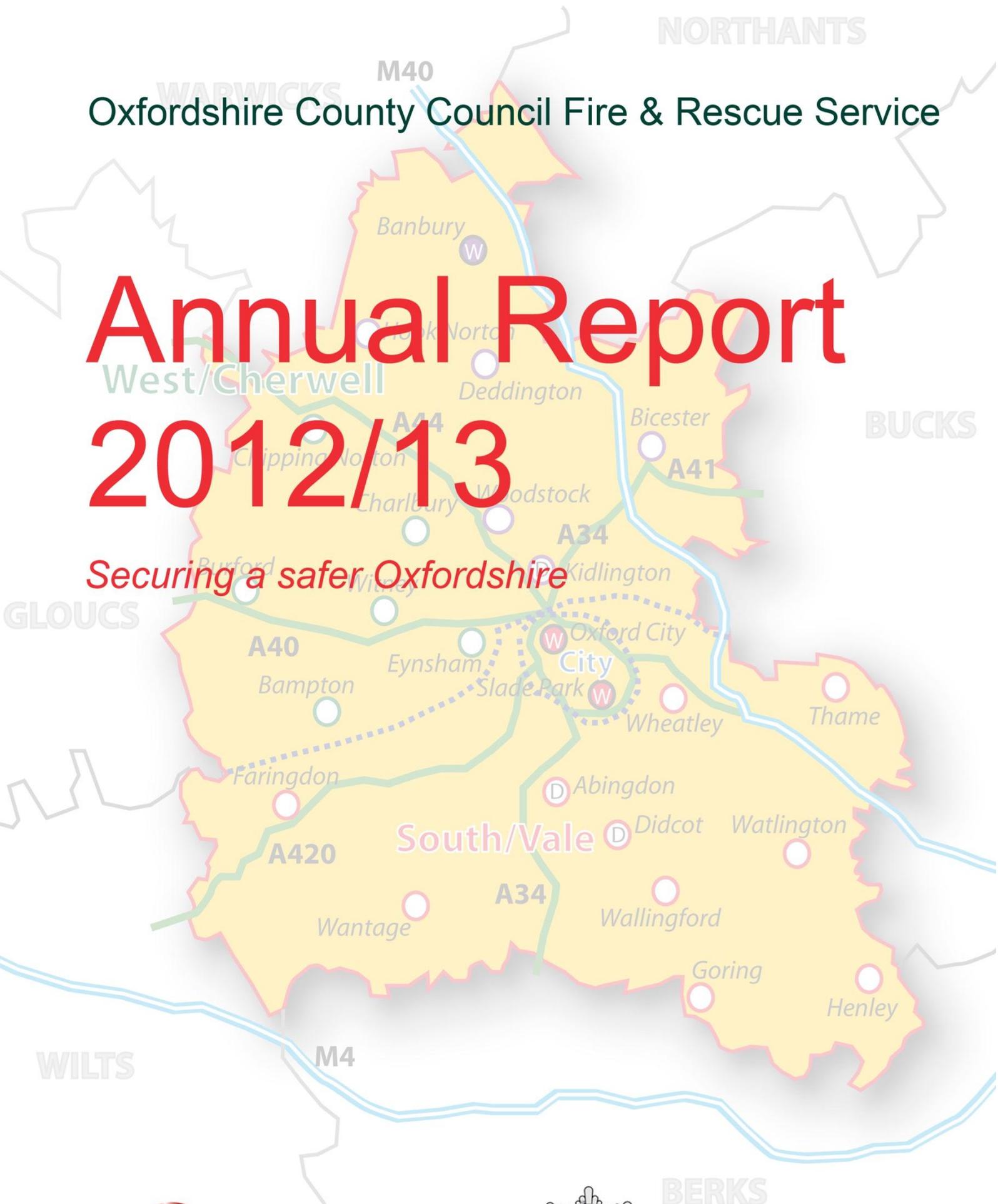


Oxfordshire County Council Fire & Rescue Service

Annual Report 2012/13

Securing a safer Oxfordshire



www.365alive.co.uk



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

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Welcome and Foreword by Councillor Louise Chapman



Cabinet Member with
responsibility for the
Fire and Rescue Service

I am pleased to present our Annual Report for 2012/13 which demonstrates our performance for this period. As it shows, we continue to go from strength to strength and have much to be proud of. Our fire and rescue service has a long history of being a high performing and low cost service.

We work hard with our community to ensure that the most vulnerable are supported and we are aware of local needs. Our firefighters provide a professional and caring service, whatever the time or circumstance, whilst also being aware of our need to work in conjunction with the other county council services to help ensure the safety of our general public. An example of this is our work in assisting with the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults. Firefighters also provide practical safety advice and support to people in their homes and workplaces.

Looking ahead, we remain firmly committed to achieving excellence and further improving public and firefighter safety. It is, therefore, important for Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service to regularly publish our performance outcomes, so we can reflect and learn in order to continue our improvement journey which will lead to a safer county.

Foreword by Chief Fire Officer David Etheridge



I am very proud to be the Chief Fire Officer of Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service and of our achievements during the past year.

We continue to exceed the targets set in 2006 as part of our 365alive campaign. Not only has this resulted in significant financial savings to the public of Oxfordshire, it has kept more people safe in their own homes, at work and on the county's roads.

2012/13 saw some significant challenges for our service which we faced head on. The 2012 London Olympics required deployment of our specialist resources to work in partnership across the Thames Valley at Dorney Lakes, and the Torch Relay passing through Oxfordshire involved significant multi-agency planning. The adverse weather which affected the county during winter and spring also placed a significant pressure on our resources.

As a county council service, our goal is to become the most integrated fire and rescue service in the country. We will work with our local partners not only to help deliver the outcomes and priorities of other county council services, such as helping the elderly and education, but also to share assets and specialist services with other emergency responders, such as Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and UK fire and rescue services.

This report will greatly assist in our accomplishment of this aim. It highlights our achievements over the last 12 months and identifies areas where we still need to improve.



Introduction

Welcome to the Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report for 2012-13. The report reviews our performance over the last financial year (April 2012 to March 2013) 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 will help us decide where to focus our efforts and resources to reduce threats and seize opportunities. This report contributes to our future planning and is essential to our process of integrated risk management.

Our vision

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) are proud of the quality of the services we deliver 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, called 365alive.

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 alive¹
- £100 Million saved to the economy of Oxfordshire
- 840,000 safety messages delivered to the community

For more details visit the www.365alive.co.uk.

¹ 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.

Integrated fire and rescue service

Traditionally, the role of a fire and rescue service was seen as four-fold: fighting fires, rescuing people, enforcing fire protection in businesses and providing fire prevention advice to householders.

Today, however, the approach is much more wide-ranging. We work alongside the police, the public health team and through the county council to reduce wider risks to community safety and well-being while still providing a value-for-money service to the local taxpayer.

Add to this the growing variety and complexity of emergency response, protection and prevention activities such as water, mud and ice rescue, building collapse, hazardous materials, road traffic collisions and our responsibilities for civil protection during major or catastrophic incidents.

The picture emerges of a multi-faceted, multi-skilled and safety-conscious organisation focused on its 365alive vision.

The service has close links to Bonn Fire Service, Germany and through partnership working we share ideas and practices across Europe. Pictured below is the Chief Fire Officer David Etheridge with Chief Fire Officer Jochen Stein, Bonn Fire Service, on a recent collaboration visit to Oxfordshire.



How our plans fit within the wider context

It is important that our priorities are consistent with local, regional and national goals and needs. At the heart of our planning process is our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2013-18.

Each year, we review our priorities and performance against these longer-term goals and produce a one-year action plan. This action plan identifies which risks we are going to target over that year and outlines the projects we are going to deliver to reduce threats and make the most of opportunities to improve both our service and the safety of Oxfordshire.

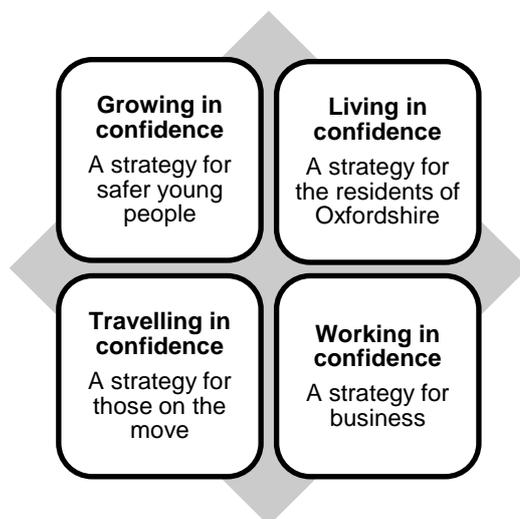
The CRMP and action plan documents can be downloaded from the Oxfordshire County Council website: [Community Risk Management Plan](#)

This annual report looks at our performance over the previous year and reports on how well our community risk management planning has worked. It also feeds into the CRMP for the next year.

Another important document is our 'Safer by Design' Business Plan; this covers both the fire and rescue service and the Emergency Planning Team and shows how we fit within the wider county council. It sets out how our integrated risk management planning fits in with the aims and objectives of the [County Council's Corporate Plan](#).

The business plan also contains our approach to resource planning, including our budgets, training and development plan and asset management plan.

The 'Safer by Design' plan consists of four main strands shown in the diagram below.



Performance results at a glance

Fire and rescue performance scorecard

OFRS sets realistic but challenging performance measures every year. These performance measures are aligned to the ten-year vision of 365alive. As you will see from the lists below the majority of our performance measures are customer focussed. Last year we set 24 strategic performance indicators. We achieved our performance measures for 16 indicators and we were very close to achieving a further five.

Performance measures achieved

- By looking at 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. Last year we estimated this to be 56 people against a performance measure of 36 people, meaning we exceeded our aim by 20 lives.
- By looking at the number of deaths and injuries to people from fires and road traffic collisions and the number of fire damaged homes and businesses, we calculate the amount of money we have saved the economy as a result of our work. Last year was £23.6 million against a performance measure of £10 million, exceeding our aim by £13.6 million.
- Across the year we delivered safety messages to a total estimated audience of 129,425 against a performance measure of 84,000, exceeding our aim by 45,425 people.
- The 2012-13 performance measure for deliberately started significant property fire in the county was 82. We had 49, which is a good reduction of 28 per cent on the previous year.
- The performance measure for deliberately started minor or outdoor fires in the county was 507. We had 229 and this is a significant reduction of 52 per cent on the previous year.
- There were only 19 injuries due to accidental fires in the home.

- The performance measure for significant fires² in the county was 1001. We were under target, we had 873 this was a substantial reduction of 14 per cent on the previous year.
- We achieved our performance measure for capital projects managed within the project management framework, meeting defined costs, quality and time constraints.
- The performance measure for the number of times the crew failed to mobilise the fire engine from the fire station within the allocated time of five minutes was 15, we achieved 10.
- We exceeded our performance measure for the business continuity management maturity model with a score of five out of a maximum available score of six.
- 70 per cent of our firefighters have completed their full development programmes which met our performance measure. These programmes take about two years to complete and ensure firefighters are competent in every aspect of their role.
- 99 per cent on average throughout the year of firefighter posts on the whole time duty system³ are filled with people on permanent contracts which met our performance measure.
- At the end of the last financial year, all projects for our Integrated Risk Management Action Plan 2012-13 were on track to be completed.
- At the end of the last financial year, all projects for our Strategic Leadership team were on track to be completed.
- Our day-to-day revenue spending was only £6,000 over our allocated budget for the year 2012-13.
- We have delivered £121,000 of efficiency savings this year by reviewing the way we deliver our services without reducing our frontline services.

² Significant fires are also called primary fires. They are any fires that involve: casualties, rescues, or fires in buildings; caravans and trailers; vehicles and other methods of transport that are not derelict; outdoor storage, plant and machinery; agricultural and forestry premises and property; and other outdoor structures including post boxes, tunnels and bridges.

