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Agenda item: 06

Performance Against Response Indicators

Community Safety Committee

Date:	6 February 2026
Submitted by:	Director of Service Delivery
Purpose:	To inform Members of Community Safety Committee of the performance against the 2025 / 26 performance outcome targets. The report specifically looks at performance covering 01 April 2025 – 31 December 2025
Recommendations:	That Members of the Community Safety Committee note the contents of the report
Summary:	To date overall operational demand has closely aligned to the weather. The long dry start to the year corresponded to a 19% increase in operational for the 1st quarter compared to the 3-year average. Quarter 3 saw a period of wetter weather with operational demand dropping by 8% against the average. Dwelling fires, Road traffic collisions and false alarms are below the three year average.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Scott Donegan, Area Manager Service Delivery Scott.Donegan01@westyorksfire.gov.uk
Background papers open to inspection:	None
Annexes:	None

1. Introduction

1.1. This performance report covers the period from 01 April 2024 to 31 December 2025.

1.2. A suite of nine Authority approved metrics provide a view of operational activity in the current financial year. These metrics are measured against a three-year average to demonstrate how the service is performing in comparison to previous years.

1.3. The nine performance indicators are:

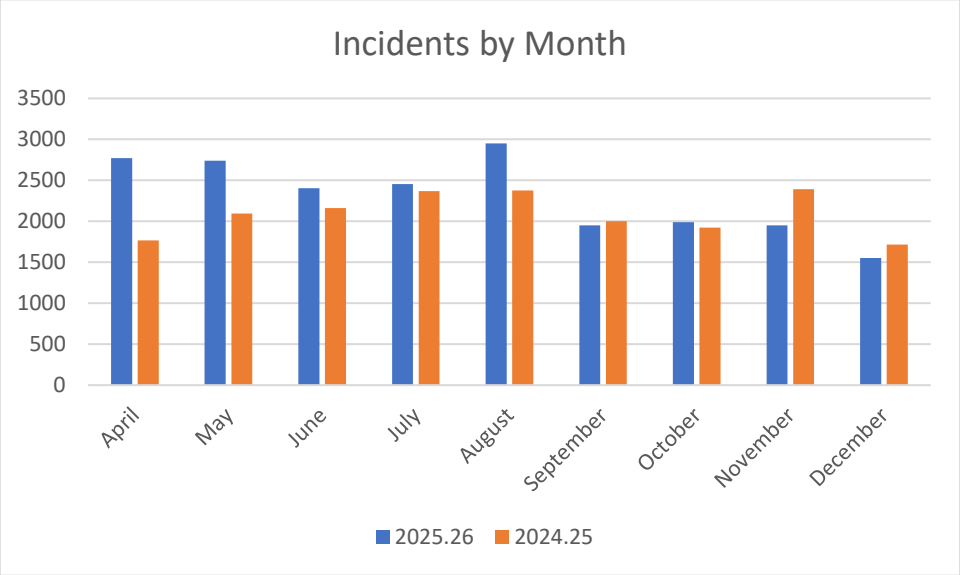
- All Incidents
- Incident Demand
- Victims Rescued
- Injuries and Fatalities
- False Alarms
- Fire Related Injuries and Fatalities
- Non - Fires
- Fires
- Road Traffic Collisions

2. Information

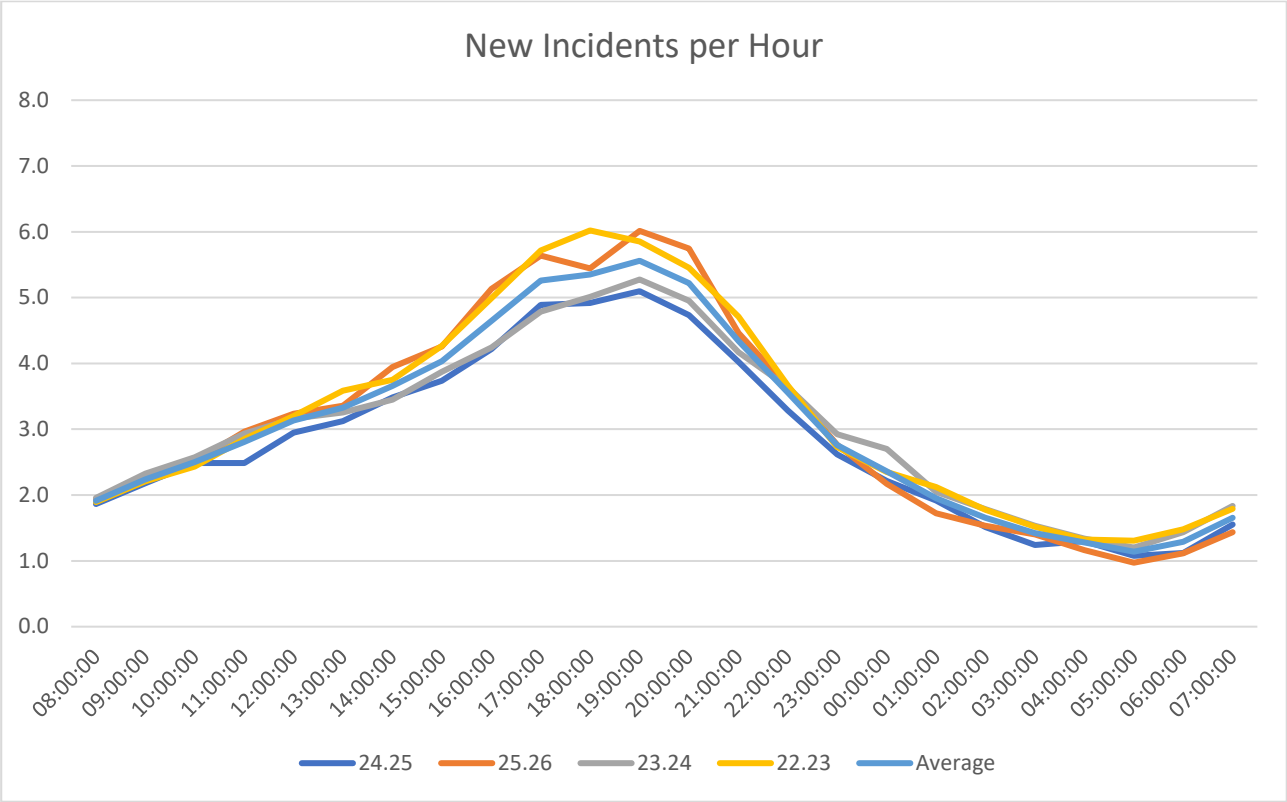
All Incidents

2.1. In this reporting period, the service has responded to 20759 incidents. This is 1955 (10.4%) more incidents than the same reporting period for 2024 / 25 and 669 more than the three-year average.

2.2. The exceptionally dry weather at the beginning of the year contributed to a significant increase in secondary fires. The wetter weather and darker evening since September have started to offset this increase and demonstrates the impact climate change can have on operational response.

