**Santa Stuck in Sooty Shoot**

**At around 1am, Christmas morning, Father Christmas was discover lodged at the top of a chimney in a small residential area, located just outside of Manchester. He had been stuck for some time and was found yelling at the top of his voice just after midnight. Fortunately, a fire crew attended the scene and Santa was freed shortly after their arrival.**

In the early hours of Christmas morning, an emergency phone call was received from a distressed resident on Springwood Avenue who claimed that a larger red coated man was stuck in a neighbour’s chimney. ‘I could hear yelling from next door’s roof!’ said a local resident, who raised the alarm. ‘When I left my house and gazed up, I could see Father Christmas waving frantically, asking for some assistance.’

Emergency services were called and immediately deployed to the scene, by which time a small crowd of children and locals had gathered. ‘You could see his top half sticking out from the top of the chimney but his waist and legs were wedged inside!’ claimed one witness. An attempt to free Santa failed, when neighbours tried to push his bottom out with a large broom. ‘We tried our best but he just wouldn’t budge!’ exclaimed a young girl from down the road.

Once the emergency services arrived, the police cordoned off the garden and the fire men set to work. Five firefighters climbed to the roof and after a number of large pulls, Santa was finally free. The crowd applauded and Father Christmas was very thankful for the help and support from the emergency services. He was soon on his way again with his next delivery destination being Madrid, in Spain.

Speaking to him briefly after the incident, he stated, ‘I would like to thank everyone for their help during my tricky situation. I was worried that all the little girls and boys would not get any toys, if they could not pull me out!’ St. Nick continued to tell us how he had entered the house to deposit the gifts for Christmas Day. He also added that he had consumed a considerable amount of mince pies. On his was back up the shoot, he began to become wedged in the brickwork. ‘I got to the top and all of a sudden I became clamped between the two sides of the chimney.’ Father Christmas had been yelling for help for a considerable amount of time before the alarm was raised by a neighbour. ‘My nose was black, there was soot in my sack, and my nose was tickling too!’

A police spokesman has now urged citizens to take a responsibility for how much they feed Santa on Christmas Eve. ‘Next year, we all need to cut down on the amount of food left for Santa. We need to help him understand that one pie per house is enough.’ This way, we can all work together to ensure that St. Nick stays slim enough to fit down everyone’s chimney and we can all have an enjoyable Christmas Day.