



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

*Working together to improve community safety*

# ON-CALL FIREFIGHTER INFORMATION GUIDE



Call **01480 444500** or visit [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)

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Thank you for your interest in becoming an on-call firefighter with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

This information guide is intended to give you **an insight into the role of an on-call firefighter**, the types of activities you can expect to be involved in during your career with us, as well as details about the current recruitment process.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to achieving fairness and equality in employment and service delivery. Therefore we welcome suitably skilled applicants from all parts of the community, including women and applicants of black and minority ethnic origin, as we are currently under-represented by these groups.



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# INTRODUCTION

Cambridgeshire is served by a total of 27 fire stations. A large majority (24 fire stations) are reliant on on-call firefighters. On-call firefighters are also needed on a 'volunteer' basis (i.e. without pay) at Peterborough Volunteer Fire Station.

## MAP OF FIRE STATIONS





## CASE STUDY

### Vicky Hemingfield

Civil servant Vicky Hemingfield, 26, loves the community work that comes as part of being an on-call firefighter.

*"It's nice to make a difference and do something rewarding. I didn't realise how much community work the fire service did until I joined – and funnily enough that is the stuff I enjoy the most. It's nearly all voluntary but I love spending my days off going along to fetes and family events with the pump talking about fire prevention. I find it really rewarding.*

*I don't have any family that live nearby as my parents live in America, so I wanted a bit more support around me and thought getting involved in something where I'd be part of a team would be a good idea. The team at the station are great – I couldn't ask for a better crew. They're always around when you need them. Fitness is important when you're on-call. When I joined I had to work on my fitness and I've exceeded even my own expectations and now I really enjoy staying fit.*

*Seeing a woman on the crew can still shock people but I've had really positive things said to me by people in the community, like how nice it is to see a female firefighter. People at my day job and friends can't believe I do firefighting but I think anyone can do it if you put your mind to it. No, it's not easy but the resource is there to get you through it and you just have to have the determination. You also have to be organised and prepared all the time – you don't want to be scrabbling around for a sock at 2am when your pager is going off!"*



# INFORMATION ABOUT ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS

## WHAT ARE ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS?

On-call firefighters can be anyone and can come from all walks of life. For example they could be shopkeepers, builders, consultants, stay at home parents, secretaries, engineers, cooks, factory workers, farmers, care workers, students or people who are not currently employed. They are people who are able to give their time to assist the fire service.

On-call firefighters are not based at a fire station, however, they need to live or work within five minutes of their local fire station. When they are contracted to be on-call they need to be able to stop whatever it is they are doing the moment a message comes through to their pager and go straight to the fire station. They may be at home and have time available to help protect the community. They could be working for themselves or perhaps for a company that is prepared to let them have time off. We ask for a commitment of at least 49 hours per week (on average), this could be during the night, at weekends, during the day or a combination of all.



## CASE STUDY

On-call firefighters are trained to deal with a similar range of situations and incidents as their full time colleagues. Working as part of an effective team, they are skilled in using the latest equipment, methods and techniques to undertake a wide range of duties including tackling property fires, grass and farmland fires, road traffic collisions, chemical spills, animal rescues, floods, storm damage and much more.

In addition, part of an on-call firefighter's role is to encourage a safe community in order to prevent fires and emergencies. They are therefore called upon to provide community education and advice on fire safety by taking part in activities such as giving talks to schools and visiting community groups to make sure people understand the risks of fire and what they can do to protect themselves.

On-call firefighters are required to attend an evening training session each week (known as a drill night) for two hours at their local fire station for training and maintenance of essential equipment.

How often an on-call firefighter is called out, depends on which station they are based at. We sometimes have more on-call firefighters available than are needed for each incident, so they are not always required to attend every call out.



**Matt Dennington**

Living just seconds from the fire station means postman Matt Dennington is usually one of the first to find out what incident the crew at St Ives has been called to when he runs over to the station. The 23-year-old has been on-call since 2013 and fits firefighting around his day job.

