

THE TALL GUY

PICTURE: TONY WOOD

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BIG PROBLEM: The guy with Martin Durrant, far right, his daughters Pippa and Emily and society vice-secretary Clare Boyling, second from right

15ft effigy is too big for much of bonfire procession route

by SIOBHAN RYAN

THIS giant guy is just too big for his boots.

While thousands of people flock to watch Lindfield Bonfire Society's annual parade and fireworks, the traditional guy will have to miss some of the fun.

The huge model should be one of the highlights of the event as he passes along the town's streets and on to the common to be ceremonially burnt.

But this year he will miss some of the procession, joining it only near the end when it snakes its way down the High Street to the common.

The problem is his height. At 15ft 2in he is an imposing sight but some of the smaller roads have low overhanging branches.

As he is only made out of papier mache and chicken wire, one sweep from a branch could do him serious damage.

To safeguard him, the society is having him join the procession where the roads are clear.

Martin Durrant, of the society, has been making guys for the annual procession for 24 years and knows what he is doing.

The miscalculation this year was brought about by a change of venue.

Mr Durrant said: "I normally make the guy at a barn and judge how high he must be by making him the same height as the roof.

"This year I made him at a different barn and once again went up to the height of the roof.

"It was only afterwards I realised he was about 2ft higher than normal.

"It won't make any difference to the fun we've got planned as he'll still be taking part. He'll just be doing a shorter route."

The guy is so big he needs to be carried in a trolley and pushed by at least four people.

It takes Mr Durrant 35 to 40 hours to create the guy and he likes nothing better than watching all his hard work go up in flames every year.

He said: "It is worth it because everyone has a good time and we are raising money for charity at the same time.

"We are on the same day as the big Lewes event but we still get a good turnout."

Last year's event raised about £2,000 for local children's charities and this year organisers hope to raise much more by bringing in extra collectors.

Between 5,000 and 7,000 people are expected to watch the procession and fireworks on Friday.

The procession starts at 7.30pm and ends at the common, where the fireworks display starts at 8.15pm.

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UP IN FLAMES: The traditional guy