

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

Estates Strategy

2024 - 2028



Making Cumbria a safer place for all

cumbriafire.gov.uk



Contents

3-4	Executive Summary & Vision
5	Estates Plan on a Page
6	Supporting the Community Risk Management Plan
6	Current Position and Future Direction
7	Size and Value of the Estate
7	Estate Strategy Principles
8	Estate Strategy Enablers
8	<i>Estate Principles</i>
8	<i>Programmes to Maintain Existing Buildings</i>
8	<i>Capital Works</i>
9	<i>Estate Management</i>
9	<i>Facilities Management</i>
10	Estates Priorities
10	<i>Estate Service Delivery</i>
10	<i>Estate Top 10</i>
10	<i>Compliance</i>
10	<i>Condition Surveys</i>
10	<i>Gender Equality</i>
11	<i>Land Registration</i>
11	<i>Collaboration</i>
11	<i>Contaminants</i>
11	<i>Estate Expenditure</i>
12	<i>Sustainability</i>
12	<i>Wellbeing</i>
12	<i>A66 Kempley Bank Roadworks</i>
14-16	Appendix A – Estate Delivery Plan

Acknowledgements

This Estates Strategy has been prepared in consultation with senior stakeholders within Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

Executive Summary

Putting our communities first

The fire estate is a critical component in how we delivery our service. We will maintain and improve our estate to benefit our communities through improved service delivery, increased productivity, efficiency and increased resilience and preparedness.

Dignity and Respect

We will ensure that estate is managed responsibly and sensitively with the appropriate measures in place to keep it safe and secure. As we look to develop and improve the estate we will engage with our workforce and ensure their views inform future improvements.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

When working across the estate, we will take in to account the needs of all stakeholder groups and will engage through staff networks to ensure the needs of diverse groups are met.

Integrity

Through our governance arrangements, we have informed decision making that ensures risks are appropriately considered and complies with all the relevant legislation, guidance, standards and codes of practice.

Leadership

We will strive for continuous improvement and demonstrate accountability for any decisions and delivery. We will make informed decisions that are in the interests of the public and drive benefits and efficiencies in service delivery. We will seek out collaborative opportunities and work closely with our blue light partners.



Executive Summary & Vision

Cumbria Fire & Rescue cover the geographical areas of Cumbria serving a population of approximately 500,000 people. The geography of the service area is predominantly rural with a mix of villages, market towns and the City of Carlisle.

This estates strategy is designed to support and enable the delivery of key strategic objectives for the elected Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and Cumbria Fire & Rescue’s priorities for the changing estate.

It outlines the current and future requirements and documents the changes that are required to meet the Chief Fire Officer’s mission to deliver an outstanding fire service to keep Cumbria safe which will be achieved through the adoption of the **Police Fire & Crime plan objectives and CFRS’ Community Risk Management Plan**. These are key drivers for all other strategies and plans. Additionally, the strategy and accompanying action plan will help determine the Medium-Term Financial Forecast for the Fire & Rescue Service.

Our Estates mission is that: *“The Fire & Rescue Service and OPFCC will work in collaboration to invest in and enhance the Estate so as to meet the aims of the PFCC and Chief Fire Officer and maintain an estate which is fit for purpose, financially sustainable and maximises and exploits existing assets”.*

Throughout the document, reference is made to the fire estate. The legal ownership of the estate rests with the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner.

The Estate Strategy identifies a set of estate-specific goals. These goals articulate our vision for the required **estate transformation**. Throughout this document, we refer to these goals as the pillars of estate transformation.

- 1. Safe, secure, and compliant
- 2. Modern
- 3. Right size and right place
- 4. Affordable
- 5. Sustainable
- 6. A great workplace
- 7. Community assets that are welcoming to the public.

The Estate Strategy identifies tangible and ambitious objectives, subject to the required investment and resource being committed, the implementation of these plans will allow our estate to achieve our vision in the medium to long term.

The following **Estates Plan on a Page** summarises the key aspects detailed within this strategy.

Estate Plan on a Page

66 Our Vision 99

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service and OPFCC will work in collaboration to invest in and reorganise the Estate so as to meet the aims of the PFCC and Chief Fire Officer and maintain an estate which is fit for purpose, financially sustainable and maximises and exploits existing assets.

Estate Objectives

Manage and maintain property effectively

Manage the estate corporately

Work effectively with partners

Deliver sustainable estate

Estate Strategy Actions

- ✔ Provide the fire service with a professional estate management function
- ✔ Deliver well maintained, safe and compliant estate
- ✔ Transform the estate to enable service improvement and diversity and equality.
- ✔ Deliver processes which operate efficiently within the available financial model.



Supporting the Community Risk Management Plan

The Chief Fire Officer has set out a clear vision for the Cumbria Fire & Rescue to deliver an outstanding service to keep Cumbria safe.

