

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service

# Fire and Rescue Plan

(Integrated Risk Management Plan)

## 2017 - 2021



**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Northumberland County Council



# INTRODUCTION

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# FOREWORD

Welcome to Northumberland County Council's Fire and Rescue Plan 2017 – 2021.

This is a four year plan, the purpose of which is to describe the main risks to our communities here in Northumberland and to show how we intend to use our capacity and resources efficiently and effectively to reduce those risks.

The plan builds on our previous work to improve our preparedness, prevention and response to emergencies, and our prevention initiatives to reduce the harm and increase the protection to vulnerable members of our communities.

We have a long and proud history of working in partnership with colleagues within Northumberland County Council as well as our external partner agencies to add resilience and value to the delivery of our services. We will continue to explore opportunities to better integrate our collaborative working to maximise the outcomes for our communities. To do this, we will continue to invest in our workforce to ensure we maintain a professional, multi-skilled and highly capable workforce supported by our apprentices and volunteers.

As we are an integral part of Northumberland County Council, we are committed to supporting the shared vision and long term strategic aims of the Authority to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of the County and its residents. We will also tell you how well we have performed in reducing and managing risk or, where this is not possible, where we have reduced the impact.

As with other parts of Northumberland County Council we have made significant efficiencies to our service since 2010/11. We have realised budget reductions of £4.5 million since 2010/11 and a reduction of approximately 73 (16.8%) posts from the establishment of Fire and Civil Contingencies since 2013/14. Despite this very challenging environment, we continue to provide a service which is resilient, effective and performing well.

We know we must aim to maintain our focus on regularly reviewing our risk profile to utilise our personnel and resources where they can have maximum impact, training and equipping the service to meet those risks and being as proactive as possible to prevent fires and other emergencies from occurring in the first place.



**Cllr John Riddle**  
NCC Cabinet Member  
Planning, Housing & Resilience  
& NCC Fire Authority Chair



**Paul Hedley**  
Chief Fire Officer and  
NCC Head of Service

# INTRODUCTION

Fire and rescue authorities in England have a responsibility under the Fire and rescue national framework for England 2012 to **'identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their communities might face'**.

In particular, fire and rescue authorities have three priorities:

- ▶ **To identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately;**
- ▶ **To work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service; and**
- ▶ **To be accountable to communities for the service they provide.**

Fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an *'Integrated Risk Management Plan'* (IRMP) which will tell communities how it will deliver those priorities. In Northumberland, we call this our Fire and Rescue Plan. Our plan is for the next four years. We will refresh our plan annually, at which time we will review our community risk profile to ensure it remains accurate.



# STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Fire and rescue authorities have a number of duties as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Under the Act, fire and rescue authorities must:

- ▶ **Promote fire safety, including the provision of information and publicity on how to prevent fires, and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire**
- ▶ **Extinguish fires and protect life and property in the event of fires**
- ▶ **Rescue people and protect people from serious harm in the event of road traffic accidents**
- ▶ **When necessary deal with emergencies other than fires and road traffic accidents**

The Service also supports the Council in its responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Providing business and other responsible persons with education, advice and guidance, prosecutions will be pursued only when it is in the public's best interests to do so.

In addition, fire and rescue authorities have a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to work with partners in their Local Resilience Forum to plan and train for Hazards identified in a joint Community Risk Register (CRR). A CRR identifies potential risks to the community for example, flooding. This assists in risk management planning, including the allocation of resources, training and preparation for the response to emergency incidents. Risks identified in the CRR are reflected in our plan.

More recently, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 further reforms policing and enables important changes to the governance of fire and rescue services. The Act places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together and enables police and crime commissioners to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a local case is made.

Prior to the enactment of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service established a Strategic Delivery Board with the following aims:-

**Better value for money** - the collaboration produces quantifiable efficiencies, either on implementation or in the longer term

**Improved outcomes** - the collaboration maintains or improves the service it provides to local people and local communities

**Reduced demand** - the collaboration should contribute towards the longer term strategic objective of decreasing risk in communities and reducing demand on services

# NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

In Northumberland, the County Council is the fire authority providing governance for Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and is, following local elections, aligning itself to the new Conservative administration structures.

## Northumberland County Council Priorities



**Northumberland**  
Northumberland County Council

**Our Vision**  
**Our Mission**  
**Our Values**

**Our Priorities**  
We will work with local people, local enterprises and with our partners to achieve these outcomes

**Northumberland will be a thriving county where people choose to live, work, visit and Invest**  
We will listen and respond to local people and our partners and we will be confident, innovative and fair

**Passionate Creative Opportunistic Customer Driven Efficient Consistent Trustworthy**

**Our Organisation**  
This is what we will do to support and enable our core priorities

**Grow our local economy**



- Support new and existing businesses to reach their potential
- Help local people to gain the training, skills and qualifications they need to secure meaningful work
- Provide a good education for children and young people to ensure they are prepared for future employment
- Provide quality transport networks connecting people, businesses and communities
- Provide a modern communication network including complete broadband and mobile phone coverage

**Improve our places and our environment**



- Maintain and improve the vitality of towns, villages and countryside
- Protect our natural environment
- Identify suitable areas for appropriate development and provide affordable housing
- Make sure we have the modern infrastructure required for our communities
- Promote sustainable travel and provide an integrated public transport network
- Improve our visitor offer, expand the scale and depth of creative industries and extend our tourism season to attract more visitors

**Enable communities and families to be strong**



- Ensure all residents feel safe, belong and have a say in how the county is run
- Provide a range of quality community and cultural services and facilities which inspire creativity and participation
- Work closely with our voluntary and community organisations to make sure everyone gets involved
- Protect the population from infectious diseases, environmental hazards and severe weather incidents
- Continue to tackle poverty and support those affected by welfare reform
- Protect vulnerable people and provide early help to those families at risk of falling into crisis

**Help people to be healthy and independent**



- Give everyone the opportunity to lead healthy, independent lives for as long as possible
- Safeguard our most vulnerable residents in a way that maintains their dignity and confidence and prevents isolation
- Deliver integrated well managed and targeted services to allow all residents to access the support they are entitled to
- Promote public health and wellbeing in the community and encourage healthy lifestyles

**Make the best use of our limited resources to ensure maximum benefit for all citizens in all communities across the county**

**Create a unified council where all staff and elected members understand their role and are motivated to deliver excellent services**

**Listen to and value the views, concerns and ideas of staff**

**Make sure all residents and businesses know what the council stands for and how it wants to work**

**Listen and promptly respond to feedback from our residents and provide quality customer services that they need and value**

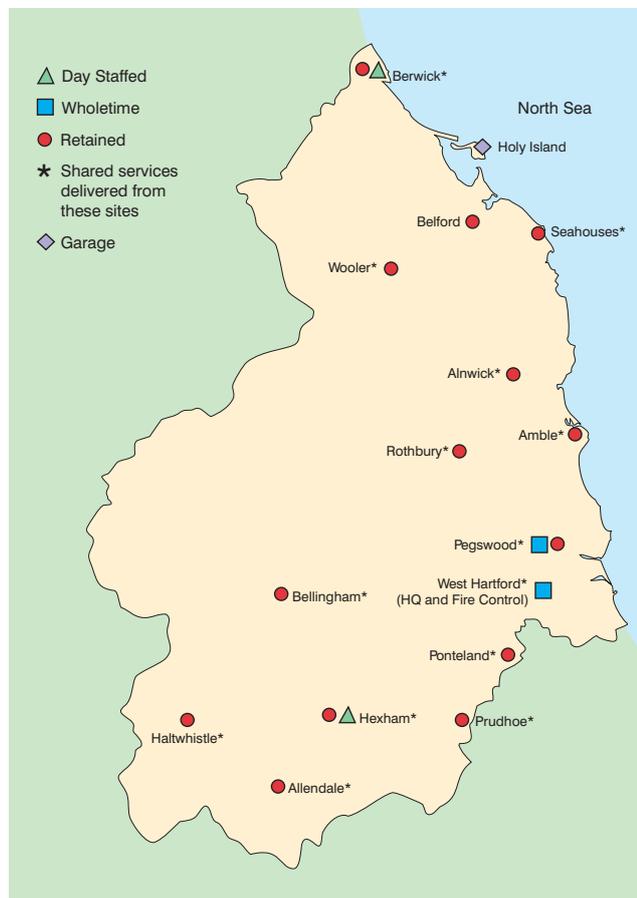
**Work in partnership and collaborate with others to deliver services as effectively and efficiently as possible**

## Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Aims

- ▶ Reduce the number of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies occurring in Northumberland
- ▶ Reduce the number of deaths and injuries and mitigate the commercial, economic and social cost of emergency incidents
- ▶ Safeguard the environment and heritage sites (both built and natural)
- ▶ Support communities to protect themselves from harm
- ▶ Provide value for money through the provision of a lean, efficient and resilient service

# YOUR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Currently, Northumberland has 15 community fire stations (excluding Holy Island garage) delivering services 365 days of the year. The Service received around 6200 calls and attended 3115 incidents in 2016/17.



## Wholetime Duty System:

The Service has two 'wholetime' community fire stations in the south east of the county, which is largely urban. Operational firefighters work two x 10 hour day shifts, and two x 14 hour night shifts. Cover is provided by 4 watches, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 per year.

## Day Staffed Duty System:

The Service has two Community Fire Stations with two watches providing cover. Firefighters work during the day for four x 10 hour shifts between 08:00 and 18:00, and respond following pager alert during the four x 14 hour night shifts.

