

## South East Wiltshire Managers report for March 2019

### Thatched Property Fires



The Service have recently attended two significant fires within thatch properties with both requiring in excess of 20 appliances and 80 personnel at scene at the height of each fire. This type of incident can have a significant impact on the Service but through the Fire Services Act we are able to minimise this by calling in assistance from our neighbouring Fire Services.

The National Society of Master Thatchers estimate that the average cost of a thatch fire is in excess of £45,000 to the home owner.

The counties of Dorset and Wiltshire have thousands of thatched homes – although there is no increased risk of fire within thatched properties, the impact of a fire is far greater and can affect those whom live in the community.

A range of fire prevention tips can be found in our free downloadable advice leaflet, [Your Thatched Home](#).

There is also a useful downloadable leaflet from the [Thatch Advice Centre](#).

Further advice can also be found on the [National Society of Master Thatchers website](#).

## On-Call – Recruitment



Firefighters from Amesbury Fire Station held an 'have a go' event in January which was aimed at boosting the number of On-call firefighters at the station several events taking place next week. This was hugely supported by the local community with 25 people walking through the doors of the station. We currently have a number of these who have since registered their intentions of joining the Service.

DWFRS needs new On-call Firefighters to provide fire cover at most of our locations across Dorset & Wiltshire. Contracted hours can vary, but On-call personnel usually make themselves available for between 90 and 120 hours per week, although we understand that some people can only give a limited amount of hours due to where they work and these can be discussed with the Manager in charge of the station upon enquiry. Our appliances at the On-call stations are crewed solely by those who live and work in the community and without the support and dedication of those individuals these vehicles would not be available to attend incidents.

In order to become an On-call Firefighter, you will need to be able to respond to the fire station in around five minutes once your pager goes off. This can be from home or work, and employers can benefit from a firefighter's training – such as first aid, manual handling, a greater understanding of health & safety in the workplace, and enhanced team spirit.

If you are interested in joining our team, you can either visit [www.dwfire.org.uk/be-one-of-us](http://www.dwfire.org.uk/be-one-of-us) or pop into your local On-call station. Both Amesbury and Wilton train on a Wednesday evening and Salisbury on a Monday. They will be at the stations from approximately 7pm onwards for 2 hours.



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE**

## A Reminder from last Report

### Chimney Safety

A clean chimney can help prevent fires and structural damage to your property. Regular cleaning of your chimney or flue will eliminate the build-up of soot and clear obstructions such as bird or animal nests, leaves and debris.

Chimneys should be swept:

- At least once a year when using smokeless fuels
- At least once a year when using bituminous coal
- Every three months when burning wood
- Once a year when using oil
- Once a year when using gas

**See also:**

Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps

– [www.guildofmasterchimneysweeps.co.uk](http://www.guildofmasterchimneysweeps.co.uk)

National Association of Chimney Sweeps – [www.nacs.org.uk](http://www.nacs.org.uk)



### Keeping Warm in the Winter

Keeping warm in the winter means using portable heaters, electric blankets or wheatbags – but all of these carry a fire risk.

#### Portable heaters



- Keep heaters at least one metre (3ft) away from curtains and furniture.
  - Never use portable heaters for drying clothes.
  - Always unplug portable heaters before going to bed or leaving the property.
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- Only use gas and paraffin heaters in well ventilated areas.

## Open fires



- Keep chimneys and flues clean and well maintained, ensuring that they are swept at least once a year.
- Make sure you always use a fireguard to protect against sparks and hot embers.
- Don't hang laundry too close to the fire in case of sparks.
- Ensure that the fire is fully out before you go to bed or leave the property.

## Gas fires

- A Gas Safe registered engineer should carry out installation and maintenance.
- Ventilation is essential – vents should never be blocked or obstructed.
- Do not turn any electrical switches on or off if you can smell gas.
- If you can smell gas, get out of the property and call 999.



