



## **KENT AND MEDWAY FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Meeting of the Authority**

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**Resource Review – Item B3**

**NOTE: All other agenda items can be found in the main meeting document pack**



By: Chief Executive  
To: Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority – 25 June 2026  
Subject: RESOURCING REVIEW (2026) RECOMMENDATIONS  
Classification: Open

## **FOR DECISION**

### **SUMMARY**

This report presents the background to the Service's Resourcing Review (2026) and outlines the proposed changes that are recommended for public consultation. The report also covers the consultation survey and programme.

The Service's current resourcing model does not align with demand patterns, particularly between day and night activity, and on-call availability is increasingly unsustainable. Without change, this will impact operational resilience and financial sustainability.

The Resourcing Review (2026) addresses these challenges and proposes effective change.

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the publication of the draft Resourcing Review (2026) Strategic Case at appendix 1.
2. Approve the public consultation document at appendix 2.
3. Approve the public consultation survey at appendix 3.
4. Approve that any minor amendments to the text of the review be delegated to the Chief Executive.
5. Approve that agreement on the final the date for changes to wholetime fire engine changes be delegated to the Chief Executive (para. 18 refers).

## COMMENTS

### Background

1. The Authority published its Community Risk Management Plan (Delivery Plan) in 2024. The CRMP has informed the development of the Response and Resilience strategy, and Prevention and Protection strategy, which is included in the papers for this meeting of the Fire Authority. Those strategies set out the transformational activities we need to undertake to be able to deliver against the external and internal challenges we face. Those key challenges include:

- Our fire engine availability does not match our demand profile

And

- Pressure on the on-call availability model

2. To address these issues, we identified that we need to review our workforce and capability distribution. This is known as a resourcing review. This involves a comprehensive assessment of where our fire stations and fire appliances are located and how they are crewed. We use historic data, alongside future forecasts of risk, to determine whether they remain in the right place and available at the right times to cover the risk.

3. In doing so we take the following methodology:

- **Foreseeable risks:** we analyse foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks using historical incident data, demographic trends, and predictive modelling.
- **Evaluation:** we evaluate the effectiveness of existing fire stations, vehicles, and duty systems in meeting response standards and serving demand.
- **Recommendations:** we develop evidence-based recommendations for changes to resourcing cover, including potential savings and investments.

4. How effectively the Authority's budget is spent has a direct impact on driving down community risk. For example, directing money toward targeted prevention activity can have a more beneficial impact on safety rather than buying a new fire engine that is rarely needed due to low demand in a particular area. Our objective is to allocate our budget and resources in the most efficient and effective way possible.

5. Additionally, ongoing reductions in central funding for fire and rescue services, combined with rising costs, continue to place pressure on our budget. We must ensure that our resourcing profile remains sustainable now and into the future.

The Fire Authority recently approved a Council Tax increase of 5.2% (equivalent to an increase of £4.95 a year for a Band D property) and a drawdown of £1.547m from earmarked reserves to balance the 2026/27 budget. It was recognised at the time of this decision that the Medium-Term Financial Plan requires further base savings totalling £1.658m between 2027/28 and 2029/30 to ensure long-term financial sustainability.<sup>1</sup> While the primary driver of this Resourcing Review is optimising fire engine alignment to meet community demand now and into the future, achieving these operational efficiencies would ensure we are continuing to spend money effectively. Consequently, proposals must be contained within our projected financial envelope. Options requiring a net increase in overall base budget spend, such as establishing new wholtime fire stations, have been robustly evaluated and discounted at this stage.

6. Financial sustainability is a shared responsibility, and delivering efficiencies does not fall solely on operational frontline services. Parallel to this Resourcing Review, a comprehensive evaluation of non-frontline expenditure, corporate support functions, and all other pay and non-pay budgets is underway to ensure maximum organisational efficiency across the entire Authority.
7. In developing our proposals, we have been careful not to impact our overall emergency response capability – we do not want to detrimentally impact overall response times. However, we do recognise that the withdrawal of resources in certain locations may have impacts including increasing local response times. Where this is the case, we have carefully weighed the impact of these against the frequency of occurrence and mitigations, such as where the next nearest resource is coming from.
8. Our proposals involve the withdrawal or relocation of some of our fire engines. Such changes require public consultation as part of the Fire Authority's decision-making process. The proposed survey for this consultation is attached at appendix 3. We have designed the survey to be as inclusive as possible. To ensure we get representation from local people and traditionally underrepresented groups, we will also be conducting a series of focus groups. To ensure the impartiality of these focus groups we will be using Opinion Research Services, who will also collate and process consultation responses.
9. The Resourcing Review (2026) represents the biggest change to emergency cover since 2012. However, since then we have continued to evolve front-line response arrangements with focused reviews and changes to specialist capabilities – the most recent being the decision to relocate water rescue assets from Sheppey fire station to Rochester fire station, which Members approved last

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<sup>1</sup> Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (18<sup>th</sup> February 2026): *Draft revenue and capital budgets 2026/27 and draft medium term financial plan 2026/30*. And Addendum to Item B4. Available at <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/fire-authority>

year. Given the nature of the changes proposed in the current review, it is likely to generate significant public and press interest.

10. In summary, the Resourcing Review proposes:

- a. An increase of 3 wholetime fire engines available during the day (07:00 – 19:00). These additional wholetime fire engines would be located at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone – providing 2 wholetime fire engines during the day and 1 wholetime fire engine at night at each of these locations.
- b. To achieve the above, 2 wholetime fire engines would be made unavailable at night (19:00 – 07:00). These fire engines would be the second fire engines at Dartford and Thames-side fire stations. These locations would now have 2 wholetime fire engines during the day and 1 wholetime fire engine at night.
- c. The closure of 5 on call fire stations at Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, Grain, and Westerham.
- d. The removal of 4 ‘attached’ on call sections at Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham, and Tunbridge Wells. There would still be a wholetime fire engine available 24/7 at each of these locations.
- e. Re-investing some of the savings from these on call changes into an additional 7 wholetime firefighter posts to help achieve the improvement in daytime fire engine numbers.

11. These proposals have been developed following in-depth analysis of risk (including pre-consultation with colleagues in local areas), demand and isolation information for each fire station in the county, as well as analysis of simultaneous activity occurring in each emergency ‘reporting cluster’. Foremost in our minds has been the safety of our customers and colleagues, and we have sought to ensure that proposals are transparent in identifying impacts on response times, and that we are clear on how we propose to respond effectively to incidents in these locations in the future.

12. Relocating or removing fire engines, or closing stations, is never going to be a popular option with our customers or our colleagues. But the proposals made either improve our alignment between fire engine availability and incident demand or remove fire engines in areas where we believe this to be an over-provision of service.

13. Firefighters need enough real emergency incidents to maintain their professional competence. The low levels of demand at some of the stations we are closing means maintaining this level of experience, and therefore safety, can be very difficult.

14. Additional information has been provided for each of the proposed changes to the firefighting resources available across the county in the Resourcing Review (2026) strategic case document (Appendix 1).
15. The risk analysis underpinning all the proposals will be publicly available as technical appendices to the Resourcing Review, but these do not form part of the consultation document itself. This approach has worked well in the past, allowing the text to be written in a simple and widely accessible style, while giving access to the technical material for those who want it.

### **Timeframes**

16. Should Members approve the draft proposals for public consultation, we will undertake a 12-week consultation with our customers and other stakeholders. The results of the consultation and the final proposals will be presented to the Fire Authority on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026.
17. Should the closure of any station or on call section be approved at the October Authority meeting, the process for withdrawing those resources would start immediately.
18. Should the changes to the distribution of wholetime fire engines from night to day cover be approved, those changes are planned to come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2028. The delay in implementation is deliberate. There are two critical systems being replaced in 2027 (workforce planning and command and control), and the outcomes of the Resourcing Review must be incorporated into these systems. We also want to allow colleagues time to adjust to new working arrangements.
19. While some feedback suggests an earlier implementation date is preferred, any acceleration would only be considered where it does not risk delivery of these systems. We therefore request that the final implementation date be delegated to the Chief Executive.

### **Consultation process**

20. The consultation process is the main route for customers and stakeholders to make their views known to the Authority on service development. For this consultation we have set the following objectives in our communications and engagement plan:
  - a. Ensure all members of the public, particularly those in affected areas, understand what is being proposed and why, using plain, accessible language free from jargon.
  - b. Maximise participation across all demographic groups, with efforts to reach those who are less likely to engage through traditional channels.

- c. Provide a clear, easy mechanism for people to express their views, and demonstrate that responses will genuinely influence decision-making.
  - d. Maintain a transparent audit trail of all consultation activity to underpin the legal defensibility of any decision made by the Fire and Rescue Authority.
  - e. Manage community concern and media scrutiny with honest, timely and consistent messaging from identified spokespeople.
  - f. Meet all obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring no group is disadvantaged in their ability to participate in or access the consultation including consideration of impacts across protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
21. Carrying out consultation in this way ensures that we comply with our legal obligations set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) which requires that in demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need to:
- a. be transparent and accountable to their communities for their decisions and actions;
  - b. provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement; and
  - c. have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard communities expect for an important public safety service.
22. We have also conducted our approach to developing our draft proposals in line with the Gunning Principles, which provide:
- a. that consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;
  - b. that the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response;
  - c. that adequate time is given for consideration and response; and
  - d. that the product of consultation is conscientiously considered when finalising the decision.
23. In addition to the consultation document and questionnaire being sent to all key stakeholders, the Authority uses several other consultation forums, such as:
- a. Awareness raising and signposting to the consultation through our website and social media channels.
  - b. Internal intranet, team update, posters, and magazine.

- c. Promotional material supplies to key public locations such as libraries and civic centres throughout Kent and Medway.
- d. Attending parish council meetings.
- e. Targeted promotions through digital channels.
- f. Media engagement (interviews, articles).
- g. Email marketing to businesses through GovDelivery.

24. These measures will ensure a wide awareness amongst our customers and relevant stakeholders of the proposals. No final decisions have been made. Consultation responses will be fully considered and may lead to modification of the proposals.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **Impact on customers**

25. To understand impact on customers, we completed a community impact assessment to understand which groups may be impacted by our resourcing review changes, and how. We looked at the community profile of each of the local areas subject to changes. This told us what groups are most likely to be impacted. From this we have developed a plan of mitigating actions. We will further develop these as we receive consultation feedback and they will form part of any final proposal. These will be available as part of the additional information within the resourcing review, provided on an area-by-area basis.

26. Our people impact assessment for communities is included as an appendix to this report.

### **Impact on colleagues**

27. There are two groups of colleagues who are likely to be impacted by the changes:

- a. Wholetime colleagues affected by the proposed movement of fire engines from night cover at one station to day cover at another. These changes are requiring amendments to shift arrangements and would also result in some colleagues moving base location. We are undertaking an internal formal consultation with colleagues.
- b. On call colleagues at stations or sections that are proposed to be closed/removed. We want to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible. As a result, we will be offering a range of options including:

- i. Voluntary redundancy.
- ii. If possible, move to another on call station.
- iii. The possibility of a wholetime firefighter contract. Should a colleague request this they would be moved to an interim annualised hours contract, where a firefighter is offered redeployment into a pool which means that, when required, they could work at any location in the County to provide additional fire engine availability during periods of high demand. This would be in place until such time as they are issued with a wholetime contract.
- iv. Annualised hours contract for those colleagues who cannot, or do not, wish to join wholetime.
- v. Suitable alternative roles within KFRS.

28. Whilst no decisions on station closures or re-deployment of fire engines will be made until the Fire Authority meeting in October, we will enter a period of consultation with colleagues affected in order to provide assurance and certainty to colleagues on what arrangements may look like, helping to reduce the anxiety associated with change.

29. A full people impact assessment has been completed and will help inform consultation with colleagues.

30. We have reviewed our Managing Structural Change policy and our Supporting Attendance guidance to ensure legal compliance. These documents have been assessed by our legal advisors. These will be offered to Unions as documents which are material to the changes.

31. We will take a collective bargaining approach with the Unions, and have also undertaken a pre-consultation period with colleagues, allowing them to submit questions, concerns, or ideas. We have either responded directly to individuals in the case of specific questions or have published the responses to all general questions on a frequently asked questions page of our dedicated resourcing review intranet site. We have also produced a series of podcasts with the Chief Executive and Director Response and Resilience outlining responses to questions and rationale for change.

32. We have provided the opportunity for colleagues to register any personal issues, such as childcare, with a named email contact.

33. Our people impact assessment for our workforce is included as an appendix to this report.

## **CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION**

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the publication of the draft Resourcing Review (2026) Strategic Case at Appendix 1.
2. Approve the public consultation document at Appendix 2.
3. Approve the public consultation survey at Appendix 3.
4. Approve that any minor amendments to the text of the review be delegated to the Chief Executive.
5. Approve that agreement on the final the date for changes to wholetime fire engine changes be delegated to the Chief Executive (para. 18 refers).

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Chief Executive Officer – Ann Millington

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01622 692121

EMAIL: kmfraclerk@kent.fire-uk.org

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None



Resourcing Review

# Strategic Case

## Summary of our proposals for change and their impacts

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

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# 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This paper presents the strategic case for changes to emergency fire cover across Kent and Medway. It has been prepared in support of the Authority's statutory duties under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, regarding the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, and in implementation of commitments made in the Community Risk Management Plan 2024–2028.
- 1.2. The Resourcing Review represents the most significant change to emergency cover in Kent and Medway since 2012. Proposals have been developed through a structured, evidence-based process combining detailed risk analysis, resource performance assessment, computer-based modelling, and community and workforce impact assessment.
- 1.3. Kent and Medway's combined population has now surpassed 1.9 million people, making it one of the most populous areas in the UK. Approximately 85% of the land is classified as rural, with one in three people living in a rural community. The county has diverse and growing urban centres, a long coastline, significant transport infrastructure of national importance, and communities with varying levels of vulnerability and deprivation. Keeping this population safe requires a resource model that genuinely reflects where and when risk occurs - not one inherited from a previous era.

## The case for change rests on three foundations:

- 1.4. **Fire engine availability does not match the pattern of incident demand:** Seven years of data shows the Service is busiest during the day, while fire engine availability peaks overnight. On-call availability falls sharply from around 0700 each day, creating a structural mismatch at precisely the period of highest demand.
- 1.5. **Demand and risk have changed:** The on-call system can trace its roots back to the retained duty system, established in 1947. Many of our on-call stations are in areas where the risk and demand profile has significantly reduced over that period. In addition, some of our on-call stations are unable to maintain reliable availability despite significant effort. Where demand and risk are low, and where there is low availability preventing that fire engine's contribution to wider system resilience, continuing to resource these stations in their current form cannot be defended.
- 1.6. **We have a statutory duty to ensure public money is spent effectively:** Financial savings are not the primary driver for this review. However, efficiencies that deliver savings are an essential element in ensuring the Service remains financially sustainable and operationally effective over the long term.

## What we are proposing

- 1.7. Our review has resulted in the following proposals:
  - The introduction of 3 additional wholetime shift fire engines during the day (Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone).

- The withdrawal of 2 fire engines at night (one from both Dartford and Thames-side).
- An increase of 7 wholetime firefighter posts.
- Changing wholetime shifts to a 12-hour day and 12-hour night (this is an internal process and does not require public consultation).
- The closure of 5 on-call fire stations.
- Removal of 4 attached on-call fire engines.

- 1.8. The proposals do not represent a reduction in the Service's commitment to public safety. The overnight reduction in fire engines at Dartford and Thames-side releases wholetime firefighter capacity. Combined with investment in seven additional wholetime firefighters, this enables the introduction of three additional daytime fire engines at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood - deployed where evidence shows they would have the greatest impact on meeting demand.
- 1.9. In addition, we are also proposing to conduct intensive prevention activity in areas that are proposed for on-call station closures, helping to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring in the first place. We believe this would have a more beneficial impact on the safety of our customers than resourcing a fire engine that is rarely required and is often not available.
- 1.10. Most stations are unaffected. Proposals are targeted only where evidence clearly supports change. No final decision will be made before a full 12-week public consultation.

## **2. Strategic and Legal Framework**

### **Statutory duties**

- 2.1. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 require this Authority to promote fire safety, respond to fires and other emergencies, and make provision for road traffic collision rescue. The Authority must have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, which requires services to identify and assess all foreseeable risks affecting their communities and deploy resources accordingly. This review directly implements commitments in our CRMP.

### **Consultation obligations - the Gunning Principles**

- 2.2. Any significant change to emergency cover is subject to a legal duty to consult. If approved, the Authority will conduct a full 12-week public, stakeholder and workforce consultation from 25 June 2026, designed in accordance with the Gunning principles:

- Consultation takes place at a formative stage - before final decisions are made.
- Sufficient reasons are given for proposals to allow intelligent consideration and response.
- Adequate time is provided for consideration and response.
- Consultation outcomes are conscientiously considered before any final decision.

- 2.3. The consultation has been designed with advice from Opinion Research Services and is structured to be legally defensible. All engagement activity during the consultation period will also comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Fire and Rescue National Framework.

### **Equality obligations and People Impact Assessments**

- 2.4. Two People Impact Assessments (PIAs) have been completed as part of this review. The Community PIA examines the potential effects of proposed changes on communities and the public, with particular attention to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, such as age and disability, as well as exploring issues associated with non-protected but influential characteristics such as deprivation and rurality. The Workforce PIA examines the impact of change on wholetime, on-call, day-crewed and non-operational colleagues across all protected characteristics.
- 2.5. Both PIAs will be published alongside consultation materials and updated as consultation progresses. No final decision will be made until consultation has been completed and equality impacts fully assessed.

## **HMICFRS alignment**

- 2.6. HMICFRS inspects Fire and Rescue Services against defined characteristics of good performance, including how well services understand and manage risk, how effectively they deploy resources, and whether financial plans are sustainable. Services are expected to explain the rationale for resourcing decisions by reference to risk. This review has been designed to meet that standard. The Chief Executive will notify HMICFRS at the point of consultation launch.

### 3. The Case for Change

#### The availability-demand mismatch

- 3.1. Incident and availability data shows a broadly inverse relationship between when the Service is busiest and when fire engines are most available. Incident demand increases from around 0700 and peaks between 1800 and 2100. Road traffic collisions show further peaks in commuting periods. On-call availability falls from around 0700 as colleagues become unavailable during primary employment hours, usually reaching its lowest point in the afternoon before recovering from around 1900.
- 3.2. The Service has 26 wholtime shift fire engines available at all times across our 22 wholtime and day-crewed stations. Our operating range, that balances availability with anticipated incident demand, is to have between 32 and 44 fire engines available at any given time. To reach the lower end of our normal operating range (32 engines), at least six on-call fire engines must also be available. At night, when on-call availability is strong, the average total number of fire engines available is 53. During the day the average is 31 - not quite meeting our operating range. At that level, only 13 engines need to be deployed before the Service enters degradation. This is where there are fewer than 19 fire engines available, a level low enough to significantly affect response times and service delivery. Whilst six on-call fire engines may seem an achievable figure, problems with maintaining on-call availability (which is a national issue) means that we have to put a disproportionate amount of effort into short term fixes daily to achieve this.
- 3.3. Between 2017 and 2026, the Service has entered degradation (fewer than 19 fire engines available) on 612 separate occasions, affecting 225 days in total and totalling over seven days of cumulative degradation time. The problem is worsening; instances of degradation rose from 31 in 2019 to 173 in 2022 and 107 in 2025. The worst periods correlate with summer demand spikes and wildfire events - the very conditions when reliable capacity matters most.

#### On-call sustainability

- 3.4. The on-call model remains vital to fire cover across much of Kent and Medway, particularly in rural and semi-rural areas. The Authority is committed to maintaining viable on-call stations where the evidence supports this. However, the fundamental challenge of securing daytime on-call availability is unlikely to improve materially at most stations, because it is driven by structural changes in the labour market rather than by effort or investment alone.
- 3.5. One of the key reasons on-call colleagues leave is a lack of exposure to incidents. Colleagues tied to a pager within five minutes of their station, but rarely mobilised, experience boredom and diminishing skill maintenance. This creates a difficult cycle at low-demand, low-availability stations: colleagues leave because they rarely attend incidents; availability falls further; the number of incidents that fire engine attends fall again.

- 3.6. The stations subject to closure proposals have each been individually assessed against demand, risk and isolation. Where there is evidence to suggest that these factors are consistently low, or one or more factors is so significant that it provides a case in itself, we consider the ongoing viability of that station. We then look at the availability of the station or section to consider whether it provides wider system resilience. Where the answer to this is no, we believe the case for closing a station or removing a section is strong.
- 3.7. When we refer to on-call closures we mean either:
- a 'standalone' on-call station, which has a single on-call fire engine in a fire station, or;
  - an 'attached' on-call section, which is where an on-call fire station is located alongside a wholetime fire engine at a 2-fire engine station. Where on-call removal is proposed from these stations, the wholetime fire engine continues to provide primary response at all times.

### **What the proposals do**

- 3.8. The overnight reduction at Dartford and Thames-side releases wholetime firefighter capacity that was previously committed to second fire engines during lower demand night hours. Combined with the recruitment of seven additional wholetime firefighters, this enables three additional daytime fire engines at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood. The effect is to shift resource from the period of lowest demand and highest availability to the period of highest demand and lowest availability - without reducing total wholetime capacity, and with a net increase in the number of fire engines available.
- 3.9. Shifting to 12-hour shifts ensures shift changeovers occur outside of peak commuter demand periods and results in additional day shift productivity in areas such as prevention visits, training and protection activity. This increases productivity and improves community safety outcomes. It also allows for additional service resilience as day and night shifts can be used more interchangeably.

### **Financial sustainability**

- 3.10. The Service faces ongoing financial pressure. The annual cost of an on-call station or section typically ranges from £100,000 to £200,000, depending on headcount. These figures do not include capital contributions, which are increasingly significant. The indicative gross annual saving from the nine proposed on-call rationalisations is approximately £965,000. The overnight reductions at Dartford and Thames-side are cost neutral, with firefighters redeployed to crew the additional day fire engines. Investment in seven additional wholetime firefighters' costs approximately £450,000 per year, producing an indicative net annual saving of approximately £515,000 to support long-term financial sustainability, and provide

opportunities for investment in other front line activities such as prevention and alternative crewing approaches.

### **What this review is, and is not**

3.11. This review is primarily about matching resources to risk and demand, improving operational resilience, and securing long-term sustainability. Whilst we do face financial pressures that mean we have to ensure we spend our money as effectively as possible; this does not mean the review is a cuts programme. The savings that arise support reinvestment in better-placed daytime cover. The Service's commitment to prevention, protection and partnership working is unaffected by these proposals and, through additional daytime capacity, is strengthened.

## 4. Current Emergency Cover Arrangements

4.1. The Service currently operates 75 fire engines at 56 locations across Kent and Medway. Crewing arrangements fall into three types:

- Wholetime shift - firefighters work day and night shifts under flexible rostering. Stations are permanently occupied and able to respond immediately. The Service has 13 wholetime shift stations.
- Wholetime day-crewed - firefighters work days at station and respond from home overnight using alerters. They must live very close to the station. The Service has nine day-crewed stations.
- On-call - on-call firefighters have primary employment elsewhere or hold multiple contracts with the Service. They respond from home using alerters and must live very close to the station. Standalone on-call stations predominantly serve rural towns and villages. On-call sections are also attached to many wholetime and day-crewed stations.

4.2. The current emergency cover model, agreed in 2021, defines availability levels as follows:

Level	Wholetime / day-crewed	On-call	Total
First line / minimum	26	6	32
Optimum / standard	26	18	44
Resilience	26	49	75

4.3. Four wholetime shift stations currently have two fire engines each available around the clock: Dartford, Thames-side, Maidstone and Canterbury. This gives the county 26 fire engines regardless of on-call availability. The proposals would increase this daytime capacity to 29 fire engines.

## 5. How Proposals Were Developed

### Overview

- 5.1. Proposals have been developed through a structured, three-stage process combining analysis of risk and demand, assessment of current resource performance, and computer-based modelling of how changes would affect service delivery. This approach is consistent with national good practice.

### Data sources and time period

- 5.2. The analysis draws primarily on seven years of incident and mobilisation data covering 2018–2024. This period is large enough to smooth year-to-year fluctuations while remaining representative of current risk, demand and operating practices. It captures both pre- and post-Covid conditions, and the exceptional demand in the summer of 2022, reducing the risk that short-term anomalies distort findings. We have used data up to 2024 as that was the last full year of data before we started our analysis in 2025.

### Modelling approach

- 5.3. To assess the impact of change, the Service uses a workload modelling system to simulate how incidents are allocated to available fire engines and how quickly fire engines respond. Models are built using the Service's own incident data, fire engine locations, duty systems, reaction times and patterns of availability.
- 5.4. The starting point for all analysis is a 'reality base case' - the closest achievable reflection of current operations. This base case incorporates actual fire engine locations, current duty systems, known availability patterns (including variable on-call availability), and the effects of alternately crewed specialist vehicles (such as turntable ladders) on fire engine availability. All change scenarios are tested against this base case so that impacts are assessed as relative change, not as absolute performance figures in isolation.
- 5.5. Alongside the reality base case, additional high-level models support strategic understanding of the relative value of locations and duty systems. These are not used on their own to justify change. Each model is run separately for each year of data and results are averaged, ensuring outcomes are not driven by isolated spikes in demand or atypical conditions.

### What the models measure

- 5.6. The modelling focuses on outputs directly linked to operational effectiveness and public safety:
  - First fire engine response times
  - Second fire engine response times - called 'second fire engine lag'
  - Changes in fire engine mobilisation patterns and utilisation
  - Service-wide resilience - percentage of time in each availability level

- 5.7. These outputs are assessed by area and by fire engine to identify where performance improves, where it is unchanged, and where there may be potential adverse impacts requiring mitigation or further consideration.

### **Interpreting results**

- 5.8. The modelling is designed to inform decision-making rather than provide precise predictions. It provides a strong indication of relative impact but cannot fully account for all real-world variables - live traffic conditions, exact fire engine movements, or dynamic decisions made by control operators during complex incidents. Results are interpreted alongside professional judgement and wider risk information. The emphasis is placed on differences from the reality base case, not on absolute figures.
- 5.9. Incidents are categorised by the number of resources and/or the level of command that is required. These are:
- Level 1: smaller scale incidents, utilising one to three fire engines, and commanded by a fire engine commander.
  - Level 2: are larger and/or more complex, requiring more resources and are commanded by a Level 2 Officer (Station Manager).
  - Level 3: incidents often requiring resources from a wider area, specialist fire engines and multi-agency working. These are commanded by a Level 3 officer (Group Manager).
  - Level 4: these are the most significant incidents, often requiring many resources from across the county, action from a variety of partners and wider community impact. They are commanded by a Level 4 officer (Area Manager or Assistant Director/Director).
- 5.10. The Service previously modelled capacity requirements on two simultaneous level-3 incidents as a standard planning scenario. We no longer do this as it is not a realistic operating model for routine planning purposes. On the rare occasions such situations arise, we use a variety of capacity scaling options such as cross-border assistance, recall to duty and use of our strategic reserve (firefighters recalled from other duties to ride fire engines). It is more important to assess the demand that simultaneous smaller incidents place on the system and ensure the base cover can meet these. Second fire engine lag remains an important indicator and is assessed for every change evaluated, with professional judgement applied to determine whether any increase is acceptable.

### **Understanding risk and demand — the KAIR profile**

- 5.11. The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile brings together three factors to compare communities across the county consistently:

- Activity (likelihood) — where incidents are most likely to occur, based on historical data including dwelling fires, RTCs and other building fires.
- Risk (impact) — where incidents could have more serious consequences, including areas with vulnerable people, high-risk buildings or critical infrastructure.
- Isolation (response challenge) — how easy it is for fire engines to reach an area, and how likely resources are to be unavailable.

5.12. These factors are combined into a single score for each area, enabling risk-based planning aligned to community need rather than historical patterns alone. We use this scoring to benchmark locations against one another. This gives a ranking. However, this only informs decisions – it does not make them. ‘Bottom slicing’ the lowest scoring locations is not helpful, as considerations are necessarily more nuanced than that. This is where we then use this data to inform professional judgment and focus further analysis.

### **Evidence considered**

5.13. The following evidence has been considered in developing proposals:

- Time we operate in each fire engine availability level - 612 degradation instances since 2017, affecting 225 days
- Current response time performance: urban 71.5% within 9 minutes (target 75%); rural 70.4% within 15 minutes (target 75%)
- First and second fire engine response times modelled under current and proposed arrangements
- Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in building fires, by time of day and response time
- Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in RTCs, by time of day - peak RTC demand in commuting periods
- Building damage severity in relation to fire engine attendance times, including second fire engine lag
- Utilisation rates by station
- Height vehicle (turntable ladder) response times and utilisation
- Risk Based Intervention Programme (RBIP) risk data - all 56 station areas ranked by very high, high and medium risk premises
- KAIR profile - Activity, Isolation and Risk scores for all areas
- Cross-border mutual aid patterns - 1,892 incidents in neighbouring service areas over analysis period
- Productivity analysis - training, prevention and protection activity enabled by additional daytime crews
- Community PIA and Workforce PIA

## 6. What the data told us

### The relationship between response times, fire outcomes, and road traffic collisions

- 6.1. This section sets out the evidence base underpinning the relationship between fire engine response times and operational outcomes across three areas: building fire casualties and fire severity, road traffic collision (RTC) casualties, and second fire engine attendance (second pump lag). It draws on seven years of Kent incident data (2018–2024) and supplements that data with peer-reviewed research and government statistical publications to provide a robust, evidence-based justification for the proposed re-alignment of fire engine availability.
- 6.2. Our proposals involve moving the second fire engines at Dartford and Thames-side from night-time wholetime shift crewing to daytime availability, with those resources redeployed as second daytime pumps at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone. The evidence presented here supports the conclusion that this re-alignment better aligns resource with demand, improves overall second pump performance, and does not materially increase life-safety risk from delayed attendance to fires or RTCs.

### Response times and building fire outcomes

#### Local evidence

- 6.3. Analysis of building fire casualties across Kent shows 35 fatalities and 62 serious casualties in 87 separate incidents. Of the 35 fatalities, 28 were either deceased before crews arrived or could not be resuscitated on scene. This means that for the substantial majority of the most serious fire outcomes, the speed of the response is unlikely to have had a material bearing on the outcome.
- 6.4. The data shows little statistical correlation between first engine response time and casualty outcome. Of the 97 serious casualties and fatalities across the period:
  - 31% had a fire engine in attendance within five minutes of mobilisation
  - A further 45% had a fire engine in attendance within five to ten minutes
- 6.5. The absence of clear evidence that faster response times led to fewer casualties is consistent with established evidence on fire development. Once a fire has reached a critical stage, intervention time becomes less determinative than the conditions present on arrival.
- 6.6. For the most severe building fire category — total involvement of the building — the data is particularly clear. During the day, 61.2% of whole-building-loss fires were already beyond intervention on first engine arrival; at night this figure rises to 77.8%. Night-time fires are discovered significantly later, on average: 29.4% of night fires took more than 30 minutes to be found, compared to 20.7% during the day. By the time crews arrive at many of the most severe incidents, the scope for intervention is materially limited regardless of response time.

- 6.7. Discovery time, rather than response time, is the primary driver of outcome severity in the most serious building fires. This is supported both by our own incident data and by the wider academic literature.
- 6.8. Fires that escalate after the first engine arrives, those that progress beyond the situation first presented, represent the subset where timing is most operationally relevant. These account for 22.8% of severe daytime fires and 18.1% at night.

### **National and academic context**

- 6.9. The Home Office's published fire statistics for England confirm there is no straightforward relationship between response time and fire outcome and explicitly identify discovery time as a fundamental variable (Home Office, 2024). This directly corroborates the pattern observed in Kent's data.
- 6.10. Research by Manes and Rush (2023), drawing on Home Office dwelling and other building fire data for England from 2010/11 to 2016/17, provides the most directly applicable UK evidence. The study found that both discovery time and fire service response time influence life safety and property outcomes, and that a quicker response can result in more effective intervention. The authors note that for every one-minute increment in response time, the proportion of fires classified as 'large' on arrival increased by 2.3%.
- 6.11. This finding reinforces the value of improving response times where possible, but it does not alter the fundamental position that, for the most severe fires, discovery time is the dominant variable.

### **Modelled impact of the proposals**

- 6.12. The proposed changes produce a modest deterioration in night-time first engine response at Dartford (up to 41 seconds urban) and Thames-side (up to 27 seconds urban), offset by improvements during the day at Ashford (up to 73 seconds quicker), Folkestone (up to 71 seconds quicker), and Strood (up to 52 seconds quicker).
- 6.13. Given that there is a negligible correlation between first engine response time and casualty outcome in Kent's own data, and that building fire casualties are distributed across response time bands without a clear threshold effect, the modest night-time deterioration at Dartford and Thames-side does not represent a material increase in life-safety risk.
- 6.14. The night-time concentration of building fire casualties (60 night versus 37 day across the period) is acknowledged. However, our interpretation, supported by national research, is that this more likely reflects later fire discovery rather than a response time effect, and the proposed changes do not alter the on-call coverage that serves Dartford and Thames-side at night.

## **Response times and road traffic collision outcomes**

### **Local evidence**

- 6.15. Analysis of 2,714 road traffic collisions attended produced 4,168 recorded casualties in total, of which 674 were serious injuries and 138 were fatalities. Unlike building fires, RTC risk is strongly concentrated in daytime hours. Serious casualties occurred at nearly twice the rate during the day (433) compared to night (241). Fatal casualties follow a similar pattern: 83 recorded during the day against 55 at night.
- 6.16. This distribution strongly aligns RTC risk with the period of highest incident demand and provides direct local evidential support for resourcing proposals that increase daytime availability.
- 6.17. Response time band analysis shows the greatest concentration of serious and fatal casualties in the 5–10-minute response window: 183 serious daytime casualties and 110 at night received attendance in this band. Responses within 15 minutes account for the substantial majority of all serious and fatal RTC casualties, suggesting that maintaining performance within this window provides an operationally significant opportunity to positively influence RTC outcomes.

### **National and academic context**

- 6.18. The operational significance of response time at RTCs is more clearly established in the literature than for building fires. A large population-based study of 2,268 US counties found that longer emergency medical service response times were independently associated with higher rates of motor vehicle crash mortality (Byrne et al., 2019). Counties with response times of 12 minutes or more had a mortality rate ratio of 1.46 compared to those achieving response within 7 minutes. The study found that early medical contact with pre-hospital personnel was uniquely important to motor vehicle crash survival, with a significant proportion of deaths — 14% in urban and 9.9% in rural settings — attributable to prolonged response times. We understand that the response model in the USA and the UK is different, and these results will also be associated with time taken for more advanced medical intervention, but it is legitimate to associate the high levels of initial emergency care that our firefighters can provide with casualty survival.

### **Modelled impact of the proposals**

- 6.19. The proposed re-alignment improves first engine response times during the day at Ashford, Folkestone, and Strood by up to 73 seconds in urban areas and 58 seconds in rural areas. Given the concentration of serious RTC casualties during the day, the location of these stations near the strategic road network, and the established evidence linking response time to RTC survival outcomes, this improvement in daytime availability directly addresses the period of highest risk for this incident type.
- 6.20. We believe the RTC case for daytime resourcing improvement is the strongest single life-safety argument in support of the proposals.

## Second fire engine attendance time and fire outcomes

### The operational context

- 6.21. The time between the arrival of the first and second fire engines, known as second pump lag, is a significant operational variable in the management of developing fires, with direct implications for fire containment, firefighter safety, and the ability to mount an effective firefighting operation. The evidence base for this relationship has strengthened considerably in recent years and supports the direction of the proposals.
- 6.22. Current average second pump lag across Kent stands at 6 minutes 51 seconds in urban areas and 10 minutes 40 seconds in rural areas, based on seven years of incident data.

### Local evidence — lag time and fire severity

- 6.23. Analysis of 4,233 building fires across the review period shows a consistent pattern: the proportion of incidents with extended second pump lag increases with fire severity. For severe fires, 46% had a second engine attendance beyond five minutes, compared to 36% of minor fires. This indicates that more serious fires are more likely to experience the resource demands that second pump availability is intended to mitigate.
- 6.24. For the most severe fire outcome category (total building loss) our severity data provides important contextual balance. Most of these fires had already reached a critical state before any fire engine arrived (61% daytime, 78% night-time). For this subset, second pump lag has limited influence on outcome. The cases where second pump timing is most consequential are those fires that escalate after first engine arrival, accounting for 22.8% of severe daytime fires and 18.1% at night. This is the subset for which the proposed county-wide improvement in second pump performance represents the most meaningful risk reduction.

### The modern fire environment

- 6.25. The scientific context for second pump lag is grounded in the changed dynamics of modern fire development. Research by the UL Fire Safety Research Institute demonstrates that fires in homes furnished with modern synthetic materials can reach flashover in as little as 3 minutes and 40 seconds. This is compared to approximately 29 minutes in homes furnished with legacy natural materials — a reduction of more than eight times (UL FSRI, 2009; 2020). This finding has been replicated across multiple experimental conditions and is recognised by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as a fundamental change in the residential fire environment.
- 6.26. Kerber (2011) documented the operational implications of this change: faster fire propagation, shorter time to flashover, and a substantially reduced window for

effective firefighting operations. The consequence is that fires in residential buildings escalate to untenable conditions significantly faster than the norms on which historical response planning was based, reinforcing the operational value of rapid second pump attendance.

6.27. Such evidence can suggest that night-time deterioration in second pump lag occurs predominantly in a fire development context where the delay in raising the alarm creates an outcome that has already been determined before any engine arrives; the daytime improvements occur in a context where second pump attendance falls within a genuinely open window to prevent escalation.

### **Modelled impact of the proposals**

6.28. The proposed changes are modelled to deliver a significant improvement in second pump performance county-wide:

- Urban second engine performance improves by 5.37% overall
- Average second engine arrival time reduces by 90 seconds in urban areas
- Average second engine arrival time reduces by 56 seconds in rural areas

6.29. For the three stations gaining a second daytime pump, the improvement is operationally material. Predicted daytime second pump lag times are: Ashford 5 minutes 1 second, Folkestone 4 minutes 47 seconds, Strood 5 minutes 11 seconds. These stations currently rely on resources travelling from neighbouring areas to provide second pump cover during the day.

6.30. The trade-off is a deterioration in night-time second pump performance at Dartford and Thames-side. Dartford's modelled night-time second engine average is 7 minutes 16 seconds urban; Thames-side is 4 minutes 56 seconds urban. At Dartford in particular, the second engine at night would typically come from a neighbouring on-call station. Modelling suggests that Swanley would see a 69% increase in mobilisations on current availability and Swanscombe would see a 46% increase in mobilisations on current availability.

6.31. The model uses a delayed response turnout time of 300 seconds; however, the actual average on-call turnout recorded in our historic data is 5 minutes 40 seconds, with a maximum of 7 minutes 13 seconds. The modelled night-time second pump lag at Dartford may therefore understate the real-world position, and we acknowledged this as a principal area of uncertainty in the proposals.

6.32. The county-wide improvement in second pump performance — 5.37% urban — is the strongest single performance improvement produced by our proposals, and directly addresses the period of highest operational demand.

### **Overall assessment**

6.33. Across all three evidence streams, the proposals align additional resource with the period of highest demonstrable risk while accepting limited deterioration at night at two stations. The key conclusions are:

- There is a negligible correlation in the data when it comes to the relationship between first engine response time and building fire casualty outcomes, consistent with the national and academic evidence base.
- Discovery time, not response time, is the primary determinant of outcome severity in the most serious building fires. The proposals do not alter the factors that influence discovery time - instead we would focus on prevention activity to address this.
- RTC serious casualty risk is strongly concentrated in daytime hours, and the academic literature establishes a clear association between response time and RTC mortality. The daytime improvements at Ashford, Folkestone, and Strood address this risk directly.
- The county-wide improvement in second pump performance is the strongest positive outcome of the proposals and is supported by scientific evidence on modern fire dynamics and the operationally critical role of timely reinforcement in scenarios where a window of opportunity exists to influence outcome.
- The night-time second pump deterioration at Dartford carries genuine uncertainty due to on-call dependency, and we are identifying this as the primary risk requiring monitoring and mitigation. We would ensure that recruitment and retention at both Swanley and Swanscombe on-call fire stations are prioritised. The relatively close-by location of Thames-side fire station provides secondary risk mitigation.

### **Height vehicles**

- 6.34. The Service has three height vehicles, based at Ashford, Maidstone and Canterbury. Of 4,660 mobilisations of a height vehicle over the analysis period, the vehicle attended the incident on only 35% of occasions (on most occasions it was turned back, as it was not required to resolve the incident). Of the 3,044 incidents where it did not attend, 2,019 were automatic fire alarms and 326 were other false alarms. Of the 1,616 incidents where it did attend, average response times were: Ashford 28 minutes, Maidstone 28 minutes, Canterbury 31 minutes.
- 6.35. The proposals do not alter height vehicle locations. Retaining two fire engines at Canterbury and Maidstone during the day ensures both height vehicles at these locations remain available and reliably crewed during the highest-demand period. The additional daytime fire engine at Ashford provides additional resilience to height vehicle availability there.

### **Dartford and Thames-side standby utilisation**

- 6.36. Data on the historic practice of deploying second fire engines from Dartford and Thames-side as standby cover at Swanley and Westerham respectively is directly relevant to the overnight reduction proposals. We had been sending the second fire engines from Dartford and Thames-side to these locations during the day to provide a geographical spread of cover. However, of 7,646 mobilisations of

Dartford's second fire engine, 1,093 occurred while it was on standby at Swanley - of which 799 (73%) were to incidents not on Swanley's station ground, and 563 (51.5%) were back to Dartford's own ground. Of 6,353 mobilisations of Thames-side's second fire engine, 664 occurred from Westerham standby - of which 579 (87%) were to incidents not on Westerham's ground. Not only does this underline the case that Westerham is not a high demand location, but it also helps us to understand the impact of second pump lag in Dartford and Thames-side (albeit during the day) when both second pumps were outposted to standby.

### Risk Based Intervention Programme risk data - premises by station area

6.37. The table below shows the concentration of very high, high and medium risk premises by station area, drawn from the 2025–2028 RBIP. This data underpins the KAIR profile and informs both individual station assessments and the overall case for maintaining or strengthening cover in higher-risk areas.

Rank	Station area	Total premises	Very high risk	High risk	Medium risk
1	Margate	1,150	100	51	999
2	Maidstone	1,031	78	117	836
3	Folkestone	940	73	92	775
4	Chatham	918	80	80	758
5	Canterbury	896	86	90	720
6	Dartford	774	77	79	618
7	Tunbridge Wells	726	83	84	559
8	Dover	726	48	40	638
9	Ramsgate	717	34	51	632
10	Thames-side	699	42	59	598
11	Ashford	698	120	94	484
12	Rochester	406	52	48	306
13	Herne Bay	354	52	24	278
14	Tonbridge	352	22	44	286
15	Sittingbourne	347	47	34	266
—	Standalone stations proposed for closure/removal (selected)	—	—	—	—
42	Westerham	47	1	0	46
44	Wye	42	2	7	33
54	Grain	20	1	8	11
55	Chilham	11	2	0	9
56	Cliffe	8	0	1	7

6.38. Ashford's very high-risk premises count (120) is the highest in the county, above Margate (100) and Canterbury (86), reinforcing the case for additional wholetime daytime cover there. Stations proposed for closure consistently appear at or towards the bottom of this ranking. Attached on-call sections proposed for removal have not been shown as those stations would still maintain a wholetime fire engine during the day to cover the risk.

### **Cross-border mutual aid**

6.39. Between January 2018 and December 2025, the Service provided 2,168 mobilisations to 1,892 incidents in neighbouring service areas. East Sussex accounted for 51.9% of these, London 25.7%, Surrey 17.9% and Essex 3.9%. The highest individual cross-border activity came from Tunbridge Wells (468 mobilisations to East Sussex), Dartford (278 to London, 40 to Essex), and Sevenoaks (167 to Surrey). Conversely, the Service received 1,078 mobilisations from neighbours to 922 Kent incidents, with Dartford receiving more London support (237 mobilisations) than any other station ground.

6.40. The overnight reduction at Dartford may modestly increase the frequency of London cross-border support at that location. This is assessed as manageable given the proximity of LFB stations at Bexley, Erith and Orpington and existing mutual aid arrangements. All neighbouring services will be formally engaged as key stakeholders during the consultation period.

### **Productivity**

6.41. Additional wholetime day fire engines create capacity for prevention and protection activity beyond emergency response. Based on current performance, each additional fire engine available during the day generates an estimated 385 home safety visits per year. Three additional day fire engines therefore create potential for approximately 1,155 additional visits annually, with further increases possible under the proposed 12-hour shift pattern. There is also scope for increased numbers of protection visits, especially during the day when most businesses are in operation. Finally, we anticipate the move to 12-hour shifts and some colleagues moving to more day working than nights, creates more opportunities for meaningful training.

### **Modelling limitations**

6.42. The modelling cannot fully replicate all real-world conditions. It uses historical incident data, assumed travel times and typical availability patterns. It cannot account for live traffic conditions, exact fire engine location at mobilisation, or dynamic control decisions. All modelling outputs are interpreted alongside professional judgement and local knowledge.

## 7. Summary of Proposals

7.1. The table below summarises all proposals by reporting cluster. Detailed evidence for each proposed change is at the relevant annex.

Cluster	Stations affected	Proposal
Ashford	Wye; Ashford	Close Wye on-call. Add wholetime day fire engine at Ashford.
Canterbury	Chilham	Close Chilham on-call.
Deal	Deal	Remove on-call fire engine from Deal (wholetime fire engine remains).
Dover	—	No change.
Folkestone	Folkestone	Add wholetime day fire engine at Folkestone.
Gravesham	Thames-side	Retain 2 fire engines 07:00–19:00; withdraw one overnight.
Dartford	Dartford	Retain 2 fire engines 07:00–19:00; withdraw one overnight.
Larkfield	—	No change.
Maidstone	—	No change.
Medway	—	No change.
Romney Marsh	—	No change.
Sevenoaks	Westerham	Close Westerham on-call.
Sheppey	—	No change.
Strood	Strood; Cliffe; Grain	Add wholetime day fire engine at Strood. Close Cliffe and Grain on-call.
Swale	Faversham	Remove on-call engine from Faversham (wholetime fire engine remains).
Thanet	—	No change.
Tonbridge	—	No change.
Tunbridge Wells	Tunbridge Wells	Remove on-call fire engine from Tunbridge Wells (wholetime fire engine remains).
The Weald	—	No change.
Whitstable	Herne Bay	Remove on-call fire engine from Herne Bay (wholetime fire engine remains).

## 8. Proposals by Reporting Cluster

- 8.1. The following sections summarise the evidence and rationale for each reporting cluster. Full supporting data for each proposed change is at the relevant annex. Where no change is proposed, a summary of the current position is provided.
- 8.2. It is important to note that details relating to factors such as the number of colleagues employed at a station were correct at the time of writing but are dynamic and may not exactly reflect the actual numbers at any given time.

### Ashford reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Ashford, Wye, Charing, Aldington
Proposed changes:	Close Wye standalone on-call station. Introduce additional wholetime fire engine at Ashford during the day.

- 8.3. Ashford is a significant logistics and transport hub, with the M20 motorway and High-Speed rail line crossing the area. The Ashford station area contains 120 very high risk RBIP premises, the highest count of any station in the county, alongside 94 high risk premises. The combination of expanding urban development, rural hinterland, and major transport infrastructure creates a demanding and varied operational profile.
- 8.4. Ashford fire station houses one of three height vehicles in the county. This height vehicle is not part of the service's standard provision. It is an "operational reserve" meaning it responds from Ashford unless it is required be relocated to cover maintenance downtime of the other height vehicles at Maidstone and Canterbury.
- 8.5. Placing an additional wholetime day fire engine at Ashford benefits from its position near the A2070 for cover into the Romney Marsh, and connections to the M20, A20 and A28 for wider county support. Given Ashford's very high-risk premises profile, additional daytime cover here represents a strong investment in risk-aligned response.
- 8.6. Wye is a standalone on-call station covering 47.3 sq km with a population of 3,202. Over seven years, 225 incidents were recorded on the station ground. Of these, 221 required only one to three fire engines (level 1). There was one level 4 incident - a grassland wildfire in August 2022, exceptional rather than routine. The incident breakdown was false alarms 32.9% (mostly automatic fire alarms), fires 28.9% (nearly half of which were outdoor fires), and special service 38.2% (a third of which were co-responding calls). Nine serious casualties were recorded across nine separate incidents. Average second fire engine lag times on the station ground ranged from 7 minutes for non-residential fires to over 16 minutes for outdoor fires. Most actual mobilisations of the Wye fire engine were to incidents elsewhere in the Ashford cluster rather than within the station ground itself. At an annual running cost of £108,333 and only 35 actual mobilisations in 2024, the station is not viable. The Community PIA identifies targeted HFSV delivery to elderly residents and agricultural fire safety work as mitigating actions.

- 8.7. The station has six colleagues against a standalone establishment of twelve. Availability has improved since a very low point of 3.3% in 2019 but remains consistently low: evening and weekend availability has not exceeded 40.1% in any year and averaged 26.1% across the full period. In 2025 it was 36.8% evenings/weekends, meaning the fire engine was unavailable for the majority of the time. Wye also provides crewing to the bulk water carrier at Ashford when qualified colleagues are available, though the low establishment makes this unreliable.
- 8.8. Charing has above average demand, risk and availability. Aldington is suitably positioned to support the Romney Marsh and growing communities south of Ashford.

### Canterbury reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Canterbury, Chilham, Aylesham, Wingham
Proposed changes:	Close Chilham standalone on-call station.

- 8.9. Canterbury is a major hub with 896 total RBIP premises including 86 very high risk, one of the highest concentrations in the county. It holds one of three height vehicles in the county. We are proposing that it retains its current arrangement of 2 fire engines 24/7.
- 8.10. Chilham is a standalone on-call station covering 45.1 sq km with a population of 2,709. Over seven years, 202 incidents were recorded on the station ground: false alarms 32.7% (mainly good intent false alarms), fires 25.7% (just over half outdoor fires), and special service 41.6% (including 35 RTCs — a notably high proportion). One fatality and seven serious casualties were recorded across eight incidents, five of the serious casualties from RTCs. There was one level 2 incident and no level 3 or 4 incidents. Average second fire engine lag to dwelling fires on the station ground was 2 minutes 22 seconds, reflecting that Canterbury or Ashford typically respond as first fire engine and are already relatively close. 63.1% of actual mobilisations occurred outside the station ground, with a further 28.9% in the wider Canterbury cluster - the fire engine functions primarily as a support resource rather than meeting local demand. At £105,235 per year, and with modelled full-availability demand of approximately 133 incidents per year (most outside its own area), the station is not viable. The Community PIA identifies the ageing rural population, agricultural fire risk, RTC risk on the A28 corridor, and heritage building stock as community risk factors, and sets out targeted prevention and protection mitigations.
- 8.11. Eight colleagues are employed against a standalone establishment of twelve; three of these joined since April 2021. Availability has been broadly consistent across the review period but fell to 23.2% evening and weekend availability in 2025, with an average of 33.3% evenings/weekends across the full period. The fire engine was unavailable for most of the time in every analysed year.

### Deal reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Deal, Sandwich, Eastry
Proposed changes:	Remove the on-call engine from Deal fire station.

8.12. Deal operates an on-call fire engine alongside a wholetime day-crewed fire engine. 13 on-call colleagues are employed, of whom 10 hold dual contracts with the wholetime establishment - meaning the on-call section is predominantly crewed by colleagues who already provide wholetime cover. Over seven years, 369 mobilisations were recorded, the majority on the station ground; the on-call fire engine supports the wider cluster on 9.3% of occasions and the rest of the county on 33.7%. The most frequent incident type at full modelled availability would be automatic fire alarms (356 of 841 modelled incidents over seven years). There were no level 3 or 4 incidents on the station ground over the entire review period.

8.13. Evening and weekend availability, while higher than most on-call fire engines proposed for removal, has declined from 64.4% in 2018 to 39.4% in 2024, although this has improved in 2025 to 50.1%. Evening/weekend average availability over the period has been 52.3%. The wholetime day-crewed fire engine always provides immediate daytime response and a five-minute delayed response overnight. At £140,600 per year, the on-call function provides supplementary rather than essential capacity alongside wholetime cover.

8.14. The fire engines at Sandwich and Eastry would both remain.

**Dover reporting cluster**

Stations in cluster:	Dover, Whitfield
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.15. Dover's status as one of the world's busiest Ro-Ro ferry ports, its susceptibility to isolation during port disruption, and its coastal geography mean current arrangements would remain. The RBIP shows 48 very high and 40 high risk premises in the Dover area. Whitfield provides important support and is well placed to provide some mitigation in the southern Deal area.

**Folkestone reporting cluster**

Stations in cluster:	Folkestone, Hythe
Proposed changes:	Introduce an additional wholetime fire engine at Folkestone during the day.

8.16. Folkestone has the third highest RBIP premises count in the county (940 total, 73 very high, 92 high). The Eurotunnel terminal, Channel Tunnel infrastructure, Dover Port proximity and the Romney Marsh to the west create a demanding operational profile. An additional wholetime day fire engine at Folkestone strengthens cover along the M20, improves access to the Romney Marsh via the A259, and supplements response to Dover and the Channel Tunnel. Together with the

additional fire engine at Ashford, this substantially improves -fire engine capacity on the Romney Marsh without reducing urban cover.

8.17. Hythe has above average risk and demand and would remain; however, its availability averaging 40% requires active improvement.

### Gravesham reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Thames-side, Ash-cum-Ridley
Proposed changes:	Keep two fire engines at Thames-side 07:00–19:00. Withdraw second fire engine overnight.

8.18. Thames-side is one of the busiest stations in the county with 699 RBIP premises including 42 very high risk. Demand is concentrated in daytime and early evening. The station has historically deployed its second fire engine to Westerham during the day as a standby - a practice now ceased as the data does not support the demand case. Of 6,353 mobilisations of Thames-side's second engine, 664 occurred from Westerham standby, of which 87% were to incidents outside Westerham's ground.

8.19. Keeping two fire engines during peak hours (07:00–19:00) and withdrawing one overnight releases wholetime firefighter capacity for redistribution to three additional day fire engines. Proximity to Dartford, Strood and Swanscombe, combined with existing mutual aid with LFB, provides suitable overnight resilience.

8.20. Ash-cum-Ridley has above average demand and risk; low availability must be addressed.

### Dartford reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Dartford, Swanley, Swanscombe
Proposed changes:	Keep two engines at Dartford 07:00–19:00. Withdraw second engine overnight.

8.21. Dartford is one of the busiest stations in the county, with 774 RBIP premises including 77 very high risk. The station receives more London cross-border support than any other station ground (237 mobilisations). The standby deployment to Swanley has been ceased; of 7,646 mobilisations of Dartford's second engine, 1,093 occurred from Swanley standby, of which 73% were to incidents outside Swanley's ground and 51.5% were back to Dartford's own ground.

8.22. The overnight reduction is supported by proximity to Thames-side, Swanley and Swanscombe, and regular mutual aid with LFB at Bexley, Erith and Orpington. As a result, we would place bespoke and focused recruitment into Swanley and Swanscombe stations to ensure we achieve reliable nighttime availability.

8.23. Swanley has higher demand and risk than most on-call stations; low availability must be addressed.

### Larkfield reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Larkfield, Borough Green
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.24. Both stations have above average demand and are well positioned for the M20/A20 corridor. Borough Green availability issues require attention. No change proposed.

### Maidstone reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Maidstone, Lenham, Headcorn, Marden
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.25. Maidstone has 1,031 RBIP premises, the second highest in the county, including 78 very high and 117 high risks. It holds one of three height vehicles in the county. The full two- fire engine wholetime arrangement is kept without change.

8.26. Headcorn (above average demand and risk) and Marden (above average demand, risk and availability) are both viable. Lenham has above average risk and serves a useful A20 support role.

### Medway reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Chatham, Rochester, Rainham
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.27. Chatham (918 RBIP premises, 80 very high risk) has one of the busiest fire engines in the county. Rochester is exceptionally well positioned for rapid county-wide access via A229, M2 and M20. Rainham has above average demand. No change proposed.

### Romney Marsh reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	New Romney, Dymchurch, Lydd
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.28. All three stations are essential given the Marsh's geographic isolation and seasonal population shifts. Lydd's wildfire risk (MoD ranges), London Ashford Airport and Dungeness Power Station are of note. The stations work well together to plan cover and share resourcing where needed. All three stations to remain.

### Sevenoaks reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Sevenoaks, Edenbridge, Westerham
Proposed changes:	Close Westerham standalone on-call station.

- 8.29. Westerham covers 22.4 sq km with a population of 4,258 Over seven years, 355 incidents were recorded on the station ground: false alarms 31.5%, fires 26.2% (over half outdoor), and special service 42.3% (a third RTCs). Two fatalities and four serious casualties were recorded across nine incidents. There was only one level 2 incident and no level 3 or 4 incidents. The fire engine was rarely mobilised to its own ground, instead, most activity supported the wider Sevenoaks cluster. The RBIP shows just one very high risk and no high-risk premises in the Westerham area. A wholetime fire engine from Thames-side was outposted to Westerham during the day for much of the review period, but the data shows that fire engine undertook limited calls in the immediate Westerham area. The station has five colleagues against an establishment of twelve. Six colleagues joined since April 2021; four have since left. This high turnover reflects the structural difficulty of sustaining the establishment. Evening and weekend availability averaged 18.6% across the period. In 2025, evening and weekend availability was 13.3%. This suggests the station cannot provide meaningful cover even outside peak employment hours. At £78,325 per year, the station represents limited value for money.
- 8.30. Sevenoaks (vital for M25/M26/A21/A25 RTC response) and Edenbridge (above average risk, isolated location) are both kept.

### Sheppey reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Sheppey, Eastchurch
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

- 8.31. Island geography makes wholetime capability essential. Eastchurch has above average demand (prison cluster) and above average risk. Both stations to remain.

### Strood reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Strood, Cliffe, Hoo, Grain
Proposed changes:	Introduce additional wholetime day fire engine at Strood. Close Cliffe and Grain on-call stations.

- 8.32. An additional wholetime day fire engine at Strood directly addresses unreliable on-call availability on the Hoo Peninsula and provides additional resource to respond should Cliffe and Grain be closed. Strood already provides primary response onto the peninsula via A228 improvements. A second daytime fire engine improves support without drawing resources from Chatham or Thames-side. Strood sits in one of the highest-demand areas of the county within the Medway network.
- 8.33. Grain is one of the lowest-demand stations in the county. Over seven years, 366 incidents were recorded on the station ground, dominated by special service calls — 61.7% of all incidents, two thirds of which were co-responding incidents (137 in total). Fires accounted for 23% of incidents, the majority were outdoor fires. Two fatalities and 35 serious casualties were recorded over the period, the large

majority associated with co-responding incidents rather than fire. The COMAH-regulated industrial sites have strong safety records; significant incidents at these locations require multi-agency, multi-resource response regardless of the on-call fire engine's status. The additional Strood day fire engine, and investment in Hoo as a strategic on-call resource, are identified mitigations. There are five colleagues against an establishment of twelve. Evening and weekend availability peaked during the Covid period (53.4% in 2020) but has declined since, reaching 35.7% in 2025. At £94,497 per year Grain represents limited value, closure is recommended.

8.34. Cliffe covers 28.7 sq km with a population of 3,091. Over seven years, 252 incidents were recorded: special service 63.1% (dominated by co-responding calls), fires 20.6% (majority outdoor), and false alarms 16.3%. One fatality and 12 serious casualties were recorded, eight from co-responding incidents. There were no level 3 or 4 incidents and only four level 2. The RBIP shows no very high- or high-risk premises. The fire engine is primarily used to support incidents outside the station ground. Evening and weekend availability dropped from 79.4% in 2019 to 15.0% in 2024 before a moderate recovery to 42.3% in 2025. At £122,052 per year, combined with low demand and risk, the station represents limited value. Closure is recommended.

8.35. Hoo is to remain and would be prioritised as a strategic on-call resource with targeted recruitment investment.

### Swale reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Sittingbourne, Teynham, Faversham
Proposed changes:	Remove on-call fire engine from Faversham (wholetime fire engine remains).

8.36. Faversham operates an on-call section alongside a wholetime day-crewed station. Over seven years, 411 actual mobilisations were recorded for the on-call fire engine. At full modelled availability, the engine would attend 174 incidents per year. 925 of 1,221 total modelled incidents over seven years occur on the station ground. The modelled activity shows automatic fire alarms as the most frequent call type (324 of 925 local incidents), alongside fires (224) and special service (272). Support to Faversham can be provided by Sittingbourne, Canterbury, Whitstable and Teynham. The wholetime day-crewed fire engine always provides immediate daytime response and five-minute delayed overnight response. Eight on-call colleagues are employed. Availability has been highly variable: ranging from 39.4% evening and weekends in 2020 to as low as 11.0% in 2023. Evening and weekend availability for 2025 was 26.4%. At £86,834 per year, the on-call function is supplementary rather than essential.

8.37. Sittingbourne and Teynham both kept with current arrangements due to demand and access/location factors.

### Thanet reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Margate, Westgate, Ramsgate
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.38. Margate has the highest RBIP premises count in the county (1,150 total, 100 very high risk). High demand, significant deprivation, and a large stock of Victorian multi-occupancy properties.

8.39. All three stations to remain unchanged.

### Tonbridge reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Tonbridge, Paddock Wood
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.40. Tonbridge provides good A21 coverage and specialist water rescue. Paddock Wood has above average demand and risk and good availability.

8.41. Both remain unchanged.

### Tunbridge Wells reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Tunbridge Wells, Southborough
Proposed changes:	Remove on-call fire engine from Tunbridge Wells fire station.

8.42. Tunbridge Wells has 726 RBIP premises including 83 very high and 84 high risk. However, the wholetime shift station provides 24/7 immediate response.

8.43. Over seven years, 466 actual mobilisations were recorded by Tunbridge Wells on-call, with most on the station ground. At full modelled availability, the fire engine would attend 96 incidents per year. Of 672 modelled incidents over seven years, 595 were on Tunbridge Wells' ground, of which 253 were automatic fire alarms — the dominant call type. The wholetime shift fire engine handled all cross-border support to East Sussex (468 mobilisations over the analysis period). The on-call section has six colleagues against an establishment of twelve. Evening and weekend availability has been highly variable, ranging between 13.6% and 51.3%, with no consistent trend. At £67,697 per year, the on-call function is supplementary rather than essential alongside the 24/7 wholetime provision.

8.44. Southborough is well placed to provide second-fire engine support.

### The Weald reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Cranbrook, Hawkhurst, Tenterden
Proposed changes:	No change proposed.

8.45. All three stations serve a geographically spread rural area with above average risk, isolation and demand profiles (Cranbrook and Tenterden) or above average risk combined with good availability (Hawkhurst). All remain unchanged.

### Whitstable reporting cluster

Stations in cluster:	Whitstable, Herne Bay
Proposed changes:	Remove on-call fire engine from Herne Bay (wholetime fire engine remains).

- 8.46. Herne Bay operates an on-call section alongside a wholetime day-crewed station. Over seven years, 261 actual mobilisations were recorded by the on-call fire engine, mostly on the station ground (58.6%), with 7.3% within the wider Whitstable cluster and 34.1% elsewhere in the county. At full modelled availability, the fire engine would attend 173 incidents per year. Of 1,214 modelled incidents over seven years, 1,024 were on Herne Bay's ground, of which 583 were automatic fire alarms - by far the dominant call type. The four-fire engine Whitstable cluster represents an over-provision. The wholetime day-crewed fire engine always provides immediate daytime and five-minute delayed overnight response. There are 52 very high risk RBIP premises in the area. 11 colleagues are employed. Evening and weekend availability has been consistently low ranging from 20.6% (2022) to 38.6% (2020). The section has seen seven new starters since April 2021, two of whom have since left. At £161,349 per year, the on-call function is supplementary rather than essential.
- 8.47. Whitstable is to remain unchanged with national specialist assets and water rescue capability. Both fire engines are well placed to back up a single fire engine at Herne Bay.

## 9. Financial Implications

9.1. Indicative financial implications are summarised below. Final figures will be confirmed following consultation and workforce decisions. A full financial model including transition, implementation and redundancy costs will be presented post-consultation.

Change	Type	Annual (£)
Close Wye on-call	Saving	108,333
Close Chilham on-call	Saving	105,235
Close Westerham on-call	Saving	78,325
Close Grain on-call	Saving	94,497
Close Cliffe on-call	Saving	122,052
Remove Deal on-call fire engine	Saving	140,600
Remove Faversham on-call fire engine	Saving	86,834
Remove Tunbridge Wells on-call fire engine	Saving	67,697
Remove Herne Bay on-call fire engine	Saving	161,349
Indicative gross saving - on-call rationalisation		~ £964,920
Overnight reduction at Dartford and Thames-side	Cost neutral — firefighters redeployed to additional day fire engines	-
7 additional wholetime firefighters	Investment	~ £450,000
Additional wholetime day fire engines - Ashford, Folkestone, Strood	Funded by redeployment + 7 new posts	-
Net annual position (on-call savings minus investment in 7 posts)		~ £514,920

9.2. The overnight reductions at Dartford and Thames-side are cost neutral - the firefighters released are redeployed directly to crew the additional day fire engines at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood. The investment in seven additional wholetime firefighters' costs approximately £450,000 per year. Set against the gross on-call rationalisation saving of approximately £965,000, this produces an indicative net annual saving of approximately £515,000. In addition, the increased number of daytime fire engines reduces the Service's reliance on short-term cover arrangements to achieve its minimum availability model, generating further operational savings that are variable in nature and not included in the figures above.

## 10. Workforce Implications

### Summary

10.1. The proposals have significant workforce implications. A full Workforce People Impact Assessment has been completed and will be published alongside consultation materials. Key implications are:

- Proposed shift changes to 12-hour shifts with start and finish times aligned to 07:00/19:00.
- Relocation of some wholetime colleagues between stations to crew additional day fire engines.
- Potential redundancies or redeployment for on-call colleagues at closing stations, with multiple options available.
- Investment in seven additional wholetime firefighters.

### Wholetime shift changes

10.2. The move to 12-hour shifts is subject to collective bargaining with the FBU. We have undertaken a 4-week pre-consultation period, followed by formal consultation on proposals. The proposed implementation date for these changes is 1 January 2028. The delay is deliberate; we have 2 critical systems going live in 2027 that would be impacted by these changes, and we do not want to risk late-stage development. The 2028 start also allows colleagues to put in place arrangements were required to deal with issues such as childcare or clashes with other employment. Day crewed arrangements will be addressed sooner, following consultation close in July 2026.

10.3. The Workforce PIA identifies specific mitigations for sex, age, disability, caring responsibilities, religious observance and socioeconomic factors. Fatigue risk assessments for the new shift lengths would be completed prior to implementation.

### On-call colleagues - options

10.4. Options have been identified for on-call colleagues at closing stations:

- Voluntary redundancy (statutory + six-week ex-gratia goodwill payment, based on 12-week average activity payment).
- Redeployment to another on-call station.
- Assessment for access to wholetime firefighter pathway, with an annualised hours contract in the interim.
- Suitable alternative Green Book roles where available.
- Annualised hours contract for those who cannot or do not wish to join wholetime.
- Voluntary redundancy, including early access to full retirement benefits for colleagues aged 55 and over.

## **Annualised hours contracts and seasonal demand scaling**

- 10.5. The Service's CRMP 2024–2028 includes a commitment to explore ways of scaling resources to reflect seasonal demand patterns — in particular the increased risk from wildfires and outdoor fires during summer months. The proposed on-call station closures would produce a cohort of on-call colleagues to whom the Service is committed to exploring alternatives to redundancy. One of the options available to those colleagues is an annualised hours contract. The Service intends to use colleagues who choose this route to form a pool that can be deployed to crew additional fire engines during periods of anticipated high demand, such as the wildfire season. This directly supports the CRMP commitment on seasonal demand scaling.
- 10.6. It is important to be clear that the annualised hours pool is a by-product of the closure proposals, not a reason for them. No station has been proposed for closure to generate this pool. The decisions to close stations or remove on-call sections are based entirely on the demand, risk, availability and financial evidence set out in this paper and the supporting annexes.
- 10.7. The initial pool is likely to be limited in size, reflecting the number of affected colleagues who choose this route rather than one of the other available options. The Service does not present this arrangement as a solution to seasonal crewing demand in its own right. Rather, it is intended as a pilot of the annualised hours concept, an opportunity to test how the model operates in practice, understand the workforce and operational implications, and build the evidence base to inform any future expansion. The CRMP commitment on seasonal demand scaling would be taken forward in a fuller and more structured way in due course, informed by what the pilot demonstrates.

## 11. The Case for Change — What Happens if We Do Nothing

11.1. The Fire Authority is required to consider the do-nothing scenario alongside any programme of change. This section sets out the projected position if the current resourcing model is maintained without intervention.

### Availability will continue to deteriorate

11.2. On-call availability at the stations under review has either been low for many years or is in decline. The structural drivers of this include changes in the labour market, the demands of primary employment, and the challenge of retaining colleagues who rarely attend incidents. These problems are not amenable to resolution through investment in recruitment alone. The Service has already invested substantially in the On-Call Pilot Team (approximately £450,000 per year) and part-time contracts (approximately £402,000 in 2025), with limited impact on systemic daytime availability.

11.3. Without change, the stations proposed for closure or fire engine removal will continue to cost a total of just under £1m per year while providing limited operational activity and unreliable cover. The do-nothing position does not preserve the status quo but risks a deteriorating position to worsen.

### The mismatch between demand and availability will grow

11.4. The inverse relationship between daytime demand and daytime availability is a structural feature of the current model, not a temporary anomaly. Demand across Kent and Medway continues to grow, driven by population growth, urban development and increasing incident complexity. Our CRMP identifies increased risk of seasonal demand, particularly during the daytime because of wildfires. On-call daytime availability shows no prospect of material improvement. Without rebalancing wholetime resource from overnight to daytime, the period of highest demand will continue to be served by the fewest available engines, and the frequency of entering degraded service will increase.

11.5. Since January 2018 the Service has spent approximately 160 hours in degradation. The trajectory is upward from 31 instances in 2019 to 107 in 2025. Without intervention, degradation frequency will continue to rise as on-call availability continues to be challenging and demand grows.

### Response time performance will decline

11.6. The Service currently performs at 71.5% against its urban response standard and 70.4% against its rural standard, both below the 75% target. The current model does not deliver the response performance the Authority has committed to provide. Without the additional daytime fire engines that the proposals enable, there is no realistic mechanism for improving this position. The do-nothing scenario means continued underperformance against the Authority's own standards.

## **Financial sustainability will be at risk**

11.7. The Service faces ongoing funding pressure. Continuing to resource stations and on-call sections that deliver low, unreliable or declining operational value consumes budget that could be better directed at risk-based response, including prevention and protection activity. The cumulative cost of the nine on-call elements proposed for rationalisation is just under £1m per year. In a constrained financial environment, maintaining this spend for very limited operational return is not a responsible use of public money.

## **12. Alternatives Considered**

12.1. In developing the proposals, several alternative approaches were examined. This section sets out the main alternatives considered and explains why they were not pursued, or why they were pursued only in part. This is relevant both to the Authority's decision-making and to the legal robustness of the consultation process.

### **Increased investment in on-call recruitment and retention**

12.2. The Service has invested significantly in on-call sustainability, including the On-Call Pilot Team, part-time contracts, and targeted recruitment campaigns. These measures have had some positive effect at specific stations but have not resolved the systemic issue of daytime availability. The fundamental challenge, that on-call colleagues are unavailable during primary employment hours, cannot be overcome through recruitment investment alone – although that remains important across viable on-call stations. For stations where demand is also low, additional investment in recruitment would not be justified by the operational return even if it succeeded.

12.3. Where stations have reasonable demand, risk or location characteristics, investment in on-call sustainability remains the right approach and is reflected in the proposals. Hoo, for example, is specifically identified for targeted recruitment investment as part of the Strood cluster changes.

### **Wholetime conversion of on-call stations**

12.4. Converting some on-call stations to wholetime crewing would address the availability problem directly but at substantially greater cost. The annual cost of a wholetime section (approx. £1.5m for shift and £800k for day crewed) significantly exceeds that of an on-call station (approx. £125k), and most of the stations subject to closure proposals have demand profiles that would not justify wholetime investment. For stations where a wholetime presence is already provided (Deal, Faversham, Herne Bay, Tunbridge Wells), the wholetime fire engine already delivers the primary response - the on-call section is supplementary, and conversion of the on-call element to wholetime would represent a major investment for marginal additional operational benefit.

### **Rebalancing using part-time and flexible contracts only**

12.5. Part-time contracts and flexible hours have been used to bolster on-call availability but have not delivered reliable daytime cover at most stations - partly because colleagues' control when they make themselves available, rather than this being determined by organisational need. The current cost of part-time contracts is approximately £402,000 per year for limited and unpredictable operational return. The proposals reduce the impact of this uncertain supplementary capacity by providing additional wholetime day fire engines at the locations where they would have the greatest impact.

## **Converting day-crewed stations to wholetime shift**

- 12.6. The Service considered whether any of its nine day-crewed stations would justify conversion to wholetime shift crewing. Two factors informed this assessment. First, the demand profile at day-crewed stations does not justify the step-change in cost that wholetime shift represents. The transition from day-crewed to wholetime shift carries a significant and ongoing revenue cost — additional firefighters, additional on-costs, and the full-time occupation of the station — and the incident volumes and risk profiles at day-crewed locations do not produce sufficient operational benefit to justify that investment. Second, the evidence did not support conversion at any day-crewed station when assessed on demand and risk grounds alone.

## **Extending overnight second fire engine reductions to Maidstone and Canterbury**

- 12.7. The Service operates four multi-pump wholetime shift stations: Dartford, Thames-side, Maidstone and Canterbury. In addition to an overnight reduction in the second fire engine at Dartford and Thames-side, the Service considered whether the same approach should be applied to Maidstone and Canterbury. Following colleague engagement and further data analysis, it was decided not to proceed at either location. The reasons are set out below.
- 12.8. A key factor supporting the overnight reductions at Dartford and Thames-side is that the two stations are in proximity and able to provide each other with reliable cover overnight. That mutual support dynamic does not replicate at Maidstone and Canterbury. Both stations are more geographically isolated from other wholetime stations, and Canterbury in particular sits within a cluster of on-call and day-crewed stations that cannot provide the same assurance of overnight support. On-call stations cannot guarantee availability. Day-crewed stations, whilst providing immediate response during the day, have a five-minute additional overnight turnout time as colleagues respond from home. Removing Canterbury's second fire engine overnight, the very period when day-crewed turnout times are longer, would have created a gap in second fire engine cover that the surrounding station mix cannot reliably fill. At Maidstone, the absence of wholetime stations in proximity, combined with concerns about second fire engine coverage into The Weald at night, led to the same conclusion.
- 12.9. A further factor is the height vehicle. The Service operates three height vehicles, based at Ashford, Maidstone and Canterbury. Reducing either of the latter two stations to a single fire engine overnight would have meant the height vehicle alternating with that fire engine for crew — the height vehicle would be unavailable whenever the fire engine was mobilised, and the fire engine unavailable whenever the height vehicle was deployed. To address this, the Service considered an arrangement in which one fire engine would be retained overnight with the height vehicle primarily crewed as a separate resource. However, when the colleague numbers required to deliver this arrangement were worked through, the establishment needed was not materially different from retaining two fire engines and the height vehicle in the current configuration. The

cost saving would have been negligible while the operational risk, loss of a fire engine or a height vehicle depending on which resource was deployed first, would have been real. The current arrangement of retaining two fire engines at both Maidstone and Canterbury at all times was therefore maintained.

### **Removing overnight second pumps from day-crewed stations**

12.10. Alongside the overnight reduction proposals at Dartford and Thames-side, both wholetime shift stations, the Service considered whether a similar approach could be applied at day-crewed stations where a second on-call pump is attached. This option was considered but was not pursued. The reason is that the on-call second pumps at day-crewed stations are already unable to provide reliable daytime availability due to the structural on-call availability challenge this review addresses throughout. The value of an on-call second pump at a day-crewed station is therefore concentrated overnight, when on-call availability improves. Removing overnight cover at those locations would have eliminated the one period in which the on-call section provides meaningful additional capacity, without resolving the daytime problem. Where the evidence supported removal of the on-call section entirely, rather than just overnight, that approach has been taken through the four attached on-call section removals proposed at Deal, Faversham, Herne Bay and Tunbridge Wells.

### **Deferring the review**

12.11. Deferring the review would not alter the structural position but would delay the operational and financial benefits, prolong the period of below-target response performance, and risk worsening the degradation trend. The financial pressure facing the Authority does not permit indefinite deferral. The review was brought forward from its originally intended timeline precisely because the combination of on-call decline, financial constraint and availability-demand mismatch required earlier intervention than planned.

### **Options considered and removed at scoping stage**

12.12. The following options were identified during the initial scoping of the review but were not taken forward for detailed analysis or modelling. In each case the reason for not proceeding is noted. Recording these options and the rationale for their removal forms part of the evidence base for the Authority's decision-making.

### **Remove all on-call stations and use the savings to fund additional wholetime capacity**

12.13. This option would have involved closing all 49 on-call sections and standalone stations across Kent and Medway, generating approximately £5 million in annual savings, and using those savings to fund additional wholetime shift sections at new or existing locations. The financial modelling indicated this would have funded approximately three to four additional wholetime shift sections. This was not proceeded with because three/four additional wholetime sections would not come close to replacing the geographic coverage and resilience depth provided by the on-call network. Large parts of rural and semi-rural Kent and Medway

would have been left without any local fire engine. The cover model would have had no resilience in depth beyond the wholetime tier, leaving the county significantly exposed during periods of high demand or major incidents. This option was removed from further consideration on the basis that it would represent a material reduction in public safety across a large proportion of the county.

#### **Convert the entire Service to on-call crewing**

12.14. This option would have involved moving to an entirely on-call model across all stations, eliminating the wholetime and day-crewed tiers entirely. Whilst this would have generated very substantial savings, it was not taken forward for detailed analysis. The fundamental problem the review is designed to address is the mismatch between availability and demand. Given the challenges with on-call availability, a model in which the Service depends wholly on on-call cover would have worsened rather than resolved the core availability-demand mismatch. An entirely on-call model could not guarantee fire cover at the standard the Authority is required to maintain and would have produced severe adverse impacts on response times. This option was not operationally or legally defensible and was removed from further consideration at the initial scoping stage.

#### **Introduce a wholetime or day-crewed station in The Weald**

12.15. The option of establishing a new wholetime or day-crewed station in The Weald was considered as a means of strengthening daytime cover in the area. This was not taken forward because the operational demand profile in The Weald does not justify the significant capital and revenue cost of a new wholetime or day-crewed facility. The existing on-call stations at Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and Tenterden already provide good coverage, and the KAIR profile does not identify a gap that a new station in this area would materially address. The investment required would not have produced a proportionate operational benefit relative to other uses of that resource identified through the review.

#### **Build a new station between Whitstable and Herne Bay, closing both existing locations**

12.16. The option of building a single new station at a location between Whitstable and Herne Bay, which would serve both communities from one site, was previously examined as part of the 2012/13 IRMP process, which identified a potential over-provision in the area. The option was reconsidered during the scoping of this review. This option was not taken forward because the operational benefits that a combined-station model might deliver would not have been sufficient to justify the capital investment at this time. The proposals instead address the Whitstable cluster through the more proportionate step of removing the on-call section at Herne Bay, while retaining the wholetime day-crewed fire engine at both stations, maintaining geographic spread of resource.

#### **Reprofiling on-call fire engines to smaller or lighter vehicles**

12.17. This option would have involved retaining on-call stations that are currently proposed for closure but replacing the standard pumping fire engine with a

smaller or lighter vehicle, such as a tactical response vehicle or light rescue unit, on the basis that a lower-cost, lower-capability resource might be more proportionate to local demand than a full pump. This option was considered but was not taken forward. The decisions to close or remove on-call resources at the stations concerned were driven primarily by demand and risk data, not by availability alone. Where demand is low and the KAIR risk profile does not support the cost of a fire engine of any type, deploying a smaller vehicle does not resolve the fundamental question of whether the station remains viable. The argument for retaining these locations, even in a reduced-capability form, did not stack up when assessed against the evidence. Investing in new or replacement specialist vehicles at stations whose operational justification is already marginal would not represent responsible use of public money.

## 13. A Whole Systems Approach

- 13.1. The proposals outlined in our Resource Review are not developed in isolation. Instead, we take a whole systems approach to ensuring that these proposals form part of a wider systems approach to improving our operational capability and ensuring the safety of our customers and our colleagues.

### Prevention is better than cure

- 13.2. We target prevention activity at the people most likely to experience harm such as older people living alone, people with dementia, those with mobility limitations, and households in areas of deprivation. Through home fire safety visits, safe and well referrals, and targeted campaigns, we reduce risk at source. As the resource base is reshaped through this review, that targeting will become more important rather than less. Preventing fires and emergencies from occurring in the first place directly reduces the demand placed on response.
- 13.3. We use our protection function to equivalent effect. By ensuring that the highest-risk premises such as care homes, houses in multiple occupation, higher-risk residential buildings, are compliant and properly managed, we reduce the likelihood of the large, complex incidents that place the greatest demands on operational crews. A building that is properly compartmented, with maintained fire doors and a tested evacuation plan, gives occupants a better chance of surviving and gives crews an increased chance of making an effective intervention.
- 13.4. We also focus prevention and engagement activity on areas of emerging and seasonal risk that bear directly on operational demand. Through wildfire prevention work such as vegetation management, landowner engagement, and customer risk communication during periods of elevated fire danger, we seek to shape and moderate one of the fastest-growing demands on our response resources. Through water safety partnership work we target the locations and demographics most associated with drowning incidents. Through road safety activity we focus on the collision hotspots that generate some of the most resource-intensive responses we attend.
- 13.5. Across all these areas, we ensure that prevention, protection and response draw on a shared intelligence picture. The same risk data that informs where fire engines are positioned and how stations are crewed also drive our targeting of home safety visits, protection inspections and seasonal campaigns.

### Providing the right equipment, tactics, and training

- 13.6. Speed of response is not the only factor in delivering successful outcomes at incidents. Weight of initial attack, the tactics used, and the execution of those tactics is also of huge importance.
- 13.7. Our current fire engines have 1600 litre water tanks. Our CRMP identified increasing problems with the reliability of fire hydrants and the potential for reduced flow rates. As a result, we have specified our new fleet of fire engines, the first of which will be delivered in summer 2027, with larger water tanks. Most

of them will have 3000 litre tanks – a significant uplift on current capability. When considered considering the resource review proposals, this increase in capability will improve the effectiveness of initial attack that a single fire engine and crew can have on a fire. We have also specified ‘smart’ pumping controls, reducing the need for a firefighter to be always at the pump, allowing them to undertake other tasks.

- 13.8. We are also investing in 5 new 8000 litre bulk water carriers. These will be strategically deployed around the county and will enable us to quickly bring large quantities of water to bear – supporting the initial attack.
- 13.9. Over the last 2 years we have been focusing on introducing a variety of firefighting tactics allowing crews to be more effective at building fires. This includes the use of innovative, alongside traditional, external attack methods. Focusing on rapidly reducing the size of a fire until additional resources can be brought to bear for a safe internal attack. Training to support the embedding of these tactics will be enabled through the opening of our new real fire training facility in Ashford. This is a 5 floor, multi-room immersive live fire training complex. It allows crews to practice a variety of tactics and scenarios. The new facility will be open for use in January 2027.

## 14. Conclusion

- 14.1. Our Strategic Case sets out a clear and evidence-based rationale for change. It demonstrates that the current resourcing model no longer reflects the pattern of risk and demand across Kent and Medway, with improved availability at its strongest when demand is lowest and with growing reliance on fragile on-call availability during the day. The proposals set out in this review are intended to correct that imbalance by moving resource to the times and places where it would have the greatest impact, while preserving the Service's statutory responsibilities, strengthening operational resilience, and supporting long-term financial sustainability.
- 14.2. The evidence presented shows that these proposals are proportionate, targeted and capable of delivering a better alignment between resources and community need. They do not represent a withdrawal from public safety, but a reconfiguration designed to improve daytime cover, strengthen response to the incidents that present the greatest life-safety risk, and make better use of public money. No final decision will be taken until the full consultation has been completed, all feedback has been considered, and the Authority has reviewed the equality, workforce and operational implications in the round. Subject to that process, this review provides a strong basis for the Authority to proceed to consultation on the proposals and to consider change as a necessary and responsible response to the challenges set out in this paper.