This is represented through the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which sets the guiding principles for service to focus moving forward. Key areas of focus and deliverables as part of the current CRMP include:

- ▶ People
- ▶ Prevention
- ▶ Protection
- ▶ Response
- ▶ Fleet & Estate
- ▶ Learning and development

This Estates Strategy will focus on providing and enhancing the whole estate to ensure that all our buildings are fit for both current and future requirements to support and enable all colleagues, whether in operational or enabling roles to successfully continue keeping Cumbria safe. Providing and estate that is safe, effective, and collaborative is crucial for our staff to operate effectively and is a key pillar of achieving the service’s mission and of caring for the wellbeing of all.

Current Position and Future Direction

Ownership of the Fire estate moved to the OPFCC in 2023 following disaggregation of the County Council. Fire Service estate management was formerly provided by the council and no estates staff from the former council transferred to Cumbria Fire Service. Technical fire service estate management is currently provided through a service level agreement (SLA) with Westmorland and Furness Council, under direction of the OPFCC Head of Estates.

In April 2025 the constabulary estates team will provide estate management to the both the police and fire estate. This work is key theme in the short term of this strategy and will provide the fire service with a dedicated estate team, under direction of the OPFCC Head of Estates.

The fire estate has seen little investment over the life of previous strategies. Maintenance, repairs and enhancement will need to be addressed moving forward. A full condition survey of the Fire estate has been completed and this is informing future investment requirements.

There is no asset management system (AMS) for recording Fire estate data and in some areas a lack of compliance which is being addressed through ongoing works programmes.

The current 10-year capital programme for Estates activity is likely to be insufficient and, being cognisant of wider financial pressures, will be subject to review moving forward. Grant funding has been secured and this is being used to address some immediate compliance and maintenance issues whilst also invested in physical changes to improve working conditions for fire fighters.

Size and Value of the Estate

The estate portfolio consists of thirty-eight operational buildings, five of which are Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The estate has a gross book value, as of 31st March 2024, of £44,155,252. The total asset gross floor area for the Fire estate is 18,000m².

Additionally, the fire estate provides accommodation for 68 green book staff, 317 on call grey book staff, and 194 regular grey book staff.

Estate Strategy Principles

Our pillars are part of the principles by which we manage our estate.



Estate Strategy Enablers

Estate Principles

The guiding principles is a focus on maximising the use of the asset over its life. This includes:

- ▶ Support and develop the OPFCC estate strategy.
- ▶ Manage and maintain condition of buildings and associated facilities to include regular maintenance and periodic inspections of all buildings.
- ▶ Manage capital and revenue building projects providing fit for purpose estates portfolio which is responsive to current and future needs.
- ▶ Undertake liaison role for selected corporate contracts, including the PFI estate.
- ▶ Acquisitions and disposals.
- ▶ Formulate and develop a sustainability and energy management plan.

Programmes to Maintain Existing Buildings

We will maintain our assets and aim to, where possible, improve buildings to provide modern facilities. Maintenance is required to ensure a safe environment. We regularly resurvey our estate, and this information is vital to gain an understanding of the condition of our assets. The surveys highlight areas of concern and risk, which in turn allow us to align our resources accordingly.

Over the life of this strategy, we adopt process in which we maintain building via a combination of in-house and external trade staff. For emergency maintenance and repairs we place an emphasis on having local services delivered close to our buildings. This will deliver a prompt response and cost-effective solution to managing building maintenance. This service delivery model ensures there is a wide spread of contractors available throughout the county and contributes towards the localism agenda and develops a strong estates business continuity model.

As buildings become more complex there is an ever-greater reliance on specialist contractors, which brings budget challenges and increases in response times to rectifying faults. We will manage our specialist supply through engagement, review, and feedback.

Capital Works

We will provide high standards of service to ensure a safe and effective Fire Estate against a backdrop of increasing demand, capacity and financial challenges. We will undertake both large and small-scale capital work to renew, improve and enhance our estate.

Work has started in 2024 to improve the estate in ten fire stations. We will invest available funds in areas of priority, aligning these to business objectives. There will a drive to improving conditions for fire fighters and promoting equality and diversity.



Estate Management

We will manage properties strategically and ensure the asset base can demonstrate value for money. We ensure decisions are taken to enhance the life of our assets, the management of our leasehold estate fits into this area. Innovative solutions will be found to generate estate management solutions, particularly around the use of assets and collaboration.

We value the estate annually, undertaking detailed reviews of obsolescence and component life cycles. We will proactively manage our PFI estates, driving improvements in service delivery and ensuring all contractual obligations are met.

Facilities Management

We provide several support and ancillary services to the buildings. This includes cleaning, provision of catering services and grounds and garden maintenance. From April 2024 we will work collaboratively across the blue light estate to look for opportunities for delivering contracts which offer economies of scale and consistent service specifications.



