



LFB Hillingdon Performance Review

A Comparison of LFB Hillingdon with
its Family Group

Prepared by Borough Commander Phil Butler

25th August 2014

1 Introduction

This document has been produced for the London Borough of Hillingdon's External Services Scrutiny Committee and the information relates to the rolling 12 months up to and include July 2014. It compares the data to that experienced by the other London Borough's that are members of the same 'family' group. Hillingdon is in a family group that comprises: Barnet, Bexley, City, Havering, Merton and Redbridge. The LFB grouped these boroughs together on the basis that their performance is broadly similar overall and therefore they may be compared with each other to identify adverse or positive trends. Please note the City of London's performance is an exception to the general rule referred to above.

The aim of the report is to inform key stakeholders of the borough's performance in relation to key performance indicators and targets in support of the London Safety Plan 5 (LSP 5). An appendix highlights the current targets fire crews are working to achieve in the borough for 2014-15. The report is designed to allow key stakeholders to easily recognise the successes and challenges associated with the LFB activities and enable them to raise questions with the Borough Commander.

2 Community Engagement

To the end of July 2014 fire crews in Hillingdon spent 13.1% of their time conducting community safety activities within the borough against a target of 12%. These activities were carried out in support of the following community safety initiatives:

- Arson Reduction
- Unwanted Calls Reduction
- Home Fire Safety
- Road Safety

Other community safety work is being carried out by the LFB Schools Team and the LFB's NW Area Community Safety Team based at Hillingdon Fire Station. Partnership work with Heathrow Airport and other high risk locations continues to ensure there are effective contingency plans in place in the case of an emergency requiring the attendance of the fire service. The LFB continues to work in partnership with a number of organisations and key stakeholders. In particular, during the last 12 months the LFB initiated the Vulnerable Persons Panel with the support of the LB Hillingdon and Safeguarding Adults Partnership. The Panel is chaired by the LFB and aims to deal with vulnerable people who fall outside of the criteria set for Safeguarding referrals, e.g. people at risk due to their lifestyle. Other partnerships that the LFB participate in are listed below:

- Unsuitable Accommodation (Beds in Sheds) Group.
- Junior Citizens Partnership
- Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
- Safer Hillingdon Partnership (and Implementation Group)
- Travellers Forum
- Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

3 Arson Reduction

3.1 Arson

Arson is perhaps the most recognisable crime with which the LFB are associated. During the last rolling 12 months the borough has continued to experience a decrease in the number of arson incidents despite periodic spikes in activity due to an arsonist who sets fire to car number plates and private garden sheds and garages. Successful partnership work with the Metropolitan Police and the Safer Neighbourhoods teams continues to tackle these sporadic outbreaks of arson, which have resulted in arrests but to date have not resulted in prosecutions due to the difficulties in obtaining evidence associated with such criminal activity.

In 2013-14 the LFB attended 195 arson incidents whereas the LFB have attended 175 incidents for the last rolling 12 months. This will represent a 10.26% reduction if it is maintained until the end of 2014-15 and result in the borough achieving a stretch target. In the last LFB report the statistics clearly demonstrated that arson in Hillingdon was a level above comparator boroughs, however, the current data shows that we have reduced arson in the borough to levels redolent of other borough's in the family group.

