



Northumberland

County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Rebecca Little

Email: Rebecca.Little@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622611

Date: Friday, 14 January 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL** to be held in **MEETING SPACE - BLOCK 1, FLOOR 2 - COUNTY HALL** on **MONDAY, 24 JANUARY 2022 at 1.00 PM.**

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally
Chief Executive

To North Northumberland Local Area Council members as follows:-

G Castle (Chair), S Bridgett (Vice-Chair), T Thorne, T Clark, G Hill, W Pattison, G Renner-Thompson, C Seymour, J Watson, C Hardy (Vice-Chair (Planning)), I Hunter, M Mather and M Swinbank

Any member of the press or public may view the proceedings of this meeting live on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/NorthumberlandTV>. Members of the press and public may tweet, blog etc during the live broadcast as they would be able to during a regular Committee meeting.

Members are referred to the risk assessment, previously circulated, for meetings held in County Hall. Masks should be worn when moving round but can be removed when seated, social distancing should be maintained, hand sanitiser regularly used and members requested to self-test twice a week at home, in line with government guidelines.



Daljit Lally, Chief Executive
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AGENDA

PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest) they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room. NB Any member needing clarification must contact the monitoring officer by email at monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk . Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To reply to any questions received from members of the public which have been submitted in writing in advance of the meeting. Questions can be asked about issues for which the Council has a responsibility. (Public question times take place on a bimonthly basis at Local Area Council meetings: in January, March, May, July, September and November each year.)

As agreed by the County Council in February 2012, the management of local public question times is at the discretion of the chair of the committee.

Please note however that a question may possibly be rejected if it requires the disclosure of any categories of confidential or exempt information, namely information:

1. Relating to any individual;
2. Which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual;
3. Relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person
4. Relating to any labour relations matters/negotiations;
5. Restricted to legal proceedings
6. About enforcement/enacting legal orders
7. Relating to the prevention, investigation of prosecution of crime.

And/or:

- Is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - It is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of this or another County Council committee in the past six months;
- The request repeats an identical or very similar question from the same person;
- The cost of providing an answer is disproportionate;
- It is being separately addressed through the Council's complaints process;
- It is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the county;
- It relates to planning, licensing and/or other regulatory applications
- It is a question that town/parish councils would normally be expected to raise through other channels.

If the Chair is of the opinion that a question is one which for whatever reason, cannot properly be asked in an area meeting, he/she will disallow it and inform the resident of his/her decision.

Copies of any written answers (without individuals' personal contact details) will be provided for members after the meeting and also be publicly available.

Democratic Services will confirm the status of the progress on any previously requested written answers and follow up any related actions requested by the Local Area Council.

4. PETITIONS

(Pages 1
- 18)

This item is to:

(a) Receive any new petitions: to receive any new petitions. The lead petitioner is entitled to briefly introduce their petition and a response to any petitions received will then be organised for a future meeting.

(b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:

(i) Housing Delivery for Permanent Residents

(ii) Badgers in Tweedmouth Cemetery

(c) Receive any updates on petitions for which a report was previously considered: any updates will be verbally reported at the meeting.

5. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

To receive a verbal update from the Area Managers from Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services in attendance about any key recent,

ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work for the attention of members of the Local Area Council, who will also then have the opportunity to raise issues with the Area Managers.

The Area Managers have principal responsibility for highway services and environmental services, such as refuse collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance, within the geographic boundaries of the Local Area Council.

6. BUDGET 2022-23 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

This presentation will outline the Council's strategy to the 2022-23 Budget within the context of the Corporate Plan. The presentation will provide details of the approach to setting the budget for the next financial year and the broad impact this will have on the delivery of services.

7. NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE: COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-26 CONSULTATION

(Pages
19 - 52)

The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 has been developed, providing data and analysis on key fire and rescue related risks, and information on how Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will work with communities to address and mitigate those risks. The purpose of the report is to raise awareness of a public consultation on the Plan which opens on 5 January 2022 and closes on 16 February 2022 and to provide an opportunity for feedback from Local Area Council into the process.

8. BERWICK REGENERATION PROJECT

To receive an update (if any)

9. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider such other business, as in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 24 February 2022 at 3:00 pm.

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussion or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

Name (please print):
Meeting:
Date:
Item to which your interest relates:
Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):
Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):
Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?

1. Registerable Personal Interests – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or

b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

2. Non-registerable personal interests - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

3. Non-participation in Council Business

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.



COMMITTEE: North Northumberland Local Area Council

DATE: 20 January 2022

TITLE OF REPORT: Petition Response - Housing Delivery for Permanent Residents

Report of: Philip Soderquest, Head of Housing and Public Protection

Cabinet Member: Cllr Colin Horncastle, Cabinet Member for Community Services

Purpose of report

To respond to the concerns raised by the Beadnell and Seahouses Community Residents Petition received on 16th November 2021.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the content of the report and ongoing measures to support the delivery of affordable housing be noted.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following priorities included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021:

How - We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone;

Living - We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for;

Enjoying - We want you to love where you live;

Key issues

1. A recent petition received from Beadnell and Seahouses Community Housing Residents Group raised concerns in respect of the availability and affordability of affordable homes to rent and buy in the coastal areas of Northumberland.
2. It is acknowledged that not all residents are able to access, or afford to rent or buy a home, where they need to, or where they would prefer to live.
3. Prices of renting and buying a home in these coastal areas are an issue as wages are relatively low compared to ever increasing market rents and house prices.
4. Residents are faced with having to move away, to find accommodation and

employment elsewhere, so reducing the pool of local labour to support the local area and its vital tourism market.

5. The Council cannot directly affect house prices, the level of private rents, or earnings, but there are measures it has taken, and can continue to take to help ease affordability pressures and make homes more accessible to local residents.
6. The current and emerging planning policies support these measures, but it can still be difficult to secure affordable housing through private developments or secure a Registered Provider (RP) to manage properties where the schemes are small in volume and remote from their management area.

Background

On 16th November 2021 a petition of 689 signatures was received by the Council from the Beadnell and Seahouses Community Housing Residents Group. The petition states:

‘We the residents and supporters of the communities in Beadnell, Seahouses and North Sunderland urgently request the council, landowners and housing associations to take action to remedy the housing crisis in the area, provide social and affordable homes solely for permanent residents in-line with prices which reflect the wages in the area.’

‘Our community respects and embraces tourism, however due to out of area investments and the increased popularity and profits in staycations many families and residents are forced out of their homes or simply cannot afford to live in the area. This is having a negative impact not only on the community but on local businesses who are unable to access employees due to the lack of residents in the area, despite offering wages in excess of the National minimum wage or living wage.

Without urgent investment in social and true affordable housing the area is not going to be able to sustain the tourism we rely on.

We therefore request urgent action to increase the housing stock in the area which is only available to people with true links to the area and restrict the exponential increase in holiday accommodation.’

The letter accompanying the petition went on to state many issues that relate to the main petition.

Current Challenges

1. Location

The rural coastal areas present a number of challenges for the delivery and retention of affordable homes, particularly properties for rent. For Registered Providers to take affordable homes delivered through the planning system, or indeed to deliver a 100% affordable scheme, they need to ensure they can effectively manage them. A certain quantum of development is required to make this feasible, or developments need to be located in areas where they already manage stock.

Additionally, securing labour to build properties, and accessing materials in areas remote from urban centres can be challenging, while the cost of connecting services can be prohibitive. Recent feedback has suggested that development costs can be significantly higher in the North of Northumberland and less building companies are currently submitting tenders to carry out development in this area.

The result of this is that while there may be affordable housing need in some coastal and rural villages, it is difficult to bring forward schemes to meet this need, especially with increasing costs.

In addition, the need to build “life-time homes” does generate some unintended consequences whether open market or affordable. The Local Plan requires that 50% of affordable homes on new developments meet or exceed the enhanced accessibility and adaptability housing standards as set out in part M4(2) of the building regulations.

Further, in order to mitigate climate change, homes will increasingly be required to be energy efficient and carbon neutral and will be required to be built to comply with design code requirements.

2. Growth of Second and holiday home market

While the spending power of owners and occupiers of second and holiday homes can provide a financial boost to local economies, demand for such properties has increased house prices locally, in areas where incomes are relatively low and much of the work available is seasonal, such as those dependent upon the tourism industry. As well as increasing affordability pressures, a proliferation of second and holiday homes can impact on the availability of properties for people living and working locally which can in turn have a detrimental impact upon the ability of businesses and services, including those relating to health and education, to recruit and retain staff. It is likely that this situation may have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ability of the Council to control the growth of second and holiday homes through the planning system is limited. Whether a house or apartment is occupied permanently by a family, let out over part of the year, or is indeed an all year-round holiday home, legally it is a private dwelling. Therefore, when existing properties are let out, or sold as holiday homes, planning permission is not required.

However, there is scope within the planning system to restrict the use of new build homes, as second and holiday homes. The Northumberland Local Plan and The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood plan contain policies to do just that.

Second and holiday homes are subject to taxation through council tax or business rates. The coastal parish councils are calling on the Chancellor to end eligibility for non-domestic rates tax relief for holiday home businesses and follow the example in Wales of allowing local authorities to set Council Tax levels for second homes and Furnished Holiday Lets (FHL) in certain wards at up to 100% above the prevailing rate. They are asking for the closure of the loophole that currently allows FHL that are ‘available’ for letting for 140 or more days a year to be valued for non-domestic

rates. The loss of income to the local authority, community and parish councils is seen as highly damaging.

3. Affordability

The Council acknowledges the struggle that some residents of Northumberland, and those looking to move to the county for work, have in securing appropriate housing which they can afford to buy or rent. Residential property prices have consistently been, for a number of years, around five to six times the average earnings of those living and working in the county. While the Council cannot directly affect house prices, the level of private rents, or earnings, there are a number of measures it has taken, and can continue to take, to help ease affordability pressures and make homes more accessible to local residents.

Such measures include:

- Securing Affordable Housing through the planning system (either for rent or purchase)
- Securing Affordable Housing through targeted direct provision itself or through partner Registered Providers (RPs)
- Securing the right mix of market housing in private developments,
- Limiting the development of new second and holiday homes.

4. Right to Buy (RTB) and Right to Acquire (RTA)

Introduced by the Government in 1980 RTB enable council secure tenants to buy their council home at a substantial discount of 33% after 3 years of renting, rising to 50% if they had rented their property for 20 years. In a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or an area designated by the Secretary of State as Rural for Right to Buy purposes special rules apply. The sale will be on the condition that you may only resell it to someone who has been living or working in the area for 3 years.

RTA allows most housing association tenants to buy their home at a discount but at a much reduced rate. In 1997 these coastal parishes were classed as designated rural areas and so they are prevented from buying their rented properties. These rulings have been set by central Government legislation and cannot be changed by NCC.

