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INFORMATIVE

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major refurbishment complete

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DEESIDE OPENING MARKS FIRST TRI-SERVICE PARTNERSHIP FOR NORTH WALES

The newly remodelled fire station at Deeside was officially opened in March after the completion of major refurbishment works at the site.



Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies, Chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, officiated at a special ceremony to mark the occasion.

The station, situated on Chester Road, Queensferry, represents the very first tri-service facility in North Wales as it also provides facilities for North Wales Police and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

Work began on the project back in June 2014 and this investment has upgraded the station to create an up to date modern facility to serve the needs of the emergency services staff and the local community.

Deeside firefighters respond to incidents in the Deeside area and beyond, also covering cross border

incidents in Cheshire. The current station opened in 1964 and, until now, has had little adaption since.

Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer, said: "We are delighted with the new facilities at Deeside and that we have been able to establish a partnership at the site with our colleagues in the police and ambulance.

"We now have excellent modern facilities for the staff who are working at the location as well as meeting rooms for the use of community groups. In addition to responding to incidents, preventing fires from breaking out in the first place is a crucial part of the work of the modern fire and rescue service – so creating closer links with our community is vital to our work to protect local residents.

"It's important that we continue to invest in our buildings for the future as part of our strategy to keep costs down in the long term. The existing building was over fifty years old and did not meet current legislation.

"The co-location of our staff with emergency service partners brings numerous benefits, both organisationally and to our communities. We have excellent relations with police at other sites such as at our Joint Communications Centre in St Asaph and the new joint stations at Nefyn, Wrexham and Tywyn.

“We look forward to building on these relationships and I am confident that the new facility at Deeside will help us to continue to serve the local community now and over the coming decades.”

The building works were completed by MPH Construction and involved opening up the existing fire station into the previous adjoining ambulance station, and extending the ground floor accommodation to include appliance bays to the rear. The existing building was re-clad, re-roofed, re-modelled and extended, and the previous fire training house was demolished and replaced with a new purpose built training tower. There is a muster bay for 44 staff, drying facilities and locker rooms as well as offices, additional dormitory provision and a new kitchen.

The refurbishment has also included improved facilities for the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, with flexible facilities, a dedicated restroom for ambulance staff, and parking for two ambulances - all provided as part of ambulance service plans for the future.

The refurbished station is accessible to everyone in the community and complies with the access requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Local residents will be able to make use of two community rooms.

North Wales Police will utilise an office for a police constable and will also make use of the shared meeting and training facilities. Not only will this arrangement assist in improved partnership working, but it will also assist the local Queensferry residents and businesses to access a police officer.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies, Chair of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, said: “The three organisations deliver a wide range of services which require the building to have the most up to date facilities for the personnel working from it. This refurbishment provides an excellent facility, not only to help support the training of firefighters to tackle incidents, but also to deliver the diverse education and prevention schemes that are operated here in North Wales by the three organisations.”

Karl Hughes, Locality Manager from the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust said: "We already enjoy a close working relationship with both the fire and rescue service and the police and having new, state-of-the-art premises also means that staff have a better working environment which can only be of benefit in providing the best possible service to the local community.

"Through innovative collaboration like this, we can continue to provide enhanced services to communities across North Wales whilst also being able to reduce costs."

Inspector Dave Jolly added: “North Wales Police is delighted to be a part of this shared facility. We can only be successful in preventing crime by working closely with our partners, and the joint location of public services is a positive step forward, given the financial constraints facing the organisations. It will enable us to maintain a strong community policing presence in the area.”



AMBULANCE AND FIRE CREWS REPORT FOR DUTY AT NEW JOINT RESOURCE CENTRE

Wrexham's ambulance and fire crews reported for their first shift at a new state-of-the-art resource centre in April.

The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service have jointly invested more than £15 million in the purpose-built centre - the first of its kind in Wales, which boasts an eight-bay fire station, a six-bay ambulance station, a make ready facility and fleet workshop plus top-of-the-range training facilities.

The Ambulance and Fire Services Resource Centre on Croesnewydd Road has replaced the existing fire station on Bradley Road in Wrexham, and the existing ambulance stations in Chirk and Wrexham.

Sonia Thompson, the Welsh Ambulance Service's Head of Operations in North Wales, said: "A lot of hard work has gone into this project from the partnership. This development will provide the modern and upgraded services that our crews deserve.

"It also presents the perfect opportunity to work more closely with our fire service colleagues, with whom we already have an excellent working relationship and attend many incidents together."

Kevin Roberts, Senior Operations Manager at North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, added: "This is an exciting time for all involved and we're delighted to have made the move into this high quality resource centre which will provide both improved facilities for our staff and a better service for the public in the area.

"Operating from one base will allow greater co-ordination when it comes to responding to incidents and will make the best use of resources for both of our organisations.



"This partnership has allowed us to create a joint facility which we can be proud of, which provides modern, improved and upgraded services."

