



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

26th April 2019

John Roberts
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
Oakroyd Hall
Birkenshaw
West Yorkshire
BD11 2DY

Telephone: 01274 655701/655733
john.roberts@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Personal

Ms Kersten England
Chief Executive
City of Bradford MDC
Office of the Chief Executive
City Hall
Bradford
BD1 1HY



Dear *Kersten,*

Easter Moorland Fires – West Yorkshire

As you are no doubt aware West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service has experienced an exceptionally busy Easter period as a consequence of a number of large wildfires which involved significant areas of openly accessible land.

It is almost certain that these fires, and many other smaller ones which haven't made the news, were started either deliberately or by the careless use of disposable barbeques or other small fires.

The impact on local communities can be considerable, as can the impact on both the natural environment and the local economy where fires occur in areas where visitors may spend time, such as Ilkley Moor.

Whilst the most recent fires have involved Kirklees and Bradford there are areas within all of the districts of West Yorkshire where similar fires could have significant impact.

As a service we apply the ethos of prevention being better than cure. Whilst our response capability will remain prepared for such an eventuality, we seek to focus effort on preventing these fires from occurring. This is a big ask, and the potential solutions are numerous. Awareness raising campaigns will feature significantly in the work which we are planning.

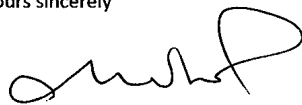
[Faint, illegible text]

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorksfire.gov.uk

We would like to initiate a discussion with all local councils to explore the potential to instigate Public Space Protection Orders which specifically prohibit the use of barbeques and the lighting of fires in defined areas of the county. We understand that this is a significant request and appreciate that the instigation of such an order is a relatively complex process involving a degree of public consultation. The vast majority of feedback from members of the public to our crews at incidents, and via our social media channels, suggests that such a move would have public support, and as such we wish to undertake a discussion with local partners on a district by district basis.

To this end I would appreciate your thoughts on this matter, and if supportive, we commit to working with you to progress this initiative.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Roberts', written in a cursive style.

John Roberts
Chief Fire Officer