



South Yorkshire
FIRE & RESCUE

OUR PLAN

Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2028

Making
**SOUTH
YORKSHIRE
SAFER &
STRONGER**

Foreword

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue's purpose is 'making South Yorkshire safer and stronger'.

All of our fantastic staff joined this service to help the people of South Yorkshire. They all work to achieve this aim- from every frontline firefighter and officer, to every member of our corporate teams.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework requires us to develop and deliver this plan. This plan also reassures the public that we take time to understand the risks they face from fires and other emergencies, carefully planning how we can manage those risks through the services we deliver.

Responding to emergencies remains an absolute priority for the service. The role of this plan is to consider how we can deliver all of our core services to address the risks in our area, of which response remains a very important part.

Our service has faced some significant financial challenges over the past fifteen years. We have responded well to the financial situation, despite significant reductions in the amount of money allocated to us from central government. The future financial picture remains uncertain and this often makes long term planning difficult.

But we continue to adapt to changes in our community and environment and we want to carry on delivering an excellent service- with a strong focus on those most vulnerable to fires and other emergencies.

We will work closely with partners across South Yorkshire's Local Resilience Forum including Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield councils, plus other agencies such as South Yorkshire Police and Yorkshire Ambulance Service, to provide the best value for our communities.

Strategic objectives

This plan describes how we will deliver our core duties to meet the risks in our county with the resources available to us. However, it does not describe everything that we want to achieve as a service during the lifespan of this plan. That's why we have committed to delivering the following strategic objectives:

1. Efficiency and productivity

Identify and remove inefficiencies across the service and improve productivity to provide best value.

We will:

- a) Set clear targets and report against our efficiency and productivity plan every year
- b) Develop our processes for identifying and realising efficiencies
- c) Scrutinise recruitment as part of existing workforce planning processes
- d) Prioritise our capital spending in line with this CRMP, reviewing it annually
- e) Deliver the objectives set out in our Green Plan

2. Inclusion, diversity and culture

Embed inclusion across the service so all staff can thrive, communities are supported and positive action translates into genuine recruitment outcomes.

We will:

- a) Implement our revised equality, diversity and inclusion strategy by the end of 2026
- b) Deliver on actions arising from a staff culture survey by the end of 2025
- c) Empower staff groups to appropriately influence policy and employee experience
- d) Involve all parts of the service in positive action work and measure its impact
- e) Monitor the quality and effectiveness of equality impact assessments

3. Performance, leadership and learning

Harness data, prioritise leadership and adopt learning to drive improved performance across all service areas.

We will:

- a) Continue to improve our use of data and invest in our performance information systems and processes
- b) Better use data to inform local plans, performance measures and workforce productivity
- c) Support excellent leadership throughout SYFR, providing effective development opportunities for all levels (aspiring, supervisory, middle and senior), by the end of 2026
- d) Embed the 360 degree process for all leaders and managers by the end of 2026
- e) Ensure local and national learning is properly embedded across the service, including the health and safety of our staff and fire contaminants management

Our strategic **objectives** replace a separate document we previously called our Service Plan. We will continue to report our progress to the Fire Authority every six months.

Introduction to risk management planning

More than 1.3 million people rely on us to provide our services. They rightly expect us to do this in a planned and coordinated way, matching the work we deliver to the different risks they face. Understanding and reducing risk in our communities is crucial to this- and to achieving our purpose of 'making South Yorkshire safer and stronger'.

The way fire services assess and reduce risk is through a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This is an up-to-date analysis of local risk and describes how we will effectively coordinate our work to improve public safety and save lives. A professional fire standard outlines the steps we should take to produce this plan in a coordinated and consistent way.

For the first time, within this plan we are also including our strategic **objectives**. These describe the other strategic, medium-term actions we are taking to change and improve our service. We are including these **objectives** in this plan so that the links are much clearer between our work to make local people safer and our work to improve our service for all those we serve and employ.

Why we are here

Our purpose is: Making South Yorkshire safer and stronger

To achieve this we deliver the following key services:

Prevention – to raise awareness of the risks people face from fire and other types of emergency. This will focus on those most vulnerable through education and early intervention to prevent emergencies from happening

Protection – to promote and enforce fire safety arrangements in buildings that fall within relevant legislation. This is to ensure buildings and occupants are as safe as possible

Response – to have trained staff ready and able to respond to a variety of emergency situations, equipped with the best vehicles and equipment to do their job as effectively as possible

Resilience – our ability to adapt and respond to any change, disruption, or emergency that comes our way. This includes our ability to deal with major emergencies that demand significant resources or require the support from other services and agencies, whilst still continuing to deliver business as usual activity across the county

Our first goal will always be to save lives and make people safer. This is what we do every single day, whether it's responding to 999 calls or carrying out work to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place.

Much of our work goes beyond this though, from improving the life chances of young people and protecting businesses, to helping tackle other issues like crime and healthcare. Our organisation's **purpose** extends therefore into making our communities more resilient.

Who we are

Our responsibilities as a fire and rescue service are set out clearly in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. We also have specific duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The service is governed by the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority. The Fire and Rescue Authority is made up of 12 councillors from the four metropolitan district councils of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.

The Fire Authority funds the service and works closely with the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to decide how our services can be provided in the most efficient and effective way. Some decision making powers are delegated directly to the service under the Authority's constitution.