Any breaches of RTB law and any loopholes being exploited should be referred to the Council Legal team.

Policy and Strategy

1. Northumberland Planning Context

When the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP) is adopted, together with the Neighbourhood plan, all applications for planning permission will be determined in accordance with the development plan. The NLP sets out policies which require a

proportion of new dwellings to be Affordable, which restrict in coastal areas, new dwellings from being built as or subsequently being used as second and holiday homes.

The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood plan was prepared and made by the community in 2018 and it directly addressed housing issues, including affordable housing and second homes.

Neighbourhood plans covering the parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell, North Sunderland, Embleton, Alnmouth and Craster, include policies that restrict new dwellings to being used as principal residences. While most of these policies are new, and have not been tested through planning appeals, it is anticipated that they will ensure that new dwellings built in these areas are more accessible to local people, with prices not inflated by demand for second and holiday homes.

Since 2018, the Council has approved 14 planning applications in the 6 neighbourhood areas where principal residency policies apply. This has resulted in this restriction being applied to 105 dwellings through the planning system. Of these, 67% are either built or currently under construction so the effects should start to be seen in the volume of owner occupiers living permanently in these coastal areas so that communities remain more vibrant all year round.

2. Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2019-22

As one of its priorities, 'Growing our communities' It sets out a number of aims; to provide additional Council-owned homes and homes for rent, enable more affordable housing through community led housing, address housing affordability in rural areas, and promote housing growth in rural areas and help shape provision to meet identified need.

The newly formed Housing Delivery team is working to the following priorities:

- Ensuring we're delivering the right type of accommodation in the right locations in the right numbers.
- Ensuring delivery is by the right landlord for each area to link to management and maintenance costs.
- Focusing on providing quality and not just quantity and delivering exemplar schemes that are zero carbon and tenure blind.
- Understanding the need and appropriate scale of schemes in rural locations is paramount and look to deliver what the market requires where others are not able/willing i.e. small unit numbers.
- Understanding current provision and whether this meets both current and future need, responding to market failure and ageing population.

These priorities will soon be embedded in a Housing Delivery Strategy for Northumberland and central to this will be the understanding that the Council will work with other Registered Providers so that together the Affordable Housing needs of the county are addressed. The model of provision will vary across the county, in line with the housing market in that area, and will involve both rented and

homeownership homes being provided to enable sustainable and balanced communities to flourish.

Housing Need

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides an overview of Northumberland's housing market and Affordable housing needs. The 2018 review found that the local gaps in the housing market in this area were the absence of housing suitable for up-sizers and first time moving families in the price range £150,000 to £200,000, as well as housing suited to the needs of older people. Letting agents confirmed that some residential landlords had chosen to disinvest or diversify away from residential into the holiday market. They also described strong demand for family homes and homes suited to elderly people.

The SHMA is supported by a range of Local Housing Needs Assessments and surveys that have been carried out for various parts of the county including this coastal area.

Allocation of affordable rented housing to local people

Affordable rented housing is let via the Homefinder Choice based lettings system and in these coastal areas as well as other rural areas in the county applications will be subject to a Rural Allocations Criteria to support rural communities by awarding additional preference to applicants with a strong local connection. A close connection to the rural parish is defined as the applicant meeting one of the following criteria:

- Living in the parish continually for at least 3 years immediately prior to the date of selection for an offer.
- Been in continuous full or part-time work (excluding seasonal work) in the parish for at least the last 3 years immediately prior to the date of selection for an offer (part-time work means a minimum of 16 hours per week).
- Lived continuously in the parish for at least 3 years immediately prior to being accepted as homeless but have been placed in temporary accommodation outside of the parish for up to 2 years.
- Having parents, adult children or siblings who have lived continually in the parish for at least 3 years immediately prior to the date of selection for an offer.

NB. In the next Common Allocations review the issue of 'excluding seasonal work' can be revisited and a decision made as to whether this is in the interests of the local community to be widened.

Dialogue with major landowners and RP's

Much of the land across this coastal area is in the ownership of three land owners; Northumberland Estates, the Trustees of Lord Armstrong and Lord Crewe's Charity. The Housing Delivery Team and the Housing Enablers will be instrumental in initiating conversations regarding further opportunities for Affordable Housing.

As providers of affordable housing, RPs, such as Bernicia, Karbon and Castles & Coasts which operate in this coastal area have a great deal of intelligence about housing need, through their own lettings and development programmes. The Council works in partnership

with the RPs, to direct the appropriate type and quantity of affordable housing development to areas where it is needed. Regular liaison between the Council's Housing Enablers, the Council's Delivery team and RPs ensure this is co-ordinated. The Housing Enablers continually assimilate the information from the above sources and provide advice on Planning applications to officers and elected members.

Conclusions

As set out above, the Council and its partners, have made significant progress in delivering affordable homes, and putting policies and procedures in place to ensure that the homes are accessible and affordable for those that need them. However, it recognises that affordability is a big issue in this coastal area and that much more needs to be done. The Housing Delivery team and the Housing Enablers will work with interested parties to bring forward Affordable rented and home ownership homes that are as affordable as the scheme viability allows.

It is essential that the right types of homes are provided in the locations where they are most needed, and that lessons are learnt from what has been delivered in the past. While barriers to delivery are wide ranging, a priority for the Council's Housing delivery programme is to deliver where others cannot and where there is an evidenced need. As the findings of the Local Housing Needs Assessments that have been completed for this area do not support the need for substantial delivery of new affordable housing the answer will be to deliver the right numbers over a steady period and ensure that mixed tenure is available to meet the range of needs that exist. It will be important to watch closely the allocations of the next schemes expected to deliver and learn from them the precise demand that exists and match future provision to this.

Implications

Policy	The Petition response references a number of existing planning policies and housing strategies, but does not create new policy.
Finance and value for money	The Housing Delivery team will ensure that financial resources committed by the Council towards delivering affordable homes are directed where they will be most effective.
Legal	While reference is made to legal section 106 agreements in the position paper, there are no legal implications resulting from the report.
Procurement	No implications.
Human Resources	None
Property	No implications from the report
Equalities	No implications from the report.

(Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	However, if more affordable housing is provided where it is most needed, a positive equalities impact will be realised.
Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	No implications.
Customer Consideration	This report is responding to the issues raised by the local community in their petition and will provide for a positive customer outcome.
Carbon reduction	While the carbon impact of building new homes may be negative, legislative and policy requirements will mitigate these impacts. Through the Council's housing delivery programme there may be the opportunity for exemplar developments, which exceed policy requirements in relation to carbon reduction.
Health and Wellbeing	To address the concerns of the local community in this Petition response is likely to have a positive impact upon health and wellbeing.
Wards	Relevant to Bamburgh ward.

Background papers:

Northumberland Local Plan – Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (January 2019)

Northumberland Local plan Regulation 19 Draft Plan showing proposed main modifications and additional changes (June 2021)

Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2019-2022

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Supporting background information

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Elizabeth Morgan/Rob Murfin
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	Colin Horncastle

Author and Contact Details

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Appendix 1 – Supporting Background Information

Types of Affordable Home Ownership

Affordable discounted home ownership products, which help get households with incomes above those which qualify for affordable or social rent into the housing market, are controlled in value by discounts secured by s106 planning obligations at initial sales and resales the different types are as follows:

- a. **Discounted Market Value (DMV)** homes are sold at prices typically 30% below local market housing values and have been delivered in Northumberland successfully over a number of years. However in the coastal areas where the housing market values are very high the affordability of the DMV product can be a problem. Affordable discounted home ownership products, which help get households with incomes above those which qualify for affordable or social rent into the housing market, are controlled in value by discounts secured by s106 planning obligations at initial sales and resales.
- b. **Shared ownership** homes can be seen as more affordable as housing providers work hard to pitch the value as low as the scheme viability allows and can even limit ownership at 80% rather than the full 100% in 'Designated Rural areas' (such as the petition area) in order to keep the product affordable. If these products are grant funded by Homes England the requirement to remain affordable in perpetuity will apply preventing them from being lost from the Affordable market once sold on. Affordable discounted home ownership products, which help get households with incomes above those which qualify for affordable or social rent into the housing market, are controlled in value by discounts secured by s106 planning obligations at initial sales and resales.
- c. **First Homes** are a new tenure of Affordable housing introduced by Government earlier this year. The First Homes initiative is aimed at delivering discounted homes for local people, especially first-time buyers, to help them get onto the housing ladder and into home ownership. These homes are to be provided at a discount rate of at least 30% below open market values, with the discount locked into the home in perpetuity for future first-time buyers. They are a similar product to DMV but are only eligible to residents who are first time buyers. New neighbourhood plan policies will be able to require a minimum 25% of affordable housing on any site to be First Homes, and if evidenced by local needs, may even be able set the discount at 40% or 50%. This higher rate of discount could prove to be very beneficial to local residents within this coastal high market value area.

Funding opportunities for Affordable Housing

Homes England (HE)

The Affordable Homes Programme 2021 - 2026 provides Government grant funding to support the capital costs of developing affordable housing for rent or sale. The aim of the funding in this round is to create a more resilient and diverse housing market. This means partners will also be expected to focus on promoting significant use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), high-quality sustainable design and working closely with local small

to medium-sized enterprises (SME) housebuilders. A particular priority is for HE to support the delivery of rural housing. This funding is applied for as the grant necessary per unit to bring forward the scheme. Bernicia are planning to apply for a level of HE funding for their North Sunderland scheme as will the Council to assist with the Seahouses First School site proposal.

S106 Commuted Sums

The Local Plan requires affordable housing to be provided on-site, with alternative off-site provision, or payment of a financial contribution (commuted sum) to the Council in lieu of all or part of the on-site provision being only acceptable where clearly justified. The pot of S106 'commuted sum' monies are available to support the delivery of affordable housing elsewhere in the area or the county as a whole. Applications for the use of s106 funds are invited from not-for-profit organisations such as RPs, Community Land Trusts, and other housing providers approved by the Council and the Council itself to meet any funding gap and could be a vital source to bridge funding gaps of schemes in this coastal area where schemes will be costly to bring forward.

Brownfield Funding

This government funding is being made available by the North of Tyne Combined Authority to support the redevelopment of previously developed sites. The council may look to apply for such funding for their Seahouses First School site proposal to cover the costs of demolition and ground remediation ahead of the development phase.

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COMMITTEE: NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 20 JANUARY 2022

Petition Regarding Badgers in Tweedmouth Cemetery

Report of the Director of Local Services, Paul Jones

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle, Cabinet Member, Local Services

Purpose of report

To acknowledge and respond to the petition and update the Local Area Council on progress made in addressing the issues raised.

