

## Assistant Chief Fire Officer Recruitment Pack

# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service



April 2025



Making Cumbria a safer place for all

[cumbriafire.gov.uk](http://cumbriafire.gov.uk)



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## A message from the Chief Fire Officer

Thank you for your interest in the Assistant Chief Fire Officer roles in Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service. This is an exceptional opportunity for individuals who are not only committed to public service but possess a strong work ethic, relentless drive for cultural change, and a passion for continuous improvement. As we look to strengthen our leadership team, we are seeking candidates whose personal principles align closely with the core values that define our service, as well as an unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of our communities.

We are particularly looking for leaders who excel in creating high-performance environments while maintaining a strong people focus. This role requires someone who can inspire, support and develop teams to consistently perform at their best, while driving cultural change that promotes inclusivity, respect and personal accountability at all levels. The ideal candidate will possess a proven ability to communicate effectively and lead with empathy, ensuring the service's mission and values are embedded in every aspect of our work.

You will be instrumental in leading transformation of our service, championing continuous improvement and fostering an environment where excellence is not just expected but achieved. Your leadership will directly influence the delivery of high-quality services and development of a positive, forward-thinking culture. You will be expected to show resilience, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to making our service even stronger and more inclusive.

If you are passionate about making a tangible difference, committed to leading teams through change, and determined to drive a culture of improvement and excellence, we welcome your application. Together, we can continue to build a service that is ready for future challenges.



**Paul Hancock**  
Chief Fire Officer  
Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service



## Our recruitment process

- ▶ For this process, candidates will be provided with the presentation topic before they are invited to interview on Monday, 19 May 2025, giving them time to prepare and present to the best of their abilities
- ▶ We are utilising NFCC recruitment best practice tools and aligning our interview questions with the NFCC Leadership Framework, balancing the process for internal and external candidates
- ▶ We have made significant changes to our application process, clearly indicating which sections are confidential and won't be shared with the shortlisting panel, and which sections will, with the aim of reducing unconscious bias
- ▶ We have included information in the advert where candidates can begin the conversation around reasonable adjustments, enabling the Resourcing and Talent team to have the initial conversation with the candidate (if successful to the next stages) and seeking consent on whether this is shared with the assessors or panel members
- ▶ We are committed to offering candidates a discussion with our Chief Fire Officer during the process, enabling candidates to get to know the service in a friendly, informal way and ask questions to people working in CFRS and living in Cumbria

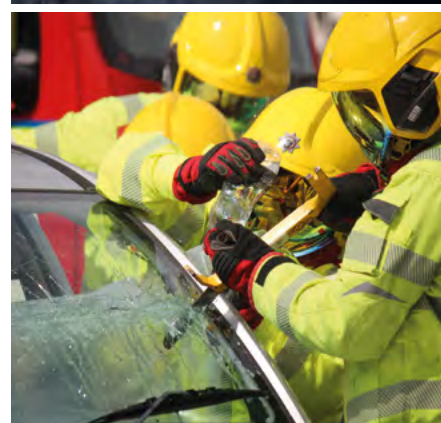
## Our assessment methods

We utilise a wide range of assessment methods to enable recruiting managers and panel members to make confident and thorough decisions, and for candidates to make the most of the experience and support their development.

Some of our assessment methods can include:

- ▶ Interview panels, including staff and stakeholder panels
- ▶ Discussion exercises, both individual with a panel or group
- ▶ Skill based assessments, such as writing a briefing, delivering a presentation, analysing data and presenting trends
- ▶ Drill exercises
- ▶ Practical assessments
- ▶ Psychometric testing
- ▶ Assessment centres

If you have any questions about our assessment methods, please email [recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk)





## Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

We value the diversity of our employees and aim to recruit a workforce which reflects our communities in Cumbria. We actively encourage applications from all suitably-qualified individuals, irrespective of people's age, disability, gender, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or other personal circumstances.

We have guidance in place to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and consistently at every stage of the recruitment process, including the consideration of reasonable adjustments.

Some of our inclusive recruitment actions are:

- ▶ Offering flexible working where possible
- ▶ Placing job adverts across a number of jobs boards, especially on the Women in the Fire Service jobs board
- ▶ Providing clear expectations, timelines and communications throughout all processes
- ▶ Removing employment history from the application form
- ▶ Encouraging supportive discussion and implementation of reasonable adjustments
- ▶ Using skill-based assessment tasks where relevant
- ▶ Collecting and analysing EDI data to inform inclusion outcomes

### Positive action

As a service we are dedicated to considering reducing under-representation where identified and supporting individuals with protected characteristics.

At the beginning of recruitment processes we: work to identify any under-representation in the role; consider support for those who have different needs; and recognise disadvantages for those with protected characteristics. We also utilise, where possible, workforce data to identify barriers and under-representation.

