

Easy Read



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Your fire and rescue service – Right place, right time, right skills

## A review of our emergency cover service

**We want to know what you think**



This document was written by the **North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Authority**. It is an easy read version of ‘Your fire and rescue service – right place, right time, right skills’.

July 2023

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 39**.



Where the document says **we**, this means the **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority**. For more information, or if you need this document in an alternative format, please contact:

**Website:** [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)

**E-mail:** [EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

**Call or text:** 07787 578 386



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# What this document is about



We are the **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority**.  
We are responsible for the **North Wales Fire and Rescue Service**.



We want to improve our **emergency cover** services in North Wales.



**Emergency cover** means having staff and resources available to deal with emergencies like fires, accidents, and floods.

## We want to:

- Provide a better service for everyone.
- Respond to people no matter where they live or who they are.
- Provide fair emergency services for our different communities.

We want to do this by managing our:



- **resources** – things like our time, equipment, vehicles and buildings
- **budget** – our money
- and **staff** well.



This document tells you about:

- how we work now
- and what changes we could make to improve our services in the future.





We have been working with people to find out what is important to them. We had feedback from:

- Our staff
- The public
- Council members
- Members of our Fire and Rescue Authority
- Local **at risk groups** – people who might need help and support to stay safe and well.



We used this feedback to develop **3 options** for the future of our emergency services.



You can read about these options on pages 27 to 35.



We want to know what **you** think about these options if you are living or working in North Wales. It will help us decide what to do next.



Please read this document and then answer the questions in the separate response form.



# About us



**North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority** was formed on 1 April 1996. It is made of 28 councillors from the 6 local authorities of North Wales.



We are responsible for providing a fire and rescue service for the communities of North Wales.



We work to lower the numbers of emergencies caused by fires, accidents, and floods.



We work with the people living and working in North Wales to prevent emergencies.



We work in schools to teach children about safety.



You can find out more about what we do on our website: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



# About our values

We believe in:



**Our people** – We make sure our staff are valued. We support our staff to develop their skills.



**Our communities** - The most important thing to us is that our communities are safe and healthy.



**Diversity and inclusivity** - We want people from all backgrounds to work for us. We want to be fair and include everyone at work.



**Our learning** - We want to be the best at everything we do. We can do this by getting feedback from others, learning from experience, and developing our skills.

# Our aims



In March 2021, we published our **Corporate Plan for 2021 to 2024**. The plan includes 7 **well-being** goals.



**Well-being** means a person is happy, healthy and is comfortable with their life and what they do.



We will continue to work to achieve the 7 **well-being** goals.



Everything in our **Corporate Plan** will help us do what it says in the law called the **Well-being of Future Generations Act**. You can read more about Future Generations Act here: [www.futuregenerations.wales](http://www.futuregenerations.wales)

## Our well-being goals:

**Goal 1:** To improve the health, safety, and **well-being** of the people in North Wales.

**Goal 2:** To keep working with other organisations and services to make North Wales a better place to live.

**Goal 3:** To make the best use of the resources we have.

**Goal 4:** To keep working with others to plan how to keep our communities safer.

**Goal 5:** To have a strong, skilled staff team who are good at their jobs.

**Goal 6:** To come up with ways to look after the environment better.

**Goal 7:** To make sure we think about **sustainability** when doing or buying things.

**Sustainable** means something will last a long time and doing things in ways that does not harm the environment.

# How we work now



The locations of our fire stations and how we work has not changed for a long time.



We have 44 fire stations in North Wales.



The types of emergencies and risks people face have changed over the years.



Since 2008 we not only deal with emergencies like fires, accidents, and floods. We have also been working with people to prevent emergencies.



We have worked hard so fewer people get injured or killed.

## How firefighters work across North Wales

1. 36 of our fire stations are run with part time or on call firefighters. On call firefighters must be within 5 minutes of their fire station whilst on duty or on call so they can respond to emergencies, do training, and other duties.
2. We have full time firefighters based at Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Bangor, Caernarfon, and Holyhead. They work a **Day Crewing Duty System**, providing cover from station between 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and are on call outside of these hours. This means there is 24 hour emergency cover from these stations. There are also on call firefighters at these fire stations.
3. We have full time firefighters at Wrexham, Deeside, and Rhyl. Staff at these stations work shifts to provide emergency cover at all times. There are also on call firefighters at these fire stations.
4. There are also full time firefighters working a **Rural Wholetime Duty System**. They work day shifts moving around North Wales to provide cover wherever needed at our on call stations.

# Future challenges



There have been more wildfires and flooding because of **climate change**.

**Climate** means long term weather trends. **Climate change** is about changes to the world's weather patterns like our air and water getting warmer.



New technology such as solar panels, electric vehicles and new building materials can be a risk to people and firefighters.



We get a lot more rescue calls when we work with other services. These are called **special service calls**.



