing community risk and its impact on demand, and the subsequent relationship between Service demand and resource requirements.

Tri-Service Community Safety Officer Posts

The aim of this project, will be to combine all aspects of the three emergency services and the Local Authority community safety and resilience work into one jointly employed individual to deliver on behalf of the partners. The intention is to improve efficiency and effectiveness of all three emergency services and the local authority in remote rural areas accordingly.

Emergency Services Gazetter

Delivery of this project is highly dependent on securing adequate project management resources. Confirmation of funding is awaited from Scottish Government.

To support delivery of the RCG projects, a Programme Office style approach has been adopted. This will ensure reporting of projects is consistent across the three services and will provide the RCG with a clearer understanding of development and progress.

PRIORITY 6 – SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

"The SFRS should continue to ensure that the benefits of Fire Reform are fully realised, evidenced and tracked, and it should explore through Service redesign new and innovative ways in which it can improve the safety and well-being of communities throughout Scotland by building on the traditional roles carried out by the Service."

Delivering change

A review of organisational structures, combined with the recognition of the scale of existing change and our future change ambitions, resulted in the creation of a new Directorate within the Service during the year.

The Service Development Directorate was formed in March 2020 with the overarching purpose of providing the bridge between strategy and implementation. It will do this through the coordination of activity and by providing access to a full suite of change management, change delivery and service improvement capabilities.

The Service Development Directorate consists of the: SFRS Portfolio Office; Service Improvement; Service Delivery Model Programme; and Information, Communications and Technology functions.

The structure and operation of the new directorate will continually adapt, flex and ultimately improve to meet the very dynamic needs of managing and delivering change.

Our Portfolio Office: Setting up to Deliver Change

In support of the Gateway Review, carried out by the Scottish Government Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise, which identified and recommended the need to move to a Portfolio structure, we have appointed a new Head of Function for the Portfolio Office, with a strategic mandate to "Set up to Deliver Change".

In support of our ambitions to deliver on our strategic intent, we are currently in the process of the definition and design of a roadmap of capabilities and services that will ensure the Portfolio Office can support the effective execution and delivery of all strategic and major change across the SFRS Portfolio.

A portfolio approach will have many benefits, including:

- Selecting and investing in more of the right programmes and projects at the right time
- Greater effectiveness and efficiency in our execution and delivery of change through standardised and repeatable processes, ensuring change is delivered in the right way
- Enhanced transparency, accountability and governance assurance
- Greater benefits realisation via continuous approaches to leverage the capacity and capability created across the SFRS

The continuous enablement and development of capability and services provided by the Portfolio Office will ensure we benefit from improved awareness across the aggregated Portfolio. It will provide the necessary inputs to effectively inform the decision-making process, whilst improving overall cross-organisational collaboration in pursuit of shared strategic goals.

Our existing Portfolio is comprised of strategic and major change projects that support the delivery of our change ambitions and the Strategic Plan 2019-22, and are managed through the Portfolio Office function. A summary of these are provided in the table below:

PROGRAMME	PROJECT
Strategic Change	Safe and Well
	Retained & Volunteer Duty System Strategy
Service Delivery Model	Community Risk Index Model
	Demand Based Watch Duty System
	Station/ Appliance Review
Major Projects	Command and Control (Phase 2)
	Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme
	McDonald Road Redevelopment and Museum of Fire
	People, Training, Finance and Asset Management System
	West Asset Resource Centre

Developing our Long-Term Vision

The pandemic has undoubtedly changed the way that we need to work. As a Service we are experiencing intense organisational change pressures. However, these pressures do not just come from COVID-19. Some of them, like the consequences of climate change or the changing risk profile of our communities, have been developing for some time.

We face a highly volatile and uncertain operating environment through which we must plot our course of action to ensure the services we provide continue to evolve to meet these and other challenges as they emerge. To do this, we have begun work to develop a long-term vision for the Service.

Working to support the National Fire and Rescue Framework our long-term vision will clearly articulate our purpose and provide a guide for staff on where we are going and, critically, why we think we need to go there. It will establish the breadth of our ambitions and the timescale over which we expect to realise them.

To develop our Vision, we undertook an internal engagement process to fully, openly and honestly engage with our staff. We wanted to build a shared understanding of the issues and pressures we are facing to enable them to shape our vision in partnership with senior management and our Board, leading to wider ownership of the changes we seek to bring about.

This process began with three online leadership events for senior management in September 2020, followed by 15 independently facilitated workshops with 150 frontline members of staff, an electronic staff survey and on-station discussions across Scotland.

Overall, we considered more than 800 responses, an analysis of which was outlined in a report considered by the Board and the Strategic Leadership Team in February 2021.

The key themes emerging from the feedback, highlighted below, are being taken forward as a fundamental consideration in shaping our future vision and, subsequently, in our strategic planning:

- Engage more with our communities to understand their needs

- Devolve decision making and support more autonomy at a local level to respond to local need

- Ensure continued staff engagement

- Develop an Emergency Medical Response, specifically out of hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA), working more closely with the Scottish Ambulance Service

- Review our emergency response operating model

- Review our Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal approach to create operational capacity

- Consider introducing a 'civilian' role with a community safety remit to undertake HFSVs, hydrant inspections and community engagement work

- Reduce the number of simultaneous projects

- Reduce bureaucracy in relation to internal policies and procedures

- Work with partners to look at the use of shared resources, particularly buildings and joint training

- Ensure non-Fire Brigade Union members have a voice in developing the firefighter role

- Increase capacity for training and consider joint training with the Scottish Ambulance Service

- Develop a culture of empowerment to support local decision making in response to community need and in the interests of innovation

- Develop a culture that supports working as one SFRS

We're now planning how we will move forward, taking all of this into consideration and building on the work that's already underway in relation to the key themes raised by staff. We have held discussions with all Service unions on the findings from the staff engagement exercise and will continue to engage with them as part of the process of building and delivering our long-term vision.

We engaged further with staff on the outcome of the engagement and on the draft vision in April 2021 and hosted workshops with a cross-section of staff and run an online pulse survey.

The draft vision was released for public consultation in July 2021 and we are now working to finalise it for publication. Working with staff, stakeholders and our communities we will then begin developing the detailed plans needed to deliver the long-term vision. This will be a key element in the next Strategic Plan which will cover the period 2022 to 2025, and will help inform successive Strategic Plans for the remainder of the next decade.

PRIORITY 7 – MODERNISING RESPONSE

"The SFRS should develop and implement dynamic, innovative and sustainable operating systems throughout Scotland which are fit for purpose and meet local needs (covering both the Retained Duty System and whole-time firefighter work patterns)."

Supporting our Retained and Volunteer Staff

Our Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) Firefighters provide the same full range of emergency services as their Wholetime colleagues – and generally carry out these duties whilst holding primary employment in various other fields.

Over the reporting period, we have taken a bold new approach to supporting this group of staff, with a focus on recruitment, retention and improving working practices.

The culmination of the Rural Full-Time Post (RFTP) project has seen 54 full time RVDS Watch Command Support Officers employed from amongst our existing RVDS workforce and strategically and equitably located across the country. The success of the project has created increased ability to support and maintain RVDS appliance availability, as well as providing other real tangible benefits such as increased community engagement, training support and the gathering of operational intelligence.

The integration of these positions will continue to improve and enhance capacity with the recognised required focus on supporting our RVDS, whilst demonstrating our intention to invest in rural and island communities, adding full-time employment opportunities in these areas.

The RFTP project work has now been subsumed in to business as usual and these post holders will be integral in supporting the workstreams identified through the newly formed National Retained & Volunteer Leadership Forum (NRVLF).

The formation of the NRVLF, as an empowered decision-making group, has seen the RVDS Strategy project moved from within the Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) to the Service Delivery Directorate. The purpose of the NRVLF is to develop strategies to deliver and improve RVDS matters, whilst promoting a collaborative partnership approach to support service level improvements.

The group provides foresight and leadership on RVDS requirements for improvement to maintain a safe and healthy workforce whilst driving improvements to the current RVDS Response and Operating model. The NRVLF acts as the project board for the RVDS Strategy Project and provides strategic oversight and support providing an increased emphasis, momentum and desire to forge forward and achieve continuous improvements for our RVDS.

A project manager has been appointed and they are being supported by a dedicated RVDS support team who have been drawn from across the country. These individuals have vast experience of the RVDS and act as a tactical frontline support function, responsible for supporting the implementation of Service-wide improvements to the RVDS model.

Service Delivery Model Programme

The Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) was formed in April 2019 with the overall aim to undertake short, medium and long-term scenario planning, to inform an analysis of risk across Scotland's communities. These reviews will identify where we, working within the confines of the resources available and in partnership, can deliver a balanced prevention, protection and response model that will contribute to eliminating, reducing or mitigating known or predicted community risk.

The Programme consists of three distinct but interrelated projects:

Community Risk Index Model (CRIM)

The development of a capability to provide an accurate and dynamic assessment of known and predicted risk across the country, within the fire and rescue service operating context. The model will ensure that we can continue to deliver our statutory duties, as specified within the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, whilst recognising the strategic ambition of our Strategic Plan 2019–2022 and remaining relevant to the communities we serve.

Station and Appliance Review

Using the outcomes of the CRIM, a review of current stations and appliances will be undertaken. Our current station locations will be overlaid with the outcomes of the risk review to determine if these assets are in the best locations to meet known or anticipated risks. The review will help to ensure that our stations and appliances are utilised to their maximum benefit in an effective and efficient manner within their respective operating contexts.

Demand Based Duty Systems

Within our community fire stations a constant crewing level is currently applied across the full 24-hour period of every day, despite the operational demand placed on each station varying across the same time period. This project is profiling operational demand and identifying where there may be opportunities to apply alternative solutions to current crewing models. In the simplest of terms that means having more firefighters available during busy periods and less during quieter periods, whilst ensuring there is sufficient resilience to safely respond to unexpected large scale, protracted or spate incidents. This would allow us to redeploy any additional capacity realised to undertake operational training, support community safety activity or other activities associated with maintaining an effective and safe operational capability.

