



Essex County  
Fire & Rescue Service

# Community Risk Management Plan

Making Essex safer **together**



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# Foreword

**Welcome to our Community Risk Management Plan. It outlines our current and future risks and what we will do to keep our communities safe. It also reflects what our people, public and partners have told us is important.**

**Our ambition is to be one of the best Fire and Rescue Services in the country. This means we are providing our residents, businesses, and visitors with a service they deserve.**

To do this, we need to work with our partners and the public to help make Essex safer **together**.

Through the CRMP development process, we have looked at things like the range of the incidents we attend, our changing population, an evolving environment (such as hot weather, wildfires and flooding), and new technology. We assess current, emerging and future risks, and review how we can support our communities and make them more resilient against these risks.

Our CRMP will also deliver against the priorities of the Fire and Rescue Plan 2024. The Fire and Rescue Plan is the strategic plan set out by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. It provides the focus and direction for our Service, with key priorities and objectives that have been developed in consultation with Essex public and key partners.

## **Our CRMP will:**

- **Enhance our ability to manage sustained high demand while making sure we're still engaging with our communities.**
- **Improve our response times to those critical life-risk incidents and improve availability.**
- **Prevent the impact and risks posed from a changing society. Including an aging population, and increased deprivation levels.**
- **Protect the built environment, making sure public safety is prioritised in the building, refurbishment and maintenance of premises and sites that fall under the Fire Safety Order 2005.**
- **Respond to the challenge and needs a changing workforce may bring. Including attraction, development and retention.**

## Achievements since our last risk management plan

We have made considerable productivity improvements over the course of our last Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), delivering record levels of prevention and protection activities, alongside more community engagement. This work is central to making our communities safer and stronger.

We have engaged and worked with local authorities and others to make sure the buildings people live and work in comply with fire safety legislation. Over our last IRMP, we have served prohibition notices on buildings that did not meet fire regulations. We only do this when absolutely necessary, and there are significant fire safety concerns.

**You can find an update of our IRMP achievements on page 62.**

This new plan includes strategic goals that will help us continue to improve community safety and societal resilience.

We will continue to strengthen our community engagement programme over the life of this plan, working more collaboratively with partners to deliver efficient and joined up services.

**Roger Hirst**  
Police, Fire, and  
Crime Commissioner



## Engagement

Throughout the development of this plan, we have engaged with our people, partners and public. We have held extensive engagement workshops, we have engaged with 6,000 people across Essex through our public perception survey to understand what matters to them, and we have listened carefully to the views of our people, our public and our partners through the CRMP consultation survey.

We have considered risk, demand and vulnerability and there are a number of actions we will take between 2025 and 2030 to build on the successes of our previous plan and help us continue to increase our resources. This will mean we can respond more effectively to incidents, protect our public, visitors, and our firefighters, and reduce fires and other incidents.

All the feedback from our people, public and partners has been considered, and this plan reflects and incorporates this.

Further information about this CRMP, our full analysis and methodology, and our consultation activities are on our website.



**Rick Hylton**  
Chief Fire Officer  
Chief Executive

# Introduction

**More than 1.88 million people rely on us to provide a service. A service that meets their needs. They rightly expect us to do this in a planned and coordinated way, matching what we do and the work we prioritise to the different risks they face.**

Every fire and rescue service has statutory duties and responsibilities that are set out in legislation. Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) sets out how we plan to fulfil these duties and keep Essex safe from fire and other emergencies.

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 details our duties to:

- Respond to fires and other emergencies
- Prevent fires and other emergencies
- Protect commercial and public buildings
- Educate and inform the public

In addition to the legislative framework, the Fire Standards Board continue to develop a range of professional standards for fire and rescue services. We are committed to adopting these standards into our ways of working. They include a CRMP fire standard. We have developed this plan in accordance with that standard.

Our work in preparing our risk management plan is underpinned by our Service data, the national CRMP fire standard, National Operational Guidance, service learning, our ongoing strategic assessment of risk, plus extensive engagement with our staff, representative bodies, partners and communities.

## Preparing our plans

When developing our Community Risk Management Plan, we followed the requirements of the National Framework and the national Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Planning Standard.

## Defining scope

Through our Portfolio Management Board, a clear scope was set to deliver a Community Risk Management Plan that enables Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) to become one of the best Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) nationally, and drive what we do.

## Hazard identification and risk analysis

We identify people, building types and places where there is a likelihood of an emergency incident happening that would have a potentially serious effect on our communities. For example, we work with the people responsible for buildings and locations to help to reduce that risk and we plan and review how we would deal with an emergency if it did occur.

## **Decision-making**

We use information about incidents that have happened in the past and analyse how we have responded to them, to better understand what happened and how efficient and effective we have been. For example, this enables us to plan to respond effectively and efficiently to similar emergencies that occur in the future.

We use information that we and other organisations collect to identify the types of people who would be most likely to have a fire or other emergency and who would be most likely to suffer harm. This could be because of personal characteristics such as age or illness, or something that might be related to where people live, work or visit such as high levels of deprivation.

Like all organisations, ECFRS has a set budget. We receive money from council tax payments, central government, and other grants. When deciding how to manage risk we also have to think about how we spend our budget to make sure we have the most positive impact on our communities.

## **Our CRMP:**

- **Uses current risk assessments to identify risks which could affect the fire service.**
- **Explains how we will use our resources – including prevention, protection and response - to reduce risk and respond to emergencies.**
- **Outlines how we will enforce the law that sets out how businesses and organisations manage fire safety in their buildings.**
- **Covers a five year time span, and will be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary.**
- **Involves effective consultation with our communities, our people, their representative bodies, and other partners.**
- **Is easily accessible and publicly available.**

# About us

**Our ambition is to be one of the best fire and rescue services in the UK. By continually raising our standards and improving what we do, we will provide our residents, businesses and visitors with a service they deserve.**

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## About ECFRS

**Essex County Fire and Rescue Services is one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country, serving 1.88 million residents over a county of 1,420 square miles.**

It is the third-most populous county in England.

We employ approximately 1500 people, and provide prevention, protection, and emergency response services from 50 fire stations. We also host one of the 19 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facilities and teams that are strategically located across England.

**Our core services are focused on our statutory duties to prevent, protect and respond to fires and other emergencies.**

**They are informed and shaped by our analysis of risk, and we align our resources and focus our activities on the areas of greater risk.**

### **Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Technical Rescue**

Our Urban Search and Rescue hosts the High-Volume Pump (fire engine) which is a national asset and can be deployed anywhere in the country to support with delivering water to the incident ground or to pump water from one location to another.

Our team also provides the Essex Technical Rescue capability which comprises of Swift Water Rescue, Rope Rescue, Drone Operations, Bariatric Rescue, and Trench Rescue. Incidents requiring the Technical Rescue team are often very complex and protracted and require their specialist skills, knowledge, and equipment to complete the rescue.

<b>Service area</b>	1,420 square miles	
<b>Population</b>	1.88m people	
<b>No. of employees</b>	Approx 1,500	
<b>Operational workforce</b>	61% wholtime 39% on-call	
<b>Assets</b>	1 Headquarters 1 USAR 50 Fire Stations	
<b>Incidents</b>	8.8 incidents per 1,000 Essex population	10.4 national
	3.1 non-fire incidents per 1,000 Essex population	3.5 national
	3.6 fire false alarms per 1,000 Essex population	4.3 national

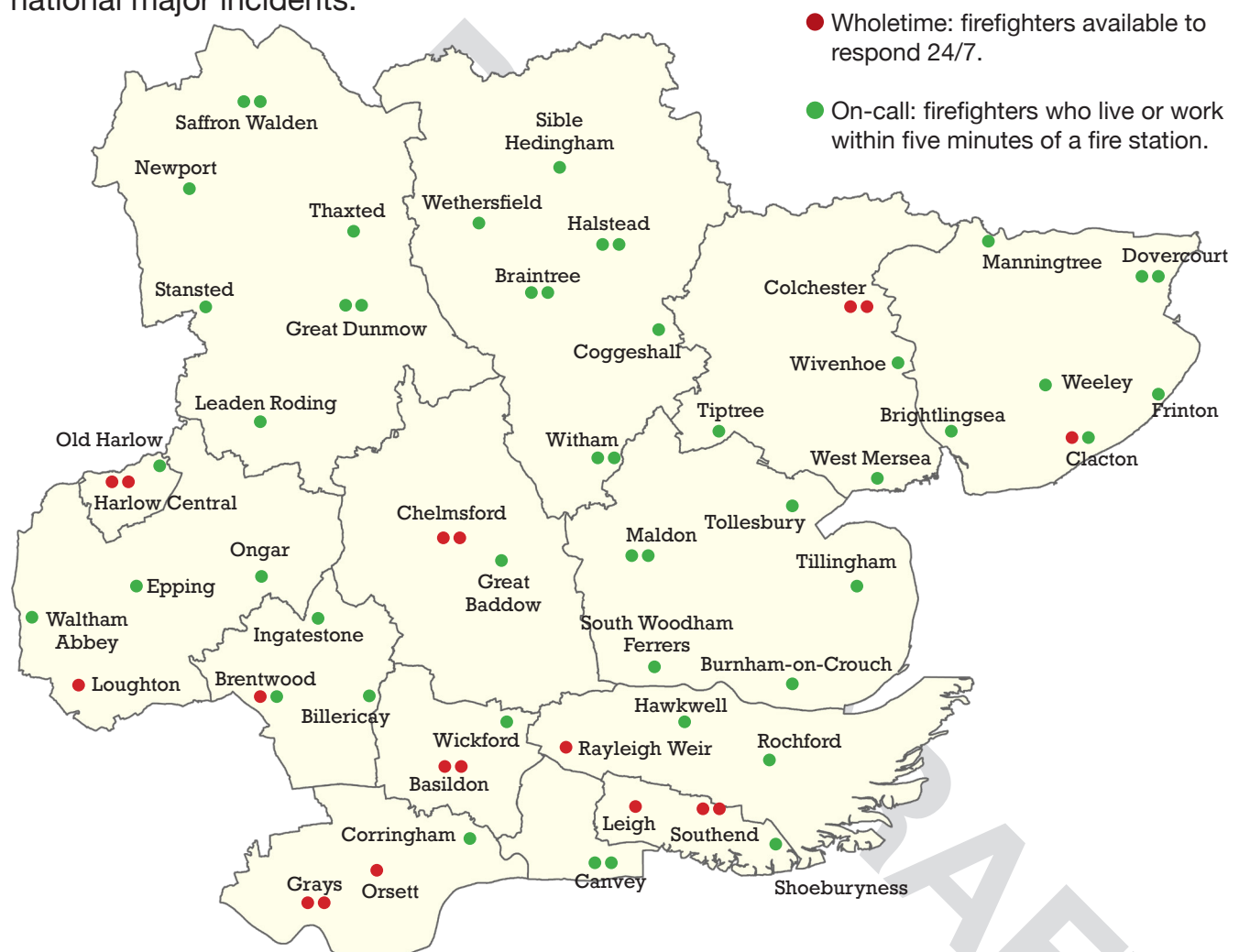
Data source: <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/fire-and-rescue-services/essex/>

**We currently operate from 50 fire stations, with 66 fire engines and a range of specialist vehicles. We also host one of the Urban Search and Rescue teams that are strategically located across England.**

Our fire engines are deployed to meet daily demands and provide resilience and capacity to handle occasional large-scale incidents or multiple, smaller incidents simultaneously. Urban Search and Rescue is crewed by wholetime firefighters and supported by USAR reserves who are based at other Essex fire stations. The crew are available 24/7, ready to deploy to local, regional, and national major incidents.

Through our risk analysis and response to our public consultation, we are reviewing how to increase guaranteed availability during peak times.

We have introduced 40 fire engines as our optimum availability. This means we can reach risk to life calls quickly, support initial attendance if needed, or respond to periods of high demand.



The analysis we carried for this CRMP assures us that the current location of our fire stations meet our operational demand. We will review this each year, and will only make any changes once a formal full public consultation has taken place.

**Our values make sure we put communities at the heart of all we do. They align with the national Core Code of Ethics and set the expected standards of behaviour from all our people.**

## **Our mission**

Making Essex safer **together**.

## **Our values**

Our values are a set of guiding principles which set the tone for how we will all work, regardless of level, with each other, our partners, and most importantly our communities. Our values are:

- **Professional**
- **Inclusive**
- **Teamwork**
- **Courageous**
- **High Performing**

## **Our behaviours**

The difference we make in our communities and to the performance of our teams and Service is driven by our behaviours. Our behaviours are:

- Be accountable for the performance of my team.
- Communicate positively and actively listen.
- Do what I say I will or explain why I have not.
- Do what is right for the people we serve.
- Inspire, empower, and help others to succeed.
- Prioritise my well-being.
- Promote and role model inclusion.
- Seek feedback and listen to improve.
- Set realistic goals and celebrate success.
- Speak up when something feels wrong.

## **NFCC Core Code of Ethics**

The Core Code of Ethics supports a consistent approach to ethics, including behaviours, by services in England. They are intended to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity of services, ensuring communities are supported in the best way.



-  **Putting our Communities First**
-  **Integrity**
-  **Dignity and Respect**
-  **Leadership**
-  **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

# About Essex

## Geography

1,420 square miles, bordering with Greater London, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, and Hertfordshire.

Home to two airports - Stansted and Southend - Harwich seaport, Lakeside shopping centre, Coryton oil refinery, power stations, docks at Tilbury and along the Thames, seven underground tube stations and parts of the M25 and M11 motorways.

The county is made up of 72% rural land, but there are also major urban areas including Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester, Southend and Thurrock.

The county also contains many ecologically important areas, one of the largest sections of coastline (400 miles) in the country, various conservation areas and over 14,000 listed buildings.

## Buildings and infrastructure

- More than 150 high-rise residential buildings.
- Various conservation areas and over 14,000 listed buildings.
- Transport links and sites include two airports - Stansted and Southend - Harwich International Seaport, seven underground tube stations and parts of the M25 and M11 motorways, London Gateway DP World and the Port of Tilbury.
- Significant hazardous material sites include Coryton oil refinery, power stations, docks at Tilbury and along the Thames.

