



# **Community Fire Protection Department**

Annual Bonfire Season Report 2010  
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Version 1.10 CJH

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## **1. Executive Summary**

**1.1** The Annual Bonfire Period represents a period of increased activity for the Police and Fire and Rescue Services across the UK. The period considered for this report is 18<sup>th</sup> October to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

**1.2** Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) manifests in various forms during this period, which includes Halloween and Bonfire Night itself, and the 'Mischief Nights' which become adopted by the young people of the UK.

**1.3** Mischief Night is mostly regarded as being the 30<sup>th</sup> October, but in some areas the 4<sup>th</sup> November is also a 'Mischief Night' where teens and pre-teens take the opportunity to 'prank' on doorsteps, or in some areas, indulge in more sinister forms of ASB ranging from egg throwing to acts which could be categorised as Arson with intent to endanger life.

**1.4** This includes the setting of deliberate fires of all kinds, in addition to the nuisance bonfires which have become more prevalent in some areas over recent years. This places pressure on the resources of Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service due to an increase in call levels, in some areas reaching almost 4 times the normal level of incidents classed as small deliberate fires, hereafter referred to as SDF's (BV206iii).

**1.5** Due to the difficulties in the recording of incident classifications due to the introduction of IRS last year, the data in the 2009 Bonfire Report is less precise than first thought. The incidents in question have since been reclassified and correctly validated, and the comparison data in this report can be regarded as accurate.

**1.6** Also because of the lack of a specific 'Bonfire' category within IRS, this report will consider all SDF's during the Bonfire Season. This will also reflect the increase in all ASB involving fire setting, not just nuisance and celebratory bonfires.

**1.7** This organisation and our partners have for many years recognised the damage done to communities by ASB during the Bonfire Season, and significant amounts of time, effort, resources and money are expended in an attempt to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the population, whilst allowing and encouraging people to celebrate the season safely. A summary of these activities by unitary area is included within this report.

**1.8** Incident data for this Bonfire Period Report will be taken from 18<sup>th</sup> October 0800 hrs to 8<sup>th</sup> November 0800 hrs. The recording period has been adjusted to reflect the actual day of Bonfire Night (Friday in 2010) and to include the weekend following. Historically the level of operational activity has been high on the weekend following the 5<sup>th</sup> November, as many people see this as a further weekend of either well intended celebration or ASB.

**1.9** Comparative incident data in this report from previous years has also been taken from similarly adjusted recording periods, not the fixed period of 15<sup>th</sup> October – 6<sup>th</sup> November used previously.

**1.10** There were a total of 258 SDF's this year during the reporting period, compared to 193 last year. We did not suffer any attacks on Fire-fighters this year, except for an incident involving an egg thrown at an appliance. There were 5 reported attacks last year.

**1.11** This report considers the activities and objectives of CFRS and various partner organisations and their actions which are intended to contribute to a reduction in the number of SDF's year on year, and in particular during the Bonfire Period. The incidents attended during the Bonfire period can have a significant effect on the Service aim of a reduction in SDF's by 10% year on year.

## **2. Recording of Bonfire Incidents**

**2.1** The national Incident Recording System (IRS) does not currently have a specific category for Bonfires, either for use during a specific period, or for use all year round. Opinions of the various IRS user groups as to whether this is necessary are divided. A number of FRS are lobbying to introduce the category, and a number are resisting on the grounds that a Bonfire is just loose refuse, and should be recorded as such.

**2.2** Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service still uses 'stop codes' in addition to the IRS, and a detailed Green Bulletin Item was published early in October to explain to operational managers how to report and record incidents during the specified Bonfire Period

(See Appendix).

**2.3** Although Bonfires are generally recorded on IRS as 'Loose refuse', the previously used categories of A, B and C were to be sent within the stop message.

Bonfire Category A - Dangerous  
Bonfire Category B - Nuisance  
Bonfire Category C - No action.

**2.4** Control staff were also instructed to 'tag' bonfire incidents throughout the recording period so that the data could be interrogated if required.

**2.5** Category C Bonfires were allowed to burn as safe celebratory events. These were recorded as a False Alarm Good Intent, not as controlled burning as in previous years.

### **3. Pre Planning and Partnership Activity**

**3.1** Unitary Performance and Station Managers from CFRS engaged with local partners in each of the four Unitary Authority Areas in order to plan a variety of individual interventions and broader strategies based on local needs, historical data, and political will. The objectives of these interventions and strategies were:

**Prevention through education.**

**Prevention through removal of 'fuel'**

**Prevention by organising 'diversionary' events**

**Operational response**

**Local Authority Waste Enforcement**

**3.2** Specific Bonfire strategies were produced for CWAC, Warrington, and Halton. Cheshire East Unitary Area, which historically does not have the same levels of ASB involving deliberate fire setting, produced local initiatives based on each of the Local Area Partnerships.

**3.3** Bonfire Removal Schemes have proved to be effective in previous years, and these were used again this year in Cheshire East, CWAC, Halton, and Warrington.

(Arrangements for each Bonfire Removal Scheme varied, as did costs. CFRS contributed financially to these schemes, please table page 5).

**3.4** Educational events were delivered by our own Community Safety and Operational staff in partnership with Cheshire Police at a number of schools, Community Centres and other locations across all four unitary areas. These events were targeted locally and based on risk profiles. Bonfire and Firework Safety was also discussed with householders during H.S.A's delivered during this period

**3.5** Targeted Response Vehicles were again deployed by CFRS in the key areas of:

**Ellesmere Port**

**Winsford**

**Warrington**

**Halton**

**3.6** A summary of the activities, strategies, interventions, response and costs can be found on the following pages.

## 4. Bonfire Removal Schemes

<b>UPA</b>	<b>CFRS COST</b>	<b>OTHER CONTRIBUTORS COSTS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF BONFIRES REMOVED</b>	<b>NUMBER OF SDF'S IN UNITARY</b>	<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>
<b>CWAC</b>	NIL	£15K	63	83	£15K
Warrington	£400	£1500	38	56	£1900
Halton	£500	£7800	36	84	£8300
Cheshire East	NIL	Absorbed within LA budget.	3	35	n/a
<b>TOTALS</b>	£900	£24300	140	258	£25200

**4.1** CWAC costs were borne by the Safer Stronger Partnership (£10k) and £2.5k each from Weaver Vale Housing Trust, and Chester and District Housing Trust.