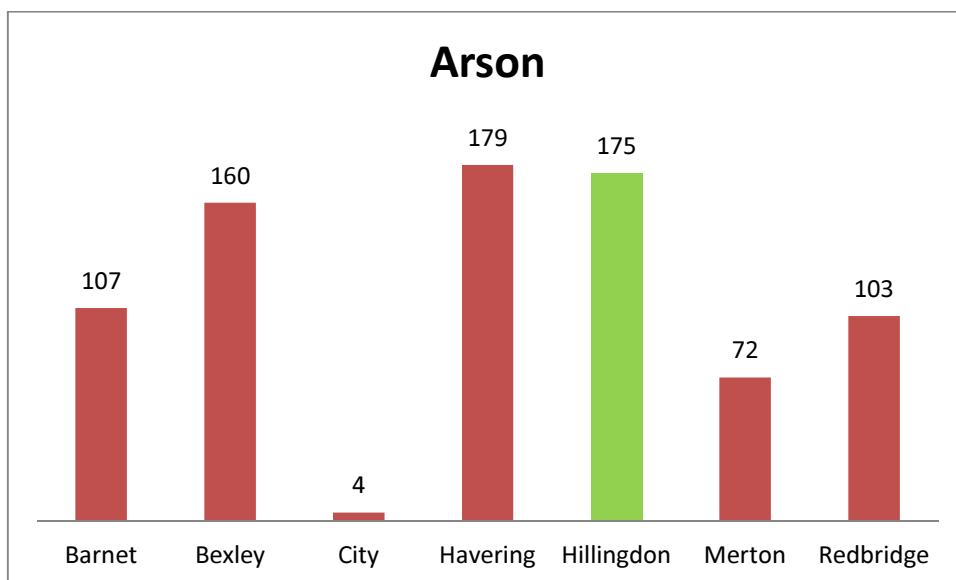


Figure 1 Arson August 2013 – July 2014

Arson hot spots in the borough are reflected in the graph below which highlights the wards in the borough where the LFB have attended 5 or more arson incidents. The most prevalent is in Botwell Ward where the car number plate arsonist(s) is most prevalent.

Figure 3 (below) breaks down arson into the top 10 types of property most affected. This highlights that vehicles are more likely to be involved in arson than any other type of property; and arson involving rubbish or refuse is second only to that.



Figure 2 Arson by Ward August 2013 – July 2014

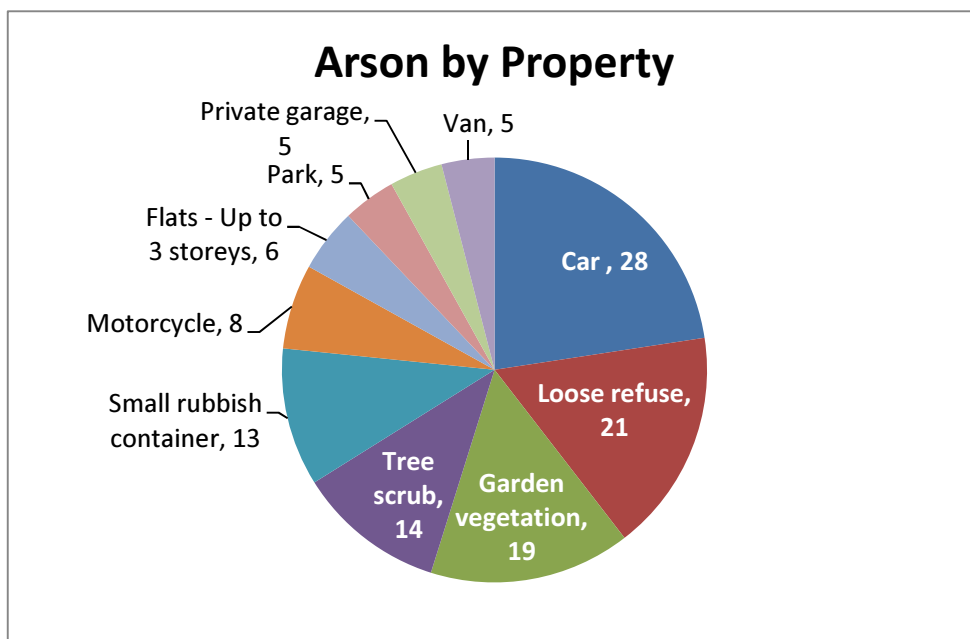


Figure 3 Arson by Property Type August 2013 – July 2014

4 Unwanted Calls

4.1 Malicious Calls

Hoax or malicious calls have remained broadly static over the last three years. As such malicious call rates are monitored locally and interventions made only when a spike in calls is identified.

One on-going initiative is that of the LFB Schools Team and fire crews who visit the borough's primary schools and educate the children about the risks associated with making a hoax call to the LFB or any other emergency service.

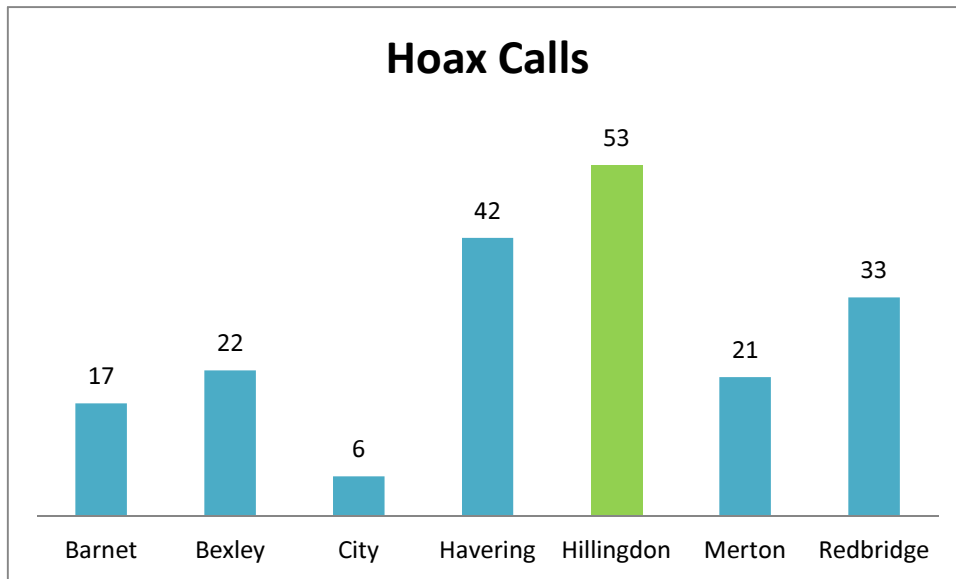


Figure 4 Malicious Calls August 2013 – July 2014

4.2 People Shut in Lifts

Until recently the LFB for many years routinely attended calls to release people stuck in defective lifts. Over the rolling 12 months the LFB have attended 44 such calls (see figure 5). Over the last two years the LFB introduced charges for releasing people from such lifts on the third occasion and above. Prior to this much work was done by local LFB officers with the managers or owners of the premises that experienced the highest volume of calls. Consequently there has been a dramatic reduction in the LFB's attendances with the corresponding reduction in risk to members of the public caused by a fire engine travelling to an emergency (see figure 6).

