



**GREATER
MANCHESTER**
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

ANNUAL DELIVERY REPORT

2023-24

OUR MISSION

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES.
WORKING TOGETHER.
SAVING LIVES.

Our Mission is why we exist and what we are here for. It centres around three clear elements that are at the heart of our work.

We have always been focussed on saving lives, and now more than ever our role is about protecting the wider communities we serve and being part of an integrated city-region that works together for the good of all our residents.

OUR VISION

A MODERN, FLEXIBLE,
RESILIENT FIRE AND
RESCUE SERVICE.

Our Vision describes what we want the Service to be and how we want our staff and the public to see us.

Our values set out what we believe in. They are the qualities we believe are the most important to us and describe the expectations the public have of us and that we have of each other. They set the standards our communities deserve and the way we should interact with one another across all levels of the Service.

Our focus is on driving change across the Service, leading our people and the behaviours we value to create a diverse and inclusive workforce, and building a culture of trust, respect and accountability.



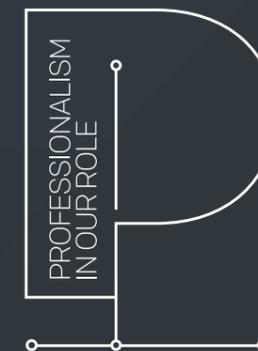
Striving to develop, to ensure our contributions make our Fire and Rescue Service the best it can be



Committed to creating and maintaining an open and truthful environment, which is fair and consistent



Removing barriers to participation to promote a truly representative service, using diversity to benefit us all



Demonstrating a positive attitude and commitment, to deliver a high-quality service and take pride in our role



Supporting, involving and listening to others, showing dignity, consideration and empathy

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FOREWORD

As we launch our Annual Delivery Report 2023-24, it gives me great pleasure to reflect on yet another successful year for Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS). Our organisation has accomplished some truly outstanding results, which are a testament to the unwavering dedication and hard work of all our staff.

It has been another challenging and demanding year, and much has been achieved. I am proud to say that GMFRS has been recognised as the most improved and one of the best performing fire and rescue services in the country, based on our latest HMICFRS inspection. This accomplishment reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering the highest level of service to the residents and businesses of Greater Manchester.

We have made significant strides towards achieving our ambitious Fire Plan 2021-25. In year three of the plan, we have made excellent progress in accomplishing much of what we set out to do. We continue to work towards completing delivery of our commitments outlined in the Fire Plan and planning for the future, as we move forward on our journey towards becoming an outstanding fire and rescue service.

It is important to acknowledge the progress we have made on our cultural journey this past year. Our 'culture first' approach, alongside the invaluable insights shared by our Culture First Board and Cultural Sounding Panel, has allowed us to further progress our commitment to inclusion. Our efforts have achieved significant equality, diversity and inclusion milestones over the year,

including moving from 93rd to 50th position in Stonewall's ranking of leading LGBTQ+ inclusive employers nationally, earning the charity's Gold Employer award, and providing inclusive culture training to over 1,000 colleagues.

We have celebrated winning a collection of awards across our teams, including the overall Emergency Service of the Year Award, Project of the Year for our Atlas Programme to reduce deliberate fires, and Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual of the Year at FIRE Magazine's Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards. The Service's Rainbow Staff Network won Stonewall's Network Group of the Year Award, beating more than 900 other organisations. Two of our firefighters were crowned British female champions in this year's British Firefighter Challenge and the GMFRS Road Traffic Collision Extrication Team scooped four national awards.

I am immensely proud of each and every member of staff at GMFRS and our achievements over the past year are a testament to their commitment and relentless efforts to deliver first-rate services to the residents of Greater Manchester. I am confident that, with their continued determination and dedication, we will continue to deliver excellence in all that we do.

Dave Russel
Chief Fire
Officer



This Annual Report covers my first full year as Deputy Mayor and I am immensely proud to reflect on GMFRS's record in that time. I continue to be impressed by the scope of work it delivers and by the commitment of the people who work here. It is a dedication not only to providing our core services as effectively as possible, but also to transforming how we work. I am delighted our teams are driving cultural improvements, as well as finding and implementing new ways of making our communities safer and fairer.

This report identifies the progress the Service has made in its delivery of the Fire Plan and its response to changing risks. Our success is clearly evident and has been recognised by a number of external agencies and awards, including our Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel who was honoured with the King's Fire Service Medal.

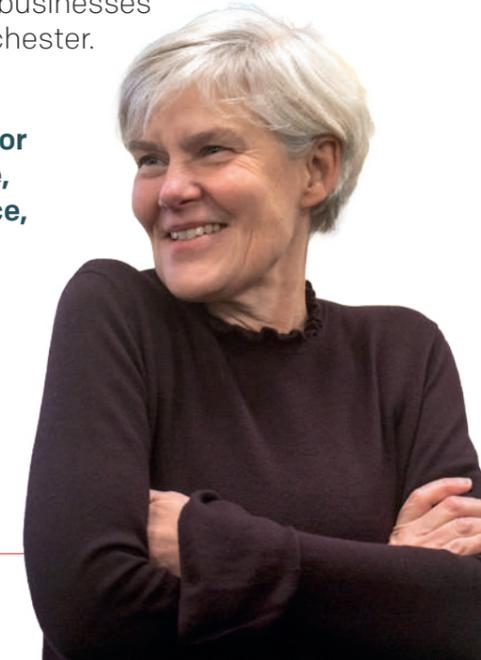
I was really pleased that this progress was acknowledged in our most recent HMICFRS inspection, published in March. For the 11 inspected themes, GMFRS achieved 10 'Good' gradings, and one 'Adequate' grading. HMICFRS also recognised four areas of Positive Practice and two areas of Innovative Practice. GMFRS's progress against previous inspections makes it the most improved service and one of the best performing in England.

This year has seen a huge number of success stories - an expansion of our cadets programme; improvements to firefighter fitness and contaminant management; procurement of new

emergency vehicles; an increase in the number of fire engines; the introduction of new prevention technology; an increase in the number of qualified fire safety officers, and more. But I know that few people in the Service are content at stopping here. There is a universal commitment and belief there is more we could do, and should do, to keep our residents and communities safe. We know that improving the culture of the Service is not a time-limited project but an ongoing commitment to our people and communities. It is a promise to create an environment where everyone who works for GMFRS, or uses its services, feels welcome, safe and respected. And as we strive to create a fairer, greener, more prosperous city region, it is vital we continue to deploy our resources to reach those most at risk or traditionally excluded from opportunities, and implement new and innovative ways of improving people's lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank colleagues for the incredible work they are doing. Our journey to becoming outstanding is driving forward, and I am excited where it will take the Service and the people and businesses of Greater Manchester.

Kate Green
Deputy Mayor for
Policing, Crime,
Criminal Justice,
and Fire



INTRODUCTION

This is GMFRS's Annual Delivery Report for 2023-24, providing an overview of the considerable progress made by the Service over the past year. Our recent HMICFRS inspection report rated us as "Good" in ten out of eleven areas assessed, reflecting the significant strides we have made.

We conducted a comprehensive public consultation on fire cover and special appliances, which informed our approach to increasing our capacity for responding to the more complex incidents being faced in our rapidly developing city region, while growing our frontline operational fleet from 50 to 52 fire appliances over the next two years. This increase, along with the introduction of new command vehicles, welfare units, foam equipment and specialist vehicles, has significantly improved our response to wildfires and other emergencies. Ahead of these changes, we have already introduced 14 new fire engines and prioritised prevention education initiatives – important investments to reduce fire and emergency risks for the people of Greater Manchester.

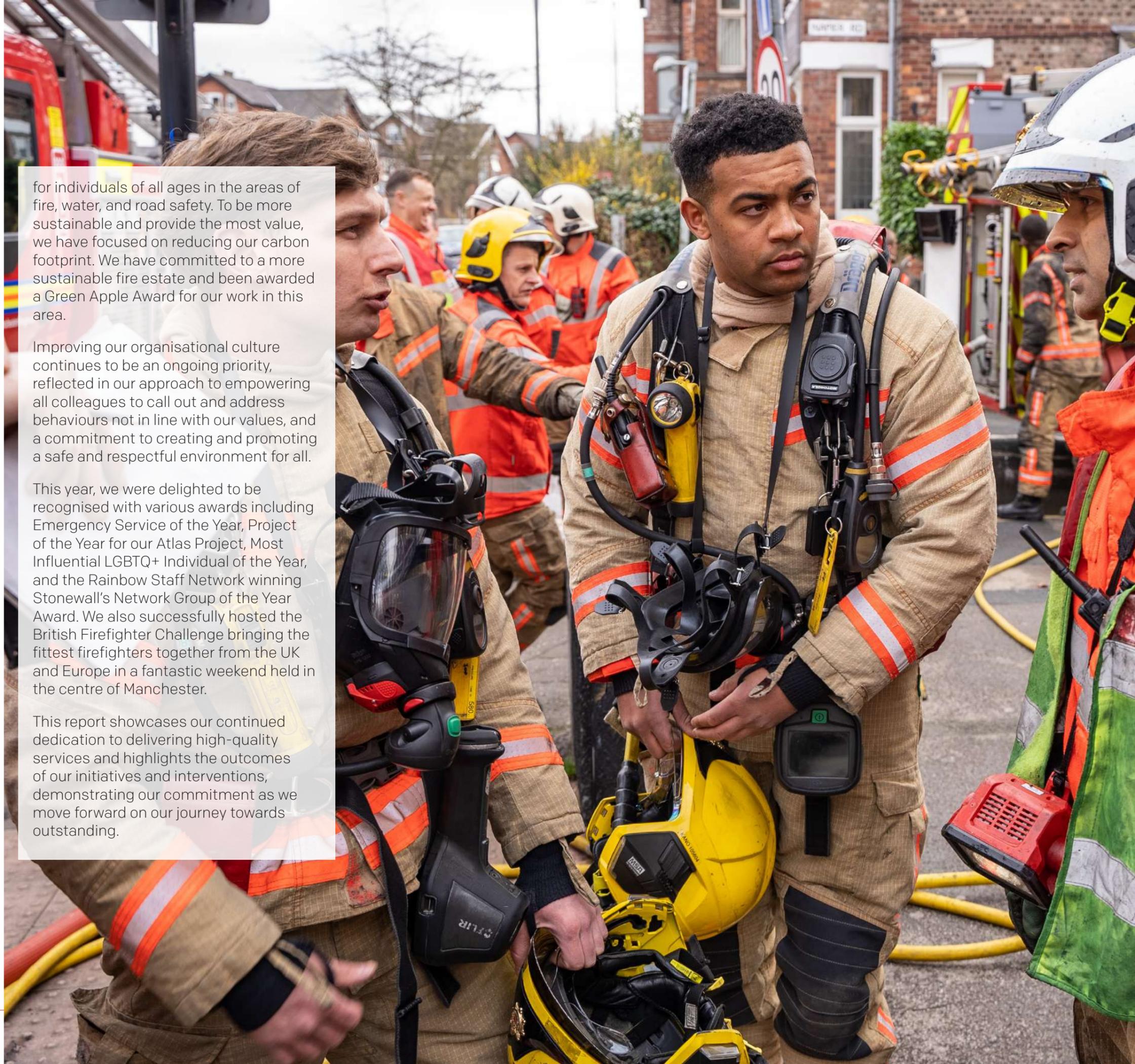
We remain committed to the protection of the built environment, particularly high-rise buildings, through collaborative action and by shaping national policy. The Protection team was also recognised at the NFCC Prevention and Protection Awards for its outstanding contribution to building and fire safety. As part of our commitment to innovative education, we have also leveraged new technologies such as virtual reality headsets which provide an immersive learning experience

for individuals of all ages in the areas of fire, water, and road safety. To be more sustainable and provide the most value, we have focused on reducing our carbon footprint. We have committed to a more sustainable fire estate and been awarded a Green Apple Award for our work in this area.

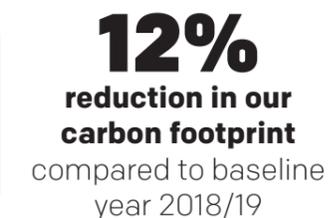
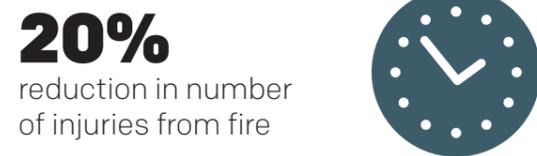
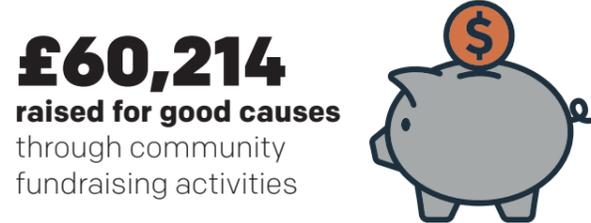
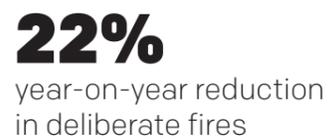
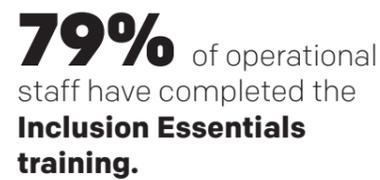
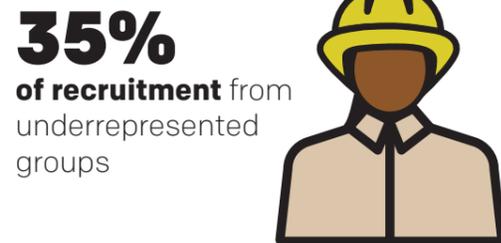
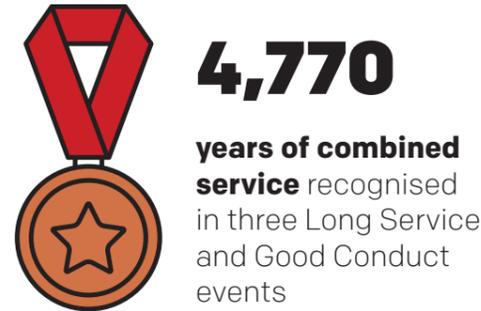
Improving our organisational culture continues to be an ongoing priority, reflected in our approach to empowering all colleagues to call out and address behaviours not in line with our values, and a commitment to creating and promoting a safe and respectful environment for all.

