



JUNE 2018

INFORMATIVE

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

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RECYCLING FIRE IN SANDYCROFT



Crews attended a fire at 300 Recycling on Factory Road, Sandycroft in May which attracted attention across the region.

The fire and rescue service was notified of the incident at 15.14hrs on the 1st May. Crews from Wrexham, Flint, Buckley, Mold, Llandudno, Deeside and Wrexham, Rhyl, Johnstown, Ruthin, Prestatyn, St Asaph, Abergel and Colwyn Bay were called to deal with the large fire which involved plastics.

Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus used hose reels and main jets to deal with the fire which was brought under control by 08.00hrs on the 3rd May.

Members of the public in the area were advised to close all doors and windows, and roads were closed whilst crews dealt with the incident.

Natural Resources Wales, with the full support of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Flintshire County Council, has since de-registered the site of 300 Recycling in the interests of public safety, after its officers found that the site could no longer operate safely.

They concluded that carrying on with operations would pose an unacceptable risk to people and the environment. This action means that it is now also illegal to store and treat waste on site. Officers from Natural Resources Wales are now working with the company to take immediate steps to reduce the risks it poses.

Photo credits: Ian Cooper, Daily Post

FIRE SAFETY WORK CONTINUES AFTER GRENFELL FIRE

A year after the tragic fire which claimed 71 lives in June 2017 at Grenfell Tower, London, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service continues to work tirelessly to ensure the safety of our communities.

Paul Jenkinson, Head of Legislative Fire Safety, said: "Since Grenfell we have inspected all the high rise residential accommodation in North Wales and we continue to work with housing providers, housing enforcement and other relevant parties to improve fire safety in these premises.

"Numerous safe and well checks have been carried out in the flats to improve safety and reduce the risk of a fire starting in these buildings."

"Following the announcement that there is a public enquiry and a review of building regulations taking place nationally, we have engaged with the consultation process and staff

members have met with the Chair of the independent review, Dame Judith Hackitt, to explain in detail some of the problems with the current system.

"The initial report found building regulations were leaving room for shortcuts and highlighted six work streams, of which four are relevant to the work of the fire and rescue service. We are influencing these work streams along with our colleagues in other services.

"Her final report, published in May, found that building regulations are complex and confusing, and she has proposed a tighter system of safety management throughout the life of a building, which would be led by the construction industry. Her review is aimed at making sure similar events do not happen in the future.



"In the meantime, we are continuing to engage with building owners and tenants to improve safety in these buildings."

'GET OUT, STAY OUT' ADVICE HIGHLIGHTED AFTER INQUEST INTO DENBIGH FIRE

The inherent risks of re-entering a burning property were highlighted following an inquest into the tragic fire which occurred in Denbigh last year.

Janet Jones, 54, died en route to hospital after firefighters rescued her from a fire in her first floor flat at Tan y Graig, Denbigh in August 2017.

The inquest, which took place in May, concluded her death was accidental.

Two fire appliances were mobilised to the incident from St Asaph and Rhyl and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust also attended. Crews were confronted with a well-developed fire and the flat was heavily smoke logged.

A subsequent investigation concluded that the cause of the fire was most probably an electrical fault following the overloading of electrical sockets.

Kevin Roberts, Senior Fire Safety Manager, said: "This was a tragic incident and one from which many lessons have been learnt. Our deepest sympathies go out to Janet's family and friends.

"Anyone involved in a fire can very quickly be overcome by the effects of smoke and we would encourage people to get out and stay out – never attempt to tackle a fire yourself or go back into a building affected by a fire.

"A working smoke alarm will provide an early warning and in the event of fire it is vitally important for all to vacate the property – and having a practiced escape plan is crucial."

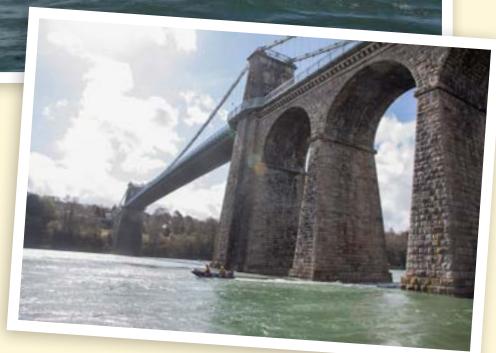
LAUNCHING OUR NEW FLOODING AND WATER RESCUE EQUIPMENT



In our last issue we reported on the funding received from the Welsh Government to review and upgrade equipment to support fire and rescue crews at flooding and water rescues across Wales.

In the last three years Welsh firefighters were called to almost 2,000 flooding and water related incidents - and in April last year, the Welsh Government introduced a new duty on fire and rescue services to respond to flooding and water rescue emergencies, with £1.8m funding provided over two years to meet the new duty.

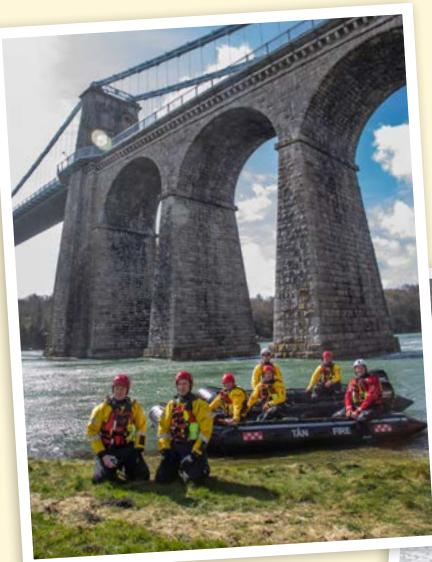
The new equipment was officially launched in Anglesey in June. Colleagues from Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services joined us in North Wales to showcase the capabilities of the equipment at Menai Bridge and Beaumaris.



This Welsh Government funding has enabled investment in the highest specification of equipment which will benefit the Welsh flood response.

Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services Alun Davies said: "We provided this investment to ensure our fire services can continue to evolve and respond to threats such as flooding. I'm pleased to see that the services have collaborated to obtain value for money and to ensure our dedicated firefighters have the best possible equipment to protect our communities."

A total of 16 inflatable powerboats are now available at locations across Wales, together with six new water incident units to provide support at incident nationally and a refresh of water rescue personal protective equipment.



PROMOTING DROWNING PREVENTION AND WATER SAFETY

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service supported the National Fire Chiefs Council's drowning prevention and water safety campaign 'Be Water Aware' in April.

Drowning in the UK is one of the leading causes of accidental death. Each year more than 300 people drown after tripping, falling or just by underestimating the risks associated with being near water. Many more people are left with life changing injuries in water related incidents.

Jane Honey, Deputy Head of Community Safety, said:
"Most people would be shocked to hear that those people drowning just happen to be near water, for example runners and walkers. They are unaware of the risks and are totally unprepared for the scenario of ending up in the water."

"By highlighting this issue and making sure simple safety messages reach them we hope to reduce the number of these needless deaths.

"During water safety week we also educated our fire cadets on the dangers in and around water. The cadets will assist us to share these messages with their friends and family and raise awareness of water safety within the communities of North Wales."



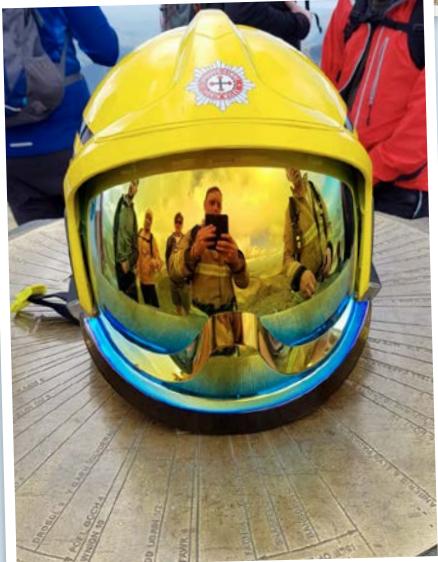
Fire cadets receiving water safety training

SAFETY ADVICE

- If you are going for a walk or run near water stick to proper pathways and stay clear of the water's edge
- Make sure conditions are safe, avoid walking or running near water in the dark, slippery or in bad weather
- If you've had alcohol don't enter the water, avoid walking alone and avoid routes near water
- Never enter the water to try and help a person or animal - always call 999 and use any water rescue equipment if it is available
- If you are spending time near water - whether at home or abroad make sure you are familiar with local safety information

FIREFIGHTERS SCALE NEW HEIGHTS

Scaling the summit of Snowdon is an accomplishment in itself but completing the challenge in full fire kit and breathing apparatus is even more of an achievement.



Eight firefighters from a variety of stations across North Wales did exactly this in May - all in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity and St David's Hospice.

Llandudno Firefighter Gareth Morgan organised the event. He said: "I would like to thank the fire and rescue service for its support, the eight firefighters who bravely took part and the 26 people who joined us to help carry our supplies."

"We were lucky with the weather on the day which turned out perfect - not too hot or cold."

"What really helped us get to the top was the massive support we received not only from our friends and family but also from the public."

"I'm honoured to have been part of this monumental challenge and to have raised a substantial amount of money - I can't thank everyone enough for donating to both charities."

