

Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service:

HELPING to conserve the environment is a major priority for Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and in a bid to promote this and good practice within the service, two fire officers have been taking part in a trial training scheme.

The scheme has been run by EMS (Environmental Monitoring Solutions Ltd), and the NVQ level 3 course taken by the two officers has covered environmental management practices, waste management and health and safety requirements.

Group Manager Sean Wells is the first Derbyshire fire officer to complete the course.

He said: "I really enjoyed the course as I have both a personal interest in these issues and a professional interest.

Helping to conserve the environment is a key element for our fire service.

It is in everyone's interest to reduce waste and re-use materials where possible and to conserve energy by switching-off power supplies when we don't need to use them. During my career, I have fought several fires in our moorland areas and have a great interest in preserving the flora and fauna.

This course helped me to take a structured look at how best to proceed in fulfilling these and other aims." Sean studied nine modules working with EMS trainer Chris Houghton for two hours at a time. He added: "The beauty of the course is that it is candidate led, so how much you do and when you do it is up to you. There are a number of levels and it may prove beneficial in the future for us as a fire service to look at some of the modules in different levels with a view to recommending the NVQs to others within the service.

Obviously you have to produce a portfolio and your work is supervised and accredited before you can obtain a qualification."

Chris Houghton of EMS said: "I believe the training programme has allowed officers to get an overall view of the fire service's environmental performance, and as a result there should be great strides towards achieving many of their corporate objectives. This training meant not only accrediting their competence in key areas such as promoting, monitoring and maintaining health, safety and security but also crucially included optional modules that encourage and involve people in community recycling."