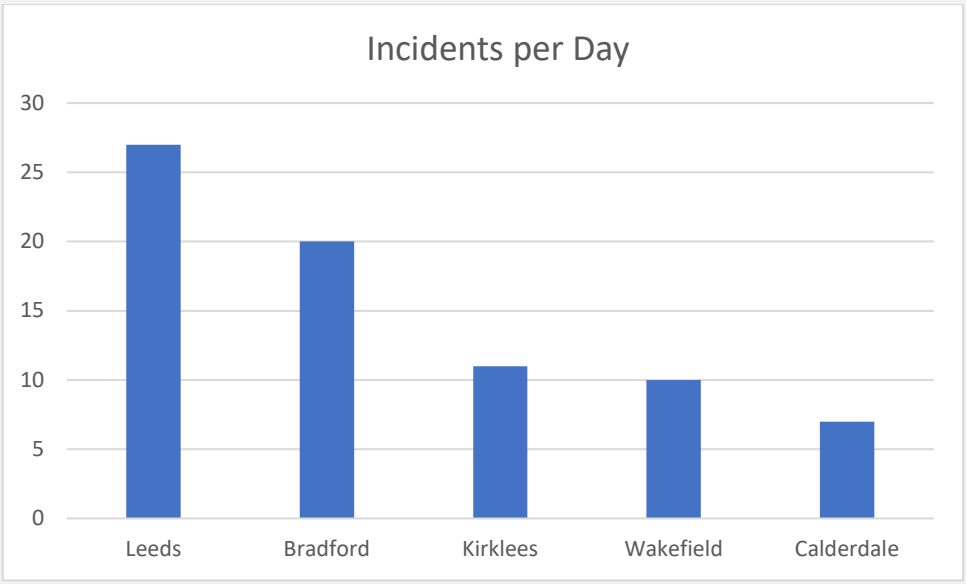


2.3. The peak period for operational mobilisations is between 19:00 and 20:00. During this period, we average six new incidents per hour. This profile is consistent with the previous three years.



2.4. Through this reporting period the service has attended an average of 76 incidents per day compared to 68 incidents for the same reporting period in 2024.25 and 75 for the three-year average.

2.5. Leeds sees the highest levels of operational demand and Calderdale the lowest. This is consistent with our understanding of risk and the related resourcing as outlined in our Community Risk Management Plan.



2.6. Performance against the Authority approved risk-based planning assumptions currently sits at 89.73%. This is 3.09% lower than the same period last year. The average response to incidents across West Yorkshire is 8 minutes 22 seconds.

Risk Score	Incidents	Met RBPA	Missed RBPA	% Met	% Missed	Av Response mm:ss
Very High	2728	2539	189	93.07	6.93	00:07:11
High	3234	3011	223	93.10	6.90	00:07:21
Medium	3935	3626	309	92.15	7.85	00:07:50
Low	4909	4404	505	89.71	10.29	00:08:29
Very Low	5759	4873	886	84.62	15.38	00:09:45
Total	**20565**	**18453**	**2112**	**89.73**	**10.27**	**00:08:22**

2.7. The performance for the period Oct – Dec 2025 is 91.83% and indicates an improvement as the year progresses.

2.8. The planned response times (below) are published in Your Fire and Rescue Service 2025 -2028. It can be seen by comparing our average response time to the Authority approved standard that our performance is strong.

Risk Band	Risk to Life	Risk to Properties	Other
Very High Risk	7 minutes	9 minutes	15 minutes
High Risk	8 minutes	10 minutes	15 minutes
Medium Risk	9 minutes	11 minutes	15 minutes
Low Risk	10 minutes	12 minutes	15 minutes
Very Low Risk	11 minutes	13 minutes	15 minutes

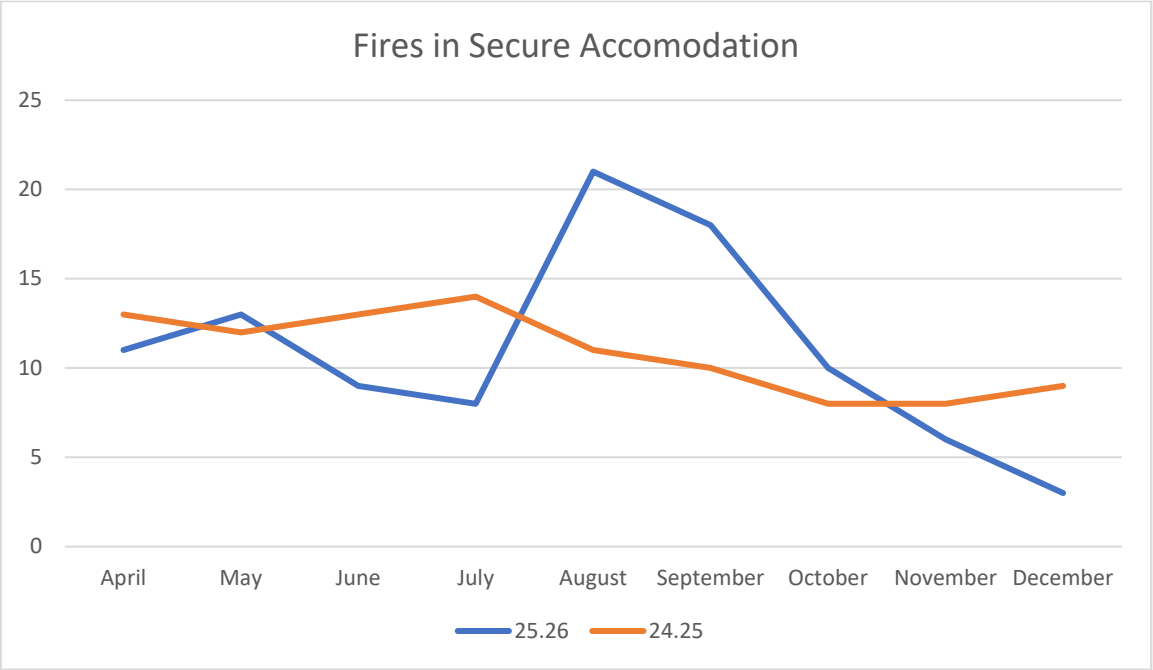
Fires

2.9. The service has responded to 9175 fires in this reporting period, this is 2145 (30.5%) more than the same period last year and 1414 more than the three-year average. 44% of all incidents attended are fires.

2.10. Of the 9175 fires, 5490 are thought to have been started deliberately and 3686 are considered accidental.

2.11. 2375 (26%) are considered primary fires and 6766 (74%) are secondary fires. This is compared to 2229 primary fires (32%) and 4776 secondary fires (68%) in 24.25. This aligns to Spring 2025 being the driest on record for the UK and the impact this has had on fires in the open.

2.12. There have been 99 deliberately set fires in secure accommodation compared with 98 in 2024.25. On the 20th of October tamper proof vapes were released across all the prisons in our area; a noticeable decline in fires has been noted.



2.13. There have been 21 fewer dwelling fires (698) compared to the same period last year and 20 fewer than the three-year average. This shows that although we have seen a significant increase in secondary fires for the year to date, this has not been reflected in an increase in fires in the home.

2.14. We continue to target our Safe and Well visits to those most at risk of fire. However, due to the increase in operational demand we have seen the number of Safe & Well visits undertaken reduce by 22%.

