

## Welcome to our Annual Service Report

Last year we set out to strengthen community safety in respect of emerging risks affecting Lancashire. Climate change in particular is having a significant impact on homes, businesses and environments, and the risk of flooding and wildfires has increased.

In response, we invested in wildfire personal protective equipment (PPE) for every firefighter in the Service plus additional equipment for specialist wildfire units. Two new all-terrain Hagglund vehicles were added to our fleet to make it easier to access rural areas during extreme weather events. These vehicles have already proved their worth in multiple incidents across the county.

Collaboration with other emergency services continued to deliver improved public services. We attended more incidents to gain entry to homes where there was a medical emergency and assist in searching for missing people than the previous year.

These partnerships enable us to use our skills and experience to keep people safe in diverse ways. A new collaboration with North West Ambulance Service on their community first responder initiative has already seen a Lancashire resident benefit from life-saving first aid from one of our staff responding from the workplace.

Business Fire Safety Checks is a new service delivered by operational crews to help small and lower risk businesses comply with fire safety laws, following significant changes to legislation. This means our dedicated fire safety inspection teams can focus on premises where occupants are at a higher risk of harm.

Thank you to everyone who took part in our emergency cover consultation which reviewed fire engines and crewing arrangements alongside community risks. The improvements identified reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. All 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances have been maintained and we are increasing the number of firefighters employed.

An innovation that is already benefitting Lancashire as part of the review is the introduction of dynamic cover software to deploy resources. It provides visual data on community risks and emergency cover in real-time to inform decision-making. This means we can position firefighters and fire engines with greater precision and has improved emergency cover and response times in communities during several periods of high demand.

During the year we were proud to offer critical support to people outside of Lancashire, as we responded to international emergency events. We supplied two fire engines and equipment to Ukrainian firefighters and formed part of search and rescue teams following natural disasters in Turkey and Malawi.

Behind all these achievements are dedicated people with the highest levels of skills and expertise. From saving lives on the frontline to supporting behind the scenes, we are united in our determination to make Lancashire safer.

Justin Johnston

Chief Fire Officer

## Our year in numbers

18,841 incidents attended

Average attendance time 7 mins 48 secs

5,632 fires attended

8 people tragically lost their lives in fires

772 accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)

37 casualties from ADFs

86% of ADFs prevented from spreading

94 missing person searches

914 gaining entry to property incidents in support of North West Ambulance Service

621 road traffic collisions attended

22,210 Home Fire Safety Checks delivered

110,197 children and young people received prevention education

18,755 people took part in road safety education

158 fire safety enforcement notices issued

15 businesses prohibited from operating

64 on-call firefighters recruited

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

### Embed the Core Code of Ethics alongside our STRIVE values

Our STRIVE values and the Core Code of Ethics guide the professional behaviours expected of all our staff to ensure our workplace is one where everyone feels valued, included, and able to reach their full potential.

A programme of staff events related to the Core Code of Ethics has been delivered to 281 members of staff to-date and continues in 2023-24. Our 360 degree appraisal process, which is undertaken by all supervisory and middle managers, now includes the code, and all new recruits were offered support and key contacts in relation to values and behaviours.

### Develop resilient leaders who manage the performance of their staff

We are focused on developing the capability and resilience of leaders to support their staff in achieving their full potential through talent management, promotion pathways, and continuous improvement.

- Seven people started Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) level 3 qualifications and 11 began level 5. They are a combination of middle manager talent gateway candidates, fire safety managers and personal development candidates identified in appraisals, including service support staff.
- Five operational and support staff are working towards ILM level 7.
- Nine people received external coaching.
- Three people were nominated for Lancashire Police's Inside Out programme.
- On-call managers were offered access to the National Fire Chiefs Council supervisory leadership development programme.
- Middle manager talent gateway assessments and area manager recruitment were delivered.

### Attract and develop diverse talent

Recruiting, training, and developing people who can meet the diverse needs of the residents of Lancashire and bring diversity of thought and talent into our Service is a priority.