## Retained Duty System:

In rural areas, firefighters who live or work within five minutes of the station will respond to a pager alert if there is an incident in their area.

## Holy Island:

Holy Island has a garaged fire engine. Firefighters from Berwick, Belford and Seahouses Community Fire Stations will respond to an incident using the fire engine and equipment stored on the island, where appropriate.

## Community Safety

The Community Safety department undertakes Safe and Well-Being visits, fitting smoke alarms and providing general safety advice where appropriate, delivery of the Prince's Trust Team programme, the firesetters intervention programme, Young Firefighters Association and manages the service's volunteer and apprentice programmes.

## Fire Control

Fire Control provides an emergency call handling and mobilising service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Fire Control Operators ensure that the right vehicles, equipment and staff are sent to a variety of incidents.

## Fire Safety

The Fire Safety department has established strong relationships with businesses in Northumberland, in order to support them in their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Order places a duty on all fire and rescue authorities to enforce fire safety in non-domestic properties. Fire Safety officers process applications for petroleum storage certificates, comment on licensing applications under the Licensing Act 2003, invoke enforcement policy where appropriate, undertake fire safety inspections and provide advice.

## Fire Support Services

Fire Support Services department has responsibility for the following areas; Health and Safety, fleet management, specialist equipment, Fire Control, management information systems, and management of contracts for services such as vehicle workshops and stores.

## Learning and Development

Learning and Development department provides a risk-based programme of training to ensure the health, safety and welfare of firefighters attending a wide range of incident types.

## Civil Contingencies

The Civil Contingencies team works within the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum to prepare and plan for emergencies within Northumberland, and protect and support communities when emergencies occur. A joint Community Risk Register is used to identify local Hazards and prioritise multi-agency planning, training and exercises. The Civil Contingencies Team drives business continuity and emergency planning across the Council.

## Public Protection

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has assumed management responsibility for Public Protection since 2016.

## Public Health Protection Unit

The Public Health Protection Unit responded to 13,297 service requests in 2016/17 from residents and businesses. It also carried out hundreds of proactive visits to protect and improve food hygiene, food standards, air quality, and water quality in private water supplies. The Unit investigates many different types of public health and safety issues including anti-social behaviour, noise, air and land pollution, fly tipping, littering, poor housing standards and dog fouling. We take hundreds of stray dogs a year to a place of safety.

## Business Compliance and Public Safety Unit

The Business Compliance and Public Safety Unit provides a range of services, including Pest Control, Trading Standards and Animal Health, Licensing (including taxi drivers, pubs, clubs, zoos etc.) and Building Control. The Unit is supported by the Technical Support Team.

### The people who deliver your service.....

*Fire and Rescue Establishment (as of 1 April 2017):*

*Emergency Response:*

*Wholetime (including Officers):* 141

*\*Retained:* 162

*Fire Control:* 16

*Corporate (including Civil Contingencies, Community Safety, Fire Safety, Fire Support Services, Learning and Development):* 37

**Total Establishment:** 356

*Public Protection Establishment (as of 1 April 2017)*

*Public Health Protection Unit* 48

*Business Compliance and Public Safety Unit* 58

**Total Establishment:** 106

\*Note the number of retained firefighters fluctuates due to the nature of the retained role.

# NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PROFILE

The County of Northumberland covers an area of 5013 km<sup>2</sup> or 1935 mi<sup>2</sup>, enjoying a National Park, miles of coastline with designated areas of outstanding natural beauty, and a heritage of historic buildings, archaeological sites and monuments. Northumberland is home to major road and rail links, The Port Of Blyth, modern industrial developments, one top tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) site and two Major Accident Hazard Pipelines (MAHP). We have 315,800 residents, who live in 149,190 dwellings in Northumberland. Northumberland has a higher proportion of residents aged 65 years or over (21.8%) than the North East and England, and this is projected to rise to 28% by 2025. Although it is recognised that fire and rescue authorities have worked hard in their prevention activity to reduce fire deaths in the home by half since the 1980s, we need to take note that by 2035 the number of people in our county aged 65 and over will have increased by over 68%.



Over 51% of the population live in 3% of urban land, largely in the South East of the county. With 97% of its area classed as rural, Northumberland is the most sparsely populated county, with only 63 people per km<sup>2</sup>. Wages in the county are lower than the average in England and unemployment is higher than the national level. More than a third of the population work in the public sector, which makes the local economy extremely vulnerable at a time of significant public sector cuts. Communities previously dominated by coal mining and heavy industry continue to face long term worklessness. 13% of the population live in some of the most deprived areas of England. Income levels across Northumberland, however, vary greatly with some areas of considerable affluence.

In Northumberland, crime has increased from 14,610 offences in 2015/16 to 19,231 in 2016/17. However, Police recorded crime is governed by the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). Following an assessment of crime statistics by the UK Statistics Authority, published in 2014, the statistics based on police recorded crime data were found not to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording means that caution is needed when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime; apparent increases may reflect a number of factors:

- ▶ Improvements in recording practices.
- ▶ Increases in reporting by victims.
- ▶ Genuine increases in the levels of crime.

Further information on Northumberland Statistics can be found at [Northumberland Knowledge](#)

## Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Operational Delivery Areas

For operational purposes, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service divides the county into two operational delivery areas. The following sections provide further detail on each of these two areas.

### Operational Delivery Area 1

Operational Delivery Area 1 covers an area of 752 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 133,932. There are 66,673 residential properties of which 11,345 are social rented and 8,882 are private rented. There are 6,051 commercial properties in the area.

## The Area is served by 7 Community Fire Stations



### **Alnwick Community Fire Station**

Alnwick Community Fire Station covers an area of 136 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 17,023. Almost 25% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 8,671 residential properties of which 1,384 are social rented and 1,260 are private rented. There are 1,021 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system with two appliances (fire engines).



### **Amble Community Fire Station**

Amble Community Fire Station covers an area of 30 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 12,583. Almost 23% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 5,755 residential properties of which 1,076 are social rented and 669 are private rented. There are 491 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



### **Belford Community Fire Station**

Belford Community Fire Station covers an area of 54 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 2,045. Almost 28% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 1,131 residential properties of which 162 are social rented and 220 are private rented. There are 208 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



### **Berwick Community Fire Station**

Berwick Community Fire Station covers an area of 125 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 17,876. Almost 26% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 8,934 residential properties of which 1,649 are social rented and 1,379 are private rented. There are 950 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs day staffed and retained duty systems and provides swift water rescue response.



### **Pegswood Community Fire Station**

Pegswood Community Fire Station covers an area of 185 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 76,120. Almost 22% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 36,759 residential properties of which 6,459 are social rented and 4,546 are private rented. There are 2,256 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a wholetime and retained duty system, and provides swift water rescue, high volume pump and incident support unit response.



### **Seahouses Community Fire Station**

Seahouses Community Fire Station covers an area of 35 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 3,886. Almost 35% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 2,889 residential properties of which 265 are social rented and 320 are private rented. There are 798 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



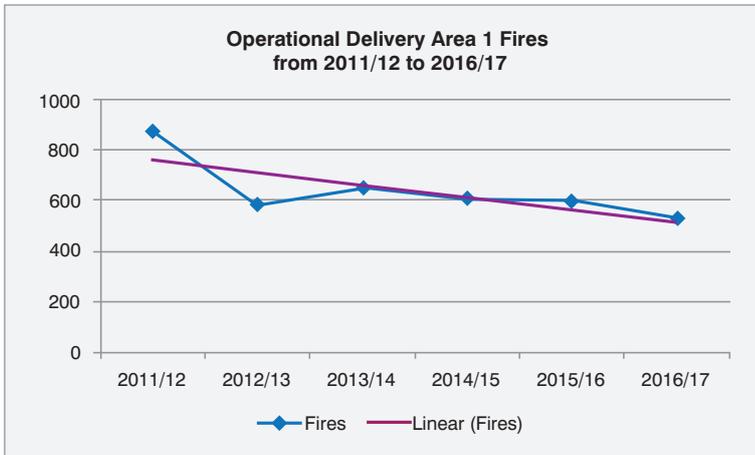
### **Wooler Community Fire Station**

Wooler Community Fire Station covers an area of 186 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 4,399. Almost 29% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 2,534 residential properties of which 350 are social rented and 488 are private rented. There are 327 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service categorise incidents into three main types; fire, false alarm, special service call. The term ‘fire’ includes outdoor fires, dwelling (house) fires and other building fires. The term ‘false alarm’ includes false alarm due to apparatus (faulty equipment), good intent false alarm and malicious false alarm (hoax call). The term ‘special service call’ includes road traffic collisions (RTC) and flooding.

