



SEPTEMBER 2018

# INFORMATIVE

➤ The quarterly bulletin of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

## CREWS TACKLE SUMMER WILDFIRES

Firefighters deal with fires  
across North Wales

## NEW FIRE SAFETY GAME

Innovative fire safety  
educational game  
launched

## FIREFIGHTERS SUPPORT LOCAL CAUSES

Mold crews raise funds for local charities

## FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY AGM

Chair re-elected

# CREWS TACKLE SUMMER WILDFIRES



Photos: Ian Cooper, Daily Post

Unprecedented hot and dry weather has meant that fire crews have been tackling a significant number of small and larger wildfires in the North Wales region throughout the summer months.

Crews were in attendance for extended periods at several incidents near Bethesda, Caernarfon and Bangor, with the largest incident at Llantysilio mountain, near Llangollen, involving a sustained period of firefighting over a number of weeks.

At its height the Llangollen fire involved nine fire appliances with smoke from the incident extending as far as Merseyside and Shropshire. Pockets of hot spots deep underground meant that firefighters kept this area under close surveillance.

Senior Operations Manager Stuart Millington said: "Fires like these tie up valuable resources, threaten the safety of nearby properties and have a lasting impact on the environment. And they have resulted in our firefighters working in some very challenging conditions over difficult terrain.

"The response from the public throughout has been overwhelming and we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support - including numerous employers of our retained duty staff who have been releasing firefighters to attend incidents, and local businesses and members of the community who have donated food and drink to our staff.

"All these incidents have also involved putting positive partnership working in practice, for example with Natural Resources Wales, Denbighshire County Council and Dŵr Cymru.

***"It has been amazing to see our communities supporting the work of our firefighters - if you think you could take on the challenge of joining our retained firefighter team then please visit our website to learn about the firefighter positions available now."***



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# HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE OF YOUR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

**North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is conducting a public consultation to gather views on its level of funding for the next financial year. Comments received will be taken into account when the Authority comes to set its draft 2019/20 budget in December.**

This year's process of setting a balanced budget is unusually difficult in that the Authority is facing some unavoidable cost increases at a time when it is having to make up ground after three consecutive years of keeping the contributions from the county councils artificially low by taking money from its own financial reserves.

The Authority is understandably reluctant to increase the contributions from councils any more than necessary, so with dwindling reserves and a funding gap that has now grown to almost £1.9 million it is particularly important that it considers all options before making its final decision about its 2019/20 budget.

Having carefully weighed up the alternatives for ensuring a balanced budget, the Authority is minded not to pursue large scale savings next year because it considers that the level of risk would be too high at this time. It has not ruled out making any savings, but the scale of those savings in 2019/20 would stop short of, for example, closing fire stations or making firefighters redundant.

Although this would probably mean some increase in the financial contributions from the county councils, it would maintain current levels of fire and rescue services and protect the Authority's reserves from falling to a dangerously low level.

The Authority is encouraging everyone in North Wales to get involved by sharing their views through the consultation process. You can do this by logging on to the website [www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk](http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

The Authority will be setting its draft budget in December 2018 and publishing its plan for 2019/20 on its website by 31st March 2019.

# MOLD FIREFIGHTERS RAISE FUNDS FOR LOCAL CHARITIES



**Two local charities have been presented with a total of £1,500 raised during the annual Mold bonfire and fireworks display last November.**

Nightingale House Hospice, Wrexham and the Daniel Owen Community Association received donations of £750 each.

Steven Hill, Watch Manager at Mold Fire Station, said: "I would like to thank all those involved in organising last year's bonfire - it was a real team effort with everyone pulling together to produce an excellent event that was enjoyed by the whole community.

"Our priority is to keep our residents safe - and attending organised displays is a good way to keep safe during fireworks season.

"Of course, it's important to keep fire safety at the forefront of your mind throughout the year.

***"We are proud to be working with the residents of North Wales to keep them as safe as possible, and seeing the money going back into the community makes all the organisation and hard work worthwhile."***

# UNIQUE SCHEME WITH CARTEFI CONWY IS A LIFESAVER



Carol Richards, North Wales Fire and rescue Service, Nia Williams, Customer Services Advisor, James Wood, Housing Management Trainee and Chad Rogerson.

## A first of a kind scheme launched by Cartrefi Conwy in partnership with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is helping to avoid potential fires.

Now celebrating its fourth anniversary, the Safe and Wellbeing scheme improves fire safety in the home and has successfully highlighted the dangers of properties packed full of combustible items such as old newspapers and junk mail.

