

# **Dolton and Dowland Village Hall.**

## **Fire Safety Risk Assessment.**

### **1. Property Description.**

- a. The Village Hall is a purpose made community building constructed in 1966-7. The structure is of concrete block construction on the outer leaf and metal supports infilled with concrete blocks on the inner leaf of the cavity wall. The new roof was installed in 2011 and consists of Kingspan 100mm insulated roofing sheets to fire resistant standards (BS 476). Building zones have been divided by filling the gaps between walls and roof with fire resistant material. The building is single-storey.
- b. The accommodation comprises an entrance foyer with toilets off, a main hall with stage, committee room with toilet and storeroom off, and kitchen. The boiler room is accessed from outside.
- c. The total surface area of the building is 350.79 square metres.
- d. Access and egress of the hall facilitates those with physical disabilities.
- e. The heating is oil fired, the modern double skinned tank being located outside, adjacent to the store room.
- f. See plan at Appendix A.

### **2. Fire risks.**

- a. Electricity which includes all lighting and power (including fuse boxes, junction boxes, lighting fittings and equipment), kitchen appliances (including cooker, dishwasher and microwave), extractors and filters, portable appliances (including heaters) and entertainment equipment (including that utilised by hirers of the hall).
- b. Hot surfaces and obstruction of ventilation equipment (kitchen).
- c. Smoking.
- d. Oil fired heaters.
- e. Accidental fires including accumulated combustible waste.
- f. 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 300.

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 Alarm System.**

Following the replacement of the roof and associated work in 2011, the hall is now equipped with an automatic fire alarm system. This is a local system and **NOT** linked to any outside source e.g. Fire Brigade.

The main control panel is located in the foyer and four manual call points are located adjacent to each fire extinguisher (see plan at appendix A). Smoke detectors are located throughout the building.

**Information concerning the alarm and resetting procedures in the event of a false activation is supplied to the temporary responsible person at the time of hiring the hall.**

#### **5. Escape Routes.**

See plan at appendix A.

Designated fire escape routes are located at the front entrance (marked 1 on the plan), from the main hall (2) and from the committee room (3). A further escape route is available to any persons in the kitchen area through that exit door (4) but this door is not designated as a fire exit.

**All exits lead to an open area with easy access to the designated assembly area on the forecourt of the Rams Head Inn, South Street. Exterior lighting illuminates all designated fire exits.**

The designated fire escape door (marked 1 on the plan at Appendix A) is a swing door which is kept unlocked when persons are on the premises. The designated fire exit from the main hall (2) is outward opening and has a push bar release. The designated fire exit from the committee room (3) is outward opening with an easily accessible lever handle, (It is not envisaged that more than 60 people will need to exit by this route).

## **6. Internal fire doors.**

See plan at appendix A.

Automatic fire doors are fitted between the main hall and the committee room and the main hall and the kitchen, (marked A and B).

These doors can either be kept in the closed position or secured by the alarm system in the open position during an event, in which case, they are automatically closed on the activation of the fire alarm.

Fire doors are in place between the committee room and the storeroom and **must be kept closed except when access is required.**

## **7. Fire Extinguishers.**

See plan at appendix A for locations of extinguishers, (marked E1, E2, E3 and E4).

1. Front foyer. - 1 x 6lt Foam Extinguisher.

2. Main Hall. – 1 x 6lt Foam Extinguisher.

3. Committee Room. - 1 x 6lt Foam Extinguisher.

4. Kitchen. – 1 x 2kg Powder Extinguisher (Blue) located adjacent to the rear door.

4a. Kitchen. 1 fire blanket.

Foam extinguishers are suitable for small fires involving combustible material, e.g. paper, cloth and wood; also liquid fires (other than free-flowing liquid fires).

**THEY ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, DEEP FAT FRYERS OR CHIP PANS.**

Powder extinguisher (Blue) is suitable for fires involving all 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 and illuminated in accordance with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. 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 room and kitchen.
5. Internal Fire doors.

## **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 13A socket outlets are protected by residual current devices (Trip rating 30mA). These form part of the maintenance of the electrical installation.

