

# FBU RECRUITMENT PRESENTATION SUGGESTED SCRIPT

THE NATIONAL PRESENTATION FOR RECRUITMENT

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**SAFER  
STRONGER  
TOGETHER**

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# WELCOME

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# LIST OF SLIDES

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# SCRIPT AND PRESENTATION NOTES

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*NOTE: All references to 'firefighters' also means firefighters control. However, you may wish to amend this if necessary. Any reference to 'watch' also comes with a 'station' option to ensure the presentation is suitable for all recruit courses i.e. wholetime/RDS. All areas in red can be amended to personalize the presentation.*

*Areas marked 'Note' give you advice regarding the purpose of the slides.*

*Instructions are in bold and underlined. The word 'click' indicates when the slides or animations should be moved on.*

# **SLIDE 1**

# **SAFER STRONGER**

# **TOGETHER**

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# SAFER STRONGER TOGETHER

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01/08/19

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*Note: Put the first slide up entitled 'Safer Stronger Together'. Leave it there and then introduce yourself using the text below. These initial paragraphs are designed to connect the Fire Service and the Union.*

*We stress teamwork as a means to understanding solidarity.*

*We are one service and one union.*



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## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Hi everyone, my name is **John Smith** and I'm a **crew manager at Norbiton** Fire station. I'm also one of the reps for the Fire Brigades Union in our Fire & Rescue Service.

I want to start by personally welcoming you to our profession. I've been a serving firefighter for **nine years** and I can tell you it's the best job in the world. In fact, its more than a job; you can be proud that you're about to undertake a unique career in a remarkable, lifesaving profession.

After your training, when you join us on a **watch/station**, you'll be part of a team – and for firefighters, teamwork is everything. Our job relies on us working together, as a team, to resolve what can be life threatening situations. So, in our **watches/crews** we work together, train together and even socialise together. We may never know what the next shout will bring, but we always know that by working together, we can face any situation and resolve any emergency.

It's a fantastic job and welcome to it.

I want to start this presentation by building on the theme of teamwork. Because, as firefighters and members of the Fire Brigades Union, we are all part of another team, the firefighter's union team. And above all else, this team has one vital aim – we always look out for, and after, each other.

You may hear from several competing voices this week, but be in no doubt, there is only one body speaking out for firefighters and firefighters control in the fire service – and that is the Fire Brigades Union.

The FBU was formed over 100 years ago to be the UK's firefighting union and we are by far the biggest and most effective professional union within the Fire Service. The FBU represents the vast majority of firefighters and firefighters control across every service in the UK, from the newest of trainees to the most senior of officers. This includes some Chief Fire Officers who we count as members!

In the FBU, you're a member of a union with a proud history and a unique identity, in fact in many ways we are far more than just a trade union, because for over 100 years the FBU has been part of the DNA of the Fire Service – building it from the old 'fire brigades' model to the modern all encompassing Fire & Rescue Service of the 21st century. Through all that time, generations of firefighters have built our union and made it as important a part of being a firefighter as wearing the uniform.

But, don't just take it from me – let's hear what one of our members, David Badillo, has to say about what it's like to be a firefighter and – importantly – why we all need to be in the FBU:



# SLIDE 2

## VIDEO

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Note: This is a high definition, professionally shot film. Make sure that you have the screen and set up to do it justice. It is most effective when you darken the room and have a large screen. Also, make sure the volume is turned up – the impact of David's words is as powerful as the visual impact.

Click and let the video play



# SLIDE 3

# MEMBERSHIP

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When the film ends click onto slide 3 and pause. The slide will say ‘Membership’ and a map of the UK will appear. Leave this in place.



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

I’m sure you’ll agree that’s a powerful film and I want to stress to you, that it wasn’t scripted in any way. All we did was send a camera crew down to David’s station and record what he had to say.

Now, I talked earlier about the role of the FBU as the professional voice of firefighters and our fundamental place in the Fire & Rescue Service. I also said the FBU represents the overwhelming majority of firefighters, – now let me prove it:

Click – The word ‘FOA’ will appear and the figure of 1,098 will appear. A series of grey dots will appear on the UK map.



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Here’s the declared membership of an ‘association’ called the Fire Officers Association; this equates to 1,098 members UK wide. They may approach you and try and get you to join them, so bear that number in mind.

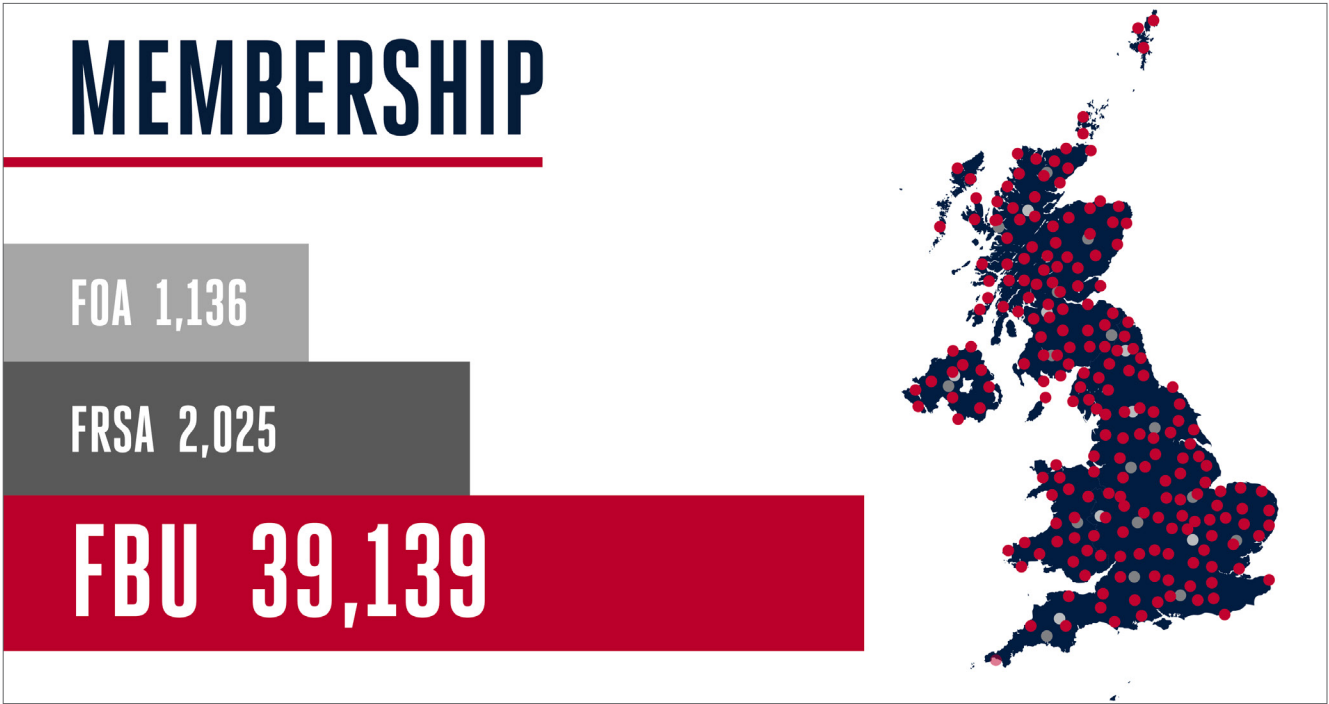
Click – The work ‘FRSA’ will appear and the number 1,986 will appear. Another series of grey dots will be added to the UK map.



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Now let’s add the declared membership of another ‘association’ the Fire and Rescue Services association, this equates to 1,986 members UK wide. Again, they may approach you and try and get you to join them, so bear that number in mind as well.

Click – the word ‘FBU’ will appear and the number 32,697 will appear. A much larger number of red dots will cover the UK map.



### SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Now let’s look at the Fire Brigades Union, 32,697 members UK Wide (or across the UK), that’s what makes your voice heard!

As you can see, the Fire Brigades Union is THE professional voice of firefighters. We represent the overwhelming majority of all firefighters, (wholetime and retained), as well as firefighters control and fire service officers across all areas of the UK. You can only join one union so remember; the combined membership of the other two associations is less than a tenth of the Fire Brigades Union.

Note: The figures come from the declared return published by the certification officer in 2018. They are therefore independent. In matter of fact, the figures of the FRSA and FOA may also include retired or ‘out of trade’ members (this is not declared in their returns). The FBU figure is only of serving members. This means the overall difference may actually be even higher than the slide shows. However, as this could not be evidenced, it was decided to represent the slide in a manner which cannot be challenged.



# **SLIDE 4**

## **WHY JOIN THE FBU**

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Click – A red slide with a group of FBU members will appear. The words ‘Why join the Fire Brigades Union’ will appear behind them.



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

But so much for size, Let’s get down to business!

I’ve talked about the fundamental role that the FBU has established across the UK Fire & Rescue Service, I’ve also talked about the reputation that the union has as the ‘professional voice of firefighters’ and our collective strength – which is drawn from the overwhelming numbers of firefighters and firefighters control members who are part of the FBU. But I want to be clear – in the Fire Brigades Union we never take any member for granted. We value the contribution of every single individual and continually develop our services to make sure you get the assistance you need.

So, let’s look at what you receive as a valued member of the FBU:

# SLIDE 5

## SAFER

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Click – A white slide will appear and the word ‘Safer’ will appear in red. Talk over the word with these points:



**SAFER**

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## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

**SAFER** – As I’ve said, you’ve joined a remarkable, exciting and fulfilling profession – but it can also be a dangerous one. The very nature of our work means that we run towards situations that other people are running away from. To do this, you don’t just need courage – you need the skills, knowledge and tools which make you a professional firefighter – and in the FBU you have the assurance of being a member of a union with the experience and commitment to make sure you get them throughout your career.

We have a proven record of fighting to keep our members safe:

- The breathing apparatus procedures we use as modern firefighters were developed and won by the Fire Brigades Union – they have saved countless lives since their implementation;
- The flame-resistant leggings and tunics we wear as modern firefighters were fought for and won by the Fire Brigades Union – previously, firefighters were forced to wear plastic leggings that melted on their legs;
- The dry suits and life jackets we wear as modern firefighters in flood situations were fought for and won by the Fire Brigades Union – previously, firefighters had to wear fire kit and tie lines around their waist, training time, critical attendance standards, fitness tests, rescue equipment, rest periods, standard tests – even the helmet you wear on your head – fought for by the Fire Brigades Union, the list literally goes on and on.

Safe systems of work are crucial in our profession and unionised workplaces like our fire stations, control rooms and training centres are proven to be safer workplaces. The FBU enables all our members to organise around key health and safety issues which improve our lives and keep us safer.

Click – and the word ‘safer’ will disappear from the screen and be replaced with ‘Stronger’. Talk over the word with these points:

**STRONGER**

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## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

**STRONGER** – Many new joiners with previous work experience comment on how good our terms and conditions are when compared against their previous place of work. That’s fantastic to hear, but let’s be absolutely clear why that is: Our Terms & Conditions were never just handed to us.

The reason we have good terms and conditions – and even more importantly, the reason why we KEEP them – is because we all stick together and speak with a strong, united voice through our union, the Fire Brigades Union.

The FBU is the only trade union within the Fire and Rescue Service that has campaigned and negotiated hard to get the best deal for our members. It’s also the only union in the Fire & Rescue Service to stand up effectively for firefighters and protect them from the worst excesses of cuts and austerity. Today we are constantly fighting to protect these conditions, but also pushing for improvements where our members think they can be made.

We achieve all this, because the union gives us a strong and effective voice.

Click – and the word ‘stronger’ will disappear from the screen and be replaced with ‘together’. Talk over the word with these points:

# TOGETHER

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Our union is built around our members – the FBU is you, the key decisions in the union are made by you, at organised meetings in the workplace or through the ballot box – all our officials are elected by you, from local reps right up to the leaders of the union. The power in our union is held by our members, it always has been, and this ensures that every member has their say.

Working together in this way achieves the unity we need to make a real difference for us all.

## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Talking of **‘TOGETHER’** – There is a simple truth that, although self-evident, still warrants repeating: We are always stronger when we stand together.

Whether you’re dealing with an issue in the workplace or a difficulty encountered at an incident, facing a challenge alone can be insurmountable.

But – When we stand together, through our union, we protect each other and our profession, that’s why being in the union is so important.

The idea of standing together is a deeply held value for the FBU – and so is our democracy. We are committed to ensuring that every member has the ability to have their say. Hearing and understanding different perspectives gives us the diversity of thought and creativity we need to solve the problems we may face in the workplace.

# SLIDE 6

## ONE UNION

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Click – and a new slide will appear. The word ‘One Union’ will appear and so will a picture of a firefighter.

# ONE UNION



*Note: the aim of this slide is to show that the FBU represents everyone. We are not a ‘wholetime’ only union or a ‘firefighter’ only union. To show this, we will put up the four areas of membership and then give examples of what we have achieved for everyone. With each click an area of membership will come up. It is important that you don’t pause and speak to each area in isolation – this could create a sense of hierarchy, which is the opposite of what we are trying to achieve. Instead, on the trigger point, click four times and pause. This will bring up the words*

*‘Wholetime’ ‘Fire Control’ ‘Retained’ ‘Fire Service Officers’. Once this is done then begin to give the examples.*

## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Every person in the fire service is as important as everyone else. We may have different roles or work on different duty systems, but we are all part of the fire service family and need to work as a team to achieve our aims.



We are all one Service – so the FBU is One Union (CLICK)

ONE UNION

WHOLETIME

FIRE CONTROL

RETAINED / ON CALL

FIRE SERVICE OFFICERS



*Note: The words ‘One Union’ is the trigger, click four times to bring up the words ‘Wholetime’ ‘Fire Control’ ‘Retained’ ‘Fire Service Officers’. Then pause the slide.*

SUGGESTED SCRIPT

The Fire Brigades Union represent all areas of the fire & rescue service from fire control, fire service officers, wholetime and retained, bringing everyone together as one team, representing everyone in it – with one voice. Of course, some issues or problems may be specific to just one group. Where this happens, we will work specifically with this group to protect and support them, and to improve their working lives in the service. We have won many campaigns on behalf of different groups of members, including:

**For Firefighters** – There are many examples of achievements for fire fighters, including protecting duty systems and stopping dangerously long working hours, but a fundamental and really high-profile victory was achieved in regard to pensions. It may be hard to believe, but only a couple of years ago firefighters faced having their pensions stolen from them by the Government – literally being forced out of pension schemes that many of us had paid into for decades and planned our futures around. The FBU stood up for us and took on the Government, the only public sector trade union to do so, and through an incredible and determined campaign, took the Government to court and won on our behalf! A huge victory which brought home the importance of being in the FBU;

**Retained** – The Fire Brigades Union has fought tirelessly for firefighters on the retained/ on call duty system, winning crucial recognition in the early 2000’s that ‘a firefighter is a firefighter’ and cannot be treated any differently just because of the duty system they work. We’ve built on that victory over the years and won numerous victories for retained members, including landmark legal victories to achieve equal pay, holiday pay, minimum pay and crucially pensions.



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**Firefighters/Control** – We won a change of title, ‘Firefighter Control’ in recognition that our emergency fire controls should never be considered as ‘call centres’ but instead be recognised as a vital and lifesaving part of the firefighter family. Firefighter control members are integral to the fire & rescue service and therefore to the Fire Brigades Union. We have fought on behalf of our control members, winning determined campaigns to stop job losses through regionalisation, challenging failing systems, increasing pay and introducing key workplace policies such as maternity, rest time, working hours etc

**Officers** – In the view of the FBU, one of the reasons why our Fire & Rescue Service is the best in the world is because it’s led by people who started their career as firefighters. This means that fire service officers have a level of knowledge and understanding of our job that is second to none. They’ve experienced what the people they are leading have experienced, they’ve learned their trade and understand the importance of teamwork, policy and safe working procedures. One of the many strengths of our union is that the majority of fire service officers joined the FBU when they first became firefighters and have stayed in the union ever since. We are proud to represent our officer members and have fought and won many key campaigns for them including fair promotion practices, pay protection across all the many pay points, lone working policies for when they are detached from the station and many more.

I hope this makes clear our determination to maintain a strong, united union which represents everyone in the fire service – Supporting and representing all members on all duty systems – One service, one union, one strong voice for the fire & rescue service.

# SLIDE 7

## BENEFITS

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Click – and a new slide will appear. The word ‘benefits’ will appear alongside a picture of a firefighter.



*Note: the aim of this slide is to highlight some of the personal benefits that being a union member will bring to the individual. It is balanced between workplace and personal benefits.*

Click – and the words ‘Help & Support’ will appear



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Your employer may intend to be fair and responsible, but sometimes problems do arise. This is where advice, support and representation from fully trained FBU Officials can pay off. We are experts in helping you to raise problems and supporting you through the process to resolve them. This may be on an informal basis, or where it's needed, through the more formal grievance process. Either way, if you need help then the FBU is there to support you and help resolve it.

This job is probably unlike anything you have ever been in before. Ours is a uniformed service with strict discipline codes that start the day you join. Nobody sets out to fall foul of the discipline code but it does happen and this is when you really need the expertise of the union to help you through it. We regularly represent and support trainees within the first few weeks of service, so it's important that you have the peace of mind which FBU membership brings from day 1.

Even the most self-resilient person can have an accident, fall ill, be disciplined or have a grievance. Join today and be protected from today. If you wait to join after the event, we may not be able to help you.

Click – and the words ‘Education & Learning’ will appear on the list

# BENEFITS

- HELP & SUPPORT
- EDUCATION & LEARNING



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

We are passionate about education in the Fire Brigades Union.

The union believes that learning should be a lifelong journey and we aim to help members to achieve their full potential at work and in their communities.

The FBU National Education programme delivers courses for branch, brigade and regional reps to assist them in their work for the union - helping to ensure that our officials are fully trained to deal with members’ issues in a capable and efficient manner. Reps are able to follow a clear education pathway and achieve accreditation for their courses ensuring they are best equipped to support their members.

Click – and the words ‘Health & Safety’ Representation will appear on the list

# BENEFITS

- HELP & SUPPORT
- EDUCATION & LEARNING
- HEALTH & SAFETY



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

In our job, we need to make sure that safety is prioritised in the workplace and beyond. The hazards that our members face are wide and varied – but they happen on a daily basis and, as a union, we are committed to making sure your safety is prioritised. The FBU have specially trained experts to make sure that hazards are anticipated, and systems of work are developed to keep our members as safe as possible. It’s part of our pact with members to make their safety a number one priority.

Click – and the word ‘Equality’ will appear on the list

# BENEFITS

- HELP & SUPPORT
- EDUCATION & LEARNING
- HEALTH & SAFETY
- EQUALITY



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

The Fire Brigades Union are recognised leaders of equality within the Fire & Rescue Service. We are passionate about ensuring that the fire service reflects the communities we serve and that every member can achieve their goals and potential, regardless of their background or any individual difference.

We have set up special sections so that minority voices are properly represented and members can seek specialist support and advice. These sections, representing women members, B&EMM members and LGBT+ members, can be accessed confidentially and are powerful advocates for equality in our profession.



Click – and the words ‘Offers & Discounts’ will appear on the screen



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Being a member of the FBU can offer you savings in a whole host of areas, which can easily offset your subscription.

We have negotiated savings and rewards to help union members and their families throughout their everyday lives. Some of the many benefits that FBU members can access include exclusive discounts of up to 30% on brand new cars, discounts on insurances and energy saving schemes.

You can also join the Rewards for Rescue Scheme and receive discounts on shopping, cinema tickets, attraction tickets and much more.

You will also receive regular copies of Firefighter Magazine delivered to your home, which presents news and features on issues affecting members throughout the service as well as international reports, health and safety, legal advice and general features.



# SLIDE 8

## PROTECTION

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Click – and a new slide will appear. The word ‘Protection’ will appear on the screen

# PROTECTION



*Note: The aim of this slide is to reinforce the most important membership of all – ‘Protection’. We will talk about our legal services and the accident & injury fund on this slide. Our research shows that these two services are the most important to new joiners – so we want to reinforce them. We will then highlight the impact of them by showing a short but powerful film which highlights them.*

## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

And now for the most important membership benefit of them all – The protection the Fire Brigades Union offers to you and your family at every turn – even in the worst of circumstances.

We’ve talked previously about how we look after each other by standing together, that’s a core value and means that we can support people in a whole number of ways. But there are times, especially in our profession, when firefighters and their families, also need the best possible support and advice from specialists in the legal profession.

Click – and the words “Legal Protection’ will appear on the slide



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Legal protection is a vital benefit of FBU membership. As a union, we make sure we engage the best possible solicitors for our members. The commercial, legal world is dominated by ‘no win no fee’ firms with bad reputations for service and even worse reputations for delivering. In our profession, such firms are of no use to us.

