



**Annual
Report and
Statement of
Assurance
2022 - 2023**





#WeAreEssexFire





“The heatwave of summer 2022 was like nothing we’d seen before.

“So many outdoor fires are preventable. Please help us by considering your actions and staying safe.”

- Chief Fire Officer Rick Hylton



essex-fire.gov.uk/savesafely



Welcome to the Fire and Rescue Statement and the Annual Report for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

The report covers the financial year 2022-2023 and includes highlights of the year, how we spent your money, performance against our targets and how we are working to improve our services to our communities.

It incorporates the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance.

Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

Contents

<u>Fire and Rescue Statement</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Governance</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Report</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>CFO Review of the Year</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Our Service</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Our Strategic Priorities</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Performance against our IRMP</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>People</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Prevention</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Protection</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>Response</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Technology</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Finance</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Statutory responsibilities</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Feedback and recognition</u>	<u>45</u>



Fire and Rescue Statement

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out a requirement for the fire and rescue authorities to publish a statement of assurance.

It says the statement should:

“... outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan) prepared by the authority for that period.

The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. For Police Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authorities (PCC FRA), this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The name of this statement differs across governance models. In the case of PCC FRAs it is called the ‘Fire and Rescue Statement’.”

2022/23 Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA) is satisfied that its business during the financial year 2020/21 was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Authority is further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Signed:

Roger Hirst
Police Fire and Crime Commissioner



Governance

The Service is governed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA).

Our Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is Roger Hirst.

The PFCC must:

- Provide a local connection between the fire and rescue service and local communities
- Set a budget and determine the council tax requirement
- Maintain an efficient and effective fire and rescue service for the county
- Approve an Integrated Risk Management Plan
- Develop a Fire and Rescue Plan and Fire and Rescue Statement
- Scrutinise, support and challenge performance against the Plan
- Appoint a Chief Fire Officer to lead and manage the service

The PFCC is elected by the public to hold the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Constable to account, effectively making the fire and rescue service and police force answerable to the communities they serve.

The PFCC ensures that community needs are met as effectively as possible, and local relationships improve through building confidence and trust. They work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values for the control and management of all activities and how the Commissioner accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all

risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Copies of these documents are available at www.essex.pfcc.police.uk or can be obtained from the Commissioner's office at Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB.

The Governance Framework

The Scheme of Governance that operated during the year included the following:

- The Constitution
- The Scheme of Delegation
- The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011; the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2012, and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2013. Quarterly audits are undertaken by the PFCC's office to ensure the Service's continued compliance with these Orders
- Information Management Protocol between the PFCC FRA and the PFCC
- Information Sharing Protocol relating to information shared between the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel
- Revised Financial Management Code of Practice For the Police Forces of England and Wales and Fire and Rescue Authorities created under section 4A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Codes of Conduct applying respectively to the PFCC and their Deputy and to the PFCC FRA's staff
- The Police, Fire and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012
- Government Security Classifications
- Financial and Procurement Regulations



Governance

HMICFRS

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for carrying out inspections of fire and rescue services in England and Wales.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Police, Fire and Crime Panel

- Scrutinise the Fire and Rescue Plan and Statement of Assurance
- Scrutinise senior appointments
- Review the Council Tax precept
- Hear certain complaints against the PFCC and Deputy PFCC
- Confirm the appointment of a new Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer

Strategic board

- Strategic oversight of the Service
- Delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan and IRMP (CRMP)
- Development of the Budget

Performance and Resource Board

- Monitor overall operational and financial performance
- Functions delegated to Chief Fire Officer
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Monitor Financial and Service Performance

Audit Committee

- Overview of financial regulations and contract procedures
- Financial management regulations
- Good governance
- Risk management

Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Board

- Strategic governance of the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme



Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Report Roger Hirst

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has had a busy year across all its prevention, protection, and response services. The summer heatwave caused a significant surge in fires and one of the busiest periods in recent memory. The Service responded well and was able to maintain its service levels while supporting colleagues across the Eastern Region.

During this period of high demand, it was the ability to work together which made a real difference, from staff members stepping into contingency roles, to local farmers creating firebreaks and the ambulance service providing extra support to crews, it was a true team effort.

The impact of the hot and summer is reflected in the overall rise of incidents attended during the year. A total of 17,568 incidents compared to 15,426 in 2021-2022.

This includes a significant increase in the number of actual fires which rose from 3,727 in 2021-2022 to 5,229 during 2022-2023. There was also a significant increase in false alarms with 7,089 during the year compared to 6,457 in 2021-2022.

It was also of significant concern that the number of accidental dwelling fires increased from the 718 we had across Essex in 2021-2022 to 783 in 2022-

2023. While this is still below the level seen in 2019-2020 and earlier, it shows the need to increase our efforts around prevention. The fact that four people lost their lives during the year further makes this need even more urgent.

Each life lost is a tragedy and leaves an indelible mark on families, neighbours, and whole communities. Speaking to firefighters who have attended these tragic events, you get a real sense of how preventable some of these incidents are. From a lack of working smoke alarms to personal or environmental issues that unnecessarily increased the risk to that person; these are things we can collectively do something about.

We know that factors such as being less mobile, living alone, drinking, smoking, having poor hearing or suffering from mental health issues can significantly increase the chance of dying in a fire. The Service has done excellent work examining the causes of historical fatal fires and identifying what happened and what could be done about it. This has helped to inform the work we can do with partners to reduce

the risk to the most vulnerable in our communities and, together, prevent these tragic cases from happening. Unsurprisingly, it identified that a lack of data sharing between agencies means that information highlighting individuals at risk is not shared and appropriate action taken. Improving this situation must be a priority for all agencies involved. Although we are making progress, when hearing directly from those who attend these tragic incidents, it is clear we need to work faster and with more urgency.

As well as collaborating with our partners in health and local councils to encourage them to share data, we are also working directly with communities to reduce risk and prevent fires. A key aspect of this strategy is through delivery of our Home Safety Visits. It is reassuring that over the last year we have been able to deliver 8,470 visits to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. This is a significant increase from the 6,223 visits the Service undertook in 2021-2022 and above the 7,718 visits undertaken in 2019-2020 prior to the Covid pandemic.

It is during these visits that we can fit smoke alarms, including sensory alarms for people with hearing difficulties, and most importantly spot the signs that somebody is at increased risk and needs additional support.

The more visits we do, the more we can target these at the those people most at risk of fire and dying of fire the more people we can protect, and the fewer people will die in our community.



My ambition, which I know the Chief Fire Officer shares, is to significantly increase both the overall number of visits and our ability to target the visits we do at the most vulnerable in our society.

Another key area where we can make a real difference is through the growth and development of our protection services. Through this area we work with the owners of high-risk buildings to address the issues that residents face.

Where necessary this involves us taking enforcement action and while our preference will always be to work with owners to address any issues that are highlighted, our primary focus will always be on the safety of our communities.

As a country we have learnt some incredibly difficult lessons through the Grenfell tragedy and the subsequent Inquiry that followed. We must now do all we can with what we have learnt to keep our communities safe.

