

Annual Performance Assessment 2018-19



Collaboration



Intergration



Involvement



Long Term



Prevention



NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MAKING NORTH WALES A SAFER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT



Welcome to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's progress and self-assessment report for 2018/19.

In March 2018 the Authority published its Improvement and Well-being Plan for 2018/19 that confirmed its long term strategic objectives and explained what it was planning to do during the year towards achieving them. We are pleased to report that we made good progress last year despite some serious challenges including a sharp increase in the number of outdoor fires that we were called to attend during the exceptionally hot, dry summer.

We were particularly pleased that in continuing our dedication to prevention activity and reducing numbers of accidental dwelling fires, the number fell again last year to the lowest ever recorded in North Wales. However, we do not intend to be complacent, and our focus remains on educating and helping people to stay safe from fire.

We hope you find our account of the year interesting and informative. We have placed more emphasis in this year's report on including real examples of how we have made a difference to people's lives, but we would very much welcome your feedback on how we might improve our reporting even more in future. If you have any comments or suggestions for improvements, we would encourage you to share them with us. You'll find our contact details on page 54.

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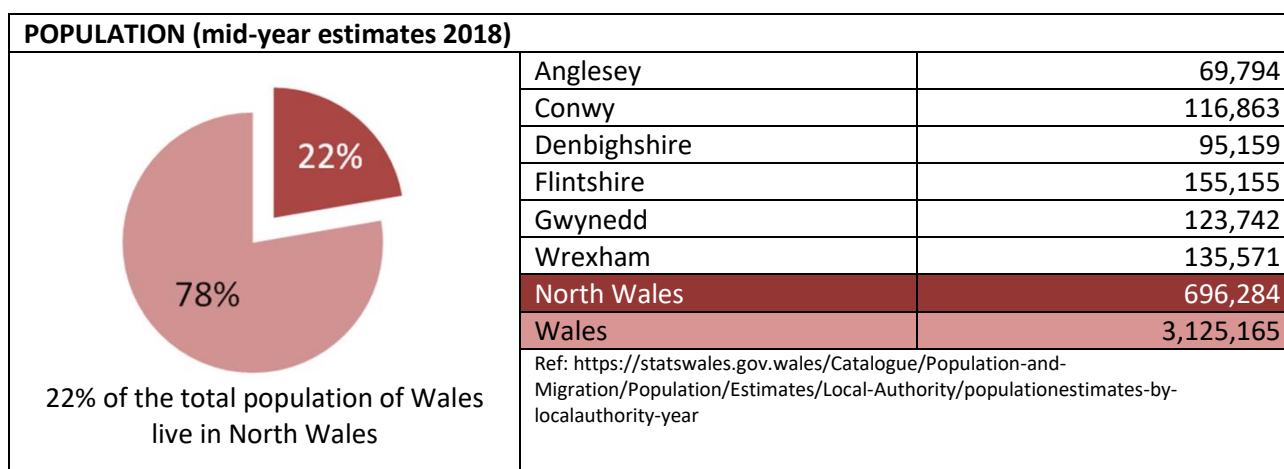
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LIVING IN NORTH WALES

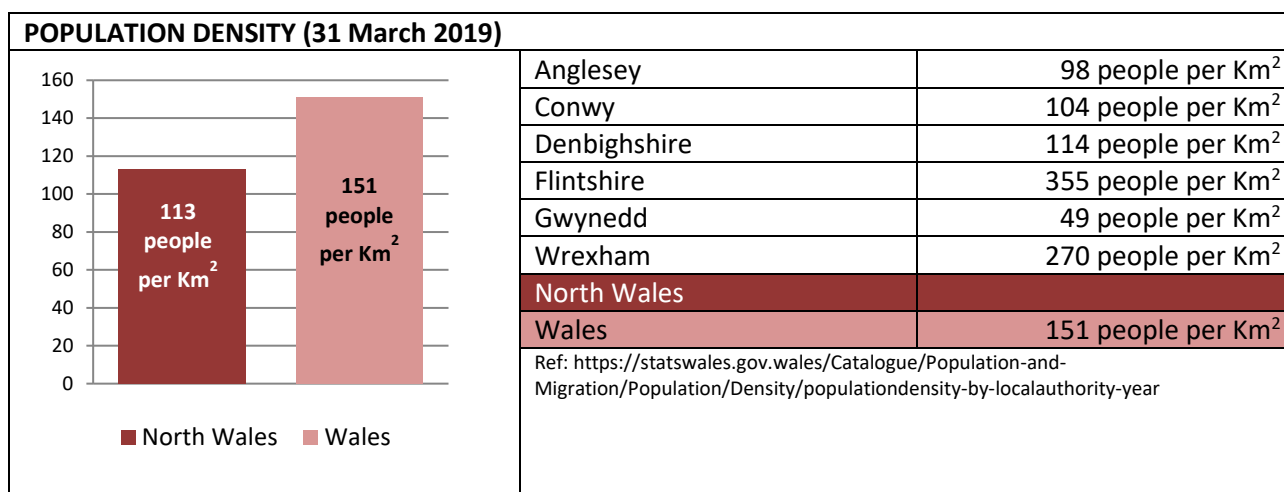
Demography of North Wales

North Wales is home to around 696,000 people, with millions more visiting the area every year for work and leisure purposes.

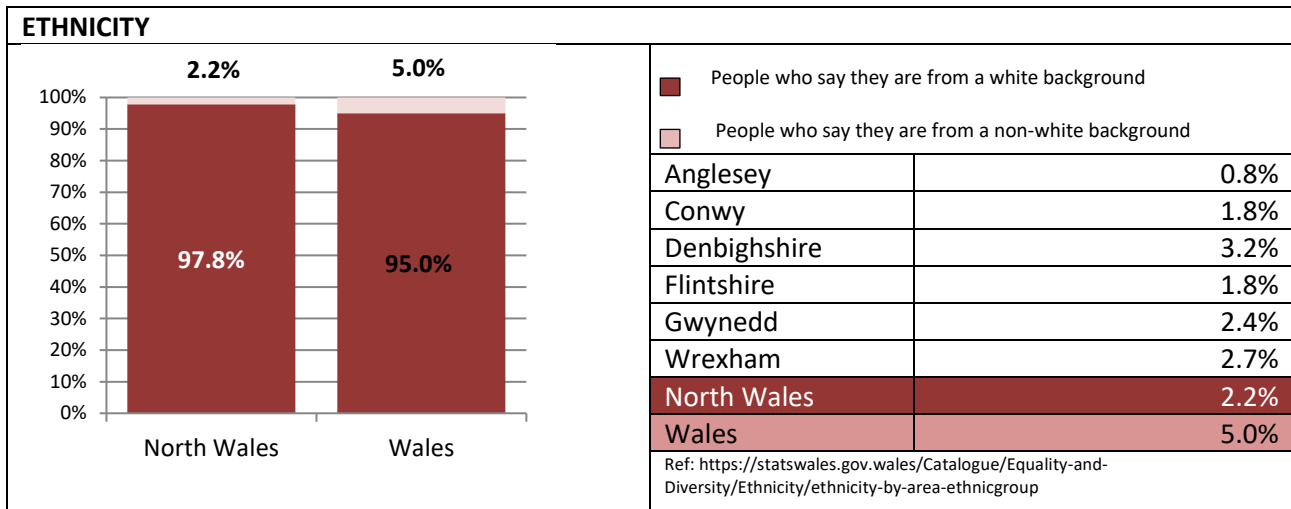
The future demographic profile for the region forecasts that by 2030 the resident population will have increased to 729,100. The increasing population of North Wales can be explained by an increasing birth rate and a decreasing mortality rate, which has led to extended life expectancy. In addition, the percentage of the population aged 65 years and over is expected to increase by 26%, and the number of people aged 85 years and over is expected to increase by 80%.



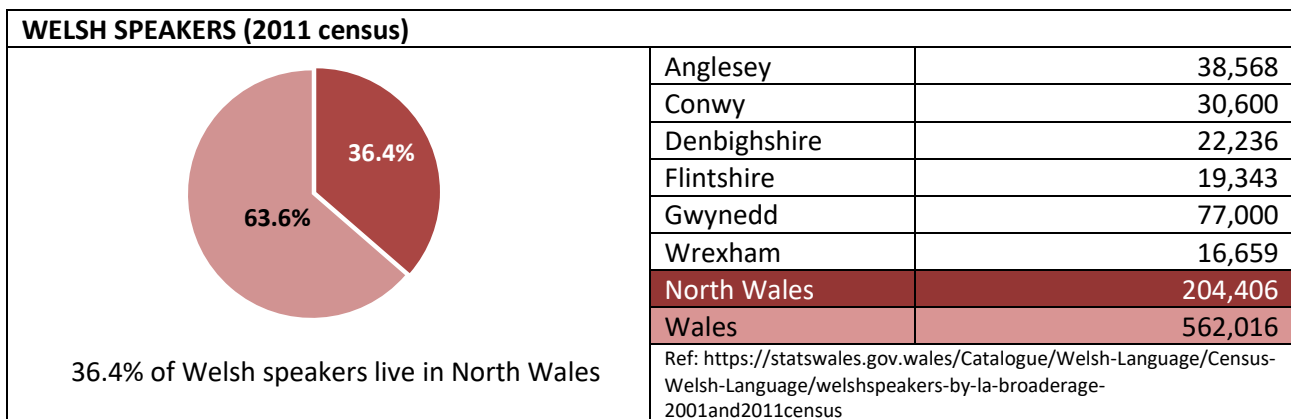
Population density remains the highest in Flintshire and Wrexham, with Gwynedd being one of the most sparsely populated.



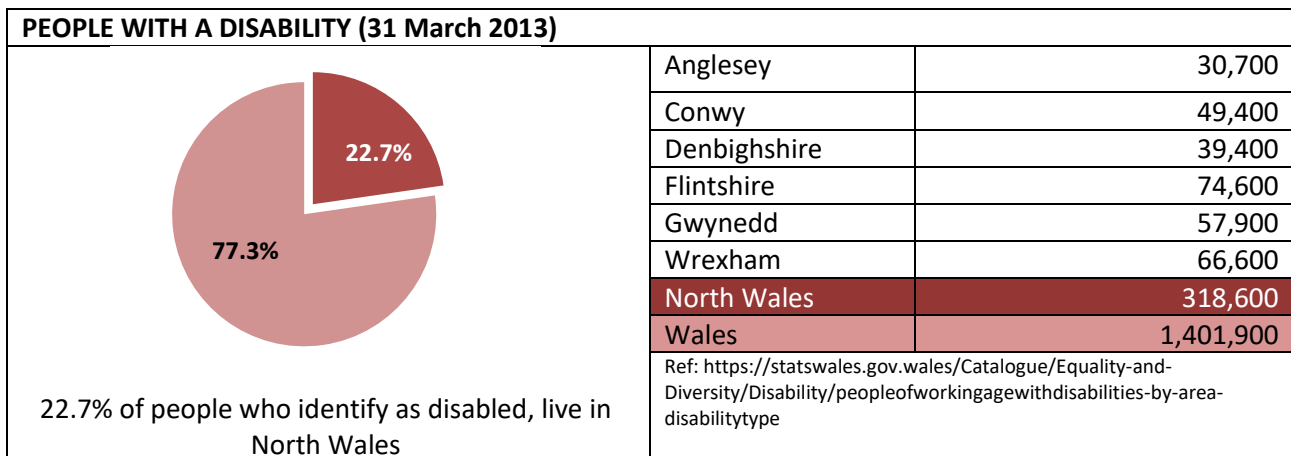
In Wales, 95.6% of the population describe their ethnic group as White. This varies by region from 97.8% of the population in North Wales to 94.3% in South East Wales.



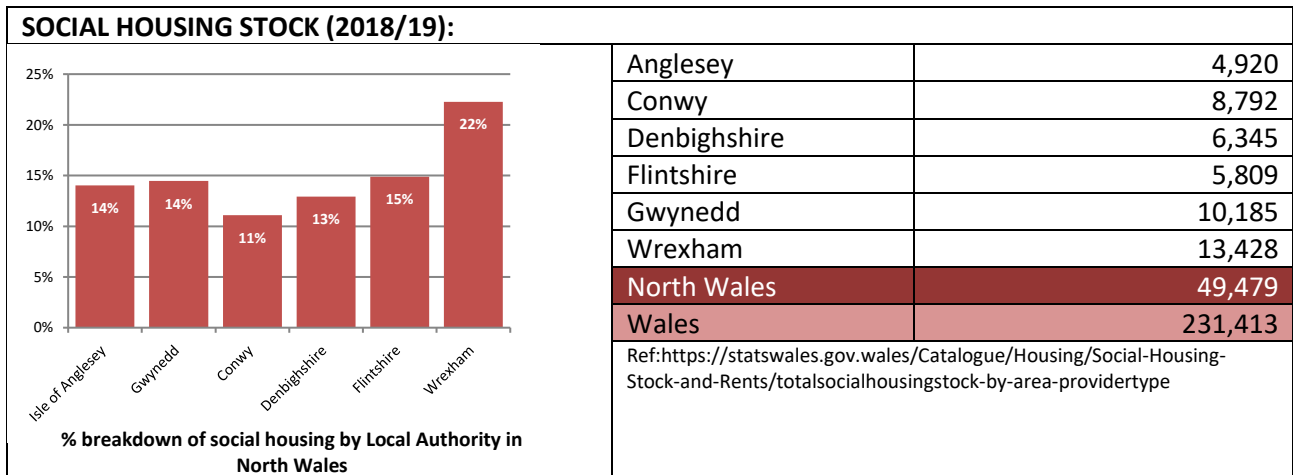
According to the 2011 Census approximately 562,000 people over the age of 3 in Wales could speak Welsh. In North Wales this is around 29.4% of the population compared with around 18% for the whole of Wales. Of those people living in Wales who are able to speak Welsh, 36.4% live in North Wales.



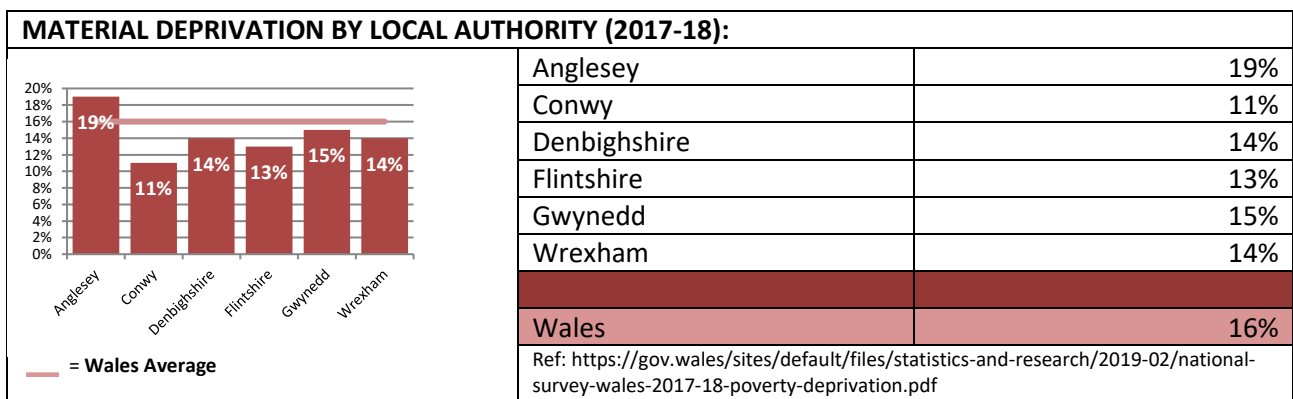
Data collected as part of the Annual Population Survey reports that in March 2013 a fifth of the population aged 16 to 64, living in Wales, identify as disabled. A higher proportion of women than men identify as disabled (23.0% compared with 18.8%).



