

Recruitment Pack

# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service



August 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 Area Manager roles in Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service. This is an exceptional opportunity for individuals who are not only committed to public service but also possess a strong work ethic, a 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 values align closely with the core values that define our service and an unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of the communities we serve.

We are particularly looking for leaders who excel in creating high-performance environments whilst maintaining a strong people focus. This role requires someone who can inspire, support and develop teams to consistently perform at their best whilst 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.

In this position, you will be instrumental in leading the 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 the development of a positive, forward-thinking culture. You will be expected to demonstrate resilience, integrity and a steadfast commitment to making our service an even stronger and more inclusive organisation.

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



## 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 Cumbrian coast to the estuaries in the south of the county. Cumbria is the second-largest county in England and is the second-least densely populated; with a population just under 500,000, 52 per cent of those live in rural areas.

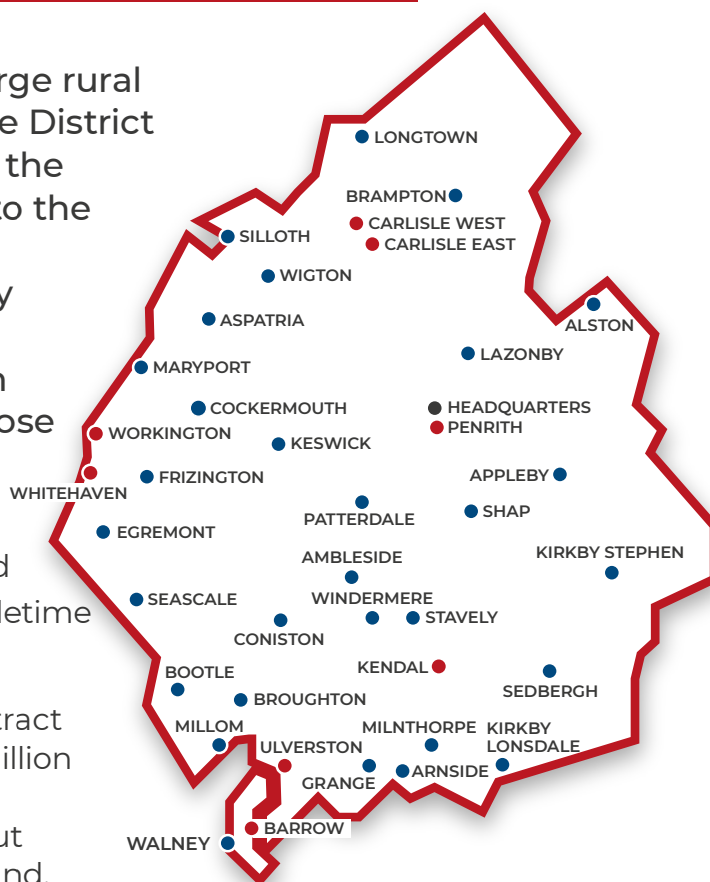
CFRS has approximately 650 firefighters and fire service staff. Cumbria is supported by 38 fire stations, eight of which are wholetime stations and 30 on-call.

Our breathtaking mountains and lakes attract millions of visitors each year – in 2021, 31 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, to 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 built 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

- = Wholetime/Day Crew and Wholetime/Day Crew with On-call
- = On-call



CFRS has a team of Fire Protection Inspectors who audit medium and high-risk premises, and our shift-based firefighters inspect low-risk premises. Our fire protection activities are wide ranging and, through effective collaboration, the service focus is on the most vulnerable to harm.

Cumbria is no stranger to severe weather as 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, while the 'Beast from the East' and Storm Arwen left many homes and villages cut off for days.

CFRS has specialist resources and training to deal with wildfires, water rescue and flooding, while our firefighters are also trained to carry out large animal rescues with examples of past rescues including horses, cows and sheep.

We focus on Prevention, Protection and Response to keep communities and visitors safe every day, every year.

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service's Senior Leadership Team combines proven excellence in their fields, industry knowledge, and a passionate commitment to continually drive the service forward.