The ambulance accommodation incorporates a fleet workshop, make ready facility, a six-bay garage, offices for fleet staff and management, debrief room and a deployment base for response staff.

Ambulance crews start their shift at the new centre then will move to strategically located deployment points across Wrexham and Chirk, where call demand data predicts where the next 999 call will come from.

Newly-recruited fleet assistants will clean stock and clean vehicles after use, enabling clinicians to spend more time face-to-face with patients delivering better care for the area.

The fire accommodation includes a local community safety office, an eight bay garage, gymnasium, training house and drill tower with a road traffic collision training area.

Facilities like the rest room, dining room, communal kitchen, main office, locker room, meeting and training rooms will be shared by both services.

An official opening and an open day for the public will be arranged later in the year.

DO YOU RENT OUT A PROPERTY IN WALES?

Landlords and agents are now required by law to be registered or licenced.

A new law -The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 - has been introduced in Wales which applies to all landlords and agents of private residential property. If you own, rent out, manage and/or live in a rented property then this law will impact on you.

Stuart Millington, Senior Fire Safety Manager, said: "If you are a landlord and you rent your property out in Wales you now need to register. This is a new law which came to force in November 2015 and you might not be aware of it yet.

"It has been introduced to improve the living and safety standards of the private rental sector and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is supporting this new legislation as it will assist to improve safety in rented accommodation in Wales.

"Landlords who supply solid fuel appliances in their property now need to ensure that they have carbon monoxide detectors installed in their property as well.

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ARE YOU A LANDLORD?

If the answer is **YES** to all the following questions you will need to register as a landlord:

- Do you own a residential property that you don't live in?
- Do you let someone else live in it?
- Do you receive money for them living there?
- Do you manage a rental property?

If the answer is **YES** to any of the following questions you will need to apply for a licence:

- Are you a landlord who self-manages your property?
- Are you an agent who lets and manages properties on behalf of landlords?
- Are you a friend, family member or associate of a landlord who looks after their property for them?

To apply for a licence or for further details visit www.rentsmart.gov.wales or call **03000 133 344**.

SHORTLIST HONOUR FOR BEING DEAF FRIENDLY

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service was nominated alongside six other organisations for an award as one of Wales' is most deaf-friendly organisations.

The awards presented by the charity Action on Hearing Loss Cymru's Excellence Wales recognise the businesses and organisations in Wales who go the extra mile to ensure they are accessible to the one-in-six people who are deaf or have hearing loss.

Stuart Millington, Senior Fire Safety Manager, said: "We were very proud to be shortlisted for the second year running and honoured to be recognised for our efforts.

"The Service is keen to provide the best service possible to everyone, which is why we have specific services in place for individuals who may have hearing problems, making us accessible to all.

"Not only do we provide this service to members of the public, but we also offer assistance to our staff, ensuring that they can complete their work to the highest possible standard with the support that we have in place if they are having any physical or mental difficulties.

"We will continue to improve our services to all, and ensure that we go the extra mile for people who need our assistance.

"We provide the option for people who are deaf or have hearing loss to phone North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Text Relay; a telephone relay service which enables deaf, deafblind, deafened, hard of hearing and speech impaired people to communicate with hearing people by telephone.

"The advice that would be given verbally usually is also provided in written literature, and all of our community facilities are installed with hearing loops so that those who attend advice or awareness sessions at our community fire stations are equally able to benefit and contribute.

"All of our operational staff members as well as our community safety staff have received a hard of hearing awareness session aimed at raising their understanding of the needs of deaf or hard of hearing people in relation to fire safety and prevention - this has included using visual prompts or literature to convey a message, as well as an understanding of how and where to install prevention equipment.

"In addition, in the past we have trained advocates and continue to provide opportunities for those who wish to develop their skills in signing; we have two members of staff who are trained to communicate through sign language.

"Many people with hearing loss could be at serious risk from a fire in the home if they don't have the right detection in place. Specialist smoke alarm systems provide valuable time to escape from a house fire, and it is vital that people who are deaf or hard of hearing have the right smoke alarm technology in their home to protect them."

An independent judging panel decided on winners which were announced at the Action on Hearing Loss Cymru Gala dinner in May. The overall award went to Western Power Distribution, the two Excellence awards went to National Assembly for Wales and Bridgend County Borough Council, the Special Recognition award went to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the People's Choice Award went to RNIB Cymru.



Anyone unsure about the alarm they need should contact North Wales Fire and Rescue Service for a free home safety check. We are here to help make sure your home is as fire safe as possible.

To request a check, phone our 24 hour hotline on 0800 169 1234, or e-mail cfs@nwales-fireservice.org.uk

LAUNCH OF 'DELIBERATE GRASS FIRES HAVE CONSEQUENCES' CAMPAIGN AT BLAENAU FFESTINIOG

Staff from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, North Wales Police and British Transport Police worked in partnership to launch this year's deliberate grass fires awareness campaign in Ysgol y Moelwyn Blaenau Ffestiniog in March.

