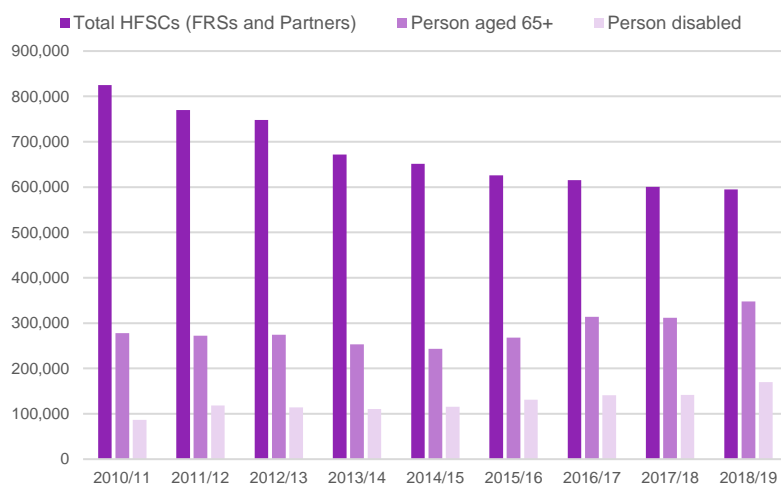




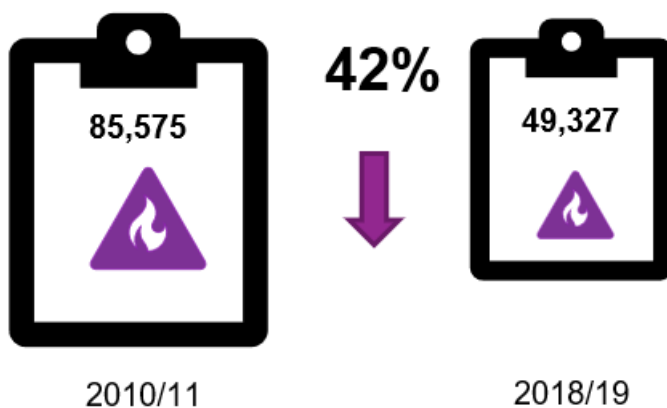
## Fire prevention & protection statistics, England, April 2018 to March 2019

This release contains administrative statistics about prevention and protection activities carried out by fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England.

The total number of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) has been declining since 2010/11. In contrast, the total number of targeted HFSCs (people aged 65 and over, disabled people) both increased over the same time. In 2018/19, FRSs and their partners completed over 590,000 HFSCs. This was one per cent fewer than the 2017/18 and 11 per cent fewer than in 2013/14.



The total number of fire safety audits has been declining since 2010/11. It declined 27 per cent over the past five years, however was virtually unchanged since last year.



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Date published:  
3 October 2019

Frequency of release:  
Annual

Forthcoming release:  
[Home Office statistics release calendar](#)

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# 1 Fire prevention

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Fire and rescue services (FRSs) undertake prevention activities which provide information and advice and aim to encourage fire safety behaviours, educate people on the steps to be taken to prevent the occurrence of a fire and increase the survivability when involved in a fire. This section focuses on Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs, also known as Home Fire Risk Checks) and smoke alarm ownership.

## Key results

- In 2018/19, **FRSs and their partners completed 594,766 HFSCs**. This was one per cent fewer than the previous year (600,324 in 2017/18) and 11 per cent fewer than five years previously (672,019 in 2013/14). (Source: [FIRE1201](#))
- In 2018/19, **FRSs and their partners completed 347,748 HFSCs targeted at people aged 65 and over**. This was 12 per cent greater than the previous year (311,588 in 2017/18) and 37 per cent greater than five years previously (253,565 in 2013/14). (Source: [FIRE1201](#))
- In 2018/19, **FRSs and their partners completed 170,257 HFSCs targeted at disabled people**. This was 20 per cent greater than the previous year (142,043 in 2017/18) and 54 per cent greater than five years previously (110,712 in 2013/14). (Source: [FIRE1201](#))
- The latest available data show that in 2017/18, **90 per cent of households owned a working smoke alarm**, unchanged from 2016/17, a two percentage points increase since 2012/13 (88 per cent in 2012/13) and an increase of 14 percentage points since 2001 (the earliest date for which these data are available). (Source: [FIRE1201](#))

