

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

2026-2029

Dumfries and Galloway

Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

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Foreword

As Chair of the Police, Fire and Rescue Sub Committee I was asked to prepare a forward for the current edition of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Dumfries and Galloway 2026, it is an honour and privilege to do this.

I did not want to just quote facts and statistics but closer to how I saw the Service as a personal observer of the Service these past sixty years.

Whilst on my drive clearing out vegetation to lower the fire risk, I was thinking what to write as a forward. I heard in the background the unmistakeable sound of the towns tender racing up the high street. I knew precisely where it was from the engines sound and the klaxons tone as it sped towards a major junction. Many times, over the years I heard and saw the same scenario as it drove past and thought this was what the Service was all about. The time was around quarter past five on a Friday evening, many of the crew would have just finished work, arriving home to eat whilst others would have just be going home to get on with family life, but the call was made and they probably dropped everything and raced towards the station, as they have done over decades. Our region is fortunate to have such a responsive and proactive Fire & Rescue Service rooted in community spirit and supported by all.

As a youngster, I would often watch the local crew practice every Wednesday out behind our home and I personally knew most of the men (it was the 1970s) as we often had to mix due to work or other activities. There was a very strong feeling of community engagement, and shopkeepers often opened well after hours to supply crews with food if they needed anything due to particularly long emergencies. The crews often held charity events to raise funds and towns folks always supported these initiatives, such was the respect and gratitude shown to the service. This has been replicated throughout Dumfries and Galloway over the decades and is part of the strength along with the generations learning from their predecessors of past risks and future ones from the advancing technology designed to make life easier, and to give residents whenever in difficulty, a response we would all expect.

As set out back in 2020 the priorities still remain:

- Priority 1 - Domestic Fire Safety
- Priority 2 - Unintentional Harm and Injury
- Priority 3 - Road Safety
- Priority 4 - Deliberate Fire Setting
- Priority 5 - Non-Domestic Fire Safety
- Priority 6 - Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
- Priority 7 - Operational Resilience and Preparedness

Community involvement is central for a strong and effective Service and that is a testament to the strong Community Planning arrangements that we have in place for our region. I happened to be driving into a council meeting some time back and whilst waiting in a queue, passed one of the Dumfries tenders which was training up a local member from my town and we saw each other and smiled. I thought, the Service is in good hands and the tradition set by others is strong.

As a Police, Fire and Rescue Sub Committee we support the principles of risk prioritisation and early intervention and fully acknowledge the contribution that our Fire & Rescue Service make to improving community safety and health and wellbeing across our communities. As a committee we

will continue to provide appropriate support and scrutiny to ensure the priorities as set out can be achieved and improved upon.

Councillor Tony Berretti

Chair, Dumfries & Galloway Police, Fire & Rescue Sub Committee

Introduction

Dumfries and Galloway is one of Scotland's most diverse and challenging areas to serve. Its large rural geography, dispersed communities and changing risk profile demand a fire and rescue service that is adaptable, resilient and closely connected to the people it serves.

As Local Senior Officer, I am pleased to present the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Dumfries and Galloway for 2026–2029.

This Plan sets out our priorities for the next three years and how we will work with communities and partners to reduce harm, improve safety and strengthen resilience across the region.

The risks facing our communities continue to evolve. We are seeing increasing demand linked to vulnerability and safeguarding, the growing impact of climate change and severe weather, and continued pressure on public services to support people earlier and more effectively. Seasonal wildfire activity, an ageing population and inequalities affecting some of our communities all shape how we plan and deliver our services locally.

In response, this Plan focuses on the areas where we can make the greatest difference. It reflects our commitment to prevention, protection and emergency response, while recognising that no single organisation can address these challenges alone. Strong partnership working, early intervention and a clear understanding of local risk will remain central to our approach.

The priorities within this Plan are informed by evidence, operational learning and engagement with partners, and align with both the SFRS Strategy 2025–2028 and the Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Our firefighters, staff and volunteers continue to demonstrate professionalism, commitment and compassion in supporting the communities of Dumfries and Galloway. I am proud of the service they provide every day, often in challenging circumstances and across a wide geographical area.

Together with our partners and communities, we will continue working to build a safer, stronger and more resilient Dumfries and Galloway.

