



DECEMBER 2017

INFORMATIVE

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



AWARDS CEREMONY CELEBRATIONS

staff and the community recognised for their achievements

SHIFTING UP A GEAR ON ROAD SAFETY

supercharging our relationship with young people who are learning to drive

SIGNING OF ARMED FORCES CONVENANT

joining Flintshire County Council in making a commitment to support the Armed Forces Community

LOOKING OUT FOR THE ELDERLY

recognising and reducing the risk of fires to older people in the community

AWARDS CEREMONY CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENTS

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Annual Awards Ceremony was held at Rhyl Community Fire Station in September to recognise and celebrate members of staff and the community who have worked hard to improve community safety in North Wales.

Eleven Community Awards were presented by Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer, and Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies, Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

The winners were Outstanding Contribution by an Individual

This award recognised a member of staff who regularly works above and beyond their normal duties.

Two individuals received this year award – Peter Roberts, Watch Manager in charge of Betws y Coed Fire Station and Tommy Rolwands, Watch Manager in charge of Llanfairfechan and also a Rural Firefighter.

During the recent Retained Duty System recruitment campaign Peter was aware that a number of applicants for Betws y Coed and a neighbouring station had not been successful in their written tests so he arranged additional support and requested appropriate literature and signposting to assist. He also ran support and development sessions for potential new staff and created study groups to set up assessments, under appropriate exam conditions, to provide a realistic flavour of an exam environment.

Tommy assisted a number of retained stations in improving their standards following recent audits by the Professional Service Standards team. In particular, he assisted newly appointed managers on the stations by signposting them to the relevant information and going to visit them to provide practical face to face support.



The Community Safety Partner Award

This award recognised the work of partner agencies or public bodies who work in partnership with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service in their quest to deliver vital community safety messages.

It was awarded this year to Wrexham County Borough Council for the target hardening service for victims of hate crime or domestic violence and to the Community Assistance Team for the non-injured falls pilot in Conwy and Denbighshire.

Station of the Year Award

This is awarded to the fire station that has carried out notable work during the last 12 months and has been recognised by the Operations Department.

This year it was Harlech Fire Station staff who were recognised for providing availability 99% of the time between June 2016 and May 2017, allowing them to respond to emergency incidents throughout Harlech and the surrounding area.

Outstanding Contribution to Business Fire Safety Award

This award recognised a member of staff within the business fire safety function who regularly works above and beyond their normal duties.

This year's winner was Nigel Day who recently retired as a compliance officer. Nigel would often go over and above the expected depth of investigation and reporting to ensure the very best job would be done, and always giving the very best of information and guidance.



Young Person of the Year

This accolade was awarded to a young person who has demonstrated extra commitment this year - Ffion Williams, a firefighter apprentice who showed great potential whilst working with the Phoenix team. She was able to take part as an instructor on the course and was a great role model for the students.

The Dedication to Service Award

Andrew Ballard from Corwen, Wil Roberts from Menai Bridge and Tommy Rowlands from Llanfairfechan were all presented with this award for their excellent commitment and providing extended service as members of the retained duty system for over 33 years.

Learner of the Year

This award went to Krzysztof Kosmala in recognition of his commitment and determination towards learning Welsh. Krzysztof Kosmala is a firefighter apprentice at Colwyn Bay Fire Station and made it his personal ambition to improve his language skills since joining the Service last year. His first language is Polish, and he has since learnt English and now Welsh, therefore Welsh is his third language and he recently completed level 2 in Welsh.

Outstanding Contribution to a Charity

Duncan Stewart Ball, Crew Manager at Rhyl Fire Station, was presented with this award as he has worked tirelessly throughout the year to raise money, giving up large amounts of his own time so as to benefit others.

Duncan's young daughter suffers with diabetes and together with his wife he

set about organising various events to help raise awareness of this debilitating condition. His main challenge was to cycle from Conwy Castle to Cardiff Castle in a day – a total of 180 miles which he completed on the 12th of June.

Contribution to the Welsh Language

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service strives to promote the Welsh language across the Service and Heather Jones personifies this commitment.

As compliance officer in Gwynedd and Môn and a member of the Welsh Language Champions scheme, Heather undertakes all aspects of her role bilingually, including writing correspondence and reports in Welsh, and encouraging others to do the same. She regularly encourages colleagues to write short emails in Welsh and some have now progressed to writing more formal letters in Welsh.

Employer of the Year

This award is all about recognising a local employer who regularly releases staff to carry out firefighting duties in the community. Such employers are essential in assisting to keep fire appliances available across North Wales.

This year's winner was Abersoch Land and Sea who currently employ three members of staff who respond to operational calls - but over a twenty year period six members of staff have been released for operational incidents from the company.

Staff Suggestion Scheme Award

The staff suggestion scheme provides an opportunity for employees to suggest new ideas or initiatives that will improve the way in which services can be delivered more efficiently or effectively.

