



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding

RETIRED STAFF WELFARE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 25 | OCTOBER 2023



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 25th issue 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.

It is becoming more important to increase the numbers of email contacts that can receive the newsletter electronically through a web link. This is due to the difficulties faced in getting the hard copies printed following the reorganisation of the Service media team in conjunction with the Police, as well as the cost of postage. Therefore, if you have received this newsletter through the post, have an email address and wish to continue to receive it, please let me have your details to add to the database. You will also receive regular updates and news on matters that might be of interest to you.

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.

I understand that not everyone

has access to the internet, and I will strive to ensure that those who need a hard copy can continue to receive it.

If you know anyone retired members of staff who do not receive the newsletter, please ask them to contact me using the details below.

Please let me have your email address!

Andy Buttery

Retired Personnel Welfare
Network Volunteer

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a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Tel: 07866 951110

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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

LIVING WELL GROUPS



The FFC Living Well Group meetings continue to be held at Leek, Lichfield and Newcastle on a rotational basis. There has been a variety of speakers invited along to each group including, Dementia Friends, U3A, Brigade Fitness Adviser, University Hospital North Midlands, Defibrillator Training and the Service Falls Team.

Earlier this year we were invited by the FFC along with partners (who are also beneficiaries of the charity) to attend their facility at Harcombe House to have a residential Living Well Group, travelling on a Sunday and returning on the following Friday. We were able to sample some activities and facilities available to beneficiaries. This particular type of break is available as part of the 'Rest and Recharge' service offered by the FFC. See www.firefighterscharity.org.uk

The Living Well Group meetings are open to all retired staff and details are circulated by email and through social media. If anyone would like any more information, please get in touch.

This year marks the 80th Anniversary of the founding of what was then called the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund (and is still often referred to as the 'Ben Fund') and as a result we are looking at ways to support the charity by carrying out some fund raising.

Living Well group members have recently helped out at a number of car washes which were held to raise funds for the FFC and the Staffordshire Emergency Services Humanitarian Association (SESHAA).

In addition, Kidsgrove Rotary Club have invited retired members to raise money for the FFC by taking part in one of their Christmas Reindeer Collections on Friday 8th December at 6.00pm, of which 50% of the proceeds will be donated to the FFC. If anyone is available to help, please let me know.

adbuttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk or 07866951110

FALLS RESPONSE TEAM

We wanted to provide you with an update regarding our Falls Response Team who are based in ESDG but have responded to calls across the whole county as well as providing an update on the new Winter Warmth campaign which is a partnership with SFRS and Staffordshire County Council.

FALLS RESPONSE TEAM

Our Falls Response Team have gone from strength to strength during the pilot of this scheme in partnership with the National Health Service (NHS), Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT) so much so that we are pleased to announce that the scheme will be extended to 31st March 2024!

The two teams are made up of Falls Response Team Leaders - Jason Clarke and Shaun Turpin and Falls Response Technicians - Aaron Bishton, Luke Zanin, Simon Wilson and Steve Flint. They operate on a rota basis covering from the hours of 8am-7pm, seven days a week including Bank Holidays.

By having the Falls Response Team, the Service is able to

support the most vulnerable in our communities at their time of need and the team have had training in use of a range of lifting equipment and are utilising these to lift up those who have fallen in a safe way.

Ian Read, Head of Prevent, Protect and Partnerships, said:

“Delivering this service means that we can work together to support the NHS at a really crucial time, hopefully preventing unnecessary hospital admissions.

We’ve received some great feedback from their families too, so it’s clear that they are making a positive difference.

This scheme also allows us to interact with some very vulnerable individuals in our community and we can utilise these opportunities to ensure that they are as safe as possible within their own homes.

This is a fantastic service that we offer to the community, and I am very proud of the impact that the Falls Response Team are having on Staffordshire.”

Partnership and Intervention Manager Carmel Warren said:

“It has been hugely rewarding

being part of SFRS Falls Service, from the initial tentative discussions regarding introducing this service to where we are now, with an established Falls Team who are able to respond to those in their time of need, helping to ensure they get help at the earliest opportunity.”

Shaun Turpin from the Falls Response Team said:

“I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the whole team - the support from management and the commitment from the team has been great!

