

Finance/Budget Issues

Financing the Service

The budget information shows how the Fire Authority will fund the fire service in accordance with its strategic aims and priorities and the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2008/09.

In addition to meeting known cost increases, the agreed budget will provide for investment in new equipment, increased attention to community fire safety, performance management and property maintenance and improvements.

Implementation of the plan – following public consultation – will see the delivery of a service that takes advantage of the latest technology, allowing us to deploy our resources within the communities we serve to ensure Essex continues to be a safe place to live, work and visit.

The additional cashable efficiency savings included in 2008/09 are estimated to be £0.8m. This represents around 1.1% of net expenditure.

Fire Service element of Council Tax 2008/09

Band D is used as a base for calculating the tax. The number of Band D equivalent properties in Essex is 635,203. To raise the required precept of £39.56m a Council Tax for Fire Service purposes of £62.28 is required; this is an increase of 3.9% over the 2007/08 figure (£59.94). The other seven bands are fixed in direct proportion to Band D.

Band A	£41.52	Band E	£76.12
Band B	£48.44	Band F	£89.96
Band C	£55.36	Band G	£103.80
Band D	£62.28	Band H	£124.56



Essex County Fire & Rescue Service Planned Spending

The Essex Fire Authority has approved a budget as follows:

	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000
Gross expenditure	69,848	73,037
Income	(1,955)	(2,371)
Budget requirement	67,893	70,666

Financed by		
Revenue support grant	4,302	3,771
Business rates	25,636	27,088
Collection Fund surplus	266	247
Council tax	37,689	39,560
TOTAL FINANCING	67,893	70,666

Changes in the budget requirement 2008/09:

	£000
2007/08	67,893
Inflation	1,680
Other changes	1,093
2008/09 Budget requirements	70,666

CONTACT US

For information relating to all of our business plans and activities, visit our website:
Essex-fire.gov.uk

As an open, transparent organisation, we welcome your comment and feedback on all aspects of our work. If you have issues about anything you have read in this document, or wish to discuss anything relating to our future plans and proposals, please contact us.

By phone: **01277 222531**
 (Ask for the Performance and Review team)

By fax: **01277 848428**

By e-mail: performance@essex-fire.gov.uk

In writing: **Performance and Review Manager,
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Copies of this document are available in other languages, Braille or large print and audio.

Can you put a value on your family's life?



It's been another ground-breaking year for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service as the organisation continues on a path of growth and development to support new and increasing risk within the County.

Once again Essex Fire Authority has supported investment in operational response and resilience, but crucially in community safety and protection activities too. That work is clearly paying dividends.

The number of people who died as a result of fires in their Essex homes has been halved.

In 2006, nine people died as a result of fires in domestic properties, but last year that figure fell to just four fatalities.

We believe this drop is in part due to ECFRS work within the community and the increased number of smoke alarms which have already been fitted in homes throughout the county as part of the Service's Home Fire Safety Visits initiative.

This scheme sees firefighters visiting people in their homes, talking to them about the best way to keep their family and property safe and fitting smoke alarms free of charge. In many instances, hot strikes are carried out immediately following house fires when



people have first-hand experience of the impact of fire on their neighbourhoods.



Crews working on the front line have been pleasantly surprised by increasing numbers of smoke alarms being in place at incidents attended and the good practice of families where they have been alerted by smoke alarms and evacuated their own homes following a pre-arranged fire plan.

ECFRS continues to expand its partnership working in areas designed to reduce death and injury on the road, tackle anti-social behaviour and assist businesses to take on new responsibilities for fire protection.

Undoubtedly education and awareness are the key. With this in mind, I would urge everyone who picks up this document to ensure they have a working smoke alarm fitted in their home. It could be the difference between life and death – there is no wiser investment. Every firefighter serving the county is aware of the devastation and heartache that so often follows fire in the home. Prevention is by far the best option.

Simon Walsh
 Chairman Essex Fire Authority

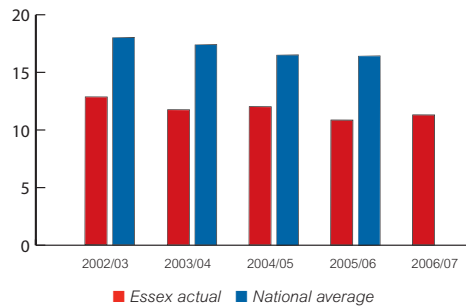


Service Activity during 2007

- We extinguished 7,029 fires
- We saved 347 people from fire
- We attended 1,696 road accidents
- We attended 3,674 special service calls
- We attended 9,713 false alarms
- We attended 22,113 incidents

Nationally set performance targets

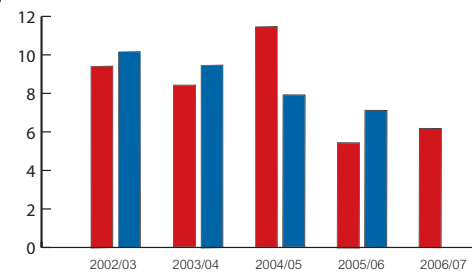
In 2007/08 ECFRS had a target of 9.5 accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings



Two factors have been key to our performance in this area. Firstly the significant increase in resources devoted to reducing accidental dwelling fires, including a 10% increase in educational programmes and 25% increase in Junior Fire Setting programmes allied with the success of the Service's Home Fire Safety Visits programme.

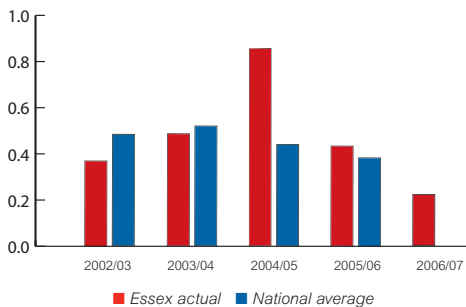
The second is a major review of the data collecting methodology which has allowed the Service to realign its performance criteria for injuries in line with other Brigades.

The Service will be expecting to improve performance still further into 2007/08.



In 2007/08, ECFRS had a target of 4.5 injuries arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population

In 2007/08 ECFRS had a target of 0.10 deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population



The Service has increased its focus on HFSCs, Juvenile Fire Setter programme and other youth intervention work such as Firebreak and Young Firefighters. The intention with much of this activity is to reduce accidental dwelling fires.

The increasing focus on effective partnerships and the arrangements within the Local Area Agreement is expected to see the performance improve in 2007/08. In particular partnerships such as Vicar in a Van and with the Fostering Network will continue to support Community Safety. 2007/08 will see the outcomes of a partnership with Basildon Council who will be carrying out Home Fire Safety Visits and installing up to 10,000 smoke alarms in their local housing stock.

*Please note that all 2006/07 data is subject to an independent audit

** Data unavailable

A year in pictures...



1) Jamie Poppy became the 1,000th youngster to have participated in ECFRS' highly acclaimed Firebreak scheme – a youth intervention programme designed to assist young people in getting their lives on track.

2) The Service continues to expand its activities to attract women and Black Ethnic Minority groups to its ranks through a range of innovative recruitment and cultural events.

3) ECFRS expands partnership working: Southend teenagers took part in a unique experience as part of the High Sheriff of Essex Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership – a nine-month course providing vocational and educational support.

4) The UK's first purpose-built Urban Search and Rescue facility officially opened at Lexden, Colchester.

5) To support its growth and development, the Authority purchased a new £4.5m headquarters building which will be occupied in May.

6) Engineering Manager Peter Warner (left) picked up a coveted prize at the Fire Industry Awards – he was named Fleet Engineer of the Year. Essex also took the lead on a national apprenticeship scheme.

7) More than 50 awards were presented at ECFRS' Community Awards, which recognise our own front-line and support staff, members of the community, other emergency services and partner organisations.