Bobby Lennox
Local Senior Officer
Dumfries and Galloway

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

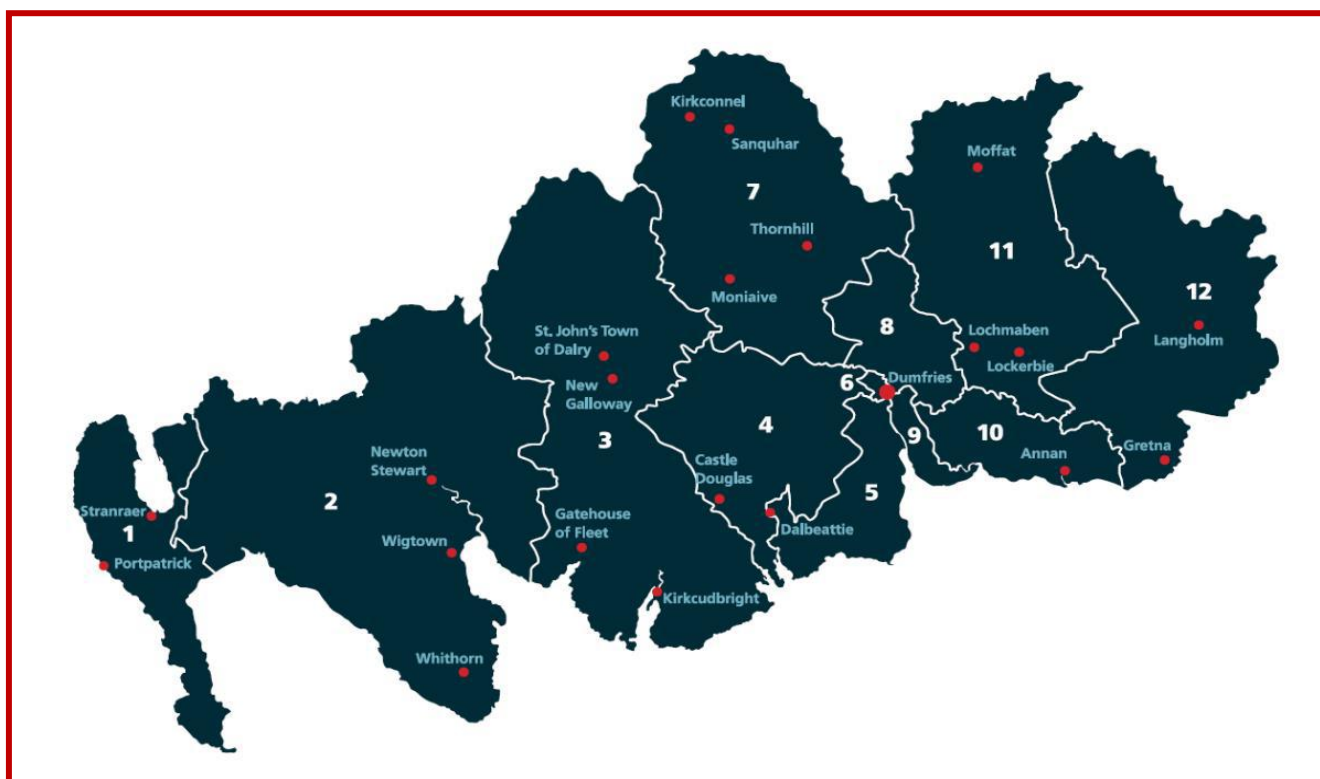
Dumfries and Galloway is one of Scotland's largest and most rural local authority areas, covering approximately 6,426 square kilometres. The region encompasses a diverse mix of urban settlements, agricultural communities, extensive coastlines and remote upland areas, presenting a distinctive and varied risk profile for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Population and Demographics

The current population of Dumfries and Galloway is approximately 148,790, dispersed across a mix of rural and urban settings. The population is forecast to reduce to around 144,575 by 2028. The largest settlements are Dumfries (approximately 48,000), Stranraer (approximately 13,000) and Annan (approximately 9,080).

The region has an older population profile than Scotland as a whole, with an average age of 46 years compared to Scotland's national average of 42 years. Over 26% of the population are aged 65 and over, and this proportion is projected to grow significantly over the coming decade. The number of people living alone is expected to rise from approximately 7,500 in 2019 to almost 10,000 by 2029. These demographic trends directly influence fire risk, vulnerability and demand for SFRS services.

1 in 3 residents (approximately 48,500 people) report having at least one long-term health condition that impacts their daily lives, and 14% of people aged 16 and over report experiencing common mental health problems. Child poverty sits at 26%, above the national average. These factors compound the risks associated with fire and unintentional harm and underline the importance of targeted, equity-focused prevention activity.



SFRS Resources

Emergency response within Dumfries and Galloway is provided from 17 locations, comprising one Wholetime station at Dumfries (permanently crewed), 16 stations operating on a Retained Duty System (On-Call) basis. The vast geography and dispersed communities mean that response times and resource availability vary significantly across the area, and the management of the on-call workforce remains an ongoing operational priority.

Local Partnership Context

Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Partnership (CPP) has published its Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2023–2033, setting out a vision of working in partnership to ensure a confident, ambitious, healthy and fairer Dumfries and Galloway for everyone who lives and works here.

The LOIP is structured around three high-level themes: Health and Wellbeing, Work, and Where We Live, with 12 outcome areas and four underpinning principles:

- Empowering Communities
- Embedding Place Planning
- Building Local Capacity
- Early Intervention and Prevention

SFRS plays an active and statutory role within the CPP and is committed to contributing to the delivery of the LOIP outcomes through this Local Fire and Rescue Plan. Key areas of alignment include reducing health inequalities, improving the wellbeing of vulnerable people, supporting community resilience and contributing to tackling child poverty and the cost of living. SFRS also contributes to the Poverty and Inequalities Partnership, the Safer Communities Partnership, the Children's Strategic Planning Partnership, the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and the Local Resilience Partnership.

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, which brings investment to communities including Gretna, Kirkcubbin, Stranraer, Whithorn and Wigtown, provides further context for the region's economic and social development, and SFRS will seek to align its community safety activities with this work where appropriate.