FRSs have been conducting fire prevention work for a number of years and in a number of different areas. This work became a statutory duty for FRSs in 2004 with the introduction of the Fire and Rescue Services Act. Typical prevention activities include: Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs), Safe and Well visits, arson prevention, promotional work with young people and other vulnerable groups as well as other campaigns and initiatives. However, because of difficulties in defining some of this work and in order to minimise burdens on FRSs we have, from this year, only collected information on HFSCs and Safe and Well visits (SWVs) – we no longer collect information on campaigns and initiatives. The information collected in previous years on campaigns and initiatives can be found in the [Table FIRE1203](#).

## Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) and Safe and Well visits (SWVs<sup>1</sup>)

HFSCs are often targeted towards the more vulnerable members of the community, including older people and those with disabilities, and aim to offer bespoke fire safety advice based on their household and lifestyle which can mitigate the risk of fire. These visits can result in the installation of smoke alarms and safety recommendations such as moving/removing furniture which may be hazardous. Many FRSs now conduct HFSCs as part of a wider Safe and Well Visit (SWV), which can cover additional factors such as falls risk assessment, smoking cessation, cold homes and fuel poverty and a range of other health and community issues depending on local arrangements.

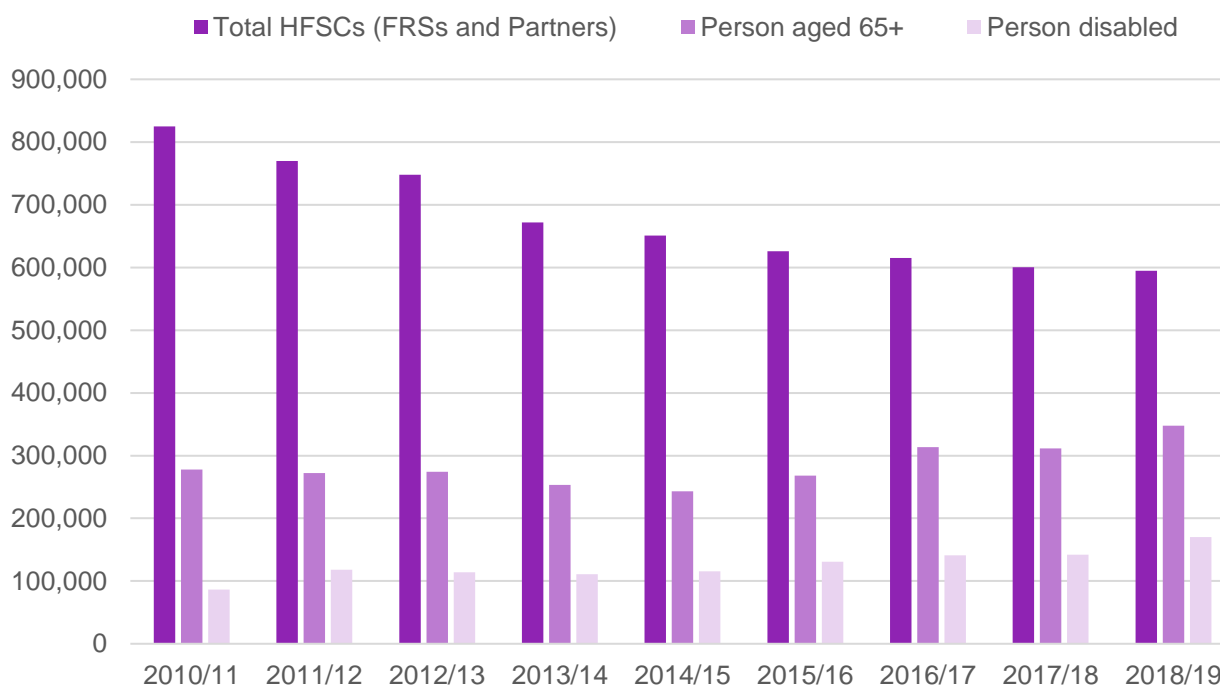
- In 2018/19 **FRSs and their partners completed 594,766 HFSCs**. This was one per cent fewer than the previous year (600,324 in 2017/18) and 11 per cent fewer than five years previously (672,019 in 2013/14).
- FRSs and their partners completed 347,748 HFSCs targeted at people aged 65 and over. This was 12 per cent greater than the previous year (311,588 in 2017/18) and 37 per cent greater than five years previously (253,565 in 2013/14).
- FRSs and their partners completed 170,257 HFSCs targeted at disabled people. This was 20 per cent greater than the previous year (142,043 in 2017/18) and 54 per cent greater than five years previously (110,712 in 2013/14).
- Three per cent of HFSCs (16,110) were completed by partners. This compares to four per cent in the previous year (24,284 in 2017/18) and seven per cent five years previously (45,313 in 2013/14).
- For the first time, because of changes to how the data are collected, we can say that 66 per cent of HFSCs were targeted at the two groups – previously there would have been double counting (i.e. households with both at least one person aged 65 and over and at least one disabled person would be counted twice).
- Of the 594,766 HFSCs undertaken in 2018/19, 346,742 (58 per cent) were part of a SWV.