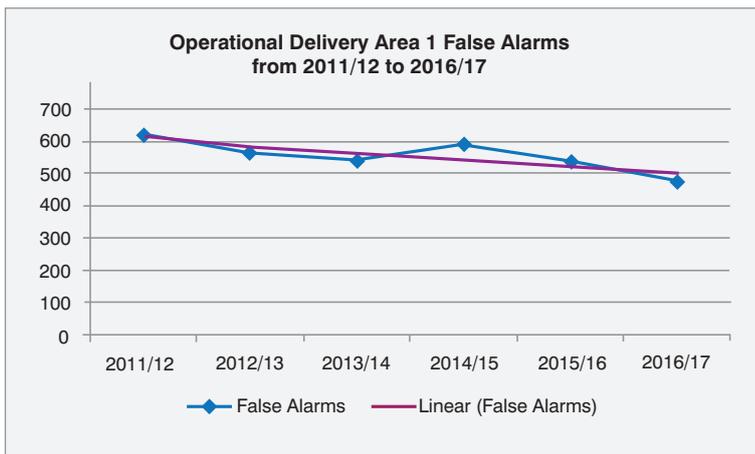
The following section provides trend charts detailing the three incident types; fires, false alarms and special service calls in Operational Delivery Area 1 for the period 2011/12 to 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 1: Fire incidents in Operational Delivery Area 1 between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



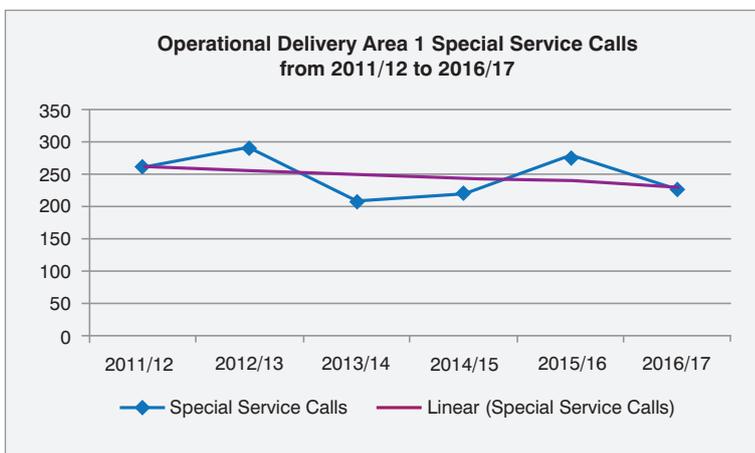
There has been a **39.7% reduction in fire incidents** in Operational Delivery Area 1 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of fires reducing from 876 in 2011/12 to 528 in 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 2: False Alarm incidents in Operational Delivery Area 1 between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



There has been a **22.6% reduction in false alarm incidents** in Operational Delivery Area 1 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of false alarms reducing from 619 in 2011/12 to 479 in 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 3: Special Service Call incidents in Operational Delivery Area between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



There has been a **12.7% reduction in special service calls** in Operational Delivery Area 1 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of special service calls reducing from 260 in 2011/12 to 227 in 2016/17.

## Operational Delivery Area 2

Operational Delivery Area 2 covers an area of 1205 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 181,329. There are 84,859 residential properties of which 14,496 are social rented and 9,535 are private rented. There are 5,387 commercial properties in the area.

### The Area is served by 8 Community Fire Stations.



#### **Allendale Community Fire Station**

Allendale Community Fire Station covers an area of 85 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 2,582. Almost 27% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 1,276 residential properties of which 80 are social rented and 231 are private rented. There are 114 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



#### **Bellingham Community Fire Station**

Bellingham Community Fire Station covers an area of 413 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 5,093. Almost 26% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 2,534 residential properties of which 324 are social rented and 441 are private rented. There are 287 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



#### **Haltwhistle Community Fire Station**

Haltwhistle Community Fire Station covers an area of 139 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 6,838. Almost 26% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 3,350 residential properties of which 456 are social rented and 454 are private rented. There are 339 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



### Hexham Community Fire Station

Hexham Community Fire Station covers an area of 239 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 26,233. Almost 26% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 12,448 residential properties of which 1,603 are social rented and 1,891 are private rented. There are 1,213 commercial properties in the area. The station runs a day staffed and retained duty system, and provides swift water rescue response.



### Ponteland Community Fire Station

Ponteland Community Fire Station covers an area of 40 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 13,548. Almost 30% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 5,922 residential properties of which 318 are social rented and 477 are private rented. There are 303 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



### Prudhoe Community Fire Station

Prudhoe Community Fire Station covers an area of 46 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 20,358. Almost 22% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 8,834 residential properties of which 1,339 are social rented and 839 are private rented. There are 484 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.



### Rothbury Community Fire Station

Rothbury Community Fire Station covers an area of 209 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 5,761. Almost 30% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 2,903 residential properties of which 287 are social rented and 483 are private rented. There are 293 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a retained duty system.

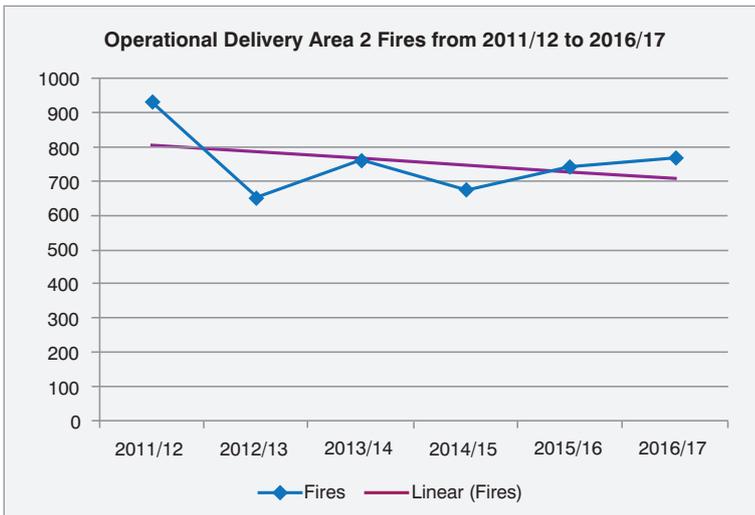


## West Hartford Community Fire Station

West Hartford Community Fire Station covers an area of 38 mi<sup>2</sup> with a population of 100,916. Just over 20% of the population are aged 65 years or older. There are 47,529 residential properties of which 10,089 are social rented and 4,719 are private rented. There are 2,354 commercial properties in the area. The fire station runs a wholtime duty system, and provides Incident Response Unit and Special Rescue Unit Response.

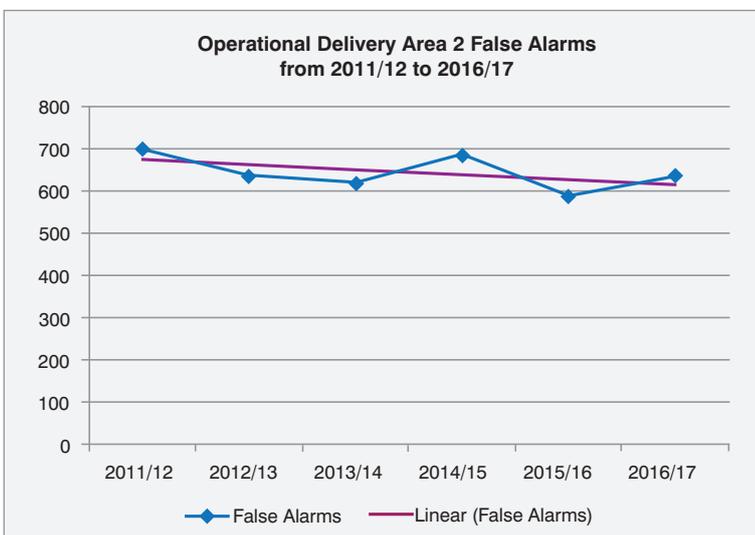
As with Operational Delivery Area 1, the following section provides trend charts detailing the three incident types; fires, false alarms and special service calls in Operational Delivery Area 2 for the period 2011/12 to 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 4: Fire incidents in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



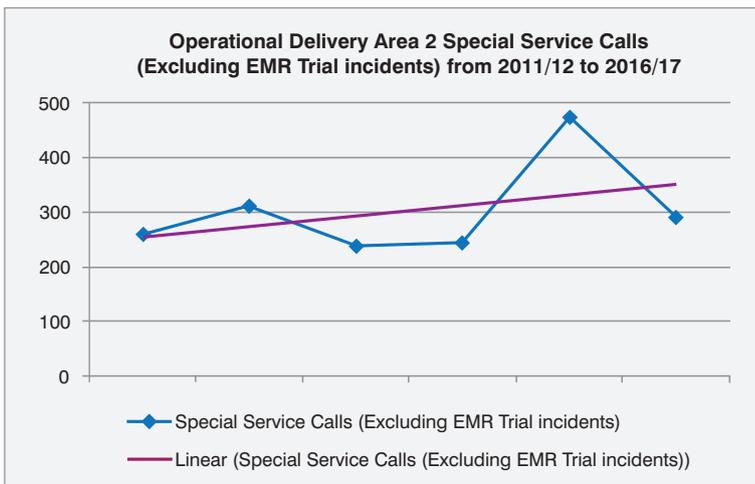
There has been a **17.7% reduction in fire incidents** in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of fires reducing from 934 in 2011/12 to 769 in 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 5: False Alarm incidents in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



There has been a **9.1% reduction in false alarm incidents** in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of false alarms reducing from 700 in 2011/12 to 636 in 2016/17.

**Trend Chart 6: Special Service Call incidents in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17**



There has been a **13.2% increase in special service calls** in Operational Delivery Area 2 between 2011/12 and 2016/17, with the total number of special service calls increasing from 258 in 2011/12 to 292 in 2016/17.

Note: the increase in 2015/16 is largely due to storms Desmond, Eva and Frank which resulted in a significant number of flooding events.