Based on the latest available estimates, there are around 326,700 dwellings in North Wales, 15% (49,479) of which are recorded as social housing stock held by local authorities and social landlords.



In Wales, between 11% and 19% of households are recorded as living in material poverty. In North Wales Anglesey has the greatest proportion of households in material poverty whilst Conwy has the fewest.



The percentage of people living on their own has increased in 5 of the 6 local authority areas in North Wales, which is in contrast to the whole of Wales which has seen an overall reduction in the percentage of people living alone.

HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES (mid 2017 and mid 2008)

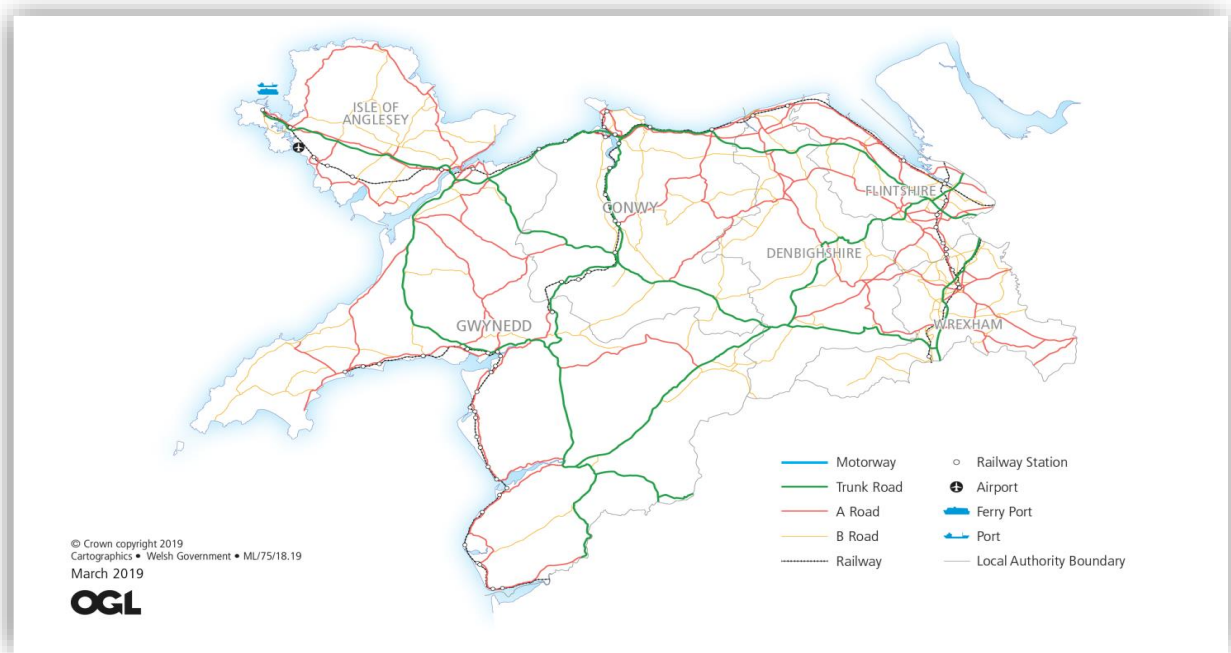
	% of 1 person households (no children)		% of households with 1 or more children		% of households with 1 adult and 1+ children	
	2008	2017	2008	2017	2008	2017
Anglesey	31.5%	33.7%	26.1%	24.1%	5.6%	5.0%
Conwy	33.4%	34.5%	25.1%	23.3%	5.6%	5.5%
Denbighshire	31.6%	31.3%	27.5%	26.2%	6.1%	6.2%
Flintshire	27.1%	28.2%	30.2%	28.6%	6.1%	6.4%
Gwynedd	34.6%	36.7%	25.3%	23.3%	5.3%	5.0%
Wrexham	29.3%	30.5%	29.8%	29.2%	6.3%	7.1%
Wales	31.8%	30.2%	26.9%	28.7%	6.8%	6.7%

Ref: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/180927-household-estimates-mid-2017-en.pdf>
 And <http://www.infobasecymru.net/IAS/themes/people,communitiesandequalities/housing/tabular?viewId=1482&geold=1&subsetId=>

Transport Infrastructure of North Wales

In 2017, a partnership involving the six North Wales constituent authorities, business partners, colleges and universities, formally launched the North Wales Growth Deal. The proposals will see investment of £1.3 billion in the North Wales economy and aims to create 5,500 jobs and bring £671m investment to the region¹.

A key theme of the North Wales Growth Deal is better connectivity with a call for improved journey times on roads and rail. According to the proposal, modernising transport in North Wales will provide the right platform to deliver sustainable economic development, connecting people, communities and business to employment, services, facilities and markets through reliable, resilient infrastructure. It will also support an integrated approach to deliver the transition to a lower carbon and climate resistant society.



North Wales' transport infrastructure includes a port and ferry port and 1 of the 2 airports in Wales. Holyhead, the third most important port in Wales by freight volume, is the main port for freight and sea passenger transport between the UK and the Irish Republic.

The A55 expressway runs for approximately 87 miles between Holyhead ferry port, through the local authorities of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire before crossing the border into England and finishing in Chester. There were two parts of the A55 which frequently had average speeds of less than 30 mph. These sections are in Holyhead and around the Britannia Bridge crossing².

There are no motorways in North Wales, but there are over 8,200 Km of roads which are classed as B and C roads and minor surfaced.

¹ <https://northwalesgab.co.uk/resources/north-wales-growth-deal>

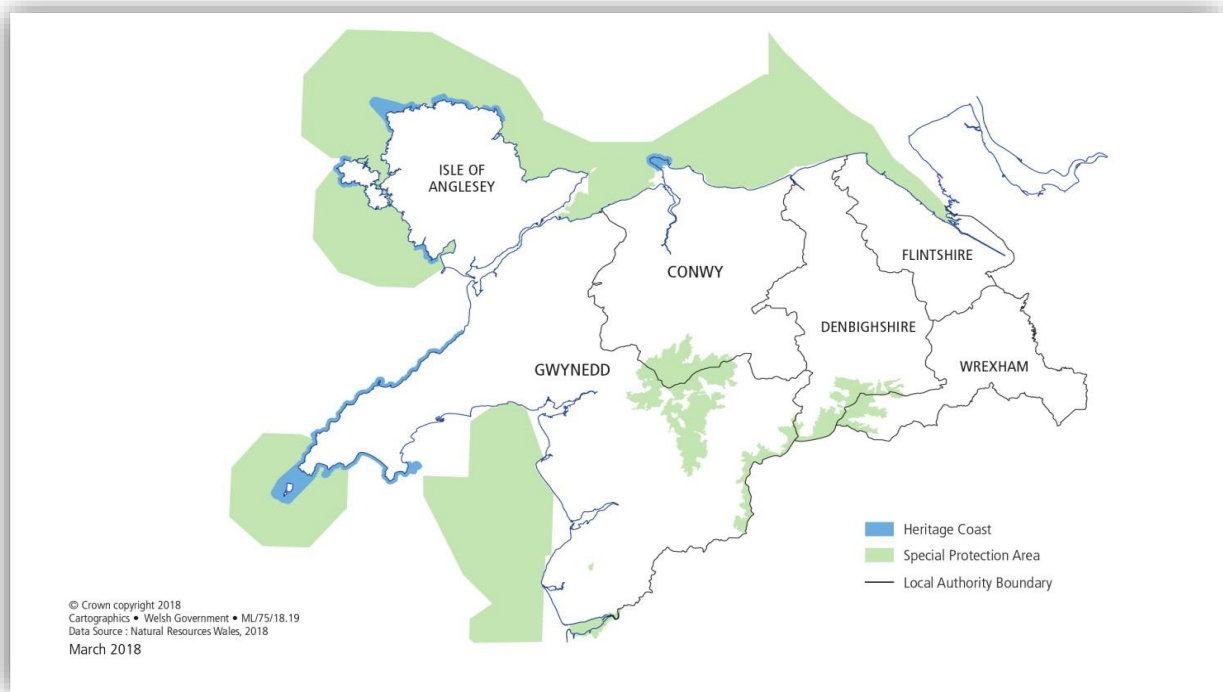
² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-08/summary-statistics-for-welsh-economic-regions-wales-north-wales.pdf>

ROAD LENGTH (Km):						
	A Country	A Trunk	B Road	C Road	Minor Surfaced	Total Road Length
Anglesey	145.5	36.4	122.5	361.9	558.0	1,224.3
Conwy	117.0	123.9	173.0	487.6	787.2	1,688.7
Denbighshire	139.8	72.1	133.7	521.6	623.4	1,490.6
Flintshire	152.0	47.7	78.1	262.4	682.3	1,222.5
Gwynedd	330.5	216.6	203.9	861.0	1321.7	2,933.7
Wrexham	110.0	30.7	142.5	370.5	518.9	1,172.6
North Wales	994.80	527.4	853.7	2,865.0	4,491.5	9,732.4
Wales	2,772.9	1,575.6	3,022.8	9838.2	17,509.1	34,718.8

Ref: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Transport/Roads/Lengths-and-Conditions/roadlength-by-typeofroad-localauthority-year>

Environment of North Wales

The Great Orme, North Anglesey Coast, Holyhead Mountain, Aberffraw Bay and Llyn Coast have all been designated as Heritage Coasts in order to protect them from insensitive developments³.



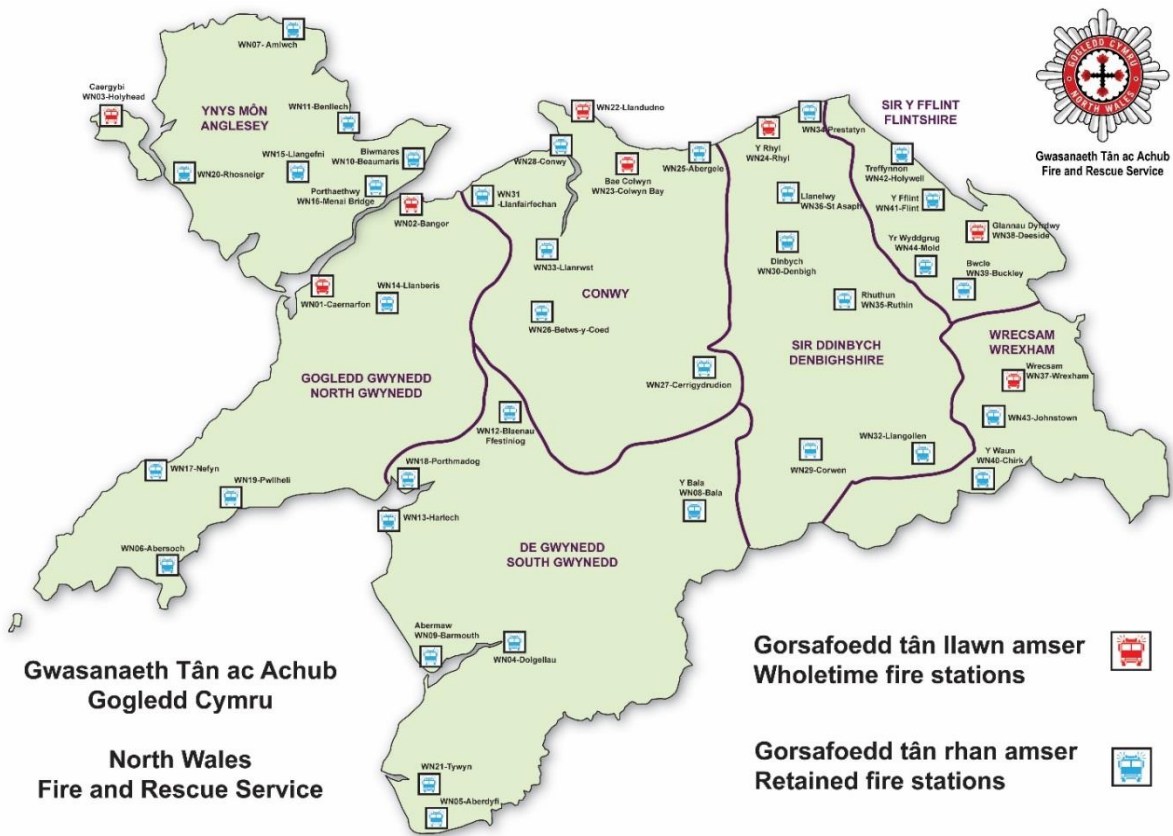
The region is also home to a number of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) such as, Migneint-Arenig-Dduallt; Bird’s Rock; Aberdaron Coast & Bardsey Island; Holy Island Coast and Puffin Island. These serve to protect bird species which are either rare or vulnerable, or which, in the case of migratory birds, visit Welsh shores regularly.

³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-08/summary-statistics-for-welsh-economic-regions-wales-north-wales.pdf>

ABOUT NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

North Wales Fire and Rescue serves the communities of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The six local authorities contribute financially to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority's annual budget and nominate county councillors – 28 in total – to serve as Members of the formally constituted Fire and Rescue Authority with responsibility for discharging its various statutory duties. The key pieces of legislation that define the Authority's powers and duties are listed on pages 49-50.

Executive responsibility for running the Fire and Rescue Service rests with the Chief Fire Officer who provides strategic leadership, manages the overall coordination of the Service's activities and optimises its use of resources. The Chief Fire Officer also provides professional advice to the Authority.



