

SAVING LIVES

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Integrated Risk Management Plan

2020-2024





“

...we will make the Service better able to meet the challenges and needs of modern societies, embracing new technology and recognising the changing risks within our communities.

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Foreword



Councillor Bob Rudd
 Chair,
 Cheshire Fire Authority

We are pleased to introduce Cheshire Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024 (IRMP). The IRMP sets out the risks facing the communities of Cheshire, how we will prevent and protect our communities from fire and other emergencies and our plans for providing emergency response.

Cheshire Fire Authority is required to have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England when carrying out its functions. The Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. One such requirement of the Framework is to produce an IRMP.



Mark Cashin
 Chief Fire Officer
 and Chief Executive
 Cheshire Fire and
 Rescue Service

This four year IRMP will outline how the Authority will make Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service better able to meet the challenges and needs of modern societies, embracing new technology and recognising the changing risks within our communities. This has been developed through a comprehensive review of the whole service, using feedback from staff, representative bodies and an extensive period of consultation on our plan; including independent assessment by third parties.

The Authority has undergone a significant period of transformation in responding to a changing society and reductions in central funding. It has seen the construction of four new fire stations to better spread emergency response cover across Cheshire; has embarked on significant collaborative projects with partner agencies and is advancing an extensive programme of modernisation to its fire stations – alongside developing a new immersive operational training centre.

There are, as with all fire and rescue services, many challenges to be faced and overcome in the years ahead. The findings of the Hackitt Review and Public Inquiry into the Grenfell Tower tragedy contain important lessons for fire and rescue services across the country to learn from and address, to ensure that a tragedy such as this is never repeated.

You will also see in further detail later in the IRMP how the Authority will look to address key and emerging risks posed by issues such as an increasingly older society, climate change and the built environment. Of course, many parts of society will need to adapt and respond to the changes we have faced, and will continue to face, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Fire authorities are no exception to this and we too will need to adapt to the 'new normal', while continuing to work with our partners to keep the community safe.

Ultimately, the Authority is dedicated to providing the communities of Cheshire with a fire and rescue service that is committed to saving lives, changing lives and protecting lives to achieve its vision of no deaths, injuries or damage from fires or other emergencies. We believe this IRMP helps to make this vision a reality.

Covid-19

While this IRMP was in its development and consultation phase, the emergence of Covid-19 coronavirus and the subsequent global pandemic saw a rapid and profound change in the functioning of our society to tackle this health emergency. Despite the uncertainty that this has caused for many of us, we have been clear in our resolve to continue to help those in need.

We have undertaken a huge amount of work in supporting our partner agencies to help our communities stay safe. This has included a wide range of activities to support both residents and our front-line colleagues, such as:

- Delivering prescription medicines to vulnerable residents.
- Using our FireBikes to help transport vital blood and tissue samples.
- Transporting food parcels to help those in need.
- Supporting the mass distribution of personal protection equipment to health and care colleagues.
- Helping our local authority partners identify extremely vulnerable people so that necessary support can be put in place.

The pandemic has also meant a significant change to how we operate as a service. We have introduced changes to many aspects of our day-to-day working practices to comply with social distancing and minimise the risk of infection to our staff, their families and the wider community.

We have developed new ways to deliver some of our services, such as providing more telephone and online support for businesses through our Protection Department. As we emerge from this pandemic, we will continue to develop new ways of working to ensure we can provide our services safely and effectively.

At the time of writing this IRMP, we cannot yet be sure as to the longer-term impacts on either Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service or society as a whole from Covid-19. Therefore as we go through the time period covered by this IRMP, we may need to adjust existing plans or develop new proposals, to ensure that we adapt to the new environment.



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The county of Cheshire

The county of Cheshire covers some 905 square miles and has a population of just over 1 million. The county is largely rural, with urban populations and major industry concentrated mostly in the North West of Cheshire. Major conurbations include the city of Chester and towns of Warrington, Crewe, Macclesfield, Ellesmere Port, Runcorn and Widnes.

- ▶ **Cheshire West and Chester** as a unitary authority includes the historic city of Chester; the industrial towns of Ellesmere Port and Winsford, and market towns and villages. It is largely rural, with the main centres of population in the north and west of the borough. The area benefits from strong tourism and retail sectors, alongside established agricultural, automotive and manufacturing industries. There are nationally important petro-chemical and nuclear fuel industries in the north of the authority and the area has a historic link to salt mining. The authority consists of urban centres alongside smaller rural settlements and mixing affluent areas with more deprived parts of the community.



- ▶ **Cheshire East** is a large unitary authority containing the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield; as well as market towns and the commuter belt south of Manchester. It is home to internationally renowned vehicle manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies, while rail, agriculture and financial services are also key industries. It is an area of contrasting features, combining urban centres with rural villages and containing areas of significant affluence but also pockets of social deprivation. The borough is served by the M6 motorway, a network of urban and rural 'A' roads and the West Coast rail line, while Manchester Airport lies on its northern border. The area is home to several heritage buildings and the north east of the authority sits at the gateway to the Peak District National Park.



The county of Cheshire

- ▶ **Halton** incorporates the industrial towns of Runcorn and Widnes, connected by two major bridges across the River Mersey. The area is home to various chemical and science industries, as well as distribution and logistics companies. Some areas within the borough reside within the most socially deprived areas of the country. Aside from the Mersey crossings, key infrastructure includes docks and ports and a gas-fired power station at Rocksavage, south of Runcorn. The Manchester Ship Canal also runs across the borough, while Liverpool John Lennon International Airport lies just over the border in Merseyside.



Photo courtesy of Merseylink

- ▶ **Warrington** is located in between Liverpool and Manchester and is the largest urban conurbation in Cheshire. Warrington is traversed by the River Mersey, Manchester Ship Canal, three motorway networks and the West Coast rail line. Due to its location it has developed into an important transport and logistics hub. It also maintains strong retail, energy and night-time economies. There are several minority ethnic communities that reside within the borough, making it one of the most diverse areas of Cheshire. Some areas, mostly in the centre of the town, sit within the 20 per cent most deprived in the country, while other areas on the periphery of the borough are within the 30 per cent least deprived.



Cheshire is bordered by Merseyside and Greater Manchester in the North, Derbyshire and Staffordshire to the East, Shropshire to the South and North Wales lies over the Western border of the county.



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Your Fire and Rescue Service

Overview

Cheshire Fire Authority is the publicly accountable body consisting of 23 elected Members appointed by Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council. The Fire Authority oversees the fire and rescue service on behalf of the communities of Cheshire. You can find details of the Fire Authority Members and more about the role of the Authority in the [About Us](#) section of the Service website.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is led by the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and the [Service Management Team](#). You can find out more about the Service Management Team on our website.

The Service is split into four different functions and benefits from corporate support services provided by Cheshire Constabulary.	1	Service Delivery
	2	Operational Policy and Assurance
	3	Prevention
	4	Protection and Organisational Performance

These functions and the Joint Corporate Services are outlined in more detail over the page.

The Service operates from 28 fire stations across Cheshire, staffed in a number of different ways to reflect local risks and demands. The map on pages 10-11 shows where our stations are located across the county.

The Service also operates three community safety centres, three fire protection offices, a joint headquarters with Cheshire Constabulary, an operational training centre, [Safety Central](#), our safety and life skills centre in Lymm, and workshops at the Sadler Road site in Winsford.

The Service's emergency call handling function is provided by North West Fire Control, based at Lingley Mere in Warrington. [North West Fire Control](#) is a collaboration between four fire and rescue services providing a control room operation for Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Lancashire.



Service Delivery

The department encompasses our frontline emergency response functions and fire stations. Further details on how the emergency cover is provided across Cheshire can be found on pages 8 and 9.



Operational Policy and Assurance

The department provides operational and incident command training to our firefighters and develops operational policies, plans and procedures. It also manages and maintains our fleet of vehicles, tests and develops new equipment and oversees the provision of health, safety and wellbeing for the organisation.



Prevention

The department oversees much of the community-based work undertaken by the Service. This includes delivering fire safety and health and wellbeing advice to residents across Cheshire through our Safe and Well programme, delivering road safety advice, engaging with young people and managing our cohort of volunteers. The Prevention department also manages the Authority's innovative and immersive safety and lifeskills centre, [Safety Central](#), at Lymm.



Protection and Organisational Performance

The department is responsible for the Service's fire protection activities and ensuring non-residential premises comply with fire safety legislation. It is accredited to ISO 9001 which provides external assurance of its activities. The department also investigates the causes of fires, works to reduce the impact of deliberate fires on the community and leads on organisational performance and our work with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).



Joint Corporate Services

The work of the Service is supported by a range of corporate services including human resources, communications and engagement, finance, procurement, stores and legal. This is delivered to both Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service through joint teams based at the shared Police and Fire headquarters at Clemonds Hey, Winsford.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service functions

The Authority needs to balance the provision of fire and rescue services across the whole of Cheshire according to its resources and local risks. This map outlines how emergency response functions are provided across the county.

The Authority has mutual aid agreements with neighbouring fire authorities to provide assistance over the border or within Cheshire. For example, firefighters assisted Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service at the Saddleworth Moor fire and Merseyside firefighters provide cover into the Neston area of Cheshire.

● Wholetime

A wholetime station is where full time firefighters operate 24 hours a day. There are currently nine fire stations operating this system across Cheshire.

■ Day Crewing

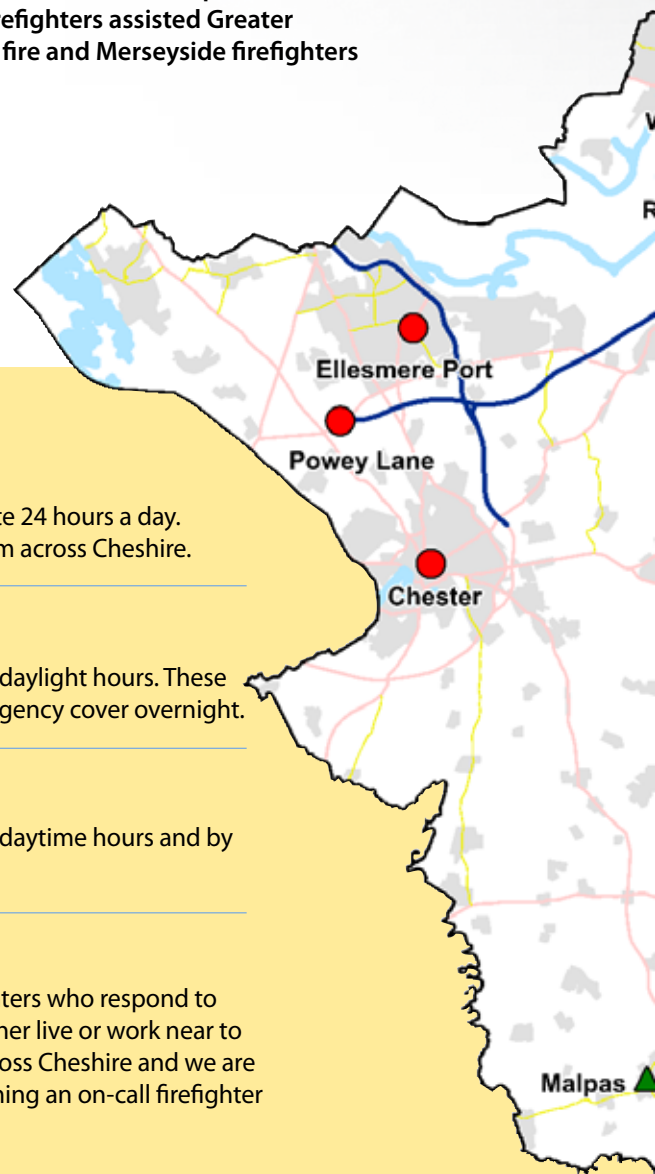
Three stations are crewed by full time firefighters during daylight hours. These firefighters live close to the fire station and provide emergency cover overnight.

