



WESTERN ISLES PERFORMANCE REPORT

Covering the activities and performance in support of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Western Isles



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Quarters 1 and 2 : 2024/25

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR



ABOUT THE STATISTICS IN THIS REPORT

The activity totals and other statistics quoted in this report are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review.

Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be differences in the period totals quoted in our reports after original publication which result from revisions or additions to the data on our systems.

From 2015-16 onwards responsibility for the publication of end-year statistical data transferred from the Scottish Government to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). This change of responsibility does not change the status of the figures quoted in this and other SFRS reports reported to the Committee.

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INTRODUCTION

The 6-monthly monitoring report covers the SFRS's performance and activities in support of the four priorities in the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Western Isles, namely:

- Priority 1 – Promoting Personal Safety and Wellbeing
- Priority 2 – Non-Domestic Fire Safety
- Priority 3 – Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
- Priority 4 – Emergency Response Preparedness and Community Resilience










As well as supporting the four priorities in the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Western Isles, this monitoring report shows how SFRS activities and performance contribute to the wider priorities of the Western Isles Council Community Planning Partnership (CPP), as set out in the Western Isles Community Plan.

The figures in this report are provisional, to provide the Committee with the SFRS's direction of travel in the Western Isles area, in terms of performance against headline indicators and targets. Most figures will not change; however, members should note that there may be some small variations for some indicators when the final confirmed figures are published by the SFRS.

The Western Isles Council Community Safety Board agreed the new Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Western Isles in 2021, covering the subsequent 3-year period. In support of delivering the priorities in this plan, 9 headline indicators and targets have been set, and form the basis of this performance report.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The table below provides a summary of the six-months (1 April – 30 September 2024) activity and year to date (YTD) progress, based on annual targets set against headlines indicators. It aims to provide – at a glance – our direction of travel during the current reporting year.

Q1 and 2: All Incidents Attended – 107		
<p>HI 1 Accident Dwelling Fires</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 5 Incidents YTD – 5 Incidents</p>	<p>HI 2 ADF Fatal Casualties</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 0 YTD – 0</p>	<p>HI 3 ADF Non-Fatal Casualties</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 0 YTD – 0</p>
<p>HI 4 Home Fire Safety Visits</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 86 Visits YTD – 86 Visits</p>	<p>HI 5 Non-domestic Building fires</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 5 Incidents YTD – 5 Incidents</p>	<p>HI 6 Fire Safety Enforcement Audits</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 15 Audits YTD – 15 Audits</p>
<p>HI 7 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 22 Incidents YTD – 22 Incidents</p>	<p>HI 8 Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 6 incidents YTD – 6 Incidents</p>	<p>HI 9 RTC Casualties</p>  <p>Q1 & Q2 – 5 YTD – 5</p>

Incidents per Ward Area in Q1 and Q2

Ward	HI 1	HI 2	HI 3	HI 5	HI 7	HI 8	HI 9
An Taogh Siar Agus Nis	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
Barraigh Agus Bhatarsaigh	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Loch a Tuath	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Na Hearadh	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Sgir' Uige Agus Carlabhagh	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sgire an Rubha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sgire nan Loch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Steornabhagh a Deas	1	0	0	2	5	0	0
Steornabhagh a Tuath	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
Uibhist A Deas, Eirisgeigh Agus Beinn na Faoghla	2	0	0	0	5	3	2
Uibhist A Tuath	2	0	0	1	1	0	0

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Of the 9 headline indicators, the following performance should be noted for quarters one and two of 2024/25:

- There were **5 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)** during quarters 1 and 2 which is below the 3-year average for the period. The majority are classed as low severity, requiring little or no intervention from the Service and minimal fire damage. 4 had an alarm system present of which 3 operated to raise the alarm.
- There were **0 ADF Fatalities**, and **0 ADF Casualties** during the six month period, which is below average.
- There were **5 Non-Domestic Building Fires** during the period which is slightly lower than the average for the period.
- We dealt with **22 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)** during the six month which is significantly below average based on the previous 3-year figures. We continue to work towards reducing UFAS and consult with stakeholders on ways to achieve this.
- We undertook **15 Fire Safety Enforcement Audits**.
- We are also supporting an ongoing Action Plan at premises within Western Isles.
- Our Community Safety Advocates and Station personnel undertook **86 Home Fire Safety Visits**. The majority targeted the most at risk in our communities.
- We attended **6 Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)** which is slightly above average. There were **0 RTC Related Fatalities and 5 RTC Related Injuries**.
- Our firefighters continue to train in all aspects of their role to ensure they are operationally prepared for what is required and we have continued where possible to gather information on local risks to assist us in an emergency through our operational intelligence visits.

PRIORITY 1 – PROMOTING PERSONAL SAFETY AND WELLBEING

HI 1 – Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

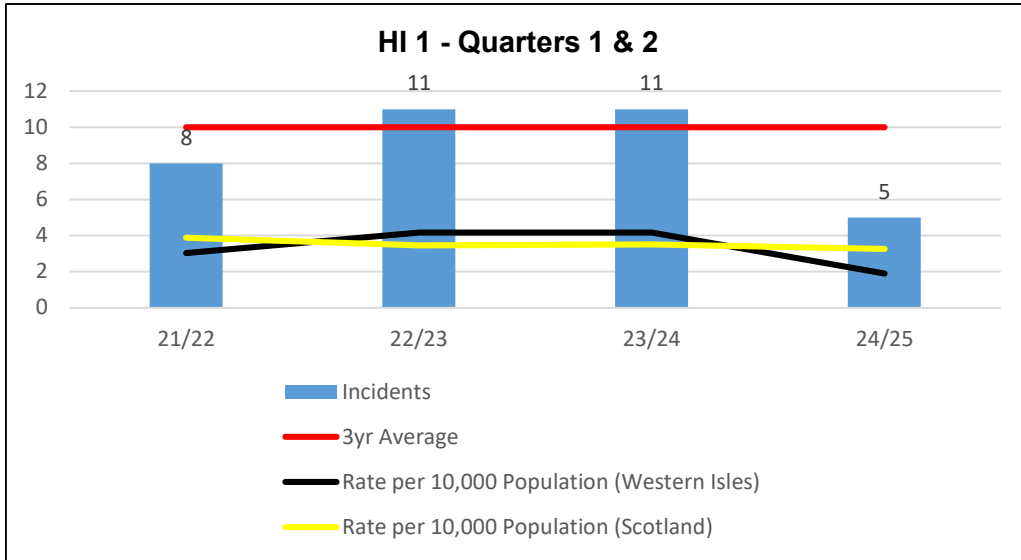


Table 1: 2023/24 Year Performance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
HI 1: ADF's	8	11	11	5