³ Career firefighters work the whole-time duty system, which means they work full-time for the Fire and Rescue Service at a permanently crewed fire station or in a support role.

Close to performance measure

- 78.18 per cent of emergencies were attended in 11 minutes or under which was close to our performance measure of 80 per cent.
- 92.73 per cent of emergencies were attended in 14 minutes or under, which is just less than our performance measure of 95 per cent.
- Combined percentage of maintenance of safety critical skills in date and of safety critical skills refreshers in date 85.6 per cent out of a performance measure of 100 per cent.
- 94.39 per cent of time that a fire engine is available in every station area out of a performance measure of 100 per cent.
- 86.20 per cent of time that on-call pumping appliances were available with a minimum crew of four or competent crew out of a measure of 100 per cent.

Performance measures not achieved

- Unfortunately there were three fire deaths in the county during 2012/13. We have aspirations for no further fire deaths within the home in Oxfordshire. Any loss of life is a tragedy, yet the performance measure we set ourselves of no fire deaths will always be challenging. By actively engaging in fire prevention education and targeting assistance to the more vulnerable residents in Oxfordshire, the number of fires across the county has dropped significantly. However, we are not complacent and we will continue to focus our efforts where they will have the greatest benefit for the most vulnerable and those at greatest risk.
- Our performance measure for the turnover of on-call staff is 10 per cent. During 2012-13 our performance was 13 per cent. Recruitment and retention of on-call staff remains a challenge for many fire and rescue services. Measures based on the on-call charter⁴ are being implemented, along with more flexible crewing arrangements using both whole time and on-call staff.

⁴ Our service is committed to developing an “On-call Charter”. The underlying concept behind this initiative is to ensure that on-call personnel feel valued and to recognise that they are an integral and long-term part of this organisation. The overall ambition is that Oxfordshire becomes the best employer of on-call firefighters in the country.

The intention is to reduce the current turnover of on-call staff and to use existing trained personnel in more creative ways to reduce the current levels of non-availability. At the same time we are actively recruiting new on-call firefighters in certain areas.

- Our performance measure for the percentage of policies and procedures that are within their valid period and do not require review is 100 per cent. In 2012-13 our performance was 64 per cent. We have been engaged in the Collaborative Partnership Programme with other fire and rescue services to promote a common approach to our operational procedures. During our re-structure, which was implemented in 2013, we established a dedicated team to implement new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). We decided not to review operational procedures documents but have planned to replace them with new SOPs on a risk assessed basis.



Requests for a full set of performance indicators should be made to Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters by calling the general enquiries line on 01865 84299 or [email: ofrs.info@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ofrs.info@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Performance results in more detail

In order to drive continuous improvement of the service we undertake periodic operational assessments (Op A). This process, which has a strong operational focus, comprises of a self-assessment and external peer challenge and is designed to look at how we lead, prioritise and deliver our main functions. The following pages report on the seven key assessment areas of Op A, which are community risk management, prevention, protection, response, health & safety, training & development and call management & incident support.

Community risk management

Community Risk Management Plan projects 2012-13

Business continuity review

Business continuity is about ensuring that in the event of any disruption, such as the flooding of a fire station or high numbers of staff taken ill with influenza, work that needs to be done continues. We have improved our plans to respond to such disruption and have aligned them with the Oxfordshire County Council strategy.

Recruitment and advancement review

It is important that we recruit the best possible people into the right roles. We believe we have achieved this by reviewing our recruitment and promotion processes and introducing a range of improvements.

Road traffic casualty reduction

The implementation of the road safety strategy has improved the way in which we deliver road safety messages to the people of Oxfordshire. We have enhanced the way we monitor and record road safety programmed events and the booking system for child cycle examinations. We have also provided a more focussed approach to pedestrian training for children.

By incorporating Local Authority Road Safety Officers into Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service we have opened up more opportunities to share experiences and knowledge and further improve our road safety performance.

Olympics 2012 pre-planning

As part of our commitment to safe and successful Olympic games, we worked closely with police, ambulance and national government partners to ensure that the Olympic torch route through Oxfordshire was sufficiently protected. We also worked with neighbouring counties to provide support for Olympic events, such as the rowing events in Eton Dorney Lake in Buckinghamshire.

On-call duty system availability review

Following a review of the on-call duty system we are improving our recruitment and retention of on-call staff by making the role more appealing and encouraging greater participation from the surrounding communities.

Operational assurance framework

Operational assurance is a national approach of ensuring that fire and rescue services are aware of, and in control of, key risks arising from organisational activities. Our new organisational assurance team ensure we meet the highest standards and help us provide the best possible service to the public.

Data sharing to improve the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children

We have worked with our colleagues in Oxfordshire County Council Social and Community Services to improve the information and standards of fire safety in vulnerable people's homes by carrying out home fire risk checks and, where necessary, fitted smoke alarms. This has resulted in 1,100 vulnerable people being identified and provided with extra support and advice to reduce the likelihood of house fires.

Review of incident command

We have analysed all the incidents we attended last year and the roles of our crews attending, including the level of command and control required. This analysis is used to inform future management decision making. We have also assessed our future planning assumptions and from this we have made plans to improve our ability to deal with significant simultaneous incidents.

Improving fire control resilience

The Thames Valley Fire Control Project aims to create a joint control room with Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services and improve the resilience within our fire control function. The project is progressing well with a target

implementation date of April 2014. This will lead to significant cost savings and improved services for the public and emergency responders.

Other Projects 2012-13

Asset management

We have implemented a system of barcode marking and computer software to track operational equipment. This means we are confident that our equipment is fit for purpose, safe and tested on a regular basis.

Emergency response activity documentation

Each incident attended is reviewed to establish community impact and hazard levels to our staff. The information is used to develop packages to ensure crews have the knowledge and skills to deal with similar future incidents. This is an on-going project linked to other fire and rescue services to ensure we get the best possible results.

Protective security

As part of the UK counter terrorism strategy we are implementing national government standards to ensure that all important equipment is protected from terrorist attack, and other illegal or malicious activity.

Organisational risk

OFRS has a risk based approach to performance management and governance. All members of staff work to identify threats and opportunities to the service and our communities. Once a risk has been identified we will decide on how we want to deal with the risk and it will be closely monitored. Below are examples of some of the risks that have been identified this year and the actions that were taken to deal with them.

- Influenza pandemic – we have developed training and plans to deal with periods of high staff absence which a pandemic might cause. We have training packages ready to be delivered to staff to assist in carrying out our critical and essential services.
- Risk from flooding and other severe weather – we have purchased additional 4 x 4 vehicles and equipment to enable an enhanced response to emergencies, in all weather conditions.

- Pressure on firefighters to complete full training requirements to deal with the wide range of incidents that a modern firefighter is required to deal with - we have developed and introduced a new training competency framework to provide better training resources to make it easier for firefighters to learn all the skills they need.
- Closure of national programme for fire control – we have invested in our fire control and are progressing a project to deliver a Thames Valley Fire Control Service between Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services. We have already been successful in securing funding from the government to deliver this project. The new control room will be based in Reading and is scheduled to open in 2014.



Prevention

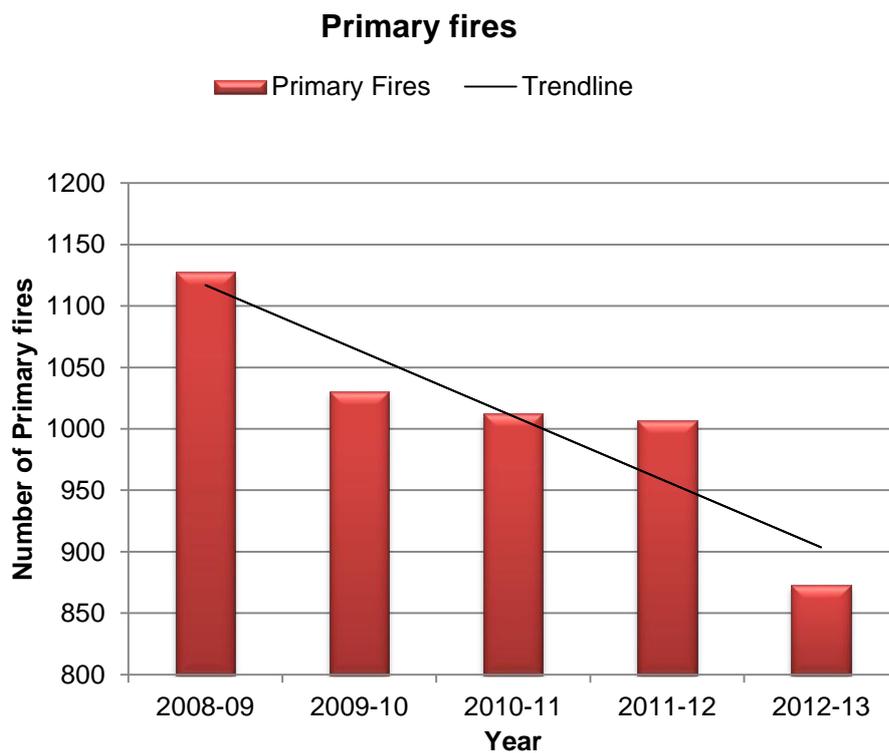
Fire statistics

Total number of significant fires

This year there was a further reduction in the number of significant fires across Oxfordshire and we exceeded the reduction targets we set. There has been a constant downward trend in fire numbers since 2008.

Our role is not just to respond to emergencies but also to be proactive and provide information and education to stop them happening in the first place. We believe that the reduction in fires across the county is due to the positive prevention and protection work we carry out.

Total number of significant fires over five years:



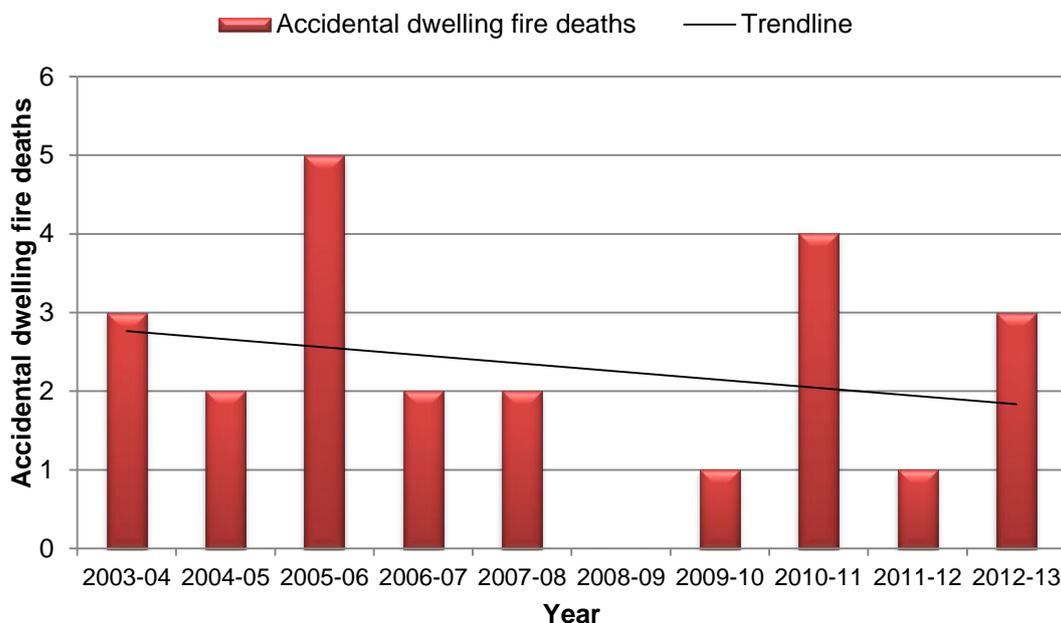
Fire deaths

There were 271 fire fatalities in England in 2012-13. Three fifths of all fire fatalities were in accidental dwelling fires (168 in 2012-13).

