

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Corporate Plan 2021- 2024



(Revised March 2023)



Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

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Foreword



Chief Fire Officer
Dawn Docx



Fire Authority Chair
Dylan Rees

Welcome to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's latest update on progress being made towards achieving the strategic priorities set out in the Corporate Plan for 2021-24.

The Fire and Rescue Authority remains committed to investing in the future, and considers the impacts of its decisions for years to come. A great deal has already been achieved by staff who continually demonstrate extraordinary adaptability and resilience to maintain service delivery through challenging and uncertain times.

The Authority has undergone a significant period of transformation during the past year following local elections in May 2022. It has also continued to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a changing society, the potential of industrial action within the workforce, and the financial pressures on the Authority's budget from inflation and other global impacts.

You will see included in the updated Corporate Plan how the Authority will look to address key and emerging risks during 2023-24, whilst providing the communities of North Wales with a fire and rescue service that is committed to its mission of 'Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit'.

Considering all emerging risks, the Authority will strive to deliver across its three main priority areas: availability of on-call fire crews; maintain and develop firefighter skills; and have sufficient corporate capacity for the future. This in part will be achieved by concluding an emergency response review, adopting recommendations from our retained duty system staff experience review, and embedding a new training and development strategy whilst developing plans for a new immersive training centre.

Our priorities align with the well-being goals for Wales outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, and the Authority's dedication to building a sustainable North Wales for generations to come. The Authority's ambitious corporate objectives focus on enhancing the health and well-being of people and communities; contributing to a cleaner environment; and increased climate-consciousness. The development of an Environmental Strategy will underpin our work to achieve this. The plan also focuses on pursuing effective communication and connectivity with people in the community, partners, and stakeholders, to increase community visibility and resilience.

North Wales Fire Authority

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (NWFRA) was established as part of the reorganisation of local government on 1st April 1996. It comprises 28 councillors from the six unitary authorities of North Wales.



The Authority is the publicly accountable body that is responsible for providing a fire and rescue service for the communities of North Wales. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 obliges Fire Authorities to secure the provision of personnel, services, and equipment, that efficiently meet all normal requirements and secure the provision of training for such personnel in relation to firefighting.

Delivery of these services and professional advice to NWFRA is the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer. The Fire Authority manages its responsibility through full Fire Authority Meetings as well as two committees; the Audit Committee, and the Executive Panel. They meet regularly to ensure the proper running of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS).



You can find out more about the NWFRA on [our website](#).

Like all public sector bodies, the Authority is required to operate in accordance with numerous pieces of legislation including:

[The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)

[The Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(Wales\) Order 2007 and \(Amendment\) Order 2017](#)

[The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

[The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

[The Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2009](#)

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

[The Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

[The Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

[The UK Data Protection Act 2018](#)

[The Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

The Authority's mission is to make North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit. To support this mission, the Authority will continue to work to reduce dwelling fires and fire deaths across the region through a comprehensive prevention strategy. They will investigate and analyse information to reduce the risks associated with all types of fire, as well as other hazards.

The Authority will also continue to promote education and collaboration with people living and working in North Wales. Equality of opportunity is a fundamental priority, and the Authority aims to increase the employment prospects of people who might find it difficult to gain employment, whilst also promoting fairness and inclusivity in the workplace. Its core values are displayed in the picture below.

More information about the Service and the Authority can be found by visiting the [North Wales Fire and Rescue Service website](#).

Our Core Values



About us

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service helps to protect an estimated population of 687,098 people, as well as hundreds of thousands of tourists and visitors who come to North Wales every year.

The Service area is approximately 6,150 square kilometres, ranging from sparsely populated rural areas, through to more inhabited urban areas. This also includes a road network of 35,119 kilometres, and coastline measuring 400 kilometres.