The Home Office has been collecting data on the number of HFSCs that FRSs carry out since 2010/11. At a national level, the number of HFSCs that FRSs complete has been declining since 2010/11. In contrast, the number of HFSCs completed on the two targeted groups the Home Office monitor (people aged 65 and over, disabled people) both increased over the same time. FRSs may also choose to target other specific groups.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detailed information on Safe and Well visits see the NFCC website here <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Safe-and-Well>

**Chart 1: Total numbers of HFSCs and targeted HFSCs completed by FRSS, England, 2010/11 to 2018/19**



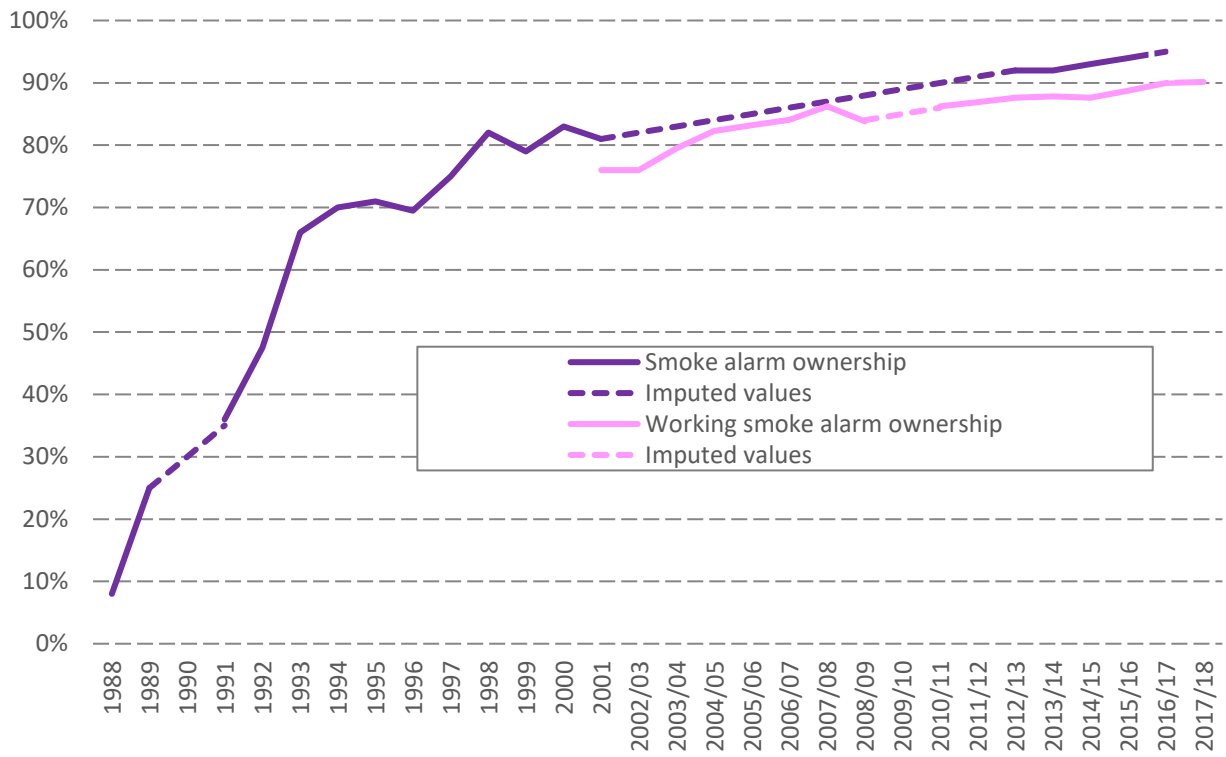
### Smoke Alarm Ownership

Data on the proportion of households with a smoke alarm have been collected since the 1980s from a variety of sources and data on ownership of a working smoke alarm have been collected from 2001. Since 2008/09 the [English Housing Survey \(EHS\)](#) has been the primary source of information on smoke alarm ownership. The exact questions asked change each year but have previously included ownership of a smoke alarm, ownership of a working smoke alarm, smoke alarm testing habits and carbon monoxide alarm ownership.

The latest available data show that in 2017/18, 90 per cent of households owned a working smoke alarm, unchanged from 2016/17, a two percentage points increase since 2012/13 (88% in 2012/13) and an increase of 14 percentage points since 2001 (the earliest date for which these data are available).

In 2016/17, 95 per cent of households reported owning a smoke alarm: the highest level ever recorded. The five percentage points difference between households owning a smoke alarm and households having a working smoke alarm is the same as reported in 2014/15, the last time both questions were asked.

