



NOVEMBER 2020

INFORMATIVE

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

**COMPETITION INSPIRES
OVERWHELMING RESPONSE
FROM YOUNG PEOPLE**



**MEET 'SBARC' -
OUR NEW FIRE
SAFETY MASCOT!**



PLEDGE OF SUPPORT TO BRITISH ARMED FORCES

Chief Fire Officer Simon Smith officially signed the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service at Rhyl Community Fire Station in February.

The Covenant is a commitment from the nation that members of the British 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.

Representatives from the Ministry of Defence together with the Service Armed Forces Champions were present to witness the signing, which represented a commitment to recognising the value of serving personnel, both regular members and reservists, veterans and military families and their contribution to the nation.

This official signing is a continuation of the work that the Service has been undertaking for a number of years.

Simon Smith said: "I believe it is important to recognise the value of supporting employees from a military background, who bring many valuable

and transferable skills through their military training, as well as supporting the wider armed forces community.

"It was an honour to pledge our support to the covenant, and to witness the commitment of our armed forces champions to their work in helping to raise the profile and needs of the armed forces community wherever possible."





SERVICE WELCOMES STUDENTS AS PART OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Female pupils from high schools across Wrexham visited the Ambulance and Fire Services Resource Centre in March as part of International Women's Day celebrations.

The event saw year 8 and 9 pupils taking part in activities organised by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust and North Wales Police, designed to give them a taste of working in the blue light services.

Stuart Millington, Senior Training and Development Manager for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, said: "We were thrilled to host this event to provide young women with a glimpse into how the emergency services work.

"The pupils were split into groups and had the opportunity to take part in sessions on fitness, test out equipment and learn more about what a career in the emergency services would involve.

"The International Women's Day 2020 campaign theme was

#EachforEqual - an equal world is an enabled world.

"We want young women to realise that anything is achievable – there is no such thing as a typical firefighter. Presently the number of our firefighters who are female is significantly lower than we would like for a modern fire and rescue service.

"But encouragingly this number is increasing, with events like this and other initiatives we run throughout the year helping to reduce the amount of women who may deselect themselves based on misconceptions, old stereotypes or myths.

"However there is still more work to be done - we want a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community, and which in turn helps to deliver the best possible fire and rescue service to the people of North Wales.

"We hope that events like this will help inspire these young women to pursue the career of their dreams."





VISIT BY DEPUTY MINISTER TO PHOENIX PROJECT

The Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn AM, visited Flint Fire Station in January to meet some of the youngsters from Connah's Quay High School who attended the Phoenix course.

This follows on from her visit in October last year to Wrexham's Ambulance and Fire Services Resource Centre to find out more about our preventative work.

The visit to Flint provided an excellent opportunity for her to hear feedback directly from the young people benefitting from this inspiring and worthwhile project.

ADVICE FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES DURING BUSINESS FIRE SAFETY WEEK

Business
Safety
Week



This year's Business Fire Safety Week in September helped officers to engage with local businesses to highlight fire safety responsibilities in the workplace, and to promote the availability of help and advice all year round.

The aim was to help small to medium sized businesses work with the fire and rescue service to make sure they are complying with the law and reduce the risk of fire - especially in response to the recent challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As lockdown measures had eased at that time and people had started to return to premises, there was a corresponding increase in the protection risk. There was concern that the Covid-19 secure measures required for premises to open could compromise fire safety measures.

Messages were distributed on the Service's social media accounts during the week to support this work.



MEET 'SBARC' - OUR NEW FIRE SAFETY MASCOT!

The three Welsh fire and rescue services introduced a brand new children's mascot in April.

'Sbarc' the friendly dragon is designed to help highlight important messages to young children about the dangers of playing with fire and how to keep safe in the home and the community.

Paul Scott, Senior Fire Safety Manager, explains more: "In the Summer of 2019, the three Welsh fire and rescue services came together to design a character that would help highlight our community safety messages.

