

# Who are we?

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is a modern Fire Service bringing two counties together and serving the local authorities of Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole, Swindon and Wiltshire.

We have 50 fire stations serving our local communities and crews are available to respond 24 hours a day.

Our 1,362 staff comprise of:

- 429 wholetime firefighters
- 588 on-call firefighters
- 22 Fire Control operators
- 292 Corporate staff

The organisation has:

- Over 70 emergency appliances
- Two training centres
- One headquarters

In 2016/17 we delivered the following:

## **Being there when you need us**

- Attended 12,474 incidents
- 3,247 fires (919 deliberate)
- 771 accidental fires in the home
- 359 fires in non-domestic buildings
- Rescued 59 people from fires
- Conducted 69 animal rescues

## **Protecting you and the environment from harm**

- 706 fire safety audits
- 1,000+ positive engagements with businesses
- 1,482 building regulation consultations

## **Help to make safer choices**

- 22,000 children received safety messages
- 26 intensive youth courses delivered
- 12,459 safe & well checks
- 16,900 people received road safety messages

We are working for and with our communities to ensure that local people are as safe as they can be.

## Our Visions and Values

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is 'passionate about changing and saving lives'.

Our vision states:

We are much more than a Fire and Rescue Service. We are about helping you to become safer, healthier and to live more independently. Improving your wellbeing and investing in our future generations is central to our way of thinking. We play a key part in supporting our communities and businesses to enable them to grow safely and responsibly.

We have our five priorities:

- **Help you to make safer and healthier choices** – we want you to be more aware about the risks you face, and support you and your business to be safer. We are committed to improving the wellbeing of you and your family.
- **Protect you and the environment from harm** – we will work with you to improve your safety and reduce the effect that day-to-day hazards and risks can have on you and your environment.
- **Be there when you need us** – we will continue to provide a professional and prompt response when an emergency happens.
- **Making every penny count** – we will continue to be a well-respected and trusted service, offering excellent value for money.
- **Supporting and developing our people** – making sure our staff are at the center of everything we do, are well led and have the right knowledge and skills, is crucial to the success of our Fire Service.

## Our Values

To help us deliver these priorities and our vision, we have developed a framework of our values known as RESPECT, which is an acronym for the seven things that we stand for in terms of how we work:

- Responsibility
- Equality
- Support
- Professionalism
- Excellence
- Communication
- Transformation

We recognise that great service is not just about what we achieve but also about how we deliver, so RESPECT runs through everything that we do. To help everyone working for us to have a common understanding of what these words mean in their day to day roles, each of the seven values are underpinned by a set of behaviours and we use these to ensure consistency and to continuously develop the way that we work.

We encourage future candidates to find out how they might work within our RESPECT framework by visiting our website [www.dwfire.org.uk](http://www.dwfire.org.uk) and completing our [RESPECT self-assessment](#) before applying.

## Think you know the role of firefighters, think again...

Firefighting involves much more than putting out fires. We play a crucial role in:

- **Educating** young drivers to prevent accidents and injuries
- **Rescuing** people from road traffic collisions
- **Keeping** our communities safe from fire and other dangers with safe and well visits
- **Supporting** the ambulance service with medical emergencies
- **Educating** children in road and fire safety through school visits and community events
- **Rescuing** people from fast flowing water and protecting properties from flood damage
- **Making** people safer in their places of work by advising business owners on fire safety regulations
- **Rescuing** people from height and confined spaces
- **Providing** specialist animal rescue services

## **Diverse communities served by our diverse workforce**

We respond to a wide range of incidents with our highly trained, highly skilled teams who have a wealth of training, experience and knowledge. The communities we serve can be as diverse as the situations we tackle.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to ensuring that its workforce reflects the community we serve. At the present time this is not the case, as women are under-represented within our operational service and the wider workforce does not reflect the ethnic diversity within our communities.

We value diversity and welcome applications from people from all backgrounds, genders, ethnicities or sexual orientations.

We are an equal opportunities employer and although we require our firefighters to have a good standard of fitness and practical ability, having a disability will not prevent you from applying. We do have our 'Frequently asked Questions' which should be able to answer any questions that you may have regarding disabilities.

## Becoming a firefighter with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

The role of a firefighter has changed over the years, it has developed with the world we live in. Prevention work is a key focus for us, and with more smoke alarms and sprinkler systems in buildings being fitted the element of carrying people out of burning buildings has reduced.

Due to education and modern technology the amount of fires that firefighters attend has lowered over the years. However, with the number of vehicles on the road increasing, there has been a marked rise in road traffic collisions attended by our firefighters.

**Alongside emergency responses, our work also focuses on:**

**Prevention** – Educating our community to be safe in their environment, this is done by:

**Community Safety:** We attend schools, community events, assisted living and work places to give Fire Safety advice in Fire Prevention, by attending schools, community events, assisted living accommodation and work places.

We attend rural areas to assist with advice to farmers, travelling community and areas with a high flood risk. This can also include the recovery of animals and farm equipment which are trapped or in danger of causing harm to themselves or others.

We give advice on boat safety, this can be from canal boats to fishing boats, the advice can include fire safety and water safety. We hold a boat safety week to raise awareness of the incidents that can happen whilst on a vessel.

**Protection** - To enhance safety in public buildings and other spaces. We do this through a team of specialist inspectors, who apply their knowledge and training to ensure that the technical fire safety aspects of commercial building design, and subsequent occupied use, are correctly identified and applied.

We also enforce fire legislation in all commercial premises as far as it applies to general fire safety measures.

To achieve this, our staff will engage in activities that include carrying out fire safety audits of premises subject to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and initiating enforcement action, appropriate to the circumstances, to correct instances of non-compliance where we find it.

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## **The elements of the firefighter require a special type of person:**

### **Do you have what we need?**

Working to help keep our communities safe means you will want to be part of the community and someone who cares about the safety of those around them. Do you have these characteristics?

**Are you professional?**

**Are you a team player?**

**Want to work within our communities?**

**Respect for diversity, with a fair and ethical approach?**

**Do you have physical and mental strength?**

**Are you able to follow orders in stressful emergency situations?**

**Do you have the drive, ability and initiative to work alone?**

**Are you able to work at height and dark confined spaces?**

**If you were able to answer 'Yes' to all of the above, then we have your next career ready and waiting**

## Personal Qualities and Attributes

- **Working with others** – working effectively with a variety of people whether they are in your team or in the community.
- **Commitment to development** – being committed to, and being able to develop yourself and others.
- **Commitment to excellence** – adopts a conscientious and proactive approach to work to achieve and maintain excellent standards.
- **Commitment to diversity and integrity** – understanding and respecting other people's differences and treating people fairly and ethically.
- **Openness to change** – is open to change and actively seeks to support it.
- **Confidence and resilience** – maintains a confident and resilient attitude in highly challenging situations.
- **Effective communication** – communicates effectively both orally and in writing.
- **Problem solving** – understands, recalls, applies and adapts relevant information in an organised systematic way.
- **Situational Awareness** – maintains an active awareness of the environment to promote safe and effective working.



## Recruitment Process

The recruitment procedure has several different stages to its process. We need the best and most committed people to join our team. Every day at work you are required to give 100 percent.

If you are one of the successful applicants to make it through the process you will be rewarded with a competitive salary, fantastic career opportunities, and the chance to work as part of a highly skilled Service, whilst achieving further qualifications and personal goals.

### Stage one – Register Interest, Job Preview, Eligibility

Once you have registered your interest with us, you will be asked some basic personal details which will enable us to communicate with you more effectively. You will also be asked to complete a Realistic Job Preview - this is a questionnaire which presents you with various demands and challenges you may face as a firefighter.

The Realistic Job Preview will help you decide if the role of a firefighter is right for you.

### Stage two – Online Tests

You will be required to complete five initial tests to help with our shortlisting. These tests are completed in five different stages, initially you will be asked to complete the Situational Judgement Test and the Behavioural Style Questionnaire.

The Behavioural Style Questionnaire is about your typical behaviours and the values you bring to your work. It measures 12 personal qualities, attributes, and behaviours relevant to the role of a firefighter.

The Situational Judgement Test consists of 20 scenarios showing a typical situation which a firefighter could face in their role. You will be asked to choose the correct answer out of four options of a multiple choice selection. This test measures five personal qualities and attributes which are important for the role of firefighter.

When you have successfully completed the above tests, you will get an invitation to access three further tests. These are ability tests in relation to Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning and Mechanical Testing which will measure your knowledge of physical and mechanical principles.

We may re-test successful applicants later in the process under exam conditions.

**Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service have outsourced the online testing. Due to this, there will be no images on the screen that relate directly to the service when you are completing these tests.**

### Stage three – Document Checks and Fitness Testing

You will be required to bring all documentation with you to confirm your identity (passport, birth certificate), your driving licence and copies of your qualifications. If you cannot prove your qualifications or identity on the day, you will not be able continue with

the process as you will not have another opportunity later on in the process to present these to us.

You will need to complete our multistage fitness test, also known as the pacer test or bleep test. This is designed to assess your level of fitness and involves running continuously between two points that are 20m apart. The runs are synchronised with a recording, which plays beeps at set intervals. As the tests proceeds, the interval between each run decreases, meaning that you will need to increase your speed over the course of the test.

During the fitness test you will also need to take part a grip strength test. This will involve holding our grip strength tool and clenching your fist, squeezing continuously - this is a pass or fail as you will need to reach a grip strength of 35 in your dominant hand and 33 in your other hand.

### **Stage four – Practical Assessment**

These tests are designed to assess your level of fitness, strength and manual dexterity as well as your level of confidence in simulated exercises.

- Ladder climb  
This is a test of confidence whilst working at height. Candidates must demonstrate the correct 'leg lock' at ground level before commencing the test. Wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including a harness, candidates must ascend a fully extended 13.5 metre ladder to approximately second storey height and demonstrate a 'leg lock'.  
  
The candidate will then be required to lean back with arms outstretched and describe a symbol shown on the floor. The candidate will then descend.
- Casualty evacuation  
This is a test of lower and upper body strength. Candidates in full PPE will be required to drag a 55kg casualty walking backwards (guided by an assessor) around a 30-metre course.
- Equipment assembly  
This is a test designed to assess manual dexterity. Applicants will be given a demonstration of the test before having to assemble and disassemble a number of components to make an item of equipment.
- Ladder extension  
Using a ladder simulator, you will be required to extend and lower the ladder by an integral line (rope) to the required height. This test combines grip and upper body strength to demonstrate your ability to operate a Fire Service ladder.
- Enclosed space  
This is a test of confidence, agility and possible claustrophobia whilst working in an enclosed space. Candidates in full PPE and wearing a Breathing Apparatus facemask will be required to negotiate a measured crawlway within a set time.

Half the route will be with clear vision and the other half with obscured vision. You will be required to perform specific tasks during this test.

- **Ladder lift**

The ladder lift test will simulate the individual and physical demands of lifting and lowering the head of a 13.5 metre ladder back on top of a fire appliance. This is a test of upper and lower body strength. Candidates in full PPE will be required to raise a bar 75cm off the ground to a height of 182cm and back down to the 75cm support. The weight of the bar at the lifting point will start at 5kg. The maximum load to be added is 15kg.

In order to help you prepare for the fitness tests, you will be able to find a 12 week training programme and a further detailed explanation of our fitness standards on our website. You can print this off and use as a training guide.

On the day of the Practical Assessment, you will be fully supervised and will be provided with the appropriate PPE to wear. It is recommended you wear comfortable clothing underneath the PPE that you can move easily in. It is recommended that you wear similar clothing to which you would wear to the gym, such as t-shirt, shorts or leggings and socks.

### **Stage Five – Presentation and Interview**

For this stage you will be asked to initially give a presentation on a topic of your choice but it must fall within the framework assigned to you at the point of invitation to interview. The presentation assesses your ability to stand in front of people and confidently present your information. This is something that our firefighters are required to do regularly when working with the local communities.

After the presentation you will be required to take part in an interview with a panel of representatives from within Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. This will focus on past experiences, your skills and personal attributes which will determine your suitability for the role of a firefighter.

### **Stage Six – Medical Assessment**

You will be invited to visit our Occupational Health Team for a medical and fitness assessment. The medical includes:

- Height
- Weight
- Blood pressure
- Urinalysis (urine tested for various abnormalities)
- Eye test – near and distance vision (with and without spectacles if worn)
- Breathing test (lung function)
- Hearing test (audiometry)
- Fitness assessment

You will be asked questions about your health and any disabilities/medical needs you may have. You will then be seen by an Occupational Health Advisor who will review the test results and may need to examine you.

We do receive many enquiries regarding current and/or past medical issues and cannot give definitive guidance regarding these issues as consultation between the Occupational Health Advisor and GP's will decide if an applicant is suitable to carry out the role of a firefighter. It should be understood that all cases will be viewed individually.

In line with Data Protection Act, we do not divulge any medical information to anyone outside of occupational health without your written consent.

### **Stage Seven – References**

In the course of the process you will be requested to provide references. References must include at least two positions with separate employers and, as a minimum, cover the last three years of your employment and/or training history. Any gaps in the three years will need to be accounted for and verified when we obtain the employment clearances. References will be taken up at the medical stage.

During this stage of the process, we will conduct the basic Baseline Personal Security Standard (BPSS) checks, this will include criminal records check. You will be asked to complete a form, once we have received confirmation of your results we will advise you at the earliest opportunity.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service do not issue contracts without a satisfactory BPSS check.

## **General Information**

### **Contracts/shift working**

Wholetime firefighters are required to work a flexible shift pattern, this will be equivalent to 42 hours per week which will involve days, nights and/or weekends.

### **Pay**

All remuneration is paid in accordance with the National Joint Council (NJC) Conditions of Service for the Local Authorities Fire Services.

### **Trainee Firefighter:**

During your initial training course you will have an annual salary of £22,237.

### **Firefighter in Development:**

Following completion of your initial training your salary will increase to £23,162.

### **Competent Firefighter:**

Once you have completed the relevant stages of your development which is achievable around 18 months to two years into your role your salary will reach £29,638.

### **Pension Scheme**

Wholetime firefighters are eligible to join the Firefighter Pension Scheme 2015 and will be automatically enrolled.

## **Benefits of Working For Us**

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service welcome anyone that joins our team. We pride ourselves as being an inclusive family, friendly service.

### **Our Family Friendly Policies**

We have a range of policies that are family friendly, including parental leave. We have a comprehensive maternity and paternity leave, along with adoption and foster care leave.

Our maternity policy is designed to help new parents balance their personal and work life during this exciting new time of life. We aim to support the mother of a child during the period immediately following the birth of a baby.

### **Childcare Vouchers**

We offer the option to join the childcare voucher scheme. This can be assessed as tax free and used to help towards your childcare costs. You will need to check your eligibility to apply and that your childcare provider accepts these vouchers.

### **Trade Unions**

Trade Unions are there to support you in your work life and they all offer a range of services and support.

There are three options for union membership:

- FBU – [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk)
- FOA – [www.fireofficers.org.uk](http://www.fireofficers.org.uk)
- RFU – [www.therfu.org.uk](http://www.therfu.org.uk)

### **Staff Discount**

As a member of the emergency services you will be eligible to apply for the Blue Light Discount Card which is widely recognised throughout the UK.

### **Support Networks**

We offer several support networks to our workforce, to support them in as many ways as possible:

- FirePride LGBT Network
- Women's Network
- MIND Blue Light Network (Mental Health)
- Stonewall
- BAME Network