Recommendations

It is recommended that members consider the report and:

- a) note and support the approach taken by the Council to date in responding to this sensitive matter;
- b) note that badgers and the setts they live in are both protected by law from disturbance under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- c) NCC is in the process of completing an application for a licence to relocate the badgers on the grounds of seeking to prevent their excavations causing serious damage to the cemetery under section 10(2)(b) of the 1992 Act, and to recognise that the evidence base required to support such an application is in itself a time consuming and costly undertaking, and;
- c) note the additional cemetery improvements that have been delivered or are planned following dialogue with petitioners and other stakeholders.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the “We want you to love where you live” priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2020-2021.

1. Key issues

- 1.1 There have been badger setts in an around Tweedmouth Cemetery for many years but during the summer of 2021 the damage caused by badger activity in the cemetery has become more prominent, which is extremely distressing for cemetery visitors.
- 1.2 The County Council's Neighbourhood Services team have undertaken regular inspections and reinstated any damaged ground identified.
- 1.3 Badgers are protected and so are the setts they live in under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and it is illegal to interfere with them or disturb them in any way without a licence being granted from Natural England.
- 1.4 Completing an application for a licence to relocate the badgers into order to prevent them causing serious damage to the cemetery, under section 10(2)(b) of the 1992 Act is a significant undertaking, requiring extensive evidence to justify the relocation activity, which includes detailed ecological survey work of badger activity and the appointment of named specialist ecologists to advise the Council on its application.
- 1.5 The County Council has engaged Natural England in dialogue on this issue, with senior staff from both organisations having attended several meetings to discuss the issue. Natural England officers have consistently stated during discussions that 'ground damage due to foraging alone is not normally considered sufficiently serious to warrant the issue of a licence'. Their conclusion following a site visit was that 'the sett was not apparently causing any physical damage to the cemetery and its graves and it was considered that closing the sett down would not currently be a suitable solution'.
- 1.6 Badgers causing damage is an issue that affects other cemeteries in the UK with examples of damage in some cemeteries elsewhere in the UK including the toppling of headstones, ground subsidence and the unearthing of human remains. Some visitors to Tweedmouth Cemetery are understandably concerned that this could happen in Berwick and want action taken to move the sett before this happens to their loved one's graves.
- 1.7 The Council has committed to making a licence application and wrote to Natural England to advise them of this in September. Specialist ecologists have been appointed to act as the Council's Named Ecologist and are due to conclude a formal Badger Survey at the end of December. In the meantime, Natural England has provided advice on potential mitigation measures and agreed to process our licence application as a priority application, notwithstanding their views as set out in paragraph 1.6 above.
- 1.8 An additional Ground Penetrating Radar Survey has been commissioned to try and determine the extent and location of any subterranean excavations relating to the badger setts within the cemetery to provide additional evidence for the licence application.

- 1.9 The Council and it's Named Ecologist will submit an application for a licence to preventing serious damage, under section 10(2)(b) of Protection of Badgers Act 1992 in January 2022.
- 1.10 Whilst survey work has been ongoing Council Officers have considered a number of mitigations that may reduce the severity of damage from foraging activity in the cemetery.
- 1.11 During the summer Council Officers and Elected Members met with the Friends of Tweedmouth Cemetery Group, during discussions several non-badger related improvements were requested in the cemetery and officers have worked with stakeholders to deliver these improvements.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 A request for an e-petition was received in August 2021 asking Northumberland County Council to remove badgers from Tweedmouth Cemetery, the petition closed in October with 643 signatures. The wording of the petition request was:

'Protect our loved ones remove badgers safely.'

Safely remove badgers from cemetery and place deterrents around the perimeter to prevent more devastation'.

- 2.2 There have been badger setts in an around Tweedmouth Cemetery for many years, during the summer of 2021 badger activity in the cemetery has become more prominent. The Council has received a significant increase in enquires, complaints and comments relating to the damage caused and the significant upset experienced by visitors to the cemetery.
- 2.3 In foraging for food the badgers are damaging the ground on and around graves which is extremely distressing for cemetery visitors, most of the damage consists of small shallow holes in the ground or scratching on the surface but has included deeper excavations and newly laid turf being 'dug up' along the length of an individual grave. Badgers prefer to feed in short grassland which is why well mown lawns, such as those in the cemetery, are often targeted by them.
- 2.4 The County Council's Neighbourhood Services team has recorded inspections in the cemetery on each workday since August 2021 and undertaken additional inspections at weekends, reinstating several hundred individual pieces of damaged ground immediately following these inspections.
- 2.5 Specialist ecologists were appointed to act as the Council's Named Ecologist in October and begun a Badger Survey on 15 October which included a number of remote wildlife cameras being placed in the cemetery for 3 weeks. Following the review of footage it was advised that further evidence would be

required to support the licence application and a further 3 week camera survey begun on 8 December 2021.

- 2.6 A Ground Penetrating Radar Survey was commissioned to provide additional evidence for the licence application, this was undertaken in December and it is hoped the results will conclusively show where the setts are located at a subterranean level and whether there is an actual risk of damage to graves below the surface. If the setts are not interfering with graves this will provide some reassurance to visitors, some of whom have expressed concern that this is happening out of sight. If they are proven to be posing a risk of interference with graves below the surface it is hoped this will add significant weight to the licence application.
- 2.7 The Council and it's Named Ecologist will submit an application for a licence to preventing serious damage, under section 10(2)(b) of Protection of Badgers Act 1992 in January 2022.
- 2.8 Council Officers have considered a number of mitigations that may reduce the severity of foraging activity in the cemetery. Some potential mitigations such as an electric fence have not been actioned at this stage due to this being an unsuitable solution in this setting. However, other mitigations have been implemented, including the application of natural nematodes to try and reduce the badgers' favourite food sources such as chafer grubs and leatherjackets, and consideration is also being given to applying pheromones at the appropriate time of year to help discourage foraging activity.
- 2.9 During the summer Council Officers and Elected Members met with the Friends of Tweedmouth Cemetery Group, during discussions several non-badger related improvements were requested in the cemetery and officers have worked with stakeholders to deliver or plan these improvements, they have included resurfacing of damaged roads, introduction of a public bench and landscaping improvements.
- 2.10 Neighbourhood Services staff have responded effectively and compassionately to the understandable increase in enquiries and complaints about the damage being caused by the badgers.

Implications

Policy	It is an accepted practice for a Burial Authority when exercising its duties with regards to the maintenance and management of a cemetery to undertake the remedial work and undertake the mitigations described in this report.
Finance and value for money	The cost of mitigation measures taken to date has been met by existing cemetery revenue maintenance budgets. If the advice from the Named Ecologist on potential Licensable Actions would result in potential costs that could not be met by existing

	budgets then a report would be prepared for the Council's Executive Team to consider appropriate funding arrangements.
Legal	<p>As a Burial Authority the Council, subject to the provisions of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery.</p> <p>Badgers are protected and so are the setts they live in under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992</p>
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	The County is the landowner and responsible for the cemetery in its entirety.
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	There are no equality considerations.
Risk Assessment	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	The Council has received a significant increase in enquires, complaints and comments relating to the damage caused and the significant upset experienced by visitors to the cemetery. Neighbourhood Services staff have responded effectively and compassionately and prioritised repairing any damage as quickly as possible.
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Berwick West with Ord

Background papers:

None

Report sign off.

	initials
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Relevant Director	Rob Murfin
Chief Executive	n/a
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Northumberland County Council

COMMITTEE : North Northumberland LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 20 JANUARY 2022

TITLE OF REPORT: Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service: Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 Consultation

Report of Chief Fire Officer Paul Hedley

Cabinet Member: Councillor Colin Horncastle, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Fire Authority Chair

Purpose of report

Following guidance from NCC Legal and Democratic Services, The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 is being presented as part of the consultation process which opens on 5 January 2022 and closes on 16 February 2022.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Senior Officers have the opportunity, should you wish, to present our Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26, and that each Local Area Council contributes to the consultation.

Link to Corporate Plan

Living – ‘we want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for’.

Key issues

- Under the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#) (2018) all fire and rescue authorities are required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan. This is now called a Community Risk Management Plan.
- According to the framework, each plan must:
 - Reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority.
 - Demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources.
 - Outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks.
 - Set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat.

- Cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework.
- Reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners;
- Be easily accessible and publicly available.

Background

- Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017-21 was extended by one year.
- Reasons for extending the plan for one year were deemed to 'have merit' during a recent inspection undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is now consulting on its Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26, supporting the Fire Authority to meet its responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018).
- Consultation opens on 5 January 2022 and closes on 16 February 2022.
- Consultation questions can be completed online by clicking the link <https://haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/nfrs/crmconsultation2022/> or by email fireconsult@northumberland.gov.uk to request a hard copy.
- Copies of the consultation questions can be provided in an alternative language on request. Please email your request to fireconsult@northumberland.gov.uk.
- The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 has now been developed, providing data and analysis on key fire and rescue related risks, and information on how Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will work with communities to address and mitigate those risks.

Implications

Policy	The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 will inform all key policies for Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service.
Finance and value for money	The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 includes information on finance and how prevention, protection and community risk and response resources are utilised to remove or to mitigate key risks across the county of Northumberland.
Legal	Northumberland Fire Authority has a legal responsibility to produce a Community Risk Management Plan, and to consult on it.
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	N/A
Property	N/A

Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and is attached for reference.
Risk Assessment	The Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 is a risk-based document, capturing key fire and rescue related risks across Northumberland, and how the Service will mitigate those risks.
Crime & Disorder	Details on crime and disorder are captured within the plan.
Customer Consideration	The plan is customer focused, written to capture key risks to residents across the county, and providing details on how the Service will mitigate those risks.
Carbon reduction	A carbon impact assessment has been completed.
Health and Wellbeing	Details on health and wellbeing are captured within the plan.
Wards	All

Background papers:

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26.
Equality Impact Assessment.

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	
Relevant Executive Director	
Chief Executive	
Portfolio Holder(s)	

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**Northumberland
Fire and Rescue Service**

Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2026



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County Council

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FOREWORD

Welcome to our Community Risk Management Plan

Welcome to Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service's (NFRS) Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-26.

As Fire Authority Chair of Northumberland County Council (NCC) and Chief Fire Officer for NFRS we are pleased to be able to provide this four year plan for our local communities, residents and visitors. The plan sets out how we intend to deliver our mission of 'Making Northumberland Safer' and to outline how we seek to give assurance that Northumberland is served by a highly efficient, highly effective and high performing fire and rescue service.

The CRMP identifies our analysis of current and future risks within the county, identifies emerging risks and trends, and outlines how we will balance prevention, protection, and response activities to reduce the impact of risk on communities by making the best use of our people and resources. We will continue to work with internal and external partners to ensure that we maintain our efforts to mature our ability to better identify, understand and analyse all of the risks we Northumberland faces.