- The Service signed the Armed Forces Covenant and was accredited with the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme's Bronze Award to support the employment of veterans through our recruitment processes.
- 87 job roles were successfully recruited to.
- Wholtime firefighter recruitment was paused at interview stage due to the potential for national industrial action by firefighters.
- Educational visits took place at schools and colleges, we attended careers fairs to promote roles within the Service, and a special recruitment event was held at our training centre to attract women.

- A comprehensive training plan was created and implemented aimed at building knowledge and skills and creating an environment for flexibility and innovation.
- A training and organisational development group was established to oversee apprentice recruitment, progression, and success.
- Incident command development and assessment was reviewed to ensure suitable behavioural skills and effective command presence are demonstrated by incident commanders at all levels. On-call incident commanders were supported with additional workshops.

#### Deliver firefighter pension changes

Calculations required to implement the pensions remedy in relation to legislative changes arising from recent legal judgments were undertaken for the vast majority of both current and previous employees. All current employees affected were transferred into the revised pension scheme.

#### Upgrade fire station facilities

Investment in new accommodation at Hyndburn Fire Station was completed and design work began at Blackpool Fire Station to ensure it meets the needs of a more diverse workforce. This includes improving accommodation, providing a dedicated training room, and installing a quiet room.

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## A celebration of our people

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service celebrated the achievements of over 50 of its most talented and dedicated people in a special event on 11 November 2022.

Long Service Good Conduct Awards were presented to both operational and non-operational staff for 20 and 30 years' service and meritorious conduct.

Justin Johnston, Chief Fire Officer, awarded personal commendations for acts of courage and determination to those involved in challenging emergencies.

The Service also celebrated its fifth annual Star Awards which recognised members of staff, nominated by their peers, for exemplifying Service values. The awards highlight the often-untold stories of people making a real difference to their colleagues and local communities.

Those who successfully completed high-level academic qualifications alongside demanding job roles, reflecting outstanding commitment to personal development, were also honoured.

### Honours and awards

Group Manager Tim Murrell was awarded a Queen's Fire Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in honour of his outstanding contribution to the fire and rescue service through innovation, dedication and voluntary work.

Tim worked tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic and was pivotal in the distribution of personal protective equipment to social and health care workers across the county, and in Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service becoming the first fire and rescue service in the country to help in the vaccination programme.

In December 2022, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service won Partnership of the Year Award at the Asian Fire Service Association awards alongside Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service. The award recognised the partnership's work to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme in communities.

The Service was delighted to then win Fire Brigade of the Year at the GG2 Leadership and Diversity Awards in March 2023, for outstanding work in championing diversity, making demonstrable progress in diversifying the talent pool and creating an inclusive working environment.

## Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening

Reduce fires and other emergencies in Lancashire's diverse communities

The Service and the Prince's Trust celebrated 22 years of delivering the team programme across Lancashire and improving the lives of young people, and our fire cadets programme continued to be delivered at six fire stations.

A water safety thematic group was introduced to our prevention activity and the Service led the formation of a pan-Lancashire water safety partnership, which was launched in April 2023.

We became a partner in the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network and contributed to the readiness assessment commissioned by the Home Office. Fire and rescue services have a role within the Serious Violence Duty which has broadened the ways we can contribute to community cohesion and citizenship.

Collaboration with Lancashire Police to attain new forensic science standards for fire investigations continued.

Improve our Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) service

Local partnerships were reviewed to ensure that for each of Lancashire's districts, the profile of partners referring people into the service matches the risk profile and meets the needs of communities.

A new version of the HFSC mobile system was developed and work continues to align the service with national principles of a person-centred service and standard data collection requirements.

Develop prevention services for homes equipped with assistive technology

Acknowledging that those with telecare are some of the most vulnerable in our communities, we strengthened the way we work with both telecare commissioners and providers through training and data sharing.

We worked closely with partners following changes to the provision of telecare in Lancashire. This will now form the basis of a new domestic automatic fire alarm policy.

## Community safety officer saves Lancashire woman's life

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's first workplace community first responder helped to save the life of a woman who suffered a cardiac arrest.

Diane Fenton went into cardiac arrest at her home in Leyland in January 2023. Her husband called 999 and began chest compressions. Andy Dow, a community fire safety officer based at Leyland Fire Station, was the first to arrive on scene followed by North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) paramedics.

