

Community Risk Management Action Plan

2021-2022



OXFORDSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL



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Cabinet Member for Community Safety
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Director of Community Safety
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WELCOME AND FOREWORD

We are very pleased to present our Community Risk Management Action Plan 2021/22 which provides an update on the risk management projects we are currently undertaking. These projects will lead to a safer Oxfordshire and contribute to Oxfordshire County Council’s vision of a ‘Thriving Oxfordshire’.

Community Safety Services includes the Fire & Rescue Service, Trading Standards, Emergency Planning and the Gypsy and Travellers Service. Our integration across the Councils (both Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council) and collaboration with partners enables us to ensure that we are joined up in delivering the best solutions to the key issues affecting our communities.

The Councils recognise the importance of these services and continues to support effective protection, prevention and response services. At our core, we provide an effective emergency response to help people when and where they need us the most. We also focus on our prevention and risk reduction activities to ensure that people remain safe, keep themselves away from harm and are part of our thriving communities.

The Fire and Rescue Service forms the largest team in Community Safety Services and is proud of its prevention activity and this has reduced the number and severity of emergencies over a 10-year period. Oxfordshire reflects the national trend, with overall reductions in the number of emergency calls, fire deaths and injuries over an extended period. The number of emergency calls are plateauing, and the last 2 years has seen a further fall. Our engagement with the most vulnerable in our communities will continue to be a key factor in ensuring the number of emergencies remain as low as possible.

Our Community Risk Management Plan 2017-2022 recognises the changes within our population, the expected growth across the county and the national and local risks that we face. This Community Risk Management Action Plan 2021/22 will assist our service to meet the challenges ahead.

Our values are at the heart of everything we do and, we will continue to do our best for our residents by working together in a supportive and honest way; striving to find the best solutions; and being open to change and doing things differently.

INTRODUCTION

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework to which fire authorities must have regard when discharging their functions.

Fire and Rescue Services Act

The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the duties and powers of Fire Authorities. Under the Act, the Fire Authority has several core functions which the service delivers on behalf of the Authority:

- Prevention
- Fire Protection
- Emergency Response

For more information see our Community Risk Management Plan or the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004

National Framework Document

The 2018 National Framework document for England states that each Fire and Rescue Authority is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). In Oxfordshire our IRMP reflects our community safety and prevention work and is called our Community Risk Management Plan or CRMP. This plan also includes relevant risk management projects from Trading Standards, Emergency Planning and our Gypsy and Traveller Service.

Integrated Risk Management in Oxfordshire

We have adopted a systems approach to integrated risk management in which we will always prioritise the delivery of our statutory duties to reduce risk and vulnerability in Oxfordshire through Prevention, Protection and Response activities. We will continuously improve our overall performance and strive to deliver an outstanding service. Our integrated risk management approach will make sure we continuously evaluating the work that we do, monitor the risks that we face and plan to use our resources to the greatest effect and deliver on those plans.

VISION

365alive is Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's vision to ensure that we are working every day to save and improve the lives of people across Oxfordshire. The vision is supported by Road Safety, Trading Standards, Emergency Planning and Gypsy and Traveller's Services.

The vision will run for 6 years from 2016 to 2022; over this time, we would like to achieve:

6,000
MORE PEOPLE ALIVE AS A RESULT OF OUR PREVENTION, PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

85,000
CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS TO BE BETTER EDUCATED TO LEAD SAFER AND HEALTHIER LIVES

37,500
VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND ADULTS HELPED TO LEAD MORE SECURE AND INDEPENDENT LIVES SUPPORTED BY SAFE AND WELL-BEING VISITS

20,000
BUSINESSES GIVEN ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO GROW

1.6 MILLION
SAFETY MESSAGES DELIVERED ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Thriving communities

for everyone in Oxfordshire

Thriving people

We strive to give every child a good start in life, and protect everyone from abuse and neglect.

We enable older and disabled people to live independently. We care for those in greatest need.

Thriving communities

We help people live safe, healthy lives and play an active part in their community.

We provide services that enhance the quality of life in our communities, and protect the local environment.

Thriving economy

We support a thriving local economy by improving transport links to create jobs and homes for the future.

We listen to residents so we can continuously improve our services and provide value for money



More information on our Vision can be found at www.365alive.co.uk

Oxfordshire County Council's vision can be read in more detail in the 2018-21 Corporate Plan.

Visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk and search for 'corporate plan' for more details.