In 2012-13 three people died in Oxfordshire as a result of accidental fires in their homes. The number of fire deaths in Oxfordshire this year is much less than might be expected for the size of its population.

However, we will continue to strive to provide education and awareness of fire related risks with an aim to ensure nobody in Oxfordshire dies because of a fire.

Accidental dwelling fire deaths over last ten years



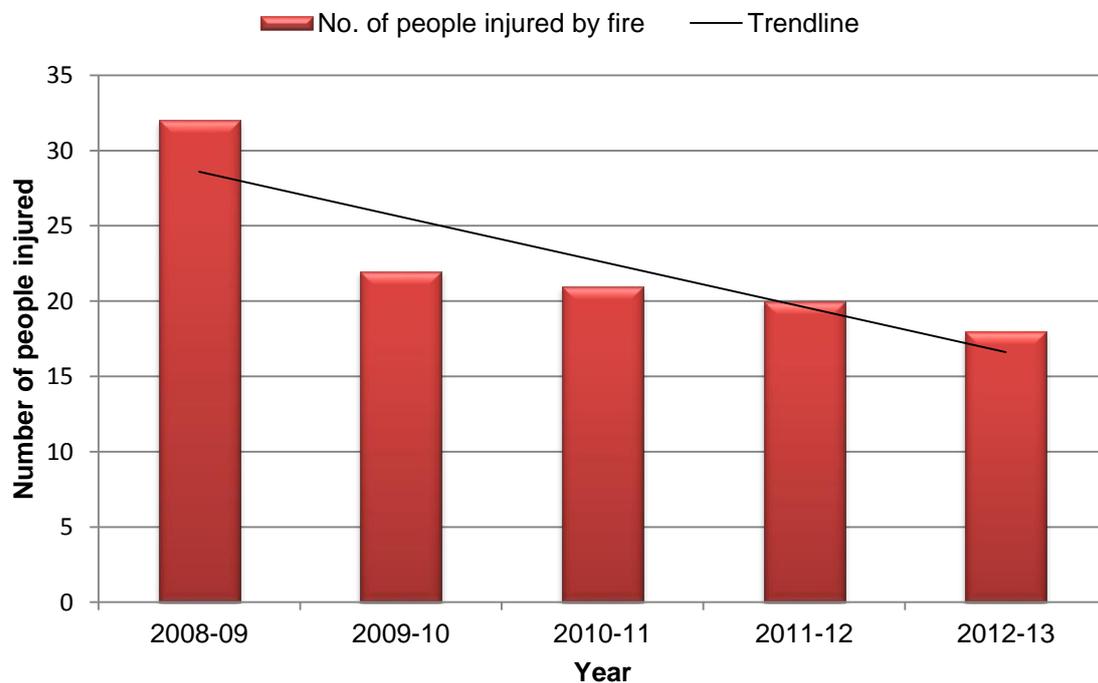
Home and Community Safety works with many partners to make people safer and our integration within the county council means we are able to work with Social and Community Services and other services to ensure we reach the most vulnerable members of our community and reduce the chance that their lives will be affected by fire.

Injuries caused by accidental fires in the home

The number of people who have suffered an injury as a result of a fire in their home this year has reduced again and was 19. There has also been a slight reduction in fire-related injuries over the last four years.

We will continue our positive prevention and safety education work to ensure this number continues to fall. We also believe that continuing to provide well-equipped and highly trained firefighters will help further reduce the number and severity of injuries.

No. of people injured by accidental fires over last five years



Arson

Arson is a significant problem to society and we work in partnership with Thames Valley Police tackling large scale serious arson incidents plus the smaller scale anti-social behaviour arson incidents which occur in the local neighbourhoods.

We have used our professional expertise and support to assist the police in making a number of successful convictions for this type of crime. This supports the police arson model by engaging with the four strands: prevention, education, detection and investigation.

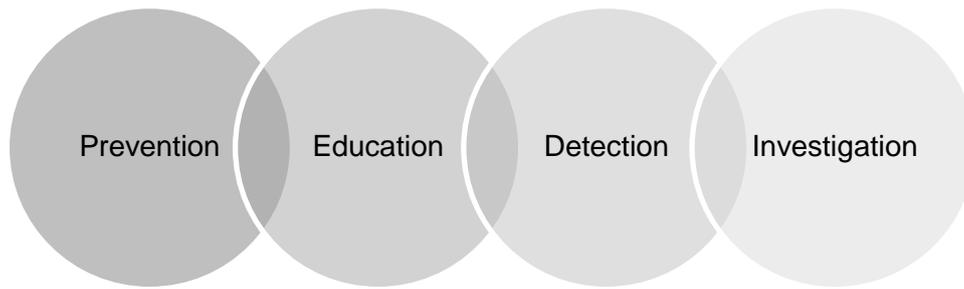
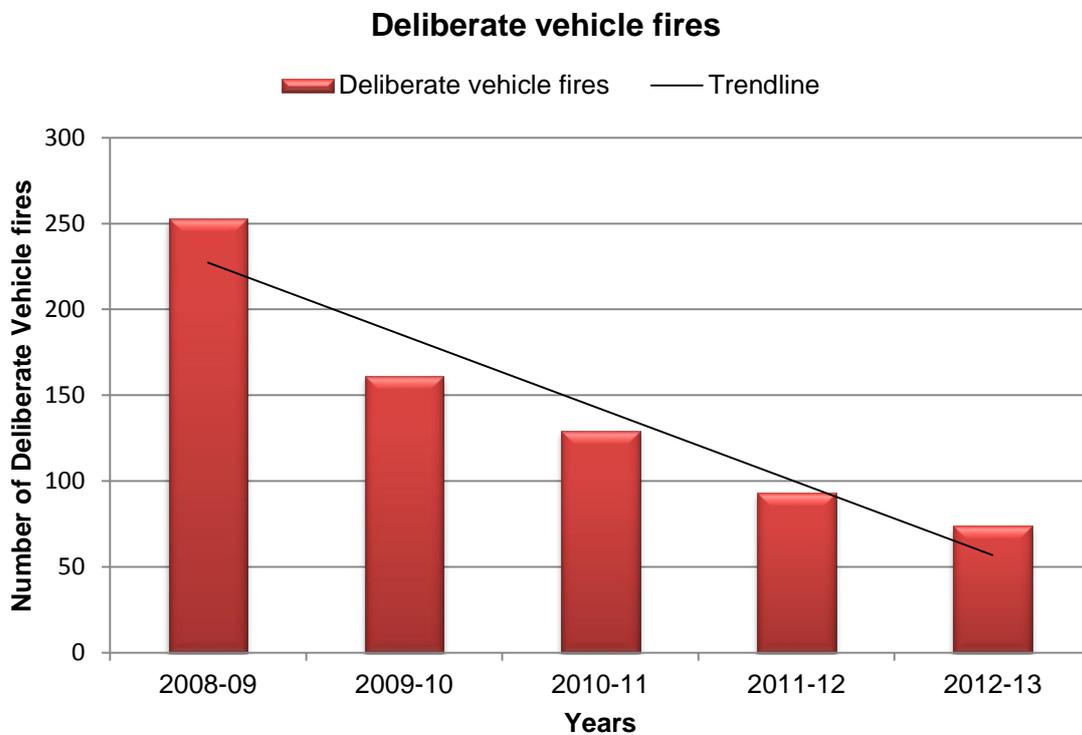


Figure 1: Four strands of Arson Prevention work

There has been a significant reduction in fires started deliberately in vehicles compared to last year, 93 incidents in 2011-12 have been successfully reduced to 74 incidents this year.

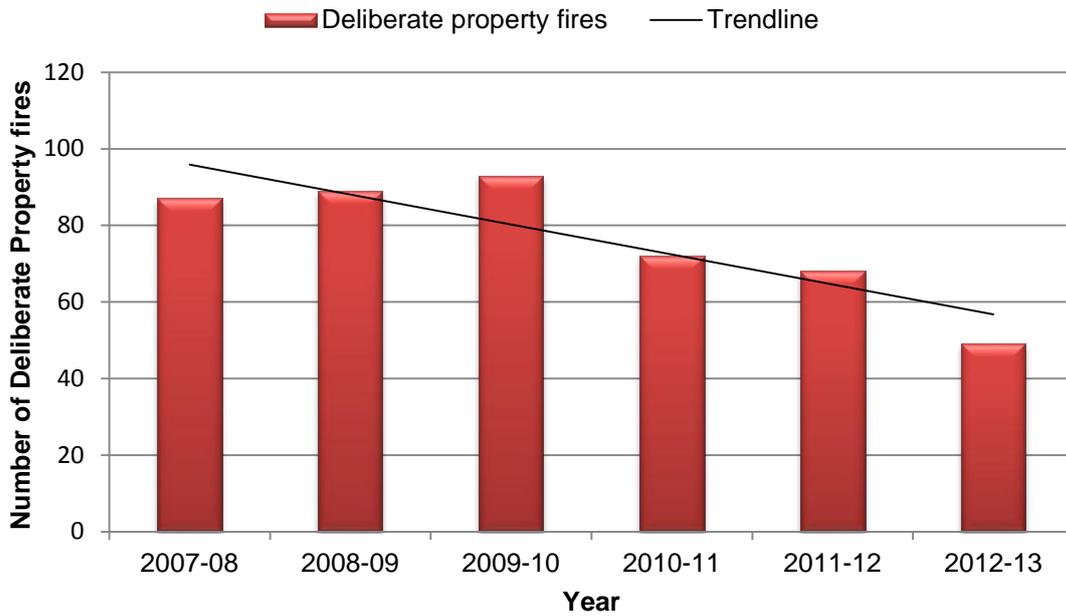


Oxfordshire continues to successfully reduce the number of deliberately started fires in the county and this is illustrated in the graphs below over the past five years.

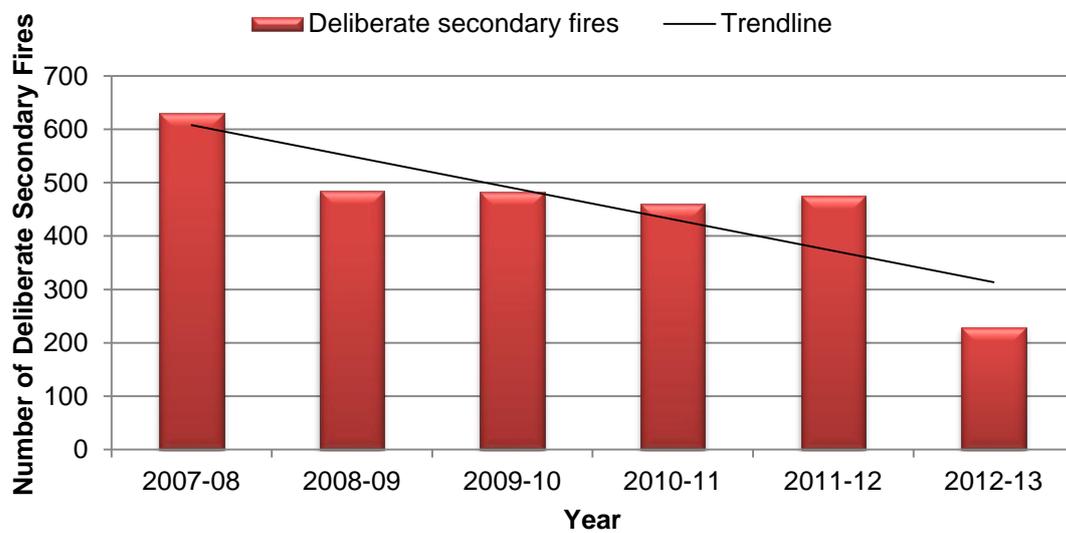
Deliberate fires are a focus for us to ensure that we use our valuable resources in the best effect and we constantly promote and provide information to the public via our prevention and protection teams.

