



**Staffordshire**  
**Fire and Rescue Service**  
preventing • protecting • responding

# RETIRED STAFF WELFARE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 24 | FEBRUARY 2023



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to issue No 24 of the Retired Staff Newsletter. I hope you find something of interest in it. If anyone has anything that they would like to share with the rest of the network in future issues, please let me know.

The retired network continues to expand as more people retire from the Service although sadly, we do say goodbye to a number each year. There are also a number who I have been unable to contact prior to retirement and are not included. In addition, the number of former on call staff (retained in old money) is underrepresented. If you are aware of anyone who has retired and does not receive the newsletter or my emails, please ask them to contact me using the details below.

I continue to seek to increase the numbers of email contacts so If you have an email address and don't already receive any messages from me, please let me know so that I can add you to the database. Apart from the newsletter I send out regular emails to keep members of the network up to date with items

of relevant interest. Please note that all details are held securely on a Service database and are not shared with anyone. All emails are sent out 'bcc' and so do not show any individual email addresses.

**Please let me have your email address!**

**Andy Buttery**

Retired Personnel Welfare  
Network Volunteer

E-mail:

a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Tel: 07866 951110

Mail: The Oldershaws, High  
Offley, Woodseaves, Stafford  
ST20 0NF



Don't forget if you need any help from the Fire Fighters Charity the helpline No is: **0800 389 88210**

**helpline@firefighterscharity.org.uk**

## ABBOTS BROMLEY COMMUNITY FIRE STATION UNDERGOING UPDATE

Abbots Bromley Community Fire Station is undergoing a refurbishment to bring the building up to date. We found out more.

Since being built in the 1960s, Abbots Bromley Community Fire Station has seen a lot of operational and community activity, but it was time to update the interior and make it fit for purpose.

Work began earlier in August 2022 in a bid to provide a better working environment for the on-call firefighters and the Service as a whole. The refurb will see the station have improved facilities such as new kitchen, gym, watch office, communications room, locker rooms, PPE stowage room and appliance bay with updated drainage facilities.

Station Manager Mark Tattum said: "This refurbishment represents a significant investment in the crew, station and the community of Abbots Bromley. By modernising the station, it will provide a better working environment for the crews when executing their duties.

"It will also provide an environment that is both functional and appropriate for operational activity and help us meet our objectives identified in the Safety Plan."

Mark added: "I am really pleased to be able to assist with this project and look forward to final result."

Over £400,000 has been invested into the refurbishment from the capital budget and work is due to be complete in the new year.

Operational activity has not been affected and the on-call crew have still been able to respond to incidents while this refurbishment has been taking place.





# BE WARM. BE SAFE.

Below is some advice from the Service in their Be Warm, Be Safe campaign. While most of you as retired Fire Service staff will be aware of the issues detailed below the Comms Team from HQ would like you to spread the word among your family and friends.

With energy bills rising you may be looking at cheaper ways to keep your heat your home this winter. Check out our top tips to make sure you are staying warm safely this winter and not putting your safety, or that of others at risk.

- Get chimneys swept and use a fireguard
- Keep heaters a safe distance away from other items and materials
- Store fuel, such as logs, away from the heat source
- Use appropriate fuel on open fires/in log burners. Look for the Woodsure "Ready to Burn" logo.
- Camping stoves, BBQs and outdoor heaters should only be used outdoors
- Keep a safe distance from heaters and open fires

- Ensure you have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors
- Candles are a big fire risk, LED candles are much safer, or use a torch
- Electric heaters should be plugged into a wall socket – do not use extension leads as they can easily be overloaded and cause a fire
- Run dishwashers, washers and tumble dryers when you are awake, they can cause fires and at night you'll have less time to react and escape

We have produced some slow cooker recipes cards as using slow cookers is a cost effective cooking method. Please avoid leaving your property if it is switched on though.

For information on how to save energy visit the Energy Saving Trust - [energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk)

## Get further advice to help you stay safe in your home

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service offer a Safe and Well visit for those residents who qualify to ensure they are safe at home. For those that do not fit the criteria, a tailored help and

advice service is offered instead. Staffordshire residents who may be eligible for a Safe and Well visit are:

- Those aged 65+ living alone
- Those with mobility issues
- Those who have a history of house fires
- Those who smoke inside their property
- Households with children under the age of five

For Safe and Well advice and guidance contact the Contact Centre on **0800 0241 999**.

Residents who are deaf or hard of hearing can text a request or enquiry to the following telephone number **07528 983 101**.

For more information please visit our Safe and Well Service page - [www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/your-safety/safe-and-well/](http://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/your-safety/safe-and-well/)



## WARMSPACE.

We're opening our fire station to provide our community with a warm space during the colder months. Pop in to enjoy companionship, conversation, activities and hot drinks.



