



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



HWFRS Collaboration

Updated April 2025



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Foreword

This document aims to show how collaboration with other agencies is firmly embedded as a way of working across all aspects of the Service. We have a statutory duty to consider Emergency Service collaboration, however this is not the key driver behind the work we do with our partners. Our commitment to working with others helps to ensure we make better use of limited resources we have, and enhances the role we have in improving the safety of our communities. Through the processes of reviewing and evaluating our partnerships, we believe we can continue to build on the successes of collaboration and look forward to further joint working with our Blue Light colleagues and our many other public, private and voluntary sectors partners in the future.



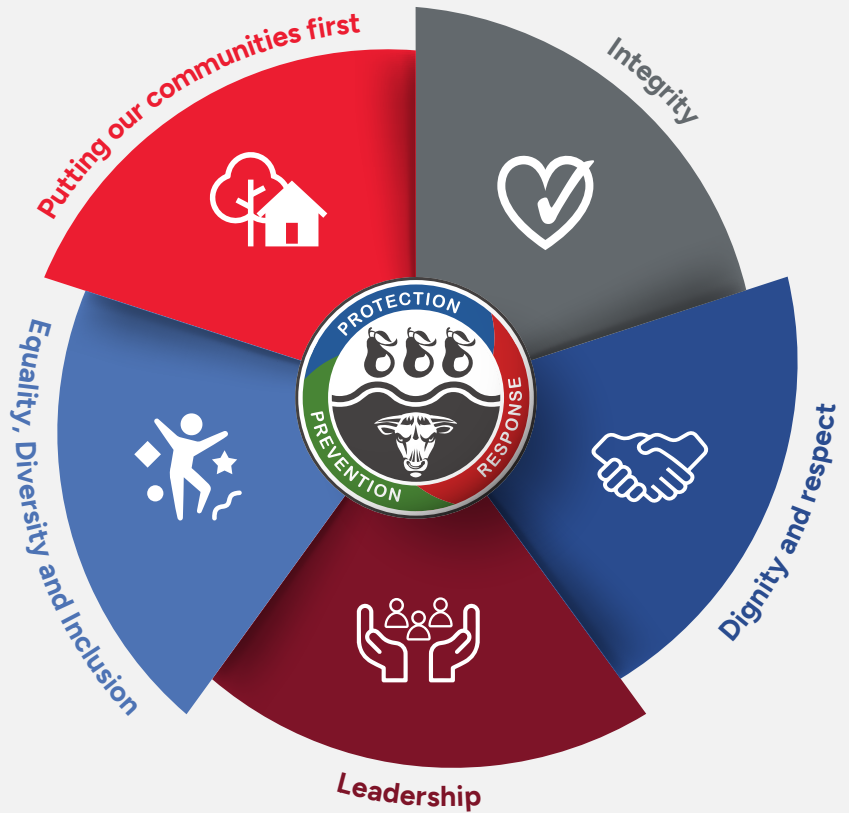
Jonathon Pryce
KFSM
Chief Fire Officer/
Chief Executive



Collaboration

Welcome to the fifth update of the Collaboration document, our summary of the many ways we work with partners to keep our communities safe and well. In previous editions, we have highlighted our ongoing joint working with **West Mercia Police** and with **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service** through our Strategic Fire Alliance. We have also emphasised the importance of collaborative working in both delivering our own services and in adding value to the wider community safety aims and priorities of our partner agencies. A vital aspect of collaboration is the continual evaluation and review of our partnerships and joint working arrangements to assess the benefits to our communities.

The Service has also embedded the national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England, which was jointly developed by the **National Fire Chiefs Council**, the **Local Government Association** and the **Association of Police and Crime Commissioners**. The code champions ethical behaviours that help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.



Putting our communities first

We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect

We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership

As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

The Importance of Evaluating Collaboration

Evaluating collaborative working is essential to ensure that partnerships are effective, efficient and beneficial to the public. Assessing collaboration involves measuring operational performance, reviewing joint initiatives and identifying areas for improvement. In HWFRS we use several mechanisms to evaluate collaborative efforts across the Service and our partner organisations.

1. Performance Monitoring and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

In HWFRS, we track specific KPIs to assess the effectiveness of collaborative working. These include:

- Response times to multi-agency incidents via our Attendance Performance Measure (APM) reporting system.
- Casualty outcomes in joint emergency responses via our Fire Deaths and Serious Injuries group (FDSI).
- Number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) conducted in partnership with health and social care agencies.
- Efficiency savings from resource sharing, such as our joint control room and co-locating with the police at our Headquarters and Bromsgrove and, new, Redditch fire stations.

Performance data is collected quarterly, analysed and compared against targets to assess whether collaborative efforts are delivering the intended benefits.



2. Reviews and Audits by HMICFRS

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) conducts independent inspections of UK fire services, including their approach to collaboration. These reviews evaluate whether services are working effectively with partners, whether they are meeting legal obligations (e.g. under the Policing and Crime Act 2017), and whether collaboration is improving efficiency and public safety. HMICFRS reports highlight strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.

