

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

2026 - 2029

ARGYLL & BUTE

Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

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Foreword

To follow in final draft.

Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll and Bute for 2026–2029.

This Plan sets out my priorities for the Local Authority area and supports the delivery of improved outcomes for the communities of Argyll and Bute. It aligns with the strategic aims of the SFRS and reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering high-quality, person-centred services in partnership with colleagues across the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

We recognise that both nationally and locally, public services are operating within an increasingly complex environment. Rising demand, emerging risks linked to climate change, an ageing population, and sustained pressures on public sector resources present significant challenges. Within Argyll and Bute, these challenges are further shaped by areas of socio-economic inequality, health disparities, and vulnerability within some communities. This reinforces the importance of targeting our activity where it can have the greatest impact in reducing harm and improving outcomes.

This Plan is aligned to the Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan (ABOIP) 2024 to 2034, ensuring that our priorities contribute directly to shared community planning objectives, including reducing inequalities and supporting safer, healthier and more resilient communities. In doing so, we remain committed to working collaboratively with partners to address the underlying factors that influence risk, particularly for those most vulnerable.

SFRS recognises that the demographic profile of Argyll and Bute continues to evolve, including an increasing proportion of older people and individuals living with complex needs. These factors can increase the likelihood and impact of fire and other emergencies.

Through the use of data, intelligence and local engagement, we will continue to identify those at greatest risk and ensure our prevention, protection and response activities are tailored accordingly.

This Plan outlines how we will direct our resources in a flexible and evidence-based way to meet local demand. It also provides a transparent framework through which our performance can be monitored and scrutinised by elected members and partners.

Our firefighters and staff are trained to respond to a wide range of emergencies, and we remain committed to maintaining the skills, capability and resilience required to deliver an effective and professional emergency response.

However, we are equally committed to prevention and early intervention. By strengthening our engagement with individuals, communities and partner organisations, we aim to reduce the incidence of emergencies and improve wider community safety.

Over the life of this Plan, we will continue to seek opportunities to improve how we deliver our services. This includes embracing innovation, enhancing partnership working, and ensuring that the voices of our communities inform our priorities.

We are committed to continuous improvement, learning from experience and performance, and adapting to meet changing needs.

Through this approach, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to play a key role in supporting safer, stronger and more resilient communities across Argyll and Bute.

Joe McKay
Local Senior Officer

National Context and Challenges

Scottish Ministers set out their specific expectations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in the [Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022](#). This Framework provides SFRS with seven strategic priorities and objectives, together with guidance on how the delivery of our functions should contribute to the Scottish Government's Purpose.

The Framework also defines the SFRS purpose as:

'To work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on prevention, protection and response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.'

The SFRS Strategy 2025-28 has been designed to have regard to these national expectations. Set against a complex and evolving backdrop, our Strategy supports delivery of our Purpose, Mission and Vision.

To achieve our ambitions, we have identified five strategic objectives and outcomes. Each objective holds equal value in driving our Strategy forward. As a collective, they define our overall direction and will be central to how we plan our activities and our budget over the next three years.

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOME
Safer Communities through Prevention	Through our work with communities and other organisations, the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland improves.
Safe and Effective Response	We are an effective and trusted Fire and Rescue Service where our communities and people are safe.
Investing in our People	Our people feel valued and are supported by a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, empowerment and accountability.
Improving Performance	Our organisational performance, productivity and resilience continually improves.
Innovation and Investment	We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate and fleet, making us more effective and efficient.

This Plan is a statutory Local Fire and Rescue Plan. It sets local direction to meet the strategic objectives and outcomes outlined above; and supports delivery of the SFRS Prevention Strategy. It demonstrates how we will contribute to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) within the Local Authority area.

National Challenges

Over the next three years, the SFRS will operate within a challenging and rapidly evolving national context. This Local Fire and Rescue Plan is developed against a backdrop of sustained financial pressure, changing community risk, and the need for organisational change to ensure services remain effective, sustainable and focused on prevention.

SFRS continues to face real terms financial constraints despite funding uplifts, with rising costs, inflationary pressures and a substantial backlog in capital investment. Ageing fire stations, fleet and operational systems require modernisation, while the Service must also deliver recurring savings. This national financial environment directly shapes decisions about service delivery models, asset rationalisation and the prioritisation of resources at local level.

