



Profile of Hampshire

Hampshire is a large and relatively prosperous county with a mix of rural and urban areas. Our main towns and cities are home to 90% of our population and these cover about 10% of the area of Hampshire. The remainder of Hampshire is rural and we have large areas of natural beauty including the New Forest and the South Downs.

There is a wide range of industry within Hampshire with major petro-chemical installations, manufacturing, retail and transport operators spread throughout. This is served by a network of motorways, major and minor roads and these are particularly busy during peak hours when people are commuting. There is a railway system that provides both local and long distance services. We have a large expanse of coastline that includes two major ports with both civilian and military traffic. We also have civilian and military airports and a large number of private airfields for smaller aircraft.

Our heritage is extremely important and Hampshire is home to significant numbers of buildings and artefacts of great value. Our environment is equally valuable and protecting it from damage from incidents and through our own actions is a key priority.

The Authority serves a population of 1,653,500 and covers an area of 3770 km² making it the seventh largest Fire and Rescue Authority in the United Kingdom. It is the largest of all the county and combined fire authorities.

Overall, the population has increased by about 5.5% since 1991. This compares with an average increase of 2.6% in England and Wales and an average increase of 5.0% in the South East Region.

The actions and activities of people are the main cause of fires and other emergency incidents. It is no surprise, therefore, that there is an underlying upward trend in the total number of incidents we attend, but the rate of the increase varies for different categories of incident.

Hampshire's age structure is very similar to the national average. Since 1991, the proportion of Hampshire's population aged 45 years and over increased from 37% to 41.4%; those over 65 years increased from 14.9% to 18.3%. The largest percentage increase was in persons aged 85 years and over, whose numbers increased by about 8,000 (or nearly 45%); in the 75 to 85 year old category the increase was about 16%.

We know from this (and other data) that we need to continue to develop imaginative safety campaigns and initiatives aimed at reaching the most vulnerable groups – particularly those in older age groups.

Travel to work figures show (as in 1991) that the greatest proportion (63.4%) drove a car or van to work. The increasing volume of traffic on Hampshire's roads has resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of road traffic accidents that we attend. We intend to work increasingly closely with other road safety agencies and pool information to help identify accident blackspots, the underlying causes of them, and to help find solutions to reduce the number of accidents.

In terms of ethnicity, the overall percentage of the population in Hampshire in ethnic minority groups is 3.27% - this is less than half that of the national average (estimated at 7.77%). The significant increases since 1991 occurred in the unitary authority areas. In Portsmouth, the percentage increased from 2.57% to 4.26%; in Southampton, the increase was from 4.92% to 6.13%. We need to do more to ensure that our public information is accessible to all minority groups. As an employer we want our workforce to be more representative of the community we serve and have developed positive action initiatives to promote diversity and equality.

To deal with this risk we have 52 fire stations; a Headquarters complex that incorporates the fire control suite, central stores and training centre and a comprehensive vehicle workshop. We employ 783 whole-time firefighters and 713 retained duty system firefighters; 41 control room staff; and 306 other support personnel. We have a fleet of 235 vehicles that includes 77 front-line pumping appliances and a comprehensive range of specialist fire appliances and equipment to deal with the increasingly wider range and complexity of incidents we are involved in.

We are determined to reduce risks and would rather prevent accidents and fires and protect people in Hampshire than respond to as many incidents as we do. You will therefore see from this Integrated Risk Management Plan that we will be actively diverting more of our resources towards fire prevention and protection activities in the future to help to achieve our mission to **Make Hampshire Safer**.

In 2003/04 we attended 26,904 incidents. These included:

- 6,544 Automatic fire alarms**
- 3,889 Primary fires**
- 8,645 Secondary fires**
- 2,578 Special services**
- 2,844 False alarms – good intent**
- 1,304 Road Traffic Accidents**
- 789 False alarms – malicious**
- 311 Chimney fires**