The Importance of Evaluating Collaboration

Continued

3. Feedback from Staff and Partner Agencies

Engagement with firefighters, officers and external partners is crucial in evaluating collaboration. Feedback is gathered through:

- Stakeholder surveys and feedback from the our communities such as our recent Community Risk Management Plan Public Consultation.
- Debriefs after multi-agency incidents to assess joint-working effectiveness.
- Lessons learned via our debrief system to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

This qualitative feedback helps us to refine our collaborative partnerships and address any challenges in joint operations.



4. Case Studies and Best Practice Sharing

We assess the success of our collaborative initiatives through case studies, looking at examples of where partnership working has delivered tangible benefits. For example, in this document we highlight specific case studies for each area of work under Response, Protection, Prevention, Valuing our Workforce and Value for Money. Best practices are shared across services via forums like the **National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)** to improve future collaboration.

5. Financial and Resource Efficiency Assessments

To determine whether collaboration is cost-effective, we conduct financial reviews to evaluate savings from shared resources, joint procurement, and co-location of services. The larger projects we undertake are scrutinised and evaluated via our Change Portfolio Board where cost savings and available budgets are aligned to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). These assessments help to justify investment in collaborative projects and inform future policy decisions.

Conclusion

Evaluating collaborative working in HWFRS involves a combination of performance data analysis, independent inspections, stakeholder feedback and financial assessments. By continuously reviewing and refining joint working practices, HWFRS ensure that our collaborative work not only enhances our emergency response and efficiency, but also the safety of our communities.

Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025-30 and Core Strategies

Our Draft CRMP 2025-30 has completed its Public Consultation and pending its authorisation by the Fire Authority will be published at the end of 2025. It is the overarching strategy we build every five years for helping to keep you, your home, your community and your environment safe from fire and other emergencies. It provides an overview of the foreseeable fire-and-rescue-related risks we believe may occur within the communities we serve. The CRMP sets out our high-level plans for tackling those risks through our Prevention, Protection and Response strategies. This plan is the result of a broad collaborative effort, bringing together the collective knowledge, experience and insights of fire service professionals, our politicians who govern us and those who represent you across both counties along with community leaders and stakeholders across

various sectors. This Collaboration Document will help to show how well collaboration activities are embedded across all aspects of the Service.

The diagram below highlights the key themes and work areas of the CRMP and Core Strategies. There are three Core Strategies covering the primary service functions – Response, Protection and Prevention. Among the enabling strategies, the aims of Valuing our Workforce are set out in the People Strategy, while ‘Value for Money’ is primarily addressed through our Asset Management, ICT, Operational Logistics, Equipment and Property strategies alongside the overarching Medium-Term Financial Plan and Budget. The CRMP, core strategies and enabling strategies and plans are all available on the Publications page of the Service website.

	CRMP AIMS	CORE STRATEGY AIMS
RESPONSE	Responding to and dealing with fires and other emergencies promptly, safely and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability • Competence • Intelligence
PROTECTION	Protecting people, firefighters, property and the environment when fires, floods and other emergencies happen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Fire Safety • Increasing Compliance • Investigating and Enforcing
PREVENTION	Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Risk • Awareness and Education
VALUE FOR MONEY 'ASSETS'	Using our resources efficiently and effectively to provide quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced Budget • Sustainable use of Resources
VALUING OUR WORKFORCE 'PEOPLE'	Providing a supportive environment for our workforce to develop, be confident and be empowered to make a positive difference for our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract and Retain • Develop and Train • Recognise Success • Health & Wellbeing • Include and Collaborate

HMICFRS Inspection Report 2023

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carried out their third in-depth review of the Service over the spring and summer of 2023. The review focused on how effective and efficient the Service is, and how well the Service supports its people. HMICFRS published their findings in November 2023.

The inspection report highlighted 11 areas for improvement (AFI) and recommended that action be taken to address them. One area for improvement identified in the report concerned collaboration, and reads:

“The Service should ensure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any future collaboration.”

In response to the inspection report, the Service published an improvement plan which sets out two key actions relating to collaboration to be implemented during the two-year period up until the next inspection:

- Review existing mechanisms for HWFRS staff to use when reviewing and evaluating collaboration
- Review evaluation processes that have taken place and establish a consistent means of evidencing how we monitor, review and evaluate current and future collaborations

The Collaboration Document currently provides information on the wide range of collaborative initiatives the Service is involved in. As work progresses on addressing the HMICFRS area for improvement, future editions of the Collaboration Document will also be able to provide more detail on the benefits arising from these initiatives.



Response

Our aim is to respond to and deal with fires and other emergencies promptly, safely and effectively.

Our core foundations are Availability, Competence and Intelligence – making sure we have the right assets available at the right time, with suitably trained and competent staff to respond safely, with the right level of information available for them to deal with any foreseeable risks.

Fire Control

Fire Control is the first point of call when a member of the public rings 999 to alert us of a fire or other emergency incident. Specialist control staff deal with the calls and ensure fire engines are despatched promptly to deal with the situation. Behind this lies a highly sophisticated information technology framework, which is crucial to ensuring that the Firefighters in Fire Control can mobilise resources efficiently and effectively.

