

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Public Performance Meeting

May 2025

Protective Marking: **Official**



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Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

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1. Current Areas of Priority

1.1 HMICFRS inspection report for Staffordshire: Fire & Rescue Service 2023/25 - Effectiveness, efficiency and people

HMICFRS evaluates and reports on the **effectiveness** and **efficiency** of England's **44** fire and rescue services and how well they look after their **people**. These inspections provide insight into how your local fire and rescue service is performing across key areas, assessing:

- *The operational service delivered to the public, including prevention, protection, and response activity.*
- *Efficiency, focusing on value for money, resource allocation based on risk, and collaboration with other emergency services.*
- *How the service upholds its values and culture, trains and develops staff, ensures fairness and diversity, and strengthens leadership and overall capability.*

In our latest inspection report, published in September 2024, the inspectors graded us as outstanding at responding to major and multi-agency incidents. The inspection assessed how well the service has performed in 11 areas, the majority of which were graded as good. The inspectors stated we had made progress since the last report and highlighted ten areas where they have seen improvements.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate
 Responding to major incidents	 Understanding fire and risk	 Preventing fire and risk
	 Responding to fires and emergencies	 Public safety through fire regulation
	 Best use of resources	 Promoting fairness and diversity
	 Future affordability	 Managing performance and developing leaders
	 Promoting values and culture	
	 Right people, right skills	

**HMICFRS measure fire and rescue services against the 11 characteristics of 'good' awarding potential gradings of Outstanding, Good, Adequate, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.*

In the rest of the report, HMICFRS sets out its detailed findings about the areas in which the service has performed well and where it should improve. HMICFRS highlighted two areas of promising practice: our collaboration with the Civil Contingencies Unit for major incidents and our partnership with the NHS on falls response and home-from-hospital services. You can read the full report which is publicly available by clicking [here](#).

The report contained **five** areas for improvement (AFIs). We are managing these AFIs through the use of an online tracker, and these are monitored via our internal governance arrangements and reported on regularly.

Progress has been made on these recommendations; with one of the areas now considered to be addressed. Actions are scrutinised by our Service Delivery Board prior to sign-off as complete. Scrutiny will remain ongoing until improvements are embedded.

In line with HMICFRS expectations we publish a summary of our progress against those recommendations on our website which you can read by clicking [here](#).

1.2 HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour (the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services)

Between October 2023 and January 2024, HMICFRS conducted a 'thematic' inspection of misconduct handling in fire and rescue services across England. The inspection focused on:

- *The identification and investigation of misconduct within services.*
- *The effectiveness and consistency of misconduct processes.*
- *Staff confidence in raising concerns and in misconduct procedures.*
- *The role of fire and rescue authorities, as well as other organisations, in managing misconduct.*

Ten services (including Staffordshire) were selected to represent a diverse sample of the sector in terms of size, location, governance, and performance. The full report is publicly available by clicking [here](#).

The report included **15** national recommendations for all fire and rescue services. We are managing these recommendations through the use of an online tracker, and these are monitored via our internal governance arrangements and reported on regularly.

Progress has been made on these recommendations; with **12** areas now considered to be addressed. Actions are scrutinised by our Service Delivery Board prior to sign-off as complete. Scrutiny will remain ongoing until improvements are embedded.

In line with HMICFRS expectations we publish a summary of our progress against those recommendations on our website which you can read by clicking [here](#).

1.3 HMICFRS Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services

The HMICFRS report on values and culture in fire and rescue services, published in March 2023, included **35** national recommendations: **one** for the police, **14** requiring action at a national level, and **20** recommendations specific to all fire and rescue services. You can read the full report which is publicly available by clicking [here](#).

Progress has been made on those recommendations; with all **20** areas now considered to be addressed. Actions are scrutinised by our Service Delivery Board prior to sign-off as complete. Scrutiny will remain ongoing until improvements are embedded.

In line with HMICFRS expectations we publish a summary of our progress against those recommendations on our website which you can read by clicking [here](#).

We are also required to report to HMICFRS quarterly with an update on our progress against all recommendations.

1.4 HMICFRS 2025-27 inspections update

Round 3 inspection progress to date:

- *Coming to end with 41/44 fire and rescue services (FRS) inspected*
- *Inspection activity in progress for remaining FRSs*
- *33 reports published to date with further 11 due to be published over the summer.*

2025-27 FRS inspections:

On the 16th January 2025 HMICFRS published its [2025-27 Fire and Rescue Service inspection programme and framework](#) which will include greater focus on:

- *Leadership at all levels*
- *Improving misconduct processes across FRSs*
- *Understanding the impact of governance on FRSs*
- *Building on the important work done to improve values and culture.*

The Next Steps

2025-27 inspections timetable to be formalised in the coming weeks with fieldwork scheduled to start in September 2025 for those FRSs being inspected first.

His Majesty's Chief Inspector Sir Andy Cooke's annual assessment of fire and rescue services, **the State of Fire and Rescue report** will be published later this Autumn.



1.5 Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase Two Report

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry phase two report was published on the 4th of September 2024.

This inquiry was established to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on the night of 14th June 2017.

Phase One: was focused on the factual narrative of the events.

Phase Two: examines the causes of the fire, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase One.

The Phase Two Report lists **58** recommendations that traverse a number of sectors, including the Construction and Fabrication industry, Architects and Contractors, Regulatory bodies, Building control, and both Local and national Government.

Emergency responders such as Fire and Rescue Services are also included.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have adopted **18** of the recommendations from the report that are aimed at Fire and Rescue Services.

14 of these **18** recommendations have now been completed.

Internal reviews have been completed and learning outcomes have been identified and implemented within the following areas:

- *Procedure for access to lifts within high rise buildings.*
- *Fire Control and the training and effectiveness of fire control staff towards large scale incidents associated with high rise buildings.*
- *Incident command fire ground communication.*
- *Operational assurance internal debriefing and learning procedures.*
- *Incident ground radio provision and procedure.*
- *Firefighter training provision, including both for new starters and refresher training.*
- *The procedure of communication with water authorities in relation to supply and pressure for firefighting purposes.*
- *The approach to training for local resilience forums.*

This report is publicly available here:

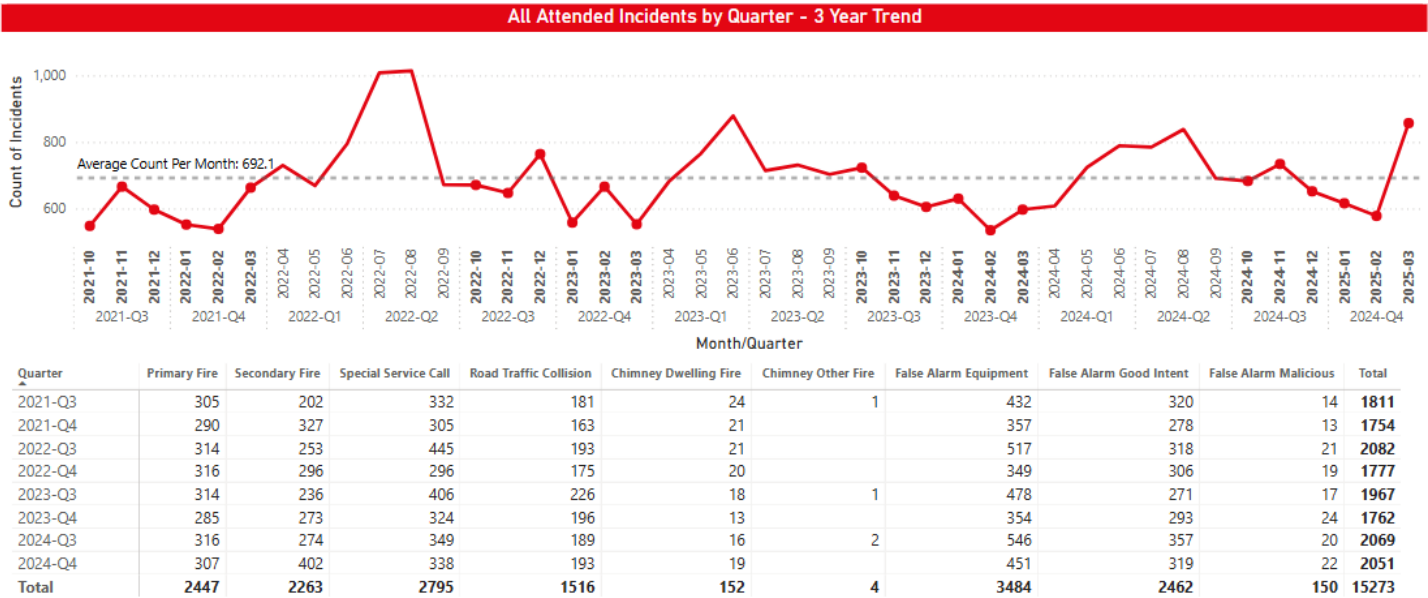
<https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/phase-2-report>



2. An Outstanding Fire & Rescue Service

2.1 Incidents Attended

Figure 1: Yearly Comparison of Total Incidents Attended April to September with breakdown of incident type



Primary fires are potentially more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to property and meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Any fire that occurred in a (non-derelict) building, vehicle or (some) outdoor structures
- Any fire involving fatalities, casualties or rescues
- Any fire attended by five or more pumping appliances.

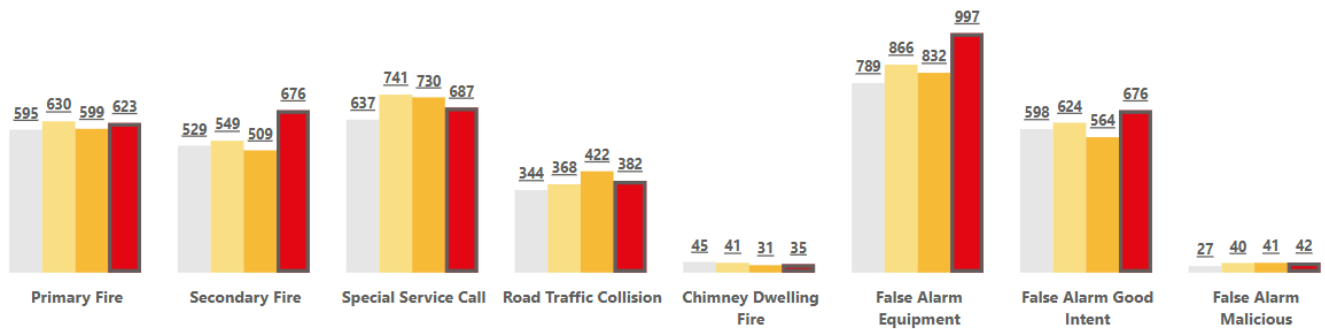
Secondary fires are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property. These include refuse fires, grassland fires and fires in derelict buildings or vehicles, unless these fires involved casualties or rescues, or five or more pumping appliances attended, in which case they become primary fires.

Special Service Calls are defined as any incident which falls outside the scope of the function of fire attendance. These incidents include both emergency and non-emergency response. Examples of Special Service Calls can be animal rescue, hazardous materials attendance, road spillages, gaining entry and exit in emergency situations and assisting other emergency services and the military with environmental catastrophe such as flooding.

