

The Great Fire of London: 1666

Step back in time with Ellie the Elephant to uncover the story of the blaze that changed a city forever!

- The fire began in a small bakery on Pudding Lane in the early hours of Sunday 2nd September 1666, quickly spreading due to strong winds and dry timber houses.
- Most houses in 17th-century London were built of wood and pitch, which acted as fuel, allowing the fire to jump easily between narrow streets.
- King Charles II ordered the creation of firebreaks by blowing up buildings with gunpowder to stop the flames from reaching new areas.
- After the fire, the Rebuilding of London Act 1667 required new houses to be built of brick or stone rather than wood to prevent future disasters.
- Sir Christopher Wren was commissioned to redesign London, most notably leading the reconstruction of St Paul's Cathedral.
- The Monument to the Great Fire of London was erected near the original bakery site, standing 61 metres tall, exactly the distance from the base of the pillar to the store on Pudding Lane.

Did you know? Did you know? The fire was so hot that it melted the iron chains of the city gates, and the lead from the roof of St Paul's Cathedral reportedly ran down the streets like a river!

Key vocabulary: Pudding Lane · Bakery · Conflagration · Timber-framed · Monument · Restoration