Resourcing Review

# Data and Modelling Overview

## Impact of proposals to re-align fire engines from nights to days

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

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# Executive Summary

## Our Resourcing Review: What We Found and What We're Proposing

Kent Fire and Rescue Service protect around 1.9 million people across Kent and Medway. That is a big responsibility. It means we must make sure that when something goes wrong, a house fire, a road crash, a flood, we can get there as quickly as possible with the right people and equipment.

To do that well, we need to make sure our fire engines are in the right places at the right times. And when we looked carefully at the evidence, we found that right now, they aren't.

### What we found

We spent time looking at seven years' worth of data — nearly every incident we attended from April 2018 to March 2025. Our data runs in financial years. We started this review in mid-2025, which is why the most recent financial year is not fully included in our proposals. But seven years of data is a strong and reliable base from which to draw conclusions, and it told us something clear: we are busiest during the day.

Incident demand starts to climb at around 7am and stays high right through into the evening. Road crashes, in particular, happen far more often during daylight hours.

But here is the problem. During the day, we also have the fewest fire engines available.

This happens because a big part of our cover comes from on-call firefighters — people who have other jobs and respond from home when their pager goes off. When on-call firefighters are at work during the day, they often cannot respond. So, the number of fire engines we can actually use drops during the very hours when we need them most.

At night it is the other way around. On-call availability is much better, so we have more fire engines ready to respond — but far fewer incidents to go to.

This mismatch has been with us for a while, but it is getting worse. The problem is that during the day low fire engine numbers means it only takes a few medium size incidents to put pressure on our service. We have entered what we call “degradation” — a point where so few fire engines are available that our ability to respond effectively is seriously reduced — on 612 separate occasions since 2017. That is not a small number, and this trend is increasing year on year.

## What we are proposing

We are not proposing to cut the number of wholetime firefighters or close any wholetime fire stations. What we are proposing is to move some of our resources from the times they are least needed to the times they are most needed.

Specifically, we are proposing to add three additional fire engines during the day at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone. These would be crewed by wholetime firefighters who work full-time shifts. We would gain these additional resources for this from two places: seven new wholetime firefighter posts that we are planning to create, and the overnight second fire engines currently based at Dartford and Thames-side, which we are proposing to withdraw. Those fire engines would be used to crew the new daytime cover instead.

This means that from 7am to 7pm, Kent would have more fire engines available than it does today. At night, Dartford and Thames-side would each have one fire engine instead of two. Their neighbouring stations would provide backup, and existing mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring fire services remain in place.

Our modelling predicts that during the day, response times at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood would improve, in some cases by more than a minute. Overnight, response times at Dartford and Thames-side are predicted to increase modestly, by 20 - 40 seconds in urban areas. We believe this is a proportionate trade-off: more fire engines, faster, during the hours when demand is at its highest - while maintaining safe and resilient cover overnight. The full modelled data is set out later in this document for anyone who wants to explore it in detail.

## What the data tells us about risk

We know some people will ask: is it safe to have fewer fire engines overnight? It is a fair question, and we have looked at it carefully.

Response time always matters. Getting to an incident quickly gives us the best possible chance of making a difference, and that is true at any time of day or night. But response time is one of several factors that shape what happens at an emergency, and the evidence shows it does not act alone.

For building fires, our data shows that the single biggest factor in whether an incident becomes serious is how quickly the fire is discovered — not how quickly we arrive after the call is made. Most of the very worst fires we attend at night have already spread significantly before anyone raises the alarm. Modern furnishings mean fire development can be rapid. At the most advanced stages, outcomes are determined primarily by discovery time and early escape rather than response time. The most powerful protection against serious fire harm is a working smoke alarm that wakes people up early, giving them time to escape and giving us time to make a difference.

The modest overnight increase in overnight response times at Dartford and Thames-side has been weighed carefully against the broader improvement in daytime performance across the county. It means we have considered these slight increases against the much larger improvements in daytime response across a wider area and concluded that the overall picture is safer and better for communities across Kent and Medway.

For road crashes, response time is even more directly linked to outcomes, and road crashes happen far more often during the day. The improvements we are proposing at Ashford, Folkestone, and Strood mean faster responses to exactly the kinds of incidents where speed makes the biggest difference.

We have also modelled the impact of our proposals on what we call “second pump” performance (or “lag”), how quickly a second fire engine arrives after the first. Across the county, our proposals are predicted to improve this by over five per cent in urban areas, reducing the average wait for a second fire engine by around a minute and a half. That is a meaningful, county-wide improvement.

### What about on-call stations?

We are also proposing changes to some of our on-call stations. In a small number of areas, we have found that on-call fire engines are very rarely called out, are often unavailable when they are needed, and serve communities where the risk profile is low. In those cases, we believe the money could be used more effectively, including through increased prevention work in those communities, such as home fire safety visits. We are carrying out a full public consultation before any decisions are made, and we will be listening carefully to what communities tell us.

Most of our stations are not affected by these proposals at all.

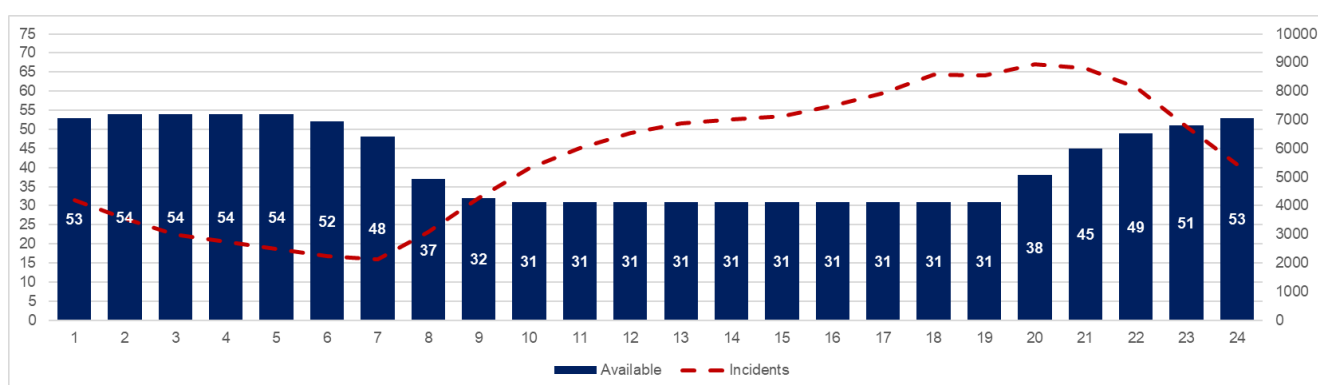
### What happens if we do nothing?

Without intervention, on-call availability is projected to continue declining, and daytime cover will become increasingly difficult to sustain. On-call availability is also declining across the country, not just in Kent. The cost of maintaining fire engines that are frequently unavailable and rarely needed is not a responsible use of public money.

## Introduction

As part of our Resourcing Review, we identified that our fire engine availability does not match incident demand. We took data from the last 7 years and analysed what times of the day we were busiest and compared that with how many fire engines we had available on average.

This identified that we have a contradictory relationship between our availability and our demand. The trend is that we are busiest during the day, with incident demand increasing from around 0700 until a peak at 2100 when demand begins to subside. Conversely our fire engines are most available overnight. From around 0700 availability begins to decrease as on call fire engines become unavailable. This lower level of availability continues until around 1900 when on call fire engines start to become available again.



The red line shows the incident demand trend (the total number of incidents over the 7 year period are indicated on the right hand side), whilst the blue bars show the trend relating to the number of fire engines available (total fire engines on the left hand side).

Instead of keeping 2 fire engines on standby through the night, we want to use them during the day, when there are more fires and emergencies. This means 3 extra fire engines would be ready during the day. The 2 fire engines we'd be moving are currently based at Dartford and Thames-side. We'd send them to Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone, so those areas have more cover during the daytime.

The table below shows the current vs proposed fire engine availability at wholetime shift locations:

Station	Number of wholetime shift fire engines available			
	Day		Night	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
Dartford	2	2	2	1
Thames-side	2	2	2	1
Maidstone	2	2	2	2
Canterbury	2	2	2	2
Strood	1	2	1	1
Ashford	1	2	1	1
Folkestone	1	2	1	1
Chatham	1	1	1	1
Rochester	1	1	1	1
Margate	1	1	1	1
Ramsgate	1	1	1	1
Dover	1	1	1	1
Tunbridge Wells	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>

In coming to our proposals, we have considered the following data:

- Percentage of time spent in our levels of degradation (a reduction in our cover)
- First fire engine response times
- Second fire engine response times (called “second pump lag”)
- Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in fires – time of day and response time
- Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions – time of day and response time
- Profile of severity of building damage in relation to 2<sup>nd</sup> fire engine attendance time
- Usage rates of fire engines
- Usage rates and response times of height vehicles
- Benefits and disbenefits associated with other types of specialist fire engine
- Risk profiles of the affected areas
- Productivity analysis
- Impact on number of requests for cross border support

## How do we produce and use data?

Our approach to producing and using data for this review is designed to provide a robust, proportionate and realistic assessment of how changes to fire engine availability may affect operational performance and risk. We use historical incident data, operational availability information and recognised modelling techniques to understand both current performance and the likely impact of proposed changes.

### Data Sources and Time Period

The analysis draws primarily on seven years of incident and mobilisation data, covering the period from 2018 to 2024. This period has been selected to ensure that the dataset is large enough to smooth out year-to-year fluctuations while remaining representative of current risk, demand and operating practices. It also includes information from both before and after Covid, which means unusual one-off events are less likely to skew the results.

Incidents involving cross-border mobilisations (e.g. into East Sussex, London) are included in the modelling because, while they are not influenced by our resourcing decisions, they do affect the availability of our own fire engines and therefore the overall resilience of the Service.

### Modelling Approach

To assess the impact of change, the Service uses a computer package called a Workload Modelling system to simulate how incidents are allocated to available fire engines and how quickly fire engines can respond. Models are built using our own incident data, fire engine locations, workforce duty systems, reaction times and patterns of availability.

All of the analysis starts from a "reality base case" — which is basically a snapshot of how things actually work right now.

This starting snapshot considers where all the fire engines are actually based, how crews work their shifts, how often vehicles are available (including part-time on-call crews), and how sharing specialist vehicles affects the number of fire engines ready to respond. Every proposed change is then compared against this snapshot, so we can see exactly what difference each change would make, rather than just looking at numbers on their own.

Alongside the reality base case, additional high-level models are used to understand the relative value of locations and duty systems. These support strategic understanding but are not used on their own to justify change.

Each model is run separately for each year of data, and the results are then averaged. This ensures that outcomes are not driven by isolated spikes in demand or unusual operating conditions.

## What the Models Measure

The modelling focuses on outputs that are directly linked to operational effectiveness and public safety, including:

- First fire engine response times
- Second fire engine response times (second pump lag)
- Changes in fire engine mobilisation patterns and utilisation

The results are looked at area by area and fire engine by fire engine, to see where things would get better, where they would stay the same, and where there might be problems that need to be fixed or looked into further.

## Interpreting the Results

The modelling is designed to inform decision-making rather than provide precise predictions. While it provides a strong indication of relative impact, it cannot fully account for all real-world variables, such as live traffic conditions, exact fire engine movements, or the dynamic decisions made by control operators during complex incidents.

For this reason, the results are interpreted alongside professional judgement and wider risk information, rather than being considered in isolation. When comparing options, the emphasis is placed on differences from the reality base case, not on the absolute figures produced by the model.

## How the Data Is Used

The data and modelling outputs are used to:

- Assess whether resources are aligned with risk and demand at different times of day
- Understand the implications of change for response performance and service resilience
- Identify benefits, disbenefits and areas requiring more work to reduce the risk
- Support transparent, evidence-based decision-making

This approach ensures that proposals are grounded in operational reality, reflect known limitations, and focus on improving outcomes for the public rather than simply redistributing resources.

## How Long We Spend in Degradation of Service

This section examines how often the Service operates within each of its fire engine availability levels and, critically, how frequently it falls below the normal operating range.

This data is important because overall Service resilience is determined not just by whether fire engines are available at certain locations, but by how many are available across the county at any given time. As availability decreases, the ability to respond effectively to either incidents happening at the same time or escalating incidents diminishes, and average response times increase. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has previously highlighted the importance of maintaining service-wide resilience, not just minimum fire engine availability.

The data shows how availability fluctuates across the year and demonstrates the contrast between daytime and night-time resilience. It highlights the reduced resilience of daytime availability, driven primarily by reduced on-call availability, and explains why comparatively few fire engines need to be committed during the day before the Service enters a degraded state.

While periods of degradation may be relatively infrequent, the consequences when they do occur are significant. The purpose of this analysis is therefore to understand how the proposals improve consistency in operating within the normal availability range, rather than simply reducing isolated instances of degradation.

It is not possible to model post-change degradation levels with complete accuracy, as degradation is influenced by multiple dynamic factors such as incident clustering, abstraction (number of fire engines not available due to break downs, maintenance etc), and events also happening across the region causing pressures. For this reason, this data is used to illustrate risk and resilience rather than to provide deterministic predictions.

The Service has 5 levels of fire engine availability, defined as follows:

	Fire engine numbers
1 – Above normal operating level	45 or more
2 – Normal operating range	32 – 44
3 – Initial alert level	25 – 31
4 – Secondary alert level	19 – 24
5 - Degradation	Fewer than 19

We have 26 wholtime fire engines who we can guarantee to be available day and night. That means we need at least 6 on call fire engines to be available to get to the lower end of our normal operating range. At night we have good on call availability, meaning we have an average of 53 fire engines available. But during the day on call availability is far more unreliable. We have to put significant amounts of work into

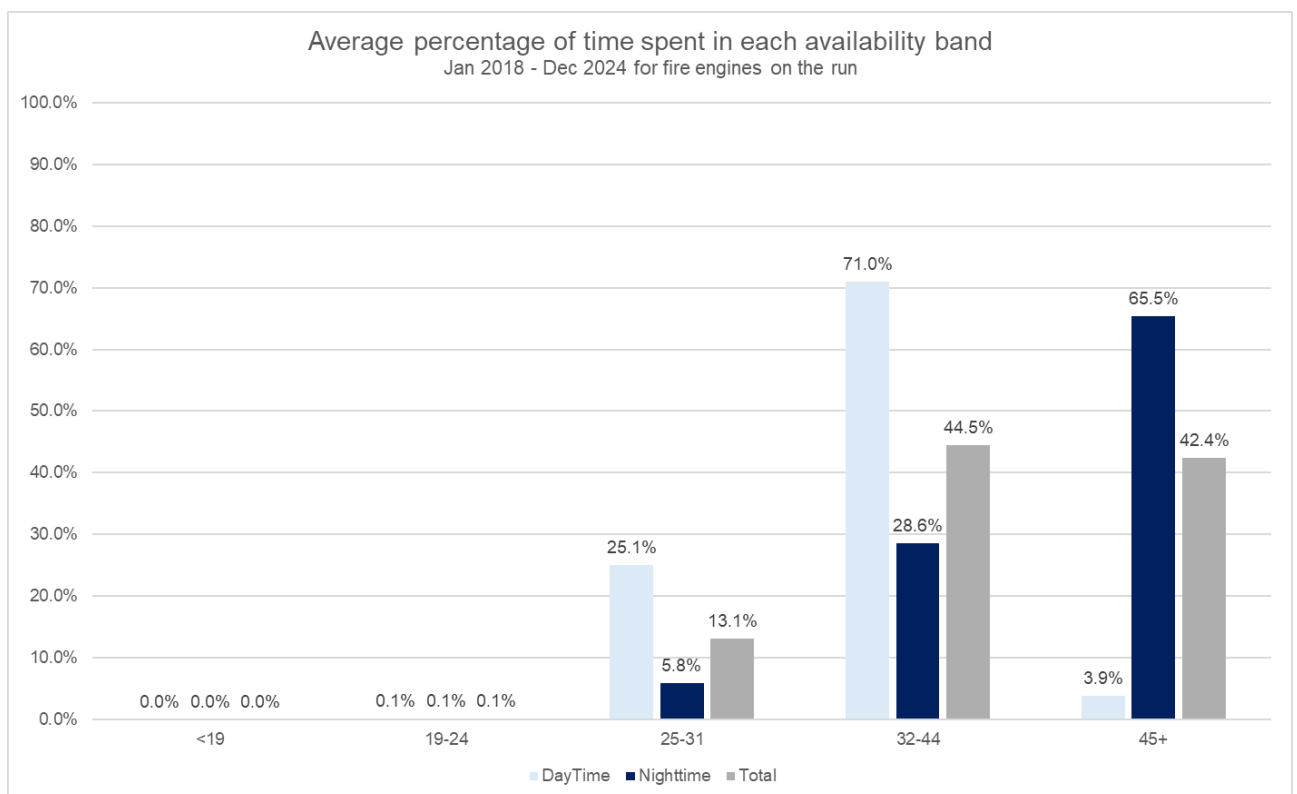
resourcing on call fire engines every day. On average we manage to achieve 31 total fire engines during the day (26 WT + 5 On Call).

If we have 31 fire engines available, this means there only needs to be 13 fire engines deployed before we enter degradation of Service.

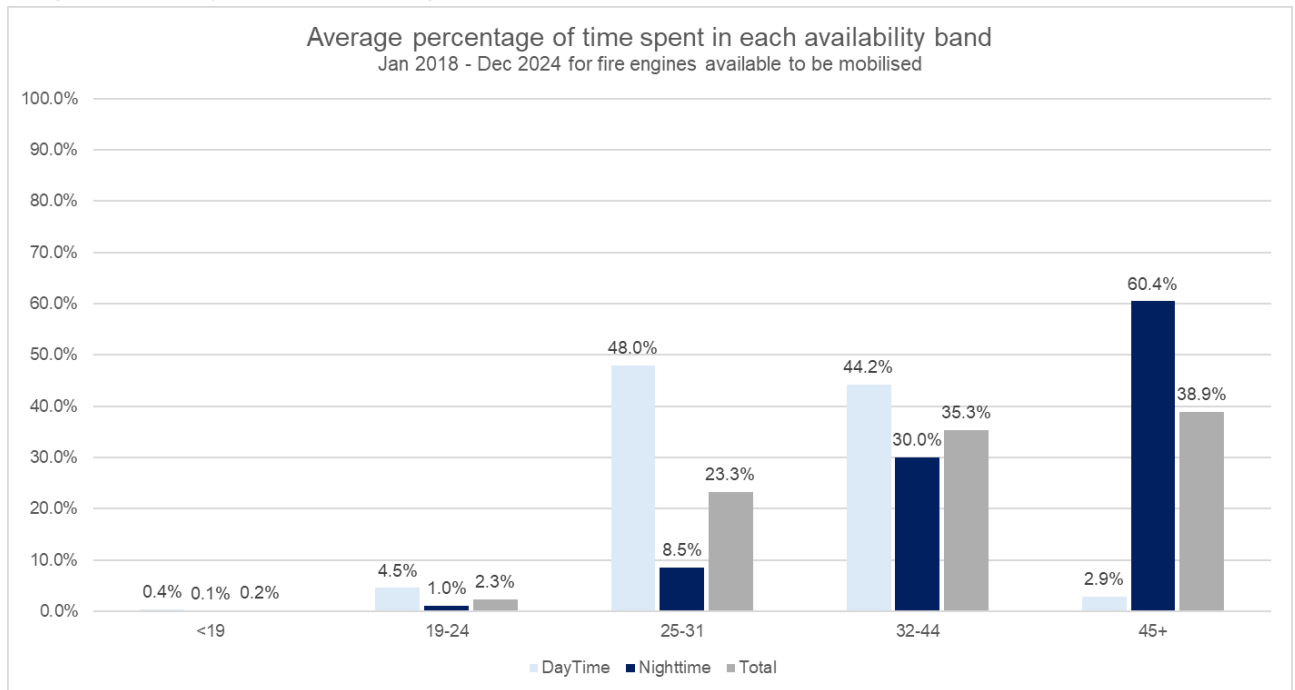
The charts and tables below show the availability of our fire engines across the years split into the percentage of time availability sat within each of our operating levels. There are two sections. The first details the operating levels against the number of fire engines on the run and does not consider those that are in use at incidents to be unavailable. The second section represents the same data but only counts the number of fire engines that are available to be sent to incidents which means those times where fire engines are in use at incidents have been removed from the calculations.

### Fire engines ‘on the run’

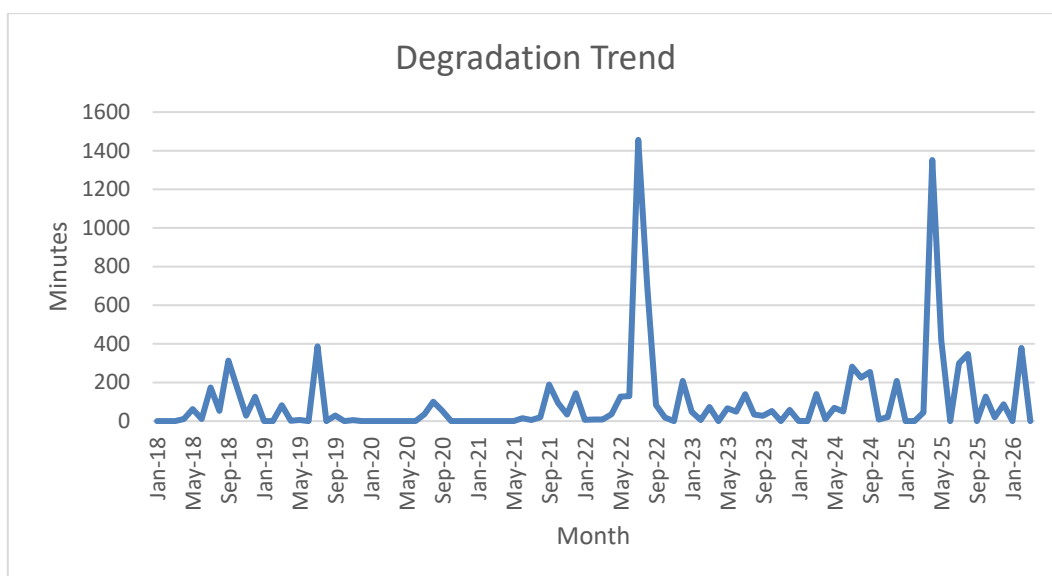
During daytime hours, we most consistently operate within the 32–44 range but spend around a quarter of our time in level 3 (or “initial alert level”) availability – this is when we have between 25 and 31 fire engines available. At night, this shifts to 45+, reflecting the higher availability of on-call fire engines shown above.



## Fire engines available to be mobilised (fire engines on the run minus fire engines busy at incidents):



Once the impacts of incidents are included, the time spent in the normal operating range (32-44) and the initial alert level (25-31) are evenly split during the day. The evening picture remains the same as above which is to be expected as there are more fire engines on the run which can absorb the incident activity with fewer impacts. The time spent in degradation (<19 fire engines) is relatively very low. However, the impact of entering degradation is very high, and has resulted in the declaration of major incidents. Since January 2018 we have spent approximately 160 hours in degradation. Whilst this is low given the length of the analysis period, the trend towards degradation is increasing. We anticipate this to become a more frequent occurrence as spate conditions, such as wildfire and flooding, happen more often.



*Note: This chart shows the trend specific to time spent in degradation. It illustrates the increasing frequency and duration of degradation events, and notable spikes in warmer months.*

For further detailed information on the number of days that have at least one occurrence of degradation in recent financial years can be found at **appendix 1**.

## First fire engine response times

First fire engine response time is a key performance and risk measure, particularly for life-risk incidents such as fires and road traffic collisions.

This information matters because how quickly a fire engine arrives is one of the things that can affect what happens at an emergency. Any plan that changes which fire engines are available needs to be checked to make sure response times don't get unacceptably worse. So, the analysis looks at how long responses have taken in the past, combines that with predictions of how the proposed changes would affect response times, and then looks at all this alongside wider evidence about what really makes a difference to people caught up in fires or road accidents.

The data shows how first fire engine response times vary by time of day and geography, and whether reducing night-time second pump availability has any material impact on the arrival of the first fire engine. It allows comparison between current performance and projected performance under the proposed resourcing model, helping to identify whether any unintended response time consequences may arise.

We also consider whether the change is statistically significant. For example, a reduction of 1% on target may not indicate a drop in performance in real terms.

### Modelled results

Results of the model which removes the wholetime shift fire engines from Dartford and Thames-side at night and places three-day duty pumps on at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood (these three are on 12 hour shifts 7am-7pm).

The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents would be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The range of average reality turnout times for the fire engines 2018-2024 period are detailed in the table below. This ultimately demonstrates there is little difference in the turnout times of wholetime resources when at base (model = 90 seconds), and that there is a larger variance for on-call fire engines on delayed response (model = 300 seconds).

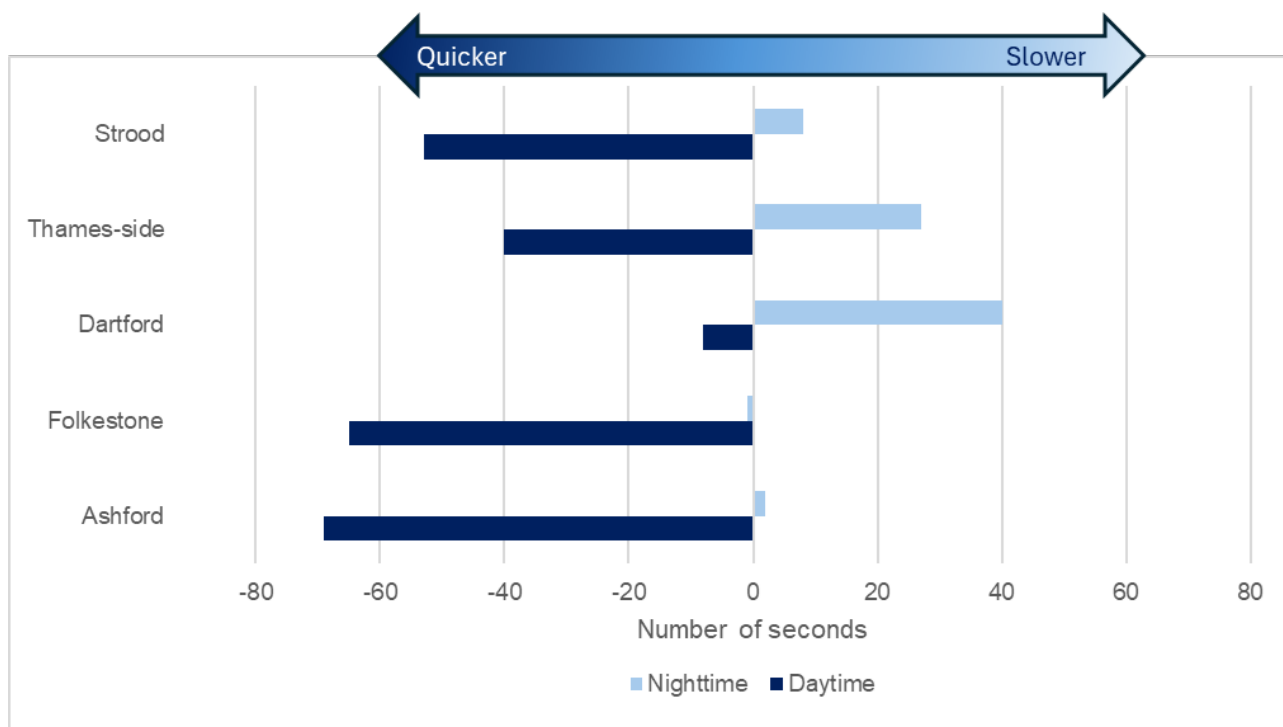
	Average	Maximum	Minimum
<b>Wholetime Shift</b>			
Available at base	01:37	02:04	01:18
Delayed Response	--	--	--
<b>Wholetime Day Crewed</b>			
Available at base	01:31	01:47	01:15
Delayed Response	05:03	05:33	04:05
<b>On Call</b>			
Available at base	--	--	--
Delayed Response	05:40	07:13	04:10

The result of the impact on the first fire engine response time is a potential reduction in performance of 0.19% in urban areas and 1.44% in rural areas. However, in terms of the average time for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident, the model suggests there would be no change in rural areas and a prediction of just five seconds longer in urban areas. The tables below show this:

Response times % performance	Potential change
Emergency Urban 1st Fire Engine	-0.19%
Emergency Rural 1st Fire Engine	-1.44%

Average response time	Average time in model	Potential change
Emergency Urban 1st Fire Engine	08:24	-5 secs
Emergency Rural 1st Fire Engine	13:40	No change

For those stations where the crewing arrangements are proposed to change, the chart and table below detail the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents on the station ground. Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to improve during the day and in some cases remain unchanged at night. Where overnight increases are predicted, these are modest and bounded: the longest predicted potential increases at night are at Dartford and Thames-side, at 41 seconds and 27 seconds respectively in urban areas. These increases must be read alongside the significant daytime improvements at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood, and in the context of the wider evidence on the factors that determine incident outcomes, which is set out in the casualty and severity sections of this document.



Note: This chart shows that all 5 locations see quicker response times during the day under the proposals (dark blue bars on the left), whilst the light blue bars to the right show where response times are slower at night.

The possible new average response times shown in the table below is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

	Emergency Urban		Emergency Rural	
	Poss Variance	Poss New Time	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
<b>Dartford</b>	3 secs slower	7 mins 46 secs	39 secs slower	10 mins 54 secs
Day time	20 secs quicker	7 mins 32 secs	41 secs slower	10 mins 50 secs
Nighttime	41 secs slower	8 mins 9 secs	36 secs slower	11 mins 1 secs
<b>Thames-side</b>	11 secs quicker	6 mins 59 secs	17 secs quicker	10 mins 37 secs
Day time	39 secs quicker	6 mins 29 secs	48 secs quicker	10 mins 13 secs
Nighttime	27 secs slower	7 mins 40 secs	23 secs slower	11 mins 7 secs
<b>Ashford</b>	43 secs quicker	7 mins 18 secs	36 secs quicker	11 mins 40 secs
Day time	1 min 13 secs quicker	6 mins 44 secs	58 secs quicker	11 mins 30 secs
Nighttime	2 secs slower	8 mins 10 secs	2 secs slower	11 mins 57 secs
<b>Folkestone</b>	45 secs quicker	5 mins 51 secs	23 secs quicker	12 mins 19 secs
Day time	1 min 11 secs quicker	5 mins 26 secs	39 secs quicker	11 mins 44 secs
Nighttime	2 secs quicker	6 mins 32 secs	3 secs slower	13 mins 16 secs
<b>Strood</b>	30 secs quicker	6 mins 41 secs	25 secs quicker	8 mins 43 secs
Day time	52 secs quicker	6 mins 14 secs	54 secs quicker	8 mins 10 secs
Nighttime	1 sec quicker	7 mins 19 secs	23 secs slower	9 mins 38 secs

## Second fire engine response times

Second fire engine response time, often referred to as “second pump lag” (we call fire engines pumps in the service as they pump water), measures the time between the arrival of the first and second fire engines at an incident.

This data is important because the second fire engine plays a role in resourcing the incident. Extended second pump lag can reduce initial firefighting intervention, particularly at fires which are getting worse.

The data shows current average second pump lag times and the difference between day and night performance. It also illustrates where the proposed changes improve daytime second pump attendance by increasing the availability of nearby fire engines, even where there is a corresponding reduction in night-time provision. Our objective is to ensure that any increase in second pump lag is, on balance, outweighed by a reduction in second pump lag elsewhere across the county, and that the overall picture — daytime and night-time together — represents a better alignment of resource with risk and demand. Any overnight increase in second pump lag is assessed against the evidence on incident outcomes set out later in this document, including the role of discovery time, fire development in modern buildings, and the distribution of serious casualties across the day. The analysis also confirms that any increase in second pump lag remains within acceptable operational parameters for both public safety and firefighter welfare.

This analysis supports an assessment of whether the proposals better align second fire engine availability with times of greatest need.

The table below details the average time between the first and second fire engine to any incident where more than one fire engine was required, by year and by area type. The overall averages are used in the models as a benchmark for how many incidents meet them when changes are made to fire engine provision.

	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
2018	5 mins 45 secs	9 mins 7 secs
2019	5 mins 35 secs	8 mins 49 secs
2020	6 mins 49 secs	12 mins 19 secs
2021	6 mins 10 secs	9 mins 7 secs
2022	7 mins 55 secs	14 mins 22 secs
2023	7 mins 30 secs	8 mins 58 secs
2024	7 mins 38 secs	11 mins 14 secs
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 mins 51 secs</b>	<b>10 mins 40 secs</b>

## Modelled results

Results of the model which removes the wholetime shift fire engines from Dartford and Thames-side at night and places three-day duty pumps on at Ashford, Folkestone and Strood (these three are on 12 hour shifts 7am-7pm).

The result of the impact on the second fire engine response time is a potential improvement in performance of 5.37% in urban areas and 0.26% in rural areas. In terms of the average time for the second fire engine to arrive at an incident, the model suggests there would be improvements in both urban and rural areas with a prediction of a reduction of 90 seconds and 56 seconds respectively.

Response times % performance	Model variance to base
Emergency Urban 2nd Fire Engine	+5.37%
Emergency Rural 2nd Fire Engine	+0.26%

Average response time	Potential change
Emergency Urban 2nd Fire Engine	-90 secs
Emergency Rural 2nd Fire Engine	-56 secs

For those stations where the crewing arrangements are proposed to change, the table below details the predicted potential time between the first and second fire engine attendances to incidents on the station ground by response type.

For both Dartford and Thames-side, it is predicted that the second fire engine would frequently come from a neighbouring on call station, if available. Considering how turnout times are used in the models as referenced above, the times detailed in the table below could be higher but would still be well within a reasonable timeframe.

	Emergency Urban	Emergency Rural
<b>Dartford</b>	<b>5 mins 49 secs</b>	<b>5 mins 20 secs</b>
Day time	4 mins 37 secs	5 mins 18 secs
Nighttime	7 mins 16 secs	5 mins 22 secs
<b>Thames-side</b>	<b>4 mins 15 secs</b>	<b>4 mins 58 secs</b>
Day time	3 mins 35 secs	3 mins 57 secs
Nighttime	4 mins 56 secs	6 mins 7 secs
<b>Ashford</b>	<b>6 mins 53 secs</b>	<b>5 mins 50 secs</b>
Day time	5 mins 1 secs	5 mins 28 secs
Nighttime	8 mins 57 secs	6 mins 24 secs
<b>Folkestone</b>	<b>6 mins 6 secs</b>	<b>5 mins 34 secs</b>
Day time	4 mins 47 secs	5 mins 32 secs
Nighttime	7 mins 34 secs	5 mins 38 secs

<b>Strood</b>	<b>5 mins 20 secs</b>	<b>5 mins 35 secs</b>
Day time	5 mins 11 secs	4 mins 58 secs
Nighttime	5 mins 29 secs	6 mins 30 secs

The time between the first and second fire engines arriving can be affected by things such as fire engine availability, time of day, address accuracy, traffic, and weather. It can also vary depending on travel distance and where the incident happens. This gap should not be compared directly with response performance, because they are measured in different ways. The arrival gap measures the time between the first and second engines arriving, while response performance measures the time from when the first engine is assigned to when it arrives. This means the gap between the first and second engines does not show whether the response standard was met

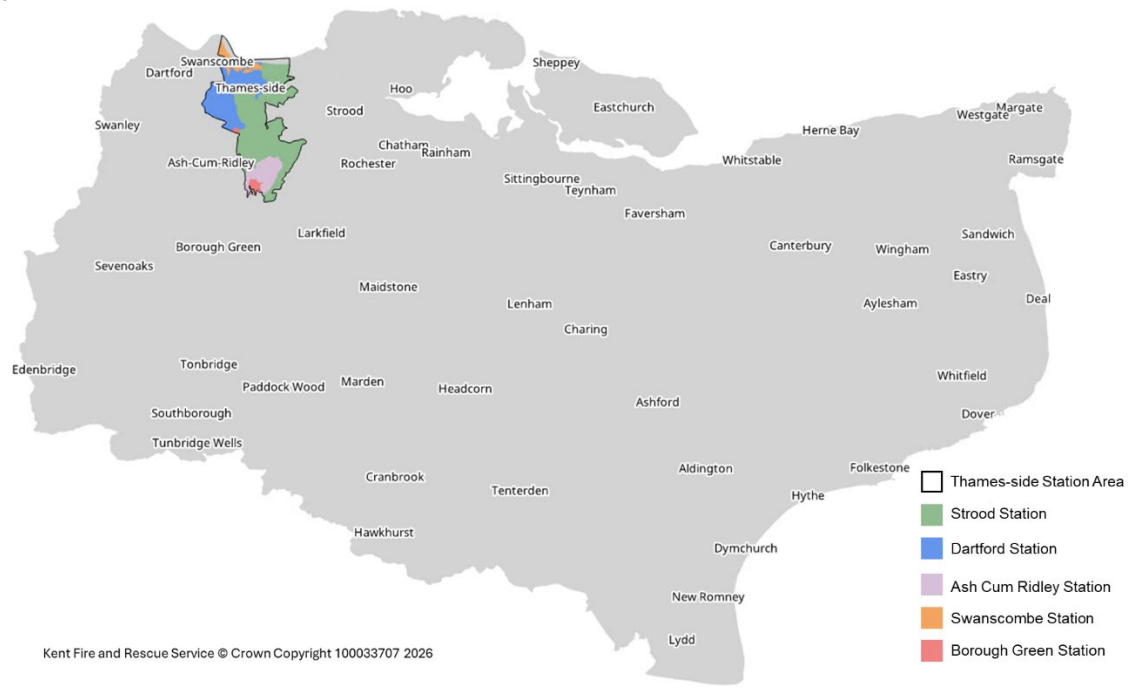
The profile of which fire engines respond second into the Ashford, Folkestone and Strood station areas at night would remain the same as there is no change to the number of fire engines at these locations or how they are crewed at night.

The Dartford and Thames-side fire station areas would see a change to which fire engines respond second at night. The maps below provide an overview of the potential change in which stations would provide the second fire engine cover for these areas at night.

County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine nighttime response in the Dartford station area



County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine nighttime response in the Thames-side station area



## Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in building fires

There has been a total of 35 fatalities and 62 serious casualties recorded in building fires over the period. Of the 35 fatalities, only seven were alive on scene but died later, the remaining 28 were either thought to be deceased before our arrival or we were unable to resuscitate.

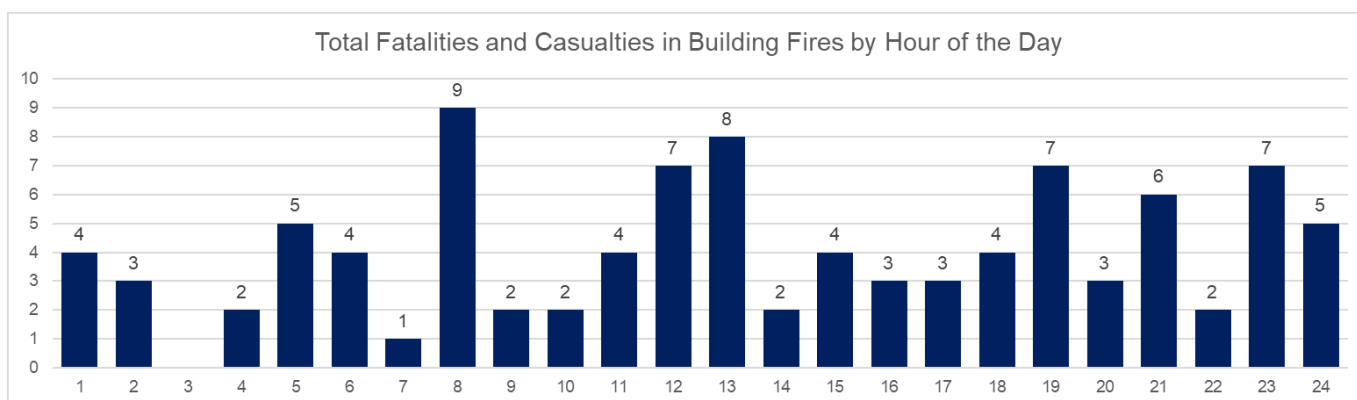
### Time of day

This section examines when serious fire casualties occur across a 24-hour period. This data is important because it helps to determine whether fire engine availability is aligned with periods of highest life risk, rather than just focusing on demand.

Understanding the time of day when the most severe outcomes occur supports evidence-based decisions about where and when resources are most likely to save lives.

The data shows the distribution of fatal and serious fire casualties by time band, highlighting whether risk is disproportionately concentrated during daytime, evening or overnight periods. This provides greater insight than response time performance alone, by linking operational activity directly to public outcomes.

It is important to be aware of the small numbers involved in the following data and analysis. The numbers of casualties and fatalities fluctuate over years, and while thankfully very rare, a single incident with multiple fatalities and serious casualties will affect the totals. The 97 serious casualties and fatalities in building fires have been recorded against 87 separate incidents.



*Note: This chart shows the total number of fatalities and casualties over the 7 year period (on the side axis) split by time of day (along the bottom axis).*

Table: Fatalities and casualties in building fires by financial year and time of day

	Serious Casualties		Fatalities		Total	
	Day Time	Night Time	Day Time	Night Time	Day Time	Night Time
2020-2021	4	5	3	5	7	10
2021-2022	5	13	2	6	7	19
2022-2023	8	3	1	1	9	4
2023-2024	2	5	0	2	2	7
2024-2025	1	6	5	6	6	12
2025-2026	3	7	3	1	6	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>60</b>

The data does demonstrate that across the small numbers of incidents there are more serious casualties and fatalities in building fires at night overall. The breakdown by hour however shows the two hours with the highest numbers recorded were in fact during the day.

## Response time

This section explores the relationship between fire service response time and casualty severity.

This data is important because it helps us assess how response time relates to outcomes for people involved in fires. Response time is one of several factors that shape what happens at an incident. This section looks at the data to understand the relative weight of response time alongside other variables, including when fires are discovered and how developed they are on arrival. It is not intended to suggest that response time is unimportant — it is not — but to ensure that proposals are assessed against the full picture of what the evidence shows.

The data helps show whether how badly someone is hurt might be linked to how long it took for help to arrive, which helps us understand how much difference faster or slower response times can actually make.

Of course, getting a fire engine to a fire quickly is important, and it gives firefighters the best chance to help. But the data shows that speed isn't the main reason people get hurt. The fact that casualties are spread fairly evenly across all response times, without things suddenly getting much worse at a particular cut-off point, matches national evidence which suggests that the biggest factor in the most serious fires is actually how long it takes for someone to discover the fire in the first place, not how long it takes the fire engine to arrive. This is why our Protection of Buildings and Prevention support to people is so important.

Table: Number of serious casualties and fatalities by financial year and by first fire engine response time – regardless of time of day

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
less than 1 min							
01:00 - 01:59	1					1	2
02:00 - 02:59							0
03:00 - 03:59		3		1			4
04:00 - 04:59	4	3	2		2	2	13
05:00 - 05:59	3	2		2	2	2	11
06:00 - 06:59		5	2		1	1	9
07:00 - 07:59	1	3	1	3		2	10
08:00 - 08:59	3	2	1	1			7
09:00 - 09:59	2		2		2	1	7
10:00 - 10:59	1	1		1	4	1	8
11:00 - 11:59		4		1	2		7
12:00 - 12:59	1		1		2		4
13:00 - 13:59		1				4	5
14:00 - 14:59		1	2		1		4
15:00 - 15:59		1	1				2
16:00 - 16:59	1						1
17:00 - 17:59			1		1		2
18:00 - 18:59							0
19:00 - 19:59							0
20 mins or more					1		1

## Profile of casualties killed or seriously injured in RTCs

Over the last six financial years there have been 2,714 RTCs attended in the County with a total of 4,168 recorded casualties. Of those recorded casualties, 138 were fatal, 674 has serious injuries and the remaining 3,356 were recorded as having slight injuries, provided first aid at scene only, recommended that they attend hospital for a precautionary check or rescued without any injuries.

Of the 138 fatalities because of RTCs, only three were alive on leaving scene but died later. Most recorded fatalities (91) were deceased at scene after unsuccessful resuscitation and a further 41 were thought to be deceased before crews arrived.

	Serious Casualties		Fatalities		Other Casualties		Incidents
	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	
2020-2021	59	31	13	10	241	115	305
2021-2022	83	47	15	11	344	155	425
2022-2023	83	45	13	12	378	152	467
2023-2024	68	48	20	10	512	194	554
2024-2025	76	25	10	4	451	188	487
2025-2026	64	45	12	8	461	165	476
<b>Total</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>2,714</b>

### Time of day

This section examines the time-of-day profile of serious and fatal casualties arising from road traffic collisions.

This data is important because RTC demand and risk patterns differ from those of fires, and resources must be capable of responding effectively across multiple incident types. Understanding when the most severe RTC outcomes occur ensures that resourcing decisions do not inadvertently weaken response capability at critical times.

The data shows whether serious RTC casualties happen more during daytime, evening or night-time periods, supporting the assessment of how well current and proposed fire engine availability aligns with RTC risk.

Chart: RTCs by hour of the day

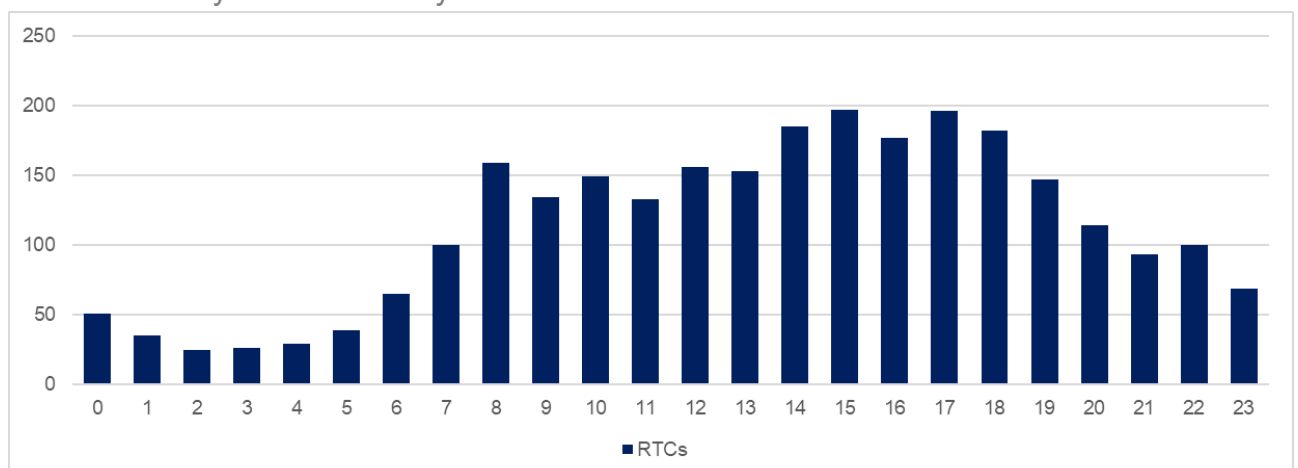
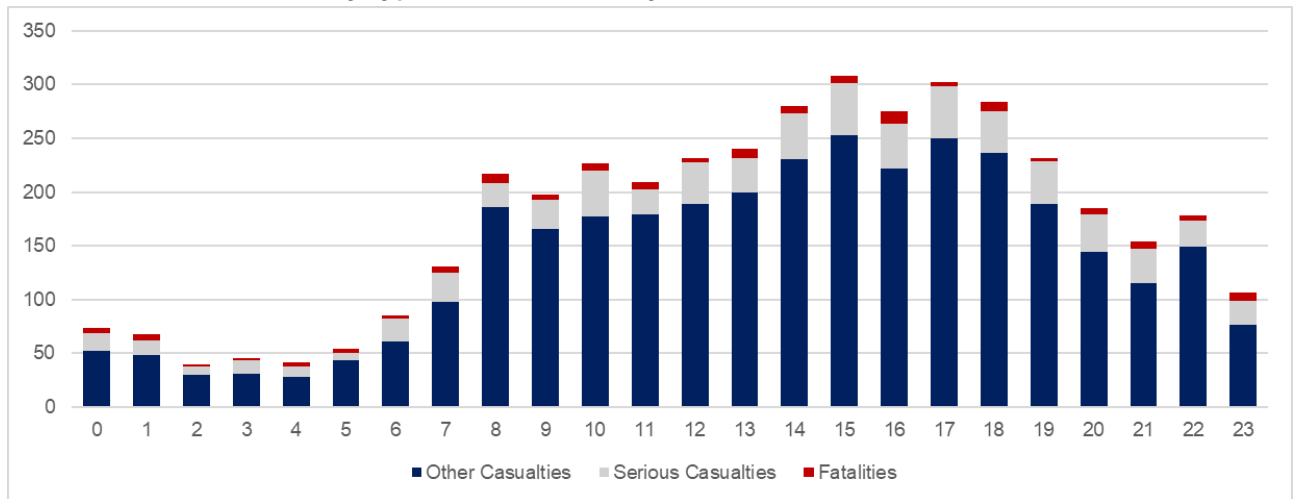


Chart: RTC casualties by type and hour of day



## Response time

This section looks at the relationship between response times and casualty outcomes for RTCs.

This data is important in identifying the impact of response times on casualty survival. Delays in response may affect patient outcomes.

The data shows how severity of injury correlates with response time, allowing us to understand the need for resource distribution to achieve response time standards.

	Serious Casualties		Fatalities		Other Casualties		Incidents
	Day	Night	Day	Night	Day	Night	
0-5 mins	60	24	7	5	538	152	557
5-10 mins	183	110	40	21	881	391	1,077
10-15 mins	124	83	25	22	614	304	711
15-20 mins	52	17	10	5	267	82	265
20-25 mins	9	5	1	2	46	29	64
25-30 mins	2	1	0	0	24	7	22
30+ mins	3	1	0	0	17	4	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>2,714</b>

## Profile of severity of building damage in relation to 2nd fire engine attendance time

This section considers how the time taken for a second fire engine to arrive influences fire development and building damage.

This information matters because how badly a property is damaged gives us a good idea of how quickly the fire spread and how well it was brought under control.

The data explores whether building damage gets worse as second fire engine attendance time increases, helping to identify the operational importance of timely reinforcement.

Out of the 5,097 total building fires across the period below, 4,085 (80.1%) were recorded as minor fires. When this is compared to the time of day the incidents happened the picture changes slightly with minor fires accounting for 77.8% at night. At night a greater proportion are severe in nature which is not unexpected with the potential that it takes longer to discover fires overnight, particularly where the buildings are non-domestic or not occupied. Regardless of the time of day most building fires are minor in nature.

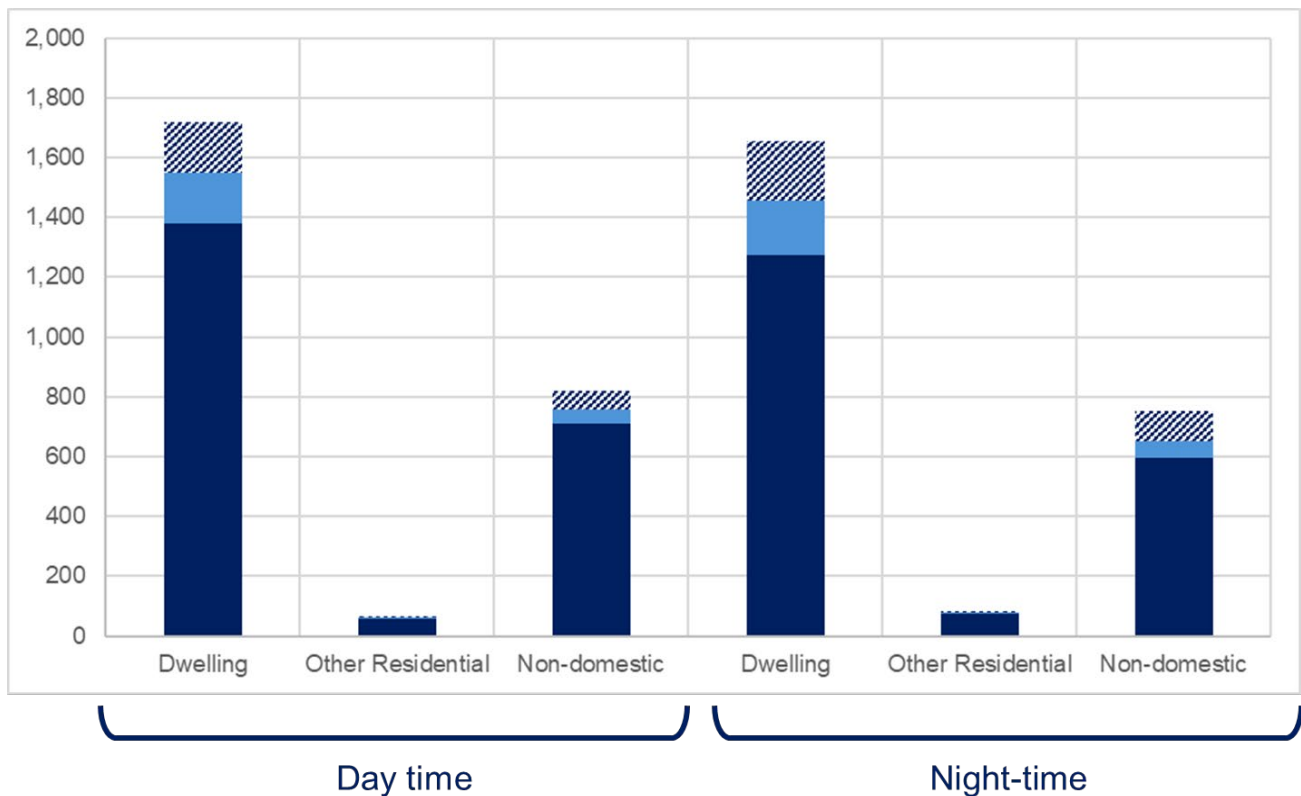
Table: Building fires by severity<sup>1</sup> of fire and time of day

	Day Time			Night Time		
	Minor	Moderate	Severe	Minor	Moderate	Severe
2020-2021	289	27	51	294	36	61
2021-2022	314	32	45	296	46	56
2022-2023	371	52	55	354	43	54
2023-2024	358	40	33	285	37	41
2024-2025	404	28	14	374	33	56
2025-2026	409	42	39	337	49	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,145</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>310</b>
% time of day	82.4%	8.5%	9.1%	77.8%	9.8%	12.4%

Table: Building fires by type, severity of fire and time of day

	Day Time			Night Time		
	Minor	Moderate	Severe	Minor	Moderate	Severe
Dwelling	1,379	168	173	1,272	182	202
Other Residential	58	4	2	73	6	5
Non-domestic	708	49	62	595	56	103
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,145</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>310</b>

<sup>1</sup> Calculations for this are based on data in the IRS comparing the size of the fire on arrival and the extent of the damage at the end of the incident.



*Note: This graph shows the number and types of fire, split across day and night, according to severity (dark blue = minor, light blue = moderate, dotted = severe).*

There are more building fires during the day but there are more severe fires at night. It is important to consider though that whilst that is undisputable, during the day severe building fires are believed to have been discovered sooner after ignition than at night e.g. 20.7% of fires in the day take longer than 30 minutes to be discovered and at night this increases to 29.4%.

The matrices below demonstrate the number of incidents mapped against the size of the fire on arrival of the first fire engine compared to the amount of damage at the end of the incident. The severity is determined by the combination of these two factors. The matrices show, for the most severe fire outcome (loss of the whole building), during the day 61.2% of those fires were already lost when crews arrived. At night this increases to 77.8%. When crews arrive and the whole building is already involved, aside from reducing the spread of the fire to other property, the time it takes the second fire engine to arrive will have little impact on the outcome. The impact of the time for the second fire engine to arrive is more applicable to those incidents that progressed past the situation first presented with, while recognising external factors play a huge role in this. During the day those that escalated accounted for 22.8% and at night this was 18.1%.

		Fire at conclusion of incident										
	Day time	Item 1st ignited	Room of origin	External roof only	Floor of origin	Roof space only	Whole roof (incl roof space)	2 floors	More than 2 floors	Roof space & other floors(s)	Whole building	Total
		Fire on arrival	Item 1st ignited	148	41	Minor	3	Moderate				
Room of origin			115		28			3		1	3	150
External roof only				5								5
Floor of origin					25			2	4		4	35
Roof space only						6				2		8
Whole roof (incl roof space)												0
2 floors								4			3	7
More than 2 floors									2	1	2	5
Roof space & other floors(s)							1			4		5
Whole building											19	19
Total	148		156	5	56	6	1	9	6	8	31	426

		Fire at conclusion of incident										
<b>Night time</b>		Item 1st ignited	Room of origin	External roof only	Floor of origin	Roof space only	Whole roof (incl roof space)	2 floors	More than 2 floors	Roof space & other floors(s)	Whole building	Total
Fire on arrival	Item 1st ignited	133	22	Minor	1	Moderate					Severe	156
	Room of origin		148		37			2			4	191
	External roof only			5						1		6
	Floor of origin				37			3		1	4	45
	Roof space only					5						5
	Whole roof (incl roof space)						1			1	1	3
	2 floors							8	1	4	3	16
	More than 2 floors								2	1		3
	Roof space & other floors(s)									10	2	12
	Whole building										49	49
Total		133	170	5	75	5	1	13	3	18	63	486

Across all three levels of severity, most times the second fire engine arrives within five minutes of the first fire engine arriving.

Table: Number of fires by severity and banded lag time in minutes

	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Severe</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Up to 5 minutes	2,076	263	288
5-10 minutes	846	112	151
10-15 minutes	228	46	56
15-20 minutes	64	11	23
20+ minutes	39	14	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,253</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>534</b>

There are several factors that are important to remember – the relationship between fire outcome and second fire engine lag is not absolute. Other factors that would have affected the outcome of the fire include but are not limited to:

- Time taken to discover the fire
- How quickly the first fire engine arrived
- The cause of the fire
- The size of the fire on arrival
- Water supplies in the area

Table: Lag time for second fire engine by seconds (grouped into bands), property type and severity

	seconds lag	Dwelling			Other Residential			Non Residential			Total		
		Min	Mod	Sev	Min	Mod	Sev	Min	Mod	Sev	Min	Mod	Sev
2 mins	1-50	467	73	60	29	1	1	152	24	35	648	98	96
	51-100	255	23	24	17			82	10	15	354	33	39
	101-150	165	27	25	7		1	104	7	17	276	34	43
	151-200	166	28	33	6	1		105	8	10	277	37	43
	201-250	163	21	28	4			92	6	8	259	27	36
5 mins	251-300	146	28	24	6			110	6	7	262	34	31
	301-350	122	19	21	4	1		105	6	13	231	26	34
	351-400	115	23	23	4		1	69	3	5	188	26	29
	401-450	81	16	16	6	1	2	63	4	10	150	21	28
	451-500	70	11	25	1			41	2	8	112	13	33
10 mins	501-550	56	10	7	5	1		31	3	6	92	14	13
	551-600	42	5	13	4	1		27	6	1	73	12	14
	601-650	35	7	9				32	2	2	67	9	11
	651-700	40	9	6	2	1		14	2	3	56	12	9
	701-750	16	3	10	2			9	4	3	27	7	13
15 mins	751-800	26	5	6	3			12	2	3	41	7	9
	801-850	11	2	5	1			6	1	2	18	3	7
	851-900	11	6	5	2	2	1	6		1	19	8	7
	901-950	7	3	4				8		3	15	3	7
	951-1000	9	2	1		1		5		2	14	3	3
20 mins	1001-1050	5		1				2	1	3	7	1	4
	1051-1100	6		2				4	3		10	3	2
	1101-1150	7	1	5				4		1	11	1	6
	1151-1200	4		1				3			7	0	1
	1201-1250	3	2	4	1			4		1	8	2	5
25 mins	1251-1300	3			1						4	0	0
	1301-1350		1								0	1	0
	1351-1400	1	2	1				1	1		2	2	1
	1401-1450	1	1	1							1	1	1
	1451-1500			1					1		0	1	1
30 mins	1501-1550	2	2	1						1	2	2	2
	1551-1600	1		1			1	1			2	0	2
	1601-1650		1					1			1	1	0
	1651-1700							1	1		1	1	0
	1701-1750	1									1	0	0
30 mins	1751-1800	1		1				2			3	0	1
	1801-1850										0	0	0
	1851-1900										0	0	0
	1901-1950										0	0	0
	1951-2000		1					2			2	1	0
	2001>	9	1	3				3	1		12	2	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,047</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>3,253</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>534</b>

## Utilisation rates of fire engines

This section examines how frequently fire engines from Dartford and Thames-side are mobilised and committed to incidents.

The data shows differences in utilisation between daytime and night-time periods, supporting the rationale for shifting resources to align availability with actual operational demand.

### Dartford

When reviewing this data, it must be considered that 30R3 (Dartford's second fire engine) routinely goes on standby to Swanley during the day which has been normal operating practice for many years. Of the 7,646 mobilisations of 30R3, 1,093 were while they were standby at Swanley. Of those 799 (73%) were to incidents not on Swanley's station ground. 563 (51.5%) were to incidents back on Dartford's station ground. An additional 96 mobilisations from Swanley were to incidents in Ash Cum Ridley's station ground.

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by year (30R1 and 30R3 are Dartford's two fire engines)

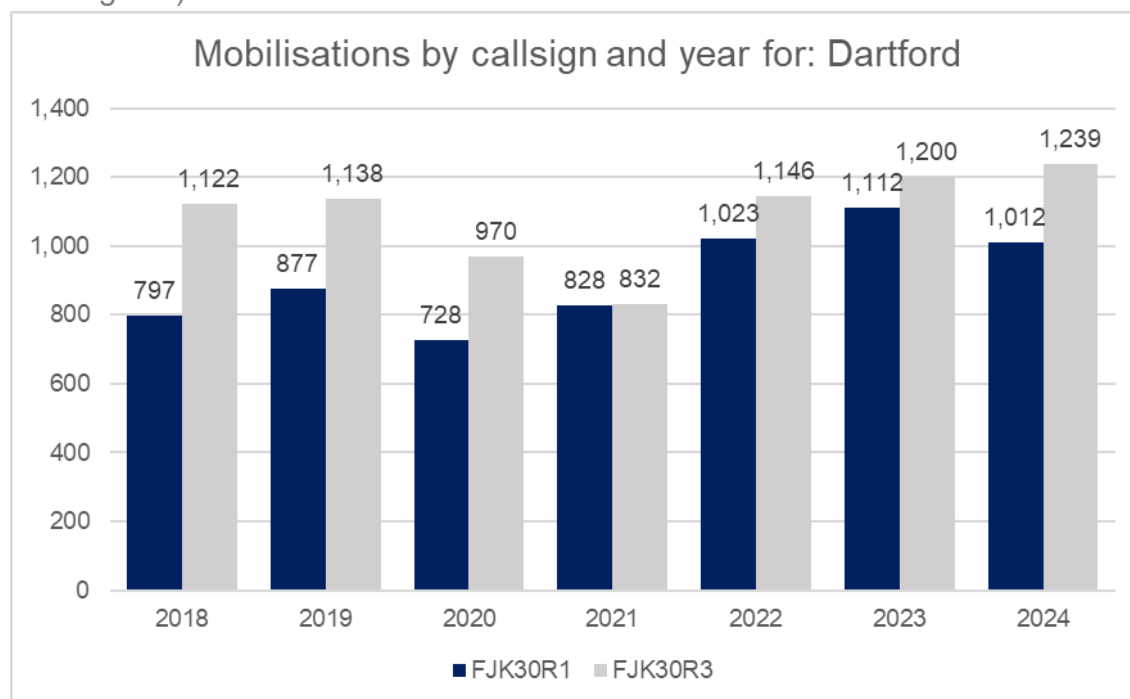


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by month

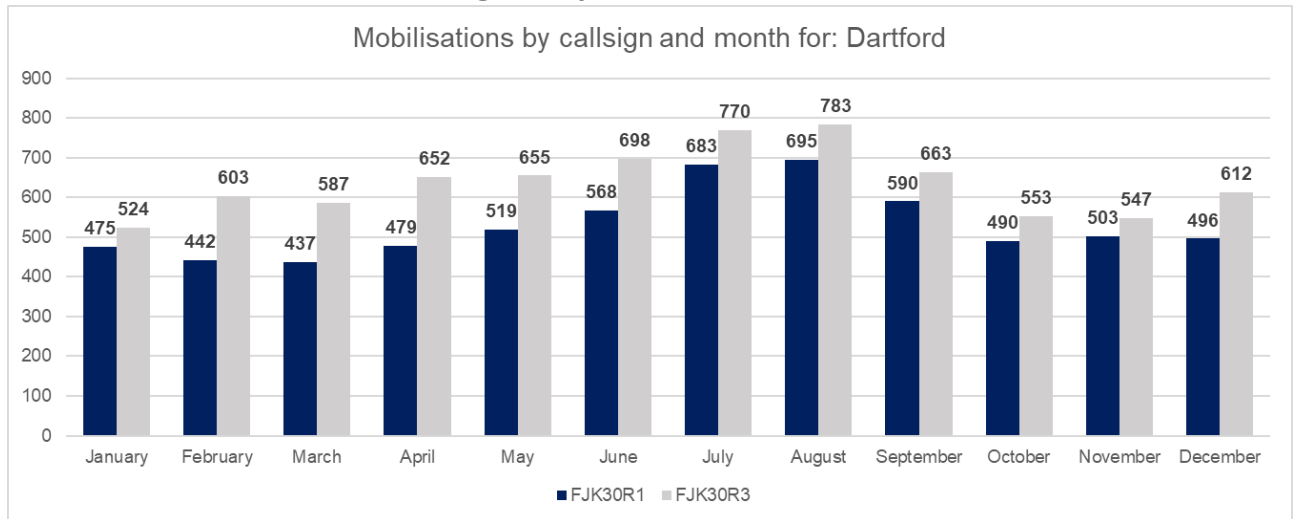


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by time of day

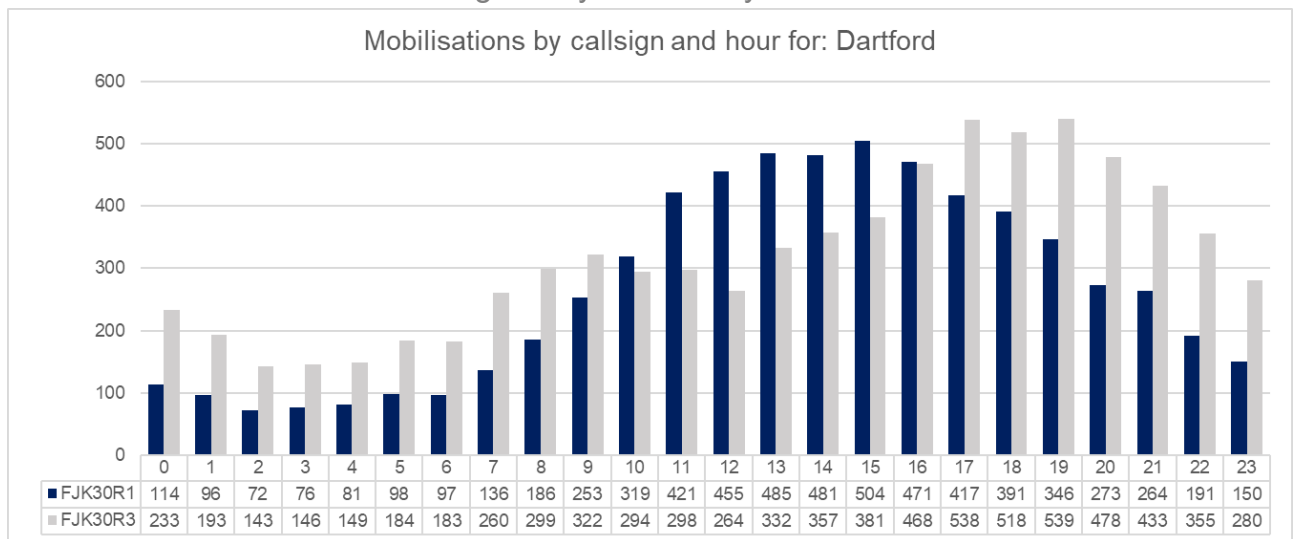


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by location

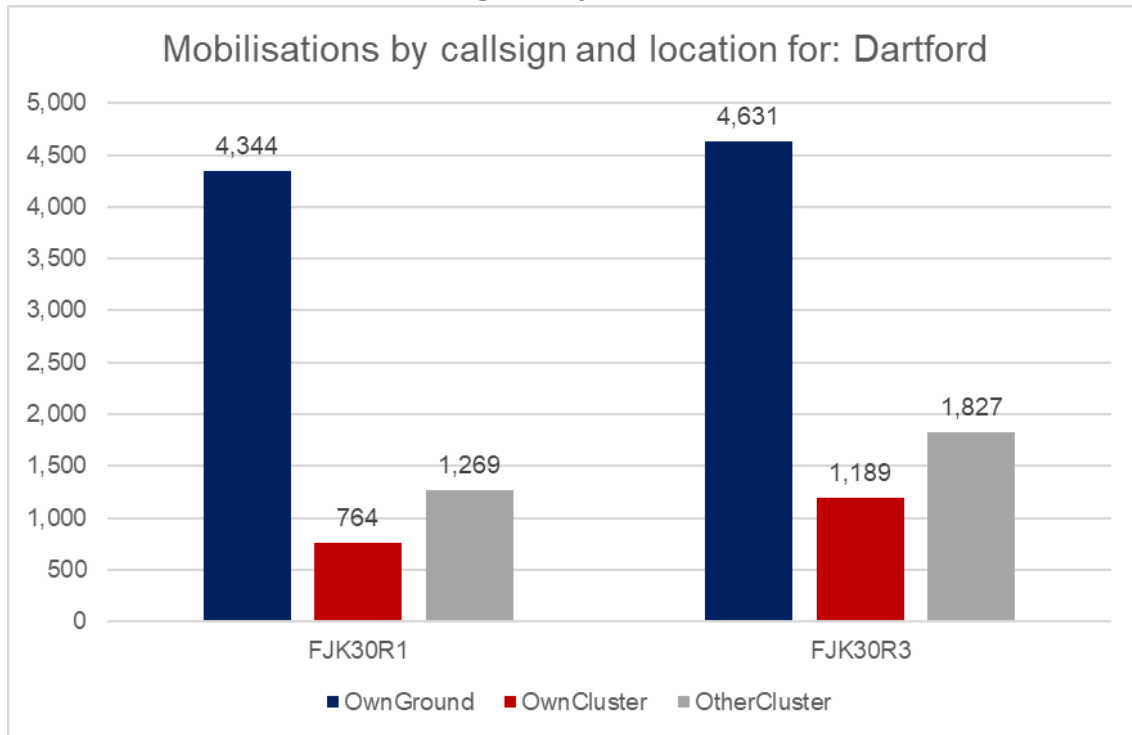
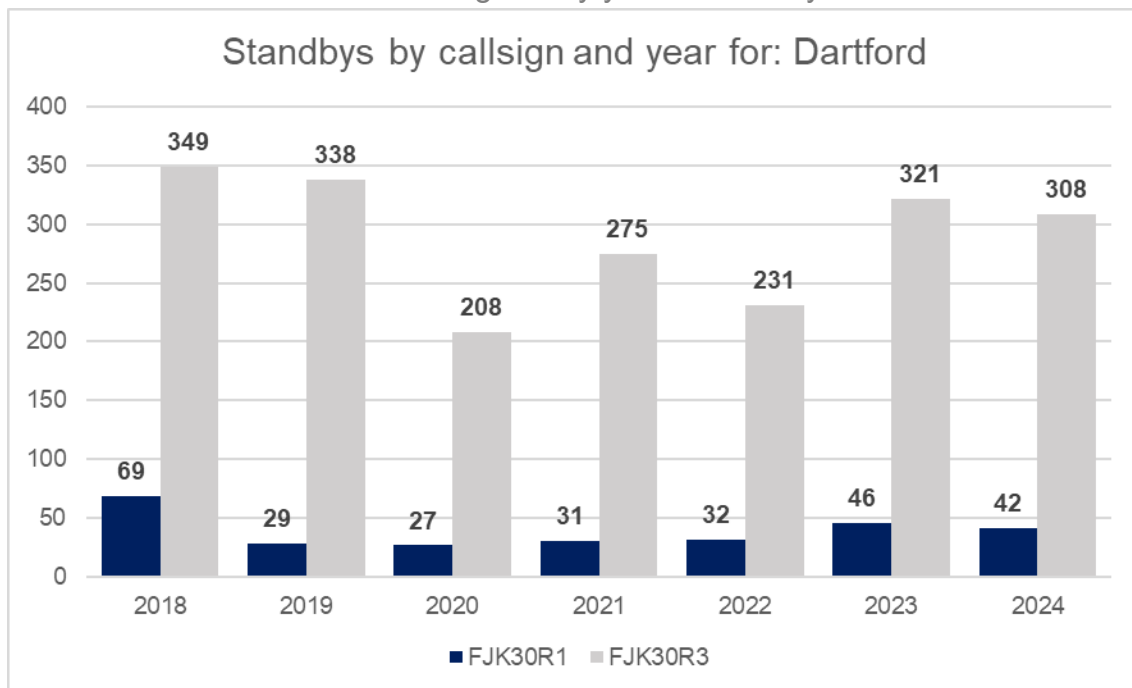


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by year to standby at another location



## Thames-side

When reviewing this data, it must be considered that 35R3 (Thames-side's second fire engine) routinely goes on standby to Westerham during the day which has been normal operating practice for many years. Of the 6,353 mobilisations of 35R3, 664 were while they were standby at Westerham. Of those 579 (87%) were to incidents not on Westerham's station ground. 5 (0.9%) were to incidents back on Thames-side's station ground. Most mobilisations from Westerham were to incidents in Sevenoaks (340) and Edenbridge (145).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by year (35R1 and 35R3 are Thames-side's two fire engines)

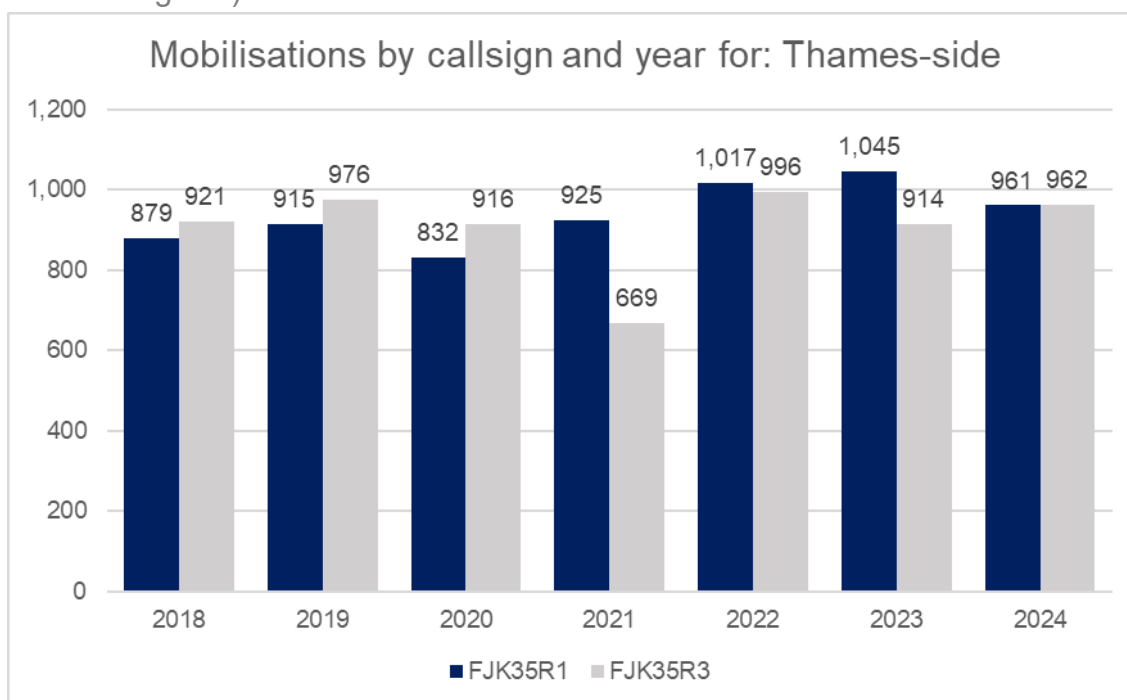


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by month

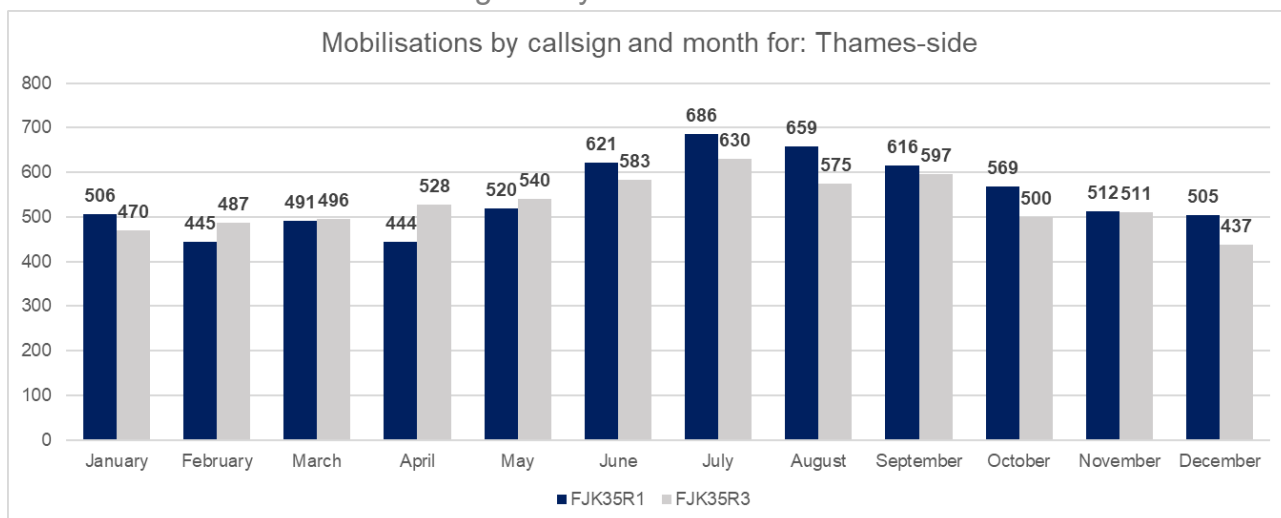


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by time of day

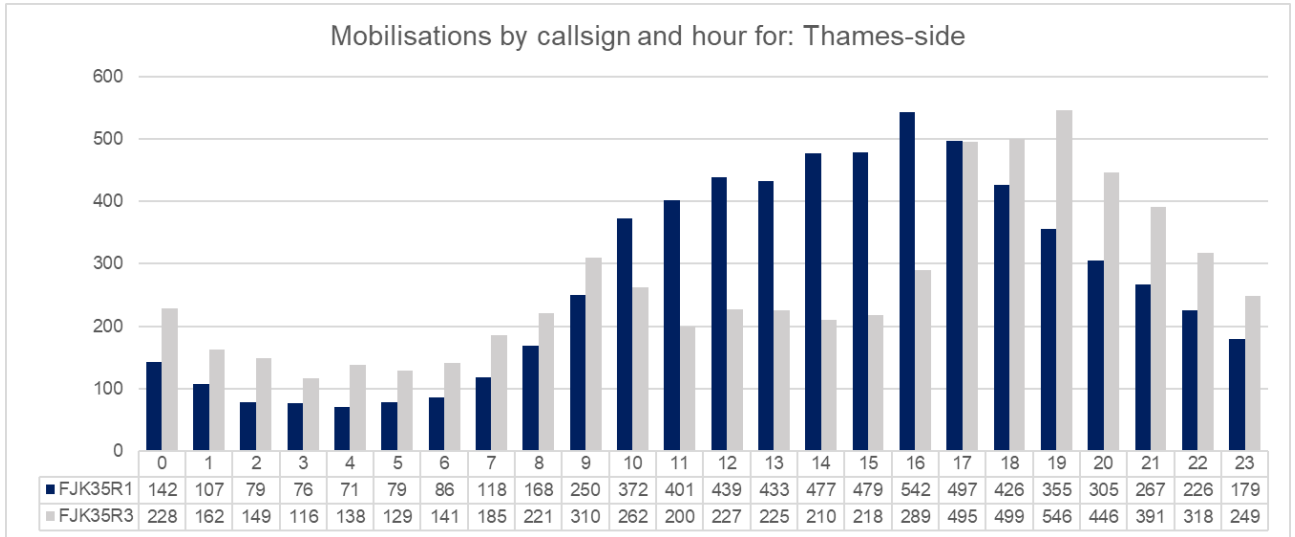


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by location

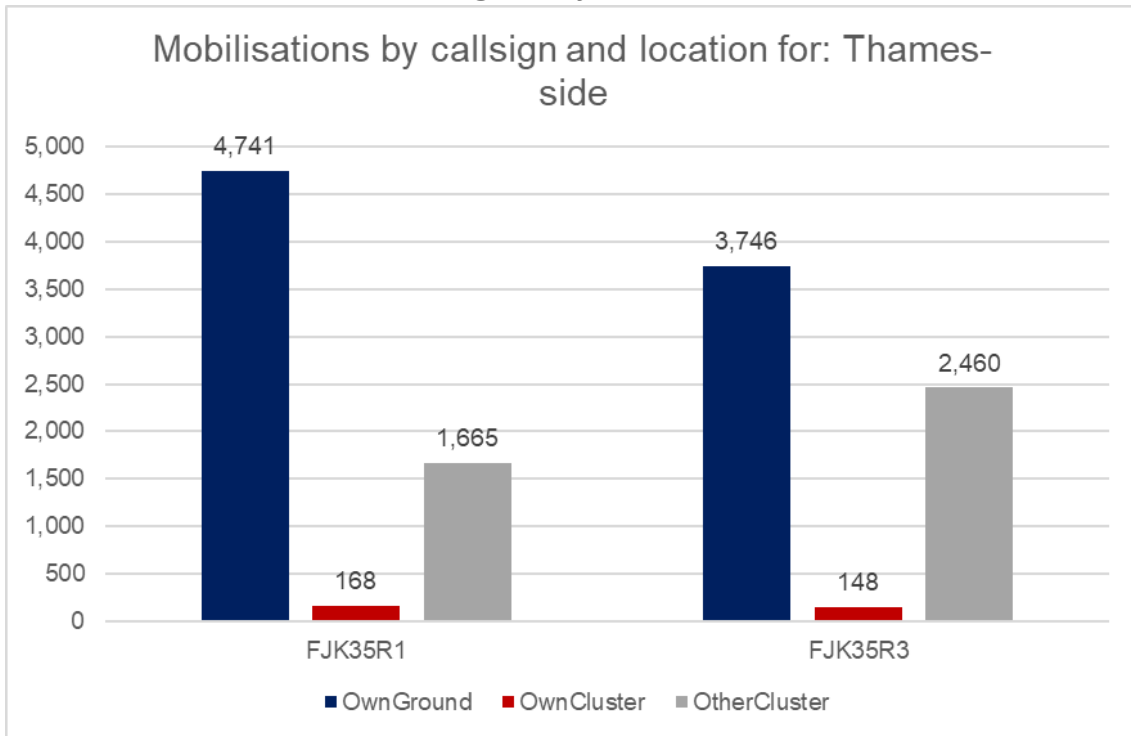
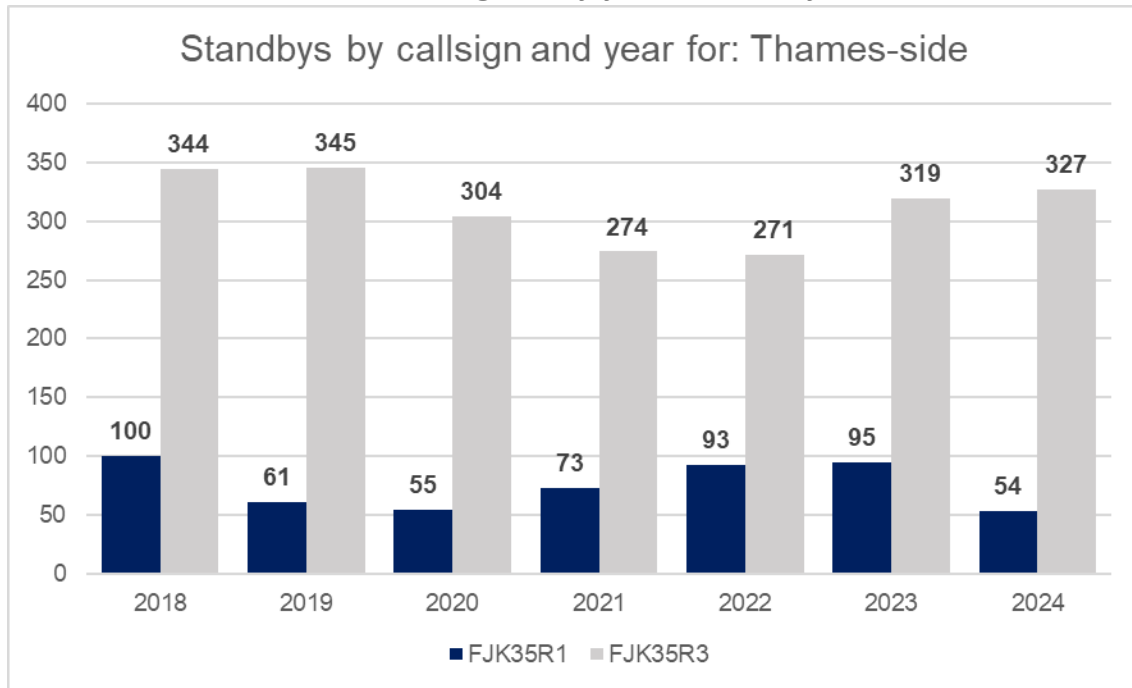


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by year to standby at another location



## Response times of height vehicles

This section examines the response performance of height vehicles.

This data is important because height vehicles are low-density specialist resources deployed to high-risk incidents. Changes to fire engine availability can have indirect impacts on their mobilisation and attendance patterns.

The data shows current response times for height vehicles and is used to assess whether the proposed changes would materially affect their ability to attend incidents within acceptable timeframes.

Of the 4,660 mobilisations of a height vehicle over the time period, the height vehicle only attended the attendance on 35% of occasions. This is due to the height vehicle being on the “Pre-Determined Attendance” (the number and type of fire engines we send to a location based on its type or level of risk) for AFA (Automatic Fire Alarm), high rise buildings etc and is correlated by the proportion of incidents they are mobilised to that are false alarms. Of the 3,044 incidents they did not attend, 2,019 were AFAs and a further 326 were other false alarms.

The response times of height vehicles covered in this section only refers to the remaining 1,616 incidents that were attended.

<b>Avg. times</b>	<b>Ashford 11A1</b>	<b>Maidstone 60A1</b>	<b>Canterbury 80A1</b>	<b>All</b>
Response time	28 mins	28 mins	31 mins	29 mins
Turnout time	5 mins	5 mins	5 mins	5 mins
Travel time	23 mins	23 mins	26 mins	24 mins
Time committed	2 hrs 7 mins	1 hr 24 mins	1 hr 25 mins	1 hr 34 mins

## Utilisation rates of height vehicles

This section considers how often height vehicles are mobilised and used.

This information matters because it helps us check that these specialist vehicles are being sent out to the right incidents, in the right numbers. By understanding how often they are used, we can make sure that any changes we make to the fire service don't accidentally make these specialist vehicles less effective or harder to get to where they're needed.

The data shows utilisation trends over time and by time of day, supporting a balanced assessment of operational impact.

Chart: Height vehicle mobilisation by year

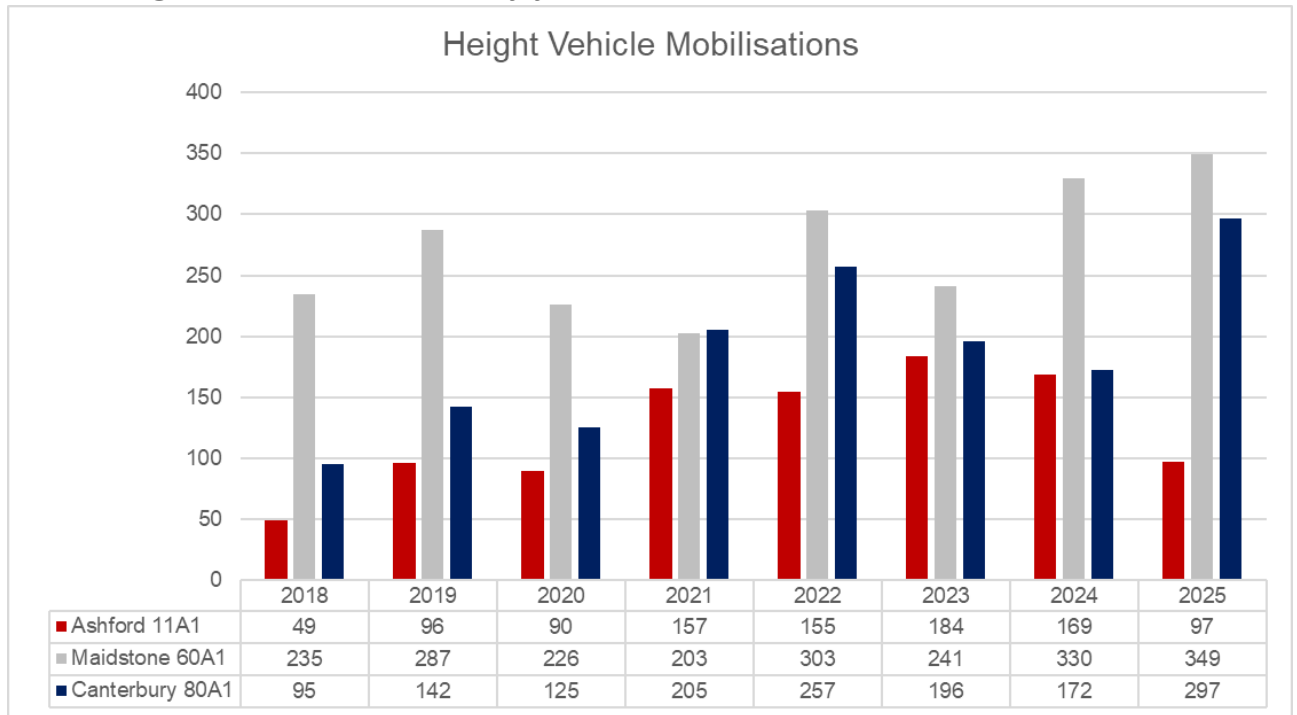


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by time of day

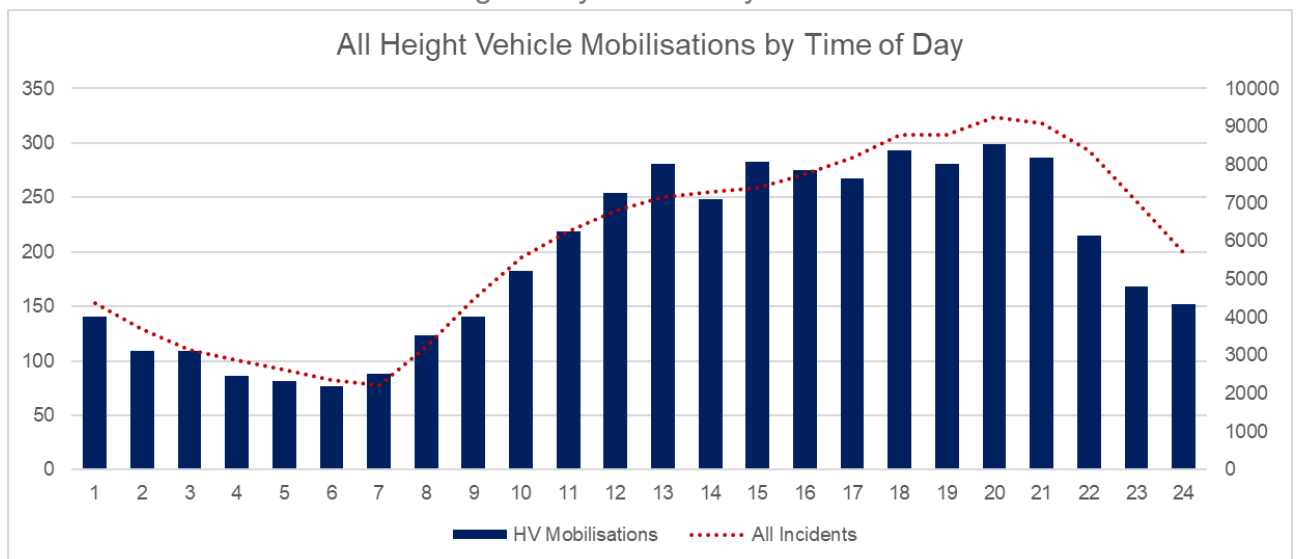
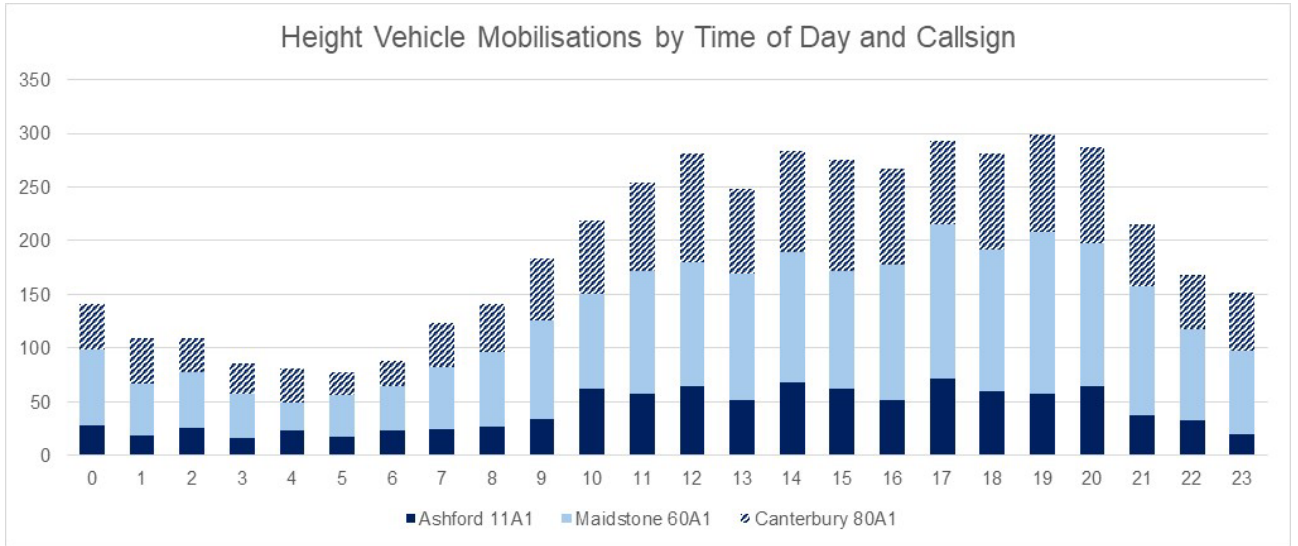
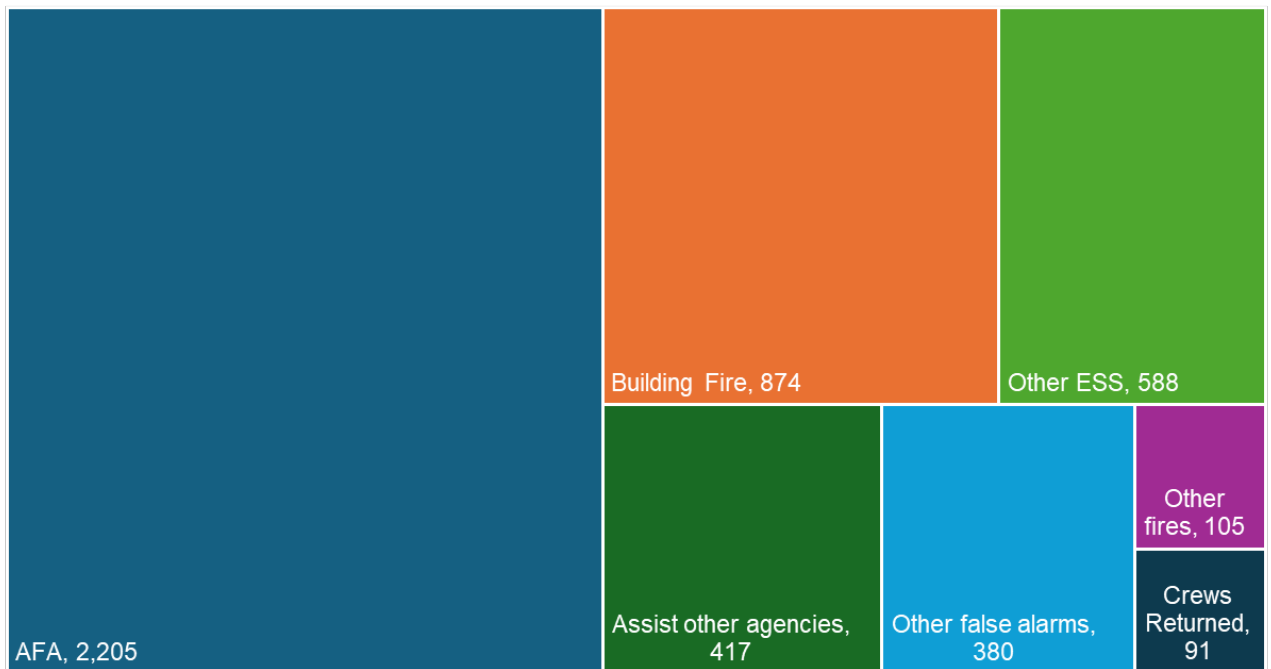


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engines by time of day and callsign



Height Vehicle Mobilisations by Incident Type



## Risk profiles of the affected areas

This section brings together demographic, geographic and incident risk data for the areas directly affected by the proposals.

### Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile

The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires.
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure<sup>2</sup>.
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable.

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

### Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)









Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

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<sup>2</sup> People+ capture's higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Dartford

### KAIR Profile









							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>111,026</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>1,941</b>	<b>56</b>

### SSRI

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

## Thames-side

### KAIR Profile









							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>102,870</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>24</b>

### SSRI

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

## Ashford

### KAIR Profile

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>99,134</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>2,184</b>	<b>86</b>

### SSRI

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

# Folkestone

## KAIR Profile









							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>72,611</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>1,556</b>	<b>28</b>

## SSRI

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

# Strood

## KAIR Profile

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>60,057</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>11</b>

## SSRI

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

## Impact on number of requests for cross border support

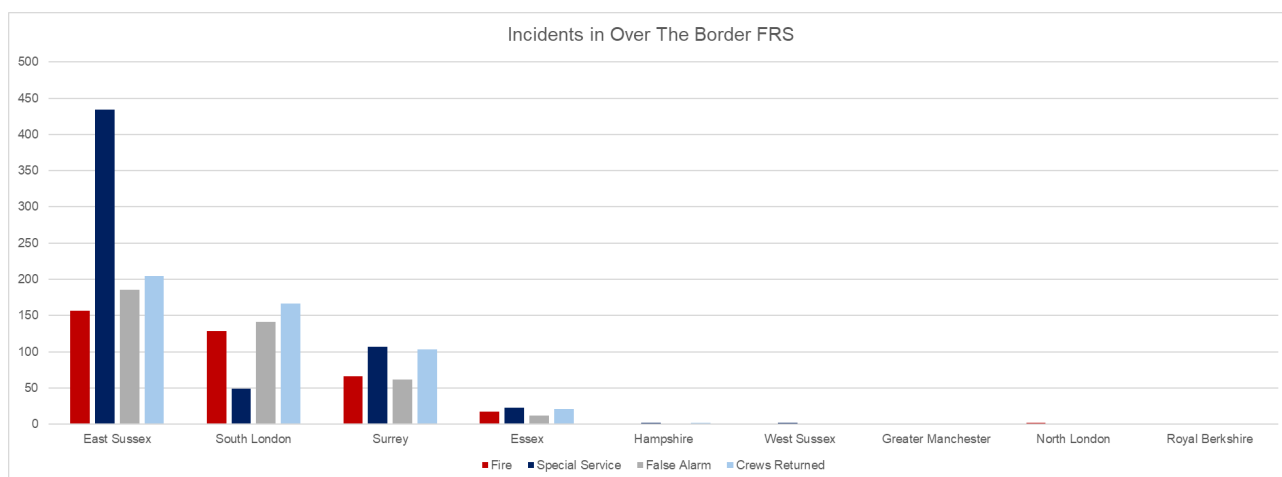
This section examines how the proposals may affect reliance on neighbouring fire and rescue services.

This data is important because increased cross-border assistance can indicate reduced local resilience and can place pressure on regional partners. Conversely, improved daytime availability may reduce the need for external support during peak periods. Sustainable levels of mutual aid are an important indicator of service resilience.

The data shows current patterns of cross-border support requests and is used to assess whether the proposals are likely to increase, reduce or have a neutral effect on mutual aid requirements.

### Kent resources mobilised to support over the border

Across a total of 1,892 incidents recorded in other Fire and Rescue Service territories between January 2018 and December 2025, 982 are within East Sussex (51.9%), 486 in London (25.7%), 338 in Surrey (17.9%) and 73 in Essex (3.9%). The other recorded incidents were further afield in the Country and account for a total of 13 incidents.



It is also important to note that 439 of the total incidents were to crews returned incidents which means our attendance was requested but before arrival we were turned back as no longer needed.

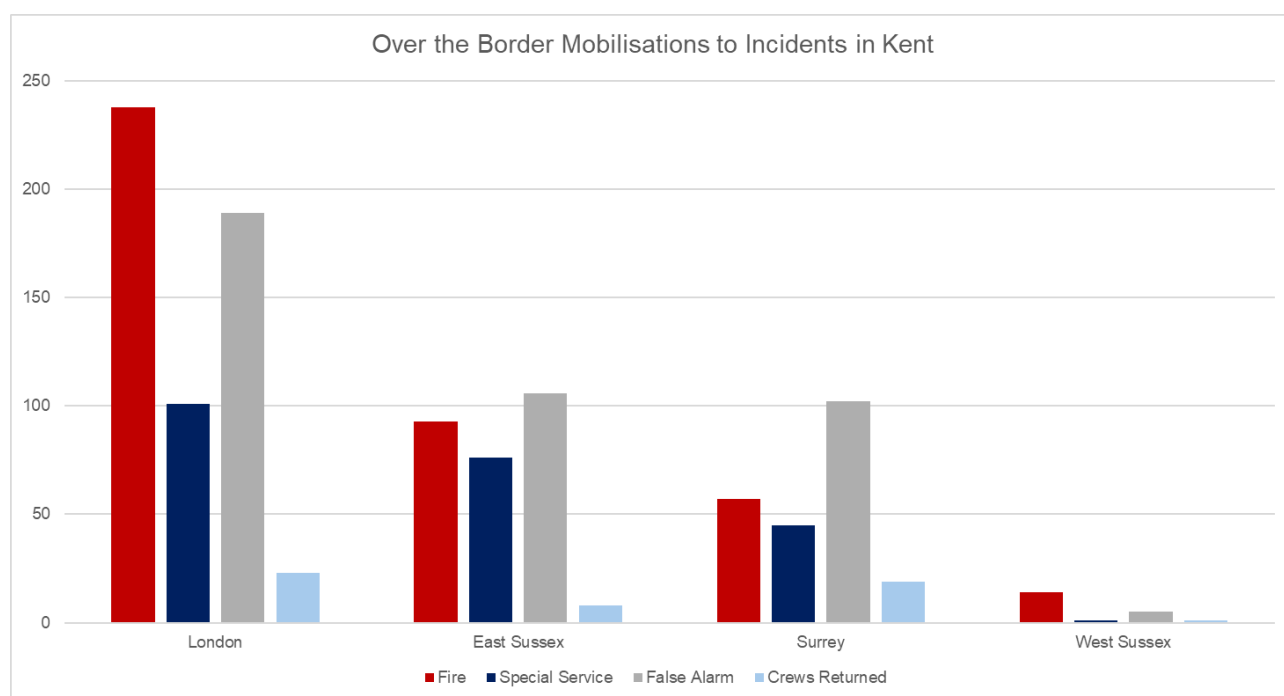
These incidents resulted in 2,168 mobilisations of Kent fire engines. One incident will often result in a request for multiple fire engines. Specials and officers will also be required but they have not been included in these figures. Those fire engines that sit on the borders of the County boundary will inevitably be busier with cross border activity and the impact is demonstrated in the table below which details mobilisations by callsign. Only those with more than 50 mobilisations have been detailed as this indicates more regular activity cross border rather than occasional incident specific support.

		East Sussex	London	Surrey	Essex	Other FRs
FJK74R3	Tunbridge Wells	468	0	5	0	0
FJK30R1	Dartford	1	278	0	40	1
FJK30R3	Dartford	0	263	9	40	0
FJK68R1	Sevenoaks	1	17	167	1	0
FJK35R3	Thames-side	4	25	110	4	0
FJK76P1	Southborough	115	0	1	0	0
FJK24R3	Cranbrook	107	0	1	0	0
FJK25P1	Hawkhurst	78	0	3	0	0
FJK72R1	Tonbridge	50	0	1	0	0
All other callsigns		207	62	81	24	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,031</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>5</b>
No. fire engine was returned		161	177	86	21	2

## Over the border resources mobilised to support incidents in Kent

We request assistance from London for incidents within Kent more than our other neighbouring services. These results will be influenced by London's mobilising policy whereby any requests for support to a structural building fire, two fire engines will be sent regardless.

Across the period there were 1,078 mobilisations of over the border fire engines to incidents in Kent, across 922 incidents.



Those station grounds that sit on the borders of the County boundary will inevitably be busier with cross border activity and the impact is demonstrated in the table below which details mobilisations by the location of the incident. Only those locations with more than 50 mobilisations have been detailed as this indicates more regular activity cross border rather than occasional incident specific support.

	London	East Sussex	Surrey	West Sussex
Dartford	237	2	2	0
Sevenoaks	115	3	46	0
Edenbridge	5	4	108	18
Westerham	59	0	56	1
Tunbridge Wells	1	104	3	2
Swanley	96	0	1	0
Tenterden	0	71	0	0
All other station grounds	38	99	7	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>21</b>
No. fire engine was returned	23	8	19	1

## Appendix 1: Count of Days that have at least one episode of degradation (<19 available pumps)

	2021-2022				2022-2023				2023-2024				2024-2025				2025-2026				Total	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>175</b>	
<b>By Month</b>																						
Jan				1				3				1									2	5
Feb				1				1														4
Mar				1				2				2				5						10
Apr					2								1				3					6
May					2				5				3				9					19
Jun	2				3				3				1									9
Jul		3				12				6				5				5				31
Aug		3				15				2				7				4				31
Sep		5				6				3				3								17
Oct			5				2				4				1					2		14
Nov			3												2					1		6
Dec			7				4				4				3					5		23
<b>By Day</b>																						
Monday			1			6							1	4	1	1						14
Tuesday	1	1	1			4	1	3	3					3	1		3	1	1			23
Wednesday	1	5	2	1	1	3			1	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	4			31
Thursday			2	1	2	4	1						1	1						1		13
Friday		3	5		1	8		1	3	3	2		1	2	2	2	2	4	1			40

	2021-2022				2022-2023				2023-2024				2024-2025				2025-2026				Total
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Saturday		2	3		2	5	2	2	1	6	3	2	1	2	1		3	3		1	<b>39</b>
Sunday			1	1	1	3	2			1						1	3		1	1	<b>15</b>
<b>Context</b>																					
Periods of Spate	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	<b>n/a</b>
Wildfires (only on days of deg)			1			74			2	1				9			2	11			<b>100</b>
Total Wildfires	2	4	2	1	3	112	1	2	5	5	1	1	1	23	0	1	16	37	2	1	<b>220</b>
Notable Heatwave events						40 degs				35 & 30 degs								35 degs			<b>n/a</b>
Notable snow events							Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes					<b>n/a</b>
Flood related calls		Yes		Storm Eunice & Franklin		Yes	Yes				Yes						Yes				<b>n/a</b>
Other	Covid		Covid																		

Resourcing Review

# On-call Viability Proposal for Closure – Supporting Data

Wye

June 2026



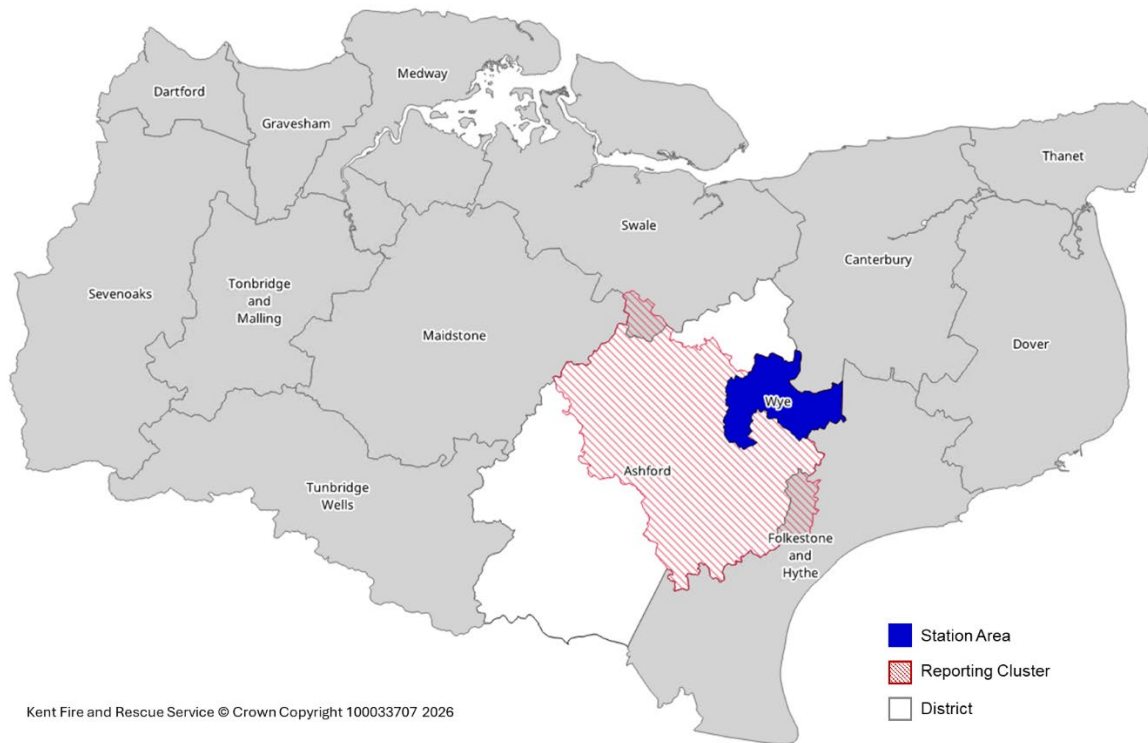
**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

## Station Information

Wye is a standalone on-call fire station located in the Ashford District area. The station area covers a total of 47.3 sq km, with a population of 3,202. For reporting purposes, Wye sits within the Ashford cluster.

County map highlighting Wye station ground, Ashford reporting cluster and Ashford District



Wye crews one fire engine and provides crewing, when qualified colleagues are available, to the bulk water carrier located at Ashford fire station.

Wye currently has six colleagues employed: one watch manager, one crew manager and four firefighters. Two of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Wye. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been four new starters at Wye station, one of which has since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

Availability has improved significantly since 2019, when 24/7 availability was as low as 2.3%. However, despite improvement, availability remains low. Even in the best recent year shown (2023, 26.0%), the fire engine was unavailable nearly three quarters of the time.

The difference between 24/7 availability (24.6%) and evenings/weekends availability (36.8%) shows Wye can provide availability outside standard daytime hours, but it is still a low proportion of the time.

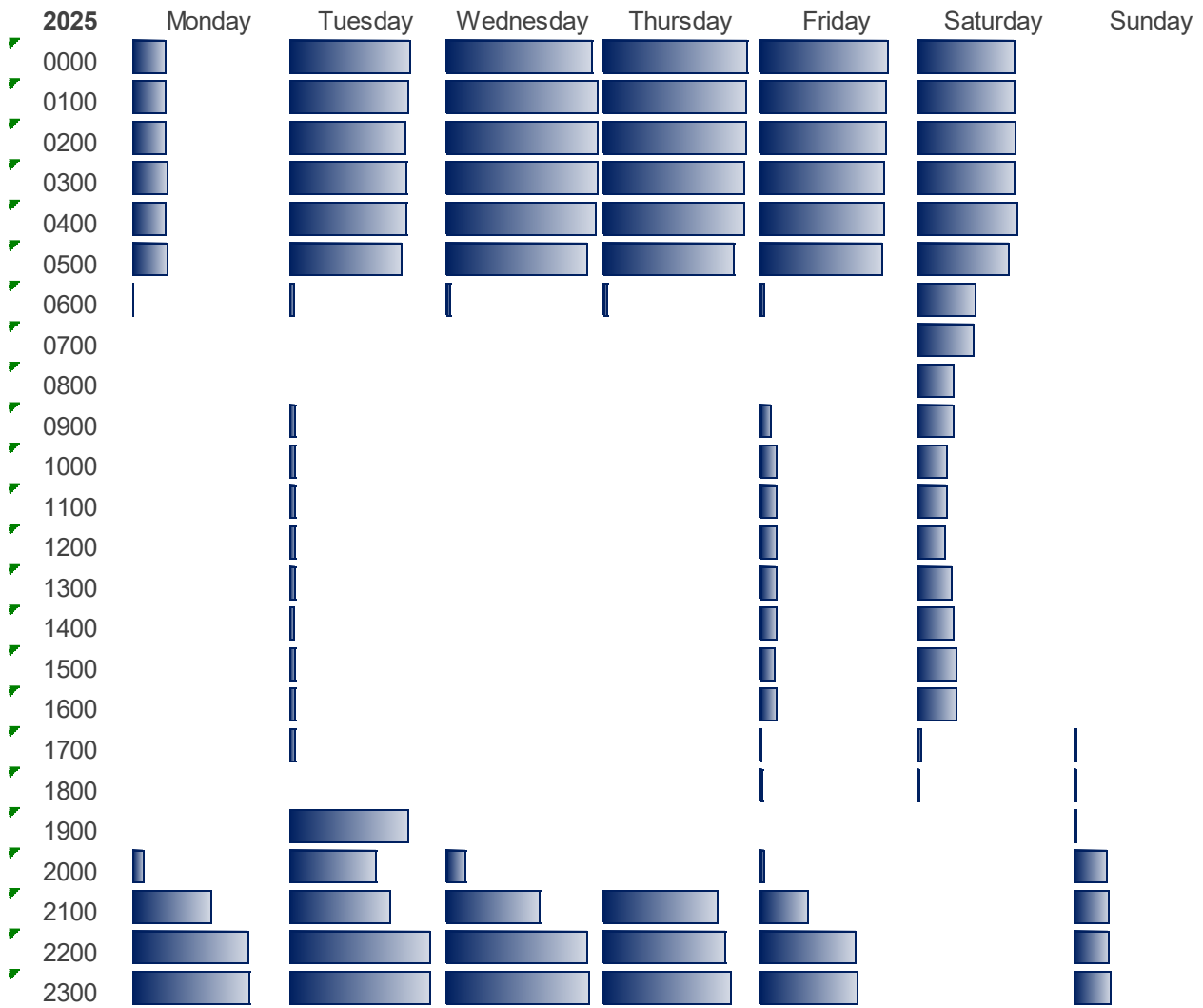
- Evening and weekend availability is around 1.5x the 24/7 figure in 2025.
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is consistently better than 24/7 by roughly 8–14 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	24.6%	36.8%
2024	23.0%	33.6%
2023	26.0%	40.1%
2022	22.9%	35.2%
2021	14.5%	21.5%
2020	15.0%	22.3%
2019	2.3%	3.3%
2018	10.7%	16.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Activity

Overall incident demand in the station ground is low. Wye contributes a very small share of the countywide demand. The one level four incident (required 10 or more fire engines to resolve) was a grassland wildfire in August 2022, which was exceptional rather than routine. In addition, most mobilisations of the fire engine based at Wye are to incidents within the Ashford reporting cluster, not within their own station ground.

## Incidents on the Station Ground

The following section details incidents that happened on the Wye station ground, regardless of who attended the incidents. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 225 incidents in total
  - Incidents spread evenly over the months
  - Incidents are higher during the day in line with the countywide picture
- False alarms: 74 (32.9% of all incidents)
  - Mostly automatic fire alarms
- Fires: 65 (28.9%)
  - Of which almost half were outdoor fires
- Special service: 86 (38.2%)
  - A third of which were co-responding incidents
- Nine serious casualties in total, across nine different incidents
  - One fire casualty because of an outdoor fire
  - Four from RTCs
  - Four from other special service incidents

Table: Number of incidents by number of fire engines required

		Wye	Kent
Level 1	1-3 fire engines	221	135,851
Level 2	4-6 fire engines	3	1,274
Level 3	7-9 fire engines	0	76
Level 4	10+ fire engines	1	43

The level four incident was a grassland wildfire fire in August 2022.

Chart: Incidents on station ground by year and incident type

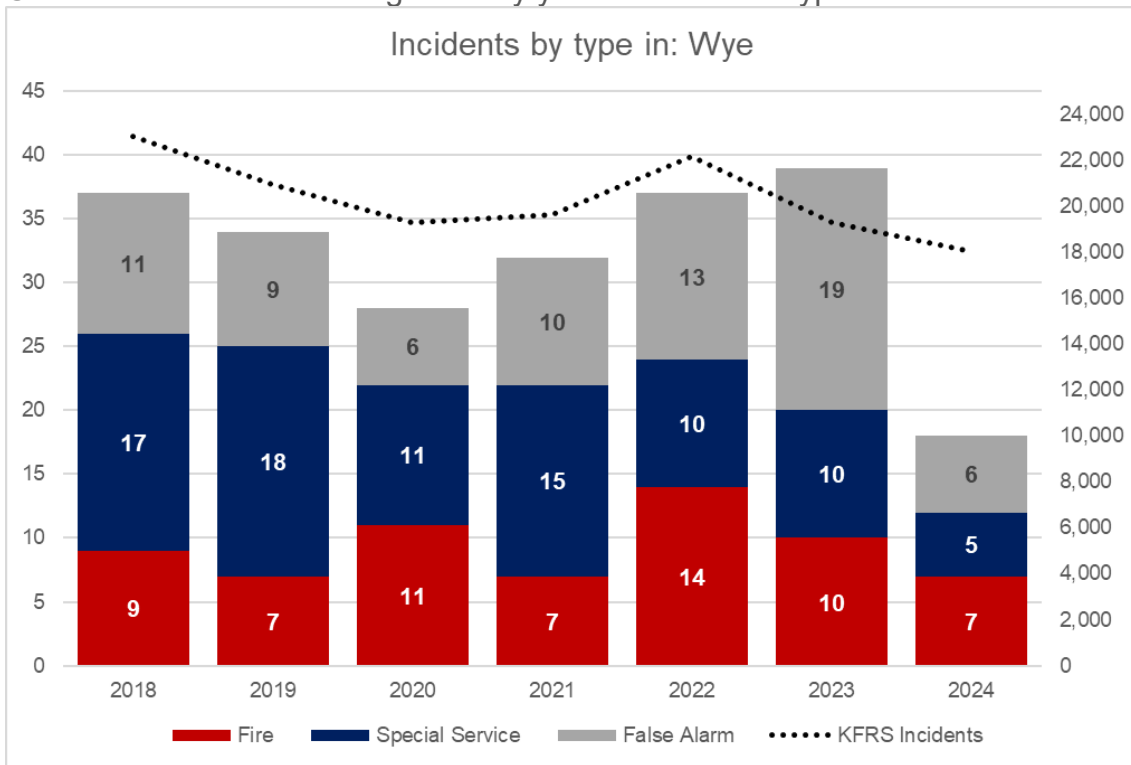


Chart: Incidents on station ground by month



Chart: Incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

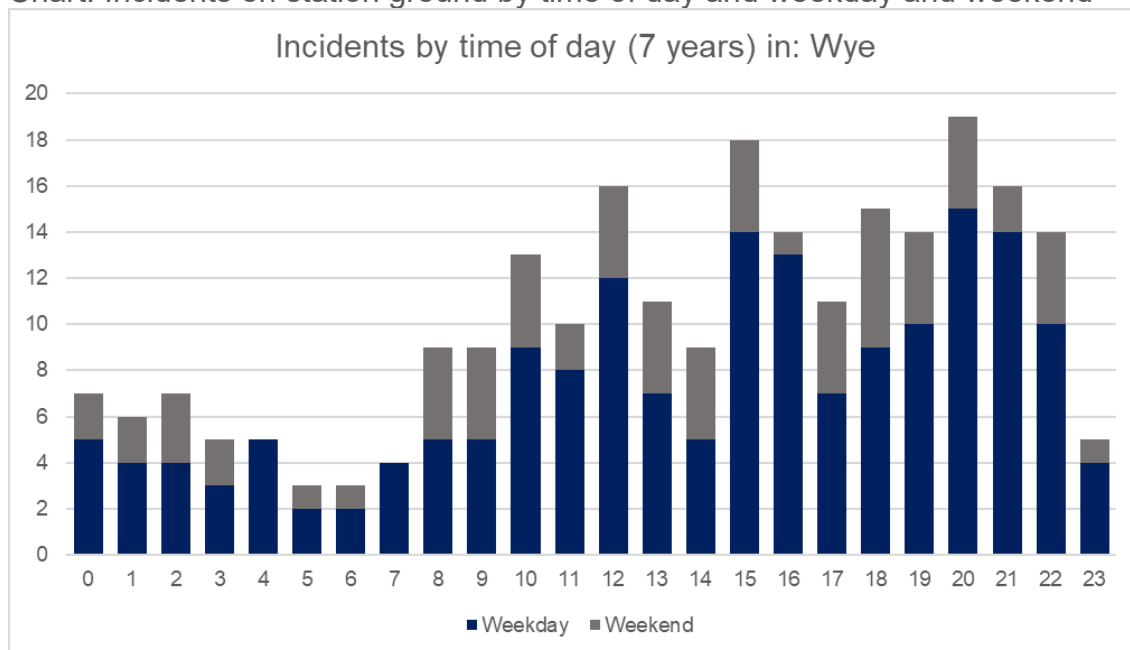


Chart: Casualties from Incidents on station ground

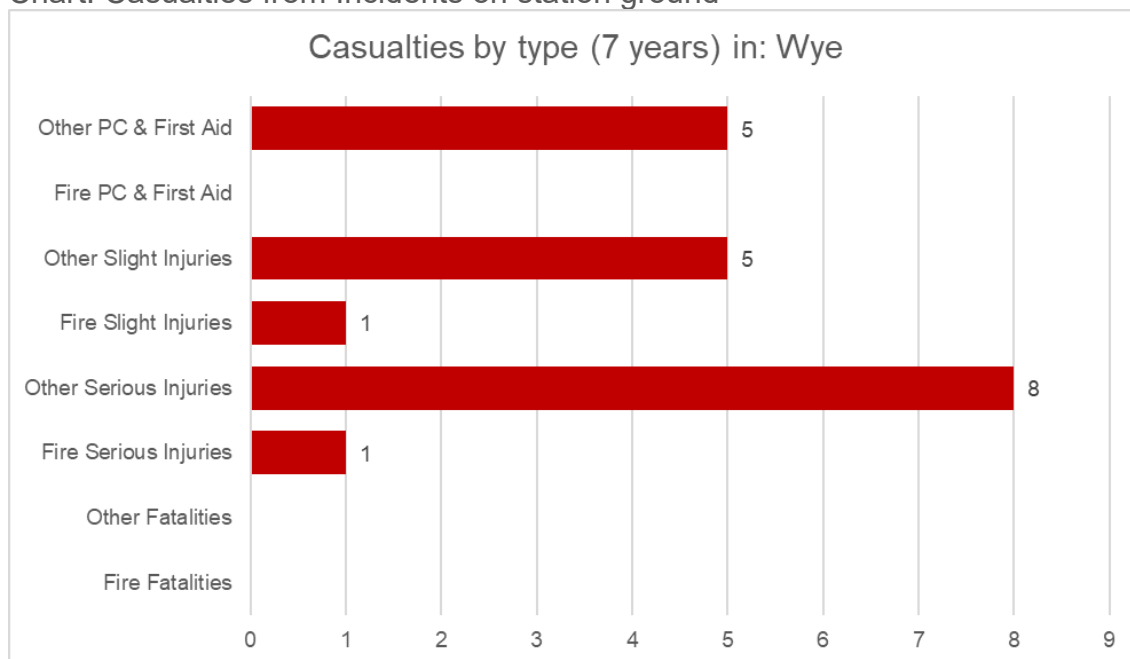


Table: Average time between first and second fire engine attendance to incidents

Rescue or evacuation from water	17 mins 58 secs
RTC	8 mins 33 secs
Fire - Dwelling	13 mins 43 secs
Fire - Non-Residential	7 mins 0 secs
Fire - Outdoor	16 mins 18 secs
Fire - Road Vehicle	13 mins 51 secs

Note: the number of incidents is very small so any outliers will not be absorbed

Chart: Fires on station ground by property type

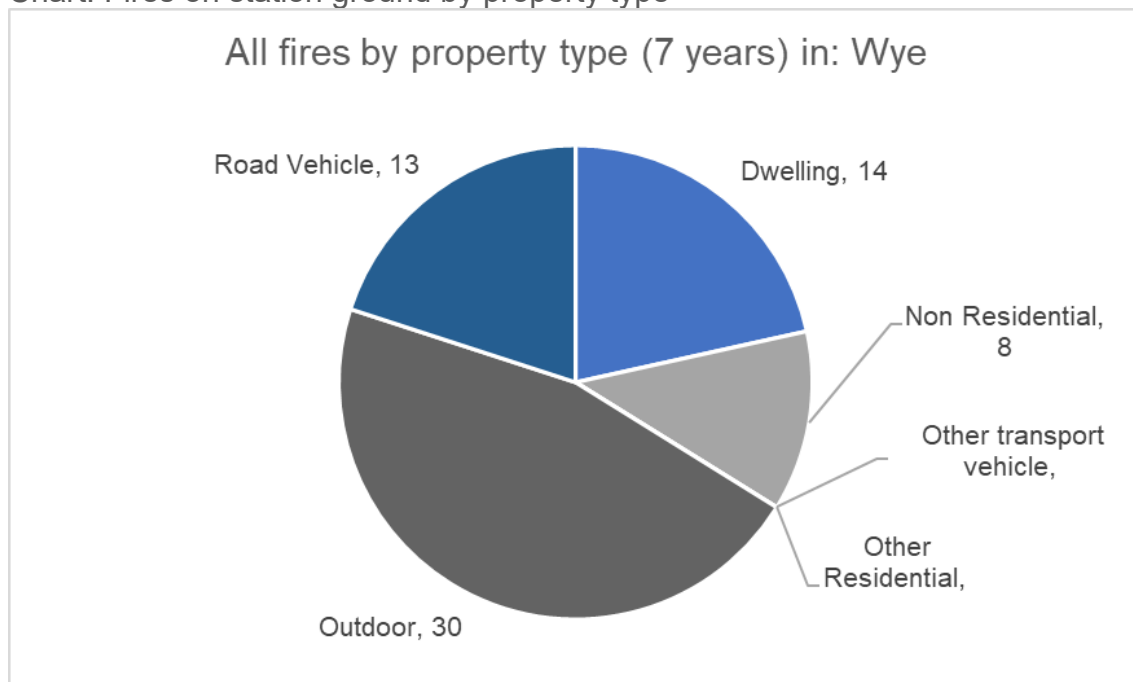


Chart: Fires on station ground by year

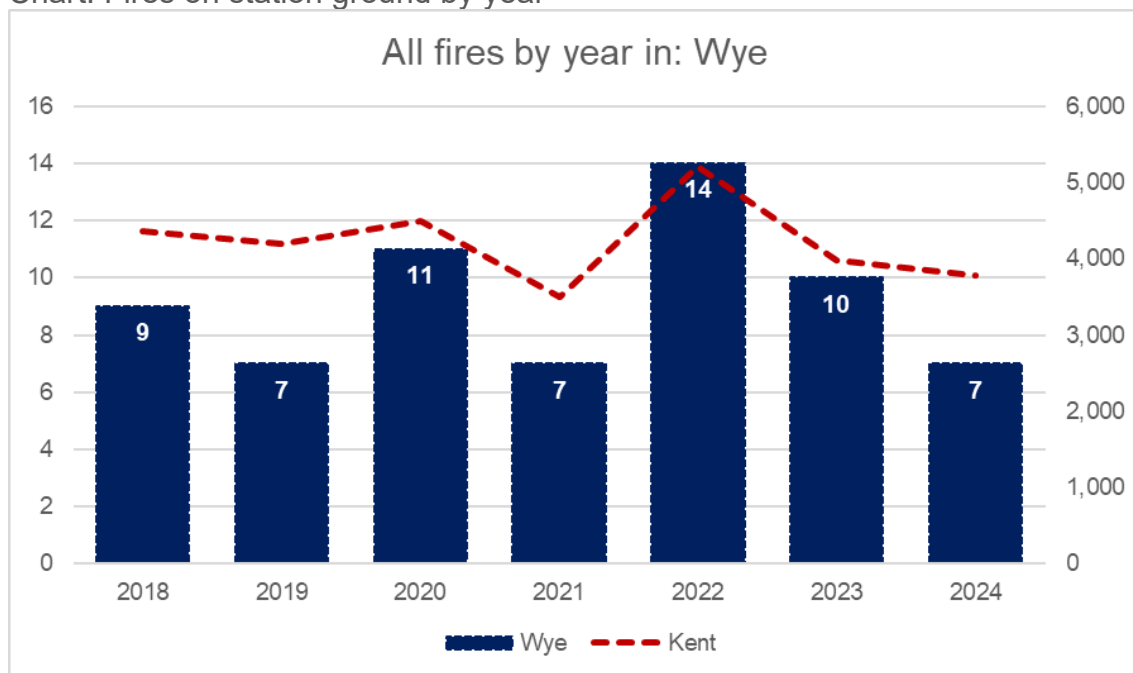


Chart: Fires on station ground by month

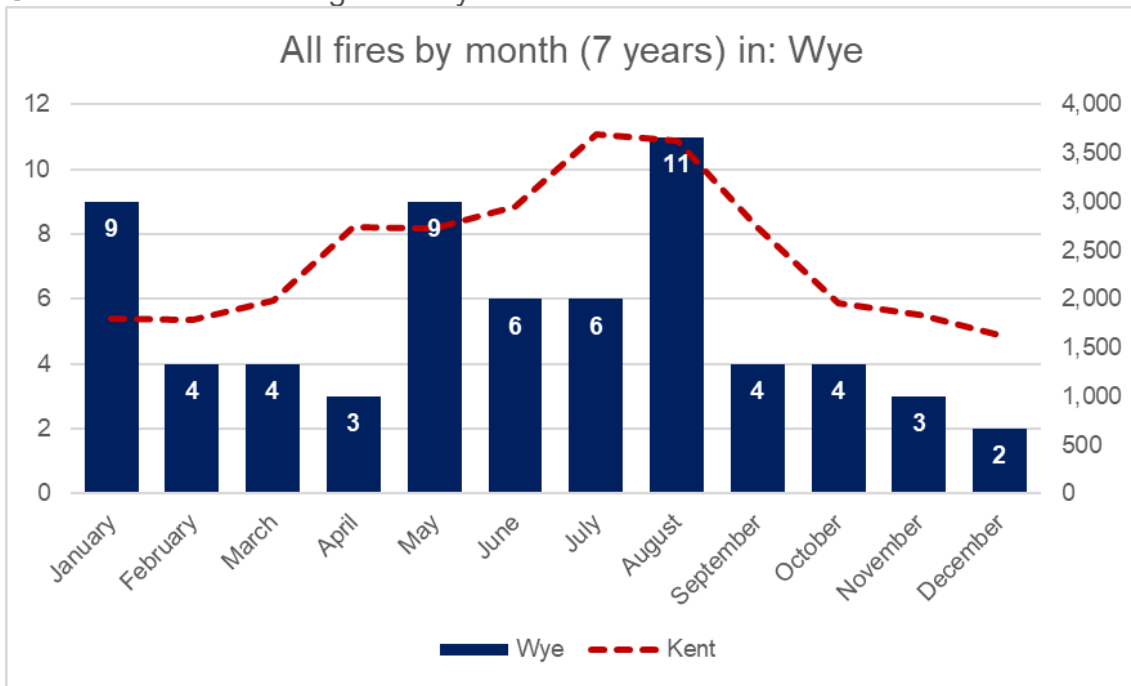


Chart: Fires on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

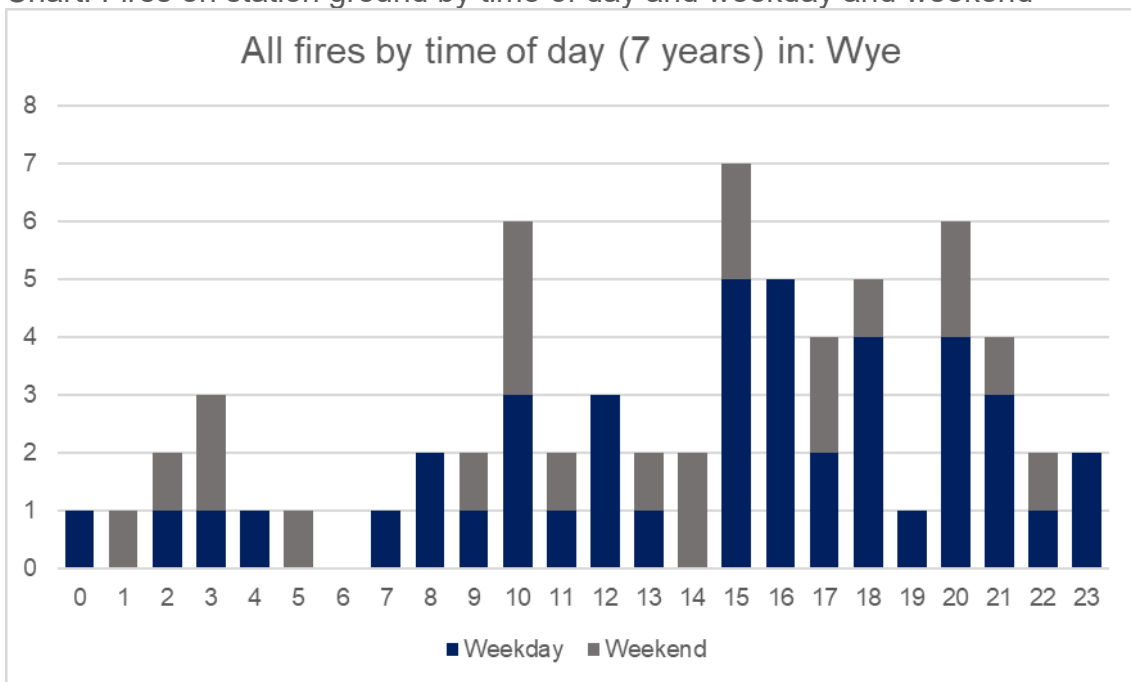


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by type

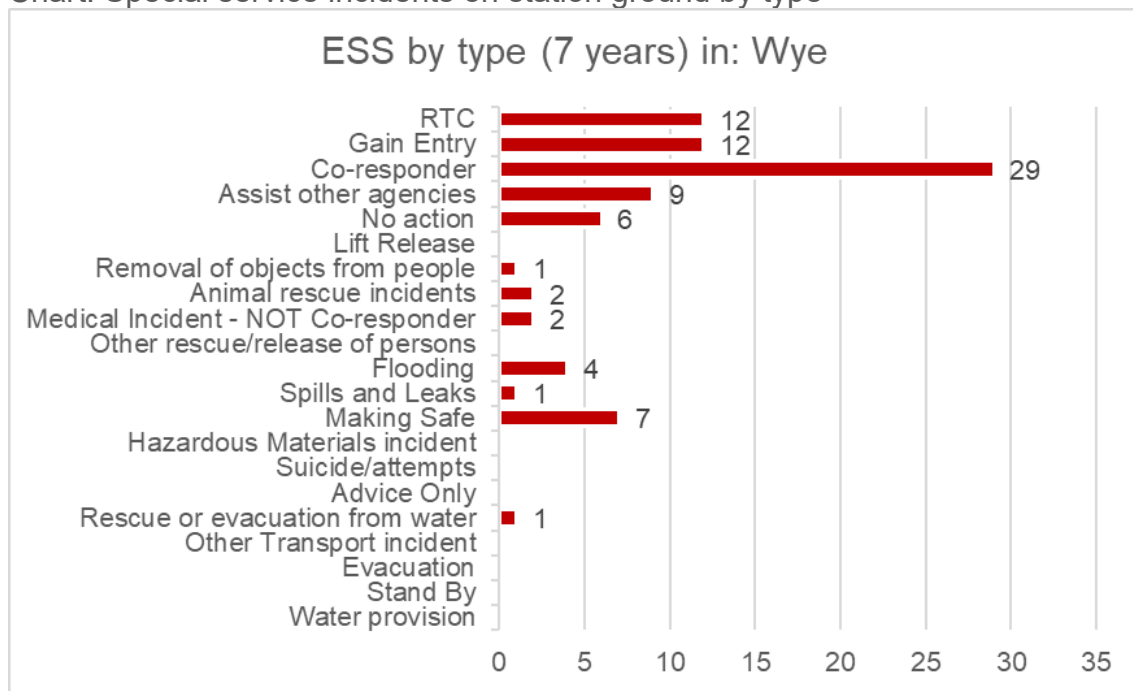


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by year

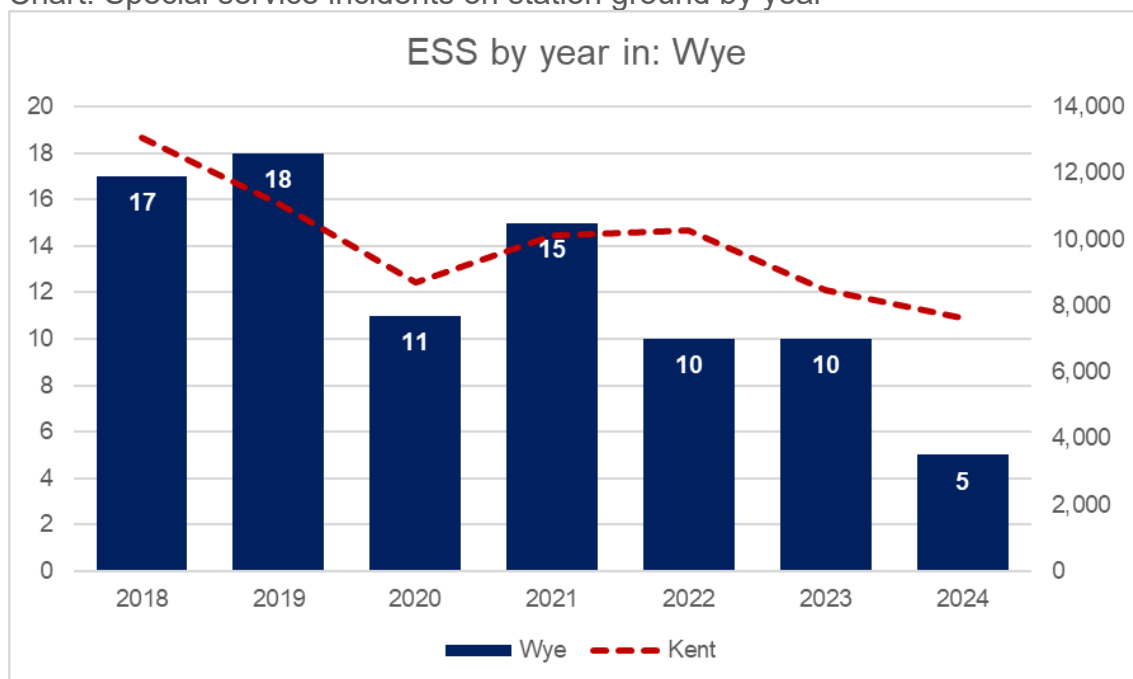


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by month

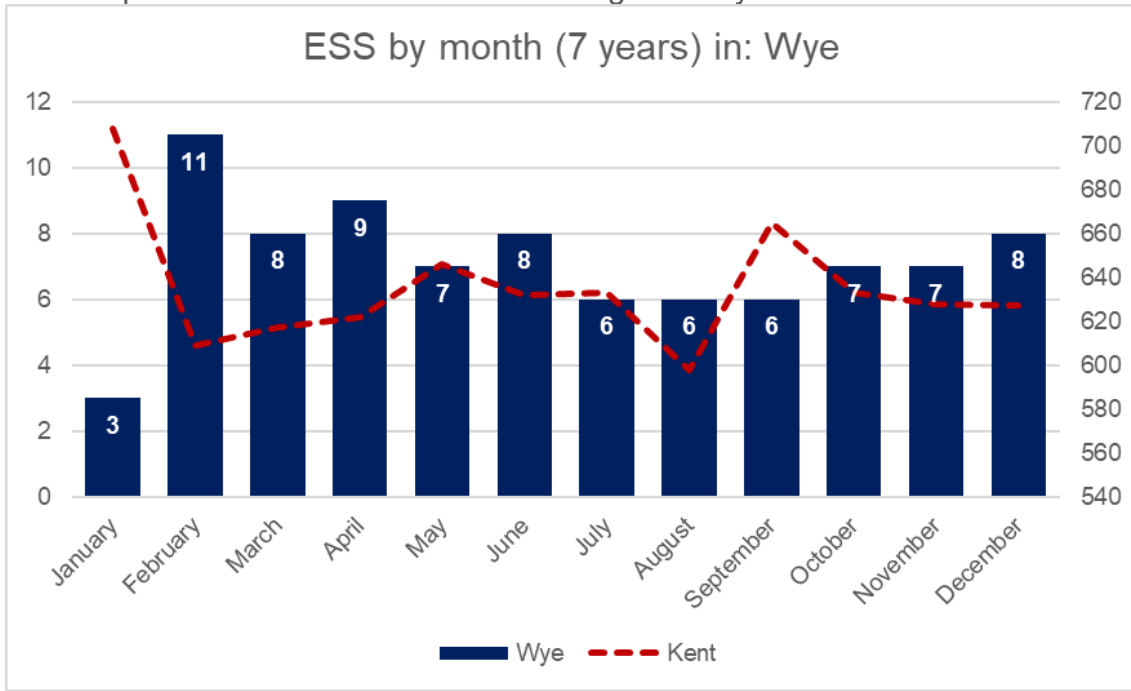
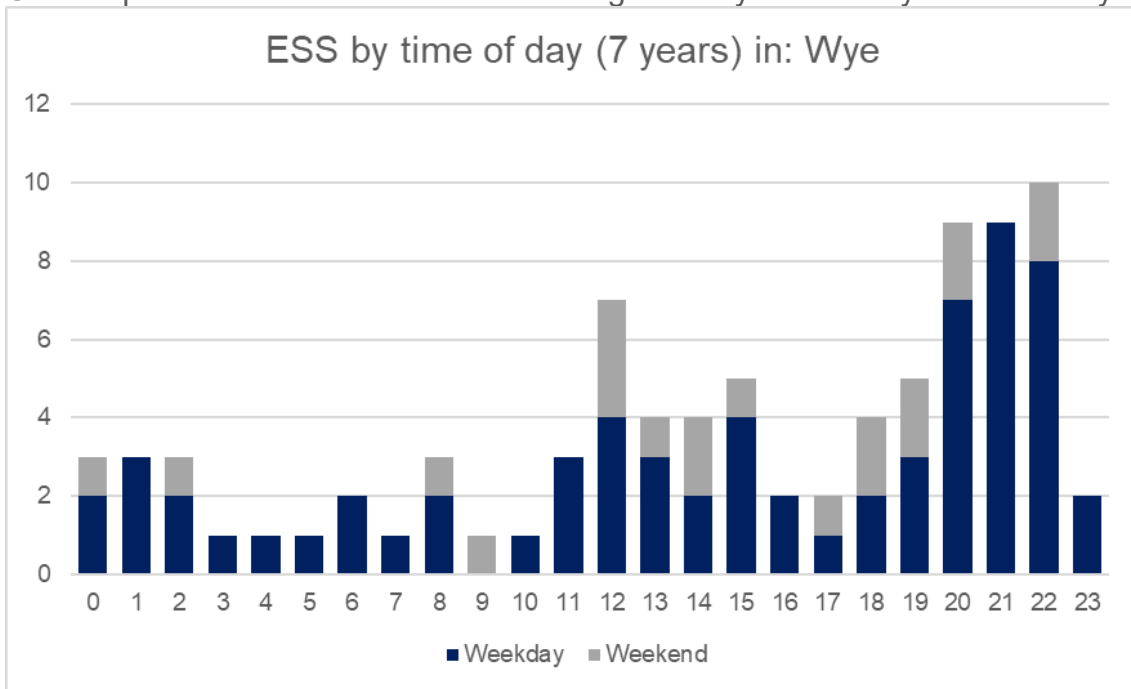


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the fire engine in Wye has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 324 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations higher in summer months and December
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Very few mobilisations are on Wye's station ground. Wye is used most of the time to support incidents within the Ashford reporting cluster (57.7%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

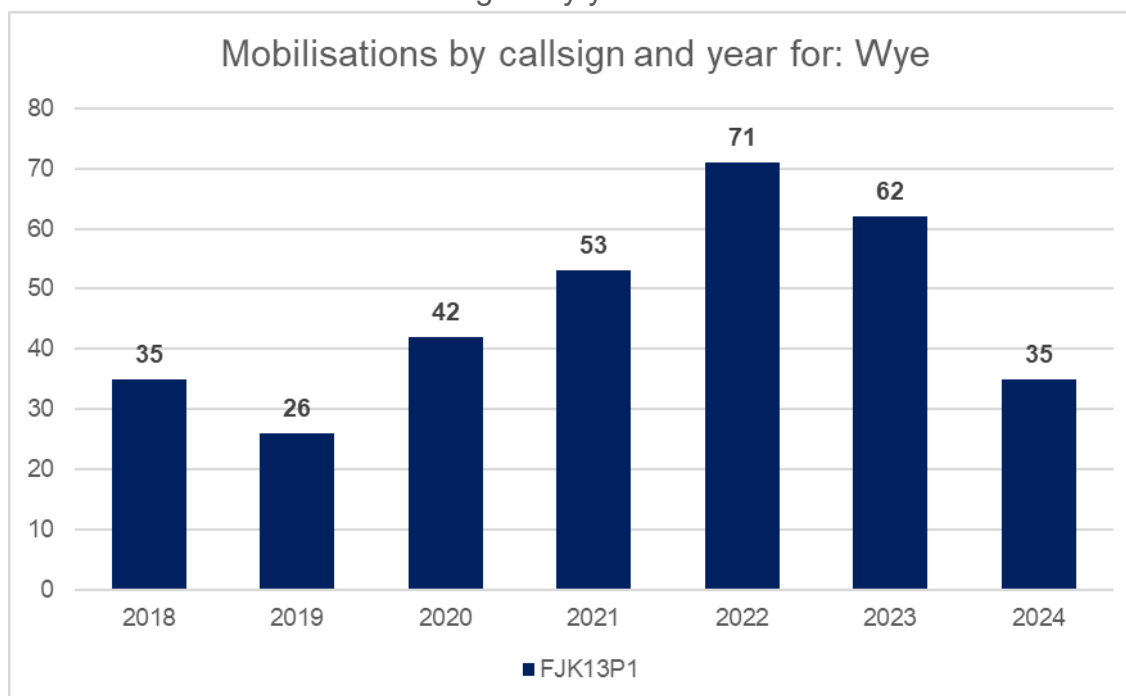


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

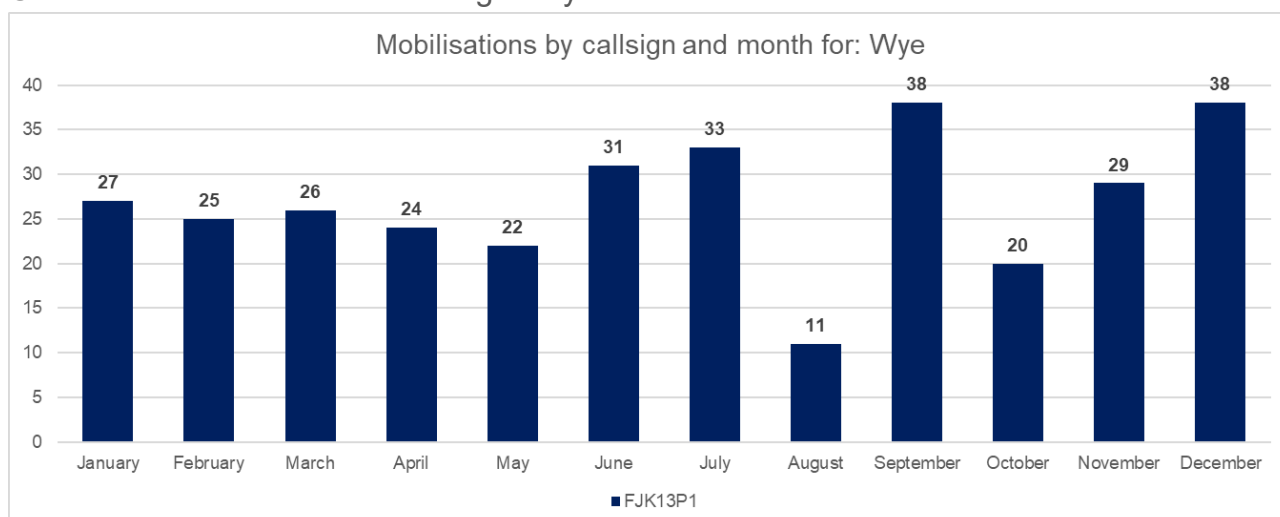


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

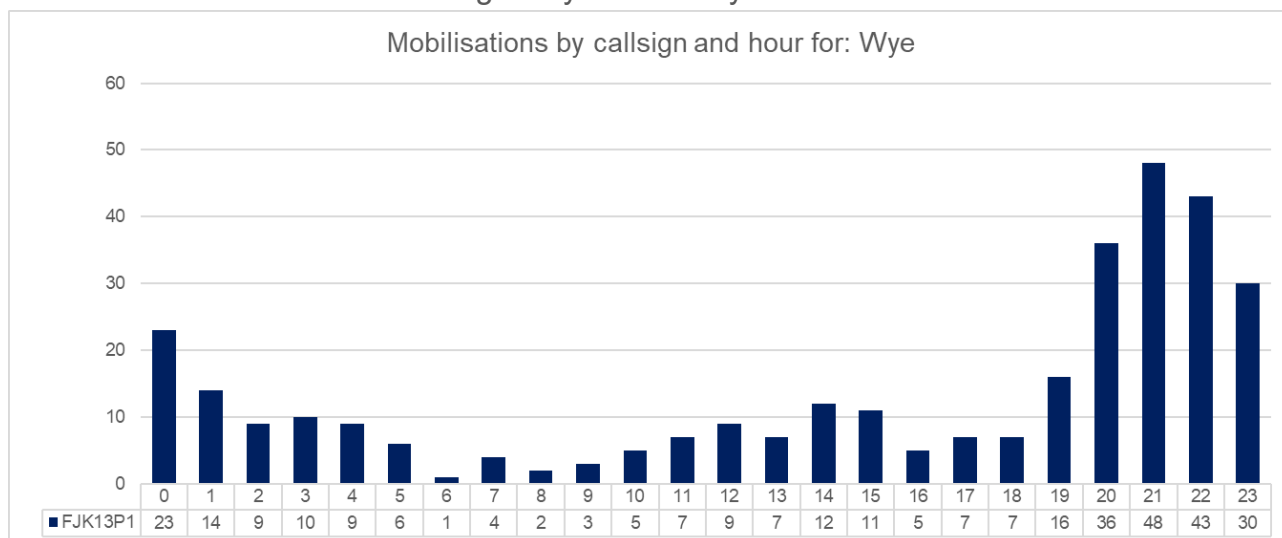


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

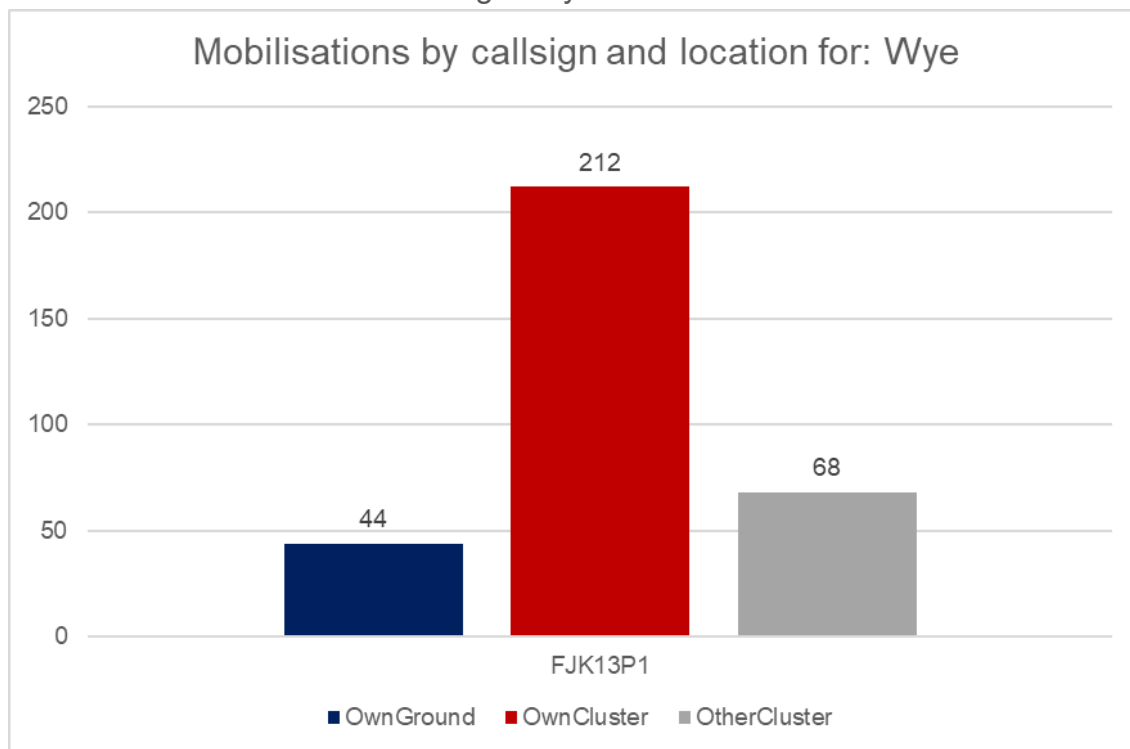
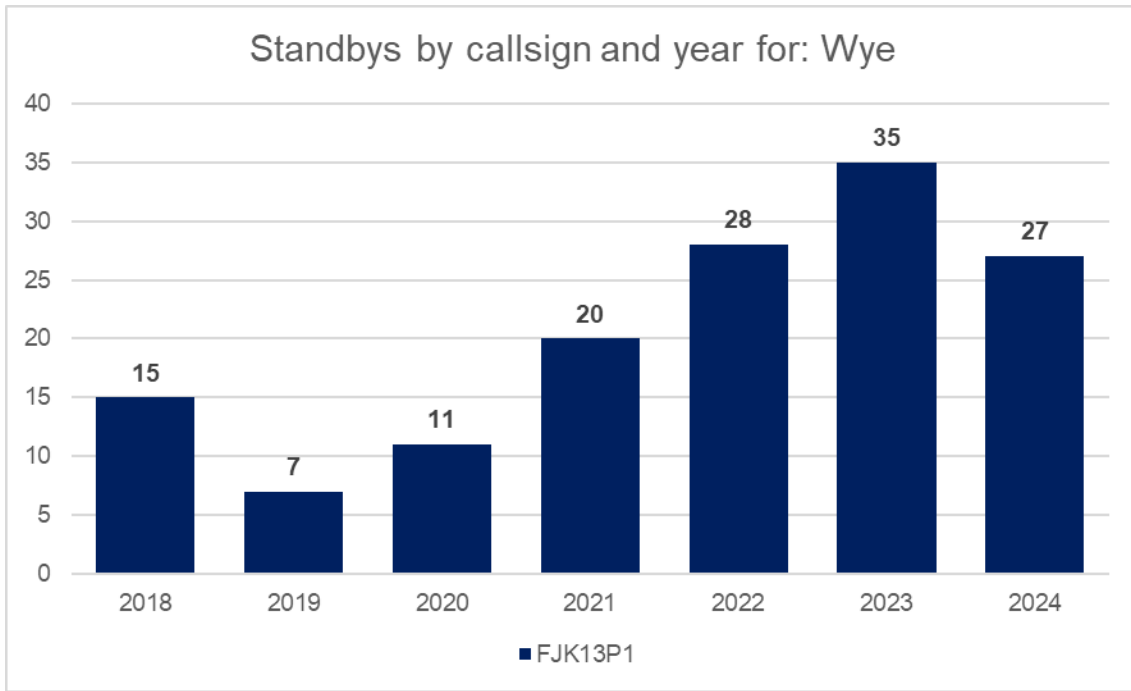


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



# Risks

In summary:

- Wye ranks consistently low for most societal risk factors and activity across the profile
- 28% of the Wye population is aged 65 and over and 15% of the population are single person households.
- On average there is a medium level of deprivation which is reflective of the majority of Kent. In comparison to other on-call station grounds Wye scores low.
- There are few commercial premises and only one infrastructure premise (railway station)
- Wye has a higher risk rating against premises that fall into the “People+” category compared to other on-call station grounds. This is being driven by a private medical treatment facility called Withersdane.

## Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile









The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

Table: Results of KAIR profile<sup>2</sup>

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>3,202</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>2</sup> People+ capture’s higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Known Risk Sites

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

There are no premises in the Wye area which requires site specific risk information.

## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond, in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Wye would have been mobilised to 102 incidents per year on average; two incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Wye is modelled to attend 717 incidents. Of those, 414 are on Ashford's station ground while 205 are on Wye's station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (207)<sup>3</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Wye was assigned to in the model can be found in **Appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Ashford	112	88	190	24	414
Wye	59	65	68	13	205
Chilham	13	13	11	1	38
Canterbury	16	4	3	0	23
Folkestone	4	3	2	0	9
Charing	6	1	0	0	7
Aldington	3	1	1	0	5
Lydd	5	0	0	0	5
Faversham	3	1	0	0	4
Tenterden	2	0	0	0	2
New Romney	0	1	0	0	1
Maidstone	1	0	0	0	1
Lenham	1	0	0	0	1
Headcorn	1	0	0	0	1
Aylesham	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>717</b>

<sup>3</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Wye station area.

County map highlighting the potential change in Wye station area coverage



The table below outlines the potential change in where each fire engine would be sent from to incidents in the Wye station area. Ashford will be pick up most of the incidents in the area, followed by fire engines from Canterbury.

Ashford	Canterbury	Folkestone	Charing	Faversham	Aldington	Whitstable
64%	21%	6%	3%	2%	1%	1%

The table below details the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area. The possible new time shown in the table is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to improve during the day but will take longer at night. It is important to note that day-time response time is impacted by the other factor in this review; placing a second wholetime fire engine at Ashford during the day.

	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
Day time	39 secs quicker	13 mins 49 secs
Nighttime	1 min 32 secs slower	14 mins 29 secs

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of fire engine availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability on the basis of numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Wye (7 years total)

	11	13	12	80	19	14	15	23	84	26	20	60	62	63	81
	Ashford	Wye	Chilham	Canterbury	Folkestone	Charing	Aldington	Lydd	Faversham	Tenterden	New Romney	Maidstone	Lenham	Headcorn	Aylesham
<b>Fires</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Dwelling	19	14	3	8	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Residential	48	7	3	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Residential	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	31	27	6	6	0	1	0	5	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
Transport	11	11	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	12	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	4	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	1	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	40	8	12	4	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	3	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Apparatus	146	51	5	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Good Intent	43	17	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malicious	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Resourcing Review

# **On-Call Viability Proposal for Closure – Supporting Data**

Chilham

**June 2026**



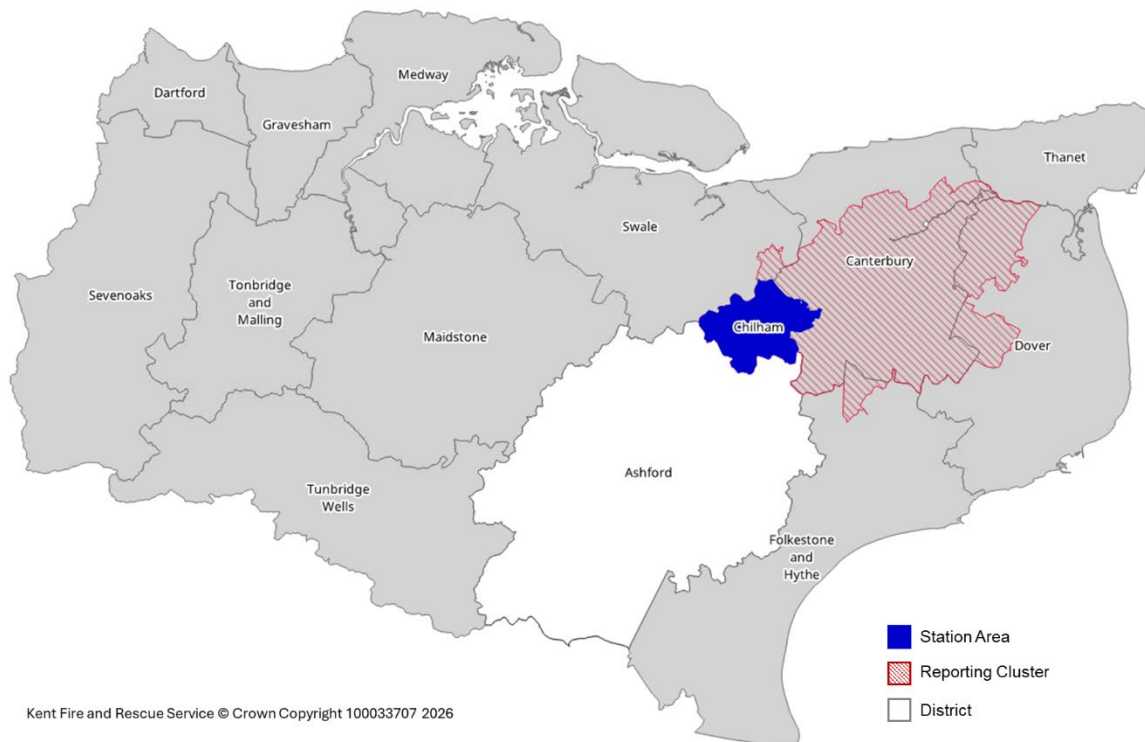
**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

## Station Information

Chilham is a standalone on-call fire station located in the Ashford District area. The station area covers a total of 45.1 sq km, with a population of 2,709. For reporting purposes, Chilham sits within the Canterbury cluster.

County map highlighting Chilham station ground, Canterbury reporting cluster and Ashford District



Chilham crews one fire engine and does not provide crewing for any other specialist vehicles.

Chilham currently has eight colleagues employed: one watch manager, two crew managers and five firefighters. Two of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Chilham. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been three new starters at Chilham station.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

Availability has been largely consistent between 2018 to 2024, but has dropped in 2025, when 24/7 availability was as low as 17.6%. Even in the best recent year shown (2024, 27.2%), the fire engine was unavailable nearly two thirds of the time.

The difference between 24/7 availability (23.9%) and evenings/weekends availability (33.3%) shows Chilham can provide availability outside standard daytime hours, but it is still a low proportion of the time.

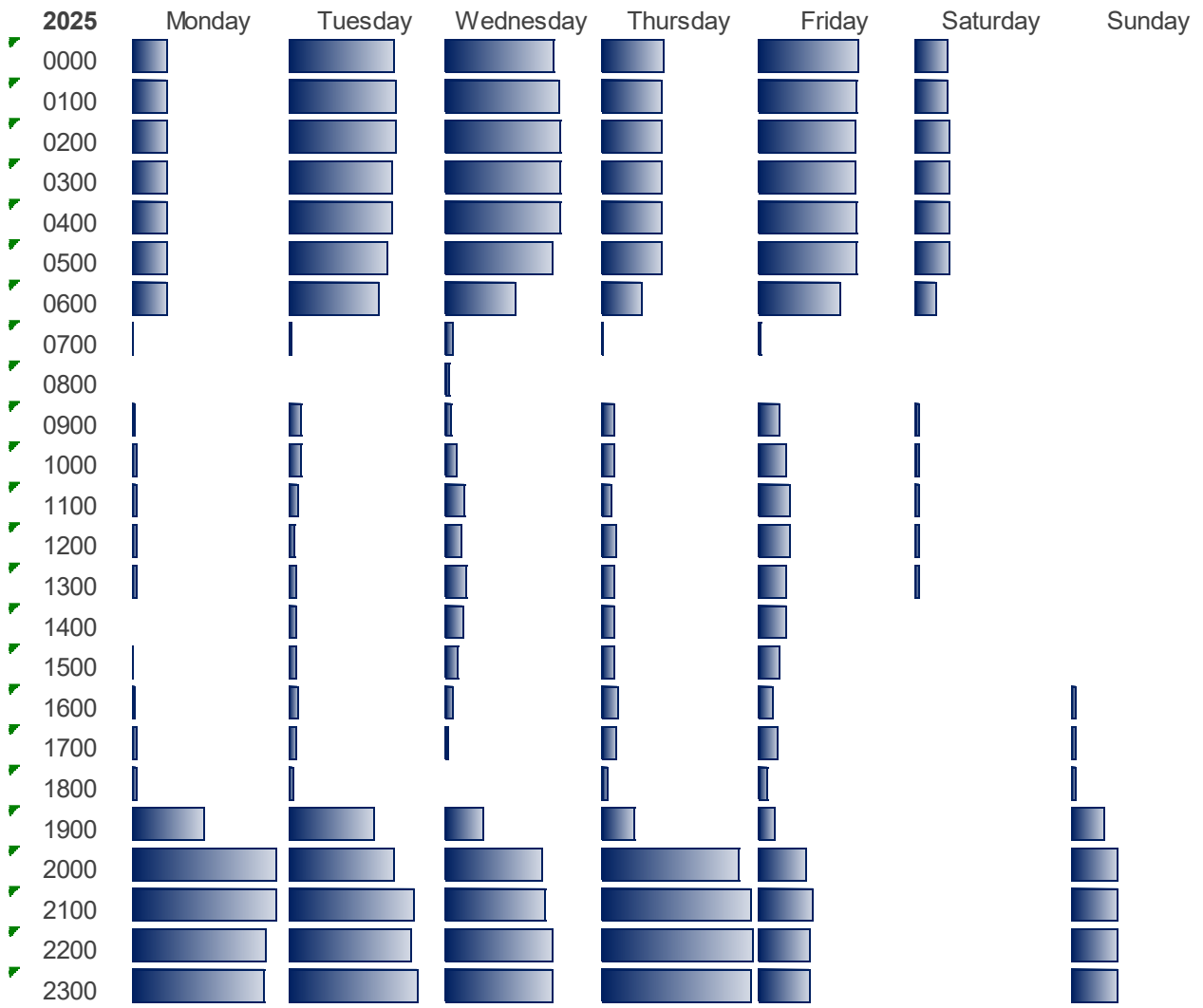
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is around 1.3x the 24/7 figure.
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is consistently higher than 24/7 availability by around 6–11 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	17.6%	23.2%
2024	27.2%	37.8%
2023	26.4%	36.9%
2022	20.0%	27.7%
2021	25.0%	35.8%
2020	27.7%	38.1%
2019	25.9%	37.1%
2018	21.0%	30.2%
<b>Average</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Activity

Overall incident demand in the station ground is low. Chilham contributes a very small share of the countywide demand. In addition, most mobilisations of the fire engine based at Chilham are to incidents elsewhere in the County or within the Canterbury reporting cluster, not within their own station ground.

### Incidents on the Station Ground

The following section details incidents that happened on the Chilham station ground, regardless of who attended the incidents. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 202 incidents in total
  - Incidents spread evenly over the months
  - Incidents are higher during the day in line with the countywide picture
- False alarms: 66 (32.7% of all incidents)
  - Mostly good intent false alarms
- Fires: 52 (25.7%)
  - Of which just over half were outdoor fires
- Special service: 84 (41.6%)
  - A large proportion of which were RTCs (35)
- One fatality and seven serious casualties in total, across eight different incidents
  - One fatality and one serious casualty from two special service incidents
  - Five serious casualties from RTCs
  - One serious casualty from a co-responding incident

Table: Number of incidents by number of fire engines required

		Chilham	Kent
Level 1	1-3 fire engines	201	135,851
Level 2	4-6 fire engines	1	1,274
Level 3	7-9 fire engines	0	76
Level 4	10+ fire engines	0	43

Chart: Incidents on station ground by year and incident type

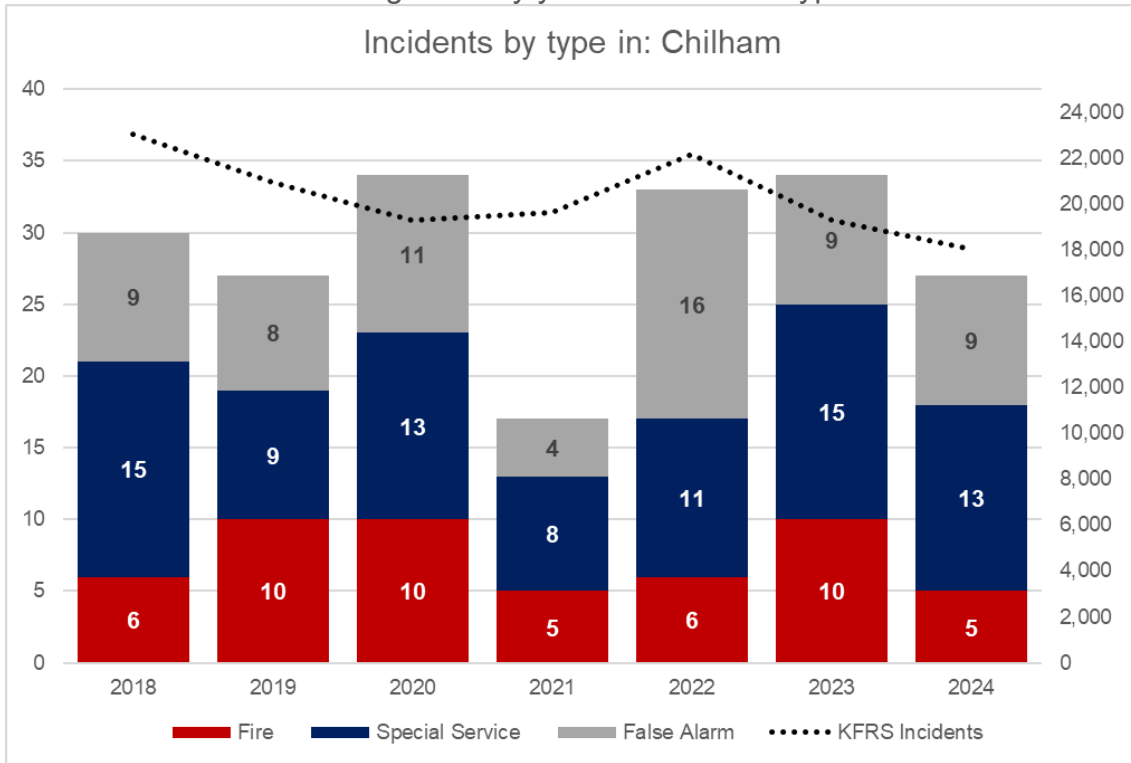


Chart: Incidents on station ground by month

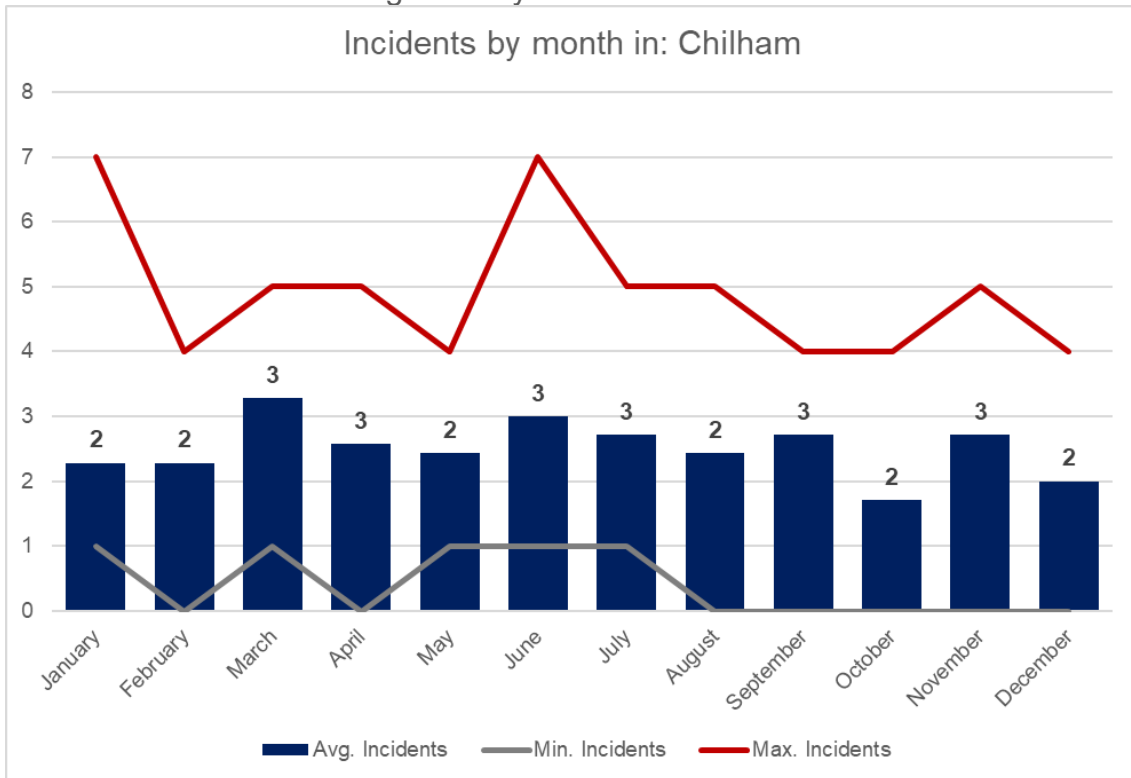


Chart: Incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

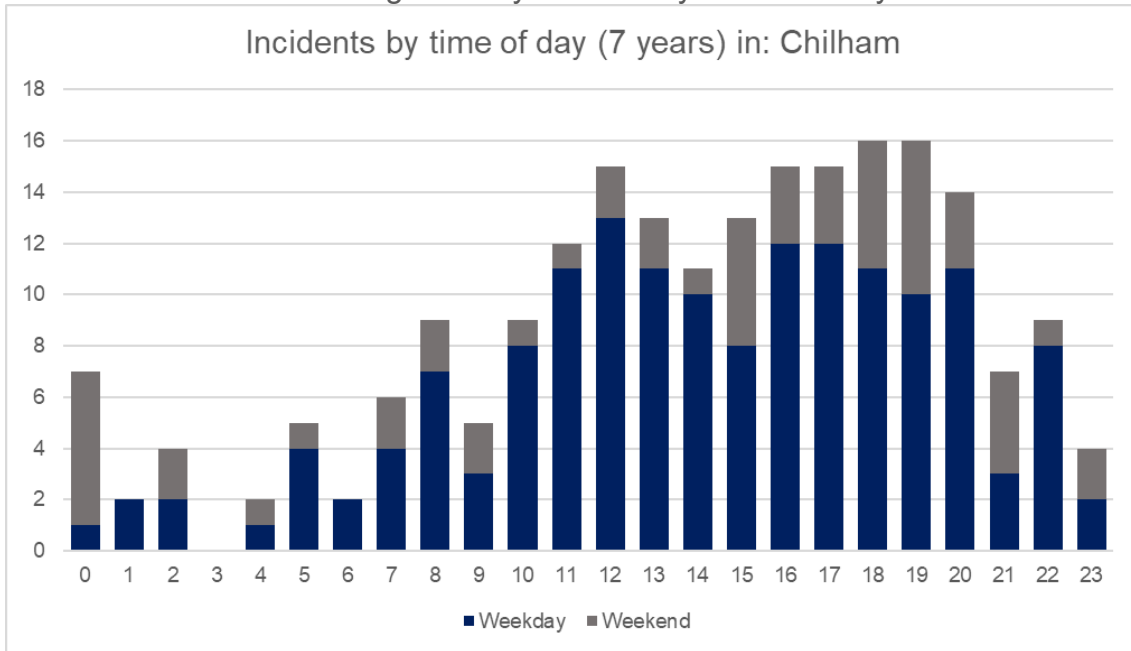


Chart: Casualties from Incidents on station ground

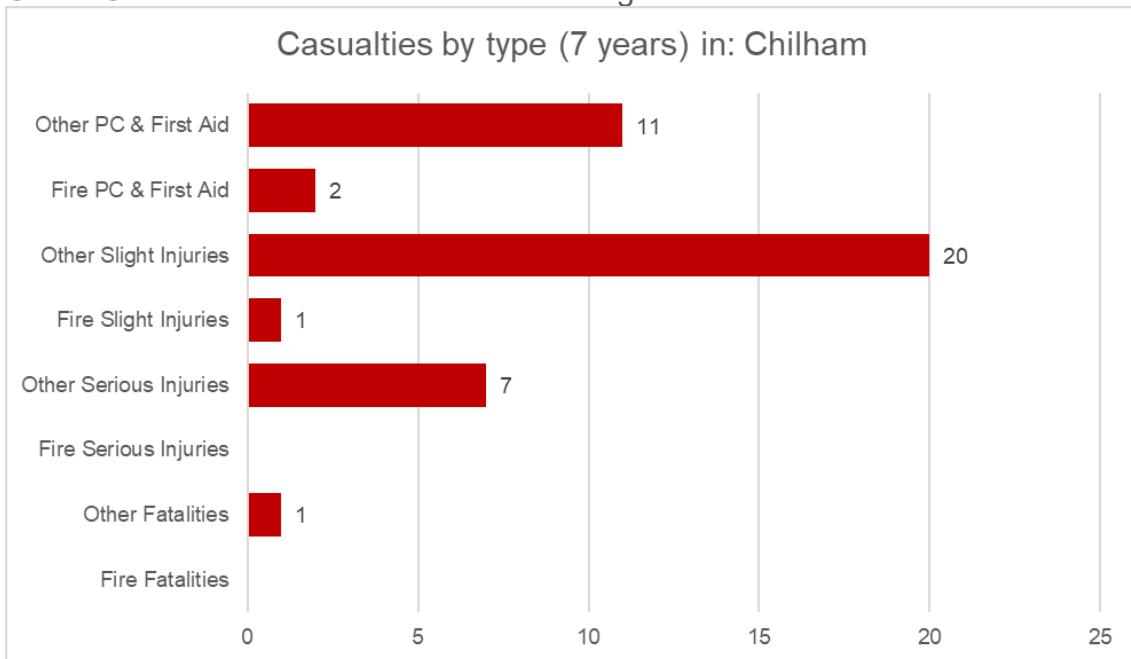


Table: Average time between first and second fire engine attendance to incidents

RTC	4 mins 19 secs
Fire - Dwelling	2 mins 22 secs
Fire - Non Residential	1 min 50 secs
Fire - Outdoor	41 mins 25 secs
Fire - Road Vehicle	1 min 41 secs

Note: the number of incidents is very small so any outliers will not be absorbed

Chart: Fires on station ground by property type

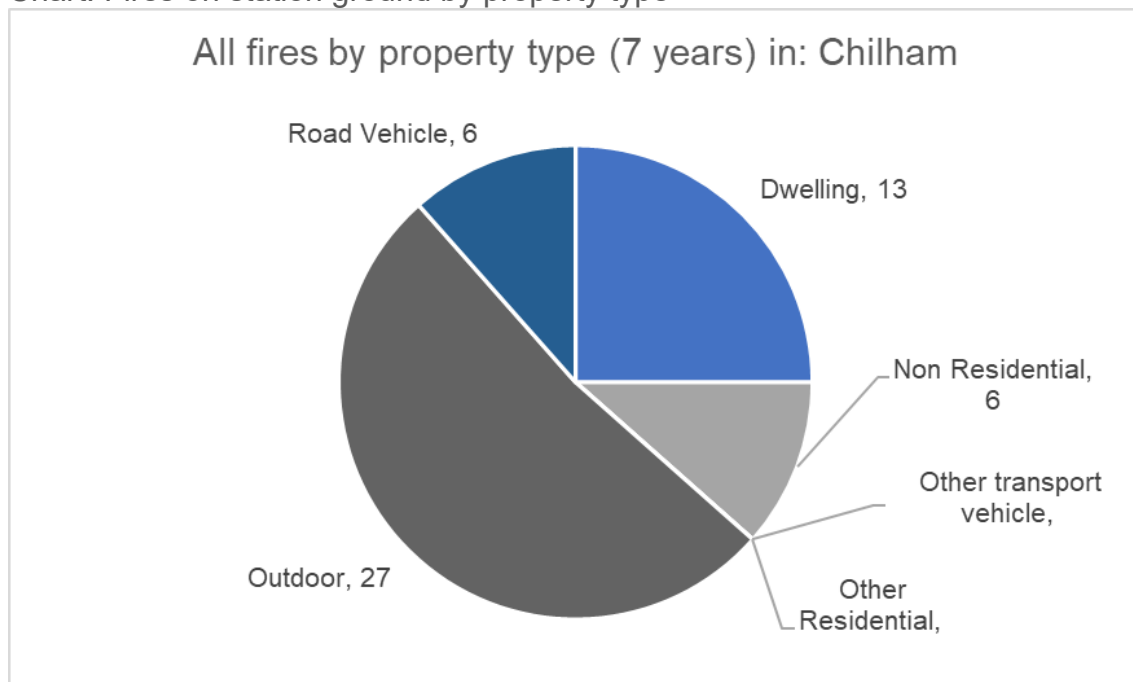


Chart: Fires on station ground by year

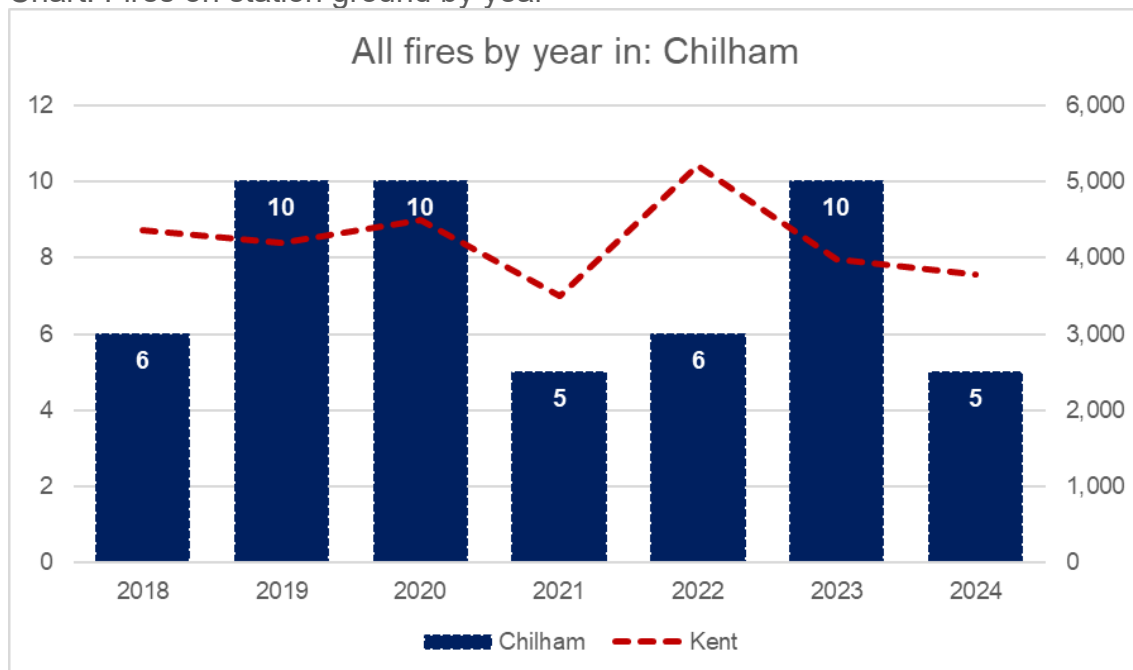


Chart: Fires on station ground by month

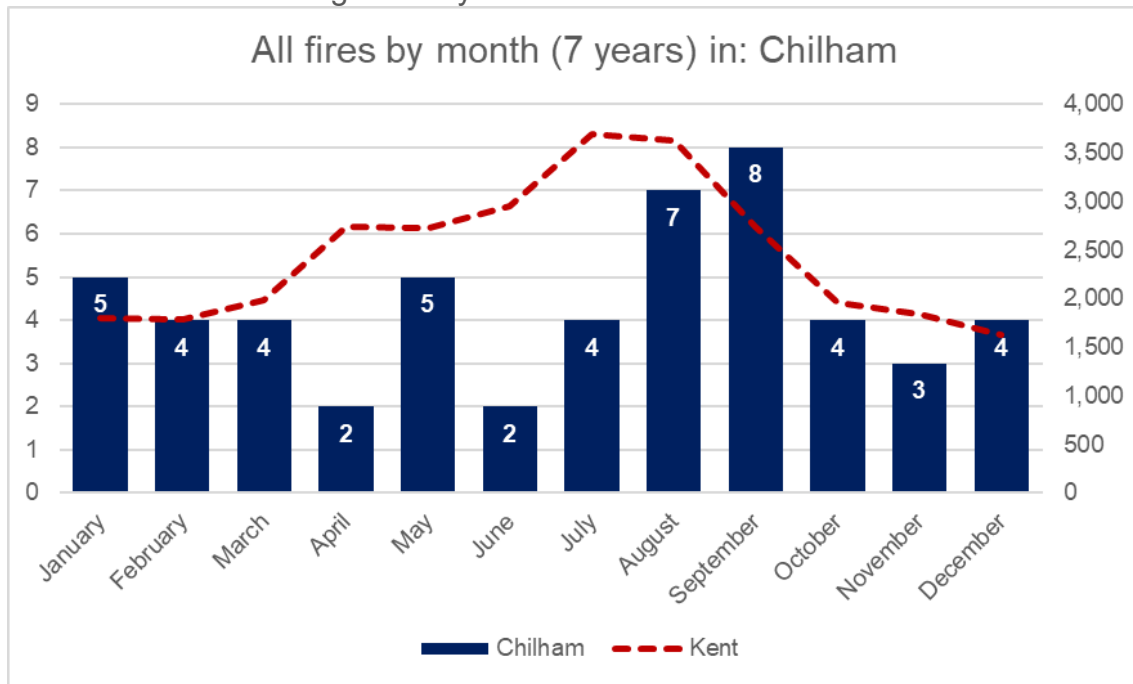


Chart: Fires on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

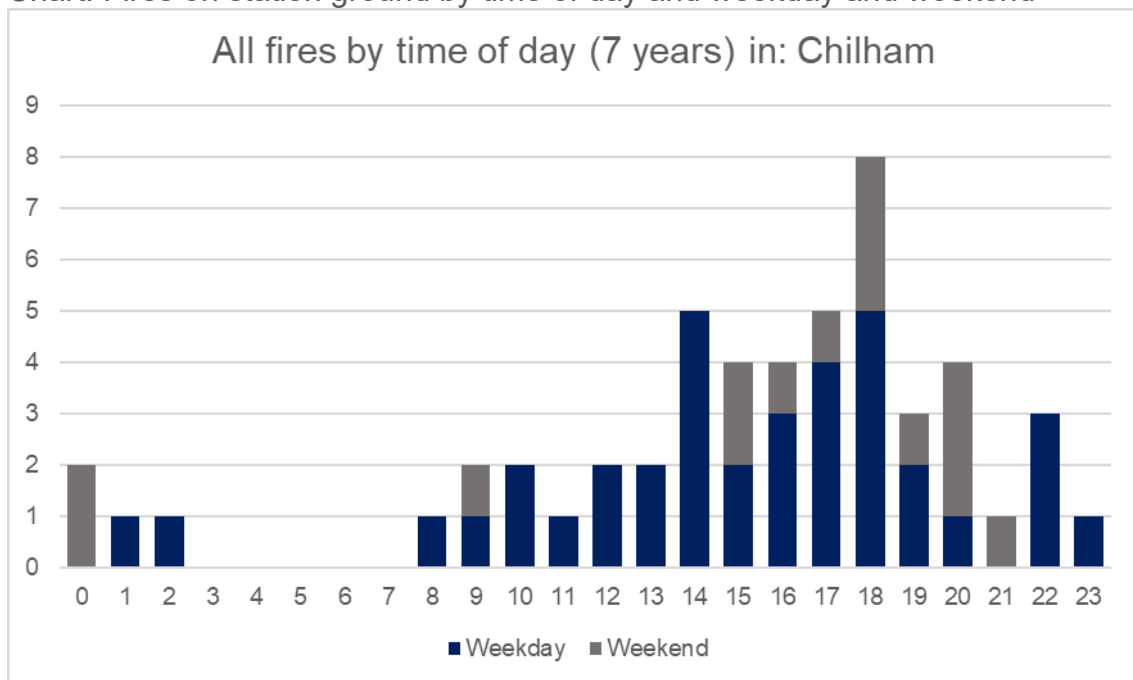


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by type

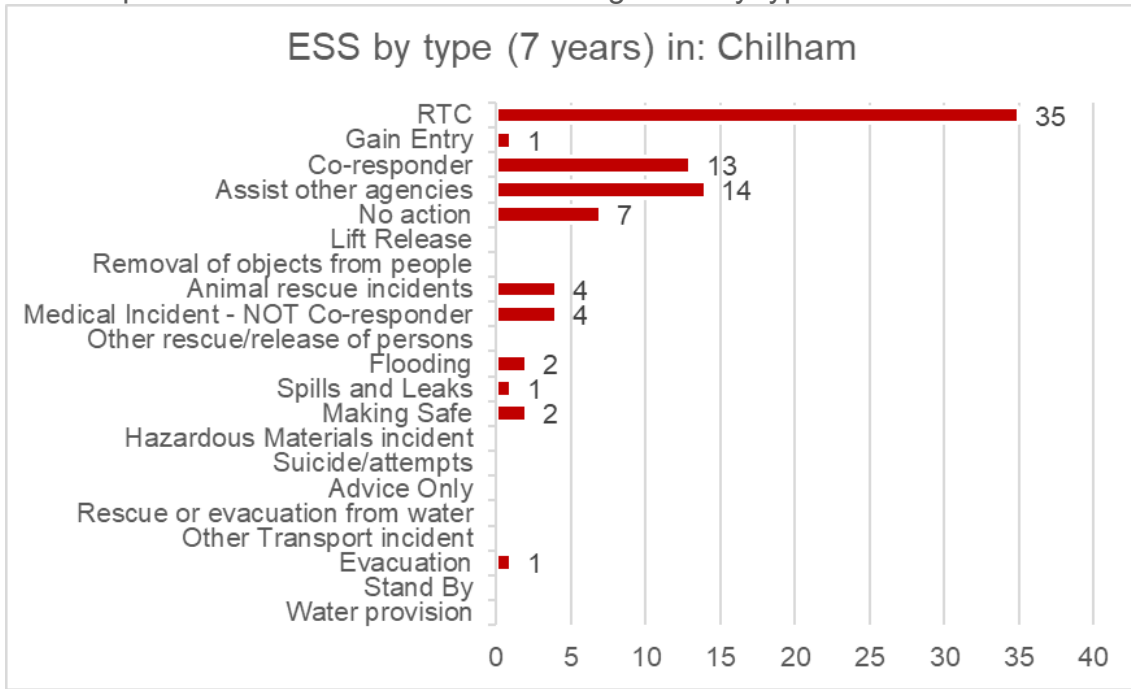


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by year

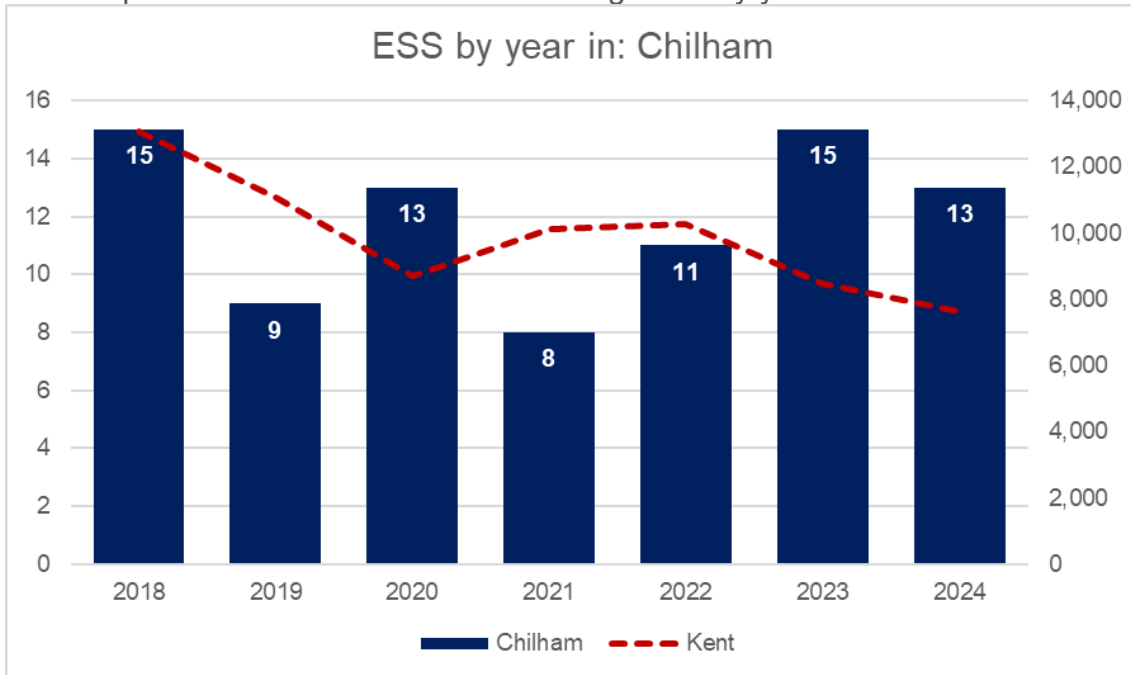


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by month

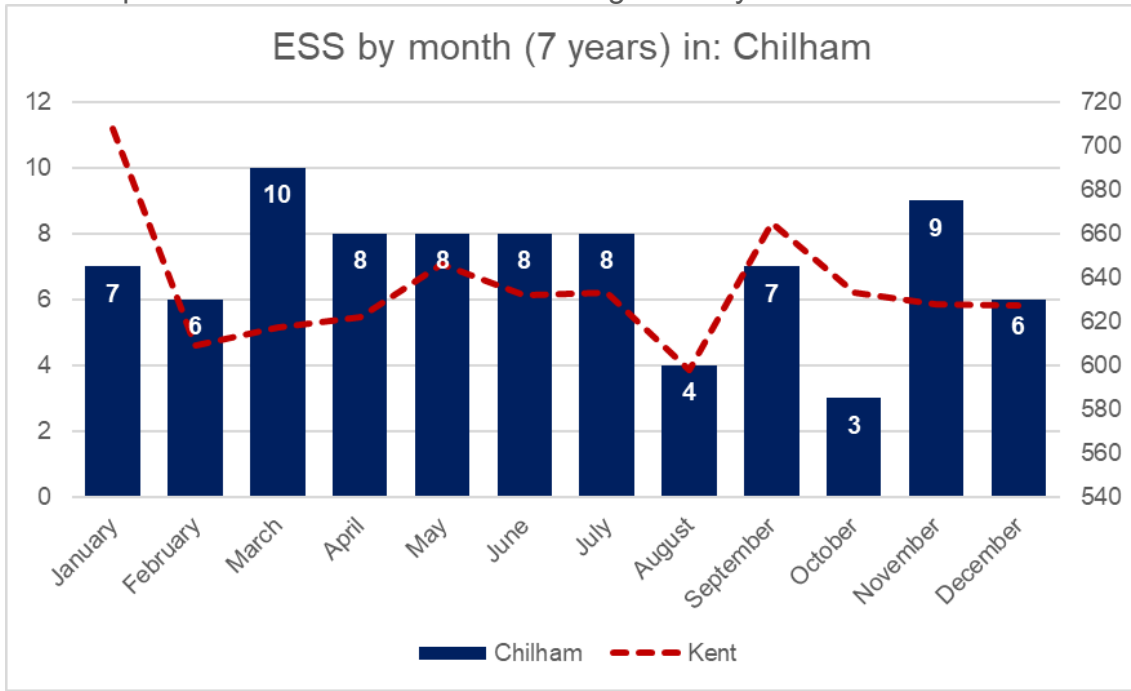
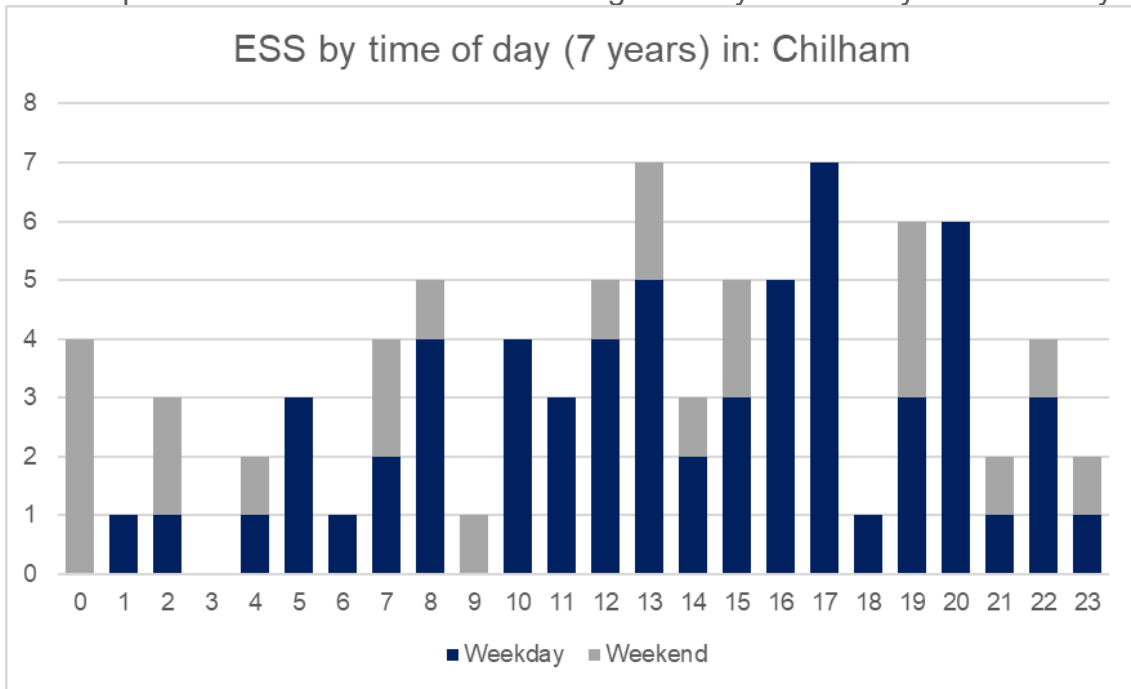


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the fire engine in Chilham has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 301 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations higher in summer months
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Chilham is used most of the time to support incidents elsewhere in the County (63.1%) or within the Canterbury reporting cluster (28.9%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

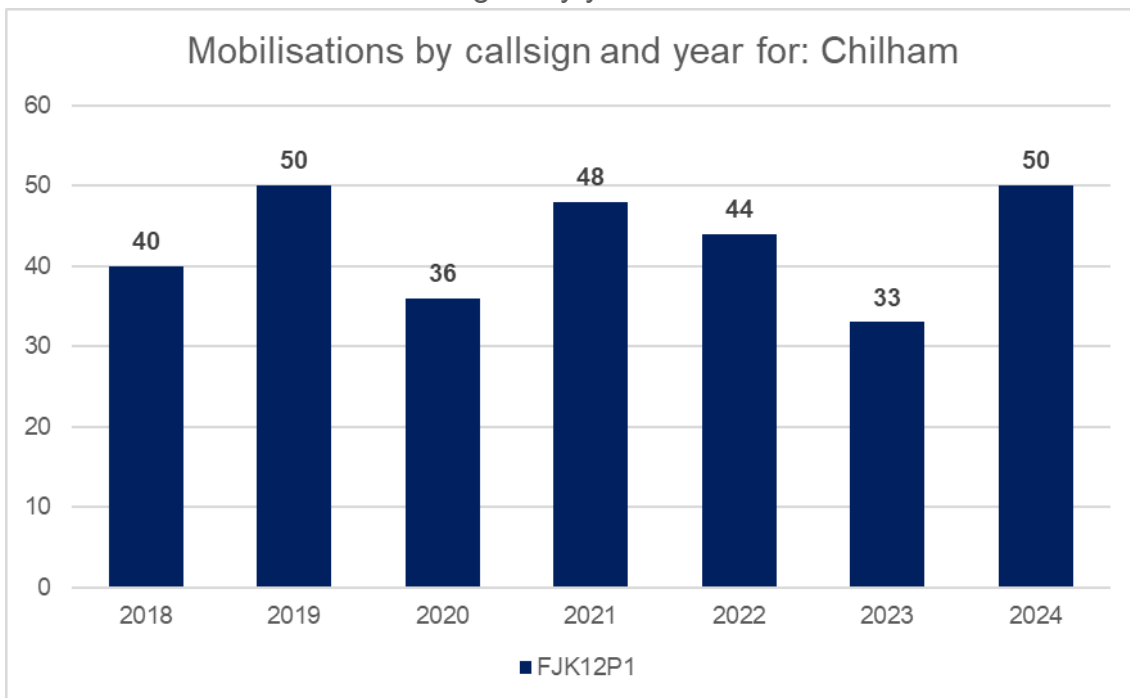


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

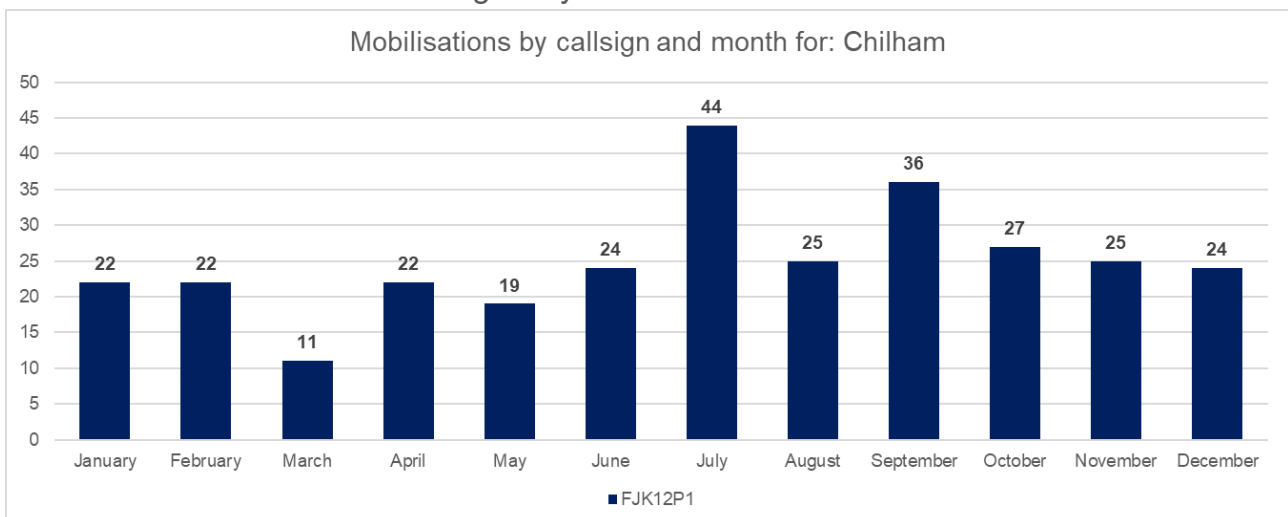


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

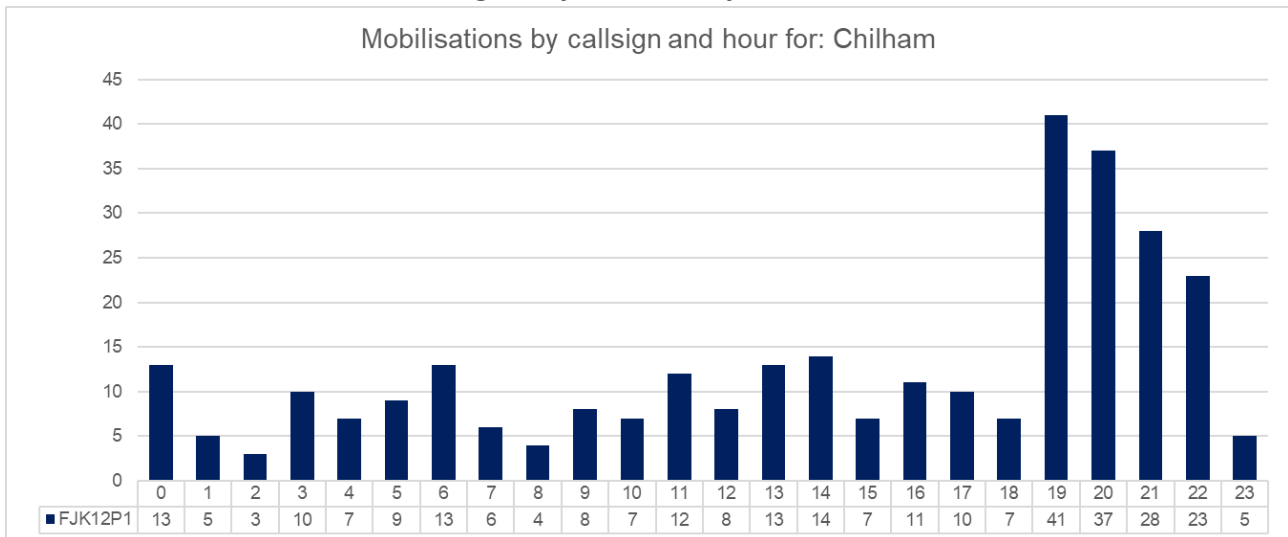


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

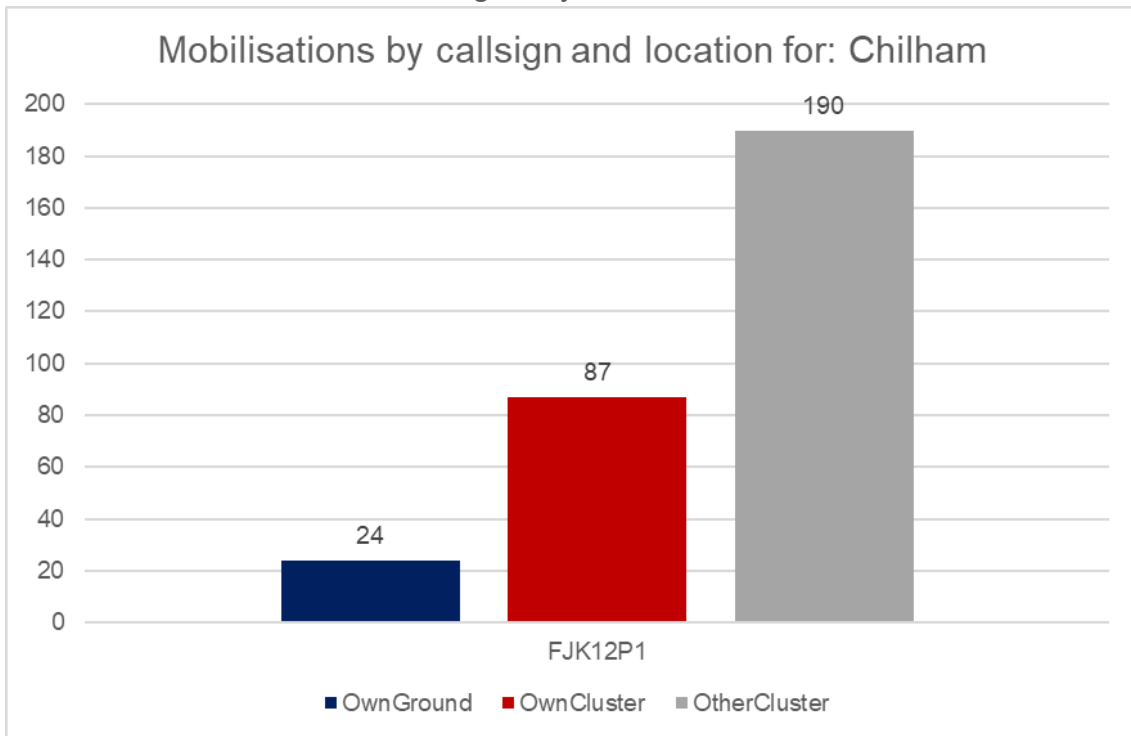
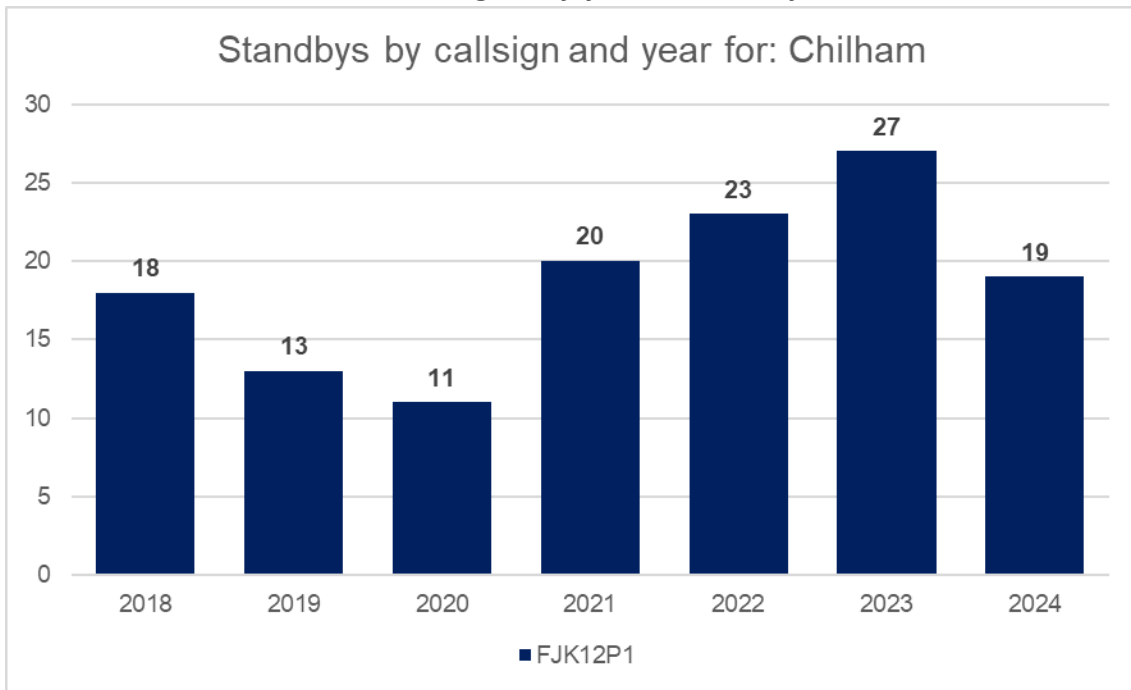


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



## Risks

In summary:

- Chilham ranks consistently low for most societal risk factors and activity across the profile.
- 25% of the Chilham population is aged 65 and over and 10% of the population are single person households.
- On average there is a medium level of deprivation which is reflective of the majority of Kent. In comparison to other on-call station grounds Chilham scores higher.
- There are few commercial premises and no infrastructure premises.

## Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile









The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

Table: Results of KAIR profile<sup>2</sup>

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
2,709	25%	6%	10%	Medium	2	57	0

<sup>2</sup> People+ capture's higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Known Risk Sites

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

There are two premises in the Chilham area which require site specific risk information.

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
0	1	1	0	0
	Association of British Dispensing Opticians	Chilham castle		

## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Chilham would have been mobilised to 133 incidents per year on average; 2.5 incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Chilham is modelled to attend 929 incidents. Of those, 417 are on Canterbury's station ground while 201 are on Chilham's station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (227)<sup>3</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Chilham was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Canterbury	110	87	209	11	417
Chilham	55	75	64	7	201
Faversham	54	31	22	7	114
Ashford	37	13	41	2	93
Wye	17	6	29	5	57
Charing	15	5	4	0	24
Lenham	3	1	0	0	4
Lydd	4	0	0	0	4
Headcorn	3	0	0	0	3
Maidstone	3	0	0	0	3
Whitstable	2	0	0	0	2
Teynham	1	0	1	0	2
Margate	1	0	0	0	1
Aylesham	1	0	0	0	1
Aldington	1	0	0	0	1
Tunbridge Wells	1	0	0	0	1
Tenterden	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>929</b>

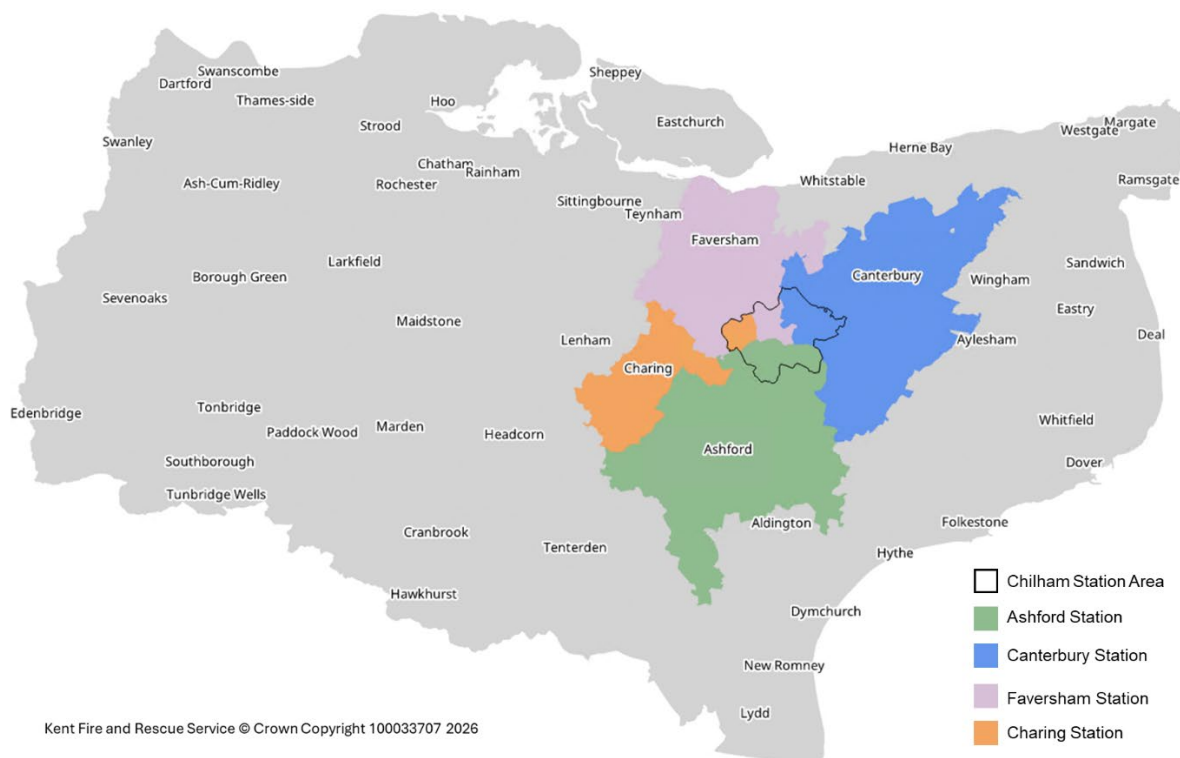
<sup>3</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Chilham station area.

County map highlighting the potential change in Chilham station area coverage



The table below outlines the potential change in where each fire engine would be sent from to incidents in the Chilham station area. Canterbury will be pick up most of the incidents in the area, followed by fire engines from Faversham and Ashford.

Canterbury	Faversham	Ashford	Charing	Whitstable	Herne Bay
56%	20%	17%	3%	2%	1%

The table below details the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area. The possible new time shown in the table is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to improve during the day but will take longer at night. It is important to note that day-time response time is impacted by the other factor in this review; placing a second wholetime fire engine at Ashford during the day.

	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
Day time	3 secs slower	13 mins 18 secs
Nighttime	1 min 57 secs slower	13 mins 59 secs

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years.

Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability on the basis of numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Chilham (7 years total)

	80	12	84	11	13	14	62	23	63	60	85	46	87	81	15	76	26
	Canterbury	Chilham	Faversham	Ashford	Wye	Charing	Lenham	Lydd	Headcorn	Maidstone	Whitstable	Teynham	Margate	Aylesham	Aldington	T. Wells	Tenterden
<b>Fires</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	28	13	13	7	4	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Non-Residential	20	7	4	16	6	1	1	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Residential	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	47	29	26	12	6	6	2	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Transport	12	6	11	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	19	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	14	14	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	3	8	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	5	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	32	33	18	7	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	5	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Apparatus	142	12	17	27	25	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	64	52	5	14	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malicious	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Resourcing Review

# On-Call Viability

## Proposal for Removal of On-Call Pump – Supporting Data

Deal

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

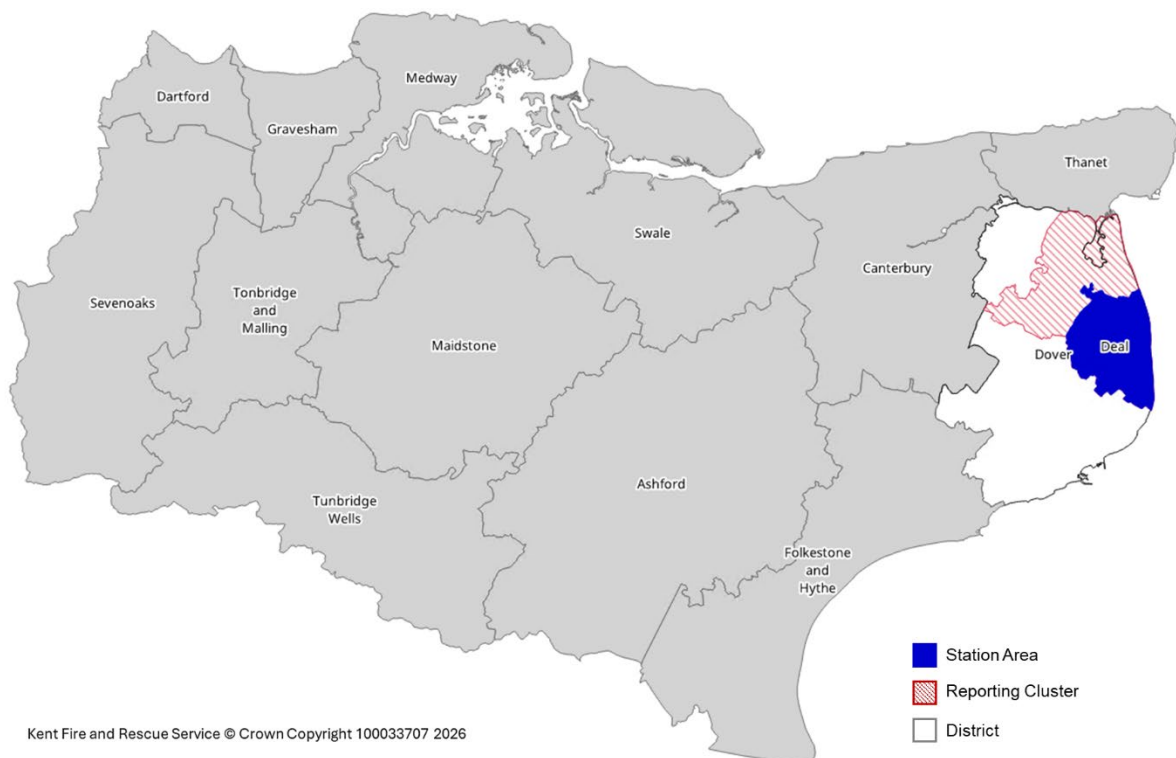
**together**

## Station Information

Deal is a 2 fire engine station. It has 1 wholetime day crewed fire engine and 1 on-call fire engine. A day crewed station has a wholetime fire engine that is available during the day on an immediate response and available overnight on a delayed response of five minutes. It also has an on-call fire engine that is available at varying times on a five minute delayed response.

The station is in the Dover District area. The station area covers a total of 52.5 sq km, with a population of 35,402. For reporting purposes, Deal sits within the Deal cluster.

County map highlighting Deal station ground, Deal reporting cluster and Dover District



Deal on-call section currently has 13 colleagues employed: two crew managers and 11 firefighters. Ten of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Deal. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been nine new starters at Deal on-call section, two of which have since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

24/7 availability has varied over the period shown, ranging from 27.9% in 2024 to 52.5% in 2019. In the most recent years, it has remained below 40%, including 38.1% in 2025, 27.9% in 2024 and 36.0% in 2023.

The difference between average 24/7 availability (40.2%) and average evening/weekend availability (52.3%) shows Deal provides better availability outside standard daytime hours.

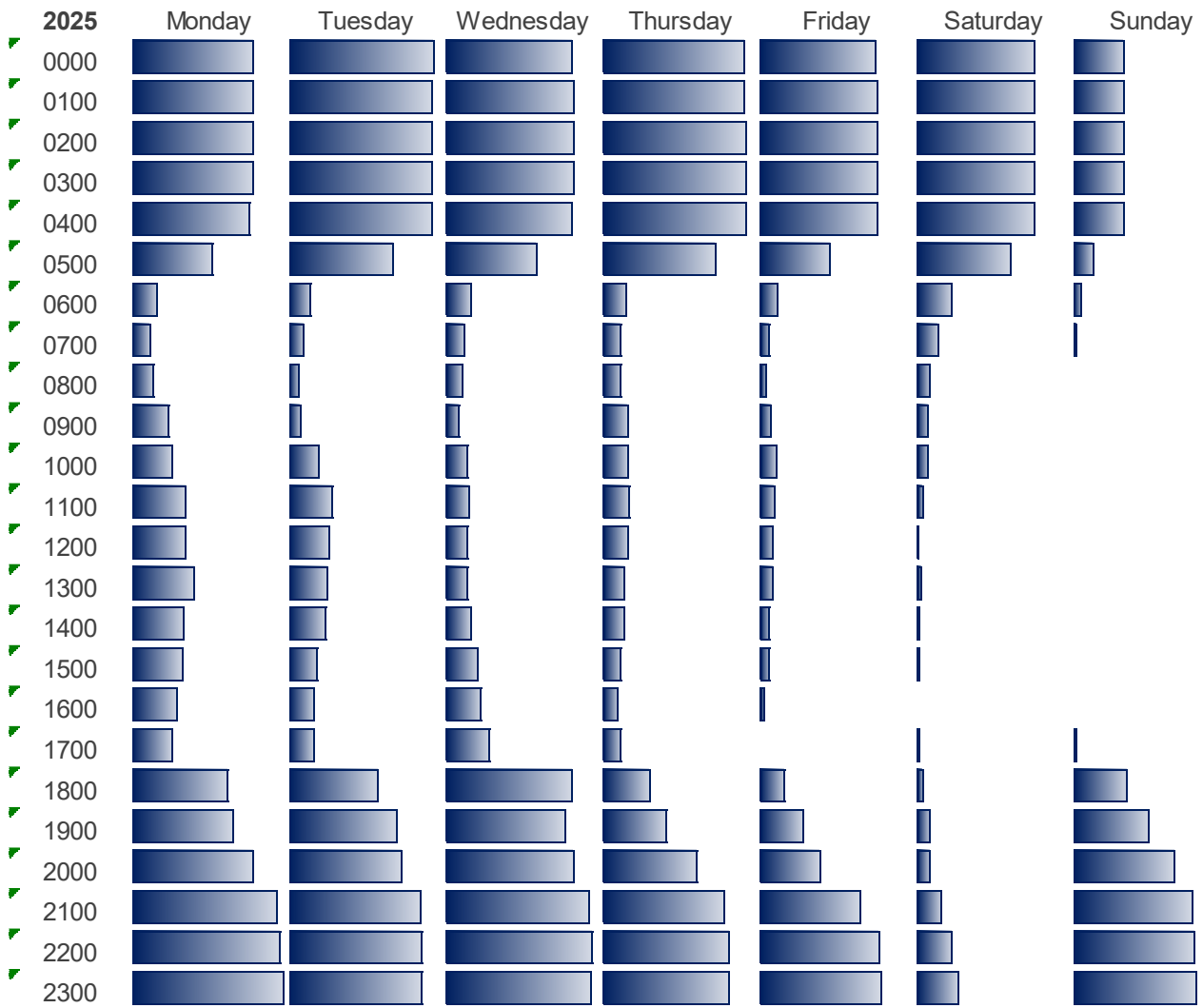
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is higher than the 24/7 figure by 12.0 percentage points (50.1% compared with 38.1%).
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is consistently higher than 24/7 availability, typically by around 11 to 14 percentage points, with an average gap of 12.1 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	38.1%	50.1%
2024	27.9%	39.4%
2023	36.0%	48.1%
2022	38.3%	52.3%
2021	38.1%	51.6%
2020	37.9%	49.1%
2019	52.5%	63.7%
2018	52.2%	64.4%
<b>Average</b>	<b>40.2%</b>	<b>52.3%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the on-call fire engine in Deal has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 369 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations higher in summer months and December
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Most mobilisations are on the station ground. Deal is used less often to support incidents within the reporting cluster (9.3%) and elsewhere in the County (33.7%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

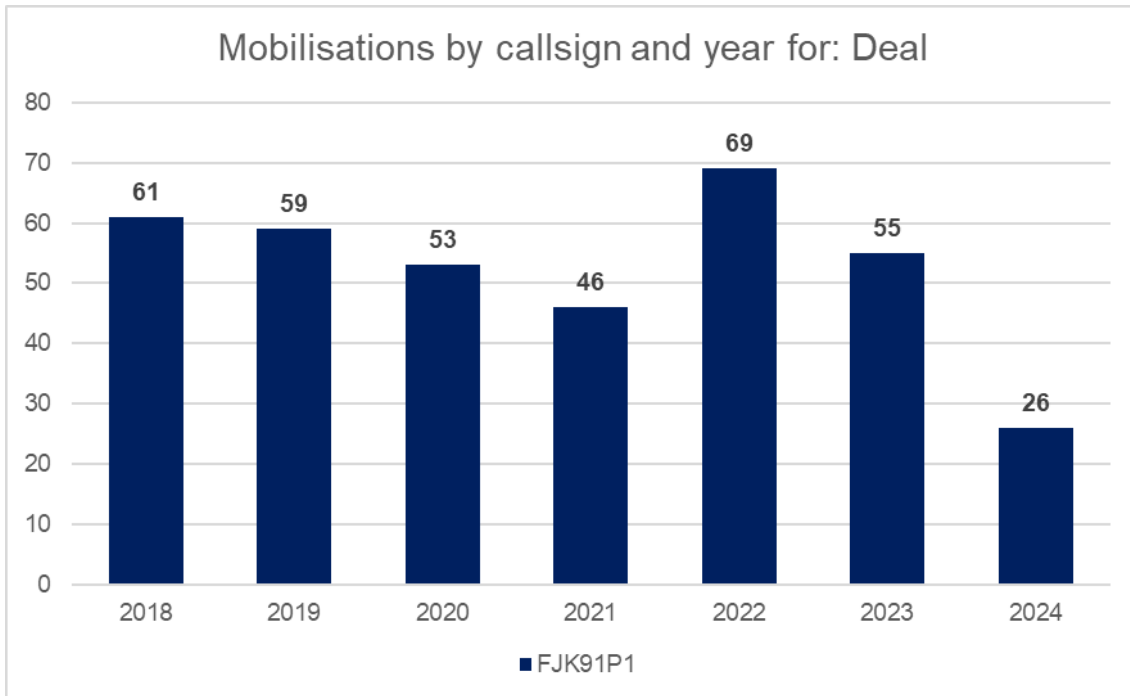


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

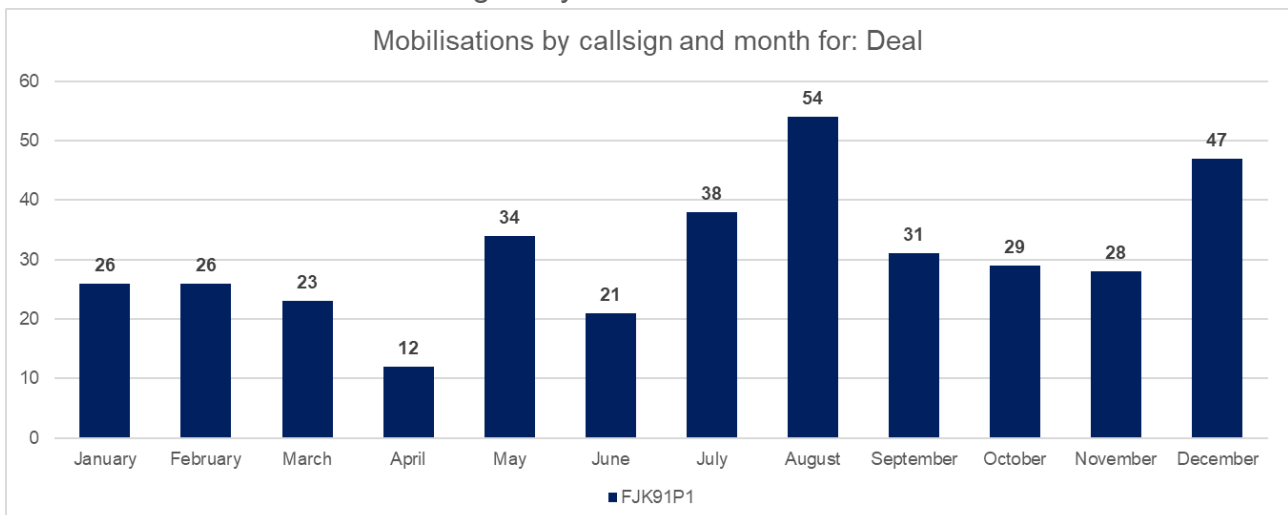


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

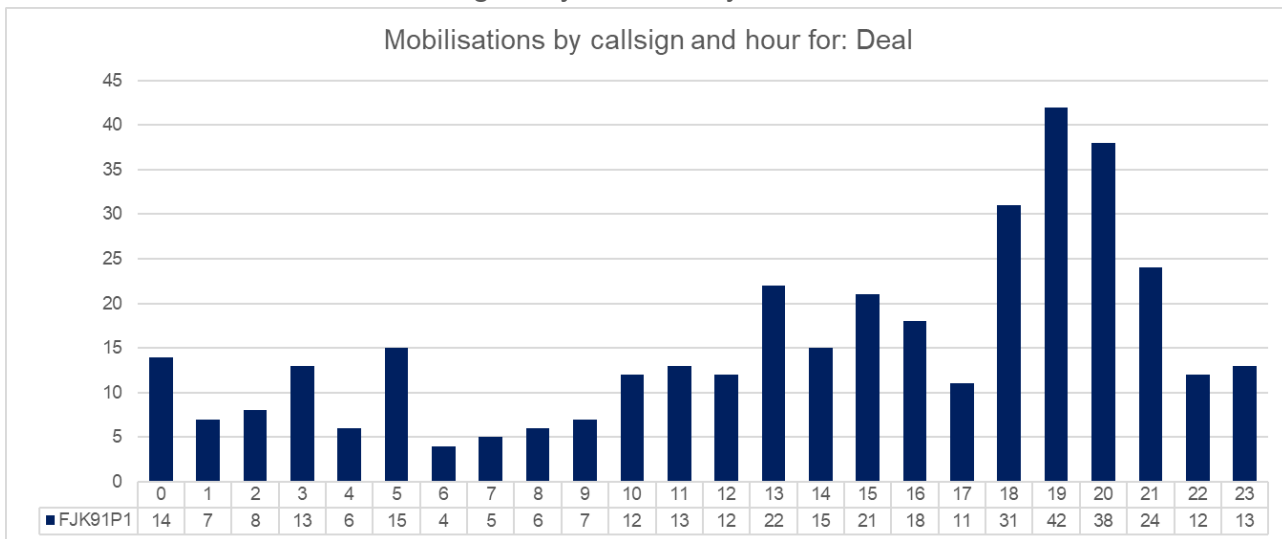


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

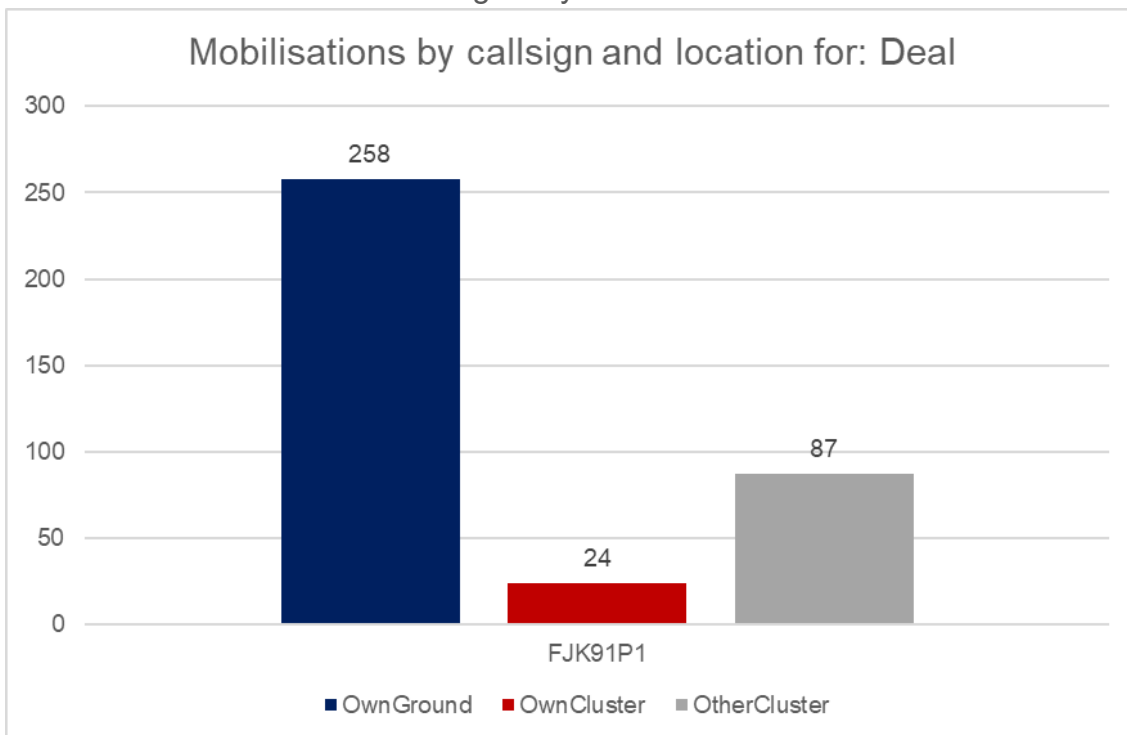
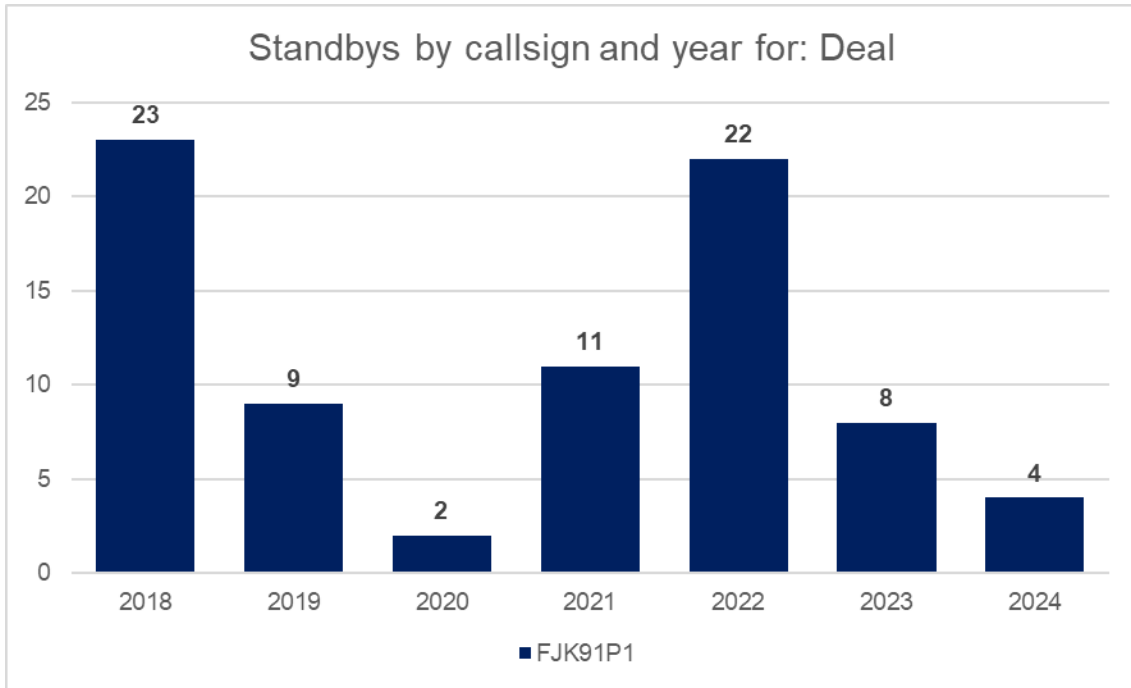


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Deal would have been mobilised to 120 incidents per year on average; two incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Deal is modelled to attend 841 incidents. Of those, 806 are on Deal's station ground. The most frequent incidents are automatic fire alarms (356)<sup>2</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Deal was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Deal	166	164	444	32	806
Dover	4	3	8	0	15
Sandwich	11	2	1	0	14
Margate	1	1	0	0	12
Wingham	1	0	0	0	1
Ramsgate	1	0	0	0	1
Eastry	1	0	0	0	1
Over the border	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>841</b>

<sup>2</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

Deal will retain its wholetime day crewed fire engine which will still provide the first fire engine response as it does now. The removal of the on-call fire engine means that the second fire engine response will come from the surrounding stations.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Deal station area.

County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine response in Deal station area



The second fire engine response will come predominantly from Dover or Sandwich.

The table below details predicted potential time between the first and second fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area by response type. The times shown are taken from the model where the other proposals for creating three additional wholetime day fire engines and all proposed station closures are included.

	<b>Emergency Urban</b>	<b>Emergency Rural</b>
<b>Deal</b>	<b>12 mins 50 secs</b>	<b>7 mins 57 secs</b>
Day time	14 mins 57 secs	10 mins 25 secs
Nighttime	8 mins 55 secs	4 mins 20 secs

The time between the first and second fire engines arriving can be affected by things such as appliance availability, time of day, address accuracy, traffic, and weather. It can also vary depending on travel distance and where the incident happens. This gap should not be compared directly with response performance, because they are measured in different ways. The arrival gap measures the time between the first and second engines arriving, while response performance measures the time from when the first engine is assigned to when it arrives.

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Deal (7 years total)

	91	16	93	87	83	90	92	Over the Border
	Deal	Dover	Sandwich	Margate	Wingham	Ramsgate	Eastry	
<b>Fires</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	88	2	3	0	1	0	1	1
Non-Residential	30	1	4	1	0	1	0	0
Residential	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	32	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Transport	13	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	43	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	41	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Apparatus	349	6	1	0	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	91	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malicious	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>



Resourcing Review

# **On-call Viability Proposal for Closure – Supporting Data**

Westerham

**June 2026**



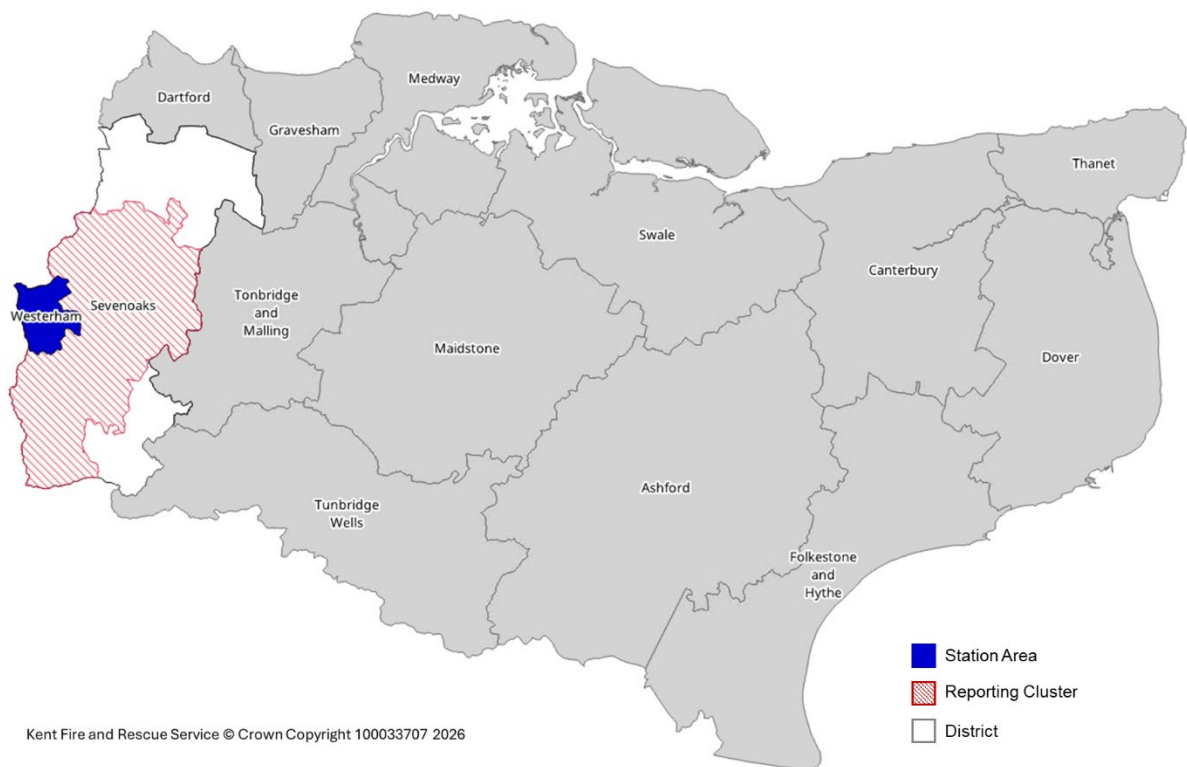
**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

## Station Information

Westerham is a standalone on-call fire station located in the Sevenoaks District area. The station area covers a total of 22.4 sq km, with a population of 4,258. For reporting purposes, Westerham sits within the Sevenoaks cluster.

County map highlighting Westerham station ground, Sevenoaks reporting cluster and Sevenoaks District.



Westerham crews one fire engine and does not provide any crewing for specialist vehicles.

Westerham currently has five colleagues employed: one crew manager and four firefighters. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been six new starters at Westerham station, four of which have since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time. It is important to note that over this time a wholtime fire engine from Thames-side has been outposted to Westerham during the day so we would not expect high daytime availability at Westerham.

Except for 2022, 24/7 availability has been consistently low ranging between 10% and 17%. Even in the best recent year shown (2023, 16.8%), the fire engine was unavailable over three quarters of the time.

The difference between 24/7 availability (15.0%) and evenings/weekends availability (18.6%) shows Westerham can provide availability outside standard daytime hours, but it is still a low proportion of the time.

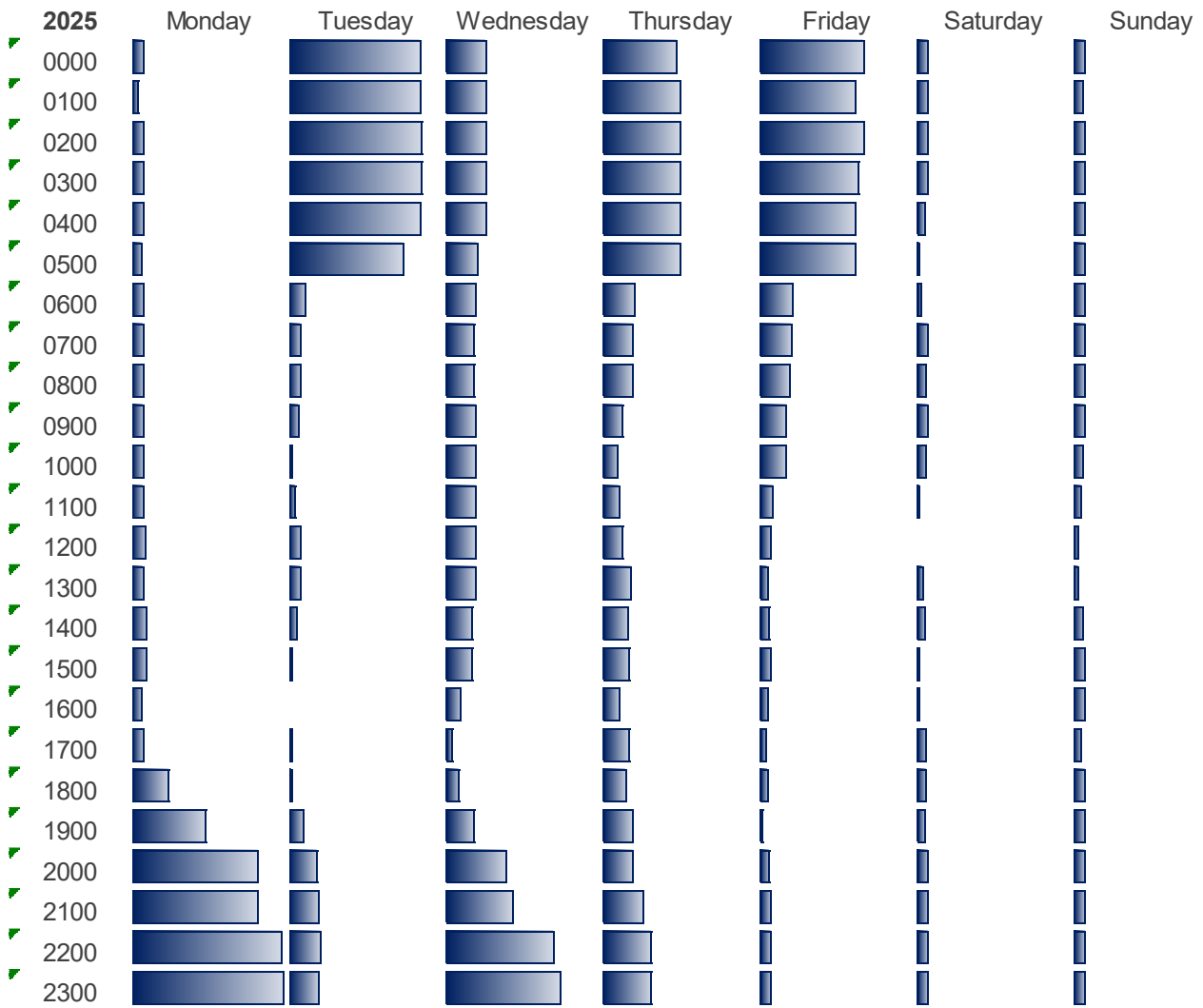
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is only slightly higher than the 24/7 figure (13.3% compared with 12.6%).
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is generally higher than 24/7 availability, typically by around 5-7 percentage points, although in 2022 it was lower than the 24/7 figure.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	12.6%	13.3%
2024	14.3%	21.3%
2023	16.8%	23.4%
2022	23.6%	16.4%
2021	15.4%	20.3%
2020	16.7%	22.4%
2019	10.5%	16.0%
2018	10.3%	15.6%
<b>Average</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Activity

Overall incident demand in the station ground is low. Westerham contributes a very small share of the countywide demand. In addition, most mobilisations of the fire engine based at Westerham are to incidents within the Sevenoaks reporting cluster, not within their own station ground.

### Incidents on the Station Ground

The following section details incidents that happened on the Westerham station ground, regardless of who attended the incidents. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 355 incidents in total
  - Incidents slightly higher in summer months
  - Incidents are higher during the day in line with the countywide picture
- False alarms: 112 (31.5% of all incidents)
- Fires: 93 (26.2%)
  - Of which over half were outdoor fires
- Special service: 150 (42.3%)
  - A third of which were RTCs
- Two fatalities and four serious casualties, across nine different incidents
  - Three of the serious casualties are because of RTCs; the remaining serious casualty was from an assisting other agency incident
  - Both fatalities are from two different special service incidents

Table: Number of incidents by number of fire engines required

		<b>Westerham</b>	<b>Kent</b>
Level 1	1-3 fire engines	354	135,851
Level 2	4-6 fire engines	1	1,274
Level 3	7-9 fire engines	0	76
Level 4	10+ fire engines	0	43

Chart: Incidents on station ground by year and incident type

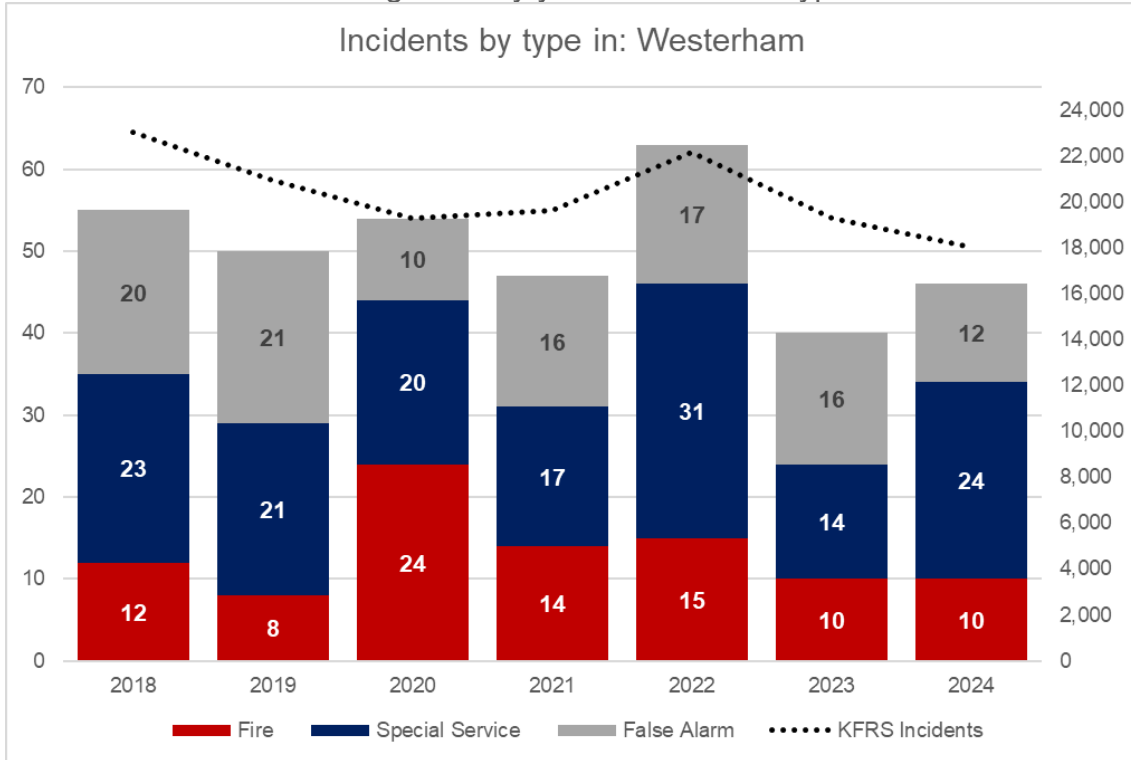


Chart: Incidents on station ground by month

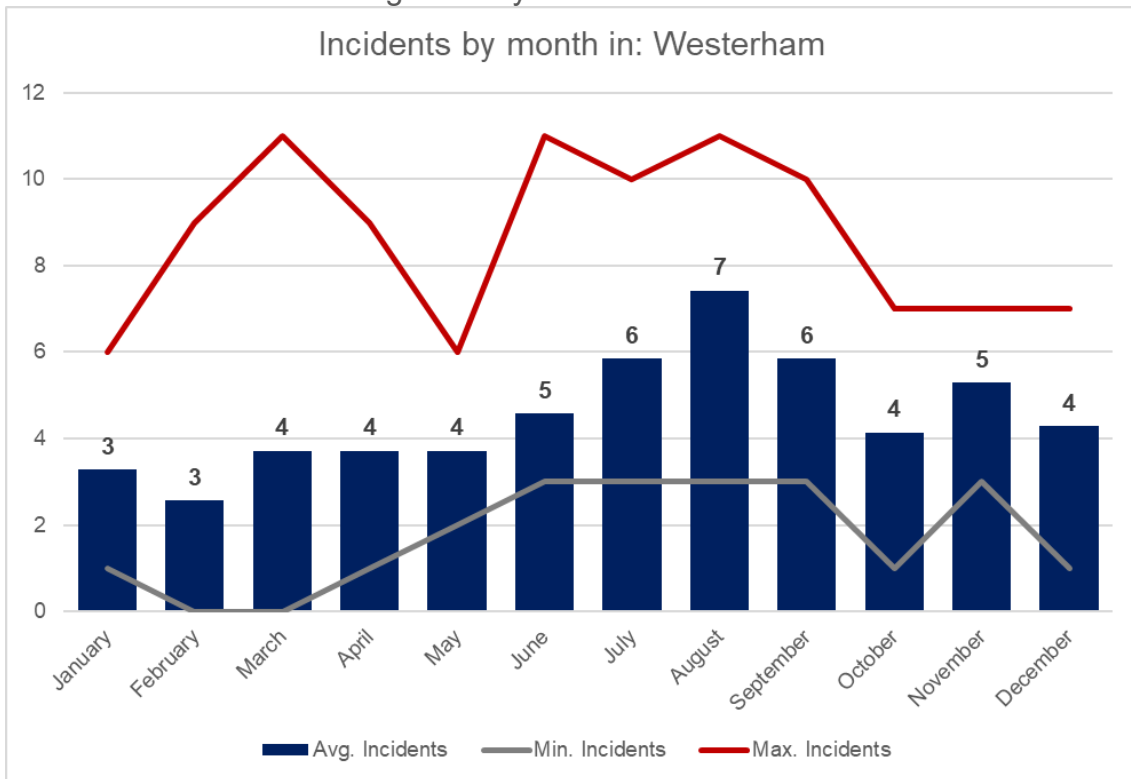


Chart: Incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

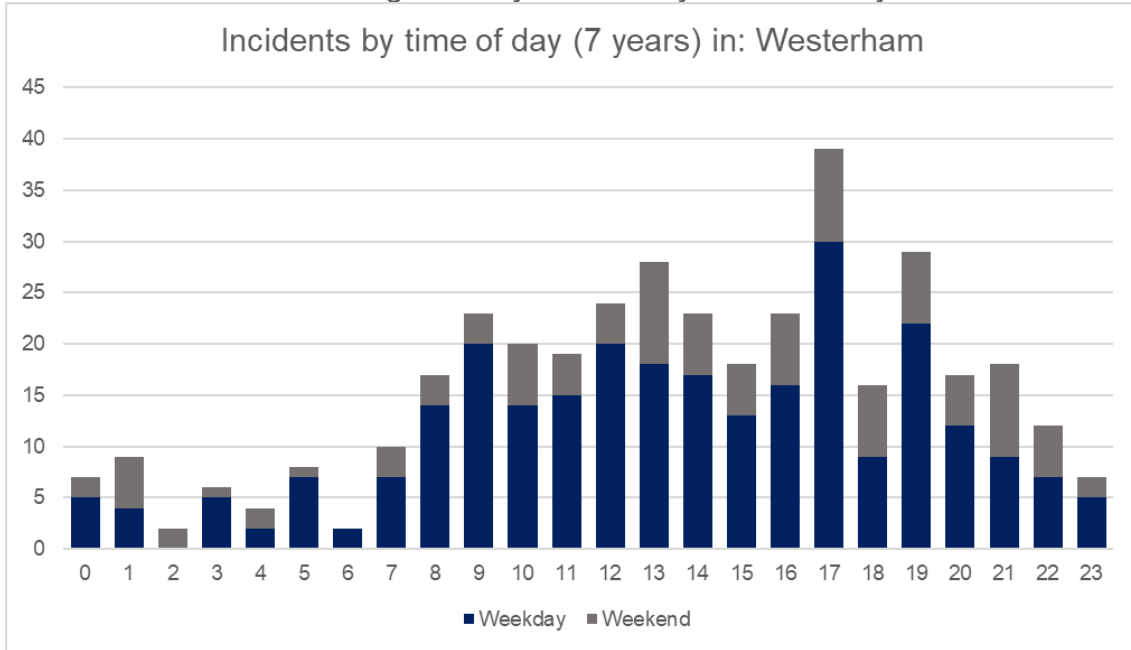


Chart: Casualties from Incidents on station ground

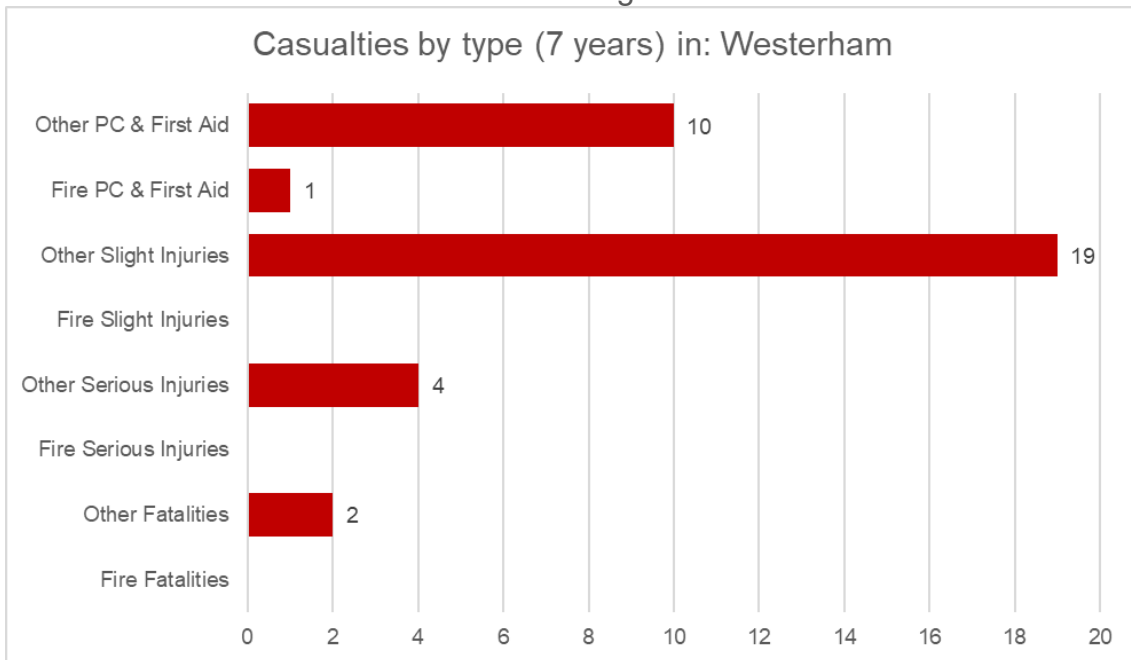


Table: Average time between first and second fire engine attendance to incidents

RTC	8 mins 11 secs
Fire - Dwelling	4 mins 36 secs
Fire - Non-Residential	4 mins 2 secs
Fire - Road Vehicle	7 mins 49 secs

Note: the number of incidents is very small so any outliers will not be absorbed.

Chart: Fires on station ground by property type

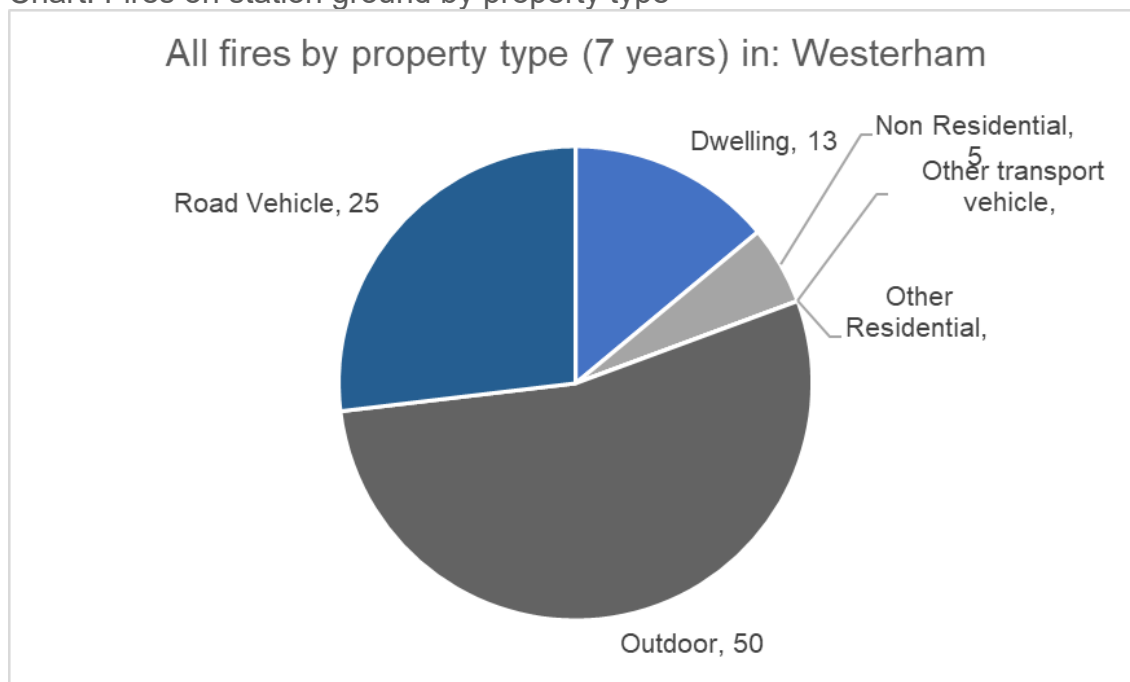


Chart: Fires on station ground by year

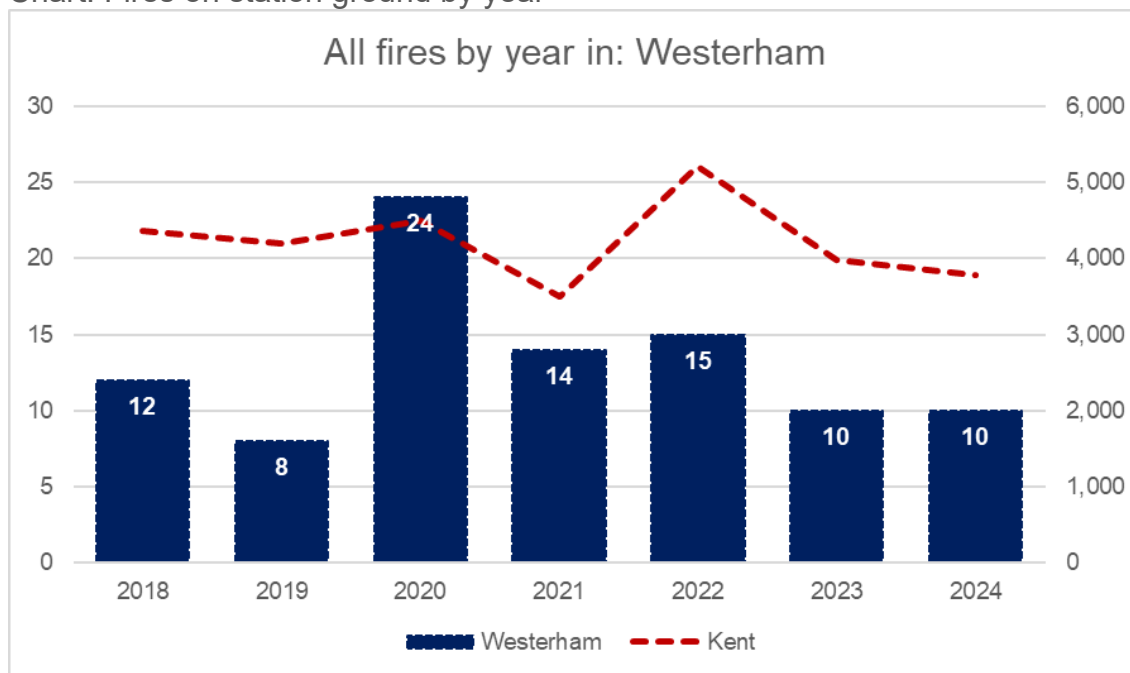


Chart: Fires on station ground by month

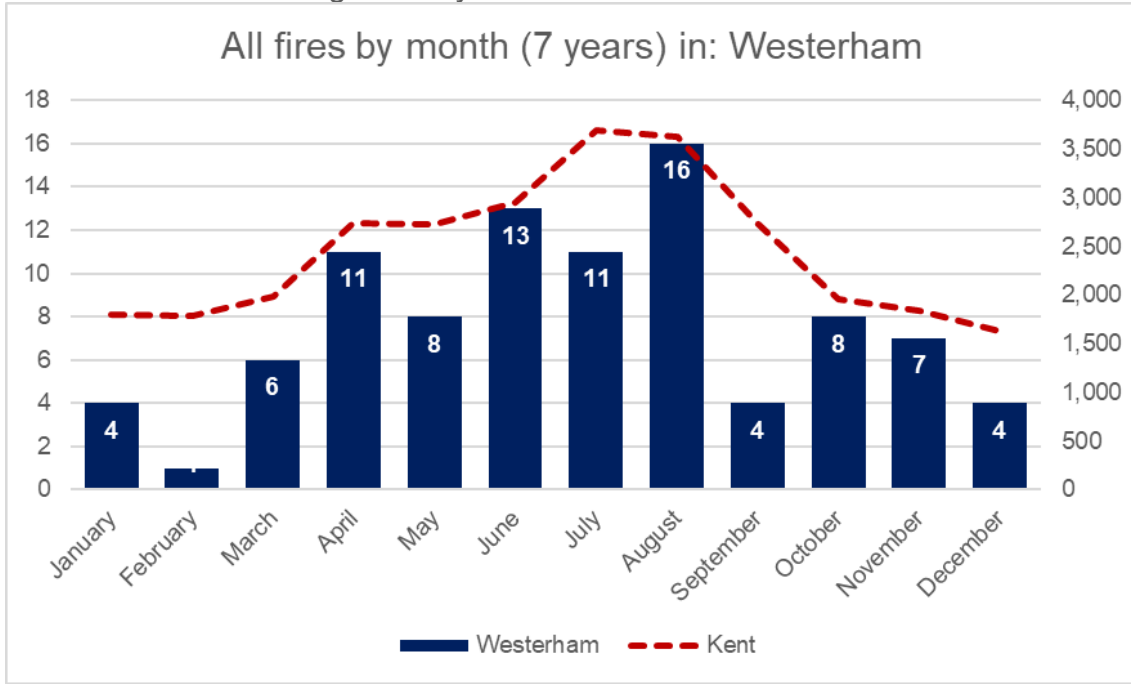


Chart: Fires on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

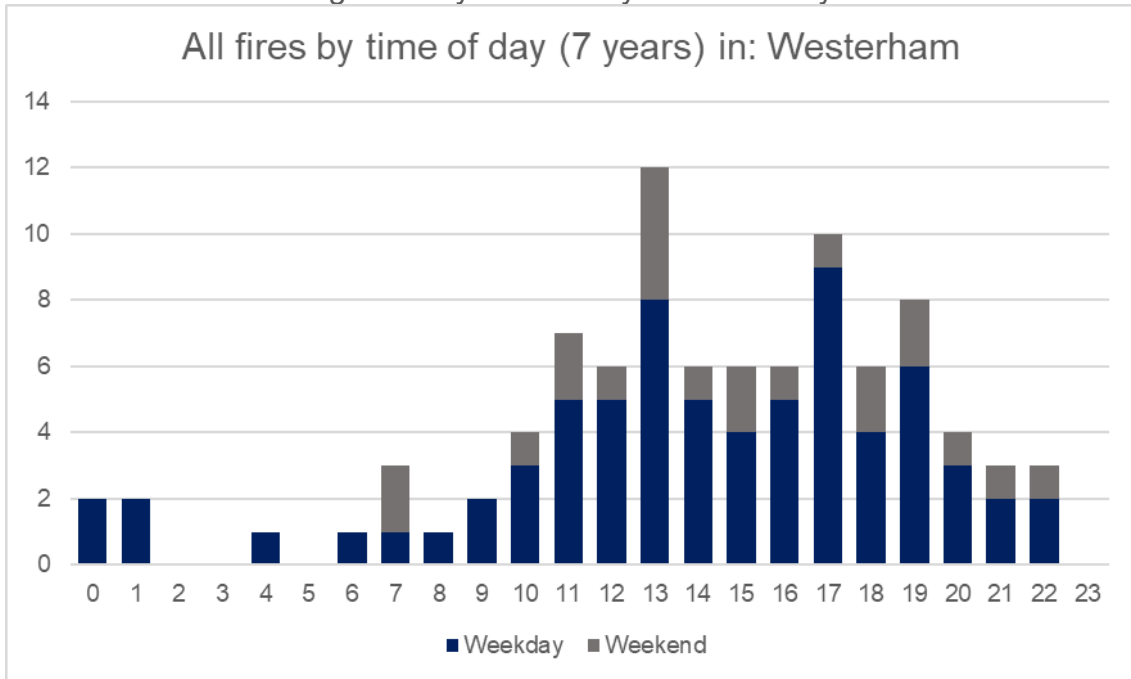


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by type

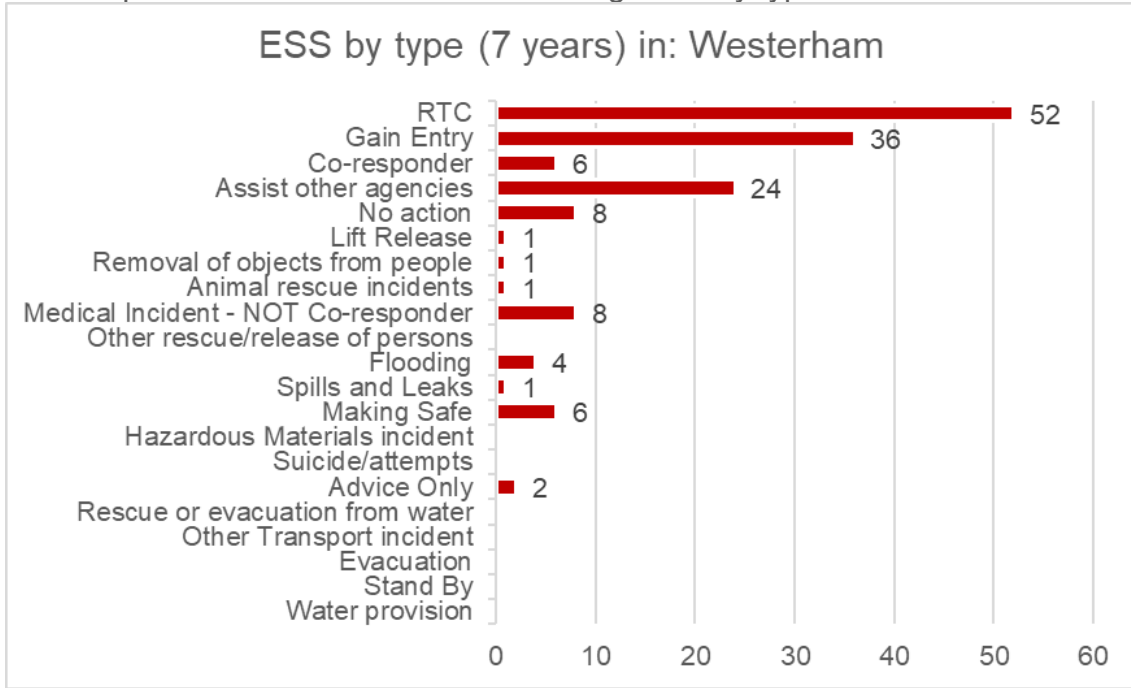


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by year

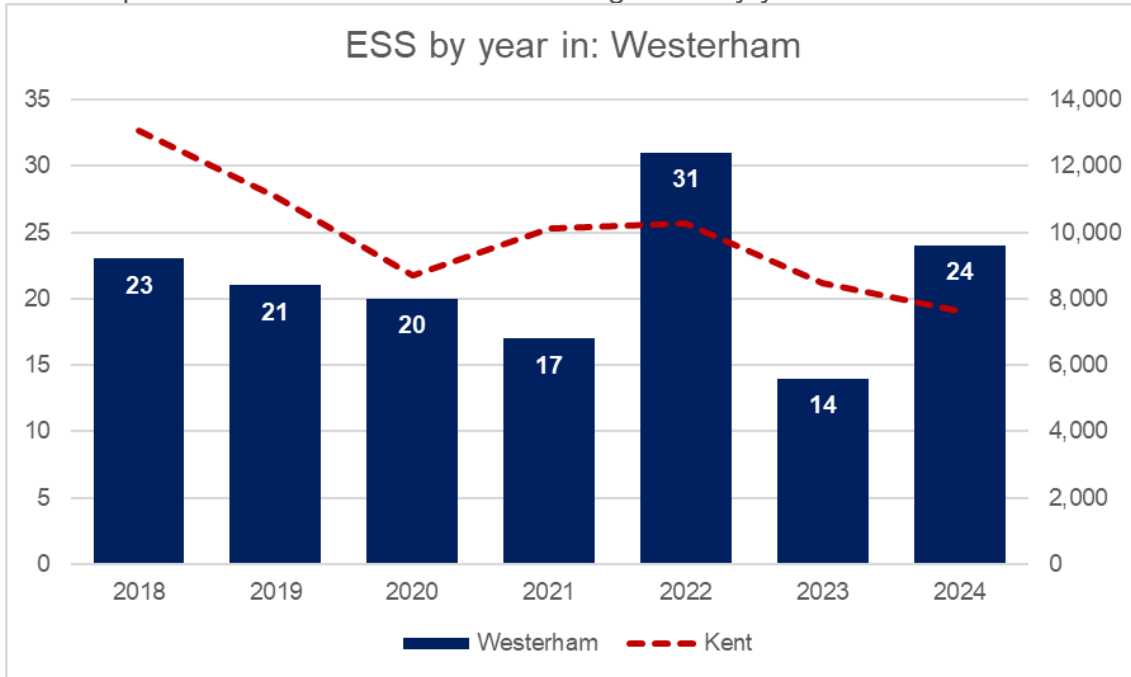


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by month

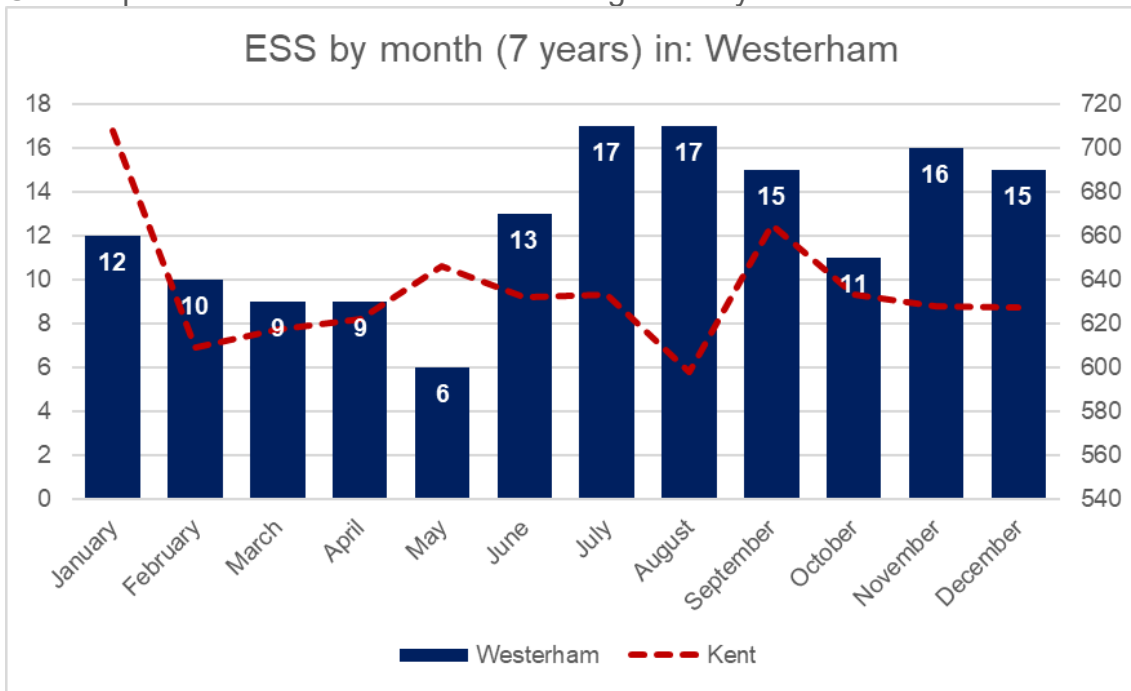
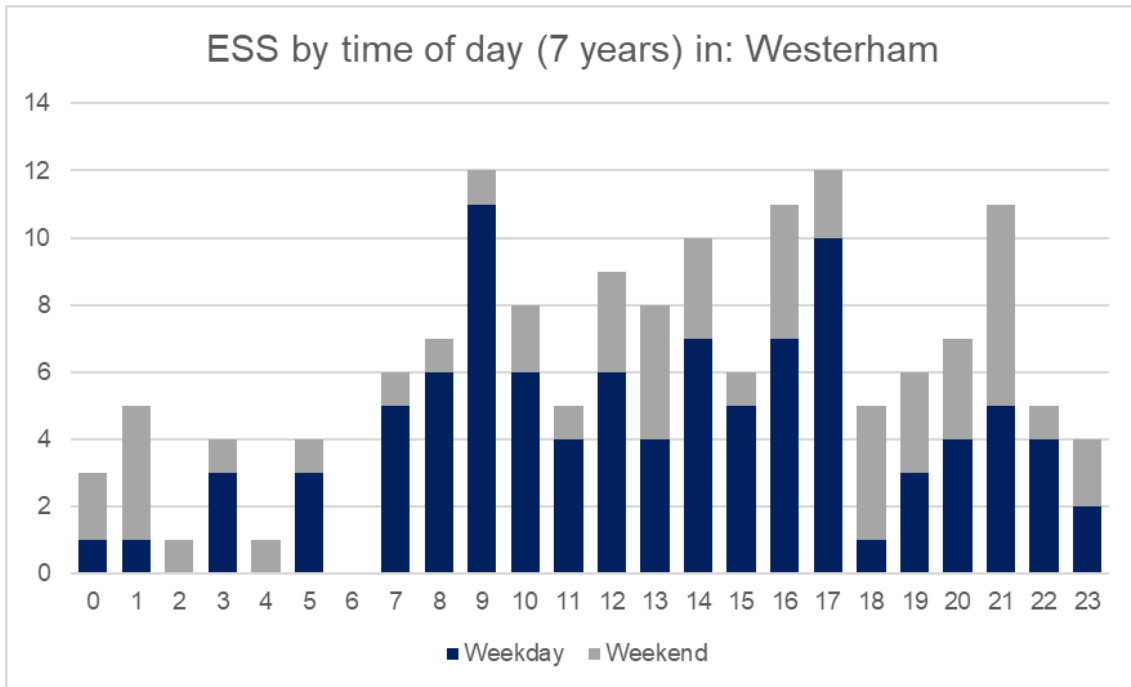


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend.



The following section details the times that the fire engine in Westerham has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 339 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations higher in summer months
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Very few mobilisations are on the station ground. Westerham is used most of the time to support incidents within the Sevenoaks reporting cluster (69.9%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

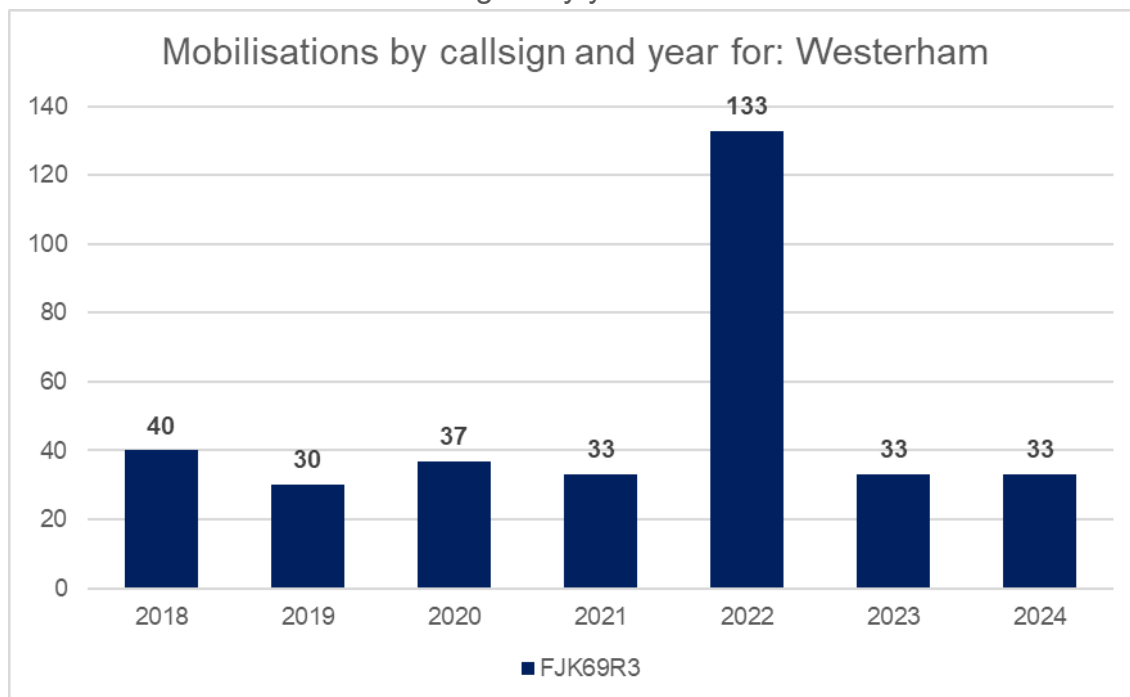


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

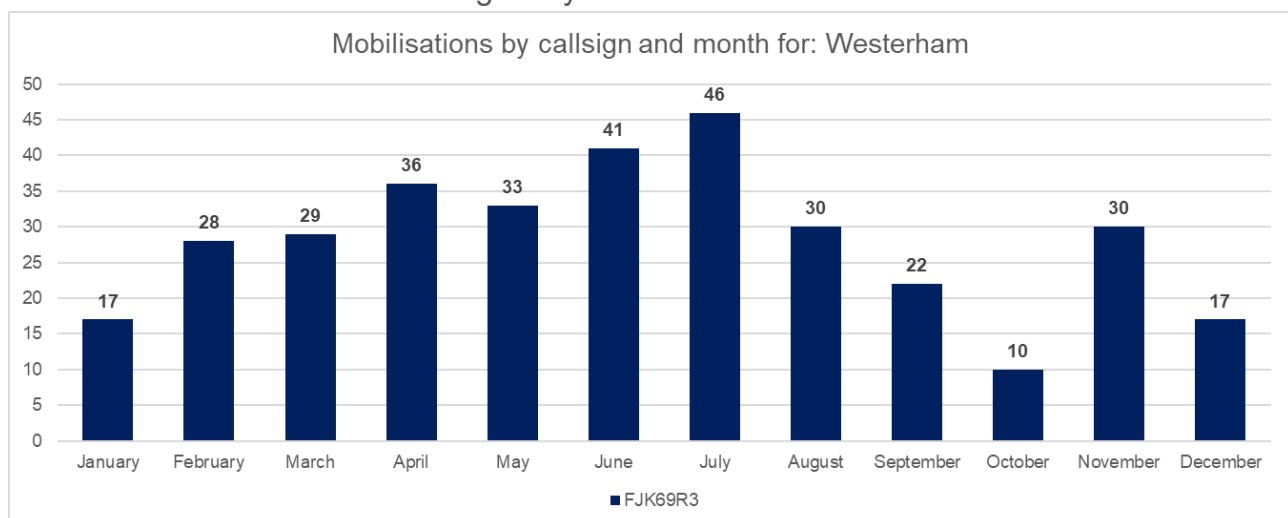


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

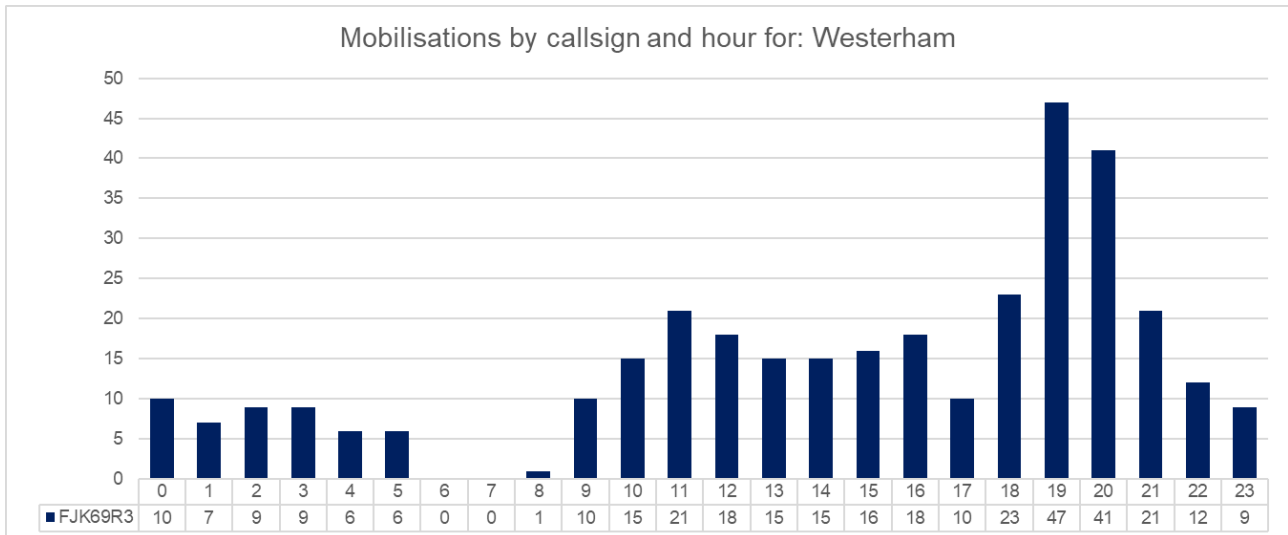


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

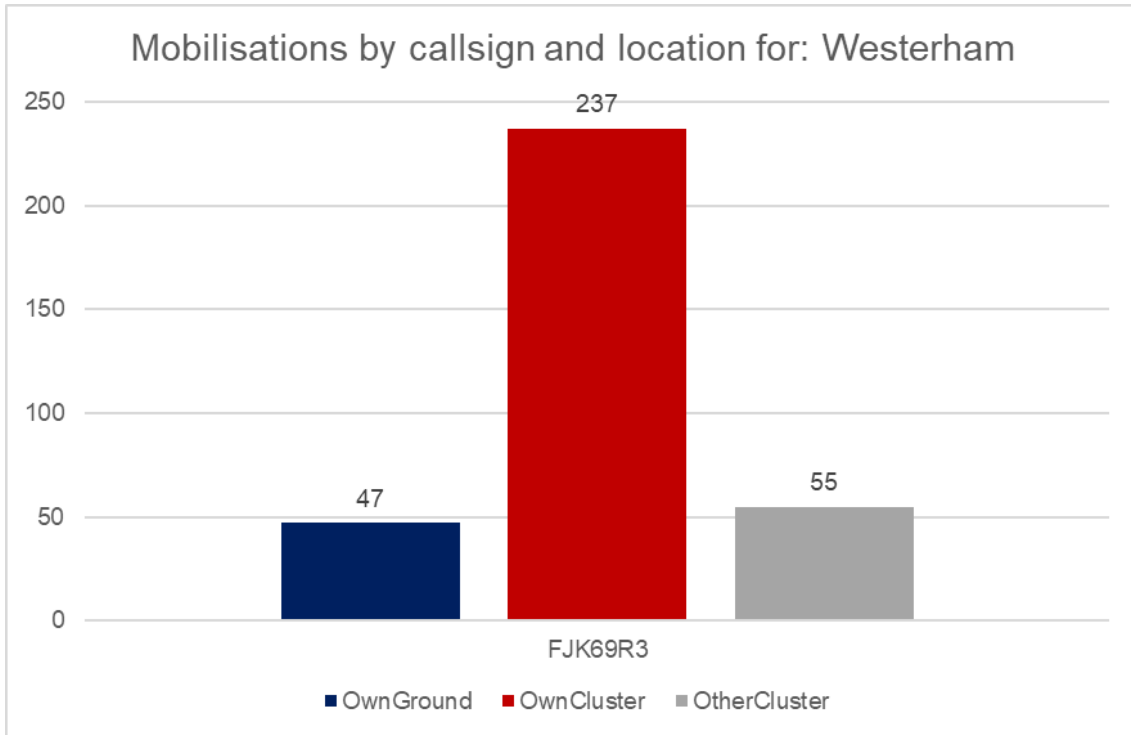
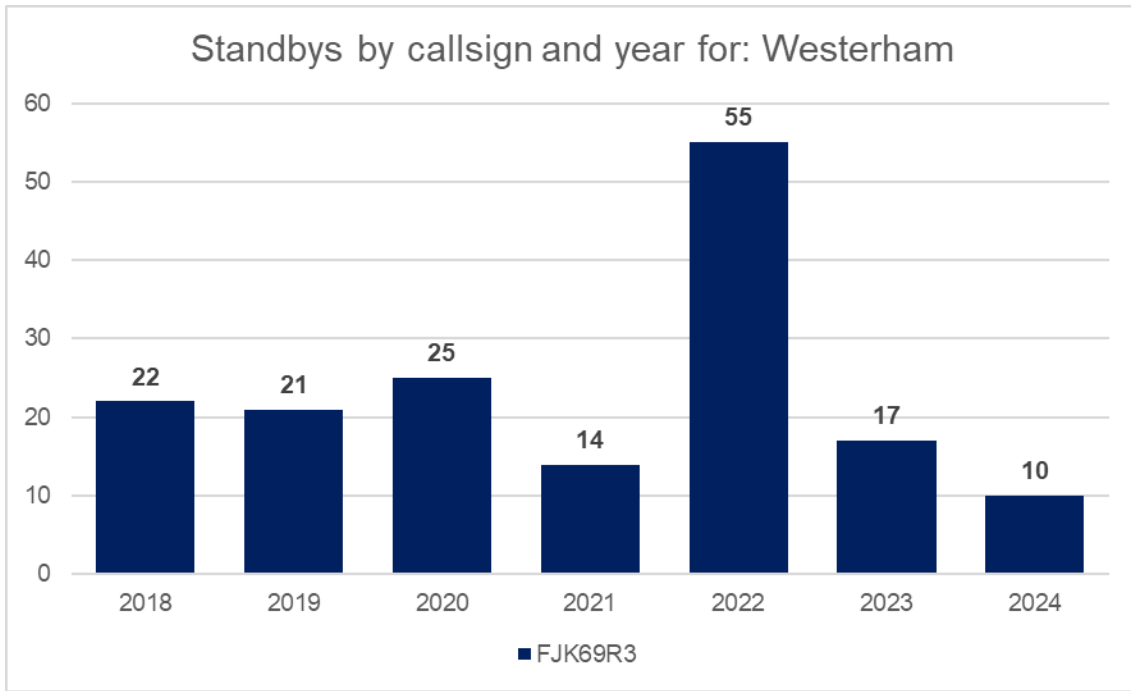


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



# Risks

In summary:

- Westerham ranks consistently low for most societal risk factors and activity across the profile but is higher for RTCs.
- 21% of the Westerham population is aged 65 and over and 12% of the population are single person households.
- On average there is a medium level of deprivation which is reflective of the majority of Kent. In comparison to other on-call station grounds Westerham scores low.
- There are few commercial premises and no infrastructure premises.

## Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile









The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

Table: Results of KAIR profile<sup>2</sup>

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>4,258</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>2</sup> People+ capture's higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Known Risk Sites

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

There are two premises in the Westerham area which requires site specific risk information.

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
0	0	2	0	0
		Chartwell House		
		Valence school		

## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Westerham would have been mobilised to 169 incidents per year on average; three incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Westerham is modelled to attend 1,183 incidents. Of those, 365 are on Edenbridge's station ground while 349 are on Westerham's station ground and a further 276 on Sevenoaks' station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (266) and RTCs (206)<sup>3</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Westerham was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Edenbridge	71	70	183	41	365
Westerham	91	130	101	27	349
Sevenoaks	54	109	86	27	276
Borough Green	1	6	1	0	8
Tunbridge Wells	4	1	2	0	7
Dartford	6	0	1	0	7
Tonbridge	3	1	2	0	6
Swanley	2	1	1	0	4
Thames-side	1	0	0	0	1
Southborough	1	0	0	0	1
Over the border	31	51	40	37	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>1,183</b>

<sup>3</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading and the total for RTCs are from the sum of the row for "RTC" under the special service heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Westerham station area.

County map highlighting the potential change in Westerham station area coverage.



The table below outlines the potential change in where each fire engine would be sent from to incidents in the Westerham station area. Sevenoaks will be pick up most of the incidents in the area.

Sevenoaks	Tonbridge	Dartford	Edenbridge	Swanley
69%	14%	10%	4%	1%

The table below details the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area. The possible new time shown in the table is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to decline during the day and at night. It is important to note that day-time response time is impacted by the current operating arrangements of out posting a wholetime fire engine from Thames-side to Westerham during the day, meaning that the increase in daytime response time is heavily influenced by that rather than the closure of the on-call station itself.

	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
Day time	6 mins 26 secs slower	17 mins 43 secs
Nighttime	2 mins 16 secs slower	14 mins 32 secs

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of fire engine availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Westerham (7 years total)

	70	69	68	67	74	30	72	31	35	76	Over the border
	Edenbridge	Westerham	Sevenoaks	Borough Green	Tunbridge Wells	Dartford	Tonbridge	Swanley	Thames-side	Southborough	
<b>Fires</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>
Dwelling	29	11	12	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	8
Non-Residential	13	5	9	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	6
Residential	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	18	53	12	0	1	6	0	2	1	0	8
Transport	11	22	20	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51</b>
Aid to Person	5	35	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Animal Rescue	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	7	23	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Flooding	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	1	7	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Co-Responding	4	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
No Action	2	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Rescue Person	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
RTC	36	43	79	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	40
Scene Safety	5	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>
Apparatus	145	61	39	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	17
Good Intent	36	39	46	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	23
Malicious	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>159</b>

Resourcing Review

# **On-Call Viability Proposal for Closure – Supporting Data**

Grain

**June 2026**



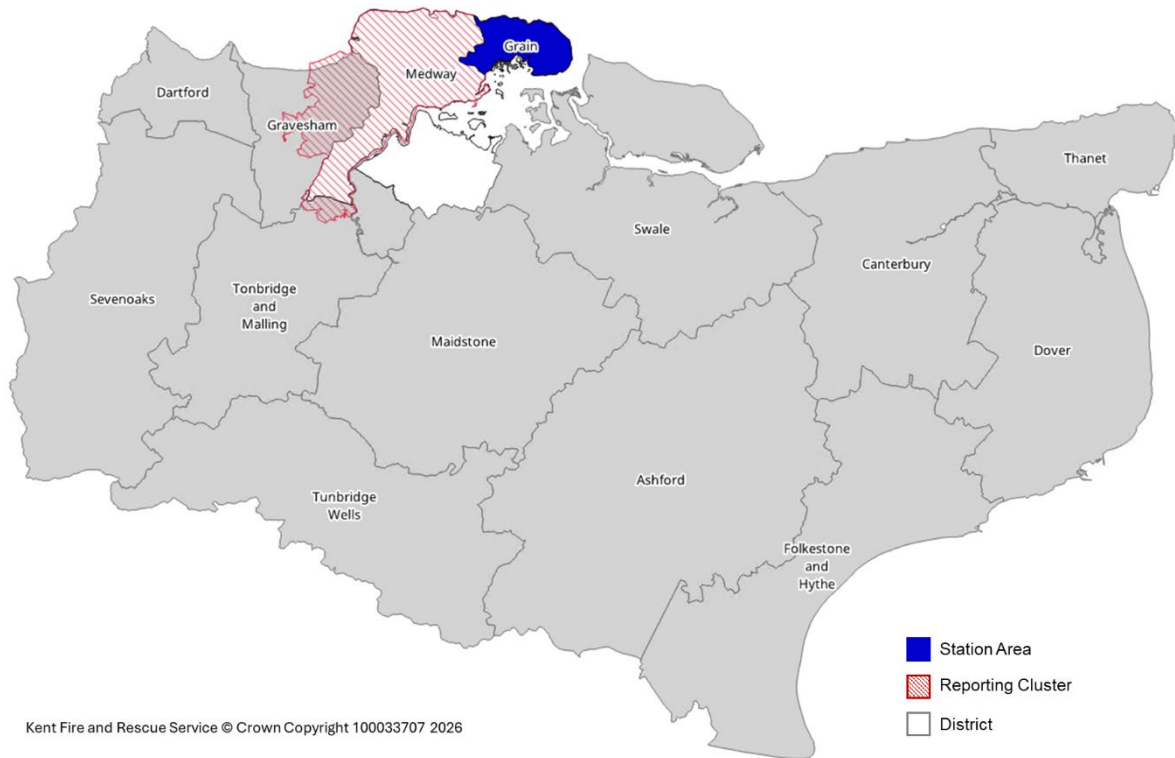
**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

## Station Information

Grain is a standalone on-call fire station located in the Medway District area. The station area covers a total of 31.4 sq km, with a population of 4,499. For reporting purposes, Grain sits within the Medway cluster.

County map highlighting Grain station ground, Medway reporting cluster and Medway District



Grain crews one fire engine and does not provide crewing for any other specialist vehicles.

Grain currently has five colleagues employed: one watch manager and four firefighters, none of whom hold dual contracts. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been no new starters at Grain station.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

Availability has declined since 2019, when 24/7 availability was as high as 37.0%; only 2020 was higher which was the Covid year where on-call availability generally increased. Even in the best recent year shown (2024, 26.0%), the fire engine was unavailable nearly three quarters of the time.

The difference between 24/7 availability (27.6%) and evenings/weekends availability (41.4%) shows Grain can provide availability outside standard daytime hours, but it is still a low proportion of the time.

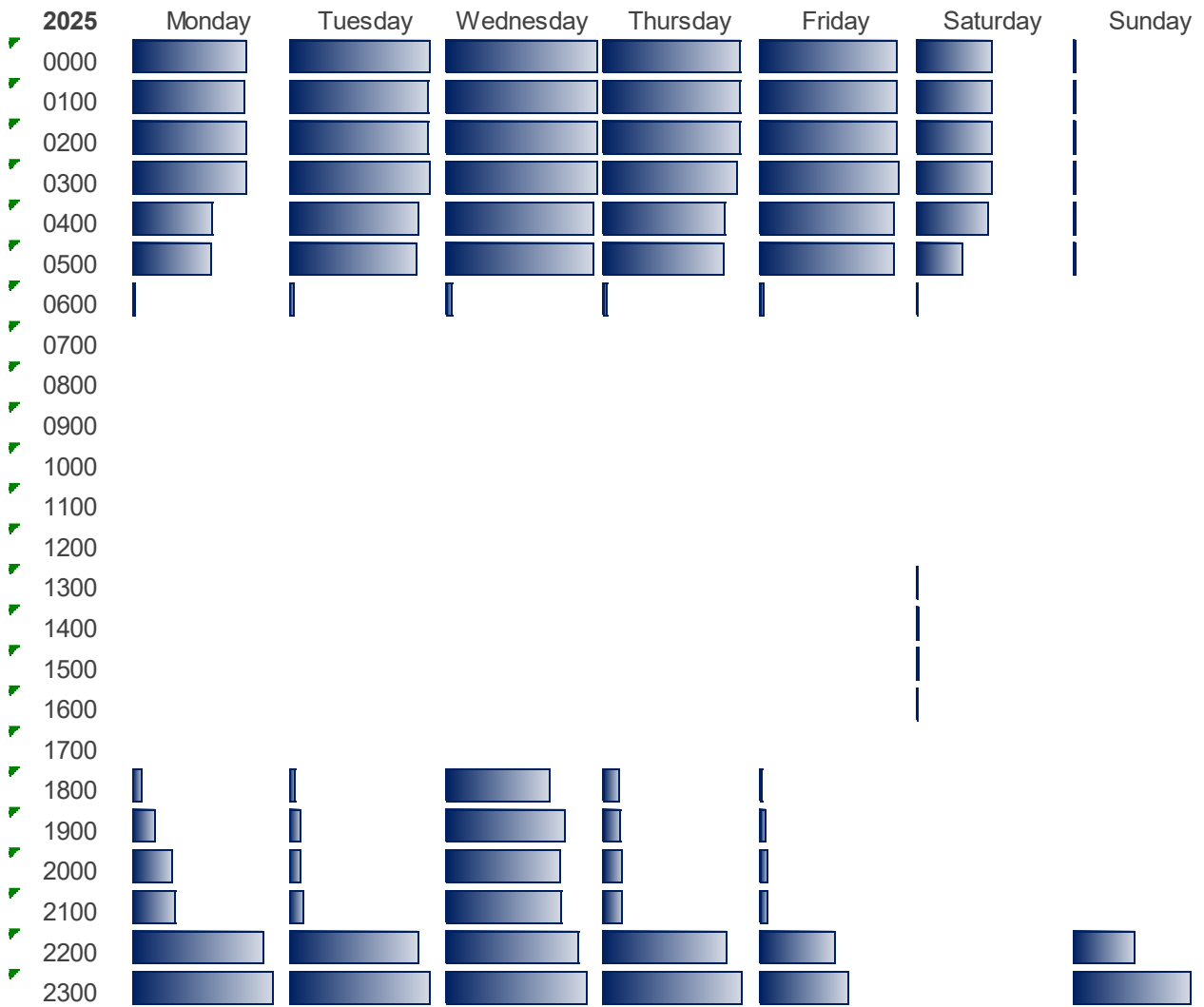
- Evening and weekend availability is around 1.5x the 24/7 figure in 2025.
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is consistently better than 24/7 by roughly 8–14 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	23.0%	35.7%
2024	26.0%	40.1%
2023	25.8%	39.9%
2022	21.6%	33.4%
2021	23.9%	37.0%
2020	37.0%	53.4%
2019	29.4%	41.8%
2018	33.8%	50.0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>41.4%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Activity

Overall incident demand in the station ground is low. Grain contributes a very small share of the countywide demand. In addition, most mobilisations of the fire engine based at Grain are to incidents on its own station ground (which is heavily influenced by co-responding incidents in 2018).

### Incidents on the Station Ground

The following section details incidents that happened on the Grain station ground, regardless of who attended the incidents. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 366 incidents in total
  - Incidents spread evenly over the months
  - Incidents are higher during the evening
- False alarms: 56 (15.3% of all incidents)
  - Mostly automatic fire alarms
- Fires: 84 (23%)
  - Of which over half were outdoor fires
- Special service: 226 (61.7%)
  - Two thirds of which were co-responding incidents (137)
- Nine serious casualties in total, across nine different incidents
  - Two fatalities; one co-responding incident, one assisting other agencies
  - One serious fire casualty as a result of an shed fire
  - 35 serious injuries, 26 recorded against co-responding incidents

Table: Number of incidents by number of fire engines required

		Grain	Kent
Level 1	1-3 fire engines	357	135,851
Level 2	4-6 fire engines	9	1,274
Level 3	7-9 fire engines	0	76
Level 4	10+ fire engines	0	43

Chart: Incidents on station ground by year and incident type

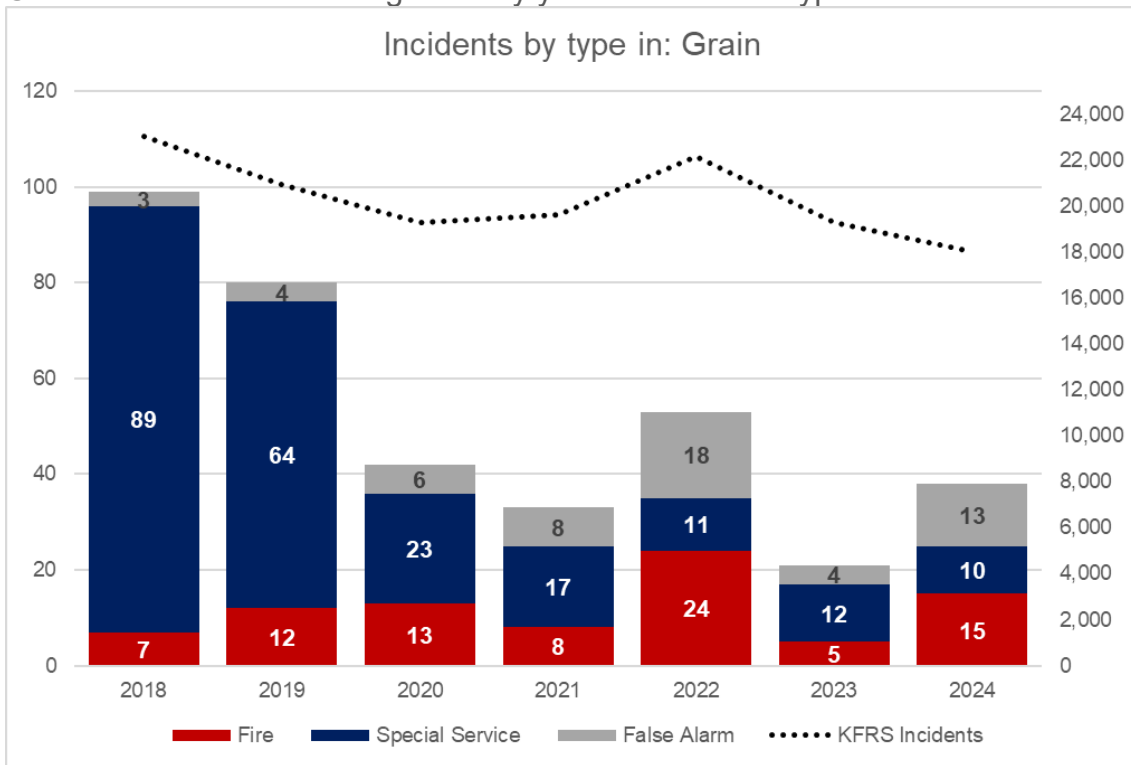


Chart: Incidents on station ground by month

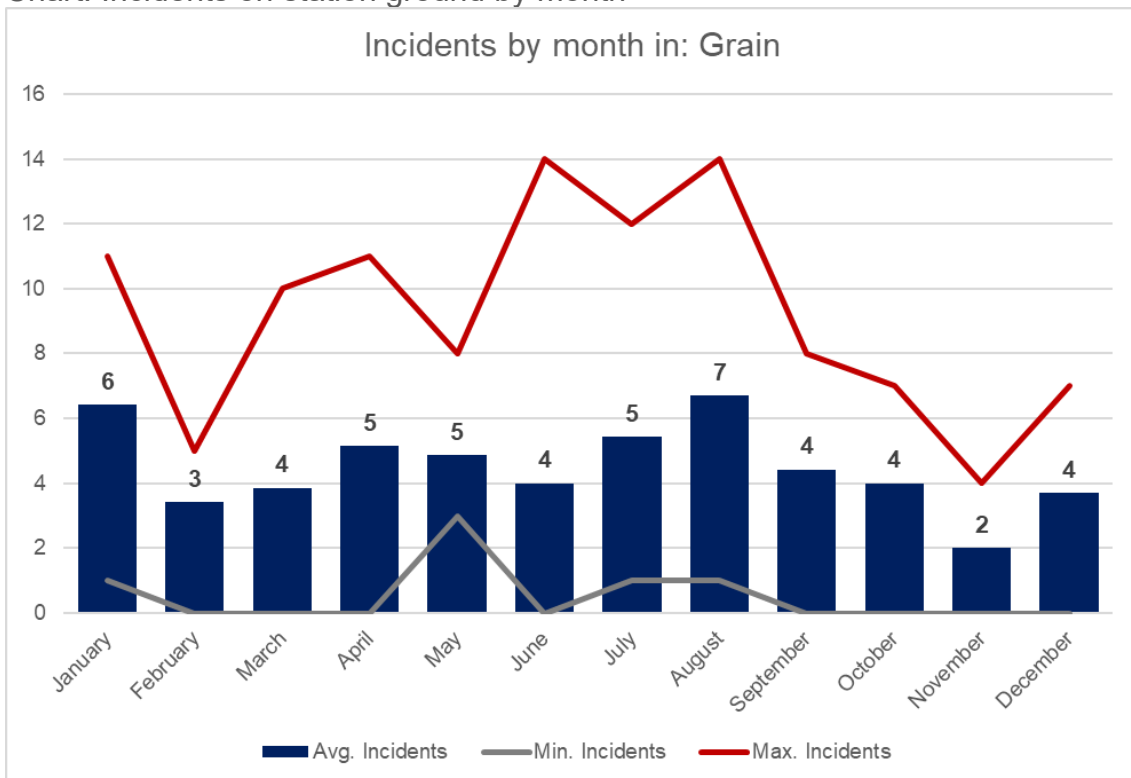


Chart: Incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

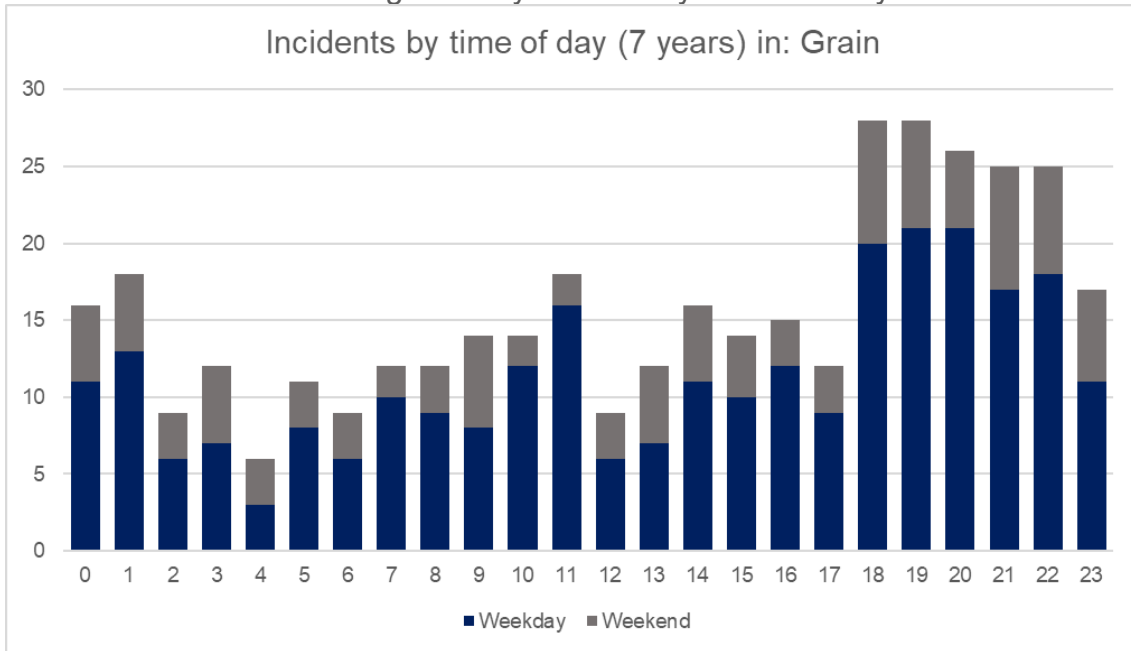


Chart: Casualties from Incidents on station ground

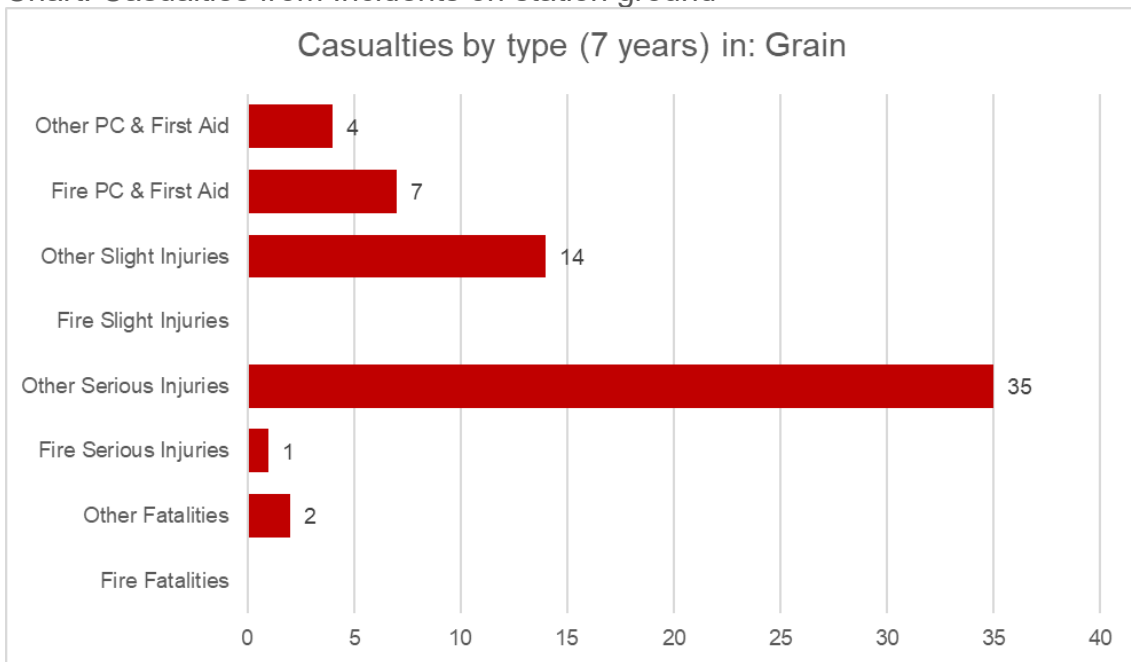


Table: Average time between first and second fire engine attendance to incidents

RTC	4 mins 10 secs
Fire - Dwelling	3 mins 49 secs
Fire - Non-Residential	2 mins 46 secs
Fire - Other Residential	10 mins 0 secs
Fire - Outdoor	35 mins 1 secs
Fire - Road Vehicle	1 mins 45 secs

Note: the number of incidents is very small so any outliers will not be absorbed

Chart: Fires on station ground by property type

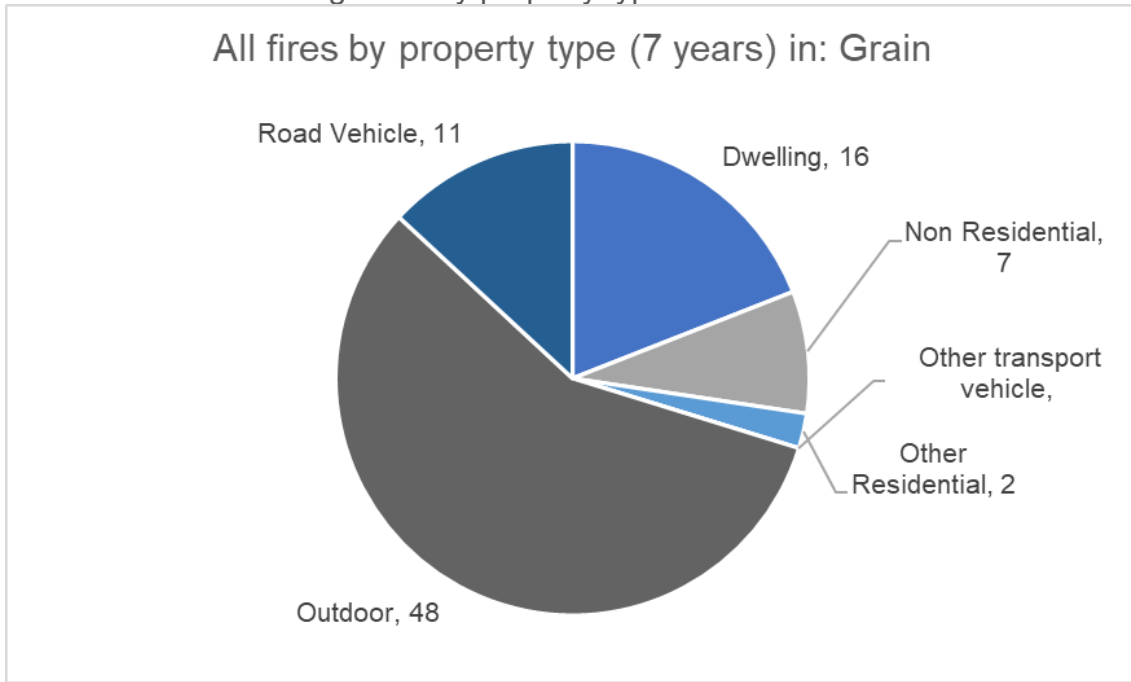


Chart: Fires on station ground by year

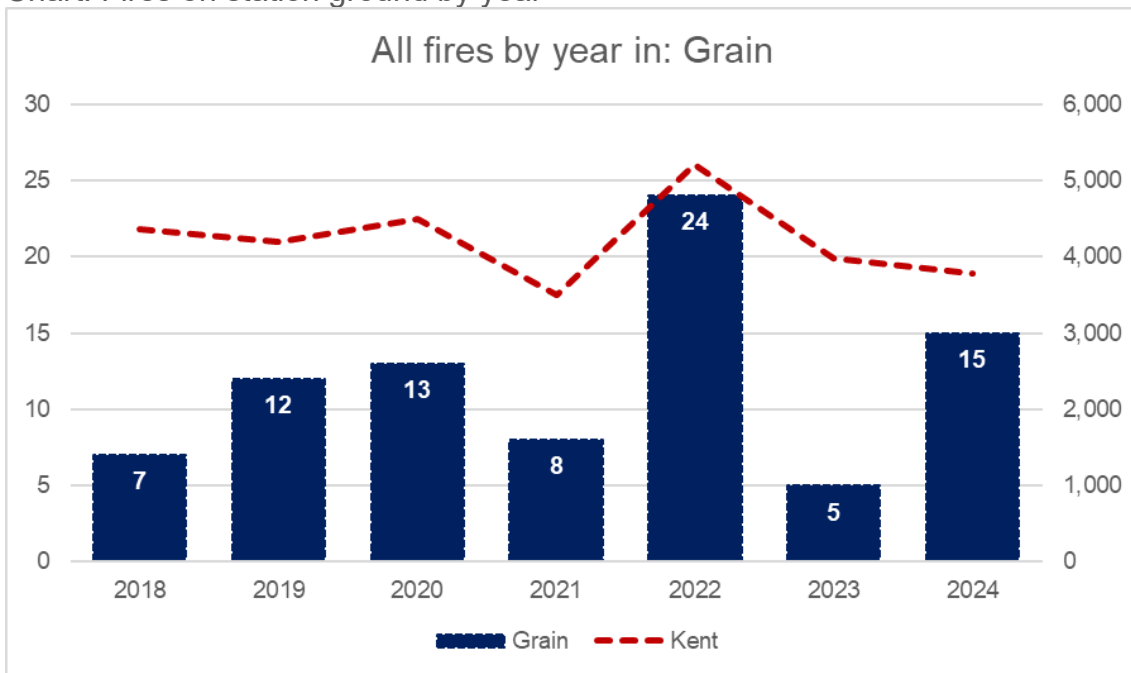


Chart: Fires on station ground by month

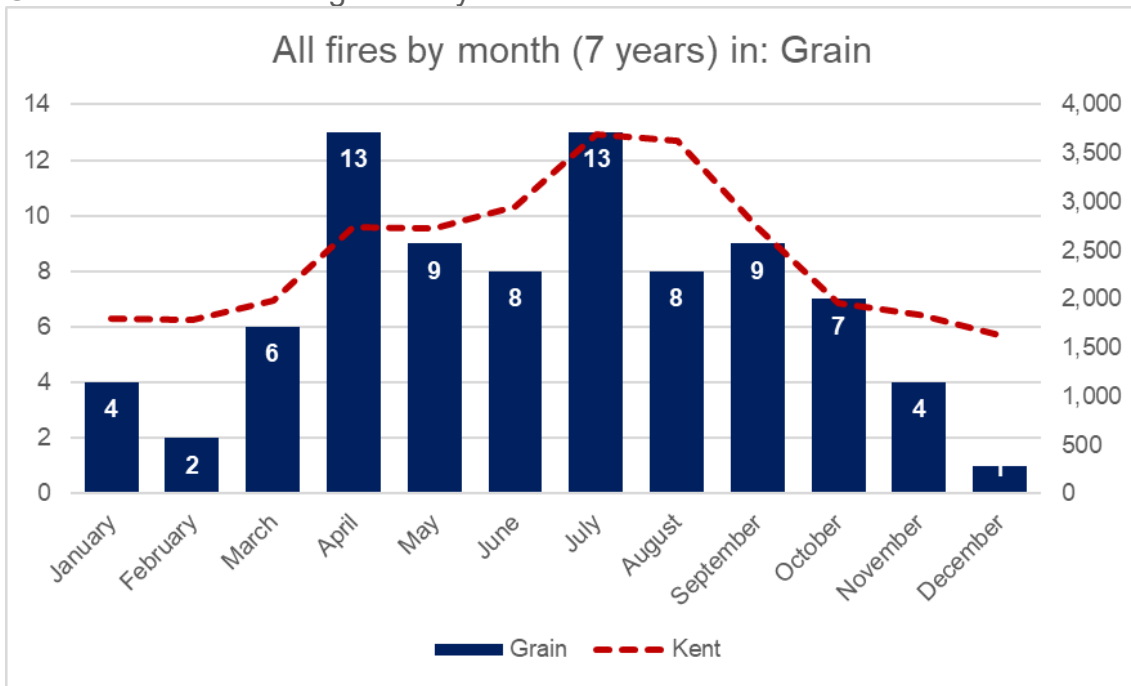


Chart: Fires on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

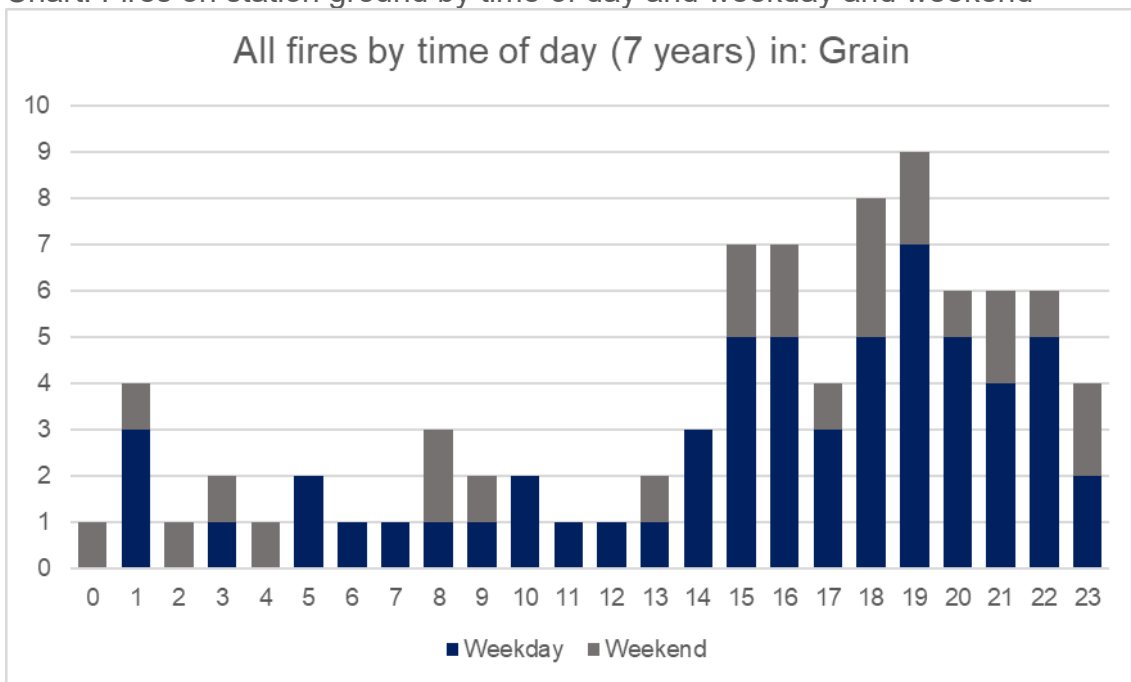


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by type

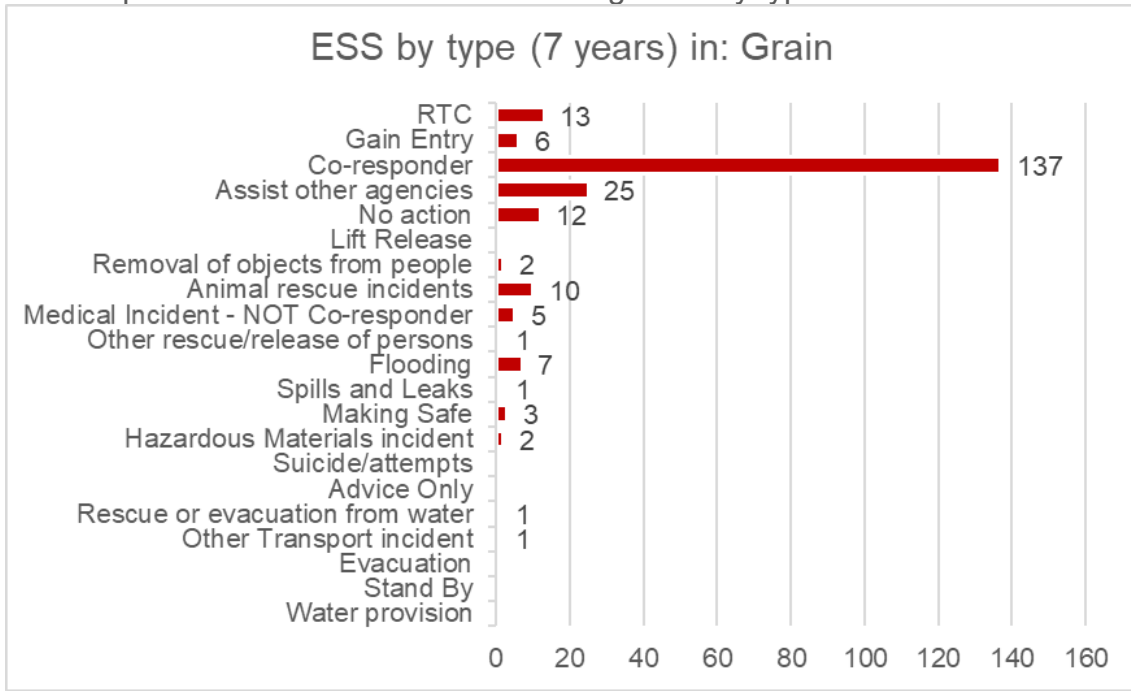


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by year

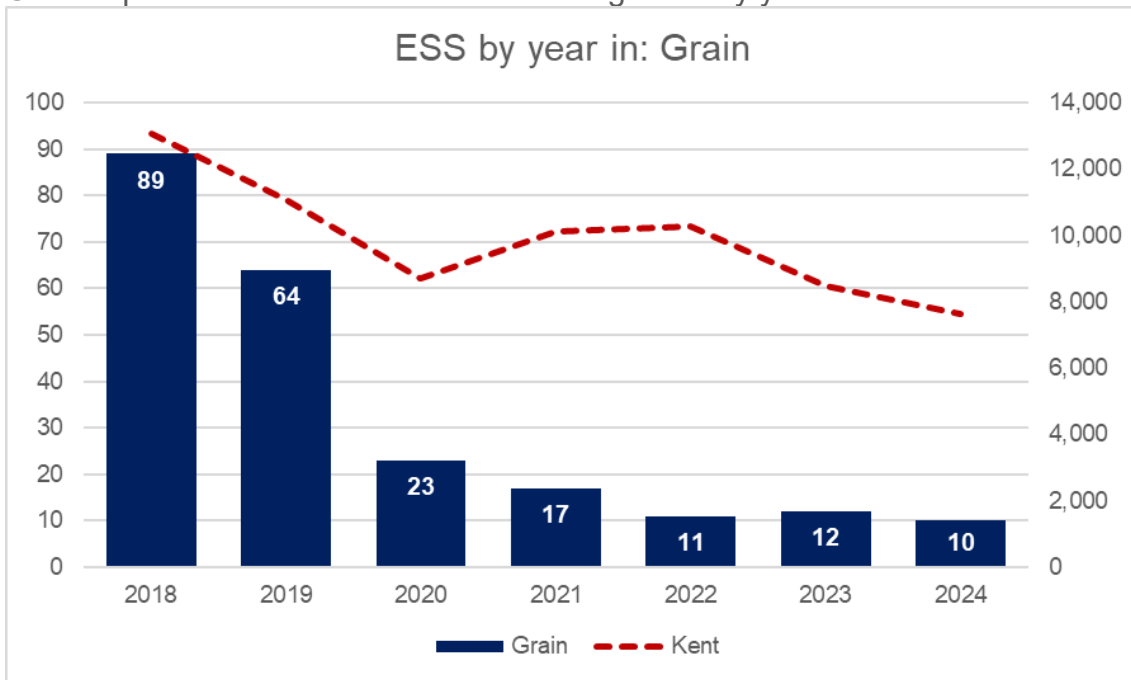


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by month

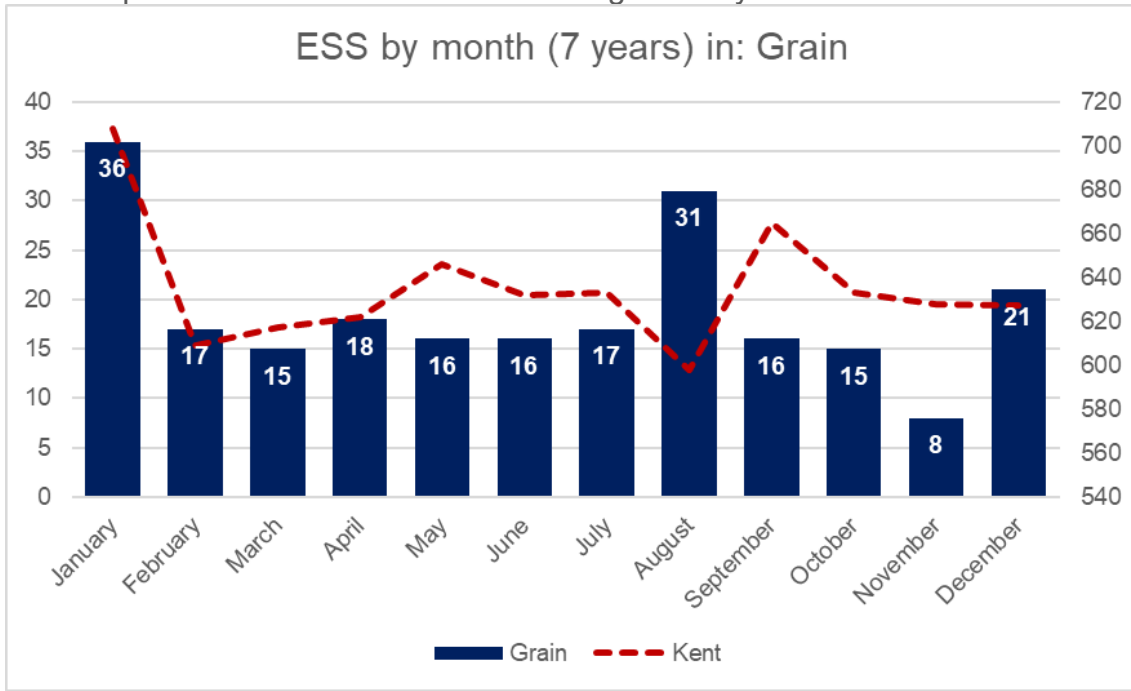
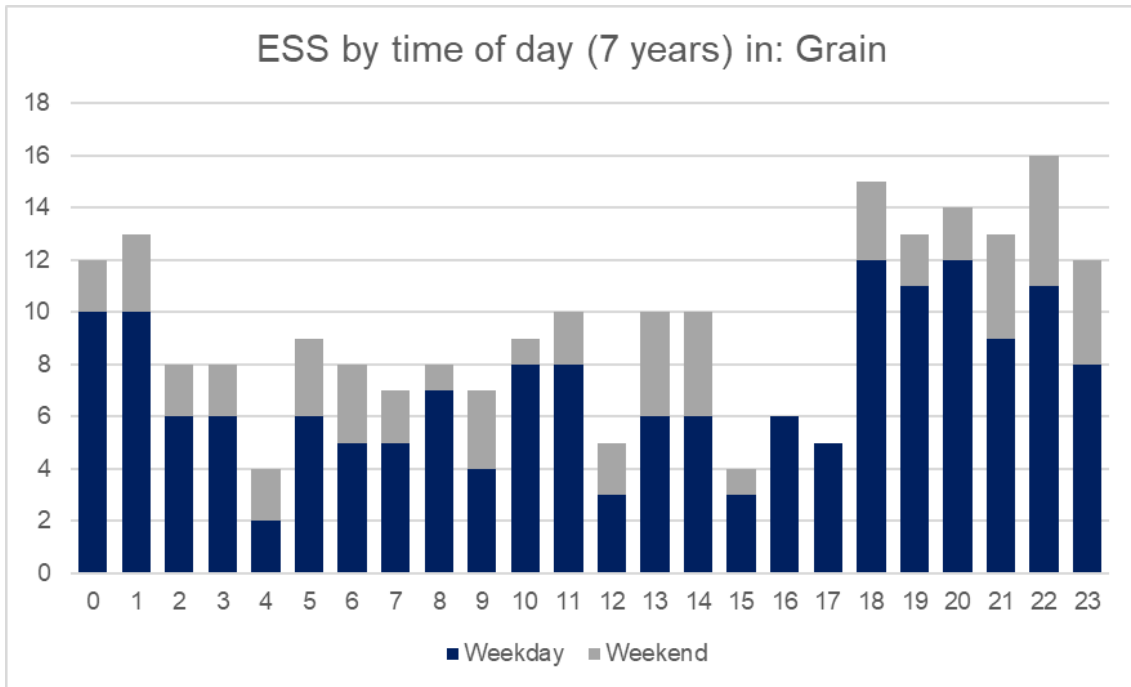


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the fire engine in Grain has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 191 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations slightly higher in summer months but mostly evenly spread across the months
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Most mobilisations are on the station ground, however a large proportion of these are co-responding incidents which were high in 2019. Grain also provides some limited support to incidents both in their reporting cluster and in other areas of the County evenly.

