

The Fire Brigades Union



Tragedy, Loss, Hope, Help



The rescue
role of the Fire
Service told for
the first time

Tragedy, loss, hope, help, rescue and survival: new figures show for first time the key role of fire service rescues



Emergencies of all kinds can bring tragedy and loss. But there is also hope, help, rescue and survival.

Over 300 (322) people a week are being rescued from fires and road vehicle crashes by the fire service across the UK, according to figures the Fire Brigades Union has made public for the first time in this report.

The total number of people rescued by the fire service will be much larger, because some figures such as those rescued from flooding, water or the London terrorist attacks, are excluded.

More than 80,000 (83,668) people were rescued from fires and vehicle crashes across the UK between 2001 and 2005, and over 190,000 (190,629) since records began in 1990. The overall number of recorded rescues is at record or near record levels.

These figures, the most recent and reliable available, are based on answers to parliamentary questions, Freedom of Information Act questions and some historical data contained in the official UK fire statistics. While many rescues are recorded, central Government does not make the figures public.

And these official figures are an underestimate. They exclude members of the public evacuated with the assistance of the fire service for their own safety or assisted in other ways. They do not include thousands of other rescues performed by the UK's fire services at other emergencies including the 2007 floods, other water rescues and those rescued from the London Underground on 7/7, nor figures on rescues from a range of other 999 incidents.

The figures on rescues from road traffic collisions represent an absolute minimum, as they assume for England and Wales that one person only is rescued in every *road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the official measure) even though these Government figures include incidents involving multiple vehicles with one or more passengers.

More than 25,000 (25,551) people were rescued from fires across the UK in the five most recent years for which UK-wide data was available. More than 4,600 (4,605) people were rescued from fires in 2005 across the UK and in 2006 over 3,800 (3,845) people were rescued in England alone.

Crews rescued just under 60,000 (58,468) people from vehicles involved in road traffic collisions in the five years to 2005/6, when rescues peaked at just under 12,000 (11,946).

Everyone in the fire service knows there is terrible human tragedy behind all these incidents. Lives are lost as well as saved and families, friends and communities are left devastated.

These figures are not a celebration of the work of the fire service. But they do underline that there is hope, help, rescue and survival as well as tragedy and loss.

The fire service today is an all-round emergency response and rescue service. The figures illustrate why the public has such high confidence in the fire service.

They also underscore the importance of the frontline rescue capability in saving lives.

Across the UK fire crews are rescuing hundreds of people every week from a range of potentially lethal 999 emergencies.

It is now very clear that the 'fire' service is a critical all-round local emergency rescue service. Our emergency rescue role covers fires, but now extends much further into rope rescues, water rescues, building collapse, terrorist attacks, and a range of other emergency incidents.

Politicians searching for a model of a world-class public service need only look at the UK's fire and rescue service and what we deliver. The answer to that search is under their noses and has a 'Made in the UK' label on it.

As I have said before, the fire and rescue service is a service to be proud of, a service worth defending.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "M. Wrack". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary
Fire Brigades Union



Contents

Rescues in fire crews' own words.....	6
Rescues.....	22
Fire deaths.....	28
Regional breakdown	
● Scotland.....	29
● Wales.....	31
● Northern Ireland.....	33
● South West.....	36
● South East.....	39
● North West.....	42
● North East.....	45
● West Midlands.....	48
● East Midlands.....	51
● Yorkshire & Humberside.....	54
● East Anglia.....	57
● London.....	60
Methodology and caveats.....	62



*Fire crews during search and rescue operations
at Stockline, Glasgow, May 2004*

CREDIT: PA PHOTOS

Building collapse rescue (Stockline)

Glasgow, May 11 2004
14 appliances including a heavy rescue vehicle
Strathclyde
9 killed, 60 injured.

Firefighter John Allan, 31, of Blue Watch, Easterhouse station, Strathclyde FRS, with four years service, arrived at the collapsed plastics factory in the second wave. Two appliances and a heavy rescue vehicle from Maryhill station were already there. It was his first ever turnout.

“There was a huge number of us there. We weren’t sure what had happened and thought it may have been an explosion because the factory was destroyed. We could see casualties and hear them but couldn’t get them out. We couldn’t tell where the voids were in the rubble and how seriously injured the workers were.

“Very early on we were aware of fatalities. I assisted with the first fatality. We moved the body along a chain. I didn’t have time to dwell on it.

“We were constantly risk assessing who was in the rubble, asking for silence. Some people hadn’t been trained for that kind of incident but the chain of command was good and everyone was very focussed.

“I worked with more senior firefighters as we desperately tried to find the voids in the rubble. I was there ten hours – the search went on for five days. There were still two people missing when I went back on the second night. These two people turned out to be dead, but we didn’t treat them as fatalities, at all times it was a rescue operation.

“A friend of mine was working there at the time. He was injured but not trapped. He had a broken leg, cracked ribs and a broken collar-bone. I didn’t realise it was him till afterwards because there was so much dust on his face.

“When the last person was taken out the grim reality of my new job came home to me. It was a baptism of fire. My experienced colleagues really helped me. One guy who’d been in the service for over 27 years said it was the worst job he’d ever seen. We were offered counselling. On my watch we just talked about it amongst ourselves.

“I think I can probably cope with anything thrown at me now. It gave me a better idea of the group of guys I work with.”

Watch Commander, Andy Scott, 50, with 28 years service was the officer in charge at the incident.

“We came from Cowdaddens station and arrived at the factory around five minutes from the time of the call out, arriving at the same time as a Maryhill appliance.

“We had no idea what we were going to face. When we arrived at the front of the factory a huge cloud of what we thought was smoke, but was actually dust, had engulfed the factory. Loads of people were leaving what remained of the building, covered in dust, many with head wounds and other injuries.

“I immediately carried out a dynamic and operational risk assessment. I then entered the building to find a male trapped under some machinery and a woman stranded on the second floor, unable to get down.

“The whole back of the building was missing. Paramedic Jamie McGlinchey straight away told me there were two fatalities and many trapped. Some forty minutes into the incident Divisional Officer David Morrison declared it a major incident.

“There was risk of further collapse in one area in particular but we had to continue to try to find people. We were there for five hours and then returned the next day. I went on auto-pilot. My instincts took over.

“We did search and rescue, which was fairly new to us. It has an effect on you pulling out the bodies but you carry on and do your job. You deal with it.

“The firefighters didn’t want to let go, in spite of getting severely fatigued. They kept working and searching. They didn’t want to take breaks. If they were talking to someone in an air pocket they wanted to see them out.

“We learnt that our fire kit was unsuitable for that sort of work. We got too hot. You need the right clothing and you need to take breaks.”

Dwelling fire rescue

West Belfast, July 27 2007

3 pumps

Northern Ireland

Two teenage daughters were staying over with their father in his West Belfast flat when, in the early hours of the morning, he became aware of smoke seeping into the apartment. Opening the door he realised they couldn't get out as the stairwell was choked with dense black smoke.

Crew commander Stephen Abrol, 39, of the Springfield Road station, who was a temporary watch commander at the time arrived wearing breathing apparatus as control had relayed information about the smoke and had then remained talking to the man in the flat, trying to keep him calm.

"There were three floors to the block but the top floor flats were unoccupied. Someone had set fire to some discarded household appliances left on the communal landing. There was no way it was an accident. It was probably kids as the security lock to the main entrance didn't work and you could just walk in.

"We knew a family was trapped. A Cadogan crew was there before us, they were kitted out and had their hose reel jet ready.

"The family came to the window and I told them to stay where they were because they were trying to escape. Their panic was growing and we were aware that some of the door frames to the other flats had started to char. We went in there with the hose reel jet to try to find the fire and see who else was in there. There were three teams of two in there. It was a concrete structure, which was very hot and with so much smoke you could see nothing. We had to use touch and feel.

"By the time we ascertained no one else was in there, more smoke was coming into the flat and the family were now getting very agitated. So we got the ladder out and brought them out through the window. They were in shock and were given oxygen before being taken to friends.

"It was a text book incident. The doors held and the fire alarms worked. Our station does predominantly residential fires. When life is involved the urgency is upped a couple of degrees but sometimes we have to take a second to consider the route out. You don't want to miss anything. You tend to check everything twice when life is at risk."

Suzanne Fell, 41, talked to the father all the time, from initial call to rescue. With seventeen years in the service at the Lisburn control centre in County Antrim she knows the importance of transmitting calm down a phone line.

"The father was talking. The daughters were on an overnight stay from their mother. He was aware of the smoke before the alarms went off but he couldn't get out of the flat because the smoke in the communal hallway was too thick.

"He started off ok and then got progressively more panicky and began talking about jumping out the windows. We'd got them all in one room and told them to put a coat along the bottom of the door. We knew the firefighters were fairly close. We kept talking to him, using their names, trying to keep him calm and stop them unnecessarily jumping out the window and maybe breaking a leg or something.

"We get panicky calls from people whose grill pan has caught fire. People tend to panic quickly when fire is involved. A few minutes seems a long time to someone trapped who thinks they're going to be burnt alive.

"We had more than one person listening into the call to help out with advice because it can also seem a long time to the person on the phone in control.

"We kept the man talking until a firefighter was in the room with them.

"Luckily I've never been talking to anyone who's died. I have colleagues who have. But at the time you're concentrating on keeping them calm and in most cases we get them out."

A house fire
CREDIT: PA PHOTOS





Firefighter Martin Walker from Bexhill fire station, East Sussex, carrying a young boy he rescued from his top floor window, October 2000

CREDIT: CORBIS

Flood rescue

Uckfield and Lewes, Sussex, October 12, 2000
12 pumps
East Sussex

Over four feet of water engulfed East Sussex as the rivers Uck and Ouse burst their banks. Watch manager Martin Walker, 41, with 13 years service in the retained duty system at the Bexhill station had heard the weather forecast and got his first call at midnight.

“Our first rescue came around 6am. Two council workers had driven into some flood water not realising it was actually a river. Firefighter John Keen and I got the call saying the water was rising quite quickly. When we got there it was just getting light. They were on the roof of the lorry. One was completely terrified, as he couldn’t swim. We put on lifejackets, set up a rescue line and waded out to them. John had to reassure the scared one who clung to him as we got them out.

“From then on it was constant calls until ten thirty that night. I was supposed to be at work as manager of a wholesale warehouse. But they had seen the news and knew what was going on.

“We did many evacuations, a lot in in-shore lifeboats. Some people panicked, some were in shock, most

were completely devastated. I was soaked to the skin for the entire day. It was a bizarre sight. Cars, sheep, cattle – all came floating down the street.

“We only got new kit at 10.30pm which had been borrowed from all round the county. I spent most of the day in chest-high water.

“We didn’t have enough dry suits and I hadn’t had any water rescue training. So lessons were learnt that night.

“We had a central command point in Lewes but then that got flooded out. We took regular breaks but there was so much to be done. At the end of the day I was physically and mentally shattered. The constant adrenalin keeps you going but also wears you out. Crews were out for four days. I did 22 hours.

“The big thing to come out of this was the inadequacy of the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Now we have two of everything and it’s of a very high standard. For weeks after we got letters of thanks at HQ. We even got a letter from Tony Blair.

“When I got home I saw that picture of me carrying the young lad. He was called Alex Bell and was only 3 years old. I couldn’t get him out of the top floor window unless I let him wear my hat. He was overwhelmed by the whole day.”



***Khalid Obadele from Blue Watch, Euston Station, rescuing
a man from the Millennium Bridge, London, April 2007***

CREDIT: PICTURE COURTESY 'DAILY EXPRESS'



Bridge rescue

London, Millenium Bridge, April 23, 2007
5 pumps (2 fire rescue units) and a fire brigade boat
London

A man was threatening to throw himself off the Millenium Bridge in central London when firefighter Khalid Obadele, 47, from Blue Watch at Euston station arrived on the scene.

“A policeman had been trying to talk him down for an hour and a half before we got there. The man was shouting ‘London is shit’, ‘everybody’s racist’ and said he was going to kill himself.

“My machine is a specialist Fire Rescue Unit. We’ve got heavy cutting gear, jacks for tube trains, gas suits, line rescue, hydraulics and air bags, and monitors for dangerous substances. We’re also water specialists. There are 12 such units in London.

“One crew got there ahead of us but it just seemed to happen that I was the one to attach the line and I shouted at the guy that I was coming over to him. I told him my name and tried to calm him down, as he was very agitated.

“I crawled over to him, telling him I wasn’t going to

argue with him and held out my hand. He didn’t take it so I said I was going to go back to the bridge. When he turned away from me I grabbed him. Even though I couldn’t get the harness on him, because I had hold of him, he couldn’t jump.

“He said his girlfriend had lost a baby and he was being deported. I told him that’s no reason to kill yourself and he started to cry. I said he’s got to be strong and look to the future.

“We stayed like this for half an hour and I could feel the cold bridge sapping his strength. Then firefighter Robert Pope came over and secured another line to us so we could go over the bridge to the waiting boat below. Our crew manager Rowan Logue took the decision we were going over the bridge.

“He started to struggle and I said ‘we’re going’ and I just rolled him off the bridge. He began screaming. Firefighters Bill Taylor and Phil Casey lowered us down onto the boat. The police were waiting for him in the boat. It took about two and a half hours from start to finish. I’ve been nominated for this, but it was a team effort. There were no injuries and we all gelled as a team. It was very satisfying.”



Watch manager Darren Lowe, with colleagues from Green Watch, Poole station, Dorset, rescuing London architect Luciano Vitrello, February 2008
CREDIT: SIMON ROWLEY/FIRE AID INTERNATIONAL



Mud rescue

Chewton Bunny, Hampshire, February 10 2008
4 pumps
Dorset

A London architect was walking along the beach between Highcliffe and Barton-on-sea with his wife when he decided to avoid the incoming tide and walk into the sand dunes. The next thing he knew he was stuck in the mud. 56 year old Luciano Vitrello said: "My feet were really heavy, and every time I tried to move them I just sank lower in the mud. It was a bit of a ridiculous situation to find myself in."

Watch manager Darren Lowe, 37, from Green Watch at Poole station with 14 years service leads a water and rope rescue team who were on the scene in twenty minutes.

"He was up to his waist and when you get up to your waist in this stuff it's really tricky to get out. If you struggle you go further down.

"As a special rescue team we have inflatable rescue paths, crews with dry suits, personal flotation devices

and a mud lance. The mud lance injects water into the mud which fluidises it and makes it easier to perform a rescue.

"The guy was very anxious to get out as he'd been stuck for over an hour. A length of ladder was laid along the mud and he was able to climb onto it and be pulled out.

"We had to be careful he didn't suffer hydrostatic shock. Mud pressurises the body and your legs will shut down. It's like being under a heavy weight. You have to make sure they come out horizontally and get medical treatment immediately otherwise toxins can be released into the body. The blood has to flow slowly back into the legs.

"He was in shock and a little embarrassed when he was taken off to hospital. He was just unlucky. There are no signs. You need local knowledge. The thing to do is not panic, spread yourself out on the mud and try and get some help. People often wriggle around a lot and make it worse for themselves."



River rescue

Bontnewydd near Caernarfon, April 21, 2007
4 pumps including a rope rescue unit, emergency tender and a water incident unit.
North Wales

A group of men were returning to a campsite in North Wales having been out on a stag night. It was past midnight when one of their number jumped over a wall to take a leak and fell forty feet down a sheer drop into the Afon Gwyrfai river below. Watch Manager, Tim Lloyd, 40, with 16 years service led an emergency tender and was in command at the incident.

“I was on the emergency tender and a dedicated water rescue team came from Bangor. We got there first. It was about half past midnight and it was pitch black. The guy wasn’t totally submerged in the river but it was a vertical drop and he’d really hurt himself. The ambulance guys were there before us but couldn’t get

down to him. We began setting up a rope rescue system. He was conscious, wet, miserable and in pain, as he’d been there some time. The ambulance guys suspected he had spinal injuries. His mates were trying to keep his spirits up by calling to him from a bridge.

“The other crew managed to find an easier access route to him further down the bank. We used floodlighting from the emergency tender and we got four guys down to him and then got two ambulance crew to him. We were moving quickly because of the danger of hyperthermia. They stabilised his neck and we put him on a spinal stretcher.

“It was a good joint operation. We’re trained in water rescue and we’ve done this sort of thing before. It was unusual in that it was so dark. When they took him off to Bangor hospital he was in pain and not a little embarrassed.”



Fire crews training in river rescue procedures
CREDIT: ALAMY IMAGES

Road rescue

A39 between Bideford and Roundswell, December 28, 2007
2 pumps
Devon and Somerset
3 injured

Tony Read, 46, a firefighter with 20 years service, based at the Barnstaple station, was on duty between Christmas and New Year, when he was called to Bideford hospital to be told his father had just passed away. On his way back to the station he came across a road traffic collision.

“I was heading back to Barnstaple fire station on the A39 when I came across this road traffic collision which had just happened. There was an ambulance and paramedic already there. I stopped to offer help and the paramedic asked me to call the fire service as a man and woman were trapped.

“It appeared a guy had had a heart attack while

driving and had veered across the carriageway into oncoming traffic. He'd hit another car head on. Luckily, there were only two cars involved.

“The paramedic dealt with the guy with the heart attack while I held the neck of the trapped girl in the other car and comforted her. It was pouring with rain and she was cold and suffering from shock.

“Around five minutes later the Bideford crew turned up and began the process of cutting them out. I passed the girl over to another paramedic.

“I'd been cut and went back to Barnstaple station. I was soaked to the skin. It was very traumatic for me because of my state of mind. When I was making the call to the fire service I could barely identify the location of the crash for the person in control. I had to shake myself out of my own trauma and switch onto the accident and help the girl. I had to suppress my own feelings and get involved as I was the first firefighter on the scene.”

Fire crews at a road traffic collision

CREDIT: GETTY



yimages®

***Fire crews at Selby train crash,
February 2001***

CREDIT: PA PHOTOS





Train rescue

Selby, February 28, 2001
6 appliances
West Yorkshire
10 killed, 40 wounded

At 6.13am on the morning of February 28 2001, Gary Hart fell asleep at the wheel of his Land Rover as he travelled along the M62. He plunged off the motorway onto the rail line right in front of the GNER 4.00am Newcastle to London King's Cross, travelling at 125mph. The Land Rover derailed the speeding train, directing it into a head-on collision with a fully laden coal train, carrying over 1,800 tonnes of coal, coming in the opposite direction. The collision speed was in excess of 140 mph. Ten people died.

Leading firefighter Mark Wilson, 45, was based at Pontefract station at the time with Green Watch. He was one of the first firefighters on the scene.

