



**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



# ANNUAL DELIVERY REPORT

2024-25

OUR

## MISSION

PROTECTING  
COMMUNITIES.  
WORKING TOGETHER.  
SAVING LIVES.

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

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

OUR

## VISION

A MODERN, FLEXIBLE,  
RESILIENT FIRE AND  
RESCUE SERVICE.

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

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

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



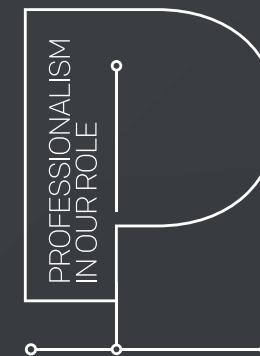
**Striving to develop, to ensure our contributions make our Fire and Rescue Service the best it can be**



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



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



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



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





# CONTENTS

Foreword	6
Introduction	8
Performance highlights	10
<b>Priority 1:</b> Provide a fast, safe and effective response	11
<b>Priority 2:</b> Help people reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies	17
<b>Priority 3:</b> Help protect the built environment	25
<b>Priority 4:</b> Use resources sustainably and deliver the most value	33
<b>Priority 5:</b> Develop a culture of excellence, equality, and inclusivity	39
<b>Priority 6:</b> Integrate our services in every locality with those of partner agencies	45
Community activities	49
Awards and accreditations	51
Significant incidents	53
Assurance and performance	57
Key performance indicators	59



# FOREWORD

**As we reflect on another remarkable year for Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS), I am filled with immense pride and gratitude. The past 12 months have tested our resilience, showcased our strength, and reaffirmed our commitment to the people and communities we serve.**

This year, we faced significant challenges, including civil disorder across the UK, that deeply affected many of our colleagues, and significant flooding affecting many residents. As a whole service, we responded to these events with professionalism, compassion, and courage. It is in these moments that the true character of our Service shines through.

We know we don't always get everything right. But when we fall short, we are committed to listening, learning, and improving. This humility and willingness to grow are what drives us forward – ensuring we continue to evolve and better serve our communities.

Our latest HMICFRS inspection recognised GMFRS as the most improved and one of the best performing fire and rescue services in the country. In 2024-25 we have built on this foundation and been able to make even greater progress and deliver exceptional achievements. This is a testament to the dedication, innovation, and relentless pursuit of excellence by every member of our team.

We celebrated our 50th anniversary with pride, honouring the legacy of those who came before us and the extraordinary contributions of our current staff and volunteers. From the rollout of new PPE and fitness facilities, to the launch of our 51st fire engine and the continued evolution of our Station Refresh Programme, we have invested in the tools, infrastructure, and people that enable our Service to thrive.

Our commitment to public sector reform has deepened, with new partnerships and place-based approaches that are helping us tackle complex social challenges. We've expanded our prevention and youth engagement work, launched the Prevention in Prisons Programme, and continued to support rehabilitation through the Atlas Project – demonstrating our belief in second chances and safer futures.

We've also made significant strides in culture and inclusion. From our Culture First Board and staff networks, to national recognition at the Asian Fire Service Awards and Stonewall Awards, we are building a Service where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to thrive.

To all our colleagues across GMFRS – thank you. Your continued professionalism, adaptability, and commitment underpin everything we do. Whether responding to emergencies, supporting our communities, or driving innovation behind the scenes, your collective efforts are the foundation of our success.

As we look to the future, we do so with clarity of purpose and renewed confidence. The progress we've made over the past year continues to strengthen the foundations of our Service – foundations built not only on operational excellence, but on compassion, inclusivity, and a commitment to innovation. It is the greatest honour of my career to lead this Service. Together, we are not just responding to emergencies – we are shaping a safer, stronger, and more resilient Greater Manchester.

**Dave Russel**  
Chief Fire Officer



**This Annual Report covers the last year of the Fire Plan 2021-25, and I am immensely proud to reflect on GMFRS's record over the last 12 months.**

The Service's performance continues to be strong. With an average response time of 7 minutes 34 seconds to life-risk incidents, GMFRS remains one of the fastest-responding fire and rescue services in the country. As well as responding effectively to emergency incidents, the Service has worked hard to prevent them from happening. Over the last year, GMFRS delivered almost 31,000 Home Fire Safety Assessments and provided fire safety advice to some 14,000 businesses. The scope of the Service's Prevention initiatives has grown over the last 12 months, including the innovative Prevention in Prisons Programme, with which GMFRS leads the way in reducing violence, self-harm, and fires in custodial settings. We have also continued to make strides on our journey to improve the culture of the Service. With over 43% of new apprentice firefighters coming from underrepresented groups, our commitment to diversity and inclusion remains a priority.

This year has seen us working hard to support residents affected by the building safety crisis. We have engaged with residents, landlords, and the Government to try to improve the safety of Greater Manchester homes. We worked closely with Homes England to help them develop the Cladding Safety Scheme's National Remediation System and were the first authority to trial the building data portal before its national rollout. Our local remediation action plan will be published at the end of August 2025. The key aim of our plan is to ensure all blocks of flats with serious fire safety deficiencies are remediated as quickly as possible and that residents are supported through this process. In Greater Manchester we

are taking a Housing First approach. Our ambition is for everyone in Greater Manchester to live in a home they can afford that is safe, secure, healthy, and environmentally sustainable.

Like so many of the dedicated colleagues I'm proud to work alongside, I want to see our Service continue to grow and do even more to keep our residents and communities safe. The Mayor and I are working hard to help ensure GMFRS has the resources to do this, and we are pleased to have secured another fire engine for the Service this year, bringing our total to 51, and making us one of the only services in the country to expand our frontline fleet. I will continue to lobby Government for improved funding and conditions for firefighters, so we can maintain our investment in people, equipment, and estates, ensuring GMFRS is an employer of choice for all and provides the best possible service to the people of Greater Manchester.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank colleagues for the incredible work they are doing. This year saw the launch of our new Fire Plan (2025-29), the first I have helped produce since I became Deputy Mayor. It also saw the publication of the new Greater Manchester Strategy. These plans create the opportunity to build on our momentum and cement Greater Manchester as a beacon of public safety and resilience, a thriving city-region where everyone can live a good life.

**Kate Green**  
Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities





# INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to GMFRS Annual Delivery Report for 2024–25. This report outlines our achievements over the past 12 months and highlights the significant progress we have made on our journey towards becoming an outstanding fire and rescue service – one that is inclusive, forward-thinking, and committed to delivering the highest standards of public safety.**

Over the year, we conducted just under 31,000 Home Fire Safety Assessments and provided fire safety advice to almost 14,000 businesses. We are proud to report a continued reduction in fire incidents, with deliberate primary fires down by almost 12% compared to last year, and deliberate secondary fires reduced by 22% compared to three years ago. Our average response time to life-risk incidents now stands at 7 minutes and 34 seconds, and we successfully rescued over 2,400 people from fires and other emergencies.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected in our recruitment efforts, with 43% of new apprentice firefighters coming from underrepresented groups. Our volunteering programme also continues to make a meaningful impact, contributing over 4,000 hours of unpaid community service across Greater Manchester.

A major milestone this year was the introduction of our 51st fire engine, enhancing our operational response, prevention and protection capabilities in our increasingly complex built environment. We also invested in Enhanced Rescue Stations at Ashton and Leigh, providing specialist training for

complex incidents such as swift water rescues. Further investments in upgrading our command vehicles and progressing the procurement of aerial appliances will strengthen our readiness to respond to a wide range of emergencies.

To improve how we identify and manage risk, we are developing a single integrated recording system for operational risk, protection, and prevention activities. This system will enable better coordination and evaluation, ensuring more effective use of our resources. We also expanded our Prevention in Prisons Programme, which continues to lead the way in reducing violence and improving safety within custodial settings.

Creating a safer built environment remains a top priority. In response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, all operational firefighters participated in large-scale training exercises to ensure preparedness for high-rise incidents. We also enhanced fire safety training for frontline staff, assigning over 500 premises for fire safety checks and supporting the implementation of new building safety regulations through a multi-disciplinary approach.

Sustainability and resource efficiency remain central to our strategy. Our ongoing Estates Improvement Programme across all 41 fire stations is delivering modern, environmentally conscious facilities that support high-quality service delivery. We also launched a new internal staff intranet, improving communication and access to information for over 2,500 users, and enabling greater efficiency and productivity.

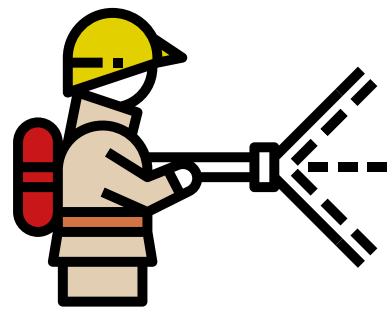
We continued to embed a culture of excellence, equality, and inclusivity through initiatives such as our 'Strengthening Our Inclusive Culture' training programme and the launch of a new four-year Training and Exercising Strategy. A refreshed programme of staff engagement and enhanced recognition efforts further demonstrate our commitment to valuing our people.

Our collaborative, place-based approach to community safety has grown stronger. Notable developments include exploring Emergency Medical Response (EMR) in partnership with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and the rollout of the 'Mini Blue Light Project', an educational initiative aimed at breaking down barriers between emergency services and the communities we serve.

This report demonstrates our continued dedication to delivering high-quality services and highlights the benefits and outcomes of our initiatives. As we look ahead, we remain focused on continuous improvement and innovation, ensuring we are always ready to protect and serve the people of Greater Manchester.



## PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

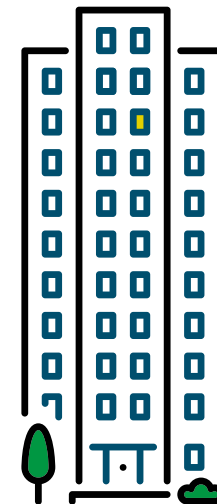
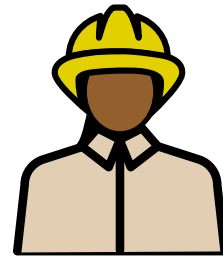


**95**  
new  
Apprentice  
Firefighters



**1,040**  
years of combined  
service recognised in  
six Long Service and  
Good Conduct events

**43.16%**  
of recruitment from  
underrepresented groups



**13,672**  
businesses received  
fire safety advice



**1,798**  
fire safety audits of business  
premises with **41% receiving  
formal advice or enforcement**

**14.60%**  
increase in number of injuries from fire

**2.45%**  
increase in Deliberate Secondary Fires

**100%**  
reduction in 'Number work related  
violence incidents resulting in injury'

**11.34%**  
reduction in Deliberate Primary Fires

**0.64%**  
reduction in Deliberate Fires



**7 minutes  
34 seconds**  
average response time  
to 'life risk' incidents



**7 minutes  
23 seconds**  
average response time  
to primary fires

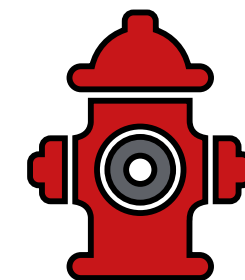


**30,840**  
Home Fire Safety  
Assessments delivered

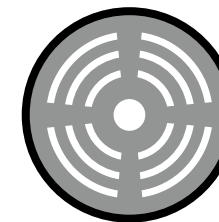


**£62,455**  
raised for good causes  
through community  
fundraising activities

**2,435**  
people rescued  
from fires and other  
emergencies



**12,500**  
fire hydrants  
inspected



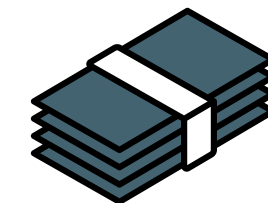
**5,333**  
fire safety interventions



**526**  
targeted prevention  
interventions completed



**825**  
school visits



**£0.450m**  
delivered in savings



**4,042**  
volunteering hours  
provided

**24%**  
reduction in our  
carbon footprint  
compared to baseline  
year 2018/19



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



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

**GMFRS is the fourth largest Fire and Rescue Service in the UK, serving a population of over 2.9 million people. As our city-region continues to grow and evolve, so do the risks and challenges we face. To meet these demands, we remain focused on delivering a fast, safe, and effective response to all emergencies. From fires and road traffic collisions to complex and large-scale incidents, our crews are trained, equipped, and ready to respond – day and night.**

We plan and prepare for a wide range of scenarios, ensuring our people, equipment, and systems are resilient and responsive. This priority reflects our core purpose: to protect life, property, and the environment across Greater Manchester.

## Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:

- Following our latest Fire Cover Review, GMFRS introduced its 51st fire engine – the first addition to our frontline fleet in 16 years. This significant investment supports our ability to meet rising demand and evolving risks across Greater Manchester. Since going live on 9th December 2024, the new appliance has responded to 667 incidents, including 102 life-risk emergencies. We marked the occasion with an official launch event at Manchester Central Fire Station. Looking ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our operational response, with our 52nd fire engine set to join the fleet in the coming year.
- We introduced Enhanced Rescue Stations at Ashton and Leigh, increasing the number of personnel with advanced training to respond to complex incidents such as technical rescues, working at height, and swift water emergencies.
- We are procuring two new High Reach Extendable Turrets (HRETs) to enhance aerial response and replacing our three command vehicles – based at Rochdale, Hyde and Atherton – with modern, tech-enabled alternatives. We are exploring future vehicle options in collaboration with other fire and rescue services and blue light partners.
- Our wildfire response has been bolstered with new transport vehicles at Stalybridge and Bolton North, enabling full crew mobilisation with specialist equipment, and the successful purchase of two Hägg Lund tracked vehicles, previously leased, to support operations in challenging terrain.
- In response to the 2017 Manchester Arena Attack and the subsequent public inquiry recommendations in 2022, GMFRS has undertaken extensive work over the past three years to transform how we and our partners plan for and manage high-impact, low-probability incidents. Through the creation of a dedicated Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) project, the Service has delivered transformational change, culminating in a nationally recognised

‘lessons learned’ presentation. This presentation openly reflects on past failings, outlines the organisational learning that has taken place, and demonstrates how this has led to tangible improvements in our operational practices and procedures.