## Essex communities

Essex has an overall population of 1.88 million, across 760,000 households.

### Population Growth

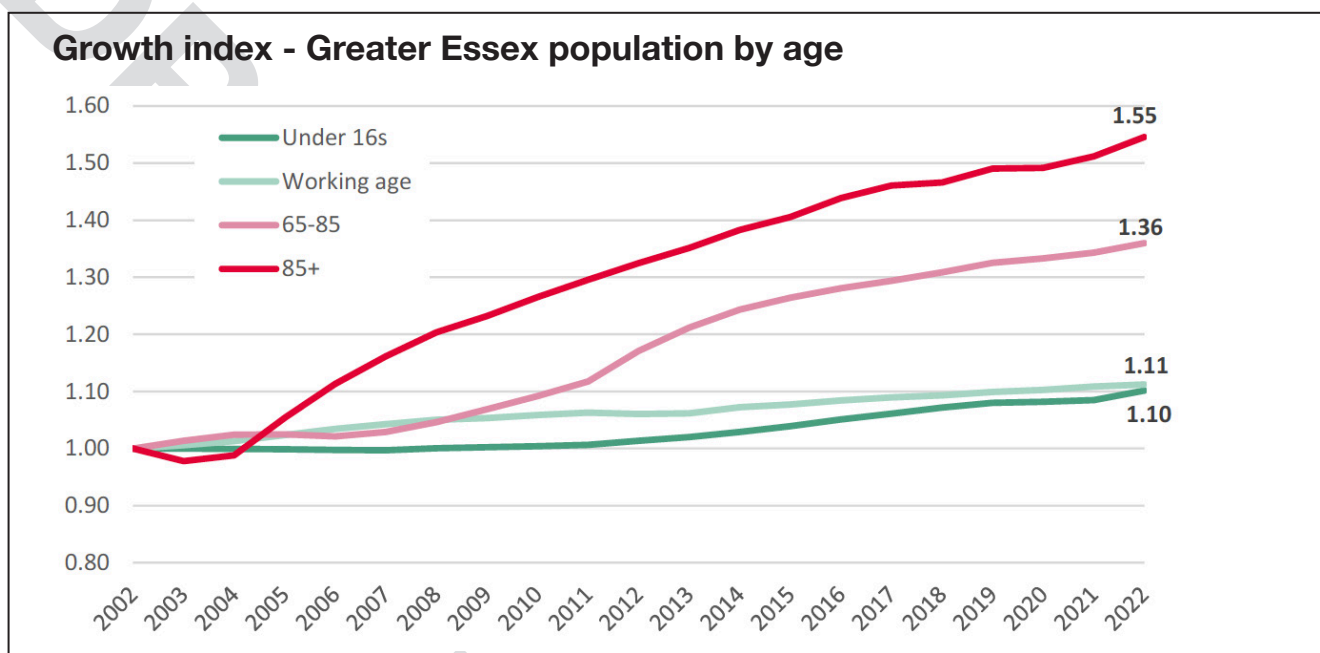
The two most significant shifts in our demography are the age of population, and increasing diversity.

Over the past 20 years, the fastest rate of population growth in Essex has been those aged over 65. Essex has seen relatively modest growth in younger age groups and those of working-age.

Demographic pressures are driving physical changes in towns and cities across Essex. Local plans currently provide for approximately 200,000 new homes to meet the needs of a growing population by 2040.

**The latest projections prepared by the Office for National Statistics suggest the population of Essex could reach two million by 2034 and increase further to almost 2.1 million by 2043.**

This represents an average annual population growth rate of 0.5% (c.10,000 people per year). This is far in excess of the growth rate projected for the East of England and for England as a whole (0.39% per year).



Data source: Mid-year population estimates 2002-2022. National Statistics.

### Living arrangements

- 29% of households are one-person.
- 44% are households are married or co-habiting couples.
- 11% are lone-parent households.
- Three-in ten households have dependent children.

### Disability

Around 309,000 people across Essex identify as having a physical or mental health condition or illnesses lasting 12 months or more, that reduces their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Levels of disability vary substantially across districts, with particular concentrations in some of our coastal communities. This reflects the strong link between levels of disability and age. One third of the Essex disabled population is aged 70+.

### Ethnic Diversity

Despite increases, Essex remains less ethnically diverse than England as a whole, where the minority ethnic population accounts for over a quarter (26.5%) of the overall population.

Even in Essex's most ethnically diverse districts – Harlow and Epping Forest – the size of the minority ethnic population is just in line with national averages.

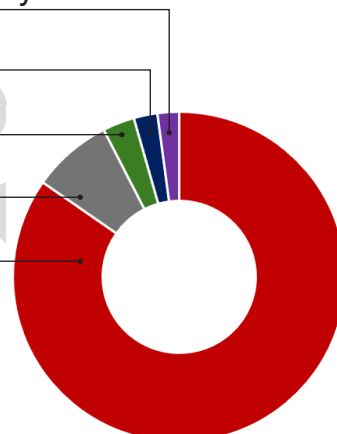
2.1% mixed ethnicity

2.3% other

3.1% black

7.8% Asian

84.7% white



# Risks

**Our CRMP is informed by current and future risk. We have used a wide range of evidence to build a risk profile, which we have validated with our own operational data.**

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## **This CRMP focuses on our plans and the actions we will take to reduce risk across Essex.**

We have broken our risk analysis into the following key areas:

- **National risks**
- **Incident risks**
- **Community risks**
- **Water risks**
- **Road risks**
- **Environment risks**

Our assessment of risks process is based on National Fire Chiefs Council guidance and aligned to National Operational Guidance and the CRMP Fire Standard.

It helps us look at all types of incident from the smallest to the largest. Alongside this, we also analyse risks that aren't incident types, but relate to the causes of incidents, such as the impact of increased numbers of vehicles and equipment powered by lithium-ion batteries, and the impact of climate change.

Through this work we have identified high impact incidents. These are incidents that have a high impact on our communities and could also impact the safety of firefighters and responders, and/ or have an impact on the environment.

They tend to occur less often, but require a large number of firefighters and equipment to deal with them, so we must be prepared for that.

We have also looked at the impact that fires can have on our firefighters, such as the effect of exposure to contaminants. Together, these risk assessments help us assess all foreseeable risk in Essex.

### **Reducing risk**

Through our strategic goals we will reduce risk against these incident types through:

- Developing new approaches and procedures
- Investing in new equipment
- Training and exercising
- Working with partner organisations
- Working with our public and communities

**You can read more about our risk analysis in our full CRMP methodology document that is on our website:**

**[essex-fire.gov.uk/CRMP](https://essex-fire.gov.uk/CRMP)**

# National risks

The National Risk Register 2023 provides information about the most significant emergencies that could impact the country now and in the future.

It is maintained by the UK Government and based on the National Security Risk Assessment. This register identifies various risks that, while unlikely to occur, could have significant and potentially catastrophic consequences for different parts of the country.

These risks include terrorist attacks, cyber-attacks, failures or accidents involving critical national infrastructure (such as electricity and gas supplies), extreme weather events, pandemics, emerging infectious diseases, widespread public disorder, and industrial action.

As a Category One responder, we must be ready to act in the event of an incident and ensure that we can continue to deliver our statutory duties if we are affected by such events.

During the course of the last IRMP 2020-2024, there were two nationally significant emergencies:

- The COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020.
- Wildfires, associated with record high temperatures and dry weather, during July and August of 2022.

# Resilience forum

We are a key member of the Essex Local Resilience Forum (ERF).

The role of the ERF is to plan and prepare for localised incidents and catastrophic emergencies.

It maintains a Community Risk Register, which identifies the most significant and high impact risks that could affect the county.

We work with our partners to prepare plans and carry out exercises to mitigate these risks.

The Community Risk Register also informs our operational preparedness and business continuity plans within the Service.

**National Resilience is a shared responsibility between central and local government. National Resilience provides specialist equipment and skilled staff to enhance the ability of the fire and rescue sector to respond effectively to large-scale or critical incidents. These may be natural, such as flooding or wildfire, or industrial accidents, building collapses or terrorist attacks.**



# Incident risks

**Our specific risk profiling means we can understand the risks associated with the incidents we respond to.**

Each risk profile sheet contains key information for that incident type including trend analysis from the last five years, and key statistics (including risk of injury/ fatality, most common month of occurrence, most common time of day, heat maps of location etc).

We then score this incident type based on severity and likelihood. Severity is the impact the incident would have on our firefighters, individuals or society, the environment, communities, heritage or net economic cost. Likelihood ranges from rare to almost certain.

Alongside our assessment of incident risks, we have also considered individual and community risks. You can read about these on the following pages.

Incident type	Risk score
Spate conditions - flood	Very high
Fire - domestic dwelling	Very high
Fire - commercial	High
Fire - Waste sites	High
Fire - tall buildings	High
RTC - multi-lane/ motorway	High
Fires - secondary	High
Rescues	High
RTC - Single lane/ A-Road	High
Utilities and fuel	High
Supporting other agencies	High
Hazardous materials	High
Specialist risk - terrorism	High
Spate conditions - wind	High

Incident type	Risk score
Hazardous materials COMAH	High
Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)	High
Fires - wildfire	High
Transport (non fire) - aircraft	High
Rescue from water	Medium
Transport (non fire) - road	Medium
Battery Energy Storage	Medium
Transport (non fire) - rail	Medium
Nuclear power	Medium
Animal rescue (small)	Low
Animal rescue (large)	Low
Other fires	Low
Transport (non fire) - waterways	Low
False alarms	Low

# Community risks

**We know that some people are more likely to have a house fire because of their living conditions, and other challenges they face.**

The people of Essex are central to everything we do. We have focused on strengthening our links with community groups to better understand their needs.

We will continue to build and develop these relationships over the life of this CRMP. This will help to make sure our services support and protect those who are most vulnerable to the risk of fires or other emergencies.

A number of complex characteristics contribute to the risk of being affected by fire or to being able to access services.

## People vulnerable to fire:

- Smokers in their home.
- Is 65 or older.
- Lives alone.
- Has limited mobility, a hearing impairment or is blind/partially sighted.
- Would have difficulty responding to, or escaping from, a fire.
- Has had a fire before or shows signs of burns or scorching in the home.
- Has learning disabilities.
- Is supported by family/ carers/ friends.
- Shows signs of neglect or abuse.
- Has a mental health condition such as dementia or depression.
- Has drug or alcohol dependencies.
- Doesn't have an alarm in all areas where a fire might start.
- Collects or hoards in their home.
- Shares a home with a child or young person who sets fires.

## Levels of deprivation

Individuals and communities in marginalised groups, including those with language and cultural barriers, transient communities, and individuals who are socially and economically deprived can also be more vulnerable.

There is a large and growing gap between the most and least deprived districts in Essex. Castle Point and Tendring District have seen sustained increases in deprivation.

There are concentrations of deprivation, with 75 neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived nationally. They are home to an estimated 123,640 residents, which has doubled since 2007. That is equivalent to 8.6% of the total population.

Additionally, 50,384 are estimated to live in the 10% most deprived nationally, with most living in Tendring and Basildon. Brentwood, Maldon and Uttlesford have no residents within this group at all.

**Over the last four years (2019-2023), Thurrock, Basildon and Harlow have had the most fires per 1,000 premises.**

The predominant Acorn geodemographic category across all these areas is “financially stretched” with a household type of “squeezed young families”.

## Deprivation and incidents

The urban or rural nature of a location impacts the likelihood of certain types of incidents taking place. We use the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and with Essex County Council and the University of Essex we have combined these factors alongside known contributors to accidental dwelling fires (ADF) to divide Essex into four areas.

Deprived urban centres with significant challenges



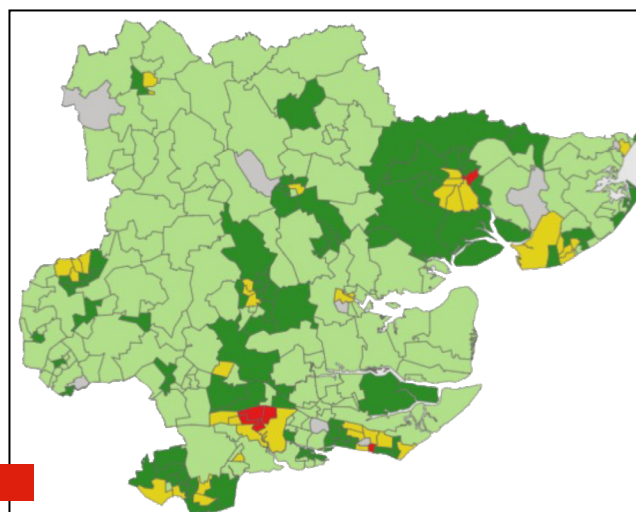
Deprived town centres and outskirts



Suburban communities



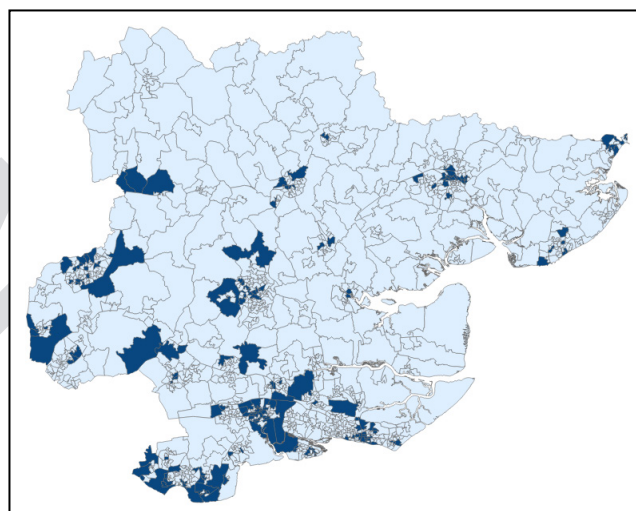
Small towns and rural settings



Data source: ACORN and ECFRS Power BI dashboard [2024]

## Disorganised neighbourhoods

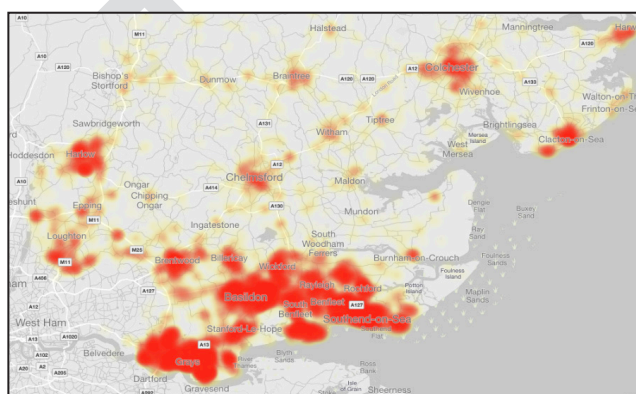
The dark blue on the map to the right shows an aggregation of data used by partner agencies, using police incident data such as anti-social behaviour and domestic violence, and fire data such as deliberate fire incidents. This was then used to model the areas that require increased levels of intervention.



