



**Wiltshire
Fire & Rescue
Service**

Briefing report for Chippenham; Corsham and Malmesbury Community Area Boards



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.wiltsfire.gov.uk or contact the following people:

	<u>Manager / Department</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>email</u>
Operational matters	Kit WATSON Chippenham, Corsham, Malmesbury Station Hub		kit.watson@wiltsfire.gov.uk
Partnership and community engagement issues	Michael Franklin (Wiltshire Council Area)	07919 306037	mike.franklin@wiltsfire.gov.uk
Home fire safety visits and for talks and visits	Community safety department	0800 389 7849	www.wiltsfire.gov.uk and then complete the on line request

Message from Station Manager Kit WATSON

In the Malmesbury, Chippenham and Corsham areas December was a relatively quiet month compared to the previous year. This was a welcome contrast to November which saw an increased number of serious incidents. Crews continued to respond to a variety of incidents ranging from animal rescues to serious road crashes.

After a quiet Christmas Day; New Years Day was busier across the county. In our area crews from Avon FRS and Wiltshire FRS attended a roof fire on the Wiltshire border at Burton and managed to prevent the fire spreading to the rest of the building.

Prevention activities continued with seasonal messages of safety in the home concentrating on heating, candles and electrical standards for Christmas lights and gifts.

An increasing seasonal fire hazard is the popularity of Chinese lanterns.

Protection activities continued. A review of waste sites was carried out following a series of large and small incidents at waste sites across Wiltshire.

Two historic public houses were signed off after rebuilding works due to serious fires. Fire safety work continues in collaboration with council officers and developers on the Royal Arthur development and the Corsham Campus.

Evacuation drills at local care homes were supported by crews and fire safety officers. Schools will be contacted in the Malmesbury, Chippenham and Corsham areas to be offered a similar service in the New Year.

We continue to look for new recruits as On Call firefighters who live or work close to the stations. Malmesbury and Corsham stations will be running recruitment Open Days early in the New Year. In the meantime anyone interested in supporting their community in this way should visit their station on their training night (Monday for Chippenham and Corsham, Wednesday for Malmesbury).

On-call firefighters needed in Malmesbury

If you live or work in Malmesbury, and are interested in becoming an on-call firefighter, then Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service wants to hear from you!

More people are needed to provide fire cover for Malmesbury and the surrounding communities. On-call firefighters respond to a pager when a 999 call is made locally, and cover is needed at all times.

Contracted hours can vary, but on-call personnel usually make themselves available for between 48 and 120 hours per week. Between them, each fire station team will provide cover for weekdays, evenings, nights and weekends.

Malmesbury firefighters drill at the town's fire station in Gloucester Road every Monday evening.

Watch Manager Chris Harvey said: "The team at Malmesbury is really committed to helping the community, but we do need more people to join us, especially offering day cover. This open evening is a chance for anyone interested in being a firefighter to have a chat with us but also try out different things, such as wearing breathing apparatus or using the hydraulic rescue equipment."

He added: "On-call firefighters receive the same training and development as whole time colleagues, and we can be called to all sorts of emergencies, including fires, road traffic collisions, animal rescues and flooding. The pay does vary, depending on how much cover you give, but it is fantastically rewarding to be a part of your community and to be in a position to

help people.”

In order to be on-call, 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 being a firefighter in Malmesbury and can’t attend the event on 14 January, visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/workingforus

Significant step taken on road to combination

The Combination Order to bring together Wiltshire & Swindon Combined Fire Authority and Dorset Fire Authority has been submitted to the Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP.

Subject to a period of consultation, and the Secretary of State finding no need for an enquiry into the merits of merger, it is expected that the Combination Order will be made in February 2015. The required legislation will then be passed by the end of March 2015, allowing the new Fire Authority to come into being on 1 April 2016.

At recent meetings of the two existing Fire Authorities , ‘Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority’ was adopted as the name of the new administrative body.

A key concern raised during the public consultation process was that there should be parity in the number of Elected Members representing Wiltshire and Swindon, and those representing Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole, and this has been resolved quite amicably. The new Fire & Rescue Authority will have 30 members, with 15 from each geographical county – although this can be reviewed by the new body in the future.

Shadow governance arrangements for the transition to the new Authority have also been agreed, with defined Terms of Reference adopted by Elected Members in both Wiltshire and Dorset.

At the heart of the new combined Fire & Rescue Authority will be a purpose-built community safety centre, which will also act as a ‘virtual headquarters’. The Government has granted £5.54 million from its Fire Transformation Fund to support the construction of this facility, with money also available to align ICT between the existing Services and support other transition costs.

A project team is now scoping potential sites and we are also liaising with partners, including other emergency services and local authorities, to see what additional benefits can be realised through this scheme.

A key element of combination was the equalisation of council tax precepts. There have been many discussions with DCLG and, alongside more favourable finances due to local tax base increases, both Treasurers, Clerks, Chairs, CFOs and Authorities have been assured that the revised financial projections make combination both viable and desirable.

Michael Franklin

Partnerships & Community Engagement Manager(Wiltshire Council area)

January 2015