# FALLS RESPONSE TEAM

The Service has recently launched a pilot Community Falls Response Team launched to support our colleagues at the NHS to attend “green” criteria falls in the Eastern Service Delivery Group area, green calls are for those where no clinical intervention is required, but there might be a need for first aid, but essentially the individual requires help to get up

The team will work on a rota basis 8am-7pm, seven days a week.

The introduction of this team is currently a pilot scheme, funded by the NHS, and will be attending triaged falls in the community where paramedic support is not required to alleviate some of the pressures on our NHS colleagues.

This pilot also allows the Service to interact with some very vulnerable individuals in the community and to utilise these opportunities to ensure that they are as safe as possible within their own homes.

On day one the team attended three calls, all were responded to within the two-hour window. All patients received a safe and well visit and smoke alarms

were fitted, so following this interaction the team is off to a fantastic start.

This Falls Response Team includes FR Team Leader – Shaun Turpin, Safe and Well Technician as well as having a background in falls response in Stoke.

- FR Technician – Simon Wilson, on-call firefighter at Tamworth Mercia
- FR Technician – Steve Flint, on-call firefighter at Tamworth Mercia

Shaun said: “We’ve had a steady start to the pilot, with a couple of falls a day to attend to however, today (15th December) saw us attending four falls across the ESDG and delivering anti-viral medication. We’ve also started to attend falls in the Stoke-on-Trent area too due to the demand in that area.”

# INTRINSICALLY SAFE BA RADIOS

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have recently collaborated with West Midlands Fire Service to procure replacement Breathing Apparatus IS/ATEX radios.

Following evaluation that took place at Oldbury Training Centre, which was overseen by members of ERT, a preferred device was identified - the Tait 9361 DMR radio.

This is a digital radio with the ability to transmit in both digital and analogue frequencies. Due to the requirements of the full ATEX standard, the radios are limited to 1 Watt power. This is the same as the current Entel981/3 radios carried on BA sets. The use of a full IS radio ensures firefighter safety in explosive atmospheres.

A route to market was identified through the CCS Framework and the contract for the supply of the required devices was awarded to Radiocom Systems Limited. The marking of the procurement process was based on quality, price and social value.

The Service already has a long-established relationship with Radiocom and is now working with them and the

manufacturer to design the radio setup, training packages and ensure timely delivery. The current estimate will see these introduced into the service by the end of January 2023 but this may be affected by the worldwide semiconductor shortage.

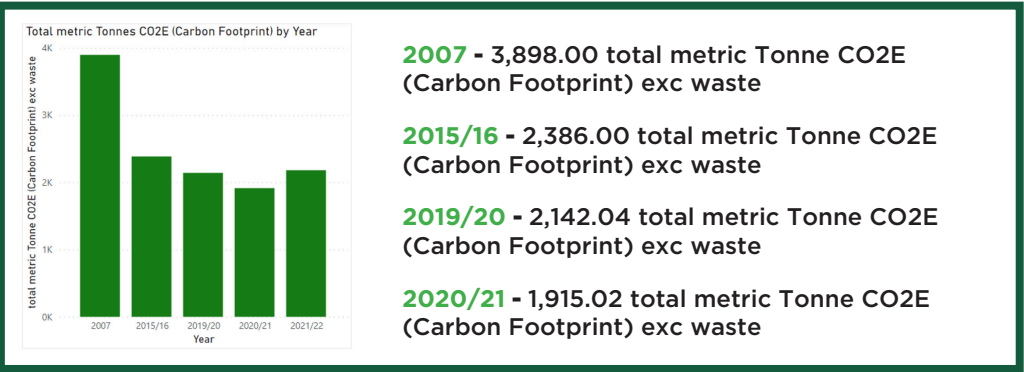
The Service is investing in excess of £80,000 in the project and ERT and BAM are looking to introduce two radios, both with fist mics to every frontline appliance.



# UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

Article by Jim Bywater, Chair of the Environmental Working Group

Since we launched the new Environmental Strategy in January 2022, we've seen momentum building and individuals across the service contributing to some excellent green initiatives. We still face challenges in our journey to reduce our carbon footprint though. In 2021/22 our carbon figures increased slightly compared to the year before, this is the first year on year increase we've seen in more than 10 years.



However, as 2020 wasn't a 'normal' year, with some staff working remotely and less journeys made, an increase was to be expected. To build upon our progress so far, it's clear that we need to do even more to develop innovative solutions to ensure carbon generation

continues to fall in future years. I'm really pleased with the progress made so far this year and I'd like to encourage more people to join in to help us reach our goals. Here's a quick update on the projects we've been working on recently:

## Waste management

Following feedback in the waste and recycling survey, we've been working on plans with our new waste contractor to provide recycling facilities at some of our sites. Recycling bins will initially be available at our residual sites, helping us to reduce the amount of waste going to disposal.