**Chart 2: Percentage of households owning a smoke alarm or working smoke alarm, England & Wales or England, 1988 to 2017/18**



## 2 Fire protection

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Fire protection refers to FRSs' statutory role in ensuring public safety in the wider built environment and involves auditing and, where necessary, enforcing regulatory compliance, primarily but not exclusively in respect of the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO). This section of the release specifically focuses on fire safety audits, short audits and building regulation consultations.

### Key results

- **In 2018/19 FRSs carried out 49,327 Fire Safety Audits.** This was virtually unchanged from the previous year (49,423 in 2017/18) but 27 per cent fewer than five years previously (67,266 in 2013/14). (Source: [FIRE1202](#))
- 33,265 (67%) of audits in 2018/19 were deemed satisfactory. This was very similar to the 33,851 (68%) that were deemed satisfactory in the previous year (2017/18). (Source: [FIRE1202](#))
- These 49,327 audits were **three per cent of premises known to FRSs.** This percentage was virtually unchanged from the previous year (3% in 2017/18) but a two percentage point reduction from 2013/14 (5%). (Source: [FIRE1202](#))
- The most common type of premises to be audited was “shops”. There were 8,999 shops audited in 2018/19, 18 per cent of all Fire Safety Audits. In 2018/19 the second most common type of premises audited was “care homes” (14%), however in 2017/18 the second most common was purpose-built flats (13%). (Source: [FIRE1204](#))
- There were 2,390 formal notices issued in 2018/19 (compared with 2,239 in 2017/18) comprising 1,479 enforcement notices, 775 prohibition notices, 91 alteration notices and 45 prosecutions. (Source: [FIRE1202](#))