In 2015/16 Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service entered into a partnership with North East Ambulance Service to take part in a pilot involving firefighters providing Emergency Medical Response to a limited category of medical incident type. This pilot is currently restricted to Operational Delivery Area 2, specifically Hexham Community Fire Station. During 2015/16 Hexham appliances responded to 78 Emergency Medical incidents. In 2016/17 this increased to 184, which represents an increase of 57%



# IDENTIFYING RISKS

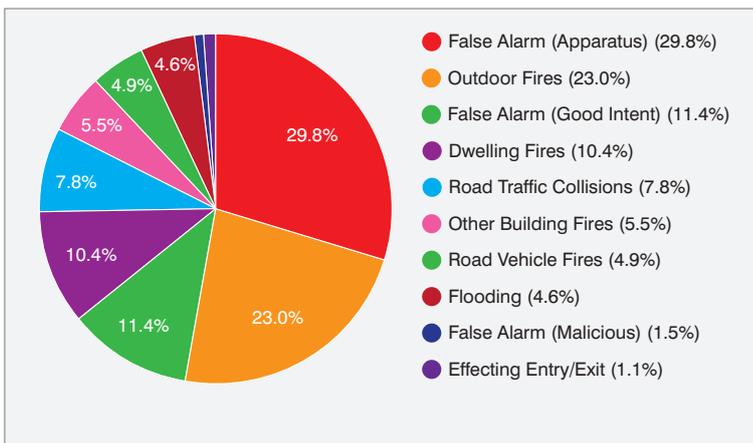
This Fire and Rescue Plan outlines how we identify, assess and mitigate fire and rescue related risks to the communities of Northumberland. Whilst we have a requirement to identify **all** fire and rescue related risks, it is risk to **life** that is given the highest priority.

The identification and assessment of risk includes consideration of risk modelling, historical data and professional judgement. The assessment of risk requires both quantitative and qualitative analysis that examines both the likelihood and impact of identified risk.

## Risks

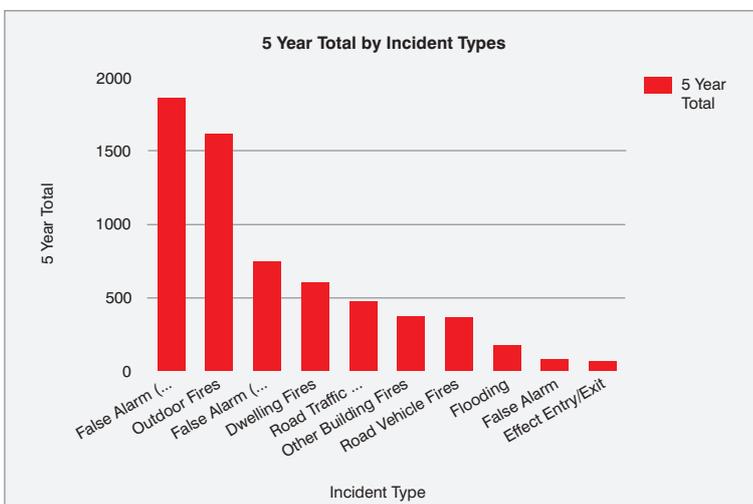
When identifying risks, it is important to look at historical data. In the last 10 years, the total number of incidents in Northumberland has reduced by over 31%. Over the past 5 years (2012/13 - 2016/17) the 10 most frequently attended incident types account for 93% of all incidents, 77% of casualties and 68% of fatalities. The 10 most frequently attended incidents are detailed in Pie Chart 1.

**Pie Chart 1: to show the 10 most frequently attended incident types across Northumberland**

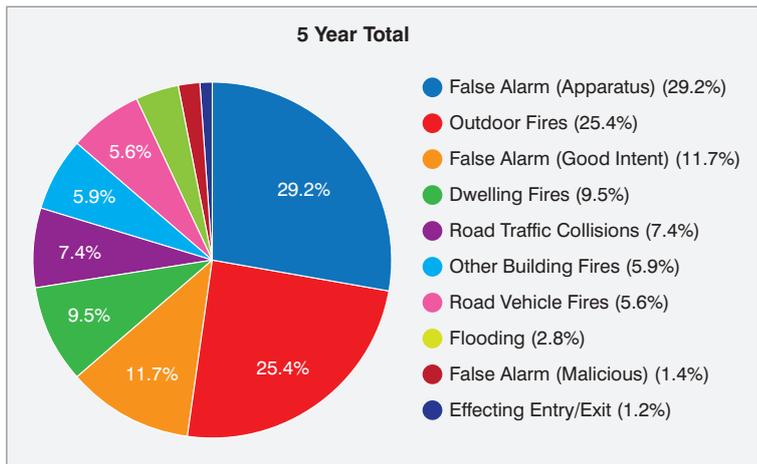


## Delivery Area 1

**Chart 7: to show the top ten incident types across Operational Delivery Area 1 2012/13 - 16/17**



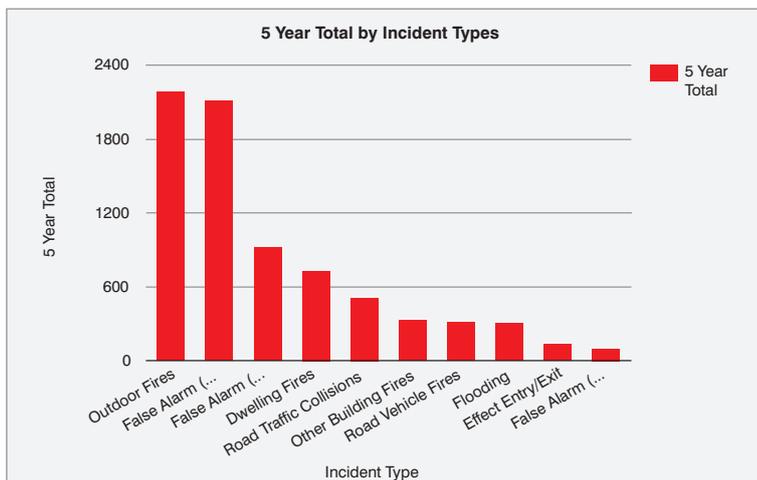
**Pie Chart 2: to show the 10 most frequently attended incident types in Operational Delivery Area 1**



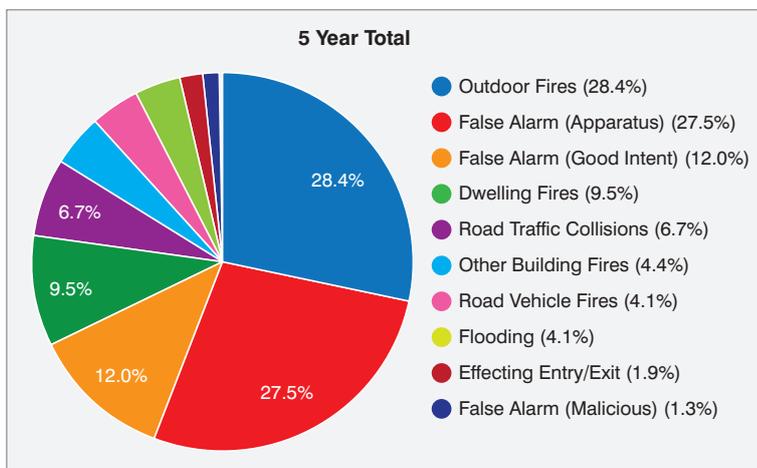
False Alarm (Apparatus) and outdoor fire incidents account for over half, 54.6%, of incidents attended in Operational Delivery Area 1. False Alarm (Good Intent) account for a further 11.7% of incidents, meaning that 66.3% of the top ten incidents attended in Operational Delivery Area 1 are made up of three incident types considered low risk with regards to casualties.

## Delivery Area 2

**Chart 8: to show the top ten incident types across Operational Delivery Area 2 2012/13 - 16/17**



**Pie Chart 3: to show the 10 most frequently attended incident types in Operational Delivery Area 2**



Outdoor Fire and False Alarm (Apparatus) incidents account for over half, 55.9%, of incidents attended in Operational Delivery Area 2. False Alarm (Good Intent) account for a further 12% of incidents, meaning that 67.9% of the top ten incidents attended in Operational Delivery Area 2 are made up of three incident types considered low risk with regards to casualties.

# MANAGEMENT OF RISKS / PREVENTION

The management of fire and rescue related risks is reflected in three key areas of service delivery; Prevention, Protection and Response. Key risks and priorities for each of these three areas are detailed in the following section.

## Prevention

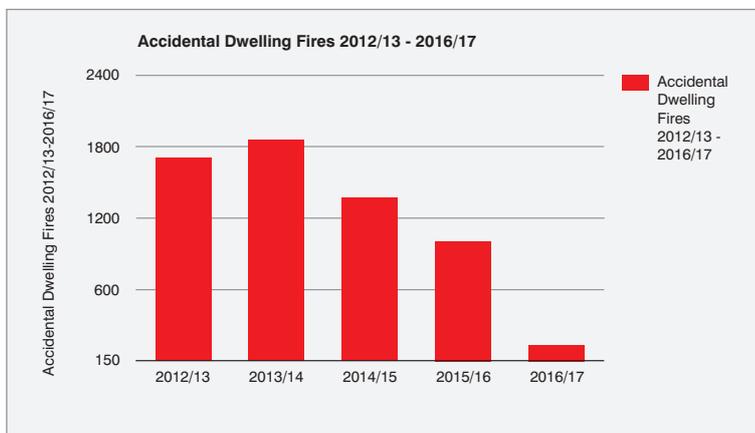
Under the Fire and rescue national framework for England 2012, *'fire and rescue authorities must work with communities to identify and protect them from risk and to prevent incidents from occurring'* (Fire and rescue national framework for England, 2012 p10)

### Accidental Dwelling Fires

Dwelling fires are the fourth most frequently occurring incident type and have a significant number of casualties per incident. They also have the fourth highest number of fatalities out of all incident types. On average, dwelling fires are most likely to occur from the start of December through to the end of March, during the evening. In 2016/17 just over 90% of dwelling fires were accidental, with 223 of 246 recorded as accidental dwelling fires.