Estates Priorities

The following are the short-term priorities within the life of this strategy. Each priority is set out in detail at Appendix A.

Estate Service Delivery

The Estates Business Case was approved in August 2024, which will see the transition of the Estates department move into the Office of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner from the Constabulary. The PFCC owns the Constabulary's estate and as the PFCC is the legal authority for Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, owns the Fire Estate too. This transition will therefore enable the Estates Department to oversee work on both fire and police estate.

Estate Top 10

The Authority have along with Cumbria Fire & Rescue have identified priority areas of the fire estate.

These include:

- ▶ Alston ▶ Barrow ▶ Coniston ▶ Grange
- ▶ Kendal ▶ Longtown ▶ Lazonby
- ▶ Silloth ▶ Whitehaven ▶ Windemere

Projects will commence in 2024 to improve these buildings. The scope of work will include ensuring facilities are fit for purpose, promote wellbeing and gender equality and removing and addressing safety hazards and backlog maintenance issues.

Compliance

The condition surveys highlighted gaps in estate compliance and a focus of work in the short term is to address this. In tandem with this work policies have been reviewed and are being updated to reflect the current position and the role of the OPFCC and estate team going forward.

Condition Surveys

External surveyors will be appointed to undertake a full condition survey of the fire estate. This will give an understanding of risk and financial liabilities; the information will be used to develop capital and maintenance plans and allow targeted investment to be made in the buildings.

Gender Equality

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service is continuing in its approach to make the service inclusive and appropriate for operational and staff members at fire stations across the county. This includes both physically, through considering whether facilities need to be upgraded to promote gender equality and through culture to drive out any discriminating behaviour that may exist within the workforce.

We recognise the HMICFRS which referred to issues in relation to culture and lack of diversity and the physical estate is a key enabler in driving positive cultural change.



Land Registration

The fire estate is owned by Cumbria Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner as they are the legal authority for Cumbria Fire & Rescue. The titles were previously vested in the name of Cumbria County Council, the former legal authority, and a key priority of this strategy is to review the land registers and register these in the name of the PFCC.

Collaboration

The move to a blue light shared estates department will ensure that collaborative work will continue in relation to improving public services throughout the county. We aim to deliver estate efficiencies through sharing public sector buildings and share estate capital development plans where applicable.

We continue to share best practice for space occupancy and running costs across several sectors, as well as continually engaging with our regional colleagues in other areas to share best practice and learning. We continue to make best use of the public estate and share buildings where possible.



Contaminants

There is national awareness around Contaminates associated with operational firefighting activities and the impact and risks this bring to fire fighters. As we progress our capital works the scope will be cognisant of this and ensure that control measures to deal with contaminants is considered as part of the design and briefing stage.

Estate Expenditure

The Covid-19 global pandemic, the war in Ukraine and other world economic factors has had an impact on both capital and revenue estate costs. There has been growth within salaries within both the hard and soft FM sector which have driven up estate costs. Recruitment and securing labour throughout the sector can be difficult. We are alive to this and continue to adapt and evolve to meet the challenges this will bring. A theme in this strategy is to build strong relationships with local suppliers and contractors to deliver local service delivery.

Sustainability

Climate change is the greatest environmental crisis in history. There is a view that decimation of the natural world is a problem of our own making, which has already affected millions. Recent global events, including heat waves, storms, and fires, have further increased awareness and a commitment to make positive change. The UK has enshrined in law a target to become carbon neutral by 2050. There is a compelling case for making a commitment to reaching zero carbon on capital projects much sooner. Within the life of this strategy, we undertake a carbon and energy management study with the following objectives:

- ▶ Identify the baseline carbons emissions of the estate,
- ▶ Develop a sustainability strategy,
- ▶ Agree service-wide carbon reduction targets,
- ▶ Develop and publicise a clear plan for delivering these targets,
- ▶ Secure a dedicated resource to lead on sustainability,
- ▶ Set out the costs, barriers, and risks to success.

Outside of this strategy, but aligned with our work, a sustainability strategy will be developed which will align all activities and create a golden thread of sustainability best practice with clear measurable targets and outcomes. Further work is planned to embed sustainability targets into the core strategies across Estates.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing and safety of staff within Cumbria Fire & Rescue is paramount to the way in which the service operates. This thread will form part of all estate's activities, and the role of the fire estates working group will ensure this aligns to all estate work with positive interaction with staff associations.

A66 Kempley Bank Roadworks

The TransPennine road project will impact on the blue light estate in Penrith. We will monitor this and act to ensure our Headquarters building remains operational throughout and that our strategic estates interests are protected.



