

PAUNTLEY VILLAGE HALL

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which came into force on 1st October 2006, replaced most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control in premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The Order applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space. It applies to community halls and community premises and is therefore to Pauntley Village Hall.

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:

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

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. Toilets
- 5. Store room

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.

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

Step 1 – Fire Hazards: Sources of Ignition, Fuel and Oxygen

The main sources of ignition are the various items of electrical equipment located in the kitchen eg cooker, microwave, fridge, water heater, and the electric heaters in the main hall. Elsewhere the main sources of ignition are electric sockets and lighting located throughout all the hall areas. In addition, a number of events, such as discos, film evenings and the Real Ale Festival require the installation of further electrical equipment in the main hall.

The main sources of fuel are the upholstered seating, stage curtains and the blinds at the windows. The main source of oxygen is the natural airflow through, doors, windows and other openings.

Step 2: People at Risk

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

- Hirers
- The Village Hall Management Committee
- The Parish Council
- Local organisations
- Contractors
- Cleaners
- Visitors
- Hirers, contractors and visitors who are unfamiliar with the hall layout
- Children
- The elderly
- People with disabilities (mobility, hearing or vision impairment)

Step 3: Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk

1. The risk of fire occurring

It is considered that the risk of fire occurring is relatively low. The main sources of ignition comprise electrical equipment located in the kitchen and electric heaters in the main hall. Combustible materials are kept away from these sources and all equipment is regularly serviced and maintained in a good state of repair. Elsewhere, electric sockets and lighting are well maintained.

2. The risk to people

An evaluation has been carried out of the actual risk to people identified in Step 2 in the event that a fire does start and spread from the areas identified above with the main sources of ignition.

All rooms are at ground floor level and are open to the various escape routes available. There are steps up to the main hall from the kitchen and store room, and a step down in the gents toilets.

3. Removal/reduction of the hazards

The identified potential hazards comprise the range of electrical equipment contained in the kitchen and the electric heaters in the main hall, which are an essential part of the facilities available to the users of the village hall. Removal would not be in the best interests of the village hall or its users and the potential hazards are reduced as far as possible through regular maintenance, inspection and servicing.

The village hall operates a No Smoking policy in all areas of the building. Elsewhere flammable materials are limited to curtains, tables and seating, and generally are kept away from potential hazards. Chairs and tables, when not in use, are kept within the small store room off the main hall where potential fire risks are very low.

4. Removal/reduction of the risks to people

The fire risk to people has been reduced to as low as reasonably practical by ensuring that adequate fire precautions are in place to warn people in the event of fire and to allow them to escape safely. Fire extinguishers for particular types of fire are situated in the main hall and kitchen, as detailed in the accompanying table. These are regularly inspected and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed on the notice board in the hall. A fire blanket is located in the kitchen.

There are three main escape routes available at ground floor level and these are readily accessible from all parts of the building. These are independent of each other with emergency escape lighting. The main escape routes are (1) via the main entrance (2) via the side fire doors and (3) via the patio doors, which have a thumb turn opening on the inside. External doors are also available in the kitchen and store room.

Escape routes are all unencumbered and are listed in the accompanying table. All external fire doors lead to the outside car park or other areas that provide open space or safe and easy clearance of the hall.

Escape routes and exits together with the locations of firefighting equipment are indicated by appropriate signs throughout the building as indicated in the accompanying table. Fire exit signs are included on the emergency lighting panels throughout the hall as also detailed in the accompanying table.

Notices indicating the location of fire doors and extinguishers are situated in a variety of positions around the building. Each fire extinguisher has operating instructions clearly displayed.

5. Installation, testing and maintenance

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. A log of all checks and servicing and maintenance is kept.

Regular checks are made of water heaters, fridges, emergency lighting, fire doors, lights and safety torch.

An annual check is made of the fire extinguishers, and a certificate of inspection obtained.

Conditions of Hire

The conditions of hire of the village hall state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed and that illuminated fire exit signs must be on for all public entertainment. The conditions of hire are shown on the parish web-site www.pauntley.org.uk.

Step 4: Record, Plan, Inform, Instruct and Train

1. Significant findings and action taken

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 in the preceding sections of this report.

A plan showing the general fire safety measures is included overleaf.

2. Emergency plan

The village hall has a simple layout with clear and well signed escape routes. As explained above, the conditions of hire state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed and that illuminated fire exit signs must be on for all public entertainment.

3. Information and instruction

Copies of the Conditions of Hire are posted for hirers on the website, and they are required to accept and adhere to them.

Signs indicating the location of fire doors and fire extinguishers are posted at various prominent and visible points throughout the village hall.

Location	Sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen	Fire detection, fire fighting and precautionary equipment	Escape routes	Emergency lighting, signs and notices
1.Main entrance and foyer	Lighting		Via main entrance	Exit signing. No smoking sign.
2.Main hall	Electric sockets and lighting. Additional lighting and production equipment for special events. Upholstered seating and curtains.	Two water extinguishers.	Via side fire door to car park. Via main Entrance to car park. Via patio doors to exterior.	Emergency lighting above fire door, above door to foyer and main entrance. No Smoking sign.
3. Kitchen	Electric cooker and power supply. Electric sockets and lighting. Water heater. Kettles. Microwave. Fridge. Fusebox. Electric storage heater.	Fire blanket. CO2 Extinguisher. First Aid Kit.	Exit via door to main hall and fire door/patio doors to exterior.	No Smoking sign. 'End of Session Checklist' sign on wall.
4.Store room	Electric sockets and lighting.	None	Via main hall to fire doors and patio doors exterior.	None
5. Toilets	Electric lights. Water heaters	None	Via main entrance	None

5: Review

This fire risk assessment has been carried out for the village hall following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The assessment is kept under review particularly with regard to any potential new risks and the need to keep them under control, and also to ensure that the fire precautions are still working effectively.

March 2023

