

OFFICIAL OPENING

Hungerford Community
Fire Station

A fire station at the heart of the community

3 July 2017





@HungerfordFS



@RBFRSOfficial



RoyalBerksFRS



RoyalBerkshireFire

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) would like to place on record its thanks to the following contributors, who have made the opening of Hungerford Community Fire Station possible:

- RBFRS staff, in particular the Capital Projects team and the Hungerford crew
- Thames Valley Police
- South Central Ambulance Service
- Compressor Products International
- Beard Construction
- HLM Architects
- Ridge and Partners
- Clegg Associates
- Hungerford Historical Association
- Hungerford Primary School
- Hungerford Fire Station Charity
- Hungerford Town and Manor
- Hungerford's retired firefighters
- Fire Brigades Union

» MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

The opening of Hungerford Community Fire Station marks an exciting new chapter for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) and highlights the progress that has been made in delivering Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's policy agenda Vision 2019, and its mission to enable people across Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives.



Councillor Colin
Dudley, Chairman
of Royal Berkshire
Fire Authority

I am very pleased that Hungerford is Royal Berkshire's first community tri-service station, providing shared facilities from which Thames Valley Police (TVP) and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) will operate alongside RBFRS.

Providing shared facilities will enable us to deliver a more effective, efficient and joined up approach for the communities of Royal Berkshire.

The Fire Authority's commitment to collaborative working is established in a memorandum of understanding between the Thames Valleys' three fire and rescue services (Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service and RBFRS, TVP and SCAS).

Hungerford is the first of a series of station refurbishments that Royal Berkshire Fire Authority will deliver through its Strategic Asset Investment Framework over the coming years.

Fire stations are rightly seen as being at the heart of local communities, so throughout the refurbishment work, a key priority has been to provide facilities for community use. A community room has been built within the new station, which will be available for use by members of the public or local community groups. The exterior of the new station has also been designed to be easily identifiable and welcoming.

Of course, a station is made of more than just bricks and mortar and its success depends squarely upon our firefighters, other staff and partners, who work tirelessly to ensure the safety of our communities. On behalf of the Fire Authority I would like to issue my thanks to all of them for keeping us safe.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Compressor Products International (CPI), who have provided a facility on the Hungerford Trading Estate for firefighters to respond from during the refurbishment works. We are incredibly grateful for CPI's support.

As a town with a long tradition of supporting its emergency services, it is fitting that Hungerford be chosen as the location of our first community station. The proud firefighting tradition in the town stretches to the Volunteer Fire Brigade which was originally formed in 1891, and the other services are firmly embedded in the town's history, as outlined later in this brochure.

There are many reasons to be proud of Hungerford Community Fire Station. Not only is it a modern, fit-for-purpose station for three emergency services, it is a fire station firmly in the heart of the community it serves.

» MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Henry Ford once said: *“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success!”*

I think this reflects the journey that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) has embarked on by developing this wonderful new community fire station in Hungerford.



Trevor Ferguson,
Chief Fire Officer of
Royal Berkshire Fire
and Rescue Service

At the beginning of this journey, the importance of two principles: collaboration and community, were recognised.

The ethos of collaboration is at the centre of what we do as a Service and we recognise that by working together, we are greater than the sum of our parts. In working closely with our blue light partners

we are able to deliver more efficient services for the communities we serve.

Hungerford, as Royal Berkshire's first community tri-service station, has provided the perfect opportunity for us to put this principle into practice. I am extremely grateful for the support that Thames Valley Police (TVP) and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) have offered throughout this project to ensure that the new station has achieved its potential.

Our focus on improved collaboration extends beyond Hungerford and it is our intention to ensure that this model can be applied across the rest of Royal Berkshire. Hungerford can serve as a beacon to demonstrate what we can achieve when we work together.

Whilst Hungerford Community Fire Station is important to us in meeting our goals as a Service, we appreciate it is also vitally important in helping local people to achieve their goals and lead safe and fulfilling lives. That's why the principle of community has been embedded in this project wherever possible.

