

Our plan for responding to emergencies in Berkshire 2020 to 2023



Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service



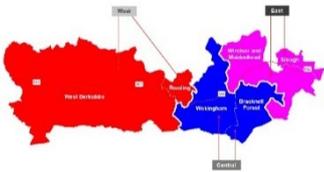
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Introduction



The **Government** has written a set of rules that all fire and rescue services must follow.



The **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** is the law that all fire and rescue services must follow.



Under the law **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority** must do **4** things:



1. Put out fires in Berkshire



2. Protect people and buildings if there is a fire



3. Rescue and protect people if there is a road accident



4. Rescue and protect people in other emergencies, like saving people from serious floods.



As part of this work, **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority** has written **3** plans on the most important things we do to protect people in Berkshire.



Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is a group of local Councillors who make all the big choices about the local fire and rescue service.



Prevention

The work we do to **prevent** fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place.



Protection

The work we do to **protect** local people at risk when **fire safety rules** are not met.



Response

The work we do to **respond** to fires and other emergencies.



Our **Response Plan** explains how we use our equipment and staff to respond to fire and rescue emergencies.



About us



Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service responds to fires and emergencies across Berkshire.

900,000



We run **18 fire stations** across Berkshire that serve **nearly 1 million** people, all year round.



Berkshire includes:

- **large towns** such as Slough and Reading



- **smaller towns** in the countryside such as Lambourn and Hungerford



- **156** tower blocks



- Many waterways like
 - the River Thames
 - the Kennet and Avon Canal



- historical sites like Windsor Castle

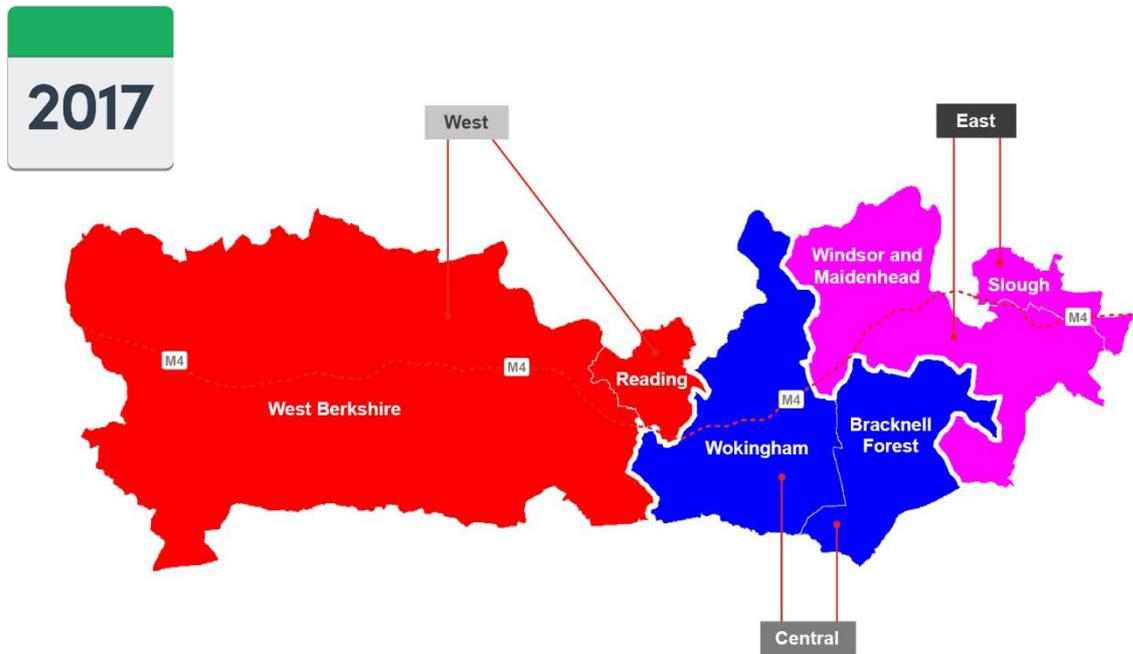


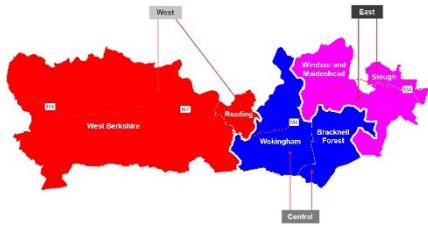
- beautiful countryside.



To find out what happened the last time we asked local people about our plans go to www.rbfrs.co.uk and search for **consultation**.

In **2017** we set up **3** hubs in Berkshire - the West Hub, Central Hub and East Hub.





The hubs:

- have staff that know a lot about **local risk**



- make sure our vehicles, equipment and people are in the right places.



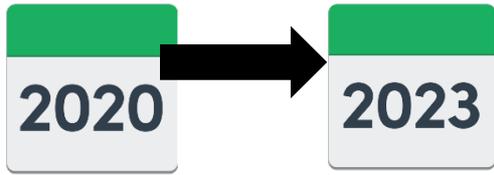
A **risk** is something which can lead to harm.



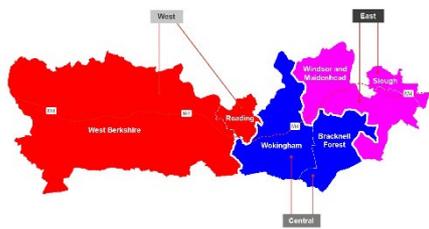
Each hub in Berkshire has its own **Local Safety Plan** to make sure they can manage local risk.



A **Local Safety Plan** is a plan that says how we will keep local people safe.



The ideas in our **Response Plan 2020 to 2023** carry on the work we have already done to make Berkshire safer.



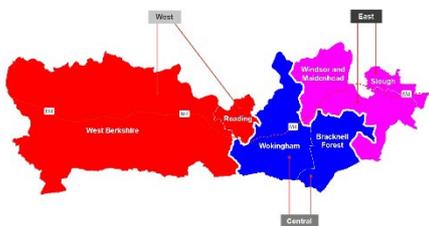
Risk in Berkshire



When we wrote our **Response Plan**, we looked at the number of **incidents** in Berkshire.



An **incident** is a possible emergency we attend to help and could include fires, false alarms, water rescue and car accidents.



From our research, we know that the most incidents took place in the **West Hub** area, followed by the **East Hub** area, then the **Central Hub** area.



We found the towns of **Reading** and **Slough** had the biggest number of incidents.

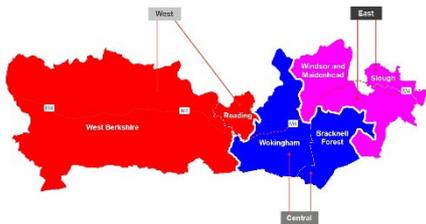


We are working hard to reduce the number of **false alarms**.

A **false alarm** could be due to faulty equipment or fake calls.



False alarms can waste a lot of time and money and add extra pressure on the service.



We found that the most high-risk sites are in the **West Hub** area, and the next highest risk area is in the **East Hub**.



A site is **high risk** because of the type of building it is, or high-risk work carried out there.



Our **Protection Plan** is about **protecting** local people at risk when **fire safety rules** are not met.



It explains how changes to buildings will affect the fire safety work we do.



More new buildings could mean we are busier.



1,300



For example, in Reading:

- over **one thousand three hundred new homes** will be built by **2024**



3,300



- over **three thousand three hundred more homes** will be built by **2029**.



Because we are more aware of the **risks**, our **Response Plan** has changed.

The plan may need to change again as we learn more.



We used to think that all buildings followed **fire safety rules**.



Fire safety rules are the things that must be done to make sure a building is protected from fire.

If a fire happens, it will stop the fire from getting bigger.



But after the **Grenfell Tower Fire**, we know that this is not true for all buildings.

Some buildings such as tower blocks with **Aluminium Composite Materials** do not protect buildings as we thought they would.



Aluminium Composite Material is used to make a type of **cladding**.



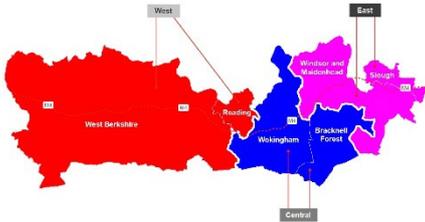
Sometimes **cladding** is used to cover the outside of buildings.



So we need to think again about how safe buildings are.



There are a number of big projects that could change how we work, including the building of a new runway at **Heathrow Airport**.



The **M4** runs through the middle of Berkshire, so road safety is an important part of our **Prevention Plan**.



From our research, of the types of incidents we attend, the greatest risk to people in Berkshire is:



1. serious road accidents



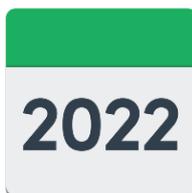
2. fires in buildings.



Using the staff and equipment we have, we want to get better at responding to accidents and fires.



For example, the new **Theale Community Fire Station** will make it easier to respond to local emergencies, such as getting people out of vehicles after an accident.



The new fire station is due to be built in the village of Theale by **2022**.



We may need to change how we work as the weather is changing a lot.



Flooding is a risk for people who live near stretches of water, including the River Thames.



We understand the risk of flooding by using the information we get from other organisations.

13,000



For example, in the Windsor and Maidenhead area over **13,000** buildings

1,900



And nearly **1,900** businesses are at risk of flooding.

2014



The last serious flood in this area took place in **2014** when we responded to **59** flooding incidents in **11** days.

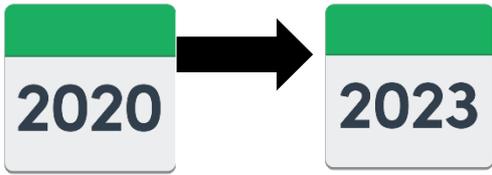
These were mostly in Windsor and Maidenhead.



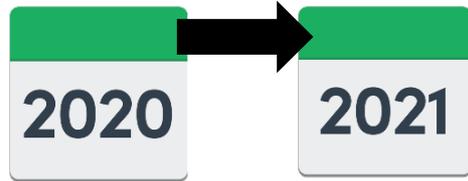
We will review our water rescue service to make sure we can respond to serious floods in the future.



We have a **15-year plan** to make sure our equipment, fire stations and computers are up-to-date.



Over the next **3 years**, we plan to have **3 projects** to find out if our services meet local need and work in the best way.



- the project about our **water rescue services** will run from **2020** to **2021**



- the project about our **technical rescue services** will run from **2021** to **2022**



- the project about our **incident support services** will run from **2022** to **2023**.



How quickly do we respond to emergencies?



In 2016 we talked to local people.

In 2017 we changed the way we record how long we take to get to emergencies.



The **response time** starts from the time of the emergency call to the time the **first** fire engine arrives.



We aim to get fire engines to the emergency within **10 minutes** of the call most of the time.



We know that more fire engines arrive **after 10 minutes** in West Berkshire where most fire stations are further apart and are staffed by **on-call Firefighters**.



On-call Firefighters are called to the fire station when there is an emergency.



We get to more emergencies **quicker** than a lot of other fire and rescue services in England.



In West Berkshire, we are more likely to arrive within **10 minutes** after **6 pm**.

On-call Firefighters do not always work on the fire station and have other jobs.

 More on-call Firefighters are available after this time.



We hope we will get to emergencies in West Berkshire quicker when the

Theale Community Fire Station

opens. We will think about ways to change the way we work in West

Berkshire to get to emergencies

quicker.





Planning for risk



We have two types of incidents. We call them:

- **normal incidents**
- **beyond normal incidents.**



Normal incidents include:

- house fires



- factory fires



- road accidents



- rescuing people from high buildings



- local flooding.

Beyond normal incidents could include:



- large-scale flooding.



If a **beyond normal** incident happens, we may work with other counties and central Government.



We do several tests to make sure we can respond to incidents.



We should be able to respond to:

- one incident that needs **10 fire engines** over **2 days**



- two incidents that need **6 fire engines** either at the same time or within **2 days**



- one or more incidents that need **4 fire engines** or more, for up to **4 days**.



What we spend on our service



Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, like all fire and rescue authorities, can only spend the money it gets from the Government, local people and businesses.



Our budget from **2019** to **2020** was **£34 million**.



From **2010** to **2020** we saved over **£7 million**.



Royal Berkshire Fire Authority must run services that are value for money.



We get most of our funding from Council Tax.



The rest of our funding is from the Government and local businesses.



In the last **5 years**, Government funding has decreased by a large amount.