As well as posing a risk to tenants, hoarding like this could also endanger the lives of visiting support staff and the emergency services in the event of a blaze.

Cartrefi Conwy therefore introduced specially trained Home Partners who visit tenants in their home at the same time as gas engineers carrying out annual gas safety checks.

During these visits, housing association staff are trained to identify any potential safety risks that could lead to a fire or cause harm to vulnerable residents through the risk of slips, trips and falls - with any issues reported back to Cartrefi Conwy's managers who can put things right.

Chad Rogerson, Partnership Manager at North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, assisted in setting up the scheme and said: "It's been a potential lifesaver from day one. The scheme, which is joint-funded by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and

Cartrefi Conwy, is extremely valuable in that it provides the opportunity to engage with the most vulnerable people within the community.

"The partnership is unique in Wales and gives North Wales Fire and Rescue Service huge assurance in the way Cartrefi Conwy approaches the importance of the wellbeing, safety and the security of their tenants. In some cases these home assessments have prevented serious harm and potentially saved lives.

"The scheme has major advantages for both organisations and the community. We are able to liaise directly with tenants in their homes, identify any concerns for safety and wellbeing, and take appropriate action to improve safety for all concerned.

**"Since the partnership started over a thousand safe and well checks have been carried out at Cartrefi Conwy's 3,800 properties. A third of these have been in sheltered accommodation which offers housing to older and more vulnerable tenants.**

"The Home Partners are trained and assessed by our staff to give general advice on safety and wellbeing topics including weekly testing of smoke detectors, escape plans, night time routine, chip pan and cooking advice, smoking, candles, open fires and electrical or gas safety advice.

"During visits they often identify people who are statistically at increased risk to fire, including the elderly, physically impaired, those with drug or alcohol dependencies or who are subject to visual or hearing impairments, or who are just living alone.

**"North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has trained nine other Cartrefi Conwy colleagues. These include independent living coordinators, tenant liaison officers and customer services advisers.**

"I'm truly delighted to have the Cartrefi Conwy Home Partners and colleagues on-board with this project. It is a fantastic example of a great working partnership."

# CHAIR RE-ELECTED FOR NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**Denbighshire County Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies was re-elected as the Chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority at the Annual Meeting held in Conwy in June.**

Councillor Davies has been a member of the Fire and Rescue Authority since 1999.

On his election to serve as Chair of the Authority for the next 12 months, Councillor Davies thanked members for their support and said: "I am pleased to take on this role for another year. There are some difficult decisions ahead but as an Authority I am confident that we will work effectively together to seek the best way forward in facing future challenges in these unprecedented times of change, financially and in terms of governance."

Conwy County Councillor Peter Lewis MBE was re-elected as the Deputy Chair.

Councillor Lewis first joined the Fire and Rescue Authority in 2012.

He said:

*"I am grateful for the support of members. The Chair and I will continue to work together in ensuring we can continue with the ongoing discussions in these times of change."*



# INNOVATIVE FIRE SAFETY EDUCATIONAL GAME LAUNCHED

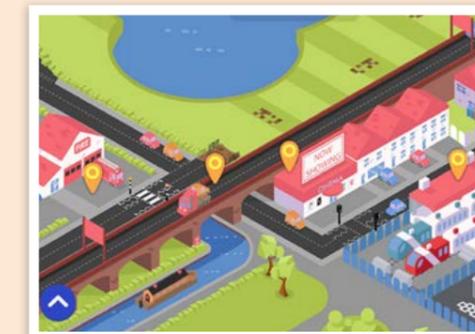
**The three fire and rescue services in Wales have been working in collaboration with a digital studio company to produce a collection of innovative educational resources for the public and teachers to use in schools across the country.**

The new resources focus on a fictional town called 'Sparkton' which young people can visit online to play games and learn how to keep safe.

The games provide an effective and entertaining way of educating young people about different subjects such as road safety, water safety and of course fire safety.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Kevin Roberts, Chair of the Welsh fire and rescue services Children and Young People Group, said: "Sparkton was originally developed by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service but we worked alongside digital specialists Matmi to produce our very own version of Sparkton here in Wales, which is available in both English and Welsh.

**"The idea behind this interactive town is to help educate children in an entertaining way, whilst in a safe environment - whether at school or at home. As technology is so popular with young people, this provides the perfect way of capturing their imagination."**



Whilst visiting Sparkton, young people are able to take part in quizzes, spot dangerous hazards, dress a firefighter whilst learning about their kit and equipment, as well as watch videos and play educational games about water, road and fire safety.