Figure 2: Three-year trend of Incident Types Attended

Incident Trend by Quarterly Periods

● 2021-Q3 & 2021-Q4 ● 2022-Q3 & 2022-Q4 ● 2023-Q3 & 2023-Q4 ● 2024-Q3 & 2024-Q4



Emerging Demand

- Between October 2024 and March 2025 **4,120** incidents were attended by the Service in total. This is an increase of **(9.96%)** from the **3,729** incidents attended in the same period within 2023/24.
- There has been a small increase in Primary Fires **(3.93%)** attended by the Service in comparison to the same period in 2023/24.
- Attendance at Secondary Fires is the most significant change in demand, with a **(28.19%)** increase noted in comparison to the same period in 2023/24. This also displays an increase in demand from the same period in the previous three years.
- There has been a reduction of **(-6.07%)** in the number of Special Service Calls attended by the Service in comparison to the same period in 2023/24.
- Attendance at Road Traffic incidents has also decreased by **(-9.95%)** in comparison to the same period in 2023/24.
- There has been an increase of **(18.04%)** in attendance at False Alarm incidents caused by equipment in comparison to the same period in 2023/24. This also displays an increase in demand from the same period in the previous three years.
- False Alarm Good Intent attendance has also increased by **(18.06%)** in comparison to the same period in 2023/24. This also displays an increase in demand from the same period in the previous three years.
- Attendance at False Alarm Malicious incidents has remained in line with data from previous years.

2.2 Service Availability

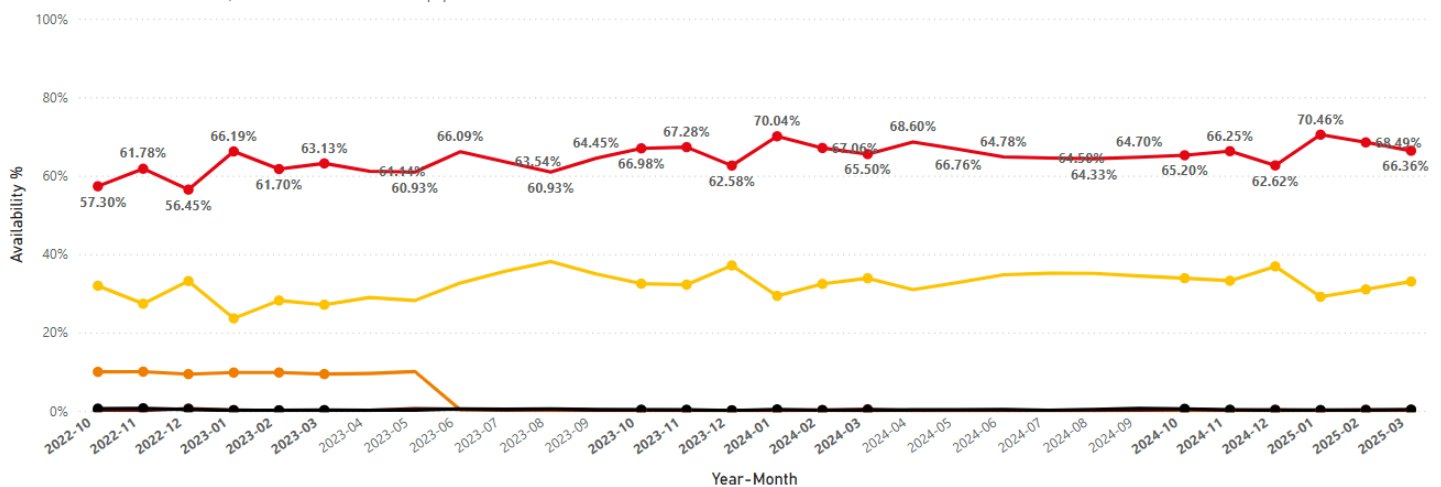
Service Availability is based on the percentage of time that an appliance is available to attend an incident. The Total Service Availability is calculated from all fire appliances at Whole Time, On Call, and Day Duty Fire stations. 'Unavailability' factors such as insufficient numbers of qualified crew, equipment defects, or training events can contribute to the percentage of time that the Service appliance is unavailable to respond to incidents.

- **'Whole-Time'** Fire Stations means firefighters are based at the station 24/7.
- **'On Call'** Fire Stations are covered by part time firefighters and are not staffed 24/7.
- **'Day Duty'** Fire Stations are a combination of the two models above with Whole-Time crewing during day shift periods.
- **'Alternative Vehicle Use'** was previously recorded when an appliance was crewed by three persons. Since the three-person crewing trial began in June 2023, this percentage of availability is now counted towards the 'On' (or available) category.

Figure 3: Three-year trend of Total Service Availability

Availability Breakdown

Alternative Vehicle Use Crew/Qualifications Defective Equipment On Other Unavailable



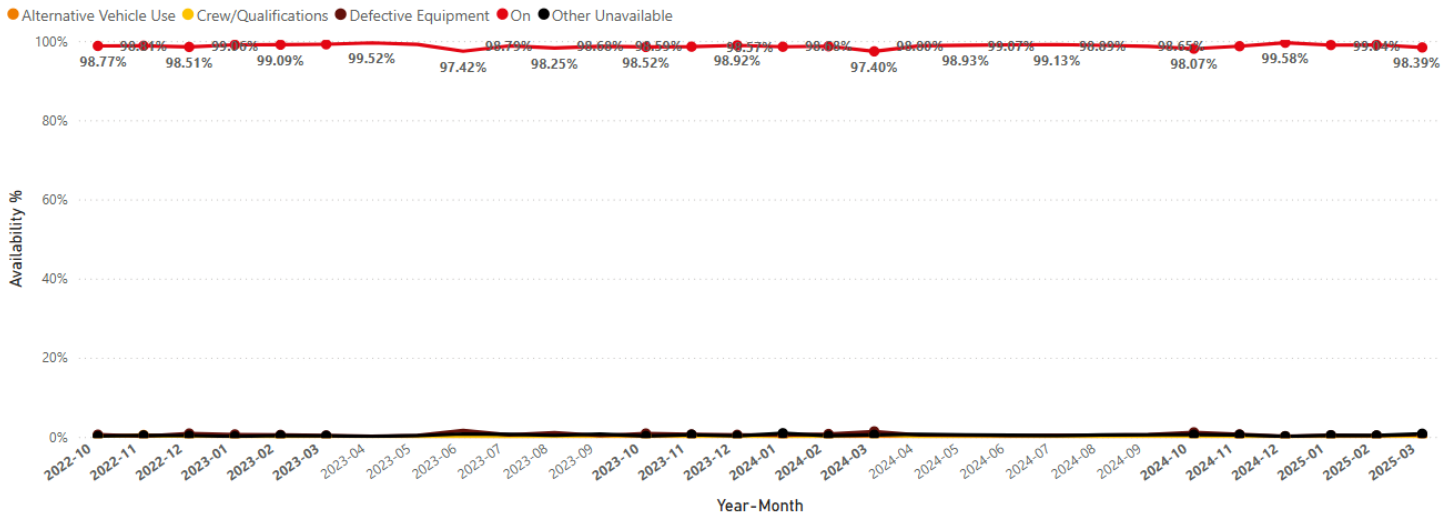
Between October 2024 and March 2025, the total average Service availability is recorded as **66.56%**.

In the same period in 2023/24 this was recorded as **66.57%** in 2022/23 this was recorded as **61.09%**.

There are many factors that can affect the ability for a Fire Service to respond to incidents. A breakdown of appliances at Whole Time and On Call stations is provided below.

Figure 4: Three-year trend of Total Wholetime Availability

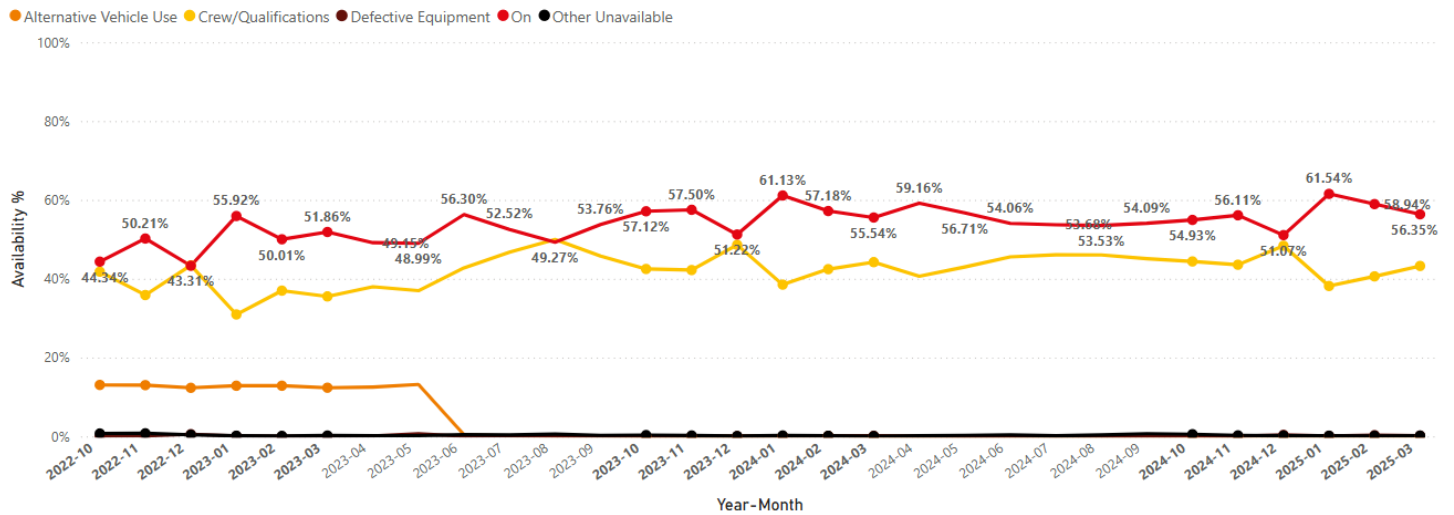
Availability Breakdown



Between October 2024 and March 2025, the total Whole Time Service availability is recorded as **98.80%**. In the same period in 2023/24 this was recorded as **98.44%** and in 2022/23 this was recorded as **98.90%**.

Figure 5: Three-year trend of Total On Call Availability

Availability Breakdown



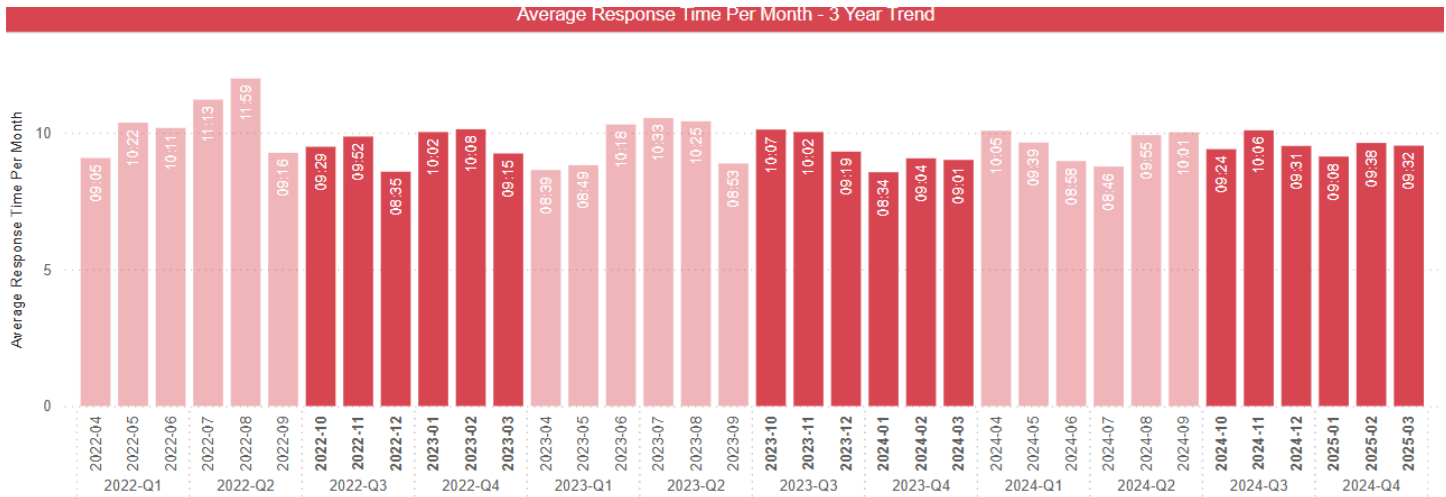
Between October 2024 and March 2025, the total On Call availability is recorded as **56.49%**. In the same period in 2023/24 this was recorded as **56.61%** and in 2022/23 this was recorded as **49.27%**.