Workforce capacity remains a critical national challenge. Recruitment, retention and availability, particularly within the retained duty system are under increasing pressure, especially in rural and remote communities. Supporting staff wellbeing, skills, training and leadership capacity is essential to maintaining safe and reliable emergency response while adapting to new and emerging risks.

The risk profile across Scotland is changing. While accidental dwelling fires continue to decline, demand is increasing from climate related incidents such as flooding, wildfires and extreme weather events. These incidents are often prolonged, complex and resource intensive, requiring increased resilience, specialist capability and effective multi-agency coordination. At the same time, demographic change, health inequalities and housing conditions continue to drive vulnerability and risk within communities.

Prevention remains at the core of SFRS's national and local approach. Reducing harm, protecting vulnerable people and building community resilience are central to managing demand and delivering long-term public value. This requires strong collaboration with partners across health, social care, local government and the third sector.

The SFRS Prevention Strategy 2025–2028 sets out a clear ambition to reduce harm, protect firefighters and communities, and manage demand through a universal prevention offer delivered proportionately according to risk, vulnerability and inequality. Local Fire and Rescue Plans are a key mechanism for delivering the Prevention Strategy at local level. They translate national prevention priorities into locally tailored actions, ensuring that community safety engagement, protection and preparedness activity is informed by local risk profiles, partnership intelligence and community need.

In response to some of the challenges we face, SFRS is progressing its Strategic Service Review Programme (SSRP). A priority for the next three-years, SSRP will focus on providing firefighters with modern facilities, fleet and equipment to enhance community and firefighter safety, how and where we deliver our services from, and ensuring our corporate services are as efficient and effective as possible. These changes are necessary to ensure resources are targeted where risk is greatest, while maintaining public confidence and local accountability.

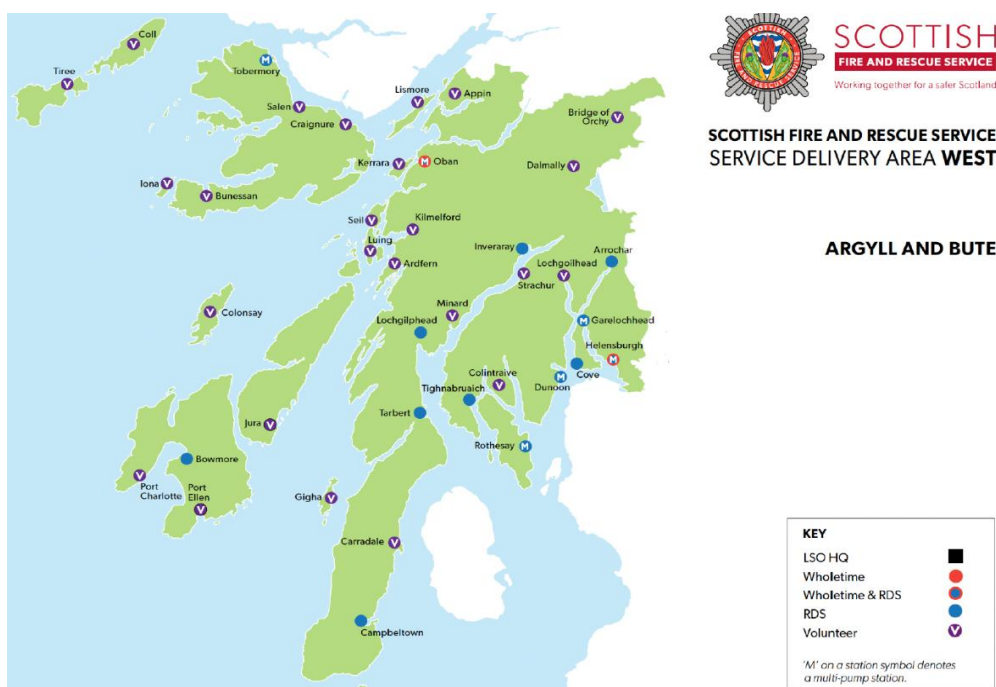
This Local Fire and Rescue Plan translates this national context into local priorities, reflecting the specific risks, needs and characteristics of communities. It sets out how SFRS will work with partners to deliver prevention, protection and response activities in a way that supports safer communities while contributing to the Service's wider strategic aims for Scotland.

By focusing on prevention, collaboration and early intervention, this Plan supports public service reform and delivers better outcomes for our local communities.

Local Context

Argyll and Bute forms part of the SFRS West Service Delivery Area and is characterised by a large, rural and island geography. The area has an estimated population of around 87,700, with a widely dispersed settlement pattern, including approximately 17.5% of residents living on islands.