Data source: partner agencies

## Secondary fire heatmap

The map to the right shows a heatmap of secondary fires. Secondary fires are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property. These include refuse fires, grassland fires, vehicle fires and fires in derelict buildings. They are frequent category of fire we respond to.



Data source: © Crown copyright and database rights  
2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. AC0000852386

**The data across the maps shows the correlation between areas of deprivation, disorganised neighbourhoods and secondary fires.**

## **Age plays a significant role in fire-related risks due to various factors that affect the likelihood of fires occurring and the ability of individuals to react to incidents happening.**

**Deprivation is not the only thing that makes a fire or other incident more likely. There are many other risk factors that can have an impact.**

There are demographic factors which can increase the risk of incidents we need to respond to. Often these demographic factors increase the risk for our emergency partners too.

### **An aging population**

Essex has an average annual population growth rate of 0.5% (c.10,000 people per year). This is far in excess of the growth rate projected for the East of England and England as a whole (0.39% /year).

**In Essex, the largest population increase in age is those aged 65-74, followed by those aged 75-84.**

Over 100,000 residents in Essex are over 80 years old, and nearly 20,000 are over 90 years old.

And while age is an important factor for fire risks, it is considered alongside mobility and frailty, mental health and learning or cognitive impairments, as well as other behaviours (like drug and alcohol use). These factors increase an individual's risk.

Over the period to 2043 we expect the fastest levels of growth to be in those aged over 75 years old.

This section of the population is expected to grow at a rate in excess of 2% per year – over seven times faster than the working age population (0.3% growth per year).

**Analysis of fire deaths indicates that older people living alone with long term mobility issues are most at risk of being fatally injured in a fire.**

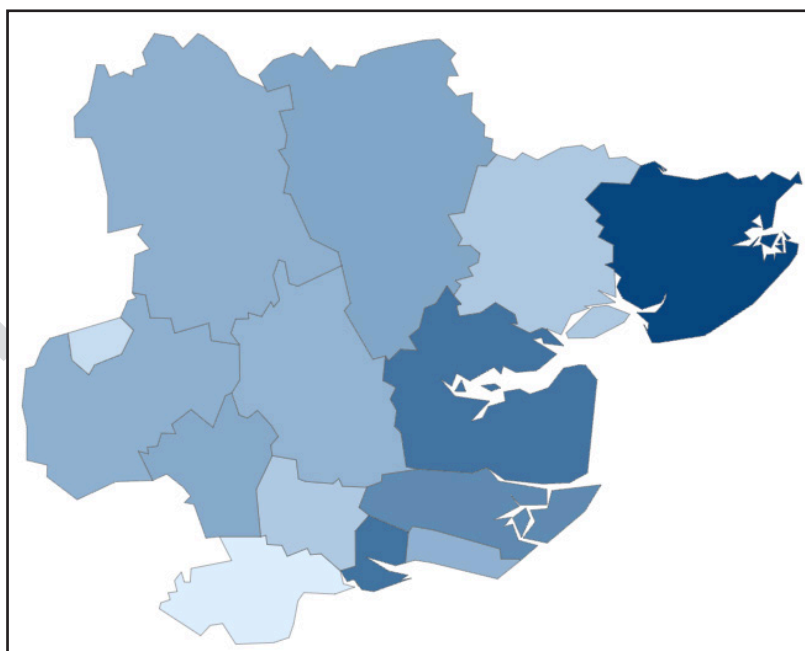
Known risk factors in the population in Essex include an aging population, an increasing number of people with mental health and obesity conditions and an increase in those requiring paid for supportive care.

The map of Essex shows where the highest number of residents live who are 65 years or older.

The darker blue areas indicate where there is a higher rate of those 65 years and older - they are predominately in Tendring and Maldon.

Levels of disability across Essex vary across districts, with particular concentrations in coastal communities.

This reflects the strong link between levels of disability and age.



Data source: ACORN and ECFRS Power BI dashboard [2024]

## Young adults

Alongside the risks posed by an aging population, there are also risks associated with young and future adults. These include social-economic pressures that lead to unsafe choices and becoming a new driver. Road crashes are the biggest killer of 17-25 year olds in the UK.

**These risks are described in more detail on pages 26-29 - evolving and future risks.**



# Water risks

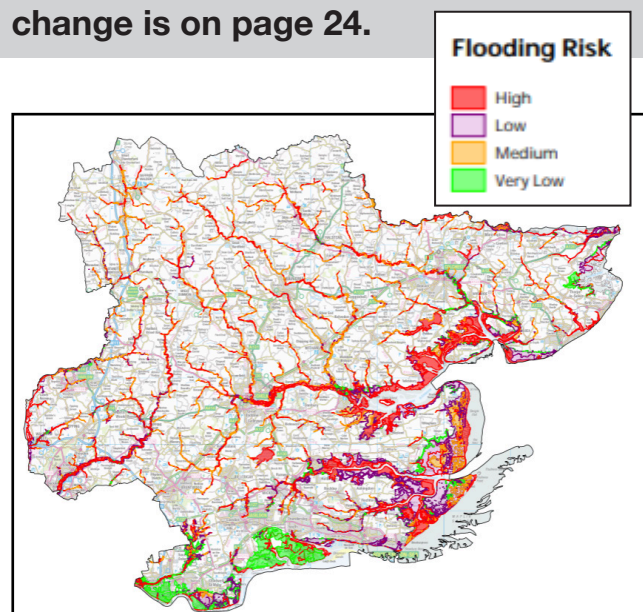
**Essex has extensive coastal areas, rivers, reservoirs and other open water sites. Water safety is an important part of our work, and the make up of our county means this is a continued risk for us.**

**Most people don't think of our Service when it comes to water rescues, but it's an important part of our work. More than 700 people drown in the UK and Ireland every year, and many more suffer life-changing injuries.**

Essex is primarily within Flood Zone 3, which means it has a high probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. It has low-lying areas, especially near the coast. Climate change and sea-level rise could worsen these risks, impacting safety near estuaries and riverbanks.

Heavy and intense rainfall causes flash flooding in inland areas, with fast-moving water and sudden surges that pose risks for drivers.

**More details about Essex and climate change is on page 24.**



Data source: © Crown copyright and database rights  
2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. AC0000852386

## Accidental drownings

Figures show that nationally around 85% of accidental drownings occur at open water sites, such as lakes, lochs, rivers, canals, reservoirs and quarries.

Teenagers and adults are more likely to get into difficulty in natural bodies of water such as in rivers, lakes, and at beaches.

Of these accidental drownings, 55% of drowning victims never intended on being in the water.

### Research by The University of Essex shows that across Essex:

- There is significant gender disparity in drowning fatalities. Males account for 82% of water fatalities, highest among those aged 20-29.
- Children are at risk due to inadequate supervision, a reliance on co-bathing and fewer children learning to swim.
- Socio-economics plays a role in access to swimming owing to high cost of classes and transportation, and therefore swimming ability.
- Residents and tourists lack understanding of beach flags and whether they indicate danger.

# Road risks

**Road Traffic Collisions are one of the leading causes of fatalities in the UK, and across Essex we have a number of major multi-lane networks running through the county, as well as “A” and rural roads.**

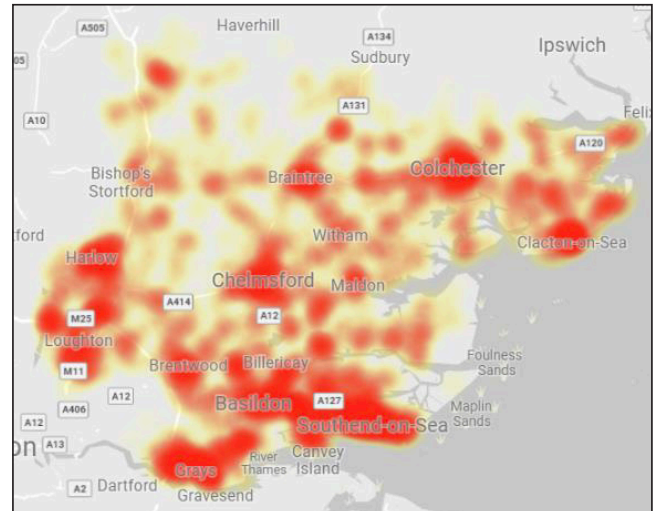
**We have a statutory responsibility to rescue those involved in Road Traffic Collisions.**

This requires specific training and equipment and close working with our blue light partners. We are a key partner to Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP).

**The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) data shows that rural roads see a higher number of both fatal and serious injury collisions compared to multi-lane roads.**

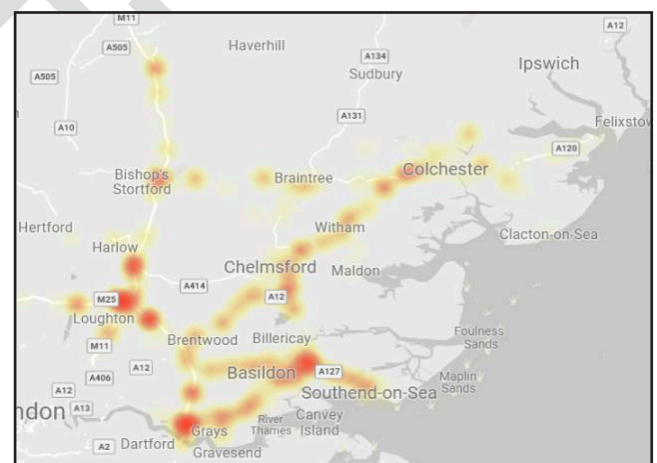
We work together with SERP to improve the effectiveness of education and intervention and also promote responsible road behaviour.

Our activities in road traffic collision reduction focus on specific interventions, campaigns, schemes and initiatives which are designed to change driving behaviours and reduce death and injury caused by road traffic-related incidents.



**Incidents on single-lane/ A Road/ rural roads.**

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**Incidents on multi-lane roads.**

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# Environmental risks

**Using Met Office and projection data for temperatures in Essex, the annual average surface temperatures are expected to increase by approximately 35% by 2079.**

## Climate change

The Met Office projections for climate change anticipate the UK will experience:

- Warmer and wetter winters
- Hotter and drier summers
- More frequent and intense weather extremes

By 2070, the Met Office projects:

- Winters will be between 1 and 4.5°C warmer and up to 30% wetter
- Summers will be between 1 and 6°C warmer and up to 60% drier

The impact of climate change could lead to:

- Rising ocean levels
- Ocean acidification
- Extreme weather events
- Flooding of coastal regions.
- Food insecurity
- Conflict and climate migrants
- Damage to marine ecosystems

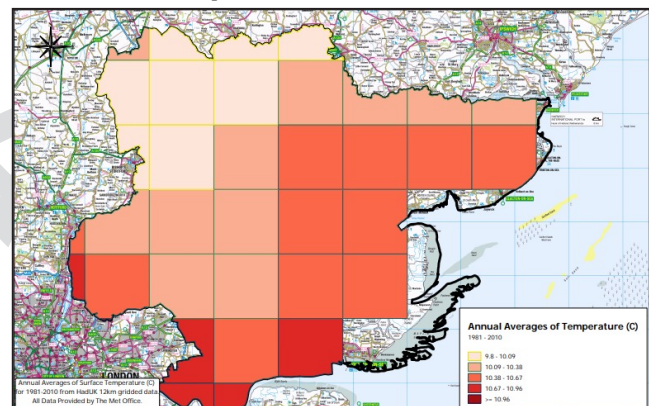
Using Met Office observations and projection data for temperatures in Essex, the annual average surface temperatures are expected to increase by approximately 35% by 2079.

The hottest areas will be those closest to built up areas of Essex which neighbour London. While the lowest temperatures are those closer to Cambridgeshire.

Alongside the increase in annual surface temperatures across Essex, the annual averages of precipitation are due to decrease by approximately 99%. These projected figures indicate that Essex will experience extreme weather conditions of predominantly hot, dry weather.

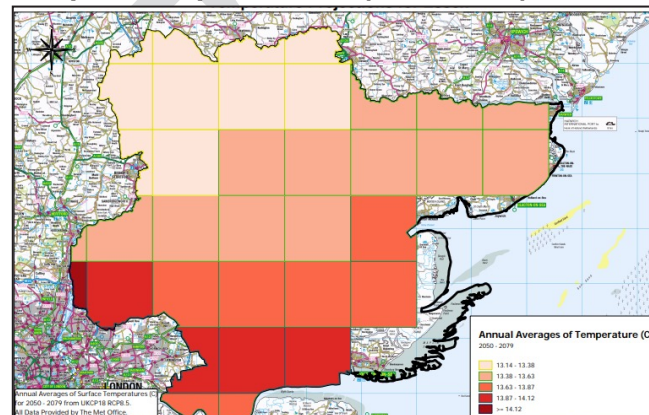
Where rain does fall, it is likely to be on surfaces which are too dry to absorb the water and lead to localised flooding.

