

Candidate Pack

Wholetime Firefighter | 2026

HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Wholetime firefighter with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). This recruitment information is about Wholetime firefighter recruitment and selection process we follow. More detailed information, outlining the application and selection process will be released when applications open.

If you have any questions after reading it, please contact our Recruitment team via email: recruitment@hwfire.org.uk.

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Application Opens:
14th December 2026

Application Closes:
6th January 2027

OUR CORE CODE OF ETHICS

We follow the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England which guides everything we do.

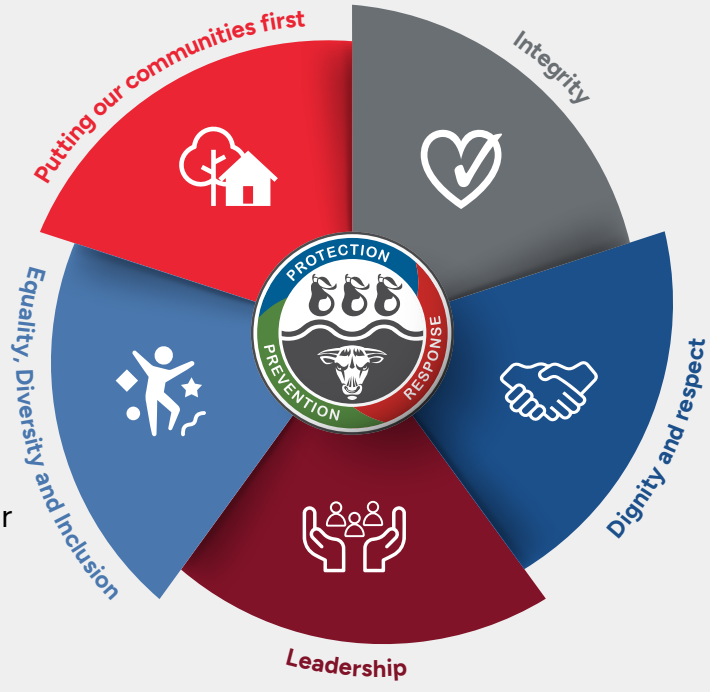
Putting our communities first
We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity
We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect
We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership
As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.



Introduction
About Us

Who We Are

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service attended 8,213 incidents in 2024-25 ranging from property and countryside fires, road traffic collisions, collapsed structures, water rescues, hazardous materials to animal rescues. We employ over 696 full-time and part-time members of staff in 754 roles, delivering a wide range of prevention, protection and emergency response services across Herefordshire and Worcestershire (an area of 392,000 hectares with a population of over 804,000 people).



- Wholetime
- Day Crewed
- On-Call (Retained)
- Wholetime Pump
- On-Call Pump
- Day Crewed Pump
- On-Call Pump – nights
- Day Duty Pump
- **HQ** Service Headquarters
- **Ops Logs** Operational Logistics

25 Fire Stations

34 Fire Engines

234 Wholetime Firefighters and Officers

349 On-Call Firefighters

28 Fire Control Firefighters

143 Support Staff and Managers

OUR PURPOSE, VISION AND MISSION

Our core purpose, vision and mission are what drives and motivates our people to make the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire safer. To do this effectively we need to understand and appreciate the diversity of the communities we serve and have a workforce that is inclusive; where our people fully represent and understand those communities.

PURPOSE

Why we are here

Keeping people safe from fire and other risks.

Responding efficiently and effectively to incidents and emergencies.

VISION

What we want to do

Building on our successes to continue to make a difference, improve lives and help secure resilient communities.

MISSION

What we do every day

As one professional team we will work hard every day to deliver high quality, sustainable services to our communities.



Introduction continued

Criteria

Some key things you need to know are:

- You need to be 18 years or over on your first day of employment.
- You need to have a minimum of English and Maths GCSEs grade C / Grade 4 or above (or equivalent).
- If you did not study GCSE's, or for general information and guidance on qualifications, please visit: www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels.
- You must have a valid driving licence and be eligible to drive within the UK.
- You will need to be eligible to work in the UK without restrictions.
- This is a physical role so you need to have a good level of fitness and health – which you'll need to maintain throughout your career with us.

General responsibilities

We expect all our employees to perform their duties in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Ethical Framework and Code of Conduct and other policies designed to protect employees and service users from discrimination and harassment. In addition, HWFRS recognises and is in support of the Core Code of Ethics. It is the duty of all our employees to actively promote equality, encourage a workplace culture of inclusivity and not to act in an unlawfully prejudicial or discriminatory manner towards others.

