



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
WOKING**

SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

26 MARCH 2012

KEY ISSUE

This report outlines the major strands of activity being undertaken within Woking by the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) team based at Woking Fire Station.

SUMMARY

The report contains information on the various activities undertaken by the Borough Team to reduce the risk from fire and road traffic collisions to the residents of Woking, including direct contact, public education programmes and campaigns.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to recognise the achievements of the local team.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Woking continues to be a safe place to live, which is reflected in the following performance figures.
- 1.2 There were 111 primary fires in the year April 2011 - Feb 2012. This represents around a 8% reduction on the previous year. There were 76 deliberate fires in Woking, which again sees around a 10% reduction on the previous year's figures.
- 1.3 There have been 24 fires in non residential premises during the last year. This is slightly higher than the previous year but is still a remarkably low figure overall given the commercial property in the Woking area.
- 1.4 The total number of accidental fires in dwellings for the year 2011 -12 is 34, a slight decrease on the previous year's total. This is still a low number given the concentration of property in the Woking area and the management team have worked hard over the year to keep this figure low with targeted campaigns and other community works in identified areas.
- 1.5 Deliberate fires in vehicles were reduced from the previous year to 8 incidents. This represents a decrease of around 50%.
- 1.6 Hoax calls are continuing their downward trend with 7 calls this year against the 13 calls received last year.
- 1.7 False alarms from Automatic Fire Detection systems reduced by around 37% to 95 calls compared with 148 recorded last year. This again represents one of the best performances in the county.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 **Road Traffic Casualties** - Following additional funding from all eleven Boroughs in the last financial year the Service's award-winning Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) event continues to be an unqualified success. Personnel from Woking fire station have also continued to deliver the 'Lifecut' events at the station – these days reflect the SDSA and FF4AD (Fire fighter for a day) methodologies and continue to improve road safety and vehicle awareness amongst young people.
- 2.2 **Schools' education programme** This is an ongoing programme of fire safety education for school children, with classroom-based input in years 2, 5, and 8. This is backed up by the education carried out by station personnel both at local schools and at the fire station. These visits occur two or three times a week as a rule.
- 2.3 **Wildfire** - Comprehensive fire plans have been updated for all commons in the borough and are available to operational crews via the mobile data platform carried on all front line appliances. I am pleased to report that the new off road fire-fighting vehicles (Unimogs) are operationally available in the Service. They have been used very successfully several times this year already and attended the large incident at Swinley Forest in the summer period of 2011.

- 2.4 Calls to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA)** - Following on from the introduction of Call Challenge system introduced on 1st January 2008 for dealing with AFA's at commercial premises calls to this type of incident continue to decline. When operational crews do attend such incidents they will discuss with the owners/occupiers methods for reducing such calls in the future. All such incidents are monitored and persistent activations at any particular premise are dealt with in an escalating process culminating if necessary in enforcement action.
- 2.5 Community Safety Works** - Woking continues to be proactive in delivering its community safety messages. In my view some of its works lead the way for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in improving Community Safety. Successes last year have included targeted Home Fire safety Visit (HFSV) campaigns, Lifecut, FF4AD and good partnership working across many different aspects of our work.
- 2.6 Youth Engagement Scheme** - There have now been 8 highly successful schemes run in the West Area, which includes Woking. In total the last year saw 9 young people referred to the courses and three of these graduated. Whilst this is a good ratio of referred young people to those graduating, there needs to be more referrals coming from the Woking area and this is something that the prevention team with Mark Taylor will be working on over the coming months. The effect on the young people that complete this course is very positive and often sees them, for example, return to full time education.
- 2.7 Firefighter for a Day** – Woking run numerous FF4AD events with over 80 young people participating last year. The scheme is carefully targeted and reflects the lessons taught in the Youth Engagement Scheme.
- 2.8 Schools Education** – The changes to the prevention team at Reigate will possibly see the suspension of the schools education programme for the next two years. In this time firefighters will be trained to ensure that the programme can be re-launched successfully, possibly in September 2013. Locally Woking personnel will continue to ensure that carefully targeted safety messages and education programmes are delivered to those most in need.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1** The Service has consulted – where possible face to face and where not electronically - with Members and partners to ensure the community safety initiatives in Woking continue to target priority areas and contribute to our aim of making Surrey safer. Whilst we deliver the borough plan each year we would like to see as much input as possible from partners to maximise its success.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Currently planned initiatives will be met from within existing budgets of Surrey Fire and Rescue. These initiatives have been enhanced however with the purchase of an 'events toolkit', funded by a member from another borough and we now present a more professional image and deliver a much more powerful message at the events that we attend. I would like to enhance our education abilities even further with the purchase of road traffic collision education equipment (for example a reactions tester) for use by our personnel and other equipment and would therefore like to be able to approach members in the coming months to assist with this.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All initiatives, campaigns and operational procedures will be subject of an Equality Impact Assessment. There are no equality implications directly related to this report

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 SFRS is an active member of the Safer Woking Partnership and contributes to a range of initiatives and campaigns within Woking intended to achieve a reduction in crime and disorder particularly in relation to arson and vehicle crime.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Woking Borough Plan for 2012/13 will deliver community risk reduction, partnership working and agreed priorities within the Woking area.
- 7.2 Members asked to recognise high performance by Woking personnel in 2011-12

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members to be aware of past performance and support the planned initiatives in Woking over the coming year.

9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 Members asked to support borough plan for 2010-11 (available from http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccwspages.nsf/LookupWebPagesByTITLE_RTF/Woking+borough+team?opendocument)

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Woking Borough Plan 2011/12