



DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE

# Annual Report 2016/17



PASSIONATE ABOUT  
CHANGING & SAVING LIVES



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# Introduction



**Ben Ansell,**  
Chief Fire Officer

This is our first Annual Report for the newly created Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Authority that is responsible for it. Looking back, last year has been a challenging one for us. We are proud of our teams and how well they have adapted to form the new Service.

Over the past 12 months we attended nearly 12,500 incidents where people needed our urgent help. Whilst we will always provide this important service, we continue to do a lot of work to prevent fires and accidents from happening in the first place. Last year we engaged with over 1,000 local businesses and responded to nearly 1,500 building applications as well as undertaking a large number of fire safety audits.



**Cllr Spencer Flower,**  
Chairman

We work hard to identify the people likely to have a fire and talk to them about minimising that risk with wide-ranging safety advice and by fitting free smoke alarms. Last year we completed over 12,000 safe and well checks, an essential means of reducing the number of fires. Whilst talking to these vulnerable people, we also help them to improve their wellbeing by helping them with additional needs they may have. For example, during our safe and well checks we are now moving to checking for frailty, warmth, risk of falling in the home and offering crime prevention support. By making referrals to partners where residents need support, this helps to reduce the pressures and costs for our partners in the ambulance, police and NHS.

Last year we worked with thousands of children and young people who received safety education talks and we ran a large number of youth intervention programmes. To help us further spread the word about reducing risks and making safer choices, we are expanding the network of safety centres to include a new centre on the border of Wiltshire and Swindon.

To help make our roads safer, we delivered road safety education to around nearly 17,000 young people and thousands of army personnel from across Dorset and Wiltshire. All in all it's been a very busy and productive year.

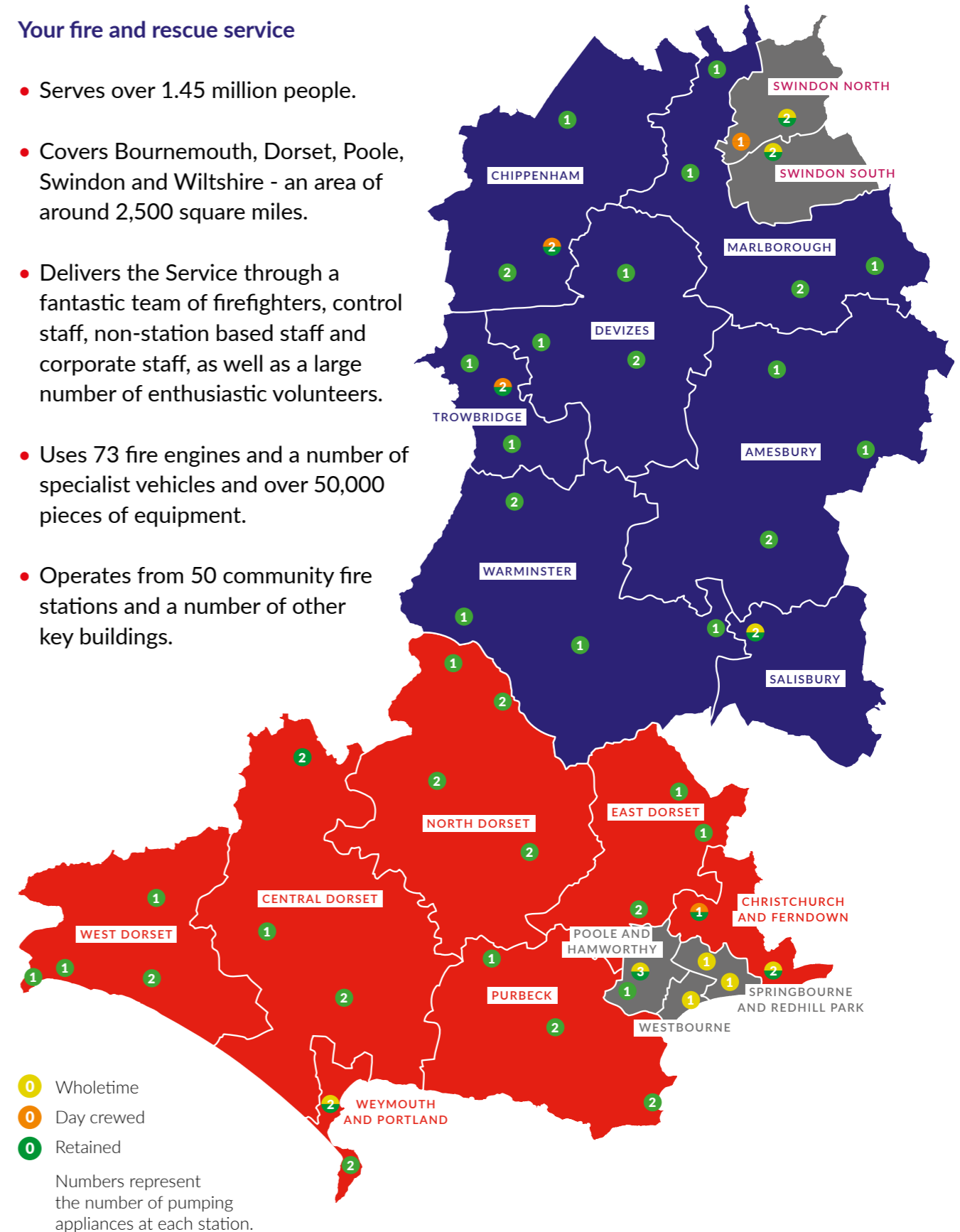
Finally, whilst this annual report gives you a flavour of what has happened last year, our Community Safety Plan 2017-21 sets out our future direction. This plan and a lot more information is available on our website or by contacting us.