We welcome comments on the plan and our proposals. We have worked hard to improve our social media presence and develop a bespoke NFRS website to enhance our community interaction, because improving our engagement with the public and raising awareness of all of our service activity is a priority for us.



Cllr Colin Horncastle
Cabinet Member for Community Services
and Fire Authority Chair

The Service was subject to its second independent assurance inspection from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) from mid-June – mid August 2021. Whilst the judgment was that we Require Improvement against Effectiveness, Efficiency and People, it was pleasing to note the positive comments and acknowledgements from the inspectorate of the improvements and progress we've made since 2019.

“THE COVID PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING RESILIENT PLANS IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH MAJOR INCIDENTS, EMERGENCIES AND BUSINESS INTERRUPTIONS”

Our new Performance and Assurance Framework (PAF), which was formally launched in January 2022, will be the mechanism by which we ensure we drive and assure integrated and continuous improvement in the performance, governance, and delivery of the Service.



Paul Hedley
Chief Fire Officer
and NCC Director

Strategically, we are committed to extending our reach and integration with partners into Northumberland communities and vulnerable groups to develop more effective community safety initiatives and interventions. Building more resilient, inclusive, and effective relationships with partners within NCC, Northumbria Police, the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC), NHS, voluntary and charity sector and other fire and rescue services (FRS) will be key to achieving that success.

As a small service covering a very large area and diverse risk, we know that maximising the availability of fire cover from our 15 fire station sites across Northumberland is fundamental to providing the Community Risk and Response capability necessary to better meet the expectations of our residents. We will be undertaking reviews of our operational response model, on-call capability and specialist response as well as looking to provide enhanced functionality through partnership and mutual aid with neighbouring FRS.

The Covid 19 pandemic highlighted the importance of having resilient plans in place to deal with major incidents, emergencies and business interruptions. In addition, the Covid 19 response also emphasised the importance of ensuring we have integrated planning and response

frameworks within NCC as well as effective multiagency response and mutual aid support from our Local Resilience Forum (LRF), FRS National Resilience and National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) arrangements. We will continue to review and update those arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

We have already started our ambitious plans to focus upon improving our internal staff engagement and staff development, putting our values and values-based behaviours at the heart of all we do. We continue to strive to be an 'employer of choice' within Northumberland, with a highly skilled and motivated workforce that reflects our Service values and who see our Service as an engaging, positive, and rewarding place to work. We have revised our recruitment and promotion policies to ensure we have eliminated obstacles to recruiting the brightest and best from all our communities. Our NFRS People Strategy compliments this CRMP and provides more detail on our 'All Included, All Involved and All Engaged' aspirations.

By being open and responsive to change, and through exploring and investing in new and innovative technologies and ways of working, we will continue to improve the safety and wellbeing of the diverse communities we serve.

There are many interdependencies within the CRMP planning process, and for this reason we intend to monitor our progress and review the measures set out in this document through an annual CRMP update. We are committed to ensuring our plans are always current, appropriate and detail what we have delivered, how we have performed and what our delivery priorities are for the coming year.

As Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority and Chief Fire Officer we value your opinion and encourage you to offer feedback on our plans. We look forward to hearing from you.

OUR COUNTY PROFILE

The county is home to major road and rail links, the Port of Blyth, modern industrial developments, one top tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) site and two Major Accident Hazard Pipelines (MAHP).

- Northumberland covers an area of **5013 km squared**.
- We have a population of **323,820**, living in **152,000 dwellings**.
- The county is the most sparsely populated county in England with **65 people per km squared**, with **96.7 percent** of the area considered rural.
- **51 percent** of people live in **3 percent** of the area, mainly situated in the southeast.
- We have an ageing population, with the number of those aged 85+ forecast to increase by **102 percent** by 2043.
- **23 percent** of children aged 16 and under live in a family considered to be low income.
- **12 percent** of the population live in **10 percent** of the most deprived areas in England.
- **98.4 percent** of residents are white, with **92.7 percent** white British.
- **12.9 percent** of the population in Northumberland are smokers.
- Compared with England, Northumberland has **higher rates** of hospital admissions due to alcohol related problems, and the rate is rising.
- **Employment** is dominated by health, retail, and manufacturing.
- With a business community that is resilient, our biggest industries are **agriculture, forestry, fishing, construction, professional, scientific and technological services**, and **accommodation and food**.



OUR VALUES

Our values and behaviours help us to work well together to deliver an efficient and effective service and to ensure that we look after our people and our communities.

Our agreed values are:

Residents first – here for you.

Excellence and quality - listening and learning to improve your service.

Respect – you are valued.

Keeping communities safe and well – your safety and wellbeing is at the heart of what we do.

Our values are underpinned by our leadership commitments:

Be professional and provide leadership by example.

Be open to challenge and change.

Be fair, honest, and transparent, acting with integrity.

Communicate openly and demonstrate empathy to all.

YOUR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

YOUR AREA:

• Area	5013 km squared
• Population	323,820
• Dwellings	152,000
• Non-Domestic Premises	20,729
• Community Fire Stations	15
• Fire Engines and Specialist Vehicles	37
• Support Vehicles	37
• Average annual incidents attended	3,355

THE PEOPLE WHO DELIVER YOUR SERVICE:

• Community Risk and Response whole time (including Officers)	130
• Community risk and Response On-call (Retained Duty System)	141
• Fire Control	18
• Corporate	38
• Establishment as of 1st December 2021	327

■ Wholtime
● Retained
◆ Day staffed
□ Garage
* Shared services delivered from these sites



RESPONSE STANDARDS FOR 2022/23

It is important for us that we can provide consistent Response Standards to all emergency incidents across Northumberland. This is the time it takes us to get to an emergency incident from the point of receiving the call into our Fire Control. As we are a predominantly rural service, with each community fire station covering an average area of 334 km squared, and where seventy percent of our firefighters are on-call/retained, this is a challenge for us.

Our Response Standards for 2022/23 are outlined in the table below:



STANDARD 1

We will strive to ensure that the first mobilised fire engine attends all property fires within 10 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.



STANDARD 2

We will strive to ensure that the second mobilised fire engine attends all property fires within 13 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.



STANDARD 3

We will strive to ensure that the first mobilised fire engine attends all road traffic collisions within 15 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.



STANDARD 4

We will strive to ensure that the second mobilised fire engine attends all road traffic collisions within 20 minutes of alerting on 80% of occasions.



OUR PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

Our People Strategy was launched in May 2021, recognising that our people are our most valued asset.

We need those people to have the right skills, qualities, values and attitude to ensure that we can meet the needs and expectations of our communities across Northumberland – by having the right people working for our residents and visitors, we have a much greater confidence of being able to fully deliver on our mission of ‘Making Northumberland Safer’. We recognise the unique role and profile we enjoy within our communities and want to enhance that conspicuous position by developing our staff as role models and community ambassadors.

By ensuring that we have a working environment where our people feel valued, listened to, empowered, and trusted, we will continue to develop as an integrated and mature organisation which works collaboratively and innovatively to support and protect our communities.

We are committed to ensuring that we are seen as an employer of choice for everyone within our communities as we recognise that by promoting inclusion, and having

a more balanced and representative workforce, we are better able to understand the needs of people from diverse backgrounds and shape our Service more effectively to meet their needs. We remain committed to taking deliberate and positive action to promote the service to underrepresented groups.

Our People Strategy is based on a set of 12 guiding principles which underpin and cut across all areas of service and six key commitments to assist in ensuring that the strategy can deliver on our strategic aims and objectives and better support the role of the Service within our council, communities and partnerships.

We recognise the importance of ethical and authentic leadership at all levels of the Service, and we will build on the significant work which has already taken place with our staff to develop our values and behaviours, as this is an essential prerequisite to demonstrating our commitment to fairness, equality, diversity, respect and continuous improvement.



OUR COMMITMENTS

- 01 Develop a ‘learning culture’ that promotes fairness and trust, and values the contribution of all.
- 02 Recognise and demonstrate equality and diversity in our workforce and across our activities.
- 03 Encourage and promote effective leadership and management at all levels of our organisation.
- 04 Provide high quality learning outcomes for our workforce.
- 05 Promote the health, wellbeing and fitness of our staff.
- 06 Support and develop ways of working that are flexible and adaptable to changing needs/demands.



OUR PRINCIPLES

Every fire and rescue service is unique, but whilst NFRS may have different cultural and people determinants due to our differences in leadership, governance, service delivery model and size, there are common goals and principles which should be consistent throughout the sector.

We have taken the underpinning principles within the NFCC People Strategy and Draft Code of Ethics to develop a suite of guiding principles which will be used to govern the service and shape our thinking and decision making.

01 We want to be an employer of choice

We will seek to position the service as a career of choice across all sectors and communities of Northumberland to attract and retain the best people. Where we identify barriers that may prevent that aspiration, whether real or perceived, we will tackle them.

02 Our values define us

Our core values and behaviours, personal and organisational, will underpin everything we do. We will challenge negative and undermining behaviour to ensure we are fair, consistent and honest in the way we treat each other.

03 We always try to make a positive difference for our communities

We will continue to make a positive contribution to the lives of our communities, residents and visitors on a daily basis – we will work to make Northumberland safer and stronger through our involvement, engagement and presence.

04 The Health, Safety and Welfare of our staff is our priority

The health, safety and welfare of all of our people will continue to be at the heart of all that we do. We will support the well-being of our staff through dedicated programmes and take specific action to tackle the stigma around mental health and celebrate difference.

05 We will embrace new ways of working

We will deliver flexible solutions that are correctly positioned to support our increasingly mobile workforce, whilst being agile enough to adapt to future changes in business requirements and working practices.

06 We will have excellent communication

We will build an effective internal communications framework to ensure that our messaging is honest, clear and delivered in the most appropriate format. Externally we will continue to grow our ability to engage and communicate with residents, businesses and partners.

07 Staff Engagement and Involvement are key to our success

We will involve our staff in decision making and policy development ensuring that they are properly engaged and consulted with regards to the future direction of the service. We recognise the importance of being able to respond to staff suggestions and the importance of every member of the service having their voice heard.

08 We will champion equality, diversity and inclusion

We will actively promote equality across our workforce and through our services in the community, and will try to increase the diversity and balance of our workforce through positive action programmes to ensure we reflect the communities we serve and attract the best possible talent available to us.

09 We will develop a workforce of leaders

We will enhance, facilitate and encourage leadership at all levels of the service, devolving responsibility and accountability to the lowest level and creating a high performance culture to improve performance and outcomes.

