Appendix 5

Protection Strategy

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Executive Summary

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's Protection Strategy 2027–2032 sets out how we will support delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan by identifying, managing and reducing fire risk within regulated premises and the wider built environment. The strategy focuses on making Lancashire safer by targeting protection activity where risk and potential harm are greatest, supporting compliance with fire safety legislation, and helping to ensure buildings are safe, resilient and well managed.

Our approach is risk-based, intelligence-led and informed by national guidance, professional judgement, organisational learning and local risk information. Through inspections, audits, business fire safety checks, statutory consultations, engagement and proportionate enforcement, we will work with responsible persons, accountable persons, businesses, regulators and partner agencies to improve compliance, strengthen fire safety management and reduce the likelihood and impact of fire.

The strategy is structured around four areas of focus: targeting and managing risk in high-risk and regulated premises; improving safety in complex and higher-risk buildings; strengthening systems through intelligence, workforce capability and joined-up working; and supporting delivery and performance. Progress will be monitored through established governance, performance measures and annual review to ensure protection activity remains effective, proportionate and aligned to risk, legislation and national standards.

Introduction

This Protection Strategy sets out how Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) will manage and reduce fire risk within the built environment during the period 2027 to 2032.

The Fire Safety Department of LFRS plays a vital role in protecting people, businesses, and communities from the devastating impact of fire and inadequate fire safety management. Through a combination of regulation, education, partnership working, and enforcement, the department works to ensure that regulated commercial buildings across Lancashire are safe, resilient, and compliant with fire safety legislation.

The following achievements demonstrate the progress made through the Protection Strategy 2022–2027 and provide a strong foundation for the priorities set out in this strategy.

Protection Strategy 2022-27 - Key Achievements

- Risk Based Intervention Programme (RBIP) - LFRS has continued to develop and use intelligence-led inspections and introduced business fire safety checks, enabling specialist inspectors to focus on more complex and higher-risk buildings.
- We have developed our RBIP onto a new digital system making the data timelier and more reliable.
- Working more collaboratively with Local Custodians across Lancashire to improve premises data and accuracy.
- Supporting Compliance and Business Engagement - The Service has continued to support businesses, employers and landlords in meeting their legal responsibilities, particularly following changes in national fire safety legislation linked to the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety Act.
- Enforcement and Prosecution Activity – we have successfully prosecuted those responsible for commercial premises where they have failed to meet fire safety requirements.
- Responding to Grenfell and Legislative Change - The Service has embedded protection activity linked to new legal requirements for higher-risk residential buildings and fire risk management responsibilities supporting a new Building Safety Regulator (BSR).
- Better Integration with Prevention and Response – Strengthened links between Protection activities, community safety and operational preparedness.
- Workforce Development and Professional Competence – we have implemented a multi-tiered protection model involving Fire Safety Inspectors, Business Safety Advisors and operational crews and developed specialist protection expertise while increasing the number of business safety interventions delivered.

Community Risk Management Plan

The Protection Strategy supports delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2027–2032 by setting out how we will identify, manage and reduce foreseeable fire risk within regulated premises and the wider built environment. As one of six Core Strategies it operates in partnership with the Prevention Strategy to reduce both the likelihood and consequences of fire, and translates the CRMP's strategic aims into protection activity that targets risk, improves compliance and supports safer buildings across Lancashire.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to **make Lancashire safer**. It is what we are here for. We are committed to ensuring that everything we do contributes to improving the safety of Lancashire's diverse communities.

Our Priorities

- Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer
- Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening
- **Protecting communities through safer buildings**
- Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently
- Using digital, data and technology to drive continuous improvement
- Delivering value for money in how we use our resources



Implementation

The Strategy is delivered through annual service planning, protection delivery plans and supporting policies, including the RBIP and enforcement framework.

The Protection Strategy will be delivered through annual service planning, protection delivery planning, supporting policies, and a risk-based approach that identifies, prioritises and addresses fire safety risk in premises across Lancashire. Annual audit targets, informed by the RBIP, will ensure that high-risk premises receive appropriate levels of scrutiny and intervention. Delivery will be supported by a competent protection workforce, a clear enforcement framework and effective consultation arrangements for building regulations and licensing activity. Performance, outcomes

and workforce capability will be monitored through established governance arrangements to provide assurance that protection resources are effectively aligned to risk and are achieving the intended reduction in community risk.

Legislation, Guidance and Best Practice

LFRS Protection Officers are responsible for regulating fire safety legislation across Lancashire, with their primary enforcement role centred on the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which places a legal duty on responsible persons to assess fire risks, implement appropriate fire precautions, and ensure occupants can safely escape in the event of a fire. Through a programme of fire safety interventions, enforcement activity and business engagement, Protection Officers work to secure compliance and reduce risk within non-domestic premises and residential buildings.

