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Tackling new challenges

WE are delighted that this Annual Report 2006/07 allows us to highlight the continuing improvements in fire safety which are taking place across Cheshire, Halton and Warrington.

The numbers of fires, fire deaths and injuries are reducing and we are beginning to see the real benefits of our major investment in visiting over 40,000 homes each year to offer free smoke alarms and free safety advice.

However there remain real challenges in ensuring that we are able to protect all sections of our communities, which is why we are continuing to pilot new and innovative projects to involve the young, older people and minority groups.

We are also working even closer with our partners to reduce the numbers killed and injured on our roads and to respond to major incidents such as this summer's unprecedented flooding levels.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and finding out how we are continually working to improve the safety of all communities in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington and achieving our vision of 'zero preventable deaths from fire or other emergencies'.



Steve McGuirk, Chief Fire Officer



Cllr Tony Hooton, Chairman, Cheshire Fire Authority

Investing more in safer communities

FIRE chiefs say a major investment in fitting free smoke alarms and raising fire safety awareness is already having a significant impact on protecting communities across Cheshire, Halton and Warrington.

New figures show that the number of accidental house fires across the area has fallen by nearly 20 per cent over the last four years, while the number of injuries from domestic house fires fell by more than a third over the same period.

The Fire Authority has set aside £1.7 million specifically to fund its programme of offering

safety advice and free smoke alarms to every home in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington by 2011.

Over the last 12 months nearly 44,000 homes have been visited and over 52,000 smoke alarms fitted.

"I am delighted that we are seeing these major reductions in both house fires and injuries," said Fire Authority Chairman Cllr Tony Hooton.

"While there are a number of factors which can affect these encouraging results, I am convinced that our Home Safety Assessments (HSAs) are already having an impact and will result in further improvements in the future."

Cllr Hooton added that the Service's ambitious HSA targets were being met thanks to hard work by a mixture of firefighters, community safety advocates, volunteers and partners.

"We are targeting the areas and groups which are more vulnerable such as older people and those with disabilities, but we would encourage people to register for their free HSA by either calling 0800 389 0053 or applying online via the Service's website – www.cheshirefire.gov.uk," he added.

● See pages 4/5 – Focus on performance



A gorge-ous photograph!

SPLASHDOWN... This fun-filled photograph of young people and leaders on one of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's Prince's Trust Team programmes has won top prize in a national competition.

The members of the Macclesfield Team 6 had their picture taken as they completed a gorge walk during their week-long residential in the Lake District.

Judges chose the picture as the winning entry in a national competition run between the Prince's Trust and Kodak, with all team members getting a new digital camera.

The 12-week Prince's Trust courses run by the Service develop skills, self-confidence and motivation and are open to anyone between the ages of 16-25 years old. For further details check the website or call 01244 342449.