



Making the Cut: Fire fighters train at Blenheim Palace

Oxfordshire Fire fighters visited Blenheim Palace to undergo special training in the Burleigh Wood. The team from Kidlington spent the morning refreshing vital skills needed to respond to emergencies in the rural Oxfordshire and Cotswolds countryside.

The Estate at Blenheim Palace provides the Fire and Rescue Service with the perfect conditions to set up training.



Gary Crone, Fire and Rescue Service, says: “We are thrilled to be able to use the area at Blenheim Palace, the facilities offer the fire fighters the ability to train hands-on with trees, cutting techniques and the equipment.”

He continue: “Whilst the crew from Kidlington are trained to undertake felling, we appreciate being able to use the woods at Blenheim Palace to refresh their skills and practise essential chainsaw handling, maintenance, felling and making a tree safe.”

Every year Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service attend hundreds of different incidents from fires to road traffic collisions, horses trapped in ditches ,people trapped by floods. As part of the many resources that are provided by them, they are able to mobilise a technical rescue team to assist with the local crews when incidents become more complex.

This team are based in Kidlington and are trained in swift water rescue, rescue from heights, large animal rescue as well as dealing with incidents that involve the use of chainsaws.

These incidents may be as the result of high winds bringing trees down onto property or cars. Or the need to gain access to vehicles that have crashed into dense woodland or hedges.

In order to keep the skills up to date, the team train every duty day in one or other of the skills, and when training for chainsaw use they are fortunate to be able to use the land owned by the Blenheim Estate. They are instructed as to which trees they are allowed to work on and try to replicate realistic scenarios by not only cutting the tree down but also winching it to move it or lifting it using specialist lifting equipment.

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Roy Cox, Rural Manager, says: “We are pleased to be able to support our local community and the Fire and Rescue Services in Oxford. These are vital skills that firefighters need and for us something as small as allowing the use of our woods could for someone in an accident be life changing.”

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