2020

LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

ARGYLL AND BUTE

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Foreword

Partnership working has never been more important as we focus on rebuilding and recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic. Thankfully, here in Argyll and Bute we have an excellent track record in partnership working. That's why I am particularly pleased to welcome the publication of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll and Bute.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service works alongside Argyll and Bute Council and other key partners, through the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership, to drive forward our Local Outcome Improvement Plan. SFRS understandably has a very significant role to play in the delivery of all outcomes and, in particular, our sixth and final measure, *People live in safer and stronger communities.* There are so many different elements to this, to all of which SFRS makes an important contribution -

We work together at all levels to ensure we achieve that goal – and in an area like Argyll and Bute, with its rich geographic mix of larger towns, rural and remote villages and hamlets, and island communities, strong and effective working relationships are a vital component of our success. Such an area depends on local knowledge and expertise, for example if looking at road safety on Argyll and Bute's scenic and popular rural roads network, as well as SFRS's more traditional operating areas relating to fire risks and prevention. Our friendly and positive working relationships from local stations to strategic management are a tremendous help when delivering services together across such a diverse area.

Every public sector agency faces considerable challenges in the current climate. Argyll and Bute is no exception but, by building on our experience of working well together, we will undoubtedly have the best chance of meeting those challenges head-on – in partnership.

Cllr Robin Currie
Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll & Bute. This plan has been developed to support the delivery of agreed local outcomes for Argyll & Bute's communities in conjunction with the national priorities contained within the SFRS Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022. With the ambition of working in partnership to improving community safety, enhancing the well-being of those living in, commuting to and/or utilizing Argyll & Bute whilst tackling issues of social inequality, this plan will set out our priorities in order to support this ambition. This Local Fire and Rescue Plan supports the Argyll & Bute Community Planning Partnership's (CPP) Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2013-2023.

This plan sets out my priorities and objectives for the SFRS within the Argyll & Bute Local Area for 2020 and beyond, and allows Local Authority partners to scrutinise the performance outcomes of these priorities. SFRS will work closely with partners in Argyll & Bute to ensure we are all "Working together for a safer Scotland" through targeting the risks to our communities at a local level.

As a public service organisation and as a member of the CPP, SFRS recognises that the diverse demographics of our society are changing which will challenge us to continually improve how we deliver our services to our communities. This Plan focuses on those areas of risk and demand in order to maximise the potential to work in partnership. By using our capacity flexibly, more effectively and innovatively, we can ensure that we direct our resources to the greatest points of need within our communities to protect those most at risk and harm. The demands placed upon the SFRS to respond to a wide variety of incidents challenges us to ensure our personnel acquire and maintain a range of skills to enable us to respond to emergencies. Through the identification and the management of risks within the area, we will continue to prepare for these responses. However, we recognise, on many occasions, this demand can be reduced through effective engagement and intervention measures and through our on-going involvement with local community safety groups in the Argyll & Bute Local Authority area, we will continue to develop our understanding of local needs and proactively seek out consultation opportunities with all sections of the community. Using this approach, we will ensure that the services we deliver are driven by consultation, in line with public expectations and will help build strong, safe and resilient communities.

Early in 2020 we faced an unprecedented challenge in the form of a global pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we dramatically changed how we worked so that we could continue to deliver an emergency service whilst keeping our staff and the public safe. The pandemic is expected to have a lasting effect on society and this will change the way in which we deliver services in the long-term. The full implications are not yet known and this makes it difficult to make any far-reaching plans with certainty. As such we will keep the priorities of this Plan under regular review to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate.

Joe McKay
Local Senior Officer

National Context

Scottish Ministers set out their specific expectations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016. This provides the outline we should follow to ensure our resources and activities are aligned with the Scottish Government's Purpose and national outcomes.

Our Strategic Plan 2019-22 has been designed to meet these national expectations. Set against a complex and evolving backdrop our Strategic Plan encapsulates our mission, values and our strategic outcomes and objectives.

To ensure we can prevent the worst from happening and to be fully prepared to respond should we be called, we need to be aware of any newly developing and/or changing risks which threaten the safety of communities or the workforce. When developing our most recent plan, cognisance was given to: our changing population and the forecasted rise in over 75s: doing what we can to balance social and economic inequality; climate change and the devastating impact the inclement weather can have on peoples' lives and livelihoods; and the threat of terrorism.

Our Strategic Plan is supported by a three-year Strategic Plan Programme which provides details on all the activities we intend to carry out to successfully achieve our ambitions. The Programme informs our Annual Operating Plan, which provides specific detail on the actions we carry out each year, and from which our performance is scrutinised.

This Plan is a statutory Local Fire and Rescue Plan. It sets local direction to meet the strategic outcomes and objectives outlined above. It also demonstrates how we will contribute to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).

Local Context

The current population of Argyll & Bute, which is around 87,000 and constitutes 1.6% of the total number of persons living in Scotland, is predicted to decrease at a time when Scotland's population is predicted to increase by 2030. Whilst the population within Argyll & Bute may decrease, the demographical aspect of the area suggests a projected increase in elderly residents by 10% for persons of pensionable age.

1	Cowal
2	Dunoon
3	Helensburgh and Lomond South
4	Helensburgh Central
5	Isle of Bute
6	Kintyre and the Islands
7	Lomond North
8	Mid Argyll
9	Oban North and Lorn
10	Oban South and the Isles
11	South Kintyre

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
SERVICE DELIVERY AREA **WEST**

ARGYLL AND BUTE

KEY
LSO HQ
Wholetime
Wholetime & RDS
RDS
Volunteer

'M' on a station symbol denotes a multi-pump station.

To enable the SFRS to plan and deliver on a proactive and reactive basis, it is important to understand where and how demand for fire and rescue resources may arise in the short, medium and longer term. As a local authority area, Argyll & Bute is constituted by eleven multi-member electoral wards covering a range of diverse urban and rural communities over approximately 2,668 square miles. Emergency response within the local authority area is provided from thirty-nine (39) locations comprising of two wholetime stations (permanently crewed) and 37 stations which operate on an 'On Call' basis.

Argyll & Bute has a significant proportion of its population within island communities. The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 introduces measures to support and help meet the unique needs of Scotland's islands now and in the future. SFRS is listed as a relevant authority within the Bill and are working collaboratively to support The Islands Plan by supporting objectives set out within the plan towards enabling and empowering communities. In our commitment to advocate such objectives, along with the rural and remote nature of some of our communities within Argyll & Bute, we have introduced six full time Watch Commander posts with the remit of supporting and strengthening our retained and volunteer systems within the area.

Review of operational activity across Argyll & Bute indicates a slight increase in overall activity levels over the last three years (2016-19). In terms of fire related activity, dwelling fires have shown a slight increase. As we move forward the continued targeting of our most at risk from unintentional harm and an increase in Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) should drive these incidents down. The provision of early warning has contributed significantly to reducing the severity of fires within the home with the majority of these incidents being dealt with in their initial stages. We will continue to work with our partners within Argyll & Bute to improve the safety of communities.

Non-Domestic fires including deliberate fire setting, on average, accounts for just 1 in 40 operational responses and trend analysis indicates a decrease in levels of this activity type over the last three years. Analysis identifies deliberate fire setting is occurring on an ongoing basis, although peak activity has been identified in the same periods each year.

Whilst attendances at Non-Fire Emergency incidents and attendance at other agencies assistance on average account for around 1 in every 6 operational mobilisations, and are less than the number of fire related incidents, the number of fatalities and casualties are notably higher than fire related injuries (fatal and non-fatal). Moreover, the majority of non-fire emergency casualties (fatal and non-fatal) are as a result of road traffic collisions within Argyll & Bute. Another emerging trend has been identified in those persons requiring assistance from other organisations, which results in support being requested from the SFRS in the form of forcing entry into premises to render assistance to occupants or the provision of first responder (medical) assistance.

