

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

# Protection Strategy

2024 - 2028



Making Cumbria a safer place for all



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## Executive Summary

### Putting our communities first

Fire Safety Legislation requires us to identify and understand the risk within our business communities and commercial premises to ensure we target our resources towards the highest risk premises.

We evaluate our Fire Safety interventions and seek the views of end users, stakeholders and partner agencies about our service quality and effectiveness. We liaise with our staff to identify ideas for improvement.

We work collaboratively with colleagues and partners to improve the service to the public. We use data to collect intelligence to assist with planning targeted Fire Safety Campaigns. The Protection Department works closely with other Regulators and Local authorities to fulfil our statutory responsibilities. We look to solve problems in different ways; to improve the service we provide through our dedicated Fire Protection website and social media threads.

### Dignity and Respect

We deliver risk focused Fire Safety Audits in a composed and respectful manner.

We create a supportive environment through business engagements where people can be themselves and ask for advice to ensure their business can be compliant and safe from fire.

We communicate responsibly, with sensitivity and respect for different cultures and offer advice and guidance through engagement with community groups, key stakeholders and partner agencies.

We build trust with minority business groups and third sector organisations by creating constructive working relationships.

We explore all solutions to reduce the risk within regulated premises.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

We create an environment where people can be their true selves and deliver their best performance. We do this through creating diverse teams and interdepartmental teams through working together, for example Protection and Prevention.

Operational teams carry out Operational Business Engagements. We value the diversity of our teams and know how to make best use of our skills and strengths.

We value and appreciate differences in people and treat everyone with kindness and respect. We avoid making and expressing preconceptions and stereotyping when interacting with others (Team meetings and briefings to staff prior to our business campaigns, information sharing and training).

### Integrity

We always strive to deliver against our commitments.

We persist in the face of obstacles and demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility. We comply with Fire Protection Fire Standard and adhere to Fire Safety Regulators Code. We acknowledge and learn from mistakes and celebrate successes with the team.

### Leadership

We pride ourselves on our Fire Protection work and the difference we make within the business community. We value inclusion and set a positive example of appropriate behaviour for everyone, consistent with our Core Code of Ethics.

We look after our staff by developing them and ensuring that they maintain continual professional development. We hold team meetings, Appraisals and practitioners forums.

We create conditions where team members feel confident to suggest and implement creative ideas. We are modernising our management information system CFRMIS.

## Introduction

This Strategy provides an outline of the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service’s approach to protecting the built environment and the people that visit, live and work within it. This strategy outlines how CFRS will carry out its statutory duty to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation.

Our Fire Protection role is to work proactively towards reducing the impact of fire within regulated premises and target those that pose the greatest risk to life, property, environment and to the nation’s heritage. This Protection Strategy outlines how CFRS will support businesses and other employers to meet their legal requirements, enhance safety and subsequently support economic growth. The strategy is built around the legislative framework provided by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Fire and Rescue Services Act.

Prevention is a key element, we target our campaign activities, business safety advice and use of regulatory powers to reduce the number of fires that occur in the first instance and be assured that when fire does occur, the resultant impact on life, property and business interruption is less than it would otherwise have been.

We will work with a range of stakeholders and partners to deliver business safety, regulatory inspection and enforcement activities in the most efficient and effective way possible. Collaboration allows us to evaluate and identify businesses and properties based on risk, vulnerability and demand ensuring our resources are allocated to the right place at the right time.

Although Fire and Rescue Services have statutory responsibilities for promoting Fire Safety and enforcing the Fire Safety Order (FSO) the overarching objective of keeping people safe from fire and associated risks does not sit with Fire and Rescue Services alone.



Fire Safety legislation overlaps with a wide range of other regulation. Successful application of the FSO, and optimal use of resources to keep people safe from the risk of fire in the built environment and minimise regulatory burden for businesses, requires CFRS to work closely with a range of other regulators, including but not limited to:

- ▶ **Local authority building controls** - Local authorities have unique powers under the Building Act 1984 to enforce the building regulations and have non-compliant building work altered or removed.
- ▶ **Approved Inspectors** - Approved inspectors are companies or individuals that can provide an alternative to obtaining building regulations approval from a local authority.
- ▶ **The Care Quality Commission (CQC)** - The CQC monitor, inspect and regulate services that provide health and social care.
- ▶ **Local Authority Housing Standards** - Local authority housing provide advice, information and enforcement in relation to both the economic and consumer standards for social housing registered providers.
- ▶ **Local Authority Environmental Health** - The local authority environmental health teams are responsible for the regulations and standards set by government for a wide range of business sectors and activities including, food safety, health and safety, environmental protection.
- ▶ **Local Authority Licensing Teams** - The Local authority licensing teams provide support, guidance and regulate businesses, organisations and individuals who want to sell alcohol.

- ▶ **Local Authority Trading Standards** - Within their role Trading Standards, amongst other things, enforce fair trading, monitor product safety, ensure age limits and restrictions are correct.
- ▶ **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** - The HSE are the national regulator for workplace health and safety and the future 'Building Regulator'
- ▶ **Police** - Detect and investigate criminal offences and case build for the Criminal Justice Service.

CFRS works closely with relevant regulators after a fire has occurred when a joint investigation is required. The preferred approach is always to share intelligence and pre-plan proactive inspection programs based on risk before an incident has happened. This pre-planning can take many forms including formal planning meetings, multi-agency thematic inspections, data sharing agreements, publicly published data or simply via intelligence sharing from one agency to another.

The overlap of legislation with other regulators provides an ongoing opportunity to conduct statutory and non-statutory consultations relating to proposed and actual building work and to proactively support future compliance by highlighting potential issues relating to forthcoming FSO compliance once premises are occupied.

