



# CFRS Weekly Update – 19/12/25

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## Weekly Update – At a Glance

- Long-serving AM retires after 29 years protecting communities
- HFSVs in commercial premises
- Crew provides visible presence in community following deliberate fires
- Vehicle checks
- Reminder: Consult with Information Governance before processing personal data
- Penrith HQ reception over Christmas and New Year
- Merry Christmas to all!
- Height Rescue, Associate Instructor – Learning and Development vacancies
- Human Rights Day and International Migrants Day
- Supervisory Manager Promotion Process – open now
- HR Advisor vacancy
- Thank you from Cumberland Infirmary
- CSAB Practitioner Forum, 13 January 2026: Margaret's story (self-neglect)
- Feeling anxious about Christmas? You're not alone
- Fire Fighters Charity: Festive opening times and support available

**\*\* Please note that the above information should be shared with all staff on parade.**

**Detailed information for each of these headlines can be found below.**



## **Long-serving AM retires after 29 years protecting communities**

After 29 years of protecting our communities in Cumbria, Area Manager Stuart Hook has officially retired from service.

Stuart's journey in Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service began as a firefighter and culminated with him retiring as a hugely-respected member of the service's leadership team.



In his time with the service, Stuart played a crucial role in the response to a number of high-profile incidents, including Storm Desmond in 2015 and the Scalesceugh Hall fire in 2019. His deep understanding and care for our communities, excellent command of incident response, and stellar leadership will be missed.

Stuart was presented with his commemorative axe in front of a packed Control Room at CFRS HQ filled with colleagues past and present. Good luck for the future, Stuart!



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### **HFSVs in commercial premises**

A reminder to all crews that it is not appropriate for crews to carry out Home Fire Safety Visits in commercial premises.

If there are alarm issues discovered in commercial premises in office hours, crews should contact the fire protection team who can organise a visit to the premises to carry out an audit and, where necessary, carry out the appropriate enforcement action.

Outside of office hours, crews should contact the duty Group Manager who can then allocate the appropriate resource to deal with the issue.

Crew must not provide smoke alarms to commercial premises.

**Scott Cameron**

Group Manager, Prevention and Protection

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**Crew provides visible presence in community following deliberate fires**



As part of a multi-agency referral, the crew from Penrith Fire Station joined Eden Local Focus Hub and Westmorland and Furness Council on the streets of Orton this week to raising awareness and provide assurance to the community following a number of suspected deliberate fires set in the area.

These incidents focused on the road between Orton and Appleby, with CFRS providing guidance and appealing for information from the community.

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## **Vehicle checks**

Please can all crews ensure that vehicle checks are done daily at the start of the shift, taking over an appliance for wholetime staff, or weekly on drill night for on-call staff.

The full vehicle checklist can be found in the  [\*\*Driving Service Vehicles\*\*](#) under heading 11.2.

**Luke Russell**

Health and Safety Advisor

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## **Reminder: Consult with Information Governance before processing personal data**

As part of our commitment to GDPR compliance and the protection of personal information, please remember that you must consult with Information Governance before starting any project or introducing any new process that involves the processing of personal data. This requirement also applies to:

- Any new sharing of personal data with third parties
- Changes to existing processes that affect personal data handling

Early engagement with Information Governance ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place and helps us meet both legal and organisational obligations.

We will be rolling out a new Data Protection Policy in the new year, which will provide detailed guidance on handling personal data.

In the meantime, if you are planning any activity involving personal data, please contact [\*\*InformationGovernance@cumbriafire.gov.uk\*\*](mailto:InformationGovernance@cumbriafire.gov.uk) before proceeding. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Fiona Little**

Information Governance Officer

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### **Penrith HQ reception over Christmas and New Year**

Please be aware that Reception in CFRS HQ at Penrith will be closed from 4pm on Wednesday, 24 December to 8.30am on Monday, 5 January.

**Jane Walker**

Team Leader, Business Support

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### **Merry Christmas to all!**

As we approach Christmas, we'd like to wish all our staff a safe and happy festive season.

Christmas is traditionally a Christian celebration marking the birth of Jesus, but over time it has also become a cultural holiday observed in many different ways around the world.

While many people will be celebrating, we also recognise that not all religions observe Christmas, and not everyone marks the season in the same way.

As a fire and rescue service we are proud to serve and be part of a diverse community. This is a time to reflect on the importance of respect, inclusion and kindness to all.

