

Why did this Great Fire burn so many more houses than other fires?

Key Dates

1666	The year of the Great Fire of London.
Sunday 2nd September 1666	The fire started and Samuel Pepys account of it began.
Monday 3rd September 1666	The fire got very close to the Tower of London.
Tuesday 4th September 1666	St. Paul's Cathedral was destroyed by the fire.
Wednesday 5th September 1666	Winds began to slow down the spread of the fire.
Thursday 6th September 1666	The fire is finally put out.

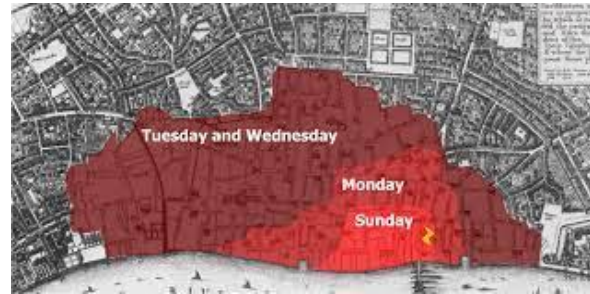
Samuel Pepys
1633- 1703



Samuel started to write, around 1660, about the things he did and who he saw. He lived in London. His diary tells us about ordinary things, like going to the coffee house and what he ate for dinner. He kept his diary safe. The things he wrote about help us to understand what everyday life at that time was like. His diary is one of most important sources of evidence about the fire.

Key Events, Facts and People

The Fire of London started on 2nd September 1666 and lasted for 5 days. It began in a small bakery on Pudding lane and eventually spread around London, destroying monuments and leaving people homeless. People tried to work together to put the fire out by using fire hooks, leather buckets full of water and creating fire breaks.



The weather in London was hot and it hadn't rained for 10 months. Houses in London were mainly built from wood, straw and pitch which are flammable materials, especially when dry. The houses were also very close together, so the fire was able to spread easily.

Houses in 1666



Houses in the present day



Key Vocabulary

significant	An important person or event that is worthy of attention.
event	Something that happens and is important.
sequence	A set of related events that happen in an order.
London	The capital city of England.
monument	A building or structure that holds historical importance.
fire hooks	An object used to pull down houses in 1666.
firebreak	A gap that stops fires spreading.
flammable	Materials that can easily be set on fire.
pitch	A sticky tar like substance that all the houses were covered in.
diary	An account of events that have happened.

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Key Questions

- When and where did The Great Fire of London start?
- How did the fire start?
- Why did the fire start and spread so quickly?
- Why is Samuel Pepys significant?
- How did people put the fire out?
- How is London in 1666 different or similar to London now?
- What impact did The Great Fire of London have on life in the present?

Unit outcomes

- ✓ To compare past and present life.
- ✓ To develop awareness of significant figures in History.
- ✓ To recognise and order key events of history.
- ✓ To analyse how we know about The Great Fire of London.
- ✓ To consider the impact a significant event in the past has on the present.

The Great Fire of London gave us

How the Great Fire of London changed London...

The 1667 rebuilding act was put in place to stop future fires from spreading so quickly. This meant the 2nd floor of houses could not be built overhanging the first. Also, houses needed to be built from brick/stone.

After the fire, new rules were brought in and every parish had to have two fire squirts, leather buckets and other fire equipment. This eventually led to an official fire brigade being established.

Sir Christopher Wren redesigned the City of London including St Paul's Cathedral.

Links to other subjects

Monument to The Great Fire of London



In 2007, the Monument closed for an 18-month programme of improvements and repairs.
<https://www.themonument.info/>

Why is this event historically significant?

How do we know about this event in history?

How can we find more information out about this event?

D & T - moving vehicles. Designing and making a fire engine to prevent the spread of fire in 1666.

Science - exploring different materials and investigating their properties.

English - diary writing inspired by Samuel Pepys recount of The Great Fire of London.

Music - learning the nursery rhyme 'London's burning'.

Art - using painting, collage and charcoal to create a landscape of a fire scene.

Reading- Vlad and The Great fire of London.

In 1824, after The Great Fire of London, the first fire brigade was formed. Visit our local fire station to discover more about fire services in the present day. <https://leics-fire.gov.uk/your-fire-service/who-we-are/locations-and-contacts/hinckley-fire-rescue-station/>