But we have carried on running a good service in Berkshire.



We have had to do a lot of extra work with local councils and building owners after the **Grenfell Tower Fire**.



We have a **15-year plan** to make sure our equipment, fire stations and computers are up-to-date.



To carry on providing a good fire and rescue service we would like to increase Council Tax by **£5** a year.



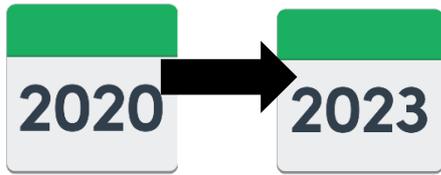
If we cannot increase Council Tax, we will have to make savings.



If we made more **savings**, it would take us longer to respond to emergencies.



We do not want to do this.



There are **6** ideas in our **Response Plan 2020 to 2023**.



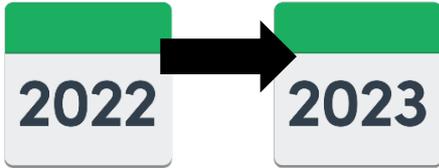
Over the next **3 years**, we will have **3 projects** to find out if our services meet local need and work in the best way.



Idea 1 is the project about our **water rescue services** that will run from **2020 to 2021**.



Idea 2 is the project about our **technical rescue services** that will run from **2021 to 2022**.



Idea 3 is the project about our **incident support services** that will run from **2022** to **2023**.



Idea 4 – We will think about new ways to make response times faster in the West of Berkshire.



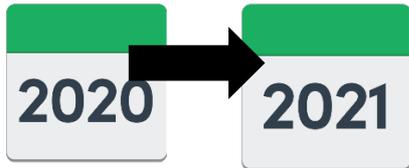
Idea 5 - We will carry on planning for risks and emergencies in the same way.



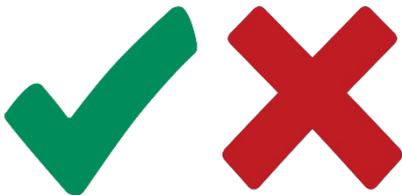
Idea 6 - We will ask the Government for more money so that we can carry on working in the best possible way.



After reading this **Response Plan**, please answer **6** questions over the next **6** pages.



Question 1 – In **2020** to **2021** do you agree that we should find out if our **water rescue services** can meet local need and works in the best way possible?



Yes or No?



Please give us any other feedback in the box below:





Question 2 – Do you agree that in **2021-2022** we should find out if our **technical rescue service** can meet local need and works in the best way possible?



Yes or No?

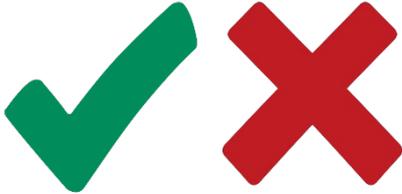


Please give us any other feedback in the box below:

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Question 3 – Do you agree that in **2022-2023** we should find out if our **incident support services** can meet local need and works in the best way possible?



Yes or No?

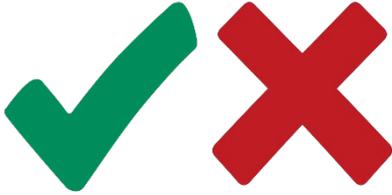


Please give us any other feedback in the box below:





Question 4 – Do you agree that we should think about new ways to make response times faster in the West of Berkshire?



Yes or No?

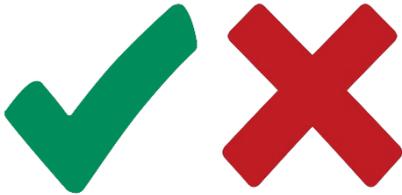


Please give us any other feedback in the box below:





Question 5 – Do you agree that we should carry on planning for risks and emergencies in the same way?



Yes or No?

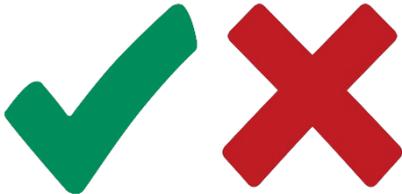


Please give us any other feedback in the box below:





Question 6– Do you agree that we should ask the Government for more money to make sure we can continue to provide the same level of service?



Yes or No?



Please give us any other feedback in the box below:



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