

Preston Village Hall Health and Safety Policy

Health and Safety Statement

Preston Village Hall Committee accepts its responsibilities under the 'Health and Safety at Work' Act 1974 and will ensure the risks to the health and safety of hirers, contractors, visitors and others affected by its operations are as low as is reasonably practicable.

Our policy aims to:

- Provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities
- Keep the village hall and its equipment in a safe condition for all users.
- Consult with hirers on matters affecting their health and safety
- Provide and maintain safe equipment
- Ensure safe handling and use of substances
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for hirers.
- Ensure all hirers are competent and to provide adequate training if required
- Prevent accidents
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- Review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals

All hirers have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to work safely and not to endanger others or themselves by committing or condoning unsafe actions - please remember your personal responsibilities and encourage others to do likewise

Legal Requirements

The policy will ensure the Committee operates in accordance with the requirements of:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995(RIDDOR)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2006
- Smoke Free Premises Regulations 2007
- The Coronavirus Act 2020 and all related legislation and guidance

Responsibilities

Preston Village Hall accepts responsibility for the health and safety of its hirers as far as reasonably practicable.

- Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Committee.
- The Committee is responsible for ensuring this policy is put into practice.
- The Committee will keep a record of all safety issues brought to their attention and the action taken.
- The Committee will ensure it has adequate insurance for the activities available for use in the hall, kitchen and garden
- Hirers, users and other visitors have a duty to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their activities and to co-operate with the Committee in keeping the Hall a safe and healthy environment.
- Hirers should ensure that they observe safe working and other practices, and where appropriate, are expected to hold and implement their own health and safety policy.
- Hirers must accept their responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves or others.
- Hirers and visitors will be expected to recognise that there is a duty on them to

comply with the practices set out by the Committee and to exercise self-discipline and accept responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves or others.

- All hirers should:
 - Cooperate with the Committee on health and safety issues
 - Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
 - Take reasonable care of their own health and safety
 - Report all health and safety concerns to the Committee
 - The Committee will ensure that any contractor it uses has an agreed Health and Safety Policy and relevant procedures in place.

Monitoring

- The Committee will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that monitoring and consultation is carried out and that arrangements are made for promoting and coordinating Health and Safety procedures.
- Health and safety will always be included on the Agenda at every Committee Meeting.
- Committee members are expected to report any health and safety incidents and concerns at the meeting.
- Urgent items should be reported to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Risk Assessments

- Risk Assessments will be carried out by the Committee.
- Action required to control risks will be approved by the Committee as necessary.
- The Committee will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented.
- Assessments will be reviewed annually or when the activity changes, whichever is sooner.
- All accidents are to be reported on an accident at work form.
- Accidents should be recorded in the Accident Book kept in the kitchen.
- The Committee is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

Contractors

- The Committee will check with contractors (including self-employed persons) before they start work that:
 - They understand the work that is to be undertaken and that this has been agreed between the Contractor and the Committee.
 - The Contractor is competent to do the work and has adequate public liability cover.
 - Contractors are aware of hazards associated with their work (including hazards specific to the Hall) and are mindful of issues such as lone working and fire safety procedures.
 - Contractors must not work alone on ladders at height.
 - Contractors must have their own Health and Safety Policy.

Safe Equipment

- The Committee will be responsible for identifying all equipment needing maintenance and ensure that effective maintenance is carried out.
- Any problems found with equipment should be reported to the Committee.
- The Committee will check that new equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.
- Assessments will be reviewed every twelve months or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Safe Handling and Use of Substances

- The Committee will be responsible for identifying all substances which need a

COSHH assessment and new substances can be used safely before they are purchased.

- The Committee will be responsible for ensuring that COSHH assessments are undertaken, and that actions are implemented
- Assessments will be reviewed every twelve months or when the activity changes, whichever is soonest

Guidelines on Manual Handling

Some tasks at the Hall will include some lifting and handling. e.g., carrying display boards, boxes of leaflets, or during maintenance tasks. To reduce the risk of injury the following guidelines should be followed:

- All hirers and volunteers are NOT required to lift or handle any object which they perceive would put themselves at risk of injury. Assistance or guidance should be sought.
- Use common sense to minimise risk, e.g., carry the minimum weight possible, minimise the amount of time you spend walking with the load by involving other people in a "human chain"
- Follow the good handling techniques as advised
- If in doubt, don't lift the object and speak to the Committee for guidance.

Accidents and First Aid

- The first aid box is kept in the kitchen area
- All accidents are to be recorded in the Accident Book kept in the kitchen.
- The Committee is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority

Guidelines on Working Alone

- Committee members and volunteers are not required to enter or continue working in any situation where they feel at risk. If a person feels at risk or to have been at risk in a particular situation, they must report it the Committee
- If you are intending to work or visit the Hall alone, inform someone where you are going and what you will be doing.
- Keep the external door locked, and only open it to a caller if you judge that this does not present undue risk to yourself.
- Be aware of your personal safety if you are at the Hall on your own.
- Ensure that you have a means of summoning help.
- Users and hirers of the Hall should have regard to these guidelines and where appropriate, develop their own guidance for Working Alone.

Fire Procedures

- The Committee is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and updated when required.
- Escape routes are regularly checked.
- Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked annually by Chubb Fire Services.
- Fire alarms are the responsibility of the Committee.
- Emergency lighting checks are carried out by the Committee annually
- Users should acquaint themselves with all exits (normal & emergency) and these must be kept clear (internally & externally) at all times so as not to impede emergency evacuation.
- In the event of an outbreak of fire however slight, the building must be evacuated immediately - fire extinguishers are provided in the kitchen. The muster point is on the grass verge opposite the front of the hall.
- The Fire Service should be called on 999.
- Users and hirers of the Hall should have regard to the guidelines and where appropriate develop their own Fire Procedures and Evacuation Plans.

Information and Advice

- North Herts District Council: 01462 474000
- Health and Safety Executive, 2 Rivergate, Bristol, 8S1 6EW. www.hse.gov.uk. Incident Contact Centre: 0345 300 9923,
- Health and safety advice is available from the Health and Safety Officer

Hirers and Volunteers' Induction and Training

- Hirers and volunteers will be made aware of this policy and the responsibilities related to it.
- Hirers and volunteers will be trained in the operation of equipment before they use it.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy adopted: June 2024

Next review: June 2025