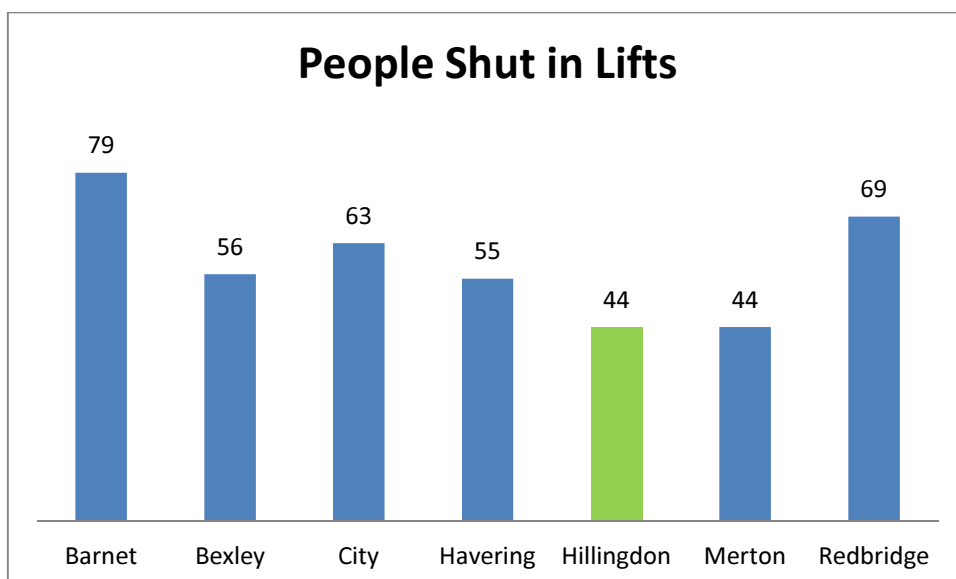


Figure 5 People Shut in Lifts Calls August 2013 – July 2014

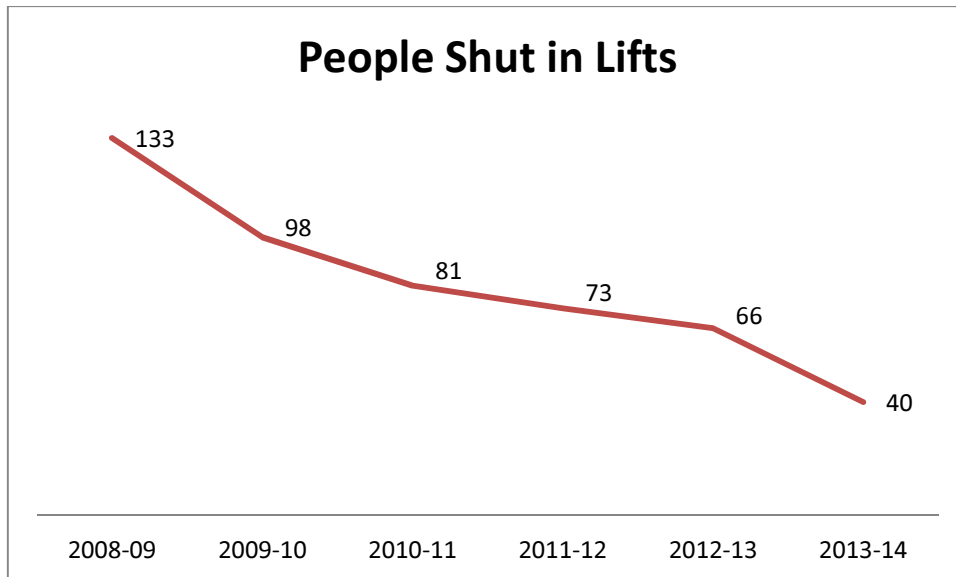


Figure 6 Reduction in People Shut in Lifts Calls 2008 – 2014 in Hillingdon

4.3 Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Calls to Non-Dwellings

Until the introduction of LSP 5 the LFB for many years routinely attended calls to automatic fire alarms actuating in non-dwellings, i.e. industrial, commercial, retail, etc. properties. Over the rolling 12 months the LFB have attended 975 such calls (see figure 7). The majority of these relate to Heathrow Airport and its surrounding hotels. However, LSP 5 introduced charges for attending the same premises on the 10th occasion and above. Prior to this much work was done by the Station Manager at Heathrow and the borough's Fire Safety team with the Airport Fire Service, Heathrow Airport Limited and hotels, to reduce the calls. This included the transfer of the attendance to such calls to the Airport Fire Service which was introduced in February of this year. Thus the benefit to the LFB has yet to be quantified in full, however, AFA calls are down from 269 in Q1 of 2013-14 to 161 in Q1 of this year, representing a 40% reduction.

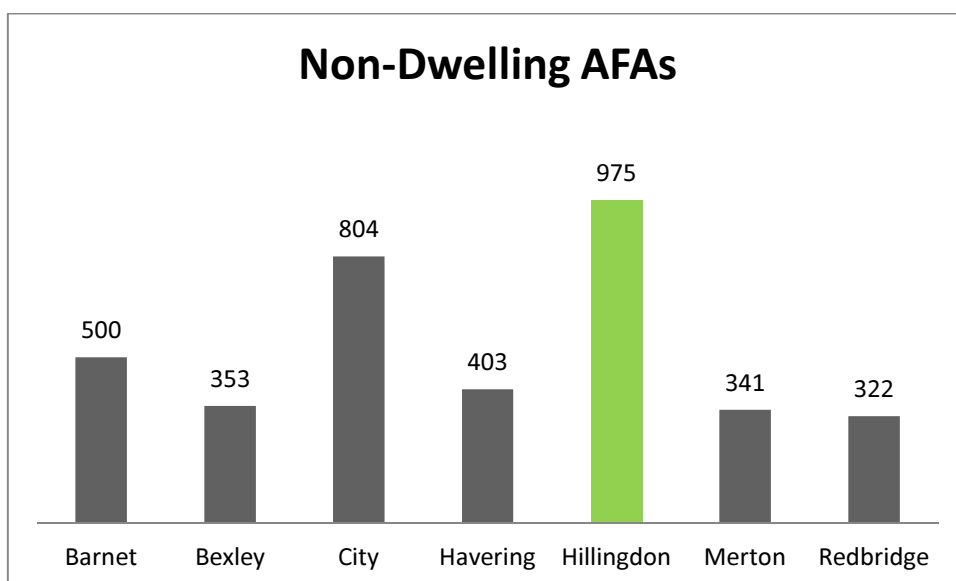


Figure 7 People Shut in Lifts Calls August 2013 – July 2014

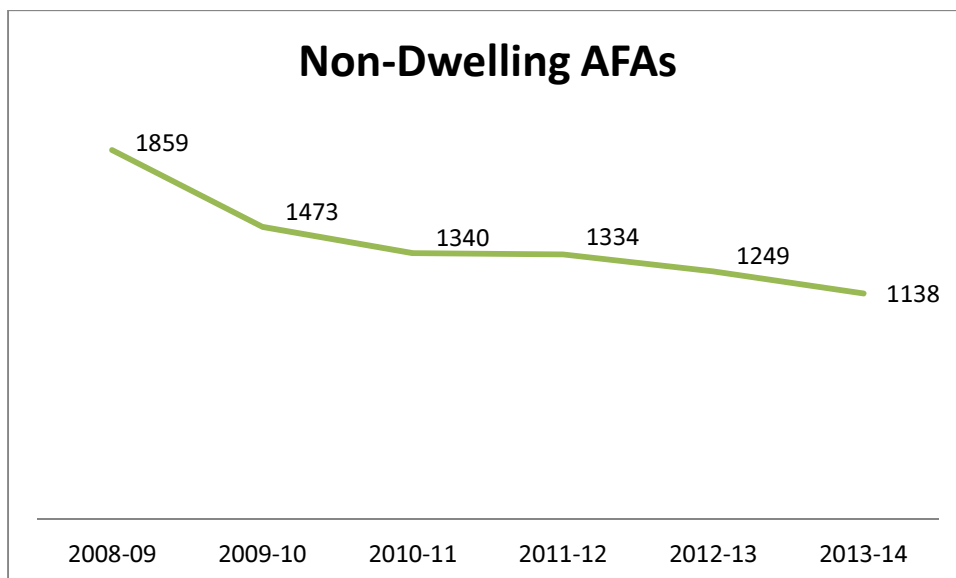


Figure 8 Reduction in Non-Dwelling AFA Calls 2008 – 2014 in Hillingdon

5 Home Fire Safety

The fire crews in Hillingdon carry out free Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) across the borough not only to prevent Hillingdon’s residents from having a fire in their home, but also to influence their behaviour when confronted with a fire to ensure their safety. A significant proportion of time is concentrated in locations that are known to experience such fires and/or those locations identified as hosting an at risk population, e.g. people with mobility problems, who are statistically more likely to experience a fire in their homes, and who may not be able to react in a timely manner. For the rolling 12 months, 2687 HFSVs have been completed against a target of 2400 and of these 90% took place in the homes of our vulnerable residents, which is 10% above the rate achieved at the end of last year. Despite this good work, 2 people sadly died and 24 people were injured as a result of a fire in their home.

Consequently, the goal of reducing all fires occurring in people’s homes remains a challenge (see figure 9). Over the last two years a small number of HFSV partnerships have been initiated with key providers of services to vulnerable people, e.g. those with mental health conditions. Consequently for 2014-15 the Borough Commander has set a target for 20% of all HFSVs carried out in the borough to be as a result of a referral from a local partnership. Currently, dwelling fires have reduced slightly with 154 attended in the rolling 12 months compared to 160 for 2013 – 14.

The above the LFB are promoting the installation of automatic fire suppression systems including misting devices and sprinklers in the homes of vulnerable people. The LB Hillingdon subsequently installed sprinkler systems in two of its premises for such people, however, with the cost of such systems being as low as £2000 for a portable device, the LFB will continue to lobby the LB Hillingdon and others to fit automatic suppression devices in their properties. Not only are there the economic savings from the consequences of a fire developing in the properties, they demonstrably save lives.

The LFB are also developing partnership working in 2014-15 with the LB Hillingdon’s ‘Beds in Sheds ‘ and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) team. Unsuitable accommodation caused the

death of one resident in the rolling 12 months and is a significant challenge for all partners due to the limited legislative powers available to them to deal with rogue landlords.

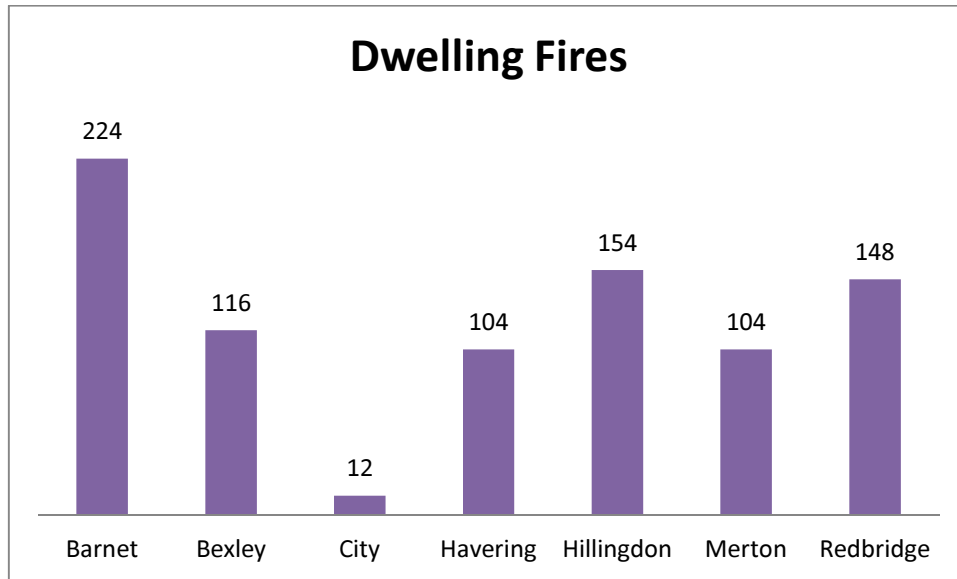


Figure 9 Dwelling Fires August 2013 – July 2014

6 Road Safety

In 2013-14 the LFB in partnership with the LB Hillingdon, London Ambulance Service and the Metropolitan Police delivered the first Save Drive Stay Alive road safety event at the Winston Churchill Hall in Ruislip. The event is aimed at Year 12's who are either just starting to drive, thinking about driving for the first time, or more likely, being driven by people who have just learnt to drive. The event lasts for approximately 90 minutes and deliberately plays on the emotions of the students to make the key safe drive messages more memorable. Work has already begun on delivering the event again in 2014-15.

7 Summary

At the end of 2013-14 the LFB in Hillingdon was the highest performing borough in the LFB and at the time of writing, continues to be so. The information above clearly highlights our overall performance compares favourably with that of the boroughs in our Family Group and shows substantial improvements in reducing our attendance to arson incidents and unwanted calls. There has also been a small improvement in reducing calls to fires in people's homes, but this is countered by 2 fire deaths and 24 injuries. However, all this success was achieved in a rolling 12 months that saw the loss of a fire engine from Hayes and a senior manager's post; and a prolonged industrial dispute. Which is a testimony to the dedication and professionalism of all LFB staff in Hillingdon.

Appendices:

Appendix 1

Targets for 2014-15:

Target		Stretch Target
Primary fires – injuries (excl. prec. checks)	18	17
Arson incidents (all deliberate fires)	272	209
Dwelling fires - all	149	139
All outdoor rubbish fires	196	164
Fires in care homes / sheltered housing	11	N/A
HFSV by LFB staff - volume	2400	N/A
P1 HFSVs - high risk people/ places (%)	80%	N/A
Time spent by station staff on CFS	13%	N/A
Non-domestic primary fires in Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order properties	90	79
AFA's - non dwelling buildings	1205	995
People shut in lift releases	51	45