Fleet Plan
2026-30

HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Contents

OUR CORE CODE OF ETHICS

We follow the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England which guides everything we do.

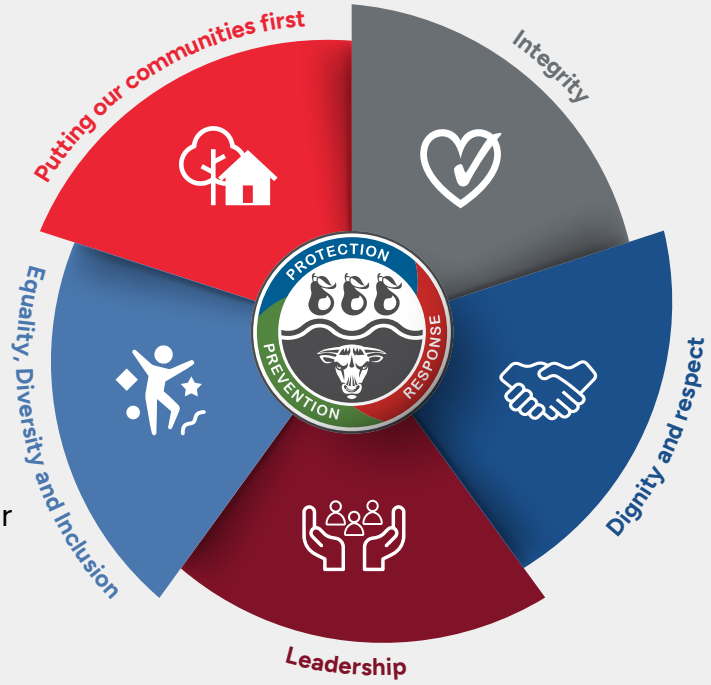
Putting our communities first
We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

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.



Introduction

This Plan forms part of the overarching Asset Management Strategy. It will illustrate how Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) will procure, maintain and replace fleet, equipment and supply items to meet current and future operational needs.

HWFRS aims to maintain a high standard of Fleet provision through continual improvement, evaluation and investment. This Plan provides an overview of the current position of the fleet and rolling replacement plan from 2026 to 2030.

As a Service, we have a diverse range of fleet and transport requirements including frontline fire appliances, specialist vehicles, cars and operational equipment. Therefore, in the demanding financial and political climate we continue to face, it is imperative that we remain alert and agile to changing circumstances, but that we also remain at the forefront of technological advances so that we can continue to match response to risk in the most economical, effective and efficient way possible.

Control of the Fleet Plan

The Fleet Plan will normally be reviewed annually by the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) and an annual report will be made to the Fire Authority Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee (P&R) aligned with the budget setting processes. The report will outline the significant vehicle procurements planned for the following fiscal year, as well as an indicative plan of those in the year thereafter*.

The Fire Authority established a Member Task & Finish Group that reviewed the Fleet Plan in 2016 of which the key findings were:

- The Strategy should be applied flexibly so as to respond to the changing needs of the Service;
- Any updated Strategy should reflect the distinction between operational decisions over the specification and choice of vehicles/equipment, which were matters for officers, and broader strategic issues affecting the Authority's finances or the service to the public, which ought to be subject to Member involvement; and
- The Fleet Plan should in future be reviewed at least every five years and in the interim, a yearly update of the Plan should be provided to Members as part of the budget setting process.

* This is due to the lead times required on some complex vehicle procurements which often cannot be delivered within one fiscal year.

Condition of the Fleet 2025

The existing Service fleet is generally fit for purpose, however there are a number of vehicles that fall within the planned replacement age. Future procurement will conform to the Fleet Plan and will usually form part of the vehicle replacement programme with only relatively minor variations as deemed necessary.

However, there may be a requirement for a significant deviation of parts of the existing Fleet Plan whereby for example:

- An urgent operational need is identified that cannot be met by utilising existing vehicles or by adapting existing vehicles at an economical cost.
- Significant "invest to save" or collaborative benefits are identified where an opportunity arises that presents a viable operational and/or financial benefit.
- A significant incident such as a catastrophic vehicle failure (or replacement parts issue), defect or omission, presents a need or opportunity, to procure or dispose of a vehicle that would not normally have been the case; or
- The Service has a need to develop, introduce or trial new technology or concepts which may present different ways of working or a different model of delivery to the communities served such as electric powered vehicles to reduce the Service's carbon footprint.

The fleet is one of the key categories of physical assets for the Service. The way in which a Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) fulfils its duties in meeting the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) is through the Integrated Risk Management Planning process and will to some extent, dictate the type of fleet the Service will maintain.