Even for those who do not celebrate Christmas as a religious festival, the season can still be a meaningful opportunity to spend time with loved ones, enjoy a well-earned break, or simply appreciate a moment of rest and connection.

Whether you are celebrating or taking time to pause and recharge, we thank you for the vital role you play in keeping Cumbria safe.

**Kelly Drury**

Watch Manager, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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### **Height Rescue, Associate Instructor – Learning and Development**

The Learning and Development department is looking to recruit two new Height Instructors on Associate Contracts.

To apply for this role, you must be operating at competent firefighter level or above.

**Closing date:** Midday, Friday 9 January 2026

**Interviews:** Interviews will be held in-person in w/c Monday 12 January 2026 at CFRS HQ Penrith

For further info please see the link below or contact SM Jonny Wills at

**[Jonathan.Wills@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Wills@cumbriafire.gov.uk)**

**Find out more and express your interest: [cumbriafire.gov.uk/internal-expressions-interest](http://cumbriafire.gov.uk/internal-expressions-interest)**

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### **Supervisory Manager Promotion Process – open now!**

If you are interested in applying for the role of Crew or Watch Manager, **the Supervisory Managers Promotion Process is now open.**

Successful candidates in this process will be eligible for positions across all duty systems, on-call and wholetime.

If you are currently in an 'eligible permanent' or 'eligible substantive' pool for a Supervisory Manager role having attended the last process, you will need to re-apply and be successful in this process.

*\*\*\*A second **on-call only** focused process will open on **Monday 5 January 2026**, with interviews planned for the week commencing **Monday 23 February 2026**, for those who are only interested positions on their on-call station. The on-call only process is designed to be more accessible to on-call staff. If this is you then you **do not need to apply to the currently open process**, but you can if you wish. You will see the process listed on our vacancies when it opens, keep your eye here:*

**[Our Vacancies | Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service](#)**\*\*\*

## Eligibility

- To be eligible to apply for Crew Manager positions you will need to currently hold the post of competent Firefighter
- To be eligible to apply for Watch Manager positions you will need to currently hold the post of competent Crew Manager and hold a current Incident Command Level 1 skill

For all roles a proof of competency will be required.

## How to apply

Join our engagement session to learn more about the role and requirements.

Apply via the correct role application form on the CFRS Vacancies webpage:  
**[cumbriafire.gov.uk/leadership-vacancies](http://cumbriafire.gov.uk/leadership-vacancies)**

The application form will require you to give answers to four questions that are linked to the NFCC Leadership Framework – there is a 300-word limit for **EACH** question.

**The application process will close at midnight on Sunday 11 January 2026.**

## Engagement session

- Final session – Tuesday 6 January 2025, 6pm–7pm

## For further information

Either speak to or email:

### Katie Norman

Resourcing and Talent Advisor

[katherine.norman@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:katherine.norman@cumbriafire.gov.uk)

07917 515892

### Colin Wright

Group Manager

[colin.wright@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wright@cumbriafire.gov.uk)

07825 340313

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## HR Advisor

**Salary:** £38,220–£39,125

**Hours:** 37 hours per week. We support part-time working, job shares and other flexible options – these can be discussed at interview.

**Contract:** Fixed term (to end October 2026)

**Location:** CFRS HQ Penrith and home working

**Closing date:** Midnight, Sunday 4 January 2026

**Interviews:** Interviews will be held in-person on Wednesday 14 January 2026 at CFRS HQ Penrith

*\*This post requires a Standard DBS Check\**

Find out more and apply: [\*\*CFRS0172 – HR Advisor | Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service\*\*](#)

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### **Thank you from Cumberland Infirmary**

The staff on the Children's Ward at Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle send a sincere thank you for the kind donations of selection boxes.

'Marshall' and the crew from Carlisle East had hoped to join me for a visit – however, visiting has been restricted due to an outbreak of flu. Hopefully we can arrange a visit in Spring.



Your kindness and generosity are much appreciated and will help spread some festive cheer on the ward. Thank you!

**Jemma Taylor and Helen Clark**

HR Managers

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### **CSAB Practitioner Forum, 13 January 2026: Margaret' story (self-neglect)**

Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board hosts quarterly themed Practitioner Forums using a case study to support learning through multi-agency discussion.

The next forum will explore 'Margaret's story', a lady with complex physical health needs where there were some concerns about self-neglect.

