

Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th April 2024

2022-23 Performance Report of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Activity

Recommendation

That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the contents of this report.

1.0 Summary

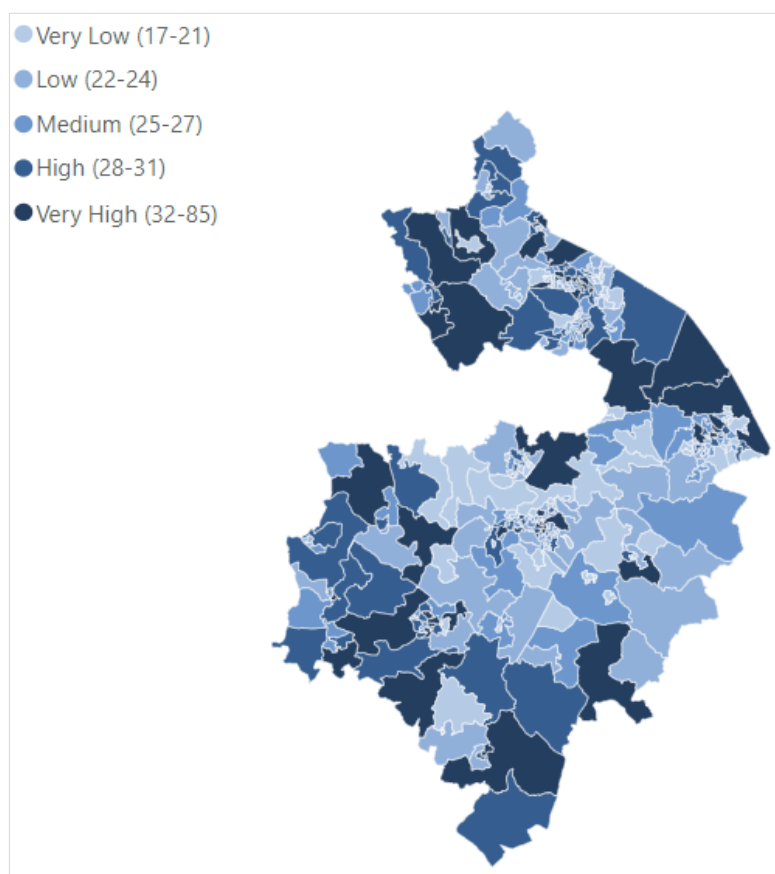
- 1.1 This report provides information regarding the performance of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) against the key business measures reported on at a corporate level. The figures aim to give a view of historical trends over the last five years, as well as a summary of the most recent performance for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
- 1.2 Several incident types usually attended by firefighters have seen significant increases as a result of severe weather experienced this financial year, which has impacted the figures for 2022/23. Of note, there have been increases in the number of accidental dwelling fires, small fires and attended road traffic collisions, with some categories seeing increases of over 75%.
- 1.3 Appliance availability remained high for wholetime appliances at 98.4%, with the on-call availability at key stations figure being much lower at 52.4%. On-call availability figures have been impacted by recruitment challenges and officers returning to primary employment following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 The Fire Control Team handled life risk and property emergency calls within 90 seconds on 84.5% of occasions over the last twelve months, the percentage remaining high but just under the target of 85%.
- 1.5 The Hospital to Home scheme has been a success and continues to strengthen the WFRS brand within the community and to ensure the elderly and vulnerable are supported and safe. Levels increased significantly during the pandemic, but demand has continued to reduce slightly over the past 12 months.
- 1.6 The service continues to monitor and track its performance with acknowledgement of the changing risk profile. Key drivers for future change in the risk profile are the effects of

emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and climate change.

- 1.7 New analytical reports are being developed regularly by the Business Intelligence team and are shared with Service personnel at all levels to assist with prevention work and targeting resources more effectively, most notably the CRMP risk analysis tool, which is helping the Service to target the highest risk areas in the county.

2.0 CRMP Risk Analysis

At the start of 2022/23, a composite risk analysis tool was developed that assigned a risk score to each LSOA in the county, which represented the community risk within that area based on 17 measures spanning across Prevention, Protection, Response and climate change.



Source: CRMP Risk Analysis, Power BI

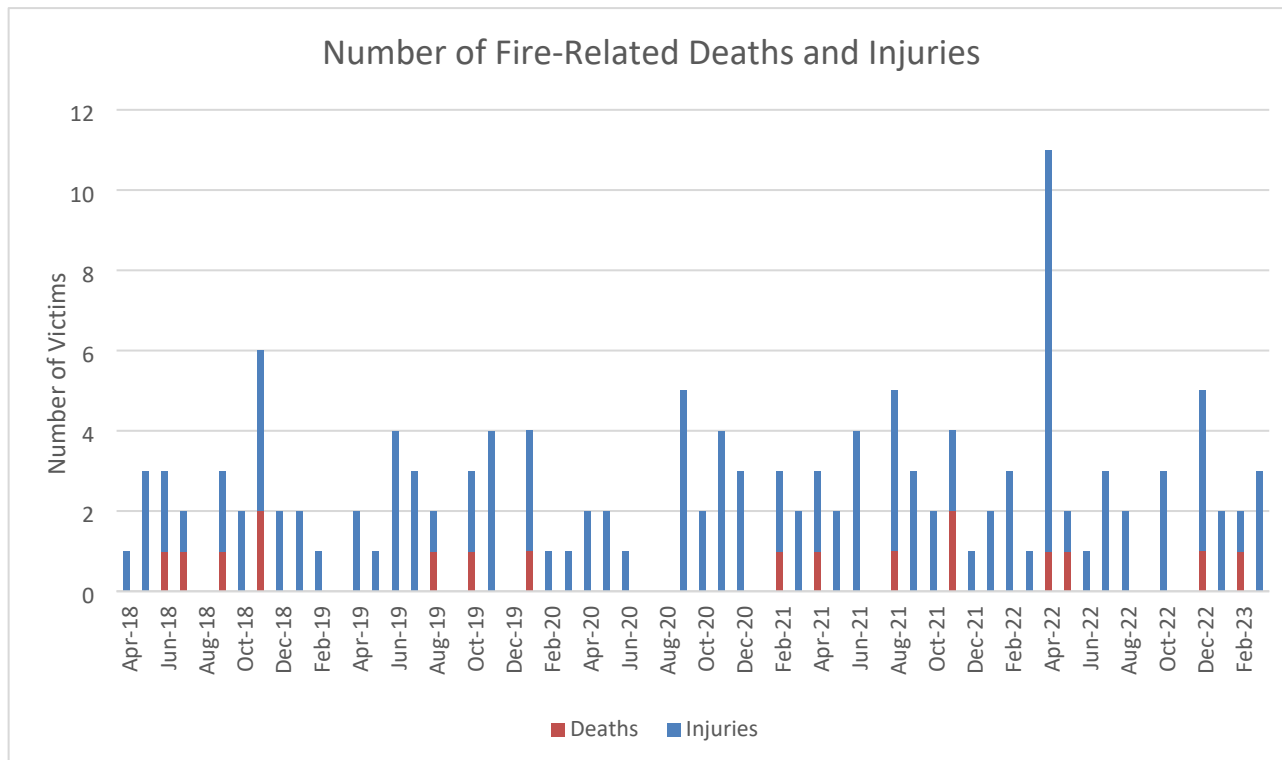
The methodology behind the risk analysis culminated in a total risk score for each LSOA, assigning each LSOA with a 'Very High', 'High', 'Medium', 'Low' or 'Very Low' classification.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service have been using this information as a tool to help deliver a risk-based approach to its fire safety activities that have been conducted in the local Warwickshire community.