Our firefighters respond to a wide range of emergencies from fires and road traffic collisions, to collapsed buildings, rescues from height, water rescues and many other types of 'special service' incidents.

However, whilst our work responding to 999 calls is both well-known and well valued by the public, far more of our contact with local people is actually through our varied and extensive work to prevent incidents from happening in the first place.

To deliver our work, we employ more than 1,000 people, most of whom are firefighters. The majority of these are wholetime firefighters. This means they temporarily 'live' and work from a fire station, following a shift pattern, and are available to attend emergency incidents 24 hours a day.

A smaller number are 'on-call' firefighters, meaning they live or work in the communities they serve and provide emergency cover from these places.

Our firefighters are supported by corporate teams who provide a wide range of specialist services. This includes collaborative community safety work and our responsibilities to enforce business fire safety laws.

We also work with a network of volunteers to further extend our public education and prevention work.

We invest in the health and wellbeing of our teams, we provide leadership development and we promote the right values and **behaviours** across the whole service. We place equality and fairness at the heart of everything we do and know we need to improve the diversity of our teams, so we are more representative of the communities we serve.

Where we are going

Our strategic narrative is called 'Our Story'. This established our vision to become one of the UK's leading fire and rescue services.

Our Story reflects our **purpose** which is 'making South Yorkshire safer and stronger'.

It explains our **aspirations** as a service. These are to:

- **Be a great place to work**
- **Put local people first**
- **Strive to be the best in everything we do**

All of our work to improve the service is designed to help us achieve these aspirations. This includes our strategic **objectives**. Current service improvement ranges from technological improvements such as the introduction of Microsoft Office 365, to green initiatives including those designed to decarbonise our service. We're also working hard to drive down unwanted fire signals, improve our property estate for our staff and address issues related to contaminants which our firefighters may be exposed to when responding to incidents.

Our Story also explains the **behaviours** we expect our staff to display, regardless of rank or role. These are 'Honesty', 'Integrity' and 'Respect'. Together with the National Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue staff, this forms an essential part of everything we do.

Who we serve

We serve South Yorkshire. As a metropolitan county, South Yorkshire has the usual mix of risks associated with large, urban areas. That's everything from city centres, sports stadiums, shopping centres, high rise flats and historic buildings, to a vast transport network of road and rail.

Our population density is more than double that of the rest of England- it ranks 38th of the 48 English counties in terms of size, but 10th out of 48 in terms of population. There are significant pockets of deprivation and inequality spread across all four districts. Cultural diversity also means we must meet the needs of different communities.

Our status as a metropolitan service does not tell the whole story though. For example, the geographic area we cover is actually big when compared to other similar fire and rescue services with more sparsely populated, rural areas and even part of the Peak District national park forming part of our county too.

This 'sparsity factor' means our fire stations are more spread out than other metropolitan services, impacting the speed and size of response to some emergencies.

What local people say

To help us produce this plan, we run an annual survey with a representative sample of local people to ask them what they think about the work we do, what they would like us to focus on in the future and their satisfaction with our service.

We've also asked our staff about changes they have experienced in their local fire station areas, plus their views on where we should be focussing our resources.

Understanding and managing risk

Our community risk management planning process considers the whole range of fire and rescue related risks which we can reasonably predict.

Experience, plus analysis from independent data experts, tells us that certain incidents such as house fires and road traffic collisions are more likely to occur than more significant incidents such as a train crash or large industrial chemical release. Although the latter may have a more significant impact on the community, they are much less likely.

Therefore, we direct our prevention, protection and response resources to provide the greatest possible return on investment by reducing the overall impact of the foreseeable risks we face.

In summary, we:

- Use evidence, insight and professional experience to list all the risks that we face
- Assess how likely each risk will threaten life, property and the environment
- Model the level of risk across the county to create a 'risk map'
- Use this information to understand where to locate our people and resources

There are lots of different types of risk and some of the main ones we face are described below.

Community and house fire risk

Although it is impossible to predict exactly when or where a fire may occur, we are able to analyse the areas and people that are more at risk. In simple terms, our risk analysis shows that some areas and people are much more vulnerable to fire than others.

Analysis of incident data and studies into what makes someone more likely to have a fire also shows that there is a very strong link between fire and deprivation. The more deprived an area is, the more house fires there are likely to be. It's also likely that those fires will be more severe, possibly resulting in someone being taken to hospital or even dying.

Understanding all this, and using data sources like the English Index of Multiple Deprivation, is really important for supporting our community risk management planning because it is unlikely to change very quickly in the future. We use this information to inform our Community Risk Model.

We explore our risk model in more detail, later on in this plan. We regularly seek to identify new or emerging fire risks. A recent example is fires caused by lithium ion batteries, which now form part of our risk register.

High-rise residential building risks

We already know that high-rise residential buildings present different risks compared to other types of home. One of our roles has always been to understand and reduce this risk for our area.

The Grenfell Tower disaster, subsequent inquiry and two phases of recommendations which followed it have rightly put renewed focus on this part of our work.

All fire and rescue services have taken steps to consider the risks mainly affecting high-rise residential buildings which were built using a particular type of cladding. We've now turned our attention to auditing all other high-rise residential buildings in our county.

