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Fireworks 2002

A survey into how fireworks affected our daily lives in 2002



Foreword:

I am delighted to introduce the Fireworks 2002 Report from the National Campaign for Firework Safety about the impact of fireworks use. I congratulate them for having carried out this research and brought together such a large number of media reports and other related material. It clearly demonstrates the depth of public concern around the United Kingdom about the misuse and abuse fireworks.

In bringing forward my Fireworks Bill I have researched, consulted and studied fireworks issues widely and the incidents catalogued are typical of many of which I have been made aware. I have been particularly concerned about the anti-social use of fireworks, distress and injuries to animals and the weaknesses in respect of the current system for the import and storage of fireworks. I have been heartened by the support the Bill has received and that people from both campaigning organisations and indeed from within the fireworks industry itself have recognised the need for action.

There is now a broad consensus for changes to how we deal with fireworks. I foresee a new regime where, acknowledging the legitimate use of fireworks, we respect them as the explosives that they are and would hope to see an end to many of the problems detailed in this report.

Bill Tynan
MP for Hamilton South

Fireworks 2002

In 2002 we issued the survey 'Fireworks 2001'. The information was taken from our 'Read all about It' web-pages of 2001, which is a collection of firework incidents reported in web-based newspapers. We have repeated this exercise, and have issued the 'Fireworks 2002' survey.

The survey is split into the following sections

Abuse of fireworks
Animals and Fireworks
Complaints of noise
Firework Accidents
Firework used as weapons
People who have spoke against fireworks
Petitions for firework change
Reader's Letters

In each section you will read of the negative impact fireworks have on our daily lives. This proves the need for regulation, now no longer 'if', but a question of 'how much' regulation is needed. Bill Tynan MP has begun his quest to bring his Private Members Bill to fruition, and for the first time, since 1875, we hope we shall have strong enforceable Firework Laws.

In the early stages of the survey the researcher discovered the 'firework problem', is not one problem but many. The first five sections of the survey highlight these problems, whilst the final three sections shows the many voices being raised, all calling for an overhaul of the outdated firework laws.

The survey also includes Reader's Letters which show that the public are very concerned about the impact fireworks have on their daily lives, which, in many cases, bring misery.

Abuse of Fireworks.

All fireworks on legal sale to the general public, in the United Kingdom, must conform to BS7114. This standard covers the way fireworks are manufactured. In all cases the seller of fireworks must be able to prove the firework indeed conforms to BS7114, by showing where he bought it from. This is called an 'audit trail'. By being able to show a fireworks 'audit trail' proves it does conform to BS7114.

It is, therefore, vital to be able to identify a faulty firework, and by using the 'audit trail' withdrawing other faulty fireworks, before any damage is done.

Many within the Firework Industry carry out such a practice, some however do not.

The Homebase store in Cheltenham had fireworks scattered around an office
August 13 2002, This is Gloucestershire, Store fined for firework breach

There were many instances where shops had acted unprofessionally, and quite rightly suffered the consequences.

'Choose what you want'. Kennet

April 18 2002, This is Wiltshire, Firm fined for selling firework to boy of 13

All those involved in the manufacture, storage, delivering and selling of fireworks have a duty of care to act responsibly. Many fail badly, and bring disrepute to the Industry.

It is very important for local services to be aware of any firework stores within their area, so they can be properly controlled. To be able to sell fireworks to the general public a licence is required from your local authority. Two incidents from 'Read all about it' 2002 reported website newspaper pages, show otherwise. The two incidents are un-related, but do highlight the problem.

Milkmen are now offering nappies, newspapers, even fireworks from their float.
January 8 2002, icNewcastle, Milk float should be a general store on wheels

and

Police are investigating how the firework came to be in the street. Sunderland
December 19 2002, Evening Chronicle, Two hurt by firework

There were incidents which showed fireworks are being sold outside the legal framework. Fireworks have been stolen from shops, lorries and garden centres and these fireworks may have been sold from houses, backs of vans, pubs and car boot sales.

It is these fireworks, which may have been manufactured to BS7114, but because the 'audit trail' has been broken, the fireworks have lost their accreditation.

