

The Great Fire of London

The Great Fire of London is a very important event in British history. It happened over 350 years ago, from 2nd to 6th September 1666. This event changed London forever.

Timeline

A spark from the oven in Thomas Farriner's bakery on Pudding Lane started a fire, which soon spread.

The news soon reached King Charles II that the fire was spreading. He had an idea to pull down some of the houses.

The next day, people began to pack up their things and leave the city.

The fire had been burning for three days when it reached the main street called Cheapside.

The wind began to blow the fire towards the river where it could go no further.

Finally, the fire began to go out. After four days, the Great Fire of London was over.

Why did the fire spread so quickly?

- The summer was hot, so everything was dry.
- Streets were narrow, and buildings were made of wood.
- There were no fire and rescue services.
- Firefighting techniques and equipment were not very good.
- People left London rather than staying to put out the fire.
- Strong winds blew the fire from building to building.



How did Londoners fight the fire?

From historical sources, we can see that the equipment used at the time of the Great Fire was made of wood, leather and metal and was used by hand.



leather bucket



fire squirt

Samuel Pepys's diary

Samuel Pepys was a Member of Parliament. He was an important eyewitness to the Great Fire of London because he kept a diary and wrote about the fire as it was happening.



How did the fire change London?

- The Great Fire destroyed much of London, including significant buildings like St Paul's Cathedral.
- Buildings were rebuilt from brick or stone instead of wood.
- Streets were made wider and more organised.
- Access to water was improved.
- Rules were published to prevent fires.
- Fire insurance was created, which included firefighting services.

Glossary

eyewitness Someone who sees an event happening and tells others about it.

fire insurance A system created after the fire to protect buildings and pay for damage from future fires.

St Paul's Cathedral A large, important church in London that was completely destroyed by the fire.