"Our aim was to capture imaginations in order to educate children and members of the public on key messages of prevention, detection and escape, and arson reduction.

"Naming the new character was conducted through public consultation at various public events



during 2019, where over 250 children were asked to choose from Flach, Fflam or Sbarc – and 'Sbarc' was a clear favourite with voters."

'Sbarc' now features across all educational and marketing material and will take centre stage during future campaigns and events to provide safety advice.

Resources featuring 'Sbarc' can now be accessed through the websites and

social media accounts of the three fire and rescue services in Wales.

The reaction to the unveiling of 'Sbarc' on social media was extremely positive – thanks to residents for engaging readily and sharing posts featuring the new mascot.

'Sbarc' will be part of the BANG campaign this month to promote bonfire and fireworks safety.





MENAI STRAITS SETTING FOR TRAINING BOAT OPERATOR INSTRUCTORS

Colleagues from Mid and West Wales joined North Wales staff for a swift water rescue boat operator instructor course held in Menai Bridge in February.

Eilian Roberts, Operational Training Manager, said: “This course was organised in collaboration with the three Welsh fire and rescue services and the RNLI.

“The attending crews achieved the qualification necessary to deliver the initial instructor course, continuation and re-validation training.

“Two members from Kent Fire and Rescue Service also joined us for the week to observe how we run the course, with the intention of delivering the same course to their own crews. They had been notified by the RNLI of the accredited course the three Welsh services had developed to address the shortfall of instructors.

“The attendees trained in challenging weather conditions on the Menai Straits but all thoroughly enjoyed the course.”

PRAISE FOR SKILLS FOR JUSTICE AWARDS

The Service’s Accredited Training Centre in Rhyl recently received a glowing report from the Skills for Justice Awards.

Michelle Corbett-Jones, Accredited Centre Manager, explained: “A virtual sampling event covered three qualifications - the Level 3 Diploma in Emergency Fire and Rescue Services, the Level 3 Award in Road Traffic Collision Instruction, and the Level 3 Award in Initial Incident Command in Fire and Rescue Services.

“The event lasted eight hours and involved the External Quality Assurer

talking to Learners, Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and Centre staff. It was pleasing that the learners interviewed were quick to praise their aligned assessor for the support and guidance provided to them throughout the process.”

The report from External Assurer noted that ‘The Centre continues to develop and improve by constant self-assessment and evaluation’ and that ‘Strong leadership from the Centre co-ordinator and Lead Internal Quality Assurer is provided to ensure the learners and assessors are suitably supported and allowed to develop’.

The assessor also highlighted a number of areas of best practice, including the use of supplementary evidence to add credibility to the assessment process, the quality of assessment comments, feedback to learners and regular standardisation activities.

This is the first time an External Quality Assurer has reviewed this qualification, concluding that the Centre should be applauded for providing clear evidence of an excellent assessor observation process, with good feedback being presented to the assessors, which adds value to the quality assurance process.



CHIRK FIRE CADETS TAKE HOME THREE TROPHIES IN ONE WEEKEND

Over a hundred young people and their leaders from all over North Wales took part in the seventh Annual North Wales Young Dragons First Aid Competition held in Rhyl in January.

Congratulations went to Fire Cadets from Chirk who won three of the five shields awarded at the weekend event.

Different categories in the competition were judged by

representatives from the British Army, the Royal Air Force, Police, Fire and the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust – with prizes sponsored by The Lord Lieutenants and High Sherriffs of Gwynedd and Clwyd.

North Wales Young Dragon Co-ordinator Gerry Frobisher MBE, said: "There were 40 teams in total, each made up of two young people and leaders aged between 12 and 30 who took part in three age-related categories.

"There were Army Cadets from Rhyl, Holywell, Flint, Anglesey, Gwynedd, Llandudno and Rossett. They were

joined by Air Cadets from Mold and Rhyl, Combined Cadet Force representatives from St Brigid's School Denbigh, Fire Cadets from Chirk as well as Young Dragon Teams from Prestatyn and Meliden.

"My thanks go to the Deputy Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff, the British Army for all their support on the day, the Army, Sea and Air Cadets for the use of the Drill Hall in Rhyl, North Wales Police Cadet team for their valued assistance, and all the leaders and young people for giving up their Saturday to support the event."



CHARITY SINGLE FEATURES MOLD FIREFIGHTER

Nick Griffiths, a firefighter from Mold, has featured in a charity single to raise funds for a local appeal.

The Countess of Chester Hospital Intensive Care Unit Blue Skies Balcony appeal is dedicated to establishing a

garden balcony on the ward so that patients can benefit from the outdoors in a safe and infection-free controlled environment.

The single, which was released in May, features children and key workers singing a unique song dedicated to all key workers, 'Not All Heroes Wear Capes'.



Steffan's poster

Steffan, 4

COMPETITION INSPIRES OVERWHELMING RESPONSE FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

A fire safety competition was launched in March inviting children and young people across North Wales to take part in designing a fire safety poster with the NHS rainbow of hope as a theme.

Over 500 entries were received and the winners of the under 7 category were:

1st prize – Steffan from Y Felinheli

2nd prize – Abraham from Ruthin

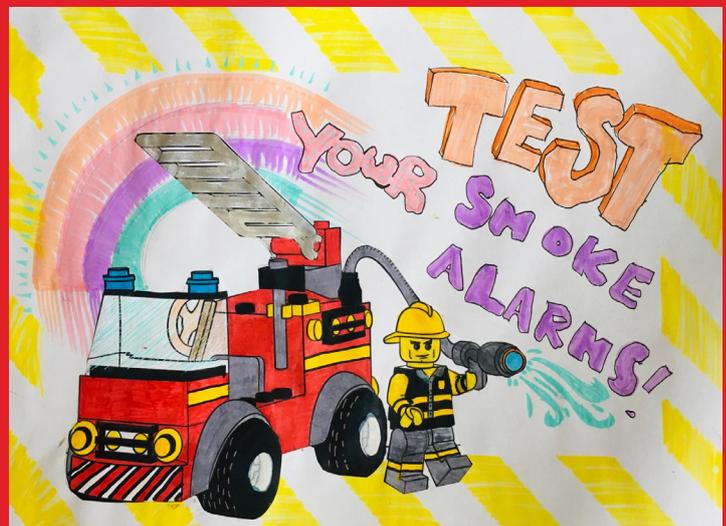
3rd prize – Iwan from Old Colwyn

The winners of the over 7 category were:

1st prize – Amelia from Wrexham

2nd prize – Charlie from Llanfairfechan

3rd prize – Osian from Moelfre



Amelia's poster

Following on from the success of the initial poster competition, a second competition was launched in June focusing on designing artwork to promote the dangers of burning garden waste, especially during the lockdown.

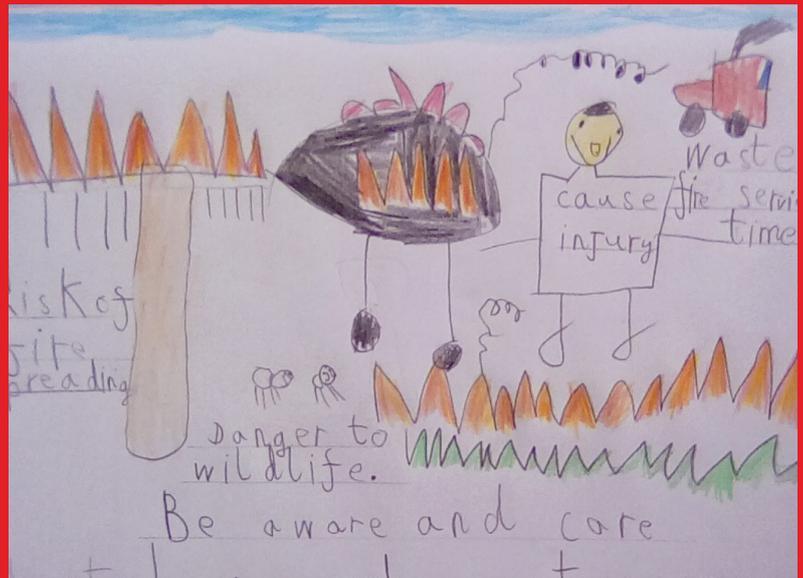
Again, the Service received some great designs and the winners in the under 7 category were:

- 1st prize – Isaac from Penyffordd**
- 2nd prize – Elin from Rhuddlan**
- 3rd prize - Cole from Rhos on Sea**

The winners of the over 7 category were:

- 1st prize – Annabel from Flint**
- 2nd prize – Isla from Coed Poeth**
- 3rd prize – Noha from Abergele**

Kevin Jones, Community Safety Manager, said: "A huge thank you to all the young people who entered the competition – we were truly overwhelmed by the positive response. Capturing the imagination of young people during this difficult time has meant that we have been able to encourage children and families across North Wales to think more about fire safety.



Isaac's poster

"Connecting with young people and making fire safety a part of everyday life is vital in reducing fires in the future - and we are heavily invested in our youth programmes. However, social distancing measures mean that we have had to look at changing the way we work with young people, creating innovative solutions to maintain our vital connection with the next generation – and the competitions have helped us to achieve this."

All winners received Lego sets, and a selection of the best designs will be showcased in the 2021 fire safety calendar which will be available by the end of the year.



Annabel's poster



HIGHLIGHTING THE BENEFITS OF CHOIR SINGING ON S4C

Earlier this year Llanberis Firefighter Dave Jones was featured on S4C's 'Corau Rhys Meirion' programme which visits choir members across Wales.

Dave welcomed Rhys Meirion to his local fire station where he took the opportunity to promote keeping safe in the home to viewers across the country.

The programme followed two football teams who are rivals on the pitch but who came together as members of the same choir. It highlighted the benefits of singing to help bring people together and improve mental health and well-being.



RHYL FIREFIGHTERS RISE TO HALF MARATHON CHALLENGE

Firefighters from Red Watch, Rhyl each completed a half marathon during lockdown in April to raise money for the NHS.

The crew decided to challenge themselves to raise £1,000 - but managed to exceed their target and chose Awyr Las as the NHS charity to support.

The challenge involved each member of Red Watch running three 5k and one 6k distance over four days on the fire station yard whilst maintaining social distancing.





PILOT TO PROTECT RESIDENTS FROM COOKING FIRES

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has joined North Wales' largest social housing provider, Adra, in a pilot to install specialist sensors to help prevent cooking fires.

Dave Evans, Partnerships Manager for Gwynedd and Môn, explained: "Cooking remains the top cause of fires in the home – and the majority of these fires are caused by cooking left unattended.

"The Stoveguard technology which has been fitted as part of a pilot with Adra is fixed within the cooking unit – the sensors measure excessive temperatures and the rate of temperature change. Once the Stoveguard detects an alarm signal it turns off the cooker, cutting off power before the fire ignites.



"We're thrilled to be working in partnership with Adra on this pilot to help protect people in their homes, which could help safeguard potentially vulnerable tenants.

"We believe that Adra is the first housing association in North Wales to be utilising this new technology, and we'd encourage others to consider installing it too."

"We advise everyone to take care in the kitchen and avoid leaving their cooking unattended, as well as refraining from drinking whilst

cooking. A working smoke alarm is essential to help alert you and your family in the event of a cooking fire or any other fire in your home – please take the time to check your alarms are working by testing them weekly."

Celfyn Evans, Fire Safety Compliance Officer for Adra, said: "The safety of our tenants from fires in the home is of paramount importance to us.

"Given that half of all fires in the home start in the kitchen, we're pleased to team up with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service using the latest Stoveguard technology. It will help keep some of our most vulnerable tenants who have had previous fires in their homes safe. It also gives them peace of mind around safety whilst using their cooking appliances."