Covering approximately 2,667 square miles, Argyll and Bute includes eleven electoral wards and a mix of urban, rural and island communities. This geography presents challenges in relation to service delivery, access and response. The area is served by 39 fire stations, the majority crewed by on call and volunteer personnel, with two wholetime and on call stations located in Oban and Helensburgh. Understanding current and future demand is essential to ensuring resources are aligned effectively to community risk and need.



Key risks within Argyll and Bute are influenced by an ageing population, rural isolation and higher levels of vulnerability within some communities. Additional risks arise from industrial hazards such as fuel storage sites and military installations, as well as environmental threats including wildfires, flooding, severe weather and landslides. Argyll and Bute forms part of the West of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership, which supports preparedness, multi-agency response and community resilience.

A review of operational activity between 2022 and 2025 in Argyll and Bute shows a significant reduction in unwanted fire alarm signals, with UFAS incidents decreasing by 60.9%, alongside a smaller reduction in other false alarms of 10.0%. Fire incidents also declined by 11.3%, showing a positive trend in risk reduction. In contrast, non-fire emergencies increased by 6.4%, indicating a

rise in demand for these types of incidents. In response, we will take a more targeted approach by analysing incident trends, strengthening partnership working, and directing prevention and engagement activity towards the most common causes to help manage and reduce this demand.

Local priorities within the Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan 2024 to 2034 include improving transport links, addressing housing needs and enhancing community wellbeing. Argyll and Bute's Community Planning Partnership is committed to creating strong, safe and vibrant communities where people have a good quality of life and access to sustainable, high-quality services. The overarching aim of the Partnership is to secure economic success through a growing population, reinforcing Argyll and Bute as a place to live, work, learn, visit and do business.

Reducing service demand, alongside the evolving role of the SFRS within public service reform, presents opportunities to strengthen integration within the community planning environment. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 has led to the development of Argyll and Bute's Local Outcome Improvement Plan through locality planning, aimed at improving outcomes and reducing inequalities. The SFRS will ensure its activities align with and support this approach.

Following the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, the SFRS will work with partners to support delivery of the local community justice strategy within Argyll and Bute.

The SFRS supports community planning priorities through prevention, protection and emergency response activity, with a focus on those most at risk, partnership working and community resilience. Effective partnership working is essential to delivering statutory duties and maximising the contribution of staff and volunteers. Strong collaborative relationships across Argyll and Bute support coordinated and effective service delivery, with clear expectations and commitment from all partner organisations.



Performance Scrutiny

Argyll and Bute Council undertakes quarterly scrutiny of East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute (EWDAB) performance through the Community Services Committee, which consists of 16 elected councillors, including a Chair and Vice Chair.

The Argyll and Bute Quarterly Scrutiny Report is prepared by the Group Commander (GC) with responsibility for the local authority area and provides an overview of incident-related performance indicators, prevention activity and protection activity. The report is presented to the Committee by the EWDAB Local Senior Officer (LSO), or by the Group Commander in their absence.

The terms of reference of the Community Services Committee, in relation to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), are as follows:

The Community Services Committee is responsible for providing democratic oversight and scrutiny of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council. Its role is to review performance, monitor the delivery of local priorities, and hold the Service to account for outcomes achieved within Argyll and Bute.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Scrutinising and reviewing the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service within Argyll and Bute.
- Receiving and considering regular performance and scrutiny reports from the Service.
- Monitoring progress against local Fire and Rescue Plan priorities and community safety objectives.
- Providing appropriate challenge and accountability through the examination of performance data, emerging risks, service outcomes and improvement activity.
- Supporting local democratic oversight while recognising that operational responsibility remains with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Local Priorities

EWDAB local priorities have been developed from the aims and objectives set out within the documents listed below. They are designed to deliver the greatest possible benefit to local communities through effective partnership working with Argyll & Bute Council, alongside other relevant partner organisations, agencies, and community groups.

Strategy 2025-28	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Protection Framework 2025-28	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Prevention Strategy 2025-28	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Local Engagement Delivery Plan 2025-28	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Local Enforcement Delivery Plan 2026	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan (ABOIP) 2024 to 2034	

Argyll & Bute Local Priorities 2025 – 2028

- Priority 1: Protecting Communities**
- Priority 2: Improving Health and Equality Outcomes**
- Priority 3: Empowering Children and Young People**
- Priority 4: Strengthening Community Resilience and Operational Preparedness**
- Priority 5: Supporting Sustainability**

	SFRS Local Area Plan Priorities				
ABOIP Outcomes	Priority 1 Protecting Communities	Priority 2 Improving Health and Equality Outcomes	Priority 3 Empowering Children and Young People	Priority 4 Strengthening Community Resilience and Operational Preparedness	Priority 5 Supporting Sustainability
Outcome 1 Transport Infrastructure				✓	✓
Outcome 2 Housing	✓	✓			
Outcome 3 Community Wellbeing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Local Priorities

1. Protecting Communities

Background

Protecting communities from fire and other preventable risks remains at the heart of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's approach within Argyll & Bute. While local incident trends demonstrate positive reductions in operational activity over the past three years, primary and secondary fires, special services and emerging risks such as wildfires and lithium-ion battery incidents remain important areas of focus. Those most vulnerable to harm often face additional challenges associated with age, ill health, reduced mobility, social isolation or economic disadvantage, while road traffic collisions, water-related incidents and anti-social behaviour can also have significant impacts on people, communities, businesses and the environment.

Through prevention, protection and partnership working, SFRS will focus on reducing risk, promoting safer behaviours, supporting responsible fire safety management and protecting people in their homes, workplaces and communities. Working with various agencies and groups across the area, including local Road Safety Partnerships and the Argyll & Bute Partnership Approach to Water Safety (PAWS) Group, we will deliver coordinated activity to reduce death, injury and harm, targeting resources where risk is greatest to help create safer, more resilient communities.

We will achieve it by:

- Promoting and delivering Home Fire Safety Visits for those at greatest risk.
- Working with partners to identify and support vulnerable individuals.
- Using data and intelligence to target prevention activity where it can have the greatest impact.
- Promoting compliance with fire safety legislation to protect people and communities.
- Supporting people to better understand risks and make informed safety choices.

Local Prevention Activity

Community Safety Engagement

- Promoting and delivering Home Fire Safety Visits, targeting those most at risk while identifying wider safety concerns and connecting individuals with appropriate support services.
- Supporting individuals at risk of fire through early intervention, partnership referrals and the provision of assistive technologies where appropriate.
- Ensuring operational crews take a visible and proactive role within local communities, leading incident reduction activities and delivering community-focused safety initiatives at a local level.

- Designing and implementing targeted community safety interventions through our Community Action Team, informed by data analysis and focused on addressing local risks, demand and vulnerability.
- Delivering partnership-based safety initiatives that address identified local risks, including road safety, water safety, CPR awareness and other community protection priorities.
- Maximising the use of social media, local media and community engagement opportunities to raise awareness of fire safety risks, promote safer behaviours and encourage community responsibility.
- Delivery of Risk Recognition inputs and hoarding awareness across all sheltered housing complexes in Argyll and Bute. These sites are visited annually in partnership with local sensory impairment teams and include a structured presentation covering fire safety, cooking, smoking, and electrical safety.
- Establish closer working relationships with various housing associations in Argyll and Bute, including Argyll Community Housing Association, Fyne Homes, West Highland Housing Association, and Trust Housing.

Protection

- Engaging with businesses, duty holders and responsible persons to promote compliance with fire safety legislation, improve fire safety management standards and reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).
- Delivering the Fire Safety Audit Programme and other risk-based protection activities within higher-risk premises, while supporting safe and sustainable communities through effective regulation and advice.

Preparedness

- Maintaining a highly trained and competent workforce, supported by effective Operational Intelligence, to ensure a safe, efficient and effective response to emergencies.
- Working with Local Resilience Partnerships (LRP) to assess community risks and coordinate a joint approach to prevention and preparedness.

Performance Indicators

Performance will be measured through qualitative feedback from stakeholders and partners, alongside quantitative, data-led quarterly reporting to support local authority scrutiny and continuous improvement.

Positive performance indicators will include:

- A sustained reduction in operational incidents across the local authority area.
- Increased community safety activity delivered by Community Fire Stations and the Community Action Team (CAT), including Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs), targeted interventions and thematic initiatives.
- Increased engagement with local communities, including delivery of the Educational Engagement Syllabus and participation in prevention and safety activities.

- Effective delivery of Fire Safety Enforcement activity, including audits of higher-risk premises, compliance outcomes and targeted interventions informed by emerging risks and trends.
- Improved availability of operational resources and positive progress across firefighter recruitment and development pathways.

Expected Outcomes

This Priority directly supports the delivery of the following Argyll & Bute LOIP:

Outcome 2: Housing

Outcome 3: Community Wellbeing

This priority supports the SFRS Strategic Objectives of:

- Safer Communities through Prevention
- Safe and Effective Response
- Improving Performance

2. Improving Health and Equality Outcomes

Background

Many of the individuals most vulnerable to fire in Argyll and Bute are also at increased risk from wider health, wellbeing and social challenges. An ageing population, dementia, sensory impairment, social isolation, accidental injury, long term health conditions, poor mental health and substance dependency can all increase vulnerability and reduce an individual's ability to live safely and independently. SIMD 2020 identified that 16.8% of residents live within Scotland's 30% most deprived areas, while 13 data zones fall within the 20% most deprived nationally. Rurality, island communities and geographical isolation can create additional challenges for people accessing support services and maintaining social connections.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is uniquely positioned to identify and support those most at risk through operational activity, Home Fire Safety Visits and partnership working. By taking a holistic approach to prevention and working alongside health and social care services, housing providers, third sector organisations, dementia support services and local Alcohol and Drug Partnerships, SFRS helps identify vulnerabilities at an early stage and connect individuals with the support they need. Through targeted prevention activity and engagement in multi-agency partnerships, SFRS contributes to reducing inequalities, improving wellbeing and enabling people to remain safe and independent within their own homes and communities.

We will achieve it by:

- Identifying wider health and wellbeing risks during Home Fire Safety Visits.
- Ensuring our Community Fire Stations and public spaces in Argyll & Bute are accessible.
- Referring vulnerable individuals to appropriate partner agencies.
- Supporting the use of telecare and assistive technologies in partnership with local sensory impairment teams.
- Continual development and delivery of risk awareness initiatives.
- Expand our partnerships and strategies with HSCPs to protect those most in need of support.
- Facilitating CPR, defibrillator and trauma awareness sessions, particularly in remote and island communities where emergency support may be limited.
- Deliver free home safety advice and promote and expand mutual referral pathways with all partners.
- Supporting the Argyll and Bute Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to improve safety outcomes for those at risk of domestic abuse.
- Focusing resources where demand has been identified, including rural and remote locations, and delivering key safety messages.
- Reducing the number of people impacted by Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests, ensuring an effective response across Argyll & Bute communities.

Local Prevention Activity

Community Safety Engagement

- Home Fire Safety Visits incorporating holistic risk assessment and early intervention VIA AP1/CPW referrals.
- Hoarding awareness, risk recognition and support pathways for HSCPs supporting individuals living in cluttered environments.
- Working in partnership with local sensory impairment services to provide tailored fire safety support, including the provision of specialist sensory impairment alarm systems, improving accessibility, identifying vulnerability and promoting safe, independent living.
- Community CPR and defibrillator awareness sessions delivered by Operational Crews and the Community Action Team, building confidence to respond in an emergency.
- Multi-agency partnership working with health, housing, social care and third sector organisations, including participation in safeguarding processes and Multi-Agency Forums (MAFs), to identify vulnerability, share information and coordinate support for individuals most at risk.
- Engaging with the Argyll and Bute MARAC partners where fire safety risks have been identified.
- Engagement with dementia friendly initiatives and support networks to enhance safety for individuals living with dementia and their carers.
- Collaboration with local Alcohol and Drug Partnerships to support individuals affected by substance use and associated vulnerabilities.
- Support for ageing populations through tailored prevention activities that promote safe and independent living at home.

Protection

- Engaging with sheltered housing providers, care home operators and responsible persons to promote compliance with fire safety legislation, improve fire safety management standards and reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).
- Delivering the Fire Safety Audit Programme and other risk-based protection activities within higher-risk premises, while supporting safe and sustainable communities through effective regulation and advice.

Performance Indicators

Performance will be measured through qualitative feedback from stakeholders and partners, alongside quantitative, data-led quarterly reporting to support local authority scrutiny and continuous improvement.