Phase 1 of the Programme concluded in December 2019 and identified a total of 30 areas for consideration to be taken forward into Phase 2. Of these 30 areas, 11 were associated with the Station and Appliance Review and Demand Based Duty System Projects and 19 were associated with the RVDS Strategy. In December 2020, it was agreed that the RVDS Strategy would be transferred to the Operations Function of the Service Delivery Directorate given the very clear synergy with operational business as usual processes.

Phase 2 of the programme is well underway. An initial scope of change report was produced in December 2020 and whilst this was not a formal creation or presentation of options, it provided us with the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the potential scope of change that may be realised because of the SDMP.

In April 2021 the first base model of the CRIM was produced and approved, which focused on human geography. The second stage of CRIM development is now in progress, and this will add the built environment and the natural environment to the human geography to provide a fully functioning, accurate and validated risk identification model.

In addition to the CRIM, a Criteria for Change Model has been approved, which consists of the following 11 key elements:

- CRIM
- Operational Demand and Impact
- Operational Response Benchmarks
- Operational Resilience
- Operational Assurance Demand
- Community Safety Demand
- Budgetary Capacity
- Legal Compliance
- Political Influence
- Opportunity, Threat and Feasibility
- Person Centred Communications and Engagement

Each of the above elements will be consistently applied to scenarios to develop viable change options that meet the objectives of the SDMP. These options will be presented in an outline options for change report in March 2022 and following a full, detailed and transparent options appraisal process, will be distilled to a refined list of options that will be presented in August 2022. The agreed refined list of options will then be subject to a formal public consultation process, from which a final list of options will be developed for presentation and decision by our Strategic Leadership Team and Board circa early 2023. Planning for implementation, subject to formal approval being received, will commence thereafter.

PRIORITY 8 – UNWANTED FIRE ALARM SIGNALS

"SFRS should develop a new approach to reducing unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS) demand and road risk. This approach should involve the SFRS Board setting stretching targets to support the Service's Strategic Plan in relation to this priority."

An Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) is an event which has required an operational attendance by the fire and rescue service due to the unwanted actuation of an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) system. However, unlike other attendances, a UFAS incident will not require any firefighting action.

Accounting for almost one third of fire and rescue activity across Scotland, UFAS incidents place a drain on front line services, increase risk to road users and cause interruption to the business sector and communities.

The reduction of UFAS is complex and challenging. Meaningful reductions in UFAS calls require a strong partnership approach at national and local level, which is underpinned by an appropriate response when a UFAS is passed to us.

The complexities and challenges of achieving UFAS reductions were critically examined by a UFAS Review Working Group during 2019/20. This detailed examination concluded during the first quarter of 2020/21, with key recommendations identified as: evaluating potential policy changes; a potential framework for improving existing UFAS approaches; and exploring innovative solutions.

A UFAS Review Project Board was established to prioritise the recommendations and provide leadership focus, oversight and drive support in implementing them. You can read more about our work to evaluate policy changes below.

Evaluating Potential Policy Changes

Evaluation is being conducted using robust options appraisal methodology to identify a strategy for responding to AFAs, that will achieve an optimum balance of:

- Minimising risk to public and firefighter safety
- Maintaining an effective response to confirmed fires originating as an AFA
- Maximising efficiency savings through reducing mobilisations and expanding our capacity to invest in prevention and other value adding activities
- Having regard to relevant risk factors e.g. time of day, occupancy, and special risks
- Supporting our commitment to achieving carbon reduction targets

In conducting the options appraisal, the process is being guided by core principles to ensure that decisions take account of all relevant considerations, including engagement and consultation with staff and key stakeholders.

A Stakeholder Options Appraisal Workshop was held in February 2021 to test a range of options for responding to AFAs that have the potential to achieve UFAS reductions. This event, hosted by an external facilitator, was an invaluable part of the decision-making process and involved several key stakeholders, including representatives from health boards, universities, schools, local authorities, the fire industry, businesses and our own staff.

Feedback from the event has informed the three options for our potential future response to AFAs.

We will hold a public consultation exercise, between July and October 2021, to allow us to consider the responses from a larger range of stakeholders and interested parties. It is anticipated that a preferred option will be submitted to our Board for approval by the end of the calendar year.

SPOTLIGHT
INTERIM RESPONSE TO AFAs DURING COVID-19

During the pandemic, we implemented interim arrangements for responding to AFAs to help minimise the risk of exposure of coronavirus to our firefighters and the public. From May 2020, we began sending a single fire engine to AFAs at certain premises, which has reduced blue light journeys by 21% since its introduction.

Reduction in blue light journeys
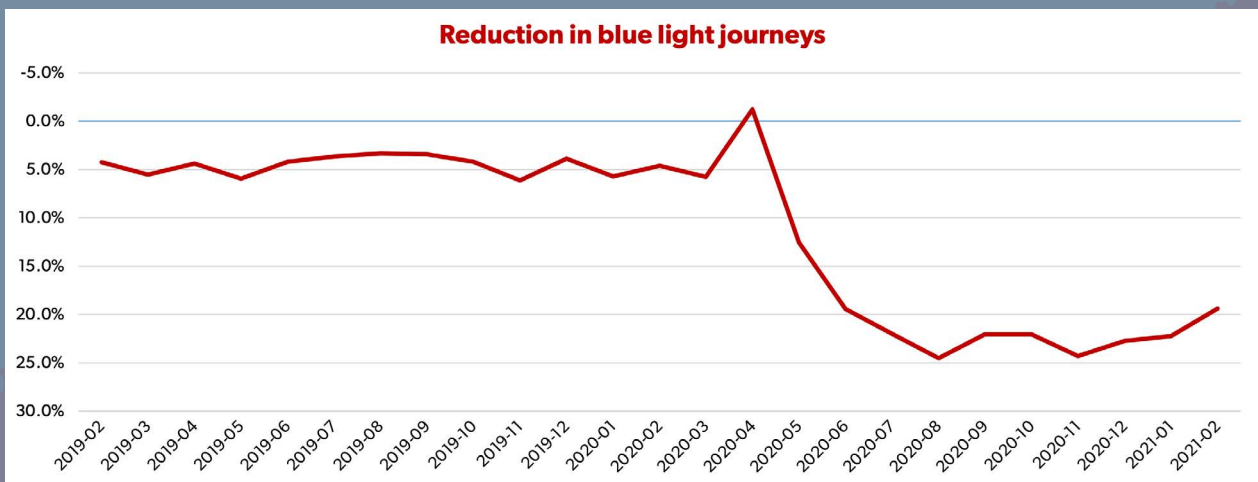
This reduction has undoubtedly improved firefighter and public safety during the pandemic through reduced road risk and a reduced risk to our firefighters of exposure to the virus, whilst still responding to AFAs.

We have reviewed the overall impact of this interim response arrangement and there has been no evidence that its implementation has had any detrimental impact.

We believe there is scope for even better outcomes and the positive impact we have seen through our interim response during the pandemic has been a sound evidence base for exploring the different AFA response strategies we have been evaluating.

PRIORITY 9 – EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE

"The SFRS should ensure it has an effective approach to performance management to support robust scrutiny of the Service at national and local levels. This approach should be regularly reviewed and evaluated in pursuit of continuous improvement. The SFRS should also collect, produce and analyse data and other intelligence to promote the safety and well-being of communities, support operational efficiency and performance improvements (including its partnership contributions) and enable effective public reporting of performance."

Effective Governance

The overarching benefit of a sound governance operating model is that it enables our Board, its Committees and our Executive functions to execute their responsibilities properly and with greater assurance that they have done so.

An internal audit of our Corporate Governance arrangements across the Service has taken place during this reporting period by Azets. The audit has provided us with independent assurance that we have generally effective corporate governance arrangements and an effective reporting framework between the Committees and the Board.

It details that our management reports to the Board and Committees are sufficiently clear, understandable and timely, and provide an appropriate level of detail to support efficient and effective decision making and scrutiny. Plans and performance against these plans are also monitored and reviewed to ensure the achievement of our objectives.

Our governance arrangements are supported by procedures which cover recording, monitoring and reporting processes. The independent audit found these to be well designed and to generally reflect good practice.

There were two recommendations made relating to: a review of the Committee Structures; and ensuring the review of effectiveness in relation to Board decisions. Both recommendations have been actioned and accepted,

further strengthening our current corporate governance arrangements.

The internal audit report coincided with the start of our journey to develop an overarching SFRS Corporate Governance Framework and Operating Model. As well as using the findings of this report, we recognise the importance of incorporating any lessons learned during the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on how we operate and continue to do in such hugely challenging times. We have engaged with key internal stakeholders to identify any areas for improvement and to ensure continuous improvement around governance.

The SFRS Corporate Governance Framework continues to be developed and forms part of our Annual Operating Plan 2021/22. The publication will ultimately provide a clear SFRS Framework of Governance from Board level and across all Executive levels of the organisation and will build on our existing *'Code of Corporate Governance'* and the *SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework*. This will ensure effective business management and supporting structures continue to be in place.

The Framework will build upon the underlying principles of: accountability; transparency and openness; integrity; stewardship; efficiency; and leadership. Additionally, it will provide a mechanism we can then use at Board, senior leadership and management level to translate the

elements of the governance framework and policies into practices, procedures, and role responsibilities within the corporate governance infrastructure.

Alongside the development of this significant piece of work, we continue to develop and strengthen our existing governance arrangements. This has included adapting our governance processes to ensure active scrutiny remains in place and conducting our *Annual Governance Review* in March 2021, approved by the Board April 2021.