We then work to ensure that positive action is in place to meet the needs of any of the identified individuals. Positive action will be in place as long as the relevant conditions for that recruitment process apply, and the impact of any positive action measures will be monitored and progress towards the aim will be reviewed.

If you have any queries about positive action, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Resourcing and Talent team by emailing [recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk)

## About Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service is a large, rural service covering the picturesque Lake District to the Pennines in the east and from the industrialised West Cumbria coast to the estuaries in the south of the county. Cumbria is the third-largest county in England but the second-least densely populated with a population just under 500,000, 52 per cent of which lives in rural areas.

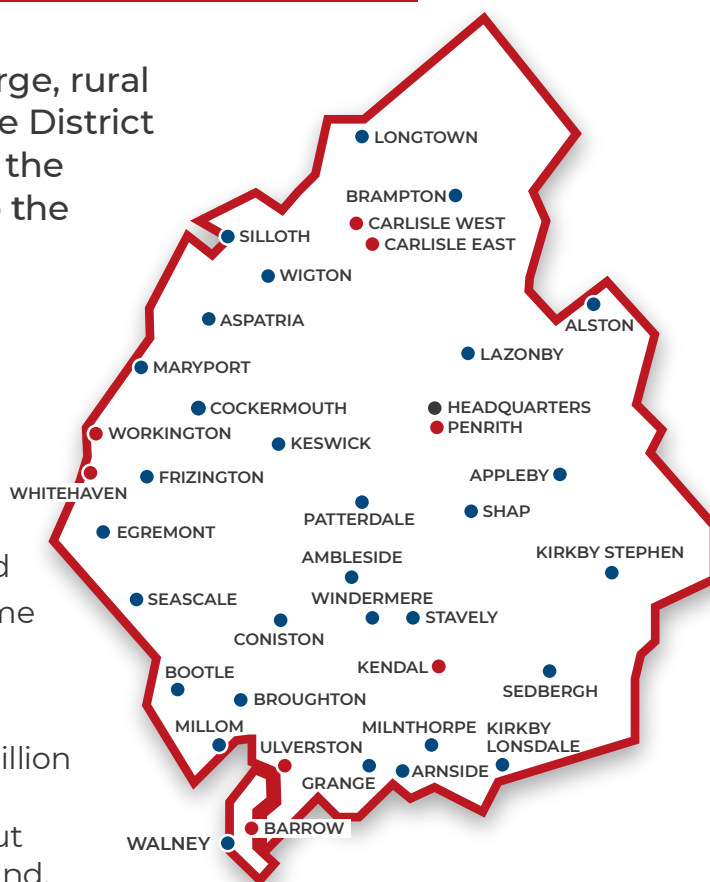
CFRS has approximately 600 firefighters and fire service staff. Cumbria is supported by 38 fire stations. We have eight wholtime stations and 30 on-call fire stations.

The mountains and lakes attract millions of visitors each year. Last year, nearly 50 million people visited Cumbria. This significantly increases risk across the county throughout the year and increases our response demand.

Cumbria has sites of significant national risk, including Sellafield and BAE Systems in Barrow. The county hosts large-scale events attracting thousands of visitors such as Appleby Horse Fair and Kendal Calling. CFRS is heavily involved in the strategic safety planning of these sites and annual events.

Cumbria also has infrastructure challenges because we have the country's fourth-largest road network with 7,900km of roads from the M6 to busy urban streets in built-up areas and narrow country roads in remote rural areas. There are 3,729km of unclassified roads, many of which are winding with steep gradients and poor accessibility, so the service has a diverse fleet of vehicles to meet our challenging geography.

CFRS places particular focus on education for young drivers, delivering road awareness for young people aged 18 to 25 regularly. Courses aim to raise awareness of the dangers on the roads and effects of road traffic collisions. The service also delivers many Call Push Rescue courses, teaching emergency life support skills to members of the public.



### Key

- = Wholtime/day crew and wholtime/day crew with on-call
- = On-call

CFRS has a team of Fire Protection Inspectors who audit both medium and high-risk premises, while our shift-based firefighters inspect low-risk premises. The service's fire protection activities are wide-ranging and, through effective collaboration, focus on those who are deemed to be most at risk.

Cumbria is no stranger to severe weather. Over the past 15 years the county has experienced significant flooding events. Storm Desmond in December 2015 caused unprecedented damage and destruction throughout the county. The 'Beast from the East' and Storm Arwen left many homes and villages cut off for days.

CFRS has invested in specialist resources and training to tackle wildfires, water rescue and flooding, and firefighters are also trained for large animal rescues.

We focus on prevention, protection and response to keep communities and visitors safe every day, every year.