We hope you enjoy reading this annual report.

# About us

## Your fire and rescue service

- Serves over 1.45 million people.
- Covers Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole, Swindon and Wiltshire - an area of around 2,500 square miles.
- Delivers the Service through a fantastic team of firefighters, control staff, non-station based staff and corporate staff, as well as a large number of enthusiastic volunteers.
- Uses 73 fire engines and a number of specialist vehicles and over 50,000 pieces of equipment.
- Operates from 50 community fire stations and a number of other key buildings.





# Making safer and healthier choices



## Key headlines



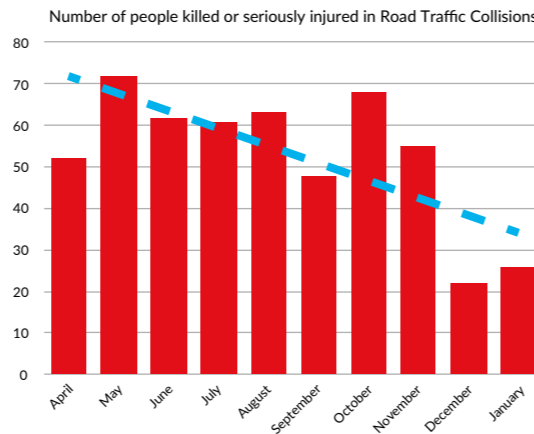
## Case study

On the 6th November 2016, we attended a very serious house fire in Swindon. This unfortunately resulted in the tragic deaths of two occupants and significant injuries to a young child. Firefighters also rescued three more occupants.

This incident led to an immediate coordinated multi-agency response with Local Authority Officers, the police, Ward Councillors and Community Leaders. Our Safe and Well advisors, Firefighters and Local Authority Officers gave safety information to nearly 1,000 homes with 400 receiving a Safe and Well visit - many of which didn't have working smoke alarms.

## Helping to achieve:

- Fewer injuries and deaths from accidental fires and preventable fires in the home.
- Fewer road traffic collisions that result in injury and death.
- Less anti-social behaviour and arson.
- More young people reaching their potential.
- More protection and support for vulnerable people so they can live fulfilling, independent lives.
- Less hospital admissions for vulnerable people.



## Overview

Last year we delivered safety education talks and youth intervention programmes to over 22,000 children and young people. Our youth intervention programmes continue to be very well received. We delivered 26 youth courses last year with over 200 attendees, all helping to deliver positive outcomes for the young people and adults who attend them.

Since 1 April 2016, we undertook 12,459 Safe and Well checks. The visits increasingly provide advice and information not only on how to drive down the risk from fire but also how people can improve their overall health and well-being. By doing this, we are seeking to provide support for those experiencing frailty, warmth, risk of falling in the home, mental health and offering crime prevention advice. By working with partners in public health, local authorities, social services and the police we hope to reduce the demands on these services and save money across the wider public purse.