It is important to highlight that at the outset of the pandemic a review of our *existing governance arrangements related to COVID-19* took place and this was monitored closely throughout. The SFRS Board have continued to follow national guidelines and this has impacted on how the Board and others conduct their business. Specifically, for the safety of our staff and our communities, all essential business of our Board and its Committees has been conducted via video or telephone conference. Despite the unprecedented challenges this brought, the Board and its Committees have continued to meet as scheduled and ensured, until such time where we can return to business as usual, all agendas and papers for meetings are published on our website in advance of meetings, with a full minute continuing to be published once it has been approved. From March 2021, *our Board meetings have been recorded* and uploaded onto our website allowing wider public access and transparency. Our Board will return to a state of full public access to Board and Committee meetings as soon as it is deemed safe in keeping with Scottish Government guidance.

The pandemic also impacted on the recruitment of new Boards Members during 2020/21, requiring the extension of two Boards Members for a period of nine months. This, however, provided continuity and resilience over this extremely challenging period. As restrictions eased, a Public Appointment went out to advert in February 2021 for four new SFRS Board Members. Appointments have been made by the Minister for Community Safety and our new Board members took up post in July 2021.

The appointment process considered the skills matrix of the existing members and importantly encouraged continued diversity within the Board. To encourage a wide range of applications and to help ensure our Board is fully representative of the communities it serves, a dedicated *recruitment event* was held in March 2021. The online

initiative received an excellent response and it is hoped has helped recruit further members to our Board who will continue to hold our strategic leaders to account, particularly through the challenging times that lie ahead.

Business Intelligence and Data Analysis

In response to a recommendation from the 2020 Business Intelligence Review, our *Business Intelligence (BI) Strategy and Action Plan* was approved in March 2021.

The Strategy sets out a vision for our approach to improving BI and data management to bring about improvements in analysis and insights across the Service.

The Strategy will help us realise our ambition to become an exemplar of BI for Fire and Rescue Services by 2025. We will build expertise in information management, analysis and data science and shift from transactional data activity to high value analysis and intelligence which will bring about improvements in the way we work. The Strategy outlines four principles that our approach to business intelligence should follow:

- A single version of the truth
- Customer focused Business Intelligence
- Good design and sound methods
- Data as an asset

The principles are supported by 12 priorities which are intended to run for the lifetime of the Strategy and will form the framework for any actions for delivery. Progress against the Strategy and 2021/22 Action Plan will be reported to our Good Governance Board on a regular basis.

In support of the BI Strategy, our Data Services Function have continued to develop relationships with academia, investing time and resource to support research and innovation through partnerships with Scottish universities, forging what we hope will be long-term collaborative relationships.

Professional development has been key in this relationship with staff currently being supported in a four-year distance learning MSc Data Sciences programme. The desired outcome is that our own team will lead more in-house development of analytical projects aimed at supporting the long-term vision of the Service.

Understanding the value of data requires good design, sound methods and robust quality assurance. As a demonstration of our commitment in this area, SFRS are now named in legislation as 'Producers of Official Statistics' which provides us with the opportunity to assign this designation to our existing statistical publications. This has meant that, for the first time, both our *Incident Statistics and Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics* have been published with this designation this year.

Financial and risk management practices

Our *Procurement Strategy 2021-24* was published in March 2021. This outward focused strategy has been developed to respond to the wider challenges Scotland faces, whilst working to deliver the aspirations of the Scottish Government.

The Strategy contains five key themes:

- Sustainability
- Value for money
- Enhancing Capability
- Transparency
- Governance and Risk

Our procurement activity is regularly audited either through internal audit and as part of the Scottish Government's Procurement Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP). We will progress and monitor improvement actions in support of the PCIP programme and will undertake a further review of our progress in conjunction with the PCIP team.

Our *Annual Procurement Report*, covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, was approved in August 2020.

The report meets our requirement under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 but importantly highlights the significant procurement activity undertaken by us in awarding 63 regulated contracts totalling more than £48.5M.

The report outlines our commitment to deliver on our sustainability duty and demonstrates community benefits through the delivery of procurement activity, including:

- Small / Medium enterprises – over 42% of SFRS total spend was with suppliers based in Scotland

and 46% of overall supplier base classified as SMEs

- Carbon Emissions – we have achieved a 15% reduction largely enabled by delivery of cleaner grid energy sources
- Property activity – McDonald Road modernisation and Newbridge training centre construction at a cost of £10.4 M with a local labour usage of 99.9%

In October 2020, our *Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20* were completed and ratified by the Board. A statutory requirement, this document reports on our overall performance and activities over the previous financial year. This year's document highlights that, once again, the SFRS managed its financial performance within expenditure limits and received a clean audit certificate for 2019/20.

To continue to develop our financial and people reporting practices, a programme of work has been established which contains several projects to deliver a fully integrated digital solution that meets our needs for our People, Training, Finance and Assets Systems (PTFAS).

PTFAS has been established to deliver flexible digital solutions that support our strategic decision making and changing ambitions as an organisation. We are engaging with prospective suppliers in advance of commencing the procurement process later in 2021.

The programme is expected to run for at least three years and when implemented will enable us to better utilise our people and asset resources, as well as: supporting key workstreams including positive workplace culture and the employee experience; new and more flexible operating models; using new vehicles and asset technologies; strengthening our retained and volunteer resources and developing training for firefighters.

A key benefit will be the provision of timely, accurate and consistent data for evidence-based decision making, planning and performance reporting delivered through verified data sources across the organisation. The system(s) procured will deliver an integrated repository of people, asset and financial information that collectively supports and develops our business intelligence capabilities.

The programme was established with regular reporting to the PTFAS programme Board and resources are now in place for the first phase of development. Progress has been made on agreeing an overall programme timeline

and phasing. The first tranche of the programme is the HR and Finance solution. Business process analysis has been completed to support the development of the specification. The procurement process for HR & Finance has been initiated and supplier engagement sessions have been completed.

Maintaining ICT security

We are a Cyber Catalyst within the Scottish Government's Cyber Security Action Plan. Our ICT Team has been working with partners externally and within the Service to fulfil the requirements of the Public-Sector Action Plan and we have already achieved accreditation to the Cyber Essentials standard.

With more people working remotely, the roll out of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is almost completed across the Service, apart from Operations Control where a more flexible solution is being piloted. MFA is a security system that needs more than one method of authentication to confirm the identity of a user. This can happen when users log on to our Office 365 system from a new location or a non-SFRS device, ensuring robust security of our ICT systems and networks.

As part of our approach to minimising the risk from cyber threats, a new system allowing users to reset passwords remotely without the need to contact ICT Helpdesk has been introduced. This system helps to ensure that we continue to operate as effectively and safely as possible.

To assist and improve collaboration our ICT Team brought forward the planned migration to Microsoft Teams – the latest collaboration product from Microsoft. This was completed in November 2020.

Criminals are using increasingly sophisticated ways to steal information and, as a trusted public-sector organisation, our information could be of interest to those with malicious intent. To help avoid some of the main online threats to the Service, mandatory ICT security training was made available to all staff via CybSafe and includes testing of understanding through assessment.

In September 2020, our new cyber security and awareness campaign for 2020 was launched. By January 2021, 87% of staff had carried out the training.

Our ICT Team continues to develop and implement technical controls, including security patching of all devices, infrastructure and applications. Work is being undertaken to develop a revised SFRS Digital Strategy for 2022-2025. Following extensive consultation and engagement across the Service, it is anticipated that the document will be presented for approval in December 2021.

Our environmental commitments

Following the recent climate change emergency declaration, we published our *SFRS Climate Change Response Plan 2045*. This Plan sets out in broad terms how we plan to become a sustainable fire and rescue service, delivering environmental benefits for the communities of Scotland. Namely, by supporting them to tackle climate change and by tackling our own carbon emissions.

Committed to supporting this Scottish Government agenda, we will be on the front line in responding to the impacts of climate change in Scotland. We aim to reduce and limit our own contribution to the causes of climate change.

We have a wide range of hard hitting targets and commitments within our Plan and we will drive down carbon emissions in line with Scottish Government direction.

Our *Carbon Management Plan (CMP) 2020-2025*, published in December 2020, sets out in detail how we will approach carbon reduction over the next five years, as we work towards the Scottish Government's ambitious target of net zero by 2045.

The CMP details 15 projects that we plan to undertake between 2020 and 2025 to reduce our carbon emissions including: low carbon heating at wholetime stations; loft insulation at Retained Stations; smart lighting controls; and light fleet electric vehicles.

The identified opportunities are projected to enable us to achieve 129% of our 2025 reduction target.

SPOTLIGHT
OUR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS IN ACTION

The three main sources of our measurable carbon emissions are electricity, gas and fuel for transport and by developing and trialling projects to make our buildings and fleet more energy efficient, we are committed to our pledge to drive down carbon emissions by an average of 6% per annum over the next decade.

Scottish Government's ambition to phase out the need for diesel and petrol cars and vans by 2032 is articulated in Transport Scotland's 'Switched on Scotland' action plan. As part of that plan, the Energy Savings Trust awarded us with a grant in September 2019 for the purchase of Electric Vehicle Charging Points, at nine locations across the Service.

A further grant was awarded in November 2020 from Transport Scotland to lease 62 Low Emission Electric Cars (£0.644m) over a three-year period, and to purchase additional Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure at forty-nine locations across the Service.

At our East Service Delivery Area Headquarters at Newbridge, there have been 600 solar panels newly installed. These will power up to 40% of the building's electricity requirements, reducing energy costs by more than £23,000 per year.

Energy usage costs can now be easily reviewed and monitored via the Energy Viewer Metre Portal which allows staff to see a detailed dashboard of the actual energy use of their building. This tool allows staff to track and measure the impact of their actions and compare how their location compares to other sites.

The reporting year has also seen an upgrade to the Tranman system to help us monitor our fleet through improved information management and data capture. This allows us to keep track of fuel usage and costs, vehicle accident and defect reporting, as well as maintenance enquiries via a web portal.

The One Ask, One Degree initiative also took place where we asked staff to join us by turning down their heating by one degree to help improve energy efficiency and help reduce carbon emissions.

