



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Monitoring Report: April 2024 – June 2024



Our five principles for keeping communities safe

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Our People Principle



1 Sickness Absence

According to the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness Absence Report for April 2023 – September 2023, the average is 4.43 duty days sickness absence per staff member, equating to 5.82%.

Total time lost, for NWFRS, due to sickness absence during quarter 1 remains lower at 5.25% although has increased by 0.22% since quarter 1 of 2023/24.

There were 863 individuals employed in 911 roles by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) during quarter one.

Please note that throughout the report, the number of cases in the year to date (YTD) will not be a sum of the quarters as some individuals' absences will span across quarters. There may also be fluctuations in the numbers reported from quarter to quarter as a result of changes to employee data.

1.1 All Sickness Absence

	Year 2023/2024			Year 2024/2025			Absence Rate Variance
	Q1 Cases	Q1 Days Lost	Q1 Lost time %	Q1 Cases	Q1 Days Lost	Q1 Lost time %	
Long Term Sickness	64	3448	4.43%	51	3098	3.78%	↓ 0.65%
Short Term Sickness	88	472	0.59%	155	1204	1.47%	↑ 0.88%
Total	152	3920	5.03%	206	4302	5.25%	↑ 0.22%

During Quarter 1, the number of short-term absence cases has nearly doubled, with short term absence accounting for 1.47% of time lost, an increase of 0.88% from the same period in the previous year.

In contrast, the number of long-term sickness cases has reduced in comparison with the same period in the previous year, with long term absence now accounting for 3.78% of time lost.

Some duty systems may see a higher percentage of lost time despite fewer cases of absence being recorded. This is caused by there being fewer staff within that duty system. The sickness absence percentage calculation is proportionate to the number of staff within that duty system.

Short term means individual periods of sickness of 27 calendar days or less.

Long term means individual periods of 28 calendar days or more.

1.2 Short Term Sickness

Short Term Sickness equates to 1.47% of lost time during first quarter.

	2023/24 Q1 Cases	2023/24 Q1 Days lost	2023/24 Q1 Lost time %	2024/25 Q1 Cases	2024/25 Q1 Days lost	2024/25 Q1 Lost time %	Percentage change in cases
Wholetime*	24	122	0.49%	54	461	1.88%	125%
RDS /On-Call	44	263	0.62%	71	543	1.29%	61%
Control	7	34	1.51%	13	80	2.96%	85%
Corporate Departments	13	76	0.60%	17	120	0.94%	31%
Total	88	495	0.59%	155	1204	1.47%	76%

(*Wholetime - includes all operational staff, such as station based, rural and flexi duty officers)

(SLT have been split so operational members of SLT are included within wholetime figures and Heads of Departments are included within Corporate Departments).

Top 3 Short Term Sickness Absence Reasons (Cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost time %
1	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	21	2.54%
2	Cold, Flu	31	1.67%
3	Musculoskeletal – Upper Limb	9	1.20%

Lost time is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

The reasons for absence above are across all duty types.

The number of short-term cases has increased by 76% between Q1 last year and Q1 this year. However, the headcount for both Q1 periods remain at similar levels.

There have been a high number of cases of cold/flu, stomach bugs/norovirus and whilst we've had a number of covid cases with employees booking sick due to being symptomatic and unwell, this has remained at a similar level to Q1 2023. Since 2022, absence due to covid has been treated as normal absence for pay, reviews, stats etc.

20 cases or 12% of the short-term sickness cases were reported as being due to sickness and diarrhoea, of which there was only 6 cases of in the same period in the previous year.

UK Government reported on 28 April 2024 that 'there was an unseasonal rise in norovirus activity during weeks 16 and 17 of 2024, mostly attributable to increased reporting in adults aged 65 years and over. This coincided with more outbreaks reported in health and social care settings.

17 cases were due to short term mental health anxiety and stress, compared to 7 short term mental health cases in the same period in the previous year. 12 of the 17 cases were at operational stations (6 retained, 6 wholetime); and 3 in Control. Whilst they are short term absences for various mental health reasons, the same support is offered with employees signposted to NWFRS related support via OH, EAP, FFC as well as other local agencies that we are aware of.

1.3 Long Term Sickness

Long Term sickness equates to an average of 3.78% of lost time during quarter 1.

	2023/24 - Q1 Cases	2023/24 - Q1 Days lost	2023/24 - Q1 Lost time %	2024/25 - Q1 Cases	2024/25 - Q1 Days lost	2024/25 - Q1 Lost time %	Percentage change in cases
WDS Stations	12	833	3.35%	20	1296	5.27%	66%
RDS /On-Call	36	2378	5.53%	22	1207	2.88%	-39%
Control	2	150	6.81%	2	87	3.22%	0
Corporate Departments	9	329	2.70%	7	508	3.97%	-22%
Total	64	3690	4.42%	51	3098	3.78%	-20%

Top 3 Long Term Sickness Absence Reasons (Cases)

	Absence Reason	Cases	Lost Time %
1	Musculoskeletal - Neck	5	4.40%
2	Musculoskeletal – Lower Limb	6	4.26%
3	Musculoskeletal – Upper Limb	5	3.43%

Lost time is based upon the days lost rather than the case numbers

The number of long-term cases has decreased in Q1 this year compared with the same period last year by just over 20%. This has been a gradual decrease over 2023/2024 and has continued to reduce in 2024/25.

During 2023/24 there were a number of very long-term sick cases that were concluded with the employees either returning to work, resigning or leaving through ill health retirement.

In comparison with the other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services, North Wales had the lowest percentage of time lost due to short term absence out of all three services.

North Wales had the lowest time lost due to long term absence for Fire Control staff but was slightly higher than Mid and West Wales for wholetime uniformed staff and was at the average level for non-operational staff, with 7.54% of time lost.

Note, the All Wales data only reported on absence data for wholetime, control and corporate staff and is for the period April 2022 to March 2023 with the next update due in October 2024.

Our Prevention Principle



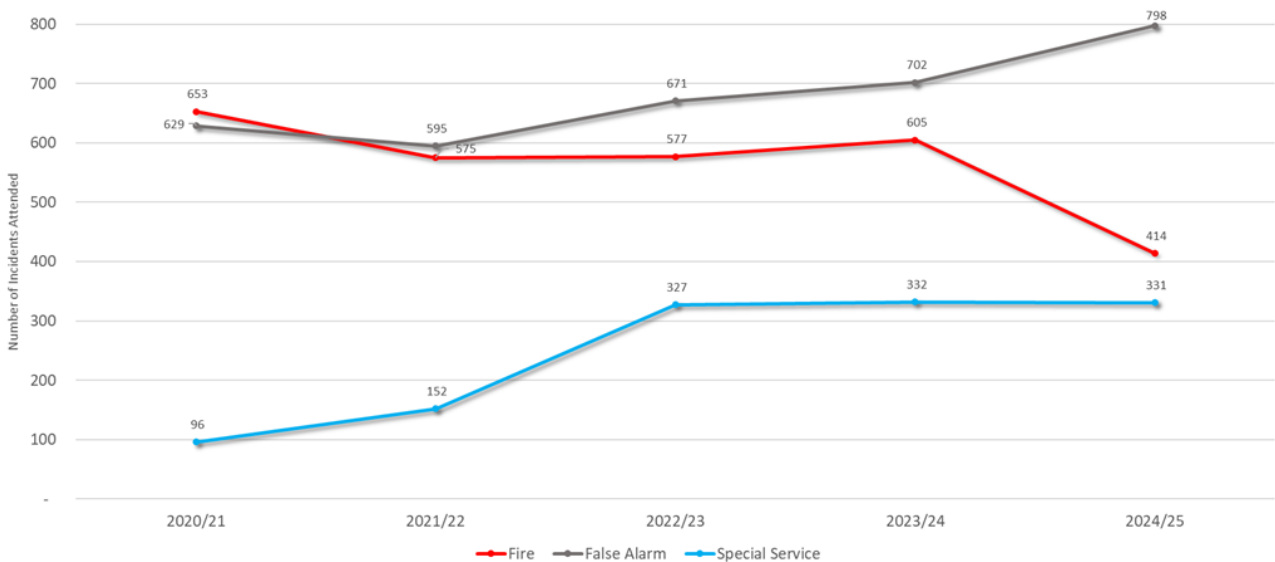
2 All Incidents

All Incidents – **1,543** incidents were attended during the first quarter of the financial year, which is a 5.9% decrease compared to quarter one (Q1) of financial year 2023/24, and 2.0% above the 3-year average of 1,512.

Fires – **414**, 29.4% less than the Q1 three-year average of 586.

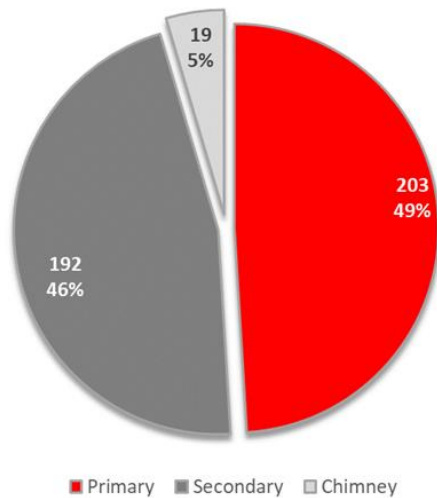
False Alarms – **798**, 21.6% more than the Q1 three-year average of 656.

SSCs – **331**, 22.6% higher than the Q1 three-year average of 270.



3 Fires, by Category and Motive

414 fires were attended; a 31.6% decrease from the 605 attended during Q1 of the 2023/24 financial year.



Primary Fires

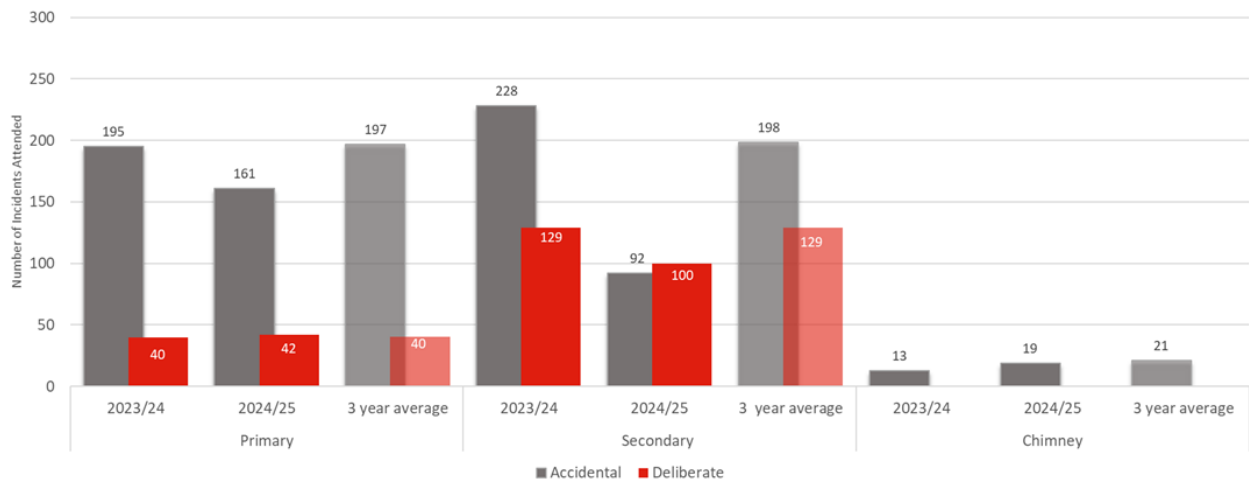
- **Accidental: 161 (79.3%).**
- **Deliberate: 42 (20.7%).**

Secondary Fires

- **Accidental: 92 (47.9%).**
- **Deliberate: 100 (52.1%).**

Chimney fires

- **19 (4.6% of all fires attended).**



Actions taken to date:

- During the first quarter of the financial year 2024/25, a total of **5,006** Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs) were completed, this is ahead of target.
- Partnership Managers continue to foster relationships with external agencies to encourage high quality referrals and are working towards a seminar to further support this.
- Campaign Steering Group (CSG) continued to work with Corporate Communications to proactively promote fire, road and water safety across all media platforms.

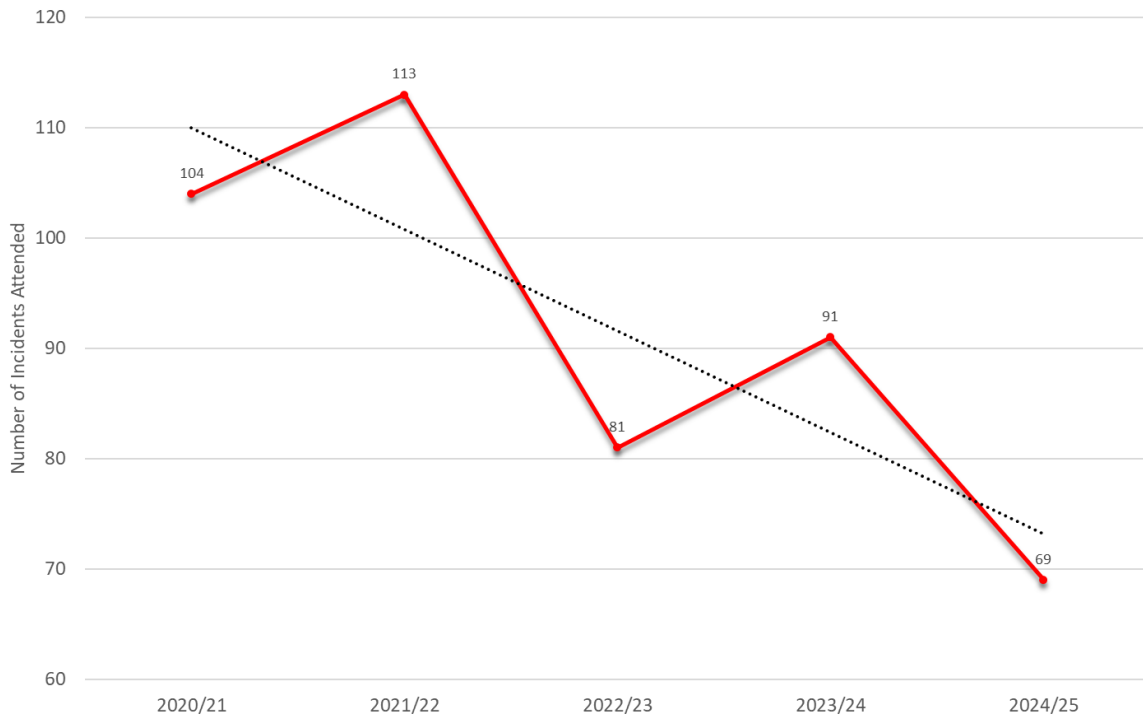
- There was significant media attention around fires involving tumble dryers that led to numerous social media posts, interviews with BBC involving FRS staff and the occupiers, local campaigns and radio interviews.
- Preparation for our Summer Safety campaigns which will include engagement with all caravan and camp sites across the service to promote safe use of BBQs and controlled burning. Contact will highlight the need to “police” their sites to discourage deliberate fire setting.
- Level 3 hotspotting events and Community Impact days with external agencies continue to gather momentum: 1 per month in each area.
- Significant amount of Road Safety engagement and input continues to be delivered, including Olivia's story, Biker Brew sessions, Biker Down courses and online safety videos.
- New lone working devices purchased for all HSSWs and for the first time will be given to the Compliance officers. Training and roll out will commence during Q2.
- Development of our prevention staff continues in line with the Department Objectives with at least 2 x 30 mins sessions each month using both external and internal providers.

Further Actions

Activity continuously ongoing.

4 Accidental Fires in Dwellings (ADFs)

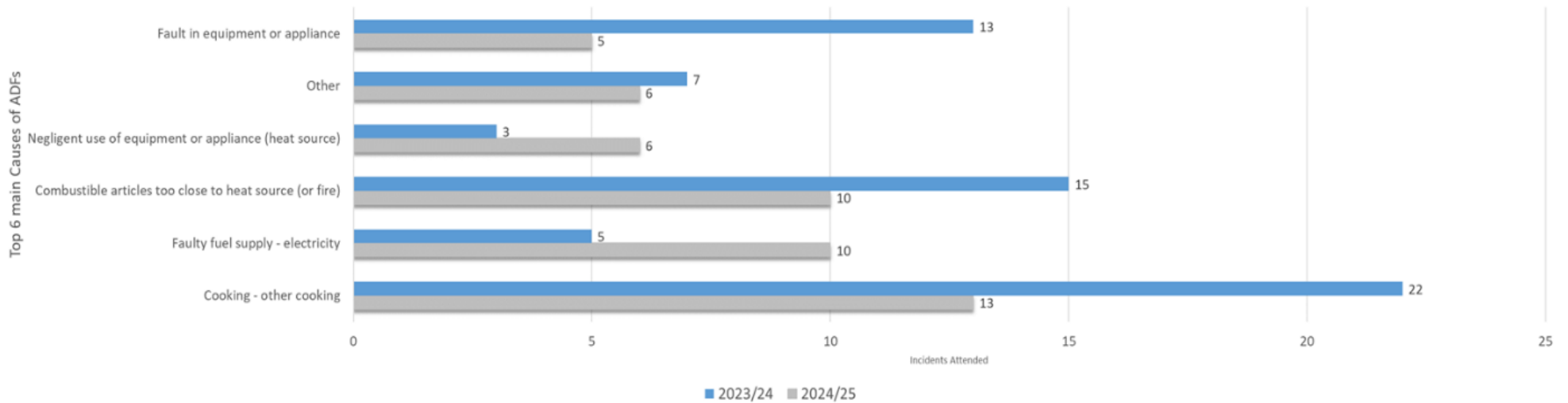
69 accidental dwelling fires were attended during the first quarter of 2024/25, 24.2% less than the previous year (91), and 27.4% less than the three-year average of 95.



5 Main cause of accidental dwelling fires

There were numerous main causes of ADFs. Although the most common during Q1 of 2024/25 was 'Cooking – other cooking', this still showed a 40.9% decrease from 22 to **13** compared with the same period last year. 'Fault in equipment or appliance' also showed a reduction of 61.5% from 13 to **5**.

Despite this, 'Faulty fuel supply – electricity' increased by 100.0% from 5 to **10**. Further analysis of this increase did not identify a trend in any particular piece of equipment as having caused the fires.



Action taken to date:

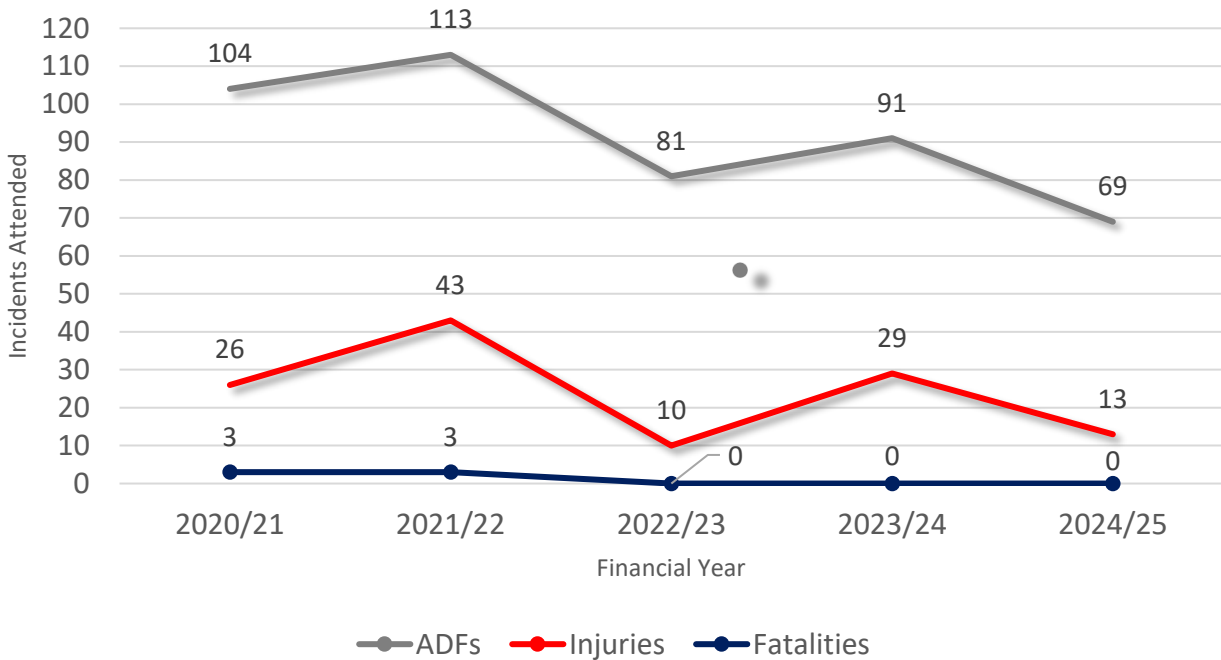
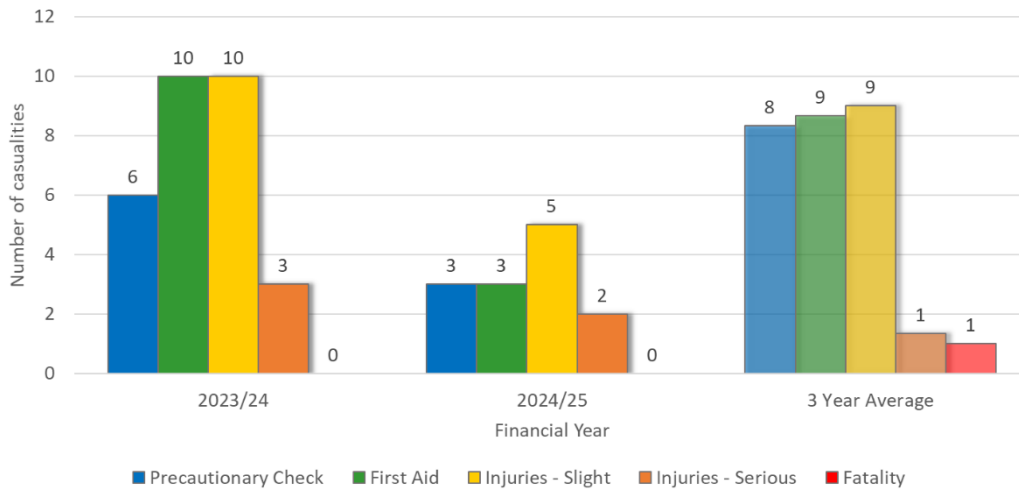
- During Q1, a refreshed SAWC policy and related procedures were submitted to SLT.
- Review of 'scoring criteria' completed during Q1, all areas offices are now consistent which will help us be as targeted as possible. This has helped ensure the HSSWs' lists are manageable and will help avoid "overdue" SAWCs.
- Engagement with operational crews continues on a very regular basis to ensure the 1 hour per activity is productive.
- 1 x Fire Awareness Child Education (FACE) and 7 x FireSafe programs delivered (Arson Reduction Team (ART) & DangerPoint).
- 5 x Phoenix courses delivered to 58 Children and Young People (CYP).

Further Actions:

Planning underway to determine how fire setting intervention activity will be delivered when Arson Reduction Team has disbanded.

6 Fatalities and Casualties from Accidental Fires in Dwellings

During Q1 of 2024/25, **13** people sustained injuries at **11** ADFs. No fatalities were recorded during the quarter.



Of the **13** casualties, **9** (69.2%) were 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation', **1** sustained slight burn injuries, **1** sustained severe burn injuries, and **1** had 'breathing difficulties (other than 'overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation)'. The **1** other casualty's injury type was recorded as 'Other'.

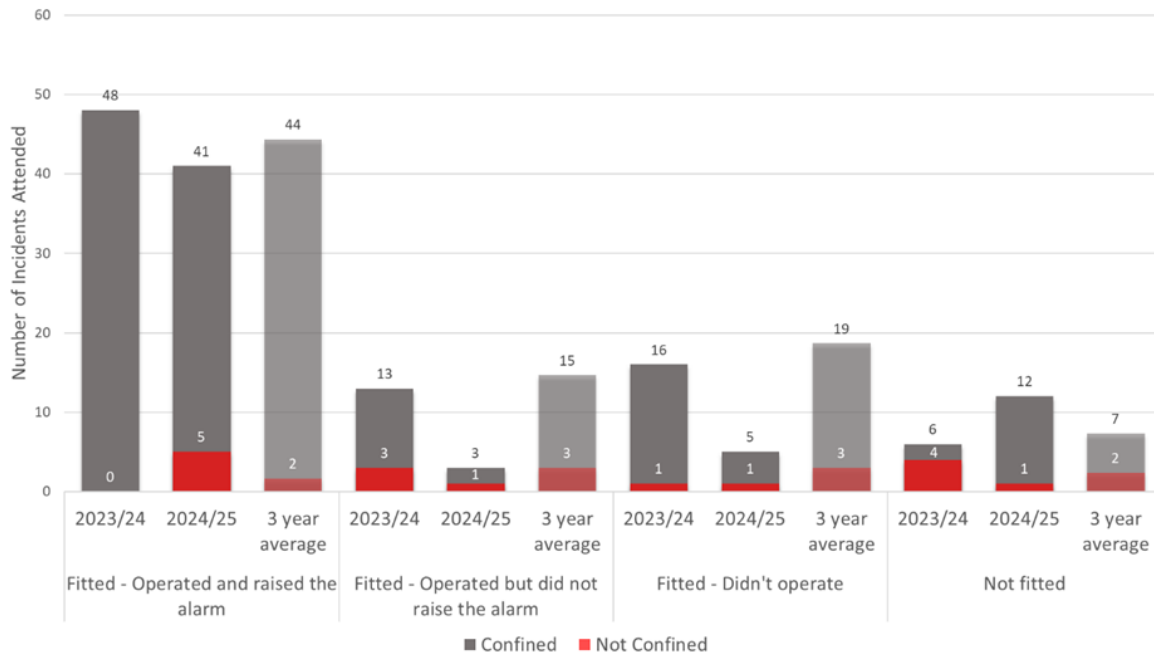
7 Smoke Detectors – Accidental Dwelling Fires

Detectors: smoke/heat detectors were present at **56** (81.2%) accidental dwelling fires attended during Q1 of financial year 2024/25.

Alarms only operated and raised the alarm at **46** (66.7%) ADFs.

Alarms were not fitted at **13** of the ADFs attended.

Of the **69** ADFs attended, **61** were confined to the room of origin, and **8** were not confined.



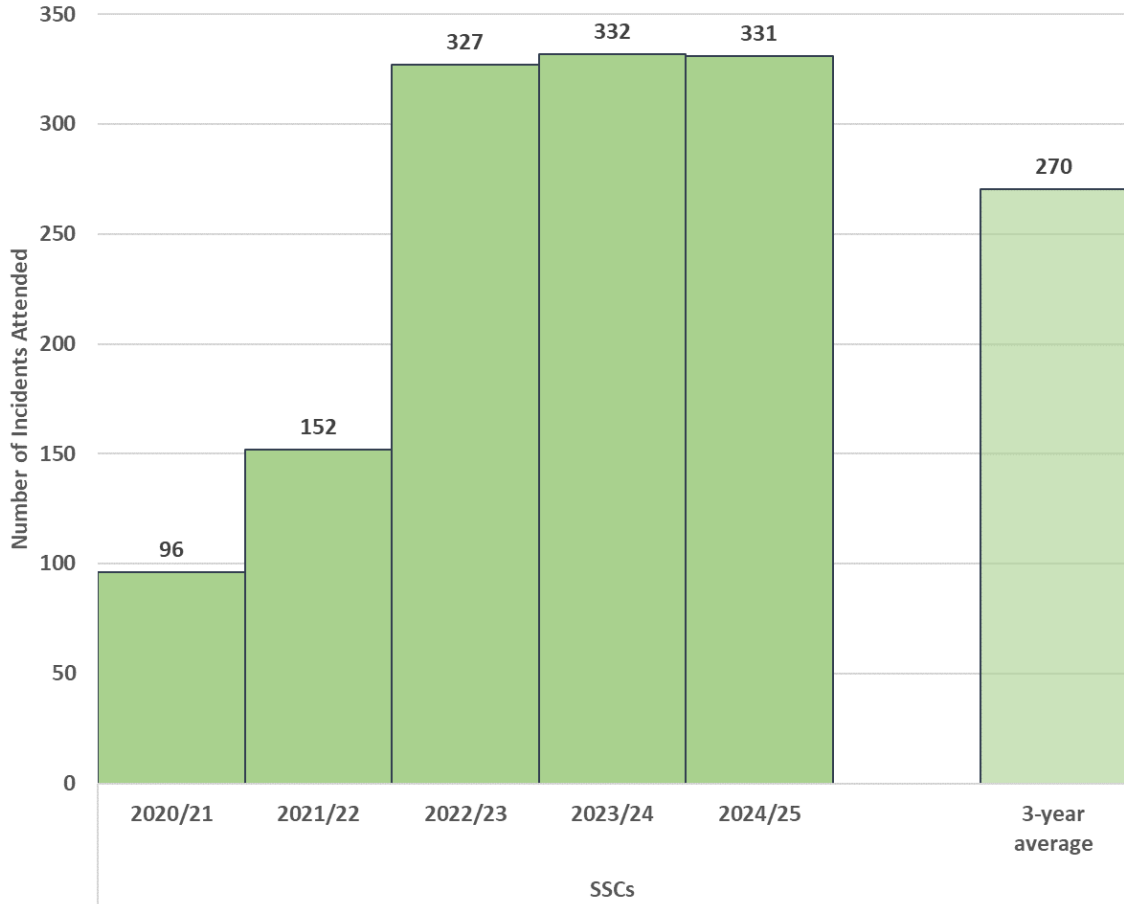
Actions taken to support the most vulnerable to fires in their homes

- SAWCs continue to be delivered across the service with effort to identify the most vulnerable ongoing.
- Partnership managers continue to foster relationships with external agencies to encourage high quality referrals.
- The 3 largest campaigns on the CSG planer during Q1 were:
 - Dementia Awareness week: 2 x events arranged involving over 60 people with dementia at Bodnant Gardens and Plas Mawr country estate.
 - Deaf Awareness week: SAWC Video incorporating British Sign Language launched. Also, all WT/DC staff given refresher training regarding fitting hard of hearing units.

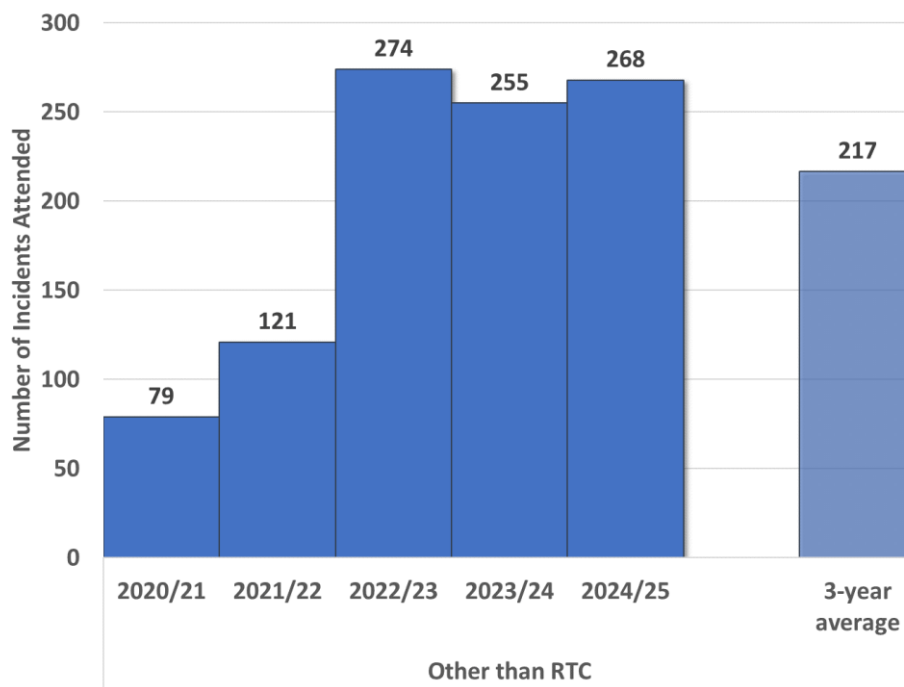
- Child Safety week. 3 engagement events held at our general hospitals.
- Engagement with vulnerable groups continues, for example, dementia groups, carers and practitioners, the travelling community, asylum seekers and many age-related groups.

8 Special Service Calls (SSCs)

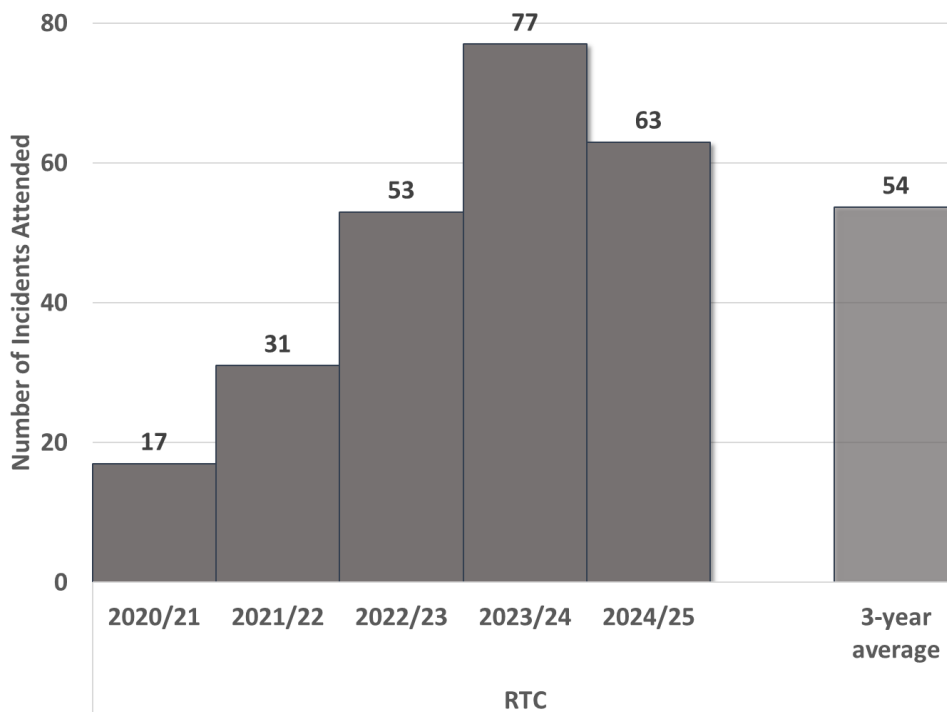
A total of **331** special service calls (including RTCs) were attended during Q1 of 2024/25. This is a 0.3% decrease compared with the previous financial year.



The following graph reflects special service calls **excluding RTCs**.



The number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) attended during Q1 of 2024/25 decreased 18.2% to **63** compared to the previous year.



Other than RTC, categories which saw the largest **increase** in attendances included:

- **5** Rescue or evacuation from water – an increase of 400.0% from 1.
- **5** Making Safe (not RTC) - an increase of 400.0% from 1.
- **5** Hazardous Materials incident - an increase of 150.0% from 2.
- **26** Other rescue/release of persons – an increase of 116.7% from 12.

Despite this, other categories saw a **decrease** in the number of incidents attended. These included:

- **15** Animal assistance incidents - a decrease of 42.3% from 26.
- **108** Assist other agencies - a decrease of 3.6% from 112.
- **15** Effecting entry/exit - a decrease of 40.0% from 25.

Actions taken to date:

During April videos messages were produced to support Water Safety Week, and more recently prepared, and facilitated 3 x simultaneous 'Drowning Prevention' events that will take place on July 25th in Wrexham, Bala and Llanberis. These are Multiy agency supported events and large social media activity expected, promoting the 'Float to live' message.

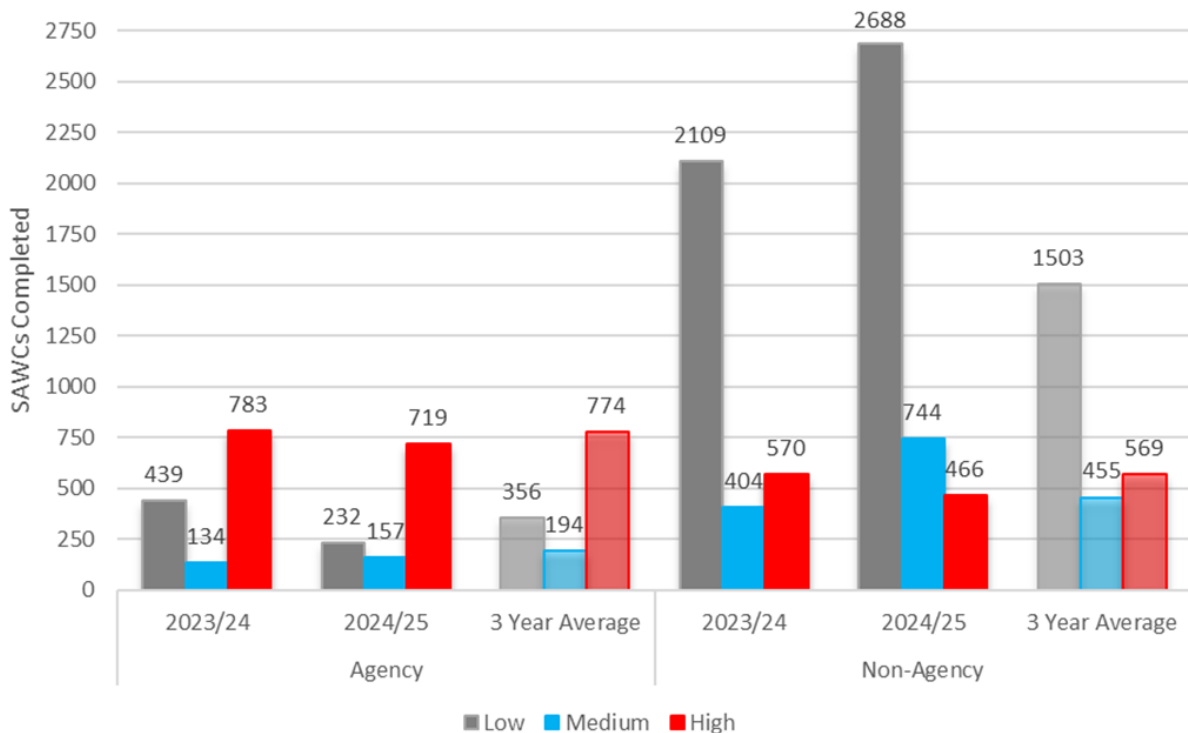
9 Safe and Well Checks

During the first quarter of financial year 2024/25, a total of **5,006** SAWCs were completed of which:

- **1,185** (23.7%) were High priority, with **719** (60.7%) of these coming from a partner agency.
- **901** (18.0%) were Medium priority, with **157** (17.4%) of these coming from a partner agency.
- **2,920** (58.3%) were Low priority, with **232** (8.0%) of these coming from a partner agency.

Whilst there has been a 12.8% increase in the number of SAWCs completed compared with the same period last year, there has been a 12.4% decrease in the number of high priority SAWCs completed compared with Q1 of 2023/24.

Number of 'Safe and Well Checks' completed by risk level, and where referred by another agency.



Actions taken to date:

- SAWCs continue to be delivered by all operational crews and the designated Home Safety Support Workers (HSSWs). Currently well ahead of target for the year.
- The WDS rural teams are managing the Low and Mediums on the Record Management System (RMS) list, with a monthly day of support from FS team members. No further action required.
- The re-introduction during Q1 of RDS crews being given SAWCs to complete on drill nights is being monitored.
- The WT/DC crews continue to conduct 1 hour each day of targeted activity using the Exeter data overlays. End of tour returns are received and monitored. No problems to report and output is generally good.
- Hotspotting is monitored at the tri-weekly Fire Safety meetings, any shortcomings are identified and dealt with accordingly.
- HSSWs continue to manage their RMS lists which im very pleased to state are finally in a very healthy and more manageable position. Managers have worked hard to try and ensure the referrals we receive are as targeted as possible.
- Now HSSWs lists are manageable, area Fire Safety teams are conducting regular door to door campaigns using the Exeter Data.

Further Actions:

- Agency Seminar: An event will be held during Sept/Oct where invited representatives from the main referring agencies will receive input from the Prevention team to help them identify our target audience. Its is imperative that our referrals are as targeted as possible to ensure we have the best impact and are able to deliver in a timely manner.
- It has been identified that the majority of SAWCs conducted during the WT/DC 1 hour per day activity and also during Hotspotting activity are being incorrectly classified as Low priority. During Q1, all crews have been instructed to start using the same priority classification process (contributory factors) as the area Fire Safety offices, this will help ensure the correct priority level is assigned to each SAWC.

This work is in the early stages and will be monitored accordingly, however should help reduce the amount of "low level" checks conducted and increase both Medium and Highs.

Our Protection Principle

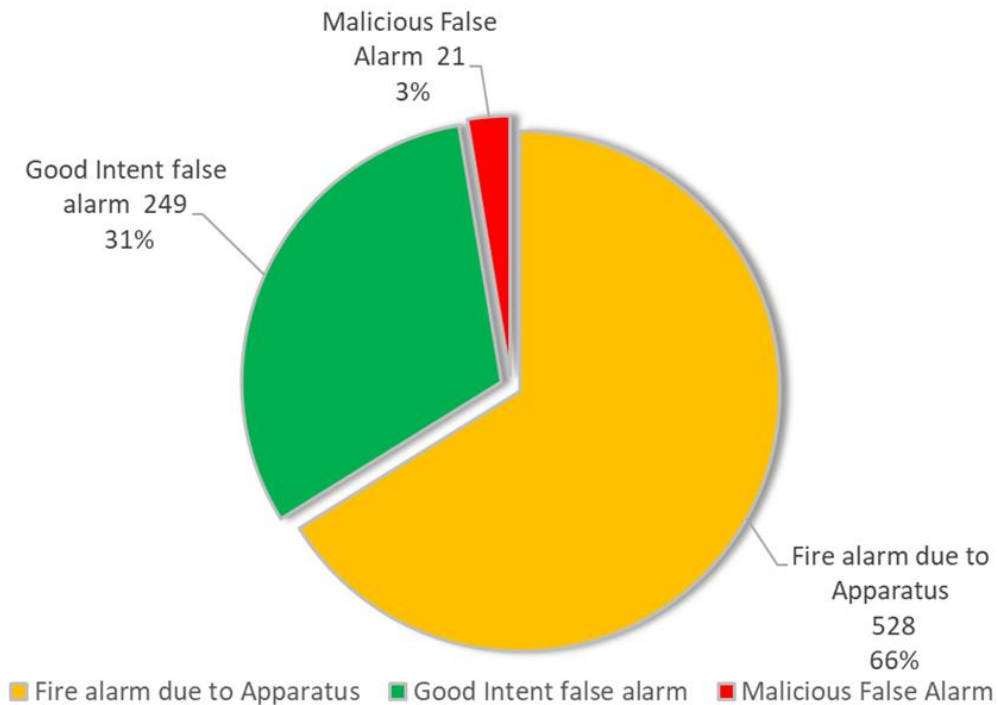


10 False Alarms

A total of **798** False Alarms were attended during the reporting period. This is an increase of 13.7% compared with the same period of the previous financial year.

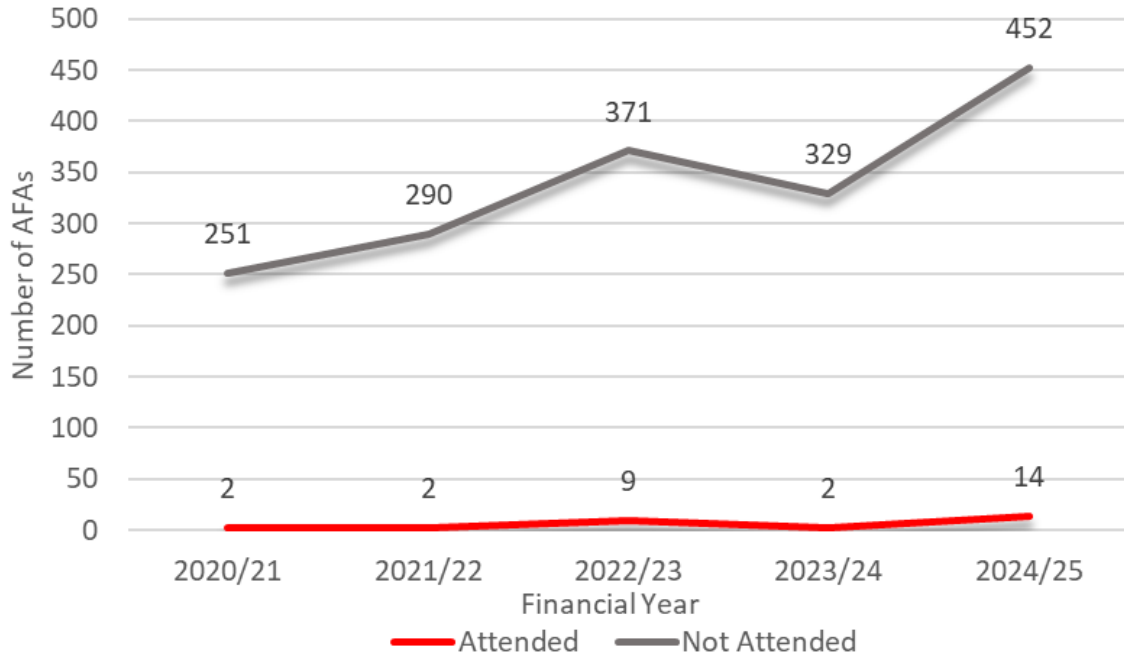
This rise in False Alarms can be attributed to a 29.7% increase in Fire alarm due to apparatus (AFA) (407 to **528**), as well as a 50.0% rise in Malicious False Alarms (14 to **21**).

Good intent false alarms saw a decrease from 281 to **249**.



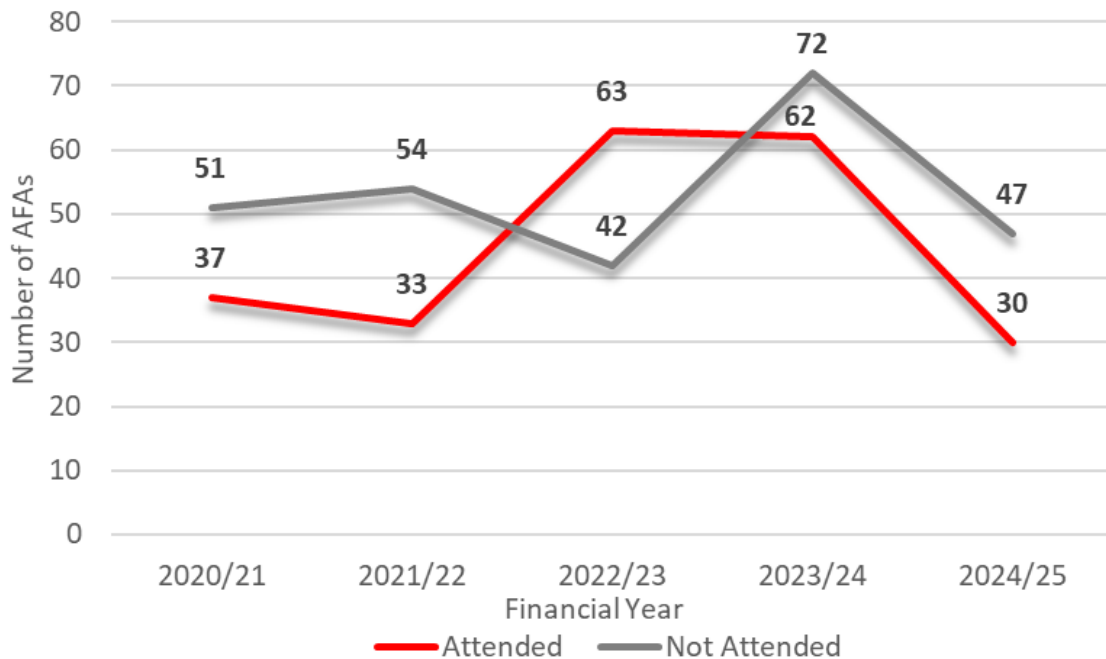
11 Commercial AFA calls

466 Commercial AFA calls were received during the reporting period, which is the highest number of calls received during any Q1 period in the last five years.



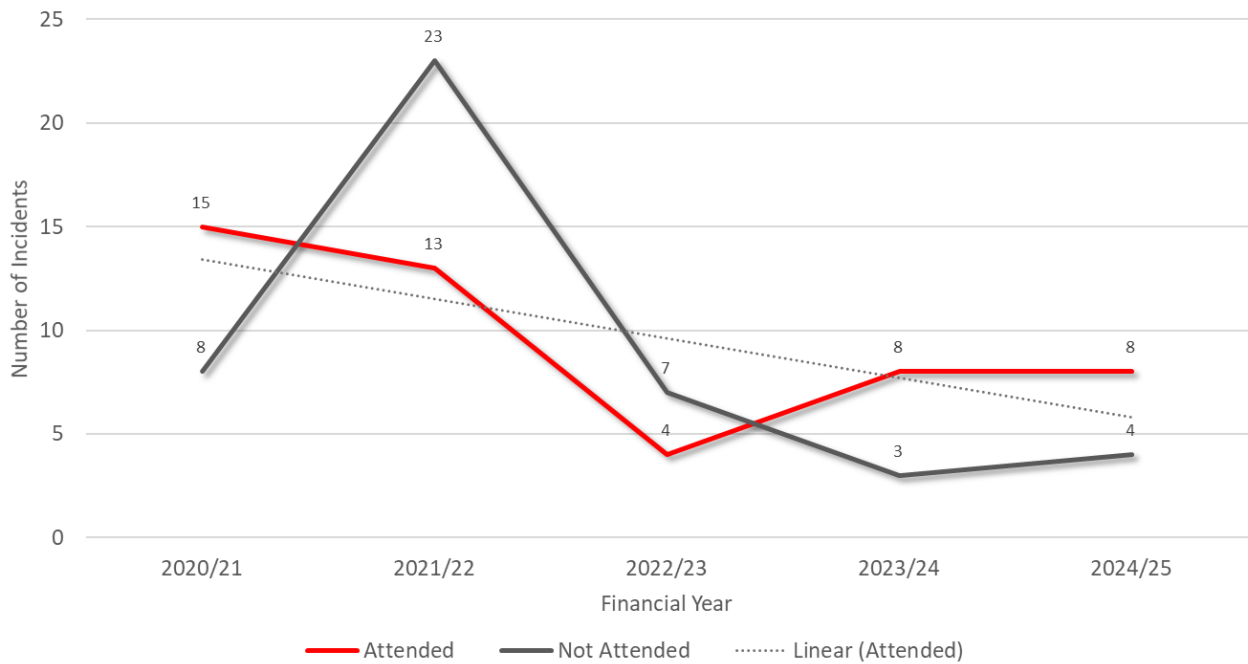
12 Hospital AFA calls

77 Hospital AFA calls were received during Q1 of 2024/25, which is the lowest number of calls received during any Q1 period in the last five years. **30** were attended, 51.6% less than last year (62).



13 HMP Berwyn

8 primary fires were started deliberately at HMP Berwyn. This is the same number as Q1 in 2023/24.



Actions taken to date:

- The communication procedure between HMP Berwyn and Control room, continues to work well with a number of incidents not being attended or resulting in crews being stood down before attendance.
- NWFRS maintain a working relationship with the HMP Berwyn Management team to continue the reduction in attendances where possible.

Our Response Principle



14 RDS Station Availability

The below table shows the average pump availability for all RDS Stations between 06:00 and 18:00. The availability is broken down by month, showing the respective weekday and weekend/bank holiday availability.

The table is representative of all RDS watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of RDS Stations Availability 06:00-18:00				
Day/Month	April	May	June	Q1
Weekday	5	4	4	4
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	12	13	11	12
Overall Average	7	7	6	7

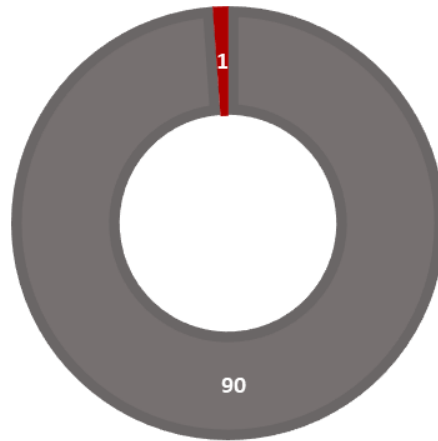
Please note that availabilities have been rounded down to the nearest whole number.

15 Planned 18 Pump Availability

Planning for 18 Pump availability for the next day has to be completed every afternoon. Time taken to complete this task depends upon the number of gaps that need to be covered and the available resources. This planning can take between 3 and 6 hours to complete initially.

18 PUMP PLANNED AVAILABILITY Q1 2024/25

■ 100% Pump Availability Met ■ 100% Pump Availability Not Met



Number of Days Planned Availability Achieved	
100% Pump Availability Met	
Weekday	61
Weekend/Bank Holiday	29
100% Pump Availability Not Met	
Weekday	1

N.B. The below comment from the Control Availability Manager explains the reasoning for why 100% availability is not showing as achieved for one weekday (29/05/2024).

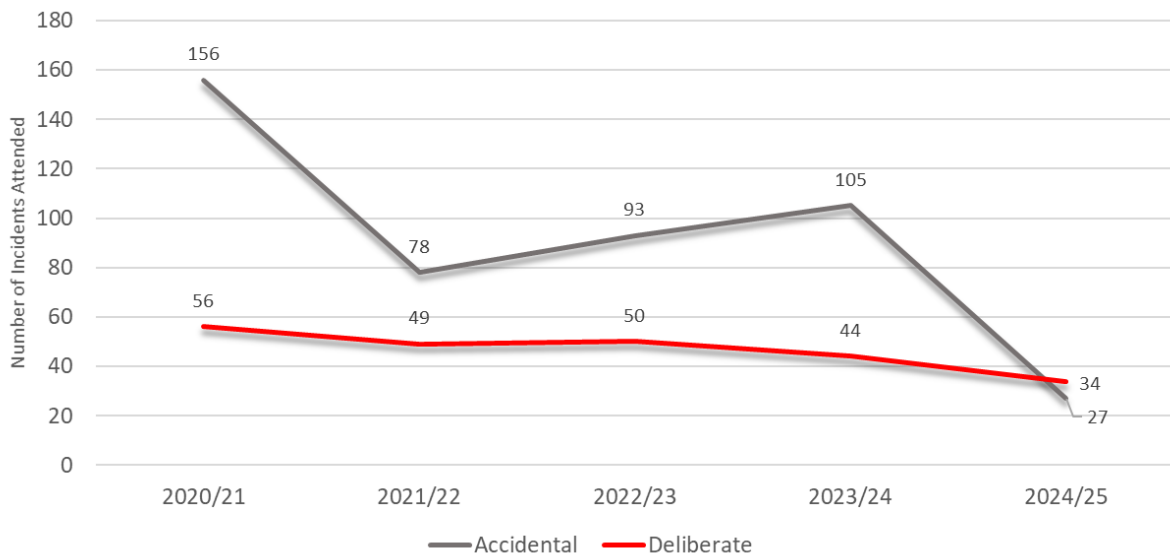
With regards to the 29th May – at the time of planning, there were 17½ appliances available due to no additional resources being available to use for deployments. However, the number of actual appliance per hour available on the day itself (recorded retrospectively as opposed to at the time of planning) did not drop below 18 appliances.

Our Environment Principle



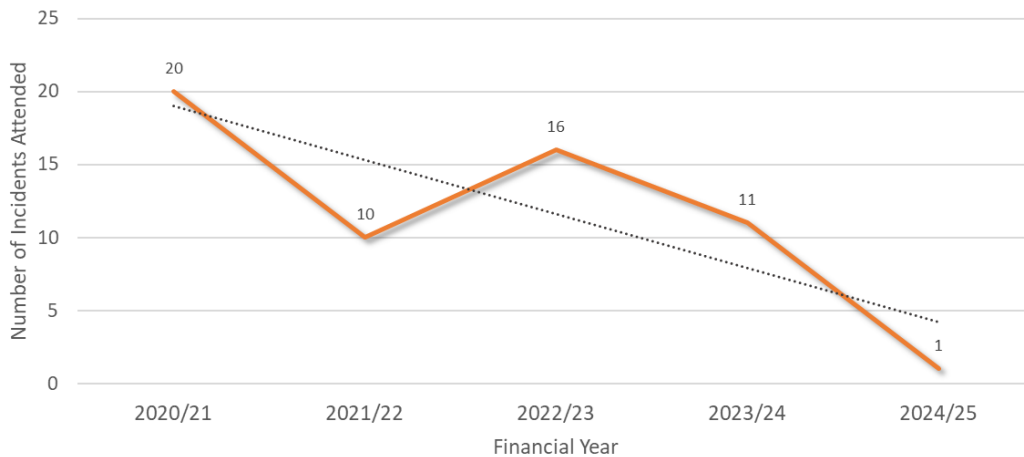
16 Grassland, woodland and crop fires

61 Grassland, woodland and crop fires were recorded during the quarter, a 59.1% decrease from the 149 recorded during the same period last year. This is 56.4% below the three-year average of 140.



17 Wildfires

1 wildfire was attended during the quarter. This is 91.7% below the three-year average of 12. As a result, the time spent at scene decreased to almost 8 hours, compared with 353 hours during the same period of the previous year.

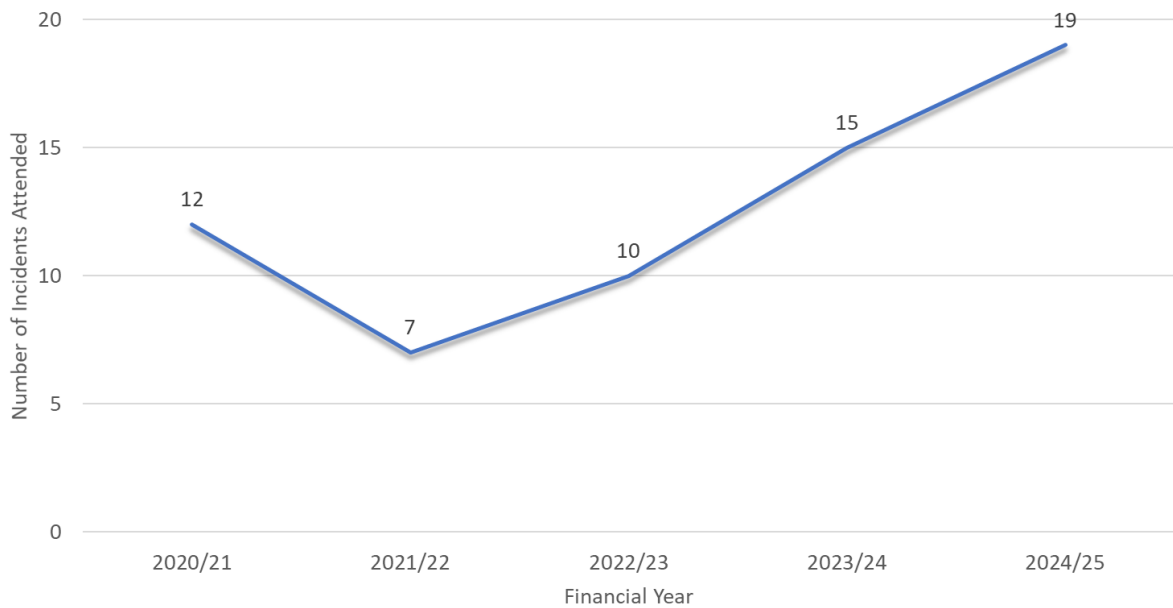


18 Flooding

There were **19** flooding incidents attended during the first quarter of 2024/25. This is a 26.7% increase in incidents attended compared to the same period of the previous year, and is a 72.7% increase over the three-year average (11).

This rise is attributed to a particularly wet spring, with 10 rain or storm weather warnings issued by the Met Office for one or more of North Wales' counties in May alone.

4 flooding incidents attended were to make a location safe, and advice was given at **10** incidents.



Glossary

Fires	All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.
Primary Fires	<p>These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.</p> <p>Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involved casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.</p>
Secondary Fires	<p>Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires.</p> <p>Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.</p> <p>Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc.</p>
Chimney Fires	<p>These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.</p> <p>Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.</p>
Special Service Incidents	<p>These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Local emergencies e.g., flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc; b) Major disasters; c) Domestic incidents e.g., water leaks, persons locked in or out etc; d) Prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.
False Alarm (general guidance)	<p>Where the FRS attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.</p> <p>Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having been attended and does not need to be reported.</p>
False Alarms - Malicious	These are calls made with the intention of getting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

False Alarms – Good Intent	These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the FRS really would attend a fire or special service incident.
False Alarms - AFA	These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm apparatus or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the FRS as part of a standing arrangement, i.e., with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.
Building - Dwellings	A property that is a place of residence, i.e., occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostel and residential non-permanent structures.
Building - Non-Residential	Properties such as hospitals, offices, shops, factories, warehouses, restaurants, cinemas, public buildings, religious buildings, agricultural buildings, railway stations, sheds, prisons.
Building - Other Residential	Properties such as hotels, hotels and residential institutions B&Bs, Nursing/care homes, student halls of residence.
Vehicle (Road and Other Transport)	Road vehicle, rail vehicle, aircraft, boat.
Outdoor	Fields, grassland, woodland, refuse containers, post boxes.
Wildfires	A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by 4 or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for 6 hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.
Short Term Sickness (STS)	Absences 27 calendar days and under.
Long Term Sickness (LTS)	Absences 28 calendar days and over.