To help us target those at most need, we have invested in specialist community risk targeting software and we have been working hard

to increase the amount of partnership data through initiatives such as the 'Single View' initiative in Wiltshire and the Dorset Information Sharing Charter involving Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. This is to ensure that our crews and Safe and Well advisers have the right information available to target the most vulnerable in our communities.

We have a number of portable misting units which can be fitted as a temporary measure in the homes of very vulnerable people, who often have significant mobility issues. The extension of the 'Orion network' through transmitters and repeaters on our fire stations now allows our Service Control Centre to be notified automatically should the portable misting units activate and a suitable response is then sent automatically.

We are focused on educating young drivers aged 16-24. The main education programme is through Safe Drive Stay Alive Roadshows focused on Schools and Colleges. We have delivered road safety education to around 16,900 people from across Dorset and Wiltshire. In addition, 24% of the British Army is located within the

Service area and data from the Ministry of Defence indicates that Army staff are 161% more likely to be involved in a road traffic collision than the rest of the UK population. As a result, we have focussed efforts on this high risk group and have delivered our roadshow to over 2,800 army personnel.

## Moving forward



We will continue to focus on ensuring we are contributing towards wider health outcomes.

Our youth intervention and education programmes, including driver education, and our work in promoting wider health and well-being are also complimented by activities and events which take place at the SafeWise safety centres which we support financially in conjunction with partners and key stakeholders. The reach and impact of our work with the SafeWise charity will increase with the development of a new community safety centre at Wroughton.



# Protecting you and the environment from harm



## Key headlines



**706**  
fire safety audits



**1,482**  
building regulation consultations

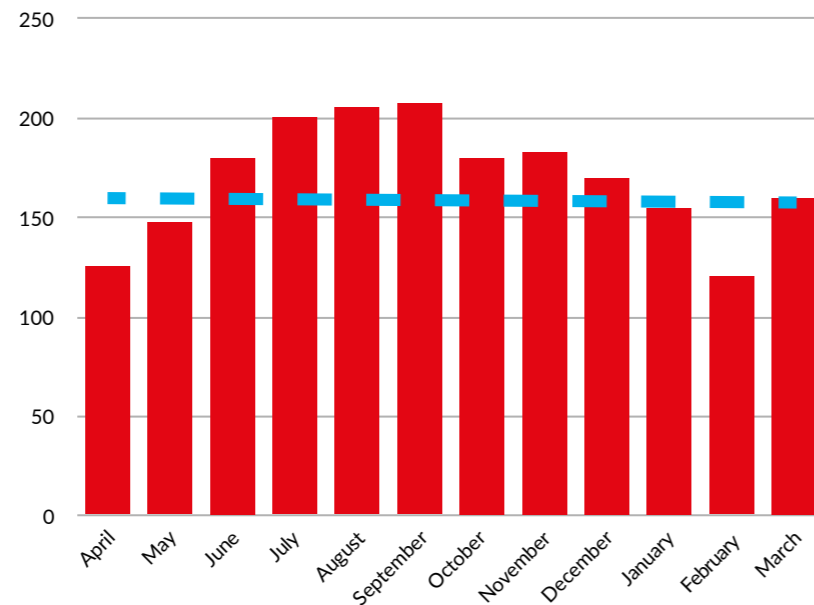


**1,000 +**  
positive engagements with businesses

## Case study

A fire crew attending a property for a false alarm had serious concerns about the level of housekeeping within the property and also the mental health and wellbeing of the occupant. Through a safeguarding officer they made a referral. The case was passed on to the local community Social Worker and a revised care package was put in place for the occupant, even though they were already known to Social Services. The occupant has subsequently received a Safe and Well visit from the Service and a tele-care link has been installed. The occupant is now safer and better supported.

Attended false alarms from automatic fire detection equipment - non domestic premises



## Helping to achieve:

- Fewer injuries preventable fires, deaths and accidents.
- Less disruption from extreme weather, especially flooding.
- Fewer false alarms and unnecessary call outs.
- Less damage to wildlife.

