



Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service

DRAFT v1.0ah

Community Risk Management Plan
2019-2023 (FINAL DRAFT v1.0ah)

Foreword

It is our pleasure to introduce the 2019-2023 Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan.

This sets out how we intend to deliver our mission of providing outstanding fire and rescue services by further improving:

- how we assess and analyse the risks faced by the communities we serve;
- the effectiveness of our prevention, protection and emergency response services;
- how efficiently we deploy our assets and resources to mitigate community risk; and
- how we value, support and invest in our best asset, our staff.

Following an inspection of our Service during the summer of 2018, we were delighted that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) judged us to be **good** at 'effectively keeping people safe and secure' within our local communities. We also welcomed the areas for improvement identified within their [report](#), which will be acted upon during the life of this plan to drive and direct continued improvement across the Service.

Mindful of the financial challenges facing us and other public services, we intend to continue to tackle our financial challenges head on. We will fully embrace our statutory responsibilities, and continue to work closely with our partners and communities, strengthening existing relationships, and forging new ones as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer.

We know that our successes would not be possible without our team of professional and dedicated staff. We have always worked hard to provide the best equipment, vehicles, training and support to our staff, and this plan places more emphasis on valuing and investing in them; recognising the key role they play in developing our Service. We continue to strive to be an 'employer of choice' with a highly skilled and motivated workforce that understands and reflects the diversity of our communities, and who see our Service as an engaging, positive and rewarding place to work. By being open and responsive to change, and through exploring and investing in new and innovative technologies and ways of working, we will continue to improve the safety and wellbeing of the diverse communities we serve.

Our Community Risk Management Plan is underpinned by seven specific strategies that set out in more detail how we will deliver on our vision and priorities during the next four years. Each year we will also publish an action plan summarising what we intend to deliver that year. We will report on progress by producing an Annual Action Plan and Statement of Assurance.

Together, we assure you of our continued commitment to making Bedfordshire a safer place.

Paul M Fuller CBE QFSM MStJ DL
Chief Fire Officer
Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

Cllr Paul Downing
Chairman
Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority

About Us

Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority

The Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) is the independent body who provide and oversee the Fire and Rescue Service for Bedfordshire.

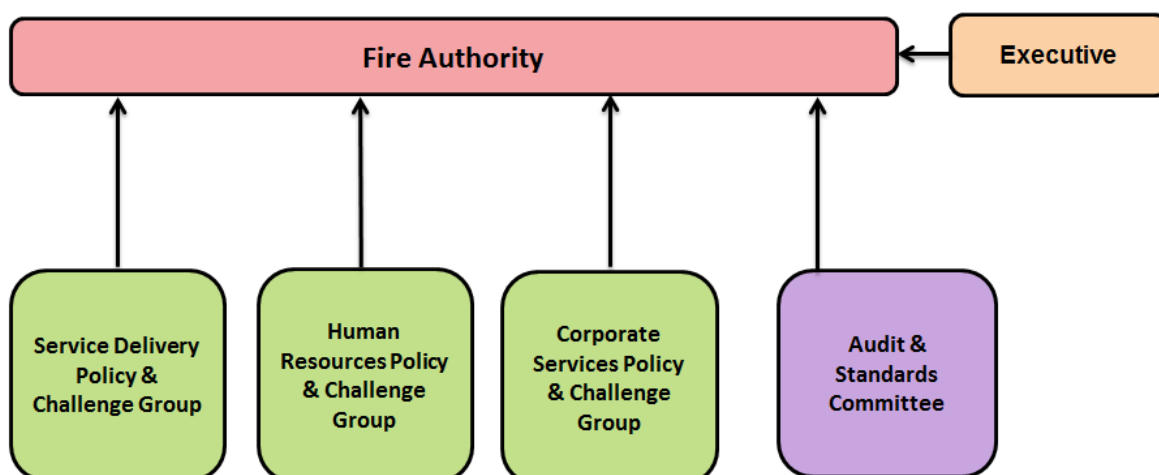
It comprises elected councillors ([Members](#)) appointed to it from each of the three unitary authorities, whose numbers are proportional to the populations they represent:

- 3 Members from Bedford Borough Council;
- 5 Members from Central Bedfordshire Council;
- 4 Members from Luton Borough Council.

Additionally the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner has a non-voting seat on the Authority.

Once appointed to the Authority, Members represent the community as a whole, not just the area they serve as a local councillor. They serve as a valuable link between communities and the fire and rescue service. Members are collectively responsible for setting the overall strategic direction of the Service, including the setting of its budget, promoting its core values and ensuring that the Service is effective, efficient and provides value for money.

The full Authority meets periodically throughout the year and is structured as shown below. More information is available on our [website](#).



The Authority has core functions which are set down in the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#), which it delivers through the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) and which include providing fire safety advice, collaboration with other agencies, developing and publishing emergency plans, compliance with statutory legislation, attending fires and other emergencies such as road traffic collisions. It provides leadership and oversight to ensure the service provided by BFRS meets the needs of the communities of Bedfordshire. It also

approves overall policy and strategy, scrutinises performance, monitors financial spending and ensure the activities of the BFRS are carried out efficiently, effectively and economically.

FINAL DRAFT v1.0ah

Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

We employ over 560 staff consisting of

- Wholetime (fulltime) firefighters and officers;
- On-call (retained) firefighters;
- Control staff;
- Corporate (support) staff.

We provide our services from 14 fire stations and our Fire Control mobilising centre at our headquarters site at Kempston which also hosts our training centre and technical services hub.

We work a range of duty systems to ensure we have the right number of skilled firefighters available at the right time and place to respond to emergencies.

- 24 hour shift - immediate 24 hour response using full-time firefighters;
- Day-crewed - immediate daytime response using full-time firefighters Monday to Friday with an on-call firefighter response at night and weekends.
- On-Call/Retained – on-call firefighters providing a response within six minutes.

Our fleet includes:

- 22 front-line fire engines;
- 2 aerial ladder platforms;
- 16 specialist vehicles;
- 66 support vehicles.

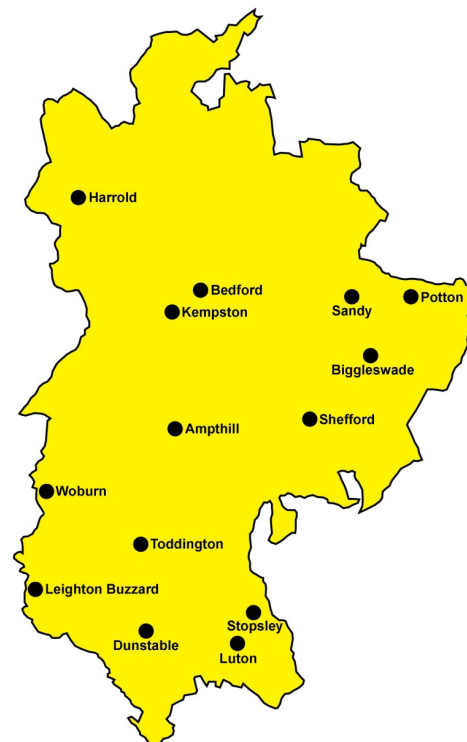
We work to **PREVENT** fires and other emergencies from occurring in the first place.

Our firefighters and other front-line staff undertake more than 5,000 safe & well visits each year, carry out fire and road safety talks in schools, and work with partner agencies to inform our communities about fire and road safety.

We work to **PROTECT** people when emergencies do happen. Our firefighters and fire safety officers undertake inspections of workplaces, engaging with and educating owners and occupiers, taking enforcement action where necessary.

We **RESPOND** to emergencies including fires, road traffic collisions, air and rail crashes, water rescues and flooding, hazardous chemical incidents and many other types of emergencies. Our firefighters regularly train, maintain and test equipment to ensure they remain operationally ready to respond to emergencies at all times.

We also work closely with our partners such as Bedfordshire Police, the East of England Ambulance Service, local councils and our neighbouring fire and rescue services to ensure we can respond effectively and competently to any emergency.



Our Mission, Aims & Priorities

Our Mission is simply to **provide outstanding fire and rescue services** that help make Bedfordshire safer and we are committed to doing everything we can to achieve this within the resources we have available to us.