As with many other fire and rescue services in the UK, in order to mitigate the risk of death or injury from accidental dwelling fires, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service chose to implement a Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) programme across the county. This programme has been running for over a decade. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service undertakes approximately 10,000 HFSCs per annum, and there has been a significant reduction in the number of accidental dwelling fires as presented in Chart 9.

**Chart 9: Chart to show numbers of accidental dwelling fires between 2012/13 - 2016/17**



In 2013/14, the reduction in accidental dwelling fires had begun to plateau in fire services across the country, indeed, some fire and rescue services experienced an increase. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service reviewed the way in which it identified risk and, as a result, introduced a new method of identifying risk of accidental dwelling fires. Since its introduction there has been a **47% reduction in accidental dwelling fires** across Northumberland. This is illustrated in the Chart 9.

Northumberland performs well compared with national figures. In England, the number of accidental dwelling fires was virtually unchanged in 2015/16 compared 2014/15 whereas Northumberland experienced a reduction of almost 12% during the same period.

In 2015, the first Health Fire Summit was held, which recognised the Fire and Rescue Service's potential contribution to a broader health agenda. On 1 October 2015, CFA, NHS England, Public Health England and Age UK published a joint consensus statement setting out a national commitment to improve health and well-being. The statement describes an intent to work together to encourage joint strategies for intelligence-led early intervention and prevention.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has subsequently changed the name 'Home Fire Safety Check' to 'Safe and Well-Being Visit' to reflect a much broader approach to preventative work. The Service already has long established partnerships with agencies including Northumbria Police and Adult Social Care for example. In 2016, the Service began working in partnership with Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust to conduct Falls Risk Assessments with adults aged 65 or older, whilst undertaking a Safe and Well-Being

Visit. This pilot has resulted in a number of referrals to Northumberland Falls Team, Short Term Support Service. The Service is now looking to expand its visits to consider other areas of risk, including risk to health and risk of falling victim to crime.

### Accidental Dwelling Fires - In order to further reduce this risk:-

- ▶ We have reviewed and refreshed our risk model and will continue to monitor its effectiveness
- ▶ We will identify priority areas for expansion of our Safe and Well-Being Visit programme alongside partners
- ▶ We will further develop partnerships to support the expansion in delivery of the Safe and Well-Being Visit programme
- ▶ We will look to expand our volunteer scheme to increase our capacity to deliver Safe and Well-Being visit, including the installation of smoke alarms

## Road Traffic Collisions

The North East Road Safety Resource provides analysis of road traffic collisions across the region. In 2016, there were 648 collisions reported to Northumbria Police, where at least one person was injured. This is a reduction of 9% from the number of collisions reported in 2015, and a 15% reduction from 2012.

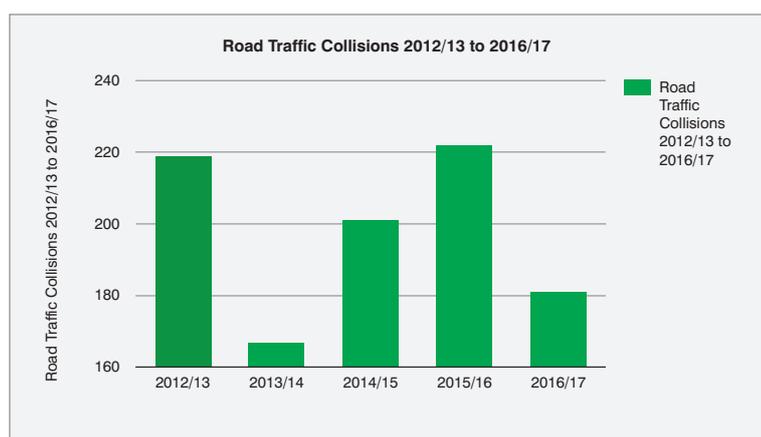
In Northumberland, there has been a reduction in road traffic collisions of 13% in 2015 and 17% overall from 2012. The situation with casualties is very similar to that of collisions with Northumberland experiencing a 13% decrease in 2016 when compared with 2015 and 14% decrease in 2016 when compared with 2012. These are the lowest injury numbers ever recorded in Northumberland since records began in 1978.

There has been an increase in killed or seriously injured in 2016 rising by 20% from 2015 and 11% from 2012. However, this is due to serious, rather than fatal, injuries increasing. Northumberland had 12 fatalities in 2016, which is the joint lowest number since records began in 1978.

In 2016, car occupants accounted for the largest road user injury group with 69% of injuries on the road and 10 of the 12 fatalities. The number of injuries sustained has decreased for most age groups. Only the older two age groups (55yrs - 69 yrs and 70+yrs) have experienced some slight increases. With regard to 55yrs - 69yrs, the number of injuries increased by 2% (3 incidents), however, this represents a decrease of 4% when compared with 2012. With regard to 70+yrs, there was an increase in injuries of 11% in 2016 when compared with 2012. However, there has been a 26% decrease in injuries for this age category when comparing 2016 with 2015.

Of the road traffic collisions that Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is required to attend, there may appear to be significant fluctuations but this is due to low numbers and is illustrated in the chart below. However, there has been a **decrease in incidents in 2016/17 compared with 2012/13 of 38 which is almost 18%**. When comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16, there was a **decrease of 41 incidents which is almost 19%**.

**Chart 10 - Chart to show numbers of Road Traffic Collisions between 2012/13 - 2016/17**



Preventative work undertaken by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service includes membership of the Northumberland Road Safety Co-ordination Group, which is led by Northumberland County Council and involves a number of partner agencies. The group identifies key areas of risk and coordinates the implementation of prevention, engineering and enforcement measures. Other partnership work includes, for example, membership of Northumberland's Ageing Well

Partnership Board where the recent increase in injuries to older drivers was presented in order that the Board could consider a number of approaches that may impact on future road safety.

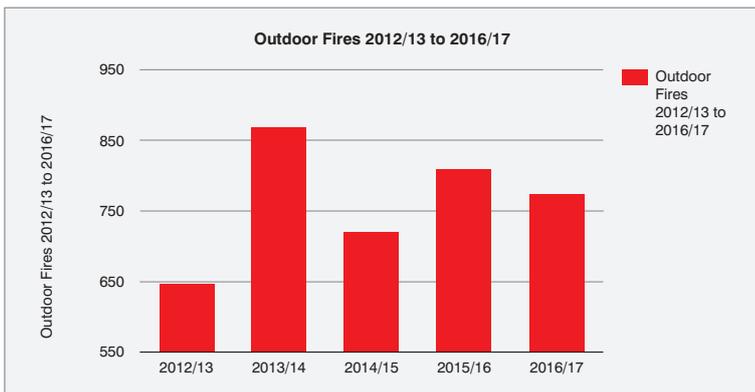
### Road Traffic Collisions - In order to further reduce this risk:-

- ▶ We will continue to support the Northumberland Road Safety Co-ordination Group, identifying key areas of risk and coordinate response
- ▶ Following a review of our Schools Education Programme, we will incorporate a revised road safety education strategy in future delivery
- ▶ We will further develop our regional road traffic collision reduction initiatives with partners in Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service and Northumbria Police

## Outdoor Fires

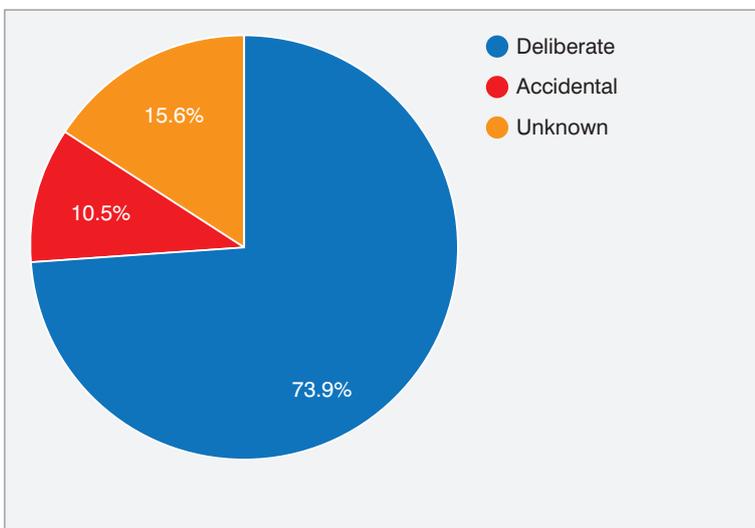
Outdoor fires represent the second highest number of incidents attended by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. However, the casualty rate remains extremely low with no recorded fatalities. There has been an **increase in incidents in 2016/17 compared with 2012/13 of 126 which is almost 14%**. When comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16, there was a **decrease of 37 incidents which is approximately 5%**.

**Chart 11: Number of outdoor fires 2012/13 - 2016/17**



The majority of outdoor fires for 2016/17 have involved loose refuse (163 or 21%), tree scrub (73 or 9%) and scrub land (69 or 9%), wheelie bin (54 or 7%) and small refuse/rubbish/recycle container (51 or 7%). Approximately 74% of outdoor fires attended in 2016/17 were deliberate, as illustrated in Pie Chart 4.

