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**Report to: Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Date of Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

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**Subject: Clackmannanshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan Review 2023**

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**Report by: Local Senior Officer, Clackmannanshire-Fife Stirling LSP Area**

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## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is required under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, to prepare Local Fire and Rescue Plans for each local authority in Scotland.
- 1.2. The publication of our new Strategic Plan 2022-25 in October 2022 instigated a requirement to carry out a mandatory review of all Local Fire and Rescue Plans. This review will provide us with information on how well we are performing against our existing priorities, as well as highlighting areas for continued improvement and opportunities for change against the growing needs of our communities.
- 1.3. This review has now been undertaken with the attached report issued to Clackmannanshire Council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee for review. The purpose of this report is for noting and presents elected members with performance of SFRS against Local Priorities for the lifecycle of the current Fire and Rescue Local Plan.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that committee notes, challenges and comments on the report as appropriate.

## **3.0 Considerations**

- 3.1. As a national organisation SFRS is committed to working in partnership with local authorities to address local and regional priorities which are designed to improve the outcomes of the communities of Scotland.
- 3.2. Whilst also delivering a response model that is fit for purpose and meets best value for the public purse, SFRS wish to work collaboratively with stakeholders to realise positive outcomes, working together for a safer Scotland.

3.3. Local Fire and Rescue Plans set the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service's (SFRS) national and local operating context and outline our specific priorities for that area. In their preparation, due regard is given to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and the SFRS Strategic Plan.

3.4. Throughout 2024 SFRS will reach out to elected members through consultation to discuss local priorities and develop a new Local Fire and Rescue Plan that is tailored to meet the needs of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the people of Clackmannanshire.

3.5. Within the Local Fire & Rescue Plan for Clackmannanshire, seven objectives have been identified. These are:

Objective 1: Local Risk Management and Operational Preparedness.

Objective 2: Unintentional Harm and Injury.

Objective 3: Domestic Fire Safety.

Objective 4: Deliberate Fire Setting.

Objective 5: Built Environment.

Objective 6: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Objective 7: Transport and Environment.

**Author(s)**

| <b>NAME</b>     | <b>DESIGNATION</b>   | <b>TEL NO / EXTENSION</b> |
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**Working together  
for a safer Scotland**



**SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

# **CLACKMANNANSHIRE AREA LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN REVIEW 2023**

**Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.**

## Introduction

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is required under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, to prepare Local Fire and Rescue Plans for each local authority in Scotland.

Local Fire and Rescue Plans set out our national and local operating context and outline our specific priorities for that area. In their preparation, due regard is given to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and the SFRS Strategic Plan.

The publication of our new Strategic Plan 2022-25 in October 2022 instigated a requirement to carry out a mandatory review of all Local Fire and Rescue Plans. This review will provide us with information on how well we are performing against our existing priorities, as well as highlighting areas for continued improvement and opportunities for change against the growing needs of our communities.

The information contained within this Review will contribute towards the development of a new Local Fire and Rescue Plan that is tailored to local needs.

## Performance Data – what the figures told us

### Performance Data: Overall Operational Activity

Data contained within this review has been displayed using Statistics Process Control (SPC) Chart. SPC Charts are used to look at variation within datasets. The blue line represents the average (in this case, the mean) and the red lines represent the Upper and Lower Control Limits (UCL and LCL). There are standard guidelines that indicate whether there is any cause for concern in the data:

- If data points fall outside of the UCL and LCL, this implies that they are not within the 'normal' range. It could be that a one-off event has caused the data to be outside of the range.
- If multiple data points (usually 6 or more) consecutively fall above or below the mean it implies that this is likely not random variation and that something is behind this change.
- If multiple data points (at least 6) show a continual increase or decrease, no matter where they are in relation to limits or means, this implies that there is a trend in the data.
- If we see two or more data points very close to the UCL or LCL, this could be an early warning sign that something is happening other than random variation and further investigation could be needed.
- Otherwise, data points that fall between the UCL and LCL are likely to be caused by random variation.

## **Performance Local Priorities**

### **Local Priority 1: Local Risk Management and Operational Preparedness**

#### **Operational Intelligence**

During the reporting period, SFRS continued to maintain an Operational Intelligence system, which is a database of premises which are inspected based on the level of risk it presents to;

- SFRS Personnel
- Public
- Community Resilience
- Historic and Cultural Value

Our personnel gather information on these premises including site plans, building construction, utilities isolation, risks to Firefighter safety and other key information. The premises are categorised as high, medium or low, and inspected according to the risk level.

Over the planning period, our personnel maintained the database by completing an inspection programme, ensuring that new risks were identified and inspected, and that premises which either no longer present a risk, or no longer exist, were removed from the system.

#### **Training**

Our personnel undertake a programme of training within the SFRS Training for Operational Competence (TFOC) framework. This training programme ensures that all personnel receive training on the 46 incident types over a rolling three-year programme. This includes core, standard, and advanced training modules. Personnel on stations with a specialist rescue resource also receive additional training in that discipline.

#### **Preparedness**

As part of the Forth Valley Local Resilience Partnership, we have prepared for, and participated in an exercise programme, which tests the emergency procedures of our business partners. This exercise programme ensures that all partner personnel can operate safely in the event of an emergency, and that our major businesses can return to normal working sooner.

Our personnel also identify premises within their own station area, and working with premises holders, complete exercises on a smaller scale.