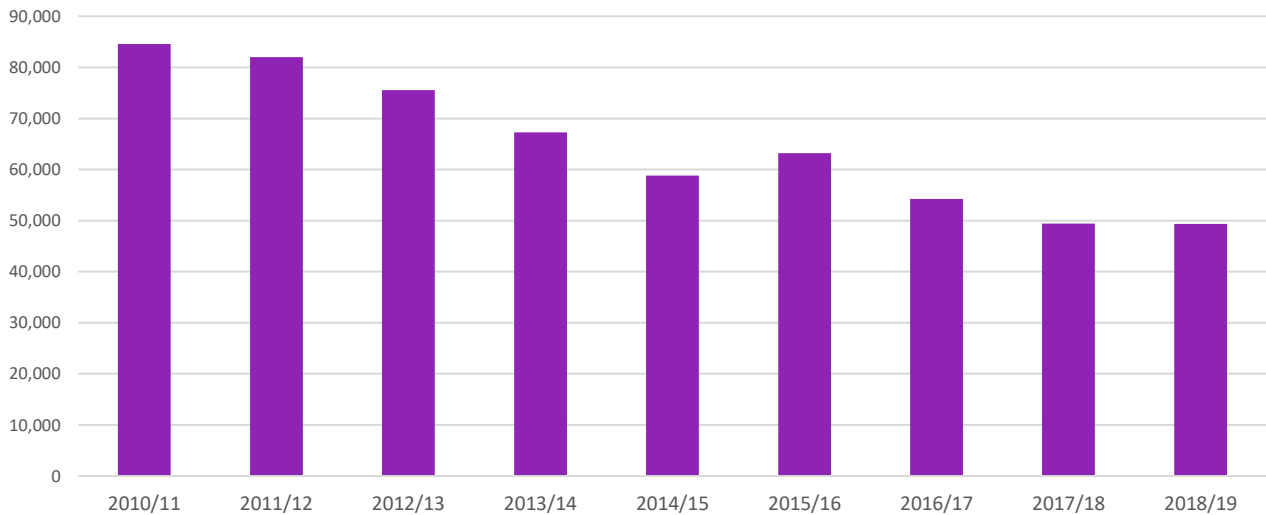
### Number of Fire Safety Audits

A fire safety audit is a planned visit by an FRS to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the level of compliance with the requirements of the FSO in a particular premises. The FSO requires a ‘responsible person’ for a workplace or premises to which the public have access to carry out and regularly review a fire risk assessment to ensure that the general fire precautions are adequate and appropriate, to reduce the risk from fire to employees and other relevant persons to as low as reasonably practicable. The FSO applies to the majority of non-domestic premises and the communal areas in residential buildings.

It is a matter for FRSs to determine how many audits they carry out per year but they must have a locally determined risk-based inspection programme and management strategy in place for enforcing the FSO.

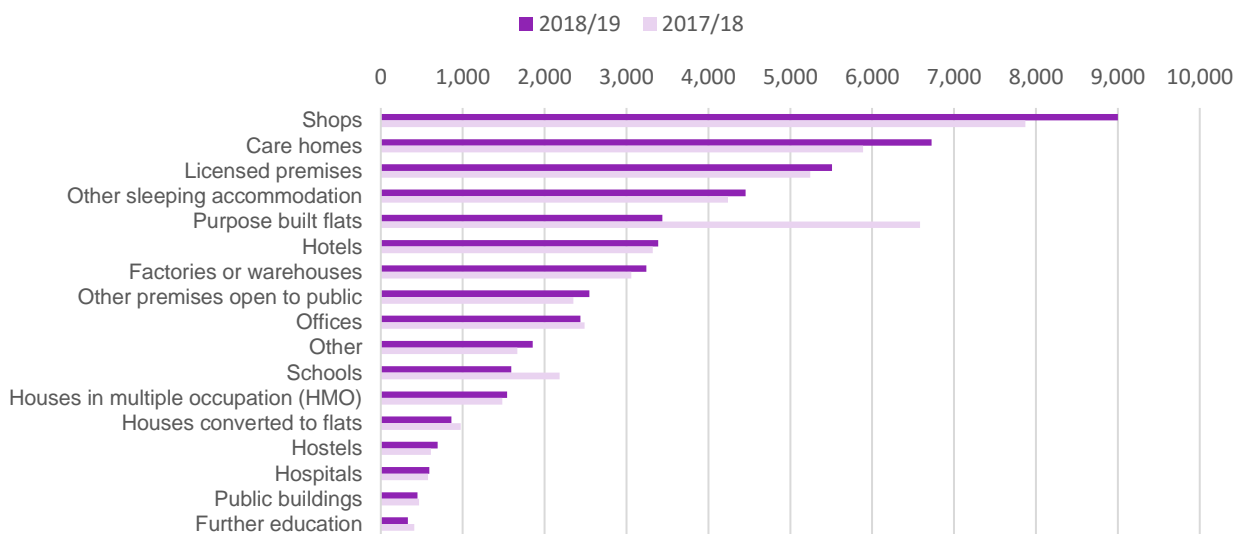
In 2018/19 FRSs carried out 49,327 Fire Safety Audits. This was virtually unchanged from the previous year (49,423 in 2017/18) but 27 per cent fewer than five years previously (67,266 in 2013/14). Since 2010/11 there has been a general decline in the number of fire safety audits that FRSs complete with 42 per cent fewer completed in 2018/19 compared with 2010/11.