5-YEAR COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

As part of our annual process, we also review any emerging risks that we need to consider that aren't captured in the Community Risk Management Plan. There are three areas we have considered this year.

The National and Community Risk Register

The National Risk Register captures the range of potential emergencies that could have a major impact on all, or significant parts of the UK. It was updated in 2020.

Local Resilience Forums then transfers these into community risk registers, by reviewing the national risks in the context of their local area. Emergency responders and other key agencies then ensure that their area have robust plans and can provide an appropriate response.

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is assessing these changes to ensure the service is still able to effectively deal with all foreseeable risks.

COVID-19

The emergence of Covid-19 coronavirus and the subsequent global pandemic has seen a rapid and profound change in the functioning of our society.

We have been working with our partners in Oxfordshire and the Thames Valley and have undertaken additional work to help our communities stay safe and protect the most vulnerable. This has included our staff driving ambulances, delivery essential equipment, supporting other organisations with personal protection equipment and undertaking key roles in the Local Resilience Forum.

The pandemic has driven a change in the way we operate as a service in order to protect our staff and remain available to respond to emergencies. We have introduced changes to many aspects of our day-to-day working practices to comply with social distancing and minimise the risk of infection to our staff, their families and the wider community.

We have developed new ways to deliver some of our services, such as providing more telephone and online support for businesses through our Protection and Prevention teams. As we emerge from this pandemic, we will continue to develop new ways of working to ensure we can provide our services safely and effectively.



Savings Programme

As a result of the financial pressures that are being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a savings programme has been designed by Oxfordshire County Council to identify potential areas of savings across all services to support the County Councils budget shortfalls.

OFRS will support the County Councils Saving programme by setting out a number of areas within the Mid-Term Financial Plan to explore any potential savings that can be delivered. This will involve reviews of areas of our organisational structure, how activities of the service are delivered and increased integration with county council services to deliver a more cost-effective service for the public.

Service Delivery Plan 2021/22

Our service delivery plan sets out the priorities we will be focusing on for the 2021-2022 year. Our service priorities are:

- To develop the services integrated risk management and develop a systems approach ensuring that risk management is embedded through the service, to reduce the risks to the community and the workforce, delivered through the services new overarching CRMP.
- Improve the operational availability of our fire appliances, ensuring we provide an effective and timely emergency response, further reducing the impact of fires and other emergencies.
- To continue to build on the culture, values and behaviours of Community Safety Services, to ensure that the working environment is an open and honest workplace where staff feel valued, aligned with the new NFCC Code of Ethics
- Review our premises estate and develop an asset strategy that aligns with corporate objectives and which delivers any opportunities in alternative ways of working that COVID-19 has highlighted.
- Improve the diversity within our service, ensuring we attract the best talent and better reflect and understand the communities we serve. Our aim is to work with our communities and be a first-class inclusive employer that our staff are proud to work for.



PROACTIVE ROLE IN IMPROVING STANDARDS IN RENTED HOUSING



WHAT IT IS?

This project seeks to protect tenants and prospective tenants from both physical harm and financial loss when renting a residential property.

WHY IT IS NEEDED?

Oxfordshire has some of the highest rental costs in the country, compounded by areas of high demand and short supply. These factors can lead to significant levels of consumer detriment.

The project will seek to:

- Protect consumers from financial and physical harm
- Improving their health and wellbeing from improved living conditions.
- Tackle the imbalance of power between landlords and/or letting agents and their tenants.

The Government's Tenants Fee Bill is one example that highlights the need to make renting fairer and to protect consumers from rogue landlords and agents and this project will aim to improve living standards in rented housing across the county.

WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

The project will have a number of areas of work. We will undertake work to better understand the issues affecting consumers within Oxfordshire, as well as investigating the regulatory options that already exist. Work will be conducted to assess compliance with relevant legislation, to improve advice to businesses and to help ensure that consumers are able to make informed choices. An enforcement approach will be devised to target those businesses who fail to comply with the law and this is likely to include making use of civil penalty arrangements, where appropriate. Responsible businesses and landlords will be protected from those who seek an unfair competitive advantage through unscrupulous practice, damaging the reputation of landlord and letting agents in Oxfordshire.

UPDATE:

A Principal Trading Standards Officer has been tasked to this area of work with efforts recently boosted from the granting of funds by National Trading Standards.

As a result of dedicated work in this area, two Trading Standards Officers are now regular participants in the Oxfordshire Housing Standards Group. We have continued to work closely with Oxford City Council on legislation regarding energy performance certificates and minimum energy efficiency standards on rented properties. We have commenced an inspection program covering 50 letting agents across the county, with lessons learned to be shared across the wider South East region and nationally. District council colleagues have helped identify target premises and adverse findings are being shared with them as appropriate. As part of this project, the County will be asked to approve new procedures for the issuing of financial penalties.

Officers will use this significant increase in contact with various parties involved in the rented accommodation market, to further associated priorities, such as fire safety, warm homes and living well.

ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVOCATES OR WARDENS

WHAT IT IS?

We aim to attract people who would like to be a part of us and what we do, but not necessarily by fighting fires.

Our prevention teams coordinate and conduct our prevention activities delivered through our Safe and Well programme. These visits make our residents and communities

WHY IT IS NEEDED?

Our Safe & Well visits are a large part of our Prevention programme and these visits make our residents and communities safer. We are planning to complete more Safe & Well visits with vulnerable residents.

This project will ensure that:

- We are able to meet the demand of the visits that are generated.
- We maximise engagement with local communities, utilising local knowledge.
- We use this information to deliver the right service at the right time.

By providing information, education and training to a core group of local residents, we will not only improve our engagement with our local communities, but it will also help us to identify and better access those that are vulnerable and most at risk from harm.

WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

We have a desire to increase our Safe & Well visits and to assist in coordinating community resilience. Community Wardens will be a well-trained and professionally supported volunteer group, and in larger towns we will look to provide a volunteer coordinator.

UPDATE:

The volunteer initiative is now officially up and running and was launched at the end of September in Henley on Thames. We have six volunteers ready to identify and help the most vulnerable in the community.

We have already completed several safe and well visits in the Henley area, as well as delivering a range of safety information. We have been targeting charity shops and food banks to give awareness of campaigns such as electric blanket safety, safe and well visits and also fire safety at home.

The volunteers have also delivered water safety information for businesses close to the Thames, these include pubs, restaurants and cafes. We are aiming to be at the local town market weekly to generate safe and well visits as well as giving out safety information and also recruiting for on call stations.

We have made some good connections with local charities who we hope we can work alongside in the future to target the vulnerable in our community.



TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THE OPERATIONAL WORKFORCE

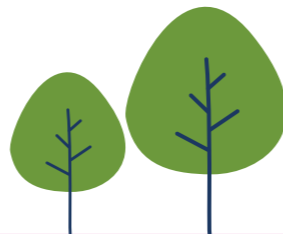
WHAT IT IS?

Over the last three years, the service looked at ways to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups into operational roles within the service. This work will continue during 2021-22.

WHY IT IS NEEDED?

We recognise that a diverse workforce has great benefits to the way in which the service works and acknowledge that fire & rescue services can be perceived as non-representative. This project seeks to:

- Identify ways in which to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups
- Provide Inclusive environments that encourage people to reach their full potential.
- Attract and retain the best and brightest individuals from all communities.



WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

We use data to understand how to access our diverse communities and we aim to build stronger community relationships, which will help to increase understanding and break down any barriers between us and the community. Opportunities for employment will be advertised in more accessible places. We conduct 'taster' days, where interested individuals can experience what it takes to be a firefighter and ask questions of those already in service.

UPDATE:

Our service operates a blended approach to the recruitment of its staff. Our recruitment media, including videos and social media campaigns are inclusive and show the diversity we wish to reflect. In addition to operational and support staff recruitment campaigns, it incorporates the provision of apprenticeships to provide opportunities for development through a recognised qualification.

We are committed to being an open and inclusive employer and are proud to be in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, identifying the service as an equal opportunity employer of choice. This demonstrates the services ongoing commitment to underrepresented groups, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community. Central to this work is the active staff Inclusion Group and allies' approach, to promote an inclusive and supportive workplace.

This approach extends to support and advice for female staff and addresses issues affecting women in the workplace. The Service supports positive action and community events to engage with and recruit from traditionally under-represented groups, such as women and black and minority ethnic residents, making the service more diverse and more representative of our communities. Since 2017 we have seen a continued increase in the percentage of women and Black and Minority Ethnic firefighters joining our service in both operational roles and leadership roles.





For fire, road and general safety advice please visit www.365alive.co.uk

If you have a fire, road or general safety question please call the free phone community safety helpline on: **08000 325 999** or email: community.safety@oxfordshire.gov.uk

