

# **Friends of the London Fire Brigade Museum**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01, THURSDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER**

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, (LFEPA) is expected to propose closing the London Fire Brigade museum, in Winchester House, part of the brigade's Southwark Training Centre.

The LFEPA will meet on **24<sup>th</sup> November** to consider a recommendation to close the museum as part of its annual budget review. This will save the cost of two staff, which we estimate to be £81,000 along with income from admissions and sales from a small shop. To date this income has never been re-invested in the museum.

The museum provides many outstanding services...

- It is a fantastic educational resource, and will severely inhibit the LFB's ability to communicate its fire safety message
- It is home to nearly 20,000 exhibits, and a fantastic collection of archives including books, and historic service records
- The museum allows family of former firefighters to conduct searches, at a time when there is a growing interest in genealogy and history.
- The museum is presently located in the grounds of the historic Grade II Listed Winchester House, once home to the founding father of modern-day firefighting techniques, Captain Sir Eyre Massey Shaw

If the museum closes, it will deprive Londoner's young and old of a valuable link to the capital's heritage.

Crucially, the museum plays a part in contributing to the Department for Communities and Local Government's fire safety Message. See: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/Firekillsreport201011>

### **The Friends of the London Fire Brigade Museum**

Is a small independent body formed in 2008 and successfully campaigned to prevent a previous attempt to close it which was vetoed both by the Committee and led to the Mayor supporting its continuation.

The meeting on 24 November is the means by which the Fire Authority formulates its budget prior to submitting it to the Mayor for his formal approval.

Our aim is to keep what is an important part of London's cultural heritage and especially on the eve of the cultural Olympiad, available to the people of London and the wider world. This collection represents one of the best examples of fire related memorabilia in the world and shows the key role the Fire Brigade has played in the development of our city.

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**CONTACT: For tv, radio and newspaper interview, call: Tony Sweeney 07876598199 Dave Rogers 07946403864**