The IOSH South West Branch event held at Boringdon Park Golf Club in Plymouth on 12th September 2017 featured a presentation on aspects of fire safety, with particular emphasis on fire safety at sports grounds and the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order.

Nick Jones of Devon & Somerset Fire rescue Service and his colleague Peter Tobin delivered informative presentations; additionally a fire crew demonstrated an appliance to members in attendance (pictured).

This event attracted one of the highest attendances at a SW Branch event to date, and because we had over 110 attendees but only 88 members had pre-booked, this put severe pressure on the venue and catering, resulting in some members going without food on the day. Please make every effort to pre-book for any Branch events you plan on attending.

Nick explained that legislation is often reactive, following on from disasters, and cited the Wheatly Committee that convened after the Ibrox Park disaster in 1971 that resulted in 66 fatalities. The findings led to the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, a centralised licensing system for designated grounds and supporting guidelines, the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (known as the 'Green Guide'). Other examples were given, with brief discussion on the recent Grenfell disaster and the possible ramifications.

Peter Tobin talked about the Fire Safety Order and explained who enforces it, which depended on the premises. The fire service is able to issue prohibition notices for serious failures, and where this occurs prosecution will be considered if in the public interest. Peter showed some examples of common failings. The fire service prefers to work with duty holders and where fire safety checks or audits identify failings then the preferred option is to remedy the failings rather than moving straight to enforcement.

Those who attended can claim CPD for the event in the usual way.