

EVERY CONTACT COUNTS 2022-2023

OUR IMPACT WITH THE PUBLIC



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service



OUR VALUES

We are **PROUD** of the service we provide



We are **ACCOUNTABLE** for our actions

Each year, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service meets thousands of people, whether through our work to prevent emergencies, to protect buildings through fire safety work or when we respond to 999 calls.

For us **Every Contact Counts**.

We show **INTEGRITY** in our work



We **RESPECT** our colleagues and members of the community

And that's not just contact with the public, but with our own colleagues, volunteers and cadets.

Our Values run throughout all our work.

FACTS AND FIGURES

10,440 incidents attended – a reduction from the previous year of 10,562.

412 accidental dwelling fires – a reduction from the previous year of 433.

90% of accidental dwelling fires were confined to the room of origin.

The number of primary fires has increased from 967 to 1012, and the number of deliberate fires from 664 to 724 – these are areas we are now focusing on.

We have met our targets when it comes to arriving at incidents promptly.

- 77.6% of the first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Station response' within 10 minutes.
- 73.5% of the first arriving appliances at any incident from an 'On-Call response' within 15 minutes.



PREVENTING EMERGENCIES - HOME SAFETY VISITS

We visit people in their homes to offer advice, support and equipment including specialist smoke alarms.

In 2022/23 we visited 10,483 properties. 93% of these home safety visits were to vulnerable people within our community.

We are also part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, visiting prospective hosts and properties, offering fire safety advice and checking smoke alarms.

“My wife and I would like to thank the team that came here today and in a very professional, friendly and efficient way, checked our house for safety, did whatever was needed and gave us sound advice to keep ourselves safe. They are a credit to you.”

“Can you please pass on our thanks to the two amazing women from the fire safety team that carried out our home safety check for our Ukrainian family (and us). They were professional, compassionate and a breath of fresh air. We learnt some valuable safety tips for our family as well. They are doing an amazing job!”

“I want to thank you so much for your help with fitting a fire alarm system, they were fantastic - they were efficient, clear, cheerful - a delight. What a great service. We would like to thank you and them for the great help.”

NOT JUST SMOKE ALARMS

Deadly Carbon Monoxide (CO) fumes were identified during one of our Home Safety Visits, potentially saving the life of a woman who'd been feeling unwell.

Safe and Well Adviser Annie Page and Newhaven On-Call Firefighter Tom Griffiths noticed that she did not have a Carbon Monoxide alarm so offered to install one for her. She said she had been told that her boiler was a room sealed one and so she would not need a CO alarm. The boiler was only a few years old and had been serviced within the last few months. However, when the team placed the CO alarm in the kitchen near the boiler, it went off immediately.

They then placed a second CO alarm in the room just to make sure that there wasn't a fault with the first one. The second alarm also went off immediately. The occupant said she had been feeling unwell recently, felt headachy and unusually tired the last couple of weeks.

The boiler was fed by gas canisters outside the kitchen window. It was immediately disconnected, and the boiler was switched off, windows and doors opened. They called the emergency gas number who were there within 20 minutes.

The boiler engineer was explaining that he doubted that the boiler would be emitting that much CO but when he did a 15-minute sealed room test, his test equipment was showing excessively high levels of Carbon Monoxide. He called out another engineer who would locate the problem and rectify it.

The team called the occupier in the afternoon to check that all was well, and she confirmed that the engineer had found the fault and made all necessary repairs and made her safe.

Annie said: "This was a classic example of why CO alarms should be fitted for any carbon burning appliances, whether it be a gas or oil boiler, a wood burning stove or an open fire. If you smell gas or suspect Carbon Monoxide, call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately on 0800 111 999. This line is in operation 24-hours a day, seven days a week."

Lisa Priestman, Community Safety Manager said:

"Every year, about 20 people die from Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gas systems that haven't been properly installed or maintained. Many others also suffer ill health. It is really important to promote and or install Carbon Monoxide alarms when gas or other fossil fuels, like coal, wood or oil, don't burn properly, as CO is extremely poisonous."

The service would like to thank Southern Gas Networks (SGN) who have sponsored 3000 Firehawk alarms for us to fit.

If you would like to find out more about a Home Safety Visit, you can:

Call us on 0800 177 7069 or

Fill in the form on our website: www.esfrs.org/HSV

PREVENTING EMERGENCIES THROUGH EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

We received a surge in invitations to schools, youth organisations and other community groups as cases of Covid fell and restrictions lifted. We've also been able to hold our own events again. It's been great to get out and about.

