

Former AF&RS Firefighter awarded British Empire Medal following 50 years of charitable service



Pictured: Ian Satherley

Former Firefighter Ian Satherley has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the New Year 2023 Honours List for his exemplary commitment and dedication to the Fire and Rescue Service.

Ian began his 32-year career as a Firefighter for Avon Fire Brigade in 1974, now Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS), serving at Southmead, Patchway, Temple, Avonmouth and Weston-Super-Mare Fire Stations. Climbing the ranks, he progressed from Firefighter to Station Officer and also worked at Fire Service Control in Lansdown and AF&RS Headquarters, formerly in Temple. He also returned to AF&RS between 2014 and 2017 to work as a driver.

Alongside his notable career, Ian has devoted nearly 50 years to support the Fire and Rescue Service through charity work. He currently holds the positions of Treasurer and Secretary at AF&RS Pensioners Association and District Chairman & District Treasurer within the South West District of the National Association of Retired Firefighters. On a national and local level, Ian provides unwavering support and connectivity to pensioners, through the modernisation and implementation of technological advancements, voluntarily. He is also a founding member of the Welfare Liaison Team providing care, kindness and understanding to individuals in distress and a prompt, practical and heartfelt response to many calls for help.

Through his volunteering efforts at the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund between 1975-2006, Ian provided compassionate support, campaigned for help and championed those suffering adverse circumstances, bereavement or facing hardship. His dedication to fundraising for the Fire Fighter's Charity continues to enable the offering of specialist lifelong support of firefighters across the country.

In the little spare time he has, Ian, who lives in Stoke Gifford, volunteers at Aerospace Bristol.

Speaking on this recognition, Ian said: "I feel very humbled and extremely honoured to be awarded the British Empire Medal. It was for me, a very emotional telephone call some weeks ago from the Cabinet Office to inform me that the Prime Minister is recommending me to His Majesty King Charles III for this award.

"My involvement in the roles I have had the pleasure holding within the Fire Service Charity and the Pensioners Association continue to be most enjoyable and knowing that I have made a difference to many colleagues and their families gives me much satisfaction.

"This award is also a reflection of the help and support I have always received from the current and many former Chief Fire Officers and number of Service personnel who work quietly in the background for which I offer a very sincere and heartfelt thanks, and also to my loving family who have helped and supported me through my career and beyond. Thank you one and all".

AF&RS Chief Fire Officer, Simon Shilton said: "On behalf of the Service, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Ian. For nearly 50 years, Ian has, and continues to, selflessly dedicate his time to supporting those in the Fire and Rescue Service community on a local and national level. His charitable efforts have helped countless people, in a number of ways, and his exceptional contribution cannot be understated.

"For those that have had the pleasure to know Ian, I'm sure they will agree he is a wonderful person to be around and is extremely deserving of this accolade."

The New Year Honours List for 2023 recognises the achievements and service of extraordinary people across the UK. It celebrates those who have made achievements in public life and/or have committed themselves to serving and helping the UK.