The Authority's Assets (as at 31 March 2019):

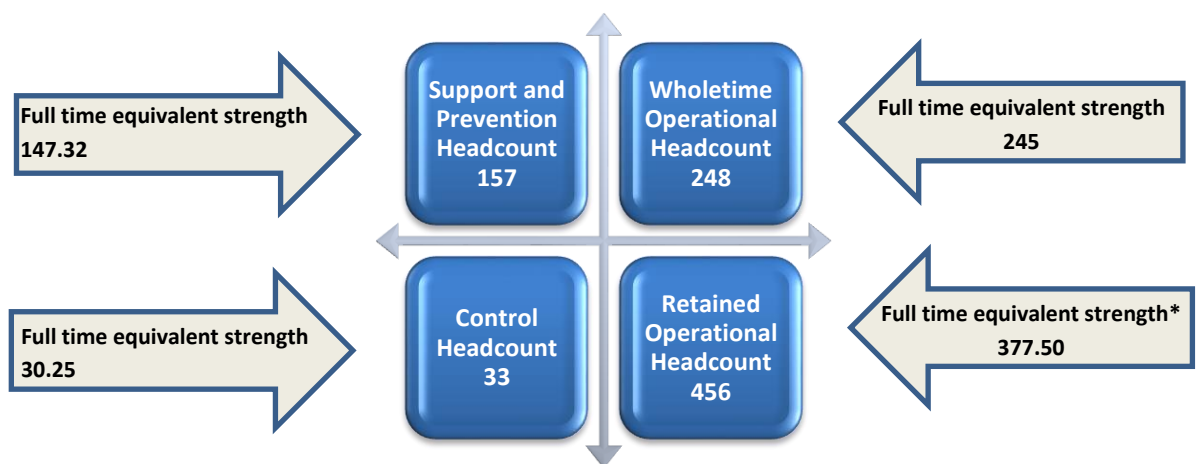


Preventing Fires

The most effective way to save lives, reduce injuries and reduce the broader community impact from emergencies is to reduce the number of incidents that occur. To achieve this, the Authority works closely with partner organisations and communities to develop and deliver initiatives aimed at preventing emergency incidents. The Service employs:

- Home Safety Support Workers to access and engage with people who may be more at risk of fire in the home to provide information, education and where necessary, additional protection measures; and
- Fire Safety Inspectors to provide free advice to the managers of non-domestic properties to support compliance with fire safety legislation and also to take action where necessary to restrict or prohibit the use of such premises and institute prosecutions for serious breaches.

Staffing (as at 31 March 2019)



*Because of the 'on call' nature of these posts, they are calculated as '24-hour units of cover' instead of full-time equivalents.

THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AUTHORITY

The Authority has a legal duty to provide a fire and rescue service that meets the needs of local communities. The Authority has to be prepared to deal with a wide-range of emergencies, from house fires and road traffic collisions to floods and chemical spills. It also has to deliver fire prevention to help keep people and property safe from fire.



FIRE PREVENTION: Fire and rescue authorities must arrange for fire safety to be promoted in their area. This includes informing people about fire prevention and advising them how best to react if a fire does break out.

FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT: Fire and rescue authorities have a duty to enforce fire safety in non-domestic premises (hotels, schools, shops and offices, etc.). This duty includes exercising powers to issue alteration, enforcement and even prohibition notices if they find that fire safety arrangements in premises are unsatisfactory.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE: Fire and rescue authorities must make arrangements for receiving 999 calls and for sending trained and equipped personnel to extinguish fires and protect life and property at those fires. They must also make arrangements for rescuing people from road traffic collisions and for protecting them from serious harm. In April 2017 the Welsh Government also created a statutory duty to respond to flooding or water rescue incidents that pose a threat to life.

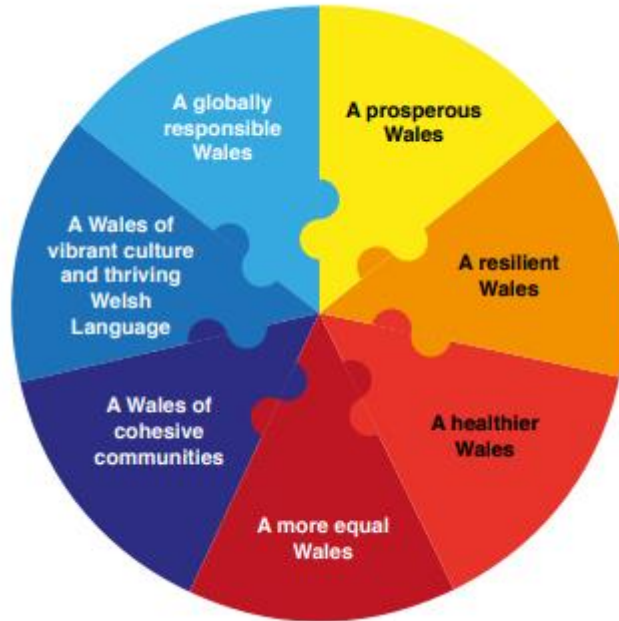
PLANNING AND RESPONSE TO OTHER EMERGENCIES: Fire and rescue authorities must make arrangements for mass decontamination of people after chemical, biological or radio-active incidents, and for rescuing people from trains, aircraft and collapsed buildings. They must also be prepared to assist with large-scale emergencies elsewhere in the UK.

The Service is also committed to actively engaging with other organisations to improve the safety of the community, including providing wide ranging education programmes. The Service helps support and signpost people who are vulnerable to risks not directly related to the fire service, such as older people who may be at risk from severe weather, households at risk of crime, or people at risk of domestic violence.

The Senior Fire Safety Manager for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is chair of the All Wales Children and Young People Group and also sits on the National Fire Chiefs Council and Young People Group.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Its aim is to make public bodies think more about the long-term aims, work better with people, communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach⁴. The Act requires the Authority to set and publish well-being objectives. These long-term objectives are changes that the Authority wants to help bring about in North Wales that will contribute to improving local well-being and to moving Wales closer to achieving its well-being goals.



Having identified these long-term objectives, the Authority has a duty to take all reasonable steps to pursue them in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle and the five ways of working and to report publicly after the end of each financial year on the progress it has made.

Five ways of working;



Balancing short term needs with long term needs

Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse

Taking an integrated approach, balancing social, economic and environmental needs

Remembering the rich diversity of people in North Wales and encouraging them to get involved in decisions that affect them

Collaborative working to meet the well-being objectives

⁴ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Essentials
<https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf>

Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales are also classed as ‘Welsh Improvement Authorities’ and are subject to the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2009 as regards following an annual process of setting and achieving local improvement objectives.

This section presents the Authority’s combined Improvement and Well-being Objectives for 2018/19, a summary explanation of the reason why each one was adopted and the steps and actions taken to achieve them. The Authority is required to publish this assessment of its own performance for 2018/19 and the statutory performance indicators for the same year by 31st October 2019.

The Equality Act 2010



The Equality Act 2010 amalgamated previous disparate pieces of equality legislation, harmonising and strengthening equality legislation under one new Act. The Act includes a public sector equality duty that requires public sector bodies, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

Equality Act 2010

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Welsh Language Standards 2016

The Welsh Language Commissioner issued fire and rescue authorities with their Compliance Notices on 30th September 2016. This document lists which of the Welsh Language Standards (as listed in full in the Welsh Language Standards Regulations (No.5); 2016) an organisation must comply with, along with any exemptions and their implementation dates.



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

PROGRESS AGAINST IMPROVEMENT AND WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES



Improvement and Well-being Objective A: To support people to prevent accidental dwelling fires and stay safe if they do occur.



Step towards meeting the well-being objective:

To deliver a comprehensive programme of prevention activity aimed at helping to keep people and communities safe from accidental fires in living accommodation.

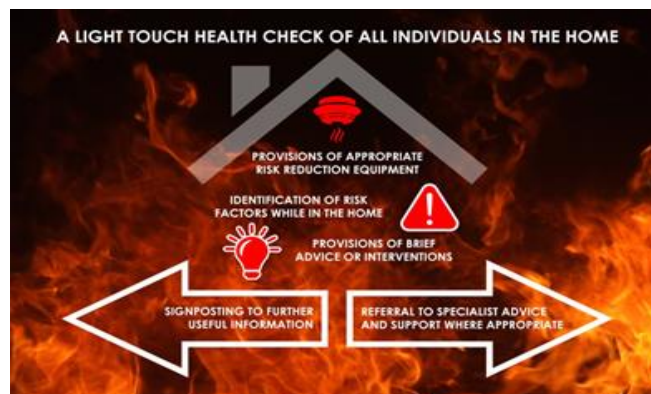


What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To expand the scope of Home Safety Checks to include additional safety messages whilst maintaining quality of delivery and to rename them as 'Safe and Well Checks'.

'Safe and Well Checks' incorporate traditional fire safety messages (including fitting of fire alarms) but also include advice on health and wellbeing issues around; smoking cessation, slips, trips and falls prevention as well as hoarding assessments and referrals to supporting agencies if required. They are conducted by specialist fire and rescue staff who are trained in supporting people who may have suffered from adverse childhood experiences, mental health issues or have signs of other vulnerabilities. In addition to this, staff are also able to provide general health and fitness advice.

Safe and Well Checks are offered to residents free of charge in both Welsh and English and are person centred. They have been designed with a holistic approach to reducing the risk of harm from fire, encompassing wider issues that affect the safety of people in their homes. Wherever possible Safe and Well Checks follow the approach outlined in the diagram below:



Specialist staff known as 'Home Safety Support Workers' receive regular training to ensure consistency in the delivery of Safe and Well Checks. Regular refresher events are held to capture learning from the experiences of the team. Examples of good practice are shared, including occasions where Home Safety Support Workers attended exceptional events in the course of their duties.

Service User Story - Bryn⁵

A community safety campaign targeting areas within Conwy and Denbighshire resulted in a visit to a home where steps were taken to reduce the risk of fire, and improve quality of life for a North Wales resident - Bryn.

The campaign was undertaken in collaboration with a local housing association, Cartrefi Conwy, which focussed on people living in their premises. Leaflets were distributed locally and visits were made to local shops, schools, libraries and community centres to promote a 'Safe and Well' campaign along with the offer of a free Safe and Well Check.

During the campaign a property was highlighted by concerned neighbours who told us that Bryn was a heavy smoker and had other factors that put him at greater risk of fire in his home.

With Bryn's consent, a Safe and Well Check was undertaken in his home environment. During our visit we found that Bryn was using household items as makeshift ashtrays and there were signs of burn marks and scorching from discarded smoking materials in his bedroom. There was also evidence of an unhealthy lifestyle, ill health, and financial issues.

As a result of our visit, and with Bryn's agreement, we put the following interventions in place:

- Provided a smoker's bed pack comprising fire retardant bedding and bed linen
- Provided a proper ashtray (as paper plates and other flammable makeshift ashtrays were being used)
- Tested existing smoke and heat alarms within the property
- Fitted an additional smoke detector in the bedroom
- Signposted to a financial inclusion officer and other social support agencies
- Discussed further support options with the housing support officer from Cartrefi Conwy
- Advised Bryn on the NHS public health strategy for 'make every contact count' and guidance on home safety was given.

This case study illustrates how intervention not only reduced the risk of fire in the home, but how the Authority was able to provide further support and advice to the householder. This led to onward referrals to other agencies who were able to support the occupier in making better informed lifestyle and wellbeing choices.



⁵ We have changed the name to protect the individual's privacy



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To deliver 20,000 Safe and Well Checks, with at least 25% of them being delivered to households referred to the Service by another agency.

In 2018/19 the Service delivered 20,651 Safe and Well Checks, of which 5,752 (27.9%) were to households referred to us by partner agencies. These referrals often come as part of a wider package of support for the most vulnerable members of the community. In addition to making referrals, trained staff from partner agencies completed 394 Safe and Well Checks themselves on behalf of the Authority.

Of the 20,651 completed Safe and Well Checks, 7,878 were from referrals categorised as low risk, 6,401 were categorised as medium risk and 6,372 were categorised as high risk, and were prioritised accordingly.

Giving something back over the festive season

During December 2018 a number of initiatives were held to support residents over the festive season.

Members from a range of local groups in the Dolgellau area were invited to the fire station for a Christmas lunch event, funded by businesses from the area that were keen to support the Authority in connecting with the local community.



Those attending had the opportunity to learn more about keeping safe in their homes as well as enjoy the company of others at a time of year which can be difficult for many people.



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To continue to develop a Fire Safety Strategy that incorporates sound evaluation methods to determine the impact and effectiveness of current safety messages and campaigns.

Prevention work focuses on reducing risks in order to save lives and prevent injuries through the delivery of safety education, along with positive interventions that help make North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit.

The Authority has integrated its prevention activities as much as possible with the work of other organisations and agencies that are similarly focussed on community safety. Rather than conduct its own isolated risk analysis, the Authority recognises the benefits of identifying and mitigating risks collaboratively. By working with partners the Authority is able to identify those who are more at risk from fire and other hazards and deliver targeted Safe and Well Checks in order to aid behaviour change and reduce number of accidental fires.

Key personnel from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service along with staff from other partnership organisations attend regular meetings of the local Campaigns Steering Group to agree and align safety messages and campaign activity with local and national campaign strategies. This is to ensure that the Authority is delivering its prevention activity as efficiently and effectively as possible. See diagram below;

Information from notable incidents and local trends are also considered. This combined approach



ensures the safety messages delivered are targeted and are aimed at changing people’s behaviour to reduce risk. The local Campaign Steering Group ensures the correct messages are given at the appropriate time of year to ensure they are as effective as possible.

During 2018/19 the Authority attended a number of serious fire

incidents which required investigations to be conducted. During the investigations, interviews were held with family, friends, neighbours and other agencies, etc. and in most cases it was discovered that there were risk factors present prior to the fire incident occurring that placed those involved at greater risk of harm.

The evaluation process for the All Wales White Goods campaign took on more of a mixed methods approach. Part of this evaluation involved looking at responses to surveys and opinion polls along with media and press coverage. Questionnaires completed by members of the public also provided valuable feedback.

Through these evaluation approaches, it was possible to assess which aspects of campaigns were successful and which could be improved. Having a clear evaluation methodology means it is possible to learn from experiences in order to make future campaigns more effective.





What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

Through analysis of past occurrence patterns, to identify and seek to reduce the anticipated incidence of specific categories of fires.

All serious fires are routinely investigated and reviewed in order to check the suitability of response arrangements, and learn lessons for improving community safety in future. The Authority is also represented on national groups that consider emerging trends and risks to the public. In addition, the Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Group is an all-Wales Fire and Rescue Service forum which looks at community safety issues and agrees the direction of all-Wales strategies and safety messages.

The all-Wales Campaigns Steering Group was tasked with prioritising a fire safety campaign in response to the following key themes identified by the CRR Group for 2018/19:

- White goods
- Smoke alarm testing
- Fire evacuation message – ‘Get Out and Call the Fire Service’
- Kitchen/cooking safety.

All three fire and rescue services in Wales had been experiencing a significant number of accidental dwelling fires associated with white goods. This issue had also been identified as one of the key priorities of the All Wales CRR Group and as a result key safety messages had been released via the Authority’s website and social media.



Tumble dryer safety in particular remains an issue because incorrect use can have devastating results. Simple changes in behaviour can greatly reduce the risk such as being aware of the residual heat that remains within both the dryer itself and the clothing that has been dried.

The press release launching the ‘All Wales White Goods’ campaign in November 2018 focussed on the experience of a young family who had been involved in a domestic appliance fire two months earlier. In September 2018, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service attended a kitchen fire which was found to have originated from a tumble dryer. Luckily the residents, a mother and her five young children had noticed smoke and been able to evacuate the property unharmed, however, as the fire occurred during the late hours of the night, the consequences could have been serious as the household could easily have been asleep in bed, leading to a life threatening event. The family had to be re-housed temporarily as the fire had left the kitchen badly damaged, with serious smoke damage affecting the majority of the property.

Information gained through fire investigation has helped inform future fire safety campaigns such as the one identifying tumble dryer dos and don’ts. The ‘All Wales White Goods’ campaign communicates potentially lifesaving messages through face to face communications, during Safe and Well Checks, social media campaigns and the use of videos as well as printed leaflets.





What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To further develop knowledge and understanding of factors that contribute to a person's vulnerability to dwelling fires and utilise this to provide well-timed, targeted messaging to build awareness of risks and consequences and try to influence and change behaviours.

Understanding the factors and risks that contribute to a person's vulnerability allows for tailored communication and advice to the public, focussing resources on specific campaigns to assist in reducing the risk of harm.

Through ongoing investigation into the causes of dwelling fires it is possible to ensure the advice and education provided remains relevant and proportionate. Whilst the risk factors identified a decade ago remain relevant today, advances in technology and cheaper electronic devices, for example, mean people are far more likely to have many more portable electrical devices in their homes than a decade ago. Devices such as mobile phones, laptops and tablets are usually rechargeable which brings new and additional hazards into the home environment if not used correctly. Counterfeit devices also pose their own unknown and unique threats.

In order to provide suitable advice, the Authority collaborates with professional partners who are able to advise on the correct maintenance and use of such devices. Working alongside charitable organisations such as 'Electrical Safety First' also helps develop guidance to deliver appropriate fire safety messages.



Knowledge is drawn from both internal sources and experiences, but also from the experiences of partners throughout the UK and from attendance at international events. Through the Campaign Steering Group safety campaigns remain relevant to emerging risks, based on experience, knowledge and understanding. Campaign programmes are reviewed annually and are linked to seasonal events.

Service User Story - Seren⁶

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service received a referral from a partner agency who felt that Seren and her family were at greater risk of fire in the home due to a number of factors including age, physical impairments and long term illness. A Safe & Well visit was arranged undertaken by a Home Safety Support Worker who was able to engage with Seren and her family and build a good rapport. Seren felt comfortable enough to speak openly about her and her family's health and mobility difficulties. By looking around the property, the Home Safety Support Worker recognised that the occupiers would benefit from handrails and a fitted seat in the bathroom, along with further improvement to the bathroom facilities. Being an upstairs flat, it also transpired that Seren and her family very rarely went outdoors due to difficulties in navigating the stairs.

⁶ We have changed the name to protect the individual's privacy

Following the visit, contact was made with relevant agencies; the local authority, social services and the housing warden, highlighting Seren's needs and suggesting some simple modifications to the property that could improve Seren's quality of life. The modifications to the property were quickly installed. It was also suggested that a ground floor property would be more suitable for Seren and her family.

'We have now been moved to a bungalow and our lives have changed for a much better standard of living, thank you ever so much, without your help I would still be a prisoner in the flat.'

Seren contacted the Service within a few weeks to advise she had been relocated to a bungalow and that her family's lives had changed for the better. She stated that they were now able to leave the flat and use the communal grassed area where they are able to take their dog for short walks. The bungalow has been fitted with rails inside and out, and Seren is able to venture outside and has been able to attend the local community building. This has helped with social interaction as Seren has been able to take part in community events, including enjoying bingo with friends and neighbours.

Seren and her family have since been revisited in their bungalow to undertake a new Safe and Well Check providing advice tailored to their new accommodation.

Notwithstanding the obvious risks that were present to the occupier, being unable to quickly leave the original property in the event of fire significantly increased the risk of harm for Seren and her family. Through collaboration and good working relationships Seren's health and wellbeing have greatly benefitted and her mobility and social interactions within the local community have improved.

Well-being Goals





What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To continue to work with partner organisations and build new partnerships where appropriate.

The Authority promotes the development of partnerships and joined-up working with relevant agencies that have an interest in the creation, promotion and maintenance of safer communities. The Service employs three Partnership Managers to ensure relationships remain current and effective.



One example of this is the Service's partnership arrangement with the Centre of Sign Sight Sound (COS) which have recently been reviewed and updated. COS aims to improve the quality of life and equality of access for deaf people and people with a sensory loss in order to improve their opportunities in all aspects of life. They do this by promoting a world where sensory loss does

not limit, preclude or stigmatise people from achieving their full potential. Staff at the centre have been trained so that Safe and Well Checks can be delivered with qualified interpreters or by staff from the centre themselves using sign language. Communicating effectively and understanding an individual's needs ensures that equipment, and advice are provided in the most appropriate and accessible ways.

Service User Story - Arwel⁷

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has an arrangement with Glan Traeth Memory Clinic (a dementia clinic run by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board) which acts as a referral agency for Safe and Well Checks.

A referral was received for a property to provide a Safe and Well Check to Arwel, a service user from the Clinic. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service had previously visited Arwel's property to complete a Home Fire Safety Check, but this had been some time earlier. The clinic made the referral due to concerns about Arwel's mental health and issues with his memory. During the visit it was apparent that Arwel was a heavy smoker, and the cigarette burn marks on his clothing revealed his tendency to fall asleep in his chair whilst smoking. During the visit the Home Safety Support Worker talked to Arwel about the dangers of fire from dropped cigarettes and provided a fire resistant throw as additional protection. The existing smoke alarms and automated telecare system were tested. Additional alarms were fitted in the living room and the bedroom.

During the visit Arwel disclosed he was feeling depressed due to several health problems and issues with his mobility. Arwel disclosed that he felt he needed further help, as he had experienced suicidal thoughts. The Home Safety Support Worker provided Arwel with signposting advice during the visit and completed an adult safeguarding referral once the visit was complete. A safeguarding officer was then allocated to Arwel.

⁷ We have changed the name to protect the individual's privacy



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To maintain the currency of existing information-sharing agreements, and seek to establish new agreements where appropriate.

Information is key to the work of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Being able to share information with other agencies is often extremely helpful, but in order to protect people's privacy it is essential that great care is taken in doing so. It is important that the public have confidence that any exchange of personal data is lawful, safe and effective.



In December 2018 the Chief Fire Officer signed the revised Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) on behalf of the Authority. This Accord is a common set of principles and standards that support the lawful exchange of personal data between organisations that provide services in Wales. Signing the Accord demonstrates a commitment to apply those principles and standards. The Accord has been updated to version 5 (published September 2018) to take account of user feedback and changes to legislation; namely the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Service is represented on the North Wales Information Governance Group (NWIGG) by its Data Protection Officer. This group is responsible for quality-assuring information sharing agreements raised by other organisations within North Wales.

One example of a data sharing agreement is the one that exists between the Service and the National Energy Saving Trust (NEST) who offer cavity and loft insulation in buildings. Under this agreement NEST shares information with the Service about consumers living in fuel poverty. The Trusts staff are trained to conduct Safe and Well Checks at properties whilst they conduct surveys in the other part of their business.

To ensure that the existing data sharing agreement was GDPR compliant, discussions took place between the Service (the data controller) and NEST (the data processor) to review the agreement. These meetings ensured that GDPR requirements were being met and that ways of streamlining the service were explored. This process highlighted that many of the referrals that the Service was receiving did not target those most at risk of fire in their homes. Through the updated data sharing agreement, a new referral pathway was implemented which generated referrals based on two contributory factors being present. The referrals generated through the refreshed data sharing agreement with NEST now targets those who are more at risk of fire in the home.





Improvement and Well-being Objective B: To facilitate high quality, responsive and better integrated fire and rescue services so that prevention activity and emergency response continue to be available when and where required, affordably, equitably and on the basis of risk.



Steps towards meeting the well-being objective:

To:

1. secure the Authority's financial sustainability by maintaining the 3-year financial strategy that combines the use of reserves, increasing financial contributions and making service reductions;
2. continue to explore opportunities to work with other organisations to offer a wider range of integrated services to the public of North Wales.



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To deliver services within the agreed budget of £33,492,877, underpinned by £646,701 from reserves along with a saving of £366,000 achieved due to a policy change relating to minimum revenue provision.

At a time of extraordinary financial challenge, the Authority is committed to continuing to provide excellent prevention services, fire safety enforcement services and emergency response to a range of incidents including fire, flooding and road traffic accidents. The Authority remains committed to playing its part in building stronger and safer communities, but also acknowledges that for the future the financial situation means that being able to sustain service delivery will require a great deal of flexibility and innovation.

In order to contribute to the austerity measures across the whole of the public sector, the Authority froze its budget from 2011/2012 until 2014/2015. In 2015/2016, there was a very small increase in the region of £113k and, in 2016/2017 the Authority used reserves to once again freeze the budget. During this period the Authority found £3 million of savings (10% of its budget) and saw its workforce – including managers, firefighters, community safety and support staff – reduce by 9%.

When the budget for 2017/18 was considered, Members realised that it was becoming unsustainable to continue to try to freeze the Authority's budget. At a meeting on 20 March 2017, Members agreed to endorse draft improvement objectives for 2017/18 including the basis for the Authority's next medium term financial strategy. This was; "to secure the Authority's financial sustainability by adopting a 3-year financial strategy that combines the use of reserves, increasing financial contributions and making service reductions."

In 2017/18, the first year of this strategy, the Authority had agreed to increase the financial contributions from the constituent authorities by £1.28 million, an increase of 4%. This was the first significant increase since 2010. This however, was less than was required to meet increasing pay, price and capital funding costs. It was, therefore, decided to underpin the 2017/18 budget with an additional £414,223 from reserves.

During the year the Authority introduced a more equitable method for apportioning costs associated with its capital programme which resulted in savings that impacted on the amount of reserves needed to balance the budget in 2017/18. The final Income and Expenditure Statement for 2017/18 confirms reserves of £93,083 were utilised.

As a result of the above along with continued uncertainty relating to the ongoing pay negotiations for firefighters the Authority decided to replace its 3 year strategy with a revised one for the years 2018/2021.

For 2018/19 members agreed to increase the contributions from the constituent authorities by 4% and use £0.647m of reserves to underpin the budget which was set at £34.141m.

In addition to ensuring careful management of its revenue budget, the Authority continues to scrutinise its capital programme in order to ensure that best value is achieved. The Authority aims to ensure its assets are utilised efficiently and effectively and continues to analyse the capital programme against possible negative revenue implications.

The detailed Annual Statement of Accounts summarising the financial performance of the Authority for year ending 31 March 2019 is available at: <https://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk/media/338984/2019-07-29-ep-item-7-audited-statement-of-accounts-inc-ags-appendix-1.pdf>

In summary, the Authority's financial position in relation to its revenue budget for 2018/19 was:

	Budget £'000s	Actual £'000s	Variance
Expenditure	34,806	35,740	934
Income	(665)	(1,728)	(1,063)
Net expenditure	34,141	34,012	(129)
Earmarked reserves	0	131	131
General Fund	(647)	(649)	(2)
Unitary Authority Contributions	(33,493)	(33,493)	0
Surplus or Deficit	0	0	0



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To consult publicly on proposed steps to be taken towards achieving the well-being objectives during 2019/20 and agree the budget for that year based on known anticipated costs.

Following a series of Planning Working Group meetings in 2018, the Authority decided to consult publicly on funding arrangements for the continued delivery of fire and rescue services in 2019/20. As part of its planning process, the Authority undertook a public consultation on the objectives that it was considering for 2019/20.

The Authority is required to undertake an annual process of setting a budget sufficient to cover its estimated running costs in the following financial year. This process of setting a balanced budget for 2019/20 was made unusually difficult for the Authority because of the challenging financial environment, some unavoidable cost increases in 2019/20 and the impact of previous decisions regarding the use of the Authority's financial reserves to cover its running costs.

The budget planning work for 2019/20 identified a year on year increase of £1.1m in net expenditure compared with 2018/19. During 2018/19 the Authority utilised reserves to fund running costs which is not sustainable as the Authority is no longer holding sufficient reserves to support ongoing running costs.

Having carefully considered the alternatives for ensuring a balanced budget in the year 2019/20, the Authority indicated that it was not minded to pursue large scale savings because it judged that the level of risk too high. It had not ruled out making savings, but the scale of those savings in 2019/20 would stop short of, for example, closing fire stations or making firefighters redundant. The public consultation ran between September and November 2018 and comprised a range of engagement materials including:

- a 36-page document providing comprehensive explanation and information;
- an online questionnaire, with the option of submitting written responses if preferred; and
- a bilingual video highlighting the role of the fire and rescue service and promoting the public consultation.

A variety of communication methods was adopted including, for example: a press release with a link to the consultation materials and information about how to take part; letters with a copy of the consultation document issued to all stakeholders who had registered to receive such correspondence; messages on social media directing people to the consultation, maintaining awareness and highlighting the closing date. The online questionnaire presented three questions;

- whether people thought it reasonable for the county councils to contribute all or some of the additional £1.9 million required to set a balanced budget in 2019/20;
- what people thought of the possibility that this could potentially add £6 or £7 a year to an average Band D council tax bill; and
- how the Authority could potentially reduce its running costs in future.

Following the end of the consultation an informal workshop was held on 16 November 2018 for Members to consider the response to the consultation and the 2019/20 budget. The budget planning work undertaken identified a net budget requirement of £35.2m.



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To remain open to opportunities for multi skilled staff to work beyond organisational boundaries to offer a wider range of services, particularly those that will improve health, safety and wellbeing outcomes as part of a person-centred 'Safe and Well' approach.

The Authority continues to build on well-established practice of working with partners to deliver a better and a more diverse range of services. This ability to build partnerships is key to the future development of a broader range of services with a particular focus on improving health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

There have been some notable examples of collaborative working in the last two financial years, including the joint pilot Community Assistance Team project alongside the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WAST) which started in August 2016. The Community Assistance Team was created to respond to people who had fallen in the home but were uninjured. The team's attendance at incidents often avoiding the need for ambulances to attend, freeing up paramedics to respond to higher priority calls.

Despite excellent feedback from people involved in both delivering and receiving this service the pilot ended in May 2018.

Disappointingly, even with the excellent outcomes above, funding from Welsh Government was not extended beyond the initial pilot period. The positive feedback received from those involved however, demonstrates the enthusiasm and commitment that members of the Service have for future collaborative working with partners across the Service area, to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in North Wales.

This project illustrated how cross-organisational pilots such as these can work through shared resourcing and by utilising a multi-skilled workforce who are able to work beyond organisational boundaries to support a wider health and wellbeing agenda.

Below is a list of beneficial outcomes:

- assistance for people who had fallen at home but not sustained an injury. This included helping people to safety and providing reassurance and support
- improved collaboration with local authorities, hospitals, WAST, North Wales Police, Care Connect/ Galw Gofal and the North Wales Regional Call Monitoring service
- prevention of further falls or other safety events through the provision of tailored and targeted advice
- support to the WAST by freeing up valuable time to attend life threatening calls
- onward referrals to other agencies where necessary
- advice and signposting where appropriate to other agencies if additional health and wellbeing needs evident



What we planned to achieve in 2018/19:

To continue to monitor and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of pilot programmes undertaken in partnership with other organisations.



In 2018/19 the Campaigns Steering Group commissioned a pilot campaign called *'Tell us before it's too late'*. This campaign aimed to utilise local knowledge within communities to identify those individuals most at risk from having a fire in the home and encourage them to provide their details to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

In order to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this campaign a range of traditional communication methods was used as well as digital and social media outputs (including Facebook, website, videos and images). The primary measure for evaluating this campaign took a quantitative approach which looked at:

- Calculating how many referrals for Safe and Well Checks were generated by the programme
- The number of website hits received during the campaign,
- The number of video views, etc

Face to face conversations were also held with local residents to obtain more qualitative feedback.

Missing from Home

2018/19 saw the continuation of the 'Missing From Home' pilot in which Service personnel assist in the vital early stages of a search for missing persons. Statistics from North Wales Police suggest that 3,000 people are reported missing from home every year. The scheme was expanded in 2018/19 to include staff from each of the 44 fire stations who can now be called upon by North Wales Police to provide assistance. This initiative, as a formal and properly coordinated arrangement, is a national first. Crews remain on call for fire service incidents, but will respond to assist North Wales Police in locating people who are missing from home as and when required.

Early deployment of resources can help to improve the chances of finding people who may have gone missing for a variety of reasons. The use of thermal imaging can also greatly assist the Police in their search efforts of a specific area. Staff can also use their first aid training to assist prior to the arrival of colleagues from the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Means of Entry

'Means of Entry' training has been provided to all whole-time and day-crewed personnel. This means that crews have the ability to gain entry into properties in a timely manner with reduced damage and the ability to replace door locks to secure a property before departure. This helps to support colleagues in the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust in providing access to people requiring medical care and to those unable to assist themselves. This specialist training is organised through the Emergency Services Collaboration Board.

What the Measure requires North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority to do

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of this legislation, the Welsh language has equal legal status with English in Wales and must not be treated any less favourably. The Authority no longer needs to develop and implement Welsh Language Schemes, however, it must instead comply with a set of Welsh Language Standards.

The Welsh Language Commissioner issued fire and rescue authorities with their Compliance Notice on 30th September 2016. This document lists which of the Standards (as listed in full in the Welsh Language Standards Regulations (No.5) 2016) North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority must comply with, along with any exemptions and their implementation dates.

The Authority is required to publish its Welsh Language Standards annual report for 2018/19 by 30th September 2019 and to publicise this appropriately.

The Authority is committed to ensuring that, in conducting public business in Wales, the English and Welsh languages should be treated on the basis of equality in order to recognise and value the rich diversity of communities, against a backdrop of significant natural and cultural heritage.

The Authority also acknowledges its duty towards its staff, most of whom are residents of North Wales, and who themselves reflect the linguistic and cultural make-up of their own communities. By acknowledging its moral and legal duties to protect the cultural heritage of the area and meet the expectations of the local community, the Authority continues to work towards ensuring that it conducts its public business in both languages.

The Authority's Implementation Plan is available to view using the link below;

<http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk/media/337605/welsh-language-standards-implementation-plan-nwfrs.pdf>

During 2018/19 the Authority continued to comply with the set of Welsh Language Standards issued in its Compliance Notice on 30 September 2016. It also continues to work collaboratively with the other two Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales with regular meetings held of a Grŵp Iaith.

Standard 147: The number of employees who have Welsh skills:

As at 31st March 2019, 641 employees were able to demonstrate that they had Welsh language skills (level 2 and above) 328 of whom were classed as fluent speakers (Level 4 and 5).

Standard 148: The number of staff members who attended specific training that must be provided in Welsh if it is available in English (namely training on recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints, induction, dealing with the public and health and safety):

Of the training listed in Operational Standards Number 125, only health and safety training was provided during the year. Two members of staff chose to complete the IOSH Managing Safely course through the medium of Welsh this year. Had any other training itemised in this Standard been delivered, it would have been facilitated in both Welsh and English.

Standard 151: The number of new and vacant posts categorised as ones where Welsh language skills are essential, desirable, not necessary or need to be learnt:

All posts require some level of Welsh with the minimum requirement being Level 2 speaking and listening. During this period, 21 new and vacant posts were advertised, 5 of which were classed as Welsh essential (Level 4 and 5) and 16 as Welsh desirable (a minimum requirement of Level 2). During this period the Service also recruited 53 RDS firefighters (on call) - all newly employed firefighters are required to attain a minimum requirement of Level 2 Welsh, either on entry or within their probation period.

Standard 143: The number of complaints received by the organisation about each class of standards:

Complaints are monitored and dealt with by the Professional and Service Standards Department. Complaints and letters of appreciation are reported annually to the Fire and Rescue Authority. No complaints were received in 2018/19 in relation to the Welsh language. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has published a complaints procedure on its website and also has an internal policy for staff on how to raise a concern or complaint.

Promoting the Welsh Language:

Promotion of the Welsh language is maintained internally in a variety of different ways including: through the Welsh Champions Scheme; a regular Welsh Column in the internal magazine 'Y Fflam'; within weekly staff bulletins; a Welsh Wednesday campaign; and through Workplace Facebook which has sub-groups for Learners and Welsh Champions. There is also a 'Welsh Learner of the Year' / 'Commitment to the Welsh Language' award.

The Human Resources (HR) Department ascertains the language choice of prospective employees at first point of contact and records this information for future use. It keeps a record of all members of staff who have requested to receive correspondence through the medium of Welsh and this can be reviewed at any stage. All HR policies and forms relating to an individual's employment have been translated and published internally. Complaints and disciplinary procedures are also facilitated through the medium of Welsh on request, with the language choice of the individual being respected at all times.

The Training department maintains a record of all the Welsh courses attended and assessments undertaken by employees, and records the results on its internal recording system. This year courses were offered from Level 2 to Gloywi Iaith to all members of staff by an external provider, Coleg Cambria. Additional courses were also provided to meet the needs of employees in order to maintain compliance with the Standards and plan for the future, which included Welsh language media training and residential courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn.

The Service runs a Welsh Language Champions' scheme whereby Welsh speaking members of staff volunteer to support their colleagues across the Service to improve their Welsh language skills. This year a new resource pack was created for the Champions to utilise with Welsh learners in the workplace. The packs contained A3 place mats, flash cards, games and worksheets designed to assist those learning Welsh. These resources have been circulated to all fire stations and area offices.

New and revised policies are published internally in both English and Welsh and each policy is required to have an associated integrated impact assessment to ascertain its impact on the Welsh language and to identify and promote ways of creating a positive impact, and avoiding negative impact.

As with the previous Welsh Language Policy, work continues to proactively offer language choice to all service users as this has always been seen as beneficial and a gateway to improved engagement with all members of the community. This year we have proactively sought to promote the Service as a bilingual organisation by promoting positive messages on Twitter using the hash tag #yagym as part of the 'Awr Gymraeg' initiative. As a result there has been a notable continued increase in the demand for Safe and Well Checks through the medium of Welsh, from 13.36% in 2017/18 to 14.53% in 2018/19. All promotional materials, posters and leaflets are bilingual with the Welsh language appearing first at all times.

Guidance is provided to employees on the importance of offering language choice to all, whether face-to-face or over the phone, regardless of location, accent, ethnicity etc. This message is reiterated during the mandatory Welsh Awareness Module that has been produced for employees, during the face-to-face sessions for new starters and during the initial firefighter training course.

The Authority recognises the value and benefit of offering language choice and as such has continued to operate a fully bilingual Control Room / Joint Communications Centre, despite there being no statutory requirement to answer 999 calls bilingually. The Authority recognises that it has a moral and ethical duty to deal effectively with people when they are involved in an emergency situation and therefore goes above and beyond the requirements of the Standards in order to deal with incidents effectively in the caller's language of choice.

Guidance is also available with regards to issuing correspondence to the public and all email signatures and letter-headed paper includes a statement welcoming correspondence in Welsh or English. 'Siarad Cymraeg' and 'Dysgu Cymraeg' logos have also been incorporated into standard e-mail signatures.

The North Wales Fire and Rescue Service website is fully bilingual and this includes Readspeak facilities through the medium of Welsh. Enquiries through the website are dealt with in the language choice of the enquirer.



PROGRESS AGAINST STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

What the Act requires the Authority to do

The Equality Act (2010) requires the Authority to write an equality plan every four years. The current Strategic Equality Plan 2016/20 identifies six equality objectives that the Authority wants to help bring about to make Wales a fairer place to live. The aim of the Equality Act is to make ensure that everyone has the right to:

- be treated fairly;
- have the same chances as others;
- be free from discrimination.

The headings for the objectives are based on the area headings in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's "How Fair is Wales" document. These headings also align with the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network Strategic Equality Plan; this enables joint objectives to be included in individual public sector organisations' Strategic Equality Plans.

Having identified these objectives, the Authority has a duty to take all reasonable steps to pursue them and to report publicly after the end of each financial year on the progress it has made. The Equality Act lists a number of characteristics which must not be used as a reason to treat some people less favourably than others. These are the 'protected characteristics':

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or Belief/Non-Belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual Orientation.

A number of sources have been used to develop the strategic equality objectives:

- Equality Impact Assessments;
- Combined Improvement and Risk Reduction Planning Objectives;
- Business plans from Heads of Departments;
- Existing strategies and plans;
- Outcome of engagement activities.

Legislation allows for the objectives to be changed at any time, therefore ongoing engagement is undertaken to ensure objectives remain current. The Authority continuously examines the most effective methods of engagement via existing links with community groups and organisations, and endeavours to establish relationships with new groups and local communities. The Authority is required to publish this assessment of its own performance for 2018/19 by 31st March 2020.

Equality objective 1 – Life and Health

Reduce dwelling fires and associated casualties through a comprehensive strategy that specifically targets people who can be shown to be at greater risk because of their particular characteristics and/or circumstances.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Attended interactive sessions to help refresh and maintain close working relationships with partner agencies that provide Safe and Well Checks
- Identified that due to turnover of staff in partner agencies, awareness of the provision of Safe and Well Checks is occasionally lost. Reminder communication messages are sent highlighting provision of this service

Equality objective 2 – Employment

Through our own employment practices, programmes and schemes increase the employment prospects of people who might otherwise find it difficult to gain access to the world of work.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Provided 'taster' days at community events to raise awareness to females of upcoming recruitment opportunities
- offered potential recruits the opportunity to engage with physical tests in an informal environment and given development advice in a realistic timeline to help with improvement
- Kept our Positive Action Strategy as a 'live' document which continues to be amended where applicable
- embedded the 'All inclusivity' group throughout the service
- recruited two cohorts of firefighter apprentices following development of the qualification framework with Coleg Llandrillo Menai
- Held open evenings at stations to provide information to On Call applicants and an opportunity to engage with serving on call firefighters
- Continued to embrace work experience placements
- Worked with our peers in Mid and West Wales and South Wales fire services to write and produce the 'People and Organisational Development Strategy 2018-2021', which will support the recruitment and development of a workforce that embraces and champions equality and diversity

Equality objective 3 – Education

Through a comprehensive programme of tailored education and advice provided singly and in collaboration, to empower people living, working and visiting North Wales to continue to reduce their own level of risk from fire and other hazards throughout the different stages in their lives.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Engaged with staff regarding the review of availability, retained duty system and flexi duty system officer workloads
- Included inclusivity within the All Wales People and Organisational Development Strategy
- Participated in an All Wales review of our Assessment and Development centres
- Continued to cascade training materials to staff in relation to Violence against women and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015

Equality objective 4 – Personal Safety

Reduce the risk of death or injury from fires in North Wales by the provision of effective prevention and protection services and emergency fire and rescue response.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Integrated into work place audits an assessment of understanding of hate crime and domestic violence
- Ensured that the community fire safety and the control and command system share the latest risk information.

Equality objective 5 – Representation and Voice

By being open and accountable about what we do and what our plans are, encourage more people to involve themselves in the process of determining the way fire and rescue services are delivered in North Wales, and aim to increase the range of representative voices that contribute to that process.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Publicly consulted between 12 September and 2 November 2018 on the affordability of the fire and rescue service. Modern electronic methods such as social media were used to encourage as many people as possible to respond.

Equality objective 6 – Access to Services, Information and Buildings

Improve access to information and communications within NWFRS, and improve physical access to fire and rescue service buildings which the public use or visit.



Working to achieve this objective, we have:

- Continued to ensure that appropriate means and methods of communication are adopted in promoting priority safety messages as identified by the Fire Safety department, taking into account multi languages, accessibility, collaboration with established representative forums and groups.
- Carried out a thorough accessibility audit of our website and are working through the recommendations for improvement.
- Worked with Mid and West Wales and South Wales fire and rescue services to produce a single Safe and Well Check leaflet, combining various fire safety topics. This is consciously an easy read document to be made available across Wales.

In accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, specified employment information in respect of employees and applicants as at 31 March 2019 will be published on our website as soon as available (no later than 31st March 2020).

HOW DOES NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY COMPARE?

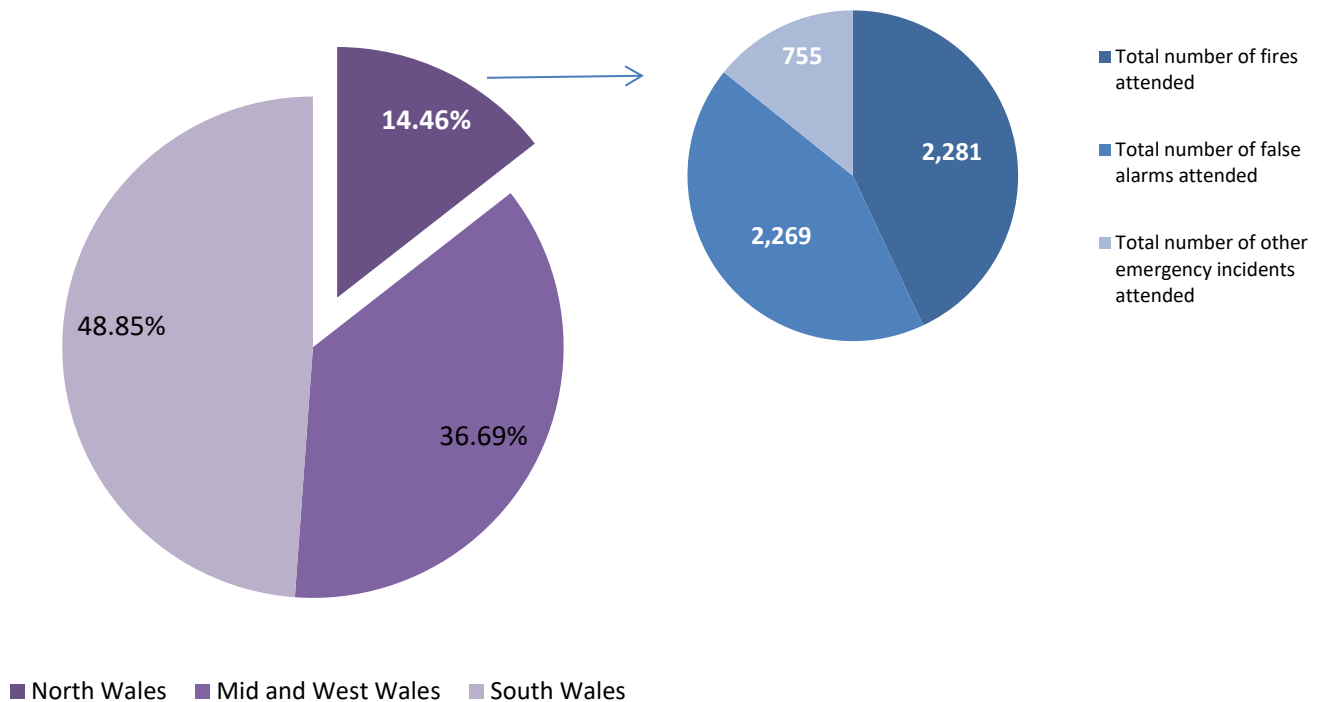
Comparing activity with others can provide useful information for the development of indicators to measure efficiency and effectiveness.

Whilst information is not always readily available within the timescales required for the publication of this report, some useful comparative data has been collated from both the 'Statistical Bulletin' produced by the Stats inclusion department of Welsh Government, and from the open access website 'Stats Wales'. Occasionally there are small variations between these published figures and those published by the Authority on its website primarily as a result of later quality assurance.

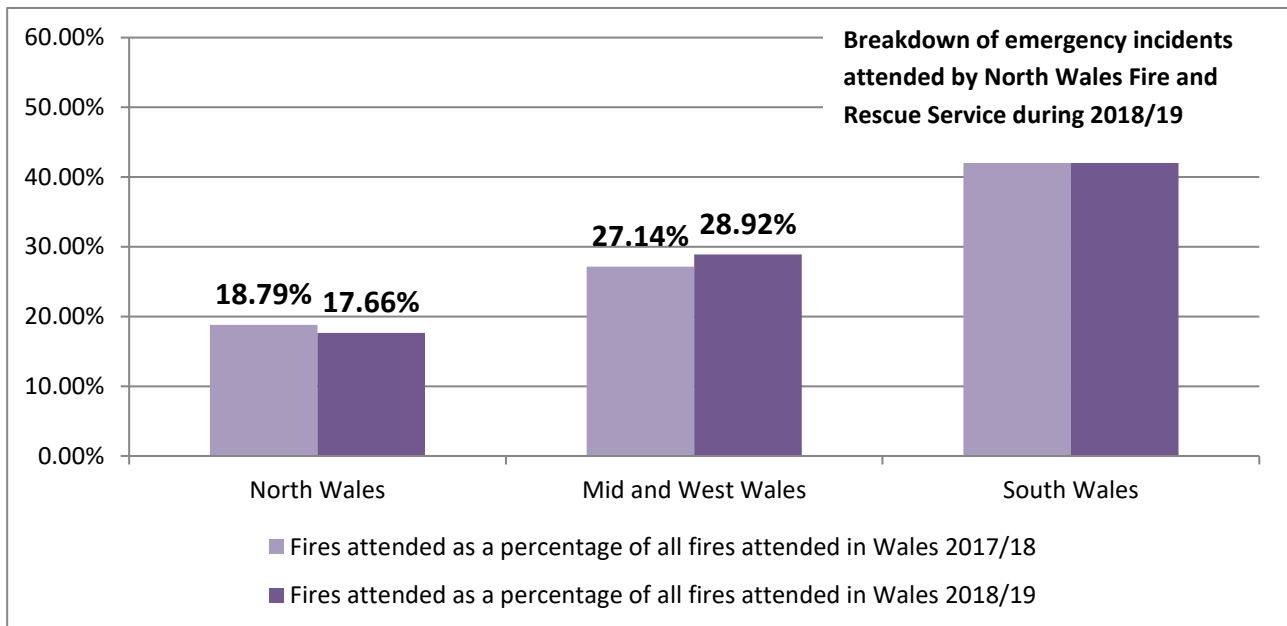
Activity comparisons in this section are based on 2017/18 figures and where available 2018/19 figures. Population figures used are those published by the Office of National Statistics. Links to the external sources are provided in the 'other information' section at the end of this document.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service attended a total of 5,305 emergency incidents during 2018/19, which was 14.46% of the total number of all emergency incidents attended in Wales.

The number of fires attended by Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities increased by 17% compared with the previous year. In North Wales however this increase was marginally less at 12%. Since 2001/02 there has been a downward trend in the number of fires attended; the 2018/19 figure is 63% lower than in 2001/02 for Wales as a whole.

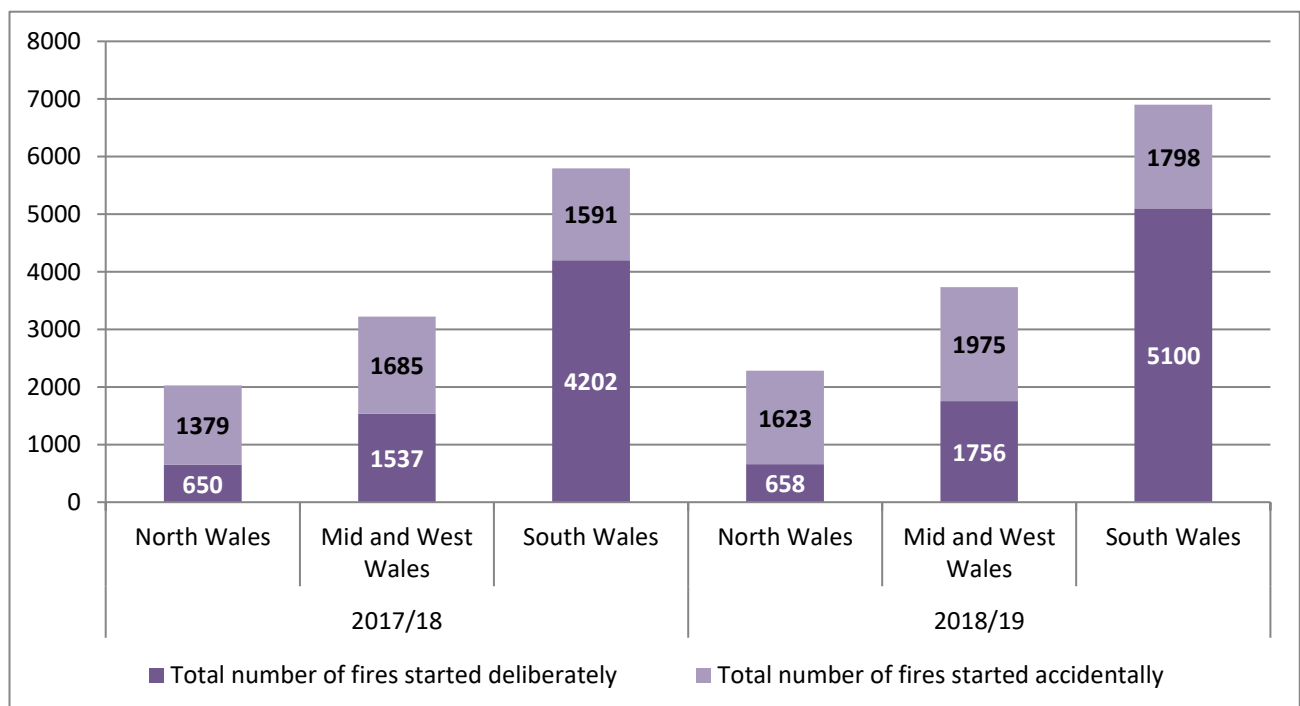


During 2018/19 North Wales Fire and Rescue Service attended a total of 2,281 fires, 265 more than in the previous year. Although the number of fires increased, the percentage of fires attended by North Wales actually decreased slightly.



Source: Statutory Performance Indicator FRS/RRC/S/001i

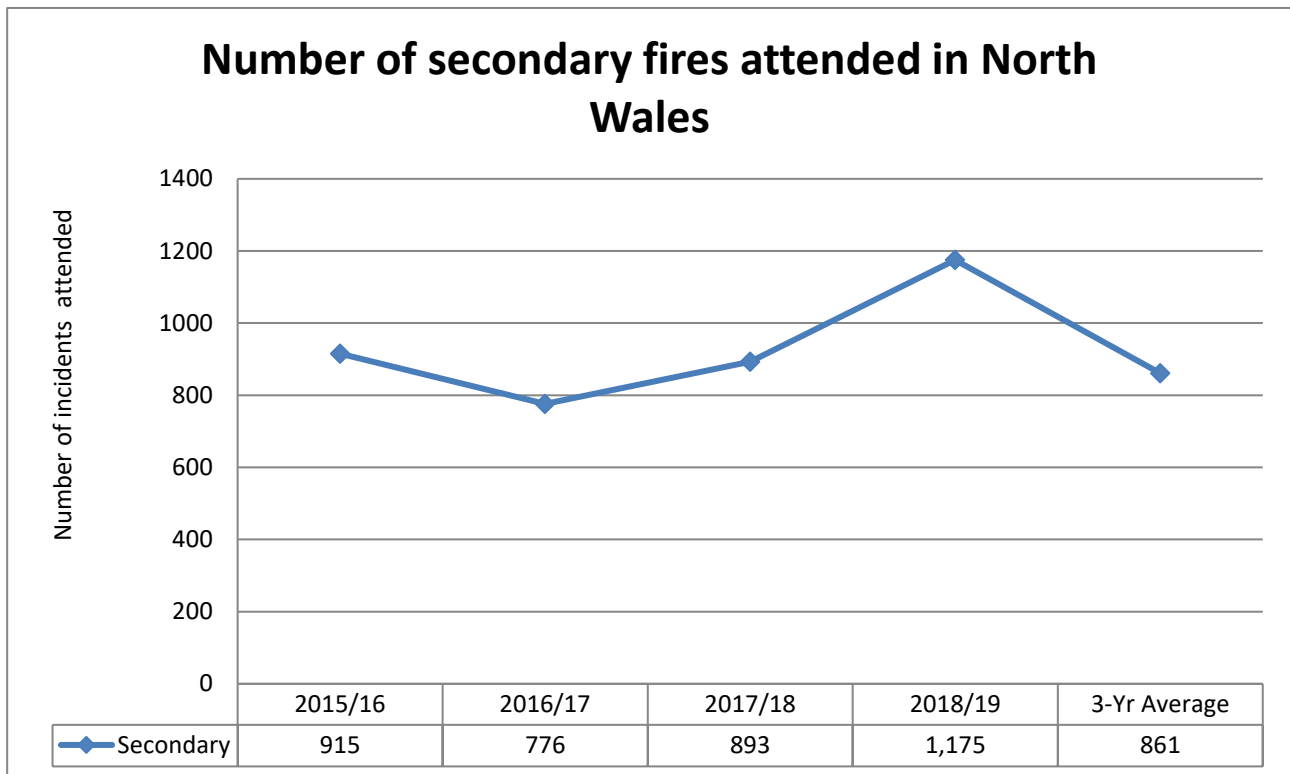
In 2018/19 there were 740 more accidental fires across Wales compared with 2017/18, an increase of 16%. Since 2001/02 however, the number has fallen by 41% across Wales. Accidental fires accounted for 71% of all primary fires and 23% of secondary fires, and almost all chimney fires were accidental.



Source: Sector Performance Indicator FRS/SEC/FI/001i and FRS/SEC/FI/001ii

Secondary Fires

Across Wales a total of 8,185 secondary fires were attended in 2018/19, an increase of 30% compared with 2017/18 which is similar to the figure for North Wales (32%). This is the highest number of secondary fires since 2011/12 and the largest year on year increase since 2013/14.



Secondary fires are the most common category of fire attended by Welsh FRAs, accounting for 62% of all fires since 2001/02 and 63% of those attended in 2018/19. Secondary fires include grassland and refuse fires unless such fires involve casualties or rescues, property loss or are attended by five or more appliances.

Grassland Fires

Across Wales the number of deliberate grassland, woodland and crop fires rose by 75% compared with 2017/18. 46% of all secondary fires occurred on grassland, woodland, cropland, whilst 41% occurred on 'other land'. These numbers increased by 86% and 8% respectively compared with the previous year (equating to almost 2,000 more fires). The number of these fires is likely to have been influenced by weather conditions; for example, 2012/13 saw the second lowest number of secondary fires since 2001/02 and was also the second wettest financial year since 1910/11. According to the Met Office – the hottest 10 years on record have occurred since 2002.

During 2018/19 North Wales attended a number of outdoor/grassland fires in locations across the Service area including, Carmel, Braichmelyn, Talsarnau and Llantysilio. During the summer months the spate of grassland fires took up a significant amount of the Service's resources but also presented the Service with opportunities not only to reflect on performance against the Incident Command Guidance but also on the equipment and techniques employed at the incidents. It also highlighted the need to focus future attention on the impact that such fires have on communities and the environment as the size and intensity of the grassland fires that occurred in 2018/19 were generally greater than in previous years.

Control of grassland fire is improved when firefighters have an understanding of a range of strategies including the construction of control lines and the use of fire as a suppression tool, consequently further targeted training packages have been developed to help fire-fighters in future along with the appointment of level 2 and 3 Wildfire Officers. During July 2018 the Service also adapted a vehicle to be more suitable to the type of terrain where grassland fires occur. The vehicle was fitted with a high pressure pump and longer lengths of hose that enabled it to be used from safe locations on hard standing.

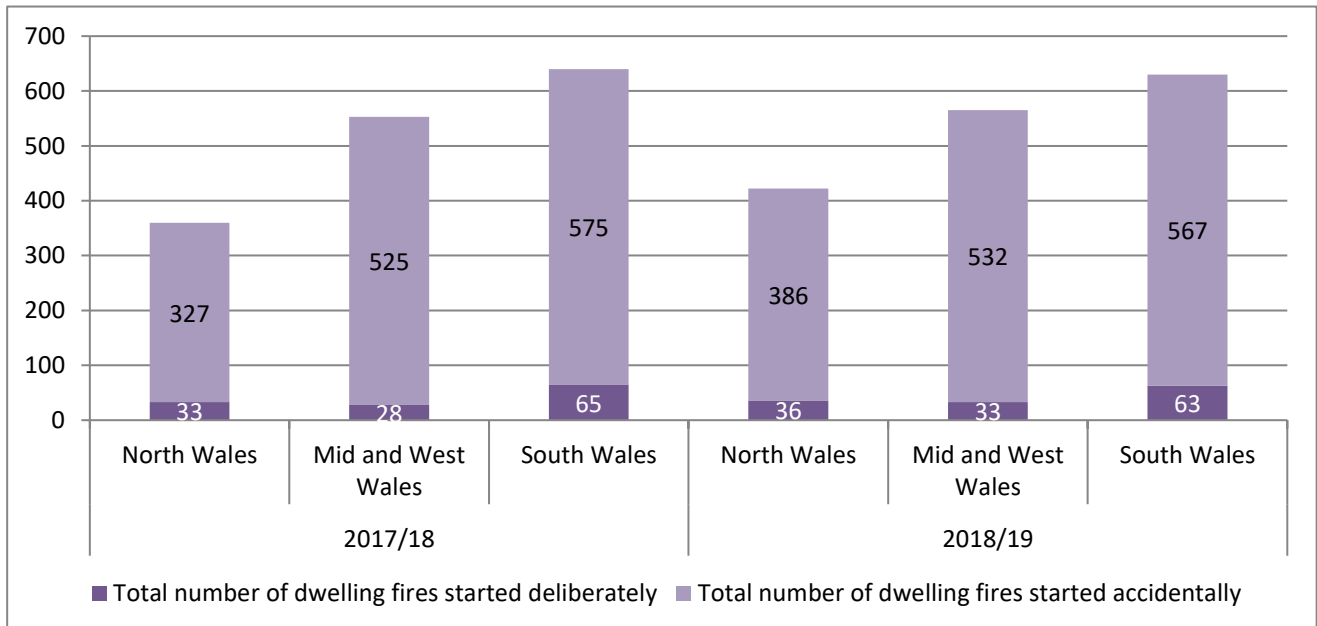
Fire Casualties

There were 20 fatal casualties from fires in Wales in 2018/19. This is 5 more than in the previous year although a similar number to those seen prior to that. The overall trend since 2001/02 has been downward, however numbers are small and prone to fluctuation.

The number of non-fatal casualties was 396 in 2018/19, a decrease of 25% compared with 2017/18 and the lowest number (and rate) since 2009/10. The overall trend over the last ten years has been downward, although in recent years the numbers and associated rates have fluctuated. All FRAs saw reductions in the number (and rate) of non-fatal casualties. This decrease was largely due to a fall of 33% in those people receiving first aid or either receiving or being advised to receive a precautionary check, down a third compared with 2017/18.

Dwelling Fires

In 2018/19 North Wales and Mid and West Wales saw decreases in the number of accidental primary fires in dwellings compared with the previous year, as shown in the table below. Only South Wales saw an increase. In 2018/19 North Wales attended 15% (59) fewer accidental dwelling fires than in 2017/18 and 24% (105) fewer than in 2016/17.



Source: Sector Performance Indicator FRS/SEC/FI/001iii, FRS/SEC/F/001iv and FRS/SEC/FI/001v

In 2018/19 the largest single cause of accidental dwelling fires was misuse of equipment or appliances, equating to a third of these fires. This has consistently been the main cause of accidental dwelling fires since 2001/02

Dwelling Fire Fatalities and Casualties

In the 18 years since 2001/02, 77% of fire fatalities occurred in dwellings, equating to a total of 312 out of 406 fatalities. Three quarters of fatalities occurring in 2018/19 were the result of dwelling fires, a similar proportion to that seen in the previous two years. In North Wales there were four more fatalities in 2018/19 than in 2017/18, but it should be noted that the numbers recorded in 2017/18 were unusually low.

	North Wales		Mid and West Wales		South Wales		Wales	
	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19
Number of fatalities from accidental dwelling fires	1	5	8	5	4	4	13	14
Number of fatalities from deliberate dwelling fires	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Source: Sector Performance Indicator FRS/SEC/IN/002iii and FRS/SEC/IN/002iv

Of the 396 non-fatal casualties in 2018/19, 299 (76%) were the result of dwelling fires whilst 63% were the result of accidental dwelling fires.

	North Wales		Mid and West Wales		South Wales		Wales	
	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19
Number of casualties from accidental dwelling fires	44	52	61	40	65	66	170	158
Number of casualties from deliberate dwelling fires	3	4	2	17	4	11	9	32

Source: Sector Performance Indicator FRS/SEC/IN/002v and FRS/SEC/IN/002vi

In North Wales there were four more serious injuries recorded in 2018/19 than in the previous year, but it should be noted that the numbers recorded in 2017/18 were unusually low.

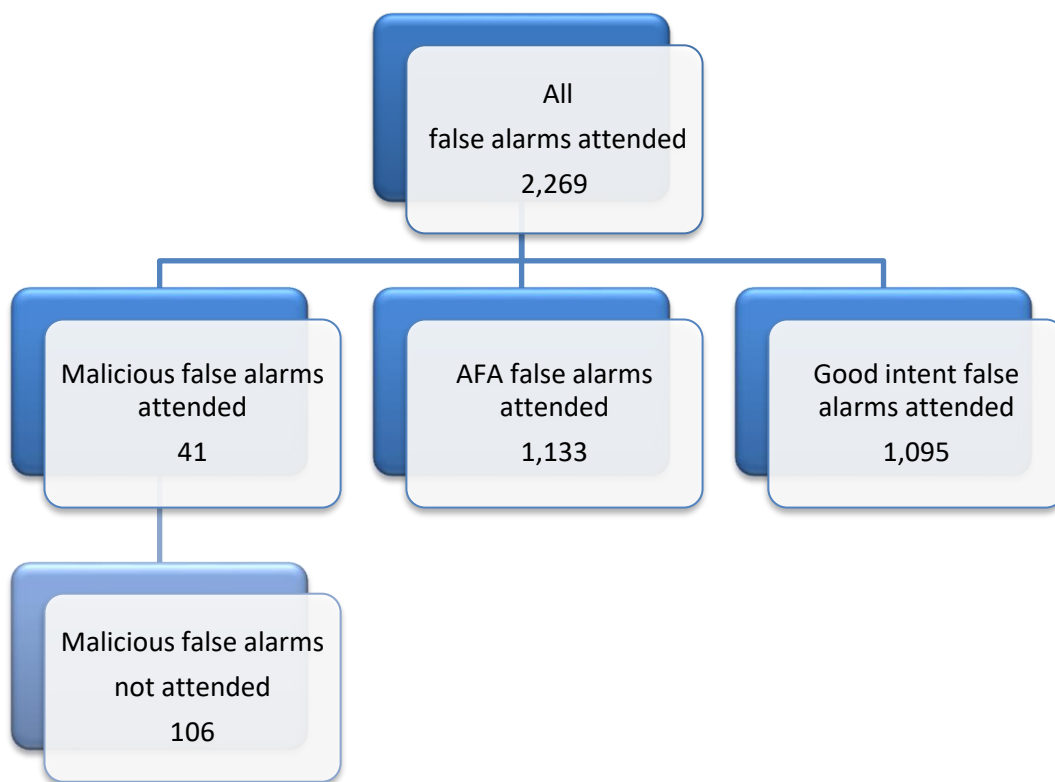
Fatalities and Injuries in ADFs	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Precautionary check	54	49	32	13
First Aid	45	42	25	27
Injuries - slight	42	25	39	11
Injuries - Serious	5	8	2	6
Fatality	3	4	1	5
Total	149	128	99	62

Cooking (not including the number of chip pans fires) continues to be the largest single cause of non-fatal casualties in accidental fires in 2018/19 (21%) and was responsible for 68 non-fatal casualties in accidental fires in 2018/19 across Wales. For this reason, cooking safety campaigns remain one of the top priorities for the North Wales Campaign Steering Group year on year.

False Alarms

In 2018/19 there were 14,487 fire false alarms attended in Wales, an increase of 2% from 2017/18 (14,161) although this is the second lowest since 2001/02. Since this time the number of fire false alarms attended has fallen by 26%. Successful call challenge has been a factor in this long-term fall. Only good intent fire false alarms saw an increase in 2018/19 compared with the previous year (17%) which may be attributed to the hot dry summer. Fire false alarms due to apparatus fell by 6% whilst malicious fire false alarms fell by 11%.

In 2018/19 North Wales received a total of 3,056 false alarm calls from AFAs and attended 37% of them. Since the initial sharp reduction in attended false alarms in 2015/16 following the change in the 4 Automatic Fire Alarm policy, the overall number of false alarms being attended has been increasing gradually. In 2018/19 the Service attended 8% (159) more false alarms than it did in 2017/18 and 14% (274) more than in 2015/16, although the actual numbers being attended have not shown the same pattern of increase.



Source: Statutory Performance Indicator FRS/RRC/S/001vi and Sector Performance Indicator FRS/SEC/FA/003i and FRS/SEC/FA/003ii

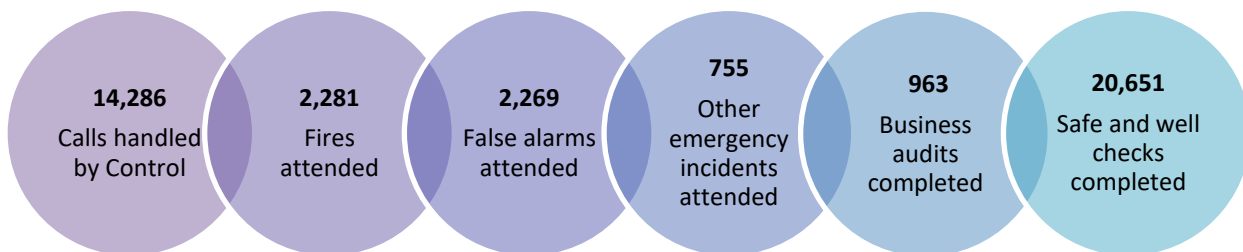
Overall there has been a downward trend in the number of malicious fire false alarms, falling by 89% since 2001/02 and since 2011/12 numbers have fallen each year. In 2018/19, North Wales saw a rise in the number of malicious fire false alarms compared with 2017/18 (5%). In Mid and West Wales and South Wales there were reductions of 27% and 5% respectively.

Special Services

Special service incidents (SSIs) accounted for a quarter of all incidents attended by FRAs in Wales. These incidents include road traffic collisions (RTCs), flooding incidents, medical incidents etc. Overall attendance at SSIs decreased by 20% in 2018/19. There was a decrease of 53% in North Wales whilst Mid and West Wales saw a 15% reduction, and South Wales saw a reduction of 16%.

The drop in attendances in North Wales is due to a fall in the number of incidents assisting other agencies such as those attended by the Community Assistance Team as well as co-responding. The falls in Mid and West Wales and South Wales, however, are due to fewer medical incidents. North Wales attend the fewest SSIs, due in part to a different system of working so that attendance at medical incidents (as first responder) is not undertaken.

Key Activities:



PERFORMANCE INFORMATION SUMMARY

The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015 was introduced on 1 April 2015 and introduced three Statutory Pl's that accompany locally collected sector indicators.

STATUTORY INDICATORS:		2017/18		2018/19	
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate
RRC/S/001i	Fires attended	2,029	29.16	2,281	32.78
RRC/S/001ii	False alarms attended	2,112	30.35	2,269	32.61
RRC/S/001iii	Road traffic collisions	206	2.96	220	3.16
RRC/S/001iv	Other emergency incidents attended	1,386	19.92	535	7.69
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population					
RRC/S/002i	Fire deaths and injuries	63	9.05	48	6.90
RRC/S/002ii	Deaths and injuries arising from fires started accidentally	59	8.48	28	4.02
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population					
RRC/S/002iii	Dwelling fires confined to room of origin	422	88.86	313	86.94
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended					
SECTOR INDICATORS:		2017/18		2018/19	
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate
SEC/FI/001i	Deliberate fires	650	9.34	657	9.44
SEC/FI/001ii	Accidental fires (or motive not known)	1,379	19.82	1,626	23.35
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population					
SEC/IN/002i	Fire related fatalities	2	0.29	8	1.15
SEC/IN/002ii	Injuries caused by fires	61	8.77	40	5.74
SEC/IN/002iii	Fire related fatalities in accidental dwelling fires	1	0.14	5	0.72
SEC/IN/002iv	Fire related fatalities in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	1	0.14
SEC/IN/002v	Fire related injuries in accidental dwelling fires	41	5.89	17	2.44
SEC/IN/002vi	Fire related injuries in deliberate dwelling fires	2	0.29	17	2.44
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population					
SEC/FI/001iii	Dwelling fires	422	12.94	360	11.02
SEC/FI/001iv	Accidental fires in dwellings	386	11.84	327	10.01
SEC/FI/001v	Deliberate fires in dwellings	36	1.10	33	1.01
SEC/FA/003ii	AFA false alarms in dwellings	788	24.17	853	26.11
Where the rate is based on 10,000 dwellings					
SEC/FI/001vi	Fires in non-domestic premises	122	4.13	223	7.34
SEC/FA/003i	AFA false alarms in non-domestic premises	325	10.99	279	9.19
Where the rate is based on 1,000 non-domestic premises					
SEC/SA/004i	Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm was not fitted	67	15.88	47	13.06
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended					

THE DWELLING FIRES RESPONSE CHARTER IN 2018/19

During 2012 the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities jointly developed an all-Wales Charter to ensure that wherever people live in Wales they can expect to be helped and supported to remain safe from fire in their homes and that if a fire does break out that they will receive a prompt, effective and professional emergency response to their call for assistance.

The Charter makes seven specific commitments that the Fire and Rescue Authority will:

1. Take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.
2. React quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.
3. Attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.
4. Deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.
5. Help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.
6. Investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.
7. Strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

The following pages provide information about our compliance with these commitments during 2018/19.

We propose, for consistency, to use a standard narrative for reporting against the Charter each year, and only updating the figures within that narrative framework.

1. We will take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.

We are committed to taking the lead in maintaining a downward trend in the incidence of dwelling fires and associated casualties in Wales.



In 2018/19 we provided advice and encouragement to people on how they can prevent fires from starting in their home and how they can keep themselves safe from fire. Our prevention activity included delivering 20,651 Safe and Well Checks to householders, and 20,833 children and young people at key stages 1 – 4 received a fire safety talk.

During 2018/19 we attended 327 accidental dwelling fires. As a consequence of those fires, 5 people lost their lives and a further 17 people sustained injuries.

Also during 2018/19 we attended 33 dwelling fires that had been started deliberately, resulting in the death of 1 person and another 17 people being injured.

The trend in the number of dwelling fires in the FRA area over the past five years is showing an overall steady decline.



2. We will react quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.

We are committed to reacting quickly and efficiently when emergency 999/112 calls are put through to us by the operator.

Our emergency fire control facility remains available around the clock every day of the year, with special arrangements in place for a seamless transfer of calls from one control facility to another in the event of serious disruption or a surge in the number of calls coming in at the same time.

Sophisticated mapping and electronic systems help us to: a) identify the location of the reported incident and b) send the most appropriate available resource to attend the incident.

