

Richards Castle Village Hall - Fire Safety Risk Assessment

1. Property Description

- a. The Village Hall is a purpose made community building constructed in the 1920's. The structure consists of a basic steel frame, concrete rendered outer and wood lined interior. Later construction and additions (*i.e* foyer toilets Jubilee room and kitchen extensions) were added in the early 80's and are of more modern appearance with rendered block walls, slate roofs and concreted floors. The main hall roof was replaced in the 90's with a lottery grant and is to fire retardant spec being of formed alloy and foam construction.
- b. The accommodation comprises an entrance foyer with toilets off, a bar, main hall with stage, 2 x committee rooms, and kitchen; plus a resources room and 3 small storage rooms
- c. The total area of the building is approx. 500 square metres.
- d. Access and egress of the hall facilitates those with physical disabilities - there being 2 wheelchair ramps.
- e. The heating is all electric comprising suspended tubular heaters and blown hot air.

2. Fire risks

- a. Electricity which includes all lighting and power (including fuse boxes, junction boxes, lighting fittings and equipment), kitchen appliances (including cooker, extractors, portable appliances and entertainment equipment (including that utilised by hirers of the hall).
- b. Hot surfaces (kitchen).
- c. Smoking, which should not happen, because it is not permitted.
- d. Accidental fires including accumulated combustible waste.
- e. Arson, and lesser mischief, e.g. horseplay.

3. People affected by fire

All users of or visitors to the hall including:-

- a. Regular users, attendees at meetings, events and activities,
- b. Organisers and attendees at special events organised on behalf of the Village Hall Committee which includes entertainment of all descriptions, community gatherings and other fund raising activities.
- c. Organisers and attendees at special events organised by hirers of the hall.
- d. Contractors visiting or carrying out works at the hall to include their employees, sub-contractors and suppliers.

In respect of (a), (b), and (c) above, under the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and the Licensing Act 2003, the maximum number of persons permitted to be on the premises at any one time is limited to 180.

In respect of (b), (c) and (d) above, those persons attending the hall may be unfamiliar with the premises.

Due to the distance from the village hall to the nearest occupied buildings (residential dwellings), there is no requirement to consider residents as part of an evacuation plan.

4. Automatic Fire Detection

THERE IS NO AFD SYSTEM IN THE BUILDING OTHER THAN SMOKE DETECTORS IN SOME ROOMS AND A HEAT SENSOR IN THE KITCHEN. These are connected to the fire alarm and details are shown on the notice next to the alarm panel in the kitchen. The detectors and alarm panel are to be routinely tested by the nominated responsible person.

5. Escape routes

In addition to the Entrance Foyer exit, which is to the west, there are 3 fire exits:

- (i) through a "push bar" double door from the Main Hall to the west,
- (ii) there is also a "push bar" single door exiting to the east for people in the vicinity of the Jubilee Room or the Kitchen.
- (iii) there is a single "push bar" door from the corridor next to the Betton Room.

6. Internal fire doors

Between the Main Hall and the Jubilee room, could be closed in the event of fire, but only if it is safe to do so.

7. Fire extinguishers

Different extinguishers are suitable for different types of fire. Please see the notices near, or on, the extinguishers.

- 1. Main Hall - 2 x 9.8 kg foam extinguishers.
- 2. Kitchen – 1 x 3.7 kg powder extinguisher (blue) located adjacent to the stage door
- 3. Kitchen - 1 fire blanket.

Foam extinguishers and water extinguishers are suitable for small fires involving combustible material (eg paper, cloth and wood). **THEY ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, DEEP FAT FRYERS OR CHIP PANS.**

Powder extinguisher (blue) is suitable for fires involving ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.

All fire extinguishers within the premises are subject to an annual inspection by the supplying Company and the Certificate of Inspection is retained on file.

8. First aid

As part of the emergency plan, a suitably stocked first aid kit is maintained and available for general use. **This is sited in the kitchen area and clearly marked.** A committee member is nominated to ensure that it is kept stocked. Included within the box are sterile adhesive dressings including waterproof dressings or blue plasters for use in the food preparation area. In the event of burns or scalds, sterile dressings can be used **but no lotions or creams.**

9. Signs and notices

1. All designated fire exits are clearly signed. All designated escape routes leading to a fire exit are clearly signed.
2. Location of fire extinguishers and their specific use.
3. Location of fire blanket and its specific use.
4. 'Action to take in the event of fire'. These are sited in the foyer, main hall, committee rooms and kitchen. A copy is shown in Appendix A.

10. Fire prevention

a. Electricity

All electrical installations and equipment must be maintained and protected in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and such maintenance and repair as required must be carried out by a competent person and records maintained. All 13 A socket outlets are protected by residual current devices (trip rating 30 mA). These should be checked as part of the regular maintenance. Portable electrical appliances must be tested and inspected at intervals suitable for the type of equipment and its frequency of use – see separate log sheets for periodic maintenance.

It is the responsibility of hirers of the hall who use their own electrical equipment at the hall to ensure compliance as to testing and maintenance of such equipment. This forms part of the contract of the hire of the hall

b. Hot surfaces and no obstruction of ventilation equipment

There should be good working practice within the kitchen area. Regular users of the kitchen should be made aware of fire risks.

c. Smoking

There is a strict '**No Smoking**' policy for the whole of the premises endorsed by suitable notices.

d. Accidental fires

Strict control must be maintained of all waste accumulated during events and it must be disposed of at the conclusion of the event.

e. Open flames

Candles must not be used, with the exception of birthday cake candles, when strict control must be maintained to ensure safety during the event and proper extinguishing immediately after use.

f. Arson

1. Control of behaviour on the premises to prevent mischief, horseplay, *etc.*
2. Strict control of hall key allocation.
3. Any person having control of any activity at the hall has the responsibility of securing the premises at its conclusion and ensuring that no person is left on the premises. This responsibility also includes the need to check all likely sources of ignition prior to closure, such as electrical equipment, waste containers, candles *etc.* Particular attention should be paid to the kitchen area.

USERS MUST SIGN THE LOCK-UP DIARY CHECKLIST IN THE FOYER

11. Action in the event of a fire

1. The person in charge of the hall or function at the time will immediately instruct all persons to leave the building using the nearest available exit and **ASSEMBLE IN THE CAR PARK**. Although there is the possibility of a false alarm, the initial action is evacuation of the building. If the location of a fire is immediately detected and is obviously manageable, it may be possible to extinguish it, **BUT WHERE ANY DOUBT EXISTS EVACUATION MUST REMAIN THE PRIORITY**.
2. If safe to do so, **SOUND THE ALARM** using the panel in the kitchen to the right of the stage door. Turn the key to "ON" and press the "SOUND ALARM" button.
3. **CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE**. This must be done using a mobile phone or alternatively next door at the old school.
4. Once the hall has been evacuated, no-one should be permitted to re-enter **unless it has been deemed safe to do so**.
5. Access for the Fire Brigade should be maintained, any obstructions at the entrance being removed, (eg parked cars).
6. On arrival of the Fire Brigade, the nominated person in charge should report to the Officer in Charge that all persons have been evacuated or their last known location.
7. Fire appliances located within the hall should only be used to attempt to extinguish a fire if:-
 - a. the fire and resultant smoke obviously appears to be easily manageable.
 - b. it is safe to do so without risk to health.
8. In the event of a false alarm, the temporary responsible person will be able to reset using the procedure on the notice by the alarm panel.

12. Short term hiring - Responsibilities

It is crucial that the "TEMPORARY RESPONSIBLE PERSON" understands their legal duties and responsibilities as part of the hiring agreement for the hall for the duration of the event or function.

A temporary responsible person includes someone nominated by the hirer to oversee the safety of everyone attending the hall during the period of hire. That person must familiarise themselves with the document "Short term hiring - Responsibilities of temporary responsible person". (See Appendix B).