# 4,790

total number of incidents  
in Cumbria in 2024–25



## 2024–25 saw our service deal with...



### 1,137

total number  
of fires



### 719

collaborations  
with partners

e.g., partner meetings attended,  
multi-agency prevention work  
delivered



### 210

accidental primary  
dwelling fires



### 771

fire safety  
audits



### 297

road traffic  
collisions



### 8,249

Home Fire  
Safety Visits

\*Data between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

## Our workforce in numbers...

Wholetime firefighters



## 229

On-call firefighters



## 334

Corporate staff



## 77

Fleet vehicles



## 169



## Achievements in 2024–25

### Developing the organisation

Refurbishment works finished at Lazonby and Grange stations



Awarded the contract for a new mobilising system to Frequentis



Provision of a Wellbeing Strategy has been identified as service priority



Estates team transitioned to OPFCC, now responsible for fire



Hosted HMICFRS team for third round inspection



Awarded silver status in the MOD Employer Recognition Scheme



### Protecting local communities

Compliance at 95.7% for building regs and 96.4% for licensing regs



Bespoke road safety package using innovative technology rolled out



Out-of-hours Protection Response Team has been introduced



New strategies for Prevention and Protection approved and published



Top 10 nationally for number of Home Fire Safety Visits completed



Developing Resilience Programmes continue to support young people



### Responding to emergencies

Overall decrease in fires by 11%



Responded to incidents in an average time of nine minutes 54 seconds



Average on-call response time to incidents of 12 minutes 39 seconds



Number of water rescues reduced by 20.5%



Fires in commercial properties reduced by 18%



Cumbria's Water Safety Partnership launched and active over first year



## Our Recruitment Processes

It has never been a more exciting time to consider your future with Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service.

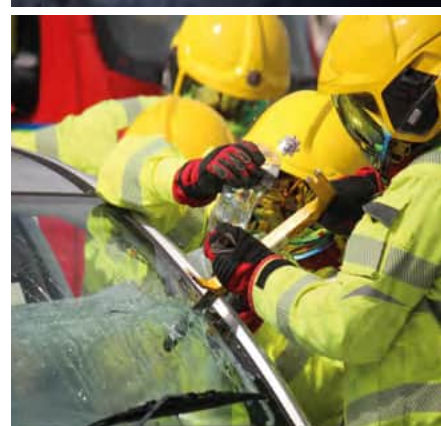
Our service is passionate about the communities we serve and dedicated to developing our workforce - if you're looking to progress in an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic fire service, we are the right service for you.

Following a significant period of change, Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service are at the beginning of our journey as we have moved from the governance of the County Council and to the Police, Fire, and Crime Commissioner. This exciting opportunity brings with it the chance to innovate, integrate, and do things differently, and one key focus is ensuring our Selection and Promotion processes are fair, inclusive, and allow all candidates to be their best selves on the day.

As a service, we have begun to introduce some measures that aim to reduce unconscious bias, remove barriers, maintain standards, and modernise how we recruit. This is on-going work and we will continually monitor changes made, seek feedback from all involved in the process, and review in line with national approaches.

Some of the changes we have made so far are:

- ▶ For all interview panel assessments, candidates are given the interview questions 10 minutes beforehand to read, process, and collect their thoughts, allowing them to come into the interview ready to answer as effectively as possible. It is a good example of positive action as research has shown that its particularly beneficial for individuals who are neurodiverse. However, given there are individuals who aren't aware they are neurodiverse we have made this adjustment for all candidates. Feedback for this has been overwhelmingly positive, with both candidates and panel members sharing that the interview has a more relaxed feel, and the candidates are able to present the best version of themselves.
- ▶ We have made significant changes to our application form, clearly indicating which sections are confidential and won't be shared with the shortlisting panel, and which sections will, with the aim to reduce unconscious bias at the shortlisting panel.





