

Oxfordshire County Council  
Fire and Rescue Service

365alive  
think safety  
365alive.co.uk

# Statement of Assurance

## 2014-15



*Securing a safer Oxfordshire*

# Contents

---

Welcome and foreword .....	2
Communities we serve .....	3
The risks we face .....	4
Overview of fire and rescue service .....	6
Our purpose .....	9
Governance arrangements.....	12
Our performance .....	20
Financial performance: statement of accounts.....	23
Our future plans .....	25
Our community engagement .....	27
Do you want to become an on-call firefighter? .....	29

## Welcome and foreword

---



Councillor  
Rodney Rose  
Cabinet member for  
the fire and rescue  
service



Chief Fire Officer  
David Etheridge  
OBE

Welcome to Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service's Statement of Assurance. As the Cabinet Member and Chief Fire Officer for Oxfordshire we are pleased to be able to provide assurance to the community on financial, governance and operational matters, through this report which makes reference to public webpages, existing reports and documents.

In 2014 we exceeded the targets set in our 365alive 10 year vision 2006-16 and have set stretch targets to continue on our improvement journey. As part of the county council we are committed to delivering an integrated, high performing fire and rescue service which provides excellent value for money to the tax payers of this county.

Our major project, the Thames Valley Fire Control Service, went live in 2015 providing a joint control room for Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Services. This will provide an improved service to our communities, enhance resilience, provide efficiency savings and create further opportunities for collaboration.

We ensure that our proactive approach, focussed on preventative activities, leads to a safer and healthier thriving Oxfordshire, by working in partnership with other county council teams and key partners. We assist in areas beyond the traditional role of a firefighter, such as working with our partners to ensure the safeguarding of adults and children. The service also works with business through its Trading Standards and protection activities and response to incidents, helping to assist in securing a world class economy and protecting the environment.

We are immensely proud of what we have achieved during 2014-15. Our personnel are our most important resource and it is through them, with the support of our county councillors and our partner agencies that we will continue to be a cost effective, well governed and a well-managed organisation.



# Communities we serve

---

## Our community

Oxfordshire is home to around 666,100 people. The population is increasing and is forecast to rise to 764,000 residents by 2026, with the biggest increases expected around Bicester, Didcot, Carterton, Harwell and Wantage. In addition the largest rises are expected within the older population groups, meaning the 75+ age group will increase by 66 per cent to 82,000 people by 2026.

## Our natural environment

Despite the forecast population increases, Oxfordshire remains the most rural county in the south east as well as being a popular visitor destination renowned for its rural beauty covering 260,595 hectares. The provision of a fleet of 4x4 response vehicles and partnership work through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Emergency Planning Team assists us to manage risks in rural locations and during periods of adverse weather.

## Our built environment

Oxfordshire has significant plans for future economic and housing growth, with a focus on the Local Enterprise Partnership Hubs – the Science Vale UK Area (a Local Enterprise Zone), Bicester and Oxford City. There will be significant developments at other locations including Banbury, Carterton and Wantage.

In 2014-15 we completed a project to review Prevention, Protection and Response resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Carterton, Wantage and the south of the county.

## Our heritage

Oxfordshire has over 12,000 listed buildings, including many sites of importance to the country's national heritage. The city of Oxford is internationally famous for its hotels, university and college buildings. Blenheim Palace heads a list of nationally important stately homes and is one of 390 Grade I listed buildings in the county. We will continue to work with owners and occupiers to ensure plans, risks, training and information is reviewed to safeguard our heritage.



## The risks we face

---

The Community Risk Management Plan is Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service's (OFRS) analysis of the county's community risk profile, together with our strategic approach of how we intend to effectively manage those risks over the period.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the framework) requires us to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), known as Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), that identifies and assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risk that could affect its community, including those of a cross border, multi authority and / or national nature. The current 2013-18 plan will be reviewed in 2016.

OFRS produces action plans based on the CRMP which sets out a number of priorities and projects to ensure that residents and businesses are safer, whilst at the same time delivering an efficient and effective emergency response when necessary.

- [National Framework Document Published July 2012](#)
- [Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

### Social risk

People in Oxfordshire are living longer. The number of people aged 75 and over is projected to grow by 66 per cent between 2011 and 2026. Historical data shows that older people are at a greater risk from suffering serious injuries or death from accidental fires.

Our Home and Community Safety Department, through partnership working, will continue to target the people most at risk through home fire risk checks and education. To support our intelligence, community population profiles will be created and correlated to incidents to focus our activities.