For us, delivering on our mission means focusing on the following 6 aims:

- **PREVENTING** fires and other emergencies from happening;
- **PROTECTING** people and property when fires happen;
- **RESPONDING** to fires & other emergencies promptly & effectively;
- **EMPOWERING** our people as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer;
- **UTILISING** our assets & resources efficiently & effectively; and
- **MAXIMISING** use of data and digital solutions to drive improvements.

We focus our resources on achieving these aims and use them to develop and deliver the key priorities we set out to achieve through our Annual Action Plan.

We use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure how we are performing against our priorities and report these on a quarterly basis to the FRA and publish an Annual Performance Report.

Our Values & Virtues - what we believe in:

Our Values & Virtues are the qualities that we believe are the most important to us and describe the expectations the public have of us and that we have of each other.

We use them every day to influence how we work to achieve our mission and priority objectives and guide the professional behaviours we expect of our staff in everything we do.

We fully support the national fire and rescue service core values of:

- Service to the community;
- Valuing all our employees;
- Valuing diversity in the Service and the community;
- Valuing improvement.

We maintain our own Service Virtues to guide the behaviours of all our staff:

- **Humility** - a humble view of one's own importance, unpretentiousness and modesty;
- **Courage** - a state of mind in which a person is able to face danger and fear with confidence and bravery;
- **Wisdom** - the ability, developed through experience, insight and reflection, to discern truth and exercise good judgment;
- **Tenacity** - persistent determination;
- **Prudence** - the measured balance between complicated situations to provide sound judgements;
- **Selflessness** - not seeking self-interest;
- **Loyalty** - a strong feeling of support or allegiance;
- **Truth** - the accepted integrity of what is considered actual.

Collaboration & Partnerships

We currently have two types of partnerships; Statutory and Non statutory Partnerships.

'Statutory' is a formal type whereby there is a legal responsibility for Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to be members.

'Non statutory' is an informal partnership created to support organisational targets and goals.

For example, we are active members of the multi-agency Community Safety Partnerships in each of our local authority areas.

We aim to evaluate our partnerships annually to ensure that each partnership is contributing to our aims and objectives set out within our strategic planning process. The annual review also provides assurances about the ongoing overall effectiveness of partnership arrangements. More information on our partnerships can be found on our [website](#).

We work closely with our blue light colleagues in Bedfordshire Police and the East of England Ambulance Service, as well as our local authority colleagues in Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council.

We view collaboration as an opportunity to reduce costs and improve services to the public so we continue to explore new opportunities to work together through the Blue Light Collaboration Strategic Board chaired jointly between the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Constable. We also work in partnership with other fire and rescue services on both front line and support services, such as our shared strategic operational command arrangements and shared ICT service with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. These arrangements have not only improved services but allowed the Authority to make efficiency savings.

Currently Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service are collaborating with Bedfordshire Police and the East of England Ambulance Service on a number of projects. These include:

- co-locating police officers and police community support officers at Ampthill, Bedford and Leighton Buzzard fire stations;
- co-locating paramedics at Luton, Sandy, Shefford & Stopsley fire stations;
- assisting Bedfordshire Police with searches for vulnerable missing persons;
- assisting paramedics to gain entry to premises where there is suspected risk to life of the occupant;
- routing fire appliances returning from incidents to travel along Police identified 'red routes'; an area where an authoritative visible presence that has been proven to help reduce crime.

Our website has more information about our [collaboration](#) initiatives.

How we analyse and manage risks to our communities

Integrated Risk Management Planning

This CRMP helps us meet the responsibilities placed on us by the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#) which requires us to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that identifies and assess all the foreseeable fire and rescue related risks and challenges which may arise, and to set out how we plan to mitigate these risks using our available resources.

Integrated risk management planning gives fire and rescue services the flexibility to use their resources in the most effective way to save lives, improve public safety and reduce the impact of emergency incidents.

The first and key component of our IRMP process is the analysis and understanding of the risks to the communities we serve, and also the risks to our organisation and our ability to deliver our core functions, both locally and nationally. The better we understand the risks the more effectively we can target our resources and activities towards reducing them.

While risk to property, the environment and our heritage are of significant importance in the work we do – it is risk to life that is given our highest priority.

We use a range of quantitative and qualitative analysis, the outcomes from which are detailed in our [Community Risk Analysis](#) (CRA) document. Our CRA directly informs what we, and our partners, are doing to ensure we are doing the right thing, using the right people and resources, provided in the right place and at the right time to help make Bedfordshire safer. Our CRMP should be read in conjunction with the CRA.

We play an active part in the [Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum](#) (BLRF); a multi-agency partnership formed to meet the requirements of the [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#). The BLRF compiles a Community Risk Register (CRR) which identifies the wide range of risks and emergencies we could potentially face within Bedfordshire. It draws upon the National Risk Register which gives a national perspective of the risks and emergencies that could occur and would result in major impact on all, or significant parts of, the UK. These inform priorities for planning, training and exercising so we can effectively manage emergencies when they arise. Outlined below are the local risks considered to be of relatively high consequence.

Local 'Very High' Risks	Local 'High Risks'
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pandemic Influenza Style Disease• Energy supply disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flooding• Fuel Disruption• Severe weather including effusive Volcanic eruption overseas

We maintain robust business continuity plans to ensure the critical functions our organisation provides can continue to operate, should serious incidents or issues occur that might otherwise interrupt them. Our planning is also influenced by other legislation such as the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004; Fire and Rescue Service (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007; Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Our County & Communities

Bedfordshire occupies a geographically central position within the UK, bordering 5 other counties and covering an area of 1,234.45 square kilometres (476.94 square miles), split by three unitary authority areas:

- Bedford Borough: 476.4 km² (183.9 sq. miles);
- Central Bedfordshire: 715.7 km² (276.3 sq. miles);
- Luton Borough: 43.35 km² (16.74 sq. miles).

With a growing and ageing population of over 664,000 people, with a workforce of over 250,000, it is proudly one of the most diverse populations in the country.

The county is, in land use terms, largely rural and agricultural, including major areas of outstanding natural beauty. Most people (over 70%) live in its larger towns including the two major towns of Luton and Bedford, but also in a number of smaller market towns. These towns lie within often picturesque rural settings which also includes many villages that add to the area's diversity of places to live, work and play.

Over recent years the local economy, like many throughout the UK, has moved from traditional manufacturing and heavy industry to one based more upon the service industry. These industries include logistics and air transport, higher education, research and development, tourism and hospitality, creative and cultural businesses, construction, and business services. Bedfordshire is growing as a national distribution hub and has a number of large industrial sites and warehouses.

Bedfordshire has two successful universities; the post-graduate Cranfield University, and the under-graduate University of Bedfordshire, together with strongly performing further education colleges based in Bedford, Luton and Dunstable. There are a number of significant and internationally linked research locations at these universities and also at Colworth Science Park, Cranfield Technology Park and the Millbrook Vehicle Proving Ground.

Within our area we have a significant stock of heritage buildings and environmental sites of special interest. Countywide rivers present us with special problems during spate flooding conditions. There are also iconic visitor attractions in the county, such as Woburn Safari Park, Whipsnade Zoo and Center Parc's fifth UK village at Woburn.

There are major growth plans that will see 66,850 new homes built across Bedfordshire in the next decade, including a new town at Tempsford, along with continued expansion in the number of industrial and commercial sites that will create an extra 53,400 jobs. The road, rail and waterway infrastructure include the M1 and A1 main arterial roads, and three major rail routes, including one of the busiest commuter rail links in the country running south from Bedford to London and beyond. The international London Luton Airport, which already handles circa 16 million passengers a year, is also expanding to accommodate this growth. Town centre redevelopment is underway in many of the county's towns, and in particular in Luton and Bedford.

It is essential that the Service continues to keep abreast of this emerging and changing risk profile and ensures our resources and capabilities continue to be aligned to the areas of greatest need.

