

**West Grimstead Village Hall**

**Fire Risk Assessment**

**2023**

## WEST GRIMSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

### FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 came into force on 1st October 2006. It applies to community halls and community premises and is relevant, therefore, to West Grimstead Village Hall.

1.2 Responsibility for complying with the Order rests with the 'Responsible Person'. For the purposes of carrying out the Fire Risk Assessment the 'Responsible Person' is the West Grimstead Village Hall Management Committee who, from time to time, appoint one or more 'competent' persons to undertake the risk assessment. This assessment replaces all previous documentation.

**1.3 Where premises are leased as an empty and unsupervised facility, the fire safety responsibilities of those hiring the building - and therefore in charge of the activities conducted within it - need to be established as part of the contract of hire. They become the 'Responsible Person' for the period of hire and must familiarise themselves with the layout of the hall, the fire safety provisions and their duties in the event of a fire.**

1.4 This Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Order and having regard to the Government guidance on Fire Safety Risk Assessment in Small and Medium Places of Assembly. The guide describes five steps that should be taken when carrying out a Fire Risk Assessment:

- 1 - Identify fire hazards
- 2 - Identify people at risk
- 3 - Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk
- 4 - Record, plan, inform, instruct and train
- 5 - Review

1.5 The Fire Risk Assessment follows this structure and has been carried out for each of the principal areas of useable space in the village hall, namely:

1. Main entrance and foyer
2. Main Hall
3. Kitchen
4. Cloakroom

1.6 For each of these areas an assessment has been carried out of sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen, fire detection, fire fighting and precautionary equipment, escape routes, emergency lighting, signs and notices.

1.7 The findings of this assessment are contained in the table in the Appendix and the key points discussed in the following paragraphs.

## **2. Fire Hazards: Sources of Ignition, Fuel and Oxygen**

2.1 The main sources of ignition are:

- the various items of electrical equipment located in the kitchen - cooker, dishwasher, microwave, fridge, kettles overhead heater and water heater
- the sound system in the hall
- the circuit board, 2 hand driers, disabled alarm system and water heater located in the cloakroom
- electrical sockets and lighting located throughout the village hall

2.2 The main sources of fuel are:

- an oil tank located outside the building to the side and rear of the property.
- the upholstered seating stored in the main hall storeroom
- the curtains at each of the main windows
- a small wooden stage and the wooden floor
- the two notice boards located in the hall
- stored items in the kitchen and cloakroom - paper towels and tablecloths, toilet rolls, books, decorations
- alcohol for future events - stored in the foyer, kitchen and cloakroom
- stored items in the foyer cupboards.

2.3 The main source of oxygen is:

- the natural flow of air through windows and doors
- the Vent-Axia system in the kitchen

## **3. People at Risk**

3.1 People who use the hall and may be at risk if there is a fire include:

- hirers
- the Village Hall Management Committee
- cleaners
- visitors - including anyone visiting the hall who is unfamiliar with the layout
- contractors
- children
- the elderly
- people with disabilities - mobility, hearing or vision impaired

## **4. Evaluate, Remove, Reduce and Protect from Risk**

### *The risk of fire occurring*

4.1 It is considered that the risk of fire occurring is normal. The main sources of ignition comprise a oil-fired boiler (outside the Hall) and electrical equipment. These are regularly serviced.

### *The risk to people*

4.2 The hall is a single storey building and is supplied with three designated escape routes. This includes a fire exit in the main hall, adjacent to the stage, which is suitable for wheelchair use. There are two fire doors which would delay the spread of fire within the building. These doors are located between the kitchen and the foyer and between the hall and the cloakroom. The kitchen door has been fitted with intumescent strips which would delay the spread of smoke from the kitchen into the foyer for thirty minutes, allowing sufficient time for evacuation of the building.

### *Removal / Reduction of Hazards*

4.3 The main sources of ignition comprise the oil-fired boiler and a range of electrical equipment which form an essential part of the facilities available to users of the hall. Removal of these would not be in the best interests of users of the hall and the potential hazards are reduced as far as possible through regular maintenance and servicing.

4.4 The oil tank outside the building has a 1 hour rating. The sources of fuel include the upholstered seating which is fire retardant and is stored away from sources of ignition in the hall storeroom. The curtains have been sprayed with a fire retardant product. Other sources of fuel are stored items which are necessary for the functioning of the hall, but are kept to a minimum. However, combustible items should not be stored in the foyer as it is a fire escape. The notice boards are each less than 1m square, and are checked to remove out of date material.

4.5 The village hall operates a No Smoking policy.

### *Removal / Reduction of Risks to People*

4.6 The fire risk to people has been reduced by ensuring that adequate fire precautions are in place to warn people in the event of a fire and to allow them to escape safely.

4.7 In the event of a fire, the alarm can be raised by either a shout or the use of a hand bell which is located on a shelf to the rear of the stage. The latter would be a suitable alarm in the event of near maximum occupancy (100 people).

4.8 Fire extinguishers for particular types of fire are situated in the main hall (Powder and Foam), the cloakroom (Powder) and the kitchen (CO2). A fire blanket is located in the kitchen. All these are serviced annually, and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed in the hall. All the fire extinguishers have operating instructions clearly displayed.