**4.2** Weaver Vale housing trust also operated their own collection service for refuse on their own land. This was a daytime service only. CWAC Streetscene teams operated until 1900 hrs.

**4.3** There is anecdotal evidence of vans 'dumping' waste furniture at locations in Ellesmere Port on Bonfire Night. This maybe trade waste being disposed of cheaply, or disposal of large household items that would normally have to be paid for by the resident.

**4.4** At the time of writing CWAC Streetscene are attempting to prosecute a Winsford resident for setting a Bonfire on public land at the rear of his house.

**4.5** Warrington Borough Council and Golden Gates Housing also provided large skips at 4 strategic locations within the Borough, to assist with the removal of Bonfire 'fuel'. Residents were encouraged to dispose of large items in these skips, reducing the availability of 'fuel' for local bonfires.

**4.6** Halton Bonfire removal costs were shared predominantly by the 6 local housing associations, with contributions from CFRS, HBC, and the Tasking and Coordination group. Work was completed by 'Smiths', a local contractor who have performed this service before. It is commendable that HBC and Smiths are able to provide a summary of each removal incident, and the percentage of waste recycled.

**4.7** Cheshire East Council operated a Bonfire removal scheme which was paid for by absorption into the Local Authority budget (Streetscape). Wolvern Housing also removed a small number of bonfires post ignition

## 5. Educational Events and Activities

5.1 Community Safety Managers deployed advocates across the four unitaries to deliver the following.

### CWAC CS Fireworks & Bonfire Safety 2010

Event	Location	Date	Audience Size	Age Group
Bonfire Safety Talk	Whitby High School, Ellesmere Port	18/10/10	270	Secondary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk with Cheshire Police	Wharton Primary School, Winsford	18/10/10	30	Primary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk	The Academy, Ellesmere Port	19/10/10	210	15-16 years
Bonfire Safety Talk	The Academy, Ellesmere Port	20/10/10	520	Secondary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk	Hartford Primary School, Northwich	20/10/10	30	Primary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk with Cheshire Police	Greenfields School	21/10/10	30	Primary School pupils
Bonfire Safety talk as part of a community initiative run with Chester Football Club	Blacon High School	21/10/10	88	Secondary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk	Whitby High School, Ellesmere Port	01/11/10	270	Secondary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk	Whitby High School, Ellesmere Port	03/11/10	270	Secondary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk	Cuddington Primary School, Northwich	03/11/10	30	Primary School pupils
Bonfire Safety Talk as part of ongoing programme to promote fire safety.	Petty Pool	03/11/10	8	Adults with learning difficulties
Key Stage Two Talk with emphasis on bonfire and sparkler safety	Greenbank School, Northwich	03/11/10	98	Special Needs pupils all ages
Key Stage Two Talk with emphasis on bonfire and sparkler safety	Greenbank School, Northwich	04/11/10	98	Special Needs pupils all ages
Key Stage Two Talk with emphasis on bonfire and sparkler safety	Hebden Green School, Northwich	04/11/10		Special Needs pupils all ages
Chester Lions Bonfire – Chip Pan display & Fire Safety	Chester Racecourse	06/11/10	+1000	Various

5.2 Total from above events inc' Chester Racecourse engagement is approx 2950.

5.3 Many of the above visits were undertaken in partnership with PCSO's and operational staff from Winsford also visited 7 local primary schools with PCSO's to talk about Bonfire and Firework Safety.

**5.4** A Pizza and Coke night at Wharton Youth Centre was also well attended and the opportunity to engage with local youths was used to good effect.

### **5.5 Warrington CS**

Advocates and PCSO's in Warrington visited four targeted Primary Schools in Warrington to deliver a Winter Safety talk. Total audience size was approximately 700. HSA's delivered by advocates and operational crews were targeted in the areas where WBC and Golden Gates Housing provided skips, to afford the opportunity of giving additional advice.

### **5.6 Halton CS**

<b>School</b>	<b>Sessions Delivered</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>
Hill View Primary School, Runcorn	A presentation on Matches & Lighters & firework safety	7/Oct	25 children aged 7-8
Holy Spirit Primary School, Runcorn	A presentation on Matches & Lighters & firework safety	8/Oct	23 children aged 7-8
Moore Primary School Runcorn	Bonfire & firework safety presentation in partnership with Cheshire Police	1/Nov	80 children Whole school
St Mary's Primary School Runcorn	Bonfire & firework safety presentation in partnership with Cheshire Police	1/Nov	122 children Whole school
All Saints Upton Primary School Widnes	Bonfire & firework safety presentation in partnership with Cheshire Police	1/Nov	110 children Whole School
The Grange High School Runcorn	Bonfire & firework safety presentation in partnership with Cheshire Police	2/Nov	140 children Year 7/8 Aged 11-12

**5.7** In addition to this Halton Advocates delivered Key Stage 2 visits to 6 schools in Frodsham and Helsby during the lead in to the Bonfire Period. These were specifically booked the week before Half Term in order to deliver a Bonfire & Firework safety message as well as a KS2 message.

### **5.8 Cheshire East**

The Cheshire East Council local structure of 7 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) to deliver local initiatives was used to good effect during the Bonfire Period, primarily to deliver diversionary events in partnership with CFRS. Advocates delivered a Bonfire and Firework Safety talk to 150 pupils at Middlewich High School. Operational staff from Congleton and Macclesfield planned and



delivered a series of talks to local Primary Schools during the lead in to the Bonfire Period. A group of Brownies who visited Congleton Fire Station in late October also received a talk about Bonfires and Firework Safety. Cheshire East Council and local charitable organisations are proactive in delivering organised and safe Bonfire events. Operational crews used these events as opportunities to engage with local people and to talk to them about Bonfire and Firework Safety. They also took advantage of this direct engagement to generate a number of H.S.A's. Risk Profiles do not indicate a serious problem with bonfires in most areas of Cheshire East. Advocates delivering H.S.A's during the lead up to and during the Bonfire Period continued to target over 65's, (Exeter database) and spoke to them about their safety and security during periods of firework activity.

## **6. Diversionary Events**

**6.1** The number of Diversionary Events involving CFRS staff and our partners over the Halloween/Bonfire Period is too large to provide a detailed breakdown within this report. All partners are involved in these events either working alone or with others. Below is a summary of significant events.

**6.2** CWAC Ellesmere Port Lions were approached with a view to organising a large local event similar to the long running Bonfire/Firework event in Chester. £500 from CFRS UPG budget supported the purchase of a professional firework display. Over 2000 local residents attended and a repeat is planned for 2011.

**6.3** Destiny and Elite Nightclub staged an U17's night on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov, supported by UPG, Police and members budgets. Despite the best efforts of the promoters, Lushclubbing, and police and fire staff, this was very poorly attended, and no repeat event is planned.

### **6.4** Halton

One large Bonfire and Firework event is provided by Halton Borough Council each year. This authority discourages other large organised displays.

**6.5** CFRS 'On the streets' Team together with 'Youth Add Action' engaged with young people in Widnes and Runcorn using the 'Cage Football' during half term holidays. The cage was provided by Youth Add Action, and CFRS provided supporting staff. This initiative included a Bonfire Safety quiz for the players. Approximately 350 young people played football as part of this intervention

**6.6** Operational Crews from Runcorn and Widnes visited the 'Phoenix Project' schools prior to the half term break. Each watch has two Phoenix Project Primary Schools allocated to it and provide support to the teaching staff in many activities and lessons, including delivery of fire safety education.

**6.7** It is worth noting that Widnes Police withdrew from a planned 5 day diversionary event involving CFRS operational staff at very short notice. This decision was based on their poor experiences last year with hostility from local youths toward the police officers, and no appreciable positive outcomes for Cheshire Police.

#### **6.8** Warrington

Warrington Borough Council do not organise their own community bonfire and firework event, and do not encourage other organisations to do so.

**6.9** For 2010 efforts were concentrated on Bonfire Removal Schemes, the 'Skip Days, and H.S.A delivery. The 'Skip Days' allow residents in key areas to dispose of larger items, potential bonfire fuel, for no charge. These skips are provided in key areas selected by looking at historical data and local knowledge.

#### **6.10** Cheshire East

300 Cinema Tickets were distributed to young people from Crewe in exchange for taking part in local 'clean up' and landscaping events from mid October through to Bonfire Night facilitated by Greenspace and Streetscape. This initiative ran alongside a number of other locally organised Halloween Parties, demonstrations and competitions in Community Centres at Fourways, Ruskin, Frank Webb Avenue and Mirion Street in Crewe. Similar activities were organised at Bromley Farm in Congleton and Colshaw Farm in Wilmslow.

**6.11** A football tournament during the October Half Term in Crewe was well supported by young people, as was an event at Cumberland Stadium. Both were run by sports development staff from Cheshire East Council.

**6.12** These events were funded by the CDRP, and events were organised by each of the LAP's using local knowledge of specific problems, and in response to local needs. A Halloween and Bonfire Activity Steering group with representatives from each of the 7 LAP's coordinated and approved bids for each of the initiatives.

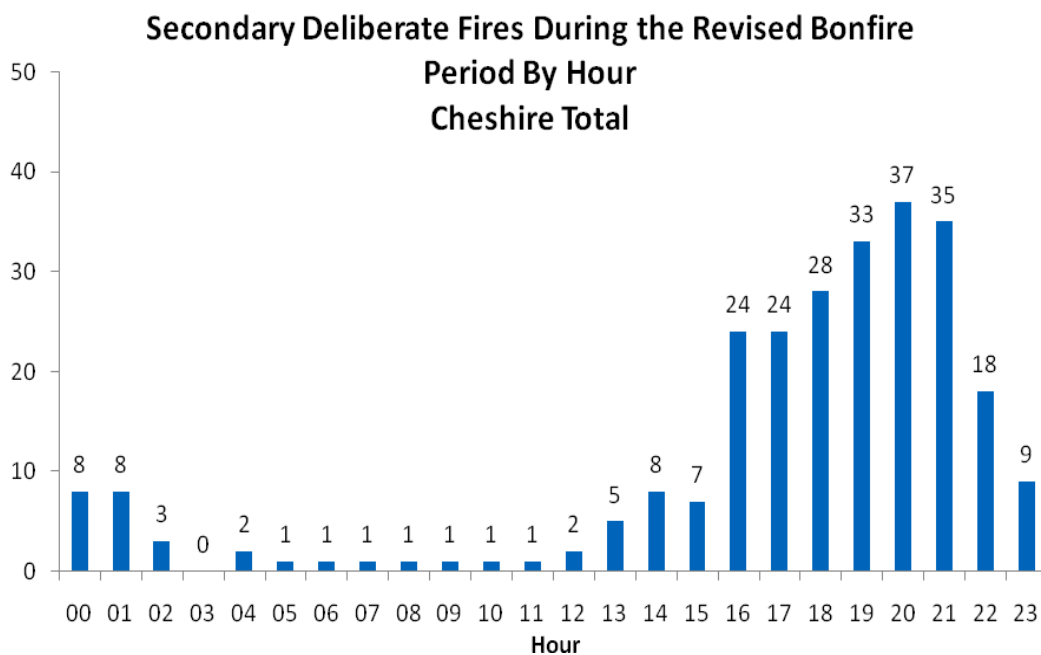
**6.13** CFRS staff were involved in the planning of these events at the LAP's, and operational staff attended to support partners and engage with attendees.

## 7. Response

**7.1** Targeted Response Vehicles (or Midi Appliances) staffed by a crew of 3 Fire fighters were deployed at the historically busier stations during the Bonfire Period. These were staffed by On Call Fire fighters on a prearranged basis. Availability of TRV's at predicted periods of peak activity allows Structural Appliances to be available for incidents which pose a threat to life or property. Operational Crews on structural appliances were also committed to a high number of Community events during this time. The availability of TRV's allows these commitments to be fulfilled.

**7.2** Four TRV's were deployed at specific times and dates according to knowledge of previous incidents, and availability of crews for staffing.

**7.3** Early evenings (1700 – 2200 hrs) are widely accepted as being periods of peak activity and wherever possible these times were scheduled as the times that the vehicles should be available. This is evidenced by the graph below.



These vehicles were available between 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November, not the full bonfire recording period. They attended 87 incidents during this time. All were Small Deliberate Fires.

7.4 Turnouts for TRV's by Station are as follows:

STATION AREA AND VEHICLE CALLSIGN.	2010	2009	2008
Ellesmere Port (21L2)	22	12	24
Warrington (21L1)	15	3	3
Widnes (21L4)	18	10	26
Runcorn (21L4)	9	(inc in above figure)	(inc in above figure)
Winsford (21L3)	23	20	33
TOTALS	87	45	86

7.5 Of the 87 incidents that were attended by TRV's, 40 of these incidents were attended on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Nov. 21L3 also attended 2 further incidents in Northwich and Knutsford.

7.6 TRV Crews were proactive in engaging with the Community at large, and reporting unlit bonfires/flytipping to the relevant authorities responsible for Bonfire Removal Schemes.

7.7 Approximate cost of maintaining TRV availability in all four areas is £200 per evening per vehicle. Total approximate wage cost for TRV availability for the whole of the Bonfire Season is therefore £15000. A further investigation and report into the costs and activity levels of the TRV's is to follow.

## **8. Fire and Rescue Control**

8.1 During the Bonfire Period, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Control staff were responsible for filtering calls so that no attendance was made to some reported incidents.

8.2 Using call handling skills and 'Discretionary Mobilising Procedure' Control staff filtered 60 calls during this period, primarily on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. The purpose of this is to reduce the number of attendances to incidents where there is no threat to life or property, or are regarded as 'nuisance' by residents. If these calls had not been filtered, and operational crews had attended, then they would have been recorded as False Alarm, Good Intent, and allowed to burn. The crews may also have been exposed to potentially hostile situations.

8.3 28 incidents attended by CFRS were recorded as FAGI during the recording period. These were likely to have been incidents which were celebratory bonfires, allowed to burn. Under previous guidance, these may well have been recorded as controlled burning, and would have increased the numbers of fires attended. During the specified recording period Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Control Staff received a total of 1252 calls to all types of incident.

## **9. Media- Corporate Comms**

**9.1** Pro-active press releases were issued in the run up to the night. They highlighted community safety messages to families, individuals and local businesses.

**9.2** These secured good coverage across the region. Local and regional newspapers, radio and TV stations were approached to invite them to accompany crews on bonfire night.

**9.3** This offer was taken up by Warrington Guardian, reporter Hannah Bargery, who accompanied a Stockton Heath crew on Bonfire Night. This resulted in a very favourable article published in the paper.

**9.4** The team also pro-actively highlighted the dangers of firework misuse following incidents in the region in the run up to bonfire night and contacted partner agencies in each unitary area regarding who the public should call to arrange for illegal bonfire removal.

**9.5** This information incorporated into the releases was well received and published by the media.

**9.6** Some of the key messages highlighted by Corporate Communications were:





- Advice to businesses on storing rubbish and safety precautions
- Advising people to attend organised bonfire events rather than hold their own
- Firework safety
- Firework misuse
- Chinese lantern safety
- Removal of illegal bonfires on waste ground
- Wheelie bin safety advice
- TRV mini feature
- Call for details of organised firework displays for website inclusion

**9.7** A total of 13 pro-active press releases were distributed across the region which generated 32 positive newspaper articles. The press releases were:

11 Oct	Firework safety urged by Warrington firefighters
11 Oct	Firework safety urged by Cheshire West and Chester firefighters
11 Oct	Firework safety urged by Cheshire East firefighters
15 Oct	Warning over deliberate fires
21 Oct	CFRS warns of firework abuse
21 Oct	Community safety is top priority this Bonfire Night – Cheshire East
21 Oct	Community safety is top priority this Bonfire Night – Cheshire West and Chester
21 Oct	Community safety is top priority this Bonfire Night - Halton
21 Oct	Community safety is top priority this Bonfire Night - Warrington
2 Nov	Happy Diwali celebrations from CFRS (all Cheshire)
2 Nov	Happy Diwali celebrations from CFRS (Halton)
2 Nov	Warrington firefighters encourage safety during Diwali celebrations

## 9.8 Radio Interviews

The press releases were not only issued to newspapers but also to radio and TV stations which led to a number of interviews gained both proactively and reactively. In addition to sending out releases the Corporate Communications team rang all radio and TV stations in the region to offer interviews. These interviews gave the Service the opportunity to promote safety messages appertaining to Bonfire night at no cost as they were positioned as news items.

	Station	Interviewee and subject
4 Nov		Richard Gerrard, Chester – bonfire safety
5 Nov		Gareth Fryar, Wilmslow – bonfire safety
5 Nov		Colin Heyes – bonfire safety
5 Nov		Colin Heyes – bonfire safety
5 Nov	Cheshire FM	Colin Heyes – bonfire safety

**9.9** The team ensured that bonfire safety messages were included in the Council's publications in Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. Unfortunately the timing of the Warrington and Halton publications did not fit with promoting this particular campaign. The CFRS Website was used to publicise details of all organised Bonfire Events known to us. The message consistently delivered was that members of the public should celebrate safely at formally organised events.

## 10. Incident Data and Performance

**10.1** Incident data on the following pages will include:

- All Small Deliberate and Accidental Fires for the specified recording period
- Comparative Data for previous years
- Activity for the two weeks post and prior to the recording period
- SDF Incidents by station area
- Bonfire Tagged SDF Incidents
- Primary Fire levels during the recording period
- Predicted and Actual wards of highest activity

**Small (Secondary) Deliberate and Accidental Fires During the Revised Bonfire Period**

	<b><u>2006</u></b>			<b><u>2007</u></b>			<b><u>2008</u></b>			<b><u>2009</u></b>			<b><u>2010</u></b>		
	<b><u>Accidental</u></b>	<b><u>Deliberate</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Accidental</u></b>	<b><u>Deliberate</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Accidental</u></b>	<b><u>Deliberate</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Accidental</u></b>	<b><u>Deliberate</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Accidental</u></b>	<b><u>Deliberate</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Cheshire East	18	48	66	23	54	77	23	31	54	4	27	31	8	35	43
Cheshire West	39	189	228	49	151	200	35	101	136	11	79	90	15	83	98
Halton	22	137	159	49	194	243	13	99	112	9	54	63	2	84	86
Warrington	19	71	90	29	62	91	17	37	54	12	33	45	7	56	63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>290</b>

Please note, in 2010, the original bonfire reporting period was revised.

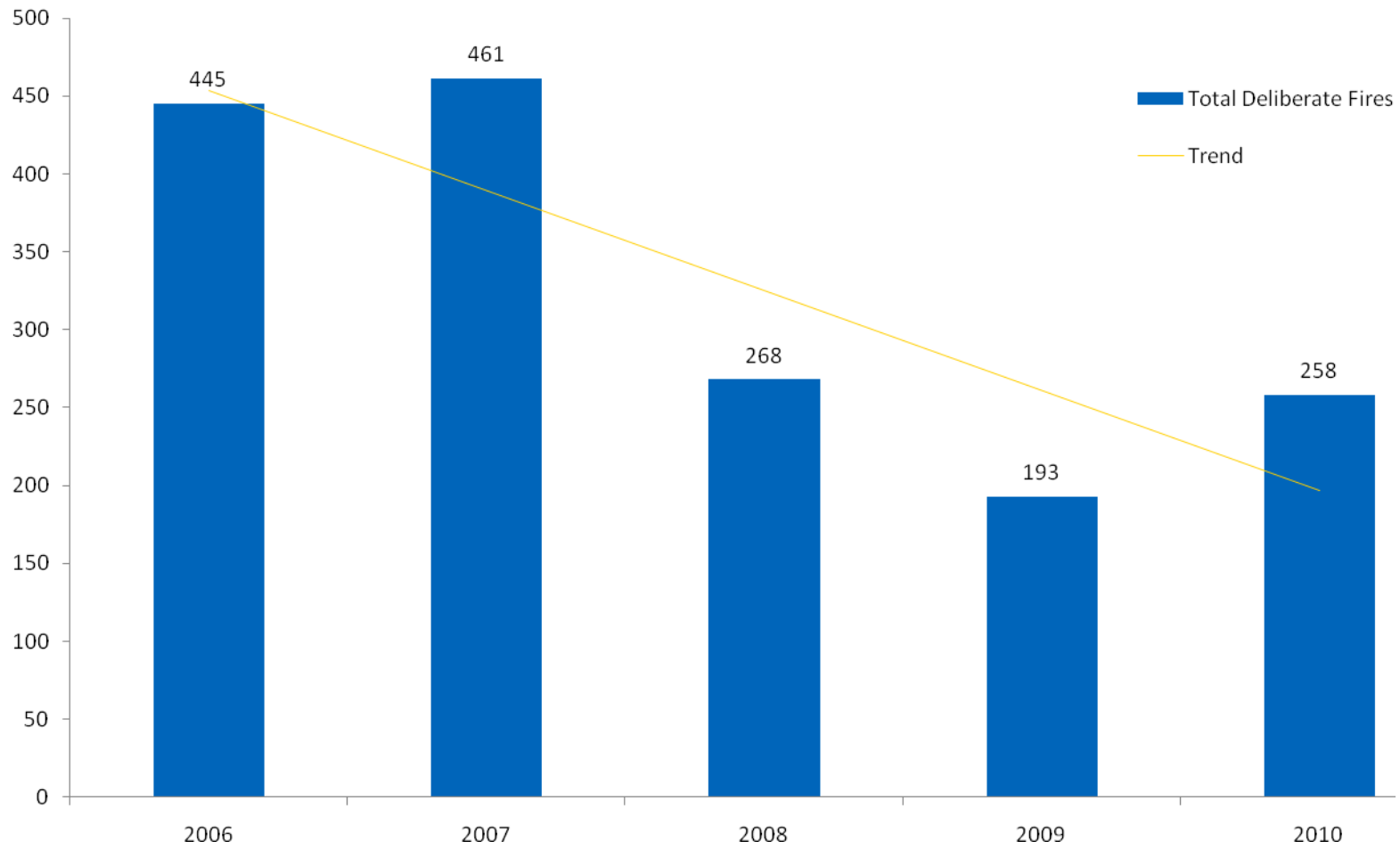
It was agreed that the reporting period would end at 08:00 on the Monday after 5 November and would begin 3 weeks prior to this, Monday 18 November

The figures above reflect this and the reporting periods for the years prior to 2010 have been amended in accordance.

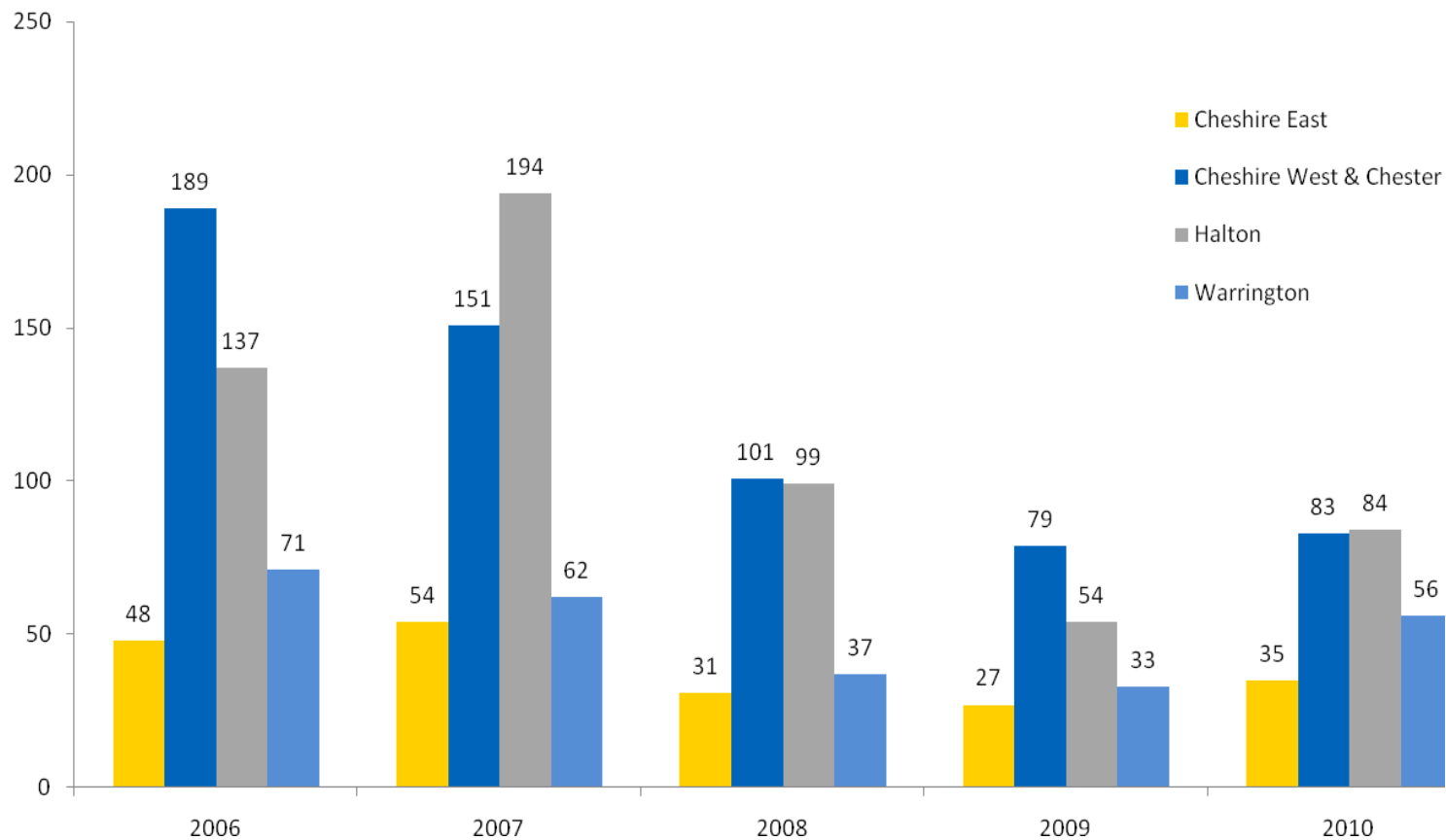
The following graphs and tables will expand and explain this data



### Secondary Deliberate Fires During the Revised Bonfire Period Cheshire Total



## Secondary Deliberate Fires During the Revised Bonfire Period By Unitary Performance Area



**10.2** To illustrate 'normal' activity levels, the table below shows Small Deliberate Fire Incidents by UPA for the 2 weeks prior to and the 2 weeks post Bonfire Period 2010.

<b>UPA</b>	<b>SDF's 2 weeks prior to Bonfire Period</b>	<b>SDF's 2 weeks post Bonfire Period</b>
<b>Cheshire East</b>	17	9
<b>Cheshire West and Chester</b>	25	20
<b>Halton</b>	24	19
<b>Warrington</b>	21	15
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>63</b>

**10.3** SDF's for the Bonfire Period by station area are as follows:

<b>STATION</b>	<b>SDF Incidents Attended by CFRS</b>
<b>Ellesmere Port</b>	38
<b>Runcorn</b>	39
<b>Winsford</b>	35
<b>Warrington</b>	46
<b>Widnes</b>	45
<b>Crewe</b>	17
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>220</b>

**10.4** Small Deliberate Fires Tagged as Bonfires by UPA

<b>UPA</b>	<b>SDF Incidents Tagged as Bonfires Attended by CFRS</b>
<b>Cheshire East</b>	8
<b>Cheshire West and Chester</b>	50
<b>Halton</b>	33
<b>Warrington</b>	15
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>106</b>

**10.5** When broken down by Station, areas of highest activity for Bonfire Incidents attended by CFRS are:

<b>STATION</b>	<b>SDF Incidents Tagged as Bonfires Attended by CFRS</b>
<b>Ellesmere Port</b>	25
<b>Runcorn</b>	22
<b>Winsford</b>	21
<b>Warrington</b>	13
<b>Widnes</b>	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>92</b>

**10.6** These 5 station areas account for 87% of all SDF incidents tagged as Bonfire Incidents. This leaves 14 other incidents tagged as Bonfires Attended across the remainder of the service area.

It is notable that the other large towns of Chester, Crewe, and Macclesfield had only 3, 2, and 1 such Bonfire incidents respectively.

Primary Fire levels remained similar at 102 in 2010 and 109 in 2009.

**10.7** A predictive index devised by the Corporate Intelligence Unit was used to map the areas most likely to suffer from increased ASB and SDF's. This index was calculated using the method below.

