



**Hampshire  
& Isle of Wight**  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



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# Volunteer Strategy 2025-2028

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# HIWFRS Volunteer Strategy 2025 - 2028

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## Introduction

**Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) has an established volunteering programme which contributes to the Service's aims of making our communities safer.**

The Service achieved the Investors in Volunteers accreditation in 2023, which is the UK quality standard for all organisations who are aiming to improve the quality and effectiveness of their volunteers' experience. This accreditation demonstrates the value we place on volunteering as an organisation, our commitment to delivering a high-quality volunteers programme and that we are continuously seeking to improve.

HIWFRS recognises the immense benefits volunteers bring to the Service and that the success of the Volunteer Programme relies on having volunteers with the right skills, attitudes, abilities and behaviours who add value to the Service.

HIWFRS will work with and integrate volunteers into the Service, drawing on the skills and knowledge that volunteers can provide to enhance its ability to deliver an exceptional service to our communities, forging better links between our communities and the Service.

This Strategy will ensure we provide public value when investing in our Volunteer Programme, volunteers and volunteer supported activities. The development of this strategy has considered the Community Safety Plan,

and in turn the prevention activity required to address risk identified in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Furthermore, this strategy has drawn upon the Service values and NFCC Core Code of Ethics in addition to feedback from colleagues across the Service to identify where there is a 'need' for volunteer support. Volunteer feedback was also sought to help the Service understand their motivation, interests, capacity and barriers to participating in volunteering opportunities.

## Vision

To have a clear organisational-wide understanding and commitment to support our Volunteer Programme and ensure it is embedded into Service activity and planning, and it also aligns with:

### a) Service values, behaviours and core code of ethics

- Supporting others – listening and acting with compassion and empathy
- Showing respect– fairness, honesty, and integrity in everything we say and do
- Everyone playing their part – recognising the contribution we all make
- Reaching further – inspiring and challenging ourselves and others

### b) Service commitments

- Protecting people, especially those who need it most
- Working with others to make buildings safer
- Preparing for emergencies and being there when people need us
- Empowering our teams to do their best
- Ensuring the best use of our funding, people and assets

## Our Volunteer Programme – where we are now

Total number of active volunteers	118
Females	29
Minority ethnic groups	4
Contribution	10,000 hours
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Volunteer</li><li>• Fire Cadet Instructor</li><li>• Children and Young People Volunteer</li><li>• Learning and Development Volunteer</li><li>• Live Casualty Role Play Volunteer</li><li>• Historical Research Volunteer</li><li>• Wildfire Patrols Volunteer</li><li>• Technical Services Volunteer</li></ul>



## Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to further develop a Volunteer Programme that focuses on:

- Raising awareness of the benefits of volunteers and volunteering to the wider organisation.
- Increasing organisational skills and capacity through improved recruitment, training, investment and engagement of active volunteers.
- Creating volunteering opportunities that engage a diverse group of individuals who are representative of our communities.
- Increasing our ability to engage with hard-to-reach members of the community.
- Reducing accidental fires and associated deaths and injuries through the promotion of fire safety messages and generation of Safe and Well Visits.
- Delivering children and young people activity, including Fire Cadets.
- Supporting HIWFRS community engagement events and campaigns.
- Supporting operational training through the provision of live casualty volunteers to create a realistic training environment.
- Celebrating and recognising the contribution and value of volunteers.
- Assisting communities during and after emergency situations (i.e. natural disaster/pandemic).



## Recognising the value of volunteers

To the Service	To Volunteers	For Communities
Volunteers are a valuable resource providing additional capacity to undertake essential activities and support efficient and cost-effective use of resources.	Volunteers are given the opportunity to pursue new interests and acquire new skills.	Volunteering allows communities to thrive together.
Volunteers contribute to the Service's corporate social responsibility agenda in many ways, such as broadening our demographic diversity.	Volunteers are given opportunities to develop personal pride, satisfaction and a sense of worth as they help both the Service and the communities they serve.	Volunteering provides a visual presence, making it easier for people to access the Service.
Volunteers provide much needed extra capacity to work within our communities to create pathways into our most vulnerable and hard to reach areas.	Volunteers have the opportunity to experience working in the Service and some go on to secure employment within our teams.	Volunteering encourages others to become involved and improves social wellbeing.
Volunteers support the Service in the collaboration with partners as we explore new ways of making Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Safer.	Volunteers are able to utilise their prior knowledge and share existing skills with colleagues across the Service.	By volunteering, people from more diverse communities may consider employment in the Service.
Benefit to staff who chose to get involved in volunteer roles which are very different to their employment role.		

## Aims

- For volunteers to improve community impact by enhancing the Service's skills, capacity and efficiency to deliver activity
- For staff to be aware of how volunteers can support them, how they should positively manage and support volunteers and to understand the benefits volunteers bring to the Service

## Areas of focus

a) To create a training package that meets the needs of the Volunteers, Department Managers and the wider Service.

b) To create new volunteer roles to assist us in meeting risks identified through the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

c) To target volunteer activity in areas of vulnerability where the risk to communities is highest.

d) To develop a dashboard to effectively measure the impact of volunteers and apply relevant learning from the data acquired.

e) To ensure continual improvement by networking with other organisations and exploring their volunteering models to ensure that we are maintaining best practice.

f) To diversify the demographics of volunteers through a more strategic recruitment activity engaging harder to reach areas of our community.

## How we will evidence success

- a) A fit for purpose volunteer training package will have been created using feedback obtained from volunteers and staff.

Volunteers will engage with the training and completion levels will be above 80%.

- b) Creation of new roles supporting the areas of risk identified through the CRMP.

- c) A "dashboard map" which effectively monitors geography of activity to inform ongoing volunteer countywide impact.

- d) A "dashboard" which effectively measures the impact of volunteering will be used to inform continual improvement alongside Volunteer feedback.

- e) Regularly attending local and national forums and the information gained from these forums will be used to continually review and update our Programme.

The Investors in Volunteers framework will be regularly reviewed to ensure our standards are maintained.

- f) A more diverse volunteer team will be in place in relation to age, ethnicity and gender, which better represents communities throughout Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.