The success so far and the news of the project continuing to the end of March 2024 shows the team effort and dedication to assist our partners in the NHS, UCCC and West Midlands Ambulance Service to help make a real difference in our community.

For me it has been a brilliant experience to be part of this project and what we have achieved so far.”

So far the team have attended over 620 falls across the county and continue to carry out safe and well visits.



RISK PLANNING TEAM UPDATE - MANAGEMENT OF CROSS-BORDER RISKS

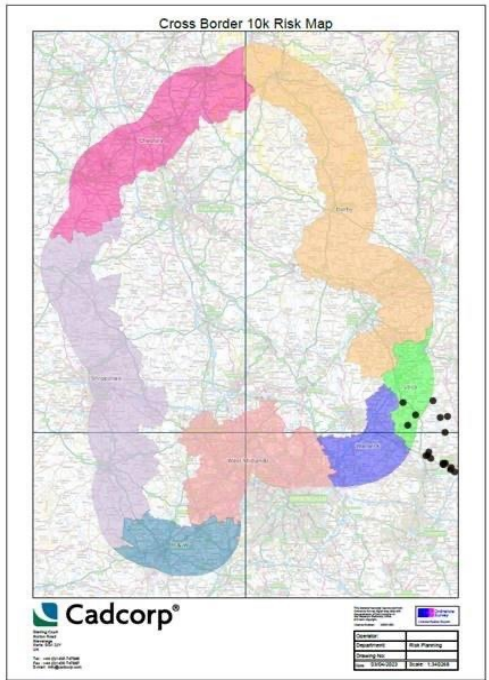
In accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, each fire and rescue service must produce a high-level Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community, including those of a cross-border, multi-agency or national nature.

The Risk Planning team have been looking at ways they can improve systems and processes to better support operational crews with identification, awareness, exercise training and pre-planning as well as operational risk information in the event of a cross-border mobilisation.

This identification and ongoing cross-border risk management will now be supported by the Risk Planning team utilising the latest data for high and very-high risks which have been shared by our seven neighbouring brigades (via Resilience Direct) and fall within 10km of Staffordshire's border. This data will then be plotted onto an easy-to-read interactive mapping overlay to help the respective delivery groups to understand these risks and to support multi-agency

collaboration, pre-planning and crew safety in the event of an incident. These will also be available via the MDT (Mobile Data Terminal).

Below is an example of the 10km border mapping, split into the neighbouring brigade boundaries which shows the data for Leicestershire FRS plotted. This will clearly identify which risks fall within our 10km border and these risks will then be accessible in the neighbouring brigade's SSRI format via the map location pins.



THORNEY PROJECT UPDATE

The Staffordshire Emergency Services Vehicle Preservation and Education Association - SESVPA - Also known as reFIREd

Further to previous articles regarding the refurbishment on a Thornycroft appliance and finding a permanent for Eveline, here are the objectives of the Staffordshire Emergency Services Vehicle Preservation and Education Association.

To preserve historic emergency services vehicles, particularly those related to, or used by one of Staffordshire's Emergency Services, with the intention of:

- 1) Raising funds for the procurement, necessary refurbishment, and preservation of the appropriate, historic emergency services vehicles
- 2) Using those vehicles in order to create additional public interest and thereby, further improve awareness, in community safety and education.

3) Displaying the vehicles, at various shows, organised school visits and local and national events, with the aim of informing and educating the public about the vital work of the emergency services; both past and present.

4) Create an online presence containing a library of vehicle photographs, as well as articles, stories, and anecdotes about the vital work of the emergency services, from frontline members, both past and present.

Association name - reFIREd which reflects the fact that retired personnel are at the centre of the project and that Fire Safety Education is the prime objective of the successful outcome of the appliance restoration.

If anyone would like to become involved with reFIREd, please contact:

a.buttery@staffordshirefire.gov.uk 07866951110

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS

STAFFORDSHIRE BRANCH, NO. 4 DISTRICT.

Report from Alf Wilson, Chair.

In the first instance I would like to thank all of those who have joined/rejoined the Staffordshire Branch of NARF in the past 12 months or so, it is good to see the branch going from strength to strength, it is only with your membership that we can go forward. The continuing dedication of Ron Biggs is a vital part of the branch operation, and he deserves recognition for this, especially when he is chasing you all for subscriptions, so thank you Ron Biggs.

