

# The Great Fire of London

1666

## RULEBOOK

*A game by Richard Donning with illustrations by Andreas Resch*

### THE SETTING

September 1666. A careless baker in Pudding Lane forgot to put out his fire, which spread creating an inferno which would destroy 13,000 houses and make 70,000 of London's 80,000 population homeless. The Lord Mayor fails to act and it is down to the trained bands of militia led by a few worthies to fight the fire and finally put it out. To do so they must decide which districts to demolish to protect others. These same individuals own much of London so making such choices is painful. In the end though it is an opportunity for many - someone is going to come out of this with the most property intact and someone will be seen to do the most to fight the fire. Could that someone have enough influence and popularity to become the next Mayor?

### OVERVIEW

The players are men of wealth and standing who own property around London. They can use the trained bands to fight the fire, use demolition charges to destroy blocks of housing to prevent the fire flowing or turn a blind eye and allow the fire to spread and damage rivals' property. Victory Points ("VPs") are scored for each player house that survives, so victory can belong to the player with the most property left, but putting out fires can also earn VPs and boost the final score. In addition each player will have three hidden objectives: important areas and historical buildings, the survival of which earns more VPs. A combination of fighting the fire, allowing it to spread to rival's houses and objectives and protecting as much of your own property as possible will win the game.

### IN THE BOX



120 Houses  
6 colours - 20 each



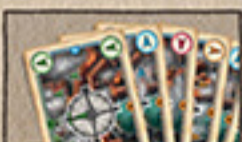
12 Player Pawns  
6 colours - 2 each



6 Player Colour  
Cards



24 Objective  
Cards



60 Fire Move-  
ment Cards



20 Tokens  
10 Demolition Charges  
6 Double Move  
4 One Victory Point



65 Red Fire  
Cones



6 Black Trained  
Band Cones



Board and  
Rulebook



1 Hero of  
London Card



6 Fire Stack  
Cards

## THE BOARD

The board shows a map of London in 1666. It is divided into districts north of the River Thames which might be engulfed by fire as well as a number of other areas that the fire cannot touch – grassed regions and fields. The districts each have between 1 and 5 house symbols in which show how many houses will be placed there. Grassed areas will not contain any houses.

Districts are divided from each other by lines representing roads, by the River Fleet and by the old city walls. One large district on the map shaded red shows where the fire is at the start of the game. This is Pudding Lane and its surrounding district. Note that the map is divided into 4 regions and this is indicated by the colour of each district (purple, blue, green and orange). The coloured arrows/links between district show how fire can move and match the coloured arrows on the Fire movement cards as well as the compass on the board. The four way cross symbol indicates where fire may move in any of 4 directions (see Example 1).

Districts whose banner has a red background are objectives to protect which will match cards the players will be given. The number in a circle on these districts show how many VP that district is worth. The **five player icon** in Cripplegate and **four player icon** in St. Botolphs and Hounds Ditch show where some Trained Band cones (black) are placed in a 4 or 5 player game. Ignore these in 3 or 6 player game. The lower part of the board contains score tracks for placing burnt or blown up houses.



*Example 1: Movement from Sion College to Moorgate is via an orange (east) arrow. Movement from Sion College to Brewer's Hall is via a Red (south arrow).*

*Fourway movement: It is possible to move from Cripplegate to Moorgate using a south or east card; from Moorgate to Cripplegate using a north or west card; from Sion College to Finsbury using north or east card and from Finsbury to Sion College using a south or west card.*

## SETUP

- Place the board in the centre of the table. Place **25 fire cones** in the Pudding Lane district and the rest near to the board. Shuffle the **60 Fire Move Cards** and deal **5 to each player**. If at this stage any player has 5 identical cards they may show their hand to the others, shuffle their cards back into the deck and deal out another 5. They continue doing this until at least one of their 5 cards are not identical.