This year, we were delighted to be recognised with various awards including Emergency Service of the Year, Project of the Year for our Atlas Project, Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual of the Year, and the Rainbow Staff Network winning Stonewall's Network Group of the Year Award. We also successfully hosted the British Firefighter Challenge bringing the fittest firefighters together from the UK and Europe in a fantastic weekend held in the centre of Manchester.

This report showcases our continued dedication to delivering high-quality services and highlights the outcomes of our initiatives and interventions, demonstrating our commitment as we move forward on our journey towards outstanding.



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



Our performance against each of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is set out on pages 60-63

PRIORITY 1: PROVIDE A FAST, SAFE, AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

We will plan for emergencies and ensure resilience, to provide a fast, safe and effective response.

As one of the largest fire and rescue services in England, we cover a wide area that includes towns and cities, waterways, moorland, rail and road networks, an international airport, and an aerodrome. Greater Manchester is undergoing constant development and growing in population, which has led to an increase in high rise dwellings that have put greater demand on our services. Additionally, the risks we face are escalating as the climate emergency leads to more frequent flooding and wildfires. Our priority remains responding quickly and effectively to emergencies whenever they occur.

This year, we have made significant strides in improving our operational capabilities, with the introduction of new technology and by undertaking a number of reviews that will help us deliver effective emergency response services.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- We continued to implement the recommendations of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, completing the four monitored recommendations, and supporting North West Fire Control (NWFC) in their response. We work with partner agencies on high-risk, low frequency incident types, and have delivered 'lessons learned' presentations to the National Fire

Chiefs Council (NFCC) Operations Conference and other fire and rescue services nationally. We have also delivered a number of presentations to staff, which shared our Service's story and learning from the Manchester Arena attack and the public inquiry.

- We continued to review and implement a revised operating model to manage contaminants that firefighters may face during their duties. Procedures are in place to isolate contaminated clothing and equipment, with additional guidelines and equipment installed to reduce the risk of contamination for frontline staff. We are supporting the national workstream on contaminants, represent the region and lead nationally on an area of the work, consulting with the NFCC and partner fire and rescue services.
- We undertook a strategic review of our Service's call handling arrangements, implementing the recommendation to remain a partner in NWFC – the region-wide emergency call handling service – until at least 2033. As part of our commitment to providing the best possible control room provision we are leading on the procurement of a new NWFC mobilising system alongside all four partners that will ensure the continuation of an effective operational response.

- We continued work on a new workforce fitness framework. The project committed to implementing annual fitness testing and ensuring that upgraded gyms and equipment are available to the operational workforce to ensure our workforce are fit to provide an effective response. Trialling of the new framework took place at pilot stations, supported by videos, learning packages and our fitness team.
- We conducted a thorough public consultation on our fire cover and special appliance arrangements using a range of methods to ensure the people of Greater Manchester had many opportunities to give their input. The results of the consultation informed our approach to increasing our operational fleet from 50 to 52 fire appliances, helping us respond to the increased risks in and around the city centre.
- We commenced the improvement of our special appliance capabilities introducing a new operating model for our Technical Rescue Units to improve our response to complex emergencies like road traffic collisions, trench rescues, and collapsed buildings. We are currently training our staff at these Enhanced Rescue Stations, which will continue throughout 2024.
- To improve our technical response and enhance our wildfire capabilities, we have added two Haaglund tracked wildfire vehicles and we are procuring two wildfire asset transportation vehicles.
- The faster we can respond to an incident, the quicker we can rescue people trapped or in need of assistance, provide first aid and in the case of a fire or floods, limit the damage to property and the environment. This year our average response time to "life risk emergencies" was 7 minutes 32 seconds. Our average response time to primary fires was 7 minutes 14 seconds, which is the fourth fastest in England.
- The implementation of an updated Gartan crewing system for our frontline operational staff commenced. This version offers increased functionality, allowing us to resource our teams more effectively and efficiently, while ensuring we have the appropriate skill sets available on every shift. It will also eliminate the need for paper-based systems, giving frontline managers more flexibility in roster planning and easier access through mobile technology.

CASE STUDIES

Manchester Arena Inquiry

In 2023/24 the Service responded to the recommendations made by the Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI). The Inquiry made a total of 149 recommendations to various organisations, of which 75 were monitored for updates requiring directed organisations to submit reports to the Inquiry.

GMFRS was given four monitored recommendations relating to incident command, operational discretion, information sharing and record making. We have worked hard with partners in Greater Manchester to ensure our monitored recommendations have been achieved and were able to sign these off in 2024. As part of our commitment to learn and improve we have developed a Lessons Learned presentation, specific to the Fire Sector, which has been shared with colleagues within GMFRS as well as nationally to other fire and rescue services and the NFCC.

GMFRS has a lead role in the Manchester Arena NFCC MAI Oversight Group and provides representation on the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Program (JESIP) Group, which oversees the national progress of fire services towards achieving all the recommendations that apply to the sector. We have made substantial progress against these recommendations and remain committed to ensuring their full implementation. Regular progress reports are submitted by the Service to the Home Office.

During 2023/24, as part of the MAI workstream, we collaborated with NWFC, Greater Manchester Police, British Transport Police and North West Ambulance Service on multiple projects. These projects included large scale exercises to robustly test our multi-agency response to a terrorist attack at various venues across the city region, along with ongoing joint training at our Bury Training and Safety Centre. This built upon the success of our marauding terrorist attack project in 2022/23 which saw all frontline firefighters trained and equipped to respond to an attack or mass casualty incident.

Managing Contaminants

In response to the potential health risks that firefighters face because of increased exposure to fire contaminants, GMFRS initiated the Managing Contaminants Programme. This programme aims to mitigate the health risks caused by hazardous substances and contaminants, such as toxic gases, smoke particles, and chemicals, that are released during fire incidents. These substances can pose significant health risks to firefighters. Long-term exposure may lead to persistent health complications.

Recognising these risks, we have taken proactive and substantial measures to address and mitigate the adverse effects of fire contaminants. Through collaboration with representative bodies, GMFRS has implemented various strategies, including the development of training and education materials, improved cleaning and decontamination

measures, the provision of outdoor cleaning and storage areas, improved access to additional equipment to facilitate increased cleaning, and a continued review of emerging scientific research to evaluate these measures.

The Managing Contaminants Programme aims to reduce exposure to fire contaminants, thus improving the health and safety of firefighters. Firefighters are trained to use personal protective equipment (PPE) effectively and take appropriate safety measures to minimise exposure during operations. Moreover, GMFRS now provides dedicated outdoor equipment for decontamination that ensures thorough cleansing of both firefighters and equipment before re-entering stations and other internal workspaces.

GMFRS also leads regional and national projects that influence and improve the management and mitigation of fire contamination. By collaborating with other fire and rescue services and relevant stakeholders, we can share best practices, develop guidelines, and implement innovative strategies, raising awareness and improving the overall response to fire incidents. These initiatives reduce the risk of exposure to fire contaminants and enhance the safety and well-being of firefighters and other colleagues who may be exposed.

To further empower our staff in managing and minimising exposure, the Service regularly updates and enhances education and training materials. These resources provide firefighters with the necessary knowledge and guidance needed for identifying and managing fire contaminants safely. This proactive approach ensures that our workforce is well-informed about the identification, handling, and management of fire contaminants, allowing them to manage and minimise exposure effectively, safeguarding their health and safety during firefighting operations.

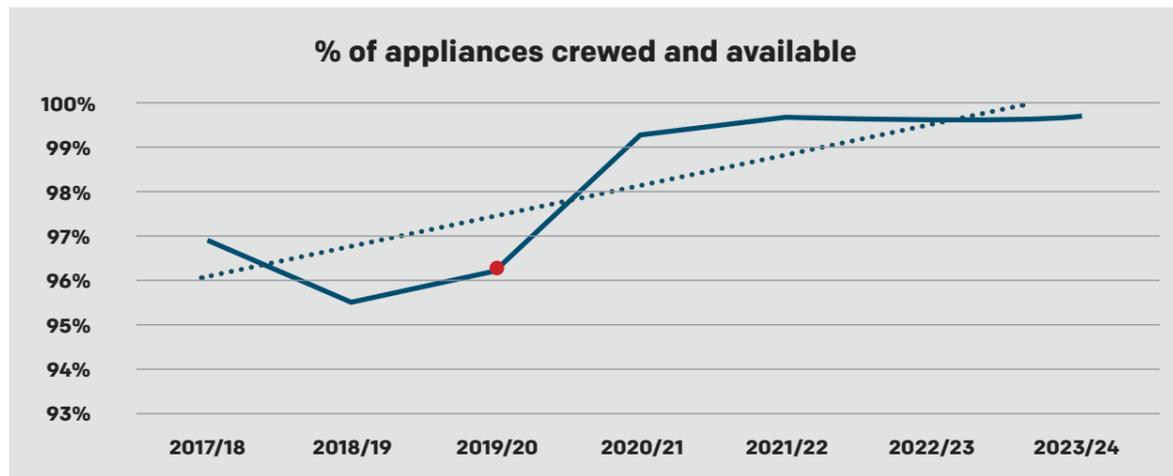


OUR PERFORMANCE

Resilience

Why it is important: Effective emergency response requires resilience, the ability to quickly mobilise the right type and number of resources. Measuring the percentage of appliances crewed and available is an effective way of helping deliver this.

How we performed: Over the last year we have had 50 appliances available for 99.67% of the time.

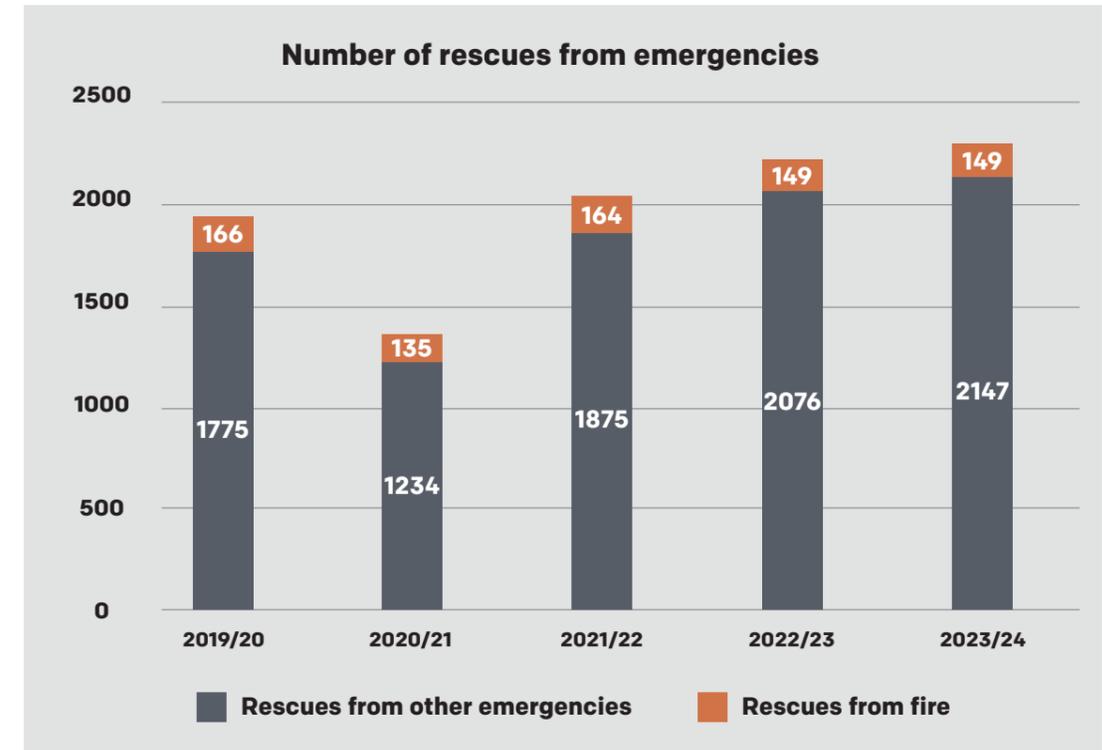


- Reduction to 50 appliances day/night on 02/10/19

People rescued from fire and other emergencies

Why it is important: Although we do everything we can to help communities and businesses reduce the likelihood of having a fire or other emergency, when they do occur we need to be ready to rescue those in danger or at risk of harm.

