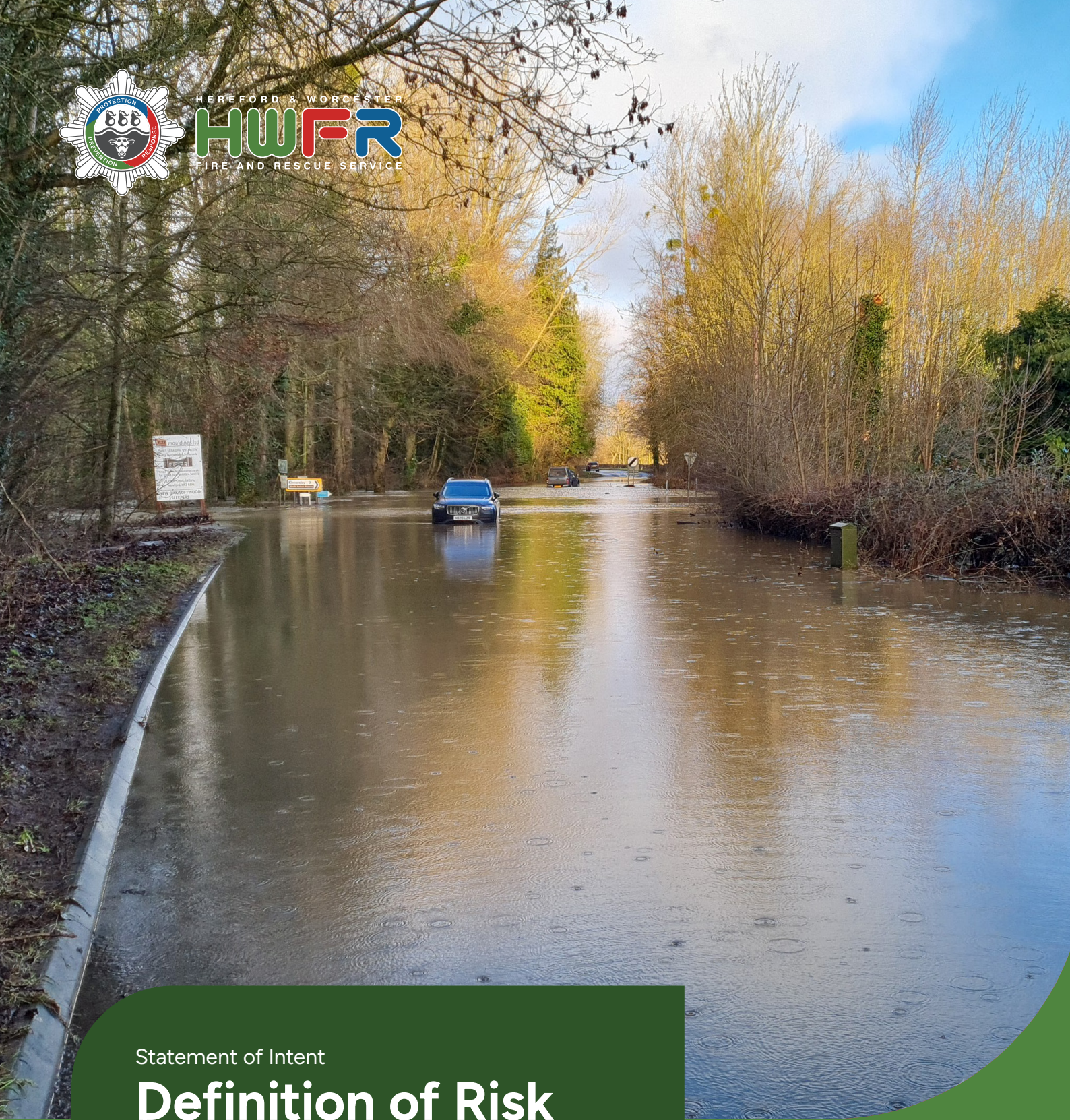




HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Statement of Intent

Definition of Risk

Water Related Incidents and Flooding

May 2024



PREVENTION

Introduction

The information articulated in this Statement of Intent will help Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) identify how it will target its prevention activities regarding water related incidents and flooding.

HWFRS defines risk as a combination of the likelihood and consequences of hazardous events. This aligns with the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) Definition of Risk.