## Current temperature observations



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## Temperature predictions (2050- 2079)



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**Essex is vulnerable to flash flooding and incidents that require rescue from water. This is from river water and local flooding of drainage networks from intense rainstorms.**

## Essex and extreme weather

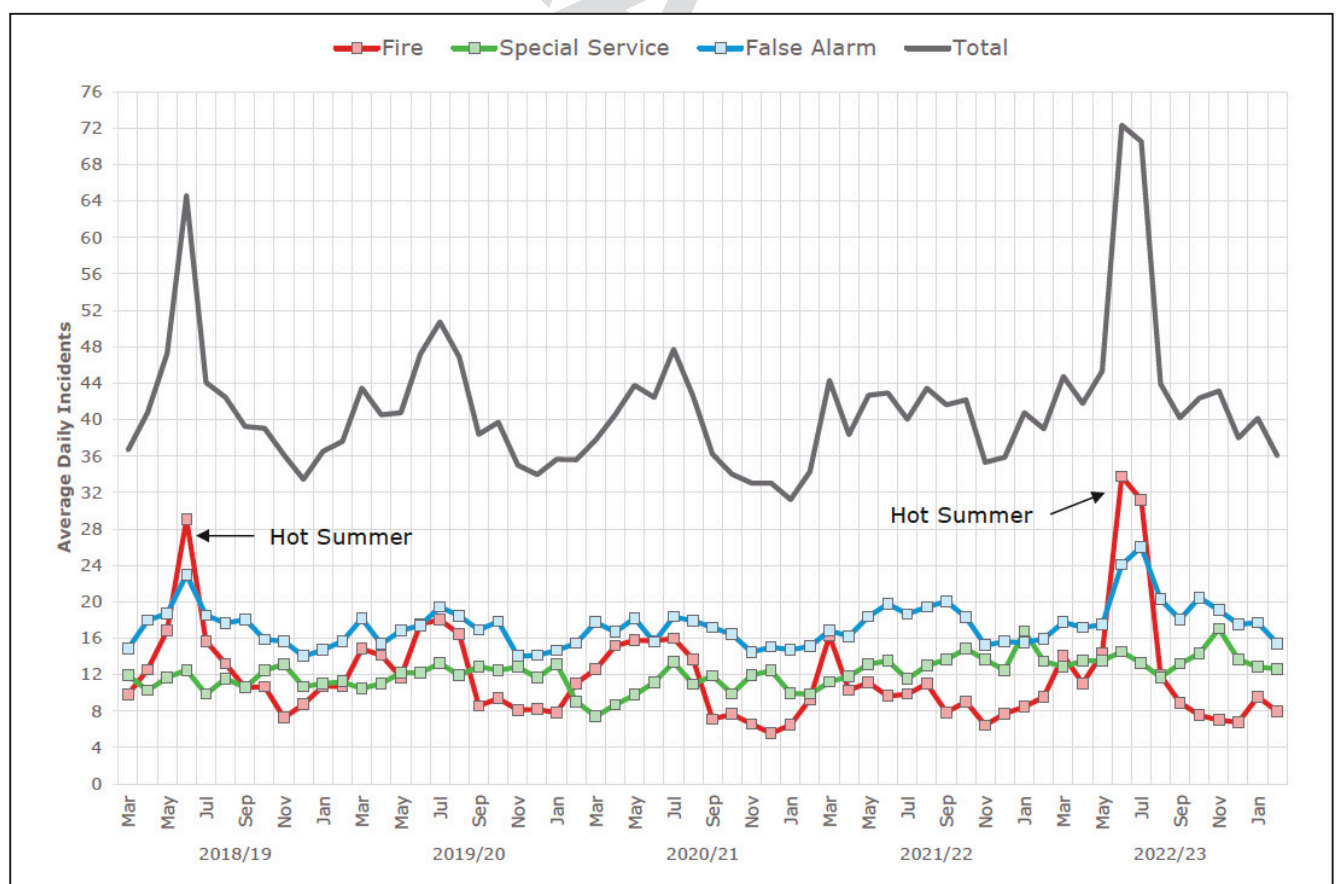
During July and August 2022 red weather warnings for extreme heat were issued by the Met Office, with temperatures exceeding 40°C over multiple days.

During this time, the Service saw a spike increase in mobilisations, with a 46% increase on the five year average in July and a 60% increase on the five year average in August.

This equated to 3,916 mobilisations and 2,325 reported incidents for July and 3,674 mobilisations and 2,285 reported incidents in August.

For both months, 82% of fires reported were outdoor fires.

In between the ongoing responses to hot weather related outdoor fires, there were 70 flood related incidents on 17 August when the weather changed for a brief period.



# Evolving and emerging risks

**In order to ensure that we can provide an effective service into the future, it is important that we look ahead at the changes we might need to prepare and respond to.**

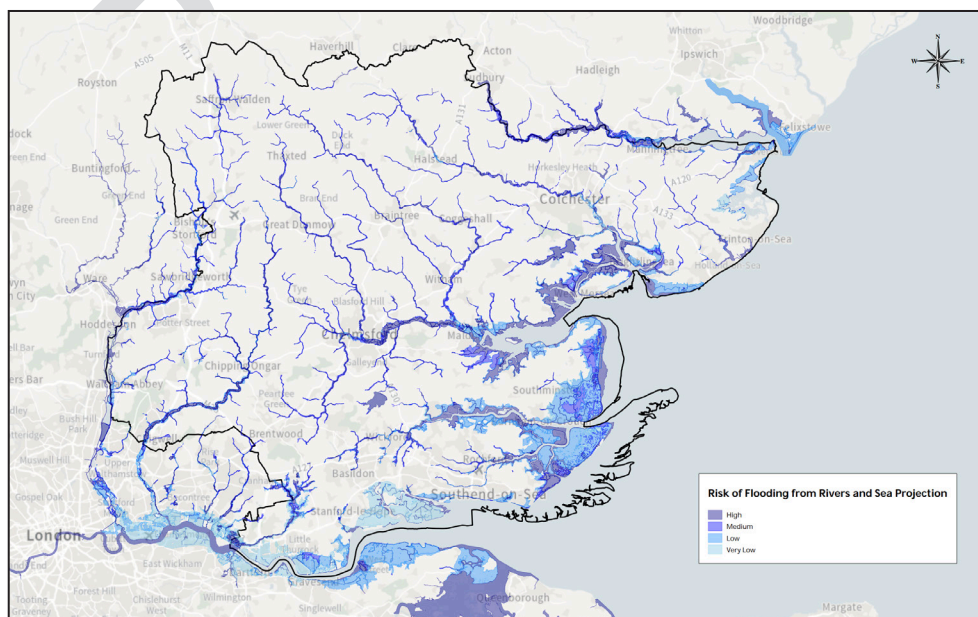
We are aware of emerging and evolving risks that could have an impact on our Service in the future. These include alternative fuels, battery storage sites, electricity generation and electric vehicles as well as modern building techniques.

Incident type	Risk score
Spate conditions - flood	Very high
Fires - wildfire	High

## Environmental changes

Extreme weather events are predicted to become increasingly frequent. They can lead to extensive wildfires and wide-scale flooding. This is already leading to changes in the way we train and equip our fire crews, and this will continue to be reviewed.

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**According to the Met Office, wildfires are projected to increase globally by 14% by 2030, 30% by 2050, and 50% by 2100.**

The increase in wildfires during the summer of 2022 showed how important it is for us to be able to respond quickly when there's a high demand for our help.

We can model areas more susceptible to flooding to help us make sure our specialist resources are best placed to respond effectively.

## Our communities

### Aging and health

People are living longer, but it also means more pressure on health and other services. This can affect how busy we are, and the demand on our services. Poor mental health can also make people vulnerable to fire. We are seeing more people who need help with their mental health, and we want to support them as much as we can.

### Cost of living

Financial constraints can increase fire risks, potentially increasing the number of dwelling fires the Service attends. Cost of living pressures may lead people to unsafe cooking practices, neglecting appliance maintenance, and being unable to afford smoke alarms.

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**“The cost-of-living crisis could be compromising the safety of our roads.”**

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Research from Brake, a road safety charity, and AXA has found that 62% of people are concerned about being able to carry out timely repairs to their vehicle.

This increases to 84% of 17-24 year olds. The research also indicates that 18% of respondents had driven with known tyre defects to save money.

### Housing

The latest projections prepared by the Office for National Statistics suggest that the population of Essex could reach 2 million in ten years (2034) and increase further to almost 2.1 million by 2043.

This will inevitably drive physical changes in villages, towns, and cities. Local plans currently provide for approximately 197,000 new homes to meet the needs of a growing population to the mid-2030s (Approximately 48,000 of these have already been built).

To meet the needs of the expanding population, the housing stock needs to grow by 1.4% each year - this usually averages at 0.8%.

This requirement is not only leading to more housing developments being built, which has an impact on our services, but is also putting increased pressure on councils and districts to provide more housing. This can lead to more change of use for buildings - where existing buildings (often commercial) are changed into residential housing. These present significant risks and challenges to the built environment and resident safety.

**This increased pressure for housing, alongside the Grenfell Tower tragedy of 2017 highlight the importance of having strong relationships with housing providers.**

## Emerging technology

Technology provides opportunities to make our processes more efficient, and to improve the accessibility of our services. However new technologies can also present new and emerging risks, which we will need to prepare for.

### Lithium-ion batteries

The growth in the use of lithium-ion batteries - from disposable vapes, e-scooters, battery electric vehicles, to solar energy storage solutions - presents new challenges for firefighting, fire prevention and fire protection.

They present risk to people in their homes and to our firefighters attending battery-related incidents.

**By 2027, replaceable or rechargeable batteries in all consumer products, including vapes, will be mandatory.**

Across the UK, the frequency of waste site fires is increasing, largely attributed to the incorrect disposal of lithium-ion batteries in household waste.

**Battery fires in bin lorries and at waste sites in the UK have reached an all time high with over 1,200 in the last year (2023). That's an increase of 71% from 700 in 2022.**

Incident type	Risk score
Waste site fire	High

---

## The risks posed by lithium-ion batteries span across our prevention, protection and response core areas.

---

Waste fires are “high” risk due to their probability in Essex, the amount of resource they require to extinguish and the safety risks for our firefighters.

In Essex, the hotspots for waste site fires are focussed in urban areas close to Basildon, Southend, Grays, Chelmsford and Colchester. Other areas also include more rural locations close to Braintree and Witham.

### Electric vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles

Fully electric vehicles are considered essential for reducing carbon emissions and achieving a greener future. As the popularity of electric vehicles grows, so does the potential for fires involving these vehicles.

Fires involving lithium-ion batteries are often prolonged and present significant challenges to firefighters, as well as hazards to the public and the environment.

### Anticipated Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) on the roads across Essex:

- 2025 50,000 vehicles
- 2030 22,000 vehicles
- 2040 800,000 vehicles



## Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Sites

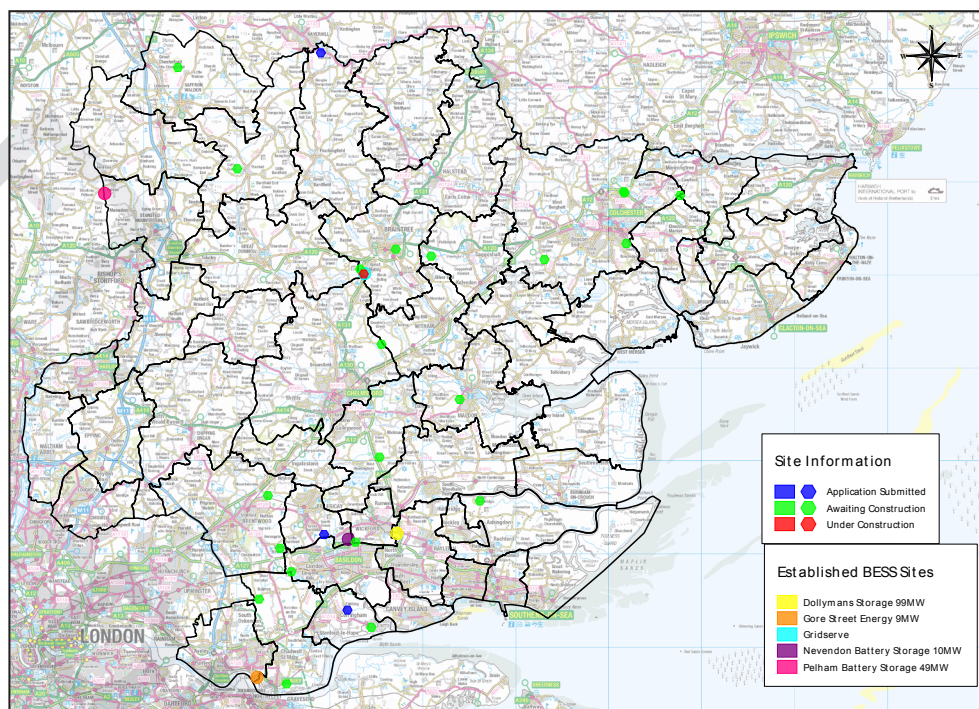
BESS sites are being installed at an exponential rate across the UK.

Fires at BESS sites can be extremely hazardous and could impact on the safety of the public and our responders.

Nationally there have been a number of high profile incidents at BESS sites that have raised significant fire risks.

Currently battery energy storage sites developments do not have a legislative requirement under the Fire Safety Order, although guidance has been issued from the National Fire Chiefs Council to BESS developers.

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## Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both an opportunity and a threat.

The threat to cyber security is constant and ever-changing, and while AI can help us protect the Service from cyber crime, it is also something that criminals will use to attack organisations.

There will be opportunities to use AI-based tools to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our activities. We would not seek to replace our people with AI, but instead invest in understanding how this technology could support our activities to create greater efficiencies and an improved service for our communities.

# Responding to risks

**To understand the demand on our resources, we've looked at how often we need to use our fire engines and specialist vehicles to respond to emergencies across Essex.**

We know that Essex is a diverse area, and therefore risk changes across different parts of the county.

Our risk assessment helps us make sure we can prioritise our prevention and protection activities, but also means we have the quickest possible response to incidents in parts of the county where the likelihood and impact is the greatest.