“What a wonderful opportunity for our children to learn about fire safety and explore the workings of a fire engine. We really appreciated the team taking the time to talk to the children here in Burwash and for us as staff it felt like we are returning to a new normality as the fire team were the first visitors we have had coming to school since Covid, so thank you once again.”



“Many thanks to Green Watch Preston Circus for your help at the Project Edward road safety event. Really appreciate you coming in to add to the audience for it as well, plus staying on to brighten the lives of small children and their adults in getting up in the cab of a fire engine – and theoretically looking for blind spots!”

“Please pass on my huge thanks to all the firefighters at Forest Row Community Fire Station for our visit. We were made to feel so welcome and the children had a fantastic time. It was lovely to hear their excited exclamations as we walked around. There may not be many of them but they are a lively bunch and were definitely keen to investigate all aspects of the station!”



“Thank you so much to Green Watch Crowborough and Michael Warner, Education Team for sorting out the visit for our home education group! The children all had an amazing time and we have just spent time doing their workbooks that you gave them. My son is autistic and has ADHD, he rarely sits and wants to write of his own accord but he was the first to the table this morning!”



WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Road Safety project

Bexhill Sixth Form College are working in partnership with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Communications Team and Bexhill Community Fire Station to create an innovative Road Safety Campaign targeting the 17-21 year old, newly qualified driver.

Our mission is to collaborate to create dynamic content which can be used across multiple platforms such as TikTok to reach our demographic. As a growing college with around 2500 students on roll, we hope that even by getting our message out to our own students will have a significant impact on driving habits and hopefully go some way to prevent unnecessary accidents and fatalities on our roads.

“A massive thank you to Bexhill crews for all the support that you were able to give our college students during our visit. The students were buzzing about the project and I know will have gained a lot from this experience. Please let your team know how grateful we are to all of them.”

Restart a Heart Campaign

As part of their support to the ‘Restart A Heart’ Campaign, East Sussex Fire Cadets joined their local community first responders to encourage students at East Sussex College, (both Eastbourne and Lewes sites) to learn hands only CPR, use of a defibrillator and the recovery position.

“Thank you for the fantastic work put in to make Restart a Heart 2022 a huge success this year. It is fantastic to see that schools and organisations who received their training in aid of this year’s campaign are providing positive feedback and asking to receive sessions again in the future. As a result we hope that important partnerships made throughout the year to make this campaign a success continue, ensuring that our communities are aware of these lifesaving skills.”

ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING – A SHOCKING RESULT!

Over a third of electric blankets failed checks at a series of events held by the service.

Out of the 547 electric blankets tested, a huge 188 blankets failed and are no longer being used.

Funding from Public Health allowed the service to offer replacements to a number of those who attended the sessions.

More than blankets

Those who attended were also able to take advantage of additional wellbeing advice and support for keeping warm this winter with the help of fuel poverty experts from our local councils.

Representatives from Trading Standards were on hand to provide the public in East Sussex with useful information on current scams that are operating in the area.

And in Brighton and Hove members from Together Co were also able to talk to residents about the social prescribing service.

We would like to thank all those who made these events a success.





On 18 January 2023, local domestic abuse charity RISE welcomed a fire safety training session from the Service for front line staff.

This training included the basics of identifying a fire common causes of fire, and general fire safety at home. The training also covered the potential dangers caused by hoarding and additional risks present for those experiencing domestic abuse and violence. RISE staff were pleased to hear about the option of Home Safety Visits, from female officers, for survivors of domestic abuse.

Sanctuary Scheme Caseworker Helen, who has referred service users for a home safety assessment said:

“The training has been really useful and I’ve already used the referral scheme. It’s fantastic that the service understands the additional risks that can be present for women experiencing

domestic abuse, and that they can and will provide personalised support to our service users, reflecting their individual needs. The service can prioritise clients at high risk of harm or arson, they can be creative with contact and visits to keep clients safe, and they can support with electrical safety, blanking plates for letterboxes and undertake external risk assessments.

As part of my most recent referral, uniformed female officers visited a woman in her home, gave practical advice on what she could do to make her home safer and installed smoke alarms. They set up a flag on her address, meaning that any fire alert from the property would immediately indicate the possibility of additional risk, allowing the service to prepare and provide a personalised response. It was a really good, co-ordinated response and my client was really happy with how the whole process went.”