- ▶ We have expanded the section on our application form 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 committing to include virtual engagement sessions and Familiarisation Days in all of our processes where possible, enabling potential candidates to get to know the service in a friendly and informal way, and to share key information on the process, as well as allowing candidates to ask questions directly to people working in CFRS and living in Cumbria.

At a time of ongoing reform of public services, it has never been more important to ensure we have the right people in the right roles, and successful applicants joining CFRS will be entering an engaging and empowering environment, building on our existing open and inclusive culture to seek continual improvement in performance across the Service. We are dedicated to improving outcomes for communities and driving our services forward to be the very best they can be.

## Our Assessment Methods

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

Some of our assessment methods are:

- ▶ 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.

Assessment methods will always be made clear on the advert, in the recruitment pack where relevant, and shared at any virtual or in-person engagement sessions/days.

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



## Feel the 'Cumbria Vibe' for Yourself

*Staff told us that values and behaviours were a priority for the service. Staff consistently described their colleagues as professional and respectful. Several referred to the service's culture as the "Cumbria vibe". The service has implemented the Core Code of Ethics well and staff understand it.*

HMICFRS report, July 2025

# 95 per cent

of respondents (244 out of 258) agreed or tended to agree that they understood the policies and procedures the service had in place to make sure they could work safely

# 95 per cent

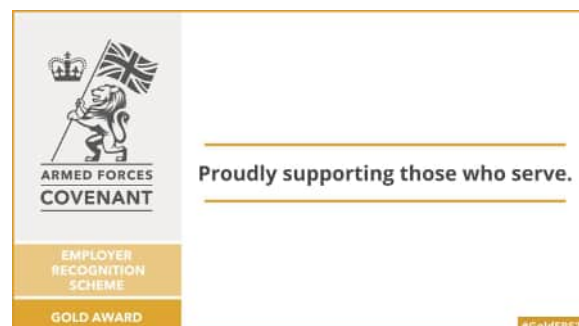
of respondents (225 out of 237) agreed or tended to agree that their colleagues consistently modelled and maintained the service's values

# 92 per cent

of respondents (237 out of 258) agreed or tended to agree that they were satisfied that the service took their personal safety and welfare seriously

# 88 per cent

of respondents (226 out of 258) agreed or tended to agree that they felt able to access services to support their mental well-being





## Living in/Relocating to Cumbria

As a place to live, Cumbria takes some beating. Its home to some of England's highest mountains, biggest lakes and most breath-taking 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 and bustling market towns and the rich history, Cumbria offers something for everyone. This unique piece 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 amongst 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 rest 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 [www.cumbriatourism.org](http://www.cumbriatourism.org)
- ▶ Information and statistics about Cumbria [www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk](http://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk)
- ▶ Visit Cumbria [www.visitcumbria.com](http://www.visitcumbria.com)
- ▶ The Lake District [www.golakes.co.uk](http://www.golakes.co.uk)
- ▶ Doing Business in Cumbria [www.cumbriachamber.co.uk](http://www.cumbriachamber.co.uk)



## Our Vision and Values

### Our vision

A community-focussed, 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.

## Cumbria in Context

In order to understand the risks in our communities, we need to understand the county and the people who live here. Risk information comes from a variety of sources and informs our professional judgement when we decide on the measures we need to have in place to respond in the most effective manner to those risks and areas of concern identified.

### About our county

Geographically Cumbria is the third largest county in England but the second-least densely populated covering 677,000 hectares, including a coastline of 245km and accounts for a staggering 48 per cent of the land mass in the North West.

Its largest urban areas are Barrow in the south, Workington in the west and Carlisle in the north of the county.

The area includes two National Parks; the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales National Parks, as well as three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; Solway Coast, North Pennines, and Arnside and Silverdale. Additionally, there are 279 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), eight Nature Reserves and four European designated Specially Protected Areas (SPA).

Cumbria's visitor economy makes a significant contribution to the broader Cumbrian economy, providing at least 32,000 jobs and £2bn of expenditure annually.