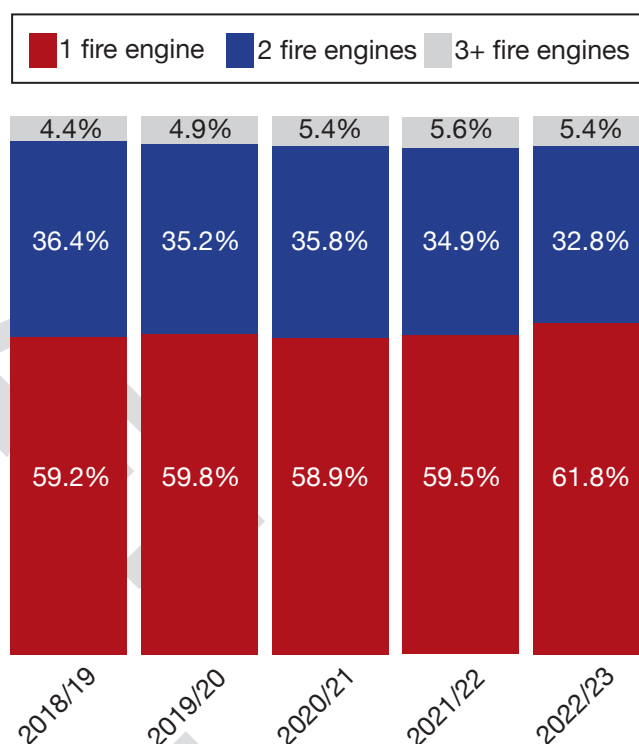
In addition to being able to get to life risk calls as quickly as possible, we also need to make sure we can support initial attendance with additional crews when needed.

## Responding to foreseeable demand

**In the last 5 years, 60% of the calls we attended were dealt with safely by one fire engine. However, we know there have been occasions when we have needed up to 20 fire engines to deal with a large incident.**

Furthermore, our analysis of the hot summer of 2022 shows our demand for fire engines went from an average of three fire engines being committed to an incident to 35 fire engines being committed to incidents in one hour during this period.

Our risk analysis and emerging risks indicates that these types of incidents are likely to occur in the future, and so we must make sure we can resource these types of incidents. We aim to have enough resources available to respond to foreseeable demand.



## Operational plans

To make sure we can respond to risks appropriately, we gather site specific risk information and develop plans. We also hold exercises with partner agencies to test our plans. This knowledge has been used to develop our specialist skills, and assures us that we have the right people, with the right equipment, in the right place at the right time.

## Spate conditions

Events that occur that place high demand on our resources for short periods of time are called spat conditions. These tend to be climate related such as flooding, extreme wind/storms or field fires.

Page 20 provides more details about Essex environmental risks.

These conditions lend themselves to early awareness of an increased risk, and we use this time to enhance the resources and logistical support we have available.

## Optimum fire engine availability

**Through data analysis, and modelling of risk scenarios, we have set a optimum availability of 40 fire engines.**

This measure means we can reach risk to life calls quickly, support initial attendance if needed, or respond to periods of high demand.

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**We have 66 fire engines in total. Our optimum number of fire engines to have available is 40. Our minimum level of availability is 20 fire engines.**

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Currently our fire engines are either wholtime (available for immediate deployment) or on-call (available for deployment within 5 minutes). Both of these crewing systems would make up our optimum availability.

We will explore how we can best use the other fire appliances when they are not available. This could include the opportunity to use some of them differently, including using an on-call tiered availability model. This could mean increasing fire engine availability during times of unexpected demand, or to support attendance at long protracted incidents. These incidents could be things like waste site fires, or spat conditions - as detailed in this document as key risks.

## Optimum availability and productivity

Due to the make up of our operational resources - wholtime and on-call - we will need to redistribute our resources to make sure we reach our optimum availability during peak hours (day), and by doing so will be able to spend more time in and with our communities.

## Minimum level of availability

Our minimum level of availability is 20 fire engines. This is the number we would need to respond to a significant one off event in our county. If we drop below this number, we would instigate business continuity arrangements and draw upon our tiered availability and off duty firefighters to increase our available fire engines.

# Strategic goals

We have developed five strategic goals that have been shaped by insights, risk analysis and data.

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# Our strategic goals

**These goals reflect our mission and values, and will mean we will continue to reduce risk in our communities and provide a service our public deserves.**

Service delivery plans and strategies will support these strategic goals.

These will be evaluated through community feedback, assurance and evaluation of actions throughout the life cycle of this CRMP.

## Preventing fires and other emergencies

---

### Our aim

**We will work together to help people stay safe from fires and other emergencies.**

We will work with our partners and communities to target our prevention, protection, resilience and preparedness activities to reduce community risk and enhance societal resilience.

---

### Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

Protect vulnerable people.

Improve road safety and reduce road death in Essex to Zero.

---

### HMICFRS inspection areas

- Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies.
- Preventing fires and other risks.

# Our strategic goals

## Reducing the impact of fire in the built environment

---

### Our aim

To protect businesses, people, the local economy and the environment from the impact of fire in the built environment.

We will improve fire safety in buildings in Essex that people live and work in.

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### Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

Making buildings across Essex safer.

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### HMICFRS inspection areas

- Protecting the public through fire safety regulation.

## Responding effectively to emergencies

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### Our aim

To respond to emergencies in the most effective and safe way, prioritising the protection of, and limiting damage to, life, property and the environment.

In this CRMP we are exploring ways to provide greater day coverage across the county.

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### Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities

Improve efficiency and effectiveness.

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### HMICFRS inspection areas

- Responds to fires and other emergencies.
- Responds to major and multi-agency incidents.

## **Inclusive and high performing culture**

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### **Our aim**

**We will embed a high performing and inclusive culture ensuring our people are supported, engaged and inspired to deliver our Service strategic goals.**

Our colleagues are empowered to be professional and ambitious in serving the communities of Essex.

---

### **Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities**

Promote a positive culture and develop the workforce.

---

### **HMICFRS inspection areas**

- Promotes its values and culture.
- Trains its staff and ensures that they have the necessary skills.
- Ensures fairness and diversity for its workforce.
- Develops leadership and capability.

## **A resilient and sustainable future**

---

### **Our aim**

**We will manage and invest in our Service to ensure it is fit for the future.**

We will manage our finances, use digital, data and technology to drive improvement, and make sure that our estates, equipment and vehicles meet the needs of our people and the risks that we face.

---

### **Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities**

Improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Adapt to our changing environment.

---

### **HMICFRS inspection areas**

- Making the FRS affordable now and in the future.
- How well the Service uses resources to manage risk.

# Preventing fires and other emergencies

**Through our prevention work we will reduce the risk of harm to individuals from fires in their homes, from incidents on the roads, and in the water.**

This goal focuses on the work we do to prevent fires and other emergencies and reduce the potential harm such incidents can cause. We will deliver this through our prevention service delivery plans.

## **Our aim**

**We will work together to help people stay safe from fires and other emergencies.**

We will work with our partners and communities to target our prevention, protection, resilience and preparedness activities to reduce community risk and enhance societal resilience.

During our IRMP 2020-2024 we have significantly increased our overall productivity and we have invested in tools and research to improve our understanding of our communities.

We have invested in enhanced safeguarding training for colleagues. We have reorganised our Prevention team to better align our resources to meet the needs of our communities.

We engage with people at all stages of life, targeting those groups and people who are at highest risk of harm.

Over the life of this CRMP 2025-2030, we will focus on how we can more effectively identify and reach those who are at a higher risk of harm.

We will work closer with partners to explore ways to tailor our activities to meet the needs of individuals.

Vulnerable people in our communities are often known to and engage with multiple agencies. We want to explore opportunities to work closer with partner agencies to provide a more efficient and joined up service.

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**We will work to reduce risk in Essex, with the aspiration to eliminate fatal and severe injuries resulting from fires, road traffic collisions and accidental drownings.**

---

We will work to increase safer and healthier communities by actively using its resources to influence and improve outcomes and reduce harm in Essex.

## Key risks

Climate related emergencies and incidents, such as flooding and wildfire.

Emerging technological risks such as e-scooters, solar charging, and the increasing use of lithium-ion batteries in a wide range of domestic settings.

Fire related incidents in the home resulting in injury or death.

People killed and seriously injured on roads.

Children and young people who are identified as being involved in fire setting behaviour.

Increasing older population, leading to an increased proportion of people whose health and wellbeing needs are likely to become more complex.

Incident type	Risk score
Spate conditions -flood	Very high
RTC - multi-lane	High
RTC - Single lane	High
Fire - domestic	High
Rescue from water	Medium

## Domestic dwelling fires

Incident type	Risk score
Fire - domestic dwelling	High

Reducing dwelling fires is crucial for preserving lives and property. By minimising these incidents, we can mitigate the risk of injury and loss of life within communities.

We have reduced the severity score through our prevention and protection activities, but this still remains a high risk for us.

### Home Fire Safety Visits

2019-20 3,593  
2023-24 10,120 ↑ 182%

### People in Essex injured by fire

↓ 17% 2019-20 66  
2023-24 56

It is predicted there will be **187,331** additional dwellings and a population increase of **447,907** by 2040.

**Fire and Rescue Plan:** Protect vulnerable people.  
Improve road safety and reduce road death in Essex to Zero.

# Preventing fires and other emergencies

## Vulnerability in Essex

We need to continue to improve our understanding of vulnerability to keep individuals and our communities safe.

We use ACORN geodemographics to categorise our Essex neighbourhoods based on demographics, social factors, consumer behaviour, and lifestyle characteristics. This helps us pinpoint areas where residents may be more vulnerable due to factors such as socio-economic status, housing type, and age.

We know that certain demographic groups and geographical areas are more vulnerable to fire risks due to factors like housing type (for example - older buildings, high-density flats), socio-economic status (for example - low-income households), and household composition (for example - elderly residents, larger families).

## Community resilience

In this CRMP we will introduce a “community resilience” approach so individuals, groups, organisations, and networks can all play a meaningful part in building resilience across Essex.

We recognise the capabilities that already exist in our communities, rather than assume the problems should be fixed from the outside.

## Over this CRMP we will:

### Strengthen our community engagement

- Spend most of our time in and with our communities.
- Continue to increase the number of home fire safety visits we carry out.
- Target our prevention activities to those people and places most at risk.
- Continue to work with partners and develop water safety engagement initiatives to reach those more likely to find themselves in danger in water.
- Make sure our communities receive services that meet their needs.
- Deliver specific interventions, campaigns, and initiatives to positively change driving behaviours and reduce death or injury caused by road incidents.
- Support our communities, educating about emerging technologies.

### Continue our partnership working

- Continue our work with health and other blue light services, as well as exploring other opportunities with partners to reach vulnerable communities.
- Improve ways of working across multiple agencies, share information, develop an understanding of community risks, and identify the individuals and properties most at risk.

- Continue our work with The East of England Ambulance Service Trust and Essex Police, as well as exploring other opportunities with partners to reach vulnerable communities.
- Continue our work within the Safer Essex Roads Partnership to reduce road deaths across Essex.
- Work with wider Essex partners to develop more opportunities to work with young people not in mainstream education, employment or training, those who have Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) needs and seldom heard groups.

#### **Public perception and feedback**

- Engage with and listen to all our communities to understand their needs and use this knowledge to help improve the services we deliver.
- Expand our after-incident response to reach those who have been affected by fires to improve our understanding of how we can prevent future fires.

#### **Develop community resilience**

- Engage those who are at higher risk, as well as areas of higher risk. We will educate and inform about known and foreseeable risk (for example flooding and wildfire) and the actions individuals and/ or communities can take to make themselves safer.
- Support communities to prepare for emergency situations by helping them develop their own resilience.

## **Outcomes**

- Fires in the home are reduced.
- The likelihood of severe injury or fatality from fires in the home, incidents on the roads, or on water is reduced.
- Fires and other incidents among people in protected groups and deprived areas are reduced.
- Greater visibility of our Service in our local communities, increasing engagement and trust.
- Increased awareness of the wide number of roles within our Service.

## **Key data**

- Dwelling fire deaths and injuries.
- Road Traffic Collision deaths and injuries.
- Home Fire Safety Visit.
- Public opinion and feedback.



# Reducing the impact of fire in the built environment

**Our protection activities focus on fire safety in premises like commercial buildings, workplaces, multi-occupancy and tall buildings, and public buildings like hospitals and venues.**

## **Our aim**

**To protect people, businesses, the local economy and the environment from the impact of fire in the built environment.**

Through our protection services, our focus is to protect multiple-life risk in the built environment through. We do this through a range of interventions and appropriate regulation:

- Building audits
- Business engagement
- Tactical planning
- Fire safety checks
- Primary Authority
- Collaboration with partners

**The impact of the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 rightly continues to influence the fire and rescue service sector.**

Our high-rise task force has applied a risk based priority approach to audit activity relating to high-rise residential buildings in Essex in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended) and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations. These came into force in January 2023 as result of the tragic Grenfell Tower fire.

## **Risk Based Intervention**

We use local and national information to help us identify the premises most at risk from fire. This helps us create our risk-based intervention programme - a list of premises that we will inspect or audit.

**We identify our highest risk premises using the following methodology:**

- **Historical likelihood of fire.**
- **Vulnerability of occupancy.**
- **Buildings identified as high risk under our operational risk information.**



## Key risks

**Multi-occupancy buildings** - an increase in fire risks due to factors like height, occupancy density, and complex structure. Fire safety laws apply to shared spaces, like hallways and stairwells, in blocks of flats or housing complexes.

**Changes in building use** from commercial to residential. These present significant risks and challenges to the built environment and resident safety.