Mitigating our impact on the environment is important to us and we strive to be innovative in how we can do this. We now have three sites that have introduced beehives and honeybees as part of nature garden projects and joint pollinator projects. Clydesmill, Motherwell and North Anderson Drive Community Fire Stations house beehives and honeybees to help make our stations more environmentally friendly and create a more sustainable future.

We've also made an impact on some larger creatures over the year through the donation of old fire hoses to Blair Drummond Safari Park. This equipment has been put to fantastic use to help enrich the lives of some of the animals at the wildlife park, including Mondy the elephant who must now stretch to get her lunch through the folded hose. This means she must work harder for her food and use different muscle groups to aid her mobility. Monkeys and otters at the safari park have also benefited from the repurposed equipment.

Without this innovative initiative, this equipment which is no longer fit for purpose, would have been treated as waste and incurred a disposal cost.

PRIORITY 10 – PEOPLE

"The SFRS should aim to be an employer of choice – maximising the effectiveness of its approach to workforce planning; promoting the safety, health and well-being of all staff; and being a learning organisation with opportunities for all. The SFRS should also seek to be an organisation that is more representative of the people and communities of Scotland that it serves."

We are committed to being an employer of choice and this includes seeking a diverse workforce which is representative of the communities we serve.

As part of our programme of initiatives linked to our Positive Action Strategy, we have continued to connect with members of under-represented groups and improve our relationships with a range of communities. This engagement is enabling us to share information about the Service and the range of careers we offer, as well as assisting us to better understand and address barriers to employment with us.

Our Balancing the Workforce Profile Action Plan continues to help attract and retain people from underrepresented groups. This includes our commitment to positive action activities, as well as initiatives to support our commitment to youth employment through the Career Ready Scheme, our Modern Apprenticeships, and work to develop as a Corporate Parent.

We have undertaken a range of targeted information events for women and members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender (LGBT) communities across the second half of the year which were well attended and received. A further programme of events for women, LGBT and ethnic minority communities are planned for the next 12 months.

We have engaged with Care Experienced Young People (CEYP), in conjunction with WhoCares?Scotland, to run an employability event to better understand the needs of this group and understand how we can support these young people in exploring the world of work. Further sessions with CEYP will take place throughout this year

to provide advice and guidance to them to support their employability skills and seek to improve their life chances in our role as Corporate Parent.

We continue to engage with other organisations to explore opportunities for joint working and partnership events on Positive Action, including Police Scotland, and will monitor the success of these initiatives in increasing applications from under-represented groups.

A long-term communications plan has been developed to support our Positive Action approach and continues to be rolled out both internally and externally. We now advertise a range of vacancies on the Proud Employers jobsite owned by Stonewall to help us target our advertising more directly to members of the LGBT communities and their allies.

We are also undertaking an exercise to improve our employee sensitive data, which will assist in informing our policies, practices and decision making.

In support of our Youth Employment Strategy and following the success of our pilot Career Ready internship programme in 2019/20, we are supporting eight more students this year who have been matched with SFRS mentors. The four-week paid internship in June and July 2021 helped them consider their personal aims and objectives, gain a greater understanding of the range of careers we offer, and provide support and encouragement in securing employment in the future. The Career Ready internships involve job shadowing, one-to-one coaching and practical workplace demonstrations. As well as benefitting the young people by improving career and work prospects for those who have limited access to

professional networks and role models from the world of work, the programme offers our staff a personal development opportunity as a volunteer mentor.

In support of youth employment, we have 596 Modern Apprentices (MAs). Of these, 588 are firefighter MAs and eight work across other MA frameworks, including Business Administration, IT Systems and Networking Advanced Technical Modern Apprenticeship, and Motor Vehicle Engineering. Our non-Firefighting MAs have advised that the mentoring that they receive, as part of their externally provided MA Programme, has been invaluable to their continued success and progression through their MA, especially during the challenging times of the pandemic.

We were successful in our bid to Skills Development Scotland for the Additional Employer Grant and are looking to establish an Apprenticeship Mentoring Pilot Programme (AMPP) to enhance our current MA FF Programme. The AMPP aims to explore the suitability of a wider mentoring service to complement the delivery of the development pathway for Firefighters MAs, by offering support in relation to their wellbeing and resilience.

The current pandemic has resulted in changes to the method of MA programme implementation with a greater reliance on remote/virtual learning; the need to learn in new/different ways; and additional pressures and concerns surrounding health, wellbeing for the MAs themselves and for their family members. The AMPP will help provide an enhanced layer of support to enable the MAs to successfully complete their MA programme, maintaining retention of MAs during the pandemic and their onward success.

Our increasing interaction with members of the community, and with young people and vulnerable adults, places a great deal of responsibility on us to ensure their safety. We have therefore undertaken a two-year project which will see over 6,000 uniformed employees join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme. The project is scheduled for completion by October 2021.

Recruiting operational staff safely

Advice from clinical bodies and the Health and Safety Executive in relation to health and wellbeing assessments has changed frequently during the COVID-19 pandemic and expert advice is closely monitored to ensure that assessments are carried out safely.

Recruitment health assessments were adapted to exclude aerosol generating procedures for a period in 2020, before being safely re-instated in early 2021. This resulted in the temporary suspension of routine health assessments for existing staff, which have now been reinstated supported by stringent risk assessments, whilst remaining alert to the ongoing impact that COVID-19 restrictions may have.

Robust planning has taken place to manage the backlog of routine assessments, through a prioritised programme of station visits, and the backlog will continue to be addressed over the next year.

Outdoor fitness assessments for trainee firefighters were re-established, as was outdoor fitness support to help facilitate a return to work for other operational staff.

There are significant challenges relating to the recruitment of RVDS/VDS staff; with a high attrition rate evident at the pre-employment stage, particularly in achieving fitness standards.

Work continues to progress through engagement with stakeholders on both the national RVDS Leadership Forum and through local solutions to develop proposals to strengthen local attraction and engagement with candidates at the pre-employment stage that would raise awareness of fitness standards.

The first of these programmes will be piloted in April 2021 and a framework for more localised fitness and medical assessments will continue to be developed to further eliminate barriers to recruitment.

Supporting Equality, Diversity, Human Rights and Inclusion

Our Strategic Plan 2019-22 describes our aspiration to be a world leading fire and rescue service and with that create 'a great place to work' and one that meets 'diverse community risks'. To do this, we know that equality and diversity must be embedded in everything we do.

Our Equality and Diversity business partnership model, underpinned by the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment process, remains an effective method of supporting the mainstreaming of equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights across the SFRS informing and influencing the decisions we take about future service provision such as Safe and Well and employment practice.

A review of the Equality and Human Rights Process has been progressed. Despite an extended deadline into 2021/22, to accommodate demands arising due to the COVID-19 response, modifications were made to the current process to facilitate urgent decision making and to accommodate the duty to conduct Island Impact Assessments. It is anticipated that the Impact Assessment Process will be developed to incorporate the promotion of good mental health. This process remains the most effective method of building equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights into decision making, policy development and policy implementation.

A review of the existing SFRS Equality Outcomes was completed and a revised set of *Equality Outcomes* were published in April 2021, along with the biennial *Mainstreaming Report*. From April 2021 the Mainstreaming Report will be published annually.
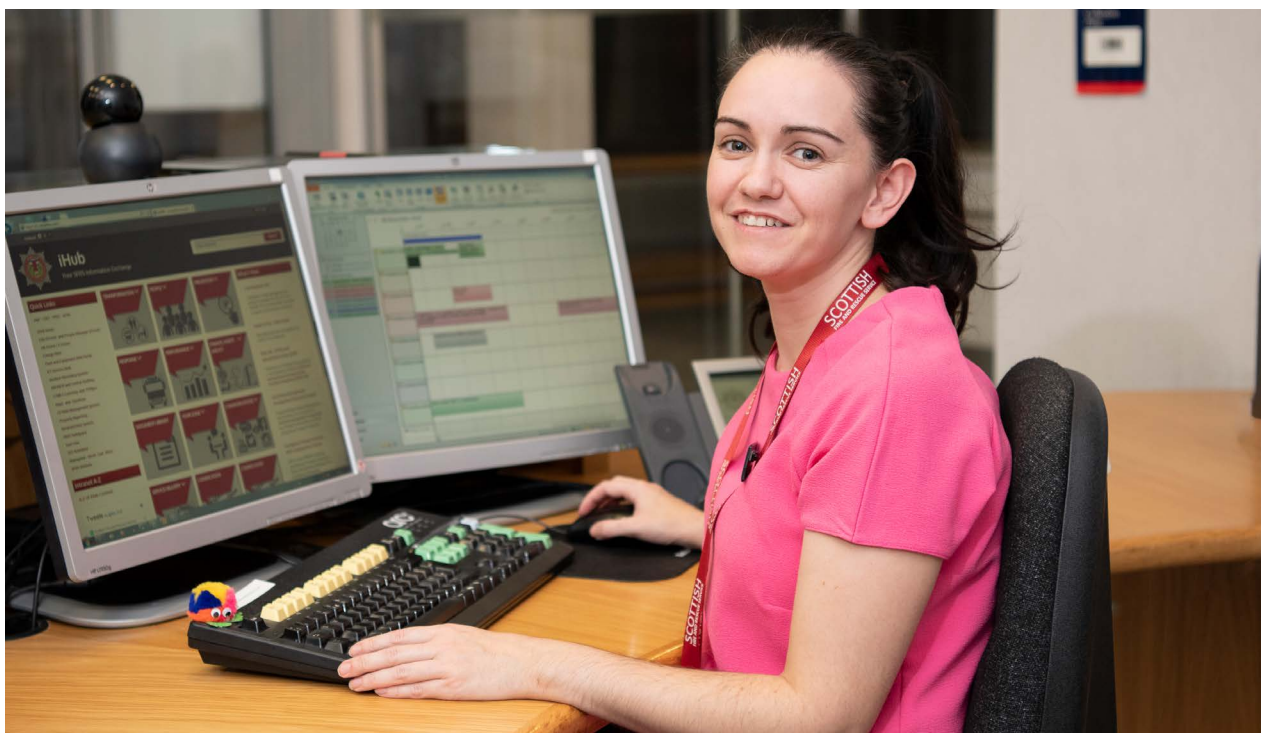
A key means of facilitating mainstreaming of equality across the organisation is the cross-Directorate Equality Partnership Group. The forum provides a vehicle to share and promote equality information and priorities, collate and disseminate examples of good practice, and consider emerging equality issues. Along with the Corporate Parenting Group, the Equality Partnership Group provides a mechanism to support equality related activities being identified, progressed and implemented remotely across the Service and not the responsibility of a single team.