It is imperative that this Fire Risk Assessment together with the appendix is read and understood prior to any such event.

13. Information and training

All Village Hall Committee members and the cleaner should read and sign the Risk Assessment including the appendices and such copy will be retained on file.

The above persons should also be aware of:-

- a. Location of fire-fighting equipment (extinguishers and blanket) and their specific uses.
- b. Fire prevention measures.
- c. The means of operating the smoke detectors and alarm
- d. Fire action procedures including evacuation, calling the Fire Brigade, maintaining access for fire appliances, briefing on arrival and location of the assembly point.

14. Review

This Risk Assessment to be reviewed annually or earlier when alterations to the premises or change of use requires.

Date of assessment:-

Responsible person:-

Dates of reviews:-

Contents noted:-

Chairperson.....

Secretary.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Action to be taken in the event of a fire. This is a copy of notices used in the Village Hall, see sections 9.4 and 11.

Appendix B. Short-term hiring – responsibilities of the temporary responsible person.

ACTION TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

ALERT OTHER PEOPLE within the Hall, taking special care of children and anyone who needs assistance.

ONLY IF SAFE TO DO SO:

- TACKLE THE FIRE with appropriate fire extinguishers or the fire blanket
- CLOSE WINDOWS
- TURN OFF AND UNPLUG ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES
- SOUND THE ALARM using the alarm panel in the kitchen to the right of the stage door. Turn the key to “ON” and press the “SOUND ALARM” button.

LEAVE THE BUILDING calmly using the nearest exit and CLOSE ALL DOORS BEHIND YOU. Do not delay to collect belongings.

CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE, giving the address Richards Castle Village Hall, SY8 4EQ.

MOVE PARKED VEHICLES TO ALLOW ACCESS for the Fire Brigade to the building.

ASSEMBLE IN THE CAR PARK to the side of the Village Hall, not at the front, in order to leave access clear for the Fire Brigade.

Short term hiring - Responsibilities of temporary responsible person

FOR ALL EVENTS, THERE MUST BE A TEMPORARY RESPONSIBLE PERSON, who has **legal duties** with regard to the safety of those persons assisting or attending the event. Key aspects of this role are described below.

Any mains operated portable electrical appliance brought into the hall as part of the event or function should be tested and certified (portable appliance testing, PAT).

Before the event or function, you should be aware of:-

1. What fire protection systems are present.
2. Identification of escape routes and exits
3. Checking that all escape routes are clear of obstruction and any combustible materials
4. The location of fire-fighting equipment and their specific use.
5. How a fire will be detected.
6. What helpers should do if they discover a fire.
7. How the smoke detectors and heat detector operate.
8. How the evacuation of the hall should be carried out.
9. Arrangements for calling the Fire and Rescue Services
10. Where people should assemble after evacuation and procedures for checking that evacuation has taken place.
11. Arrangements for fighting the fire if safe to do so.
12. Procedures for meeting the rescue services on arrival and ensuring easy access.

At the start of the event or function, you should notify all those present about:-

1. The "No Smoking" policy.
2. The emergency plan in the event of fire.
3. Location of exits and escape routes.
4. Location of assembly point.
5. The location of fire extinguishers.
6. Care for children and anyone else in need of assistance.

During the event or function, you should ensure that:-

1. Escape routes and exits do not become blocked.
2. The 'No Smoking' policy is enforced.
3. Where naked flames are present (eg candles), combustible material is kept clear.

At the end of the event or function, you should ensure that:-

1. There are no apparent sources of ignition.
2. All electrical apparatus is switched off and any hot surfaces are allowed to cool before leaving.
3. All portable appliances (eg heaters, sound equipment etc) are turned off and disconnected.
4. All accumulated rubbish is removed from the hall.
5. All lights are extinguished and doors properly secured to prevent unlawful entry.
6. YOU HAVE SIGNED THE LOCK UP DIARY