



# R B F & R S

## news release

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### **CONGRATULATIONS TO BERKSHIRE'S NEWEST FIREFIGHTERS**

Six firefighters graduated today at the first ever Passing Out Parade held at the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue (RBFRS) Training Centre in Whitley Wood, the first intake to be trained 'in house'.

Previously, recruit firefighters joining RBFRS did their initial training at centres run by other fire and rescue services, returning to Berkshire for additional training before joining their designated fire station.

These six firefighters received core skills training at Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's training centre before spending the rest of their three-month programme at Whitley Wood.

The successful firefighters are 'one in a hundred', with more than 600 people applying for the six vacancies that RBFRS advertised last year. They received their certificates from the Chief Fire Officer, Iain Cox, who congratulated them on their achievement and welcomed them to Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Family members and friends watched proudly as the firefighters demonstrated their skills in the ladder rescue of a casualty from a simulated house fire and rescuing another casualty from a simulated car crash.

In addition to acquiring the technical and practical skills required to use the vast array of complex equipment used by the modern firefighter, the trainees received classroom-based instruction in the theoretical and professional aspects of their roles, including emphasis on working with members of the community in fire safety education. They took part in a demanding programme of operational training and learned about the traditions and values of the fire and rescue service.

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The six firefighters who passed out at the Training Centre today are:

Firefighter Jay Avery (from Plymouth)

Firefighter Marvin Browne (from Tilehurst)

Firefighter Andy Grist (from Maesteg, South Wales)

Firefighter Martin O'Keefe (from Shinfield)

Firefighter Greg Pearson (from South Africa, now lives in Woodley). FF Pearson also won the prestigious Silver Axe award , for Best Trainee.

Firefighter Simon Woods (from Slough)

Group Manager Simon Jefferies, Training Centre Manager, said: "This group of trainees demonstrates the high standards required to become a firefighter. They have worked extremely hard throughout their course and should be proud of what they have achieved. They will find there is a great deal more to learn once they join their fire stations but we are confident that they will do well and will rise to the challenge.

"The Training Centre staff and Watch Manager Pete Briggs, who was in charge of their training, have done everything in their power to ensure our trainees had the best opportunities to learn and to improve and this has certainly paid off in the standard the trainee firefighters have attained."

The new firefighters will now have a few days leave before they start work at their allocated fire station.

**ENDS.**

**NB**

**Notes for Editors:**

**If you would like a group photograph of the new firefighters, please contact Nicole Targett on 0118 932 2283.**