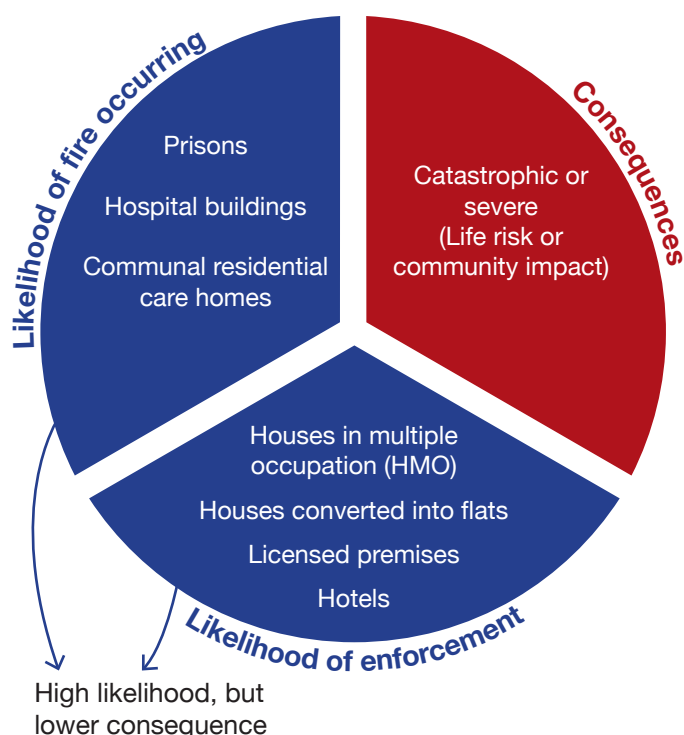
**Responsible persons** failing to comply with fire safety legislation, either intentionally or due to a lack of understanding.

**Changes in fire safety legislation** required to be effectively and consistently shared, and implemented by those affected or impacted.

**The growth and diversity** of land and buildings to which fire safety legislation applies in a changing and increasingly complex environment.

Incident type	Risk score
Fires - commercial	High
Fire - tall buildings	High
Automatic Fire Alarm	High
Battery Energy Storage	Medium

## Risk and priorities



A fire in any type of business premises can have a devastating impact. We have a duty to help those responsible for these premises to understand and comply with fire safety laws or potentially face criminal action.

### Societal life risk

- Complex/ delayed evacuation strategies
- Dependency of occupiers on others to evacuate
- Building complexity - design and build, risks and delays to firefighting

### Critical community assets

- Loss of critical community asset
- Major disruption and financial loss to communities, society or the economy
- Major impact on communities/ environment

# Reducing the impact of fire in the built environment

## Over this CRMP we will:

### Engagement

- Provide advice and guidance to businesses on their fire safety regulation responsibilities and provide business continuity support.
- Provide professional advice and support on fire safety at events and through fire safety seminars.

### Training and Development

- Continue to invest in our high-rise task force and protection officers.
- Ensure the continued development and competence of our team of specialist fire safety professionals.
- Provide more specialist protection training, enhancing firefighter safety and improving inspection of premises.

### Consultations

- Provide statutory consultation for buildings that will fall under the Fire Safety Order 2005 once built.
- Provide professional fire safety opinion on licensing applications.
- Influence future infrastructure across the county through partnerships with Local Authorities and Districts.

### Unwanted Fire Signals and AFAs

- Implement new and improved ways to reduce unwanted fire signals and the number of repeat mobilisations to fire alarms activating because of poor fire safety management.
- Make every contact count - use mobilisations to Automatic Fire Alarms as an intervention opportunity.

### Legislation and enforcement

- Continue to develop and enhance our risk-based intervention programme.
- Ensure our activity supports the outcomes of the Government's Building Safety Review.
- Continue to enforce legislation when regulated premises are not compliant with relevant legislation.

### Post-incident

- Promote safety advice following a significant fire in a business premises.
- Provide support and advice on business recovery and avoiding future incidents.
- Our team of specialist fire investigators attend fire incidents where the cause is unclear, to detect the probable source and cause of ignition. They will share findings to inform future prevention activities.

### Emerging risks

- Work with the NFCC and other Fire and Rescue Services to improve the planning process for BESS so planning authorities consider the implications of fire and firefighter safety when approving new sites.
- Working with our partners to plan for and respond to the emerging threat from fires involving alternative fuels, including Lithium-Ion batteries and Hydrogen fuel.

## Outcomes

- Safety in all buildings across Essex is equitable, and our communities feel safe in their homes, places of work or buildings they are visiting.
- Communities and individuals understand our role in keeping them safe.
- Reduction in the likelihood of severe injury or fatality from fires in multi-occupancy buildings.
- An established business engagement partnership approach with building owners leading to safer buildings across Essex.
- Reduction in false alarms in commercial buildings, protecting front line fire engine availability.
- Increased interventions carried out by Firefighters.
- Through training and development, protection officers and operational colleagues have improved knowledge and understanding of built environment risks.

## Key data

- Interactions and interventions carried out at commercial premises.
- Reduction of fires in non-residential buildings.
- Automatic False Alarm (AFA) data.
- Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).
- Public opinion and feedback.

**Fires in non-domestic buildings see fewer fire related fatalities and injuries compared with dwelling fires. However, these types of fires tend to see more damage to property.**

# Responding effectively to emergencies

**Our statutory duty to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies is covered by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.**

We have 50 fire stations strategically positioned across the county. Our Control room is based at our Service headquarters.

Together, our control operators and firefighters provide our operational response.

When we receive a 999 call we respond immediately with the nearest appropriate fire engines and specialist equipment, depending on the size and nature of the incident.

The stations are staffed using a variety of shift patterns (working arrangements) to make sure we can provide an effective and efficient response to any incident.

Currently we have wholetime firefighters and on-call firefighters.

**In this CRMP we will explore how we can better guarantee availability during our peak times.**

## Our aim

**To respond to emergencies in the most effective and safe way, prioritising the protection of, and limiting damage to, life, property and the environment.**

## Operational assurance

Delivering effective operational response takes preparation, training and exercising. We maintain our preparedness by making sure that colleagues are trained, equipped and have access to up to date and accurate risk information.

We undertake regular exercises and drills, including some with partner agencies, to make sure we are prepared and have effective procedures.

We collect learning from incidents to improve our performance and ensure the safety of our people and the public. We also share relevant learning with other organisations, locally and nationally.

## Response standard

A response standard is a commitment to respond to incidents within set timescales. We have aligned our response standards to Home Office reporting.

We will always respond to emergencies in the most effective and safe way, prioritising the protection of life, property, and the environment.

### Dwelling Fires

“Fires in properties that are a place of residence - places such as houses and flats, excluding hotels/hostels and residential institutions; dwellings also includes non-permanent structures used solely as a dwelling, such as houseboats and caravans”.\*

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**We will attend all Dwelling Fires across Essex within an average of 10 minutes.**

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### All Incidents

Includes attendance to false alarms, special services (non-fire incidents such as road traffic collisions and flooding), as well as other fires - primary fires in non-residential buildings, road vehicles, outdoor fires and secondary fires.\*

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**We will attend all other incidents across Essex within an average of 15 minutes.**

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\* Home Office fire statistics definitions

## Optimum availability

In this CRMP we are exploring ways to provide greater day coverage across the county. We will also look at options to prevent fire engines becoming unavailable due to short term staffing issues to protect our life risk response.

Through data analysis and modelling of risk scenarios across Essex, we know that having 40 fire engines available is our optimum number. This optimum number of 40 fire engines available means we can reach life risk calls quickly, support initial attendance, or respond to periods of high demand.

Currently our fire engines are either wholetime (available for immediate deployment) or on call (available for deployment within 5 minutes). Both of these crewing systems would make up our 40 available fire engines.

The nature of the on call duty system means we will not have the same 40 fire engines available at all times. We will use our fire engine allocation in a flexible way to deliver our optimum level of availability.

There is also opportunity to use the other fire engines differently, including using a tiered availability model. This could mean increasing fire engine availability during times of unexpected demand, or to support at long protracted incidents.

# Responding effectively to emergencies

## Over this CRMP we will:

### Response Model

- Implement 40 fire engines as our optimum availability.
- Reach dwelling fires within an average of 10 minutes. This is from the time of the emergency call.
- Strengthen the on-call duty system to make it more effective, flexible, and more rewarding for staff, making it more sustainable.
- Invest in our mobilising systems and availability management tools.

### Training and exercising

- Make sure the continued development of skills, effective use and resilience of our operational colleagues.
- Plan and carry out exercises that are aligned to the national risk register, our Essex Resilience risks, our incident risks and emerging risks.
- Keep ahead of changes and adapt our training and response models, aligned to National Operational Guidance and emerging risks.
- Share learning from incidents and exercises across the organisation, feeding into operational plans
- Make sure that essential resources, equipment and adequately trained firefighters are available and align with our planning assumptions.

### Investing and improving

- Invest in our facilities, resources and equipment to ensure our response capabilities remain fit for emerging and future risks.
- Integrate organisational assurance across the Service to improve our prevention and protection services.
- Prioritise health, safety and wellbeing in operational planning and delivery through a clearly communicated health and safety policy.

### Urban Search and Rescue and Technical Rescue

- Maintain a National Resilience High-Volume Pump that can be deployed anywhere in the country to support with delivering water to the incident ground or, pumping water from one location to another.
- Maintain Technical Rescue capability which comprises of Swift Water Rescue, Rope Rescue, Drone Operations, Bariatric Rescue, and Trench Rescue.



## Key risks

**Challenges of on-call recruitment and retention impacting fire engine availability.**

**Responding to non-emergency calls like Automatic Fire Alarms puts additional demand on our available front line resources.**

**Emerging technologies and changes in the built environment present new operational risks and firefighter safety risks.**

**Enhancing resilience during periods of extreme pressure, such as extreme weather, protracted incidents or industrial action.**

**Unsustainable financial spend on additional shift working, stand-by moves and unplanned overtime.**

## Outcomes

- Protecting front line fire engine availability to reach dwelling fires within an average of 10 minutes.
- Reach all other incidents within an average of 15 minutes.
- An on-call duty system that is sustainable and supports availability.
- Reduction in stand-by moves.
- Additional shift working is planned and proactive.
- Continued investment in our people and equipment aligned to evolving and emerging risks.
- Visibility of our Service in our local communities increased.

## Key data

- Percentage of time we have 40 fire engines available.
- Average response time to dwelling fires is 10 minutes.
- Average response time to all other incidents is 15 minutes.
- Domestic fires confined to room of origin.
- Public opinion and feedback.

# Inclusive and high performing culture

**The strength of our Service comes from our people. We want to make sure all our people are empowered to make a difference and serve our communities.**

## **Our aim**

**We will embed a high performing and inclusive culture ensuring our people are supported, engaged and inspired to deliver our Service strategic goals.**

Our colleagues are empowered to be professional and ambitious in serving the communities of Essex.

This goal is focused on making sure that our people are professional, and have the skills and capacity to deliver an outstanding service to our Essex communities.

## **We will achieve this through our People and Inclusion Strategy.**

Investing in our people means leadership and skills development, and it also means providing our people with modern technology, systems and equipment so they can provide a better service to our public.

It is important that our people have the right skills to be able to do their role. It is also important that maintaining and developing those skills is easily accessible. We need to focus on our operational training provision, making sure it meets the emerging risks and changes across our county.

We want to maximise the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our staff by investing in personal protective equipment and resources that keep our people safe and protected from harm. This could be using emerging technologies like live incident feeds into our control room, or more practical and efficient equipment for gaining entry.

We also need to focus our work on our development pathways and leadership programmes, as well as succession planning to make sure we have the right skills for today and for leadership in the future. We want to continue to develop and diversify our people and our talent from within our Service, helping people to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress as leaders.

## **We have a partnership approach to safeguarding.**

Safeguarding concerns are reported by our people, and actions are taken to protect those who are vulnerable. This reduces harm, or greater harm at the earliest opportunity.

### **Key risks**

**Developing, training and managing our people effectively.**

**Planning for and retaining our workforce so that we have the skills we need now and in the future.**

**Retaining our operational workforce so that we have optimum availability. Particularly on-call operational colleagues.**

**Continuously developing a culture where every employee has access to support, is treated fairly, inclusively, with kindness, equality, dignity and respect.**

**Workplace culture across a national Fire and Rescue Service level, and the impact this has locally for Essex.**

**Ensuring our focus remains on delivering high performance.**

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

**The Public Sector Equality Duty aims to make sure public authorities have due regard to certain equality considerations when making decisions about how they provide services and implement policies.**

We are committed to being inclusive by design, advancing equality of opportunity and encouraging good relations between people. We do this through our Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives.

We report regularly on how we are delivering against this on our website within our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion section.

### **Equality, diversity and inclusion**

We achieved the Silver Inclusive Employers Standard accreditation, becoming the first fire and rescue service in the country to do so.

Our positive action recruitment focuses on attracting diverse candidates and in 2023 we saw increases in applicants who identify as female, LGBTQ+, from a minority ethnic background, disabled and/ or under the age of 25.

# Inclusive and high performing culture

## Over this CRMP we will:

### Become inclusive by design.

- This means all our processes, policies and practices will have inclusion at the heart of everything. We will make sure that all our services, activities and decisions are intentionally inclusive.
- Embed our mission, values and behaviours, and set the professional standards expected of our people.
- Continue to aspire for equality, diversity and inclusion excellence.
- Develop and launch a Culture First Board. The board will include colleagues and community representatives to bring experience and diversity of thought to our culture conversations and plans.

### Attraction, retention, succession

- Review and improve succession planning to retain, attract and develop a workforce that is diverse, has the right skills, experience and leadership qualities. Our teams will be equipped to fulfil the needs of the communities we serve.
- Improve the collection of equality data to better understand workforce demographics and needs, supporting our ambition to achieve a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

### Training, learning, and development

- Deliver professional development for colleagues across the Service, with a particular focus on delivering a leadership development programme.
- Review how we develop and diversify our people within our Service, helping them to reach their full potential and supporting those who aspire to progress as leaders.
- Adapt our training to align to changes in work practices and new technologies. We will equip our colleagues with the skills to interpret and use data and up-skill all to be digitally enabled.
- Deliver a centralised community engagement and customer service development offer, so our colleagues provide the best services to all our communities, and each other.
- Safeguard the health, safety and welfare of colleagues, through investment in contaminant management, training facilities and continuous operational learning.
- Undertake functional reviews to ensure that we align our resources to the needs of the organisation, and have the capacity and flexibility to deliver high quality services.
- Ensure effective engagement and feedback mechanisms for all staff, including those from under-represented groups, to enhance staff wellbeing.