## Overview

Our fire safety inspection programme is based on actively targeting those buildings and people at greatest risk. Last year we continued to develop effective working relationships with the Care Quality Commission and Clinical Commissioning Groups for jointly regulated premises. This has allowed us to share knowledge on risk, educate partner agencies in our work and train partners in how they can assist us in recognising and reducing risk from fire. Our approach to safeguarding is in place with 24/7 coverage to manage safeguarding referrals and all personnel with safeguarding responsibilities also received additional training.

Our fire safety team undertook 706 fire safety audits and responded to 1,482 buildings regulations consultations as part of our statutory duties. We have actively engaged with over 1,000 local businesses to raise awareness of their fire safety responsibilities and where necessary to drive down the number of false alarm calls generated by faulty systems or misuse.

As part of the Primary Authority Scheme, whereby

we are the national lead for all fire safety matters associated with agreed organisations, we have adopted an active approach and this has resulted in our support for key housing groups such as Aster and Colten Care. We also support the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Oak Furniture Land in achieving greater fire safety compliance in their premises nationwide.

Operational crews have continued to gather and review information and intelligence on key risks within their areas to help ensure that they are prepared for emergency incidents should they occur. We are investing in further technology to assist operational crews to get timely data to support their roles.

All high-rise buildings are included in the site specific risk information process. We also identify Grade 1 and 2 listing status so that these premises are appropriately protected and responded to.

We are an active member of both of the Local Resilience Forums that are in place across the Service area helping to ensure that we jointly plan and respond



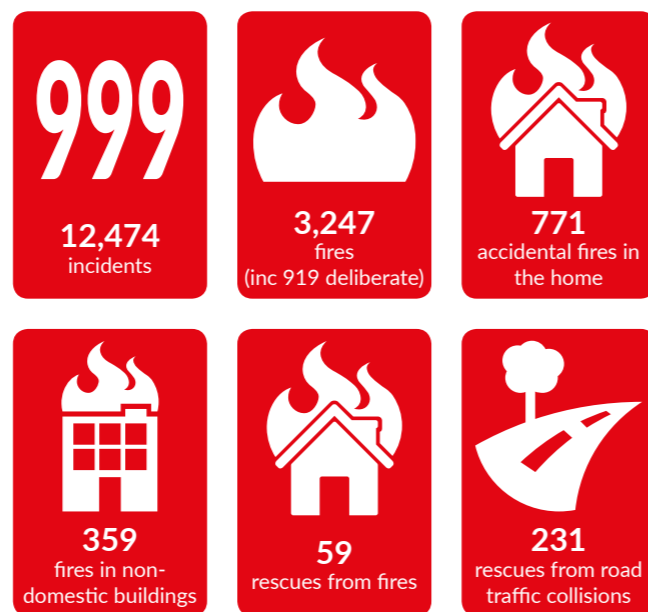
with our key partners. By understanding risk and the priorities for our area, we are able to understand the impact of emergencies occurring and work with statutory partners to assess the gaps in our ability to respond.

## Moving forward

We will continue to have a pro-active approach to providing business support and education aimed at promoting residential and commercial sprinkler systems, alongside raising awareness of fire safety responsibilities and compliance. We are further strengthening our training to help identify safeguarding concerns and ensure that appropriate action is taken if a concern for an adult or child arises.