Andy and the paramedics gave Diane advanced life support for over 50 minutes, using a defibrillator to restart her heart, before she was taken to hospital.

"If it wasn't for Andy and the paramedics, the outcome could have been a lot different."

Diane Fenton

The Service is running a trial involving non-operational staff volunteering as community first responders, supporting NWAS. Volunteers respond to life threatening emergencies in their communities from the workplace and administer first aid in the initial vital minutes before NWAS colleagues arrive.

The collaboration aims to save lives in Lancashire's communities. We also have defibrillators on every fire engine in the county.

Two weeks after her cardiac arrest and heart surgery, Diane was back home with her husband, fully recovered. She has since visited Leyland Fire Station to thank Andy and the NWAS crew for saving her life.

## Protecting people and property when fires happen

### Transform fire protection and business safety

Five new business safety advisors were recruited to the fire protection team and are training to national standards. The scope of training and support given to firefighters has been broadened following work with Skills for Justice, the National Fire Chiefs Council and regional partners on the development of a Level 2 Award in Carrying Out Fire Safety Checks. This has been embedded in apprentice firefighter training with roll out to existing firefighters planned.

Crew training sessions are planned during 2023 to further upskill firefighters in built environment tactics and work to digitise protection services progressed with the development of a digital document store for premises files.

### Introduce Business Fire Safety Checks

Following a successful pilot the previous year, Business Fire Safety Checks are now delivered by all wholtime operational crews to lower risk premises that would not normally be audited by fire safety inspectors. The service helps businesses comply with fire safety laws.

### Strengthen our fire safety inspection programme to meet evolving standards

A review of risk-based inspection data helped define higher risk premises, which we target to make sure they are complying with fire safety requirements. The creation of our built environment and operational liaison team strengthened our understanding of auditing in line with new legislation and guidance.

### Introduce a new automatic fire alarm attendance policy

Due to high numbers of incidents which were found to be false alarms and following public consultation, the Service started to change how it responds to automatic fire alarms in non-sleeping risk premises, initially during daytime hours. We respond when there is a confirmed fire only (or the building provides sleeping accommodation). This enables us to use our resources more efficiently. The second phase of this project related to night time hours went live in May 2023.

We have engaged with businesses in various ways, including dedicated online sessions, to support them in making necessary changes to their fire alarm procedures and emergency plans relevant to their premises type.

Working with premises that are exempt from our automatic fire alarm policy has minimised false alarms, so that we remain available for genuine emergencies. This also reduces disruption to businesses.



## Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently

### Review emergency cover incorporating the replacement of the day crewing plus duty system

We undertook an emergency cover review to ensure that our emergency response remains effective and efficient, and that we are well equipped to respond to future challenges.

Public consultation took place from July to October 2022 and Lancashire's Combined Fire Authority agreed the proposed changes in December.

The changes identified reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire and:

- Maintain all 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances.
- Maintain our outstanding response standards.
- Create an increase in firefighter jobs of eight.

### Review special fire appliances and resource provision

A review of special fire appliances, such as aerial ladder platforms, swift water rescue units, and hazardous materials and environmental protection units, was carried out to ensure they are located and crewed in line with community risks.

Most changes will be implemented as part of the emergency cover review implementation in 2023-24. However the number of bariatric response units has increased from six to 10, development of a small command support unit has begun, and a 4x4 wildfire unit has moved to Bacup to complement the specialist wildfire capability there and nearby at Rawtenstall.

### Invest in our fleet

Procurement of a 45-metre aerial ladder platform (ALP), the greatest ALP capability currently available in the UK, began. The Covid-19 pandemic and supply chain problems delayed this work however it is expected to be in service in 2023.

Procurement of two more water towers, fire engines with added capability to deliver large volumes of water from height and pierce building exteriors to extinguish fires within compartments, was completed. The appliances are expected to be in service during 2023-24.

Building of new incident command units continued with the first expected to be completed in 2023. These vehicles will replace existing units and lead to more effective large-scale incident management. New incident command software has also progressed and is being tested.

As part of our vehicle replacement plan, 13 new fire engines are being built with delivery expected to start in 2023-24.

## Respond to the impacts of climate change

The Service procured new wildfire personal protective equipment (PPE) for all our firefighters, plus additional equipment for specialist wildfire units. Rollout began and was completed in June 2023.

Two new Hagglund vehicles were added to our fleet to strengthen our response to wildfires and flooding. The all-terrain vehicles are rubber tracked off-road appliances which will enhance our existing wildfire and flood rescue response capability in remote areas of the county.

A working group of firefighters explored the use of climate change response vehicles to further strengthen our capabilities, and consulted on proposals to trial two bespoke all-wheel-drive fire appliances to give better access to rural areas. The group is now progressing vehicle specifications for trials.

This investment is part of our work to respond to the impacts of climate change through our climate change operational response plan.

Four fully electric cars were introduced for use by fire safety teams. The Service is reducing its diesel-powered support vehicles, replacing these with self-charging and plug-in hybrid technology, and exploring the wider rollout of electric vehicle charging units at strategic locations across the county.

## Implement operational learning in response to national events

Recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry were implemented including the development of an evacuation policy, delivery of training, and the introduction of new equipment such as smoke hoods and curtains. We also completed thematic assurance for these items and will continue to develop our people through training and exercising.

Recommendations from the Manchester Arena Inquiry were analysed and actions identified. We introduced new trauma equipment and training, which enhances our capability when responding to incidents with serious trauma, and remaining actions will be progressed in 2023-24.

## Optimise emergency cover through improved data including dynamic mobilising software

We have introduced dynamic cover software that enables us to deploy resources more effectively and efficiently across Lancashire. Currently in use during significant incidents, it provides visual data on community risks and emergency cover in real-time. This means we can position firefighters and appliances with greater precision to improve emergency cover and response times during periods of high demand.

## Lancashire firefighters deployed to global humanitarian disasters

After devastating earthquakes hit Turkey and Syria on 6 February 2022, six firefighters from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service were deployed to Turkey to assist in search and rescue efforts.

The earthquakes led to the deployment of the United Kingdom International Search and Rescue (UKISAR) team. UKISAR responds to humanitarian accidents and disasters worldwide and the team is on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Watch Manager Wayne Ward, Crew Manager Jim Davison, Crew Manager Chris Jowett and Firefighter Adam Varey responded, along with search dogs Davey and Sid, and their handlers Crew Manager Lindsay Sielski and Firefighter Jon Hardman.

"For every area where we had intelligence that there may be someone alive in there Davey would be up, he would use his nose and he would be able to sniff out through cracks in the rubble to let us know if there was anyone alive in a building or a collapsed structure."

Crew Manager Lindsay Sielski, UK International Search and Rescue Team K9 Lead

The team spent 10 days working on searches, which could last up to 18 hours, and rescued eight people. The dogs found a further three who were then rescued by local teams.

In March, Crew Manager Jim Davison was deployed to Malawi following Cyclone Freddy, which caused landslides and flooding. He was part of a team that supported Malawian authorities in the search for survivors and providing shelter and water to thousands of people affected.

## Lancashire supports Ukrainian firefighters

Lancashire firefighters drove two ready to use fire engines to Poland as part of a convoy organised by UK charity FIRE AID and International Development and the National Fire Chiefs Council to support firefighters in the Ukraine.

The Service also donated personal protective equipment including helmets, boots, tunics, and protective suits; defibrillators; hoses; and other vital firefighting equipment.

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

### Implement the first stages of our digital strategy

The Service has worked with digital developers to design and build a new data warehouse to enhance performance reporting processes. Several key performance indicators (KPI) were used to build initial performance dashboards within Microsoft Power BI. The solution includes the underpinning architecture and technology framework that will be used to deliver the remaining KPIs as well as standardised performance dashboards.

A project to enrol our mobile device fleet into a cloud management platform is nearing completion, which will enable greater access to digital solutions across devices.

We started increasing awareness of cloud productivity tools within the Service, sought local champions and initiated a community developer programme to empower our people with digital solutions. This work is continuing and will introduce ways to enlighten and upskill people to make more effective use of the tools that are now readily available.

Work progressed to consolidate our corporate data platform so that a consistent and enriched view of data from different systems is accessible to staff, and this new platform is what has been used to service the dynamic cover software.

Digital and data solutions were analysed and built to support other areas of work in this report including improvements to the Home Fire Safety Check service, transformation of fire protection and business safety, and the introduction of business fire safety checks.

### Create digitally enabled fire engines

A new mobile data terminal was successfully tested and 80 have been ordered for fire engines and other Service vehicles which will replace all the existing terminals in the fleet.

Five fire engines are also piloting a second mobile terminal installed into the rear of the vehicles. These devices are de-mountable and will provide firefighters with more efficient, data-rich information that can also be used on the incident ground.

To increase connectivity, additional routers were added to two of the pilot vehicles, and work started on a secure network to connect with North West Fire Control and other applications.

### Install CCTV on fire engines

CCTV was installed in 12 fire engines and all officers' cars resulting in a decrease in vehicle accidents and reduction in associated costs. Three aerial ladder platforms were fitted with six-way CCTV and plans are in place to extend the installation programme in 2023-24. The aim is to increase firefighter safety while they protect communities.

Replace a number of drill towers

New drill towers and associated alerter masts were installed at Blackpool, Bolton-le-Sands and Tarleton fire stations and others have been repaired, as part of a service-wide replacement programme.

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## Making Lancashire safer

### Fire at former nightclub in Preston City Centre

On 19 May 2022, a fire broke out in the former Odeon cinema and vacant Evoque nightclub on Church Street in Preston. The building was partly derelict and partly used by businesses.

12 fire engines, two aerial ladder platforms, the drone team, the urban search and rescue team, and a command support unit responded to the fire, which was prevented from spreading to adjacent properties.

Firefighting continued for several days alongside emergency demolition to make the structure safe. The Service worked with Preston City Council and other partners to minimise disruption to local residents and businesses in a multi-agency response to the incident.

### Two people and a dog rescued from house fire in Charnock Richard

A faulty dishwasher, turned on before the occupants went to bed, caused a serious fire in a house on Chorley Lane in Charnock Richard on 21 June 2022.

Luckily, Michaela Swift and her visiting friend were awoken by a smoke alarm but were unable to leave the property due to heat and smoke.

Trapped in a first floor bedroom, the pair followed survival advice from North West Control Room until fire engines arrived. The first firefighters on scene rescued both women and Michaela's dog through the upstairs window using a ladder, undoubtedly saving their lives.

Fortunately, those involved suffered mild smoke inhalation from which they recovered however the property was significantly damaged and uninhabitable for many months.

[Michaela Swift comment to be inserted]

### Fire at Chorley landfill site

On 13 July 2022, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service responded to a fire at a landfill site on Dawson Lane in Buckshaw Village, Chorley.

Fifteen fire engines, the drone team and multiple special appliances, including water towers, high volume pumps, command support unit, water bowser, and a Hagglund were involved in firefighting.

The Service worked with the Environment Agency and other partners in a multi-agency response to the incident, which covered approximately 6,000 square metres of surface area and lasted several days.

### Boxing day fire in Blackpool beauty salon

On 26 December 2022, eight fire engines, an aerial ladder platform, and the drone team were called to a fire in a beauty salon on Church Street in Blackpool town

centre. The urban search and rescue team and fire search dogs were later mobilised to assist in the response.

The fire caused parts of the building to collapse and an area of Church Street had to be closed as the area was made safe. The Service worked closely with Lancashire Police and other partners to minimise disruption to local businesses.

### Waste site fire in Preston

Six fire engines, an aerial ladder platform, a water tower, and the drone team were called to a fire at a waste site on Longridge Road in Preston. The site is permitted to recycle, reclaim, and recover a range of waste materials.

The fire on 12 March 2023 impacted on the local community and multiple reports were made to the authorities about the incident.

The Service worked closely with the Environment Agency, which regulates waste sites to make sure they are complying with environmental legislation, to investigate the circumstances of the fire and identify measures to help reduce the risk and scale of potential future fires at the site.

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