- Now take the **Fire Stack cards** needed for the number of players:

- 3 Players (Fire Stack Cards A to F)
- 4 Players (Fire Stack Cards A to D)
- 5 Players (Fire Stack Cards A to E)
- 6 Players (Fire Stack Cards A to F)



Start with Card A. Place it face up on the table Deal out onto it **face down** as many cards as shown next to the number of player in this game. Now Place Card B on top of the deck. Deal out as many cards as show. Continue until you have created a deck of Fire cards which will have at intervals within it the Fire Stack Cards.

Place the **remaining cards in the box** as they are not needed (12 in 3 Player , 8 in a 4 Player and 5 in a 5 player, all cards are used in a 6 player game).

▪ **Place 5 houses of each colour** into the box lid. There will be 30 houses now in the box lid. Mix the houses up and draw them blind from the lid. Start with the Orange region containing the Tower.

For each district in that region other than any green grassed areas draw houses at random from the houses in the lid and place them in the district until it is full. Most districts will show one house symbol and so receive one house. Some districts are marked with 2, 3, 4 or 5 house symbols and receive that number of houses. When this process is complete 30 houses in 6 colours should have been placed on the map - all in the same region.

Once the orange region is filled with houses, move onto another region. Add another 5 houses of each colour to the box lid and repeat the process for the next region.

Continue this process until all 4 Regions have been completed and each district on the map is filled with houses (other than grassed areas and the Pudding Lane district).

You use all the houses regardless of the number of players.

▪ **Shuffle the 6 colour cards.** Deal one to each player (Optional rule - see "Hidden Colours" at the end of the rules). Now hand the player their matching coloured pawn. Put any unused pawns back in the box - they are not needed this game.

▪ **Take the twenty black tokens** (these are blank on one side and show explosive charges, a 2 chevron symbol or a 1VP symbol on the rear) and shuffle them **face downwards**. Now place these on the districts whose name labels are coloured yellow.

▪ **Shuffle the three green decks marked I, II and III separately.** Deal each player 1 green objective card from each deck. Thus, they will now have three green objective cards each.

▪ The player who most recently visited London is the **start player**. Alternatively choose randomly.



*Example 2: Aldgate receives 4 houses whilst Bethnal gets 1.*



## Placing the Trained Band Cones

Dependant on the number of players follow these rules for placing the **black cones** (which represent the trained bands) anywhere on the map provided they are outside the green region which contains Pudding Lane, but can be anywhere in the other 3 regions. **2 cones in a 4 player game** and **1 cone in a 5 player game** are placed in predetermined places. There is no limit to the number of cones that may be placed in the same district.



**In a 3 Player game:** Beginning with the starting player each player takes it in turn to place 1 black cone and then takes it in turn to place a 2nd.

**In a 4 player game:** 1 cone is placed in Hounds Ditch and 1 in St. Botolphs. Then beginning with the starting player, each player takes it in turn to place 1 cone.

**In a 5 Player game:** 1 cone is placed in Cripplegate. Then, beginning with the starting player each player takes it in turn to place 1 cone.

**In a 6 Player game:** Beginning with the starting player, each player takes it in turn to place 1 cone.

▪ Now, beginning with the starting player, **each player places his landowner pawn**. This represents the player himself who is owner of the houses in his colour. He may not place the landowner pawn in the green region, but may place it in any district in any of the other three regions including the grassed areas. There is no limit to the number of player pawns that may be placed in the same district.



*Regardless of the number of players, each player plays with only 1 colour and will have 20 Houses.*

▪ Place the **Hero of London Card** near the board.

## PLAYER TURNS

Players take it in turns to play. In a player turn they:

- 1) Expand the Fire
- 2) Take actions
- 3) Draw a fire card (and possibly intensify the fire)

### 1) Expand the Fire

The Fire starts off in Pudding Lane district shown on the map as the red area. In a player's turn they **must** play a fire card.

**Fire card** >> These each show an **arrow** and **compass** direction. The arrow's colour will match coloured links/arrows on the board. As an aid to orientating the fire card we have added 4 symbols around the card. These are also present on the board edge. You can turn the card so it matches the orientation of the board. The River Thames is also on the cards.