Providing support to colleagues through the Equality and Diversity Business Partners is supplemented by the provision of impact assessment training, specialist topic training such as LGBT Leadership for Executive and Non-Executive Leaders and Equality Champions training. This helps support individual responsibility for the equality agenda, visual cues for highlighting the importance of equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights has featured prominently from the availability of rainbow lanyards to show alliance with LGBT communities and colleagues to regular corporate communications on key events such as LGBT History Month, Black History Month, Care Leavers Week and the promotion of materials to support colleagues who are victims or encounter victims of domestic abuse.

Alongside our strategic objectives and ambition to be the best employer we can be, we have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to remove all unfair discrimination and bias from the workplace. We have joined our Justice sector colleagues in the Cross-Justice Sector Working Group on Race and Workforce to identify and address any structural barriers our workplaces pose for ethnic minority communities. As part of the 2021 statutory reporting on pay we voluntarily published our ethnicity pay gap information.

To meet both legal and moral obligations the *'We are Positive About Disability - Guide to Reasonable Adjustments and Supporting Staff with a Disability'* has been published. This guidance will support and embed a culture that is positive about disability, where stereotypical thinking is challenged. It will ensure that appropriate guidance is in place to support our employees and line managers.

Listening to our employees, their experiences and views is a critical feature of an improving organisation. In addition to our corporate communications and formal staff engagement measures, equality related Employee Networks have been established. The Networks are an avenue for people who may have similar life experiences, share a protected characteristic, or have an interest in the protected characteristic, to meet online. A LGBT Network, a Women's Network and Neurodiversity Network are currently operating.

Alongside the Networks programme we have Strategic and Senior management representatives who are Equality Champions across a range of protected characteristics and themes including champions for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Care Experienced & Carers, Disability and Tackling Domestic Abuse. The establishment of these Equality Champions drawn from the senior management tiers provides a humanising touch to corporate equality messaging and highlights the individual personal commitment to equality by our leaders.

Over the year, we acted in advance of the move to end period poverty in the UK by providing access to free sanitary provisions on fire appliances for our operational crews attending incidents. In the second half of 2020/21 we further extended the provision of free sanitary products to our occupied premises. The provision of free sanitary products is part of our commitment to advancing equality and supporting a healthy workforce, as well as ensuring dignified and inclusive workplace facilities for both employees and visitors to our premises.

The value of these initiatives is illustrated within our *Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2021*. The Report demonstrates a 10% increase in the numbers of Wholetime Female Firefighters since 2019, and an increasing number of women assuming positions within the uniformed management structure. It illustrates that women are equally represented within the three upper quartiles of the support staff structure, and that women form a majority on our Board.

Several of our employees are EU nationals and their automatic right to work and live in the UK ended on the completion of the transitional arrangements on 1 January 2021. To support these employees, we have invited them to workshops to provide information and support on the processes and qualifications necessary to gain Settled or Pre-Settled Status or UK Citizenship. These workshops have been supplemented by an ongoing communication campaign which continually updates our employees on the UK's evolving immigration process.

SPOTLIGHT
CORPORATE PARENTING THROUGH COVID

We published our second *Corporate Parenting Plan* in January 2020. At that time, COVID-19 and the consequent measures to prevent the spread, were not in place.

Where safe to do so, we have adapted our approach to meet our actions, or a variation of them, within our Corporate Parenting Plan.

This has included colleagues in the East collating care packages for care experienced children and young people and working in partnership with supermarkets to deliver food parcels. Where possible, we have continued to virtually support local champions boards and groups. Within the North and the West, we have continued to work with other local partners and corporate parents to prepare for COVID-19 restrictions easing.

During Care Experience Week in October 2020, we delivered an internal 'focus group' to understand the barriers that care experienced young people can face when it comes to employment. Some of the barriers highlighted were:

- IT access
- Language used in applications
- Financial barriers

- Lengthy address history due to different placements
- Mental health
- Criminal convictions
- Access to eligibility documentations such as birth certificates
- Employers not taking the above barriers seriously

We are now exploring how this feedback can be incorporated into our employment practices and are arranging to have training from with Who Cares? Scotland to assist with this.

For National Care Leavers Week, we focussed on producing information sessions and materials that will reflect key fire safety messages for individuals leaving their care setting; moving into transition accommodation and/or their own home. Care Leavers themselves highlighted some of the areas that they felt should be included within any safety guidance and their contribution is a valued and important element of this work.

Engagement is currently on-going and we are looking to design fire safety talks that can be delivered to care experience people and an accompanying information leaflet.
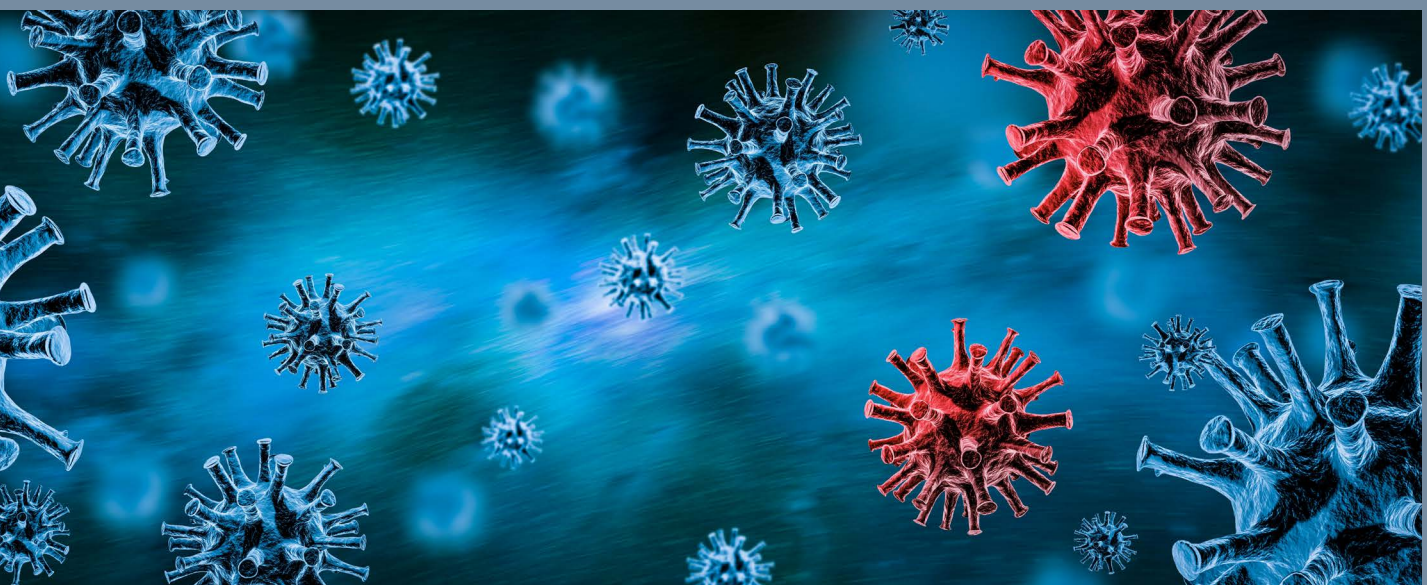
Health, Safety and Wellbeing

We care for our staff through progressive health, safety and wellbeing arrangements and strive to be proactive and innovative in how we achieve this.

During this reporting period, COVID-19 has heavily influenced this area. We have worked continually to safeguard our staff as far as practicable. The following suite of risk control documents have been developed and implemented to support the safe occupation of SFRS workplaces:

- COVID-19 Workplace Management Arrangement and Generic Risk Assessments
- COVID-19 Workplace Risk Assessments for all SFRS Workplaces
- COVID-19 Workplace Management Plans for all SFRS Workplaces
- COVID-19 Induction and Return to Work videos
- COVID-19 Secure Posters and Corporate Signage – providing clear and concise information of SRS COVID-19 control measures within workplaces

There is a legal requirement for us to consider all COVID-19 cases within the workplace. This is to establish whether there is sufficient evidence to suggest there has been a workplace transmission of coronavirus. This reporting year, we have received 352 COVID-19 reporting notifications. 57 of these cases determined there was reasonable evidence to suggest that the transmission may have been work related and subsequently reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

Work is ongoing to ensure that our safety measures reflect changing UK and Scottish government guidance. Our Health and Safety team have introduced additional support for our staff through new engagement support processes. These include:

- 6 rapid reviews for confirmed cases of workplace clusters (>3 confirmed cases)
- 62 workplace subject specific reviews undertaken
- 40 workplace virtual or onsite support reviews completed
- 67 desk top reviews of COVID-19 Workplace risk Assessments and Management Arrangements

The need to deliver many critical business activities during the pandemic has resulted in a requirement to systematically consider the required activities and undertake an evaluation of the risk. Without this process the risk would be undefined and arguably uncontrolled, examples of critical activities include recruitment, IFE examinations and training to support the safe delivery of critical activities. Our Health and Safety Team have supported the development of specific risk assessment and safe systems of work.

Ensuring we meet our legal health and safety duties has remained a focus throughout the period. The completion of annual health and safety improvement plans has increased by 12% from the previous year.