In 2018/19, we handled a total of 14,286 emergency 999/112 calls. We were able to obtain enough information about dwelling fire incidents to alert the appropriate initial response within 90 seconds on 91.9% of occasions and between 91 and 120 seconds on 2.9% of occasions.

However, we know that the speed of call handling – although important - is not the only relevant yardstick. Knowing where our services are needed requires specialist skills to effectively glean information from callers who may, for example, be unfamiliar with the area they are in, be frightened or in distress, be very young, or have communication or language difficulties to contend with.

Another important skill is recognising when a caller is abusing the 999/112 system by falsely claiming that there is an emergency when, in fact, there is not. It is a criminal offence to knowingly make false calls to the emergency services. Sadly, that does not seem to deter a minority of people who tie up the 999 lines and divert services away from people who may be in a genuinely life-threatening situation. Every time we turn out to one of these malicious false alarms it wastes both time and money and places the rest of the community at higher risk.

In 2018/19, we received 114 malicious false alarms. In 64% of cases, we were able to establish that these calls were not genuine and so avoided needlessly mobilising resources to attend.

3. We will attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.

Once we have answered the emergency 999/112 call and allocated the most appropriate resources to make up the initial attendance at the incident, our next priority is to get to the incident quickly, safely and properly equipped to deal with it.



In 2018/19 we responded to 9% of dwelling fires within 1-5 minutes, 54% within 5-10 minutes, 19% within 10-15 minutes and 18% in over 15 minutes. These times include the time it takes for personnel to turn in to the fire station as well as the travel time, so a number of things can affect the speed of response figures, including the urban/rural geography and the nature of road networks in the area.

Speed of response to dwelling fires is extremely important, but we cannot over-emphasise the importance of preventing those fires from happening in the first instance, and of having at least one working smoke alarm fitted and a pre-planned escape route in case a fire does occur. However, if a dwelling fire has occurred, we ensure that our firefighting crews are properly equipped to deal with it.

We equip our firefighters with high quality personal protective equipment and firefighting equipment. We require them to be operationally fit and healthy and we make sure that their skills are routinely tested and exercised. We also routinely check that the way our crews dealt with incidents was in accordance with accepted firefighting procedures.

We take the safety of our firefighters very seriously, given the nature of the work that they undertake. In 2018/19 our crews attended 2,281 fires in a variety of different types of premises and at outdoor locations. Whilst fighting those fires, 22 operational staff received an injury. For some, the injury was slight, but for others the injury was sufficiently serious that it meant that they had to take time off to recover. It is rare that firefighters sustain serious injuries – of the total above, none were classed as ‘specified’ injuries under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

4. We will deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.

We are committed to dealing with fires effectively, efficiently and professionally. To this end, we equip our highly trained fire crews with the right skills, knowledge, information, firefighting equipment and command support so that whatever the circumstances of the dwelling fire, they will be correctly prepared to deal with it.



In 2018/19, of all the dwelling fires that we attended, 87% were successfully contained within the room of origin, without spreading any further. Although a number of factors could contribute to this statistic that would be outside the control of the attending crews (such as how long it took for someone to discover the fire in the first instance, whether or not internal doors had been shut to help prevent the spread of the fire, and how far away from a fire station the dwelling was located), we still consider this to be a reasonable indicator of our firefighting success.

We recognise the importance of research and equipment improvements, and ensure that we invest time and effort in staying in touch with the latest developments.

We also take very seriously the professional image of the fire and rescue service. We place great emphasis on the personal qualities and attributes of all our operational staff, as well as their physical and psychological fitness and the high standard of their operational and management training.

We encourage all our staff to adhere to a set of core values that was adopted nationally by the UK fire and rescue service and that expresses our commitment to valuing service to the community, people, diversity and improvement.



5. We will help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

We are committed to helping to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

A fire in the home can leave people feeling extremely vulnerable. When people have lost their possessions, they will have need of practical as well as emotional support. When people have been injured or killed in the fire, the experience can affect whole communities as well as the individual and his or her immediate friends and family. For this reason, the Fire and Rescue Service’s role in supporting communities does not end when the fire has been extinguished and everyone has been accounted for.

In all cases, the cause of the fire will be investigated and carefully recorded. Every detail of how and where the fire started, how far it spread, any special circumstances, any particular factors that contributed to the fire will be recorded as a source of future learning, research and monitoring.

If there are reasons to believe that a fire was started deliberately in a dwelling, either by someone living there or by someone else, this will be followed up with the Police and other relevant agencies.

In some premises, such as blocks of flats or houses occupied by a number of different tenants, the post-incident investigations might indicate that a landlord had failed to ensure the necessary level of fire safety. Our specialist fire investigators might then be involved in a criminal investigation and court proceedings.

If a fire is found to have started accidentally, we might undertake some form of community safety activity or campaign in the vicinity, offering advice and reassurance by way of free Safe and Well Checks.

6. We will investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.



We always investigate the causes of dwelling fires. In many cases the cause and origin of a fire will be very clear and straightforward, but in others a more in-depth, forensic investigation will be required to ascertain the most likely cause of the fire. In 2018/19, only 11 dwelling fires were recorded as having an unknown cause.

If crime is suspected, the investigation of the fire will be conducted with the Police. People suspected of deliberately setting fire to a dwelling are likely to face criminal prosecution, although in some cases this may not be the only course of action available – for example if the fire has been started by a young child or by a person attempting suicide.

In 2018/19 we attended 360 fires in dwellings, of which 33 were found to have been started deliberately.

In some residential premises, such as flats and houses of multiple occupation, the communal and shared areas are covered by regulations that require whoever is responsible for those premises (such as the landlord or the premises manager) to have good fire safety arrangements in place. Failure to do so can lead to the closure of the premises and prosecution of the responsible person with the prospect of imprisonment and/or unlimited fines.

As an enforcing authority, we ensure that responsible persons fulfil their obligations under this legislation, and can select from a range of enforcement options available to us, depending on the seriousness and risk posed by the contravention.

In 2018/19 we served 3 Enforcement Notices, no Prohibition Notices and no Formal Cautions. No prosecutions were concluded during the year.



7. We will strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

We continuously strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

Under legislation, Fire and Rescue Authorities are classed as 'Welsh Improvement Authorities' and are expected to routinely review and continuously improve their own performance through a formal process of setting, implementing and reporting against annual improvement objectives.

We do not limit our improvement activity to this formal annual process, however, as high standards and continual improvement form an integral part of our everyday running of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Examples of improvement activities that go on include:

- Responding positively to peer reviews, audits and inspections
- Responding positively to consultation responses, feedback from stakeholders, complaints and compliments
- Learning from our experiences, such as from post-incident debriefs, reports of accidents or 'near misses'
- Contributing to working groups, sharing good practice, and learning from research undertaken
- Taking opportunities to learn from - and with- other organisations through partnerships, committees, boards and professional associations
- Planning for potential challenges to maintaining our operations, such as through business continuity management processes
- Planning for potential challenges to future service delivery, such as through local resilience forums
- Continuously developing the technical and professional skills of our staff
- Maintaining and renewing our physical and computerised assets such as our equipment, vehicles, buildings and technology.

WHAT OTHERS SAID ABOUT US

Inspection by the Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited NWFRS on 24th and 25th October 2018 as part of the HSE programme of inspection for Fire and Rescue services. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service was one of six fire and rescue services to be visited. As part of the inspection the Auditors spoke with staff from various departments and locations, with fire station visits to Llandudno and Bala.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service was identified as having good practice in relation to the coaching style of its Professional Service Standards Audit programme and its management of National Operational Learning and Joint Operational Learning.

The inspection found one area for potential improvement in relation to how we provide site specific risk information to operational crews. This is an issue NWFRS was already aware of, and was highlighted by NWFRS to the inspection team.

Representatives from all six fire and rescues services came together to share the learning from each of the inspections as well as areas of good practice. NWFRS presented on the Professional and Service Standards Audit process.

No written report was issued by the Health and Safety Executive following its inspection of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

2017/18 Peer Assessment Report

A copy of the 2017/18 Peer Assessment Report is available by clicking on the link below;

*to be updated when link available and no later than 30th September 2019.

Wales Audit office – Annual Improvement Report 2018/19

The most recent annual improvement report by the Wales Audit Office focused on an examination of the extent to which the Authority has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when taking steps to meet the following well-being objective:

- ‘Continue to explore opportunities to work with other organisations to offer a wider range of integrated services to the public of North Wales.’

As part of this review a partnership survey was also conducted that assessed the effectiveness of the Authority’s partnership work examining how Safe and Well Visits are conducted as well as a look at the work of the Arson Reduction Team. A copy of the report can be found on our website using the link below;

*to be updated when link available and no later than 30th September 2019.

OTHER INFORMATION

- The **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** clarifies the Authority's duties and powers to:
 - Promote fire safety;
 - Fight fires;
 - Protect people and property from fires;
 - Rescue people from road traffic accidents;
 - Respond to other specified risks, such as chemical incidents;
 - Respond to large scale emergencies such as terrorist attacks.
- The **Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (Wales) Order 2007** and **(Amendment) Order 2017** place duties on the Authority in connection with emergencies involving chemical, biological or radioactive contaminants; structural collapse; trains, trams or aircrafts; and flooding and inland water emergencies when they present a risk of death, serious injury or illness.
- The **Civil Contingencies Act 2004** requires the Authority to plan for and respond to large scale emergencies that threaten serious damage to human welfare, the environment or to security.
- The **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** requires the Authority to enforce fire safety in non-domestic premises, including the communal parts of blocks of flats and houses in multiple occupation.
- Under the **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** the Authority must set objectives to continuously improve what it does and publish information about its improvement and performance.
- The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** requires the Authority to work towards improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of future generations of people in Wales, both individually and as a statutory member of Public Services Boards in North Wales.
- The **Equality Act 2010** places duties on the Authority to have due regard to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics.
- **The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011** replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993 and as part of the new legislation, in Wales the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated any less favourably. Public bodies no longer need to develop and implement Welsh Language Schemes and must comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards instead.
- The **UK Data Protection Act 2018** was introduced to modernise data protection laws and meet the needs of an increasingly digital economy and society. It provides a legal framework for data protection, implements GDPR standards across all general data processing and ensures that the UK continues to have appropriate data protection legislation in place after it leaves the EU.

Duties Of Welsh Fire And Rescue Authorities

Planning for and responding to large scale emergencies that threaten serious damage to human welfare, the environment, or to security	Enforcing fire safety in non-domestic premises	Promoting fire safety	Fighting fires, and protecting people and property from fires	Rescuing people from road traffic accidents
Responding to large scale emergencies such as terrorist attacks	DUTIES OF WELSH FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES			Responding to specified risks, such as chemical incidents and some types of flooding emergencies
Setting objectives to continuously improve	Eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with different protected characteristics	Working in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs	Treating the Welsh and English languages equally, promoting the use of Welsh and complying with defined Welsh language standards	Working towards improving people's social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being

Welsh Government – People and Communities

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/communities/safety/fire/?lang=en>

Wales Audit Office

The Wales Audit Office publishes reports on behalf of the Auditor General who is required to assess the likelihood that the Authority will continue to improve and whether the Authority is discharging its duties and acting in accordance with relevant issued guidance. Auditors also work with fire authorities across Wales to deliver a programme of financial and value-for-money audits.

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External information sources used in compiling this document

Wales Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics 2018/19: <https://gov.wales/fire-and-rescue-incident-statistics-april-2018-march-2019>

Stats Wales: <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue>

Welsh Government Future Trends Report 2017: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/170505-future-trends-report-2017-en.pdf>

INTERVENTION IN THE EVENT OF FAILURE OR POTENTIAL FAILURE TO COMPLY:

The Welsh Government has powers of intervention:

- under section 22 of the **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the National Framework. In such cases, section 23 - Intervention Protocol would apply;
- under section 29 of the **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is at risk of failing, to comply with the Measure. However, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, Welsh Ministers may only intervene after they have offered voluntary support to the Authority under section 28 of the Measure.

CONSULTATIONS:

Each year the Authority seeks the opinions and views of the North Wales public and other stakeholders as part of its process of developing its strategic plans and objectives.

Recent consultations are listed below:

Title	Consultation	Publication	For year
Improvement Objectives for 2014/15 including new financial strategy	Autumn 2013	March 2014	2014/15
Improvement Objectives for 2015/16	Autumn 2014	March 2015	2015/16
Improvement Objectives for 2016/17	Autumn 2015	March 2016	2016/17
Improvement and Well-Being Objectives for 2017/18 onwards	Autumn 2016	March 2017	2017/18
Improvement and Well-Being Objectives for 2018/19 onwards	Autumn 2017	March 2018	2018/19
Improvement and Well-Being Objectives for 2019/20 onwards	Summer/Autumn 2018	March 2019	2019/20
Improvement and Well-Being Objectives for 2020/21 onwards (new Environmental Strategy)	Summer/Autumn 2019	March 2020	2020/21

GLOSSARY / DEFINITIONS

- **Fires**

All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.

- **Primary Fires**

These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.

Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involve casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.

- **Secondary Fires**

Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires. Secondary fires are those that would normally occur in locations such as open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered - in the same way as agricultural and forestry property - to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights, etc.

Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

- **Chimney Fires**

These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.

Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

- **Special Service Incidents (other emergency incidents)**

These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:

- Local emergencies e.g. flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc;
- Major disasters;
- Domestic incidents e.g. water leaks, persons locked in or out etc;
- Prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.

- **Fire Deaths (fire related)**

is a person whose death is attributed to a fire even if the death occurred weeks or months later. These are also occasional cases where it becomes apparent subsequently that the fire was not the cause of the death. These figures are therefore subject to revision.

- **Fire Injuries**

For consistency after April 2009 across the UK, fire casualties are recorded under four categories of severity:

- i) the victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious;
- ii) the victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight;
- iii) the victim was given first aid at the scene only, but required no further treatment;
- iv) a precautionary check was recommended – the person was sent to hospital or was advised to see a doctor as a precaution, but having no obvious injury or distress.

- **False Alarm (general guidance)**

Where the Fire and Rescue Service attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.

Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having been attended and does not need to be reported.

- **False Alarms – Malicious**

These are calls made with the intention of getting the Fire and Rescue Service to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

- **False Alarms – Good Intent**

These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the Fire and Rescue Service really would attend a fire or special service incident.

- **False Alarms – Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)**

These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm apparatus or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the Fire and Rescue Service as part of a standing arrangement, i.e. with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation).

ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS AND HOW TO CONTACT US

Other versions of this document are available:

- in paper and electronic formats;
- in English and Welsh;
- as a short summary leaflet of the key points;
- in accessible formats through our website.

Contact Details:



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AN INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING OUR SERVICES

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is constantly looking for ways to improve its operations and delivery of services. By regularly publishing information that is meaningful we hope to attract an increasing level of engagement with the people and communities who rely on our services.

So, if you have any comments about this Assessment, or how we might improve our future Annual Performance Assessments we would very much like to hear from you.