Transport and other special service call risks

We don't just attend fires. A large proportion of our emergency calls are classed as 'special service calls'. Lots of these are road traffic collisions.

With high population density in our urban areas we can expect a significant number of road traffic incidents in these areas. However, they also occur on more rural roads, away from populated places. Where these incidents are likely to occur is more difficult to predict because analysis of our data shows that they do not necessarily match areas of increased deprivation like fires do.

We know that response to road traffic collisions can be affected if they occur in more rural areas or if there is a significant build-up of traffic due to the collision, which can impact the time it takes firefighters to get to the scene.

We currently work with other agencies as part of the county's Safer Roads Partnership to reduce the number and severity of road traffic incidents. We usually focus this work on those most at risk, such as young and inexperienced drivers.

Helping other agencies- such as Yorkshire Ambulance Service- gain access to properties where there is concern for someone who may be inside also forms a big and growing proportion of our special service calls.

Other types of special service calls range from rescues from collapsed buildings or machinery, flooding, water rescues, rescues from height and releasing people who are trapped in lifts.

Commercial and industrial risks

Homes aren't the only types of buildings which can catch fire, with lots of the calls our firefighters attend involving non-domestic buildings. Some of these premises have their own particular risks to consider such as hospitals and hotels, to petrol stations, sports stadiums and waste recycling sites.

To help prevent major public and environmental accidents, some premises are required by law to produce emergency plans to mitigate on site accidents involving substances that the premises produce, use or store. The legislation is called the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015 and the premises it relates to are known as COMAH sites. There are seven upper tier COMAH sites in South Yorkshire.

We are the local authority responsible for preparing, reviewing, testing and exercising external emergency plans for COMAH sites in South Yorkshire and we do this in co-operation with our multi-agency partners. These plans are designed to formulate a multi-agency response and mitigate off-site impacts of a major accident.

Environmental risk

The impact of climate change and an increase in extreme weather events may increase environmental incidents such as flooding and wildfires, which may in turn place extra demands upon our resources.

The most recent major flooding which hit South Yorkshire was in October 2023, during Storm Babet. The last major flooding before this was in 2019.

The term 'wildfire' meanwhile refers to any large fire in open countryside, like grass and scrubland or moorland and woods. Large scale wildfires are quite rare, but when they do occur they can take a long time to tackle and often require the use of lots of firefighters, fire engines and other specialist equipment. They can also cause significant environmental damage.

With part of our county bordering the Peak District national park and other areas of moorland and sites of special scientific interest, the risk of wildfires is higher than in some other parts of the country. National analysis also suggests that the frequency of this type of incident could be increasing as a result of climate change.

The record breaking UK heatwave in July 2022 highlighted the impact of extreme weather events on our service and our communities. With climate change known to make extreme weather events more likely in the future, we must continue to resource according to risk, not just current demand. We have recently undertaken significant work to improve our capability in this area, including new training, vehicles, crew welfare arrangements and tactical advisors. We are further improving our resilience through the use of spare fire engines, small incident units and water bladders to help us respond to 'spate' conditions.

Sometimes, our firefighters also attend incidents which involve working in or around water, ice and deep mud. Firefighters trained to have extra skills are expected to attend these types of incidents with the purpose of saving life or giving humanitarian aid.

Heritage risk

The term 'heritage risk' relates to historic buildings, stately homes, monuments, museums, historic parks and other attractions. There are currently 62 grade I listed sites in South Yorkshire- and several hundred grade II listed sites.

South Yorkshire itself is home to a number of national heritage sites. Although the number of these sites in comparison to domestic dwellings is few, we recognise the unique risk they pose if involved in fire. For obvious reasons, this type of risk rarely changes.

Nine sites remaining on the Historic England 'at risk' register in South Yorkshire are Church of St Mary in Walkley, Globe Works, Beehive Works, Tickhill Castle, Rotherham town centre, Park Hill flats, Oakes Park, Cannon Hall Kitchen Garden and Hillsborough Park.

Some of the buildings also have their own salvage plans should a disaster occur. These are made available to us and help us to mitigate the damage in the event of fire, flooding or any other emergencies.

National risk

The National Risk Register takes into account all national risks, but not all apply to South Yorkshire. These risks are nationally graded and then locally analysed to see if and where they sit within our community risk register.

The risks which currently feature highly for South Yorkshire are:

- **Health related-** a pandemic or other emerging infectious disease
- **Severe Weather-** such as heatwaves, storms and low temperatures or snow
- **Utility disruption-** a local or national failure to electricity, gas, water or telecommunications
- **Cyber-** a cyber event affecting critical infrastructure or services
- **Flooding-** whether from rivers, surface water or from reservoirs
- **Crowd-related incidents-** large scale incidents at high capacity venues

Locally, we play a leading role in the work of the South Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum and are members of its associated subgroups. The forum brings together all agencies with a significant role to play in preparing for, responding to and recovery from the effect of emergencies, and was formed to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Its work includes making sure responders work together to minimise community risk and respond collectively in the most appropriate and effective manner where emergencies occur.

We also know that terror related events could happen anywhere and at any time. As this is highlighted on the community risk register, we have conducted exercises to improve our approach if called to respond. We have also given a portion of our workforce new skills to respond to this type of incident and increased the level of protection that specialist and non-specialist responders have access to. We will continue to review our work in this area to keep pace with recognised threats.

