



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

West Dunbartonshire Bonfire Fireworks Protocol 2024



West Dunbartonshire Bonfire/Fireworks Protocol 2024

Bonfires and firework misuse can have a detrimental effect on community safety and the right of residents to live without fear, anxiety, and disturbance.

Bonfires traditionally accompany November 5th celebrations and can be a frequent source of danger due to their size, location or construction, and can also become a focus for anti-social behaviour.

A strategy to minimise the causes and effects of bonfire and firework misuse and the dangers of their related activities, has been developed by West Dunbartonshire Council, working in partnership with Police Scotland, and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. As a result, a joint protocol has been produced for identifying, reporting, and the disposal of dangerous bonfires, and to combat the misuse of fireworks.

This protocol builds on good practice and is designed to assist in the safe legitimate enjoyment around bonfires and fireworks. It ensures consistency in approach, which increases public safety and confidence within West Dunbartonshire.





Our Aims

- **Maximise** public safety and **minimise** disorder.
- To **reduce** the instances of bonfires being located in unsafe or dangerous locations where there is the possibility of injury to persons or damage to property.
- To **minimise** the effect of reckless and indiscriminate use of fireworks and where possible to identify those involved in this type of activity.

Our Objectives

- To identify locations where unauthorised bonfires are being/have been constructed or where materials for bonfires are being gathered and stored and remove and dispose of same.
- To identify persons responsible for illegal possession and use of fireworks.
- Identify retailers selling fireworks in contravention of the legislation.
- To educate schoolchildren on the dangers and misuse of fireworks.

Bonfire Safety Advice

SFRS advice is to attend an organised event, although these are limited. If you are unable to attend an organised display, we would ask that you consider the impact of bonfires and fireworks on people and animals.

It is often children rather than adults who are injured by fireworks. The noise and light that fireworks emit can be overwhelming for people with sensory impairment and neurological differences, such as Autism. Animals can also find fireworks particularly distressing.

If you have a bonfire at home, make sure that it is well away from buildings, vehicles, trees, hedges, fences, power lines, telecommunications equipment and sheds. Please consider wind strength, which can significantly affect any fire. You must also ensure that smoke does not cause a nuisance to neighbours and flying embers do not endanger neighbouring property.

Additionally:

- Never drink alcohol if you are tending a bonfire or setting off fireworks. Remember that it is an offence to consume alcohol in a public place.



- To reduce the emission of harmful smoke and combustion products, bonfires should comprise of untreated wood and paper-based materials. No plastics/rubbers/fabrics.
- There is a danger of explosion from pressurised containers or sealed vessels amongst bonfire material, or when irresponsibly thrown on burning bonfires.
- Never throw fireworks on bonfires.
- Never use flammable liquids to ignite bonfires, use proprietary firelighters.
- Smoke from bonfires must not pose a public nuisance, affect visibility on roads or otherwise inconvenience vehicles.
- Sparks, flying embers or burning debris must not endanger nearby property.
- Never leave a burning/smouldering bonfire unsupervised, make sure it is properly extinguished.

Any bonfire failing to satisfy safety conditions, or where people are behaving irresponsibly, may be deemed dangerous and as such, are subject to being either removed, extinguished or otherwise made safe. For more information, please refer to [SFRS Website](#).

Bonfires and the Law

It is an offence under Section 56 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 for any person to lay or light a fire in a public place, so as to endanger any other person, or give them reasonable cause for alarm or annoyance, or so as to endanger any property.

It is illegal for anyone under 18 years of age to possess fireworks in a public place and throwing fireworks, or setting them off in a public place, is illegal.

You are only permitted to use fireworks between the hours of 6pm and 11pm on any day except on 5th November, when the curfew extends to midnight.

It is an offence under section 80 of the Explosives Act 1875 to throw or ignite fireworks in any highway, street, thoroughfare or public place. The power to enforce this section of the act rests with Police Scotland. Anyone convicted of this offence may be subject to a fine.

If you have any information regarding fires that have been started deliberately in your area, you can call the **Crimestoppers Scotland hotline on 0800 555 111**. All calls are completely anonymous and do not require names or personal details and you will not be asked to give evidence in court. Alternatively, you can submit information anonymously online: [Click Here](#)



Fly tipping during the Bonfire and Fireworks season is a major cause of fire and it is also a criminal offence. If you see fly tipping or know of an area where there is a build-up of refuse or combustible material, contact your local authority cleansing or environmental department to arrange uplift.

For more information, or to report on the above, please contact:

West Dunbartonshire Council: 01389 737 000

Antisocial Behaviour

- It is an offence under section 80 of the Explosives Act 1875 to throw or ignite fireworks in any highway, street, thoroughfare or public place. The power to enforce this section of the act rests with Police Scotland. Anyone convicted of this offence may be subject to a fine.
- Regulations made under the Fireworks Act 2003 make it an offence for any person under 18 years of age to possess fireworks in a public place and for anyone to ignite fireworks out with the period of 6pm – 11pm. The exceptions to this are 5th November when fireworks can be set off until midnight and until 1am on New Year's Day, the night of Diwali and at Chinese New Year.
- Under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to any domestic or captive animals. This is enforced by the **Scottish SPCA (03000 999 999)**.

West Dunbartonshire Council Anti-Social Investigation and Support Team: 01389 772 048

Firework Code

Firework Top Ten Safety Code for Adults – if you do decide to have a home fireworks display.

Young people should watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance and follow the safety rules for using sparklers. Only adults should deal with firework displays and the lighting of fireworks. They should also take care of the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used.

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable.
2. Keep fireworks in a closed box and use them one at a time.



3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework.
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back.
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks.
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit.
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them.
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators.
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire.
10. Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.

Children

Watching fireworks can be great fun for children. Children suffer over half of all firework injuries and many of these are babies and toddlers and while their scars may heal, the trauma for the child and their parents can last for years.

We want children to enjoy fireworks however they need to know that they can be dangerous.

- Supervise all children carefully and keep them well back from the bonfire and fireworks.
- Never give sparklers to under 5's. (one of the most dangerous fireworks)
- Show older children how to hold sparklers - away from their body and at arm's length - and teach them not to wave them at other people or run while holding them.
- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes that could catch alight easily and give children gloves to wear when holding sparklers.
- Avoid alcohol if you're running a display.

Sparkler Safety

Did you know that sparklers get five times hotter than cooking oil? Sparklers are not toys and should never be given to a child under five.

- Store sparklers and other fireworks in a closed box in a cool, dry place.



- Always light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- Never hold a baby or child if you have a sparkler in your hand.
- Plunge finished sparklers hot end down into a bucket of water as soon as they have burnt out. Remember, sparklers can stay hot for a long time.
- Don't take sparklers to public displays, it will be too crowded to use them safely.

In an emergency

- Cool the burn or scald with cold water for at least 10 minutes.
- Cut around material sticking to the skin - don't pull it off.
- Don't touch the burn or burst any blisters.
- Cover the burn with clean, non-fluffy material - Clingfilm is ideal - to prevent infection.
- If clothing catches fire, get the person to stop, drop to the floor and roll them in heavy material like a curtain.
- Get advice from your doctor or accident and emergency department at your local hospital.

Sale and Retailer Issues (Trading Standards)

- Legislation is in place concerning the sale and storage of fireworks. Retailers must obtain a licence from Trading Standards to be allowed to store fireworks for sale. If they aren't licensed, or if they store products in an unsafe manner, retailers may be prosecuted. A list of licensed premises is regularly updated and sent to Police Scotland and SFRS.
- It is illegal for retailers to sell most fireworks to anyone under the age of 18. The minimum age for smaller fireworks, namely caps, cracker snaps, novelty matches, party poppers, serpents and throw downs is 16. Retailers must only sell fireworks that conform to European Safety Standards and/or UKCA marked as well as meeting certain noise conditions.

Unless they have a special licence to sell on an all-year-round basis, suppliers can only sell fireworks during the periods:

- 15th October to 10th November
- 26th December to 31st December
- The first day of Diwali and the three days immediately before
- The first day of Chinese New Year and the three days immediately



Hotspot Actions

Partners have identified several 'Hotspot' areas where the risk of an outbreak of fire is considered to be 'significant' based on incident history or where high levels of fireworks / bonfire disorder and antisocial behaviour have previously occurred.

The West Dunbartonshire Greenspace Team will monitor such 'Hotspots' to ensure that potentially dangerous bonfire materials are removed. Additionally, they will locate any further sites, not previously known, which in their view present a danger to persons or property. Additional checks will be carried out by both Community Wardens and Police Scotland across the School estate to ensure that all grounds are kept clear of bonfire materials.

Hotspot areas include:

Dumbarton:

- Brucehill
- Bellsmyre (Overtoun House)
- Castlehill (Cumbrae Cres South & Hawthornhill Road)

Vale of Leven:

- Old Bonhill (Dalmonach Park)
- Bonhill (Braehead, Ladyton, O'Hare & Redburn)
- Haldane (Inler Park)
- Renton (Wylie Park)

Clydebank:

- Faifley (Swallow Road, Orbiston Place, Faifley Road)
- Dalmuir (Dumbarton Rd, Wellington Pl)
- Whitecrook (Braes Ave, Fleming Ave, Low Cres)
- Linnvale
- Drumry
- Duntocher
- Mountblow (Perth Crescent, Lilac Avenue, Pine Road, Melbourne Avenue, Canberra Avenue)



- Radnor Park (Dickens Avenue, Cornock Street, Crown Avenue, Granville Street)

Housing Officers, Anti-Social Behaviour Staff, Neighbourhood Team, Greenspace Team and other Partners will monitor activities within their respective areas to help identify any problems in relation to the illegal storage and sale of fireworks by retailers or the illegal possession and use of fireworks by individual persons. Where problems or potential offences are detected, they should be reported immediately to the local trading standards service and/or local police, both of whom have certain enforcement responsibilities in these areas.

The local trading standards service will provide an up-to-date list of those premises within West Dunbartonshire which are licensed to store fireworks under the Explosive Regulations 2014 to relevant enforcement agencies on a regular basis.



Appendix

Useful Contact Telephone Numbers

Police Scotland

In Relation to: Any Misuse of Fireworks e.g. times, location, Call 101 (**999 in an emergency**)

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

West Dunbartonshire Community Fire Stations Contact Telephone Numbers

Station	Contact Telephone Number
Clydebank	01389 385 141
Dumbarton	01389 762 222
Balloch	01389 758 141

You can contact the relevant Community Fire Station for general bonfire related advice except in an emergency, where you should dial **999**.

West Dunbartonshire Council

West Dunbartonshire Council: 01389 737 000

Environmental Health: 0141 951 7957

Trading Standards (In relation to: Underage sales (to under 18s), unsafe or unlicensed storage by shops, dangerous fireworks i.e. not bearing the CE mark: 0141 951 7957



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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Stop your area from becoming a fireworks hot-spot.

Speak up 100% anonymously to independent charity Crimestoppers if you know or suspect who is involved or planning fireworks misuse.

Speak up. Stay safe.

Tell our charity what you know.

crimestoppers-uk.org



Crimestoppers Trust is a registered charity.
UK registration nos. 1108687/SC037560.

Scotland

CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% anonymous. Always.

Be Fearless.

Speak up to make your
community safer.

Give info / get info
at Fearless.org



Crimestoppers Trust (also known under youth brand "Fearless") is a Scottish Charity 50037960