**Pie Chart 4: Causes of outdoor fires 2016/17**



Preventative work is based at a local level with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service working collaboratively with key partner agencies, Northumbria Police, for example. The service attends forums such as Community Safety Hubs to ensure delivery is driven by locally determined, shared intelligence.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service receives referrals from partners across Northumberland regarding individuals who are displaying fire setting behaviour. It delivers a programme of intervention and education to address this risk.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service also attends wildfires, which are defined by the National Operational Guidance for Wildfires as:

‘any uncontrolled vegetation fire where a decision or action is needed about its suppression’.  
In addition, a wildfire will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- ▶ **Involves a geographical area of at least one hectare (10,000 square metres)**
- ▶ **Has a sustained flame length of more than 1.5 metres**
- ▶ **Requires a committed resource of at least four fire and rescue service appliances/resources**
- ▶ **Requires resources to be committed for at least six hours**
- ▶ **Presents a serious threat to life, environment, property and infrastructure**

(National Operational Guidance for Wildfires, 2016)

Although the number of wildfire incidents in Northumberland is relatively low, the impact of such fires both in terms of the environment and allocation of resources, is high.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is recognised as the leading fire service within the UK with regard to wildfire issues. The service has led on wildfire strategy and tactics and has developed a number of bespoke training packages which have been delivered to a wide range of fire and rescue services and land management agencies both within the UK and internationally. At a strategic level the Chief Fire Officer is the national wildfire lead for the National Fire Chiefs Council and provides advice to government and the wider wildfire sector.

The Northumberland Fire Group was set up in 2005. This is a multi-agency group of public and private sector partners that has been established to address wildfire issues within Northumberland. The group aims to protect local communities, the economy, natural environment and cultural heritage of Northumberland by reducing the risk of wildfire occurrence. The group also promotes the importance of creating and maintaining wildfire fire plans. Wildfire fire plans are an important tool used for planning, preparing and responding to wildfires within the county.

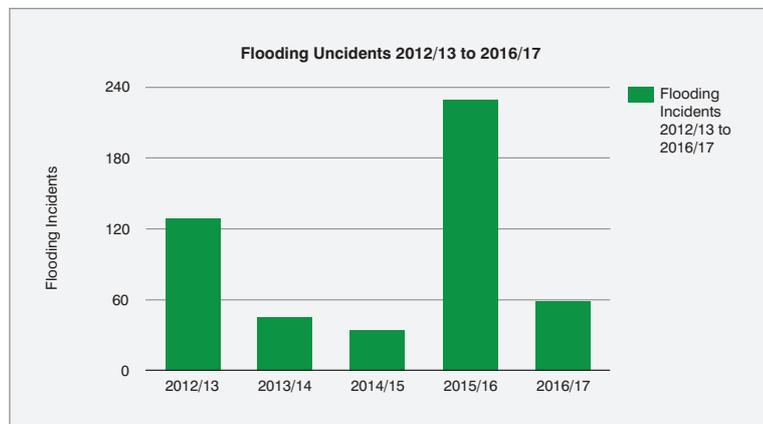
### **Outdoor Fires - In order to further reduce this risk:-**

- ▶ **We will continue to work locally in partnership with agencies such as Northumbria Police**
- ▶ **Following a review of our Schools Education Programme, we will incorporate revised risks associated with deliberate fire setting into the delivery of education within schools**
- ▶ **We will undertake a review of the current firesetters intervention programme**
- ▶ **We will look to develop additional capacity to enable us to deliver youth engagement programmes which focus on deliberate fire reduction**
- ▶ **Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will continue to play a leading national role in developing new policies and procedures for improved pre-planning, response and suppression of wildfire incidents**
- ▶ **Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will undertake a full internal review of wildfire training, response and management to ensure that we are well placed to respond effectively to major wildfires within the county**
- ▶ **We will continue to work with national and international partners to combat the growing risk and threat from wildfire incidents**
- ▶ **We will continue to support the work of the Northumberland Fire Group**

## Flooding

Whilst national recording systems mean that incidents of flooding also include plumbing leaks, burst pipes or overflowing sinks and baths, it should be noted that the greatest impact, disruption and risk both to our communities and to Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is caused by surface water flooding after rainfall and fluvial flooding of rivers and water courses.

**Chart 12: to show flooding incidents 2012/13 - 2016/17**



There has been a **decrease 54.6% in flooding incidents** in Northumberland between 2012/13 and 2016/17, with the total number of flooding incidents reducing from 130 in 2012/12 to 59 in 2016/17. However, it should be noted that the number of flooding incidents can vary significantly each year, with the number of flooding incidents recorded in 2015/16 being comparatively high at 230. When looking at 5 year totals from 2012/13 to 2016/17, total flooding incidents account for 4.1% of the top ten most frequent incident types.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Northumberland County Council is responsible for planning risk management for flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses, otherwise known as local sources of flooding. Northumberland Local Flood Risk Management Objectives have been developed in line with the Environment Agency's National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England. This sets out the following national objectives for flood risk management:

- ▶ **Understand the risks** - understanding the risks of flooding and coastal erosion, working together to put in place long-term plans to manage these risks and making sure that other plans take account of them;
- ▶ **Prevent inappropriate development** - avoiding inappropriate development in areas of flood and coastal erosion risk and being careful to manage land elsewhere to avoid increasing risks;
- ▶ **Manage the likelihood of flooding** - building, maintaining and improving flood and coastal erosion management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society;
- ▶ **Help people to manage their own risk** - increasing public awareness of the risk that remains and engaging with people at risk to encourage them to take action to manage the risks that they face and to make their property more resilient; and
- ▶ **Improve flood prediction, warning and post-flood recovery** - improving the detection, forecasting and issue of warnings of flooding, planning for and co-ordinating a rapid response to flood emergencies and promoting faster recovery from flooding.

Performance is monitored by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). The RFCC is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes:



- ▶ to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
- ▶ to encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities
- ▶ to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area

With regards to incident management, we are a Category 1 Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and therefore have a responsibility, along with other organisations for developing emergency plans, contingency plans and business continuity plans to mitigate the effects of an emergency in Northumberland.

The Northumberland County Council Flood Action Plan sets out a response to the threat of flooding, based on warnings issued by the environment agency. These plans have been produced in partnership with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services. The Civil Contingency team are responsible for the management of the various organisations involved in an emergency response.

### **Flooding - In order to further reduce this risk:-**

- ▶ We will continue to review our resources to ensure we have resources that provide effective response and resilience during flooding incidents
- ▶ We will continue to support Northumberland County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority in its risk management planning
- ▶ Our Civil Contingencies Team will continue to support planning, training and exercises to prepare our county for large scale emergencies such as flooding
- ▶ We will improve our recording of flood incidents to allow a more thorough evaluation of risk

Under the Fire and rescue national framework for England 2012 each fire authority must, 'set out its management strategy and risk based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005'. (Fire and rescue national framework for England, 2012 p10).

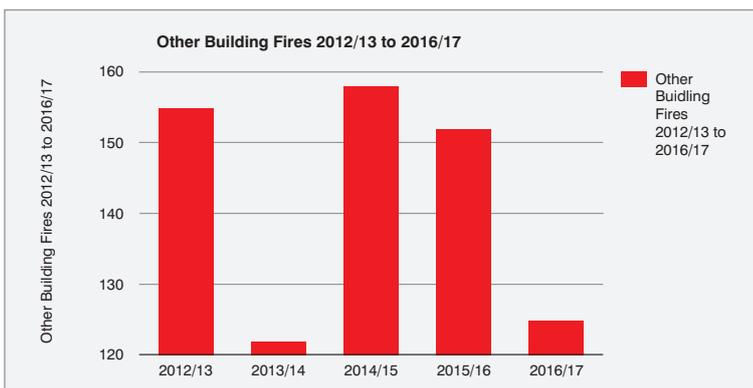
## Other Building Fires

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service recognises the impact that fire can have on the local economy if a business is affected by fire. Figures provided by the Association of British Insurers (ABI) suggest that in 2015, commercial & industrial fire & explosion claims in the UK cost insurers £770m, and in 2016 they cost £885m. The cost of business interruption following fire claims being £155m in 2015 and £133m in 2016.

There are over 9000 non-domestic and commercial premises at risk of fire in Northumberland. Fires in these premises are classified as 'Other building fires' and include; types of sleeping accommodation including care homes and commercial properties, or are places open to the public. Other building fires are the sixth most common incident type in Northumberland.

In Northumberland, **there has been a 20% reduction in Other Building Fires** in 2016/17 compared with 2012/13. There has been an **18% reduction in 2016/17 compared with 2015/16**. This is illustrated in Chart 13 below.

**Chart 13: Numbers of Other Building Fires between 2012/13 - 2016/17**



A small team of Fire Safety Inspecting Officers works closely with businesses across Northumberland to deliver a risk-based inspection programme. These Officers will provide advice, guidance and/or education and, where necessary, will enforce fire safety legislation.

Premises are prioritised for inspection according to risk and according to the measures that have been implemented to mitigate risk.

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations are also enforced on petroleum dispensing sites with regard to the storage and supply of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

There are 94 Grade I and 198 Grade II listed buildings in Northumberland. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service implement a thematic inspection programme which ensures fire precautions are provided that are sympathetic to the nature and design of the premises.