A review and in-depth analysis of the technical capabilities, resilience and longevity of the current Fire Control arrangements and the findings of public enquiries such as Grenfell have helped to shape the requirements for new technology and new ways of working. We are leading a collaborative project to deliver a full end-to-end solution to address these requirements in a sustainable way, ensuring adaptability for future requirements.

HWFRS have led the collaborative project with **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (Shropshire FRS)**, **Cleveland Fire Brigade (CFB)** and **County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)**, and are now able to access the most up-to-date control-room technology at an affordable cost.



RESPONSE
CASE STUDY



Further efficiencies are made through choosing this cloud-hosted solution, which, as it is maintained remotely, will also free up space and capacity in our own premises.

The technology will provide enhanced resilience for the four individual control rooms, as the single shared system will enable any/all of the other control rooms to support each other in times of unusual demand, major incidents or local site failures. The spread of the control rooms over a wide area mitigates the risk of local incidents overwhelming all control rooms simultaneously. No matter which control room handles the calls, each Authority will be able to maintain autonomy to resource incidents according to their own geographical area's risk profiles, thereby ensuring the provision of high-quality sustainable services to our communities.

Hereford and Worcester Fire Control is located at Hindlip Park, Worcester, alongside colleagues in the **West Mercia Police** control team. Shropshire Control is located at Shrewsbury Fire Station. Cleveland Fire Control is located in Hartlepool and County Durham & Darlington in Belmont, Durham.

Benefits

- Efficiencies made through the economies of scale of collaborative procurement.
- The cloud-hosted solution frees up space and capacity for other digital innovation in the organisation.
- Enhanced resilience via the single shared system during times of high demand or major incidents.

Response Continued

Armed Forces Partnership

Fire and Rescue Services work with our partners in all branches of the military and this partnership work is often not widely known or understood, however the practice is well embedded in HWFRS.

As key partners in the Local Resilience Forum we often plan and prepare for emergencies within our borders alongside our military colleagues who may be, and have been, called upon to support Fire and Rescue operations, at such times as severe widescale flooding within HWFRS. Senior officers also work more widely with military partners in regard to UK based operations and Counter Terrorism related activities.

Senior HWFRS Fire officers have also supported the Defence Academy for the United Kingdom on the Joint Staff College training programmes. This arrangement has been in place for over fifteen years and assists the military in the training of their senior officers in understanding and working with Fire and Rescue Services across the UK.



HWFRS has achieved silver status in the Armed Forces Covenant and a key joint piece of work within this is for HWFRS to become an employer of choice for some military personnel leaving the armed forces, in either On-Call, Wholetime or Support roles. Our 2025 On-Call and Wholetime recruitment campaigns have targeted specific resources at working with our military partners and evaluation in 2026/7 will enable us to better understand how successful this programme has been.



Response Continued



On-Call Recruitment

HWFRS actively participates in the NFCC On-call Strategic Group and the NFCC On-call Practitioners Forum. Members of our On-call Recruitment Team have contributed to the task and finish group responsible for designing and developing the NFCC On-call Recruitment Website. Through our involvement in these NFCC groups, we have fostered collaborative working relationships with regional and national Fire and Rescue Services, facilitating the exchange of best practices and innovative solutions, such as the Service's [post code checker](#). This assists potential On-call recruits to quickly identify suitability based on work or home address and was showcased nationally at the NFCC On-call Practitioners Forum.

The On-Call recruitment team regularly attend **Chamber of Commerce** events, working hard to promote the benefits to businesses who are supportive of employees becoming on-call firefighters whilst strengthening HWFRS's ongoing efforts to recruit on-call firefighters'.

Ongoing and new collaborative initiatives

- Joint Fire and Police investigations continue to be undertaken at fires and serious incidents.
- Assistance at Police incidents such as missing person (MISPER) searches, body recovery and gaining entry/exit to buildings supporting both Police and Ambulance Services, and a 24/7 operational multiagency drone capability. Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, the Service supported 104 missing person incidents and 1,053 gaining entry incidents.
- In total during 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Service recorded co-attendance with other agencies at 4,960 incidents, 90% of which were with ambulance or police services. Other partners included the **Environment Agency, National Highways** and gas and electricity utilities.
- Joint command and control major incident facilities with the Strategic Coordinating Group and Tactical Command Group at the Operations Communication Centre at Police and Fire Headquarters.