As part of the launch a new film was shown to students about the consequences of deliberate fires and the effect they can have on families and communities. The 'Still Laughing' film, aimed at secondary school pupils, is to encourage fire and potential fire starters to think about the consequences of deliberately starting grass and mountain fires.

The film emphasises how starting a fire may seem like harmless fun but that it can actually have devastating consequences – risking a criminal record for the fire setter, as well as harming local wildlife and the landscape, and being detrimental to the Welsh economy. Most importantly firefighters could be diverted from attending a real emergency where someone is trapped in a house fire or a road traffic collision.

As well as the two day multi-agency visit to the secondary school, the Arson Reduction Team organised visits to local youth clubs, visits to primary schools, arranged Phoenix courses in the area, arranged an event on the High Street and took part in joint patrols with North Wales Police around the town.

Stuart Millington, Senior Fire Safety Manager, said: "This year, as with previous years, we refuse to tolerate the deliberate grass and mountain fires that lead to the destruction of the mountainside and wildlife across Wales, which can put lives at risk.

"By working with our partners on this hard hitting multi-agency campaign we are determined to make a change and make deliberate fire setting completely unacceptable to everyone in our communities - grass fires have consequences so they have to stop!"

Community Safety Inspector Julie Sheard commented: "Whilst fire officers are tending to reports of deliberate grass and mountain fires, there could be a person trapped in a house fire or involved in a serious vehicle collision who is in need of urgent assistance from the emergency services. Additionally, such fires often cause extensive and irreparable damage to the environment and kill local wildlife.



"Prevention, education and enforcement are at the heart of tackling this irresponsible behaviour and working closely with key partners to address the underlying issues behind this type of crime is crucial."

Kevin Jones, Arson Reduction Team Manager added: "This year the message is clear, if you set a grass fire, you are a criminal. One silly action can have serious consequences on a person's future. I urge parents, guardians, teachers and members of the public to look out for signs of suspicious behaviour such as the smell of smoke and accelerant, possession of matches and other behaviour that is suspicious and report any information to North Wales Police on 101."

The 'deliberate grass fires have consequences' communications approach is part of a wider multi-agency grass fire reduction strategy that has been developed by the three fire and rescue services of Wales, with the support of their partners, to reduce the number of grass and mountain fires across Wales. The wider strategy is focusing on the communication, education, diversion and enforcement messages and initiatives that all partners will develop and implement according to their particular areas of focus.



TALKING NEWSPAPER HELPS SPREAD FIRE SAFETY MESSAGES

A talking newspaper based in Dolgellau is partnering with the Service to help spread potentially lifesaving advice to residents across the region.

The Dolgellau and District Talking Newspaper for the Blind is a free service for people who cannot read the local newspapers. They provide a weekly bi-lingual tape of local news from around the area to anyone who is registered blind or partially sighted, as well as a bi-monthly magazine tape.

Following on from this new partnership, the tapes now also include fire safety advice and details of how to apply for a free home safety check, with advice specially tailored for those with sight issues. The tapes are sent out to residents across North Wales.

The partnership came about after local Home Safety Support Worker, John Paul Williams, approached the talking newspaper and asked whether they would consider including details on how to stay safe from fire.

John Paul explained: "The Dolgellau and District Talking Newspaper for the Blind offer a fantastic service – working with them is a great opportunity for us to connect with potentially hard to reach residents who have sight issues.

"I'd like to thank the newspaper for working with us in this way, and helping to keep the residents of North Wales as safe as possible. I look forward to developing how we can work together in the future."



Gareth Roberts from The Dolgellau and District Talking Newspaper for the Blind, said: "We're thrilled to be working with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and helping to keep our listeners safe in their homes.

"We post out 25 tapes and 35 CDs each week, and adding in this information means that as well as keeping our listeners up to date on local news, we're also highlighting the importance of smoke alarms and the services available to them."

BANG CAMPAIGN WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Youngsters who were given the opportunity to win iPod Shuffles during last year's Halloween and Bonfire Night campaign were presented with their prizes recently.

The BANG (Be A Nice Guy) initiative was supported by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police, in partnership with the Police and Community Trust, to remind youngsters across North Wales how their behaviour could affect others and how to keep themselves safe when venturing out during this period.

Hannah Maddocks and Alan Hill were the winners chosen at random from the hundreds of entries received by the Arson Reduction Team.

Kevin Jones, Arson Reduction Manager, said: "The BANG campaign helps to highlight the importance of keeping safe during bonfire and Halloween celebrations and has once again contributed to keeping down the number of incidents we were called to attend.

"We organised fun events and activities involving youngsters across North Wales, and everyone who attended completed a quiz on fire safety and anti-social behaviour which was then put into a draw from which the two winners were chosen.



Hannah



Amanda

"Year on year, this campaign has helped tremendously in fostering improved relationships with young people and has assisted us and other partner agencies in educating the youngsters of North Wales."