Our bespoke Health and Safety Management Information System (HSMIS) was launched during this period, with development of further modules ongoing. The HSMIS supports us in monitoring, measuring and implementing our health and safety arrangements in accordance with all statutory duties placed upon the Service.

The system will strengthen our Health and Safety arrangements by allowing us to interrogate our safety performance locally as and when required. The system will produce bespoke, detailed performance reports for the SFRS which will identify targeted actions and monitor improvements.

HOMEWORKING

Although significant work has been carried out to make our working premises COVID-secure, the introduction of lockdown changed the way many of our staff had to work. Our support staff who are predominantly office-based, were no longer able to access certain buildings and were asked to work remotely.

Our ICT colleagues have been instrumental in responding to the impact of the pandemic by supporting our staff to be able to work effectively from home. Laptops were provided where possible, alongside guidance and support for the use of personal equipment.

The earlier implementation of Office 365 and Direct Access allowed this shift in working practice to take place quickly and easily, facilitating staff access to files and systems from home locations. The use of Skype initially, and now Teams for virtual meetings, calls and collaboration has increased significantly since the end of March.

As the pandemic progressed, ICT then provided additional laptops to staff who previously did not have them. Since the end of March 2020, around 600 laptops have been allocated, as well as additional equipment such as screens and docking stations. A Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment has been developed and

staff regularly working from home have undertaken the review to reduce the chance of work-related injuries or ill-health associated with extensive use of DSE and workstations.

Homeworking on a regular basis presented new challenges, so our Health and Wellbeing team developed a booklet to support employees to manage physical and mental health while working from home. A COVID-19 homeworking checklist was made available, designed to assist in reviewing home environments and take all reasonable measures to maintain good posture, health and wellbeing while working on computers - as well as a few simple ideas to assist remote working with kids around.

Despite the initial challenges to implement efficient homeworking, this way of working has provided a greater work-life balance for some of our staff. Based on feedback received work has been undertaken to develop an Agile Working Framework and Homeworking Policy to complement the existing Flexible Working Policy. This supports our goal to be a flexible, inclusive employer and will be an enabler for the 'Reset and Renew Routemap' as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.
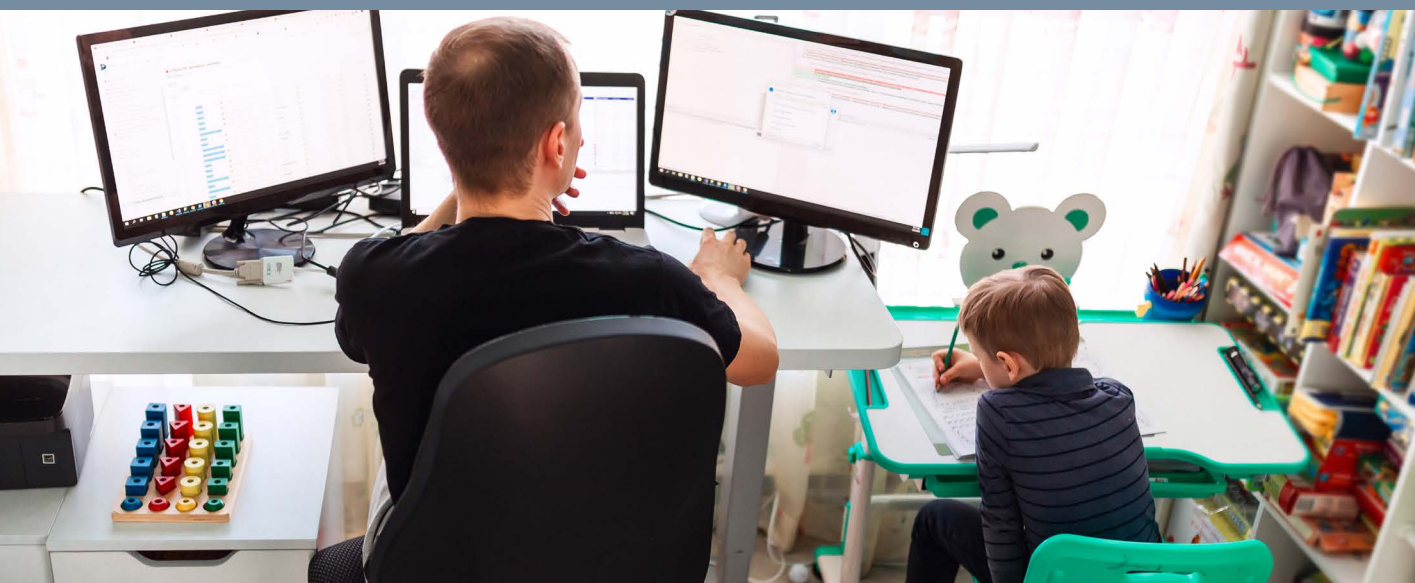
Physical Health Arrangements

Despite the ongoing challenges brought by the pandemic, the physical health of our staff remains equally important. Development of our Health and Wellbeing systems continues to support improvements in the delivery of health and wellbeing services.

To help reduce the number of cancellations and non-attendance at appointments, an appointment text reminder service has been implemented which has reduced waiting times and allowed cancelled appointments to be reallocated to others. A process of case management has been introduced which has resulted in reduced appointment waiting times and greater efficiency in the management of employee fitness. A HW system upgrade has also taken place, with improved functionality bringing continuous improvement to working practices within the team and a greener environment having significantly reduced paper based activity.

A contract was awarded in early 2021 to support the electronic scanning of medical and fitness records. This means that resources can be used more effectively through remote and immediate access to records, ensuring clinical availability is used to its full capacity, as well as a reduction in storage requirements and cost.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Firefit Steering Group, in conjunction with the University of Bath, have completed a scientific study to identify the cardiorespiratory fitness standards for UK fire and rescue services. These are the methods by which fitness should be assessed and a recommended fitness management process.

The recommendations include the use of a firefighter simulation test (fireground fitness assessment) that should be undertaken by staff who are unable to meet the required recommended cardiorespiratory fitness standard as a final determinant of fitness for role. As we do not currently have the required facilities and equipment to complete this assessment across a significant proportion of stations, a research project has been commissioned to develop an alternative assessment and associated performance standard that replicates the national standards, whilst being practicable for us.

The contract has been awarded and the research will be undertaken in two parts: the identification of two task

simulations; and a data collection. It is anticipated that Phase 1 will begin in March 2021 and be completed within a year.

Physical fitness will also continue to be supported via the addition of two new contracts this year - functional training equipment and treadmills as part of a programme of fitness equipment replacement.

Work has taken place to strengthen our clinical governance - a system through which accountability for the continuous improvement of quality of service is adopted. Whilst this is established good practice and not mandatory, the adoption of clinical governance provides an effective framework for the planning and provision of health and wellbeing services to our staff.

The SFRS Clinical Governance Action Plan, which is overseen by our Clinical Information Governance Steering Group, has been updated and will be delivered over a 5-year period ensuring that it remains flexible to consider emerging priorities as we commence our recovery from the pandemic.

Our commitment to health and wellbeing also focuses on the longer-term impact for staff and we continue to monitor emerging issues and developments. Research has shown that continued exposure to contaminants can cause long term health issues for firefighters. We have entered into a research agreement with the University of Central Lancashire to undertake a project within the field of firefighters' exposure and contamination from various fire effluents with the Fire Brigades Union over a three-year period. An interim report has been published and the findings and recommendations are currently being considered. We have continued to strengthen engagement with charitable partners such as Maggie's and Prostate Cancer UK who provide support to those with degenerative and terminal conditions.

Provision of structural firefighting Personal Protective Equipment has continued during the period ensuring our firefighters have the clothing they need to keep them safe. Every firefighter across Scotland will receive two sets of structural firefighter clothing that has: an outer layer to protect against flame injury; a moisture barrier to protect against water penetration whilst allowing internal moisture vapour to escape; and an inner thermal barrier and lining to protect against heat from proximity to flame.

Mental Health

We recognise that good mental health is as important as physical health and we are committed to ensuring our staff are equipped to identify poor mental health in themselves, their colleagues and their families; and fundamentally to know how they can be supported.

Our *Mental Health Strategy* was launched in June 2020. Priorities have been identified including the formation of a Suicide Prevention Sub Group, and the subsequent creation of a suicide prevention strategy. Actions from this strategy now form part of the wider mental health and wellbeing action plan. Engagement with partner agencies is progressing as we work towards the development of a model of mental health support across the SFRS.

In March 2021, a programme of mental health support was piloted across our Operations Control staff. The evaluation of this pilot will inform future work. Staff have continued to readily share their lived experiences to engender a culture where mental health is openly accepted and spoken about.

We participated in the mental health awareness campaign "Time to Talk" promoting the theme of small conversations potentially making a big difference. We ran virtual café support sessions and encouraged staff to take the time to talk, share and enjoy a conversation with each other about how they feel. We continue to develop a comprehensive calendar of health promotion campaigns and actively participate in health campaigns such as 'Movember' and 'March the Month'.

Our Wellbeing Group continues to focus on the provision of practical support and leadership development tools; producing thematic updates around health and wellbeing issues related to COVID-19, including: financial challenges; safe use of alcohol; relationship issues including isolation and loneliness and domestic abuse; personal safety; nutrition; weight management; sleep hygiene; and support for vulnerable groups.

A staff Wellbeing Survey was launched in January 2021 to evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the Wellbeing Group during the pandemic. The results have been shared with staff and will further inform the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

Work is continuing in collaboration with Scottish Government, Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service to develop the Lifelines programme and explore opportunities to work collaboratively across the tri-services. The Lifelines project delivers a tailored mental health and resilience framework for emergency and first responders in Scotland. The *Lifelines website* is now live and provides dedicated resources for our staff and their families. Lifelines has recruited mental health trainers who will provide training to the three emergency Services in Scotland. Work has already begun on embedding mental health training into our leadership and development programmes.