**Key headlines**



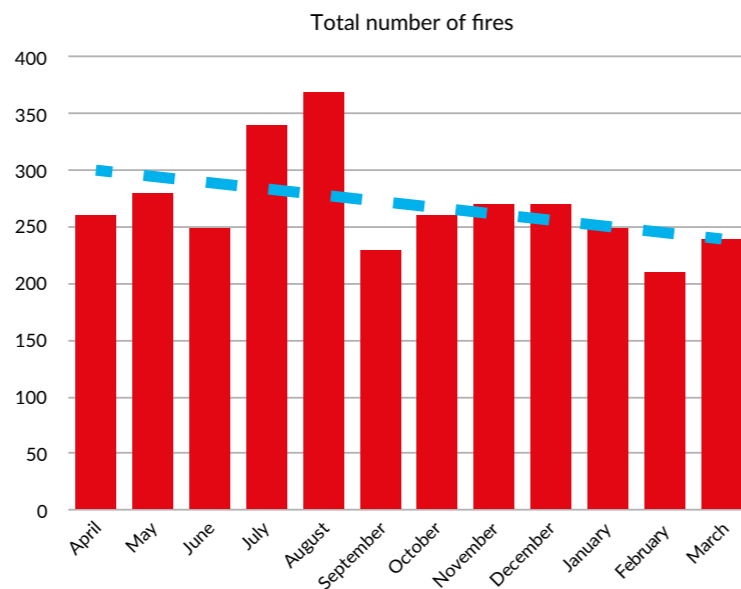
**Case study**

In March of this year, a serious fire broke out at HMP Guys Marsh. This drew significant resources from the Service and required a great deal of coordination across a number of responding organisations due to the complexity of the environment, being a secure prison. The fire was declared a 'major incident', which ensured that tried and tested processes and procedures, were put in place leading to the safe and effective resolution of the incident.

Both internal and multi-agency debriefs were held to ensure any learning points from the event were captured and addressed.

**Helping to achieve:**

- Fewer injuries and deaths from accidental fires and preventable fires.
- Safer roads with fewer road traffic collisions that result in injury and death.
- Fewer deaths and serious medical injuries.
- Safer firefighters and staff.



**Overview**

Last year we attended 12,474 incidents including 3,247 fires. We were called to 919 deliberately set fires and 771 accidental fires in the home. Tragically, six people lost their lives, five of which were accidentally started fires. We rescued 59 people from fire and 231 from road traffic collisions.

We have set our emergency response standards to focus on life risk, which for sleeping risks means we aim to arrive within 10 minutes for the first fire engine and 13 minutes for the second one, if needed. We achieved this on 71.6% and 65.7% respectively.

Where we know that our ability to physically achieve our response standards is not possible, we continue to work hard to help identify those most vulnerable in our communities and focus our efforts on prevention and fire safety.

To ensure that operational firefighters are safe to carry out their roles, we have continued to develop our approach to acquiring, applying and maintaining our operational competences.

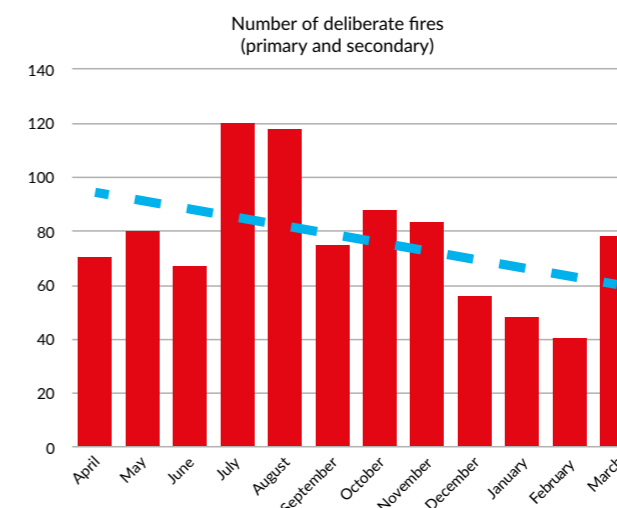
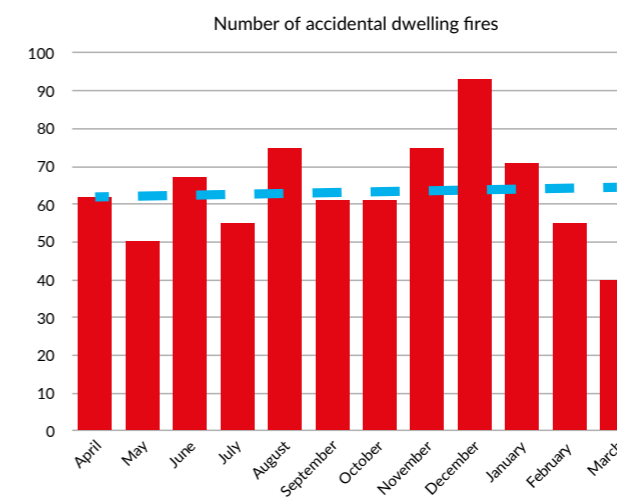
**Moving forward**

In the first year of the Service we have concentrated on aligning operational ways of working. We will continue to do this, as well as implementing reviews associated with rescues from height, dealing with flooding or any other foreseeable



event that can be mitigated by our response capabilities. We are investing significantly in mobile technology devices to help ensure that operational staff have accurate and timely information to do their job efficiently and safely.

