

NEWTON AND BYWELL COMMUNITY HALL

Fire Risk Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which came into force on 1st October 2006, 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.

1.2.

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 relevant, therefore, to Newton and Bywell Community Hall.

1.3.

For the purposes of carrying out the Fire Risk Assessment the 'responsible person' is the Newton and Bywell Community Hall Trustee Board who from time to time appoint one or more 'competent' persons to undertake the risk assessment.

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:

- Identify fire hazards
- Identify people at risk

- Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk
- Record, plan, inform, instruct and train
- Review

The Fire Risk Assessment follows this structure and has been carried out for each of the principal areas of usable space in the Community Hall, namely:

1. Main entrance and foyer
2. Main corridor
3. Gents toilets
4. Ladies toilets
5. The Meeting Room
6. Disabled toilet
7. Kitchen
8. Main Hall
9. Store room 1
10. Store room 2
- 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 on the following page 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 area eg. cooker, dishwasher, microwave, fridge. There are electric water boilers in the loft and oil boiler in the disabled toilet with associated controls.

2.2.

Elsewhere, the main sources of ignition are electric sockets and lighting located throughout all the Hall areas.

2.3.

The principal sources of fuel are concentrated in store room (1) and loft areas and include paper files housed in a metal cabinet together with fabric and board for crafts.

2.4.

Elsewhere, the main sources of fuel are the upholstered seating, tables and wooden stage.

2.5.

The main source of oxygen is the natural airflow through, doors, windows and other openings. This natural airflow is sometimes supplemented by mechanical means when the Vent-Axia system is used.

3. People at Risk

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

- Hirers
- The Trustee Board Members
- 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)

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 relatively low. The main sources of ignition comprise electrical equipment located in the kitchen, oil boiler in the disabled toilet. Combustible materials are kept away from these sources and all equipment and boilers are regularly serviced and maintained in a good state of repair.

4.2. Elsewhere, electric sockets and lighting are well maintained.

The risk to people

4.3.

An evaluation has been carried out of the actual risk to people identified in Step 2 in the event a fire did start and spread from those areas with the main sources of ignition ie kitchen, disabled toilet or store areas.

4.4.

The main entrance/foyer, the main Hall, kitchen, disabled toilet and meeting room are all at ground floor level and are open to the various escape routes available.

The store areas relatively confined space and the only escape is via the main

Hall from where access is available to the main escape routes, the loft area is also a relatively confined space which escape is via the wooden stair into the lobby area where access is available to the main escape routes.

Removal/reduction of the hazards

4.5.

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

4.6.

Similarly, the boiler in the disabled toilet and loft areas are essential for the comfort and well-being of users of the Hall. Their potential hazards are minimised through regular servicing and meet the latest safety requirements.

4.7.

The paper files are housed in a metal cupboard to avoid accidental ignition. The fabric, wood and plastics stored by the visiting craft classes represent a potential hazard and they are encouraged to reduce these to the minimum practical and to be kept tidy and confined to a specific area.

4.8.

The Community Hall operates a No Smoking policy in all areas of the building.

4.9.

Elsewhere flammable materials are limited to tables and seating, and demountable stage are generally kept away from potential hazards. Similarly, mats and various sports and leisure apparatus used by local groups are kept secure within the small store room off the main Hall where potential fire risks are very low.

Removal/reduction of the risks to people

4.11.

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.

4.12.

A fire alarm system is in place incorporating an alarm bell and manually operated 'break glass' points which are located in the main entrance/foyer, in the main Hall and in the main corridor escape route.

4.13.

Fire extinguishers for particular types of fire are situated in the main entrance/foyer, main Hall, kitchen, meeting room as detailed in the accompanying table. These are regularly inspected and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed in the main entrance/foyer. A fire blanket is located in the kitchen.

4.14.

There are four main escape routes available at ground floor level and are readily accessible from all parts of the building. All are independent of each other with emergency escape lighting. The main escape routes are (1) via the main entrance (2) via an external fire door off the main Hall (3) via the main corridor linking the kitchen, disabled toilet and meeting room Room to an external fire door

4.15.

Escape routes are all unencumbered and are listed in the accompanying table. All external fire doors lead to the outside patio and car parking areas that provide open space for safe and easy clearance of the Hall.

4.16.

Escape routes and exits together with the locations of fire-fighting 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.

4.17.

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. Installation, testing and maintenance

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

4.19. Monthly checks are made of water heaters, fridges, emergency lighting, fire doors, lights, dishwasher, safety torch, water boiler, emergency lights and the fire alarm.

4.20. An annual check is made of the fire extinguishers, and a certificate of inspection obtained. The electrical system is also checked on an annual basis and a safety certificate obtained. The new oil boiler and electric boilers will be serviced on an annual basis.

Conditions of Hire

4.21. The conditions of hire of the Community Hall state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed. The conditions of hire are shown on the Community Hall web-site.

4.22. For theatrical and entertainment events particular health and safety procedures apply and an appointed person is responsible for fire safety and emergency evacuation.

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 in the preceding sections of this report.

5.2.

A plan showing the general fire safety measures is displayed in the entrance hall

Emergency plan

5.3.

The Community Hall has a relatively 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.

5.4.

The Community Hall operates particular health and safety procedures for entertainment events covering the appointment of a health and safety officer, preparation for public entry to the event, emergency procedure, performance restrictions, no smoking and notification to the public.

Information and instruction

5.5.

Copies of the Conditions of Hire and the conditions relating to Entertainment Events are provided to hirers who are required to accept and adhere to them.

5.6.

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

5.7.

Fire safety advice is given to the Hall cleaners and contractors.