### Other Building Fires - In order to further reduce this risk:-

- ▶ We will review our risk model to ensure we continue to deliver an effective risk-based inspection programme
- ▶ We will continue to review our inspection programme in light of emerging national incidents

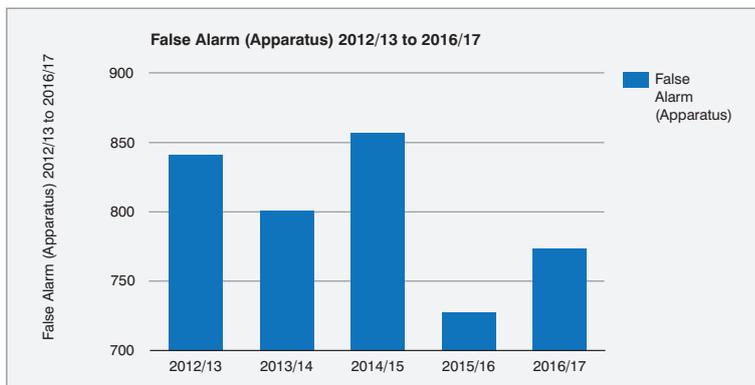


## False Alarm (Apparatus)

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is often notified of fires in response to automatic fire detection equipment or alarm systems (e.g. smoke alarms). If, after arrival and on investigation, we find that there is no fire present, we record our attendance as a false alarm due to apparatus.

There has been an **8% reduction in False Alarms** (Apparatus) in 2016/17 compared with 2012/13. However, there has been a **6% increase** in 2016/17 compared with 2015/16. A number of measures have been implemented to reduce this type of incident.

**Chart 14: Chart to show numbers of False Alarm (Apparatus) between 2012/13 - 2016/17**



### False Alarm (Apparatus) - In order to further reduce this risk:-

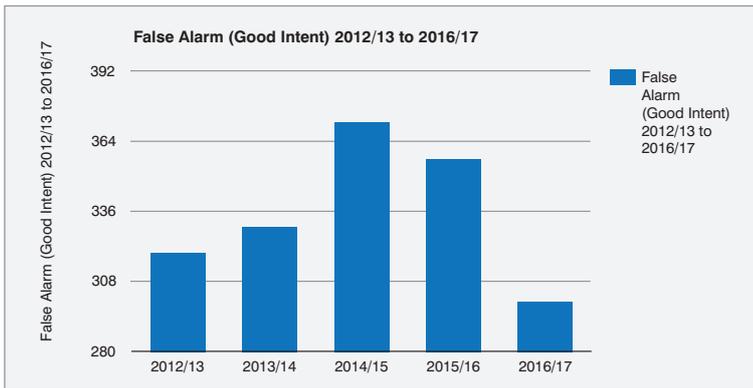
- ▶ We will continue to work with businesses, providing advice and guidance on the management and maintenance of automatic false alarm systems
- ▶ We will consult on the introduction of a cost recovery process to encourage better management and maintenance of automatic fire alarm systems

## False Alarm (Good Intent)

We are often notified by members of the public about genuine concerns regarding a possible or potential emergency. If, after arrival and on investigation, we find that this is not the case and there is no emergency to deal with, we record our attendance as a false alarm, good intent.

There was a **reduction in False Alarm (Good Intent) attendances of 6%** in 2016/17 compared with 2012/13. There was a **reduction of 16%** in 2016/17 compared with 2015/16. A number of measures have been implemented to reduce this type of incident.

**Chart 15: Chart to show numbers of False Alarm (Good Intent) between 2012/13 - 2016/17**



**False Alarm (Good Intent) - In order to further reduce this risk:-**

- ▶ We will continue to monitor our performance to ensure effectiveness of our protection measures

**False Alarm (Malicious)**

False Alarm (malicious) calls are totally unnecessary and avoidable mobilisation which could result in life saving resources being unavailable when required at a real emergency. Using our education programmes we work to emphasise that these are not without consequences, and our Fire Control Operators actively challenge suspected False Alarm (Malicious) calls, which has reduced numbers consistently over the years.

We will individually analyse False Alarm (Malicious) calls and review procedures where necessary including our ability to disconnect mobile homes from the network when they are used to make False Alarm (Malicious) calls.



The Service is fully committed to the prevention of fires and other emergencies, and to the protection of our communities. However, fire and rescue authorities also have a responsibility to *'make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents (sic) and emergencies within their areas and in other areas in line with mutual aid agreements'* (Fire and rescue national framework for England, 2012 p10)

## To help us meet this requirement, the Service deploys:

- ▶ 21 frontline fire engines
- ▶ 6 4x4 vehicles with specialist cutting equipment and fogging units
- ▶ 3 Swift Water Rescue Vehicles including powered boats
- ▶ 1 Specialist Rescue Unit
- ▶ 1 Incident Support Unit

## Response Standards

It is important for the service to measure its effectiveness in responding to emergency incidents. National standards for measuring response times have been removed, therefore Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is currently reviewing its local response times in collaboration with the North East Fire and Rescue Services. In addition, the service continues to look at new and innovative ways to provide operational cover in areas where workforce recruitment and retention impact on its ability to respond. Following consultation in 2015/16, an alternative response model is being trialled in Seahouses and Wooler that will maximise the use of available personnel, using crews of three personnel to respond to low risk incident types such as small rubbish fires etc.

## Community Fire Stations

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has shared facilities for a number of years with partners such as Sure Start, North East Ambulance Service, Northumbria Police and Northumberland National Park Authority Mountain Rescue Teams. More recent collaborations have included the opening of new community fire stations in Hexham and Alnwick.

Hexham Community Fire Station was built as part of a partnership between Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust. The new facility is based at the Hexham General Hospital site, and houses two fire appliances and a Swift Water Rescue Unit, alongside staff from Public Health Protection and Business Compliance and Public Safety Units.

Alnwick Community Fire Station has been built on a site which is shared with Northumberland County Council Local Services, who provide waste, highway maintenance and neighbourhood services. The extended facility has created more space, bigger workshops and better access for the public. The new community fire station provides better training facilities for our firefighters and improved community services. This site optimises the sharing of facilities for staff including Public Health Protection and Business Compliance and Public Safety Unit personnel.

## Resilience

Our mutual arrangements under Sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 are robust. This means we can ask our bordering fire and rescue authorities for assistance when there is an increased risk to our communities, such as large scale or major incidents.

## **The Government retains strategic responsibility for national resilience, however we support this responsibility locally by deploying:-**

- ▶ **1 High Volume Pump (HVP)**
- ▶ **1 Incident Response Unit (IRU)**
- ▶ **2 High Volume Pump Tactical Advisors**
- ▶ **4 National Incident Liaison Officers**

## **Civil Contingencies**

It is made clear in the Framework that *'Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and to meet the full range of service delivery risks'*. We have a team within our Service with responsibility for Civil Contingencies on behalf of the Council. The Team works within the Local Resilience Forum to develop a Community Risk Register for Northumbria, which covers Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. The role of the team is then to prepare and plan for emergencies within Northumberland, and protect and support communities when emergencies occur. The Civil Contingencies Team drives business continuity and emergency planning across the Council.

### **Priorities for the team are to:**

- ▶ **Work within Northumbria Local Resilience Forum to identify and record risks in the Community Risk Register**
- ▶ **Prepare appropriate emergency response plans**
- ▶ **Train our staff**
- ▶ **Test arrangements through regular exercises**
- ▶ **Apply learning to review and amend plans**
- ▶ **Prepare appropriate Business Continuity Plans**

## **Emergency Medical Response (EMR)**

Demand on North East Ambulance Service has increased significantly over the past 10 years. Whilst the variety and complexity of rescue incidents firefighters respond to has broadened along with the specialist skills needed to meet these challenges, firefighters in Northumberland have been attending fewer fires over the same period.

In 2016, all four North East Fire and Rescue Services agreed to trial Emergency Medical Response Units, in the form of fire appliances. These units deliver emergency medical services when requested by North East Ambulance Service. Emergency medical services include attending calls where people are suffering from chest pain, difficulty in breathing, cardiac arrest and unconsciousness not due to trauma. Emergency Medical Responders have been trained to enhance their existing medical care knowledge, including basic life support by managing a patient's airway, giving oxygen therapy, including assisted ventilation, delivering cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation using a semi-automated external defibrillator and controlling blood loss. Fire appliances have been provided with additional equipment, including oxygen and an automated external defibrillator. The trial concludes in November 2017.

## Gaining Entry

On occasions it is necessary for emergency services to gain entry to someone's home. In partnership with North East Ambulance Service and Northumbria Police, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will gain entry using the least destructive method possible where there is considered to be a risk to life.

## Firefighter Safety

Firefighter safety remains a priority for Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. While all emergency incidents present an element of risk, activities that present a high risk to safety are limited to those incidents that have the potential to save life or prevent rapid and significant escalation of the incident. This is known as the Firefighter Safety Maxim. The Service supports its firefighters by ensuring effective health, safety and welfare management. Firefighters are supported through the provision of:

- ▶ Relevant risk critical training
- ▶ Personal Protective Equipment
- ▶ Appropriate equipment and resources
- ▶ Risk critical information
- ▶ Operating procedures to enable safe systems of work



# FIRE CONTROL



Fire Control provides an emergency call handling and mobilising service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and dealt with 6,200 calls in 2016/17, mobilising to 3,115 incidents. Since November 2012 Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Fire Control has handled 'out of hours' calls on behalf of Northumberland County Council. During 2016 Fire Control handled 5,206 out of hours calls on behalf of Northumberland County Council.

Fire Control moved from the previous site in Loansdean, Morpeth in November 2013 to Service Headquarters at West Hartford. A new inter-operable call handling and mobilising system was developed and installed in partnership with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service going live in 2013. The replacement system uses modern technology to allocate the nearest available resource to life risk incidents, speed up attendance times, enhance operational resilience and provide value for money. The interoperability of the Fire Controls in Northumberland and Tyne and Wear provide a facility for each fire control to take calls on behalf of the other, mobilise each other's resources, monitor ongoing incidents and provide greater resilience in sparse conditions.

The additional resilience provided by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has enabled a demand led staffing model to be introduced within Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Fire Control.