HWFRS is fully committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. We value equality of opportunity and developing a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community. We encourage everyone who has the necessary skills and experience to apply.

We expect all our employees to promote health, safety and welfare at work and also towards our service users through adhering to our Health and Safety policies and all other relevant statutory requirements and to lead by example.

We expect all our employees to protect the confidentiality at all times of our service users, partner organisations and other third parties and comply with all relevant and applicable IT security policy and procedures.

Safeguarding

HWFRS recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Adults, Children and Young People. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

The Selection Process

Our selection process to become a wholetime firefighter follows a number of stages. More information on what is involved at each stage will be communicated as and when a wholetime recruitment campaign is started. You must complete and be successful at each stage to progress to the next one.

Firefighter recruitment is an extremely competitive process and the selection process is set to meet our recruitment needs. We reserve the right to carry out additional filtering to reduce the numbers based on skill and ability.

Attendance

We are unable to progress your application if you cannot attend or complete all stages of the process.

Feedback

Unfortunately, due to the large number of applications we receive for wholetime firefighter recruitment, we will be unable to provide feedback on reasons why you are not being taken forward.



THE RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

14.12.26
Applications Open

06.01.27
Applications Close

08.01.27 to 10.02.27
Online Assessments

W/C 01.03.27
Job Related Tests

W/C 22.03.27
Interview

06.04.27
Fitness Test and Kit Sizing

14.04.27 and 15.04.27
Medical Assessment

MAY 2027
Offer and Pre-Employment Checks

AUGUST 2027
Appointment and commence induction & initial training course

The Selection Process continued

Candidate Application Form

The first stage of the process is an online application form which includes your personal details and a number of questions to assess your eligibility to apply. Applications must be completed accurately and honestly, and you are encouraged to read all instructions carefully to ensure you fully understand what you are being asked to do. If you fail to complete a section or complete it incorrectly, your application will not be progressed.

Any false, misleading or inaccurate information in connection with your application will result in you being withdrawn from the process, the withdrawal of any offer of employment that may be made or formal disciplinary action if you have already been appointed.

Check!

All communication during the process will be sent to the email address provided by you on your application form so please check this is correct when completing your application form. Please ensure you keep your contact details updated and that you regularly check your email account and spam folder.

Online Assessments

Following the application stage of the process, there will be an online assessment. Further details of what is involved in our online stage will be communicated as and when a recruitment campaign opens.





The Selection Process continued

Job Related Tests

If you are successful in the online stage, the next stage is the job related tests. These tests will determine whether you have the required levels of fitness, strength, stamina, co-ordination and manual dexterity to carry out the role of a firefighter. You will be provided with all the necessary personal protective equipment/clothing (PPE) required on the day.

You should not be concerned at the prospect of taking these tests, as you will be closely supervised. The tests are as follows:

Confined Space

This timed test is designed to assess confidence, agility and stamina. Candidates in full PPE wearing an 11kg Breathing Apparatus set with obscured vision will make their way through a Breathing Apparatus crawl gallery. Once inside the gallery they will be required to follow a guideline to the end.



Confined Space Video

Casualty Evacuation

This is a timed test designed to assess upper and lower body strength and co-ordination. Candidates wearing full PPE are to drag a 55kg dummy backwards around a 30m course, by a carrying handle fixed to the dummy..

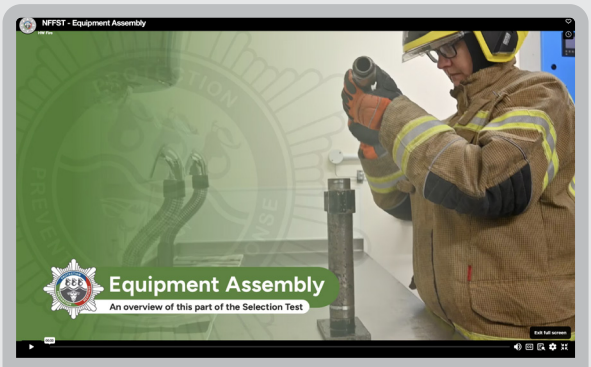


Casualty Evacuation Video

The Selection Process continued

Equipment Assembly

This timed test is designed to assess This is a timed test designed to assess manual dexterity. Candidates will be given a demonstration of the test before having to assemble and disassemble a number of components to make an item of equipment.



Equipment Assembly Video

Equipment Carry

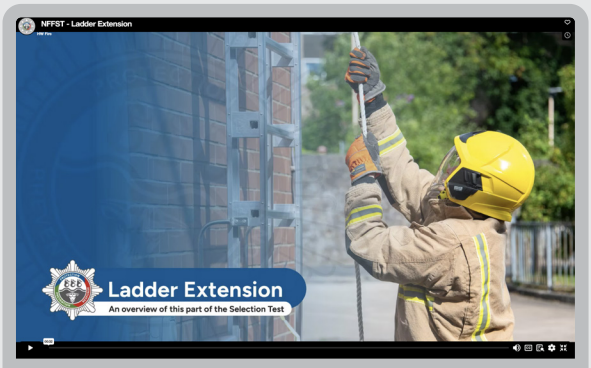
This is a timed test designed to assess upper and lower body strength and co-ordination. Candidates are to carry items of equipment up and down a course between two cones placed 25m apart. They will be given brief demonstrations of correct lifting techniques and permitted to practice picking up the various items.



Equipment Carry Video

Ladder Extension

This test is designed to assess upper body strength, grip strength and coordination. Candidates will need to demonstrate the ability to extend and lower a ladder safely and under control.

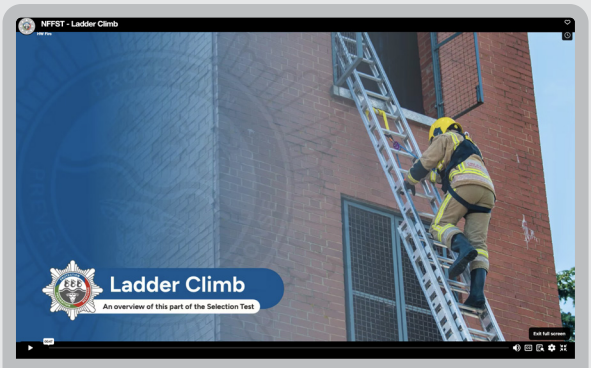


Ladder Extension Video

The Selection Process continued

Ladder Climb

This test is designed to assess confidence at heights. An instructor will provide a demonstration. Candidates in full PPE must wear a safety harness and practice a leg-lock at ground level. The candidate then has to ascend 2 thirds of the way up the ladder then take a leg-lock. They will then be asked to lean backwards and outstretch their arms to the sides, and then whilst looking over their shoulder they should say out loud what symbol is being shown by the assessor at ground floor.



Ladder Climb Video

Ladder Lift

This is a test designed to assess upper and lower body strength and co-ordination. Candidates wearing full PPE are to raise the bar of a ladder lift simulator to the required height with 15 kg of weight placed on the simulator cradle, which gives a total lift load of 24 kg. Candidates are directed to perform a practice lift with 5 kg of weight on the cradle to ensure they are prepared for the test.



Ladder Lift Video

The Selection Process continued

Interview Day

You must successfully pass all parts of the job related tests before you can be invited to the interview selection day. The interview selection day assesses your knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the role of a firefighter. Further details regarding the day will be available to those applicants that successfully reach this stage.

We are committed to equal opportunity for all. As part of our interview process, we remove all candidates' personal details prior to issuing the interview packs to the interview panel. This includes information directly related to sex or gender, age, disability, or marital status, and seeks as far as possible to remove information that may indirectly identify any of these characteristics.

In addition, no information contained in the diversity monitoring, previous convictions, or medical information sections of the application form are passed to the interview panel.

The interview process is an opportunity for you to evidence how your skills, abilities and knowledge, match with those of the role of a Wholetime firefighter. Additionally, the interview will also seek to assess your own values and behaviour and how they align to the Service's Core Code of Ethics.

Fitness Test

The cardiovascular fitness test is to measure the ability of the heart, blood cells and lungs to provide oxygen-rich blood to the working muscle tissues and the ability of the muscles to use oxygen to produce energy for movement. Its unit of measurement is VO2 max which is expressed as millilitres of oxygen per kilogram of body weight per minute.

The VO2 max requirement for recruits is 42 or above. This will be assessed using a Chester treadmill test. The test is a 12-minute graded treadmill walk test designed to assess whether or not you can achieve the minimum recommended VO2 max.





The Selection Process continued

Medical

We need to ensure that our firefighters are both medically and physically fit. You will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire, and undergo and pass a medical assessment. The medical assessment will examine your general health and fitness against the required standard and will include a discussion on your completed medical questionnaire.

Your medical assessment will include measurement or assessment of:

- Height
- Weight
- Blood pressure
- Spirometry (lung function assessment)
- Audiometry (hearing assessment)
- Urinalysis
- Analysis of any skin conditions
- Review of your medical history
- Clinical examination of eyes, ears, mouth, heart, lungs, reflexes, abdomen and mobility

Your health information is strictly confidential to our health assessment professionals. They will identify and discuss with you any medical conditions that may affect your ability to undertake the role of a firefighter. In some cases, we may need to see further information from your GP.

Offer and Pre-employment Checks

If you are successful in the recruitment process, we will issue you with a conditional offer of employment. The offer of employment will be conditional and subject to the following pre-employment checks:

1. Confirmation of right to work in the UK without restrictions

Anyone applying for a role with HWFRS must demonstrate that they are eligible to work in the UK without restrictions. Documented evidence of your eligibility will be requested as part of the selection process, and this will be checked and verified before any offer is made.

Full information on the types of documentary evidence that will be accepted, can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checklist

2. Receipt of satisfactory references

When completing the online application form you will be asked to include details of two referees. We recommend that you obtain their approval prior to submitting your application. If we do not receive references within a reasonable time this may affect your start date and appointment with HWFRS.

The Selection Process continued

3. Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS)

You will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and this will be carried out as part of your pre employment checks.

More information regarding DBS checks can be found here. The Recruitment team will organise your check; you are not required to apply for one yourself.

4. Vetting

Some of our stations share a site with West Mercia Police. As a result, employees working at these stations will be required to complete NPPV Abbrv Level 2 vetting. If you are allocated a station where this is the case, you will be contacted on an individual basis to arrange for the vetting check to be completed.



Keeping in touch

All communication during the process will be sent to the email address provided by you on your application form so please check this is correct when completing your application form. Please ensure you keep your contact details updated and that you regularly check your email account and spam folder. You are advised not to change your email address during a recruitment process to ensure we can communicate with you effectively.

Appendix
Job Description

Department: Service Delivery

Responsible to: Crew / Watch Commander

Main purpose of the role

To be an integral part of both an emergency response and prevention team by working within the community, in order to prevent emergencies occurring, minimise their impact when they do and intervene effectively when required. This will be to the benefit of that community and within a safe working environment.

Key Duties and Responsibilities (Aligned to national Firefighter Role Map)

Key Duties and Responsibilities:	Examples of this include:
To respond immediately and safely to all operational incidents as required, undertaking firefighting, rescue and other actions in order to save and protect life, property and the environment, providing support and minimising distress to those affected and contributing to the resolution of the incident (FF3, FF4, FF5).	• Responding immediately and safely as part of a team to all operational incidents and requests for assistance e.g. incidents involving fire, persons trapped in vehicles/ machinery, collapsed or dangerous structures, hazardous materials, adverse weather conditions, animal rescue, supporting other agencies. • Dealing with emergencies as directed and working effectively and efficiently as a member of a disciplined and professional team. • Providing both physical and emotional support to people directly and indirectly involved in an operational incident e.g. reassuring and comforting people, protecting privacy and dignity, giving first aid care.
To collect information on operational risk premises and sites in the station area, ensuring information and plans are disseminated to all relevant people in accordance with Service policies and procedures (FF6).	• Collecting and updating information on risks in the community e.g. sites that contain hazards that need special responses (chemical, biological, radioactive), sites that by their nature need special responses (hospitals), and risks such as derelict or unoccupied buildings. • Collecting and updating information on resources in the community e.g. fixed installations, water supplies and Fire and Rescue Service access.

Appendix continued

Job Description continued

Key Duties and Responsibilities:	Examples of this include:
To participate in community safety initiatives, providing information, education and advice to promote understanding of safety matters so as to reduce risk in line with identified needs and foster positive relations with the local community in support of service objectives (FF1).	• Establishing and maintaining the confidence of members of the public and maintaining links within the community. • Assisting in Service prevention initiatives to educate the community on the risks and hazards of fire and other emergencies e.g. conducting safe and well checks, taking part in community events, signposting vulnerable people to other agency support, giving advice on fire safety, road, and water safety.
To undertake fire safety inspections of premises, completing reports and taking action as required so as to reduce risk and ensure compliance with legislative requirements (FF8).	• Maintaining all firefighting and emergency equipment in a state of readiness including cleaning, repairing and testing as required to approved standards and procedures. • Completing paperwork and routine administration via accurate recording of information.
To participate in a structured programme of training and development and to undertake self-development activities in order to achieve and maintain competence against National Occupational Standards for that role and in line with Service objectives (FF2).	• Taking part in a continuous training programme by attending lectures, exercises, practice drill sessions and other forms of training to develop and maintain competence levels. • Developing own skills and knowledge through personal development to maintain competence. • Completing paperwork and routine administration via accurate recording of information and keeping own personal records up to date.
To assist in the training and development of colleagues, as required, communicating own skills and knowledge, and through demonstration and instruction (FF7).	• Supporting your colleagues to develop themselves in their job role e.g. communicating your skills and knowledge, encouraging feedback, respecting diversity and promoting our values and core purpose.
To take personal responsibility for own performance, ensuring personal appearance, conduct and levels of fitness are maintained in line with Service standards (FF2).	• Developing own skills and knowledge through personal development. • Maintaining the level of physical and medical fitness necessary to carry out all duties. • Maintain personal appearance, hygiene and standards of dress in keeping with a disciplined and professional service.

Appendix continued
Job Description continued

Key Duties and Responsibilities:	Examples of this include:
To undertake driving of Fire and Rescue Service vehicles including their operation and deployment at incidents commensurate with the level of training received (FF9).	• Driving a Fire and Rescue vehicle safely to and from an incident via the most effective route. • Siting the vehicle safely and securely at incidents. • Complying with all relevant regulations and guidelines.
To actively promote and demonstrate personal commitment in respect of the Service's purpose, vision, mission and, values and policies concerning quality of service and customer care, equality, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding and health, safety and welfare.	• Being sensitive to the needs of others, particularly with regards to fairness, equality and diversity issues. • Recognising health and safety issues at work and dealing with them to minimise or eliminate the degree of hazard or risk. • Ensuring personal safety and that of others at all times. • Adhering to the policies and procedures of the Service.

The postholder will be required to undertake any other reasonable duty commensurate with the grading and responsibility of the post. This could be at any location across the Service working a variety of shift patterns, in order to meet Service priorities, business continuity requirements or personal development.

Appendix continued
Person Specification

Requirements	Essential or Desirable	Identified by
Qualifications and Training		
Maths and English GCSE grade C (grade 4) or above, or equivalent qualifications	Essential	Application, Production of Certificates
Experience and Knowledge		
Experience of working in a team	Desirable	Interview
Experience of undertaking tasks of a practical nature	Desirable	Interview, Practical tests
Awareness of the role of a Firefighter	Essential	Interview, Online Assessments
Awareness of the role of the Fire and Rescue Service within the community	Essential	Interview, Online Assessments
An understanding of and commitment to the Core Code of Ethics and the national Fire and Rescue Service Leadership behaviours for a Firefighter	Essential	Application, Interview, Online Assessments
Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion to HWFRS as an employer and service provider	Essential	Application, Interview, Online Assessments
Skills and Abilities		
Ability to work comfortably at height	Essential	Application, Practical Tests
Ability to work comfortably in confined spaces	Essential	Application, Practical Tests
Ability to swim a minimum of 50 metres	Essential	Application

Appendix continued

Person Specification continued

Requirements	Essential or Desirable	Identified by
Other Factors		
At least 18 years of age on commencement of employment	Essential	Application, Pre-employment Checks
Eyesight and colour vision in line with entry standards (subject to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 where appropriate)	Essential	Medical Assessment
Good hearing in line with functional standards (subject to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 where appropriate)	Essential	Medical Assessment
Have and be able to maintain a level of personal fitness to 42 VO2 max or above	Essential	Fitness Test
Able to work rostered shifts including weekends and public holidays	Essential	Application
Hold a full driving licence with no pending issues	Essential	Application Form, Driving Licence Check
Fluency in the use of English Language (as set out in English Language Fluency Duty Part 7 Immigration Act)	Essential	Interview

If you have any questions regarding the application or selection process, please contact: recruitment@hwfire.org.uk / 01905 368490.

Interested candidates are welcome to meet or discuss the role with a member of the panel and arrange a visit to HWFRS. This can be arranged by emailing Tracey Hedges: THedges@hwfire.org.uk.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER HWFR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

HWFire

© 2026 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
Service Headquarters, Hindlip Park, Worcester WR3 8SP
0345 122 4454 | info@hwfire.org.uk | www.hwfire.org.uk