

## Fire at Barnsley ASOS fashion warehouse 'deliberate'

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From the section Sheffield & South Yorkshire

A fire which caused an online fashion retailer to cease trading is being treated as arson, police have said.

The fire at the ASOS distribution centre near Grimethorpe, Barnsley broke out at about 22:00 BST on Friday.

South Yorkshire Police said the incident was being treated as deliberate following initial investigations with the fire service.



The blaze at Park Spring Road caused "substantial damage" and has forced the company to stop taking orders.

More than 60 firefighters tackled the blaze overnight and about 500 people were evacuated from the five-storey building.

On a holding page on its website, ASOS said: "We have pressed pause on the ASOS website, this is due to a fire in our Barnsley distribution centre in the early hours of Saturday.

"Thankfully no-one was hurt and we expect to be back to normal for you in the next day or so."

The blaze is believed to have spread from the second floor to the third and fourth floors.

Ten fire engines, including three from West Yorkshire Fire service, were drafted in to help overnight.

One worker at the warehouse, Lukasz said: "There was a big smell like burning plastic or something like that.

"I think that's why they evacuated us from the area because it was dangerous to breathe that.

"Everyone is safe, nobody was hurt and I think everyone will be alright."

The Barnsley warehouse is the company's major global distribution centre.

It has other facilities in the US, China and Australia but most orders go through Barnsley.

In a statement, the company said no new orders were currently being taken and existing orders yet to be shipped, would also be delayed.

It is understood the warehouse contains more than 10 million boxes of packaging.

Simon Rodgers, Investigating Fire Officer for South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, said: "The fire involved four floors of the warehouse and the blaze was contained in the area of origin by firefighters.

"ASOS staff had a good evacuation process in place which assisted the emergency services and allowed the fire to be brought under control more quickly."

### Online-Technology.co.uk – 3 Key Points

- Protect the brand, i.e. communications plan
- Keep staff and public informed, i.e. Communications plan
- Address all the issues, i.e. Incident management plan