Whilst our availability to respond to the wide range of emergencies that we face is suitable and sufficient in our major conurbations, 85% of our response appliances are crewed by on-call duty system firefighters who are mostly operating in rural areas. Attraction, recruitment, retention and therefore availability of our on-call firefighters continues to be a challenge. We have therefore been focussing on local campaigns to improve the establishment of our on-call duty system staff. This has had increasing success and together with a comprehensive on-call review, this will help ensure the sustainability of this critical section of our workforce.



# £ Making every penny count

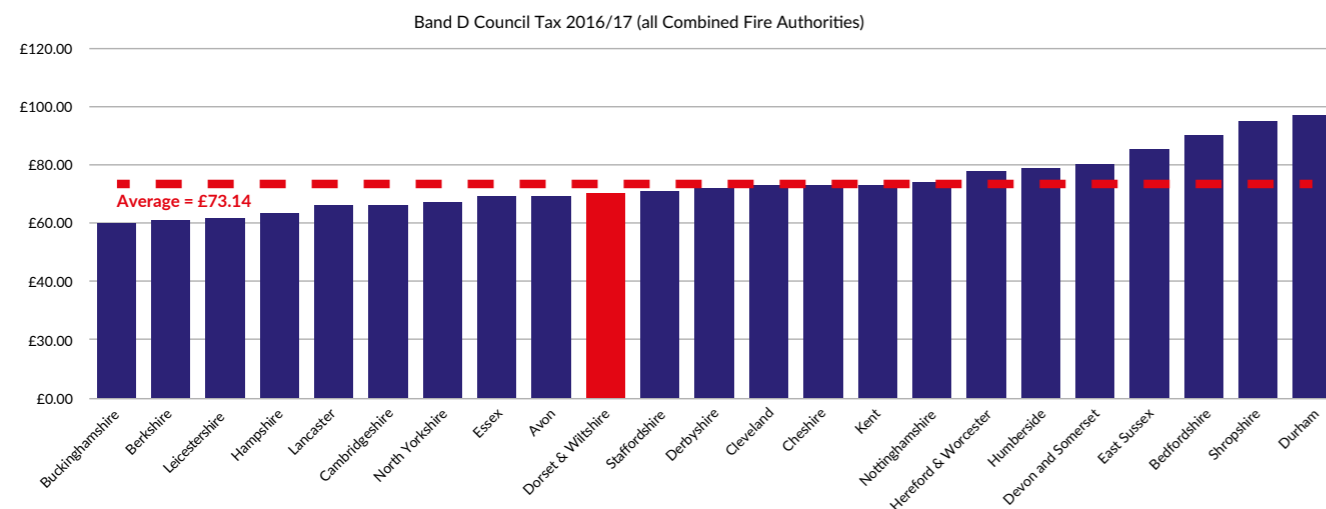


## Key headlines

- £4m** of annual cashable and non-cashable savings
- Unqualified audited accounts
- Below average costs per head
- At or below costs against a national 'basket of goods'
- 100%** of all requests under the Data Protection Act have met the statutory timescales
- 99%** of Freedom of Information requests within timescales
- 93.5%** of complaints resolved within 14 days