Key Prevention and Protection Considerations

The review of our 2020 Local Fire and Rescue Plan identified a number of important trends that shape the priorities for this new Plan. Non-fire emergencies, particularly inter-agency incidents involving vulnerable individuals, have increased since 2020. Deliberate fires, while predominantly outdoors and of a secondary nature, continue to show seasonal peaks. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) has reduced significantly following national policy changes in 2023. Climate-related incidents, including wildfires and flooding, are becoming more frequent and complex. Derelict and disused buildings continue to present an emerging risk across the area.

These findings, combined with the demographic and socioeconomic context of the region, inform the six priorities set out in this Plan.

In developing this Plan, a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach has been applied, drawing on tools and frameworks provided by Public Health Scotland. This approach recognises that fire and rescue

activity connects directly with wider determinants of health including housing, social isolation, poverty and mental wellbeing, and that reducing harm requires coordinated action across public services. The priorities within this Plan have been shaped with reference to the Public Health Scotland Building Blocks framework, ensuring that our work contributes to improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities across Dumfries and Galloway.

Performance Scrutiny

Overseeing the performance of SFRS at a local level is the responsibility of the Dumfries and Galloway Police and Fire Sub Committee. This forum provides the mechanism for scrutiny against the priorities within this Local Fire and Rescue Plan and enables engagement with the Local Senior Officer on regional and national matters.

Reporting against the priorities and performance indicators in this Plan takes place on a quarterly basis through the Sub Committee. Performance reports provide data and narrative updates against each priority, enabling the Sub Committee to scrutinise progress, identify areas for improvement and provide appropriate challenge and support.

Progress against Local Fire and Rescue Plans is also scrutinised by the Local Management Team within SFRS, and reports are aligned to the national performance reporting framework to ensure consistency across the Service.

Local Priorities

In developing the priorities for this Plan, we reviewed performance data from the 2020 Local Fire and Rescue Plan, engaged with communities and stakeholders across Dumfries and Galloway, and took account of operational intelligence, national trends and partner insight. This evidence-led approach ensures that our priorities reflect the areas of greatest risk and opportunity for the people of Dumfries and Galloway.

The seven priorities in this Plan are:

- **Priority 1 – Reducing Unintentional Harm and Protecting Vulnerable People**
- **Priority 2 – Improving Safety in Homes and Buildings**
- **Priority 3 – Supporting Safe, Resilient and Empowered Communities**
- **Priority 4 – Delivering a Safe and Effective Emergency Response**
- **Priority 5 – Reducing the Risk from Deliberate and Accidental Fires in Outdoor and Rural Environments**
- **Priority 6 – Supporting Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience**
- **Priority 7 – Strengthening Partnerships and Community Planning**

The table below illustrates how these priorities align with the outcomes of the Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2023–2033.

	SFRS Local Area Plan Priorities						
LOIP Outcomes	Priority 1 Vulnerable People	Priority 2 Safe Homes & Buildings	Priority 3 Resilient Community	Priority 4 Emergency Response	Priority 5 Outdoor & Rural Fires	Priority 6 Climate Adaptation	Priority 7 Partnerships
Outcome 1 Help mitigate impacts of Cost of Living	✓	✓					✓
Outcome 2 Reduce health inequalities	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Outcome 3 Improve health and wellbeing	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Outcome 4 Eliminate child poverty	✓	✓	✓				✓
Outcome 5 Grow working age population							✓
Outcome 6 Address skills and recruitment gaps				✓			✓
Outcome 7 Increase volunteering opportunities			✓		✓		✓
Outcome 8 Develop inclusive economy			✓	✓	✓		✓
Outcome 9 Eliminate digital exclusion							✓
Outcome 10 Improve transport connectivity			✓				
Outcome 11 Combat climate change					✓	✓	✓
Outcome 12 Develop affordable homes	✓						✓

Local Priorities

1. Reducing Unintentional Harm and Protecting Vulnerable People

"We will work even more closely with communities... supporting vulnerable members of society to live safely and independently."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Reducing unintentional harm and protecting vulnerable people remains a key area of demand for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Dumfries and Galloway. The area's ageing population, rurality and increasing levels of vulnerability continue to influence operational activity, particularly in relation to non-fire emergencies and safeguarding.

Between 2023–24 Q1 and 2025–26 Q2, inter-agency incidents represented the largest proportion of non-fire demand, with 386 incidents of this type. Vehicle incidents accounted for 201 incidents, flooding or water rescue for 97, and humanitarian incidents for 93. Non-fire incidents have been subject to random variation nationally, with a clear increasing trend since 2020–21.

Accidental dwelling fires remain broadly consistent with national patterns, though the area has not shown the sustained downward trend seen nationally. Incidents involving vulnerable individuals including those affected by poor mental health, addiction, reduced mobility and social isolation continue to form a significant element of operational activity.