How we performed: In the last year we have rescued 2,296 people from fires and other emergencies. Control staff at NWFC handle all our emergency calls. They ensure fire appliances respond quickly to the right location, as well as providing lifesaving advice to those trapped in a fire or involved in another emergency.

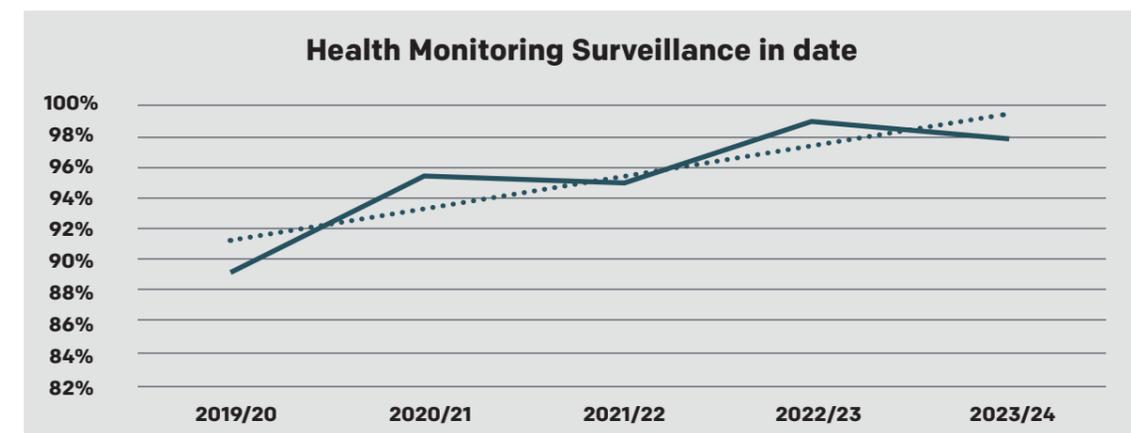


Firefighter health

Why it is important: Firefighter health is not only important to providing a resilient and effective emergency response, but it is also central to our commitments to organisational culture by looking after our staff and keeping them safe.

How we performed: The key performance indicator (KPI) was re-named 'Health Monitoring Surveillance in date' and replaces the term 'Statutory Medicals in date.' This enables us to closely monitor firefighter fitness. All medicals are now scheduled to give enough time to allow for cancellations and rearrangement if required, to ensure that medicals are completed well within the 3 month overdue threshold.

Despite an increased demand due to more new recruits than previous years, at the end of 2023/24, 97.62% of statutory medicals were in date.



PRIORITY 2: HELP PEOPLE REDUCE THE RISK OF FIRES AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

We will help people reduce the risks of fires and other emergencies and help build safer communities.

Preventing an emergency is safer and more effective than responding to one after it has occurred. The work we undertake with our local communities, and other services, supports the residents of Greater Manchester to look after themselves and each other, especially those that are the most vulnerable. Supporting the vision of the Greater Manchester Strategy - good lives for all in a fairer, greener, more prosperous city region - we are developing a whole-life approach to reducing risks.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- We have expanded the use of innovative technologies to enhance our prevention education initiatives, utilising virtual reality headsets to educate people on fire, water and road safety. The headsets were launched at a road safety event at Farnworth fire station and demonstrated at a Road Peace event in May 2023. Since then, we have used them extensively to convey thematic messages, videos, and interactive content to a range of age groups.
- We have introduced a new Community Fire Cadet model and programme designed for young people aged 14-16 years. The programme targets young people who may be at risk of fire, road

or water-related incidents, struggling in mainstream education, or involved in anti-social behaviour. In November 2023, we launched community Fire Cadet courses at four fire stations: Wythenshawe, Bury, Eccles, and Bolton. The programme provides an opportunity for young people to acquire basic firefighting skills as well as personal and social skills.

- We commenced work on a large-scale Prevention and Protection digital programme, which will continue throughout 2024/25 and beyond. The programme will lead to the creation of an integrated digital recording system, capturing information about buildings, places, and prevention activities all in one place. The system will improve data recording and efficiency, enabling our colleagues to focus more time on core prevention and protection activities.
- The Prevention Team adopted the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Early Intervention Implementation Framework to meet the needs of young people and communities through the delivery of best practice programmes. A nationally accredited level 1 qualification in 'Developing Resilience' has been embedded via the existing Atlas Project.

- We promoted and embedded StayWise as the primary education tool for all GMFRS staff. Staywise is an online resource platform of educational resources and activities from the UK's leading emergency services and safety-focussed organisations. Training is being provided to support the delivery of a range of education packages via the StayWise portal to ensure vital safety messaging is incorporated into everyday learning.
- The prevention messaging we provide to residents living in flats has been strengthened and enhanced, ensuring a targeted approach to high-rise buildings and households. Cross-directorate working was utilised during high-rise days of action where leaflets were distributed, doorstep advice was provided, and home fire safety assessments completed. As part of this activity, we engaged with housing providers and managing agents of the properties, advising them how to disseminate key messages about fire safety, and improving building and resident safety.
- We have created a 'Safer Communities and Interventions Team', that will provide bespoke interventions to reduce risks, focusing on areas such as deliberate fire setting and violence related themes. We are progressing investment in the team and the development of our programmes, to ensure they match the needs of individuals, our communities, and complement our partnership collaborations.



CASE STUDIES

StayWise

StayWise is an online library that brings together the educational resources of the emergency services (fire, police, ambulance, coastguard, RNLI) and key safety-focused organisations. Led by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) it was established to support teachers and community safety practitioners to deliver essential safety messages to children and young people.

GMFRS has adopted StayWise to realise the intended benefits of efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of message. StayWise will provide our staff with a wider suite of resources to choose from and help develop and deliver engaging lessons in schools and communities. It will help promote our key safety messages and impart vital life skills and critical safety messages through core curriculum activity.

In our commitment to adopt the StayWise platform and introduce best practice for delivery of educational activities, we have liaised directly with the StayWise Team to ensure our information and key messages are comprehensive and meet the needs of our communities. StayWise resources align to nationally agreed fire, road and water safety messages, improving the consistency of messaging delivered by emergency services, schools and other partners. We completed a robust and thorough evaluation of our educational material, and some of our previous educational materials are now incorporated within the StayWise library.

We are encouraging our blue light partners and education professionals to utilise StayWise. Widespread adoption of StayWise could increase the contact time young people have with key safety messages and support the reduction of avoidable deaths and injuries.

As we strive to be a learning organisation, StayWise has inbuilt functions to assist us to track and evaluate its use in our organisation to ensure our communities get the best possible service.

Fire Cadets

As part of our Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) 2022/23, we fulfilled our commitment to develop a new model to introduce a Fire Cadets scheme to support the development of young people. Building on this further, we included in our 2023/24 ADP a commitment to implement a Fire Cadets scheme to support the development of young people, improving their future employment prospects and providing pathways.

GMFRS has established Fire Cadet units at Eccles, Bury, Bolton and Wythenshawe. Cadets meet once a week and participate in a range of theoretical and practical activities leading to an accredited Duke of Edinburgh qualification. The programme covers various themes, including the use of hose-lines, first aid, health and safety, and home, water, and fire safety.



We are proud to see our Fire Cadets thrive in the programme and take on new opportunities. Two of our Fire Cadets are joining the NFCC's 'Cadet Voice' to have a say in the future of Fire Cadets and the programme's evolution nationally. Additionally, two have participated in the regional Institute of Fire Engineers lecturette in Lancashire.

To promote further progress, we have introduced a rigorous application process and will also be launching an online workbook in September to support those wishing to become a Fire

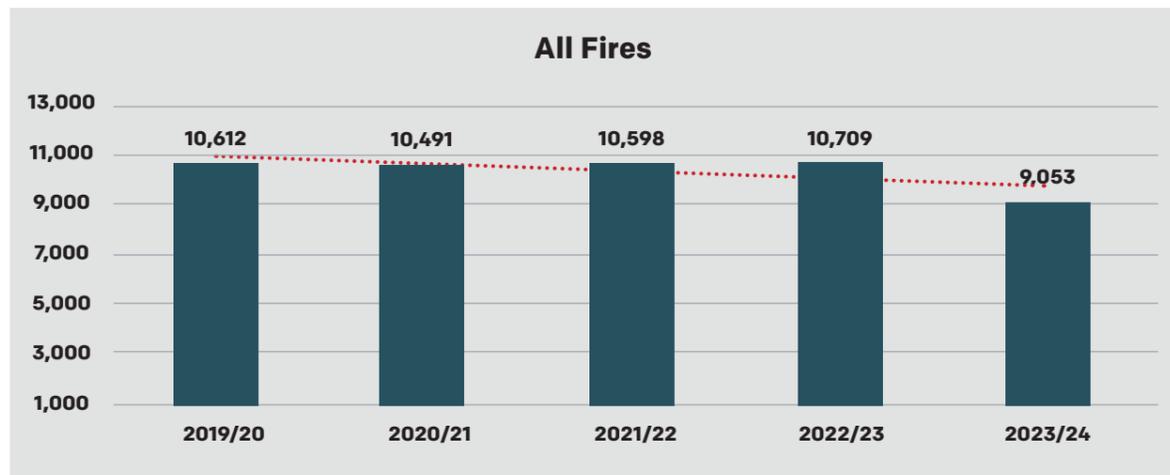
Cadet Crew Manager. To expand the Fire Cadet programme and offer more opportunities, we are collaborating with Manchester Enterprise Academy to offer an after-school activity tailored to young people with special educational needs, disabilities, or challenging behaviour, with the support of existing cadets acting as mentors.

OUR PERFORMANCE

Fires

Why it is important: All fires have the potential to result in the loss of life, personal injury, damage to property and the environment. Preventing all types of fire is rightly seen as one of the main roles of the fire and rescue service.

How we performed: This year the total number of fires in Greater Manchester dropped by 15% to 9,053. This is a 33% reduction over the last 10 years and a 15% reduction over the last 5 years.

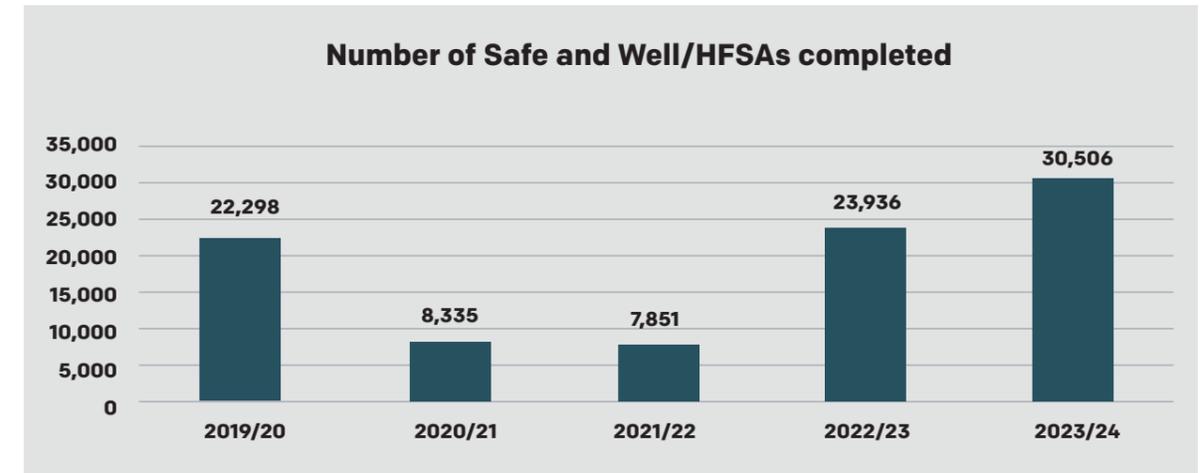


Home Fire Safety Assessments (HFSA)

Why it is important: We are committed to engaging with those within our communities who are most at risk of fire, to inform and educate them on how to reduce the risk of fires in their homes, as prevention is safer and more effective than response.

How we performed: We delivered 30,506 HFSA to those identified as being most at risk of fire during 2023/24, a continued increase versus previous years.