We recognise the critical nature of the provision of post incident support for the health and wellbeing of our staff. This service is delivered through our partners at the NHS Rivers Centre. Work has been ongoing to raise awareness amongst our staff of the services available and to develop processes to ensure that the service is embedded into our culture of prevention and support.

Training and Developing our People

Ensuring that our staff receive appropriate training to carry out their role effectively, efficiently and safely has continued to be a priority for us.

We have moved to ensure that vital training of our staff has been able to continue during the pandemic. Guidance was produced for our operational crews to facilitate local on-station training and maintain competence in their key core skills during COVID-19 restrictions. This took account of national guidance from Scottish Government and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and was composed in consultation with Trade Union Representative Bodies.

The creation of streamlined on-line operational training materials supported this training delivery model to enable 12 core skills modules to be accessed remotely via our Learning Content Management System, enabling staff to complete technical knowledge training without physically attending their stations. This reduced the time and frequency that Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) staff had to be at their stations by limiting their attendance solely for practical skills application sessions. Training Instructors have supported local delivery where needed including providing quality assurance of the training undertaken at Community Fire Stations.

Similarly, where training is facilitated at National or Regional centralised Training Centres, newly revised training delivery models were utilised to protect both students and instructors by maintaining them within protective bubbles wherever practicable and by reducing the duration of physical attendance on the course by delivering the technical, knowledge and understanding elements remotely. Physical attendance on the course is limited solely to instructor-led practical application training sessions wherever possible.

Initial acquisition training courses for the induction of new Wholetime and Retained Firefighters has primarily been facilitated at our Training Centres. A further local course was facilitated at Huntly Community Fire Station to assist to maintain crewing levels, support local delivery and reduce the need for extended travel requirements to other areas of Scotland. Risk Assessments by Training Function Officers, supported by Health and Safety Advisors, were undertaken at all our Training Centres to ensure compliance with COVID-19 guidance and ensure 'COVID-Secure' status at each of our 12 sites throughout Scotland.

Thermal Monitoring Temperature Testing was undertaken at all our National Training Centres prior to staff entering our COVID-Secure buildings. Initial scoping to install additional temporary facilities, such as pre-fabricated structures for classrooms and staff welfare, to assist with COVID-recovery training at the National Training Centre is now underway. Collaborative work across the Service continues to identify opportunities for localised use of Community Fire Stations for additional training delivery wherever possible. Collectively this has enabled us to maximise the capacity at each Training Centre and identified Community Fire Station venues, whilst ensuring restrictions are observed.

Some courses were more difficult to facilitate during the restrictions; however, careful planning took place to ensure that courses for critical skills could continue. For Driver Training, a specific Risk Assessment and Safe System of Work was developed to protect Training Instructors and staff undertaking driving courses. This was done in full consultation with all Driver Training Teams across the Service and considered guidance from Scottish Government, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and NFCC. The recruitment of four additional Driver Training Instructors has taken place during this reporting period. These appointments have largely been focused on the

North Service Delivery Area, with three Driver Training Instructors taking up post there to support local delivery and further enhance our capacity and resilience.

Enhanced use of technology has been embraced throughout the pandemic to help deliver our training. The introduction of a mobile Application (App) available via mobile phones for operational staff has been introduced. The App is an extension of our current Learning Content Management System and is available to all operational staff. It contains many programmes including: operational checklists for reference at emergency incidents; station details; Frontline Updates; and COVID-19 Task Cards which provide guidance relating to procedures during the pandemic. Throughout this reporting period the App has been routinely updated to include guidance and learning materials relating to the pandemic.

The use of new technology has allowed significant changes to our Incident Command Training. Most of the development input for many of these courses is now facilitated remotely by way of video calling. Similarly, the use of cameras and video streaming services allows assessors to undertake their roles remotely and the candidates need only attend physically for their facilitated assessment.

Laptops have been issued to all Trainee Firefighters and many of our staff within the Training Function to allow remote working and access to training materials and systems. Course delivery programmes have been amended to allow remote delivery using Skype and Microsoft Teams wherever possible to reduce physical attendance at our Training Centre venues. Collectively, this has enabled our Firefighters to continue to train and remain able to respond effectively, efficiently and safely throughout this period.

The redevelopment and upgrading of our Portlethen training facility is progressing well. The impacts of COVID-19 upon this project closed the site down for around four months, however, since reopening the contractors have worked tirelessly to bring this back on track and ensure that the site is completed with as minimum disruption as possible.

Considerable effort has been directed towards analysing the impact of COVID-19 upon skills currencies and introducing a Recovery Plan prioritising training towards supporting our

Operational Response and ensuring a focus upon Specialist Rescue skills which are needed in advance of the COP 26 Climate Summit. A requirement for additional resources has been identified to support the Recovery Plan and recruitment processes are now underway.

To further strengthen our operational training arrangements, a programme manager has been recruited to deliver the Training Continuous Improvement Programme which resulted from the Training Employee Development Review which took place in 2019. Whilst the pandemic has presented opportunities to trial and implement new and innovative ways of training our staff, the programme manger will be able to incorporate the lessons learned into the Improvement Plan and further enhance the implementation of the recommendations and actions that arose from the review.

Developing our Leaders

Developing and strengthening leadership capability, capacity and resilience across the Service continues to be a key priority. This is pivotal in enabling the development of organisational culture, which supports our ongoing evolution and enables effective succession planning and organisational outcomes.

We continue to develop our leadership capability which centres around strategic organisational needs, taking an

agile approach to leadership at all levels. In progression of the opportunities for collaboration through the Scottish Emergency Services National Collaboration Strategy, agreement has been reached to establish the Collaborative Leadership Project through a shared resource and learning model.

Key achievements during 2020/21 have included:

- Completion of a detailed feedback paper from the Chief Officer's Online Leadership Engagement Sessions in September 2020. This has informed the early Future Vision draft and our overarching proposals in relation to the engagement process.
- The delivery phase of the Leading-Edge Strategic Leadership Team Development Programme has concluded, informing the development of strategic goals and objectives.
- Senior leadership development focus has now turned to the imbedding of the leadership style across Executive, Strategic and Middle Management teams through the Leadership for Change Programme.
- Our Succession Planning activity continues with the approval of the Leadership Development Centre Policy forming the basis of our approach to Talent Management. This will complement the existing leadership and technical development processes, taking cognisance of the leadership behaviours and competency framework to ensure consistency across the organisation.
- Engagement on the proposed Leadership Development Centres (LDCs) for future supervisory managers is progressing. Psychometrics to inform LDCs, talent management/development and succession planning activity have been procured and will be pivotal in the onward development of our future leaders.
- The well-established partnership with the Collective Learning Partnership and Scottish Union Learning Fund (Lifelong Learning Programme) continues to support our staff to access personal development courses that range from Mental Health Awareness, Modern Languages, and British Sign Language to Microsoft Office 365.
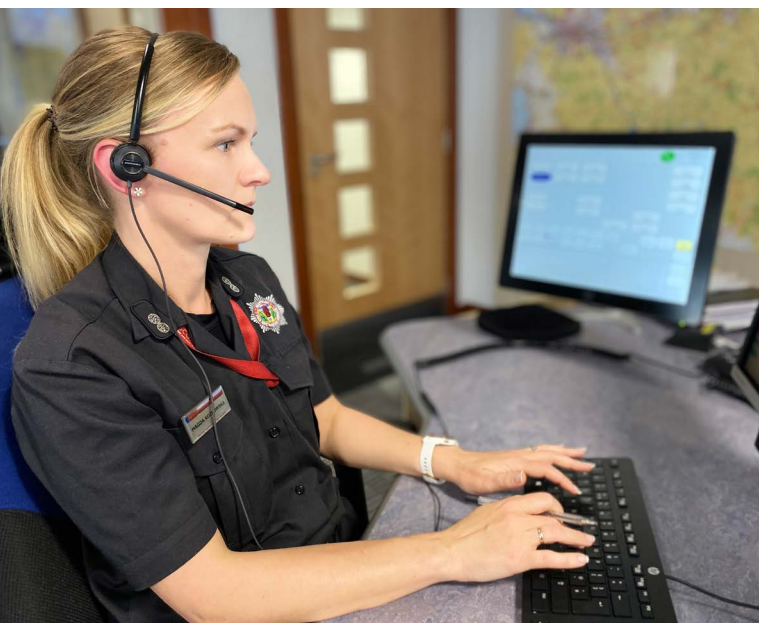
Building the Future Together

In support of Future Vision development and planning, the Building the Future Together (BFT) Programme was developed in September 2020. The Programme will help implement and embed a Cultural Framework, made up of seven pillars, that will be a key enabler to the long-term vision work.

The Programme has moved to implementation phase with the Pillar 1 'Our Commitment' working group established and progressing towards launch. Employee engagement has been a key focus for the group and a pilot of the engagement tool 'Trickle' will take place in five distinct functions/teams. This engagement process will initially focus on the commitment around 'Dignity' and will further support the development of our approach to Dignity, Integrity and Respect.

Pillar 2, 'Our Leadership', is a feature of ongoing activity in the delivery of the agile working framework, our leadership succession planning arrangements and ongoing development with the Strategic Leadership Team.

Work has commenced on Pillar 3 'Our Workforce' in response to the Strategic Workforce Plan and the predicted requirements over the coming 2-4 years ensuring that we continue to implement robust succession planning and realising our ambition to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time.

Pay, Reward and Benefits

We place significant value on our staff and strive to deliver fair, attractive and inclusive pay, rewards and benefits to them.

As a result of the previous standardisation of uniformed terms and conditions in 2018/19, we have continued to monitor the effectiveness of these in meeting Service requirements, as well as the needs of our staff. As part of this work, a final review of the arrangements surrounding detached duties has been concluded, ensuring that these revised arrangements are fit for purpose.