All our Protection activities derive from a common purpose: *"A community focused, professional and trusted Fire and Rescue Service that makes Cumbria a safer place for all"*.

## Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Since the enactment of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order on the 1st October 2006 CFRS has had a statutory duty for Fire Safety enforcement in all premises other than single private dwellings. It enables us to ensure those buildings that provide public access, public assets, and places of work are safe from fire and other types of incidents. Our Fire Safety work within the non-domestic environment engages and educates those with responsibility for the design, ownership and management of premises. This will ensure the occupiers, employees, clients and customers are safer in the event of fire.

Using our risk-based approach to target those most at risk, we will undertake fire safety audits prioritising resources towards premises on the basis of highest risk, thereby ensuring that our resources are targeted where they can be most effective.

## Fire Protection Fire Standard

The Fire Standards Board has been established nationally to oversee the identification, organisation, development and maintenance of Professional Standards for Fire and Rescue Services in England. As described by the Fire Standards Board, National Professional Standards are a key component of continuous improvement. They can form a point of focus against which performance can be measured and further improvement identified. In reference to HMICFRS, Fire Standards can identify 'what good looks like'.

## Fire Protection Key Objectives

Key Objectives for CFRS in terms of our Fire Protection and Enforcement activity are:

- ▶ Reducing the risk in buildings by meeting the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- ▶ Arrangements for working with the business community across Cumbria for delivering risk-based Protection activity.
- ▶ Arrangements for safeguarding the culture, heritage, and environmental assets in Cumbria.
- ▶ Working with the business community in order to reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS)
- ▶ Ensuring our Fire Protection Inspectors and Advisors have the requisite skill, knowledge and understanding in order that CFRS can deliver its statutory regulatory function.
- ▶ Develop and implement our upgraded CFRMIS application, to enable the Fire Protection team to work more effectively.

## Key Objectives

To ensure the Protection priorities are fully serviced, the following Fire Protection objectives have been developed:

### Objective 1: Reduction of Risk

We will reduce risk in buildings by targeting our resources to deliver information, education and legislative enforcement to help make the community a safer place. We will continue with our risk-based approach to Fire Safety Inspections, Interventions and Audits.

### Objective 2: Working and supporting the Business Community

The impact of fire is far reaching, affecting not only those directly involved but also the local economy and local communities who rely on those buildings for housing, work, education, leisure, or community support.

We recognise that most businesses acknowledge the importance of Fire Safety. Not just in a legal and regulatory sense, but also in terms of a desire to keep people safe, protect their premises and ensure business continuity for their activities. Consequently, we will continually seek to engage with the business community in a constructive and helpful way.

### Objective 3: Protect Cumbria's unique Heritage.

Fire remains the greatest threat facing those responsible for safeguarding our built heritage. While other risks such as theft, flood and even insect or fungal infestation can damage buildings and their contents, only fire can destroy them completely.

There is a growing expectation that Fire and Rescue Services will develop an understanding of heritage buildings in their area and develop appropriate Prevention, Protection and Response strategies. In 2017 The Lake District was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status.

### Objective 4: Reduce Unwanted Fire Signals (False Alarms)

A false alarm or unwanted fire signal (UwFS) is defined as an alarm activation resulting from a cause other than a fire which is passed via a monitoring centre. If an automatic detection and fire alarm system is correctly planned, installed, and maintained, it can significantly improve safety by detecting a fire and sounding the alarm at the initial stages of a fire's development. Unfortunately, this equipment can also produce unwanted or false alarms. UwFS have a major impact on fire and rescue services.

### Objective 5: Workforce Development

The NFCC Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators advocates national occupation standards and qualification expectations commensurate with the level of complexity of the work undertaken. The qualifications necessary to deliver the framework range from level 3 to level 7 which take many years to develop and therefore it is necessary to undertake succession planning and talent spotting to maintain a sustainable competent Fire Protection workforce. In turn this process shapes the balance of internal development versus external recruitment.

### Objective 6: CFRMIS Application Development

CFRS understand the need to seek opportunities to improve the effectiveness of our Fire Protection team. We will do this by developing our CFRMIS software to enable the team to:

- ▶ Gather information during a visit on an electronic tablet.
- ▶ Reduce/eliminate the need of paper-based systems and drive our environmental agenda.
- ▶ Help with auditing activity.

## Conclusion

The aim of CFRS is to protect and improve the quality of lives of the people in Cumbria. CFRS will strive to be a Fire and Rescue Service that works with residents, businesses, communities, and other organisations to deliver the best services possible within the available resources.

To achieve this outcome through our CFRS Protection Strategy we aim to influence and regulate the built environment to protect people, property, and the environment from harm. The objectives outlined in this document will be detailed and tracked through the protection plan on a page.

If we are successful, the outcomes will be:

- ▶ Fewer emergency calls
- ▶ Fewer deaths and injuries from fires and other emergencies
- ▶ Less crime and disorder
- ▶ Less property damage and economic loss
- ▶ Less damage to the environment
- ▶ More business resilience and economic growth
- ▶ Our heritage preserved
- ▶ High public satisfaction with our services.



## Appendices

[OIN 0049 Fires in Tall Buildings.docx](#)

[FSO Section 12 - Procedure for dealing with Unwanted Fire Signals.docx](#)

[OIN 0168 Fire Survival Guidance \(FSG\)](#)

[OIN 0169 IBE](#)

[CFRS Profiling Risk in Regulated Premises - Methodology March 2019](#)

[RBIP 2021-22 to 2023-24](#)



# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

## Our Code of Ethics



Putting our communities first



Dignity and Respect



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Integrity



Leadership

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