Area (Km ²)	Population	Dwellings	Non-Domestic Properties	Road Length (Km)	Local Authority Areas
KM²					Anglesey Conwy Denbighshire Flintshire Gwynedd Wrexham
6,150	687,098	329,382	33,606	35,119	

The Service employs around 898 staff in operational and corporate service roles. There are 44 fire stations based across the North Wales area. These house a variety of emergency vehicles and specialised equipment which help support our operational firefighters at incidents.

Wholetime Firefighters	On-Call Firefighters	Control Staff	Corporate Services Staff	Number of Fire Stations	Emergency Appliances
274	452	31	144	44	54 Fire Engines 3 Aerial Ladder Platforms 30 Other Operational Appliances
Establishment	Establishment	Establishment	Establishment		

as at 31st March 2023

Protecting, Preventing, Responding

As an emergency service, we are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to respond to emergency incidents.

Responding

Our Control operators are highly trained to take details of your emergency call.

Did you know that during 2022-23 we:



- handled **13,224** emergency calls



- attended **5,892** emergency incidents, of which:

- **2,011** were fire related
- **1,209** were non-fire emergency
- **2,672** turned out on arrival to be a false alarm



- attended **344** accidental dwelling fires
- helped put out **55** wildfires.

Preventing

Our dedicated fire safety teams work in residential communities to promote fire safety.

Did you know that during 2022-23 we:



- completed **18,052** Safe and Well Checks, of which:
 - **32%** were referred from an agency partner
 - **6,162** were classed as high risk
- provided **139** safety talks to children and young

people

- helped look for **34** high risk missing people.



Protecting

Our specialised business fire safety staff ensure legal regulations are being met.

Did you know that during 2022-23 we:

- completed **690** fire safety audits on business premises
- served a total of **6** enforcement notices
- completed **9** prohibition notices
- worked closely with farmers and landowners to manage controlled burning work, and therefore reduced the number of calls made to Control.

