



**Members Meeting – 17 December 2024**  
**Fire Protection Association, London Road**  
**Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 0RH**

**In person:**

Terry McDermott (TMc) – NFSN, Ali Perry (AP) – BAFSA, Roger Brason (RBr) – SYFRS, Ritchie O’Connell (RO) – Welsh Rep, Toni Maddox (TM) – NFSN, Rajeev Rai – AIG, Tom Roche (FM Global), Dale Kinnersley(DK) – FPA, Alan Brinson (AB) – EFSN, Mark Fessenden (IFSA), Steve Brailey(SB) – Armstrong Priestley, Tom Kitchen (TK) – Nottinghamshire FRS

**Online:**

Richard Clark (RC) – NFCC, Nicholas Coleshill(NC) – BAFSA, Ronnie King(RK) – NFSN/APPG, Stephen Fellows (SF)- Hereford & Worcester FRS, David McClean(DM) -NFCC

**Apologies:**

Ian Cox – NFSN/BSA, Jonathan Dyson, NFCC/NYFRS, Rob Barber (RB) – NFSN/SFRS

**Welcome and Introduction – TMcD** – started the meeting and welcomed – Mark Fessenden (MF)-IFSA & Steve Brailey(SB) – Armstrong Priestley (new industry member of executive committee) to their first NFSN meeting.

1. Minutes and actions from last members meeting (TMcD)  
Minutes reviewed and MF discussed Global Sprinkler Saves, Common Voices (people who lost family to fire and support sprinklers and provide testimonials. Burn Foundation. Discussion of other organisations with useful information (Home Fire Coalition USA & Australia)  
**Action: TM to add links to NFSN website**
2. Finance update(TM)  
Warwickshire & Cornwall FRS decided not to renew membership in 2025 and Norfolk still deciding whether to continue membership. All 2024 memberships paid in full except Tyco which has been chased and PO received. Business Sprinkler Alliance has once again provided a £3,000 donation (invoiced and received) as in previous years and in addition have agreed a further £5,000 towards the Optimal Research project which has been invoiced but not yet received. 2024 was first year NFSN has income has exceeded costs.  
  
TM also requested suggestions on what to put on website – (RO) suggested something similar to Ask Joe (Ask Ronnie?) on website.  
**Action: TM to collect suggestions and work with IFSA on website.**
3. Parliamentary Business/ All Party Group report (RK) – via teams

Report attached.

Discussion that Official Response to Grenfell is due out by end of March and next NFSN meeting should be near that time to discuss. Dates discussed and 18 March was most suitable date. If report not out by then a teams meeting will be assemble to discuss response.

Action: RB/TM – to contact John Blackwood to discuss having meeting in Glasgow in March once confirmed ask AP to contact Scottish FRS to host meeting.

#### 4. Sprinkler Saves Update (NC) -via teams

Full report attached. Fire in Nottingham covered in report and Tom Kitchen from NFRS in attendance to discuss. [Nottingham Sprinkler Save](#)

Action – TM to get further details from TK and TMc to contact TK to do a presentation  
Comments to Nick's

DM – NFCC has updated their sprinkler statement this year [NFCC Fire Suppression Policy](#), he emphasised importance on government leadership to encourage use of sprinklers, sprinklers week, importance of RK work with APPG.

DM offered NC NFCC's assistance with Sprinkler Saves

TMc to set up meeting with Dave Russell and NC

TMc discussed that there is not enough support of Sprinkler Saves. That some FRS have support from Local Authorities that match funding – South Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and how that information can be shared with other FRS's

(RC) Thinks should be a focus to mandate builders to install sprinklers as they won't do it without a specific requirement. How to communicate to the correct people within the services what information is important to report to sprinkler saves. Every fire a failure, how to promote sprinklers, key performance indicators.

(DM) Communication important but changing government attitudes more important.

(SB) Important to let public know about sprinkler safety and disseminate information outside of the usual channels maybe through social media?

(MF) discussed 10 year study in US that there was no appreciable increase in the use of fire sprinklers over other fire detection in the public perception.

#### 5. Update from Tom Roche – Report attached

Alex Norris MP replaced Rushanara Ali (Building Safety - MHCLG), update on Dagenham (not salvageable - being torn down), Cannock (still rusting hulk).

Government wanted industry to self regulate and since Grenfell has been push back for government to be responsible for regulations. Mobility challenges in Grenfell highlighted that safe egress should be available for all.

Necessity of clarity – disjoint between guidance and regulations. Highlighted the importance of licensing and regulation and accountability. There is a need for professional standards and competence in the building industry. Current structure too complicated to effectively carry out. Confusion between government and public who is responsible.

Discussion on remedial cladding – Angela Rayner review of regulations – not changing just being made more clear. TR thinks government needs to take responsibility, failed in primary duty to make public safe.

Positive outcomes: Northern Ireland has amended their building regulations to come into line with Scotland and Wales requiring sprinklers in residential buildings over 11 meters, care homes and student accommodations and have included in their guidance that warehouses must be sprinklered.

Importance of education when sprinklers are in place. Framework for communication when sprinklers are turned off during building/maintenance, reinstating a sprinkler system after a fire, responsibility of maintenance and inspection of systems.

Discussion on schools which was further discussed in TMc report on Optimal Research project.

Inquiry will not discuss sprinklers, if you are going to assist vulnerable people, they need more time to vacate building which makes a good case for sprinklers.

(SB) Comment on Competence (need skilled people to look at new builds) and Capacity (for new homes, remediation & repair) and how to train and prepare people on their responsibilities.

6. Lunch

7. Research with Optimal economics (TMc)

Hi Terry I have notes but you can just stick your notes in here

Action: TR to provide statistics to TMc – completed see below

As discussed, I looked at the figures for Schools and fire alarms as reported in the Other Building Dataset that Edith is using for the same period.

For Primary Schools this indicated 3749 fire incidents. 406 incidents are recorded as the alarm was absent (10.8% of incidents) . 1625 incidents were reported as the fire alarm was present and did raise an alarm (43.3% of incidents)

For Secondary Schools this indicated 2183 fire incidents. 208 incidents are recorded as the alarm was absent (9.5% of incidents) . 542 incidents were reported as the fire alarm was present and did raise an alarm (24.8% of incidents)

On the fire frequency items I came to the following:

Based on a service life of 60 years at 1.4% chance per year for a primary school it would have a 57% chance of a fire during its service life. At 4% chance per year for a secondary school it would have a 91% chance of a fire during its service life. This does not mean a fire that will burn it down but just a fire incident that requires the FRS attendance.

8. NFCC Update (RC)

NFCC 9991 guidance has been published, building height for sprinklers reduced to 11 meters, advice on care homes – more stringent requirements for egress. Discussed 8700 – Sprinklers in timber structures, 9980 Fire Assessment and external wall structures. Also mandating provision for people who can't use stairs, emergency evacuation – not rescue, window of opportunity to use sprinklers as people are less likely to need to egress if sprinklers in place. Government wants FRSs to pick up slack without consulting them. NFCC published article on Luton Car park - link at the end.

9. Group Updates

(RO) – Discussed Specified Attachments (ie awnings)

(AP) – Update on Cameron House Fire – remind Scottish government that traditional buildings can't be retrofitted they can't be used as a hotel. Discussion of courses in the pipeline from BAFSA.

Action – get link to consultation from AP and link to 9991 seminar

(AB) – Discussed EFSN conference in Salzburg, 2 – 3 April 2025, BS EN 12845

(RR) – Importance of sharing information with local authorities, grey area on how losses are reported with or without contents in gathering data.

(DK) – Discussed BS EN 12845, Currently no guidance on how to sprinkler a warehouse, used to be up to insurance companies – no standardisation.

#### 10. Members updates

(TK) – Notts FRS had 3 submissions to Sprinkler saves this year and in past years used to be 1. Notts has procedures for AFSS training and how they are promoting sprinkler saves within the organisation.

Action – TM to get further information from TK on processes to help other FRSs

Nb – Tom has provided the information which will be available on the website

#### 11. Future events

Next meeting – 18 March, Glasgow tbc

#### 12. AOB

(MF) – IFSA has offered further support for NFSN's efforts, the deadline for grant submission's is 31 December. Discussed the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition Sprinkler Week is 19 – 25 May 2025.

Action – TMc to complete and submit grant request by 31 December

Nb – submitted and presented at a meeting

#### 13. Tour of The Fire Protection Laboratory

Links to websites suggested in meeting:

[Sprinkler Saves UK](#)

[London Luton Car Park Fire](#)

[Grenfell Inquiry Article](#)

[Mass Timber Experiments](#)

[Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition USA](#)

[Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition Australia](#)

[Sprinkler Saves USA](#)

[Common Voices - People who have suffered losses due to fire](#)