

The Great Fire of London Timeline Cards

Sunday 2nd September 1666

01:00

After weeks with no rain and 10 months of hot, dry weather in London, the Great Fire starts in Thomas Farriner's bakery on Pudding Lane.

Sunday 2nd September 1666

07:00

By now, 300 houses have burned down. Samuel Pepys goes to look at the fire and writes about it in his diary.

Sunday 2nd September 1666

11:00

Samuel Pepys reports the fire to King Charles II who then orders Lord Mayor Bloodworth to start demolishing houses so that the fire won't spread further.

Sunday 2nd September 1666

15:00

King Charles II goes to view the fire from the River Thames on a boat with his brother the Duke of York (who went on to be James I). By this time, the fire was burning around 100 houses per hour.

Monday 3rd September 1666

09:00

The Duke of York sets up fire posts around the city and collects men to become groups of firefighters.

Monday 3rd September 1666

10:00

The fire reaches the wealthy area of London and the street where Lord Mayor Bloodworth's home is. This is Lombard Street and Gracechurch Street.

Monday 3rd September 1666

14:00

The fire reaches and burns down the Royal Exchange (the money centre of London).

Monday 3rd September 1666

15:00

The city gates close to all incoming traffic to ease congestion.

Monday 3rd September 1666

20:00

Samuel Pepys witnesses that the front line of the fire is around one mile wide and by the end of Monday evening, half of London has been destroyed.

Tuesday 4th September 1666

05:00

King Charles II and the Duke of York ride into the city to help keep up spirits in the fighting of the fire.

Tuesday 4th September 1666

06:00

Carts are once again allowed into the city.

Tuesday 4th September 1666

12:00

The Duke of York is nearly killed by the fire but is OK and spends around 18 hours fighting the fire on this day. Meanwhile, in other parts, the fire reaches Ludgate and Newgate.

Tuesday 4th September 1666

18:00

The fire spread to Temple (an area of central London still called that today and famous for its links to law).

Tuesday 4th September 1666

20:00

St Paul's Cathedral is alight!

Tuesday 4th September 1666

22:00

Around Somerset House, buildings are demolished to try and save the fire spreading to Whitehall and Parliament.

Tuesday 4th September 1666

23:00

The strong winds that were helping to spread the fire now drop and the intensity of the fire lowers slightly. However, as the wind drops it also changes direction towards the Tower of London where lots of gunpowder is kept! In order to stop this all exploding, surrounding buildings are demolished and valuable items moved.

Wednesday 5th September 1666

06:00

The King leaves London to go to Hampton Court for safety while the Duke of York carries on his quest and starts to get anyone to help collect papers from the Rolls Chapel in Chancery Lane where lots of important records are kept.

Wednesday 5th September 1666

07:00

Samuel Pepys is back in London after taking his gold to safety (and burying his cheese!). Amazingly, his house had survived the fire. He climbs to the top of Barking Church to look at the damage the fire has caused. He writes in his diary that it is "the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw".

Wednesday 5th September 1666

12:00

Holborn Bridge fires are put out.

Wednesday 5th September 1666

22:00

A sailor called Richard Rowe, helps to beat out flames at Middle Temple Hall by climbing onto the burning roof. By now, only one of the main fires is still burning.

Thursday 6th September 1666

04:00

The approximate time that the last major fire is extinguished in Bishopgate.

13th September 1666

A royal proclamation is issued to stop building until new rules and regulations are published.

(People wanted and needed any new building to be safer.)

8th February 1667

Parliament passes the very first Rebuilding Act which states that new buildings must be made of brick or stone.

March 1667

The rebuilding of London starts on 11 miles of streets.

December 1667

Around 800 buildings have been rebuilt.

1672

95% of work is underway.

1687

The last area certificate is issued for rebuilding.

1708

The main part of rebuilding is finished on St Paul's Cathedral.