Non-Fires

2.15. Non-fires include incident types such as effecting entry for partners, RTC's, lift rescues and other technical rescues. Non-fires make up 17% of operational demand. A breakdown of the 20 most common non-fire incidents can be seen below:

Initial Incident Type	Non-fires
ASSIST AMBULANCE - GAINING ENTRY	919
PERSONS LOCKED IN	349
PERSONS STUCK	260
Humanitarian or Assistance - Assist other agency	231
RTC SMALL VEHICLE(S) INV.	224
ASSIST POLICE	167
PERSONS IN LIFT	157
PERSONS REMOVAL OF OBJECTS	137
OTHER ASSISTANCE	123
VEHICLE SMALL ON FIRE	99
Rescues - Rescue from entrapment (non-emergency)	71
URGENT SAFE AND WELL	71
RESCUE OF SMALL ANIMALS	69
ASSIST AMBULANCE	65
Rescues - Persons locked in	63
RESCUE FROM WATER (OR ICE)	57
RESCUE OF LARGE ANIMALS	51
Rescues - RTC persons trapped (small vehicles)	51
Rescues - Lift persons shut in	30
SMELL / FUMES	30

2.16. The service has attended 3632 non-fire incidents. This is 93 more than the three-year average and 34 fewer than the same period last year.

2.17. 1010 incidents result from the ‘Effecting Entry’ support we provide to the Yorkshire Ambulance service. This is 184 fewer when compared to the same period last year.

2.18. A new non-fire type was created for the year 25.26, ‘Urgent Safe and Well’ relates to our new process of responding to credible threats of arson. This is process change does address a concern raised during our last inspection by His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. In 2025.26 we have responded to 71 urgent Safe and Well visits.

False Alarms

2.19. In this reporting period the service has attended 7949 false alarms. This is 840 fewer than the three-year average and 226 fewer than last year. False alarms are responsible for 38% of all operational demand for this reporting period.

False Alarm Reason	False Alarms
Faulty	1704
Cooking/burnt toast	1337
Controlled burning	1054
Other	554
Reported incident/Location not found	489
Total	**5138**

Most common false alarm types

Fire Related Injuries and Fatalities

2.20. In this period there has been 118 fire related injuries. This is consistent with the three-year average and 16 less than the same period last year.

2.21. Unfortunately, there have been ten fire related domestic fatalities. One of these is subject to Police investigation. Smoking materials continue to be a common link to these fires.

2.22. Local campaigns are undertaken following the more serious fires and wider safety campaigns linked to the National Fire Chiefs Council Calendar are delivered county wide. A large Lithium Ion Campaign was launched before Christmas with the impacts currently being evaluated.

Injuries and Fatalities

2.23. In this reporting period there have been 200 non-fire related fatalities and 937 injuries. This is a reduction of 133 compared to last year and 47 fewer than the three-year average. 165 fatalities resulted from supporting the Yorkshire Ambulance Service and other blue light partners.

2.24. Other significant incident types resulting in a fatality include attendance at water related incidents (6) and RTCs (8).

Road Traffic Collisions

2.25. There have been 426 RTCs in this reporting period, 8 fewer than the three-year average and 27 fewer than the same period last year. RTCs are responsible for 2% of the service's overall operational demand.

2.26. The main activities undertaken by firefighters include full extrication techniques (91), ensuring scene safety (114) and precautionary stand-by (47).

3. Financial Implications

3.1. There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1. The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

5.1. It has been identified through national datasets that higher levels of deprivation are a key factor in the occurrence of fire and other emergencies. By targeting risk reduction activities to those most vulnerable we are likely to support and reduce risk in the most diverse communities across the county.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1. Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

(EIA template and guidance)

Date EIA Completed: "Add EIA completed date here"

Date EIA Approved: "Add EIA completed date here"

The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1. The health, safety and wellbeing of all WYFRS staff involved in responding to emergency incidents is one of the key priorities contained within Your Fire and Rescue Service 2025-2028.

7.2. The District Command teams actively monitor the health and safety of staff following incidents and have welfare provisions in place for any specific incident type where

crews may witness distressing scenes with support available through local managers and the Occupational Health and Safety Unit.

7.3. Trauma Risk Management Sessions continue to be delivered across the service with the aim of delivering a resilient, trauma-aware workplace culture.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1. Warm, dry weather dramatically increases the risk, severity, and speed of fires. Through 2025.26 the climate has led to conditions which make fuels easier to ignite, fires which spread more rapidly, higher intensity fires and environment conditions which result in erratic fire behaviour. This has led to large areas of our moorland and other open spaces experiencing fires which have destroyed protected habitats.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1. This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability
- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services

10. Conclusions

10.1. To date, overall operational demand has closely aligned to the weather. The long dry start to the year corresponded to a 19% increase in operational demand for the 1st quarter compared to the 3-year average. Quarter three saw a period of wetter weather with operational demand dropping by 8% against the average.

10.2. Although the weather has had a significant on secondary fires and overall demand for our services, it is positive to report that we are seeing a slight reduction in both domestic fires and road traffic collisions.

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Agenda item: 07

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

Community Safety Committee

Date:	6th February 2026
Submitted by:	Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Director of Service Delivery

Purpose:	To inform Members of the ongoing work in relation to Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and the issues Fire and Rescue Services are encountering.
Recommendations:	That Members note the contents of the report.
Summary:	The report outlines the work of WYFRS in relation to planning applications for BESS sites within West Yorkshire and the issues identified through these processes, along with a variety of associated reference documents.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Area Manager (AM) David Teggart T: 07810 354638 E: dave.teggart@westyorksfire.gov.uk
Background papers open to inspection:	None
Annexes:	None

1. Introduction

1.1 WYFRS recognise the UK Government's strategic priorities of energy independence and security whilst the country is transitioning to an environment that is less reliant on fossil fuels. This necessitates innovation and the use of grid scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and we understand that they are a fundamental part of the UK's move toward a sustainable energy system.

1.2 Grid scale BESS capture energy in times of low demand and provide almost instantaneous support to the National Grid at times of high demand. They do this by taking energy generated by renewable sources and storing it in lithium-ion batteries.

1.3 When managed correctly lithium-ion batteries can be operated safely and the likelihood of problems are low. However, when faults do occur, these batteries can pose a significant fire risk.

1.4 The UK Battery Strategy indicates through modelling by the Faraday Institution and Bloomberg NEF models the growing needs of BESS to provide sustainable power in future years. These models estimate that BESS could provide 10-20GW of capacity to the UK grid by 2030, and 30-35GW by 2050.

1.5 This transition, product development and innovation is outpacing safety standards and regulation, leading to potential increased risk of fires as a result. This is a real concern for WYFRS, other fire and rescue services and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

1.6 Looking to the future, standards, regulation and statutory guidance to mitigate fire safety risks associated with BESS must be developed and be capable of being updated and adapted in a timely manner to keep pace with the development of BESS technologies.

2. Information

2.1 Risks associated with BESS

2.2 Whilst incidents involving BESS in the UK are relatively rare, there have been failures within BESS across the world. These failures are recorded in the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Failure Event Database.

2.3 BESS use lithium-ion batteries, when managed correctly these batteries can be operated safely and the likelihood of problems are low. However, when faults do occur, these batteries can pose a significant fire risk due to thermal runaway.

2.4 Thermal runaway occurs when a battery generates heat faster than it can dissipate it. This can result in the rapid production of large volumes of toxic and explosive vapours and lead to explosion and fire. When lithium-ion batteries burn they produce oxygen, the chemical reaction in the battery continues to produce heat, and various

fuels are also present. This means that these fires are very difficult to extinguish as water cannot access the battery cells meaning thermal propagation from cell to cell continues. Furthermore, if a fire occurs, it may reignite even in the absence of oxygen, making these fires particularly dangerous for both the public and for firefighters.

2.5 The House of Commons Library published a BESS research briefing in June 2025, it sets out concerns about fire risks and how fires can be prevented.