The risk analysis tool will be refreshed in Summer 2023, where the data underpinning the model will be updated to include the most recent data, thus providing an up-to-date picture of risk in the county.

3.0 Key Business Performance Measures and Indicators

3.1 Key Business Measures: Fire-Related Deaths and Injuries



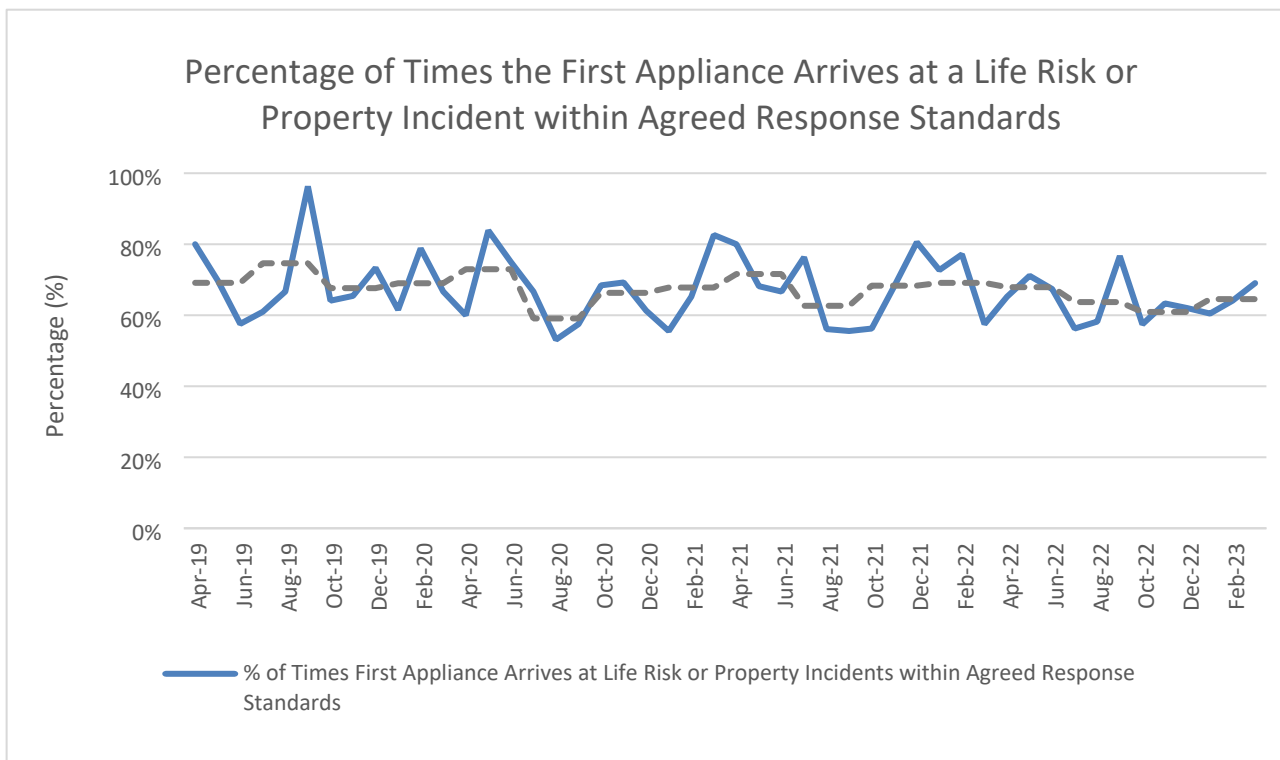
Source: Firecrest

In 2022/23 there were four fire-related deaths recorded, which is the same as the number recorded in the same period of 2021/22. All four deaths have been confirmed as fire-related by the Coroner and one of the deaths was a fire-related suicide. In the event of a fire-related death, the Service investigates to understand causes and identify any appropriate improvement activity.

In 2022/23 there were 30 fire-related injuries recorded, which is an increase of three incidents compared to the 27 fire-related injuries recorded in the same period of 2021/22. For the 30 victims, 16 victims were taken to hospital and 14 were given first aid at the scene. Three incidents saw victims with serious injuries. There was a spike in April of 10 fire-related injuries. This represents the highest number of fire-related injuries that have been seen in a single month, although monthly figures returned to normal levels after this.

The Service closely monitors levels and types of incidents involving fire-related injuries to address any emerging issues and to inform community prevention activity. Following any incident that results in a fatality or life changing injury, the Service conducts a Significant Fire Incident Review (SFIR) with appropriate partners. The purpose of these reviews is to assess current partnership working and embed any lessons learnt in order to reduce the chance of similar incidents happening again.

3.2 Key Business Measure: Response Times



Source: Firecrest, Vision

The Service’s agreed response standard is 10 minutes from the time of assignment for 75% of incidents. Between April 2022 and March 2023, an appliance arrived at life risk or property incidents within agreed response standards 64.3% of the time, which is a decrease from the 2021/22 figure of 67.9% and still below the target. The average time to respond to a life risk incident for the attending appliance was:

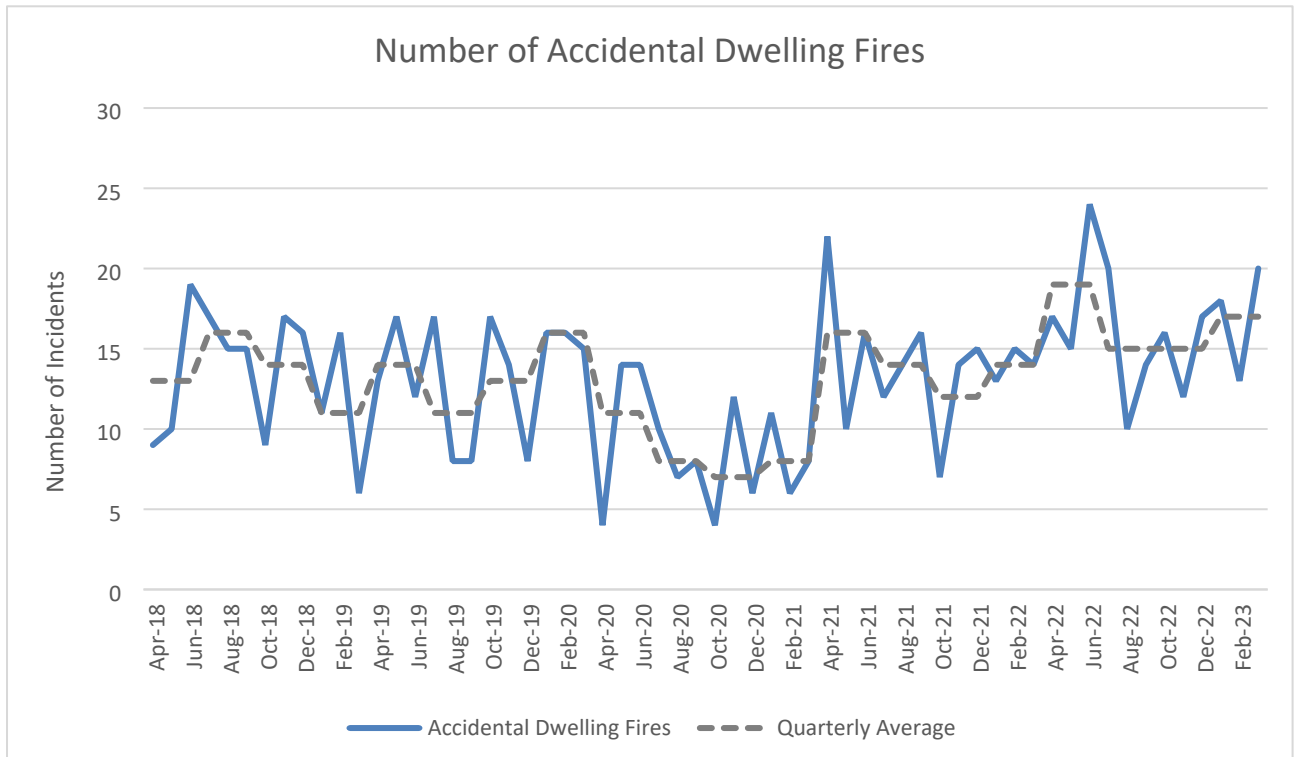
- 8 minutes 54 seconds for Fire incidents
- 10 minutes 46 seconds for Road Traffic Collision incidents
- 7 minutes 25 seconds for Special Services incidents