As promised, I have investigated the likelihood of using the Fire Fighters Charity's centre at Penrith as a base for walking in the Lake District. The FFC has provided the information below for applications to use Penrith, there will be a cost for this, see the link below:

The link to Sykes Cottages and one of the properties at Jubilee House. There are 4 available for renting- you can find them by searching for Eamont Bridge.

One of the properties sleeps 6, but is 3 bedroomed, then 2 sleep 4 (2 beds) and one sleeps 3.

<https://www.sykescottages.co.uk/cottage/Lake-District-Cumbria-The-Lake-District-Eamont-Bridge/12-Eamont-Park-1112835.html>

In conjunction with the Firefighters Charity Living Well Groups we have held a number of car washes at Leek, Newcastle, and Lichfield Community Fire Stations which raised over £1600, and which was split between the Firefighters Charity and Staffordshire Emergency Services Humanitarian Aid Association (SESHAA) Poland/ Ukraine Border Project.

The SESHAA Project is aimed at continuing our support for nine Polish Fire Stations and their volunteer personnel adjacent to the Ukraine Border. SESHAA have supported this group of volunteers in equipment, training, and partnership for over fifteen years.

The war in Ukraine has set some further challenges, and we are supplying RTC extrication equipment, water rescue and Trauma Care equipment and the appropriate training. We need to raise some funding to transport the equipment to Poland. All SESHAA members are volunteers, no member is paid for their time, and the last two members who went out to Poland to undertake the scoping visit, paid for the flights themselves. SESHAA is a UK Registered Charity, number 1070739.

I would like to say thank you to those who came along and helped out at the car washes, and for supporting the Firefighters

Charity, SESHAA and the Polish Volunteers.

Alf Wilson

Chair National Association of Retired Firefighter's, Staffordshire Branch

Project Manager/Advisor SESHAA.

For more information on the work of NARF and benefits of membership see www.narfire.org.uk Please note that at the time of writing the website is currently under reconstruction.

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

NARF/RETIRED STAFF XMAS LUNCH



The NARF/Retired Staff Christmas lunch will be held on Thursday 7th December at 1230 at Service HQ. The cost will be £15 ALL retired staff are invited to attend. Please let me know if you would like to be included.

THREE RIDER TRIAL

The transformation work on more flexible on-call mobilising is being completed with a view to respond to a number of predetermined incidents, by utilising our on-call crews to prevent the escalation of incidents and to reduce the risk of the public putting themselves at harm. The concept is to mobilise a crew of three to make quicker interventions to improve community safety when they would otherwise not have been mobilised.

The concept is not about reducing costs, its actually an investment aimed at improving outcomes for our communities, while using our staff to the best of their abilities in the most effective and efficient manner. A crew of three will have the potential to implement lifesaving actions throughout the whole of Staffordshire. They will be used as the closest appliance available and be sent to a range of incident types.

Work is taking place alongside Fire Control and our systems integration team to ensure

that the correct mobilisation criteria will be achieved with the selected crewing requirements, the crewing requirements are a Service priority for maintaining firefighter safety. In the future, our on-call crews will respond to a number of incidents types, which they would have previously not attended.

Crews will still be required to maintain a minimum requirement, which will include a suitably trained crew of three, including breathing apparatus wearers, a qualified level one Commander and a separate Emergency Fire Appliance Driver.

Consultation with key stakeholders including representative bodies and all operational crews has taken place. Our Deputy Chief Fire Officer delivered a vlog to provide feedback on questions that were asked to the Transformation Board regarding three rider crewing mobilisations. The Service intends to start a trial in the summer of 2023 for approximately six months.

STAFFORDSHIRE LIONESSES RECEIVE CAPS

Earlier this year, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's own Lionesses were honoured for their exemplary achievements at a special ceremony in Burton upon Trent.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Michelle Hickmott and Stoke-on-Trent based firefighter Rachel Unitt were presented with their national team caps and numbers at St. George's Park on 4th April.

The duo represented the Lionesses in a combined 103 matches – taking on the likes of Spain, Croatia and Holland. They were both full-backs for England and often joke about which one was better, but there's no discrediting their exceptional achievements both in sport and protecting the communities of Staffordshire.