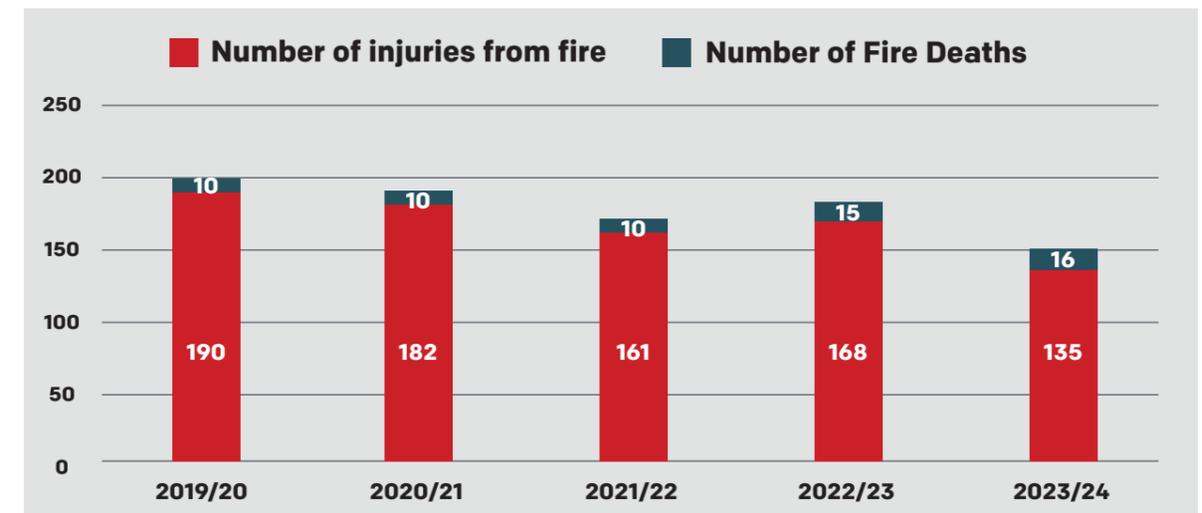
The new HFSA process implemented in January 2022 is embedded across the Service. Our High Risk Household List, which uses a risk stratification process to identify households that represent the highest risk of fire, launched in July 2022 and has helped drive the increase in targeted visits. This, coupled with continued work to improve our referral awareness and process with partners across Greater Manchester, supports the increase.



Injuries from Fire

Why it is important: We have relatively small numbers of fire deaths each year, which makes statistical analysis of trends more challenging. Analysing casualty and fatality information helps us to understand underlying risk factors and target our resources to ensure we further reduce the risk of deaths and injury from fire.

How we performed: The number of injuries has reduced by 20% (33) in 2023/24 compared to the previous year. Over the last 5 years, there has been a reducing trend in injuries, amounting to a decrease of 29%. The casualty profile we see in Greater Manchester aligns with national statistics, according to the most recent Home Office data published for the year ending March 2023. Sadly, there has been an increase in the number of fire deaths in the past two years. Most injuries and fire deaths result from dwelling fires, so prevention continues to be an area of focus actioned through targeted HFSA interventions, campaigns, and partnership referrals.

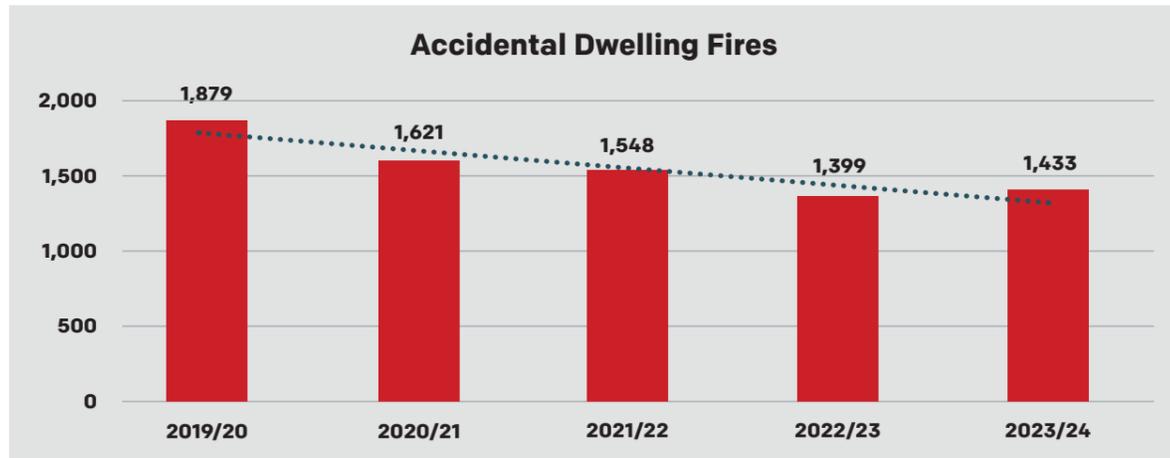


Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)

Why it is important: The risk of death and injury from a fire at home, at work and in the wider community tragically still exists. Approximately three-quarters of fire deaths occur in people's homes. Our proactive prevention and protection work is key to stopping these incidents occurring in the first place.

How we performed: The majority of ADFs continue to be 'cooking related' (45%), similar to previous years.

This year there have been 1,433 ADFs, which is an increase of 2%, though a reduction of 24% over the last 5 years and as shown on the graph, is a reducing trend.



PRIORITY 3: HELP PROTECT THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The profile of Greater Manchester is changing rapidly as we continue to see an increase in the number of high-rise buildings, expansion of the airport, and growth in the commercial sector. The scale of development in the city region is exceeding national planning assumptions, with the faster growth here than the UK economy reflected in our changing skyline. To protect the safety of our firefighters and our residents, and to protect our local economy, environment, and heritage, we are working with partners and developers, and are shaping national policy, to ensure buildings in Greater Manchester are safer and better protected from fire.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- It has been a hugely successful year for our protection team who were recognised at the NFCC Prevention and Protection Awards ceremony. The Training and Development team were recognised for their outstanding contributions to building and fire safety, scooping the 'Outstanding Contribution Award' and the 'Team Award.'
- We have implemented an ambitious new functional delivery model to ensure we can deliver our regulatory activities efficiently and to a high standard. This has seen us improve our average response times to consultations significantly, create a team to respond to fire safety

concerns seven days a week and in the evenings, and improve our business engagement activities. We have continued to recruit and train new Fire Safety Regulators and welcomed 15 new colleagues into the Service.

- In January 2023, the Fire Safety England Regulations were implemented, which included most of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report recommendations. Our approach to managing these requirements is built on the collaborative work undertaken with Housing Providers and Managing Agents over the last few years. In addition to implementing systems to accept and respond to fault reports to ensure resident and firefighter safety, we have also produced resources that can be used for residents. Working with Prevention colleagues we developed new leaflets for residents and collaborated with other North West fire and rescue services to produce videos for residents and those responsible for carrying out monthly checks on fire safety provisions. Our regulatory activity will continue in 2024/205 with the release of further information from the Building Safety Regulator. We conduct regular large-scale training exercises to ensure our firefighters are adequately prepared to respond to high-rise incidents.

- During the last 12 months we have been improving and expanding our fire safety training capability to ensure we continue to develop Fire Safety Regulators and upskill our frontline operational colleagues by delivering high quality training. We continue to work on developing a Level 4 Diploma so we can deliver all core training in-house, ensuring best value for money for the people of Greater Manchester.
- We launched our Business Engagement Framework as part of the NFCC Business Safety Week to formalise our commitment to supporting businesses to comply with their legal obligations. We provided advice to over 13,000 businesses and this included mailshots to licensed premises on the risk of combustible decorations, visits to city centre bars in advance of Manchester Pride, online sessions for housing providers and managing agents on changes to the Fire Safety Order, and advice being sent to all petrol stations following a serious incident. We collaborated with North West fire and rescue services and the GM Centre of Regulatory Excellence to launch a campaign for Takeaways – this involved a new leaflet, social media campaign with bite size videos and online seminars on fire safety and food safety.



CASE STUDIES

Fire Safety Training - Level 2 Award Fire Safety Checks

Our Protection Training and Development Team worked with Skills for Justice to develop the criteria for a new Level 2 Award in Fire Safety Checks. GMFRS was the first training provider to be accredited to deliver this course.

The Level 2 Award is a key priority to develop the knowledge of frontline operational crews, enable them to provide advice to businesses and collect risk information to inform the Protection Risk Based Inspection Programme.

The course has been piloted with apprentices and watches and the roll-out across the whole organisation commenced in January 2024. As part of the pilot, apprentice firefighters worked with the Risk Reduction Team to carry out fire safety checks in Hyde. The day of action saw advice being offered to small businesses on complying with their fire safety responsibilities and cases where serious concerns were found being picked up by Fire Safety Inspectors.

Since the rollout of the programme further improvements have been made to the course to streamline the assessments and create a series of videos that will improve the experience of learners.

Supporting legislative change through business engagement

As part of our commitment to supporting housing providers and managing agents to adapt to new legislation we have created a range of resources to support compliance with the Fire Safety England Regulations.

Our Higher Risk Team worked with Prevention colleagues to develop specific advice and information leaflets for residents living in blocks of flats – these contain advice on preventing fires in the home and advice on evacuation strategies.

To further develop this support, the North West Protection Group collaborated to produce a series of videos. Two videos were produced for residents which explain the evacuation strategies which may be in place in blocks of flats and what to do if there is a fire in the building. Fire safety officers from around the region also produced a series of short videos explaining how to undertake the monthly checks required by the Fire Safety England Regulations to support training for building managers and caretakers.

The videos were shared with local partners and national trade bodies. They were also launched with social media and media campaigns and have now been viewed thousands of times.



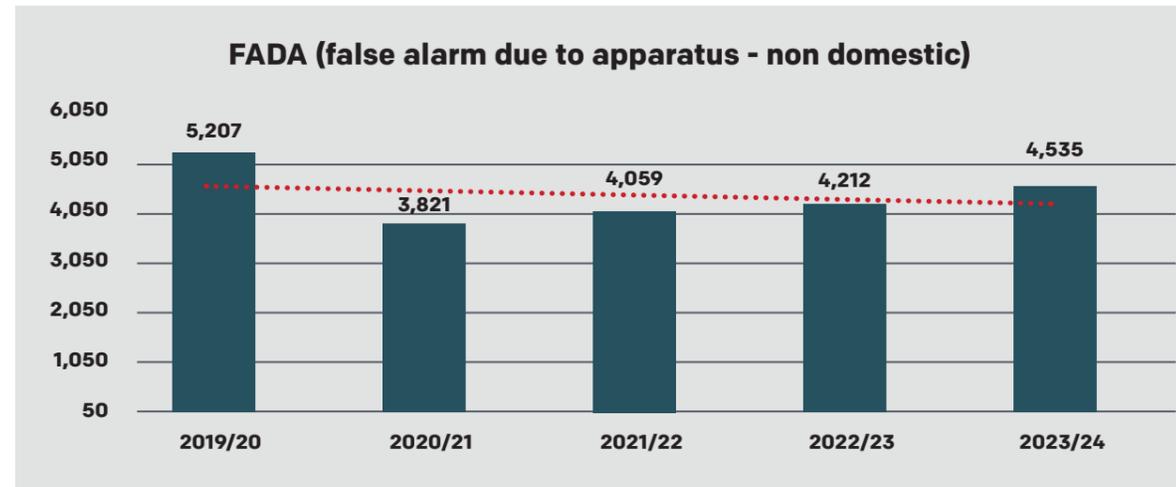
OUR PERFORMANCE

Preventing False Alarms

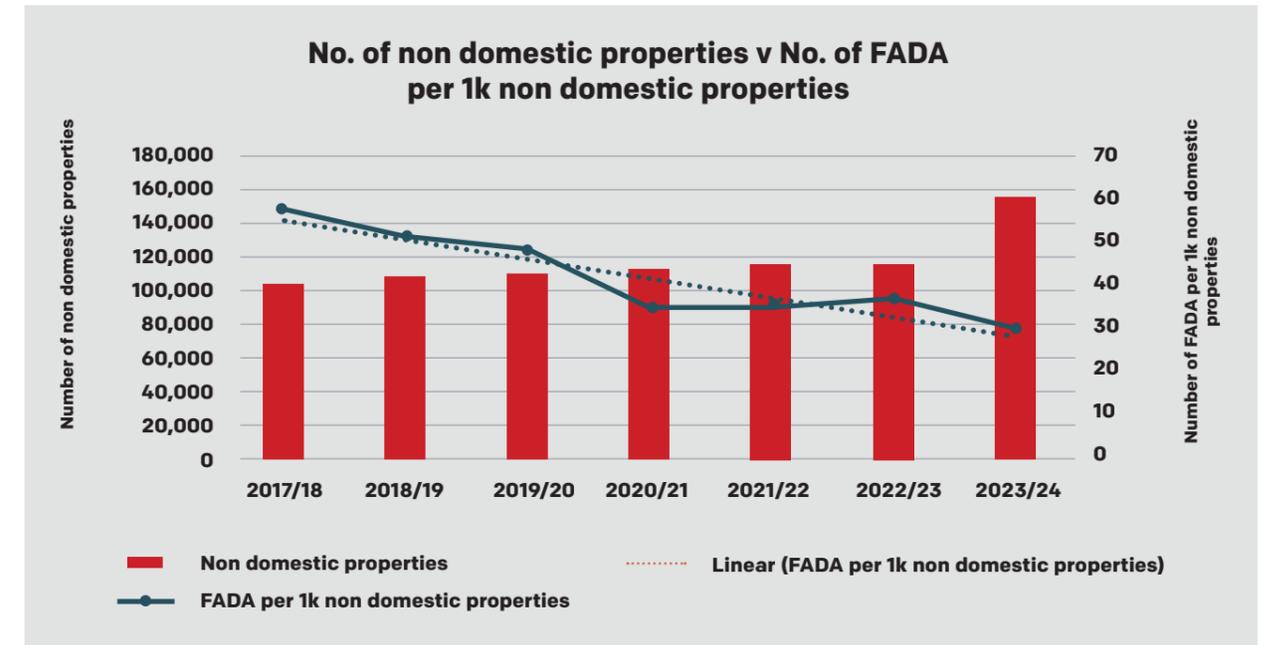
Why it is important: False alarms from automatic detection systems (FADA) tie up our crews, making them temporarily unavailable for real incidents, and incur avoidable costs.