I am incredibly proud of the project team who have worked tremendously hard to deliver this station. They have delivered a modern, fit-for-purpose station of which we can all be proud.

I would like to thank each and every one of our firefighters at Hungerford, who have demonstrated their unwavering dedication to keeping their community safe during the refurbishment work. I now look forward to them taking ownership of the new station with our blue light partners and continuing the long proud traditions of the emergency services in Hungerford.

The opening of Hungerford Community Fire Station is an important milestone on our journey and a chance to reflect on where we are today. The station is a testament to the hard work, professionalism and commitment of all of our staff, past and present, who have demonstrated what can be achieved when we remain focused and determined to deliver for our communities.

» A FIRE STATION AT THE **HEART OF THE COMMUNITY**

EARLY YEARS

The distinguished reputation of the Fire Service in Hungerford has been built and maintained by several generations of local people. Here are just a few of the people who have worked so hard to make the station what it is today.



THE AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE (AFS) AND HUNGERFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE (HVFB) 1941

AFS wearing caps: Back row: left to right, Tup Lambourne, Charlie Geater, Stan Poulton, Tom Cox. Front row: Bob Moffatt, Jim Woods, Jack Morley, Jack Pike, Bert Wyatt, Bill Cox, Jack Brewer. HVFB wearing helmets: Top row: left to right, Ted Stevens, Bob Fisher, Reg Whiscombe, Harry Giles, George Willis. Front row: Vic Caswell, Con Wilkins, Tom Buckland, Reg Honeybone, Alf Maklin, Doug Wilmott, Ted Stevens, Senior Officer in Charge.



HUNGERFORD FIRE CREW OF 1994

Back row: left to right, S.Reay, E.Hopcroft, G.Saunders, T.Pearce, S.Barrett, P. Scarlett, G.Miles. Front row, J.Dopson, P.Rackham, I.Morley, N.Barr, D.Whiting, B.Evans, J.Barrett.

1941

1983

1994

2004



HUNGERFORD CREW OF 1983

Back row: left to right, P.Bonsal, A.Morley, P.Rackham, G.Dinham, J.Dopson, S.Brooks, P.Scarlett. Front row, I.Morley, D.Whiting, H.N.S. Barr, L.Scarlett, B.Evans, A.Wells, Inset: R.Ward.



HUNGERFORD CREW OF 2004

Back row: left to right, C.Thopson, D.Dopson, G.Martin-Jones, J.Lepetit, M.Dumas, A.Gale. Front row: G.Saunders, D.Lavisher, P.Rackham, J.Allen, P.Whiting, J.Barrett.

TODAY'S STATION CREW

Hungerford Community Fire Station is fully staffed by local people from a range of backgrounds, who bring a wide range of skills to serve their local community.



THE HUNGERFORD CREW OF 2017

From left to right: Ben Dopson, David Crookall, Louise McKevitt, Graham Saunders, Graham Dixon, Charlotte Kersley, Paul Keenan, Jack Dopson.

2017



Hungerford firefighters train at Newbury Fire Station during the refurbishment work.



HUNGERFORD FIRE STATION NEW BUILD

THE MAKING OF THE STATION



The first crucial element in the making of Hungerford Community Fire Station was to develop a detailed design that could be used to inform the practical build process. This vision would be developed not only with Hungerford in mind, but as a shining light to guide RBFRS to become a truly modern fire and rescue service and provide a blueprint for future design projects.

RBFRS decided that a bright, bold, new design was needed; one that would create a modern look for our fire stations and place them at the heart of the communities they serve. At the same time, ensuring that stations are fit-for-purpose, enabling frontline staff to carry out their vital roles.

Alex Brown, RBFRS' Strategic Property Manager procured a team of experts, including architects, from HLM Architects, surveyors from Ridge and Partners and Clegg Associates to develop the plans for Hungerford that could realise this vision.

They identified the key drivers of transparency, accessibility and community. They also wanted to develop a station that had a modern look and feel and crucially something which their community could be proud of.

A distinctive design was drawn up, in order to make the station identifiable to members of the public. The watch room at the front of the station was designed to be transparent and open, letting in light, but also allowing members of the public to see inside the building.