Positive performance indicators will include:

- Number of referrals made to partner agencies, supporting early intervention and access to appropriate services.
- Reduction in accidental fires, fire related injuries and other preventable harm among vulnerable individuals.
- Increased uptake of assistive technology and specialist fire safety equipment, including sensory impairment alarm systems.
- Number of vulnerable individuals supported to remain living independently within their communities.
- Delivery of community engagement, education and awareness activities that promote safety, wellbeing and resilience.
- Increased participation in Home Fire Safety Visits and targeted prevention initiatives.
- Number of safeguarding referrals made and contributions to the Argyll and Bute Multi-Agency Forum (MAF), resulting in coordinated partnership support for those at risk.
- Number of safeguarding referrals made and contributions to the Argyll & Bute MARAC, resulting in coordinated partnership support for those at risk.
- Strengthened partnership outcomes through collaborative working with health, housing, social care and third sector organisations.

Expected Outcomes

This Priority directly supports the delivery of the following Argyll & Bute LOIP:

Outcome 2: Housing

Outcome 3: Community Wellbeing

This priority supports the SFRS Strategic Objectives of:

- Safer Communities through Prevention
- Safe and Effective Response
- Improving Performance

3. Empowering Children and Young People

Background

Children and young people play a vital role in building safer and more resilient communities. Early intervention, education and positive engagement can significantly reduce risk-taking behaviours and help young people make informed decisions that improve their safety and wellbeing throughout life.

Across Argyll and Bute, SFRS works with schools, youth organisations and community partners to deliver a wide range of educational and diversionary programmes. These initiatives aim to raise awareness of risks associated with fire setting, water safety, road safety, anti-social behaviour and other community safety issues, while providing opportunities that build confidence, resilience and positive community involvement.

Argyll & Bute benefits from high levels of youth participation, with 94.6% of 16–19-year-olds engaged in education, employment or training during 2024/25, exceeding the Scottish average of 93.3%. While the area's overall unemployment rate remains relatively low at 3.2%, geographic isolation can present challenges for young people accessing opportunities. Reports of disorder and anti-social behaviour have reduced, although town centres and seasonal visitor locations continue to experience periodic concerns.

We will achieve it by:

- Delivering targeted school engagement programmes across the local authority.
- Expanding FireSkills and youth engagement initiatives.
- Providing road, water and fire safety in early years, primary and secondary education.
- Contributing to the delivery of diversionary activities that reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Supporting young people through bespoke Fire Safety Support & Education (FSSE) interventions.
- Working with partner agencies including Developing the Young Workforce to promote positive outcomes for young people.
- To continue to promote active participation in MCR Pathways mentoring across our workforce.
- Being an active partner of Argyll & Bute's Corporate Parenting Board.

Local Prevention Activity

Community Safety Engagement

- Continued development and delivery of the SFRS FireSkills Programme. Using practical firefighter-themed activities to build confidence, resilience, teamwork, and positive community involvement.
- Ensuring our Youth Volunteer Scheme Instructor Staff and Youth Volunteers are supported and feel valued.
- Delivery of "Firefighter for a Day" sessions (Single-day FireSkills-based courses), while strengthening partnerships across education, community justice, and wider community

organisations, to create accessible opportunities for young people and young adults from diverse backgrounds.

- Working in partnership with Police Scotland to deliver road and water safety messaging in schools, as well as bonfire & antisocial behaviour campaigns.
- Working in Partnership with Developing the Workforce to provide positive destinations for young people.
- Supporting access and provision of Water Safety Scotland educational resources and digital learning materials through schools and education partners, ensuring that targeted water safety campaigns, such as Ice Safety, are delivered to relevant age groups at appropriate times of the year.
- Continue to participate in activities that support Argyll and Butes Planet Youth program.

Protection

- SFRS Fire Safety Enforcement Auditing Officers undertake a programme of inspections and audits across relevant educational and childcare premises, helping to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation and supporting the safety of children, young people and staff.

Performance Indicators

- Reduction in deliberate fire-setting and youth-related fire incidents.
- Increased awareness of community safety risks.
- Number of young people participating in FireSkills, Firefighter for a Day and FSSE.
- Number of school and educational establishment engagements delivered.
- Positive feedback from schools, youth organisations and community partners on SFRS engagement activities.
- Reduction in the number of road or water related Special Service incidents involving young people.

Expected Outcomes

This Priority directly supports the delivery of the following Argyll & Bute LOIP:

Outcome 3: Community Wellbeing

This priority supports the SFRS Strategic Objectives of:

- Safer Communities through Prevention
- Investing in our people
- Innovation and Investment

4. Strengthening Community Resilience and Operational Preparedness

Background

As a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) plays a vital role in preparing for, responding to and supporting recovery from emergencies affecting communities across Argyll and Bute. Working alongside local, regional and national partners, SFRS contributes to the planning and coordination of effective multi agency arrangements for a wide range of incidents, including flooding, severe weather, transport incidents, major fires, terrorism related events and other emerging risks.