CHARITIES PRESENTED WITH BONFIRE DONATIONS

Local charities came together at Deeside Fire Station recently to receive a total of £5,600 - the proceeds raised during the annual bonfire and fireworks display on the 5th of November 2017.

Charities who received the donations included DAFFODILS, Eye 2 Eye, , Plymouth Street Friday Club, Shotton Embroidery Club, Shotton Community Association, Ewloe over 50s forum, Manley Court Tenants Association, St John's Ambulance, Mental Health UK, Ysgol Pen Coch, Flintshire CAB, Deeside Round Table, Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia (CDH UK), Hawarden Lodge 6140 and The Fire Fighters Charity. Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, presented the cheques to representatives of the various charities.

Ian Werner, Watch Manager, Green Watch and one of the organisers of the event, said: "The turn out for the most recent fireworks display was great and I would like to thank each and every person attending for making it possible for us to donate to these worthy charities.

"It was a pleasure to see the charities receiving their cheques from our Chief Fire Officer. I would like to thank all the representatives for coming along to receive the donations.

"I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped with the organisation of the event and during the display, especially North Wales Police and Flintshire County Council.

"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."



FIREFIGHTERS ASSIST IN SEARCH FOR PEOPLE REPORTED MISSING

Firefighters from the 44 fire stations based across North Wales have joined the 'Missing from Home' scheme which involves working together with North Wales Police to assist in searches for vulnerable missing people.

Kevin Roberts, Senior Fire Safety Manager for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Dealing with a loved one going missing would be a nightmare scenario for anyone and the stark reality revealed in statistics from North Wales Police is that 3,000 people are reported missing from home every year.

"We initially became involved in the scheme last September with selected stations taking part. We have now expanded the scheme so that staff at each of our 44 stations have received training and can be called upon by North Wales Police to provide assistance in searches as and when required.

"As far as we are aware, this initiative as a formal and properly coordinated arrangement is a national first. Crews remain on call for fire and rescue service incidents, but will respond to assist North Wales Police in locating people who are missing from home as and when required.

"In another demonstration of our commitment to working in partnership to protect our communities, all our wholetime crews have now received additional training on effecting entry to a property without causing damage, which helps maintain the security of buildings. As well as protecting our residents in times of need, this also helps free up police officers who would otherwise be called to secure the premises.

"It's all about working to ensure the safety of everyone and we're thrilled to be working with North Wales Police to help protect the communities we serve."

Richard Debicki, Assistant Chief Constable, North Wales Police said: "It is entirely proper that the emergency services are examining ways to work together to maintain and improve service to the public and we are pleased that the scheme has now been expanded across the region. This is a great example of what blue light collaboration can achieve.

"This initiative strengthens the number of emergency service professionals tasked to reports of missing persons, which should result in persons being found more quickly so minimising the possibility of them coming to harm. By bringing together our combined skills, training and equipment we can better protect the people of North Wales."

RUTHIN FIREFIGHTERS TAKE ON CHESTER HALF MARATHON

Ruthin firefighters took part in the Chester Half marathon in April raising money for the Wales Air Ambulance.

Firefighter Jamie Knights, one of the organisers of the group, said: "A group of us decided to do the half marathon for two reasons. Firstly we want to raise money for the Wales Air Ambulance, an organisation we sometimes work alongside and which doesn't get government funding.



"The other reason is that it helps keep us fit as firefighters, and anyway it is good fun. We've all enjoyed training together."

Chelsey Hughes, Physical Fitness Advisor, also took part in the event.

MAKING FIRE PREVENTION A PART OF LIFE - JUST LIKE POPPING TO ASDA!

Staff were offering fire safety in the home advice to shoppers in Asda stores in April.

Fire and rescue services across the country were delivering this information in support of the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC's) collaboration with Asda.

The supermarket chain was keen to help keep people safe and made 100 stores available to deliver safety messages as part of Fire Focus - a National Fire Safety Day.

To support the day North Wales Fire and Rescue Service staff attended Queensferry, Bangor and Llandudno stores.

Paul Scott, Head of Community Safety, said: "We recommend that every home should have at least one smoke alarm on each level. Make sure that the smoke alarm is placed where you can hear it – even through a closed door.

"Test your smoke alarm every week. A smoke alarm can buy you valuable time in the event of a fire, but only if it works."

"Be careful how you cook – around half of accidental house fires start in the kitchen. Do not get distracted when you are cooking and avoid cooking when you have consumed alcohol."

Stewart Edgar Prevention Lead for the NFCC, said: "It was fantastic that Asda offered UK fire and rescue services the opportunity to meet with their customers and offer life-saving advice on fire prevention.



"We hope this will make sure the people who need this help most get access to it, and that our presence reminds people that fire prevention should be part of everyday life – just like popping to the supermarket."