The Fleet Plan comprises of three main categories:

Red Fleet

All fire appliances and similar specialist operational vehicles utilised for an emergency response role and/or to meet a specific capability.

Within this category there are two sub-headings:

- Fire appliances – vehicles regardless of size or type that offer a first response front line capability to most incident types.
- Special appliances – vehicles that regardless of size are designed or built to meet a specific identified local or strategic need(s). This may also include trailers used to support operational assets.

Responding Officers' Cars

All officer cars, spare response cars and Principal Officer cars that have an emergency response role.

Ancillary Fleet

All cars, vans and other type of vehicles (including trailers) not used for operational response as their primary role.

Condition of the Fleet 2025 continued

The fleet consists of the following:

34 Operational fire engines

10 Fire engines for operational reserve, training and local Fire Cadet units

20 Specialist red fleet vehicles plus eight trailers

36 Responding officer and principal officer cars

64 Ancillary fleet vehicles, vans (small and large) and cars

Current position

The performance of the red fleet (fire appliances and specialist vehicles) is considered suitable and to a high standard. Responding officer cars were reviewed and replaced in 2022-23 and due again in 2026-27.

The performance of the ancillary fleet is generally satisfactory. In 2023, five electric cars and three electric vans were procured. Future procurement of fully electric vehicles will be pursued where charging infrastructure and overall costs permit. Where fully electric vehicles are not suitable, hybrid vehicles will remain the preferred alternative.

In creating the existing fleet there has been significant user engagement which will form part of any future procurement. Future planned reviews will endeavour to achieve efficiencies whilst maintaining a high standard of vehicle and user satisfaction.

There is also some scope to investigate other vehicle types and explore new technological solutions within this Plan over the next five years.

Adverse Weather

Resilience in adverse weather conditions is a critical requirement for vehicles with an operational response role, as they provide essential services to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire 365 days a year. These vehicles must remain fully operational in all conditions to ensure timely and effective response during emergencies. Key features that support this resilience include the ability to mobilise promptly in sub-zero temperatures, sufficient wading depth for flood-prone areas, and enhanced traction through all-wheel drive or systems suitable for snow and ice. Such capabilities are vital to maintain service continuity and protect public safety during severe weather events.

Note: additional functions and as vehicles are procured and disposed of will result in the numbers of vehicles actually owned to vary.

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet

It is the role of the Fleet Manager to carry out a continuous and detailed appraisal of the fleet, in conjunction with the user requirements.

Any assessment should identify:

- Those vehicles which are in the current fleet, yet are not meeting staff or Service needs and therefore suggest change is required.
- Those vehicles which require improvements to make the vehicle more suitable.
- Vehicles which are performing well and which can be used to provide guidance for future vehicle choice.

Lifespan of vehicles

Fleet replacement programmes vary across the UK FRS and there is no appropriate industry benchmark to equate this to. Informal benchmarking with some partner FRSs suggests that the lifespan of HWFRS vehicles has been greater than that of some other Services, particularly metropolitan FRSs in relation to the red fleet.

The age of a vehicle has some potential to present increased maintenance and repair costs. However, this must be offset against the effect of low vehicle mileages, low operational usage, above average maintenance cycles and the quality of the product that is procured at the outset.

Conversely consideration should also be given to whether the lifespan of vehicles will limit the ability to respond to technological advances.

Vehicle specifications and designs have allowed modifications and updates to occur where necessary, but older vehicles generally have lower levels of technology and may not be able to accommodate the retrofitting of technical advances.

It is important to regularly assess the current lifespans of the fleet to determine whether it is beneficial to reduce or extend these lifespans further. These assessments by the Fleet Manager should not be limited to age or mileage.

The replacement of a vehicle may be determined (increased or decreased) based upon a number of considerations. As well as the factors detailed above, other areas such as the type of vehicle and any bespoke built elements, costs of maintenance, residual value, public perception and image, financing and any other cost related matters over the life of the vehicle.

Aspirational fleet replacement ages

Fire engines	**12-15 years**
Specialist vehicles (e.g. Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP), water carrier, argocat)	**25 years**
Operational support vehicles (vans such as Environmental Protection Unit (EPU), Water Rescue Vehicle (WRV)	**10-15 years**
Responding officers cars	**4 years**
Non-operational cars and small vans	**6 years**
Non-operational larger ancillary vehicles (e.g. equipment van, mini-bus)	**15-20 years**

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet continued

Vehicle Rotation

Where fleet assets are subject to low mileage, (not necessarily low usage) these vehicles may be rotated and swapped with other similar vehicles of higher mileage during their lifespan. Where a vehicle consistently demonstrates low mileage and low usage the management responsible for that vehicle will be expected to consider whether the vehicle can be removed from the fleet and other options for a more efficient use of transport explored.

Fleet Replacement Programme

Based upon the current fleet assumptions and aspirational fleet replacement ages the following five-year plan outlines the predicted replacements:

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Red Fleet (fire appliance)	3 x Fire engines "2010 Scania"	7 x Fire engines "2012 Scania"			
Red Fleet (other)	1 x EPU 1 x Animal Rescue (AR)	1 x drone vehicle	1 x water carrier 1 x Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) van	1 x water carrier	
Responding Officer car		34 Officer vehicles			
Ancillary Fleet (vans and cars)	13 x cars 8 x vans 1 x canine (K-9) van 1 x On-Call Support Officer (OCSO) van	5 x cars		5 x medium vans 2 x large vans	5 x cars 3 x vans
Estimated Cost Total	**£1,709,522**	**£3,649,540**	**£310,101**	**£435,101**	**£208,000**

Notes relating to table above

Animal Rescue and drone vehicles added to costings, USAR van included but may not be required. EPU costings included but may be funded/part funded by the Environment Agency (EA).

2025-26

Three fire engines are required; these will be ordered under the same contract as the seven required in 2026-27 and will include 8 x 18T (inc. 2 x Ultra Heavy Rescue Pump (UHRP)) appliances and 2 x All Wheel Drive (AWD) compact appliances. One EPU is required; The Animal Rescue vehicle was introduced early 2025, with a redundant vehicle currently being utilised as a trial. This will now be added to the fleet. Twenty two cars and small vans to be replaced using a blended approach, with a mixture of hybrid petrol vehicles and fully electric where EV infrastructure allows. A van kitted for K-9 search and rescue will also be replaced.

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet continued

2026-27

Seven fire engines are due for replacement (part of the 2025-26 order), one dedicated drone vehicle will be added to the fleet (replacing a Volvo XC60 currently being used). 34 Officer response cars are due to be replaced (a reduction from the 36 currently). Five cars to be replaced, opportunity to be full electric vehicles will be explored, EV infrastructure permitting.

2027-28

One water carrier is due for replacement and one USAR van if still required.

2028-29

One water carrier is due for replacement. Five medium and two large vans are due for replacement.

2029-30

Five vans and three cars are due for replacement, opportunity to be full electric vehicles will be explored, EV infrastructure permitting

Due to international supply chain difficulties lead time on vehicles may be extended affecting project build times. This should be taken into consideration when planning projects as it may affect Capital budget planning, the plan will be reviewed annually.

Vehicle Procurement

Vehicles will be procured in accordance with all relevant guidelines, standing orders and legislative requirements and may be either procured directly through the appropriate tender process or off an existing framework or other means. The procurement process will seek to determine the method of obtaining the best value for money over the life of the vehicle, whilst providing the user with the most appropriate and best quality vehicle.

The Treasurer will determine the best method of funding these vehicles which may involve outright purchase, lease, capital or revenue financing or any combination of these.

In reaching procurement decisions in this matter there will be regard to (not definitive):

- Whole life costs including resale values;
- Manufacturer and product support;
- Maintenance requirements;
- User requirements and specification;
- Product testing and user feedback;
- Feedback from other users;
- Reliability ratings;
- Estimated lifespan of the vehicle;
- Environmental impact; and
- Fleet consistency (see below)

Note: Cost estimates may vary and are based on assumptions from previous procurements with a 3% year on year increase, existing user specification and supplier advice, which are all subject to change and updating.

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet continued

Consistency of the Fleet

Alongside the need for transparent and regularly reviewed procurement policies when replacing vehicles there is also a balance with the needs of the organisation. It is beneficial to avoid having too many different technical characteristics which would result in incompatibility, or a disproportionate level of technical difficulty in operation and maintenance. This should not be a barrier to new types of vehicles entering the fleet but is a legitimate consideration which may be taken into account at review periods.

Where appropriate and in the interests of efficiency, vehicles may be procured for consistency over an extended period (such as a call-off contract or framework), which should not normally exceed four years, after which a full review of the specification and procurement route should be undertaken.

Such matters that may need consideration in regard to differing vehicles manufacturers and models could be the costs associated with:

- Varying makes of vehicles requiring extensive technician training for maintenance;
- Provision of replacement parts, stock held on site, product support and tools required;
- Driver familiarisation and interoperability of the fleet by the user including specific training requirements; or
- Wide variances in stowage solutions, as appropriate.