RISE CEO Jo Gough said:

“When someone is in the thick of trauma due to the abuse they have experienced, it can be impossible for them to hold onto practical ideas like keeping access and exits clear or going through a fire plan with a child. RISE is pleased to work in partnership with the team at East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service on this important issue, and to be able to provide this valuable training for our front-line teams so they can help keep survivors safe.”

About RISE

RISE stands for Refuge, Information, Support and Education.

Founded in 1994, RISE support women, children & LGBT+ people in Brighton & Hove and surrounding areas who are affected by domestic abuse.

PROTECTING BUILDINGS - FIRE SAFETY ENGAGEMENT, TRAINING AND ENFORCEMENT

The new Fire Safety (England) Regulations came into force on 23 January 2023 to meet the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 recommendations. The Inquiry was established following the devastating Grenfell Tower Fire in 2017.

The service worked hard to make sure that the local community knew about its responsibilities through engagement and communication.

It also continued its work on inspections, checks and prosecutions.

Number of inspections of high-risk premises - 506

Number of fire safety checks by operational crews – 1,523

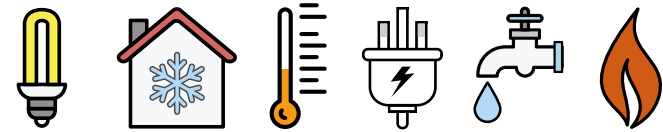
More than a thousand people attended 108 business safety engagements.

CAMPAIGN – SAVE SAFELY

Our 6-month long online Save Safely campaign was created in response to the cost-of-living crisis and fuel poverty, to encourage people to save safely and reduce the risk of fires associated with finding alternative ways of heating homes.

Engagement online as follows (as of 19 April 2023):

- Total Facebook reach was approximately 20K people with approximately 8100 views of the videos and in excess of 200 reactions, comments and shares
- Total Twitter impressions were in excess of 17K with around 3.5K views and 277 engagements
- Total TikTok views were just under 4K
- Total views of all related webpages – 778.



#SaveSafely

RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

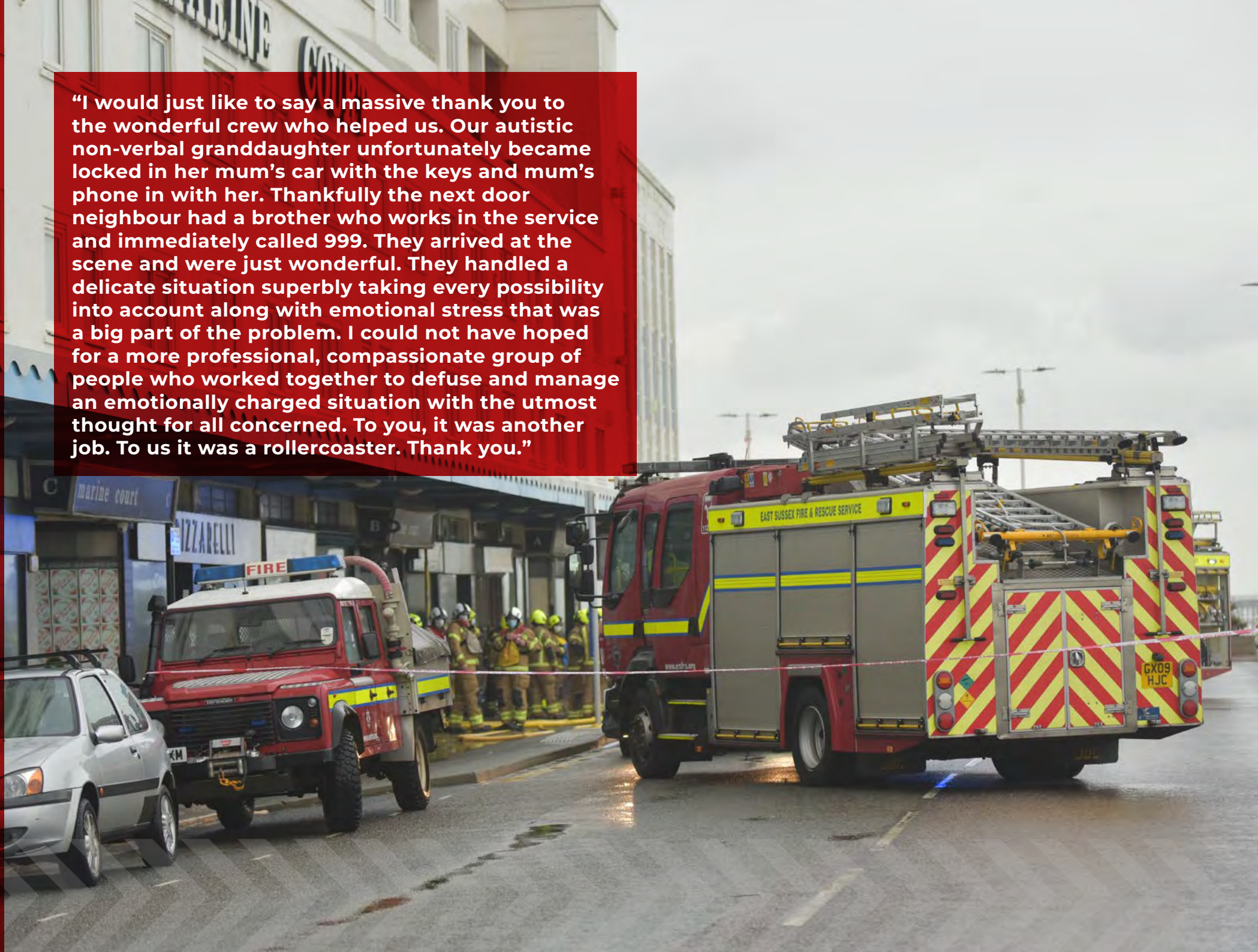
We respond to a wide range of incidents – but some stand out that little bit more.

