



# 100 firefighters battle thatch blaze

Words & photos  
by Lisa Bright

MORE than 100 firefighters from across the county were called to tackle a blaze at a thatched cottage in Kilmington on Sunday.

The village came to a standstill at 16 fire engines from as far as Topsham, along with five specialist vehicles, attended the scene to tackle the blaze and prevent it from spreading to neighbouring properties.

The fire service received reports at 11am on Sunday morning that the thatched roof of a mid terraced house in Silver Street, Kilmington was well alight.

Eight appliances quickly attended the scene.

At approximately 11.52am the incident commander in charge requested four further appliances for extra manpower.

By 12.30pm there were a total of 16 fire engines and more than 100 firefighters at the scene. Engines came from as far as Exeter, Cullompton, Topsham and Exmouth.

Roughly 28 firemen were tackling the blaze using water jets and hose reels. Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus attacked the fire from inside the building.

As well as preventing the fire from spreading to the adjoining properties, crews were also involved in the removal of thatch from the roof and salvaging items from the property.

The fire was eventually contained and was out by 5pm.

Group Commander for Exmouth, Mike White, said: "the cause of the fire is not yet known but it is not thought to be suspicious.

"My team were superb. In order to prevent the fire from spreading to the other properties we had men wearing breathing apparatus inside the roof fighting the fire from the inside. And we rotated the work force, which helped to contain the fire.

"The men worked very hard. From my point of view it was a successful job."

The entire roof was damaged and most of the first floor suffered from smoke and water damage. Nobody was injured.