Changes to the current call handling and mobilising system are planned in preparation for the replacement national radio scheme, known as Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). The new system is due to go live before the end of 2020.

# FURTHER RISKS

In addition to the day to day incidents that occur and that have been reflected within this plan, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service must also ensure that it is resilient to respond to incidents that are currently infrequent or have not yet manifested within the county. The likelihood of these incidents occurring or becoming more frequent may be subject to a variety of factors.

## Climate Change

*Northumberland Knowledge* data suggests that the county's climate is already changing, with an increasing number of storms, rainfall events and rising sea levels. It is likely that daily temperatures in Northumberland can be expected to increase, with heatwaves likely to increase both in terms of duration and intensity.

### In order to prepare for and mitigate this risk:-

- ▶ We will continue to undertake planning, training and exercises to prepare our county for large scale events
- ▶ We will continue to review our resources to ensure we have effective response and resilience during large scale events such as flooding and wildfires
- ▶ We will review our Safe and Well-Being Programme to ensure impact of climate change to our communities will be considered

## Threats of terrorism

Although considered low risk in Northumberland, the potential impact of a terrorist event is considered to be very high. As such the Service plays a full and active role, locally and regionally via the Local Resilience Forum, in planning and training for such an event.

### In order to prepare for and mitigate this risk:-

- ▶ We will continue to undertake planning, training and exercises to prepare our county for potential terrorist events
- ▶ We will ensure we maintain a 24/7 full complement of National Inter-agency Liaison Officers (NILO) to support both local and regional response, whilst taking cognisance of national threat levels.

## Ageing Population

As detailed in *Northumberland Knowledge*, the population of Northumberland is ageing. By 2031, 31 % of Northumberland's population will be over 65 years old. People over the age of 65 are at increased risk of falling, hypothermia, malnutrition, excess winter death, repeat hospital admissions, isolation and suffering from loneliness, fire death or injury.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service already prioritises partner referrals for Safe and Well-Being Visits and, in addition, targets those who are 65 years of age or older.

### **In order to prepare for and mitigate this risk:-**

- ▶ **The Service will expand the safe and Well-Being Visit Programme to incorporate assessment of wider age-related risks**
- ▶ **The Service will continue as a member of both Northumberland and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adult Board and Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board, supporting local safeguarding priorities and ensuring consideration of identified risks as part of its risk profiling**

## **Housing and Commercial Development**

Northumberland County Council is committed to supporting housing and commercial development as part of its strategic planning.

### **In order to prepare for and mitigate potential risks:-**

- ▶ **Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will continue to work pro-actively with colleagues in the council to identify, and where possible, mitigate risks early in the planning stages**
- ▶ **The Service will continue to ensure appropriate resources are allocated to Northumberland County Council Building Control to ensure development conforms to relevant regulation**
- ▶ **Our Fire Safety Team will continue to provide guidance to ensure new developments are safe from the risk of fire**
- ▶ **As part of our continual risk review, we will continue to analyse our resource distribution to ensure that it remains aligned and appropriate to future developments**

## **Transport Infrastructure**

Good quality transport infrastructure is essential for increasing the capacity for economic growth.

### **In order to prepare for and mitigate potential risks:-**

- ▶ **Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will continue to monitor the impact of changes to road, rail, port and air transport on the number and types of incidents attended by emergency response resource**
- ▶ **We will ensure our workforce development programme reflects both actual and potential transport risks and that we train and equip our personnel to effectively deal with them.**
- ▶ **As statutory consultees, we will continue to provide professional advice on future infrastructure development**

# THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

The Core Spending Power of a Local Authority includes the Settlement Funding Assessment, Improved Better Care Fund, New Homes Bonus, Adult Social Care Support Grant, Transitional Grant and Rural Services Delivery Grant. It also includes the Government's projection of the Council Tax Requirement over the period up to 2019-2020, including an assessment of what can be raised from the additional Adult Social Care precept.

There has been a significant reduction in Settlement Funding Assessment and Revenue Support Grant available to the Council over the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan. In addition, the Government's forecast growth in Core Spending Power is significantly less than the England average and that of the other six North East Councils. It also highlights the greater reliance now placed on locally generated income streams such as the retained share of Business Rates, Council Tax and New Homes Bonus.

In February 2016, the Council approved the Medium Term Financial Plan covering the period 2016 to 2020 and two year budget for 2016-2018. It included the requirement to deliver budget reductions equating to £6.0 million in 2017-2018 and £36.0 million over the period 2018-2020.

Further information on Northumberland County Council 'Looking Forward Medium Term Financial Plan 2017 - 2020' is available by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/About-the-Council/Finance/Part-2-budget-for-2017-2018.pdf>

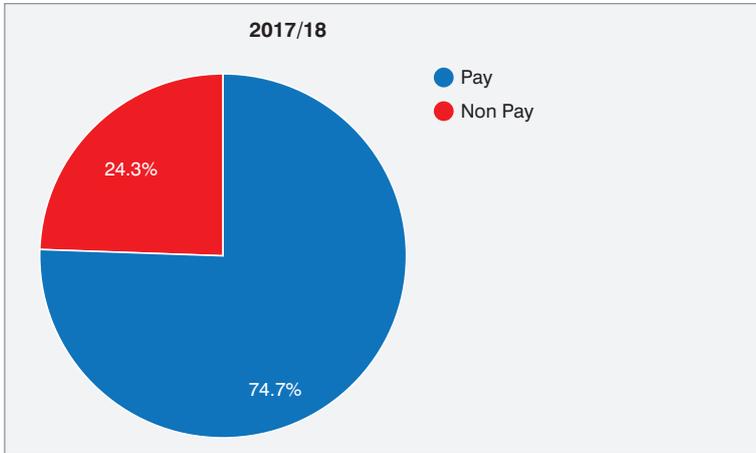
Since 2010/11, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has made efficiency savings of £4.5 million and has a current operating budget of £14.1 million. Already described as lean and efficient, the increasing challenge for Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is to continue to deliver a resilient fire and rescue service model that manages risk to our communities, whilst continuing to deliver value for money for the taxpayers of Northumberland.



## How our money is spent

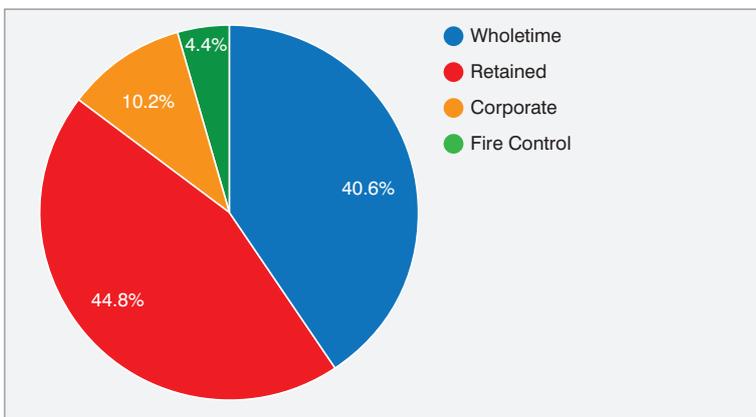
A significant proportion of our revenue budget is spent on employees, including pay, when compared with non-employee costs such as premises, transport, supplies and services. During 2017/18 we will expect to spend over 75% of our revenue budget on our employees, as illustrated below.

**Pie Chart 5: to show expenditure 2017/18**



**Pie Chart 6: to show percentages of employees working in each element of the organisation.**

Of our employees, 40.6% are wholetime firefighters (including officers), 44.8% are retained firefighters, 10.2% work in corporate roles, and 4.4% work in our fire control. This is illustrated in Pie Chart 6.



# **NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PRIORITIES**

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service priorities for 2017/18 are as follows:-

**1. Review risks to our communities, recommending, implementing and evaluating any identified changes in how we deliver our service.**

In order to improve the safety, health and well-being of our communities we will use intelligence and risk modelling to inform risk prediction and resource planning.

We will review key risks to our communities in order to identify priorities and inform our service delivery on an annual basis.

**2. Continue to embed the organisational strategy for evaluation and quality assurance.**

We will ensure robust evaluation and quality assurance underpins priority areas of our service delivery, as informed by our risk prediction and resource planning.

**3. Actively seek opportunities to work in partnership and collaboration, both internally and externally, to deliver added value to our communities.**

As an integral part of Northumberland County Council we will continue to ensure we work with colleagues across the council by exploring opportunities for closer collaboration, co-location and greater integration in order to deliver improved intelligence based service outcomes for our communities. We will continue to work with external partners, particularly Northumbria Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Northumberland Healthcare Foundation Trust, North East Ambulance Services and our neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services to explore further opportunities to increase partnerships that offer tangible health, welfare and social benefits to our communities.

**4. Deliver business case outcomes for the continued modernisation of the Emergency Control Centre, including the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project.**

Business Case options will be considered and implemented for the future working of the emergency fire control centre. Further work will take place to establish more robust ways of working and the mutual provision of resilience with neighbouring services.

**5. Delivery of the Public Health Protection Plan**

We will develop and deliver the Food Service Plan, we will continue to deliver the Produced in Northumberland Verification Scheme supporting Northumberland food businesses and we will ensure that Northumberland complies with National Air Quality objectives and DEFRA is updated with our progress.

**6. Delivery of the Business Compliance & Public Safety Unit Plan**

We will develop and deliver the Business Compliance and Public Safety Plan which covers areas such as building control, licensing, pest control, trading standards and animal health and provide technical support across all areas of Public Protection.

During the annual review of our Fire and Rescue plan, priorities will be refreshed against national, regional and local drivers.