The Welsh Government wants us to think about how we could support ambulance staff by responding to people with **cardiac arrest**. **Cardiac arrest** is when the heart suddenly stops pumping blood to the brain and other organs.



To do all this we would need to be prepared.

# Why we need to make changes



We have a guaranteed **emergency cover** at only 8 fire stations in North Wales.



In other areas of North Wales, we depend on part time or on call firefighters.



We are working hard to employ new firefighters and keep our existing firefighters.



We need to make sure there is a response team in different areas to cover all North Wales.



The changes we make should be well worth the money spent on it.



We are looking at having a training centre. Training is very important for firefighters to:

- develop their skills
- update them on new technology
- keep themselves and others safe
- prepare firefighters to deal with new and existing risks
- provide a high quality response.



We could share the emergency training with other services working together to make sure our people have the right skills.



# Preventing and responding to different risks

## House fires



We have worked hard to lower house fires in which people get injured or killed.



We do safety checks to provide fire safety in homes.



We put smoke alarms in houses.



Most house fires start in the kitchen. This can cause serious injury or harm.



We work with people to promote ways you can stay safe.



You can find out more about fire safety in homes on our website: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



Since 2013, all new homes in Wales are fitted with a fire sprinkler system. It has saved lives and prevented injuries.



Alarm systems help older people and at risk people in homes.



Smoke alarms can give an early warning signal which gives people time to get out and dial 999.



Records show that in the year 2022 to 2023, there were no deaths due to accidental fires in homes in North Wales. We must continue to work to maintain this level of safety.

# Road accidents



We work with organisations including other fire and rescue services in Wales to promote road safety.



We promote 5 important things to do when you are driving:

- Do not drink alcohol and drive
- Lower your speed
- Drive carefully
- Use a seat belt
- Switch off your mobile phone



In Wales, drivers from the age group of 16 to 24 years old are more likely to be involved in road accidents.

# Tackling Wildfires



**Climate change** can lead to more wildfires.



Wildfires puts lives at risk and damage the land, property, wildlife, and the environment.



We had to deal with 20 wildfires in North Wales in March and April 2022.



It is important to work together to prevent these fires.



We work with organisations along with other fire and rescue services to raise awareness of the damage that wildfires can cause.



We also work with local landowners and farmers.



It affects local communities and businesses. Farmers and businesses can lose land.



Putting a wildfire out is very difficult and costs a lot of money. It needs special equipment and it can put firefighters at risk.



We are focussed on reducing the number of wildfires and its effect on our communities, land, and wildlife.



# Flooding



There has been more flooding in North Wales because of **climate change**.



There have been many storms in the UK affecting North Wales as well. Storms lead to heavy rain and severe flood warnings. This needs an emergency response.



During Storm Cristoph in January 2021, we had over 200 calls. The worst areas affected were Ruthin and Bangor-on-Dee. People had to be rescued from homes. Rest centres were opened with flood warnings across North Wales.



Officers worked with other emergency services and local authorities to plan and prepare for this flooding.



We want to change the way we work to respond to the challenges our communities face because of **climate change**.

# Prevention and protection



We work hard to prevent fires and other emergencies.



Our focus is to prevent emergencies. There have been fewer serious fires over the last 10 years.



In 2022 to 2023, our staff completed over 18 thousand safe and well checks to help prevent fires in the home.

**You can register for a free safe and well check by:**



**Text:** Text your details to 07507303678.

**Phone:** 0800 169 1234 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



**Online form:** [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



Our fire safety staff work with people and businesses across North Wales to provide advice and information.



It is our responsibility to make sure businesses do everything to keep people safe. It is the law.





# Our options for the future



We want to make sure we can be in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.

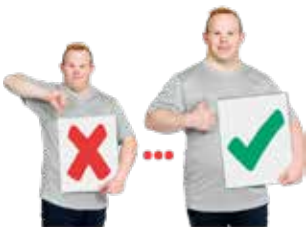


We held focus groups, workshops, and meetings to get feedback from people.

We have come up with 3 options based on:



- What is important to people.



- What would improve our emergency cover services across North Wales.

## Things that are important to us

**Emergency cover** - How we respond to emergencies like fires, accidents, and floods.

**Protection and prevention service** - Keeping your home and businesses safe. So fewer people get injured or killed.

**Services that people can afford** - Giving people a better service by saving money.

**Staff** - How any changes we make can affect staff in the service.

**Fair and equal service** - Provide fair and equal service to everyone in the community.

**Social value** - How any changes we make can affect our communities.



All 3 options involve changing the way we staff some of our fire stations during the day time, to make sure we can give a better response.

## Option 1



- Deeside and Rhyl will change to a **Day Crew System**. Firefighters work some hours at the station during the day and are on call during the night to provide a response 24 hours a day. This change will free up 28 firefighters.



- We will use our current **Wholetime Duty System Rural Firefighters** (firefighters that work from different areas in a van), and the firefighters we free up from Rhyl and Deeside stations to have **3 new Day Staffed stations** at Corwen, Porthmadog and Dolgellau. Full time firefighters will be based at these stations in the day. The stations will be covered by on call firefighters at night.



- 2,148 more households will get a response within 20 minutes.



- 1,740 extra houses will get safe and well checks.



- We will be able to have more school visits, safety campaigns and other events in countryside areas.



- We may have a chance to employ full time firefighters in South Denbighshire and Gwynedd



- This option will cost each household in North Wales around £171.02 a year. This is £20.36 more than what you pay now.

## Option 2



- Change Rhyl and Deeside fire stations to a **Day Staffing Duty System** – firefighters will be based at these stations during the day time and then go home. On call firefighters will cover these stations at night.



- Remove 1 **fire appliance** at Wrexham's fire station. **Fire appliance** means vehicle that is designed for firefighting. We would keep 1 vehicle for full time firefighters and 1 vehicle for on call firefighters at Wrexham.



- We will use our current **Wholetime Duty System Rural Firefighters** (firefighters that work from different areas in a van), and the firefighters we free up from Rhyl, Deeside and Wrexham stations to have **3 new Day Staffed stations** at Corwen, Porthmadog and Dolgellau. Full time firefighters will be based at these stations in the day. The stations will be covered by on call firefighters at night.



- There will be 22 fewer full time firefighters.



- We will be able to save £1.1 million.



- 321 more households will get a response within 20 minutes.



- 1,740 extra houses will get safe and well checks.



- We will be able to have more school visits, safety campaigns and other events in countryside areas.



- We may have a chance to employ full time firefighters in South Denbighshire and Gwynedd.



- This option will cost each household in North Wales around £167.29 a year. This is £16.63 more than what you pay now.

## Option 3



- Rhyl and Deeside fire stations will change to a **Day Staffing Duty System** - Firefighters will be based at these stations during the day and then go home. On call firefighters will cover these stations at night.



- Remove 1 **fire appliance** at Wrexham's fire station. **Fire appliance** means vehicle that is designed for firefighting. We would keep 1 vehicle for full time firefighters and 1 vehicle for on call firefighters at Wrexham.



- We will use our current **Wholetime Duty System Rural Firefighters** (firefighters that work from different areas in a van), and the firefighters we free up from Rhyl, Deeside and Wrexham stations to have **2 new Day Staffed stations** at Porthmadog and Dolgellau. Full time firefighters will be based at these stations in the day. The stations will be covered by on call firefighters at night.





- There will be 36 fewer full time firefighters.



- Close 5 on call stations at Abersoch, Beaumaris, Cerrigydrudion, Conwy, and Llanberis.



- There will be 38 fewer **on call** firefighters.



- We will be able to save £2.4 million.



- 2,087 fewer households will get a response within 20 minutes



- 1,160 extra houses will get safe and well checks.



- There will be less opportunities to take part in community events.



- There will be less opportunities to employ staff in the 5 areas where on call stations would be closed.



- We **may** have a chance to employ full time firefighters in **Gwynedd**.



- This option will cost each household in North Wales around £162.88 a year. This is £12.22 more than what you pay now.

# How to tell us what you think



Please send us your answers by **12am Midnight** on **22 September 2023**.



You can answer the questions online: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



You can fill out the response form and email it to: [EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales)



You can fill out the response form and print it and post it to:

**Freepost**

**ADOLYGIAD TAN/FIRE REVIEW**



You can call or text us to share your views on **07787 578 386**.



Your views are important to us. We would like to hear from you before we make any final decisions about the future of our services.



We will be running community events to collect feedback. You can be part of these events in person or online.



You can find out more details of all events on our website: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



If you cannot access the internet, you can call us on **07787 578 386**.



If you are a member of a community group and you would like us to come and talk to your group:

- Call or text us: **07787 578 386**
- Or email us on: [EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:EmergencyCoverReview@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

# What happens next



We will go through all the feedback we get.



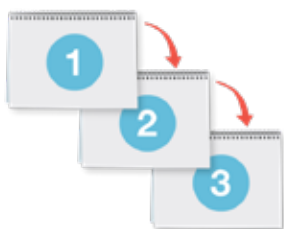
We will use all the feedback, proof, and information to decide what to do.



We will write a report about what people have said. The report will be available on our website: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



We will record our final decision making meeting. You will be able to see it on our website: [www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



After the final decision is made, we will make changes to our services in steps by following our **Risk Management Plan**.

# Hard words

## Climate change

Climate means long term weather trends. Climate change is about changes to the world's weather patterns like our air and water getting warmer.

## Sustainable

Sustainable means something will last a long time and doing things in ways that does not harm the environment.

## Well-being

Well-being means a person is happy, healthy and is comfortable with their life and what they do.