How we performed: This year saw 323 (8%) more FADA attended in non-domestic premises than the previous year, although there has been a reduction of 13% compared to 5 years ago.

The number of FADAs fluctuates on a regular basis but the majority continue to be in hospitals (24.37%) and residential accommodation (12.46%).



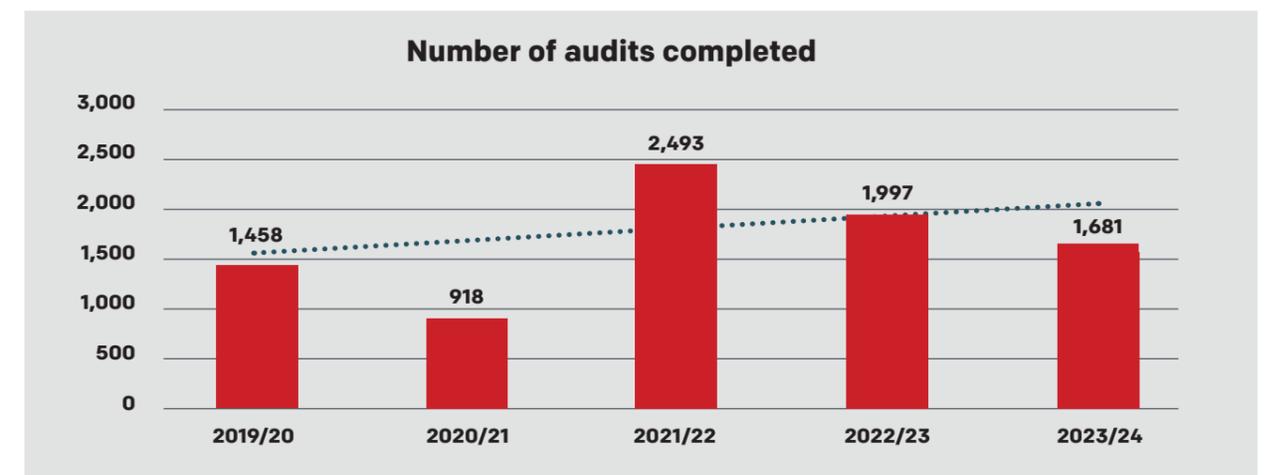
The direction of travel for FADA over the last 12 months is negative, with year-on-year increases in such incidents. But the chart on the next page shows that the proportion of properties having these incidents is showing a reducing trend due to the rise in construction of new buildings.



Fire Safety Audits

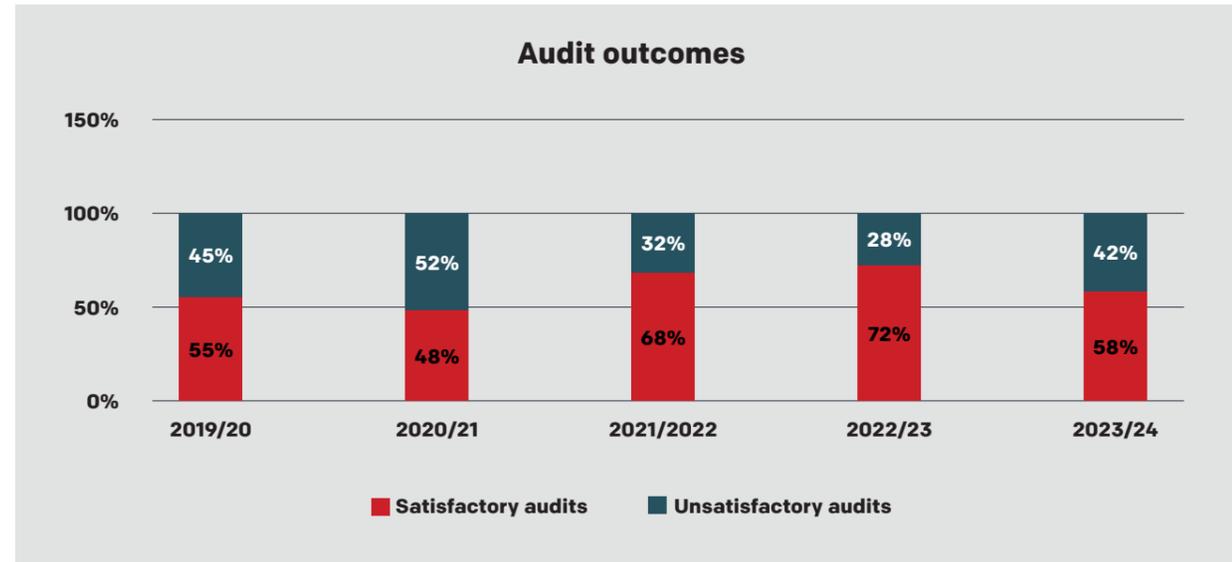
Why it is important: We have a statutory duty to provide advice and enforce fire safety standards in buildings. Any building fire poses a potential risk to life, but the cost of fires is also increasing and when businesses suffer a major fire, many do not recover, leading to loss of jobs.

How we performed: 1,681 fire safety audits were undertaken in 2023/24, with the majority being proactive audits taken from the Risk Based Inspection Programme. The remainder were responsive, including responding to complaints, post-fires, automatic fire alarms (AFAs) and intelligence-led work.



To increase the number of audits, we have recruited 26 Fire Safety Regulators over the past 18 months. These regulators are currently in a developmental phase to gain experience and expertise. In this phase, auditing is sometimes done in pairs or under supervision, which limits the capacity of more experienced staff to mentor and lead separate audits. While more Fire Safety Regulators are now working towards meeting the expected number of audits, as they gain more experience and become fully ingrained in their new roles, we anticipate that there will be an increase in the number of audits completed.

The proportion of audits which were classified as 'satisfactory' decreased this year and is slightly below the national average of 63% (based on 22/23 national data).



PRIORITY 4: USE RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY AND DELIVER THE MOST VALUE

We will use resources efficiently and sustainably in a way that delivers the most value.

Investment in our resources ensures we have the right assets in place at the right time to respond to the ever-changing and complex needs of a growing city-region. Our diverse communities across Greater Manchester benefit from a more sustainable, fit for purpose fleet and improved facilities for our frontline staff, supporting our commitment to maintain an efficient estate for the future.

We are committed to investment across all areas of our Service and our effective financial management has led to efficiencies and savings across all these areas.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- GMFRS has committed, through the Estates Programme, to create a more sustainable fire estate which supports a modern diverse workforce, fit for the 21st century and beyond. Construction is underway on a new purpose-built facility at Blackley– the first of our fire stations to be rebuilt as part of our 16-year commitment to improving our estates.

- Littleborough fire station reopened on 6th November 2023 after an extensive refurbishment which provided new fitness facilities, a new kitchen and dining area, locker rooms, and improved facilities for our workforce to manage contaminants.
- Planning permission has been granted for a new station at Whitefield, with an application for planning permission submitted for King Street, Stockport. It is anticipated that both stations will be rebuilt over the next 12-24 months and will offer our firefighters state of the art facilities to support improved welfare and training provision on site.
- As part of an extensive station refurbishment programme, 20 stations are in the process of benefitting from redecoration and new flooring, 18 stations have seen gym upgrades to support firefighter fitness, and feasibility studies are being undertaken to provide all stations with improved rest and study facilities.
- The Service is committed to minimising the risk of contaminants at fire stations. Currently, we are undertaking measures to improve the decontamination facilities, and we have already completed upgrades in 30 stations, with ongoing works in several others. Our ultimate objective is to upgrade every station to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our firefighters.

- Following on from the successful launch of the Sustainability Strategy, carbon reduction schemes have had feasibility studies undertaken at key stations, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure is being designed across the estate. These initiatives aim to reduce the annual carbon footprint of the Service. So far we have reduced our carbon footprint by 12%, compared to our 2018/19 baseline.
- We have delivered financial efficiencies of £711,000 by identifying savings opportunities across areas of the Service, meeting our required efficiency target set by national Government.
- While making these savings, we have invested in our frontline response by purchasing 14 new fire engines. This represents a £3.5m commitment to continue to keep the communities of Greater Manchester safe.



CASE STUDIES

Littleborough Community Fire Station

In November 2023, we reached a milestone in our estates improvements programme when Littleborough Community Fire Station re-opened its doors.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham joined Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel and Councillor for Littleborough Lakeside Janet Emsley to reopen Littleborough Community Fire Station, which has undergone a major refurbishment and extension.

This upgrade to the station sees an increase in accommodation for staff members, new fitness facilities, a new kitchen and dining area, improved/new locker rooms, and improved facilities to support managing contaminants that firefighters may be exposed to at incidents.

We have also introduced an 'iconsole' to replace the existing console facilities used across our estate. This new mobilisation equipment improves the crew's ability to get key information before attending an incident.

As we continue to shape services across Greater Manchester, fire stations such as Littleborough are being improved to ensure we are delivering a service that is fit for the future.

These improvements and refurbishments form part of our estates strategy, with a focus on reducing our carbon footprint and supporting the city-region's ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2038.

Green Apple Award

The Sustainability Team won a Green Apple Environmental Award in recognition of its work on energy saving over the past 12 months. The award is based on the team's delivery of energy saving projects across our fire stations – funded by the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) – followed by an energy saving campaign aimed at encouraging staff to reduce energy wastage on station.

Solar power was installed at two GMFRS fire stations, alongside switching 18 stations to LED lighting. These measures will deliver annual energy savings of around 444,791 kWh, with annual carbon emissions reduced by around 31.7tCO₂e. The upgrades to Greater Manchester's fire stations were part of improvements to the wider public estate, which have seen over 200 public sector buildings across the city-region receive improvements to make them greener and more energy efficient. Greater Manchester's public buildings are now producing over 7,000 tonnes less CO₂ equivalent per year as a result.

The second phase of the project involved an energy saving competition, which saw stations graded based on raw kWh savings. Station staff were challenged to support this, finding ways to contribute to further energy savings and raise awareness amongst their peers.

Since delivering the project, GMFRS has presented the success of the project to other UK fire and rescue services, supporting them in developing energy efficiency projects of their own. There are also plans to collaborate with other services to deliver a wider energy saving competition.

Receiving the award, Mat Chard from the Sustainability Team said: "Everyone at GMFRS has a really important role to play in helping to create a sustainable city-region so it is great to have been recognised for a collective effort in reducing energy usage within our organisation. We are proud of what has been achieved and are looking forward to inspiring further climate action."

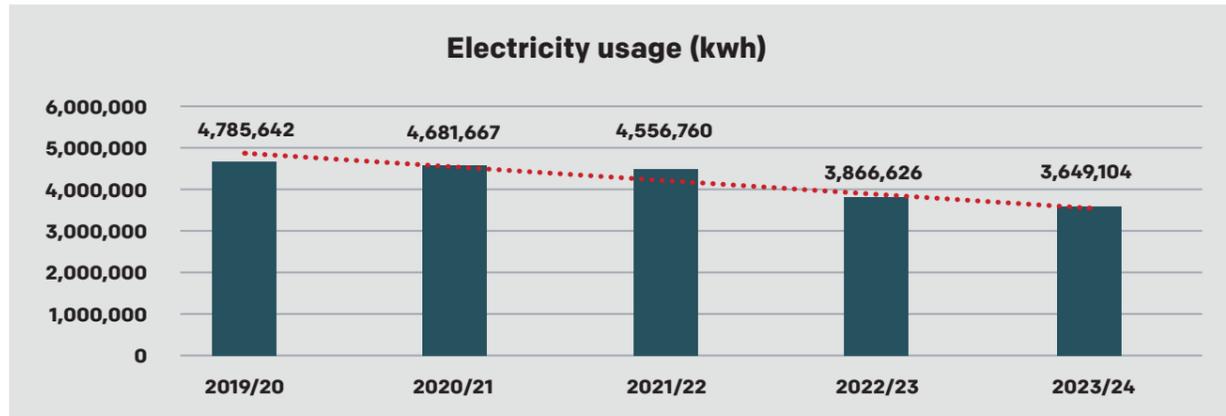


OUR PERFORMANCE

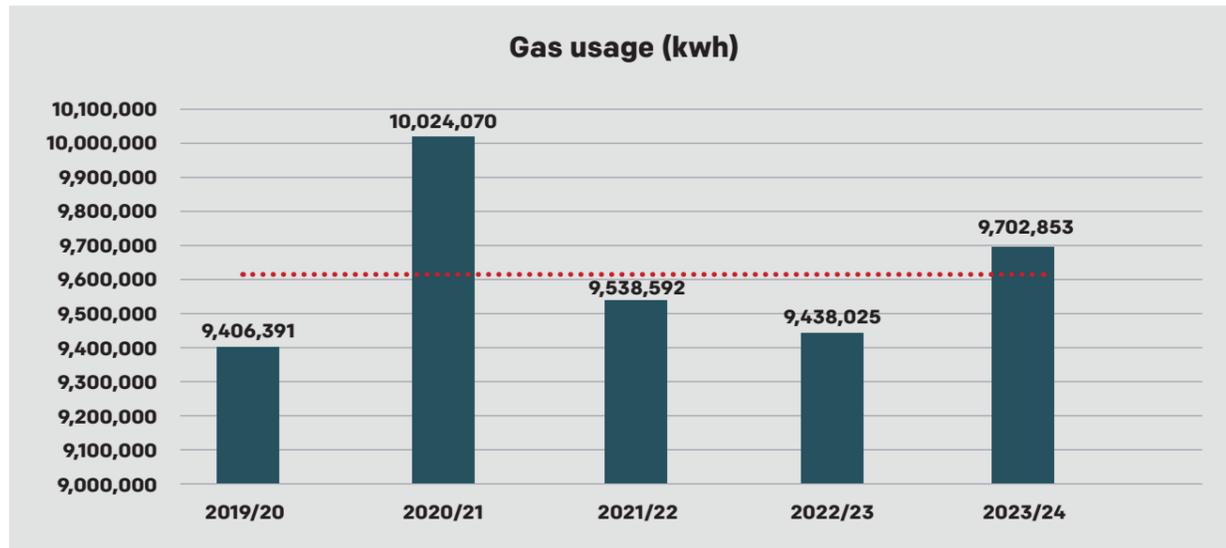
Energy use

Why it is important: The climate emergency impacts us to an even greater degree than many other services. Warmer, drier summers increase the number of wildfires, and wetter, milder winters increase the risk of flooding and road traffic collisions. We have 45 sites and a social responsibility to reduce our own carbon footprint and improve biodiversity.

How we performed:



The reduction in electricity usage in 2023/24 compared to the previous year is attributed to the ongoing benefits of fire stations being fully retrofitted with LED lighting and an expanded solar PV system at two of the stations. Gas usage is showing an increasing trend over the last five years, likely due to an increase in heating demand compared to previous year, particularly in Winter months.



PRIORITY 5: DEVELOP A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSIVITY

We will develop staff and leadership excellence, in an inclusive and progressive workplace.

At the heart of our Service are our employees, and their growth and wellbeing are of utmost importance to us. We are committed to cultivating a diverse workforce that mirrors the communities we serve, and we are actively working towards this goal.

We have continued to prioritise the improvement of our organisational culture by adopting a 'culture-first' approach, considering our service values in everything we do. In 2023, we established our Culture First Board who oversee and scrutinise our approach. We are committed to further developing a more inclusive workplace where our whole workforce can thrive.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- In July 2023, we hosted the British Firefighter Challenge in Manchester. The event had a festival atmosphere and featured food, live music, and showcased firefighter equipment. Over 40 GMFRS staff participated, and Helena Brown, one of our Whitefield Station firefighters, was crowned the British Female Champion. The event was supported by over 70 GMFRS volunteers who managed coordination, safety and welfare during the race days.
- We have now fully embedded the Leadership Development Framework which offers a consistent approach to enhancing skills, competencies, and knowledge for our current and future leaders. This has been achieved through the rollout of leadership, management, and coaching qualifications. We also hosted our second cohort of the Diverse Leaders programme, equipping those from underrepresented groups for future selection and promotion processes.
- We created a new Volunteering Strategy, enhancing and improving our offer for our committed volunteers who dedicate valuable time to support the work of our Service, and welcomed 24 new volunteers. This group became the first new volunteer recruits since before the pandemic.
- We continued to build on the successes of our Rewards and Recognition Framework, and held incredibly popular events, including six Long Service Good Conduct awards, representing 4,770 years of service for GMFRS colleagues. We have also developed a calendar of events and established an awards panel.



- We are developing our Organisational Learning Framework which will review and evaluate the lifecycle of learning, including any measures implemented. Learning outcomes from all areas of GMFRS will be included in the framework and the new system will track learning outcomes and action plans.
- A new system has been introduced to capture public feedback following our attendance at incidents. This gives us the facility to hear directly from the public and continue to improve our service.
- We held our third annual Power of Staff Networks Conference in October. The event aims to highlight the successes of our staff networks and recognise their power and influence across the organisation. Attendees came from across the country to share GMFRS's learning and successes.
- Practice to Progress (P2P), conducted an independent evaluation of GMFRS's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategy. The report recognised our well-defined EDI Strategy 2022-25 with its supporting Action Plan setting clear goals. As per its recommendations, we are continuing to prioritise delivering training sessions that promote positive attitudes and values among our workforce.
- The White Ribbon Steering group has successfully been approved to co-design an Inclusive Leadership Programme for GMFRS middle managers. This will be developed in collaboration with experts from Super Being Labs and Safe Lives. "Look Again" will be a cultural learning programme where we learn and grow through raising self-awareness and dialogue.
- We enhanced our Bullying and Harassment and Disciplinary Policies, aiming to resolve concerns early and continue to address behaviour that falls short of our values. We also introduced the FRS Speak Up independent reporting line for employees.

CASE STUDIES

Culture First Board

Our Culture First Board was launched in May 2023, chaired by our Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel and independent Co-Chair Sunita Gamblin, QPM. Sunita is a former Deputy Chief Constable who transformed her force's approach to fairness and inclusion. She has always been passionate about ethics, culture and inclusive leadership so was perfectly placed to bring this expertise to GMFRS.

The Board brings together a range of employee voices; including staff network leads, our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, trade union representatives, and Cultural Sounding Panel leads alongside senior leaders from across the Service to drive our culture-first approach.

To keep the Board impactful "the dynamics and the role of the Culture First Board is forever evolving, and it remains an integral part of the organisation. It is driving positive change and fostering a culture where all employees feel valued and supported, and continues to support finding ways to support cultural initiatives". Andy Ellison, Watch Manager at Hollins Fire Station, Red Watch and Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Regular updates are provided to the Board across the breadth of staff engagement, equality, diversity and inclusion, and communications campaigns. The Board reaches further than simply attending meetings. Humaira Ahmed, Talent and Resourcing Lead and Race and Faith Network Co-Lead said, "feeding back to the network assures our

members that action is being taken and their voices are being heard through their leads – the Chief Fire Officer attended one of our first Race and Faith network meetings, which is a first for any Chief".

As the work of the Board continues, a subgroup is being created to ensure momentum and actions take place, retaining sufficient time and space for the employee voice to be heard in order to create a truly inclusive culture in every way.

Promotion Pathway

In January 2023 we launched our new Promotion Pathway Framework, which sets out clear routes to promotion for our operational workforce.

The Framework sets out to effectively identify, develop, and promote the best possible talent in a fair and inclusive way. To ensure the new pathway would be as effective as possible we co-designed it with our workforce; this was an important step for us and helped us to understand the lived experience of our team members, how they perceived promotions within the organisation and what would encourage them to consider promotions in the future. This co-design resulted in a process that now enables colleagues to develop first before they apply for promotion; development that includes a range of opportunities supported by our Leadership Development Framework, such as courses, qualifications, workshops, coaching and mentoring, masterclasses and project opportunities in essential areas such as Incident Command and Leadership development.

In addition, we improved our communications on development opportunities and promotion requirements, developed posters setting out the Pathway, undertook careers events for our apprentice teams, awareness videos and an enhanced section on our intranet. The co-design also enabled us to identify and remove barriers to promotion for all our workforce but, in particular talented people from underrepresented groups who may not have had the same opportunities for promotion as their peers in the past. For example, moving an exam qualification from an essential requirement to a desirable requirement, and replacing the knowledge base with a vocational workbook which is more inclusive to colleagues with neurodiverse needs and/or colleagues who have not had the opportunity to thrive academically.

We have also made our assessment and selection process more robust, and aligned with modern recruitment practices, including using values-based interview questions alongside behaviour-based virtual testing.

Lastly, we have also introduced a 'High Potential' outcome, whereby very high performers who are identified through the assessment process are offered 'stretch' opportunities to develop themselves further with temporary promotion opportunities at the rank above once they have achieved competence.

Since our launch in January more than 280 colleagues have applied for promotion at various ranks, marking our highest volume of candidates on record, 54% more than the previous 18 months. We have also seen an increase in colleagues from our underrepresented groups applying for promotion, with a 9% increase overall compared to the previous 18 months.

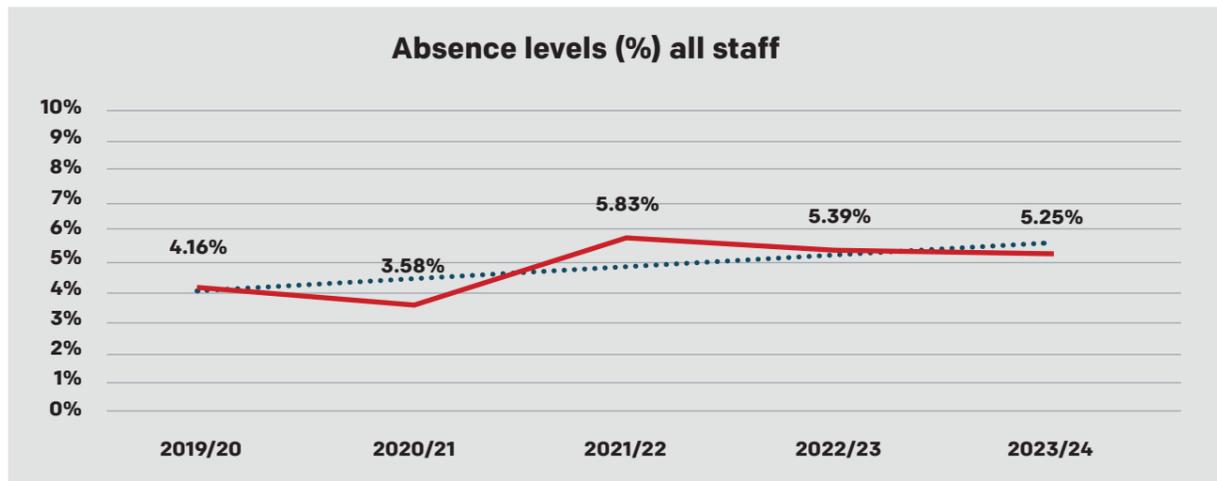
We are proud that the new pathway process has been recognised as "promising practice" by HMICFRS in our latest inspection.

OUR PERFORMANCE

Improving Sickness Levels

Why it is important: Staying healthy and feeling well are essential to delivering high-quality services to the communities we serve. There is also a clear economic value. Before the pandemic, over 130 million working days were lost to sickness in the UK each year, costing the economy an estimated £12 billion annually.

How we performed: Overall sickness absence is reducing year-on-year. We monitor the most common reasons for both long-term and short-term absences, which allows us to implement preventive activity and continued support. This includes 'Trauma Wellness Checks', a pilot programme implemented by Occupational Health, along with resources and tools provided by GMFRS such as the Employee Assistance Programme.

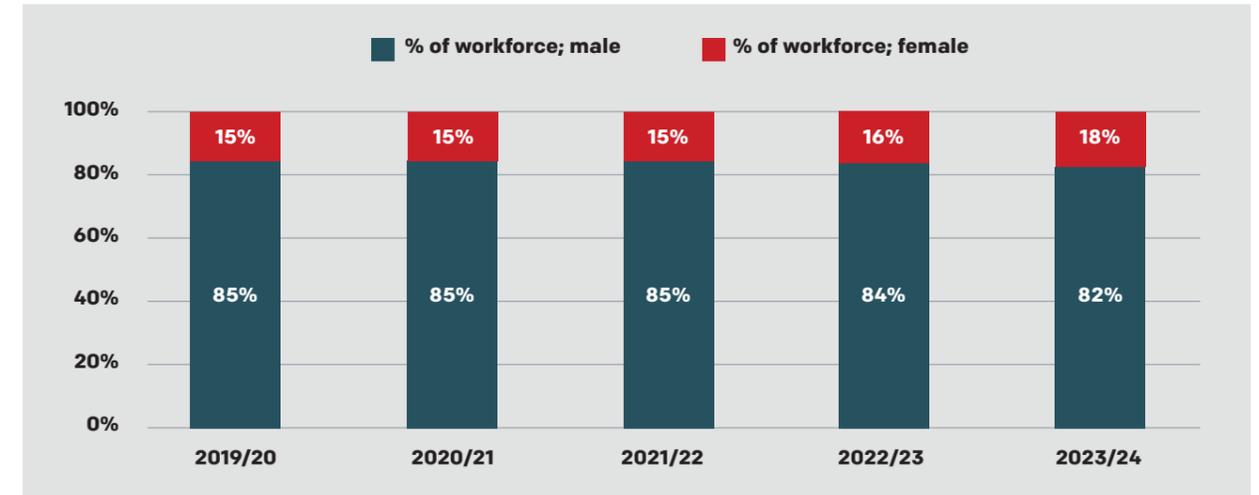


Diverse Workforce

Why it is important: A public service is most effective when it reflects the public it serves and can draw from the skills and experience of all its communities.

How we performed: The overall female population of the workforce has shown an improvement of 1.47% when comparing 2023/24 to the previous year, and the longer-term direction of travel is positive.