The most worrying aspect is where are these fireworks being stored, whilst awaiting their illegal sale.

It recovered more than eight tons of fireworks from an unlicensed store in the Dalmarnock
October 31, 2002, BBC News Scotland, Firework Complaints Rocket

Police seized a cache of 1.200 fireworks from a mans home in Edinburgh
October 28 2002, Scottish Daily Express, Firework Sales Alarm,

Police seized £5,000 worth of display fireworks during an early morning raid in Blackpool.
October 18 2002, This is Lancashire, Dawn swoop nets fireworks

Police seized £10,000 of illegal fireworks containing four times more gunpowder than is allowed by law.
October 19 2002, icWales, Cardiff, Fireworks seized

Many of these fireworks may have been made to BS7114, and may have been perfectly safe. We do not know. The problem is we are not aware of where, and how, they are stored.

Animals

Together with their owners, animals continue to pay a high price when it comes to fireworks.
This incident,

New Year festivities which left horses traumatised and caused a dog to disappear in panic
January 3 2002, This is Essex, Colchester, Pets traumatised by 2002 fireworks

was the first in our 'Read all about It' web-pages for 2002, and the year finished off with,

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association appeals to readers to sign our "Regulate Fireworks Now" petition,
December 30 2002, This is Lancashire, Don't forget pets as fireworks are set off

For years cats and dogs have suffered by having fireworks tied to them, thrown at them, and in the year 2002 Megan, an eight year old Bull Terrier, was taught to play fetch with a firework, in Middleton, Greater Manchester, with tragic consequences.

In the year 2001, Rocky's death, the dog that tore it's own face off, heralded more complaints than ever about the sheer noise fireworks now make. No less tragic was this, which shows the negative effect of fireworks is no longer limited to cats and dogs.

One of his prized cows died during a corporate firework display. Little Budworth
November 15 2002, icCheshireOnline, Valuable cow dies after firework panic

Both the RSPCA and the PDSA reported many animals being treated with firework-related injuries. But now there is a new phenomenon, firework noise. At present there is no upper limit on the noise a firework can make. There is enough evidence to show animals do not like fireworks because of the sheer noise they make. The RSPCA has brought out an excellent report entitled 'Quiet Please, loud fireworks frighten animals'. They looked at the problem of animals and firework noise and recommended a maximum of 95dB(A)l. This they decided would cause the least damage to animals.

The current Fireworks Bill, is beginning its passage through parliament. One of the clauses, 2 (2) (b), refers to 'distress' to animals. It is easier to measure the physical distress an animal suffers when a firework causes physical damage. But how shall we determine the mental 'distress' animals suffer when faced with noisy fireworks.

There is evidence to show animals do suffer 'distress' from the noise fireworks make. It is time a maximum

level of noise was set for every firework, in order to minimise the distress firework noise brings to our animals.

Complaints of noise.

In our '**Firework Survey 2001**' the complaints numbered 18. In the last year there have been 41 complaints registered as part of the newspaper story. This does not include the many 'Reader's Letters' of complaint. The first complaint,

Not letting residents living nearby know about the event before. Colchester
January 3 2002, This is Essex, Colchester, Pets traumatised by 2002 fireworks

The amount of noise fireworks make has now become a separate firework problem.

Leicester City Council had 56 complaints about noisy fireworks.
August 31 2002, This is Leicestershire, Cracking plan to cut noise

As well as noisy fireworks, there is evidence fireworks are being discharged at un-social hours.

Disturbed at 3am on Monday . Shirley
July 26 2002, This is Solihull, Fury over late night fireworks

Exeter families fed-up with fireworks keeping them awake through the night
August 6 2002, This is Devon, Residents have had enough of late-night noise

There is a difference between a firework of 120dB(A)I being set-off in the middle of a firework display, where it's noise may not be so noticeable amongst the tumult, but, it will have a different response, when discharged in the dead of night. The apparent loudness of the firework will be many times greater.

Many people say they can feel the house shake with the vibration during noisy firework discharges. In August came this rather disturbing report,

A structural expert claims vibrations from fireworks celebrations are damaging Edinburgh's old buildings. Arnold Hendry believes the tonnes of explosives used to mark the Edinburgh Festival, Hogmanay and military Tattoo are dislodging pieces of masonry. Leisure chief, Councillor Steve Cardownie, is backing calls for an investigation into the impact of fireworks.
August 2 2002, icScotland , Fireworks may be cause of building damage

As fireworks become more and more powerful, surely we cannot allow the slow destruction of our historic buildings to continue. This must be a consideration for lowering the 'explosive' nature of fireworks. If there is a case to be made, for saying loud fireworks damage buildings over a long period of time, then who should pay for the costs of repairing these buildings. Until we know for certain that loud explosive fireworks of the category 4 nature, as used in Edinburgh's celebrations, do not cause damage then limiting the 'explosive' type fireworks should be a priority.

Firework Accidents.

Only three months were firework reported accident free. When one thinks of the tragedy at the Rhode Island Night club, we have been extremely lucky. But fireworks have caused 3 deaths in the year. The first occurred when,

A pregnant woman lost her baby after a firework hit her the stomach. Greater Manchester
November 5 2002, ManchesterOnline, Boy's hand blown off by rocket

The others were two ladies, one of which was knocked down by a youth fleeing from a firework incident,

Died after she was knocked to the ground moments after a firework was let off
November 11 2002, icHuddersfield, Death tragedy Two arrested

The other lady was too frightened to use the 'safer' route of an underpass, because youths were throwing fireworks around.

Crossed the road instead of the underpass because youths had been letting off fireworks in the subway
November 13 2002, icCheshireOnline, Northwich, Fear of yobs ends in death

These deaths are a result of fireworks being freely available.

It may be argued that some accidents result as a misuse of fireworks by the firer, but not all can be construed as such. On the first day of the new year,

A faulty indoor firework sparked a fire in a night-club's ducting on Bridge Street, Bolton,
January 1 2002, This is Lancashire, Firework starts blaze

There is now an added element to firework accidents.
According to BS7114 Category 3 fireworks, "When used according to the instructions, these fireworks should not cause injury to people standing 25 m or more away. People firing these fireworks would be expected to wear suitable protection."

The firework crashed through the glass over the breakfast room, in Stoulton, at about 10pm.
February 5 2002, This is Worcestershire, Apology after firework went through roof

A deadly firework crashed through a conservatory roof and hit a terrified 10-year-old girl. Lostock Hall
November 5 2002, Preston Today, Rocket blasts through roof

It hit it with enough force to break a neighbour's roof tile and set fire to the felt underneath."
November 11 2002, This is Oxfordshire, Stray firework damages roof

These three incidents demonstrate how fireworks have now become a hazard when returning to earth. In each of these cases, a firework upon returning to earth, would have caused "injury to people standing 25m or more away", and therefore failed to meet the requirements of BS7114.

Residents fear someone could be maimed or killed by metal-tipped fireworks. Braunstone
November 22 2002, This is Leicestershire, 'Ban dangerous fireworks'

If we allow fireworks to be made of a more solid nature then we are increasing the risk of many more accidents as a result of rockets returning to earth and striking someone.

In cases, where fireworks have caused damage, to roofs and other property, it is up to the owner of the property to recoup the cost of the damage through their insurance, whilst the firer and the firework companies, remain in 'not-me-guv' mode.

More time and effort must be placed on firework design to ensure they do not cause a hazard outside the 25 metre danger zone. Fireworks failing that test, should be refused qualification to BS7114.

Firework used as weapons.

We have sub-divided this group into 6 categories.

- a Fireworks used against firefighters
- b Fireworks used against people
- c Fireworks used against people in houses
- d Fireworks used against police
- e Fireworks used for terror
- f Fireworks used in vandalism

This section shows how fireworks are now being used by certain sections of the general public.

Unfortunately, all these activities have been unhindered for many years, and now are seen by certain members of the public as part and parcel of the firework season. The acceptance of the so called 'Mischief Night' allows this minority the excuse to wreak havoc on the general public.

a Fireworks used against firefighters

We wrote to though Fire Brigade asking for the official figures of incidents involving fireworks being thrown at firefighters, but we were told they do not keep such records. Our 'Read All About' pages, for 2002, shows there were 13 incidents reported. Here are some of the incidents.

Fireworks were hurled at firefighters as they were attempting to put out a grass fire in Kirkby.
October 2 2002, icLiverpool, Firefighters attacked by jobs

Jobs hurled fireworks at firefighters tackling a blaze at an allotment.

October 9 2002, icNewcastle, 999 crew attacked

Firefighters came under attack from youths armed with rockets and other powerful fireworks on a dimly-lit Bolton street.

October 14 2002, This is Lancashire, Firemen blasted by rockets

In Hamilton, a crew were hit with fireworks as they fought a blaze.

October 30 2002, Daily Mirror, Firemen Attacked by Gang

Thugs hurled fireworks at firefighters who were called out to a caravan fire.

November 1 2002, This is Nottingham, Thugs target firefighters

A gang of jobs attacked fire crews with a barrage of fireworks as they tackled a blaze.

November 6 2002, ManchesterOnline, Terror attack by firework thugs

At least two firefighters have been injured after missiles and fireworks were thrown at them during Bonfire Night attacks.

November 6, 2002, BBC News Scotland, Fire Crews Attacked on Bonfire Night

The practise of starting a fire and then targeting the attending firefighters is now so common-place, that the researcher believes it is not newsworthy in the eyes of the newspapers. Firefighters in their protective clothing, can, in a very small way, tolerate such activity, but with fireworks becoming more powerful, it is just a matter of time before we have our first fatality among the firefighters.

b Fireworks used against people

There were 35 incidents where people have been the target of firework abusing users. Here are six incidents

"Jumping Jack" fireworks were hurled at terrified commuters and drinkers.

June 3 2002, This is York, Firework gang in station rumpus

To throwing a firework at a woman.

June 29 2002, This Is Lancashire, Youths banned from town centre

A grandad had his finger blown off when a hooded thug hurled a powerful firework at him.

October 2 2002, This is The North East, Grandad's finger blown off as thug throws firework

She was with a group of other girls when a boy threw the firework at her.

October 9 2002, Greenock Telegraph Online, Girl injured in firework horror

"All I was told was that it was someone who came out of the pub who threw the firework at Sarah."

October 11 2002, Birmingham Evening Mail, Firework girl's agony

Terrified passengers including a woman seven months pregnant cowered as a lit firework thrown by a gang of youths rocketed through their busy tube carriage.

October 25 2002, Local London, Passengers terrified by firework gang

Anyone of these incidents could have had fatalities. The possible consequences of the incident involving fireworks inside a London Tube carriage, are terrifying.

c Fireworks used against people in houses

There were sixty incidents reported in our 'Read All About It' pages where lit fireworks were introduced into a house when in some circumstances it was known people were inside. The letter-box has been a traditional entry point.

A firework pushed through the door.

January 3 2002, Surrey on-line, Young wreckers plaguing village

Jobs pushed a firework through the sleeping family's letterbox early yesterday.

August 5 2002, This is the North East, Mum praised after firework attack

An arsonist pushed a burning firework through their letterbox last night.

October 12 2002, This is Lancashire, Firework pushed through letterbox

A blaze which devastated a Slaithwaite firm may have been caused by a firework pushed under the door.

October 16 2002, icHuddersfield, 'Wrecked by a firework'

Widower Leonard Brown spoke of his shock today after a firework was put through his door.

October 16 2002, Greenock Telegraph, Yobs hurl rockets at firemen

But now the firework abusers are using other means,

Police are hunting mindless vandals who risked causing a major blaze by shattering the living room window of a family home and throwing in a lighted firework.

October 17 2002, East Lothian Courier Lighted firework is thrown into house

Residents at a house in Windmill Road, Longford, were targeted by yobs who threw a lit firework through a broken window.

October 23 2002, icCoventry, Concern over firework pranks

They tossed two fireworks through an open window of the students' dormitory.

November 6 2002, icNewcastle, Police probing firework attack

Not only houses are being targeted,

A blaze which devastated a Slaithwaite firm may have been caused by a firework pushed under the door.

October 16 2002, icHuddersfield, 'Wrecked by a firework'

A lit firework was thrown into a vet's surgery in Appleton during the early hours of Tuesday morning.

October 17 2002, This is Cheshire, Firecracker explosion damages vet's surgery

Poolbrook Primary School in Malvern has escaped with minor damage after pranksters put a lit firework through a letterbox.

October 23 2002, This is Worcestershire, Plea is made on fireworks

A firebug set off a firework in a communal hall at the flats, setting light to a pram at about 2.20pm on Sunday.

October 23 2002, This is Trafford, Firefighters rescue toddler and baby

A 15-year-old boy who pushed a lighted firework into the letterbox at Conwy police station for a dare.

October 31 2002, iDaily Post, Firework prank,

The building in Ilminster was damaged after a firework was set off in the entrance hall.

October 31, 2002, BBCi Teletext, Firework badly charity building

A firework was also pushed through the letterbox of Jades Chinese Takeaway.

November 5 2002, icSurreyOnline, 'Trick or treat' terror

Yobs hurled exploding fireworks through the windows of a church, smashing glass and causing hundreds of pounds of damage.

November 6 2002, Express and Star, Fireworks are thrown into church

Terry Sayer runs a travel agents in Brownhill, Blackburn, where youths posted a rocket through the letterbox.

November 9 2002, This is Lancashire, Firework plea

Police are hunting arsonists who pushed a burning firework through the letterbox of a Halesowen firm over the weekend.

November 11 2002, This is The Black Country, Firework attack on firm

There is sufficient evidence to prove that fireworks in the hands of the 'hooligan' element of our society are very, very dangerous. Each of the sixty incidents could have ended with loss of life. We have been very lucky so far. Just how long can our luck hold?

d Fireworks used against police

There were 16 reported incidents where fireworks have been targeted at our police force. It is well known in Northern Ireland, fireworks have been thrown at police and security forces, but now it is beginning to happen here.

Threatening police with a firework

January 17 2002, This is Lancashire, Man denies threat to burn police

Held a firework at waist height "like a gun" before firing it at police horses.

March 2 2002, This is Bradford, Jail for rioter who used firework 'like a gun'

A group of about 50 hooligans began raining down fireworks and flares on the police.

May 3 2002, icBirmingham, 50 police hurt on night of hate

There was soccer violence at Millwall,

"You don't just chance upon thunder flashes and fireworks."

May 8 2002, icSouthLondon, We will see off the scum

Police were attacked with bricks, paving stones, flares and fireworks.

May 12 2002, icScotland, Police issue six more Millwall riot photos

And then just 'normal' violence,

A 14-year-old youth was cautioned after fireworks were thrown at a patrol car.

October, 24 2002, BBC News, Police in fireworks attack

Police have come under attack from a gang of yobs hurling fireworks.

November 5 2002, Burton Mail, Fireworks attack on cops

A police chief today compared a town to Beirut after "the worst Bonfire Night in his 28 years as an officer". A squad car was one of seven vehicles torched in Bulwell last night.

November 6 2002, This is Nottingham, Police Chief says, 'It was like Beirut'

Police officers in St Paul's were subjected to a barrage of industrial-sized fireworks deliberately aimed at them by groups of youths.

November 7 2002, This is Bristol, Targeted by fireworks

Earlier in this survey we referred to how common-place the attacks on firefighters are becoming, is it now spilling over into attacks against the police?

e Fireworks used for terror

There were 62 incidents, where fireworks were used to terrorise. Here are a few.

A man who threw a fire bomb in a busy city centre, thought to be a ballcock packed with fireworks.

March 2 2002, Daily Mirror, Fire Bomb City Scare

The package was now believed to be a professional firework rather than a bomb.

March 5 2002, IcHuddersfield, Blast drama after chase

A firework was hurled into a church meeting room

March 22 2002, IcBirmingham, Church knife horror

The giant roman candle exploded after being thrown into the premises.

March 26 2002, IcBirmingham, Men sent down for firework attack

Two teenagers have been banned from using fireworks after terrorising locals for more than a year.

September 11 2002, Manchester Online, Fireworks ban for teen louts

A firework containing a series of smaller firecrackers was thrown on to the pitch.

October 8 2002, Times Online, Bigots face tough new laws after Old Firm violence

Shoppers were left terrified when louts launched fireworks at a shop on a troubled Southampton estate.

October 9 2002, This is Hampshire, Thugs target shop in firework attack

A car drove past at 9pm and a firework was thrown from the window.

October 9 2002, Salford Advertiser, 999 man's firework ordeal

Youngsters in Eric Avenue, Thornaby, held a running battle, hurling fireworks at each other.

October 9 2002, icTeesside, Fireworks ban call

He dropped a large rocket on the floor and rode out, leaving it to explode into the wooden ceiling.

October 11 2002, This is The North East, Fireworks pranksters condemned

Two pubs and a restaurant reported incidents where fireworks were thrown at customers.

October 12 2002, This Is Bradford, Fireworks thrown in attacks

Yobs in Ashgill were accused of hurling stones, bricks and fireworks at buses.

October 12 2002, icLanarkshire, Don't let the yobs kill off our vital bus link

The gang hurled lit fireworks at pedestrians and into shops during a horrifying rampage through the streets.

October 14 2002, Leeds Today, Fireworks from MP

A gang of BMX riding youths in Heslington Road, York, are said to have thrown the lit firework in the direction of the woman.
October 22 2002, This is York, Police warn fiends of fire danger

The misuse of fireworks has turned one area of Taunton into a virtual war zone.
October 31, 2002 Bath Chronicle, Cars wrecked in Halcon 'war zone'

and potentially, the most damaging incident of all,

The safety of passengers is being jeopardised by maniacs launching fireworks at planes landing at Manchester Airport.
October 22 2002, Manchester Online, Firework jobs put jets in peril

These incidents highlight one of the many problems we have within our society. Because fireworks can be used in this manner, then certain people will use them this way. The minority who use fireworks in this way, should not be confused with the vast majority of ordinary people who celebrate Guy Fawkes Night on November 5th.

But we must tackle the problem of firework abuse.

f Fireworks used in vandalism

There were fifty reported incidents of vandalism. We have defined this section as vandalism, where there does not appear to be risk to anyone's life.

We asked the Royal Mail how many of their post boxes etc, were damaged by fireworks and we received a reply saying they did not keep records of how many were damaged, or the cost of replacing them.

There seems to be a popular practise of 'blowing up' pillar boxes.

The fire brigade was called out to deal with a blaze in a post-box caused by a lit firework.
June 11 2002, This is North Scotland, Firework caused post-box blaze

A powerful firework thrown into a mailbox on Leicester's Saffron estate exploded with such force it cracked the box's cast iron casing.

October 21 2002, Leicester Mercury, Post box firework attack sparks danger warning

Firefighters from Gipton station have tackled four blazes in post boxes in the space of two days, all caused by fireworks being shoved through the letter slots.

October 24 2002, Leeds Today, Post boxes targeted in firework attacks, By Charles Heslett

In Graham Avenue, Patcham, fireworks were put into a Royal Mail letter box. They exploded, blowing off the door and scattering post over the street.

November 1 2002, This is Brighton & Hove, Family's Hallowe'en firework shock

Locals in a Black Isle town thought a modern-day Guy Fawkes was at work when a metal post box exploded and sprayed the surrounding area with potentially lethal debris.

November 7 2002, The Highland News, Police probe post box blast

Windows and walls shook as thugs caused a massive explosion which ripped apart a cast iron pillar box.

November 19 2002, icSurreyOnline, Vandals blow up postbox

Vandals used fireworks to blow up a village postbox last Friday. Teenagers dumped so many lit fireworks into the Royal Mail box that the shutter blew off, scattering letters all over the street.

November 21 2002, icNorthWales, Vandals blow up postbox

Christmas mail was left charred after a firework blew up a postbox.

December 3 2002, This is Local London, Lit firework in postbox

Post Boxes are not the sole target,

Fireworks were let off in a wheelie bin in Mill Street, Rocester.

April 4 2002, Burton Mail, Hunt on for phone box blast vandals

and one of many telephone kiosks that were damaged

Heard a "pop," and then a "boom," as a Chinese firework went off in the kiosk at Waterfoot.

May 25 2002, This is Lancashire, Man, 19, caged over 'vicious' attack

Cars were also attacked,

A stolen display firework was attached to a car and detonated in Collyhurst, Manchester.
October 5 2002, This is Lancashire, Brigade chief's warning over fireworks misuse

Youths also smashed a car window in Owlwood Drive, Little Hulton, and placed a firework on the back seat.
October 12 2002, This is Lancashire, Firework pushed through letterbox

Somerset Fire Brigade have dealt with five car fires which they believe involves fireworks.
October 31, 2002, BBCi Teletext, Firework badly charity building

A car was seriously damaged by youths who placed a powerful firework inside it in Charlestown.
October 2002, Manchester News, Terror attack by firework thugs

Fireworks are being abused. The power of fireworks is being used to cause much damage in our society. If we minimise the power in fireworks, then that will reduce their use in abusive ways.

People who have spoke against fireworks.

Included are the many people have spoken out against fireworks. Politicians (60), from all sides of the political arena. Scottish MSP's, and Welsh members of parliament have all spoken out against fireworks. We have recorded one MEP, in our 'Read All About It' pages.

It is not only the politicians who have voiced their concern but many members of the Local Government, councillors, Police, Fire Chiefs, as well as the Animal Welfare groups such as RSPCA, SSPCA, PDSA, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

These people and organisations all have differing solutions, but all start with the same premise, something has to be done about fireworks.

And from within the firework industry,

John Woodhead, Chairman, British Fireworks Association
Called for tighter import controls
March 4 2002, IcHuddersfield, 'No firework ban' praised

The solutions offered are wide and varied,
from a total ban,

Michael Todd, Chief constable, Greater Manchester
Backed our campaign by voting for a total ban.
December 13 2002, Manchester Evening News, Our own fire chief constable backs total ban

Oliver Johnson, Councillor, Middlesbrough
Said a total ban on fireworks was the only answer to the problem.
November 15 2002, icTeesside, Ban firework sales

to a ban on retail sales

Joan Ryan, Enfield North MP, Labour
Is campaigning for a complete ban on the sale of fireworks.
September 26 2002, This is Local London, Fireworks campaigners say, Get wise or get hurt

Stuart Jones, Public relations officer, Nottingham branch of the National Federation of the Blind
We believe there should be a total ban on fireworks being sold in the shops.
October 16 2002, This is Nottingham, Spare a thought for the people you scare

To a partial ban

Pamela Pearson, founder Prevent Unwanted Pets animal welfare charity
Wants the Government to slap a total ban on large fireworks which cause excessive levels of noise and distress.
April 12 2002, This is Lancashire, Call for new laws on firework sales

other restrictions include

Stan Tennant, Councillor, Central Buchan, Scottish Nationalist Party
wants sales restricted to authorised people in charge of organised displays.
April 24 2002, This is North Scotland, New bid to ban sale of fireworks to public

Sue Marbrow, Councillor, East Staffordshire

wants to see the legal age for buying fireworks increased to 21.

April 25 2002, Burton Mail, New call to change the firework laws

David Watkins, The Mayor of Brighton and Hove

has called for a ban on late-night fireworks in historic squares.

August 20 2002, This is Brighton and Hove, Mayor calls for late-night fireworks ban

John Thompson, Police Chief Superintendent, divisional commander for Eastern Division,

Called for tighter legislation on the sale of fireworks, including a complete ban on newsagents selling them, to halt the annual drain on officers' time.

September 20 2002, This is Lancashire, Crackdown on fireworks kids

Archie Graham, Councillor, Glasgow

"We believe organised displays in a controlled environment are the only safe way to enjoy fireworks."

September 22 2002, Sunday Mail, Ban the Bangers Councils demand sales crackdown

Many local newspapers have set up their own campaigns, after being urged to do so by their readers. Most notable are,

**Leicester Mercury
Manchester Evening News
Nottingham Evening Post
Yorkshire Evening Post**

Their reporters and journalists are working very hard, campaigning to have fireworks brought under stricter control. These, and many other reporters, whose efforts are in our 'Read All About It' pages, from which this survey is made, are owed a debt of gratitude by the National Campaign of Firework Safety. We are very happy to acknowledge that debt, for without their efforts, this survey would not be possible.

Petitions for firework change

There have been many types of petitions against fireworks.

From

The 200,000-name petition, organised by Labour MP for Brent North Barry Gardiner, is to be delivered to Downing Street on October 16.

October 11 2002, Burton Mail, MP joins fight on fireworks,

to the smaller

A Campaign in Blyth Valley to control firework sales has been backed by more than 1,700 people.

December 16 2002, Evening Chronicle, Firework ban is backed by 1,700

Many people have shown their intolerance of the current situation by raising petitions amongst themselves and handing them to their MP or local councillor.

Included here are the many 'polls' that have taken place.

We asked yesterday if you thought that the sale of fireworks to the public should be banned. An overwhelming majority of you said that they should

YES 98%

NO 2%

October 12 2002, Manchester Evening News, How you voted on fireworks

A phone poll showed an overwhelming 94% of voters - 466 callers - called for a ban on fireworks on general sale. Only 6% - 28 callers - believed they should not be banned.

October 30 2002, Preston Today, Ban them now!

An astounding 99 per cent of you want tougher legislation on fireworks.

November 9 2002, icWales, Blast off

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals carried out their own poll.

A MORI poll for the RSPCA shows 71 per cent of those questioned thought loud fireworks should be restricted to public displays.

November 4 2002, ManchesterOnline, Stay Safe campaign wins backing

All show there is public support for tighter restrictions on fireworks.

Reader's Letters

In the newspapers we have used for our 'Read All About It' pages have been many readers letters, and the vast majority were for major changes in firework regulations.

Only in the months of February and April were the newspapers free from complaints about fireworks. Here is a selection from each month.

January 10 2002, Evening Post, Letters, Why I want a firework ban.

I would just like to say that I am in total favour of a firework ban. It's now January 5, 2002, 10pm and two more have just been set off. I can only think the people setting them off are selfish inconsiderate morons, so the sooner a total ban is introduced the better.

K C, Bramcote

March 11 2002, Nottingham Evening Post, Home-made bangers are not the issue

MPs need to understand that lip-service is not enough. If there is no effective action well before the next election we should make it an election issue.

R C Radcliffe-on-Trent

May 7 2002, icScotland, Roy's rocket

Those terrible explosions we hear, not just on Guy Fawkes' night but month after month, are getting out of hand.

Mrs R. L, Glasgow.

June 14 2002, This is Nottingham, Why fireworks?

I heard fireworks going on June 3 (why?)

G. A. Wollaton Vale

July 16 2002, This is Leeds, The Firework Menace must be stopped

Once again I have been woken late at night and nearly scared to death by extremely loud bangs,

S DS, Leeds 5.

August 22 2002, This is Brighton and Hove, Boring bangs

The great explosive reverberations frankly frighten me.

M. P. Brighton and Hove,

September 16 2002, Express and Star, Please end this annual misery

Is it too much to ask this government littered with failures to stop the sale of fireworks,

JT, West Bromwich.

October 4 2002, This is Nottingham, A rocket for retailer

I have written to a local retailer who has been selling half-price fireworks five weeks before Guy Fawkes' Day, asking whether their behaviour is responsible and justifiable,

S. B. Keyworth

November 1 2002, This is Lancashire, Ban sale of explosives

Banning the sale of what are basically explosives to the general public. If we only pull together and make our voices heard, we can beat this problem once and for all.

J. W. Darwen.

December 18 2002, This is Local London, Take firework action

Since the last week of September to quite recently, we have had to listen to these explosions at all times of the day.

C. C. New Addington

Many readers letters urged others to write to MP's, Local Councillors etc and voice their own firework complaints.

Findings of Firework 2002

Many Fireworks are unable to be verified as conforming to BS7114.

Many Non BS7114 fireworks are being sold.

Many Fireworks are losing their BS7114 accreditation.

Many Fireworks are being stored in an unsafe manner.

Many Fireworks are being sold in an unsafe manner.

Many Fireworks are 'unreliable' when used in a correct and safe manner.

Many Fireworks are becoming a greater hazard.

Many Fireworks are now becoming too loud.

More attention must be paid to firework design.

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