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

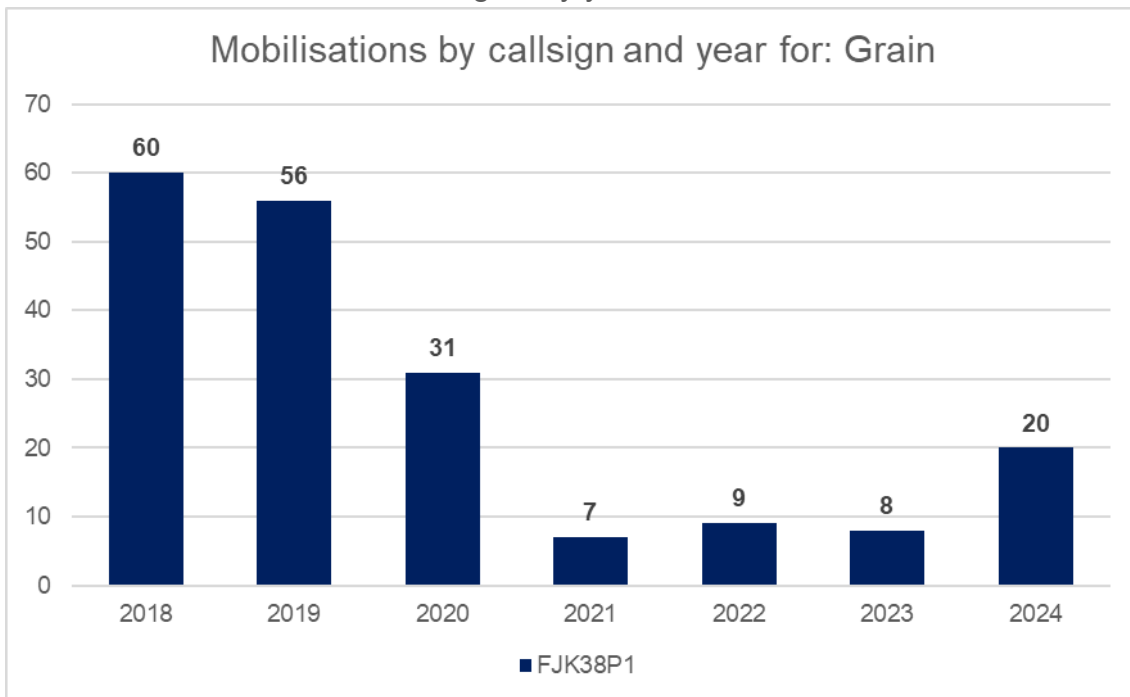


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

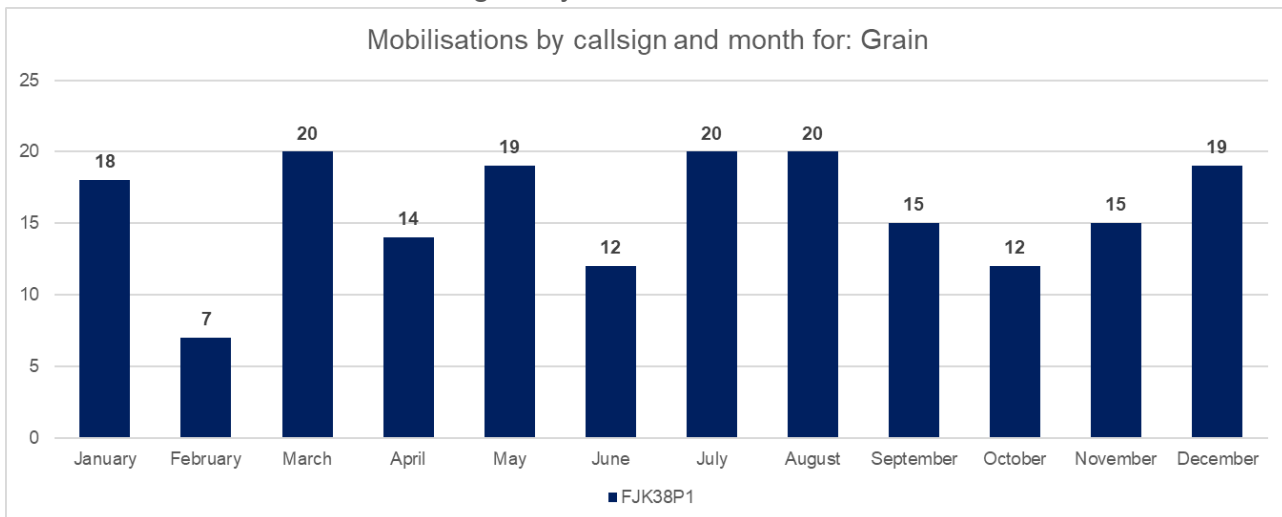


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

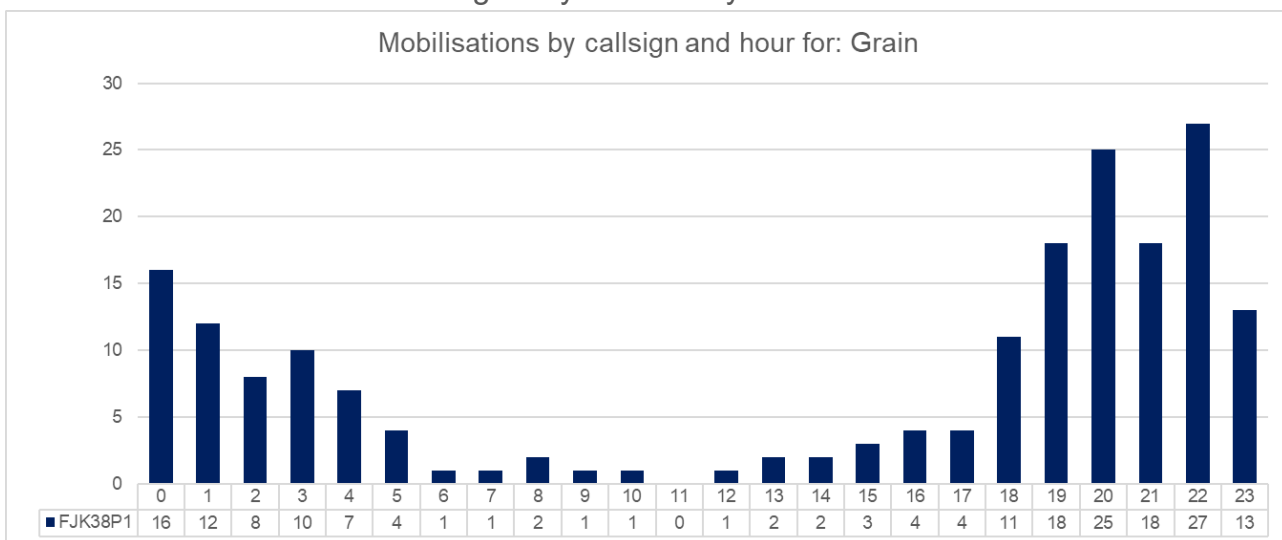


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

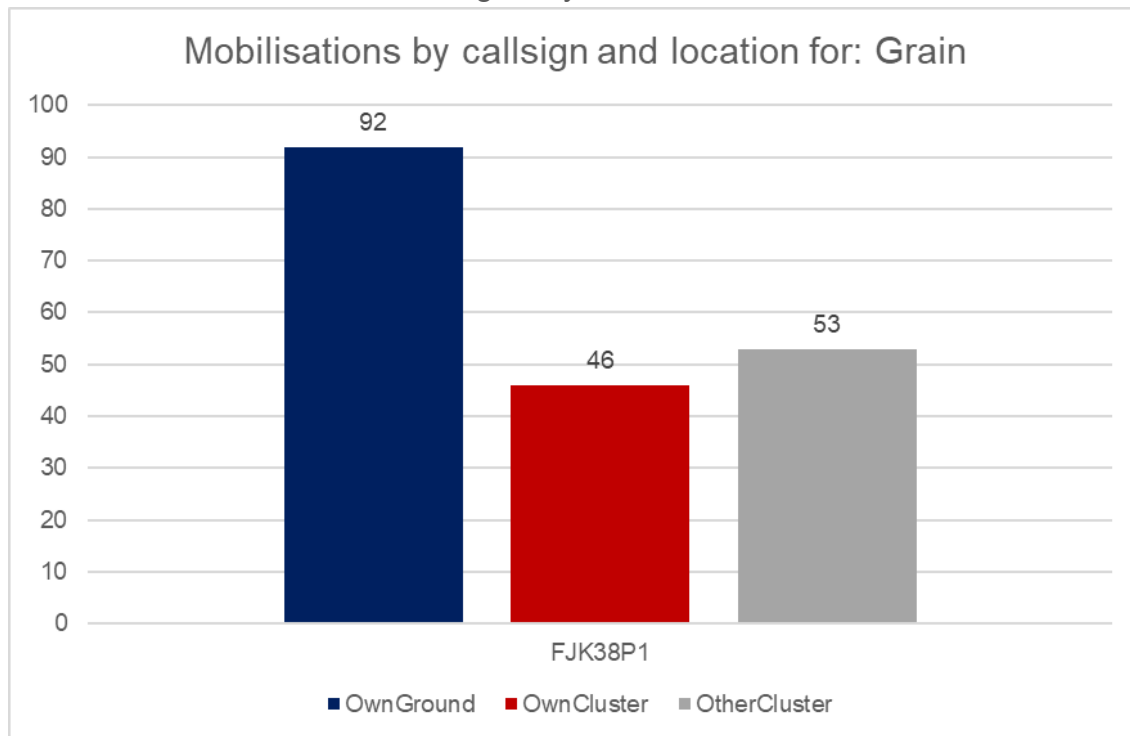
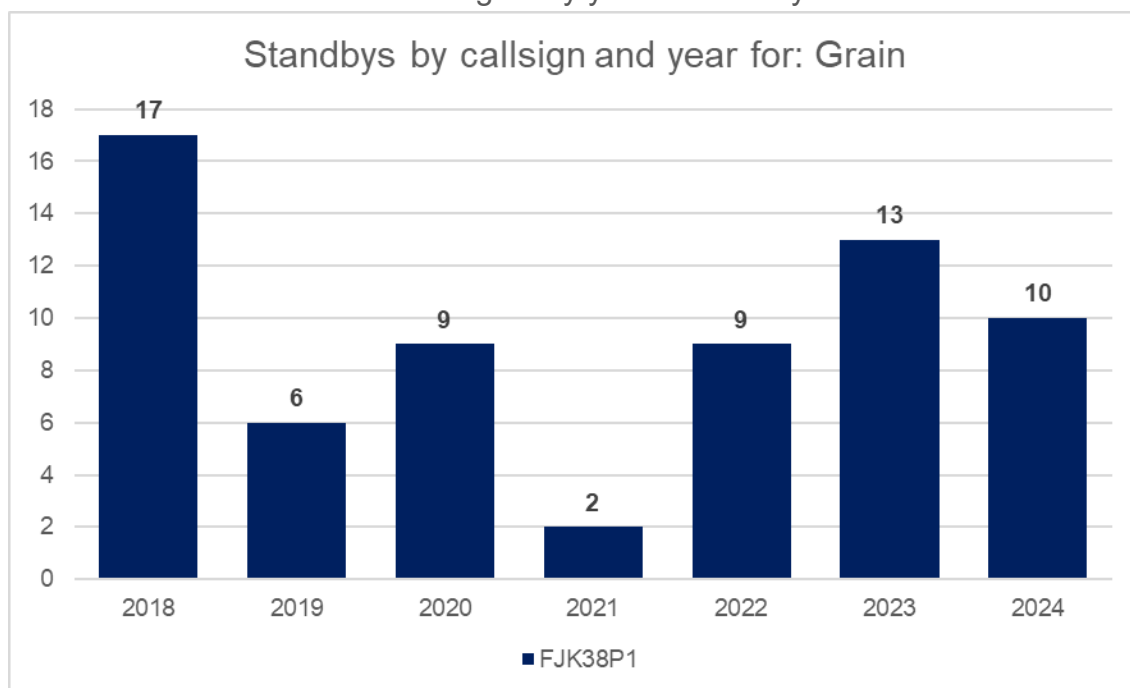


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



## Risks

In summary:

- Grain ranks consistently low for most societal risk factors and activity across the profile
- 22% of the Grain population is aged 65 and over and 10% of the population are single person households.
- On average there is a high level of deprivation. In comparison to other on-call station grounds Grain ranks high.
- There are few commercial premises but a high infrastructure score due to the public utility sites

## Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile







The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

Table: Results of KAIR profile<sup>2</sup>

							
Population <b>4,499</b>	Over 65 <b>22%</b>	Disability Limited a Lot <b>9%</b>	One Person Households <b>10%</b>	Average Deprivation <b>High</b>	People + Premises <b>3</b>	Other Premises <b>83</b>	Infrastructure Premises <b>9</b>

<sup>2</sup> People+ capture's higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Known Risk Sites

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

There are five premises in the Grain area which require site specific risk information.

Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
0	3	2	0	0
	Power Station BP Oil Refinery National Grid			

## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Grain would have been mobilised to 42 incidents per year on average; less than one incident per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Grain is modelled to attend 296 incidents. Of those, 264 are on Grain's station ground. Most incidents are special service incidents (157), over half of which were co-responding incidents<sup>3</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Grain was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Grain	66	152	40	6	264
Hoo	11	3	1	0	15
Chatham	4	0	0	1	5
Strood	3	1	0	0	4
Thames-side	2	1	0	0	3
Dartford	1	0	1	0	2
Swanscombe	1	0	0	0	1
Sheppey	0	0	1	0	1
Rochester	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>296</b>

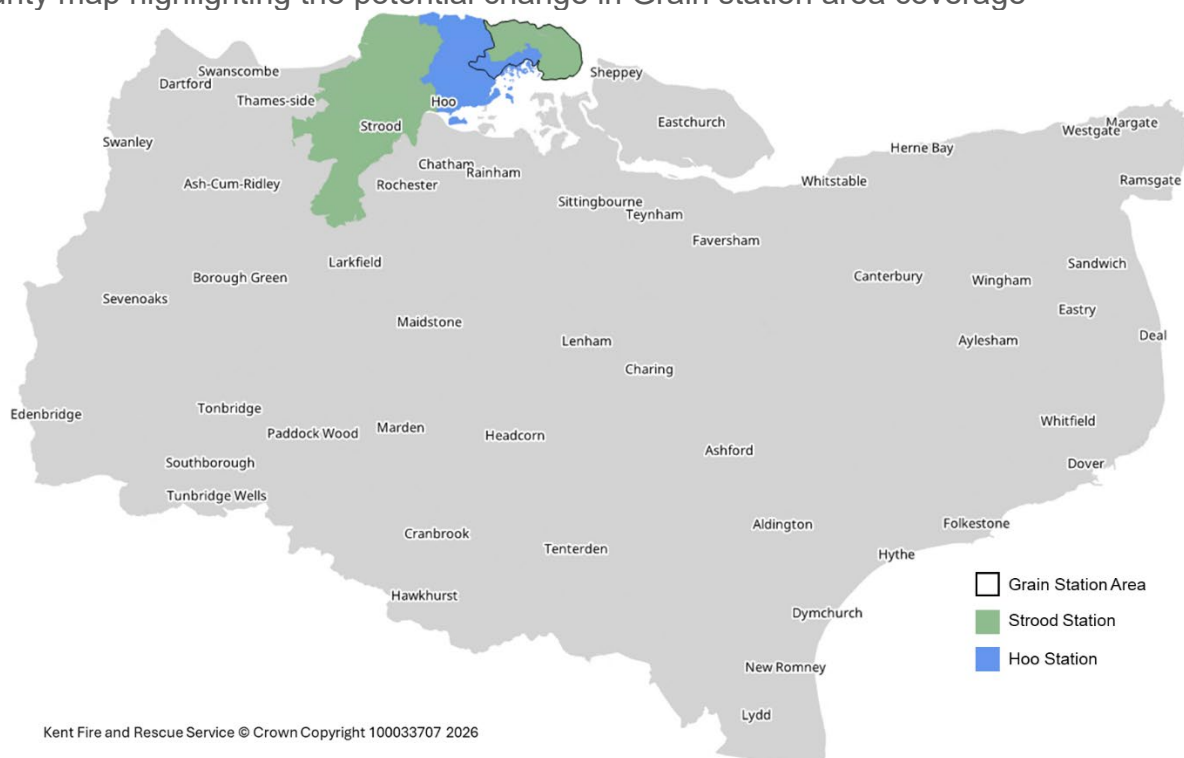
<sup>3</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total special service incidents quoted are from the sum of the row for the special service heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Grain station area.

County map highlighting the potential change in Grain station area coverage



The table below outlines the potential change in where each fire engine would be sent from to incidents in the Grain station area. Strood will be pick up most of the incidents in the area.

Strood	Hoo	Thames-side	Medway	Rochester	Thames-side	Dartford	Larkfield	Faversham
62%	14%	10%	5%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%

The table below details the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area. The possible new time shown in the table is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to improve during the day but will take longer at night. It is important to note that day-time response time is impacted by the other factor in this review; placing a second wholetime fire engine at Strood during the day.

	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
Day time	29 secs quicker	17 mins 56 secs
Nighttime	2 mins 37 secs slower	18 mins 30 secs

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

### Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

### Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So, while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Grain (7 years total)

	38	37	43	39	35	30	33	48	50
	Grain	Hoo	Chatham	Strood	Thames-side	Dartford	Swanscombe	Sheppey	Rochester
<b>Fires</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Dwelling	14	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Non-Residential	7	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Residential	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	31	5	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Transport	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	89	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	9	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Apparatus	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Good Intent	31	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Malicious	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Resourcing Review

# On-Call Viability Proposal for Closure – Supporting Data

Cliffe

June 2026



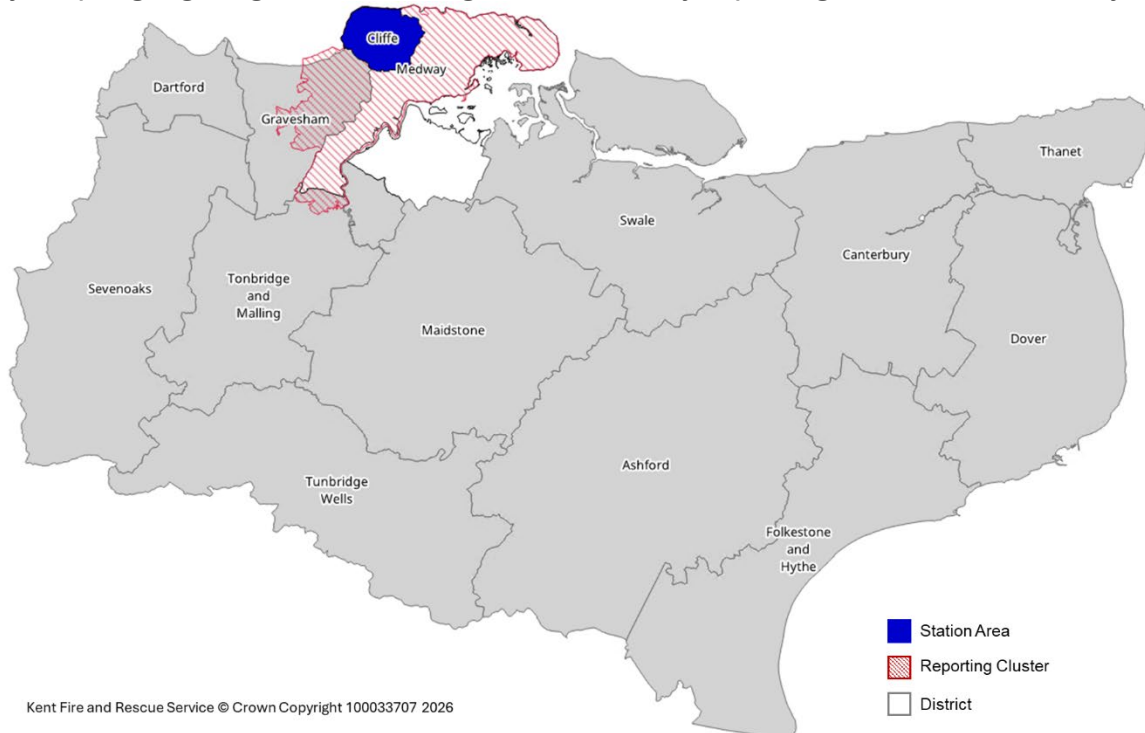
**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**together**

## Station Information

Cliffe is a standalone on-call fire station located in the Medway District area. The station area covers a total of 28.7 sq km, with a population of 3,091. For reporting purposes, Grain sits within the Medway cluster.

County map highlighting Cliffe station ground, Medway reporting cluster and Medway District.



Cliffe crews one fire engine and does not provide crewing for any other specialist vehicles.

Cliffe currently has eight colleagues employed: one watch manager, one crew manager and six firefighters. Three of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Cliffe. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been four new starters at Cliffe station.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

Availability has declined since 2019, when 24/7 availability was as high as 51.7%, to a low of 9.8% in 2024. The range of annual percentages is large. Even in the best recent year shown (2025, 27.3%), the fire engine was unavailable nearly three quarters of the time.

The difference between 24/7 availability (33.0%) and evenings/weekends availability (50.5%) shows Cliffe can provide availability outside standard daytime hours.

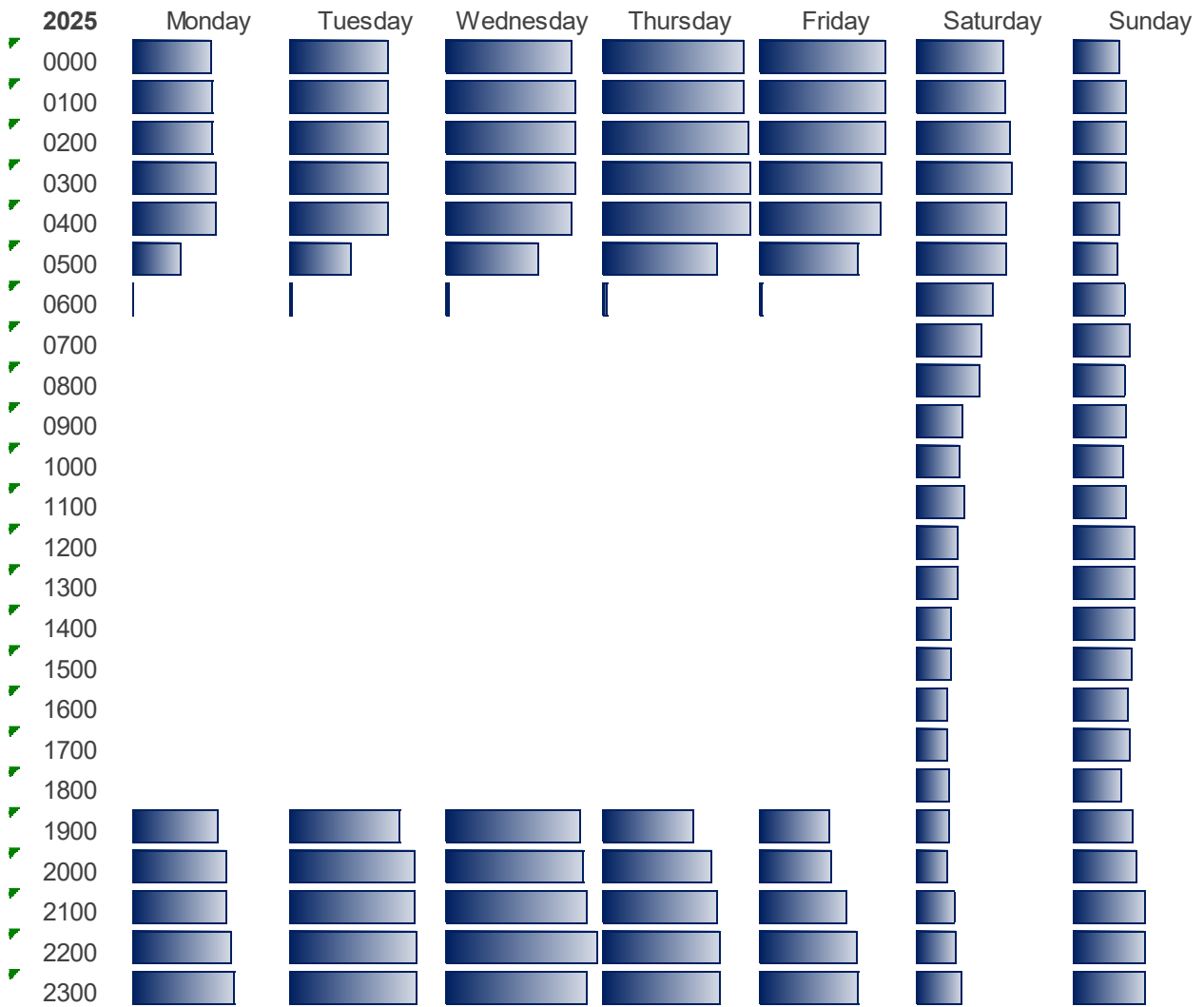
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability (42.3%) was around 1.5 times the 24/7 availability figure (27.3%).
- Across the full period shown, evening and weekend availability is consistently better than 24/7 by between 5.2 and 27.7 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	<b>24/7 Availability</b>	<b>Evening and Weekend Availability</b>
2025	27.3%	42.3%
2024	9.8%	15.0%
2023	10.7%	16.6%
2022	28.3%	43.7%
2021	39.8%	61.7%
2020	49.1%	74.0%
2019	51.7%	79.4%
2018	47.0%	71.7%
<b>Average</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Activity

Overall incident demand in the station ground is low. Cliffe contributes a very small share of the countywide demand. In addition, most mobilisations of the fire engine based at Cliffe are to incidents within the reporting cluster or elsewhere in the County rather than on their own station ground.

### Incidents on the Station Ground

The following section details incidents that happened on the Cliffe station ground, regardless of who attended the incidents. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 252 incidents in total
  - Incidents spread evenly over the months
  - Incidents are higher during the afternoon and evening
- False alarms: 41 (16.3% of all incidents)
- Fires: 52 (20.6%)
  - Of which over half were outdoor fires
- Special service: 159 (63.1%)
  - Two thirds of which were co-responding incidents (92)
- One fatality and 12 serious casualties in total, across 12 different incidents
  - One special service incident had two serious casualties recorded
  - eight serious injuries recorded against co-responding incidents

Table: Number of incidents by number of fire engines required

		Cliffe	Kent
Level 1	1-3 fire engines	248	135,851
Level 2	4-6 fire engines	4	1,274
Level 3	7-9 fire engines	0	76
Level 4	10+ fire engines	0	43

Chart: Incidents on station ground by year and incident type

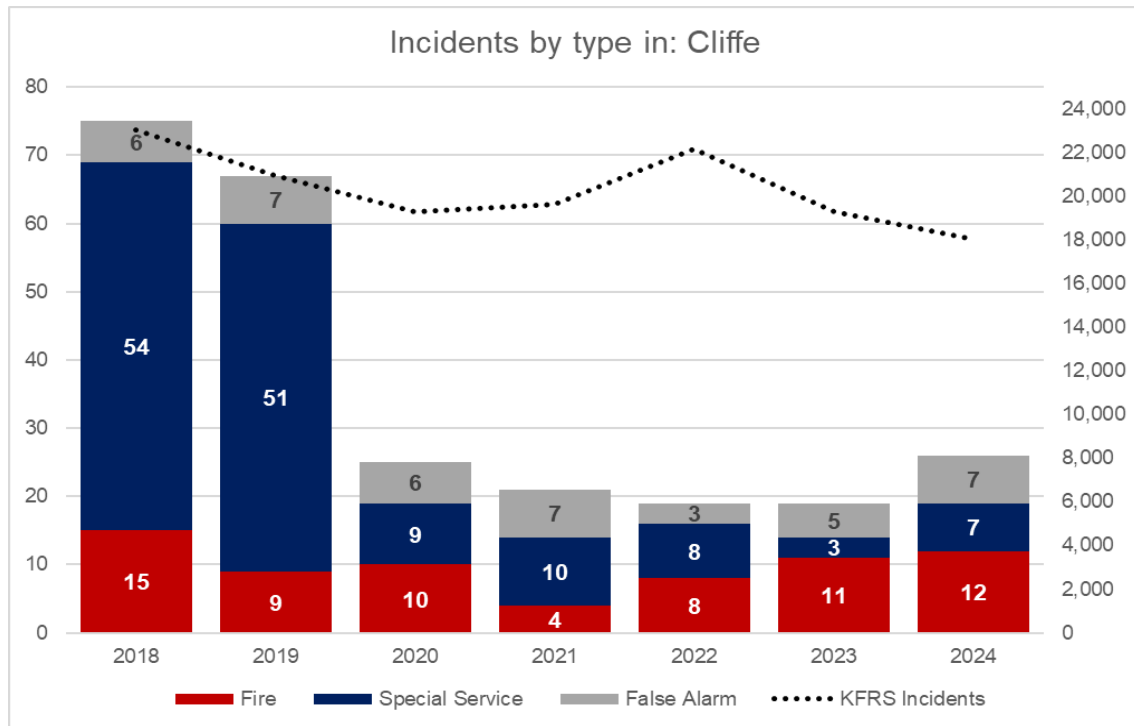


Chart: Incidents on station ground by month

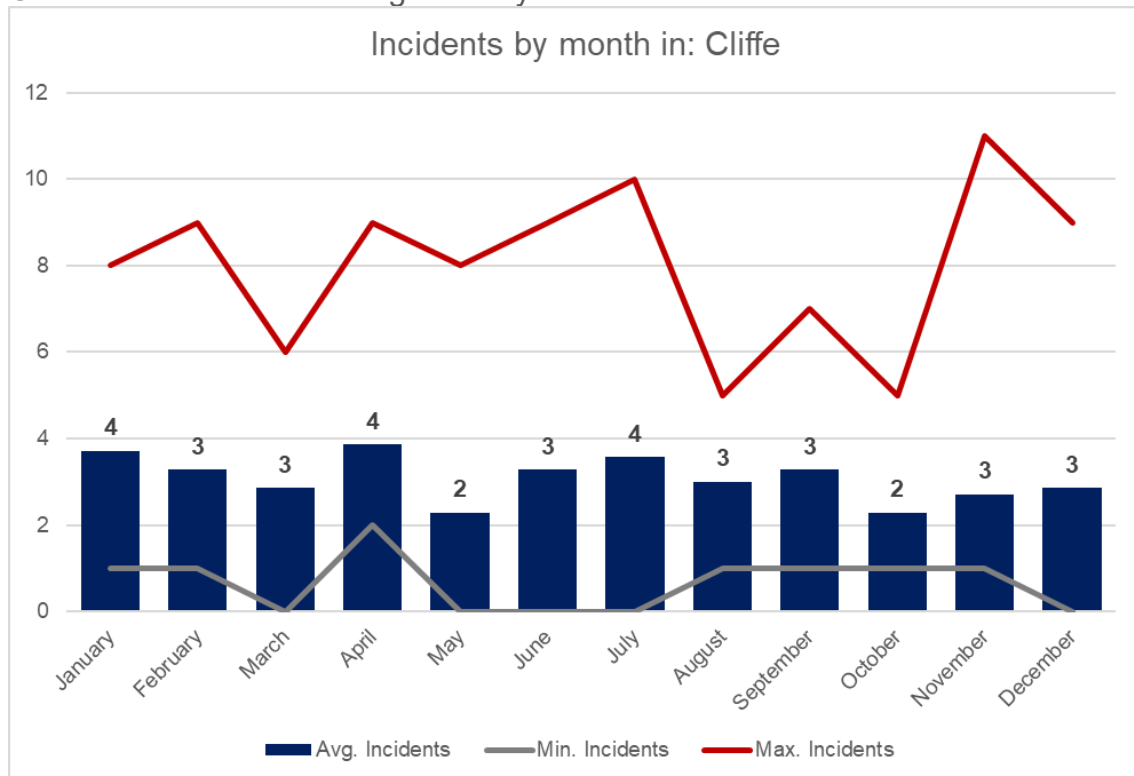


Chart: Incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

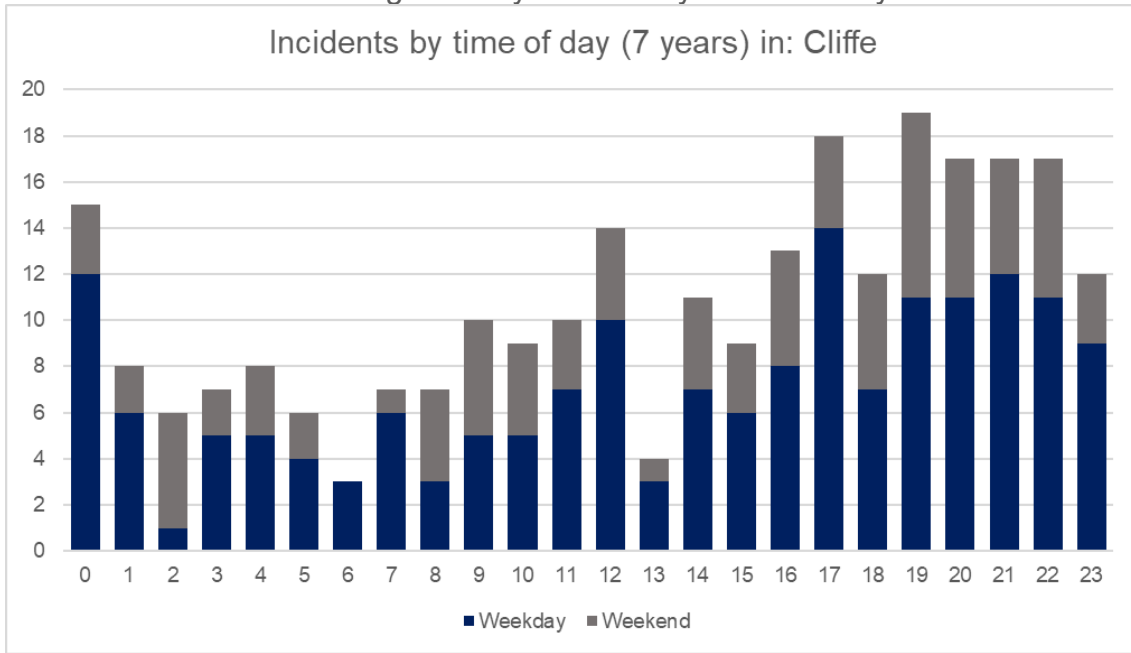


Chart: Casualties from Incidents on station ground

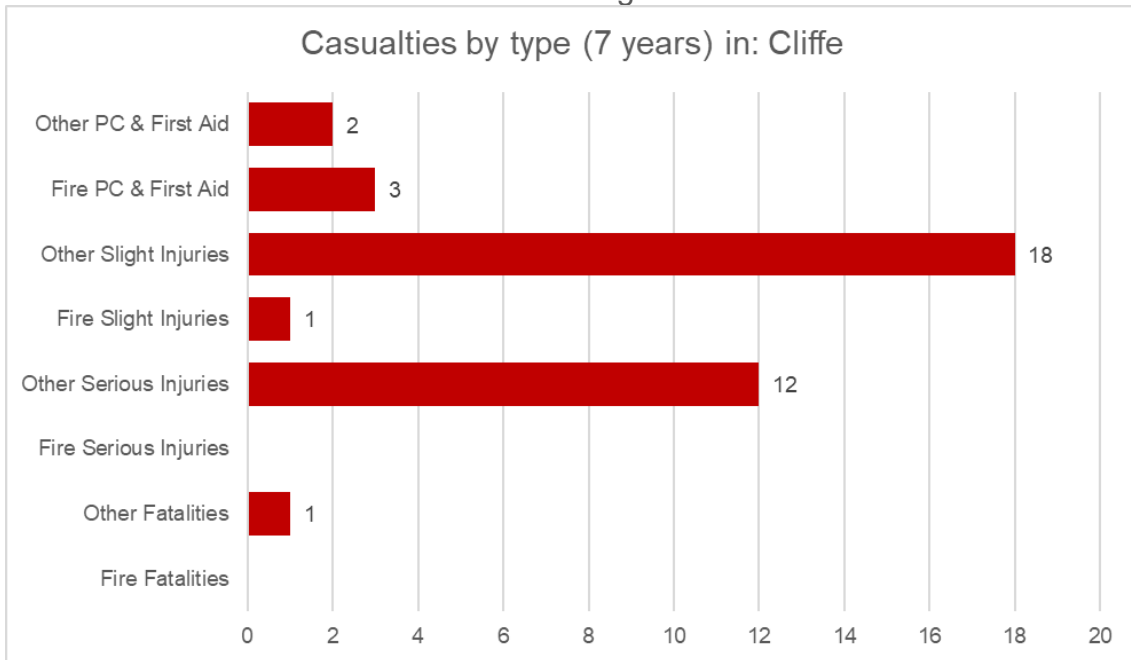


Table: Average time between first and second fire engine attendance to incidents

RTC	1 min 1 secs
Fire - Dwelling	8 mins 58 secs
Fire - Non-Residential	15 mins 34 secs
Fire - Outdoor	26 mins 41 secs
Fire - Road Vehicle	13 mins 39 secs

Note: the number of incidents is very small so any outliers will not be absorbed

Chart: Fires on station ground by property type

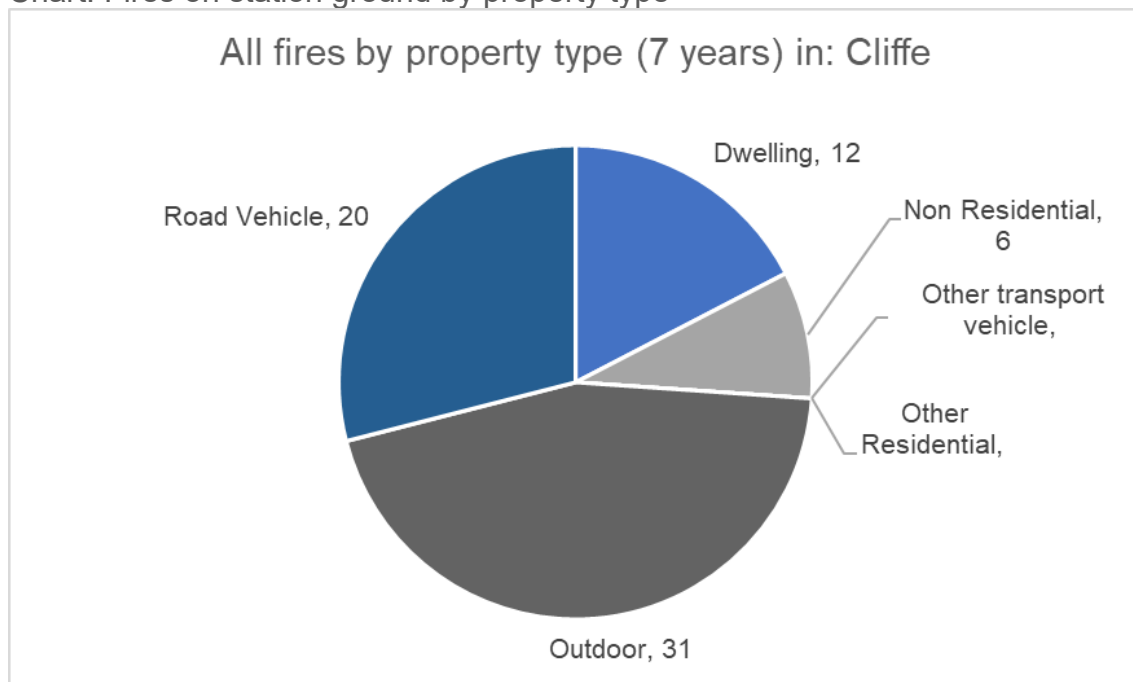


Chart: Fires on station ground by year

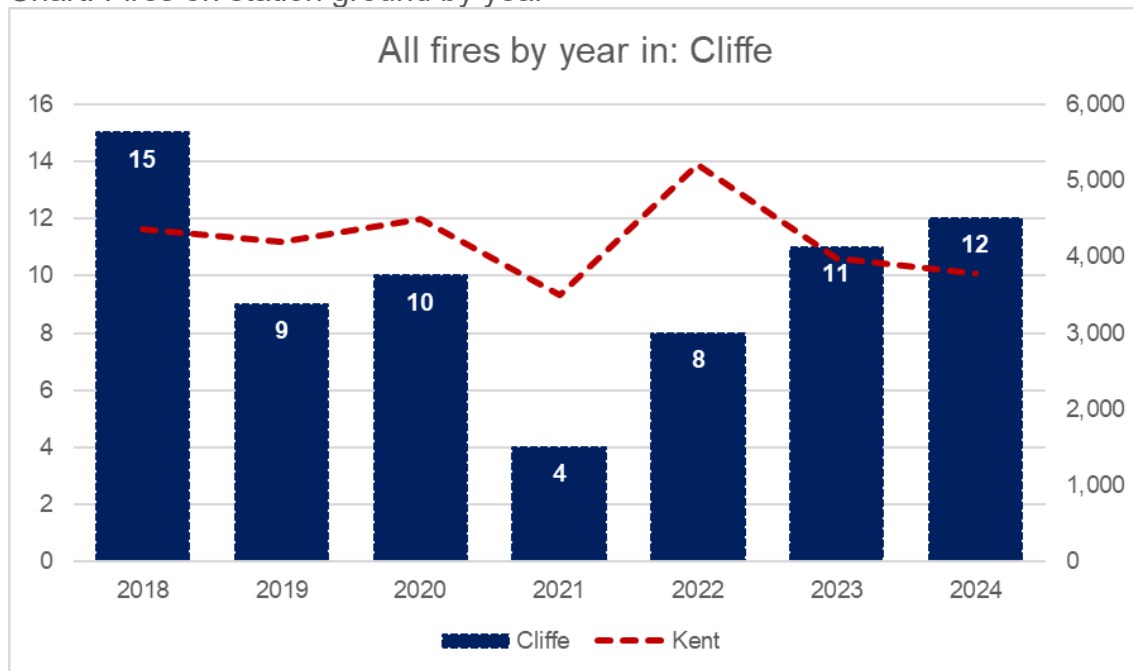


Chart: Fires on station ground by month

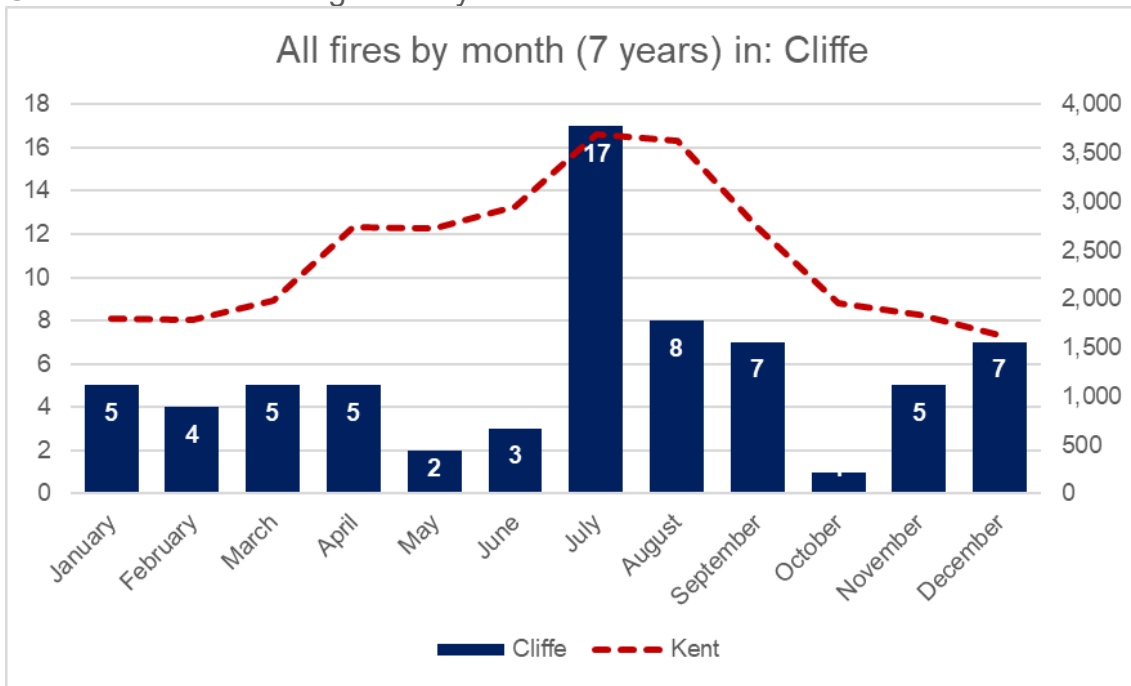


Chart: Fires on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend

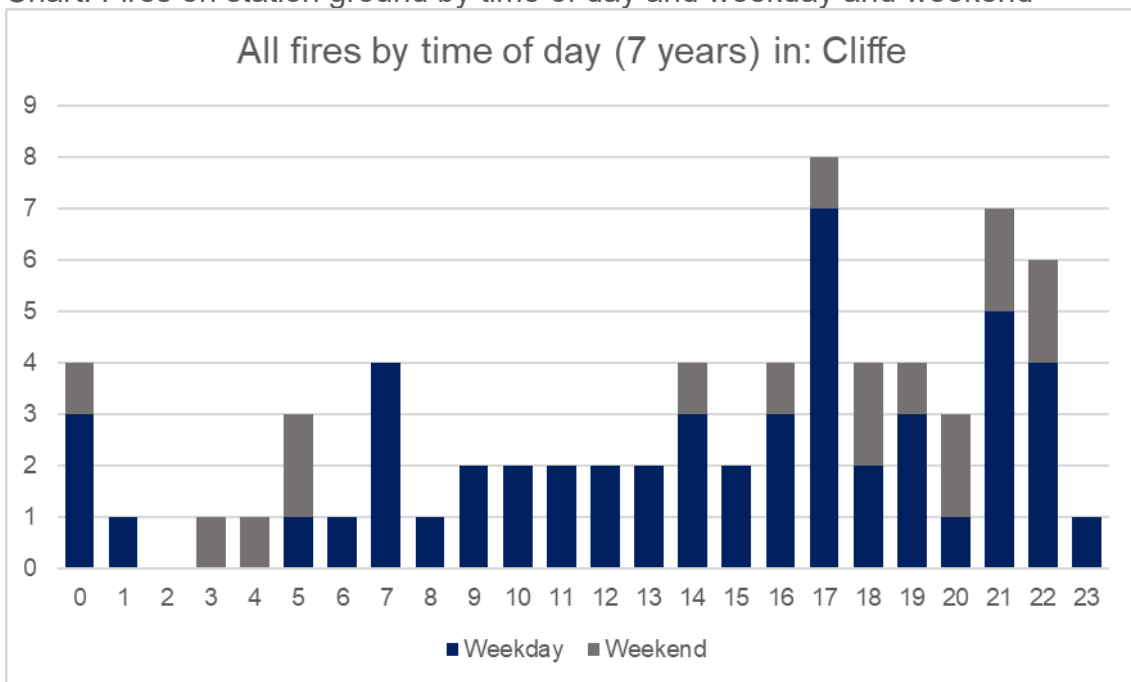


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by type

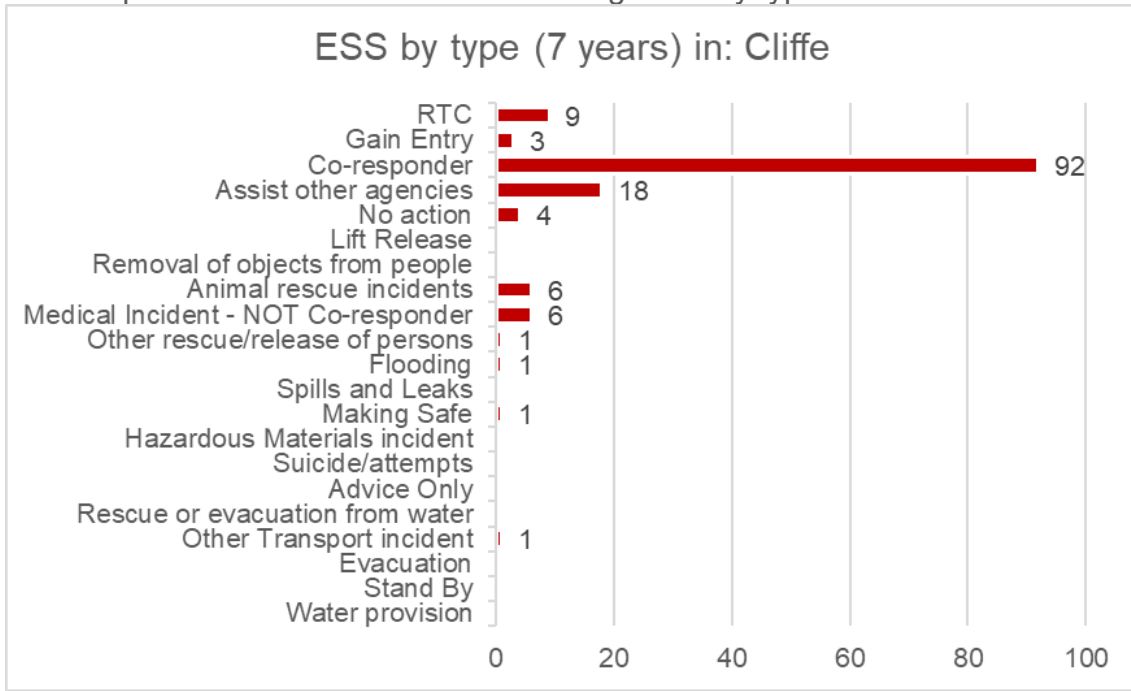


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by year

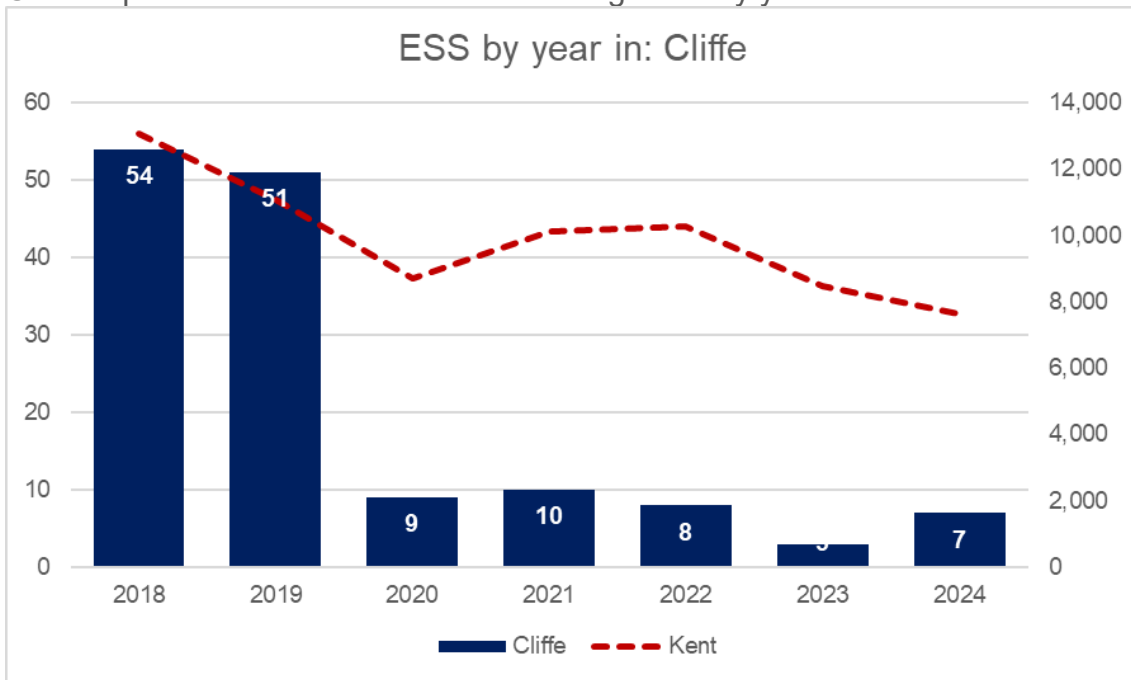


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by month

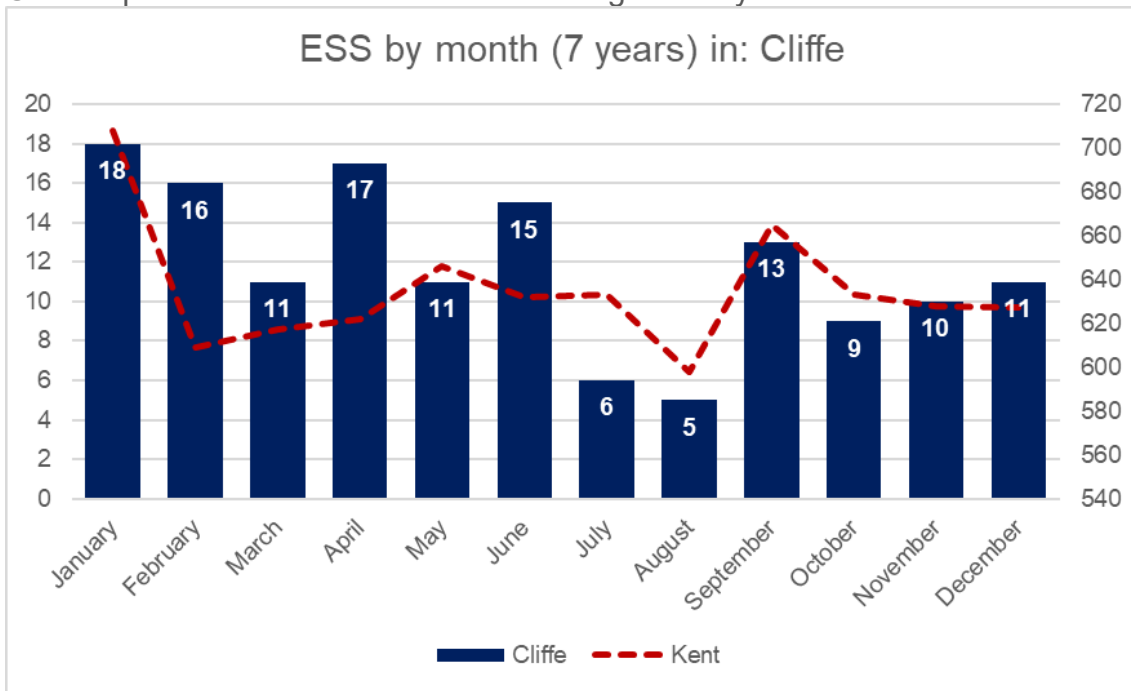
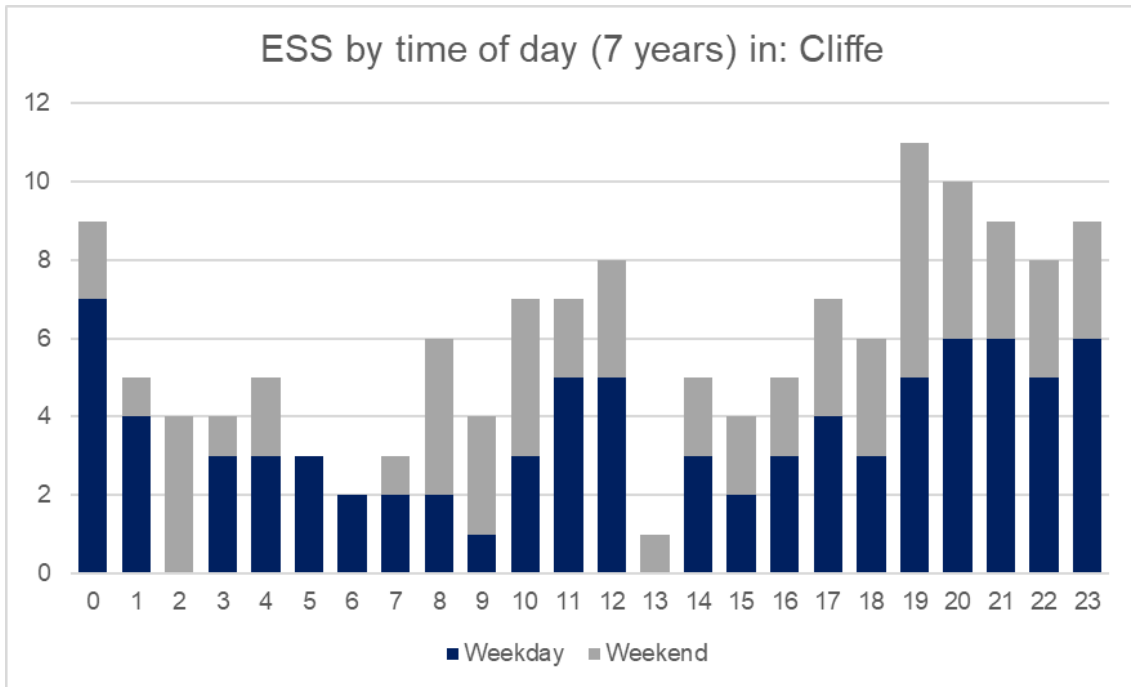


Chart: Special service incidents on station ground by time of day and weekday and weekend.



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the fire engine in Cliffe has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 614 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations were considerably higher in 2018 and 2019; these can be attributed to co-responding incidents
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Cliffe is used most of the time to support incidents in the Medway reporting cluster (48.7%) or elsewhere in the County (31.1%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

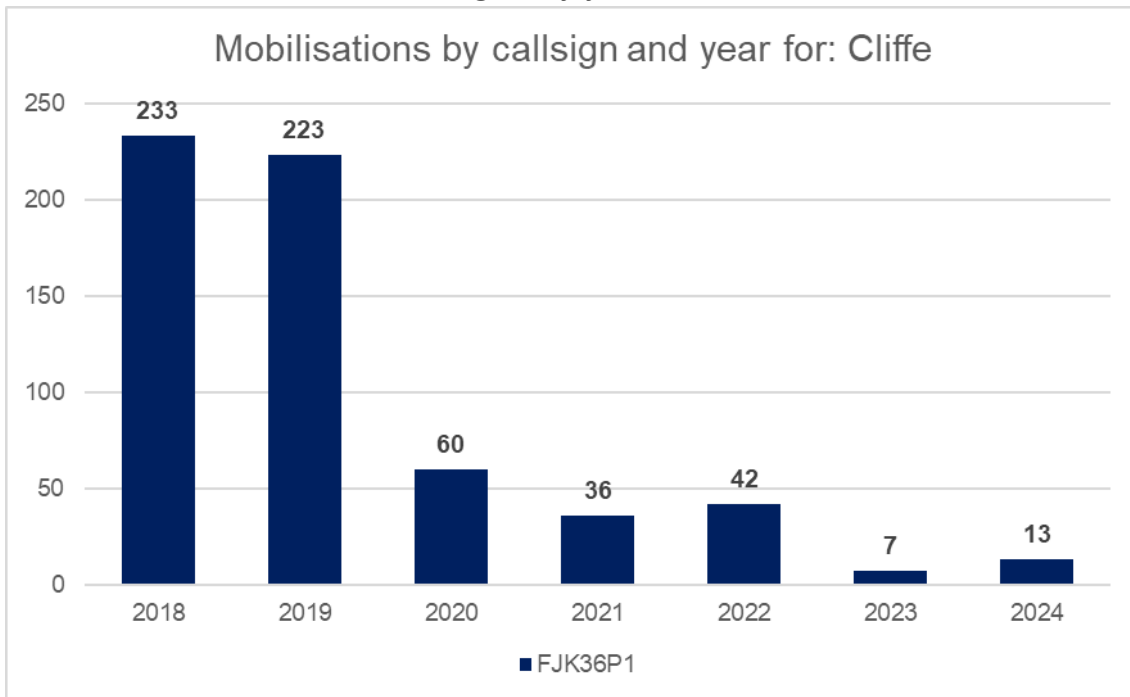


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

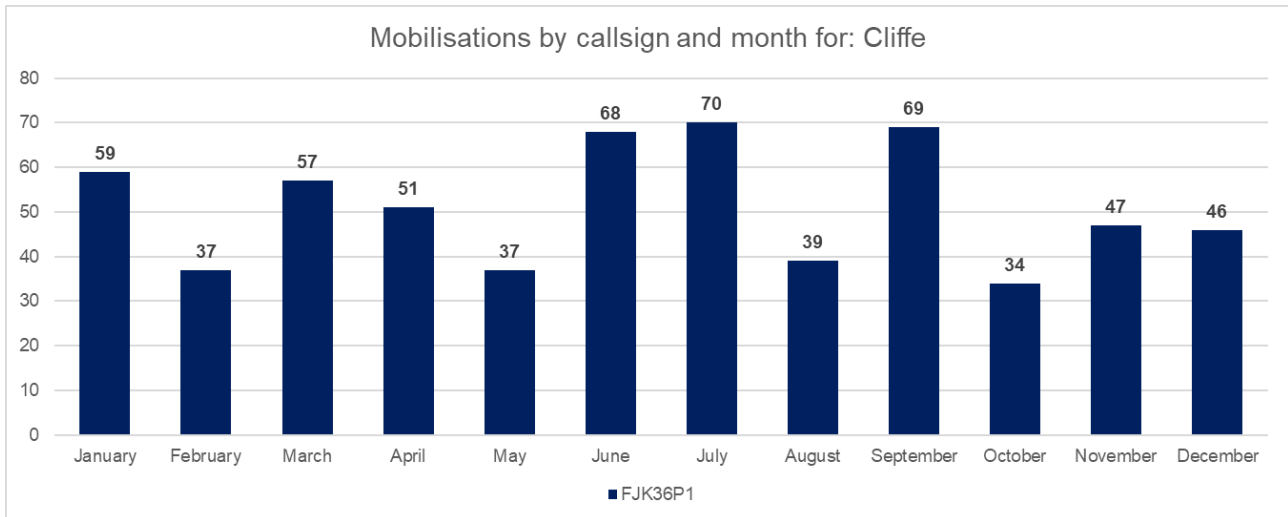


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

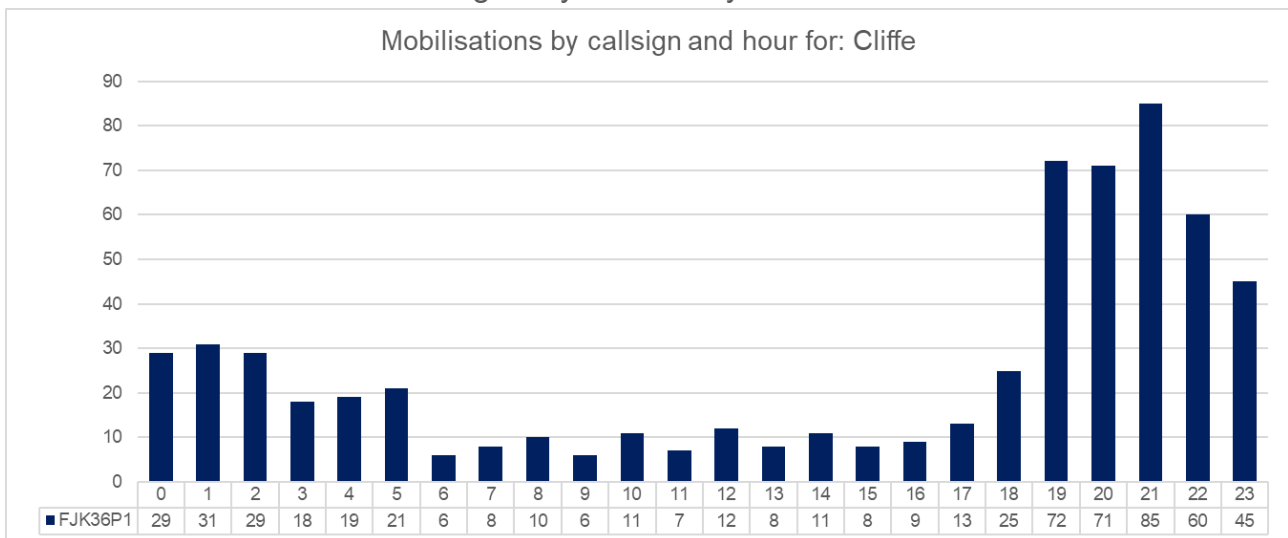


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

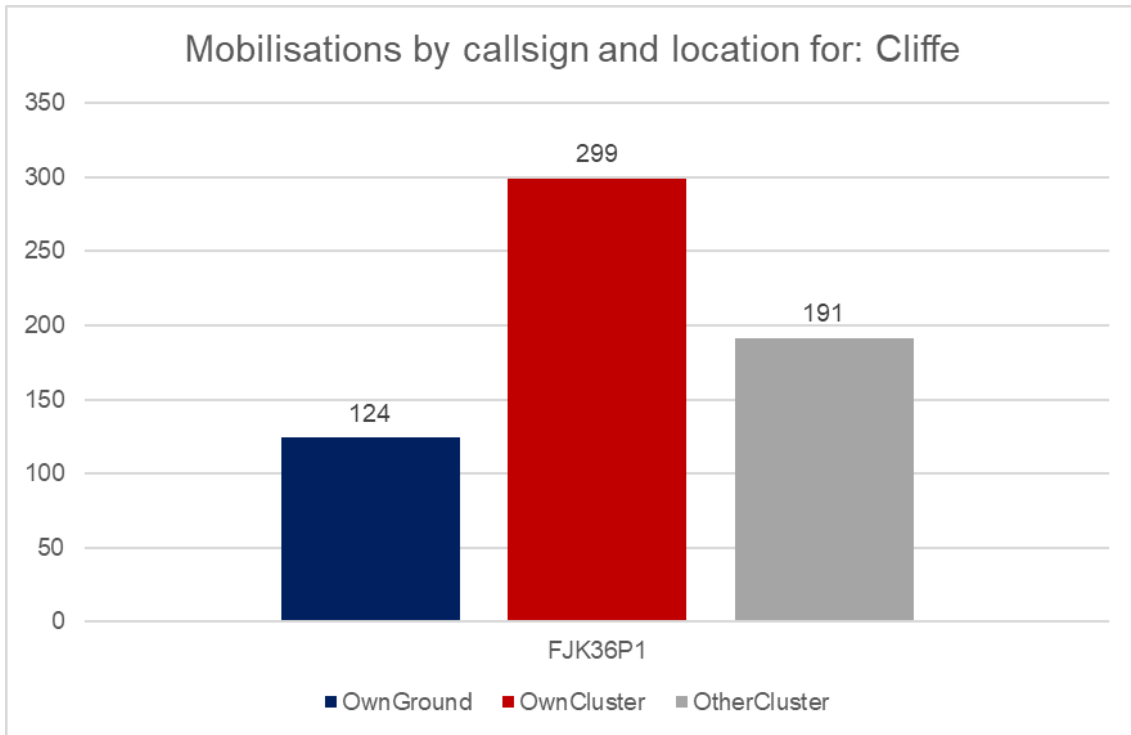
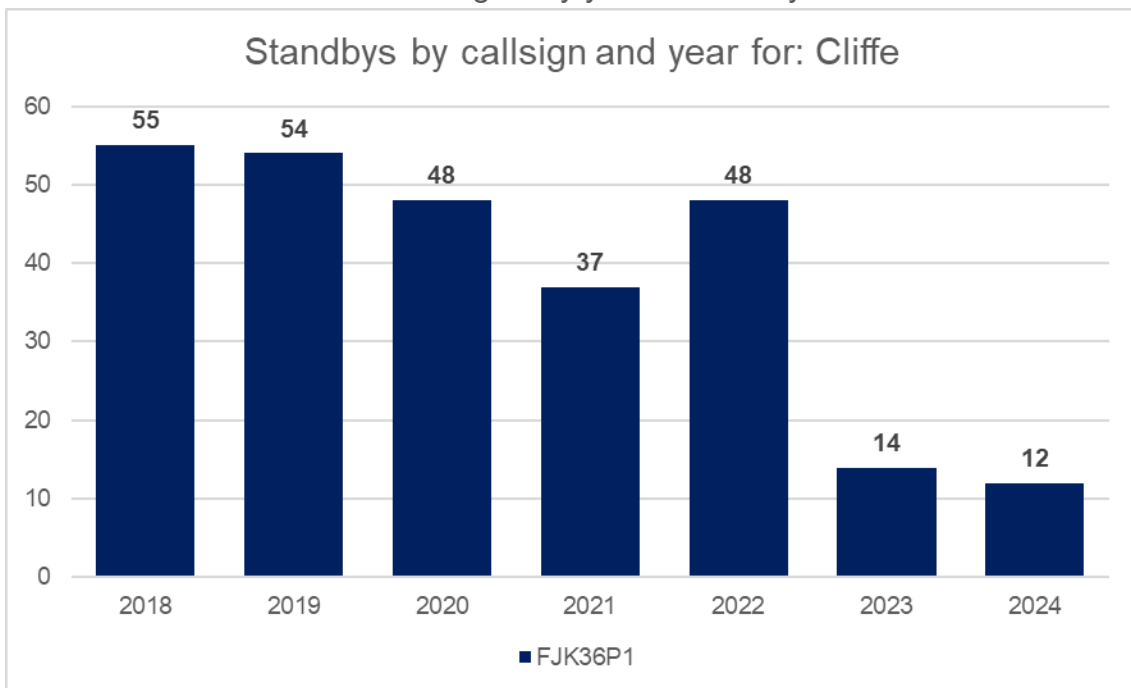


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



# Risks

In summary:

- Cliffe ranks consistently low for all societal risk factors and activity across the profile
- 19% of the Cliffe population is aged 65 and over and 8% of the population are single person households.
- On average there is a medium level of deprivation. In comparison to other on-call station grounds Cliffe ranks lower.
- There are few commercial premises and no infrastructure premises on the station ground

## Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk Profile









The Kent Activity, Isolation and Risk (KAIR) profile is a data-based tool that shows incident likelihood, consequence, and response challenges by area.

The KAIR profile is a way to compare different areas of Kent to indicate where resources may be needed most. It brings together three main things:

1. Activity – how often incidents are likely to happen in an area
  - based on past incidents such as dwelling fires, road traffic collisions, and other building fires
2. Risk – how serious the impact could be if something happens
  - for example, whether an area has more vulnerable people, higher deprivation, important buildings, or key infrastructure
3. Isolation – how difficult it may be to reach the area quickly
  - based on response times and whether the nearest fire engines are likely to be unavailable

These three parts are combined into one overall score for each area.

Table: Results of KAIR profile<sup>2</sup>

							
Population	Over 65	Disability Limited a Lot	One Person Households	Average Deprivation	People + Premises	Other Premises	Infrastructure Premises
<b>3,091</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>2</sup> People+ capture's higher dependency/complex buildings such as care homes, high rise residential. Other Premises captures remaining non-commercial premises. Infrastructure captures hospitals, transport hubs, power generation etc.

## Known Risk Sites

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) is information gathered and maintained by fire and rescue services to identify significant hazards, risks, and control measures associated with specific premises or locations. In line with National Operational Guidance, SSRI supports operational preparedness by providing crews with relevant information on building layout, fire safety systems, access arrangements, water supplies, hazardous materials, and risks to firefighters or occupants. This information enables informed decision-making, improves firefighter and public safety, and supports effective incident command during emergency response.

There are no premises in the Cliffe area which require site specific risk information.

## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Cliffe would have been mobilised to 62 incidents per year on average; one incident per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Cliffe is modelled to attend 436 incidents. Of those, 263 are on Cliffe's station ground. Most incidents are either co-responding incidents (82) or outdoor fires (49)<sup>3</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Cliffe was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Cliffe	86	129	42	6	263
Strood	35	21	9	1	66
Chatham	11	7	22	0	40
Thames-side	15	1	15	0	31
Dartford	8	0	1	0	9
Rochester	2	3	3	0	8
Grain	5	1	1	1	8
Hoo	4	1	1	0	6
Swanscombe	3	0	0	0	3
Maidstone	1	0	0	0	1
Swanley	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>436</b>

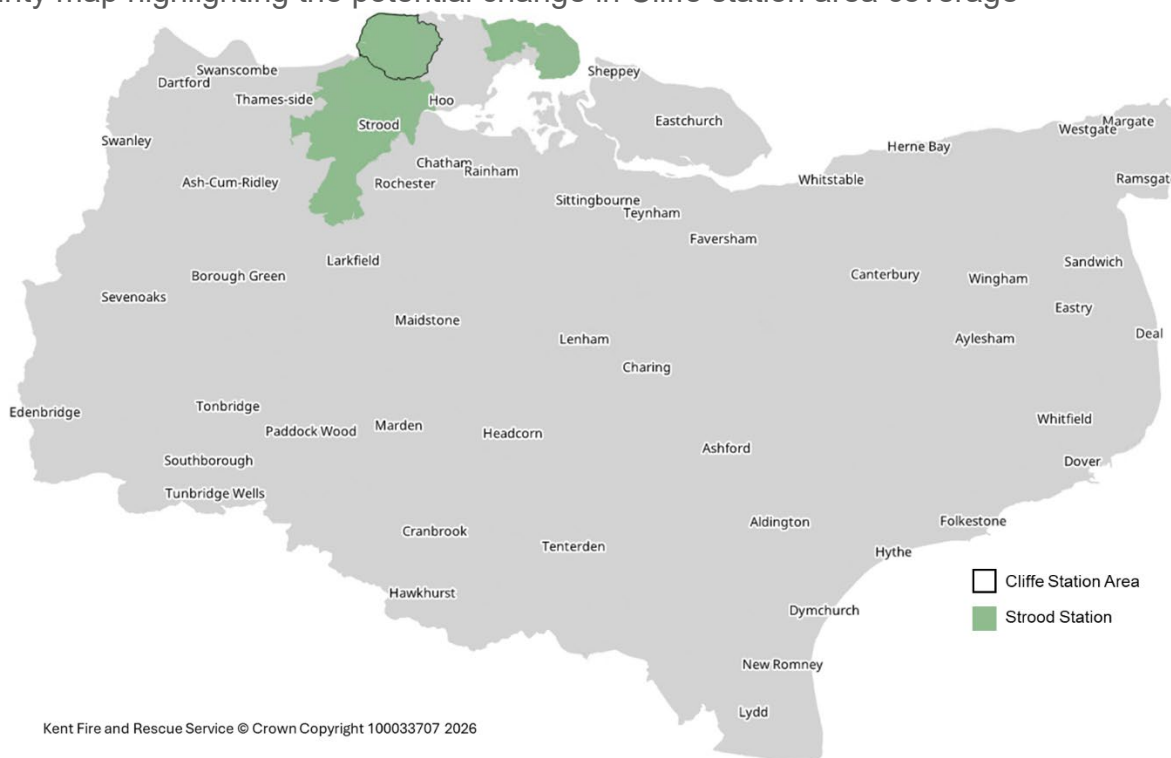
<sup>3</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The totals quoted are from the sum of the relevant row.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Cliffe station area.

County map highlighting the potential change in Cliffe station area coverage



The table below outlines the potential change in where each fire engine would be sent from to incidents in the Cliffe station area. Strood will be pick up most of the incidents in the area.

Strood	Thames-side	Chatham	Dartford	Rochester	Hoo	Maidstone
<b>81%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

The table below details the possible differences in first fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area. The possible new time shown in the table is calculated from finding the variance the models predict and then applying that variance to the reality of actual response times for the same incidents used in the model.

Overall, first fire engine average response times are predicted to improve during the day but will take longer at night. It is important to note that day-time response time is impacted by the other factor in this review; placing a second wholetime fire engine at Strood during the day.

	Poss Variance	Poss New Time
Day time	1 min 20 secs quicker	11 mins 59 secs
Nighttime	3 mins 20 secs slower	14 mins 36 secs

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Cliffe (7 years total)

	36	39	43	35	30	50	38	37	33	60	31
	Cliffe	Strood	Chatham	Thames-side	Dartford	Rochester	Grain	Hoo	Swanscombe	Maidstone	Swanley
<b>Fires</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	12	6	4	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Non-Residential	6	6	4	4	2	1	1	3	2	1	0
Outdoor	49	21	3	8	6	0	3	0	1	0	1
Transport	19	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	3	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	15	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	82	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
No Action	4	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	1	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	11	7	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Apparatus	19	3	16	12	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	23	5	5	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Malicious	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Resourcing Review

# On-Call Viability

## Proposal for Removal of On-Call Pump – Supporting Data

Faversham

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

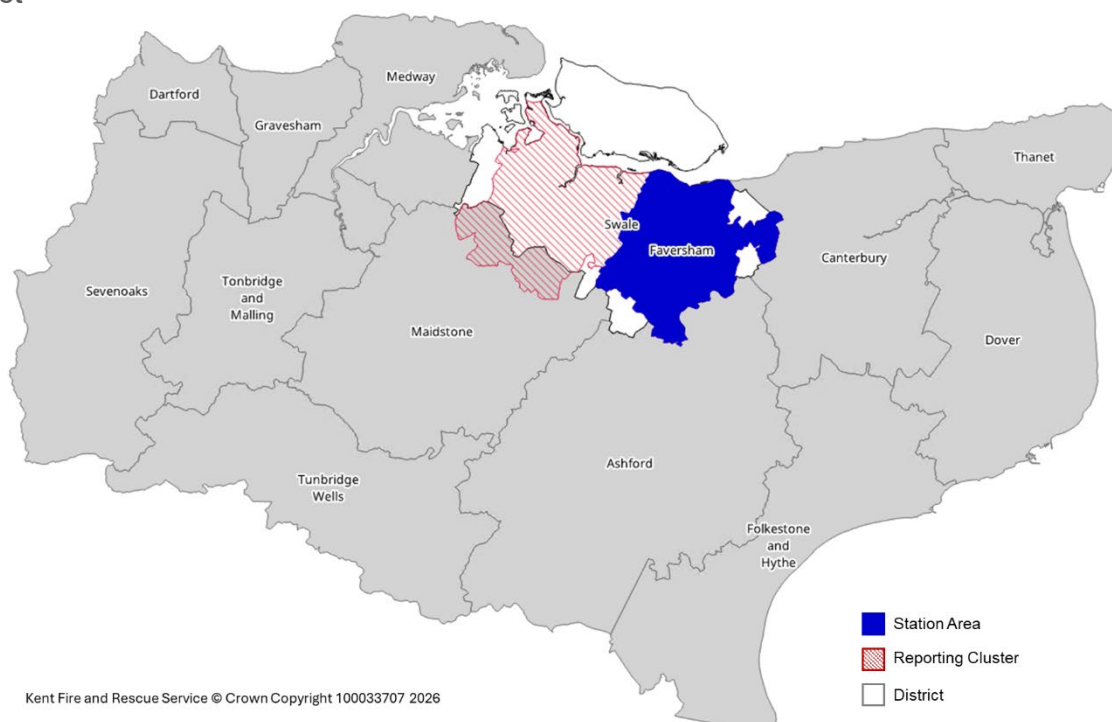
**together**

## Station Information

Faversham is a 2 fire engine station. It has 1 wholetime day crewed fire engine and 1 on-call fire engine. A day crewed station has a wholetime fire engine that is available during the day on an immediate response and available overnight on a delayed response of five minutes. It also has an on-call fire engine that is available at varying times on a five minute delayed response.

The station is in the Swale District area. The station area covers a total of 128.5 sq km, with a population of 28,945. For reporting purposes, Faversham sits within the Swale cluster.

County map highlighting Faversham station ground, Swale reporting cluster and Swale District



Faversham on-call section currently has eight colleagues employed: two crew managers and six firefighters. Four of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Faversham. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been five new starters at Faversham on-call section, one of which has since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

24/7 availability has varied over the period shown, ranging from 8.4% in 2023 to 43.4% in 2020. In the most recent years, it has remained below 20%, including 18.3% in 2025, 14.6% in 2024 and 8.4% in 2023.

The difference between average 24/7 availability (22.2%) and average evening/weekend availability (26.5%) shows Faversham provides slightly better availability outside standard daytime hours overall.

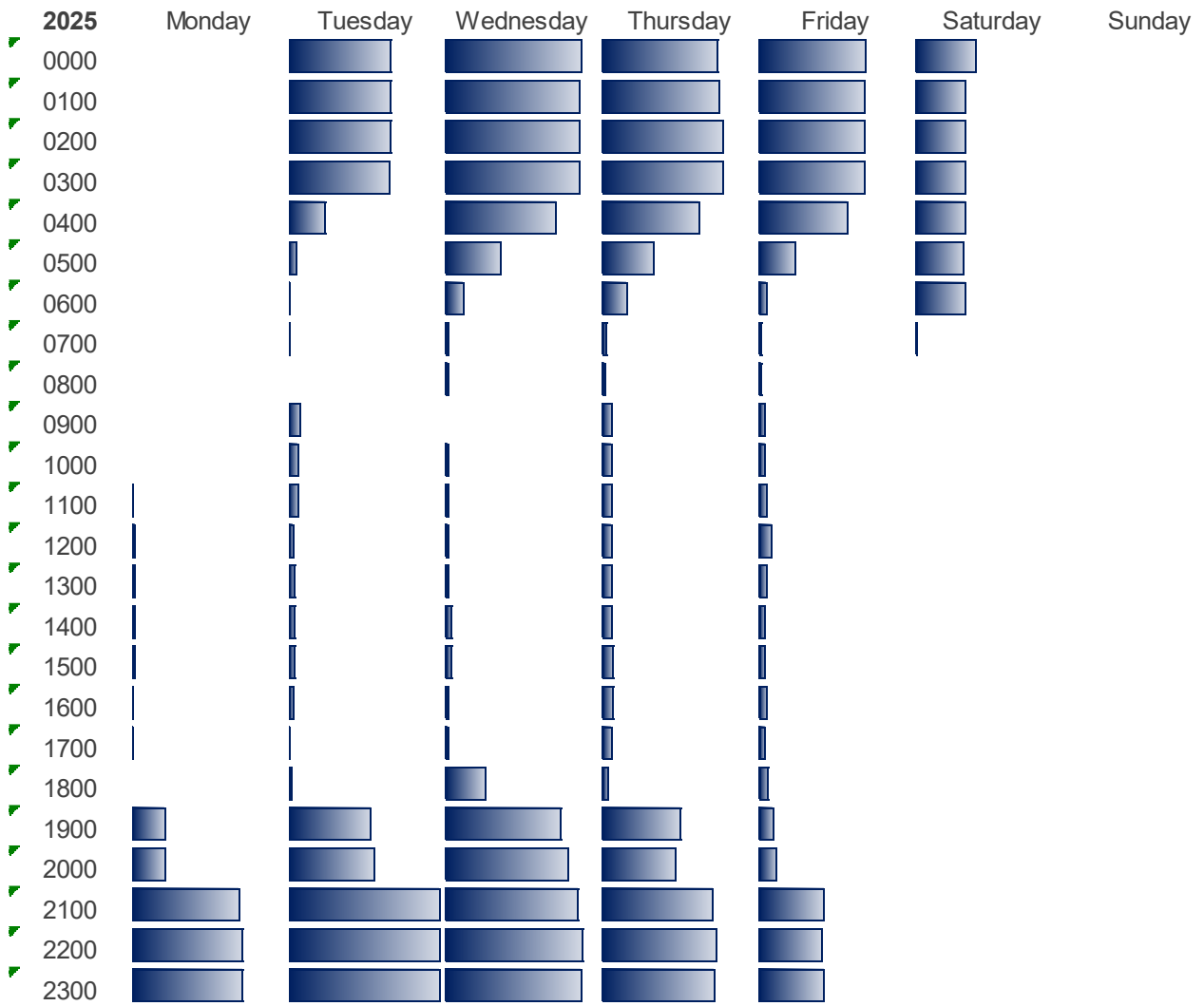
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is higher than the 24/7 figure by 8.1 percentage points (26.4% compared with 18.3%).
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is usually higher than 24/7 availability, although the gap is modest in some years and in 2020 evening and weekend availability was lower than the 24/7 figure. Overall, the average gap across the period is 4.3 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	18.3%	26.4%
2024	14.6%	22.2%
2023	8.4%	11.0%
2022	13.8%	18.2%
2021	23.7%	30.5%
2020	43.4%	39.4%
2019	38.2%	38.4%
2018	17.1%	26.1%
<b>Average</b>	<b>22.2%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the on-call fire engine in Faversham has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 411 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations have fluctuated over the years, mirroring those years where availability also fluctuated
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Most mobilisations are on the station ground. Faversham is used less often to support incidents within the reporting cluster (17%) and elsewhere in the County (24.5%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

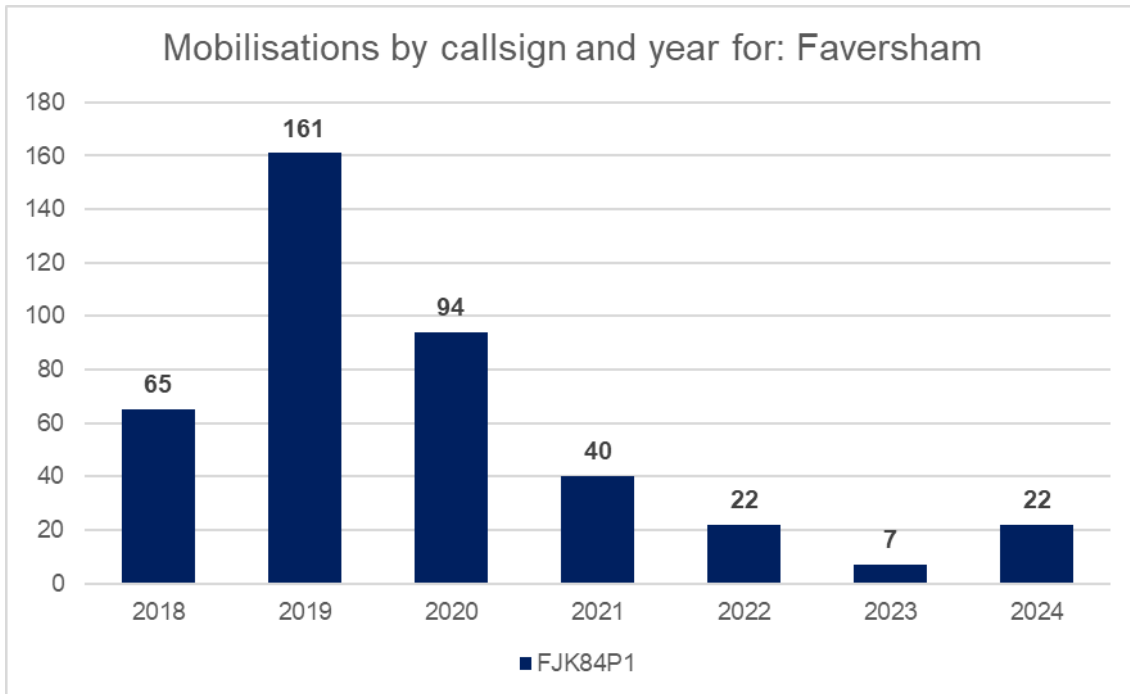


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

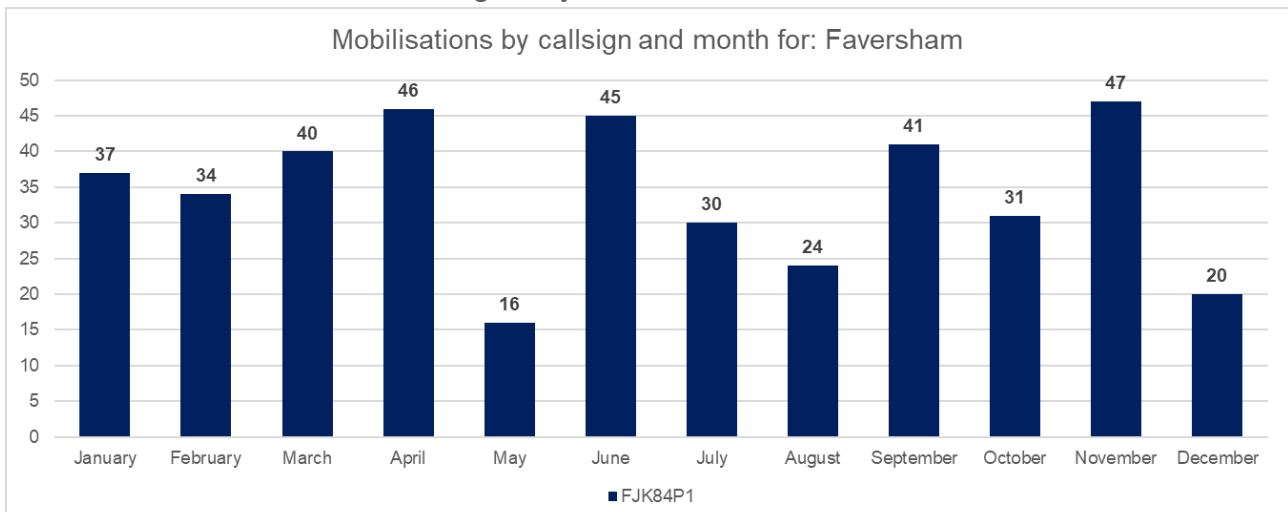


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

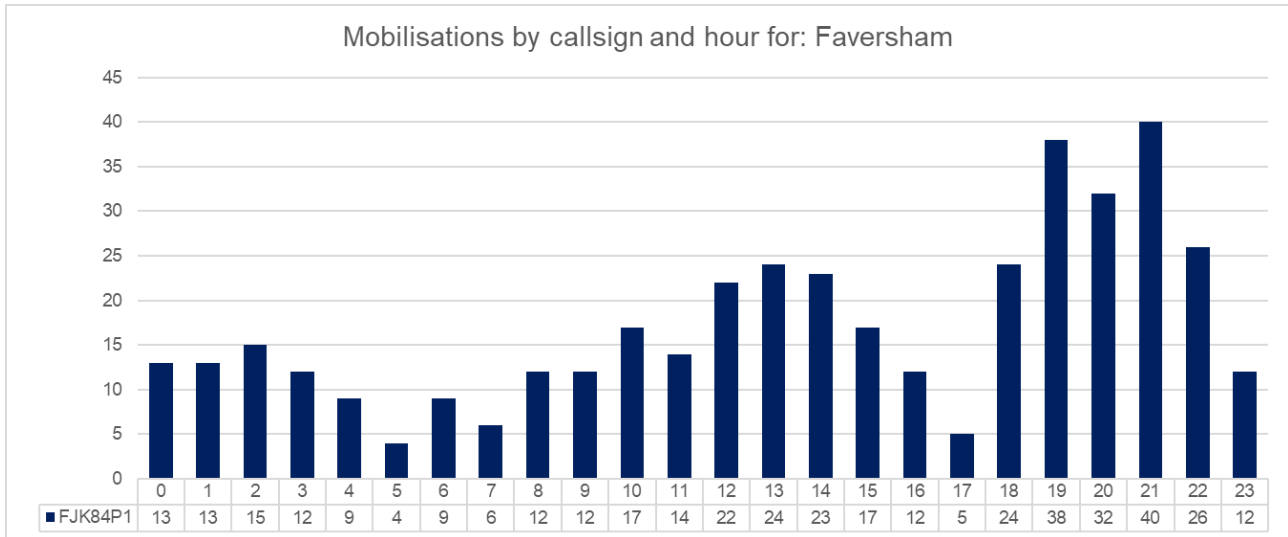


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

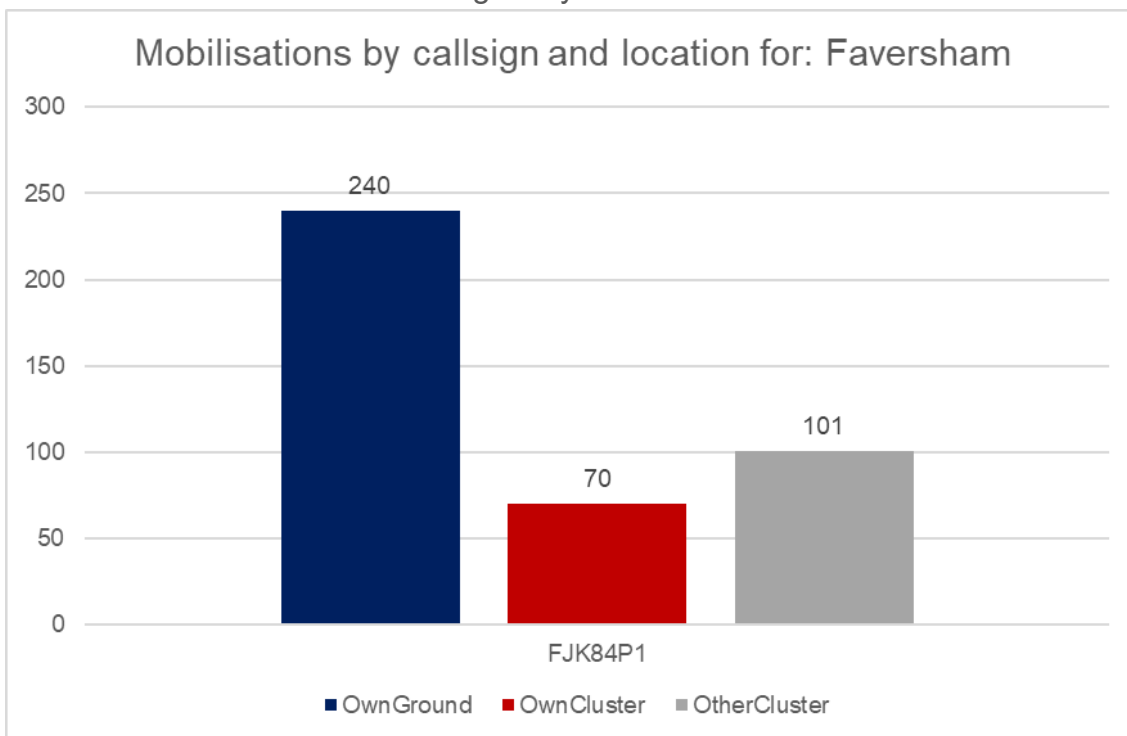
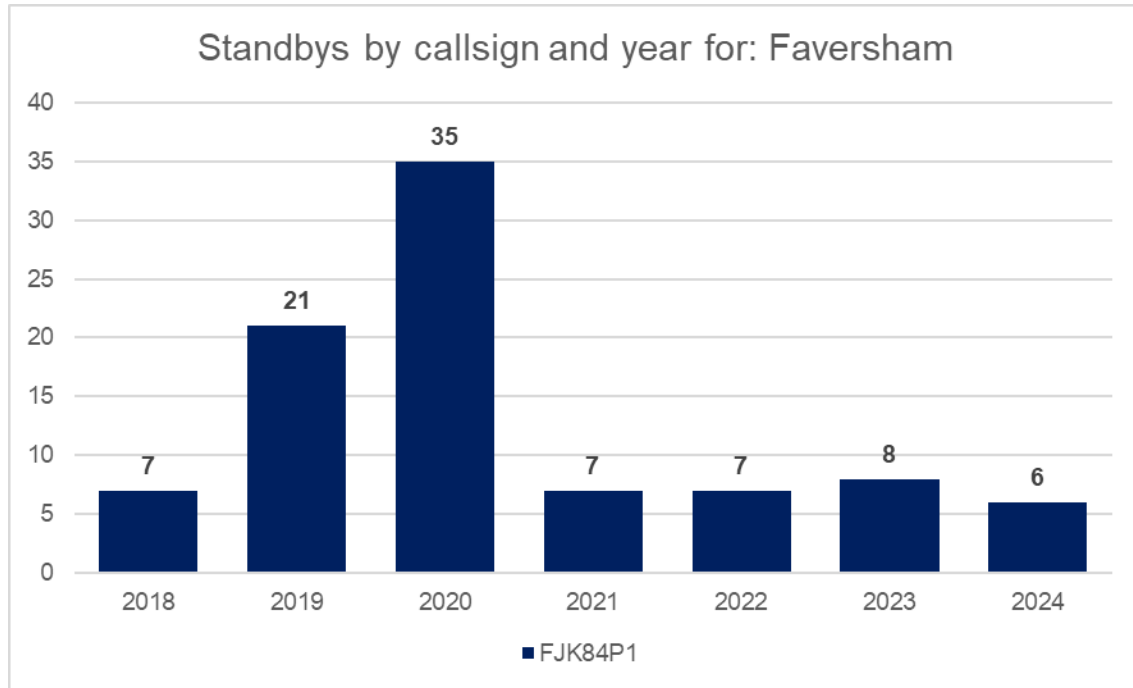


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Faversham would have been mobilised to 174 incidents per year on average; three incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Faversham is modelled to attend 1,221 incidents. Of those, 925 are on Faversham's station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (324)<sup>2</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Faversham was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Faversham	224	272	401	28	925
Sittingbourne	29	43	23	2	97
Canterbury	19	15	29	1	64
Whitstable	9	14	15	1	39
Teynham	15	13	7	3	38
Herne Bay	8	0	9	0	17
Chilham	5	1	4	0	10
Ashford	5	0	1	0	6
Charing	3	1	0	0	4
Chatham	3	0	0	0	3
Maidstone	3	0	0	0	3
Sheppey	1	1	0	0	2
Lenham	2	0	0	0	2
Wye	1	0	0	0	1
Aldington	1	0	0	0	1
Lydd	1	0	0	0	1
Margate	1	0	0	0	1
Cliffe	1	0	0	0	1
Rainham	0	0	1	0	1
Eastchurch	1	0	0	0	1
Aylesham	1	0	0	0	1
Ramsgate	0	0	1	0	1

<sup>2</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

Over the border	1	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1,221</b>

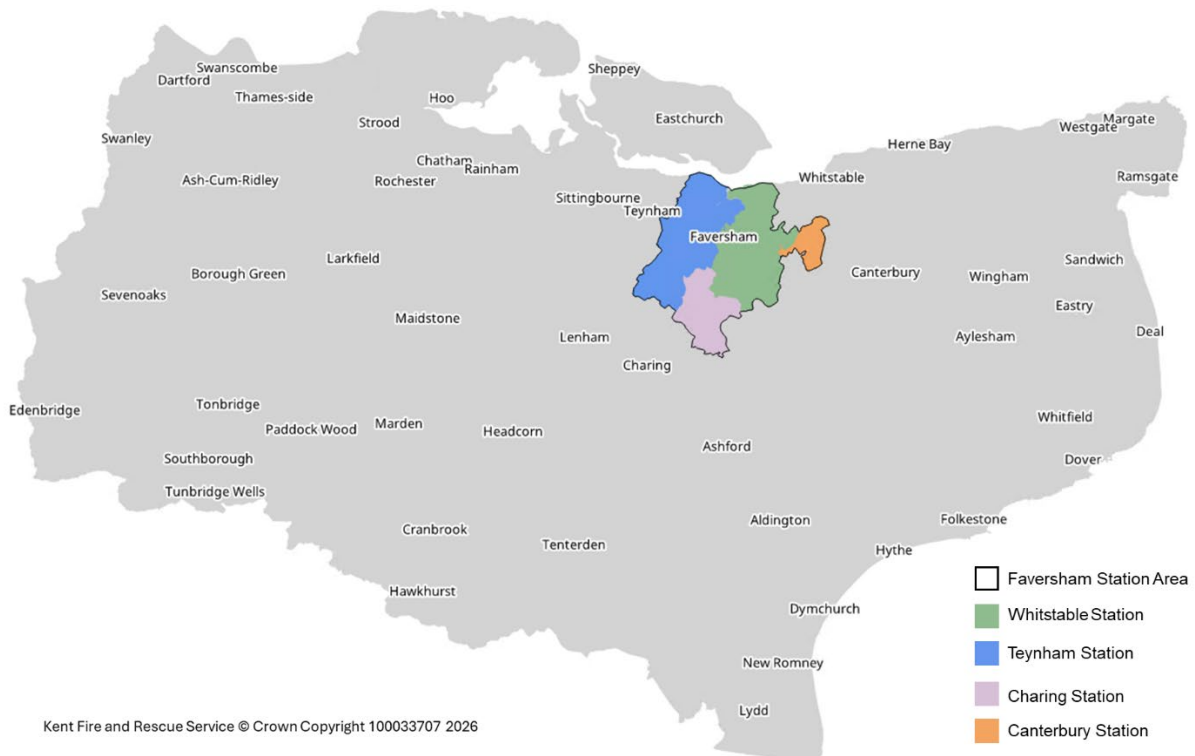
## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

Faversham will retain its wholetime day crewed fire engine which will still provide the first fire engine response as it does now. The removal of the on-call fire engine means that the second fire engine response will come from the surrounding stations.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Faversham station area.

County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine response in Faversham station area



The second fire engine response will come predominantly from Whitstable or Teynham.

The table below details predicted potential time between the first and second fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area by response type. The times shown are taken from the model where the other proposals for creating three additional wholetime day fire engines and all proposed station closures are included.

	<b>Emergency Urban</b>	<b>Emergency Rural</b>
<b>Faversham</b>	<b>8 mins 27 secs</b>	<b>7 mins 15 secs</b>
Day time	9 mins 24 secs	8 mins 12 secs
Nighttime	6 mins 30 secs	5 mins 25 secs

The time between the first and second fire engines arriving can be affected by things such as appliance availability, time of day, address accuracy, traffic, and weather. It can also vary depending on travel distance and where the incident happens. This gap should not be compared directly with response performance, because they are measured in different ways. The arrival gap measures the time between the first and second engines arriving, while response performance measures the time from when the first engine is assigned to when it arrives. This means the gap between the first and second engines does not show whether the response standard was met

## Understanding the data

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This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Faversham (7 years total)

	84	45	80	85	46	86	12	11	14	43	60	48
	Faversham	Sittingbourne	Canterbury	Whitstable	Teynham	Herne Bay	Chilham	Ashford	Charing	Chatham	Maidstone	Sheppey
<b>Fires</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	64	4	7	3	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Residential	22	4	3	3	7	0	1	4	1	1	1	0
Residential	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	89	7	2	3	4	2	2	0	2	2	1	0
Transport	48	14	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Aid to Person	22	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	7	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	28	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	7	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Co-Responding	52	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	12	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	20	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	98	39	12	10	7	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Scene Safety	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Apparatus	274	1	24	12	2	8	3	0	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	127	22	4	3	5	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Malicious	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

	62	13	15	23	87	37	44	49	81	90	Over the border
	Lenham	Wye	Aldington	Lydd	Margate	Cliffe	Rainham	Eastchurch	Aylesham	Ramsgate	
<b>Fires</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Non-Residential	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Aid to Person	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal Rescue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scene Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Apparatus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Malicious	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Resourcing Review

# On-Call Viability

## Proposal for Removal of On-Call Pump – Supporting Data

Tunbridge Wells

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

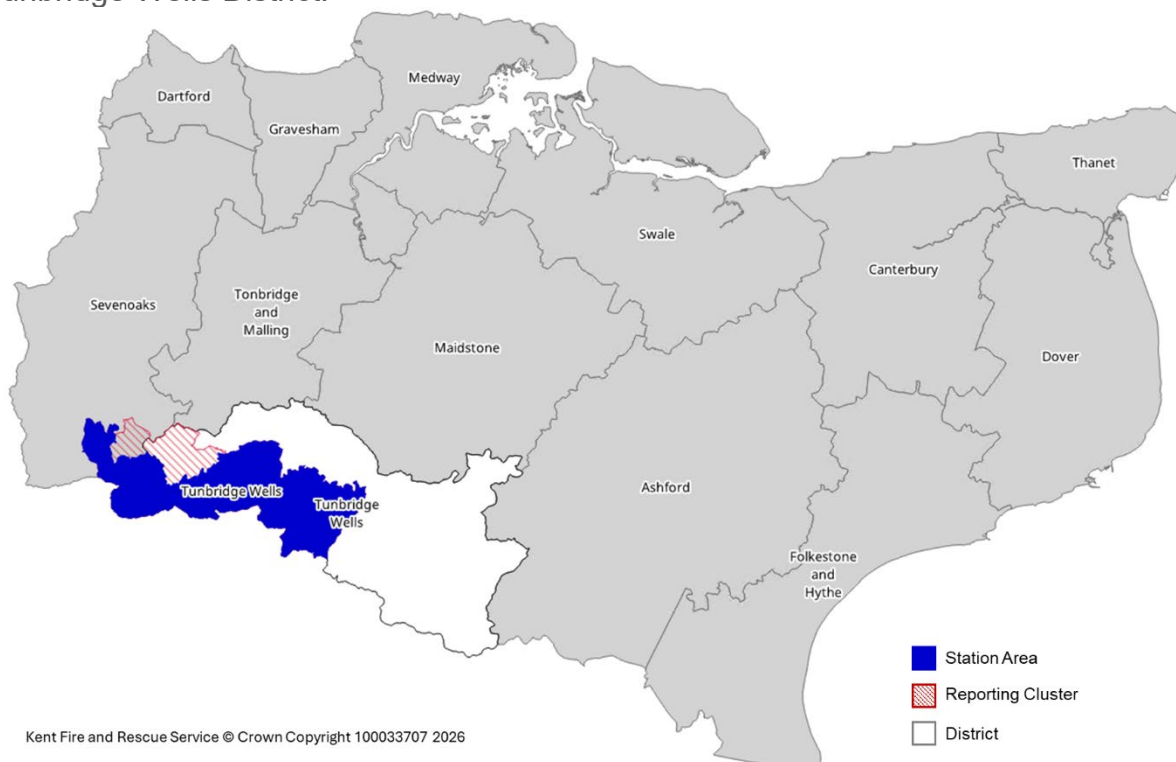
**together**

## Station Information

Tunbridge Wells is a 2 fire engine station. It has 1 wholetime shift fire engine and 1 on-call fire engine. The wholetime fire engine is available 24/7 on an immediate response. The on-call fire engine is available at varying times on a five minute delayed response.

The station is in the Tunbridge Wells District area. The station area covers a total of 109.7 sq km, with a population of 69,475. For reporting purposes, Tunbridge Wells sits within the Tunbridge Wells cluster.

County map highlighting Tunbridge Wells station ground, Tunbridge Wells reporting cluster and Tunbridge Wells District.



Tunbridge Wells on-call section currently has six colleagues employed: one crew manager and five firefighters. Two of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholetime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Tunbridge Wells. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been four new starters at Tunbridge Wells on-call section, one of which has since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

24/7 availability has varied over the period shown, ranging from 10.2% in 2025 to 35.1% in 2023.

The difference between average 24/7 availability (22.5%) and average evening/weekend availability (32.4%) shows Tunbridge Wells provides slightly better availability outside standard daytime hours overall.

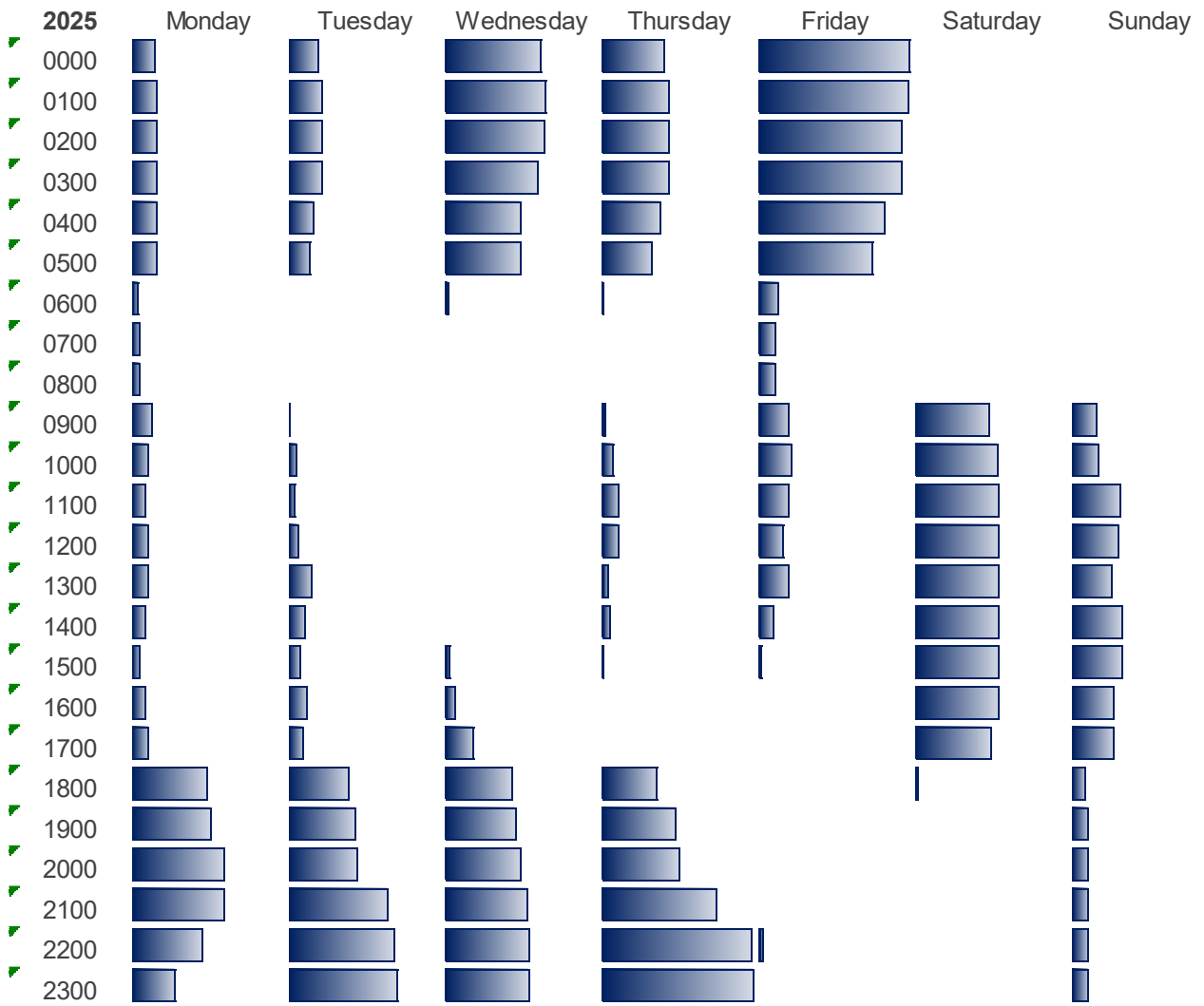
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is higher than the 24/7 figure by 3.4 percentage points (13.6% compared with 10.2%).
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is usually higher than 24/7 availability, although the gap is modest in some years. Overall, the average gap across the period is 9.8 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	10.2%	13.6%
2024	23.7%	35.1%
2023	35.1%	51.3%
2022	11.6%	15.5%
2021	18.2%	27.1%
2020	28.5%	39.2%
2019	22.1%	32.2%
2018	30.8%	45.2%
<b>Average</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three, they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the on-call fire engine in Tunbridge Wells has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 466 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations have fluctuated over the years with the highest number in 2023.
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Most mobilisations are on the station ground. Tunbridge Wells is used less often to support incidents within the reporting cluster (6.9%) and elsewhere in the County (23.8%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

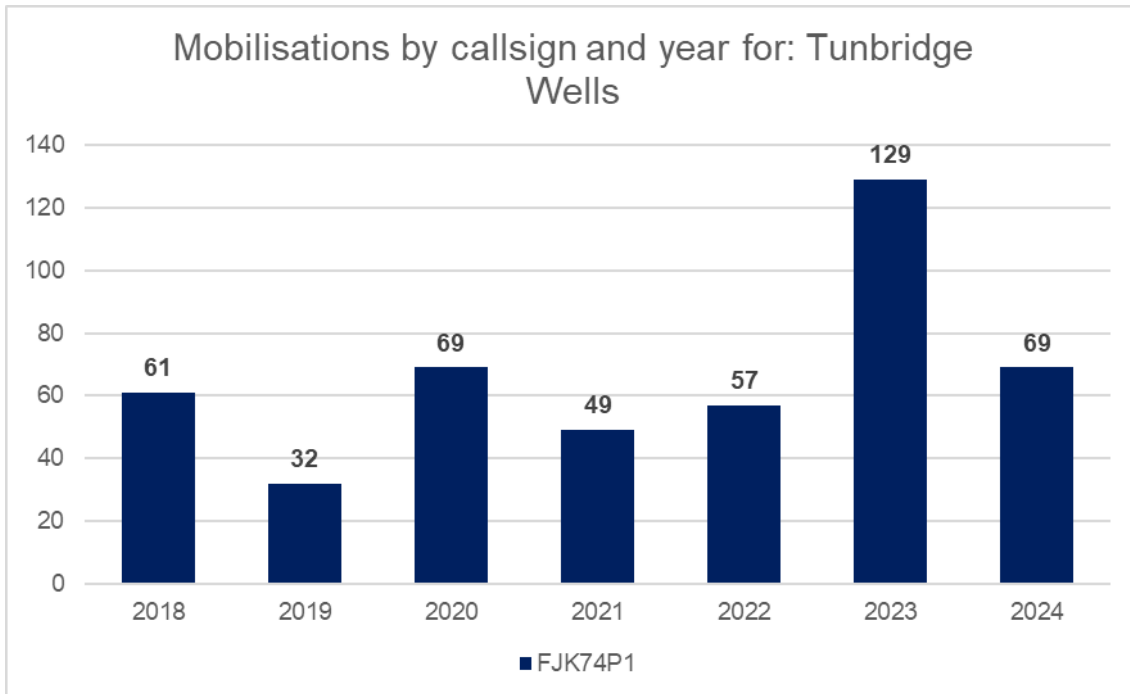


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

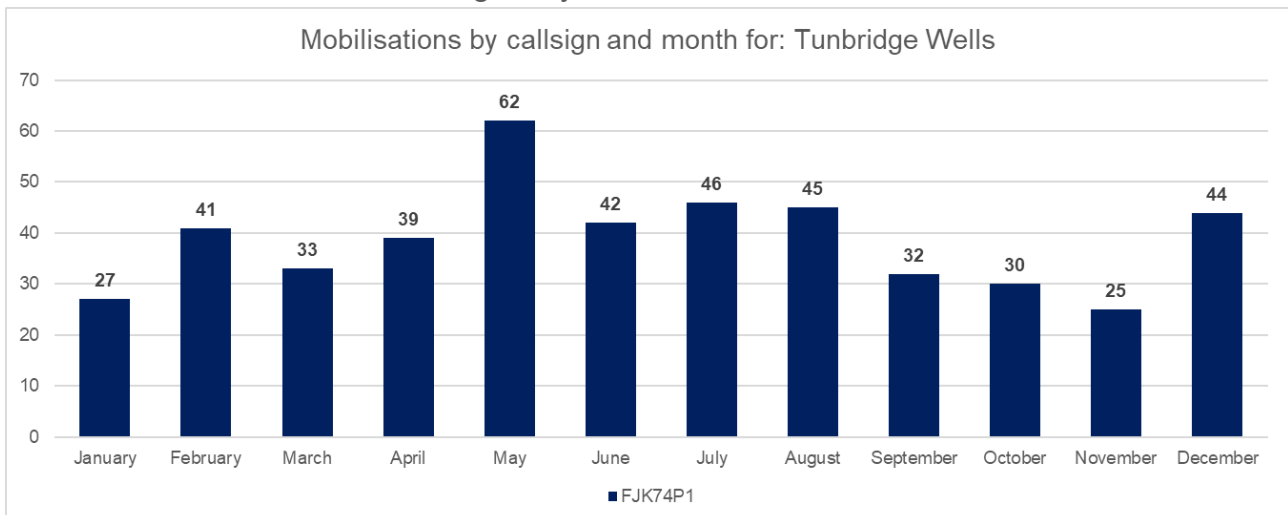


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

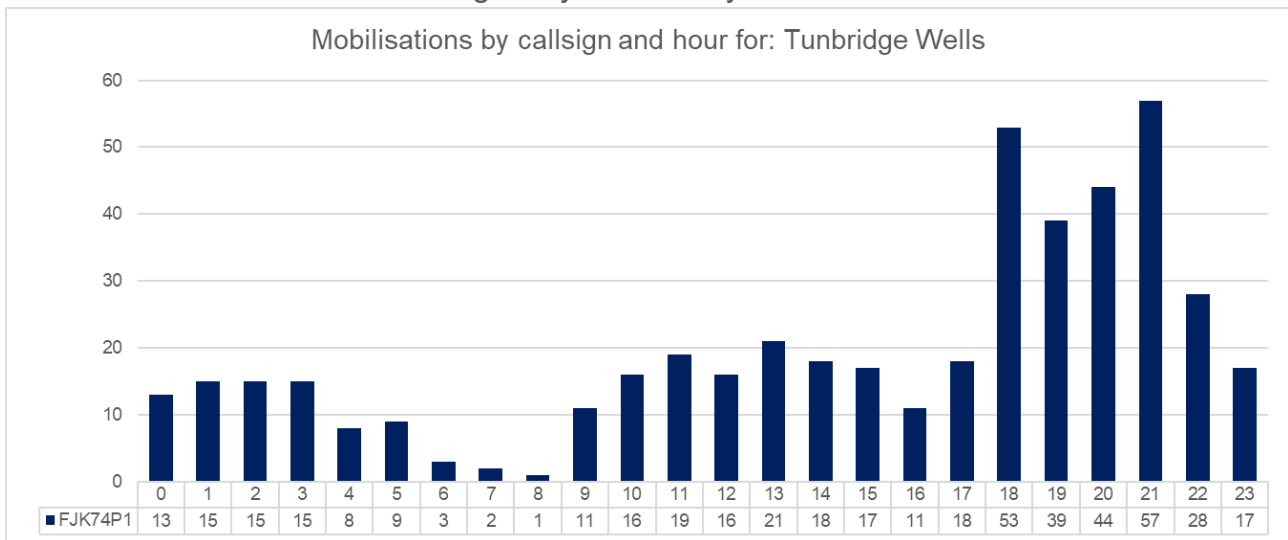


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location.

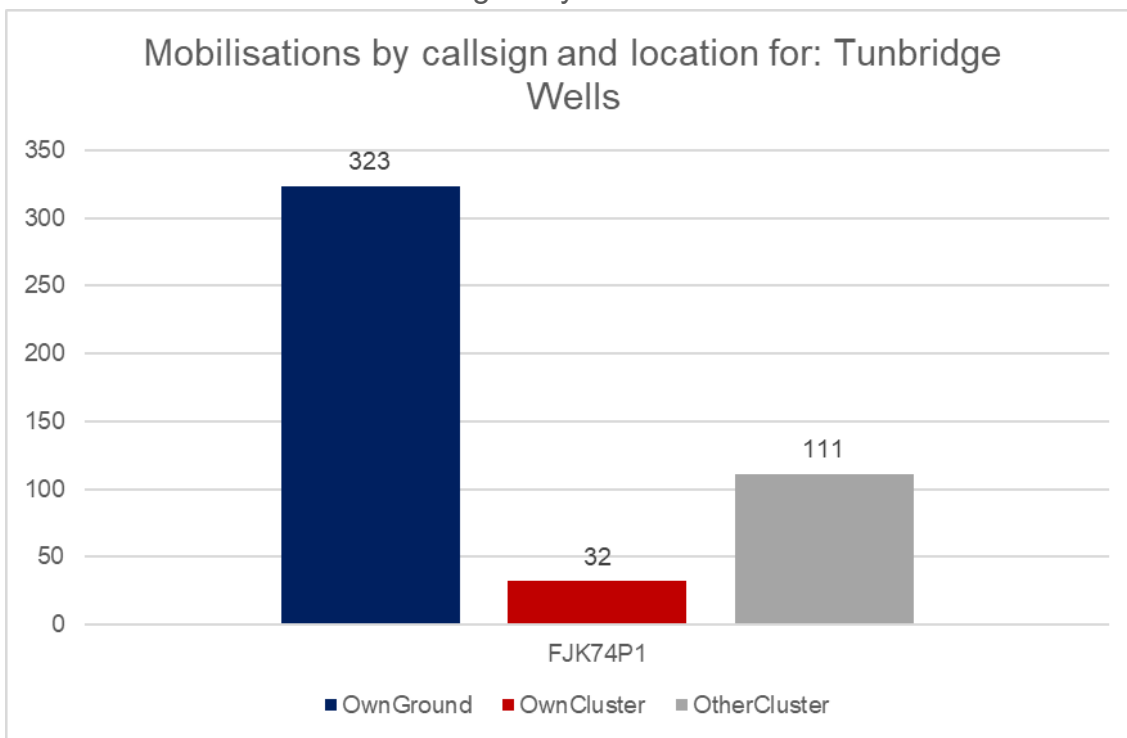
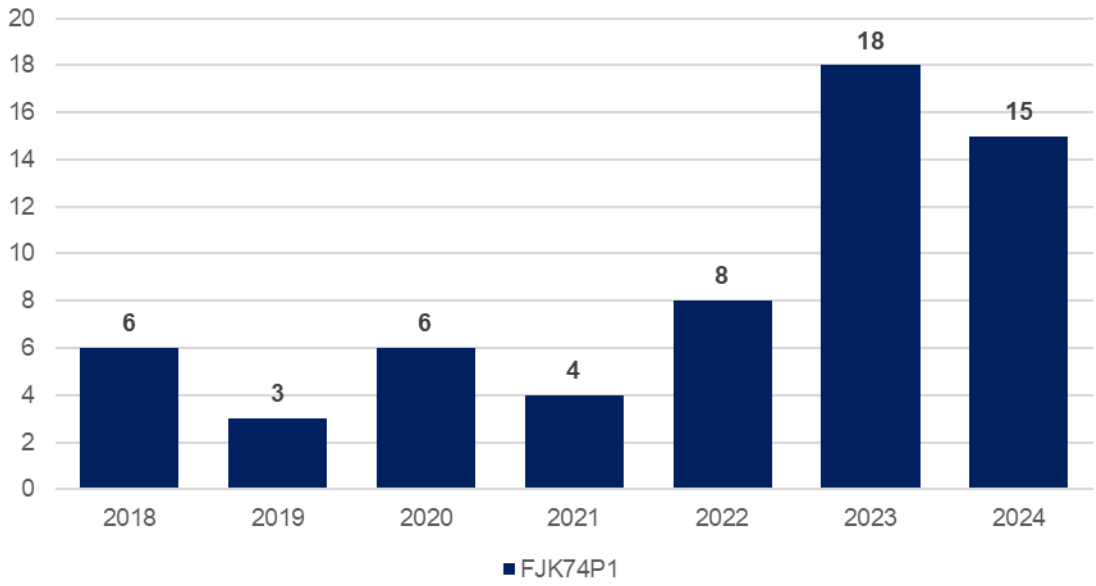


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location

Standbys by callsign and year for: Tunbridge Wells



## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Tunbridge Wells would have been mobilised to 96 incidents per year on average; two incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Tunbridge Wells is modelled to attend 672 incidents. Of those, 595 are on Tunbridge Wells' station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (253)<sup>2</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Tunbridge Wells was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Tunbridge Wells	105	159	321	10	595
Southborough	8	6	15	1	30
Tonbridge	2	1	2	0	5
Paddock Wood	1	2	1	0	4
Maidstone	1	0	0	0	1
Edenbridge	0	0	0	1	1
Sevenoaks	1	0	0	0	1
Over the border	4	13	15	3	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>672</b>

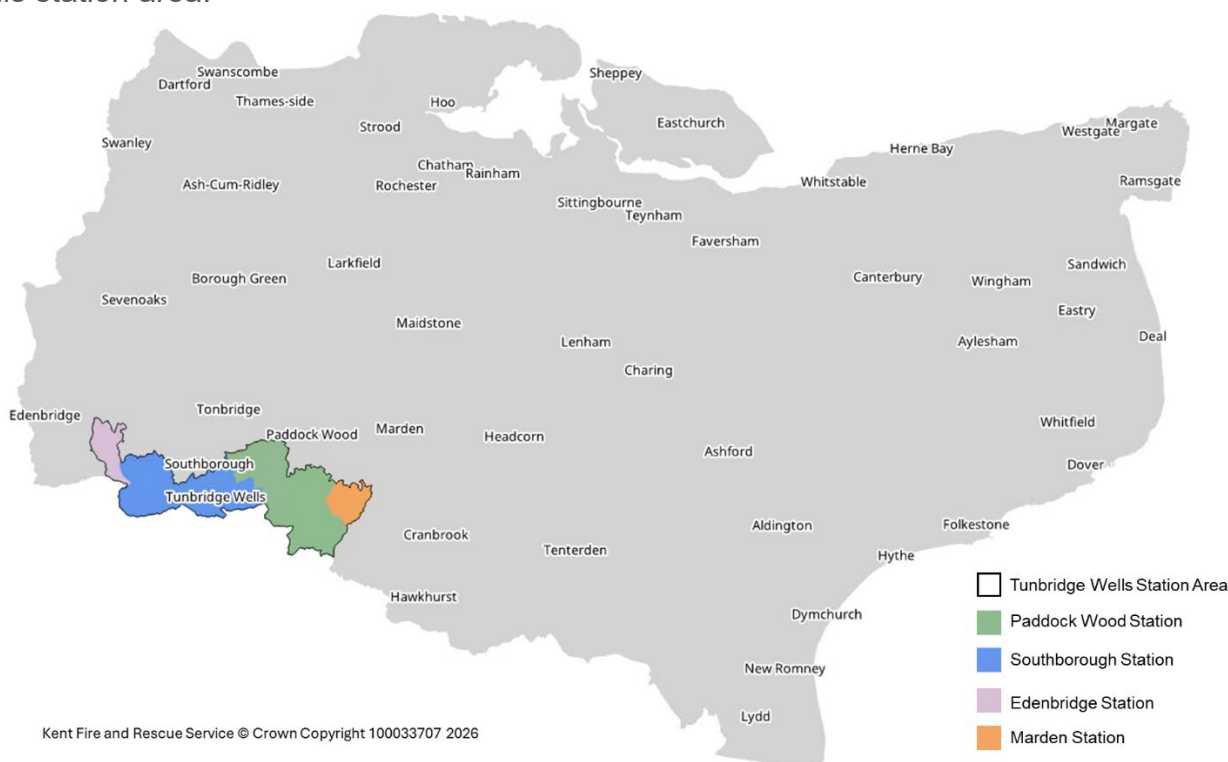
<sup>2</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

Tunbridge Wells will retain its wholetime day crewed fire engine which will still provide the first fire engine response as it does now. The removal of the on-call fire engine means that the second fire engine response will come from the surrounding stations.

County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine response in Tunbridge Wells station area.



The second fire engine response will come predominantly from Southborough or Paddock Wood.

The table below details predicted potential time between the first and second fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area by response type. The times shown are taken from the model where the other proposals for creating three additional wholetime day fire engines and all proposed station closures are included.

	<b>Emergency Urban</b>	<b>Emergency Rural</b>
<b>Tunbridge Wells</b>	<b>10 mins 14 secs</b>	<b>6 mins 24 secs</b>
Day time	10 mins 58 secs	6 mins 50 secs
Nighttime	8 mins 53 secs	5 mins 29 secs

The time between the first and second fire engines arriving can be affected by things such as appliance availability, time of day, address accuracy, traffic, and weather. It can also vary depending on travel distance and where the incident happens. This gap should not be compared directly with response performance, because they are measured in different ways. The arrival gap measures the time between the first and second engines arriving, while response performance measures the time from when the first engine is assigned to when it arrives. This means the gap between the first and second engines does not show whether the response standard was met.

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Tunbridge Wells (7 years total)

	74	76	72	73	60	70	68	Over the border
	Tunbridge Wells	Southborough	Tonbridge	Paddock Wood	Maidstone	Edenbridge	Sevenoaks	
<b>Fires</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
Dwelling	48	4	0	0	1	0	1	2
Non-Residential	21	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
Residential	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Outdoor	23	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Transport	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>
Aid to Person	21	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	21	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
No Action	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rescue Person	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	28	2	1	2	0	0	0	7
Scene Safety	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>
Apparatus	235	8	2	0	0	0	0	8
Good Intent	79	7	0	1	0	0	0	7
Malicious	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>



Resourcing Review

# On-Call Viability

## Proposal for Removal of On-Call Pump – Supporting Data

Herne Bay

June 2026



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

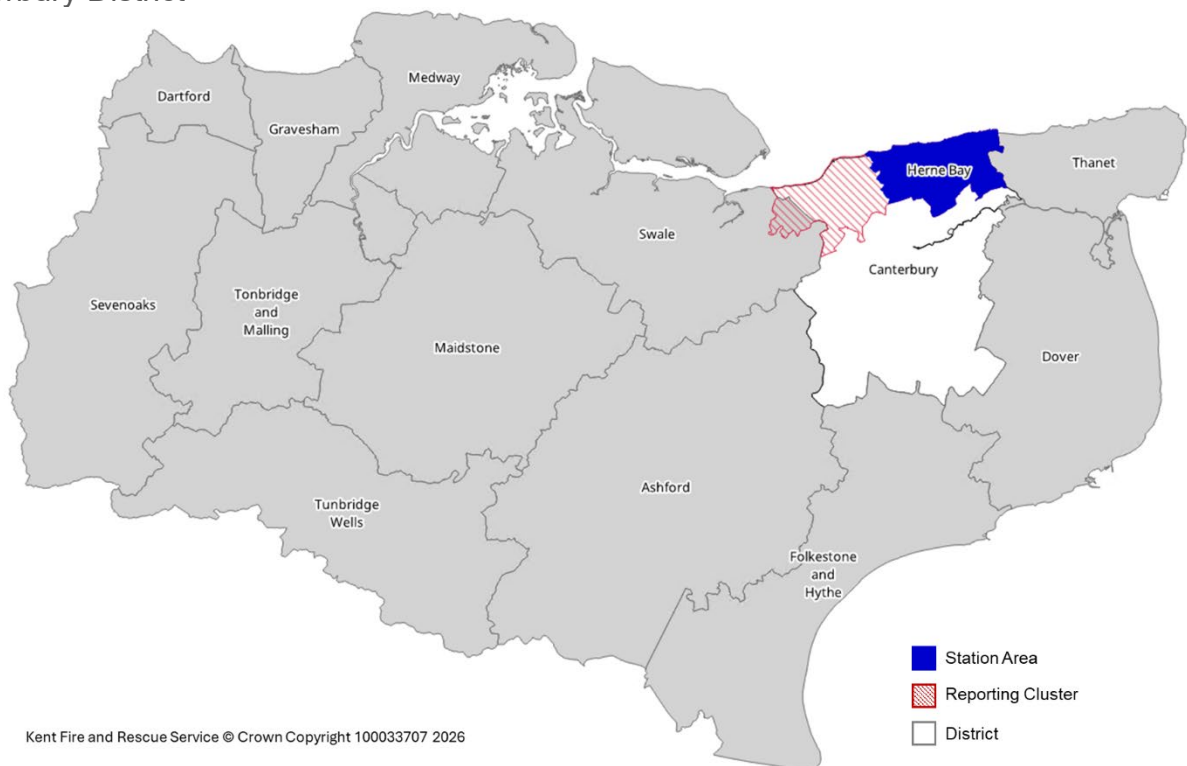
**together**

## Station Information

Herne Bay is a 2 fire engine station. It has 1 wholtime day crewed fire engine and 1 on-call fire engine. A day crewed station has a wholtime fire engine that is available during the day on an immediate response and available overnight on a delayed response of five minutes. It also has an on-call fire engine that is available at varying times on a five minute delayed response.

The station is in the Canterbury District area. The station area covers a total of 47.6 sq km, with a population of 42,193. For reporting purposes, Herne Bay sits within the Whitstable cluster.

County map highlighting Herne Bay station ground, Whitstable reporting cluster and Canterbury District



Herne Bay on-call section currently has 11 colleagues employed: two crew managers and nine firefighters. Four of these colleagues hold dual contracts which means they are an employed wholtime firefighter or internal services colleague and hold an on-call contract to respond from Herne Bay. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there have been seven new starters at Herne Bay on-call section, two of which have since left Service.

## Availability

There are multiple factors that can affect the availability of on-call fire engines;

- Number of colleagues employed – this will vary depending on whether we are targeting 24/7 availability or evening/weekend availability.
- Current skillset of colleagues. For a fire engine to be considered available it must have a minimum of four<sup>1</sup> colleagues; one of whom must hold a driving qualification, and one must hold an incident command qualification.
- Availability of colleagues and the contracted hours they have. Most on-call firefighters carry out the role as a secondary employment, so their availability is partly determined by the commitments to their primary employment and the impact of the working time regulations.

Given that the factors listed above can change frequently, it is reasonable that the amount of time a fire engine spends available can fluctuate over time.

24/7 availability has varied over the period shown, ranging from 14.8% in 2022 to 28.2% in 2018. In the most recent years, it has remained just above or below 20%, including 20.6% in 2025, 22.0% in 2024 and 20.3% in 2023.

The difference between average 24/7 availability (22.8%) and average evening/weekend availability (30.6%) shows Herne Bay provides better availability outside standard daytime hours.

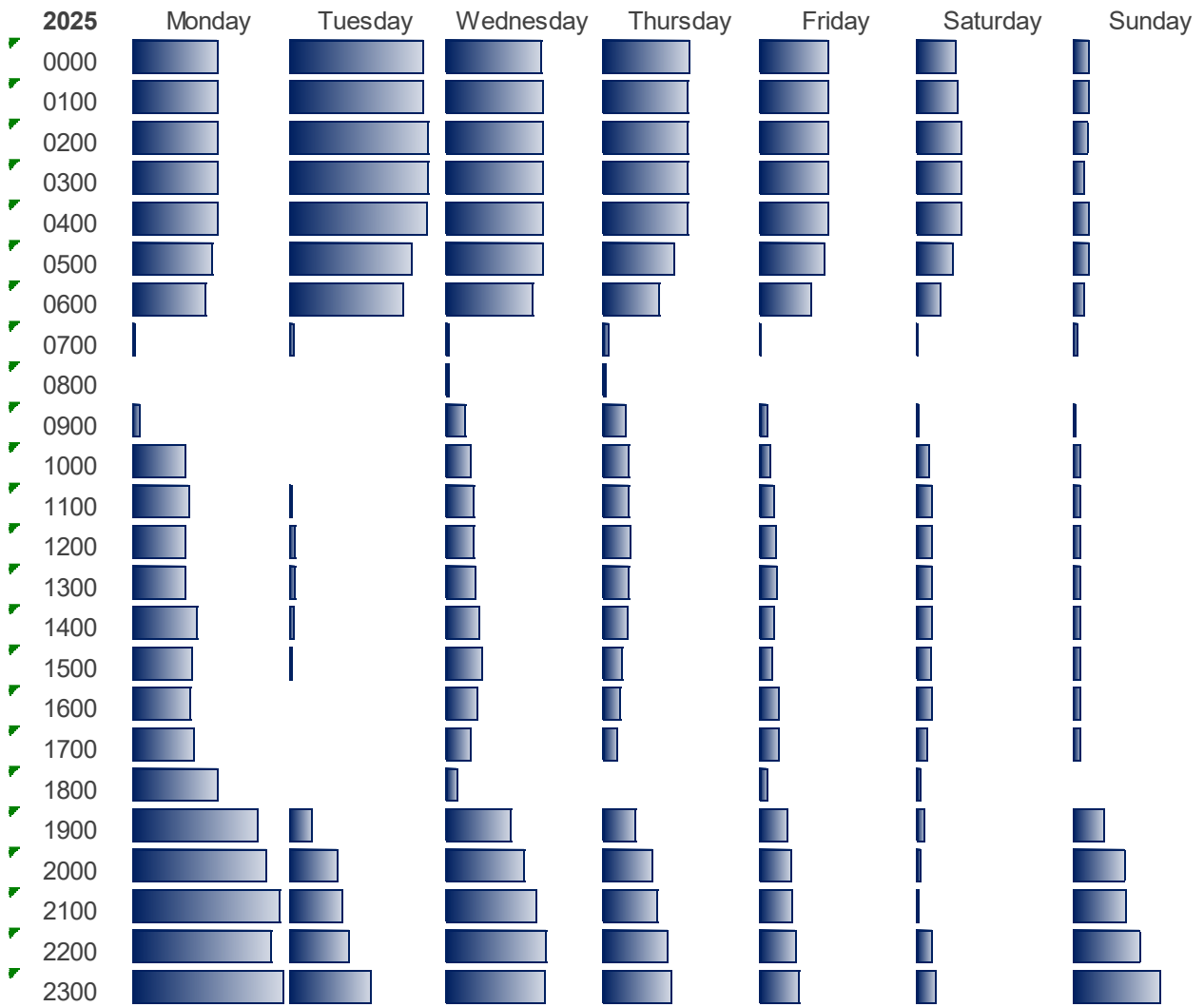
- In 2025, evening and weekend availability is higher than the 24/7 figure by 4.8 percentage points (25.4% compared with 20.6%).
- Across the full period, evening and weekend availability is consistently higher than 24/7 availability, typically by around 5 to 12 percentage points, with an average gap of 7.8 percentage points.

Table: Percentage of time the fire engine was at incidents or available to be deployed

	24/7 Availability	Evening and Weekend Availability
2025	20.6%	25.4%
2024	22.0%	28.5%
2023	20.3%	28.6%
2022	14.8%	20.6%
2021	26.2%	37.1%
2020	26.8%	38.6%
2019	23.2%	30.8%
2018	28.2%	35.2%
<b>Average</b>	<b>22.8%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to crew a fire engine with three trained colleagues. This is a voluntary arrangement only to be used when normal crewing levels fall below standard and the qualification requirements are met. On those occasions where a fire engine is dispatched with a crew of three they will be supported by an additional fire engine.

Table: Profile of availability by day of the week and hour of the day in 2025



## Mobilisation of the fire engine

The following section details the times that the on-call fire engine in Herne Bay has been mobilised, regardless of where the incident was in the County. Covers the period of January 2018 to December 2024.

In summary:

- 261 mobilisations in total
  - Mobilisations higher in the spring and summer months
  - Mobilisations are higher in the evening which will reflect when the fire engine is more regularly available
- Most mobilisations are on the station ground. Herne Bay is used less often to support incidents within the reporting cluster (7.3%) and elsewhere in the County (34.1%).

Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year

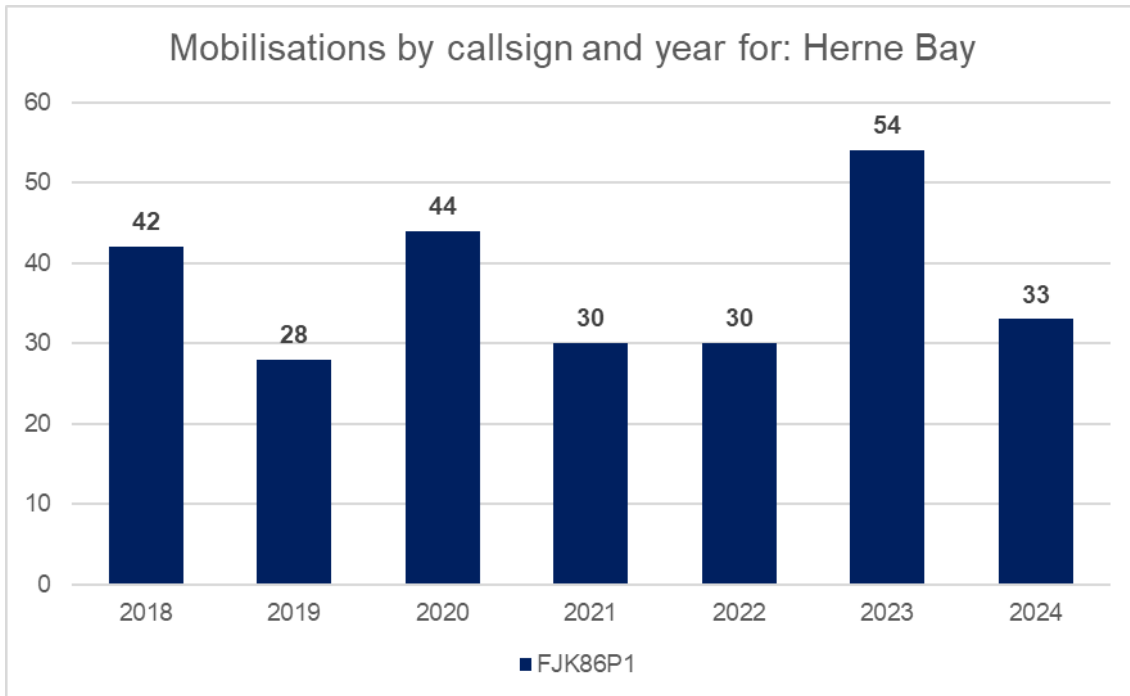


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by month

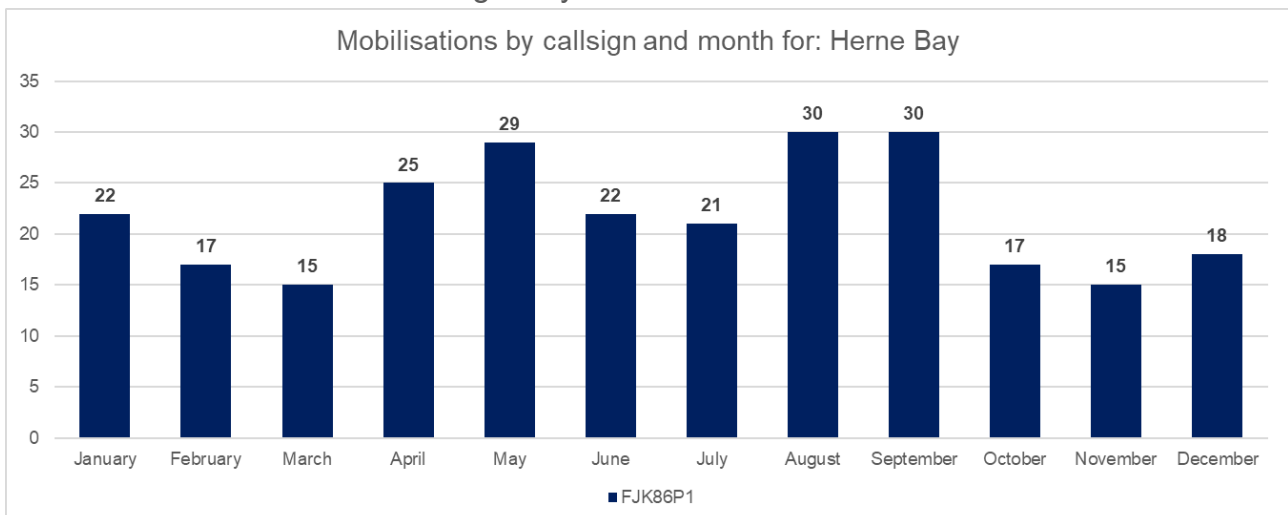


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by time of day

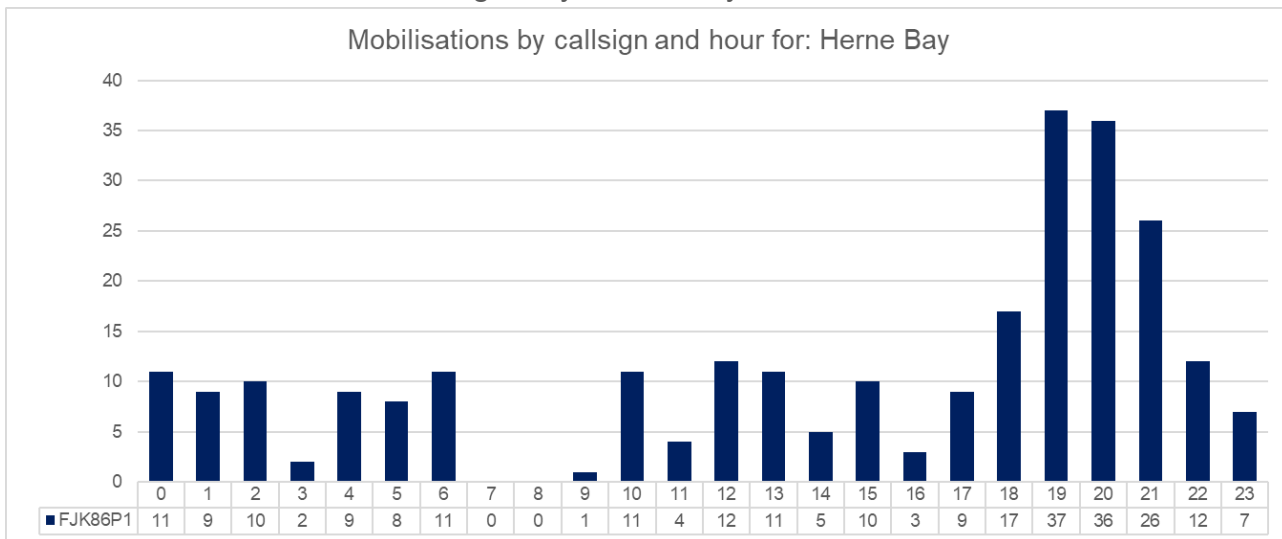


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by location

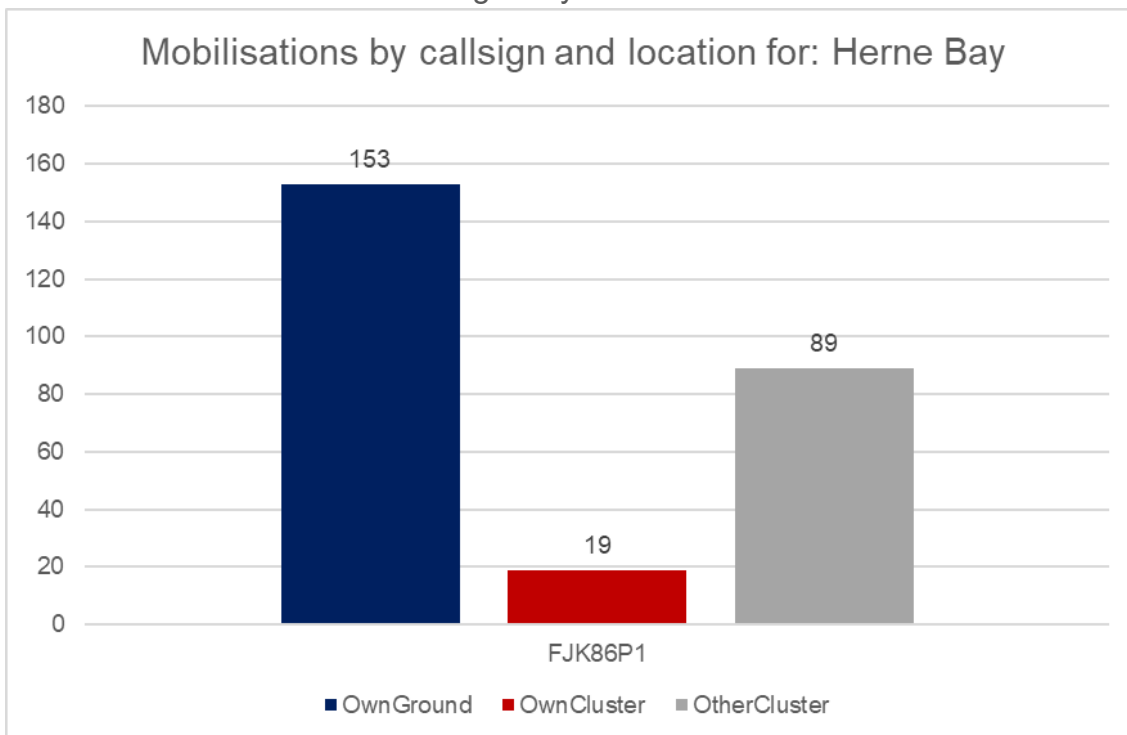
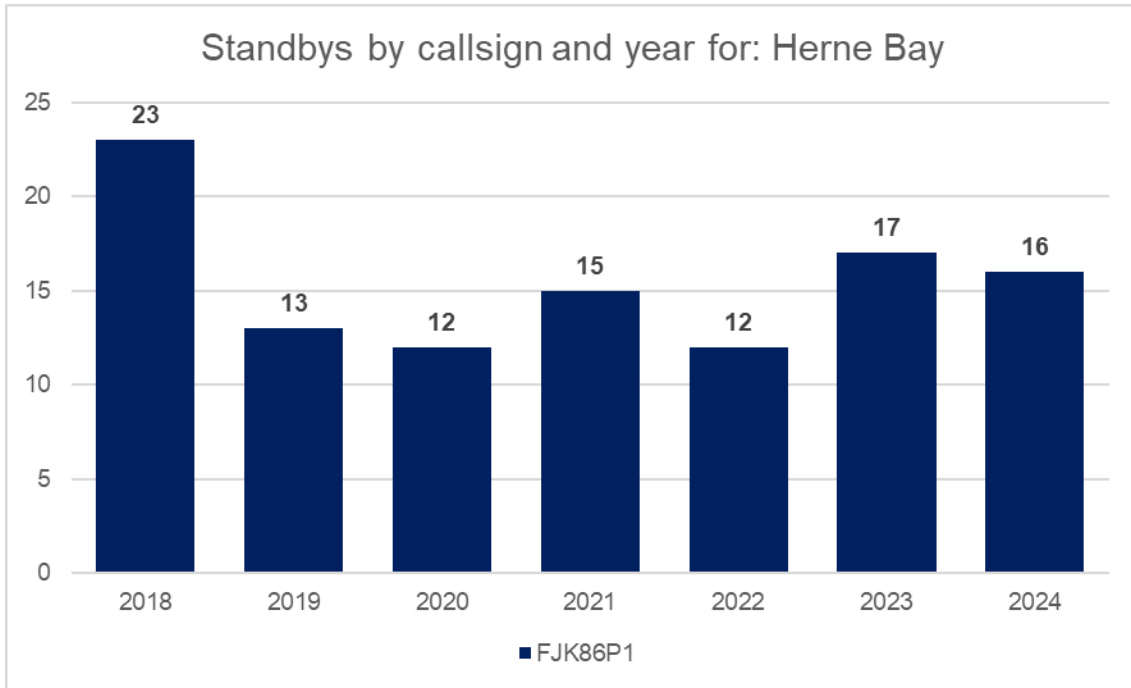


Chart: Mobilisations of the fire engine by year to standby at another location



## Modelled activity

Using workload modelling software, it is possible to resource historic incident data and identify impacts to differences in frontline service delivery. The impacts that can be assessed are changes to response times, the time differences between first and second fire engine attendance and differences in fire engine utilisation.

For this review a model was created to demonstrate how much activity every fire engine would pick up if they were available for deployment all the time. For on-call fire engines the model allows for a five-minute delay to respond in line with the current operating model for on-call. The purpose of this model is to remove the influence of availability to determine purely the necessity of the fire engine to interact with historic incident demand.

Under this model, Herne Bay would have been mobilised to 173 incidents per year on average; three incidents per week. This is based on seven years of historic incident activity, where in total Herne Bay is modelled to attend 1,214 incidents. Of those, 1,024 are on Herne Bay's station ground. Most incidents are automatic fire alarms (430)<sup>2</sup>.

A full breakdown of the types of incidents Herne Bay was assigned to in the model can be found at **appendix 1**.

	Fire	Special Service	False Alarm	Crews Returned	Total
Herne Bay	183	228	583	30	1,024
Whitstable	20	7	40	3	70
Canterbury	30	8	19	5	62
Margate	6	5	14	1	26
Westgate	7	9	0	1	17
Ramsgate	5	2	2	1	10
Faversham	2	0	0	1	3
Over the border	1	1	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1,214</b>

<sup>2</sup> These figures are taken from the table in **appendix 1**. The total automatic fire alarms quoted are from the sum of the row for "apparatus" under the false alarm heading.

## Impact on service delivery

Closing a fire station or removing a fire engine from frontline service delivery will of course have an impact to our customers. A model was created to demonstrate who is likely to be sent to incidents within the proposed station areas to cover the demand and identify the impacts in first fire engine response time to the area. The results of the model provide a predication of how incidents will be resourced, but they can never entirely reflect reality. The models are set up with turnout times for fire engines at base of 90 seconds and those on delayed response at 300 seconds. This is not reality and the average time to turnout for each fire engine can vary for a variety of factors such as where colleagues live or work and traffic or traffic management such as 20mph zones. The model also uses a normal road speed response approach and therefore does not take account of the increased speed that a blue light response would have. It is probable that the possible underestimation of turnout times is cancelled out by the overestimation of the time taken to reach incidents.

Herne Bay will retain its wholetime day crewed fire engine which will still provide the first fire engine response as it does now. The removal of the on-call fire engine means that the second fire engine response will come from the surrounding stations.

The map below identifies which neighbouring fire stations will likely pick up any incident demand in the Herne Bay station area.

County map highlighting the potential change to second fire engine response in Herne Bay station area



The second fire engine response will come predominantly from Whitstable.

The table below details predicted potential time between the first and second fire engine attendances to incidents in the station area by response type. The times shown are taken from the model where the other proposals for creating three additional wholetime day fire engines and all proposed station closures are included.

	<b>Emergency Urban</b>	<b>Emergency Rural</b>
<b>Herne Bay</b>	<b>7 mins 59 secs</b>	<b>4 mins 34 secs</b>
Day time	8 mins 20 secs	4 mins 46 secs
Nighttime	7 mins 18 secs	4 mins 14 secs

The time between the first and second fire engines arriving can be affected by things such as appliance availability, time of day, address accuracy, traffic, and weather. It can also vary depending on travel distance and where the incident happens. This gap should not be compared directly with response performance, because they are measured in different ways. The arrival gap measures the time between the first and second engines arriving, while response performance measures the time from when the first engine is assigned to when it arrives. This means the gap between the first and second engines does not show whether the response standard was met.

## Understanding the data

This review started in 2025 and therefore it was not possible to include data for the 2025 calendar year in all the analysis and modelling work. Due to the timing the data was taken until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Five years would be considered a normal incident range to use in this sort of review as it allows for enough incidents to be significant and generally allows for fluctuations to smooth out, however due to the anomalies in data that the Covid year produced it was decided to extend the data range to seven years. Seven years gave two “normal” years ahead of Covid and three “normal” years afterwards which represents the normal five-year modelling period.

### Availability

The availability of our on-call fire engines does not fit a fixed or rolling pattern. The turnover of on-call colleagues and changes in hours of availability can occur frequently which means there can be large fluctuations in availability over the years.

Availability is calculated based on the status of the fire engine taken directly from our mobilising system; the system used to send resources to emergency incidents from our Fire Control. The only time a fire engine is considered unavailable is when it is off the run, insufficient crew or defective.

The availability profile displayed represents the average pattern of appliance availability represented by its most dominant hours. To determine the dominant hours within the availability provided, a percentage of availability by hour for every day across the full calendar year is profiled allowing for an average availability profile to be calculated against availability data that has no fixed pattern or high variances in availability patterns. The purpose of this profile is simply to give an indication of the most likely recurring pattern of availability, but it is recognised that this will vary significantly across days, weeks, months and even years. Availability was expanded to include 2025 to demonstrate we are aware of the volatility in availability based on numerous influences such as skillsets, recruitment, leavers etc.

### Incidents

Incident information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The incident data within this document are all the records of an incident that was reported within the affected station ground area, regardless of who attended. All incident types are included; fires, emergency special service including co-responding and false alarms. The incident types are taken from the outcome of the incident, not the type of incident that was reported. These two things can be different e.g. report of fire that turns out to be a false alarm.

### Mobilisations

Mobilisation information is taken directly from the incident recording system, which is driven by the creation of an incident in our mobilising system. The mobilisation data within this document are all the records of times the fire engine was sent to an incident regardless of where the incident was in the County.

Standby mobilisations are taken from the occasions where the status of the fire engine shows it has been sent to another location to provide availability in response to a risk.

## Modelled Activity

To ensure we are as fair and reflective of reality for on-call as possible, we determine a weekly pattern for every on-call fire engine for each year. The weekly pattern for the year is then used within the model for that year.

The incident data that is used within the models is the same as that presented here in this document and covers the seven-year period referenced here for consistency.

## Mapping Change Outcomes

We use mapping to help visualise change impacts. To do this, we work out which station is likely to respond fastest to each area by combining travel time and turnout time.

Sometimes, when this is shown on a map, it can look odd — for example, an area may appear to be covered by a station that is farther away or “past” another station.

This happens because the model is based on actual road routes and where people are located within the area, not just straight-line distance or how it looks on the map.

So, while the map may look unusual in places, it reflects a realistic response, rather than the nearest station visually.

Appendix 1: Maximum Availability Model Mobilisations for Herne Bay (7 years total)

	86	85	80	87	88	90	84	Over the Border
	Herne Bay	Whitstable	Canterbury	Margate	Westgate	Ramsgate	Faversham	
<b>Fires</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Dwelling	61	4	8	1	2	2	2	1
Non-Residential	39	5	7	2	1	2	0	0
Residential	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor	45	9	13	3	2	1	0	0
Transport	36	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
<b>Special Service</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Aid to Person	40	0	2	2	0	1	0	0
Animal Rescue	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Assist Other Agencies	44	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Flooding	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Hazardous Materials	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Medical	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Co-Responding	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Action	14	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Rescue Person	10	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
RTC	64	5	3	0	6	1	0	0
Scene Safety	19	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>False Alarm</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Apparatus	376	32	8	14	0	0	0	0
Good Intent	187	8	10	0	0	1	0	0
Malicious	20	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Crews Returned</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>



**This document has been optimised specifically for digital publication and web accessibility.**

**Consequently, the visual layout focuses on functional readability and online formatting standards rather than traditional print aesthetics.**

## **Consultation document**

### Contents

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## **Introduction**

### **Message from the Chair of Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority**

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) works to help keep the people of Kent and Medway safe.

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority oversees the work KFRS does, making sure that it is run well and meets local needs. It does this by understanding the risks in our communities.

KFRS needs to make some changes so it can continue to give a good service in the future. I know that changes can feel worrying, which is why we will look at the plans carefully to make sure they work for local people and would not affect the service KFRS provides.

This is your fire and rescue service, and we want to hear what you think. Please read this document which explains the changes being considered and why and then fill out our short survey.

Chair of Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority

## **About Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)**

KFRS is overseen by Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority and is led by a Chief Executive and a Corporate Management Board.

We do more than put out fires. We respond to a wide range of emergencies, including road traffic collisions and specialist rescues such as people trapped in confined spaces or at height. We rescue people from rivers, lakes, and other water hazards. Beyond emergency response, we help to prevent fires by visiting homes and schools and giving safety advice to businesses. We also carry out regulatory enforcement work to help make sure buildings comply with fire safety law and that responsible persons meet their legal duties. When fires do happen, we investigate the causes and share learning to help prevent similar incidents in future. We work closely with other services and partners to deliver this work.

We have a fleet of vehicles - including 75 fire engines and rescue vehicles – located at 56 fire stations. We have three main types of fire station and firefighters, which are:

### **Wholetime-Shift (full-time)**

**Stations:** we have 13 wholetime shift fire stations. Firefighters are at these stations all day and all night. This means a fire engine can leave straight away, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Firefighters:** wholetime shift firefighters are full-time and work shifts at the station.

### **Wholetime-day-crewed (full-time)**

**Stations:** we have nine day-crewed stations. Firefighters are at the station from 9am to 7pm. Outside these hours they are on-call within five minutes of the station and are alerted if there is an emergency.

**Firefighters:** day-crewed firefighters work at the station in the daytime and can be called back at night.

### **On-call (part-time)**

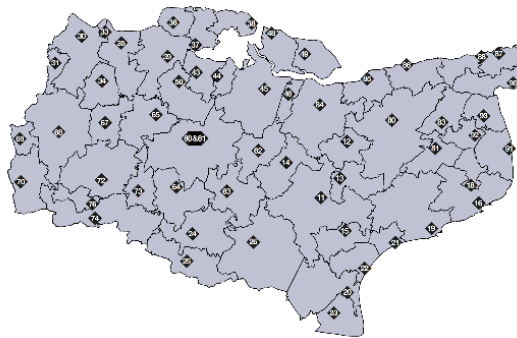
**Stand alone on-call stations:** we have 34 stand alone on-call stations in many smaller towns and villages. Firefighters are not at the station all the time. When there is an emergency, they travel to the station and then take the fire engine to the incident.

**Attached on-call sections:** we have 15 attached on-call sections. They offer extra provision in urban areas. These stations have two appliances: one is crewed by one of our wholetime crews; and the other is crewed by the attached on-call section.

**Firefighters:** on-call firefighters usually have another job. When we alert them, they go to the station as quickly as they can. They are expected to arrive and be ready to respond on the fire engine within five minutes.

On-call stations are often in smaller towns and villages. Wholtime stations are usually in larger towns and places with more people.

**KFRS service map**



Stn	Name	Priority	Address	Stn	Name	Priority	Address
75	Abbotsway	On-call	11-11	88	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
14	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	89	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
11	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	90	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
8	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	91	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
62	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	92	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
82	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	93	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
41	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	94	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
12	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	95	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
37	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	96	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
24	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	97	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
33	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	98	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
9	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	99	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
36	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	100	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
29	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	101	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
48	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	102	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
92	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	103	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
10	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	104	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
19	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	105	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
26	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	106	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
85	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	107	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
82	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	108	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
36	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	109	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
41	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	110	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
62	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	111	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11
22	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11	112	Abbotsway	Wholtime	11-11



Fire cover across Kent and Medway is managed as one joined-up service, not just station by station. Our 24/7 Control Room is always tracking the location of every fire engine across the county. When emergencies happen and fire engines are sent out, our Control Room makes decisions straight away about where to send the next nearest available engine, so cover is maintained across the county.

This means that if a fire engine near you is already at an incident, our Control Room will identify the next nearest available resource and send that instead. In some cases, this may come from a neighbouring station, from a different part of the county, or in some circumstances from a neighbouring fire and rescue service. This approach is standard across fire and rescue services in England and is how we ensure that a community is not left without cover simply because one local engine is busy or unavailable.

**Your fire service: today and tomorrow**

Kent and Medway keep changing and it is important that we keep up with these changes so we can respond to emergencies in the best way. Our job is to keep people safe, and we do this by looking at what could put people in danger now, and what might be a risk in the future. To deal with these risks, we need the right number of firefighters and fire engines, in the right places, at the right times. We also need to spend public money carefully.

The proposals below have been developed following an in-depth analysis of risk, demand, and activity. Foremost in our minds has been the safety of our customers and colleagues, ensuring our proposals are transparent in identifying impacts on response times, and clarity regarding how we would respond effectively to incidents in these locations in future if the proposals are agreed.

**Please read the information below, then fill in our short survey. Your views matter. There is a more detailed version [here](#) with more data which may help you consider the issues.**

## **Background to the proposed changes**

The changes we are proposing would affect some fire stations, fire engines and firefighters. To understand the changes and why they are being proposed, it is important to know and understand the background to them. Our key challenges are outlined below.

### **Making sure we have enough firefighters and fire engines**

To keep people safe, we need enough firefighters and fire engines available, in the right places, at the right times.

Between 2017 and 2026, the Service has entered what is known as degradation (fewer than 19 fire engines available) on 612 separate occasions, affecting 225 days in total and totalling over seven days of cumulative degradation time. The problem is worsening: instances of degradation rose from 31 in 2019 to 173 in 2022 and 107 in 2025. The worst periods correlate with summer demand spikes and wildfire events - the very conditions when reliable capacity matters most.

### **Busiest and quietest times**

We look at what emergencies we are called to attend, when and where. This shows us our busiest and quietest times.

We are usually busiest during the day and quietest between midnight and 7am.

### **Fire engines and firefighters available**

We seek to have an operating range of between 32-44 fire engines available. This is made up of:

- 26 fire engines at our wholetime stations
- additional fire engines which come from our on-call.

The number of additional fire engines available can vary because on-call firefighters may not be available to crew some fire engines between 7am and 7pm. This is when we are at our busiest but when on-call firefighters are least available, because they are at work elsewhere. This means we may not always have the minimum of 32 fire engines available for periods during the day.

If there are not enough on-call crews available during the day, we use other ways to provide cover at some stations. For example, we can use part-time contracts, ask trained operational colleagues working in other roles to work extra shifts, or pay on-call firefighters to work from a nearby station for a set period. These arrangements can help, but they cost more and are not always an option.

The number of on-call fire engines available at night is often significantly higher than needed. This means we regularly have over 44 fire engines available for periods during the night.

## **What this means**

Our data shows:

- (i) we do not have enough fire engines available in the day, when we need them most
- (ii) we have more available at night, when we get fewer calls.

## **How we know this**

We looked at information from more than 120,000 incidents over the last seven years. This showed that the number of fire engines we have available does not match the times when we get the most calls. This means that at our busiest times, we do not always have enough fire engines available; and if there is a big emergency, it can be difficult to keep enough engines free for other calls.

## **On-call firefighters' skills and experience**

On-call firefighters are trained to a high standard. However, like many practical skills, firefighting ability is developed over time by attending real incidents. Every time a crew responds to an emergency, they develop their confidence and skills in ways that cannot be fully replicated through training exercises alone.

At some on-call stations, the number of callouts is so low that crews attend very few real incidents each year. This limits the hands-on experience our on-call colleagues can gain. Over time, this can affect their overall readiness and professional development as firefighters.

This is not a reflection on the commitment or quality of our on-call colleagues: they are dedicated professionals who give up their time to keep their communities safe. It is simply a consequence of very low call-out volumes that is difficult to overcome.

## **On-call recruitment is becoming harder**

Across England, it has become harder to recruit on-call firefighters, mainly because fewer people live close enough to on-call fire stations; lifestyles and working patterns have changed; and many employers cannot let staff leave work to respond. All this means that on-call fire engines often cannot be crewed as there are not enough firefighters available.

## **The changes we are proposing**

As a result of our review, we are proposing to:

- introduce three additional guaranteed wholetime shift fire engines during the day (at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone)
- withdraw two wholetime fire engines at night (one from both Dartford and Thames-side)
- introduce seven new wholetime firefighter posts
- change wholetime shifts to a 12-hour day and 12-hour night (this is an internal process and does not require public consultation)
- close five on-call fire stations
- remove four attached on-call fire sections.

**There are therefore two changes we need to consult you about. These are below.**

## **Change 1 - more fire engines available during the day**

We are busiest in the daytime and quieter at night. Because of this we want to ensure we have more fire engines at wholetime stations available and ready during the day.

### **What would change?**

We propose to:

- improve daytime cover at Strood Fire Station by adding a new second wholetime fire engine (it would continue to have one wholetime fire engine at night)
- improve availability of the second fire engines at Ashford and Folkestone Fire Stations by crewing them with wholetime firefighters instead of on-call firefighters during the day. They would continue to be crewed by on-call firefighters at night
- remove one wholetime fire engine at night from both Dartford and Thames-side Fire Stations to enable the increases to daytime cover outlined above (each station would still have two wholetime fire engine available during the day and one at night).

These changes would help us respond faster in the daytime, when we get the most calls.

## **Change 2 - changes to some on-call stations**

We looked at information for all our 49 on-call fire engines, using the same checks for each one. This included:

- how many call-outs the station gets
- the risk in the station area
- how it compares with other similar stations
- the isolation of the area
- how often the station can crew a fire engine and is available to respond
- how much the station contributes to overall emergency cover across Kent and Medway.

We also spoke to our colleagues (including firefighters, control room colleagues, and community-based teams), the people who know our communities and our work, to help us understand the risks in different areas before we made any decisions. They told us about the types of emergencies they attend, the risks in each area, and how different communities use our service. This information helped us build a clearer picture of where risk is higher or lower across Kent and Medway and has directly shaped our understanding of risk in the areas affected by these proposals. We have used this alongside our data and evidence to make sure the changes we are considering are reasonable and well-informed.

As a result of this analysis and these discussions, we are proposing to close stations and remove on-call sections that evidence shows are rarely called out, and provide only a very small amount of the total emergency cover across Kent and Medway. It believes that incidents in these areas can be sufficiently covered by other fire engines, and that risks can be reduced through focused prevention and protection work.

Affected on-call firefighters would be offered a range of options, which may include a move to another on-call station if suitable; the opportunity to apply to be a wholetime firefighter; or redeployment into a suitable alternative role within KFRS. There may be a small number of redundancies once all other options have been exhausted.

Resulting financial savings would be used in two ways; to invest in more wholetime firefighters (change 1) and support the proposed changes to daytime cover changes; and to help reduce the budget deficit alongside measures such as a freeze on non-essential vacancies and a review of all non-operational spending to find further efficiencies.

### **The stations/sections we propose to close**

Due to low risk and low demand, we are proposing to remove the on-call fire sections from the following four fire stations:

- Deal
- Faversham
- Herne Bay
- Tunbridge Wells.

Each of these stations would still have a wholetime fire engine following the removal of their on-call sections, providing 24/7 immediately available fire and rescue services.

We are also proposing to permanently close Chilham, Cliffe, Grain, Westerham, and Wye on-call fire stations. These five stations are proposed because:

- they are under-used, with limited callouts.
- they are in areas where risk is lower than it is in other places.
- we must spend public money carefully.

If the stations were to close, incidents in these areas would be dealt with by fire engines from neighbouring wholetime fire stations, which already happens in practice when fire engines are not available. We have carefully modelled the response times from the next nearest available resources. This information is available in the supporting technical documents, which are published alongside this consultation document. We have also reviewed Site-Specific Risk Information for the highest-risk places and spaces in each affected area to make sure response plans remain robust. Where risks sit near county borders we will continue to share plans with neighbouring services.

We would also undertake prevention, protection, and community engagement work to help keep customers safe and reduce risk in these areas even more.

You can read the full information for each station on our [Station Information page](#) which forms part of the technical documents for this consultation. These documents show the complete picture for your local station.

It is important to understand that:

- a. having a fire engine at a station does not mean it is always ready to respond. A fire engine can only respond if there is a full crew available. The stations and on-call sections we propose to close provide only a very small amount of the total emergency cover across Kent and Medway. Their contribution is even smaller because on-call crews are often unavailable, especially during the daytime. This is a national trend. Daytime is also when most incidents happen.

- b. closing these stations or removing the on-call sections does not leave communities unprotected. Instead, it recognises the level of cover we are able to provide today and the focus on prevention and protection.
- c. the changes allow savings to be reinvested in the additional wholetime posts needed to deliver the improved daytime cover.

## **What would happen to our people and our fire engines?**

We want to be clear about what would happen to the people and equipment affected by these changes.

### **Our on-call firefighters**

We would offer a range of options, which could include a move to another on-call station if suitable, the opportunity of applying to be a wholetime firefighter, redeployment into suitable alternative roles within KFRS, an interim contract providing additional cover capacity across the county. There may be a small number of redundancies once all other options have been exhausted should the proposals be agreed. We have already informed colleagues of the proposed changes, so they understand the options available to them if affected.

### **Our wholetime firefighters**

The changes to daytime and night-time fire engine cover at wholetime stations would require a change in their usual base location for some firefighters. We have undertaken an internal formal consultation with wholetime colleagues about these arrangements. We would create seven additional wholetime firefighter posts to support the increased daytime provision at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone.

### **Our fire engines**

Some fire engines at stations proposed for closures or proposed removed on-call sections would be stood down and may be sold, disposed of, or donated if they are no longer needed or no longer meet operational standards. Any financial savings from this would contribute to addressing our budget position and, where possible, to reinvesting in the service. We are also undertaking a rolling fleet renewal programme, with new appliances being delivered from mid-2027.

## **What we do beyond responding to emergencies**

The changes we are proposing are not just about fire engines. We believe we are at our most effective when we prevent emergencies from happening in the first place. Discovery time, rather than response time, is the primary driver of outcome severity in the most serious building fires. This is supported both by our own incident data and by the wider academic literature.

That is why prevention, protection, and community engagement are at the heart of our proposal, alongside our emergency response. To learn more about our prevention work, take a look at our pages about [home safety](#), [schools and young people](#), [road safety](#), [water](#)

[safety](#), and [building and business safety](#). We also carry out targeted community work, working with people, places and spaces at greatest risk.

## **Our wider savings approach**

As a publicly funded organisation, we must account for the money we receive and spend. We need to ensure that we operate as efficiently as possible across the organisation, to keep the county safe and apply our funding to where it is most needed.

The closure of some on-call stations and the sale, disposal or donation of out-of-date fire engines would result in a saving. While this saving would be used to address the budget gap, we are also considering how it could be re-invested in providing additional fire engine availability.

Savings would not come solely from these proposals. Across the organisation, we are scrutinising all areas of spending to make sure we operate as efficiently as possible and direct public money to where it makes the most difference. This includes a vacancy freeze on certain posts across the organisation. We are reviewing all non-operational expenditure to identify further efficiencies.

The Fire Authority raised council tax by 5.2% in 2026/27 and drew down reserves of £2.061m to balance this year's budget. Our Medium-Term Financial Plan requires base savings of £1.658m between 2027/28 and 2029/30 to ensure long-term sustainability. This review, and the wider organisational savings work, are designed to help us achieve that in a way that is responsible, transparent, and focused on what matters most: keeping the people of Kent and Medway safe.

## **When would these changes happen?**

This is a consultation. No decisions have been made. The Fire Authority will consider the results of this consultation at its meeting on 15 October 2026, at which point it will decide whether to approve the proposals, approve them with amendments, or not to proceed.

If the closure of any on-call station or on-call section is approved by the Fire Authority, the process for withdrawing those resources would begin immediately after that decision.

If the changes to wholetime fire engine cover (the increase in daytime provision at Strood, Folkestone and Ashford, and the overnight reduction at Dartford and Thames-side) are approved, those changes would likely come into effect from 1 January 2028. This later date reflects the need to incorporate the outcomes of this review into two critical IT systems being replaced in 2027 – our workforce planning system and our command-and-control system. The final implementation date for the wholetime changes has been delegated to the Chief Executive, who may bring this date forward if it is safe to do so without putting delivery of the critical systems at risk.

## **The documents for this consultation**

This consultation document is one of a suite of documents. Together, they give a complete picture of the proposals and the evidence behind them. All documents are available at [www.kent.fire-uk.org/emergency-cover-review](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/emergency-cover-review):

The consultation survey is held separately to this document. You can complete it by using the button below or by going to [www.kent.fire-uk.org/\[address to be inserted\]](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/[address to be inserted]). It is short and straightforward to complete online. Paper copies are available can be requested by calling 01622 692121.

**BUTTON GOES HERE**

## **Need to know or have questions?**

We know this is an important issue for many communities and we want to make sure everyone has the information they need to respond to this consultation. If your question is not answered by this document or the supporting documents listed above, you can:

- Visit our Questions page at [www.kent.fire-uk.org/](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/) where we publish answers to questions received from members of the public.
- Email us at [@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:@kent.fire-uk.org)
- Call us on 01622 692121

## **TELL US WHAT YOU THINK**

This is your fire and rescue service and we need to know what you think. Please tell us by going to our Survey – it is quick and easy to complete.

**Go to Survey**



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**CONFIDENTIAL WHEN  
COMPLETE**

*Responses will be independently  
processed by ORS  
(Opinion Research Services)*

## Kent Fire & Rescue Service

### Changes to fire and rescue services in Kent

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) is committed to providing an excellent, modern, agile fire and rescue service for the communities of Kent. However, the Service faces several challenges, including:

- a mismatch between demand and availability
- longstanding challenges in recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters, leading to declining on-call fire engine availability
- the need to make best use of limited resources across the Service.

KFRS is therefore proposing to reshape its services to ensure resources better match current and future risks, demand, and public expectation; and deliver improved efficiency and value for money.

**There is an online version of this questionnaire which we encourage you to complete.** Please visit <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/resourcingreview> by **17 September 2026**; or you can complete this paper questionnaire and return it FREEPOST to arrive by the same date. It should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and we welcome responses from everyone, including members of the public, organisations, and KFRS employees.

Completed questionnaires will be processed by Opinion Research Services (ORS), an independent specialist research practice. All personal information will be kept securely, in accordance with latest data protection laws, and anonymised no more than one year after any decisions have been finalised. In the reports, feedback from individuals will be completely anonymous, but views from organisations or people acting in their official capacity may be attributed. ORS may use automated AI solutions to assist in the analysis of responses, and therefore you should ensure that you do not include any identifying information in your feedback. For further information, please see [www.ors.org.uk/privacy](http://www.ors.org.uk/privacy) or <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/privacy-policy-and-notice>.

If you have any queries about the consultation, you can email KFRS on [ResourcingReview@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:ResourcingReview@kent.fire-uk.org) or if you have any difficulties taking part, email Catherine Wall at ORS on [catherine.wall@ors.org.uk](mailto:catherine.wall@ors.org.uk).

### Consultation document

We have summarised the main consultation issues within this questionnaire to help you answer the questions. However, you can access the full consultation document, and more detailed information, supporting data and analysis at [www.kent.fire-uk.org/resourcingreview](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/resourcingreview).

You can request a paper copy of any documents by calling 01622 692121.

**How would you describe your connection to this consultation?** Please tick ✓ **all** that apply

I am a resident	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a connection to KFRS or another FRS	<input type="checkbox"/>
I represent a community group, business, or organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Background information

*Please refer to pages 2 and 3 of the consultation document.*

KFRS has 13 stations crewed by wholetime firefighters, who are full-time firefighters working shifts, covering day and night. This means a wholetime fire engine is available straight away, 24/7.

KFRS also has nine wholetime day-crewed fire stations. Firefighters are at these stations from 9am until 7pm. Outside these hours they are on-call nearby and are alerted if there is an emergency.

The remaining 49 sections are on-call, crewed by firefighters who usually have another job but receive the same core training as wholetime firefighters.

- 34 of these stations, mainly in smaller towns and villages, are standalone on-call stations, whereby firefighters are not on-station all the time, but travel there when there is an emergency, then take the fire engine to the incident.
- The other 15 are 'attached' on-call sections, offering extra cover in urban areas. These stations have two fire engines: one of which crewed by the on-call section.

On-call firefighters must live or work close enough to their station to arrive and be ready to respond within five minutes.

## KFRS's Challenges

*Please refer to pages 4 and 5 in the consultation document.*

KFRS currently faces several challenges, namely:

- **insufficient day-time fire engine availability:** KFRS aims to have between 32 and 44 fire engines available (26 wholetime fire engines, plus additional on-call fire engines). If the Service falls below 19 it takes additional action to make more fire engines available. Between 2017 and 2026, KFRS has had fewer than 19 fire engines available on 225 days. The worst periods correlate with summer demand spikes and wildfire events
- **Fire engine availability does not match demand:** KFRS is busiest during the day and quietest at night; but has the most fire engines available at night, and the fewest in the daytime. This is mainly because on-call firefighters are least available in the day because they work elsewhere. This means that at its busiest times, KFRS does not always have enough fire engines available; and if there is a big emergency, it can be difficult to keep enough fire engines free for other calls

- **Low on-call demand:** some on-call fire stations get very few call-outs, and provide only a very small amount of the total emergency cover across Kent and Medway. This means firefighters get limited real-life, hands-on experience to build their confidence and skills. This can affect their overall readiness and professional development as firefighters. It also creates retention issues, as people leave due to lack of active work
- **A need to save money and make best use of limited resources:** KFRS faces a budget deficit of at least £1.7m in the coming year. As a publicly funded organisation, the Service must also ensure it is as efficient as possible, keeping the county safe while using its funding where it is most needed.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that KFRS needs to make changes to the way it uses its resources to address the challenges outlined above?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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### **Increasing the number of fire engines available during the day**

*Please refer to pages 5 and 6 of the consultation documents, and the station information pages.*

KFRS is busiest in the daytime and quieter at night. Because of this, it wants to ensure it has more fire engines at wholetime stations available and ready during the day.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that FRS should match its resources to its demand by having more fire engines available during the day, and fewer at night?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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Specifically, KFRS proposes:

- improving daytime cover at Strood Fire Station by adding a new second wholetime fire engine (it would continue to have one wholetime fire engine at night)
- improving the availability of the second fire engines at Ashford and Folkestone Fire Stations by crewing them with wholetime firefighters instead of on-call firefighters during the day. They would continue to be crewed by on-call firefighters at night
- removing one wholetime fire engine at night from both Dartford and Thames-side Fire Stations to enable the increases to daytime cover outlined above (each station would still have two wholetime fire engines available during the day and one at night).

Taken together, these changes would create seven additional wholetime firefighter posts. They would also mean a change in some firefighters' base location. KFRS has undertaken internal consultation with potentially affected colleagues about the possible changes.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to increase the number of wholetime fire engines during the day at Ashford, Folkestone, and Strood to two; partly enabled by reducing night-time cover at Dartford and Thames-side from two wholetime fire engines to one?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
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## Addressing on-call challenges

Please refer to pages 6 of the consultation document, and the station information pages

KFRS reviewed and analysed data for all its 49 on-call fire engines, including:

- how many call-outs the station gets
- the risk in the station area
- how it compares with other similar stations
- the isolation of the area
- how often the station can crew a fire engine and is available to respond
- how much the station contributes to overall emergency cover across Kent and Medway.

As a result of this analysis, the Service is planning to remove some on-call fire engines and stations that are least used. These changes are only proposed where evidence shows these fire engines are, rarely called out; and provide only a very small amount of the total emergency cover across Kent and Medway. KFRS believes that incidents in these areas can be sufficiently covered by other fire engines, and that risks can be reduced through focused prevention and protection work.

Affected on-call firefighters would be offered a range of options, which may include a move to another on-call station if suitable; the opportunity to apply to be a wholetime firefighter; or redeployment into a suitable alternative role within KFRS. There may be a small number of redundancies once all other options have been exhausted.

Resulting financial savings would be used partly to invest in more wholetime firefighters and support the proposed changes to daytime fire and rescue cover; and partly to help address the budget deficit alongside other measures such as a vacancy freeze on non-essential posts, and a review of all non-operational expenditure to identify further efficiencies.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that KFRS should use the resources associated with its least used fire engines/stations differently, including reallocation if they could offer greater benefit in other areas of the Service?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

**Strongly agree**

**Tend to agree**

**Neither agree  
nor disagree**

**Tend to  
disagree**

**Strongly  
disagree**

**Don't know**

## Removal of attached on-call fire engines

Please refer to page 6 of the consultation document, and the station information pages

Due to low demand, KFRS is proposing to remove the attached on-call fire engines from the following four fire stations (that each have another wholetime fire engine):

- Deal
- Faversham
- Herne Bay
- Tunbridge Wells.

Each station would continue to have a wholetime fire engine following the removal of its attached on-call engine, providing 24/7 immediately available fire and rescue services.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with KFRS's proposal to remove on-call fire engines from Deal, Faversham, Herne Bay, and Tunbridge Wells Fire Stations?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Closure of on-call fire stations

Please refer to page 7 of the consultation document, and the station information pages.

KFRS is proposing to permanently close Chilham, Cliffe, Grain, Westerham, and Wye on-call fire stations. These five stations are proposed because:

- they are under-used, with limited callouts
- they are in areas where risk is lower than it is in other places
- it is hard to get enough on-call firefighters to crew the fire engines, especially in the day.

If the stations were to close, incidents in these areas would be dealt with by fire engines from neighbouring fire stations, which already happens in practice when fire engines are not available. KFRS has carefully modelled the response times from the next nearest resource, further information on which can be found in the station information pages.

KFRS would also undertake prevention, protection, and community engagement work to help keep customers safe and reduce risk in these areas even more.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to permanently close the on-call fire stations at Chilham, Cliffe, Grain, Westerham, and Wye?** Please tick ✓ **one** box only

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Any further comments

Do you have any comments about KFRS's proposed changes and how they might affect you/your community; and/or any other alternative suggestions for how KFRS can address its challenges and ensure a resilient and sustainable fire and rescue service?

If your comments relate to one or more of the fire stations below, please specify which.

Please tick ✓ all that apply

ALL of the stations below		<input type="checkbox"/>	NONE of the stations below		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>One or more specific fire stations</b>					
Ashford	<input type="checkbox"/>		Grain	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Chilham	<input type="checkbox"/>		Herne Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cliffe	<input type="checkbox"/>		Strood	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dartford	<input type="checkbox"/>		Thames-side	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Deal	<input type="checkbox"/>		Tunbridge Wells	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Faversham	<input type="checkbox"/>		Westerham	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Folkestone	<input type="checkbox"/>		Wye	<input type="checkbox"/>	

IF YOU ARE COMMENTING ABOUT A SPECIFIC FIRE STATION OR LOCALITY PLEASE IDENTIFY THIS USING THE LIST ABOVE, OR STATE CLEARLY IN YOUR WRITTEN COMMENTS.

PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS IN THE BOX, CONTINUING ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY.

## Equalities Impacts

*As a public body, KFRS has a duty to take into account the impact of its decisions on human rights, under the Human Rights Act 1998, and also on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation).*

**Are there any positive or negative impacts relating to equalities that you believe should be considered? If so, are you able to provide any supporting evidence and suggest any ways to reduce or remove any potential negative impact and increase any positive impact?**

PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**Any supporting evidence will be welcomed, but please be mindful about sharing any personal or sensitive data which could lead to someone being identified.**

## INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

If you are responding on behalf of an **ORGANISATION OR BUSINESS**, please provide the details here

Please give us the name of the business/organisation and any specific group or department you represent. Please also tell us what the business entails or who the organisation represents, what area it covers and (if applicable) how you gathered views of members. Please answer in the box below and continue on a separate sheet if necessary

If you are providing your own **PERSONAL RESPONSE** (including if you are a colleague at KFRS or another FRS), please answer the questions below.

Kent FRS has a duty to promote equality, and they want to make sure that we include all parts of the community in the engagement, but these questions are optional. We will take all responses fully into account, regardless of whether you provide your details.

**What is your full postcode?** Please write in

This will help us understand views in different areas

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

**What was your age on your last birthday?**

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 to 74          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75+               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

**What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Prefer to self-describe \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say

**Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months (include any problems related to old age)?**

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No
- Prefer not to say

**What is your ethnic group?**

- White - British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish, Welsh
- White - Roma, gypsy, or traveller
- White - Other
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

**Do you work for KFRS, or another FRS?**

- Yes, work for KFRS
- Yes, work for another FRS
- No
- Prefer not to say

**Thank you for your time**

Please return the questionnaire by **17 September 2026** to:

Opinion Research Services · FREEPOST SS1018 · PO Box 530 · Swansea · SA1 1ZL

# KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

## People Impact Assessment (PIA)

### Resourcing Review – Community

<b>Document Owner</b>	Leanne McMahon
<b>Supports</b>	Resourcing Review – Station and Fire Engine Proposals
<b>Version</b>	Draft v0.3
<b>Date</b>	June 2026
<b>Reviewed by</b>	Resourcing Review Project Team

*MONITORING and REVIEW: This PIA (our internal naming of the legally required tool Equality Impact Assessment) will be reviewed alongside the wider Resourcing Review project and updated following formal consultation. It will be monitored using community and demographic data, response time and incident outcome data, prevention and protection activity, and feedback from communities, partners, and local authorities. Ongoing assurance against the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.*

## Introduction and our commitment

This People Impact Assessment (PIA) looks at how the Resourcing Review proposals may affect people and communities. It helps us consider the impact of proposed changes. These changes include station closures and resource use. The aim is to meet public need, protect people at greater risk, and support a reliable emergency response.

This PIA focuses on people, communities, and public confidence. It looks at equality, vulnerability, and risk. It uses local risk information, community data, and professional judgement. It also uses partner insight and KFRS plans. These plans explain how prevention, protection, response, and resilience work together.

- KFRS Rural Plan and Community Risk Management Plan
- KFRS Prevention and Protection Strategy
- KFRS Response and Resilience Strategy
- Community and demographic data (including age, disability, deprivation, and rurality)
- Established PIA practice, including the latest internal PIA approach
- Professional judgement and partner intelligence

The PIA helps decision-makers, colleagues, representative bodies, and the public understand the likely impact. It also sets out the support already in place. It explains what further action could reduce risk.

KFRS has carried out equality of access to services work. This helps us understand how different people access services. For this consultation, the website includes accessibility

features. These include translation support and options to change font. Printed copies will be available. We will also contact focus groups to help gather views in person.

## Scope of the assessment

This PIA considers the community impact of the following specific proposals within the Emergency Cover Review.

Proposal Type	Detail
<b>Station Closures (5 on-call stations)</b>	Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, Grain, Westerham
<b>Removal of attached on-call sections (4)</b>	Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham, Tunbridge Wells
<b>Overnight fire engine reduction</b>	Dartford and Thames-side: two to one fire engine overnight
<b>Increased daytime fire engine cover (3 stations)</b>	Strood, Folkestone, Ashford: additional wholetime daytime fire engine at each location

This assessment looks at the impact on people who live, work, or travel in Kent and Medway. It gives extra attention to people who may be more at risk. This includes people in rural areas, people facing disadvantage, and people who may find it harder to leave a building or get support.

The assessment focusses on specific stations and the surrounding areas. However, fire engine cover across Kent and Medway is managed in real time. Fire engines are moved as incidents happen. Our control room always monitors this. It makes operational decisions to keep services resilient as demand changes.

## Strategic geographic and demographic context

Kent and Medway now have a combined population of more than 1.9 million people. Kent includes large towns, rural communities, and a long coastline. About 85% of the land area is classed as rural. Around one in three people live in a rural community. Around 40% of businesses are in rural areas.

Most people live in larger urban areas. Dartford and Medway are among the most densely populated parts of Kent. These areas also have younger and more diverse populations. North Kent has seen growth linked to movement from London. This means some areas are busier at night and quieter in the day. That can change local risk patterns.

Across Kent and Medway, about 18% of people are classed as disabled under the Equality Act. Rates vary across the county. They are higher in Thanet, Folkestone and Hythe, and Dover. They are lower in Dartford, Tunbridge Wells, and Sevenoaks.

## Risk Based Intervention

KFRS does not rely only on fire engines to keep people safe. We also reduce risk through prevention, protection, resilience planning, and community partnerships. This includes the KFRS Risk-Based Intervention Programme (RBIP). This helps us directly connect the specific risks in our communities with the actions we take to prevent them. It ensures our safety work is targeted where it is most needed. In practice it includes checking businesses and high-risk buildings, providing safety advice through events and written materials, visiting vulnerable residents at home to prevent fires and planning jointly with other community partners to ensure the county remains resilient.

More detail around our work and how we target is included in our Prevention and Protection Strategy 2025-2029 and the KFRS Rural Plan.

## People

KFRS does not help keep people safe only by sending fire engines when something has already gone wrong. A large part of supporting people to keep safe happens earlier. This is why prevention matters. Many of the people most likely to die or be seriously harmed in a fire do not need a faster response. They need earlier support, safer homes, better information, and help that is designed around the risks they face in everyday life.

Risk is not spread evenly across Kent and Medway. Some people are much more likely to be affected by fire, road incidents, water incidents, or by barriers that make it harder to get help. This includes older people, people with disabilities or reduced mobility, people with mental health needs, smokers, and people facing financial hardship. It also includes some communities who may not appear to be at highest risk in incident data. Even so, they could be less likely to get support because of language barriers, low trust in public services, limited access to online services, or previous negative experiences.

This is why KFRS uses an evidence-led prevention approach. We do not wait for people to come to us. We use information about incidents, local knowledge, population data, partner insight, and what communities tell us to identify where risk is highest and where access to services may be weakest. This helps us target Home Fire Safety Visits, community safety work, education, referrals, and support more clearly. It also means we can adapt what we do for different people, rather than expecting everyone to respond to the same message or use the same route into our services.

Our equality of access to services work and People Impact Assessments help us understand these patterns in a structured way. They help us check whether a policy, service, or change could affect one group more than another. They also help us decide what we should do about it. In practice, this means looking carefully at where services may work less well for some people and then taking action to remove or reduce those barriers.

For the public, this means more than general fire safety advice. It means identifying older residents who may be living alone and less able to escape quickly. It means working with health services, social care, housing providers, charities, and faith and community groups to reach people who are less visible to public services. It means adapting visits and communication for people with dementia, sensory needs, neurodiverse conditions, low

confidence online, or limited English. It also means listening to communities and feeding back what people are experiencing, so services can improve over time.

In the context of this review, this matters because community safety is not shaped by emergency response alone. Fire engines remain essential, but they are only one part of how harm is reduced. The safest outcome is for a fire not to start at all. It is also safer when a person has working smoke alarms, when a high-risk household has already been identified, or when a vulnerable resident has had support before a crisis develops. This is why prevention and fire safety work are such important parts of how KFRS keeps people safe, especially those most at risk of serious harm.

Where changes are proposed to stations or fire engine availability, KFRS will continue to use this risk-based approach to focus support where it is needed most. This includes targeted Home Fire Safety Visits, work with partners to identify vulnerable households, and community engagement with groups who may be missing out on support. It also includes ongoing review of incident data and local knowledge. The aim is to make sure that people most at risk are not overlooked and that prevention work continues to reduce harm across Kent and Medway.

This section should be read alongside the rest of the assessment. It explains why KFRS places such strong emphasis on prevention, early action, and fair access to services. For many communities, these actions are the most effective way to reduce risk and save lives. They are a core part of how KFRS plans to keep the public safe as demand, demographics, and local risk continue to change.

## **Places and Spaces**

Fire safety regulation exists to protect people in the buildings where they live, work, shop, worship and spend their time. In England, the rules that govern fire safety have been strengthened in recent years, with major reforms following the Grenfell Tower tragedy of 2017. These changes are designed to make sure buildings are designed and managed with safety in mind, and that problems are found and fixed earlier.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) is the enforcing authority for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended) across Kent and Medway. We focus our time and resources on the places where the risk to life is highest, and we take action that matches the level of risk we find.

### **How we identify risk**

Not all buildings carry the same level of risk. We use a system to assess and categorise every premises we are responsible for. Each one is placed into one of five risk categories: very high, high, medium, low, or very low. The category reflects both how likely a fire safety problem is, and how serious the consequences could be if one occurred.

The highest risk premises include places such as care homes, hospitals, prisons and supported housing.

These are buildings where people may have limited ability to escape quickly. High risk premises include some types of sheltered housing and buildings where flammable materials are stored. Medium risk premises include places like shops, sports venues, schools with boarding facilities and entertainment venues.

Across Kent and Medway, we are responsible for thousands of premises across all these categories, spread across the county from large towns to small rural communities.

### **How we carry out fire safety checks**

We carry out planned, proactive checks on premises to make sure they are meeting their legal responsibilities. This work is part of our Risk Based Intervention Programme, which sets out how we will use our resources between 2025 and 2028 to focus on the premises that pose the greatest risk.

Our approach is not primarily about issuing penalties. The aim is to make sure buildings are safe. However, where we find serious problems, we do have the power to take enforcement action. The type of check carried out depends on the level of risk and who is available with the right skills to carry it out.

Wholetime firefighters are firefighters who work full-time, based at a station. As well as responding to emergencies, they carry out planned fire safety checks at medium risk premises, such as shops or entertainment venues. These visits help us maintain safety standards across many buildings.

On-call firefighters also play a vital role in responding to emergencies, but they do not carry out these planned fire safety visits. On-call firefighters are not always at the station. They respond when called, which means their time is focused on emergency response.

In areas where there is no wholetime station nearby, our specialist teams' step in to carry out planned fire safety interventions. This means that every part of Kent and Medway is covered, regardless of which type of firefighter serves that area.

### **Site Specific Risk Information**

For some premises, we hold detailed information about the building that firefighters may need if they are called to an incident there. This is called Site Specific Risk Information, or SSRI. It might include details about the layout of the building, nearest water supplies, or hazards that firefighters need to know about.

This information is part of our wider picture of risk. It connects to our Risk Based Intervention Programme, helping us understand not just which buildings need checking, but what our crews might face if something goes wrong. The two pieces of work support each other. Where sites are near county borders, we share information and plans with neighbouring fire and rescue services.

These sites are well regulated and managed safely. Our firefighters are trained and practice regularly. This information supports that training. It does not replace it. We will review this information before and after any resourcing changes. This will help make sure the right plans stay in place.

## **Reactive as well as planned**

As well as the planned checks we carry out, we also respond reactively. This means that we investigate when something prompts us to act. That might be after a fire or other incident at a premises, or because a concern or complaint about fire safety has been raised. Anyone can raise a fire safety concern, and we take all concerns seriously. When we receive one, we will investigate it and decide what action is needed based on what we find.

## **Risk beyond buildings**

Not all risk sits within a building. Across Kent and Medway, some of the most serious harm, deaths, and large-scale emergencies happen in open spaces: on roads, in rivers and lakes, across heathland and farmland, and in areas where land and property have fallen out of use.

Kent is a geographically diverse county. Around 85% of its land is classified as rural, with one in three residents living in a rural community. This shapes the nature and consequences of risk across the area. Incidents in the countryside can take longer to reach. Water supplies can be less reliable. Roads are often longer and more isolated. A fire, collision or drowning can become more serious before help arrives.

## **Forecasting future incident numbers**

The number of incidents we attend can be affected by many things. In some areas, the number of incidents is quite low, so there is not enough past data to make long-term predictions with confidence. Incident levels can also change because of the weather, changes to roads or the local area, shifts in population, new laws or policies, and the impact of prevention and safety work. Over the last 14 years, the number of homes and buildings has increased, but this has not had a material impact on the number of incidents we attend. Long-term forecasts should be seen as an indication, not a precise prediction.

To understand what may happen in the future we use a method that shows the range of incident numbers we would normally expect to see. This helps us spot when something is unusually high or low. When that happens, we investigate the reasons. For example, the very hot and dry summer in 2022 led to a much higher number of outdoor fires than usual. This helped explain the increase in incidents during that period. This approach is more useful for short-term planning and helps us judge whether changes in risk are likely to affect demand, including whether removing fire engines is likely to make a meaningful difference.

For the purposes of this impact assessment, we have focused on the incident types that are most relevant to the likely effect of changes at each named station. These are accidental dwelling fires, emergency special service incidents, and road traffic collisions. Emergency special service incidents are emergencies where fire crews help people in situations that do not involve a fire. This can include rescues from height or water, helping people trapped in lifts or machinery, making areas safe after damage or flooding, and other urgent requests for assistance. Looking at these incident types gives a clearer picture of local risk and helps us assess whether changes to fire engine availability are likely to have a meaningful impact. Although road traffic collisions fall under this category, we have also looked at those in isolation.

## PART A: Proposed on-call station closures

The following section provides a community risk profile for each of the five stations proposed for closure. Each profile considers the current risk environment, future trajectory, population and building profile, and the mitigations available to reduce the impact on communities.

Our on-call fire stations have automated external defibrillators (AEDs) available for community use. Should a station close, we propose to offer these devices to the relevant parish council. To ensure a smooth transition and keep this equipment accessible to the public, KFRS will support any initial maintenance and running course. This would help the equipment remain in local community use.

### A1 – Grain fire station

#### Executive risk summary

The Grain area is a small and geographically isolated community next to a group of large, highly regulated industrial and energy sites. The wider Hoo Peninsula is also changing, with housing and infrastructure growth. The local risk picture is therefore shaped by geography, infrastructure, and the need for strong planning and partnership working.

KFRS holds detailed risk information (Site Specific Risk Information) for five key risk sites in the Grain area. This is detailed information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Grain fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

<b>Station type</b>	On-call (OC)
<b>Current establishment</b>	On-call firefighters drawn from the local community
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Isle of Grain – peninsular, accessible via A228 only
<b>Nearest wholetime cover</b>	Strood
<b>Proposal</b>	Closure of on-call station

### 1. Demographics and community risk

#### Current risk:

- Static population of approximately 1,730 residents (Medway 001B, Census 2021), with net-zero growth over 20 years and no indication that future recruitment will become more sustainable to improve station availability.
- Higher-than-average proportion of those aged up to 15 (21.9%) compared to England average of (18.6%) and a slightly higher proportion of ageing population over 65 (18.2%) compared to England 18.4% (Census 2021).

- (19.9%) of the population are classified as disabled under the Equality Act across day-to-day activities limited a lot and a little. (Census 2021).
- Tight-knit community with slow population turnover, enabling accurate targeting of prevention activity.
- Day-to-day domestic risk profile is stable but contains specific vulnerability concentrations.

**Future risk:**

- Wider Hoo Peninsula is subject to housing expansion (8,000–10,000 new homes by 2036+).
- A228 is the single access route; increasing traffic from new developments and Thamesport HGV movements raises risk of isolation of the communities on the peninsula in the event of a road closure.

**Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has remained low overall since 2012. A small increase is expected in the future.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. Attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

**2. Housing and building profile**

- Current stock dominated by low-rise, traditional brick, detached and semi-detached properties and established park homes.
- Very limited new build (<50 dwellings 2015–2025)
- While future housing is heavily focused on the wider peninsula, a 34-home affordable development is currently under construction near to Grain's Fire Station for completion in 2026.

**3. Risk assessment**

Risk area	Detail	Assessment
<b>Isolation via A228</b>	Single road access means a road closure on the A228 can affect external reinforcement and movement to and from the peninsula.	This is an important access issue for Grain because the road network is limited. The risk is managed through access planning, joint working with partners, and existing emergency arrangements for the area.
<b>Domestic fire – older residents</b>	Around 18.2% of the population is aged over 65, and some residents may need more	This is a recognised community risk and supports continued targeted Home Fire Safety Visits and wider prevention activity for

	support to leave a property quickly.	older residents and households with known vulnerabilities.
<b>Wildfire – coastal marshes</b>	The surrounding marshland can be affected by dry conditions during warmer periods of the year.	This is a seasonal risk that is better managed through monitoring, landowner engagement, public information, and wider wildfire planning than through station location alone.  Wildfires typically occur during the day, when Grain fire station is not available. The proposed additional fire engine at Strood will strengthen the response to this risk by increasing initial firefighting capacity.

## 5. Mitigations

- The proposed changes to the location of wholetime fire engines mean that Strood fire station may have two fire engines available during the day, improving the speed and capacity of response to incidents in Grain.
- Hoo fire station will be prioritised as one of our strategic on-call fire engines, with investment in recruitment to strengthen crewing on the peninsular.
- KFRS has a lead role in community resilience and works closely with resilience partners, including Kent Resilience Team, so plans, communication routes, and escalation arrangements are a regular focus.
- Targeted Home Fire Safety Visits for older residents and families are part of the Service's wider Risk-Based Intervention Programme (RBIP), helping KFRS focus prevention work where it is most needed.
- When the A228 has a planned closure, we work with other teams to put temporary backup plans in place. This keeps the road safe for emergency vehicles; guides traffic the right way and gives you clear updates so you can plan your journey easily.
- Keeping the community informed and involved. We will clearly explain upcoming changes and what will remain exactly as it is. We also want to provide strong reassurance to our residents that our dedicated, specialist teams for industrial emergencies remain fully active and ready to respond.

## A2 – Chilham fire station

### Executive risk summary

Chilham station serves a rural community in the Stour Valley between Canterbury and Ashford. The area is characterised by dispersed historic settlements, agricultural activity, and a tourist and visitor economy centred on the village, castle, and surrounding countryside. The risk profile is dominated by rural response distances, heritage building stock, and seasonal agricultural hazards.

KFRS holds detailed risk information (Site Specific Risk Information) for two key risk sites in the Chilham area. This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date.

If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Chilham fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

<b>Station type</b>	On-Call (OC)
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Rural village, Stour Valley, between Canterbury and Ashford
<b>Nearest wholetime cover</b>	Ashford and Canterbury
<b>Proposal</b>	Closure of on-call station

## 1. Demographics and community risk

### Current risk:

- Predominantly white British, ageing, small rural population with above-average proportion of residents aged 65+.
- Higher rates of social isolation among older residents, particularly in dispersed hamlets and farmsteads outside the village core.
- Below-average deprivation overall, but pockets of fuel poverty and poor housing insulation in older rural properties.
- Limited public transport connectivity increases dependency on private vehicles; those without transport face barriers to accessing support.

### Future risk:

- Modest residential growth through infill and barn conversions.
- Ashford Borough Council's planning framework supports continuing growth in homes, jobs, and visitor activity across the wider borough, and recent call-for-sites activity around Chilham illustrates pressure for further development.
- Climate change is increasing the frequency of dry summer periods, raising the risk of agricultural fires and wildfire spread.
- An ageing demographic profile may intensify over the next decade, increasing the proportion of residents with mobility and sensory impairments.

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has remained low overall since 2012. A small increase is expected in the future.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic. Assuming there are no significant changes to external factors, it is expected there will be a marginal increase over the new few years.

## 2. Housing and building profile

- Predominantly traditional construction: timber-framed, tile-hung, and flint/brick listed buildings.
- No high-rise or complex building risk; aerial appliance demand is low.

## 3. Agricultural and industrial profile

- Working agricultural land including arable farms, orchards, and hop gardens, seasonal machinery and crop fire risk.
- Straw and crop storage creates high fire load in summer months.

## 4. Environmental profile

The Lower Stour wetlands opportunity area contains some of Kent’s most extensive water and wetland habitats. The area includes a very high number of designated sites such as Stodmarsh, Westbere Marshes, the Lydden Valley and Hacklinge Marshes. Along the coast, the mudflats and sand dunes which lie between the marshes and the sea form part of the Sandwich and Pegwell Bay site, a site of international importance for bird life. In 2024 plans were approved to create a wetland in Chilham “engineered” landscape to help address issues relating to pollution in the River Stour catchment caused by wastewater from housing.

## 4. Risk assessment

Risk area	Detail	Assessment
<b>Heritage building fire</b>	Listed and older buildings may allow fire to move more easily and can be more difficult to manage during an incident.	This is a long-standing local feature rather than a new risk. The assessment is that pre-fire planning and ongoing prevention and protection work remain the most useful controls.
<b>Agricultural fire</b>	Crop, machinery, and storage fires can occur during busier farming periods and in dry weather.	This remains a seasonal rural risk. The assessment is that partnership work with the farming community and continued rural fire safety activity are practical mitigations as detailed in our Rural Plan.
<b>Social isolation – older residents</b>	Older residents living in dispersed rural properties may be less likely to notice a fire early or leave quickly without support.	This supports targeted Safe and Well work and close partnership with health and social care services. The assessment is that prevention activity can reduce risk for the households most likely to need support.
<b>Wildfire spread</b>	Dry conditions can increase the chance of fire moving from farmland or open land toward nearby property.	This is a seasonal issue that is best addressed through monitoring, local engagement, and wider wildfire planning across the area.

## 5. Mitigations

- Targeted Home Fire Safety Visits for isolated elderly residents in the rural catchment.

- Partnership with local partners and farming community networks to promote agricultural fire safety and early reporting.
- Seasonal wildfire risk monitoring with partners and landowners; community-facing information issued in spring/summer.
- Proactive engagement with local businesses to review building fire safety arrangements, focusing on the safe storage of chemicals and hazardous materials, alongside fire-safe land management practices.

### A3 – Wye fire station

#### Executive risk summary

Wye is a small historic village at the foot of the North Downs, home to agricultural activity. The risk profile combines the classic challenges of rural on-call coverage with HGV traffic on the A28 corridor.

While some areas have some higher risk places or spaces where KFRS holds unique site-specific risk information, there are no locations like that in Wye. The Wye area is covered by our standard county-wide risk-based intervention programme. We look at every property in the community and give it a rating from very low to very high risk, based on things like how easy it is for people to escape in an emergency. This helps us focus our safety checks and fire prevention work where they are needed most.

Wye station is used by a community warden as a local operational base. If this proposal is approved, we will work closely with the warden service to identify a suitable alternative arrangement, so community support can continue without disruption.

<b>Station type</b>	On-Call (OC)
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Rural village, Stour Valley, between Ashford and Canterbury, North Downs AONB
<b>Nearest wholetime cover</b>	Ashford
<b>Proposal</b>	Closure of on-call station

### 1. Demographics and community risk

#### Current risk:

- Small resident population with a notably wide age range including established families, retirees, and a transient student/researcher population
- The Wye campus environment means a concentration of young adults who may underestimate fire risk in older residential accommodation
- Several care settings and elderly residents in the village and surrounding hamlets

#### Future risk:

- Climate change risk to North Downs heathland and the surrounding AONB increases wildfire exposure
- Ashford's planning framework continues to direct significant housing and employment growth to the borough and ongoing review work is considering further land for

homes, jobs, and community uses to 2041. Wye is specifically mentioned as an important provider of local shops and services, although new developments will be at 'a scale appropriate to the individual characteristics of the settlement'.

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has remained low overall since 2012. A small increase is expected in the future.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

## 2. Housing and building profile

- Mix of traditional village housing, Victorian terraced properties, and agricultural workers' cottages

## 3. Agricultural and AONB profile

- Active arable and livestock farming across the wider catchment; seasonal crop storage hazards
- North Downs AONB creates wildfire and ecological risk; chalk grassland and scrub vegetation is sensitive to ignition in dry periods
- National nature reserve at Wye and Crundale Downs.
- Proximity to the Stour Valley means periodic flooding risk

## 4. Risk Assessment

Risk area	Detail	Assessment
<b>Agricultural and wildfire risk</b>	There is a seasonal risk in open land and farming-related fire risk across the wider catchment.	The assessment is that this remains an established rural risk and should continue to be managed through seasonal planning, business engagement, community messaging, and local partnerships.
<b>Older residents living in hamlets</b>	Some older residents live in smaller rural settlements where early detection and access can be more difficult.	These supports continued targeting through Home Fire Safety Visits and local prevention work for residents who may need extra support.

## 5. Mitigations

- Targeted HFSV delivery to elderly and socially isolated residents in Wye village and surrounding hamlets
- Business and fire safety engagement for the local agricultural sector, focusing on high fire risk prevention, crop storage, and wildfire prevention

## A4 – Cliffe fire station

### Executive risk summary

Cliffe is a small village on the Hoo Peninsula of North Kent, set within an expansive marshland landscape on the south bank of the Thames Estuary. The area carries a legacy of industrial land use, active cement and aggregate extraction activity, and a residential community that is geographically isolated. The station serves a catchment with limited road connectivity and a relatively high proportion of vulnerable residents.

While some areas have higher risk places or spaces where KFRS holds unique site-specific risk information, there are no locations like that in Cliffe. The Cliffe area is covered by our standard county-wide risk-based intervention programme. We look at every property in the community and give it a rating from very low to very high risk, based on things like how easy it is for people to escape in an emergency. This helps us focus our safety checks and fire prevention work where they are needed most.

<b>Station type</b>	On-Call (OC)
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Hoo Peninsula village, Thames Estuary marshland, North Kent
<b>Nearest wholetime cover</b>	Strood
<b>Proposal</b>	Closure of on-call station

## 1. Demographics and community risk

### Current risk:

- Small but geographically concentrated village population with limited connectivity to wider services
- Above-average proportion of older residents and households with limited digital access
- Index of Multiple Deprivation data indicates moderate deprivation in parts of the Cliffe catchment
- The marshland and agricultural setting mean some residents live in isolated properties beyond the village centre

### Future risk:

- The wider Hoo Peninsula housing growth (8,000–10,000 new homes) will increase the secondary demand on whatever coverage is provided, including to Cliffe
- Some limited local housing developments are planned in and around Cliffe village.

## Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has remained low overall since 2012. A small increase is expected in the future.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

## 2. Housing and building profile

- Traditional brick construction; mix of farm cottages, bungalows, and some newer social housing
- No high-rise stock; agricultural outbuildings with fire load present on the marshland

## 3. Industrial and environmental profile

- Internationally designated nature reserves (SSSI, Ramsar) on the marshland; ecological sensitivity creates constraints on fire suppression and wildfire response
- Limited industrial operations now as such operations have reduced over recent decades.

## 4. Risk assessment

Risk area	Detail	Assessment
<b>Rural isolation and access</b>	The road network is limited.	Access is an important issue for Cliffe. The assessment is that route planning, local familiarisation, and wider resilience arrangements will remain important if cover changes.
<b>Older and vulnerable residents</b>	Some residents may have limited mobility or limited digital access, especially in more isolated parts of the catchment.	This supports continued targeting through Home Fire Safety Visits, community engagement, and work with partner agencies that already know the local population well.
<b>Ecological constraints on response</b>	Protected habitats in the area can affect how some incidents are managed.	This is mainly an operational planning issue. The assessment is that site knowledge and joint working with environmental partners remain the key mitigations.

## 5. Mitigations

- Home Fire Safety Visits prioritised for older residents
- Community resilience planning coordination with local partners, Medway Council and the Environment Agency around flood evacuation routes and multi-agency response protocols for combined flooding and fire incidents
- Business fire safety inspections for active extraction sites maintained through the Service's Risk Based Intervention Programme

## A5 – Westerham fire station

### Executive risk summary

Westerham is a historic market town on the Kent-Surrey border, situated at the foot of the North Downs and bisected by the A25. The town serves as a gateway between the M25 corridor and the rural West Kent landscape. Its risk profile is defined by a combination of heritage building stock, high volumes of commuter and tourist traffic, a care home and elderly resident population, and proximity to the M25/M26 junction, which generates a recurring demand for complex road traffic collision response.

Westerham has two key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Westerham fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

<b>Station type</b>	On-Call (OC)
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Historic market town, Kent-Surrey border, North Downs
<b>Nearest wholetime cover</b>	Sevenoaks or Oxted (Surrey FRS, cross-border)
<b>Proposal</b>	Closure of on-call station

## 1. Demographics and community risk

### Current risk:

- Affluent commuter town with an ageing permanent resident population supplemented by tourist numbers drawn to historic attractions (Churchill's home at Chartwell, Westerham village).
- Sevenoaks district has the lowest disability rate in Kent (15%), but this masks specific pockets of vulnerability in care home settings.
- Several care homes and supported living facilities in and around the town centre, housing residents with high dependency needs.
- The surrounding rural area includes dispersed farms and equestrian properties with limited road connectivity.

### **Future Risk:**

- Incremental residential growth through infill and conversion; heritage building risk persists. Sevenoaks District's emerging Plan 2040 is being prepared against a housing need of around 712 homes a year, with potential growth options that include land at the edge of Westerham.
- M25 traffic volumes are projected to increase, sustaining RTC demand on the M25/M26 junction.
- Climate change impact on North Downs heathland increases wildfire risk in summer months.

### **Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents attended each month has remained low overall since 2012. There has been a small increase, which is expected to continue in the future.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue.

## **2. Housing and building profile**

- Historic town centre with listed and conservation area buildings in traditional construction.
- Mix of older detached properties, Victorian housing, and some modern residential development on the town periphery.
- Rural properties including farm buildings and equestrian facilities with high fire load potential.
- Care homes and supported living facilities represent the highest consequence residential risk.

## **3. Transport and infrastructure risk**

- M25/M26 junction at Clackett Lane is one of the busiest motorway junctions in Kent with complex RTC demand.
- A25 through the town centre carries high volumes of tourist and through-traffic; congestion can delay response from Sevenoaks.
- Cross-border mutual aid with Surrey FRS is already established.

#### 4. Risk assessment

Risk area	Detail	Assessment
<b>Care home fire risk</b>	There are several care settings with residents who may need support to leave a building safely.	The assessment is that care homes are an established part of the area profile and will continue to be monitored and supported through the KFRS risk-based intervention programme.
<b>M25 road traffic incidents</b>	The M25 and M26 continue to generate demand from complex road traffic incidents.	The assessment is that this demand remains an established part of the area profile and should continue to be supported through motorway planning and mutual aid arrangements.
<b>Heritage building fire</b>	Listed buildings in the town centre can allow fire to spread more easily and can be more complex to manage.	The assessment is that this remains a known town-centre risk and should continue to be managed through pre-fire planning and business engagement.
<b>A25 congestion delay</b>	Through-traffic can affect movement through the town centre.	The assessment is that this is a practical access issue that should continue to be considered in route planning and cross-border support arrangements.
<b>Rural access</b>	Isolated farms and equestrian properties can take longer to reach with larger vehicles.	The assessment is that rural access remains an established feature of the area and should continue to be supported through familiarisation and mutual aid planning.

#### 5. Mitigations

- Review of risk across the care homes and supported living facilities in the Westerham catchment through the Risk Based Intervention Programme.
- Targeted business engagement for key buildings in the Westerham area.
- Home Fire Safety Visits targeting elderly residents living in homes or residential care.

## PART B: Removal of attached on-call sections

The following four stations currently have an attached on-call section providing additional surge capacity and resilience alongside the primary wholetime or day-crewed fire engine. The removal of these sections does not close the station but does reduce the total number of fire engines available and removes the on-call crew from the establishment. This section considers the community impact of that reduction.

On-call firefighters play a vital role in responding to emergencies, but they do not carry out planned fire safety checks on buildings. On-call firefighters are not always at the station. They respond when called, which means their time is primarily focused on emergency response.

Across Kent and Medway it's primarily our wholetime, day-crewed or specialist teams carry out planned fire safety interventions. This means that every part of Kent and Medway is covered, regardless of which type of firefighter serves that area.

### B1 – Deal fire station (attached on-call section)

#### Community risk profile

Deal is a coastal town on the east Kent coast with a distinct community identity, a historic built environment, and a population with above-average levels of deprivation and disability. The town will retain fire cover with nearest additional cover from surrounding stations.

Deal has five key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Deal fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

<b>Current establishment</b>	Day-crewed primary fire engine + attached on-call section
<b>Proposal</b>	Removal of attached on-call section
<b>Nearest mutual aid</b>	Dover, Sandwich

#### Current and future risk

- Deal sits within a coastal district (Dover) that has one of the highest disability rates in Kent (21.1%), above the Kent and Medway average of 17.8% (Census 2021).
- Parts of Deal sit within the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally particularly in the town centre and seafront wards and there is a correlation between deprivation and fire risk.
- Seasonal population variation driven by tourism creates periods of higher occupancy in holiday lets and licensed premises.

- The seafront and historic conservation area contains buildings with narrow street access limiting fire engine approach.
- Removal of the attached on-call section reduces the station's surge capacity during concurrent incidents or when the primary fire engine is committed.
- The adopted Dover District Local Plan to 2040 provides for around 11,000 homes across the district and continued economic growth focused on town centres, tourism, and employment locations, so the likely trajectory includes continued demand from domestic, commercial, and town-centre incidents.

### **Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic. If wider conditions remain similar, a marginal increase is likely in the next few years.

### **Mitigations**

- Enhanced Home Fire Safety Visit targeting those most at risk in Deal, primarily delivered through the day-crewed fire engine crew.
- Seasonal risk assessment for tourist season; consideration of targeted prevention messaging for holiday accommodation providers.
- Continued engagement with local business to provide fire safety advice and support.

## **B2 – Herne Bay fire station (attached on-call section)**

### **Community risk profile**

Herne Bay is a coastal town in the Canterbury district, characterised by a large and growing retired population, a legacy of seaside housing including older converted seafront properties, and a developing seafront and town centre economy. It is one of the most rapidly ageing communities in Kent.

Herne Bay has seven key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Herne Bay fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

<b>Current establishment</b>	Day-crewed primary fire engine + attached on-call section
<b>Proposal</b>	Removal of attached on-call section
<b>Nearest mutual aid</b>	Whitstable, Canterbury

### Current and future risk

- Canterbury district has a growing retired and older population; Herne Bay itself has one of the highest concentrations of over-65 residents in the county
- Large stock of converted Victorian and Edwardian seafront properties
- High proportion of single-occupancy households among older residents; delayed fire discovery and limited self-evacuation capacity
- Growing care home and supported living sector in the town increases the proportion of high-dependency residents
- Herne Bay also sits within a district where previous and emerging planning work has identified housing growth, with the town itself linked to more than 3,000 additional homes over time. This may alter occupancy patterns and increase the number of older residents and families

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

### Mitigations

- Prioritised Home Fire Safety Visit targeting single-occupancy households with older residents.
- Continued engagement with local business to provide fire safety advice and support.

## B3 – Faversham fire station (attached on-call section)

### Community risk profile

Faversham is a historic market town in Swale district, home to one of the UK largest breweries. The town has a mixed demographic profile, a diverse housing stock ranging from medieval timber-framed buildings to modern estates and sits at the centre of a largely rural catchment including the North Kent marshes.

Faversham has five key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Faversham fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

<b>Current establishment</b>	Day-crewed primary fire engine + attached on-call section
<b>Proposal</b>	Removal of attached on-call section
<b>Nearest mutual aid</b>	Sittingbourne, Teynham, Canterbury

### Current and future risk

- Between previous Census in 2021 Swale population grew by 11.7% and the number of residents aged 50 to 64 rose by 15.4%. This age bracket is steadily moving directly into the 65+ bracket, compounding the long-term aging trend.
- Faversham town centre contains several medieval and listed timber-framed buildings with inherent fire spread risk and complex suppression requirements.
- Active and historic industrial uses in the town include chemical manufacture and storage; Faversham's industrial heritage means some legacy contamination and fire risk from older premises.
- The broader Swale rural catchment includes isolated marshland properties and agricultural holdings with limited road access
- Swale has a mixed deprivation profile; parts of Faversham's catchment experience moderate to high deprivation.
- Removal of the on-call section reduces available fire engines for concurrent incidents in both the town and the rural catchment.
- Current proposals and decisions around southeast Faversham include around 2,500 homes together with employment land, local services, and facilities, which would change the scale of the town over time and are likely to affect the mix of domestic, commercial, and road-related incidents.

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic. If wider conditions remain similar, a marginal increase is likely in the next few years.

## Mitigations

- Targeted business engagement for businesses in the medieval town core.
- Home Fire Safety Visit maintained for rural catchment, with particular focus on isolated properties on the North Kent marshes.

## B4 – Tunbridge Wells fire station (attached on-call section)

### Community risk profile

Royal Tunbridge Wells is the principal urban centre of West Kent and one of the most affluent towns in the county. The town has a legacy Victorian housing stock, a busy town centre commercial sector, and is surrounded by a large rural area including the High Weald area of natural beauty (AONB).

Tunbridge Wells has 23 key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Tunbridge Wells fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

<b>Current establishment</b>	Wholetime primary fire engine + attached on-call section
<b>Proposal</b>	Removal of attached on-call section
<b>Nearest mutual aid</b>	Southborough, Tonbridge, Crowborough (East Sussex FRS, cross-border)

### Current and future risk

- Tunbridge Wells district together with Sevenoaks has one of the lowest disability rates in Kent (15%), but this overall average masks concentrations of vulnerability in older residential areas and care settings.
- The Victorian Pantiles and town centre areas contain heritage building stock with limited fire compartmentation and complex access.
- A growing care home sector serves the ageing population; the district's elderly cohort is expanding as a retirement destination.
- The High Weald AONB to the south is subject to increasing wildfire risk from heathland and woodland during dry summers.
- The town centre generates a night-time economy; licensed premises risk increases in the evening period.
- Removal of the on-call section reduces surge capacity for major incidents and concurrent call demand.
- The adopted Tunbridge Wells Local Plan 2020–2038 provides for around 4,500 homes across the borough, while the next plan review will be prepared against a higher housing requirement, so future housing and service growth may increase demand and change its profile.

### **Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence of a sustained increase, so the most likely picture is that numbers will remain broadly similar.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

### **Mitigations**

- Night-time economy fire safety engagement and Risk Based Intervention Programme activity maintained with licensed premises in the town centre.
- Targeted business engagement and Risk Based Intervention Programme activity in the Pantiles and town centre area.
- Seasonal monitoring and community awareness initiatives with partners for the High Weald AONB.
- Home Fire Safety Visit targeting maintained, with particular focus on older residents.

## **PART C: Overnight fire engine reduction – Dartford and Thames-side**

The following stations are proposed to reduce from two fire engines to one overnight. The stations remain open and fully crewed during the day. This section considers the community risk profile of the overnight period specifically and the mitigations available.

Every loss of life in a fire is a tragedy. Some of these fires happen during the night. In these specific cases, a faster fire engine response is unfortunately not always enough to save a life. This is because smoke and fire can overcome a person before anyone is able to call 999. This is why our prevention and protection work is so vital. We focus heavily on early warnings, like making sure people have working smoke alarms. We also help residents make their homes safer. This work can stop fires from starting in the first place or give people the time they need to escape safely.

### **C1 – Dartford fire station**

#### **Community risk profile**

Dartford is the most densely populated district in Kent and the primary gateway between Kent and London via the Dartford Crossing (M25/A282). The town has a young, diverse, and rapidly growing population driven by inward migration from London, commercial and logistics development, and active high-rise and large-scale residential development.

Dartford has 48 key risk sites. Risk sites are a natural feature of urban areas, surrounded by other wholetime stations. Many of these sites present a lower night-time risk. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Dartford fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

The Dartford Crossing has agreed joint planning and preparedness arrangements with partner agencies. These arrangements are reviewed on a planned schedule and exercised regularly so that overnight response remains coordinated and well understood, including where support or standard attendance may come from over the county border.

<b>Current night establishment</b>	Two wholetime fire engines overnight
<b>Proposed night establishment</b>	One wholetime fire engine overnight
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Urban; densely populated; gateway to London via Dartford Crossing
<b>Nearest overnight mutual aid</b>	Swanscombe, Swanley, Thames-side

## Current and future risk

- Dartford has the most diverse population in Kent; the Black community represents 8.2% – the highest in the county – and the district has an Eastern European community.
- Rapid residential growth through high-rise and large-scale residential development; several tall residential buildings are now in the Dartford urban area, generating potential aerial appliance demand overnight.
- The Dartford Crossing frequently operates well above its design capacity of 135,000 vehicles per day, with peak volumes exceeding 180,000 vehicles; tunnel and bridge fire incidents are nationally significant with multi-agency response requirements.
- The commuter-belt effect means the overnight population is higher than the daytime population; domestic fire risk peaks at night.
- Lowest disability rate in Kent and Medway (14%); however rapid population growth means total number of vulnerable residents is growing.
- The planned Thameslink Tunnel project brings long-term infrastructure risks; the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is closely involved in planning and construction, using specialist fire engineering teams to deal with complex risks.
- The adopted Dartford Plan provides for 12,640 homes between 2024 and 2037, alongside continuing economic growth and logistics activity.

## Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence, so the most likely picture for the next few years is that there will be a marginal increase.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

## Mitigations

- Continued delivery of co-ordinated proactive and reactive business engagement through our firefighters and specialist building safety teams. Most of this work takes place during the day, which is not impacted by the proposed change.
- Overnight demand and concurrent incident data will be reviewed regularly so KFRS can check that the arrangement is working as intended and respond if further action is needed.
- Daytime prevention work, including Home Fire Safety Visits and community engagement, will continue to reduce risk in homes and support safer living across the Dartford area.

## C2 – Thames-side fire station

### Community risk profile

Thames-side station serves a mixed industrial, commercial, and residential catchment along the south bank of the Thames Estuary in Gravesham district. The area includes active ports, logistics hubs, large retail and leisure developments, and a residential community with deprivation in certain wards. It is a high-demand station with a complex and varied incident profile.

Thames-side has 27 key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Thames-side fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway

<b>Current night establishment</b>	Two wholetime fire engines overnight
<b>Proposed night establishment</b>	One wholetime fire engine overnight
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Mixed urban-industrial Thames waterfront, Gravesham
<b>Nearest overnight mutual aid</b>	Swanscombe, Strood, Dartford

### Current and future risk

- Gravesham is home to Kent and Medway's largest Sikh community which make up 8% of the district's population, representing 51% of the total Sikh population across Kent and Medway; cultural and religious community gatherings occur regularly in the evening and overnight period, increasing occupancy in community buildings.
- Active Thames riverfront with commercial shipping, leisure craft, and port facilities; water and marine incident risk is elevated overnight when reduced staffing exists across all agencies.
- Logistics and distribution warehousing along the Thames waterfront; large fire loads in automated storage facilities require water and fire engine resources.
- Residential wards with above-average deprivation rates have elevated domestic fire risk, particularly overnight when fire fatality risk peaks.
- London Thamesport and adjacent commercial infrastructure will continue to expand; automated warehousing risk profile is increasing.
- The planned Thameslink Tunnel project brings long-term infrastructure risks; the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) is closely involved in planning and construction, using specialist fire engineering teams to deal with complex risks.
- Evidence supporting the Gravesham Local Plan review identifies continuing pressure for employment land and logistics activity, while major riverside schemes and wider growth proposals include substantial mixed-use and residential development, including proposals of around 3,500 homes at Northfleet Harbourside.

### **Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence, so the most likely picture for the next few years is that there will be a marginal increase.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, a marginal increase is expected in the next few years.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

### **Mitigations**

- Continued community engagement with Sikh and other faith communities in Gravesham to support fire safety in community buildings and places of worship.
- Targeted Home Fire Safety Visit in the underprivileged residential wards, focusing on households with elderly residents, smokers, and those with limited mobility.
- Continued delivery of co-ordinated proactive and reactive business engagement through our firefighters and specialist building safety teams. Most of this work takes place during the day, which is not impacted by the proposed change.

## PART D: Increased daytime provision – Strood, Folkestone and Ashford

The following three stations are proposed to receive an additional daytime fire engine, increasing their capability during the hours when on-call availability has historically been lowest. This is a positive community impact that creates tangible opportunities to increase the volume and quality of prevention and protection activity delivered to the communities these stations serve.

Positive community impact opportunity	How increased daytime provision enables It
More Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)	Additional crew available during the day enables an increase in proactive visits to vulnerable households releasing specialist teams to other areas of risk
Building fire safety interventions	A second fire engine allows an increase in proactive business safety visits increasing the proactive assessment of potential risks in the area and support specialist teams in providing essential fire safety advice.
Community education and prevention	School visits, community events, and road safety education can be scheduled without compromising emergency response capacity
Faster concurrent response	During daytime peak demand hours, a second fire engine reduces wait times for second and subsequent calls in the immediate and surrounding areas.
Enhanced crew training	A second wholetime fire engine ensures crews can conduct realistic training scenarios (such as simulated property fires or road traffic collisions) with a full team on-site.
Additional fire engines compensating for other fire engine withdrawals	These locations help to provide additional cover in areas affected by other proposed closures

### D1 – Strood fire station (increased daytime provision)

#### Community risk profile and positive impact

Strood sits on the western bank of the River Medway, directly connected to Rochester and the wider Medway urban area via the Medway bridges. It is part of the Medway Unitary Authority, which is one of the most densely populated and rapidly growing areas in the Southeast. The addition of a daytime fire engine at Strood will have a significant positive impact on both emergency response and prevention activity across the western Medway community.

Strood has 11 key risk sites. Key water related risk on the River Medway are included in assessments of risk. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date.

If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Strood fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

<b>Current daytime establishment</b>	One wholetime fire engine
<b>Proposed daytime establishment</b>	Two wholetime fire engines (daytime)
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Urban; western Medway; gateway to North Kent peninsula including Hoo
<b>Population served</b>	Part of Medway Unitary Authority – population c.293,000; one of the fastest growing areas in SE England

### Current community risk

- Across Medway, approximately 17.4% of the population are classified as disabled under the Equality Act across day-to-day activities limited a lot and a little compared to the national average of 17.3% (Census 2021)
- The number of Medway residents born in Nigeria rose from around 1,500 in 2011 (0.6% of the local population) to around 4,000 in 2021 (1.4%) (Census 2021).
- Romanian, followed by Polish, Panjabi and Bulgarian, is among the most common main languages after English in Medway (Census 2021) language barriers can impede fire safety messaging reaching all communities
- Medway's Black community has seen the largest growth of any single ethnic group, now 5.6% of the total population a 3.1 percent increase from 2011 (Census 2021); diverse community profile requires inclusive and multi-channel prevention engagement
- Strood provides key road access points to the Hoo Peninsula, including routes to major industrial sites at the Isle of Grain; an additional daytime fire engine at Strood provides resilience for major industrial incidents when on-call cover is unavailable
- The western Medway area includes older residential housing stock, active commercial development, and high levels of HGV traffic connecting the M2 and A2 to the peninsula and ports

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence, so the most likely picture for the next few years is that there will be a marginal increase.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue.

## Positive local community impact of additional daytime fire engine

(supplementing the general benefits identified above)

- Strood's position as the gateway to the Hoo Peninsula means the additional fire engine strengthens daytime resilience for incidents affecting Grain, Cliffe, and other peninsula communities.
- Boosted capacity to deliver targeted prevention and protection activity across the Isle of Grain.
- Strood's position on the M2/A289/A228 junction means it is well placed to provide a response to road traffic collisions.

## D2 – Folkestone fire station (increased daytime provision)

### Community risk profile and positive impact

Folkestone is the principal town of the Folkestone and Hythe district on the Kent coast. It has one of the highest deprivation levels in Kent, a growing disability rate, a diverse and transient population including asylum seekers and international visitors via the Channel Tunnel, and a large legacy of older, converted, and HMO housing stock. The town is in active regeneration, with new development planned in the Folkestone seafront area and the Folkestone Harbour development. An additional daytime fire engine represents a substantial positive community impact for one of the most vulnerable communities in Kent.

Folkestone has 28 key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Folkestone fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

The Channel Tunnel is another important risk site located near the town. There are specialist plans (SSRIs) for the Channel Tunnel site and surrounding infrastructure. We work closely with French emergency services and tunnel operators. We run regular joint practices and training exercises to ensure we are always ready. If an incident happens in the tunnel, a coordinated response from both countries is triggered immediately to keep passengers and the local community safe. The UK response does not rely on Folkestone alone; it draws resources and specialist support from across the county.

<b>Current daytime establishment</b>	One wholetime fire engine, one on-call fire engine
<b>Proposed daytime establishment</b>	Two wholetime fire engines
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Coastal town; Folkestone and Hythe district; Channel Tunnel proximity
<b>Disability rate</b>	Folkestone and Hythe: 21.83% – second highest in Kent

## **Current community risk**

- Folkestone and Hythe have the second highest disability rate in Kent (21.8%) (Census 2021), above the county average; a large proportion of residents have mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments that increase fire risk and impede evacuation.
- Within the Folkestone and Hythe district, socio-economic disparities are localised in pockets of severe deprivation. Folkestone Central and Harbour districts rank among the most deprived 10–20% nationally according to the English Indices of Deprivation. Deprivation directly correlates with elevated fire risk and requires specialist prevention support.
- Folkestone's coastal location and proximity to the English Channel means the town hosts an asylum seeker and refugee population; language barriers and unfamiliarity with UK fire safety practices require targeted outreach.
- The phased Folkestone seafront and harbour regeneration and recent revised application for the eastern section of the site along the coast will bring new residential and commercial units to the that area.

## **Future Incident Demand**

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence, so the most likely picture for the next few years is that there will be a marginal increase.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.
- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed there will be a marginal increase in the next few years.

## **Positive local community impact of additional daytime fire engine**

(supplementing the general benefits identified above)

- Increased community safety outreach to the asylum seeker and refugee community can be delivered in partnership with local voluntary organisations; pictorial safety materials deployed.
- Folkestone's position as the gateway to the Marsh and surrounding areas, means the additional fire engine strengthens daytime resilience for incidents in those areas.
- Boosted capacity to deliver targeted prevention and protection activity across the Marsh and surrounding areas.

## **D3 – Ashford fire station (increased daytime provision)**

### **Community risk profile and positive impact**

Ashford is one of the fastest-growing towns in the Southeast of England. Designated as a growth town by successive governments, Ashford has seen sustained, large-scale residential and commercial development over the past two decades and is projected to continue growing through the 2030s.

The town is the principal urban centre for a large rural area covering much of southern Kent, including the areas affected by the on-call station closures at Chilham and Wye. An additional daytime fire engine at Ashford directly addresses the increased demand that will arise from absorbing those catchments and the population growth the town itself is generating.

Ashford has 22 key risk sites. For each of these sites, Kent Fire and Rescue Service holds Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI). This is detailed operational information about a site, such as its layout, hazards, access points, and anything firefighters may need to know if there is an emergency. These sites are also subject to regular planning, review and monitoring. They are well regulated, and firefighters train and practice for these risks so that the response is well understood and kept up to date. If a serious incident happened at one of these sites, the response would not rely on Ashford fire station alone. Incidents of this type are expected to draw on fire engines, specialist colleagues and support from across Kent and Medway.

<b>Current daytime establishment</b>	One wholetime fire engine
<b>Proposed daytime establishment</b>	Two wholetime fire engines
<b>Geographic profile</b>	Major growth town; hub for rural southern Kent; international rail gateway
<b>Population served</b>	Ashford borough and wide rural area; one of the fastest growing towns in SE England

### Current community risk

- Ashford is a designated growth town with a large active development pipeline; new residential estates using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC/Modular) are being built at pace, introducing novel fire spread risks that require specific operational tactics.
- The town serves a vast rural community across southern Kent, including the Stour Valley villages, the Romney Marsh, and the High Weald fringe; response times to the most rural addresses in this catchment are already among the longest in the county.
- The borough has a growing and diverse population including Eastern European, South Asian, and other communities; multi-lingual prevention activity is increasingly important.
- Agricultural and rural fire risk across the wider rural area served by Ashford is seasonal; the additional daytime fire engine provides resilience for concurrent rural and urban incidents.

### Future Incident Demand

- Accidental dwelling fires – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended each month has remained low since 2012. There is no clear evidence, so the most likely picture for the next few years is that there will be a marginal increase.
- Accidental Dwelling Fires (Night) – The number of accidental dwelling fires attended at night has also remained low since 2012. While numbers may vary from month to month, there is no clear sign of a longer-term increase, so levels are expected to remain broadly similar.

- Emergency Special Services (non-fire) - The number of emergency special service incidents has been increasing since 2012. A continued gradual increase is expected.
- Road Traffic Collisions - The number of road traffic collisions attended each month has generally remained low since 2012. However, attendance has been higher since the Covid lockdown periods than it was before the pandemic, and it is assumed this will continue into the future.

### **Positive local community impact of additional daytime fire engine**

(supplementing the general benefits identified above)

- Boosted capacity to deliver targeted protection activity across the Weald and Marsh areas.
- Expanding Home Fire Safety Visits across the Ashford urban area and extended rural catchment (absorbing Chilham and Wye communities), enabling proactive outreach to households that would previously have been outside effective range.
- The additional daytime fire engine will provide resilience for the out of area cover the existing fire engine routinely provides, especially into the Weald and Marsh areas.
- Ashford is very well connected onto the A20, A28, and M20 meaning it is well placed to provide additional support to other areas of the county.

## PART E: Impact assessment by protected characteristic

This section assesses the overall impact of all proposals considered in this PIA against each protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and identifies the mitigations and actions that apply.

Characteristic	Issues & Analysis	Mitigations
<b>Age</b>	Older people (65+) are statistically at highest risk of fire fatality and least able to self-evacuate. Station closures at Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, and Westerham all affect catchments with above-average older populations, as do the removal of on-call sections at Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham, and Tunbridge Wells. The overnight reduction at Dartford and Thames-side also affects the period of highest fatality risk.	Targeted HFSV programmes including with smoke alarm provision. Review referral routes for affected areas.
<b>Disability</b>	Folkestone and Hythe (21.8%) and Dover (21.2%) districts have the highest disability rates in Kent. The removal of the Deal on-call section (Dover district) and the increased provision at Folkestone are therefore particularly significant. The increased daytime provision at Folkestone directly and positively addresses the highest-risk disability catchment.	Prioritised Safe and Well visits. Review referral routes for affected areas. Inclusive communication formats.
<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	The overnight reductions at Dartford and Thames-side affect the most ethnically diverse areas in Kent. Folkestone has an asylum seeker and refugee population. Ashford has growing diverse communities. Domestic fire risk data does not show ethnicity as a primary driver (age and deprivation are stronger predictors), but language barriers can impede access to fire safety information.	Accessible prevention materials. Community partner engagement. Accessible website with translation tools. Increased daytime cover at three stations enables targeted outreach.
<b>Deprivation (Other)</b>	Deprivation directly correlates with fire risk. Deal, Herne Bay, and Folkestone all have above-average deprivation in parts of their catchments. The overnight reductions at Dartford and Thames-side effect areas with pockets of deprivation. The increased provision at Folkestone and Ashford positively targets some of the highest-deprivation communities in Kent.	Targeted HFSV programmes including with smoke alarm provision. Review referral routes for affected areas
<b>Rurality (Other)</b>	Station closures at Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, and Grain all affect deeply rural communities where response time increases will be most acute. Rural residents have fewer alternative services, lower digital connectivity, and often poorer road network access. Agricultural fire risk is seasonal and high consequence.	Response time modelling for all rural addresses. Community engagement. Agricultural business fire safety engagement. Community resilience development.
<b>Sex</b>	Men remain statistically overrepresented in fire fatalities, often linked to risk-taking behaviours.	Targeted prevention messaging.

	Women may be disproportionately affected in domestic settings or where caring responsibilities exist. No specific geographic concentration identified beyond the universal application of these factors.	Risk-profiling within HFSV activity.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	Coastal areas within the Deal, Herne Bay, and Folkestone catchments include higher proportions of young families with fewer economic resources. Increased risk where response times increase in family-heavy areas.	Universal HFSV eligibility. Targeted prevention through maternity and early-years pathways.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Gravesham (Thames-side overnight reduction) has a large Sikh community; Dartford has the highest Muslim and Hindu populations in Kent. Community and faith buildings create gathering risk in evening hours. The overnight reductions are the primary concern for this characteristic.	Continued protection and prevention activity. Engagement with faith leaders. Community building risk measured through Risk Based Intervention Programme
<b>LGBTQ+ / Gender Reassignment / Sexual Orientation</b>	Canterbury has the highest LGB+ population in Kent (4.49%); Herne Bay sits within Canterbury district. No direct disproportionate impact identified beyond the universal implications of reduced on-call section cover.	Inclusive service delivery. Visible signals of inclusion. Inclusive prevention messaging.

## PART F: Monitoring, review and success measures

### Monitoring framework

Action Item	Frequency	Purpose
Response time performance by geographic area with community risk overlay	Quarterly	Monitor material changes in response times by geography and risk profile
Fire and incident outcome monitoring	Monthly	Identify changes in severity, fatality, or injury patterns
HFSV and prevention activity data by station area	Quarterly	Ensure high-risk groups remain prioritised; measure increase in prevention delivery at Strood, Folkestone and Ashford
Building fire safety check review	Quarterly	Confirm protection activity maintained or increased; track additional fire safety checks enabled by increased daytime provision
Mutual aid protocol effectiveness	Post-incident	Confirm that agreed mutual aid protocols are delivering effective cover in closure areas
Partnership and Local Authority feedback	Ongoing	Capture intelligence on emerging community impacts from partners including adult social care, housing, and health
Post consultation and post implementation	Post-consultation and post-implementation	Reassess impact and mitigations following decisions; capture lived experience from affected communities
Site Specific Risk Information and highest-risk site review	Post-implementation	Ensure robust plans remain in place for the highest-risk places and spaces, including sites near county borders where information is shared with neighbouring services
Equality, accessibility and consultation reach review	At consultation close and post-implementation review	Confirm that accessible consultation measures, printed materials, website accessibility tools, and focus group engagement have supported fair access for different communities

### Success measures

If the proposals are appropriately mitigated and implemented, the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Reduction in the amount of time spent in level 5 degradation.
- No material increases in incidents at locations affected by closures or reductions.
- No material increases in fire severity outcomes from incidents in affected areas.
- Increase in HFSV delivery and building fire safety inspections in the Strood, Folkestone, and Ashford areas within 12 months of increased provision going live

- Community confidence maintained; complaints and negative community intelligence return to baseline levels within 12 months.
- Targeted HFSV programmes in closed-station catchments within 6 months of any closure.
- Site Specific Risk Information for the highest-risk places and spaces is reviewed and updated ahead of implementation, with cross-border information-sharing arrangements confirmed where neighbouring services may provide support
- Accessible consultation arrangements, including printed copies, website accessibility tools, and targeted focus group engagement, are demonstrated to have improved reach into communities less likely to engage through digital channels alone

*This PIA is a living document and will be updated as the Resourcing Review develops. It is intended to show clearly how community impact has been considered, what mitigation is already in place, and what further action can support safe and effective implementation.*

# People Impact Assessment

## Resourcing Review | Workforce

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<b>Date</b>	June 2026
<b>Author</b>	Leanne McMahon – Director Prevention, Protection and Engagement
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<b>Reviewed by</b>	Resourcing Review Project Team

### Purpose

This People Impact Assessment considers the workforce impacts arising from proposals within Kent Fire and Rescue Service's Resourcing Review in relation to actions for public engagement. There is a separate analysis for internal changes only. Its purpose is to ensure that changes to station configurations and operational availability are assessed fairly and transparently, in line with equality duties, organisational values and workforce wellbeing.

The assessment focuses on two groups of colleagues whose working arrangements are directly affected by the proposals. It identifies the impacts for each group, any mitigations KFRS, stations, managers and colleagues can apply, and the ongoing actions required to support fair and effective implementation.

This assessment does not determine the final decision. It informs the Resourcing Review Project Team, Strategic Leadership Board, Corporate Management Board, Fire Authority members, representative bodies, and colleagues of the potential people impact, any mitigations, and areas requiring further attention.

## What the proposals involve

The Resourcing Review seeks to rebalance fire engine cover across Kent and Medway by shifting resource toward the periods and locations of highest demand. The specific proposals relevant to this assessment are:

### Station changes going to public consultation

- Three additional wholetime fire engines available during the day (07:00 to 19:00) at Strood, Ashford, and Folkestone. These stations will have two wholetime fire engines during the day and one at night.
- The second fire engine at Dartford and Thames-side will be unavailable at night (19:00 to 07:00). Both stations will retain two fire engines during the day and one at night.
- Closure of five on-call stations: Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, Grain, and Westerham.
- Removal of the on-call section at four stations: Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham, and Tunbridge Wells. A wholetime engine will remain at each location 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Reinvestment of savings into seven new wholetime shift firefighter posts.

## Impact by colleague group

This section sets out the specific impacts and mitigations for each of the two groups of colleagues directly affected by these proposals.

Alongside the formal consultation, KFRS has already put in place a range of routes to inform, hear from and support colleagues. These include a written feedback route, the Ask the Chief process, regular updates to frequently asked questions and webinars led by the Chief and the Director of Response and Resilience.

Welfare support has also been made available through Station Leaders, Service Delivery and on-duty welfare officers. In addition, regular discussions have taken place with representative bodies so that questions, concerns and feedback can continue to inform the approach.

### Group 1: On-call firefighters at affected stations

Colleagues at Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, Grain, Westerham, Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham, and Tunbridge Wells

## What is changing

Five on-call stations at Chilham, Wye, Cliffe, Grain and Westerham are proposed for closure. At the four remaining stations Deal, Herne Bay, Faversham and Tunbridge Wells, the on-call section would be removed, though a wholetime engine always remains on station.

Colleagues who's on-call role ends as a result will be offered a structured set of options.

### Options available

- **Move to another on-call station.** Redeployment to a suitable nearby station with an extended trial period. If the move does not work out, the colleague remains eligible for a redundancy payment.
- **Transfer into wholetime.** Colleagues may apply to join the wholetime service through a practical assessment and values-based interview. Those who meet the required standard will be placed into a wholetime course within 18 months. An annualised hours contract covers the period before the course starts. Accepting the annualised contract removes eligibility for redundancy payment.
- **Move into a green book role.** Where a suitable green book post is available, colleagues may apply.
- **Voluntary redundancy.** Colleagues with more than two years of service receive a statutory redundancy payment plus a six-week goodwill payment. Those with less than two years receive the goodwill payment only. A week's pay is calculated on the average of earnings over the previous 12 weeks, including retaining fee, CPD, and activity payments.
- **Voluntary redundancy with early pension (age 55 or over).** Colleagues aged 55 or over may take both a redundancy payment and early access to their on-call pension. KFRS has agreed to fund the early payment cost. Retiring from the on-call contract does not affect any wholetime or green book contract.
- **Annualised hours contract.** Colleagues who do not wish to join wholetime, or who do not pass the migration assessment outright, may be offered an annualised hours contract, subject to availability and assessment outcome. Hours are typically needed during summer months for resilience. This contract ends on joining wholetime.

## Migration assessment process

Colleagues wishing to transfer into wholetime will attend a practical assessment day led by a Training, Technical and Professional Station Manager. Three assessment outcomes are possible:

- All required skills demonstrated: progression to a six-week migration course.
- Safe but benefiting from a full course, or not yet at end-point: progression to a full 16-week pathway course.
- Risk-critical concerns or values issues identified: no progression to wholetime.

For borderline cases, a development plan may allow the colleague to demonstrate readiness over an agreed period. Where there are significant risk-critical gaps, the development plan will be longer and the wholetime course offered at a later stage.

## Impacts and mitigations

Impact	Mitigation
Colleagues may feel their role and contribution is being undervalued because of station closure or appliance removal.	KFRS will communicate clearly and directly with all affected colleagues about the rationale for the changes, recognising the contribution on-call colleagues have made. All communications will be written in plain language accessible to a neurodiverse audience.
The range of options may be confusing or feel overwhelming, particularly for colleagues who process information differently.	Each colleague will be offered an individual conversation to talk through the options. Written summaries will be available in plain English. Multiple formats are available including written, verbal, and digital.
Colleagues may not meet the migration assessment standard and feel they have limited remaining options.	KFRS will discuss outcomes individually with each colleague. Where standards are not fully met, development pathways will be explored before an outcome is reached. All eligible redundancy entitlements will be clearly communicated.
The transition period between roles creates uncertainty that may affect wellbeing and financial security.	Annualised hours contracts maintain employment and pension rights during the transition. Occupational health and employee assistance support remain available throughout.
The closure of a local station may mean longer travel distances to an alternative role, which may disadvantage colleagues with caring responsibilities or limited transport.	Travel distance and caring responsibilities will be considered during individual conversations about options. HR and line manager support will be available for those facing difficulty.
Perceptions of how on-call and wholetime roles are valued may affect how some colleagues experience the change and may influence confidence in future on-call recruitment across the service.	Communication at service, station management and team level will explain how savings from on-call changes are being reinvested, including seven new wholetime posts, while also recognising the contribution of on-call colleagues. Representative bodies, managers and local leaders will be encouraged to reinforce this message consistently so colleagues can discuss concerns and perceptions openly.

## Group 2: Dual contractors at affected on-call stations

Colleagues holding both a grey book and a green book or wholetime contract at affected stations

### What is changing

Dual contractors at affected stations hold two separate employment contracts. If their on-call element ends because of these changes, they are offered two main options.

### Options available

- **Voluntary redundancy on the on-call contract.** Statutory redundancy payment (calculated on the government formula, capped at 20 years' service) plus a six-week ex-gratia goodwill payment. Colleagues with less than two years of service on the on-call contract receive the goodwill payment only. Weekly pay is calculated on the average of earnings over the previous 12 weeks, including retaining fee, CPD, and activity payments.
- **Annualised hours contract.** An alternative to redundancy. Grey book dual contractors continue to train on their wholetime contract. Green book dual contractors are required to complete 137 hours on station plus 96 hours of FirePro training to maintain competence. CPD payments continue as now for both groups. Payment for activity is at the on-call rate. Hours are typically required in summer months for resilience.

### Impacts and mitigations

Impact	Mitigation
Colleagues may not fully understand how their two contracts interact, particularly around redundancy eligibility and pension entitlements.	KFRS will provide individual briefings for dual contractors. Written guidance will clearly set out the position for both grey and green book contract holders. HR support will be available for any queries.
The distinction between the two contract types (grey book and green book) and the different competence requirements may cause confusion.	Separate plain-language guidance will be produced for grey book and green book dual contractors. Guidance on the Managing Structural Change policy will be shared as part of this.
Choosing the annualised hours route may affect how colleagues plan their time and finances if the hours are concentrated in summer months.	KFRS will communicate the expected shape of annualised hours clearly in advance, including which months hours are likely to be required, so colleagues can plan accordingly.

## Equality impact across all groups

KFRS is required under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to consider how these proposals may affect colleagues with protected characteristics. We have identified where there is potential impact.

Characteristic	Impact identified	Mitigation
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Station closures at locations with higher proportions of women may reduce gender diversity locally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender representation monitored after implementation.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No direct impact identified.</li> <li>Periods of significant change can increase anxiety for trans and non-binary colleagues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusive behaviours and confidentiality reinforced throughout consultation.</li> <li>Engagement with colleague networks and inclusion leads.</li> <li>Zero tolerance of harassment.</li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Station closures may disproportionately affect locations with higher representation of colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds.</li> <li>Consultation may feel less inclusive if engagement is not culturally accessible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baseline diversity data established at affected stations.</li> <li>Inclusive engagement methods used throughout.</li> <li>Recruitment, retention, and progression monitored.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability and neurodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neurodivergent colleagues may find prolonged uncertainty more difficult to manage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain English communications throughout, with accessible formats available through the service's intranet.</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No direct adverse impact identified.</li> <li>Prolonged change can affect the psychological safety of LGBTQ+ colleagues if leadership commitment to inclusion is not visible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusive workplaces and visible allyship maintained.</li> <li>Clear reporting routes for any discriminatory behaviour.</li> </ul>

## Outstanding actions and development commitments

The following actions are required to ensure the mitigations identified in this assessment are effective. They are tracked through the Resourcing Review Project and will be updated as the programme progresses. Actions are included at service, manager, station and colleague level where relevant.

## Engagement and communication

Impact	Mitigation
<p>Communications about complex options may not be clearly understood by all colleagues, particularly neurodivergent colleagues or those for whom English is not a first language.</p>	<p>All colleague-facing communications to be reviewed for plain language and accessibility before issue. Multiple formats available through accessible systems. Individual conversations offered to all directly affected colleagues.</p>
<p>The implementation approach may be strengthened or improved where representative bodies are engaged early enough to shape it.</p>	<p>Early and structured engagement with FBU and FRSA throughout consultation. Feedback loops built into the programme.</p>
<p>Managers may need support and practical tools to hold effective conversations with affected colleagues and to help teams work through the change locally.</p>	<p>Manager briefing and support materials developed ahead of consultation. HR available to support individual conversations.</p>

## Equality monitoring

Impact	Mitigation
<p>The cumulative impact on protected groups may not be fully visible unless monitoring is in place throughout implementation. This should include monitoring how the reduction in the number of occasions where double shifts can occur affects fatigue, attendance patterns, travel demands and access to workplace information for different groups of colleagues.</p>	<p>Baseline diversity data established. Annual monitoring of equality data, including by sex, race, age, disability, and employment type. Monitoring should also consider whether reducing the number of occasions where double shifts can occur is creating any unintended impact through increased travel, while also identifying any wellbeing or communication benefits linked to reduced fatigue and more regular attendance.</p>

## Monitoring and review

This assessment will be reviewed following formal consultation, updated as the programme progresses and monitored against the measures below. It should also continue to focus on the specific impact on KFRS colleagues.

What will be monitored	Frequency	Purpose
Workforce equality data by sex, race, age, disability, and employment type	Annually	To identify disproportionate impact on any protected group resulting from station, duty system, or contract changes.
Feedback from colleagues and representative bodies during consultation and implementation	Ongoing	To capture lived experience and ensure questions are identified and responded to in good time.
Colleague wellbeing	Periodic	To assess confidence in raising concerns, and overall wellbeing during the transition.
Reasonable adjustments audit	Periodic	To confirm existing adjustments are consistently reviewed, agreed, recorded.
Manager feedback and capability review	Periodic	To check managers are being adequately supported to lead their teams through the change.