“We are parents of a severely autistic teenager, who weekly boards at a local school. Thank you so, so much to the team who came to his rescue and helped when he was stuck in his bedroom because his door handle broke. One of his carers was full of praise for everyone who helped and said they were so kind and supportive of him. To support him through this incident while helping to keep him calm was simply incredible.”

“We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the crews from Heathfield Community Fire Station who arrived promptly following the emergency call which involved the 10,000 volt cables running across our garden snapping and sparking which ignited trees and shrubs and underlying planting in our garden. They dealt with the circumstances in a calm and efficient manner, coupled with a dose of good humour, keeping both us and officers safe in what could potentially have been a very dangerous situation.”



“I would just like to say a massive thank you to the wonderful crew who helped us. Our autistic non-verbal granddaughter unfortunately became locked in her mum’s car with the keys and mum’s phone in with her. Thankfully the next door neighbour had a brother who works in the service and immediately called 999. They arrived at the scene and were just wonderful. They handled a delicate situation superbly taking every possibility into account along with emotional stress that was a big part of the problem. I could not have hoped for a more professional, compassionate group of people who worked together to defuse and manage an emotionally charged situation with the utmost thought for all concerned. To you, it was another job. To us it was a rollercoaster. Thank you.”



OUR PEOPLE - FIREFIGHTERS

We've welcomed new On-call firefighters, with eight joining in November 2022 and a further six in March 2023.

On-Call firefighters are ordinary people who combine their day jobs with being On-Call for Fire and Rescue situations and emergencies.

When the call comes in, they drop what they are doing and become part of the East Sussex Fire and Rescue team. It's a huge commitment, but an immensely rewarding way to serve the community, keep the public safe and earn an extra income.

All had to complete intensive training at our Service Training Centre. The course consists of 16 days intensive training, split over three weekends and a two week course. Upon completion firefighters are equipped with practical and theoretical knowledge enabling them to safely respond as part of an operational response team within our community.



OUR PEOPLE - COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank our fantastic Community Volunteers and recognise the tireless volunteering work they have completed this year.

Here's a selection of what they've been up to!

'Be Bright Be Seen' Campaign

Our Volunteers raised awareness, and distributed hi-vis items at events, supporting Brighton and Hove City Council every year. This initiative's been very successful. In 2012 the baseline was around 45% of riders using lights, this has now increased to 87% of riders with full lights in 2022, with 57% using helmets and 45% having elements of hi-vis on.

Events

The list of community days we've been involved with is long! Pride in Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton, Eastbourne 999, Project Edward road safety events, Have A Go recruitment day at Lewes and our station open days.

Service Training Centre and Operational Exercises

Firefighter Pass Out Parades and events need lots of extra help and our Volunteers regularly support the Training Centre with car parking and looking after attendees.

They are also in demand for casualty role play, acting out symptoms depending on the scenario given to them. In this way our Volunteers allow for realistic training simulations for the firefighters. Volunteers are often carried on stretchers or cut out of cars. Outside of the Training Centre environment, Volunteers are involved in on-site operational exercises, whether acting out a hospital evacuation or even a train crash.

If you're interested, find out more on our website:
www.esfrs.org/your-safety/community-volunteers



OUR PEOPLE - FIRE CADETS

We now have three units of Fire Cadets, with packed waiting lists!

Open to anyone aged between 13 and 17, they make new friends, have loads of fun and learn all about what it means to be a firefighter and make a positive impact on our community.

Here's a snapshot of what they've been up to!

- Two East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Fire Cadets received a royal invite from the Lord Lieutenant to the exciting Platinum Jubilee concert. Liberty and Alex were even spotted on TV by their families. Cadet Alex said: "The atmosphere was absolutely electric. People enjoying themselves, singing along, dancing. All the singers present who I thought I would never have the honour of seeing. It was absolutely amazing."
- This celebration at the Jubilee concert was then followed by a Jubilee tea party at No 10 to which East Sussex Fire Cadet of the year Coby received an unexpected invitation.
- Following 'World Drowning Prevention Day' Eastbourne and Uckfield Cadets attended a session at Ashdown Leisure, Nutley, to remind them of important water safety messages. This session was especially pertinent following the tragic drowning of at least 13 people during the recent heatwave. The Cadets also had the opportunity to use kayaks, paddleboards and take part in a raft building competition.
- Cadet parents, carers and other family members were invited to end of term parades at both Eastbourne and Uckfield units. Each event gave the opportunity to reflect since these units commenced at the start of 2020. Cadets remembered the challenges of virtual meetings, socially distanced meetings in community hall car parks and the return to stations. Highlights included the recent 999 event in Eastbourne, the Uckfield Station car wash, participating in the Remembrance Parades and the action packed team building weekend at Herstmonceux last Autumn.

GIVING BACK – THE FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY

We support the Fire Fighters Charity throughout the Year in many ways and so do you.

You may have attended one of our charity car washes or taken a trip to one of our special clothing banks that are available at eight community fire stations: Pevensey, Broad Oak, The Ridge, Seaford, Battle, Rye, Mayfield and Barcombe.

A special mention goes to the generosity of those in and around Brighton.

On 15th and 16th December 2022, Crews, Community Volunteers and other support from across East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service carried out a charity collection in and around Preston Circus Fire Station, Brighton. The first one post-Covid, with almost arctic temperatures, a cost of living crisis and just general change in people's spending habits meant it was always going to be a difficult time to get close to the figures we have reached historically. Despite the cold weather, those who participated and donated helped make the event a success raising a total of £4526.95 for The Fire Fighters Charity.

The Fire Fighters Charity provides services that enhance quality of life for serving and retired firefighters, fire personnel and their families through a range of support programmes including physical rehabilitation, psychological support, recuperation and a confidential helpline which provides impartial advice, guidance and support on a wide range of concerns.

You can find out more about the work of The Firefighters Charity here:

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk



The
Fire Fighters
Charity

A FINAL WORD FROM HMICFRS

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is pleased that it has been judged as 'Good' across eight important areas in its latest inspection report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), published in January 2023.

The service is judged to be good at:

- Understanding fires and other risks
- Preventing fires and other risks
- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Responding to major and multi-agency incidents
- Making best use of resources
- Future affordability
- Getting the right people with the right skills
- Managing performance and developing leaders.

Progress does not stop here. This report is just one way our service to the community is monitored to ensure we continue to deliver our commitments to the public in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

The report also found:

- The service delivers sound financial management. There are regular reviews to consider all the service's expenditure, including its non-pay costs. This scrutiny makes sure the service gets value for money

- Staff were proud to work for East Sussex Fire and Rescue and most staff displayed the values which the service promotes widely
- The service has demonstrated a clear commitment to the support of staff following traumatic incidents
- The service is creating a culture of continuous improvement. This is promoted throughout the service and staff are encouraged to learn and develop
- The service has made sure all staff are trained and clear about what to do if they encounter inappropriate behaviour.

HMICFRS Background

HMICFRS: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and in July 2017 extended its remit to include inspections of England's fire and rescue services.

The full report can be found on the HMICFRS website: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2021/east-sussex/



East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