*"The bit that is really important to me is the team spirit that comes with being part of a crew at an on-call station.*

*When the pager goes off it's a real rush, right the way up until you get to the station and into the pump and get the information about what job you're attending. The first five minutes is a bit of a mental rush – but a good one!*

*My most memorable job so far has to be a barn fire we attended. We were the first pump to arrive and had to take control of the incident. We really had to get involved and all the training came into play. It could be seen as a little overwhelming but it's such an achievement when you look back to see what you have tackled.*

*Since joining I've obviously learned all about firefighting but I've also gained other skills like first aid and understanding more about working in a team."*

## WHO CAN BE AN ON-CALL FIREFIGHTER?

Don't believe everything you hear about the fire and rescue service – firefighters come in all shapes and sizes, there are no maximum or minimum height restrictions.

On-call firefighters have to be at least 18 years of age with a good all-round level of fitness but there is no upper age limit.

Previous experience or formal qualifications are not required due to the comprehensive training programme on-call firefighters receive and we are particularly keen for more women and people from black and ethnic minority communities to join.

As we can't predict when they will be called out, on-call firefighters need to be flexible in their work or home-based activities and work or live within five minutes of an on-call fire station, as they need to be able to get to the fire station within five minutes of receiving a pager message (driving at normal road speeds).

In Cambridgeshire, a large percentage of our on-call firefighters are self-employed, including mechanics, accountants, bricklayers, plumbers and shop owners. Many of these people have found that being an on-call firefighter has a positive impact on their business. This is because they have better links with their local businesses and communities and they are well known and trusted by people in their area.

On-call firefighters need to have good communication skills together with personal skills such as courage, understanding, reliability, flexibility, determination, self motivation, common sense, commitment, enthusiasm and the ability to work within a team. They also need to be able to reflect the Service's values at all times.

Above all, the role requires a real desire to serve the local community.

Unfortunately we are unable to accept applications from those who have a contract of employment with another employer that requires them to be moved from their normal place of work for periods of more than two weeks or periods of more than four weeks in a calendar year; with less than one month's notice being given.







## CASE STUDY

### **Phil & Tony Thacker – Mechanics**

**Tony Thacker and his son Phil run Thackers Auto Care Ltd in Ramsey, where they are both on-call firefighters.**

*Tony said: “My son and I are both on-call firefighters and we also run a busy mechanics in Ramsey.*

*We are a small business – it’s just us two. So, if we get a 999 call the business effectively closes down for half an hour or so. We haven’t got money to burn, we need to make a profit and pay a mortgage just like anyone else. So if we thought that being on-call firefighters had a negative impact on our business, we couldn’t afford to do it.*

*In an average week, we’ll get about four 999 calls. Some of these happen during the day when we’re at work and some in the evenings and weekends when we’re with our families. Most of the calls only last about 30 minutes. If they happen at work, we just stay late and catch up.*

*All our customers are aware that we are on-call firefighters and on the rare occasions that we are called out for a longer time they completely understand. Especially when you tell them where you’ve been – the incidents that last longest are usually house fires, road traffic collisions or businesses on fire.*

*I’ve been a mechanic for over 30 years and I’ve never felt that I’ve lost any customers through being an on-call firefighter, quite the reverse actually.*

*When you’re an on-call firefighter people treat you differently. They know that you’re saving lives and they’re very appreciative of that. I often get stopped in the shop or the pub and thanked for attending an incident, even if the person thanking me was not involved!*

*You also develop strong links with your community and you become well known as a firefighter. People know who you are and what you do and they are grateful for what you do.”*

# INFORMATION ABOUT ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS CONTINUED

## WHY ARE ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS NEEDED?

On-call firefighters are a vital part of today's fire and rescue service.

They provide an efficient, effective service that gives emergency cover to more than 90 per cent of the UK. In Cambridgeshire, on-call firefighters make up 56 per cent of the workforce and are generally located in rural communities, small towns and villages.

## HOW OFTEN WOULD I BE NEEDED?

The number of incidents that an on-call firefighter attends varies between fire stations and further information can be obtained by contacting your local fire station. However, we need people to provide cover around the clock, particularly during daytime hours on weekdays and weekends.

We do realise that everyone needs to balance their working life with their private life though and that means being able to enjoy some quality time off. On-call firefighters get annual leave they can take if they have a deadline at work or for holidays.

## WHAT DO I GET OUT OF IT?

Firefighting is not like any other job. It can be unpredictable, exciting and rewarding, coupled with the satisfaction and respect that comes with providing a crucial service to the local community.

