

Evening News

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Pitsea: Did hoax call kill widow?

An elderly widow died while firefighters were attending a schoolboy's hoax call, it was revealed today.

The prank which diverted a crew from the real fire in Pitsea could have been responsible for the 73-year-old's death, a fire chief believes.

Barry Cable, community commander for Basildon and Castle Point, said: "We will never know if she would have survived if we hadn't been called out to the other fire.

"Our engine was heading out in the opposite direction and things could have been very different if we had got there earlier."

Firefighters from Basildon went to a suspected blaze at Ramsden Hall School between Billericay and Ramsden Heath shortly after noon yesterday.

They were responding to a call they later discovered had been made by a 12-year-old on his mobile phone.