



Office of the  
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

## Want to take it further?

For more information on the job, the training and the rewards, contact your local Fire and Rescue Service. Their telephone number is in the Phone Book and their address may be stamped on this page.

Alternatively, call in at your local fire station where you can talk to the people already doing the job.

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don't just live  
in your community



protect it...  
...join the retained Fire & Rescue Service

# Could you be a retained firefighter?

Firefighters have one of the most respected jobs in the community. Retained firefighters, like their full-time colleagues, are trained to deal with a wide range of situations and incidents. These include fires, of course, road traffic accidents, dealing with hazardous materials and floods, and protecting the community through fire safety work.

Retained firefighters are a vital part of today's Fire and Rescue Service. They provide an efficient, effective service that gives emergency cover to more than 90% of the UK. The 14,000 firefighters who make up the retained fire service in England and Wales are generally located in rural communities, small towns and villages.

The Fire and Rescue Service needs people who can respond in an emergency, particularly in rural areas and during daytime hours. Retained firefighters are paid volunteers who do the same job as full-time firefighters. The difference is that they are not based in a fire station waiting for an alarm. Instead, they are on standby waiting to be called out.



**They may be at home, working for themselves or for a company that is committed to helping the community. But when the call comes a retained firefighter must drop whatever they are doing and become part of a team ready to face any emergency.**

Using the same vehicles and equipment as a full-time station, a retained crew will be called upon to attend the same range of incidents as full-time firefighters at any time of the day or night.

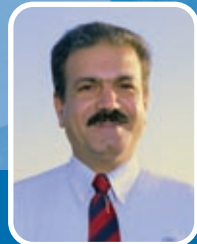


“Saving somebody's life – it doesn't get much more rewarding than that.”



**Profession**  
*Dinner Lady – Firefighter*

*“The job and the work that it entails appealed to me because of a strong sense of what I am doing for my community.”*



## Profession

Engineer - Firefighter

*“There is a lot of friendship and camaraderie – in the station and in the brigade. There is a great feeling of satisfaction when you’ve actually helped someone.”*



# Do you measure up?

To be a retained firefighter you need to be at least 18 years old, physically fit and live and/or work close to the fire station. Just as important are qualities like common sense, commitment and enthusiasm. Retained firefighters need to keep calm under pressure and have patience and understanding.



## The rewards

### Retained firefighters receive:

- a basic annual payment (a retainer) and fees for emergency response
- fees for training sessions and for duties like equipment maintenance
- a long service bonus

Apart from the excitement, the challenge and the satisfaction of a job well done, rescue work gives you the chance to work as part of a friendly team.

You'll learn new skills, helping you to become more self reliant and confident. After all, if you can cope in a real emergency, you are ready for anything that life might throw at you.

*“Firefighting for me is dedication as I feel I'm fulfilling a role in society.”*

# Teamwork and training

- Training is flexible: usually two to three hours a week.
- You'll learn the same procedures and techniques as full-time firefighters.
- Training covers use of equipment, plus community fire safety and first aid.
- You'll develop as part of a team and learn how to keep risks to a minimum.



*Helping the community prevent fires is just as important as fighting a chemical fire.*

# Building-in safety

**The Fire and Rescue Service has changed how it works. Fire prevention is a top priority.**

Community fire safety means that retained firefighters share their expertise with the community on how fire spreads and how to avoid a fire. **The number of lives saved through helping people to keep themselves safe from fires is growing all the time.**



# Days in the life

Many retained firefighters are in full-time employment with agreement from their employers to leave work to attend an emergency call. Others commit time after work and at weekends or can offer time between caring commitments for example, when the children are at school. **People who are unemployed are also attracted to this worthwhile commitment.**

- On average you may be called out two or three times a week for a couple of hours.
- You can be paid for being on call for only part of the day or week.
- You can be retained on night cover when you get home from work.
- You can be retained on day cover and have evenings and weekends free.
- If you really can't be on call because of other commitments you can sign off.



# The benefits for employers

- Your employee will be professionally trained to deal with emergencies and provide first aid.
- A retained firefighter on your staff could help save lives and property in an emergency at your business.



*There isn't one part of the job you can do on your own. It's got to be teamwork – just putting the ladder up takes three or four of us.*