



Who's who



Fire and rescue services

- The Fire and Rescue Service are responsible for tackling and extinguishing the wildfire.
- They investigate how the wildfire started and if sufficient evidence is gathered will seek prosecution. Representatives from the Fire and Rescue Service act as expert witnesses and assist the Police to seek justice.
- Firefighting helicopter pilots may be required for water collection and for dropping water on the blaze depending on the terrain and size of the wildfire.
- Behind the scenes office staff will be working away to help coordinate and support the organisation's staff on site. They will also have a role in updating the general public, sharing information with other relevant organisations, to keep all informed about the situation as it develops.
- Specialist fire and rescue wildfire forensic investigators will be on site as soon as it's safe to do so, to investigate the source of the fire and search for evidence.



Land managers

- Public land managers, such as Natural Resources Wales, work closely with the emergency services on the issue of wildfire. From opening gates to providing advice on which roads or tracks are suitable for Fire and Rescue Service vehicles, providing maps of areas which may be affected when a wildfire breaks out, to providing information on what type of vegetation is present.
- Natural Resources Wales advises Welsh Government and other landowners such as farmers, on preventative actions and the economic and environmental damage the wildfire has incurred.
- Natural Resources Wales plays a key role in preventing wildfires through building wildfire resilience into forest and grassland management planning. This means that habitats are made more resilient to wildfire through careful management of fuel load such as the regular removal of bracken, and creating fire breaks (areas that are free of vegetation).
- Private landowners, managers and field staff working in the area, such as farmers, might have to be on site to support the emergency services, providing access to the site.
- It's important that landowners in wildfire prone areas are aware of what they can do to reduce the risk of wildfire and promote nature's recovery should a wildfire occur. They can minimise the risk of damage to their land and property by creating a defensive zone that's less likely to go up in flames by managing the amount of vegetation a fire can consume. For example, burning vegetation or fuel in piles rather than burning a whole area, creating firebreaks, grazing livestock to keep vegetation under control, thinning and pruning trees and clearing vegetation from around structures.
- Farmers might need to move their livestock, harvested crops and farm machinery to safer areas in the event of a wildfire.
- Landowners may need to reseed or plant an area after a wildfire. This can have a high financial and time cost. Establishing plants with a high moisture content, such as grasses and flowers can help reduce the risk of wildfire. Keeping plants in the defensive zone well-watered can also maximise their resistance to fire.

Business owners

- Some local businesses might be negatively affected by a wildfire event, perhaps having to close due to their proximity to the wildfire. Other businesses might be busier than ever. For example, local services such as hotels and eating places may be providing for the media representatives.
- If a wildfire poses a threat to property, local business owners can help by making sure the property can be easily reached by firefighters. Access points need to be clear and any potential flammable material such as firewood and rubbish should be removed.

General public

- Ordinary passers-by such as dog walkers, joggers, people on their way to work or school, or people living in nearby dwellings are often the first to spot others acting suspiciously or the signs of a wildfire.
- The general public need to keep themselves safe in the event of a wildfire by avoiding the area and following any safety signage or guidance. This can cause inconvenience and prevent planned activities such as travel or recreation.
- Often the first to raise the alarm by contacting the emergency services or the landowner, the general public are able to provide crucial information that ensures an effective response. Providing information on location, size of the wildfire, rate of spread and what's immediately at threat can help emergency services detect and deal with the wildfire quickly and effectively.



Helpful services and organisations

- Utility services may need to take emergency action. For example, water companies might have to make water available for firefighting or check the quality of any affected water sources. Energy companies might need to check, and possibly turn off pipelines and pylons.
- Councils might need to provide emergency shelters to temporarily house those that have had to evacuate their homes.
- Charities, like the Red Cross, support those affected by wildfire, by providing food and shelter for those that have had to flee their homes.
- Veterinary professionals may be called to the scene to assist with the rescuing and treatment of wildlife or livestock which may have got caught up and become injured in the wildfire.
- Meteorologists or weather forecasters will advise on wind speed, direction, humidity, rainfall and more, providing vital information which can be used to help manage a wildfire.

Media

- News media teams may travel to the area to capture the scene, keeping people both locally and nationally up to date with the situation.
- Journalists, camera operators, sound recordists, bloggers, and vloggers, may all be working on capturing the story.
- Drone operators may be deployed to capture video footage and photographs of the scene, during or after a wildfire event.

Legal system

- Legal and Court officials will manage the prosecution and defence of anyone charged with deliberately starting a wildfire. These include solicitors, barristers, judges, court security, stenographers, and artists.
- Jury members are selected from the local population.
- Rehabilitation, probation, and prison officials will manage the possible incarceration and rehabilitation of anyone found guilty of deliberately starting a wildfire.



Fire setter(s)

- Someone who may have unintentionally started the wildfire through careless actions. For example, careless smokers who discard their cigarette butts or irresponsible campers that left a campfire unattended or not properly extinguished.
- An arsonist who has deliberately set a wildfire, motivated by a range of reasons including vandalism, an attempt to conceal another crime, extremism, for revenge, for the thrill of it, for profit or due to suffering from mental health issues.
- The fire setter's family and friends who may have to deal with those affected; they may be asked for comment by the media or be compelled to provide information and evidence as part of the wildfire investigation and subsequent legal action.

Local homeowners

- If a wildfire poses a threat to their property, homeowners can help by making sure their property can be easily reached by firefighters by ensuring access is clear. They need to ensure potential burning material isn't stored around their property. For example, gas tanks and firewood.
- If living in a high-risk area, homeowners can make sure they have an emergency bag to store their vital items in case they need to evacuate their home at short notice. They can also have an evacuation plan prepared in case of a wildfire.



Volunteers

- People in the local area may be asked to volunteer to support the emergency services and other interested parties, by supplying refreshments or resting places away from the wildfire fighting front line.
- Volunteers could be requested to support the affected community or shore up the emergency services. For example, retired fire fighters and nurses asked to temporarily return to service to replace displaced community members.
- Volunteers may be needed to support the evacuation of people or animals from at risk areas.

