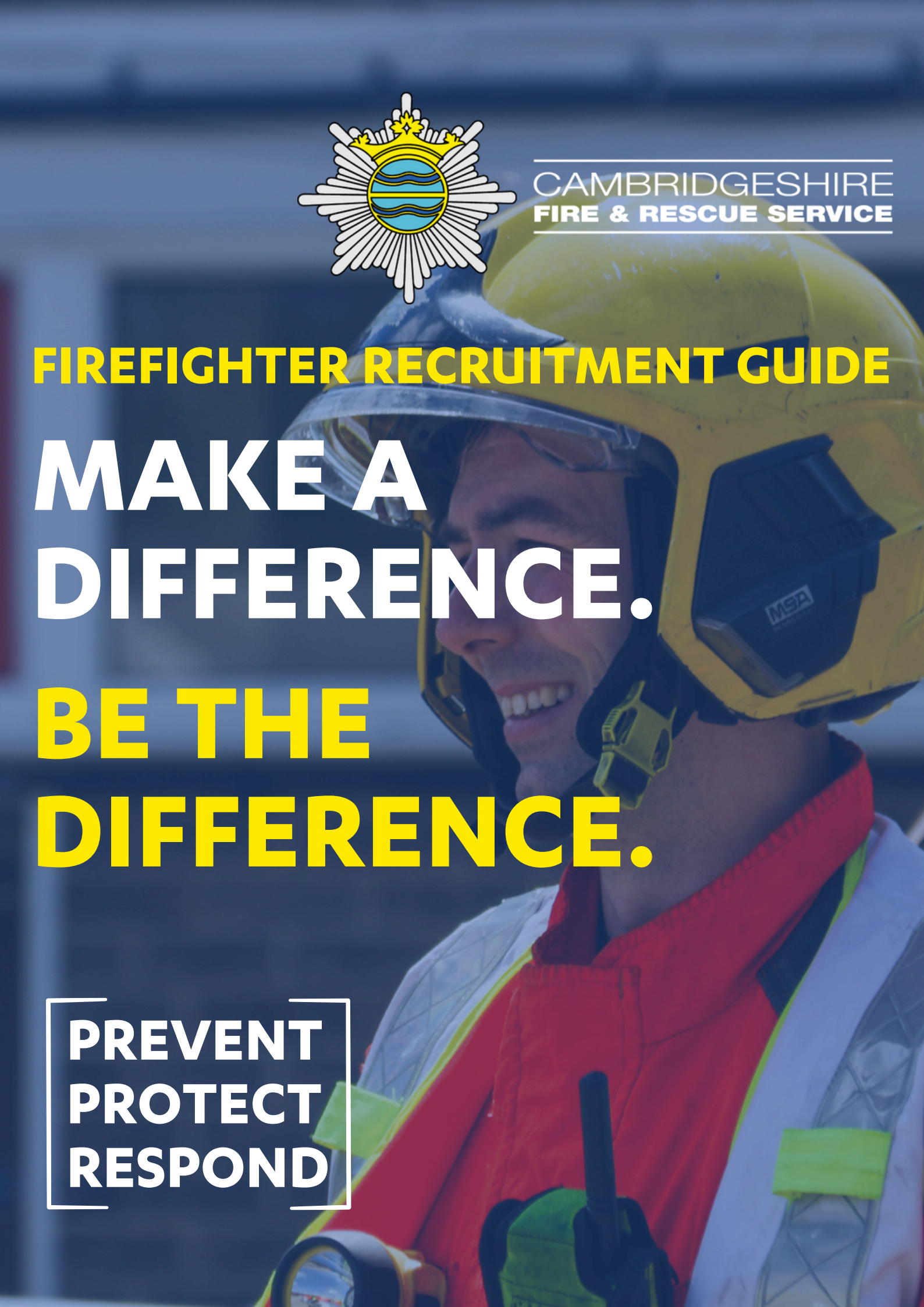

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT GUIDE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
BE THE DIFFERENCE.
PREVENT
PROTECT
RESPOND

A message from our **Chief Fire Officer**



Thank you for considering a role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

At CFRS, our purpose is simple and meaningful: to protect, prevent, and respond. Whether you're working on the frontline or in a professional support role, this shared mission connects every member of our team. It's what drives us to keep communities safe, reduce risk, and be there when it matters most.

Being part of CFRS, regardless of the role you play, is more than responding to emergencies. It's about making a difference every day, being part of something bigger and contributing to a Service that people trust and value.