## Air quality improvement

JETS (formerly known as workshops,) Estates and Procurement teams have been working on exciting plans for the trial of four new electric service vehicles, which will be based at four different sites across the service with the hopes that this trial will allow us to test the technology and monitor its effectiveness in reality before committing to any larger scale moves across to electrification technology.

## Green space generation

With aims to provide a wildlife

haven, as well as a wellbeing opportunity for staff, work is continuing on developing the green space area at Stone Fire Station. To launch this project, a 'wild play day' was held in August with support from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. Local primary school children had a go at creating bug hotels and bird boxes, giving them the chance to learn new skills as well as generating safe spaces for local wildlife.

## Operational incidents

It's been a very challenging year to reduce operational incidents whilst facing extreme temperatures during the summer months. We attended 21 wildfires, with 13 of these incidents requiring five or more fire appliances, which poses a significant resourcing challenge for the service. These figures show an increase compared to the previous year, so we still have a lot of work to do to tackle this area.





## THE FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY HELP RETIRED STAFF LIKE PAUL & SUE WITH DIGITAL PHYSIOTHERAPY



By donating or fund raising for the charity, you're directly helping individuals across our fire services community - both working and retired. People just like Paul and Sue Fisher, who were supported with digital physiotherapy.

When you call us for support, we take the time to understand your specific needs, so we can tailor the support we offer you - empowering you to live happier and healthier.

Just one of the services we offer is digital physiotherapy.

Our Physiotherapists and Exercise Therapists provide 1:1 digital support for individuals who may need help following an injury or illness.

Using our video consultation platform, we work with you to understand your needs and how we can support you. We then develop a personalised rehabilitation programme, which can also be accessed via an app.

For some, a stay at one of our three centres may then follow, if we feel it would benefit you. And two people who experienced that are Paul and Sue Fisher - who say they noticed huge improvements, both from home and at Jubilee House, our centre in Cumbria.

Paul, 73, a retired firefighter from Staffordshire and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services, who now volunteers in the Ceremonial Squad, had always fundraised for us as well as regularly donating.

However, he never needed our support until recently.

"I've always been reasonably active, then I played golf with my son one day in February and came home with an aching back," says Paul. "By the next day, I couldn't move."

"I later found out it was a prolapsed disc and, to make matters worse, I also discovered around the same time that I had cancer of the vocal cord. I was at a real low."

"It was just by chance I was chatting to someone at headquarters around that time, within the Retired Welfare Network, and he said, 'why don't you give the Charity a call'. I thought, 'I'll give it a try'. It's the best thing I ever did!"

"The support I've had since then has mainly been with my back and mobility, as that was impacting my life so much. It was a nightmare, especially because I was so used to be active."

Paul was offered a series of video calls with one of our physiotherapists.

"She did a video assessment and sent me a programme of exercises to do at home," says Paul. "When I started doing them, I was in so much pain and couldn't do much. She told me to persevere and do one of each

exercise every other day. I did it and within two weeks I was pretty mobile again and the pain had subsided considerably."

"The next time we had the video call, I happened to mention that my wife Sue suffered badly with arthritis. She said, 'well your wife is eligible for support too'. I'd known she was, but I didn't realise how far that reached..."

Sue was put in touch with a separate physiotherapist and was given her own programme of exercises, tailored specifically for her.

"Mine was brilliant, but Sue's was a miracle," says Paul. "She'd been suffering for 10 years with her right shoulder and the whole right-hand side really, to the point doctors were telling her to stay on painkillers and attributing it to old age."

"After the assessment, the physiotherapist was able to tell her that her shoulder was tendons, her elbow was tennis elbow, and her wrist was arthritis!"

"After being given the 10 exercises, not using any apparatus - just ones she could do at home - she noticed an improvement within three days. And within a week, she wasn't taking any painkillers at all."

"Both of us were so amazed and grateful, and it happened in a

very short period of time.”

As Sue’s programme progressed, we suggested she visit Jubilee House for a week’s rehabilitation, with Paul too.

“It was ideal because I don’t love driving,” says Sue. “We both had our own exercise programmes, but we could be together all the time, just working independently on those.

“I was really frightened about going at first to be honest. I’ve never been in a gym. At 71 years of age, you become anxious anyway and the thought of someone trying to put me on a piece of equipment in a gym was horrific.

“But within seconds of speaking to them, I was completely relaxed. And I mean in seconds! They were so kind and considerate.”

Sue and Paul had one-to-one time with our Physiotherapists and Exercise Therapists, as well as group sessions on everything from pain management to nutrition.