For initial appliances that missed the 10-minute target, the average time for response was:

- 14 minutes 0 seconds for Fire incidents
- 13 minutes 58 seconds for Road Traffic Collision incidents
- 14 minutes 13 seconds for Special Services incidents

The Service focuses its attention and short-term remedial measures on incidents where the modelled 10-minute response time was missed, as opposed to the incidents where it was not. Response times are being reviewed based upon the new risk analysis report. Ongoing lower availability for rural on-call stations combined with the usual wide geographical spread of incidents has resulted in significant variations from month to month.

3.3 Key Business Indicator: Accidental Dwelling Fires



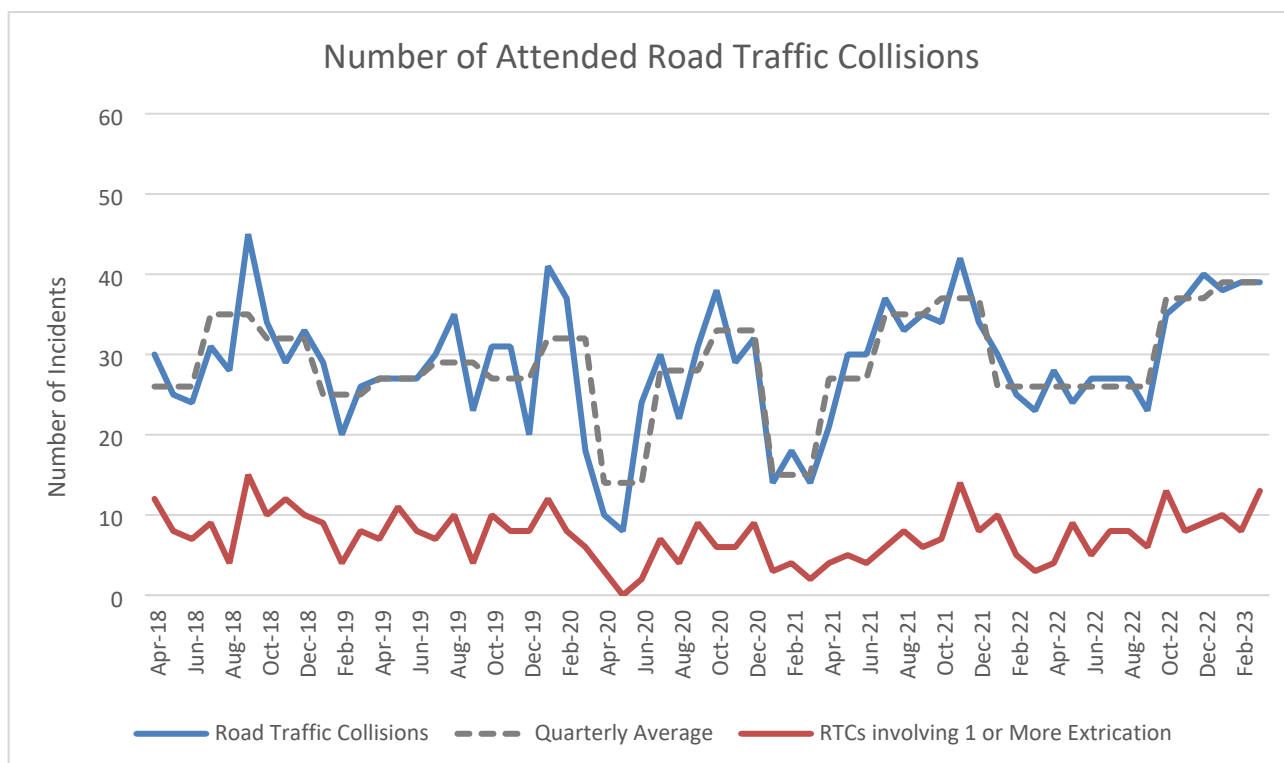
Source: Firecrest

From April 2022 to March 2023, WFRS attended 196 accidental dwelling fires, which is a 16.7% (28 incidents) increase when comparing to the same period of 2021/22. Incident levels and the severity of incidents are monitored closely to identify and react to any emerging trends. The full suite of prevention activities has now restarted post-pandemic and the targeting of these measures is being further enhanced using Power BI risk mapping, which is being rolled out across fire stations countywide. National benchmarking for 2021/22 indicated that Warwickshire remains a top performer when compared nationally for this measure.

The rise in accidental dwelling fires appears to be a national trend. The numbers also need to be viewed in line with an increasing population in Warwickshire, with a large increase in housing developments built locally over the last few years, and some still being built (particularly in Warwick District). There is also a link between fires occurring, deprivation and the cost-of-living crisis that could continue going forward. All serious fires are reviewed through a Significant Fire Incident Review (SFIR), which drives prevention activity.

The proportion of fires confined to the room of origin has remained high for the period of April 2022 to March 2023, with 90.5% of accidental fires being confined to the room of origin, compared with 90.8% reported between April 2021 and March 2022.

3.4 Key Business Indicator: Road Traffic Collisions Attended and Road Traffic Collisions involving 1 or More Extrication



Source: Firecrest

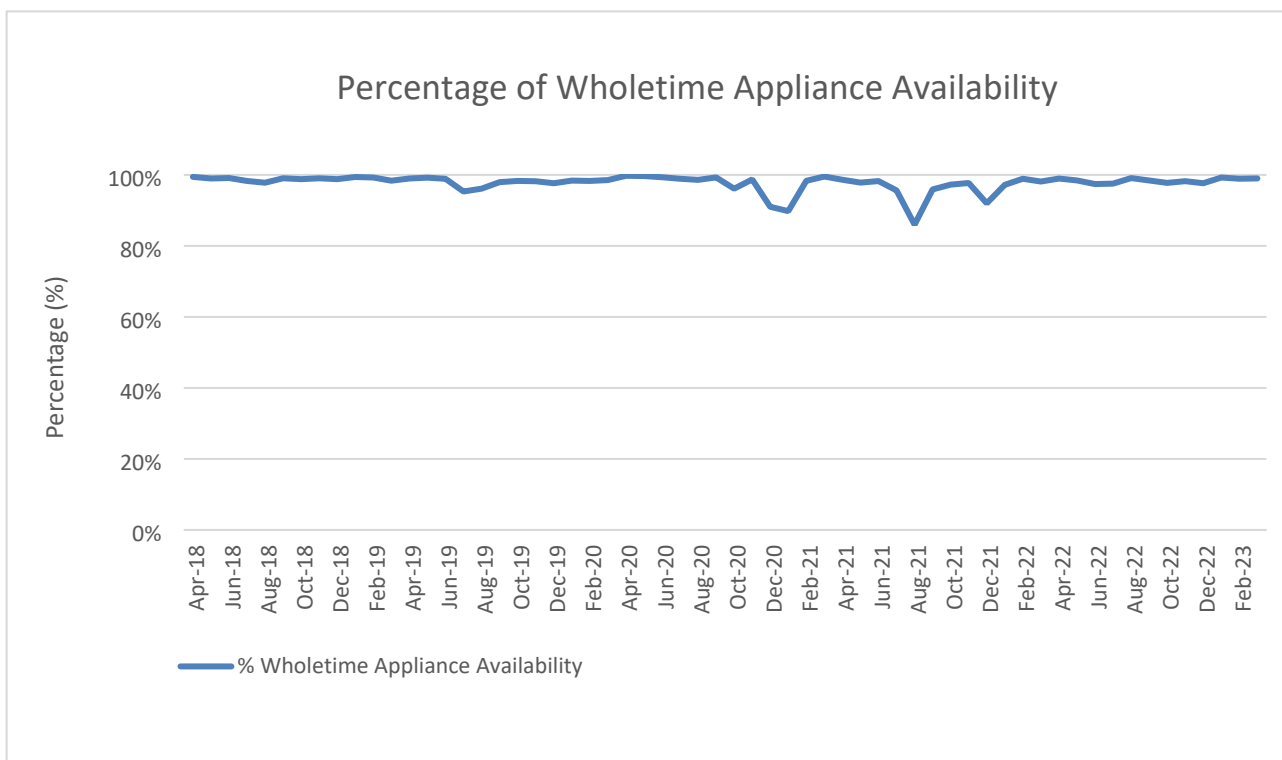
From April 2022 to March 2023, WFRS attended 384 road traffic collisions, which is a 2.7% (10 incidents) increase when comparing to the same period of 2021/22.

