



FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE MATTERS

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RECORD NUMBER OF RESCUES SHOWS VALUE OF FIREFIGHTERS

Firefighters rescued more people over the last year than ever before, underlining the exceptional role of emergency intervention, new research by the Fire Brigades Union has found.

Latest figures show that over 43,000 people were rescued by firefighters in the UK between April 2016 and March 2017. This equates to over 3,600 rescues a month, or well over 100 rescues every day.

Over 36,000 people were rescued by firefighters in England between April 2016 and March 2017. Over 2,000 rescues took place in Wales, whilst there were almost 1,500 rescues in Northern Ireland. The Scottish fire and rescue service rescued over 3,500 people overall between April 2016 and March 2017.

INCREASING RESCUES

Total recorded rescue activity increased by 6% over the last year across the UK. There were increases in England, Scotland and Wales. This underlines both the diversity of emergencies that firefighters now deal with, and the continued importance of emergency intervention.

Last year there were substantial increases in the number of rescues carried out by firefighters in Durham, Staffordshire, Bedfordshire, Essex and Norfolk fire and rescue services. Rescues were substantially down in Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Greater Manchester, although these brigades recorded high numbers in previous years. Nevertheless, firefighters were able to serve communities by tackling a range of hazards promptly and effectively, protecting, lives, homes and businesses.

NON-FIRE INCIDENTS

A major finding is the huge number of rescues from non-fire incidents including flooding, hazardous chemical spillages and road traffic collisions.

There were around ten times more rescues at non-fire incidents than at fires. This reflects the wider range of activities that modern day firefighters now undertake and shows the service provides an outstanding response to a range of emergencies.

For the UK as a whole, over 39,000 rescues were carried out at non-fire incidents in 2016-17. This is the highest figure since the FBU began collecting this data.

The figures indicate that firefighters still make a significant intervention in fire related incidents, which is appreciated greatly the public. Across the UK, almost 4,000 people were rescued from fires by firefighters over the last year.

The FBU collects these figures from fire and rescue services and publishes them annually. At the turn of the century, the Westminster government stopped publishing fire rescue figures. Both the Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Assembly do not publish these figures either. The Scottish government publishes rescue figures for fires, but it does not for other incidents.

The figures may be revised in light of further research. Some firefighter rescues are underestimated, when involving matters such as terrorism, flooding and other major incidents. The FBU wants government bodies to publish official, comprehensive statistics on rescues, showing the value firefighters contribute to their communities.

Rescues by Brigade, April 2016 - March 2017

	Total rescues at fires	Total rescues at non-fire incidents	Total rescues 2016-2017	Change % on previous year
Scotland	517	3075	3592	+1%
Northern Ireland	142	1356	1498	-3%
Mid and West Wales	44	764	808	+1%
North Wales	32	276	308	+7%
South Wales	92	860	952	+6%
Wales	168	1900	2068	+4%
Cleveland	22	284	306	+1%
Durham	197	995	1192	+285%
Northumberland	6	170	176	-20%
Tyne and Wear	64	814	878	+28%
Humberside	43	785	828	+10%
North Yorkshire	16	394	410	-2.4%
South Yorkshire	57	1065	1122	+2%
West Yorkshire	84	1271	1355	-10%
Cheshire	23	596	619	+24%
Cumbria	31	358	389	+31
Greater Manchester	171	1712	1883	-46%
Lancashire	72	907	979	-4%
Merseyside	74	422	496	+1%
Derbyshire	139	1014	1153	0%
Leicestershire	37	434	471	-5%
Lincolnshire	54	409	463	+11%
Northamptonshire	65	534	599	+11%
Nottinghamshire	26	781	807	+20%
Hereford and Worcester	298	117	415	+22%
Shropshire	61	478	539	+13%
Staffordshire	65	725	790	+256%
Warwickshire	14	186	200	-29%
West Midlands	168	839	1007	+18%
Bedfordshire	26	451	477	+87%
Cambridgeshire	12	84	96	-76%
Essex	51	1331	1382	+75%
Hertfordshire	57	624	681	+9%
Norfolk	30	860	890	+60%
Suffolk	28	339	367	1%
London	421	4122	4543	+37%
Berkshire	105	1022	1127	+59%
Buckinghamshire	11	712	723	-64%
East Sussex	29	813	842	-64%
Hampshire	139	1525	1664	+63%
Isle of Wight	6	69	75	-4%
Kent	48	690	738	+5%
Oxfordshire	33	486	519	-46%
Surrey	71	1335	1406	+5%
West Sussex	40	470	510	0%
Avon	46	655	701	+13%
Cornwall	13	259	272	-9%
Devon and Somerset	90	862	952	+6%
Dorset and Wiltshire	39	813	852	+13%
Gloucestershire	21	168	189	-35%
England	3103	32980	36083	+7%
UK TOTAL	3930	39311	43241	+6%