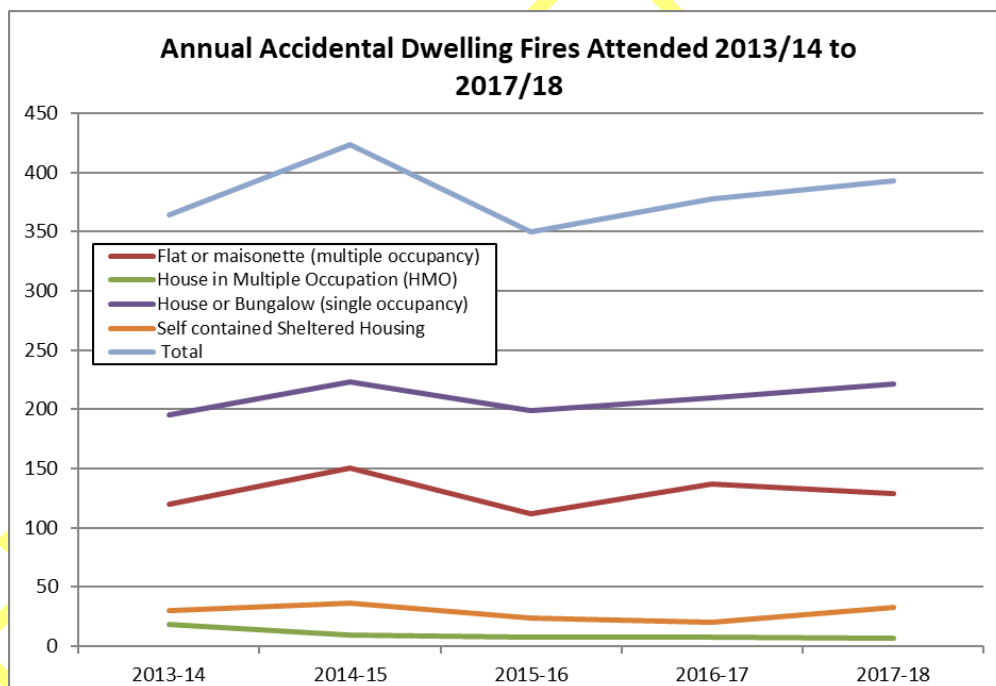
Summary of Risks within Bedfordshire

Dwelling Fire Risk

Fires deaths and injuries arising from accidental dwelling fires have reduced significantly over the past decade. We are aware Bedfordshire has a growing and ageing population with the 65+ age group predicted to increase more steeply over the next decade putting pressure on most public services.

Our analysis tells us that the people most at risk of dying in a dwelling fire include older people, smokers, those with some form of mobility or mental impairment, those who misuse alcohol or drugs and those living without a working smoke alarm. We use a range of data, including health data, to identify people who most need our prevention services and to make sure those people get support. Deprivation is also a recognised factor that increases risk from fire. The English indices of deprivation measure relative deprivation in small areas in England called lower-layer super output areas (LSOA). Although Central Bedfordshire has none, Luton has 9 LSOA in the nation's top 10% and is within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Bedford has 5 LSOAs amongst the top 10%.

There is a rising trend in the number of accidental dwelling fires within our area as the table below shows:



To better target our prevention interventions effectively we worked with Experian, analysing 5 years of our incident data and 5 years of Home Fire Safety Check data profiled against national Mosaic data to produce a bespoke Mosaic Model profile; which classifies each household in the county into one of 7 risk groups. The 3 groups with the highest relative accidental dwelling fire risk score for each household group were

1. Group 3 Transient, young singles with high risk and few interventions.
2. Group 2 High risk, elderly singles reliant on state support.

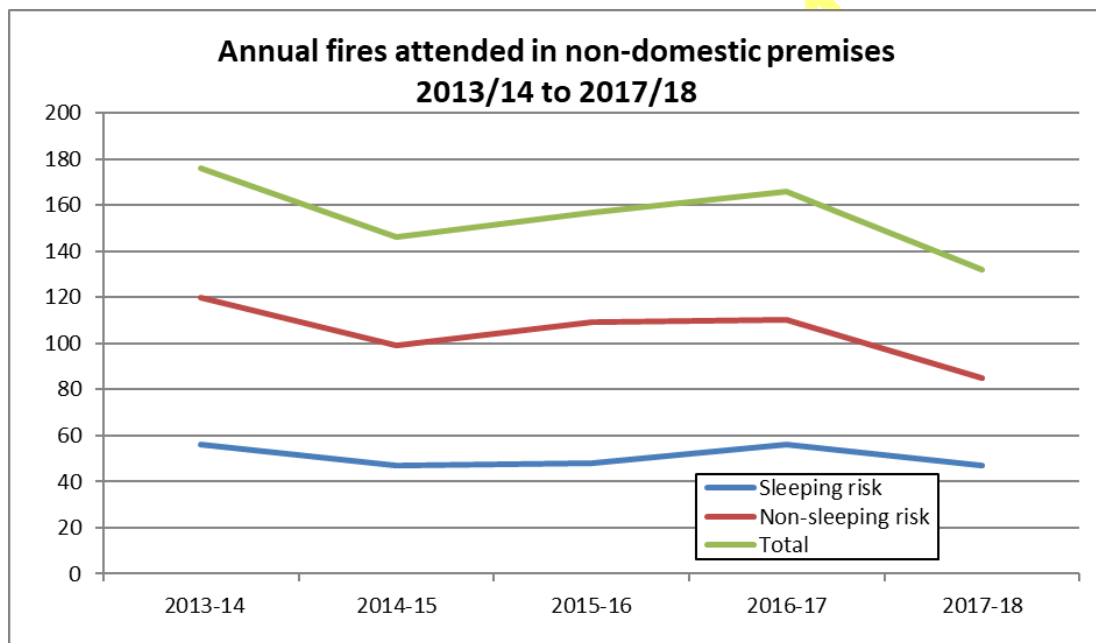
3. Group 1 Less affluent social renters with high fire risk.

Non-Domestic Fire Risks

Non-domestic premises includes those premises not regarded as dwellings such as hospitals, schools, care homes, offices, shops, leisure facilities, factories, airports, transport hubs and other premises or places defined by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

There are more than 17,000 commercial or non-domestic buildings in Bedfordshire. These include hospitals, care homes, hotels, offices, shops, night clubs and other locations such as chemical plants and factories. Although fires in non-domestic buildings have declined in recent years, we recognise the impact that a fire can have on the local economy if a business is disrupted by a fire. Figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) suggest that fires in industrial and commercial buildings cost the UK economy £1.4 billion in 2011.

The downward trend is encouraging and we will continue to work to reduce these fires.

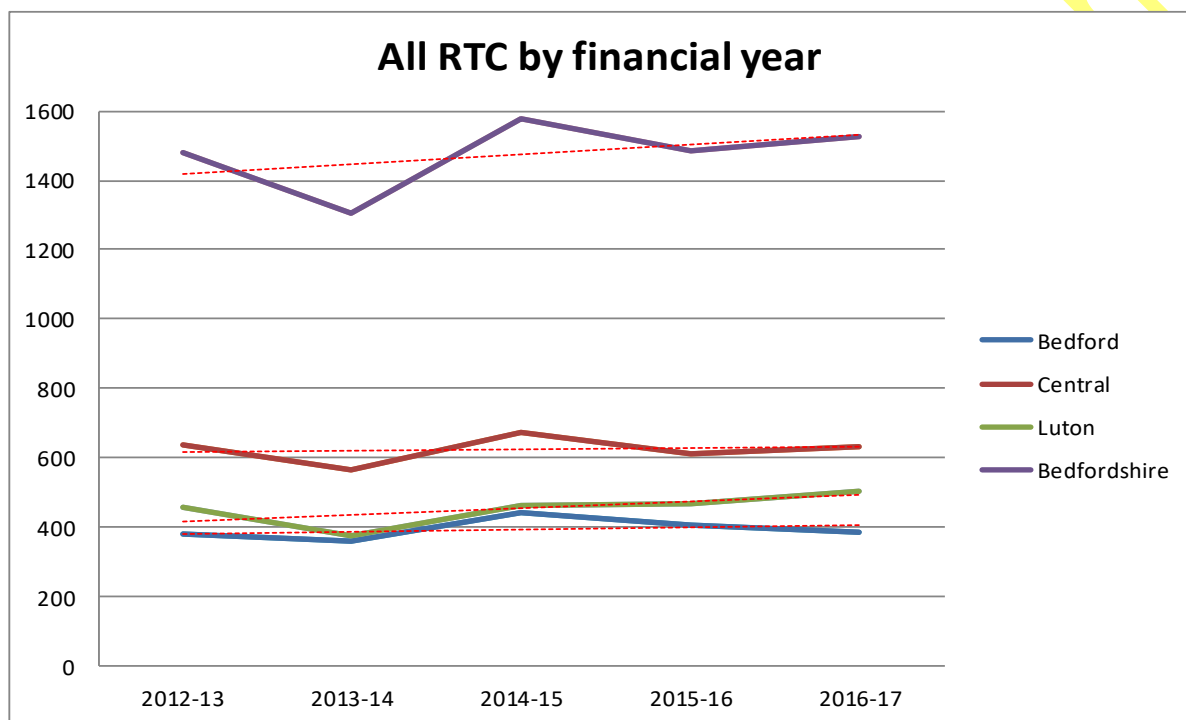


Heritage Fire Risk

We also work hard to protect the heritage of Bedfordshire. There are 114 Grade I and 143 Grade II* listed buildings in our area. Heritage buildings were usually built in an era when fire safety was not a priority and as a result they can be more vulnerable to fire. Our fire safety officers work with the owner/operators of these sites to ensure they comply with fire safety legislation and our operational firefighters gather on-site risk intelligence to inform tactical plans. These plans assist with effectively extinguishing any fires and with protecting and preserving these important buildings and their often valuable contents.

Special services and road traffic collisions

We have a number of major road networks running through our area with increasing volumes of traffic that presents a risk of road traffic collisions (RTC's) occurring. Collisions also frequently occur on the many rural roads that exist across Bedfordshire. We work to mitigate these risks through our prevention and response activities. The chart below shows trends for all RTCs (not just those that BFRS attend) and there also appears to be an increasing trend in the annual number of RTC resulting in casualties being Killed or Seriously Injured. (KSI) (Source: Reported road casualties in Great Britain: 2017 annual report, DoT. Note 2017/18 data not yet available).



Risk of extreme weather

An increasing risk relates to extreme weather; this includes the risk of death, injury or loss from flooding. In recent years the number of significant flooding events has increased. We have a number of areas within Bedfordshire that have been subject to severe localised flooding. In recent years we have deployed our flood rescue capability to support incidents in other areas as part of national planning and preparedness arrangements..

River Flooding and Surface Flooding are amongst the highest risks identified by the National Risk Register. Flooding is identified as a high risk by the Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum (BLRF). A Multi-Agency Flood Plan has been prepared by BLRF to ensure an effective coordinated response to significant flooding events. There are a number of rivers and water courses that run through the county of Bedfordshire. Although most of the above are small water courses, they all have the potential to flood and cause risk to the life, property and infrastructure.

NATIONAL RISKS

Risk of terrorist activity

This is a complex area due to the frequency of new threats being identified and seen enacted internationally. Events over the last few years, both at home and abroad, have increased the risk of terrorist or self-motivated attack activity impacting on our society. BFRS plays a major role in protecting the community in the event of such an incident and along with the other blue light services contributes significantly to the planning and training for such events.

Emergency services work closely with security services and government to identify threats and provide effective warning, informing and response planning. Our Service supports this with national incident liaison officers (NILO), who are able to work closely with emergency service partners, and currently provides a local and national capability for mass casualty injuries and decontamination processes.

How we use our resources to make Bedfordshire safer

Fulfilling our mission of providing outstanding fire and rescue services to make Bedfordshire safer requires us to make sure that *everything* we do is focused on improving the safety of our diverse communities. As the risk in Bedfordshire is constantly evolving our approach needs to keep pace with this change.

Our CRMP is underpinned by our medium term financial strategy, and specific strategies covering Prevention, Protection, Response, People, Assets, and Digital & Data.

Like many fire and rescue services we are facing the challenges of:

- reductions in government funding;
- reducing levels of experiential learning amongst firefighters due to fewer incidents, which places a greater focus on simulation training;
- A retirement profile that is forecasting large numbers of senior and experienced firefighters retiring in the next few years;
- Recruiting and retaining a skilled and diverse workforce;
- A drive to diversify the range of services we provide to the public.

We continually analyse the risks within our communities and use this to allocate the right number of our staff to prevention, protection and emergency response duties. For example in 2019/20, a key focus is deepening our understanding of community risk, and providing all our staff with greater insight into how productive we are and how well we are performing. We will use this insight to provide assurance we are focusing our resources to areas of highest risk and can explain our rationale for doing so.

Prevention Strategy

Aim: **PREVENTING** fires & other emergencies from happening.

Our prevention **priorities** are to:

- Continue to reduce the number and impact of fires within our diverse communities;
- Improve our understanding of community risk through better & more innovative engagement with our diverse & hard to reach communities;
- Continue to reduce the number and impact of deliberate (arson) fires;
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads;
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in water related incidents;
- Work with partners to broaden our prevention role & capabilities.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Use an intelligence led, risk based approach to target the vulnerable & most at risk from fire;
- Maximise capacity and reach through use of specialists, firefighters & partners;
- Work collaboratively to make every contact count;
- Positively engage with and educate young people;
- Deliver an effective Safe and Well service;
- Ensure continuous improvement through effective evaluation of prevention activities;
- Actively support the Tri-Force Road Safety Partnership & the NFCC Prevention Strategy.

Safe & Well Visits

The success of our traditional Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) has contributed to a reduction of risk and a significant reduction in the number of deaths and injuries from accidental fires in the home. Our Safe and Well programme, designed with our local health and social care partners to target the most vulnerable, extends our HFSC approach to include risk factors that impact on health and wellbeing, such as winter warmth checks, falls prevention support, alcohol misuse and crime prevention advice, and includes referrals to specialist services. We also work with other public sector organisations, such as housing providers and health services, to exchange relevant information about people who need support and make sure they receive a visit from the person best placed to help them.

Arson Reduction Strategy

Deliberate fires account for a large proportion of the emergency incidents we attend. Our prevention strategy is focused on working with partners including the police, local authorities and other agencies to understand where the areas of greatest risk are and to work together to reduce the number of deliberate fires that occur, analysing data and investigating fire related crimes to ensure appropriate action is taken against offenders. We also deliver targeted educational activities to change the behaviours of those people who are likely to commit arson. Although the smaller fires we attend are, to some extent, linked to the prevailing weather conditions, there is a recognised link between deliberately set small fires and other forms of antisocial behaviour. It has been estimated that young people start a

large proportion of these fires so education and engagement with this group is key to reducing these incidents. We aim to reduce deliberate fires through interventions in three key areas:

- **Environmental Interventions:** These are multi agency initiatives involving teams of people from BFRS and other partners to visit designated areas to identify, process, and where necessary remove the opportunities and targets for arsonists such as fly-tipped combustible waste and abandoned vehicles. Also to identify potential targets where improved security could deter arsonists, such as derelict or unused buildings and insecure outbuildings;
- **Investigation-based Interventions:** We identify arson 'hot spots', patterns and trends and share this information with relevant partners to ensure a joint approach is taken in dealing with arson attacks; the sharing of data often reveals that the arson is part of a wider pattern of anti-social behaviour;
- **Educational Interventions:** We aim to engage with every Year 2 pupil across the county highlighting the dangers of fire and the role of the Fire and Rescue Service within the community. Our staff and partner agencies deliver 'Safety Squad' educational inputs to Year 5 and 6 pupils in Luton, which includes a session on the dangers of fire and the crime of arson. Secondary school students can engage in our newest programme, 'Fire Forward'. It is specifically designed to help improve young peoples' aspirations and promotes positive, safe decision making relating to fire, roads and water. Our SAFE (Safety Awareness and Fire Education) programme is a targeted programme for young people who present a risk around fire. This is delivered by specially qualified staff with the aim of changing behaviours.

Our Fire Cadets

We have four Cadet Units based at Kempston, Leighton Buzzard, Luton and Sandy Community Fire Stations. We focus on teaching practical skills to young people and developing positive behaviours to create role models in society. Cadet units take part in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, with Cadets working towards recognised qualifications. Cadets support Fire Station Open Days, charitable events and fundraising, take part in civic events such as Remembrance Day and assist at ceremonial activities such as the Service Awards Evening and the Christmas Christingle Service. We are proud to nominate one Fire Cadet each year to be the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet.

Reducing the risk of death or injury from road traffic collisions

We are an active partner on the Bedfordshire Strategic Road Safety Partnership Board which brings together the key agencies with responsibility for safety on our roads. We undertake a range of interventions particularly targeting vulnerable road users. Many of these initiatives are delivered jointly with other partners including police and local authority. Examples include:

- 'Biker Down' and 'Bike Safe' delivered by our FireBike team of Road Traffic Collision Reduction Officers (RTCRO);
- Schools 'Year 5 Alive' programme;
- '6th Form Safe' programme for new and learner drivers;
- Supporting national and local road safety campaigns;
- 'Staying Safe in Later Life' presentations.

Protection Strategy

Aim: **PROTECTING** people & property when fires happen.

Our protection **priorities** are to:

- Focus our resources on engaging & educating local businesses to reduce the risk of fire & comply with fire safety legislation;
- Through inspection & audit, continue to reduce the risk from fire in buildings to both the public and firefighters.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Use an intelligence led, risk based approach to audit & inspection;
- Actively engage & educate local businesses, supported by fair & proportionate enforcement;
- Work together with other regulators & stakeholders to reduce risk;
- Maximise capacity & firefighter safety by utilising operational crews to undertake fire safety audits;
- Ensure we maintain a highly skilled & sustainable specialist fire safety team;
- Ensure continuous improvement through effective evaluation of protection activities;
- Work with the NFCC to actively support & respond to learning from the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry & the Independent Review of Building Regulations.

In discharging our statutory responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, we provide education and business support and, if necessary, use our enforcement powers to make premises safe. This helps to protect people, property and the environment by either preventing fires from occurring in the first place, or by limiting the effects of fires when they do occur. We maintain a comprehensive database of premises that are categorised from very high risk to very low risk. Our risk based audit programme ensures that those premises most at risk of fire are prioritised by our protection activities. To increase capacity, our specialist fire safety officers have trained our full-time firefighters to undertake audits of low and medium risk buildings. Our dedicated fire safety officers focus on premises that are more complex and which represent a higher risk. This makes the most appropriate use of resources we have available, enabling us to ensure we allocate resources according to risk.

We have taken proactive activity within education to improve compliance and community safety. We engage and share information with businesses and the public through:

- Business action days;
- NFCC Safety Weeks;
- Social media;
- Our website; and
- Attending business, residents and landlord forums.

Response Strategy

Aim: **RESPONDING** to fires & other emergencies promptly & effectively.

Our response **priorities** are to:

- Ensure we provide an effective & timely response to fires & other emergencies at all times;
- Work with LRF partners to effectively plan & prepare for local & national emergencies;
- Work with partners to broaden our response role & capabilities;
- Ensure our response resources & crewing arrangements are aligned to current & future risks.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Have effective operational policies & procedures aligned to National Operational Guidance;
- Provide firefighters with fast access to relevant & timely operational risk information;
- Maintain a positive Health & Safety (H&S) culture, ensuring we continuously learn from incidents;
- Continue to invest in the best appliances, equipment, training & development to ensure our crews respond safely & effectively;
- Review our emergency cover ensuring our resources align with current & future risks;
- Continue to test & maintain effective business continuity plans;
- Proactively collaborate with the NFCC & multi-agency & cross-border partners;
- Continue to develop & maintain our national resilience assets & capabilities.

Our emergency response standards

Prior to 2004, targets for response times to fires and other emergencies were based on a prescriptive framework of national standards. Since then, we have established our local emergency response standards that set out how quickly we aim to respond to key emergencies within our area. The standards relate to the time it takes to get the first fire appliance to the scene from the time it is alerted by our Fire Control Centre.

For **emergency calls**, we will:

- Answer 90% of 999 calls within 7 seconds or less; and
- Mobilise required resources within 60 seconds or less on 80% of occasions.

For **critical fire incidents**, (threaten life, structures or the environment), we will provide an initial response of:

- 2 fire appliances (total 9 riders) on 90% of occasions; and
- Arrive within 10 mins on 80% of occasions.

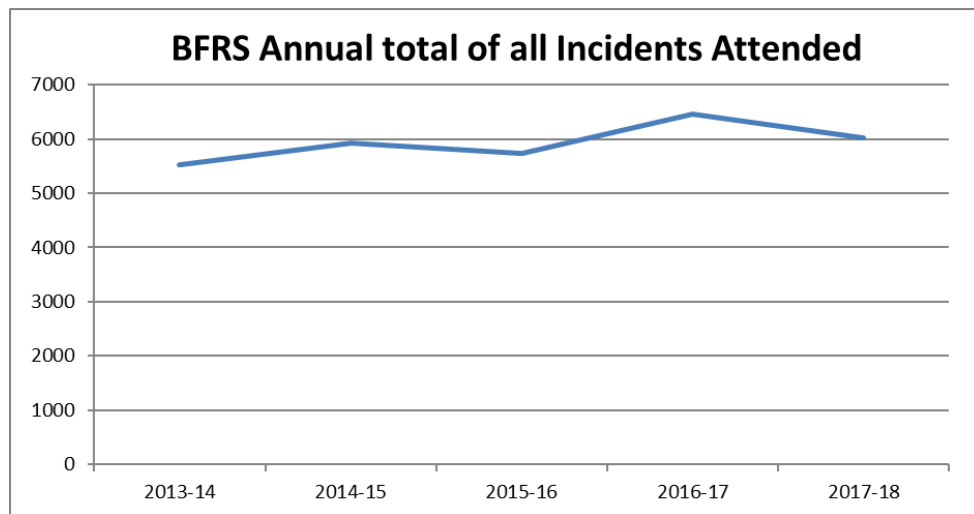
For **road traffic collisions** (RTCs), we will:

- Arrive within 13 mins on 80% of occasions.

For **secondary incidents** (non-life risk), we will provide an initial response of:

- 1 fire appliance with 5 crew; and
- Arrive within 20 mins on 96% of occasions.

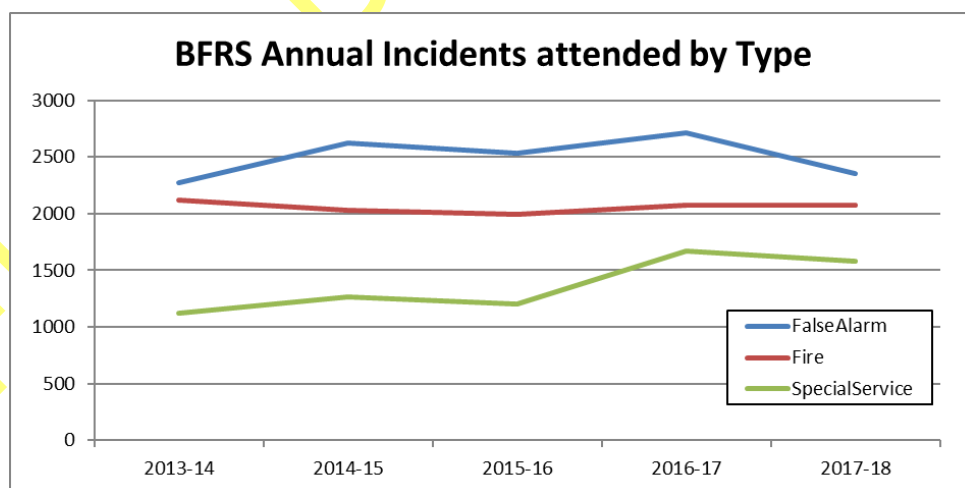
Our response strategy is designed to provide a resilient emergency response if an incident does occur. In 2017/18 BFRS Fire Control received 11,099 emergency 999 calls (an average of over 30 calls per day) and as a result attended and resolved 6,013 incidents. The total number of incidents we attend is steadily rising as the chart below shows.



The type of incidents responded to by BFRS can broadly be split into three areas:

- **Fires** – Defined as either primary or secondary (see below);
- **Non-fire** – Covers a wide range of incidents including road traffic collisions, rescues from height, from water, providing medical assistance, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials and other calls to protect life, property and the environment;
- **False alarms** – This includes false reports of all incidents types originating from both automatic fire detection systems and by human error.

Over the last five years we have seen a slight decline in the number of fires we attend however non-fire special services are on the increase.



We have implemented a range of improvements to maintain operational availability more flexibly and efficiently including:

- Introducing lean 24 hour shift system arrangements in 2012 (10% reduction in posts);
- Implementing a revised officer rota in 2015 (20% reduction in officer posts);
- Introducing a shared Strategic Command rota with Cambridgeshire FRS in 2016;

- Better availability of on-call fire appliances through new ways of working (strategic reserve, standby schemes, dual contracts, self-rostering and phased alerting);
- On-call availability management improved through use of new software system and trialling use of pro-rata retainers and flexible leave arrangements.

People Strategy

Aim: **EMPOWERING** our people as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer.

Our people **priorities** are to:

- Be an employer of choice, recruiting, retaining & developing a highly skilled & diverse workforce who uphold and model our values and virtues;
- Ensure our people understand our strategic direction & their role in achieving it;
- Embed a positive and inclusive learning culture where all staff have a voice;
- Provide a safe & healthy working environment with low absence, accidents & injuries;
- Develop our managers to value, lead, motivate, develop & empower their staff to be the best they can be;
- Continue to invest in providing all our staff with the best training and development opportunities.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Work with our communities and our partners to better engage, understand & recruit a truly inclusive workforce reflective of our diverse communities;
- Work with our staff to update and embed our values and virtues, ensuring all our leaders are visible role models of them;
- Work with our trade unions to maintain an effective employee relations environment, promoting and investing in the health & wellbeing of our people;
- Continue to recognise & reward our people for the excellent work they do;
- Build confidence, resilience, capability & capacity, providing a range of effective, high quality learning, development & assessment pathways that support our strategic objectives;
- Ensure our promotion processes and are transparent and consistent;
- Seek more effective means of communicating and engaging with our staff in ways that empower them and encourage innovation, agility and continuous improvement in the services we provide;
- Continue to develop & embed our values based performance management framework.

The retirement profile of the Service shows a high number of staff will likely retire in the next few years. This profile presents a risk around potential loss of skills and experience and therefore robust workforce planning is essential. However, it also presents an opportunity to reform our ways of working to ensure that the Service can attract and retain a more diverse workforce equipped with the skills to deliver a modern fire and rescue service to the communities we serve.

We will be working to align our existing staff development programmes with the new NFCC leadership framework (2019) whilst maintaining career pathways that are underpinned with

technical skills, knowledge and understanding, giving our staff the confidence and opportunities necessary.

From 2019 our new wholtime firefighters will benefit from attending initial training through an apprenticeship standard, developed by the sector to meet our expectations and externally accredited by Skills for Justice. We will explore further opportunities to benefit from modern apprenticeship standards to support a range of staff development.

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Assets Strategy

Aim: **UTILISING** our assets & resources efficiently & effectively.

Our assets **priorities** are to:

- Continue to provide the best facilities, vehicles, equipment and PPE we can afford to enable our staff to respond and support the range of emergency incidents and other activities that we attend in ways that are professional, effective and efficient;
- Ensure any investment is mindful of our duty to collaborate and the national procurement agenda wherever there is a clear business case to do so;
- Always specify, procure and maintain our assets under the principles of protecting the front line, improving firefighter safety, providing value for money.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Produce sustainable capital & revenue budgets aligned to our strategic objectives;
- Adopt the whole life cycle approach to asset management, engaging with end users, utilising innovative new technologies, and actively pursuing collaboration opportunities with partners;
- Implement effective & sustainable asset management plans & systems providing assurance our fleet, equipment, estates, ICT & training resources support current & future needs;
- Ensure we have compliant & collaborative procurement processes so we purchase the right products & services at the best price and when we need them.

As a fire and rescue service, we operate from 14 fire stations and a headquarters complex that also incorporates our training and development centre, 999 Fire Control mobilising centre and our fleet and equipment workshops. We procure a range of professional services and provide and maintain a wide range of vehicles, equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) and IT hardware and software to enable us to provide our prevention, protection and training services, as well as respond professionally to the significant range of emergency incidents we are called to attend.

We seek to align our approach to procuring, improving and maintaining our asset base with the mission, aims and priorities within our CRMP mission.

Digital & Data Strategy

Aim: **MAXIMISING** use of data and digital solutions to drive improvement.

Like many public services, it can be challenging to keep pace with the changing digital environment. Feedback from our staff and recent HMICFRS inspection tells us that some of our IT systems and processes are hindering our productivity. We know we can also improve how we collect, store and utilise our data so our staff have greater insight into how we are performing and the risks we are working to reduce. By giving staff access to more information will enable us to empower them to take greater ownership in driving improvements in everything we do, whilst allowing proper evaluation against our objectives.

Digital technologies available today can act as real enablers, not only speeding up our processes but also generating intelligence through analysis that allows evidence-based decisions to be made about where best to utilise our resources.

Digital transformation means the integration of digital technology into all areas of an organisation, fundamentally changing how we operate and deliver value to customers. True digital transformation will improve the ways in which we work, how we interact with partners, the public and each other. This transformation requires some organisational culture change; to accept and embrace the use of new technologies, systems and processes to facilitate organisational improvement where we can all work smarter.

Our digital and data **priorities** are to:

- Embark upon a programme of digital transformation, using data and technology to enable not hinder improvement;
- Become a 'fast follower', adopting industry best practices in key areas through collaboration, whilst building capacity to be fire sector leader;
- Improve overall staff engagement and digital literacy by offering a more flexible, collaborative and mobile working environment;
- Create a paper-lite workforce, eradicating re-keying of data to central systems;
- Build a more visible brand with the creation of digital services;
- Enable better access to data and performance insight.

Our **approach** (how we will do this) will be to:

- Maximise the added value of digital solutions;
- Expand our data analysis capabilities, collaborating within and across sectors;
- Invest in digital solutions to support collaboration and make better use of existing data;
- Develop our approach to understanding, and utilising, open data;
- Using data across fire and rescue services and partners to support service delivery;
- Create a culture and environment where data analytics can add value to service delivery, whilst allowing outcomes to be properly evaluated against objectives;
- Ensure our digital transformation is underpinned by strong governance and effective cyber security procedures;
- Influence and support delivery of the national NFCC Digital and Data Strategy.

Financial Strategy

Since 2010, we have seen our Government funding cut by £7.5 million. The 2020/21 financial year may see significant funding changes due to the Comprehensive Spending Review, Formula Funding Review and changes to Business Rates Retention and we forecast a further cut of £1.4m. However, we have been proactive in identifying changes that ensure continuity of our professional services whilst delivering the required efficiencies.

Future financial settlements are likely to remain difficult. As such, we continue to plan for a range of financial scenarios that may emerge in the next few years.

Our ability to mitigate our risks and realise opportunities is directly impacted by our resourcing and budgetary make-up. Our current budgetary plans and assumptions determine the speed at which we will deliver our action plans. More information is available on our website.

Our financial **priorities** are to:

- Ensure we deliver a balanced sustainable budget that provides value for money, aligns our resources to risk & supports the delivery of our CRMP;
- Be innovative in developing & delivering on our Efficiency Plan whilst maintaining a prudent level & utilisation of our reserves.

Our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a document that sets the Authority's financial strategy for the next four years. It focuses on the 2019/20 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme, but also sets the scene for future years. It covers national events such as the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and then breaks down how this impacts locally on the Authority.

The MTFS details our reserves policy, planning assumptions behind the budget figures and other considerations that must be taken into account when setting the strategy, such as the tax base, efficiencies and shared services.

Efficiency Savings

An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity is reduced but its quality and effectiveness remains the same or improves. The Fire Authority continues to focus on finding new ways to deliver the highest quality services at lowest possible cost.

In 2015, the Government announced the revenue support grant funding for the Service over the four years from 2016/17 to 2019/20. This settlement equates to a 59% funding reduction from 2015/16 grant funding levels.

Some of the key areas where the Authority has been achieving its planned efficiency savings include:

- Savings in managerial and support staff costs through shared service arrangements, organisational restructure and improvements to working systems;
- Savings in firefighter crewing arrangements;
- Savings to the public through collaborative work;
- Savings through joint Procurement such as Firefighters Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Savings in the Service Vehicle Replacement Programme through improved asset management and maintenance.