Michelle represented England in a 4-1 win against Finland in 2009 and played at club level for Birmingham City, Fulham, Coventry and Charlton from 2003 to 2011.

Even whilst she was storming down the wing for the Lionesses,

Michelle worked in a number of fire services across the UK for over 15 years before joining us from London Fire Brigade in May 2022 as ACFO.

Speaking on receiving her caps and numbers, ACFO Hickmott said: "It was a special day to be presented our caps by the current lionesses.

"I feel incredibly proud to have played a part in the long journey that women's football has been on over the years - having this recognised by The FA was an important moment for women's football. It has taken generations of commitment, passion and sheer hard work to help get women's football to a place where the England stars are now household names, which is fabulous. Their successes are so well deserved, and I am sure there are more to come!"

Her full-back counterpart, Unitt, made a total of 102 appearances for England as part of the national squad for five major tournaments, three European Championships and two World Cups - and was crowned England's International Player of the Year in 2004.

Now a firefighter based in Hanley, she previously played at club level for Wolverhampton Wanderers, Everton, Fulham, the New Jersey Wildcats in the US, Birmingham City, Nottingham County and the London Bees.

Rachel said: “As a young girl it was my dream to play for England, so receiving my legacy cap was a very proud moment.

“It was an incredible day for all involved and nice for everyone to get the recognition of contribution to the game.

“The lionesses winning the European championship shows the progression of the women’s game in this country and what can be achieved. ”



ROVING RESOURCE CONCEPT IN SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Russell Brown, Station Manager for Codsall, Wombourne and Kinver has given us an update on the Roving Resource Concept in South Staffordshire.

Following some information gathering and looking at statistical data in 2022 dating back several years, we established that an area for an efficiency project to be focused would cover the South Staffordshire Leg, starting at Brewood and working our way further south with Codsall, Wombourne and Kinver. Historically these stations

have worked hard to attract and maintain availability of the appliances in their respective areas, however it has been increasingly challenging over recent years due to a wide and varied number of reasons, from the on-call crewing model, recruitment, retention of staff to the reliance on and support from our neighbouring services. A number of these issues were highlighted but can be very complexed and ultimately have all come at a cost to SFRS. Under the transformation board this

was highlighted to be reviewed and efficiencies found, and improvements made where possible.

This is where the Roving Resource Concept was introduced. The resource meaning putting the correct people with the correct skills in the correct place at the correct time. This is to increase and improve availability in South Staffordshire, with an overall aim of improving appliance availability in order to educate and advise the communities that they serve whilst attending and resolving incidents within the county of Staffordshire. The concept was first introduced in August 2022 as a 12-week trial to see what impact this would have for South Staffordshire.

Following its introduction, it was clear that it provided us with some positive results, such as the following:

- *Increased resource availability at a weekend in South Staffordshire.*
- *Increase in moral of the staff at the stations involved.*
- *Positive investment in our own people by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.*
- *Provided South Staffordshire with resources which were available and used.*

- *Ability to provide education and advice to the communities through Warmer Homes campaigns, community events and positive action by available resource.*
- *Additional opportunities for personal development and team development.*
- *Exposure and experience to crew members in early development which in turn has improved recruitment and retention.*
- *Reduction of dependence on over border resources for support.*
- *Increase in declared hours by staff at the South Staffordshire stations inside and outside of the trial time period.*
- *People have seen the benefit and more people are expressing an interest in doing the same elsewhere in the county.*

Following the conclusion of the initial trial a full report was produced highlighting the positive outcomes and the Service Transformation Board voted to continue the trial in 2023 for a further 24 weeks, where it will once again be reviewed by the Service Transformation Board.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

FIRE IN MILL STREET, STONE

50 Firefighters were called to deal with a fire in Mill Street Stone in December 1993. The fire broke out in a derelict former mill later used as a warehouse around lunchtime. Fire crews from Stone were on the scene within six minutes of the call being received. The biggest problem facing the crews was the perilous state of the three-storey building according to the Officer in Charge Divisional Officer Cliff Gilbert. "It was very hectic for the first hour or so" he said. "Being a Victorian building, we had rapid fire spread and a danger of collapse".

"It took two hours to get the fire under control, then we concentrated on protecting adjacent buildings including a two-storey office block.

