

The Fire Brigades Union South West Region

Avon – Cornwall – Devon & Somerset – Dorset – Gloucestershire – Wiltshire

The professional voice of your local fire and rescue service





SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE

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The recent devastating floods in our region stretched the fire service to the limit. In Devon & Somerset alone fire crews answered 1,357 emergency calls and made 218 rescues *in only 5 days*. Other fire and rescue services in the region were similarly effected – the professionalism and commitment of everyone in the service was there for all to see.

It should be obvious to everyone that in situations like this, which are becoming more regular, we are working to the limit and, in some cases, beyond. **But despite this your local fire and rescue service still faces unsustainable cuts.**

The Prime Minister had pledged that there would be no cuts in frontline services, but this is not true. Cuts to fire service budgets being made under the coalition are so serious that even the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) has said *"CFOA is clear that the current situation cannot continue without risking the long term safety of the public."*

Budget cuts are placing front line appliances, like the aerial platform on the cover of this leaflet, under threat. These appliances are vital to public safety and were used to fight the fire at the Grade 1 listed Luckington Manor in Wiltshire, as well as rescuing a man from a Cheltenham flat and dealing with a house fire in Trowbridge, amongst many other incidents.

Firefighter posts are being cut and some brigades are trying to cover up job losses by asking firefighters to live at fire stations for up to 4 days at a time! This type of system would take the fire service back to the Victorian age and the FBU has condemned it as draconian.

Your local fire service deals with incidents and saves lives every day. From house fires – such as the recent rescue of a woman in Weymouth from a smoke filled flat, to dealing with large scale simultaneous incidents – such as the large barn fire near Sherborne, the fire in the Cliff House Hotel in Bournemouth and the fire at Lytchett Minster School – all dealt with by the same fire service at the same time!

We all work closely together and share what resources we have – during the floods in December boats and crews from Gloucestershire were deployed in Devon & Somerset; and the High Volume Pump from Avon was sent to Bodmin fire station in Cornwall. **But the cuts being planned by the government will increase the risk to the safety of both front line staff fighting fires and members of the public.**

In light of recent events it should be obvious that the fire and rescue service requires further investment to deal with the situations we face. Everyone should now be able to see that cuts in the fire service would compromise public safety. *Please support your local fire service – tell your local MP that it's time for a change of direction:*

NO TO CUTS!