"I'd never been involved in anything on that scale before. I came across the coal train first and thought 'jesus christ, that's bad' and then I looked over the bridge at the passenger train. The only way I can describe it was as if some petulant child had got hold of those carriages and given them a good ragging.

"We found out who was in command and then divided up the carriages by their numbers. We were running stretcher-bearers more than anything. We took people across the field and into a barn. We had so few spine boards it was crazy. We took such care to put them on the boards and carry them and then we had to turf them off to carry more people out.

"If it had been the commuter train an hour later, it would have been carnage. The dead were left in their seats and covered up. I vividly remember one dead person upside down in their seat. Mobile phones kept going off. We just left them. I'd never seen so many dead bodies.

"We spent about four hours there. When we left everyone alive had been accounted for and the work was done. We did as good a job as the circumstances allowed. We needed more spine stretchers. I hope it's a one-off for me. I'll be glad if it is. We don't talk about it amongst ourselves. We talk about the smaller incidents."

1 Rescues

Fires and road traffic collisions

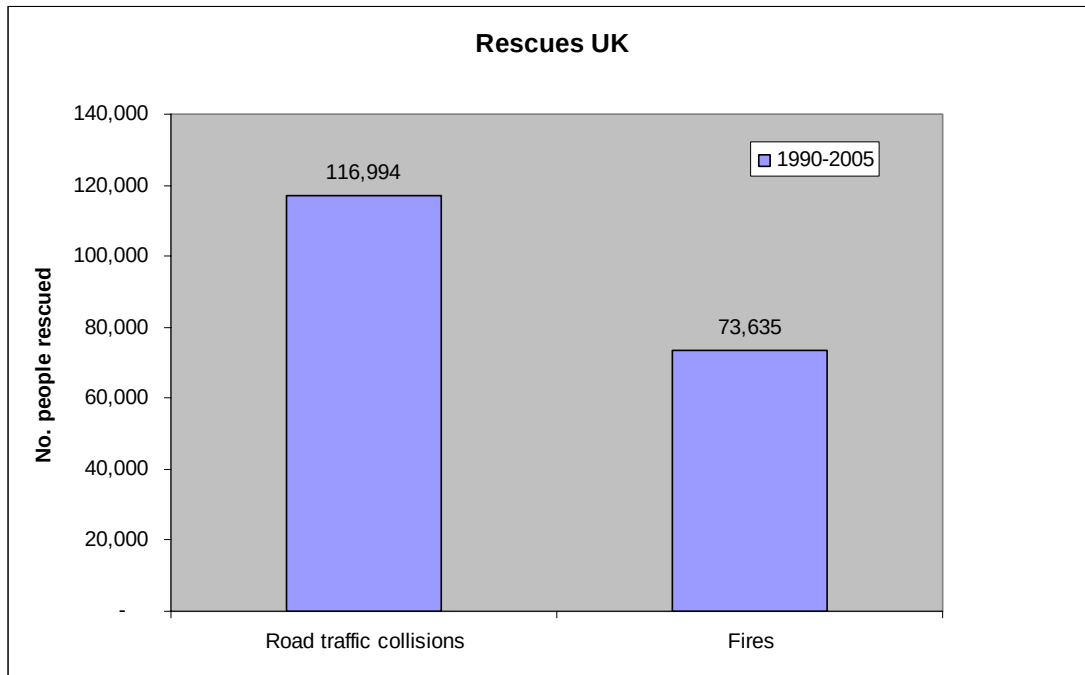


Fig. 1.1 Source: CLG; Scottish Executive; Welsh Assembly Government; Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service; answers to written parliamentary questions

Over 80,000 (83,668) people were rescued from fires and road traffic collisions in the UK by fire and rescue services in 2001-2005, the most recent five years for which data is available (Fig. 1.1).¹ Since records began in 1990, the number of people rescued was over 190,000 (190,629).² These figures are absolute minimums as the number of rescues from road traffic collisions in England and Wales is based on a highly conservative estimate of one person rescued per incident involving persons rescued, while data in a number of years in the 1990s is patchy.

In England, over 65,000 (68,619) were rescued from fires and road traffic collisions in the five most recent years for which data is available.³ And in the ten years to 2005, just under 130,000 (128,547) people were rescued. In 2005 over 13,000 (13,596) people were rescued.

¹ Table 1a

² Table 1b

³ Table 1e

Fires

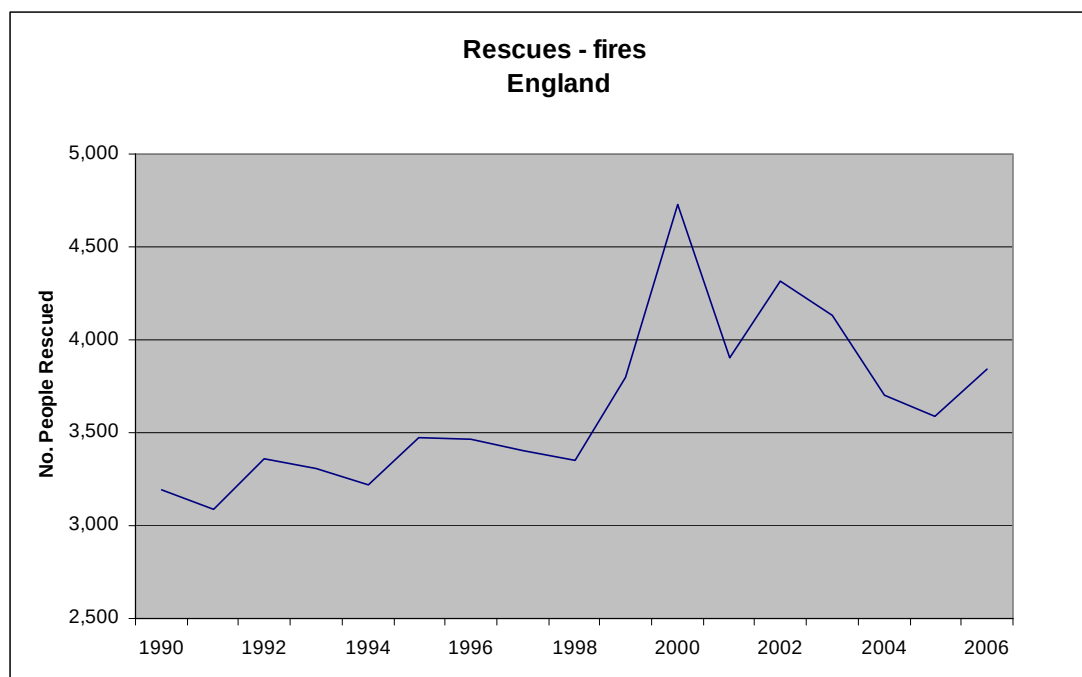


Fig. 1.2. Source: Annual Fire Statistics (1990-1999); answers to parliamentary questions 14 June 2005, 27 November 2006, 21 April 2008.

Over 25,000 (25,551) people were rescued from fires by fire and rescue services across the UK in the five most recent years for which data was available, with in excess of 4,500 (4,605) people rescued from fires in 2005 alone.⁴ The total rises to over 70,000 (73,635) since 1990 (fig 1.1.).

In England, rescues from fires are running at record or near record levels, with the total at over 60,000 (61,883) people since 1990 (Fig. 1.2).⁵ More than 38,000 (38,777) people were rescued from fires in England by the fire and rescue services in the period 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available, with more than 3,800 (3,845) rescued in 2006.

Driving these figures are rescues from dwelling fires, which are also running at record levels. Dwelling fire rescues have remained at more than four fifths of total rescues from fires in England since records began 27 years ago. Just under 34,000 (33,981) were rescued from dwellings in England in 1997-2006 and just under 3,400 (3,394) in 2006 alone.

⁴ Table 1c

⁵ Table 1f

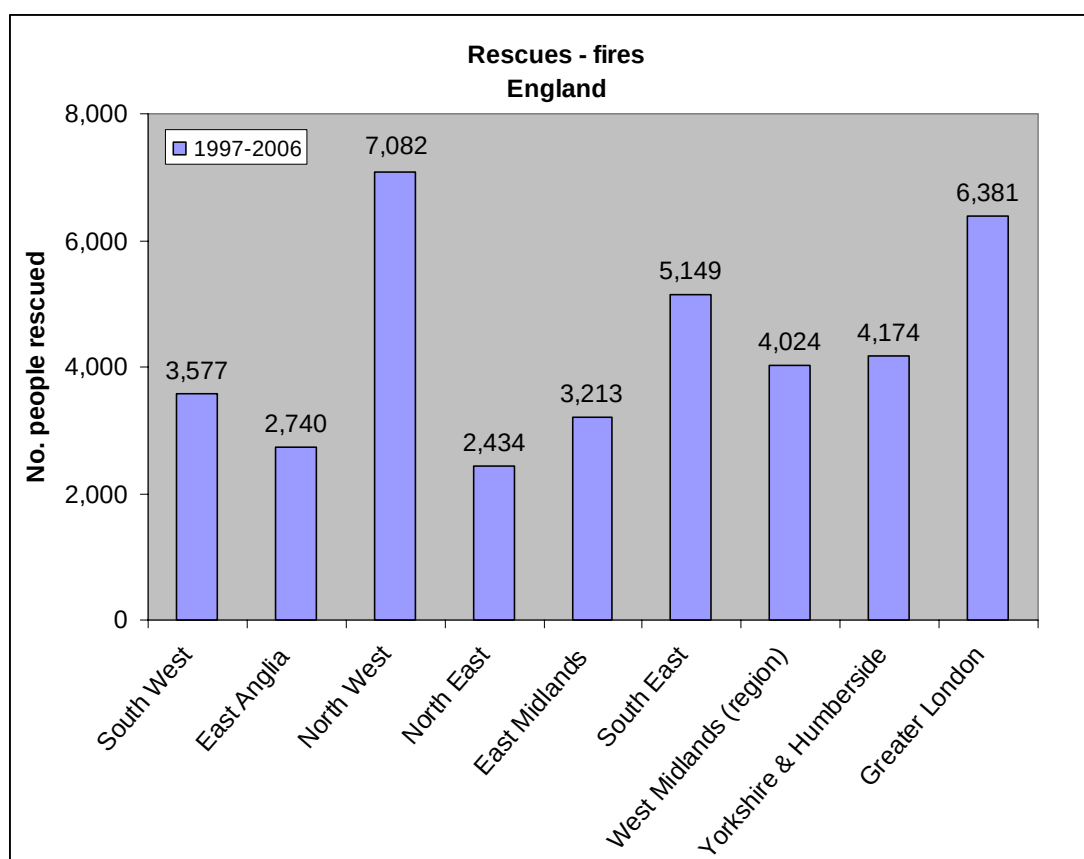


Fig. 1.3. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Note: More detail on the English regions, plus Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales can be found from page 29 onwards.

Over 7,000 (7,082) people were rescued from fires in the North West during the period 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (Fig. 1.3), , with more than 5,000 (5,149) rescued in the South East and over 6,300 (6,381) in London. Fire crews rescued more than 4,000 in the West Midlands region (4,024) and Yorkshire & Humberside (4,174), while the figure exceeded 3,500 (3,577) in the South West, 3,200 (3,213) in the East Midlands, 2,700 (2,740) in East Anglia and 2,400 (2,434) in the North East.

In Wales, between 1997 and 2006, the number rescued was just under 7,300 (7,292). (Fig. 5.1.).⁶

Rescues from dwelling fires in Scotland were just under 4,200 (4,181) during 2001-2005, the only years for which data is available (Fig. 3.1).⁷ No data is available on rescues from fires in other buildings.

In Northern Ireland fire crews rescued more than 1,200 people (1,230) from fires between 2000 and 2007, the most recent years for which data is available (Fig. 5.1.).⁸

⁶ Table 4a

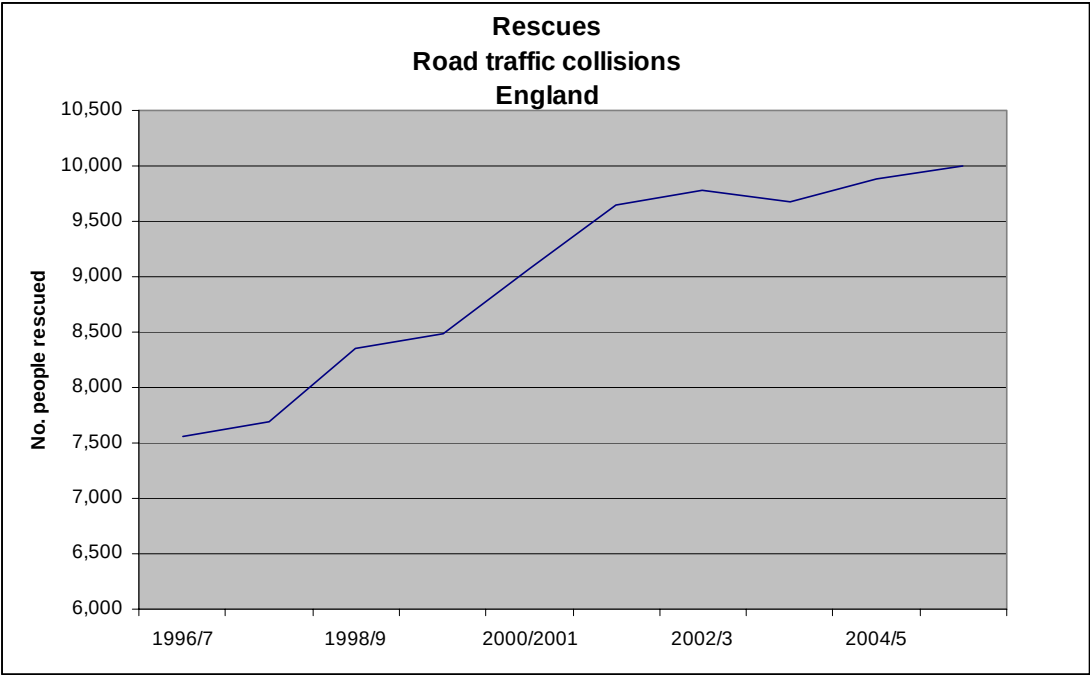
⁷ Table 3a

⁸ Table 5a

Further details on the English regions and Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland from page 29

Road traffic collisions

Rescues by fire and rescue services from vehicles involved in road traffic collisions peaked at just under 12,000 (11,946) in the year 2005/6, the most recent year for which comparable data is available for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.⁹ The number of people rescued across the UK in the five years to that date is approaching 60,000 ((58,468). These figures represent an absolute minimum as they are based on an estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued (the unit that is measured) in England and Wales..



*Fig. 1.4. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*

⁹ Table 1d

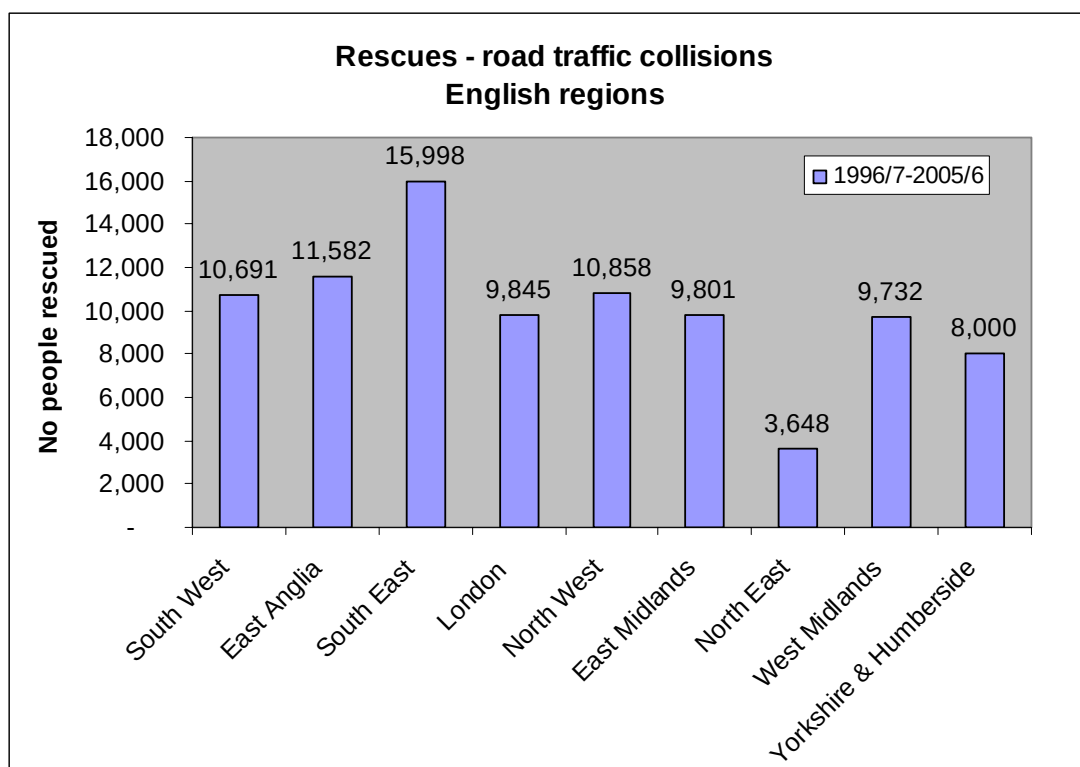


Fig. 1.5 Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

In England alone, over 90,000 (90,151) people were rescued by fire and rescue services from road traffic collisions in the most recent ten years for which data is available, with a 32 per cent increase in 2005/6 compared to 1996/7. During the decade, just under 16,000 (15,998) were rescued in the South East, over 11,000 (11,582) in East Anglia, more than 10,000 in the South West (10,691) and the North West (10,858) with the total approaching 10,000 in London (9,845), the East Midlands (9,801) and the West Midlands (9,732). Eight thousand were rescued in Yorkshire and Humberside and over 3,600 (3,648) in the North East (Fig 1.5).¹⁰

Over 10,000 (10,006) people were rescued across England in 2005/2006 (Fig.1.4).

Rescues from road vehicles involved in accidents advanced in double digits in all but one region of England over the ten year period with increases of over 30 per cent in the South West, South East, East Anglia and West Midlands. The number of people rescued from road traffic collisions in London rose by 91 per cent, compared to ten years earlier.

Over 5,400 (5,445) people were rescued from road traffic collisions in Wales in the ten years to 2006/7 and in the five years to 2006/7 fire crews rescued over 2,700 (2,765).¹¹

¹⁰ Table 1h

¹¹ Table 4a

In Northern Ireland fire and rescues services rescued over 2,000 (2,088) in the five years to 2007 achieving a record of 447 people rescued in that year. In the eight years to 2007, over 3,300 (3,306) were rescued in Northern Ireland.¹².