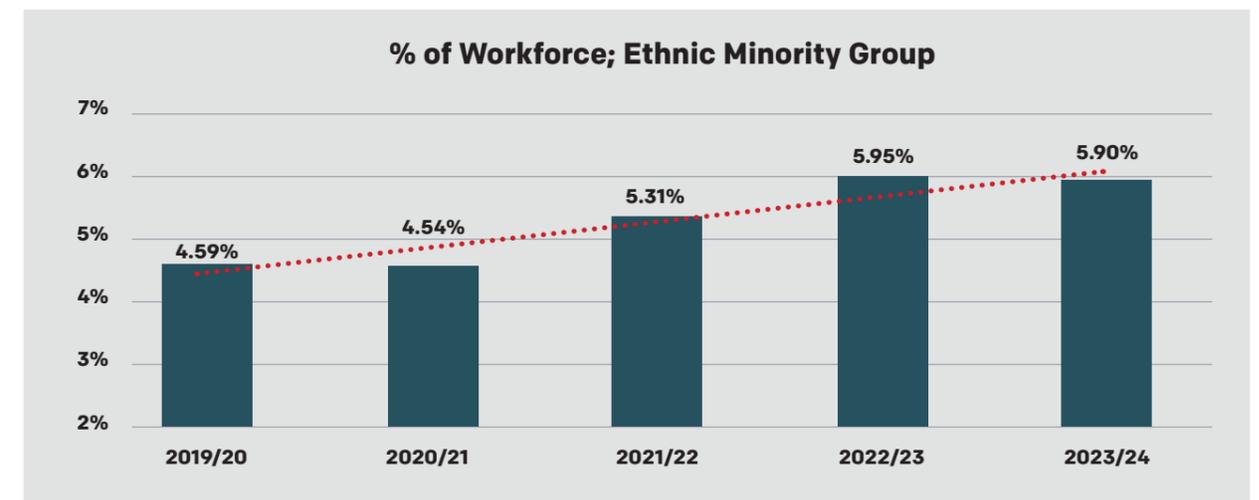
At the end of 2023/24, 8.52% of firefighters were women compared with 7.28% in 2022/32. This number continues to steadily increase from a low of 1.83% in April 2015.



The overall proportion of staff from an ethnic minority group was 5.90% at the end of 2023/24 which shows a decrease of 0.05%, though over the last 5 years shows a positive direction of travel.

The proportion of firefighters from an ethnic minority group was 6.44%, a decrease of 0.04% compared to last year.

There was also a decrease in Apprentices of minority ethnicity of 1.79% compared to the previous year. 15.26% of our apprentices are of a minority ethnicity.



PRIORITY 6: INTEGRATE OUR SERVICES IN EVERY LOCALITY WITH THOSE OF PARTNER AGENCIES

We will support and drive the place-based approach to public sector reform enshrined in the Greater Manchester Strategy, ensuring that local services from different partner agencies are fully integrated within every locality and contribute to problem-solving for local communities.

Public services need to be as effective as they can to meet the needs of Greater Manchester residents and improve community safety. It is essential we work in partnership, supporting the collective effort to add the most value. A recent peer challenge review by the Local Government Association (LGA) highlighted how Greater Manchester's success is built on a long history of collaboration across the city region.

In GMFRS we have a continued commitment to develop an integrated, place-based approach to reducing emergencies. We work in an integrated way with other blue light services at emergencies, particularly at large-scale incidents such as floodings, wildfires, and serious road traffic collisions.

In this section we have identified some of the progress we have made in delivering Priority 6. There are no specific commitments for this priority as they are a fundamental part of the Fire Plan and are embedded within each of the five other priorities. For this reason, there is no performance data at the end of this section.

Key achievements and progress in 2023-2024:

- Collaboration work with local partners has been undertaken to support serious violence reduction across Greater Manchester. As a Service, we have developed a framework of programmes, interventions, and activities to support this work and have rolled out a learning package for our workforce.
- In the last 12 months we have established a central digital platform where all three emergency services across Greater Manchester can access and contribute to a register to record all collaboration activity that has taken place. The register is managed by the Local Resilience Forum, ensuring joint contribution and learning.
- We have continued to embed the Framework for Integrated and Place Based Working, which outlines our commitment to work with our partners and communities to deliver services in a more integrated way, providing consistency and accountability, and ensuring maximum value to our residents.

- As part of our Integrated Place Based Working (IPBW) arrangements, we have implemented a service wide digital approach to ensure activities that support the strategic priorities set out in the Fire Plan are recorded consistently with appropriate levels of detail to be shared with our partners.
- We have established a What Works Forum (WWF) to enable us to work together with our partners to reduce fire and emergency incidents throughout Greater Manchester. The Forum has been able to facilitate the capture and sharing of best practice amongst the local authorities and other partners to allow a more streamlined and efficient engagement approach.
- We have improved our engagement with local communities across social media platforms: X, Instagram, and Facebook, to ensure they are informed about GMFRS activities, events, safety campaigns, and good news stories.
- Our approach to involving residents in our work was recognised by Greater Manchester being selected as one of twelve global leaders in civic engagement by Bloomberg Philanthropies and Harvard University's Centre for Cities; we are now building on this by evolving our model for public participation, which will be trialled for the development of our next Fire Plan.



CASE STUDIES

Serious Violence Duty

As a named specified authority for the Serious Violence Duty, GMFRS has worked closely with GM Violence Reduction Unit, community safety partnerships and other fire and rescue services to ensure the Service was prepared to deliver against newly created statutory obligations to understand, prevent and address serious violence in Greater Manchester.

This preparatory work involved establishing data sharing agreements with other specified authorities, supporting and contributing to each of the strategic needs assessment and delivery plans on serious violence.

In addition, GMFRS developed a framework of GMFRS programmes, interventions, and activities to prevent, reduce or address serious violence including referral pathways and evaluation standards. An example of one of these interventions is the GMFRS Athena Project.

The Athena Project is delivered in partnership with Moss Side Fire Station Boxing Club. Designed to improve confidence, self-esteem, fitness and skill base, the project provides young people from across Greater Manchester with a safe place and positive role models to interact with. One young person who engaged with the Boxing Club was successful in qualifying for the Olympics in Paris 2024. When asked, what they enjoyed most about the project, young people said:

"I felt included. I normally sit at home. It made me see that I can be good at something. Nigel told me I was doing well. I don't normally hear that."

"The sessions have made me see that there is more than hanging round with my friends. Frankie talked to me at the end of a session and made me realise I can do whatever I want in life. I want to come back and do more sessions."

Colleagues from Manchester Youth Justice fed back; "Really enjoyed getting involved in the boxing and watching the kids get stuck in. The coach was great as well, really encouraged the young people."

What Works Forum

In February 2024, GMFRS held the first internal WWF as part of the delivery of our IPBW Framework. The purpose of the Forum was for our internal stakeholders to develop the 17 areas for consideration from the GMFRS IPBW Maturity Assessment held in the Autumn of 2023.

The Maturity Assessment was shared via a survey both internally and externally asking for individuals and agencies to give their view on how well GMFRS is working in an integrated and place-based way. The survey provided rich narrative which was distilled into seventeen areas to focus on.

Following discussion at the WWF, three different outcomes were selected to progress the discussion:

- Take the discussion to the "New Ways of Working in Neighbourhoods" seminars which are an outcome of the GMCA's own Maturity Assessment which took place early in 2023. The seminars are used to help improve collaborative working and the sharing of best practice across the 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester.
- Progress the discussion through our upcoming Consultation and Engagement events as areas for discussion and exploration with partners and communities, as we develop the next Fire Plan 2025-29.
- Allow WWFs to remain a part of internal 'Business As Usual' activities which are already being progressed.

The Internal WWF was deemed a success affording departmental leads the opportunity to consider how partners can assist and what the next steps need to be. The first areas to be discussed at the "New Ways of Working in Neighbourhoods" have now been identified and will be presented in a workshop style to partners across Greater Manchester. Conversations have already started with partners who are receptive to supporting GMFRS in identifying best practice across the 10 Boroughs. This style of collaboration will then progress to the development of our annual Borough Delivery Plans (Place Based Plans).

It is hoped that this collaborative approach will result in the sharing of best practice and the creation of delivery plans that meet the needs of our communities.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

As well as preventing and responding to emergencies, over the last year we have delivered a wide range of activities within our communities. Some of the highlights are detailed below.

- During Student Fire Safety Week, we carried out dedicated high-rise visits, attending student flats in Manchester and Salford to talk to people about their evacuation procedures, test and fit their smoke alarms and gave them important home fire safety advice. Crews from Wythenshawe, Gorton and Irlam made the visits with colleagues in our Prevention and Protection teams.
- Members of our Protection Team joined partners across Greater Manchester at Bolton Means Business - a free event to support local organisations and businesses. The team provided information and advice for new and existing businesses around compliance with the Fire Safety Order.
- Our Prince's Trust teams have been busy supporting local communities with teams from Hyde, Bolton and Oldham decorating at the Bangladeshi Welfare Association, St James Parish Church and Oldham Greenhill Community Sports Centre, and our Stockport and Manchester teams undertaking litter picking in their local area.
- GMFRS has been working with Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) to raise awareness about the fire risks associated with disposing of batteries in household bins. The 'Be Battery Aware' campaign aims to educate

residents across Greater Manchester on how to dispose of batteries, and items containing batteries such as electric toothbrushes, shavers, games consoles and vapes, properly and safely. By raising awareness of the consequences of incorrect battery disposal in household waste and recycling bins, the 'Be Battery Aware' campaign sets out to reduce the number of battery-related incidents across the city-region.

- Stalybridge Fire Station recently organised an initiative with St John's Ambulance to deliver essential defibrillator training across schools in Stalybridge. The launch involved children in Year 6 at Buckton Vale Primary. This life saving work is now being rolled out to more schools across Greater Manchester.
- Operational crews from across the Service have organised various activities, including station open days and charity car washes, raising money for the Fire Fighters Charity and local causes. Over the year we have raised a total of £60,214.
- While Blackley Fire Station undergoes rebuilding the crews are still busy doing fabulous work based out of Philips Park Fire Station. Watch Manager Chris Brown visited Edgehill and delivered training to year one medical students on collaborative working across emergency services, JESIP and the medical capabilities of the Fire Service. This training was followed by visits to station involving the whole watch including Philips Park crews, to help embed the theoretical learning with a practical

element which is now been rolled out to international nursing students. Some of these students will go on to be trauma doctors, heli-medics or undertake other medical roles and the University recognise this training as being essential input. Thanks to the hard work of Blackley staff this training has now been officially integrated in to the University's annual curriculum.

- Over last year, our fantastic volunteers provided 3,105 hours of support in our communities. We recently bid farewell to two long-serving volunteers: Chaplain Sue Tansley, who has volunteered with us since 2015, and Cadet Instructor Derek Griffin, who signed up when he was 19 years old in 2010. Our colleagues from Manchester Central Fire Station recognised their outstanding service by presenting them both with GMFRS recognition certificates.
- Firefighters, staff, volunteers and their families took part in the Manchester Pride parade, all proudly supporting and celebrating LGBTQ+ equality and challenging discrimination.
- We have been running Moss Side Fire Boxing Club since 2008 and are immensely proud that member Patrick Brown, who joined the club in 2020, has qualified for the 2024 Olympic Games, following success at the Boxing Road to Paris event in Italy. The club's aim is to build confidence, self-esteem, fitness, and skills while providing a safe haven for young people with positive role models, reflecting GMFRS's involvement in the local community.



AWARDS AND ACCREDITATIONS

This year we have been recognised for a variety of different achievements. Some of the awards our workforce has won can be found below:

- Our Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel has been awarded the King's Fire Service Medal for distinguished service – the highest honour that fire service personnel can receive. He received the award for services to the fire and rescue service and public safety.
- In December 2023, GMFRS attended the Fire Magazine Excellence Awards and scooped three awards including - Emergency Service of the Year, Project of the Year for our Atlas Programme, and Jax Effiong received Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual of the Year.
- The GMFRS Recognition Awards 2023 was held on Saturday 2 December, and honoured 78 individuals for their dedication, commitment and acts of bravery. More than 150 guests were invited to the Training and Safety Centre in Bury, along with Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Mrs Diane Hawkins JP LLB, and the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester, Kate Green, to celebrate the achievements and recognise the efforts of those whose actions have made a special impact this year.
- GMFRS held six Long Service, Good Conduct events throughout the year to acknowledge the dedicated service of its staff. Collectively, the staff members represented 4,770 years of commitment to public safety. The events recognised both operational and non-operational staff and included family and friends in an inclusive celebration. The Long Service Good Conduct Awards recognise commendable achievements and demonstrate the dedication of individuals.
- GMFRS trainee Joanna Drewett was named the winner of the Prince's Trust Young Achiever Award, in recognition of her achievements. The ceremony took place in front of King Charles.
- Our Head of Protection Jenni Seex was recognised for her outstanding contribution to fire safety at the Women in Fire Safety Awards in London.
- GMFRS was successful at the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Prevention and Protection Awards 2023. The Team was recognised for their outstanding contributions to building and fire safety at an awards ceremony in Derby. Sarah Hardman was a joint winner in the Prevention category following her achievements in the field of Home Safety, including the development and implementation of the Home Fire Safety Assessment. Our Protection Team scooped the 'Team Award' at the annual event for their incredible work across our city-region in relation to building and business safety. Sue Abbott, who has supported our Service as a volunteer for more than five years, was nominated for the 'Volunteering' award.
- Our Rainbow Staff Network won Stonewall's Network Group of the Year Award 2023, beating more than 900 other organisations and teams to top spot!

