



FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

**GREAT HORKESLEY NEW VILLAGE HALL, TILE HOUSE LANE
GREAT HORKESLEY, CO6 4EA**

www.greathorkesley-pc.gov.uk

The Fire Safety Risks of the Village Hall will be assessed annually.

Approved by Village Hall Committee: 26th March 2024 Minute Ref: V23/34 (b)

INTRODUCTION

Building Type: Single storey, detached, purpose-built community hall constructed of brick under a sheet metal roof.

Responsible Person: Village Hall Management Committee (Cllr J Burns-Langton, Chair)

This Fire Risk Assessment was carried out in order to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, usually referred to as the RRO. It applies to most non-domestic premises, including community halls.

The RRO states that it is the duty of a Responsible Person to ensure that general fire precautions are in place to make the premises safe for all persons working in or visiting the Village Hall. The Responsible Person may delegate another person to carry out the Fire Risk Assessment but responsibility for compliance with the RRO remains with the Responsible Person. The Fire Risk Assessment identifies the precautions needed to comply with the requirements and prohibitions of the RRO and therefore demonstrates that the Responsible Person is undertaking their duty.

PEOPLE AT RISK

| PEOPLE AT RISK | CONTROL MEASURES |
|--|---|
| People with disabilities, or frail or elderly people | All entrances and exits from the hall are flat and suitable for wheelchair users. All fire exits are clearly signed. There are no trip hazards inside the Village Hall. |
| Hirers of the hall that are not familiar with the premises | Hirers of the hall confirm their agreement with the Conditions of Hire, and receive a copy of the Fire Safety Policy & Emergency Procedure, including details of firefighting equipment and fire exits. |
| Staff or contractors alone in the premises | All staff that may work alone in the premises are aware of procedures applicable in the event of a fire. Contractors are generally accompanied by a member of staff. |
| Children | Children are always to be accompanied by a suitable number of responsible adults, when visiting the premises. |

FIRE HAZARDS & CONTROL MEASURES

| HAZARD: SOURCE OF IGNITION | LOCATION | CONTROL MEASURES |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---|
| Electrical installations | All rooms | Electrical installation testing is up to date (carried out every five years), most recently carried out by a qualified electrician in 2023. Child safety devices are fitted to all sockets. |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| Lighting | All rooms | All lights are ceiling fixed and not in close proximity to combustible materials. |
| Electrical equipment | All rooms | Annual PAT testing is up to date. |
| Explosives | All rooms | Hirers agree to the Conditions of Hire. |
| Heating | Main hall | Air source heat pump servicing is up to date. |
| Cooking activities | Kitchen | Electric cooker and hob have no flame for ignition of materials. There is very limited use of oil-based cooking, and an approved fire blanket is kept in the kitchen if required. |
| Arson and other deliberate actions | All rooms | All fire precaution measures referred to in this document are maintained. Building is always locked and secured when not in use. There is no letterbox giving access to the building. |
| Smoking | All rooms | No smoking is permitted anywhere in the building. A cigarette bin is located on the wall outside for the use of smokers to extinguish their smoking materials safely. |

| HAZARD: SOURCE OF FUEL | LOCATION | CONTROL MEASURES |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Flammable materials and obstructions | Lobby | Protected route to be clear of flammable materials and obstructions at all times. |
| Furniture and fittings | All rooms | Curtains in the main hall are fireproofed. Chairs with upholstered seats are never placed near sources of ignition. |
| Paper/cardboard | Main hall | All paper documents are stored on shelving in locked cupboards in the main hall - members of the public do not have access. |
| Waste storage | All rooms | Hirers remove waste on completion of hire. Bins in WCs are emptied regularly. No other bins, including external bins, on the premises. |
| Flammable liquids, gases and solids brought to Village Hall | All rooms | Hirers agree to the Conditions of Hire. Cleaning liquids are kept in a locked cupboard - members of the public do not have access. |

FIREFIGHTING, DETECTION & FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Fire Alarm System

The Village Hall has a fire detection system, which has a service contract in place and is inspected annually. The fire detection system consists of a fire alarm check point, interlinked smoke and heat detectors and sounders, and manual call points. The smoke detectors are present in the main hall, committee room, along protected escape routes and in high-risk areas

such as the kitchen, cleaner's cupboard, and equipment cupboard. If a fire is detected, the roller shutter dividing the kitchen from the main hall will operate automatically. All tests, servicing and false alarms are recorded in a fire alarm logbook. This logbook is available for inspection by the Responsible Person at any time.

Firefighting Equipment

Water and CO2 extinguishers are installed in locations around the premises and there is a fire blanket in the kitchen. The Village Hall does not have a sprinkler system. There is a service contract in place for the firefighting equipment and it is inspected annually. The equipment is date stamped on the annual service.

Three foam extinguishers have been recently replaced with water extinguishers, yet the notices for the foam extinguishers are still on display and have not been replaced. There is a powder extinguisher notice on the wall where there is no extinguisher.

Action: Remove unnecessary extinguisher notices and replace with water extinguisher notices.

Emergency Lighting

A standalone emergency lighting system is installed at the premises. There is a service contract in place and the emergency lights are inspected annually.

| EVALUATING FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS | YES/NO | ACTIONS REQUIRED |
|--|---------------|-------------------------|
| Are possible ignition sources kept separate from combustible materials? | Yes | |
| Are possible ignition sources controlled to minimise the risk of fire? | Yes | |
| Would a fire be discovered quickly and would everybody be warned immediately? | Yes | |
| Is escape possible in more than one direction? | Yes | |
| Are the fire exits easy to identify and reach? | Yes | |
| Are escape routes free of obstruction? | Yes | |
| Do fire exit doors open outwards? | Yes | |
| Are fire exit doors easy to open? | Yes | |
| Is the fire alarm system tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | |
| Is the emergency lighting system tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | |
| Are fire extinguishers and firefighting equipment tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | |

EMERGENCY PLAN & ESCAPE ROUTES

Signage

Illuminated and non-illuminated fire exit and directional signage is in place around the premises. All relevant doors except the cleaner's cupboard currently have 'Fire Door Keep Locked' signs on them.