10 We are a learning organisation

We will become skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying our behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. We accept and welcome scrutiny and challenge and recognise new ideas and different thinking is essential if learning is to take place.

11 Strong collaboration and partnership

We will actively support working and sharing information with our partners, and will develop our relationships with partner organisations to promote and deliver services which add real public value and improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

12 We are 'OneTeam'

NCC's vision is 'One Council That Works For Everyone' – as part of our contribution to achieving that vision we will develop a 'One Team' culture within NFRS to break down internal barriers and encourage a collaborative and outcome focused mind-set.



OUR BUDGET

We had a total budget of £16,136,360 to deliver your service during 2020-21. Much of this budget was spent on our people, and this is reflected in **Chart 1** below. **Chart 2** shows how this money is spent by role. Finally, **Chart 3** shows how non-staffing budget is used to support our Prevention, Protection and Community Risk and Response activity.

CHART 1

How our budget reflects staffing and non-staffing costs for 2021-22.

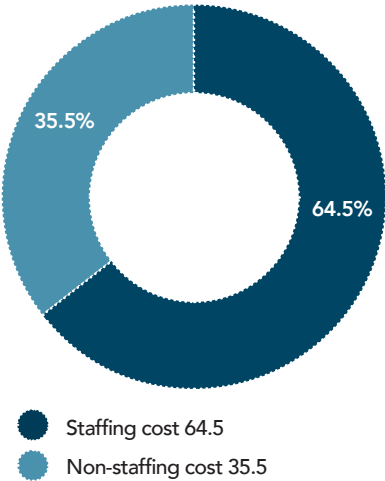


CHART 2

How our budget has been divided by roles during 2021-22.

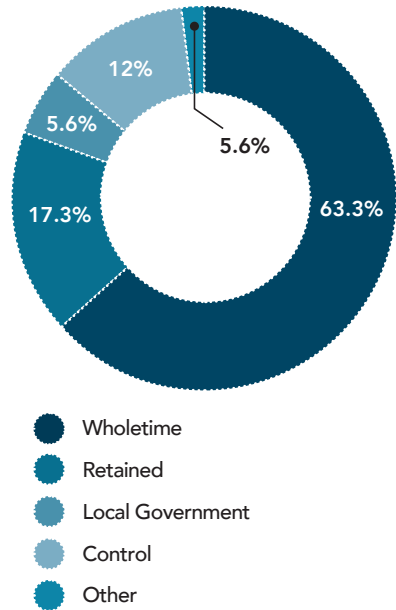
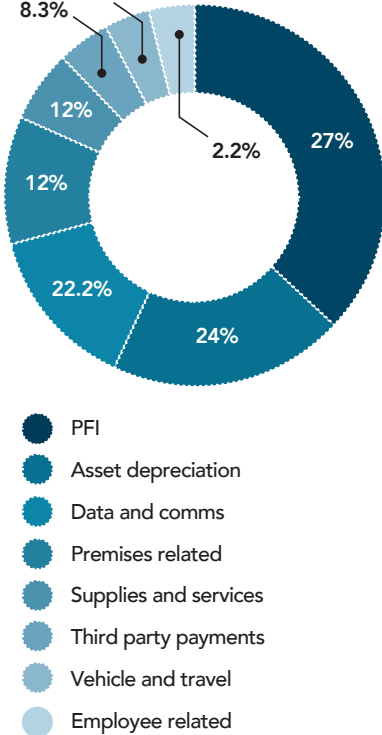


CHART 3

How our budget reflects non-staffing costs for 2021-22.



OUR COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Fire and rescue authorities (FRA) have a number of duties as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

When carrying out their core functions under the Act, FRAs must:

- Secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment.
- Secure the provision of training for personnel.
- Secure arrangements for dealing with calls and summoning assistance.
- Secure arrangements for obtaining information for the discharging of their functions.
- Secure arrangements for reasonable steps to be taken to prevent or limit damage to property resulting from the discharge of their functions.

- To collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide.
- To be accountable to communities for the service they provide.
- To develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

The core functions of an FRA are:

- Promote fire safety, including the provision of information and publicity on how to prevent fires, and on the means of escape from buildings in case of fire.
- Extinguish fires and protect life and property in the event of fires.
- Rescue people and protect people from serious harm in the event of road traffic collisions.
- When necessary, deal with emergencies other than fire and road traffic collisions.

FRAs in England have further responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) to 'assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities'.

The Framework identifies five priorities for fire and rescue authorities:

- To make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents.
- To identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Authority (NFRA) is also legally responsible for the enforcement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Order places a duty on a responsible person within an organisation to carry out fire risk assessments to identify, manage and reduce the risk of fire within public and commercial buildings, and in communal and external areas of residential premises with two or more dwellings.

In order to support the Fire Authority, we carry out audits of premises, provide education, advice and guidance to responsible persons on fire safety. Where serious fire safety issues are found, we will take appropriate enforcement action to improve fire safety. We will also prosecute when it is in the public interest to do so.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the FRA has a duty to work with partners in their LRF to plan and train for risks identified in a joint Community Risk Register (CRR). This assists in risk management planning, and risks identified in the CRR are reflected in our plan.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency services. NFRS works in collaboration with Northumbria Police, the OPCC and, through a North East Strategic Delivery Board, the 4 North East FRS' to ensure NFRA meets its responsibilities under the Act.

Our CRMP will support change within NFRS, setting out our strategic priorities and how we intend to manage the existing and future risks within the county.

UNDERSTANDING RISK

NFRS defines risk as a **'combination of the likelihood and consequence of a hazardous event'**. This supports the NFCC definition and strategic risk management framework.

In the case of fire and rescue related risks, hazardous events are the emergency incidents that we attend. We have a responsibility to our communities to identify what type of incidents we attend, and to work with our communities and key partners to minimise or prevent the likelihood of these happening.

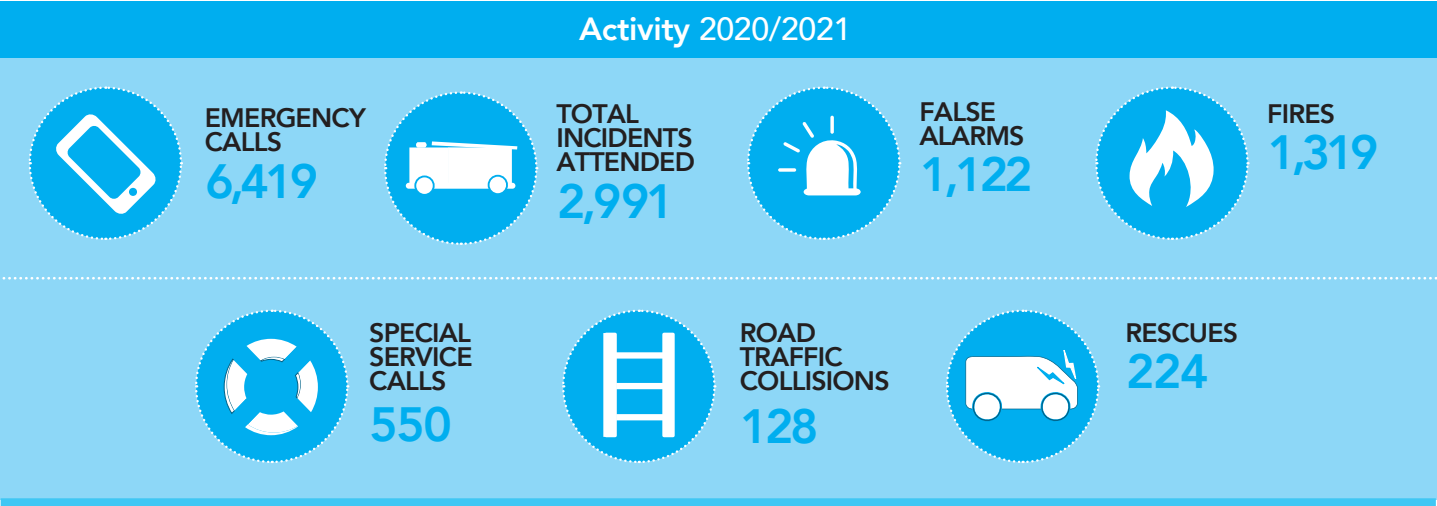
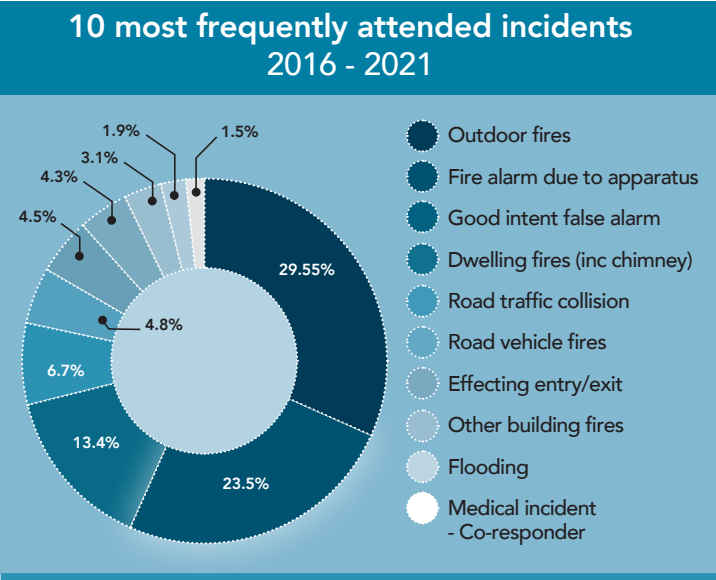
We know that over the last 10 years, working closely with our communities and key partners, we have reduced the

total number of incidents we attend by 21 percent. The total number of incidents we attended during 2020/21 is likely to have been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic, however the total number attended is the lowest in the last 10 years, and 11 percent less than the previous year (2019/20).

To understand the risks faced by our communities, we need to know what type of incidents we attend. We know that we attend up to 30 different types

of incidents, however we also know that only 10 of these account for over 90 percent of all attendances. By focusing on these we will maximise our efforts to reduce risk and mitigate consequences.

The types of incidents we attend the most rarely change, which gives us confidence that we can target our resources effectively, implementing both short and long-term interventions. The charts below show the types of incidents we attend.



“WE KNOW THAT OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, WORKING CLOSELY WITH OUR COMMUNITIES AND KEY PARTNERS, WE HAVE REDUCED THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS WE ATTEND BY 21 PERCENT.”