**Chart 3: Number of Fire Safety Audits, England, 2010/11 to 2018/19.**



It is expected that the number of audits on different premises types in individual FRSs will vary from year to year depending on the local need, targeting strategies and the complexity of the specific buildings being audited. However, at the national level, certain patterns have remained relatively stable. For example, the highest proportion of fire safety audits were on shop premises for all years on record between 2011/12 and 2018/19.

**Chart 4: Total number of fire safety audits by FRSs, by type of building, England, 2017/18 and 2018/19 (ordered by 2018/19 figures)**

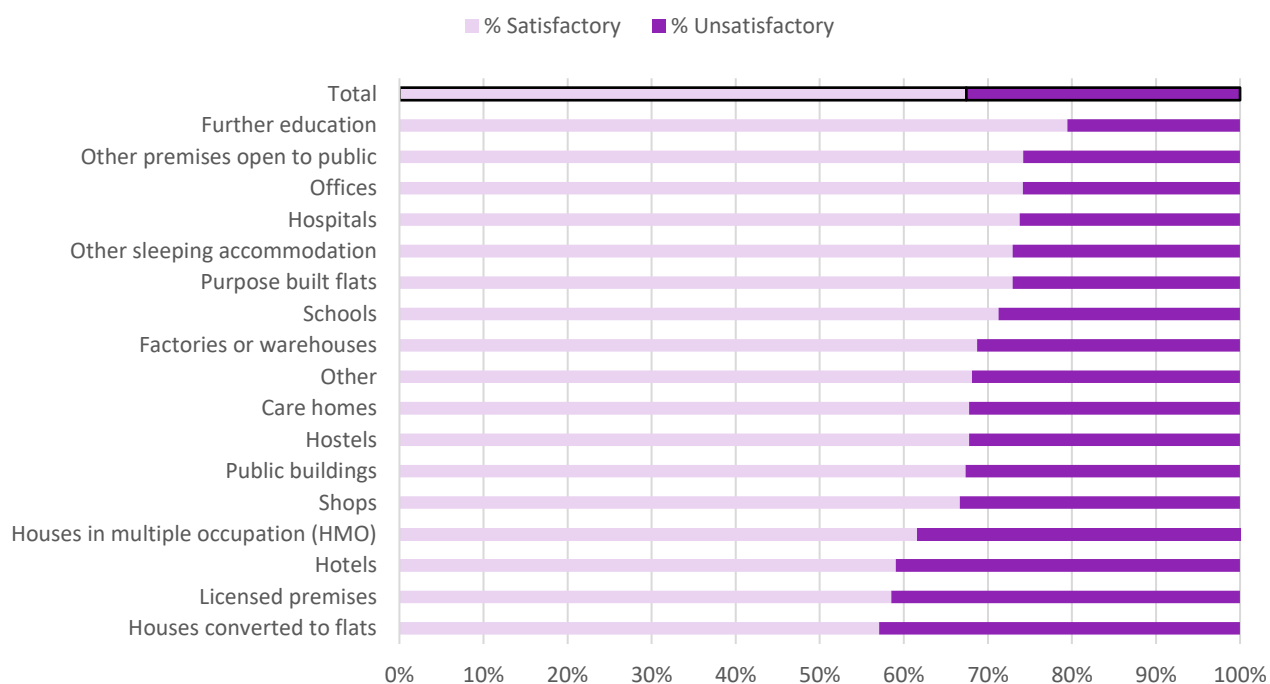


There were 3,437 audits of purpose-built blocks of flats of four storeys or more in England in 2018/19, returning this to similar levels seen in 2016/17 (an 11 per cent increase on the 3,097 audits in 2016/17) but lower than the 6,586 audits in 2017/18 which is likely to have been because there was an increase in focus in these audits after the Grenfell Tower Fire. While purpose-built flats were the second most common audit in 2017/18, care homes were in both 2016/17 and 2018/19.

### Outcome of Fire Safety Audits

When a fire safety audit is completed the result is categorised as either satisfactory, when no further action is taken, or unsatisfactory, when the responsible person is non-compliant with the FSO.