The building was due for demolition in order to make way for a new road, Christchurch Way, which opened on 13 February 1995. It was originally built in the 19th century as a fustian mill. Fustian is a type of velvet, a mixture of cotton and linen. During the First World War it was used to house German Prisoners of War who were employed on local farms.

Extract from 'Contact' Issue No2 Autumn 1974

For those who aren't aware (or can't remember) Contact was the name of the Brigade magazine that ran from 1974 until the late 1980s.

Here is an amusing extract from the second issue. I don't know if anyone can identify the officers or the 'radio ham' concerned:

The following communique has been received from our radio ham (who wishes to remain anonymous) who happened to hear the following radio message from a certain Divisional Station.

"From A.D.O. It is a range of single storey buildings containing polymethyl methacrylate, 2 jets in use."

"From D.O. Stop for address. Quantity of plastic toilet fittings involved, 2 jets in use."



Staffordshire Past Track and Stafford Newsletter

FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY CELEBRATES IT'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marks 80 years since the founding of what we know today as The Fire Fighters Charity. Here is a timeline explaining it's history.

1940 - The London Fire Service Benevolent Fund is set up by Major Jackson, London's fire chief, from an initial donation of £24.

1943 - The Fund nationalises to become the National Fire Services Benevolent Fund. (known to many as the Ben Fund).

1945 - Almost 1,500 fire service orphans are cared for by the FSNBF supported by grants and allowances.

1953 - HM Queen Elizabeth II becomes the Funds Royal Patron.

1965 - Marine Court at Littlehampton, West Sussex opens as a recuperation centre.

1978 - The Charity's co-founder, Ronnie Greene, passes away.

1980 - Annual fund-raising tops £1 million pounds for the first time.

1981 - Harcombe House in Devon opens up for recuperation.

1993 - The Queen attends the

Golden Jubilee reception at London's Guildhall

1995 - Jubilee House in Cumbria opens, offering rehabilitation and nursing services to beneficiaries.

2003 - The Fund's Lottery launches. It's still going today (visit the www.firefighterscharity.org.uk) to find out more and have the chance to win up to £25,000.

2003 - The Fund celebrates its Diamond Jubilee with a star-studded concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

2005 - The Fund starts working with the Children's Burns Trust to support burn victims.

2006 - After a long building programme, Harcombe House starts offering rehabilitation.

2008 - The Fund changes its name to The Fire Fighters Charity.

2013 - A newly refurbished Marine Court launches rehabilitation facilities and psychological support services roll out across all three centres.

2019 - As the result of a long-standing working relationship between The Fire Fighters Charity and The Royal

Foundation HRH The Duke of Cambridge visits Harcombe House to recognise the work of the Charity and to mark Emergency Services Day.

2020 – Present - During lockdown the Charity introduced a series of digital support pathways which they are continuing to develop and evolve.

This now includes the MyFFC app

which provides a means for the UK fire and rescue community to engage with each other, enjoy exclusive content and access support whenever they need it. You can register via the website and download the app from Google Play or the App Store. www.firefighterscharity.org.uk



ADVICE FROM THE BRIGADE FITNESS ADVISER

Mark Pearce, the Service's fitness adviser, has visited two of the Living Well Group meetings to give some tips on keeping healthy in older age. Below are some extracts from his presentation.

What is aging?

Aging effects everyone in different ways, in different degrees and at different stages of life.

Affected by three factors;

- Intrinsic – genetic factors
- Extrinsic – how we live, what we do, how we fuel ourselves etc.
- Illness/disease factors

We cannot increase someone's lifespan as such, but physical activity, healthy diet and positive mental wellbeing can increase

your longevity and quality of later life.

How does it effect us?

MUSCLE MASS - We lose about 0.5% every year from 30 years of age (varies greatly depending on genetics/lifestyle)

BONE DENSITY - Approximately the same loss

AEROBIC CAPACITY

- 3-6% loss per decade in 30's/40's
- 20% loss per decade around 70's – accelerated by bed rest (e.g. 12% loss in 10 days reported)

Exercise, specifically mechanical stimulus under load, can decelerate all this by promoting muscle/bone creation and natural growth hormones which can for example improve general

cognition to aid in avoiding falls.

