

## Melksham Area Board Report – 3rd September 2019

### Barbecues



Barbecues are great when the sun is shining and you have friends and family to visit, but they do carry a fire risk.

- Always position the barbecue on a level site, away from wooden fencing, sheds and hedges.
- Don't place the barbecue on dry grass or vegetation.
- Use firelighters or barbecue fuel to light the coals – NEVER use petrol or paraffin.
- Keep children and pets well away from the cooking area and never leave the barbecue unattended.
- Be careful when grilling fatty foods, as the fat can cause the coals to flare up.
- Don't move the barbecue until it is completely cool, and make sure any remaining charcoal is cold before disposing of it carefully. Ideally use water to damp down the ashes.
- If using a disposable barbecue, make sure it is completely cold before disposal.
- NEVER dispose of hot barbecue ashes in plastic rubbish bins as this can easily start a fire.
- Always have a bucket of water or garden hose to hand in case a barbecue gets out of hand.
- Make sure the controls and cylinder valves of a gas barbecue are turned off before you change the cylinder, which should be done in a well ventilated area. Always check the connections for leaks.

- Store gas cylinders outside and protect them from direct sunlight and frost.
- Make sure your gas barbecue is correctly serviced and that all joints are tightened, safe and secure.
- Never use a barbecue indoors or inside a tent, as they produce potentially lethal carbon monoxide.

## Heath fires and countryside safety



When you are out and about enjoying the countryside, there are some things you can do in order to protect our beautiful surroundings and keep you safe.

Large wildfires are thankfully rare but, when they do occur, they can be very serious and affect large areas of the countryside. They also take a great deal of resources to bring under control, which impacts the availability of appliances for property fires and other emergencies.

The Upton Heath fire in Dorset in 2011, for example, damaged approximately 250 acres of the heath and required the mobilisation of 30 fire engines and 11 Land Rovers.

Wildfires can ravish the local wildlife, destroying ecosystems in a matter of hours that have taken years to build up. If a wildfire encroaches upon farmland, then crops and farm buildings can be consumed, and homes that border heathland can also be at risk.

At their worst, wildfires can cause death or injury to people. A developed wildfire creates its own wind, which drives it at speeds faster than people can get out of its way.

Steps you can take to avoid starting a wildfire:



- Avoid open fires in the countryside. If you must have a fire, make sure that you're in a designated safe area.
- Put out cigarettes and other smoking materials properly before you leave your vehicle.
- Do not throw cigarette ends out of your vehicle. They could start a fire and destroy surrounding countryside.
- Don't leave bottles or glass in woodlands, as sunlight shining through the glass can cause a fire to start. Take the items home, or put them in a waste or recycling bin.
- If you see a fire in the countryside, report it immediately. Do not try to tackle a fire yourself; usually they can't be put out with a bucket of water. Please call the fire service and leave the area as soon as possible.
- Ensure that you know your location or a landmark so you can direct the fire service.

### **Safe and Well Visits- Home safety**

The Melksham area has a dedicated Fire Service '**Safe and Well**' advisor who can visit people, within their own homes, advising on home safety and wellbeing.

A Safe and Well visit is **FREE** and normally lasts about one hour covering topics such as:

- Using electricity safely
- Cooking safely
- Making an escape plan
- What to do if there is a fire
- Keeping children safe
- Good practice – night time routine and other points relevant to you
- Identifying and discussing any further support the occupier may need

If you have thatch property, are living alone, have a young family, are over 65 or a smoker please get in contact with us. We want to help make you safer in your own home. If you or someone you know has mobility or sight and hearing impairments, please suggest a Safe and Well visit.

Visit <http://www.dwfire.org.uk/news/new-name-new-contact-details-same-service/> to book one.

## **Response**

### **Total Incidents attended by DWFRS for Melksham Area; 27/07/19 – 27/08/19.**

DWFRS have responded to 30 incidents in the Melksham area between the dates above.

Melksham Fire Station Responded to a total of 30 incidents County wide in the mentioned time period. Details are listed in the table below.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Incidents in Melksham</b>	<b>Off of Station Ground incidents</b>	<b>Total</b>
False Alarm	12	0	12
Fire	8	0	8
Other	10	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Pump Availability</b>	<b>42.2%</b>		

## **Recent Notable Incidents**

The crew from Melksham have been involved in a rescue of a man from a stream, suffering hypothermia, numerous RTC's including one LGV and Car. They have also attended a number of fires, mainly consisting of small kitchen/cooker fires.

## **Community Engagement**

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service provides a free service called a Safe and Well visit. We will visit a person's home by appointment and discuss any safety issues in the home. We will also have a conversation about improving an individual's health and well-being.

If you or someone you know need a smoke alarm, some advice or are worried about what to do in an emergency, contact us for a free Safe and Well visit;

<http://www.dwfire.org.uk/safety/safe-and-well-visits/>

## **Community Safety Plan**

DWFRS Community Safety Plan 2018-2022 outlines our plans for the future. It explains the diverse services we provide and how we plan to improve and deliver them over the four-year period. The plan can be found on the DWFRS website <http://www.dwfire.org.uk/community-safety-plan/>



Phil People

Station Manager, Wiltshire West. Trowbridge, Bradford, Melksham & Devizes.

Email: [phil.people@dwfire.org.uk](mailto:phil.people@dwfire.org.uk)

Tel: 07787862767 / 01722 691247

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