Maintaining a high level of operational readiness requires a skilled and adaptable workforce, effective risk assessment processes, robust contingency planning and strong partnership working. Through active participation in Local Resilience Partnerships (LRPs) and other multi agency forums, SFRS works collaboratively with responder organisations to identify risks, develop emergency plans, share information and strengthen local resilience arrangements. This collaborative approach helps ensure communities are better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies.

Joint training and exercising are central to ensuring an effective emergency response. SFRS regularly participates in multi-agency exercises and training events that test operational capabilities, validate emergency plans and enhance interoperability between responding organisations. These activities provide valuable opportunities to identify lessons learned, promote continuous improvement and ensure that responders can work together effectively during complex and challenging incidents.

The impacts of climate change continue to influence the nature and frequency of emergencies faced by local communities. In particular, the increasing risk of large and prolonged wildfires, flooding and severe weather events presents growing challenges for emergency responders. In response, SFRS has invested in specialist equipment, enhanced training programmes and improved operational capabilities to strengthen its ability to prevent, prepare for and respond to such incidents.

Through a proactive approach to preparedness, training, exercising and partnership engagement, SFRS remains committed to strengthening community resilience and ensuring an effective, coordinated and professional response that protects communities, businesses, critical infrastructure and the environment.

We will achieve it by:

- Delivering statutory responsibilities as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- Maintaining and developing the operational competence, skills and preparedness of all personnel to respond effectively to emergencies.
- Continue to invest in specialist fleet and equipment to strengthen our response to emerging risks such as wildfires and climate related incidents.
- Actively participating in multi-agency planning, training and exercising to strengthen interoperability and coordinated emergency response arrangements.
- Gathering, analysing and maintaining accurate operational intelligence to support informed decision making and effective incident management.
- Monitoring, assessing and reviewing response arrangements to address emerging risks and lessons identified from incidents and exercises.
- Working with partners to enhance community resilience and support local preparedness, response and recovery capabilities.

- Strengthening preparedness for the impacts of climate change through investment in specialist resources, training and capabilities to address increasing risks such as large-scale wildfires and flooding.
- Strengthen collaboration with COMAH site operators, including HMNB Clyde and RNAD Coulport, to reduce risk, improve operational preparedness and support the safety and resilience of local communities.

Local Prevention Activity

Preparedness

- Active participation in Local Resilience Partnerships to strengthen multi agency preparedness, response and recovery arrangements.
- Delivery and participation in tabletop, command and live exercises to test plans, validate procedures and enhance interoperability.
- Development, review and maintenance of civil contingencies and emergency response plans to address current and emerging risks.
- Ongoing staff development, training and competence assurance to maintain operational readiness and resilience.
- Collection, analysis and maintenance of operational intelligence to support risk informed decision making and effective incident response.
- Delivery of community resilience and awareness initiatives to improve preparedness and strengthen local resilience.
- Coordination of flood preparedness and response activities in partnership with local and national agencies.
- Investment in specialist training, fleet, equipment and capabilities to address emerging risks, including those associated with climate change and wildfires.



Community Safety Engagement

- Community CPR and defibrillator awareness sessions delivered by Operational Crews and the Community Action Team, building confidence to respond in an emergency.
- Basic Trauma informed awareness sessions provided to local communities in partnership with health care partners.
- As part of our wildfire strategy, the Community Action Team collaborates with local partners and the public to raise awareness of wildfire risks and support safer choices when accessing the outdoors.

Performance Indicators

Performance will be measured through qualitative feedback from stakeholders and partners, alongside quantitative, data-led quarterly reporting to support local authority scrutiny and continuous improvement.

Positive performance indicators will include:

- Achievement of operational training and competence requirements to maintain emergency response capability.
- Participation in resilience and emergency preparedness exercises to test plans, procedures and operational effectiveness.
- Completion of operational intelligence and site familiarisation visits to improve risk awareness and incident planning.
- Delivery and participation in multi-agency exercising activities to strengthen interoperability and coordinated response arrangements.
- Provision of community resilience and awareness initiatives to support preparedness and enhance local resilience.
- Ongoing development of preparedness and response capabilities to address current and emerging risks within local communities.

