



## **South West Wiltshire Area Board 21st November**

A busy period for everyone following a very hot and dry summer, seeing crews dealing with large heath fires in very demanding conditions.

Despite this the teams that form part of South Wiltshire continue to strive forward in making gains in their activities in and around their community. Some examples for you:

- Safe & Well-Being Visits increase on a monthly basis
- Members of Red Watch will attend Salisbury Cathedral in Nov in recognition of their efforts during the chemical attacks.
- Hosting NHS Blood Donation at the fire station in Salisbury in October and the New Year
- Working with local Parishes with their operational Flood Working Group
- Amesbury Fire Station will host a Recruitment Drive at a local supermarket
- Teams will attend local events such as Cancer Awareness Event at Salisbury, Wiltshire Council continue to supply event details for community events.
- Remembering those that were lost on Remembrance Sunday

With unseasonable highs and a possible expectation of cold snaps through the winter months it's time to think about how to stay safe in your home.



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE**

## 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.

It is not enough to use a vacuum cleaner and you should make sure that your chimney or flue is inspected regularly.

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

The following safety advice should always be followed when lighting an open fire or woodburning stove:

- Don't use flammable liquids such as petrol or paraffin to light your fire.
- Don't burn excessive amounts of paper or rubbish.
- Don't overload the fire with fuel.

When the fire is alight, check the loft space occasionally to make sure there is no smoke leaking from cracks, defective brickwork or mortar joints.

**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.
- 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 Safe and Well visit is a totally free service offered by Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service.

We'd like to visit you in your home, at a convenient time to see what we can do together to make you safer. We can also have a conversation with you around improving your health and well-being.

We will fit free smoke alarms where required and offer advice to make you and your family safer and healthier in your 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

Anyone applying for a FREE Safe and Well visit will be assessed and prioritised. On the outcome of a few simple questions the service will be able to determine those most at risk and a visit will be arranged. Some simple questioning might be:

*Does only one adult live at the property?*

*Would anyone living in the property have difficulty in escaping the property in the event of a fire?*

*Does anyone living within the property have any impairments (Physical or Mental)?*

*Does anyone within this property hoard?*

*Has the occupier been discharged from hospital in the last 4 weeks or use medical oxygen?*

*Does this property have no smoke detectors or old smoke detectors?*

*Is anyone living at the property a smoker?*

*Is anyone living at the property over 65 years old?*

*Is anyone living at the property over 85 years old?*

*Are portable/plug in heaters used in the property?*

*Do you consider yourself or anyone in the property as vulnerable?*

**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.

## Thatched Properties



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.

Thatch fires are typically attended by in excess of 50 firefighters, at least eight appliances and often for over 24 hours. The National Society of Master Thatchers estimate that the average cost of a thatch fire is in excess of £45,000.

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](#).



# Recruitment

## On-Call Recruitment(RDS)

Recruitment is still in progress due to the continuing ebb and flow of staff. Reports that there are no major concerns is promising but Amesbury (RDS) staffing levels could be higher. A positive drive is underway to try and resolve this shortfall. Currently Amesbury provide fairly good coverage throughout the day.

Salisbury (RDS) have a good working relationship with the Wholetime Duty System(WDS) and still maintain a very good level of availability whilst displaying a very healthy attitude towards their work. Wilton (RDS) continue to provide good coverage but still need to recruit a few more people so that they reach capacity.

The service is still moving to new method of payment for its on-call staff. This will be a salary based scheme rather than utilising a retaining fee. This means on call staff will be rewarded for the cover they give rather than the incidents they attend. It will cost the service more money, but it is believed that it will result in better appliance availability.

## **Recruitment campaign**

If anyone is interested in becoming an On Call Firefighter, visit the webpage; <https://www.dwfire.org.uk/working-for-us/> or pop in the station for a chat on Monday evenings between 7pm and 9pm (Salisbury) or Wednesday evenings 7pm – 9pm (Wilton and Amesbury).

Your local station is recruiting On-call (retained) firefighters are ordinary people doing extraordinary work – they are men and women who may have other jobs or responsibilities as well as their vital role with the Fire & Rescue Service. On-call firefighters are part-time staff who make themselves available for emergency call-outs depending on their other commitments. They are usually contracted for between 48 and 120 hours per week, but this can vary. Between them, each fire station team will provide cover for weekdays, evenings, nights and weekends.

## **How many firefighters are on-call?**

Some 60% of firefighters in Dorset and Wiltshire work on an on-call basis, making them hugely important to both the Service and the communities that they serve. Of our 50 stations, the majority are crewed only by on-call firefighters and on-call staff work alongside their wholetime colleagues at many of our other stations.



## **Who can be an on-call firefighter?**

Our on-call staff come from all walks of life: they may be employed, self-employed, parents at home or students. Some work in building or allied trades, whilst others are shop assistants, farmers, typists, factory workers or managers.

What they all have in common is self-reliance, confidence, respect, enthusiasm, team spirit and a willingness to be ready for anything when they are alerted to an emergency. On-call and wholtime firefighters are expected to meet the same entry standards and they receive the same training and development to enable them to work to common standards.

## **Who can apply?**

You can find out more about the role and current vacancies through these pages, but key requirements for applicants are:

- You must be at least 18 years old when you join us (you can apply once you are 17½)
- You must be able to respond and attend the fire station within five minutes (this can vary slightly dependant on location)
- You must have a good standard of physical fitness
- You must have the right to work in the UK If you are unsure if you can apply

## 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.

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



**Total Fire Calls for Salisbury Fire station;  
September**

Category	Incidents
False Alarm	33
Fire	16
Special Service	15
<b>Total</b>	

**October – not available as the month had not completed at the time of submitting, they will be included in the next area board report.**

Category	Incidents
False Alarm	30
Fire	6
Special Service	7
<b>Total</b>	

**Availability of Wholetime (1<sup>st</sup>) appliance;**

100%

**Availability of On-Call (2<sup>nd</sup>) appliance;**

March %

Appliance	Day	Night	Average
31P2	82.8	87.7	85.25

## **Points of Interest for the Salisbury Station and neighbouring stations**

### **Wilton & Amesbury**

- Delivery of the new ALP will occur in the New Year and staff will be trained in how to operate it which members becoming in-house instructors to ensure competency and professionalism.
- Delivery of the Technical Rescue Vehicle has occurred and on-going training in both Water Rescue & Large Animal Rescue will enhance the response of the station.
- Wilton will become a Wading Response Team in the New Year – training has been programmed in.
- The proposed works for a Command Training Suite has begun at Salisbury. This will ensure that Operational Commanders are trained and assessed so that they meet the demands of an Incident.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) They will be carrying out reality testing at most of our fire stations, and our protection and prevention offices, as well as interviewing SLT members, heads of department and other members of staff. HMICFRS update - fieldwork visit 19 to 23 November This work begins on Monday 19 November and concludes on Friday 23 November. A hot debrief will be delivered by HMICFRS inspectors on Wednesday 28 November.
- Amesbury will continue with their recruitment drive with Have a go Day planned for the New Year. An advert placed in a local magazine – Stonehenge Trader, will also advertise On-Call-Recruitment in December.
- Salisbury & Amesbury are working with The Trussell Trust and will be holding emergency food boxes over the Christmas Period. - [www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)

## **Community Safety Plan**

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