Together with the Chief Fire Officer and the entire Service we are committed to increasing our capacity and ability in this vital area and making sure that we work hard with building owners to drive down risk and keep our residents safe.

Over the last year we have reviewed our risk-based inspection process which is an evidence-based approach to selecting properties on a year-by-year basis to audit across the county.

This has led to a reallocation of visits and new targets to ensure our resources are used to make the most impact. In 2022-2023 we undertook 1,974 risk-based inspections which is an increase on the previous year of 1,157.

One of the significant challenges faced by the Service is that the number of trained fire inspectors nationally, is far below the number required. This shortfall has resulted in the Service investing in training and developing our inspectors in-house. We intend to increase this training to provide a strong pipeline of talented well-trained inspectors.



His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) highlighted our protection service as an area where we need to improve.

As a result, we have secured additional funding for the Service to invest and grow this programme. This investment is alongside additional investment in training and the modernisations of the Service's systems.

Over the last year, like the rest of the country, we have had to maintain a difficult balance between the need for additional investment and the well reported challenges faced by our residents due to the cost-of-living crisis.

While this may have started due to the war in Ukraine and the subsequent impact on fuel prices, it is having a real impact across our communities in Essex.

Despite these challenges the public continue to strongly support investment in Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and we were able to secure investment in the service to help mitigate the cost of necessary and measured increases in staff costs, inflationary pressures on fuel, services and insurance while also continuing to invest in the development and progression of our service.

This investment by the public is making a difference and the Service is improving year on year. Since I became involved with them in 2017, the culture has improved significantly, as reflected in our recent HMICFRS inspection. The way the Service responded to Covid was exemplary and the recent response to the high demand in the summer was exceptional. But most importantly we see every day a Service where staff, firefighters and communities are working hard together to improve our response, to drive forward our prevention activity and build the best fire and rescue service in the country.

I would like to recognise the efforts made across the Service and by partners in driving forward this change and thank them all for their contribution. I would also like to thank Rick Hylton, our Chief Fire Officer, and his senior team for the leadership and aspiration for the Service.





Chief Fire Officer Review of the Year Rick Hylton

I am pleased to share with you our Statement of Assurance and Annual Report. I want to use it to explain how we are keeping you safe, protecting our communities and managing our budgets and spending.

Our mission is to make Essex a safe place to live, work and travel. All of us share a common goal in that we want to be one of the best fire and rescue services in the country. By continually raising our standards and improving what we do, we are providing the best protection we can to keep you safe.

The economic situation within the year created financial pressures on both our pay and non-pay budgets from inflation and pay costs. We have also been investing in improving our Service. Moving forwards, it was key for us to secure a budget for 2023/24 that would enable us to fund this and continue with our investments.

Thanks to support from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and our lobbying of central government we have seen our central grant funding increased in line with inflation. Alongside this, our Council Tax precept has been raised, increasing our funding by around £2.3 million. Combine that with being able to deliver £1.1 million in efficiency savings in the 2023/24 budget, this means we have

set a balanced budget that will keep people safe, improve our services and further invest in our people and equipment.

This report outlines our key financial issues and shows we continue to drive change, reduce risk, invest in prevention and protection, and provide a first-class emergency service, with our people at the centre of all we do.

We are good at understanding fires and other risks

In July 2022, we were inspected as part of an inspection programme for all UK fire and rescue services. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its report into our effectiveness, efficiency and how well we look after our people.

We were assessed on how effective we are at prevention work, protecting against and responding to fire and other risks, whether we provide value for money and how well we look after our people and ensure fairness and diversity.



We opened wholetime firefighter recruitment in October 2022 and continue to have a high number of people who want to join our Service. Between April 2022 and March 2023, we received more than 2,800 applications, welcoming 34 new wholetime firefighters, 91 new on-call firefighters, seven new Control operators and 51 new employees in our support teams.

We have held four passing out parades for wholetime firefighters and control room staff, events for our on-call firefighters, and our annual staff awards where we celebrated the achievements of well over 100 colleagues.

Thirty-two of our staff members were also recognised for 20 and 30 years plus dedication to the community at our long service and good conduct awards. Awards were also given based on achievements in ethics, values, and behaviour.

People Awards 2023 winners

Although the report said we required improvement across the three areas of assessment, it recognised that we are good at understanding fire and other risks. One area highlighted was our improvement in promoting the right values and culture to our people.

This was graded as inadequate in an earlier inspection. We still have a long way to go but I am pleased that the work we are doing to embed and promote the right values and culture has been recognised. A key part of this has been adopting and embedding our Core Code of Ethics which support our Service values, culture and behaviours.

It's important to remember these reports are always a snapshot in time, and when reading the report, I thought it was a fair reflection and importantly highlighted the areas of improvement we are already getting on with. I am confident that when we are inspected again, we'll be able to demonstrate we have continued our progress towards providing you with the best service we possibly can.

Our People

Our people are the heart of our Service, and they are our greatest asset. This year we have continued to attract and recruit new talent.

Our Service Headquarters was the venue for three collaborative events and conferences involving all our blue light partners to mark International Women's Day, International Men's Day and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia.

I also awarded Chief Fire Officer Commendations to on-call firefighters from Epping Fire Station, Green Watch from Rayleigh Weir Fire Station and Station Manager Syd Barratt.

We received a national award in the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2022 for our work towards inclusion for LGBTQ+ staff.

Firefighter Matt Hill won the Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual in Fire Award and Donna Bentley, our Head of Safeguarding, was shortlisted for the Most Influential Woman in Fire.

Alongside this, two dedicated colleagues from our Service were recognised in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Honours list.



**We're proud
of our people**

Matt Hill: Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual in Fire
– Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2022

Join us

essex-fire.gov.uk/pink

Roger Pickett, a former firefighter who recently retired after 44 years' service and created the Essex Fire Museum. Derek Whitbread, an on-call firefighter who has served Epping for 47 years, received the British Empire Medal.

Station Manager Terry Jewell was awarded an MBE by His Majesty the King in the New Year 2023 Honours list for his services to International Search and Rescue in his 30 years plus career as a firefighter.



Terry in New Zealand. Picture from BBC online

Our gender pay gap has decreased over the last year, but we recognise we do have an average gender pay gap of 1.02%.

The UK fire and rescue service as a sector is still largely male dominated. At our Service, three-quarters of our overall workforce is male. So, although we can confidently say our non-discriminatory pay process results in equal pay, it is more challenging to reduce the gender pay gap when there is a disproportionate number of men in an organisation.

When we began reporting in 2018, the gap was 15.6%. This huge decrease is a testament to the work we have done in creating a more diverse workforce - a key factor in reducing the gender pay gap, but we know there is still more that can be done.

We will continue with positive action in recruitment and our commitment to achieving a workforce that is more reflective of our communities. In partnership with the Asian Fire Service Association, we hosted a collaborative event for large employers from the public and private sector in Essex which brought diverse expertise and voices to the table to discuss positive action and share learning.