As for Scotland, fire crews rescued over 4,200 people (4,280) in the five years to 2005/6. There was a rise in every year bar one with a new high of 905 people rescued in Scotland 2005/6.¹³

¹² Table 5a

¹³ Table 3a

2 Fire deaths

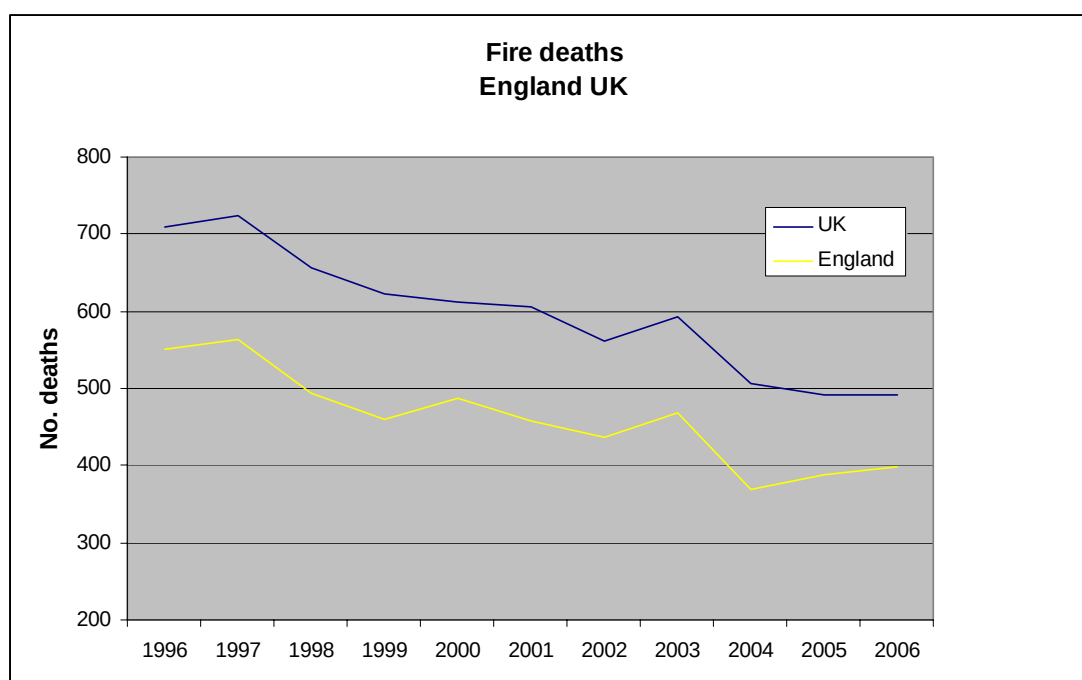


Fig. 2.1. Source: Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1 March 2008

The decline in the number of fire deaths in the UK continued over the past decade, halting in 2006 when the figure stayed at 491 for the second year running (Fig 2.1).¹⁴

Progress was made in Scotland in the most recent two years for which figures were available (falling from 99 deaths in 2004 to 65 in 2005 and a low of 52 in 2006) while in Wales a low of 22 was reached in 2006.

The number of fire deaths rose for the second consecutive year in England to 398 in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available (Fig. 2.1). The rise in 2006, returning to the level of four years earlier, was up from 388 in 2005 and 368 in 2004. In contrast, fatalities fell in Scotland and Wales in 2006.¹⁵

Deaths in dwelling fires fell in England from 369 in 2005 to 287 in 2006, the second lowest level since 1994, available data showed.¹⁶

¹⁴ Table 2a

¹⁵ Table 2a

¹⁶ Answer to parliamentary question 3 April 2008

3 Scotland

Rescues

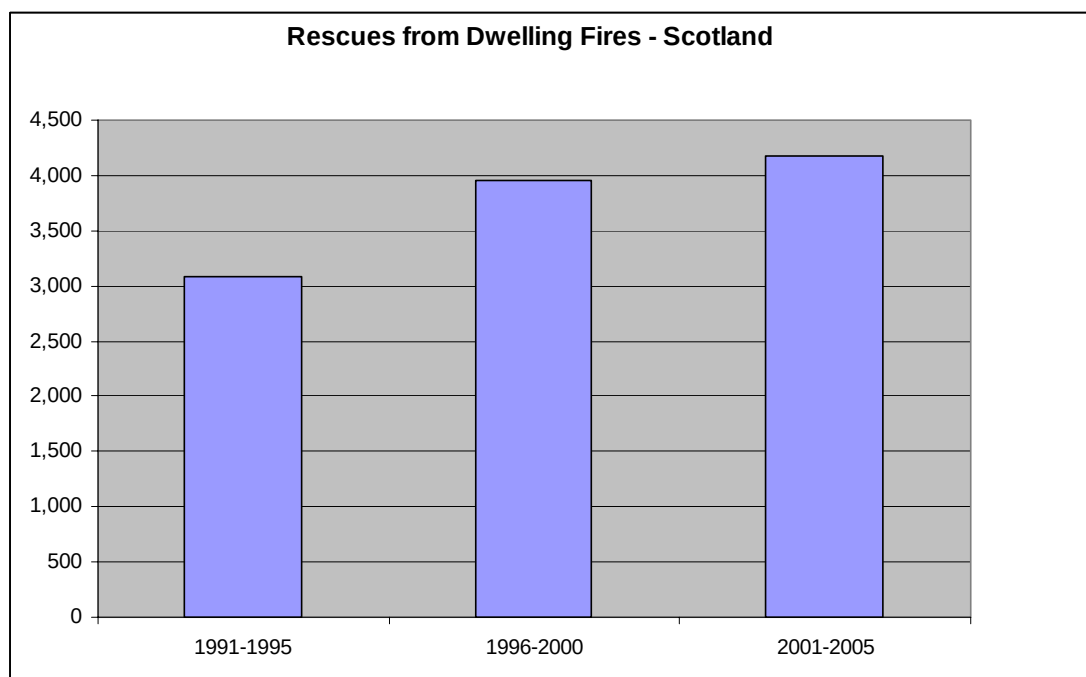


Fig. 3.1. Source: Scottish Executive.

Rescues from dwelling fires in Scotland are running at record levels with around 4,200 (4,181) people rescued by the Scottish fire and rescue services in 2001-2005, the most recent five years for which data is available (Fig. 3.1).¹⁷ In 2005 just over 700 (709) people were rescued.

Over 4,000 (4,280) people were rescued from road traffic collisions between 2001/2 and 2005/6. The number increased in four out of the five years and is running at record levels¹⁸.

¹⁷ Table 3a

¹⁸ Tables 1d, 3a

Deaths

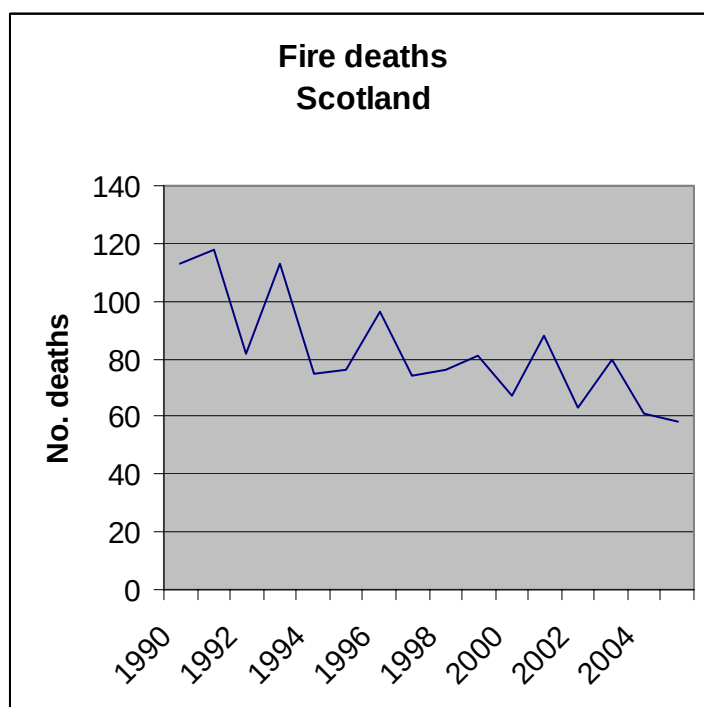


Fig 3.2. Source: Scottish Executive

Deaths from fires in Scotland fell in 2006 to 52, the lowest level since 1990, the most recent year for which data is available (Fig 3.2.).¹⁹

¹⁹ Table 3b

4 Wales

Rescues

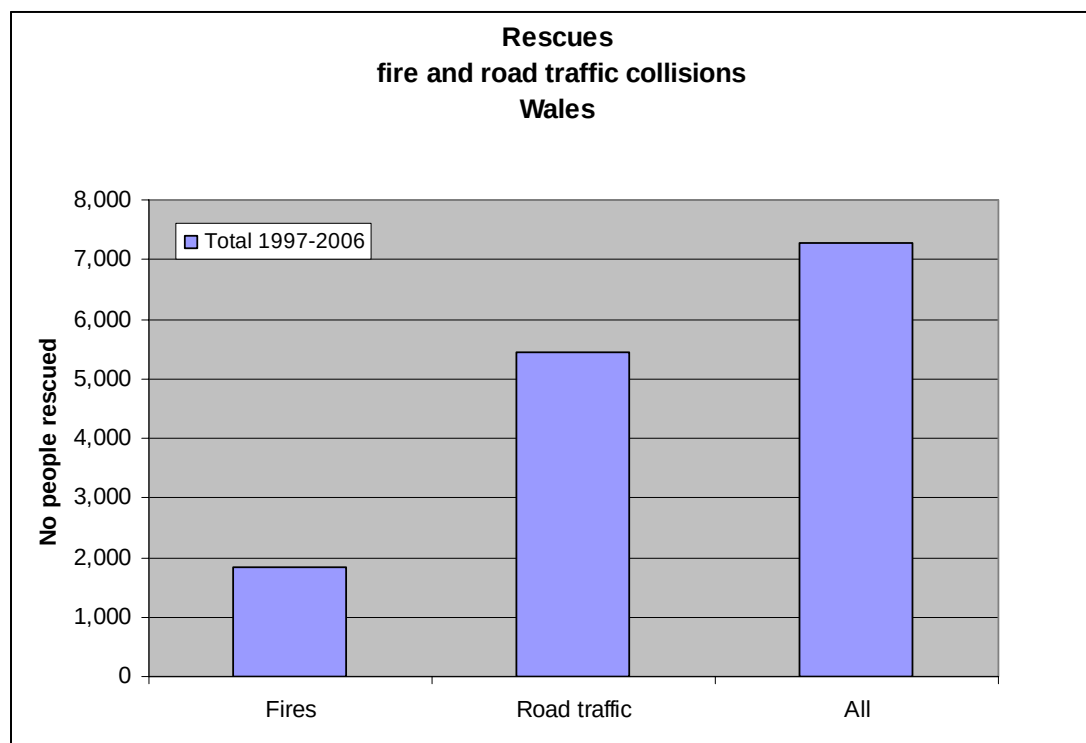


Fig. 4.1. Source: Welsh Assembly Government.

Note: road traffic collision rescues are calendar year with 2006/7 = 2006

Figures are based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Just under 7,300 (7,292) people were rescued from fire and road traffic incidents in Wales between 1997 and 2006, the most recent ten years for which data is available. Over 3,600 (3,609) people were rescued between 2002 and 2006,.

Just under 5,500 (5,445) were rescued from road traffic collisions between 1997/8 and 2006/7 and over 1,800 (1,847) were rescued from fires in the ten years to 2006.

In 2006, 190 people were rescued from fires and in 2006/7 542 people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued. Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded). (Fig. 4.1).²⁰

²⁰ Table 4a

Deaths

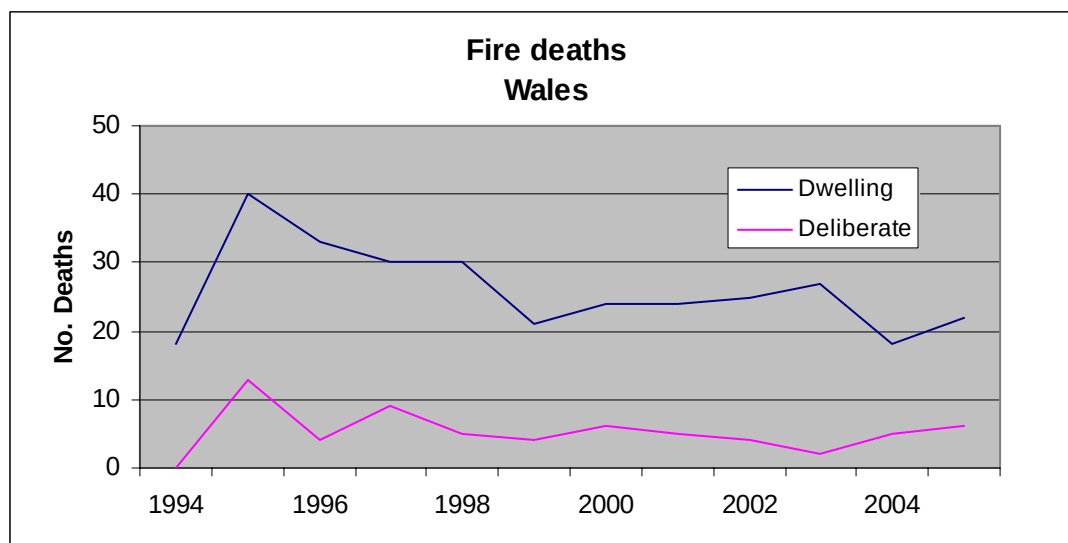


Fig. 4.2.. Source: Welsh Assembly Government.

Deaths from fires in dwellings increased in 2005 – the last year for which data is available – to 22 from 18 the year before (Fig. 4.2.).²¹ This is the second lowest level in the five years to 2005 and the third lowest level since 1994, the year data was available²².

Deaths from deliberate fires increased in 2005 to six, a five-year high.

²¹ Table 4b

²² Table 4a

5 Northern Ireland

Rescues

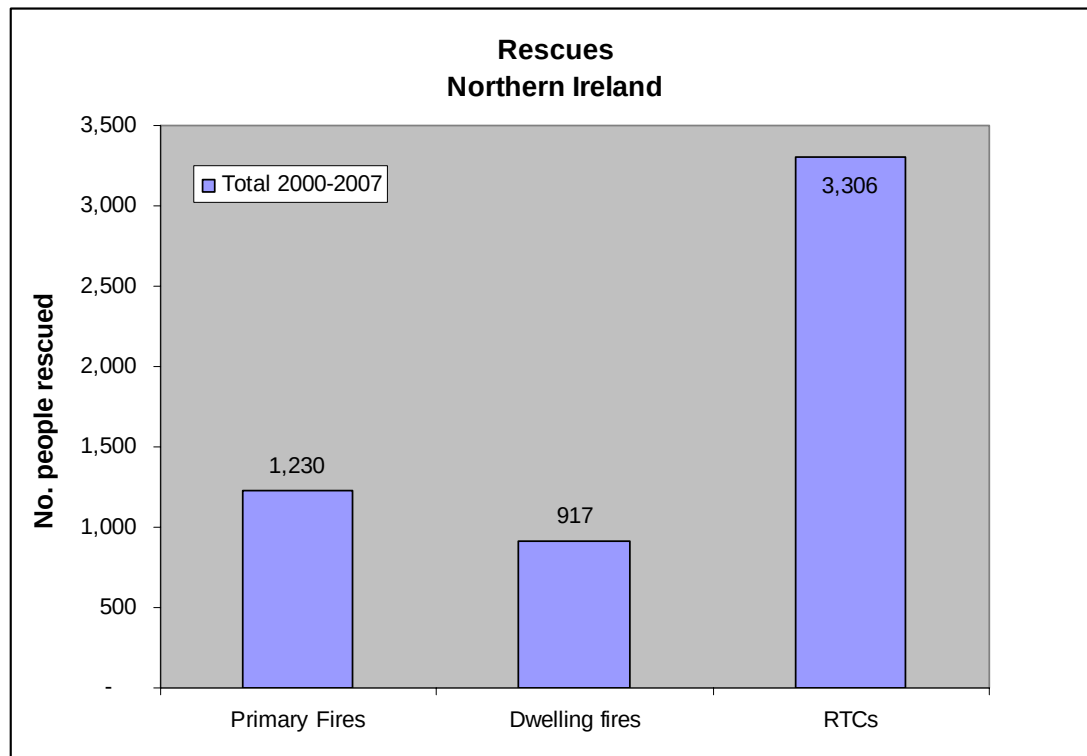


Fig. 5.1.. Source: Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service rescued over 4,600 (4,605) people from a range of incidents between 2000 and 2007, the most recent year for which data is available.