Appendix A – Estate Delivery Plan

	Description	Benefit	SRO	Time-scale	Costs/Resource	Governance / Oversight
1	Estate Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Transition Estates Team into the OPFCC.▲ Wider piece of work around media, finance, a new asset management system, recruiting new members etc.▲ New staffing model to provide work capacity.▲ Improved service delivery to fire fighters, visibility around work being undertaken.▲ Reduction in risk.▲ Greater compliance.▲ Financial benefits.▲ Improved health and safety	Phil Robinson	April 2025 (potential to go beyond)	Set out in approved estates business case	Executive board Estates Transformation Board Estates SLT
2	Estate Top 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ This involves the following Estate: Alston, Barrow, Coniston, Grange, Kendal, Longtown, Lazonby, Silloth, Whitehaven, and Windemere.▲ Scope of work to ensure facilities are fit for purpose, removing and addressing safety hazards, ensuring sites have adequate female facilities etc, Improved wellbeing, lockers spaces, equality and diversity.	Phil Robinson & estates working group.	Ongoing – 2025	Costs TBD.	Estates working group SLT
3	Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Link to above, removal of estates risk and gaps in policy.	Phil Robinson	April 2025	Included above.	SLT
4	Condition Surveys Review and disposal or enhancement of buildings (including consideration of collaboration opportunities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Review Fire & Rescue for condition using building surveys.▲ Consideration and proposals regarding disposal, collaboration or enhancement of existing where required.▲ Develop estates funding based on a priority work programme, review of risk and affordability.▲ Align capital works to maintenance strategy.	Phil Robinson	Surveys complete July 2024, review August / September 2024. Build into estates budget 24/25 financial year and thereafter.	As base budget	SLT Executive board

	Description	Benefit	SRO	Time-scale	Costs/Resource	Governance / Oversight
5	Gender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Examining fire stations and considering whether facilities need to be upgraded to enable gender equality.▲ Continue to work on culture to drive out any discriminating behaviour that may exist within the workforce.▲ Continue to monitor reports from HMICFRS.	Phil Robinson/ Estates working group	April 2024 onwards	TBC	SLT Estates working group
6	Land Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Ensuring that all land registry titles are up to date.▲ Priority areas have been identified to check first (Alston, Barrow, Coniston, Grange, Kendal, Longtown, Patterdale, Silloth, Whitehaven, and Windemere).▲ Working together alongside external solicitors to complete this work.	Phil Robinson	Ongoing – complete 2026	£60K	Estates SLT
7	Collaborative Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Considerations for any pieces of work for Fire & Police (and other blue light services) to work collaboratively will be explored.▲ Collaborative working with Grange Fire Station and North-West Ambulance Service (lease of ground floor to NWAS).	Phil Robinson Estates working group SLT	July 2024 onwards	Costs and resourcing TBD.	Exec board working together SLT Estates SLT

Appendix A – Estate Delivery Plan

Description	Benefit	SRO	Time-scale	Costs/Resource	Governance / Oversight
8 Management of contaminants (associated with operational firefighting activity)	<div>▲ Consider National recommendations for the management of fire contaminants on Stations.</div> <div>▲ Safe storage and processing clean and dirty of 'Fire Kit' (PPE)</div> <div>▲ Appropriate welfare facilities for decontamination (Showers and changing rooms)</div>	<div>Phil Robinson</div> <div>Estates working group</div> <div>Fire Contaminants Working Group</div>	Ongoing	TBC	<div>Exec board working together</div> <div>SLT</div>
9 Estate Expenditure	<div>▲ Develop detailed cost data on estates expenditure.</div> <div>▲ Link to estate condition surveys</div> <div>▲ Procurement activity</div>	Phil Robinson	April 2024 onwards		<div>Expenditure group</div> <div>SLT</div> <div>Estates SLT</div>
10 Estate Sustainability	▲ Review sustainability benchmarking data in order to further develop estate sustainability activities.	Phil Robinson Estates Working Group	April 2025	-	<div>SLT</div> <div>Estates working group</div>
11 Wellbeing	<div>▲ Promote best practice, around health and safety in the fire estate.</div> <div>▲ Manage contractors so when working across fire estate for compliance and create a positive culture around health and safety.</div>	Phil Robinson	Ongoing	TBC	<div>SLT</div> <div>Estates working group</div> <div>Estate SLT</div>
12 A66 – Kempley Bank improvements	<div>▲ Liaise with National Highways to maintaining access/egress to HQ site during planned A66 improvement scheme.</div> <div>▲ Strategic asset management, preserve value.</div>	Phil Robinson	Ongoing	TBC	<div>SLT, PFCC executive gold.</div>



Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

Our Code of Ethics



Putting our communities first



Dignity and Respect



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Integrity



Leadership

    @cumbriafire

Making Cumbria a safer place for all

cumbriafire.gov.uk