Of the 384 road traffic collisions attended, there were 101 incidents requiring extrications, which is 26.3% (21 incidents) more than the 80 incidents attended last year. In addition, the percentage of road traffic collisions that required an extrication increased from 21.4% in 2021/22 to 26.3% in 2022/23. The greatest increase in road traffic collisions was seen during the winter months, where more severe cold weather was experienced than the year prior.

The frequency, types and locations of road traffic collisions are monitored closely to identify any emerging trends and subsequent prevention activity. Business Intelligence are carrying out further analysis of WFRS data and WCC Road Safety team data to provide hotspot areas and a casualty profile to enable better targeting of prevention activity.

The Services continue to work in partnership to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Warwickshire roads, also working with surrounding Fire Services.

3.5 Key Business Indicator: Wholetime Appliance Availability

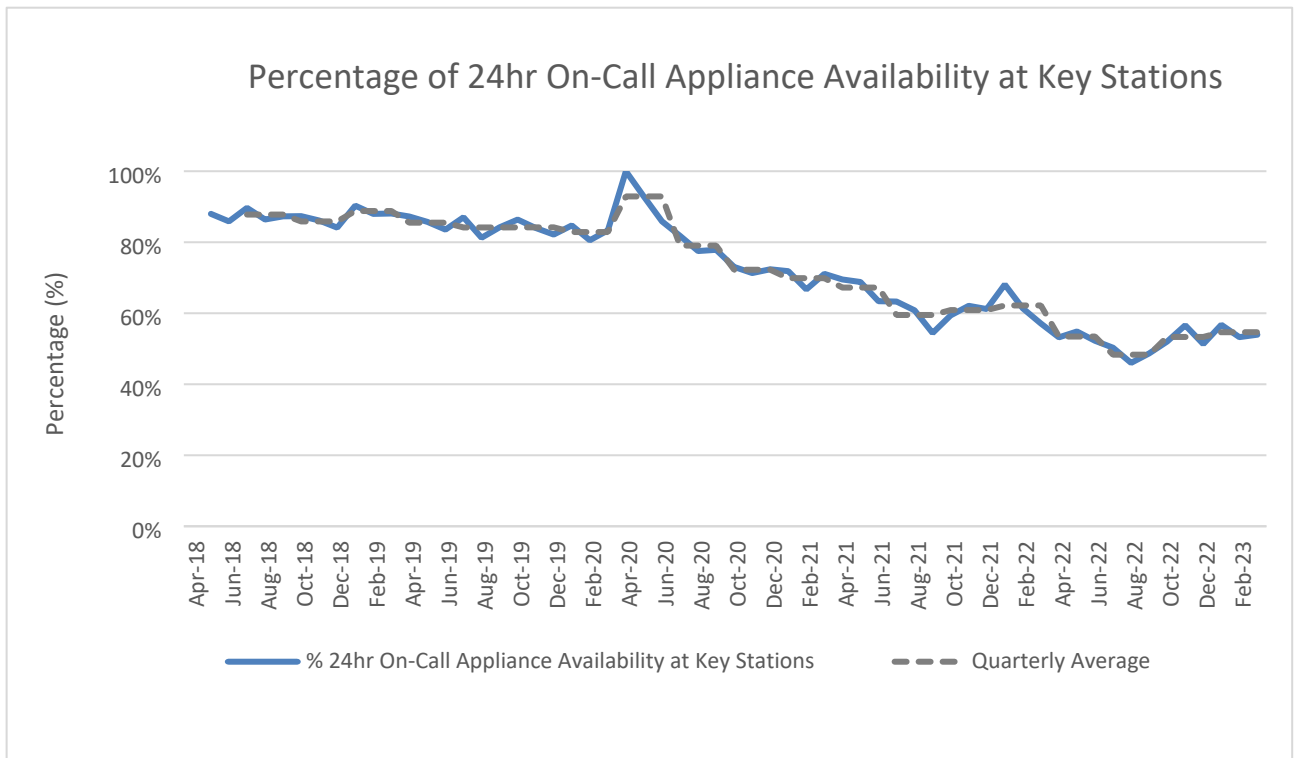


Source: Wholetime Availability Performance Monitoring, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23

The average wholetime appliance availability for 2022/23 was 98.4%, which is an increase on the 2021/22 figure of 96.1%.

These figures reflect an improved picture with regards to competency levels following COVID-19 working guidelines. Also, Six new Volvo appliances have been brought into the Service, which has also contributed to a significant improvement in overall appliance availability, with a further three due later in 2023.