More than 1,200 people (1,230) were rescued from fires and of this, over 900 (917) were rescued from dwelling fires. In 2007 alone 154 people were rescued from all fires (Fig. 5.1.).²³

²³ Table 5a

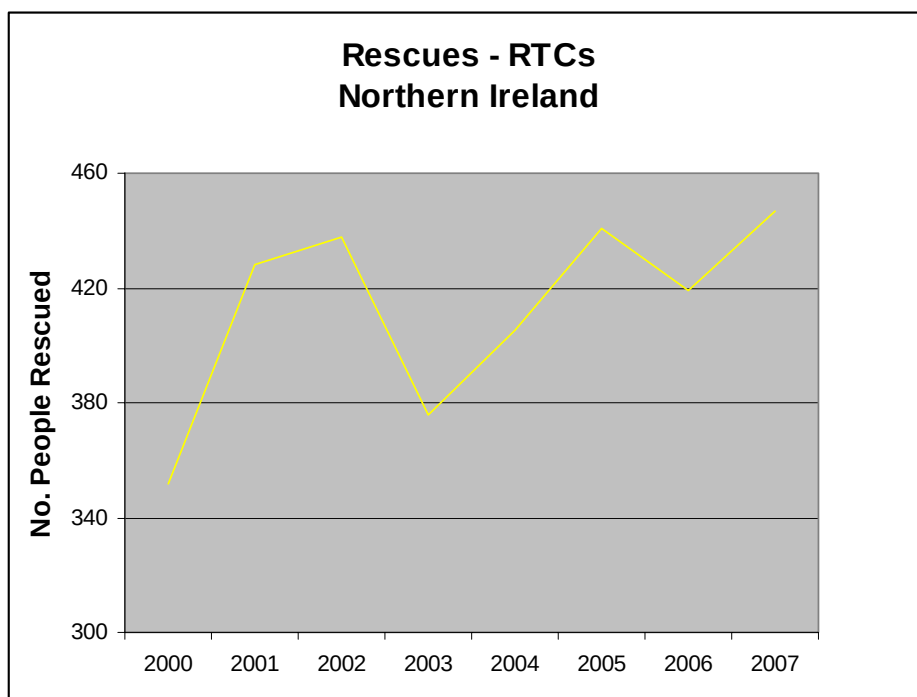
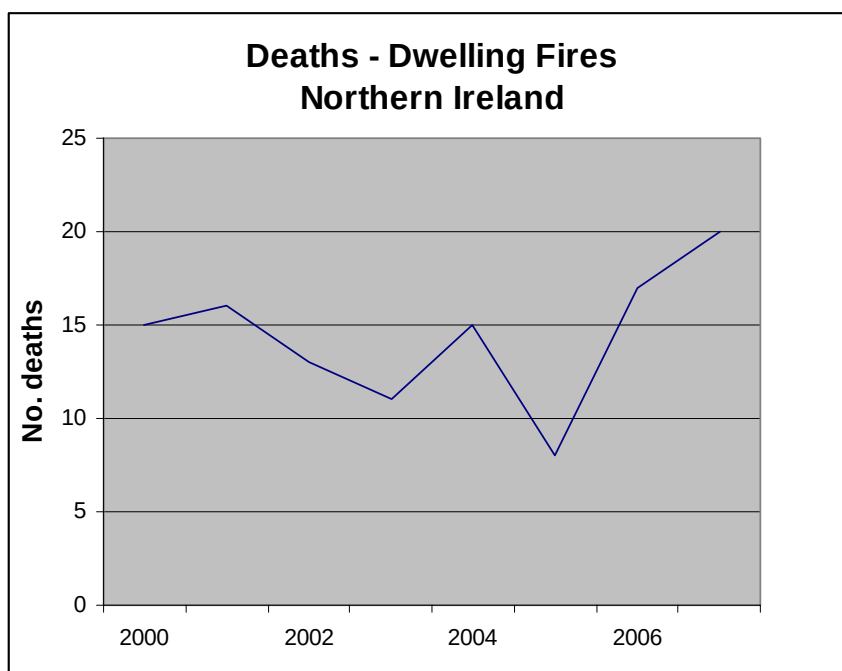


Fig. 5.2. Source: Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Over 3,300 were rescued from road traffic incidents between 2000 and 2007, the most recent year for which data is available. In 2007 a record 447 people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued from their vehicles (Fig. 5.2).²⁴

Deaths



²⁴ Table 5a

Fig. 5.3. Source: Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

Deaths in dwelling fires in 2007 hit the highest level since 2000, the earliest date for which data is available. The number of deaths rose to 20, the third consecutive annual rise (Fig. 5.3).²⁵

²⁵ Table 5b

6 South West

Rescues

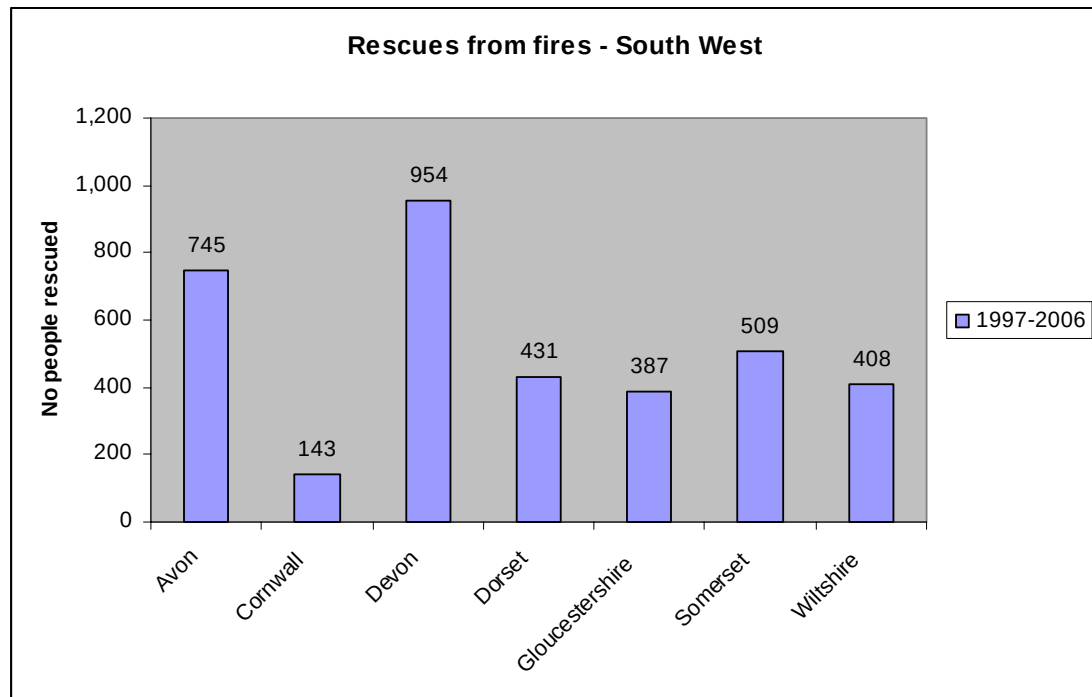


Fig. 6.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Over 3,500 (3,577) people were rescued from fires in the South West by fire and rescue services in the period 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (fig.1.3).²⁶

Devon was in the lead (954 people rescued) followed by Avon (745) and Somerset (509). The number of rescues reached a five-year high of over 430 (437) people in 2006 (fig. 6.1). Over the ten year period, over 90 per cent were rescued from fires in dwellings.

²⁶ Table 1g

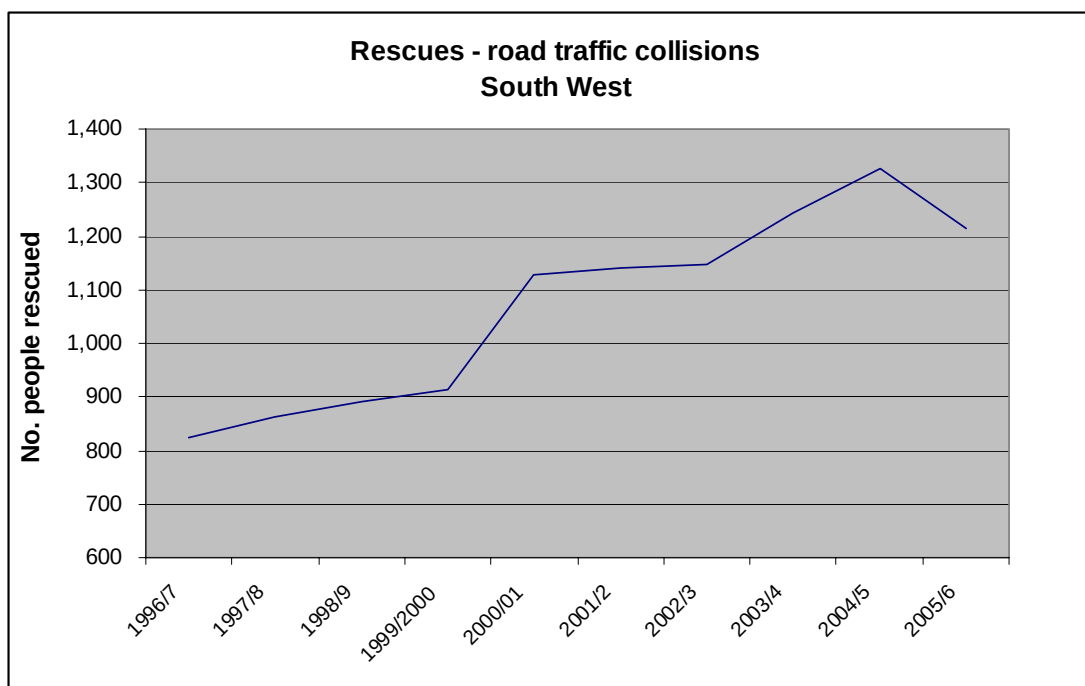


Fig. 6.2. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

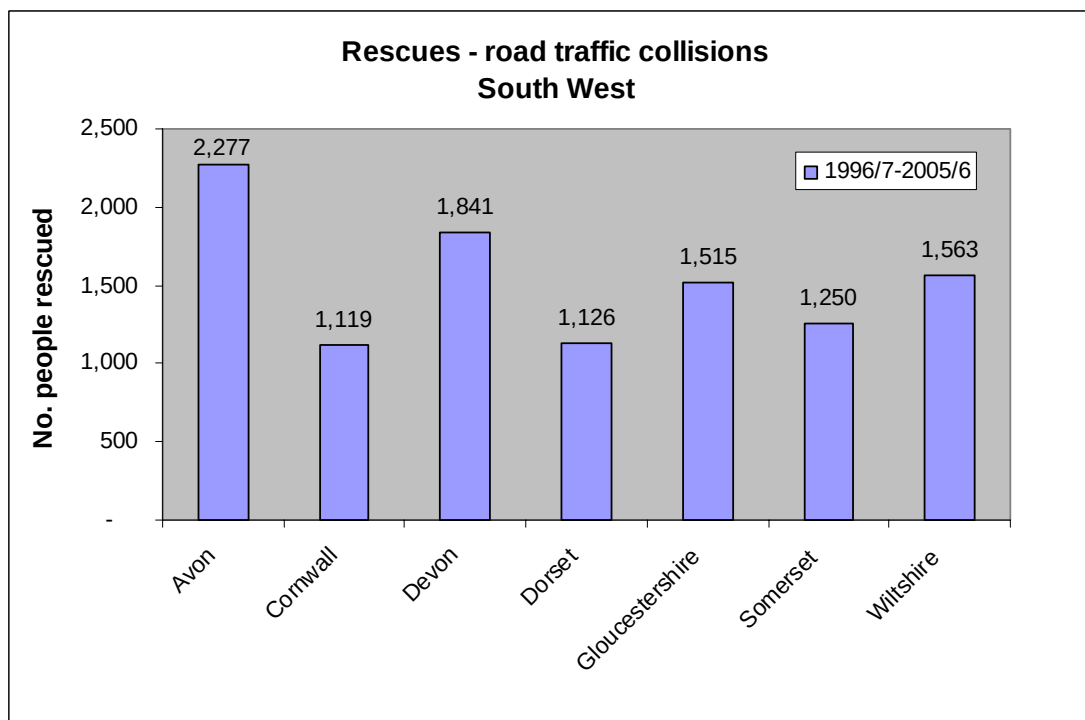


Fig. 6.3.. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Over 10,000 (10,691) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the South West in the 10 years to 2005/6, the most recent year for which data is available (fig. 1.5). Over 1,200 (1,214) people were rescued in 2005/6, a 47 per cent rise on the number rescued in 1996/7 (fig. 6.2.). The number rose in every year bar one over the decade.

Between 1996/7 and 2005/6, numbers rescued in Avon were over 2,200 (2,277), in Devon over 1,800 (1,841), Wiltshire and Gloucestershire over 1,500 (1,563 and 1,515 respectively), with in excess of 1,000 people rescued in Somerset (1,250) Dorset (1,126) and Cornwall (1,119) (Fig.6.3.)²⁷

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

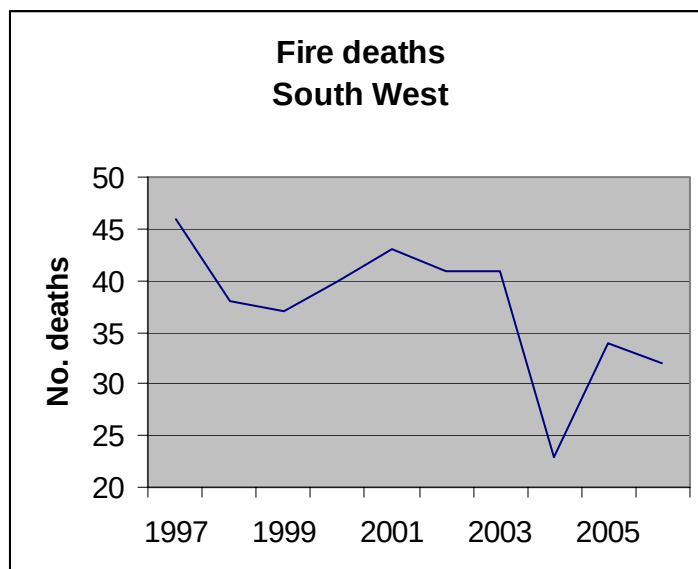


Fig. 6.4. Source: Written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1, March 2008

Fire deaths in the South West fell in 2006 to 32, after rising in 2005 to 34 from a ten-year low of 23 in 2004 (fig. 6.4.).²⁸ Deaths peaked at 46 in 1997. The number of deaths stayed stubbornly over 40 in 2000-2003, hitting a low of 23 in 2004.

²⁷ Table 1h

²⁸ Table 2b

7 South East

Rescues

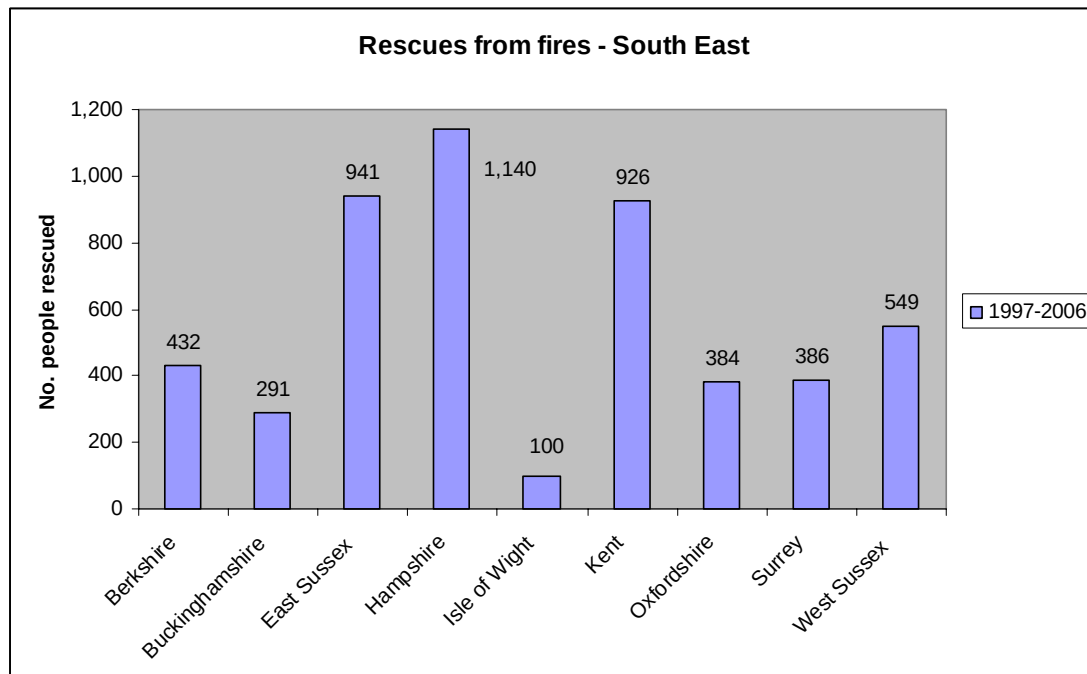


Fig. 7.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Fire and rescue services rescued over 5,000 people (5,149) from fires in the South East in 1997-2006, the most recent ten years for which data is available (fig.1.3).²⁹ Fire crews rescued over 1,100 (1,140), in Hampshire and more than 900 (941) in East Sussex and Kent (926). In the Isle of Wight, the rescue of 43 people in just one year (2000) brought the total to 100 over the ten year period.(Fig. 7.1.).

Over 4,300 (4,339) were rescued from fires in dwellings in 1997-2006 across the region.

²⁹ Table 1g

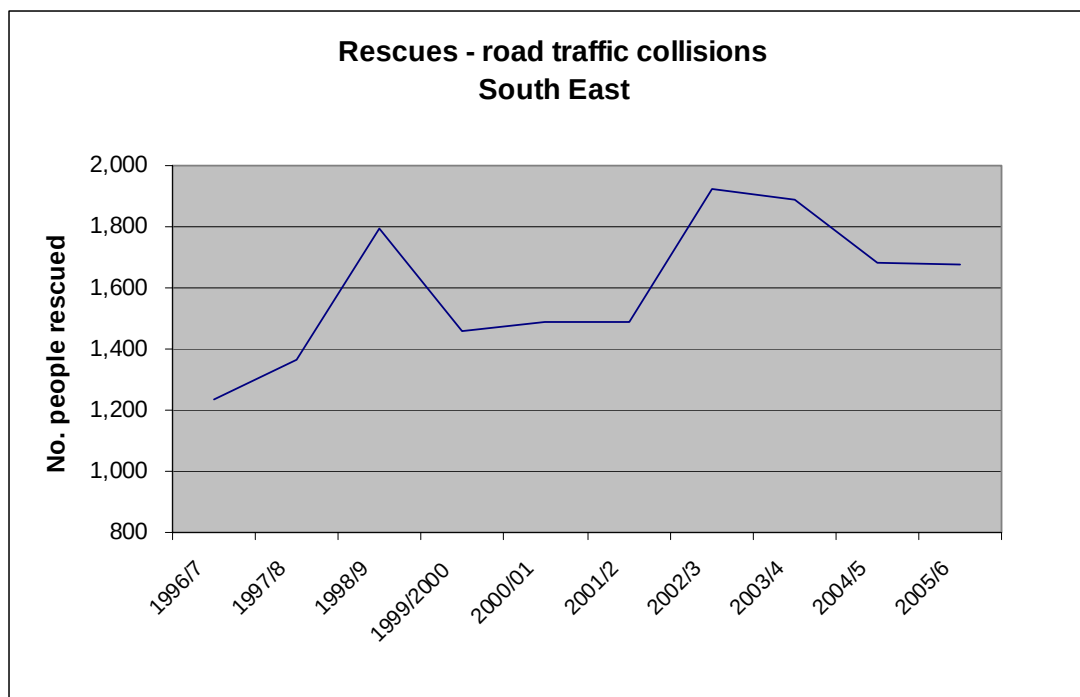


Fig.7.2: Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

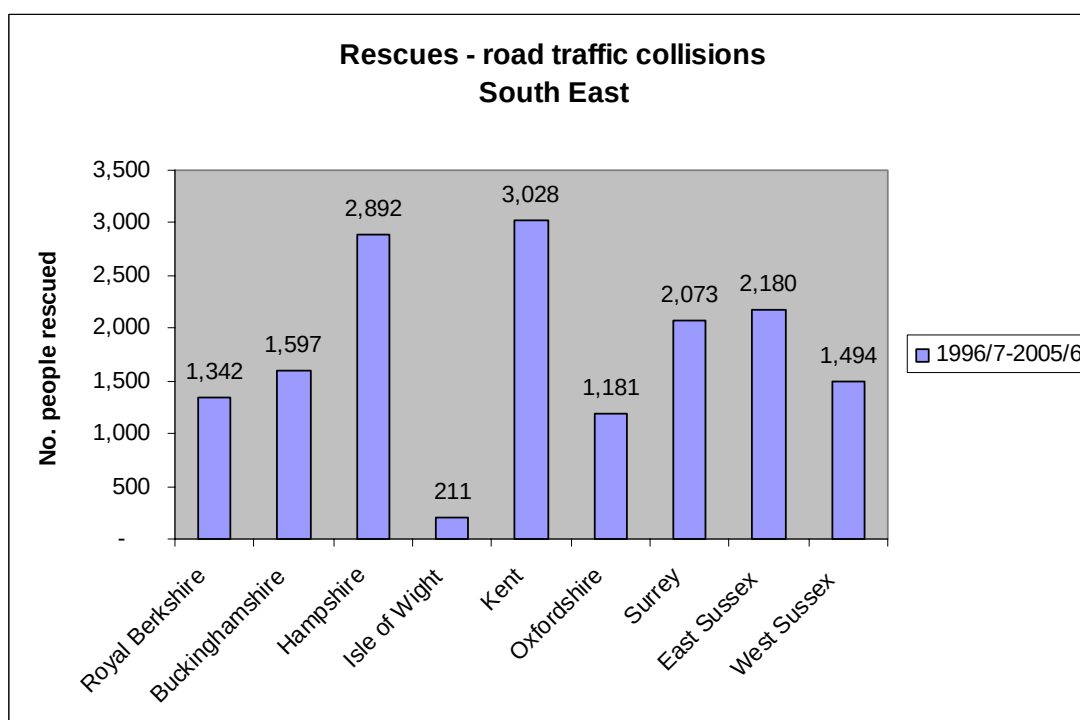


Fig. 7.3 Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Just under 16,000 (15,998) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the South East between 1996/7 and 2005/6, the most recent ten years for which data is available (fig. 1.5). Over 1,600 (1,677) were rescued in 2005/6, a 36 per cent rise on the number rescued in 1996/7 (fig. 7.2.).