We will continue to work with our employee networks, partners and stakeholders to gain feedback and understand how we can bring about positive change based on feedback from colleagues.

Our key strategic decisions include consideration of our Core Code of Ethics and, through our People Impact Assessments, ensure we care about the potential impact of decisions on all people. Our most recent change was to enhance maternity leave and pay, which sees full pay for the first 26 weeks, and is a prime example of where our diversity networks have championed positive change within our Service, making a real difference to people's lives.

We have introduced our Transitioning at Work guidance – a commitment we are making as a Service to make sure that transgender and non-binary colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and are not disadvantaged in the workplace.

The guidance, which has been developed with the support of our representative bodies, sets out the steps our Service takes to prevent discrimination.

This year we signed the Armed Forces Covenant, to formally pledge our support to members of the Armed Forces community. The covenant recognises our commitment to ensure the fair treatment of all staff who have served, or will serve in the Armed Forces, and their families. Many serving and former Armed Services personnel already work within our Service across a range of departments including both operational and support roles.

I want our Service to be one of the best fire and rescue services in the UK. I want all our people to work in a high performing and inclusive environment. It is what everyone deserves. Being the best means our communities are safe, our partners are supported and engaged, and our people can thrive.

Keeping our communities informed

We are committed to engaging with our communities and being open, transparent and accessible with information about our Service and what we are doing to keep people safe. In December we launched our new website which is fully accessible and easier for people to use and find information about our work and incidents.

This data snapshot shows the effect this is having already. **The data is from 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023.**

Booking a home safety visit

1,358 visits (old website)
3,938 visits (new website)

Home safety advice (10 top tips)

313 visits (old website)
1,599 visits (new website)

Candle safety

19 visits (old website)
261 visits (new website)

The screenshot shows the Essex County Fire & Rescue Service website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the service logo, links for 'Join Essex Fire', 'Request a home safety visit', and 'Contact us', a search bar, and a menu icon. A red banner at the top of the main content area reads 'Welcome to our new website. We welcome your feedback.' Below this is a large section titled 'Welcome to Essex County Fire and Rescue Service' in red text. To the right of this text is a photograph of firefighters in full gear standing in front of a fire engine. Below the main heading, there is a paragraph of text: 'We are one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country, serving the county of Essex which has a wide variety of risks, covering an area of 1,400 square miles and a population of 1.8 million. We provide prevention, protection and emergency response services from 50 fire stations across Essex.' A red button labeled 'We are Essex Fire' is positioned below the text. Further down, a section titled 'Latest incidents - we're there when you need us' contains a paragraph about the types of emergencies they respond to and a red button labeled 'View all incidents'. At the bottom of the page, there is a map of Essex with several red circles highlighting specific locations. To the right of the map, a list of incidents is displayed, including 'Field fire' on Main Road, Margarettin (01 Aug 4.04am), 'Outbuilding fire' on Prince Charles Avenue, Orsett (31 Jul 5.02am), and 'Derelict building fire' on Westall Road, Loughton (29 Jul 4.30pm).



This year our fire stations were once again able to open their doors to the public for open days and charity car washes, as well being community spaces during the winter to help some of our most vulnerable residents keep warm.

Thousands of people from across the county were able to meet our firefighters and support staff, find out about home fire safety, recruitment, careers and just talk to us. It's really important to me that our communities, particularly those who are more vulnerable, isolated or lonely see our Service as a safe and welcoming place.

Our prevention and protection teams also organised and held safe, well, secure events in some of our most vulnerable council wards in each local Service area across the county.

They worked in partnership with other services and agencies to deliver information and advice to residents to help keep them safe.

How we are keeping our communities safe

Record-breaking temperatures and thousands of extra calls and incidents; 2022/23 was a year like no other for our Service.

In total, we attended over 5,000 fires, over 1,000 road traffic collisions and over 7,000 false alarms but it was the incidents related to extreme weather that proved the most challenging.

2022 was the joint warmest summer on record in England and the driest since 1995. It resulted in an incredibly busy two months for our Service. In July and August, we received more than double the average 999 calls and attended 6,000 incidents - around twice as many as the previous year.

In addition to these large incidents, firefighters extinguished countless other fires, rescued people, and animals from a wide variety of situations and supported partner organisations and emergency services

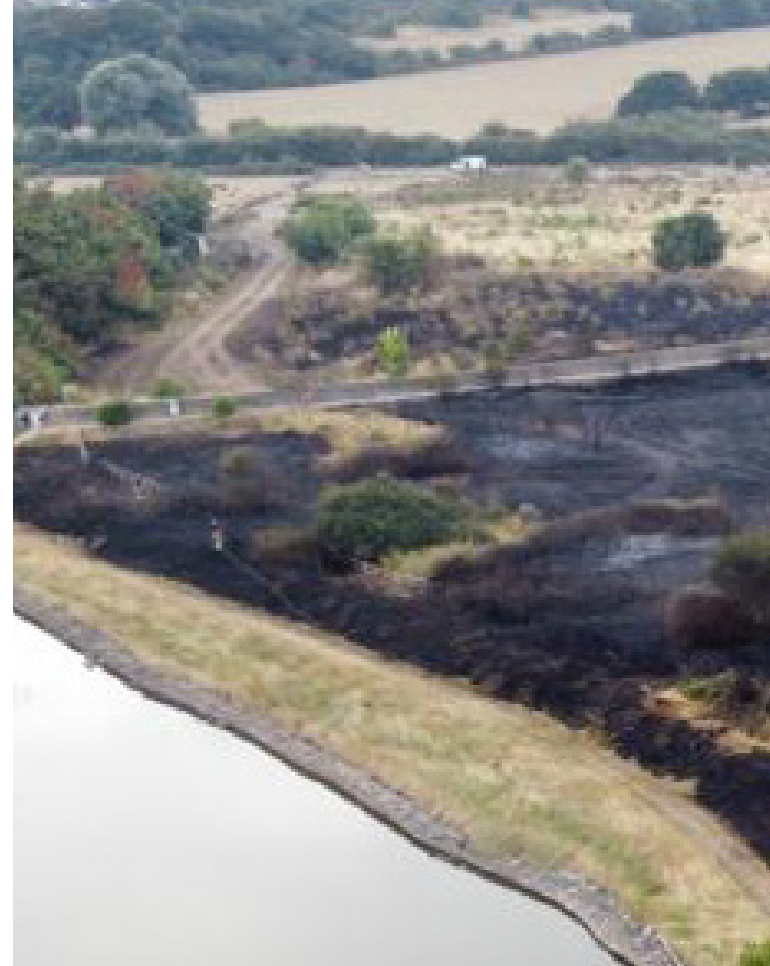
across the county and beyond. It is not just incidents we spend our time on. We have carried out over 8,000 fire safety visits to the public, over 1,900 inspections (1,682 at high and very high risk properties) and audits at commercial properties and over 126,000 school-aged children had a visit from our education teams.

We have achieved a huge amount during 2022 to 2023, and despite extra pressures and challenging situations we have continued to work incredibly hard to keep the people of Essex safe. Our people are our service and their achievements and commitment have been outstanding this year.