Portable electrical appliances must be tested and inspected at intervals suitable for the type of equipment and its frequency of use.

**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 obstruction of ventilation equipment.**

This forms part of good working practice within the kitchen area. Regular users of the kitchen are made aware of fire risks and suitable notices are displayed in the kitchen area for hirers of the hall.

### **c. Smoking.**

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

### **d. Oil fired heaters.**

These are regularly inspected as part of a maintenance plan. The oil tank is located at the rear of the premises adjacent to the storeroom (exterior access only). See appendix A.

### **e. Accidental fires.**

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

**The use of candles during events must be kept to a minimum and where it forms part of the event e.g. for decorative purposes on tables, strict control must be maintained to ensure safety during the event and proper disposal before vacating the hall.**

Flammable materials retained at the hall for the convenience of regular users must be kept in the secure storeroom. This room is fitted with fire doors.

f. Arson.

1. Control of behaviour on the premises to prevent mischief, horseplay, etc.
1. Strict control of hall key allocation.
2. All persons having control of any activity at the hall has the responsibility of securing the premises at its conclusion and to ensure that no person is left on the premises. This check 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.

**11. Fire Action.**

1. In the event of fire, either the fire alarm will automatically sound or one of the four call points will have been activated. 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 at the designated assembly point in front of the **Rams Head Inn in South Street.**

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 e.g. a small fire in a waste bin, it may be possible to extinguish it, **BUT WHERE ANY DOUBT EXISTS, EVACUATION MUST REMAIN THE PRIORITY.**

2. **CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE. The nearest telephone is situated in the foyer at the hall.** If access to this telephone is not possible, eg. seat of fire, then alternatives include the telephone at the Rams Head Inn, a mobile phone, or near neighbour. However, it is known that mobile phones have poor reception in the village and dependant on time of day or evening, the telephone at the Rams Head Inn may not be available. **The nearest public telephone is located in the Square at the front of the Royal Oak Public House.**

3. Once the hall has been evacuated, no-one should be permitted to re-enter **unless it has been deemed to be safe to do so.**

4. Access for the Fire Brigade should be maintained, any obstructions at the entrance being removed, e.g. parked cars.

5. 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.

6. Fire appliances located within the hall should only be used to attempt to extinguish a fire if:-
  - a. the fire appears obviously to be easily manageable.
  - b. it is safe to do so without risk to health.

7. In the event of a false activation, the temporary responsible person will have information concerning resetting procedures.

**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 a person nominated by the hirer to oversee the safety of all persons attending the hall during the period of hire. That person must familiarise themselves with the ‘Fire Emergency Plan for the Temporary Responsible Person’. (See Appendix B).**

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

**13. Information and training.**

All Village Hall Committee members and the caretaker 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, i.e. fire extinguishers, and their specific uses.
- b. Fire prevention measures.
- c. The means of operating the Automatic Fire Alarm System.
- d. Fire action procedures including evacuation, calling the Fire Brigade, maintaining access for fire appliances, briefing on arrival and location of assembly point.

**14. Review.**

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

Date of assessment:- 24<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Responsible person:- John Thouless

Dates of Reviews:- .....  
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Contents noted:-

.....Chairperson	.....
.....Secretary	.....
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## **Appendix B.**

### **Emergency Plan – Fire.**

#### **Short term hiring – Responsibilities of Temporary Responsible Person.**

As the Temporary Responsible Person for the event/function, you have **legal duties** with regard to the safety of those persons assisting or attending the event.

**It should be noted that any portable electrical appliance brought into the hall as part of the event or function should be tested and certified (P.A.T. testing).**

#### **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 Automatic Fire Alarm System operates.
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, the means of activating the fire alarm call points and their location.
3. Location of exits and escape routes.
4. Location of assembly point.
5. The location of fire extinguishers.
6. Care for those with special needs.

#### **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 e.g. candles, combustible material is kept clear.
4. The committee room does not become overcrowded, (**maximum of 30 persons**).

**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. (Remember the immersion heater switch in toilet off committee room).
3. All portable appliances, e.g. 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. Particular attention should be paid to fire exits.