Some of this downward trend and success is attributable to the partnership working between Community Safety Partnerships, Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service and Thames Valley Police.

Deliberate property fires



Deliberate secondary fires



Deliberately started secondary⁵ fires

⁵ Secondary fires are minor fires and fires in the open that do not involve people's property or possessions and are not categorised as primary fires.

Road safety

The reduction of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) is a priority for us and we will aim with our partners to try and influence driver attitude and behaviour to reduce these incidents occurring.



This may be a difficult task as there is a transient population passing and travelling through our county. We are working closely with other fire and rescue services and other external partners to try to collectively influence drivers beyond our boundaries.

A dedicated Road Safety Education Team deal specifically with providing education and awareness for reducing deaths and injuries across a wide range of road users.

We focus a lot of our preventative work on young drivers as this is the age group where the most fatalities occur and the causes are numerous e.g. texting and the use of mobile phones, drinking and drugs, speeding, over confidence and inexperience on the roads. Data shows that young drivers, between 16 and 24 years, are the most likely to be involved in collisions.

Our Road Safety Officers are positioned within our service at a local level to support our fire crews and managers with local road safety concerns or issues which are raised from our residents and neighbourhoods. We aim to become more proactive to the causes of RTC's by identifying trends, mapping collisions and providing targeted options for local problems.

Over the last ten years, significant progress has been made to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. The service recognises that more needs to be done through co-ordinated support and through integration and partnerships. We are part of a multi-agency approach, striving to achieve further casualty reductions over the next decade.

The national, regional and local statistics identify that while RTC's and those Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) are reducing year on year, the following risk groups are considered to be and the priority targets for road safety training and education:

- Car occupants (seatbelts, mobile phones etc)
- Male drivers (17 -24 years)
- Motorcyclists
- Drinking and drugs
- Pedestrians (children)
- Cyclists (children)
- Speeding.

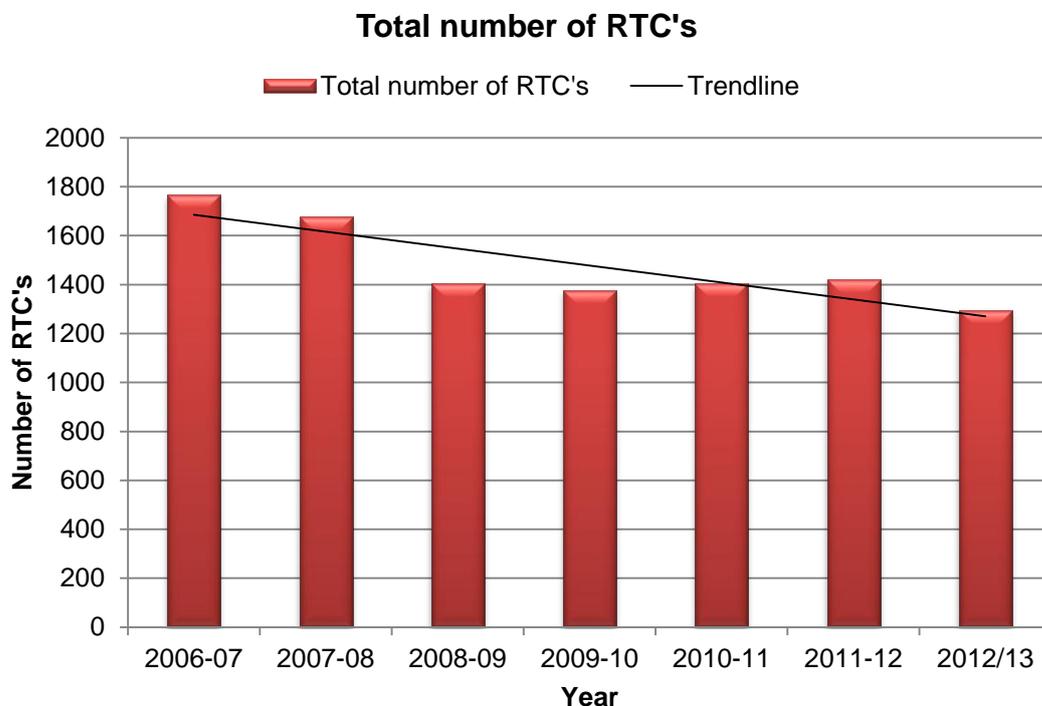
The local picture in Oxfordshire

Our priorities reflect the nationally recognised target groups above.

In 2012-13 there were 1295 RTC's recorded on Oxfordshire roads, compared to 1422 in 2011-12. However, as a fire and rescue service we actually only attended 284 of these collisions which were the most serious for extrication purposes, compared to 362 in 2011-12.

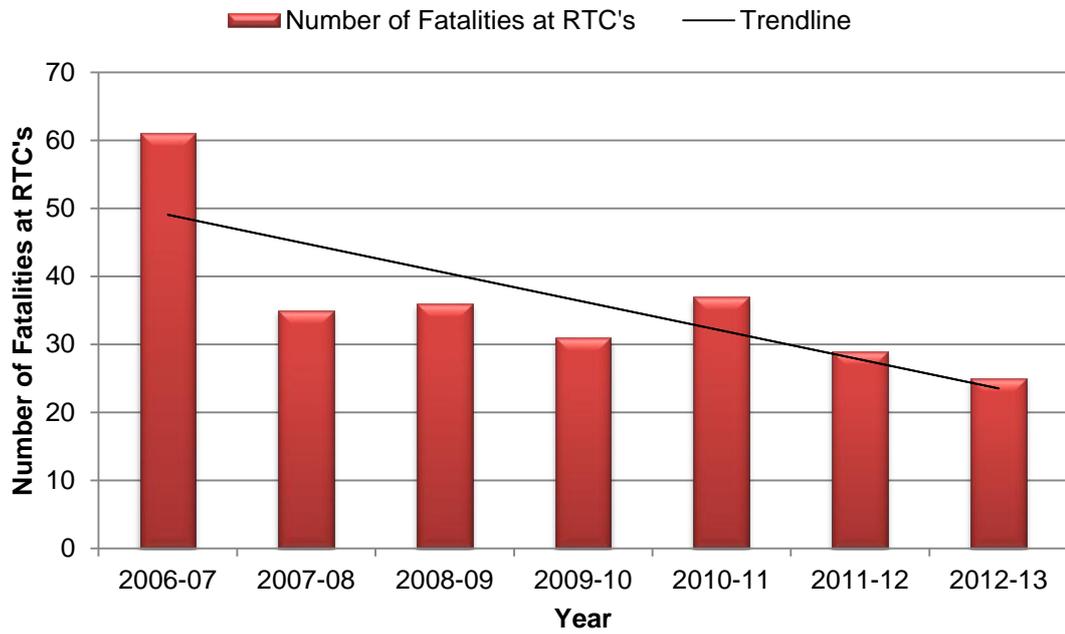
In the past 10 years we have been very successful at reducing fires in the home and now for every two primary fires, we will attend five road traffic collisions. This comparison clearly identifies how important it is for us to try and assist in reducing the risk to our communities by delivering road safety education, training and increasing public awareness.

It is rewarding to know that the overall number of road casualties in Oxfordshire has been at the lowest point since records began. However, with 253 people killed or seriously injured on our roads in 2012, we and partners accept that we cannot be complacent and we will strive to drive down and reduce these figures further where we can. Visit www.365alive.co.uk for more information.



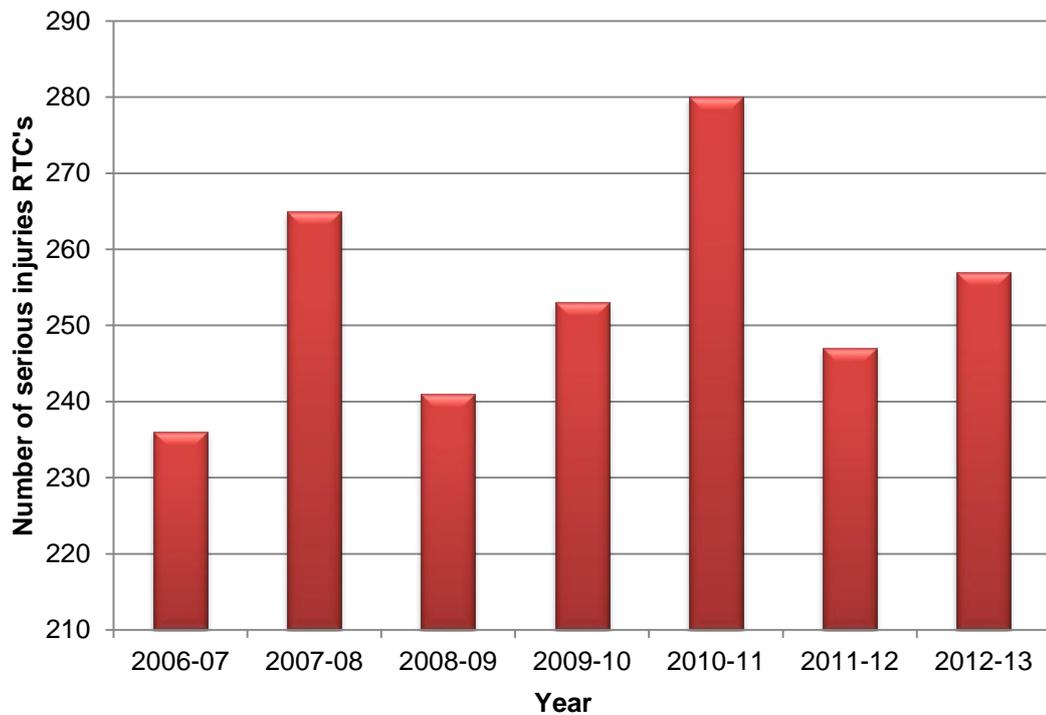
The number of road traffic collisions in Oxfordshire - Thames Valley Police data

Number of fatalities at RTC's



The number of fatal road traffic collisions in Oxfordshire - Thames Valley Police data

Number of serious injuries at RTC's



The number of serious injuries at road traffic collisions in Oxfordshire - Thames Valley Police data

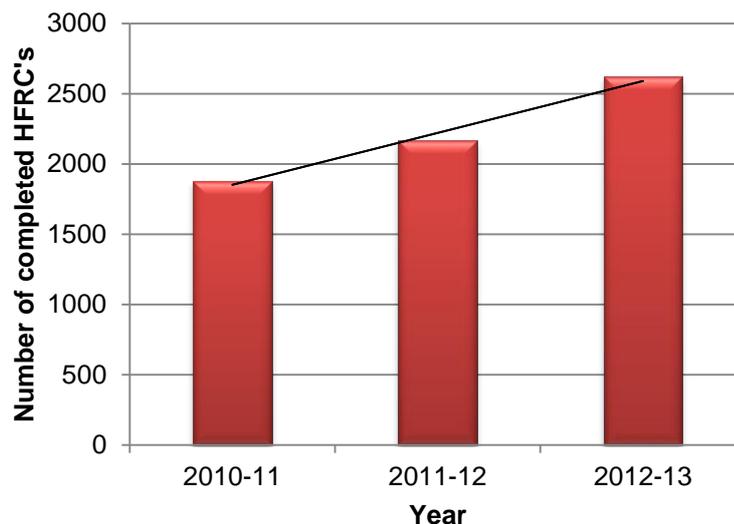
Home and Community Safety

Developments within Home and Community Safety during 2012-13 relate to the on-going challenges faced by OFRS regarding the prevention of all fires and public fire safety education, but is predominantly aimed at a reduction in the number of accidental dwelling fires.