“I really enjoyed mixing with different people with different ailments too, and them being so patient with us! Our group was a lot younger that week, but they were so patient,” says Sue.

Paul is now hoping to spread the

word about the importance of donating to us, having seen the difference it makes.

“It’s so difficult to get through to a lot of firefighters the benefits and what’s available,” adds Paul. “They’ll always support charities, but it’s about making them understand that this is there for them and could help them massively one day.

“Unless you’re suffering, people don’t tend to look at the Charity and think what it could do for them.

“In the past, I never realised physiotherapy could stop pain – and I’m so grateful that it does! It’s all thanks to donations and fundraising, throughout your career and after.

“Life’s really good at the moment. And that’s all down to the Charity, for both of us. We can’t thank you enough. We’ll be looking at any way we can fundraise now going forwards.”

**Firefighters Charity Support  
Line 0800 389 8820**



## UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE RESEARCH INTO CANCER AND FIRE- FIGHTERS

You will probably have seen recent press articles reporting on the findings of University of Central Lancashire’s research into the increased risk to cancer faced by firefighters.

Below is a letter sent by an FBU National Officer to one of our retired colleagues who has made some enquiries regarding this matter. (DECON referred to in the letter is the name given to the FBU’s campaign regarding this matter)

“The DECON training goes a long way towards better protecting firefighters’ health, but it’s not the end of the road. It’s now beyond doubt that firefighters are dying and becoming ill from these wider occupational exposures and yet the wider fire sector, including the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Home Office they advise, are relatively silent and desperately slow in taking action.

In light of these findings, we’re calling for:

- Regular health monitoring for all firefighters, on an annual basis and to continue after retirement

- Proper monitoring and recording of exposures
- The introduction of facilities and contracts for proper PPE and workwear cleaning across all services and duty systems
- The proper recording of cancer diagnoses and deaths against the occupation of firefighter (i.e. medical records and death certificates)
- The introduction of legislation that will ensure that affected firefighters are given the compensation and protection they deserve

These actions are long overdue and we’ll be fighting for them every step of the way.”

In unity,

**Riccardo la Torre**

**FBU National Officer**

## MARK PEARCE RUNS FOR THE FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY

The Fire Fighters Charity are a cause close to firefighter Mark Pearce's heart and so he has taken on the ultimate challenge of running the London Marathon. Mark explains his reasons for entering and how you can support him.

I've applied for a place through The Fire Fighters Charity for several years now, always half expecting to get the standard response of "thanks for your interest but unfortunately...". That is what I've always got until July this year though when I got the call saying I've been successful!

After the initial excitement waned, it then dawned on me the amount of training I'm going to have to do, the number of hours of pounding the streets I'm going to have to endure and the amount of boredom I'm going to cause everyone by going on about it all the time!

Why am I running it this year? Well, there's a few reasons really. I've had a bit of rough last 12 months, losing both my parents within five months of each other. That combined with turning 40 and always wanting to do the London Marathon, it's been a perfect storm of things aligning.

In the past (distant past!?) I've run half marathons, Tough Mudder and other events but this will be by far my biggest challenge.

I'm confident in working up to the fitness levels required as I've always been into training of one form or another and can follow a training plan, but my biggest fear is my body breaking down. That's why I'm starting training now. Nice and early and slowly build up to the event rather than rushing things with a couple of months to go. Although saying that, I may be getting my donations back straight away in care from The Fire Fighters Charity once I've crawled across the line at the end of April!

The Fire Fighters Charity has done some amazing work for firefighters and their families for many years. From the obvious physical rehabilitation to respite care, mental health support and much more, they have been a vital support structure for so many people. Having this chance to give something back and contribute a tiny bit to helping them and the work they do is a privilege.

It would be amazing if you donate, support and spread the word of what I, and thousands of others are doing in order to raise money for good causes. I know that everyone is struggling in some way at the moment but even the smallest of amount can go a long way to making a difference in someone's life.

If you can donate then just scan the QR code with your mobile and that will take you directly to my donation page.



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS LIFETIME AWARD

In November 2022 retired colleague Jeff Brereton received a NARF Lifetime Award from Jon Pryce, the CFO of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. Jeff now lives in Hereford but served for all his fire service career in Staffordshire following wartime service in the RAF. He has been a staunch supporter of NARF and has 50 years of charity work behind him for the Fire Fighters Charity and the RAF Benevolent Fund.

He is now the ripe old age of 102. You may remember my article on him in a previous newsletter when he featured in the Service of Remembrance at the Albert

Hall in 2020 and that he has also been on TV looking around one of the Hurricane fighter planes that he worked as a mechanic during world war 2.

This can be seen using the following link:

**[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xi335eJz4Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xi335eJz4Q)**





## RED FBU PLAQUE UNVEILED FOR SUB OFFICER EDWIN JAMES BOOTH.

A former firefighter who lost his life during the Second World War has been remembered in a dedicated service.