The active player chooses a space which has **at least two fire cones** in it and **moves one fire cone** across as **many connected districts** as you desire in any direction of your choice. However when the fire cone leaves the last space on fire and exits into a non fire district that **last movement must be in the direction on the card**. When it enters a non fire district it stops. In



most cases there may be two or more valid moves allowing the fire to spread into different districts in the direction shown on the card in which case the player chooses which district the fire moves into but **must obey Fire Movement Priority** (see later).

*Note that in moving fire cones during this phase you can never take the last fire cone from a district.*

However if Pudding lane district ever runs out of fire cones, add five more from the stock. This is the Great Fire after all! If during the game there is a need to add extra fire cones to the board and both the stock and Pudding Lane are exhausted then **each** player places one fire cone back into the stock.

**North, South, East and West** arrows allow fire to spread to districts which share a **link matching that colour**.

You can also spread fire to districts which **meet on a corner only** and are **diagonally connected**. This will be shown by the cross symbol.

A North card can also spread fire NW or NE; an East card can also spread fire NE and SE; a South Card can also spread the fire SE and SW; and a West Card can also spread the fire SW and NW.

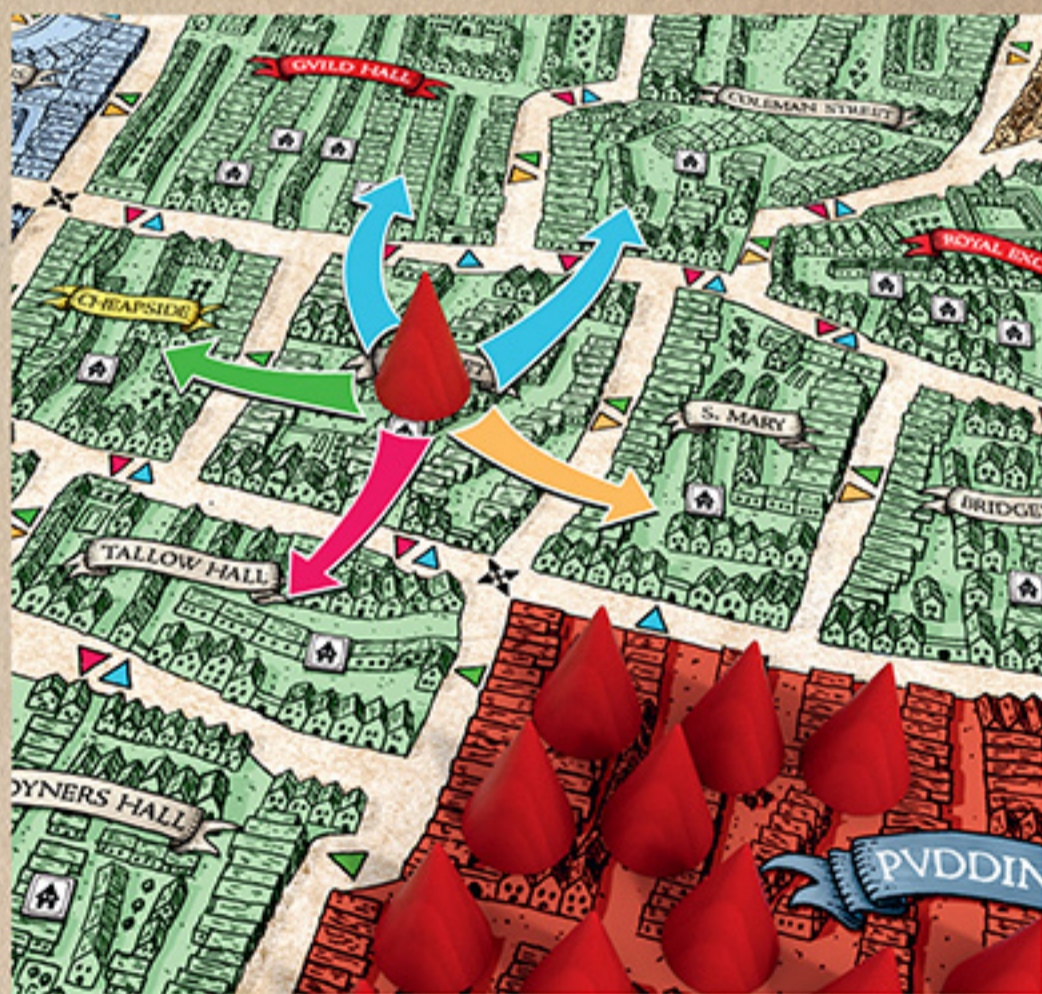


*Example 3: The player plays a North card. He takes a fire cone from Pudding lane district and moves it to S. Bennet which is already on fire. From there he exits into Guild Hall. However he could have instead moved north into Coleman Street.*

*The other arrows show other cards he could have played to move fire from S. Bennet.*

*For example an East card will mean the fire goes to S. Mary; a South card to Tallow Hall; and a West card to Cheapside.*

*Note that the fire cone is taken from Pudding Lane and flows to S. Bennet before following the card direction. Of course he could have exited Pudding Lane with a fire cone directly north into S. Mary, Bridgeward, Candlewick Ward or Pepys House; West into Tallow Hall or Voyners Hall or East into Pepys' House, Philpott Lane or Billingsgate.*



**Using a Fire moves twice token** >> If a player has collected one of the tokens marked with two arrows on the back, they can play it at the same time they play a Fire card. This makes fire move into **two new districts** (one more than the usual single move). The player will get to choose and move **TWO** fire cones this turn. The player may choose the order that each movement is done and the two new districts may be connected to totally different parts of the fire or even separate fires or may follow one after the other. Both moves must of course obey the direction of the card. Other than this the rules above apply. Once a token is played it is **placed back in the box** and cannot be used again. **Only one of these tokens may be played in a turn.**



*Note, that it is possible to collect a "Fire moves twice token" and use it in the same Fire Move phase.*

In the very unlikely situation that **no move is possible** the player concerned shows his hand to the other players. Then he discards one card. After this he places three additional fires in any fire district or districts (following the rules on Intensifying the fire - see below). Note that a card which causes a player's own house to be destroyed still counts as a valid move and if it is the only valid move available to him the player **must** play that card.

### Fire Movement Priority

The player chooses **which** fire cone he will move. Once he has then he must follow these Fire Priority Rules. From the various options of moves possible the players can choose where the fire moves but must obey this priority ranking system:

1. If possible the fire spreads into a district containing a **house or houses and no trained band cones**.
2. The fire spreads into districts **with houses in but containing one or more trained band cones**.
3. The fire spreads into an **empty (already burnt down) district containing no trained band cones**.
4. The fire spreads into an **empty (already burnt down) district containing one or more trained band cones**.

The player has to consider all valid moves possible with that card for the chosen fire cone (so for example a Fire moves west card allows Fire to move SW and NW and so those moves are possible and if a move in any direction possible with the card would follow a higher ranked move then that move must be followed). Remember that the direction only applies after the cone has left the fire and the cone could move first through the fire any number of spaces in any direction. This can occasionally mean the fire cone could move a long way across the board.



*Example 4: The card played is a fire goes south card. The Fire cone chosen is one in Pudding Lane. The player considers various possible south moves. Fire priority rules will mean he has to choose one of: 1. Cheapside, 2. Tallow Hall, 3. Billingsgate. All of which are south moves from the fire. He may not choose Coleman Street or Bread Street, because they have a Trained band pawn in, nor Watlin Street, which has burnt down.*

*The fire cone is moved north and west through the fire, but the very last move - when a new district goes up in smoke, must be a south move, as in this case, into Cheapside. Note the player could have just taken the cone from Guild Hall but preferred to take it from Pudding Lane.*

## Fire Moving into New Districts

If there is a **trained band cone in the district** not currently fighting fire – i.e. it is not on top of a fire cone – then immediately place the trained band cone on top of the new incoming fire cone. The fire has not yet burnt the houses down and the brave soldiers are holding it back.

If there are **no trained band cones** available to contain the fire or those present are already containing fire then the houses burn down.

If the **number of trained band cones in a district equals or exceeds the number of fire cones** then that fire is contained and fire **cannot spread from or through that district**. But new fires may move into the district which will mean the fire is no longer contained.

**Fire cannot spread into any of the grassed area.**

## Fire Damage

If as a result of the fire phase the **fire spreads to a new district** (and there are not enough trained bands in that district to contain it – see containing a fire later) **remove all the houses** in that district and put them **on the score track** on the game board. Each player's house that is burnt down means that this player will lose 2 VPs. This is indicated by placing the first house they lose over the 40 VP square on their track. As they lose more houses place them on the track so that each house occupies a square. The player's current score is easily seen by the highest numbers visible on the burnt houses track.

You now add as many additional fires to that district (taken from the stock on the table) to bring the total number of fire cones in the district up to the original number of houses in the district (1 or whatever the number of houses is)

*Let's say that the fire moved into Guild Hall. This is a size 4 district as shown by the fact it has 4 houses. In addition to the fire that moved in 3 more fire cones from the stock will be added so that 4 fire cones are present.*

If the fire is **still contained after** the new fire cone moves in then you do not remove the houses.

## Receive Tokens

If the fire moves into a new district which contains a token and destroys the houses in that district then the player may take the token, look at it and place it face down in front of them. Tokens come in 3 types:



### Explosive Charge Symbol

The fire is spreading fast and the au-

thorities are starting to release gunpowder to demolish building. You may use this token as a demolition charge. See demolitions later.



### Double Move Symbol

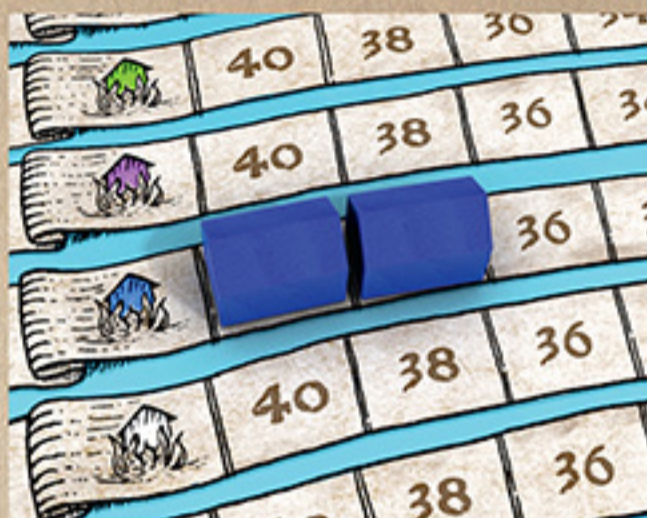
The fire is raging and surging out of

control. You may use this "Fire Moves Twice" token in this or later moves to choose and move **two** fire cones in a Fire Moves phase.



### 1 VP Symbol

The fire has just destroyed a rival's stock of goods leaving you with a monopoly, increasing your influence in the city.



*Example 5: Blue has lost 2 houses and these are placed on the track. He now has 36 VPs left.*

## 2) Taking Actions

Players have **4 action points per turn**. These can be spent to:

**a) Move the player's landowner pawn 1 or more spaces at a cost of 1 point per space moved.**

**b) Move a trained band cone 1 or more spaces at a cost of 1 point per space moved.**

Both landowner pawns and trained band cones can move from any district to any adjacent district. **Diagonal movement** across 4 way arrows corners is **permitted**, as is movement into or through a district which has been demolished or is on fire.

The River Fleet is no barrier to movement. The old city wall is no impediment to movement. All Pawns and trained bands **may move onto grassed areas**. No pawn or cone may ever enter Pudding Lane.