As well as learning firefighting techniques, on-call firefighters learn other skills such as, road traffic collision procedures, fire safety and first aid as well as having an opportunity to be trained in Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) driving.

On-call firefighters receive an annual salary, plus an hourly rate (which is for the hours when they are out attending incidents or attending a drill night) plus a disturbance fee (paid when they are called out to an incident). The annual salary reflects the amount of hours that an on-call firefighter is able to provide and falls into three bands:

- 1. 100% salary – over 96 hours per week**
- 2. 75% salary – 72-95 hours per week**
- 3. 50% salary – 49-71 hours per week**

Please see [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk) for the most up to date rates of pay.

On-call firefighters are entitled to 38 days of paid annual leave (including eight statutory holidays), to be taken in blocks of seven consecutive days free from duty. They are entitled to an additional three days of long service leave when they have completed five years' continuous service.

From the start of employment, on-call firefighters will be able to contribute to the new firefighter's pension scheme. Please see our website for the most up to date contribution rate.

We also offer an Employee Assistance Programme which provides a free and confidential support service, offering unlimited access to advice, information, coaching and counselling where appropriate.

On-call firefighters are entitled to sick pay that is subject to national terms and conditions.

Uniform and personal protective equipment are provided to be worn while on duty.



## CASE STUDY

### Rachel Casbon

By day, Rachel Casbon, 40, is an accountant. She became an on-call firefighter in 1999 to give her the adrenalin rush her day job didn't. As well as juggling a full time career in accounting and being an on-call firefighter, she also has two horses, a dog, a cat and a partner, but still manages to fit everything in.

*"I applied not expecting to be accepted or even to pass all of the entry tests, but a few months later I was proudly awarded my pager and I still love every minute of the job, particularly being able to help others when they find themselves in an unfortunate situation.*

*I have learnt heaps whilst being an on-call firefighter. Not only is my first aid at work qualification renewed regularly, I now also have a LGV Class 2 licence and am able to drive a 14 tonne fire engine on blue lights. I have learnt enormous amounts about chemicals and chemical reactions, as well as the physics of fire and its effect on various substances.*

*My Dad was so chuffed and proud to announce to his friends that his daughter was a firefighter and drove the fire engine.*

*Everyone I meet in my day job is amazed at what I do in the evenings and weekends. But I have to get my adrenalin from somewhere, as accountancy just doesn't do it!"*



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

On-call firefighters who are planning on responding to incidents while at their place of work must have the permission of their employers. It is important that employers understand what this involves so please ensure that the employers receive the Employer Information Booklet, available on our website.

Employers will also need to sign a form confirming that an on-call firefighter can be released from work. This can be found as part of the application.

## INFORMATION FOR PARTNERS AND FAMILY

Without the support and encouragement of partners and families, on-call firefighters would struggle to carry out their role.

This support does mean that occasionally the lives of partners and families can be affected. The main disadvantages to being on-call are:

- The difficulty in planning spur of the moment activities
- Being called out in the middle of the night
- Not being able to be relied upon to be the sole-carer when on call. Alternative child or dependant care arrangements need to be made in case of the need to respond to an emergency quickly.

However, having an on-call firefighter within the family has advantages of:

- Giving and caring to the community in which they live
- Financial reward
- Being able to carry out risk assessments of the home
- Being trained in first aid
- Being a positive role model.

A recent survey of partners asked the question:

### WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL THAT YOUR PARTNER'S WORK AS AN ON-CALL FIREFIGHTER IS WORTHWHILE?

The answers that were received included the following responses:

*"As a family we are very proud of their work and it's a nice thing to be able to tell people."*

*"He has helped save lives, made many friends and is very proud to be a firefighter."*

*"She enjoys serving the community and has learnt valuable skills. One of her big achievements was qualifying as a LGV driver."*

*"It has given my partner more confidence and boosted their self-esteem."*

*"My partner finds the job rewarding, exciting and satisfying, this is what makes the job worthwhile not the amount of money she earns."*

## CASE STUDY

### Chris Stallard

Chris Stallard is 44 and is one of three postmen that work as on-call firefighters at St Ives station. He is able to provide cover around his day job.

