

Blaze hits charity

A CHARITY that provides holidays for injured military personnel has been hit by fire.

South West Scotland RnR saw its Carsethorn base go on fire twice last week.

The incidents happened just days after the organisation, established in 2009, received £3,000 from the Royal Bank of Scotland Community fund to help pay for holidays for men whose units cannot normally afford the experience.

The first, larger fire was on Wednesday evening and is believed to have been caused by an electrical fault. Two days later there was a smaller fire that was caused by a laptop battery.

And although Wednesday's blaze was contained to one room, extensive smoke damage means the organisation faces a race against time to get the base, called the End House, ready for the year's first party of veterans arriving in May.

By **Stuart Gillespie**

Charity founder Jennefer Tobin owns the house, although wasn't there at the time of Wednesday's fire.

She said: "There is a great deal that needs to be done and our first boys are set to arrive in three months.

"It has to be ready by then, even if it is just the area that they live in.

"I have no idea how much it will cost but there is black gunge everywhere and every piece of furniture, clothing and implement will need to be cleaned."

Three fire engines – two from Dumfries and one from Dalbeattie – were sent to deal with last Wednesday's blaze, which started at around 8.30pm. A supervisory officer from Dumfries also attended.

A spokesman for Dumfries and Galloway Fire and Rescue Service said: "On arrival, firefighters were confronted by a



GUTTED: Jennefer Tobin surveys the damage to her study after her premises were hit by fire.

severe fire and heavy smoke coming from the ground floor living room window.

"Quick intervention by the fire crews with a hose through the ground floor window contained the fire to the living room and reduced the impact of smoke damage in the remainder of the premises."

Southwest Scotland RnR, has given 170 vet-

erans an energetic holiday since then.

As well as staying at the house, they also enjoy activities such as shooting, golfing and sailing.

Anyone who wishes to help the charity either with fundraising or by helping with their activities should e-mail jennefer.tobin@btinternet.com.