Response Continued

- Over-the-border mobilisation of appliances to support neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services. Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, there were 125 incidents attended over the border, most of which were in the Shropshire, Warwickshire or Gloucestershire fire and rescue service areas.
- Extensive contingency planning with **West Mercia Local Resilience Forum**, including in relation to wide area flooding and wildfire.
- National Operational Guidance continues to be implemented with procedures aligned to best practice across Blue Light services.
- HWFRS, Police and Ambulance services have a number of National Interagency Liaison Officers (NILOs) and regional Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) membership to enhance communications and response to major incidents.
- Local education establishments provide students to act as casualties for the HWFRS exercise programme, providing critical feedback on the level of care received.
- The Service's Search and Rescue Dog, Bella has now taken over from her predecessor Radar, and is trained to attend local and national incidents where there is a need to search for missing persons. In addition to helping to search following incidents such as road traffic collisions, collapsed buildings and when people are missing in water, there is close working with **West Mercia Police** to help to find vulnerable missing persons.
- Wyre Forest and Tenbury Wells Fire Stations work in collaboration with the **Environment Agency** in the erection of flood defence systems when required.
- Interoperable communications and radio channels as part of the future Airwave replacement programme will be enhanced further when the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme is implemented across all emergency services. Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) is now available and enables us to share related information with operational employees, other fire controls and other multi-agency organisations.



Protection

Our aim is to make sure people, firefighters, property and the environment are protected from fires, floods and other emergencies. Our core foundations are Promoting Fire Safety, Increasing Compliance and Investigating and Enforcing – promoting fire safety through information and encouragement, carrying out fire safety inspections, investigating the cause of fire and enforcing compliance where breaches are found.



Multi-Agency Targeted Enforcement (MATE)

HWFRS undertakes joint enforcement operations alongside the main enforcement authorities targeting premises and individuals failing to comply with the Fire Safety Legislation. These include **West Mercia Police, Immigration, Trading Standards, Gang Masters and Border Force.**

During the NFCC Protection Conference in March 2025, HMICFRS cited areas where we have been identified as using best practice in relation to innovative/promising practices regarding our working with other agencies (MATE).



PROTECTION
CASE STUDY

In 2024, we attended multiple **MATE** initiatives resulting in **MATE** inspections being conducted at 37 different premises.

In 2025, we have already attended multiple **MATE** initiatives resulting in **MATE** inspections being conducted at 35 different premises so far with many more planned.

Those visits have resulted in numerous fire safety breaches being identified, resulting in multiple Enforcement Notices and Prohibition Notices being issued and the creation of a case file ready for Prosecution.

The most recent results came from Operation Henhouse 2025, which involved five strike days attended by multiple agencies across the areas of South Worcestershire, North Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford and Wrekin. Results are shared on behalf of the **West Mercia Economic Crime Unit.**



Benefits

- Combined enforcement powers meaning the most efficient approach to compliance.
- Multiple agency involvement meaning the most effective results from individual operations.
- Safeguarding our communities by prosecuting illegal activities.

Protection Continued

Ongoing and new collaborative initiatives

Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) and Third Party Validation



In line with **National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)** guidance, all Fire Safety Inspectors from **HWFRS** and **Shropshire FRS** are being third-party-accredited by the Institute of Fire Engineers.

One of our Fire Safety Inspectors has been successful in his application to join the **Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE)** Contextualised Auditors Register. He is one of only 48 individuals across the entire UK to achieve this distinction, reflecting the high standard of expertise and professionalism he brings to the role.

Following his successful application, he was invited to take part in the interview process for new applicants. Representing Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), he now works alongside five other colleagues from across the UK to conduct interviews for those seeking to join the IFE register. This recognition highlights both his individual achievement and the contribution of HWFRS to national fire-safety standards.

QA and Peer Assessment



Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Joint Quality Assurance and peer review of Fire Safety Inspections – An external quality assurance schedule has been agreed between HWFRS and **Shropshire FRS** following a year of internal Quality Assurance by management.

Experian Data



Experian Data collaborative

procurement – A new-risk information database has been jointly purchased by HWFRS and **Shropshire FRS**. This has been merged with existing data to provide a better definition and understanding of risks in our communities.

During the NFCC Protection Conference in March 2025, the **Experian Data** joint procurement was cited as using best practice by NFCC’s Organisational Learning Manager for understanding current and future risk by utilising Experian data to help formulate our RBIP.

Primary Authority Scheme



This national scheme is designed to streamline processes for businesses operating nationwide. HWFRS works with a number of private sector companies (Halfords, Marston’s, Connexus Housing) to ensure consistent advice, inspection and enforcement processes.

Fire Safety Courses / Degree Courses

Fire Safety courses have been arranged collaboratively with **Shropshire FRS**, and work for competency log-books is being shared.

Collaboration with the Assistant Chief Officer (ACFO) of **Scottish FRS** and multiple FRS to further developing the Fire Engineering course offering to suit the FRS Sector.



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Protection Continued

SOCJAG

The Service is a member of **SOCJAG (the Serious and Organised Crime Joint Action Group)** in the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, bringing together the Police and a number of other public-sector agencies to reduce the impacts this type of crime has on business and the wider community.

MATAC

HWFRS is in collaboration with the **Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination Group (MATAC)** which represents the tactical and co-ordinating arm of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), an inter-agency collaboration to reduce local crime and anti-social behaviour in the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. MATAC is a multi-agency approach to crime reduction, focused on joint tasking between regulatory bodies and relevant stakeholders.

NFCC Enforcement Register



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

This register provides details of statutory notices served by various Fire and Rescue Authorities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended). By default, notices are displayed in order of their issue date, with the most recent displayed first.

National Strategic Protection Forums (NFCC)

HWFRS is an active member of this forum and it provides Protection Leads with a more detailed briefing and update on legislative matters.

Housing Forums and Housing Protocols

A protocol document on joint working between local housing authority and Fire and Rescue Services was published in May 2007, following ministerial approval. This document was commissioned by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) department and produced by a consortium of organisations concerned with fire safety in residential premises known as the Fire Safety and Housing Working Group.

The purpose of this protocol document is therefore to set out the principles of joint-working arrangements between Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Housing Authorities and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service with an underlying aim of improving fire safety.

The introduction of the Housing Act 2004, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Fire Safety Act 2021 has imposed a duty on the two statutory authorities to enforce certain fire safety provisions, with a particular emphasis on residential accommodation.

The protocol is designed to encourage efficient use of resources between the authorities by identifying different categories of residential accommodation and agreeing which authority would take the lead in any informal or formal action which may result. It is also designed to provide the necessary contact details for each authority in the event of an emergency or complex situation. It seeks to promote an enhanced level of co-operation between the authorities at all levels and at the same time enable each authority to discharge their respective duties under their respective legislation.

Protection Continued

Chamber of Commerce



Strategic membership of a not-for-profit organisation that exists to support businesses in the two counties. The role is to ensure businesses reach their individual potential to collectively increase local economic growth, to support local communities and people.

West Midlands Regional Protection Forum

This group provides a forum in which matters which may affect Fire and Rescue Services across the UK may be discussed in order to assist the membership in understanding those matters and determining the best outcomes for their individual circumstances. Its purpose is to complement the Strategic Protection Forum which undertakes a similar remit for executive managers and strategic leaders for Protection in fire and rescue services. The role and responsibilities include completion of actions assigned by the Chair and reporting the results of those actions to the Forum within the agreed timescales, and also suggesting and delivering agenda items on a range of topics including but not limited to:

- Enforcement
- Communications
- Campaigns
- New building regime
- Joint working
- Case studies
- Emerging risks

CROSS-UK

A Collaborative Reporting for Safer



Structures UK (CROSS-UK). **CROSS** is a confidential reporting system which allows professionals working in the built environment to report on fire and structural safety issues. These are then published anonymously to share lessons learned, create positive change and improve safety.



Protection Continued

Safety Advisory Group Across Herefordshire & Worcestershire

A major event will normally require a multi-agency approach in which the Event Organiser, Security (if appropriate), Police, Ambulance Service, Fire and Rescue Service, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils and NHS will play a part. It is therefore important that there is a clear demarcation of duties and that any responsibilities are agreed and understood at the event planning stage.

The Safety Advisory Group has been established to provide help and guidance through one central body and has been established to avoid putting the public and events teams at risk.



BAFSA (British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association)

British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association

bafsa

Membership to the UK's leading trade association for the fire sprinkler industry. It was founded in 1974 and in 2024 celebrated 50 years of advocating for increased fire suppression and protection through the use of automatic fire sprinklers. Over the years the association has been instrumental in both an advisory and lobbying capacity to successive governments and those responsible for fire safety on the effectiveness of fire sprinklers as a fire safety measure.

Prevention

Our aim is to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place. Our core foundations are Reducing Risk and Increasing Safety Awareness and Education – reducing the likelihood of death or injury due to fires, road traffic collisions and other fire and rescue-related risks is the most effective way to save lives and reduce impact on communities, neighbourhoods and the environment.



Road Safety

HWFRS works collaboratively with the West Mercia Road Safety Team, local policing teams, charities and county councils to reduce the number of deaths or serious injuries from road traffic collisions.



PREVENTION
CASE STUDY

Agencies work jointly on Your Impact, which is a multi-agency road safety scheme delivered in all schools aimed at Year 10 students who are currently road users, whether as car passengers, pedestrians or cyclists and may soon become young drivers. The project targets all young people in this age bracket across both counties which relies on partners in local Authorities, Councillor support and developing relationships in the private sector for the non-state schools.

We also work in partnership with **West Mercia Police** Road Safety team to deliver Mature Drivers Workshops. These are designed to specifically help drivers understand the changes that happen as we age and how these can affect our driving. They are primarily for drivers aged 65 and over.



Benefits

- Multiple partners meaning a more effective approach to tackling shared objectives.
- Targeted at year 10 students meaning early intervention and education before they become young drivers.
- Expansion of the project will ensure awareness of the dangers of driving to another target group of over 65s.



Prevention Continued

Home Fire Safety Visits

The Prevention team continue to build working relationships with partner agencies across the two counties with a view to receiving referrals to carry out Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) to those individuals most vulnerable to fire. We work in partnership with other agencies to reduce the risk of accidental fires in the home and serious injuries and deaths.

Referring agencies include Social Care, NHS professionals, Housing Teams, Falls Response Teams, voluntary agencies, the Police and Ambulance services. Incoming HFSV referral numbers are continually reviewed and an annual feedback survey is distributed to partners. This enables us to evaluate our processes and to make improvements where required.