Thomas Plant is a firefighter in Colwyn Bay and also provides rural firefighting cover at stations across North Wales. He took the award this year for suggesting the Service invests in water purification equipment to wash appliances to prevent them from being damaged by the hard mains water that is currently used to clean them.

Six Long Service and Good Conduct Medals

were presented to members of staff by the Lord Lieutenant of Clwyd, Mr Harry George Fetherstonhaugh OBE. The medal is awarded to firefighters by Her Majesty's Representative in recognition of 20 years service.

The recipients were

- Dave Hughes
- Gavin Lowry
- Michael Dymock
- Jody McEachern
- Steve Dixon
- Paul Ellams
- Robin Jones
- Shane Price
- Helen Angel-Hayes
- Jodie Hamilton
- Steven Roberts
- Shoned Worsley
- Nigel Williams

Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer also presented the Loyal Service award to Anwen Medicott and Aled Thomas, who completed forty years of service.

SHIFTING UP A GEAR ON ROAD SAFETY



North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has been supercharging dialogue between young people in Colwyn Bay who are learning to drive.

Students from Coleg Llandrillo joined players from Rygbi Gogledd Cymru at the recent debut of the Service's newly branded Subaru engagement vehicle.

Its purpose is to educate young drivers on the dangers of driving irresponsibly while appealing to those who have an interest in sports cars and racing.

The car and its crew visited road safety events across the region to promote vital messages such as 'Fatal 5' and the higher risks of being an RTC casualty as a young person, encouraging conversation among young drivers.

Jane Honey, Deputy Head of Community Safety, said: "Young people who receive their licences are gaining valuable independence and driving represents a significant part of adulthood, but it also comes with the responsibility of keeping themselves and other road users safe.



"Utilising the Subaru Engagement Vehicle and virtual reality technology will help young drivers understand the tragic consequences irresponsible driving can have."

"We look forward to working with young people across the region with the help of the newly branded vehicle, driving home key messages about the importance of safety behind the wheel."

The newly branded Subaru will continue to tour schools, colleges, workplaces and events in order to educate those who are new on the road.



SIGNING OF ARMED FORCES COVENANT

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service signed the Flintshire Armed Forces Covenant recently at County Hall in Mold.

By signing this covenant, the fire and rescue service joins Flintshire County Council in making a commitment to support the Armed Forces Community in Flintshire.

The event was attended by representatives from the armed forces, council employees, regional armed forces liaison officers and the council's armed forces champion, Councillor Andy Dunbobbin.

The covenant represents a firm commitment by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to support the armed forces and recognise the value of serving personnel – both regular members and reservists, veterans and military families and their contribution to the nation.

Speaking at the event, Councillor Dunbobbin, said: "Flintshire County Council is delighted that North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is joining the other 18 signatories and is pledging its support to

the Flintshire Armed Forces Covenant. We have an active and enthusiastic Steering Group and have made significant steps to promote the Covenant and ensure employees and the public are aware of the needs of the Armed Forces Community.

"We look forward to the fire and rescue service becoming an active partner and working with us to promote awareness of the Covenant, honour the achievements of the Armed Forces Community and make a real difference to their lives."

Chief Fire Officer Simon Smith said: "It was an honour to sign this agreement. Our priority is to provide the best possible fire and rescue service to the communities of North Wales, working to reduce the number of emergency incidents that occur and responding to emergencies when they happen. It is our dedicated and diverse workforce which allows us to do this and we therefore recognise the value of supporting employees from a military

background, who bring many valuable and transferable skills to the through their military training.

"Signing this covenant demonstrates our commitment to upholding the key principles involved and in working and acting together with other partners in North Wales to support the armed forces and its wider community."

The covenant is a commitment from the nation that members of the Armed Forces community should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of services and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most. Flintshire County Council formally signed the Covenant in July 2013.



LOOKING OUT FOR THE ELDERLY



Staff took the opportunity at the beginning of this month to recognise and reduce the risk of fires to older people in the community.

Various events in Llandudno, Connah's Quay and Bangor focussed on providing older members of the public an opportunity to learn valuable safeguarding lessons.

This was part of the Service's celebration on International Day of Older People 2017, acknowledging the value of older people, as well as the challenges of an ageing population in North Wales.

Due to health issues and living arrangements, those aged over 65 are at a higher risk of dying in a house fire than any other age group. Furthermore, 41% of all North Wales house fires last year involved residents aged over 60.

Predictions over the next 20 years suggest that the number of over 65 year olds living in the area will increase from 157,000 to 213,000 (35%).

These statistics represent a significant demand increase in the coming years, and in order to minimise the impact on future emergency responders, it is becoming more important than ever that older people know how to check smoke alarms,

plan their safe exit and have regular contact with neighbours and family.