HI 2 - ADF Fatal Casualties & HI 3 - ADF Non-Fatal Casualties

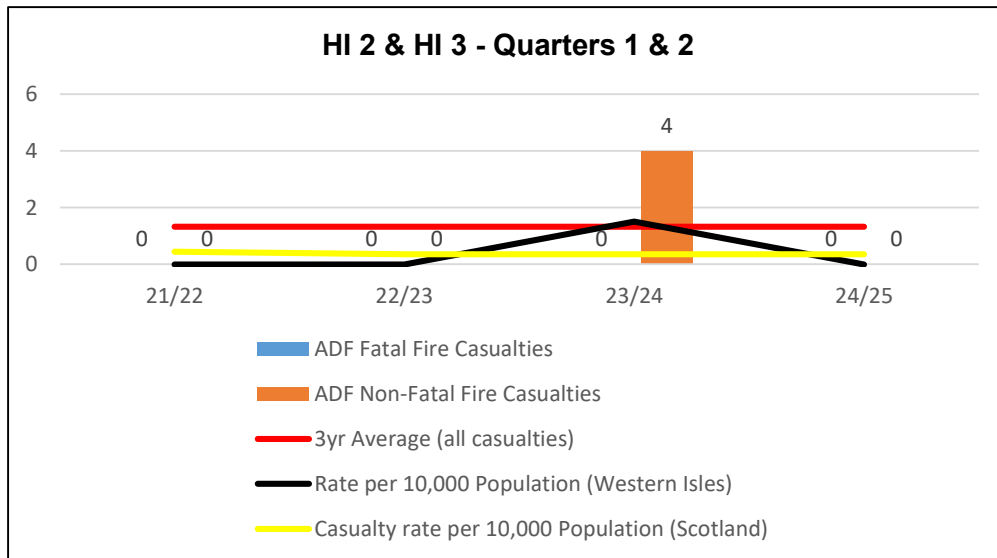


Table 2: 2023/24 Year Performance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
HI 2: ADF Fatal Casualties	0	0	0	0
HI 3: ADF Non-Fatal Casualties	0	0	4	0

What we aim to Achieve

- Downward trend in the number of accidental dwelling fires.
- Downward trend in the number of accidental dwelling fires casualties and fatalities.

There were **0 ADF Fatalities** for this period and year to date

There were **0 ADF Casualties** which is below the 3-yearly average and lower for the period, however there were 4 ADF Casualties within the year to date, however these were injuries which were slight. The overall **5 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)** is lower than in the previous year and significantly below the 3-year average. The majority are classed as low severity, requiring little or no intervention from the Service and minimal fire damage.

All ADF's are followed up with HFSV's and agency referrals where required.

HI 4 – Home Fire Safety Visits

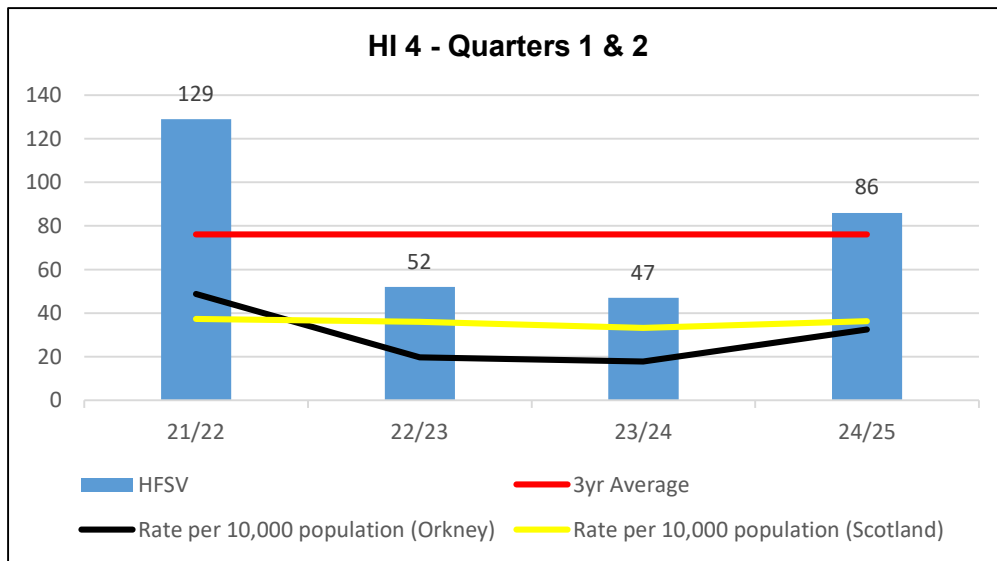


Table 3: 2023/24 Year Performance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
HI 4: Home Fire Safety Visits	129	52	47	86

What we aim to Achieve

- Reduced societal and economic cost of unintentional harm or injury
- Improved safety and wellbeing of Highland residents
- Support independent living of vulnerable residents within our communities

Our Community Safety Advocates and Station personnel undertook **86 Home Fire Safety Visits**. The majority targeted the most at risk in our communities and clearing the backlog

To support our communities the Community Safety Advocate has continued to process **referrals to partner agencies** based on the needs of the individuals. Over the year we support referrals both to and from the NHS, Telecare, Deaf services and Police Scotland.

PRIORITY 2 – NON-DOMESTIC FIRE SAFETY

HI 5 – Non-Domestic Building Fires

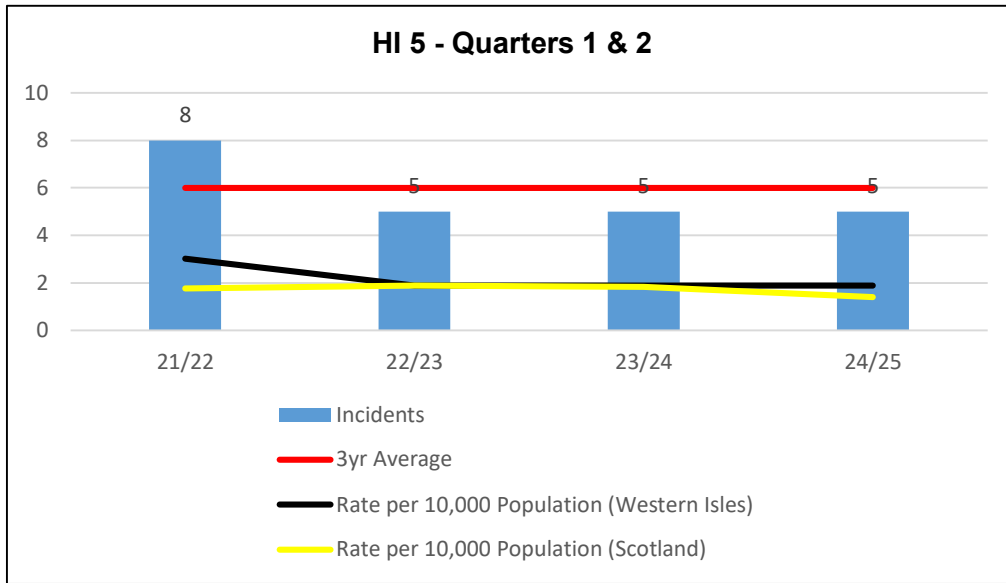


Table 4: 2023/24 Year Performance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
HI 5: Non-Domestic Building Fires	8	5	5	5

HI 6 – Fire Safety Enforcement Audits

A total of 15 audits were undertaken during Quarters 1 and 2.

What we aim to Achieve

- Reduction in the number of non-domestic fires
- Support for duty holders to understand their duties and responsibilities to comply with fire safety legislation
- Reducing the social and economic impact of non-domestic fires and supporting business continuity and employment in Highland
- Contributing to the protection of our built and natural heritage

We attended **5 non-domestic building fires** this period which is the same as that of the same period last year but with a slight decrease in the three-year average.

To support our communities in complying with their obligations we have conducted **15 audits during this period**.

Our Fire Safety Officers also supported an Action Plan on non-domestic buildings and are working with the responsible persons for compliance.

The FSEO team completed over 100 Holiday let applications in this period.

PRIORITY 3 – UNWANTED FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

HI7 – Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

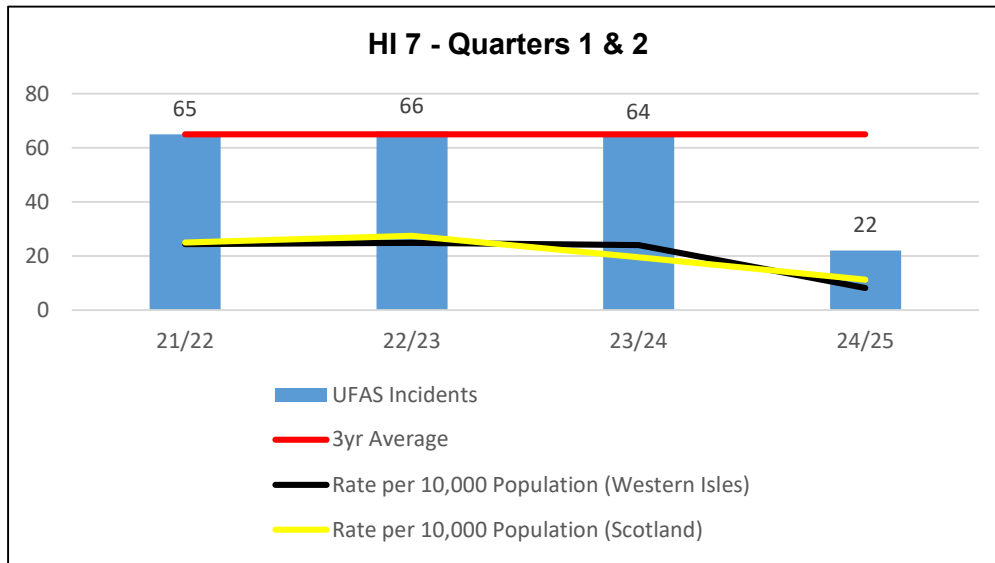


Table 5: 2023/24 Year Performance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
HI 7: UFAS Incidents	65	66	64	22

Property Type	Number
Hospital	5
Nurses/Doctors Accommodation	3
Nursing/Care Home	3
Sheltered House – Not Self Contained	2
Fire Station	2
Residential Home – Children’s	2
Hostel	2
Student Hall of Residence	1
Other Residential Home	1
Large Supermarket	1

What we aim to Achieve

- Reduction in the number of UFAS incidents across Western Isles, particularly amongst the highest offenders
- Reduction in unnecessary demand on On Call Firefighters and their primary employers
- Reduced road risk for SFRS staff and the wider community
- Release capacity for staff training and community engagement through reduction in UFAS attendance
- Reduced costs to SFRS associated with UFAS response

During this period, **we were called out to 22 UFAS incidents**, which is significantly below the 3-year average and shows a large decrease for the period.

We have continued our engagement with these premises and made recommendations to reduce occurrences.

One of the priorities of SFRS is to reduce the amount of UFAS calls we attend. The Fire Safety Enforcement Officer (FSEO) engage with duty holders during the audit process to offer advice on reducing unwanted activations including considering cost-effective technical solutions (e.g.re-positioning fire detector heads and changing detector types).

The way in which we attend UFAS has changed since the implementation of the new UFAS Policy which took effect on 1 July 2023. Since then, we have seen a significant drop in UFAS numbers.

PRIORITY 4 – OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE AND PREPAREDNESS

What we aim to Achieve

- Responding to and resolving operational incidents in a safe, effective and efficient manner that keeps staff, partners, and the public safe
- Contributing to wider safety by focusing on preventing emergencies occurring
- Planning and preparing for response and mitigating the social and economic impact of emergencies upon communities
- Reinforcing local resilience within communities and in Community Fire Stations

During this period, we delivered our quarterly training commitment to operational firefighters, whereby we trained and tested their preparedness to deal with a variety of incident types.

Firefighters continue to carry out Operational Intelligence within their station area so that they are aware of the associated risks and hazards, and if required can take effective actions in dealing with incidents at these sites. All this information is continually updated on our tablets carried on frontline appliances thus giving our staff information at the point of need.

In the Western Isles we have seen extremely successful recruitment and availability (**4 appliances above 90% and 7 above 70%**). However, we do face some challenges in areas where population levels are low or decreasing.

To support our On-Call stations, increase recruitment and provide cover we employ 2 full-time rural Watch Commanders.

- A trial joint mobilising process whereby two appliances who do not have safe minimum crewing numbers available can meet at an agreed rendezvous point to give them enough crew to safely respond to the incident.
- A formalised process which will allow On-Call staff to undertake paid duties at other stations to increase their staffing levels, undertake prevention activities and thereby increase appliance availability.

Since the 1st October 2023, there have a limited number of joint mobilisations, which has improved response times and community confidence. We continue to aim to limit the number of joint mobilisations.

The improvements and learning we have made have assisted in the On-Call improvement programme and future recommendations.

SGN Exercise

A SGN Gas major exercise was planned and delivered. The Fire Service was the lead agency with over 50 responders present. Crews performed excellently and had great feedback from other agencies. The Exercise tested out the CNES COMAH plan for the site and all agencies have fed back to Emergency Planning.



Station Establishment and Availability

- 16 x On-Call Retained Duty System appliances across 14 Stations

***Please note the availability figures do not include Joint Mobilising availability.**

***Please note Lochmaddy and Valtos figures are below the actual availability levels due to our recording system Gartan still having the rules for these appliances as Rapid Response Units (RRU). These stations are available more than figures shown. This issue is expected to be resolved when the national contract for a new availability system goes live.**

Station	Apr – Sept 24 Availability* %	Male	Female	Staff
Barra	97.31%	10	0	10
Bayhead	71.68%	8	0	8
Benbecula – 1 st Appliance	69.22%	8	2	10
Benbecula – 2 nd Appliance	11.78%			
Great Bernera	86.90%	7	1	8
Leverburgh	92.32%	10	0	10
Lochboisdale	69.95%	6	0	6
Lochmaddy	40.06%	3	2	5
Ness	58.07%	7	1	8
Scalpay	87.20%	7	2	9
Shawbost	94.84%	10	1	11
South Lochs	69.09%	7	2	9
Stornoway – 1 st Appliance	100%	20	2	22
Stornoway – 2 nd Appliance	81.00%			
Tarbert	65.38%	10	1	11
Valtos	51.20%	5	2	7

135 Station based personnel

2 Rural Wholetime Watch Commander Positions.

2 Station Commanders, 1 Group Commander, 1 Area Commander

In addition, Prevention, Protection and Training non-operational

Recruitment

Since August 2022 37 RDS firefighters were recruited into Western Isles Fire Stations, with a further 7 due to attend a course in November 2024. 5 of the 7 who are due to start in November are for Uist based stations.



11 RDS Firefighters started their initial training in Stornoway training centre in May 2024. (New Candidates are pictured in the back row of the photo above. We had new recruits for Stornoway, Ness, Shawbost, South lochs, Valtos and Tarbert.

12 RDS personnel were recruit recently completed a 2-week BA initial course in Stornoway, We are the only Island group with the capability of running this course locally. This has had a positive effect on the candidate experience and means candidates do not need to leave the Island to receive training to the national standard. The this should show a direct improvement in appliance availability over the next reporting period.

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY SAFETY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

This section provides details of community safety engagement programmes undertaken within the Western Isles during the first and second quarters of 2023-24, in support of our priorities and targets.

Events Overview

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service staff on the Western Isles have continued to attend local public events to promote Community Fire Safety, provide Operational Response and develop and promote multi-agency working, demonstrating a collaborative approach to public safety.

Attended events including both the Hebridean Celtic Festival, many local shows across the Islands and the EDF in Benbecula.

Hebridean Celtic Festival – Stornoway

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service worked alongside partners from HM Coastguard, Scottish Ambulance Service, Mountain Rescue and Police Scotland focusing on event planning, providing immediate assistance & advice, response and a positive visible presence for the duration of the event.



Sports Clubs CPR Initiative

SFRS in the Western Isles have had a long running relationship with the charity Lucky to B Here and the crews have carried out several fundraisers over the years to raise money for defibs in rural communities.



We had local sports teams attend the local community fire stations to learn valuable lifesaving skills such as CPR and defib training. This training had the added incentive that we get locals into fire stations who are recruiting.

The defib was installed and the inputs planned locally when WC Steven Maclachlan had a cardiac arrest and was saved on the Shinty pitch by local firefighters in Skye. The Fire Service tied into that publicity to raise awareness, with news releases on several local media outlets.



The concept was a success and has been rolled out across Lewis and Harris Football teams. We then expanded the concept to Uist and Barra Football teams then onto the local Shinty teams, and the Male and Female Rugby Teams.

This initiative has resulted in over 120 members of the senior sports teams being trained locally in lifesaving skills and had a positive engagement with the Service, with many indicating a preference to join their Local fire station over the next 12 months as part of our recruitment cycles. We are now intending to roll out this initiative to youth teams in these areas.