Working in collaboration with **Operational Research in Health (ORH) Ltd** we have developed a fire and rescue risk profile for Northumberland. Applying analysis and statistical modelling, we have:

- Analysed incident and response data of all incident types attended by the service.
- Identified multiple data sources relating to fire and other risks, such as population and demographics, building and road network data.
- Applied random forest modelling to determine risk scores, and to identify which characteristics have the strongest relationship to the likelihood of incidents occurring. For instance, we know that there is a strong relationship between deliberate outdoor fires and crime deprivation (this is the recorded crime for four major crime types, violence, burglary, theft and criminal damage).
- Assessed these relationships to consider risk across Northumberland.

This process allows us to determine a risk score by Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA). A LSOA is a geographical area of approximately 1500 people or 650 households, and there are 197 in Northumberland. The risk score is relative to Northumberland, and to the highest risk LSOA.

Our profile helps us to determine where we target our resources to address risk, and what factors impact on both the likelihood of an incident happening, and the severity of any resulting consequence. This in turn influences our Prevention and Protection programmes, as well as ensuring we have our Community Risk and Response resources where we need them most.

Risk is dynamic, and we will continue to review risks to our communities, our people, our reputation and the delivery of our statutory responsibilities.



DWELLING FIRES

During 2020/21 we attended 199 house fires in Northumberland, 90 percent of which were accidental. These incidents can have a devastating affect on those involved, sometimes leading to injury and even death. Our risk profile uses multiple data sets to inform our programmes, and we enhance our profile with data

that allows us the opportunity to target our prevention towards those most likely to have an accidental fire in their home. Our partners help us with this by sharing, where appropriate, information and data on individuals and families who would benefit most from our support. Where we can, we will work with our

partners collaboratively to develop our programmes and strengthen our reciprocal training and referral processes to ensure we can help and support the people who need us the most.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Deliver a targeted safe and wellbeing programme, ensuring people remain at the heart of what we do.
- ▶ Work in collaboration with partners to develop our prevention policy.
- ▶ Deliver robust safeguarding referrals leading to positive outcomes for those at risk.
- ▶ Deliver training for Community Risk and Response personnel and assess operational and command competence.
- ▶ Undertake fire investigations to ensure learning.
- ▶ Undertake case reviews to inform learning.
- ▶ Continue to develop our use of social media platforms to share key messages with our communities.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Introduce additional measures to monitor the success of our safe and wellbeing programme, ensuring we are targeting those who are at high or very high risk of having a fire in their home.
- ▶ Introduce community safety training and qualifications for Community Safety and Community Risk and Response personnel.
- ▶ Work with partners to further share relevant data to assist risk profiling and targeting.
- ▶ Pilot the NFCC national model for dwelling fires as a 'proof of concept'.
- ▶ Launch a dedicated NFRS website.
- ▶ Develop and implement Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) online services to allow for online referrals.
- ▶ Implement robust quality assurance processes.
- ▶ Evaluate the success of our safe and wellbeing programme.



AUTOMATIC FALSE ALARMS (AFA) IN DWELLINGS

These are incidents we attend where a smoke alarm has activated in the home, but there is no fire present.

Our risk profile tells us that factors influencing the likelihood of an AFA in the home are social deprivation, social residential buildings and the population who are over 65 years of age. As there is no fire, the risk of injury is low. However, we should consider these incidents as a warning that risks may be present.

With an ageing population, there is potential for numbers of this incident type to increase, potentially also leading to an increase in actual dwelling fires. Working with our partners, therefore, becomes more important than ever.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Two or more AFAs in dwellings result in a referral to our Community Safety Department, who will visit the home to carry out a risk assessment.
- ▶ Ensure our risk modelling includes data on members of our community who are 65 years old or older.
- ▶ Ensure our referral pathways are clear and implemented appropriately.
- ▶ Provide information to signpost individuals and families to further help and support when they are not ready for a referral to be made.
- ▶ Deliver training for Community Risk and Response personnel and assess operational and command competence.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Undertake additional analysis in order to better understand AFAs in dwellings.
- ▶ Continually monitor and analyse AFA data to understand and target resources and advice, where underlying trends are identified.
- ▶ Work with the NFCC to implement and support campaigns and initiatives.





OUTDOOR FIRES

During 2020/21, over 29 percent of the incidents we attended were to outdoor fires. 75 percent of these were started deliberately, typically involving rubbish, grass and woodland. Although we attend a lot of outdoor fires, the risk of injury remains low. However, there are significant financial

and environmental impacts associated with this type of incident. Our incident profile tells us that outdoor fires typically occur in the South East of the County, and our risk profile suggests outdoor fires occur in our more deprived areas where there is a higher crime rate (there is a strong

correlation between outdoor firesetting and anti-social behaviour). There is also a strong relationship between outdoor firesetting, anti-social behaviour and young people under the age of 17.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Monitor performance through our Performance and Assurance Framework.
- ▶ Collaborate with our neighbouring North East FRSs to support research into the culture of deliberate outdoor firesetting.
- ▶ Deliver our 'Extinguish' Programme for young people involved in firesetting.
- ▶ Deliver our schools education programme in the areas where outdoor fires are most likely to happen.
- ▶ Engage children and young people in rapid local interventions.
- ▶ Work in partnership to enhance arson reduction.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Collaborate with our neighbouring North East FRSs to support research into the consistency of reporting and recording of deliberate fires.
- ▶ Collaborate with key partners on the development of target area profiles.
- ▶ Further develop our key partnerships in order to strengthen core programme delivery.
- ▶ Develop robust quality assurance processes.
- ▶ Evaluate the impact of our proactive prevention programmes.
- ▶ Evaluate our reactive interventions.

WILDFIRES

Extended periods of warm, dry weather can help support the development of large vegetation fires – fires which we call wildfires. While wildfires tend to be more common in the spring and summer, they can occur at any time of the year.

The number of wildfires occurring in Northumberland is relatively low (17 incidents between 2016/17 and 2020/21), however they can

escalate quickly and spread across large areas. Wildfires can cause major disruption to life, property and infrastructure and have catastrophic consequences for the environment, flora and fauna. 70 percent of wildfires in Northumberland have been accidental and have burned for periods of between a few hours, up to one month.

The Met Office climate projections

for the UK indicate significant temperature rises in the decades ahead for both winter and summer. Extreme weather could become more frequent and intense.

We have measures in place to monitor both climate change and wildfire risk in order to ensure we have the correct resources where and when we need them most.

The following definition has been used for a wildfire; a fire \geq 1 hectare (10,000 sqm) and/or \geq 4 fire engines or vehicles and/or \geq 6 hours duration and/or flame length \geq 1.5 m and/or serious risk to life, environment, property or infrastructure.

What we do to reduce risk:

Work closely with the Met Office and Natural Hazards Partnership so that we obtain early warning that wildfire risk is elevated/severe/extreme. We also monitor the Daily Hazard Assessment.

Monitor the Met Office Fire Severity Index (FSI).

Provide wildfire prevention and preparedness advice to residents, businesses and visitors in line with our Wildfire Communication Plan.

Create and review detailed fire plans for sites that are considered at highest risk of wildfires.

Utilise a wildfire scoresheet in partnership with Northumberland National Park Authority and Natural England, subsequently published by the Uplands Management Group.

Chair the NFCC Wildfire Group sharing good practice for wildfire prevention, preparedness and response around the UK.

Facilitate the multiagency Northumberland Fire Group. www.northumberland.gov.uk/Fire/Group.aspx

Provide Specialist Personal Protective Equipment for all Community Risk and Response personnel.

Maintain four specialist wildfire hub stations.

Train Wildfire Support Officers to support locally.

Train and provide National Wildfire Tactical Advisors.

Work in Partnership to support the sharing of assets.

Support Northumberland County Council Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

Design and implement an annual wildfire exercise to test the response to wildfire incidents, which will aim to include partner agencies and neighbouring Fire & Rescue Services.

Use the wildfire risk scoresheets developed with our partners to obtain a more detailed and localised understanding of wildfire risk across Northumberland.

Work with colleagues at Northumberland County Council to help develop plans for planting the Great Northumberland Forest.



NON-RESIDENTIAL FIRES (OR OTHER BUILDING FIRES)

These are fires in commercial buildings, such as the retail sector, industrial, manufacturing, hospital and educational facilities.

These incident types account for four percent of all incidents attended, and we attended 93 of these in 2020/21.

Risk from injury is relatively low, however the impact of non-residential fires on the economy can be significant.

Our risk profile has indicated that, in addition to the implementation of a risk-based inspection programme, protection work should prioritise retail buildings and areas with high deprivation.

What we do to reduce risk:

- Continue to support the business community in legislative responsibilities.
- Deliver a risk-based inspection programme.
- Provide information, advice and guidance to businesses, enforcing legislation when necessary.
- Engage with businesses, introducing innovative methods of delivery.
- Increase the inspection capability of Fire Safety by introducing Level 3 Inspectors into Community Risk and Response and establishing Associate Inspectors.
- Work with regional fire and rescue services to collaborate on Business Fire Safety.
- Implement actions identified following national incidents such as the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
- Implement a Site Specific Risk Information policy to ensure Community Risk and Response personnel are aware of the risks relevant to each high-risk commercial building.



What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- Expand the Community Risk and Response Fire Safety Level 3 qualification to all operational Watch and Crew Managers.
- Educate and advise businesses on the completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS).
- Consider the fire safety implications of the new Building Safety Bill, and implement recommendations as appropriate.
- Target all commercial premises involved in a fire for a post fire safety inspection.
- Ensure that all inspecting officers who hold a Fire Safety Level 4 diploma qualification are aligned to the 3rd party accreditation process identified by the NFCC.
- Develop an on-line self-assessment process for businesses to register their fire safety compliance.
- Monitor a series of identified targeted measures to inform and enhance fire safety delivery across the commercial sector.
- Develop a communications strategy to utilise social media platforms to inform and advise businesses.
- Identify emerging significant risks in the built environment and assess the impact of these on our service provision and the risks they present to our communities from initial awareness through planning, construction, occupation and its ongoing use.
- Further develop the use of our associate fire safety inspecting team to carry out fire safety audits in support of our risk-based inspection program.
- Continue to develop our action plan on petroleum.

AUTOMATIC FALSE ALARMS (AFA) IN NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

These are incidents we attend where the automatic fire detection equipment or alarm system has activated and there is no fire.

As there is no fire, the risk of injury is low, however as 34 percent of all incidents we attend are to false alarms, there is a significant impact on fire

and rescue resource which could be available for other incidents where risk of injury or even fatality is greater.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Work with businesses to provide advice and guidance on the management and maintenance of automatic alarm systems.
- ▶ Manage a cost recovery process to encourage better management and maintenance of automatic alarm systems.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Target businesses who are identified as having frequent AFA calls to their premises and work with them to reduce impact on NFRS.
- ▶ Continually monitor and analyse AFA data to understand and target resources and advice to business, where underlying trends are identified.
- ▶ Work with NFCC to implement and support campaigns and initiatives.