## Electric blankets

- When buying an electric blanket, go to a reputable retailer and make sure the product meets the current UK and European safety standards – for example, BEAB Approved.
- Always read the manufacturer's instructions before use.
- Never use a hot water bottle 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.
- When storing an electric blanket, don't fold it as this may damage the internal wiring. Store flat or rolled up.
- Examine the blanket regularly for signs of wear and tear – for example, worn or frayed fabric, scorch marks, wires poking through the material, any damage to the flex. If you find an issue, get the blanket replaced.
- Get your blanket tested by a qualified electrician at least every three years and replace blankets every ten years.

## Safe & Well Visits

**A Safer Home** 

We continue to provide a totally free service and are looking for opportunities from our partners to help us plan visits to our most vulnerable people within our community

In addition to fitting smoke detectors we now offer heat detectors, all of which are free. This will be done whilst giving valuable advice to occupants on how to make them and their family safer and healthier in the home. The appointment normally lasts about one hour and covers 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 you may need if necessary

A selection of free leaflets containing useful information on Safety in and around the home can be found on our Website below:

### How to register for a S&W Visit

**To request a free Safe and Well Visit, please call 0800 038 2323 or alternatively you can enter your postcode below and follow the instructions to see if you match our criteria for a Safe and Well Visit.**



**Visit** <https://www.dwfire.org.uk/safety/safe-and-well-visits/> to book a visit, leaflet advice and watch a short video that introduces Safe and Well visits.

## **Community Engagement**



Salisbury Fire Station continues to proactively use our Pinpoint programme or our Community Map which allows us to see the risks to our community geographically and therefore target specific properties for High Risk Safe and Well (S&W) visits. Following incidents at

domestic properties any serious concerns are dealt with through a S&W visit or referred through the Safe-Guarding process. This is covered in the Amesbury and Wilton areas by dedicated Safe & Well advisors who will attend a home at the request of the owner or carer. Visit <https://www.dwfire.org.uk/safety/safe-and-well-visits/> for more information.

We can also arrange visits to our fire stations or one of our safety centres. For more information or to make a booking for your school or pre-school, please visit our webpage; <https://www.dwfire.org.uk/school-visits/> or email [enquiries@dwfire.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@dwfire.org.uk)

### **Community Safety Plan**

DWFRS Community Safety Plan can be found on the DWFRS website; <http://www.dwfire.org.uk/community-safety-plan/>

## Response



The 3 stations in the area have attended a number of incidents in the last 3 months and we have supported our neighbours at the large fire in Andover at the Ocado Premises. Thankfully this winter has not given us the issues we had this time last year but we have had a few spells of harsh weather which saw us working closely with our partners in the Local Resilience Forum to ensure that we could continue to provide a robust response as well as support our colleagues should they have needed it in the NHS.

### **Total Fire Calls:**

#### **December**

Category	Incidents Salisbury	Incidents Wilton	Incidents Amesbury
False Alarm	11	0	2
Fire	10	1	4
Special Service	21	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

#### **January**

Category	Incidents Salisbury	Incidents Wilton	Incidents Amesbury
False Alarm	27	2	6
Fire	22	1	5
Special Service	26	2	4
Other	19	9	2
<b>Total</b>			



## February

Category	Incidents Salisbury	Incidents Wilton	Incidents Amesbury
False Alarm	31	4	2
Fire	22	2	15
Special Service	17	3	2
Other	22	5	9
<b>Total</b>			



### Points of Interest for the Salisbury Station and neighbouring stations Wilton & Amesbury

- Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) progress update - This new appliance will soon be operational in the Salisbury Area with crews from the station currently undertaking essential training.
  - The date for the combined Animal and Water Technical Rescue Unit that will be based out of Salisbury to become operational has been put back due to an unforeseen lack of availability at our training facility in Cardiff. It is hoped that the training will commence in the coming months.
- The works for a Command Training Suite at Salisbury is nearing completion following some slight delays in equipment installation. This will be a state-of-the-art facility allowing operational personnel to be assessed on their command capabilities.

### Community Safety Plan

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