Dumfries and Galloway's demographic profile, with over 26% of the population aged 65 and over and high levels of long-term health conditions, means that vulnerability will continue to grow as a driver of demand. Over 14,000 people are identified as unpaid carers, and the number of older people living alone is projected to rise significantly over the plan period.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue to deliver Home Fire Safety Visits targeted to those most at risk, with a focus on older people, those with health conditions and individuals experiencing vulnerability.
- Strengthen referral pathways and early identification of vulnerability through operational crews, Community Action Team activity and partner engagement.
- Work with Health and Social Care, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, Social Work and third-sector partners to coordinate support for vulnerable individuals.
- Deliver targeted Home Fire Safety Visit campaigns in areas with higher levels of deprivation, social isolation and health inequalities.
- Provide safety planning and ongoing engagement for individuals with complex needs, including joint visits with partners where appropriate.
- Continue to promote and facilitate access to assistive technology, including telecare and carbon monoxide detection, to enhance safety in the home.
- Engage through the Poverty and Inequalities Partnership and other community planning structures to ensure our work addresses the root causes of vulnerability.

- Engage through the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's membership of the Prevention Hub to strengthen connections with public health partners, share intelligence on vulnerability and align prevention activity across services.
- Work with NHS Dumfries and Galloway and local public health colleagues to develop joint approaches to falls prevention, recognising the overlap between fire risk and the circumstances that place older people at risk of falls and injury in the home.

Performance Indicators:

- Number of Home Fire Safety Visits delivered and proportion to high-risk individuals.
- Number of safeguarding referrals made by SFRS to partner agencies.
- Number and rate of accidental dwelling fires and fire-related casualties.
- Number of inter-agency and non-fire emergency incidents attended.
- Number of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors installed in households of vulnerable individuals.
- Trends in fire risk assessed through local data profiling.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Delivery of Home Fire Safety Visits to identified high-risk individuals, including older people, those with long-term health conditions and those in fuel poverty.
- Targeted campaigns promoting fire safety awareness within community groups.
- Development of a partnership with NHS Dumfries and Galloway to promote Home Fire Safety Visits via digital screens in health settings.
- Participation in Community Action Team activity to identify and engage with vulnerable individuals.
- Delivery of safe and well referrals to partner agencies where wider needs are identified.
- Collaboration with NHS Dumfries and Galloway public health teams on falls prevention initiatives, particularly targeting older people living alone in rural areas.

Protection:

- Continued programme of fire safety enforcement audits targeting higher-risk premises, including those with sleeping accommodation or vulnerable occupants.
- Engagement with care home and sheltered housing providers to support fire safety compliance and raise awareness.

Preparedness:

- Engagement with Local Resilience Partnership to ensure vulnerable populations are included in emergency planning.
- Contribution to multi-agency forums to ensure coordinated preparedness for incidents involving vulnerable individuals.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced rate of accidental dwelling fires and fire-related casualties.

- Improved safeguarding outcomes through earlier identification of vulnerability.
- Reduced health inequalities through targeted prevention activity aligned with LOIP Outcomes 2 (Reduce health inequalities) and 3 (Improve health and wellbeing).
- Greater independence and safety for vulnerable members of the community.
- Reduced demand on partner health and social care services.

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safer Communities through Prevention

2. Improving Safety in Homes and Buildings

"Our approach to fire prevention and enforcement will be revised."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Improving safety in homes and buildings remains a core responsibility for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Dumfries and Galloway. The area's varied housing stock, ageing infrastructure and presence of derelict and disused buildings continue to present a range of risks across both domestic and non-domestic settings.

Home Fire Safety Visits increased following the Covid-19 period but have shown a recent decrease from 2023–24 Q4 onwards, reflecting a national pattern. Non-domestic fires remain low, with no clear long-term trend, though national data shows a downward trend. Fire Safety Enforcement audit activity has increased significantly since 2022–23, with figures consistently above or at the upper control limit in 2024–25.

Derelict and disused buildings continue to present an emerging and dynamic risk across Dumfries and Galloway. These sites require an intelligence-led, multi-agency approach to reduce hazards, limit unauthorised access and support operational preparedness.

The wider housing context is also relevant. Child poverty in Dumfries and Galloway sits at 26%, and affordable housing remains a priority in the LOIP. The condition and tenure of housing stock directly influences fire risk, and SFRS's work in this area contributes to wider public health and housing outcomes.

To achieve this, we will:

- Deliver a targeted programme of Home Fire Safety Visits, prioritising households identified as higher risk through referral pathways, operational intelligence and partner data.
- Continue and develop the partnership with NHS Dumfries and Galloway to increase awareness of Home Fire Safety Visits through health settings.
- Maintain and develop the Fire Safety Enforcement audit programme, applying a risk-based approach to target higher-risk premises.
- Continue multi-agency engagement with property owners, Police Scotland and the local authority to address risks associated with derelict and disused buildings.
- Develop and deliver a public awareness campaign highlighting the dangers of entering derelict structures.
- Maintain and update operational risk information and briefing notes for station crews to support safe and effective incident response.
- Engage with duty holders to promote compliance and raise awareness of their fire safety responsibilities.
- Work with Public Health Scotland and partner agencies to monitor and respond to emerging environmental hazards in domestic and non-domestic settings, including risks associated with lithium-ion batteries in household devices and electric vehicles, ensuring operational crews and the public are aware of the specific risks these present.