To enter into the Sparkton interactive zone, visit our website on [www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk](http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

# FOCUS ON CHILD SAFETY



**A campaign to raise awareness of the risks of child accidents and how they can be prevented was a particular focus for fire and rescue service staff in June.**

Child Safety Week is an annual campaign supported by a variety of organisations and this year staff visited the children's wards at all North Wales Hospitals. Visits took place at Glan Clwyd Hospital, Ysbyty Gwynedd, and Wrexham Maelor Hospital as well as local schools to talk to young people about how to stay safe.

Justin Evans, Head of Community Safety, said: "The fire and rescue service is here to keep people safe, but in addition to responding to incidents when they do occur, we understand the value of preventing the incident from happening in the first place. As a result we also carry out a huge amount of work to prevent accidents from happening as part of our Safety and Well visits to homes across the region.

*"We support Child Safety Week in a bid to encourage parents, guardians or carers to think about how they can put simple measures in place to safeguard children against anything from minor accidents to serious harm and injury."*

"We work hard throughout the year supporting campaigns and coordinating educational school visits, but Child Safety Week is a fantastic opportunity to spread the word on safety as wide as possible and it was great to see the children interacting with our staff at these events."



# JOINT EMERGENCY EXERCISE IMPROVES PARTNERSHIP WORKING



**A multi-agency exercise simulating a road traffic collision has helped to improve joint working.**

RAF Sealand, Deeside provided the location for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service staff to practice working collaboratively alongside colleagues from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, North Wales Police, the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust and staff from Hough Green Recovery and the Casualty Union.

The simulated multi vehicle collision involved three light vehicles, one light goods vehicle and one heavy goods vehicle.

Multiple live casualties provided by the Casualty Union simulated being trapped and requiring assistance from emergency services, with Hough Green Recovery staff being on scene to witness first-hand the intrinsic joint working of the emergency services.

Amy Croxton, Crew Manager from Deeside Fire Station, said: "This exercise provided a realistic scenario for multi-agency staff from various organisations to work simultaneously together.

*"It allowed us to all to gain a greater understanding of each other's capabilities as well as limitations in regards to an operational incident, working towards one common goal as per the Joint Emergency Service's Principles of 'Working together, saving lives and reducing harm'."*



# FREE FIRE SAFETY COURSE FOR LANDLORDS

Rent Smart Wales, the registration authority for those who rent out property, has developed a new fire safety course for landlords.

Developed in conjunction with the three fire and rescue services in Wales, the course aims to increase fire safety knowledge and make landlords aware of their legal obligations to ensure their tenants and properties are protected from the potentially devastating effects of fire.

The course, available on the Rent Smart Wales website, is the first online Continuing Professional Development course to be offered by the scheme and provides more in-depth information on fire safety than the basic responsibilities covered in the mandatory training course for all self-managing landlords in Wales.

The online training takes around one hour to complete and covers nine topics including general landlord duties, fire safety, gas safety, electrical safety and furniture and furnishings safety. The course also includes information about fire safety in Houses of Multiple Occupation, fire safety equipment and risk assessments.

Landlords must complete a short assessment at the end of the course to pass and the result forms part of their training record with Rent Smart Wales.



**The RSW Online Fire Safety Course for Landlords is available for free now!**  
[www.rentsmart.gov.wales](http://www.rentsmart.gov.wales) | 03000 133 344

Paul Scott, Head of Business Fire Safety for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, said: "It's so important that everyone is aware of their fire safety responsibilities – we all have a role to play in keeping our communities safe."

*"By supporting the development of this free and easy to access course we hope that landlords will take the time to learn more about how to provide the safest level of accommodation possible, in turn helping to protect the residents of our region."*

## ROYAL INVITATION LEADS TO TRIP OF A LIFETIME FOR FIRE CADET

A Fire Cadet based at Chirk was one of just eight fire cadets from across the UK to be selected to attend a Royal Garden Party in May.

Morgan Williams visited Clarence House to attend the prestigious event hosted by The Prince of Wales to honour outstanding members of youth organisations.

Morgan, who was nominated by her Cadet Instructor, said: "The trip to London was a once in a life time thing that I will never forget."

*"The day was amazing - there was a real buzz from everyone. I got to meet and learn from other fire cadets from all over the UK and made some really good friends."*

"We didn't know beforehand what we were actually going to be doing on the day but this all added to the sense of occasion and excitement."

*"Throughout the event we experienced lots of new things - from greeting guests to seeing and briefly talking to royalty, which was a bonus."*