We're proud of the culture we've built. In our most recent engagement survey, 88% of our people said they're proud to work for CFRS, and 84% agreed that everyone is welcome. Our teams describe the organisation as welcoming, supportive, and inclusive and we work hard to make that a reality, every day, for everyone.

People join CFRS for different reasons - whether it's a desire to help others, give back to the community, develop new skills, or be part of a close-knit team. Whatever your motivation, you'll find a place here where your contribution matters and where you're supported to grow and thrive.

If you share our commitment to protecting people, preventing harm, and responding with care and professionalism, we'd be proud to have you as part of our team.

Matthew Warren



Chief Fire Officer

Our values

Being part of CFRS means joining a team that cares — about the work we do, the people we serve, and each other.
Our Service Values of Welcoming, Respectful and Professional are not just words. They shape how we treat one another, how we serve our communities, and how we carry out our work each day.

We welcome difference, treat people with respect, and take pride in doing things properly. Whether you're responding to an emergency, delivering fire prevention advice, or supporting others behind the scenes, these values guide how we protect people, prevent harm, and respond when it matters most.
If our values connect with you and you're looking for a career where your contribution matters, you'll thrive in a role that's built on trust, respect, and purpose.



What we do

At CFRS, our purpose is clear and powerful: to protect people, prevent harm and respond when we're needed most. It's more than a saying — it shapes everything we do.

- Protect – We work with our communities to identify and reduce risks, safeguard vulnerable people, and support resilience across homes, businesses, and public spaces.
- Prevent – Through education and outreach, we aim to stop incidents before they happen — from fire safety visits to road safety campaigns and community engagement.
- Respond – When emergencies do happen, we act swiftly and professionally — whether it's fires, road traffic collisions, floods, or other incidents.

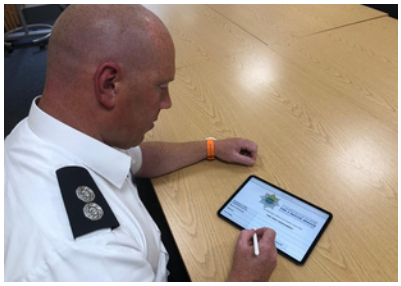
This purpose unites everyone at CFRS — from firefighters on the frontline to those behind the scenes. No matter your role, you'll be helping to deliver a trusted public service that saves lives, reduces harm, and supports our communities to thrive.



Prevent

We're always available to respond if there's an emergency, we want to stop fires from happening in the first place. Our community safety work is a priority and we help those most at risk of a fire in the home.

Protect



It's not just in the home where fire safety is important. All non-domestic premises by law must have fire risk assessments carried out by the owners or a responsible person. This is to ensure that employees and any visitors are as protected as they can be from fire and that they could evacuate safely.

Respond

Our crews of highly trained firefighters are ready to respond when needed — not just to fires, but to a wide range of emergencies. Each year, we attend around 1,500 fires, 400 road traffic collisions, and over 600 other incidents, including flooding, animal rescues, chemical spills, and water rescues.
Firefighters are trained and equipped to handle whatever comes their way.



A career as a firefighter

Being a Firefighter is so much more than putting out fires. It's about protecting people, preventing harm, and making a real difference in the community—every single day.
You don't need to be the strongest, the fastest, or have a background in emergency services. What matters most is your commitment, resilience, and a desire to give something back. We'll give you the training, support, and skills you need to succeed.

Make a difference

Being a firefighter is about keeping people safe — at home, on the road, and in their communities. Whether you're responding to emergencies, helping someone in a time of crisis, or offering fire safety advice during a home visit, you'll be making a genuine difference every single day.
It's a role built on trust, teamwork and public service — and it's one of the most rewarding careers you can choose.

Variety and impact

No two days are ever the same. One day you might be responding to a road traffic collision or a house fire. The next, you could be helping a vulnerable person stay safe at home, supporting flood response, or delivering fire safety workshops in schools.

A career with purpose

This isn't just a job — it's a career. As a firefighter, you'll gain lifesaving and life-changing skills and have access to ongoing development that helps you grow both professionally and personally. From fire safety to community education, from rescue techniques to leadership, the opportunities to learn are wide-ranging and meaningful.
Whether you stay on the frontline or take on specialist or leadership roles in future, CFRS offers a stable, rewarding path where your contribution matters — every day.



Hannah

Station Commander

Hannah has been been part of our team for nearly 20 years. Having attended a 'Have A Go' event, which sparked her interest, she is now a Station Commander at Ely Fire Station and a mum to three children.

"Before I became a firefighter, I worked as cabin crew at London Gatwick Airport, so it was a very different career. Joining the Service was something that I had considered in the back of my mind but didn't want to go for it until I was ready to settle down and had been travelling".

"When you get onto the fire station you realise that people come from all walks of life - whether that's different genders, builds or fitness levels, but everyone has a part to play in the watch. There's a great level of camaraderie, it's like an extended family"

As your career progresses, you'll find stability and growth and while you can't put a price on doing work that truly matters, it's one of the most rewarding things about a career as a firefighter.

Salary

Starting £30, 384

Competent £38, 881

Benefits



We offer family friendly policies to help you balance work and family life.



You'll get 33 days holiday plus bank holidays, giving you time to rest, recharge, and spend time with those who matter most.



Your wellbeing matters — with access to counselling, an employee assistance program and dedicated support whenever you need it.



You'll be enrolled in a generous firefighter pension scheme, helping you plan confidently for the future.



From day one, you'll have access to ongoing learning, development, and progression opportunities to help you grow throughout your career.



100'S of discounts for those working in the emergency services



cycle to work scheme



free eye tests



dental plan



use of gym on station

What we look for

There's no such thing as a 'typical firefighter'.

We welcome people from all backgrounds, experiences and walks of life because the communities we serve are diverse and we believe our teams should be too.
You don't need to be the strongest, the fastest, or have any emergency services experience.

What matters most is your attitude, values and potential.

We're looking for people who:

- Care about others and want to make a difference
- Are calm under pressure and willing to learn new skills
- Can work well in a team and communicate clearly
- Are ready to challenge themselves physically and mentally
- Show respect, professionalism and a commitment to doing the right thing - all the time

Becoming a firefighter takes tenacity, resilience and hard work and it's not always easy — but it's always worth it.



What our people say

"I have worked with some great people within each role who all bring different backgrounds or skills to the workplace. No matter what job you do in the service they all contribute to making a difference to people within our communities and on occasion that difference can be life or death".
Vicky

"Different people will see things in different ways and respond in different ways. Nobody's perfect but you learn and develop together".
Stocker

"Firefighting is about commitment, passion and drive rather than your size. If you've got those qualities, it doesn't matter what size or shape you are. Flexibility is also something you need to be and you have to be emotionally aware in this job".
Simon

The recruitment process

The early stages of the recruitment process are completed online and are designed to check if candidates meet the entry requirements and assess the qualities and behaviours needed to succeed as a firefighter at CFRS.



These assessments will be managed on behalf of CFRS by HR Solutions Hub - a provider with expertise in delivering fair and professional recruitment tools. They administer the tests through a secure platform, ensuring a consistent experience for every applicant.



Using an external provider helps us ensure the process is objective, consistent, and fair for everyone applying. If you need support or adjustments to complete any part of the process, before you start - we're here to help - just get in touch.

To complete the assessments successfully, you'll need access to a laptop, tablet or computer, and a reliable internet connection.

Stage 1



Registration

You'll begin by registering your details on our online system. This gets you set up for the rest of the process so make sure your contact information is correct and complete. A lot of the recruitment journey, including some of the assessments and communication, takes place online, so please check your emails regularly throughout the process.

Stage 2

Essential Criteria checklist

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. However, because of the demands of the role, there are a few essential criteria you'll need to meet to progress in the process:

- You must be 18 years or over by the time your training course begins. There is no upper age limit.
- You must have the right to work in the UK.
- Live within 20 miles of Cambridgeshire's boundary (as determined by our mapping system)
- You must hold a full UK manual driving licence. If you're currently learning, you can still apply — but you must pass your driving test before your start date.
- You will need to meet the required level of physical fitness and are medically fit to safely carry out the duties of a firefighter.
- Be able to swim, including: jumping or diving into deep water, swim 50m in under 70 seconds, swim 100m continuously, dive to the bottom of the pool, tread water for 30 seconds and climb out unaided.
- You have five GCSEs (A-C / 4-9), including Maths and English, or an equivalent qualification.

Qualifications

Not sure if your qualifications meet the criteria? Check with an education provider or careers service.

UK Qualification Reference Statement

UK ENIC or Contact Us | National Careers Service.

Stage 3

Online Assessment If you meet the eligibility criteria, you'll be invited to complete a series of online assessments. You don't need previous experience to successfully complete these assessments, just your full attention and a quiet environment to complete the tests.

You'll need to successfully complete all online assessments to progress to the next stage of the process, but don't worry, you'll have the opportunity to practice by completing simulated tests.