If a trained band **enters a district which is on fire** and that fire has not been completely contained, i.e. there is at least one fire cone in the district which does not have a black trained band cone on top of it, then the **trained band stops moving** and tries to contain the fire. Place the trained band cone on top of the fire cone which has not been contained (see containing and putting out fire below).

**Trained band cones which are sat on top of a fire cone cannot move** – they are pinned trying to contain the fire. Landowner pawns do not get pinned in this way.

**c) Put out Fire.**

A Put out Fire action costs 1 point for a district but can only be done if valid (see rules on Putting out Fire)

**Demolishing a District.** If a player has picked up a token with a gunpowder charge on it, he may use it in this phase of the same or on any of his **LATER** turns, as a **FREE** action that does not consume action points. (see rules on demolitions). A player may use multiple demolition charges in the same turn.

## 3) Draw a Fire Card

Now the player draws a new fire card so his **hand is again 5 cards**. If they draw the last card in a stack and the Fire Stack Card is revealed they now follow the rules under "Intensify the Fire" below. They **do not** get another action phase.

### Intensify the Fire

**A total of three fire cones** are added to the board. These three cones may be added to any district or districts excluding Pudding Lane with a non contained fire cone in it, providing the total number of fire cones in the district(s) does not exceed the original number of houses in the district **plus 2**.

*For example a size 3 district may contain up to 5 cones. Guild Hall could contain up to 6 cones.*

If a player cannot place all three cones, he places as many as he can and discards the rest.

Once the Intensify the fire action is complete **remove the Fire Stack Card and discard it**.

This is the end of the player's turn and play passes to the player on their left.

When the **last "Intensify the Fire" action** has been completed the players play **once more around the table**. They will end up with 4 cards at the end of the game.

## CONTAINING FIRES

Trained bands can contain fires. When they move into a district on fire each trained band can "contain" 1 fire cone. Place the trained band cone on top of the fire cone.

If the number of fire cones exceed the number of trained band cones the fire is **not contained** and **fire can spread** from and through the district.



If the number of trained band cones **equals or exceeds** the number of fires the **fire is contained** and fire cannot spread from or through the district.

**Landowner pawns cannot contain fire.**

### PUTTING OUT FIRES

If the number of trained band cones equals or exceeds the number of fires - that is that the fire is contained - then a landowner pawn also in the district may issue a **Put out Fire order**.

A **Put out Fire action** will always remove **exactly one fire cone** from a district.

The active player places the fire in front of them. At the end of the game they will gain **1 VP for each fire they have removed**.

Active players may repeat Put out Fire actions as often as they wish assuming they have sufficient action points.

The first player to collect 3 fire cones takes the **Hero of London Card**. If another player exceeds the number of fire cones that the player in possession of this card has then they take the card.



*Example 6: In St. Pauls there are 5 fires. Green's landowner pawn is present along with 5 trained band cones. For an action point green can order a Put out Fire Action and remove 1 fire cone. Now he orders a second Put out Fire action and removes another fire cone etc.*

### DEMOLISHING DISTRICTS

Players can collect demolition charges as tokens from the game board.

In a player's action phase they may (as a **free action** that does not consume action points) use the charge to destroy a district.

They use any trained band cone to place and detonate a charge in any district the cone can move to. Moving the cone costs actions as usual but detonating the charge, does not. A player pawn **does not** need to be present. You may only detonate charges **in districts immediately adjacent to a district with a fire in it** (contained or uncontained). This does include spaces adjacent to the Pudding Lane district.

You cannot detonate a charge if a district has fire in (either contained **or** uncontained). Demolition charges **may never be used in a district size 3 or above** (the VP areas) **until and unless** it has burnt down and is no longer a valid VP area.

**The demolition charge token is placed** (with the gunpowder charge symbol face up) in the district to show that the district is now a **fire break** and **fire cannot spread to or through it**. When a district is demolished, take each house from that district and place it on the board with those that have been burnt down for scoring. Each demolished house - like each burnt house will lose the owner 2 VP.

Players can demolish empty districts.

