



**Derbyshire**  
Fire & Rescue Service  
Making Derbyshire Safer Together



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## | Press Release

Press release from **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service** and **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority**

**Making Derbyshire Safer Together**

**17 JUNE 2020**

### **DERBYSHIRE FIREFIGHTER NAMED WOMAN FIREFIGHTER RISING STAR**

Danielle Heathcote, an On-Call Firefighter for Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service (DFRS) has been named 'Woman Firefighter Rising Star' in the Women in the Fire Service (WFS) Awards 2020 and runner up in the 'Bright Light' category.

Dani, who joined DFRS in 2017 as an On-Call Firefighter at Wirksworth Fire Station, was nominated in both categories for the remarkable contribution she has made to the development, encouragement and reinforcement of women's role in the fire and rescue service.

Derbyshire's Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Gavin Tomlinson said: "The Service is incredibly proud that Dani has been honoured by Women in the Fire Service and awarded 'Women Firefighter Rising Star'.

"Dani is truly an inspirational, positive role model for anyone wanting to become a Firefighter. She has attended over 100 community engagement events sharing her own story and journey to becoming a Firefighter and has been instrumental in supporting several females who have successfully gone on to join the Service.

"Dani has become a positive role model to Firefighters of the future too. On hearing that a young girl had said she couldn't become a firefighter as it was only for boys, Dani arranged to take the fire engine to her pre-school and show that girls can and do become Firefighters. Dani also regularly supports the Service's inclusion and diversity teams at positive action events at schools, colleges and careers events, being a visible role model, showing that a 5 foot 1, single mother can become a Firefighter.

In addition to the work to promote equality and women in the fire service, Dani is also a Mind Blue Light Champion for the Service, giving her time to support colleague's mental health and wellbeing.

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Gavin Tomlinson MBA MIFireE  
Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive



Speaking on notification of her award, Dani said: “I feel honoured to have been awarded the WFS Women Firefighter Rising Star and I hope that this achievement will show other women that if they really want a career as a Firefighter, with hard work and determination they can achieve it.

“I’d wanted to be a Firefighter since I was 17 but at the time thought I was too young to apply. In 2017 I finally realised that ambition after seeing an advert for on-call Firefighters at my local station. I’m now really excited to say that three years on and I’ve recently been successful in my application to become a wholetime Firefighter for the Service.

“Like my award, I hope that my fire service career to date and that of the other 50 inspirational female Firefighters in Derbyshire, will continue to inspire others, showing that no matter who you are you can become a Firefighter.”

You can read more about Dani at <https://www.derbys-fire.gov.uk/news/blogs/our-blog/danielle-heathcote-working-mum-and-on-call-firefighter>

## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

## **ABOUT WOMEN IN THE FIRE SERVICE UK [www.wfs.org.uk](http://www.wfs.org.uk)**

Established as a self-help group WFS UK is a volunteer-led non-profit organisation managed by a board and an elected national committee of women fire professionals. We specialise in delivering training and development events aimed at women. These events are opportunities to network, learn new skills, and mix with peers from all areas across the service. We provide information and advice to women who are contemplating a career in the fire service, speak in schools and careers fairs and at fire and rescue service equality, diversity and inclusion events. We have links to other women’s professional networks and promote the fire and rescue service as an employer of choice.

- There was a total of 54 nominations across 7 categories
- 6 nominations in the Young Persons role model
- There were 16 nominations in the Bright Light category
- 10 nominations in the Men as Allies category
- 9 nominations in the Woman FF Rising Star category
- 11 nominations in the Dany Cotton Inspiring Leader category
- 1 nomination in the Event Champion category
- Joint nomination in the Corporate Star category
- 3 Chief Fire Officers were nominated
- 3 men were nominated outside of the Men as Allies category
- Nominations from 19 FRS, 1 x charity and 2 from other backgrounds.

**ENDS**