Performance Indicators:

- Number of Home Fire Safety Visits completed, including trend data.
- Number and outcome of Fire Safety Enforcement audits conducted.
- Number and type of non-domestic fires attended.
- Number of derelict building risk assessments and multi-agency interventions completed.
- Number of enforcement actions taken where appropriate.
- Number of awareness and engagement activities delivered in relation to emerging hazards, including lithium-ion battery safety.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Delivery of Home Fire Safety Visits to identified households, with a focus on those living in older or higher-risk housing.
- Partnership with NHS Dumfries and Galloway to promote self-referrals and raise awareness of fire safety through health venues.
- Targeted engagement with social landlords, housing providers and community organisations to support residents in accessing Home Fire Safety Visits.

Protection:

- Delivery of a risk-based Fire Safety Enforcement audit programme covering a range of premises types, with priority given to sleeping accommodation and premises with vulnerable occupants.
- Engagement with duty holders to support understanding of fire safety legislation and promote compliance.
- Multi-agency coordination with Police Scotland and Dumfries and Galloway Council regarding derelict and disused buildings, including joint site visits and monitoring arrangements.
- Development of operational briefing notes to support crew situational awareness in relation to high-risk sites.

Preparedness:

- Contribution to multi-agency emergency planning for premises with complex fire risks.
- Maintenance of operational risk information to support safe and effective incident response.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduced rate of accidental fires in domestic and non-domestic premises.
- Maintained or improved compliance with fire safety legislation across non-domestic premises.
- Reduced risk to communities and firefighters from derelict buildings.
- Contribution to LOIP Outcomes 2 (Reduce health inequalities), 12 (Develop affordable homes) and 3 (Improve health and wellbeing).

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safer Communities through Prevention

3. Supporting Safe, Resilient and Empowered Communities

"We will build on our success of preventing wider harm... improving wellbeing... increasing community resilience."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Supporting safe and resilient communities remains central to reducing risk across Dumfries and Galloway. Prevention activity has focused on engaging with individuals and communities to improve awareness, influence behaviour and support safer choices.

Deliberate fires are predominantly outdoor incidents. Between 2023–24 Q1 and 2025–26 Q2, 284 of the 342 deliberate fires occurred in outdoor settings. There is a clear seasonal trend, with Q1 figures consistently above average, reflecting peak activity in spring and summer. Youth-related fire setting and risk-taking behaviour, particularly around derelict buildings and open water, remains a contributing factor.

Road safety remains an important area of demand, with road traffic collisions attended by SFRS showing random variation since 2020. Nationally, SFRS attendances at RTCs have increased since 2022. Dumfries and Galloway's rural road network, with long stretches of A-road, high numbers of agricultural vehicles and seasonal tourist traffic, creates particular hazards.

Water-related incidents remain consistent across the reporting period, with increases in coastal areas. Wider community safety concerns, including health, employment and the cost of living, are also relevant given that socioeconomic disadvantage increases vulnerability and risk.

Operation Safety, the area's long-standing multi-agency youth engagement programme, continues to reach more than 2,000 P6–7 pupils annually across the region and represents a key preventative investment. The Youth Volunteer Programme in Sanquhar also provides positive opportunities for young people.

To achieve this, we will:

- Expand youth engagement initiatives across the area.
- Continue to deliver targeted youth engagement, including small-group work with young people referred through Youth Justice and other pathways.
- Deliver seasonal prevention campaigns aligned to local risk, including outdoor fire safety, road safety and water safety.
- Work in partnership to reduce deliberate fire setting and associated anti-social behaviour, sharing intelligence with Police Scotland and the local authority.
- Continue to support road casualty reduction through Road Safety Support and Education sessions, specialist motorcycle safety activity, car seat advice, and targeted engagement with young drivers.
- Deliver water safety awareness activity at identified locations of higher risk, including coastal areas such as Luce Bay.
- Engage communities through events, station open days and local groups to build awareness and strengthen relationships.

Performance Indicators:

- Number of young people engaged through youth education programmes, including Operation Safety.
- Number of deliberate fire incidents attended and trends over time.
- Number and type of road traffic collision interventions delivered and outcomes.
- Number of water safety engagement activities delivered.
- Community feedback on safety awareness initiatives.
- Number of fire-related anti-social behaviour referrals made from partner agencies.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Delivery of Operation Safety to P6–7 pupils across all schools in Dumfries and Galloway.
- Targeted youth engagement sessions in partnership with Youth Justice, youth work services and schools for young people at risk of deliberate fire setting or anti-social behaviour.
- Participation in the 'Under the Lights' football initiative and other diversionary programmes to reduce fire-related anti-social behaviour.
- Seasonal prevention campaigns covering outdoor fire safety, road safety, water safety and cooking safety.
- Community engagement through events, open days and collaboration with local groups.
- Road Safety Support and Education sessions for individuals referred following road traffic incidents.
- Biker Down motorcycle safety engagement targeting higher-risk rider groups.
- Child car seat safety events in partnership with Police Scotland.
- Targeted water safety messaging at higher-risk coastal and inland locations.

Protection:

- Engagement with Fire Safety Enforcement colleagues to address deliberate fire setting in non-domestic premises.
- Information sharing with Police Scotland regarding locations and individuals associated with deliberate fire setting.