**Chart 5: Proportion of fire safety audits deemed satisfactory or unsatisfactory by type of building, England, 2018/19 (ordered by per cent satisfactory)**



In 2018/19 49,327 fire safety audits and 33,265 (67%) were deemed satisfactory. The proportion of audits that were satisfactory was 56 per cent in 2010/11 and increased gradually until the middle of the decade. Since then the proportion has been relatively stable between 67 and 69 per cent. As Chart 5, above, shows the premises type with the greatest proportion of satisfactory audits was “further education” (79%) while houses converted to flats (57%), licensed premises (59%) and hotels (59%) were the premises with the lowest proportion.

When an outcome is unsatisfactory and the risk to relevant persons is not significant and the responsible person is willing to comply, agreed action plans known as informal notifications may be issued instead of formal enforcement notice procedures.



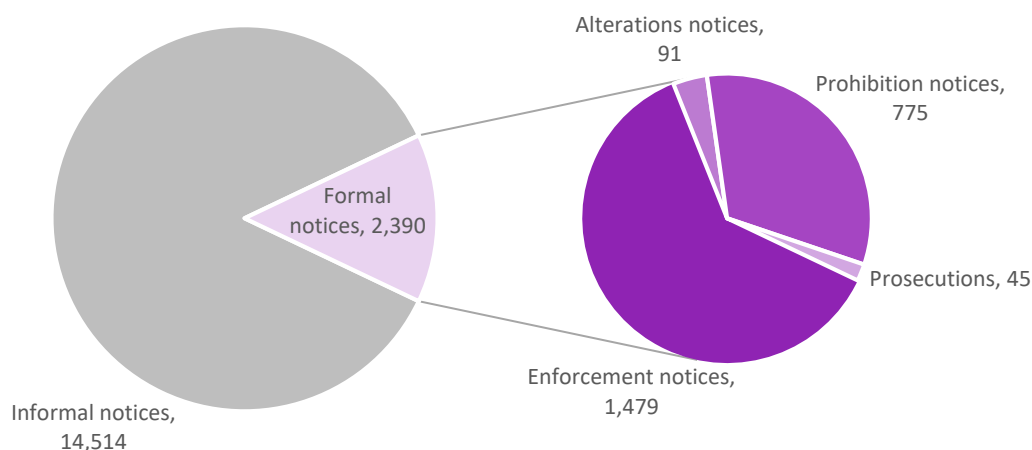
Formal notifications are issued in the most serious of cases where less formal action has failed to resolve issues of non-compliance. These are categorised within the FSO as:

**Table 1: Details of formal notifications.**

<b>Enforcement notices (Article 30)</b>	These are served if the enforcing authority is of the opinion that the responsible person has failed to comply with any provision of the FSO or of any regulations made under it.
<b>Prohibition notices (Article 31)</b>	These are served on the responsible person or any other person, if the enforcing authority is of the opinion that use of premises involves or will involve a risk to relevant persons so serious that use of the premises ought to be prohibited or restricted.
<b>Alteration notices (Article 29)</b>	These are served on the responsible person if the enforcing authority is of the opinion that the premises constitutes a serious risk to relevant persons (whether due to the features of the premises, their use, any hazard present, or any other circumstances); or may constitute such a risk if a change is made to them or the use to which they are put.
<b>Prosecutions (Article 32)</b>	These are the number of convictions for failure to comply with an alteration, enforcement or prohibition notice, or any other matter for which it is an offence under Article 32.

There were 2,390 formal notices issued in 2018/19 (compared with 2,249 in 2017/18) comprising 1,479 enforcement notices, 775 prohibition notices, 91 alteration notices and 45 prosecutions.

**Chart 6: Fire safety notices resulting from unsatisfactory fire safety audits (informal and formal) issued in England, 2018/19**



### Short Audits

Since 2016 FRSs have had the option of using the short audit form, designed by the sector to support the principles of better regulation and allow FRSs to focus their enforcement resources more effectively on higher risk premises.

In 2016/17, for the first time, the Home Office collected data from FRSs on the number of these short audits that they complete. The data were collected on a voluntary basis and

were only indicative of the national picture as only eleven out of 45 FRSs provided data. In 2017/18, Home Office made this collection mandatory and received short audit figures from 22 FRSs, increasing slightly to 24 in 2018/19. Due to the low number of responses and the immaturity of the data collection, these figures are considered experimental statistics at present. More information about experimental statistics can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#). Home Office statisticians aim to work with FRSs to improve the quality of the data in future releases. Experimental statistics are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as a means to build in quality at an early stage. Collecting data on the number of short audits enables greater understanding of the protection work that FRSs undertake.