*For more details, please refer to the full case study.*

- We have successfully implemented a new Fitness Framework, ensuring firefighters meet the highest standards of physical and mental fitness required for their vital roles. All firefighters are now tested annually against nationally recognised standards by trained professionals who also provide expert advice on nutrition, health, and wellbeing. Every fire station has been equipped with upgraded fitness facilities that meet national health and safety standards, with outdated equipment removed. In addition, all staff now have access to a personalised fitness app, enabling them to track progress, receive tailored guidance, and stay supported throughout their fitness journey.
- As part of our commitment to delivering high-quality call handling and control room services, GMFRS has led the procurement phase for a new North West Fire Control mobilising system, in collaboration with regional partners. Following a rigorous and transparent evaluation process, a provider has now been appointed. All partners are working together to develop a 12-month implementation roadmap, ensuring a modern, flexible, and responsive mobilisation system is in place by 2026/27, supporting the continued delivery of effective emergency response across the region.





## CASE STUDY

### Manchester Arena Inquiry

The Manchester Arena Attack in 2017 was a defining moment for emergency services across Greater Manchester. The subsequent public inquiry, concluded in 2022, highlighted serious shortcomings in multi-agency coordination and emergency response – demanding urgent and transformative action.

In response, GMFRS launched one of the most significant programmes in its history: the Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) Project, commencing in December 2022. Delivered over two intensive phases across three years, the project aimed to fully implement the Inquiry's recommendations and embed critical learning into every aspect of GMFRS operations.

This was not a routine improvement exercise – it was a comprehensive overhaul of how GMFRS prepares for and responds to high-impact, low-probability incidents. The project led to the development of a nationally recognised 'lessons learned' presentation, which candidly addressed past failings and showcased the tangible changes made since the tragedy.

Training and development programmes have been comprehensively redesigned to ensure all personnel are equipped with the skills, confidence, and knowledge required to respond effectively to complex, multi-agency emergencies. Weekly joint exercises and planning sessions with blue light partners have significantly enhanced communication, resource coordination, and shared situational awareness.

Every recommendation from the Inquiry has now been fully implemented. GMFRS has aligned its operations with the highest national standards and best practices, resulting in a Service that is not only more capable and resilient, but also more transparent, accountable, and committed to continuous improvement.

The MAI Project marks a defining chapter in GMFRS history. It has strengthened our operational foundations, restored public confidence, and ensured that the lessons of the past continue to shape a safer future for all.



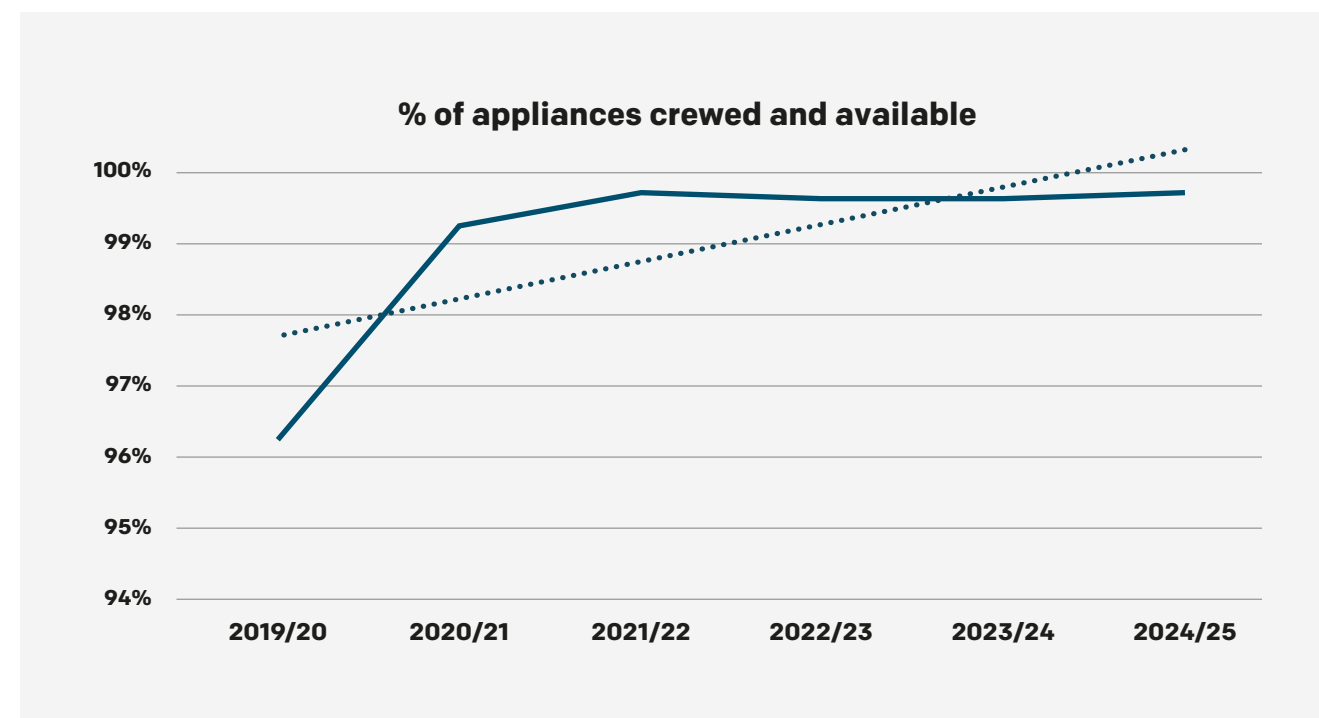


# OUR PERFORMANCE

## Resilience

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

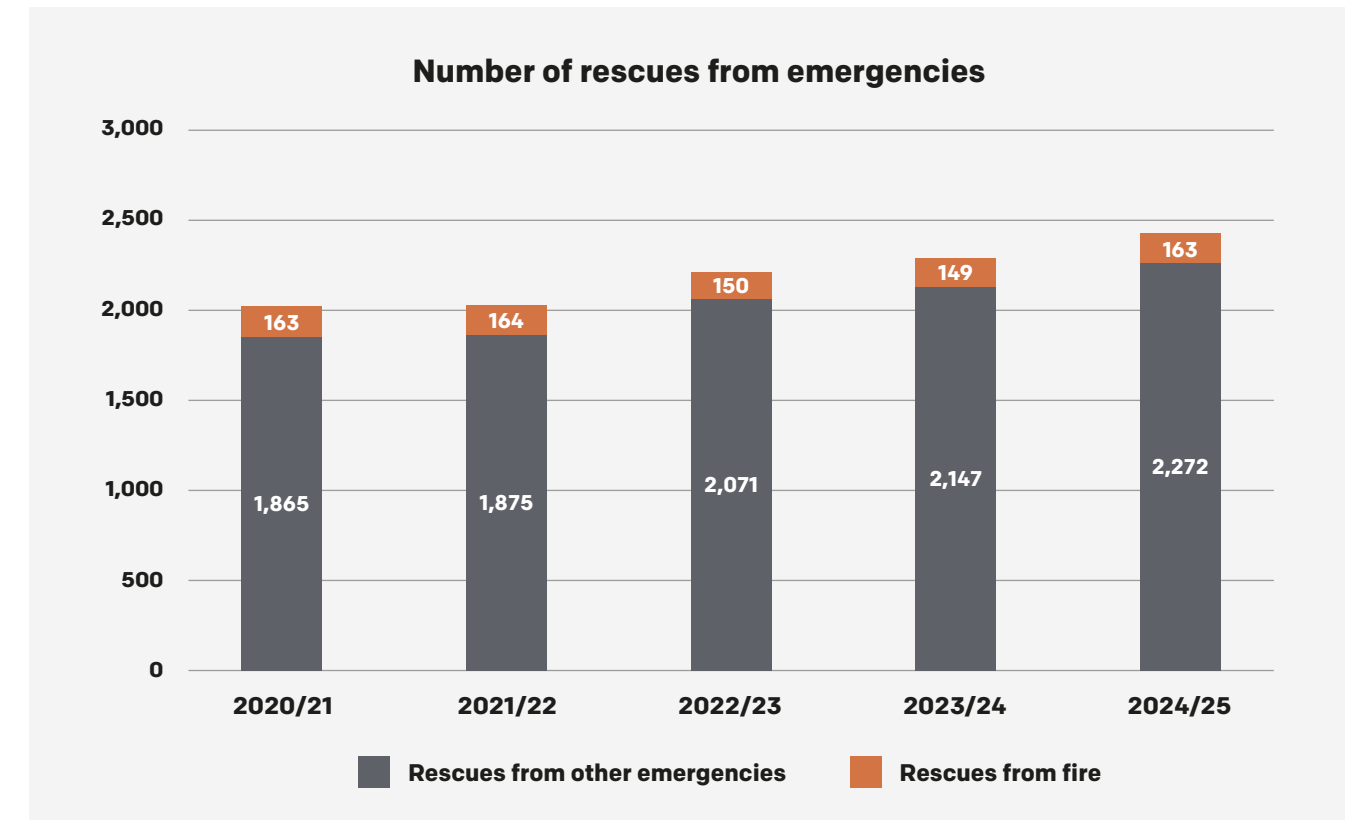
**How we performed:** Over the last year we have had all appliances available for 99.70% of the time. This relates to 50 appliances until December, when the 51st appliance was introduced.



## People rescued from fire and other emergencies

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

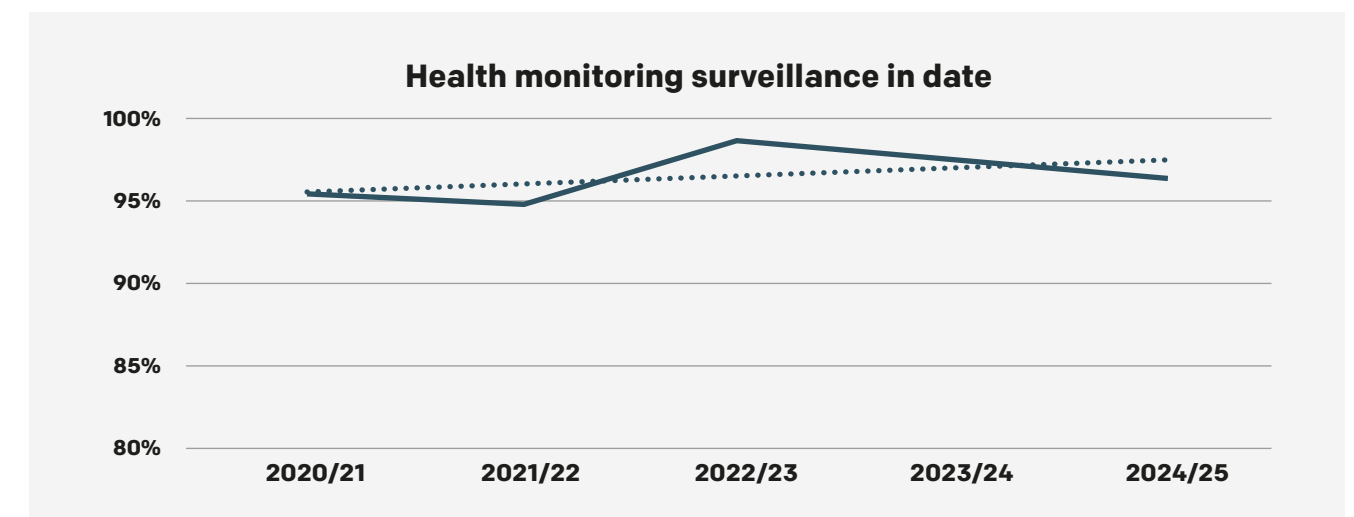
**How we performed:** In the last year we have rescued 2,435 people from fires and other emergencies. Control staff at North West Fire Control handle all our emergency calls. They ensure fire appliances respond quickly to the right location, as well as providing lifesaving advice to those trapped in a fire or involved in another emergency.



## Firefighter health

**Why it is important:** Firefighter health is not only important to providing a resilient and effective emergency response, but it is also vital that we look after our staff and keep them safe.

**How we performed:** The key performance indicator (KPI) is named 'Health Monitoring Surveillance in date' and last year, our performance was 96.51%. This KPI enables us to closely monitor firefighter fitness. All medicals are scheduled to give enough time to allow for cancellations and rearrangement if required, to ensure that medicals are completed well within the three month overdue threshold.





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

**Preventing emergencies before they happen is the most effective way to protect lives, reduce harm, and promote the wellbeing of Greater Manchester's communities. Over the past year, GMFRS has strengthened its prevention work through the launch of innovative programmes, the expansion of targeted education initiatives, and a renewed focus on supporting those most at risk.**

By working closely with residents, local organisations, and partner agencies, we are empowering individuals and communities to take proactive steps in reducing fire and other emergency risks. Our efforts are particularly focused on vulnerable groups, ensuring they have the knowledge, tools, and support needed to stay safe.

This priority reflects our belief that prevention is not just a service we deliver – it's a shared responsibility. Through collaboration, education, and early intervention, we are building safer, more resilient communities across Greater Manchester.

### Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:

- We have researched and are designing an integrated recording system for risks related to buildings, people, and places. This system will bring together operational risk, protection, and prevention data onto one platform – supporting more joined-up, efficient service delivery. By reducing our administrative burden, it will enable

staff to focus on high-value, risk-reduction work. Once implemented, the system is expected to deliver both clear time and cost savings, while improving the consistency and impact of our risk management approach.

- We have established a new Prevention and Protection outreach team, introducing new roles and a refreshed operating model at the Training and Safety Centre in Bury. This dedicated team enhances our education delivery and enables more targeted risk-reduction approaches, placing Greater Manchester's communities at the heart of our work. In addition, a Safer Communities and Interventions team has been created to support those who are most vulnerable and at risk, further strengthening our commitment to prevention and early intervention.
- The Safer Communities and Interventions team, in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service and staff at Broughton Fire Station, has developed and delivered a pilot 12-week practical course at HMP Hindley, focused on key prevention themes including fire setting in cells and reducing violence in prisons. The course uses hands-on activities to engage participants and build confidence. In its most recent Independent Review, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons recognised the programme as a valuable enrichment activity that supports positive self-esteem and personal development. The Prevention in Prisons Programme

has since expanded to other prisons across Greater Manchester, using an evidence-based approach to address issues such as cell fires, anti-social behaviour, and violence – by challenging the attitudes and behaviours that contribute to reoffending.