ROAD VEHICLE FIRES

During 2020/21 we attended 143 vehicle fires, and many of these had been started deliberately. Perhaps not surprisingly, our risk profile tells us road vehicle fires are more likely to occur in our more deprived areas where there is a higher crime rate.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Maintain robust partnership with Northumbria Police to inform our understanding of why these incidents are happening in Northumberland.
- ▶ Share information and intelligence with partners where appropriate.
- ▶ Attend regular partnership meetings such as Victim Offender Location (VOL) meetings to share intelligence, improve learning and effectively target prevention resources.
- ▶ Maintain Fire Investigation qualifications and competence.
- ▶ Develop robust regional and national partnerships to share good practice.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Continue to strengthen our relationship with Northumbria Police and other partners to ensure the effective sharing of information and intelligence.
- ▶ Further develop the role of Community Risk and Response Station Managers with key partners, and with the wider community.
- ▶ Increase Fire Investigation knowledge, experience and capacity within NFRS.



ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

Each year people die or suffer serious injuries on the roads of Northumberland. We typically attend only the most serious collisions and attended 128 during 2020/21. Our

profiling tells us that 78 percent of all road traffic collisions involved at least one driver who lives in Northumberland. The North East Road Safety Resource provides us

with additional road traffic collision data, helping us to understand how we compare with both England and other local authorities across the region.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Maintain membership of the Northumberland Road Safety Coordination Group (NRSCG).
- ▶ Contribute to the Northumberland Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan.
- ▶ Monitor road safety performance utilising analysis provided by the North East Road Safety Resource.
- ▶ Deliver a road safety programme in schools as directed by our risk profile.
- ▶ Deliver key road safety messages on all prevention programmes with young people.
- ▶ Use social media platforms to share key messages.
- ▶ Maintain a Community Risk and Response capability across Northumberland.
- ▶ Train firefighters in the latest trauma management techniques in collaboration with North East Ambulance Service to ensure a high quality of casualty management.
- ▶ Provide all front-line personnel with specialist training and equipment to deal with road traffic collisions and potential casualties quickly and efficiently.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Identify a road safety lead.
- ▶ Work in collaboration with Northumberland Road Safety Co-ordination group to monitor and identify emerging road safety issues affecting the residents of Northumberland.
- ▶ Provide road safety education in the community-based upon identified risks specific to geographical areas.
- ▶ Provide road safety education in schools based on identified risks and targeted at relevant age groups.
- ▶ Further develop and enhance public 'Biker Down' sessions to inform and educate motorcyclists on the dangers of, and actions to be taken following motorcycle collisions.
- ▶ Continue to engage with the wider fire and rescue service sector to stay informed of any updates and changes to ensure that we take advantage of the latest available technology and procedures where appropriate.

FLOODING AND WATER RESCUE

We attended 276 flooding incidents between 2016/17 and 2020/21. These incidents can devastate parts of the community and leave an impact that can last for years.

While numbers have remained constant, we attended a number of incidents in August of 2019/20, and these were the result of heavy rainfall. The Met Office claims that as the world warms, fewer rainy days in summer are

expected. Winter rains could remain as likely as they are now. In 2008, widespread flooding in Northumberland affected 1,200 properties.

In 2012, flooding events impacted 240 properties. Smaller, more isolated flooding events occurred in 2013 and 2014. We have measures in place to monitor flooding risk in order to ensure we have the correct resources where and when we need them most.

We also respond to water rescue incidents, not related to flooding. Although numbers are small, 48 were recorded between 2016/17 and 2020/21, the number of incidents of this type has been increasing. Almost 44 percent of those rescued from water were from moving water such as rivers or the sea. Such events can be devastating for those involved.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Implement a schools education programme, delivering key messages on water safety.
- ▶ Utilise social media platforms to share water safety messages and both national and local campaigns.
- ▶ Maintain Swift Water Rescue capability at strategic locations across Northumberland.
- ▶ Work with partners during the response and recovery phase of flooding events.
- ▶ Undertake local and multi-agency planning, training and exercises.
- ▶ Work with NCC partners to develop and implement the Northumberland Local Risk Management Strategy.
- ▶ Work with partners to develop multi-agency flood plans.
- ▶ Support NCC Climate Change Action Plan 2021-23.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Expand our Swift Water Rescue Capability by upskilling additional personnel at key locations across the county.
- ▶ Identify areas of risk and address with prevention measures as appropriate.
- ▶ Continue to train our personnel in the latest techniques and procedures to ensure maximum effectiveness at water rescue incidents.



NATIONAL RESILIENCE

The term resilience refers to the ability to withstand a crisis and recover from it quickly. This could include events impacting on national security, wide scale flooding or wildfires, or pandemics such as Covid 19.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) confirms that the Government has responsibility

for fire and rescue related national resilience assets and capabilities but that these should be managed through local fire and rescue services.

A national programme called New Dimensions, identified the need for 47 High Volume Pumps (HVP) across the country to support water or flood related incidents. We host one of these

HVPs in Northumberland, situated in the southeast of the county but ready to deploy across the county and indeed the country when required. These incidents are low in likelihood, but the impact is significant, with the possibility of building collapse, large scale environmental damage and the evacuation or rescue of people.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Complete and regularly review risk assessments for Northumberland.
- ▶ Deliver a programme of site visits.
- ▶ Participate in national exercises.
- ▶ Ensure continuous improvement by implementing actions to address recommendations identified following site visits or national exercises.
- ▶ Maintain HVP capability and competence.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Observe and evaluate operational incidents and exercises, implementing recommendation identified.
- ▶ Review systems, processes and procedures.
- ▶ Provide support to HVP operators, instructors and Tactical Advisors with competence standards, continuous professional development, and acquisition training.
- ▶ Maintain an effective governance process for the HVP capability.

EFFECTING ENTRY/EXIT

Sometimes we are asked to help Northumbria Police or North East Ambulance Service to gain access to someone’s home. This may be because they need urgent medical help or because someone is trapped in a room and can’t get out.

We will only do this where we consider there to be a risk

to life, and we will gain entry in the least destructive way possible.

Over the last few years, these types of incidents have been increasing, and we attended 135 incidents of this type in 2020/21. Due to the nature of this incident type the risk of injury and even death is high.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ Maintain Community Risk and Response competence.
- ▶ Ensure lock pulling kits are available on all fire engines.
- ▶ Continue to provide training and instruction to operational personnel in methods of entry.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ Work in partnership with Northumbria Police, North East Ambulance Service and regional FRS’, to frequently review current arrangements to inform how we all can continue to provide an appropriate response to these incidents in the future.
- ▶ Research and review further equipment that may provide alternative methods of entry where appropriate.

MEDICAL INCIDENT – CO-RESPONDER

Between January 2016 and September 2017, we responded to 293 medical incidents.

This was a programme delivered in collaboration with North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), involving our firefighters attending high priority calls including patients who were unconscious and/or not breathing. Due to the nature of this

incident type, the risk of injury and death is high, with 634 casualties and 60 fatalities per 1,000 incidents.

Although this pilot programme has concluded, we will continue to review the possible benefits of delivering this programme in the future.

MARAUDING TERRORIST ATTACKS (MTA)

Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTAs) are fast-moving, violent attacks where assailants move through a location aiming to find and kill or hurt as many people as possible.

The likelihood of this type of incident occurring in Northumberland is low, however there is significant risk of injury or death should an incident like this happen. It is important that

we have robust planning in place, and that we work closely with other emergency services so that a response is coordinated at every level.

The foundation to every multi-agency response is the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP), however we may need to take other factors into consideration when responding to attacks.

The JESIP Joint Operating Principles (JOPs) for terrorist attacks have been developed from operational experience from the three emergency services, as well as learning taken from actual attacks and exercises.

The overwhelming priority will always be to respond quickly and proactively to protect the public.

What we do to reduce risk:

- ▶ All appropriate operational staff have received training regarding the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP), aligned to the JESIP Joint Doctrine document.
- ▶ All appropriate operational staff have been provided with associated JESIP aide memoires to assist commanders and responders in dealing with critical multi-agency incidents.
- ▶ To support multi-agency operations at terrorist related, or other critical incidents, NFRS has trained a number of officers known as National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILOs). These NILOs have appropriate knowledge, skills and security clearance to be able to respond to these types of incidents effectively. Further, these NILOs proactively engage with local, regional and national networks to ensure that information is appropriately exchanged between our multi-agency partners and stakeholders.
- ▶ All appropriate operational staff have received training regarding the JESIP JOPs for terrorist type attacks - including an active exercise programme to apply and test this specific learning.
- ▶ NFRS has a number of terrorist attack response planning documents to ensure that the Service is prepared for these types of incidents.

What we plan to do, to further reduce risk:

- ▶ NFRS will continue to provide appropriate JESIP refresher training (including specific refresher training regarding terror attacks), alongside our multi-agency partners and stakeholders.
- ▶ NFRS will continue to engage in our active exercise programme alongside our multi-agency partners and stakeholders, thus ensuring that the learning provided is being periodically applied and tested in a realistic manner. Any learning from these exercises will be fed back into the Service and the wider sector, ensuring continuous improvement for both the Service and our partners.
- ▶ NFRS will continuously keep all of our terrorist attack pre-plans under close critical review, amending them as appropriate - with subsequent testing of these amended plans via our active exercise programme.



EMERGING RISKS

In addition to the range of incidents outlined in our CRMP, we must be prepared to respond to incidents that are currently infrequent yet have the potential for high impact to our communities, and continue to monitor any potential increase in the risk of likelihood and/or impact.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND EXTREME WEATHER

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides assessments on climate change, implications and future risks. Climate change is bringing increased temperatures, but this is leading to multiple changes such as heatwaves, heavy rainfall and extreme weather events such as storms. These changes increase the likelihood of incidents such as flooding and wildfires, but they also increase the likelihood that the Service will be required to respond to potentially devastating events, as we saw with Storm Arwen and Barra, and to support our communities in the recovery from such extreme occurrences.

We will continue to debrief and review every response to extreme weather events to ensure we have the necessary policies, procedures, training and equipment available to provide an effective and resilient operating model. NFRS supports NCC in its delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan 2020-23. In recent years the council has reduced its carbon emissions by a third and the county is now ranked as one of the greenest in the country. However, there is still work to be done in both further reducing our own greenhouse gas emissions and providing leadership to encourage residents, businesses and other organisations to take action to cut their own carbon footprint with the aim of reaching a net-zero Northumberland by 2030. As we support the delivery of the action plan, we recognise that the positive impacts on health and



climate may take many years. As such, NFRS must continue to monitor climate change and continuously assess our resilience in responding to this increasing risk ensuring we continue to have the right people, in the right place, with the right skills.

