

Fire Safety in Thatched Buildings

A thatched roof is always at risk from fire. Once a fire has taken hold in thatch it will spread rapidly.

The most common causes of fire in thatch are:

- Electrical faults.
- Lightning affecting the TV aerial.
- Stray sparks from chimneys, discarded cigarettes and bonfires.

TV aerials should be fitted to a freestanding pole. Where this is not possible it may be fixed to a gable or gable end chimney where the cable can be run down the wall, avoiding contact with the thatch. Disconnect the TV aerial during electrical storms to prevent damage to the system. Lightning conductors should conform to British Standard BS6651.

You can reduce the risk of fire by following these tips:

- Never burn rubbish or garden waste near thatched property.
- Never light fireworks near the property.
- Make sure all smoking materials are extinguished and cold before disposal.
- Candles should always be placed in a secure holder and away from furnishings and curtains.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep chimneys and flues clean and well maintained.
- Keep electrical goods and wiring in good repair. Switch off when not in use.
- Use a bulkhead type light fitting in the loft space.

Looking after thatched roofs

Keep the thatch well maintained and have regular checks carried out by a competent thatcher. For more information, contact the Thatching Advisory Services Ltd. on 01264 773 820 or visit www.thatchingadvisoryservices.co.uk

Fit and maintain smoke alarms

Protect your household by fitting and maintaining smoke alarms. A smoke alarm should be fitted at the highest point of the roof void if possible and linked to another alarm sited in the hallway or landing. For maximum protection, fit a smoke alarm in every room except the kitchen, bathroom and garage.

In the event of fire

Use your fire escape plan to get everyone out of the building. Call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service. Do not attempt to remove burning thatch, as this will only fuel the fire.

For fire safety information... log on to www.rbfrs.co.uk, email community.safety@rbfrs.co.uk, or call 0118 945 2888

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
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PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

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fire safety advice for Thatched Buildings



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