### Environmental risk

Oxfordshire has many waterways, which have associated risks of flooding and drowning. We have firefighters trained to rescue people from both moving and still water, including faster moving 'white water'. They will also respond to national emergencies resulting from large-scale flooding.

Our firefighters identify potential areas of danger on our waterways and develop procedures to ensure they can respond both quickly and effectively when an emergency occurs. All front line appliances carry water rescue equipment and the rescue tender has a boat for river incidents.

## Economic risk

Unemployment in Oxfordshire remains significantly below the average for England. The county is a global seat of education, learning and research, a centre of engineering and scientific excellence, a world leader in automotive and advanced manufacturing, publishing, health care and life sciences and an iconic tourist destination.

This includes a number of nationally and internationally recognised businesses such as, BMW Mini, Oxford Instruments, Williams and Lotus Formula One Teams, the city's two universities and a number of important military establishments. Our operational and fire protection teams work with businesses to plan for emergencies and carry out fire protection enforcement and advice.

## Risks beyond our borders

### Over the border mutual aid arrangements

Through sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 OFRS has set up reinforcement schemes for securing mutual assistance with Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Authorities to provide and utilise resources such as fire engines.

Plans are also in place, through the National Resilience Advisory Team (NRAT), to provide specialist appliances and crews for mass decontamination, urban search and rescue, water and high volume pumping, hazardous chemical analysis and command and control across England and Wales.

### Standard Operating Procedures

OFRS have been engaged in the National Fire and Rescue Service Collaborative Partnership Programme to promote a common approach when working across borders. In 2015 we opened a new joint fire control with two of our neighbouring fire and rescue services, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes, known as the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

We have a team responsible for developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Tactical Operational Guidance (TOG) documents. This information is carried on fire engines and accessed via on-board computers known as Mobile Data Terminals. It enables all operational staff to access the most up to date guidance and information at the scene of an emergency with neighbouring authorities working to the same procedures.

The National Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Project (JESIP) has also been formed to enhance joint working further across blue light services and collaborate where possible.

# Overview of fire and rescue service

---

## Overview of our structure

OFRS is governed by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) whose full members are listed below. Full SLT meetings are held monthly with fortnightly meetings to discuss specific issues. SLT reports to County Council Management Team (CCMT).

- Chief Fire Officer — David Etheridge OBE
- Deputy Chief Fire Officer — Nathan Travis
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer — Simon Furlong
- Area Manager Operations and Resilience — Nigel Wilson
- Area Manager Strategic Risk and Planning — Mat Carlile
- Community Risk Management — Richard Webb
- Area Manager Organisational and Technical Support — John Lloyd
- Human Resources Business Partner — Kim Terry
- Finance Business Partner — Sarah Fogden.

## Strategic Leadership Team



## Our people

At the end of March 2015 there were a total of 237 whole-time firefighters and 74 support staff. We also had 337 people working as on-call firefighters in Oxfordshire's local communities.

## Our resources

There are currently 24 fire stations in Oxfordshire, which are crewed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by a mix of full time and on-call firefighters. They offer safety advice, education and a response to emergencies calls.

We have a front line fleet of 35 fire engines and a number of specialist vehicles to support large or complex incidents. These include an aerial ladder platform and a specialist technical rescue vehicle that attends road traffic collisions and specialist rescues. We have vehicles for environmental protection and firefighter decontamination following incidents involving hazardous materials.

The upgrading of two fire engines to Enhanced Rescue Vehicles for specialist rescues has been a success and we plan to complete a further upgrade in 2015-16. We have specialist vehicles for High Volume Pumping, detecting hazardous materials and decontaminating members of the public as part of a national response strategy. Two Light Response Vehicles are being trialled in the fleet as an effective alternative to the traditional larger fire engine.



## Our values

OFRS fully supports the underpinning values of the county council, as well as those agreed nationally by the Chief Fire Officers Association, the Fire Brigades Union, UNISON and a number of other fire and rescue services. These combined values provide a central focus on the standards and principles we expect our employees to promote, uphold and maintain.

### We value **service to the community** by:

- focusing on our customers' needs
- working with all groups to reduce risks
- treating everyone fairly and with respect
- being accountable to those we serve
- striving for excellence in all we do.

### We value **diversity** in the Service and community by:

- treating everyone with dignity and respect
- providing varying solutions for different needs and expectations
- promoting equality of opportunity in employment and progression within the service
- challenging prejudice and discrimination.



### We value **each other** by practising and promoting:

- fairness and respect
- recognition of merit
- honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- personal development
- 'can-do' attitude, co-operative and inclusive working
- one-team approach.

### We value **improvement** at all levels of the Service by:

- taking responsibility for our performance
- promoting and supporting innovation
- embedding efficiency and effectiveness in all we do
- being open-minded
- responding positively to feedback
- learning from others
- consulting others.

# Our purpose

---

## Our vision

OFRS is proud of the quality of the services that it delivers to the public. We have a clear vision and strive to recognise and respond to the key issues and challenges. These combine to create our ten year vision for a safer Oxfordshire. This commenced in 2006 and is called 365alive.

This vision sets three challenging targets for us.

By 2016, thanks to the emergency response and the community and partnership work of Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service, there will be:

- 365 more people alive<sup>1</sup>
- £100 Million saved to the economy of Oxfordshire
- 840,000 safety messages delivered to the community.

By year eight of our ten year initiative we had already achieved our targets. We didn't want to be complacent with that so have set ourselves further stretch targets for the final two years. These are as follows:

- Save an extra 11 lives per year
- Save an additional £2.5 million per year
- Make an extra 20,000 people safer.

We are confident we can rise to this challenge as well as knowing this contributes to making those who work in, live in and travel through Oxfordshire safer.

For more details visit the website at [365alive.co.uk](http://365alive.co.uk)

## Our mission statement

- To secure a safer community in Oxfordshire by reducing the incidence of fire through partnerships, education, advice and enforcement.
- To sustain a highly effective, efficient and economic fire and rescue service, with best value at its heart.

---

<sup>1</sup> By looking at the reduction in the number of people who die as a result of fires and road traffic collisions and the number of rescues we perform, we calculate the number of people who are still alive as a result of our work.

## Our aims and objectives

### Fire and Rescue Service Business Strategy

Our Business Strategy covers the Fire & Rescue Service, Emergency Planning and Community Safety Services. The Strategy has been updated in order to capture the medium term (3-5 year) vision for all of the Services identified, as well as their aims to meet the current priorities of the wider county council.

- [Fire and Rescue Business Strategy](#)

### Our challenges and priorities during 2014-15

The OFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2014-15 formed part of our approach to mitigate risk within Oxfordshire through prevention, protection and intervention strategies. The CRMP 2014-15 Action Plan identified the following priorities:

- Project 1: Implement the Training Collaboration Review carried out in 2013.
- Project 2: Review our Aerial Appliance capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review.
- Project 3: Review of Light Response Vehicle capability and implement changes to staffing supported by that review.
- Project 4: Review of Prevention, Protection and Response resources to meet the expansion and changing risk profile of Banbury, Carterton, Wantage and the south of the county.

We successfully completed Projects 2, 3 and 4 during 2014-15. Project 1 is still on-going into 2015-16.

- [Community Risk Management Plans and Annual Action Plans](#)

## Chief Fire Officer's statement on equality and diversity

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service recognises that all individuals have fundamental human rights and, therefore, adopts a rights-based approach to equality.

Practices will be developed that promote the right for everyone to participate in all aspects of life by promoting initiatives that remove barriers to participation and by actively promoting equality and social inclusion.

We will have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other unacceptable conduct, to promote equality of opportunity

and to promote good relations between all persons with respect to their disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender status or gender reassignment, age, marital status and pregnancy or maternity.

We seek to develop and provide relevant, appropriate and accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population. The service will eliminate unlawful or otherwise unjustifiable discrimination and promote equality in the provision of our services. As an employer we value the contribution that every employee makes and respect individual differences, utilising the diversity of our workforce as a positive benefit.

Chief Fire Officer, David Etheridge OBE

The service fully supports the OCC Equality Policy and its objectives and publishes case studies to demonstrate how these objectives are met.

- [Equality and inclusion case studies](#)

## Our services to the community

The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is OFRS's analysis of the county's community risk profile, together with our strategic approach of how we intend to effectively manage those risks over the period.

OFRS produces action plans based on the CRMP that sets out a number of priorities and projects to ensure that residents and businesses are safer, whilst at the same time delivering an efficient and effective emergency response when necessary. We consulted with the community on the four projects in the CRMP 2015-16 action plan.

- [Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

## Governance arrangements

---

OFRS is an integral part of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), who are responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

OCC is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

OCC has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance that is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA / SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'.

The OCC Annual Governance Statement enables the fire and rescue service to demonstrate that it has fulfilled its obligations under the framework. Full details can be found in the OCC Annual Governance Statement, which is included in our 'Statement of Accounts' publication at the end of the document.

- [Annual accounts and audit](#)

## Your fire and rescue authority

Oxfordshire County Council is a county authority and is the fire authority for Oxfordshire represented by full council with all members. All the key decisions are made by cabinet members, meeting either jointly as the cabinet or as individual cabinet members, taking delegated decisions within their own responsibilities.

Councillor Rodney Rose has responsibility for:

- Fire and Rescue Service
- Emergency Planning Unit
- Trading Standards
- Thames Valley Fire Control Project
- Internal management
- Human Resources and industrial relations
- Strategic Rail
- West Oxfordshire District Council liaison
- West Oxfordshire Local Strategic Partnership
- Policy co-ordination
- Equalities
- Localities and Community cohesion.



The performance of the fire and rescue service is overseen by the Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee. Cabinet meetings are held once a month and are attended by all cabinet members. The cabinet is also responsible for preparing the budget and policies to propose to the full council. The scrutiny committees provide advice to the cabinet on major policy issues and may review its decisions.

Details of how the community can attend meetings and access agendas and reports can be found at:

- [Meetings and decisions web page](#)

## Our legal responsibilities

### Responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the duties and powers of fire and rescue authorities. Under the Act, the Fire Authority has a number of core functions:

- Fire safety - promoting fire safety - including the provision of information and publicity on steps to be taken to prevent fires and the giving of advice on how to prevent fires and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire.
- Firefighting - extinguishing fires and protecting life and property in the event of fires.
- To respond to and rescue people from road traffic collisions (RTCs) and protecting people from serious harm in the event of RTCs.
- Emergencies - when necessary deal with emergencies other than fires and road traffic accidents.

We address these core functions in our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which identifies and assesses foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our community. We produce action plans based on the CRMP that sets out a number of priorities.

- [The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004](#)
- [Community Risk Management Plans and Action Plans](#)

## Responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) places certain duties on all Category 1 Responders as defined by the Act, including OFRS. One of these duties is the formation of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF).

The purpose of this forum is to ensure that there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi agency response to emergencies that may have a significant impact on the communities OFRS serve.

TVLRF is a partnership consisting of representatives from police, local authorities, fire, ambulance, environment agency, health and the military as well as utility and transport companies.

The Act requires Category 1 Responders to maintain the plans for preventing emergencies; reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of emergencies; and taking other action in the event of emergencies. Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations regarding business continuity management.

These plans are drawn from risk assessments and have regard for the arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public at the time of an emergency. The Emergency Planning Unit, of which OFRS has overall responsibility, is key to helping the council meet these duties.

- [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum website](#)

## Responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

The Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007 instructs fire authorities to make provision for:

- Decontamination of people and to limit harm to the environment at chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear emergencies.
- The rescue of people at emergencies involving collapse of building, structures, incidents involving trains, trams or aircraft, and where resources are required beyond the scope of day to day operations.
- Personnel, services and training and make arrangements to carry out these above functions.
- Response to emergencies outside the fire authorities' area.

We make provision for these requirements through operational planning and procedures as part of our involvement with the National Resilience Programme. Chief Fire Officers Association National Resilience (CNR) is the organisation that provides assurance to the Department for Communities and Local Government that the National Resilience capabilities generated are able to meet the new threats to national stability. CNR provides operational assurance at the strategic level.

- [Fire resilience website](#)
- [The Fire & Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order](#)

## Responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service enforces general fire safety legislation on behalf of the county council. Other related legislation the authority enforces includes:

- The Dangerous Substances (Notification & Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

Our enforcement activities adhere to the principles of 'better regulation' contained in the Enforcement Concordat and Regulators Compliance Code and we aim to support business and other responsible persons through education and the provision of advice and guidance. Where it is absolutely necessary, we will take enforcement action and will only consider prosecution where it is in the public's best interest.

Full details of how we discharge our responsibilities under fire safety legislation can be found at:

- [Fire safety advice for businesses web page](#)

## Responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

OFRS operates within the county council's management framework which incorporates the provisions of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the responsibility to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy working environment for all employees.

Our health and safety policy documents explain how we discharge our responsibilities under health and safety legislation.

We undertook a full external Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Quality Safety Audit (QSA) of our Health and Safety management systems in June 2014, achieving an 87 per cent score.

- [Audit reports | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Policy Part 2](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Policy Part 3](#)

## Responsibilities under the Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act 2011 gives fire authorities powers of competence to:

- Carry out its functions so that it will be able to do anything they consider appropriate for purposes linked to their statutory responsibilities to help deliver innovative and more personalised services to their communities.
- Make charges for certain services. These powers enable both councils and fire and rescue authorities to act innovatively to generate efficiencies and secure value for money outcomes.

Full details of the of the Localism Act 2011 and community right to challenge and right to bid for community assets can be found at:

- [Community Rights and Localism Act web page](#)

## The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework

The current Fire and Rescue National Framework for England published in 2012 sets out the government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England to:

- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately.
- Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service.
- Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.

A gap analysis has been completed to ensure that OFRS has met the requirements of the framework document and an action plan has been established.

- [National Framework Document Published July 2012](#)
- [National Framework Requirements Gap Analysis](#)

## Management of risk

The county council has a risk management strategy which aims to ensure that there is continuous improvement in the arrangements for managing risk across the directorates.

Full details can be found in the OCC Annual Governance Statement which is included in our 'Statement of Accounts' publication at the end of the document. These are published each year, on the Council's website at:

- [Annual accounts and audit web page](#)

OFRS risk management strategy follows the principles of the Office of Government Commerce's Management of Risk Framework. All members of staff work to identify threats and opportunities to the service and our communities.

Once a risk has been identified we decide how we want to deal with it then monitor it closely. Risk registers are maintained for strategic risk, operational risk, community incident and firefighter safety risk and a business and resident profile risk report is kept. The nature of certain risks means that not all records will be accessible to all.

- [Risk Management Strategy](#)

The Trading Standards Service administers over 200 Acts or sets of regulations which the County Council has a duty to enforce. These statutes broadly address consumer protection issues and include those relating to:

- Consumer product safety.
- Fair trading (including controls on descriptions applied to goods and services supplied to consumers and pricing legislation).
- The provision of consumer credit.
- Consumer rights (e.g. information that must be provided to consumers in certain circumstances).
- Food labelling, safety and food chain integrity (including food hygiene at some establishments).
- Animal disease control and rules concerning livestock feed.
- Age restricted products.
- Weights and measures.
- Explosives and petroleum licensing and storage.



In addition, the Service also enforces some legislation that the local authority has the power to enforce, including:

- Livestock animal welfare.
- Some aspects of consumer rights legislation.
- Road weight restrictions.
- Performing animal controls.

Much of the capacity of the Service is invested in fulfilling these duties, mainly through investigating suspected breaches of this legislation (e.g. suspicions based on complaints received about businesses in this area). It also provides business advice and support to assist local businesses to meet the requirements of consumer law.

The Service operates on an intelligence-led basis, reviewing information and intelligence to identify the issues that present the most significant risks to consumers and businesses and allocating resources to address these risks. National Trading Standards (a Department of Business, Innovation and Skills Board) has published an intelligence operating model setting out organisational arrangements applying at local authority, regional and national level which provide for an integrated framework for allocation of resources at each of these levels.

## Codes of Practice

One of our key responsibilities is the enforcement of food law through the food chain on behalf of the Food Standards Agency. Codes of Practice require that local authorities set out their food law enforcement arrangements in food law enforcement plans. In terms of food enforcement our business plan reflects the enforcement programme for food standards (including materials and articles in contact with food), animal feeding-stuffs and on farm medicine records legislation.

Trading Standards enforcement of food safety and livestock feed legislation is governed by statutory Codes of Practice.

- [Food Law Codes of Practice](#)

## Responsibilities under the Road Traffic Act 1988 section 39

Oxfordshire County Council as the local authority has a statutory responsibility under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for road safety engineering, education, training and publicity (ETP) that are discharged through both the Environment and Economy and fire and rescue service, as part of Social and Community Services Directorates. Full details of how we discharged are responsibilities to provide road safety information, advice and training under the Road Traffic Act 1988 can be found at:

- [Road safety web page](#)

## Our collaborative arrangements

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) exist with other agencies such as Highways Authority, Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and the Defence Fire and Rescue Service.

We also have MOU's with other local organisations such as RAF Brize Norton, British Red Cross, HMP Huntercombe, Emergency Response Team Search and Rescue and Oxfordshire Lowland Search and Rescue.

A full list of Memorandums of Understanding can be found on the website at:

- [Memorandums of understanding document](#)

## Reinforcement schemes

Under sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, OFRS have a duty to enter into reinforcement schemes with other fire and rescue authorities. A list of these schemes can be viewed at:

- [Memorandums of understanding document](#)

## How we secure business continuity

Business continuity management is a series of processes and plans that identify risk and develop OFRS resilience to ensure that adverse events cause minimal disruption to the services provided and that critical services are maintained. Plans have been developed for all sites and critical functional departments, and these plans have been tested and exercised. The plans were implemented during periods of national industrial action.

# Our performance

---

## How we performed during 2014-15

A full analysis of the Trading Standards Service workload and performance is published annually in the Trading Standards Service business plan. There are two main performance measures that are monitored corporately through the year.

- Money saved for consumers as a result of our interventions: £507,881
- High risk business inspections completed (target 100%): 97.79%
- [Trading Standards Service Business Plan](#)

A description of the fire authority's key performance indicators and targets against which the service is measured can be found in Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report. This report reviews our performance over the last financial year and shows the headline statistics and trends in incidents and emergencies that we have attended.

This allows us to recognise areas where we have done well, identify where we can improve our service and trends in specific incidents and emergency types. It helps us decide where to focus our efforts and resources to reduce threats and explore opportunities. The report contributes to our future planning and is essential to our process of integrated risk management.

- [Performance information - Annual Reports](#)

## Response standards performance

Since April 2005 OFRS has had local response standards for attending emergency incidents in the county. The Chief Fire Officer is required to report annually on the fire and rescue service's performance against these standards and bring forward any recommendations as appropriate. Our response targets remain stretching, yet over recent years we have achieved levels within a few per cent of the target.

Local response standards are:

- 80 per cent of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 11 minutes
- 95 per cent of all emergency incidents will be responded to within 14 minutes.

The above is measured by the time it takes to get the first fire appliance to the scene from the time at which the fire station is first alerted.

In 2014-15 our response times for the year exceeded our stretch targets:

Response standards performance 2014-15	Total emergency incidents in scope	Incidents responded to <11mins	per cent response standards <11mins	Incidents responded to <14mins	per cent response standards <14mins
<b>Totals</b>	3565	3031	85.02%	3397	95.29%

- [Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service performance web page](#)

## Benchmarking

We use national benchmarking reports and tools. We are also part of a [Chief Fire Officers Association](#) (CFOA) family group to facilitate benchmarking against fire and rescue services of similar size and demographics and to promote best practice. The Fire Statistics Monitor publication provides headline figures on fire, false alarm and special service incidents in England.

- [Fire Statistics Monitor Report](#)

## What others have said about our performance

### Operational Assessment (OpA) Peer Challenge

The Local Government Associations (LGA's) Fire Peer Challenge of OFRS was successfully completed in May 2014 and resulted in positive feedback from the peers within their report.

An initial self-assessment to establish a benchmark against the seven Key Assessment Areas (KAA's) was undertaken by OFRS. The KAA's included community risk management, prevention, protection, response, health & safety, training & development and call management & incident support. The peer team then met with a broad cross-section of elected members, officers, staff, front line firefighters, stakeholders and partners, over 80 people in total.

An action plan was produced based on the final report to improve performance. The OpA report can be found on the link below:

- [Peer Challenge Report](#)

### Customer Service Excellence

The government wants services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering with the citizen always at the heart of service provision. With this in mind, Customer Service Excellence was developed to offer services a practical tool for driving customer focused change within their organisation.

OFRS have maintained the Customer Service Excellence award following the re-assessment in March 2015 and the report can be found on the link below.

- [Customer Service Excellence Report](#)

## Organisational Assurance Team

The Organisational Assurance Team ensures consistently high performance throughout the organisation by conducting quality assurance audits. The Organisational Assurance Policy outlines how the service is assured and the Procedure on Organisational Assurance Audits details the audit process. The following audits have been undertaken:

- Operational audit, debrief, monitoring and feedback systems and processes
- Review of Operational Information Systems
- RoSPA Quality Safety Audit of Health & Safety
- Equipment Management System (EMS) Redkite
- The Purchase, Issue, Security and Management of Fuel
- Review of methodology for the frequency of re-inspections for fire safety audits
- Joint Assurance of TVFCS
- Benchmarking Survey.

## Lessons learnt

### Operational debriefs

Operational debriefs are used at both incidents and exercises and form part of a quality control system to ensure effectiveness of core activities at a tactical level. They help ensure that any lessons learnt can be actioned and improve the service we provide. Outcomes and actions taken from previous debriefs are made available to all personnel.

### Coroners Regulation 28 Notices

OFRS attend coroner's court as a result of fire fatalities. The coroner, through Regulation 28 of their legislative powers, has the ability to produce a preventable future death report. OFRS attended a fatal fire on 5 September 2014. The cause of the fire was investigated and found to be the electrical wiring situated behind the walls of the home. The coroner issued a preventable future death report and said:

'The fault in the wiring that resulted in this fire may be present in other similar properties within the estate built at the same time. Electrical testing will not necessarily reveal this fault. Consideration as to what information and action can be undertaken by the Fire and Rescue Service to alert the local community on this matter.'

We have produced an action plan which we are actively progressing.



# Financial performance: statement of accounts

---

## Where our money came from

Our budget for 2014-15

OFRS are an integral part of OCC who provide the statement of accounts and audit that can be found on the OCC public website:

- [Annual accounts and audit](#)

## What your money was spent on

### Revenue expenditure

The net budget for the Fire and Rescue Service for 2014-15 was £25,463,601. A summary of OFRS expenditure can be found in the Annual Report at:

- [Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service performance web page.](#)

### Expenditure per head of population<sup>2</sup>

The cost of providing the fire and rescue service in 2013/14 was approximately 10p per day for each person within Oxfordshire.

The cost per head of population for 2013-14 was £38.64 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £40.05
- Family group fire and rescue services - £38.63
- All English fire and rescue services - £40.50
- County council fire and rescue services - £39.54

### Expenditure per member of staff

We provided a service at a cost of £42,901 per member of staff in 2013-14 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £48,705
- Family group fire and rescue services - £44,681
- All English fire and rescue services - £46,079
- County council fire and rescue services - £43,048

- [Pay Policy Statement](#)

---

<sup>2</sup> Financial data is taken from the CIPFA Fire and Rescue Statistics 2013/14, as CIPFA 2014/15 statistics are not currently available. County council fire and rescue service figures do not include Isle of Wight or Isles of Scilly as they do not represent a fair comparison due to their size

## Expenditure per incident

Our overall expenditure against the number of incidents we attend is £4,791 per incident in 2013-14 compared to the average of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £4,531
- Family group fire and rescue services - £4,274
- All English fire and rescue services - £4,431
- County council fire and rescue services - £4,529.

## How we provide value for money

Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan 2013-14 to 2017-18 sets out the key objectives and priorities for action for the council. It is a key document and sets out the broad strategic direction, as well as the council's values and principles that guide all of our work. We have an absolute focus on ensuring services are efficient and delivering value for money for local people.

- [Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan](#)

## Auditors findings

A summary of auditors' reports and findings can be found in the Annual Audit Letter 2013-14 on the link below. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 require local authorities, including fire and rescue authorities, to prepare an annual governance statement in support of the annual statement of accounts. Full details can be found in the OCC Annual Governance Statement, which is included in our 'Statement of Accounts' publication at the end of the document.

- [Annual accounts and audit | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

## Our future plans

---

### OFRS overarching plan 2015-16

In 2015-16 we are facing increasing business and efficiency challenges set against a changing public sector environment. The purpose of the Overarching Plan is to provide all our staff with details of the context in which we are working and provide information to enable them to make an effective contribution to the Vision of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. This plan is a précis of each of the functional plans drawn up for 2015-16.

- [Overarching Plan 2015-16](#)

### Our future challenges

We regularly analyse the county's community risk profile and set out our strategic approach as to how we will effectively manage those risks.

This is detailed in our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2013 to 2018, which can be found on the link below. The government requires us, by law, to regularly produce and review our plan, which is also known as our 'Strategic Integrated Risk Management Plan'. We plan to fully review our risks in 2016 and produce a new five year CRMP in 2017.

- [Community Risk Management Plan 2013-2018](#)

### Trading Standards

The Trading Standards Service has formally adopted a strategic plan setting out our priorities for the period 2013-14 to 2017-18. The Service also publishes an annual business plan to set out in detail how we will progress work on the agreed strategic priorities.

This business plan also explains how we work on a day to day basis and how we prioritise our response to issues within the scope of the service that we could respond to. It also explains how we measure and monitor our performance and what we achieved in the previous year.

- [Trading Standards Strategic Plan](#)

## Our future commitments

The Community Risk Management Action Plan 2015-16 details the specific projects we commenced in 2015.

- Project 1: Implement Emergency Medical Support Services in collaboration with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS).
- Project 2: Review adverse weather resilience arrangements with the emergency planning team and other partners.
- Project 3: Trial emergency cover review recommendations in the Carterton area.
- Project 4: Identify opportunities to work with partners to improve health, safety and wellbeing in local communities.
  
- [Community Risk Management Action Plan 2015-16](#)

# Our community engagement

---

Consultation on the draft Community Risk Management Action Plan 2015-16 commenced on 10 October 2014 and concluded on 2 January 2015. In order to obtain the widest spectrum of responses, several different means of capturing opinions and ideas were used in the consultation process. A total of 73 responses were received and can be found in the consultation responses document:

- [CRMP Consultation Responses](#)

## Comments and compliments

The fire and rescue service is passionate about delivering top quality customer service. Delivering excellent customer service benefits us as individuals, our organisation and our customers. We also know that we need to continually adjust and improve our levels of customer service because we need to meet the changing needs and expectations of our customers.

If you have any comments, compliments, complaints or suggestions, please contact us using whichever of the following methods is most convenient to you:

- Telephone: 01865 815906.
- Email: [complaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@oxfordshire.gov.uk).
- Online: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/complaints).
- Post: write to: Complaints Team  
FREEPOST (SCE 7709)  
Oxford  
OX1 1YA

Comprehensive information is available in the following links:

- [How to make a complaint about Oxfordshire County Council](#)
- [Fire and rescue service comments, compliments and complaints](#)



## How you can become involved

To make a request for a free Home Fire Risk check, call the community Safety Helpline free on 08000 325999 or visit [365alive.co.uk](http://365alive.co.uk) and complete our quick on-line questionnaire.



For fire and road safety advice, visit [365alive.co.uk](http://365alive.co.uk).

Follow us on Twitter at [@OxonFireRescue](https://twitter.com/OxonFireRescue) or on Facebook at [Oxfordshirefireandrescueservice\(official\)](https://www.facebook.com/Oxfordshirefireandrescueservice(official)).

## Access to information

Details regarding the fire authority's arrangements in respect of access to data and information can be found on the council's [access data and information web page](#).

## Signature

Signed on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council:

Date: May 2015

Councillor Rodney Rose

Cabinet member with responsibility for the fire and rescue service

## Do you want to become an on-call firefighter?

---

There is currently a shortage of on-call firefighters at some fire stations in OFRS. This is particularly the case in our small towns and rural areas because nowadays there are fewer people who live and work in their local towns and villages. You might be just the person to fill the gap.

### Where do you work?

First of all, you need to live or work near to a fire station because you have to be able to get there within a few minutes of a call. Secondly, because we can't predict when you'll be called out, you have to be flexible in your work. The chances are that you'll be working at home, self-employed or for a community-minded employer who can let you off from time to time.

### Are you fit for the job?

To apply to join the fire and rescue service you don't need any paper qualifications. You must be at least aged 18, with good all-round fitness. You will be asked to take a straightforward physical test as part of the process, and just as important are qualities like common sense, commitment and enthusiasm.

### How often will you be needed?

On average, you will be called out two or three times a week for a couple of hours. If you cannot be available all the time, that's not a problem. You can be paid for being "on-call" for only part of the day or week. There is a particular shortage of people who are available during weekends, but you would have some evenings and weekends free if you need to, and still do a valuable and worthwhile job. If you really can't be on-call - for example because of a holiday or a deadline at work - you can take time off.

### What do you get out of it?

Apart from the excitement, the challenge and the satisfaction of a job well done, your on-going training will assist you in becoming more self-reliant and confident. After all, if you can cope in a real emergency, you are ready for anything else that life might throw at you. You will meet a lot of people in your local community and earn their confidence and respect. You will also get continual, on-going training in the use of equipment and in other more general life skills including first aid. Added to all this, you get paid! You get paid a basic retainer, plus a fee for call-outs and another fee for going into action. You also get paid for training and duties like equipment maintenance.

If you think you've got what it takes to join the team, contact your local fire station for further information, or check out [our vacancies pages](#).