2.6 Though rare, BESS fires are challenging to extinguish and can continue to burn from several hours to several days. A fire in Liverpool, in 2020, lasted 3 days, more recently a fire in Essex (Feb 2025), broke out at an under-construction BESS site and lasted three days and took over 200 firefighters to put out.

2.7 Smoke plumes from fires can harm air quality. However, trying to extinguish fires using water can result in large volumes of contaminated fire-water runoff which can have a long-term impact on the environment. As a result, the prevailing view when it comes to firefighting tactics is to adopt a ‘controlled burn’ to minimise runoff whilst protecting the surrounding area from flame and heat impingement. This decision is often taken based on the battery chemistry and site-specific information and taken in consultation with other responding agencies including the Environment Agency and the site technical experts.

2.8 Planning Applications

2.9 Following a 2020 amendment to the Planning Act 2008, BESS projects were removed from the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) planning regime. If a BESS is part of a larger project, such as a solar farm that meets the NSIP threshold (100MW+ as of 2026), the BESS may be considered "associated development" and thus included within the Development Consent Order (DCO) for that project.

2.10 As a result, BESS projects—regardless of their capacity—are generally required to obtain planning permission from the Local Planning Authority under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.11 Currently there is no statutory requirement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to consult with the local Fire and Rescue Authority on such BESS planning applications.

2.12 The NFCC encourages early engagement with the local Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), and for this to continue throughout the planning process. This is outlined in the government guidance on planning for renewable and low carbon energy and is a critical element to ensure that developers understand the local requirements needed for firefighter access and facilities.

2.13 WYFRS has worked with the 5 Local Planning Authorities to agree a process to engage and contribute to BESS planning consultations. Whilst this has been in place,

this has generally worked well, although there are a number of older and/or smaller schemes that for one reason or another were not brought to the attention of WYFRS.

2.14 WYFRS are generally being engaged by BESS developers as part of local authority planning processes, however, this has been inconsistent across the county and with the differing developers.

2.15 We will take the opportunity to consider any application where we are consulted. It is the aim of WYFRS to provide advice to the planning authority/developer and not create unnecessary barriers for the applicant. As such, we continue to work with the developers and local authority planning officers to better understand any risks that may be posed and develop strategies and procedures to mitigate these risks. At the same time, we recognise the concerns that residents of West Yorkshire may have regarding the use of these sites.

2.16 WYFRS does not seek to provide opinion on the entirety of a BESS system design. Instead, the aim is to limit the content to such matters that directly relate to facilitating a safe and effective response should an incident occur.

2.17 All told, we are seeing an increasing number of BESS planning applications being submitted to us for comment at planning stage by all parties.

2.18 However, as we do not have statutory duties through the planning process, the bodies receiving our comments are not required to respond, or to demonstrate how any FRS concerns have been satisfied or addressed.

2.19 Therefore, we have seen some mixed results and outcomes from across the districts based on our feedback. However, this has improved over the recent years, as the ways of working have become more established. Although a number of responses have not been acted upon as we anticipated.

2.20 Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD)

2.21 The Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) tracks the progress of UK renewable electricity projects over 150kW. It provides, as far as possible, a comprehensive snapshot of projects, and of progress across the technology sectors, through the life cycle of the planning system. An interactive map of the REPD data shows the geographical spread of renewable energy projects.

2.22 According to the REPD, as of January 2025, there were more than 100 BESS in the UK, of which around half are standalone, and half co-located with renewable energy projects such as solar and wind farms. Further, circa 90 BESS sites are currently under construction, 700 BESS sites have planning permission granted, and 518 BESS planning applications have been submitted.

2.23 Within West Yorkshire we have dealt with around 30 BESS site planning applications, when looking individually at those that have been refused, resubmitted

and appealed these extend to beyond 40 different applications throughout the entire county.

2.24 Planning Guidance

2.25 Currently there is a lack of prescriptive guidance provided to aid the Planning Authorities and Fire and Rescue authorities in assessing the information received from developers/contractors proposing BESS. To aid Fire and Rescue Authorities in providing comments to support the planning authorities in making a planning decisions in relation to these sites, the NFCC has produced a guidance document for use by Fire and Rescue services. The NFCC Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS (Dated November 2022) was published in early 2023.

2.26 It is our expectation that all proposed sites should meet the recommendations of the NFCC guidance, with the exception of the local requirements set out below, and the documentation provided by the developer should clearly outline how the proposed site meets the expectations of this guidance.

2.27 We also strongly recommend developers and planning authorities apply the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 855 Standard for the Installation of Stationary Energy Storage Systems along with guidance from the NFCC Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System Planning Guidance. Noting that some information and documents referenced have been updated since the NFCC guidance was published in 2023.

2.28 The UK Government has now published health and safety guidance Grid scale electrical energy storage systems: health and safety - GOV.UK for grid scale electrical energy storage systems.

2.29 The guidance aims to improve the navigability of existing standards and provide a clearer understanding of relevant health and safety standards that the grid scale electrical energy storage systems industry, which includes lithium-ion batteries, can apply to its own processes.

2.30 In order to ensure that developers and local authority planners have access to the requirements of WYFRS we have set out a pre-defined set of requirements to assist when developing plans at pre-planning or whilst commenting on planning applications.

2.31 As a minimum requirement, WYFRS will require:

2.32 The development to comply with current national guidance in relation to spacing of units, suppression systems and additional mitigating measures as required depending on the battery technology used.

2.33 Two separate access points on opposite sides of the site large enough for a fire appliance to enter to allow for emergency access in differing wind conditions and to

allow firefighting operations not to be impacted by any smoke plume. One access road with a perimeter road around the site does not meet this requirement.

2.34 In a fire situation, our tactical intervention is planned to allow an individual BESS container, or containers (depending on separation distances) to burn out and firefighting tactics will focus on protecting the surrounding infrastructure and other BESS containers. To achieve this would require the use of multiple ground monitors and water curtains to provide 360 degrees of protection/boundary cooling. (This is based on guidance from battery manufacturers, if the technology used requires a different intervention, then this should be discussed with WYFRS).

2.35 A single ground monitor has a flow rate of around 1,900 litres per minute, a single water curtain has a flow rate of around 450 litres per minute. Therefore, to provide 360 degrees of protection would require the use of 2 ground monitors and 2 water curtains which would provide a flow rate of approximately 5,000 litres per minute. Therefore, to ensure a successful application, the site should be provided with suitable supply of water to allow WYFRS to adopt these tactics.

2.36 Given that there is a potential for 5,000 litres of water per minute to enter the site for an anticipated duration of 2 hours, any containment system should be capable of accepting 600,000 litres of water. A water management plan should take this into account, and/or mitigate the off-site impacts through further liaison with the Water Undertakers and/or the Environment Agency.

2.37 It is essential that an emergency response plan is developed and shared with WYFRS at the earliest opportunity to minimise the impact of an incident throughout the lifecycle of the facility. This should be regularly reviewed and any significant changes communicated to WYFRS.

2.38 Details of what is expected to be included as part of the Risk Management Plan and Emergency Response Plan is provided in the NFCC Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS.

2.39 Any applications which do not meet the principles of the above guidance, requirements and recommendations will be deemed as unsuitable and therefore will be objected to.

2.40 The NFCC Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS (Dated November 2022) was published in early 2023. The guidance has been under review for approximately 18 months it is anticipated that the updated guidance will be released in the coming months.