Future risks

Risk changes all the time. Some things can emerge very quickly, with the Covid-19 pandemic a recent and stark example of this. Other risks emerge more slowly, such as population changes or new housing or business developments. Our job is to review these risks regularly.

This involves us regularly updating our community risk model with the most up-to-date population and incident data and working with partners including local and national government to understand the changes which could affect South Yorkshire in the future.

We record all such risks on a foreseeable risk register and consider what resources we have in place to reduce these risks through a combination of prevention, protection, response and resilience capabilities.

We also consider future risks on a multi-agency level through the Local Resilience Forum and as a partnership we consider our capacity and capability to deal with those risks.

Our current resources and capabilities are likely to be suitable for dealing with any emerging risk, but we need to review emerging risks to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to all potential and foreseeable risks within South Yorkshire.

Emerging risks include new housing or business developments and changes to transport infrastructure. We are statutory consultees for major housing and commercial developments.

Our internal systems and processes for managing risks facing the service further support our work in this area.

We must also continue to learn and we have a dedicated team who capture learning from local, regional and national emergencies- like the Grenfell and Manchester Arena tragedies- and consider any gaps in our current capability. For example, emerging technologies such as the widespread rollout of electric vehicles and associated charging infrastructure may present new and as yet unknown fire risks in the future.

This work will continue into the future to keep our firefighters as safe as possible when responding to incidents. It will inform our operational policy, how we train our staff and the equipment we use to ensure we are prepared for all foreseeable risks that we face. A dedicated Firefighter Safety Team helps to provide this essential function. The team also considers other ways to keep firefighters safe during or following incidents- for example by overseeing work to understand and reduce risks posed by incident ground contaminants.

Community risk modelling

A 'risk model' is a way of using data to work out which parts of the county are most at risk when it comes to fire and other emergencies.

We define risk as 'the potential for an emergency to occur that may threaten life, cause injury or damage property or the environment.'

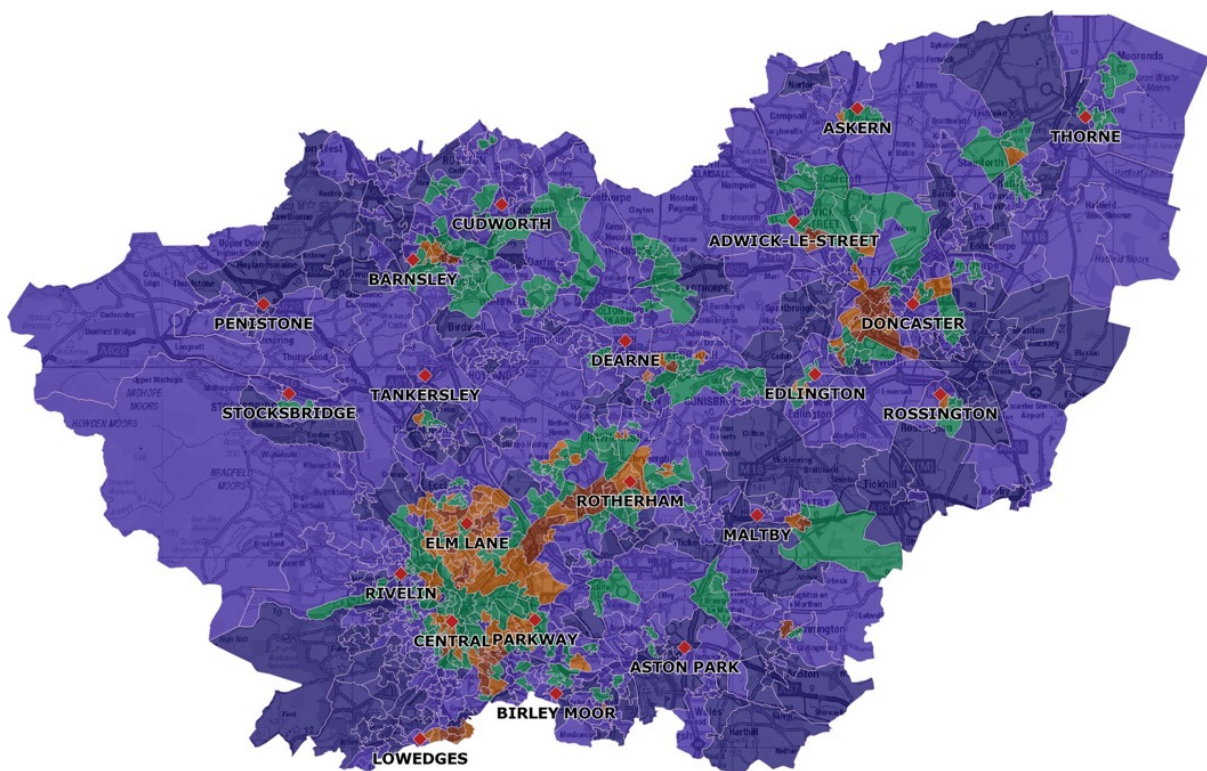
We've developed a revised methodology for how we assess risk across the county. This includes a detailed analysis of specific data sets that determine the risk of fires and other emergencies occurring. This helps to inform our response, prevention and protection activities to mitigate these risks.

There is lots of information which can inform how we deliver our services across the county. The key is selecting the most appropriate sets of data to give us the best chance of putting our resources in the right places at the right times to protect the communities of South Yorkshire.

This is constantly being refined as new data emerges and we develop our ability to interpret this data which in turn informs our decisions. We have selected some examples of the data we use to inform us about risk within the community with an explanation of how we use them below. The methodology for these risk models was developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council and is supported by a national professional fire standard.

Dwelling fire risk

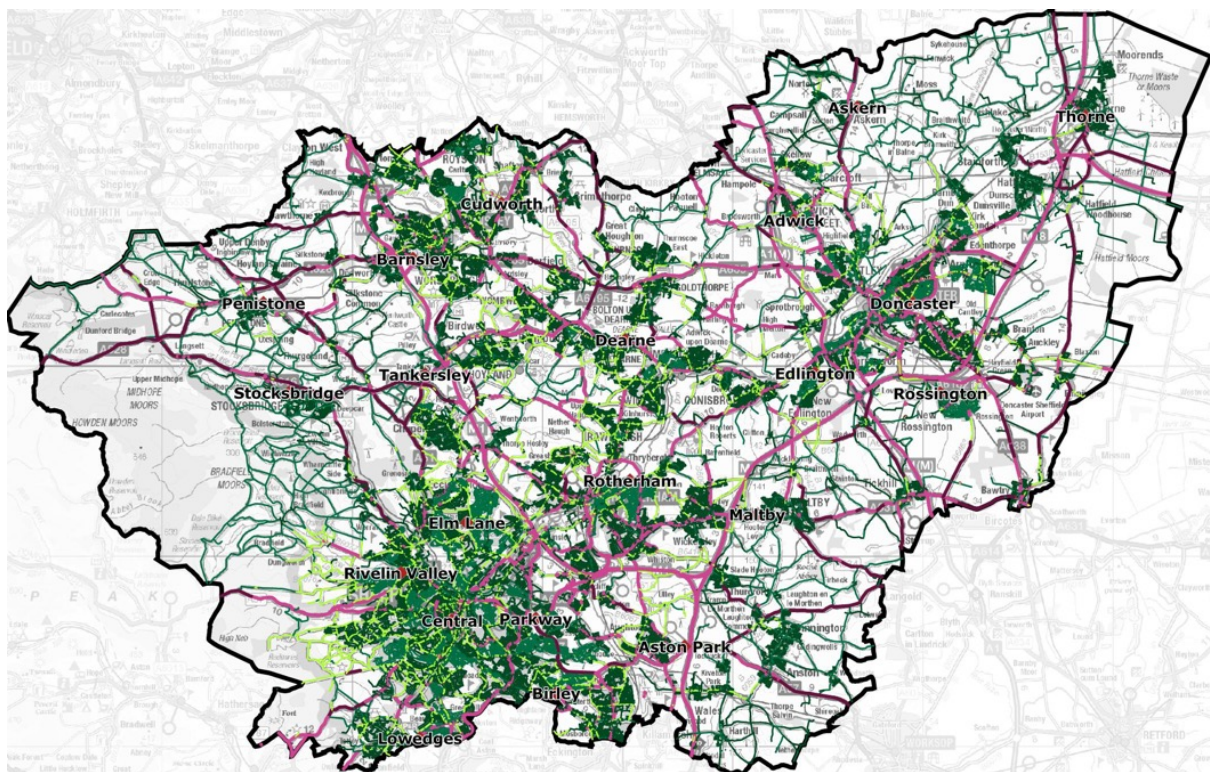
This map shows the parts of South Yorkshire where the risk of house fires is greatest based on population and incident data. Purple areas are low or very low risk, green areas are medium risk and the brown areas are high or very high risk.



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Road traffic collision risk

This map shows the roads in South Yorkshire which carry the greatest risk based on traffic and incident data. Dark and light green roads are very low and low risk and lime green are medium risk. Pink and dark red roads are high and very high risk.



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Prevention, protection and response

There are three main ways we address the risks we have identified in our area.

These are:

- Prevention- prevent emergencies from happening in the first place through safety education and engagement with our communities
- Protection- protect buildings by checking compliance with fire safety laws
- Response- respond to emergencies quickly and professionally

Making sure all our prevention, protection and response strategies work together effectively to make the biggest impact is what we mean by 'community risk management'.

We have separate strategies relating to our prevention, protection, response and resilience work which support our Community Risk Management Plan. They detail how the different teams work together to deliver this plan, its strategic **objectives** and achieve our purpose-making South Yorkshire safer and stronger.

These strategies will be reviewed and monitored in light of the contents of this plan.

Prevention

A key responsibility of any fire and rescue service is to prevent emergencies before they occur. We do this by using data to carefully direct our work at the people and places where it will have the greatest impact. This has already produced big results.

In 2019/2020 for example, we recorded the lowest ever number of accidental house fires in South Yorkshire. More homes than ever before are also fitted with smoke alarms.

However, more recently long term reductions in house fire incidents have begun to slow. For this reason, we must become even more targeted in how we deliver high-impact, resource intensive work like Home Fire Safety Visits.

Home Fire Safety Visits are where we visit people's homes and give people specific advice on reducing their fire risk, help them with tailored escape plans and provide fire safety equipment, like smoke alarms. We only deliver these visits in the homes of people who we believe are more at risk of fire, based on clearly defined criteria.

We also use sophisticated computer software to help us model where we should target these visits based on lots of different data sources, such as census and deprivation information, anonymised healthcare data and our own house fire statistics.

We also now offer a wider range of advice as part of our Home Fire Safety Visits. This is where our staff deliver advice on behalf of partners, for example around crime prevention, falls prevention and healthy aging. We do this because we recognise the role we can play to support wider public health goals and because there is a clear link between vulnerabilities such as falls and isolation, and the risk from fire.

Anyone can also access safety advice via an online safety check. This talks people through the steps they can take for themselves to make their homes safer, without the need for an in-person visit.

Partnership working is vital for identifying those who are most at risk. So, we will continue to build on the numbers of our referral partners, to ensure we can engage and support high risk, vulnerable people wherever they are in South Yorkshire.

Our responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty are also considered as part of our prevention strategy.

Another big part of our prevention story is our work with schools and young people. Our work in this area is closely aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) strategic intent to support all children and young people to be safe, healthy, resilient and active participants in the community. The NFCC works collaboratively with fire and rescue services like ours to develop resources and products that will support their delivery to children and young people. This includes work around fire cadets, early interventions, safeguarding, and StayWise (a digital education platform). We will deliver the NFCC "Developing Resilience" course, accredited by the Princes Trust. This programme is designed to support young people at risk of becoming disengaged from education or training, providing them with essential skills and guidance to foster personal growth and resilience.

In South Yorkshire, we visit schools at key times in a child's education to talk to them about keeping safe from fire, plus other risks like roads and water. We carefully design our education packages so that we are delivering the right messages, to the right children, at the right age.

Where necessary, we also prioritise school visits in areas which we know tend to be at higher risk of certain types of incident. Alongside our partners, we invite every year six pupil in South Yorkshire to receive education at our film-set style Lifewise Centre, which we jointly run with South Yorkshire Police. This is called 'Crucial Crew'.

Our 'Think Family' programme is offered to children and young people identified as being involved in fire play or fire setting. The programme takes into account the complex requirements of those with special educational needs.

We also believe risk management involves building resilient and sustainable communities. Improving the life chances of young people delivers a long term social return on investment because of known links between employability and demands on public services. This includes someone's susceptibility to fire, but also extends to other issues such as crime, healthcare and the economy.

We are currently reviewing the work and structure of our community safety team to ensure we continue to offer the best service in an efficient and effective way.

Lastly, whilst we cannot realistically speak to every single person in South Yorkshire about safety face-to-face, there's lots we can achieve through public information campaigns. Many of the safety campaigns we have delivered in the last few years are proven to have helped reduce common types of incident, like cooking and electrical fires. Our public information campaigns link to a national calendar of campaigns, but are mainly led by intelligence and trends within South Yorkshire.

Protection

Protection is the term fire and rescue services use to describe their work to enforce fire safety laws and reduce the risks in different types of building. It also involves licensing, prosecutions and advice around planning and fire engineering.

Most of this work focuses on premises like shops, factories, offices, warehouses, hospitals, sports stadiums and hotels.

There are other premises too like petrol stations and fireworks retailers that have their own special regulations and licensing arrangements, which we also oversee and enforce. There are thousands of commercial buildings in South Yorkshire and it's not possible with the resources available to us to check them all regularly. Instead, we use something called a 'risk based audit programme.'

This is a way of prioritising which of these buildings we inspect most often based on different things, such as whether people sleep in the buildings at night or the types of processes a business undertakes. We still check lower risk premises, but do this less often. For example, there is generally less risk associated with something like a small shop, compared to a hospital.

We also set aside some of our business fire safety inspectors' time to respond to complaints from members of the public, who might have spotted a safety issue with a building and then reported it to us.

We use Business Safety Visits to talk to businesses about their responsibilities and advise them on ways to make their premises safer.

Aside from businesses, we are also responsible for ensuring high-rise residential buildings comply with fire safety laws. This is an issue which we've particularly focussed on following the Grenfell Tower disaster and subsequent inquiry and building safety reviews.

Another part of our protection work we're very proud of is our long standing advocacy of sprinklers. We believe sprinklers are a cost effective way of making buildings safer – they stop fires from spreading and save lives. We particularly support their use in commercial settings and high-risk residential buildings, for example where people with mobility or mental health conditions may be unable to react quickly.

Response

Whilst we would much rather prevent emergencies from happening in the first place, we are best known for our ability to respond to a very wide range of emergencies using the skills and equipment available to us.

Our response to emergencies involves several parts of the service. Firefighters on fire stations respond to incidents in the first instance. More senior officers support, assure safety and may take charge as incidents escalate. Our Control room operators take 999 calls, support the public and dispatch our staff and vehicles to incidents.

Calls we respond to include:

- Fires
- Road traffic collisions
- Specialist rescues, including from water, confined spaces and height
- Flooding
- Animal rescue
- Gaining access to assist other agencies

We can't afford to have fire engines and fire stations everywhere, so we instead aim to put them in the places where they are needed the most based on the risks we are likely to face.

The majority of our fire stations are permanently staffed so firefighters are able to respond immediately to an emergency.
































Other fire stations, in areas where we experience fewer emergencies, are staffed using on-call firefighters who will respond from home or work to their local fire station if there is an emergency.







As well as normal fire engines, we also have very specialist vehicles and equipment, like high reach appliances, boats, specialist pumping equipment and decontamination vehicles. These are placed strategically across the county so that we can call upon them if needed. We can also deploy regional and national technical rescue equipment where needed.

We are currently reviewing all of our specialist attributes at all of our fire stations. This is to make sure they are in the right places and provided in the most efficient and effective way possible to meet the risks in South Yorkshire. The review is being delivered through the specialisms programme- which combines 10 separate projects. The programme will be completed within the life of this plan.

We're currently midway through a project to replace all of our standard frontline fire engines. Following the delivery of new fire engines in 2023, we now keep surplus fire engines in reserve. This greatly improves the resilience of our vehicle fleet.

This table shows the number of fire engines and how we staff them at each of our 21 fire stations.

Station	Crewing type	Station	Crewing type
Barnsley district		Rotherham district	
Barnsley	 	Rotherham	 
Cudworth	 	Aston Park	
Tankersley		Dearne	 
Penistone		Maltby	
Doncaster district		Sheffield district	
Doncaster	  	Central	 
Adwick		Birley Moor	 
Askern		Elm Lane	
Edlington		Lowedges	
Rossington	 	Parkway	 
Thorne		Rivelin	
		Stocksbridge	

-  Pump (wholetime)
-  Pump (on call)
-  Pump (day crewed)
-  Small Incident Unit
-  Aerial (wholetime)
-  Aerial (dual crewed)

Response times

We adopted a new set of response standards for how quickly we respond to 999 calls in 2021.

We obviously aim to get to emergencies as fast as we can, every time. We continue to do this.

However, having a set of response times means we can measure our performance to ensure we are delivering the best possible service to our communities with the resources we have available to us.

Our response times refer to the time it takes for the first fire engine to attend an incident, following a 999 call. Other fire engines may follow, depending on the type of incident.

Our total response time is made up of the length of time it takes for a 999 call to be handled, a fire station to be alerted, firefighters to crew a fire engine or other vehicle and the travel time for that fire engine to arrive at an incident.

Our expected response times will vary depending on factors such as whether someone's life is at risk and the level of risk in a particular area.

To inform our response times, we used risk modelling information to determine three risk categories (High, Medium and Low) for different parts of the county.

Different incident types are then also given a risk category (High, Medium and Low) based on the type of incident and the respective risk to life.

Our target is to achieve our response time standards on 80% of occasions.

During 2023/24 we achieved our standards on 87% of occasions.

Our average response time was 7 minutes and 40 seconds to emergency incidents.

The table below explains how well we've met our standards for different types of incident in 2023/24. The 'target' is how quickly we expect to respond to different levels of incident. The percentage shows how regularly we've achieve that target. The time is an average for how quickly we've responded to each level of incident.

Community risk	Incident category risk		
	High	Medium	Low
Target	7 minutes	9 minutes	11 minutes
High	65% 06:32 mins	74% 08:17 mins	89% 07:20 mins
Target	9 minutes	11 minutes	13 minutes
Medium	78% 07:15 mins	81% 08:36 mins	92% 07:34 mins
Target	11 minutes	13 minutes	15 minutes
Low	86% 07:38 mins	86% 09:01 mins	94% 07:40 mins

Resilience

Occasionally, we experience large scale incidents which require us to have effective resilience arrangements in place.

Likewise, we sometimes send firefighters and equipment from South Yorkshire to help other services if they are dealing with a major emergency.

Sometime these larger scale incidents mean we need to call in support from other fire and rescue services. Likewise, we sometimes send firefighters and equipment from South Yorkshire to help other services if they are dealing with a major emergency.

Being resilient means we must have such plans in place to ensure we can still deal with any normal activity across the county whilst also resourcing a large scale incident that may last several days or longer.

National resources are strategically located within fire and rescue services throughout the UK to provide an emergency response to larger scale incidents and disasters. In South Yorkshire, we host specialist resources which can be deployed anywhere in the UK. These include a High Volume Pump (HVP) used for widespread flooding incidents where greater pumping capacity is required, Detection Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle, which can be used to identify and monitor hazardous substances, and a Mass Decontamination capability. These resources are not only available for national deployment- they can also be used to support local response to any incident where they would be required within South Yorkshire.

We also look at resilience on an organisational level, such as maintaining effective business continuity arrangements and cyber security measures to ensure that we can adapt and respond to any change, disruption, or crisis that comes our way.

On a multi-agency level, through the South Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum, we are working to help communities become more resilient to emergencies.

Finance and resources

The service's operating budget for 2024/25 was £64.5 million.

The Fire and Rescue Authority's budget comes from a variety of sources:

- Local Taxpayers - £32.3m
- Revenue Support Grant - £13.0m
- Business Rates - £17.2m
- Other Income - £6.8m
- Reserve contribution - £0.03m

Our budget is spent on:

- Operational Staff - £43.1m
- Corporate Staff - £11.2m
- Indirect Staff Costs - £2.7m
- Transport - £1.3m
- Premises - £4.2m
- Supplies and Services - £4.7m
- Central expenses - £0.5m
- Capital financing - £2.5m
- Income - (£1.1m)

We are forecasting a cumulative deficit of £3.72m in our medium term financial plan. This means we will be spending £3.72 million more than we are receiving in income across the three years covered by the plan. In the short term, these deficits will be funded from reserves.

