



Trudoxhill Village Hall  
Foghampshire Lane  
Somerset  
BA11 5DG

Throughout this document, traditional terms are used but they are not intended to be gender specific. Thus, for example, the use of the title Chairman applies to incumbents and aspirants of either gender. Equally, he and his should be considered to imply she and hers, etc.

## Policy: TVH005 – Fire Risk Assessment.

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## 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 therefore relevant to Trudoxhill Village Hall.
- For the purposes of carrying out the Fire Risk Assessment the 'responsible person' is the Trudoxhill Village Hall Management Committee who from time to time appoint one or more 'competent' persons to undertake a risk assessment. This assessment should be carried out and the results and any recommendations noted and filed in the relevant folder. Appropriate action must be taken by the 'responsible person' to reduce the risks, and a signed and dated record kept of both the assessment and any actions required/taken.
- The Fire Risk Assessment should be 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 - file results in relevant folder in date order.
  - Review

This Fire Risk Assessment follows this structure and will be carried out for each of the principal areas of useable space in the village hall, namely:

- Main Hall
- Kitchen
- Toilets
- Stage
- Storeroom

For each of these areas an assessment will be carried out of sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen, fire detection, fire-fighting and precautionary equipment, escape routes, emergency lighting, signs and notices.

The table (form) to record the findings of this assessment is shown in the table at the end of this document and the key points discussed in the following paragraphs.

### 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., hob, oven, fridge, water heaters and plate warmer(s). Elsewhere, the main sources of ignition are electric sockets, heaters and lighting located throughout all the hall areas.
- The principal sources of fuel are concentrated in the kitchen, together with curtains in the main hall, the stage, cardboard boxes, wood and plastics kept in the storeroom.
- Elsewhere, the main sources of fuel are the upholstered seating, stage curtains and various other curtains at each of the main windows.
- 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 heaters are used.

### 3. People at Risk

People who use the hall and may be at risk if there is a fire include: -

- The Village Hall Management Committee
- The Parish Council
- Local organisations
- Contractors
- Cleaners
- Visitors
- Hirers and visitors who are unfamiliar with the hall layout.
- Children
- 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 main hall. Combustible materials should be kept away from these sources and all equipment should be regularly serviced, maintained and checked to be in a good state of repair.
- Elsewhere, electric sockets and lighting should be well maintained.

The Risk to People

- An evaluation should be carried out of the actual risk to people identified in step 2 in the event a fire started and spread from those areas with the main sources of ignition.
- The main entrance, the main hall, kitchen, toilets and storeroom are all at ground floor level and are open to the various escape routes available.

#### Removal/Reduction of the Hazards

- The identified potential hazards comprise the range of electrical equipment contained in the kitchen and elsewhere 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, but the potential hazards must be reduced as far as possible through regular maintenance, inspection, servicing and replacement.
- Similarly, the heaters are essential for the comfort and well-being of users of the hall. Their potential hazards are minimized through regular servicing.
- Any future high-risk flammables introduced into the hall should be housed in a metal cupboard to avoid accidental ignition.
- Trudoxhill Village Hall operates a No Smoking policy in all areas of the building.
- Elsewhere flammable materials are limited to curtains, tables and seating, and generally are kept away from potential hazards.

#### Removal/Reduction of the Risks to People

- The fire-risk to people has been reduced to as low a level as is 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.
- Fire extinguishers for particular types of fire are situated in the main hall, kitchen and toilet corridor as detailed in the accompanying form. These should be inspected annually, and the Certificate of Inspection is displayed in the corridor. Fire blankets are located in the kitchen.
- There are three main escape routes available at ground floor level and they are readily accessible from various parts of the building. All are independent of each other with emergency escape lighting. The main escape routes are (1) via the road entrance from the hall (2) and (3) via external doors.
- Escape routes must be unencumbered and then to gather at the assembly in the play park.
- Escape routes and exits together with the locations of firefighting equipment are indicated by appropriate signs throughout the building as indicated in the accompanying table. Fire exit signs are fitted with lighting panels above the doors throughout the hall as detailed in the accompanying table.
- 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

- All fire prevention and fire-fighting equipment must be maintained in effective working order through regular checks, periodic servicing and maintenance. Sources of risk must also be checked on a regular basis.
- Monthly checks are made of water heaters, fridges, emergency lighting, fire doors, lights, and water boiler.
- An annual check is made of the fire extinguishers, and a certificate of inspection obtained. The electrical system must also be checked on an annual basis and a safety certificate obtained.

#### Conditions of Hire

- The conditions of hire of the village hall state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed. The conditions of hire are shown on the Village Hall website (Conditions of Hire).
- For theatrical and entertainment events, particular health and safety procedures apply and an appointed person is responsible for fire safety and emergency evacuation.

#### **Record, Plan, Inform, Instruct and Train**

##### Significant Findings and Action Taken

- The main findings of this 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.

##### Emergency Plan

- The village 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 working for all public entertainment.

##### Information and Instruction

- Copies of the Conditions of Hire are provided to hirers who are required to accept and adhere to them.
- Signs indicating the location of fire doors and fire extinguishers are posted at various prominent and visible points throughout the village hall.
- Fire safety advice is given to the hall cleaners and contractors.

#### **Review**

- This fire risk assessment has been carried out for the village hall following the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. 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.

##### Recording of Assessments

- Because Trudoxhill Village Hall is a very small building and the fire risks are minimal, the monthly and annual risk assessments for all safety requirements are performed at the same time and the results recorded on a single form. This form must be signed, dated and the name of the assessor clearly printed. These forms are found in a separate folder.
- Should any part of the assessment be regarded as unsatisfactory, the operative **MUST** bring the potential non-compliance to the immediate attention of the Chairman or his Deputy. The Chairman, or Deputy, must, in conjunction with the assessor, judge the level of risk from severe (may cause immediate or serious harm) to trivial. Where the hazard is regarded as high risk, all activities **MUST** stop until remedial measures are taken. If the hazard is regarded as medium risk, restricting activities should be considered and corrective action taken as soon as reasonably practical. For low-risk problems, normal activities can be resumed, and the situation monitored until remedial action can be taken.

- All remedial actions must be recorded, signed and dated as per section 6(b). The non-compliance **MUST** be discussed at the next full committee meeting, or an emergency meeting held forthwith depending on the degree of severity.