- We have expanded our prevention work with children and young people through immersive, multi-agency initiatives like the Bury Takeover Project. This innovative programme engaged over 100 young people from across Greater Manchester in interactive safety education, covering fire prevention, exploitation awareness, and first aid. Delivered in partnership with youth services and safeguarding teams, the project helped build resilience, raise awareness of key risks, and strengthen trust between emergency services and vulnerable young people.

*For more details, please refer to the full case study.*





## CASE STUDY

### GMFRS Takeover Project

In summer 2024, GMFRS, in partnership with GMCA, Programme Challenger, and a broad network of statutory and voluntary partners, launched an ambitious and innovative initiative: The Bury Training and Safety Centre Takeover Project.

Born from a shared vision to creatively engage vulnerable young people across Greater Manchester, the project aimed to deliver immersive, meaningful learning experiences that would raise awareness of key safety issues, build resilience, and open pathways to future opportunities.

At its core, the Takeover Project was designed to maximise the impact of shared resources, expertise, and cross-sector collaboration. Professionals from a wide range of disciplines came together to deliver safety education in a way that was both memorable and transformative. Central to the experience was a fictional case study following the story of 'Ben', a young person navigating the risks of criminal exploitation. Participants were immersed in Ben's world – his home, his street, and the social environments that shaped his journey – while learning about fire safety, child criminal exploitation, knife crime, substance misuse, and first aid.

The sessions were co-designed and delivered by a diverse team, including GMFRS Prevention Instructors, Complex Safeguarding Teams, youth workers, social workers, and representatives from organisations such as Catch 22, Street Doctors, and Transport for Greater Manchester. This multi-agency approach ensured the content was

accurate, relevant, and tailored to the needs of the young people involved.

Over the summer, 103 young people from eight of Greater Manchester's ten boroughs participated in 21 immersive sessions. Identified through local Complex Safeguarding Teams, these young people came from a wide range of backgrounds, many with complex needs and experiences of vulnerability. The project also engaged over 100 professionals in the design, delivery, and evaluation of the sessions.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive:

- 96% reported learning something new.
- 70% said they would change their behaviour as a result.
- Many expressed a deeper understanding of safety issues – from the dangers of charging phones under pillows to recognising signs of exploitation and knowing where to seek help.

The immersive format was particularly well received, with participants describing the experience as 'like being in a TV show' and praising the realism of the scenarios.

Professionals echoed this enthusiasm, highlighting the interactive delivery, relevance of the content, and the project's ability to engage and resonate with young people.

While some logistical challenges were noted – such as behaviour management and communication around session

planning – these were seen as valuable learning opportunities. Feedback has already informed improvements for future delivery.

The project has already led to tangible outcomes:

- Referrals to Catch 22 support services increased by 15% in 2024.
- New cohorts have been identified for future sessions, including care-experienced young people and those attending pupil referral units.
- Funding has been secured to develop a filmed version of the tour, extending its reach beyond the physical site.

The Takeover Project has also received national recognition, reaching the final shortlist in the Local Government Chronicle Awards under the Children's Services category – an outstanding achievement from a pool of hundreds of entries.

As a first-year pilot, the project has provided valuable insights for the Safety Centre's delivery team. Staff now demonstrate a stronger understanding of techniques used by social workers and youth professionals to manage challenging behaviours, helping to create a more responsive and supportive environment for young visitors.



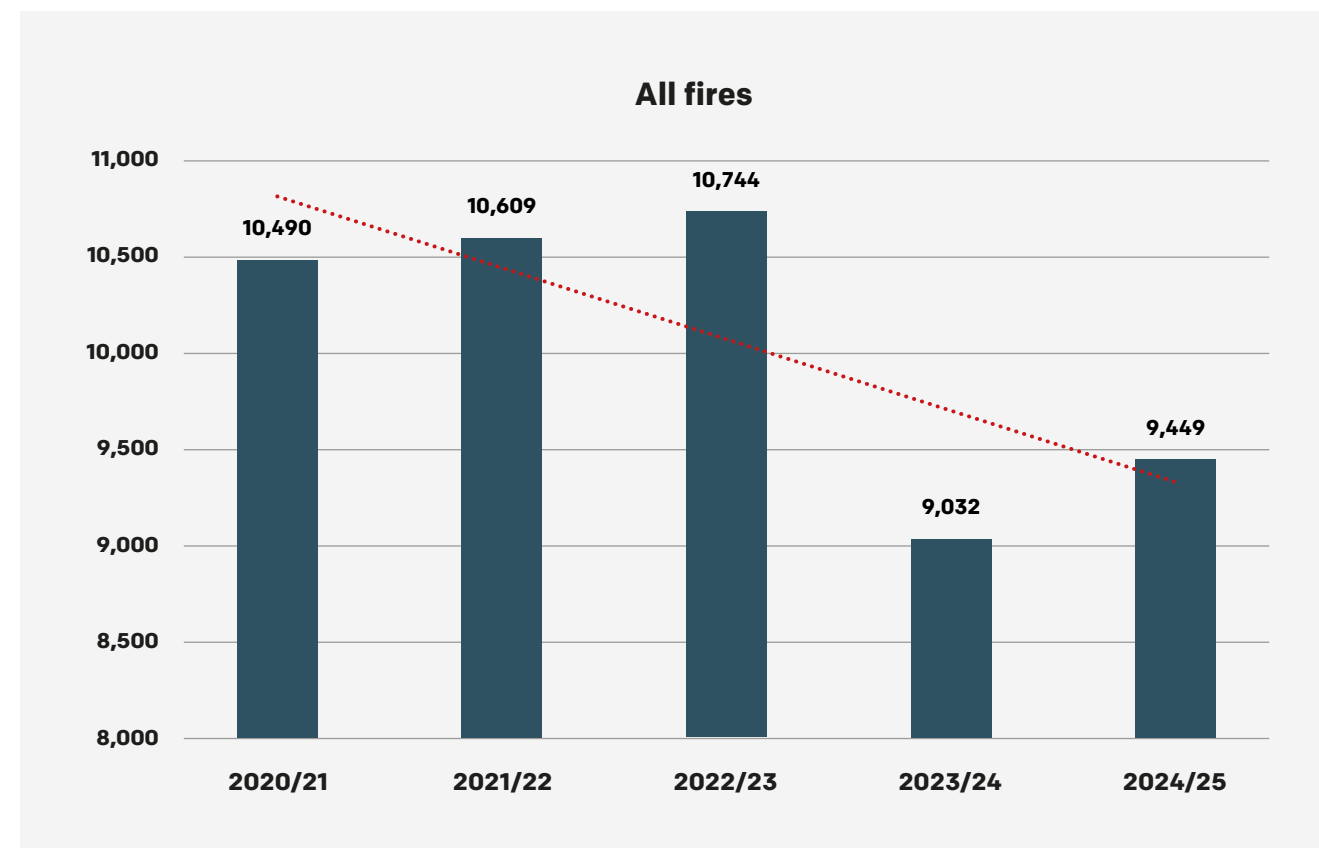


# OUR PERFORMANCE

## Fires

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

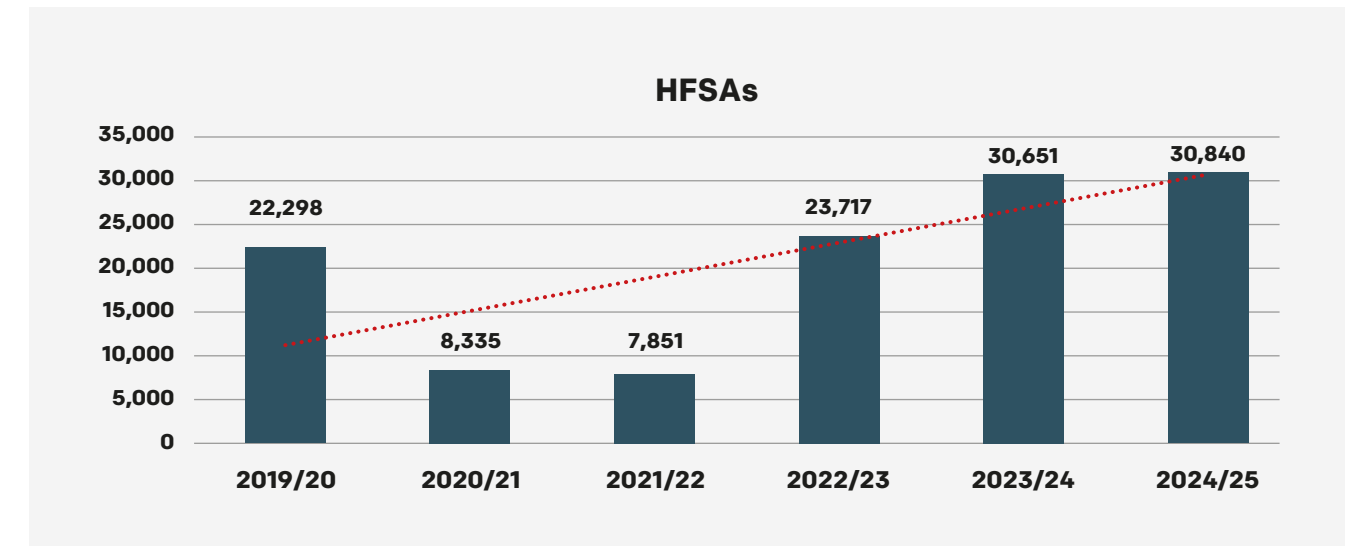
**How we performed:** This year the total number of fires in Greater Manchester increased by 4.62% to 9,449. However, this is a 9.92% reduction over the last five years and a 12.05% reduction over the last 3 years.



## Home Fire Safety Assessments (HFSAs)

**Why it is important:** We are committed to engaging with our communities to inform and educate people on how to reduce the risk of fires in their homes, as prevention is safer and more effective than response.

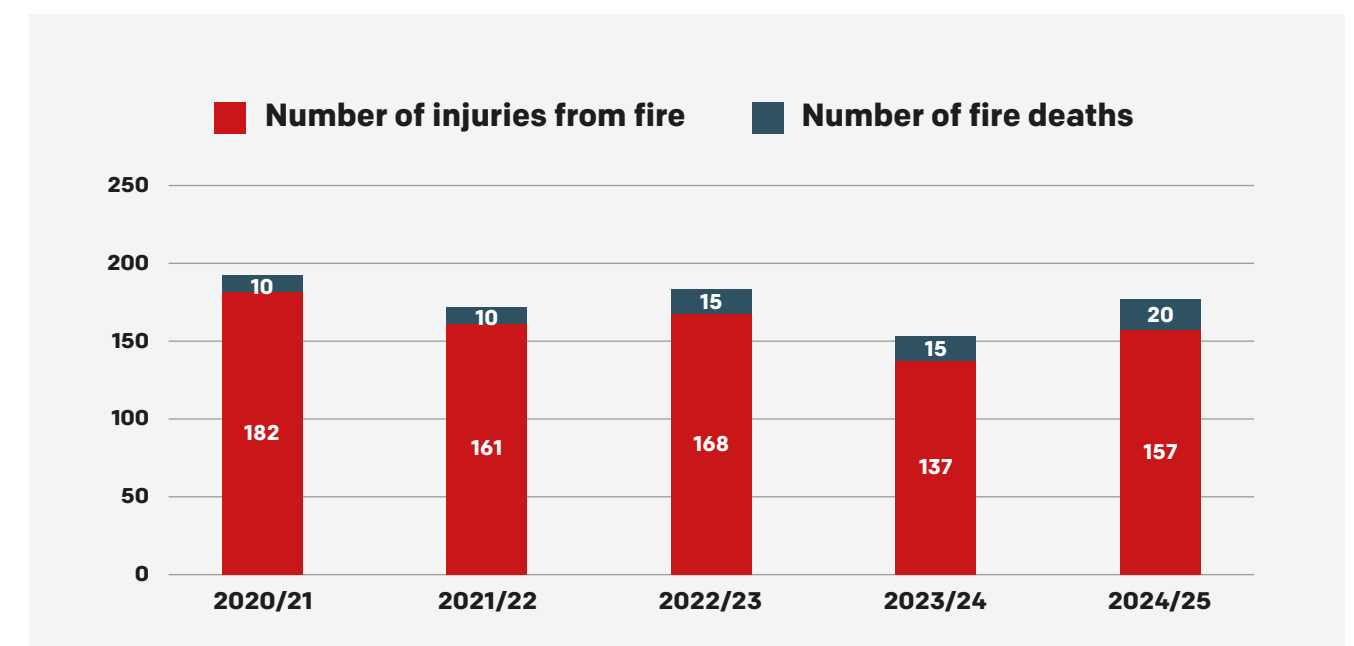
**How we performed:** We delivered 30,840 HFSAs to those identified as being most at risk of fire during 2024/25, a continued increase versus previous years.



## Injuries from fire

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

**How we performed:** The number of injuries has increased by 14.6% (20) in 2024/25 compared to the previous year. Over the last five years there has been a reducing trend in injuries, amounting to a decrease of 13.74%. The casualty profile we see in Greater Manchester aligns with national statistics, according to the most recent Home Office data published for the year ending March 2024. Sadly, there has been an increase in the number of fire deaths in the past three years. Most injuries and fire deaths result from dwelling fires, so prevention continues to be an area of focus, actioned through targeted HFSA interventions, campaigns, and partnership referrals.

