



THE SOCIETY'S 2017 AGM VISIT -

County Durham and Darlington FRS

The Fire Brigade Society enjoyed a fascinating, busy and varied Annual General Meeting Visit, on 22nd to 24th September, with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

Beginning at Durham Tees Valley Airport and the Serco's International Fire Training School, our large party was able to see a large cross section of preserved fire engines, industrial fire appliances and airport crash tenders over the morning session.

The afternoon saw the group visiting Newton Aycliffe, where they were initially faced by an almost empty appliance bay, due to an incident in Darlington, though patience was rewarded, with the appliances return.

Sedgfield and Spennymoor followed before arriving at Headquarters for one of the many highlights of the weekend, the arrival of our President, Jon Hall, in the first fire engine he ever rode. This same fire appliance also attended the Grand Hotel, Brighton bombing in 1984.

The Annual General Meeting progressed well and will be reported fully in due course.

Our second day provided a 'another highlight', a spectacular line up at Darlington of heritage Durham Dennis appliances.

Bishop Auckland offered more variety, whilst the journey into the rural areas of the beautiful county allowed another highlight, a visit to the first UK 'Quad' fire station at Barnard Castle before moving to the industrial Glaxo works.

The rural settings continued at Middleton in Teesdale, where traction engines occupy the old fire station, and at Stanope the wild moors provided the backdrop to the fire station.

The modern Crook fire station saw us conclude the day in somewhat overcast conditions.

The final day was spent in the more industrial locations on the eastern side of the county, with again variety of vehicles available, ranging from a large number of vehicles at Durham, one not even 'on the run', supplemented by Mountain Rescue vehicles, HVPU at Peterlee, a lovely and well-kept Dennis Sabre at Wheatley Hill, new '66 registered' pumps at Seaham and High Handenhold, before concluding at Consett.

Over the weekend MAN, Sides, Volvo, Dennis, Land Rover, Scania and Mercedes Benz all featured, as did Carmichael, JDC, Browns and Bence bodywork. A great mix of some eighty vehicles.

We thank CFO Stuart Errington and his teams for facilitating such a thorough visit to all the fire stations in the county. Everyone who contributed in organising and coordinating the packed weekend is applauded also. We especially thank our 'squad of ladies' on the visit who provided catering, conjuring up tea and biscuits three times over the weekend.

All attendees left with a smile on their face and memories of 'an excellent weekend'.

A full report will feature in a future issue of our acclaimed magazine Fire Cover.

The line-up at the UK 's first 'Quad' fire station at Barnard Castle

