



Norfolk Constabulary and  
Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service Collaboration

# Annual Report

# 2020







**The Policing and Crime Act 2017** includes a statutory duty on police, fire and rescue and ambulance services to keep opportunities to collaborate under review and to work in a collaborative way where in the interests of efficiency or effectiveness.

Collaboration has never been more important than during 2020, where through the Norfolk Resilience Forum and strong established partnership links, our services worked side by side to play a pivotal role in the protection of Norfolk and its people.

While some of our planned collaborative projects had to be paused due to the pandemic, they were replaced by an urgent need to join forces in new ways to aid

the national response to this global pandemic, which affected all of us in our daily lives.

We are very proud of the collective response by Norfolk's agencies and by our staff who worked quickly and effectively to step into new challenges and get the job done.

In some ways, the pandemic has brought forward some of our longer term plans for collaborative working. This included an urgent need to combine our driver training resources, to share buildings and to take on new and additional duties.

Both police and fire services continue to protect, prevent and respond, making efficient use of the resources available.

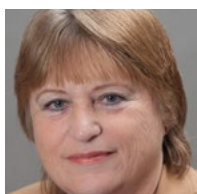




This report gives a flavour of the work involved in 2020. Our shared commitment to doing our absolute best for Norfolk and its people has never been more important than during this unprecedented year of challenge.



**Lorne Green,**  
Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Norfolk.

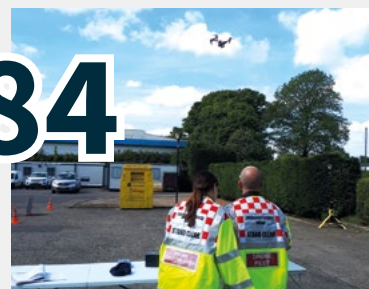


**Councillor Margaret Dewsbury,**  
Cabinet Member for Communities  
and Partnerships at Norfolk County  
Council and Chair of the Fire Authority.

# Success in numbers

## 1,484

number of times  
police/fire drones  
were used in 2020.



## 184

EEAST staff and  
volunteers given driver  
training from police/  
fire instructors during  
phase one of the  
Covid-19 pandemic.



## 73

firefighters driving emergency  
ambulances for EEAST, carrying  
out 982 shifts April - July 2020.



## 1,100

young drivers  
given road safety  
advice online.



# Our Covid Response

## **Blue Light Working Group:**

In addition to our longer-term plans, the Covid-19 pandemic led to the setting up of a Blue Light Working Group, also involving other emergency services and the military. The aim being to work together and identify new ways to jointly support colleagues and communities with any emerging operational issues.

## **Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF):**

Both our services are part of NRF and, through this, they committed resources to support public services and other partner agencies. The primary aim of the work was to contain virus spread. Staff from both services were involved at all levels of this countywide partnership. One early piece of work, supported by both our organisations, was the development of local guidance on social distancing for Norfolk's communities.

## **Supporting East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) to maintain service:**

During April and May 2020, our driver training teams delivered a joint programme to support patient transport services provided by the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST). By lending our combined help, we were able to accelerate the training of new drivers – including student paramedics, community first responders and volunteers.



Collectively, we trained 184 additional drivers for EEAST, over seven weeks, enabling them to join the pool of patient-transport vehicle drivers. The lesson plans and standard operating procedures that our joint team have put in place have now been adopted and used by EEAST's own blue light driver trainers.

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service also committed 73 firefighters, to drive EEAST emergency ambulances between April and July as part of a national agreement. During this time, NFRS staff provided 982 shifts for EEAST, a total of 13,215 hours of work.

## **Effective use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service utilised their knowledge and experience to support Norfolk Constabulary to develop a comprehensive PPE guide for staff which covered all the expected circumstances that operational staff were likely to encounter. Practical guides, covering donning of protection equipment and decontamination following contact with body fluids, ensured officers were confident in the use of PPE. These guides, alongside effective briefing and management, helped ensure that





both organisations maintained relatively low rates of staff infection thus minimising the risk of any potential loss of service to the public.