2.41 This updated guidance will supersede and seek to build on the original guidance document that was published in 2023. The new guidance is based upon the analysis and professional judgement applied to a range of supporting materials including academic research, national and international standards, case studies, and industry guidance.

2.42 This will provide a more comprehensive document in some respects, however, in light of the significant feedback through the rewriting and consultation period the guidance is expected to be less prescriptive in some areas.

2.43 These changes to guidance may hinder our current approach to planning applications (outlined above), as some of these stipulations are and will continue to be above and beyond those anticipated to be in the future iteration of the NFCC guidance.

2.44 NFCC Position Statements

2.45 The NFCC has recently released the BESS Position Statement with a number of recommendations as below.

2.46 In addition to the recommendations set out in Fire Risks in Energy Technologies Position Statement, NFCC calls on the UK Government and Devolved Administrations to minimise BESS fire safety risks by:

(1) Creating an overarching framework and UK standard for the safe deployment and operation of BESS. This should be supported by technical standards and include clear guidance on the design and suitable locations for BESS, taking into account potential impacts of BESS on Critical National Infrastructure, any sensitive environmental receptors, local communities, and the need to ensure effective FRS pre-planning and operational response in the event of a fire.

(2) Including BESS in the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 at the earliest opportunity and ensuring that equivalent regulations are established for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

(3) Ensuring that FRS concerns and advice are taken into account and responded to when they are engaged about fire safety risks in BESS planning applications.

(4) Investing in a programme of continuous research on best practice firefighting tactics for fire incidents involving BESS to inform FRS training and operational guidance.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications associated with this paper. The above highlights additional burdens on various teams within service. A planning application will generally require a minimum of two to three people to review the various documents. These can range from 20-30 through to hundreds of pages.

3.2 We will generally try and meet with the site developers and Local Authority (LA) planner(s) to provide the opportunity to discuss any areas identified and following this submit a written response to the LA Planning Dept.

3.3 Following this, there are generally ongoing back and forth communications either through the LA Planning Dept or direct with the developers.

3.4 Depending on the outcome of the planning application, this may create further work, particularly for the sites refused, as they go through the resubmission and appeals process.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. People and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no direct People and Diversity implications within this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

(EIA Template and Guidance)

6.2 Date EIA Completed: N/A

6.3 Date EIA Approved: N/A

6.4 The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 Whilst this report doesn't have any direct health, safety and wellbeing implications. The thermal runaway of the batteries and the ensuing fire would lead to various health and safety issues and considerations for responders as well as the public as outlined in the UK Government health and safety guidance Grid scale electrical energy storage systems: health and safety - Annex B - Principal hazards associated with battery systems.

7.2 These include:

(1) Fire, heat and smoke.

(2) The potential for building internal pressure, eventually venting explosive gasses (for some chemistries and housing types).

(3) Electric shock (Discharge of electrical current and/or electrical arcing).

(4) Build up and ignition of flammable gases.

(5) Cascading failure/thermal effects from adjacent BESS cabinets/units.

(6) Exposure to external flame/surrounding fire.

(7) Emergency services unable to respond effectively if unaware of presence/size/type of system.

(8) Explosive hazards (explosive gas or battery rupture hazard).

(9) Exposure to harmful chemicals or substances.

(10) Leakage of electrolyte.

(11) Exposure to toxic gases.

(12) A plasma arc is established from current flowing through ionised air and can rapidly lead to extreme temperatures (enough to explosively vaporise conductive metals) and light.

(13) Arc blast can follow the arc flash through the instantaneous expansion of gas at the point of fault.

(14) Injury caused by movement of cables/ components through electromechanical stresses.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 Whilst this report doesn't have any direct environmental implications. A fire at a BESS site has the potential to cause significant air and ground pollution.

8.2 The smoke plume and water run off may contain amounts of toxic and harmful metals, chemicals, substances, gases and vapours.

8.3 The site design is critical to capturing and holding the water run off generated through the incident, and whilst the fire will not be directly fought, there will be run of from the boundary cooling that mixes with the products of combustion such as leaking battery coolant, toxic and harmful metals, chemicals and substances.

9. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

9.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25 strategic priorities below:

- Improve the safety and effectiveness of our firefighters.
- Promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all our people.
- Encourage a learning environment in which we support, develop, and enable all our people to be at their best.

- Focus our prevention and protection activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Collaborate with partners to improve all of our services.
- Work in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
- Plan and deploy our resources based on risk.

10. Conclusions

10.1 WYFRS recognise that the UK Government's strategic priorities of energy independence and security whilst the country is transitioning to an environment that is less reliant on fossil fuels. This necessitates innovation and the use of grid scale BESS and we understand that they are a fundamental part of the UK's move toward a sustainable energy system.

10.2 When managed correctly lithium-ion batteries can be operated safely and the likelihood of problems are low. However, when faults do occur, these batteries can pose a significant fire risk.

10.3 This transition, product development and innovation is outpacing safety standards and regulation, leading to potential increased fire safety risks as a result. This is a real concern for WYFRS, other fire and rescue services and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

10.4 Looking to the future, standards, regulation and statutory guidance to mitigate fire safety risks associated with BESS must be developed by Government and be capable of being updated and adapted in a timely manner to keep pace with the development of BESS technologies.

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Agenda item: 08

Spotlight On Reports

Community Safety Committee

Date:	6 February 2026
Submitted by:	Director of Service Delivery
Purpose:	To provide Members with examples of how the service meets the needs of vulnerable people within the community in its service delivery functions of prevention, protection and response.
Recommendations:	That Members of the Community Safety Committee note the contents of this report.
Summary:	The 'Spotlight On' case studies highlight just some of the excellent work that is being delivered across the communities of West Yorkshire

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:	None
Contact Officer:	Scott Donegan, Area Manager Service Delivery Scott.Donegan01@westyorksfire.gov.uk
Background papers open to inspection:	None
Annexes:	Spotlight-On Reports

1. Introduction

1.1 WYFRS is committed to meeting the needs of West Yorkshire's diverse communities. Members are aware that we direct our resources particularly towards the most vulnerable groups and individuals who are most at risk because of their lifestyles, behaviours or the way their protected characteristics, such as race, or religion or gender, influence their day-to-day life.

1.2 The Spotlight On case studies allow the service to demonstrate to Members of the Community Safety Committee how we often go above and beyond in order to provide an excellent service to the people of West Yorkshire and keep vulnerable people safe.

2. Information

2.1 The cases attached to this report showcase how our staff are working across districts to reduce risk and where required, respond to emergencies to provide a first class service to people in their time of need.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The activities carried out in the development of the work described come from existing revenue budgets and are supporting through collaboration with key partners.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. People and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no people and diversity implications resulting from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 The activities described demonstrate our commitment to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of target groups across the respective districts. All activities have been fully risk assessed and where necessary control measures implemented.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 Several the risks highlighted in these documents could potentially have a significant impact on the environment locally and service wide, the plans show we have considered these risks and the actions we will take to mitigate the impact.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no Risk Management Implications arising from this report

10. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

10.1 None

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management
- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.
- Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

12. Conclusions

12.1 The documents presented to Community Safety Committee demonstrates how West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service have found innovative ways to make a positive contribution to reduce risk for the communities of West Yorkshire.

Spotlight on...

Immersive training for Bradford's firefighters

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

What was the need, how was it identified?

Discussions with firefighters during station visits and operational incidents, have highlighted one consistent message; crews really enjoy operational training and would like more realistic and challenging scenarios, and more opportunities to strengthen their operational skills.

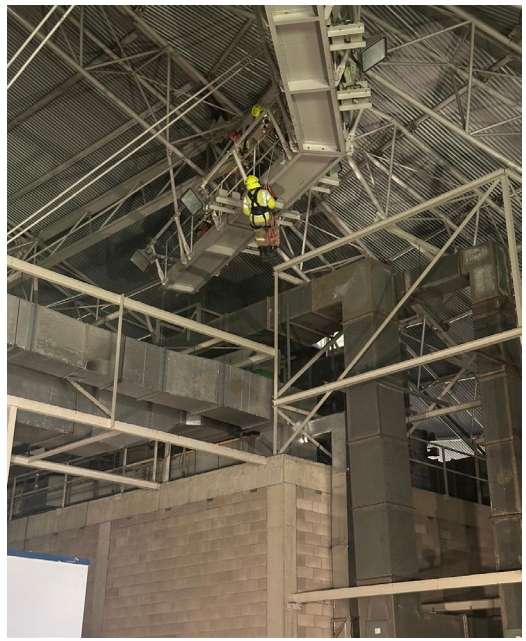
In response to this, the district team set about identifying a variety of training venues to enable us to develop more immersive, scenario-based training in real-world environments, looking at both local and emerging risk —ensuring firefighters are fully prepared for the most challenging incidents.

What did we do?

In collaboration with the local authority and estate managers, we identified key venues that provide the ideal environment for realistic scenarios. These included:

Bingley St Ives Estate: we used this venue which allowed firefighters to train realistically and overcome problems such as pumping water from a significant distance across challenging terrain. This incorporated a multi pump water relay with several fire engines, which is difficult to replicate in a fire station yard.

Richard Dunn Sports Centre has proved an excellent training venue for firefighters. We have developed realistic line rescue scenarios, working with the Technical Rescue Team from Spen Valley.



Offering crews the chance to set up multi line systems and work from a significant height in a controlled environment.

We have also carried out breathing apparatus training drills at the Richard Dunn complex, and mass casualty exercises with St John Ambulance.

The mass casualty exercise was carried out with support from the students at Bradford College who acted as 'live' casualties and provided some great 'realism' for firefighters and medical staff.

At **Margaret McMillan Towers**, we tackled high-rise scenarios inspired by lessons from Grenfell Tower and incorporated the improved high-rise procedures.

What difference did we make?

Crews appear more engaged, more confident, and have been provided a great platform to showcase and hone their skills during realistic scenario training.

We have received excellent feedback from both fire crews and partner agencies, stating that these scenarios have provided a good learning environment and provided a great opportunity for people to thrive.

What are the keys to our success?

We designed training environments that challenged, inspired, and empowered our staff to grow both as individuals and as collective teams. This realistic scenario-based approach unlocked the full potential of our operational crews, driving engagement while building resilience, leadership, and a culture of excellence.

What are we doing next?

We're not stopping here! Building on the success and enthusiasm from our operational crews, we're committed to exploring new ways to advance and elevate training across Bradford District.

Future training projects:

- Investing in 'Mass bleed' kits to strengthen realistic casualty care skills.
- Liaising with local Bus companies, focusing on the risk of Electric Buses, with a view of providing further training for crews.
- And we're leading the way in Breathing apparatus training, with plans for a 'digital fire attack box' which is a tool which uses digital flames, sounds and smoke to simulate realistic fire scenarios

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Spotlight on...

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

Calderdale District Safety Roadshow

What was the need, how was it identified?

Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) continue to be a significant issue in Calderdale, especially for drivers between the ages of 17 and 21. Analysis of local collision data and feedback from partner agencies highlighted that this group is disproportionately involved in serious incidents, often linked to risky behaviours such as speeding, drink/drug driving, and mobile phone use.

Furthermore, we identified an opportunity to extend the safety message beyond RTCs to encompass Lithium-Ion Battery Safety and Water Safety.

These insights drove the need for targeted intervention at educational institutions like Calderdale College.

What did we do?

On 2 October, we delivered the Safety Road Show at Calderdale College, engaging around 150 learners through six interactive sessions. This initiative was part of our wider strategy to reduce RTC's among young drivers - a group identified as high-risk through local collision data and partner feedback.

Key activities included:

- **Car Brake Reaction Tester** to demonstrate stopping distances and the importance of speed awareness.
- **Live RTC Extrication Demo** by WYFRS crews, showcasing real-life rescue techniques and the consequences of unsafe driving.
- **Fatal Five Presentation** by the Roads Policing Unit, addressing the five most common causes of serious collisions: speeding, drink/drug driving, mobile phone use, seatbelt non-compliance, and careless driving.
- **Lithium-ion Battery Safety** and **Water Safety** awareness sessions, broadening the scope of personal safety beyond road risks.

What difference did we make?

The Safety Roadshow session had a strong and positive impact on attendees.

- About **89%** of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their awareness of **electrical and water safety** increased.
- About **93%** agreed or strongly agreed that their awareness of **road safety** improved.
- The event was highly rated, with an **average overall score of 4.5 out of 5**.
- Satisfaction with the organisation was also high, averaging **4.4 out of 5**.

These results show the session was effective in raising safety awareness and was well received by participants.

What are the keys to our success?

Clear impact on safety awareness
Attendees reported increased awareness of electrical, road, and water safety. Most participants rated both the event and its organisation highly (average scores of 4–5 out of 5), showing the format delivered the intended learning outcomes.

2. Hands-on, high-engagement stations
Interactive activities like the Car Brake Reaction Tester and RTC demonstration were repeatedly highlighted as the most engaging. Practical experiences helped anchor learning and improve recall.

3. Multi-agency collaboration and credible voices
Working with partners such as West Yorkshire Police, Branching Out, college staff, and WYFRS crews brought real-world expertise and made safety messages more persuasive.

4. Trauma-informed, age-appropriate content
Sensitive topics were carefully framed, and pre-event communications with parents and guardians helped set expectations, ensuring the learning was powerful but appropriate.

5. Strong event planning and logistics
Detailed planning, clear run-sheets, effective venue coordination, and on-site support allowed facilitators to focus on delivering the sessions smoothly.

6. On-site communications and media support
Corporate Communications and post-event PR helped amplify the event's reach and reinforced its credibility with students and stakeholders.

7. Real-time feedback mechanisms
Using QR code surveys enabled immediate, specific feedback from participants, supporting rapid learning and validating the event's impact.

What are we doing next?

During 2026, the Calderdale district plans to conduct four Safety Roadshows in collaboration with educational institutions and community partners.

These initiatives aim to further disseminate essential safety messages to members of the community.

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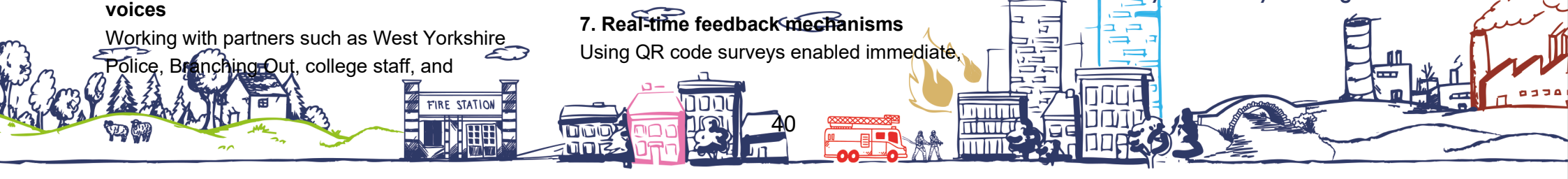


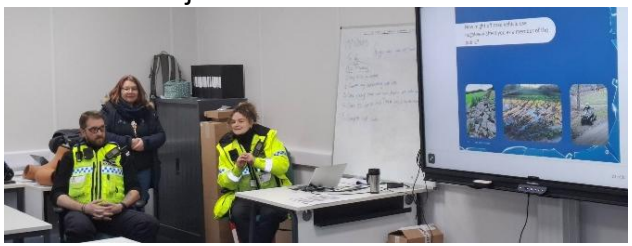
Spotlight on...

Road Safety Week in Kirklees

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

What was the need, how was it identified?

We planned the Road Safety Student Events because local data and partner feedback showed that many young people aged 16 to 19 are still involved in serious road traffic collisions. Schools, colleges and partner agencies told us that students needed clearer, more practical information about the risks of driving, especially around speeding, distraction, and unsafe choices. Teachers also said that classroom talks alone were not enough, and that students would benefit from seeing real demonstrations and having hands-on activities. These events were designed to help young people understand dangers on the road and support the Vision Zero aim of reducing deaths and serious injuries.



Kirklees College Brunel Construction Centre Huddersfield

Kirklees College Waterfront Quarter Huddersfield

What did we do?

To meet this need, we held three events on 18th to 20th of November 2025 at different Kirklees College sites. Each event used a carousel format, where small groups of students moved between different partner activities every 15 minutes. WYFRS delivered a live Road Traffic Collision (RTC) demonstration so students could see how firefighters rescue people from a crashed car. The Youth Interventions Team showed how reaction times change when distracted or impaired using the Brake Reaction Tester and special goggles. Other partners also took part: the Speed Camera Van team explained how speed enforcement works; the Safer Communities Team used a Speed Indication Device at the roadside; and the Road Safety Education vehicle provided important safety messages. Indoors, students spoke with Kirklees Highways and West Yorkshire Police about safe driving, e-scooter rules, tyre checks, and lithium-ion battery dangers. WYFRS staff used simple briefing cards to make sure the Fatal 5 dangers were explained clearly.

Kirklees College Springfield Centre Dewsbury

What difference did we make?

These events made a real difference to the students. Many said the RTC demonstration helped them understand how serious a crash can be and how long it takes emergency services to help. Students also said the activities helped them think differently about speeding, using mobile phones, and the effects of drink or drugs on reaction times. Teachers said students were more engaged than in normal classroom lessons, and that the hands-on style helped them remember key safety messages. The events also helped build trust between young people and the emergency services, as students were able to ask questions directly and see how different agencies work together to keep people safe.

Kirklees College Brunel Construction Centre Huddersfield

Kirklees College Brunel Construction Centre Huddersfield

What are the keys to our success?

The events were successful because all partners worked closely together and delivered clear, consistent messages. The practical demonstrations were a key reason for high engagement, as students could see and experience the risks rather than just hear about them. Delivering the sessions inside the colleges made it easier for students to take part and meant we reached groups who might not attend external events. Another reason for success was the positive and friendly approach of the firefighters, police officers and council teams, which helped students feel comfortable and involved. Strong partnership working and realistic activities helped make these events meaningful, memorable and effective

What are we doing next?

As part of our continued commitment to Vision Zero, we will keep driving efforts to reduce killed and seriously injured (KSI) incidents across the Kirklees district. Throughout the year, we will deliver a range of targeted road safety events focused on communities identified as most at risk through our partners. This will include practical demonstrations, awareness sessions, and education designed to challenge unsafe behaviours and promote safer choices on the road. We aim to strengthen prevention, improve understanding and support the long-term goal of achieving safer roads for everyone.

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Spotlight on...

Leeds District Electrical Safety including lithium-ion batteries

What was the need, how was it identified?

We know that electrical fires continue to be one of the most common causes of incidents we attend, and a lot of these fires come from things people use every day, e-bikes, Scooters, chargers, phones, e-cigarettes, power banks and other small electrical items. Over the past year we've noticed more incidents linked to poor quality chargers, unsafe products bought online, and people leaving things plugged in for long periods, especially overnight. With this in mind, and with the NFCC continuing to highlight the risks around lithium-ion batteries, we identified a need to get out into busy public spaces and speak directly to the community. Trinity Leeds is one of the busiest shopping centres in the city, attracting a wide mix of ages, including young adults who regularly buy tech and gadgets. This made it the ideal place to have honest conversations about electrical safety and help people understand the risks before something goes wrong.

What did we do?

On Wednesday 14th January, Rachel Barton attended Trinity Leeds alongside Garforth Blue Watch and Sophie from Stanningley White Watch to run an electrical safety awareness event as part of our "Buy Safe. Charge Safe. Dispose Safe." campaign. Throughout the day they spoke with shoppers, answered questions, and shared practical advice based on real incidents we see across the service. On display were a range of electrical items that had been involved in fires, which helped people clearly see the damage unsafe products can cause. They also demonstrated tools such as the plugin measuring device so people

could recognise non-compliant chargers. Our focus was on giving simple, helpful information that people could take away and start using straightaway to keep themselves and their families safe.

Shoppers were also encouraged to register their electrical appliances with Home - Register My Appliance so they could be alerted by email if their appliance needed any safety repairs or recalls.

What difference did we make?

The impact was obvious throughout the day, with many people stopping to talk, ask questions and share their own experiences. The fire damaged items really helped open conversations, improve education on what items contain a lithium-battery and correct charging advice. Shoppers were genuinely interested in how everyday habits can increase risk. Crews received some really good feedback, including people saying they now understood the importance of checking chargers properly and that they wouldn't leave items on charge overnight anymore. Several people commented that they didn't realise how dangerous counterfeit or cheap online products could be until they saw the evidence in front of them. Overall, we helped raise awareness, changed behaviours on the spot, and made electrical safety feel relevant and achievable for everyone we spoke to.

What are the keys to our success?

A big part of our success came from choosing the right location. Trinity Leeds gave us constant footfall and a wide range of people to engage with. The fire damaged items were also a key factor; they grabbed attention and made the messaging more powerful. Having Garforth Blue Watch present added real importance, as people value advice coming directly from operational crews. The teamwork on the day was excellent, ensuring we stayed visible, approachable and consistent in what we were telling people. Keeping the messaging clear and straightforward also helped, as people could take something useful away within just a couple of minutes of talking to us.

What are we doing next?

Following the success of this event, we're looking at other busy locations where we can run similar sessions and reach even more people. We'll continue to support the wider campaign and build on what worked well at Trinity Leeds. This includes exploring more partnerships with shopping centres such as White Rose, retailers and community venues, and creating additional visual resources to help show the risks clearly. We'll also use the feedback from this event to shape future engagement so we can keep improving how we deliver electrical safety advice across the district.

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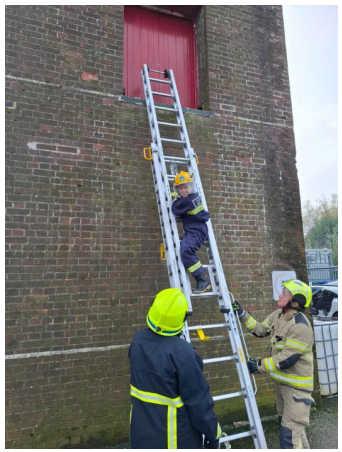
Spotlight on...

