

WEST HILL VILLAGE HALL

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

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WEST HILL VILLAGE HALL

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 replaces 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 all community buildings including village halls.

This Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Order and having regard to Government guidance on Fire Safety Risk assessment in community buildings. It contains the 5 steps to be taken as shown in the Contents (page 2), and which have been undertaken for the main areas of useable space in West Hill Village Hall as follows:-

Ground floor

1. Main entrance and foyer
2. Main Hall – known as Oak Hall
3. Acorn room
4. Kitchen
5. Disabled toilet and Ladies' and Gents' toilets
6. School kitchen leased to West Hill Primary school for children's meals
7. 2 storerooms

First floor

8. Beech room
9. Maple room
10. Toilet and separate kitchen
11. 5 Storeroom

For each of the above areas, an assessment has been undertaken of sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen, fire detection, fire fighting and precautionary equipment, escape routes, emergency lighting, signs and notices. The key findings of this assessment are described on the following pages.

1. FIRE HAZARDS: SOURCES OF IGNITION, FUEL AND OXYGEN

The main sources of ignition are the various items of electrical equipment located in the two kitchens, including cooker, dishwasher, microwave, fridge, and freezer. Other sources of potential ignition are electric sockets, portable appliances, PA system, Air Conditioning units in Acorn Room and Beech Room, naked flames such as candles (which are not allowed in the hall) and lighting located throughout the Hall.

On the ground floor, principal sources of fuel are wooden stage blocks, wooden cupboards, tables in the main storeroom, wooden floors and floor tiles and curtains. There is also a cleaning machine (owned by Cleaning Contractor) charged and stored in the main storeroom (serviced annually).

Another storeroom is used by West Hill Primary school.

On the first floor, there is a storeroom with space shared one third each by Primary school, the PTFA and the village hall, containing a wide range of equipment. Another storeroom opposite contains equipment used by West Hill Pre school.

Also on the first floor, there are plastic chairs outside the 'office' and children's plastic chairs on the landing.

The main source of oxygen is the natural airflow through doors and windows.

2. PEOPLE AT RISK

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

- Hirers of the Village Hall
- Pre school and Primary school children daily in term time
- Children when used as a party venue
- Our cleaner
- Contractors
- The elderly

- People with disabilities (mobility, hearing or vision impairment)
- School kitchen staff

3. EVALUATE, REMOVE, REDUCE AND PROTECT FROM RISK

3.1 The risk of fire occurring

It is considered that the risk of fire occurring is relatively low. The main sources of ignition are electrical equipment in the two kitchens, the PA system, the air conditioning units and the contents of the downstairs and upstairs storerooms referred to above.

Combustible materials are kept away from these sources and equipment and heating units are regularly serviced and maintained in a good state of repair. Elsewhere, electric sockets and lighting are well maintained and portable appliances 'PAT' tested annually.

3.2 The risk to people

An evaluation has been undertaken of the actual risk to people identified in paragraph 2 in the event a fire did start and spread from the main sources of ignition such as the two kitchens, plus one leased to the Primary school.

On the ground floor, the escape routes are the main entrance, the exit fire door from Acorn room, the three exit fire doors from the Main Oak Hall, and the side entrance facing the adjacent Primary school.

On the first floor, the escape routes are down the main stairs to the foyer, but if blocked, down the stairs from Beech room to the side entrance.

3.3 Removal/reduction of the hazards

The identified potential hazards comprise the range of electrical equipment contained in the two kitchens, which are an essential part of the facilities available for users of the village hall. Removal would not be in the 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 storeroom on the ground floor, off the Main Oak Hall, contains wooden stage blocks and cupboards which do represent a potential hazard but are the minimum practically required for users, and are kept tidy and away from potential hazards. The same principle applies to the other storeroom used by

West Hill Primary school on the ground floor, and the two storerooms on the first floor referred to in paragraph 1.

West Hill Village Hall operates a No Smoking and No candles policy in all areas of the building.

3.4 Removal/Reduction of the risks to people

The fire risk to people has been minimised as far as is reasonably practical. Fire escape signs are in place as is emergency lighting to assist people in the event of fire and to allow them to escape safely.

Within the hall building, there are 10 fire extinguishers with instructions, 4 fire blankets and 4 smoke alarms and details of location are shown in Appendix 2. They are regularly inspected and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed in the foyer.

On the ground floor, there are six escape routes available and are readily accessible from all parts of the hall. All are independent of each other. They are the main entrance, Acorn room, three external fire doors in the Main Oak Hall and the side entrance opposite to the Primary school.

From the first floor, there are two staircases with access to all six escape routes on the ground floor.

Escape routes are all unencumbered and are listed in Appendix 2. All external doors lead to the outside and provide open space for safe and easy evacuation of the hall.

3.5 Installation, testing maintenance

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

Regular checks are made of all kitchen appliances described in paragraph 1.

An annual check is made of the fire extinguishers and a certificate of inspection obtained. The electrical system is also checked on a regular basis.

4. RECORD, PLAN, INFORM, INSTRUCT AND TRAIN

4.1 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.

4.2 Conditions of Hire

The conditions of hire of West Hill Village Hall state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed. Conditions of hire are shown on the Village Hall website – westhilldevon.org/villagehall.html.

4.3. Emergency plan.

A Fire Emergency Procedure exists for the protection of all hall users and together with our Health & Safety procedures is circulated annually to all our regular users.

5. REVIEW

This Fire Risk Assessment has been completed in line with ACRE Information Sheet No 37 headed 'Fire Safety in Village Halls,' in order to comply with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

It is kept under review, particularly with regard to any potential new risks and to ensure that the fire precautions continue to work effectively.

Colin Veale - Chairman

Mike Hemming – Hall Manager

November 2023