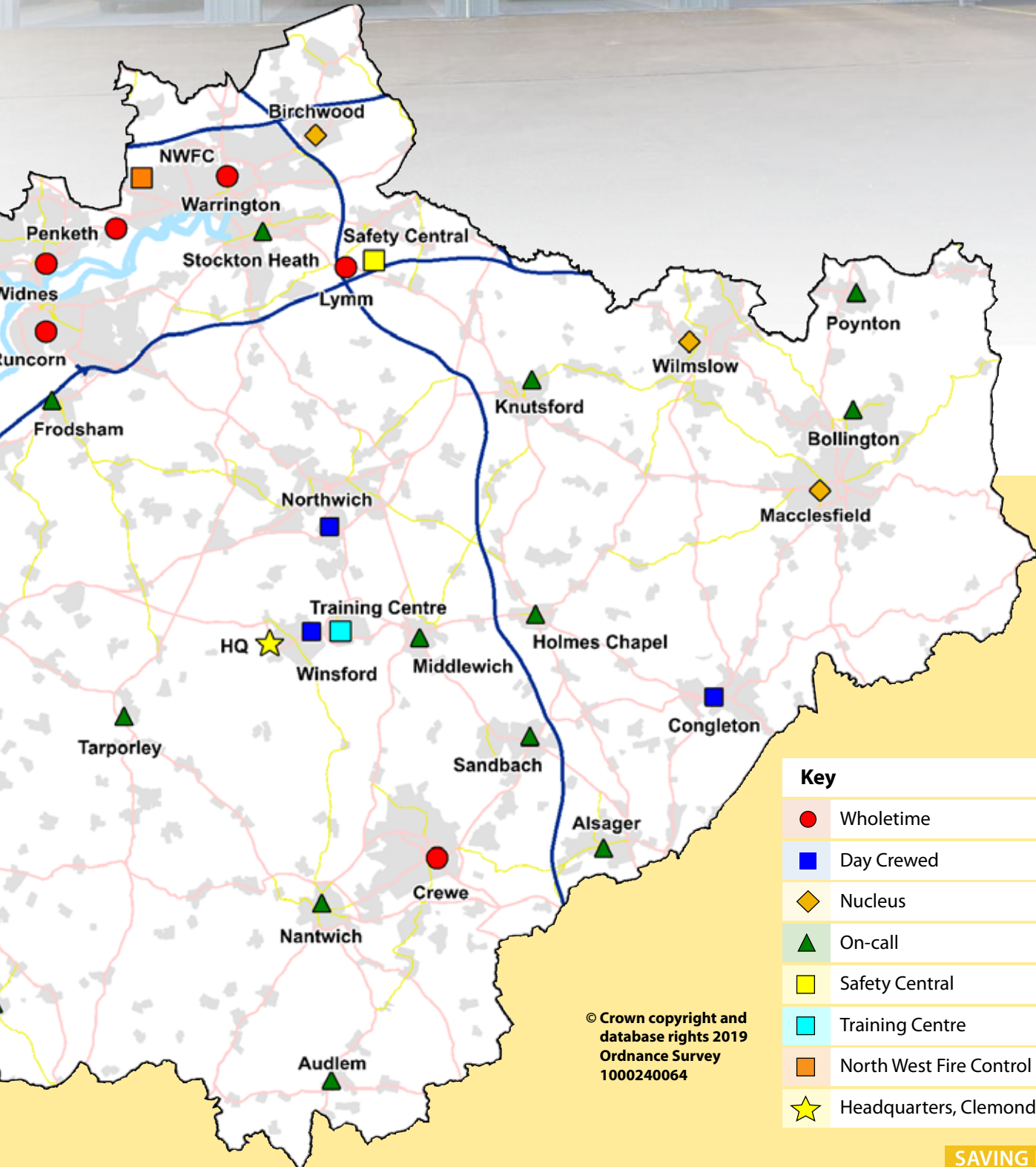
◆ Nucleus

Three stations are crewed by full time firefighters during daytime hours and by on-call (part time) firefighters overnight.

▲ On-Call

These stations are operated by on-call (part time) firefighters who respond to emergency calls via an alerter. On-call firefighters will either live or work near to the station. There are currently 13 on-call fire stations across Cheshire and we are recruiting at most of these. If you are interested in becoming an on-call firefighter please visit www.oncallfire.uk.





Key	
●	Wholetime
■	Day Crewed
◆	Nucleus
▲	On-call
■	Safety Central
■	Training Centre
■	North West Fire Control
★	Headquarters, Clemonds Hey

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The risks we face

The risks facing the Service are diverse. Cheshire has an ageing population. At present, 21 per cent of residents in Cheshire are aged over 65 and the elderly population is expected to continue to increase, with more than double the current number of residents aged over 80 by 2030. There is a clear link between old age and vulnerability, particularly from fire. In fact, those over 80 are significantly more likely to die in the event of a fire than any other age group.

Our research also shows that properties where people are either living alone or are lone parents are most likely to experience a fire in their home.

The number of people living with mental health issues in the UK continues to increase, and Cheshire is no exception. There are wider issues that need to be taken into account when planning, as these can create risks, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse as well as general health and wellbeing.

Our road networks continue to change and develop. Four major motorway networks cross Cheshire, spanning the length and breadth of the county, as well as 877km of urban and rural A roads. Cheshire's major road networks handle more than 5.9bn vehicle miles per year. These are supplemented by smaller country lanes and suburban streets. The West Coast Main Line runs North-South through Cheshire, alongside regional rail networks. Crewe is due to become a hub station for the HS2 rail network.

In addition to numerous retail and heritage centres, Cheshire is also home to a range of industry. This includes major vehicle manufacturers and associated supply chains, pharmaceutical companies, logistics, warehousing and distribution and a variety of petro-chemical sites.

Certain industrial sites are subject to specific Control of Major Accident Hazard ([COMAH](#)) Regulations. Cheshire has the highest number of COMAH sites in the UK, with 28 upper-tier sites primarily centred around the petro-chemical industry on the banks of the River Mersey.

Recent fires in several premises across the country, including Grenfell Tower and the fire at the Beechmere assisted living complex in Crewe, have brought a focus on the need to undertake specific work on assessing potential risks presented by buildings constructed using modern methods of construction, such as timber frame and cladding. We are working with partner agencies to ensure these risks are addressed.



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The risks we face

Licensing legislation states that properties occupied by five or more people - who form two or more households - require a licence to operate as a house of multiple occupation (HMO). HMOs are also subject to particular fire safety regulations. There is a need to work with local authority partners to identify further premises which may be unlicensed HMOs and ensure that residents of these properties are safe from fire.

The impact of climate change increases the likelihood of extreme weather events, such as significant rainfall. As well as affecting coastal areas, rivers and canals, this can lead to surface water flooding impacting on people and property. Flooding is a major risk facing some areas of Cheshire. Parts of major conurbations in Warrington and Chester lie within a flood warning zone. Two major rivers (Mersey and Dee) traverse the north of Cheshire and other rivers such as the Weaver, Dane and Bollin feature across the rest of the county.

Climate change can also contribute towards the other extremity of heatwaves and prolonged dry weather. Such circumstances could lead to fires involving grass, heath and moorland which can lead to large scale wildfire incidents that require significant resources over an extended period of time.

Historically agriculture, particularly dairy farming, has been the county's primary industry, notably in Cheshire East. Large animals in distress pose potential serious risks to the public and financial hardship and business loss for farmers.

The following charts highlight the changes in key risks such as an ageing population and wildfires. Further information can be found in our horizon scanning analysis and supporting documentation, which were used to support the production of this IRMP and can be accessed via our website.

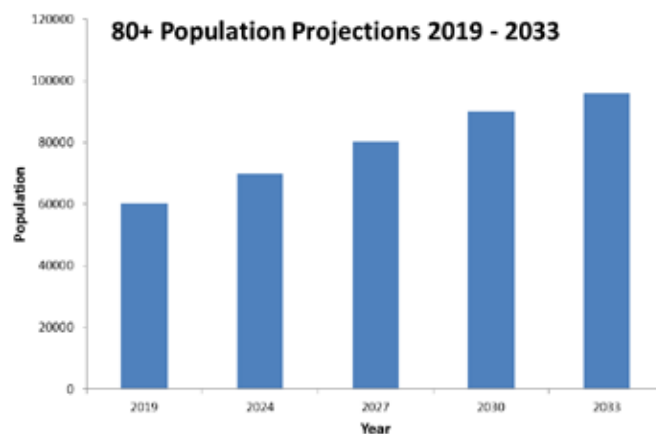


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The risks we face

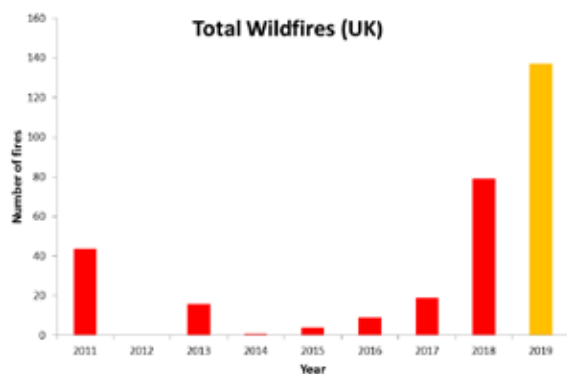
Ageing population

Population projections from the Office for National Statistics show that the overall population of Cheshire is likely to increase by 1.65 per cent by 2024. However, the population of people aged 80+ is expected to increase by 16 per cent to nearly 70,000 residents over the same period. While Cheshire East is predicted to have the largest population of 80+ residents at nearly 29,000, it is estimated that the largest change will be seen in the Warrington area where the 80+ population is expected to grow by 19 per cent, to just over 12,000 people.



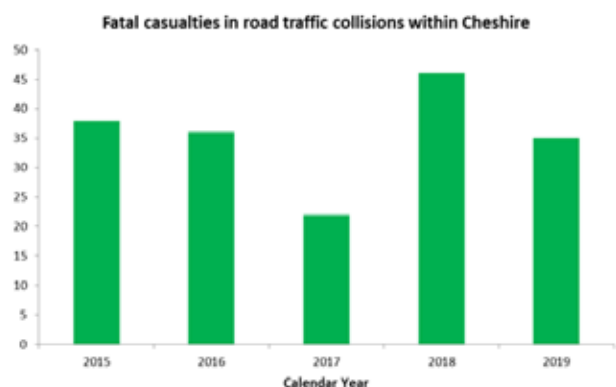
Wildfires

The UK has had more wildfires in 2019 than any year on record.



