

The Great Fire of London

What was London like in 1666?

- Busy city
- Very crowded
- Wooden houses very close together
- Dirty streets with lots of rats
- No running water so washing had to be done in the River Thames and toilet buckets were emptied into the street.



How did the fire start?

- On Sunday, 2nd September 1666
- Thomas Farriner was a baker
- A spark from his bread oven started the fire
- The bakery was on Pudding Lane

Glossary

Baker: a person who makes bread and cakes

City: a large area where lots of people live

Extinguish: to stop a fire from burning

Firebreak: a gap that stops a fire spreading to nearby buildings

Fire hook: a tool used by people to pull down burning buildings

Monarch: the head of state e.g. King, Queen, Emperor

Monument: a statue or structure built to remember a person or event

Source: a thing or place from which something comes

Overcrowded: a place where there are too many people for the space

Why did the fire spread?

- Houses in London were built from wood and straw which burn easily.
- The houses were very close together with no space between.
- The wind was strong and there had been no rain so London was very dry.
- There was no fire brigade so people had to try to extinguish the fire themselves.



Who was Samuel Pepys?

- He was a member of Parliament and was born in London in 1633.
- He is famous for his diary about the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London.
- Samuel Pepys has an unusual last name. You say it like this – 'Peeps'.
- Pepys saved his Parmesan cheese from the Great Fire of London.
- He could play a number of musical instruments, including the violin and the recorder.

How did they put out the fire?

- First people used buckets of water from the River Thames.
- They pulled down houses with fire hooks to create fire breaks.
- King Charles II ordered people to use gunpowder to blow houses up to make bigger fire breaks.
- Finally, the wind died down and the fire was extinguished after 4 days.