*"I got involved at the station in St Ives because I had a lot of free time and I wanted to do something to help the local community. I wanted to do something of use with the time I had free. Answering calls is such an adrenalin rush for me when the pager goes off."*



# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED

## STATION VISIT

We would encourage people to visit their local station on their drill night (details of when these can be found on our website or by calling recruitment on 01480 444500) to talk to the on-call firefighters about what the role is really like. They will also be able to talk through the current needs of the station and assist with the completion of any forms.

## DECLARATION OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES

Applicants are required to declare any offence for which the conviction is not yet spent.

Within the meaning of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – incorporating the Rehabilitations of Offenders Act (exemptions) 1975 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exemptions) (Amendment) Order 1996 – applicants are advised to declare any charge that is pending, as a subsequent conviction could lead

to their dismissal from the Service. Broadly the Act provides for anyone who has ever been convicted of a criminal offence and not sentenced to more than two-and-a-half-years in prison to become a 'rehabilitated person' at the end of the rehabilitation period, provided there have been no further convictions. At the end of this period, the conviction is considered spent and thus to be treated as it had never happened. If you are unsure whether you have to declare a previous conviction you should contact your local Probation Office, Citizens Advice Bureau or your Solicitor. Alternatively you can consult the Home Office publication 'A Guide to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974'.



## CASE STUDY

### Ritchie Hawkins

Thirty-year-old Ritchie Hawkins has an unusual day job. He's a professional speedway rider and works as an on-call firefighter at Yaxley around his training and competing.

*"I joined up to do something different and worthwhile. I've grown up living just yards from the station, so it all made sense.*

*It's hard to explain what it's like when you're out at an incident, in the middle of things. For me, the only thing I can liken it to is my speedway racing. Both get the adrenalin pumping. When I'm racing at 80mph around a track on a bike with no brakes I have to be 100 per cent focused, and when I'm tackling a fire, it's the same, I'm 100 per cent focused on that job.*

*I don't really think about the dangers but I think if you were to ask my family about it, I guess they are concerned at times. To be honest though, my family are really pleased that I'm doing something with my life and getting training and learning new skills.*

*It's a big commitment but if you're willing to put the effort in then it's so rewarding. It's not about the money, in a way it's more of a hobby. I see it as you get a little bit of financial reward back for doing something you enjoy and helping your community."*



# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE EQUALITY AND INCLUSION AT WORK

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is a community service and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to giving the highest level of service to our diverse communities throughout Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Our aim and commitment is to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age or is disadvantaged by requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.

In delivering services we ensure that members of the public are treated with dignity and respect regardless of culture, background or lifestyle. We are committed to listening to the varied needs of our diverse community and to provide services appropriately to them.

We expect the same commitment from any agencies/ partners who work on our behalf. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and consideration at work. This extends to the right to work in a safe and healthy environment free from harassment, bullying and discrimination or intimidation either directly or indirectly by other employees.

## PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Hair (including facial hair) must not impair the seal of the breathing apparatus face mask nor must it impair vision or hearing.

Whilst on duty the use of make-up or hair preparations, such as gel or hair spray, is not allowed.





## CASE STUDY

### Jess Stebbings

It's a common myth that you have to be a certain height to become a firefighter, so at 5ft 3in tall, Jess Stebbings' friends still can't believe that she does the job.

Aged 24, Jess followed in her father's footsteps and became an on-call firefighter at Wisbech in 2013. Her main job is as a fitness consultant at a local leisure centre and she fits her firefighting role around the job.

*"With my dad being a firefighter I grew up with the lifestyle of firefighting. When I was little he would go out on a shout, and when he came back in I was always so interested in where he'd been and what he'd been up to.*

*Being a firefighter is hard work but I like the buzz of it.*

*We get quite a lot of road traffic collisions, especially along the A47. It can be a real eye opener. What you see doing this job can have a massive effect on you as a person, how you see life and those around you. I think I appreciate things much more since I've been firefighting.*

*My mum does worry but whenever I get off a job I always ring home to tell mum and dad what I've been doing – and obviously to let them know I'm fine!*

*My friends still can't believe that little old me can do it! Because of my size and because I'm a woman people are quite shocked but you work as part of a team and my height doesn't put me at a disadvantage.*

*I had to build quite a bit of strength when I joined and keep it up to stay fit but I like that. Anyone who is thinking of joining should just do it – I think it's the best job in the world."*



# THE SELECTION PROCESS

Joining the fire and rescue service is a great way of meeting new people – both the people you work with and those in the community who you help. There's a special kind of bond amongst firefighters. It comes from working together as a team in conditions that are sometimes potentially dangerous or emotive. That helps bind you together as few jobs could.

The recruitment and selection of on-call firefighters is dependant upon you either living and/or working within five minutes of one of the Service's on-call fire stations.

Details of the locations of on-call fire stations in Cambridgeshire can be found on page 4 of this information guide.

The length of time it takes to complete the process varies, but it may take up to six months from the initial application.

We run regular monthly recruitment information evenings for people considering becoming an on-call firefighter and would encourage you to attend one of these. Details of these can be found on our website [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk) or by calling Recruitment on **01480 444500**.

Please note that successful completion of any stage of the recruitment process does not guarantee a role within Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. All roles are determined by the availability you are able to offer your station and what availability they need at that time.

## STAGE ONE – APPLICATION STAGE

An application form, an availability form, a uniform sizing form and an equality and inclusion monitoring form have either been sent with this guide, or are available on request.

To request these forms, please:

- Call Recruitment on **01480 444500**
- Email [recruitment@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@cambsfire.gov.uk)

When completed, return the forms by post to:

Recruitment  
Fire Service Headquarters  
Hinchingsbrooke Cottage  
Brampton Road  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire  
PE29 2NA



## CASE STUDY

### Marc Lewis

When Marc Lewis joined as an on-call firefighter aged 40, others on his course were, as he puts it, 'young enough to be my kids'. But there is no age limit on when you can join.

*"In my opinion, age has nothing to do with it – it's all about the will to succeed. It's not an easy ride and you have to work to pass the tests and get in, but it doesn't matter how old you are, so long as you're healthy and have the determination to do it.*

*In Littleport we have a vast range of different ages and experience on the station. The most important thing to us is to work as a team and back each other up. Whether that's on the incident ground, or just making sure we have cover to keep the fire engine on the run, we all work together.*

*We've just won the Service's Excellence Award for Team of the Year and I think that's because we've really embraced recent changes and have worked hard together to make sure our crew is available for the community.*

*Firefighting is very different to my day job as a store manager of a retail shop. But it doesn't matter what working background you come from as you've always got something to bring to the team. Everyone has a different skill set that they contribute and you also learn things at the station to take back to other parts of your life."*



# THE **SELECTION PROCESS** CONTINUED

## **APPLICATION FORM**

This contains your personal details and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

## **EMPLOYER'S CONSENT FORM**

If you are employed and you have permission to be released by your employer, they must give written consent, via the employer form.

## **AVAILABILITY FORM**

This details the hours you say you are available to be on-call.

You will be expected to maintain this availability if you are successful in being offered a post as an on-call firefighter with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Your availability will be assessed to ensure there are vacancies at the fire station during the hours you are available to be on-call. If your availability does not match the station's requirements at this time, your details will be added to a holding list for your chosen station.

## **EQUALITY AND INCLUSION MONITORING FORM**

This helps us ensure we are as accessible as possible to all groups in the community. The data is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and is not used to assist or make selection decisions.

## **UNIFORM SIZING FORM**

This is so we can provide an appropriate protective uniform for you to use should you be invited to attend an on-call firefighter assessment day.

## **INFORMAL STATION MEETING**

Once you have submitted your application you will be contacted by the station commander and be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the job and your availability in more detail.

## **STAGE TWO – WRITTEN TESTS**

These tests consist of a series of multiple choice questions designed to assess your abilities and aptitude for becoming an on-call firefighter.

The tests are conducted in a classroom style environment and take approximately three hours to complete (including breaks).

They consist of three tests which need to be completed in a set time and include:

- Working with numbers
- Understanding information
- Situational awareness and problem solving

For further information on written tests, as well as practice papers, please visit [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)



## STAGE THREE – OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

Once you have successfully completed your written tests, you will be invited to attend a medical appointment with our Occupational Health Unit. They normally take approximately two hours to complete. The purpose of the medical is to assess your general level of health to decide whether you are fit to undertake firefighting duties (allowing for any reasonable adjustments that may be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010).

