



## Was the Great Fire of London a bad thing?

In this unit of work the children will be taken back to 1666 and the very morning when the Great Fire broke out at a small bakery down Pudding Lane in London. They will discover facts about why the fire started and took so long to stop, looking at the differences in life then compared to life today. The children will meet key figures such as Thomas Farriner and Samuel Pepys.

### In this unit children will:

- Be able to sequence the significant events of the Great Fire of London.
- Understand why the fire broke out.
- Understand how life in London in 1666 was very different from today.
- Understand the results from the fire and how London changed after this.
- Learn about how and why the fire spread so far and for so long.
- Know and understand what a diary is and how important this was during the Great Fire.
- Understand what an eye witness is and the part that Samuel Pepys played in recording the events of the Great Fire of London.
- Understand that London was rebuilt after the Great Fire by Sir Christopher Wren and a lot of changes were made, to understand why different materials were used.
- Discuss the differences between life of 1666 and today, including the use of the fire service and the materials that houses were made out of.

### Cross Curricular Links

**Geography** – Map work and finding our Capital city on a map.

### Key Vocabulary

**London** – Capital city of the United Kingdom.

**Cathedral** – Large and important church that the Bishop is in charge of.

**St Paul's Cathedral** – a very large church in central London which was destroyed in the fire. A new one was built not long after the fire, which still stands today.

**King** – The male ruler of the country who holds this role because he is a member of the Royal Family.

**baker** – someone that sells breads and cakes that are made in a shop.

**diary** – a book that people write about their lives in.

**firebreak** – a gap that stops a fire spreading to nearby buildings.

**leather buckets** – buckets made out of leather used in 1666; they didn't hold much water.

**water squirts** – almost like a small hosepipe.

**architect** – a person who designs buildings.

**homeless** – if you do not have a home.

**law** – system of rules set by the country.

**Fire Brigade** – specialist people trained to put out fires correctly.



## Key Knowledge:

- The fire started on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1666 in Thomas Farriner's **bakery** on Pudding Lane.
- The fires in the bakery used to bake the bread were not put out properly, starting the **fire**.
- In **1666**, the buildings in London were made out of wood and straw and had been built very close together which made it very easy for the flames and fire to spread. It had been a very dry summer so the buildings were dry. **Strong winds** were also blowing which encouraged the flames to move across London.
- People used **leather buckets** and **water squirts** to try and put the fire out, but these did not work. Later in the week, King Charles II ordered the buildings to be pulled down to stop the flames spreading.
- By Thursday 6th September (4 days later) the wind had died down. This meant that people were able to help put the flames out more easily.
- Thomas Bludworth was the Lord Mayor of London during the fire.
- **Samuel Pepys** wrote a **diary** during the fire that became very famous.
- **Sir Christopher Wren** was the chosen **architect** who redesigned London and **St Paul's Cathedral** after the fire.



- Many people were left **homeless** after the fire and some never returned to London.
- Charles II made a **law** that houses should be built further apart and they must be built using stone.
- After the fire, an organised **Fire Brigade** was established.
- People began to **insure** their houses.

## Key Questions

- Why did the fire spread?
- Did anyone die in the fire?
- What part did the weather play in the spread and stoppage of the fire?
- Where things changed after the fire?
- Was the population of London during the fire different to today?