In Kent more than 3,000 (3,028) people were rescued by fire crews over the decade, followed by Hampshire with almost 3,000 (2,892). Over 2,000 were rescued in East Sussex and Surrey (2,180 and 2,073 respectively), just under 1,600 (1,597) in Buckinghamshire and just under 1,500 (1,494) in West Sussex, with 1,342 in Royal Berkshire, 1,181 in Oxfordshire. Over 200 (211) were rescued in the Isle of Wight in the 10 years to 2005/6 (Fig 7.3)³⁰.

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

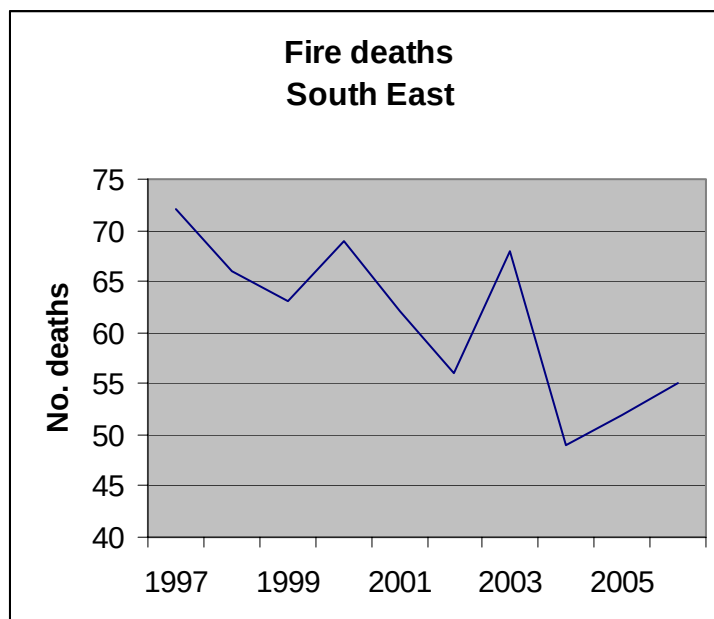


Fig. 7.4. Source: Written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1, March 2008

Fire deaths increased in the South East for the second year running in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available.³¹ Rising to 55, the number was up from 52 in 2005 and 49 in 2004 - the lowest level since 1997.

³⁰ Table 1h

³¹ Table 2b

8 North West

Rescues

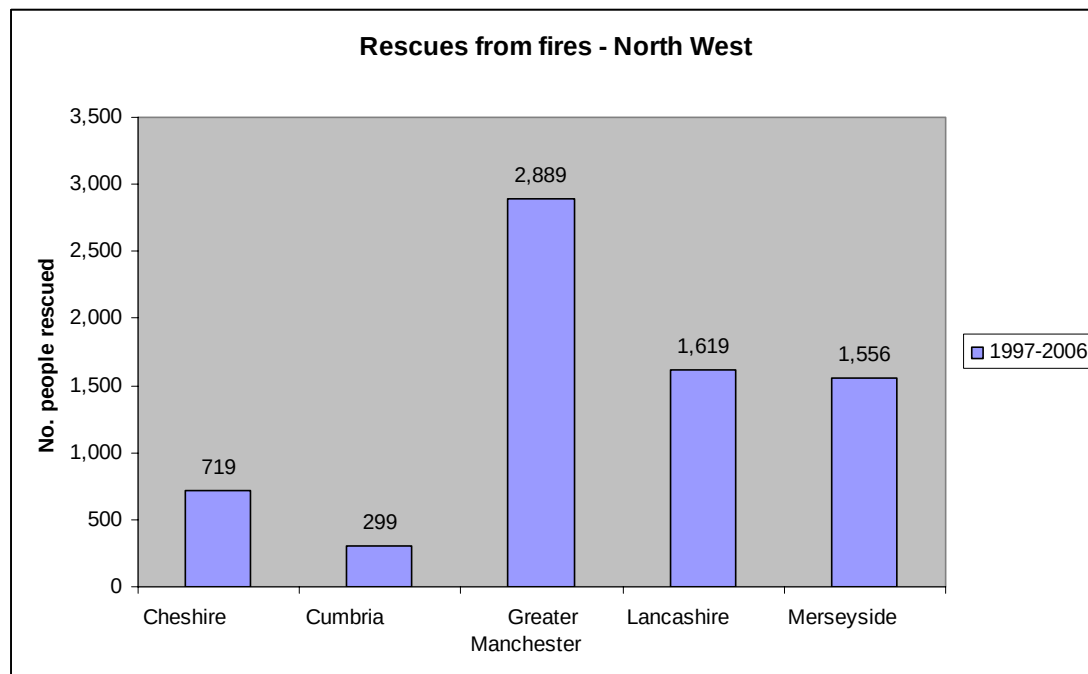


Fig.8.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Over 7,000 (7,082) people were rescued from fires in the North West by fire and rescue services in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (fig.1.3).³² Fire crews rescued over 2,800 (2,889) people in Greater Manchester, over 1,600 (1,619) in Lancashire, over 1,500 (1,556) in Merseyside, more than 700 (719) in Cheshire and just under 300 (299) in Cumbria (Fig. 8.1).

Over 6,300 (6,309) people were rescued from dwelling fires by fire and rescue services in the North West in the ten years to 2006, with over 2,500 (2,525) rescued in Greater Manchester alone. There were over 1,400 rescues in both Lancashire (1,427) and Merseyside (1,434), over 600 (665) in Cheshire, and over 250 (258) in Cumbria.

³² Table 1 1g

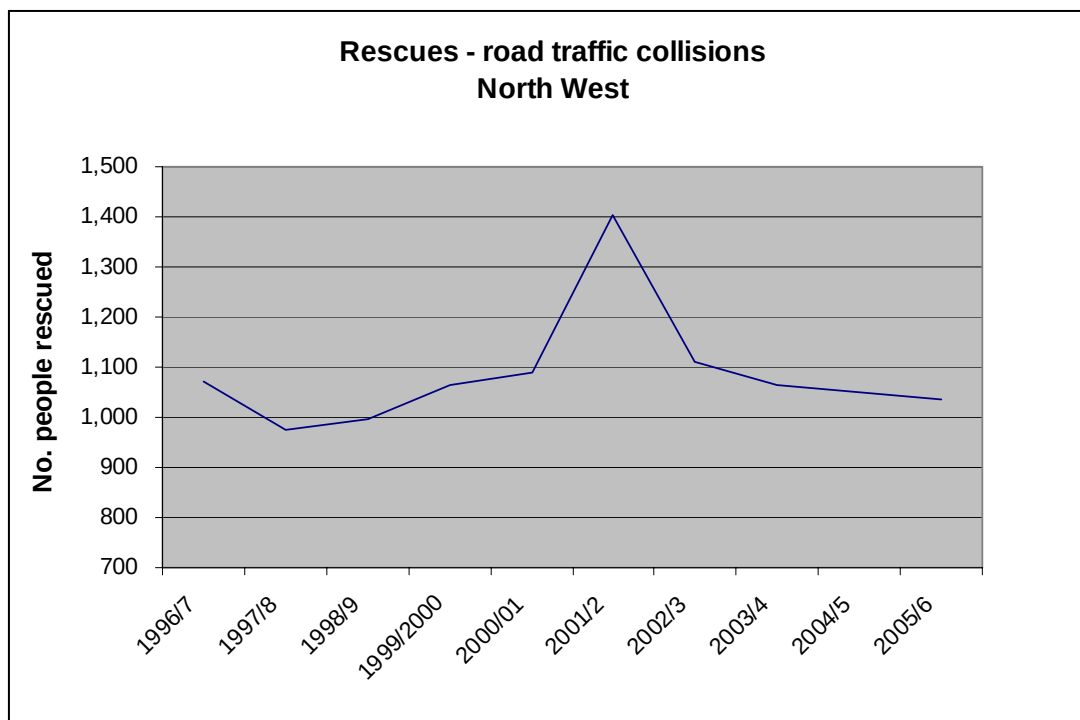


Fig. 8.2. Source: Answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008

Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

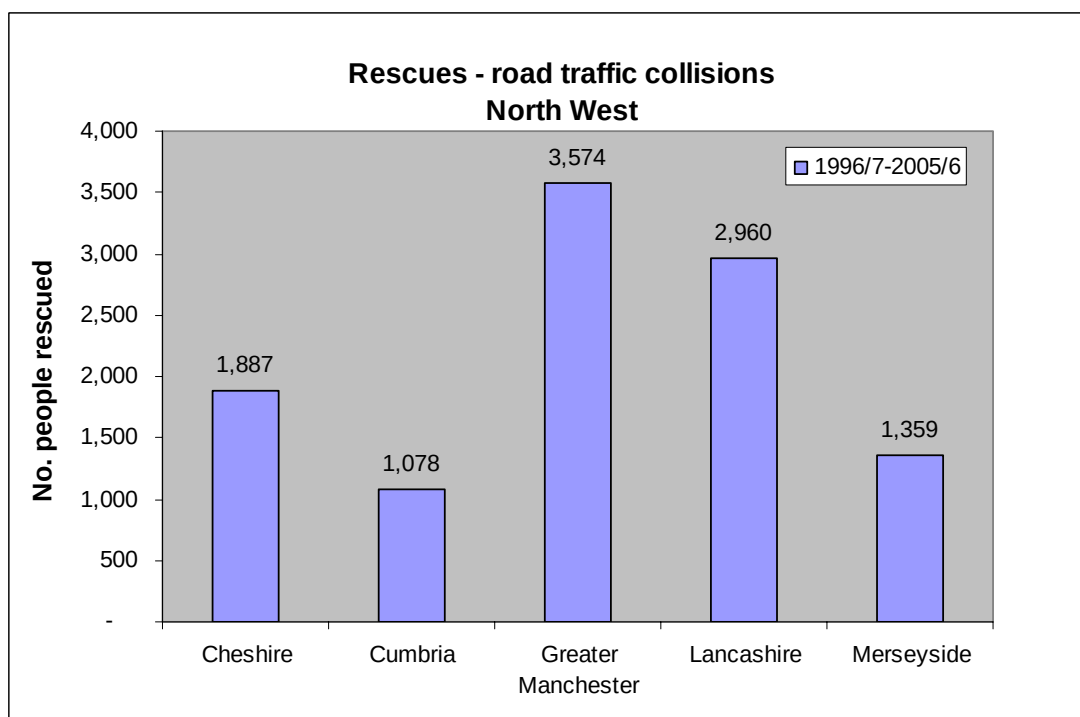


Fig. 8.3. Source: Answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008

Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Over 10,000 (10,858) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the North West between 1996/7 and 2005/6, the most recent year for which data is available (fig. 1.5.). Over 1,000 (1,034) were rescued in 2005/6, alone (fig.8.2).

In the ten years to 2005/6 in Greater Manchester over 3,500 (3,574) were rescued by fire crews while just under 3,000 (2,960) were rescued in Lancashire, over 1,800 (1,887) were rescued in Cheshire, more than 1,300 (1,359) in Merseyside and in excess of 1,000 (1,078) in Cumbria³³.

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

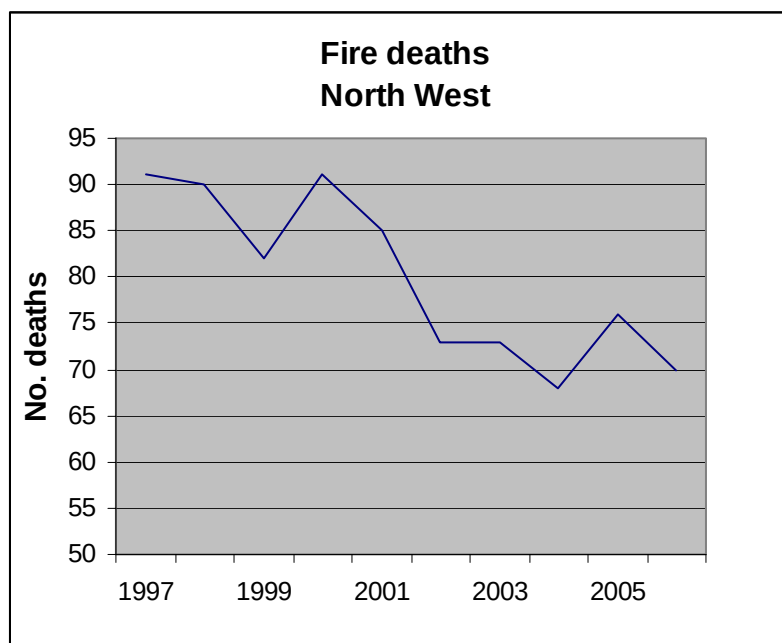


Fig. 8.4. Source: written answer to parliamentary question 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release March 2008

Deaths from fires hit a low of 68 in 2004 in the North West, falling in a downward trend from a high of 91 in 1997 (fig. 8.4.).³⁴ In 2005, they bounced back to 76, falling back to 70 in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available

³³ Table 1h

³⁴ Table 2b

9 North East

Rescues

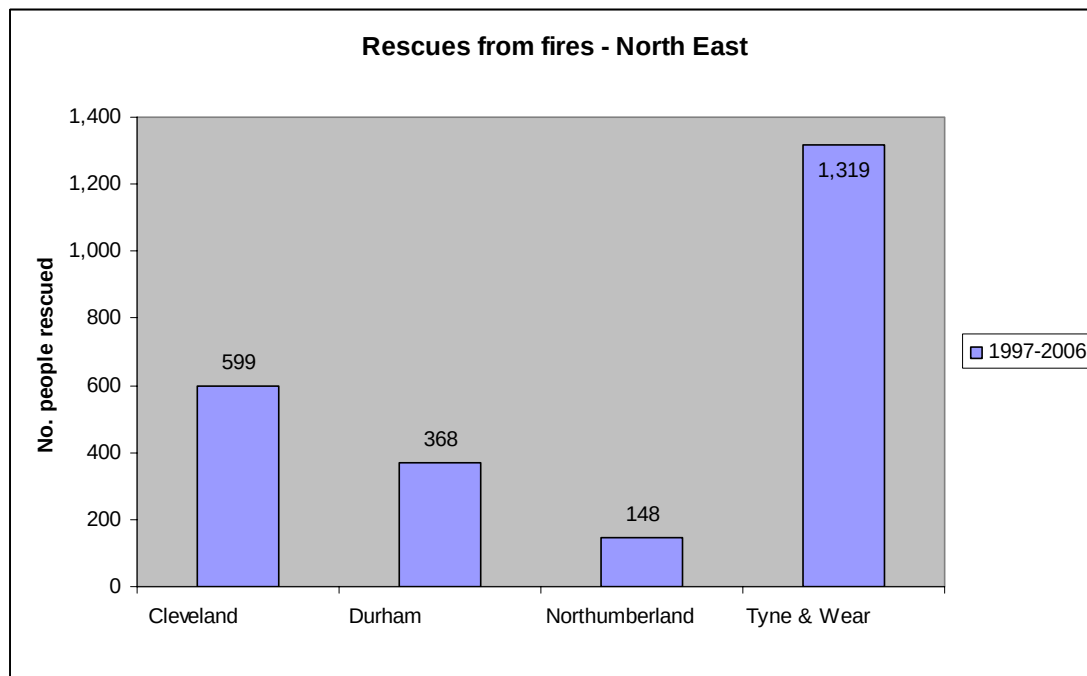
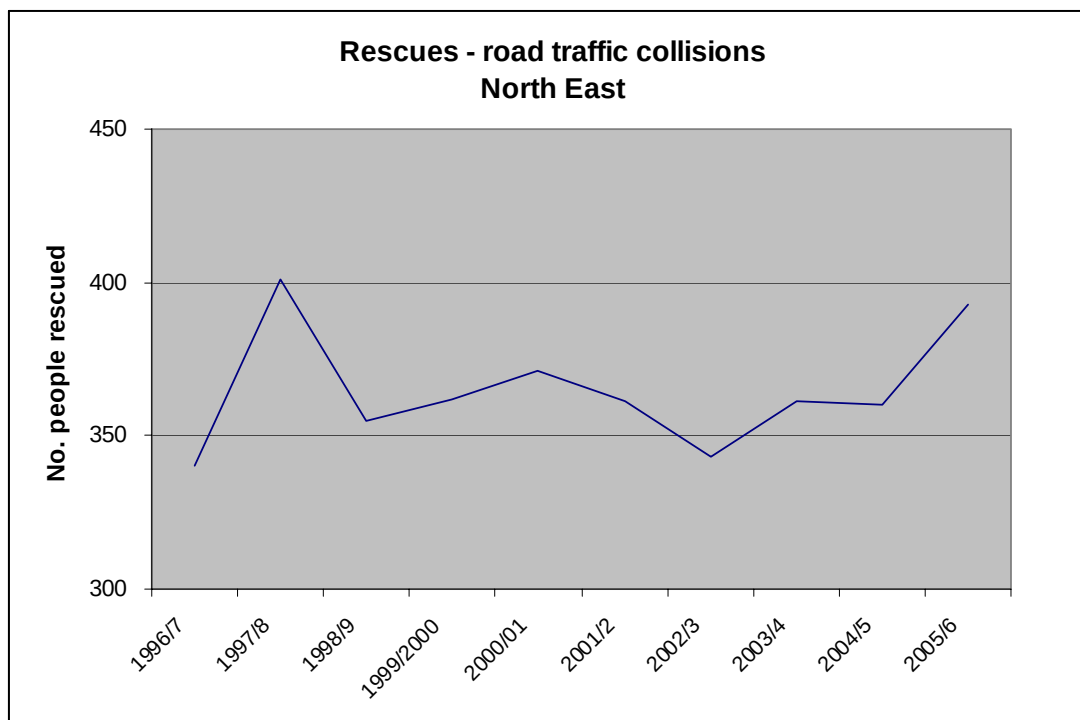