The main contributory factor for appliance unavailability at On Call stations is the number of On Call crew available, and the number of those crew that have the necessary operational training and qualifications to allow a deployment to an incident. This is the largest single factor affecting the Total Service Availability.

2.3 Service Response Times and Standards

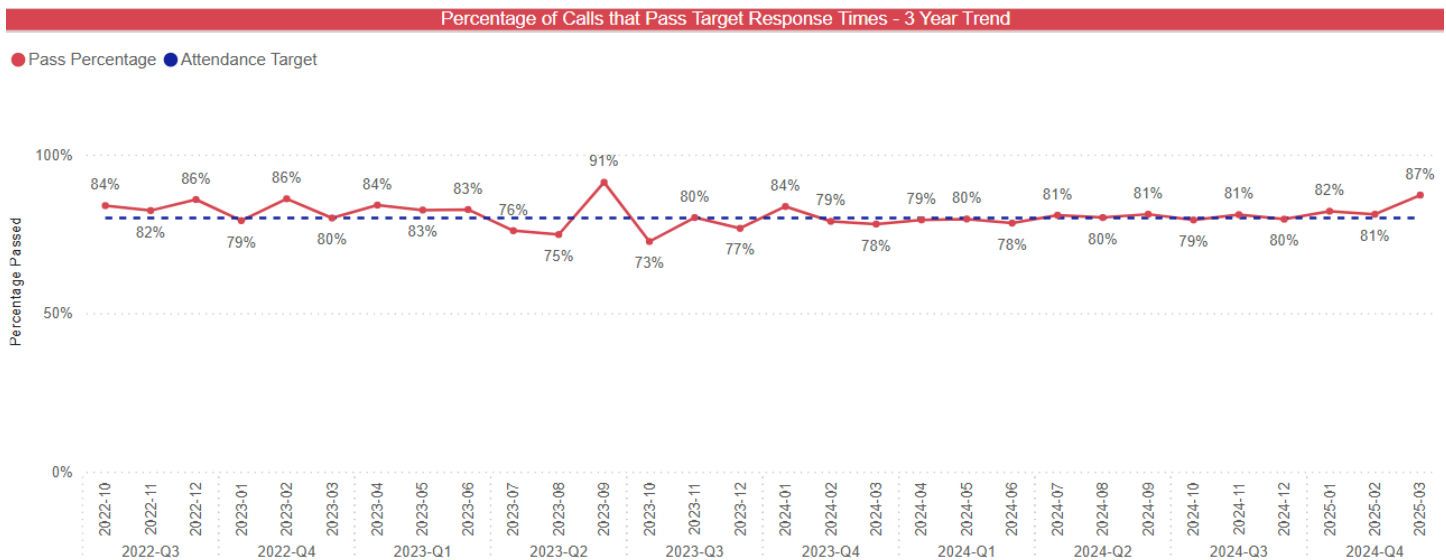
Service response times are measured monthly and are based upon the time taken for the first fire appliance attend an incident from the point of mobilisation by Fire Control. The Total Average response time is below, which is calculated from all fire appliances at Whole Time, On Call, and Day Crewed Fire stations that have been mobilised to incidents during each month.

Figure 6: Three Year trend of Average Service Response Time



Between October 2024 and March 2025, the average Service response time is recorded as **9 minutes 33 seconds**. In the same period in 2023/24 this was recorded as **9 minutes 21 seconds** and in the same period in 2022/23 this was recorded as **9 minutes 33 seconds**.

Figure 7: Three Year trend of Service Response Standard



Response standards are based on achieving arrival at an incident within a given time using the criteria below.

High Risk areas	Medium Risk areas	Low Risk areas
Arrival within 8 minutes	Arrival within 10 minutes	Arrival within 18 minutes

The Service looks to achieve a target that **80%** of the time a response is completed within either **8 minutes for areas of high risk, 10 minutes for areas of medium risk, and 18 minutes for areas of low risk.**

Areas of the county have been classified as High, Medium or Low risk based on a geographical analysis made up of the following factors and risk indicators:

- *Frequency of life risk incidents*
- *Index of Multiple Deprivation factors*
- *Limiting Long term illness*
- *Population density*
- *Rented accommodation*
- *Number of Lone elderly persons & single parents*

Between October 2024 and March 2025, the overall pass rate has been **81.67%**.

In the same period in 2023/24 this was recorded as **78.50%** and in the same period in 2022/23 this was recorded as **82.83%**

Overall, our attendance times fluctuate between **8 mins 30 secs** and **10 mins 30 seconds** and will be dependent on whether appliances are busy at an incident or unavailable due to crewing, meaning the next nearest appliance will then attend.

In most cases the Service is meeting the **80%** monthly target for high, medium, and low risk area attendance. Some of the current challenges are due to an increased attendance at prison fires in the South Staffs area where it is difficult to meet the 10min target time and will affect the ability to meet the **80%** target for attendance standards. Further work is ongoing around this.

There are also some rural locations which will, in some cases, take longer to attend due to reduced road infrastructure and access issues.

The period of June to August 2022 was noted as a time of **SPATE conditions nationally**, with fire services receiving high levels of demand for attendance at secondary outdoor fires in particular during the period.

2.4 Transformation Update

The requirement for Service Transformation is to ensure that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service ***“is able to provide a modern, efficient and sustainable level of service to the public which does not compromise the safety of our staff or our communities.”***

Phase One of Service Transformation: Completed

Phase One of the Service Transformation programme has been successfully completed. All actions and progress are recorded and monitored through a live electronic tracker on SharePoint. This system is regularly scrutinised by the Service’s Management Board and the Commissioner’s Strategic Governance Board.

Phase one has seen recurring savings of **£1.3m** being achieved. Key aspects from Phase One include:

- Completion of the Prevention and Protection Review by the end of 2024.
- Adoption of the On-call Three-person Crewing Trial into formal policy, following approval from the Service Delivery Board in December 2024
- Continued development of the Shared Estates Strategy:
 - Permanent police presence now established at Stone and Uttoxeter fire stations.
 - Shared police facilities implemented at Kinver, Chase Terrace and Penkridge.
 - Plans for Kidsgrove are under review as part of the broader estate strategy, which aims to maximise opportunities for efficiency and collaborative working.

Phase Two of Service Transformation: Current Focus and Strategy

Recent work on the medium-term financial strategy has identified that **£1m** of new recurring savings is now required by 2029.

Phase Two of the transformation programme is centred on navigating through this financial challenge whilst enhancing efficiency and productivity and delivering improvements for both the public and the workforce. The Transformation Board continues to meet Bi-monthly, with flexibility to adjust its frequency and scope based on progress and demand.

The Transformation Board identified and approved **five key internal workstreams** as part of phase two. These are supported by an external workstream based on scenarios to make further savings and are subject to oversight from the Service Delivery Board and other governance bodies as appropriate. Updates on all themes will be reported at Transformation Board meetings and a phase two tracker will be updated as the work streams progress.

Phase Two: Internal Workstreams

1. Administration Review

A comprehensive review of administrative functions across the Service's delivery groups is underway. The aim is to ensure efficient and balanced use of resources. Recommendations and options are due to be presented to the Service Management Board imminently.

2. Clean Concept Implementation

Ongoing work to minimise firefighter exposure to contaminants is being managed through ERT, Learning & Development, and JETS. Key initiatives include investment in new appliances, breathing apparatus (BA) sets, and improvements to facilities at the L&D Centre. This work also includes staff education and policy development.

3. IT Systems Optimisation

Efforts to enhance the use and efficiency of IT systems and devices, data management software, and the adoption of digital processes and technologies are progressing and will be reported through the Transformation Board.

4. Environmental and Sustainability Review

This workstream aligns with the Service's Environmental Strategy. While some initiatives, such as solar panel installations, are paused due to budget constraints and limited return on investment timelines, strategic review continues. This workstream remains under review for new opportunities.

5. Community Sprinkler Project

Concluded in March 2025, this long-term project began in 2016 and resulted in the installation of sprinklers in nineteen tall buildings. The project delivers an annual cashable saving of £55,000.

Additional Efficiency Measures

Several cost-saving initiatives are also being implemented alongside the core workstreams:

- **Vacancy Control:** Suspension of a project management role has generated a saving of **£70,000**.
- **Fire Engineer Post Reconfiguration:** A transition from Grey Book to Green Book under a 12-month fixed-term contract has saved **£15,000**.
- **Capital Programme Review:** aiming to Realis savings of **£200,000**.
- **Shared Estates and Property Disposals:**
 - Shared estates strategy continues to deliver efficiencies.
 - Disposal of Stafford property expected to generate **£600,000** in capital receipts, phased over several years.
 - Additional estate-related savings opportunities are being explored

The Service remains committed to delivering an effective and sustainable transformation programme. Through continued oversight, strategic alignment, and financial prudence, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is making measurable progress in both service delivery and organisational efficiency.

2.5 Collaborative Shared Estates

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service has a building portfolio consisting of **35** premises. The portfolio consists of **21** Private Finance Initiative (PFI) buildings and **14** residual buildings. The PFI buildings are split across **2** outsourced contracts which are managed from within the Estates Team, which is a shared service with Staffordshire Police.

One contract consists of **10** fire stations, whilst the other PFI contract is made up of **11** fire stations. The remaining **14** residual buildings are maintained by an in-house facilities management team within the Estates Team.

Following on from the successful refurbishment of Abbots Bromley Fire Station, the Estates Team are undertaking design and feasibility work to refurbish Brewood Fire Station. In addition, following a review of the joint estate in Stafford by the Commissioner's office, a first phase of investment to refurbish the Stafford Fire station at Hydrant Way was undertaken and successfully completed.

Phase 2 of the works are at design stage and expected to commence shortly, which will further improve the facilities at the site for the staff and fire crews. Improvements to the learning and development facilities at Pirehill were completed in February 2025, and improvements to the JETs site at Trentham Lakes have been finalised, with a view to implementing the works in summer 2025.

Last financial year (2024/25) saw the Estates Team deliver circa **£0.7m** worth of investment across the residual sites, and this financial year (2025/26) the team are aiming to deliver circa **£1.7m** worth of investment across the residual estate.

Staffordshire Fire Service is committed to further reducing its carbon footprint, in particular within the building portfolio. There have been an additional six electric vehicle charging points installed at Pirehill meaning there are **12** charging points now available. A wider review is being undertaken to explore options around electric vehicle charging points being provided at other sites across the estate, and currently 3 out of the 4 vans used by the estates team are electric vans. Furthermore, the estates team is exploring opportunities to match its own capital resources with government funding to implement solar panels at a number of locations, thereby reducing energy costs moving forward.

The Estates Team are working closely with the Staffordshire Commissioner's office to build upon the current successful collaborative building projects recently undertaken, which saw the creation of new police posts at Chase Terrace, Kinver and Penkridge Fire Stations. During 2024/25 schemes were delivered at Uttoxeter and Stone Fire stations where Staffordshire Fire Service now shares collaborative accommodation with colleagues in Staffordshire Police.

The Estates Team is committed to utilising the building portfolio to explore further collaborative opportunities between both Fire and Police as well as other public body organisations.

3. Protecting

3.1 Protection Activity

The Service completes a number of Protection activity types:

- Fire Safety Audits**

A Fire Safety Audit is an examination of a premises and relevant documents to ascertain how the premises are being managed regarding fire safety to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Audits are generally targeted to those premises where the occupants could be deemed at most risk should a fire occur.

- Licensing Consultations**

Under the Licensing Act 2003 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the licensing authority is required to consult and give Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service the opportunity to make representation with regards to public safety (fire safety), before issuing the licence.

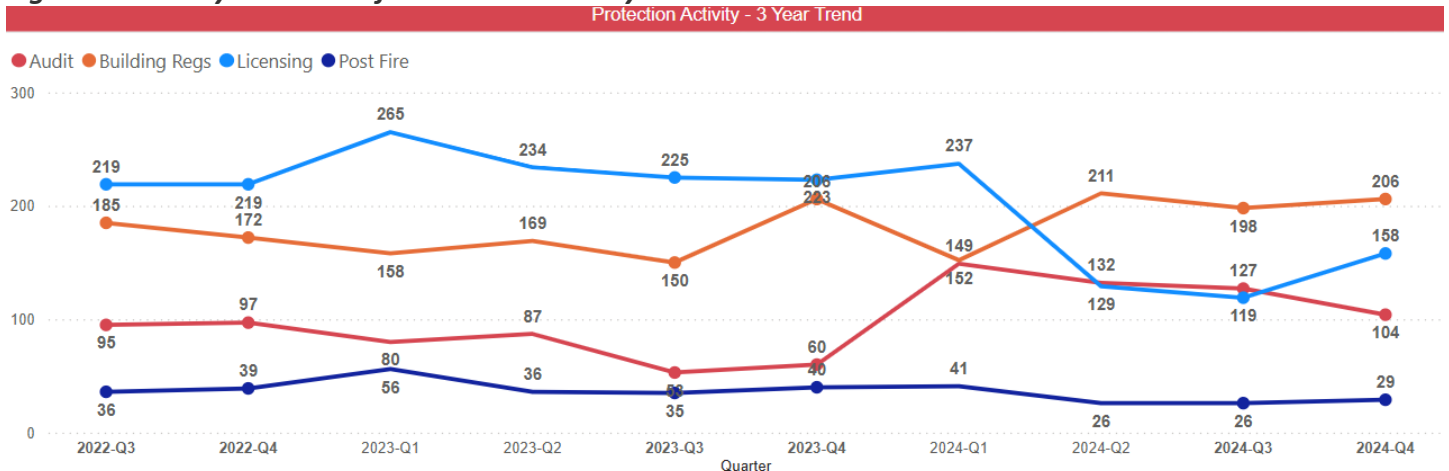
- Building Regulation Consultations**

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is a statutory consultee as part of the Building Regulations process. Whenever a new building is to be built, or alterations are proposed to an existing building then Building Regulations approval will be required. Proposed plans for new premises and those undergoing alterations are usually sent for approval to either the local Authority Building Control department or an Approved Inspector. The proposed plans will then be passed to the local Fire and Rescue Service as a statutory for consultation where they will be checked to ensure occupants will have a suitable means of escape and that fire appliances can access the premises should they need to.

- Post Fire Inspections**

When a fire has occurred, it may indicate a failing of some elements of fire safety within that premises. Therefore, a post fire inspection will be carried to ascertain the details of the fire, work with the business to ensure business continuity arrangements are in place, and in some cases carry out a full fire safety audit so measures can be put into place to prevent reoccurrence and ensure future compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Figure 8: Three-year trend of Protection Activity



Between October 2024 and March 2025:

231 Fire Safety Audits were carried out, which is an increase from the **113** completed within the same period in 2023/24.

Of those premises audited, Care Homes, Hotels, Tall Buildings and Hospitals make up the majority of those visited.

404 Building Regulation Consultations were completed, which is an increase from the **373** completed within the same period in 2023/24.

277 Licensing Consultations were completed, which is a decrease from the **373** completed within the same period in 2023/24.

55 Post Fire Inspections were completed, which is a decrease from the **75** completed within the same period in 2023/24.

Fire Safety Audits

The number of Fire Safety Audits completed has increased significantly through the period of October 2024 to March 2025. This can be attributed to a new Risk Based Inspection Programme giving greater insight and overview of premises to be audited, as well as much improved performance statistics being available to Protection Teams. Whilst there has been a general increase in audits there has been a slight drop in Q4 2024/25. This can be attributed to a number of staff members retiring or leaving the service. A recruitment campaign is currently on going which should be completed by the end of May 2025.

Risk Based Inspection Programme

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service has recently updated the methodology for defining risk in non-domestic premises. The updated Risk Based Inspection Programme was launched on February 14th, 2024, and is the primary method in which the Service prioritises risk for those premises covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This has had an impact on the premises proactively chosen for a fire safety audits by Protection Teams. As at the end of March 2025, the Service has achieved a **92%** completion rate of the Risk Based Inspection Programme, since this time the service has further increased this to **94%**.

The logic for defining risk in non-domestic means each premises received a risk rating of Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low. Those premises deemed Very High or High risk will be audited by a Fire Safety Inspecting Officer who holds a Level 4 Diploma in Fire Safety. A selection of lower risk premises will receive a compliance check by operational crews.

To be allocated a risk category the following has been considered:

Measured Consequence
Life, Property and FRS impacts based on IRS date



Potential Consequence

- Societal
- Firefighter
- Community
- Heritage
- Environmental



Building-specific Consequence
SFRS knowledge of the building and area

Measured Consequence – This is based on historical incident data across a range of premises types (Care Home, Sheltered Housing, HRRB etc.) to give a generic risk score for each building type.

Potential Consequence – This gives a generic score for each of the 5 risk areas mentioned for each building type. These can be manually adjusted by Fire Protection Teams based on local knowledge. Where Firefighter Risk has been defined by a Site Specific Risk Inspection (SSRI), that Firefighter Risk level will be taken. Where no SSRI has been carried out the generic score will be used.

Building Specific Consequence – Fire Protection Teams can adjust scores based on local knowledge. E.g. generically a Care Home would score low for Heritage risk, however if this is Grade 1 listed, this score could be adjusted which would have an impact on the overall risk category.

The level of risk and the outcome of the previous audit will influence the reinspection timeframe. The table below displays the planned revisit schedule in numbers of years relative to risk and previous outcomes. Due to inspections moving in cycles, sustaining 100% completion for an extended period of time is unlikely.

Revisit Schedule based on risk and outcome of Fire Safety Audit (years)

	Standard	Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		Enforcement / Prohibition
		Satisfactory	Fire Safety Matters	Fire Safety Matters	Action Plan	
VH	3	4	4	3	2	2
H	4	5	5	4	2	2
M	<i>Covered by inspections where necessary (Post Fire, Complaint etc...) or via Compliance Check carried out by Operational Crews as part of an SSRI</i>					
L						
VL						

Fire Safety (England) Regulations

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations have now been fully adopted by the Service. All plans and external wall reports for tall buildings have now been received from members of the public that manage or are responsible for high rise buildings within Staffordshire.

The Service has also been receiving and actioning any faults with regards to fixed installations within tall buildings through our Fire Protection teams.

To date **109** faults have been received with regards to firefighting installations in tall buildings allowing the Service to action defined action plans for each premises on receipt of each fault.

3.2 Fire Hydrants

10 whole-time fire stations have been actively testing fire hydrants within Staffordshire since March 2024. Joining them shortly after were **4** on-call fire stations in the west of the county as part of a trial testing programme.

Alongside the operational crews testing fire hydrants are our dedicated team of three Hydrant Technicians each with their designated On-Call testing areas.

The testing programme using the newly appointed 3tc Water Management solution provides a simple intuitive interface enabling the user to capture hydrant data essential for operational use.

18,436 fire hydrants are currently adopted within Staffordshire.

38.9% of these hydrants have now been subject to a test or inspection as at the end of March 2025.

7,179 of these adopted fire hydrants have now undergone statutory testing and inspection since 1st January 2024 with the introduction of the hydrant management system. These hydrants are subject to an ongoing testing programme in accordance with the requirements off the Fire Services Act 2004.

Figure 9: Hydrant Risk Categories and Inspection Schedule

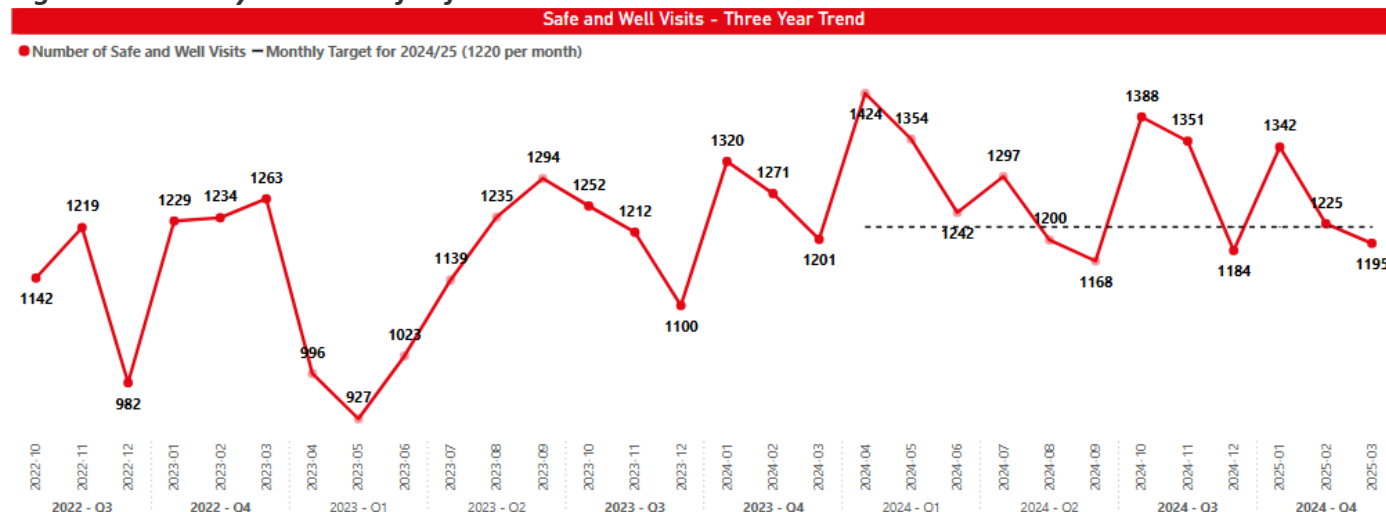
Risk Category	Inspection Schedule	Risk Factor / Property Type
Very High	12 months	Risk Area Very High / Identified High Silt areas.
High	36 months	Residential – High Risk Area Semi / Detached / Terrace / Mobile / Flat / Apartment / Maisonette Village Halls / Places of Public Entertainment / Sports Grounds / Community Facilities / Shopping Complexes / Primary Schools / Secondary Schools / Colleges / Universities / Nurseries / Farms / Agricultural / Animal Boarding Kennels / Animal Rescue Centres / Industrial Parks / Warehouses / Laboratories / Office Buildings / Multi Storey Car Parks / Service Stations / Transport Stations Hospitals / Care Homes
Medium	60 months	Residential - Low Risk Area Semi / Detached / Terrace
Low	84 months	Rural Areas non-residential

4. Preventing



4.1 Safe and Well Visits

Figure 10: Three-year trend of Safe and Well Visits



7,685 Safe and Well visits have been completed between October 2024 and March 2025.

During this period, there has been an increase in the number of Safe and Well visits completed by the Service in comparison to the same period in 2023/24 (**7,356**) and in 2022/23 (**7,069**).

In Q1 of 2023/24, there was a trial of a new Prevention recording system whereby a proportion of prevent activity recording was completed elsewhere.

The Service has implemented targets for Safe and Well visits in order to drive performance and aid planning in relation to executing the reduction of risk in domestic premises. Targets represent something new for teams to aim for and aspire to achieve for the benefit of the community we serve.

A Service target of **1,220 visits per month** was established from April 2024 onwards.

From reviewing performance, it was agreed to make a reduction in targets for Wholetime operational crews to take account of the new demands of education visits and compliance checks. The number of Safe and Well Visits undertaken by the Technician cohort has shown that there is some additional capacity to conduct further Safe and Well Visits, therefore an action was taken to realise this capacity by increasing targets for the technicians. This is intended to offset the proposed reduced productivity from Operational crews.

The Fire and Health Partnership Teams (Home from Hospital and Falls Team) also conduct Safe and Well visits to the community members they help when performing their duties. Evidence has shown that the Falls Team have consistently outperformed their target. The Home from Hospital Team have made significant improvement over the course of this fiscal year, however it was felt their target did not need to be adjusted and is set at an appropriate level.

The Service also continues to deliver Olive Branch training on-line for partners, which is aimed at people who visit vulnerable members of communities in their own homes within Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. The training helps to identify potential fire hazards and other risks in the home, it includes how to refer “at risk” people to the Service for a Safe and Well Visit. The Contact Centre continue to manage our Safe and Well booking procedures and to support this function, processes undertaken by the Contact Centre are currently being reviewed.

4.2 Fire and Health Partnership Team



Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service has been delivering a Falls Response Service and Home from Hospital Service to the communities of Staffordshire since December 2022 and December 2023 respectively. The Service has worked closely with Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board (SSOTICB) and Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT) to achieve this and continues to do so.

Future funding has now been secured by the Service to continue these initiatives, with funding for the Home from Hospital team confirmed until 31st March 2026 and the Falls Team confirmed until 31st December 2025 with the aspiration to obtain additional funding to extend this to March 2026 to align the funding cycle of both initiatives.

Whilst the overall initiative is described as the Fire and Health Partnership Team, there are two distinctly different services that are dealt with separately below.

Falls Response Team

The falls response service went live on 7th December 2022 and has provided live service every day since.

The below performance data is up to 31st March 2025:

- There have been **2331** mobilisations, which averages **2.76** call per day, however more recent months have been running at over **3** calls per day.
- The majority of patients continue to be elderly with **94%** being over 60, which is a risk factor associated with fire and enables us to carry out Safe and Well visits.
- The team responds to the whole county of Staffordshire and has an average attendance time of under **37 minutes**, which has reduced by **1 minute** over the reporting period.
- Overall, each job takes an average of **65 minutes** to complete.
- The data shows that the triage process works well and the vast majority of time we are assigned to calls that are suitable for our team although this has reduced slightly since the last report:
 - **83%** of the time the patient is picked up and has no injuries
 - **7%** of the time the patient has been picked up or managed to get up prior to our arrival
 - **9%** of the time the patient is picked up but requires a referral back to ICC for further attention.
- SFRS have completed **1201** Safe and Well visits as a result of these mobilisations.

Home from Hospital Team

The Home from Hospital service (HfH) went live on 4th December 2023 and has provided live service every day since, excluding Christmas day, as the Integrated Discharge Hub is closed.

The below performance data is up to 31st March 2025:

- There have been **2625** mobilisations since the Service went live, with **2105** of those being for the Discharge and Settle in Service (DSI). The average is **4.16** discharges per day, which has reduced slightly from the last report.
- The majority of patients continue to be elderly with **95%** being over 60, which is a risk factor associated with fire and enables us to carry out a Safe and Well visit.
- On average each DSI job takes **75 minutes** to complete, which has increased slightly over the reporting period.



- Just under **98%** of the time the DSI is conducted with no issues. On **2%** of occasions there may be some minor issues.
- To date there has still only been 1 readmission within 24 hours.
- Since taking on new responsibilities in July 24 the team has also completed the following:
 - Fitted **513** key safes
 - Completed **103** moving furniture jobs
 - Completed **13** property inspections
- With all activities combined the team is now completing between **6-7 jobs per day** on average.
- An evaluation of the service by Chester University is well underway, with the draft report expected imminently.
- In February the team have received the Chief Executive Award from University of North Midland NHS Trust, to recognise how successful and impactful this patient safety initiative is. SFRS is the first external partner to ever receive this award.

4.3 Education Update

Education Delivery Plan

Safe+Sound - Face to face Sessions

Below are details of the Fire Stations at which Safe+Sound delivered between October 2024 and March 2025. Feedback from children and teachers continues to be positive. The main issue/challenge is transport to and from the event as this is the main reason cited by schools unable to attend.

Figure 11: Educational delivery and attendance

Delivery location	Workshops delivered	Number of children attending	Number of adults attending	Number and percentage of schools invited that attended
Tamworth Belgrave	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT and RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) What to do in an emergency (Emergency First Responders)	617	48	18/30 60%
Chase Terrace	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT and RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (Network rail)	305	31	8/11 72%
Burton	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT and RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (British Transport Police) What to do in an emergency – St John Ambulance	672	62	13/26 50%

Delivery location	Workshops delivered	Number of children attending	Number of adults attending	Number and percentage of schools invited that attended
Leek	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT) Smart Money (HSBC) What to do in an emergency – St John Ambulance	533	56	12/21 57%
Biddulph	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT) Smart Money (HSBC)	211	18	2/4 50%
Rugeley	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT and RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (Network rail)	252	23	9/14 64%
Penkridge	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (Network rail)	288	25	4/13 31%
Stafford	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Water safety (C&RT and RNLI) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (Network rail)	616	62	16/35 46%
Sandyford	Fire Safety (POD) Being a Good Citizen (Police) Road safety (DHL) Smart Money (HSBC) Railway Safety (Network rail) Making positive choices (Community Drug and Alcohol Service)	1025	130	23/44 52%
TOTAL		4522	455	105/198 53%

Safe+Sound - Weekly online Sessions

The weekly programme continues to attract significant numbers of viewers – views are measured by number of devices tuning in, this could be one person or a whole classroom full watching one screen.

Below details the dates the programmes were released, the content of each programme, the number of devices within Staffordshire watching live, and the total devices watching live.

The breadth of topics and the wide variety of partners involved is clearly demonstrated. Topics are repeated to reinforce learning but usually with a different partner delivering the same topic in a completely different way. Watch any programme on demand by scrolling down the page and choosing a programme at

www.learnliveuk.com/safesound



Figure 12: Safe+Sound delivery and attendance

Date	Topics	Staffs Devices viewing	Total devices viewing
2.10.24	On the platform – Network Rail Truck Safety (Pt 4) – Gist Using an AED – SFRS Electrical safety – SFRS	6944	15162
9.10.24	Truck Safety (5) – Gist Flooding – Transforming the Trent Valley Independent Journeys – Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) Safety at Level Crossings – Network Rail	7119	15406
16.10.24	Smoke Alarms – SFRS Truck Safety (Pt 6) – Gist Talking Mental Health – Anna Freud NCCF Escape plans – SFRS Sounds of Brook Hollows – Transforming the Trent Valley	7329	15437
23.10.24	Bonfire Night Safety – Staffs Police Halloween Candle Safety – SFRS Oooh and Aaah – British Firework Association Be Bright Be Seen – SSRP Halloween Advice – Staffs Police Bonfire Night Advice – SFRS Ditch the Blade – Staffs police	7145	15366
6.11.24	Peer pressure – Staffs Police Electricity on the Railway – Network rail Consequences – Staffs police Family Walk – Transforming the Trent Valley Know your way out – StayWise Trespass and the law – Network rail	7217	15261
13.11.24	Be safe at home – RoSPA Trent Valley walk – Transforming the Trent Valley Restart a heart – Yorkshire Ambulance Service Feeding Birds – Silverdale Country park Seatbelt safety - SFRS	7088	15220
20.11.24	E-scooters – Staffs Police Anti-Bullying – CACH Martha's Story – Yorkshire Ambulance service Station Tour with safety tips – SFRS Fraud – don't miss a trick - HSBC	7326	15753
27.11.24	Parking by schools – Staffs police Act your age – Paddox Primary School Fire action plan – StayWise Green Cross Code – Gist Body Scan – Sporting Communities CIC	7512	15827
4.12.24	Password strength – Staffs police Wildlife near railways – Network rail Close before you doze – StayWise Decision making – Re-Solv Divided attention - SSRP	7391	16002
11.12.24	Christmas home safety – SFRS Never take a shortcut – Network rail Blue light aware – SSRP Frozen water – Silverdale Country park Top 10 tips on line – Staffs police	6837	14849

Date	Topics	Staffs Devices Viewing	Total devices Viewing
8.1.25	Charging safely – SFRTS Share aware – Staffs Police Memories with Grandma – Alzheimer’s Society Playing games near the railway – Network Rail Rainbow meditation – Sporting Communities CIC Stop, drop and roll – StayWise	6449	13540
15.1.25	Frozen water safety – SFRS Kitchen safety – SFRS Road safety and cycling – SSRP Copying Friends can be dangerous – the Track pack (Network Rail) The Snowman – Calm Careers	7588	15700
22.1.25	Staying Safe online – Police (ROCU) Ditch the Blade – Staffs police Trespass within stations – Network rail Shattered lives – Network rail Fire safety – Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue service Mountain Bikes – Silverdale Country park	7491	15720
29.1.25	Escape plans – SFRS Exit Plan – West Sussex Fire & Rescue service Safety with pets near railways – Network rail Green Cross Code – SSRP Emergency Aid – HMB Training Winter wellbeing – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	7381	15821
5.2.25	Password safety – Police (ROCU) Anti-Social behaviour – Staffs Police CPR – HMB Training Balloons and kites – Network rail Level crossings – Network rail Winter wellbeing – breathe – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	7573	15884
12.2.25	Train yards and sidings – Network rail Harrison’s story – Network rail Ice Danger – SFRS Preventing a fire – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service How to spend money wisely – HSBC Winter wellbeing – explore – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	7108	16038
26.2.25	Introduction – Water safety Special Dangers – canal & River Trust (C&RT) Hazards under the water – Silverdale Country park What to do if someone falls in – C&RT Float to live – instructions – RNLI SAFE message by a canal – C&RT Toddler safety – C&RT Frozen water safety – SFRS Thank you – and links to websites	6956	15805
5.3.25	What is malware – police (ROCU) Control and calling 999 – SFRS Making a 999 call – Cheshire FRS Retrieving dropped items – Network rail What is hate crime – CACH Dog waste – Silverdale Country park Winter wellbeing – Night Sky – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	7728	16802

Date	Topics	Staffs Devices Viewing	Total devices Viewing
12.3.25	Banter or bullying – CACH Smoke alarms – SFRS How to spot signs of fraud – HSBC Staying safe with older children – Network rail Nesting Birds – Silverdale Country park	7442	16556
19.3.25	Different types of hate crime – CACH Electricity on the railways – Network rail Log Plies – Silverdale Country park Gaming – stay in control – HSBC Recovery position – HMB Training	7833	16854
26.3.25	The safety rap – Network rail Mobile phones – SSRP Wildlife Crime – Silverdale Country park Nuisance Fires – SFRS Firefighter Jet – Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue service	7512	17044
TOTAL		152,969	330,047

Operational Crew – Education Delivery

The updated Education Delivery Plan commenced in September 2024. Crew packages have been updated and new Grab bags provided on stations for a consistent, easy to use resource for delivery.

Feedback from Crews and schools about the packages has been positive.

The table below shows progress against the Education Delivery Plan, with the packages required to be delivered over this and next academic years. Crews also deliver Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and After School Groups depending on local need and capacity. To have completed **48%** of the delivery plan between sept 2024 and April 2025 is a great achievement as in order to achieve the overall target in two academic years we would only be looking for 50% achievement over the whole year.

Package to be Delivered	Number of sessions required	Number of Education Delivery Sessions Delivered	% Complete
KS 1 Year 1 - Road Safety	206	99	48%
KS 1 Year 2 - Fire Safety	358	179	50%
KS 5 UPS - SM Presentation	7	1	14%
KS 5 UPS - Station Visit and Tabletop Exercise	7	1	14%
Total	578	280	48%

Volunteering

We currently have **32** volunteers, service wide.

Service Delivery Group	Hours volunteered	Selection of activities undertaken
NSDG	227.5	Safe+Sound, Community events, Station Visits
ESDG	280.5	FF Charity events, Safe+Sound, Community events, Station visits
WSDG	641.50	Safe+Sound, Memorial gardening, Drama Queens (L&D support) Community events
Chaplains	597.50	Chaplaincy support including drop ins, requested support and team meetings
TOTAL	1,747	



5. Emerging Issues

5.1 Battery and Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

Grid scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) are a fundamental part of the UK's move toward a sustainable energy system.

In support of this Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service are working with both the Local Authority Planning departments and site operators within the county to ensure that:

- *The Service is made aware of proposed site locations.*
- *Engagement occurs throughout the planning and development stages of BESS sites.*
- *That the Service has a forum by which to raise concerns and to influence site development*
- *Site specific risks to both local communities and attending firefighters are captured to ensure that overall site safety is prioritised.*

In accordance with the 'Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System Planning' guidance published by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC); we ensure that the operator identifies hazards and risks specific to the facility and develop, implement, maintain and review risk controls. From this process site specific risks are identified, and a robust Emergency Response Plan can be developed.

Through the planning application process our Protection and Response teams ensure the following areas are addressed:

- *Siting of renewable energy infrastructure so as to eliminate or reduce hazards to emergency responders.*
- *Safe access for emergency responders in and around the facility, including to energy storage and firefighting infrastructure.*
- *Provision of adequate water supply and firefighting infrastructure to allow safe and effective emergency response.*
- *Effective emergency planning and management, specific to the site, infrastructure and operations.*
- *Owner has a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan, showing full understanding of hazards, risks, and consequences.*
- *Effective identification and management of hazards and risks specific to the siting, infrastructure, layout, and operations*
- *Impact on surrounding communities, buildings, and infrastructure.*
- *Vegetation sited and managed so as to avoid increased bushfire and grassfire risk.*
- *Prevention of fire ignition on-site.*
- *Prevention of fire spread between site infrastructure (solar panel banks, wind turbines, battery containers/enclosures).*
- *Prevention of external fire impacting and igniting site infrastructure.*
- *Provision of accurate and current information for emergency responders during emergencies.*

Once this information is collated and reviewed, a tactical plan will be developed in case of an incident occurring at the site.

6. HR Performance Update

6.1 Recruitment Activity and Establishment

Wholetime Firefighter Recruitment Process

Status of applications for Wholetime Firefighter recruitment. This Process closed 1st October 2024.

Status	Percentage	Number
Shortlisting	56.1%	569
Fire and Rescue Eligibility form started, but not submitted	18.5%	188
Main Application Started, Not Submitted	18.2%	185
Minimum Eligibility - Auto Reject	6.2%	63
Application Withdrawn	0.5%	5
Duplicate Check - Potential	0.3%	3
Application Started, Not Submitted	0.1%	1

Diversity Breakdown of Shortlisted Candidates

- 14% identified as Female
- 8% identified as having an ethnicity other than White British
- 13% identified as LGBT+
- 7% identified as having a Disability

Diversity Breakdown of Appointed Candidates

Out of the 596 shortlisted candidates, **16** applicants were successful in achieving a WT Firefighter post within the Service. Of those appointed:

- 31% identified as Female
- 7% identified as having an ethnicity other than White British
- 38% identified as LGBT+
- 13% identified as having a Disability

Figure 13: FTE Headcount Report 31st March 2025

FTE Headcount Summary as at 31st March 2025

	Last Month At 28 February 2025	This Month At 31 March 2025	Actual Movement in Period	Budget 2024-25	Budget Variance 2024-25	Last year At 31 March 2024	Actual Movement last 12 Months
Management Team	13.0	13.0		12.0	(1.0)	14.0	(1.0)
Station Managers	23.0	23.0		22.0	(1.0)	23.0	
Watch Managers	61.0	63.0	2.0	63.0		64.0	(1.0)
Crew Managers	49.0	48.0	(1.0)	47.0	(1.0)	47.0	1.0
Wholetime FF	152.5	161.5	9.0	156.0	(5.5)	158.0	3.5
Wholetime FF - Casual Contracts	7.0	10.0	3.0		(10.0)	12.0	(2.0)
	305.5	318.5	13.0	300.0	(18.5)	318.0	0.5
On-Call FF	289.0	285.3	(3.7)	387.0	101.7	269.3	16.0
Support Staff	127.3	122.9	(4.4)	131.6	8.8	121.4	1.5
Secondments / Funded Posts	16.8	16.8		13.8	(3.0)	17.6	(0.8)
TOTAL HEADCOUNT	738.6	743.5	4.9	832.4	89.0	726.3	17.2

This report shows headcount as FTE's (Full Time Equivalents)



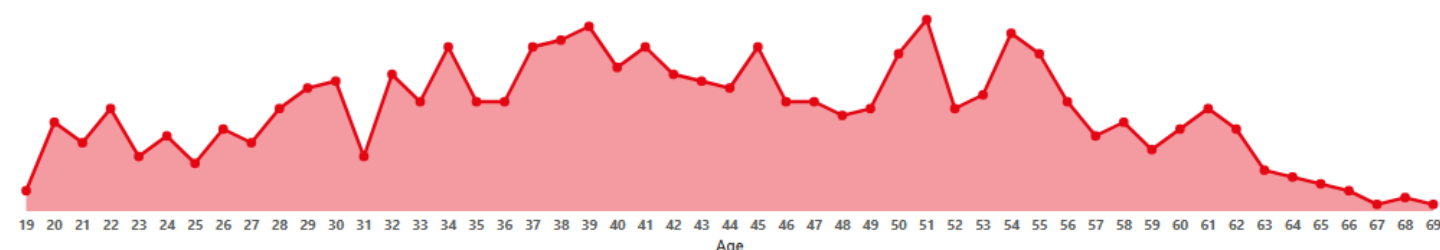
6.2 Workforce Diversity

The chart below displays the workforce diversity position 2023, 2024 and 2025 for all Whole Time, On Call, and Support staff including Principal Officers. These charts are based upon declared data collected during the recruitment and on boarding process. This data is provided voluntarily by individuals. Changes to numbers in the overall workforce can also influence the percentages shown.

Figure 14: Total Service Diversity Profile % Yearly Comparison

Age Distribution

● March 2025



Ethnicity	2023	2024	2025	Gender	2023	2024	2025	Religion	2023	2024	2025
Any Other White Background	2.11%	2.37%	3.09%	Not Stated	0.11%	0.31%	5.28%	Agnostic	0.89%	1.03%	0.90%
Asian British	0.44%	0.72%	0.39%	Male	80.80%	81.17%	76.93%	Atheist	0.89%	1.03%	1.03%
Black African	0.22%	0.31%	0.13%	Female	19.09%	18.52%	17.78%	Bahai		0.10%	
Black British	0.11%	0.10%	0.13%	Sexuality				Buddhist	0.55%	0.41%	0.51%
Black Caribbean	0.22%	0.21%	0.13%	Bisexual	0.11%	0.21%	0.56%	Christian	29.63%	30.25%	32.05%
Indian	0.22%	0.41%	0.39%	Gay Man	0.33%	0.31%	0.94%	Jedi Knight	0.55%	0.41%	1.03%
Not Stated	0.22%	0.72%	3.09%	Gay Woman/Lesbian	0.55%	1.44%	1.31%	Jewish	0.33%	0.51%	0.13%
Other Ethnic Group	0.11%			Heterosexual/Straight	60.27%	55.86%	77.67%	Muslim	0.44%	0.51%	0.64%
Other Mixed Background	0.22%	0.31%	0.26%	Not Stated	38.73%	42.18%	19.51%	None	25.97%	28.19%	30.76%
Pakistani	0.67%	0.62%	0.64%	Disability				Not Stated	38.07%	34.36%	30.12%
White & Asian	0.11%	0.10%	0.13%	No	91.79%	91.26%	85.82%	Other	1.78%	1.85%	2.06%
White & Black African	0.11%	0.10%	0.13%	Not Stated	6.55%	7.00%	10.95%	Rastafarian	0.11%		
White & Black Caribbean	1.00%	1.03%	0.77%	Yes	1.66%	1.75%	3.22%	Sikh	0.67%	1.23%	0.64%
White British	93.67%	92.70%	90.34%					Spiritualist	0.11%	0.10%	0.13%
White Irish	0.55%	0.31%	0.39%								

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Staffordshire Fire ED&I team collaborates with Staffordshire Police to share best practises, work together for the communities of Staffordshire, offer lived experience and help drive the culture change. This has also led to the creation and promotion of our internal staff networks who can give guidance, experience, and help develop and recruit a diverse workforce. One way in which we are doing this is through the Joint Inclusivity calendar.

The service has trained colleagues in Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). This is a type of internal risk assessment previously referred to as a 'People Impact Assessment', 'Equality & Human Rights Assessment', 'EIAs' or an 'Equality Analysis'.

Its overall aim is to identify risk of inequality, discrimination or disadvantage within service activities (or proposed activities) by assessing the likely impact our policies, procedures, projects or functions might have on the different groups of people we both serve and employ. This includes residents, community groups, employees and other members of the public who may be affected by our activities. Working with colleagues in IT, we have designed an online EqIA submission system where staff complete EqIA's for the EDI Teams approval. This way, we have an online trail of the document, and once it is signed off, it is stored securely ready for Boards or any future audits.

The Neurodiversity Steering Group has been developed in conjunction with Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. This is to help both services work better together for our Neurodivergent colleagues, share best practice and lived experience the work force.

We also now have a joint Police and Fire Neurodiversity Officer who supports both line managers and colleagues to look at the support we give to colleagues around Neurodiversity and reasonable adjustments.

Community Engagement

Promoting recruitment whether it is for Wholetime, On-call or support roles has been something that has been completed at all community events along with the usual fire safety messages. An increased presence at community events across the county over the past 2 years has generated more interest in roles with the fire service. Moving forward we will get information to all Watch's about recruitment campaigns and materials to promote as this could be a much more effective when attending events. There is now a strong base of connections in the community with links to the Sudanese, Eritrean, Afro-Caribbean and Asian populations.

Positive Action

We completed 3 'Positive Action Days' which individuals from underrepresented groups were invited to attend a range of stations across the county. These individuals had already been known to the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue service, either through contacts from the Positive Action officer or who had submitted an 'expression of interest' form on the website.

They had self-declared themselves to be from a protected group and therefore offered the opportunity to attend one of the sessions. These sessions included being introduced to the environment in general which allowed for practical hands-on participation with job-related tests they would have to complete in order to be successful in the application process.

With support of Fire Service personnel throughout the day, this also allowed for general discussions around the job itself, shift patterns, leave, day-to-day duties and other relevant aspects of working for the Fire Service. This gave individuals the chance to ask questions around specific issues or concerns they had. The sessions were well attended and feedback obtained from each event shows the sessions were positively received and the information helpful, a total of 16 applied from the positive action days.

Fitness Testing

Previously 3 'Positive Action Days' were completed which involved inviting individuals along to a range of stations in the county. These individuals had already been known to the Staffordshire, either through contacts from the Positive Action lead or they had submitted an 'expression of interest' form on the website. They had declared themselves to be from a protected group so therefore offered the opportunity to attend one of the sessions. These sessions involved being introduced to the environment in general and allowed for practical hands-on participation with the job-related tests that they will have to complete in order to be successful in the application process.

With the support of Fire Service personnel throughout the day, this also allowed for general discussions around the job itself, shift patterns, leave, day-to-day duties and other relevant issues. This gave the individuals the chance to ask about specific issues that they were concerned about. These sessions were well attended and from feedback that was requested after each event, it was positively received and proved to be useful for them. From those that attended; a total of 16 applied from the positive action days.

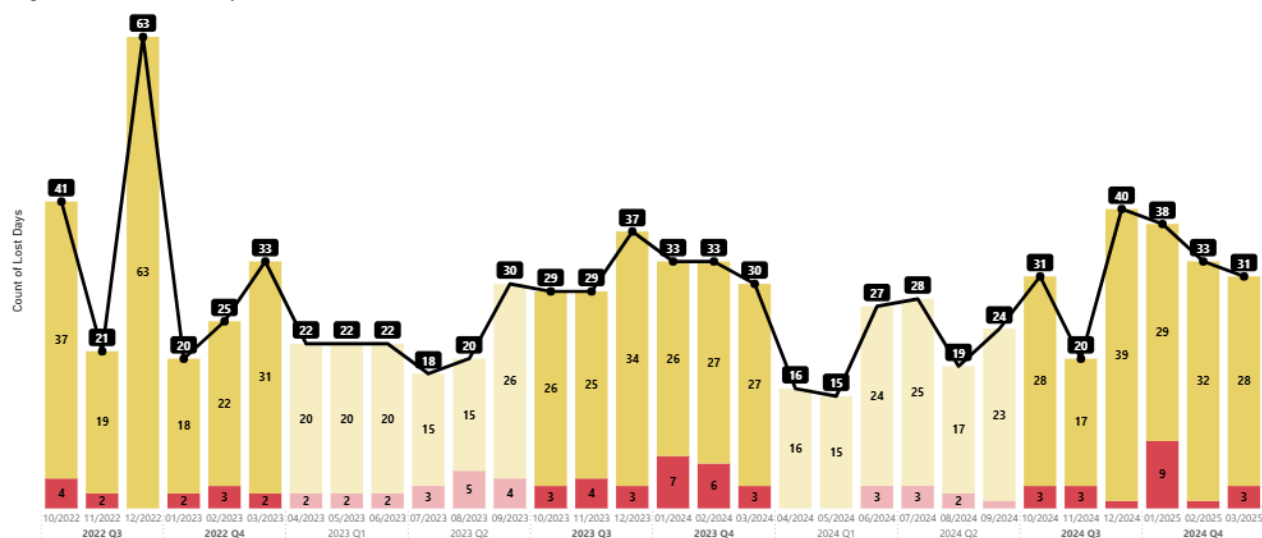


6.3 Workforce Sickness

Figure 15: Total Number of Wholetime Days Lost Due to Sickness

Lost Days Due to Sickness: Wholetime

Long Term ■ Yes ■ No ● Count of Lost Days



Short Term Sickness Type Wholetime

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	72	38	14	22	40	31	11	14	23	26
Sick: Musculoskeletal	12	9	12	11	8	16	22	15	18	16
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	6	10	15	9	21	10	9	14	19	19
Sick: Disease/General	18	7	3	6	5	10	2	6	12	15
Sick: Surgery/Screening	6	1	3	2	4	2	3	2	3	2
Sick: Psychological		2	2	2	2	4	1	3	2	4
Sick: Neurological	1		3	1		2	1	3	3	4
Sick: Skin	1		1	2	1	2	2	4	2	
Sick: Facial/Eyes/Ears/Dental	1		3		3	2	2	1	1	1
Sick: Blood/Immune System	1	4	1					1		1
Sick: Cardio Vascular	1		1		1	1	1			
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological				1				2	1	1
Sick: Pregnancy Related			2							
Sick: Circulatory/Metabolic							1			
Total	119	71	60	56	85	80	55	65	84	89

Long Term Sickness Type Wholetime

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Musculoskeletal	3	5	6	4	4	6	3	2	3	6
Sick: Psychological	1			4	2	5		3	1	3
Sick: Surgery/Screening				2	1	1			2	1
Sick: Respiratory					1	1		1		1
Sick: Blood/Immune System					1					2
Sick: Cardio Vascular	2					1				
Sick: Disease/General				1		1			1	
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions		2			1					
Sick: Circulatory/Metabolic				1						
Sick: Facial/Eyes/Ears/Dental						1				
Total	6	7	6	12	10	16	3	6	7	13

The above illustrates both short and long-term sickness absence for Wholetime Firefighters.

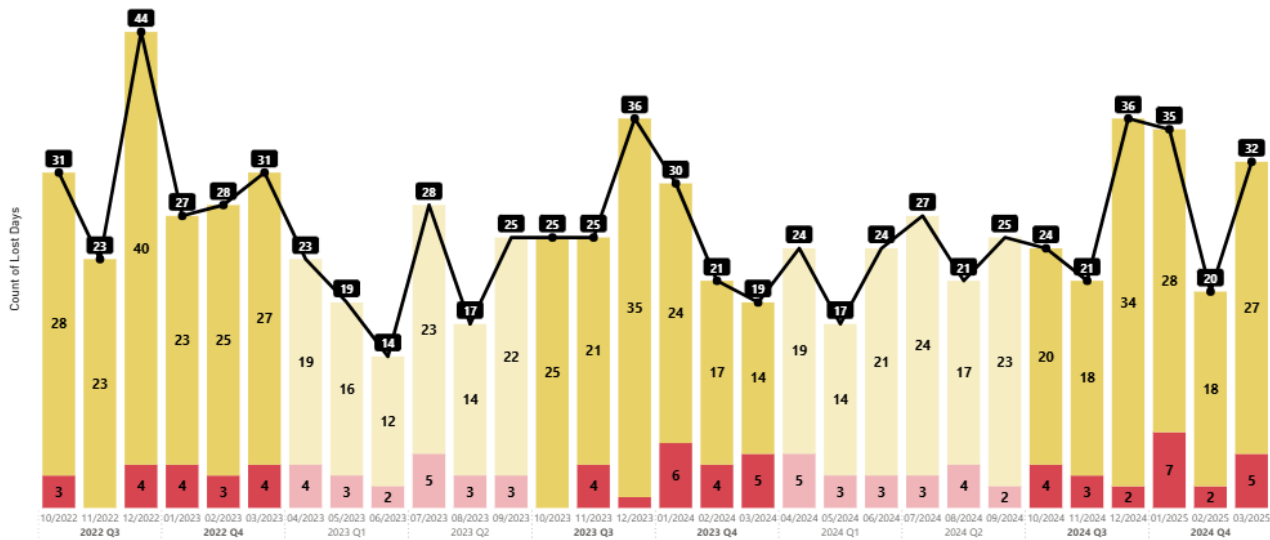
In quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2024/25, there were a combined total of **173 days** lost due to short terms sickness with Respiratory (**49 days**) and Musculoskeletal conditions (**34 days**) being the main causes of absence. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24, a total of **165 days** were lost to short term sickness displaying a slight increase when comparing the data from the two quarter period. The main causes of short term sickness have remained the same over the three year trend. There are notable increases in short-term sickness around the month of December over all three years, which is typical for that time of year and is largely attributed to seasonal respiratory illnesses.

There have been a total of **20 days** lost to long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24 a total of **26 days** were lost to long term sickness, displaying a reduction for this reporting period. The main causes for long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25 are musculoskeletal (**9 days**) and psychological conditions (**4 days**), and these main causes have remained the same over the three-year trend.

Figure 16: Total Number of On Call Days Lost Due to Sickness

Lost Days Due to Sickness: On Call

Long Term ● Yes ● No ● Count of Lost Days



Short Term Sickness Type On Call

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	46	34	12	14	30	21	11	12	22	14
Sick: Musculoskeletal	9	10	9	12	11	7	15	12	17	22
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	9	11	14	11	12	8	15	14	11	14
Sick: Disease/General	12	12	3	8	10	5	4	4	7	12
Sick: Facial, Eyes, Ears, Dental	7	2	2	5	5	4	4	2	3	2
Sick: Psychological	2	1	1	2	5	3	1	5		4
Sick: Surgery/Screening	2	1	1	4	3	3	2	3	4	
Sick: Skin	1	2	1	1			1	7	5	1
Sick: Neurological	2			1	1	1		2	2	1
Sick: Blood/Immune System		2	1		1	2		2	1	
Sick: Cardio Vascular			1		2	1				1
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological			1	1				1		2
Sick: Pregnancy Related										
Total	90	75	47	59	81	55	53	64	72	73

Long Term Sickness Type On Call

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Musculoskeletal	2	9	5	3	1	8	7	2	5	2
Sick: Psychological		1	1	4	2	4	2	4	2	4
Sick: Surgery/Screening	1		2	1	1	2	1	1		2
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	1	1		1				2	1	1
Sick: Respiratory	3				1				1	1
Sick: Cardio Vascular						1	1			1
Sick: Neurological			1	1						1
Sick: Blood/Immune System										2
Total	7	11	9	10	5	15	11	9	9	14

The above illustrates both short and long-term sickness absence for On Call Firefighters.

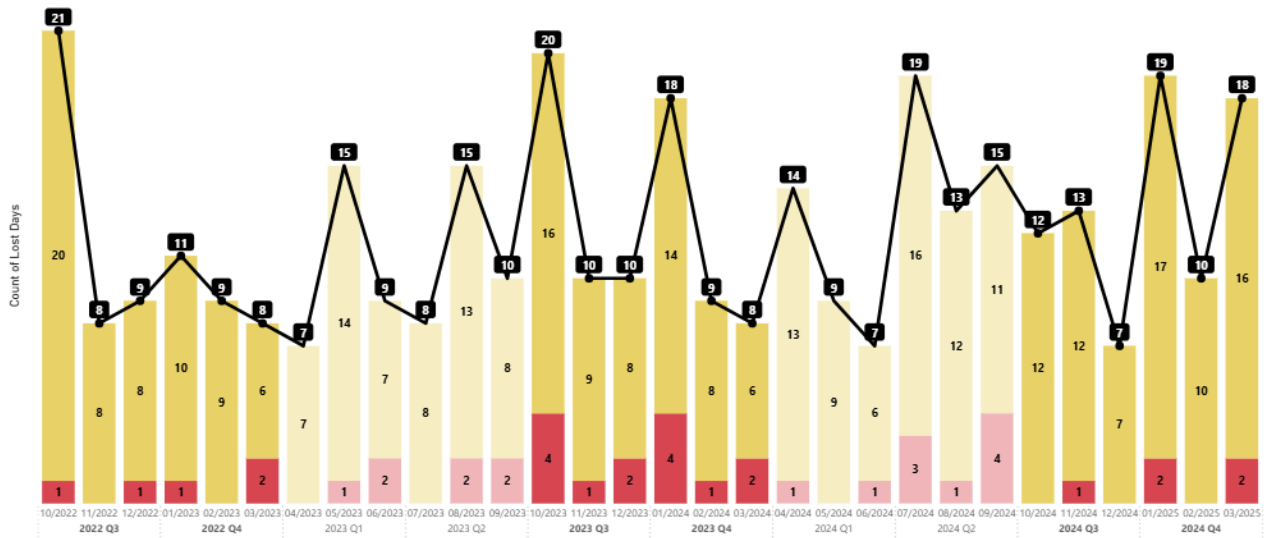
In quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2024/25, there were a combined total of **143 days** lost due to short terms sickness with Respiratory (**36 days**) and Musculoskeletal conditions (**39 days**) being the main causes of absence. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24, a total of **136 days** were lost to short term sickness displaying a slight increase when comparing the data from the two quarter period. The main causes of short term sickness have remained the same over the three year trend. There are notable increases in short-term sickness around the month of December over all three years, which is typical for that time of year and is largely attributed to seasonal respiratory illnesses.

There have been a total of **23 days** lost to long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24 a total of **20 days** were lost to long term sickness, displaying similar levels to this reporting period. The main causes for long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25 are musculoskeletal (**7 days**) and psychological conditions (**6 days**), and these main causes have remained the same over the three year trend.

Figure 17: Total Number of Support Days Lost Due to Sickness

Lost Days Due to Sickness: Support

Long Term ■ Yes ■ No ● Count of Lost Days



Short Term Sickness Type Support

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	28	12	8	13	17	11	11	15	16	11
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	1	4	5	3	4	5	5	8	3	8
Sick: Disease/General	3	4	3	1	2	6	1	1	1	6
Sick: Neurological	2	1	2	4	3	1	5	1	3	5
Sick: Psychological	1	1	3	1	1	5	4	2	2	2
Sick: Musculoskeletal	2	1	2	3	1	1	4	1	3	3
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological		1			1	2	3	4	1	3
Sick: Facial/Eyes/Ears/Dental			1		2	2	3	3	4	4
Sick: Blood/Immune System		1		1	1	2		1	1	1
Sick: Pregnancy Related			3	2						1
Sick: Surgery/Screening			2			1	1			2
Sick: Cardio Vascular			1		1		1			1
Sick: Skin								1	1	
Total	36	25	28	29	33	28	28	39	31	43

Long Term Sickness Type Support

Type	2022 Q3	2022 Q4	2023 Q1	2023 Q2	2023 Q3	2023 Q4	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4
Sick: Psychological		3	3		3	4		5		2
Sick: Surgery/Screening					2	1		1	1	1
Sick: Respiratory	2				1		1			1
Sick: Neurological				1			1		2	
Sick: Musculoskeletal				1			1			
Sick: Pregnancy Related				1						
Sick: Skin					1					
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions				1						
Total	2	3	3	4	7	7	2	8	1	4

The above illustrates both short and long-term sickness absence for support staff.

In quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2024/25, there were a combined total of **74 days** lost due to short terms sickness with Respiratory (**27 days**) and stomach/abdominal conditions (**11 days**) being the main causes of absence. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24, a total of **61 days** were lost to short term sickness displaying a slight increase when comparing the data from the two quarter period. The main causes of short term sickness have remained the same over the three year trend. There are notable increases in short-term sickness around the months of January and October within all three years.

There have been a total of **5 days** lost to long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25. In comparison to the same period in 2023/24 a total of **14 days** were lost to long term sickness, displaying a decrease for this year. The main causes for long term sickness in quarter 3 and quarter 4 2024/25 are Psychological (**2 days**) and surgery/screening (**2 days**), and these main causes have remained the same over the three year trend.

Overall Sickness Type Trends – Days Lost

Sickness Type Wholetime

Type	2022 Q3 & 2022 Q4	2023 Q3 & 2023 Q4	2024 Q3 & 2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	110	73	50
Sick: Musculoskeletal	29	34	43
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	18	32	38
Sick: Disease/General	25	16	28
Sick: Psychological	3	13	10
Sick: Surgery/Screening	7	8	8
Sick: Neurological	1	2	7
Sick: Blood/Immune System	5	1	3
Sick: Facial,Eyes,Ears,Dental	1	6	2
Sick: Cardio Vascular	3	3	
Sick: Skin	1	3	2
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological			2
Total	203	191	193

For Wholetime staff over the same period in the last three years the following is noted for the top 5 contributory factors:

- A large reduction in days lost to Respiratory sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Musculoskeletal sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Stomach/Abdominal sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Disease/General
- A small increase in days lost to psychological sickness

Sickness Type On Call

Type	2022 Q3 & 2022 Q4	2023 Q3 & 2023 Q4	2024 Q3 & 2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	83	52	38
Sick: Musculoskeletal	30	27	46
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	22	20	27
Sick: Disease/General	24	15	19
Sick: Psychological	4	14	10
Sick: Facial,Eyes,Ears,Dental	9	9	5
Sick: Surgery/Screening	4	9	6
Sick: Skin	3		6
Sick: Blood/Immune System	2	3	3
Sick: Neurological	2	2	4
Sick: Cardio Vascular		4	2
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological			2
Sick: Pregnancy Related		1	
Total	183	156	168

For On Call staff over the same period in the last three years the following is noted for the top 5 contributory factors:

- A large reduction in days lost to Respiratory sickness
- An increase in days lost to Musculoskeletal sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Stomach/Abdominal sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Psychological Sickness

Sickness Type Support

Type	2022 Q2 & 2022 Q3	2023 Q3 & 2023 Q4	2024 Q3 & 2024 Q4
Sick: Respiratory	30	29	28
Sick: Stomach/Abdominal Conditions	1	9	11
Sick: Disease/General	3	8	7
Sick: Neurological	2	5	8
Sick: Psychological		8	6
Sick: Genital/Gynaecological/Urological		1	7
Sick: Musculoskeletal	2	2	4
Sick: Surgery/Screening		4	4
Sick: Blood/Immune System		3	1
Sick: Facial,Eyes,Ears,Dental		4	
Sick: Cardio Vascular		1	1
Sick: Skin		1	1
Sick: Pregnancy Related			1
Total	38	75	79

For Support staff over the same period in the last three years the following is noted for the top 5 contributory factors:

- A small reduction in days lost to Respiratory sickness
- An increase in days lost to Stomach/Abdominal sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Disease/General
- A small increase in days lost to Neurological sickness
- A small increase in days lost to Psychological Sickness

Notable Actions

Absence—both short and long term—is receiving significant focus from HR, management, Occupational Health (OH), and the Fitness Advisor. A monthly case conference has been established, involving all relevant parties, to explore and progress each absence case appropriately. This collaborative approach ensures a proactive and coordinated strategy for supporting staff and managing absence effectively across the Service.

It was identified that some OH referrals submitted by line managers lacked sufficient detail and the appropriate level of questioning. This limited the OH team's ability to produce robust and actionable reports. To address this, training presentations have been developed and delivered in collaboration with Occupational Health at Operational Forums, aimed at improving managers' referral skills and understanding.

To further support this work, we are introducing Wellness Support Plans, which are scheduled for release to the Service shortly. These plans are designed to help managers tailor their questioning and develop structured support strategies, particularly for individuals experiencing poor mental health.

As our focus in this area has deepened, it has become evident that some absences are the result of significant and long-term health conditions, where a return to the workplace is unfortunately not feasible. In response, we have revised our capability process to better reflect the sensitivity and complexity of such cases. This includes a more structured and compassionate approach to ill-health retirement, supported by newly developed guidance and a dedicated Occupational Health contact.

Additionally, a new HR tracking system for absence has been implemented. Weekly meetings are now held with the Head of Response to review absence cases in detail, ensuring transparency around timelines and enabling effective management of crewing.

It was also noted that the Fitness Advisor was not consistently involved in cases involving modified duties. To address this, the Fitness Advisor now attends all case conferences to ensure appropriate support is provided where relevant.

Future Activity

Two HR Training Days are scheduled for late September and early October. A key component of these sessions will focus on the effective management of absence, including the appropriate use of return-to-work (RTW) interviews to support a consistent and supportive approach across the Service.



7. Finance Performance Update

This Finance update reviews the financial performance of the Authority for the year ending 31 March 2025 (Period 12). It includes a summary of progress in key financial areas, offering insights into the financial performance and position of the Authority during the year 2024/25.

The revenue budget for the year 2024/25 was approved by the Staffordshire Commissioner at **£50.1m** in February 2024 which included a Band D council tax of **£86.77**, an increase of **2.99%** for the year (**£2.52**) in line with the Council Tax referendum limit of **3%** set by Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement.

The reported revenue spend as at 31 March 2025 was **£49.9m** against the budget of **£50.1m** and included an additional contribution to support the capital financing requirement for the Authority and to maintain a stable position for Earmarked Reserves.

The year end position included the receipt of **£0.5m** following the resolution of the airwave legal case against Motorola, in total **£18.6m** has been returned to Fire and Rescue Authorities. This was following the Competition Appeal Tribunal who took the decision in December 2023 to uphold the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s decision to impose a charge control mechanism on charges for Airwave.

Total Pay spend for the year was **£33.6m** against a budget of **£33.5m**. Pay spend represents **67%** of the total revenue budget and despite some small variances the outturn position finished within **0.3%** of the approved budget. This also included a shortfall of **£0.14m** in the grant received to support the increase in contribution rates into the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

Other Employee costs have also been updated to include the Employer Liability savings resulting from the move to the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) for the provision of employer liability insurance and there have been no ill-health retirements payments in year, a more favourable position to budget and forecast.

Total non-pay and income closed favourable to both budget and forecast. Interest receivable closed at **£1.1m** for the year (**£585k better than budget**), with additional interest arising from the higher cash balance due to the additional pension grant funding received (pension remedy). Consequently, the cash balance at the end of the year was **£19.9m**, **£8.9m** higher than the original budget. Interest receivable rates are forecast to reduce to **4%** next year (2025/26) and the Bank of England reduced the headline rate to **4.5%** in March 2025. Non-pay costs are also favourable which reflects a saving this year for gas and electricity costs which has been reflected fully within the budget approved for next year.

The capital programme closed the year at **£4.0m**, **£0.4m** below the latest forecast. The capital work included refurbishment work and Stafford Fire Station and the training facilities at Fire HQ. **£1m** of spend was incurred on operational equipment with **£0.4m** invested in hydraulic cutting equipment for all appliances, and the final spend on breathing apparatus equipment (**total £1m in last 2 years**). Two new Enhanced Rescue Pumps were operational in 2024/25 providing additional response capability at Longton and Stafford Stations (**investment £0.75m**).

A number of Financial Challenge workshops have been undertaken in March and April 2025 and also a full update included in the spring publication of Burning Issues. These sessions were available for all staff to attend in person or via MS Teams. The sessions explained the Financial Challenge ahead and the need to save an additional **£1m** by 2029 due to the reduction in funding incorporated into the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26.