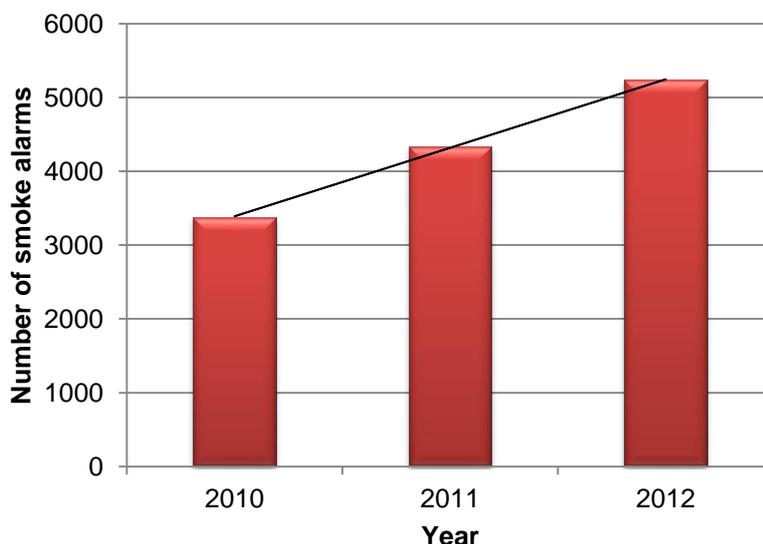
Every opportunity, no matter how small, is taken to remind the public of the dangers of fire and how residents can be empowered and encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions regarding fire prevention within their homes.

Through our relentless Home Fire Risk Check (HFRC) process, OFRS personnel continue to work with and educate all people about these dangers and how they could be avoided if residents took some simple preventative actions.

Number of HFRC's carried out by OFRS and partners



Number of smoke alarms fitted by OFRS and partners



To help achieve this OFRS provides many easy to use public facilities, including the [365alive website](#), official [OFRS Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) sites and 365alive business cards.

When fires do occur it remains vitally important to us that occupiers receive early warning and all personnel are encouraged to continue with the promotion of suitably installed smoke alarms. Particular emphasis is placed upon the importance of ensuring they work correctly and a weekly test is conducted.

Integrated county social care

One of OFRS key objectives is to become the most integrated fire and rescue service in the country and during 2012-13 OFRS has strived to broaden its working relationships with Oxfordshire County Council Social and Community Services (OCC S&CS).

Through its participation in the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult and Child Boards, OFRS continue to support S&CS in safeguarding the county's residents. OFRS personnel are still confidentially reporting any concerns they should have regarding the safety of adults or children, either at home or in the community and during 2012-13 have returned 65 alerts to OCC for further investigation.

This process, together with the established OCC and OFRS sharing of client information protocols have continued to pay dividends, not only when fires occur, but also during recent adverse weather periods.

Home oxygen users

During 2012-13 the OFRS Home and Community Safety Manager has established a partnership with the company responsible for providing the county's Home Oxygen Service.

This engagement has provided a new formal system of client data exchange and as a result 642 potentially brand new specific vulnerable clients have been identified who can now be offered HFRC's and potentially have smoke alarms installed.

British Minority Ethnic (BME) groups liaison work

Through the employment of a specific Home and Community Safety Advisor for BME community liaison, during 2012-13 OFRS have continued to seek out opportunities to educate those under represented communities.

Specific activities have taken place at mosques and venues within the Asian community, together with the establishment of working relationships with similar colleagues within Thames Valley Police.

Adult Learning Fire Service (ALFS)

During 2012-13, using the existing OFRS Franklin Vermeulen Safety Centre, a successful pilot course in safety was run with 10 OCC adult learners. Following this pilot, a more structured accredited 20 week ASDAN safety course for adult learners, funded through their own budgets has been established.

National Citizens Service (NCS)

The NCS was launched in 2010 by the prime minister and is seen as a priority activity for young people. It is a government lead scheme which during 2012-13 was provided locally by OCC as the official government provider.

Through its integrated work with OCC, OFRS actively engaged and played a vital part in ensuring successful delivery of the scheme. OFRS have been a fundamental part of this process, with the Home and Community Safety Manager providing representation on the OCC NCS Steering Group who offered 105 places to young people exiting or leaving school during 2012.

Phoenix Project

The Phoenix project continues to be a very effective and successful collaborative partnership between the OFRS and the OCC Early Intervention Service (EIS). It involves OFRS personnel and EIS staff working together with school children who are in need of additional support to discourage them from engaging in anti-social behaviour. During 2012-13, 11 courses were delivered, catering for over 100 students.

Junior Citizens Trust Oxfordshire

As lead partner for The Junior Citizens Trust, OFRS have continued to work with various partners in the successful on-going delivery of this non-direct funding education facility for KS2 Year 6 (10-11 year old children) in every day safety activities.

The Junior Citizens Trust experience is offered free of charge to year six state school pupils in Oxfordshire and each year approximately 5000 school children take part in the safety activities provided by the trust and its partners.



OFRS Fire Cadets

OFRS Fire Cadets continue to provide an opportunity for children aged 12 to 18 years to meet one evening each week and follow a structured programme of core fire and rescue service activities and community safety education.

OFRS now employs a total of 10 people, mixed between either, whole-time or on-call firefighters and support staff, who were originally fire cadets. This demonstrates the value of the scheme to OFRS and the young adults, proving that the experiences they gained and the opportunities offered have provided a suitable and appropriate grounding for potential long term employment.

Protection

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service enforces general fire safety legislation on behalf of the county council. The legislation the Authority enforces includes:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974
- The Dangerous Substances (Notification and Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007.

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.

Risk based inspection programme

We use a risk-based system to decide which business we will inspect. Our system uses data and guidance from communities and local government together with local intelligence and knowledge. It looks at trends in location and types of fire and considers the vulnerability of groups.

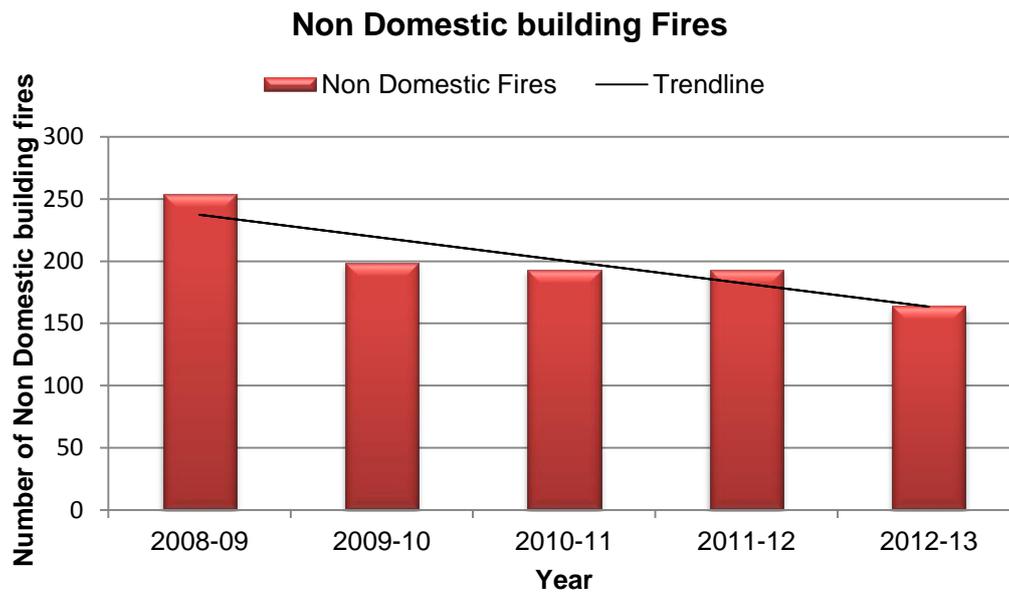
This system ensures that our greatest effort is directed at businesses which could pose a serious threat to people's safety and where there is the greatest likelihood that they are not complying with the law.

In 2012-13, our fire safety inspectors carried out 411 audits. In 72 per cent of cases there was a requirement to improve fire safety arrangements. In addition to this, fire safety inspectors carried out a further 677 building regulation consultations, 340 consultations for organisations such as OFSTED and local licensing authorities as well as a further 2,029 fire safety activities to prevent fires, boost economic growth and drive down the risk to the people of Oxfordshire.

Rate of fire incidence in non-domestic buildings

One of the principal aims of fire safety enforcement is to reduce the numbers of fires in buildings where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies with a view to reducing the economic cost of fire to the Oxfordshire and UK economy.

Data for the last five years is shown below illustrating the downward trend in non-domestic building fires in Oxfordshire.



Response

Emergency response targets

When an emergency occurs, we aim to get a fire engine there safely but as quickly as possible. Depending on the information given by the caller, we will send an appropriate number of fire engines and firefighters with the required skills and equipment. When the fire engine arrives at the scene, the incident commander will assess the situation and request more resources if they are needed.

How quickly we arrive at the emergency will depend on many factors which include the accuracy of information given, the location of the incident, weather and traffic conditions. The targets we have set ourselves are explained below.

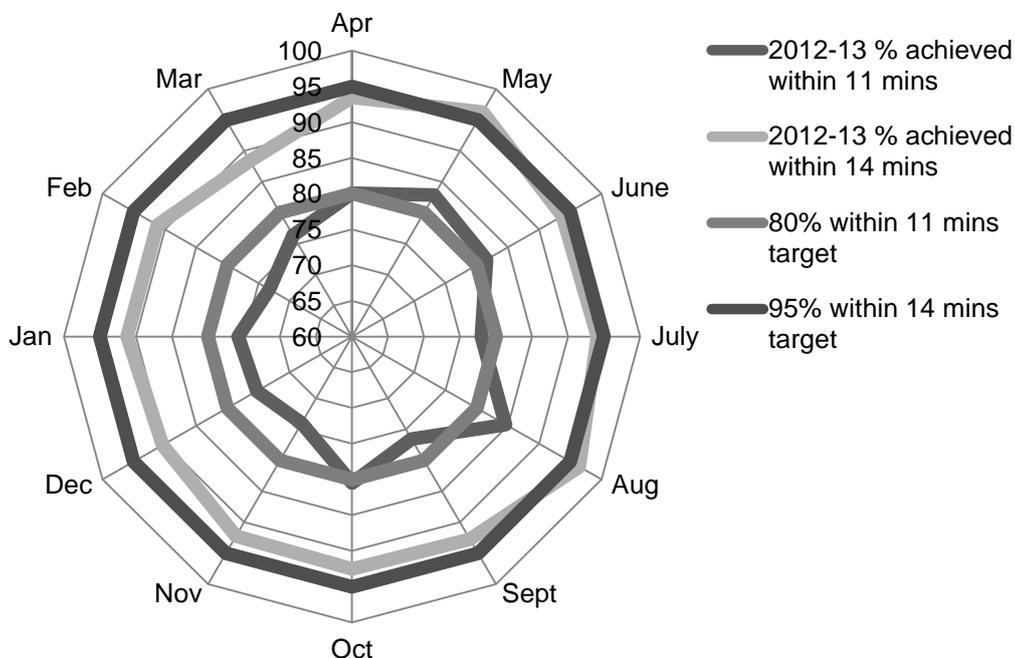
Under normal circumstances, when an emergency occurs a fire engine will be sent from the nearest fire station. We aim to arrive at 80 per cent of emergencies in 11 minutes or fewer and 95 per cent of emergencies in 14 minutes or less. The time is measured from when the fire engine is alerted to when it arrives at the address or location given by the caller.