Expected Outcomes

This Priority directly supports the delivery of the following Argyll & Bute LOIP:

Outcome 1: Transport Infrastructure

Outcome 3: Community Wellbeing

This priority supports the SFRS Strategic Objectives of:

- Safer Communities through Prevention
- Safe and Effective Response
- Innovation and Investment
- Investing in our People

5. Supporting Sustainability

Background

The impacts of climate change and emerging technologies are influencing the risks faced by communities across Argyll and Bute. Increasing periods of warmer, drier weather can contribute to a greater risk of wildfire, while the growing use of lithium-ion batteries in homes, businesses and transport introduces new and evolving fire risks.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is committed to supporting the transition to a more sustainable future while ensuring communities remain safe and resilient. Through our Energy and Carbon Strategy, Carbon Management Plan and local partnership activity, we will work to reduce the environmental impact of our operations, support community understanding of emerging risks and contribute to wider sustainability ambitions across Argyll and Bute.

By working with partners, businesses and communities, we will promote environmental responsibility, reduce avoidable demand on emergency services and help build resilience to current and future challenges.

We will achieve it by:

- Supporting the delivery of SFRS environmental and carbon reduction objectives through sustainable operational practices and investment in lower-emission technologies and infrastructure.
- Promoting energy efficiency across Service properties and supporting initiatives that reduce the environmental impact of our estate and day-to-day operations.
- Encouraging sustainable resource management by supporting recycling initiatives and reducing waste generated through Service activities.
- Reducing avoidable incidents and unwanted fire alarm signal (UFAS) attendances, helping to minimise operational demand, blue-light journeys and associated carbon emissions.
- Continued investment in specialist resources including dedicated wildfire units and EVs across our national fleet.



Local Prevention Activity

Community Safety Engagement

- Working with partners to raise awareness of emerging risks, including lithium-ion batteries, battery energy storage systems (BESS) and other technologies that may present fire and environmental hazards.
- Delivering targeted prevention activity to reduce wildfire risk and increase public understanding of the environmental and community impacts of outdoor fires.
- Using local risk information and incident trends to identify areas of concern and develop targeted community engagement and prevention initiatives.
- Developing local initiatives to address emerging risks and trends that affect community safety, resilience and environmental sustainability.
- Working with community planning partners and resilience groups to strengthen community resilience and support sustainable local solutions to local challenges.

Protection

- Supporting safer businesses and commercial premises through fire safety audits, enforcement activity and engagement aimed at reducing fire-related environmental harm and pollution.

Performance Indicators

- Progress against relevant SFRS Energy and Carbon Strategy and sustainability objectives.
- Instances and trends of unwanted fire alarm signal (UFAS) attendances.
- Instances and trends of wildfire incidents.
- Instances and trends of lithium-ion battery-related incidents.
- Number and impact of local campaigns and initiatives promoting environmental sustainability, emerging risk awareness and responsible behaviours.
- Number of businesses and organisations supported through fire safety engagement, audits and enforcement activity.
- Evidence of partnership initiatives that improve community resilience and environmental awareness.
- Reduction in avoidable operational activity that contributes to environmental impact and carbon emissions.

Expected Outcomes

This Priority directly supports the delivery of the following Argyll & Bute LOIP:

Outcome 1: Transport Infrastructure

Outcome 2: Housing

Outcome 3: Community Wellbeing

This priority supports the SFRS Strategic Objectives of:

- Safer Communities through Prevention
- Safe and Effective Response
- Innovation and Investment
- Investing in our People

Review

To ensure this Local Fire and Rescue Plan remains flexible to emerging local or national priorities a review may be carried out at any time but will be reviewed at least once every three years.

A review may also be carried out if the Scottish Minister directs it or if a new Strategic Plan is approved. Following a review, the Local Senior Officer may revise the Plan.

Contact Us

We are fully committed to continually improving the service we provide to our communities and recognise that to achieve this goal we must listen and respond to the views of the public and our partners.

We use all feedback we receive to monitor our performance and incorporate this information into our planning and governance processes, in order to continually improve our service.

We are proud that the majority of feedback we receive is positive, and we are keen to hear examples of good practice and quality service delivery that exemplify the standards we strive to provide for the communities of Scotland.

If you have something you would like to share with us, or you require additional information, you can get in touch in a number of ways:

Write to: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

2 Kilbowie Road Clydebank
G81 6QT

Phone: 01389 385999

Visit our website: www.firescotland.gov.uk

Follow us on X @scotfire_ABEWDHQ

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