Action: Put a 'Fire Door Keep Locked' sign on the cleaner's cupboard door.

Escape Routes & Protected Route

There is one protected escape route, along the main corridor with fire exits at each end. Escape distances from the main hall and the meeting room are well within the maximum limits set out in building regulations. Each room should have a floor plan showing the escape route fixed to the fire exit door or immediately adjacent to it. None could be found.

The Village Hall has three designated fire escape doors; two have push bar openers, one in the main hall and one by the kitchen, and the main entrance door has a thumb turn lock, so no keys are required should the need arise to vacate the Village Hall quickly and safely. The other two external doors in the main hall are not designated fire exits, although they could still be used for emergency egress.

Both doors to the meeting room have thumb turn locks. Low occupancy in the meeting room means that only the door leading to the lobby (which is part of the protected route) is required to be a fire exit door.

All internal fire doors have self-closing devices as required.

The presence of a large number of door wedges was noted and some doors, particularly along the protected route, are known to be wedged open at times.

The furniture store cupboard in the main hall has a set of double fire doors which are required to stay open when the cupboard contents are being moved. These doors, and the set of double doors between the main hall and the lobby, have self-closing devices that mean if the doors are open, they will swing shut when the fire alarms sound.

The lobby is part of the protected route and as such should not contain any obstructions or items which could potentially fuel a fire. There is a coat rack and a table in the lobby, but these are kept clear of the main exit route.

*Actions: A floor plan showing escape routes to be fixed or adjacent to fire exit doors.
Ensure self-closing devices for all doors are working correctly and remove all door wedges.*

Emergency Plan & Evacuation Procedure

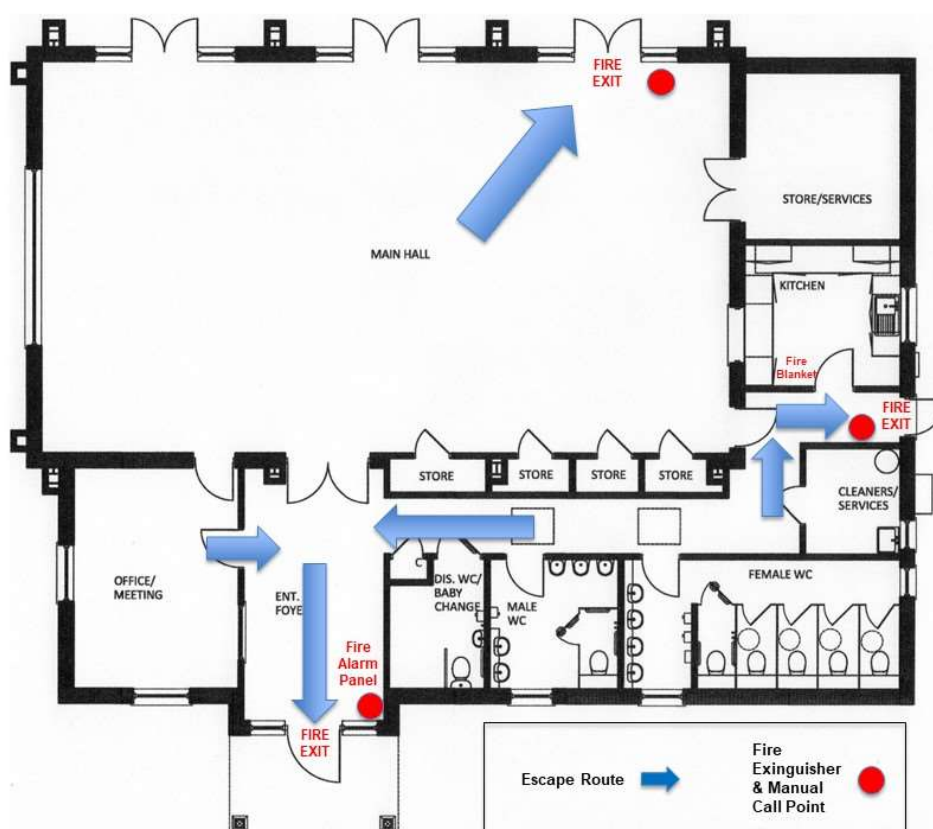
There are Fire Action notices placed by each manual call point with detailed instructions about what to do in case of a fire. A standard template is used for these notices but instructions for some sections are unique to each building. These are left blank for completion by the

Responsible Person and in all cases the information has not been added. In the main hall the extinguisher and notice adjacent to the fire exit giving external egress is concealed by curtains.

In the event of a fire, the fire alarm will sound automatically or can be started manually using a manual call point. Occupants are to leave the premises calmly and quickly using the closest escape route and fire exit. Everyone should assemble at the Fire Assembly Point (the far side of the Village Hall car park) and the current hirer of the Village Hall should confirm that everyone is present (hirers are advised to keep a record of the total number of people at their event).

Actions: Ensure all Fire Action Notices are properly completed.

Move the Fire Action Notice and fire extinguisher notice in the main hall, so they are not concealed by the curtains.



FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

This Fire Risk Assessment should be reviewed annually, or more regularly if there has been a significant change to the Village Hall or its use.