Prior to attending this appointment, you need to visit the opticians for an eyesight test. You will be given a form that the optician must complete. The visual entry standards for firefighters are detailed on our website.

## FITNESS TEST

During your medical assessment with Occupational Health you will be required to undertake The Chester Treadmill Walking Test that has been designed specifically for fire and rescue services.

The object of the test is to measure the aerobic fitness, which is the ability to carry out activities in all aspects of your social and occupational life without causing undue fatigue.

The treadmill pace is set at 6.2km/hr (3.8mph) and the incline at 0% for two minutes. Every two minutes thereafter the gradient is increased by 3%. Successful completion of the test requires you to walk unaided for a total time of 12 minutes with an increasing incline to 15%.

## CASE STUDY

### Jordan Moore

Factory worker and new dad, 31 year old Jordan Moore joined Wisbech on-call in July 2013. He fits firefighting around his shifts at work.

*“Being a firefighter is amazing. I was always interested in doing it but didn’t even realise on-call existed. I came to the station and spoke to the station commander and he told me all about it and how it works.*

*What I like about it is how unexpected it all is. You never know what you’re going to be called to or where you’re going to head off to.*

*The people here are a great bunch and make the hard shouts and tough training enjoyable.*

*Being honest, when I first started I was pretty petrified of my pager going off. I would sit there watching it and waiting for it to go off. I was too scared to jump in the shower because I didn’t want to be late to a shout! Now, it’s just second nature and I don’t miss out on things because I’m on-call. And I definitely do shower now! You just get on with normal life.*

*You’ve got to be committed to be an on-call firefighter. It’s hard when it’s a nice hot sunny day outside and you can’t go to the beach because you’re on-call but to me it’s more important to give my hours and keep the Wisbech pump on the run. It’s all worth it.”*



# THE **SELECTION PROCESS** CONTINUED

## **STAGE FOUR – ASSESSMENT DAY**

If you successfully pass the medical and fitness assessment, you will be invited to attend an assessment day which will include the physical tests, interview and uniform fitting. They normally take approximately four hours to complete.

### **PHYSICAL TESTS**

As part of the selection process, you will be required to undertake physical tests which aim to assess your level of fitness, strength and manual dexterity as well as your level of confidence in simulated exercises. These tests are designed to reflect operational practice.

For further information about the levels of fitness required please visit our website.

There are currently seven tests:

- Enclosed space
- Ladder climb
- Casualty evacuation
- Ladder lift/lower simulation
- Equipment carry
- Equipment assembly
- Ladder pull

### **INTERVIEW**

The purpose of the interview is to assess your general aptitude for the role of an on-call firefighter. You will be required to give examples about experiences you have had that relate to the qualities and behaviours we expect of our on-call firefighters.

There are no right or wrong answers; you just need to answer in a considered way drawing on your own experiences.

### **UNIFORM FITTING**

During the assessment day you will have a uniform fitting. This is necessary to ensure that you receive your full firefighting uniform before attending the new recruits course.

### **FINAL STAGE**

Once you have successfully completed the recruitment and selection process and subject to your ongoing availability meeting the current requirements of the station, you will be sent an offer of employment letter together with your contract.

All offers made are subject to confirmation of your legal right to work in the UK, our receipt of references satisfactory to the Service and medical fitness (including an eye sight examination) appropriate to the job and consistent with our equality policy.

Subject to us receiving the above, you will receive your uniform and be required to attend a 12 week modular new recruits course at our training centre in Huntingdon (see page 24). You will need to pass the recruits course for your contract to become confirmed.

## CASE STUDY

### Graham Duff

Graham Duff is the After-Sales Manager at Audi in Peterborough and a father-of-two. For the past 11 years he has also been an on-call firefighter at Yaxley Fire Station.

*"I always liked getting involved in the community and previously used to be committed to the Scouting scene locally but then I wanted to do something else in the community. My brother had been an on-call firefighter for a number of years so I knew a little bit about it. I love the fact I can be doing anything, like playing with my kids in the garden, and then just minutes later you're in the back of the fire engine as the pager has gone off. It is hard juggling a full time job, on-call firefighting and a family and it does affect your life in some ways, but I love doing it. Before I joined I came to the station for a few drill nights and got to know the crew and understand what went on. I'd highly recommend people do that so you don't go into it blind."*



# TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Regular training is essential to ensure you can carry out your duties safely and competently. Some training courses that you will undertake are compulsory and training venues may be outside of the Cambridgeshire area.