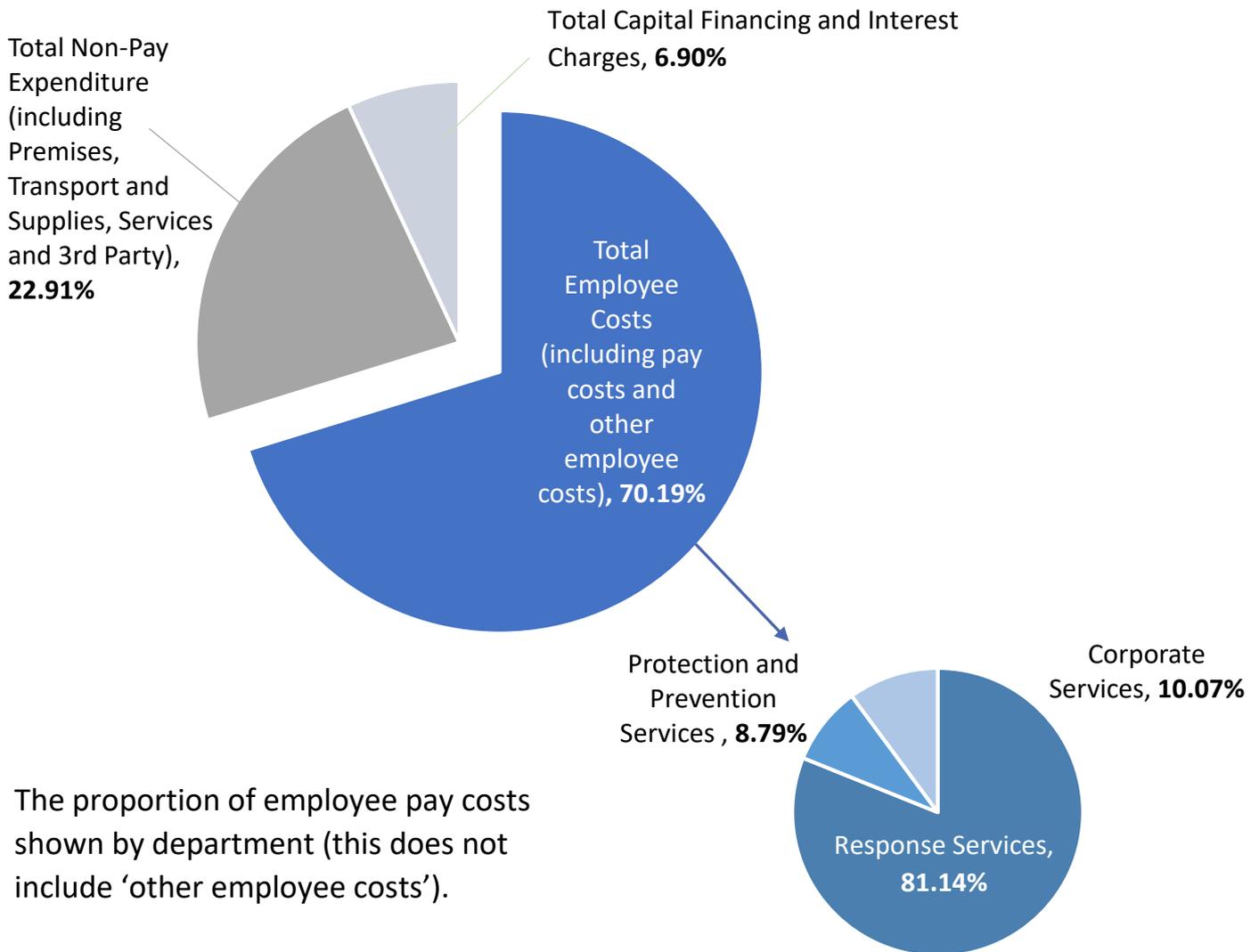


Our Budget for 2023-24

We are committed to delivering value for money across all the services we provide with funding levied from the local authorities we serve: Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, and Wrexham.

The total budget of £44,394,000 includes an additional income of £2,024,000 from grants and fees which has not been taken into consideration for the proposed expenditure shown below.

Nearly three quarters of the budget will be spent on employee pay costs and other employee costs.



The proportion of employee pay costs shown by department (this does not include 'other employee costs').

Costing £63.04 per year
(per head of the population)

Well-being of Future Generations / National Fire Framework

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of future generations of people in Wales. The Act lists seven well-being goals for Wales as a whole which are shown in the figure below. These goals are intended to promote a sense of common purpose, and so encourage people and organisations to work together to help achieve the goals for the benefit of future generations.

Guidance published on the Well-being of Future Generations office website provides information to help public bodies develop their 'journeys' towards improving the well-being of people in Wales. The journey checkers contain practical examples and steps that public bodies can use to help develop their own well-being objectives. The Authority has used these journey checkers to map its seven long-term objectives to Wales' national well-being goals, helping to ensure they are aligned and sustainable. In addition, in setting its objectives, the Authority has taken into consideration the National Fire Framework, that requires Fire and Rescue and Authorities in Wales to consider:

- Public accountability:
 - providing a clear explanation of work scope (e.g. firefighting, fire safety etc.), and the relative volume and cost of each
 - fulfilling Service objectives, along with implementing controls to limitations that prevent further progress.
- Medium to long term planning:
 - taking account of the messages outlined in the National Fire Framework
 - understanding varying risk profiles of communities
 - accounting for continued financial challenges
 - contributing to the well-being goals
 - understanding areas for wider service delivery in communities
 - accounting for the view of citizens based on fair and balanced engagement.
- Clear and transparent links to improvement planning:
 - providing open reporting on performance, including reporting on findings of peer assessments and Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor reports.



Measuring Improvement

The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015 introduced three statutory performance indicators.

STATUTORY INDICATORS:	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Fires attended	1,770	25.34	1,879	26.70	2,011	29.27
False alarms attended	2,314	33.13	2,517	35.79	2,672	38.89
Road traffic collisions	105	1.50	207	2.94	232	3.38
Other emergency incidents attended	509	7.29	751	10.68	977	14.22
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population						

Fire deaths and injuries	50	7.11	58	8.25	40	5.82
Deaths and injuries arising from fires started accidentally	47	6.68	50	7.11	35	5.09
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population						

Dwelling fires confined to room of origin	339	87.60	375	87.62	330	86.84
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended						

Using the population figures, we are able to convert the incident number into a 'rate' figure, which allows us to compare our performance against other Fire and Rescue Services.

Comparing with others can help identify areas where we perform particularly well, and areas where we might be able to improve. We are careful to use comparisons as a guide only, as local factors such as the rural and urban characteristics of an area, its demographic profile, and even the weather, can affect our activity from year to year.

Well-Being Statement

The Authority must also carry out “sustainable development” in order to help bring about improvements for the Welsh population in the future.

The objectives within this plan have been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle, and devised following a series of meetings with heads of departments and workshops with Members.

The objectives have also been developed in accordance with the recommended “**five ways of working**” as defined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These involve:



Looking to the long term so that what happens now does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Authority has considered the long term challenges facing North Wales which include projected demographic changes of an ageing and growing population, and anticipated financial constraints affecting public services.



The Authority has retained prevention at its heart, recognising that preventing fires and other harmful situations occurring makes better sense than response alone, and may help the Authority meet their objectives.



Taking an integrated approach, considering how its own well-being objectives might impact on each other and on the achievement of the well-being goals for Wales.



Remembering the rich diversity of people in North Wales and encouraging them to get involved in the decisions that affect them. The Authority has consulted widely, and sought the views of the general public and representatives of particular groups whilst determining its objectives.



Working collaboratively with others to help the Authority achieve its objectives, and, conversely, to help others to achieve theirs. The Authority has continued to build productive working relationships with communities and a range of organisations, including the Public Services Boards (PSBs); planning and collaborating at different levels and through various forums.

Corporate Objectives

In March 2021, the Authority published Corporate Plan 2021-24 in which it set out its seven long-term improvement and well-being objectives. In October 2022, the Authority confirmed its intention to continue to pursue those same objectives in 2023-24.

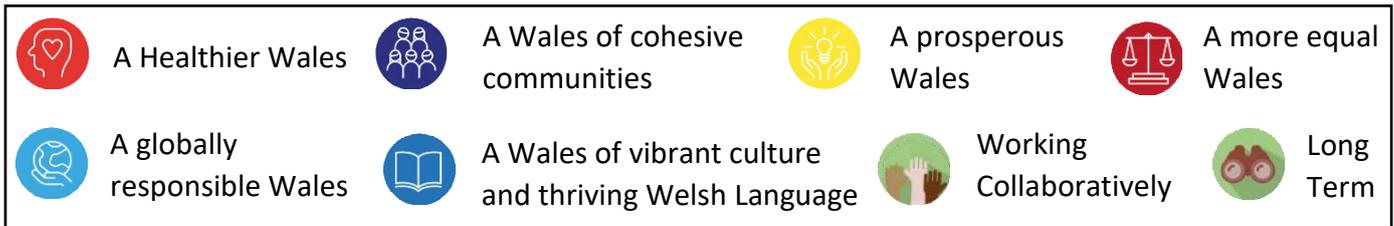
In developing the plan for 2023-24, we again considered the impact of other influences such as climate change, national infrastructure, population and demography, and how we can work with our partners to deliver our plans. We considered the objectives of the Public Services Boards (PSBs), where we are statutory members and with whom we work to jointly deliver improvements in respect of the social, cultural, economic, and environmental prospects of future generations.

The demands and expectations on Fire and Rescue Services evolve, so we have also looked to encompass recommendations arising from Public Inquiries into events such as Grenfell Tower Fire 2017, Manchester Arena Bombing 2017, and COVID-19 and have resilience for other unforeseen events that might impact the delivery of our plans.

This plan sets out what we have achieved so far and what we will be doing to achieve progress in 2023-2024 against these objectives.



Objective 1: To work towards making improvements to the health, safety and well-being of people in North Wales



We will provide prevention of, and protection from, emergencies in order to keep our communities safe. Evidence suggests that our preventative activities have been extremely influential in the reduction of emergencies in recent years, a trend we are keen to maintain and improve. One of the key drivers for our preventative campaigns programme is the information we obtain from, and share with, other organisations, which allows us to develop specific campaigns based on statistical evidence.

Some of the things we have achieved:

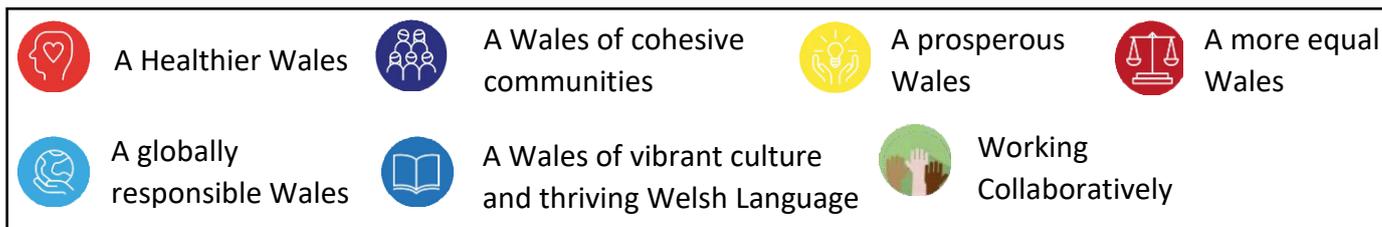
- delivery of 18,052 Safe and Well Checks, with 5,733 of those being delivered to households referred to the Service by another agency
- embedded safeguarding practices into day-to-day activities, ensuring these are aligned with national policy and guidance
- continued to develop and deliver interventions and engagements with children and young people through targeted activities
- worked with organisations that support vulnerable people
- implemented the latest technological advancements and upgrades to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and safety.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- deliver 17,500 safe and well checks, with at least 25% of those being delivered to households referred to the Service by another agency
- meet the increasing demand for provision and support of digital communications, including Cyber Security Standards and Accreditation
- progress our plans for a new immersive training and development centre to offer a wider range of training scenarios, and deliver improvements in training
- continue to deliver fire safety audits based on the risk-based inspection programme
- continue to create an inclusive workplace that enable all staff to perform to the best of their ability, and meet the diverse needs of our communities
- improve the health, fitness, and well-being of staff through the provision of advice and information, active monitoring, and education.



Objective 2: To continue to work collaboratively to help communities improve their resilience



The Authority's approach to prevention and delivering fire safety advice, education, and interventions has contributed to a reduction in the number and severity of emergency incidents attended across North Wales. This approach involves working with a range of partners across the public and third sector, to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved. Preventing fires and responding swiftly to emergencies helps to avoid or reduce the human cost, insured and uninsured losses, the cost of repairs and lost productivity, and the reduced attractiveness of an area to inward investment.

Improving resident and business safety through awareness, education, and intervention, as well as identifying opportunities to reduce crime such as deliberate fire setting, can bring economic benefits to individuals, communities, and businesses.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

- worked with partners and stakeholders such as Natural Resources Wales and farmers/graziers to identify locations in North Wales which are at greater risk of wildfires, and help to develop emergency response plans
- carried out a review of our response to wildfires, including the welfare of crews
- continued to build relationships with partners such as Natural Resources Wales, Local Resilience Forums, the Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG), and inland flood and water rescue groups to improve the joint capabilities of agencies to help those affected by flooding
- worked collaboratively with communities in respect of the recruitment of retained firefighters to enhance resilience of emergency incident cover in their areas.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- rollout Microsoft 365 as a means of further improving communication and integration with partners
- continue to comply with Welsh Language Standards, including promotion of activities and learning
- work collaboratively with our partners and communities to develop plans to reduce and respond to wildfires and climate related emergencies
- implement recommendations of the wildfire review.



Objective 3: To operate as effectively and efficiently as possible, making the best use of the resources available



Given the backdrop of financial uncertainty and the potential increase in demand for services across the public sector, it is inevitable that the Authority will be faced with challenges to sustain its services over the coming decades.

The pressure on fire and rescue services is therefore likely to come from several areas, including the recruitment and retention of operational firefighters, and the potential of broadening the role of a firefighter. Rationalising the Authority's costs and managing a balanced budget over the next few years will help sustain fire and rescue services into the future, making the area more resilient to demographic and other changes.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

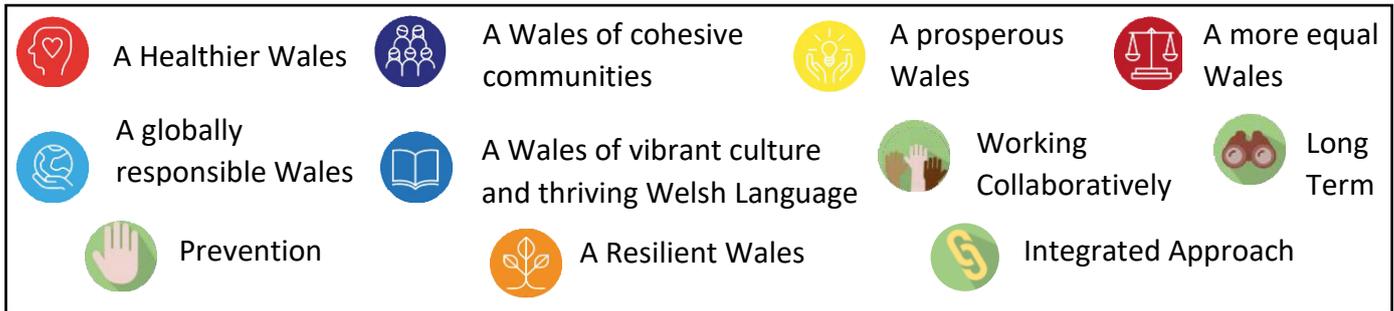
- reintegration of financial services previously outsourced to Conwy County Borough Council
- developed an effective asset management system that promotes optimal resource allocation
- built on existing measures to monitor operational performance by fire crews before, during, and after incidents
- conducted the retained duty system staff experience review
- carried out a review of the delivery of training and development, including providing training more locally to support the needs of retained firefighters.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- conclude the emergency response review and consult the outcomes with relevant stakeholders prior to implementing recommendations
- adopt National Operational Guidance for Control rooms as part of a review of our Control Room staffing arrangements and workforce skills aimed at improving our resilience
- support the delivery of outcomes from the retained duty system staff experience review
- refine pensions and payroll processes and implement budget modules.



Objective 4: To continue to identify opportunities to encourage greater engagement with people, communities, staff and stakeholders



The Authority is committed to improving the way it communicates and engages with people about the services it delivers, and although its reach is widening, it acknowledges that this can always be improved.

Understanding, listening to and representing communities is a crucial part of the Authority's role. Society is changing, and therefore there is a need to change how people are able to communicate with us to ensure that the Authority's messages reach everyone, including under-represented groups and communities.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

- engaged with local employers, communities, and those directly affected by fire and other emergencies to develop prevention activities and campaigns
- promoted national and local safety campaigns, ensuring that areas of greatest risk are prioritised, for example, fires caused by cooking
- maintained the currency of existing information-sharing agreements, and sought to establish new agreements where appropriate
- continued to report progress on findings from a health and well-being survey of all staff, and promoting activities throughout the Service
- improved reporting on energy usage to reduce carbon production, including the development of an 'Invest to Save' fund for future carbon reduction projects.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- procure and install stowage equipment to reduce the spread of fire contaminants
- implement the All Wales People and Organisational Development Strategy
- continue to support the delivery and review of the fire family staff survey
- continue our delivery of Children and Young People programmes/activities and interventions
- introduce the Serious Violence Duty adopted in January 2023 by all strategic partners on the Safer North Wales Partnership Board.



Objective 5: To maintain a suitably resilient, skilled, professional and flexible workforce



The Authority recognises the importance of attracting, developing and retaining a workforce that is reflective of the diversity within the communities it serves. This cannot be overstated, and therefore equality and diversity lie at the heart of the Authority's culture and core values: a commitment to diversity and inclusion; a desire to strive for excellence; the protection of communities, and recognition of the value of its people.

Through an All Wales People and Organisational Strategy, the Authority will support new ways of working to utilise the skills and professionalism of the workforce.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

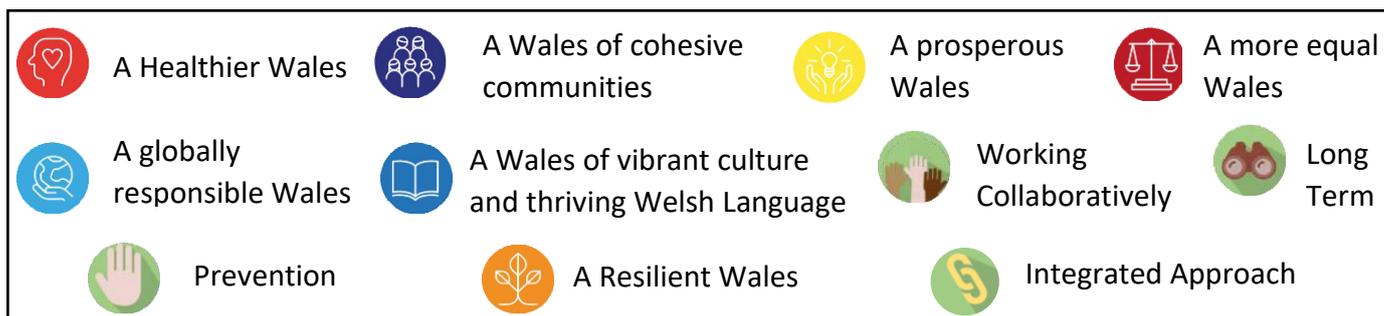
- developed employment practices to increase the employment prospects of people who might otherwise find it difficult to gain access to work, as well as prioritise action to promote gender equality
- adopted agile and flexible working models which will contribute to a low carbon society through reducing emissions associated with travel for work purposes
- continued to seek out new opportunities to develop apprenticeship schemes within the Service
- contributed to the All-Wales People and Organisational Development Strategy
- improved ways of supporting staff to become future leaders
- introduced a new staff structure that will help to increase the number of staff in our community areas.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- continue our focus on recruiting, developing and retaining a highly skilled, motivated and bilingual workforce
- continue to work towards the revalidation of the Platinum Corporate Health Award
- develop a talent identification and management process to replace the existing professional development programme
- commence year 1 of the 3-year operational training strategy
- review and respond accordingly to the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor for Wales Thematic Review recommendations.



Objective 6: To develop ways of becoming more environmentally conscious in order to minimise the impact of our activity on the environment



In 2017, the Welsh Government set out its ambition of achieving a carbon-neutral public sector by 2030. In March 2019, it published Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales, which aims to support the public sector to set a baseline, and monitor and report progress towards carbon neutrality.

The Authority recognises that it has an important role to play in protecting and in reducing its impact on the environment. It is committed to improving environmental performance and considering it in all areas of its work, from fire prevention, to environmentally friendly technology.

The Authority is also mindful of its role in helping the people of North Wales understand the impact of weather and climate change and the challenges that these present. The Authority also recognises its own leadership role in this regard in terms of its own operations and its use of resources, whilst it delivers its activities in a manner that helps sustain the planet for our future generations.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

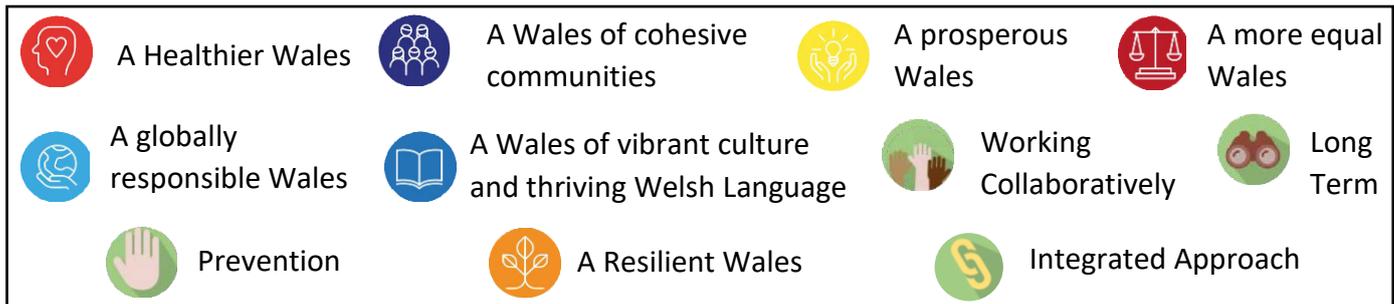
- established a Strategic Board with responsibility for developing an Environmental Strategy for the Authority
- identified and implemented ways to increase biodiversity on premises
- worked with Public Services Boards across North Wales to understand climate change from a regional perspective
- worked with landowners to reduce incidences of wildfires, and encouraged notifications of controlled burning.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- support the delivery of the Environmental Strategy 2022-2030
- continue to develop our monitoring and reporting of energy consumption and carbon emissions
- develop our reporting of greenhouse gases in line with Welsh Government carbon reporting.



Objective 7: To ensure that social value and sustainability are considered, including during procurement processes



Social value is a term used when describing the relative benefits for people and communities of taking certain courses of action or of introducing changes. Adding social value is about considering whether what is being proposed could be done differently in order to enhance and improve people's lives.

The Authority already undertakes a number of activities that do more than simply deliver what its statutory duties require of it.

Adding social value comes in many forms. It is also about ensuring that when procuring goods and services the Authority considers more than cost alone. The social, economic, and environmental aspects need to be taken into account alongside value for money considerations during tendering processes. By embedding social value into its procurement processes the Authority can also bring about a social return from the money that it spends.

Some of the things we have already achieved:

- ensured that the procurement of new operational equipment includes consideration of 'total end of life' disposal
- ensured procurement frameworks and contracts measure social value
- promoted social value and sustainability within the Service.

During 2023-2024 we will:

- carry out a procurement review following the appointment of a new Procurement Manager
- continue with our build programme to replace training towers with new steel tower installations
- continue to deliver Safe and Well Checks to the communities of North Wales
- review our health and attendance management arrangements.



Have your say

We are always looking for ways to improve our service and to present information that is meaningful. In order to help us to do this, we want to ensure your views are considered when delivering our activities and keeping you informed.

- Write to us: North Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Ffordd Salesbury
St Asaph Business Park
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 0JJ
- Call us: 01745 535250
- Send us an email: CorporatePlanning.Helpdesk@northwalesfire.gov.wales
- Via our website: www.northwalesfire.gov.wales
- Or follow us on:
-  Twitter
[@northwalesfire](https://twitter.com/northwalesfire)
-  Facebook
www.facebook.com/northwalesfireservice

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English – we will respond equally to both and will reply in your language of choice without delay.