**Powder Fire Extinguishers** are often termed the 'multi-purpose' extinguisher, as they can be used on wood, paper, textiles, flammable liquids and gaseous fires. However, there are no sources of gas in the Village Hall. For instructions on how to use these fire extinguishers go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAaalWAUOZI>

**CO2 Fire Extinguishers** are for use on flammable liquids and live electrical equipment. They should **not** be used on wood, paper, textiles or flammable metal fires. For instructions go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPhbJ95VGe0&ab\\_channel=ZippyangelsProductions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPhbJ95VGe0&ab_channel=ZippyangelsProductions)

**Foam Fire Extinguishers** are safe for wood paper, textiles and flammable liquids. For instructions go to: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQckBXM6o-I&ab\\_channel=ZippyangelsProductions](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQckBXM6o-I&ab_channel=ZippyangelsProductions)

4.9 There are three Emergency Exits and each is provided with internal signage and emergency lighting. They give direct access to the Assembly Point which is the churchyard opposite the hall. There are also signs on the outside of the two side doors saying that the doors must be kept clear. External lights illuminate all of the exits and these are triggered by movement.

4.10 In the event of a fire it is essential that access is maintained for a fire engine. Parking in the vicinity of the hall must reflect this need.

#### *Installation, Testing and Maintenance*

4.11 All fire prevention and fire fighting equipment is maintained in effective working order through regular checks, periodic servicing and maintenance. Sources of risk are also checked on a regular basis.

4.12 Monthly checks are made of fire exits and emergency lighting.

4.13 Annual checks are made of the fire extinguishers and fire blanket and a Certificate of Inspection obtained. Electrical PAT testing is carried out on an annual basis and an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is made every 5 years.

#### *Conditions of Hire*

- 4.14 The conditions of hire, which must be signed by all hirers, state that they must:
- have a fully charged mobile phone to summon the Fire and Rescue Service in the event of a fire
  - ensure that all Fire Exits are unobstructed and that those in their care are aware of the location of the Fire Exits and Fire extinguishers
  - nominate a suitable person to supervise the evacuation of any child, elderly or disabled person in their care
  - familiarise themselves with the location of the mains electricity switch and stop cock
  - be able to account for the people in their care
  - close all doors and windows and to turn off all heaters, kettles and the cooker at the mains when they leave the building. They are also asked to remove all rubbish
  - regular users are required to conduct a fire drill at least once a year.

## **5. Record, Plan, Inform, Instruct and Train**

#### *Significant findings and action taken*

5.1 The main findings of the fire risk assessment, including the actions taken to prevent fire occurring and to reduce the risk to people, are contained within the preceding sections of this report.

### *Emergency Plan*

5.2 The village hall has a simple layout with clear and well signed escape routes. There are instructions on what to do in the event of a fire. These can be found on the hall notice board as well as in the Conditions of Hire.

### *Information and Instruction*

5.3 Copies of the Conditions of Hire are provided to hirers on the village hall website. These must be signed and sent to the Bookings Secretary to show that they are accepted and will be adhered to.

5.4 Signs indicating the location of fire doors and fire extinguishers are clearly visible in the hall.

5.5 Fire safety advice is given to all cleaners and contractors.

## **6. Review**

6.1 This Fire Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually - or more frequently if there are perceived to be new risks caused by alterations to the fabric of the building, the heating system or the types of activity taking place within the hall.

17/04/2023

For Appendix see below:

## Appendix

Location	Sources of ignition, fuel & oxygen	Fire fighting and precautionary equipment	Escape routes	Emergency lighting , signs & notices
Main Entrance & foyer	Lighting and cupboard storing alcohol.		Via main door	
Main hall	Electric sockets and lighting; sound system; curtains; 2 notice boards.	2 fire extinguishers, 1 is powder (by the Fire Exit), the other foam (by the storage cupboards);	Via main door, via Fire Exit direct to outside and via Fire Exit in cloakroom to outside	Emergency lighting above all 3 exits. Signs above all 3 exits and signs above both fire extinguishers which indicate their usage and how to deploy them.
Hall store cupboard	Upholstered seats and tables; electric light & switch	Foam extinguisher located just outside the cupboard door in the hall.	Via any of the 3 Fire Exits	As above
Cloakroom	2 hand driers, main circuit board, disabled alarm system, lighting and water heater. Stored items eg toilet rolls, paper towels, books and cleaning products.	1 powder fire extinguisher and a fire door to main hall.	Via Fire Exit to outside	Emergency lighting and sign above fire exit. Sign above fire extinguisher showing usage and deployment.
Kitchen	Electric cooker, dishwasher, microwave, fridge freezer, 3 kettles, an overhead heater and a water heater. Stored items e.g. cleaning fluids, towels and paper tablecloths. Vent-Axia in kitchen window.	1 CO2 fire extinguisher and 1 fire blanket. Fire door to foyer has been fitted with an intumescent strip to delay smoke for 30 minutes.	Via main entrance to outside	Fire exit sign above the kitchen door and signs for extinguisher and blanket deployment. Hirers are requested to 'Turn off' cooker. and water heater at the mains switch before leaving the hall.
Outside	Oil-fired boiler and oil storage tank	Powder extinguisher located just inside the fire exit nearest to these items	Down path towards the road	Motion activated lighting above the nearest fire exit