- Firefighter Helena Brown from Green Watch Whitefield was crowned British Female Champion (35-39 years) at this year's British Firefighter Challenge, which was hosted by GMFRS at the end of July in Cathedral Gardens, Manchester. Firefighter Hanah Butler from Gorton Station was crowned British Female Champion (18-29 years) and Watch Manager Marc Howson from Moss Side station was the fastest GMFRS male.
- GMFRS's Road Traffic Collision Extrication Team scooped four national awards as they took part in this year's UK Rescue Organisation (UKRO) Festival of Rescue hosted by Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue in September 2023. The Extrication Team has retained their title as the 'Best Extrication Team in the UK' for the second year in a row. The team members also took the awards for 'Best Incident Commander' and 'Best Medical Team' and were placed second for 'Technical Rescue Operators'.
- The team also represented the UK FRS at the World Extrication Competition in Lanzarote, finishing 6th in the world championships. The competition had a total of 274 participants from 17 countries, including 32 trauma teams and 35 extrication teams.



MAJOR INCIDENTS

Bradley Lane, Stretford

April 19, 2023

Firefighters were called out to a large fire involving two commercial units containing a number of vehicles and machinery on Bradley Lane, Stretford. Several fire engines, along with Chadderton's hose laying lorry, Manchester Central's turntable ladder, Leigh's technical response unit and Salford's Scorpion attended the incident.



Victoria Works, Clifton Street, Manchester

June 17, 2023

Operational crews tackled a fire affecting two industrial buildings on Clifton Street. The fire involved a large multi occupied commercial site and spread to several neighbouring units. At the height of the incident, we had eight appliances and numerous other support vehicles in attendance.

Railway Road, Horwich

June 17, 2023

GMFRS crews were called to reports of a fire at a derelict commercial property on Railway Road, Horwich. Three fire engines from Horwich, Wigan and Atherton fire stations, alongside the hydraulic platform from Leigh, attended the incident.



St Thomas Street, Oldham

June 24, 2023

Emergency services were called to reports of a fire on Saint Thomas Street North in Oldham and response teams from GMFRS, Greater Manchester Police and accompanying medical professionals rushed to the scene. Sadly, a 42-year-old woman died despite the best efforts of first responders, and a 15-year-old was taken to hospital with serious injuries. Firefighters worked through the night to extinguish the fire and contain it. Residents in neighbouring homes were evacuated, and nearby streets were cordoned off.



Highfield Industrial Estate, West End Street, Oldham

June 27, 2023

GMFRS was called to Highfield Industrial Estate on West End Street just outside Oldham town centre to reports of smoke coming from one of the units. The unit was said to contain large quantities of hazardous chemicals. Five fire engines from Heywood, Chadderton, Ashton, Bury and Blackley fire stations were quickly mobilised to the scene and decontamination procedures were implemented. Greater Manchester Police evacuated Oldham College and a nearby gym as a precaution.



SS Simon and Jude C of E Primary School, Bolton
August 17, 2023

Operational crews worked tirelessly to extinguish a major fire at SS Simon and Jude CofE Primary School on Newport Road in Bolton. At the height of the response, 17 fire engines from across Greater Manchester were in attendance.

Chorley Old Road, Bolton
August 31, 2023

Firefighters were called to a blaze at a vacant terraced house on Chorley Old Road, Bolton around 3am on Thursday, August 31st. The fire covered both floors of the building and was tackled defensively. It required eight fire engines, along with several specialised appliances from across Greater Manchester, to extinguish it.



Warwick Road, Old Trafford
September 7, 2023

Firefighters tackled a huge blaze at a derelict building on Chester Road, Old Trafford. At its height, eight fire engines attended the scene supported by several special appliances extinguished a fire on multiple floors and rescued 2 casualties.



Dean Trust School, Stockport Road, Ardwick
January 4, 2024

The fire, which tore through a classroom on the third floor of a school building, prompted a huge emergency services response. Eight fire engines, and technical response units and police, cordoned off the main road. Firefighters used hose reels and breathing apparatus to bring the fire under control.

Nelson Street, Bury
February 28, 2024

At 11am on Wednesday February 28th, five fire engines from Whitefield, Heywood, Broughton, Bury and Bolton Central fire stations, the command unit from Rochdale fire station, the technical response unit from Ashton fire station, and the turntable ladder from Manchester Central fire station were called to an incident involving an explosion at a mid-terrace house on Nelson Street, Bury.

Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus used two hose reels and five jets to contain a subsequent fire. Crews worked alongside colleagues from Greater Manchester Police, North West Ambulance Service, and Cadent Gas to make the scene safe.



Lanxess Manufacturing Plant, Tenax Road, Manchester
March 4, 2024

A chemical leak at a company in Trafford Park triggered a huge emergency services response, with 12 fire engines responding to the incident at an industrial site on Tenax Road in Trafford Park. Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus worked alongside site staff and other emergency services to contain the incident and keep the area safe.

Earthquake in Morocco

Five of our firefighters flew to Morocco as part of national search and rescue efforts following a devastating earthquake in the country. They were part of a UK International Search and Rescue (UKISAR) team made up of 60 operational crew members from 14 fire and rescue services. The team was deployed through the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office following a request for support from the Moroccan government after a 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck on Friday 8th September 2023.



ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE

Assurance

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the Framework) mandates each English fire and rescue authority, through the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, to produce an Annual Statement of Assurance.

Our Statement outlines the way in which GMFRS has regard to the Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan, and to relevant strategic plans.

Each year we produce an independent declaration, supporting our Annual Governance Statement as part of the governance reporting of GMCA. The declaration is produced in line with the requirements and guidance contained in the revised Framework, published by the Home Office in May 2018.

This statement identifies the measures of assurance in place for operational activities (response, prevention, and protection), finance, governance and workforce and finishes with a statement from the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Chief Fire Officer as to the adequacy of assurance measures.

We set out our compliance requirements under five broad headings:

- Operational Assurance
- Prevention and Protection
- Finance
- Governance
- Workforce

A copy of our current Annual Statement of Assurance can be found on our website.

HMICFRS

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is an independent body in the UK that inspects and evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue services. They provide assessments on the quality of services provided to the public against 11 areas, ensuring that services are efficiently and effectively delivered.

The objectives of the inspections are to:

- Improve the services provided by the FRS to ensure they reduce the risks identified by local communities.
- Identify good practice, transformation, and areas for improvement.
- Improve transparency and accountability to the communities they serve.

Since our first inspection we have been working to deliver improvements, with progress reported and monitored through our governance arrangements. GMFRS was first inspected in 2019 and again in 2021. In our most recent inspection in Autumn 2023, GMFRS was graded as 'Good' in 10 of the 11 areas and 'Adequate' in one. This demonstrates the significant improvements the Service has made, with four of the 11 areas moving from a 'Requires Improvement' grading to a 'Good' grading and one from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Adequate'. GMFRS is currently the most improved fire and rescue service in England.

Two 'Areas for Improvement' were identified by the inspectors, one of which we have already addressed and closed. Our activities to address these areas are being delivered alongside our improvement programme. Additionally, HMICFRS recognised four areas of Positive Practice and two areas of Innovative Practice, which together, is the most any fire and rescue service has received in this round of inspections. The areas highlighted for particular praise were the Service's:

- state-of-the-art training and development suite for protection staff.
- Atlas Project, which is changing behaviours amongst adult fire setters.
- approach to performance monitoring and evaluation.
- ecological sustainability strategy.
- Culture First board, which is helping drive cultural transformation.
- process to identify, develop, and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

A copy of all our HMICFRS Inspection reports can be found on our website.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2022/23 KPI FRAMEWORK

The following table shows the Service's performance against Corporate Key Performance Indicators at the end of 2022/23. Despite external factors, such as the weather, we have made good progress on our performance given the ambitious targets set at the start of the year. KPIs are important in helping us understand how well we are serving our communities and setting expectations for managers to monitor and adapt to changing situations.

We are committed to continuously improving our performance through Service Excellence and have set targets for various KPIs, which are reviewed quarterly at our Performance Board meeting, and scrutinised by the Deputy Mayor and the Police, Fire & Crime Panel.

Priority 1 – Provide a timely, safe and effective response	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast or Target	% Change
Average Response Time to 'life risk' Emergencies (includes call handling, turnout and travel)	7 mins 21 secs	7 mins 32 secs	7 mins 30 secs or less	
% of appliances crewed and available	99.65%	99.67%	99.50%	0.02%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) - MoC3	93%	93%	100%	0.00%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) - MoC6	93%	93%	100%	0.00%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) - MoC12	93%	90%	100%	-3.00%
% of Health Monitoring Surveillance in date	98.67%	97.62%	100%	-1.05%
Firefighter fitness (Acceptable to Excellent)	93.62%	95.65%	100%	2.03%
Rescues from emergencies	2,225	2,296	Monitored	3.19%
Priority 2 – Helps reduce the risks of fire and other emergencies	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast or Target	% Change
Number of Fire Deaths	15	16	Aspire to 0	7%
Number of Injuries from Fire	168	135	109	-20%
Deliberate Primary Fires	1,382	1,215	1,240	-12%
Deliberate Secondary Fires	5,585	4,208	5,822	-25%
Accidental Dwelling Fires	1,399	1,433	1,202	2%
All Special Service Calls	8,031	8,308	Monitored	3%
Total number of Home Fire Safety Assessment (HFSA) referrals received	12,141	10,951	12,000	-10%
Number of Home Fire Safety Assessments (HFSAs) completed	23,936	30,506	32,800	27%
Princes Trust - % retention rate	85%	84.45%	80%	-0.65%

Priority 3 – Help protect the built environment	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast or Target	% Change
Number of Fire Safety Interventions	4,847	5,365	5,000	11%
Total number of audits completed of which;	1,997	1,681	3,920	-16%
% Satisfactory	72%	59%	Monitored	-12%
% resulting in formal enforcement	9%	16%	Monitored	7%
% resulting in advice	19%	24%	Monitored	4%
Number of businesses receiving advice	8,419	13,549	15,000	61%
FADA (False alarm due to apparatus - non domestic)	4,212	4,535	3,187	8%
Priority 4 – Use resources sustainably and deliver the most value	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast or Target	% Change
% Reduction in our Carbon Footprint (compared to baseline year (2018/19))	-8%	-12%	-25%	-4%
Progress against annual savings plan	£0.788m	£0.712m	£0.712m	
Priority 5 – Develop a culture of excellence, equality and inclusivity	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	2023/24 Forecast or Target	% Change
% of Workforce; Male	83.76%	82.29%	Monitored	-1.47%
% of Workforce; Female	16.24%	17.71%	Monitored	1.47%
% of Workforce; Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (BAME)	5.95%	5.90%	Monitored	-0.05%
% of Workforce; LGBTQ+ Sexual Orientation	<5%	<5%	Monitored	
% of Workforce Trans	<5%	<5%	Monitored	
% of Workforce Non Binary	<5%	<5%	Monitored	
Absence levels (%) All staff	5.39%	5.25%	5%	-0.14%
% Apprentices from Current Workforce	10.47%	11.10%	2.30%	0.63%
Total number of adverse health and safety events	New for 2023/24	342	Monitored	New for 2023/24
Number of accidents resulting in injury	78	120	Monitored	54%
Number work-related violence incidents resulting in injury	New for 2023/24	5	Monitored	New for 2023/24
Number work-related violence incidents not resulting in injury	New for 2023/24	44	Monitored	New for 2023/24
Number of near misses	29	48	Monitored	66%
Number of reported adverse safety events/incidents resulting in damage to vehicles	New for 2023/24	118	Monitored	New for 2023/24
Number of reported adverse safety events/incidents resulting in damage to operational equipment	New for 2023/24	7	Monitored	New for 2023/24
Number of adverse events resulting in lost time;	18	33	Monitored	83%
Total number of days lost due to injury	651	683	Monitored	5%
Number of RIDDOR reportable accidents	6	7	Monitored	17%
Priority 6 – Integrate our services in every locality with those of partner agencies	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	2022/23 Forecast or Target	% Change
% of safeguarding referrals made that are compliant with GMFRS Safeguarding Referral Procedure	New for 2023/24	82%	100%	New for 2023/24



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WINNER
Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
Award 2015

Emergency Service
of the Year

Greater Manchester
Fire and Rescue
Service

Brought to you by
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Dräger

The award banner features a dark blue background with a starry pattern. On the left, there is a gold laurel wreath emblem with the text 'WINNER' above it and 'Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service Award 2015' below it. The main text 'Emergency Service of the Year' is in a large, bold, yellow font. Below this, 'Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service' is written in a smaller yellow font. At the bottom left, it says 'Brought to you by' followed by the 'FIRE' logo. At the bottom right, it says 'Sponsored by' followed by the 'Dräger' logo. A small version of the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service crest is also visible in the center.