Two fire engines will be sent to fires in people's homes, accidents on the road and various other emergencies. In remote areas, where the location makes it difficult to arrive quickly, we carry out targeted risk reduction and prevention work to reduce the chances of incidents occurring and reduce the impact of the incident until we arrive. In 2012-13 the first fire engine arrived at 78.17 per cent of emergencies in 11 minutes or fewer and 92.73 per cent of emergencies in 14 minutes or fewer.



Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service response standards

Monthly performance against response standards 2012-13



Factors affecting performance and risk mitigation

Increased traffic levels and the introduction of more widespread reduced speed limits, have meant that fire appliances are required to proceed at a reduced speed. As a result of these changes we have reviewed our attendances to ensure that the vehicle sent to an incident would deliver the swiftest response.

We aim to utilise an automatic vehicle location system by late 2014. This will ensure that we have the precise location of a fire appliance and can mobilise the nearest. OFRS drivers are required to modify their driving dependent upon the risk to ensure that their attendance is made in a safe and controlled manner, without endangering other road users.

All personnel are required to wear full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) prior to leaving the station. This has added a short delay in turning out, but ensures additional safety en route and the ability to deploy more quickly once in attendance.

We have well-rehearsed procedures for severe weather events. To date we have ensured a response to all life threatening incidents during these periods of disruption, and offered additional support to other OCC critical services where resources have allowed. It is worthy of note that in both the winters of 2011-12 and 2012-13 attendance times increased as a direct result of the severe weather.

In the current economic climate (as people are having to travel further afield to find primary employment) it has become more difficult to recruit suitable personnel from the immediate vicinity of the fire station, therefore at some stations we have widened the catchment area to ensure that we have sufficient numbers of personnel available to crew the pump, however this does have an effect on the time that it takes for these personnel to respond to the station and in turn increases the attendance time to an incident.

Local managers and the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) carry out a performance review against the agreed response times, with the data being analysed to establish the reason behind any under-performance. Where local issues can be addressed these actions are recorded on our Scorecard performance monitoring software, where a more holistic approach is required the issue is raised to SLT and fundamental reviews are undertaken. Our response targets remain stretching, yet over recent years we have achieved levels within a few per cent of the target.

Full details can be found in our [Response Standards Report](#).

Responding to road traffic collisions (RTC)

Last year we responded to 284 RTC's and this rescue response has been enhanced by the introduction of two new appliances. These are called enhance rescue vehicles (ERV) these two new appliances are located at the north and south of our county reducing the travel time to these incidents where typically persons are still trapped within their vehicles.

It also gives us resilience when we have simultaneous incidents within the county. These vehicles have specialist cutting and spreading rams to release the casualty in the quickest and safest way. These vehicles do have the very latest lithium ion battery packs to allow them to be very versatile and mobile with no set up time.

Responding in flooding, snow, and wildfire

Adverse weather such as flooding and snow events is becoming increasingly common. We have ensured that we can always respond to emergencies during all types of weather and have three improvements since last year.

Every vehicle in the fleet are provided with snow socks that assist in enhancing traction during snow and freezing conditions, this equipment has been used successfully this year. We have increased our fleet of 4x4 vehicles by three vehicles and these are used to transport specialist equipment during times of wide area flooding.

These vehicles are also made available to the county council to allow critical members of staff to perform their duties. For example social services attending vulnerable people in their own homes. These three vehicles are considered multi use and in the event of summer wild fires they can be kitted out with mobile water fogging units to allow us to get to remote areas quickly and safely.



Health and safety

Health and Safety Team

External reviews of our health and safety function by the Health and Safety Executive and Regional Quality Safety Audit both recommended that the capacity of the health and safety team should be increased.

These recommendations were included in a structure review of the service and it has been agreed that two additional posts will be created for Health and Safety Technicians in 2013. The new posts will enable more pro-active monitoring to take place in order to identify potential accidents and prevent them from happening.

Standard operating procedures

OFRS have been engaged in the collaborative partnership to promote a commonality of approach when working across borders. There are currently 18 other fire and rescue service's which make up this partnership.

In order to enhance regional working and national resilience we are adopting Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) which are created and agreed within the collaborative partnership. These SOP's are based on national incident types. There are currently 109 national incident types based on historical data of incidents which fire and rescue services have attended in the past.

These incident types will be the basis for future mobilisation of appliances and officers by fire control. The SOP information is carried on fire engines and accessed via Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs). It will enable all operational staff to access the most up to date guidance and information at scene with neighbouring authorities working to the same procedures.

Health and safety developments

Noise monitoring is essential to ensure that workers' hearing is protected from excessive noise at their place of work, which could cause them to lose their hearing and/or to suffer from tinnitus. In 2012-13 we trained two members of staff to monitor noise levels and have invested in new noise monitoring equipment to protect our employees.

Risk assessments for our operational equipment have been reviewed and updated during 2012-13.

Active monitoring of accidents, near misses and injury to staff

To enable the service to achieve improved health and safety performance and to comply with corresponding legislation, we investigate all accidents, near misses and occupational ill health (known as safety events) and produce reports. Such reports and statistical data are used to develop action plans and organisational strategies to prevent, reduce or limit future unsafe situations.

Certain categories of safety event are also required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). OFRS safety event investigation and reporting system is designed to interface with the OFRS Intranet based risk assessment system, enabling robust and permanent safe systems of work to be designed or amended.

The overall aim is to improve safety in the workplace, be it on station, in workshops and offices or at operational incidents.

The number of reports OFRS submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) has reduced from five in 2011-12 to one in 2012-13.

The number of operational staff injured at incidents in 2012-13 was 31, which was the same number as the previous year. The number of near misses involving operational staff at incidents reduced from eight in 2011-12 to five in 2012-13.

The total number of injuries recorded in 2012-13 was 85 which is an increase on the 2011-12 figure of 77. The total number of near misses increased from 45 in 2011-12 to 49 in 2012-13.

Improvements following national incidents

Coroners have recently issued two Rule 43 notices. The purpose of a Rule 43 notice is that the coroner will inform person/s or authorities that they believe a similar incident can be prevented by taking certain actions.

A coroner issued a Rule 43 notice following the inquest into a fatal fire at Lakanal House, Camberwell, London on 3 July 2009. A Rule 43 notice was issued by the coroner following the inquest into the tragic deaths of Firefighters Alan Bannon and James Shears at Shirley Towers, Hampshire on 6 April 2010.

As a result, we have conducted a review of the recommendations against our current policies, procedures and training programs and produced an action plan for improvement.

Training and development

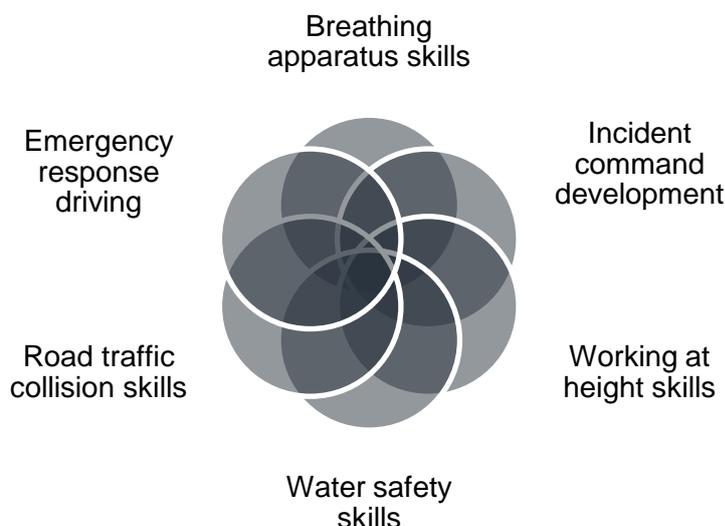
Firefighters and their development to competence

Firefighters undergo an extensive, externally verified development programme to learn competence in all the skills required of them. This normally takes between 24 to 36 months depending on duty system. 70 per cent of firefighters have completed this programme and have been deemed fully competent. The target of 75 per cent reflects the natural movement of personnel through the organisation especially on-call firefighters. This year we are in the acceptable performance range.

Critical safety training competency frameworks

The training competency framework supports firefighters in maintaining their operational skills and competence. Safety critical skills are categorised into six areas shown in the diagram below.

Six safety critical skills



In 2012-13 we introduced measures showing what percentage of firefighters have recorded their competence against these frameworks. One of our performance measures looks at the percentage of firefighters who have recorded fully competent in all of the six safety critical skills.

In 2012/13 we achieved 85.6 per cent which is acceptable performance although we strive for 100 per cent. We have introduced a review of the frameworks to ensure they continue to meet the needs of those using them and provide the correct level of support.

The Training and Development Team provides refresher training for all safety critical skills to ensure regular updates and assessment by suitability qualified instructors. The frequency and duration of the refresher training will depend on the type of skill. 90 per cent of firefighters have completed the necessary refresher training in all six safety critical areas. This year we are in the acceptable performance range although we strive for 100 per cent.

Assessment of operational personnel for promotion

The Training and Development Team are now responsible for assessing operational personnel for promotion. The process underwent a review this year and a new process was implemented for the assessment of firefighters wanting to take on the role of crew manager.

The process involves assessment of people's operational, technical, training, leadership and management capabilities. The new process has received positive feedback from managers and participants and the format will be used for the assessment of crew managers wanting to become watch managers during 2013. The associated policy and procedure has also been reviewed and is expected to be released during the summer of 2013.

Training and development policies and procedures

There are two policies and 34 procedures managed by the training and development team. All policies and 31 of the procedures are currently in date.

Successes in 2012-13 include

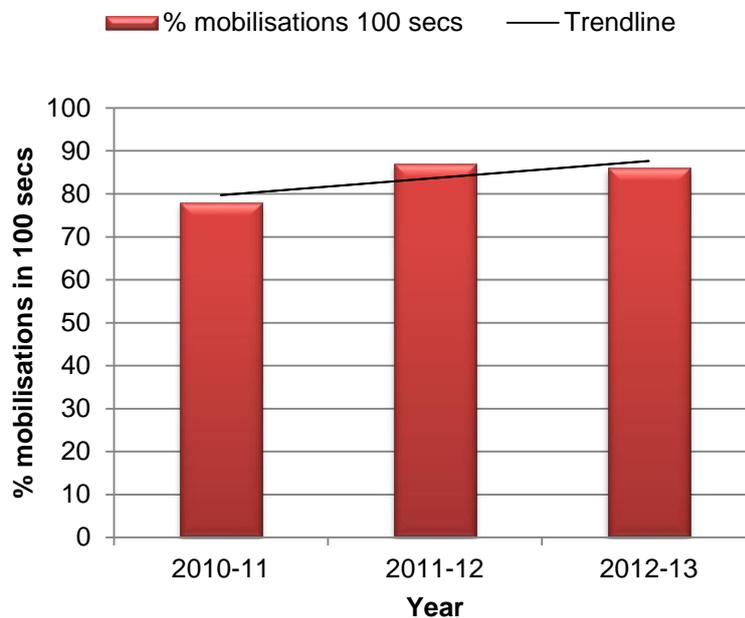
- Expansion of the role of the Training Resources Officer to meet the requirements of standard operating procedures and drive improvements to digital image processing.
- The Training Support Team have developed electronic training and assessment packages for incident commanders on new standard operating procedures.
- Awarded centre status from Edexcel for incident command development BTECs for Level 1 incident commanders.
- The Incident Command Development Team have provided management scenario training to new cohort of the service's duty managers.
- The Incident Command Development Team assisted Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service in the assessment of the command competence of its principle officers.
- Skills for fire and rescue service awards for our development programmes.
- Facilitation of training for Emergency Planning Team which is likely to be adopted by other county council leadership teams.