## Helping to achieve:

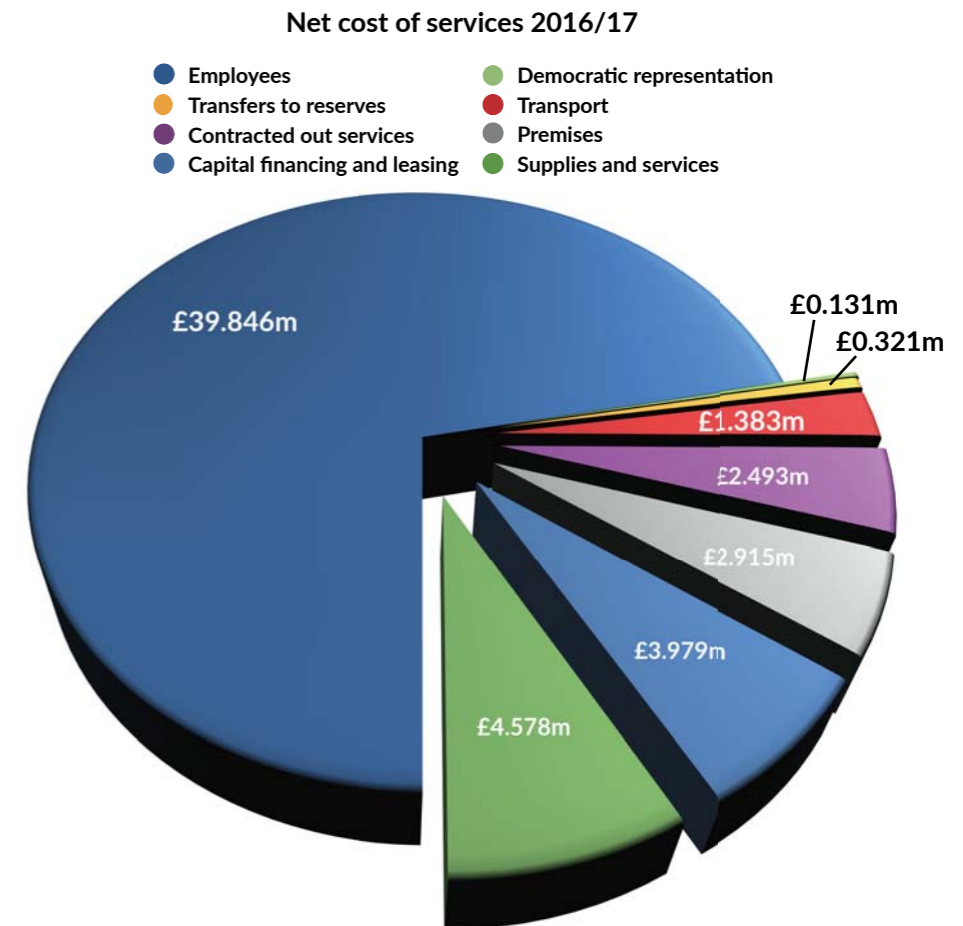
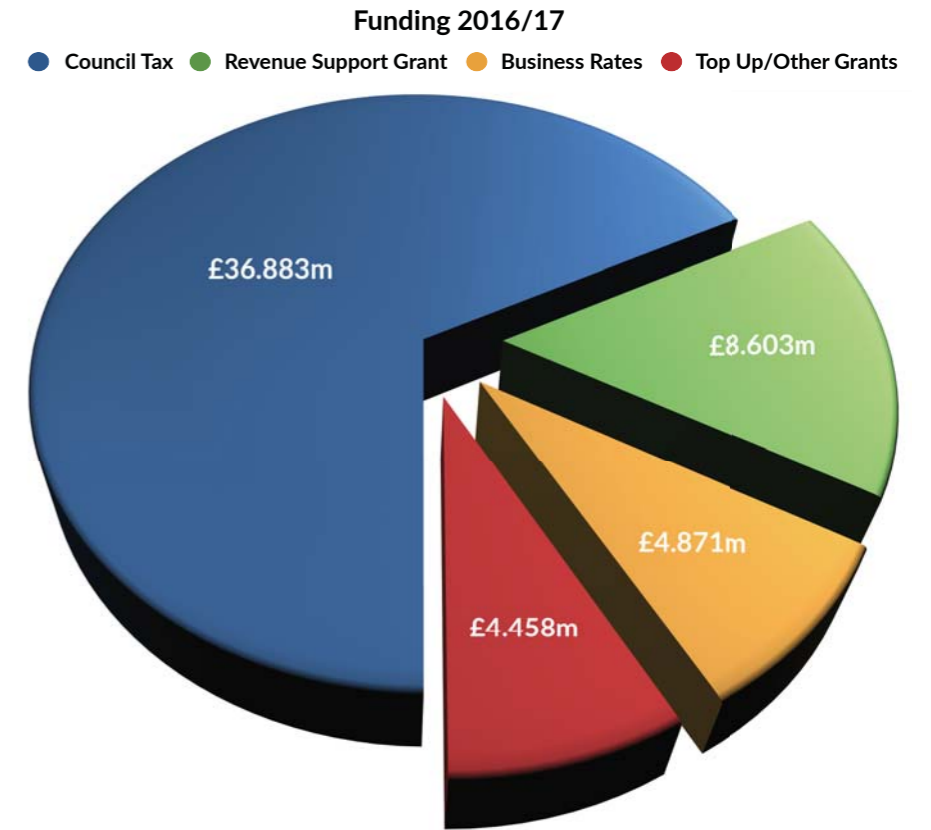
- A stronger, more financially stable fire and rescue service putting as much money in the frontline as we can.
- Maximising usage of buildings and minimising their running costs.
- Being more cost-effective by working more closely with other emergency services and local authorities.
- A reduced carbon footprint, fewer unnecessary journeys and more cost savings.



