

# Fight fires in Surrey from home

3 December 2022



Marking the retirement of Surrey's first female firefighter the Fire and Rescue Service is recruiting firefighters who can respond from home.

**Paula Hartwell** joined Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in January 1993 as the services first female firefighter, and after 30 years she's hanging up her helmet.

Since joining the service as a firefighter at Chertsey Fire Station, Paula went on to become a Leading Firefighter, followed by a Watch Commander in fire stations as well as fire safety and prevention departments. She then became a Station Commander at Woking Fire Station. After a short time within the Operations Assurance Team followed by Community Intelligence, Paula returned to Woking to finish her career.

**Paula spoke of her career, she said:** "I have enjoyed being part of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service team - helping the communities which we serve and every day trying to make a difference.

"It has been both challenging and rewarding, I have learned many skills over the years and have great memories. I have loved my career immensely and hope that many more women take on the role.

Since joining the service, Paula has also welcomed three daughters with her other half Tony.

**Dan Quin, Chief Fire Officer, said:** "What a fantastic legacy Paula leaves behind here in Surrey - our first female firefighter paving the way for many more females after her, showing fire and rescue as being a successful career option. I am privileged to have worked with Paula for over 20 years and I know she will be greatly missed. Thank you, Paula."

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service is currently recruiting on-call firefighters and Joint Fire Control operators. On-call firefighters respond via pager from their home or work. Joint Fire Control operators take emergency calls and mobilising for Surrey, West and East Sussex - the first person residents speak to in an emergency. Join a life-saving service and find out more by visiting [www.surreycc.gov.uk/firecareers](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/firecareers).

Surrey County Council News