Following external assistance and subsequent failure to reach agreement to seek conclusion to the harmonisation of Retained Duty System (RDS) terms and conditions, further constructive discussions with representative bodies have taken place and this led to us issuing an improved offer. A series of engagement events were completed in Quarter 1 of 2021/22 across all Retained and Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) locations to enable managers to discuss the revised

offer on the standardisation of RDS terms and conditions with RVDS staff. Whilst the Fire and Rescue Services Association have accepted this offer on behalf of their members, we are still awaiting dates for progression to a consultative ballot from the Fire Brigades Union to progress.

Negotiations regarding harmonisation of terms and conditions for employees within the national and local training instructor pools have reached a successful conclusion and revised terms will be implemented from July 2021.

Negotiations with Unison and Unite commenced in March 2021 in relation to their joint Support Staff pay claim for 2020/21 which provides an opportunity for us to consider a number of aspects of the Support Staff Pay and Reward Framework.

Our commitment to equality in pay and conditions is demonstrated in our *Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2021*. Our Gender Pay Gap has consistently

reduced since the creation of the SFRS and, as of January 2021, sits at 1.01% (mean) against a UK National average of 15.5%. This has been achieved through a combination of initiatives such as the standardisation of the terms and conditions of both Support Staff and Uniformed employees, Support Staff pay underpinned using an analytical Job Evaluation system, gender-free recruitment processes, and the adoption of the Scottish Living Wage.

We remain focussed on working towards enhancing our Total Reward Framework to support employee engagement, attraction and retention. As part of this, a one-off COVID-19 Employee Recognition Process, based on the principles of the SFRS Recognition Scheme, was successfully concluded in March 2021. This initiative recognised the efforts of our staff who have gone above and beyond in displaying outstanding behaviours and contributions to both the Service and their communities during this unprecedented time. It is anticipated that the full SFRS Recognition Scheme will be launched later in 2021 to continue to recognise the commitment and dedication of those who work with us.

Strategic Resource Planning

It is important that we understand our staffing profile and plan for anticipated changes.

During the reporting period, a joint project was carried out with the Scottish Public Pensions Agency to confirm the retirement profile of our Wholetime Operational Staff. This has led to the development of a six-year external recruitment and internal promotion schedule, giving the ability to efficiently forecast and assess for issues and plan more effectively than ever before. We have developed our Retained firefighter leavers profile to more accurately plan for this staff group. Dedicated resource has been allocated to manage both Retained and Support Staff leavers and vacancies to improve candidate and recruitment manager experience in these groups of staff.

The operating environment created by the pandemic has had a significant impact on resourcing. Safe systems of work have been developed and implemented to enable key resourcing activities to continue despite challenges. Adjustments include a move to conducting virtual interviews which has proved to be a positive change based on feedback from candidates and panels.

SFRS and Scottish Government restrictions have impacted the resourcing of external candidates, with challenges to medicals and our ability to train new staff. This has resulted in deficiencies to our frontline operational establishment. Workforce Planning continue to provide support to Service Delivery to develop a range of reporting tools and options to manage availability. Additionally, we have established a Resourcing Recovery Group to maximise our resourcing intakes and continue to work with stakeholders to develop tactical solutions to support our resourcing needs.

We continue to work with stakeholders to enhance our approach to workforce planning and have used the resultant analysis to not only advise our resourcing timelines and priorities but enhance other areas, including training scheduling and operational availability. Furthermore, workforce planning data is now interfaced with the rostering system to ensure resilience within the 5 Watch Duty System.

SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

<u>www.firescotland.gov.uk</u>

SFRS Annual Performance Review 2020-21

Version 1.2   November 2021

FIRE AND SMOKE ALARMS IN SCOTTISH HOMES

A briefing note for local elected members and partner organisations

The law on fire alarms is changing. By February 2022, all Scottish homes will need to have interlinked alarms.

The legislation has been introduced by the Scottish Government following of the Grenfell Tower fire in London in 2017, and it applies to all Scottish homes.

Interlinked means if one goes off, they all go off, and it is the property owner's responsibility for meeting the new standard.

Guidance and further information can be found via the Scottish Government website

The role of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) – Home Fire Safety Visits

To protect the most vulnerable, SFRS will only fit interlinked alarms into owner-occupied homes where the individual/household is assessed as "high risk" through our Home Fire Safety Visit assessment process.

If the individual / household does not meet these criteria, staff will provide safety advice, information and details of the revised legislation during the visit. Interim detection can also be supplied if the property has no detectors at present.

However, we can't recommend products or installers. To request a Home Fire Safety Visit, contact us on 0800 073199 or text "FIRE" to 80800.

What each home needs

By February 2022 every home must have:

- one smoke alarm in the living room or the room you use most
- one smoke alarm in every hallway or landing
- one heat alarm in the kitchen.

All smoke and heat alarms should be mounted on the ceiling and be interlinked.

If you have a carbon-fuelled appliance – like a boiler, fire, heater or flue – in any room, you must also have a carbon monoxide detector in that room, but this does not need to be linked to the fire alarms.

Help with costs

It is the property owner's responsibility for meeting the new standard.

If you are a private tenant, your landlord is responsible.

If you are a council or housing association tenant, work is ongoing to make sure your home meets the new standards.

Elderly or disabled people may be eligible for support to fit interlinked alarms from Care and Repair Scotland. They can be contacted via careandrepairscotland.co.uk or by calling 0141 221 9879.

Types of alarms

You can use either sealed battery alarms or mains-wired alarms.

Both types of alarm are interlinked by radio frequency and do not need Wifi.

There is no list of approved suppliers or fitters, and SFRS can't recommend these however each alarm must comply with the following standards:

- smoke alarms: BS EN14604:2005
- heat alarms: BS 5446-2:2003
- carbon monoxide detector: British Kitemark EN 50291-1

Further information is available via the *Scottish Government website*

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

PARTNERSHIPS PANEL – 9 FEBRUARY 2022

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
2021/22 QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE UPDATE REPORT

1.   PURPOSE

1.1   To advise members of the Partnerships Panel as to the progress being made against South Ayrshire's Local Fire and Rescue Plan priorities, and to provide panel members with an update on other key fire and rescue service matters.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   It is proposed that members of the Partnerships Panel:

   i.   Note the contents of the performance summary report for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021.

   ii.   Note all Scottish Fire and Rescue Service updates.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   On the 1st October 2019, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) laid before the Scottish Parliament its new Strategic Plan for the period 2019/22. As a result of this publication, the Service is legally obliged to review its existing Local Fire and Rescue Plans for all 32 local authorities across Scotland.

3.2   On the completion of this review a new Local Fire and Rescue Plan for South Ayrshire was developed and, following a public consultation, was presented to South Ayrshire Council for formal approval.

3.3   All progress against the priorities contained within the aforesaid document are now subject to monitoring by South Ayrshire Council's Partnerships Panel.

4.   PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

4.1   An analysis of operational responses across South Ayrshire for the period 1st April to 31st December 2021 identified a 8.2% increase in activity levels when compared to the corresponding period in 2020. A further review of activity over the rolling three years average indicates a 2.4% increase in operational demand over the six-month period.

4.2 In reviewing operational activity on a broader level, false alarms accounted for 57.7% of all demand, with fire related and special service activity accounting for 27.5% and 14.8% respectively.

4.3 For the period 1st April to 31st December 2021, overall progress is being monitored across six indicators, utilising the three-year rolling average as basis of measuring performance. Year on year and the rolling five-year average figures are also used to review short and long terms changes in demand and trends.

4.4 Utilising the defined approach in Section 4.3, review of performance against these indicators identified five are above and one is below the three-year average.

4.5 Further analysis of this performance is provided within the accompanying performance report (Appendix A).

5.   **CURRENT POSITION – SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE UPDATES**

5.1 The Local Senior Officer Area has developed the following three South Ayrshire strategies to support the safety of residents, further enhance local economic growth and mitigate the impact fire related matters can often have on the environment:

- Domestic Safety Strategy
- Deliberate Fire Setting Demand Reduction Strategy
- Non- Domestic Fire Reduction Strategy

A presentation on the South Ayrshire Deliberate Fire Setting Demand Reduction Strategy will be presented to the Partnerships Panel on Wednesday 9th February 2022.

5.2 The SFRS has recently published the following reports in October 2021. Copies of these documents are attached for the Partnership Panels consideration:

- Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics Report (Appendix B)
- Annual Performance Review Report (Appendix C).

5.3 The Scottish Government recently conducted a consultation process on its next Fire and Rescue Service Framework for Scotland. This process concluded on Wednesday 22nd December 2021. A review of the SFRS's Strategic Plan will take place once the revised Fire and Rescue Service Framework is published.

5.4 The law on fire alarms is changing from February 2022, which means all Scottish homes will need to have interlinked alarms. An Elected Members briefing note on this matter is attached to this report for the Partnerships Panel's future reference (Appendix D).

5.5 The SFRS attended an explosion within the Kincaidston area of Ayr on the evening of 18th October 2021. This incident attracted a multi-agency response; with over 70 fire appliances and supporting vehicles from the fire and rescue service attending the scene over a four-day period.

Local SFRS Community Action Team members continue to work within the Kincaidston Community, alongside various other partners, to support residents with their recovery from this event.

5.6 Representatives from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have been working closely with Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership colleagues to enhance employment opportunities for residents with one or more criminal convictions.

This included the (recent) delivery of an engagement session at Ayr Racecourse for local employers on the benefits of employing people with lived experience and how this can diversify thinking with the workplace.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Fire and Rescue Service activity is subject to regular monitoring and review by South Ayrshire Council's Partnerships Panel. The contents of this document, and accompanying performance report, forms part of this monitoring process.

6.2 Members of the Partnerships Panel will be kept up to date as to progress against the Local Fire and Rescue Plan and to any future fire and rescue service updates as they arise.

Area Commander Ian McMeekin
Local Senior Officer
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
21 January 2022

For further information, please contact Area Commander Ian McMeekin 01294 606811