

## **Washington Area Committee Report 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

### **Fatalities**

I am pleased to report that for the Sunderland area as a whole there have been no fire deaths from April to date, free Home Fire Risk Assessment inspections continue to be the focus of the district and is proving to be successful in tackling unwanted fire deaths. Unfortunately there are still occurrences of fire deaths so it is important that we don't let our guard down and we continue to promote fire safety in homes across the Washington area.

### **Injuries from Accidental dwelling fires**

The numbers of injuries from accidental fires in dwellings for Washington for the period were 1 compared to 0 reported for the same period in the previous year.

### **Numbers of accidental dwelling fires**

Total numbers of accidental fires in dwellings in Washington for the same period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May were down to 3 compared with a figure of 4 for the previous year down 25%.

### **Deliberate property fires**

Numbers of deliberate property fires showed a slight decrease from 3 incidents to 2 for same period last year.

### **Deliberate Vehicle fires**

The area has seen no change in the numbers of deliberate vehicle fires with the area experiencing 1 incident similar to the same period in 2013.#

### **Accidental Dwelling Fires**

This type of incident is a pre cursor to serious incidents causing injuries and deaths and so in an effort to tackle these incidents which are frequently in the kitchens of dwellings greater emphasis is highlighted on the dangers of fire in kitchens by our fire fighting staff during Home Fire Risk Assessments.

### **Deliberate secondary fires**

This is our target area; deliberate secondary fires have increased by 7% over the 2 month period from 40 calls attended to 43. Washington North wards seeing a largest increase in ASB fires from 10 to 16 and Washington West ward showing an increase from 3 incidents to 14. Historically these fires are started by children and youths setting fire to grassland, loose refuse, wheelie bins, tree scrub etc.

To address this increase I have:-

- Targeted Washington North ward and arranged a campaign for wheelie bin stickers to be posted on bins either left out early or left out after being emptied.

- Highlighted schools in the immediate vicinity that may benefit from a visit to our safety works centre in Newcastle.
- Target Red House and Monkwearmouth school pupils to make a joint visit with the Police to educate them in the dangers of fire setting and to pass on fire safety advice.
- Highlight the Target the areas to our local firefighters who can increase ASB reporting of fly tipping and rubbish left on streets and back lanes and have it removed.
- Unoccupied / Derelict premise boarded up or demolished as soon as possible i.e. Glendale House, Hillthorne Farm.

The Target streets have been identified and ASB uplifts arranged, I will also be working with the Police and other agencies through the LMAPs to address the increase in these incidents which will address the problem and lower the numbers of that type of incident.

I am also currently working with Louise Butler in the Washington area to set up a group to look at problem industrial estates within the area around the issue of general housekeeping and storage, this may be rolled out to other areas if it proves successful.

Steve Graham

Station Manager Washington Fire Station