

# PROTECT



DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE

## Marlborough Area Board Report

March 2018

### Remaining “Safe and Warm” during Adverse Weather

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service has issued advice to local people on the best ways to stay safe and warm during cold weather

Open fires can provide a relaxing and atmospheric way to keep warm, whereas portable heaters are handy to move around - but it's important to use them safely:

- Always use a fire guard to protect against flying sparks and hot embers from an open fire.
- Use a metal container to store any ashes.
- Make sure ashes are not left near any potentially flammable objects.
- Ensure ashes are completely out before disposing.
- Make sure embers are under control and properly extinguished before you go out or go to bed.
- Get your chimney swept regularly.
- Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes.
- Always unplug electric heaters when you go out or go to bed.
- Gas fires should be serviced every year by a competent engineer.

Electric blankets can help you keep warm during the cold nights, but they can be a danger if not used properly - 440 injuries result from every 1,000 fires started by an electric blanket:

- Never use hot water bottles in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if the blanket is switched off.
- Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.
- Don't fold up electric blankets as this damages the internal wiring. Store them flat or rolled up instead.

### Safe and Well Visits- Home safety

The Marlborough 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 last about one hour covering topics such as:

- Using electricity safely

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- 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.

### **Road Safety**

The adverse weather could also affect driving conditions, especially if there is snowfall. There are basic safe driving principles which apply in all adverse conditions, but especially when there is ice or snow. We would urge people to follow the forecasts and abide by any travel advice that is issued.

The following advice is worth bearing in mind:

- Slow right down – if visibility is poor or the road is wet or icy, it will take you longer to react to hazards and your speed should be reduced accordingly. If you have a temperature gauge in your vehicle that is showing zero degrees or below, then presume that the roads will be icy.
- Maintain a safe gap behind the vehicle in front – stopping distances are double in the wet and ten times greater in icy weather. The gap between you and the vehicle in front is your braking space in a crisis.
- Look out for vulnerable road users – be aware that people on foot, bicycles, motorbikes and horses are harder to spot in adverse weather and in the dark. Drive as though someone could step out in front of you at any time.
- Look out for signs warning of adverse conditions – including fixed signs, such as those warning of exposure to high winds, and variable message signs on motorways that warn of fog, snow and which may display temporary slower speed limits.
- Stay in control – avoid harsh braking and acceleration, and carry out manoeuvres slowly and with extra care.
- Use lights – put lights on in gloomy weather or when visibility is reduced. Only use front and rear fog lights in dense fog.
- Listen to travel news on local radio so you know where problem areas are.

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- Make sure you have an emergency kit in your car, including ice scraper and de-icer, warm clothes, a torch, jump leads, a car charger for your mobile phone and food/drink.

A full range of advice for staying safe at home and on the roads can be found at [www.dwfire.org.uk/get-ready-winter](http://www.dwfire.org.uk/get-ready-winter)

### **Recruitment Campaign**

Dorset & Wiltshire FRS is always looking to recruit on-call staff. Starting from 6<sup>th</sup> November last year the Service has run six “have-a-go-sessions so that under-represented groups in our community can see what it is like to be a firefighter. These will continue throughout the coming year.

Three of these have been in the Wiltshire area, Swindon, Salisbury & Trowbridge. Despite numerous campaigns in the past, female and BME groups are still under-represented in the Fire Service and we are hoping that this positive action will help destroy some of the myths about the job.

### **Want to become an On-Call firefighter ? Or know someone who does?**

On-call Firefighters provide a part-time service around other commitments. They let us know when they are available and respond to emergency call outs.

To find out more about the role please visit the ‘Working for us’ pages of our website or drop into the station on a Monday evening for a chat.

We also have opportunities for **Volunteers**. If you are interested please see the Service Web-site, contact Neil Chamberlain or speak to me. My contact details are at the end of this report.

### **‘Safe and Well’ and ‘Health and Well-Being’**

The Service is keen to maintain a link between our **Safe and Well advisors** and **Health and Wellbeing** activities across the Marlborough area.

The Service is looking to work with any local groups to exchange information on vulnerable households. We have a software programme ‘**Pinpoint**’ which will identify the high risk premises, within the Marlborough Community Area, and allow both the Service and local groups to engage in joint working and information sharing in order to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. Helping people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, living safely and leading a more fulfilling life is an admirable objective for all of us.

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### **DW Fire and 'Safety Weeks'**

**The Service** supports a number of various “Safety Weeks” during the course of the year. This support has generally been in the form of giving advice through media outputs, during safe and well visits and Business Fire Safety interventions. These last two months have seen the following campaigns:

- Chimney Fire Safety Week
- Business Safety week
- Gas Safety week
- UK Home Safety week
- Candle Safety week
- National Burn awareness day
- Student Fire Safety Week

### **Incidents of note.**

- Fire involving underground electrical supply installation- SSE attended
- Large fire in the open- unattended bonfire
- 3 Chimney fires- Safety advice given to owners on each occasion
- Large vehicle fire- JCB destroyed
- Dangerous structure- Tree fallen on to overhead power cables
- Road Traffic Collision- 1 car, person trapped and rescued by Fire Service
- Large animal rescue- horse into trench- specialist rescue teams deployed.

### **Community Safety Plan**

The Service Community Safety Plan 2017 – 2021 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 our website

<http://www.dwfire.org.uk/community-safety-plan/>

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**Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue**

- Helping you make Safer and Healthier choices
- Protecting you and the Environment from Harm
- Being there when you need us
- Making every penny count
- Supporting and developing our People

Jack Nicholson GIFireE

**Station Manager**

**Wiltshire (East)**

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

Telephone: 01722 691 242

Mob. 07809 548048

Email: [jack.nicholson@wiltsfire.org.uk](mailto:jack.nicholson@wiltsfire.org.uk)

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

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