In undertaking this role, Protection Officers also apply and contribute to the requirements of the Fire Safety Act 2021, Building Safety Act 2022, Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, and relevant aspects of Building Regulations, particularly where fire safety is concerned. This includes consultation on new developments, alterations to existing buildings, high-rise residential buildings, houses in multiple occupation and other complex or higher-risk premises.

LFRS delivers its protection activities in accordance with guidance and best practice developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the National Fire Standards, ensuring a consistent and professional approach to fire regulation and community safety. Protection Officers are trained and developed against the National Fire Sector Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators, ensuring they possess the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to undertake risk-based regulation, enforcement and partnership working to nationally recognised standards.

Working collaboratively with local authorities, building control bodies, planning authorities, the Health and Safety Executive, housing providers, care regulators, businesses and other emergency services, the Protection Department plays a vital role in making Lancashire safer by preventing fires, protecting people and supporting compliance with fire safety legislation.

While firefighters respond when emergencies occur, the Fire Safety Department focuses on preventing incidents before they happen. By identifying risks, influencing good fire safety practices, and holding those responsible for buildings to account, the department helps to reduce the likelihood and consequences of fire.

What We Do

Inspections and Enforcement

The department's primary responsibility is to enforce fire safety legislation, ensuring that those who own, manage, or control premises understand and fulfil their legal duties. Fire Safety Inspecting Officers carry out audits and inspections of a wide range of buildings, including Commercial premises, Care homes, Hospitals and healthcare facilities, educational establishments, Licensed premises, Hotels and sleeping accommodation, Industrial and manufacturing sites and High-rise residential buildings.

Lancashire has over 68,000 regulated buildings and over 5,000 higher risk buildings. Higher risk buildings are generally buildings where people are sleeping, or the premises that are occupied by greater numbers of people or more vulnerable people.

Our fire safety teams utilise a Risk Based Intervention Programme, our RBIP, which is designed to ensure we inspect all higher risk premises within a 5-year inspection frequency. Non-compliant premises or very high-risk premises maybe inspected more frequently.

Supporting Businesses and Communities

Our approach is not solely about enforcement. LFRS is committed to helping businesses, organisations, and communities understand how to manage fire risk effectively.

The department provides guidance and advice to responsible persons, building owners, developers, and managers to help them comply with their legal obligations and create safer environments for employees, residents, customers, and visitors.

By working collaboratively with businesses and partners, we aim to encourage a positive fire safety culture across Lancashire where prevention is prioritised, and risks are addressed before they result in harm.

Influencing Safer Buildings

The Fire Safety Department plays an important role throughout the life cycle of buildings. Officers work closely with local authorities, developers, architects, fire professionals and building control bodies to provide specialist advice on fire safety matters during planning, design, construction, and alteration stages.

This proactive involvement helps ensure that fire safety is considered from the earliest stages of development, supporting the creation of safer buildings and stronger communities.

Protecting the Most Vulnerable

A key priority for the department is protecting those who may be at greater risk from fire. This includes residents in high-rise buildings, people living in supported accommodation, care settings, and other vulnerable groups.

By gathering intelligence, analysing local risk, and working closely with partners, the department targets its resources where they can have the greatest impact. This risk-based approach ensures that the highest-risk premises receive appropriate oversight and intervention.

Responding to Emerging Risks

The built environment is constantly changing. New technologies, modern methods of construction, energy systems, and evolving legislation present both opportunities and challenges for fire safety.

The Fire Safety Department continually develops its expertise to understand and respond to emerging risks. This ensures that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service remains prepared to protect communities in an increasingly complex environment while supporting innovation and sustainable development.

Delivering Excellence

Our protection approach ensures:

- A risk-based, intelligence-led approach that targets the highest risk premises and greatest threats to life;
- A consistent and proportionate regulatory service, balancing advice, engagement and enforcement;
- Effective use of resources and a competent workforce to manage risk, demand and complex buildings; and
- A partnership-driven approach that improves compliance, strengthens systems and delivers safer buildings.

Area of focus 1: Targeting and Managing Risk

Targeting and Managing Risk in High-risk and Regulated Premises

Protection activity focuses on regulated premises rather than individuals, ensuring systems, management arrangements and physical protections are suitable, sufficiently maintained and targeted where fire would present the greatest risk to life. Delivery of our RBIP will continue to identify high-risk premises and prioritise inspection, audit and engagement activity where intervention can reduce the likelihood and impact of fire most effectively.

Improving fire safety awareness with responsible persons to drive self-compliance is fundamental to improving outcomes. Through targeted and inclusive business safety activity and campaigns, we will support compliance through advice, engagement and education, using enforcement where necessary to protect life.

Where serious non-compliance places people at risk, enforcement action, including prosecution where appropriate, will be used confidently and proportionately to secure compliance and protect life.

What we will do:

- Target interventions and engagement activity at the highest risk premises;
- Support responsible persons to improve compliance through advice, engagement and education;
- Deliver a RBIP across all risk levels;
- Use enforcement confidently and proportionately where serious non-compliance exists;
- Deliver business safety engagement and campaigns to drive self-compliance. Engagement will be inclusive, building trust and confidence with our communities.

How we will measure progress

- Delivery against the RBIP (activity versus plan);
- The numbers of interventions and enforcement actions;
- Levels of compliance in high-risk premises;
- Impact and evaluation of business safety campaigns and engagement activity;
- Reduction in serious fire safety breaches identified.

Area of focus 2: Safer Buildings

Improving Safety in Complex and Higher-risk Buildings

We will improve safety in complex and higher-risk buildings by supporting robust fire safety management, compliance with evolving legislation and effective assurance over time. This includes delivering the Service's responsibilities arising from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and subsequent fire safety legislation, and working with accountable persons, principal accountable persons, residents and the Building Safety Regulator to help ensure higher-risk buildings are properly managed and fire safety provisions remain effective. Complexity does not, on its own, increase the likelihood of a poor outcome; however, it does require strong fire safety provision, competent management and a workforce with the correct technical skills and behaviours to support safe outcomes.

What we will do:

- Continue to deliver and embed the recommendations arising from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and introduction of new fire safety legislation;
- Work with accountable persons, residents and regulators to provide assurance; focus on ongoing safety management and system performance in higher-risk buildings;
- Strengthen engagement to improve compliance and safety outcomes;
- Maintain a competent workforce with the technical skills to assess and support our role with complex buildings;
- Maintain a workforce that is appropriately qualified and trained to ensure that interactions with responsible people, staff residents and community groups are professional, inclusive and respectful.

How we will measure progress

- Compliance levels in higher-risk and high-rise residential buildings.
- Monitor timescales of remediation from identification of serious fire safety deficiencies to completion of remediation works.
- Appropriate frequencies of inspections of high-risk buildings to ensure up to date risk information is stored to support our operational emergency response plans.
- Workforce competency levels and skills ensure staff are able to operate across all risk type premises.
- Number of building regulation consultations responded to within statutory timeframes.

Area of focus 3: Stronger Systems

Enabling System-wide Risk Reduction

We will continue to create and develop partnerships which complement a system-based approach to risk reduction, using intelligence, learning and integrated working across prevention, protection and response to reduce risk across the wider built environment. We will drive compliance and fire safety management across building portfolios and organisations, not solely individual premises, and use learning from fires, investigations, post-incident activity and assurance to continually refine protection activity and risk profiling.

The delivery of robust training, assessment and quality assurance for our protection workforce will ensure we maintain sufficient competent capacity through workforce development, succession planning and alignment with the national competency framework and fire standards.

The delivery of our Business Fire Safety Check (BFSC) service to lower risk premises helps drive compliance across premises types throughout the county. Supported by robust built environment training and fire safety awareness for operational crews and Community Safety Advisors, we will strengthen links between protection, prevention and operational preparedness so safe and effective response is informed by risk, intelligence, and learning from incidents and reviews.

What we will do:

- Use intelligence, incident learning and assurance to continuously improve risk profiling;
- Strengthen links between protection, prevention and operational response;
- Develop workforce capability through training, assessment and succession planning;
- Work with partners to drive compliance across organisations and building portfolios;
- Deliver Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs) to improve compliance in lower-risk premises;
- Enhance fire safety awareness across staff and partner functions.

How we will measure progress

- Continual improvement and quality of risk and intelligence data.
- Completion of BFSC activity and outcomes.
- Evidence how learning from incidents is influencing activity.
- Effectiveness of cross-service working (prevention–protection–response).

Area of focus 4: Supporting Delivery and Performance

Deliver a high-performing, risk-led protection service, focused on outcomes and continuous improvement.

We will continue to deliver a high-performing, risk-led protection service that meets the needs of our communities and the changing built environment landscape, with a clear focus on outcomes, assurance and continuous improvement.

We will ensure we deliver a qualified and competent workforce that can respond to new and existing risk efficiently and effectively. Our staff will uphold the values of LFRS, and the quality of our service will remain a priority through evaluation and quality assurance of our people and how we discharge our regulatory duties. We will also continue to monitor and target problem premises so that preventable demand does not take resources away from where they are needed most.

What we will do:

- Deliver targeted risk-based interventions and campaigns.
- Maintain compliance in high-rise and regulated premises.
- Reduce unwanted fire signals in commercial properties.

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How we will measure progress:

- Volume and type of protection activity delivered; to identify any issues including equality issues.
- Outcomes from intervention activity and enforcement.
- Evaluation of campaigns and assurance activity.
- Number of unwanted fire signals.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance and quality are monitored through established assurance and governance arrangements, with annual review to ensure ongoing alignment with risk, legislation and national standards.

The Areas of focus set out in this Protection Strategy are measurable and will be subject to regular monitoring and review. This will enable us to understand how the strategy is being implemented, track progress against agreed priorities, and assess how effectively protection activity is supporting safer buildings, stronger compliance and reduced risk.

Performance Measures

We will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of our protection activities through relevant performance information, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), audit and inspection outcomes, statutory consultation activity, enforcement activity, quality assurance, seasonal trends and feedback. This will help us to assess whether activity is risk-based, proportionate, consistent and contributing to improved fire safety standards.

The measures used to monitor will include the following KPIs:

- Business Fire Safety Checks
- Fire Safety Activity
- Building Regulation Consultations (BRC)

Performance information will be reviewed regularly through established service performance arrangements to identify progress, emerging risks, learning and

opportunities for improvement. The strategy will be reviewed no later than one year after publication and then annually during the strategy period. Progress will also be reported through the Annual Service Report.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term / Acronym	Meaning
Accountable Person	A person or organisation with legal responsibility for assessing and managing building safety risks in higher-risk buildings.
Annual Service Plan	The yearly plan that sets out how LFRS will turn its strategic priorities into delivery activity.
Assurance	Checks and review activity used to confirm that protection work is effective, consistent and improving.
BFSC	Business Fire Safety Check: a protection activity used to support compliance and improve fire safety awareness in lower-risk business premises.
BRC	Building Regulation Consultation: statutory consultation activity where LFRS provides fire safety advice on building proposals.
Building Safety Act 2022	Legislation introduced to strengthen the management and regulation of building safety, particularly for higher-risk buildings.
Building Safety Regulator (BSR)	The national regulator responsible for overseeing building safety and the higher-risk building regime.
CFA	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority: the public body that oversees Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.
Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)	LFRS's main strategic plan for understanding and reducing fire and rescue risks in Lancashire. This Protection Strategy supports delivery of the CRMP 2027–2032.
Core Strategies	The strategies that explain how LFRS will deliver the strategic aims of the CRMP through key service areas.
Duty Holder	A person or organisation with legal duties for fire safety or building safety.
Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004	Legislation that sets out the main statutory functions of fire and rescue authorities.
Fire Safety Act 2021	Legislation that clarifies fire safety responsibilities for parts of multi-occupied residential buildings.
Fire Safety Inspecting Officer	A suitably trained officer who undertakes fire safety audits, inspections, advice and enforcement activity.

Higher-risk Building	A building that presents greater potential risk because of its height, use, complexity, occupancy or the vulnerability of people who may be affected by fire.
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	A measure used to track progress, performance or impact.
National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)	The professional body that supports fire and rescue services through national guidance, good practice and sector leadership.
National Fire Standards	Nationally agreed standards that support consistent, professional and effective fire and rescue service delivery.
Operational Risk Information	Information about premises, sites or hazards that helps crews plan for and respond safely to incidents.
Principal Accountable Person	The accountable person with primary responsibility for managing building safety risks in a higher-risk building where more than one accountable person exists.
Regulated Premises	Premises where fire safety duties apply under relevant legislation, including many non-domestic premises and some residential buildings.
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005	The main fire safety legislation for non-domestic premises in England and Wales. It places duties on responsible persons to assess and manage fire risk.
Responsible Person	The person or organisation legally responsible for fire safety in a premises under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
Risk Based Intervention Programme (RBIP)	A programme that uses risk information to prioritise protection interventions, inspections, audits and engagement activity.
Risk Intelligence	Evidence, data and information used to understand fire risk and target protection activity.
Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR)	A key source of evidence about current and future risks in Lancashire. It informs priorities, planning and resource decisions.
Unwanted Fire Signal	A fire alarm signal where attendance is not required because there is no fire or emergency. Reducing these helps improve efficiency and availability.

Document Control

Reference	
Date	
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09/09/2026	V2.2	Amends following EB initial review of strategy structures
15/09/2026	V2.3	Updates further to consultation and feedback from EVGs and rep bodies
07/10/2026	V2.4	EP and MH amends following EB Away Day
23/10/2026	V2.5	Final review and couple of minor amends made by Ian Armistead