Building on the success of previous forums, practitioners and managers working in Cumbria are invited to attend the forum, which will take place online via Teams on Tuesday 13 January 2026, 10am–12pm.

The forum will provide an opportunity to explore the challenges when working with adults who experience self-neglect and how working together as professionals across partner organisations can support to improve outcomes.

Facilitated discussion will provide opportunity to learn together:

- What has worked well/not from case studies
- Opportunity to reflect on practice
- Discussion time in a multi-agency forum
- Inform CPD requirements
- Identify barriers to partnership working and identify opportunities to improve outcomes through working together

**[Book your place here](#)**

## Mark Clement

Head of Planning and Improvement

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### **Feeling anxious about Christmas? You're not alone**

The festive season is often shown as a time of joy and togetherness – but for many people, it can feel stressful and overwhelming.

If you struggle with social anxiety the thought of parties, family gatherings, or even busy shops might make you want to hide under the duvet.

The good news? There are ways to make this time easier – and plenty of support out there.

#### Why does social anxiety spike at Christmas?

- Lots of social events – it can feel like you're expected to say "yes" to everything
- Pressure to be cheerful – everyone seems happy, so you feel you should be too
- Changes to routine – less structure can make things feel unpredictable
- Social media comparisons – seeing "perfect" festive posts can add pressure

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. Organisations like Mind, Mental Health UK, and Anxiety UK say these feelings are common – and manageable.

#### Simple tips to make things easier

##### **1. Pick what matters most**

You don't have to go to every party. Choose the events that feel most important and give yourself permission to skip the rest.

## **2. Plan ahead**

Worried about awkward silences? Think of a few easy topics – like holiday plans, favourite films, music – to help conversations flow.

## **3. Take breaks**

If things feel too much, step outside or find a quiet spot for a few minutes. It's okay to recharge.

## **4. Try breathing techniques**

Slow, deep breaths or 'box breathing' (inhale for four, hold for four, exhale for four) can calm racing thoughts.

## **5. Stay present**

Notice the little things – the smell of mince pies, the sound of music. Mindfulness helps stop overthinking.

## **6. Limit social media**

Scrolling through 'perfect' Christmas posts can make anxiety worse. Take breaks or mute notifications.

**Remember** – Christmas doesn't have to be perfect. It's okay to set boundaries, take breaks, and look after yourself. You're not alone – and help is always available. You got this!

### Where to get support

**Fire Fighters Charity** – [Fire Fighters Charity - We provide life-long care and support for the UK's fire family](https://www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/) 0300 373 0896 (24 hours a day, seven days a week)

**Mind** – [We're Mind, the mental health charity | Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk/)

**Andys Man Club** – [ANDYSMANCLUB - It's Okay To Talk](https://www.andysmanclub.com/)

**Mental Health UK** – [Mental Health UK - We champion the UK's mental health](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)

**Anxiety UK – [National charity helping people with Anxiety - Anxiety UK](#)**

**Every Life Matters [Every Life Matters - Suicide Safer Cumbria](#)**

**Samaritans** – Call **116 123** (free, 24/7) if you need someone to talk to

**Shout 85258** – This service offers anonymous 24hr support. By texting 'BLUELIGHT' TO 85258 it offers support specifically for emergency workers

**Annie McInerney-Thompson**

Recruitment, Fitness and Engagement Coordinator

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### **Fire Fighters Charity: Festive opening times and support available**

Fire Fighters Charity's Support Line will temporarily close at 1pm on Wednesday, 24 December and will reopen at 8am on Friday, 2 January 2025. Its Supporter Care line will also be closed during this period.

If you are experiencing thoughts of suicide, the charity's Crisis Line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the festive period. Please call on **0300 373 0896**.

You can also find further sources of support available to you [here](#).

If you would like to make an enquiry regarding health and wellbeing support, you can complete [an enquiry online](#) and the charity will get back to you from 2 January – or you can wait until it re-opens to call its Support Line on **0800 389 8820**.

Find out more on the charity's opening hours and further support [here](#).

Meanwhile, there's a wide range of online resources available to you at any time in its Online Wellbeing Hub, from a mental health self-assessment tool, to short and long courses covering a number of key health and wellbeing topics.

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**Fire Fighters Charity**

To have your news included in this section please email:

**CFRS.update@cumbriafire.gov.uk**