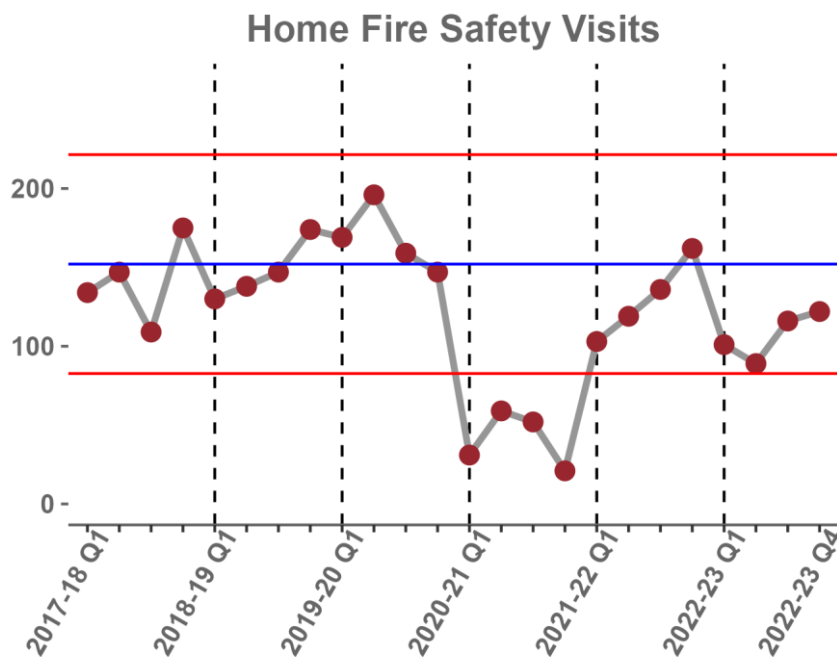
**Local Priority 2: Unintentional Harm and Injury**

The Building Safer Communities programme is a collaborative initiative which seeks to help national and local partners and communities work together to make Scotland safer and stronger. The programme vision is of a flourishing, optimistic Scotland in which resilient individuals, families and communities live safe from crime, disorder, danger and harm.

Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) are a proven method of engaging with people at risk from fire and for providing appropriate fire safety information and advice reducing the risk of unintentional harm from fire within the home environment.

A HFSV may be defined as: A comprehensive assessment carried out by a trained assessor, which examines the levels of fire risk within the home. It provides a means to mitigate the risk through the provision of guidance, advice and, if required, the installation of smoke and heat alarm(s)'.

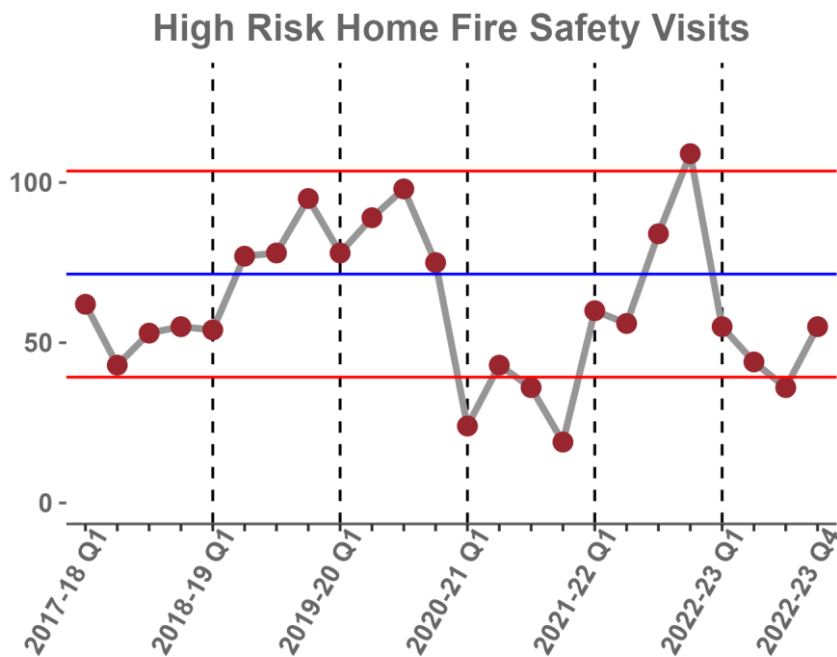
The graph below highlights our current performance within Clackmannanshire over the reporting period 2020 -2023, also included are figures prior to the COVID 19 Pandemic.



Home Fire Safety Visits in Clackmannanshire were subject to random variations before the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21. There was a substantial decrease in Home Fire Safety Visits in 2020-21 Q1, shown by the data point being far below the lower control limit. Figures have slowly increased since then, but with the exception of 2021-22 Q4 they have been below average, showing that the number of visits carried out has not return to levels seen before the pandemic. This is consistent with national patterns in the data.

## Targeting and Prioritising Visits

Targeting of HFSVs to those most at risk (High Risk HFSV) will be informed by analysis and assessment of data, trends, operational intelligence and also through information / referrals received from partner agencies.



Similar to overall Home Fire Safety Visit figures, visits that were considered high risk were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with a large reduction seen between 2019-20 Q4 to 2020-21 Q1. From 2020-21 Q1 to 2021-22 Q2 figures were below average, before an increase above the upper control limit in Q4. Figures since then have returned to below average with 2022-23 Q3 being below the lower control limit. This shows that the number of high-risk visits has not returned to levels seen before the pandemic. Overall patterns in Clackmannanshire are consistent with what has been seen nationally across Scotland.

## Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law

A new law came into effect in February 2022 and has come about because of the Grenfell fire in London in 2017, and it applies to all Scottish homes.

Every home now needs to have interlinked fire alarms. Being interlinked means if one alarm goes off, they all go off. You may not always hear the alarm closest to the fire, especially if you're somewhere else in the house. An interlinked system will alert you immediately and can help save lives. It is the property owner's responsibility for meeting the new standard.

### How we worked to improve our performance

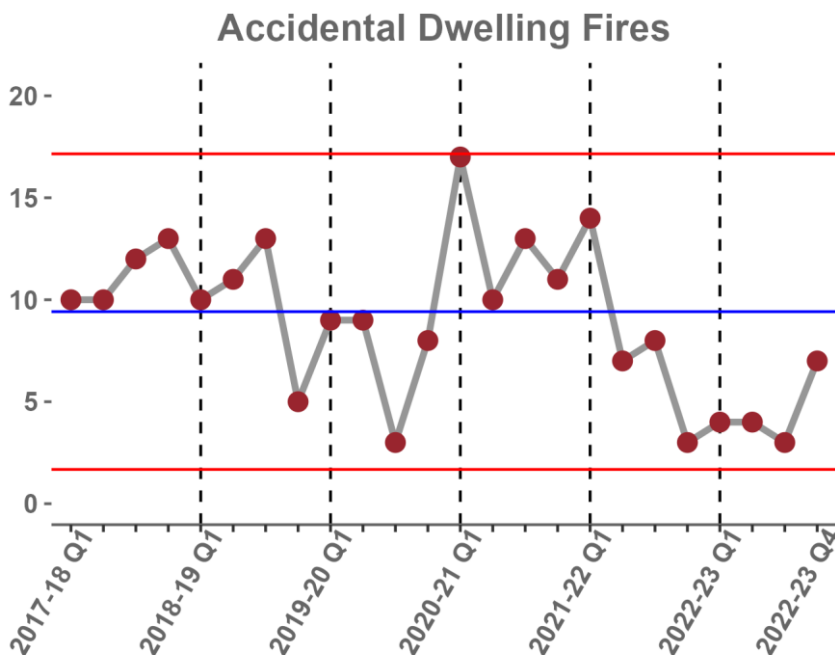
Targeting of HFSVs is informed by analysis and assessment of data, trends, operational intelligence and also through information / referrals received from partner agencies.

HFSV to high-risk vulnerable persons continues to be our primary focus to reducing fire related accidental harm. Partner agencies and their practitioners are a proven way of helping SFRS identify vulnerable persons who are at risk from fire, this relies on partner referrals into SFRS.

In an effort to increase partner referrals into SFRS, locally we have trained over 500 Partner practitioners on fire risk recognition and the referral pathway following the removal of COVID restrictions.

### Local Priority 3: Domestic Fire Safety

Accidental Dwelling Fires cause considerable distress for the occupier and local community, but also place a significant financial cost to the economy.

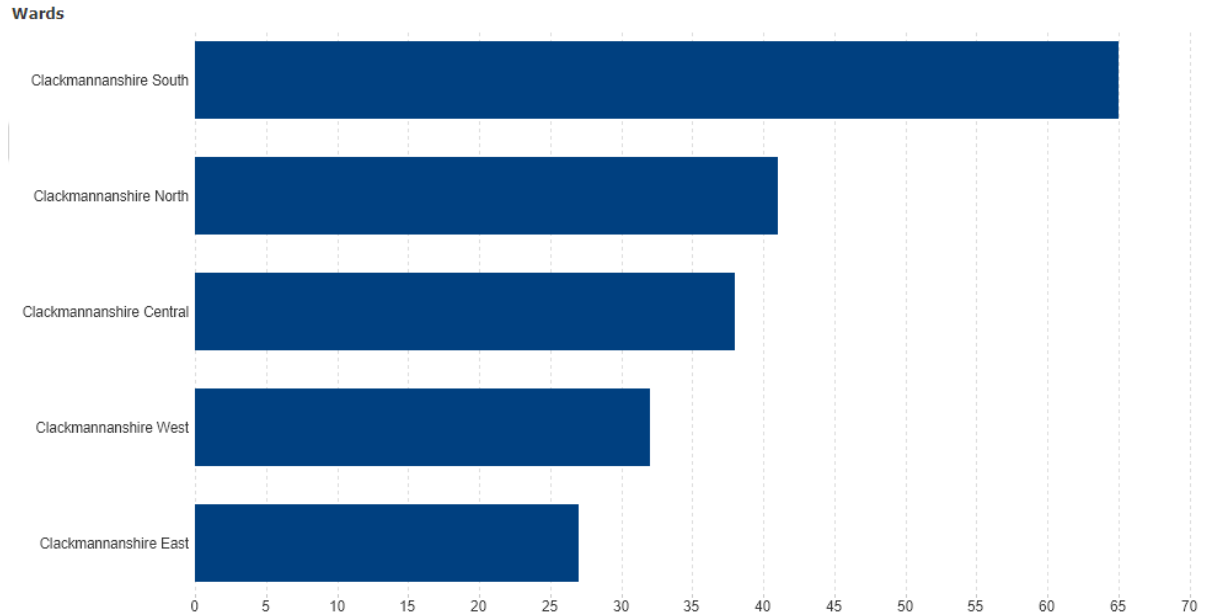


Accidental dwelling fires in Clackmannanshire have been subject to random variations since 2017-18 Q1. Figures have been below average since 2021-22 Q2, indicating a downward trend. Nationally, there has been a decrease in accidental dwelling fires since 2017-18.



