

PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

THE E-ZINE OF LOTHIAN AND BORDERS FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Lothian and Borders
Fire and Rescue Service

visit www.lbfire.org.uk
contact enquiries@lbfire.org.uk
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OUR PURPOSE

Through the provision of a quality service, it is our purpose to reduce the impact upon the community and the environment of fires and other emergencies and by doing so, improve community safety and engender a sense of well being within the population living within its boundary.



QUARTER OF A MILLION HOMES RECEIVE SAFETY INFORMATION

The number of homes which have received vital safety information in Lothian and Borders has now reached over a quarter of a million



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AT WORK

A new partnership with SACRO points to an effective way of engaging young offenders who are putting lives at risk



THE 'FATHER OF FIREFIGHTING' IS UNVEILED

History was made this autumn as the statue of James Braidwood was unveiled in his home city of Edinburgh



NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING

New arrangements with our community planning partners will help build on the success of a number of key projects



CHERNOBYL CHILDREN JOIN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

A visit to a fire station is one of the ways our Service is helping to give children from Chernobyl a happy experience



Home Fire Safety Checks have become a part of regular duties for firefighters

QUARTER OF A MILLION HOMES RECEIVE SAFETY INFORMATION

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service (LBFRS) have made over a quarter of a million visits to homes across the area, delivering vital safety information.

Following the implementation of Home Safety Checks as part of the LBFRS's Service Improvement Plan, Firefighters visit the homes within their Station's area, offering free fire safety advice and home safety checks. The visiting Firefighters also offer to fit a free smoke alarm with batteries if needed. So far, over 70,000 smoke detectors have been fitted.

Brian Allaway, Chief Fire Officer said, "This is a fantastic milestone to reach. As there are around 750,000 homes in the area, this means we are well on the way to reaching our goal of visiting every home in Lothian and Borders. The fire safety advice given by our Firefighters is invaluable, as well as the free smoke alarm, which could ultimately save you and your family if a fire breaks out in your home."

David Mallin, Head of Community Safety for the Service said, "The work of the Fire Service has changed dramatically in recent years. We are carrying out more non-fire related rescues, such as water rescues and rescues from heights, and there are thankfully fewer fires across Lothian and Borders. We believe this is a lot to do with the increased awareness of fire safety, and the fire prevention work carried out by ourselves and other organisations.

The number of fire deaths and injuries has dropped, and again we believe this is influenced by both the drop in the number of fires, as well as the high number of homes which now have smoke alarms fitted. A smoke alarm can give that vital warning, without which, if you're lucky, you could wake up surrounded by smoke, however by that time many people do not wake up at all. People should strive to do everything they can to protect themselves, their family and their home."

For a free Home Fire Safety Check, carried out by local firefighters, freephone 0800 169 0320

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*Making a potential hoax caller
think again before dialling*

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AT WORK

Earlier this year, the Red Watch at Tollcross Fire Station received the very familiar fire call to Pollock Halls, halls of residence for what turned out to be yet another malicious call. For the Fire and Rescue Service, this was not unusual. For two students it was a night they wished had never happened.

The CCTV within the halls of residence captured the pair maliciously breaking a 'break glass' call point, which left the security with no option but to discuss the issue with university staff. This led to police involvement and criminal charges being brought against the individuals. A report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal for action and the students were given the opportunity as part of their sentencing to get involved with the restorative justice service SACRO.

SACRO's role is "to promote community safety across Scotland through providing high quality services to reduce conflict and offending." It does this through a form of mediation where the offender accepts responsibility for the crime and agrees to meet and work with the victim - with the hope of repairing harm done. The victim in this case was Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service.

Through discussions between our Community Safety team, SACRO and Red Watch Tollcross it was decided that the offenders would attend Tollcross Fire station for a half day session and engage in a fictional "Consequences" programme.

The day's events began with an introduction to Tollcross Fire Station and a chat about the role of the Fire and Rescue Service and the types and volumes of calls that Tollcross attends. The question "who do you think deserves an apology following your actions?" was posed to the individuals and it was this question that became a key aspect of the programme. Their reply at this stage of the day was "the Fire Service."

From here the two were taken through to the Control suite to listen to the actual fire call in which they were involved in. Approximately two minutes later they heard a second call to a house fire with people trapped. It was fully explained at this point that due to Tollcross attending the Pollock Halls incident, the attendance to the house fire may be delayed by up to five minutes, as another Fire Station would have to be mobilised.