3.6 Key Business Indicator: 24hr On-Call Appliance Availability at Key Stations



Source: Fire Service Rota

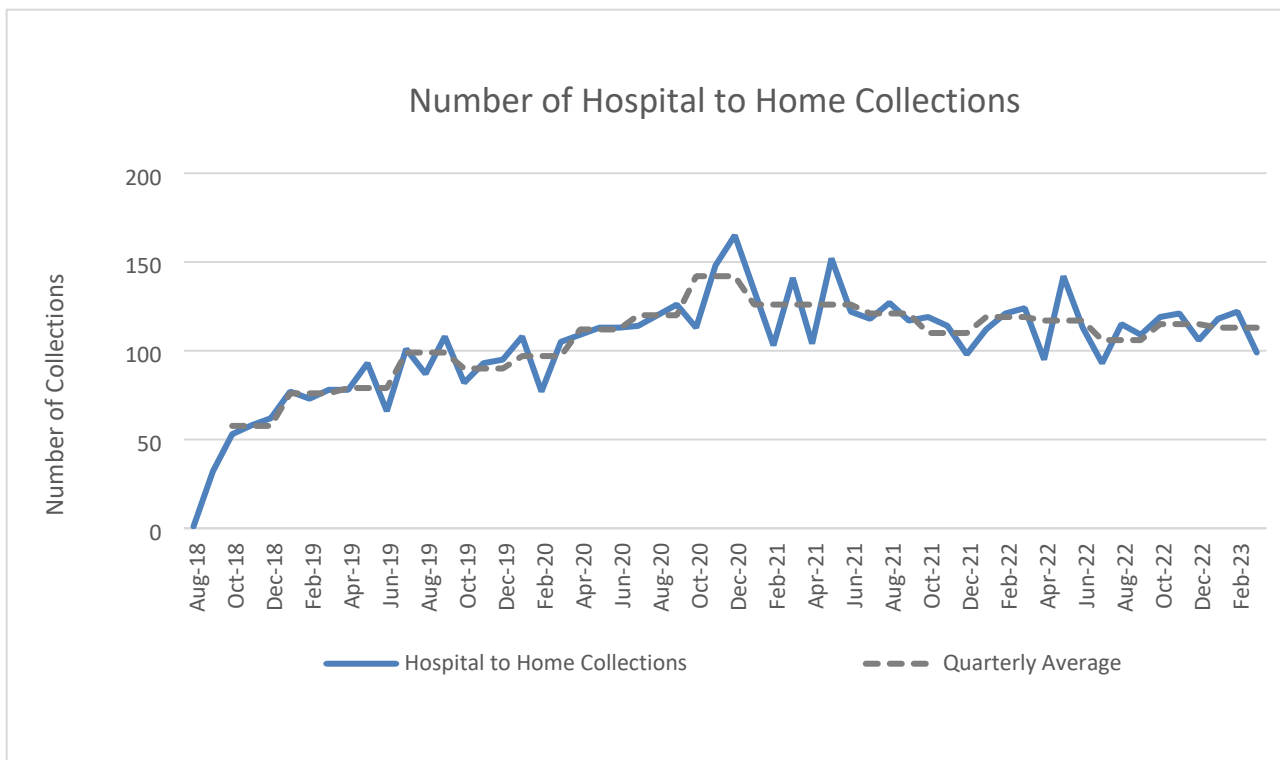
From 1st November 2020, it was agreed that the key availability measure should focus on on-call crews that are available as a full crew to respond to Priority 1 incidents. For the period April 2022 to March 2023, the average on-call availability at key stations figure was 52.4%, a decrease from 62.5% for the year before.

A dedicated Station Manager is focusing on exploring new approaches to improve On-Call availability and a 22-point improvement plan is being implemented. There is also a recent trend of wholetime on-call staff resigning their on-call role. This trend is being explored alongside measures and policies that aim to counteract this movement.

The role of Community Engagement Officer has been made permanent, after being a temporary role for the last 12 months. The postholder will work to attract on-call recruits and their work has already increased the number of people interested in the role.

We have recently commissioned a third party, ORH, to review our resources. This review is likely to influence the approach that we take with the on-call system, whilst factoring in the challenges that we have with on-call recruitment and retention.

3.7 Key Business Indicator: Hospital to Home Collections



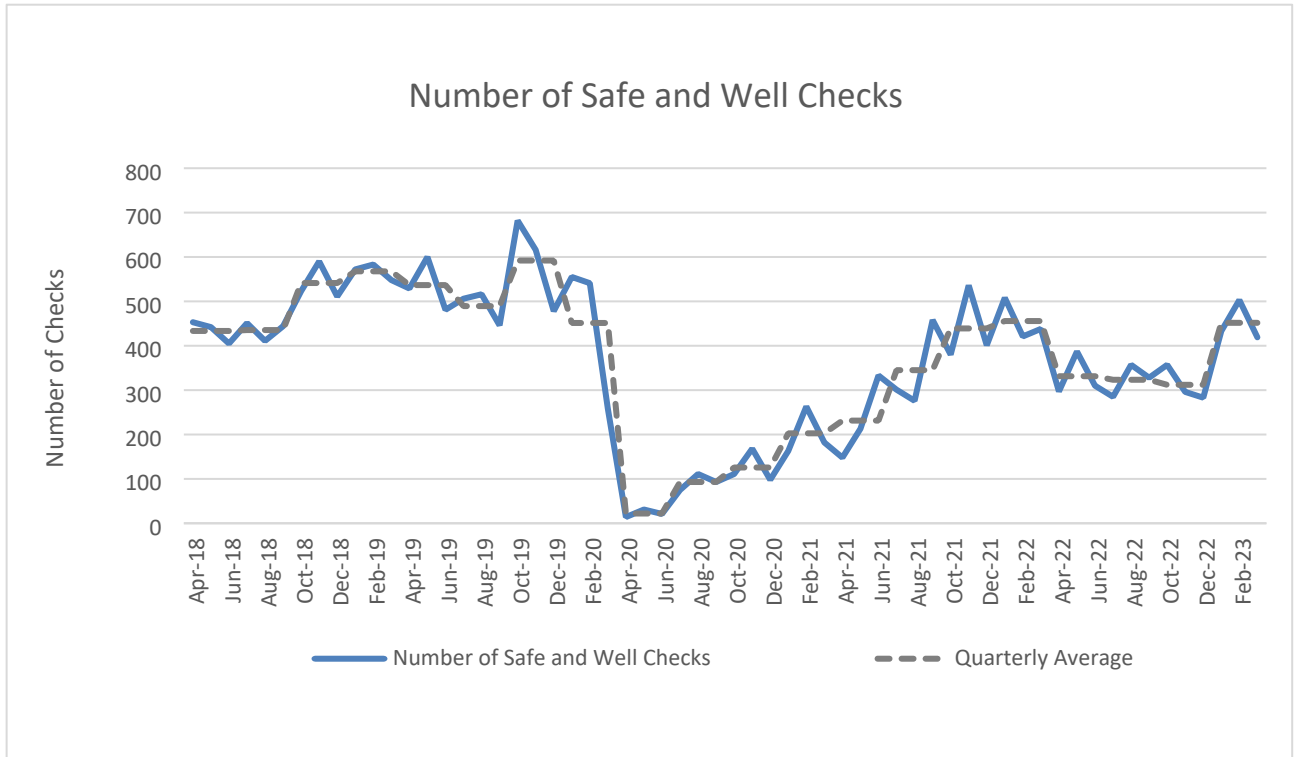
Source: Firecrest

There has been a significant increase in Hospital to Home activity since the start of the pandemic, although the number of collections decreased by 9.6% (76 collections) this year from 1,428 in 2021/22 to 1,352 in 2022/23.

The initiative continues to receive extremely positive feedback for service users and NHS Trusts report a positive impact on balancing hospital capacity and reducing waiting times for ambulances to transfer patients into hospital care.

Departmental supervisory capacity is being reviewed to provide improved coordination, the ability to evaluate the initiative and any opportunities for expansion. Vehicle design is also being reviewed to explore the potential of expanding the service offer to people with disabilities and Commissioners are promoting increased use of the service at George Eliot Hospital.

