

Last summer, Suffolk experienced extreme temperatures, leading to more than 500 fires in the open in July and August alone, compared to just over 100 in the same period for 2021. Fires can be devastating, causing loss of life and irreversible damage to properties. But they can often be prevented, and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is asking communities to stay safe this summer.

During hot and dry weather, everyone is encouraged to:

- Put litter in the bin when out and about.
- Avoid barbecues and campfires in public open spaces.
- Ensure that any cigarettes are totally put out and disposed of properly.
- Pick up any glass items instead of leaving them lying around after a picnic.
- Report any fires in the countryside immediately by calling 999.

Jon Lacey, Chief Fire Officer for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Suffolk is a predominantly rural county, so fires in the open are far more common during prolonged periods of dry weather as demonstrated last year. The increase in demand was immensely challenging for our fire service, with many firefighters who have been with us for their whole working life describing working in the peak of the heatwave as being like nothing they'd ever experienced before. Although we will always be there for our communities when they need us most, we would ask that people help us by preventing incidents from happening in the first place, reducing the chance of anyone being seriously injured or even killed in a fire."

Read further advice on [fire prevention in dry weather](#), [what thatched property owners must do to protect their homes](#) and [how farmers and landowners can avoid incidents](#). You can also find out more about their free [Home Fire Safety Visits](#) for vulnerable residents and [staying safe in the home](#).

In addition, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has committed to the following actions to help prevent an increase in incidents this summer:

- Regular social media posts about fire prevention during dry weather on our Twitter and Facebook channels (this activity is already underway).
- An EADT column (date to be confirmed) and press release to be issued in early June advising the public on how they can stay safe this summer.
- The appointment of a new Manager in the Prevention team who will be responsible for supporting operational staff with prevention activity, particularly around local risks. The new Manager will also oversee partnership working and building relationships with key organisations, such as the NFU, in our communities.
- Continued work with the agricultural community to provide education, support, and prevention advice on fire safety.

The Service also offers [Home Fire Safety Visits](#), which involves specialist staff visiting Suffolk residents in their homes to provide bespoke fire safety advice, including designing a fire escape plan to help people safely evacuate their property in the event of a fire, and fit smoke, carbon monoxide and sensory alarms. These services use a person-centric approach and prioritise the most vulnerable people in our communities. Residents can book their Home Fire Safety Visit by contacting the Prevention team on 01473 260588 or emailing fire.businesssupport@suffolk.gov.uk.