### **Collapse/ injury incident support:**

From March - September, Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service agreed to temporarily support the police by providing a response to support ambulance crews where there was a collapse behind a closed door or concern about welfare and forced entry was required. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) allowed NFRS to attend and force entry prior to the arrival of an ambulance, upon instruction from police. This is in addition to the usual MOU where NFRS staff can assist in cases where there is already an ambulance in attendance.

### **Incident safety on the road network:**

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service agreed to temporarily respond to police requests to attend situations on highways where a person walking on a road and could cause a danger. They also agreed to support protecting the scenes at collisions or where there was an obstruction. This is known as fending off.

### **Sharing accommodation:**

A joint agreement was agreed where Norfolk Constabulary would house fire service recruits in police accommodation blocks to enable their basic training to continue and support resilience. The fire service granted specialist police firearms response teams space within the county's fire stations to keep them separate from the general patrol staff. This helped ensure additional health protections to this specialist policing resource.







# Learning and development

Learning activities were heavily affected by the pandemic with schedules changed and priorities altered. However, new ways were found to ensure work progressed wherever possible.

As mentioned in the previous section, driver training teams worked together more closely than ever before. In addition to the EEAST support, provided mutually, the driver training teams also worked together in other ways.

A focus around shared professional development activity enabled both services to meet national driving instructor tests and to support specialist vehicle training for staff from both services.

This includes joint use of facilities that enhance the skills of staff through use of the fire service reversing area, to prepare its drivers for their minibus/service vehicle licence tests.





# Estates Management



## Site sharing:

During 2020, work continued where possible to share station locations across the county where it was in the best interests of the services.

Building work completed at Reepham Fire Station to provide a new police report office and relocate services from the former Market Place police station nearby. The new site is fully operational.

In Holt, building work advanced and, despite some delays due to the pandemic, the project will complete in Spring 2021. There is a new police report office to relocate staff from Holt police station.

Both co-locations will enable the services to work better together and maintain visibility in the heart of both towns and their local parishes.

## New learning and development centre:

Norfolk Constabulary purchased the Hethersett Old Hall School site in March 2020, for a new learning and development centre. Both police and fire teams are working together to look at potential co-location of professional training services.

This will help in the collaboration of training for prevention and protection teams and driver training. The first phase of the project involved renovating classroom and scenario areas.

The next phase of classrooms and supporting tutor accommodation will be operational in early summer 2021.

Indeed, the purchase of the Hethersett Old Hall School site in March 2020, gave both services a new and exciting space to continue its collaboration journey of recent years in terms of training. (more on this in the next section)







# Contact and Control Room (CCR)

Excellent work in 2019 created a joint contact and control room and new headquarters for the fire service to advance joint working, particularly in the area of community safety.

The benefits of the CCR project were widespread in 2020. For example, the spate of flooding in December 2020 saw the fire service declare a major incident. Supporting JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles) of co-location. The ease and flow of information allowed for a rich common operational understanding at all times throughout this incident.

The shared space has enabled both teams to work better together, particularly for major incidents and protecting vulnerable people. Working together improves our joint response to incidents, develops processes and policy, and a shared culture based on common values and public service.

Operational commanders from both services meet daily and senior managers meet monthly with ambulance service colleagues to discuss areas of common interest, work together to support one another, set joint objectives and ensure strategic plans are aligned.

In 2020, partnership working advanced to include a joint response to some categories of road related





occurrence for high risk missing people and has undoubtedly been instrumental in delivering better outcomes for those involved.

We created a Covid safe working environment for our CCR teams. There are now wellbeing champions across all teams and post incident wellbeing practitioners in both services who help staff members from either service. We have built a quiet room where colleagues can get away from the hustle and bustle of a busy control room, which has proved popular.



incidents. This has reduced joint deployments and allowed demand to be more effectively balanced across the two services at times of peak demand.