Cumbria has over 7,000 listed buildings, approximately two per cent of the national total. It has two UNESCO World Heritage sites; the Lake District and Hadrian's Wall.

Within the county we have the M6 motorway and two trans-Pennine trunk roads, the A69 and the A66. There are also 3,729km of unclassified roads, many of which are narrow, winding, with steep gradients and poor accessibility.

Cumbria's current population is just over 498,000. At any given time, visitors to the county can significantly swell these numbers. Cumbria receives nearly 50 million visitors on an annual basis.

More than 50 per cent of the Cumbrian population live in rural communities which brings varied challenges for service delivery. The Cumbrian population is 'super-ageing'. This means that the population of Cumbria is ageing faster than the rest of the UK population and the number of people of working age is reducing.

Nearly 25 per cent of the Cumbrian population is aged over 65. As people grow older, their health needs become more complex with physical and mental health needs impacting on each other.



Additionally, those with existing physical and learning disabilities are living longer, increasing the need for more complex packages of support.

There are currently estimated to be about 8,000 people living with dementia in Cumbria. This is expected to increase to over 13,000 by 2030.

Mental health and age are both significant risk factors in relation to domestic property fires.

There are high levels of poverty and deprivation spread across the county and in particular in the urban areas of Barrow and West Cumbria.

Some areas in Cumbria fall within the 10 per cent most deprived areas in the country.

Although the prevalence of poverty and deprivation is greater in Cumbria's urban areas there are pockets of significant deprivation in some of the most rural communities.

Deprivation is a risk factor for fires and increasing deprivation may lead to more incidents.

## National risks

The risks that the UK faces are continually changing.

The government monitors the most significant emergencies that the UK and its citizens could face over the next five years through the National Risk Assessment (NRA).

The risks cover three broad categories: natural events, major accidents, and malicious attacks.

As a service we must ensure we are prepared and able to respond when required.

To support our ability to address national risks, CFRS will continue to train and develop our firefighters to the highest possible standard so that they can respond to local, regional and national emergencies.



## 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 Women in the Fire Services' jobs board
- ▶ Providing candidates with 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 to 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, on [recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk)

## Key Definitions

### Equality

**Equality** ensures that every individual has equal opportunities, regardless of their background, identity or experience.

### Diversity

**Diversity** refers to the representation and recognition of people with different characteristics. In the UK, it is against the law to discriminate against someone with a 'protected characteristic'. These include:

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Gender reassignment
- ▶ Marriage and civil partnership
- ▶ Pregnancy and maternity
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion or belief
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Sexual orientation.

In addition to protected characteristics, we aim to consider diversity of other characteristics, such as socioeconomic background, as well as considering intersectionality, wherein people may have multiple, overlapping identities that can impact their experiences.

### Inclusion

**Inclusion** is about going beyond representation and recognition, to valuing these differences and enabling everyone to thrive at work.

We strive to have an inclusive workplace, where people feel they can perform to their full potential, and that they belong in the organisation without needing to conform or mask their identities

*These key definitions have been supported by information on [CIPD.org](https://www.cipd.org).*



## Key Documents

Please note, these are document versions we have now, and some are currently under review.

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### Cumbria Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority Annual Report — 2023–24

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

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

On 16 July 2025 we received the report from our most recent HMI inspection (Round 3). Our service was assessed against the following areas:

- ▶ Effectiveness
- ▶ Efficiency
- ▶ People

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

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### Community Risk Management Plan — 2024–28

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2024–28 was published June 2024 following a six-week public consultation earlier that year. The document helps the organisation understand and manage issues that could impact the organisation and the 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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## Cumbria PFCC's Police, Fire and Crime Plan — 2025–29

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

Response Strategy — click [here](#)

Prevention Strategy — click [here](#)

Protection Strategy — click [here](#)

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Equality and Diversity Strategy — click [here](#)

People Strategy — click [here](#)

## Our governance

David Allen is the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria following the transfer of responsibility for Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service's governance to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner from 1 April 2023.

For more information, 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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