



## 11<sup>th</sup> National Training and Development Weekend Eastbourne

Hosted by East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

### Facing the Future Together

NWFS Chair Mani Gilbert-King opened the proceedings and welcomed 75 delegates representing Police and Fire & Rescue services, from as far afield as Tyne & Wear, South Yorkshire and Devon & Somerset.

*“I felt energised,  
enthused and challenged  
by this event”*

The focus for day one involved inspirational leaders talking about their journeys, the challenges, in particular what motivated and spurred them on. In keynote addresses from Ann Millington (CEO Kent) and Susan Johnson (CEO Durham & Darlington) both shared their personal career experiences. The audience was moved by the honesty and openness of the speakers, their willingness to share, and their desire to inspire others to follow.

Dawn Harding (DCFO Northants) talked of the importance of mentors and coaches in helping to find the right path. Liz Aitken (ACO) and Becci Bryant (AM) discussed their experiences of the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) and Gill Donnell shared her journey through the Police service.

Des Prichard (CFO) spoke of his personal experience, during and after the Marlie Farm incident in which two members of ESFRS lost their lives. It was an open and honest insight into leadership during difficult and traumatic times. He talked about the need for self awareness, as well as resilience.

*“Very full and  
informative throughout  
both days...all positive.  
Thanks so much.”*

Cheryl Rolph (ACO ESFRS) and Dany Cotton (DAC LFB) both stressed the importance of networking, emphasising the difference it makes to have the support and encouragement from like minded people.

Sharon Jakeman of ESFRS, spoke of her amazing ability to hold herself back, and the internal battle it took to allow herself to work towards realising her own potential.

Alex Johnson (GM Derbys FRS) focussed on self belief, and the need to have confidence in your own abilities, and not to be held back by self imposed barriers.

On Saturday evening Mary Keightley, of Mind Associates Limited, gave a different perspective on “Formidable Women” and guidance on the journey to the top. Her lively and challenging presentation gave delegates more food for thought.

*“fantastic to both share  
experiences and learn  
new skills in a  
supportive and non-  
pressured environment”*

The NWFS Annual Awards presentations took place at the close of the evening. Christine Svenson, Regional Representative for NWFS in the NE Region for many years, was presented with an award, as was Stuart Irwin of Buckinghamshire FRS & FSSAA, awarded for his contribution to Women’s Fire Service Rugby (see awards page for full details and citations).

*“Loved it, full of inspiration. Empowering”*

Day 2 and it was over to the delegates to lead the way. At Maresfield Training Centre, there were RTC exercises and hot fire scenarios to contend with. One group of delegates, from a variety of backgrounds and roles, took up the Incident Command challenge, working in syndicates, they dealt with tactical decision making scenarios and simulated incidents. All the delegates had an opportunity to attend a presentation on the outcomes and learning points from the Marlie Farm investigation.

Also at Maresfield a group of 12 young women, currently on the Public Services course, took part in an exciting Fire Service taster days' experience, including operating fire extinguishers and team building exercises.

Meanwhile the delegates at HQ took part in classroom based seminars, such as Communicating with Confidence, led by Annie Broadbent of MeActually, an insight into Neuro Linguistic Programming with Debra Wood of Sussex Police, and the Value of Mentoring by Dawn Harding of Northants.

Karen Beadle of West Sussex FRS, delivered a session on Healthy Hormones for a Healthy Career, which was very well received, as were Kelly Connolly's Pilates sessions.

At the close of the event the exhausted NWFS team felt it had been a very successful event, and this was confirmed by the delegates in their evaluations.

*“Thank you for your advice, support and inspiration”*

A huge vote of thanks must go to Des Prichard and all his team at ESFRS for supporting the event and making it such a wonderful success.