Preparedness:

- Contribution to community resilience planning, including awareness of seasonal risks and adverse weather impacts.
- Engagement with partner agencies regarding risks associated with derelict buildings, open water and outdoor environments.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduction in deliberate fire incidents and associated anti-social behaviour.
- Improved safety behaviours among young people and higher-risk groups.
- Reduced road casualties and improved road safety outcomes.
- Stronger community resilience and safer choices in the community.
- Contribution to LOIP Outcomes 3 (Health and Wellbeing), 4 (Child Poverty), 7 (Volunteering) and 8 (Economy/Fair Work).

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safer Communities through Prevention

4. Delivering a Safe and Effective Emergency Response

"Providing an effective emergency response will always be a priority..."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Delivering a safe and effective emergency response remains a fundamental responsibility for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Dumfries and Galloway. The area's rural geography, dispersed communities, extensive transport networks and range of incident types require a well-trained workforce, strong operational preparedness and effective multi-agency coordination.

Fires in Dumfries and Galloway have been subject to random variation since 2020–21. From 2023–24 Q2 onwards, figures have consistently been below average, suggesting a potential decreasing trend. A seasonal Q1 peak is evident, consistent with national patterns. Non-fire emergencies continue to form a significant proportion of operational demand.

Road traffic collisions attended by SFRS have shown random variation since 2020, with national figures showing an increasing trend since 2022. Dumfries and Galloway's rural road network presents specific challenges, including longer response times to remote incidents and a higher proportion of serious collisions.

The area's 17 fire stations, with 16 On-Call Duty System, present ongoing resourcing and availability challenges. Maintaining appliance availability and operational competence across the area is a continuing priority.

To achieve this, we will:

- Deliver a structured operational training programme covering core competencies, including breathing apparatus, road traffic collision response, water rescue, wildfire and incident command.
- Undertake multi-agency exercises with partner agencies to strengthen coordination and interoperability.
- Maintain and update operational risk information, site-specific plans and familiarisation visits.
- Support appliance availability and workforce commitment through effective local management and recruitment activity.
- Continue to develop and deliver joint exercises, including water rescue, custody environment and site-specific scenarios.
- Ensure that organisational learning from operational incidents and training events influences future practice.
- Support the introduction of new wildfire operational capability to enhance response in rural and forestry locations.

Performance Indicators:

- Appliance availability rates across the area.
- Operational training completion rates and competency assessments.

- Number and type of multi-agency exercises undertaken.
- Response times to emergency incidents.
- Number and type of operational incidents attended, with trend analysis.
- Operational risk information currency and compliance.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Community engagement to raise awareness of fire and emergency risks.
- Contribution to road safety awareness and casualty reduction activity.
- Promotion of outdoor and water safety messages to reduce preventable emergencies.

Protection:

- Delivery of fire safety enforcement activity to reduce the likelihood of fire in non-domestic premises.
- Maintenance and development of operational risk information for higher-risk premises.

Preparedness:

- Delivery of operational training covering the full range of incident types, including fire, road traffic collision, water rescue, wildfire and chemical incidents.
- Multi-agency exercises in partnership with Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, HM Prison Dumfries, Nith Inshore Rescue and other agencies.
- Maintenance of Business Continuity arrangements to support operational resilience during periods of disruption.
- Contribution to Local Resilience Partnership planning to ensure robust arrangements for major incidents and emergencies.

Expected Outcomes:

- Maintained and improved emergency response capability across Dumfries and Galloway.
- Improved interoperability with partner agencies.
- Contribution to LOIP Outcomes 8 (Economy/Fair Work) and 10 (Transport Connectivity) through safer roads and infrastructure.
- Reduced harm to communities from fire, road traffic collisions and other emergencies.

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safe and Effective Response

5. Reducing the Risk from Deliberate and Accidental Fires in Outdoor and Rural Environments

"Investment in new and enhanced data-led prevention interventions... understanding emerging risks and preventing an emergency incident or harm from happening in the first place."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Dumfries and Galloway's extensive rural landscape, encompassing moorland, forestry, agricultural land, coastal areas and upland terrain, creates a distinctive and significant risk from both deliberate and accidental fires in outdoor environments. The area's rural character means that these fires can spread rapidly, are difficult to access and can cause lasting damage to the natural environment, wildlife, agricultural livelihoods and rural communities.

Between 2023–24 Q1 and 2025–26 Q2, deliberate secondary fires, predominantly in outdoor locations, accounted for 284 of the 342 deliberate fire incidents attended. A clear seasonal pattern exists, with Q1 consistently producing the highest figures, reflecting the vulnerability of dry vegetation in spring. Outdoor fires at derelict sites, grassland, woodland and along roadsides are recurring features of demand across the area.

Accidental outdoor fires also represent a recurring risk. Barbecues, campfires, agricultural burning and discarded materials are among the causes identified through operational experience. The area's popularity as a visitor destination including Dark Sky sites, forests, coastal paths and rural tourism brings seasonal increases in outdoor activity and associated fire risk.

Land management practices, particularly controlled burning and muirburn, require ongoing engagement with farmers, gamekeepers and estate managers to ensure they are carried out safely and in compliance with legislation. SFRS works with the Scottish Forestry, NatureScot and land managers across the area to share risk information and promote safe practices.

The economic impact of outdoor fires on farming, forestry, tourism and the natural environment represents a significant concern for Dumfries and Galloway. Protecting these assets through targeted prevention and enforcement activity directly supports the region's rural economy and aligns with the LOIP's ambitions around economic development, health and wellbeing and climate change.

To achieve this, we will:

- Deliver targeted seasonal campaigns to raise awareness of outdoor fire risk, focusing on spring and summer periods when risk is highest.
- Engage with land managers, farmers, estate owners and forestry operators to promote safe burning practices and compliance with muirburn legislation.
- Work with local authority colleagues, Police Scotland and NatureScot to share intelligence and coordinate multi-agency responses to deliberate fire setting in rural and outdoor locations.
- Develop and maintain site-specific operational risk information for higher-risk outdoor locations including forestry plantations, upland areas and frequently affected sites.
- Promote responsible behaviour among visitors to Dumfries and Galloway's outdoor spaces, including messaging around campfires, disposable barbecues and litter.

- Engage with schools, youth groups and local communities in rural areas to raise awareness of the consequences of outdoor fire setting and encourage responsible behaviour.
- Support the development and embedding of wildfire response capability within station training programmes across the area.
- Utilise incident data and mapping to identify locations of recurring outdoor fire activity and direct prevention resources accordingly.

Performance Indicators:

- Number and location of outdoor and deliberate secondary fire incidents, with seasonal trend analysis.
- Number of land manager and rural business engagements completed.
- Number and reach of seasonal outdoor fire safety campaigns.
- Number of site-specific risk assessments and operational briefings completed for higher-risk rural locations.
- Number of multi-agency interventions in relation to deliberate outdoor fire setting.
- Comparison of outdoor fire incident frequency year on year.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Delivery of seasonal outdoor fire safety campaigns across Dumfries and Galloway, with targeted messaging for visitors, land managers and local communities.
- Engagement with rural schools and youth groups to raise awareness of the causes and consequences of outdoor fires.
- Partnership with VisitScotland and local tourism bodies to promote responsible behaviour in the outdoors.
- Promotion of the Countryside Code and responsible campfire and barbecue use through digital and community channels.
- Engagement with Dark Sky Scotland, Galloway Forest Park and other key visitor destinations to share safety messages at points of high footfall.

Protection:

- Engagement with forestry operators, estate managers and agricultural businesses regarding fire safety compliance, muirburn legislation and risk reduction.
- Sharing of operational intelligence with Police Scotland regarding locations and individuals associated with deliberate outdoor fire setting.
- Contribution to multi-agency enforcement activity in relation to fire-related anti-social behaviour in rural and outdoor settings.

Preparedness:

- Maintenance and development of site-specific operational risk information for higher-risk outdoor and rural locations, including forestry plantations and upland areas.
- Delivery of wildfire-specific operational training for station-based crews across the area.
- Engagement with Scottish Forestry, NatureScot and the Local Resilience Partnership to ensure coordinated preparedness for large-scale outdoor fire incidents.

- Participation in national and regional wildfire working groups to share learning and develop best practice.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reduction in the number and severity of outdoor and deliberate secondary fire incidents.
- Reduced risk to communities, firefighters and the natural environment from outdoor fires.
- Improved awareness among visitors, land managers and rural communities of outdoor fire risk and responsible behaviour.
- Contribution to protecting the rural economy, including farming, forestry and tourism, from the impact of fire.
- Contribution to LOIP Outcomes 2 (Reduce health inequalities), 7 (Volunteering), 8 (Develop inclusive economy), 11 (Combat climate change) through reduced vegetation burning and carbon emissions.

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safer Communities through Response

6. Supporting Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience

"The impact of climate change will drive significant demands... preparedness will be increased."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Climate change continues to influence the risk profile across Dumfries and Galloway. The area's rural landscape, extensive forestry, exposure to severe weather events and long coastline contribute to a range of environmental risks, including wildfire, flooding and water-related incidents. These incidents are often prolonged, complex and resource-intensive.

Outdoor and wildfire incidents show consistent seasonal increases, with Q1 figures regularly above average. Flooding and storm-related incidents remain consistent across the area and can cause significant disruption to communities, particularly in remote and rural locations. Water-related incidents increase during periods of higher recreational activity.

The introduction of a new wildfire operational resource within the area represents a significant enhancement to local capability and will support a more effective and proportionate response to increasing wildfire risk in rural and forestry locations.

Environmental risks are expected to intensify over the plan period as climate change accelerates. Ensuring that SFRS and its partners are prepared to respond to these risks, and that communities are resilient and informed, will be essential to reducing harm and managing demand.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue and develop wildfire prevention and response activity, including targeted patrols, engagement with land managers and forestry partners, and community messaging in higher-risk areas.
- Embed the new wildfire operational resource within local response arrangements.
- Maintain and develop response capability for flooding, severe weather and water-related incidents.
- Deliver targeted water safety awareness activity at identified locations of higher risk.
- Contribute to local resilience arrangements, including planning and preparedness for environmental incidents through the Local Resilience Partnership.
- Support community preparedness for adverse weather events and major environmental incidents.
- Work with partner agencies to strengthen joint training, exercises and familiarisation activity covering environmental incident types.