## Overview

Last year our Band D fire precept was £69.21, compared to a national average of £73.14. We achieved £4m worth of cashable and non-cashable savings in order to help balance the 2016/17 budget. The main areas for savings have been through senior management reviews, rationalising non-station based staffing and flexi duty officers, establishing a single Service Control Centre. The remaining savings came through other areas, such as property sharing initiatives, smarter working practices and changes in procurements and contracts.

In addition to this, we have also been able to invest in strengthening the availability of fire appliances in rural areas. We are working hard with the SafeWise charity and partners towards establishing a new safety centre on the Wiltshire and Swindon border. This new community facility will complement the existing centres in Bournemouth and Weymouth where over 15,000 young people visit each year to learn in a safe and controlled environment and become aware of every day dangers to reduce accidents happening. In addition, we have worked



with Wiltshire Council to establish a new headquarters at their Five Rivers health and wellbeing centre in Salisbury. We are also working with key partners to explore opportunities for sharing our fire stations and in some cases to establish new buildings in line with the One Public

Estate initiatives operating in both Dorset and Wiltshire. As well as ensuring sound financial management, we are also pleased that our internal and external auditors have not raised any significant governance issues. Each year we are required to provide

an annual statement of assurance. The statement includes a number of links to the reports that assess our performance along with our Statement of Accounts, our Annual Governance Statement and our external assessment reports. These are all available from our website.

## Moving forward

In spite of our combination, we received the fourth worst financial settlement for Combined Fire Authorities in England and Wales (27%).

We will constantly review all aspects of our Service to identify ways we can improve efficiency and make our money go even further. We are consolidating contracts and working with others to procure key support services

to maximise our savings. It was pleasing to note that recent government analysis demonstrates that against a standard 'basket of goods', that we purchased them at or below the average for fire and rescue services in England. We are reviewing whole time duty systems to more efficiently crew appliances to help us set a balanced budget in future years. We are working hard to reduce non-

essential travel for our staff by investing in new technology. This will save time and money, reducing our carbon footprint. Maximising the space available in our buildings is another way we are reducing our costs. We already share facilities with the police, ambulance and local councils, and will continue to realise new opportunities for sharing our buildings and generally working more closely.

## Our future plans



Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority

The Fire and Rescue Authority oversees the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. The Authority currently has 30 Members who are appointed annually by their Councils:

- Ten from Wiltshire Council.
- Eight from Dorset County Council.
- Five from Swindon Borough Council.
- Four from Bournemouth Borough Council.
- Three from Borough of Poole

The proportion of Members is on the basis of the numbers of electors in each of the constituent areas. The Authority's statutory core functions, as laid down in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, are to:

- promote fire safety in its area;
- extinguish fires and protect life and property from fire;
- deal with road traffic accidents and the rescue of trapped persons; and
- deal with other types of emergencies as designated by order from the Secretary of State.

The Authority has a number of sub-committees including four Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees that look closely at performance and improvements at a local level.

More information about the Authority and these committees can be found on our website.

As an Authority, we are always looking to improve what we do and how we do it. We have a great workforce that work tirelessly to help make Dorset and Wiltshire a healthier and safer place to visit and work.

By working together with other agencies in a joined up way, we can deliver our priorities and reduce demands on the police, adult care, children's services, health services and many others. Ultimately, this saves us all money and makes the best use of our valuable public sector resources.

Our Community Safety Plan 2017-21 sets out the future ambitions for the Service over the coming years. It highlights our key priorities and what we intend to focus on, including our key targets.





## DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE

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