In 2018/19, the 24 FRSs that provided data carried out 9,767 short audits. This represents 20 per cent of all audits and 41 per cent of audits carried out in the 24 FRSs that provided short audits information.

### **Number of staff employed for fire safety activities**

For the first time the Home Office collected information on the number of staff employed by FRSs for fire safety activities. The information can be found in FS10 in [FIRE1204](#). This showed that in England on 31 March 2019 there were 72 fire engineers (FTE) employed by FRSs, 503 staff competent to carry out a short audit, 951 competent to carry out an audit, 597 competent to serve an enforcement notice and 407 competent to serve a prohibition notice. As FRS staff are likely to be competent to carry out more than one of these activities, the categories are not mutually exclusive.

### **Building regulation consultations and other fire safety activity**

FRSs also provide data on the number of consultations received under Building Regulations; and any other fire safety activities they undertake to support business understanding of, and compliance with, the FSO. Building regulation consultations are statutory consultations with FRSs by building control bodies under articles 45 and 46 of the FSO. The information can be found in [FS2 in FIRE1204](#).

In 2018/19 FRSs carried out 50,157 building regulation consultations. This was a five per cent decrease in the number of building regulation consultations compared with 2017/18 (52,834). The main reason for this decrease was the decrease of 1,035 shop premises (a 10% decrease compared 2017/18). The largest percentage decrease over the same time was 25 per cent for public buildings, although this was a relatively small 163 premises. Similarly to fire safety audits, the highest proportion of building regulation consultations in 2018/19 were on shops (19% or 9,417). FRSs carried out 75,036 other fire safety activities in 2018/19 (an increase of nine per cent compared with 68,857 in 2017/18).

## 3 Further information

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This release contains administrative statistics about prevention and protection activities carried out by fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England. This publication also draws from other sources such as the English Housing Survey.

Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics and other Home Office statistical releases are available from the [Statistics at Home Office](#) pages on the GOV.UK website.

Data tables linked to this release and all other fire statistics releases can be found on the Home Office's 'Fire statistics data tables' page. The sections above state the most relevant tables for each section. The tables can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables>

Guidance for using these statistics and other fire statistics outputs is available on the fire statistics collection page, found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-guidance>.

The information published in this release is kept under review, taking into account the needs of users and burdens on suppliers and producers, in line with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). If you have any comments, suggestions or enquiries, please contact the team via email using [firestatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:firestatistics@homeoffice.gov.uk) or via the user feedback form on the fire statistics collection page.

### Revisions

The figures in this release refer to activity that occurred in the financial year 2018/19, the year up to and including 31 March 2019. The statistics published may not match those held locally by FRSs and revisions may occur in the future.

### Other related publications

[Home Office](#) publish five other statistical releases covering fire and rescue services:

- [Fire and rescue incident statistics, England](#): provides statistics on trends in fires, casualties, false alarms and non-fire incidents attended by fire and rescue services in England, updated quarterly.
- [Detailed analysis of fires attended by fire and rescue services in England](#): focuses on fires attended by fire and rescue services across England, and fire-related fatalities and non-fatal casualties in those fires; including analyses of the causes of fires and smoke alarms ownership and operation.
- [Detailed analysis of non-fire incidents attended by fire and rescue services, England](#): focuses on non-fire incidents attended by fire and rescue services across England, including analysis on overall trends, fatalities and non-fatal casualties in non-fire incidents, and further detailed analysis of different categories of non-fire incidents.
- [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics](#): focuses on total workforce numbers, workforce diversity and information regarding leavers and joiners; covers

both pension fund income and expenditure and firefighters' pension schemes membership; and includes information on incidents involving attacks on firefighters.

- [Response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services, England](#): covers statistics on trends in average response times to fires attended by fire and rescue services.

The [Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government](#) publish one statistical release on fire:

- [English housing survey: fire and fire safety report](#): focuses on the extent to which the existence of fire and fire safety features vary by household and dwelling type.

Fire statistics are published by the other UK nations:

Statistics for [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) are published. [Northern Ireland](#) fire statistics are published by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

Home Office Statistical Bulletin 23/19

ISBN: 978-1-78655-898-5

ISSN: 1759-7005



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