### Accidental Dwelling Fires by Ward:

Across the reporting period, Accidental Dwelling Fires in Clackmannanshire has averaged at 41 incidents per year. The ward breakdown for the years 18-23 can be seen below. Clackmannanshire South has recorded the most incidents, whilst Clackmannanshire East has recorded the least number of incidents.



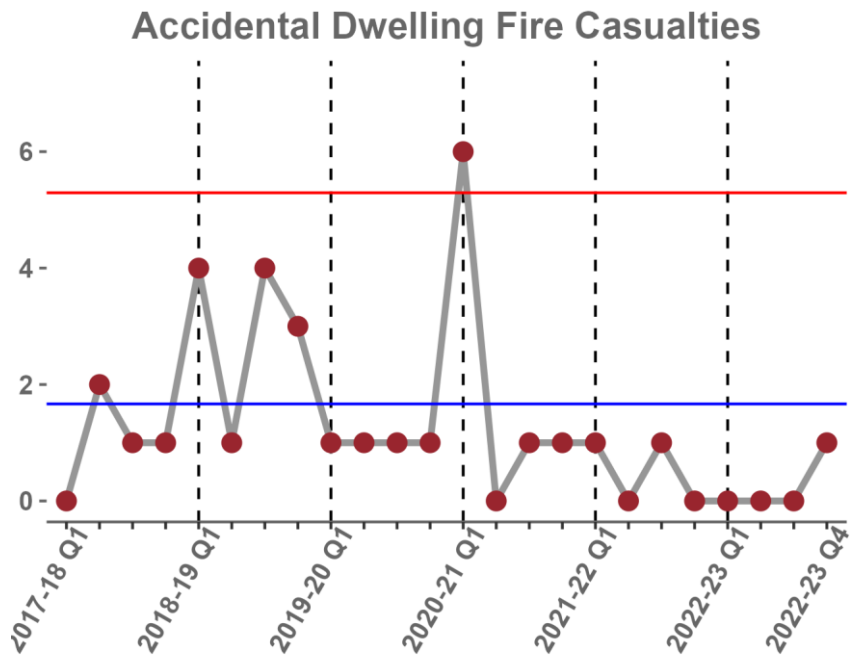
Evidence shows that Accidental Dwelling Fires in 22-23 are well below (22) the five-year average of 56, the severity from the fires has also decreased significantly. Our data shows that majority of Accidental Dwelling Fires are a result of cooking.

A number of these incidents (45%) required no action to be taken by SFRS personnel, and only 10% resulted in the use of a hose reel jet. Of the incidents, 90% of damage remained in the room of origin.

Although the number of domestic dwellings fitted with smoke detection increases every year, through our own, and partner agency work, only 75% of addresses suffering an Accidental Dwelling Fire had working smoke detection, which gives an early warning, and prevents a much more serious incident developing. Of those addresses with smoke detection, 9% did not operate to give that vital warning.

The Stirling Clackmannanshire Fire, Local Senior Officer (LSO) area has consistently delivered a high number of Home Safety Visits when compared to other LSO areas. This has contributed to the low numbers of incidents across our area, as well as the low fire severity at incidents which do occur.

### Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties



Accidental dwelling fire non-fatal casualties have remained within control limits since 2017-18 Q1 with the exception of 2020-21 Q1. From 2020-21 Q2 figures have been below average. Nationally, figures have remained consistently below average since 2020-21 Q1.

In 2020-21, there were a total of 2 dwelling fire fatalities.

#### How we worked to improve our performance

SFRS is currently undertaking a review of our Home Safety Visit system which will enable us to better target those most at risk, not only from fire, but also from unintentional harm injuries in the home. We will continue to work with our partners, to reduce the risk from fire and unintentional injuries as we move forward into the new Local Plan.

### **Local Priority 4: Deliberate Fire Setting**

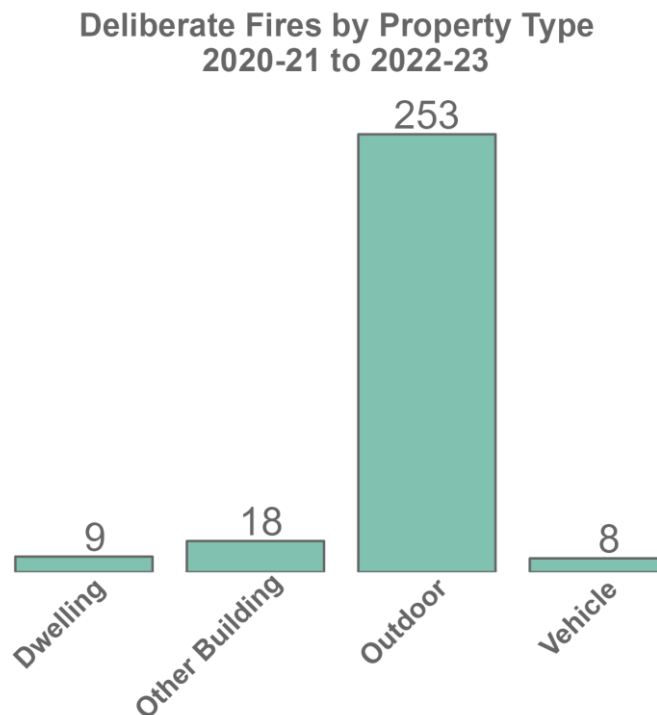
Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and is responsible for a high number of all secondary fire activity attended by fire crews in Clackmannanshire. These fires are split into two categories, which are described below:

**Primary Fires** - are generally more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to property. Primary fires are defined as fires that cause damage and meet at least one of the following conditions:

- any incident which involves uncontrolled combustion requiring equipped personnel
- any fire involving fatalities, casualties, or rescues.
- any fire attended by six or more pumping appliances.