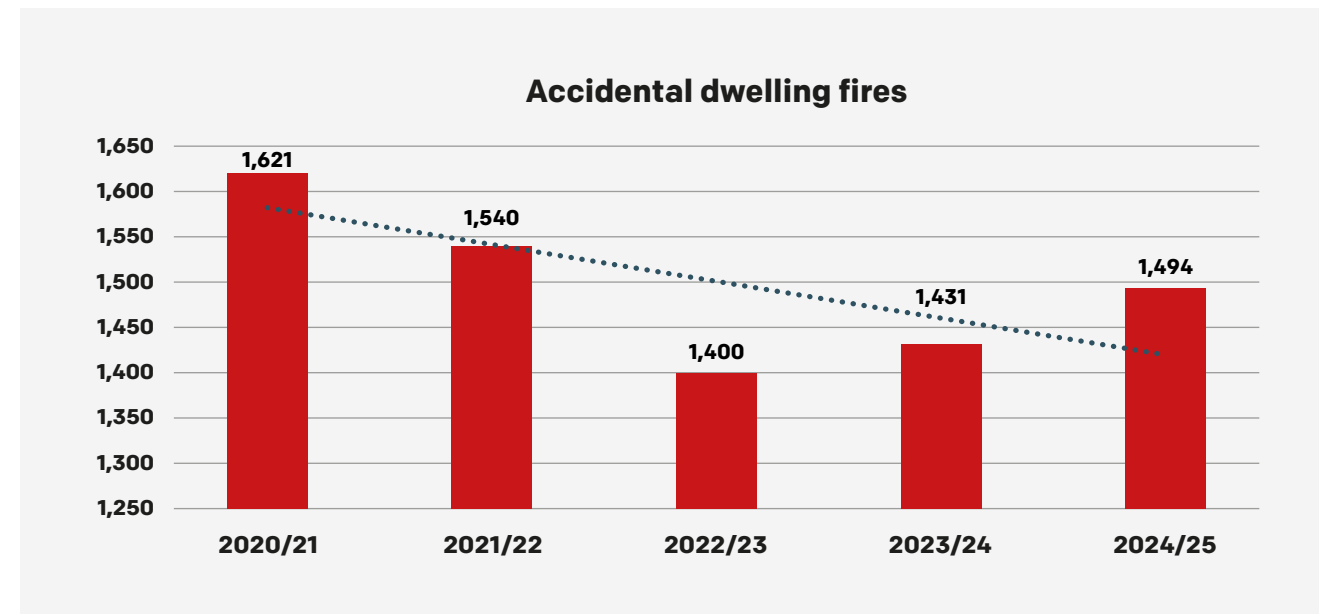




### Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)

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

**How we performed:** The majority of ADFs continue to be 'cooking related' (46%), similar to previous years, a topic covered within our safety messaging and campaigns. This year there have been 1,494 ADFs, which is an increase of 4.4% (63) compared to the previous year, though a reduction of 7.83% over the last five years and as shown on the graph, is a reducing trend.





## PRIORITY 3: HELP PROTECT THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**Greater Manchester's built environment is changing rapidly, with a growing number of high-rise developments, airport expansion, and continued commercial growth. These changes bring new challenges and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of residents, firefighters, and the wider community, while also protecting the local economy, environment, and heritage.**

GMFRS plays a vital role in shaping safer spaces by influencing the design of new buildings, inspecting existing structures, and working closely with developers, regulators, and local authorities to embed fire safety at every stage. Our teams are also supporting the implementation of new requirements under the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety Regulations, which are driving higher standards of accountability and safety across the sector.

Through these efforts, we are not only responding to today's risks but also helping to build a more resilient, future-proofed Greater Manchester, where people live, work, and thrive in safer buildings and communities.

### **Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:**

- Following the release of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report, GMFRS undertook a comprehensive review and developed detailed plans to address all relevant recommendations. With more high-rise buildings than any other area outside London, Greater

Manchester faces unique challenges in ensuring resident safety. Significant work has already been delivered across the Service, including large-scale training exercises to ensure our firefighters are fully prepared to respond to high-rise incidents. We also continue to run High Rise Days of Action throughout the year, which provide vital reassurance to residents living in buildings under interim safety measures and allow our crews to familiarise themselves with the layout and risks of these buildings. These events form a core part of our strategy to protect high-rise residents and demonstrate our commitment to learning from the Grenfell tragedy, embedding those lessons into our operational practices, and continually improving our approach to high-rise safety.

- Over the past 12 months, we have continued to strengthen our fire safety training offer to ensure frontline operational staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to identify and escalate fire safety risks. As a result, 506 premises have been allocated to crews to carry out fire safety checks on less complex premises. We have also reviewed and enhanced the Level 3 Fire Safety Certificate for auditors, with delivery of the updated training now underway. In addition, 21 new Fire Safety Regulators across two cohorts completed their initial training and development within the year, further expanding our capacity to support fire safety compliance across Greater Manchester.

- In response to the implementation of new building safety regulations, GMFRS has proactively assessed the implications of legislative changes on the delivery of our statutory services. We have played a key role in supporting and embedding new regulatory regimes for high-risk buildings, including flats, in line with the requirements of the Building Safety Act and associated reforms. This has involved developing and implementing new systems, policies, and processes to enable effective multi-disciplinary working with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). The additional regulators we have recruited and trained will ensure we have the capacity and expertise to uphold the highest standards of building safety across Greater Manchester.
- Our Protection Team is actively working with fire and rescue services across the North West to enhance the safety of residents and businesses throughout the region. As part of this collaborative effort, a North West Business Engagement Group has been established to develop targeted campaigns and tailored fire safety advice. This partnership approach enables us to address specific fire safety challenges more effectively and support improved compliance within the business community.





## CASE STUDY

### Working with partners for better regulation

GMFRS is committed to supporting businesses to meet fire safety requirements and our advice and engagement activity is a key part of our work.

The Co-Op Live Arena is the UK's largest music arena designed to offer an exceptional experience to music fans whilst meeting high sustainability standards. Co-Op Live is a first of its kind in the UK and a valuable addition to Manchester's cultural offer as well as providing significant local employment.

It is a complex building with highly engineered fire safety provisions. Construction started on the site in 2020 creating over 3,500 jobs and delivering an economic contribution of over £330 million.

A few weeks before the planned opening GMFRS was made aware that not all of the construction work would be completed and this included some of the fire safety provisions. A unique scenario called for a different regulatory approach and the need to work with the venue in a way that traditional inspections would not deliver.

GMFRS played a key role in ensuring a comprehensive multi-agency response to support the venue to prepare for opening and managing events safely whilst construction works continued. Through a Strategic and Tactical Co-ordination Group we worked with Co-Op Live to identify priority works to be completed

and ensure that robust management arrangements were put in place on an interim basis and that these were tested. This included reviewing revised plans for the opening event to ensure this could take place safely.

We worked with Greater Manchester Police (GMP), NWAS and Licensing colleagues to develop a holistic quality assurance process and carried out a number of assurance visits to review and test the management arrangements. GMFRS undertook over 300 hours of assurance activity during events to ensure that staff were effectively trained, evacuation arrangements were robust and that customers were safe.

Since its opening Co-Op Live has created over 1,000 jobs for local residents, attracted over 1.5 million visitors and made a contribution of over £455 million to the UK economy of which over £300 million has been directly into Manchester's hospitality industry.

In the last year we have continued to work with our partners to provide fire safety advice for businesses, and working with Licensing Teams distributed fire safety advice to over 2,500 licensed premises in the run up to Euro 2024 and over 8,000 hospitality venues and shops in the run up to Christmas.





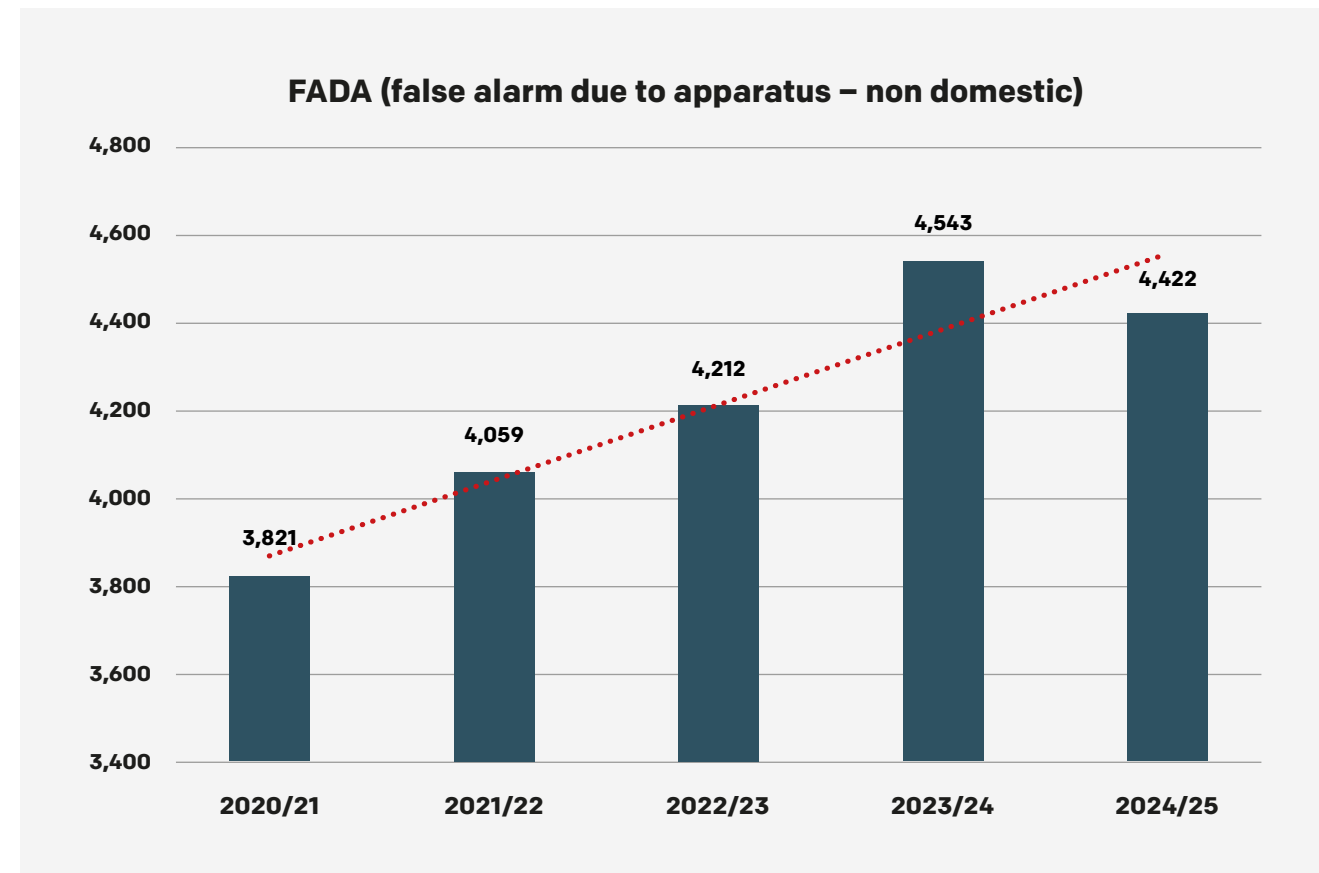
# OUR PERFORMANCE

## Preventing false alarms

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

**How we performed:** This year saw 121 (2.66%) fewer FADAs attended in non-domestic premises than the previous year, and there has been an increase of 15.73% compared to five years ago.

The number of FADAs fluctuates on a regular basis but the majority continue to be in hospitals (22.50%) and residential accommodation (12.66%).

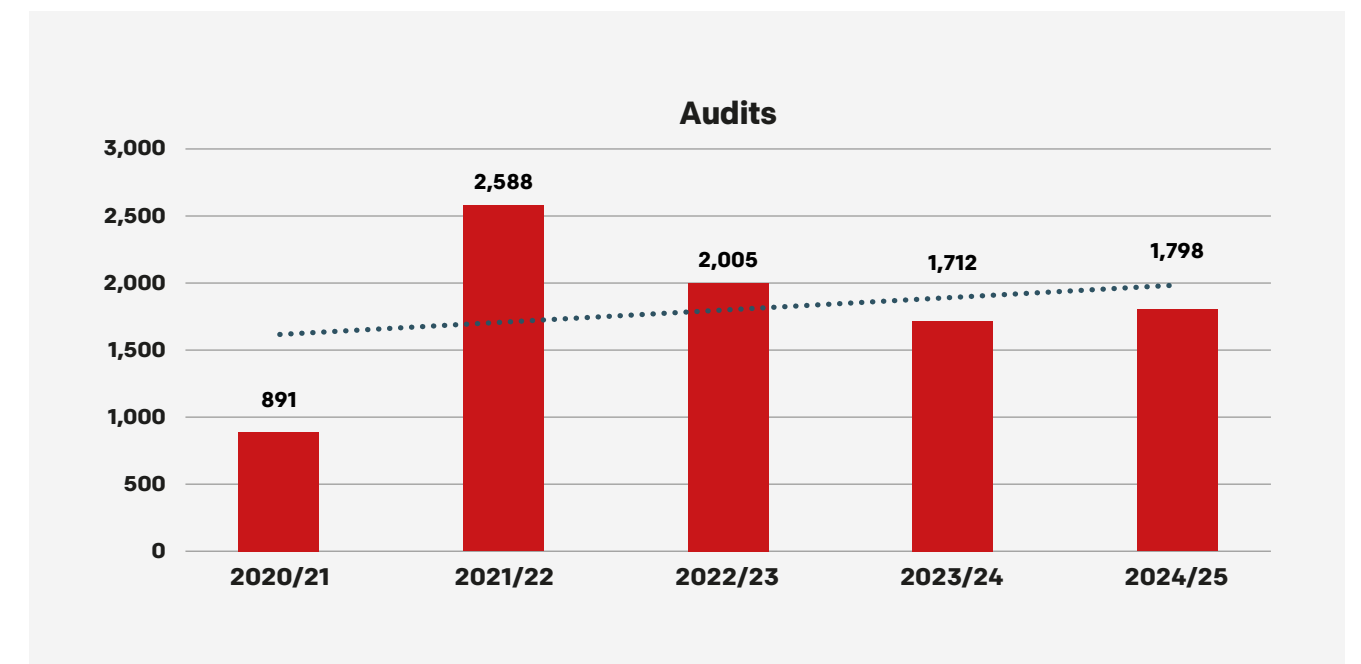


The direction of travel for FADAs over the last 12 months is positive, despite a long term increasing trend.

## Fire safety audits

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

**How we performed:** 1,798 fire safety audits were undertaken in 2024/25, with the majority being proactive audits taken from the Risk Based Inspection Programme. The remainder were responsive, including responding to complaints, post-fires, automatic fire alarms (AFAs) and intelligence-led work.