Demolishing a district with a token in **also destroys that token**. The player does not gain the token.

Both land owner pawns and Trained Band Cones **may move through a demolished district**.

## GAME END

Play continues in player turns until one player **draws the last card from the deck**. Players then each get **one more turn**. When the last player has completed this last turn the game is over. This will mean each player is left with 4 unplayed cards in his hand.

### Scoring

Each player now counts his VPs. Each player will have placed their burnt out house on the board at the bottom on the track in their colour. Each house will cover a 2 VP square as they have lost 2 points per house burnt down or demolished.

Players now **remove houses from the scoring track** as they score VPs. If they score an odd number of points turn a house side ways to show they have scored an additional 1 VP beyond the last number visible.

If they score **over 40 VP** they can start again from the right hand side of the track, adding 40 to the points shown.

They earn **1 point for each fire cone put out**.

Each player now **reveals his objective cards** and scores the VPs shown if the districts on the card survived. A district is considered to have survived if it still contains houses. If it has an uncontained fire cone or cones in or it is empty, then it has not survived.

Players **gain 1 VP for each "1VP Token"** they own.

The player who owns the **Hero of London Card** earns 2 VP.

In the **event of a tie** the player who put out the most fires and so had the most fire cones in front of him wins. If there is still a tie then the player with the most intact houses on the map wins. If there is still a tie then the player who scored the most points from objective cards wins. If the scores are still tied then the game is drawn.

## OPTIONAL RULE A: HIDDEN COLOURS

If the players wish to keep their colours secret then deal out the colour cards as at present but **face down** so that the colours are hidden. Each player takes a player pawn randomly which may or may not match his **actual colour**. The game is played the same way with the player using the randomly chosen pawn as his own landowner, but the actual colour of the player is a secret only revealed at the end of the game.

## OPTIONAL RULE B: MORE DESTRUCTION

**After the final "Fire Intensifies"** action play round the table **twice more**. Each player will end up with only 3 cards left. This variant allows for more opportunity to take advantage of the last Fire Intensifies action BUT will lead to more destruction. You have been warned!!

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*Richard Denning*

**Great Fire: London 1666** is a Medusa Games Design.

# The Great Fire of London

1666

September 1666: A careless baker in Pudding Lane forgot to put out his fire which soon spread, creating an inferno which would destroy 13,000 houses and make 70,000 Londoners homeless.



The Lord Mayor has failed to act and it's down to the trained bands led by a few worthy men to fight the fire and save the city...

The players are men of wealth and rank owning property around London. They direct the trained bands to fight the fire, use demolition charges to destroy blocks of housing to prevent the fire flowing or turn a blind eye and allow the fire to spread and damage rivals' property.

Victory can belong to the player with the most property left, but putting out fires can also boost their final score. In addition each player will have three hidden objectives: important areas and historical buildings, the survival of which can decide the game.

September 1666: Ein unachtsamer Bäcker in der 'Pudding Lane' vergisst sein Feuer zu löschen. Es ist der Auslöser für ein Flammeninferno, dem 13,000 Häuser zum Opfer fallen und welches 70.000 Londoner zu Obdachlosen macht.



Der Bürgermeister war hoffnungslos überfordert und das Schicksal der Stadt lag in den Händen unzähliger tapferer Soldaten und deren ehrbaren Anführern...

Die Spieler verkörpern wohlhabende Grundbesitzer. Dabei lenken sie die Löschtrupps, sprengen Häuserreihen um die Feuerbewegung zu unterbrechen oder kümmern sich darum, das Feuer auf die Besitztümer der Mitspieler loszulassen.

Um das Spiel zu gewinnen muss man die eigenen Häuser retten und tatkräftig bei den Löscharbeiten helfen. Zusätzlich hat jeder Spieler drei geheime Aufträge - das Beschützen wichtiger Gebiete und historischer Gebäude. Hierfür gibt es wertvolle Punkte welche zum Schluss das Spiel noch entscheiden können.

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Illustrations/Illustrationen: Andreas Resch

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