**1. Rate of incident per 1,000 population**

**= (ward incidents / ward population) x 1,000**

**2. Ward index score**

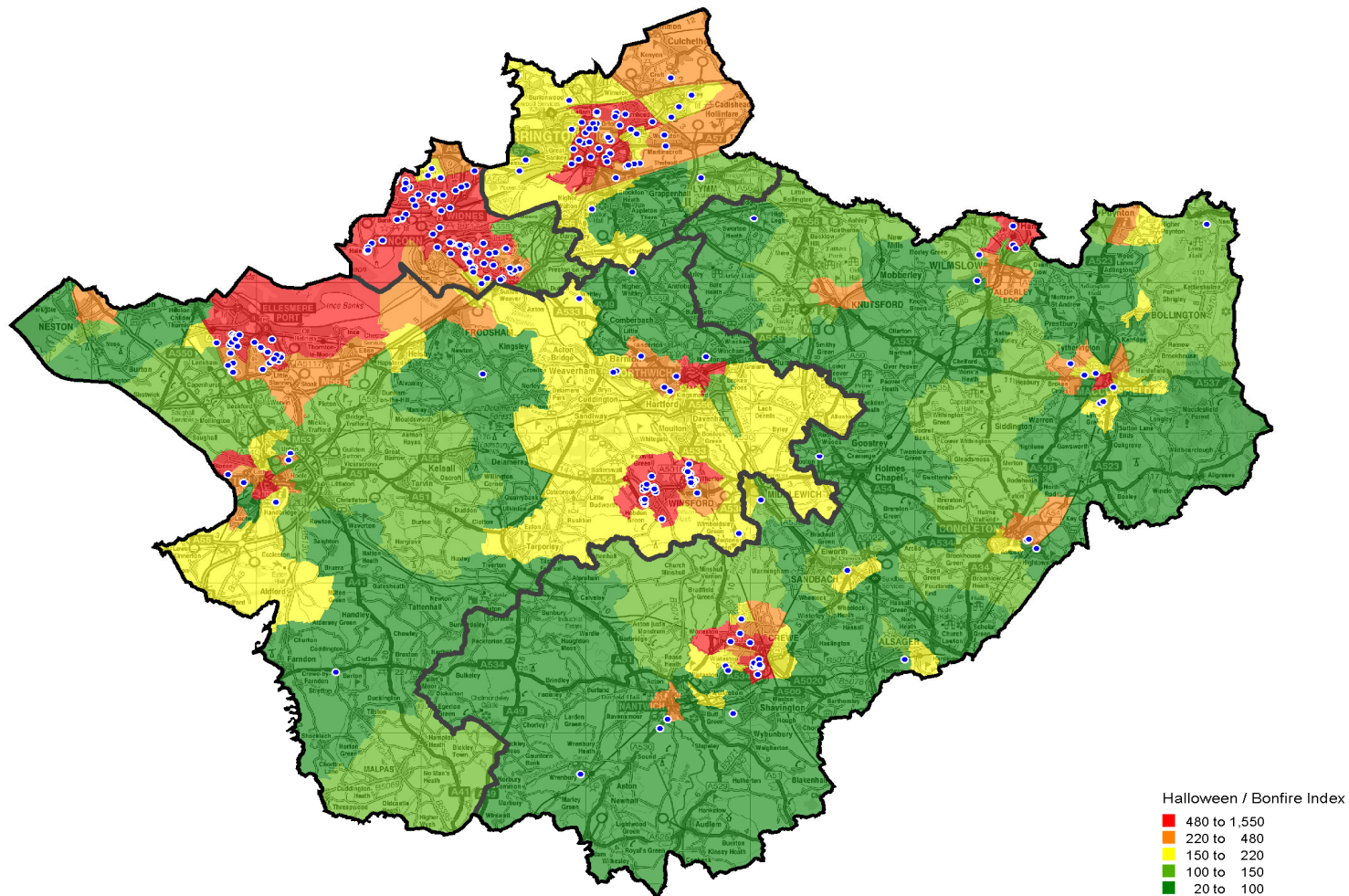
**= (rate per ward / average ward rate) x 100**

**3. Total score**

**= secondary fire index + ASB index + criminal damage index**

**10.8** The coloured 'heat map' (overleaf) produced using this ward based index has been overlaid with SDF's during the Bonfire Period of 2010. The high level of correlation between predicted and actual activity is notable, and this data can be used next year in order to target our activities and those of partners.

Predictive Index 'heat map' overlaid with incidents during Bonfire Period.



## **11. Evaluation**

**11.1** The service total of 258 Small Deliberate Fires, which includes all those tagged as Bonfires on the Fortek System, represents an increase when compared to 2009's total of 193. By Unitary Performance Area Halton and Warrington both showed an increase of 50% or more, CWAC was up 5%, and Cheshire East's SDF incidents increased by 28%.

**11.2** It is important to bear in mind that the Bonfire Season of 2009 was particularly poor in terms of weather. A spell of rain always reduces SDF calls, no matter what time of year. The weather in 2010 was more favourable to those wishing to celebrate Bonfire Night and Halloween, or to those wishing to indulge in ASB.

**11.3** The day of the week that Bonfire Night falls on is also a significant factor in increased call levels. Nov 5<sup>th</sup> 2010 was a Friday, 2009 was a Thursday – a day which represents the lowest levels of ASB of all types.

**11.4** Given these factors, and compared to increases across the other UPA's, the increase of just 5% in SDF levels in CWAC is notable. The Bonfire Removals in CWAC were successful, and the well attended new event in Ellesmere Port may have contributed to this relatively small increase.

**11.5** SDF totals across the service in previous years have been significantly higher than those recorded this year. If we look back to 2006, the service total for a similarly adjusted Bonfire Period was 445. This increased slightly in 2007 to 461, then dropped to 268 in 2008.

**11.6** If we use 2006 as a baseline, then this year's SDF incidents represent a 42% reduction in call levels.

**11.7** A significant fact is that there were no attacks recorded on our operational staff this year. There were 5 last year and 8 in 2008. One incident was recorded this year when an egg was thrown at an appliance. This was on 31 Oct in Handforth. Egg throwing is a popular 'mischief night' activity in many areas. Operational Staff have contributed to this reduction by applying reasonable judgement as to whether a fire is dangerous or a nuisance, or could be allowed to burn, thereby reducing the opportunity for conflict with youths.

**11.8** Call filtering and subsequent non attendance at bonfires will have a similar effect on reducing opportunities for conflict.

## **12. Conclusion**

**12.1** The increases in apparent activity involving all Small Deliberate Fires can largely be attributed to the better weather this year when compared to 2009, and also the day of the week that the 5<sup>th</sup> of November falls on.

**12.2** There are 5 towns that historically display the highest levels of activity involving SDF's at all times of year, not just the bonfire season. SDF levels in Crewe are also significant, although not at the same levels of Warrington, Widnes, Runcorn, Ellesmere Port, and Winsford.

**12.3** Bonfire Removal Schemes continue to remain an effective means of reducing the numbers of SDF's. A visual presence of teams actively removing material will discourage the 'rebuilding' of Bonfires.

**12.4** Departments throughout the service were proactive during the run up to, and during the Bonfire period. The hard work and enthusiasm of all is recognised in this report. Without the efforts of staff and partners, it is likely that the number of SDF's would have been much greater. The positive effect of the combined efforts of all involved on the quality of life of the residents of Cheshire is difficult to quantify, but is important to recognise.

### **13. Recommendations**

- 1.** CFRS continues to lead, support and advise organisations holding organised bonfire and firework display.
- 2.** Organised bonfire and firework displays are actively encouraged as the most appropriate and safe way to celebrate.
- 3.** Planning of initiatives is started earlier in the year, and is led by CFRS.
- 4.** Bonfire Removal Scheme costs are examined and evaluated for effectiveness, and best practice is shared.
- 5.** TRV use is limited to the weekend of Bonfire night in 2011, and the preceding weekend (a further investigation and report is to follow).
- 6.** Any successful prosecutions relating to the building of Bonfires are published to reinforce the message that bonfires on public land are illegal.
- 7.** Bonfire Removal Scheme hours are extended – one reported in Ellesmere Port at 18.45, too late for removal, became an incident at 19.30 hrs.
- 8.** Removal of large items, normally charged for by LA's, is provided as a free service during the preceding month.
- 9.** Local Environmental 'Clean Up' days, such as those in Crewe, are considered as an intervention in all UPA's, with appropriate involvement of local youth populations.
- 10.** Data is gathered from Primary Care Trusts next year regarding the number of injuries involving fire and fireworks. This data should be a useful indicator to support the service recommendations that organised events are the safest way to celebrate.
- 11.** CFRS and Partner resources and efforts are focussed on the six key towns identified earlier. Using data from the Corporate Intelligence Unit, ASB information from COSTAR, and Predictive Indexing, local hotspots can be targeted more accurately and to greater effect.
- 12.** Clear Aims and Objectives are defined for each target area and initiative in order to improve evaluation and focus on outcomes.



## **Appendix**

### **The Green – Issued October 2010 - Bonfire Season Brief**

This years Bonfire season for Operational and Statistical Analysis purposes will be from 0800hrs 18<sup>th</sup> Oct. to 0800hrs 8<sup>th</sup> Nov.

#### **Stop Messages and Recording**

The accurate recording of incidents attended during this time is particularly important.

The appropriate Bonfire Stop Codes will be used between these dates in line with the following guidance for property and cause:

- 294 Bonfire No Action – should be recorded as FAGI code 189. Not Intentional burning controlled 300.
- 293 Bonfire Nuisance – will usually be recorded as deliberate ignition code 108
- 292 Bonfire Dangerous – will usually be recorded as deliberate ignition code 108

OIC's may, at their discretion, use the code 106 (Intentional burning uncontrolled), or another stop code if appropriate in the case of an organised event or private bonfire party which results in a dangerous or nuisance bonfire.

Not all small fires attended during this period will be Bonfires, small fires involving loose refuse, bins etc should be recorded as such. Do not classify all small fires as Bonfires.

When recording on IRS, the OIC should consider that for statistical purposes, this year we will be reporting on all small fires, regardless of property type or cause.

#### **The IRS guidance for fire classification is as follows:**

Question 5.15 – Cause / Motive

Select the option that, in your opinion, corresponds best to the **probable** cause or motive of the fire – primary or secondary or chimney.

A **deliberate** fire is a fire started deliberately such as **suspected** arson and some fires started by children\*, psychiatric patients, suicides and attempted suicides.

**\*If a child under the age of nine years old starts a fire then this should be classed as accidental unless there is evidence to suggest otherwise.**

Motive	GUIDANCE
Accidental	Caused by accident or carelessness (not thought to be deliberate). Includes fires which accidentally get out of control e.g. fire in a grate or bonfires. Includes fires started by children unless there is evidence to suggest otherwise
Deliberate – own property	Where a fire is started deliberately. Own property refers to the normal occupiers – including a child in their own house.
Deliberate – others property	Where a fire is started deliberately by somebody who is not an occupier of the property. This includes fires in non-residential buildings where the owner is not involved e.g. fires in office buildings, fires in barns, cars.
Deliberate – unknown owner	Where a fire is started deliberately but it cannot be determined whether it was own or others property.
Not known	Use where there is general uncertainty about the cause or motivation of the fire. 'Not known' should only be used if absolutely necessary.

### **Action By Ops Crews**

During busy periods, Control will be 'stacking' calls using a strict protocol according to property and life risk. It is essential that OIC's of both Structural and Midi Appliances book available as soon as you are finished at an incident. You must not self mobilise to further incidents. If you are approached to attend a further incident, ensure there is no life risk, then ask the informant to dial 999. Police officers should be asked to report incidents to their control for processing. If there is a life risk, then report it as a running call to control, who will enhance the PDA if necessary.

### **Unlit Bonfires**

There are a number of Bonfire Removal Schemes operating across the 'county'. Unlit Bonfires in CWAC should be reported to StreetScene on Tel No 0300 123 7026.

This scheme will operate from 0700 to 1900 7 days a week for the Bonfire period and the removal team should respond within two hours.

The number for Halton is 0303 333 4300, response is guaranteed within 24hrs but will usually be much quicker.

In Cheshire East, the reporting line is 01270 537064.

These numbers should be used by members of the public, and our own staff who have discovered a Bonfire on an Arson Route or during general duties. If an unlit Bonfire is reported to a crew or station, ask the caller to redial the appropriate number.

In Warrington, you may wish to direct the caller to any of a number of communal skips put in place by WBC for the disposal of waste which could otherwise be used as bonfire 'fuel'.

### **Corporate Message**

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will be encouraging all residents, including our own staff, to enjoy their celebrations *safely*.

We ask that you play your part by attending organised displays only, and encouraging friends and family to do the same.

If you know of any organised bonfire or firework displays, pass the details to Sian Corrigan so that they can be included on the service website and in press releases.

The misuse of fireworks is a serious Anti Social Behaviour issue and represents a genuine source of fear for the vulnerable members of society. We have already had two incidents this year involving fireworks through letterboxes, fortunately neither of these resulted in injury or significant damage.

As you all know, incidents of ASB such as this can very quickly become tragedies.

**Enjoy yourselves, *SAFELY!***