Fig. 9.1.. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

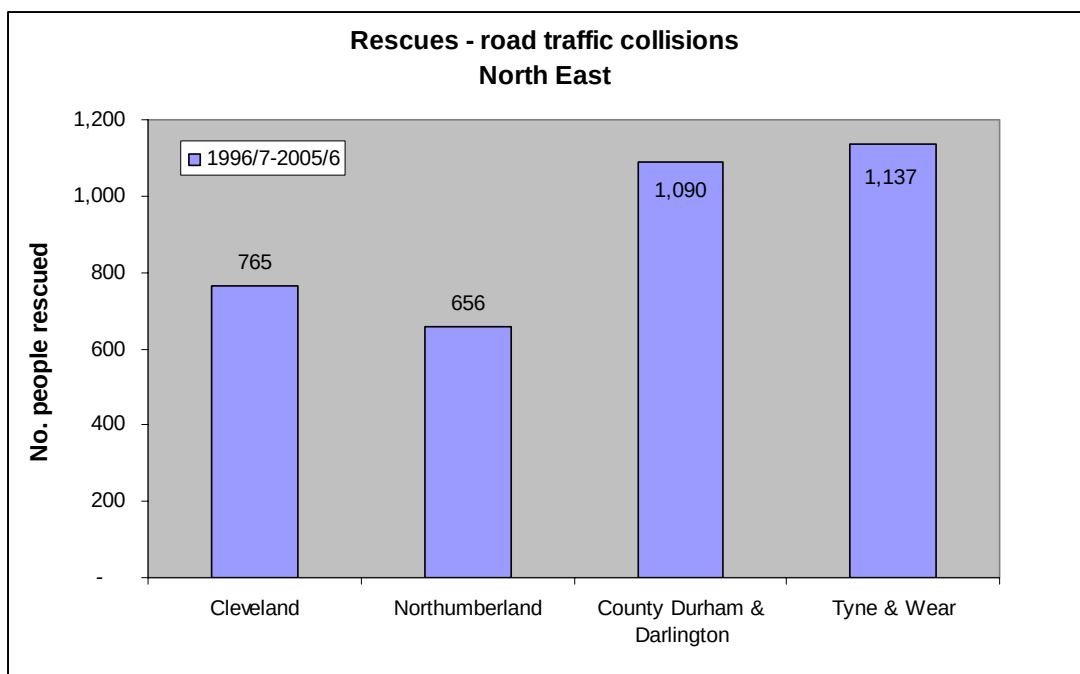
Over 2,400 (2,434) people were rescued from fires in the North East by fire and rescue services in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which figures are available (fig.1.3).³⁵ Over 1,300 (1,319) were rescued in Tyne & Wear and just under 600 (599) were rescued in Cleveland (Fig. 9.1).

Just over 2,000 (2,097) people were rescued by the fire and rescue service from dwelling fires in the North East in the ten years to 2006, with just under 1,200 (1,190) rescued in Tyne & Wear alone. Fire crews rescued just under 500 (496) people in the years 1997-2006 in Cleveland, 270 in Durham and just under 150 in Northumberland. Over 200 (228) were rescued from their homes across the region in 2006 alone.

³⁵ Table 1g



*Fig.9.2. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*



*Fig. 9.3. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*

Over 3,600 (3,648) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the North East in the 10 years to 2005/6, the most recent year for which data is available (fig. 1.5.). Just under 400 (393) – the second highest level over the ten year period - were rescued across the region in 2005/6 (fig.9.2).

Fire crews in Tyne and Wear rescued over 1,100 (1,137) in the 10 year period and over 1,000 (1,090) were rescued in County Durham. In Cleveland, over 700 (765) people were rescued and in Northumberland the figure exceeded 600 (656).³⁶

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

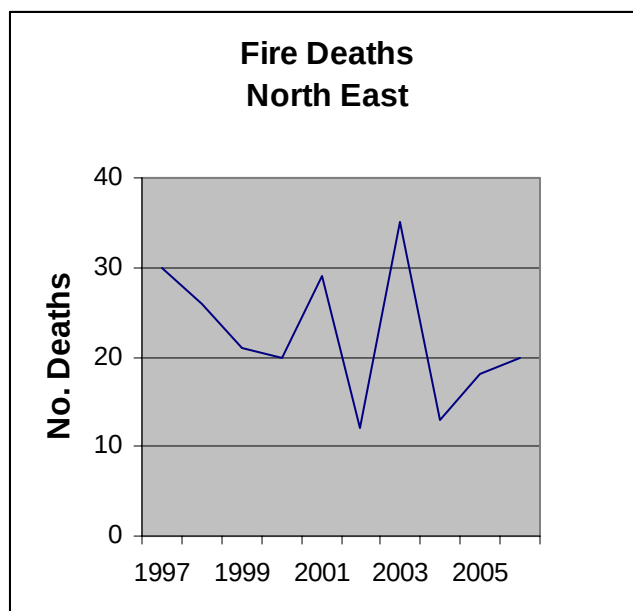


Fig. 9.4. Source: written answer to parliamentary question 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release March 2008.

Deaths from fires in the North East rose for the second year running in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available (Fig 9.4).³⁷ At 20, the number in 2006 is at the same level as deaths in 1999-2000. Fire deaths hit a low of 12 in 2002, bouncing back to a high of 35 a year later.

³⁶ Table 1h

³⁷ Table 2b

10 West Midlands

Rescues

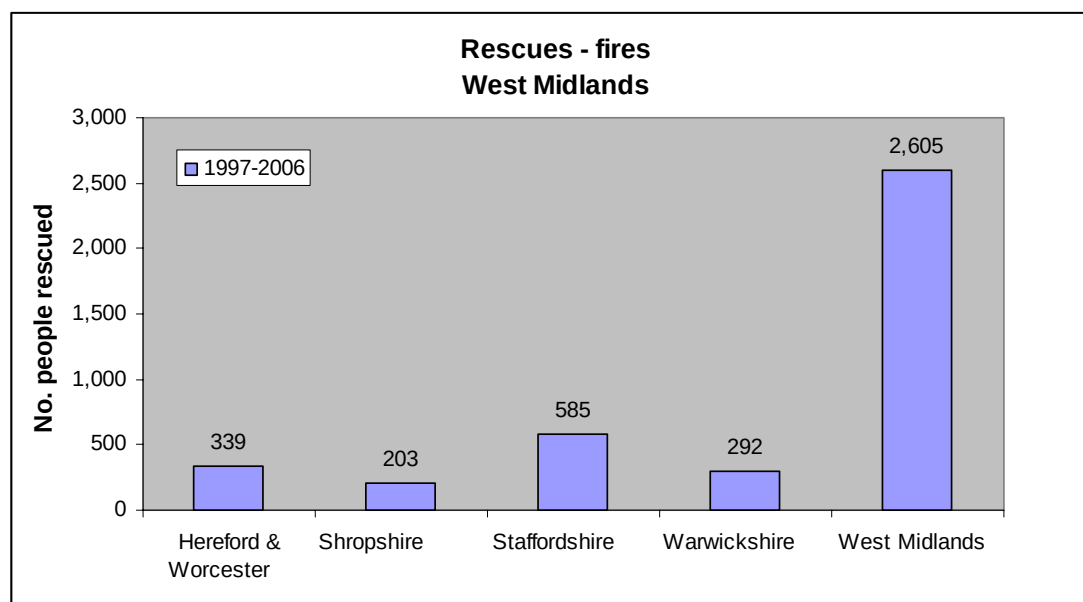


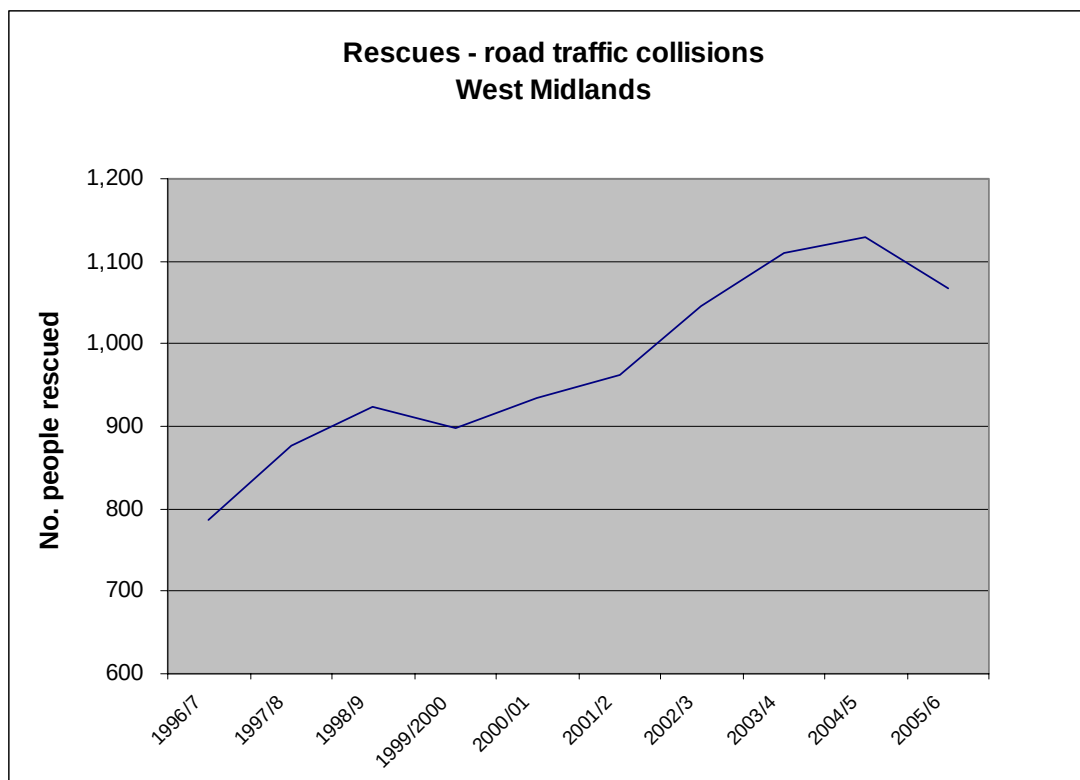
Fig. 10.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Over 4,000 (4,024) people were rescued from fires by the fire and rescue services in the West Midlands region in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (fig.1.3).³⁸

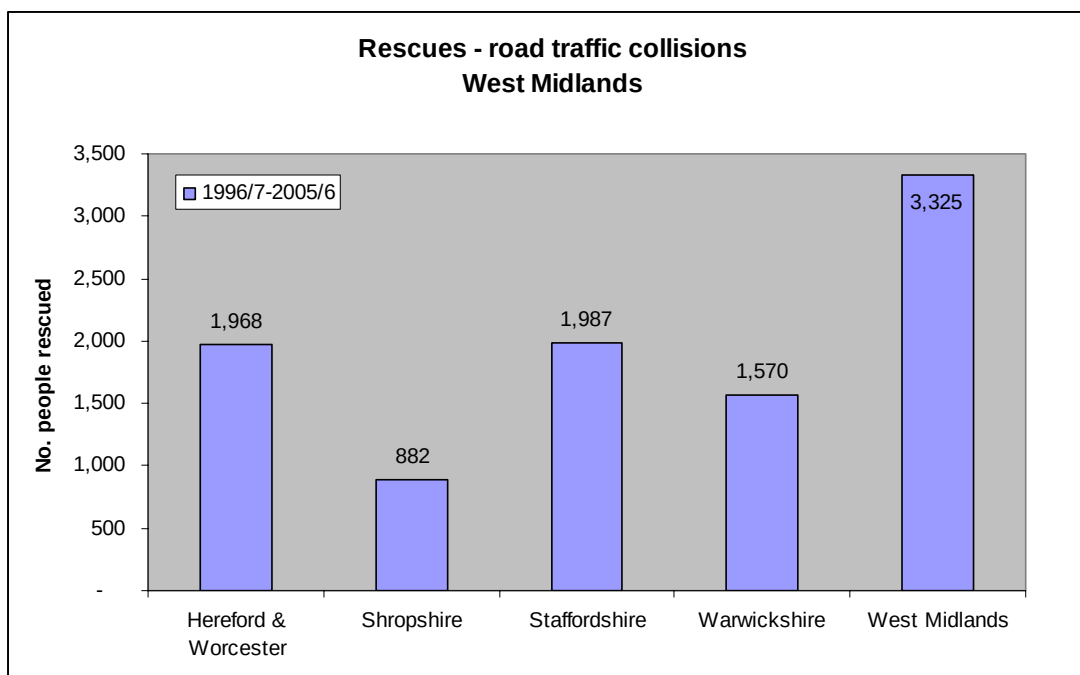
In the West Midlands fire authority area, 2,605 were rescued in the ten years to 2006, while just under 600 (585) people were rescued in Staffordshire (fig. 10.1). Data for 2006 is provisional.

Over 3,600 (3,643) people were rescued in the West Midlands from dwelling fires by fire and rescue services in the ten most recent years for which data is available. In 1997-2006 more than 2,300 (2,385) people were rescued from fires in their homes in the local authority area of West Midlands, over 500 (525) in Staffordshire, just under 300 (283) in Hereford & Worcester, over 200 (274) in Warwickshire and over 100 (176) in Shropshire. In 2006 alone, 277 people were rescued from their homes across the region.

³⁸ Table 1g



*Fig. 10.2. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*



*Fig. 10.3. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*

Over 9,000 (9,732) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the West Midlands region between 1996/7 and 2005/6, the most recent ten years for which data is available (fig 1.5). In 2005/6, for the fourth year running fire crews rescued over 1,000 (1,068) people, which was a 36 per cent rise on 1996/7 (fig. 10.2). West Midlands crews rescued over 3,300 (3,325) while in Staffordshire and Hereford & Worcester the figures stood at just under 2,000 (1,987 and 1,968 people respectively) (fig 10.3).³⁹

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

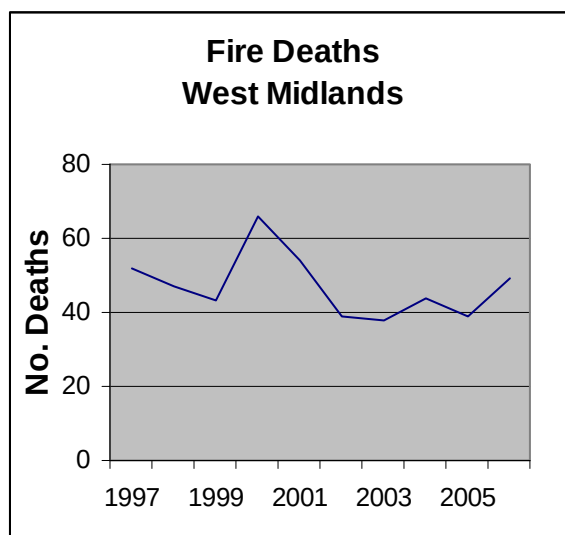


Fig. 10.4. Source: written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release, March 2008.

Fire deaths in the West Midlands region rose in 2006 to the highest level in five years, hitting 49 (Fig. 10.4).⁴⁰ The number peaked at 66 in 2000.

³⁹ Table 1h

⁴⁰ Table 2b

11 East Midlands

Rescues

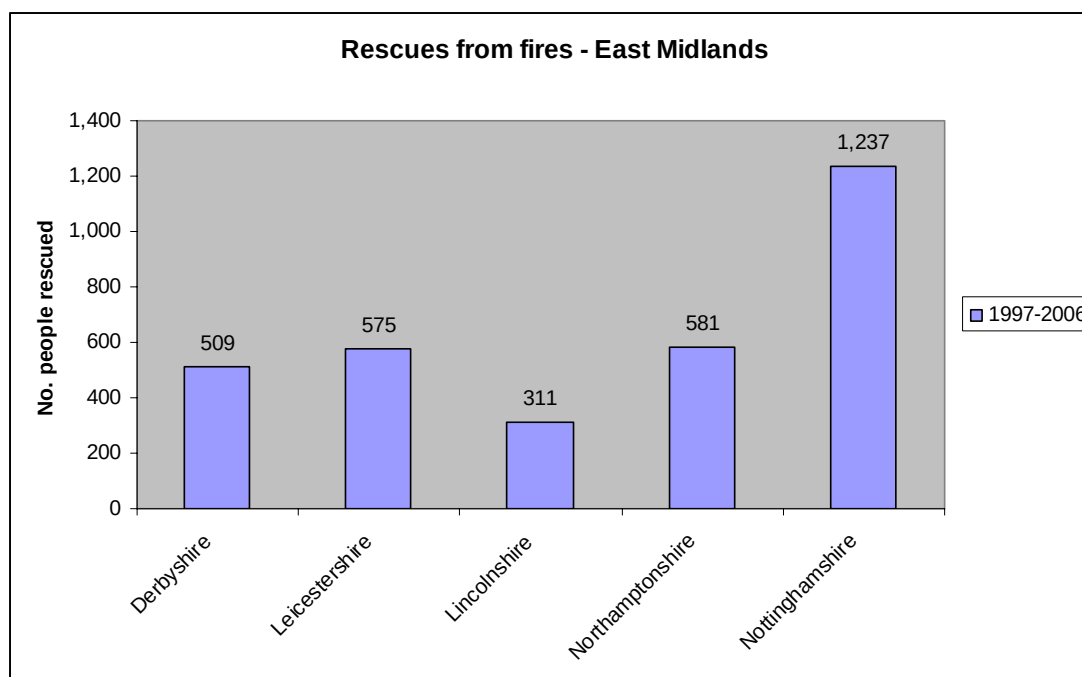


Fig. 11.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Over 3,200 (3,213) people were rescued from fires in the East Midlands by fire and rescue services in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (fig.1.3).⁴¹ Over 1,200 (1,237) were rescued in Nottinghamshire and over 500 rescued in Derbyshire (509), Leicestershire (575) and Northamptonshire (581). In Lincolnshire fire crews rescued more than 300 (311) (Fig. 11.1.). In excess of 250 (256) people were rescued across the region in 2006 alone. Data for 2006 is provisional.

