

# **WALKHAMPTON MEMORIAL HALL – 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 and village halls and is relevant, therefore, to Walkhampton Memorial Hall.

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 usable space in Walkhampton Memorial Hall:

1. Main entrance and foyer
2. Men's and Ladies' toilets
3. Main Hall
- 4.. Kitchen
5. The store rooms

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

## **1. 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, microwave, fridge, water heater.

Other sources of potential ignition are electric sockets, electric lighting and heating throughout the hall areas and portable appliances.

Principal sources of fuel are wooden floor, wooden partitions between kitchen and store areas, wooden doors, skirtings and door frames, plastic tables and chairs, and curtains.

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

## **2. PEOPLE AT RISK**

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

- Hirers of the Memorial Hall
- Contractors
- Cleaners
- Memorial Hall users
- Children (when used as a party venue)
- The elderly
- People with disabilities

## **3. EVALUATE, REMOVE, REDUCE AND PROTECT FROM RISK**

### **3.1 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 high-level wall-mounted heaters in the main 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.

### **3.2 The risk to people**

An evaluation has been carried out of the actual risk to people identified in Step 2 in the event that a fire did start and spread from those areas with the main sources of ignition i.e. kitchen or hall. All areas are at ground floor level (this is a single storey building) and are open to the five escape routes available, namely the dedicated fire exit at the far end of the hall, the main entrance, the double doors for disabled users, the back door from the kitchen, and the back door behind the servery.

### **3.3 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 hall. Removal would not be in the best interests of the hall or its users and the potential hazards are reduced as far as possible through regular maintenance, inspection and servicing. The hazards posed by the electric heaters are minimised through their location high on the walls and servicing as required.

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

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

### **3.4 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 (replaced December 2016) to assist people in the event of fire and to allow them to escape safely.

Two fire extinguishers are located in the main hall and one fire extinguisher is located in the kitchen, all with instructions, and these are regularly inspected. A fire blanket is also located in the kitchen.

There are four emergency lights: one outside by the main entrance, one in the main hall, one in the kitchen and one in the servery.

There are five external doors, all readily accessible from all parts of the hall. All are independent of each other. The escape routes are (1) the dedicated fire exit at the far end of the hall, (2) the main entrance, (3) the disabled entrance doors in the main hall, (4) the back door from the kitchen, (5) the back door behind the servery.

All external doors lead to the outside and provide open space for safe and easy evacuation of the hall. The first three exits listed above all have appropriate signage above. The fire extinguishers have operating instructions clearly displayed.

### **3.5 Installation, testing and maintenance**

All fire prevention and fire fighting equipment is maintained in effective working order through periodic servicing and maintenance. An annual check is made of the fire extinguishers, and a certificate of inspection obtained. The sources of risk are also checked on a regular basis. Regular checks are made of the water heater, cooker, fridge, kettles, heaters, and microwave. The electrical system is also checked on regular basis.

## **4. RECORD, PLAN, INFORM, INSTRUCT AND TRAIN**

### **4.1 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.

### **4.2 Conditions of Hire**

The conditions of hire of the Memorial Hall state that fire and other exits must not be obstructed and that hirers must familiarise themselves with the positions of the exit doors and the fire fighting equipment. Conditions of hire and this fire risk assessment are shown on the Hall website.

## **5. REVIEW**

This fire risk assessment has been carried out for Walkhampton Memorial Hall after reading the 139 pages of HM Governments' 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