Performance Indicators:

- Number and type of wildfire incidents attended, with seasonal trend analysis.
- Number of flooding and severe weather incidents responded to.
- Number of water-related incidents attended.
- Number and reach of wildfire and water safety prevention activities.
- Participation in Local Resilience Partnership planning and exercises.
- Number of joint exercises covering environmental incident types.

Local Prevention Activity:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Wildfire awareness campaigns targeting land managers, visitors and rural communities.
- Water safety messaging at higher-risk locations, including Luce Bay and other coastal and inland water areas.
- Community engagement to build awareness of environmental risks and promote preparedness.

Protection:

- Risk-based engagement with forestry operators, land managers and businesses to support fire safety compliance in higher-risk rural environments.

Preparedness:

- Contribution to Local Resilience Partnership planning for flooding, wildfire and severe weather events.
- Development and delivery of multi-agency exercises covering environmental incident scenarios.
- Operational training for wildfire, water rescue, flooding and severe weather response.
- Maintenance of operational risk information for higher-risk environmental locations.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved preparedness and response capability for climate-related incidents.
- Reduced impact of environmental incidents on communities.
- Stronger community resilience to adverse weather and environmental change.
- Contribution to LOIP Outcome 11 (Combat climate change) and Outcome 3 (Health and Wellbeing).

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safe and Effective Response

7. Strengthening Partnerships and Community Planning

"Continued commitment to Community Planning... working with councils and partners."

— SFRS Strategy 2025–2028

Background:

Partnership working remains central to delivering effective prevention, protection and emergency response across Dumfries and Galloway. The complexity of risk and demand across the area requires a coordinated, multi-agency approach to support vulnerable individuals, improve community safety and strengthen resilience.

Inter-agency incidents form the largest proportion of non-fire demand, with 386 incidents attended between 2023–24 Q1 and 2025–26 Q2. The complexity of cases involving vulnerability and safeguarding is increasing, and growing demand for joint working across public and third-sector partners reflects the scale of social need within the area.

SFRS contributes actively to the Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Partnership and a range of thematic partnerships, including those focused on poverty and inequalities, community safety, youth justice, housing and road safety. This contribution is central to delivering the shared ambitions of the LOIP 2023–2033.

Deepening data sharing arrangements with partners will be an important area of development during the plan period. Improved digital systems and shared intelligence will support earlier identification of vulnerability, better targeting of prevention activity and more effective coordination of support for individuals with complex needs.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue active participation in the Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Partnership and contribute to shared priorities in the LOIP.
- Strengthen data sharing arrangements with key partners, including NHS Dumfries and Galloway, Social Work and third-sector organisations.
- Contribute to multi-agency public protection and safeguarding arrangements, including joint visits and information sharing.
- Engage through the Local Resilience Partnership to ensure robust and coordinated planning for major incidents and emergencies.
- Contribute to thematic partnerships including the Poverty and Inequalities Partnership, the Safer Communities Partnership and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.
- Work with schools, education services and youth justice partners to support targeted engagement with young people.
- Share and promote best practice in prevention, protection and response with partner agencies.

Performance Indicators:

- Number and frequency of contributions to CPP and thematic partnerships.
- Number of data sharing arrangements developed or enhanced.
- Number of multi-agency safeguarding and public protection referrals made.
- Number and type of joint exercises and planning activities undertaken.

- Feedback from partners on effectiveness of collaborative working.

Local Prevention Activity*:

Community Safety Engagement:

- Delivery of joint prevention campaigns with partners across health, social care, education and the third sector.
- Contribution to the Poverty and Inequalities Partnership and aligned activity to reduce health and fire inequalities.
- Engagement with community groups and third-sector organisations to extend the reach of prevention activity.
- Participation in the Safer Communities Partnership and contribution to shared community safety priorities.

Protection:

- Contribution to multi-agency enforcement activity, including joint working with Police Scotland and Dumfries and Galloway Council on derelict buildings and anti-social behaviour.
- Engagement with building control and planning services to promote fire safety in new and refurbished premises.

Preparedness:

- Active participation in the Local Resilience Partnership and contribution to multi-agency emergency planning.
- Joint exercises and training with partner agencies covering a range of hazard and incident types.
- Contribution to Business Continuity planning with partner organisations.
- Development of shared situational awareness and information-sharing protocols.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved outcomes for vulnerable individuals through coordinated multi-agency support.
- Stronger community resilience and reduced inequalities through partnership-focused prevention activity.
- More effective use of collective resources across community planning partners.
- Contribution to all 12 LOIP outcomes through aligned community planning activity, with particular relevance to Outcomes 2 (Health inequalities), 3 (Health and Wellbeing), 4 (Child poverty) and 11 (Climate change).

Delivering Against Strategic Objective: Safe and Effective Response

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 exemplifies the standards of service that 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
 120–124 Brooms Road
 Dumfries
 DG1 2DZ

Phone: 01387252222

Visit our website: www.firescotland.gov.uk

Follow us on X (Twitter) @scotfire_DG

Like us on Facebook SFRS Dumfries & Galloway



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