Youth Interventions – Re Action Illingworth



What was the need, how was it identified?

Youth Interventions developed the Re Action programme following a request from a partner based in the Leeds area. It was designed for young people who are under the age of 10 who were on the fringes of criminal behaviour and exploitation. 3 pilot cohorts were delivered within the Leeds district, which led to funding being secured from the SVD partner Safer Communities, for the delivery of 6 cohorts for primary schools in the Calderdale district.

Following the success of the previous Re Action cohorts based in Lee Mount and Deansfield primary schools, Ash Green and Moorside primaries were approached. They were both able to identify 10 young people who would benefit from a mix of 1-1 and group work which focused on making positive, safer choices.

What did we do?

After meeting the young people and staff working at both schools, we looked at previous delivery models and identified what would work for the needs of the young people and the school. For Ash Green, it was identified as being more beneficial to have most of the sessions delivered on station. For Moorside, the better fit was to have more sessions at school, with three longer on station sessions.

The content was tailored to meet the needs of the young people and included work focusing on topics such as anti-social behaviour, fire safety, emotional management, peer pressure and interpersonal skills. This was delivered through a mix of classroom-based activities and practical drill square activities such as use of hoses and the ladders.

What difference did we make?

There were many positives identified because of the Re Action programme. At Ash Green, it was noted that using the same instructors each week had developed strong, positive interactions between the young people and the fire fighters who work within their community. At Moorside, it was highlighted that having an all-female delivery team had helped challenge some of the views the group held about women and their role within the home and community.

Both schools have reported an improvement in behaviours within school and Moorside have said they are going to implement some of the positive peer influence work introduced to the group throughout the school.

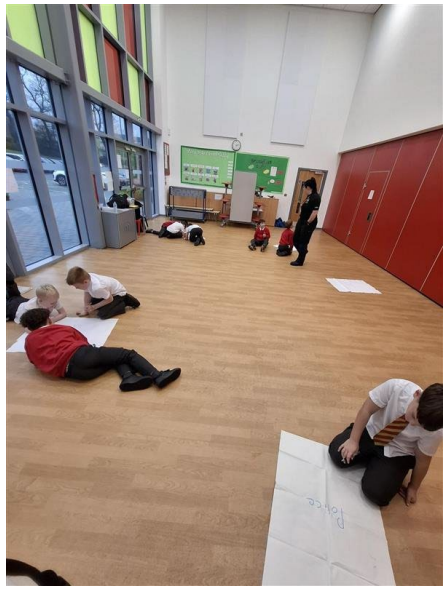
What are the keys to our success?

Working within a team of specialist Youth Trainers means that Youth Interventions can offer programmes tailored to the needs of the young people. Being able to draw on the wealth of knowledge throughout the team means that we can be flexible in how and what we deliver, meaning the young people can access a programme that works for them.

Having a pool of instructors who work within the community the young people live in is also a key to success. This allows young people to develop a positive relationship with a blue light service, which has long term benefits on both sides.

What are we doing next?

With the start of the new term, Youth Interventions have approached both Moorside and Ash Green and offered further work for some of each cohort that may need extra support. This has been accepted and is due to start January 2026. Youth Interventions have also secured funding to deliver a further cohort in the Harehills area of Leeds, which also began in January 2026.



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Spotlight on…

Wakefield

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

Wakefield District – working within the community to improve safety……..

WHITE RIBBON CHAMPION

WORKING TOGETHER TO END MEN'S VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

What was the need, how was it identified?

Assistant District Commander Sophie Green serves as an ambassador for the White Ribbon campaign, and the White ribbon day was Thursday 27th November

What did we do?

In collaboration with Watch Commander Adrian Bamforth, the District Support Officer, Sophie has developed a new white ribbon to be displayed on fire appliances. Together, they partnered with a local company that generously donated the ribbons to support the initiative. Sophie is also providing comprehensive training on the campaign to all crews and has participated in a multi-agency event at the Hyde Park Parkrun in Leeds.

A huge thank you goes to Chris Woodhead at Zest for Print in Meltham who created and donated the ribbons.

Parkrun

What was the need, how was it identified?

With the ongoing rosk around Lithium-Ion batteries, Pontefract Blue watch carried out an education event at Junction 32.

What did we do?

The watch spent a full day engaging with the public delivering vital education on safe charging of these devices, they were supported by our Prevention engagement coordinator Rachel Barton.

What was the need, how was it identified?

October 16th was Re-start a heart day, crews from across the district Supported Yorkshire Ambulance service in delivering sessions on CPR to local schools

What was the need, how was it identified?

Road Safety Week

As part of our ongoing commitment to Vison Zero, WC Hames attended Castleford College to give students input into Road safety.

What did we do?

Watch Commander Hames dedicated an entire week at the college, delivering presentations to all students. The programme concluded with a road traffic collision (RTC) demonstration conducted by local fire crews

What was the need, how was it identified?

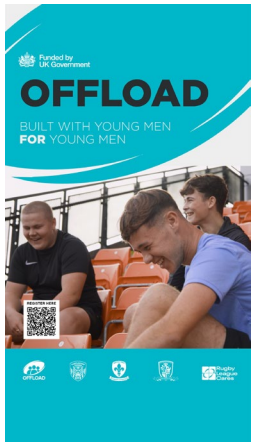
Bonfire night preparation

Crews conducted a series of bonfire safety presentations at local schools in the lead-up to Bonfire Night. Additionally, teams from across the district undertook 61 Environmental Hazard reviews, identifying instances of fly tipping and other concerns, and reported these issues to partner agencies to help mitigate the risk of fires during this period.

Wakefield District Prevention

Collaboration is at the forefront of partnership working within the district. The District Team are taking a leading role in several projects, the most notable of which are;

- Offload and Ahead of the Game – this is a government backed plan to break down barriers as part of their newly launched Men's health strategic vision for England. Working with our 3 key rugby league teams – Castleford Tigers, Wakefield Trinity and Featherstone Rovers. A pilot has been established in Wakefield to target young men who are not in education or employment and who are socially isolated. Both the Youth Intervention Team and District resources will work with the teams to build resilience and connections and inspire young men to aspire; inspire confidence and above all prevent them from becoming future service users



Operation HABB

Recent success within the district of an 18-month project within the Agbrigg area of Wakefield to improve the neighbourhood and reduce ASB and Fire Setting saw DPM Donna Wagner receive a WY Police Divisional Commanders Commendation for her collaborative / partnership working on Operation HABB. The outcome of which was to make this area a safer place to live and work

Representatives from WY Police; WYFRS and Council ASB Team

What are we doing next?

- Future Forward - Plans are in place to continue the collaborative / partnership work as we target ASB and Fire Setting within our parks and woodland areas.

A recent successful operation led by DPM Wagner, supported by the Prevention Team and Crew from Wakefield saw a successful day of action within the park which involved all the key partners coming together to reduce ASB and Fire Setting. This has significantly reduced activity here and this will now be cascaded to all the hotspot parks within the district

- Finally support for the Armed Forces Covenant will continue with Fire Referral training now being given to Help for Heroes Community Nursing Teams within Wakefield District and Operation Nova to support veterans back into employment and transition into civilian life

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