The effectiveness of our joint approach to road related incidents was clear to see when Storm Dennis hit the UK on the 15th Feb 2020. A joint silver suite was established under JESIP protocols, working to a single strategy. Many calls were duplicates of the same incidents but by working together to triage calls and developing a shared understanding of which incidents were being attended by the other service, it ensured that our collective response maximised our capabilities.

CCTV and drone feeds are now readily accessible to both services and we have seen a number of deployments where the lead service is receiving video streaming of the incident from the other services' assets; most notably this is a regular





# Road Safety

For Norfolk, we estimated a 75% reduction in the use of motor vehicles during the initial national lockdown as most people followed the government guidelines to stay at home.

There was a resulting reduction in the number of collisions in which people were killed or seriously injured (KSI) compared to previous years.

Many usual road safety campaigns and events were cancelled due to the COVID pandemic but this has not curbed the enthusiasm for collaborative working between Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service and Norfolk Roads Policing to ensure the people of Norfolk are safe on our roads.



## Joint Preventative Safety Work

The PCC led #Impact delivered by the tri-blue light partnership of Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service, Norfolk Police and East Of England Ambulance Service to educate young drivers on the importance of the Fatal4 and consequences of their actions whilst behind the wheel. It relies on interactive performance and engagement actions to promote those messages.

Therefore, an early decision was taken to halt all booked sessions with Norfolk's Colleges, to ensure the safety of all involved. No sessions were delivered during 2020. The successful #Impact Project was commissioned from November 2016 through to March 2020 and all partners look to advancing progress on this important awareness and champion the Fatal4 message to our young people.

Road Safety is a shared responsibility and #Fatal4, plus the early prevention message, is key for our young drivers. The main focus of our joint work to prevent KSI's is education and awareness around vulnerable road users, namely young drivers, motorcyclists, and pedal cyclists.

The impact of lockdown initially halted all such activity, but by the easing of the initial lockdown phase, we had created online products aimed at





delivering these key messages. The Young Driver Fatal4 session has now been delivered online to over 1,100 students this year, with more sessions planned into 2021.

The services joined forces and also worked with Norfolk County Council's Road Safety Team to jointly promote BRAKE's road safety week in November 2020. This was done through social media and roadside interventions.

The annual Drink/Drug Driving Kills campaign launched in December at King's Lynn North fire station. The campaign launch day brought NFRS and Norfolk Roads Policing staff together in conjunction with #Impact to show unity in delivering the festive campaign message. This was captured and shared across the respective social media platforms along with regional newspapers to support the widest reach possible. Mock road crashes were set up at King's Lynn, Thetford and Norwich Sprowston fire stations, delivering a stark reminder of the dangers of Drink/Drug driving over the festive period. Teams from both police and fire supported the launch at each site.

Our message of 'Drink/Drug Driving Kills, Your Choice, Make the right one' was promoted through

highly visible banners with joint branding and through media and shared social media. We continue to build on the strong partnerships already formed between Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service and Norfolk Police with the NPCC Operations campaign calendar pivotal in creating a 2021 Road Safety campaign delivery strategy for Norfolk.

The ongoing restrictions of the pandemic will undoubtedly reduce the opportunity for face to face public engagement, so our partnership meetings, over the coming weeks, will draw on the experiences and expertise taken from the learning achieved, from both services, during 2020 to keep the public safe and provide the best communication of safety messages possible.





# Drones

Drone responsibilities have been shared in our services since 2018.

Together we provide an efficient and effective drone response for Norfolk. Drones offer cutting edge support to operational deployments at a fraction of the cost of traditional helicopter air support.

Since the first lockdown in April 2020, drones have provided a clear and Covid safe means to gather event information, intelligence and a response to concerns for safety and matters of disorder. This is due to the ability to fly the drone at a safe distance whilst monitoring an incident.

Police/ fire drones were sent to incidents 1,484 times in 2020, compared to 657 in 2019.