More than 2,700 (2,725) people were rescued from dwelling fires by the fire and rescue services in the East Midlands in the most recent ten years for which data is available.⁴² From 1997-2006, over 1,000 were rescued in Nottinghamshire, over 500 in both Northamptonshire and Derbyshire, and over 250 in Lincolnshire. Fire crews rescued in excess of 200 (224) people from their homes in the region in 2006 alone.

⁴¹ Table 1g

⁴² Table 1g

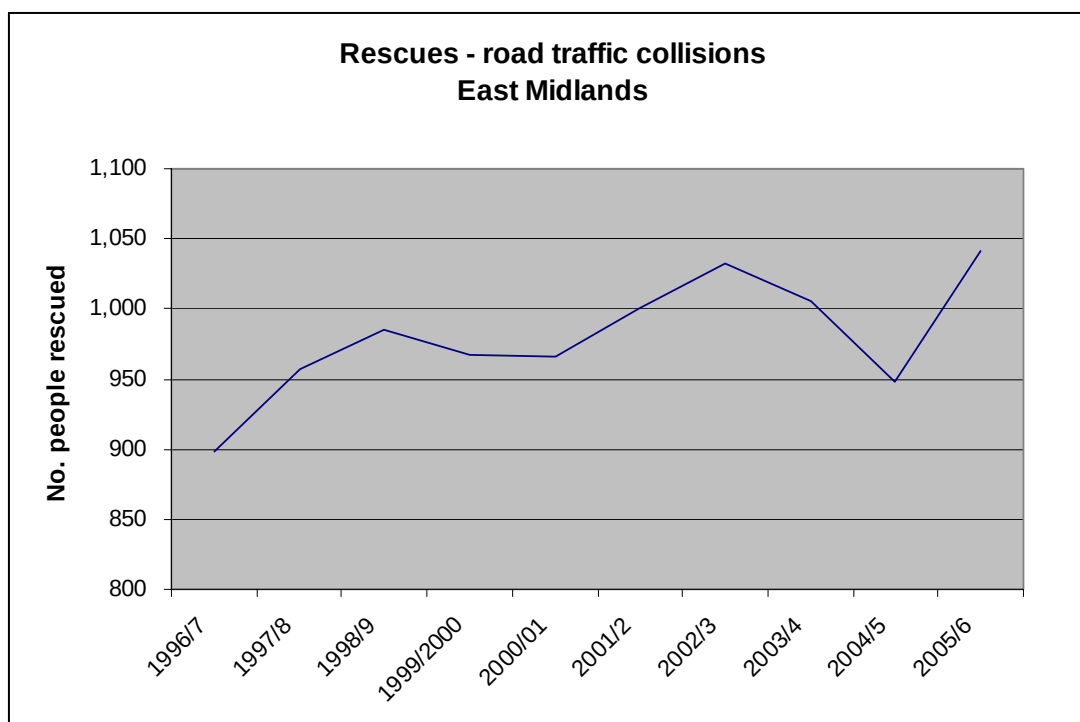


Fig. 11.2 Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

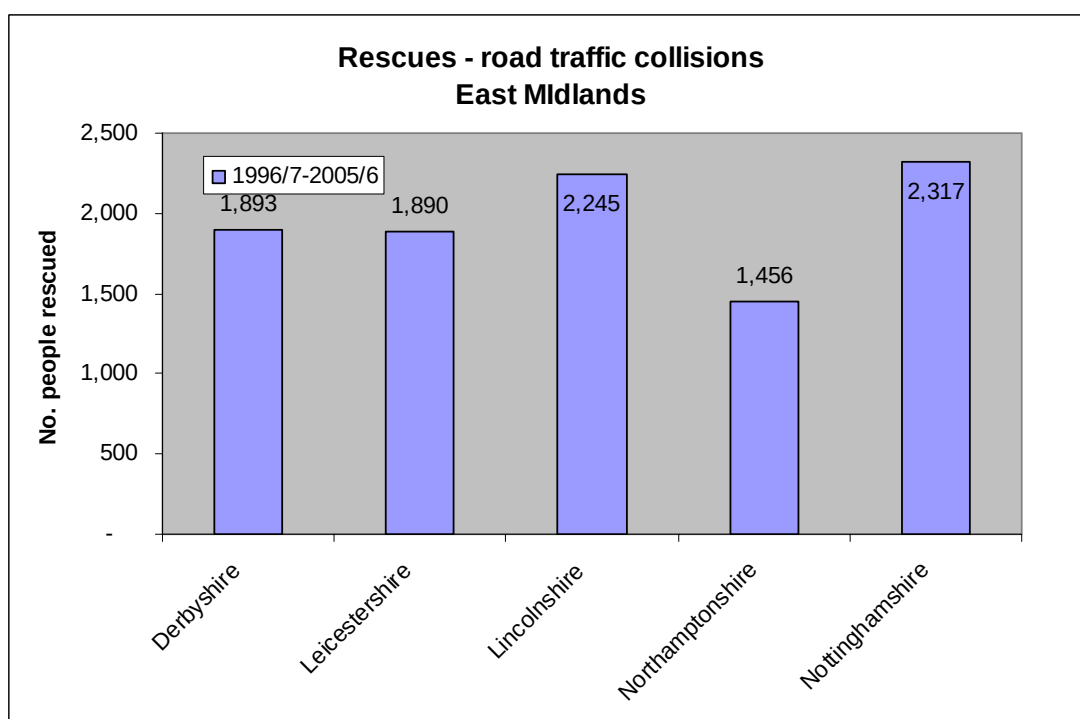


Fig. 11.3. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
 Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Over 9,000 (9,801) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the East Midlands between 1996/7 and 2005/6, the most recent ten years for which data is available (fig. 1.5.). A record high of over 1,000 (1,041) were rescued in the region in 2005/6 (fig. 11.2.).

In Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire over 2,000 were rescued (2,317 and 2,245 respectively) over the ten year period, while fire crews rescued more than 1,800 in Derbyshire (1,893) and Leicestershire (1,890) and in excess of 1,400 (1,456) people in Northamptonshire (fig. 11.3).⁴³

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

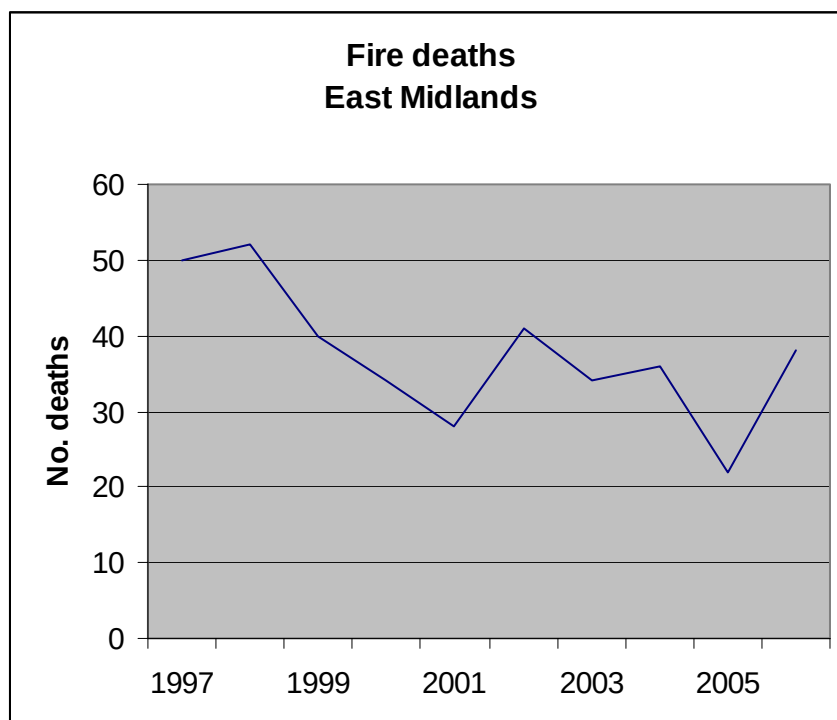


Fig. 11.4. Source: Written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1, March 2008

Deaths from fires in East Midlands rose to a four-year high of 38 in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available (fig 11.4.).⁴⁴ There was a fall from 1997 when there were 50 deaths, but from year to year the numbers have varied substantially.

⁴³ Table 1h

⁴⁴ Table 2b

12 Yorkshire & Humberside

Rescues

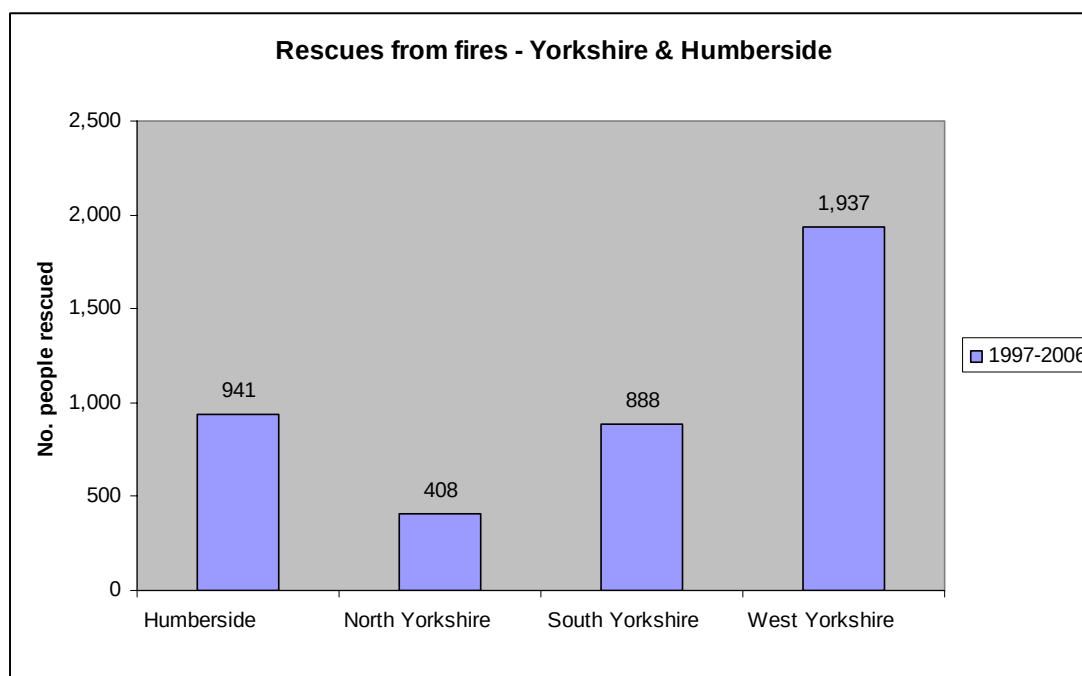


Fig. 12.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

Over 4,000 (4,174) people were rescued by fire and rescue services from fires in Yorkshire & Humberside in 1997-2006, the most recent ten years for which figures are available (fig.1.3).⁴⁵ In 2006 fire crews rescued over 500 (506), a record high, with the number rising in every year bar one over the decade. In West Yorkshire over 1,900 (1,937) people were rescued, while fire crews rescued over 900 (941) in Humberside, over 800 (888) in South Yorkshire and more than 400 (408) in North Yorkshire (fig. 12.1.).

The vast majority of rescues from fires were from dwellings. Over 3,700 people (3,772) were rescued by fire and rescue services from dwelling fires in Yorkshire and Humberside in 1997-2006, the most recent ten years for which data is available. More than 1,700 (1,716) were rescued in West Yorkshire, over 800 in Humberside (855) and South Yorkshire (826) and well over 300 (375) in North Yorkshire. Fire crews rescued over 400 (447) people from their homes in Yorkshire and Humberside in 2006 alone.

⁴⁵ Table 1g

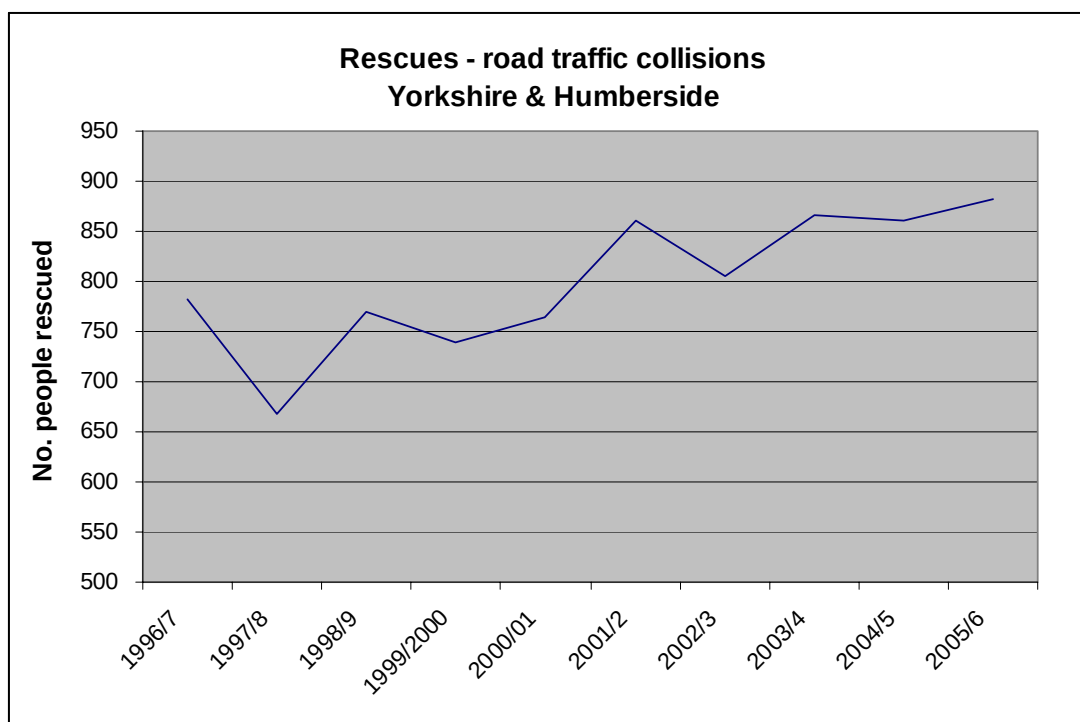


Fig. 12.2. Source: Answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

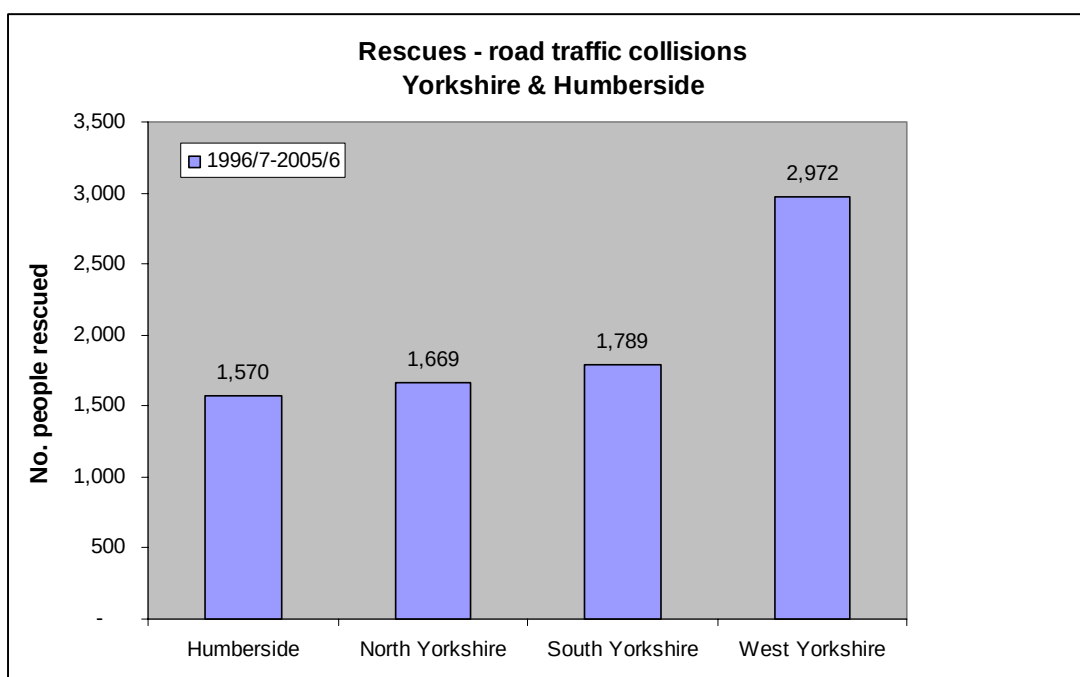


Fig. 12.3. Source: Answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

8,000 people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the Yorkshire & Humberside between 1996/7 and 2005/6, the most recent ten years for which data is available (fig. 1.5.). Fire crews rescued a record 882 people in 2005/6 (fig.12.2). In West Yorkshire just under 3,000 (2,972) people rescued during the 10 year period, while between 1,500 and 1,800 were rescued in South Yorkshire (1,789), North Yorkshire (1,669) and Humberside (1,570).⁴⁶

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

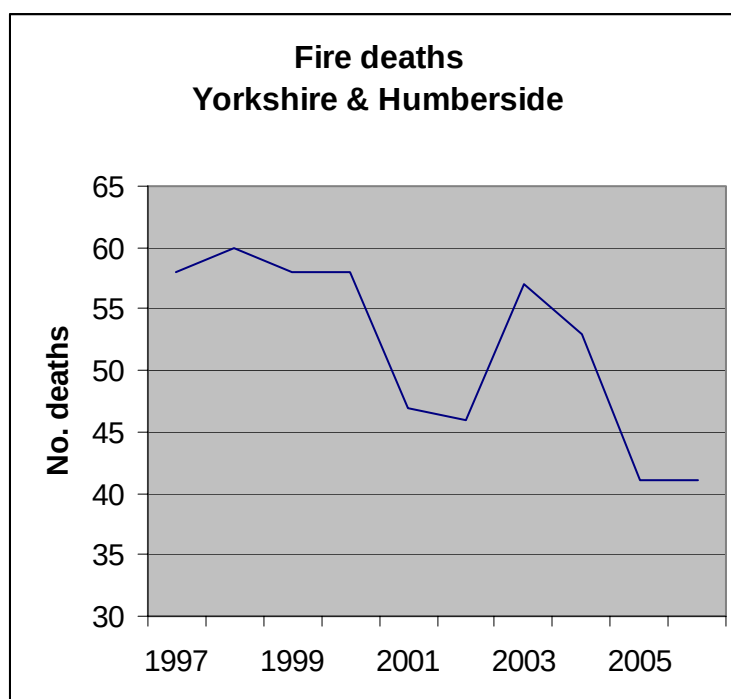


Fig 12.4 Source: Written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1, March 2008

Fire deaths remained stable at 41 in 2006 compared to 2005 in Yorkshire & Humberside (fig. 12.4).⁴⁷ They peaked at 60 in 1998, and bounced back up to just below this level in 2003 (57).

⁴⁶ Table 1h

⁴⁷ Table 2b

13 East Anglia

Rescues

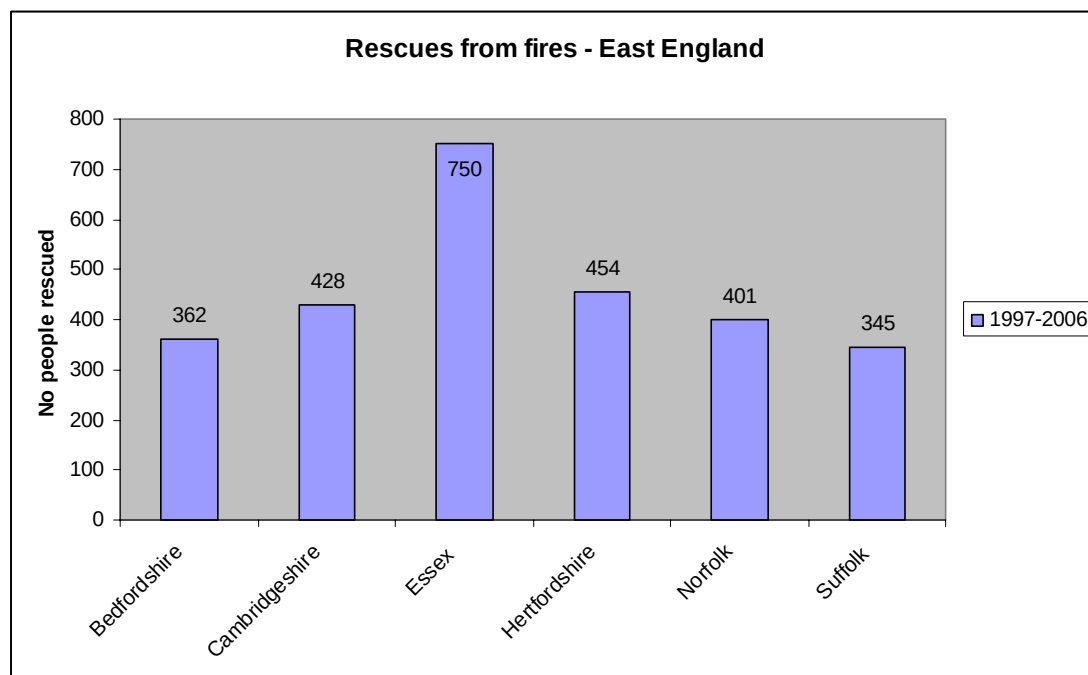
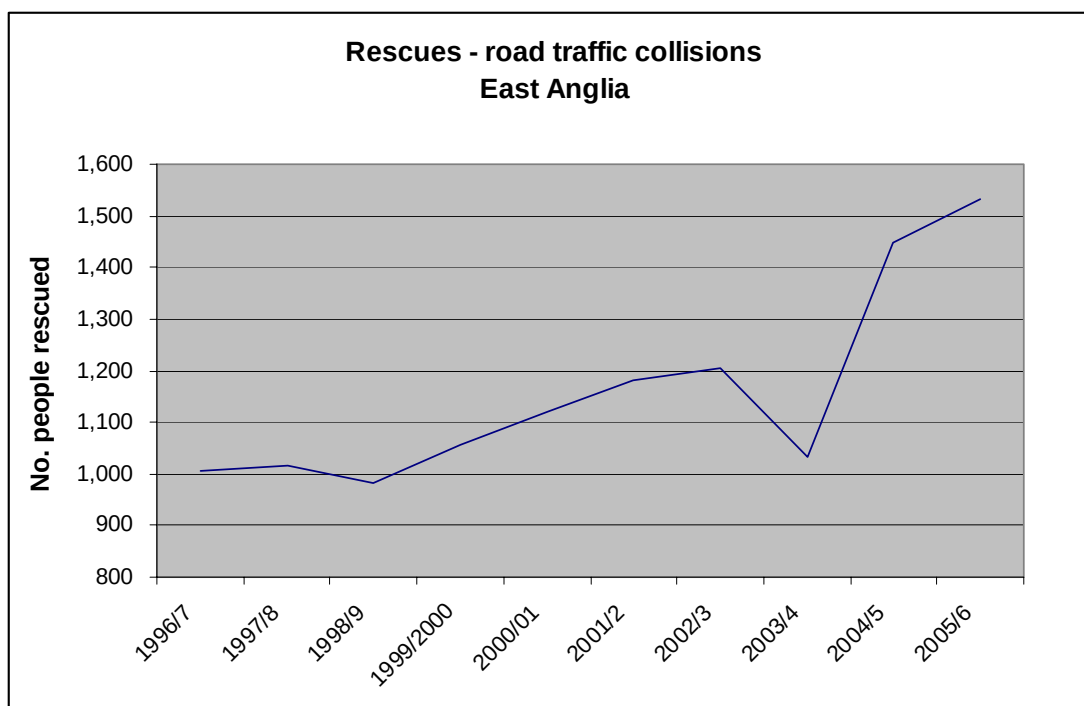


Fig. 13.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.

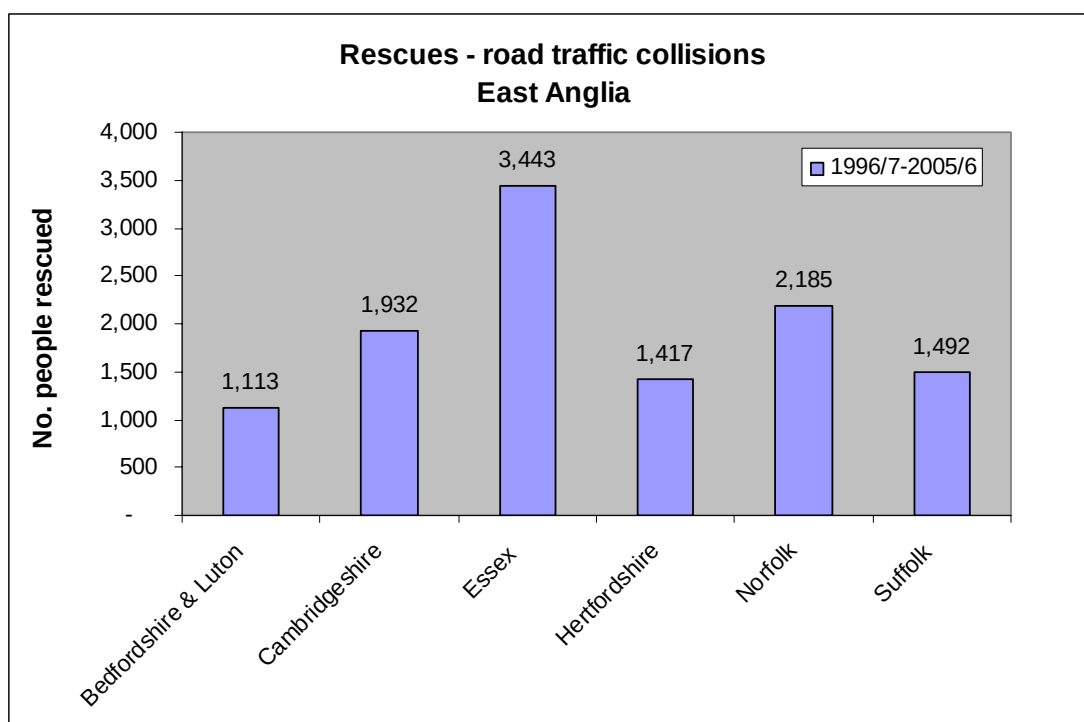
Over 2,700 (2,740) people were rescued from fires in East Anglia by fire and rescue services in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (fig.1.3)⁴⁸ In Essex 750 were rescued, and over 400 in Cambridgeshire (428), Hertfordshire (454) and Norfolk (401). More than 300 were rescued in Bedfordshire (362) and Suffolk (345) (Fig 13.1).

Just under 2,500 (2,479) people were rescued from dwelling fires by fire and rescue services in East Anglia in the most recent ten years for which data is available. Over 650 (659) were rescued in the period 1997-2006 in Essex, over 400 (430) in Hertfordshire and over 300 in Cambridgeshire (377) and Norfolk (360). Over 200 (223) were rescued from their homes across the region in 2006 alone.

⁴⁸ Table 1g



*Fig 13.2. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*



*Fig. 13.3. Source: answer to parliamentary question 21 April 2008.
Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued*

Over 11,000 (11,582) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in East Anglia in the 10 years to 2005/6, the most recent year for which data is available (fig. 1.5.). A record 1,531 people were rescued in 2005/6, a 52 per cent rise on the number rescued in 1996/7 (fig.13.2).

In Essex more than 3,400 (3,443) were rescued over the decade, while crews rescued more than 2,000 (2,185) in Norfolk and over 1,900 (1,932) in Cambridgeshire . In excess of a 1,000 people were rescued in Suffolk (1,492), Hertfordshire (1,417) and Bedfordshire (1,113) (fig.13.3) ⁴⁹

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per road traffic collision involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

Fire deaths

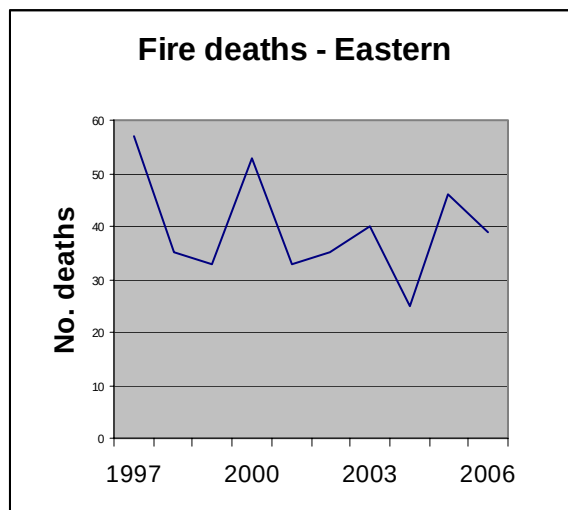


Fig. 13.4. Source: written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release, March 2008.

Deaths from fires in East Anglia in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available, were up from a low of 25 in 2004, hitting 39, but this was down from 46 in 2005 (Fig. 13.4).⁵⁰ The trend since 1997 has been downwards, but the number has varied strongly from year to year in all six brigades in the region.

⁴⁹ Table 1h

⁵⁰ Table 2b

14 London

Rescues

Over 6,300 (6,381) people were rescued from fires in London by the fire and rescue service in 1997-2006, the ten most recent years for which data is available (1997-2006) (fig.1.3).⁵¹

Over 5,600 (5,637) of these rescues were from dwelling fires. In 2006, 684 people were rescued from all fires (of which 627 in dwellings). Data for 2006 is provisional.

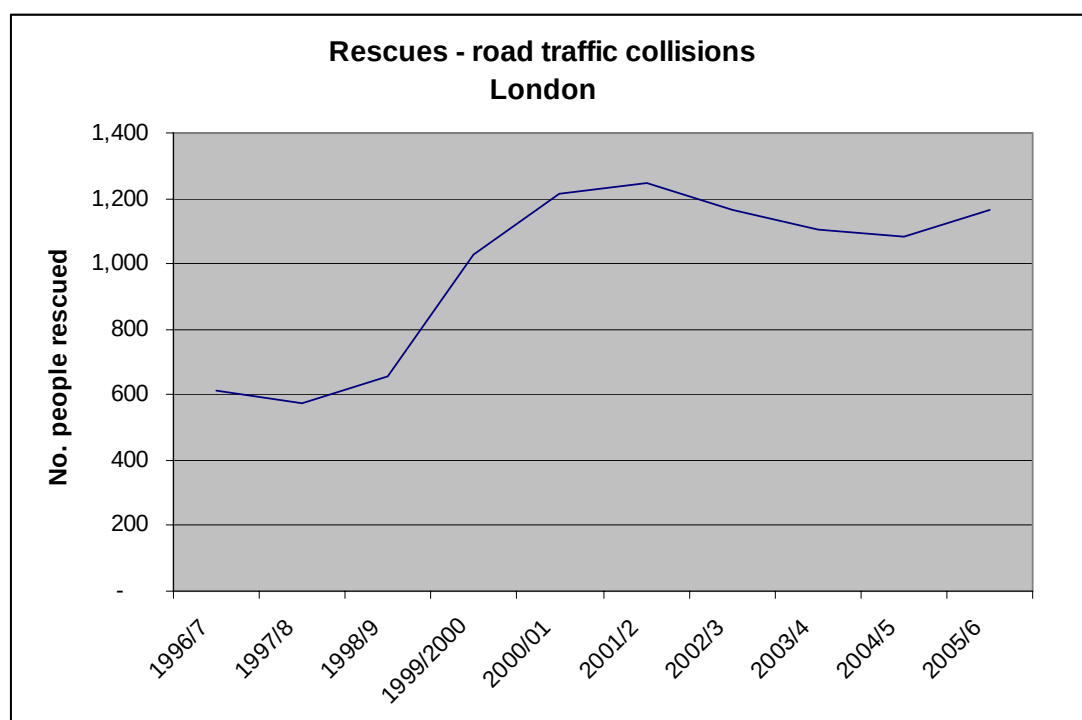


Fig. 14.1. Source: answer to parliamentary question, 21 April 2008

Note: figures based on a very conservative estimate of one person rescued per road traffic collision involving persons rescued

Just under 10,000 (9,845) people involved in road traffic collisions were rescued by fire services in the London in the 10 years to 2005/6, the most recent year for which data is available (fig 1.5.). Over 1,100 (1,166) were rescued in 2005/6, a 91 per cent rise on the number rescued in 1996/7 (fig 14.1)⁵².

Road traffic collision rescue figures are an absolute minimum as they are estimated as one person rescued *per RTC involving persons rescued* (the unit that is recorded).

⁵¹ Table 1g

⁵² Table 1h

Fire deaths

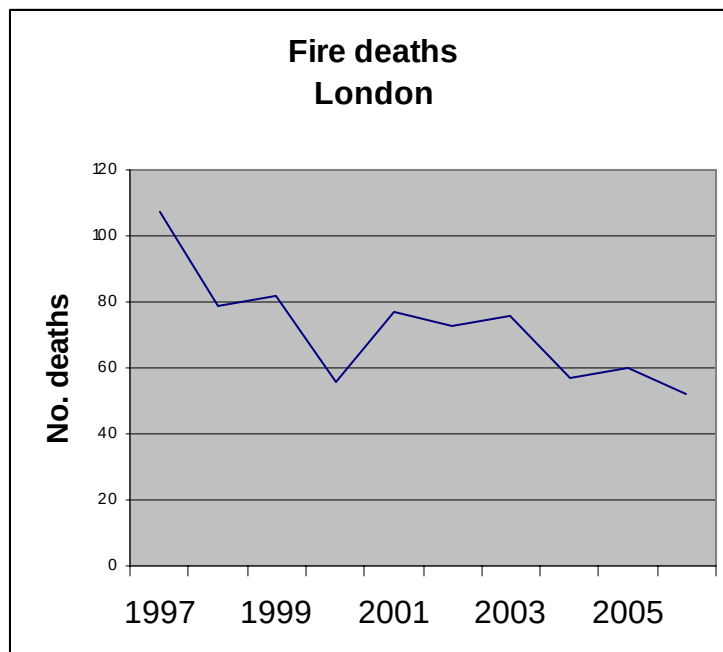


Fig. 14.2. Source: Written answer to parliamentary question, 18 February 2008; Fire and Rescue Services Statistical Release 1, March 2008

Deaths from fires in London hit a ten-year low of 52 in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available (Fig. 14.2.).⁵³ This is less than half the amount (107) recorded in 1997. For five out the most recent ten years deaths stood within the 73-82 range, falling relatively strongly in 2004-2006.

⁵³ Table 2b

Methodology & caveats

These figures published in this document are the most recent and reliable available.

They are based on answers to parliamentary questions, Freedom of Information Act questions and some historical data contained in the official UK fire statistics. While many rescues are recorded, central Government does not make the figures public.

Where estimates were necessary, for example, to arrive at the number of rescues from road traffic collisions, the figures are absolute minimums. Rescue figure included in this document on road traffic collisions in England and Wales are based on the figures that are collected for the numbers of incidents involving persons rescued, which necessarily involve at least one person being rescued. Comparisons with figures showing the actual number of people rescued from Northern Ireland and Scotland strongly suggest that this underestimates the number of people actually rescued in England and Wales.

This report captures only a part of the rescues carried out by the fire and rescue service. The figures exclude members of the public evacuated with the assistance of the fire service for their own safety or assisted in other ways. The figures do not include thousands of other rescues performed by the UK's fire services at other emergencies including the 2007 floods, other water rescues and those rescued from the London Underground on 7/7.

When examining changes in the figures at a fire authority level from one year to next, caution should be exercised. Account should also be taken of the size of the population in a given fire authority area and also the context, such as the rising wealth of the nation which tends to go hand in hand with a higher educational level (higher awareness of fire safety), customs (lower consumption of home made chips, a classic fire risk) and furniture/accommodation that bring a lower risk of fire.

Furthermore, because of weather patterns and an array of other factors from year to year between regions and even between fire authority areas in a region, there are great variations in terms of the emergencies that occur and that require the intervention of the fire and rescue service.