Instead, the interests of Fire Brigades Union members and their families are protected by a set of specialist solicitors, called Thompsons. They know our industry inside out and have a unique relationship and commitment to our members. Thompsons Solicitors are the UK's only law firm uniquely dedicated to trade unions and they have built a reputation for supporting and winning for firefighters which is second to none. We have worked with them over decades and they have built up a specialist knowledge of our industry – even sending lawyers to participate in hot fire training so that they understand the unique demands of firefighting. This commitment means that firefighters can trust them to deliver on your behalf. As an FBU member you will benefit from a comprehensive package of legal services which include:

As an FBU member you will benefit from a comprehensive package of legal services which include:

- Personal Injury at or away from work, on holiday or on the roads
- Serious injury, including brain and spinal cord injuries
- Industrial disease or illness
- Special terms for clinical negligence
- Employment law
- Criminal injury claims
- Free wills service, which allows you to generate a will online without submitting a paper application
- Special terms for Lasting Powers of Attorney, remortgaging and conveyancing and even Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) Claims

Because FBU members give 100%, we make sure you always get 100%.

FBU members using our legal service keep 100% of their compensation – whatever the injury and however complex the claim. By comparison, claims companies and high street law firms will take up to 25% of your damages.

Click – and the words ‘Accident & Injury Support’ will appear on the screen



## SUGGESTED SCRIPT

As firefighters, we know that despite all the safe systems of work, the nature of our job puts us at higher physical risk than others.

It's an urban myth that firefighters are always looked after. The truth is, when serious injuries, or worse, take place, firefighters and their families can be left facing massive financial difficulties.

To combat this, the FBU has set up a scheme unique to our members. It's called the Accident & Injury fund and its purpose is to support our injured members and the families of firefighters who are left behind. We first instigated it in world war two when the bodies of our members, killed whilst fighting fires in the blitz, were delivered to their widows in sacks on the back of a council truck!

Unlike an insurance policy the Accident and Injury Fund is run by the FBU solely for the benefit of FBU members. The fund is financed by members' contributions, and has handled more than £600,000 worth of claims by FBU members.

If the worst happens, your families are covered by a "Death Benefit" lump sum. This gives them the equivalent of a Wholetime Firefighters annual salary, payable upon the death of a member. In addition, 20% of a Wholetime Firefighter (competent) rate will also be paid for each dependent child left behind.

We go through our career hoping we will never have to access it, but it's reassuring to know that as an FBU member the fund is there should we or our families need it.

But it's all very well for me to say this to you in the comfort of a classroom. The truth is, there is never a more powerful way of getting a message across than hearing it direct from members and their families who have experienced it firsthand.

If you want to really understand the reality of our profession and the importance of being an FBU member – then let Rebecca and Andy tell you of it:

# SLIDE 9

## VIDEO

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## Click – Rebecca Williamson & Andy Adams Film



*Note: This is a high definition, professionally shot film. Make sure that you have the screen and set up to do it justice. It is most effective when you darken the room and have a large screen. Also, make sure the volume is turned up – the impact of Rebecca and Andy's words is as powerful as the visual impact.*

*When the film ends click onto slide 10 and pause. The slide will say 'Any questions'. Leave this in place.*

**SLIDE 10**  
**ANY QUESTIONS**

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Click



*Note: when questions are finished it is vital that you leave time for members to fill in the online joining portal and for you to help them with any areas they may need assistance with.*

## SCRIPT

Any Questions

## JOIN THE UNION

You should now ask all attendees to bring up the online joining portal on their mobile phone/ tablet. The process is designed to be quick, easy, and engaging.

There are videos on the portal which assist applicants to understand certain sections but, as they have seen the presentation, they shouldn't feel the need to view them.

Please talk them through the process, assisting where required. They will need their bank details handy to fill in the direct debit section.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Once the applicant submits the online joining form, an email will automatically be generated to the local FBU Brigade Organiser, Brigade Secretary and Brigade Chair.

These officials will then fulfil the proposer/seconder requirement by sending the email on to the membership department at Head Office. The department will then send a membership card to the new member and confirm that they are members of the FBU.

## AND FINALLY

WELL DONE! By signing up new members you are building our union, protecting our service and providing new colleagues with a future of protection, safety and unity which being a member of the Fire Brigades Union brings.

You've done a great job – THANK YOU!





**SAFER  
STRONGER  
TOGETHER**

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 [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk)

 [@fbunational](https://twitter.com/fbunational)

 [Fire Brigades Union](https://www.facebook.com/FireBrigadesUnion)

 [FBU national](https://www.youtube.com/FBUnational)

 [Fire Brigades Union](#)

 Sign up for the FBU's email bulletin [bit.ly/FBURCall](https://bit.ly/FBURCall)