CFRS is led by a Service Leadership Team that combines industry knowledge, proven excellence in their fields, and a passionate commitment to continually drive the service forward – with representation from operational and corporate services.



## Our vision and values

### Our vision

A community-focused, professional and trusted fire and rescue service that makes Cumbria a safer place for all.

### Our values

We believe passionately in the delivery of excellent public services to make Cumbria a safer place for all. To do that we need to be clear about the values and behaviours that we need to drive change and achieve our high standards.



**Putting our communities first**



**Dignity and respect**



**Equality, diversity and inclusion**



**Integrity**



**Leadership**

#### ► **Putting our communities first**

We put the interest of the public, the community, and service users first

#### ► **Dignity and respect**

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias

#### ► **Equality, diversity, and inclusion**

We continually recognise and promote the value of equality, diversity and inclusion, both within the fire and rescue service and the wider communities in which we serve

#### ► **Integrity**

We act with integrity, including being open, honest and consistent in everything that we do

#### ► **Leadership**

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership



## Living in or relocating to Cumbria

As a place to live, Cumbria takes some beating. It is home to some of England's highest mountains, biggest lakes, and most breathtaking scenery. The scenic views are matched by the openness of its communities and the friendliness of its people.

From the stunning beauty of the Lake District to the lively, bustling market towns and the rich history, Cumbria offers something for everyone. This unique part of England inspires a lasting affection among residents and visitors alike. But there is more to Cumbria than meets the eye. What brings people here and keeps them coming back is, quite simply, the unbeatable quality of life.

Time and again the county comes top of the league in surveys looking at Britain's best places to live, with excellent schools, low crime, good house prices, and big opportunities for those who choose to live and work here.

If you are considering relocating here, there are a few things you should know:

- ▶ Cumbria's schools consistently achieve above national average results in a range of areas, and the percentage of children who gain access to their first preference schools are among the best in the country
- ▶ Cumbria has some of the lowest crime rates in England
- ▶ It has an amazing outdoor offer
- ▶ Its GP practices have the country's highest levels of patient satisfaction



Connectivity to and from Cumbria is excellent:

**Train:** Cumbria has excellent mainline rail links, opening up access to Newcastle, Leeds, Glasgow and London

**Road:** Cumbria is linked to the south of the country by the M6, to Scotland via the M74/75, and to Newcastle upon Tyne by the A69

If you are travelling further afield, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and Newcastle are located less than 90 minutes' drive from the county.

This is only a brief glimpse of what Cumbria is all about, of what it's like to live and work here. To get a real taste of this beautiful, interesting and exciting county, you'll really have to come and experience it for yourself.

For more information, please visit:

- ▶ Cumbria Tourism [cumbriatourism.org](http://cumbriatourism.org)
- ▶ Information and statistics about Cumbria [cumbriaobservatory.org.uk](http://cumbriaobservatory.org.uk)
- ▶ Visit Cumbria [visitcumbria.com](http://visitcumbria.com)
- ▶ The Lake District [golakes.co.uk](http://golakes.co.uk)
- ▶ Doing business in Cumbria [cumbriachamber.co.uk](http://cumbriachamber.co.uk)

### **Relocation package**

We have a Relocation Assistance Scheme available. Further details on this package will be discussed with successful candidates.

## Key documents

Please note these are the latest versions of each document but some are currently under review.

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### Annual Report – 2022–23

Click [here](#) to view the report.

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### His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

On Friday, 20 January 2023 we received the report from our most recent HMI inspection (tranche 3), the third set of reports. Our service was assessed against the following areas:

- ▶ How effective they are in keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks;
- ▶ How efficient they are in keeping safe and secure from fire and other risks; and
- ▶ How well they look after their people.

Click [here](#) to view the report.

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### Community Risk Management Plan – 2024–2028

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2024–2028 was published June 2024 following a six-week public consultation earlier that year. The plan helps the service to understand and manage issues that could impact the organisation and community.

The CRMP identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks, in order for the service to prioritise its staff and resources to carry out our important response, prevention and protection work.

Click [here](#) to view the plan.

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Please see below our current service strategies:

**Response Strategy – click [here](#)**

**Prevention Strategy – click [here](#)**

**Protection Strategy – click [here](#)**

**Equality and Diversity Strategy – click [here](#)**

**People Strategy – click [here](#)**

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## Our governance

On 1 April 2023, the governance of CFRS transferred from Cumbria County Council to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority)

For more information please click [here](#).

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) has developed the new Police, Fire and Crime Plan 2025–2029, that incorporates both policing and fire priorities.

To view the plan please click [here](#).

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# Our Code of Ethics



**Putting our communities first**



**Dignity and respect**



**Equality, diversity and inclusion**



**Integrity**



**Leadership**



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