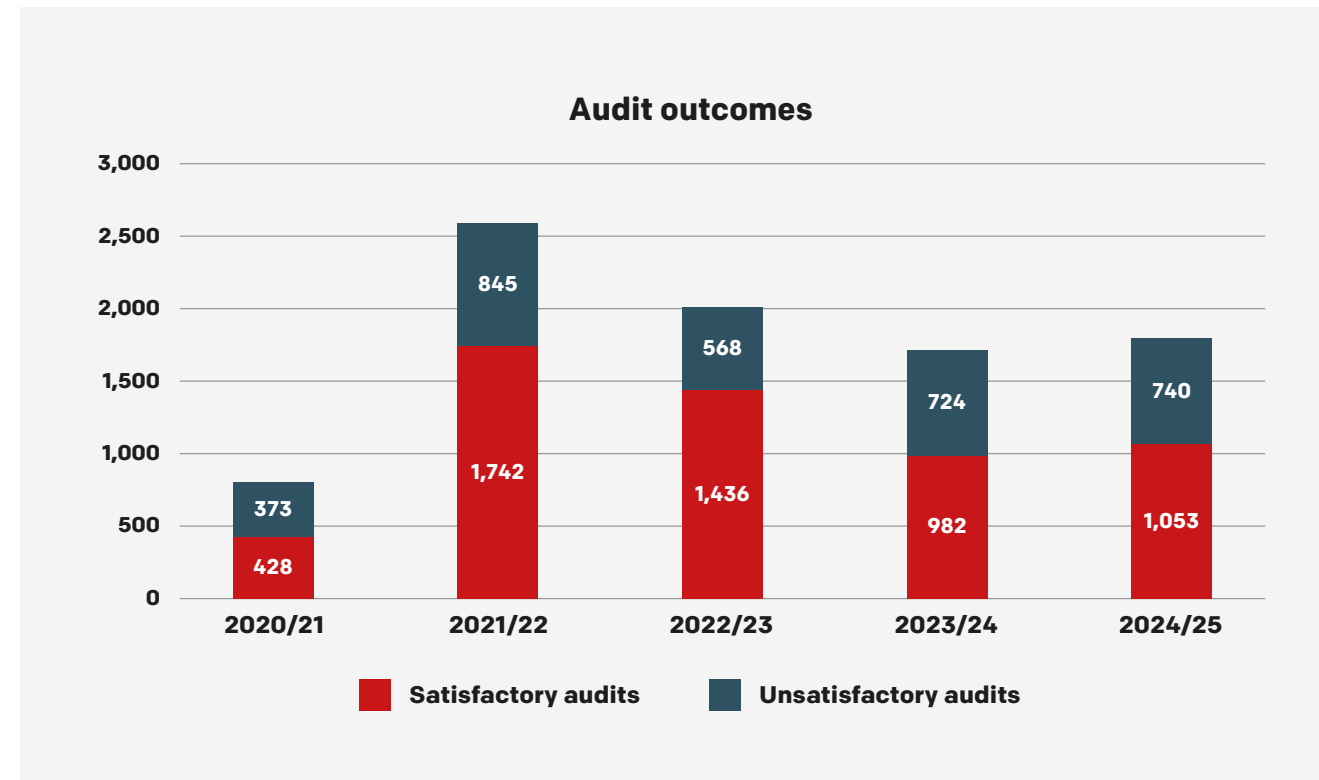


We have continued to strengthen our Protection Teams by recruiting and training Fire Safety Regulators. By year-end, we increased our number of Fire Safety Inspectors to 52 (full-time equivalent), with 35 deemed competent and 17 undergoing initial training or development. New Fire Safety Regulators complete a 16-week training programme before they are qualified to audit simple premises. During this phase, audits are often conducted in pairs or under supervision, allowing experienced staff to mentor and support trainees – though this does temporarily reduce overall audit capacity.

In parallel, we have invested in the development of our competent Fire Safety Regulators and Managers, with 12 Protection staff successfully completing the Level 4 Diploma. This ongoing investment is essential to equip our teams to address the diverse risks and complexities of the built environment. However, it does have a short-term impact on our auditing capacity while training and development activities are underway.

By March 2025, GMFRS had 52 Fire Safety Regulators in post – the highest number in over a decade. While several are still in development, more are now progressing toward audit targets, positioning the Service to increase audit volumes and strengthen regulatory impact.

The proportion of audits which were classified as 'satisfactory' increased this year to 58%, equal to the national average (based on 2023/24 national data).





## PRIORITY 4: USE RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY AND DELIVER THE MOST VALUE

**In a constantly evolving environment, it is essential that we manage our resources responsibly ensuring every decision we make delivers the greatest value for our communities. At GMFRS, this means investing wisely in our estate to protect the long-term future of the Service, while providing modern, fit-for-purpose facilities that support the wellbeing and effectiveness of our staff.**

As the impacts of climate change become increasingly visible, fire and rescue services are on the frontline – responding to more frequent and severe flooding, wildfires, and extreme weather events. Alongside our operational responsibilities, we also recognise our duty to reduce the environmental impact of our own activities. From how we build and maintain our stations, to how we use energy, vehicles, and equipment, sustainability is embedded in our approach to delivering a more resilient and prepared Service.

### Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:

- Our 16-year Estates Improvement Programme continues to modernise and future-proof our fire estate, creating sustainable, high-quality environments that support the needs of our workforce and the communities we serve. Construction has recommenced on the new Blackley Fire Station, while preparations are underway for the demolition and full rebuild of Whitefield Fire Station.
- In April 2025, GMFRS officially opened its Leadership Academy at the Training and Safety Centre in Bury, featuring state-of-the-art facilities for immersive operational and leadership training.
- The procurement process is underway for a contractor to deliver the new fire station at King Street in Stockport. This state-of-the-art facility will incorporate the latest technology and sustainable design features, aimed at reducing energy consumption and minimising environmental impact. Once complete, the new station will provide a modern, efficient base for our crews and a long-term asset for the local community.
- Eighteen fire stations have received new flooring and interior decoration upgrades, improving the day-to-day working environment for our crews while helping to preserve and protect our estate assets for the long term. These enhancements form part of our wider commitment to maintaining high-quality, modern facilities across the Service.
- To support the health and performance of our frontline firefighters, upgraded gym facilities and high-quality, commercial-grade fitness equipment have been installed across all fire stations and training centres. These improvements have encouraged more regular use, contributing to increased participation, enhanced physical fitness, and overall staff wellbeing – ensuring our crews remain fit, resilient, and ready to respond.

- Major refurbishments have been approved for Eccles, Leigh, and Sale fire stations. Through close consultation with our workforce, we are co-creating modernised facilities that will enhance working conditions and extend the life of these stations for the next generation of firefighters.
- A new intranet has been launched for 2,500 users, offering targeted content and enabling staff to personalise their experience. By providing easier access to relevant information, the platform supports more efficient working, boosts productivity, and reduces reliance on corporate services. Staff can now 'self-serve' through a more reliable and resilient system.





## CASE STUDY

### The Climate Emergency

In England, fire and rescue services (FRSs) are not under a clear statutory duty, nor do they receive dedicated funding, to respond to flooding. As stated in the National Fire Chiefs' Council's policy statement (August 2024):

"Whilst there is the public perception that fire and rescue services are responsible for responding to flooding incidents, there is no statutory duty placed on FRS in England to do so."

Despite this, FRSs routinely respond to such emergencies. In 2023/24 alone, FRSs attended 17,795 flooding incidents; a 33% increase compared to five years earlier.

### Wildfire trends and risks

Since the Saddleworth Moor fires in 2018, Greater Manchester has experienced several large-scale wildfires. In March 2025, GMFRS tackled a major moorland fire near Oldham, requiring six fire engines and support from local farmers. The early timing of this fire highlights the growing threat posed by climate change.

### Proactive measures and public awareness

Wildfires emphasise the urgent need to protect peatlands and reduce fire risks. GMFRS continues to promote responsible behaviour in moorland areas, urging the public to:

- Avoid lighting barbecues, fires, or fireworks
- Properly dispose of cigarettes and litter

These actions are vital to safeguarding our environment, reducing emergency incidents, and building climate resilience.

### Peatlands and the Climate Emergency

Greater Manchester's moorlands around the north and eastern edges of the city-region, from the Peak District to the West Pennine moors, and lowlands in south Wigan, west Salford and west Trafford, contain vast peat reserves which are critical carbon sinks. According to the UN Environment Programme:

'Peatlands store twice as much carbon as all the world's forests.'

When peat is destroyed, it releases stored CO<sub>2</sub> and reduces future carbon capture, worsening the climate crisis. Wildfires not only destroy peat but also reduce the land's ability to absorb rainfall, increasing flood risk downstream.

### Greater Manchester flooding – January 2025

In January 2025, a major incident was declared in Greater Manchester due to widespread flooding. Key events included:

- Stockport: 400 residents evacuated from a converted mill
- Didsbury: 445 hotel guests and 50 households evacuated
- Wigan: Flooded roads and properties led to multiple evacuations
- Harpurhey: 100 people stranded and rescued by crews

Over a 48-hour period, GMFRS led the rescue and evacuation of more than 1,000 residents across over 100 emergency incidents. These efforts were coordinated in partnership with local authorities and supported by police, paramedics, and mountain rescue teams, ensuring a swift and effective multi-agency response.





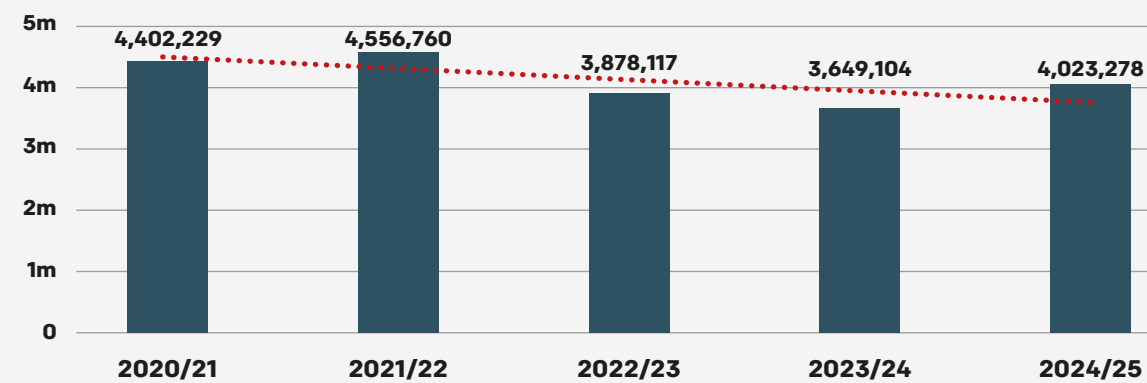
# OUR PERFORMANCE

## Energy use

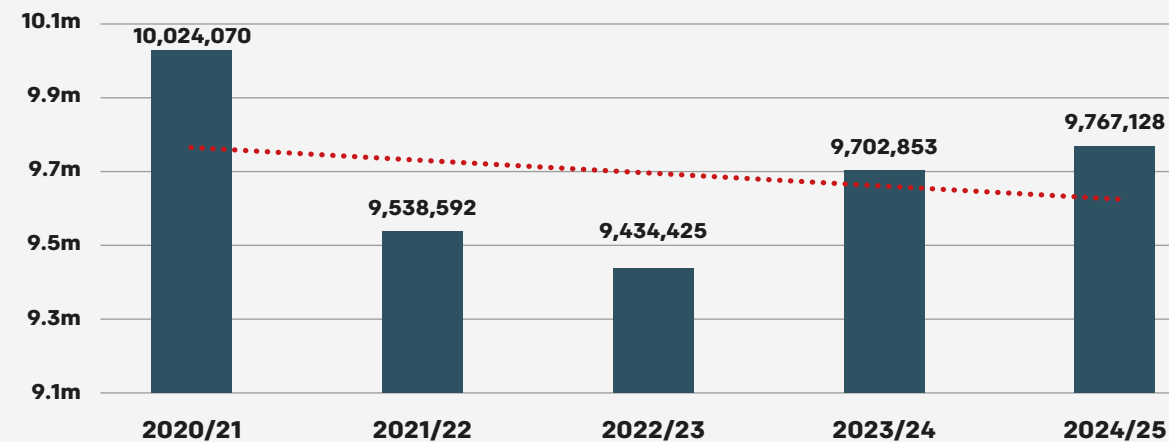
**Why it is important:** The climate emergency impacts us to an even greater degree than many other services. Warmer, drier summers increase the number of wildfires, and wetter, milder winters increase the risk of flooding and road traffic collisions. We have 45 sites and a social responsibility to reduce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

**How we performed:** 2024/25 electricity consumption is 33% lower than the 2018/19 baseline largely owing to significant investment in solar PV and LED lighting since the baseline year. Gas consumption is currently five percent higher than the 2018/19 baseline. A shift of heating systems to air source heat pumps is likely to support a reduction in gas consumption in the long run.

Electricity usage (kwh)



Gas usage (kwh)





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

**At GMFRS, we believe that a service which reflects the diversity of its communities is better equipped to engage with and serve them effectively. Through our outreach programmes, commitment to inclusivity, and focus on cultivating the right organisational culture, we are inspiring both our current workforce and the next generation of the GMFRS family.**

Our leadership development initiatives and continuous drive for improvement are helping to raise standards across the organisation. We are committed to embedding excellence in everything we do – ensuring that equality, inclusion, and high performance remain at the heart of our culture.

### Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:

- The GMFRS volunteer programme continues to grow, offering meaningful opportunities for community involvement and clear pathways into the Service. In 2024/25, 92 volunteers contributed over 4,000 hours of support. Five were recognised for long service, marking five, ten, and 15 years of dedication, while one volunteer progressed to become an Apprentice Firefighter, demonstrating the programme's value in supporting personal development and career progression. These achievements highlight the vital role volunteers play in supporting GMFRS and strengthening community connections.

- Over the past year, GMFRS has introduced a dedicated staff engagement programme, creating inclusive and constructive spaces for meaningful dialogue across the organisation. A key focus has been empowering leaders at all levels to share ideas, challenge the status quo, and embrace diverse thinking. Central to this is the 'Engaged Leaders' programme, which brings staff together to hear from experts in strategic thinking and problem-solving, helping them apply new insights to current and future challenges. In-person engagement sessions have also taken place across the Service, giving frontline staff the opportunity to speak directly with senior leaders, share the barriers they face, and contribute innovative ideas to improve service delivery.
- GMFRS has continued to strengthen its approach to recognising and rewarding both staff and volunteers. A key development has been the integration of the volunteer recognition scheme into a refreshed 'Recognition and Awards' policy, ensuring that volunteer achievements are celebrated alongside those of paid staff. The updated policy also introduces a transparent and standardised process for nominating and acknowledging contributions across the Service, promoting fairness, consistency, and ethical recognition for all.