General recommendations (65+)

150 minutes of light/moderation (e.g. golf, hiking, mowing lawn, walking, cycling, swimming, yoga etc.) aerobic activity OR

75 minutes of vigorous (e.g. running, tennis, badminton, rowing, squash etc.) aerobic activity OR

Combination of both!

ONLY 20% OF GENERAL POPULATION ARE HITTING THIS TARGET

Strength training twice per week

ONLY 10% OF GENERAL POPULATION ARE HITTING THIS TARGET

Practical training tips...

Set a goal/target e.g. walking/running a certain distance, getting up and down off the ground easier, improving general mobility, fit into an item of clothing, commit to three sessions per week etc.

Use an RPE scale rather than focusing on chasing heavier, longer, faster all the time.

Focus on tempo, range of motion and control of equipment and own body.

Train at the best time of day for you.

Focus on enjoyment and consistency – avoid 'beasting' yourself every day.

Make resistance training the priority – lifelong benefits for body, heart and overall wellbeing.

Realistic expectations - do not limit yourself but adjust to your current circumstances/abilities and progress from there.

Nutrition

Increase protein intake - muscle protein synthesis slows the older we get – aim for 1 gram per kg of body weight per day.

Have protein at every meal.

Increase legumes (beans, lentils, peas, chickpeas), fish, fruits and veg.

Blueberries – improves memory function and verbal skills.

“Eat like an adult” (Dan John)

Supplements... not generally a fan except for...

Anything recommended by your GP/linked to medical condition.

Protein Supplements – not to be used as a substitute but is cost effective, useful if lack of appetite and/or struggle to get protein in throughout the day.

Omega 3 Fish Oils.

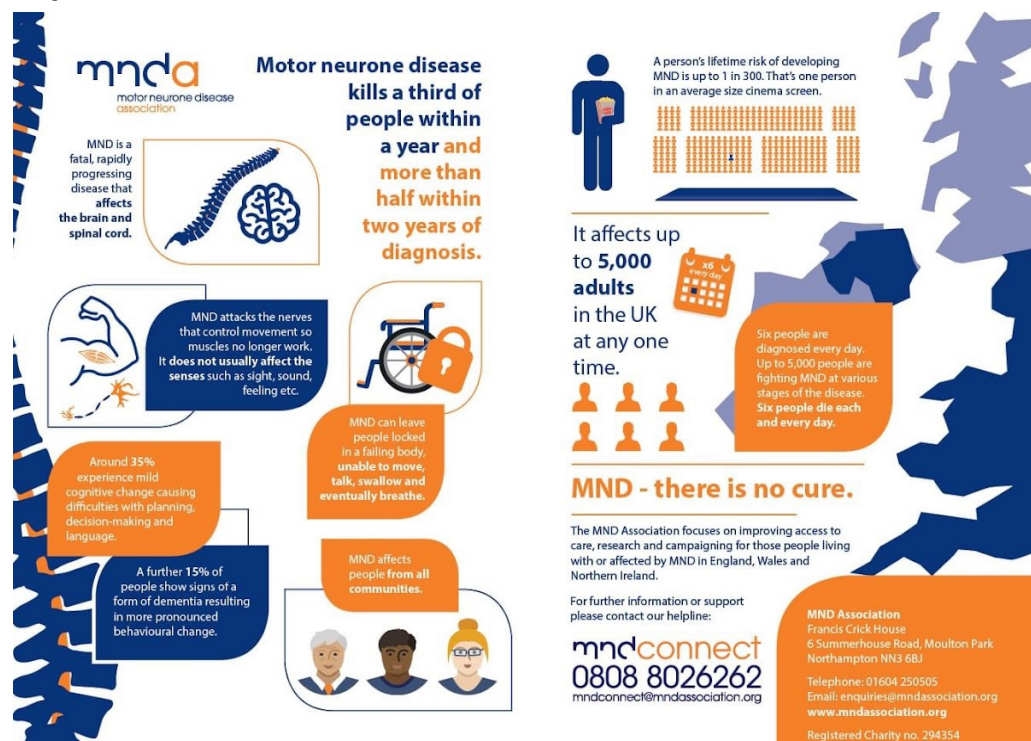
Vitamin B12 (produces red blood cells, improves fatigue, bone health – prevents osteoporosis, reduces age related eye issues, slows down loss of neurons associated with memory/dementia, improves heart health and more)

RAISING AWARENESS

- MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE (MND)

Global Motor Neurone Disease Awareness Day was held on the 21st of June and is a key date in the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) Charity's calendar. The main aim of the Association is to make MND treatable and ultimately a cure is found through access to care, research and campaigning for those people living with or affected by MND.