Whilst many incidents within Argyll & Bute are as a result of a confirmed genuine emergency, on average around 63% of emergency responses made by the SFRS turn out to be False Alarms or Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. These alarms may be as a result of a genuine belief that a fire is occurring which subsequently is confirmed not to be the case or through malicious activity resulting in a report of fire being made knowing this report is false in its nature. There are also a number of warnings of fire generated by fire alarm systems which, following an attendance and investigation, turn out to be false in their origin. Currently attendances to

premises which generate these false signals account on average for half of all emergency responses within Argyll & Bute resulting in disruption to those within the premises in which the alarm activates and also to the SFRS who, on many occasions, are diverted from other activities to attend these incidents.

Reducing service demand, whilst developing the role of the SFRS as part of the ongoing process of public service reform, presents both challenges and opportunities for us to become more integrated in the community planning partnership environment. The introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 has result in the development of Argyll & Bute's Local Outcome Improvement Plan through a process of locality planning which is designed to deliver local outcomes that make a positive contribution across Argyll & Bute's communities and to reduce inequalities. In developing this Local Fire and Rescue Plan, the SFRS will seek to ensure its activities compliment and support the locality planning process. With the development of the local community justice strategy within Argyll & Bute following the introduction of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, the SFRS will ensure, as a partner within the Community Justice Authority, its resources contribute to support the delivery of the local justice strategy.

The delivery of shared outcomes is embedded within Argyll & Bute through its range of community planning approaches. Argyll & Bute's Community Planning Partnership is committed to the delivery of its vision of being "a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high-quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs."

Through the development of its Local Outcome Improvement Plans and associated key strategic priorities focused on Economy and Skills, Safer Communities and Wellbeing, the SFRS takes an active role in the delivery of these priorities and their intended outcomes through participation and engagement across the partnership arena. Only by working in partnership will all services fully deliver governance arrangements, statutory duties utilising all staff and volunteers to their full potential. Partnership working is something we do very well in Argyll & Bute and all involved get a lot out of the partnership and working together. Every level of the CPP needs to have the right people. Being a member of the CPP does require time and commitment - both as an individual and as a representative of a member organisation - and there are expectations of each organisation to deliver for our communities. The overarching purpose of our work as a Partnership is securing economic success through a growing population – reinforcing the clear message that Argyll & Bute is a great place to live, work, learn, visit, invest, do business and more. It is a message that Community Planning Partners quite simply live and breathe in practice, too – we all carry out our core business and deliver our essential services in Argyll & Bute, and we depend on its success as much as everyone else who lives and works here.

SFRS has participated in the development of Argyll & Bute Local Outcome Improvement Plan and its six outcomes:

1. The economy is diverse and thriving.
2. We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth.
3. Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all.
4. Children and young people have the best possible start.
5. People live active, healthier and independent lives.
6. People live in safer and stronger communities.

Youth Volunteer Scheme based at Helensburgh, Campbelltown and Tobermory Community Fire Stations during the launch at our National Training Centre in Cambuslang.

Performance Scrutiny

Overseeing the performance of the SFRS at local level is the responsibility of Argyll & Bute's Policy, Review & Scrutiny Committee. Within this forum the Committee undertakes the process of scrutiny to monitor progress against the priorities within Argyll & Bute's Local Fire and Rescue Plan and it also engages with the Local Senior Officer in matters arising on a regional or national basis.

Local Priorities

In identifying the priorities for this Plan (listed below), we engaged with communities and stakeholders in Argyll & Bute. The engagement process involved asking the views of citizens in relation to what the SFRS priorities should be within the local area, what additional work SFRS should undertake and asking if SFRS should target those most at risk. This proved valuable in ensuring that the services SFRS delivers meets the needs and expectations of the local community

Priority 1. **Domestic Fire Safety**
Priority 2. **Unintentional Harm and Injury**
Priority 3. **Road Safety**
Priority 4. **Deliberate Fire Setting**
Priority 5. **Non-Domestic Fire Safety**
Priority 6. **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals**
Priority 7. **Operational Resilience and Preparedness**

SFRS Local Area Plan Priorities / LOIP Outcomes	**Priority 1** Domestic Fire Safety	**Priority 2** Unintentional Harm and Injury	**Priority 3** Road Safety	**Priority 4** Deliberate Fire Setting	**Priority 5** Non-Domestic Fire Safety	**Priority 6** Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)	**Priority 7** Operational Resilience & Preparedness
Outcome 1 The economy is diverse and thriving.		✓					✓
Outcome 2 We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth.							✓
Outcome 3 Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all.	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Outcome 4 Children and young people have the best possible start.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Outcome 5 People live active, healthier and independent lives.	✓	✓	✓				✓
Outcome 6 People live in safer and stronger communities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

1. Domestic Fire Safety

Fire safety within the home is a key prevention strategy for the SFRS as the consequence of fires within the home can result in a range of impacts on individuals, families, social landlords and communities. For organisations, the requirement to respond, intervene and deal with the aftermath of domestic fires places demand on their resources. To reduce this demand, it is essential that any approaches to prevention are evidence-based to maximise and focus resources in order to make the biggest impact and to safeguard those most at risk of fire.

Analysis of accidental dwelling fire data identifies cooking as the most common cause of fires within the home in Argyll & Bute and also the most prevalent cause where fire related injuries are sustained by occupants. Distraction has been identified as the main contributory factor where accidental dwelling fires and/or injuries occur. Those who are deemed at risk from fire may also have other vulnerabilities and impairments due to age, health or mobility reasons such as long-term limiting illness and other socio-demographic factors, however they may also be receiving support from other partners. The scope therefore exists to work more closely together to protect those most at risk from fire through effective information sharing.

In order to reduce the potential for fires from occurring, influencing positive change in occupant behaviours through raising fire safety awareness will be at the forefront of our preventative activities. By increasing the ownership of working smoke detection, the means of giving early warning of fire will also contribute to mitigating the severity of fires and fire related injuries within the home. By using assistive technology such as 'Telecare', the opportunity exists to further enhance the safety of those who are at risk from fire.

We will seek to reduce accidental dwelling fires and fire related injuries within the home by:

- *Promoting and undertaking Home Fire Safety Visits to those deemed at risk from fire.*
- *Working with our partners in Argyll & Bute to share information where fire risks within the home have been identified and to provide solutions to protect those who are at risk.*
- *Focusing engagement activities in those areas where Service demand has been identified.*
- *Supporting the provision of assistive technology within the home to increase occupant safety.*

We will monitor our progress in promoting our domestic safety strategy by:

- *Reducing the number of accidental dwelling fires and their severity.*
- *Reducing the number and the severity of fatal and non-fatal fire related injuries.*
- *Increasing the presence of working smoke/heat detection within homes of the most vulnerable.*

By achieving a reduction in the frequency and severity of accidental dwelling fires and fire related injuries we will:

- *Support the safety and wellbeing of Argyll & Bute residents.*
- *Support the independent living of vulnerable members within our communities.*
- *Reduce the social and economic cost of fires and fire related injuries.*
- *Reduce demand on the SFRS and its partners.*
- *Make our communities safer.*

2. Unintentional Harm and Injury

It is not uncommon for those at risk from fire to also be at risk from other types of accident/incident within the home resulting in injury, in particular those arising from slips, trips and falls. Requests to the SFRS to provide aid and assistance directly through a first responder role or to provide support to other agencies when attending these types of incidents are increasing. Analysis of incident data indicates that falls are a common cause of accidental deaths and injuries and these account for a significant proportion of admissions to hospital. Those persons injured through falls may often by affected by other medical conditions such as dementia. The SFRS has a role to play in contributing to the protection of those at risk from injury and harm within the home. Through operational attendances and delivery of home fire safety visits, we have the opportunity to identify those at risk and, through an assessment of such risk, refer individuals to partner organisations for additional support.

Out-with the domestic environment, the SFRS respond to a range of non-fire related emergencies. We respond to flooding and water related incidents throughout the region. We will continue to develop our staff to meet local needs including undertaking preventative measures such as water safety inputs to children as well as working with our Local Resilience Partners and other key groups to minimise the risk. To maximise impact and safety within our communities our resources are continually reviewed to ensure they are situated in the correct locations.

Almost 3,500 people in Scotland undergo attempted resuscitation each year after an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA), with only one in twenty surviving an OHCA to return home. By undertaking a role in emergency medical response, firefighters can play a vital role in the survival rate for people suffering and surviving a cardiac arrest.

SFRS education programmes will focus on two main areas:

- The Curriculum for Excellence part of the programme delivered by teachers.
- Specific school programmes delivered by specialist trained staff and operational crews, in conjunction with partner agencies. Engagement activities such as, awareness briefs (bonfire), RTC awareness, Fireskills, CPR and mentoring.

Due to the increase in number of non-fire related incidents now attended by the SFRS and the increased emphasis being given to road safety within Argyll & Bute, road safety is now included within priority area 3. – Road Traffic Collisions.

We will seek to reduce the impact of unintentional injury and harm by:

- *Utilising our Home Fire Safety Visit programme to assess for non-fire related risk and refer those deemed at risk from injury and harm to partners to provide additional support.*
- *Raising awareness of Fire and Rescue Service personnel as to those factors that increase the risk of unintentional injury or harm.*
- *Working in partnership to deliver targeted road safety programmes to young drivers.*
- *Focusing resources where demand has been identified and delivering key safety messages.*
- *Reducing the amount of people impacted by Out of Hours Cardiac Arrests (OHCA).*

We will monitor the effectiveness of our intervention strategies by:

- *Reviewing the number of requests for assistance from other agencies and for the provision of medical and first responder support.*
- *Reducing the number of other non-fire related emergencies and the frequency and severity of injuries arising from these incidents.*

By achieving a reduction in the frequency and severity of unintentional harm and injuries we will:

- *Reduce the social and economic cost of unintentional harm and injury.*
- *Support vulnerable members within our communities to live independently within their communities.*
- *Ensure the safety and wellbeing of those living, working and visiting Argyll & Bute.*
- *Make our communities safer.*

3. Road Safety

The most common non-fire related incident type attended within Argyll & Bute out with the domestic environment are Road Traffic Collisions (RTC). This incident type has resulted in both fatal and non-fatal injuries. Consequences of RTC's can have a serious impact on those involved, their families and the predominantly rural communities they live in.

The number of people seriously and slightly injured on the region's roads has dropped considerably from previous reporting periods and is in line with Scottish Government expectations. Although the number of people killed has reduced over the years, this is still short of our local ambitions. Improvements in this priority area can be attributed to ongoing education programmes, encouragement, enforcement, road improvements and advances in car technology. However, a single road death is still one too many and, as an organisation, we will continue to work towards 'zero' road deaths on the region's roads.

Responding to RTCs is a statutory duty for the SFRS, however a collective approach is required amongst community planning partners to support risk reduction measures. As a partner, the SFRS will support the education of young drivers who are considered to be an 'at risk' group and support other initiatives intended to reduce the instances and impact of RTCs within Argyll & Bute. We will continue to support and drive forward initiatives through our membership of the Argyll and Bute Road Safety Partnership.

We will seek to reduce the number of Road Traffic Collisions and resulting fatal and non-fatal injuries on the region's roads by:

- *Working in partnership to deliver targeted road safety programmes to young drivers.*
- *Working in partnership to deliver targeted road safety programmes and messages to 'Priority Focus Areas' including speed and motorcycles, vulnerable road users, and age.*
- *Working with and leading Argyll and Bute Road Safety Partnership to analyse data, identify action areas and create initiatives to reduce deaths and injuries, to meet the Scottish Government's ambition of zero deaths on Scotland's roads.*
- *Working with our partners in Argyll & Bute to share information where RTC trend patterns have been identified to assist with remedial work and reduction strategies.*

We will monitor our progress in promoting road safety by:

- *Reducing, year on year, the number of fatalities and casualties from RTC's in Argyll & Bute.*

By achieving a reduction in the number of Road Traffic Collisions and the severity of those injured we will:

- *Make our communities safer.*
- *Support the independent living of vulnerable members within our most rural communities by having access to safer roads.*
- *Provide empowerment opportunities for communities and individuals.*
- *Reduce demand on the SFRS and its partners.*
- *Reduce the number of hospital admissions, and the associated costs to the NHS and other organisations due to RTC related injuries.*
- *Encourage young drivers and other groups to be responsible road users through active engagement and education.*

4. Deliberate Fire Setting

Deliberate fire setting accounts for a significant number of operational incidents with Argyll & Bute and takes various forms. Whilst a small proportion involves occupied buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures (primary fires), the preponderance of deliberate fires are classed as secondary in nature and, on most occasions, occur in outdoor locations.

Analysis of incident data identifies deliberate secondary fires occurring throughout the year, however peak activity is noted in the springtime, during the bonfire season and when prolonged periods of dry weather arise. Deliberate fire setting is regarded as anti-social behaviour and is also criminal in nature. These acts can lead to serious consequences such as personal injury, injury to others, damage to property and the environment. Dealing with instances of deliberate fire setting also diverts fire and rescue resources from other meaningful activities.

Working in partnership, we will seek to combine our information to identify those parts of our communities that are being affected by anti-social behaviour in order to reduce such instances whilst tackling the underlying causes of such behaviour. On some occasions the SFRS will work with Police Scotland to investigate deliberate fire setting to determine the cause and, if possible, those responsible for such acts. Diversionary and engagement activity is regarded as an important approach in tackling anti-social behaviour and will continue to be part of our approach to raise awareness of the impact of this unwanted activity.

We will seek to reduce the instances of fire related anti-social behaviour by:

- *Identifying those parts of Argyll & Bute's communities affected by deliberate fire setting to share this information with our partners.*
- *Utilising our Firesetters' and school's education programmes to raise awareness of the impact of fire related anti-social behaviour.*
- *Working with partners to develop joint strategies to reduce the risk posed by deliberate fire setting and to mitigate its impacts.*

We will monitor the effectiveness of reducing fire related anti-social behaviour by:

- *Reducing the number and type of deliberate fire setting incidents within Argyll & Bute.*
- *Evaluating the effectiveness of our young engagement programmes.*

By achieving a reduction in fire related anti-social behaviour, we will:

- *Enable the SFRS to divert its resources towards other community-based activities.*
- *Protect the natural and built environment.*
- *Support the promotion of active and responsible citizenship across Argyll & Bute's communities.*
- *Support our communities in feeling safe from crime, disorder and danger.*

5. Non-Domestic Fire Safety

In general, all workplaces and businesses are classed as non-domestic premises and as such come within the scope of Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (the Act) which places duties on persons responsible for these premises to comply with the Act and its associated regulations. The SFRS has a statutory duty to promote fire safety and, where required, enforce compliance with fire safety legislation. To discharge this duty and to secure compliance, the SFRS has adopted an approach utilising advice, education and where required formal enforcement powers.

Given the variety of premises which come within the scope of the Act, the SFRS has developed a Fire Safety Enforcement Framework which is based on the principal of risk combined with historical fire data across occupancy groups to create the Fire Safety Audit Programme. Those premises which present a higher degree of risk from fire are subject to regular fire safety audits to verify compliance.

The occurrence of fire in non-domestic premises can have a devastating impact on business, employment, the provision of critical services and also our heritage. Evidence suggests that premises affected by a serious fire experience a high failure rate. The SFRS will undertake its audit programme to support Argyll & Bute's ambition to grow its economy during this challenging period following Coronavirus, and seek to safeguard its culture, heritage and continuation of employment opportunities.

We will seek to reduce the instances of fires within non-domestic property by:

- *Undertaking our Fire Safety Audit Programme in accordance with the SFRS Fire Safety Enforcement Framework.*
- *Engaging with duty holders to promote responsible fire safety management of premises that come under the auspices of Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.*
- *Working in partnership to ensure the appropriate provision of fire safety standards are incorporated in new premises under construction or premises undergoing material changes.*

- *Working in partnership with other enforcement agencies and organisations to support legislative compliance.*

We will monitor the effectiveness of reducing fires in non-domestic premises by:

- *Reducing the number of fires in non-domestic premises and the type of premises involved in fire.*
- *Reviewing the number and types of fire safety audits carried out across Argyll & Bute.*
- *Reviewing the outcome of fire safety audits carried out in non-domestic premises.*

By achieving a reduction in fires within non-domestic premises we will:

- *Enable the industrial, commercial, and service sector to maintain business continuity and employment across Argyll & Bute.*
- *Reduce the potential for loss of life and injury.*
- *Protect Argyll & Bute's culture and heritage.*
- *Protect the natural and built environment and reduce the impact of fire on our communities.*

6. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Fire protection within premises can be viewed as a holistic approach for the purposes of safeguarding life and/or property by inhibiting, growth and spread of fire. The design and use of premises will influence the extent of the fire protection required to be incorporated within it. In developing a fire protection strategy for the various premises' types and for that strategy to be successful, a key component is the provision of early warning of fire. The provision of early warning enables those within premises sufficient time for them to exit the building to a place of safety in the event of fire.

Whilst a small number of fire alarm signals generated are due to confirmed fire conditions being present, there are an even greater number of signals generated, which when investigated, have occurred when no fire conditions have been present. On such occasions these are known as 'Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals' (UFAS) which is defined as 'an event which has required an operational attendance by the fire and rescue service due to the unwanted actuation of a fire alarm system'. On these instances the signal may originate from a monitoring/call centre as a result of an automatic activation of the fire alarm system or a person activating the fire alarm system either maliciously or with good intentions believing a fire was occurring within a non-domestic premises.

The impact of responding to UFAS incidents causes disruption to the total working environment of the premises and to the range of activities the SFRS undertake. Unnecessary blue light journeys, whilst responding to UFAS incidents, create additional risks and hazards to firefighters and to the public and also have a detrimental impact on the environment through the generation of additional carbon emissions. Active and positive engagement with occupiers to take responsibility in limiting the number of UFAS incidents within their premises is integral to reducing these impacts.

We will seek to reduce the instances of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by:

- *Investigating every cause of alarm and engaging with those responsible for fire warning systems following an operational attendance at a UFAS incident.*
- *Analysing our UFAS attendances at those premises that give cause to frequent generation of false alarms to identify trends and support occupiers to develop demand reduction plans.*

- *Instigating, where required, formal fire safety enforcement measures to ensure appropriate demand reduction action is taken by those responsible for premises generating unacceptable levels of false alarms.*

We will monitor the effectiveness of mobilising to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by:

- *Reducing the number of attendances at non-domestic premises and reviewing the type of premises generating unwanted false alarm signals across Argyll & Bute.*
- *Evaluating the outcomes of occupier's demand reduction plans to review progress and identify and share good practice.*
- *Reviewing our attendances at UFAS incidents to ensure our attendances are based on an assessment of risk and demand.*

By achieving a reduction in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals, we will:

- *Minimise the disruption to business and service continuity across Argyll & Bute.*
- *Increase the capacity of the fire and rescue service to carry out other activities.*
- *Reduce the risk to firefighters and the public whilst responding to UFAS incidents.*

7. Operational Resilience and Preparedness

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire (Additional Function) (Scotland) Order 2005 defines the duties and responsibilities for the SFRS in relation to responding to emergencies. It is essential that our firefighters possess the skills, knowledge and expertise to enable them to respond efficiently and effectively to incidents which, by their nature, can be varied in both their type and complexity.

It is important that our firefighters understand the risks across their communities to ensure the level of risk is matched by an appropriate level of operational response. In gathering this knowledge, appropriate training can be carried out to safeguard firefighter safety and to ensure any such response results in an effective and efficient deployment of our resources.

Emergency responses across Argyll & Bute includes firefighters operating within the Retained Duty System (RDS) and Volunteer Duty System (VDS). This duty system is based on an "On-Call" provision with our RDS firefighters responding from home and/or primary work locations. Given the dynamic nature of this duty system and to support a balance between primary, personal and firefighting commitments, each RDS Station requires a sufficient number of RDS and VDS firefighters to ensure this vital resource is available when required.

There will also be occasions whereby the nature of an emergency will require a combined operational response by emergency services and other organisations in order to deal with such a significant and/or major event. To ensure a co-ordinated response occurs, additional duties are placed upon the SFRS under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to prepare for and be able to respond to and deal with major emergencies. The scope of such preparations will include responding to adverse weather events including flooding, natural disasters, pandemics, chemical incidents or major transport incidents. The threat of terrorism also compels the SFRS to ensure that it can also respond alongside other partner agencies should such an event occur.

As an emergency responder, the SFRS needs to ensure that it has the capability and capacity to plan, prepare and respond to major emergencies. Working in partnership at a local and national level, the multi-agency joint approach requires those involved to assess these risks in order to develop appropriate integrated response plans. Following development, these plans

require to be tested in operational preparedness for such events and to support a return to normality following a significant event and subsequent disruption.

We recognise the potential for the role of the SFRS to evolve which provides scope to further protect those members of our communities from harm in the event of an emergency. Assisting other agencies in emergency situations, such as responding to 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests' is one example where resources can be combined to maximise the potential for positive outcomes for those requiring assistance. Out with emergency responses the opportunity also exists to promote and support community resilience in dealing with adverse weather events and to improve the survivability rates from cardiac arrests through active engagement and education across Argyll & Bute communities.

We will seek to ensure operational response and preparedness within Argyll & Bute is maintained by:

- *Fulfilling our statutory duties in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.*
- *Ensuring all known risk information is obtained, communicated and exercised.*
- *Working locally with partner organisations and agencies to ensure effective response plans are developed for identified risks.*
- *Ensuring our training, staff development and equipment is fit for purpose to meet our current risk profile and adaptable to changing circumstances.*
- *Continuously reviewing our response arrangements.*
- *Adapting and evolving our response and service delivery models to meet future emerging risks.*

We will monitor our effectiveness against the following:

- *We will visit high risk premises on a regular basis to ensure our staff are aware of the hazards and risks posed by these premises.*
- *We will participate fully in all multi agency training and exercising events.*
- *We will use internal SFRS reporting systems to monitor the operational competence of our personnel.*

In doing so we will add value by:

- *Keeping members of the public and our staff safe, should any incident occur.*
- *Reducing the financial burden and disruption caused to our communities when emergencies do occur.*
- *Protecting the wealth and prosperity of our area.*
- *Proactively helping the wider community by preventing emergencies and planning to mitigate their effects when they occur.*

Review

To ensure this Local Fire and Rescue Plan remains flexible to emerging local or national priorities, a review may be carried out at any time but will be reviewed at least once every three years. A review may also be carried out if the Scottish Minister directs it or if a new Strategic Plan is approved. Following a review, the Local Senior Officer may revise the Plan.

Contact Us

We are fully committed to continually improving the service we provide to our communities and recognise that to achieve this goal we must listen and respond to the views of the public and our partners.

We use all feedback we receive to monitor our performance and incorporate this information into our planning and governance processes in order to continually improve our service. We are proud that the majority of feedback we receive is positive and we are keen to hear examples of good practice and quality service delivery that exemplifies the standards of service that we strive to provide for the communities of Scotland.

If you have something you would like to share with us or you require additional information, you can get in touch in a number of ways:

Write to:	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Argyll & Bute, East and West Dunbartonshire Area HQ 2 Kilbowie Road Clydebank G81 6QT
Phone:	01389 385999
Visit our website:	www.firescotland.gov.uk
Follow us on Twitter	@scotfire_ABEWDHQ
Like us on Facebook	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

firescotland.gov.uk