



FirebrakeWales

The Welsh Fire Safety Charity

Annual Report 2009



Welcome from the Chair

It has been an exciting and positive year for Atal Tân Cymru / Firebrake Wales, as we developed new activities and services and strengthened our position as a key partner in the planning, delivery and evaluation of community fire safety initiatives across Wales.

We continued to build effective networks and partnerships with organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors and between these organisations and the Fire & Rescue Services. Partnerships gave rise to a number of projects aimed at reducing the incidence of home fires, particularly for those most at risk or hardest to reach. Evidence from recent Communities & Local Government research underlines the importance of working in partnership if fire prevention strategies are to succeed.

In addition, we expanded our efforts in collecting and analysing statistical data and evidence from research to promote improved targeting of community fire prevention initiatives. The charity also initiated new research studies to identify the most effective methods for providing safety information and support to specific communities of interest to reduce their home fire risks.

To provide a firm base for ongoing development, the charity continued to improve its operational policies and procedures, put in place a more effective staffing structure and improved systems for ensuring good governance. We also began to explore opportunities for securing funding from charitable trusts, foundations and new public sector sources in order to ensure our work can be sustained and developed in the future.

This report highlights some of our key achievements during the year as well as our priorities for the future. These would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and commitment of our small, dedicated staff team, efforts of the Trustee Board and the ongoing support of our funders and partners.

In the year to come, the charity will continue to build on its strengths, achievements and learning through the delivery of projects, support for partnerships and promotion of evidence-based policy and practice to make communities across Wales safer from fire.

Mike Chown
Chair, Trustee Board



Our Mission

“To reduce the incidence of deaths and injuries in fires by raising awareness of risks, providing safety information, promoting fire safety research and encouraging collaboration between the public, private and voluntary sectors to make Wales a safer place”



Source: Firebrake Wales - Survey of 1,000 Welsh households, 2009

Staff Team

Kim Smith, Chief Executive Officer

Kate Slowinski, Projects & Partnerships
Co-ordinator

Richard Hall, Policy & Research Co-ordinator
(from February 2009)

Kathryn Eveleigh, Central Services Co-ordinator

Trustees

Mike Chown (Chair from October 2008)
Independent Trustee

Steve Clarke (Chair to October 2008)
Independent Trustee

Collin Crowley
Mid & West Wales Fire Authority

Brian Fraser (resigned July 2008)
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Sir Harry Jones
Independent Trustee

Doug Mackay (resigned July 2008)
Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Andy Marles (appointed July 2008)
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Adelaide Morgan
Independent Trustee

Glenn Price (appointed July 2008)
South Wales Fire Authority

Derek Rees (resigned July 2008)
South Wales Fire Authority

Trevor Roberts
North Wales Fire Authority

Rebecca Rosenthal
Independent Trustee

Richard Smith (appointed July 2008)
Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service

Simon Smith
North Wales Fire & Rescue Service

With Thanks

Firebrake Wales would like to extend sincere thanks to a number of organisations and individuals for their support to the charity during the year, including:

South Wales Fire Authority and Fire & Rescue Service

Mid and West Wales Fire Authority and Fire & Rescue Service

North Wales Fire Authority and Fire & Rescue Service

Welsh Assembly Government

ASH Wales

Care & Repair Cymru and Agencies

British Lung Foundation Wales

Greenfield Media

Moonoo Productions

Lime Green Tangerine

Semaphore Display

Age Concern Cymru

The Publicity Centre

Beaufort Research

Circle IT

Allens

Dragon Supplies

WCVA

County Voluntary Councils of Wales

Menna Wyn

Fire Kills

Broomfield Alexander

Haines Watts

Unity Bank

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Projects and Partnerships

Smokefree Living

Smokefree Living is a partnership between Firebrake Wales and ASH Wales with the support of the Welsh Fire Services and Welsh Assembly Government.

Although Smokefree Living initiatives have taken place in England, this is the first within Wales and the only project to provide information on reducing risks not only to health, children and the environment, but also to fire safety. In addition, it targets information directly to households of people who smoke, as identified by the Fire & Rescue Services during a Home Fire Safety Check.

Evidence from evaluation of the pilot carried out in Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service area seems to show that the method is successful in encouraging safer behaviours and getting more people to stop smoking in their homes. We look forward to building on the pilot to develop and extend the project to the rest of Wales by the end of 2009.



Care & Repair Partnership

Firebrake signed a partnership agreement with Care & Repair Cymru which has enabled us to work together towards our shared goal of improving the safety and welfare of vulnerable older people in Wales. Central to delivering on this was a study of current and previous partnerships between the 22 Care & Repair agencies and the Fire & Rescue Services. This included recommendations for development of more opportunities for collaboration and building on good practice.

Firebrake has set up a partnership steering group to implement recommendations, ensure continuation and expansion of good practice and monitor outcomes of the partnerships.



Raising Awareness of Risks

- Firebrake co-ordinated the final full year of the Fire Flash media campaign together with the Fire & Rescue Services and Welsh Assembly Government. During the year information resources, events and television advertisements highlighted the risks of fire related to drinking and cooking, smoking and the festive season. Features on the ITV evening news during Fire Safety Week highlighted the risks of home fire to a wider audience.
- Almost 8,000 primary school children participated in our Bonfire Safety campaign, receiving information on firework and bonfire safety through schools and community groups and sending posters for the Firebrake competition.
- The charity joined with Lloyds TSB and the Fire & Rescue Services of Wales to draw attention to the risks of fire in the home during the run up to Christmas. This included distribution of fire safety information and animated text messages during three public events in Wales.
- Firebrake co-ordinated a publicity day at Morriston Fire Station in Swansea and gave a number of media interviews to draw attention to the risks of home fire from smoking, on National No Smoking Day in March.
- The charity brought together Community Safety practitioners from the Fire & Rescue Services with advisors from the British Lung Foundation Wales to provide fire safety information to those at risk due to health conditions or use of home medical gases. Starting in South Wales, Fire & Rescue Service staff gave presentations to local "Breathe Easy" groups of people living with lung disease, their friends, families and carers. In turn, most group members had Home Fire Safety Checks to address their specific risks in the home.

Partnerships and Networks

Firebrake facilitates a number of strategic decision making, information sharing and good practice networks that bring together practitioners across the Fire & Rescue Services. These include the Equality and Diversity Forum, Youth Engagement Forum, Community Fire Safety Strategic Group and the Joint Arson Group (which also includes representatives from the Police, Forestry Commission, Welsh Assembly Government and Youth Services.)

We are actively involved in a number of networks to raise awareness of fire safety such as Wales Council for Voluntary Action Research Network and Wales Tobacco Control Alliance and Forum and have begun to make links with a number of other networks such as Age Alliance Wales, Flying Start and the National Health Service.



Vera Brinkworth, Head of External Affairs, Care & Repair Cymru

Policy & Research

Thankfully, the number of people in Wales suffering injury and death in home fires has decreased over time. The number of casualties (non-fatal and fatal) in accidental dwelling fires in Wales fell from 697 in 2000, to 488 in 2007.

This trend has largely been driven by the greater emphasis of the Fire & Rescue Services in providing advice to communities on how they can reduce their fire risks and through installing thousands of smoke alarms in homes across Wales. However, the incidence of home fires remains high for some groups and there is more that can be done to prevent further injuries and deaths, through the use of research.

The Importance of Research

- **Who is** more at risk of fire in the home?
- **Where can** we find them? Are some people more difficult to reach with fire safety messages and why?
- **What should** be done to reduce the risks of fire in the home? It is likely some households will require different kinds or levels of information and support.
- **How do** we deliver the information to ensure that it has the greatest effect in encouraging safer behaviours?

Research will help us answer these questions and can help shape how fire prevention activities are planned and delivered to maximise their impact on our communities. Also, research in the form of robust evaluation of fire safety initiatives can tell us “what works” and why. Demonstrating how these initiatives make a positive, measurable difference to the safety of communities will be increasingly important, particularly in the current economic climate where available funding may be limited.

Research and Influencing Policy

During the year, the charity carried out a number of studies including,

Fire Safety Attitudes Survey, Wales. One thousand Welsh households participated in the first survey of its kind, to determine attitudes and behaviours related to fire risk.

Findings will be used to support better targeting of fire safety information and support initiatives.

Survey of Care & Repair Agencies in Wales. The Care & Repair movement works with people over 60 to ensure their homes are safe, secure and appropriate to their needs. We interviewed leaders from their 22 Agencies in Wales to identify barriers and opportunities to working in partnership with the Fire & Rescue Services. Recommendations from the report will be used to increase the number and improve the quality of partnerships designed to reduce home fire risks for the most vulnerable older people.

Evaluation of SmokeFree Living Pilot Project. The charity evaluated the “pilot” phase of this project, which targets smoking households with information on reducing the risks of smoking to health, children, the environment and fire safety. The study made recommendations for improving later phases of the project.

As well as leading and conducting its own research, Firebrake collected, analysed and summarised key findings from other relevant fire safety research and provided this to a wide range of partners for consideration in the development of future fire safety activities.

In future, Firebrake will continue to build on its positive links with key individuals and decision-making bodies as a means of encouraging evidence-based fire safety policy and practice within the Welsh Assembly Government, Fire & Rescue Services and other partners with an interest in community safety.

Looking to the Future

In the year ahead, Firebrake will build on its achievements and continue to develop its position as a facilitator and key contributor to the strategic direction and evidence-base of fire prevention practice throughout Wales.

We will work with ASH Wales and the Fire & Rescue Services to extend the Smokefree Living project throughout Wales. We will also support and monitor the ongoing development of Care & Repair Agency / FRS partnerships, which engage with vulnerable older people, who are at greater risk of death and injury in fire.

In addition, we will explore new partnerships and projects with other organisations that work for and with other groups that are at higher-than-average risk of suffering a domestic fire, are difficult to reach with conventional fire safety messages and/or may be resistant to adopting safer behaviours. This may include organisations working with children and families, black and minority ethnic communities and those with mental or physical ill-health. Firebrake will also support the development of local and regional partnerships between the Fire & Rescue Services and community-based organisations.

The charity will continue to focus on activities that involve working with people, so they can make informed choices and manage their risks of fire in

the home more effectively. We also wish to promote opportunities for people to be involved in shaping community fire safety initiatives in the future.

The charity will continue to build links with the academic and research communities, collect, analyse and distribute evidence from UK and international fire safety research and conduct new studies to learn more about the attitudes and behaviours of people with respect to fire safety. This will enable better targeting of fire prevention activities to those most in need and the use of models of delivery proven as effective in fostering positive change.

In order to ensure that our activities and services are of high quality, are sustainable and represent good value, Firebrake will continue to review and improve its policies, procedures and systems for employment, governance, service delivery, management and administration. All developments will be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation and knowledge gained will be used to inform the strategic direction, activities and services of the charity in future. We will continue to explore opportunities for attracting sustainable funding from a wide range of sources including charitable trusts and foundations, public sector grants and commissioning and private sector donations.

Firebrake will continue to work closely with the Fire & Rescue Services, Welsh Assembly Government Fire Services Branch and other partners to promote a shared approach to community fire safety that promotes user-engagement, collaboration, evidence-based practice, value for money and the highest standards of delivery.



Source: Fire Incident Data 2007, WAG Community Safety Statistics & ONS Census Mid Year Population Estimates, 2007.

Wales Community Fire Safety Trust (also known as Firebrake Wales)

Registered Charity Number 1100964

Abbreviated Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2009

The following figures are taken from the full financial statement of Firebrake Wales for the year ended 31 March 2009, which will be presented to the Trustees on 21 October 2009 and submitted to the Charity Commission. The auditors, Broomfield & Alexander, whose proposed opinion is unqualified, have confirmed that this summary is consistent with the full report. The summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Charity. For further information the full accounts, auditor's report on those accounts and the Trustees' annual report should be consulted; copies of these will be obtained from Firebrake Wales at Ground Floor, 6 Hazell Drive, Newport, NP10 8FY on written request.

	2009	2008
Fixed Assets comprising furniture, equipment and leasehold property improvements	8,208	10,093
Investment in Subsidiary	1	1
Debtors, being what the charity is owed from:		
Grants due and prepaid expenditure	6,144	25,716
Cash, being monies held at the bank and in hand	267,621	195,917
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	281,974	231,727
Less: What the charity owes to:		
Creditors and accruals	(61,630)	(6,683)
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Leaving what the charity owns	220,344	225,044
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How this was created:		
By Restricted funds	-	20,655
By Designated income funds	214,400	-
By Unrestricted funds	5,944	204,389
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	220,344	225,044
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Annual Operations: Where our money came from:

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2009 Total	2008 Total
Incoming resources:				
Grants and sponsorship receivable	241,225	274,649	515,874	538,049
Interest received and other income	9,794	-	9,794	10,986
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	251,019	293,168	530,368	549,035
Outgoing resources:				
Less: Expenditure on salaries, staff costs and general overheads	237,200	293,168	530,368	538,350
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Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources	13,819	(18,519)	(4,700)	10,685
Transfers between funds	2,136	(2,136)	-	-
Total funds brought forward	204,389	20,655	225,044	214,359
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Fund Balances Carried Forward	220,344	-	220,344	225,044

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf by the Chair, M Chown.

Our Mission

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Firebrake Wales is supported by grants from the three Fire & Rescue Services of Wales, Welsh Assembly Government and charitable donations.

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