On Sunday 20th November 2022, firefighters in Hanley paid their respects to the late Edwin Booth during a special ceremony organised by the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU).

Members of Edwin's family watched on as a red plaque was unveiled at Hanley Community Fire Station. It stands to remember and honour those in service who have died protecting their communities.

Since 2017, the red plaque scheme has created dozens of memorials in the UK for fallen firefighters who have died in the line of duty. Each plaque is funded independently by the Firefighters 100 Lottery and is unveiled in the area most local to the fallen firefighter. It follows English Heritage's blue plaque scheme which marks the homes of influential historic and cultural figures in the UK - allowing these heroes' achievements to be celebrated and remembered into the future.

Edwin's story began in 1925 when he joined the Stoke-on-Trent City

Fire Brigade as a firefighter. He served the Hanley community for 15-years and transitioned into a sub-officer in 1939, coinciding with the start of the Second World War.

Sadly, on 16 Nov 1940, Edwin passed away as a result of the Blitz bombings whilst on duty in Coventry. He was 38-years-old at the time.

Firefighters and staff from his local station in Hanley attended the ceremony to pay their respects to the local hero.

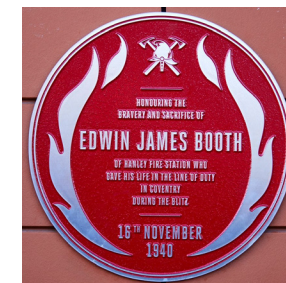
Deputy Chief Fire Officer Glynn Luznyj, who gave an address at the ceremony, said: "I'd like to pay tribute to Edwin's heroic actions during the Second World War and extend my gratitude to his family for attending the event.

"The Service is so proud of its colleagues, both past and present. It was a privilege to work with the Fire Brigade's Union in honouring his brave memory in the community which he served so valiantly."

Jack Lee, Staffordshire Brigade Chair, said: "The FBU red plaque scheme is there to commemorate the bravery of firefighters who have paid the

ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

"The permanent mounting of this FBU Red Plaque will ensure that the sacrifice that Edwin James Booth made, will never be forgotten."



## THORNEY PROJECT UPDATE (THE STAFFORDSHIRE EMERGENCY SERVICES VEHICLE PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION ASSOCIATION - SESVPA)

The project to restore an old Staffordshire Thorneycroft fire appliance has now moved forward. In August 2022 CFO Rob Barber and Alf Wilson signed the Charity Commission documents to begin the project - at no cost to the Taxpayer! When complete it is hoped to use it to support Fire Safety and Education events. A former staff member of the workshops who has some knowledge and experience of the Thorneycroft has looked over the appliance and produced a report on its condition and given an indication of the work involved. Unfortunately, before being brought back to Staffordshire it had spent some time exposed to the elements. The team will consider to what extent it can feasibly be restored i.e., from full working order to a good

standard of visual condition suitable for static display. The project will also look at the possibility of providing a permanent base for Evelyn which will allow visitors to view her. Other trustees of the project include a number of retired members. It is still early days and there will be a considerable amount of fund raising and work on the appliances to be carried out. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in any way, please get in touch with me. (a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk)



## FORMER FIREFIGHTER WHO RAISED OVER £500K FOR CHARITY WINS HEROES' AWARD

Former colleague Kelvin Chell has been presented with the 2022 Uniformed Heroes award for his exceptional service to local communities.

Sixty-six-year-old Kelvin was nominated for the award by Chief Fire Officer Rob Barber after completing an incredible 50-year career last month, which saw him raise over £500,000 for various charities and organisations across the region.

He was invited to attend an awards ceremony last October in Stoke-on-Trent and was presented with the award after a panel of judges recognised his exemplary efforts.

Kelvin said: "I'm tremendously honoured to have received this award.

"You certainly don't do these sorts of things for any recognition or personal gain, but it's very touching to see so many people come together and make this award possible."

"Throughout my entire career, my colleagues have always supported me in various ways to help raise money and awareness for good causes across Staffordshire and serve the local community."

He first joined the Service in September 1972 and quickly ascended the ranks, where he became a Crew and Watch Manager across various stations in Longton, Burslem and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Throughout his career, which spanned five decades, Kelvin has raised over half-a-million pounds for causes like Air Ambulance, Royal British Legion, Sneyd Green Primary School, Dougie Mac Hospice, Donna Louise, MACCAS project (mental health in the young), the Royal Stoke University Hospital cancer ward, Cardiac Risk in the Young and various others.



## STAFFS FOOTIE TEAM FIRESPORT UK WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Hannah Sones from corporate communications played as part of the Service's 5-a-side football team in October. She tells us about how close to glory the team came.