**Secondary Fires** - are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property. These include refuse fires, grassland fires and fires in derelict buildings or vehicles.

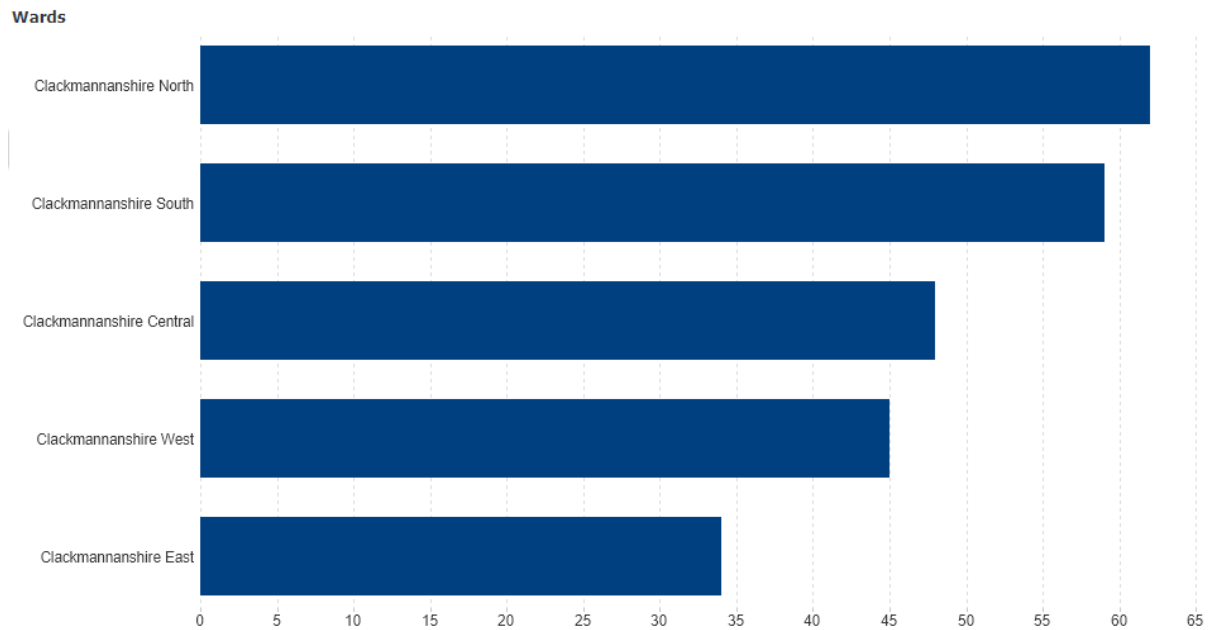
There remains a close link between deliberately set secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour.



Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, most deliberate fires have occurred in outdoor settings, with 253 fires in total occurring in this property type over this time. This is followed by other building fires (18 fires in total), dwelling fires (9 in total) and vehicle fires (8 in total).

### Deliberate Secondary Fire Setting by Ward

Out with UFAS incidents, deliberate 'secondary' fire setting accounts for more incidents within Clackmannanshire than any other:



The figures above highlight that deliberate secondary fire setting continues to be an area of concern.

### Deliberate Fire Reduction Strategy

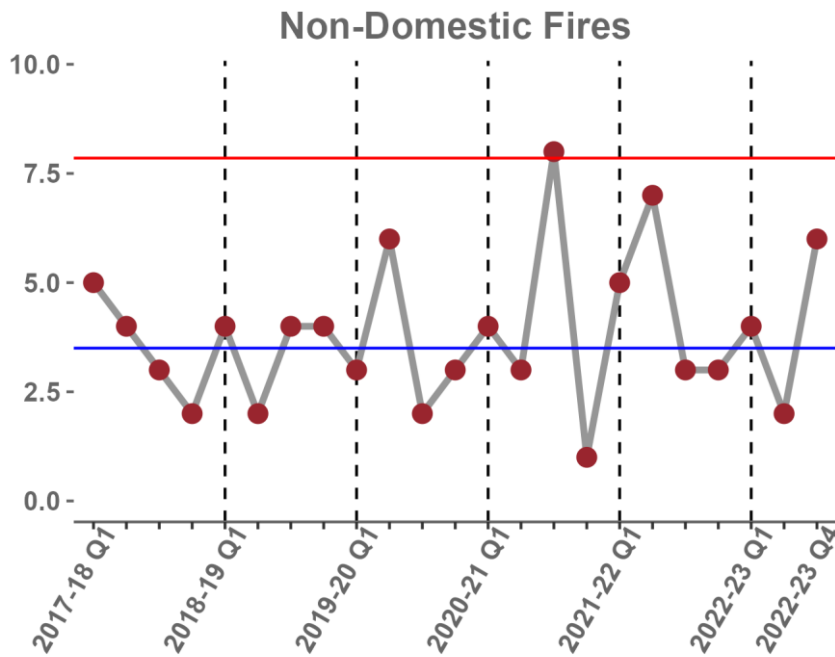
Locally we target schools in high activity areas to deliver talks regarding the dangers and consequences of deliberate fire setting. These talks take place normally in April and October, which are the peak periods of activity.

We also work with our Police and Local Authority partners to identify deliberate fire setting incidents early to ensure that solutions are implemented to prevent further incidents.

We also liaise with premises occupiers, particularly in town centres, to give advice on refuse storage and security which can be a cause of deliberate fires.

**Local Priority 5: Built Environment**

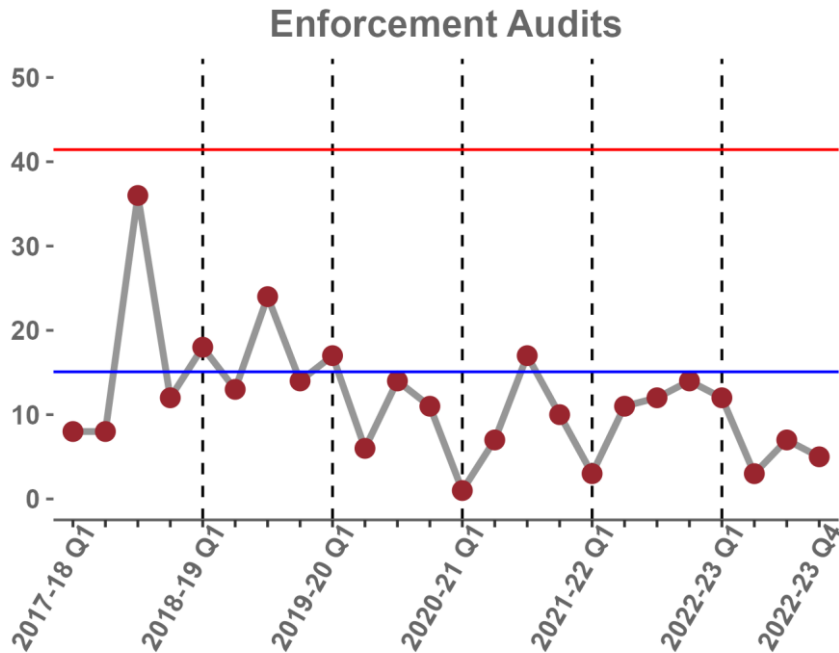
All fires in workplaces and business premises are classified as Non- Domestic Fires and come under the scope of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. Incidents involving fires in non-Domestic properties in Clackmannanshire have risen in the reporting period.



Non-domestic fires have been subject to random variations since 2017-18 Q1 and have remained within the control limits with the exception of 2020-21 Q3 which was on the upper control limit. There are no clear overall trends or patterns. Nationally, non-domestic fires have shown a decreasing trend since 2017-18.

## Audit Programme

In undertaking our statutory duties in respect of Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), SFRS will implement a risk-based methodology and establish a programme to audit relevant premises, prioritising premises that present the greatest risk to life safety.



Audit figures were subject to random variation between 2017-18 Q1 and 2019-20 Q4. During the Covid-19 pandemic, figures decreased, with the figures for 2020-21 onwards being on or below the average. This is consistent with national patterns in the data.

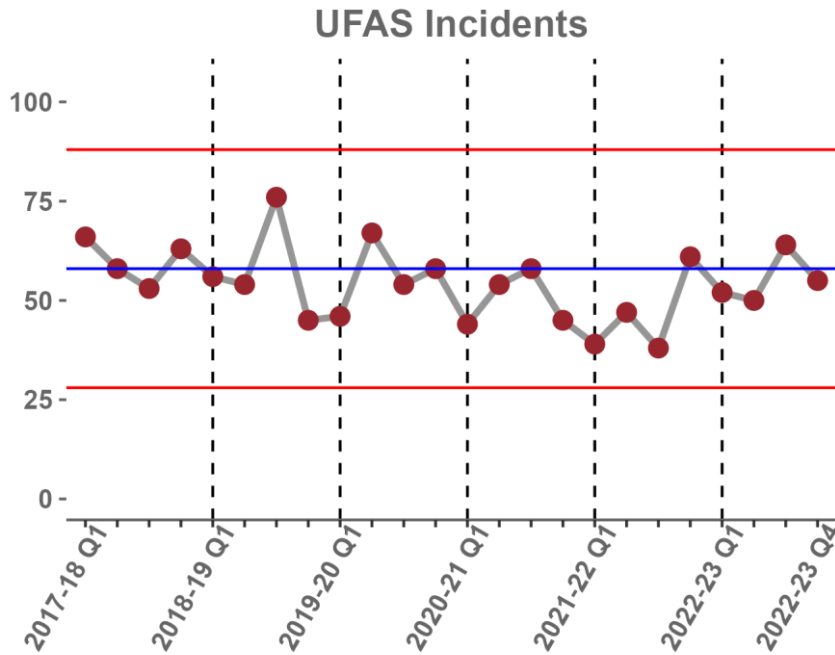
### How we worked to improve our performance

We continue to deliver a programme of fire safety audits in relevant premises - as detailed within section 78 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 - identified as high risk on an ongoing basis. We also complete thematic audit programmes where patterns emerge of incidents in a particular risk group.

As well as the audit programmes described above, we also deliver 'post fire audits' which take place as soon as possible after a fire has occurred in a premises. The purpose of these audits is to deliver further fire safety advice to the premises occupier, and to identify any issues which could be used to inform other similar premises types in order to prevent further incidents of a similar nature.

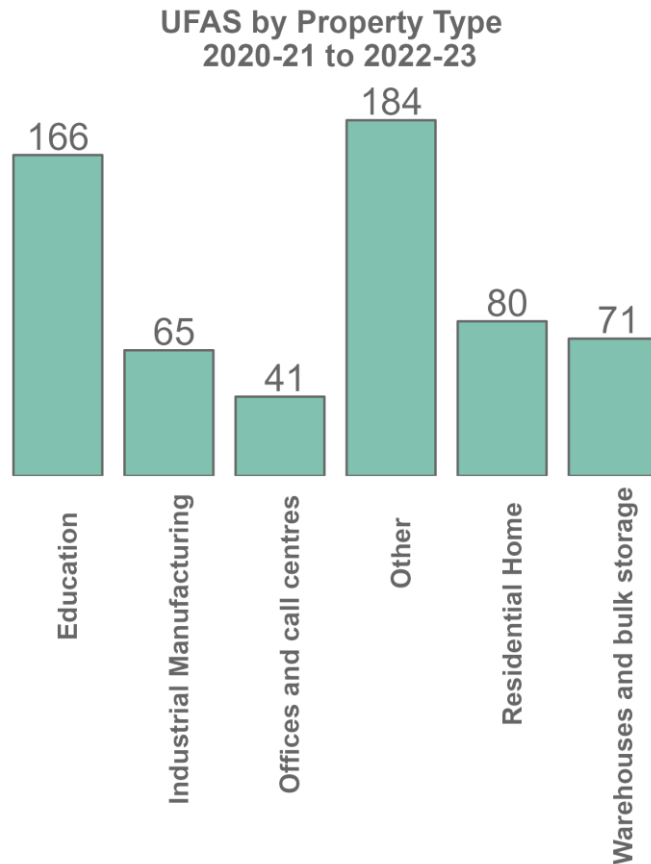
Local Priority 6: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

An Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) can be defined as ‘any alarm activation which is not the result of a fire or a test’. UFAS incidents have fluctuated in Clackmannanshire over a five-year period. The graph below highlights the trend over five years:



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) have been subject to random variation since 2017-18. Nationally, figures decreased during the Covid-19 pandemic, when most offices were closed, and home working was encouraged. This meant that less people were in workplace buildings, and so there was less opportunity for an unwanted signal to occur. Between 2020-21 Q1 and 2021-22 Q3, figures were on or below average. This could have been due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then, figures have returned to average levels. This is consistent with national patterns in the data.

## UFAS by Property Type



Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, most UFAS occurred in property types that fall under the category 'Other', with 184 occurring here within this time. This was followed by education (166), residential homes (80) and warehouses and bulk storage (71).

### How we worked to improve our performance

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) Reduction Strategies continue to be managed and monitored by an 'UFAS Champion' who contacts premises occupiers after each UFAS incident, to discuss the activation, as well as strategies to reduce or eliminate.

In July 2023 SFRS has changed how it responds to automatic fire alarm (AFA) call outs to commercial business and workplace premises, such as factories, offices, shops and leisure facilities - unless a fire has been confirmed. This change does not apply to sleeping premises, such as hospitals, care homes, hotels or domestic dwellings who will continue to get an emergency response. The change will reduce blue light journeys to AFA calls and associated road risk and carbon emissions. The new response model will allow firefighters more time to focus on upskilling, training and prevention work.

