

**Additional Update: Bonfires on Public Land**

(Recommendations 1-4: signed-off as fully achieved in March 2023)

<b>Recommendation 1:</b>	<b>To supplement Cleveland Fire Brigade’s (CFB) annual promotion of fire safety ahead of the bonfire season, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) reviews its own public engagement approach to reinforce this messaging across all available communication mechanisms, emphasising dangers of bonfires and impact on local residents.</b>
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Community Safety team continue to work closely with Cleveland Fire Brigade and planning for Mischief and Bonfire period has already started. Case Management Officers have put together a Problem Solving Plan to start addressing the main issues well in advance. This includes redesigning an information leaflet and developing joint messages to be communicated across CFB, Police and SBC social media platforms. Last year’s social media campaign was very successful and we aim to repeat/better that performance with the 2023 campaign.

**(A draft of the leaflets are included at the end of this document).**

**(Planned letter to be sent out to identified locations, 2023 included at the end of this document)**

**(Planned letter for Primrose Hill Joint Operation 2023 included at the end of this document)**

Case Management Officers and CFB will jointly attending Eco pop up shops at Arlington Park in the run up to bonfire season in order to educate residents on fire safety, promote the message to attend planned, scheduled events and to inform them of the implications of fly tipping and bonfires and provide guidance on waste removal etc.

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<b>Recommendation 2:</b>	<b>In terms of communicating to the wider public, SBC considers adopting the Shrewsbury Town Council approach in emphasising a zero tolerance towards unauthorised bonfires (including contact routes for permission to light a bonfire on public land and the potential consequences for failing to seek permission).</b>
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**Stockton Borough Council Partnership Bonfire Strategy 2023**

**Aims and objectives.**

To reduce the harm and antisocial behaviour associated with the Mischief and Bonfire period in 2023, through collaboration with the community, raising education and awareness, and working with partners to keep people safe.

1. Education and awareness.
  - a. Identify alternative, organised events taking place on key dates during the period.
  - b. Publicise these events across platforms and with partners.
  - c. Promote responsible behaviour and safe alternatives.
  - d. Provide guidance on legislation and health and safety considerations (bonfires, fireworks etc).
  - e. Promote responsible use of fireworks.
  - f. Make full use of communication methods such as letters, leaflets, social media and the community.
  
2. Community Engagement.
  - a. Encourage local communities to organise safe alternative events.
  - b. Collaborate with partners to support community initiatives.
  - c. Collaborate with the community, schools and partners to spread the message of safety and responsible behaviour throughout the period.
  
3. Enforcement
  - a. Work with partners, particularly CFB and Police to enforce regulations on fireworks and bonfires, including size limitations, clearances and safety precautions.
  - b. Discourage unsafe practices, spelling out the dangers and the likely legal consequences.
  - c. Work with Licensing to enforce Firework legislation to minimise risk.
  
4. Response
  - a. Liaise with Ambulance, CFB and Fire to understand agency responsibilities in case of accidents and emergencies.
  - b. Develop an operational plan for SBC and understand how that fits in with partners and emergency services.

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- c. Work together to understand and mitigate foreseeable risks in the period leading up to Mischief and Bonfire week.
5. Monitoring and Reporting
- a. Ensure incidents are properly recorded and shared between agencies during and after the operation.
  - b. Ensure there is shared situational awareness, particularly on key dates, by having effective communication methods in place between partners and an understanding of each other's responsibilities.
  - c. Record interventions and engagement activity so the operation can be evaluated for effectiveness.
  - d. Hold a structured debrief for shared learning and service improvement.

Potential problem locations have been identified using council and partnership data, and this is a standing agenda item on the Joint Action Group.

Research indicates that no Local Authority area permits unofficial bonfires on land, and only properly organised, licensed and insured events would be sanctioned by the Safety Advisory Group.

We are aware of community events that do take place, some of which have become more popular now there is no Riverside display. There are some safety and environmental concerns regarding bonfire locations, nature of the fireworks and burning of materials. We are engaging with the community, monitoring intelligence and working with police, CFB and housing partners to mitigate some of the issues.

There is an Action Plan and a monthly partnership task and finish group in place and we have considered offering to work with the 'organisers' of one large event that takes place annually, if they can be identified, and attempt an official event. However, it is believed this on its own would not satisfy the community and they would go ahead with their large unofficial bonfire elsewhere in the locality, creating even more of a problem.

**CFB/Police/SBC** will visit individuals believed to be organising or influencing the event and advise them not to use the illegal fireworks or to go ahead with the large bonfire. Safety advice and guidance about safe events will be given, and the likely consequences of something going wrong.

**Licensing/Trading Standards/Police** Any information about illegally held fireworks will be fed back in so that appropriate action can be taken to remove them from use. We will do joint operations to maximise enforcement potential in advance.

Case Management Officers have been tasked with collating information on local organised events across the bonfire period and publishing this across partnership platforms to persuade the public to attend safe, organised events.

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The team targeting problem locations with resident letters, similar to the guidance sent out last year on how to dispose of waste responsibly and safety information on fireworks and bonfires, including reminding people of their legal responsibilities.

We have also secured Home Office funding for Operation Grant – A Port Clarence operation to prevent fly tipping and illegal fires. The operation has already started.

<b>Recommendation 3:</b>	<b>SBC reinforces existing communication arrangements with both CFB and Cleveland Police for them to report details of dispensed combustible materials for collection (both during and outside the bonfire season).</b>
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During the bonfire season CFB and Police have direct access to Control Room via radio and telephone to report any issues. Via ASB funding we are also sourcing five Airwave handsets which will afford even greater interoperability between SBC and police.

An online reporting system is used by all agencies and the public and has proven to be a success as the request can be created at the scene using the online form. This generates a job which can be directly accessed by enforcement to pick up/attend and action.

This has proven to be efficient as it gives the options to include pictures of the waste and pinpoint the location of the waste on a map making it easier for the officer investigating. This has encouraged members of the public to report waste.

This sharing of information is vital and has proven to have a positive impact, although last year there was no reporting mechanism for separating reports from different agencies and sources, we are hoping to use different codes for recording this year which should enable us to demonstrate the different sources. There are email addresses published for prompt removal of combustible material on land owned by Thirteen Housing and to contact Care for Your Area and CFB.

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<b>Recommendation 4:</b>	<b>SBC continues to support CFB and Thirteen Housing Group in undertaking leaflet-drops to identified bonfire hotspot neighbourhoods within the Borough regarding fire safety and reporting routes for anti-social behaviour / associated disorder.</b>
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We continue to work jointly with CFB and Thirteen and have planned operations in Primrose Hill and across identified locations in the run up to Bonfire period. The strategy, aims and objectives is outlined in the previous section and the Operation for Mischief/Bonfire period is currently in draft format pending an information and intelligence update.

Since 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the team are also working alongside Cleveland Police to conduct evidence based ASB patrols in 7 hotspot locations across Stockton, Billingham and Thornaby. A monthly data is completed and sent to the PCC.

There will be a post Autumnus debrief and statistics will be published for the period post operation.

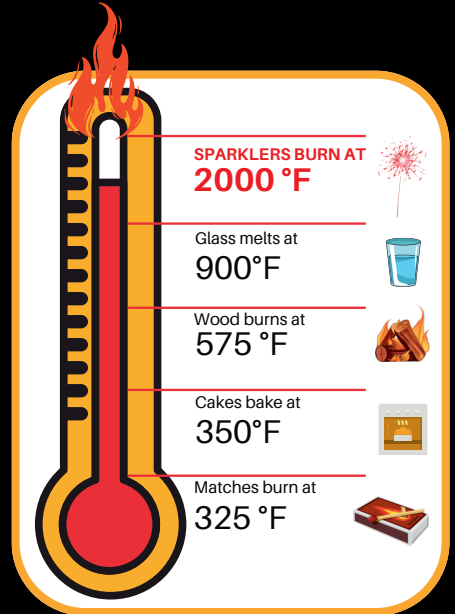
# REMEMBER REMEMBER



## SAFETY FIRST THIS NOVEMBER

- **Be Smart**
- **Be Safe**
- **Be Sensible**

**Don't forget fireworks are explosive and extremely dangerous so remember:**



**Think don't drink** - alcohol and fireworks do not mix



**Stay alert** - always supervise children around fireworks



**Stand back** - keep behind safety cordons



**Four-legged friends** - keep pets indoor



Turn over to find out the Firework Code to stay safe



[www.clevelandfire.gov.uk](http://www.clevelandfire.gov.uk)



# STAY SAFE & FOLLOW THE FIREWORK CODE



- Do not buy fireworks from UNLICENCED retailers..These fireworks may be unsafe and illegal.
- Always keep fireworks in a closed box.
- Take them out one at a time and close the box.
- Never put fireworks in your pocket.
- Be considerate. Let your neighbours know you will be having a display, especially if they are elderly or they have pets or children.
- Avoid setting fireworks off late at night, particularly if it is a school-night.
- Ensure your pets are safe.
- Never go back to a lit firework unless the instructions advise otherwise.
- Never throw fireworks; it is dangerous.
- Light fireworks one at a time, at the end of the fuse, and at arm's length.
- Light sparklers one at a time and wear suitable gloves, even when lighting them.
- Never give sparklers to a child under the age of 5.
- Never throw spent fireworks on a bonfire.

Only buy fireworks that comply with current safety standards.

Carefully follow the instructions on EACH firework.



[www.clevelandfire.gov.uk](http://www.clevelandfire.gov.uk)



# MISUSE OF FIREWORKS COULD RESULT IN A FINE AND PROSECUTED



**Consumer Fireworks (those available to the general public)  
fall into three main categories  
(sometimes referred to as CAT).**

**CAT F1** – Smaller fireworks, some of which are suitable for indoor use and generally have the smallest safety distance.

**CAT F2** – Small to Medium sized fireworks which are suitable for outdoor use only. Generally the minimum safe distance to spectators is 8 meters, although the specific instructions for each firework may state a larger distance, which is why it is important to check.

**CAT F3** – Medium to Large sized fireworks and the highest available to the general public. Generally the minimum safe distance to spectators is 25 meters, although the specific instructions for each firework may state a larger distance, which is why it is important to check.

## WHAT IS FIREWORK MISUSE?

- \* Possessing CAT F1 fireworks whilst aged 15 or under
  - \* Possessing CAT F2 or CAT F3 fireworks whilst aged 17 or under
  - \* Letting off fireworks between 11pm and 7am (midnight on Bonfire Night and 1am on New Years)



# DID YOU KNOW...?

Flytipping and setting bonfires on public land is...

**ILLEGAL**



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

**REPORT**



Flytipping & illegal bonfires to your local council

## Be a FireStopper.

Deliberate fires destroy communities.

Tell us what you know

**FireStoppers.**

**0800 169 5558**

[firestoppersreport.co.uk](http://firestoppersreport.co.uk)

**100% anonymous. Always.**



## WHEELIE BIN... TAKE IT IN!

Wheelie bins can become easy targets. Keep them **secure**, put them out on **day of collection** and bring them back in **as soon as possible.**



Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 1LD  
SAT NAV code: TS19 1UE

Tel: 01642 528439

Email: [Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk)

Date: 16/08/2023

Dear Resident,

## **Bonfire Season**

As we approach bonfire season, the Civic Enforcement Service would like to take this opportunity to remind residents of the appropriate way to store and dispose waste lawfully.

Fly tipping costs local authorities millions of pounds each year to remove but it also has a detrimental impact on both our community and environment. You can help us tackle this problem.

Bonfire season is approaching, and it creates a potential target for people setting deliberate fires which creates an added strain on our emergency Services. Along with the additional strain, fly tipping waste is a criminal offence and can leave you subject to a fine of an unlimited amount and imprisonment of up to 5 years.

Additionally, Stockton Council and Cleveland Fire brigade urge all residents to attend safe, scheduled events and to follow the firework code and to not participate in bonfires on land where no permission has been granted.

## **What if I have waste to remove?**

If you have waste that needs removing, we encourage residents to recycle where possible and utilise the facilities the council have to offer. Care for your area offer a Bulky Waste collection service which can be arranged online at <https://www.stockton.gov.uk> or via telephone 01642 391959.

Your local household Waste Recycling centre **SUEZ Recycling UK**, is located on Haverton Hill Road, TS231PY. There is a booking system in place and slots can be booked on the council's website - <https://digital.stockton.gov.uk/hwrc-bookings>

There are registered waste carriers that can take your waste which can be found on the Waste Carriers Register - <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers> - Just be sure to obtain a receipt from the person you pay to transfer the waste.

Customer address  
Address line one  
Address line two  
Address line three  
Postcode

## **How do I report Fly Tipping, waste accumulation or someone who I believe to not be a waste carrier?**

The above issues can be reported into Civic Enforcement via email on: [Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01642 528439.

We are working closely with Cleveland Fire brigade to prevent any fly tipping occurring and subsequently being set alight for the purpose of this season and to prosecute any offenders and emphasise that these actions have consequences.

This residential area has been highlighted by statistics from SBC and Cleveland Fire Brigade as a location where these incidents of illegal bonfires and waste accumulations have previously taken place. Therefore, we urge anyone who witnesses fly tipping occurring or a waste accumulation in gardens to contact us on 01642 528439 or via email on [Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk) especially with this season approaching.

As a community we can prevent these incidents taking places by conducting the relevant checks, securing our own waste, and reporting any waste accumulation or fly tipping offences promptly. Let's enjoy this season responsibly and protect our community, emergency services and environment.

Yours,

Civic Enforcement - Environmental Crime Co-ordinators.

Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 1LD  
SAT NAV code: TS19 1UE

Tel: 01642 528439

Email: **Civic.Enforcement@stockton.gov.uk**

Date:16/08/2023

Dear Resident,

### **Waste storage and Disposal**

Civic Enforcement Service want to take this opportunity to remind residents of the appropriate way to store and dispose waste lawfully due to an increase in fly tipping in the vicinity and incorrect display of household waste. These incidents are investigated by our Enforcement Officers and can carry a heavy penalty for the perpetrator.

Fly tipping waste is a criminal offence and can leave you subject to a fine of an unlimited amount and imprisonment of up to 5 years. Fly tipping costs local authorities millions of pounds each year to remove but it also has a detrimental impact on both our communities and environment, you can help us tackle this problem in order to improve our quality of life within the locality and community.

Your designated household waste collection days can be located on <https://www.stockton.gov.uk>. Household waste/ wheeled bins can be placed out for collection on dusk the previous day and must be returned to your property by dawn the day of collection. They must be kept within your property boundary at all other times.

As a community and with partnership working in Stockton, agencies such as Cleveland Fire Brigade, Thirteen, and Cleveland Police are working collectively to engage with residents in your locality, supporting community engagements and activities and supporting residents in the development of the area and community.

Enclosed is some useful contact information for residents to be able to seek help with any issues they may be experiencing. Together we can achieve more for our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Civic Enforcement - Environmental Crime Co-ordinators.

*In partnership with*