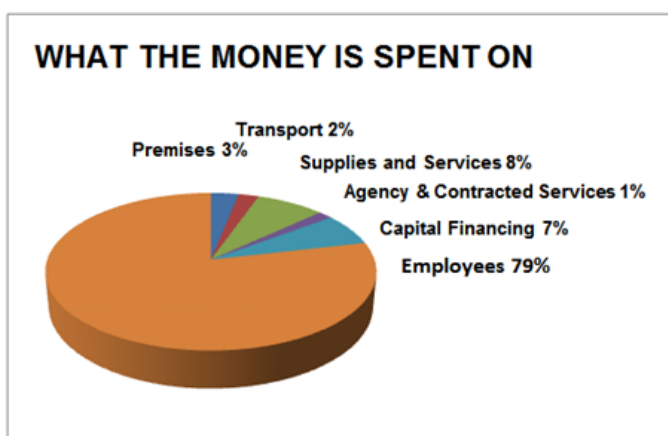
Revenue Budget

Our revenue budget sets out the money necessary for the day to day running of the Service. Our efficiency measures have allowed us to continue with key service improvements whilst restricting the increase in 2019/20 council tax precept to 2.99% (equivalent to an increase of 5.5 pence per week for a Band D household).

This has been achieved despite the impact of a 20% reduction in Government grant to the Authority (compared to 2018/19) totalling £0.573m, and the effect of inflation which is forecast to increase our costs in 2019/20 by £0.854m.

Capital Budget

Our capital programme highlights spending on assets such as our fire stations and fire engines. Each year the Authority draws up a rolling four year programme of capital projects. The capital projects for 2019/20 total £1.736m and these are being funded by contributions from the revenue budget.

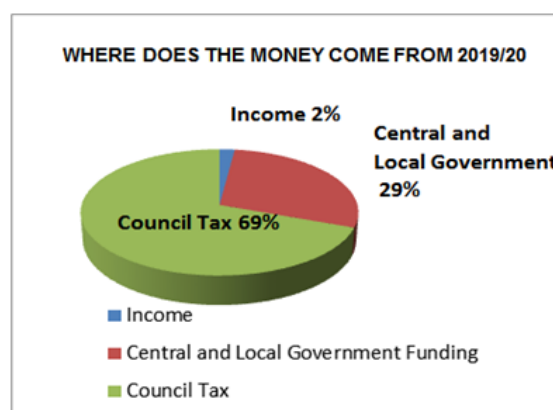


What the Money is Spent on:

	2019/20 (£m)	2018/19 (£m)
Employees	23.8	23.2
Premises	1.0	1.1
Transport	0.7	0.7
Supplies and Services	2.3	2.3
Agency and Contracted Services	0.5	0.3
Capital Financing	2.0	2.0
Total	30.3	29.6
Reserves Funding	-0.6	-0.2
Budget Requirement	29.7	29.4

Where Does the Money Come From?

	2019/20 (£m)	2018/19 (£m)
Gross Budget	30.3	29.9
Income	(0.6)	(0.5)
Budget Requirement	29.7	29.4
Central and Local Government Funding	(8.7)	(9.4)
Council Tax	(21.0)	(20)
Total Funding	(29.7)	(29.4)



Accountability

Our internal Programme Board is responsible for overseeing the effective delivery of the key projects and programmes that underpin delivery of our CRMP and ensuring project risks and resources are properly managed.

The Fire and Rescue Authority, through its Audit Committee and Policy and Challenge Groups, sets us challenging targets for a range of performance indicators which help them to monitor and scrutinise our performance, both in terms of activity outputs and outcomes, ensuring the Service is functioning efficiently and effectively and delivering on our CRMP.

To support the delivery of our CRMP, we have a range of measures known as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are aligned to the strategies underpinning the CRMP and are reported to the Authority every quarter. You can view these and the targets set by the Authority on our [website](#).

We publish an annual Statement of Assurance that seeks to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters, showing that Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to deliver the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and our own CRMP. From 2019, we intend to expand this document and rename it our Annual Performance and Statement of Assurance Report.

In 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) extended its remit to include inspections of England's fire and rescue service. They now assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 45 fire and rescue services in England. You can find more information about our most recent inspection on their [website](#).

Each year the Service conducts a number of audits in specific areas to provide assurance to our processes and identify further areas of improvement. We are also required to periodically respond to national audit and self-assessments on specific areas of our service, such as specialist response capabilities for flood rescue (conducted in 2019).

Consultation & Engagement

The purpose of consultation is to understand the effects of a proposal on different stakeholder groups. We regularly consult with local people and organisations on a range of issues. There may be a number of reasons to consult such as gathering views and opinions on our plans.

We always seek to engage in real discussion with stakeholders to help us make informed decisions, and how we consult will vary depending on the nature of the proposal. The choice and form of consultation will depend on the issues under consideration, who needs to be consulted, and the available time and resources. More information about our consultations is available on our [website](#).

If you would like a printed copy of this document please contact us via any of the following:

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Post: Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Southfields Road
Kempston
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MK42 7NR

Website: www.bedsfire.gov.uk

Email: contact@bedsfire.gov.uk

Social Media: Facebook: www.facebook.com/bedsfire
Twitter: @bedsfire
Instagram: @bedsfire

Appendix A - Our 2019/20 Annual Action Plan

Each year, we prepare an Annual Action Plan that outlines what we intend to do during that particular year to support the delivery of our CRMP and our mission to **provide outstanding fire and rescue services** that help make Bedfordshire safer. To help make it easier to follow, the actions are aligned to our CRMP 'Aims'. Our Annual Performance and Statement of Assurance Report will explain how well we did in delivering our plans.

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Aim: **PREVENTING** fires & other emergencies from happening.

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refresh our approach to assessing and predicting risks from fire and other emergencies within Bedfordshire, and how we share outcomes from this analysis with our staff, partners and the public. 	<p>We must have a thorough understanding of the evolving risks in our area and be reassured we are using the latest tools and techniques. A key aspect to this will be how we engage with our staff and communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh our approach to Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults ensuring alignment with national guidance. 	<p>Our work brings us into contact with some of the most vulnerable children and adults so our approach, policies & procedures need to keep pace with the latest national guidance such as the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a programme to improve understanding of safeguarding & vulnerability within our communities amongst our operational staff. 	<p>Our staff have said they want to better understand how to identify vulnerability, and safeguard vulnerable people along with building their skills in engaging with our diverse communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver at least 50% more Safe & Well Visits than we delivered in 2018/19, ensuring we are targeting the most vulnerable. 	<p>Our Safe & Well Visits build upon our highly successful home fire safety checks, reducing risks from falls, alcohol, crime, winter warmth and other health problems. An ambitious target but the more we deliver, the more people we can help to improve their health, safety and wellbeing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a new Community Safety Facility at Bedford Fire Station. 	<p>Building upon the success of our Home Safety Centre in Luton, providing an alternative venue in Bedford, will allow more people to access our community safety activities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate our key prevention activities and ensure any new activities incorporate effective evaluation. 	<p>Evaluation enables us to determine if we are efficiently targeting our resources towards the areas of greatest risk, and importantly, if it is having a positive impact.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively pursue new and innovative ways to work together with partners to contribute to the wider public health agenda in support of the NHS 10 Year Plan. 	<p>The fire and rescue service is recognised nationally as a 'health asset' and we are keen to use our knowledge, skills, capabilities and reputation to improve the health, safety & wellbeing of our communities, beyond just fire safety.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure those living within high rise residency premises are provided with a collaborative and coordinated approach to improve safety and confidence 	<p>BFRS made an immediate response following the Grenfell fire in London, where we re-inspected all our high rise premises. We will ensure that community concerns are addressed and our engagement reflects the national and local learning (see Protect).</p>

Aim: PROTECTING people & property when fires happen

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a new digital fire safety management system to deliver more efficient working and better oversight of activity. 	<p>To ensure we are doing the right thing, using the right people and resources, provided in the right place and at the right time to help make Bedfordshire safer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce enhanced quality assurance arrangements to ensure consistent effective enforcement. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our risk based inspection programme to ensure that our resources are being effectively targeted, working with our Eastern region to agree a common definition what constitutes high-risk premises. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the business community to further reduce unwanted fire signals. 	<p>Unwanted fire signals are ‘false alarm’ incidents we attend due to a fire alarm actuation caused by defective equipment or poor fire safety management. They represent a significant draw on our resources so reducing them will release capacity to focus on other important work.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the NFCC to actively support & respond to learning from the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry & the Independent Review of Building Regulations. 	<p>The tragedy at Grenfell Tower in 2017 will have a profound impact upon the way fire safety in buildings is managed and regulated and we want to be proactive in supporting and responding to the learning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh our approach to developing and assuring the competence of our firefighters to carry out fire safety audits. 	<p>We train our operational firefighters to carry out fire safety audits in buildings we consider to be lower in risk, improving their knowledge of the buildings in their area and allowing our specialist fire safety officers to focus on the more complex, high risk inspections. We want to accredit the training we provide with an appropriate qualification.</p>

Aim: **RESPONDING** to fires & other emergencies promptly & effectively

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilising the latest technology, commission an in-depth analysis of our emergency cover arrangements. 	<p>Risks within Bedfordshire are constantly evolving and our emergency response cover needs to reflect this. We want to be confident we are doing the right thing, using the right people and resources, provided in the right place and at the right time to help make Bedfordshire safer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the availability of fire appliances crewed by on-call firefighters by introducing new and innovative ways of working. 	<p>Many of our fire stations rely on on-call firefighters to crew fire appliances. Like many fire services, recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters is a real challenge so we are seeking new and sustainable ways to overcome these challenges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work regionally to implement the remaining elements of National Operational Guidance. 	<p>Ensuring our firefighters are working to National Operational Guidance provides a common platform for all fire and rescue services in the UK to work safely and effectively together at emergency incidents.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest and rollout new Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) to all our fire appliances. 	<p>Our fire appliances MDTs (mobile computers) give our firefighters access to risk critical information about buildings, chemical hazards, vehicle construction, water supplies and location mapping in our and neighbouring counties. Purchasing the latest MDTs will enhance our response capabilities, improve firefighter safety and reduce reliance on paper based systems.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service to procure a new 999 call handling and mobilising system for our Fire Control Centre. 	<p>Investing in the latest technology will improve our ability to respond effectively to emergencies. Working with Cambridgeshire to buy a new system will deliver efficiency savings and improve resilience between our Services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace our Operational Support Unit (OSU) vehicles. 	<p>Our OSU vehicles provide invaluable support to large or complex emergency incidents and they have reached the end of their serviceable life so need replacing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh our approach to capturing and sharing the learning from emergency incidents both within Bedfordshire and nationally, including how it influences training provision. 	<p>Every emergency incident is different from the next one, so it is important that we effectively capture, share and act upon any learning, whether it happens in Bedfordshire or elsewhere in the country.</p>

Aim: **EMPOWERING** our people as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with our staff and representative bodies to refresh and update our Service Values and Virtues framework as part of the Moving Forward Together programme. 	<p>Involving staff at all levels in refreshing our values and virtues, putting empowerment at the heart, will help ensure everyone understands and visibly demonstrates them, led by our Corporate Management Team.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh our approach to recruiting operational staff and managers, both wholetime and on-call, taking learning from others, maximising positive action initiatives and collaborating wherever possible. 	<p>Our people are our biggest asset, so it is important we recruit the best and most diverse talent to help us engage with and improve the safety and wellbeing of our communities. Our ageing workforce and retirement profile means we need to better anticipate our future recruitment needs and plan for these accordingly. Learning from and working with others will help improve our approach. It is important we align our approach with the recently published NFCC Leadership Framework.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop our approach to identifying, developing and supporting high-potential staff and aspiring leaders, aligned to the NFCC Leadership Framework. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the support staff pay structure to ensure alignment with new NJC Green Book conditions ensuring BFRS is well placed in the market to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce. 	<p>Our support staff are an essential and valued part of our workforce. We often struggle to recruit and recruit the talent we need in these varied roles so this is one way of making us an employer of choice.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement our Mental Health Action plan to ensure that managers and employees are trained, supported and equipped to deal with mental health issues in the workplace. 	<p>Research shows that members of the emergency services are more at risk of experiencing mental health problems than the general public, but are less likely to seek support. We're committed to taking action to raise awareness, challenge mental health stigma and provide help and resources to support our staff.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a service wide wellbeing survey and develop proposals to address any areas of concern. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with our staff and representative bodies to review and further improve our approach to managing grievance, sickness and discipline issues. 	<p>Our staff have told us before they lacked confidence in raising grievances and had mistrust in our disciplinary system. After taking action last year we were pleased that HMICFRS said staff had told them about recent improvements but we acknowledge more work is needed to ensure our staff feel engaged and part of a positive culture.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our approach to maintaining operational competence of firefighters and upgrade our PDRPro software to make it easier to record competence. 	<p>Safely reducing the administrative burden on firefighters who have achieved competence can allow them to focus on other work.</p>

Aim: **UTILISING** our assets & resources efficiently & effectively

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update our internal Procurement Strategy documents with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership & Collaboration; • Commercial Practice; • Social Value. 	<p>To ensure our procurement approach supports delivery of our CRMP and is aligned to and influence the national Fire Procurement Strategy.</p> <p>We must also take a more commercial approach to procurement practice and income generation, that is legally compliant and effectively managing our supplier relationships to deliver better value for money products and services and reduce corporate risk.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our staff and representative bodies to introduce systems to better assess the productivity of our operational staff. 	<p>The majority of our revenue budget is spent on employing our firefighters so we are keen to better understand how productive they are so we can improve how effectively and efficiently we are delivering our services and maximising capacity. We continue to face financial challenges so having an evidence base built on solid and consistent data will be crucial to sustaining our fire and rescue service going forward.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an internal staff focus group to identify, develop and implement innovative solutions that support delivery of our CRMP and deliver efficiencies. 	<p>We want to encourage our staff to get more involved in developing ideas and solutions that will help us be more effective and efficient.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an electronic Asset Management System (AMS) for our operational equipment and vehicle fleet. 	<p>This will greatly enhance our ability to track, test and maintain our vehicles and equipment and inform our future procurement decisions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively pursue further collaborative opportunities with our blue light partners to share our buildings, functions and capabilities, using our financial reserves to invest in mutually beneficial schemes. 	<p>We have a duty to collaborate but we firmly believe it is the right thing to do to ensure we and our blue light partners are working together to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the services we provide within Bedfordshire.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a more commercial approach to collaboration, including exploring establishing a trading company to support income generation. 	<p>The creation of fire trading companies is one means of addressing some of the challenges associated with austerity, and offering opportunity to realise benefits such as generating additional income, utilising spare capacity and providing a social return.</p>

Aim: **MAXIMISING** use of data and digital solutions to drive improvement.

What we intend to do in 2019/20	Why we are doing it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline our digital transformation by undertaking a Digital Maturity assessment to assess the current status of our digital capabilities. 	<p>This assessment will help clarify the level of “digital readiness” that will inform delivery plans going forward.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrate our desktop estate to Windows 10 to utilise enhanced functionality and security. We will go cloud based with Microsoft Office 365 and SharePoint Online. 	<p>Building upon our recent infrastructure improvements, moving to the latest Microsoft Windows operating system and Office software strategy that will allow us to embark upon our digital transformation programme and provide the majority of the digital tools needed to move away from paper based, bureaucratic and inefficient processes, to an environment providing technical excellence through scalable, sustainable, and resilient and secure IT infrastructure.</p> <p>It will also empower staff by providing staff with a more flexible, collaborative and mobile working environment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work with Bedfordshire University to implement a KPI (corporate) dashboard with dynamic data views to present timely information to aid our performance monitoring. 	<p>Empowering our staff to take greater ownership for delivering performance improvements means we need to give them better access to data and information to broaden their insight into the risks we face and how we are performing in terms of our outputs and community outcomes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will implement Microsoft Power Business Intelligence (BI) to create tailored reports available on-demand to empower our workforce. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop our HR iTrent system to create efficiencies through reducing paper and moving to online resources. 	<p>Moving to our new HR iTrent system has already improved performance and realised efficiencies. We plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the performance Management module to enable on line appraisals; further develop the recruitment module to enable on line shortlisting; roll out the iTrent expenses module to cut out bureaucracy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to plan for and support the implementation of the Emergency Services Network (ESN). 	<p>ESN is a major national project that will eventually replace the existing Airwave communications network used by the emergency services across the UK.</p>