

SPRING 2017

# In Attendance

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH FIREFIGHTER



Featuring On The Bell The Journal of the Emergency Services

# Retired fire engine put to work in Romania

A fire engine formerly based at Witheridge has been delivered to a remote part of Romania for use by its volunteer fire crew.

The appliance was used twice within three weeks of its delivery to extinguish serious fires in Carand, Arad County.

The charity Community Action Romania (CAR) purchased the appliance with help from the people at Tidcombe community church, Tiverton. Firefighters from Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service delivered the fire engine and provided training to the volunteer firefighters in Romania.

Firefighter Gelvin Williams, based at Tiverton Fire Station, who has been on a previous charity mission to Romania, was one of the crew who delivered the appliance. He said: "There had been a number of fires in the town and the response from the nearest fire service was more than 50 minutes, leaving devastating effects to the property and the community.

"Our focus was to prepare the volunteer firefighters with fire prevention knowledge and to deal with fires from the outside, not entering the risk area but reducing the risk of property loss and



prevent occupants taking life risks to save their own property.

"There are many people and organisations I need to thank for their help, guidance and support, especially my family for their support throughout and allowing me to miss yet another birthday, this time my partner Alison."



The training took place in 35-degree heat as Gelvin and Adam Edwards, based at Bampton, went through the process of using chimney rods and ladder drills with the help of an interpreter.

Safe Southwest helped provide personal protective equipment for the local volunteer firefighters and Firehawk supplied 300 carbon monoxide alarms for the local community.

*Pictured are fire authority member Cllr Brian Greenslade with Gelvin and Steve Gardner of Community Action Romania, just before their departure.*

*Also pictured are the fire engine in Romania and the team providing training to the volunteers in Romania on how to use the equipment on the fire appliance.*





**Front cover:**

Left to right: Councillor Nick Forbes and Watch Manager Dave Summers of Tyne & Wear FRS in the cage of the Brigade's new Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP).

Photograph courtesy Tyne and Wear FRS.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

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# Fireworld – The National Fire Museum and Heritage Centre

## Background

The Fire Services National Museum Trust (FSNMT) is a registered charity (No: 276571) originally founded in 1979 by a group of senior fire officers, fire service enthusiasts and engineers who all felt that the proud history and achievements of the British Fire Service over two centuries and more should be permanently recorded and marked at a national level.

This inaugural effort was endorsed by the Home Office, MPs, The Chief Fire Officers Association, British Fire Brigades and their fire authorities, and other professional bodies that represented the UK industry.

Today, the Trust cares in storage for over 45 historic fire engines from manually pumped versions from the 18th century, 19th century horse-drawn types, early motorised pumps from the 1900s, right through the dramatic Blitz years of World War II to more modern fire engines of the 1980s.

And that's not all by a long length of hose...

The Trust has over 8,000 separate items of firefighting and rescue equipment, uniforms, models, books, magazines and technical manuals, fire brigade badges, buttons and rank markings and a positive mountain of fire service administration, documentation and history going back two centuries and more.

## The Trust Objects

The basic objects of the Trust remain as in 1979 and are:



- **Instructional:** To demonstrate the evolution and development of firefighting and fire engineering.
- **Educational:** To display firefighting and rescue exhibits in such a way as to encourage the study of fire technology, including mechanical engineering, hydraulics, chemistry and physics.
- **Fire Safety:** To contribute to both children and adults the understanding of fire safety and the reduction of outbreaks of fire and its subsequent casualties.
- **Technical:** To display items and examples of outstanding technical and engineering interest.
- **Historical:** To preserve and maintain for practical display and re-enactment firefighting items of historical importance.
- **Recreational:** To provide a display of popular appeal to both Emergency Blue Light Service personnel and the public alike.



## Our Present Home at Weedon Depot

Since its founding, the Trust initially occupied two successive temporary sites in Grantham and Loughborough. The FSNMT and its embryonic *FireWorld* project for a National Fire Museum and Heritage Centre first arrived on the Grade II listed former Royal Ordnance Depot site at Weedon, Northamptonshire in 1996, not far from Jct 16 on the M1.

However, after a change of developer ownership and suffering multiple delays and procrastination within the planning process, Trustees decided in 2013 to investigate a re-location for the *FireWorld* project.

Following a considerable amount of detailed work, this aim is moving towards fruition with an alternative site in the South of England. Discussions are ongoing with local authorities and planners, together with outline design concepts of the new design and build, and funding for the project.

It is anticipated that given current progress in all these areas, an announcement should be made during the early summer months of 2017 of the confirmed location, which will allow a final determination of *FireWorld* and see the Trust's national collection open to the public at very long last.

[www.fireworld.btck.co.uk](http://www.fireworld.btck.co.uk)

[www.friends-of-fireworld.org](http://www.friends-of-fireworld.org)

# Editor's comment

In this editorial that coincides with the acquisition by a new publisher of *In Attendance*, I am pleased to mark a milestone in the history of the magazine and its future development under Jeremy Mills, its new owner, as the magazine of the British firefighter.

*In Attendance* was originally founded 30 years ago by Zane and Christine Bilail, the owners of Gateacre Press, who also at that time published several occasional individual fire brigade magazines.

Over a period of two decades and more, *In Attendance* became well-known as a quarterly journal that was circulated free to most Fire & Rescue Services in the United Kingdom carrying news and features of an operational, technical and social nature.

Over this period, Gateacre Press also produced a number of programmes at no cost for various fire station events on behalf of the then-Fire Services National Benevolent Fund, as well as for other fund-raising activities. In later years, *In Attendance* spawned the sister publication *On The Bell* which catered for Police and Ambulance Services.

Zane Bilail was quite well known by many in the uniformed services and companies around the wider fire industry. Zane frequented most annual exhibitions, sporting events, and various product launches. He and Christine

were true supporters and ambassadors of the blue light emergency services.

Sadly, Zane died in 2015 after a long illness, and his funeral in Liverpool was attended by uniformed representatives of many UK Fire & Rescue Services, accompanied by their colour parties, together with personnel from various Police Services and Ambulance Services.

I have every confidence that Jeremy Mills, the new publisher of *In Attendance* and *On The Bell*, will continue in the same mould.

One of the current safety issues facing the fire sector, not just in the UK but globally, is the unacceptably high number of fires of electrical origin.

In the UK, there are approximately 25,000 annual incidents in this category, a number of which have involved fatalities. As an international example, the United Arab Emirates also has a situation where fires of electrical origin form one of the most common causes of outbreaks, and there are similar instances in other countries.

In this edition of *In Attendance*, we report on the particularly urgent problem of fires occurring in some tumble dryers known to have a fault in their circuit boards. Although manufacturers are undertaking service recalls, it is reported that almost three million appliances are still awaiting



remedial action leaving them still with a serious risk of fire.

On Page 8 of this issue, we update readers on the major fire in 2016 that all but destroyed the National Trust's 18th century Clandon House mansion in Surrey and its priceless contents. Investigators soon found that the fire began in an electrical distribution board. The estimated fire loss was put in excess of £150 million.

Given that the introduction of smoke detectors into domestic dwellings some three decades ago had a very significant effect in reducing fire fatalities and other casualties and damage, it would seem that the large number of recorded fires of electrical origin do need to be urgently addressed with an application of an innovative solution to diminish this blot on the fire statistics landscape.

**Neil Wallington**

*Consultant Editor*

*In Attendance – The Magazine of the British Firefighter  
and On The Bell – The Journal Of The Emergency Services  
are circulated every quarter to Fire & Rescue, Police, and Ambulance Services  
throughout the United Kingdom.*

*We continue to welcome your Press Releases that can include reports  
of operational incidents, and news of new vehicles and equipment,  
new premises, training, personnel including appointments  
and retirements, fund raising, sporting and social events.*

*Please contact: 01484 534323*

*or visit: [www.inattendance.co.uk](http://www.inattendance.co.uk) or [www.onthebell.co.uk](http://www.onthebell.co.uk)*



# Fire Service and Dorset County Hospital launch Help You Home

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) is joining forces with Dorset County Hospital (DCH) and Dorset Adult & Community Social Care on a trial Safe and Well campaign called 'Help You Home'.

Working closely with the British Red Cross, 'Help You Home' builds upon their 'Support at Home' campaign by using DWFRS volunteers to help deliver the swift and safe discharge of patients from DCH to get them home, then providing support to allow them to return to independence.

The pilot scheme will work with three wards in the hospital and will include the patients being offered free Safe and Well checks from DWFRS.

If successful, the scheme is expected to be expanded across the hospital.

The level of support on offer ranges from helping patients home, to collecting prescriptions and daily visits to check they are able to cope at home and that they have a suitable amount of food in the house.



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE**

With a broad network of dedicated volunteers in and around Dorchester, DWFRS are perfectly placed to work alongside DCH and the British Red Cross by delivering this interim service, which includes patients being offered free Safe and Well checks by the Service.

Head of Prevention, Lorraine Hunt said: "We are very fortunate to have exceptional volunteers who dedicate their time to help DWFRS make a positive difference in our communities. This is one area where we know we can help to make a real difference at a personal level and within the wider health care system."

The service is free, flexible, strictly confidential, and is provided by skilled and trained volunteers all of whom have had an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

If you're interested in becoming a dedicated 'Help You Home' volunteer, or fulfilling a more traditional volunteer role for Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, please email: [volunteering@dwfire.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@dwfire.org.uk) or call us on 01722 691000.



A striking image that captures a powerful twin aerial attack during a 20 pump factory fire at Bradford. Photograph courtesy West Yorkshire FRs.



This Dubai Civil Defence 54m Magirus Aerial Ladder Platform pictured outside the iconic Fairmont Hotel underlines the growth of the annual three day Intersec Expo event in the Emirates which in January 2017 attracted a record 33,500 visitors from 129 countries. There were 143 British companies exhibiting in the fire sector, the biggest UK representation ever, with 86 in the British Pavilion.

# Vintage Fire Engine gets all wrapped up

Packexe Ltd, the world's leading supplier of innovative protection film products, was recently asked by the Bristol Aero Collection Trust to securely wrap a 1962 fire engine and a number of vintage aeroplanes as they make their way out of storage to be displayed for the first time at Aerospace Bristol.

Packexe® wrapped the vintage fire engine using the reusable Packexe® Fleece and Packexe® Glass & Glazing, from their self-adhesive protection film range, which is quick to install, leak-proof and slip-resistant, to protect it during transit.

CEO and founder of Packexe®, Andrew Orchard, says, "It was an honour for us to be invited to Aerospace Bristol and to help their team to protect a vintage 28 RHY for its next journey to a special display.

The engine is part of the history of Aerospace Bristol and we are delighted that it will be coming out of storage to



be appreciated. Packexe® self-adhesive protection film is a simple but specialist product that can be applied to unusually shaped objects with relative ease and so was perfect to cover the entire engine."

The engine, a Thorneycroft Airfield Crash Tender Registration 28 RHY, was built by Hampshire Car bodies in 1962 for the Bristol Aeroplane Company. Sporting a Rolls Royce B81 MK5Q engine, the 28 RHY has a Thorneycroft 'Nubian' six wheel drive chassis and gave firefighters 800 gallons of water capacity, 90 gallons of foam and 200lb of Co2.

Retired in 1990, the engine had an illustrious career at Filton attending the rollout of Concorde 002 in September 1968 and the Concorde's first flight in 1969 alongside general airfield use. In addition, the tender stood in for the local fire brigade to attend workplace and domestic fires when required.

The engine has been loaned indefinitely to the Bristol Aero Collection Trust and came with several manuals and Civil Aviation Authority training booklets which help curators get a picture of the Company fire brigade's duties and methods on a busy works airfield.

# London's Historic Fireboat Massey Shaw



The restored former London Fire Brigade Fireboat *Massey Shaw*, a veteran of three trips to the Dunkirk military evacuation of 1940 and subsequently the prolonged London Blitz, flying bomb and rocket years up to 1944. The vessel currently resides just off the Thames in London's Dockland.

Cared for by a dedicated group of marine enthusiasts, including ex LFB personnel, *Massey Shaw* is now a regular feature on London's river at charity and other events.

For more details see: [www.masseyshaw.org](http://www.masseyshaw.org).

# Clandon Park mansion fire

The 8th Earl of Onslow, the ancestral owner of Clandon Park in Surrey, has criticised the £30 million plan by the National Trust to rebuild the devastated remains of the historic Grade 1 listed Palladian mansion following the fire that swept through the building on 29th April 2015.

The fire destroyed 90% of the mansion's roof, floors and interior structure, together with irreplaceable artefacts including 18th Century furniture, paintings, porcelain and textiles, despite the heroic efforts of Surrey FRS crews and those from surrounding brigades.

Fortunately, firefighters managed to salvage some of the house's valuable contents as they removed paintings and carried antique furniture to safety onto the lawns of the mansion. Amongst other historic items salvaged included regimental colours from the Surrey Infantry Museum located at Clandon Park, although much of the Museum's collection of medals, uniforms and other military memorabilia were lost. Fire investigations subsequently revealed the likely cause of the fire to be an electrical fault.

The National Trust has recently announced a competition to choose the best design for the restoration of



Above: Clandon Park fire. Photo courtesy Paul Burgman.



Clandon Park. Architects have been invited to submit proposals to "restore and re-imagine" the 18th century mansion.

However, the Earl of Onslow, whose ancestors have lived in Clandon Park before leaving it to the National Trust in 1956, has disapproved of the plans saying that he fears the result would be a "suburban mock-Georgian monolith". He says that Clandon Park should be left in ruins as a sad reminder of its once-glorious past.

Left: some of the interior damage at Clandon Park. Photo courtesy The National Trust.



# MFERS launches new Kicks Football Plus programme with Liverpool FC Foundation



Football legend Gary McAllister paid a very special visit to Toxteth Fire Fit Hub as the Liverpool FC Foundation teamed up with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to deliver new practical and educational activities to local youngsters.

Kicks Football Plus is a new collaborative initiative between the club's official charity, the LFC Foundation, the Premier League and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service.

Through the use of football as an incentive, the scheme will provide a range of practical and education activities to participants to help encourage personal growth and development.

To celebrate the launch of the new programme, club ambassador McAllister attended the preview event at the Toxteth Fire Fit Hub, which showcased some of the activities that Kicks Football Plus will be offering to local youngsters.

Some of the sessions that will be delivered via Kicks Football Plus will include: emergency first aid, road safety, safe internet use, arson awareness and the dangers of knife crime.

Andrea Cooper, head of Liverpool FC Foundation, said: "I am delighted that

we have renewed and extended our partnership with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. I believe that by working collaboratively we can reach out to and engage with many more youngsters in the most deprived areas across the city and help tackle the key issues."

Phil Garrigan, Deputy Chief Fire Officer for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, added: "Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has a long and proud relationship with the LFC Foundation, where we have worked together to bring opportunities to young people from underprivileged backgrounds across Merseyside.

"Through diversionary events and workshops we have sought to engage young people to reduce their chances of succumbing to fire-related antisocial behaviour, either as perpetrators or victims, and to help build safer, stronger communities.

"We are delighted to be part of the Kicks Programme to encourage young people to build confidence, develop life skills, grow their self-esteem and hopefully progress towards further education or employment."



## Firefighters tow driftwood from River Mersey to New Brighton pirate ship



Driftwood turned to 'gift wood' when Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Marine Rescue Unit delivered a huge piece of wood to The Black Pearl pirate ship attraction in New Brighton, Wallasey.

The log was drifting in the River Mersey and posed a danger to ships and the MFERS Marine Fire One Rescue boat was deployed to remove it.

Instead of disposing of it the team thought it might make an excellent addition to The Black Pearl and towed it to Cosy Cove in New Brighton where the driftwood pirate ship sits proudly on the shore.

The pirates were very pleased with their new booty and are planning to use it as part of the attraction.

Iain Holgate, Team Leader at Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Marine Rescue Unit, said: "We have some good contacts at The Black Pearl and when we were tasked to remove the driftwood from the River Mersey we got in touch with the team at Cosy Cove as we thought it would make a perfect addition to the pirate ship.

"We were glad to be able to engage with the community in this way and happy to contribute to the famous Black Pearl."

# Dual role for Police and Firefighters

A “groundbreaking” collaboration between fire and police in Shropshire and Hereford and Worcester saw their first firefighter training course of Police Community Support Officers.

The initiative with West Mercia Police to train PCSOs as firefighters in more rural areas will help keep fire engines “on the run” says Shropshire’s fire chief.

Shropshire’s first Community Support Officers to become on-call firefighters, Andy Neeves and Steve Breese, and Kirsty Jenkins from Hereford and Worcester, ‘passed out’ at a ceremony at Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury and all three will now perform an emergency services dual role.

Andy (34), who walks and cycles around Oswestry town centre as a PCSO, has already responded to more than 60 emergency fire calls since he started his dual role with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service in March this year.



“Working together like this will benefit both services and save money. I don’t respond to a fire call if I’m dealing with a police incident but if I am able, then I go.”



L to R: Shropshire PCSOs Steve Breese and Andy Neeves, Rod Hammerton (CFO), Chief Inspector Adam Thomas (West Mercia Police), Area Commander John Pryce (Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service), PCSO Kirsty Jenkins (H & W) and Gareth Maddox (H & W).

A former Superdrug store manager in Shrewsbury, Andy now works for the police for 37 hours and is available on call for fire duties for up to 84 hours a week with firefighting colleagues based at Oswestry Fire Station.

“Training police Community Support Officers as firefighters is a groundbreaking approach and makes a lot of sense,” said Shropshire’s chief fire officer Rod Hammerton.

“It provides the fire and rescue service with firefighters where they are hardest to find and provides local communities with an additional layer of protection.

“It is difficult to attract firefighter recruits in some parts of Shropshire and it is sometimes a struggle to crew fire appliances, especially during weekdays. This innovative approach will help us tackle that issue,” added the fire chief.

“We are always on the lookout for capable people to become on-call firefighters. It just so happens that PCSOs hold many of the qualities we look for in a firefighter so I think this initiative is an excellent fit for us and the community,” he said.

Shropshire PCSO Steve Breese was presented with the top student award for his course.



Emergency services working together: Chief Inspector Adam Thomas (West Mercia Police) and Chief Fire Officer Rod Hammerton (right) with Shropshire PCSOs Steve Breese and Andy Neeves.

# Cutting performance: Theory versus Reality

## by Ian Dunbar, Holmatro

When it comes to assessing performance, we are generally predisposed to being impressed by big numbers. Whether this is the megapixels on our new camera, the top speed of our latest car or the screen size on the new TV; big numbers attract and hold our attention. We must, however, look beyond the headline digits, especially where it is only a theoretical figure. In this instance, I am referring to the maximum forces attributed to hydraulic rescue tools.

In another article I will look at hydraulic spreaders, but for now let's focus on cutters. The maximum cutting force is without doubt the first consideration for most people when it comes to choosing cutters and is generally at the heart of a purchasing decision. Of course, there are other considerations such as build quality, weight, ergonomics and other unique features but once the conversation regarding those has ceased, it always comes back to cutting force. The question here is: what is cutting force?

### Maximum theoretical cutting force

Here we go: maximum cutting force is 100% theoretical. This is because it is the result of a calculation relating to the cylinder (or piston) cross sectional area, multiplied by the pressure at which the tool works e.g. 720bar (10400psi). It is also important to understand that the maximum (theoretical) cutting force has nothing to do with the blade design, shape or geometry. Actually, if two identical cutters were placed side by side with one having standard blades and one having blades made out of wood, they would both have exactly the same maximum theoretical cutting force. So, you should now begin to understand that there is far more to the performance of hydraulic cutters than a theoretical calculation which results in a big number.

### Cutting performance

The real test of a cutter (or any hydraulic tool for that matter) is the actual performance. This can only ever be assessed with the tool in hand and on a late model vehicle. I have previously explained that although there are still



*There is more to cutting performance than a theoretical calculation resulting in a big number.*

many older vehicles on the road, the true test of modern hydraulic rescue equipment is their performance on new cars. It is only when a cutter is used on such vehicles that an assessment of its performance can be made. In use, its weight, ergonomics and blade geometry all become apparent. This because we hardly (if ever) use the tool at waist height in a neutral standing position; we mostly use them above or below waist height. Blade geometry has more of an impact than you may think. The blades are (of course) your point of contact with the vehicle; they will determine how effective the tool is at penetrating and surrounding cuts and they will influence any tool movement during the cutting process. Remember too that how the blades are mounted to the tool, i.e. inclined (see pictures below), may provide increased ergonomics and safety.



*Working with the Holmatro Inclined Cutter offers you increased ergonomics when cutting high or low on the car and more room between the tool and the car (read: patient!), e.g. when making a relief cut in the A pillar.*

### Residual capacity

It is also useful to actually assess how 'hard' the tool is working. This can be achieved by placing a pressure gauge between the pump and tool. This is important as it will give a visual indication of residual capacity. That is to say that if a cutter performs a cut on a modern-day

**"The best thing about knowledge is passing it on". Holmatro Rescue Consultant Ian Dunbar travels the world to train and exchange knowledge with rescuers from all nationalities.**



vehicle using only 50–60% capacity, it has lots of reserve capacity in the event of increased vehicle strength in the coming years.

### EN and NFPA norms

The other thing to keep in mind when looking at hydraulic rescue equipment is the norms which they conform to (EN and NFPA norms). These are industry tests which allow comparison to be made between manufacturers. These norms test hydraulic cutters on steel profiles such as round bar. I would urge you to ask yourself how relevant these tests are when considering the actual 'real world' use during vehicle extrication. Vehicle profiles are very different from round bar.

### Conclusion

It is very easy to be drawn to and impressed by big numbers and in many things in life it is very often what we look for when making a purchasing decision. However, having an understanding of the numbers sometimes attributed to hydraulic rescue tools, how they are calculated and their operational relevance (or lack of) will allow you to make a more informed decision, by focussing on 'real world' performance rather than any theoretical figure. Appreciating that the cutting tests performed for norms only rely on steel profiles rather than vehicle construction means that a real assessment of a cutter's performance can only be made by using it for its true purpose.

Put simply, whilst numbers are interesting, compared to actually using the tool, they do not really tell you a great deal at all.



# Fire service to help ambulance crews gain entry to properties

Hertfordshire's police, fire and ambulance services have signed a new agreement on forced entry to properties in medical emergencies.

Until now, when an ambulance crew couldn't gain access to a property they've called the police to help them break in. But now, in a six-month pilot, Hertfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service will take on that role, using their expertise and equipment to help paramedics get inside a locked property quickly.

Firefighters are well placed to carry out this role as they already have the skills as experience to gain entry to a property in an emergency and have the emergency medical training to assist ambulance crews treating a patient.

This new arrangement will also free up valuable police time. In the last year, the police responded to 272 requests to gain



entry to properties by the ambulance service.

Richard Thake, Cabinet Member for Community Safety at Hertfordshire County Council, said: "We're keen to see emergency services working more closely together and are always open to looking at ways of making our services better and more efficient.

"This is a great example of how our fire and rescue service can free up police time by using their expertise to help the ambulance service.

"Not only can our firefighters help paramedics get into a property quickly to help someone in need, they also have the emergency medical training to assist paramedics providing care for patients."

Chief Constable Charlie Hall said: "This marks the beginning of our desire to work more collaboratively with our blue light partners in order to deliver a more efficient and effective service to the public of Hertfordshire. There has been some really good partnership working over many years but this sets out our ambition to take things a stage further and work in a way which reduces demand on all our services by joining up the response

especially in relation to community safety. We are now working on the implementation of the MoU through the Herts Local Change Team."

Dave Fountain, Deputy Director of Service Delivery at East of England Ambulance Service, said: "This is an excellent example of our key blue light services working together as one; this new scheme will help all of the emergency services and fundamentally improve services to patients across Hertfordshire. This is one of many collaborative schemes we are currently work on, and moving forwards we all will continue to focus on the response and quality of services we are able to offer to our patients and everyone across our counties in the east of England."

The new arrangement has been welcomed by Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner David Lloyd, who said: "The Fire and Rescue service are the experts at entering properties in an emergency. It makes sense for them to provide this valuable service and help free up police officers at the same time.

"My new Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan is looking at way we can extend the level of cross-service working, and this is a wonderful example of something which will deliver a better service to Hertfordshire's residents."

The new agreement was signed by representatives from the three emergency services at a ceremony in Stevenage on 29 November. The pilot will run for six months until May.



an alternative location, located on the Hungerford Trading Estate.

Before work commences on the refurbishment, there will be several opportunities for the public to find out more about the project, as well as ask any questions. Further details on this will be published in due course.

Colin Dudley, Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority said: "We're delighted these plans have received the go ahead. This RBFRS initiative reflects our commitment to modernise our stations and embed them firmly at the heart of the communities that they serve alongside other organisations."

Andy Fry, Chief Fire Officer at RBFRS said: "As Berkshire's first tri-service station this is an exciting opportunity to strengthen our ongoing partnership with other emergency services to deliver even better, more efficient services to the people of Hungerford and the surrounding area."

Simon Dackombe, Strategic Planner at Thames Valley Police said: "Thames Valley Police are delighted to be part of this exciting project and look forward to operating from a more fit for purpose facility that is better suited to the needs and demands of modern policing within Hungerford. In delivering this new facility it enables TVP to dispose of the current Police Station, something which has been planned for some time."

Deputy Commander for West Berkshire Local Policing Area, Chief Inspector Lindsey Finch, said: "We're happy to be working closely with RBFRS to provide a neighbourhood office for our local officers in Hungerford. We remain committed to maintaining our police presence in Hungerford, and this new location at the heart of the local community will allow our officers to do this."

Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld said: "This project is an example of the strategic collaboration between the Thames Valley Police and the three Fire and Rescue Services of the Thames Valley, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed last year. This efficient further collaboration of blue light services in Hungerford will not only save money but increase operational effectiveness for the people of Hungerford."

Philip Astle, Chief Operating Officer at SCAS said: "We look forward to continuing the working partnership with RBFRS at Hungerford and are committed to providing excellent patient care to our local community and surrounding areas."

# Plans for Hungerford community tri-service station approved

Hungerford Fire Station is set to become Royal Berkshire's first community tri-service station after plans for a modern refurbishment were approved by West Berkshire Council on Monday 17 October.

The approved plans will not only deliver a modern, fit for purpose fire station, but will also offer a shared location for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS), Thames Valley Police (TVP) and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) to operate from.

The refurbishment work has been planned by RBFRS and funded by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) to help RBFRS deliver objectives set out in its Vision 2019 plan. One of the central objectives set out is to place Berkshire's fire stations at the heart of the communities that they serve, enabling people to live safe, fulfilling lives.

Once complete, all three services will operate from the refurbished station, with RBFRS and TVP based on site and SCAS able to use the station's facilities as needed. Firefighters from the new station will also continue to respond to serious medical emergencies alongside their SCAS colleagues, as part of the RBFRS Co-Responding scheme. It is expected that this arrangement will allow greater collaboration between the three organisations, for the benefit of the local community.

The approved plans include a provision for a community room within the new station, which members of the public or local community groups will be able to use. The new station has been designed to be easily identifiable for visitors and the general public.

Work is due to begin in November 2016, with completion expected by June 2017. RBFRS's full operational response will be maintained in Hungerford during the refurbishment work, with the retained crew and appliance operating from



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



# New Fire and Rescue Service vehicle scales the heights

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has added a new aerial ladder platform (ALP) vehicle to its fleet to improve safety for the public and firefighters.

The Bronto Skylift ALP is capable of reaching heights of up to 37m or 120ft, making it the fourth largest vehicle of its kind in the country and the largest in the North East region.

It has the ability to reach the parapets of all bridges in the Tyne and Wear area, as well as high rise buildings, and will be used for firefighting, rescues and special services.

The new vehicle came into service at the end of February, replacing the oldest ALP in the Tyne and Wear fleet which is 15 years old.

Cllr Nick Forbes, vice-chairman of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, braved the elements on Monday, 13 January to experience the ALP's capabilities at first hand.

Cllr Forbes said: "This state of the art vehicle, which can reach the highest buildings and bridges in Tyne and Wear, is an essential piece of kit that will help save lives in the future. It represents a significant investment in public and firefighter safety by the Fire Authority."

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Chris Lowther, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, said: "The new ALP is an integral part of the Service's planned fleet replacement programme. It increases our capabilities when faced with incidents such as the damaged shopping centre roof in Newgate Street, Newcastle last week. Our firefighters were able to go up in the ALP's cage to make the roof safe after it was damaged by strong winds."



L-R, Cllr Nick Forbes and Watch Manager Dave Summers



# Sunderland housing refurbishment scheme makes residents safer from fire

A refurbishment scheme that has included the fitting of life saving fire sprinklers in a block of flats in Sunderland has been completed.

Housing Association Gentoo Group has installed the sprinklers in D'Arcy Court, Hendon as part of a joint pilot scheme with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to improve the safety of its high-rise homes.

The installation was part of a £4m modernisation scheme involving the refurbishment of 104 flats over 13 floors, which began in summer 2014.

Andrew Griffiths, Deputy Director at Gentoo, said "At Gentoo we are committed to ensuring our customers feel safe in their homes. By working in partnership during the process of the modernisation works at D'Arcy Court, we were able to invest in a system that could help save lives in the event of a fire. We will continue to work with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to reduce the number of preventable fires in our communities and make even more homes in Sunderland safe from fire."

The scheme was supported by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, whose campaign 'Sprinklers Save Lives' promotes the benefits of sprinkler systems in both commercial and domestic properties.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer John Baines, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Gentoo has shown great leadership in protecting their communities and supporting those most vulnerable in their homes. As we know, fires in the home devastate lives, and whilst working smoke alarms are essential to provide an early warning, they will not stop a fire developing. Sprinkler systems prevent a fire from growing.

"Put simply, they can and do save lives. I would like to commend Gentoo for their foresight in enhancing the safety of residents within D'Arcy Court by committing to fit sprinkler systems to this high-rise. This is a major step forward in improving the safety of residents in high-rise housing.

"Across the Tyne and Wear area, a number of housing groups have also installed sprinkler systems in high-rise accommodation and homes for those

more vulnerable. This latest project has seen the total number of dwellings protected increase to over 1,240, since we launched our partnership campaign."

The system is designed to use the existing water tanks within the loft space, with the addition of a new booster pump to ensure each flat receives the correct water flow and pressure. During modernisation works the ceilings were lowered to allow for pipe work to be hidden and sprinkler heads to be recessed. Sprinklers have been fitted

into the kitchen, bedroom(s), hallway and living room of each flat.

Fewer than 1% of high-rise social housing tower blocks currently have sprinklers fitted within homes. Installing sprinkler systems in high-rise towers is not currently a legal requirement but comes highly recommended by coroners, following inquests into the deaths of eight individuals in two tower block fires in the past seven years.



# Bath scientists set the standard for UK

Researchers from the University of Bath have devised new scientifically-based and nationally-recognised fitness tests and standards, against which the physical capacity of the country's 50,000 firefighters can be evaluated.

They are designed to simulate the changing nature of the job in Britain in the 21st century and ensure operational readiness at all times.

Although would-be firefighters have to pass a UK-wide physical fitness test to get a job, until now the 52 fire services have all had their own individual (and often different) requirements to ensure operational staff stay in shape. Many of the measures had been in place for decades, and were based on the experiences of non-British firefighters and research conducted in other countries, not necessarily reflecting the operational challenges faced by UK firefighters.

In the last two decades the number of fires in Britain has fallen by two-thirds, thanks to increasing use of smoke detectors, the reduction in smoking, and greater public awareness. But the range of incidents that our firefighters deal with has increased and there is greater focus now on reducing risk in the community, educating the public, and ensuring better working with partners in the emergency services and local communities. But this has exacerbated the issue of firefighters staying fit enough, with sudden rises in physical activity interspersed with less physically demanding activity.



Station Manager Pat Foley of Avon Fire & Rescue is shown preparing for the new drill ground tests, with Dr Andy Siddall from the University of Bath. Photo courtesy Avon Fire & Rescue Service.

## Largest study of its kind

Bath University's research, funded by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) and the Fire Service Research and Training Trust, involved the largest study of its kind ever conducted in Europe, with 62 firefighters put through sophisticated tests to measure physiological responses to the demands put on their bodies.

Volunteer participants were given a range of standardised tasks agreed by an expert panel of experienced firefighters as being a fair reflection of the minimum demands on operational staff, whether male or female, full-time or working on a 'retained' basis. Cardiovascular tests included running

hoses, carrying equipment, evacuating casualties, and fighting fires in open spaces. But instead of wearing typical breathing apparatus, participants donned face masks and devices to monitor their oxygen uptake.

## Devising a drill ground test

The researchers calculated a minimum cardiorespiratory standard of 42.3 ml/kg/min for staff employed as operational firefighters. This was endorsed last year by CFOA, which has now also approved a related 'drill ground' test that simulates firefighting and can be undertaken at any fire station. This test will be used to assess those who fail to pass the initial treadmill-based cardiorespiratory stress test, but has the added advantage



Station Manager Pat Foley of Avon Fire & Rescue is shown participating in some of the drill ground tests. Photo courtesy Avon Fire & Rescue Service.



# firefighter fitness in changing Britain

that it can be completed regularly to maintain operational fitness. Gym-based tests of upper body muscular strength and endurance, associated with ladder manipulation and equipment handling, have also been validated and endorsed.

Professor James Bilzon, Head of the Department for Health, led the work. He said: "Maintaining the right level of physical fitness ensures effective job performance, and, more importantly, the safety of firefighters and the public they serve. This is another example of the University of Bath making a difference with applied research that impacts on daily lives and benefits individuals and the whole country."

Justin Johnston, Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Lancashire, leads the CFOA's work on firefighter fitness. He said: "I am delighted with the partnership with Bath and proud of the robust and professional standards we have achieved. This work has significantly enhanced UK firefighter fitness and I believe it will be of great interest to other counties too."

Avon Fire & Rescue Service worked with the University's researchers to develop the new standard and tests and will soon be employing a civilian fitness advisor. Station Manager Pat Foley leads their work on firefighter fitness.

He said: "It has always been important that firefighters are fit but the role has changed. We now attend many different



Station Manager Pat Foley of Avon Fire & Rescue wearing a portable oxygen analyser before participating in some of the drill ground tests himself. Photo courtesy Avon Fire & Rescue Service.

incidents including ones on the roads and water rescues and also carry out fire prevention work in the community. The partnership with the University of Bath is very valuable as it is relevant to the work we carry out, because it is important that we do not just measure fitness but we support staff to maintain their fitness."

In the final phase of the current partnership, Bath researchers are analysing the results of a detailed health questionnaire sent to more than 3,000 fire service personnel, and assessing blood samples to estimate the risk of cardiovascular and metabolic disease and look for links with lifestyle choices.



Professor James Bilzon, Head of the University of Bath's Department for Health and Principal Investigator for the research project, is shown with equipment used in the new drill ground tests. Photo courtesy Avon Fire & Rescue Service.

The University of Bath celebrates its 50th anniversary this year as one of the UK's leading universities both in terms of research and reputation for excellence in teaching, learning and graduate prospects.

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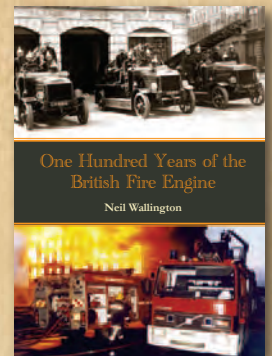
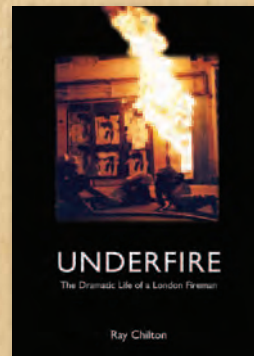
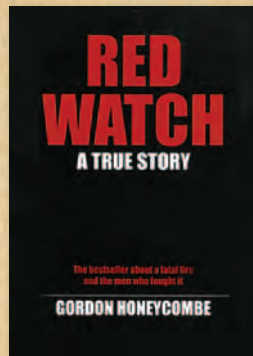
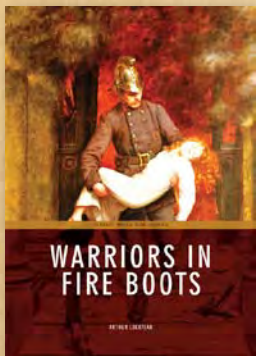
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# Home visits changing to focus on West Yorkshire's most vulnerable

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) is changing the way it delivers home visits in a bid to help keep the most vulnerable people in our communities safe. It has launched a four week public engagement exercise asking for people's views on the new home visit, which will be called 'Safe and Well'.

For the past two decades WYFRS has delivered Home Fire Safety Checks, with on average around 45,000 home visits carried out each year across the county. This has had a huge impact in reducing the number of accidental fires in people's homes. In 2015/16 the brigade attended 1,032 compared to 1,268 in 2009/10.

The increased awareness of smoke alarm ownership, coupled with the educational visits to homes and schools, has given rise to a cultural shift in perception with a new wave of fire safety savvy individuals and families, many of which we now consider to be 'low risk'. However, WYFRS currently

still carry out around 40% of visits in the homes of people deemed at low risk of having a fire (figures represent 2010–2015).

Meanwhile, WYFRS has also learnt from experience that certain demographics deemed at higher risk of having a fire in the home – such as older people, people living with a disability, mobility problems, or smokers – also share other vulnerabilities that affect their health and wellbeing.

With this in mind, WYFRS is planning to launch a new home visit programme, Safe and Well, which will see them working closer with the health sector. The focus of the visit will remain fire safety, but firefighters will also act as the 'eyes and ears' for our partner agencies and will offer basic advice and make a referral where they see another issue that requires addressing.



Safe and Well is a joint enterprise between the Chief Fire Officers Association, Public Health England, NHS England, the Local Government Association and Age UK. Safe and Well is due to launch this April on a phased basis and is expected to take around two years to fully implement due to a comprehensive training programme for staff.

Other than fire prevention the key topics of Safe and Well are falls prevention, social isolation, winter cold, crime prevention and smoking cessation. People requesting a Safe and Well visit will be assessed, via a series of questions about their home and lifestyle, and those at higher risk will be prioritised.

If you are assessed to be low risk, with working smoke alarms in your home and no other vulnerabilities, then you will be directed to a fire safety education package, either online or via leaflets.

Area Manager for Fire Safety, Chris Kirby, said: "The new Safe and Well visits have the potential to make a real difference to West Yorkshire's most vulnerable people." He continued "The Fire Service is not trying to be medics or social workers but we are highly trained to recognise risks and prevent accidents. Experience has taught us that where people are living in circumstances where there is a high risk of fire in the home, often there are other lifestyle traits that affect their overall wellbeing. The new visit will still focus on fire safety but where we see another issue, such as a risk of falls, we can refer through to our partner organisations".



*Overheated sockets: a clear example of the fire risk of an overloaded electrical circuit and its multiple plugs in a twin socket. On average, there are still approximately 25,000 UK fires of electrical origin each year.*

## Boat Race may be sunk by historic support craft fire risks

The annual University Boat Race between Cambridge and Oxford on London's River Thames, first established in 1829, is under threat from the perceived fire risks of the petrol-engined historic support craft that traditionally follow the race. These vessels carry Race officials and wealthy sponsors who pay significant fees for the close-up view of the race.

The Port of London Authority (PLA), the body that is responsible for safety on the river considers that the wooden support craft are a danger because of their inboard petrol engines. The Boat Race organisers were warned by the PLA back in 2015 that all passenger boats taking part from the 2018 Boat Race onwards must comply fully with the requirements

of the UK Small Passenger Boat Code which is the national standard for these boats agreed with the industry.

Boat Race organisers fear that the withdrawal of the use of the historic craft as following spectator vessels could have a severe effect on sponsorship revenues.



Above:  
*A horse drawn 50ft escape ladder of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, which became the London Fire Brigade in 1904. This view was taken c.1900 outside Redcross Street Fire Station in the Barbican area of London. Note the Superintendent and his dog and the superbly turned-out MFB horses specially bred for their strength and stamina.*

Above:  
*A Victorian print of a horse drawn steamer at full gallop.*

Below:  
*The London Brigade's last horse-drawn appliance – a 85ft wooden turntable ladder at Kensington Fire Station – was withdrawn in 1922 but several horse drawn pumps were kept for historical display purposes. Here, an 1875 Shand Mason horse drawn steam pump is put through its paces at an LFB display in Victoria Park, Hackney, East London in 1935.*



Above:  
*London's fire horses were driven by fire-uniformed coachmen who cared lovingly for their charges as can be seen in this image taken at a London Fire Station towards the end of the LFB horse drawn era, c.1920.*



Above:  
A London Fire Brigade 50ft wheeled escape ladder  
pictured at Southwark HQ, c.1905.

All images are courtesy of London Fire Brigade and Neil Wallington's collection.



Above:  
This oil painting captures an LFB crew getting a steam pump  
to work at the scene of a fire. Note the lone policeman trying  
to keep the spectating crowd back.

Below:  
A classic view of Vauxhall Fire Station c.1910 with a line up  
common to many London fire stations of that time.  
From L to R: A Merrweather steam pump, a hose cart and a  
50ft wheeled escape.

