

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

# Response Strategy

2024 - 2028



Making Cumbria a safer place for all



[cumbriafire.gov.uk](http://cumbriafire.gov.uk)

# Contents

- 02 Executive summary
- 03 Introduction
- 04 Response arrangements
- 06 Response Principles
- 07 Response Framework
- 08 Objectives

## Executive Summary

### Putting our communities first

When we respond to our communities we do so with empathy, compassion and treat everyone with respect. We embrace the diversity of our communities to ensure that we provide the best possible service when we are called upon. We learn from every incident and interaction to continually improve our service. We recognise the privileged position we are in serving our communities and are proud to represent Cumbria FRS. We work closely with our communities to engage and educate and ensure communities see CFRS as an employer of choice.

We deliver risk focused Fire Safety Audits in a composed and respectful manner.

We create a supportive environment through business engagements where people can be themselves and ask for advice to ensure their business can be compliant and safe from fire.

We communicate responsibly, with sensitivity and respect for varying cultures and offer advice and guidance through multi-lingual options.

We build trust with minority business groups and third sector organisations by creating constructive working relationships.

We explore all solutions to reduce the risk within regulated premises.

### Dignity and Respect

Respect is central to all that we do at Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service. We treat each other with dignity, fostering an inclusive workplace where everyone can be themselves. We encourage open dialogue, ensuring everyone has an equal voice and is heard. We actively challenge and reject inappropriate behaviour, creating a positive and supportive environment. By being sensitive to the needs of others and embracing differences, we cultivate a respectful and collaborative culture for all team members.

We always strive to deliver against our commitments.

We persist in the face of obstacles and demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

We actively create environments where people can be the best they can. We understand and embrace the amazing benefits diversity brings. We strive for our teams to reflect the communities they serve to ensure that teams can effectively respond to a wide variety of situations. We actively engage with our communities to encourage them to join our service. We actively challenge inappropriate behaviour.

### Integrity

We operate with open, honest and fair principles and ensure these are embedded in our recruitment and promotion processes. We base our decisions on evidence and ensure that clear communications are shared. We embrace internal and external feedback mechanisms, including debriefs, 360 appraisals and VIPs.

We deliver against the commitments we make to our communities.

### Leadership

We recognise our position as role models and ensure our behaviours match the expectations from the communities we serve. We celebrate our successes with families and employers. We value our teams and ensure support is available. We create environments where team members can suggest creative ideas.



## Introduction

**Our response strategy defines how we ensure sufficient and proportionate emergency response arrangements are available to respond to and manage a wide range of risks and threats, delivered through a range of local, regional, and national delivery models.**

We seek to ensure that the majority of our resources are located where the risk is and an appropriate immediate response is made to all emergency calls. This initial response is pre-determined according to the type of incident. We regularly review our approach to providing and deploying resources to ensure they remain flexible and seek to improve our capability in dealing with a wide range of foreseeable emergencies and risks.

The landscape of emergency incidents, that we respond to, is ever changing and evolving. Our aim is to ensure that when emergencies do happen, we are able to respond in the most effective and safest way to protect and limit damage to life, property and the environment. To achieve this, we will continue to be innovative and flexible in the way that we manage and deal with emergencies.

We are neighbours to 5 other fire and rescue services (Scotland, Northumberland, Durham and Darlington, North Yorkshire and Lancashire), we carry out joint planning and exercising with our neighbouring FRS to ensure we are prepared to deal with emergency incidents on a local, regional and national scale.

We have a number of industrial Fire and Rescue Service partners, namely at BAE Systems in Barrow and Sellafield Ltd on the west coast of Cumbria. We will continue to work closely in collaboration with these local partners to ensure that we can effectively prepare, exercise and respond to emergencies at these risk sites when they occur.

The response strategy does not operate in isolation. The objectives are set out in our CRMP and aligned to other service strategies, policies and plans.

External partnership working, collaboration and interoperability also play a key aspect in our response strategy, we will, in line with our responsibilities as a category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act, play a full and active part of Cumbria's Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The LRF's main responsibilities are to ensure that local risks are assessed and that preparedness, in terms of response and recovery arrangements are in place to deal with the range of potential emergencies that could affect the county. Through the Blue Light Collaboration Board, we have a programme of identified opportunities that are explored for feasibility and innovative ways of enhancing the emergency service available to our communities, whilst at the same time realising greater efficiencies through working together.



## Response Arrangements

### Our Station arrangements & staffing model.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) uses both wholtime and on-call systems to provide effective emergency response across the county. With 55% of our workforce being on-call firefighters, we maintain a flexible staffing model that ensures coverage in all areas. We operate 42 fire engines from 38 fire stations strategically placed to serve Cumbria's communities.

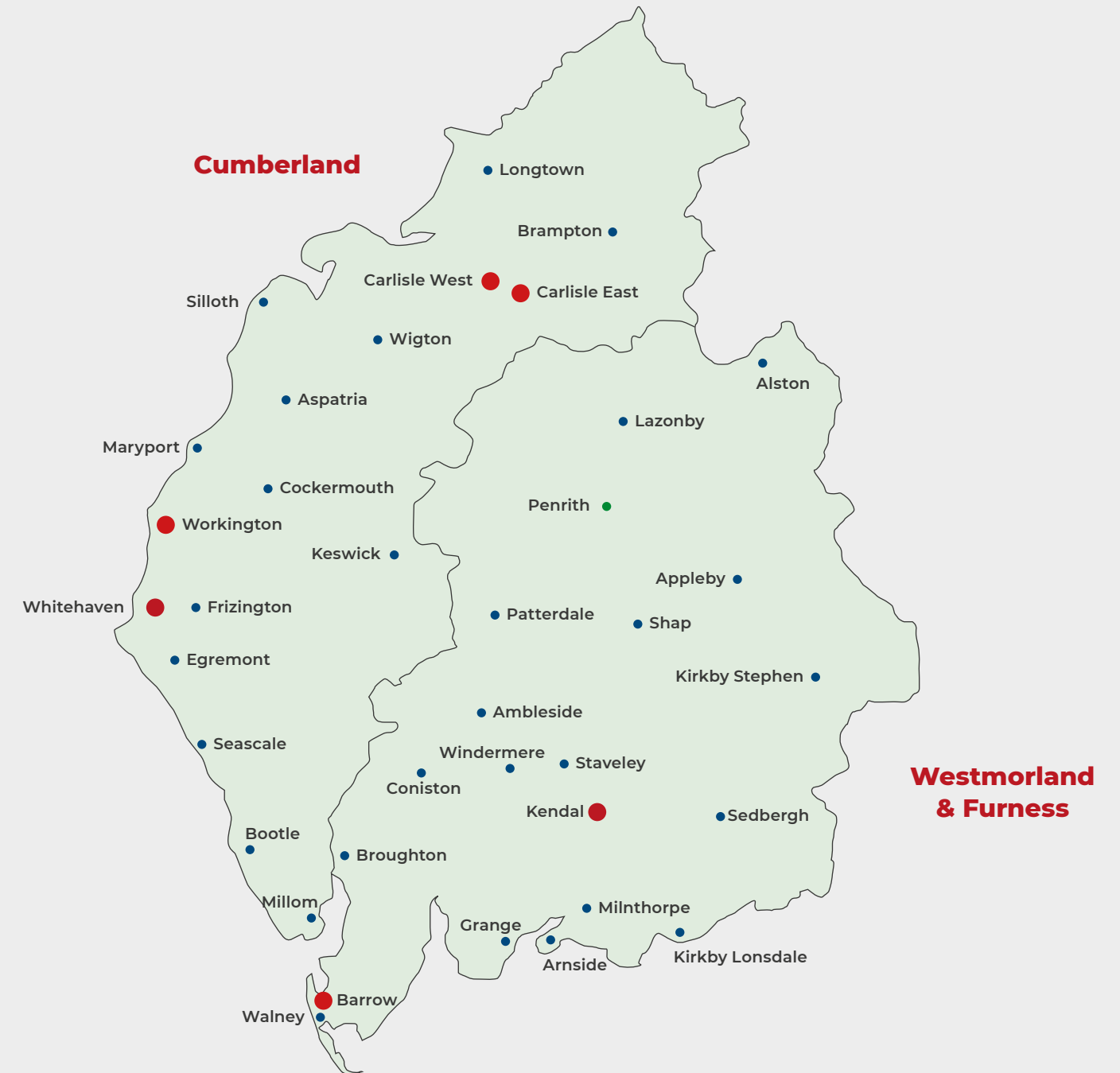
Our priority is to respond quickly and efficiently, deploying personnel with the appropriate skills, equipment, and support to manage any incident. Additionally, some of our stations are equipped with advanced technical rescue capabilities (detailed in Appendix A). This model allows us to deliver a high level of service, ensuring that our response is both timely and effective, meeting the needs of diverse emergency situations.

### Structure & Responsibility

The response structure is overseen by the Area Manager Response, who is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the delivery of response across the service, in line with this strategy. The service is divided into two Basic Command Units (BCUs): Westmorland & Furness and Cumberland. Each BCU is managed by a Group Manager, responsible for ensuring response performance is effectively managed. Cumberland consists of 4 Local Command Units (LCUs), while Westmorland & Furness has 5 LCUs. Each LCU is overseen by 1 of 9 Station Managers and comprises a combination of regular and on-call fire stations. The daily management and station availability are handled by Watch Managers and Crew Managers, who ensure that all stations are ready to respond effectively as required. This structure ensures efficient delivery of service-wide response objectives.

This Response Strategy ensures that CFRS remains committed to and focused on the following principles:

- ▶ CFRS are committed to ensuring diverse communities in the county receive services that meet their needs.
- ▶ Employing and utilising appropriate duty systems and flexible arrangements to ensure the appropriate level of skilled Firefighters are available.
- ▶ Providing an appropriate response to fires and other emergencies locally, regionally and nationally by distributing emergency response vehicles and equipment, based on risk, vulnerability and demand.
- ▶ Maintaining high standards of operational preparedness and Firefighter safety by ensuring our Firefighters are highly skilled and trained.
- ▶ Ensuring our operational capabilities are resilient and are continually assessed against foreseeable and relevant risks.
- ▶ Responding to and safeguarding the environment in Cumbria particularly against the risk of Wildfire in specific habitats.
- ▶ Ensure that outcomes delivered by this Response Strategy are measurable, effectively reviewed and evaluated
- ▶ CFRS will also enter into 'Memoranda of Understanding' (MoU) and mutual assistance arrangements, where it is clear that such an agreement is likely to better support response arrangements that ensure the safety of the communities in the County. Any such MoU will clearly recognise the role of the participating agencies.





# Response



## Fleet and Assets

To effectively respond to the diverse risks in Cumbria, we collaborate with our Fleet and Technical Services department to ensure that our vehicles and equipment remain fit for purpose. Delivering a modern fleet enables us to transport firefighters and essential technical equipment safely and effectively to incidents, considering the county's road and emergency risk profiles.

## Learning & Development

Our Learning & Development team plays a vital role in supporting our response efforts by ensuring our workforce is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to handle emergencies effectively. We provide training to maintain operational staff competency and oversee risk-critical recertification.

The team ensures that all staff are trained in the latest techniques for managing the diverse range of incidents we face in Cumbria. By delivering our training plan, we ensure that our crews remain "safe and legal" in their operations.

Additionally, we foster leadership development across the service, helping to build strong leaders who can manage teams during critical incidents, further enhancing our response capabilities.

## People & Talent

Our People & Talent team understands that our workforce is our greatest asset, essential to delivering high-quality services to our communities. The skills, expertise, experience, and diversity within our team directly influence the effectiveness and quality of our response across Cumbria. By working closely with this team, we ensure robust succession planning is in place at all Fire Stations, guaranteeing that we have the right people in the right roles to maintain a strong and effective response capability.

## Ops Planning

Our operational planning team supports the health, safety, and welfare of operational firefighters. A key element is producing, disseminating, and reviewing Operational Risk Information and creating action plans to deploy resources efficiently. We work closely with Northwest Fire Control to provide accurate response plans, enabling quick and informed decision-making during incidents.

Additionally, we collaborate with the Local Resilience Forum, coordinating multi-agency responses to large-scale emergencies and ensuring effective communication and resource-sharing. By reviewing National Operational Guidance (NOG) and aligning Cumbria's Product packs with best practices across the UK, our team ensures that local plans reflect local risks. Engaging in training exercises, we ensure that our crews are well-prepared and equipped to respond to any emergency across Cumbria with maximum effectiveness.

## Business Continuity

We are committed to maintaining critical services, even during times of high demand or when faced with the loss of our resources, such as people, property, and assets. We will maintain a degradation plan that adapts to evolving risk profiles, is exercised regularly, and ensures that we can continue our operational response during disruptive events.

## National Resilience

We play a crucial role in emergency planning and response within Cumbria, having faced numerous major incidents like wide-area flooding and significant transport accidents. We will maintain the capability to step up our response efforts during such emergencies, ensuring robust in-house arrangements for accepting local, regional, and national support as detailed within the National Capability Advisory Framework.

Our assets, including the High Volume Pump and Mass Decontamination Unit will remain in a high state of readiness for deployment to significant events in Cumbria and nationally if needed.



# Objectives

1

## Objective one:

Deliver a highly effective and efficient operational response.

To achieve this, we will have to continuously review our operational philosophy and implement 'new ways of working' as set out in our Operational Cover Plan.

3

## Objective three:

Explore changes in duty systems to ensure best value and promoting flexible working arrangements.

We will explore options to improve duty systems across wholetime and On-call duty systems.

2

## Objective two:

Explore innovative means of communication to ensure that pertinent information is understood and acted upon by all staff.

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service will invest in new technology as described within our Response Plan, this will assist with real-time updates, alerts, and knowledge sharing.

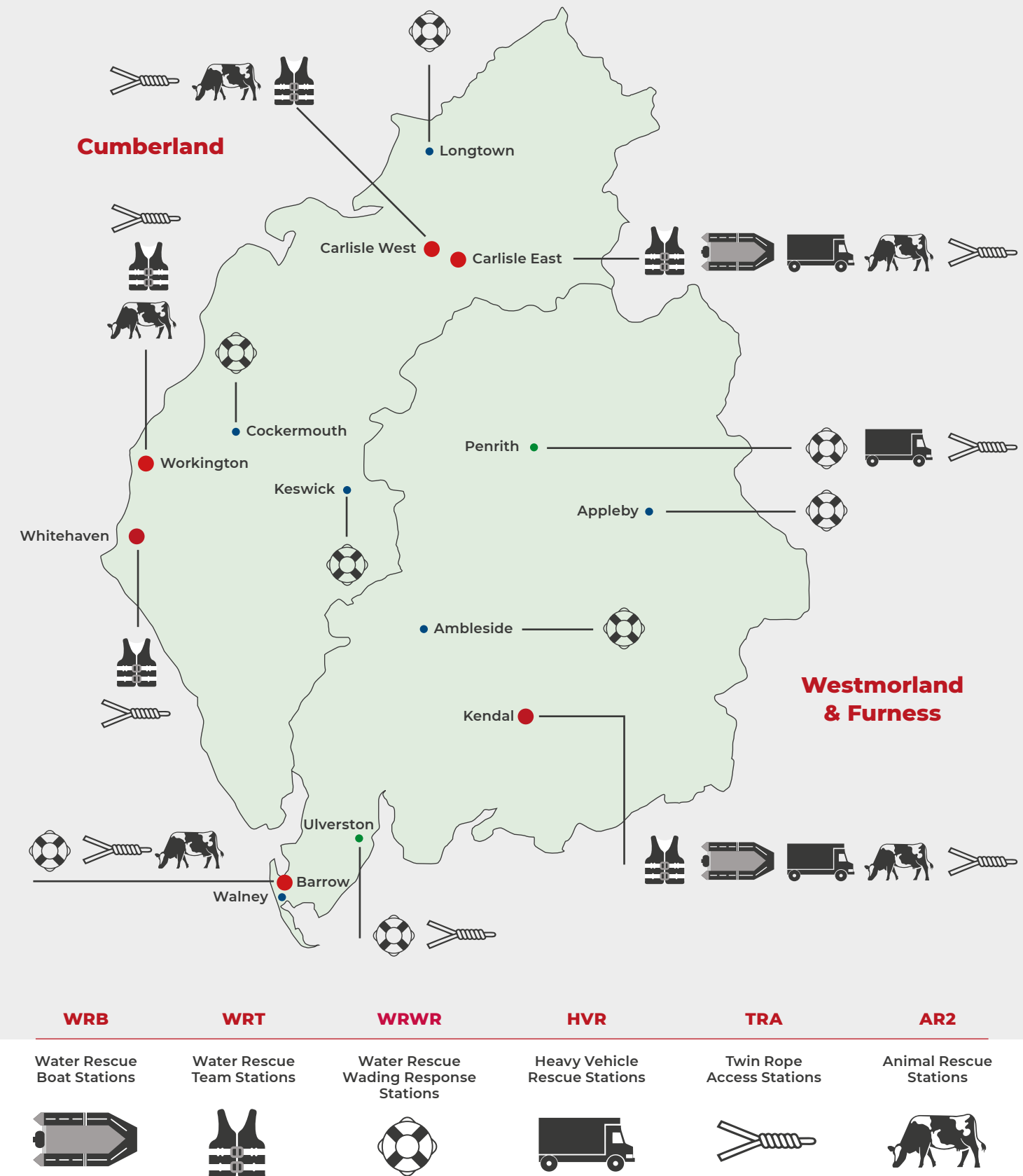
4

## Objective four:

Work with neighbouring services to increase our understanding of cross border risk.

We will review the sharing of appropriate risk information with our neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services, this will include arrangements for cross border mobilising, exercising and interoperability working.

# Appendix A





# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

## Our Code of Ethics



Putting our communities first



Dignity and Respect



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Integrity



Leadership

    @cumbriafire

Making Cumbria a safer place for all

[cumbriafire.gov.uk](http://cumbriafire.gov.uk)