Call management and incident support

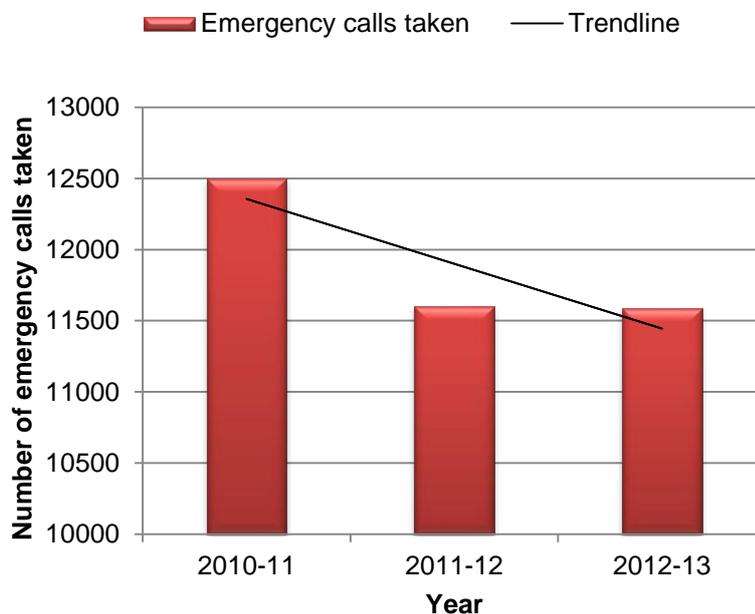
Following the closure of the national programme for fire control we have invested in our fire control and are progressing a project to deliver a joint control room with Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services called the Thames valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS). This joint control room will be located in Calcot, Berkshire and will serve all three counties within the Thames Valley. It is anticipated that the joint control room will go live in April 2014.

Within Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service we currently measure performance for our fire control as follows.

% mobilisations in 100 seconds



Number of emergency calls taken



The number of administration calls taken by OFRS control room during 2012-13 was 61,413. A new set of measures have been identified for the TVFCS based on the following criteria:

Efficiency benefits

- Financial saving in the cost of the control service
- Increased number of incidents handled per operator per shift
- Improved user interface and working environment in control.

Resilience benefits

- Improved ability to deal with spate conditions.

Operational benefits improve

- Time to answer call
- Time to mobilise
- Time for first attendance of the fire appliance.

These are already being measured within all three control rooms and will provide a baseline for the TVFCS performance.



Performance benchmarking

How do we compare to similar fire and rescue services?

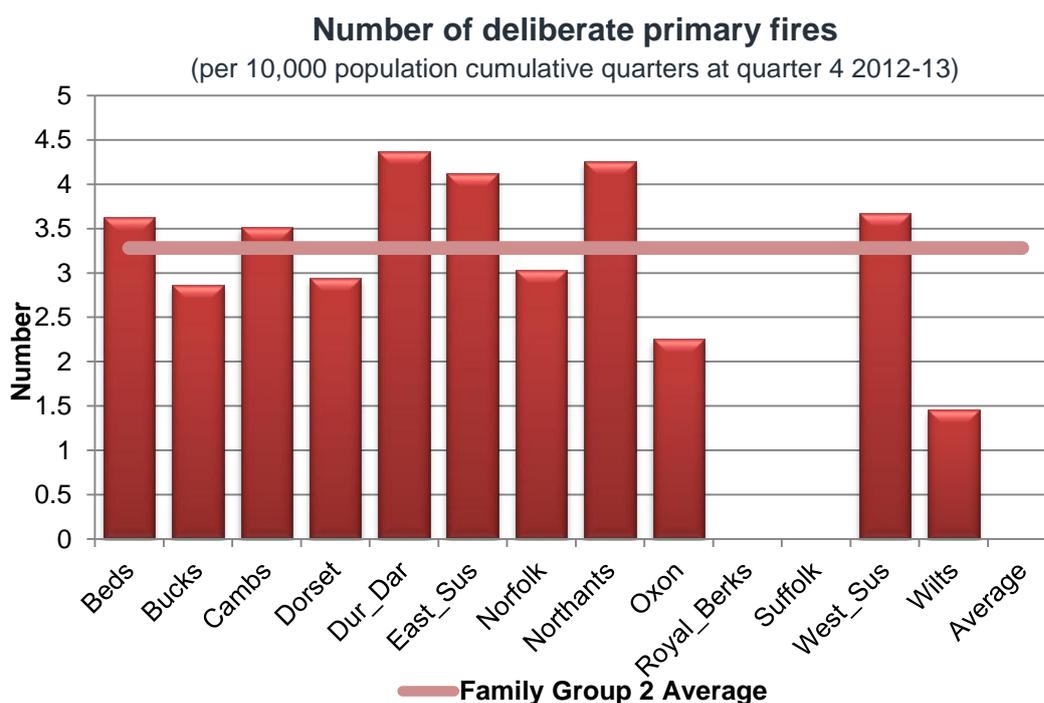
We collect the same performance information as similar fire and rescue services covering similar communities. This allows us to compare our performance at the end of the year and share ideas to help each other improve.

The fire and rescue services in our group are: Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dorset, Durham and Darlington, East Sussex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire, Suffolk, West Sussex and Wiltshire.

The average for each measure is shown by the red line on the following charts. The data from Royal Berkshire and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's was not released at the time of this publication.

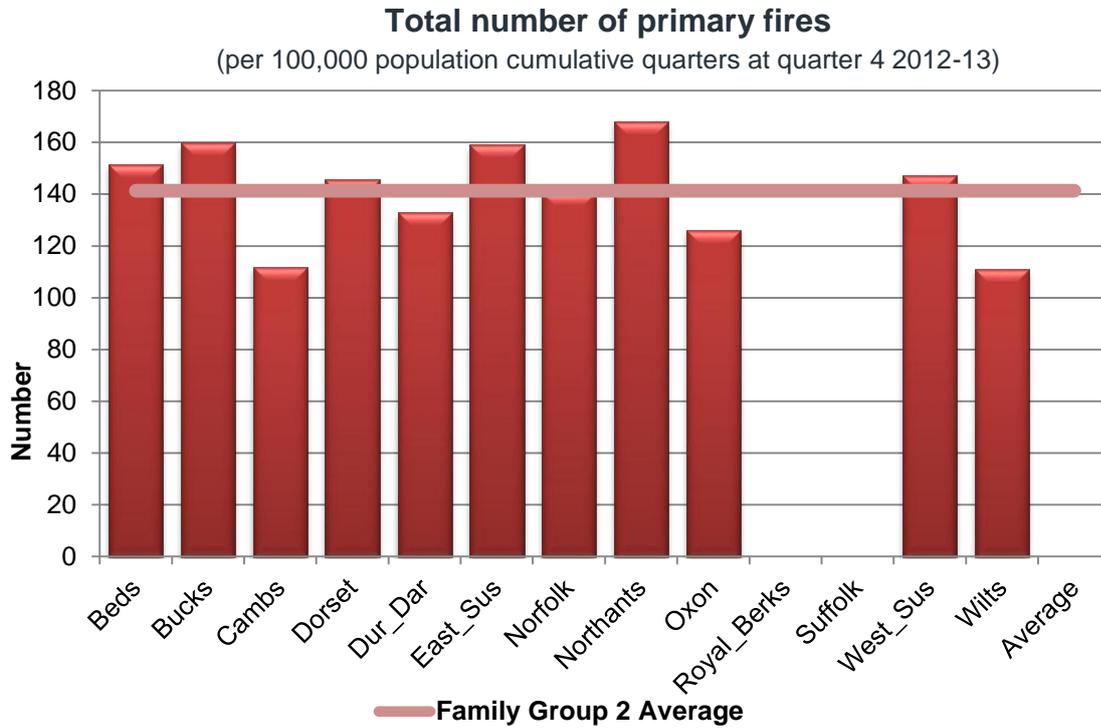
Deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population

Oxfordshire had the second best performance for the number of deliberate primary fires which is below the family group average. We have a strong partnership with Thames Valley Police which tackles arson across the region.



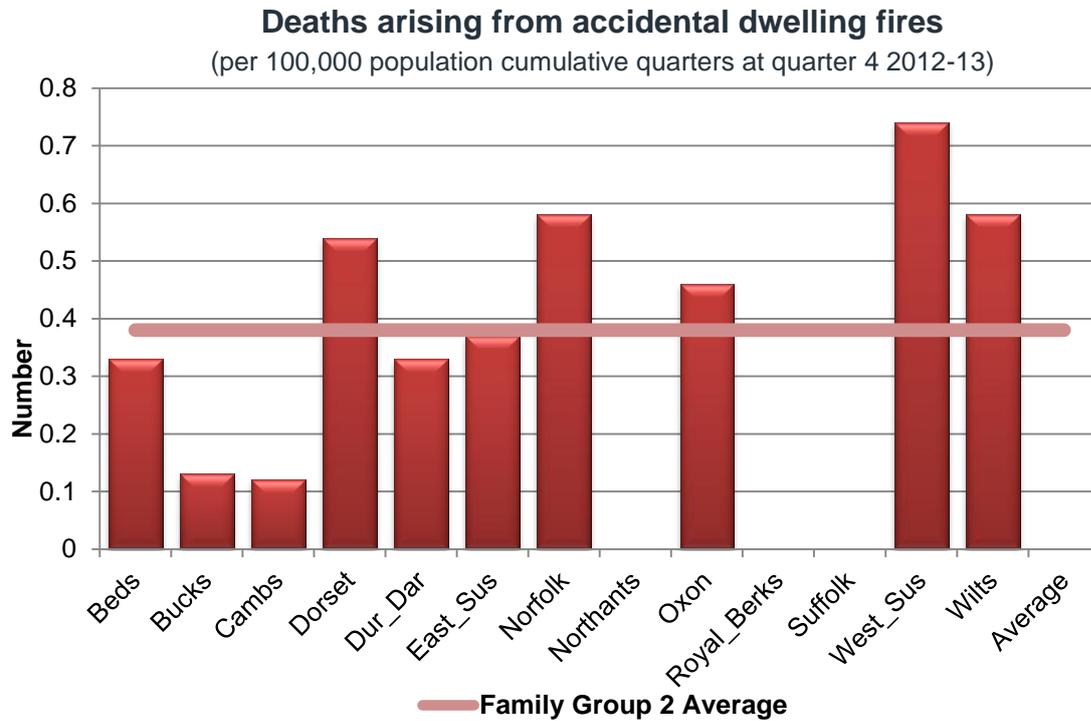
Total number of primary fires per 100,000 population

Oxfordshire has the third lowest number of primary fires in our group and is below the average for the group.



