

# YFA News

April 2019



## The Young Firefighters Association

The Young Firefighters Association (YFA) helps 13-17 year olds to challenge themselves, make new friends, learn exciting firefighting skills and to help their communities. A lot of their time is spent on the training yard, practising firefighting drills, but they also get involved in plenty of other exciting and challenging activities. Whether these young people go on to become firefighters or not, they will undoubtedly learn a range of vital skills that will help them in their everyday lives.

This newsletter gives an overview of the activities of the last few months which have been undertaken by members of the YFA.



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## Droitwich YFA get Water Smart

Water safety training has helped to enable the YFFs to assist other people in distress or themselves if they fall in the water while trying to help. Following on from the River Wye session last year, there has been a follow-up pool-based exercise to reinforce the water safety lessons learned.



## Fun and team building

YFFs have enjoyed a couple of great days out as a reward for their hard work over the year. They went off-road mountain biking on some designed technical trails in the Forest of Dean and also enjoyed a team-building exercise at Laser Quest in Worcester.

## Playing a part in the community

Since our previous newsletter, Droitwich YFFs have been playing their part in the community. They paraded with other cadet forces at the Droitwich Remembrance Parade to show respect for and remember those who gave their lives in past and present conflicts. The YFFs also assisted Droitwich Lions at six Santa Sleigh events around the Droitwich area, collecting for various other charitable organisations.

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## Wash and shine for charities

Young Firefighters from Redditch spent a day with Redditch Blue Watch washing and shining cars and raised a fantastic total of £809, a big increase on last year's £600. The funds raised were split between The Fire Fighters Charity and the YFA, to help fund future projects.



Redditch Young Firefighters busy at the car wash

## Our Association

Our Redditch Young Firefighters have been quizzed on their attitude to the Association – with some interesting answers.

### Why did you join Young Firefighters?

Some came along for a trial evening, really enjoyed it and have come every week since, others have had family or friends who are members so they joined to. Most wanted to try something new. A few have always wanted to be firefighters so YFA is a good way of finding more about the job.

### What were you doing in your spare time before you joined?

Our YFA members have a wide range of other activities they take part in as well as committing to our weekly drill nights. Some swim, play rugby, football or hockey for local clubs. Others are members of dance or amateur dramatics clubs.

### What do you do at Young Firefighters?

We do lots of ladder, hose reel and breathing apparatus drills and are taught that safety is really important. It's great to have our own fire appliance and learn to use the same equipment as real firefighters. We also learn first aid and about different areas of the fire service.

We also do fundraising so that we can take part in other activities like camp. Taking part in the Astwood Bank Carnival is great. Bag packs and car washes are tiring but fun, too.

### What do you enjoy most?

We love the atmosphere within the unit and being part of the station. It's been nice to make new friends away

from school, getting to know them and working together during the drills. It's exciting when you hear the bells sound and the crew take the fire engine out on blue lights. BA and ladder drills are our favourite nights.

### What skills have you learnt?

We've learnt how to work properly as a team. The drills have helped us to improve our communications skills which is important to make sure drills are carried out safely. We're so much fitter and healthier because of the drills and activities.

YFA has also helped us realise that supporting the community makes a difference – last year some of our fundraising money went towards a local charity which helped to buy defibrillators.

### What is your Young Firefighters highlight so far?

One of the best days has been Passing Out Parade. It was very special to be able to show our parents and family the skills we had learned and celebrate with them afterwards.

We recently took part in a station exercise involving a bus accident. It was really exciting to be a casualty and see how the real firefighters tackle an incident, find casualties and treat them.

### How have the volunteer instructors helped develop you as a cadet?

They're passing on their skills and training to teach us how to use the proper equipment depending on the drill. The Instructors are very supportive and if you make a mistake they don't tell you off, but show you how to do it again properly. They've helped to boost our confidence and we're grateful that they want to give up their free time to teach us.

If you have any comments regarding this newsletter or would like to find out more, please visit [www.hwfire.org.uk/yfa](http://www.hwfire.org.uk/yfa)  
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