The development of the drone capability and technology has been significant and investment in 2020 has enabled both organisations to purchase the latest equipment to provide live time clearer images and widen the scope for flying in terms of locations, weather parameters and time.

Work has progressed to ensure that we explore further opportunities for collaboration, thereby seeking to reduce costs and provide a more effective drone response.

## Examples include:

- Joint training and continued professional development programme
- Ability to share equipment and resources
- Start of a six month pilot to locate a shared resource at a fire station in west Norfolk, reducing response times and offering greater flexibility and accessibility
- Introduction of joint management meetings to share oversight and progression of the capability
- Consideration of a future estates strategy to incorporate a shared training and maintenance facility

Both organisations have seen a rise in the number and diversity of drone deployments. Many of the flights will involve a crossover (for example, NFRS attending an incident on behalf of the police), and also where we have attended jointly to provide further resilience. The drone pilots from each organisation have a good working relationship and complement each other's needs. A joint training programme is planned.

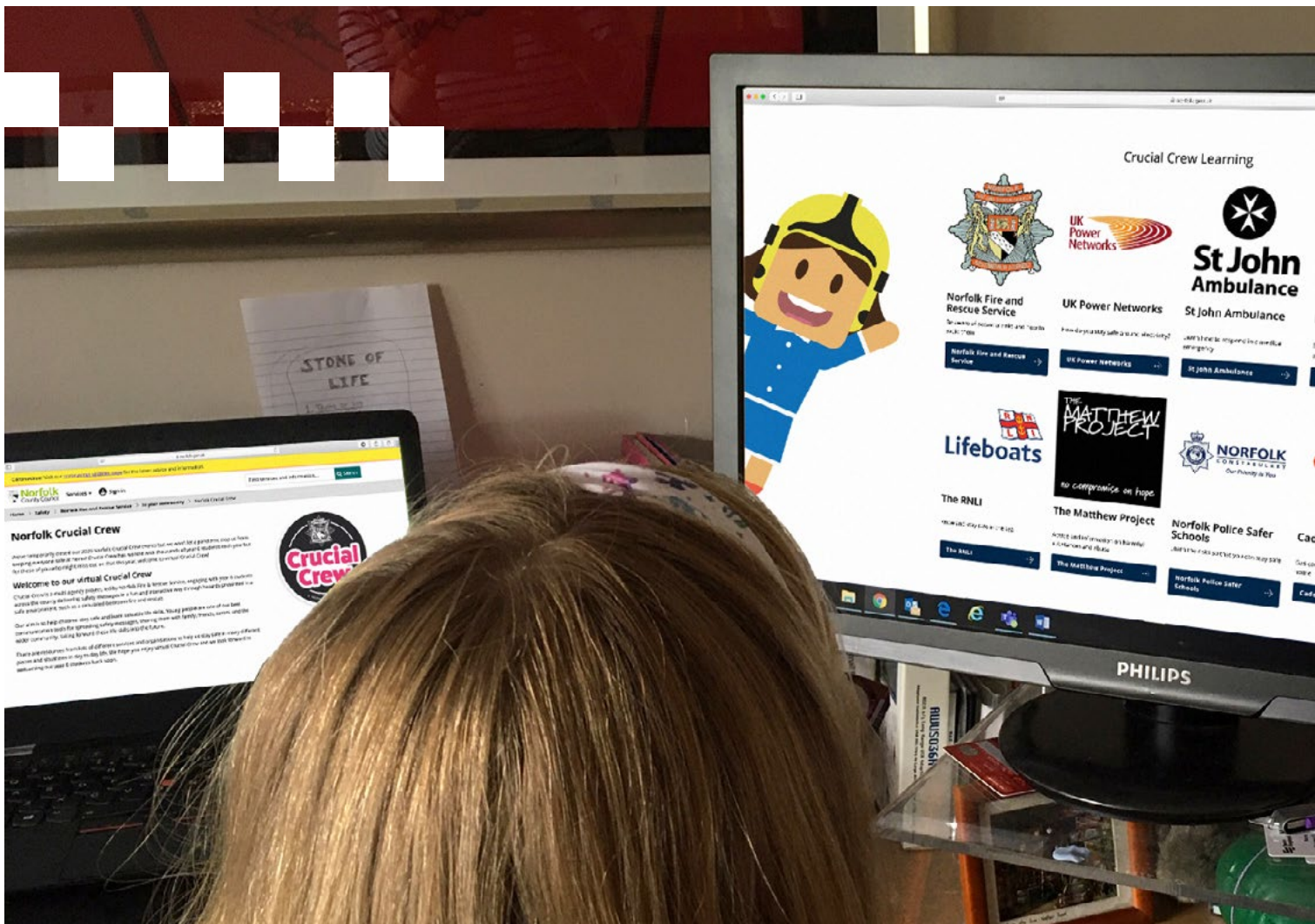
A man with learning disabilities went missing near to a river in a very remote location. Police and NFRS drones were deployed along with the police helicopter provided by the National Police Air Service (NPAS). Due to bad weather, NPAS had to land but both drones continued to conduct searches of the area. A further high risk missing person was reported in the county requiring drone support. The joint deployment allowed NFRS to re-deploy to this while the Police stayed in the area. The missing person was located by the Police drone shortly after and the second person was located by the Fire Drone.











