

Pro-Chancellor,

Darran Gunter has led a distinguished career in the emergency services, including serving as Chief Fire Officer for Dorset for ten years and being awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal.

During his time in charge of Dorset Fire and Rescue Service, Darran oversaw a new focus on prevention which coincided with a reduction in fire-related deaths in the county.

Darran describes his working life as the result of career de-selection. Having been born into a mining family in South Wales, he was urged by his father to work hard and break the generational mould. Darran came to the end of his schooling during the height of the miners' strike and applied to join the fire service in response to a local advertisement.

Having convinced his parents of the career choice, Darran joined Gwent Fire Service where he was quickly promoted to lead fireman. A desire to experience working for a larger, busier fire service saw him relocate to Birmingham - a move which he describes as career defining. While at West Midlands Fire Service, Darran progressed to Station Manager and continued his academic studies with a Diploma in Management Studies and an MBA at Birmingham University.

His time at Birmingham gave Darran a passion for leading and developing others, which resulted in him joining the Fire Service College as an instructor in management and command. He went on to join Dorset Fire and Rescue Service as Assistant Chief Fire Officer in 2001, progressing to Chief Fire Officer and later overseeing the amalgamation of Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Having experienced 13 fire-related deaths in a 13-month period while at Dorset, Darran was determined to transform the service from reactive to proactive. He set about launching a prevention campaign which resulted in the fire service becoming an integral part of community life. This was exemplified in the launch of the new Weymouth Community Fire Station in 2011; a glass-fronted building incorporating community and training facilities.

As a boy from the Welsh Valleys whose family had always worked in mining, Darran's advice to others starting is to be guided by your ambitions, not your past.

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Darren Gunter, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Business Administration, *honoris causa*.