- As part of the evolving Culture First agenda, GMFRS's dedicated programme to foster a more inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued, empowered, and supported, the Service has launched a training initiative called 'Strengthening Our Inclusive Culture'. This programme aims to align the Service's aspirational cultural vision with practical, everyday tools and techniques. It helps staff understand how behaviours, attitudes, and values – both their own and those of others – shape the lived experiences of colleagues and ultimately influence how services are delivered to the communities GMFRS serves.
- Underpinned by a new four-year Training and Exercising Strategy, GMFRS has made significant progress in enhancing the development and training of operational staff across all levels of the organisation. This work was initiated by an independent review of operational training in 2023 and has since evolved into a comprehensive two-year programme of improvement. The Service has strengthened its technical training and development offer while also fostering a culture of continuous professional growth. Drawing on real-world learning from national and international incidents, GMFRS now uses a diverse range of interactive training tools to help staff maintain operational competence and deliver services to the highest standards.

- GMFRS has delivered the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship to its staff since 2018. In 2024-25, 95 new apprentices joined, with 72 expected in 2025–26, adding to the 163 currently active apprentices and nine in end-point assessment which brings the total supported to 616. This year, the Firefighter Apprenticeship Board was introduced to strengthen governance across the programme. GMFRS was also highly commended at the NFCC Apprenticeship Awards and has been shortlisted for the 2025 Greater Manchester Skills Awards in the 'Team of the Year' category.

*For more details, please refer to the full case study.*

- This year marked clear progress toward inclusive leadership, supported by the launch of the Promotion Pathway. Representation of operational staff from under-represented groups rose from 12% in 2019 to 22% by September 2024. The pathway is helping to set clearer expectations, strengthen line manager support, and foster personal development. Candidate feedback reflects a more open, modern, and transparent process – placing GMFRS in a stronger position to reflect its communities and grow diverse leadership talent.



## CASE STUDY

### Apprenticeship Firefighter Programme

GMCA and GMFRS proudly earned a place in the prestigious Sunday Times Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers, ranking 45th nationally. This recognition reflects our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality apprenticeship opportunities, championing diversity, and supporting individuals to build meaningful careers in public service. With over 2,500 staff across GMCA and GMFRS, more than 100 new apprentices joined us in the past year alone – each one contributing to the strength and future of our Service.

At the heart of this success is the GMFRS Firefighter Apprenticeship Programme, a structured and immersive two-year journey that equips recruits with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to become fully operational firefighters. Delivered through a blend of practical training and theoretical learning, the programme leads to a nationally recognised Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship qualification. Apprentices are trained not only in core firefighting techniques but also in a wide range of emergency response scenarios, including road traffic collisions, water and rope rescues, and multi-agency operations with police and ambulance services. In addition, they also complete the Level 2 Fire Safety qualification. The programme is fully funded through the Apprenticeship Levy, ensuring accessibility and opportunity for all who meet the entry requirements.

One of the standout voices from our Firefighter Apprenticeship programme is Lauren Quigley, a former elite swimmer,

whose story was recently featured in the Sunday Times national briefing. Lauren spoke candidly about her transition from sport to the fire service, describing the uncertainty she felt after retiring from competitive swimming and the sense of purpose she found in her new role.

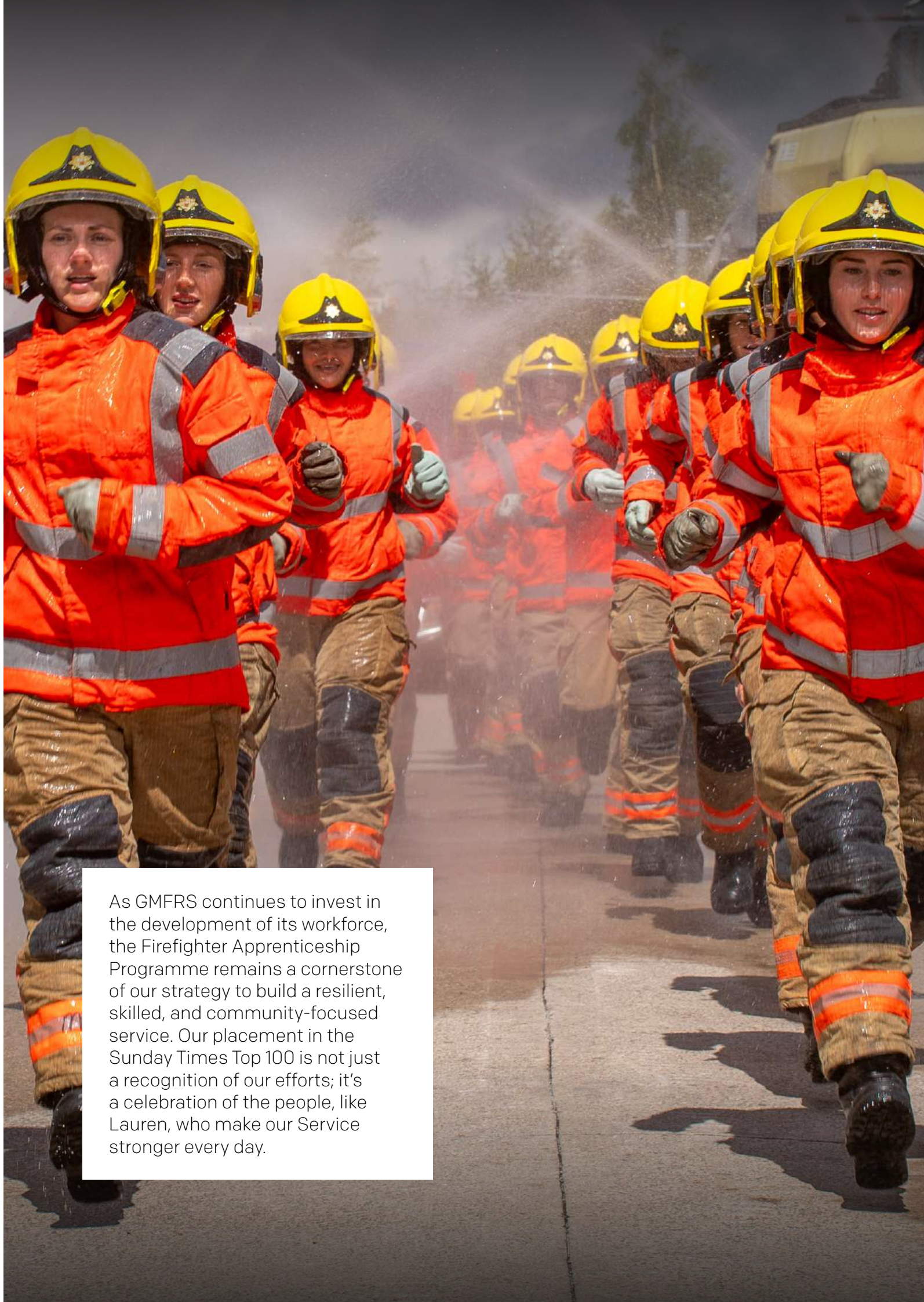
“I wasn’t sure where I wanted to go next. I had a friend in the fire service who said it would be great – you keep fit, you work as a team. I went for it, and it went really well.”

Lauren’s experience highlights the inclusive and supportive environment that GMFRS fosters. She quickly adapted to shift work, bonded with her watch, and embraced the physical and mental challenges of the role. Her enthusiasm for the job is clear, especially when she talks about the variety of responsibilities she’s taken on.

“There’s a lot you don’t even realise. You think firefighters just fight fires – but we do so much more!”

From cutting up cars in road traffic collision training to preparing for rope rescues and working alongside other emergency services, Lauren’s apprenticeship has been rich with learning and real-world impact. She describes the job as incredibly rewarding, surrounded by like-minded people who are driven by a shared commitment to helping the community.

“As soon as I joined the fire service, I was around people who are very like-minded, who want to help the community. It’s a very rewarding job. My apprenticeship has been successful. I’ve loved it.”



As GMFRS continues to invest in the development of its workforce, the Firefighter Apprenticeship Programme remains a cornerstone of our strategy to build a resilient, skilled, and community-focused service. Our placement in the Sunday Times Top 100 is not just a recognition of our efforts; it’s a celebration of the people, like Lauren, who make our Service stronger every day.

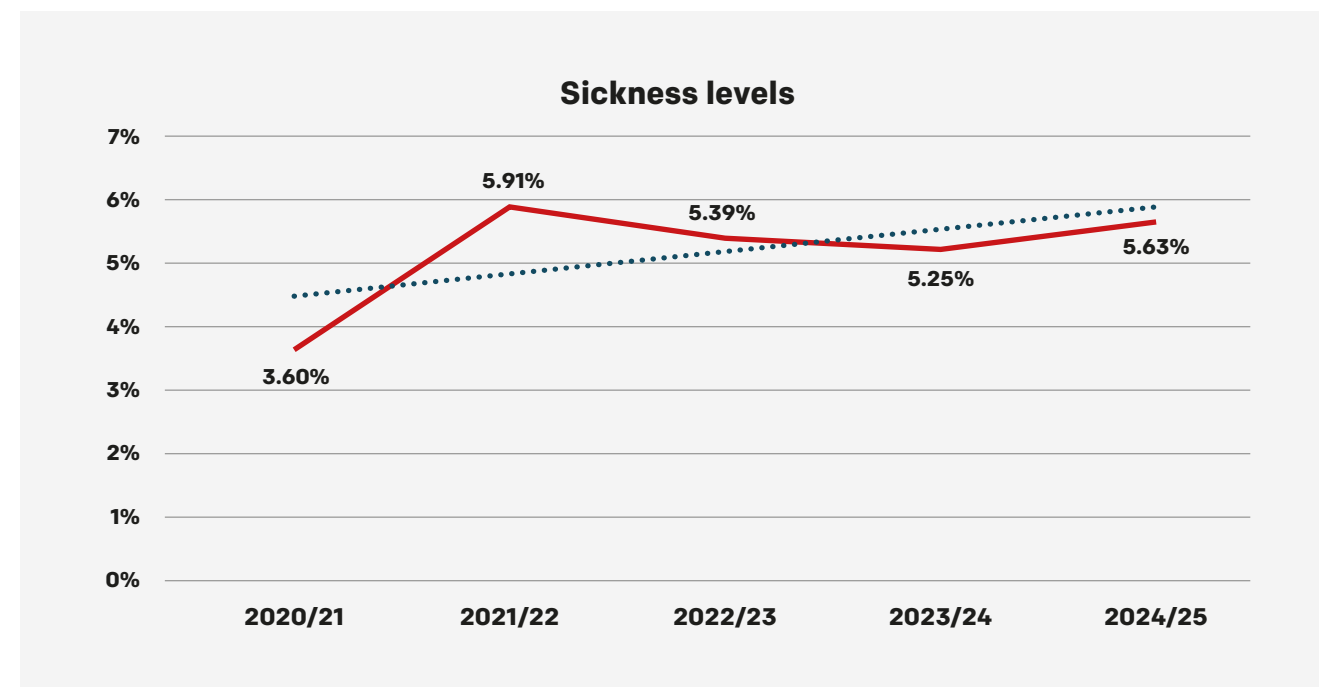


# OUR PERFORMANCE

## Improving sickness levels

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

**How we performed:** Overall sickness absence has increased in 2024/25. We continue to monitor the most common reasons for both long-term and short-term absences, which allows us to implement preventive activity and continued support. This includes support offered by Occupational Health, along with resources and tools provided by GMFRS such as the Employee Assistance Programme.

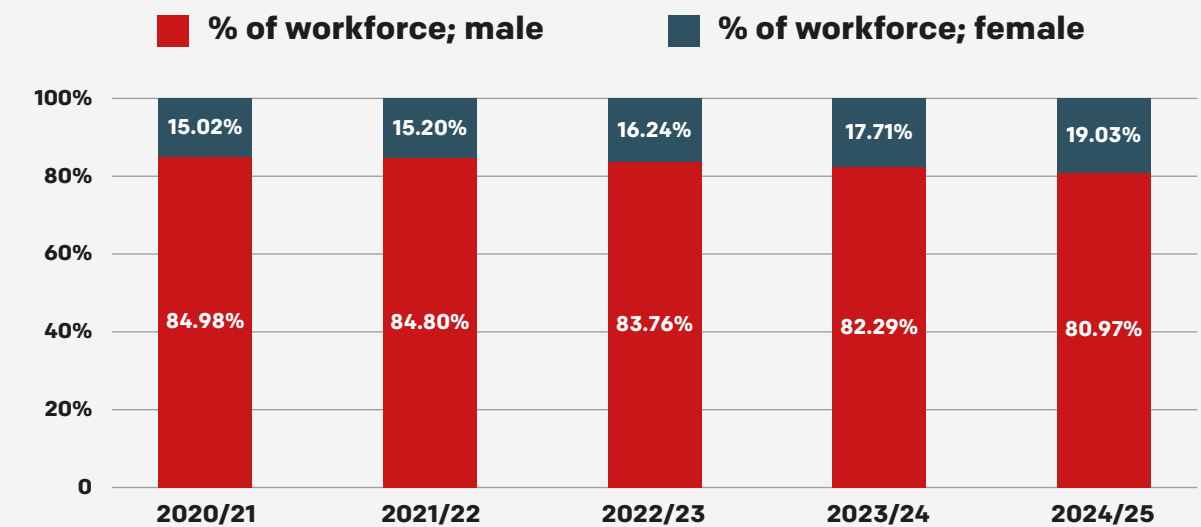


## Diverse workforce

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

**How we performed:** The overall female population of the workforce has shown an improvement of 1.32% when comparing 2024/25 to the previous year, and the longer-term direction of travel is positive.

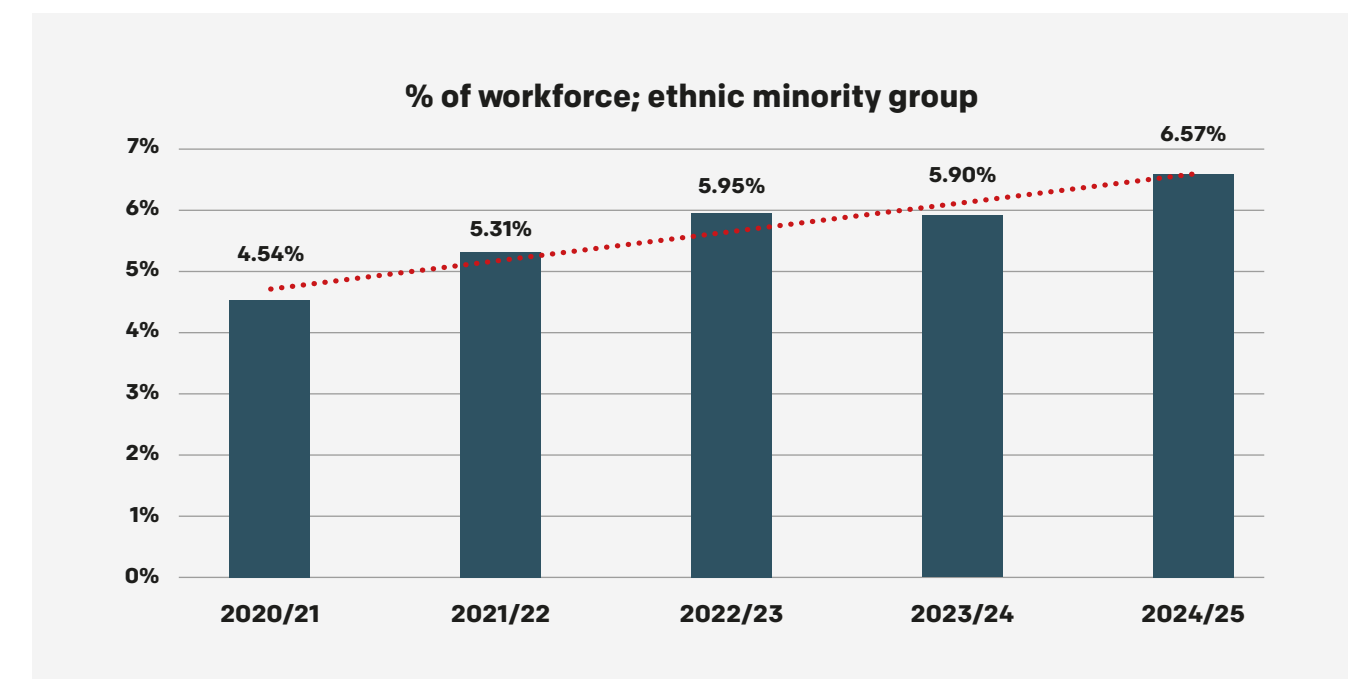
At the end of 2024/25, 9.61% of firefighters were women compared with 8.52% the previous year. This number continues to steadily increase from a low of 1.83% in April 2015.



The overall proportion of staff of an ethnic minority was 6.57% at the end of 2024/25 which shows an increase of 0.67%, an increase of 2.03% over the last five years with a positive direction of travel.

The proportion of firefighters from a minority ethnic group has increased to 7.14% in 2024/25 from 6.44% the previous year.

There has been a decrease in Apprentices of minority ethnicity to 11.24% from 15.26% the previous year.





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

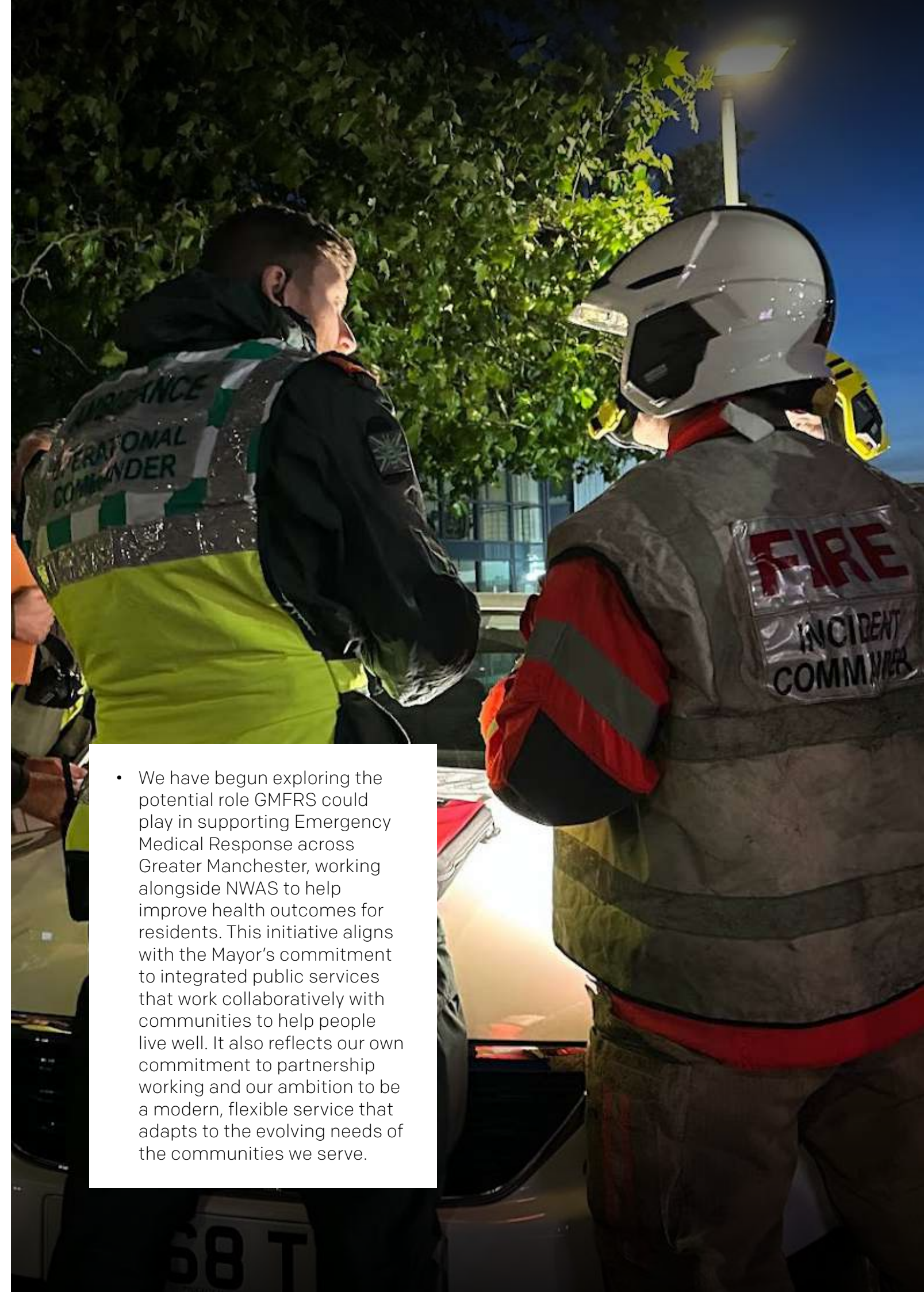
**We are committed to advancing a place-based approach by working collaboratively with partner agencies across Greater Manchester. Through integrated service delivery, we support the transformation and reform of the public sector, helping to address complex challenges and drive meaningful, community-level problem-solving.**

### **Key achievements and progress in 2024-2025:**

- GMFRS established the What Works Forum (WWF) – a collaborative platform bringing together prevention, protection, and response leads from across the Service. The WWF plays a key role in identifying and implementing effective approaches to reducing fire and emergency incidents across Greater Manchester. By fostering stronger collaboration with local authorities and partner agencies, the forum enabled the sharing of best practice and the development of more streamlined, efficient engagement strategies. As part of the wider 'New Ways of Working in Neighbourhoods' network, the WWF is helping to shape a consistent, place-based approach across the Greater Manchester footprint. Though still in its early stages, this work is proving transformational in coordinating multi-agency efforts and delivering a standardised offer to communities.
- GMFRS has partnered with the British Red Cross to designate fire stations as safe spaces for individuals in crisis. These locations provide immediate refuge for those experiencing harm, distress, or isolation. Fire crews offer a calm, secure environment and contact a Red Cross volunteer to provide further support. This initiative builds on an established partnership and reinforces GMFRS's commitment to community safety through compassionate and collaborative care.
- The Mini Blue Light Project is a multi-agency initiative launched in October 2024, bringing together GMFRS, GMP, NWAS, and the Wigan Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Designed for young people from the Higher Folds estate in Wigan, the programme aims to promote positive behaviour change by building resilience, knowledge, and understanding – ultimately boosting self-confidence and self-esteem. It also seeks to break down barriers and improve relationships between blue light services and the local community.

*For more details, please refer to the full case study.*

- We have begun exploring the potential role GMFRS could play in supporting Emergency Medical Response across Greater Manchester, working alongside NWAS to help improve health outcomes for residents. This initiative aligns with the Mayor's commitment to integrated public services that work collaboratively with communities to help people live well. It also reflects our own commitment to partnership working and our ambition to be a modern, flexible service that adapts to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.





## CASE STUDY

### Mini Blue Light

In April 2024, the Safer Communities and Interventions team explored a collaborative approach to address challenges within the Higher Folds Estate. Over the past couple of years on the Higher Folds Estate, the public's confidence in the emergency services had declined. Anti-social behaviour (ASB), deliberate fire setting and gang related knife crime was on the rise.

From this the Mini Blue Light was developed. It is a three-pronged education programme providing awareness and education to the Year 6 primary school children at St Gabriel's Primary School on the Higher Folds Estate in Leigh.

Jointly funded by blue light services and Wigan Community Safety Partnership (CSP), the programme will support the delivery of the course and provision of personalised hoodies to all students.

The programme provides early intervention aimed to support and improve children's long-term outcomes through promoting positive behaviour change. It helps support children to develop strengths and skills to prepare them for adult life, whilst building relationships between the blue light services and the Higher Folds community.

The collaborative aims of the project are:

- Keeping people safe
- Reducing harm and offending

- Strengthening communities and places
- Responding efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our communities, consequently reducing risk and the demand on blue light services
- Building relationships and breaking down barriers.

GMP, GMFRS and NWAS have provided life skills and live demonstrations throughout the programme. Sessions have incorporated prevention and protection campaigns, focusing on collaborative events such as Operation Treacle, which is a seasonal campaign to reduce firework-related injuries and anti-social behaviour, and Safe4Summer.

The Mini Blue Light project commenced on Tuesday 29th October 2024 and was launched by the Mayor of Wigan.

There were attendees from multiple agencies and the project has been covered by GMFRS, GMP and local authority media teams.

Once a month the delivery team focus on a key topic and the participants of the programme are introduced to the three emergency services and discuss how they work together when dealing with incidents such as ASB, road safety and water safety. These subjects have included theoretical and practical learning. The programme transforms safety advice into engaging, hands-on experiences, making learning both enjoyable and impactful.

Sessions have included:

- What is ASB and the law – this has linked to sessions on derelict buildings and deliberate fire setting. Students have experienced how quickly fire spreads through virtual reality headsets. This session included practical aspects led by NWAS such as how to treat a burn and 'Stop the Bleed'.
- GMP led a 'Decision Making' session that discussed the seriousness of knife crime and included open discussions on online safety and child exploitation.
- We have provided a scenario on road safety; this allowed the students to explore their decisions and made them more aware of their surroundings.
- All students have had input on calling the emergency services, when to seek help and were introduced to the What3Words app.
- Students acquired knowledge and skills through an in-pool water safety delivery. Students learnt how to 'Float to Live' and how to demonstrate a throw and reach rescue.





# COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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

- To mark World Drowning Prevention Day, GMFRS delivered water safety training and demonstrations across Greater Manchester. Crews provided throwline and CPR training at Salford Quays, supported by virtual reality safety sessions and joint engagement with GMP. In Wigan, we partnered with the Canal and River Trust to teach lifesaving techniques like 'float to live', while Agecroft Blue Watch trained 50 Scouts in basic life support at the Lowry.
- Our Protection, Prevention, and Service Delivery teams carried out a range of fire safety engagement activities across Greater Manchester. These included High Rise Days of Action in Manchester, Salford, and Wigan, where crews visited flats to discuss evacuation procedures and promote Home Fire Safety Assessments. We also partnered with Pendleton Together to speak with residents about the benefits of sprinkler systems, and delivered a fire safety talk at Ashton Pioneer Homes, engaging staff and residents with practical advice.
- In the business community, we provided tailored fire safety guidance to over 13,000 premises through targeted engagement and thematic events. Highlights included a presentation to the Manchester Pub and Club network, collaborative work with care homes, and venues preparing for major events like the European Cup and Pride.
- We hosted a special commemorative event at our Bury Training and Safety Centre to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, joining hundreds of beacon lightings across the country at 9:15pm. The event organised by our Armed Forces Network brought together members of the Bury Veterans Association and crews from Bury Fire Station, creating a meaningful tribute honouring the bravery and sacrifice of those who served.



- GMFRS continued to strengthen community ties through youth engagement and local safety initiatives. Crews at Philips Park welcomed the Manchester 317 Squadron Air Cadets for a station tour and fire safety session, while Hyde Blue Watch visited the LEAP Centre to support the BLOOM eco-therapy project with safety advice and hands-on activities. In Bolton, crews tackled anti-social behaviour by educating local schools about fire risks.
- GMFRS supported road safety across Greater Manchester through the launch of the £1 million Vision Zero Innovation Fund, aimed at eliminating serious injuries and deaths by 2040. In Rochdale, crews partnered with GMP for 'Op Considerate', targeting unsafe driving behaviours. Our Safe Drive Stay Alive programme also reached nearly 6,800 young people with powerful, real-life road safety messages.
- Our Biker Down programme, led by the Motorcycle Risk Reduction Team, delivered targeted motorcycle safety sessions in partnership with GMP, including public events at Bury Training and Safety Centre to promote key road safety messages.
- Our King's Trust team delivered nearly 8,000 hours of community service across Greater Manchester.



Projects included garden makeovers, renovations at youth clubs, support for adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and wellbeing initiatives at fire stations strengthening local connections and improving lives through practical, hands-on support.

- Our specialist wildfire crew from Littleborough joined partners near Glossop for joint training, alongside other fire services, landowners, and the Peak District National Park. The exercise tested the Fire Operations Group's multi-agency response to wildfires, strengthening collaboration and preparedness across the region.
- We proudly took part in 999 Emergency Services Day at the Trafford Centre, joining colleagues from GMP, NWAS, and other partners. With over 60 GMFRS staff and volunteers in attendance, we engaged around 10,000 members of the public; sharing vital safety messages and showcasing the diverse work we do across Greater Manchester.
- Across 30 sites, we hosted 78 Station open days and car washes, raising over £54,000 for The Fire Fighters Charity and engaging more than 19,000 members of the public; strengthening community ties while supporting a vital cause.





# AWARDS AND ACCREDITATIONS

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

- This year we celebrated our 50th anniversary with a series of commemorative events that honoured our history and the people who have shaped GMFRS over the past five decades. A flagship celebration at Manchester Central Fire Station brought together staff, volunteers, and community partners to reflect on our journey, featuring historical exhibits, guest speakers, and a ceremonial parade. Throughout the year, we shared stories from across the Service, highlighting the impact of our work and reaffirming our commitment to public service, innovation, and resilience as we look to the future.
- Two of our King's Trust managers have received a special award in recognition of the support they provide to young people in Stockport. Steve Heffernan and David Yule were awarded a special award for their work at Stockport Town Hall on Monday 22nd April 2024. The Mayor of Stockport, Councillor Graham Greenhalgh, awarded both Steve and David with a Mayor's Award for their outstanding community spirit, exemplified, amongst other things, through their King's Trust work in supporting the community's young people.
- We are proud to celebrate two outstanding colleagues recognised nationally for their community contributions. Crew Manager Robert Chew received the British Empire Medal in the 2024 Birthday Honours for his extensive work in Littleborough, including developing a community garden, organising youth activities, and running over 500 miles for charity. Firefighter Aaron Parmar from Oldham White Watch was awarded a British Citizen Award for raising over £170,000 for Manchester Arena victims, largely through the Manchester Remembers Foundation which is a celebrity football and music event he founded. Aaron also received a Chief's Commendation for his continued dedication to charitable and community work.
- Our Volunteer Recognition Event at Bury Training and Safety Centre, celebrated the contributions of 92 volunteers who gave over 4,000

hours of support throughout the year. Volunteers play a vital role in operational training, community engagement, and safety campaigns. Five were honoured for long service, marking five, ten, and 15 years, whilst one has progressed to become an Apprentice Firefighter, highlighting the impact and value of volunteering within GMFRS.

- GMFRS colleagues were recognised for their outstanding contributions at the Asian Fire Service Association Awards. Humaira Ahmed was named Equality Role Model of the Year for her leadership on issues such as so-called honour-based violence and recent civil disorder. GMFRS also received the Outstanding Contribution to Charity award for our continued support of causes like the Children's Burns Trust.
- We were proud to earn a Gold Award in the 2023-24 Workplace Equality Index and be named one of Stonewall's Top 100 Employers for 2024.
- GMFRS was successful at the British Firefighter Challenge. Helena Brown from Whitefield Green Watch retained her title as Female British Champion, setting a new course record. Fire Investigator Emily Hollands secured a podium finish with her relay team, and Watch Manager Tony Taylor

placed second in his age category. Watch Manager Dave Chapman also impressed, recording GMFRS's fastest time at the event with a remarkable 2 minutes and 57 seconds.

- Our RTC Extrication Team represented GMFRS at the World Rescue Challenge in Terceira, Portugal. Competing against teams from across the globe, they tackled tough scenarios with skill and determination, finishing 3rd in the Triage Scenario and 13th overall out of 35 teams.
- At the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards, Emma Potts, our Safer Communities and Interventions Manager, was named 'Youth Champion of the Year' for her work supporting young people through programmes like Apollo and Athena. GMFRS also won the 'Resilience and Learning from Major Incidents' award, recognising our strengthened resilience arrangements, including enhancements to our Marauding Terrorist Attack capability.
- Our Digital Solutions team won the inaugural NFCC DDaT Excellence in Digital Award for their outstanding work on key applications, including tools for fire safety assessments, hydrant management, training, and incident investigation.





## SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS



### Andrew Street, Stockport August 2024

In August 2024, a significant fire broke out at a derelict mill on Andrew Street in Stockport. The incident occurred on the evening of Wednesday, 14th August, around 6:15pm. Eight fire engines from various Greater Manchester stations, along with a Technical Response Unit, responded to the scene.

Firefighters used six hose reel jets and breathing apparatus to bring the blaze under control. The fire was successfully contained on all sides, and although operations were scaled down, crews remained on-site overnight to monitor and extinguish any remaining hotspots.

### Pimhole Road, Bury September 2024

On Tuesday, 3rd September 2024, a significant fire broke out at a commercial premises on Pimhole Road in Bury, involving a large quantity of scrap metal. The incident began shortly after 1:30am, prompting a major response from GMFRS. Eight fire engines from stations including Bury, Whitefield, Ramsbottom, Heywood, Broughton, Agecroft, Oldham, and Bolton attended the scene, supported by specialist units such as a turntable ladder and a drone team.

Due to the scale of the fire, road closures were implemented in the surrounding area, and local residents were advised to keep their windows and doors closed to avoid smoke inhalation. Although the fire was brought under control by the morning, crews remained on-site to dampen down hotspots and manage debris. The site and surrounding area were declared safe later that day.

### Longden Road, Levenshulme October 2024

On the morning of 4th October 2024, a major fire broke out in a commercial building on Longden Road, located at the border of Gorton and Levenshulme in Manchester. The blaze began around 8:00am, sending thick plumes of black smoke across the area, visible as far as Oldham. The fire prompted the evacuation of nearby homes and the closure of several streets in the area.

A total of twelve fire engines from across Greater Manchester responded, with crews using hose reels, jets, turntable ladders, and drones to assess and tackle the fire. The fire was brought under control by around 1:45pm, though road closures and safety measures remained in place while emergency services continued their work. Residents were advised to keep windows closed, and the public was asked not to fly drones over the area to avoid interfering with operations.





### New Year's Eve flooding – various locations

On New Year's Eve and through into New Year's Day GMFRS responded to hundreds of incidents that involved flooding. Fire Control declared 'spate' conditions at 11:30pm on New Year's Eve due to being inundated with emergency calls. A multi-agency, county wide Major Incident was declared at approximately 5:00am on New Year's Day. On New Year's Day GMFRS resources attended three significant wide area flooding events which were Meadow Mill, Stockport, the Didsbury flood plain and the Britannia Country Hotel and Platt Bridge, Wigan.

At Meadow Mill in Stockport, residents of a converted mill were evacuated by emergency services due to the flooding after a loss of power and water supply. Approximately 400 people were evacuated, with emergency services assisted by mountain rescue teams. At the Britannia Hotel in Didsbury, 445

people were rescued after flooding cut off power and water supplies. The flood water was hazardous due to contaminants and its speed of flow, so people were evacuated using powered inflatable boats.

Elsewhere in Didsbury, about 50 properties were evacuated through the course of the afternoon and evening of New Year's Day. Widespread flooding of properties and roadways in Platt Bridge, Wigan also led to evacuations. At Lancaster Works in Harpurhey about 100 people who had been attending a New Year's Eve event became stranded due to rising floodwaters. They were walked to safety once the water had subsided.

In total, GMFRS attended over 100 separate incidents, in many instances leading people to safety from their flood-stricken homes or vehicles, including many elderly or vulnerable residents. There have been no casualties or reports of serious injuries.



### Wildfires March 2025

In March 2025, a series of significant wildfires swept across moorland areas in West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, driven by dry conditions and strong winds. The first major incident began in West Yorkshire and rapidly progressed westward into Greater Manchester, ultimately affecting approximately ten square kilometres of moorland. What initially appeared to be three separate fires were soon amalgamated into a single large-scale incident due to their proximity and the challenging weather conditions.

Emergency services mounted a substantial response, deploying eleven fire engines alongside specialist wildfire units. To contain the advancing flames, a burns team executed a controlled live

burn over a 300-square-metre area – an essential tactic in halting the fire's spread and protecting surrounding land.

Later that same week, another wildfire broke out near Blackstone Edge in Littleborough. Fire crews from Rochdale, Horwich, Heywood, and Chadderton, supported by wildfire specialists, responded swiftly and successfully brought the blaze under control. In connection with this incident a teenager was arrested on suspicion of arson, highlighting the ongoing risks posed by human activity in vulnerable moorland areas.

These events demonstrated the importance of coordinated wildfire response strategies and the critical role of specialist teams in managing complex, fast-moving incidents across county borders.



# ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE

## Assurance

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

Our Assurance Statement, also known as the GMFRS Fire and Rescue Declaration, outlines the way in which GMFRS has regard to the Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan, and to relevant strategic plans.

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

This statement identifies the measures of assurance in place for operational activities (response, prevention, and protection), finance, governance and workforce and concludes with a

statement from the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Chief Fire Officer as to the adequacy of assurance measures.

We set out our compliance requirements under five broad headings:

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

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

## HMICFRS

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

The objectives of the inspections are to:

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

Since our first inspection, we have been committed to delivering continuous improvement, with progress monitored through our governance arrangements. GMFRS was first inspected in 2019 and again in 2021. In our most recent inspection in Autumn 2023, GMFRS was graded as 'Good' in 10 of the 11 areas and 'Adequate' in one. This reflects the significant progress made, with four areas improving from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good', and one moving from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Adequate'. GMFRS is currently recognised as the most improved fire and rescue service in England.

Inspectors identified two Areas for Improvement, both of which have now

been actioned and closed. HMICFRS also recognised four areas of Positive Practice and two areas of Innovative Practice – more than any other service in this inspection round. These included:

- Our state-of-the-art training and development suite for protection staff.
- The Atlas Project, which is changing behaviours among adult fire setters.
- Our approach to performance monitoring and evaluation.
- Our ecological sustainability strategy.
- The Culture First board, which is driving cultural transformation.
- Our process for identifying, developing, and supporting high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

Our next inspection is scheduled for September 2025, and we remain focused on building upon this momentum to further strengthen the quality and impact of the services we provide to the communities of Greater Manchester.

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





# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<b>RESPONSE – Provide a timely, safe and effective response</b>	<b>Actual 2023/24</b>	<b>Actual 2024/25</b>	<b>2024/25 forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
Average response time to life risk emergencies (includes call handling, turnout and travel)	7 min 32 sec	7 min 34 sec	7 mins 30 secs or less	+ 2 secs
Average response time to life risk emergencies (fire)	6 min 55 sec	7 min 0 sec	Monitored	+ 5 secs
Average response time to life risk emergencies (special service)	8 min 14 sec	8 min 10 sec	Monitored	- 4 secs
% of appliances crewed and available	99.67%	99.70%	99.50%	0.03%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) – MoC3	93%	98%	100%	5%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) – MoC6	93%	94%	100%	1%
Maintenance of competencies (% completed against planned) – MoC12	90%	89%	100%	-1%
% of health monitoring surveillance in date	97.62%	96.51%	100%	-1.11%
Firefighter fitness (acceptable to excellent)	95.65%	97.21%	95%	1.56%
Rescues from emergencies	2,296	2,435	Monitored	6.05%
<b>PREVENTION – Helps reduce the risks of fire and other emergencies</b>	<b>Previous YTD</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Full year forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
Number of fire deaths	15	20	Aspire to zero	33.33%
Number of injuries from fire	137	156	91	13.87%
Deliberate primary fires	1,217	1,079	1,011	-11.34%
Deliberate secondary fires	4,210	4,313	4,214	2.45%
Accidental dwelling fires	1,431	1,494	1,241	13.70%
All special service calls	8,298	9,540	Monitored	14.97%
Total number of HFSA referrals received	10,951	11,405	12,000	4%
Number of HFSAs completed	30,651	30,840	30,800	0.32%
King's Trust – % retention rate	84.45%	87.25%	80%	3.32%
<b>PROTECTION – Help protect the built environment</b>	<b>Previous YTD</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Full year forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
Number of fire safety interventions	5,405	5,333	6,500	-1.33%
Total number of audits completed	1,607	1,798	4,000	8.71%
– of which; % resulting in formal enforcement	16%	13%	Monitored	-3.00%
Number of businesses receiving advice	13,549	13,648	12,000	0.73%
Number of AFA calls received at NWFC	new for 2024/25	17,128	Monitored	
Percentage of AFAs not mobilised to	new for 2024/25	51%	Monitored	
FADA (False alarm due to apparatus – non domestic)	4,543	4,422	4,159	-2.66%



<b>SERVICE EXCELLENCE – Use resources sustainably and deliver the most value</b>	<b>Previous YTD</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Full year forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
% change in our carbon footprint (compared to baseline year (2018/19)	-12%	-24%	-37%	-15%
Progress against annual savings plan	£0.712m	£0.450m	£0.450m	

<b>PEOPLE – Develop a culture of excellence, equality and inclusivity</b>	<b>Previous YTD</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Full year forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
% of workforce; male	82.29%	80.97%	Monitored	-1.32%
% of workforce; female	17.71%	19.03%	Monitored	1.32%
Number of workforce; non-binary and other	<10	<10	Monitored	
% of workforce; minority ethnic people	5.90%	6.57%	Monitored	0.67%
Number of workforce; LGBTQ+ (sexual orientation)	51	65	Monitored	27.45%
Number of workforce; trans	<10	<10	Monitored	
Absence levels (%) all staff	5.29%	5.72%	5%	0.43%
% apprentices from current workforce	11.10%	10.08%	5%	-1.02%
Total number of adverse health and safety events	334	362	Monitored	8.38%
– Number of accidents resulting in injury	120	120	Monitored	0.00%
– Number work related violence incidents resulting in injury	5	0	Monitored	-100.00%
– Number work related violence incidents not resulting in injury	44	40	Monitored	-9.09%
– Number of near misses	46	82	Monitored	78.26%
– Number of reported adverse safety events/incidents resulting in damage to vehicles	112	117	Monitored	4.46%
– Number of reported adverse safety events/incidents resulting in damage to operational equipment	7	9	Monitored	28.57%
– Number of adverse events resulting in lost time	33	42	Monitored	27.27%
– Total number of days lost due to injury	683	1788	Monitored	161.79%
Number of RIDDOR reportable accidents	7	13	Monitored	85.71%

<b>PARTNERSHIP WORKING – Integrate our services in every locality with those of partner agencies</b>	<b>Previous YTD</b>	<b>Current YTD</b>	<b>Full year forecast / target</b>	<b>% change</b>
% of safeguarding referrals made that are compliant with GMFRS safeguarding referral procedure	79%	87.90%	100%	11%





**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



[manchesterfire.gov.uk](http://manchesterfire.gov.uk)



[@manchesterfire](https://twitter.com/manchesterfire)



[manchesterfire](https://www.facebook.com/manchesterfire)