Community Newsletter

Winter Edition 2026

Cannock Chase

Welcome

Welcome to our latest community newsletter. As we enter the new year, we anticipate significant challenges for us here at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Recent changes to our funding mean we expect to receive substantially less government grant over the next three years. This is off the back of Government funding shortfalls over the past two years. To help offset this reduction, the Staffordshire Commissioner is currently seeking residents' views on a proposed £5 increase in Council Tax. This consultation comes at a time when demand for our services is rising, as outlined on page 3 of this newsletter.

Over the years we have already made a number of efficiencies to make our organisation as lean as possible, with minimal impact to the public. Therefore, making further efficiencies isn't going to be easy. That said we will rise to the challenge and we will work hard to continue to deliver the best possible service for the people of Staffordshire; keeping the safety of our firefighters and communities at the core of everything we do. Thanks for reading and enjoy the rest of this latest edition.

Chief Fire Officer,
Rob Barber

BE WARM. BE SAFE.

Be warm, Be Safe this winter.

We're urging people to stay safe during the cold weather snap this winter in anticipation of a seasonal increase in house fires and rescue incidents around frozen water.

Between November 2024 and February 2025 last year, we dealt with over 150 accidental house fires in Staffordshire, which is why it is so important to Be Warm, Be Safe this winter.

Portable heaters should always be kept away from clothing and other materials and should not be plugged into overloaded sockets. They can overheat easily and catch alight.

If you're using a chimney, make sure to get it swept and to use a fire guard, whilst ensuring fuel is stored far away from naked flames.

We have successfully raised more than **£11,000 for charity** during three station open days.

Events were held at Stafford, Tamworth and Sandyford Community Fire Stations and in total, **£11,632 was raised** in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity.

Almost **10,000 visitors** enjoyed meeting our firefighters, watching live safety demos and enjoying fairground rides, face painting and inflatables.

The Fire Fighters Charity provides timely, clinical care and wellbeing support to members of the UK's fire services and their families.

Community Engagement Officer, Adam Brunt, said: *"Our open days in 2025 were a great success and saw 9,500 people attend our stations and enjoy everything we had on offer.*

"I am delighted that we were able to raise so much money for The Fire Fighters Charity, who work tirelessly to support firefighters and staff across the country.

"Our next open days are planned for 20 June and 11 July in Burton and Longton and I hope this year's events are bigger and better than ever."

Retired firefighter raises more than £50k for charity

A retired firefighter in Staffordshire has raised **£50,000 for the Royal British Legion** by selling poppies around Remembrance Day, taking his grand total to a whopping **£121,900** over the last four years.

Kelvin Chell, who served Staffordshire communities for more than 50 years, sold poppy badges with distinctive designs across a number of different locations to raise money for charity.

In 2024, he raised an impressive **£43,000** but in 2025 he beat that by around **£7,000**, finishing with a grand total of **£50,007.**

Kelvin recently presented the cheque to representatives from the Royal British Legion alongside Chief Fire Officer, Rob Barber.

Kelvin said: ***"It has been an honour to raise so much money for a great cause with this yearly campaign, and I'm so pleased at how well the poppies have sold yet again.***

"This was the fourth year of selling the poppies and this year I introduced nine new designs, which were really popular.

"Thanks to all those who supported my fundraiser, the money will go a long way in supporting serving and ex-serving military personnel and their families."

We're recruiting for on-call firefighters

Have you always wanted to make a difference in your local community?

We're after on-call firefighters at a number of our stations across the county. On-call firefighters live close to their local fire station and head there, from their home or work location, when their alerter goes off.

Shepherdess and on-call firefighter, Katie Stanley, balances both caring for a flock and communities across Abbots Bromley. She has encouraged others to consider applying to be an on-call firefighter.

Her role with us fits alongside her day job which sees her care for around 300 sheep.

Katie said: "Working as an on-call firefighter fits really well around my daily sheep activities, I just carry an alerter and when it goes off, I head straight to the station.

"It's really flexible with having to book off when I need to as well. For example, some of my sheep escaped recently through a broken fence and I was able to book off, sort out my sheep, then book back on.

"It's perfect to fit around your lifestyle whilst earning some extra money and doing something that can help the community.

"I am also dyslexic, and everyone has been really supportive which has helped me gain confidence in all areas which helps my home life too."

Anyone over the age of 18, who lives or works close to an on-call station can apply to become an on-call firefighter, and all applicants will go through the same recruitment and training process.

To find out more about the role and to apply, visit our website.

Outdoor fires increase by

70%

We've dealt with a **70 per cent increase** in the number of outdoor fires in Staffordshire in 2025.

The statistics show there were 1,828 outdoor fires from April to September 2025 compared to 1,076 the same period in the previous year. This has resulted in a 21 per cent increase in the overall number of incidents we've responded to.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Michelle Hickmott, said: *"Unfortunately, despite lots of education and warnings, we still had lots of fires start that were avoidable, either because they were accidentally started by people being careless or they were started deliberately.*

"As our summer periods are becoming warmer, we will continue to work hard to help people understand the risks of outdoor fires to protect our communities and our environment.

"As we move into the winter months, the focus will be more on home safety, particularly in relation to how people heat their home, reminding people of the importance of fires, heaters log burners and chimneys being operated with care and serviced regularly.

"Again, a lot of fires are avoidable, so we'd urge people to just take extra care to ensure they are not putting themselves, or their family, at risk."

Performance information

This section provides our performance information over a six month period for the local area. Full year performance statistics for the county can be found on our website, search "Statement of Assurance."

All Attended Incidents	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Total
Cannock Chase	66	68	63	75	70	53	395

These figures detail the total number of incidents firefighters attended, these incidents can vary but typically include business fires, house fires, outdoor fires, road traffic collisions and animal rescues.

Accidental Dwelling Fires	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Total
Cannock Chase	1	3	3	2	1	4	14

These figures detail the number of accidental house fires firefighters attended. The most common cause of these incidents is cooking, however other common causes are electrical fires and cigarettes not fully put out.

Road Traffic Collisions	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Total
Cannock Chase	9	7	6	5	2	7	36

These figures detail the number of road traffic collisions firefighters attended. Firefighters don't attend all road traffic collisions however of the ones they do they are either required to make the vehicles safe or at the most serious collisions they often have to cut casualties free from their vehicles using specialist cutting equipment.

Safe and Well Visits	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Total
Cannock Chase	134	125	78	91	111	120	659

These figures detail the number of safe and well visits. A safe and well visit involves a member of staff going into the homes of the most vulnerable to talk to them about fire safety and put measures in place, such as smoke alarms, to improve their safety.

In an emergency always dial 999.

General enquires: **0300 330 1000** (freephone)
Safe and Well: **0800 0241 999**
For people who are deaf or hard of hearing text: **07528 983 101**