



Rhwydwaith  
**CYMUNEDAU MWY DIOGEL CYMRU**  
WALES SAFER COMMUNITIES  
Network

## **Wildfires: A strategic partnership approach in Wales**

**Spring/ Summer Seminar Series 2023**

**Tuesday 16 May 2023, 10:00-11:30**

### **FAQs**

**Q: Burning mountains in the Upper Amman Valley is a common sight. Young people are often blamed, but at least some of these are initially set for land management.**

- **Are controlled burns (that stay under control) included in the statistics?**
- **Do they count as deliberate?**
- **Are there any statistics on who sets these fires, for example, whether fires are set by young people, visitors, or land users?**

A: There is the capability for people to notify Fire Control that they are undertaking a controlled burn and as such in most cases the Fire and Rescue Service will not attend, so these will not be included in the statistics. The identification of causality is limited to deliberate/ accidental ignition and is unlikely to identify the nature of the person as this is most often not available at the time of attendance.

**Q: How relevant is the current legislation and do you feel it is time for a review?**

A: The code was published in 2009 and things have moved on in terms of land management techniques, styles, and outcomes. A new review would help frame the new situation and landscape within which the code and the legislation is required today and would offer a great opportunity to reflect and assess what is needed now.

In addition, the farming community has changed in the way that it's doing a lot of its management. Moving forward within the sustainable farming scheme, a piece of legislation is needed to endorse and ensure more annual programmes of land management, not just within certain times of the year.

The Heather and Grass Burning Code currently offers a restricted view on other opportunities that can be done alongside, and therefore a review should be seen as an opportunity for collaboration. Ideally it would be good for the Land Management community to look more at the sort of frequent management rather than just short term impacts of managing fuel loading at certain times of the year.

A review would also give the opportunity to look at alternative aspects; burning might not always be appropriate and there are lots of other management techniques that do just as much good. The Wales Wildfire Board is working together to give that information to the communities of land managers across Wales.

The Wales Wildfire Board and the Charter are actively considering the options for working smarter in terms of the opportunities available to land managers to burn in areas that might not have grown nesting birds or who do not have certain species of flora and fauna that would be impacted by that sort of vegetation management currently in place.

Through partnerships and working with wildlife practitioners a new way forward needs to be looked at and a review of the code would be welcomed.

**Q: In respect of accidental fires, partners have recently discussed the possibility of banning disposable BBQs, especially close to National Parks. Could it be advocated in Wales with the increase in risk?**

A: Disposable barbecues, wild camping, and the inappropriate use of fire setting for a recreational purpose is something that the Wales Wildfire Board are cognisant of and are monitoring closely. The Fire Service ran some data on this last year and across Wales there wasn't a significant issue noted, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it's not something that should be considered for the future.

National Resources Wales wish to enable people into the green spaces and there is concern that by restricting BBQs it could push people away. The importance should be on making sure people are aware of the risks and ensure there are safe spaces for them to use it within, which are controlled and safe.

**Q: Is there any sector that's missing from the Board or the Charter that you'd like to get involved with in terms of adding to the conversation and recognising responsibilities?**

A: The Charter is only being launched this summer, so it is expected to grow and expand. It is expected that more communities, organisations, and individuals will engage as the purpose becomes more well known.

**Q: How long do the particles from Wildfires stay in the air?**

A: The fine particles behave more like a gas, so they can stay in the air for quite a while. They'll disperse and get diluted away from the source, so they don't just settle.

The impacts of wildfires are significant, and the pollutants emitted from the fires are harmful. Wildfires have the same impacts on the environment as pollutants that come out of car exhausts.

Community awareness and understanding is key, especially as we are likely to see an increase in wildfires due to climate change.

## HELPFUL LINKS

- Wales Safer Communities Network website – [Safer Communities for Wales - Wales Safer Communities](#)
- Sign up to receive the Wales Safer Communities Network fortnightly newsletter, BRIFF, by emailing [safercommunities@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:safercommunities@wlga.gov.uk)
- Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services website – [Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service \(mawwfire.gov.uk\)](#)
- Healthy Hillside Project – [Healthy Hillside - South Wales Fire and Rescue Service \(southwales-fire.gov.uk\)](#)
- Natural Resources Wales website – [Natural Resources Wales](#)
- Forest Research – [Wildfires in Wales - Final Report](#)  
*Final report from this project that sought to characterise and understand the problem of wildfires in the South Wales Valleys region and to offer recommendations for appropriate management and policy responses. May 2011.*