## Outcomes

- Our firefighters are trained to national standards and equipped with the right equipment to undertake their roles
- All Service processes, policies, and practices are inclusive.
- Our mission, values, and professional standards are embedded, guiding behaviour and decision-making.
- Annual equality reporting shows an increase in greater diversity within our workforce.
- Our Strategic Workforce Planning accurately forecasts the roles and skills we need so recruitment and training can be planned, minimising skills gaps and vacant roles.
- We have an annually reviewed four year training plan aligned to risk, changes in work practices, new technology and community needs
- Our people understand community insight, and have increased confidence in community engagement.
- All leaders have participated in our leadership development programme.
- All employees have access to development opportunities.
- Attendance at work and employee engagement indicators improve.

## Key data

- Strategic workforce planning.
- Learning and development data.
- Diversity data.
- Training plan.
- Culture dashboard.
- Public opinion and feedback.

# A resilient and sustainable future

**We will manage and invest in our Service to ensure it is fit for the future. We are committed to continuing our improvement journey to deliver services that our communities deserve.**

This strategic goal is focused on three enabling areas:

- How we manage our finances.
- How we use digital, data and technology to implement improvement and innovation.
- Making sure our estates, equipment and vehicles meet the needs of our people and the risks we face now and in the future.

## Managing our finances

Our aim is to make sure that we deliver the best possible service and value for money with the finances and assets that we have been trusted with.

We strive to provide the public with value for money services. Over recent years we have worked hard to make efficiencies to ensure that services are maintained within our available funding.

We make sure that the Service and our finances are managed well, that we deliver value for money, and that we invest to deliver an outstanding service fit for purpose now and in the future.

**HMICFRS: We are “good at making the service affordable now and in the future”.**

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

Each year we update our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This can be viewed on our website. It is updated regularly to reflect changes in economic conditions and efficiency plans are used to reduce the impact of financial risks.

The MTFS provides an overarching view of the way in which the Authority's finances will be managed and it brings together various related financial strategies in one document. It demonstrates how our resources are used to support this CRMP.

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**Since 2020/21, we have made £6.2m of cashable savings. We have also raised £7.9m resulting from the sale of surplus assets. These capital receipts are being reinvested into our Capital Programme.**

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We will continue to achieve further efficiency and productivity savings throughout this CRMP.



## Data and intelligence

This strategic goal also focuses on how we increase and improve our use of data and business intelligence tools to help us better understand and respond appropriately to the risks we, and our communities, face. To achieve this we will use technology to balance the need for security and resilience with the desire to innovate and introduce new, efficient ways of working.

We will identify innovative ways to modernise our Service and implement progressive change. This includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for predictive analysis and forecasting risk, such as environmental changes.

## Estates and fleet

We have made significant investment in our emergency service vehicles, and improved facilities at our fire stations.

We need to protect the future of our Service by investing in our buildings and equipment through capital investment. We also need to ensure we respond to new and emerging risks, by investing in new methods, skills, and equipment where required.

We are keen to play our part in reducing carbon emissions through our estates modernisation, the vehicles our people use to travel and the equipment they use to deliver our services.

## Key risks

### Financial uncertainty and funding pressures

Insufficient funding to maintain current range or level of service to the public.

Financial uncertainty includes single year funding settlements, council tax precept threshold, changes in inflation, interest rates, pay settlements and change in government funding (including grants).

### Estate modernisation

Fire stations and sites requiring increasing investment maintenance to make sure they remain safe and fit for purpose for our diversifying workforce.

### Cyber Security

Disruption to our ability to deliver emergency response and other services due to a cyber attack.

Cyber Security is a key area of investment and a rapidly growing risk that we need to protect our resources against.

# A resilient and sustainable future

## Over this CRMP we will:

### Digital, data and intelligence

- Embed dynamic cover and workforce management tools as key enablers for managing optimum fire engine availability and resources that align to risks.
- Improve the use of data to drive service improvements and transparency.
- Provide colleagues with easy to access, current, and role-relevant data to reduce community risk.
- Continue to develop a digitally engaged and data literate workforce.
- Use data to enhance community analysis, evaluating and improving our risk methodology for prioritised home fire safety visits aligned with individual and household needs.
- Use innovation and digital solutions to keep our communities safer. For example exploring smoke alarm emerging technology.
- Ensure all systems meet up-to-date security requirements and security standards.

### Managing our finances

- Deliver balanced budgets while maintaining adequate reserves.
- Achieve 1.5-3% efficiency savings.
- Achieve 1.5-3% productivity savings.

### Estates and fleet

- Deliver live fire training facilities at Service Headquarters that meet our operational training needs now, and into the future.
- Explore opportunities to deliver fleet services in collaboration with Essex Police.
- Deliver a new fleet workshops in collaboration with Essex Police when possible.
- Continue to invest in our sites and estates so they are suitable, inclusive and fit for our colleagues.
- Implement fleet telematics to improve vehicle and fleet management, and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Reduce the Service's carbon footprint over the life of this CRMP through our Net Zero Roadmap.

## Outcomes

- Deliver a balanced budget each financial year.
- Released capital funds for asset investment meaning:
  - our live fire training facilities meet our training and development needs.
  - improved fleet facilities in collaboration with Essex Police.
  - improved site facilities through the estates modernisation programme, minimising exposure to contaminants.
- Implement a dynamic cover solution and control optimisation:
  - Improved response times.
  - Improved resilience.
  - Optimised fire cover.
  - Minimise risk.
  - Reduced over time expenditure
  - Efficient and effective use of resources.
- Fleet telematics in place meaning:
  - Carbon footprint reduced.
  - Vehicle availability improved.
  - Cost efficiencies realised - for example from reduction in accident repairs and insurance costs.
  - Collaboration opportunities with Essex and Kent Police.

## Key data

- Annual efficiency savings.
- Annual productivity savings.
- Carbon footprint metrics.
- Percentage of time we have 40 fire engines available.
- Average response time to dwelling fires is 10 minutes.
- Average response time to all other incidents is 15 minutes.

# Engagement and Consultation

When planning a CRMP, or any major changes, we engage with our key audiences. They are:

- Our people (staff, volunteers, and representative bodies)
- Our partners (other emergency services, neighbouring FRS', community groups, local authorities and town/parish councils, MPs, voluntary groups and health partners)
- Our public (people who live, work and travel in Essex)

To help shape this CRMP we wanted to understand:

- Our people, public and partner perceptions of risk in our communities.
- The current and future challenges facing the Service.
- Ideas on how we address key issues and challenges.

During the life of this CRMP we will continue to engage with our people, public and partners to discuss how we are delivering the plan and what impact we are having.

**This document has been shaped by the feedback and ideas from our people, our partners and our public.**

The engagement sessions, workshops and public consultation survey supported our recommended proposals for change.

The survey showed that the majority of people who responded thought our proposals were reasonable.

## Consultation readiness

We worked with the Consultation Institute to achieve a Certificate of Consultation Readiness. The purpose was to externally assure our consultation process in partnership with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Office as they consulted on the draft Fire and Rescue Plan.

However, on July 31 we were informed by the Consultation Institute that they had ceased trading. As such we couldn't be awarded a certificate as the organisation does not exist anymore. However, we took the learning from the sessions and feedback provided by our Consultation Institute advisor to help shape our plans for consultation before developing our plans.

## Gunning Principles

We followed the four Gunning Principles:

- Consultation should be carried out when proposals are at the formative stage
- Sufficient information is provided to allow intelligent consideration of the proposals
- Adequate time is given for response
- Responses are conscientiously considered before decisions are taken

## Engagement activities

### People (staff) engagement

April 2023 - November 2024

13 podcasts

Leadership forum sessions - 9

Staff workshops - 37

148 ideas submitted by our people

### Public #TelIECFRS survey

November - December 2023

### Public Perception Survey

January 2024 - ongoing

Data and responses on page 58 have been collected between January - September 2024.

### Partner workshops

September - November 2024

6 workshops

100 attendees in total

### Public consultation

October - November 2024

Our public consultation asked for input against 13 proposals. The proposals focus on enhancing our ability to:

- Manage high demand
- Improve critical response times
- Reduce community risks
- Protect the built environment
- Plan for the future workforce

## #TelIECFRS online survey

We carried out a light touch survey with our public to help shape our thinking and to understand what was important to our public.

It was promoted via our internal and social media channels. 884 people opened the survey with 222 people completing it.

In summary:

- Almost 40% of people think electrical faults are the biggest risk of fire in their home. This is followed by cooking at 27.6% and candles at 10%.
- The least concerns are deliberate fires, gas explosion and hoarding.
- 95% of people have a working smoke alarm on every level in their home.
- Almost 75% of people share our safety advice with other people.
- Most people are fairly confident their place of work is aware of the fire safety measures in place.
- Apart from home fires, people are most concerned about road traffic collisions, flooding and building fires
- They are least concerned about office fires and water rescues.

	2023										2024									
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
People (staff) engagement																				
#TelIECFRS																				
Public perception survey																				
Partner workshops																				
Public consultation																				

## Public perception survey

It is important that the public have trust and confidence in us as an emergency service. In 2024 we commissioned an external company to carry out quarterly public perception surveys for two years.

A total of 5,583 Essex residents have been interviewed between January and September 2024. 72% of interviews have been conducted face-to-face, with the remaining 28% over the phone. The following is a summary of the results to date:

### Awareness

Most Essex residents understand ECFRS respond to fires, but are less aware of other services without being prompted.

### Perceptions

- Most feel ECFRS does a good job, provides good value for money and are confident the Service will respond effectively in an emergency.
- Six-in-ten think ECFRS and partners do a good job supporting vulnerable and at-risk people, although less than four-in-ten know how to access specialist support for such people.

### Communication

- Over half feel informed about what ECFRS is doing, although only around one-in-ten feel very well informed.
- When it comes to what residents are interested in learning more about, personal safety and preventing home fires are the most popular topics.
- A third use social media to keep informed about ECFRS, with Facebook being the most popular network.

## Feelings of Safety

- Electrical faults are considered the biggest single risk to home fires, followed by cooking.
- Nine-in-ten Essex households claimed to have smoke alarms in their house, but only a third checked them at least once a month, with 15% never checking them.
- Residents who rent their properties or live in semi-detached or terraced housing (attached housing) are significantly less likely to have working smoke alarms on every level or check them regularly.
- In the local community, road traffic collisions and home fires were considered the most concerning fire and rescue related risks, although a third did not perceive any risks.
- Over half think the Service provides enough information about what risks there may be in the community.

## Partner workshops

Our workshops were attended by other emergency services, neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services, community groups, local authorities and town councils, MPs, voluntary groups, health partners and members of the Fire and Crime Panel.

Our partner workshops supported the themes and proposal ideas, and the chart on the next pages (62-63) show the survey results and level of support for each proposal.



## Public consultation

This was completed by 833 people, with a further 2,847 people making comments on the individual proposals through our social media surveys.

**The survey showed that the majority of people who responded thought our proposals were reasonable.**

### Highest agreements

91% was recorded for proposal 9 - working with our communities to increase the number of households with working smoke alarms.

89% supported proposal 11 - being more proactively involved in understanding emerging technologies and the impact of emerging risk.

85% supported proposal 1 - to further invest in the way we manage our resources to improve fire engine cover and availability.

### Lowest agreements

63% agreed with proposal 3, developing an on-call availability system and 62% agreed with proposal 4, to review how we respond to non-time critical and non-emergency incidents.

## Demographics of respondents

Highest proportions of respondents lived in Colchester and Braintree, followed by Chelmsford, Tendring and Castle Point.

The lowest responses were from Harlow and Thurrock. This aligns to our public perception survey where these two areas have the least engagement with our Service.

The highest proportion of respondents were in the 41-64 age category. Followed by those 65 years and older and then age 19-25 category.

Slightly higher proportions of respondents were male (50.7%), with 40.0% female.

Some 85.0% of respondents were White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British.

Some 14.7% of respondents had a disability or long-term health condition.

Almost one in three (32.1%) of respondents worked or volunteered for ECFRS or worked with ECFRS as a partner.

## Public consultation

The chart details the proportion overall agreeing (either 'agree' or 'strongly agree') with each proposal.

Proposal 1: To what extent do you agree that we should further invest in the way that we manage our resources so that we can improve fire engine cover and availability?

Proposal 2 - To what extent do you agree we should explore introducing an extra duty system so we have more fire engines with guaranteed availability during peak times?

Proposal 3 - To what extent do you agree we should develop an on-call availability system?

Proposal 4 - To what extent do you agree we should review how we respond to non-time critical and non-emergency incidents?

Proposal 5 - To what extent do you agree that we should review how we respond to automatic fire alarms

Proposal 6 - To what extent do you agree that it is important to you to **understand** our response measures and targets?

Proposal 6 - To what extent do you agree that it is important to you that we **share** how we're performing against these targets?

Proposal 7 - To what extent do you agree that we should continue to work with our emergency partners to make our high-risk communities safer?

Proposal 7 - To what extent do you agree we should campaign for greater data sharing between health partners and emergency services?

Proposal 8 - To what extent do you agree that it is important we spend time within our communities when we are not at incidents?

Proposal 8 - To what extent do you agree we should look at how we could expand our post incident response work to better understand and better engage with our communities?

Proposal 9 - To what extent do you agree we should work with communities, partners, companies and voluntary orgs to increase the no. of homes with working smoke alarms?

