



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

End of Year Performance

1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

**Together We
Make Life Safer**

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



This has been a challenging and unprecedented year for the Service, and our communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the year and impacted the working practices of the Service in various ways, but operational and corporate performance have remained strong, illustrating how both the Service and its workforce have adapted to the unparalleled circumstances the pandemic has created.

The number and types of incidents have varied throughout the year, reflecting the pandemic lockdowns and their impact on both commercial and domestic activity, and behaviour. For example, there was an increase in outdoor fires in the early summer (when initial lockdown restrictions eased) – relating to the domestic use of disposable BBQs, which particularly effected the Isle of Wight and New Forest areas. Furthermore, fire casualties reduced significantly compared to last year, though there was a small increase in fire fatalities.

Combined Fire Authority

2020/21 saw the continued and extensive preparations for the new Combined Fire Authority. In advance of the combination, we built upon the existing partnership and increasingly embedded aligned working practices, integrated services and technology, and continued our organisational focus on policies, procedures and guidance. Our combined authority has been three years in the making and the 1st April 2021 was a historic day for the fire service, becoming one organisation with a single purpose of helping to make the lives of our communities safer.

The COVID-19 pandemic

The Service has played a critical role within the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum (HIOWLRF) and its response to COVID-19 - for example, chairing the Strategic Coordination Group and hosting the Strategic Coordination Centre at our Eastleigh Headquarters; leading work around logistics, media activity and business continuity; and delivering additional activities, such as ambulance driving, hospital ICU care, the successful establishment of Basingstoke fire station as a vaccination centre, and detached and voluntary vaccinators. We have also led the HIOWLRF work to ensure any surplus vaccines on Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are made available to LRF partners – and as a result around 15,000 vaccines had been utilised as at the end of March 2021.

We harnessed and utilised our ICT infrastructure, ensuring we were, and continue to be, able to maintain critical and other activities with many staff working from home or having to work differently.

Whilst the pandemic continues, there remains uncertainty of its overall impact, including on the Services' financial position and the medium and long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of our people, whom we continue to provide extensive support and communications to. We have operated effectively, with new working practices and comparably low COVID-19 sickness levels (which have been monitored regularly through Power BI dashboards that provided a 'live' picture of absence to monitor the impact on our teams and business continuity).





Basingstoke Fire Station

repurposed as
a vaccination centre

24

Firefighters detached
driving ambulances



36,050 estimated vaccinations
administered by HIWFRS staff

60+ HIWFRS staff trained to administer
vaccinations across the county

27 firefighters working in

4 hospitals intensive care unit settings, working

396 shifts in ICU on

88 intensive care beds



3

Positive hours Co-responder cars and Small Fires
Vehicles (SFV's) utilised to provide additional resilience
and support for SCAS



354

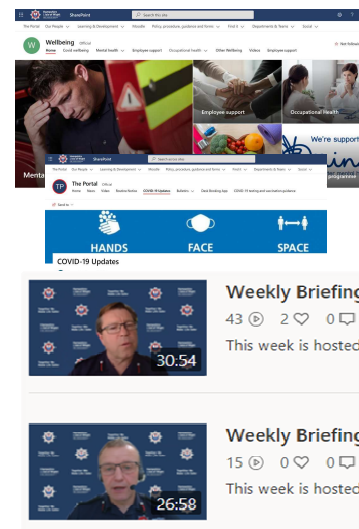
mask fittings for SCAS, as well as separate mask
fitting support for Hampshire Constabulary

6,858 lateral flow tests completed



Supporting and communicating to our people

A range of wellbeing resources have been signposted via our Wellbeing Portal, there has been interactive communication, and a range of other support and communication resources are available.



Staff have been vaccinated to provide resilience and business continuity; while lateral flow tests have helped prevent the spread of the virus and maintain comparably low absence levels.

HMICFRS inspection

Following HMICFRS's COVID-19 inspection of HIWFRS's response to the pandemic, the inspectorate published a report in January 2021 that concluded they were impressed with how effectively we responded to support both our communities and our people.

“In summary, we are impressed by how the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively to fulfil its statutory functions, protect the public and support staff wellbeing”
(HMI Matt Parr)



Following the launch of the new joint Safety Plan in April 2020, the Services' approach to tracking and monitoring our performance has developed, with a focus on our collective purpose of how 'Together we make life safer' for the people of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The report's key facts and summary are framed around the Safety Plan priorities, with the incorporation of island performance given the 1st April 2021 combination, where possible.



**Our
Communities**



Our People



**High
Performance**



Public Value



**Learning and
Improving**





21,571 incidents, -4% vs 2019/20

67 high rise incidents vs **67** 2019
(high rise: dwelling fires of 4 storey+)

4,228 

Fires +2% (+103 incidents) vs 2019/20, mainly owing to a 29% (+260) increase in grass fires. Nationally, 6% decrease in fires (2020 vs 2019).

7,617 

False Alarms -3% decrease vs 2019/20. Nationally, decrease (2020 vs 2019) by 1%

9,726 

Special Service Calls (includes RTCs) -7% decrease vs 2019/20. Nationally, decrease (2020 vs 2019) by 2%. RTCs have declined 24% due to the pandemic reducing activity)

Station Group activity Southampton & New Forest followed by Portsmouth Havant & East Hants remain the busiest groups (by incident volumes) due to the population density of Southampton and Portsmouth.

Summary: Increases in fires have been influenced by **outdoor fires** (mainly grass fires) attributed to warmer dry weather conditions, combined with lifted COVID-19 pandemic restrictions encouraging population activity outside. This combination of events saw a rise of **fires with careless disposal of BBQs/cigarettes (parks, open spaces, forests)** and led to our consequent engagement with local authorities to assist with identifying key locations (via analytical briefings/reports) with supporting prevention and communication campaigns in locally effected areas.

A small decrease in **false alarms** (due to apparatus) was related to non-essential premises being closed during the initial COVID-19 lockdowns, with staff based at home. It should be noted nationally false alarms remain one of the highest incident categories recorded. With growing numbers of commercial premises, fitted with detectors and more regulation control, this incident type is set to remain high (both locally and nationally) but should not give rise to concern; although our resources are impacted when called.

In terms of special service calls, overall **RTC incidents** saw the greatest decrease, followed by effecting entry/exit. Medical incidents saw a slight increase, primarily owing to additional support to SCAS – with peaks of support in the height of the pandemic waves, particularly in early 2021.

7 fatalities (+2 increase vs 2019) occurred this financial year; **5 were female** (a shift from all male); aged **54 to 101 years old**. Two fires were careless disposal of smoking materials and two were suicides.

HIWFRS fatalities & casualties summary

7 fire fatalities
vs 5 2019/20



90 fire casualties
-7% vs 2019/20

fire casualties
60% male
19% related to cooking

15 RTC fatalities
-25% vs 2019/20



388 RTC casualties
-15% vs 2019/20

40% female
34% related to cooking

49 SCC fatalities
-25% vs 2019/20
Such as suicide, assist other agencies, persons trapped

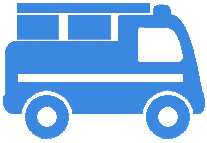


209 SCC casualties
-4% vs 2019/20
Such as medical cases assisting other agencies, rescues



HIWFRS call handling response
97% were answered in 7 seconds or less

35,602 calls
-7% vs 2019/20



HIWFRS 2019/20 vs 2020/21 incidents -
4% decline mirrors national decrease

21,571 incidents
vs 22,398, 2019/20



HIWFRS fire fatalities an increase of 2
compared to 2019/20. 5 female and 2 male; aged 54–
101, 2 due to smoking materials, 2 due to suicide

7 fire fatalities
vs 5, 2019/20



HIWFRS critical response
7 mins 45 secs
vs 7:38 2019/20

Urban **7 mins 30 secs**
Rural **10 mins 40 secs**
vs 2019/20 Urban 7:25 & Rural
10:02



**HIWFRS 80.0% combined on-call
availability**
vs 75.2% 2019/20



1,235
-26% vs 2019/20

HIWFRS 97% building regulation consultations
completed on time, a 13%-point improvement vs 2019/20

590
+11% vs 2019/20

HIWFRS 88% licensing consultations
completed on time, a 15%-point improvement vs 2019/20



All HIWFRS S&W activity 10,076 vs 9,308 2019/20
Of which ...

5,420 face to face

2,279 telephone risk assessments (new)

1,195 refused entry

1,182 could not contact (on multiple occasions)

2,762

over-65s, and those with a disability



10,076 Safe and Well activity

vs 9,308 2019/20



Of the **10,076 jobs**
2,279 were COVID-19 telephone risk assessments
and **1,858** were COVID-19 visits

S&W completed on time

(by required visit date)

49%

vs 48% 2019/20

Summary: There has been an increase of 7.7% in Safe and Well (S&W) activities compared to last year; partly driven by a variety of engagements in response to the pandemic, using new methods to connect with our vulnerable residents.

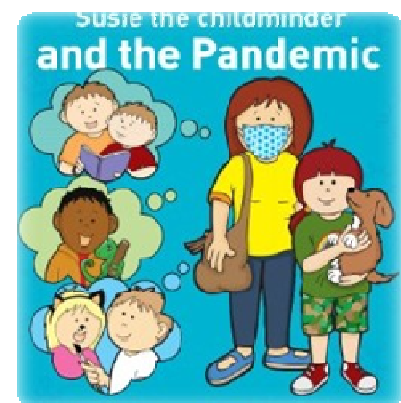
Service delivery changes were required in response to the pandemic and COVID-19 telephone risk assessments were launched March 2020 as an alternative and visits to only the most vulnerable individuals carried out - this way of working has continued. In total in 2020/21 HIWFRS carried out 2,279 COVID-19 telephone risk assessments and 1,858 COVID-19 home fire safety visits.

There has been a significant amount of engagement activity to increase Safe & Well visit numbers; however, this work has been impacted by the ongoing pandemic. Despite this impact, volunteers have, for example, been distributing safe and well postcards at vaccination centres to target vulnerable groups and generate new referrals. Additionally, social media is used for safety campaigns along with a published campaign calendar which enables us to plan, deliver and evaluate across areas such as home, road and water as well as seasonal events such as Diwali, Bonfire Night and the summer period.

Education

A significant amount of activity has been delivered by our CYP team – despite COVID-19 – through, in part, the use of technology and new methods of delivery. One specific example is Susie the Childminder and the Pandemic book that was launched in July 2020 and is the most downloaded resource on the NFCC StayWise website page.

CYP Schools Education, Cadets, Princes Trust and FireWise continued to deliver face-to-face or virtually. Our ICT capability and systems have been a major factor in the delivery of these programmes. Home learning pages within our KidZone on our website are also being kept up to date with new products for children, parents and teachers.





284 High Risk premises vs 284 2019/20



1,235

-26% vs 2019/20

Building regulation consultations

97% completed on time, a 13%-point improvement vs 2019/20



590

+11% vs 2019/20

Licensing consultations

88% completed on time, a 15%-point improvement vs 2019/20

595

-55% vs 2019/20

FSA's

The number of audits dropped during the early months of the pandemic but increased gradually from the summer months

60% of audits in 2020/21 were deemed satisfactory, this percentage was slightly higher than the previous year

Existing enforcement work: Prosecution investigations and statutory notice follow ups continued in line with the new procedures and were subject to a risk-based approach. HIWFRS continue to consult in line with our statutory duties.

High Risk High Rise Residential Buildings: They continue to be regularly contacted/visited to ensure the fire risk from cladding is mitigated in accordance with any temporary measures. The Service are also assessing the impacts of the [Building a Safer Future report](#). 70% of the 284 High Risk premises are average and above in the compliance rating. We have worked closely with Portsmouth City Council in supporting the retro-fitting of domestic sprinklers in their high-rise estate across the city. We have also been working closely with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, the local MP and the management of high-rise buildings to improve the fire safety provision and advice to residents.

Despite the pandemic, **Protection Teams** have responded to where dangerous conditions exist and/or a serious risk to life in the event of fire is identified and support the issuing of formal notices. Alleged Fire Risks were still made by our crews, partners, and members of the public.. We have supported the development of the **Fire Protection Standard**. We have taken part in the consultation and writing of the Fire Standards for Fire Protection and Prevention.

Risk Based Inspection Team (RBIT): Protection Officers follow guidelines and are developing procedures to undertake activity remotely, enabling businesses to stay safe, receive the information they require to maintain the safety of their buildings and those in and around them. As part of the delivery plan, we will react to any changes in legislation amending policies and procedures, informing the public where required. We are also:

- Implementing a Charter to underpin Quality Assurance processes and performance management.
- Ensuring safety event planning is proportionate and effective.
- Reducing demand on our resources through unwanted fire signals and lift incidents.
- Educating and supporting the business community through regional and national campaigns.
- All operational incidents now attract prevention education and advice. This is in the 'Stop' message for these incidents.



This year, there were 2,573 fewer calls (a 7% decrease) compared to the same period in 2019/20. HIWFRS were mobilised and attended 21,571 incidents (61% of all calls). July through to September 2020 saw an increase of 821 calls compared to the same quarter in 2019/20. This was due to the post-lockdown conditions and behaviour changing with more people out in the community. This trend of reduced incidents is mirrored nationally, and is reflective of the impact of the pandemic, lockdowns and behaviour change.

However, there was some variation by incident types, with fires increasing 2% primarily due to a 29% increase (+260 incidents) in grass fires; while false alarms and special service calls both reduced. There are some factors to explain the increase in grass fires such as a hot summer and COVID-19 pandemic where the population's movement were restricted and businesses being temporarily closed, and then as restrictions lifted behaviour changed. The increase in gardening activities from members of the public being at home may also have contributed to the number of bonfires or BBQs.

We have seen a slight increase, by seven seconds, in our **average critical response time**, which has been impacted by various factors. For example, increased travel times for crews due to incident locations or the availability of particular stations. However, in 2020/21, we have been able to maintain a critical response time below eight minutes despite operating within our degradation plan on various occasions; and we have done this whilst managing peaks of COVID-19 related absence and supporting HIOWLRF partners with a wide range of activities, as outlined earlier in this report. We will continue to monitor our critical response over the year ahead as we move through the pandemic recovery phase.

Overall HIWFRS **on-call availability** improved from 75% in 2019/20 to 80% in 2020/21. On-call availability was assisted by the pandemic as a result of the increased lockdown restrictions, and some staff being furloughed from their primary employment, which meant more on-call staff were available at their respective stations.

Protection activity: Protection Teams have supported Local Authorities and Operation Nightingale to ensure buildings are safe. Teams have visited re-purposed buildings used to house vulnerable people to ensure their safety. They are working with colleagues in the Care Quality Commission to embed the MoU between the CQC and the NFCC which will see better quality of regulations in specialist care provision across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

There has also been extensive work with Portsmouth City Council supporting the retro-fitting of domestic sprinklers in their high-rise estate across the city. There has also been collaboration with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and the management of high-rise buildings to improve the fire safety provision and provide advice to residents at Crown Heights and Winterthur Way.

Prevention & Safe and Well activity: HIWFRS Safe & Well activity has increased this last year. We have adapted and continued to respond and carry out Safe & Well referrals effectively to fulfil our statutory functions – as noted by HMICFRS – to support and protect our communities. Furthermore, volunteers have been distributing safe and well postcards at vaccination centres to target vulnerable groups and generate new referrals.



Sickness absence – reduced overall

HIWFRS, **10.65** average shifts/days lost to sickness
(-1.15 shifts lost (-9.7%) vs 2019/20)

Gradual decline of COVID-19 absences between April-September; consistently below NFCC benchmark levels; December and January increases to absences, declining into February and beyond.

- The highest cause of shifts lost to sickness for whole-time and on-call staff is COVID-19, accounting for 38% of total shifts lost.
- Main cause of sickness for both groups (after COVID-19) is musculoskeletal following the national picture. Musculoskeletal absences, however, have decreased substantially for both staff groups (whole-time: -37%; and on-call: -37%) compared to 2019/20.



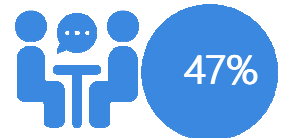
HIWFRS staff turnover **11.4%**

+1.2% point increase (based on 1860 staff average and 213 leavers)
vs 10.2% 2019/20 (based on 1883 staff average and 192 leavers)



HIWFRS female representation, 5.3% (up to 298) driven by Hampshire increase in female staff.

HIWFRS 858 PDR YTD reviews



Staff Wellbeing

79% respondents strongly agreed or agreed their manager will deal with health & wellbeing issues with integrity and professionalism (11% neither agreed or disagreed)



Usage
 EAP 263 calls, +22.3%
 +64% *mental health calls vs 2019*
 MHFA: 58 volunteers +3.5% vs
 2019
 TRiM : 1417 offers +20% vs 2019



Sickness absence:, the average number of shifts lost to sickness for HIWFRS personnel has decreased by -1.15 shifts (-9.7%) from 11.80 to 10.65 compared to 2019/20.

Support staff were the only staff group to see a reduction in shifts lost by -857 shifts lost (-33%) compared to 2019/20. Mental health was the highest cause of sickness for support staff, though these absences have decreased by 18% compared to 2019/20. Absences where sickness was undisclosed had the highest reduction (-92%) followed by respiratory (-68%) with the overall reduction due to staff being able to work from home.

The highest cause of shifts lost to sickness for whole-time and on-call staff was COVID-19, accounting for 38% of total shifts lost. The main cause of sickness for both groups (after COVID-19) was musculoskeletal absences.

Establishment: As at 24th March 2021, HIWFRS employed 1,823 people (by contract), a 3.9% decrease from March 2020 – though there has been a 7% increase in the number of support staff over the year (+22).

Ethnicity: The workforce is predominately white British (87%), with a slight decrease (by 2 staff) in employees from ethnic minority groups (where recorded) in March 2021 (compared to March 2020). This figure will fluctuate in line with staff turnover during the year as contracts end, in addition to new recruits joining the service.

Gender: Over the last 12 months, there were 298 female staff, up 5% from the previous year. 28% (84) were female firefighters (down 2, from 86 in March 2020). On-call female staff have decreased by 11% (-5), whole-time female staff increased by 8% (+3) compared to March 2021. For Green Book staff, including the ICU, 52% were female, up 1 versus last year. In total, 16% of the workforce is female, with a slight percentage point increase compared to last year.

Wellbeing survey: we have carried out a range of detailed analysis following our 2020 Wellbeing Survey, which had 526 respondents.

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) usage increased 22%, the number of mental health first aiders (who are available on both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight) increased 4%, and the number of TRiM offers of support increased 20%. The number of incidents where a TRiM assessment was required also increased 22%.

Learning & Development: Due to the pandemic, all non-critical courses were postponed until 28th September 2020, with adjustments made to ensure postponed courses were reintroduced (where possible) with COVID-19 secure considerations implemented. Operational assurance processes were implemented in three areas: Safety Critical practice; regular reporting; and critical qualifications. On the 24th March 2020, the decision was made in light of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, to freeze qualifications for an initial six months. This was assessed in relation to risk and various mitigation was put in place to manage the situation.

To support our staff, extensive online support through the period was in place via Moodle to enable our on-call personnel to maintain knowledge, for example through virtual drill nights. As we begun our recovery activity and working practices, Drill Nights restarted at stations (from 29th March), in addition to a variety of training courses to support qualifications.



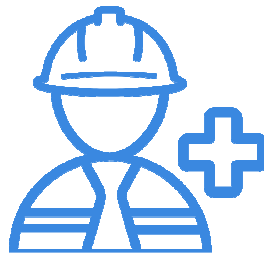
92% of all PPG's in date, up to 31st March 2021

Of which:

97% Policies are in date

95% Guidance are in date

91% Procedures are in date



Health and Safety

The Health & Safety team continue to carry out various activity to support staff during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic – providing expert advice and support beyond business as usual and project activities.

We have conducted active monitoring across the Service incorporating BAU safety and COVID-19 management either by MS Teams, phone or in person. Our Health & Safety team has been carrying out a range of activity to support the Service, including, but not limited to:

- making Green Book Health and Safety induction available on Moodle;
- manual handling training has been produced for, and undertaken by, Green Book staff with a wider project covering all departments that have manual handling as part of their role;
- there has been a DSE/Agile training/assessments roll out of a new platform to cover all personnel that may not just work from an office, i.e. working from home, other areas of the Service or on the move;
- Health and Safety policy and procedures has been reviewed and aligned, where possible; and a new H&S tool is currently being implemented to further support the Service.

Finally, our health and safety risk assessments have been reviewed – with positive feedback – by our internal auditors and an independent peer review by Kent FRS.

SUBSTANTIAL

Top-rated assurance opinion received in internal audit on our HIWFRS approach to COVID-19 risk assessments.

Due to COVID-19, there has been a significant reduction in H&S incidents; and positively, there were more leading (near miss/cause for concern) than lagging (injuries) indicators.

Main H&S incident types:

Operational incidents, routine activities and training.

H&S leading indicators

-16% vs 2019/20

H&S lagging indicators

-34% vs 2019/20

H&S RIDDOR reporting

22 vs 11 in 2019/20

Increase owing to two COVID-19 infections and two spikes relating to fitness training (lost time but low injury)



In terms of FRS net revenue expenditure by 1,000 population, the previous year's figures are:



2019/20, Hampshire ranked 14th of 24 Combined Fire Authorities



2019/20, Isle of Wight ranked 9th out of the 11 county authorities

Owing to CIPFA publication dates estimated data is currently available for **2020/21**:



2020/21, Hampshire ranked 13th out of 24 Combined Fire Authorities

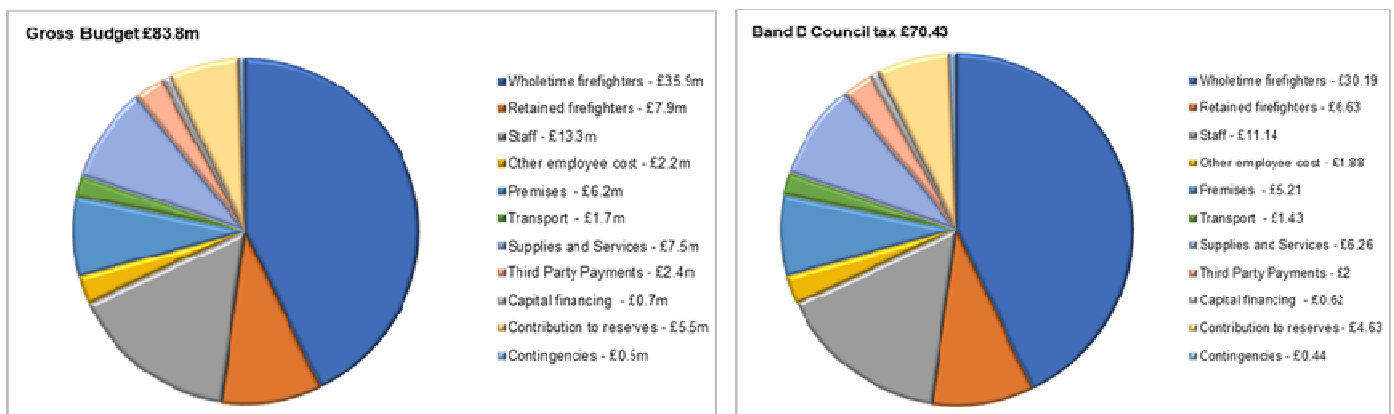


2020/21, Isle of Wight ranked 9th out of the 11 county authorities

Source: CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) is an institute and accountancy standards body for public service;. CIPFA publish annual data, including on costs per 1,000 per population

Cost breakdown & indicative view of how our communities' council tax is spent

Cost of staff (wholetime firefighters: £35.9 million, retained firefighters: £7.9 million, and other staff: £13.3 million) are the largest spend areas, followed by supplies and services, and premises.





Operational Learning

676 YTD submissions (June-March)

78% Of learning related to operational incidents

116 January 2021 was the peak month for learning (116 entries).

In January 2020, the Operational Assurance Team introduced a new “Submit Learning Tool” to improve how we learn from operational incidents and activity. For context, we reported 256 submissions in its 1st quarter in the 2019/20 performance report.



Wider Organisational Learning

An Organisational Learning tool has been developed and was launched in April 2021. This tool replaces the previous Lessons Learned tool, which only captured lessons from projects and programmes. The interim solution will initially run in parallel with the existing Submit Learning tool, which captures operational learning.

HMICFRS and Internal Audit

Joint HMICFRS action plan (from 2018 inspection) formally closed – **65** actions complete

Various positive (‘substantial’ and ‘reasonable’) internal audits in 2020/21 with the 2020/21 internal audit assurance opinion report going to HIWFRA Standards & Governance Committee in July.

69

Safety Plan improvements

More detail is provided in **Appendix B**, but **69 out of 74** Safety Plan improvements were completed in 2020/21.



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

**‘Keeping our
people safe
at home, on
the road and
at leisure.’**

**Hampshire & Isle of
Wight Fire & Rescue
Service**

