



Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service briefing for Royal Wootton Bassett & Cricklade and Marlborough Community Area Boards - July 2015

The aim of this article; which is one in a series, is to provide a benchmark of information to allow you to understand the changes which are occurring in the local fire service.

For various reasons Wiltshire FRS managers do not see your area the same way you or our partners might. I hope this first article helps explain this,

The fire service map of Wiltshire looks like this.

Six communities, comprising 4 stations, each 'community' run by a Station Manager. This recently changed from 9 communities to release more managers to work on the Dorset & Wiltshire FRS's combination.

Our boundaries do not match Community Area Boards or other divisions.

For example what we think of as our 'station grounds' is very different from the Community Area Board areas.

Our areas are defined by historically which fire station would arrive first. This is now out of date but still helps us decide which station or community is responsible for the work which needs doing.



What we do:

Prevention, Protection, Response

We aim to work with you and our partners to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening, help people protect themselves if they do happen, and to respond quickly with rescues and firefighting when all else has failed.

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People, Property, Environment

Saving lives is our core aim but we also work to protect property and the environment.

It is no wonder we seem to turn up everywhere.

This series of articles is mostly about the people who work at stations (because that is what I do) but we have other staff, such as Mike Franklin and Graham Weller, that do nothing but promote



prevention; protection, partnership working and community engagement. They are much more reliable when attending pre-planned events and meetings because they don't have to drop everything to attend emergencies!

How do the stations do that?

To provide the best service possible within our financial limits we have several ways of staffing our stations.

We have about 500 fire fighting staff trained to attend incidents with about 200 on duty at any one time.

When not attending incidents or training they support Prevention and Protection work.

- Some stations are staffed 24hrs a day 7 days a week. They can maintain more specialist skills, respond quickly day or night and can carry out prevention and protection work whenever it is needed.
- Some stations are staffed during the day 7 days a week. They can maintain more specialist skills, respond quickly during the day and carry out prevention and protection work during the day.
- Some stations include staff who work during office hours Monday to Friday. Work by these staff concentrates on Prevention and Protection work
- All except one station in Wiltshire relies for some or its entire staff on people with other jobs who respond from home or work. This 'On Call' system is very cost effective but means that they are slower to respond and not available to carry out as much prevention and protection work. It is also increasingly difficult to find people to do this type of emergency response.

In the 'community of fire stations' covering the Royal Wootton Bassett; Swindon, Marlborough and Ramsbury areas there are two stations with On Call staff, one station staffed 24 hours a day and one station with a crew available on station during the day with On Call staffing the rest of the time.

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New Legislation – Private Landlords

Wilts FRS have commenced a new project involving private landlords. New laws will require the fitting of smoke alarms on every level in the rental property. If there is a solid fuel appliance in the property then a CO alarm must also be fitted.

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This new legislation comes into place on the 1st of October 2015 and the Government has provided funding to every Fire & Rescue Service to enable restricted numbers of smoke and CO alarms to be issued on a 'first come' basis free to Private landlords who meet the requirements. The alarms can be collected from Swindon; Trowbridge and Salisbury Fire Stations. Landlords will need to complete the form on our website where other information regarding collection can be found at www.wiltshirefire.gov.uk . The forms need to be completed prior to collecting the alarms.

Combination News

The first full meeting of the new Shadow Fire Authority took place on 23 June. With just nine months before the new Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service comes into being, staff at both existing FRSs are busy developing structures, policies, procedures and systems.

One of the outcomes from the combination will be the construction of a safety centre in the Swindon area on a site yet to be decided by the Fire Authority. The resources for this project have come from the Government transformation fund and will provide a Safety Centre for the people of Wiltshire. This will be a long term project and at the moment I cannot give any more detail but if you wish to look at the educational and community facilities offered by these types of premises in Dorset please take a look at www.Streetwise.org.uk

It has also been agreed to site the new Dorset & Wilts FRS HQ strategic hub in the Wiltshire Councils Community Campus the Five Rivers centre, Salisbury. This hub will accommodate the Chief Fire Officer and his senior management team and will have conference and meeting room facilities together with work places for other members of staff.

Water for fire fighting:

A recent fire within the RWB & Cricklade Community Area caused a Parish Council to question the FRS ability to fight fire with reduced mains water pressure or a lack of water. The following is a response provided by Station Manager Paul Jarney stationed at Marlborough who has responsibility for RWB fire station.

" In the event of a fire within a location suffering from low water pressure or lack of water supplies, the Fire Service would adopt the following:

Each Fire appliance carries approx. 1800ltrs of water - enough to easily tackle a fire in a domestic property.

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In the event of additional water being required at a larger incident, this can be provided in a number of ways – one is the use of Hydrants to augment the supply, locations of which are electronically stored on our mobile data terminals. If these are of low pressure, a request can be made to the appropriate water board to increase the pressure for emergency purposes. For some industrial units, the operation of a meter bypass will also increase the flow as it is not restricted to going through the meter.

Additionally, we may request additional Fire appliances to attend and also have dedicated water carriers which provide 9000ltrs of water each. This water can be “dumped” in dams and then ferry back and forth to refill as demand requires.

In addition to all of this, each appliance has the ability to lift water from other sources such as ponds/pools/pits/rivers/lakes etc. in the event of not being able to get the appliance near these sources; there are portable pumps available to manually carry to these locations.

Michael FRANKLIN

Partnerships & Community Engagement Manager(Wiltshire Council area)

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