Secondary and tertiary use of vehicles

Consideration can be given to determine whether vehicles in the Fleet Plan can be used in more than one way during their lifespan or adapted at the end of their lifespan for alternate secondary or tertiary uses. However, it will normally be the policy to dispose of a vehicle at the end of its life (see Disposal of Vehicles). Examples of when adapting an existing vehicle is preferable include trial solutions, such as the stand-alone animal rescue resource or dedicated drone vehicle.

This does not preclude the extension of the use of a vehicle where appropriate beyond its aspirational replacement age.

The legacy costs of aged vehicles and the adoption of old vehicles into roles they may not be entirely suited to should be avoided and especially where they are not specified within the Fleet Plan.

Where ad hoc vehicles are required or short term use is identified for fixed periods, existing vehicles may be adapted or utilised. However, other means should be explored, such as the user providing their own vehicle and claiming appropriate recompense or the hiring or loan of a suitable vehicle.

Collaboration

HWFRS will ensure that where appropriate, collaboration discussions are considered for all fleet procurements (between appropriate partners) and will include the potential for loan, hire and support arrangements.

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet continued

Disposal of Vehicles

It is the policy of this Plan that at the end of a vehicle's life it is disposed of and in such a way as to realise the best value for the asset and through the most appropriate route.

Regard to the following areas should be given when disposing of a vehicle:

Maximising re-sale value

The primary objective upon disposal of a vehicle is to ensure best value is obtained therefore the Service will normally explore the most efficient route for disposal to achieve this. In some cases this does not always equate to the financial amount realised following disposal. Where public value is best served there may also be alternative routes for disposal within the public sector.

Security

To ensure vehicles are not acquired by purchasers who could potentially use an ex-HWFRS vehicle for purposes that are detrimental to the national interests of the country e.g. crime or terrorism.

Charitable organisations

There may be requests to supply end of life vehicles to charitable organisations to help developing countries. The ability to do so will be considered against the residual value of any vehicle, which often can be significant, thus the donation of a public asset worth several thousands of pounds to a charity may not be appropriate.

Assisting other UK Fire Services and partners

Vehicles may still have a useful function for other organisations. However, as noted above the value of any asset owned by the Fire Authority would need to be considered before any such agreements are made.

Spare parts

Some vehicles may be utilised for spare parts before disposal, where this represents better value for money or provides parts that cannot be obtained through other cost effective methods.

Environmental Considerations

There are five main areas which could have a significant effect on CO_2 emissions:

1. Reducing the number of vehicles;
2. Reducing the number of vehicle movements;
3. Improved driving techniques;
4. Changing to more environmentally friendly fuels; and
5. Changing to cleaner and more fuel efficient vehicles.

The Service, primarily through the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), has identified the requirements for the red fleet, which cannot easily be reduced further unless the CRMP determines as such. During the 2024 Service Resource Review, the number of red fleet vehicles was reduced, where low usage fire engines were replaced with crew carriers, thus making further reductions more challenging within the next five years.

Assessing the performance and suitability of the HWFRS Fleet continued

Exploring alternative fuels remains a priority for improving sustainability, but this must be balanced with operational resilience. While fully electric vehicles offer environmental benefits, current technology and charging infrastructure make them unsuitable for emergency response roles and vehicles operating across large rural areas. Hybrid engines, however, present a more practical solution by reducing emissions while maintaining the flexibility and reliability required for our service. This approach ensures that vehicles can deliver a resilient response 365 days a year to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, even in adverse conditions or when infrastructure challenges arise.

The procurement plan for 10 new appliances in the next 2 years will include enhanced fuel efficiency as technology has moved forward to meet latest emissions legislation.

Legislative Requirements

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998;
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER);
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995;
- Road Vehicles (Construction And Use) Regulations 1996;
- TOG Best Practise Guidelines (Inspections and Servicing Intervals);
- Manufacturer Tolerance Guidelines.

Monitoring and Review

The programme of work is measurable. Therefore, we are able to continually monitor relevant information to be fully informed throughout the plan period of the progress made on each project.

Alongside monitoring, we will review the progress of each project listed in the Programme of Works to enable us to identify any subsequent actions which may need to be carried out to ensure the works are delivered within the timeframe identified. The first review will be carried out no later than one year from the publication of the Plan and will then be reviewed on an annual basis.

Further, as part of the annual review of the Plan we will also update the Fleet Replacement Programme (adding the next year to the table shown on page 7).

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HWFR
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HWFire

Service Headquarters, Hindlip Park, Worcester WR3 8SP
0345 122 4454 | info@hwfire.org.uk | www.hwfire.org.uk