What do you know about Motor Neurone Disease? There are some key facts.



If you have not seen the BBC documentary of former Rugby League star Rob Burrow MBE - 'Rob Burrow - Living with MND' which took an intimate look at

Rob's life with MND more than two years on from his diagnosis. It is still available to view at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-jwatotoHk

Rob has inspired so many people to join the fight against MND - you may have seen on the news his friend, former teammate and fellow Association patron Kevin Sinfield OBE take on many challenges raising money in Rob's name. His Ultra 7in7 saw Kevin running from Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh to Old Trafford in Manchester in just 7 days - the equivalent of around 40 miles a day.

"My Dad died from Motor Neurone Disease ten years ago and he is the reason I took up running. My first race was the 'Potters Arf' marathon in 2013 and I carried my Dad's crown green bowls with me as a tribute and to raise funds for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA). I got the running bug (as you do!) so carried on and have completed many half Marathons and 3 Marathons since but the one I always wanted to do was the London Marathon. It is incredibly difficult to secure a ballot place but after 10 attempts I was successful and run in the London Marathon on 23rd April. An incredible day and event with a record breaking 48,000 runners and many top athletes and celebrities taking part.

I decided to run for the Motor Neurone Disease Association again and it was very inspiring to see Kevin Sinfield and his Rob Burrow team leading us amongst

some 230 MNDA runners. As a bit of an additional challenge, I decided to run the Marathon dressed as a blue cornflower! The blue cornflower (*Centaurea Cyanus*) was adopted as the national symbol of hope for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) because of its fragile appearance but hardy nature. Like the cornflower, people with Motor Neurone Disease show remarkable strength in coping with this devastating disease. By doing this I was also aiming to break a Guinness World record as the 'fastest male marathon runner dressed as a three-dimensional plant'.

On the day I suddenly found that I had competition and two other guys who were friends and running for another Charity were also dressed as plants! (Sunflowers!) We had a good chat and wished each other the best of luck but knowing they were in the runners starting before me meant their predicted finish time was faster - but I was determined this wasn't going to spoil my day.

There were some other funny and incredible people running in costume trying for World Records none more so than the Royal Marine Corporal with the fridge on his back (he got the record) It was a memorable run and day with family support, going past huge crowds and many familiar landmarks and it was tough

towards the end, but I managed to complete it in 4 hours 15 minutes and 23 seconds.

Waiting for me at the finish was the Guinness World Records adjudicator who to my great surprise suddenly confirmed to me that I had broken the record! Not too bad at 61! The most important bit was the raising of the profile of the Motor Neurone Disease Association and securing donations of over £900 (target was £250) towards the great work they do – it was also a fitting 10th Anniversary tribute to my Dad. Carry on doing what you enjoy for

as long as you can, be patient and anything is achievable.”

Mick Daniels



WALKING GROUP

The Walking Group continues to meet every few weeks to have a social get together as well as to gain the many benefits of walking which includes building stamina, burning excess calories and making your heart healthier. More information on the physical and mental health benefits of walking on: Walking for health - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

The walks are organised by various members of the group and are usually five to eight miles in length and also include a shorter route for those don't want to walk that far. 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).

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**

BRIGADE ANGLING TEAM

The Brigade Angling Team begins its season in April and runs through until September every year. We hold two matches each month at various venues within Staffordshire and sometimes Warwickshire and Shropshire.

At present there are around 10 full time members who are mostly retired veterans and former staff members, the rest of the team is made up of a small number of guests who regularly support the team. Every year we send three or four teams to fish in the Fire Service National fishing competition, this year it was held at Messingham in Scunthorpe. Although the results on the day were disappointing a great time was had by all especially those members who booked lodges and spent the week at the venue.

We usually hold two charity matches or events where all monies from raffles, name cards and peg fees are collected in support of The Fire Fighter's Charity.