## INITIAL TRAINING

If you are selected to join Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, whatever your educational achievements, you and other new recruits will receive the same basic training, consisting of technical, practical and theoretical work.

The initial training will be held at our Training Centre in Huntingdon, over a 12 week period, consisting of a mixture of evening, weekend and day training and will cover training in breathing apparatus and firefighting techniques.

Once you have completed the initial training, you will then be an on-call firefighter and able to go out on 999 calls.

## TRAINING THROUGHOUT YOUR CAREER

To become fully trained you will need to go through a development training package, some of which will take place during drill nights and some will need to be undertaken in your own time. This normally takes 24 months to complete.

After successfully completing your 24 month development training you will have the opportunity to undertake courses, both internally and externally, including attending the Fire Service College in Gloucestershire, to broaden your existing knowledge of firefighting and rescue.

You will receive further training throughout your career to ensure that you are kept up to date with the latest technology and equipment.

## PROMOTION AND LONGER TERM CAREER PROSPECTS

There are several opportunities for promotion and you can begin to take on extra responsibilities involving having a more managerial role as a crew commander or watch commander. Within Cambridgeshire, career progression occurs as follows:







## **ANY** QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions that are not answered within this booklet, you can call Recruitment on 01480 444500 or go along to your local fire station's drill night and speak to the station commander.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING  
YOU AS A NEW RECRUIT SOON!**

# APPENDIX

## FIREFIGHTER JOB DESCRIPTION

Inform and educate your community to improve awareness of safety matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote safety matters to inform your community</li> <li>Facilitate learning through demonstration and instruction</li> </ul>
Take responsibility for effective performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take responsibility for personal performance</li> <li>Establish and maintain effective working relationships with people</li> <li>Develop your own skills to improve your performance</li> </ul>
Save and preserve endangered life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a search to locate life involved in incidents</li> <li>Rescue life involved in incidents</li> <li>Provide treatment to casualties</li> <li>Support people involved in rescue operations</li> </ul>
Resolve operational incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control and extinguish fires</li> <li>Resolve incidents other than those involving fire or hazardous materials</li> <li>Support people involved in an operational incident</li> </ul>
Protect the environment from the effects of hazardous materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate damage to the environment from hazardous materials</li> <li>Decontaminate people and property affected by hazardous materials</li> <li>Support people involved in hazardous materials incidents</li> </ul>
Support effectiveness of operational response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect information on risks in your community</li> <li>Collect information on resources in your community</li> <li>Maintain internal resources</li> </ul>
Support the development of colleagues in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate your own skills and knowledge to colleagues</li> <li>Support development of colleagues</li> </ul>
Contribute to fire safety solutions to minimise risks to your community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect premises to minimise risks to people, property and the environment</li> <li>Report on issues arising from an inspection</li> </ul>
Drive, manoeuvre and re-deploy fire service vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive vehicles to incidents</li> <li>Manoeuvre, site and re-deploy vehicles</li> </ul>

## FIREFIGHTER PERSON SPECIFICATION

Personal Style	Commitment to diversity and integrity	Understands and respects diversity and adopts a fair and ethical approach to others
	Openness to change	Is open to change and actively seeks to support it
	Confidence and resilience	Maintains a confident and resilient attitude in highly challenging situations
Interpersonal Skills	Working with others	Works effectively with others both within the Fire and Rescue Service and in the community
	Effective communication	Communicates effectively both orally and in writing
	Commitment to development	Committed and able to develop self and others
Working with Information	Problem solving	Understands, recalls, applies and adapts relevant information in an organised, safe and systematic way
	Situational awareness	Maintains an active awareness of the environment to promote safe and effective working
Organisational Effectiveness	Commitment to excellence	Adopts a conscientious and proactive approach to work to achieve and maintain excellent standards
	Planning and implementing	N/A
	Political/organisational awareness	N/A



Please see our website  
[www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk)  
for the most up to date information



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**  
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