

**Llantysilio Statement - Llantysilio Mountain Fire**

**Prepared on behalf of the Llantysilio Estate for the Denbighshire County Council's Communities Scrutiny Committee Meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

1. When the fire first took hold on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July it was felt that the fire brigade left site too early and that they should have stayed on site until the was properly contained as once the fire had been let into the bracken debris it was able to take hold rapidly from then on.
2. Why wasn't the fire hit hard right at the outset to stop it in its tracks as once it was allowed to develop it spread very rapidly.
3. Communication - there appeared to be a lack of communication between the change of fire commanders on site, many of whom were attending from far afield. I understand that a local farmer was on site for a substantial amount of time at the beginning and had to inform each commander of the directions and physically take them up to the mountain to give directions how to access the mountain, where to access the mountain and also show them the routes for water carriers etc.
4. Local farmers were not allowed to help. Some offered toppers to cut fire breaks but these offers were refused possibly on the grounds of causing damage to the SSSI. The cutting of firebreaks ahead of the fire front could have substantially mitigated the losses that actually occurred.
5. Training – It would appear that many of the fire fighters had little or no experience in dealing with mountain and heather fires. Training should be extended to include recognition of the difference types of ground vegetation including bracken, (green bracken does not indicate that it is wet) as instructions were given by the fire brigade not to damp down areas of green bracken on the grounds that they were "wet". Quite clearly in ignorance of the fact that there is always a substantial amount of dry bracken debris at ground level. Training should also extend to the use of the all-terrain vehicles in fully laden conditions to avoid the roll-overs that occurred.
6. The Llantysilio Estate would be agreeable to granting access.