3.8 Key Business Indicator: Safe and Well Checks



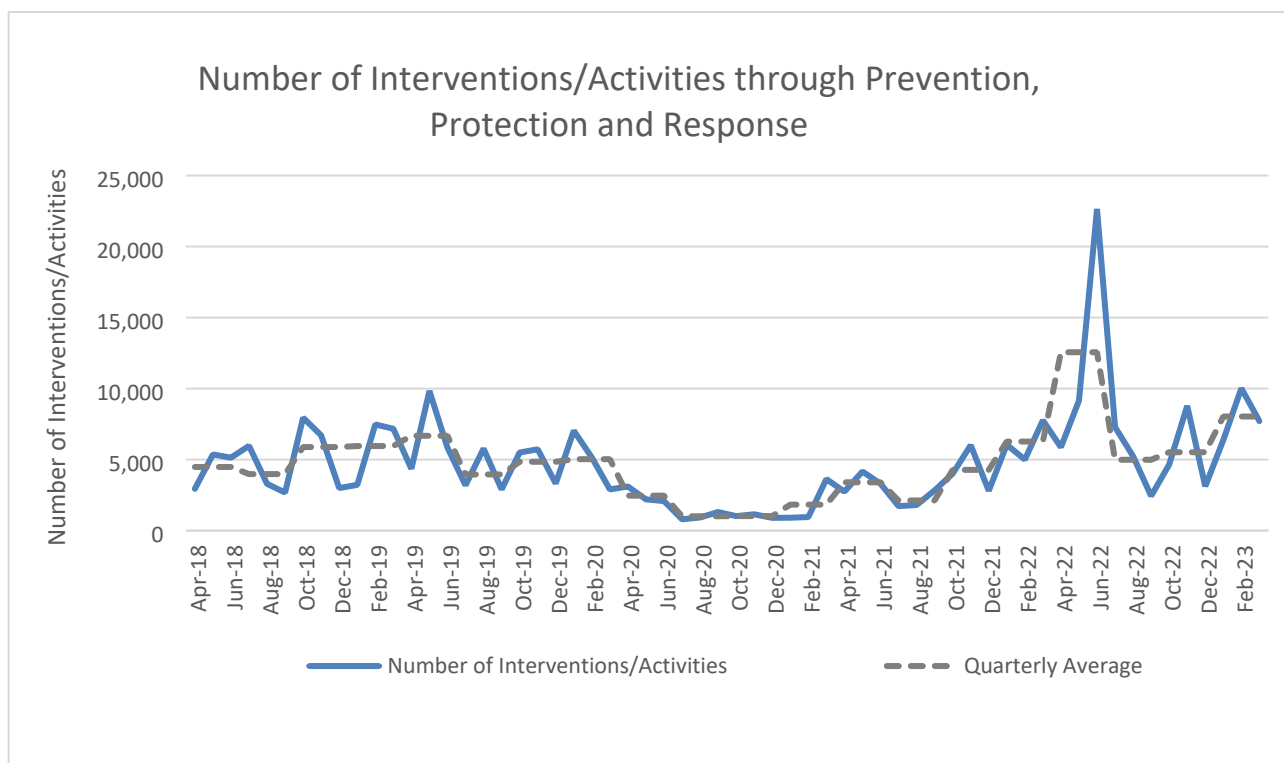
Source: Firecrest

From 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, there were 4,255 Safe and Well Checks completed, which is a 3.6% reduction (158 cases) on the same period in 2021/22 of 4,413.

The number of Safe and Well Checks conducted has increased significantly since the end of COVID-19 working guidelines, although there was a short-term reduction during the summer of 2022 due to the increase in operational activity caused by the extreme heat events.

A new Response Power BI report has been created that is accessible to and used by all crews to enable them to monitor and target Safe and Well Checks effectively. Work is being carried out to ensure that the performance figures that are collated on the Firmstep system are accurate due to inconsistencies having been identified that have affected reporting figures.

3.9 Key Business Indicator: Interventions/Activities through Prevention, Protection and Response



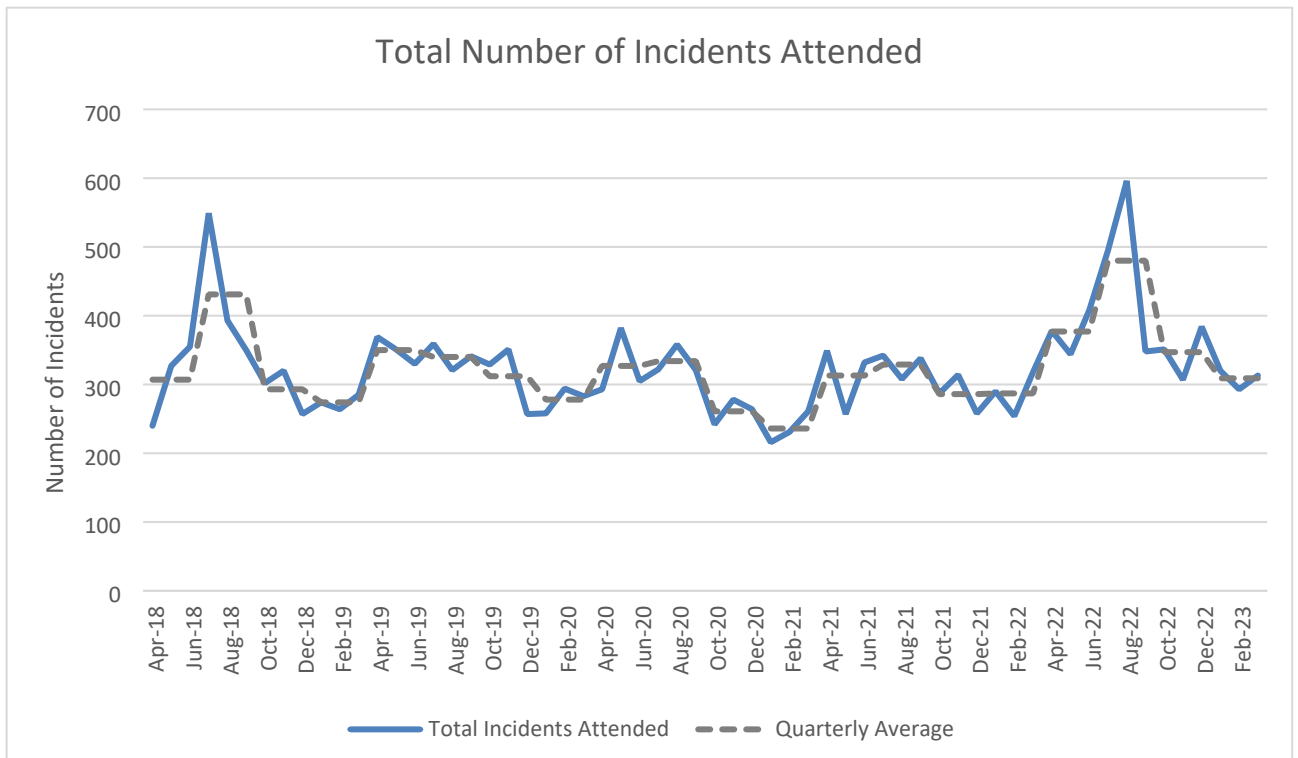
Source: Firecrest

For the period of 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, there were 93,295 interventions/activities delivered, which is a 93.5% (45,091 interventions/activities) increase on the same period in 2021/22 where 48,204 interventions/activities were delivered.

The number of interventions/actions delivered by Prevention, Protection and Response teams has increased significantly post-pandemic following the lifting of restrictions. Over the last 12 months there has been an increase in community engagement, with the number of road safety education sessions and school programmes increasing in volume.