# Community Safety

In early 2020, Norfolk Constabulary provided scam prevention training to operational fire staff in Norwich as part of a pilot scheme.

The aim was for those fire crews to include this information in their home fire safety visits. These visits were significantly refined to focus resources

on those in the very highest fire risk category, with visits only taking place using specialist staff, rather than the operational crews. This halted the scam prevention trial, but we aim to re-introduce this pilot as soon as we are able to.

The first stages of the Mental Health Advice pilot project was successfully delivered with staff trained and data sharing agreements in place. The next stage of implementation will roll out in 2021. Work that has progressed includes the introduction of a dedicated fire service section to the monthly rural newsletter, with communities receiving relevant updates and information. The Community Rural Advisory Group (CRAG) is chaired by Norfolk Constabulary who bring together stakeholders from the rural community quarterly, to discuss matters that are impacting rural and farming communities. During the first







lockdown, the frequency of these meetings changed to monthly and a broader range of partners were included. The fire service remains a key stakeholder in this meeting and has helped shape the support that this group has provided throughout the year.

A joint operation targeting safety checks and support towards the community living on the waterways, has taken a broader partnership approach under 'Operation Broads'. Some targeted multi-agency visits were conducted in 2020, however these were limited due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Both organisations continue to support children and young people. The successful fire service Crucial Crew programme has moved to a digital platform so that primary school children continue to receive key messages from the range of partners involved, including police. The plan to identify 20 young people from the Short Stay Schools that could move onto the NFRS Prince's Trust Team Programme in 2020 was delayed but will be reviewed in 2021.

## Joint promotional and media work

Throughout 2020, the media and communications teams of both services worked closely together around a range of messaging.

This included general coronavirus safety messaging as part of the wider Norfolk Resilience Forum.

It also included promotion of many projects listed above such as the Hethersett site, Road Safety Week, Drink/ Drug Driving campaign and spate weather related messaging.

Main channels used for external media outlets and social media channels of both services.







2020 has shown the dedication and commitment of both our teams in doing all they can during the Covid-19 pandemic.

While some of our plans changed and some were halted, they were replaced by other work streams. We collectively and quickly adapted our work and ensured that we maintained both our operational response and committed to helping Norfolk in new and innovative ways.

The flexibility of our staff and our ability to quickly make decisions and work together, alongside our blue light partners and other agencies, has been

invaluable during a very difficult year for all. We are very grateful to our staff across both services who have stepped in to new duties in order to protect Norfolk and its people.



Stuart Ruff,  
Chief Fire Officer at  
Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service



Simon Bailey,  
Chief Constable of  
Norfolk Constabulary.



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