

## Welcome to our Annual Service Report

Last year the Service adapted to delivering our services alongside supporting the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic in Lancashire. We were proud to continue playing a central role, working as one team with partner agencies in the Lancashire Resilience Forum.

After helping to establish vaccination centres in the previous year, in 2021-22 we continued to support local NHS services to deliver the vaccination programme. This included helping to deliver booster jabs to protect people against the Omicron variant during Christmas and New Year.

Over the course of the pandemic, we have helped to deliver approximately 500,000 vaccinations, with around 125,000 vaccines administered by our staff. We will continue to support Lancashire's recovery from the pandemic for as long we are needed.

This vital work was carried out alongside an increase in regular activity compared to the first year of the pandemic. Last year we attended almost 19,000 emergency incidents (an increase of around 10%) and conducted over 17,600 home fire safety checks (an increase of over 30%).

Despite challenging circumstances, both frontline and support staff maintained the highest standards while responding to emergencies and delivering services that keep communities in Lancashire safe.

In 2021-22 we were also able to progress several important areas of work that will ensure the Service is in a strong position to respond to changing risks in Lancashire, in particular climate change emergencies and extensive reform to business fire safety.

We also responded to numerous significant and complex emergencies throughout the year that have been conducted with exceptional skill and professionalism.

Justin Johnston  
Chief Fire Officer

## Our year in numbers

Incidents attended	18,932
Average attendance time	7 min 56 seconds
Fires attended	5,372
Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)	845
People lost their lives in ADFs	6
Casualties from ADFs	40
ADFs with a low or medium fire severity	94.2%
On-call fire engines available to respond to incidents	79.1%
Missing person searches (supporting other emergency services)	33
Gaining entry to property incidents (supporting other emergency services)	761
Road traffic collisions attended	721
On-call firefighters recruited	50
Home Fire Safety Checks delivered	17,632
Children and young people received prevention education	66,141
People took part in road safety education	13,704
Fire safety enforcement notices issued	102
Businesses prohibited from operating	16

## **Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening and protecting people when they do**

### **Review the Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referral pathway**

This project involved working with our partners to ensure the HFSC service continues to target prevention activity at the most vulnerable people and properties in Lancashire.

Following review and feedback from partners, we have improved the quality and management of HFSC referrals through improved communication and establishing a seamless process when we are unable to contact someone who has been referred through the service. The extensive partnership work that has been carried out culminated this year in the introduction of new ways of working for community safety and operational staff.

### **Embed Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) awareness**

Awareness of the impact of traumatic experiences in childhood on behaviour has been embedded across the service through toolbox talks, e-learning and as part of new recruits' training with the aim of delivering more informed and effective community fire safety and youth engagement activity. We intend to build on this foundation as we move to introduce trauma informed practice.

### **Built Environment Assessment Team**

Established to address the evolving risks posed by an increasingly complex built environment and the potential for buildings to perform unexpectedly in a fire, the team increased our knowledge and understanding of buildings in Lancashire.

Core services across prevention, protection and operational response have been strengthened and improved as a result of the team's recommendations. How we train our staff to assess risk in the built environment now draws on refreshed guidance which reflects national learning from significant incidents. Bespoke guidance has been provided to firefighters to support safe and effective response activities and operational crews are now delivering business fire safety checks. We have also established built environment risk managers and will soon be recruiting to fill these roles within the Service. Their responsibilities include accelerating organisational knowledge, understanding and competence in this area.

Read more about this work on page 10.

## **Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently**

### **Strengthen operational assurance**

Our assurance monitoring system (AMS) is improving the way we analyse data, identify trends and apply learning from exercises and incidents, including national learning. For example, we are using the system to track progress against the Grenfell Tower Inquiry action plan. Information from our debrief app, which captures learning from incidents and exercises, is automatically transferred to the AMS and analysed to inform improvements in how we plan, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

### **Respond to the impacts of climate change**

We continue to adapt and invest in understanding and mitigating climate change emergencies in the county. A new climate change operational response plan has been launched, which identifies the increasing impacts and consequences of climate change in terms of both prevalence and duration of large-scale flooding and wildfire events.

As part of that plan we have invested in two new Hagglund vehicles. These rubber tracked off-road vehicles are helping us respond more efficiently and effectively to fires and flooding incidents that occur in difficult to access locations. This investment has expanded our developing wildfire and flood rescue response capabilities. Every firefighter in the Service already has a bespoke flood suit and this year they will receive specialist personal protective equipment for fighting wildfires, making Lancashire the first fire and rescue service in the UK to have wildfire kit for all frontline responders.

### **Optimise rota management**

Following a trial in 2020-21 to introduce several new processes designed to make detachment and overtime planning more efficient, we have further reviewed and updated our ways of working.

We continue to develop our staffing management app to ensure we maintain optimum staffing levels across a number of wholetime and on-call duty systems in a more efficient way. The latest developments include broadening access to the app for on-call firefighters.

## **Replace incident command units and software**

Our incident command units are critical to how we manage complex or large-scale incidents. We've produced and tested a specification for new vehicles that will lead to more effective incident management in the future, which includes new software that will enable us to share information safely and efficiently across the incident ground. A contract for two new command units has been awarded with arrival into the Service expected in 2023-24.

## **Evaluate tools to strengthen our response**

During 2020-21 we expanded a pre-alerting system, designed to reduce incident response times, to wholetime and on-call fire stations following a trial. The system provides early mobilisation messages which have improved average reaction times to incidents across all duty systems. Pre-alerting has been implemented across our fire stations and we continue to refine the system based on feedback from operational crews.

We also concluded research into a software system that provides dynamic cover data and plan to introduce this during 2022-23 to help ensure our resources are available in the right place, at the right time.

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## **Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer**

### **Develop a strong organisational culture based on values and wellbeing**

A programme of work to continue developing an organisational culture that promotes a healthy state of wellbeing and truly represents the Service's STRIVE values: service, trust, respect, integrity, valued and empowerment.

- Supervisory and middle managers continued to progress their development through the Institute of Leadership and Management levels 3 and 5.
- Promotion pathways have been reviewed and implemented creating opportunities for talented individuals to progress more quickly via a talent gateway assessment. This also allows on-call incident commanders the opportunity to be considered for wholetime supervisory manager roles where they meet the essential requirements.
- During 2021-22 we introduced a team of wellbeing support dogs to our health and wellbeing services. Six members of staff and their dogs received training to be able to assist in improving wellbeing, de-stressing after demanding incidents and providing peer support and signposting. Our health and wellbeing work has been recognised in the Oscar Kilo awards, run by the National Police Wellbeing Service. We were awarded runner up in the personal resilience category for our workplace wellbeing toolbox talks. These talks continue to share awareness of mental health, provide support information and offer wellbeing tips across the whole Service. Collaboration with the Fire Fighters Charity continues to expand the range of workshops available with a focus on personal resilience and the importance of maintaining good physical health to support mental health and wellbeing.

### **Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within the Service**

Recruiting, developing and retaining a workforce that is inclusive and more reflective of Lancashire's communities is central to serving our communities as effectively as we can.

- A series of engagement activities within Lancashire's minority communities took place prior to 'have a go' recruitment events at community venues across the county, aimed at appealing to a diverse range of talent. The events were an opportunity for people to find out more about a career with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and encourage them to apply when recruitment opened.
- A trial of flexible annual leave arrangements at Blackpool and South Shore fire stations was extended for another year to allow further learning, due to the impact of Covid-19 on staffing levels at the time. Further evaluation will be carried out once complete to consider the effectiveness of the trial.

- A Ramadan safety campaign was launched at Preston Muslim Forum and the Service participated in the 'I'm not a Muslim but I will fast (for one day)' initiative with One Voice Blackburn. Members of staff fasted for one day to support Muslim colleagues and community members.
- Focus groups were held with fire cadets and college students to gather insight to inform fire safety campaigns targeted at young people.
- The Service has continued to attend Pride events across Lancashire and engage with the LGBTQ+ community to show our support, break down barriers and create positive relationships with the communities we serve. We work collaboratively with other fire and rescue services as well as public sector organisations such as Lancashire Constabulary to maximise engagement opportunities.

### **Upgrade fire station accommodation**

Following completion of work at South Shore fire station to improve accommodation and facilities, a contractor has been appointed to upgrade accommodation at Hyndburn. Investment in fire stations is part of our commitment to ensuring our people have the best facilities to support their health and wellbeing and provide a positive working environment.

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## **Delivering value for money in how we use our resources**

### **Invest in training and equipment**

Investment in a programme of significant, long-term improvements continues to ensure that our people have the best equipment and training available to deliver effective services now and in the future.

- Following significant capital investment, construction work to expand the existing fleet garage and provide a purposely designed breathing apparatus training school and welfare facilities at our training centre in Chorley is complete and both are in full use by our staff.
- Following a review of drill tower provision across the Service, a medium to long term replacement plan based on specialist skills and the condition of existing facilities is being implemented.
- Last year we undertook work to rationalise on-vehicle technology and consider integrated vehicle systems as part of plans to introduce CCTV on fire appliances. Installation of CCTV is now underway with a view to improving driver training and reducing the amount of time taken to investigate driving incidents.

### **Collaborate with other public services**

Covid-19 caused our plans through the Blue Light Collaboration Board to be placed on hold but presented new ways for the Service to diversify and work with partners to support the pandemic response in Lancashire.

Our people volunteered to provide essential services: delivered interventions and welfare checks to Lancashire's most vulnerable residents; trained to handle mass casualties and support temporary morgues; coordinated the distribution of personal protection equipment (PPE) supplies to health care settings; and fitted P3 face masks for hospital and social care workers.

The Blue Light Collaboration Board was re-established after being paused during the Covid-19 pandemic. A new strategic statement of intent has been produced setting out objectives for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service.

Collaboration work with Lancashire Constabulary is underway to prepare for the introduction of a new standard in relation to fire scene investigation for organisations that investigate fires as part of the criminal justice setting. This includes fire and rescue services carrying out investigations as part of multi-agency teams.



## **Replace performance and analysis software**

Work has progressed to replace the software we use to research, analyse and report information relating to incident trends, prevention data and performance. As part of our digital transformation programme, we are developing a data warehouse and creating a system that is fit for future needs. In a phased approach, the project will enable more effective monitoring and reporting of a wide range of key performance indicators.

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## **Making Lancashire safer**

In addition to the priorities set out in our Annual Service Plan, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service provides a wide range of services throughout the year to help keep people safe.

### **Supporting communities during the coronavirus pandemic**

Since the pandemic began in 2020, we have played a central role in the response, working as one team alongside partner agencies in the Lancashire Resilience Forum. This included delivering essential services from visiting vulnerable residents to carry out interventions and welfare checks to coordinating distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies to health and social care settings.

We later turned our attention to supporting local NHS services to establish vaccination centres, providing site management, marshalling, administration and logistics support to mass vaccination venues and community sites. Firefighters and support staff were also trained to administer vaccines directly to patients.

In December 2021, we once again supported local NHS services with the Covid-19 vaccination programme, administering booster jabs over Christmas and New Year.

- Over the course of the pandemic, we have helped to deliver approximately 500,000 vaccinations, with around 125,000 vaccines administered by our staff.
- 328 volunteers supported the vaccination programme at 25 sites across Lancashire, including five mass vaccination sites.

### **Transforming protection services in response to fire safety reform**

Extensive reform to fire safety and building control standards is underway to make buildings safer for occupants following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire. Building on the recommendations from work carried out by our built environment assessment team, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry action plan and significant changes in fire safety legislation, the past year has seen substantial changes in the way we help businesses to reduce fire risk in their buildings, keep people safe and comply with legislation. Our protection services have been restructured to include a protection transformation team and a new built environment and operational liaison team.

The protection transformation team has expanded the ability of the Service to assure the standard of fire precautions in smaller and lower risk premises through the introduction of business fire safety checks (BFSC) undertaken by operational crews. The process is underpinned by a state-of-the-art premises allocation portal and an app on a mobile device, which ensures the check can be undertaken with minimal disruption to the business and relevant fire safety advice is automatically sent by e-mail following completion. Premises which are found to be seriously non-compliant are referred to our dedicated fire safety inspection teams.

Historically, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has been called out around 2,000 times every year by automatic fire alarms (AFAs) or by people dialling 999 reporting that an alarm is sounding in premises (with no sleeping risk) during the day. Over 99.5% of these calls were subsequently found to be false alarms when fire engines arrived. In light of the risk this creates by unnecessary blue light mobilisations and reduced emergency vehicle availability, we have changed how we respond to these alarms.

## **Community safety work with young people**

Virtual delivery of prevention education in schools was used successfully throughout the pandemic as an alternative to in-person visits and by the end of the 2021 academic year, nearly 6,000 pupils had received the Year 6 Road Sense package prior to moving onto secondary school.

In September 2021 we resumed in-person delivery of education packages in all schools in Lancashire and sought to catch up with primary school students who missed a year during the pandemic. All primary schools in Lancashire will have been offered our Childsafe and Road Sense packages by the end of the 2021-22 academic year.

Fire cadet units restarted at six fire stations after the pandemic forced the units to pause. The cadet programme provides support and opportunities for young people aged 13 to 17 alongside the opportunity to achieve some valuable qualifications. Seventy cadets were enrolled in the year.

The Prince's Trust programmes ran throughout the pandemic with teaching methods adapted to ensure they could continue. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service celebrated 20 years of delivering The Prince's Trust last year and we are incredibly proud of the programmes we run in nine areas across Lancashire.

## **Leading nationally on the use of drones**

Last year we expanded our drone team to include more pilots who work on an on-call system, which strengthens resilience in relation to our aerial capabilities. The use of drones has transformed the way we fight fires by providing incident commanders with aerial intelligence, including infra-red capability to identify fires burning within a structure or underground. Our partnership with Lancashire Constabulary has also resulted in drones being used in missing people searches and public events.

As the national drone lead for both police and fire and rescue services, the team maintains strong focus on innovation and introduced new state-of-the-art equipment in 2021-22. This included four new drones with advanced search and artificial intelligence capabilities; a new remotely operated vehicle that is being trialled for underwater rescues; and advanced software which allows the team to create aerial maps of large-scale incidents such as wildfires and floods in near real time.

## Significant incidents

Explosion in Morecambe  
16 May 2021

A major incident was declared following an explosion on Mallowdale Avenue in Morecambe. Two terraced houses had collapsed and a third was seriously damaged. 10 fire engines responded along with the urban search and rescue unit, search and rescue dogs and the drone team. Firefighters rescued five people from the site and worked alongside the police to investigate the cause of the fire. A child tragically died in the incident.

Commercial building fire in Poulton  
16 August 2021

Eight fire engines and an aerial ladder platform were called to a fire involving the ground floor of a commercial building on Station Road in Poulton.

Explosion in Clayton-le-Woods  
15 October 2021

Eight fire engines, the urban search and rescue team, an aerial ladder platform and the drone team responded to an explosion involving a house on Kirkby Avenue in Clayton-le-Woods. Firefighters worked alongside Lancashire Police to investigate the cause of the fire. Sadly one person died in this incident.

Strong winds in Skelmersdale  
29 October 2021

Six fire engines and an aerial ladder platform were called to Eskbank in Skelmersdale when strong winds caused damage to approximately 24 domestic properties. Firefighters worked with Lancashire Police and West Lancashire Borough Council to make the buildings safe and assist residents.

Flooding across Lancashire  
30 December 2021

Firefighters attended multiple flooding incidents during heavy rain across the county. Some involved roads and properties being affected by flood water, and we also attended several incidents where vehicles and along with their occupants were trapped in flood water.

Bridge collapse in Roeburndale  
18 January 2022

Five fire engines, several special appliances and the drone team attended an incident involving a bridge collapse on Moor Lane in Roeburndale. A vehicle pulling a trailer had fallen into a river as a result. Firefighters assisted police, ambulance and mountain rescue teams in a multi-agency response. Several people were injured and sadly one person died.

Wildfire in Rossendale  
19 March 2022

Eight fire engines, the wildfire burn team, special appliances including a Hagglund all-terrain vehicle and water bowser, and the drone team were called to a wildfire on Shawforth Moor near Bacup.

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