

# Increase in fires for Cambridgeshire's firefighters

29/05/2025

Firefighters across the county have been kept busy over the last two months as they attended a five-year high number of fires.

The month of March saw Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service crews attend more than 160 fires, a significant increase on the previous year's 111. The five-year average for March is around 135. In April they attended more than 200 fires, compared with 131 in 2024 and the five-year average of 162.

The rolling 12 months has seen an increase of 13 per cent, from 1,690 to 1,911.

Group Commander James Ball, head of Community Fire Safety, said: "It is really concerning to see such a significant rise in fires in the last couple of months. We often see fires increase as the weather changes, with people getting their gardens ready for the summer. However, this is a sharp rise and certainly a cause for concern."

Many of these fires were in the home, mostly starting in the kitchen due to cooking or appliances.

James added: "Our crews often attend fires in the kitchen due to several factors. It's very easy to get distracted while cooking and leave things for longer than needed. Also, having items on top of hobs is dangerous as they can easily be switched on. We have seen a few incidents recently where appliances, such as air fryers, are being heated up by a hob being accidentally switched on."

Although many fires happen in the kitchen, there are other fire risks around the home. Crews attended a fire recently in Huntingdonshire involving a vanity mirror, which reflected the sunlight and started a fire, causing significant damage.

James said: "One way residents can help keep themselves and their families safe in their homes is to use our online home fire safety check tool. This goes through some questions and provides a downloadable fire risk assessment, which can help the whole family learn more about how to keep their homes safe."

## **Around 200 fires were outdoors, many of which were started deliberately.**

James added: "Starting a fire intentionally is a serious crime and can have severe consequences for those that do, no matter how big or how small it is. Not only this, but any fire presents significant risks for anyone around the area if it gets out of hand, as well as for the fire crews sent to tackle them.

"There are precautions people can take to help reduce the risk of a deliberate fire. Simple things like keeping rubbish bins out of sight and away from buildings, where possible, along with installing security lights or cameras, can all be a deterrent. Also ensuring any bulky household rubbish, such as sofas or washing machines, is taken to the local recycling centre and not left in the open.

"Parents can also help by speaking with their children and ensuring they know the risks and dangers of fire. There have been reports from some incidents of groups of young people running from the scene of fires. Things like making sure that lighters and matches are kept well out of reach of children, as well as making sure they stay clear of disused or derelict buildings, can also make a big difference."