The traditional fire service colour of red has been used on the bay doors and throughout the station, but this was applied with a modern twist, as different shapes such as the iconic arch were prominent in the design.



Hungerford Community Fire Station

APPLYING THE DESIGN

There were a number of practical considerations to account for, due to the fact that it had been 50 years since the station was last updated:

- There was no flexibility for the community to use the building. It was designed only to respond from and our focus has moved to prevention, reducing the number of incidents we attend.
- It was no longer suited for the storage of modern equipment and vehicles.
- It was important to provide up-to-date training facilities and make the station fully accessible.

As a result, the plans included a number of new key features: an enlarged appliance bay to accommodate a modern fire appliance, a gym to support firefighters in maintaining their fitness, an upgraded drill tower, a new training tower facility that allows for ladder transfer practice, and a community room.

Measures to reduce energy consumption have been introduced throughout the station, including upgraded insulation and the fitting of LED lighting. It is expected that energy consumption will reduce by approximately 40 percent as a result.

CONSULTING AND DELIVERING



Alex Brown,
Strategic Property Manager

As this was to be Royal Berkshire's first tri-service station, it was important for extensive consultation to be carried out with Hungerford firefighters, as well as colleagues from Thames Valley Police (TVP) and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS).

Alex Brown, RBFRS' Strategic Property

Manager, said: "The crew at Hungerford have been magnificent. They have engaged with us every step of the way.

"During the work, our firefighters continued to respond, from a location provided by Compressor Products International (CPI), located on the Hungerford Trading Estate. We are very grateful for their support.

"We also worked closely with our blue light partners, on things such as access requirements for each service. It was vital that firefighters, police, and SCAS colleagues are able to use the facilities effectively.

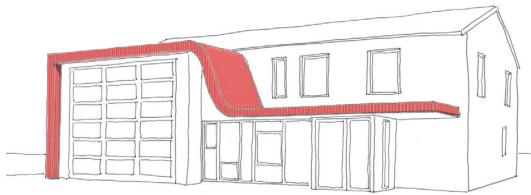
"Engagement with local residents was carried out before, during and after the build, to ensure that they were kept informed of the plans. We worked with our build contractor, under the Considerate Constructors Scheme, to inform residents and delivered leaflets within the locality providing contact information for the build.

"We're very pleased with the end result, which is a contemporary station that is fit-for-purpose for a modern fire and rescue response and symbolises the future with its fresh new look. It will definitely serve as a blueprint for future projects."

TIMELINE OF THE BUILD

Following completion of the design process the principal contractors, Beard Construction, were appointed to complete the build. The work began on Monday, 28 November 2016, and took a total of seven months, finishing on Monday, 26 June 2017. During that time there were several challenges to overcome, including the discovery of three historic buildings within the site.

Below are some of the key milestones in the refurbishment of the station.



An early artist's impression of Hungerford Community Fire Station.



The building has been stripped out, ready for the refurbishment.

January 2016

8 November 2016

1 February 2017

31 March 2017



Members of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority mark the groundbreaking at the station.



Scaffolding has been erected as work continues.



The exterior walls are remodelled.



The new bay doors have been fitted and the interior takes shape.

20 April 2017

11 May 2017

31 May 2017

26 June 2017



The arch is installed at the front of the station.



Finishing touches being applied at the station ready for the opening ceremony on 3 July.

» IMPROVING FACILITIES

As well as upgrades to the facilities on site at Hungerford Community Fire Station, a range of new facilities have been added for the benefit of staff and members of the public.

RBFRS is committed to providing a high level of training and development to its staff. With this in mind, plans for the refurbishment included an upgrade to the existing drill tower to ensure it is fit-for-purpose. A new ladder transfer section has also been added, providing firefighters with a greater capacity to recreate real life situations during training scenarios.



Helping to maintain the fitness and wellbeing of our staff was an important consideration throughout the build. A compact gym has been added on the first floor, with key pieces of equipment for staff to use.



Toilet and kitchen facilities have also been refurbished, and the use of the kitchen will be mainly shared between RBFRS and TVP staff. However SCAS staff and community room users will also have access to these facilities.



IT provisions on site have been upgraded, with new computer terminals added to the watch room, police office and the community room.

Accessibility was a key consideration throughout the build, so steps were taken to ensure that the site is fully accessible to all. Step free access has been fitted at the front of the station, as well as a lift between the floors for those who can't manage the stairs. A fully accessible toilet is also on site.

THE COMMUNITY ROOM



Reflecting the Fire Authority's commitment to place fire stations at the heart of communities, the refurbishment of Hungerford Community Fire Station included the creation of a new community room.

The fire station is well placed to have a community room, given its central location in the town. The community room is designed to provide staff and local people with a meeting space and accompanying facilities upon request.

This room has been added on the first floor, with a window looking down onto the appliance bay. In keeping with the rest of the building, new look fixtures and fittings have been provided to present a modern interior. A widescreen TV monitor is available for presentations, together with meeting tables and chairs.



As well as the community aspect, this room will be used for training, staff meetings and provides a comfortable area for downtime during an operational shift.

Community groups and individuals will be able to book these facilities through a central booking system which is currently being developed.

THAMES VALLEY POLICE IN HUNGERFORD



Thames Valley Police (TVP), and specifically our local Neighbourhood Policing team for Hungerford, are very much looking forward to sharing our new office with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS).

RBFRS and TVP have worked very constructively together on this project, the first in a series of collaborative estates projects across Berkshire involving blue light sites.

The force has planned for some time to replace the Victorian Hungerford Police Station.

Built in 1864, the building was originally a pair of houses for a sergeant and a constable, with two cells.

In recent years the station has become both expensive to run and too large for our needs.

The new fire station will allow the Neighbourhood Policing Team to continue to deliver the same level of service as before while remaining within the heart of the Hungerford community – in fact, even closer to the town centre than our current site.



The implementation of new technology within TVP such as utilising smartphones, when coupled with new working practices, now enable our officers to be out and about and more visible within our communities, rather than restricted to buildings.

When the officers are spending time in the office, being under the same roof as our other blue light partners will encourage greater co-operation to tackle the issues and solve the problems of most importance in the Hungerford community and surrounding towns and villages in a collaborative fashion.



» SOUTH CENTRAL AMBULANCE SERVICE **IN HUNGERFORD**



South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) is delighted that the new fire station in Hungerford will bring even closer working relationships between local ambulance, fire and rescue and police services.

The three emergency services have, of course, always co-operated closely. More recently, however, SCAS has strengthened its partnership with RBFRS by developing a co-responding scheme trial. By training RBFRS firefighters to have additional medical skills to work as co-responders for SCAS, we are able to deploy them to incidents on our behalf to administer emergency first aid where there is an immediate threat to life prior to our ambulance crews arriving on scene.

This gives patients in life-threatening emergencies a greater chance of survival and full recovery by getting appropriate, qualified and emergency first aid trained personnel to the scene as quickly as possible.



Now, with the launch of the shared station in Hungerford, our three services have a great opportunity to share experiences, learn from each other and spark new ideas that can be developed into more initiatives that will help the local community to be safer and more secure.



» LIFE AS A **HUNGERFORD FIREFIGHTER**

Hungerford has a longstanding connection with its emergency responders and local people that proudly serve their town in an effort to keep it safe.

The Watch Manager and several crew members explain their lives as retained firefighters and what the new station means to them.

GRAHAM SAUNDERS, WATCH MANAGER



“Older firefighters are still in the community,” he said. “It’s a privilege to know you can look at past firefighters, meet them and be in their company – and you want to do as good a job as them.”

Graham has another job despite all the commitment he gives to Hungerford Community Fire Station. He is a plumber by day and worked in dentistry for 33 years before that.

“Training in 1990 was a lot different. I had two weeks’ training to be on the run. It was weekend training throughout a year to two years and then you were tested. It has changed now and people can expect to be riding on a fire engine in some capacity within five months of joining.”

“I’m confident it will be brilliant to go back and have a proper station from which to work”.

“It will be nice to have colleagues from partner services sharing it with us and we want people from the community to use the space that’s been made for them – and we’ve already had interest in that.”

With nearly three full decades’ service, Graham is acutely aware of the significance the reopening of Hungerford Community Fire Station has in a long tradition.



DAVID CROOKALL, CREW MANAGER



"I joined RBFRS as a retained firefighter at Hungerford Fire Station in 2008. For the past two years I have also been a wholetime firefighter and I'm currently with Blue Watch at Newbury.

"I've lived in Hungerford for 16 years, and before I joined RBFRS I was running my own local plumbing business. I passed the fire station most days while driving to work, so I decided to support them as I wanted to ensure the station would be there for the local community if ever it was needed.

"I enjoy my role, as it gets you into the community and I feel that I'm making a difference to the safety of the local residents.

"I'm also an instructor for the Young Firefighters programme, which I really enjoy. It is an opportunity to teach 12 – 16 year olds about the fire service. It's great to see them develop their teamworking and problem solving skills, but also to see their social skills develop.

"They arrive not knowing very much about the fire service and finish by performing a range of fire service drills at a passing out parade ceremony. Their parents are usually amazed by how much progress they have made.

"The new station will provide a real focal point in Hungerford. It's important for us to be seen in the community and not just respond to incidents.

"Hungerford has great community spirit, and lends itself well to having a retained station. It is a large town, with a range of businesses, and in the past it has had a wide pool of people willing to serve their local community as firefighters.

"We're always on the lookout for new firefighters. We need to keep recruiting to ensure the station can maintain the level of service that the town deserves.

"If like me, you want to support your local fire station and be there for your community in case of an emergency, please consider joining us as a retained firefighter."

LOUISE MCKEVITT, FIREFIGHTER



Louise McKevitt is one of the newest firefighters and joined 18 months ago.

She balances work at Hungerford Fire Station with her position as a swimming instructor and her work riding race horses

at Lambourn, responding from home in between her other roles.

Motivated by wanting to help her own community, Louise is looking forward to the crew being back in their own station to build on their good work.

She said: "The best thing about this job is going out and making a difference and doing what you can to make something better for someone.

"It's been tough being out of the station during the building work but we've been really well accommodated.

"One of the benefits of being out of the station has been that we've got out and travelled to different locations to train so that's been positive."

"My first memorable incident was a canal boat fire, just around the corner from the station. It was one of my first shouts, it was really nerve-wracking and it was a big job.

"My training prepared me for it but the guidance from colleagues stands out for me because they recognised I was new and knew what was suitable for me to work on to make sure I contributed something."

"I'm looking forward to the grand opening!"

If you're interested in becoming a retained firefighter, please visit our website:



[rbfrs.co.uk/
working-for-us/retained-part-time-firefighters](http://rbfrs.co.uk/working-for-us/retained-part-time-firefighters)

» HISTORY OF HUNGERFORD FIRE STATION

Firefighters have been serving Hungerford since 1891, when the town welcomed the formation of a volunteer fire brigade.



CREW AT CHARNHAM STREET

The HVFB at the new fire station, 1893. On the left is Mr George Platt (Lieutenant) and with his dog is George Cottrell (Captain).
Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum

1893

Their initial home was at The Tannery, through the kindness of Lieutenant George Platt, who had a brewery on site. The fire engine was based on the ground floor in readiness for a turn-out, and there were rooms on the first floor for the accommodation of the brigade and their equipment.

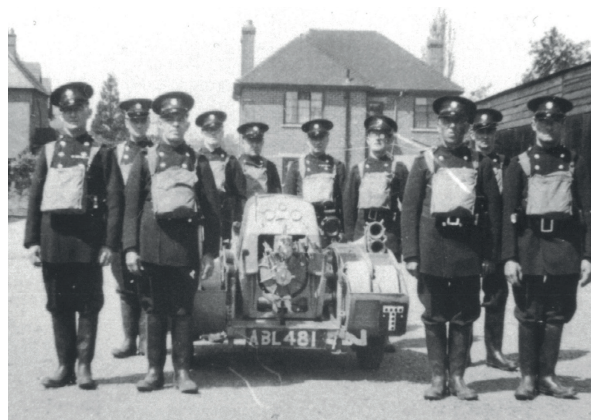
In 1893 Lieutenant Platt decided to sell the brewery and it was necessary to find a new fire station for the brigade, so plans got underway to build a new station in Charnham Street in 1893.

An article published in the Marlborough Times on, 16 September 1893, read:

“Hungerford can now boast of one of the best fire engines and one of the best appointed and convenient stations in the kingdom, and of a brigade who are striving to gain the highest of efficiency.”

”

1938 – 1941



CREW AT BARR'S YARD

Hungerford Auxiliary Fire Service in Barr's Yard (c1938-41).
Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.

In July 1938, the Government created the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS) to bolster wartime firefighting efforts, with Hungerford represented in Barr's Yard. The AFS was taken over by the National Fire Service (NFS) in 1941 to assist the war effort.

The Hungerford crew were often sent outside the town to assist in major fires as a result of the blitz, for example, London, Bath, and Southampton and even as far as Exeter.

In 1948, the National Fire Service was split into many county-based fire services, and Hungerford's service came under the control of the Berkshire Fire Service.

The poor position of the fire station had become apparent from as early as 1945, as the A4 was becoming a busy and important trunk road, causing issues with exiting the fire station in Charnham Street. It was also difficult at times for firefighters to get to the station.

The growing size of standard fire engines also created a pressing need for a larger fire station in the years after the war, and the opportunity was taken to build a modern station on part of the Great Western Mill site within the town.

As the Charnham Street property belonged to the town, the proceeds of the sale formed the Old Fire Station Charity, which still exists today.



1948

1968 – 2017

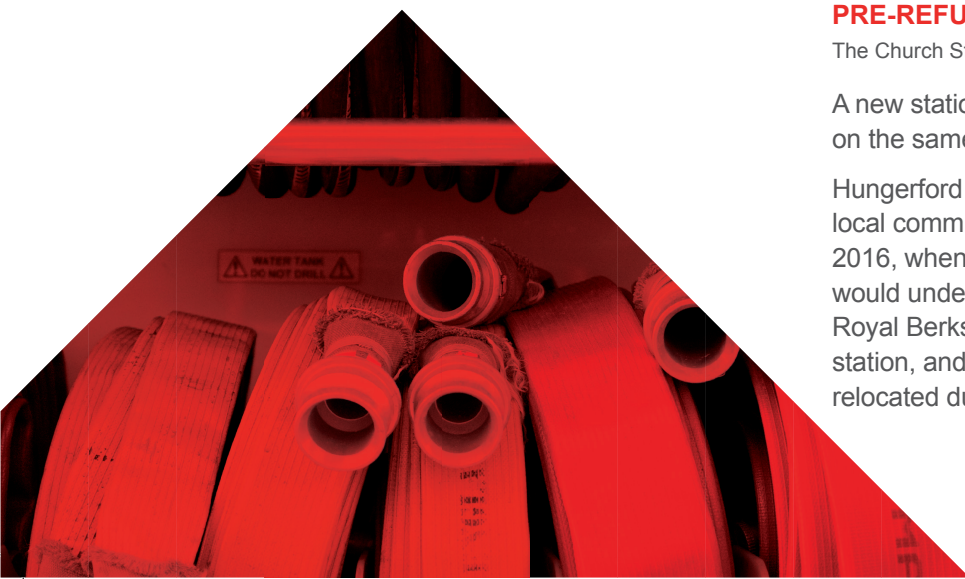


HUNGERFORD FIRE STATION PRE-REFURBISHMENT

The Church Street Fire Station

A new station was built on Church Street in 1968, on the same site where the station remains today.

Hungerford firefighters continued to serve the local community from Church Street until October 2016, when it was announced that the Fire Station would undergo a major refurbishment to become Royal Berkshire's first community tri-service station, and the crews were temporarily relocated during the refurbishment works.



» FIREFIGHTING IN HUNGERFORD

Hungerford firefighters have responded to a number of high profile incidents over the years, illustrating the importance of the fire and rescue service. In recent times, Hungerford firefighters have responded to incidents such as the 51 vehicle collision on the M4, the Windsor Castle fire and the Ufton Nervet rail crash. Firefighting incidents in Hungerford can be traced as far back as 1566, when Hungerford suffered a serious fire, known as the Great Fire of Hungerford.

THE GREAT FIRE OF HUNGERFORD

In 1566, a fire started in, or close to Queen's Mill in present-day Bridge Street, and spread to the south on both sides of the street as far as the Three Swans Hotel, which remains in Hungerford today.

Before the 17th century the main methods of tackling fires were to douse water on the fire using leather buckets, to pull the thatch off roofs with long fire-hooks and in some cases to pull down burning houses to try and stop the spread.

A large number of properties in the area were completely destroyed by the fire, and there is likely to have been damage to other nearby buildings. Rebuilding would take a variable amount of time – with Queen's Mill rebuilt at least by 1574, but other properties took longer. For example, 1 High Street was still described as “decayed by fire” in 1591, and was finally rebuilt by around 1609.



Drawing of 1598 showing fire-hooks, ladders and buckets in use.
Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.



FIRE AT COTTRELL'S IRONWORKS, EDDINGTON

On 23 December 1892, one of Hungerford's most destructive fires broke out at Cottrell's Iron Works at Eddington. There were a number of buildings in the foundry, surrounded by dwelling houses on three sides.

The fire was discovered at about 8pm by Frank Jessett, an active member of the fire brigade who lived nearby. He gave the alarm, the fire bell was rung and the steam fire engine was up and running quickly. Fortunately, the River Kennet runs through Eddington and the engine was placed in it as near the fire as possible.

The firefighters ran out the hose and soon had four jets on the buildings, which were burning furiously.

The proprietor of the Ironworks, Mr Cottrell, was also captain of the fire brigade. He gave orders which were promptly carried out by firefighters, preventing the spread and saving much of the property.

The Parish Magazine of January 1893, records: "Had it not been for the prompt and energetic action of the Fire Brigade with their powerful steam engine, the whole of the extensive premises and probably all the houses in Eddington must have been destroyed. As it was, the damage done was most lamentable, and must be the occasion of considerable loss and inconvenience to the firm, to whom Hungerford owes so much of its prosperity."

FIRE AT GREAT WESTERN MILL, CHURCH STREET

On 22 June 1960, a major fire broke out at the large Great Western Mill in Church Street. A total of 20 fire engines were sent, but the building was completely destroyed and the fire was so severe that the timber sleepers on the adjacent railway caught fire. Firefighters returned to damp down further flare-ups for another 15 days before it was finally extinguished.



Great Western Mill fire, 22 June 1960. Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.

» EQUIPPING OUR FIRE SERVICE

As firefighting techniques have developed, the pumping appliances used to tackle fires have changed significantly over the years.

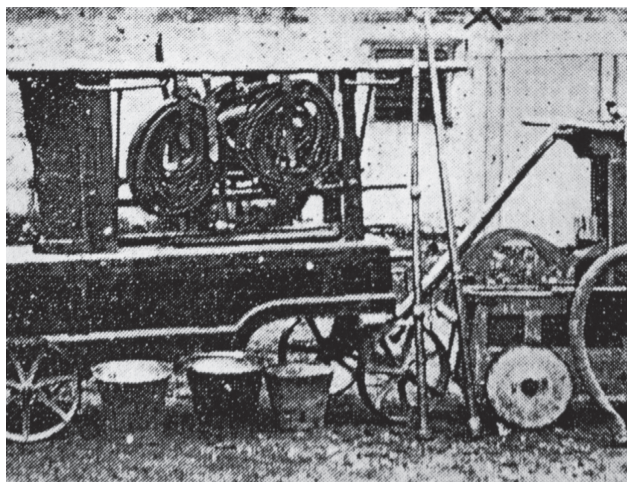
HUNGERFORD'S FIRST FIRE PUMP

Hungerford was very early in obtaining its first fire pump, which cost a grand total of £17.

It was obtained in 1702, six years before the 1708 Parish Pump Act, which ordered that every parish (in London) must keep a water pump and designated men to help extinguish fires. Sadly, it seems that this pump has not survived to the present day.

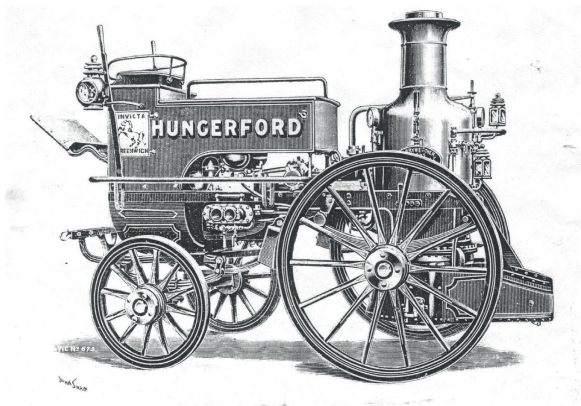
Hungerford's second fire pump was bought in 1737, and was thought to be based on the design of Richard Newsham. Early Newsham fire pumps were little more than hand-powered pumps on wheels, but it is estimated that they could squirt 400 litres of water per minute, at flames more than 40 metres away.

Hungerford's third fire pump, which dates from later in the 18th Century, is thought to be the same pump that stands in the entrance to the Town Hall and Corn Exchange.



Hungerford's two 18th Century manual fire pumps. The pump on the right is now restored, and stands in the entrance to the Town Hall and Corn Exchange. *Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.*

NEW STEAM FIRE ENGINE FOR HUNGERFORD



1910 Greenwich New Steam Fire Engine for Hungerford. *Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.*

By 1890, plans were being drawn up to obtain a new steam fire engine for the town. A meeting was organised in August 1890, to raise funds for the new fire engine and discuss the formation of the volunteer fire brigade. It was decided to buy the Merryweather Greenwich fire engine, which needed three horses to pull it, and cost £300.

An article in the Newbury Express in 1891, read: "It is very creditable that a town like Hungerford should be in possession of such a magnificent engine."



HUNGERFORD FIRE ENGINES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

In 1910, the fire brigade obtained a new and more powerful motorised Merryweather steam fire engine, named The Dreadnought.

The Dreadnought could travel at 20 to 30 miles an hour on flat ground and was capable of delivering 300 gallons per minute and could throw a single jet to a height of 150 feet in the air.



The Dreadnought being demonstrated on the wharf. 23 Sep 1910. Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.

The Dreadnought served the town for 14 years before it was replaced by a petrol driven engine, a Leyland appliance which was proudly named John O'Gaunt. The Leyland had a top speed of 40 miles per hour. It was retired from service in 1942.

Hungerford's next new fire engine was an Austin. It was called John O'Gaunt II, as the name plate being transferred from its predecessor, the 1924 Leyland.



The Austin John O'Gaunt II fully restored by Mr Mick Paul. Image courtesy of Hungerford Virtual Museum.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF FIRE ENGINES

If you look inside the bay doors at Hungerford Community Fire Station today, you will see the Mercedes Atego fire engine, which forms a part of the core fleet for Berkshire in 2017.

At the time of writing, the next generation of fire engines are arriving in the County. During 2017, four new Volvo fire engines were purchased in collaboration with our colleagues in Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service.

The fire engines are designed to improve how we work together at an incident, with the stowage and equipment being similar on each vehicle, making it easier for the fire services of the Thames Valley to respond.

These appliances are being firstly placed in stations which spend a lot of the time working across the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire borders. In future, when any old appliances are retired from service, they will be replaced by the new Volvo fire engines.



The Volvo fire appliance, which arrived in 2017.

This is an excellent case of collaborative working between fire and rescue services and has delivered modern, fit-for purpose fire engines with state of the art technology.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
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