Road Traffic Collisions

In the past two years there have been a total of 81 deaths on the road in Cheshire.



Current Operational Demand

*Based on average yearly demand between 2016/17 and 2019/20

	8298	Incidents Attended
	2681	Fires
	3409	False Alarms
	1854	Other Special Service Incidents
	354	Road Traffic Collisions
	369	Accidental Dwelling Fires
	1082	Deliberate Fires
	173	Fires in Non Domestic Premises
	91	Injuries in Accidental Dwelling Fires
	31	Of These Attended Hospital

Predicted Annual Future Operational Demand

*Based on predicted 4 year average from 2020/21 to 2023/24

	8081	Incidents Attended
	2384	Fires
	3041	False Alarms
	2293	Other Special Service Incidents
	363	Road Traffic Collisions
	322	Accidental Dwelling Fires
	918	Deliberate Fires
	154	Fires in Non Domestic Premises
	75	Injuries in Accidental Dwelling Fires
	24	Of These Attended Hospital

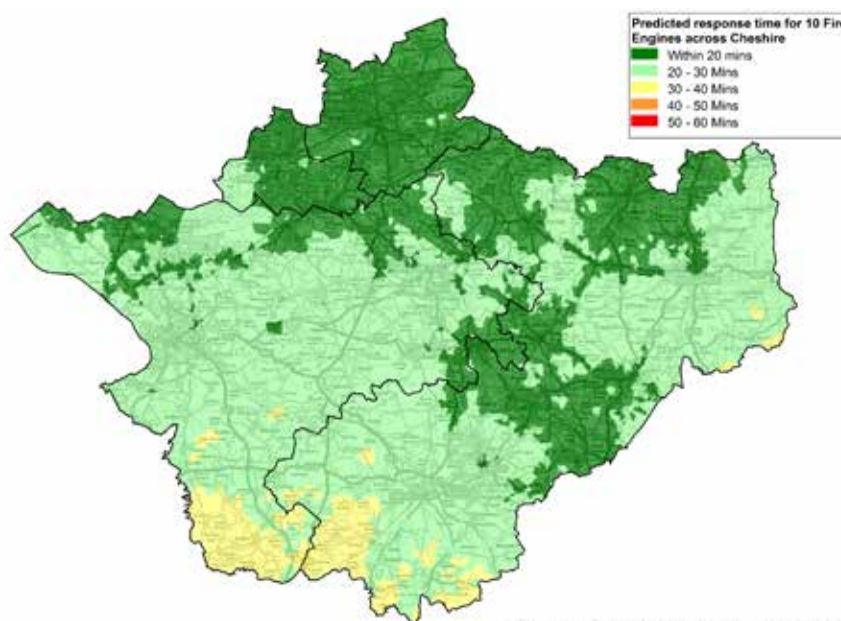
The risks we face

Responding to Major Incidents

Around 80% of incidents attended by the Service can be resolved by a single fire engine. On occasions, we do respond to major incidents that require many more resources. Recent examples include fires at Beechmere assisted living complex in Crewe in August 2019 and Chester Zoo in December 2018. Over twenty fire engines and specialist vehicles attended both of these incidents. The image below shows how quickly which we can get ten fire engines to various parts of Cheshire. Across 93% of the county we are able to provide ten fire engines within 30 minutes.

While such incidents are ongoing, the Service must maintain its ability to respond to further emergencies which may occur. To do this the Service has a coverage model which North West Fire Control use to distribute the remaining fire engines to strategic locations around Cheshire in order to provide optimal cover in all areas. This ensures we are able to continue meeting our response standard of arriving at 80% of life risk incidents within ten minutes.

Major incidents often require assistance from our neighbouring services. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 allows fire authorities to make agreements with their neighbours to provide mutual assistance; either to specific geographical areas where the neighbouring authority may provide a quicker response, or to assist with major incidents and spate conditions. Cheshire has these arrangements in place with all six surrounding fire authorities. In return for their support, Cheshire resources will be used to help our neighbours when needed. Recently this has included assisting Greater Manchester and Staffordshire tackle large moorland fires and helping prevent a dam collapse in Derbyshire.



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Whole Service Review

The Whole Service Review was requested by the Authority to align the provision of services across our prevention, protection and response functions to future risks, resources and priorities. The review sets the future direction of the Service for the years from 2020-2024. It has been developed using our Community Risk Management model and is informed by incident data, risks, statistics, information sources and feedback, as well as the outlook for public finances.

The Review was developed with the feedback of trade unions, staff and fire authority members, as well as considering feedback from previous public consultations. It incorporates and expands on previous reviews and includes proposals for the crewing arrangement at Wilmslow Fire Station, the location of Ellesmere Port’s second fire engine and the third aerial appliance. Further information on all these projects can be read in more detail later in this plan. The review also incorporated an analysis of the crewing arrangement at Penketh Fire Station; however the outcome of this work stream was to conclude that the existing arrangement is fit for purpose and therefore no changes are proposed at this time.

Significant work continues to improve the [on-call duty system](#). The programme encompasses recruitment, retention and ensuring that procedures and processes are updated to reflect the needs of our on-call firefighters.

In addition to the Whole Service Review, the Authority has a significant capital programme which is being progressed. As well as capital spending on fire engines and equipment there are particular programmes underway, including the [new training centre](#) under construction at Sadler Road in Winsford. The training centre and projects outlined in this plan will be funded using a significant amount of the Authority’s reserves and public borrowing where necessary.

The multi-year programme of modernisation across the Authority’s property portfolio is underway. Construction is progressing on the new fire station at Chester on the existing St Anne Street site, while preparatory work has begun on a new fire station on its existing site in Crewe. These projects will ensure our fire stations and other buildings meet the needs and requirements of a modern fire and rescue service.



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How we reduce demand and assess risk

The Service uses its Community Risk Management model (CRM) to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its communities. We then put in place arrangements to mitigate these risks, either through adjusting existing provision, more effective collaboration and partnership working, or building new capability.

The CRM model involves detailed risk analysis, using a range of information to generate a risk profile across Cheshire, such as incident and response data; national and local statistics; site-specific risk information; local intelligence; feedback and the results of computer simulations and modelling. Officers consider all of the information then apply professional judgement to decide upon the optimum provisions and services required to reduce the risks, which are then delivered through the Service's prevention, protection and response departments. This informs the Authority's targets for activity such as Safe and Well visits and our response standard to attending life-risk emergencies, which is currently to attend life risk incidents (e.g. house fires and road traffic collisions) within ten minutes on 80 per cent of occasions. Performance against key targets is regularly reviewed and scrutinised by elected members.

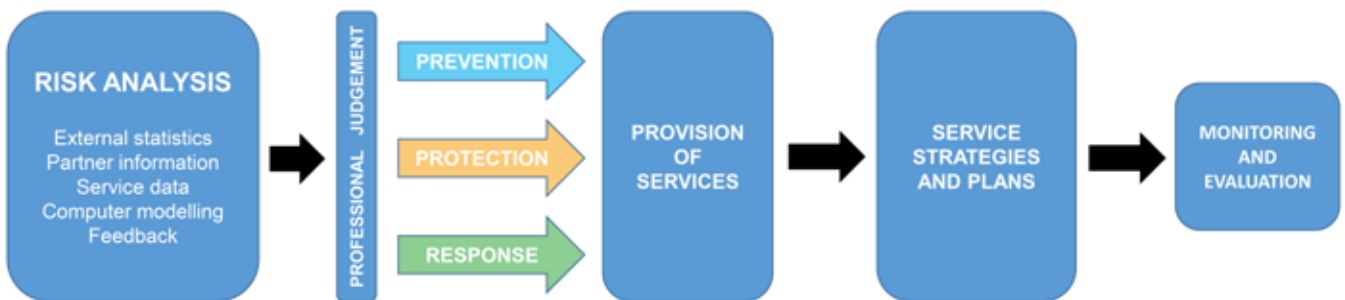
Effective response to some of the risks requires a partnership approach between other emergency services, local authorities, health providers and partner agencies. These partners are brought together through [Cheshire Resilience Forum](#) (CRF) to prepare and plan for responding to a range of emergencies. We regularly test these plans with partners through joint training exercises.

Local resilience forums such as the CRF are required to produce a Community Risk Register (CRR), which highlights potential risks facing the area. The risks we have outlined in this plan include some of those identified within the CRR, as well as more specific fire and rescue risks and influences.

We undertake to analyse risks in Cheshire using many data sources and use our professional judgement

To determine the optimum provision of services to address risk across Cheshire, according to our resources available

This provision is outlined in the Service's plans, such as the IRMP. Changes to our service provision will also be informed by feedback through public consultation

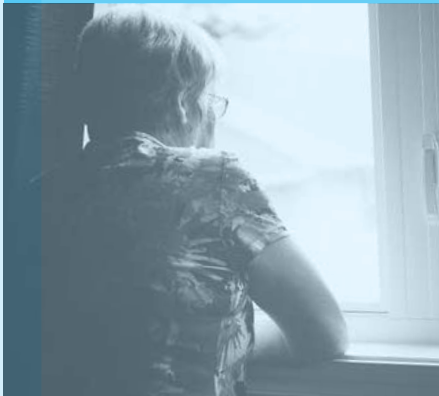


We monitor and evaluate our performance to inform any changes we may need to make to address and mitigate risks in the community.

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Risks Prevention

Home Safety



Residents over 80 are more likely to die in the event of a fire than other age groups.

Who is most at risk

- ▶ Older people
- ▶ Lone person over pensionable age
- ▶ Lone person under pensionable age
- ▶ Lone parents with dependent children
- ▶ Those who drink or are otherwise distracted when cooking
- ▶ Those who smoke or use matches/candles

What we are doing

- ▶ Our firefighters and Prevention advocates carry out [Safe and Well](#) home visits to over-65s and the most vulnerable members of our communities. Alongside traditional fire safety advice, health information is given to residents through our healthcare partnership initiatives. In 2018/19, staff carried out over 40,000 visits. More information is provided in the chart overleaf.
- ▶ We deliver fire safety advice to all Cheshire residents through a range of initiatives including national and regional campaigns and local action plans.
- ▶ We have three community safety teams working from hubs across Cheshire to serve the whole community.
- ▶ We have [Safety Central](#), a lifeskills education centre in Lymm, open to school and community groups.
- ▶ We have [Risk Rater](#), a tailored online or mobile home safety application to risk assess homes and provide personalised fire safety plans.

