



Hertfordshire Fire Brigades Union

Campanigning for Firefighters and Emergency Fire Control Staff

Newsletter 5

March 2010

Welcome to Newsletter 5

Keeping members up to date

Please send us your contributions

Email fbu.herts@ntlworld.com

25 Year Badges

Through an administration error we believe some members that are due their 25 year badge have not received them.

The Brigade Executive Committee would like firstly to apologise for this unacceptable error. We are working to correct our membership system to ensure that the error does not happen again.

In the meantime if you have not received your 25yr badge or you know of someone else who hasn't please let us know as soon as possible.

fbu.herts@ntlworld.com

INVEST IN SAFETY



www.hertsfbu.org.uk



SAFER HERTFORDSHIRE CAMPAIGN

Hertfordshire firefighters believe that there is a sound case for reinvestment in the fire service and we have compiled a number of documents, films and other forms of evidence that we believe firmly supports our case.

Today we call on politicians to meet with us to discuss our concerns and to give their reassurance to the people of Hertfordshire that our fire service is one we can continue to rely upon when disaster strikes.

We request that all and every media organisation in the County listen to our case and portray it for what it is – the truth.

We call upon the people of Hertfordshire to take an interest in the funding of public services such as our fire service and consider whether we are worth the £30 per year that we cost you. If you think we are, then please pledge your support and lobby your local politicians to meet with us to discuss our concerns.

In return for their support, professional firefighters and control room staff will give their pledge that they will do their very best to continue to provide the excellent fire and rescue service that the people of Hertfordshire deserve.

CUTS COST LIVES

facebook Herts FBU

Part of the Team

★★★★★



HAVE YOU SEEN THE FILM?

INVEST IN SAFETY



**SAFER
FIREFIGHTERS
SAFER
HERTFORDSHIRE**

www.hertsfbu.org.uk



TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

On behalf of my daughters Rachel and Rebecca, my son-in-law Scott, Lynsey - Ewan's partner and Jason, I would like to say thank you for such love and respect and pride which you gave Ewan at his funeral service on Wednesday 22 July.

It was so moving and so wonderful that you travelled from all over the country and stood in the pouring rain to honour my son. I will never forget seeing rows and rows of firefighters, it took my breath away and all those attending and watching.

At the service in Kinross Parish Church I asked for the reading from 1 Corinthians chapter 13, which talks about love. Love for each other, love for our family, love for the community we live in and love for the people we work with.

My dearest son Ewan was greatly loved by everyone, and he loved his work, his colleagues and the community of Edinburgh which he served. You showed that love at his funeral service and we are deeply grateful.

You made what was a very sad day beautiful. I thank you from deep within my heart and will always remember you with the love we shared on that special day.

**Linda Williamson
Ewan's Mother**



Health & Safety Representatives

The Union's team of Health & Safety representatives is growing steadily with many attending fully funded training courses.

If you are interested in taking on the role of Health & Safety Rep at your workplace please contact Simon Bloxham at Blue Watch Baldock



REGIONALISATION OF CONTROLS – TAKING OUR CAMPAIGN FORWARD

Our campaign against the regionalisation of Emergency Fire Controls in England has been one of the longest the FBU has ever undertaken. We make no apology for this. Our campaign *is* producing results. For most of the last seven years the FBU has been the most consistent – and often the only – voice of opposition to the ill-conceived FiReControl Project but our opposition and campaigning is undoubtedly having an effect.

Our campaign has focussed on the threat to our Service from the proposed regionalisation of Fire Controls. The concerns highlighted by the FBU include:

- the impact on operational efficiency within the Service;
- the impact on Firefighter and public safety;
- the threat to jobs and conditions of service of members working in Emergency Fire Controls;
- the escalating costs involved.

We have made clear that the threat of regionalisation is part and parcel of the attack on emergency operational intervention i.e. our ability to respond rapidly, safely and effectively to emergency incidents. This same agenda is being used to support and justify many of the cuts we face throughout the Service at local level.

Campaigning works

It has taken a considerable time but finally others are starting to wake up to what the FBU, the largest professional organisation within the Fire and Rescue Service, has been saying from the start.

On 21 October last year we held our rally at Westminster Central Hall followed by a lobby of Parliament (see circular [2009HOC0640MW](#)). Two thousand members attended, making it the largest parliamentary lobby the Union has ever organised and one of the largest trade union lobbies in recent years.

Many other members who were not able to attend e-mailed or wrote to their MP or met with them locally. A number of Regions organised further lobbying events either locally or at Westminster.

This campaigning activity was extremely effective and it was no coincidence that less than four weeks later on 17 November the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee announced its new inquiry into the FiReControl project.



The terms of reference for the new inquiry were:

- progress with the project so far;
- the reasons for the cost and time overruns which the project has experienced; and
- what, if any, changes need to be made to the Government's plans for proceeding with the project

We know from Government and from MPs that our lobbying has had a significant impact on debates around the project. The Local Government Association (LGA) has now moved to a position of opposition and CFOA is also now far more critical.

This has been achieved through the hard work of FBU members and officials. Your lobbying of MPs, Councillors, Fire Authority Members and Fire Service Managers is vital and has proved that if we continue with the political pressure much can be achieved.

On the 8th February the CLG Select Committee met to hear oral evidence from interested parties regarding the Government's FiReControl Project. The General Secretary answered questions from the Committee on behalf of the Union. The written submissions from the FBU will be circulated to Branches shortly and a full and detailed report will be published in the next edition of Firefighter.

Members should be aware that, in line with the decisions of Annual Conference, we will continue to press for the *scrapping* of the FiReControl Project in full while at the same time campaigning for the rights of FBU members should Regional Control Centres (RCCs) actually be established. This involves demands for:

- No compulsory redundancies
- Grey Book terms and conditions for existing and new staff
- FBU recognition

The numerous delays in the project have meant that our campaigning tactics and timelines have been amended on several occasions. There is every likelihood of further delay and therefore further adjustment to our campaign would be required. Members will be kept informed as such information becomes available. At the time of writing we are still awaiting the results of the Select Committee.