On 12 October, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) took part in FireSport UK's first ever women's 5-a-side football tournament. FireSport UK organise a lot of sporting tournaments across the services annually, but never before a women's football event, so it was a fantastic opportunity to be a part of.

Hosted by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service at Manchester Tennis and Football Centre next to the Etihad stadium, 13 fire services took part from Scotland to Cornwall.

The SFRS team consisted of Rachel Unitt (Blue Watch Hanley), Michelle Hickmott (ACFO), Abbi Walker (CM Orange Watch Wombourne), Hannah Sones (Corporate Communications), Helen Green (CM Orange Watch Cheadle), Sherry McCue (Orange Watch Newcastle) and Claire Lester (Trainer Blue Watch L&D) with Glynn Luznyj (DCFO)

volunteering to manage the team and provide support on the day.

Out of the 13 teams in the competition the SFRS team finished second in their group after winning games against Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, London and Greater Manchester. They drew a game with Cheshire and only had a single narrow defeat to Scotland. This meant that they progressed into a semi-final against West Yorkshire and unfortunately, they were defeated at that stage after a close fought battle.

Scotland were the eventual winners of the tournament and will host the competition next year.

It was a brilliant event to be a part of and even the drizzly Manchester weather couldn't dampen the team's spirits. Everyone worked extremely hard and we had a lot of fun both on and off the pitch. Not only was it a great day out with those you don't typically work with day-to-day, but it was also a good chance to meet with others across the different fire services which gave the event a real buzz.

## POST-CHRISTMAS FITNESS -TAKING THE FIRST STEP

Mark Pearce – fitness adviser has some sound advice on getting back to fitness following the recent festive period:

You have finished off the last Quality Street and you have decided to get fitter and healthier in 2023. But where do you start? Here are my top 5 tips to get you focused and take that first step to a new you.

**There is so much choice nowadays, outdoor bootcamps, weight training, circuits, indoor classes, Zumba, boxercise, snorkel step classes... ok, so I may have made up the last one but you get the point.**

It's important to choose what's best for you, don't sign up to an outdoor fitness bootcamp in January if you don't like the cold, you will lose enthusiasm fast and end up giving up. Do research and speak to people who have done classes or into their fitness and remember getting fit doesn't have to mean spending lots of money! There is always walking, running, cycling etc., all for free!

**Becoming fitter and healthier does not mean you have to live on avocado smoothies!**

Small changes go a long way and a big part of what I encourage as a Personal Trainer. I'm not one for prescribing massive overhauls of diets and meal plans, people fail to stick to them and they become restrictive and you end up feeling negative towards them, i.e. they are not sustainable. Instead, tweaking your existing diet to change your food habits can be just as effective and stay with you forever. For example, if you are a takeaway fan, limit them to once a week. If you drink 2 or 3 cans of pop a day, aim for 1 a day for a week then drop it to 1 or 2 every couple of days. It's important to not cut out treats as they can be a vital form of reward for all you hard work.

### **Set yourself a challenge!**

Having a target will increase your chance of meeting your goals. Be specific and be realistic. Don't target a marathon next month if you've never ran before! Start small, this will give you confidence when you meet the targets and leaves room for progression as you slowly increase your targets. A

weight loss target could be 7lb loss in 4 weeks, this works out at under 2lb per week which is realistic and achievable. If you have always wanted to run but get out of breath walking to the lounge then target walking and running around the block, slowly increasing the running and decreasing the walking over a 4-week period until you are running around the block.

### **Rope in a friend or family member!**

You are much more likely to achieve fitness targets if you

exercise with a partner or group. It motivates you to keep going, introduces some competition and builds confidence as you progress your fitness levels in front of someone.

### **Probably the most important is PLAN!**

Write dates and times in your diary, sort childcare, organise meet ups in order so you have structure to your week. The more you do this, the more your efforts will become part of your life rather than just a fad diet or fitness regime.

## WALKING GROUP

Over the last twelve months there have been regular walks held at different venues across the County with aim of having a social get together as well as some fresh air and exercise.

Over 30 retired colleagues have taken part with each walk averaging about 11 participants.

The walks are organised by various members of the group and are usually 5 – 8 miles in length and often include a short version for those who wish to do a shorter distance. We usually finish off the walk with a pub lunch.

All retired members are welcome to come along, and we aim to hold the walks in different areas of the county. Look out for the emails containing details of forthcoming events. If you are not on the retired network email list and would like to join us, please let me have an email address ([a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk)). All details are held securely on a Service database and not shared with anyone. If you don't have access to email but would still like to take part, you can contact me on **07866951110**



## OPERATIONAL LEARNING, GUIDANCE AND ASSURANCE TEAM (FORMERLY KNOWN AS TRAINING SCHOOL!) **WHAT'S GOING ON...**

Introducing the NEW 'STOP' hot debriefing tool

An on-scene or STOP 'hot' debrief should be conducted as soon as is reasonably practicable following the conclusion of all incidents and exercises, preferably on the scene and involving all personnel.

Where present other attending agencies (for example police/ ambulance/EA) should be invited to participate and share their perspective on the resolution of the incident.

An on-scene debrief should be considered normal for all incidents, irrespective of whether a structured multi-agency debrief is expected to take place at a later date.

Following the incident, the officer-in-charge of each attending appliance should make notes for future reference which could inform a structured multi-agency debrief should they be required.

The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume II report

The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume II report was published

in November, and our thoughts remain with the families, friends, and colleagues, of the 22 people who lost their lives at this tragic event. As a Service we will study the detail of the report findings and reflect these against our own policies and procedures locally. There is always learning from such tragic events, and we will work hard to ensure that the learning from this enquiry informs our approach in the future.

### **National Operational Guidance**

National Operational Learning (NOL) and Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) form part of the maintenance process for the National Operational Guidance (NOG) products we have in service and will be a vital element of NOG going forward. NOL and JOL outcomes will be some of the factors considered when changes are made to guidance, and we will ensure the review of NOG is as effective as possible.

Good use of the JOL and NOL will ensure we close the loops on learning and will provide assurance to the Service and the general public, that we

can demonstrate and show our commitment to learn from incidents and continually improve our multi-agency response to future incidents and emergencies.

Newly appointed National Operational Guidance Lead, Rich Taylor is working on the final tech bulletin and SOPs that fall out of these which sit within Learnpro. We currently have 27 tech bulletins available to support operational crews with the skills and knowledge to deal with all foreseeable incident types. We encourage individuals and crews to explore the tech bulletin tiles and look through the additional materials that are available to help breakdown the documents into easier bite size learning tools.

Over the next 12 months the team will look to introduce new ways of delivering this information to ensure it is accessible to all learning styles.

### **Incident Risk Management**

The incident ground is an operational workplace, and the law requires fire and rescue services to assess and reduce the risk to personnel as far as is reasonably practicable. As well as this duty of care to fire and rescue personnel, there is also a duty to safeguard others.

As the Incident Commander, they are responsible for ensuring that a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk is carried out at the scene.

In the initial stages of the incident, this is done by the completion of a dynamic risk assessment which includes:

Evaluating the situation, including who might be harmed and how

Assessing whether the benefits of actions are proportionate to the risk

Selecting systems of work

Declaring the tactical mode

Ensuring tactical control

Implementing additional or alternative control measures

As soon as time and resources permit, incident commanders must ensure that a more comprehensive evaluation is recorded and this should be done in the form of a written assessment of risk - the ARA:

## FROM THE ARCHIVE 1

### FIRE IN BURTON TOWN CENTRE DECEMBER 1992

Report from Burton Mail

A Rottweiler puppy was hailed a hero in December 1992 after raising the alarm of a fire.

The fire at B Wise in Burton's High Street was discovered at 2.35am on a Sunday morning but quickly spread.

Maria Rigby from the Beehive public house was out with Trish, her Rottweiler puppy, when she spotted the blaze.

Mrs Rigby said: "The dog poked her head in the doorway of the shop and when I went to fetch her, I noticed it was on fire."

The blaze took 45 firefighters from Burton, Tutbury, Abbots Bromley, Lichfield and Cannock nearly four hours to bring under control.

The age of the building meant crews were in constant danger of

the roof collapsing.

A vacant carpet warehouse next door was also completely gutted, and two adjacent buildings were badly smoke damaged.

Divisional fire officer Cliff Gilbert said: "It was an extremely difficult fire to tackle because access to the rear of the shop was limited and the age and construction of the building meant the fire spread rapidly."

Crews were also constantly in danger of the roof falling in and at one stage had to be withdrawn."

Melanie Coltman, the manager of Burton's B Wise shop said she had only been in bed a few hours when she was told of the fire as she had been out with staff from the store to a party.



## FROM THE ARCHIVE 2

### STAFFORD BLAZE TOWN'S BIGGEST FOR 8 YEARS

That was the headline in the Evening Sentinel on August 28th, 1973, after a fire that was estimated to have caused tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage at a Stafford timber yard. A two-storey corrugated iron and steel building was destroyed along with three machine saws worth £10,000 pounds each, three other machines and two lorries. About 40 firefighters from Stafford, Stone, Gnosall and Penkridge fought the blaze and prevented further damage. The fire was stopped from spreading to three diesel tanks containing a total of 1,200 gallons and from two other buildings containing timber

and paper as well as an adjacent business.

Staffordshire's Deputy Chief Fire Officer Ralph Ford said "The heat was so intense that it melted the blue flashing lights on our machines. We heard several minor explosions inside the building as we fought the fire."

The 'From the Archive' article in the last newsletter which featured photographs from the opening of the Stafford Lammascote Road Fire Station in 1971 bought a response from retired colleague Ken Jones who remembered the event and was able to identify several of those who were included.

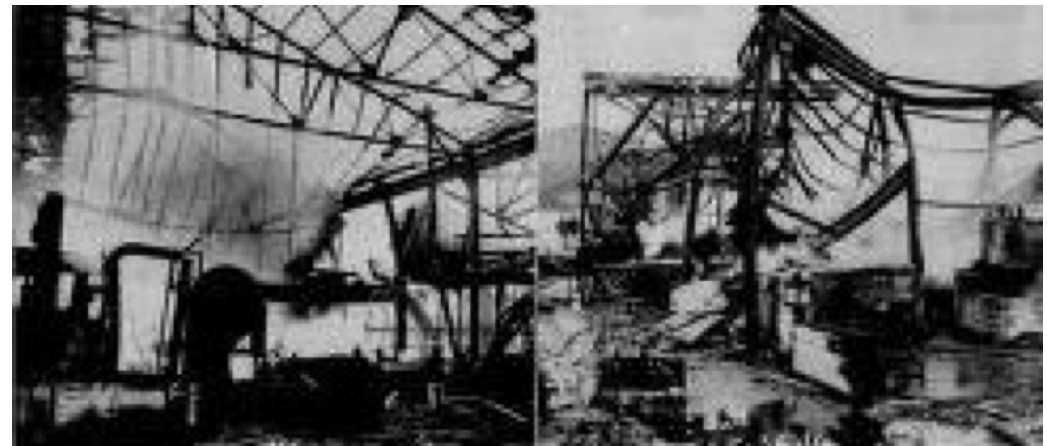


Photo - Evening Sentinel, British Newspaper Archive

## LIVING WELL GROUPS

There have to date, been seven successful Living Well Group meetings held at Lichfield and Newcastle. Forthcoming meetings are planned for Newcastle on Feb 7th then moving to Leek for March 7th, April 4th May 9th). All meetings 1030 - 1230.

We are keen to ensure an evenly spread programme of meetings across the County and will be planning future meetings accordingly.

In order to help this process, we and the FFC require some additional volunteers to help coordinate the meetings, particularly for the southern area e.g. Lichfield. The admin side of things would be provided by current volunteers who would also be able to help any new members to the team at meetings.

A brief explanation of the Living Well Groups is detailed below.

- A monthly meeting for the retired FRS community to help to maintain social connections (some of which can reduce as you get older)
- The groups meet in a community fire station for a

couple of hours we provide refreshments and there's usually a speaker

- There's a focus on what's happening in the local community, the FRS and in the Fire Fighters Charity
- We occasionally offer guidance/ speakers on how to stay healthy as you get older

The groups are run by 2 volunteers who are supported by the FFC and existing coordinators - they are the key to the success of the group.

The FFC provides full training and support. The time commitment for a volunteer is one morning per month, a small amount of admin (taking a register).

The volunteers go to the group-set up the room how they would like it, greet the attendees, introduce the speaker, make tea and coffee and generally host the group. In order to be a volunteer for a group there are a few things we need to do:

- Application form
- Two references

- Enhanced DBS form (verified over video call)
- Safeguarding and professional boundaries training (via Zoom)
- Training on how to run the group, GDPR guidance etc. (often done over Zoom)

If anyone is interested and would like any further information, please get in touch: **adbuttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk** or **07866951110**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Living Well Groups:

Feb 7th Newcastle Fire Station 1030 - 1230.

March 7th April 4th, May 9th, Leek Fire Station 1030 - 1230

Further meetings to be confirmed. Dates will be circulated by email and social media.

### Walking Group:

February - Rudyard Lake, March - Cannock Chase dates to be confirmed and further walks to be announced.

### St Florians Day - International Firefighters Day/Firefighters Memorial Day - May 4th

### NARF Meetings:

AGM May 17th, Gayton Village Hall 11.00

### Firefighters Memorial Trust Annual Service of Remembrance:

September 4th - Service of Remembrance and Wreath Laying, National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas

### Christmas Lunch for NARF and all Retired Staff:

December 7th, Service HQ 12.00

For more information on the work of NARF see **www.narfire.org.uk**

Anyone interested in joining NARF please let me know or contact the branch secretary Ron Biggs **ronniethewolf22@icloud.com**





# RETIRED STAFF WELFARE NETWORK NEWSLETTER



**Staffordshire**  
**Fire and Rescue Service**  
preventing • protecting • responding