Next year will have its own challenges. The cost-of-living crisis is likely to continue to impact our communities. We already have some idea of how this might increase risk within our county, so we are working hard, alongside our partners, to support our most vulnerable residents.

Following this year's extreme weather-related incidents, we are planning and taking our learning to prepare for similar incidents this summer.

I would like to say thank you to all our communities for the continued support they give to all of us at Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Whether that has been following our safety advice, coming to our charity car washes and open days or passing on details of a vulnerable neighbour or person for us to visit. However you have supported us this year, thank you.





In July and August, we received more than double the average 999 calls and attended 6,000 incidents. Around twice as many as the the previous year.

Our Service

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country, serving a county which includes Stansted and Southend airports, Harwich seaport, Lakeside shopping centre, Coryton oil refinery, power stations, docks at Tilbury and parts of the M25 and M11 motorways.

Essex is a county of contrasts. It contains numerous ecologically important areas and manages one of the largest sections of coastline (350 miles) in the country. There are various conservation areas and over 14,000 listed buildings.

The organisation is administered from its headquarters at Kelvedon Park in Kelvedon, where the Service also has a mobilising control centre.

ECFRS provides prevention, protection and emergency response services from 50 fire stations and an Urban Search and Rescue facility.



Our Vision

Safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build success and well-being for all.

Our mission

Essex is a safe place to live, work and travel.

Our Behaviours

How we act and how we treat each other and our communities.

The national Core Code of Ethics sits alongside our values. The five ethical principles provide the basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.



Our Values

We are open, honest and trustworthy

We respect and honour all we do for the Service and our colleagues, being transparent and consistent in our communications and throughout our work.

We are courageous in everything we do

Having the confidence to always own our part and not be a bystander in order to progress and learn from our experiences. **#JustOwnIt**

We work as one team

All in it together to deliver a safer Service and a safer Essex.

What part do you play?

We are always professional

We proudly stay ahead of the game by embracing training and development, continually learning, while delivering professional standards to efficiently serve our community.

We value the contribution of all

We create an inclusive and non-judgemental environment that respects people as individuals, and embraces diversity. We value everyone equally, create opportunities, and celebrate our successes.

Our strategic priorities

Fire and Rescue Plan

The Fire and Rescue Plan sets out the priorities for fire and rescue services in Essex on how we will keep our communities safe.

Working with the public and alongside our partners, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner created the plan to make sure we provide efficient and effective prevention, protection and response activities.

The priorities in the Fire and Resuce Plan are:

1. Prevention, protection and response
2. Improve safety on our roads
3. Help the vulnerable stay safe
4. Promote a positive culture in the workplace
5. Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service
6. Be transparent, open and accessible
7. Collaborate with our partners
8. Make best use of our resources

Our Areas of Focus

Our areas of focus help us deliver our Fire and Rescue Plan priorities.

Equality

To be an inclusive employer, that delivers inclusive services and takes proactive steps to recruit a diverse workforce.

Fire Protection

Deliver our role as part of the Building Safety Regulations and embed the outcomes of the Building Risk Review into our Inspection Programme.

Prevention

To reduce fire deaths to zero and contribute towards the Safer Essex Road Partnership vision zero.

Operational Training

Provide quality training and facilities, to respond to the risks we face with assurance of competence.

Crewing

Increase our recruitment and retention; exploring flexible crewing models to improve response times.

Technology

Improve our systems and hardware to enhance productivity and connectivity.

Leadership Development

Introduce a Service-wide programme for the leaders of today and the potential ones for the future, to support workforce planning.

Fire Standards

Implement national standards to ensure best practice, support cooperative working and provide greater efficiencies.

Property and Facilities

Develop our property portfolio to meet and support the wellbeing needs of our workforce as well as our communities.

Risk

Adopt a performance and data driven approach to best use our resources to respond to new and changing risks more appropriately.

Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 - 2024

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is our corporate plan. It sets out how we plan to put our Fire and Rescue Plan (FRP) in place and drives our annual Strategic Plan, which includes things like our continuous improvement work, our programmes for change and how we manage our budget.

This plan identifies how we manage risks in Essex, protect our communities and respond to fires, all against a backdrop of financial challenges. Our risks and demands in Essex, like the rest of our country, continue to change, which means that we need to regularly review our priorities and activities so that we actively respond to our community's needs.



Our Performance | IRMP 2020 - 2024

Here's how we're performing against our Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 - 2024.



8,470
safe and well
safety visits



Our safe and well and safety visits continue to increase. We are targeting our most vulnerable, lowering Accidental Dwelling Fires and fire fatalities.

Year	No of visits	Smoke alarms fitted
2022 - 2023	8,470	10,329
2021 - 2022	6,223	9,566
2020 - 2021	4,346	5,865
2019 - 2020	7,718	8,459

Keeping our communities safe

Despite the increase in incident numbers, Essex has one of the lowest rates of accidental dwelling fire casualties and fatalities per 10,000 population in the South East region.

Year	ADF	ADF per 10,000 population	Casualties per 10,000 population	Fire fatalities
2022 -2023	784	4.33	0.45	4
2021- 2022	725	4.24	0.48	10
2020- 2021	738	4.32	0.48	5
2019- 2020	787	4.57	0.47	2

Our fire fatalities are down 60% from 2021 to 2022. From 10 to 4 in 2022 to 2023.



37,950
calls into control

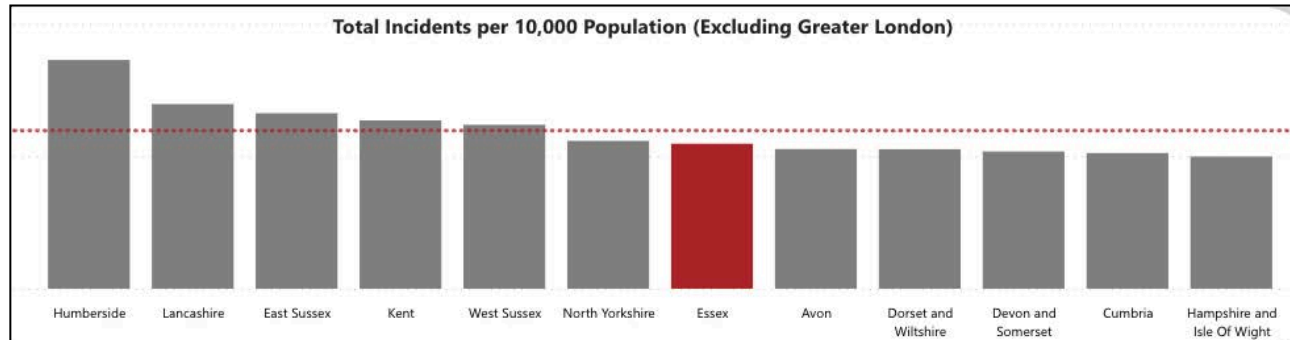
The heatwave conditions last summer resulted in a busy two months – 4,610 incidents in July and August compared to 2,674 in 2021. **82% of the fires were outdoors.**

Year	999 calls	Incidents
2022- 2023	37,950	17,568
2021- 2022	30,115	15,418
2020- 2021	28,651	14,340
2019- 2020	30,542	15,243

In August 2022, control received a 60% increase in calls compared to the previous five year average.

Year	Incidents	Total fires	Special services	False alarm
2022- 2023	17,568	5,229	5,250	7,089
2021- 2022	15,246	3,727	5,089	6,430
2020- 2021	14,340	4,186	4,102	6,052
2019- 2020	15,244	4,581	4,549	6,114

Over the last four years, **Essex has had one of the lowest total incident rates per 10,000 population** compared to similar Fire and Rescue Services in our “family group”*. The table on the right shows 2022 to 2023.



Only 15% of all fires in Essex last year were **Accidental Dwelling Fires.**



Year	Total fires	ADF	% of total fires
2022- 2023	5,229	784	15%
2021- 2022	3,727	725	19%
2020- 2021	4,186	738	18%
2019- 2020	4,581	787	17%

Accidental Dwelling Fires have reduced over the IRMP period.

People

Our people are at the heart of making sure we keep our communities safe.

Our People Strategy is key to delivering our Fire and Rescue Plan. It is also a major part of delivering the Integrated Risk Management Plan.



Multi-agency exercise

To deliver against our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) we will:

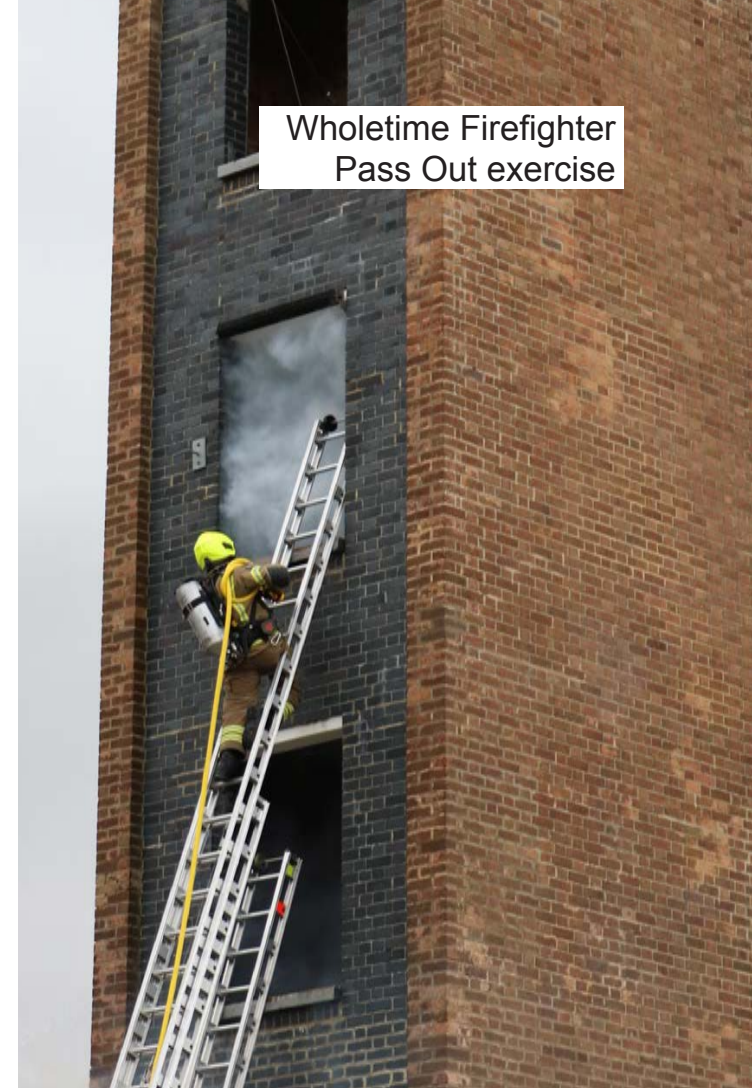
- Continue to invest significantly in training so that all our staff have the skills to remain safe in their work.
- Identify and target any gaps in skills for every employee, making sure that training is suitable for all learners and all shift systems.
- Retain specialist and technical expertise, and encourage people to add to their skills.

From 2022 to 2023 we have:

- Delivered Phase 3 Core Skills Assessment Programme (CSAP) which means our Watch Managers, Crew Managers and Station Managers can be assessors and verifiers.
- Developed our manager's leadership skills so we have strong effective leaders both now and in the future.

- Developed a full business case for new training facilities to include hot fire facilities. We have commissioned the development of this work.
- We deliver Operational Training that ensures we can offer assurance of competence for all firefighters.
- We have strengthened our Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) response and training. This included delivering training to all front line crews. We have also implemented MTA Training for support staff.
- Implemented PDRPro (digital system) as our core competency recording system to ensure accurate centralised records of competence to be captured.

Wholetime Firefighter
Pass Out exercise



Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of:

- **developing and broadening our role and range of activities;**
- **promoting a positive culture in the workplace;**
- **working together with our partners;**
- **helping vulnerable people to stay safe; and**
- **prevention, protection and response**



We will continue to improve the diversity of our workforce by promoting a career in the fire service as an opportunity for everyone.

We proudly promote a culture of inclusivity in our recruitment processes and, in line with the Equality Act 2010, do our best to encourage people from a wide range of backgrounds to apply for our vacancies.

This helps to build the skills and knowledge of our existing staff and brings different experiences from each person's life to our workforce.

Like many fire and rescue services in the country, our workforce does not currently reflect the diversity of the communities in our county.

However, we believe that by:

- promoting a positive culture;
- actively engaging with our communities;
- sharing information about our activity and progress towards our objectives; and
- taking opportunities to reach out to younger people in Essex;

we can increase the diversity of people we attract to our varied roles. This includes our apprenticeships, cadet opportunities and voluntary positions.

Our positive action approach actively encourages the participation of females, ethnic minorities and people under 25-years-old.

We receive a lower proportion of applicants from these groups, which means they are under-represented in our workforce when compared to the communities in Essex.

In 2022*, we received 2,872 applications for our vacancies.

The applicants shared the following information with us.

- 387 applicants were female (13.2%)
- 149 applicants were from an ethnic minority group (5.2%)
- 503 applicants were under 25 years old (17.5%)
- 54 applicants identified as LGBTQ+ (1.9%)
- 100 applicants had a disability (3.5%)

March 2022 people statistics

- 4.6% of workforce disabled
- 3.8% of workforce ethnic minority
- 18.3 % of workforce female
- 4.2% of workforce LGBTQ

* we have only been collecting this data since 2022



Want to join us but think you're too short?

Katie is 5'3" (and a half)
We don't have height restrictions

Search: Essex Fire Wholetime



#JoinEssexFire



Prevention

Our Prevention Strategy makes sure we do the following as part of our Integrated Risk Management Plan:

Develop community safety action plans that set out risks in specific areas which we use to target our resources.

Find out who the most vulnerable people are in our communities and help them through our specialist staff.


Assess our prevention activities to make sure they are effective for our communities.

Use our operational staff to help us provide safety advice to more vulnerable people in our communities.

Tell you how we are working with our partners to reduce the number of vulnerable people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads



8,470
Home Safety visits were carried out from 2022 to 2023 by firefighters, volunteers, and other community safety staff.

Road traffic collisions

As a key partner of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership we are working to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads in Essex

In 2022-2023 there were 901 people killed or seriously injured on the roads.

91 road safety events
43 FireBike events

Home Safety and Safe and Well visits

8,470 Home Safety visits.
2,822 by our firefighters and 5,648 by volunteers and other community safety staff.

Firebreak

Firebreak is an intervention programme for people aged 10 and over. The programme promotes safety by teaching people a range of vital life skills relating to fire safety.

From 2022 to 2023, we ran 24 courses for different age groups, working with vulnerable people in our communities, as well as offenders and victims.

These courses helped us engage with and support up to 288 young adults and students.



Supporting our Integrated Risk Management Plan through Prevention

School safety fire programmes

126,536 children engaged through education visits.

In partnership with Essex Police, our education team delivers a variety of fire-safety awareness programmes. The current number of pupils (aged four to 17) is approximately 280,000.

Protection

Our priority is to protect businesses, people, the local economy and the environment from fire and wider community-related risks.

Our protection work is guided by the duties placed on us by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

To deliver against the Integrated Risk Management Plan we will:

- Review the inspection programme to make sure we are making decisions based on data we have collected, to help us to understand which premises pose the greatest risk, and target our resources appropriately.
- Make sure we have the right resources to meet our commitments in the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).

We have restructured Fire Protection to support the additional resource requirements of new legislation and Fire Standards.

We have implemented an out of hours fire safety officer process.

We have reviewed and refreshed the Protection Risk Based Inspection Process and aligned resources to meet delivery targets.

This has meant that we have identified and delivered more inspections than previous years.

1,974
risk based inspection audits

762 very high risk inspection
920 high risk inspection

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

We welcome the Fire Safety Act in England and Wales, and the Regulations in England, as important steps forward in strengthening the Fire Safety Order and improving fire safety.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

Are you compliant?

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 have been introduced as a result of the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report.

The new Regulations require 'responsible persons' of residential buildings to identify and communicate fire risk information to your fire and rescue service.

Keep in touch with us

Be the first to know about our free business safety webinars, law and regulation updates and news from our fire service.

Sign up to our newsletter: essex-fire.gov.uk/sign-up

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/business   

To deliver against our IRMP we will find opportunities to get involved with more businesses across Essex, leading to an increase in business engagement events.

We've set up a dedicated area of our website to provide guidance to affected property owners and an easy to follow form on our website to allow the information to be shared with us securely. Our Business Engagement Team are also available should a responsible person need any additional help. <http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/legislation>



Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Find us at
STAND

9

Are you up to scratch on Business Fire Safety?



Essex County Fire and Rescue Service want to help to keep you, your business and your employees safe.

As an owner or manager of a small business, the fire safety law for the workplace can feel daunting.

The National Fire Chiefs Council has designed an interactive tool to help small business owners understand their legal duties for fire safety in the workplace.

To find out more about business fire safety, pop along to see us at the Basildon Business Expo!

For more information on business safety, visit: www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Find us on:



Response

We respond to a variety of emergencies, including fires, road traffic collisions, specialist rescues, maritime incidents, flooding, and incidents relating to hazardous materials.

To make sure we can respond effectively we have a modern fleet of fire appliances, including specialist appliances such as aerial ladder platforms, heavy rescue pumps, incident command units and water rescue units.

In the last year we have:

- Recruited 91 on-call firefighters
- Recruited 34 wholetime firefighters
- Introduced new processes to move our appliances around the county which has increased coverage at strategic stations
- Increased productivity and increased Home Fire Safety visits
- improved firefighter safety by purchasing and using drones at incidents

1,142
Firefighters

631 Wholetime
Firefighters

511 On-Call
Firefighters

17,568
total incidents

5,229 total fires

5,250 special services

7,089 false alarms

784 accidental dwelling fires

	Total incidents	Total fires	Special services	False alarms
2022 - 2023	17,568	5,229	5,250	7,089
2021 - 2022	15,418	3,744	5,221	6,453
2020 - 2021	14,340	4,200	4,088	6,052
2019 - 2020	15,243	4,720	4,521	6,002
2018 - 2019	15,515	4,938	4,283	6,294

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads



Live or work 5 minutes from here?

join.essex-fire.gov.uk

#JoinEssexFire



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

You can apply to become an **on-call firefighter** at this station



We have a dedicated On-Call Liaison Team (OCLO), who engage with and work with our on-call colleagues with the aim to improve recruitment and retention.

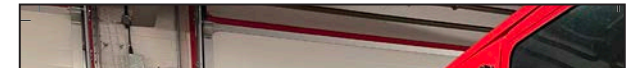
Our On-Call Development Programme has helped streamline on-boarding for new recruits and reduce the number of temporary positions.

We have continued to improve and increase recognition for on call staff. That includes special on-call events where family are invited too.

We have listened to feedback and reviewed the annual leave policy, agreeing a revised approach to manage Time Off In Lieu (TOIL).



We will improve the availability of our on-call appliances



South Woodham Ferrers residents, could you be an on-call firefighter?



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

#JoinEssexFire



A Summer like no other

Make sure we have the right appliances, people and equipment in the right places to manage risk across the county, and make sure resources are available when our communities need them.



The heatwave conditions last summer resulted in an incredibly busy two months for our Service – with 4,610 incidents in July and August compared to 2,674 in 2021.

In August 2022, control received a 60% increase in calls compared to the previous five year average. 82% of the fires were outdoors.

Throughout July and August, our key station coverage and availability was at 94%.



Straw fire



Electrics in outbuilding



* Firefighter numbers at 31 March 2023



Technology

New technology is the key to developing our Service and the way in which we protect the public. In order to support how we manage risk, it is important that our ICT infrastructure is modern and effective and makes the best use of new technologies.

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of:

- being honest, open and accessible;
- working with our partners;
- making the best use of our resources;
- prevention, protection and response; and
- helping the vulnerable to stay safe

Deliver an ICT transformation and optimisation programme that will make sure we make the best use of effective systems

All sites and fire stations have had a new fibre optic link installed, offering speeds that have made web browsing, streaming services and use of cloud-based applications such as Office 365 much easier for colleagues.

This new network provides a faster, direct connection to the internet for every location, rather than each site having to connect through Service Headquarters, which was the case previously.

We have upgraded and replaced Service mobile phones to ensure that the Service is able to maintain its communication network and take advantage of future smart phone technology.

We have moved our Health and Safety reporting to a new system, which has made the process more refined and robust.

Deliver a new command and control system that will improve how we mobilise crews and improve communications from the control room to the incident.

Deliver a data system that will improve how we report data and performance (this will guide our prevention and protection activities and help us to target resources at those who are most vulnerable).

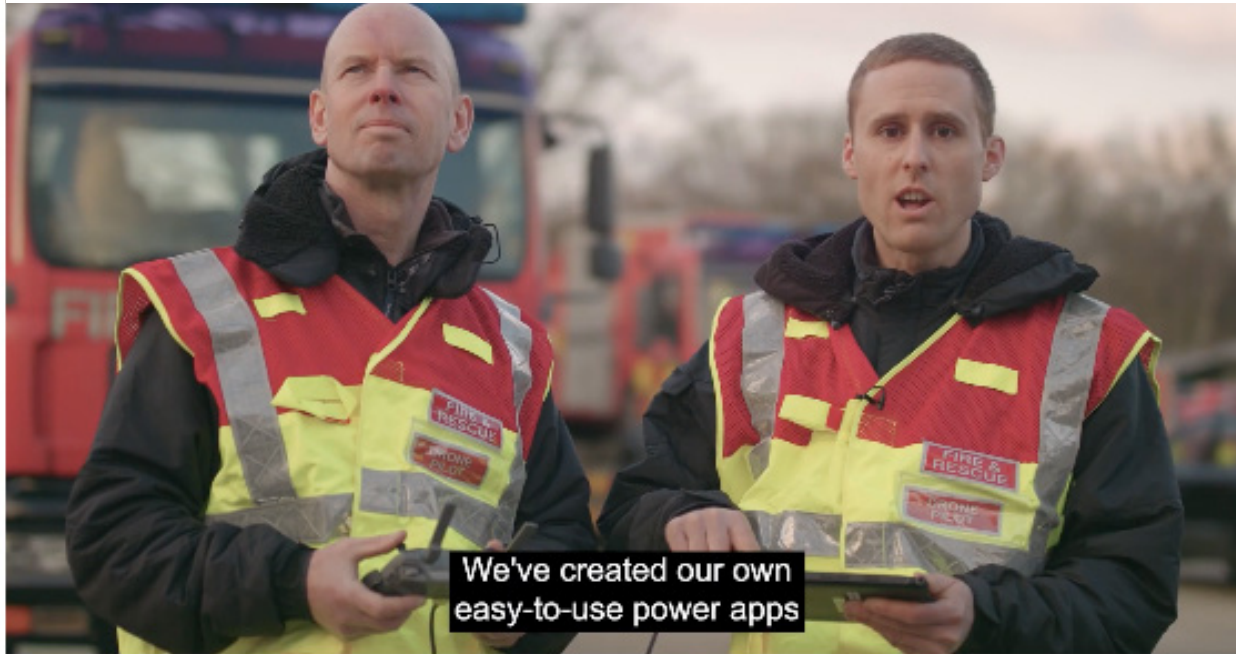
We're launching a new Guardian Command and Control system. This has been procured and planned, with launch in Summer 2023.

The system will improve how we mobilise and the decisions we make. For example, the system will let us know if an appliance is Breathing Apparatus deficient or efficient and mobilise accordingly.

The biggest benefit and change will be stability, particularly at times of peak demand. It will provide greater confidence to the people using it, the end users and the people of Essex.

Digital and Data Strategy video

Watch the full video here: <https://youtu.be/U2WtUK5E1Ys>



Don't buy second hand electric blankets.

Replace yours at least every ten years. Keep it away from water. Unplug before sleeping unless it's overnight approved. Regularly check its condition. Don't fold it tightly when storing. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

what3words

The what3words app has been rolled out on Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) to help crews and improve our response to incidents.

It's a useful tool for assisting crews in finding difficult locations, particularly in rural areas.

Using data

We have also delivered a new data system and employed a data scientist. This has helped us understand our data more, use data to make decisions and also identify trends and future risks.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

essex-fire.gov.uk/savesafely

Finance

Ensuring that we have an efficient Service that offers value for money underpins everything we do. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Service's business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Statement of Accounts includes an Annual Governance Statement that sets out a review of the key financial controls. The Draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2023 can be found here:

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts

Please note, at the time of publication of this report (Sept 2023) these accounts are unaudited.

The Authority's core budget for 2022 to 2023, before funding is £84.14m. The Authority's core budget spend before funding is £82.16m. The budget included a 2% pay award for all staff.

In addition, the Authority committed £1.98m from Earmarked Reserves to fund one-off investments making a total budget spend of £84.14m.

Revenue Budget and Expenditure

The position at the end of year was a deficit of £4.36m, of which £3.89m was funded from Earmarked Reserves. This is set out within the table to the right (page 40) which compares actual net expenditure with the approved budget:

The Authority's total expenditure was £88.0m against total funding of £83.7m. £3.9m was funded from Earmarked Reserves and £0.5m was funded from General Reserves.

Funding

60% of the Authority's funding is from the Council Tax collections across the districts in Essex, and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. Council tax income has been based on the Commissioner's proposal of an increase in the precept of 1.95%, which was agreed at the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 3 February 2022. The precept payable for a Band D Council tax property increased from £73.89 to £75.33, a change of £1.44 per year.

2021/22				2022/23			2022/23			2022/20
Actual £000	Description	Core actual £000	Earmarked actual £000	Total actuals £000	Core budget £000	Earmarked budget £000	Total budget £000	Core budget variance £000	Earmarked budget variance £000	Total budget variance £000
35,489	Wholetime Firefighters On-Call	35,647	999	36,646	35,475	863	36,337	(172)	(137)	(309)
7,561	Firefighters	9,384	-	9,384	7,263	-	7,263	(2,121)	-	(2,121)
1,575	Control	1,729	-	1,729	1,604	-	1,604	(125)	-	(125)
15,605	Support Staff	16,187	535	16,750	16,018	714	16,732	(169)	178	(19)
60,229	Total Employment Costs	62,947	1,534	64,510	60,361	1,576	61,937	(2,587)	42	(2,573)
2,360	Support Costs	1,811	429	2,240	1,604	300	1,904	(206)	(129)	(336)
10,346	Premises & Equipment	11,476	158	11,606	10,106	-	10,106	(1,369)	(158)	(1,500)
3,146	Other Costs & Services	3,981	305	4,287	3,425	100	3,525	(557)	(205)	(762)
2,212	Ill health pension costs	2,287	-	2,287	2,184	-	2,184	(103)	-	(103)
5,229	Financing Items	5,379	-	5,379	5,897	-	5,897	518	-	518
23,293	Total Other Costs	4,934	893	25,799	23,217	400	23,617	(1,717)	(493)	(2,182)
83,523	Gross Expenditure	87,881	2,428	90,309	83,578	1,976	85,554	(4,304)	(452)	(4,755)
(1,650)	Operational Income	(2,291)	-	(2,291)	(1,415)	-	(1,415)	876	-	876
81,871	Net Expenditure before Funding	85,590	2,428	88,018	82,162	1,976	84,138	(3,428)	(452)	(3,879)
	Funding									
(7,772)	Government Grants	(9,753)	-	(9,753)	(7,549)	-	(7,549)	2,204	-	2,204
(8,511)	Revenue Support Grant	(8,780)	-	(8,780)	(8,780)	-	(8,780)	-	-	-
(16,901)	National Non-Domestic Rates	(16,416)	133	(16,283)	(16,519)	-	(16,519)	(103)	(133)	(236)
(80)	Council Tax Collection Account	(783)	1	(783)	-	-	-	783	-	783
(47,796)	Council Tax Precept	(49,384)	1	(49,384)	(49,315)	-	(49,315)	69	-	69
3	Council Tax Collection Impact	(3)	1,329	1,326	-	-	-	3	(1,329)	(1,326)
(80,058)	Total Funding	(85,119)	1,462	(83,658)	(82,163)	-	(82,163)		(1,462)	1,495
814	Funding Gap / (Surplus)	470	3,889	4,360	(0)	1,976	1,976	(470)	(1,913)	(2,384)
135	Cont'ns to/(from) General Bals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(1,737)	Cont'ns to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	-	(3,890)	(3,890)	-	(1,976)	(1,976)	-	1,914	1,914
(787)	Net Funding Gap / (Surplus)	470	(0)	470	(0)	-	(0)	(470)	0	(470)