What we plan to do

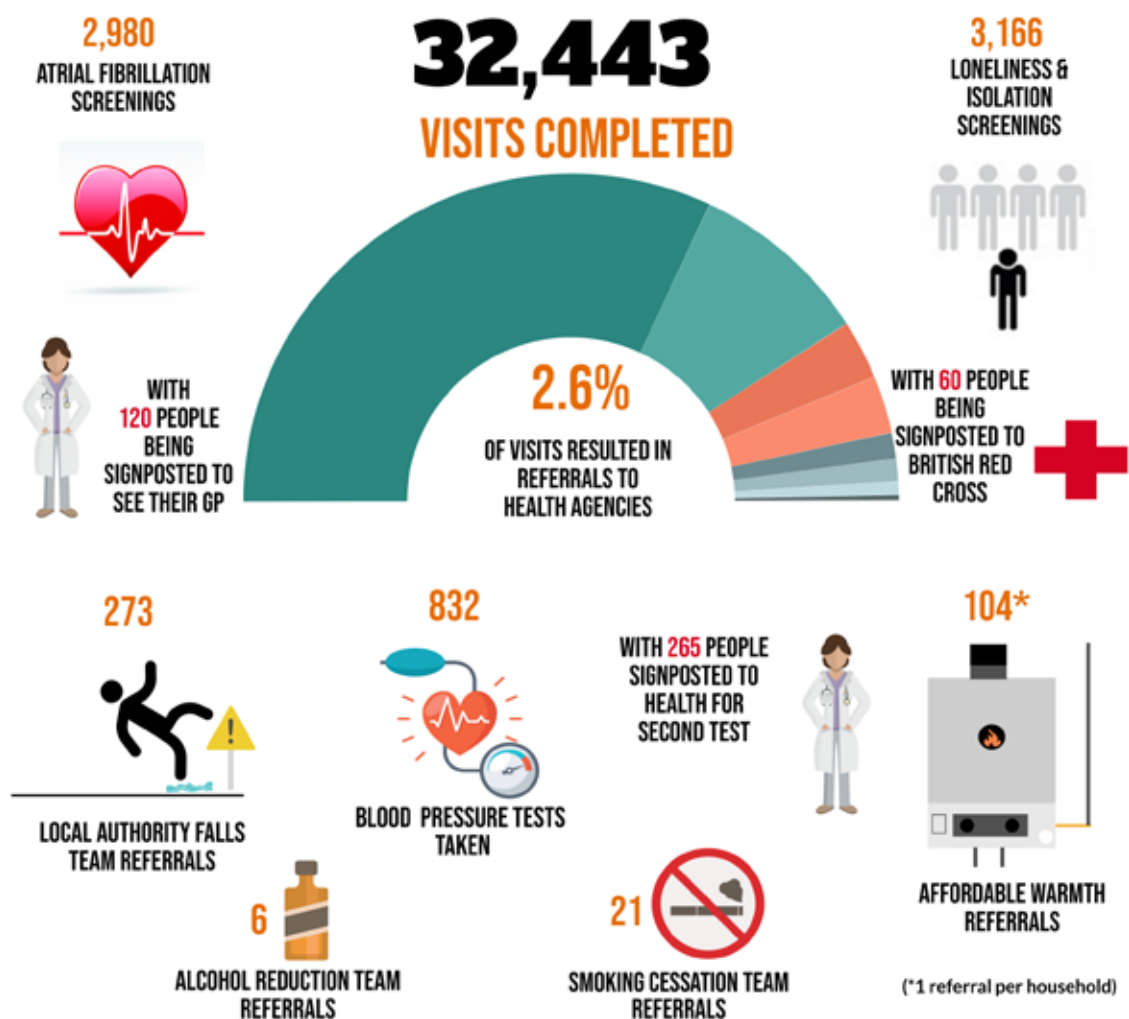
- ▶ Revise our Safe and Well targeting methodology to include a focus on single adult and lone parent households.
- ▶ Develop campaigns to reduce kitchen/cooking fires and living room fires caused by smoking materials.

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Risks Prevention

In 2017, the Authority began to offer Safe and Well visits to residents in the community who were at risk from fire. Alongside fire safety advice, firefighters and advocates provide householders with signposting information on how to keep healthy and prevent key risks related to fire, such as slips, trips and falls; smoking cessation and reducing alcohol intake.

The infographic below provides information on the outcomes of the Service's Safe and Well programme for 2019/20.



Risks Prevention

Young People



Our youth engagement programmes aim to reduce the risk of arson and anti-social behaviour, while giving young people opportunities

Who is most at risk

- ▶ School age children at risk of exclusion.
- ▶ Young people not in education, employment or training.

What we are doing

- ▶ Delivering cadet units at many of our fire stations to provide young people aged 12-17 opportunities to experience a uniformed service and develop their personal and social skills.
- ▶ Running RESPECT programmes with local partner agencies to instill positive behaviours in school age children aged 13-16 at risk of exclusion. We also run Primary Respect courses to develop the skills and self-esteem of children aged 9-11.
- ▶ Delivering an 'On The Streets' outreach programme aimed at 13-19 year olds in Halton to reduce anti-social behaviour such as hoax calls and small deliberate fires.
- ▶ Working with partners to provide FireSafe programmes to support families with children who have a fascination with fire and eliminate behaviour that puts people at risk.
- ▶ Working in a long-standing partnership with The Princes Trust to deliver programmes for 16-25 year olds to equip them with skills and behaviours to help them enter or rejoin education programmes or the workplace.
- ▶ Providing immersive and interactive fire safety awareness and education to schoolchildren, and other groups, through our exceptional safety and lifeskills centre, Safety Central.

What we plan to do

- ▶ We will continue to use our skills and trusted reputation to deliver youth engagement activities with our partners that reduce risk in the community, to give young people opportunities to develop and equip them with skills to help them make a positive contribution in their community.

Risks Prevention

Societal risks



Poor mental health and wellbeing can lead to fires and other incidents in the home.

Who is most at risk

- ▶ Those who are socially isolated
- ▶ Those who suffer from mental health issues
- ▶ Those who use alcohol and/or drugs
- ▶ Hoarders
- ▶ Some minority groups

What we are doing

- ▶ Our firefighters and Prevention advocates carry out Safe and Well home visits to the most vulnerable members of our communities.
- ▶ Alongside traditional fire safety advice, health and wellbeing information is given to residents through our healthcare partnership initiatives.
- ▶ We identify and share, with residents' permission, those in the community who require additional assistance and support from our healthcare partners.
- ▶ We employ a mental health advocate who works with partners and within communities to ensure residents can access appropriate support.
- ▶ We have Family Support Advocates working collaboratively with Cheshire West and Chester Council who provide community support with vulnerable families.

What we plan to do

- ▶ We will continue to work with our partners and within communities to reduce risk and increase support for those affected with our intelligence-led, risk-based approach.
- ▶ Refine our targeting approach and focus interventions for vulnerable people, including those who are socially isolated; suffer from mental health issues; use alcohol and/or drugs; and hoarders.

Risks Prevention

Road Safety



During 2018 and 2019, 81 lives have been lost on Cheshire's roads.

Who is most at risk

- ▶ The biggest killer on the roads is motorists driving carelessly, followed by driving too fast, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, not wearing a seatbelt, and driving while using a mobile phone – together known as the [Fatal 5](#):

What we are doing

- ▶ We have a dedicated road safety plan and a team that proactively engages with the public to improve knowledge, attitude and behaviour.
- ▶ We are an active partner in the Cheshire Road Safety Group, alongside Cheshire Constabulary and the four unitary councils, fully supporting the #Fatal5 road safety campaign.
- ▶ We have a [Fire Bike team](#) that promotes post-test training and the Service's Biker Down courses.
- ▶ We target vulnerable road users to promote road safety, with [cycle safety](#) initiatives and [Think, Drive Survive!](#) seminars for young road users.
- ▶ We are commissioned to deliver road safety education activity on behalf of Cheshire East Council, one of few fire and rescue services to deliver on behalf of a local authority. This sees staff visit every school to deliver age appropriate interventions to improve road safety education.

What we plan to do

- ▶ We will increase our efforts and work with public sector partners to create a strategic road safety plan that will have a real impact on reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. This will be informed by the feedback from our consultation.

Risks Protection

Heritage



The loss of any historic building represents a loss which can never be replaced.

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ Occupiers including staff and visitors
- ▶ Significant historic buildings
- ▶ Artefacts, paintings and objects of historic value
- ▶ Tourism/local economy

What we are doing

- ▶ Carrying out fire safety audits at heritage sites.
- ▶ Working with owners and occupiers to ensure they comply with fire regulations.
- ▶ Holding heritage impact days in areas with significant numbers of historical buildings.
- ▶ Working with partners to develop and deliver an holistic approach to heritage protection.
- ▶ Holding operational exercises, incorporating salvage recovery, at historic sites.
- ▶ Developing specific operational plans to improve operational response to heritage fires.

What we plan to do

- ▶ We will develop our heritage risk management plans and recruit a dedicated heritage officer.

Risks Protection

Businesses



80 per cent of companies which don't recover within a month after a fire are likely to go out of business.

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ Staff and customers
- ▶ Buildings and stock
- ▶ Local economy and jobs

What we are doing

- ▶ The Authority has a risk-based inspection programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This prioritises premises posing the greatest risk to life. The programme follows national guidance and provides flexibility to take account of additional intelligence to address local and national issues. Inspectors are qualified in line with a robust competence framework to enable them to deliver the programme. Enforcement action is taken in accordance with the Regulators' Code and where required, prosecutions are undertaken for the most serious cases of non-compliance.
- ▶ Operational crews are trained to carry out low risk inspections and provide assurance, education and prevention advice, as well as identifying any areas of concern.
- ▶ We have a dedicated [Business Safety team](#) which provides advice, guidance and education to support fire protection activities. The team works with local stakeholders, such as partner agencies, Chambers of Commerce and under-represented groups.
- ▶ We hold business safety impact days in our communities.
- ▶ We deliver fire safety advice through a range of initiatives including national and regional campaigns and local action plans.
- ▶ We campaign for increased use of sprinkler systems and their inclusion in legislation.

What we plan to do

- ▶ Review our risk-based inspection programme to ensure it is suitable and addresses risks to businesses and improves safety.
- ▶ Expand our '[Sprinklers Save Lives](#)' campaign to educate and advise business owners and residential high-rise properties on the benefits of fitting sprinkler systems. This will be informed by our consultation feedback.

SAVING LIVES
 CHANGING LIVES
 PROTECTING LIVES

Risks Protection

Modern methods of construction



Not having correct fire policies and procedures in place is a criminal offence.

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ Residents
- ▶ Staff and visitors
- ▶ Premises
- ▶ The environment

What we are doing

- ▶ We proactively visit construction sites to work with owners and residents to ensure the fire safety measures in place are appropriate.
- ▶ We have a risk-based inspection programme focused on life risk buildings.
- ▶ We pay particular attention to care homes, sheltered accommodation and extra care villages (life risk buildings) with timber framed construction.
- ▶ We recommend to all timber property owners that they review their fire safety policies and procedures.
- ▶ We advise residents to raise concerns about fire safety procedures with the owner of the property.
- ▶ We recommend the fitting of sprinklers in domestic and commercial buildings.
- ▶ We are reviewing and learning from emerging findings from nationally significant incidents, such as the outcomes of the Hackitt Review and public inquiry as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire.