Venue Cymru hosted a 'Get Connected' afternoon in partnership with Cartrefi Conwy with bingo, live music and dancing. Connah's Quay Civic Hall held 'Let's Celebrate Together- Again!', an action group for over 50s and Caffi Hafan in Bangor promoted keeping well in winter.

The events represented important activities that people could enjoy whilst learning more about keeping safe in their homes and community.

COMBATING THE DANGERS OF CARBON MONOXIDE – THE SILENT KILLER



A partnership between Wales and West Utilities and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is helping to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is now working in collaboration with Wales and West Utilities, the gas emergency and pipeline service across North Wales, to promote the support available to residents.

As part of its 'Safe and Well' visits, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service will be providing key information on how to keep yourself and your family safe from this silent killer, carbon monoxide.

Staff will also be able to signpost to other schemes operated by Wales and West Utilities to help those most in need, including signing people up to the Priority Services Register, connecting them to the gas network through the Warm Home Assistance scheme and installing Gas Isolation Valves to help older people stay in their homes for longer.

Paul Scott, Head of Community Safety, said: "We're proud to be working with Wales and West Utilities to help ensure people have information to keep them as safe as possible from the dangers of carbon monoxide.

"Carbon monoxide poisoning can be fatal or cause permanent damage to your health. The gas is produced when carbon fuels don't burn completely - it has no smell or taste and, in large quantities, it can kill very quickly.

"By ensuring that all fuel burning appliances and associated flues are maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, chimneys are swept and inspected regularly and that an audible CO alarm is fitted, we can help protect ourselves and our families from the dangers of carbon monoxide."

Sarah Hopkins, People and Engagement Director at Wales & West Utilities said: "As a values-based business we're keen to work with partners that share our way of doing things and our priorities of customer service and safety, so we're delighted to be working with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

"We recently met the exacting British Standard 18477 for our work in supporting vulnerable customers but there is always more we can do, and partnerships are a key way we can help deliver for those who need us most right across the communities we serve."

BONFIRE DISPLAYS GO OFF WITH A BANG

Staff from across the Service worked in partnership with North Wales Police to support the BANG campaign over the Halloween and bonfire period.

The Be A Nice Guy campaign is aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour and making North Wales a safe place at this time of year.

The Service funded a number of diversionary activities across North Wales as well as supporting the work of firefighters to arrange or assist at organised bonfire displays across the region.

Kevin Roberts, Senior Fire Safety Manager, said: "Safety at this time of year is the responsibility of us all. We cannot over emphasise that the best way to reduce the number of injuries during bonfire celebrations is by attending organised events. They are the safest type of displays, have the best facilities and offer the best value for money.

"Bonfire celebrations can cause an increase in anxiety for senior citizens and pet owners, so attending community events helps reduce this distress. I am pleased that we were able to support so many local events during this time in both diversionary events and organised displays."



COOKING SAFETY CAMPAIGN WINNER ANNOUNCED

Shoppers across Anglesey and Gwynedd were given the opportunity to take part in our cooking safety competition recently as part of the on-going campaign to reduce kitchen fires which has visited all counties of North Wales over the last 18 months.

Mr Trevor Jones, from Penmynydd, Anglesey won the competition and was presented with a £100 supermarket vouchers by Cameron Owen, Community Safety Apprentice.



STUDENTS TOP OF THE CLASS FOR FIRE SAFETY

Fire and rescue service staff have been engaging with students during September as part of a student safety campaign.

Representatives visited Freshers Fairs at both Bangor and Glyndŵr Universities where students took part in a short safety quiz and received a free highlighter pen promoting the Service's social networking sites.

The Service is also working with staff from both universities to educate them about fire safety and drive down false alarms, as well as targeting potentially vulnerable students in private rented accommodation.

Paul Scott, Head of Community Safety, said: "The Freshers Fairs were extremely busy and we spoke to hundreds of students about the importance of fire safety, sharing our tips to keep them safe. We've also been giving advice on how to avoid false alarms at the halls of residence – we have been working in partnership with both universities on this issue for a number of years and we've seen considerable progress.



"Many of these young people are living away from home and their parents for the first time and are potentially very vulnerable."

"Our messages were promoted on social media - encouraging students to like and share our Facebook posts and to follow us on Twitter and Instagram for even more fire safety advice."



PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING



Gwent and Tŷnau Fire and Rescue Service

Did you know that Rhyll Community Fire Station is available for public use?

Have you thought about using our facilities?
We can host your meeting or training course
We welcome local people and organisations to come along

Facilities available include;

- Variety of large and small meeting rooms to suit everyone - all with overhead projectors
- Free wi fi
- Free parking
- Accessible via public transport
- Viewing area to see working fire station

Costs from as little as £7 an hour for a room



It's the first purpose built facility of its kind in Wales - reaching out to the local community and promoting fire safety

Call us on 01745 352 722 or visit www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk