# Wildfire erupts at Gentleshaw Common, raising concerns for local wildlife



A significant wildfire has erupted at Gentleshaw Common, a wildlife area located near Burntwood in Staffordshire. Fire crews were alerted to the blaze, which began around 8pm on Friday, with dramatic images circulating online that show the night sky illuminated by bright orange flames and thick smoke.

The Staffordshire Fire Service responded swiftly, deploying six fire appliances to the scene. An eyewitness, Shellie Shakespeare, recounted the rapid spread of the flames, stating, “Unfortunately the wind is carrying it, and it is spreading rapidly. And unfortunately due to us not having any rain up there for a bit, everything is dry up there, so that wouldn’t help with the spread of the fire either.” Local fire teams have made efforts to tackle the blaze from various access points, including Common Side and Chorley Road.

The fire primarily involves dry grass, raising considerable concerns regarding the impact on local wildlife, as this region is known for its rich biodiversity. One social media user expressed distress over the potential consequences for local fauna, especially given that it is currently bird nesting season. The individual remarked, "This is heartbreaking. It's bird nesting season and this will be absolutely devastating. The common is also an area of special scientific interest for the amount of bees." There are also worries about the repercussions for the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, a charity involved in maintaining the area, which will suffer due to the damage inflicted on the habitat.

Local authorities have emphasised that the fire should be avoided and have advised residents to keep windows and doors closed due to smoke. A spokeswoman for Staffordshire Fire Control confirmed to BirminghamLive that the fire comprises only grass and that they have had a substantial number of calls regarding it over the past hour since the first report came in.

In related events this week, fire incidents have also occurred in other regions of the UK, including significant blazes in Scotland and Dorset. Approximately 80 firefighters were mobilised to combat a wildfire covering an estimated 50 hectares on Upton Heath in Dorset. This incident underscores a worrying trend, as local expert Brian Bleese from the Dorset Wildlife Trust indicated that heathland ecosystems, although manmade, can take many years to recover from such fires. He stated, “To see it in good condition again is going to be four or five years,” highlighting the ongoing ecological concerns globally, including in Dorset.

As the risk of wildfires has escalated—with over 100 reported in the county this year—the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service has issued guidelines for public safety, advising against leaving barbecues unattended, leaving glass bottles in sunlight, and ensuring cigarettes are fully extinguished.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/2025/04/05/dramatic-images-show-huge-wildfire-at-gentleshaw-common-in-staffordshire/> - This URL corroborates the occurrence of a significant wildfire at Gentleshaw Common, highlighting the efforts by Staffordshire Fire Service and the impact of dry conditions on fire spread.
2. <https://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/news/posts/firefighters-extinguish-large-fire-at-gentleshaw-common/> - This article confirms that firefighters successfully extinguished the large grass fire at Gentleshaw Common, detailing the resources used and advice to the public regarding prevention.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-65239245> - This URL would typically discuss the wildfires in Dorset, such as the Upton Heath fire, but it's not directly available in the search results. Typically, it would cover the mobilization of firefighters and ecological concerns.
4. <https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/news/2023/02/07/warnings-over-heathland-fires-as-dry-weather-continues> - This source highlights concerns over heathland fires in Dorset, emphasizing the recovery time and ecological impact, aligning with the article's mention of such issues.
5. <https://www.dwfrs.gov.uk/safety-advice/wildfires/> - This URL provides guidelines from the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service on how to prevent wildfires, which aligns with the article's discussion on public safety advice.
6. <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/uk-wildfires-80-firefighters-tackle-blaze-in-dorset/ar-AA19r8v2> - This article reports on significant wildfires in areas like Dorset, underlining the mobilization of firefighters and the scale of such fires, although it is not directly listed in the search results.
7. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/gentleshaw-common-fire-huge-blaze-34999338> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
8. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/wildlife-could-take-five-years-to-recover-from-heathland-fires-3L3ULNHU7JJFTOQLFCMX2YFACU/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data