

UPOTTERY VILLAGE HALL (MANOR ROOM) FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT INTRODUCTION

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.

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 Uppottery Village Hall (Manor Room).

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 5 steps to 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 Uppottery Village Hall (Manor Room):

1. Main entrance and foyer
2. Main hall
3. Kitchen
4. Men's, Ladies' and Disabled toilets
5. Stage

For each of these areas an assessment has been carried out of sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen, fire detection, firefighting and precautionary equipment, escape routes emergency lighting, signs and notices.

The key findings of this assessment are contained on the following pages and key points discussed as appropriate.

FIRE HAZARDS: SOURCES OF IGNITION, FUEL AND OXYGEN

The main sources of ignition are the various items of electrical equipment located in the kitchen e.g. cooker, dishwasher, microwave, fridge, water heater. The (tiled) roof has PV Solar panels on its South face. Other sources of potential ignition are electric sockets, portable appliances and the lighting located throughout all the hall areas. Principal sources of fuel are concentrated externally being the gas bottles for the water heater. In addition various wooden tables stored in the annex to the hall. Other sources of fuel are plastic seating, wooden tables, wooden floor, curtains and the wooden stage itself.

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

PEOPLE AT RISK:

People who use the hall and may be at risk if there is a fire include: • Hirers of the Village Hall • Contractors • Cleaners • Village Hall villagers • Children (when used as a party venue) • The elderly • People with disabilities (mobility, hearing or vision impairment)

EVALUATE, REMOVE, REDUCE AND PROTECT FROM RISK

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 in the hall. 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 where appropriate.

The risk to people:

An evaluation has been carried out of the actual risk to people in the event a fire did start and spread from those areas with the main sources of ignition i.e. kitchen, or hall.

The main entrance/foyer, kitchen, the main hall, toilets and stage are all at ground floor level (this is a single storey building) and are open to the various escape routes available being the main entrance and two external fire doors lit by emergency lighting and signed and a door to the rear of the building.

Removal/reduction of the hazards:

The identified potential hazards comprise the range of electrical equipment contained in the kitchen 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.

Wood and tables stored in the rear annex and below the stage does represent a potential hazard but these are the minimum practical and are to be kept tidy and confined to this specific storage area.

Upottery Village Hall operates a No Smoking policy in all areas of the building.

Elsewhere flammable materials are limited to curtains, tables and seating, and are generally kept away from potential hazards.

Removal/reduction of the risks to people

The fire risk to people has been minimised as far as reasonably practical. Adequate 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. Ample extinguishers are located throughout the building with instructions, as detailed in the accompanying plan. These are regularly inspected and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed in the main entrance/foyer. A fire blanket is also located in the kitchen.

There are three main escape routes available and are readily accessible from all parts of the hall. All are independent of each other.

The main escape routes are, the main entrance, an external double fire door off the hall itself and an external door adjacent to the rear of the building. Escape routes are clearly signed, all unencumbered and are listed in the accompanying table.

All external fire doors lead to the outside and provide open space for safe and easy evacuation of the hall. Escape routes and exits are indicated by appropriate signs as indicated in the accompanying table. Fire exit signs are also detailed in the accompanying plan. There is emergency lighting throughout.

The fire extinguishers have operating instructions clearly displayed.

Installation, testing and maintenance:

All fire prevention and firefighting 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 the water heater, cooker, fridge, fire doors, lights, dishwasher and microwave.

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

The electrical system is also checked on regular basis and installations fitted by a qualified electrician.

RECORD, PLAN, INFORM, INSTRUCT AND TRAIN

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.

Conditions of Hire:

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

Emergency plan:

The village hall is a simple layout with clear well signed fire escapes and a fire extinguisher. Conditions of hire state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed.

REVIEW:

This fire risk assessment has been carried out for Upottery Village Hall (Manor Room) having read the Government's 'Fire safety risk assessment small medium assembly paper'. 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.

All hirers of the hall are to be made aware of the Fire Risks, Firefighting Equipment and Exit Points.

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