Statutory responsibilities

As a Fire and Rescue Service we have legal responsibilities under multiple pieces of legislation. We aim here to explain what responsibilities fall under which piece of legislation.

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Act replaced the Fire Services Act 1948 with a new legislative framework to ensure fire and rescue services were better able to meet the particular challenges of the 21st century.

The Act clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding and terrorist attacks

- Do other things to respond to the particular needs of their communities and the risks they face.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under Part One of the Act, emergency services and local authorities (defined as Category One responders) have a legal obligation to assess risk, plan and exercise for emergencies and undertake business continuity management

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face

- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide
- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 replaces most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control within a premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The Order applies to virtually all buildings, places and structures other than individual private dwellings, for example a family home or individual flats in a block.

Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

This outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities.

The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents both within and outside the authority area involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

Localism Act 2011

The aim of the Localism Act was to devolve more decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

The Act covers a wide range of issues related to local public services, with a particular focus on the general power of competence, community rights, neighbourhood planning and housing.

The key measures of the Act were grouped under four main headings:

- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government
- New rights and powers for communities and individuals
- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective
- Reform to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally.

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face
- Collaborate with emergency services

and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide

- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Equality Act 2010

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Service must have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristic groups. Our objectives, published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010, are:

- To improve the recruitment, retention, progression, development and experience of the people employed by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to enable the organisation to become an inclusive employer of choice.

- To promote and encourage employees to voluntarily declare their self-classification diversity data to ensure ECFRS actions as an employer are evidence led and improvement focused.
- To improve the mapping, quality and extent of equality information in order to better facilitate compliance with the public sector equality duty in relation to service delivery including IRMP additional activities.
- To review the equality impact of key organisational policies for differential impact in areas such as recruitment and selection, learning and development, absence management, modified duties, talent management, appraisal, disciplinary and grievance.
- To ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect and have a workplace that is free from harassment and bullying by changing the culture of the organisation to one that is genuinely inclusive. All employees are high performing because we value their

differences, which includes gender or gender identity, race, or religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, pregnancy, caring responsibilities or membership of a trade union.

- To seek external review, challenge and accreditation of ECFRS' actions as an employer by actively participating with relevant equalities standards and benchmarks including the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework.

These objectives were adopted on 1 March 2018. They were approved by the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group and are in place until 28 February 2022.

We last reviewed these as part of creating our People Strategy 2020-24. The objectives are reflected in our People Strategy.

Data Protection Act 2018

The Act is a complete data protection system, so as well as governing general data covered by the GDPR, it covers all other general data, law enforcement data and national security data.

The Act exercises a number of agreed modifications to the GDPR to make it work for the benefit of the UK in areas such as academic research, financial services and child protection. The Act aims to:

- Make our data protection laws fit for the digital age in which an ever increasing amount of data is being processed
- Empower people to take control of their data
- Support UK businesses and organisations through the change
- Ensure that the UK is prepared for the future now we have left the EU

Health and Safety at Work Act

Our Service recognises and accepts the responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of our employees and undertakes to protect people, assets and the communities in which we work.

To achieve this, we meet all relevant requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (together with all other statutory provisions associated with it) and supports staff in meeting their obligations under the act.

Detailed health, safety and welfare specific arrangements, based on the Health and Safety Executive's methodology, are set out in our Health and Safety Policy and associated framework of policies, which take relevant legislation, guidance and industry best practice into account.

The policies provide employees with relevant and comprehensive information on the risks they face and the preventative and protective measures required to minimise them.

Quarterly inspections are carried out on all our premises and any defects are reported and monitored until completed.

There is a shared common understanding of the Service's mission, values and beliefs and a positive health and safety culture is fostered by the visible and active leadership of Senior Managers.

Our Health and Safety Team continually develops and improves systems for monitoring and improving the effectiveness of our Health and Safety Management Systems. These processes include peer Health and Safety Audits.

A productive relationship has been established between the Health and Safety Trade Union Safety Representatives and the Health and Safety Team.

One in three house fires start in the kitchen

Stop thinking, 'It won't happen', and start thinking, 'I won't let it happen'.



Stay in the kitchen when you're cooking.

Make something cold if you've been drinking or you're tired.

Never put water on an oil fire.

Clear your hob area and surfaces when you've finished cooking.

Fit a heat detector in your kitchen and a smoke alarm on each level of your home.

Feedback and recognition

Feedback

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to providing the highest possible levels of service to the communities in Essex.

Compliments

We love to know when you have received especially good service from us. Send us your comments, thank you cards, emails and we'll share with our relevant colleagues, teams and firefighter watches.

This feedback is useful because it helps us to learn about the things we are doing right, so we can make sure we carry on doing those things in the future.

#WeAreEssexFire

Getting in touch

If you would like to send us your feedback please email compliments.complaints@essex-fire.gov.uk or call: 0300 303 5555

Complaints

Sometimes things do go wrong. Hearing about times when we've not met your expectations helps us to improve the service we provide.

In 2022/23 we received 32 complaints. That was down from 50 complaints received the previous year.

Of the 32 complaints, we responded and closed 22 within 20 days (our target). Ten complaints took longer to action than 20 days. This was due to the complexity of the nature of the complaint, including requesting footage.

We will always make sure your complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently.



Helpful links

[Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk)

www.essex-fire.gov.uk

[ECFRS Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2022/23](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts)

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts

[Fire and Rescue Plan](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/plan)

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/plan

[Integrated Risk Management Plan \(IRMP\)](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/irmp)

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/irmp

[His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2021/essex/)

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2021/essex/>

[Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england)

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england



Be a FireStoppper.

Deliberate fires destroy lives.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Tell us what you know

FireStoppers.

0800 169 5558



essex-fire.gov.uk

join.essex-fire.gov.uk