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‘Diesel horn’ may replace bells on city fire engines

The bells may not be ringing much longer as engines from Sheffield Fire Brigade go racing out on a call.

A brand new fire-engine-red wireless control car delivered to brigade headquarters at Division Street today is fitted with a two-tone horn warning instead of a bell.

And if the horn receives approval from the Home Office and is standardised, it could replace the bell warning used at present.

Councillor Herbert Redgate, Chairman of Sheffield's Fire Brigade Committee, told *The Star* today: "A lot of people think bells have had their day.

Efficient

"Many people in closed cars claim that they cannot hear them. Recent tests have shown that this two-tone horn has topped the list of warning instruments for efficiency.

Councillor Redgate said the horn was similar to that used by British Railways on diesel engines.

"But I understand that the railways are prepared to change their warning system if the Home Office standardises the horn for fire brigade use," he added.

The new wireless control car was driven to fire brigade headquarters ready to be handed over to Sheffield's Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Ben Jones, at the start of the Fire Brigade Committee's annual inspection today.

New station

High-spot of the inspection was the visit of the Lord Mayor, Ald., Isidore Lewis, to the £60,000 fire station at Mansfield Road, opened in April this year.

The committee is also visiting the other fire stations in the city and seeing the site of a new £60,000 station - a replica of the one at Mansfield Road - to be built at Lowedges Road. The new station, on which building work will start this year, will replace the existing one at Norton, and personnel will be transferred from there.

Concern at the number of fires caused by children playing with matches was expressed by Mr. Redgate.

Plea to Parents

Last year 67 fires in buildings' were caused by this - an average of one in every 10 fires in buildings reported, he said. In the first six months of this year, there were 21 similar cases and 60 cases of fires caused by matches outside buildings.

"We would like to appeal' to parents to help us with this problem by either keeping matches out of their children's way or using safety' matches," he added.

Last year, there were also 137 malicious fire calls, an increase of 41 over 1961. So far this year, there have been 50.