To assist partners in identifying risks in the home, awareness training on fire safety and hazard spotting is delivered. This provides partner agencies with a greater understanding of fire safety and risks and assists them to recognise when to initiate a referral for a HFSV.

Service Volunteers work alongside partner-agencies such as Age UK, NHS and Carers Association at organised events to identify individuals who would benefit from Prevention intervention.

Water Safety

The Service works in partnership with the **Royal Lifesaving Society (RLSS UK)** to educate people to enjoy water safely, to keep their families and friends safe and to know what to do in an emergency.

Joint promotion and communications campaigns have taken place to highlight the dangers of water and how to be safe around it.

Deliberate Fires

Fire prevention work includes sharing information with the Police to tackle deliberate fires and for arson prevention, collaborating with partners such as the Police, local schools and Children's Services to provide a Fire Safety Intervention scheme for under-18s. Specialist Fire Investigation Officers work closely with the Police utilising the streamlined forensic reporting system to ensure the most efficient input into the criminal justice system possible.

The intervention is delivered to young people who are considered to have an 'unusual' or 'unhealthy' fascination with fire or have been involved, or are at risk of being involved, in fire-setting behaviours.

Partnership referrals into this service mean that individually tailored advice and support can be offered; early intervention and education can reduce the chances of it happening again.

Multi-agency Meetings

Members of the Prevention team are also key partners on numerous strategic boards such as Health & Wellbeing Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards and the Crime Reduction Board. At these meetings, we offer input and expertise on developments within the Fire Sector and discuss opportunities to work collaboratively to support the wellbeing of our communities.

Prevention Continued

Evaluation

Monitoring and reviewing partnership working is a crucial element of measuring the effectiveness of Prevention delivery. Partners are given the opportunity to complete a feedback survey for the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) programme on an annual basis, and internal processes assess the external HFSV referrals received, identifying areas of focus activity for working collaboratively with partners.

On a bi-annual basis key partners meet to discuss the Your Impact road safety education programme to undertake a review on evaluation results and to identify any improvements that are required to enhance and develop the collaborative Your Impact delivery programme.

Ongoing and new collaborative initiatives

- The Prevention team will continue to work in collaboration with partner organisations to deliver person-centred Home Fire Safety Visits to those identified as most vulnerable in the community.
- The Service will continue to work in partnership with other agencies to promote water safety messages, to reduce the risk of deaths and serious injuries from flooding or water.
- Promotion of preventative services offered will continue so that new partnerships can be identified.
- Pathways are in place to make referrals to other agencies, such as Social Services, NHS services and the voluntary sector to assist individuals who may need additional support. These are continually reviewed to ensure that they are up-to-date.
- Partnership working will continue to develop in relation to road safety initiatives with the expansion of Your Impact and the further embedding of the Mature Drivers Workshops with West Mercia Road Safety Partnership.
- The Service will promote the Fire Safety Intervention Scheme by working with partners such as the Police Safer Neighbourhoods teams, local schools and Children's Service.
- The Service will continue to be a part of numerous strategic partnership meetings, such as Health and Wellbeing Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards, to offer input and expertise on developments and will seek new opportunities to work collaboratively.
- Collaborative working with regional and national Fire and Rescue Services will continue to share ideas and best practice.



People

Our aim is to provide a supportive environment for our workforce to develop, be confident and feel empowered to make a positive difference for our communities. Our core foundations are to attract and retain, to develop and train, to recognise success and to support Health & Wellbeing, inclusion and collaboration.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The Service continues to work with national networks such as the Asian Fire Service Association and Women in the Fire Service UK to access and share knowledge, research and training opportunities in the field of inclusion.



PEOPLE CASE STUDY

Our own Women@HWFire staff network continues to maintain close links with **West Mercia Police's** Women of West Mercia network to share experiences, knowledge and resources; working together on events and sharing connections.

HWFRS is also linked at a national level to Fire Sector groups supporting the implementation of the Core Code of Ethics, the development of People Impact Assessments and Equality of Access to Services and Employment guidance and toolkits.

In Spring 2023, the Service partnered with ioda ltd to conduct a comprehensive independent cultural audit to assess our organisational culture and practices. The outcomes contributed towards several plans and programmes, and directly informed the content of our Service-wide EDI Training Programme launched this year. This achieved a 97% participation rate, with staff rating the training 4.5 stars out of 5 overall.

HWFRS continues to work with local minority groups such as our involvement with local PRIDE events within Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This is a fantastic way of engaging with our local communities and a diverse range of people, and helping show the Service is a modern, diverse and inclusive organisation - one that is open to all and welcomes people from all walks of life.

Benefits

- Enhanced innovation through varied perspectives and experiences.
- Improved employee morale through an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected.
- Better problem-solving through diversity in thought and background which enhances the ability to tackle complex problems effectively.