We would welcome people of all abilities to come along and join us, we can also help out with fishing gear. If anybody is interested in joining us, please get in touch - **Gary Beckett, 07960099004 or email gbeckett26@hotmail.com.**

It's probably fair to say that the Angling Team is one of the longest continuing sports sections running in the Service. Here is a report from the second Issue of the Contact magazine (see also From the Archive) in 1974 shortly after the amalgamation of Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent and Burton on Trent Fire Brigades:

"The first of the Angling matches was fished at Coombes Abbey, Coventry. The Brigade entered four teams and although the fishing was patchy, we were able to obtain the Heaviest Fish Prize. Stan Phillips was the recipient and Aub Taylor won his section.

After the match, tea and sticky buns were served at Brierly Hill Fire Station. I must say that a good time was had with the lads from the North Division teams. All members seem delighted that they are now part of the Angling Club of Staffordshire Fire Brigade."



MEET OUR NEW ON CALL SUPPORT OFFICERS



Left to Right: Darren Thompson, Tom Mabley, Michelle Dudman, Rick Pattison, Richard Kissman and Jordan Fallows

Our On-Call Support Officers (OCSOs) are the team who work with our on-call firefighters to help them to improve appliance availability. One aspect of their role is to encourage potential employees from the initial expression of interest through to successful completion of their training.

Formally known as Retained Support Officers (RSOs), the team have not only taken on a new name but three new OCSOs. Richard Kissman, Jordan Fallows and Tom Mabley join Michelle Dudman, Rick Pattison and Darren Thompson to form a permanent team following a successful trial.

Station Manager, Dez Stoddart, who oversees the OCSO team, said: "An initial on-call trial was launched back in June 2021 as demand was building on on-call

firefighter numbers across the Service.

"The trial initially began with three RSOs but soon grew to a team of six as demand and interest in becoming an on-call firefighter grew. We have also seen growth in our front-line on-call establishment since the trial began, which is a testament to those who have been involved in this process."

Dez added: "On-call firefighters are an integral part of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service; therefore, it is important that this team continue the good work they've done and work alongside other departments like HR, L&D and Corporate Communications to get people interested, through the doors, trained and available to crew their local appliances."

Since the trial began, there have been a number of people involved in the process to bring it to where it is today. Dez said: "I want to take this opportunity to give my thanks to all those who have been involved in the trial and have helped to make it a success."

Our OCSOs will also help and support the Service Delivery Group plans and bolster our front-line.

If someone you know lives close to one of our on-call fire stations and wants to become an on-call firefighter and make a difference

in the community, then we are recruiting.

More information can be found on our external website: www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/careers/on-call-firefighters

IS A REASONABLE STEP COUNT IMPORTANT?

There are studies that state exercise and how our bodies break down and use food is more effective if people are generally active consistently rather than just training/good nutrition alone. For example, if two people go on exactly the same diet/training plan, one remains sedentary outside the gym and the other ensures they are getting 10-15,000 steps in every day then its proven that positive physical/mental effects are more evident

in the more active person.

So if you can improve your health by not doing anymore hard training or stricter diets then surely it's an easy win!

Will walking 6-10 thousand steps every day make you super fit and lean on its own, probably not, but it does make every other positive step you do make much more effective and more responsive in a positive way.



IN MEMORY OF FORMER COLLEAGUES

I have been asked to include a list of names of former colleagues who are no longer with us. Detailed below are the names of those who have passed away in the last eighteen months that I have received notification of.

Graham Langford
Ian Havey
Diane Morgan
John Mountfort
Trevor Plant
Bill Dare
Dave Blank
Phil Stockton
Geoff Lloyd
Peter Jackson
Brain Tinsley
Jack Yates
Mick Toghill

Ted Worsley
J. F. Stevens
Mrs M. Lovatt
John Barnsley
M.J.K. Davies
Paul Smithers
Ken Harvey
Peter Cartwright
Margaret Walkeden
Chris Mountfort
Alan Paulinski
Peter Harrison

**Our thoughts are with their families and friends as they
come to terms with their loss.**

RETIRED STAFF WELFARE NETWORK NEWSLETTER



Staffordshire
Fire and Rescue Service
preventing • protecting • responding