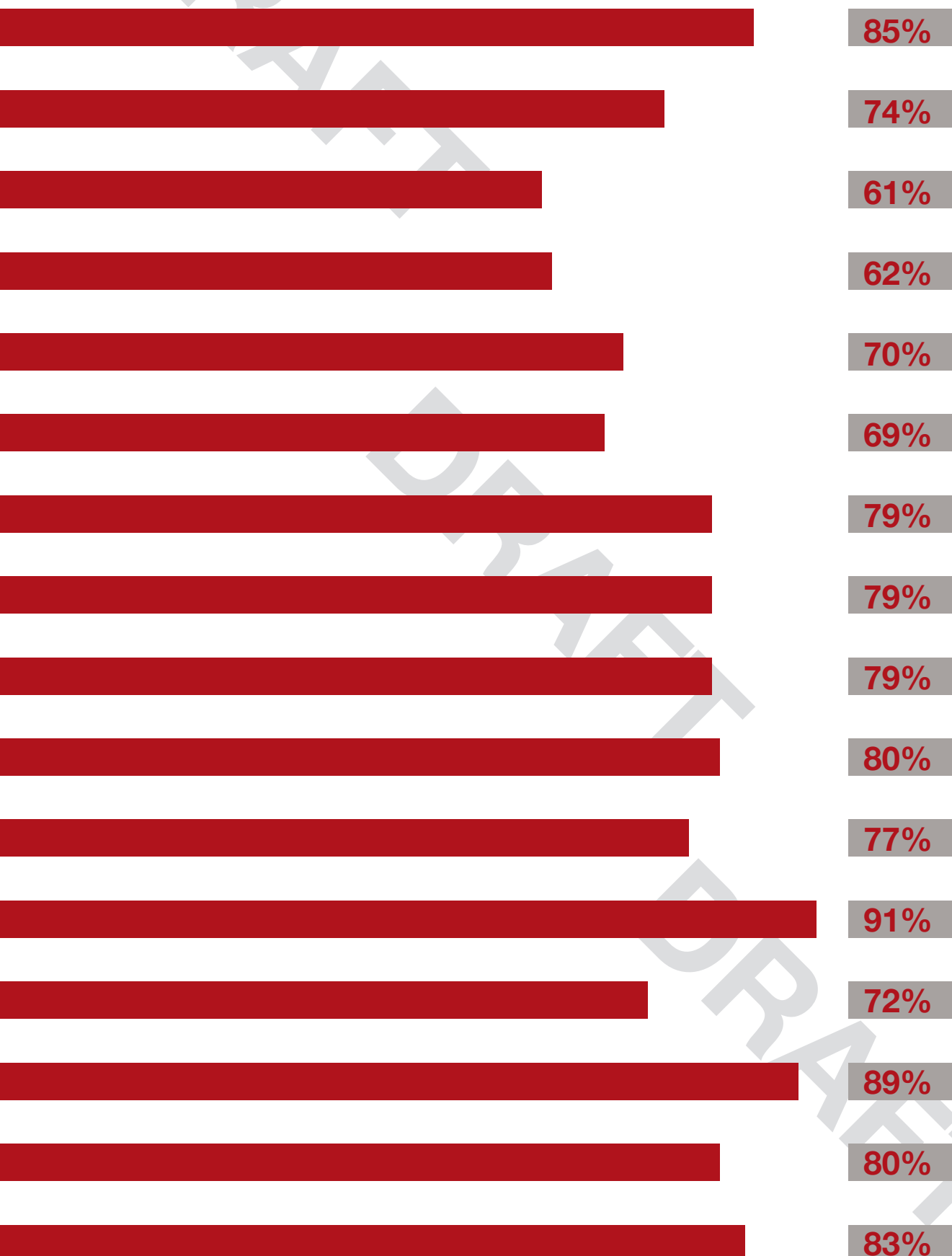
Proposal 10 - To what extent do you agree that we are doing enough to promote safety advice?

Proposal 11 - To what extent do you agree that we should be more proactively involved in understanding emerging technologies and the impact of emerging risks?

Proposal 12 - To what extent do you agree with supporting long term investment in the Service through capital funding in training and facilities?

Proposal 13 - To what extent do you agree that ECFRS could improve the services we provide through further investing in resources?

**% agree with proposals**



# Updates against our IRMP 2020-2024

## People

**Continue to invest significantly in training so that all our staff have the skills to remain safe in their work.**

Introduced an Operational Training Strategy which incorporated greater governance arrangements and a centralised records system to deliver our Core Skills Assessment Programme.

**Identify and target any gaps in skills for every employee, making sure that training is suitable for all learners and all shift systems.**

Introduced a Service Training Plan which identifies key training requirements for all staff and is delivered through a mixed model approach.

**Retain specialist and technical expertise and encourage people to add to their skills.**

Appraisals have been updated to ensure conversation about technical leadership development and skills. Departmental Training Planning process has been implemented. LearnPro app was developed and launched to all employees and includes opportunities for all to add to skills.

**Make sure our planning for the future is effective, to allow us to continue to provide our service.**

Supported the production of Prevention, Protection and Response Strategies through the alignment of our Strategic Workforce Plan.

**Develop our managers' leadership skills so that we have strong, effective leaders both now and in the future.**

Created a Leadership Development Programme which is supported by our approach for building high performing teams.

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

Through our Positive Action Plan we have expanded our recruitment policy to ensure Positive Action and Inclusion are key components for all new opportunities.

We have **reduced** the median Gender Pay Gap **2.8%**   
2023-2024: 2.8%  
2019-2020: 17.7%

**Provide people with the skills to promote a positive culture and behaviour.**

Designed and developed a Culture Change Strategy and Programme which uses pulse surveys to track progress of understanding.

## Prevention

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

Develop Place Based Prevention plans that set out risks in specific areas which we use to target our resources. Create a Service Delivery plan which defines a vision and mission of each activity. Closer alignment between Operations and Prevention created, with joint targets and support provided.

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

Enable our operational staff to provide safety advice to more vulnerable people in communities. Increased the number of Home Fire Safety Visits by our operational crews

### Home Fire Safety visits

 **182%**

2019-20: 3,593  
2023-24: 10,120

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

Incorporated Accidental Dwelling Fires Risk Modelling and Cluster Data provision to stations to support targeting.

### Accidental fires

2019-20: 780  
2023-24: 679

 **13%**

**Assess our prevention activities to make sure they are effective.**

Developed our Service Delivery Strategy and methods of evaluating through the Prevention and Protection Governance Board.

**People in Essex injured by fire**

2019-20: 66  
2023-24: 56

 **17%**

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

Reporting through the Safer Essex Road Partnership the activities undertaken by the Fire Service to deliver against the Vision Zero programme.

**Fires reported and attended**

2019-20: 4,581  
2023-24: 3,785

 **17%**

We have continued to work in partnership to make sure all schools in Essex are offered safety education and interventions, through a variety of channels.

# Updates against our IRMP 2020-2024

## Protection

**Train more operational staff to do business safety checks, help us reach more businesses and issue advice.**

Established a Business Engagement Team and developed a Business Engagement Strategy to increase business focused Safe and Well visits.

**Find opportunities to get involved with more businesses across Essex, leading to an increase in business engagement events.**

Improvements to our Business Engagement delivery to increase visibility at events and within publications tailored to the business sector.

**Make sure we have the right resources to meet our commitments in the Risk Based Inspection Programme.**

Reviewed and updated our Risk Based Inspection Plan to incorporate a targeted growth plan aligned to our resourcing.

**Deliberate fires across Essex have seen a 38% reduction in last 5 years.**

**Review the inspection programme to make sure we are making decisions based on data to help us understand which premises pose the greatest risk and target our resources.**

Introduced an Enforcement Management Model so appropriate action is taken against all premises. This is reviewed against our Quality Assurance Policy.

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## HMICFRS

**There is no longer a cause for concern for our protection work, with inspectors recognising the work we are doing working with businesses, high rise buildings and the rural community to reduce risk.**

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## Response

### **Make sure our response is appropriate for each area of the county.**

Implemented a Strategic Station Policy to support resource optimisation.

### **Meet the response standards.**

Average response time across the IRMP is 10 minutes 32 seconds in relation to our target of the first fire-engine to a potentially life-threatening incident. Average percentage is 84.45% in relation to our target of 90% of all incidents to be attended in 15 minutes.

### **Have the right appliances, people and equipment in the right places to manage risk across the county.**

Completed our crewing conversion from day shift to on-call at South Woodham Ferrers, Great Baddow and Waltham Abbey Fire Stations.

### **Improve the availability of on-call.**

Created an On-Call Development Programme delivered by an on-call support and development team.

### **Provide our crews with training on specialist appliances, to make sure they are available when our communities need them.**

All specialist appliances have had specific training requirements built into the PDRPro and LearnPro competency management system for personnel attached to stations with such assets.

## Digital and data

### **A new command and control system will improve how we mobilise crews and improve communications from the control room to the incident.**

New Control system has been implemented that makes use of a new resilient wide area network. Mobile Data services have been migrated to a commercial 4G service and Control room staff have received comprehensive training on the new system.

### **A command and control system that will help the transition to the Emergency Services Network and the associated technological benefits.**

Our new Control system uses ESN Connectivity, and we are constantly monitoring the national ESN project to ensure we are aligned.

### **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).**

Implementation of the New Reporting Framework (2021) across Service delivery areas and delivered by Performance and Analytics through new reporting tools.

### **An ICT transformation and optimisation programme that will make sure we make the best use of effective systems.**

Migration and modernisation of systems to cloud based solutions includes Learning & Development, ERP, Health and Safety and Incident Reporting.

# Governance and reporting

**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 Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) ensures that community needs are met as effectively as possible, and local relationships improve through building confidence and trust.

## **PFCC vision**

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

The PFCC is responsible for setting the strategy and priorities for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police. These are set through the Fire and Rescue Plan, and the Police and Crime Plan.

## **Fire and Rescue Plan 2024-2028**

The Fire and Rescue Plan sets out the priorities for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, and a series of strong, tangible commitments to help keep our communities safe.

The plan brings together the Service, partners and the public to build safe and secure communities and offer efficient and effective prevention, protection and response activity.

## **Fire and Rescue Plan priorities**

- Protect vulnerable people
- Improve road safety and reduce road death in Essex to zero
- Make buildings across Essex safer
- Adapt to our changing environment
- Promote a positive culture and develop the workforce
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness

**PFCC vision:** Safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build success and wellbeing for all.

## Fire and Rescue Plan 2024-2028

The FRP has been developed alongside the CRMP to ensure joined up priorities that match risk profiling across Essex.

Our corporate plan outlines foreseeable fire and rescue risks in our communities, and the actions we plan to take to mitigate them.

**ECFRS mission:** Making Essex safer **together**

## Community Risk Management Plan

**Medium Term  
Financial Strategy**

**People and  
Inclusion Strategy**

Our Medium-Term Financial Strategy demonstrates how our resources are used to support the CRMP.

Our People and Inclusion Strategy is key to delivering our CRMP and our Fire and Rescue Plan.

Each financial year we produce a detailed plan with activities, performance targets and planned programmes of development.

## Service Delivery Plans

Our Service Delivery Plans provide more detailed information about how the Service plans to deliver and develop our services to meet the strategic goals set out in our CRMP.

## Statement of Assurance

Our Statement of Assurance sets out how and where to find information about all aspects of the fire and rescue service and our work with partners. It also provides assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

# Glossary of terms

**Accidental Dwelling Fire (ADF) -**

A fire in a domestic property started unintentionally.

**Assets** - Everything we own or lease that is used to deliver the services we provide  
- fire stations, vehicles, equipment, workwear, technology and offices.

**Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)** - A system that warns people of a possible fire by automatic or manual means.

**Consultation:** a formal survey or way of collecting views from our audience.

**Deploy/deployment:** when we allocate a fire engine or vehicle to a specific area.

**Deprivation** - the absence of essential resources needed for a decent standard of living, including things like money, education, healthcare and housing (see Index of Multiple Deprivation [IMD]).

**Essex Local Resilience Forum** - A multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, from across Essex.

**False Alarm** - A call to an incident that does not require our attendance, for example where an alarm is being tested, a smoke alarm is sounding due to a failing battery or a fault in the system.

**Fire Control Service** - Often referred to as the control room. This is where emergency calls are received and call handlers allocate the appropriate response (i.e. the number of fire engines) and/or provide appropriate advice.

**His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)** - An independent body that assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, and people aspects of police forces and fire and rescue services.

**Home Fire Safety Visit** - A free service we offer to people who may be at increased risk of, or from, fire.

**Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** - The IMD is a government tool in England that measures relative deprivation across small areas. It assigns scores from 1 to 10 based on factors like income, education, health and crime.

**Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)** - An alternative name for Community Risk Management Plan.

**Modelling** - The use of data, calculations and simulations to predict or estimate various factors related to fire and rescue services, such as demand, resource, response times and effectiveness.

**Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)** - A tablet device used by firefighters on our fire engines that provides crucial information, such as specific risks present at certain sites we may need to attend.

**National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)**- The professional voice of the UK fire and rescue service (FRS). NFCC drives improvement and development throughout the UK FRS.

**Non-domestic**- This is a building that is not a home or house.

**On-call Firefighter** - on-call firefighters live or work within five minutes of a fire station and are paged when there is an incident. This means they're not based at the fire station full time.

**PESTELO** - An framework to evaluate external factors. It includes Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal and Operational.

**Representative Body** (also Trade Union) - this is a membership organisation for employees to join if they wish. They are in place to protect and advance the interest of their members.

**Resources:** This is what we can send to respond to an incident – such as fire engines, equipment, firefighters etc.

**Specialist vehicle:** vehicles that are not our normal fire engines, including boats, and aerial ladder platforms.

**UK Resilience Framework** - An analysis that focuses on the UK's ability to anticipate, assess, prevent, mitigate and respond to, and recover from, known, unknown, direct, indirect and emerging civil contingency risks.

**Wholetime Firefighters:** our wholetime firefighters work regular shift patterns. They respond to emergencies and carry out our prevention and protection activities.

**Wildfire** - Large uncontrolled fires occurring in open natural vegetation. A wildfire incident usually requires more than 4 fire engines, covers an area of 1 hectare or more, takes more than 6 hours to extinguish and has flames longer than 1.5 metres.

# Data sources

## External data sources

### ACORN

<https://acorn.caci.co.uk>

### Environment Agency

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

### Index Multiple Deprivation

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

### Met Office

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk>

### Office for National Statistics

Census 2021 data

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

### Renewable Energy Planning Database [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

### SERP

Safer Essex Roads Partnership

### HMICFRS <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk>

## Internal data sources

### #TellECFRS Survey

### Public Perception Survey

### CRMP Consultation

### CFRMIS

Community Fire Risk Management Information System

### IRS Incident Recording System

### Power BI Data analytic reporting tool

### TAIR and SAIR

Tactical After Incident Response  
Strategic After Incident Response



# Essex County Fire & Rescue Service