

28/2/02

Fire strikes in Cowbridge

FIRE gutted a house and a newsagents in Eastgate, Cowbridge last week, as local residents watched helplessly as the flames took hold and spread before fire crews could arrive.

By a cruel irony, the house is only 100 yards from Cowbridge Fire Station, but the crew were out on a training exercise.

The blaze started in number 25, Eastgate, and although the occupants were affected by smoke, the situation did not appear too serious,

However, after five minutes, local residents gathered outside the buildings saw the smoke become much thicker, and became much more concerned.

After about 10 minutes, flames started to appear, and it became clear that the fire, which had started upstairs in number 25, was spreading to upstairs in the adjoining newsagents.

Fire crews arrived at about the 15-minute mark, as tiles were exploding from both roofs, with flames soaring 20 feet into the air, and the fire was extinguished within 10 minutes.

A spokesman for the Fire Service told The GEM: "The training exercises are essential, and involve checking hydrants and other safety critical areas.

"Four fire appliances answered the call with Llantwit Major arriving just ahead of the Cowbridge unit."

By the time The GEM went to press this week, both properties appeared badly damaged and it was unclear when the newsagents would re-open.