



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority
MAKING YOU SAFER
PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING
WWW.BUCKSFIRE.GOV.UK



COUNCIL TAX



2007-2008



Who we are

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service serves a population of more than 700,000 in the areas covered by Buckinghamshire County Council and Milton Keynes Council.

It is run by Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority, which has 17 members – 12 councillors from Buckinghamshire County Council and five from Milton Keynes Council.

You can count on us to respond to your 999 call for help in an emergency – and we are working harder than ever to prevent you from having fires and accidents in the first place! In short, we aim to make you safer through **PREVENTION**, **PROTECTION** and **RESPONSE**.

Our priorities are to:

- Reduce risk to life, property, our heritage and the environment by working in partnership with key agencies to promote awareness and responsibility. This will be achieved by balancing the provision of prevention, protection and response services.
- Have a healthy, flexible, diverse, skilled and motivated workforce.
- Review and improve our performance continuously.
- Maintain a continuing professional response to all operational emergencies.
- Deliver these priorities cost-effectively.



SAFETY TIP: Smoke alarms save lives – but only if they work. Test your smoke alarms once a week. Push the button, not your luck.

What happens to your money

This year we will spend £26,362,000 (£37.30 per head of population) on providing services to you.

- £1,613,000 (£2.28 per head of population) will come from Government grant.
- £9,613,000 (£13.60 per head of population) will come from business rates.
- £14,972,000 (£21.18 per head of population) will come from council tax.
- £164,000 (24p per head of population) will come from reserves.

Our budget for this year is 4.86 per cent higher than last year's. To fund the essential improvements we need to make, we have had to increase the rate at which our share of your council tax is charged by 4.95 per cent. Our charge to a band D council tax payer is £52.33 for the year. This is an increase of £2.47 on last year, when your council tax contributed £14,046,000 to our budget of £25,140,000.

What it's spent on:

	2006-2007	2007-2008
Employees	£21,004,720	£21,772,780
Premises	£719,289	£740,868
Transport	£2,238,715	£2,305,876
Supplies and services ...	£1,918,204	£2,265,426
Cross-border charges	£107,692	£60,923
Capital charges	£910,488	£1,028,008
Income	-£1,759,108	-£1,811,881
TOTAL	£25,140,000	£26,362,000

This year's budget allows for the pay award and inflation (£748,000) and additional community safety initiatives. We need to:

- Provide our workforce with the skills they need in today's modern fire and rescue service (£119,000)
- Expand the vital fire prevention, fire safety and road safety work we are doing in partnership to reduce injuries and deaths from fire and other incidents (£112,000)
- Continue with the long-term modernisation of the service required by the Government (£243,000)

Our total borrowing figure for 2006-2007 was £6,452,000.

We currently employ a total of 709 staff, including 296 wholtime firefighters, 192 retained firefighters, 23 emergency control room staff and more than 100 people who work in a variety of support services, including community safety, fire safety, workshops, finance, human resources and corporate planning.

Fighting fires is only part of the work of the modern-day service. Releasing people trapped in vehicles after collisions and dealing with chemical spills make up an increasing proportion of our work. Changing political and environmental conditions mean that we need to be ready to tackle major incidents such as natural disasters and terrorist attacks.



SAFETY TIP: Do take care in the kitchen – never cook if you have come back from a night out and are tired or have been drinking.



SAFETY TIP: If in doubt, get out, stay out and call us out by ringing 999. Things and buildings can be replaced – but people can't.

Making you safer

2006 factfile

Aged 65 or over?

Living alone?

On benefits?

- If you have answered “Yes” to any of these questions, we can help make you safer.
- Let us carry out a **FREE** safety check to help you minimise the risk of a fire.
- It’s a basic assessment of the fire risks in your home, carried out by our staff.
- It takes about 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the size of your home. We will need you to be present to answer a few questions for us.
- We will fit **FREE** 10-year smoke alarms where necessary.
- Ring us on **01296 744477** or email us at **cs@bucksfire.gov.uk** and we will arrange a convenient time to come and see you to carry out the check.
- To find out more, please visit our website at **www.bucksfire.gov.uk**
- Please don’t put this off – do something about it now!

- During the year we have completed 5,304 Home Fire Risk Checks – basic assessments of the fire risks in people’s homes – and installed 7,947 smoke alarms.
- We received 20,756 emergency calls, of which 9,903 required attendance at emergency incidents.
- Around 1,300 people aged between 15 and 24 attended Live & Learn road safety presentations at local schools and colleges.
- We have successfully put 24 newly-recruited firefighters through the first phase of their training.
- We recruited a fire investigation dog and handler to help investigate fires believed to have been started deliberately.
- Diligent and effective partnership working by our Arson Intelligence Officer helped secure the arrest and conviction of a serial hoax 999 caller.
- Representatives of 240 schools attended free presentations to help them assess and manage the fire risks at their premises.
- We achieved significant reductions in the number of false alarms generated by automatic fire detection systems – a 25 per cent reduction at the “top” 50 sites.



SAFETY TIP: Before you go to bed, switch off and unplug all your non-essential electrical items and make sure your doors are closed.



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