PANDEMIC

A pandemic is an outbreak of infectious disease, occurring over a wide geographical area, and generally affecting a significant proportion of the world's population, usually over the course of several months. In December 2019, the World Health Organisation learned of a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2, now known as Covid-19. NFRS works

closely with our colleagues in NCC Business Resilience and Emergency Planning and Public Health, and with partners in Northumbria LRF and nationally through the NFCC to ensure risks are captured in our CRR, and to ensure our business continuity arrangements are robust. The Service reacted quickly to the worsening pandemic to revise our operating model and service delivery to ensure that the people of Northumberland were protected.

On 22 January 2021, following a Covid-19 thematic inspection, a report was published by HMICFRS on how well the Service had responded to the current pandemic. Pleasingly, inspectors found that the Service

had adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively. Implementing several measures to protect personnel and managing arrangements through our Business Interruption Management Team (BIMT) our fire control and community fire stations remained available as normal. In addition, the Service was able to provide fire prevention advice to the most vulnerable members of our community by adapting our approach and introducing a triage process. At the time of publishing this CRMP, the county is still in the midst of the pandemic and the Service continues to adapt and develop

will outnumber children younger than 5 years. In 2050, 80 percent of older people will be living in low and middle-income countries, and the pace of population ageing is much faster than in the past. This shift in demographics can be seen in Northumberland, with the number of those aged 85 and over forecast to increase by 102 percent by 2043. As people age, they are more likely to experience several health conditions at the same time. Older age is also characterised by the emergence of several complex health states, often the consequence of multiple underlying factors including frailty, falls and delirium.

An increase in age and associated health conditions, may also result in an increase in risk from fire. As such, we will continuously review our risk model to ensure we are aware of additional factors that may influence risks to our communities; whilst continuing to strengthen our partnership arrangements in order to effectively deliver our prevention programmes to those who require our services the most.

FUTURE HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines a local plan as: ‘The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community’.

NCC consulted on modifications to its Local Plan during 2021 and NFRS continues to work closely with our partners across the council to ensure we are aware of and can plan for, emerging risk in relation to future residential, commercial and industrial developments.

We have strengthened our process of identifying emerging risks, enabling us to consider all impacts to our communities and our service.



its offering to the communities of Northumberland to maintain its high standards of delivery whilst ensuring it continues to protect the people of Northumberland and staff.

AGEING POPULATION AND INCREASED VULNERABILITY

According to the World Health Organisation, between 2015 and 2050 the proportion of the world’s population over 60 years will nearly double from 12 percent to 22 percent. By 2020, the number of people aged 60 years and older





We have provided detail on two such emerging risks below:

BRITISHVOLT

Britishvolt is building the first Gigaplant in the UK, at a site in Northumberland, where it will build sustainable low carbon battery cells. At full capacity in 2027, the Gigaplant will produce cells for around 300,000 electric vehicle battery packs per year.

NFRS started consulting and engaging with partners at a very early stage, with the first virtual online meeting taking place in January 2021. Since that time, we have engaged in regular virtual and on-site meetings with significant stakeholders.

The Gigaplant is proposed to provide 3,000 jobs for the North East, many from the local area. Further jobs are expected to be created in the supply chain. NFRS will continue to monitor the potential increase in associated risk.

As the site will come under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations we have discussed with Britishvolt what materials will be used and stored on site during the manufacturing process to gain a greater understanding of the hazards this will pose to our Community Risk and Response crews. However, work in the early stages by the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency has ensured compliance with COMAH regulations.

Our Community Risk and Response firefighters have made site visits to familiarise themselves with the site

during the construction phase. Once construction of phase 1 has been completed, firefighters will carry out a site inspection, completing a site-specific risk information (SSRI) document to record potential risks. This information will be added to our mobile data terminals (MDT), ensuring firefighters attending an incident have all the risk information they need.

We will consider specialist firefighting requirements and pre-determined attendances (PDA) based on the hazard information provided by Britishvolt.

NORTHUMBERLAND TRAIN LINE

NFRS continue to work with partners throughout the development of the Northumberland Train Line (Ashington to Blyth rail link), which will connect the South East of the county to central Newcastle. The reopening of the Northumberland Line will deliver 18 miles of upgraded track and six new stations, five located in Northumberland at Ashington, Bedlington Station, Bebside, South Newsham and Seaton Delaval. The scheme is planned to be completed by winter 2023 and is intended to:

- Improve access from towns such as Ashington and Blyth to employment hubs like Newcastle, as well as opening up new opportunities for education and travel.
- Provide a real incentive for potential employers to relocate to and invest in the area.

- Provide vital infrastructure to help deliver the region’s aspirations for population and economic growth. Help to attract visitors and improve local tourism. Enhance public transport connectivity within and beyond the region.
- Help to reduce congestion and improve air quality on key corridors by moving people away from car travel and onto public transport.
- Support the delivery of significant growth in sectors such as renewable energy, offshore oil and gas and engineering.
- NFRS have advised and assisted the planning team on fire precautions required at the proposed sites and are reviewing Community Risk and Response requirements to ensure an appropriate emergency response is provided. Our fire safety inspectors will continue to work with partners to identify new and developing businesses to ensure compliance with fire safety regulations, and responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.



AIMS AND PRIORITIES

NCC has a vision of **'one council that works for everyone'** underpinned by the five key principles of:

Living – we want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for.

Enjoying – we want you to love where you live.

Connecting – we want you to love having access to things.

Learning – we want you to achieve and realise your potential.

Thriving – we want to attract more and better jobs.

To support NCC vision and principles, and to deliver our mission statement of **'Making Northumberland Safer'** NFRS has developed the following aims to:

Reduce the number of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies in the community.

Reduce the number of deaths and injuries and mitigate the commercial, economic and social cost of emergency incidents.

Safeguard the environment and heritage sites (both built and natural).

Support communities to protect themselves from harm.

Provide money through the provision of a lean, efficient and resilient service.

Working towards our vision, NFRS has identified the following priorities for 2022-23

01 Deliver service improvements as outlined in our Continuous Improvement Plan.

The service has a comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) detailing a suite of actions against HMICFRS Areas for Improvement, CRMP priorities, and Priority programmes and projects. The Strategic Performance Board will monitor progress as part of the Service's Performance and Assurance Framework.

02 Deliver the NFCC risk model for dwelling fires as a pilot in Northumberland.

The NFCC in collaboration with Operational Research in Health has developed an evidence-based methodology for dwelling fires. We will enhance the risk model for use locally and implement a pilot in Northumberland to help us target our safe and wellbeing programme effectively and efficiently.

03 Undertake a review of protection delivery across the organisation utilising the NFCC Fire Standard and Implementation Tool.

The review, and subsequent implementation of recommendations, will ensure we are a fire and rescue service that improves the safety and wellbeing of our communities by reducing risks and incidents in the built environment, as outlined in the fire standard. Protection activities will educate and regulate those responsible for keeping buildings safe.

04 Undertake a review of prevention delivery across the organisation utilising the NFCC Fire Standard and Implementation Tool.

The review, and subsequent implementation of recommendations, will ensure we are a fire and rescue service that works to educate our communities to adopt safer behaviours, improving their safety, health and wellbeing, as outlined in the fire standard. Prevention activities will be effective, efficient and targeted.

05 Apply robust risk modelling to inform and further develop our community risk and response operating model.

We will work in collaboration with Operational Research in Health to produce an analysis of Community Risk and Response provision across Northumberland.

This will allow the service to assess the optimum distribution of our stations, fleet, equipment and specialist response to meet our risks, and will be used to inform our strategy for future estate and operational resource procurement, provision, and resilience.

06 Undertake a review of response standards for Northumberland.

We will review our response to emergency incidents across Northumberland, ensuring we continue to provide an effective and efficient service to our communities.



INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSURANCE

Good performance management and assurance will ensure our service is effective and efficient.

Internal:

- ◆ We monitor and assure our performance through a Performance and Assurance Framework.
- ◆ Our Strategic Performance Board provides high level oversight of all of our performance and assurance arrangements across the service.
- ◆ Priorities and Service Improvements are monitored through a Continuous Improvement Plan to ensure we are a service that is continually improving.
- ◆ We review risk annually to inform our CRMP, refreshing priorities and service delivery strategies.
- ◆ Our annual Statement of Assurance continues to provide confidence that we are delivering on our statutory responsibilities.
- ◆ NCC undertakes service reviews with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring continuous improvement.

External:

- ◆ HMICFRS will provide external assurance to the communities of Northumberland, through the delivery of regular programmes of inspections, additional thematic inspections, and robust monitoring arrangements.
- ◆ We will use learning from National Operational Learning and Joint Organisational Learning to ensure continued improvement of our service delivery.
- ◆ Our Training, Assurance and Safety Department has achieved the Skills for Justice Quality Mark, ensuring robust external assurance of training delivery.
- ◆ Our Community Safety Department is Matrix Accredited ensuring good quality delivery of information, advice and guidance to our communities.
- ◆ Our Prince's Trust programme is both internally and externally verified.

YOUR VIEWS

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) reminds us that we are accountable to the communities we serve, and that we must consult regularly on our risk management plan.

In our plan, we have told you about the types of risks communities face in Northumberland and set out the things we are doing and plan to do to remove or to mitigate those risks. Thank you for taking the time to read our plan, we would now love to hear your views.

We would like to ask you four questions which you can answer by completing our survey online:

www.haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/nfrs/crmconsultation2022/

This consultation opens on **Wednesday 5th January 2022** and will close on **Wednesday 16th February 2022**.

An Easy Read copy of our plan can also be found on our website at www.northumberland.gov.uk/fire.

This can also be provided in hard copy. If you would like to receive an Easy Read copy please email us at fireconsult@northumberland.gov.uk

QUESTION 01

In our Community Risk Management Plan, we have explained that there are 10 types of incidents that account for over 90 percent of all the incidents that we attend. Do you agree that we should focus our prevention, protection and community risk and response resources on these incidents?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If NO, please explain why here:

QUESTION 02

Against each incident type, we have explained what we do, and also what we plan to do to address the risks we have identified. Are there any other activities you feel we could consider?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please provide details of the activities you would like us to consider:

QUESTION 03

Are there any fire and rescue related risks you feel we have not identified, and that we should consider as a priority for our prevention, protection and community risk and response resources?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please detail the risks and how you feel we should use our resource to address them:

QUESTION 04

We will monitor progress against the priorities described in our plan in our Continuous Improvement Plan. Would you like us to tell you how we are doing?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, please let us know how you would like us to provide you with an update:

QUESTION 05

If you have anything else you would like to tell us, please include it in the box below.

Additional comments:



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Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service

West Hartford Business Park
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