

FIREWORKS AND BONFIRES

There is a short Government document called *“Celebrating with bonfires and Fireworks – A community guide”* and this includes guidelines for a successful and neighbour friendly display. Here are the main points:

Fireworks

Don't drink alcohol and be the person who is responsible for setting off fireworks

- Give neighbours a few days' notice of your display.
- Use appropriate fireworks - try to avoid really noisy ones – and buy from reputable dealers. Store them safely, in a closed metal box, out of reach of children and animals.
- Make sure pets and other animals are safely away from fireworks.
- Avoid letting off fireworks in unsuitable weather
- Let off your fireworks in large open areas. Keep children well away from the lighting area. Each firework should have a minimum safety distance marked on it. Setting off fireworks close to buildings is dangerous and tends to amplify the sound.
- Do not allow children to play with or light fireworks. Ensure that they hold sparklers at arm's length and when they go out, dispose of them in a bucket of water.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit but hasn't gone off. It could still explode. If it still hasn't gone off after half an hour, soak it with water just to make sure that it cannot reignite.
- After your display, a responsible adult should clear up firework fall-out and dispose of it safely. Remember debris can fall on neighbouring properties; if you think this might have happened ask if you can check.
- Don't use sky lanterns as you have no control over them once they've been set off. They can kill animals, litter the countryside and start fires.

Bonfires

- Warn your neighbours beforehand, so that they can close windows, keep pets indoors and take any other necessary precautions.
- Build your bonfire well clear of buildings, roads, garden sheds, fences, trees and hedges and, if possible, choose somewhere sheltered from the wind to minimise the risk of the bonfire being blown out of control or of smoke restricting the vision of road users.
- Check there are no cables – like telephone wires – above or close to the bonfire.
- Before you light the bonfire, check whether any pets, wildlife or small children have crawled inside.
- Always keep a bucket of water or a working hosepipe nearby.
- Don't get rid of household waste or processed wood on the bonfire if it will cause pollution or harm people's health. You should always burn dry material as it produces less smoke.
- Never use flammable liquids to start a bonfire and never throw on fireworks or burn dangerous items such as aerosol cans, paint tins, foam furniture, rubber, plastics or batteries.
- Don't leave bonfires unattended and keep children and pets away. A responsible adult should supervise the bonfire until it has burnt out.
- Once the bonfire has died down, pour water on the embers to stop it reigniting.

Steve Dixon, Clerk, Kingston Seymour Parish Council. November 2021