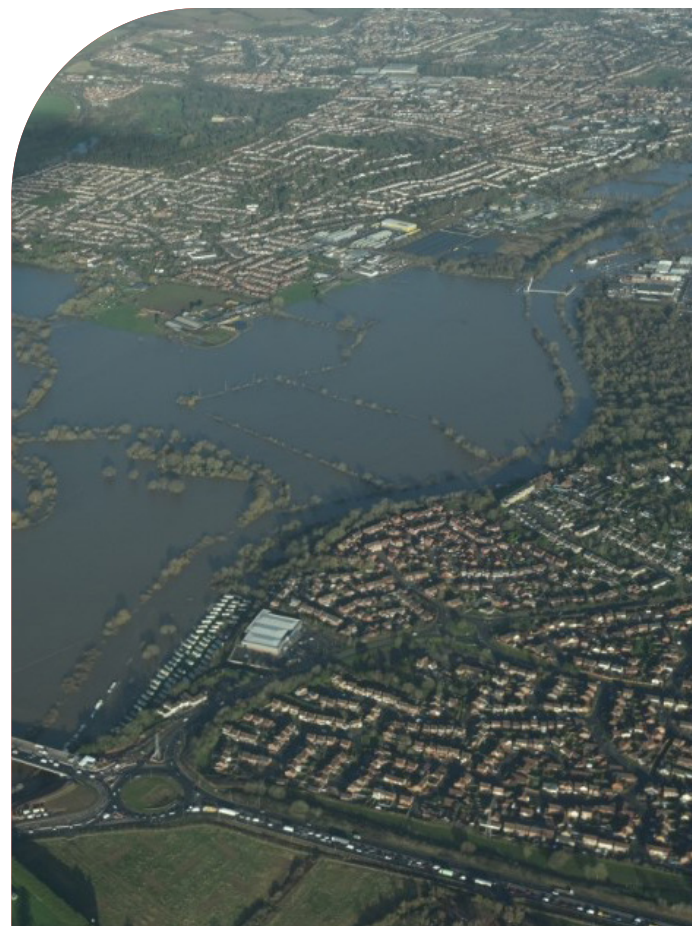
As well as using the NFCC Definition of Risk, a range of other risks have been considered, which are important to understand when looking at areas presenting the greatest threat or harm to life.

The Service attends a wide range of water incidents and the NFCC Water Incident Dashboard identifies that from 2014 – 2021, HWFRS attended the highest number of water rescue incidents across the country. This includes people who have tried to drive through flood water, those who have got into difficulty whilst taking part in sport and leisure activities and helping individuals who have attempted suicide by jumping into deep or fast flowing water.

The responsibility for flooding sits with multiple agencies to provide a joint approach to flood management within the County. The Service contributes to the flood prevention agenda by working closely with partner agencies in providing advice.

This analysis of information will enable the Prevention department to plan how best to utilise its resources in delivering its preventative services in relation to water related incidents.

HWFRS defines risk as a combination of the likelihood and consequences of a hazardous event.



Who is at Risk?

Flooding

Analysis of national datasets and statistics has enabled HWFRS to identify the areas of Herefordshire and Worcestershire that are at greatest risk of being affected by flooding, as well as those individuals who are likely to be most affected by flooding.

- During the 10-year period under review the Service attended a total of 1,436 flooding incidents, which included pumping water out of properties, evacuating individuals from their properties and providing advice. This amounted to just over 2% of the total number of incidents the Service attended during this time period.
- 180 individuals were injured as a result of being involved in flooding.
- 2 individuals died as a result of flooding in their home.
- 82% of flooding incidents where an individual died or sustained injuries requiring hospital treatment, occurred in residential properties where there was a person over the age of 65 living on their own.
- The highest number of incidents attended by the Service occurred within Worcester and Wyre Forest Station grounds.

Water Rescues

Analysis of national datasets and statistics has enabled HWFRS to identify the individuals within Herefordshire and Worcestershire who are at greatest risk of requiring being rescued from water.

- During the 10-year period under review the total number of water rescues was 804. This includes people who have tried to drive through flood water, those who have got into difficulty whilst taking part in sport and leisure activities and helping individuals who have attempted suicide by jumping into deep or fast flowing water.
- This includes 83 individuals being hospitalised as a result of the incident and 47 individuals losing their lives.
- Males, mostly in their 20's were twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured in water than any other age group.
- The highest number of water rescue incidents with casualties occurred within Worcester and Hereford fire station grounds.

Future Targeting

Water safety and flooding is a shared duty across statutory partners and effective safety campaigns will rely on partnership working.

HWFRS will work alongside key stakeholders to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries in or around water by providing water safety advice and flooding awareness. This collaborative work will include:

- Working on campaigns such as Drowning Prevention Week and Don't Drink and Drown with other Fire and Rescue Services and partner agencies including West Mercia Police, Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI), Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA), Royal Lifesaving Society (RLSS) Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) and Environment Agency.
- Working collaboratively with partners to trial alternative signage for Fords
- Developing partnership arrangements with Mental Health teams and raising awareness with appropriate Service personnel on Suicide Prevention.
- Promoting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Water Safety Workstream and aligning Service activities to National Guidance.
- Carrying out proactive targeted Prevention work to include the delivery of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) at properties known to be at risk of flooding, increasing the emphasis on helping the communities to build resilience.

HWFRS will use the information summarised in this Statement of Intent to map risk and identify how the Service will target its Prevention activity with relation to water related incidents.

A review of all data sets will be undertaken on an annual basis to ensure that the Service continues to target those most vulnerable to fire within their communities.



Further Information

For further information please visit
www.hwfire.org.uk



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