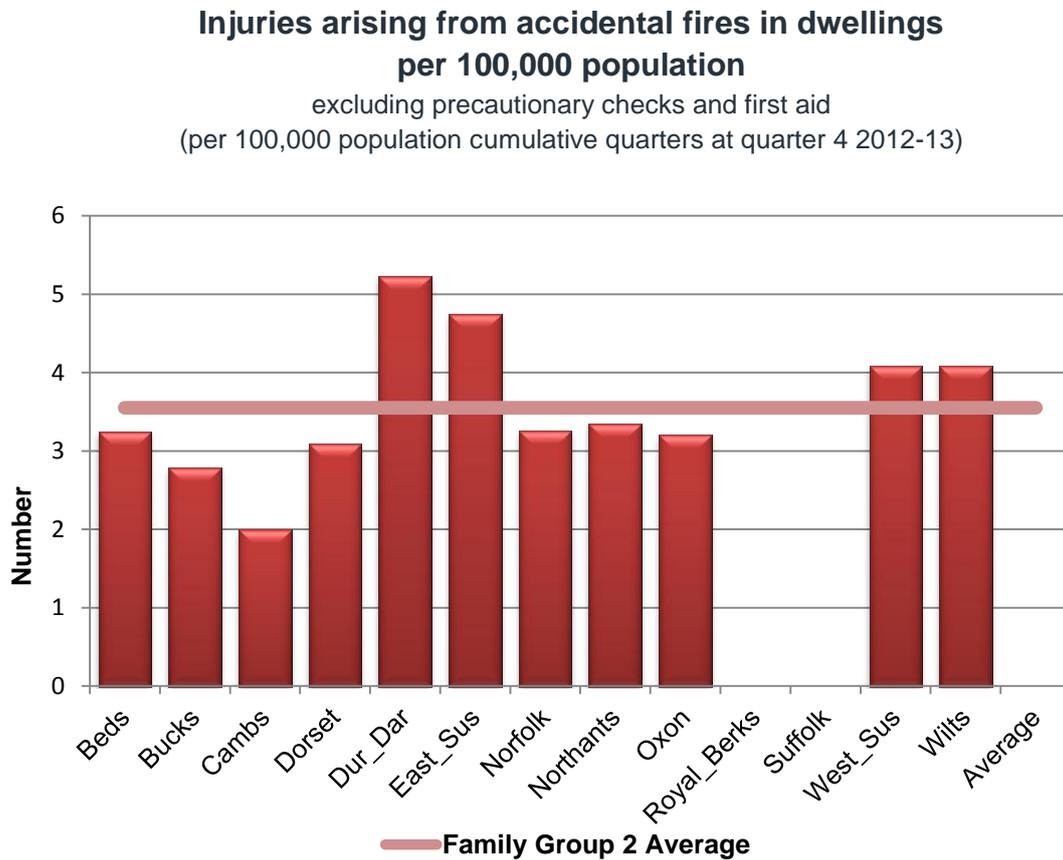
Accidental fire deaths (in dwellings)

The number of deaths arising from accidental dwelling fires in Oxfordshire was higher than the group average, because unfortunately there were three fire deaths in the county during this period. Any loss of life is a tragedy, yet the performance measure we set ourselves of no fire deaths will always be challenging.



Number of injuries arising from accidental dwelling fires

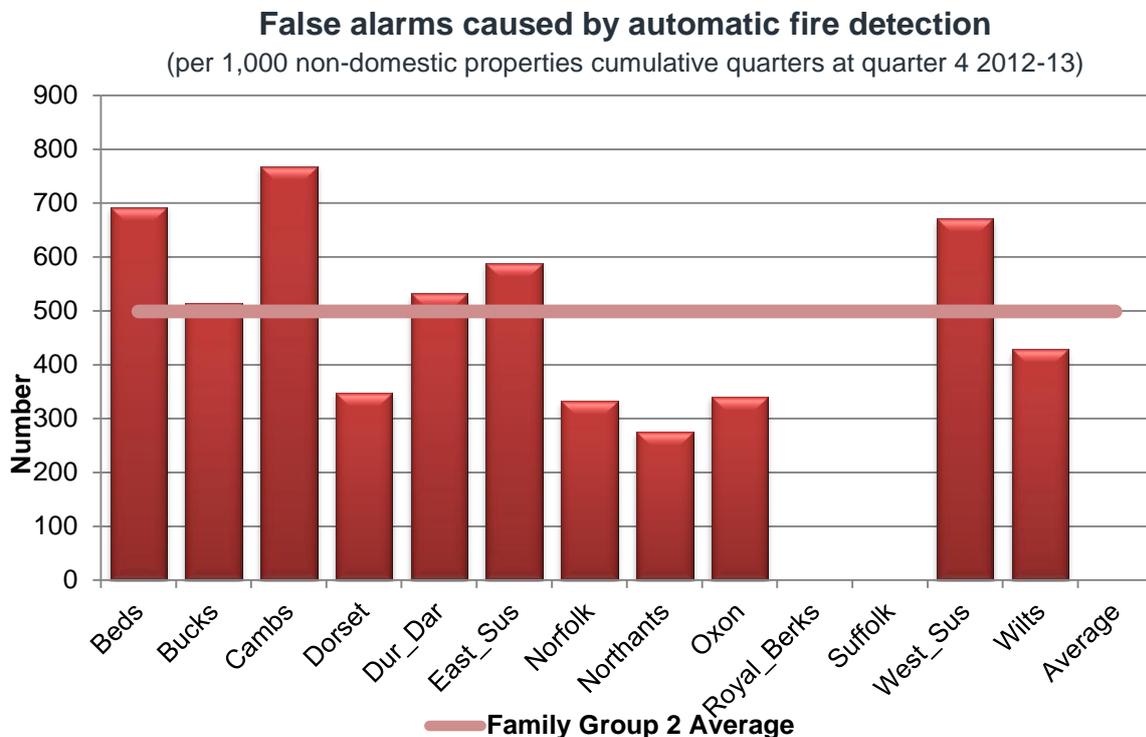
Oxfordshire has below average number of injuries caused in accidental dwelling fires for its group. However we recognise we need to continue to deliver safety and fire prevention work to reduce the number of injuries that occur.



False alarms caused by fire detection systems (per 1,000 non-domestic properties)

False alarms in non-domestic properties will cause disruption to the business and a drain on fire and rescue service resources. We will work with businesses and advise them how to reduce these alarms while still maintaining the required level of fire safety.

Oxfordshire has below group average for this type of false alarm and we will continue to drive these down. We have an Unwanted Fire Signals Policy which is designed to reduce the impact of unwanted calls generated by automatic fire detection systems. We achieve this by adopting a policy of non-attendance in respect to fire signals generated from automatic fire alarm systems unless there is a confirmed fire, except in certain circumstances.



Customer satisfaction

A survey is sent to everyone who has an incident in their home or business. The survey asks a number of different questions about both our control room staff and the firefighters who attend their incident.

The service uses a private company to collect the completed surveys and they compare what people thought of us with what people thought of other fire and rescue services. The results are studied to identify areas where we can improve our services and areas we are performing well in.



The Government Standard

The survey results are scored between zero and 100. A score of 100 means that everybody was very satisfied with the service, a score of 75 would mean that everybody was fairly satisfied with the service. Results that are between 75 and 100 would mean that the majority of people were either fairly satisfied or very satisfied.

Summary of survey results 2012-13

- 97 per cent of people were satisfied with their initial contact with our control room when they had an emergency involving their home.
- 97 per cent of people were satisfied with their initial contact with our control room when they had an emergency involving their business.
- 100 per cent of people were satisfied with the fire and rescue service at the scene when they had an emergency involving their home.
- 98 per cent of people were satisfied with the fire and rescue service at the scene when they had an emergency involving their business.
- 100 per cent of people were satisfied with the fire and rescue service keeping the effects of the incident to a minimum.

The survey identified that after the incident we need to ensure that we offer people further safety advice and give them information to help them get back to normal after the emergency. As a result we put in place an action plan and updated our leaflets.

Complaints

During the period 2012–13 the fire and rescue service received only seven informal complaints which were dealt with internally and not made formal and passed to the county council.

Customer Service Excellence

The government wants services for all that are efficient, effective, excellent, equitable and empowering with the citizen always and everywhere 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.

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service have maintained the Customer Service Excellence award for 2012-13 and have improved from 2011-12 by having one less partial compliance.

Oxfordshire County Council Choice Awards 2012

We secured an innovation award for our innovative approach to establishing a new character Drago, a young dragon, which children and their parents can identify and associate with fire prevention and community fire safety. Drago is also incorporated into the 365alive website which provides an interactive fun and safety zone for children.

Staffing

At the end of March 2012 there was a total of 25 control room staff, 247 whole time firefighters and 74 support staff. We also had 352 people working as on-call firefighters in Oxfordshire's local communities.

Attendance and sickness

The number of work days lost to sickness from all of our staff continues to be one of the lowest of the county council with an average of less than 1.3 days this is an improvement on the previous year's average of 1.5 days. We believe this is because our staff are well motivated and are proud to work as part of the fire and rescue service and that our managers effectively use our absence management procedure.

The Fire Fighters Charity

We continue to work with the Fire Fighters Charity to reduce the impact of illness and injury to our staff. The service has always been heavily involved in fundraising. In 2012-13 we raised in excess of £86,000 in aid of the charity through a variety of fundraising events and through our own lottery and regular giving programmes, and our on-station clothing banks.

In late 2012 Didcot fire station achieved the second highest total in the country for their car wash and look likely to better that in 2013. We also launched a new initiative to help reach our beneficiaries in the community, 'Reaching Out' as the programme is titled, to those most in need from the fire service family.

Equality and diversity

Equality and diversity is an integral part of everything we do both with our delivery of service to the community and in the employment and retention of our staff. In 2012 we reviewed our strategy 'Walk the Talk' to encompass changes in legislation and a move to include our delivery of service into our equality and diversity mission.

'Walk the Talk' contributes to our overall achievement of our statutory duties and stated goals. We continue review our performance against the Equality Act 2010, the Oxfordshire County Council Equality and Cohesion Policy and the Equality Framework for the fire and rescue services. The Equality Framework for fire and rescue services has three levels of attainment; developing, achieving and excellent. OFRS is currently assessed as achieving, and in some areas self-assessed as excellent.

Finance

Revenue expenditure

- The Budget for the fire and rescue service for 2012-13 was £24,911,000. The final position was £6,000 over budget, which was offset by other variances within the Social & Community Services Directorate.

Expenditure per head of population⁶

The cost of providing the fire and rescue service is approximately 11p per day for each person within Oxfordshire.

The cost per head of population for 2011-12 was £39.99. We are lower cost than the average cost per head of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £42.51
- Family group fire and rescue services - £40.22
- All fire and rescue services - £45.04.

Expenditure per member of staff

We provided a service at a cost of £42,060 per member of staff in 2011-12 compared to the average cost of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £44,436
- Family group fire and rescue services - £42,661
- All UK fire and rescue services - £42,028.

Expenditure per incident

Our overall expenditure against the number of incidents we attend is above average for other fire and rescue services, £4,841 per incident in 2011-12 compared to the average of:

- South east region fire and rescue services - £4,304
- Family group fire and rescue services - £4,090
- All UK fire and rescue services - £4,046.

⁶ Financial data is taken from the CIPFA Fire and Rescue Statistics 2011/12, FRSs that did not supply data to CIPFA are not included in these averages. Number of incidents taken from CLG Fire Statistics, Great Britain 201/12, tables 3a, 3d (i), 7a.

This is mainly due to the success of our prevention work. By using our resources effectively to deliver prevention work we are reducing the number of incidents that occur.

Therefore those incidents that do occur are seemingly more expensive. It is also to a lesser extent due to the rural nature of Oxfordshire.

To provide a suitable response across the whole county the level of resources are higher than more densely populated areas. This is why the on-call firefighters are so important in delivering an excellent and cost effective service.



Review of our service

The service has been reviewed this year by the county council's Internal Audit Team, by the fire and rescue sector and by external organisations.

OCC internal audit reports

As part of the Oxfordshire County Council, the fire and rescue service receives regular audits by the county council's Internal Audit Team. In 2012 they looked at our performance management and business continuity arrangements. Both audits were concluded positively.

Business continuity peer review

Business continuity management is a series of processes and plans which identify risk and develop OFRS resilience to ensure that adverse events cause minimal disruption to the services provided and that critical services are maintained. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 states that the fire and rescue service must have robust business continuity management in place, so that they are able to continue to provide a critical service during the most challenging conditions.

OFRS business continuity management was satisfactorily audited in January 2013 by OCC Internal Audit Team. During the year 2012-13 significant progress has been made in improving business continuity management within the organisation with increased training and awareness at all levels and all departments carrying out reviews to identify areas of weakness.

Health and safety executive review

The Health and Safety Executive undertook a review of the service in 2009 and revisited the service in March 2012 to ensure we had carried out their recommendations from the original visit. They were satisfied with our progress and we were able to demonstrate that we have improved in the areas that were identified in the 2009 review.

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 today 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 formal qualifications. You must be at least 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 which 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](#).)