Having listened to the firecall the individuals were taken downstairs and 'mobilised' to a training event in the house section of the Station's training tower. They were assigned two safety officers who briefed them fully on health and safety issues before donning full personal protective equipment and breathing apparatus sets. On arriving at the training tower they

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Tollcross Fire Station, Edinburgh

were faced with a house fire and a Watch Manager informing them that three casualties were missing within the house. The search commenced and very quickly a live casualty was located. This was quickly removed from the house and the crew were redeployed to the fourth floor to search for two missing children. This search was unsuccessful and the crew was withdrawn.

Following the exercise, and when all the smoke had been cleared, everybody walked through the house to the location of the two child simulators. It was explained to the students that they had in fact missed the casualties and as they were running low on air they had to be withdrawn. There was no doubt at this stage that the students had gained a new understanding of the difficulties and stress levels that Firefighters face. It was emphasised hypothetically that had Tollcross not been at Pollock Halls on a malicious call we could have got to this fire five minutes earlier.

After the exercise, the students were taken to a lecture room, where they watched the DVD "Fire Hoaxers" courtesy of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service. This DVD is aimed at secondary school pupils and follows the events of a young lad making a malicious call to a car fire. In the background, a house fire develops which has to be attended by another Station. The consequence of the house fire is a mother and two children lose their lives. The last frame of the film displays "So it's a laugh to call out the fire service is it? Say that to the father who's just lost his family."

The first question of the day now was repeated "who do you think deserves an apology following your actions?"

The silence of the individuals said it all and the reality of their actions and what they had learnt on the programme hit home. In a half-day session, we taught them that what had been a silly prank to them could have had a devastating effect on someone else in society.

There is no doubt the students left Tollcross with a great deal of respect for the Fire and Rescue Service and definitely very appreciative of the potential consequences of their actions.

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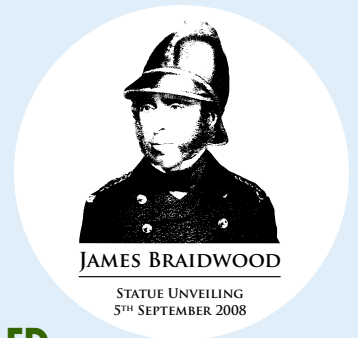
Highlights of the event included a fire appliance from 1824 driven by two horses, and firefighters in uniforms from throughout the Service's long history



A large crowd, of both invited guests and the public, gathered to witness the event



The statue is finally unveiled



THE 'FATHER OF FIREFIGHTING' IS UNVEILED

Since the last edition of this e-zine, and following a determined campaign, a statue of the 'Father of Firefighting', James Braidwood, was appointed a worthy place overlooking the centre of the city and the ancestors of the people he laboured to protect 184 years ago.

Taking place in Parliament Square, the ceremony was opened by the Lord Provost, George Grubb, and the statue was officially and publically unveiled by Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, whilst Chief Fire Officer Brian Allaway provided the vote of thanks.

The event drew in substantial crowds, with the general public, members of the Braidwood family and others with significant links to the Fire Service witnessing the prestigious event. Highlights included modern and vintage fire engines with Firefighters clad in historic uniforms, horses, ten violinists from James Braidwood's own school – the Royal High School in Edinburgh, and the unveiling itself, featuring a turntable ladder fire appliance as a prop. Later Councillor Mike Bridgman, Convener of Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Board, welcomed invited guests to a civic reception hosted by the Lord Provost.

The man who has led the group of campaigners to this superb outcome for over three years is 93-year-old former Edinburgh Firemaster Dr Frank Rushbrook. Dr Rushbrook was a Firefighter for 33 years and Firemaster between 1961 and 1970.

Brian Allaway said; "I am delighted with the success of this project, after years of campaigning and planning, it is tremendous that the Father of Firefighting has been honoured in this way.

"I am also pleased that through working together with the City of Edinburgh Council and other partners, the outcome is positive, both for the man without whom this could not have taken place, Dr Frank Rushbrook, and for everyone involved in and interested in the history and future of Firefighting."

Funding for the statue was acquired through various channels, primarily from Dr Rushbrook and other campaigners' fundraising efforts and private donations, plus Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, Edinburgh Council's Pensions and Trusts committee and the Surplus Fire Fund, which was set up from charitable donations by wealthy city people after the Great Fire of Edinburgh in 1824.

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The statue close-up



Dr. Frank Rushbrook, CBE was at the forefront of the effort to make the statue a reality



Brian Allaway paid tribute to Dr. Rushbrook, and serving members of the Fire Service both past and present

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Councillor Mike Bridgman, Convener of Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Board said of the placing of the statue, "I am delighted that the City has been able to honour James Braidwood, the Firemaster of the first municipal Fire Brigade in the British Isles and probably the world. His statue has a prestigious position and it is fitting that this place is linked so strongly to Braidwood's life, as it is close to the site of his original fire station headquarters on the High Street and his home which overlooked Parliament Square."

The seven-foot bronze statue was crafted by Kenny Mackay, who was also responsible for the admired sculpture of Donald Dewar in Glasgow.





Cooldown Crew in action

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS

Engagement in Community Planning has been a statutory responsibility for Fire and Rescue Services since the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The drive for the public sector to work more effectively in partnership has led to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. The reporting structure for this process will be through the use of Single Outcome Agreements (SOA) between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities. Progress on the performance outcomes will be measured through a set of 45 national indicators and targets.

Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service (LBFRS) has put into place new arrangements to build on the work already achieved in conjunction with community planning partners and meet the requirements of each constituent council's SOA. We have adopted a corporate responsibility for community planning and each of the Service's Principal Officers has been aligned to one of our Council areas. In addition we have announced the appointment of a Community Planning Manager. This new role will work closely with our Station based Service Delivery Managers and coordinate our partnership activities across the LBFRS area. For Council Community Planning Managers the new role will provide a single point of access for enquiries and the provision of relevant statistical information.

It is also planned that a number of Local Authority Liaison Officers will become available in 2009 to further enhance community engagement.

As we reach out to our communities we will endeavour to build on a number of our key projects. These include working with young people through our Phoenix and Cooldown crew initiatives and our Home Safety Check programme. For further information on our new arrangements please contact our Community Planning Manager, Steve Harkins, at LBFRS Headquarters, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh.

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CHERNOBYL CHILDREN JOIN THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Smiling faces of lively kids greet Firefighters and other staff at our Fire Stations and Headquarters when the children affected by Chernobyl visit. They take in the tours with great enthusiasm and wolf down the lunch prepared for them with the spirit of any other child hungry from a day of excitement and fun. The shocking experiences which these children have dealt with are momentarily placed to one side, which is exactly what these children need.

The Chernobyl Children Lifeline charity gives children who are suffering as a direct consequence of the horrific explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Plant in 1986, an opportunity to enjoy a month of the uncontaminated air and food that we take for granted, as well as a good fun trip away. There is also a lot of work being done through camps and assistance in the Chernobyl area itself.

The nuclear fallout from this catastrophe was ninety times greater than the Hiroshima bomb and following the initial shock of this disaster, it's simple to get on with life here, forgetting that such a disaster has very long lasting consequences. One of the most delayed effects of Belarus being the world's most radioactive place is the extremely high cancer rate. The immune systems of the children in Belarus are so unresisting, that only one in ten of those who live there are fully healthy.

Although it is now 22 years since the explosion, research has shown that second-generation children are more likely to suffer the effects of radiation.

This information is exactly why the work of the Chernobyl Children Lifeline Charity is still so imperative today to the children and people in Belarus. 2500 to 3000 children are brought to the UK every year, and it is estimated that living for one month in the UK boosts the children's immune system, adding at least two years to their life expectancy.

The children who come are chosen for one of the following reasons:

- They have had cancer and are now in remission after treatment
- They live in one of the contaminated areas of the country
- They have been evacuated from a heavily contaminated area
- They have other illnesses related to the situation in Belarus, or have recently recovered from an operation

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Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service hosts at least one group of these children for a day each year, and they are taken on a tour of the Headquarters Museum and often to a fire station. This experience is a highlight of their trip and the kids have a great time.

The families of the children don't miss out, as after arriving here with often not much more than the clothes on their back, their host families and the charity ensure they return with as much as they can carry in the way of clothes and presents for them and their family.

Stories are told of children arriving unwell and weak, and heading home a month later unrecognisable, as a person who has experienced a month of a childhood everyone deserves.

**For more information on any of these topics, please contact
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