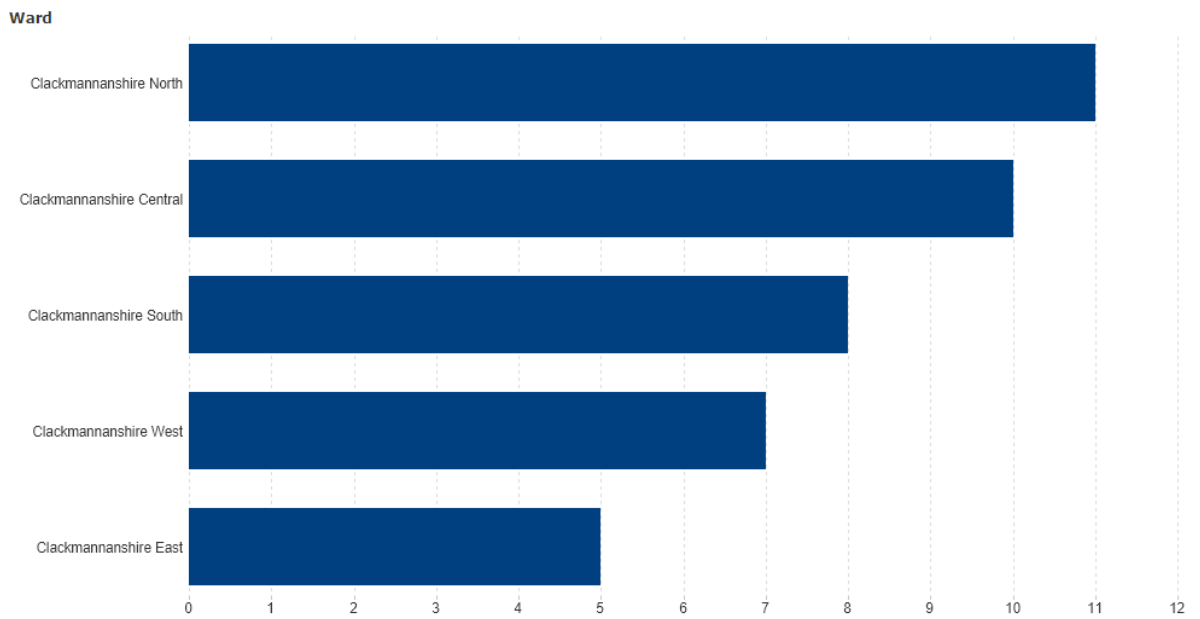


## **Local Priority 7: Transport and Environment**

### **Water Related Incidents**

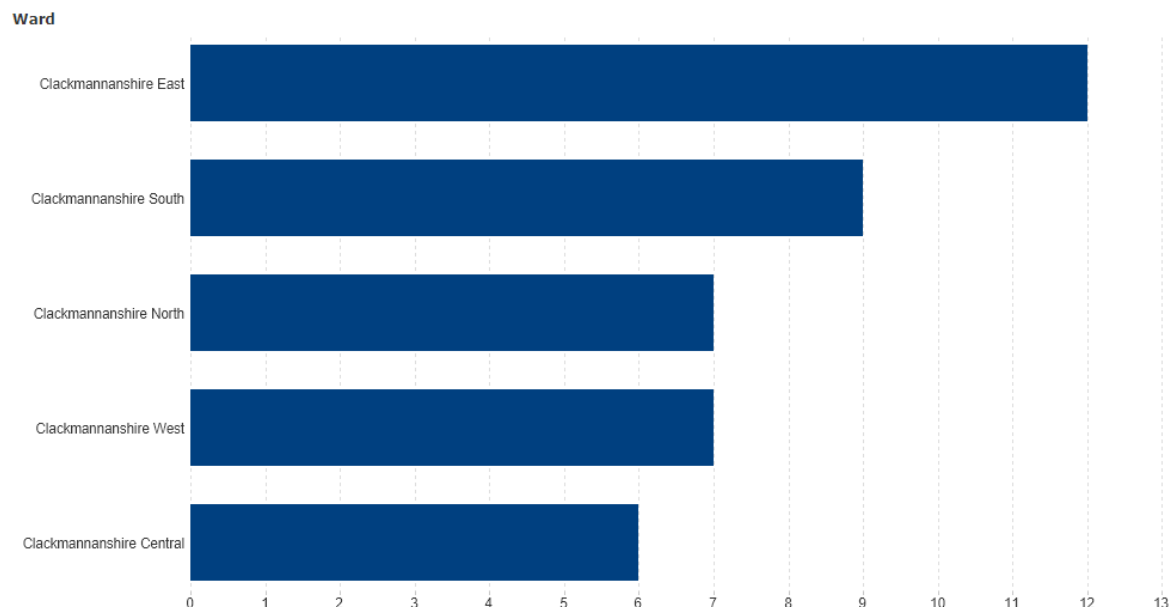
Water related incidents caused by environmental factors are thankfully rare. An average of 14 flooding incidents were attended during the three-year period 2021 -2023. One incident over the three-year period related to pumping out following localised pluvial flooding.

There were only two reported incidents which required trained SFRS Water Rescue personnel to enter waterways to assist with evacuations.



## Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)

As SFRS generally only attend RTC's of a serious nature, where persons are trapped, the figures below do not capture every RTC which occurs within Clackmannanshire:



## How we worked to improve our performance

### Water

- Water Safety input delivered to primary and secondary schools.
- Winter Ice Safety input delivered to primary and secondary schools.
- Seasonal foot patrols conducted at Locations of Concern creating water safety engagement opportunities with young people and members of the public.
- Inland and Coastal Water Safety CSE events
- Waterside Responder scheme Training delivered to businesses across Clackmannanshire who's work location is beside a body of water.

Water Safety Concerns in Clackmannanshire - any concerns around water safety in Clackmannanshire can be sent to the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Water Safety Group where experts in water safety can collectively discuss the concerns and identify how to improve the situation.

### Road

SFRS Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Fife area, along with our partners, deliver valuable educational projects including 'Safe Drive Stay Alive', 'Cut It Out' and 'Biker Down'

Partnership events developed and delivered included:

- Road Safety input delivered to primary and secondary schools.
- Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) Road Safety Production delivered to secondary pupils in 5th year.
- Virtual Reality (VR) Road Safety input delivered to Secondary School leavers.
- Road Traffic Offending input delivered to Criminal Justice Groups.
- Biker Down - Improving motorcyclists risk awareness and driving ability.

## **Conclusion**

SFRS in Clackmannanshire is committed to working in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council, Police, Health and Social Care and third sector partners, to implement a prevention strategy which will reduce the risk of harm to our communities, through fire and other risks. SFRS is currently contributing to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Locality Plans. This will in turn improve outcomes for our communities across Clackmannanshire.

As demands and expectations from our communities for our services continue to expand across Scotland, SFRS, as a national organisation, is progressing with our transformation programme, which is being designed to ensure that we have the appropriate resources in the best location to safely manage incidents which do occur. This transformation programme includes expanding the role of our personnel, to meet the needs of our communities and partners.

It is recognised however, regardless of how active the SFRS is in its prevention agenda, operational demand will still be present. It is therefore vital to ensure the SFRS can respond as and when such demand arises. The continuous process of identifying and reviewing the range of risks within our communities will provide the basis as to how we will manage and respond to such risks to safeguard the safety of our firefighters and our communities.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the following priorities are taken forward in the new Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the Area:

Priority 1 - Local Risk Management and Operational Preparedness

Priority 2 - Unintentional Harm and Injury

Priority 3 - Domestic Fire Safety

Priority 4 - Deliberate Fire Setting

Priority 5 - Built Environment

Priority 6 - Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Priority 7 - Transport and Environment

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED