

# News Release

Issued on: Friday 2 August 2019

## **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Declared UK Fire Service Champions**

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service were crowned UK fire service champions during last weekend's British Firefighter Challenge in Watford.

The British Firefighter Challenge is an annual sporting event which pushes firefighters to their limits, whilst providing a day of entertainment for its spectators, and raises money for The Fire Fighters Charity.

This year's event was hosted by Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service on Saturday 27, and Sunday 28 July, and saw over 200 firefighters competing both individually and in relay teams.

Seven firefighters from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service took part in the challenging course, receiving a number of good results over the weekend.

Firefighters, Pete Wakefield and John Gregory, received second and third for fastest British male overall, and additionally placed first and second in their age group (30-34), whilst Jack Baker, also received a bronze medal in his category (18-29). Their fastest combined times meant Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service became the UK fire service champions, improving on last year's position of second place.

John Gregory, firefighter at Eastern Fire and Rescue Station in Leicestershire, said: "The weekend's weather just about held off, and I can't tell you how many people pulled together to make this event happen. There have been some big achievements for Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service - it has been an incredible journey, and one I am most proud of.

"Congratulations to all of the competitors, and thank you to all of the volunteers, sponsors, and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service for hosting this year's event. I must also say well done to my colleagues who took part, and in particular a big thank you to Pete and Jack, who together we have become champions!"

Rick Taylor, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer, said: "What a great result and reward for Pete, John, Jack and the rest of the team. The individual personal commitment towards this firefighter's challenge is something that will be hard to top.

"For Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to be able to say we are 'UK Fire and Rescue Champions' is something that we, as a whole service are proud of."

The event raised nearly £7,000 for [The Fire Fighters Charity](#), who provide physical, mental health and social wellbeing support to past and present members of the fire service community.

Leicestershire's [Mini Fire Engine](#), was also in attendance during the weekend, raising over £500 for charities local to Leicestershire.

The British Firefighter Challenge 2019, results for Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service are as follows:

### **UK Fire Service**

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (Pete Wakefield, John Gregory, Jack Baker) - Gold

### **British Male**

Pete Wakefield (2 minutes 33 seconds) – Silver

John Gregory (2 minutes 34 seconds) – Bronze

### **18-29 Age Category**

Jack Baker (2 minutes 37 seconds) – Bronze

### **30-34 Age Category**

Pete Wakefield (2 minutes 33 seconds) – Gold

John Gregory (2 minutes 34 seconds) – Silver

Craig Smith finished in 3 minutes 33 seconds (77<sup>th</sup> overall, finishing 23<sup>rd</sup> in the M30 category), Mark Baker 3 minutes 37 seconds (90<sup>th</sup> overall, finishing 10<sup>th</sup> in the M45 category), Richard Moon 3 minutes 41 seconds (97<sup>th</sup> overall, finishing 30<sup>th</sup> in the M30 category) and Gareth Whitaker 4 minutes 3 seconds (131<sup>st</sup> overall, finishing 39<sup>th</sup> in the M30 category).

For the full results and for further information about the British Firefighter Challenge, visit [britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk/](http://britishfirefighterchallenge.co.uk/) or follow them on social media, Twitter: [@TeamGB\\_Fire](https://twitter.com/TeamGB_Fire), Facebook: [British Firefighter Challenge](#), Instagram: [BritishFirefighterChallenge](#).

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

Interviews can be arranged through prior arrangement with Corporate Communications on the details below.

Image: Courtesy of British Firefighter Challenge, John Gregory (2<sup>nd</sup>) Pete Wakefield (1<sup>st</sup>)

**About the Service**

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service provides emergency response, prevention and protection services from 20 stations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Its headquarters is based in Birstall, Leicester.

During 2018/19, the Service attended 762 road traffic collisions, of which 125 were extrications from vehicles, in addition to 2,569 fires. We carried out 6,746 home safety checks and fitted 4,790 smoke alarms. 279 schools were visited as part of the Service's schools programme, delivering fire and road safety education to pupils. Staff organised or took part in 1,068 community safety events, promoting fire and road safety and arson prevention, and 134 Virtual Fatal Four (VF4) events as part of the Service's young drivers' road safety project.

The Service's prevention, education, enforcement and inspection programmes have resulted in significant reductions in the number of incidents. In the last ten years, fire-related incidents have reduced by over 30 percent.

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