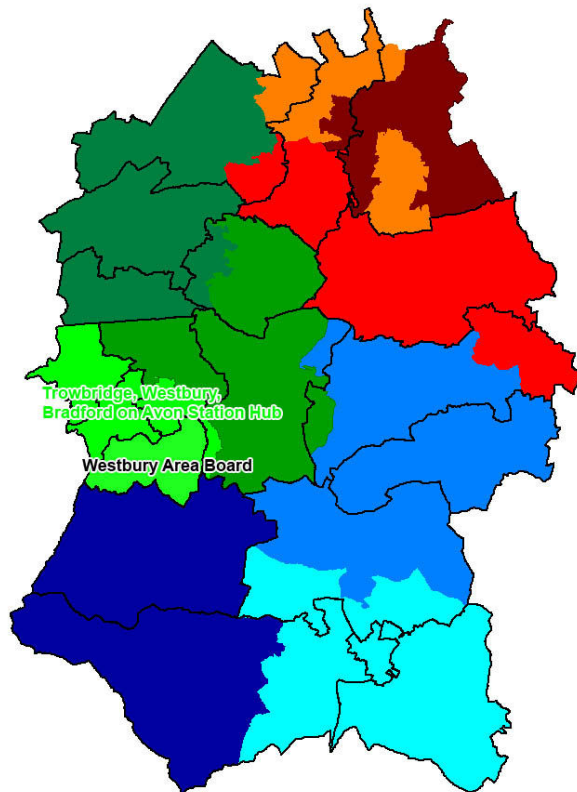




**Wiltshire
Fire & Rescue
Service**

Briefing report for Westbury Area Board



Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service has grouped together neighbouring fire stations into station hubs, to work more effectively and efficiently, supporting each other to improve the service we provide.

Responding to incidents:

Your Area Board's / Locality's communities immediate emergency response will be provided by staff at these stations and where necessary additional support from staff and specialist equipment from other stations.

Prevention work:

Staff from other departments also provide the community with specialist services giving fire safety and road safety advice and interventions such as talks and visits.

Protection work:

Specialist staff provide expert knowledge, give advice and undertake enforcement action working very closely with the planning authorities to keep communities safe from fire.

In an **emergency dial 999**, for other non urgent matters you can either visit our website: www.wiltfire.gov.uk or contact the following people:

	<u>Manager / Department</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>email</u>
Operational matters	Station Manager – Andy GREEN Trowbridge, Bradford-on_Avon, Westbury Station Hub		andy.green@wiltfire.gov.uk
Partnership and community engagement issues	Michael Franklin (Wiltshire Council Area)	07919 306037	mike.franklin@wiltfire.gov.uk
Home fire safety visits and for talks and visits	Community safety department	0800 389 7849	www.wiltfire.gov.uk and then complete the on line request

Combination with Dorset approved by Fire Authority

At a special meeting of Wiltshire and Swindon Combined Fire Authority on 11 November, members voted unanimously in favour of combining with neighbouring Dorset. Dorset Fire Authority had already unanimously agreed to the move at a meeting held in Dorchester on 4 November.

A 13 week public consultation showed an overwhelming preference from residents, businesses and partners across both counties for combination, not just for financial reasons but also for efficiency and resilience.

Combination with Dorset was also the strong recommendation of Chief Fire Officer Simon Routh-Jones, as professional advisor to the Fire Authority, as it would enable the organisation to maintain a safe, strong and sustainable Fire & Rescue Service that sits in the heart of local communities.

Support for combination was subject to assurance in writing from the Department of Communities and Local Government for equalisation of the fire precept element of the council tax – thus ensuring that residents in Wiltshire, Swindon, Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole will all pay the same. Work will now start to develop a Combination Order, which will need to be laid before Parliament.

Local News from Station Manager GREEN

Crews from Westbury fire station have attended 54 calls during the months of September, October and November.

During September, crews supported staff from other stations at incidents. They were one of six pumps and several support appliances that attended a house fire in Market Lavington. In mid-September responded to 11 flooding incidents in 5 hours in the Melksham/Hilperton/Corsham area as a result of extremely heavy rainfall.

The station held a very well attended open day. This enabled crews to demonstrate their skills with some exciting drills. Community Safety was a big part of the day with staff available to help with any safety related issues raised by those visiting. We also raised awareness of the need for new trainees with a number of people having the chance to try out some of our equipment.

In October local crews attended an 8 pump fire at the APETITO factory in Trowbridge and a further 8 pump fire at a farm in Rowde.

In November crews attended a house fires in Trowbridge; Devizes and Westbury. The crews also took the Light Off Road Pumping vehicle from the station and attended a canal boat fire in Hilperton. This resulted in a fatality. The 'light pump' is a small off road vehicle that is able to provide a first aid firefighting capability in areas that are difficult to access while more resources are transported to the scene of operations.

A number of minor road traffic collisions, chimney fires and false alarms have also been attended.

Fire Safety Messages

Christmas Safety:

Don't let fire become an unwelcome guest this Christmas. Brightly wrapped presents under the Christmas tree, dazzling decorations and feasting with our nearest and dearest are all well-loved trappings of the festive season. But as Fire Kills figures show a peak in the number of accidental fire deaths and injuries over the festive period, it's clear that without care some of our favorite Christmas trimmings have the potential to leave festive celebrations in ruin. Cooking, drinking and faulty or flammable decorations are among the biggest festive fire risks.

Unattended cooking is one of the biggest causes of accidental house fires through the year, and the distractions of a crowded house at Christmas can often result in cooking being left unattended. The added influence of alcohol means that it's even more important to stay alert while preparing the turkey dinner.

Also while no Christmas party would be complete without a few decorations, dry Christmas trees, flammable decorations and wrapping paper can all act as extra fuel for a fire sparked by overheated sockets, faulty fairy lights or unattended candles.

Warning given over portable heater safety

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service is supporting a national campaign by Fire Kills and Electrical Safety First to highlight the potential dangers of portable heaters.

Evidence from across the country shows that portable heaters pose a real fire risk if not used properly, with vulnerable, elderly people most in danger. We would urge anyone wanting to warm their home in this way to take particular care of the type of heater used and to follow our advice on staying safe.”

Top tips include:

- Never leave portable heaters unattended or keep them on when you go to sleep.
- Ensure that heaters are positioned well away from anything that could knock them over.
- Keep heaters at least a metre away from combustible materials, such as curtains, soft furnishings or paper.
- Never buy second-hand halogen heaters.
- Never power a halogen heater from an extension lead, as these can easily be overloaded and cause a fire.
- Regularly inspect your heaters and don't use anything that appears to have been damaged.
- Make sure you have working smoke alarms and test them regularly.

Some households will qualify for a free home fire safety check from Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service. To find out more, call 0800 389 7849 or visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk

- Electrical Safety First is a charity dedicated to reducing deaths, injury and damage caused by electricity. For more information, visit www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