## ~ All Our Yesterdays ~



# Defective tumble dryer model which caused fatal fire was behind 20 previous outbreaks

*A defective tumble dryer caused a house fire in Birmingham, UK, that killed a mother of two in her bedroom, a Coroner has ruled.*

*Mishell Moloney was discovered dead under a duvet on the bedroom floor by her daughter and sister on February 7 after they smashed their way through a rear patio door to get in. The 49-year-old was found to have died after being overcome by carbon monoxide fumes and smoke caused by a small fire in the tumble dryer in the downstairs kitchen.*

*Birmingham Coroner's Court heard that dryer manufacturer Beko had received reports of 20 previous fires in the same model, but none had the defect thought to have caused the blaze that killed Ms Moloney.*

*Recording a narrative verdict, Emma Brown, the Area Coroner for Birmingham and Solihull, said: "It's my conclusion Mishell's death was due to smoke inhalation from a fire that was caused by the Beko tumble dryer within her*

*kitchen. The source within the tumble dryer was the printed control board (PCB). It's not possible to identify the nature of the defect which caused the fire."*

*The Coroner added: "Mishell was aware of a problem with the tumble dryer before the fire because she turned the machine off. She obviously thought she had dealt with it and went to bed intending to sort it subsequently."*

*Ms Moloney, who bought the appliance in October 2012, had been home alone on the night of 6 February and texted her family just before midnight. It was the last time relatives heard from her, and shortly after 4pm the next day they found Ms Moloney's window blinds blackened with soot, and forced their way in. An investigation at the house in Coriander Close, Rubery, Birmingham, found the fire started in or around the area where the dryer's PCB was.*

*Beko said the PCB had never been the identified cause of any blazes traced*



*to the 8kg DCS 85W, the model Ms Moloney had. The company's Director of Quality Andrew Mullen said: "In virtually all cases it has been the run capacitor – I can't think of any cases that weren't."*

*Mr Mullen said a decision not to recall the model was taken after a risk assessment and consultation with Trading Standards. He revealed two smaller 6kg and 7kg models had been recalled because of 100 incidents of reported faults with the capacitor, "within the first three months".*

*Asked by the Coroner why Beko had not decided to recall the larger model, he said: "We looked at the number of incidents against sales, the severity of the incidents and circumstances, and in all those assessments they were all incidents that happened within 10 or 20 minutes of the tumble dryer being used."*

*"Nearly all those were when the tumble dryer was in unheated buildings such as a shed or outhouse. In those cases the risk of injury was low." He added the model was discontinued last year "as part of a range change".*



*The damage in a home after a tumble dryer caught fire.*



*The aftermath of a fridge freezer fire.*

# Fire alert affects nearly 3 million tumble dryers

**Nearly 3 million owners of Whirlpool tumble dryers have been told not to use their machines after the firm backtracked on its previous advice that they were safe to use.**

Following an intervention by Trading Standards officers, the maker of Hotpoint, Indesit and Creda tumble dryers is urging customers affected to unplug their machines until they have been fixed by an engineer.

For the past 15 months, Whirlpool had been assuring customers that the machines were safe to use as long as customers were at home and not asleep. During this time a number of house fires have been linked to tumble dryers, prompting calls from consumer bodies for Whirlpool to be investigated by officials.

Experts have now described Whirlpool's handling of the situation as "appalling" while consumer bodies including *Which* called for all dryers to be recalled and consumers refunded.

Whirlpool is in the process of replacing or repairing an estimated 4 million faulty machines across the UK after identifying a safety issue in 2015. Since then Whirlpool has fixed around 1.3 million tumble dryers, meaning nearly 3 million people still have a potentially dangerous dryer. In December 2016, Whirlpool told customers they could expect to wait six months for a repair.

A Whirlpool spokesman has said: "We have consistently responded to the advice of Trading Standards and continue to do so. Trading



Standards have confirmed that our actions to date in this campaign have been undertaken diligently and responsibly."



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# Safety failures led to multi-fatality tower fire

**Southwark Council in London has been fined a total of £570,000 by Southwark Crown Court for safety failures at Lakanal House, the south London tower block in which three women and three children lost their lives in a serious fire on 3 July 2009.**

London Fire Brigade (LFB) brought the prosecution against the council, which was landlord of the 14-storey block of flats at the time of the fire, after inspectors visited Lakanal House in the wake of the tragedy.

By far the most serious shortcomings identified by the post-fire inspection was a failure to conduct a fire-risk assessment, deficiencies in fire-resistant structures and materials between each maisonette staircase and shared internal doors, a lack of compartmentation in false ceiling structures of shared corridors, and an absence of fitted intumescent strips and smoke seals on fire doors.

The fine, which included costs and was potentially unlimited, was reduced from £400,000 after Southwark Council pleaded guilty to four offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire) Safety Order.

In 2013, an Inquest into the fire determined that the fire had started when a television in a ninth-floor flat caught fire. The flames and smoke then spread rapidly throughout the block of 98 maisonettes, which were built in 1960. It also emerged that the people who died had been told by 999 operators to stay put, mistakenly believing that fire safety measures would prevent flames and smoke from reaching

them.

In passing sentence, Judge Pegden said: "In this case there was a major fire at Lakanal House, involving the tragic loss of six lives – including three children. But the sentence of this court of course can never reflect such a terrible tragedy. Indeed, the prosecution does not allege that these breaches were causative of the fatalities in the fire, or indeed of the fire itself. This case is concerned with the risk existing prior to those events."

Dan Daly, LFB's Assistant Commissioner for Fire Safety, said: "The fire at Lakanal House was a particularly harrowing incident and our thoughts remain with the families and loved ones of those who died. Bringing this prosecution against Southwark Council has been about ensuring that lessons are learned."

He continued: "All landlords, including large housing providers, such as councils and housing associations, have a clear responsibility under the law that their premises meet all fire safety requirements and are effectively maintained to provide protection in the event of a fire and keep their residents safe. We want them to take the opportunity provided by this court case to remind themselves of exactly what their fire safety responsibilities are under the law and to ensure that everyone in their premises is safe from the risk of fire."

Since the fire, Southwark Council has invested £62m to make their homes safer.



Lakanal House. Image courtesy London Fire Brigade.

On 1 January 2017, history was made when Dany Cotton became the first female Commissioner of London Fire Brigade. Dany's appointment in the top job came 35 years after the first woman joined the Brigade; however, women had been involved in the fire service long before then.



Dany Cotton, Commissioner of the London Fire Brigade.

The first Chief Fire Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Captain Sir Eyre Massey Shaw, helped teach female students at Girton College how to use firefighting equipment and successfully tackle a fire. The Cambridge institute had its own all-women's fire brigade from 1878 until 1932.

Although women were trained how to protect factories from fires during the First World War, it was not until the 1940s, and the outbreak of the Second World War, that they would play a far greater role in the fire service.

The Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) was formed in 1938 and, as a result of most men





# the Fire Service

International Women's  
Day: 8th March 2017



*Girton College, Cambridge, female students practice hose drill c. 1900.*

joining the army, a huge recruitment drive was launched encouraging women to join the fire service for the first time.

Women were not expected to tackle fires during the war but they did everything else, from being drivers and despatch riders, to working on the communications network and other various tasks around the fire stations.

In 1941, the AFS moved under the control of the government, becoming the National Fire Service (NFS). A formal rank structure was established mirroring that of the men and by 1943, over 90,000 women had enrolled in the NFS.

Among the thousands of trailblazing women were Lady Betty Cuthbert, Joyce Hicks, Mary Oddy, and Gillian Tanner. Lady Cuthbert had joined the AFS in July 1938. She was the 23rd woman to volunteer and, when the NFS formed, was appointed Chief Woman Fire Officer and stationed at London Fire Brigade headquarters at Albert Embankment.

She was a popular figure who was in charge of recruitment, organising training, fitness regimes, and the structure of duties for women firefighters. She was awarded an OBE in 1943 and a CBE in 1946.

Joyce Hicks had joined the AFS three months before war broke out in 1939. She



*Trail Blazers: Lady Cuthbert (left), Mary Oddy (centre) and Joyce Hicks.*



*London firewomen were given other roles such as despatch riders and drivers. These perilous roles often involved driving in pitch black at night during enemy air raids.*

began her career as a trailer pump driver before being promoted to Staff Officer with the formation of the NFS. Joyce was responsible for the fitness of female recruits and introduced a compulsory medical and fitness test that all new recruits had to pass before joining – something that had not previously existed.

Mary Oddy had worked in a school before joining the AFS in 1938. She worked alongside Lady Cuthbert and Joyce Hicks as a Staff Officer at Brigade headquarters. These three women later received commendations for their work in the fire service during the war.

Firewoman Gillian Walton-Clark – whose maiden name was Gillian Tanner – was awarded the George Medal for her bravery during the Second World War. As a 21-year-old she delivered petrol to fire pumps around Bermondsey in South London while the docks were being bombed during the Second Great Fire of London in 1940.

In 2005, Gillian told the BBC she simply did what she was asked to do. She said: "You don't think about it – the things happening when the fires were going. You could hear the bombers, but you just got on with it. If you are going to be killed, you are going to be killed and that's all there is about it."

The NFS continued after the war before eventually being disbanded in 1948. Many women remained in the Auxiliary Fire Service until it was later disbanded in the 1960s.

In 1965, the Greater London Council was established and encouraged women to



*During the initial 57 nightly continuous raids of 1940, and during later raids through to 1944, firewomen manned mobile control units out in the street during the bombing.*

get involved in the fire service not just in traditional roles, such as communications or administration, but operationally.

London's first woman firefighter was Sue Batton. She joined in 1982 and was stationed at Lewisham Fire Station. A further 60 women joined the Brigade throughout the 80s, including Dany Cotton who joined the LFB as a teenager in 1988.

Dany said: "When I decided to apply for London Fire Brigade, my family thought I was mad. I've worked hard to prove that women make great firefighters and everyone can bring something different to the role."

As of February 2017 there are 324 women firefighters – approximately 7% of the operational workforce – with more than 400 more women working as control officers handling 999 calls or at Brigade Headquarters.

*(All photographs courtesy of the London Fire Brigade.)*

# Sheffield Emergency Services team picks up major NHS collaboration Award

A joint emergency services team set up to reduce demand on 999 responders in Sheffield has picked up a major health award.

The Local Intervention and Falls Episodes (LIFE) team, set up by South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and South Yorkshire Police and supported by Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, won the award for best NHS Collaboration at the Health Business Awards 2016 event in London. Humberside Fire & Rescue and London Fire Brigade were also shortlisted in the same category.

The team is four months into a six-month pilot which sees staff visit homes to reduce fire risk in properties, improve security and help people who have fallen.

So far the project has carried out more than 150 crime prevention checks and 250 home safety visits, which include the fitting of free smoke alarms.

The team also responds to help people at low priority incidents, including helping almost 40 people who have had a fall, are not injured, but are unable to get up on their own.

LIFE team staff have also helped find missing people and visited vulnerable people who have either been victims of crime or are at risk of anti-social behaviour.

Some of this work traditionally takes police officers and paramedics off the road for many hours.

SYFR Head of Prevention and Protection Steve Helps, said: "This award is the best possible example of our commitment to collaborate with our emergency services partners. It's also deserved recognition for a brand new team, which proves emergency services are working together locally to help make people safer and healthier.

"We know that there are huge links between the people who need the help of the police and health services, and those who are at risk of fire. So collaborative working such as this undoubtedly benefits our public safety work."

Chief Inspector Jenny Lax from South Yorkshire Police, said: "I am delighted that the LIFE team have won this national award, which recognises that the emergency services are working well together through collaboration to



reduce the vulnerability of people in our communities and improve their quality of life."

Dr Steven Dykes, Deputy Medical Director at Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, said: "It's great to see this example of joint working recognised at a national level, particularly as it has benefited many local residents in its first few months by providing them with an integrated approach to their social and medical needs."

The team operates using two specialist vehicles and consists of four staff – two South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue employees and two South Yorkshire Police community support officers (PCSOs).

The scheme has been funded by South Yorkshire Fire Authority for six months and researchers from the University of Huddersfield have been commissioned to evaluate its effectiveness. If successful, it could be extended and taken to other parts of South Yorkshire.

Last year the Government announced new proposals to transform the way the police, fire and rescue and ambulance services work together. It wants to encourage collaboration by introducing a new statutory duty on all three emergency services to look at opportunities to work with one another better to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

In South Yorkshire, fire crews already attend hundreds of 'medical break-ins' every year, where they gain access to properties where people are thought to be in need of urgent medical attention, but where ambulance service paramedics cannot get to them. This work used to be carried out by the police.

Work has also now started on a joint police and fire station in Maltby, whilst five ambulance stand-by points will also be created at five other fire service premises across the county.



(L-R): Catherine James (Yorkshire Ambulance Service), Rob Hall (LIFE), Jonathan Dyson (South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue), Jenny Lax (South Yorkshire Police), Jayne White (LIFE).



**MAN Prime Movers. Remember these?** Massed New Dimension MAN Prime Movers here in 2002 at the Fire Service College before being distributed to Fire & Rescue Services.

## Emergency Services Show

The Emergency Services Show, the leading UK annual event for all emergency services personnel, brings the sector together with the single aim of improving public safety. The Show reflects the importance the services are placing on finding new ways of working together for the mutual benefit of the individual organisations involved and for the benefit of the public they all serve.

The Emergency Services Show is a marketplace for an emergency services industry looking to drive efficiencies through collaboration.

The first Show was held in 2006 at The Royal Horticultural Halls in London with just 90 exhibitors and 1,000 visitors. The Show grew and moved to Stoneleigh Park where it was held from 2007 to 2012. The requirement for more space took the event

to the NEC in Birmingham from 2013, moving this year to Hall 5, the NEC's most prestigious event space. The 2017 Show on 20–21 September will be the biggest ever from organisers Broden Media.





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