What we plan to do

- ▶ Review our risk-based inspection programme to ensure it is suitable and addresses emerging risks associated with modern methods of construction, such as timber framed buildings and cladding systems. Consultation feedback will help inform this.
- ▶ Implement relevant outcomes from the Hackitt Review and Public Inquiry as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire.

Risks Protection

Houses in multiple occupation (HMO)



Landlords of HMO premises must have suitable fire precautions in place and a licence where required

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ Residents and visitors
- ▶ Buildings and property

What we are doing

- ▶ We work with our Local Authority partners to ensure fire safety is managed in HMOs.
- ▶ We carry out inspections of HMO common areas.

What we plan to do

- ▶ Develop closer working relationships with Local Authorities and develop assurance mechanisms for HMO premises to ensure fire safety standards are being met.
- ▶ Utilising our consultation feedback, we will develop a Cheshire wide campaign to inform owners and residents of HMOs of the regulatory requirements in relation to fire, as well as any specific risks that may be presented by this type of accommodation.

Risks Response

Climate change



Extreme weather events linked to climate change can pose a risk to people and properties

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ People
- ▶ Property
- ▶ Businesses including heritage buildings
- ▶ Countryside, wildlife and environment

What we are doing

- ▶ We have flood response plans and firefighters trained in swift water rescue.
- ▶ We have water rescue boats and technical rescue units.
- ▶ We have specialist resources and equipment for tackling wildfires.
- ▶ We are a member of the Fire Operations Group, which is specifically aimed at preventing and responding to wildfires and moorland fire. This group consists of fire and rescue services, national parks, the National Trust and other partners.

What we plan to do

- ▶ Review our flood/water response provision across Cheshire to ensure that it meets emerging needs.
- ▶ Develop a new wildfire capability, comprising a specialist team with personal protective equipment and dedicated vehicle to tackle wildfire and other climate change-related incidents such as flooding.
- ▶ Expand our fleet of 4x4 rapid response rescue units. These will be tailored to meet the risks of the local area. More detail is provided on page 37.



Risks Response

Specialist response vehicles



The Service has a range of specialist vehicles to enable firefighters to respond to many non-fire emergencies.

Who and what is most at risk

- ▶ People in water or at height
- ▶ Motorists
- ▶ Natural environment
- ▶ Industrial premises
- ▶ Large animals

What we are doing

The Authority maintains a number of assets and a fleet of vehicles to enable firefighters to respond to a wide range of incidents in addition to more typical fires and road traffic collisions. Its specialist resources are outlined below:

- ▶ Two rescue boats to support rescues from waterways and improve firefighter safety.
- ▶ Technical and animal rescue units to rescue people from height or large animals which are trapped.
- ▶ A high volume pump to provide large quantities of water at a fire or pump flood water away.
- ▶ Specialist vehicles to protect the environment or heritage sites during incidents, or to respond to chemical fires.
- ▶ A major rescue unit with heavy rescue equipment for incidents such as road traffic collisions involving heavy goods vehicles.
- ▶ A command unit to assist the organisation of large incidents and a unit to provide welfare facilities for firefighters.
- ▶ Three appliances to fight fires from above and access high locations (please see page 31 for more details on specific plans relating to these).
- ▶ We have implemented a successful trial of response to medical emergencies involving cardiac arrest.

What we plan to do

- ▶ Review the provision of specialist vehicle resources to ensure that capabilities are adequate and are distributed optimally.
- ▶ Review our water strategy in line with modern firefighting demands focusing on pre-planning, existing resources, new technology and potentially investing in a large water carrier which could also be utilised as our driver training vehicle. Provisionally this would be based at Ellesmere Port Fire Station.
- ▶ Roll out cardiac response capability across all of our fire stations (this will be tailored to the outcomes of national negotiations with trade unions).

SAVING LIVES
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PROTECTING LIVES

Risks Response

Firefighter safety and effectiveness



The Authority is committed to ensuring that our firefighters and staff are provided with the best equipment to keep them safe and to improve how effective we are at keeping the community safe.

In recent years we have invested in:

- ▶ New battery operated road traffic collision cutting gear.
- ▶ Two new aerial appliances, based at Chester and Lymm Fire Stations.
- ▶ New personal protective equipment for our operational staff.
- ▶ Stabilisation equipment to aid operations during complex road traffic collision extrications.
- ▶ New fire engines (approximately three per year).
- ▶ A new £11m state-of-the-art operational training centre at Sadler Road, Winsford.

We are proposing to:

- ▶ Review the need for cold cut lances which enable crews to tackle fires quickly from outside a building by injecting high pressure water through walls and doors.
- ▶ Review and improve fireground welfare facilities for our firefighters.
- ▶ Invest in more positive pressure ventilation fans, which provide rapid smoke clearance and reduce heat when tackling fires.
- ▶ Continue to trial a fire service drone, with the aim of introducing this capability to support operational incidents.



This is an example of what the new cold cut lances may look like.

Photo courtesy of Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Response plans for 2020-2024

Replace the Third Aerial Appliance with a High Reach Fire Engine

The Service currently has three aerial appliances which are available for the whole of Cheshire.

Two were replaced in 2016 at a cost of £588,072 per aerial. The third aerial based at [Macclesfield](#) is 17 years old so is in need of replacement. It is used only four times per annum on average so is proportionally very expensive. An aerial appliance is a specialist vehicle with a large extendable platform that can apply water to fires from height and can be used to affect rescues.

In 2014/15 officers reviewed the feasibility to operate with two aerials rather than replace the third. This extensive review has concluded and confirmed that it would be feasible to reduce to two aerials. However, Officers believe that there would be significant operational benefits to replacing the third aerial with new type of aerial incorporating a High Reach Fire Engine (HRFE), similar to the pictured Stinger or Scorpion models below.

HRFEs are an emerging technology in UK fire and rescue services and are extremely versatile. They are both a fire engine and aerial appliance so are efficient and cost effective. The net capital cost of replacing the existing appliance with a HRFE is c. £300k rather than £750k. They offer outstanding water application capability and can pierce through material such as roofs and walls to assist firefighting.

The Authority will replace the aerial appliance and one fire engine at Macclesfield Fire Station with a High Reach Fire Engine. As a Cheshire-wide resource and following feedback from our consultation process, we will review the implementation and usage of the new vehicle after 12 months, to determine its optimum location to provide the best outcomes across Cheshire as a whole. Any resulting changes would be subject to further consultation.



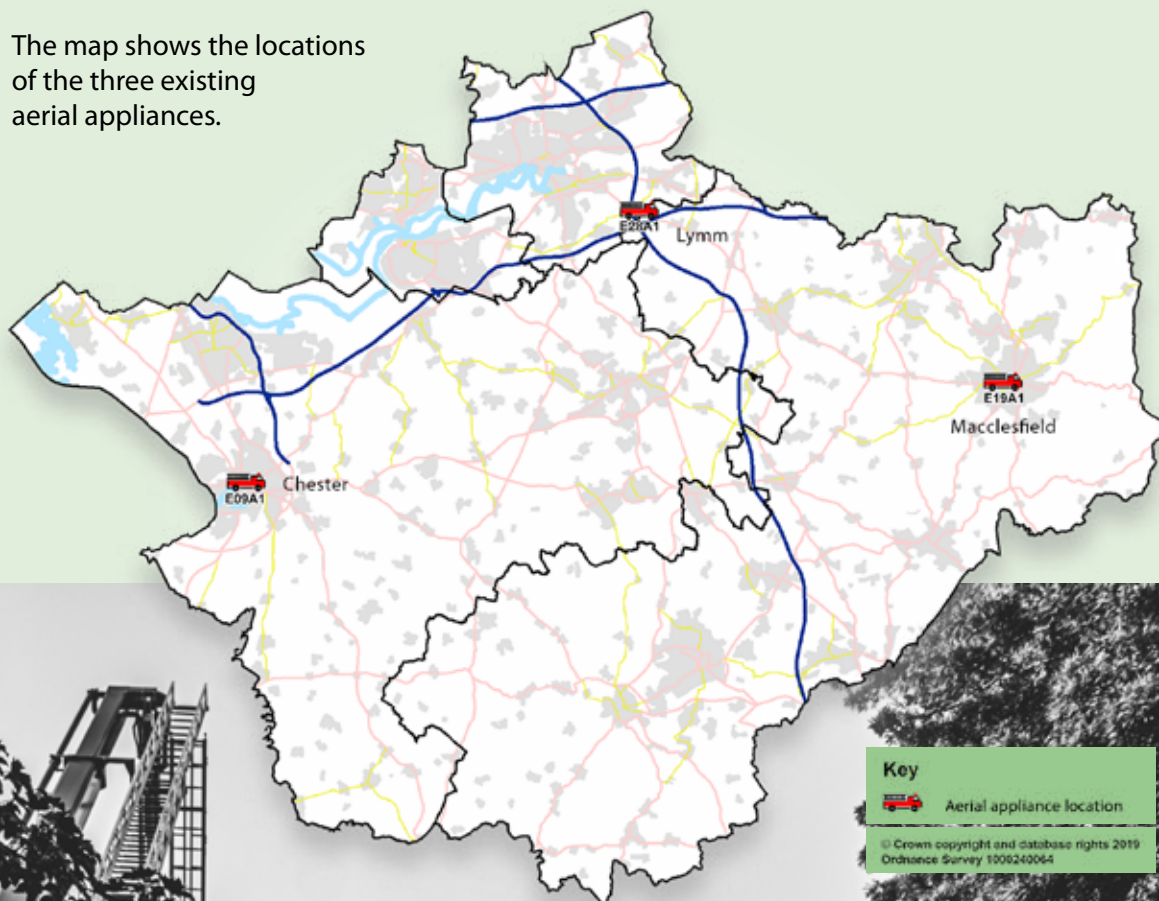
AT Stinger



E1 Scorpion

Response plans for 2020-2024

The map shows the locations of the three existing aerial appliances.



SAVING LIVES
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PROTECTING LIVES

Introduce a Day Crewing System at Wilmslow Fire Station

The fire engine at Wilmslow operates as a nucleus crewing model (further details of our crewing models are provided on page 10). Historically it has been difficult to recruit and retain on-call staff at Wilmslow so there are frequently insufficient staff to crew the fire engine at night. This means bringing in resources from other parts of Cheshire to cover. While this can be challenging to manage it has ensured that the fire engine at Wilmslow is available 99 per cent of the time.

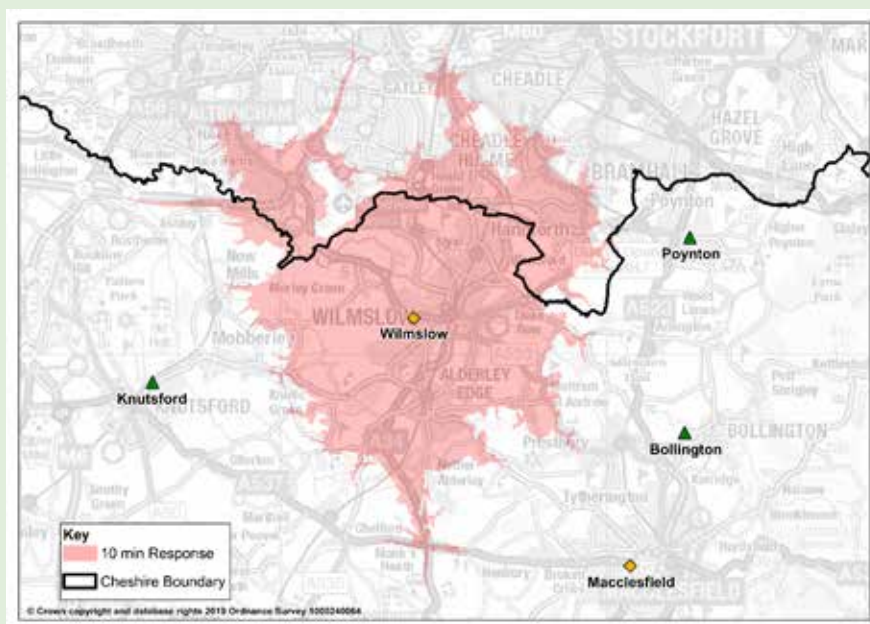
Following a review of the current arrangements at Wilmslow, the Authority has decided to change the crewing model to Day Crewing (DC). DC is in place at other stations in Cheshire and is extremely efficient and effective. It operates with full time staff who receive additional pay for providing guaranteed on-call cover overnight, guaranteeing 24/7 availability without the need to bring in cover. It saves c.£200k per year on the current model, however it requires accommodation adjacent to the station for staff. It is expected that this will be paid for using revenue savings. Furthermore, though average night time response times could be quicker by around 1.5 minutes, average response times during the daytime at weekends may be around 2 minutes slower.

Some consultation feedback called for a wholetime crewing model at Wilmslow and highlighted Manchester Airport as a specific local risk. Comments also referred to an alternative option should the required land not be available.

The Authority's view at this time is that the level of fire and rescue activity in Wilmslow means that the extra revenue cost of a wholetime system would not be an efficient use of resources. Regarding Manchester Airport, Wilmslow is usually sent to support Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and the airport's own fire service, who provide the primary response to an airport emergency. This would continue to be the case under the new model.

The Authority has identified a suitable site, owned by the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, that would enable the development of this plan. However, availability of this land is not guaranteed. Should this plan not prove possible, the Authority will look to further improve the current operating model. Any substantial change to the crewing arrangements would be proposed in future IRMPs and subject to consultation.

Wilmslow Fire Station



The map shows the 10 minute response reach from [Wilmslow Fire Station](#).

Relocate Ellesmere Port's second fire engine to Powey Lane

In 2017 the Authority opened a new fire station at Powey Lane. Various specialist response vehicles were moved to the station as well as a fire engine from Chester. The new station provides specialist capabilities and has significantly improved response times across a large area, including to outlying areas such as Neston.

Powey Lane Fire Station is 3.3 miles from Ellesmere Port Fire Station and its fire engine can respond to all of Ellesmere Port within 10 minutes. Because of this, the Authority intended to change the crewing of one of two fire engines based at Ellesmere Port Fire Station from wholetime (full time) to on-call (part time). However, after consideration the Authority felt that it did not provide value for money and was unlikely to be sustainable; therefore, the Authority explored whether this fire engine could be relocated to another area or station.

Following this review, the Authority has decided to relocate this engine to Powey Lane. This means that the current Powey Lane fire engine would return to its original location at Chester Fire Station. The net effect of this change is to have one fire engine each at Ellesmere Port Fire Station and Powey Lane; and two at Chester Fire Station.

This change will maintain all of the benefits of the new fire station at Powey Lane and balance resources across Cheshire West, while ensuring that response times in Chester and Ellesmere Port are amongst the best in Cheshire.

A considerable amount of consultation feedback focused on risk within Chester and Ellesmere Port. Regarding Chester, comments highlighted the heritage risk within Chester, the size and density of the City's population and its prominence as a visitor attraction.

Industrial risks within Ellesmere Port were also highlighted. If a major incident occurs at these premises, a significant number of resources from across Cheshire and neighbouring areas would be needed. Robust arrangements are in place to provide an effective response to an incident of this scale.

Stanlow oil refinery is referenced specifically. If the on-site fire service were unable to control a fire in its initial stages, a large number of fire engines would be required. The slight reduction in the attendance time for a second fire engine would not dictate the outcome of the incident, and in any event this would still be within 10 minutes. Foam supplies would be required to resolve the incident, which are, and will continue to be, stored at Powey Lane, from where the second fire engine would respond.

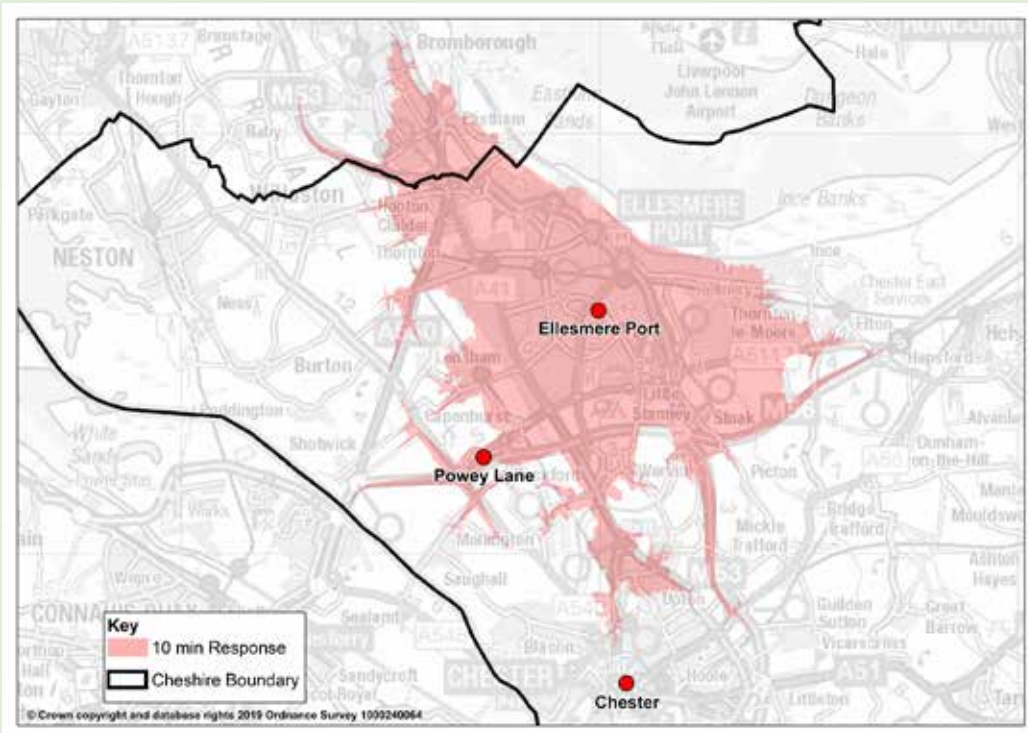
Some staff comments questioned whether the location of the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port was consequential, as it is believed to spend a lot of time outside of its own area on standby and covering other locations. In reality, the fire engine spends 91.3% of the time available to respond from its home station, therefore it is important that it be best located to maximise its operational benefit.

This engine also attends a large number of unplanned standby calls, whereby a fire engine is moved to cover another station due to incident activity. 71% of these were to cover the Chester area. Many of these calls would be removed by providing Chester with two fire engines, while maintaining two to cover Ellesmere Port from the fire stations at Powey Lane and Wellington Road.



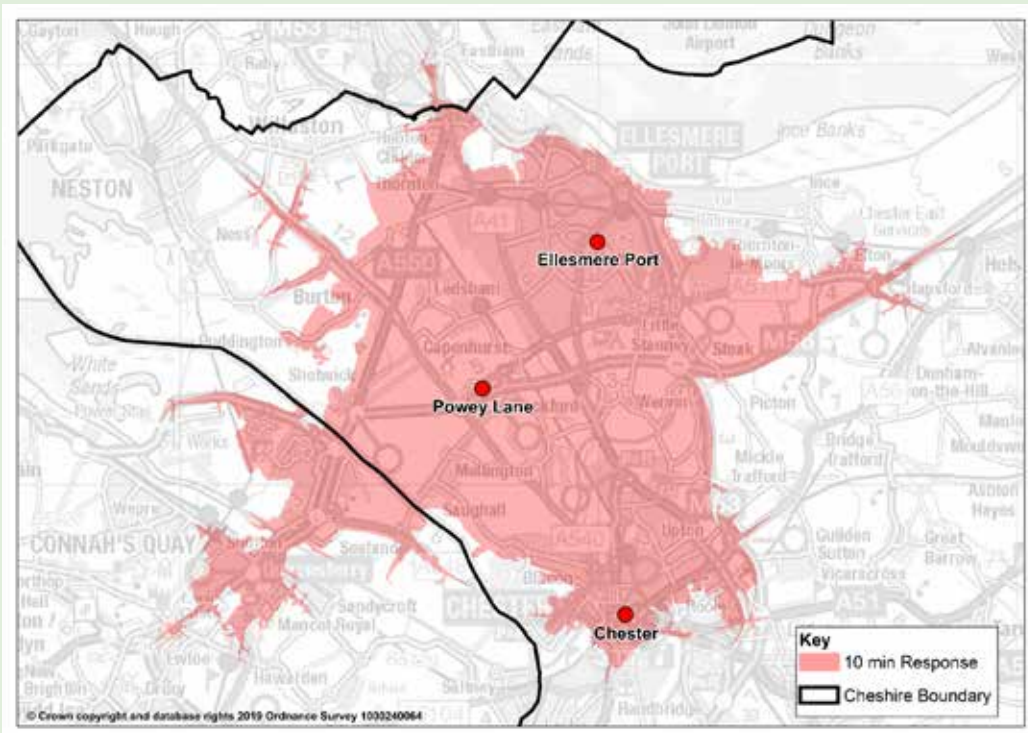
Powey Lane Fire Station

Ellesmere Port Fire Station



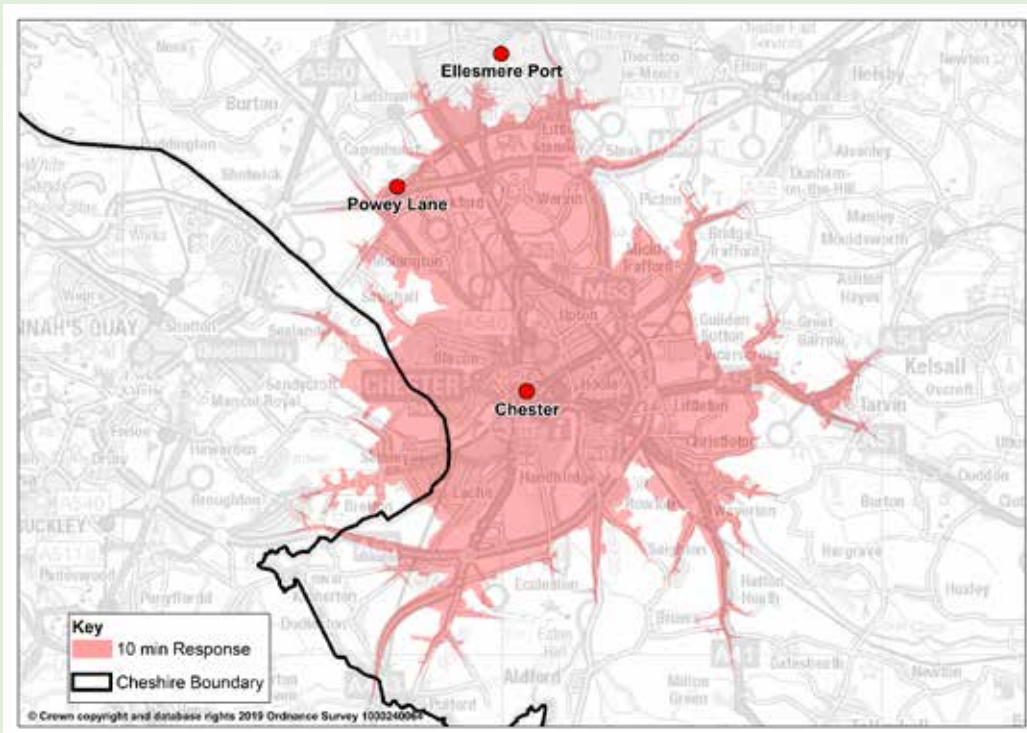
The map shows the 10 minute response reach from [Ellesmere Port Fire Station](#).

Powey Lane Fire Station

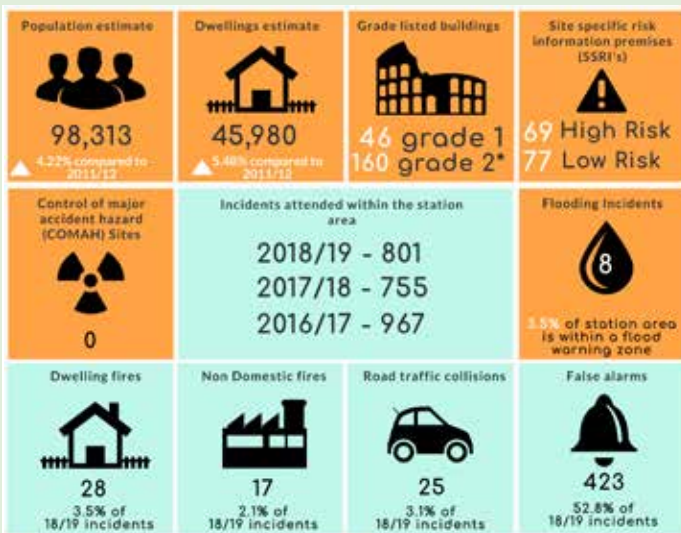


The map shows the 10 minute response reach from [Powey Lane Fire Station](#).

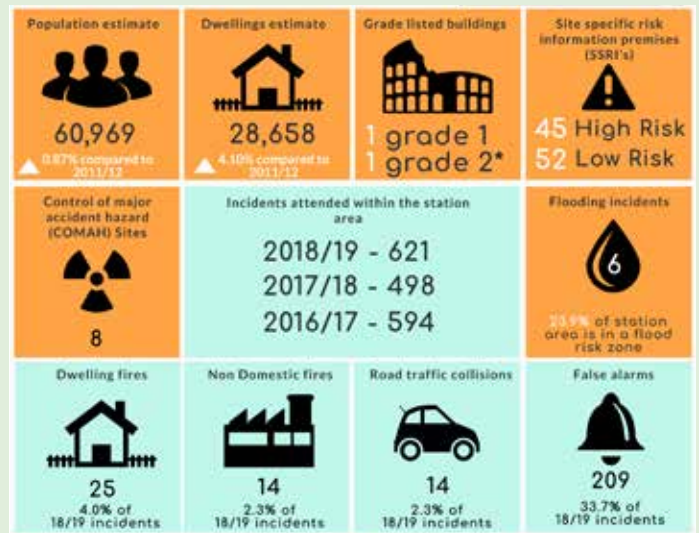
Chester Fire Station



The map shows the 10 minute response reach from [Chester Fire Station](#).



Key fire and rescue risk and demand within Chester



Key fire and rescue risk and demand within Ellesmere Port

Response plans for 2020-2024

Expanding our response to road traffic collisions

Over the last two years there have been 81 lives lost due to road traffic collisions (RTCs) in Cheshire. The Authority's plan to reduce this is two-fold; prevention (see page 20) and improved emergency response to RTCs.

To improve response, the Authority will introduce a fleet of 13 Rapid Response Rescue Units (RRRU), mainly in rural parts of Cheshire where response times tend to be slower. The RRRU will be crewed by two firefighters who will respond to RTCs to provide lifesaving trauma care. They will also do preparatory work prior to the arrival of fire engines, thus improving casualty extrication times and outcomes.

The RRRU will be tailored to local needs and be equipped to deal with local risks such as flooding, wildfires (or cardiac response, subject to national negotiations). Capabilities of specific vehicles at each location will be considered as part of a review of our specialist appliances. The vehicles will be in addition to the existing resources at the fire station and are not intended to be used for firefighting operations as you would expect of a traditional fire engine.

Each vehicle and the associated equipment will require a capital investment of approximately £40,000.

RRRU have been in use since 2009 and the necessary assurance and operating procedures already exists. As vehicles are rolled out to additional stations, the suitability of risk assessments will be reviewed and appropriate training will be provided to staff. Any such expansion of the vehicle's role as described above would also be subject to consultation with representative bodies.

Additional feedback suggested RRRU would be better placed on wholetime stations. Given the availability of standard fire engines at these locations and the fact that recruitment and retention of staff is not a challenge, there are limited benefits which would be delivered by placing an RRRU at these stations.

The map shows the locations of the proposed 13 Rapid Response Rescue Units.



This is an example of what a new Cheshire RRRU may look like.



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Collaboration

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 places a duty on all emergency services to explore how they can better work together in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Prior to this, Cheshire had already embarked upon significant collaboration with partners to establish [North West Fire Control](#). The centre, in Warrington, provides emergency call handling and mobilisation for fire and rescue services in Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

In Cheshire, the [Police and Crime Commissioner](#) and [Fire Authority](#) work closely together to foster greater joint working. This has already resulted in a major programme of collaboration to provide joint corporate services to both fire and police from a shared headquarters building. Going forward, the Authority will work with the PCC and Cheshire Constabulary to further refine this programme to improve the services provided to our respective members of staff through the introduction of a performance and evaluation framework.

The Authority also works with North West Ambulance Service to assist them in gaining entry to properties where there is a concern for someone's welfare. The Authority will continue to explore the possibility of utilising firefighters to respond to emergency cardiac response incidents alongside paramedics. This initiative is, however, influenced by the national negotiations between employers and representative bodies regarding the role of modern firefighters

As the Authority progresses its programme of modernising many of its fire stations, it will consider opportunities to further collaborate with local partner agencies, working closer together and sharing premises to reduce costs and operate more efficiently and effectively.

Additionally, the Fire Authority will continue to employ staff as part of multi-agency teams working with local partners under the Complex Dependencies Programme, providing an integrated approach to prevent children, families and vulnerable adults reaching crisis, and providing crisis management for those that have.

The Authority will, through the course of all of its collaborative arrangements, undertake reviews as necessary to ensure collaborations are providing the expected benefits to the organisation and the community.



HMICFRS

In 2017 a new independent inspectorate was created for fire and rescue services in England when the existing inspectorate for policing took on responsibility for fire as well, becoming Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The first cycle of inspections took place during 2018/19 and Cheshire was inspected during 2018, with the report published in December 2018. The inspection consisted of three key themes, with several sub-sets of questions under each theme:

- Effectiveness (how effective the Service is at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- Efficiency (how efficient the Service is at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks)
- People (how well the service looks after its people)

HMICFRS uses a similar grading model to that of OFSTED for school inspections, using the following grades: Outstanding; Good; Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

Cheshire was graded as 'Good' for its effectiveness and efficiency and 'Requires Improvement' in how it looks after its people.

Following the inspection, an action plan was developed to address the findings of the inspection and drive improvements. This was produced after engaging with staff across the organisation to inform its development. Progress against the action plan is monitored by Members of Cheshire Fire Authority. Work is ongoing to progress this action plan and continue to make improvements ahead of the next cycle of inspections.



Looking after our people

One of the key priorities for the Authority is to look after its people and to build upon its reputation for being a high performing, compassionate and inclusive employer.

This is underpinned by a culture where everyone feels they are treated fairly and can enjoy their work in a welcoming and collaborative environment where the value of both individual and team contributions are recognised.

The Service's [People Strategy](#) sets the direction and focus for our people-related activity. It has been developed in recognition of the fact that people are our greatest asset and incorporates the following areas of emphasis:

- Strengthening leadership and line management to support organisational change and service delivery to the public.
- Creating cultural values and behaviours which make Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service a great place to work.
- Developing ways of working that respond to service model needs.
- Providing excellent training and education to ensure continuous improvement of services to the public against a backdrop of changing demands.
- Strengthening our ability to provide an excellent service by diversifying our staff and creating a fair and equal place to work.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of all our staff.

Within the [People Strategy](#) is a framework that encompasses the Service's people priorities and objectives. This is referred to as the "Steps Framework" and comprises three main elements – Step In, Step Forward and Step Up.



Looking after our people

Step In

This covers all aspects of attraction and recruitment to focus on fairly selecting the candidates with the right values, attitude and skills to make a difference to their community.

Step Forward

This is about maximising the capacity and sustainability of our people through effective planning and matching resources with finances, aligning individual career aspirations with the need to futureproof the organisation. This aspect of the strategy also underpins the Service's commitment to staff wellbeing and creating a safe and healthy working environment.

Step Up

This is about strengthening our leadership and providing excellent training and development to our people to ensure continuous improvement of services to our communities.

Step In

The Authority operates a blended approach to the recruitment of its staff. In addition to operational and support staff recruitment campaigns, it incorporates the provision of apprenticeships and work experience placements to provide opportunities for young people.

The Authority is committed to being an open and inclusive employer. It is proud to be ranked third in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for the second successive year, ranking it as the best performing emergency service in the UK within the Index. This demonstrates the Authority's ongoing commitment to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community. Central to this work is the active staff network of LGBT+ staff and allies, FirePride, to promote an inclusive and supportive workplace.

A similar network, Limitless, provides support and advice for female staff and addresses issues affecting women in the workplace. The Service supports positive action and community events to engage with and recruit from traditionally under-represented groups, such as women and black and minority ethnic residents, making the Authority more representative of the community.



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CHANGING LIVES
PROTECTING LIVES

Looking after our people

Step Forward

In order to ensure the Authority is sustainable for the future, strategic workforce planning is undertaken to provide an accurate picture of the structure and capabilities of the workforce. This enables us to plan recruitment activity and address future skills shortages. Work is underway to develop more career pathways to ensure the Service provides different avenues to joining the organisation and to provide meaningful career opportunities within the Authority.

The Authority is committed to ensuring that firefighters and staff can carry out their jobs safely and effectively. It has robust health and safety procedures in place and its support for staff has led to nationally recognised low levels of sickness absence. Particularly regarding mental health and wellbeing, the Authority has procedures in place to support staff in the event of traumatic incidents and has relaunched its network for staff to champion mental health in the workplace. It has recently appointed a dedicated mental health and wellbeing advisor to help build a culture where staff can openly discuss their mental health and seek support if required. The advisor is also leading work to support mental health and wellbeing needs of staff which may have emerged due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Step Up

Professional and leadership development is a key area of emphasis for the Authority coupled with the development of a culture that is based on trust, integrity and authentic staff engagement.

We develop resilient leaders and offer a range of interventions to upskill and support existing and future leaders. We support academic achievement to ensure our leaders have the relevant underpinning knowledge and we offer a range of development tools, including appraisals, coaching, mentoring and bespoke leadership development programmes. In selecting and developing leaders we use a national leadership framework to ensure the leadership skills and behaviours are relevant and appropriate to the fire sector.

Another aspect of development is creating a learning culture that ensures our firefighters are able to undertake immersive and realistic operational training. While the success of its prevention work has led to a long-term reduction in fires, this does mean that firefighters are more reliant on training and simulation to develop their learning and experience. To address this, work is ongoing to construct a new operational training centre to provide realistic and interactive scenarios to ensure staff can deal with the wide range of incidents that may occur in Cheshire.

Having an engaged workforce is a key way of continuing to improve the organisation and providing the community of Cheshire with a first class fire and rescue service.

The Authority is keen to ensure positive industrial relations and work effectively with representative bodies to resolve issues and improve the organisation. Additionally, the commitment to engage with staff has seen the establishment of a Staff Engagement Forum to consider topical issues and suggest improvements. Other initiatives include the introduction of staff conferences to further involve all staff in developing the organisation, and increasing the visibility of senior leaders to gather and act on feedback from staff. Staff engagement will continue to be a priority throughout the duration of this IRMP.

Looking after our people

Our Core Values

By 2018, our core values were nearly ten years old. Therefore, we embarked on a comprehensive review to make sure that the values we live by in the workplace are a true reflection of us and the behaviours we want to promote.

This review took over a year and involved a significant amount of engagement with our staff through surveys, focus groups and several interactive conferences. Our new values are provided below and were developed and decided by our staff.

The values are deliberately centred around people. We felt it was important to develop a set of simple, memorable principles that not only shape the organisation, but reflect us as individuals. That way, we can truly embed our values not just through our policies and procedures, but in how we conduct ourselves as people each and every day.



Our finances

Cheshire Fire Authority is funded through two main sources of income: funding from central government and through its share of council tax, called its precept. Council tax makes up around 67 per cent of the Authority's funding with government grants and distribution of business rates comprising the other 33 per cent.

For the last full financial year, 2019/20, the Authority had a revenue budget of £43.4m and a capital budget of £17.5m. The graphic on the right outlines what we actually spent in the year. Further details can be found in the [Authority's Statement of Accounts](#), available on our website www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

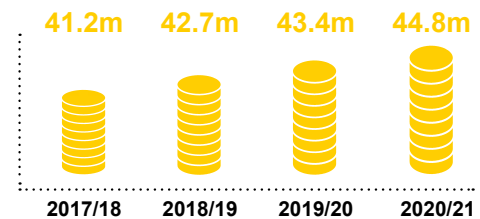
As part of its budget management, the Authority produces a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), covering a five year period. The MTFP is updated regularly to reflect emerging, local, regional and national issues and makes informed assumptions about issues such as future pay, inflation, government funding and council tax levels. Current assumptions include an annual increase in its precept of 1.99 per cent, an annual pay increase of 2 per cent for staff and 2 per cent for non-pay inflation. The latest MTFP can be viewed on our website.

Over the past year the Authority has undertaken a comprehensive exercise to more effectively and efficiently align resources to deliver against its key aims and objectives, a process known as priority based budgeting. It will continue with this approach over coming years to ensure funding is allocated towards priority areas and make our community safer.

As with other public sector organisations, the Authority is impacted by spending decisions taken by Government. The Government outlines its key spending priorities through its annual Budget announcement and, longer-term, through Comprehensive Spending Reviews (CSR).

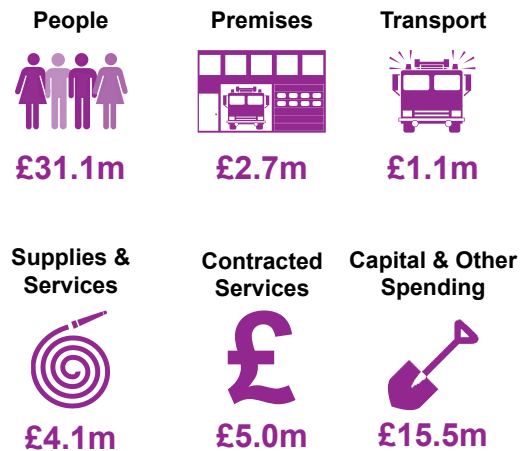
There is a considerable amount of uncertainty regarding the future outlook for public spending, as a result of the external political environment and the impact of coronavirus. More clarity may emerge from the next CSR, the outcomes of which may require the Authority to revise its plans as necessary to ensure it fulfils its legal duty to deliver a balanced budget.

Our funding



What we spend it on

2019/20 actual spend:



Our finances

What we spend

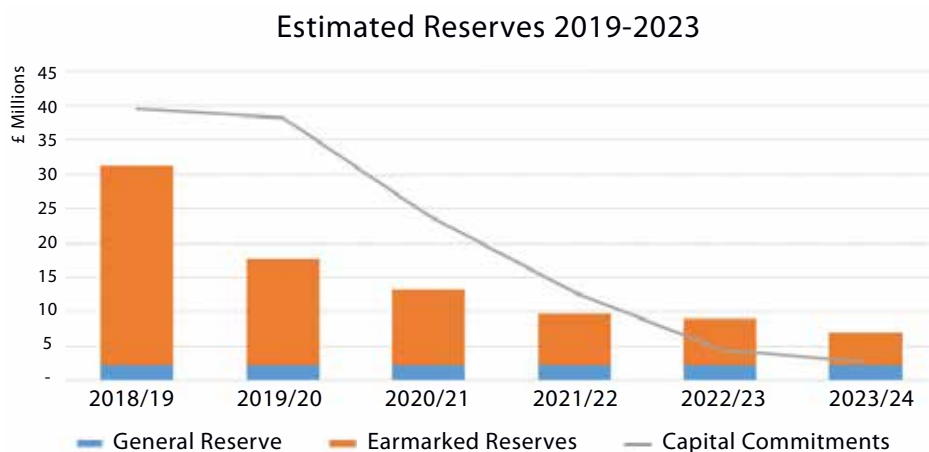
The Authority’s biggest outlay is on its staff, which accounts for over 70 per cent of its revenue spending. It also has other costs including fuel, supplies and services such as utilities.

In 2014 the Government ceased providing the Authority with specific capital funding. This has meant that capital spending, such as replacement fire engines or new fire kit and equipment, has had to be completely funded by the Authority either through reserves or by setting aside money from its revenue budget (which is the amount of money the Authority requires to provide its services during the year).

In addition to regular capital spending on items such as those described above, the Authority has a significant capital programme underway. This programme will use up the vast majority of reserves over the next four years and incorporates several key elements:

- ▶ Construction of a new operational training centre at its Sadler Road site in Winsford. The success of the Authority’s fire prevention work means that there are now less fire incidents than in the past. While this is great news, it does mean that firefighters rely more on simulation and training to develop their skills rather than real life experience from incidents. The centre will provide staff with realistic and interactive training scenarios that reflect the range of risks across Cheshire.
- ▶ Building new fire stations at Chester and Crewe. Construction of the new fire station at Chester is well underway and will lead to a more efficient and modern building to benefit staff and the community. The Authority is also commencing plans to build a new fire station on the site of the existing facility in Crewe.
- ▶ The Authority is also continuing with a significant programme of modernisation of its estates. This involves the modernisation of most of its fire stations and its housing stock and will provide more modern and efficient premises for its staff.

The chart shows the Authority’s capital commitments and its projected level of reserves up to 2023/2024.



Summary of our plans

To summarise, here are our plans for 2020-2024:

From
2020/21

- Extend Safe and Well home visits to focus interventions for a broader range of vulnerable people.
- Work with public sector partners to create a strategic road safety plan that will have a real impact on reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.
- Develop targeted campaigns to raise awareness and protect our communities from the key causes of fire.
- Review our Risk Based Inspection Programme.
- Expand our 'Sprinklers Save Lives' campaign, promoting the use of sprinklers in business premises and high rise residential properties.
- Move the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port Fire Station to Powey Lane, moving the current fire engine at Powey Lane back to Chester.
- Develop our wildfire capability.
- Review the need for new equipment to improve the effectiveness of our response.
- Review our firefighting water provision and our response to water incidents.
- Comprehensive review of plans and procedures to adapt to Covid-19 guidance and ensure the safety of staff and the wider community.

From
2021/22

- Change our approach to how we manage heritage risks.
- Launch a Cheshire-wide campaign aimed at owners and occupiers of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Replace the aerial appliance and a fire engine at Macclesfield with a High-Reach Fire Engine.
- Provide Rapid Response Rescue Units on all of our primary on-call fire stations.
- Review our specialist resources.
- Invest in a large water carrier to be based at Ellesmere Port and used to support firefighting operations across Cheshire.

From
2022/23

- Develop a new four year plan.

From
2023/24

- Change the crewing system at Wilmslow Fire Station to a Day Crewing Duty System.

Developing our plans

The plans within this IRMP were subject to an extensive consultation process between 16 December 2019 and 24 April 2020. This consultation involved members of the public, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service staff, as well as stakeholders and partner agencies from across Cheshire.

Our public consultation involved an online survey, a series of community roadshows, focus groups and other deliberative sessions. We also had a survey for our staff to complete, alongside team visits and conferences for employees to input into our proposals. We also consulted directly with our partners and stakeholders in writing and through individual meetings and briefings.

Our consultation process was subject to an independent Quality Assurance assessment by the Consultation Institute, to ensure that the process undertaken by the Authority met required standards of good practice.

In addition Greenstreet Berman, specialists in risk analysis, provided independent assessment of our proposals subject to consultation, and the methodologies used to develop them.

The plans were then subject to approval by Cheshire Fire Authority on 1 July 2020. This IRMP highlights where the feedback from our consultation has influenced the decisions taken regarding the proposals. More information on the consultation, including feedback reports, consultation materials and other documentation, can be accessed via our website www.cheshirefire.gov.uk.



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