Mental Health at Work Commitment



In 2022, the Service joined forces with other UK businesses, mental health charities and public sector and signed the Mental Health at Work Commitment. The Commitment sets out clear standards on what best practice has shown is needed to make a difference and better equip employers to create an environment where employees can thrive.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer continues to be the Service's organisational sponsor for the Mental Health at Work Commitment as we continue to build on our current and future wellbeing activities, such as continuing to promote our Welfare & Critical Incident Stress Team (CIST) support, introducing the Back Up Buddy app and maintaining links with the Fire Fighters Charity.

Leadership

HWFRS has continued to partner with Trans2Performance, a learning and development provider to support the Service to develop its current and future leaders. Our focus more recently has been on managing performance, coaching conversations and navigating challenging conversations with confidence.

Ongoing and new collaborative initiatives

- Multi-agency training opportunities – we are exploring multi-agency training opportunities for our Incident Commanders. This training has also been extended to **Shropshire FRS** as part of our commitment to collaboration under the Fire Alliance.
- Joint working relationships at support service department level. Departments continue to work with peers at **West Mercia Police** and **Shropshire FRS** to develop joint working practices.
- The University of Worcester works with HWFRS and **Shropshire FRS** to deliver health and fitness testing for firefighters as well as developing and advising on intervention programmes to support firefighters to maintain healthy fitness regimes.
- Police Incident Commanders attend Fire Service Incident Command Health Checks to develop a shared understanding.
- Joint major Fire Service training exercises involving partners such as **West Mercia Police, Worcester NHS, Worcestershire County Council, West Midlands Ambulance** and the **University of Birmingham**.
- Joint training in several areas including methods of entry, health and safety, family liaison and trauma.
- The Service facilitates joint awareness sessions for Police search advisors, Police negotiators and Police Commanders.
- Continued partnerships with external Inclusion specialists bring in-depth knowledge of best practices, frameworks and tools that help us design and deliver initiatives which are impactful, sustainable and demonstrate a visible commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Joint training for road traffic collisions and incidents involving hazardous materials.
- Joint press releases with the Police.
- Police and Ambulance services have use of the Fire Service's Strategic Training Facilities.
- Support staff and senior management teams are co-located with Police teams at Hindlip Park and have the ability to share data, intelligence and best practice.
- National Operational Guidance continues to be implemented with procedures aligned to best practice across Blue Light services. Regionally, **West Midlands Fire Service** provides a lead, while the Service is also appraising options with **Shropshire FRS**.
- Support staff from Fire and Police are becoming increasingly engaged in joint work such as Operational Policies by aligning policies and sharing best practice. At senior management level, teams are engaged in collaborative working and developing shared strategies.

Assets

Our aim is to use our resources effectively and efficiently to ensure we are able to provide quality services. Our core foundations involve maintaining a balanced budget and ensuring a sustainable use of resources and assets with the right buildings, equipment and vehicles in place.

Property Programme

Working with the **Police and Crime Commissioner's** team within our capital build programme, we are focusing on building Hereford Fire Station, and North Herefordshire Training Facility at Leominster Police Station. Redditch Combined Police and Fire Station and Broadway Fire Station are both now complete and occupied.



ASSETS
CASE STUDY



Hereford Fire Station is proposed as a rebuild on the existing site and will provide an asset that improves the functions available, including facilities to provide training for officers, helping to deliver an effective service to communities and businesses within the city. It also includes opportunities to engage with partners and groups within the community by offering options for hot-desking as a work location.

Leominster Police Station is the proposed site for a new North Herefordshire Training Facility. Working closely with police partners, this will provide a facility with the potential for joint training with **West Mercia Police** and **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service**.

There is a continued programme to collaborate with partners at locations where we invest to improve, with police colleagues utilising facilities at Tenbury Wells, Peterchurch and Wyre Forest Fire Stations.

Benefits

- Associated cost-savings of collaborative build costs.
- Facilitation of the most effective service to our communities.
- Co-location with police providing opportunities for joint training and facilities leading to shared costs.



Assets Continued

Environmental Sustainability

An environmental assessment of all buildings was produced and a planned programme of work has been established to minimise the impact on the environment through better energy usage, using technology to provide more sustainable solutions and reduce our carbon footprint.

Electric charging-points are placed at fire stations where we can upgrade the infrastructure, working towards our environmental plan to reduce the carbon footprint.

Working with **West Mercia Police**, we are sharing our environment plans and infrastructure to support a wider impact at a number of locations, adding value in both financial savings through joint working and shared locations and greater energy efficiency.

Fleet and Equipment

We have memoranda of understanding with neighbouring fire and rescue services to provide workshop resilience in order to deliver essential fleet maintenance to ensure our capability and business continuity model is sustainable.

Procurement

Collaborative procurement is a strategy that focuses on achieving greater value by working together with multiple organisations to jointly plan, source and buy goods and services commonly shared. The focus is on collaboration and value and efficiency rather than on cost savings.