Stage 4

Fitness and swim assessment

After successfully completing the online assessments, you'll be invited to attend in-person assessments. These include two key physical evaluations that you must complete to move forward in the recruitment process.

1.Fitness Tests:

You'll complete a fitness assessment to make sure you're ready for the physical demands of being a firefighter. The test we use is the Chester Treadmill Walking Test — a nationally recognised assessment specifically designed for fire and rescue services. More information about the treadmill test can be found here.

2.Swimming Test:

At CFRS our wholetime firefighters receive Level 3 in-water rescue training. That means they're prepared to carry out rescues in fast-moving or deep water, often in challenging and high-pressure situations. To make sure you're ready for this part of the role, we need you to demonstrate strong swimming ability and confidence in the water during the recruitment process.

Stage 5

Practical firefighter assessment & personal statement

This is one of the most exciting stages of the recruitment process - a hands-on opportunity to experience what it's really like to be a firefighter. The physical tests are designed to reflect real-life firefighting situations and give you the chance to demonstrate your ability, technique, and determination.

You'll be guided through a series of practical tasks, including:

- Ladder climb - showing your confidence at height
- Ladder lift - lift and lower a fire service ladder to demonstrate upper body strength, coordination, and safe manual handling technique
- Casualty evacuation - dragging a weighted dummy to safety
- Equipment carry - moving fire kit over a set distance
- Enclosed space test - navigating through a dark, confined area
- Equipment assembly - putting together a piece of firefighting equipment

We'll share key information before the assessment, and we encourage you to watch the videos on our website about the Occupational Ability Tests - Occupational Ability Tests and Exercises

Personal statement.

If you've successfully completed the ability tests, we'll ask you to tell us why you want to become a firefighter.

Think about:

- What draws you to the role of firefighter?
- Why do you want to be part of a Service that protects, prevents, and responds?
- How do our values — Welcoming, Respectful, Professional — resonate with you?
- What impact do you hope to make in the communities we serve?

Be honest, be specific, and help us understand the difference you want to make — and why you believe CFRS is the place to do it.

Stage 6

Final Assessment

If you pass the physical tests, you'll be invited to take part in an interview and job-related exercises. These are designed to explore how you think, communicate, and work with others — not just what you know. We want to understand how you might respond to real-life situations and whether you demonstrate the values and behaviours that reflect who we are as a Service.

The final assessment will focus on:

·Our Service Values - Our values and behaviours

·The National Firefighter Code of Ethics - Core Code Of Ethics - NFCC

·How you would approach real-life situations with the mindset and behaviours expected of a firefighter

We're looking for people who bring the right mindset - individuals who are respectful, inclusive, committed to learning, and focused on serving their community.

It's not about having firefighting experience - it's about whether your behaviours and attitudes align with ours.

Stage 7

Medical exam and eye test

If you pass the final assessments, you'll be invited to a medical with our Occupational Health Team. You'll complete a medical history questionnaire, followed by a series of checks to make sure you're fit and ready for the role. With your consent, we may also contact your GP for further information if needed.



The medical assessment includes:

- Vision and hearing tests
- Lung function assessment
- General health and fitness checks

Stage 8

Pre-employment checks

Before you officially join CFRS, we need to complete a few final checks to confirm your suitability for the role. This stage is essential to ensure the safety, integrity, and professionalism of our workforce and your cooperation is key. To avoid delays, please be ready to provide:

- Five years of employment, education or character references
- Proof of your right to live and work in the UK
- Completion of an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check

These checks help us make sure that everyone who joins CFRS meets the highest standards of trust and reliability — qualities at the heart of our commitment to protect, prevent and respond.

Please ensure you respond promptly when asked for information — it helps keep the process moving and brings you one step closer to starting your firefighter journey.





Thank you for your interest in joining Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

We're proud to be a Service that values dignity, respect, and equal opportunity for all. If you have any conditions — whether diagnosed or not — that may affect any part of the recruitment process, please let us know. This could include physical or mental health conditions, or anything related to neurodiversity.

Sharing this information is completely confidential and will not affect how your application is assessed. It simply helps us ensure that any reasonable adjustments can be made to support you through the process.

We understand the recruitment journey is detailed and can take time, but it's designed to prepare you for one of the most rewarding careers there is.

We wish you the very best of luck. If you're successful, you won't just be joining a Service — you'll be joining a team that makes a real difference every day.

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BE THE DIFFERENCE.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Working together to improve community safety