Our capital programme comprises one-off investments which could not be funded through annual revenue budgets. They include things like new buildings, vehicles and equipment. Our medium term financial plan forecasts spending between £8 million and £9 million per year until 2027, with the majority of this funded through loans.

The most significant risks to our medium term financial forecasting are uncertainty over government funding, firefighter pension valuations and pay and non-pay inflation.

Fire Cover Review

What is the fire cover review?

We commissioned an external company specialising in data analysis to review our current 999 response arrangements.

We used external specialists so that we could have a completely fresh look at our arrangements. We also wanted it to be completely independent so staff and the public could have maximum confidence in the findings.

This fire cover review mainly considered the location of our fire stations and vehicles and how changing their location or staffing (based on existing staffing models) might impact our 999 response times.

What did the review find?

The fire cover review found that all 21 fire stations are in good locations.

There are some changes we could make to fire station locations which may make minor differences- for example, reducing our response time to parts of the county by a few seconds.

But changing the location of fire stations to achieve this is not viable because:

- The cost of building a new fire station in a new location is not practical or efficient, compared to the relatively small increase in performance
- There is not always land available on which a new fire station could be built in what the data shows would be the best location

The fire cover review also found that our 27 fire engines are generally in the right locations. This number of fire engines also provides us with adequate flexibility to help us manage short term, busy periods like flooding or wildfires.

Some of our fire stations have two fire engines. Changing the location of the second vehicles would have no impact on how quickly the first fire engine at those stations is able to attend incidents, but could help to support our activities in other parts of the county. However, it is unlikely to be financially viable due to the level of investment required to change their locations.

What changes, if any, are we going to make?

Based on the fire cover review, **will look to maintain our current provision of 27 fire engines and 21 fire stations at their current locations** during the lifetime of this plan.

The data shows that we should move the Small Incident Unit from Cudworth fire station to Dearne fire station. This is the best location for the unit based on the fire cover review. This is because the vehicle is able to reach a larger number of incidents from there than its current location. We also plan to extend the remit of the Small Incident Unit to include calls where we help the ambulance service to gain entry to properties, thereby keeping the existing fire engines at Dearne available for fire service 999 calls. The Small Incident Unit will be crewed by existing on-call firefighters at Dearne- providing the option to mobilise either the Small Incident Unit or a full sized fire engine, depending on the nature of the incident. This proposal will result in some efficiency savings, which will be re-invested to improve on-call fire engine response in other parts of South Yorkshire.

On-call firefighters at Cudworth have previously been able to provide night-time cover at Barnsley fire station by staffing the spare night-time fire engine, when the first fire engine is responding to a 999 call. In reality, this has been used very rarely as other resources have been able to provide this cover. On-call firefighters from Cudworth fire station provided night-time cover at Barnsley fire station 29 times in the 30 month period from April 2022 to September 2024. Therefore this option will be discontinued.

We will also update fire station work routines. This change will mean firefighters carry out important community and business safety work at times of the day when there are less 999 calls, based on our local incident data.

What if our funding changes in the future?

Currently, we only have single year funding settlements. This means we only know how much money we have to spend for the year ahead. Should our funding change in the future- for better or worse- we will consult on and publish a separate CRMP investments and efficiencies plan. This will explain proposed changes to our service provision (protection, prevention and response) based on the outcomes of our fire cover review and future funding position.

When making efficiencies, we do consider all parts of the service- not just service delivery. For example, we already require business cases for every corporate staff vacancy, non-pay budgets are scrutinized as part of strengthened budget management processes and all new jobs roles are robustly considered as part of an annual workforce planning process. We've also worked with staff to develop a 'long list' of efficiencies from right across the service.

How we will measure our success

Corporate Performance Reporting

We already publish a set of performance indicators which show how well we are doing at managing risk in our area. These include measures like the number of accidental house fires, injuries and deaths in South Yorkshire, the number of other incidents we attend and statistics relating to our prevention and protection work. We also report against the expected response time standards, as set out in this plan.

HMICFRS

All fire and rescue services are regularly inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). This is another way in which our success at managing local risk and achieving our strategic **objectives** can be scrutinised and compared with that of other fire and rescue services. We continue to consider the outcomes of our own and other fire and rescue services' inspection outcomes, making improvements in how we deliver our services to the communities we serve.

Fire Standards Board (FSB)

As part of the reform for Fire & Rescue Service, this board has established professional standards to help drive continuous improvement across the fire sector. These standards are a key component to continuous improvement. We review these standards when they are published and monitor the service's progress towards implementing them.

Fit For the Future (FfF)

Developed in partnership by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the National Employers (England) and the Local Government Association (LGA), Fit for the Future (FfF) is the shared view of the ambitions for the future of the fire and rescue service over the next five years. Working together alongside other fire and rescue services as part of this programme, we will ensure our service is best placed to meet the needs of communities, keeping people safe, increasing trust and providing public safety.

Annual Statement of Assurance and Annual Governance Statement

This provides the necessary accountability and transparency to the communities in South Yorkshire that the organisation is delivering against expectations, our strategic **objectives** and legislation- including the Fire and Rescue National Framework.



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