- One of the most attractive benefits of collaborative procurement is that it helps to save across the overall budget.
- Partnering with multiple organisations to purchase a single product or service makes it easier to capitalize on volume discounts that would otherwise be unavailable, thereby securing better pricing.
- Economies of scale. By bringing together spend from multiple organizations and approaching the market with that aggregate requirement, they have more buying and negotiating power and can secure a better deal.
- Buyer-supplier relationships are strengthened.
- In addition to saving money, collaborative procurement helps to save time. By reducing the duplication of effort, organisations can save time and money.
- Collaboration in procurement also helps in terms of social value.
- Effective collaboration gets you more exposure to expertise.
- It's possible to use collaboration as an opportunity to standardise things.

As part of a regional Breathing Apparatus (BA) replacement programme, we are one of five fire and rescue services who worked on a project to collectively procure a replacement BA set that meets a jointly identified specification.

Assets Continued



Ongoing and new collaborative initiatives

- Shared fire station buildings with the Police in Redditch, Bromsgrove, Tenbury Wells and Peterchurch.
- The Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub was opened in February 2020. This multi-agency facility currently includes the **Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA)**.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points are located at Worcester, Wyre Forest, Redditch, Malvern, Evesham, Broadway, and Leominster fire stations, with more planned at locations when refurbishments are undertaken.
- Bunkered Fuel Stock Resilience provision.



Other Collaborative Arrangements



Corporate Communications

The Corporate and Digital Communications team works in collaboration with other FRS and external communications teams, to ensure consistency across all messaging and visuals and to gain the widest possible reach to our communities. For example, working together on the Summer Water Safety series of campaigns has ensured joined-up thinking from a group of experts including **Shropshire FRS, Severn Trent Water, West Mercia Police, Police and Crime Commissioner's Office and Royal Life Saving Society UK**. Collaboration includes engaging with local schools to learn about water safety.

The Head of Corporate and Digital Communications works closely with the WMLRF Communications group, including planning and study days, to ensure that the group is ready to work together in an emergency situation in order to deliver a consistent communications message. This may be updating on an incident, community safety information or ensuring correct messaging is relayed to our communities quickly and effectively.



Other Collaborative Arrangements

Continued



Collaborative design and media live brief projects with Hereford College of Art and University of Worcester aid student learning with an understanding of how to work with a public sector client and the ability to build their portfolio of work. Projects include a social media video filmed on green screen, a mapping project with bespoke iconography, creation of a podcast series and a journalism PR report. The projects facilitate HWFRS access to the latest studios and equipment, therefore producing high-quality output aimed towards specific target audiences within our communities. Working with

lecturers and specialist communications researchers ensures HWFRS is at the cutting edge of digital enhancement.

Working collaboratively with the Herefordshire and Worcestershire **Chamber of Commerce** facilitates communication with businesses across the two counties. Being part of the bi-annual Business Expo allows HWFRS to raise its profile in the business community and to connect with businesses to build databases of contacts for Protection work, such as webinars in fire safety. The Chamber facilitates sharing of social media posts and advertising, for example when recruiting.



The Corporate and Digital Communications team work with industry experts such as DRPG on internal communication app development, and eighteen73 (formerly Orphans) on the external website. Members of the team attend conferences and design festivals alongside our external partners to ensure we continue to learn about design, media and digital developments. The team collaborates with Chris Green Media to develop media training for Station Commanders and above, ensuring the offering is to industry standard and moves forward with available technology.

Other Collaborative Arrangements

Continued

HWFRS has a number of formal, written arrangements with partner organisations called Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Operational Annexes. They are designed to provide each other with support or other assistance if required, within the terms agreed by both parties.

The arrangements are listed in the table below.

Service Arrangement	Purpose, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Operational Annexes
Environment Agency	Use of HWFRS environmental protection equipment and liaison arrangements in respect of pollution control measures.
HMP Hewell	Procedures formulated in liaison with the Prison Service Fire Safety Manual aimed at ensuring the safety of prisoners, staff, contractors, members of the public and fire and rescue service personnel.
HMP Long Lartin	A protocol establishing a working relationship with the prison to provide emergency response to a fire and the maintenance of firefighting provisions at the establishment
Joint Working Protocol for Serious Accident Investigation	A protocol prepared by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) to promote the development of effective means of cooperation and mutual liaison between HWFRS and the FBU in the event of a work-related death, serious injury or incident involving operational duties which is serious enough to have the potential for death or serious injury.
Joint Operational Learning (JOL) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Warwickshire and West Midlands	A Standard Operating Procedure setting out the working practice for the use of Joint Operational Learning on-line. Partners include Fire and Rescue Services, Police, Ambulance and Local Resilience Forums.
Red Cross	An agreement outlining the assistance the British Red Cross can provide to HWFRS – new updated MOU completed in September 2022.
Identification of Faulty Electrical Goods and Appliances	HWFRS is working closely with both West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and HM Government’s Office for Product and Safety and Standards (OPSS) in an effort to identify faulty electrical goods and appliances to reduce the risk to the communities we serve. HWFRS has a new reporting tool that allows Incident Commanders to detail and record any incident involving any electrical item such as large white goods items, e-bikes, battery-powered tools and laptops. OPSS are notified each time an entry is made and can then receive timely and accurate data to identify trends and ultimately recall potentially dangerous products, supportive of the HWFRS Prevention Strategy.



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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