4.0 Other Performance Measures and Indicators

4.1 Attended Incidents



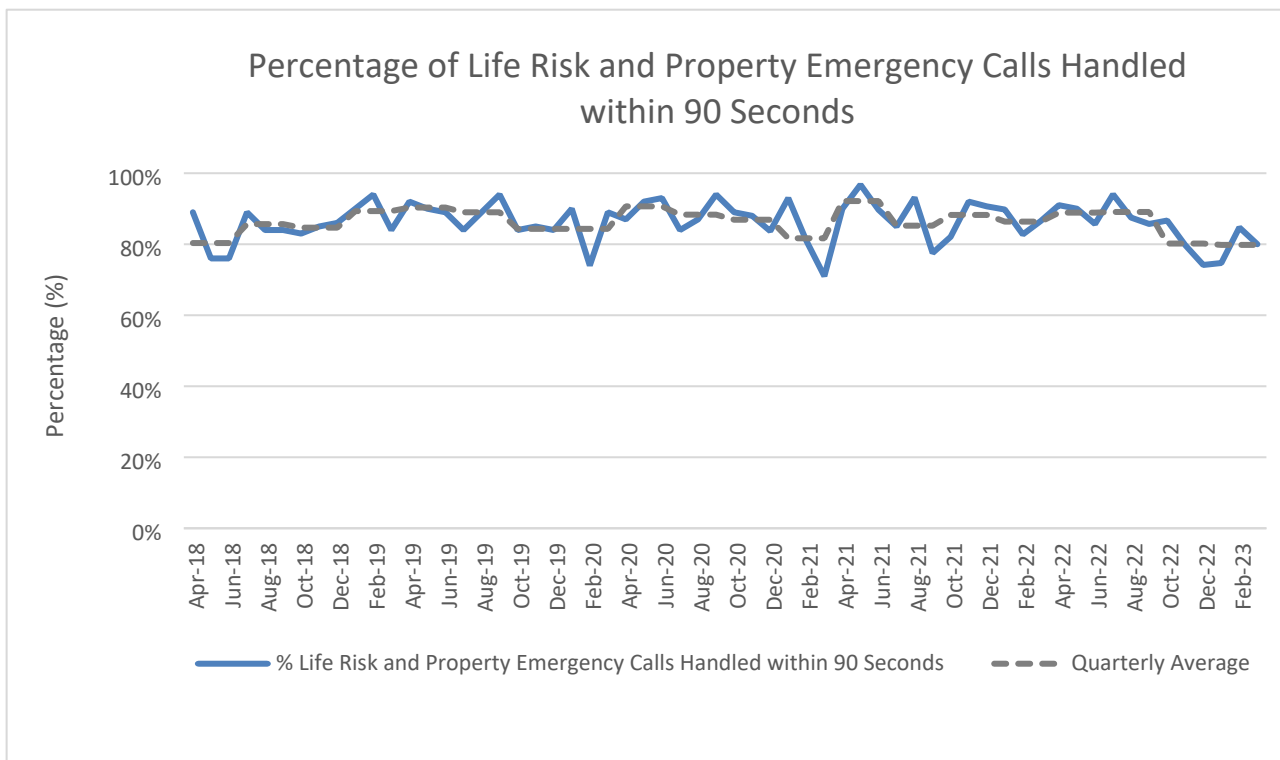
Source: Firecrest

From April 2022 to March 2023, WFRS attended 4,541 incidents, which is a 24.5% (894 incidents) increase on the same period of 2021/22. The total number of fires attended increased by 50.4% (520 incidents), including a 75.7% increase (374 incidents) in small fires and a 62.6% increase (57 incidents) in other primary fires. Road traffic collisions saw an increase of 2.7% (10 incidents), special services attendances increased by 26.2% (168 incidents) and false alarms experienced an increase of 12.5% (199 incidents).

The large increase in attended incidents for 2022/23 can be attributed to the extreme weather events experienced, predominantly in the summer. Record temperatures in the summer resulted in a significant increase in the number of fires. Additionally, cold snaps during the winter period saw a significant increase in flooding incidents due to frozen pipes bursting or leaking.

The Service monitors levels and types of incidents to address any emerging issues and to inform community prevention activities.

4.2 Life Risk and Property Emergency Calls Handled within 90 Seconds

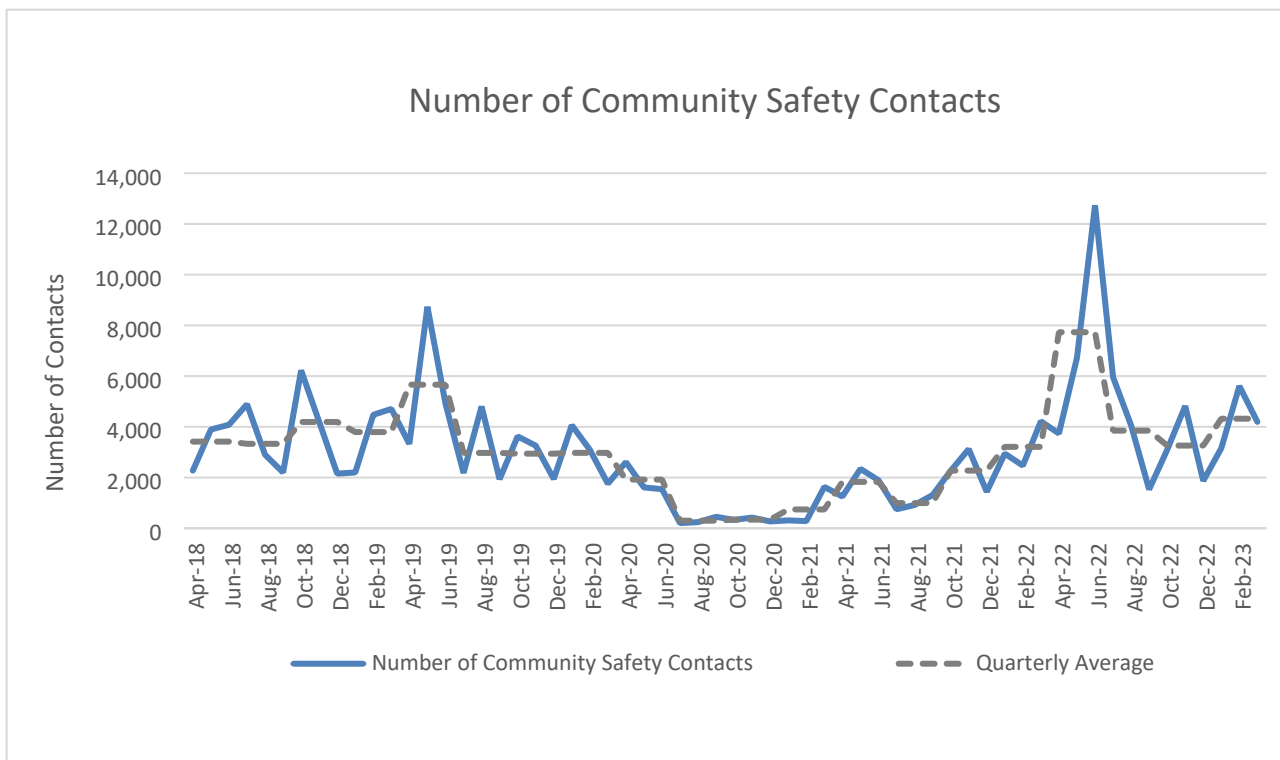


Source: Fire Control - Vision

The Fire Control Team achieved an average call handling time of 90 seconds or less of 84.5% over the last 12 months, which is just under the target of 85%.

Exposure to the live mobilising environment to support development of three new Trainee FF Controls may have impacted the average call handling for emergency incident types. With the development of these team members, the expectation would be that the average call handling time will reduce over time. A review of the call challenge function embedded in the Command-and-Control system is imminent with the replacement of mobilising systems, which will assist in streamlining the process further by introducing an Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) that will pre-populate the call handling form with address and contact details when an emergency call is received.

4.3 Community Safety Contacts

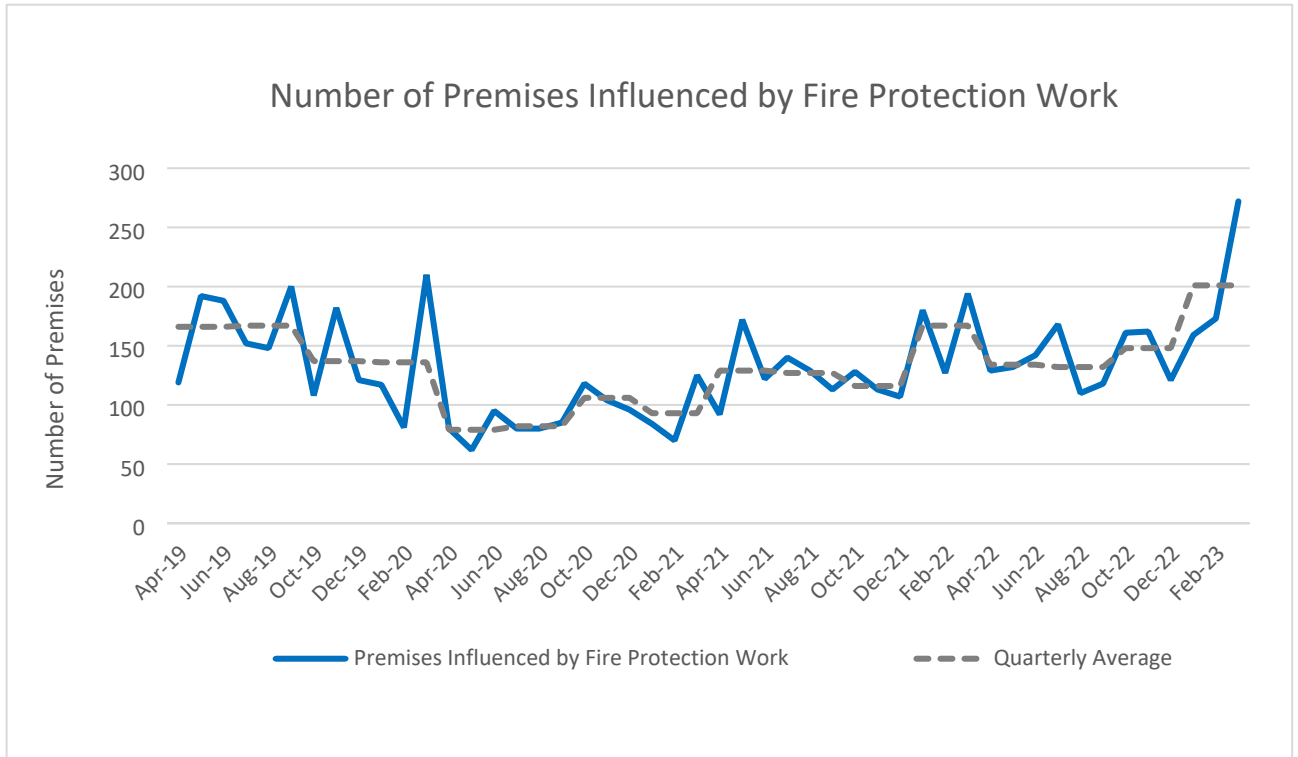


Source: Fire Prevention Team

The target number of contacts has always been exceeded through an extensive range of targeted safety initiatives and engagements that the Service would normally deliver on. In 2022/23, 57,489 contacts were made, an increase of 130.6% on the 2021/22 figure of 24,929 following the removal of all COVID-19 working guidelines.

The removal of COVID-19 restrictions and increasing community confidence has enabled the Service to steadily return to business as usual in the context of reducing community risk. As a result, face-to-face engagements such as community events, Safe and Well Checks, the schools' education program, Heart-Shield and road safety initiatives have all resumed. The increased number of community contacts correlates with this increase in activity.

4.4 Premises Influenced by Fire Protection Work



Source: Fire Protection Team

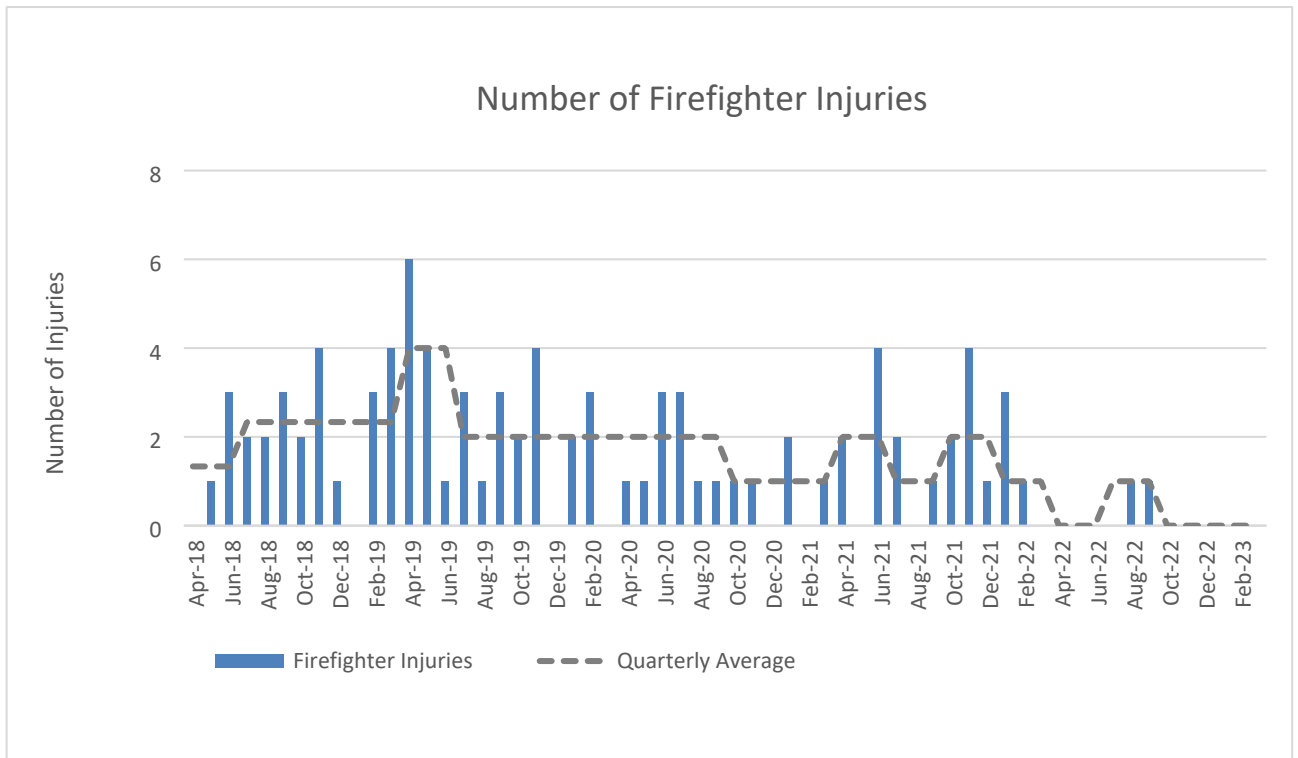
The number of premises influenced (this could be in person, via phone/email or consultation with the responsible persons) by fire protection officers for 2022/23 was 1,847, exceeding the target of 1,700. This was a new measure that was introduced three years ago to reflect the positive contribution fire protection activity has within the communities of Warwickshire.

Much of the work that derives this performance figure is driven by audits of premises/structures falling under RRFSSO 2005 and consultations driven by legislation relating to the hospitality sector, wedding venues, planning and building regulations and sports grounds, as well as wider business premises concerns. The Service has been able to build on the levels of activity in the previous year due to having greater capacity; several new Officers have been developed and equipped to deliver a wide variety of Fire Protection work.

4.5 RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Reporting)

In 2022/23 there were four RIDDOR incidents reported, where the target is zero. This is one fewer than the number recorded in 2021/22. Of the four incidents, one 'over 7 day' injury and three 'no dangerous occurrence' injuries were reported. Positively, no 'major' injuries were reported.

4.6 Firefighter Injuries



Source: WFRS Health & Safety Team

Whilst the target for 2022/23 is zero injuries, it is accepted that minor injuries will occur during operational and training activities. There were a total of two injuries reported for the 2022/23 period, which is a significant reduction on the 20 injuries in 2021/22.

All reported injuries are investigated, and remedial measures are put in place where possible and appropriate.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 None.

6.0 Environmental Implications

6.1 None.

7.0 Timescales Associated with the Decision and Next Steps

7.1 Not applicable.

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Members: None as county wide report

Other members: