

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Woodbastwick Village Hall

The Woodbastwick Village Hall is a registered charity with trustees responsible for its management.

The Woodbastwick Village Hall Management Committee (WVHMC) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the hall. The WVHMC comprises elected members and members who represent some of the regular hirers of the hall. The WVHMC is responsible for the implementation of this Health and Safety Policy. The hall's premises comprise of a car park, an entrance lobby, the main hall, snooker room, small kitchen, toilets, storage room, Outside there is a grassed area and storage shed.

1. Policy Aims

The aims of the Hall Committee regarding Health and Safety Policy are to:

- Provide healthy, accessible and safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our employee(s), volunteers, committee members, visitors and hirers.
- Keep Woodbastwick Village Hall premises and equipment in a safe condition for all hirers and users.
- Provide such training and information as is necessary to staff, volunteers hirers and users.

The WVHMC considers the promotion of the health and safety of employees at work and those who use the premises, including contractors who may work there, to be a priority. Prevention of accidents depends on a committed attitude of mind to safety as well as the operation and maintenance of equipment and safe systems of work. The WVHMC will encourage volunteers, employees, contractors, visitors and users to engage in the establishment and observance of safe working practices.

The WVHMC will review this policy annually, and also as required by any change of circumstances. Individuals with responsibility for aspects of health and safety will report to the WVHMC regularly, including any accidents, faults, misuse or other matters that could affect health and safety of users, volunteers or employees. These reports and subsequent actions will be recorded in the minutes of WVHMC meetings.

2. Responsibility for Health and Safety

2.1

The WVHMC has overall responsibility for health and safety in the Woodbastwick Village Hall and for the implementation of this policy. It is the intention of the WVHMC to comply with all Health and Safety legislation and to act positively where it can reasonably do so to prevent injury, ill health or any danger arising from activities and operations in the Woodbastwick Village Hall.

2.2

All users of the hall are expected to read this Policy Statement as a condition of their hire and to recognise that it is their duty to comply with all the procedures and safety requirements, including safety notices at the premises. They will be required to sign the hiring form as evidence that they agree to the hiring conditions.

2.3

It is the duty of all volunteers, employees, contractors, hirers and visitors to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their activities, to do everything they reasonably can to prevent injury to themselves and others, and to co-operate with the WVHMC in keeping the premises safe and healthy, including the grounds and car park. Hirers and contractors must comply with the provisions in sections 4 and 5 respectively.

2.4

Should anyone using the hall come across any faults, damage or other situations which might cause injury and cannot be rectified immediately, they should inform a WVHMC member as soon as possible so that the problem can be dealt with. Where equipment is damaged a notice should be placed on it warning that it is not to be used, and it should be reported immediately.

2.5

The WVHMC or its nominees including outside contractors conduct routine checks and inspections of safety procedures and equipment. These include:

- a general risk assessment
- a fire risk assessment
- an access audit
- fire extinguishers and fire blanket
- lighting and emergency lighting
- portable electrical appliances (PAT)
- fixed electrical system
- first aid boxes
- emergency evacuation procedures

The results of these are recorded in WVHMC minutes. Anything found to be unsatisfactory or requiring attention will be corrected or mitigated by the WVHMC as soon as practicable.

3. Fire and Emergency Evacuation

All users should familiarise themselves with:

- the fire prevention notice on the hall notice board
- the fire exit signs
- the types and location of fire-fighting equipment, i.e. fire blanket (in the kitchen) and extinguishers (in the hall and kitchen)

If you discover a fire

- Shout 'FIRE!' and its location
- Only if it is safe to do so, fight the fire with the fire blanket or an appropriate extinguisher
- Call the Fire Brigade on 999
- Exit the building

If you hear the fire alarm

- Leave the building immediately by the nearest exit and move away from the exits.
- Do NOT stop to collect personal belongings.
- Only if you are sure you have time to do so, close the windows.
- Only if you are sure you have time to do so, close all doors behind you.

- Go to the assembly point – the far side of the car park.
- Ensure the entrance to the car park is kept clear for emergency vehicles.
- Do NOT re-enter the building until permitted to do so by the senior fire officer.

4. Hirers

Hirers will be given or have access to this Policy Statement and the hiring agreement will require them to confirm that they have read and understood the Statement.

Hirers are responsible for:

- complying with all conditions of hire, as set out in the Hiring Agreement, and for ensuring that their organisation/party conducts its activities in line with such conditions, particularly in respect of compliance with all safety requirements and safety notices especially that for emergency evacuation. Hirers may have responsibilities above and beyond these with regard to insurance and statutory requirements relating to their particular organisation or activity;
- ensuring familiarity with fire safety checks (e.g. keeping fire exits clear) and evacuation procedures;
- designating a responsible person at each hiring/event who will take charge of evacuation in case of emergency;
- ensuring that highly flammable substances are not brought into or used in any part of the premises;
- seeking the consent of the WVHMC before erecting any internal decorations that may contain combustible materials and ensuring that any allowed decorations are not placed near light fittings or heaters;
- checking that, if any portable electrical equipment is brought onto the premises, it is safe for use and has been PAT tested within the last two years;
- ensuring that no unauthorised heating apparatus is brought to the hall. In particular, the use of portable liquefied gas appliances (LPG) is expressly forbidden;
- having a mobile phone for use in emergencies.

5. Contractors

The Committee will check with contractors (including self-employed persons) before they start work that:

- The contract is clear and understood by both the contractor and the WVHMC.
- The contractor is competent to carry out the work, e.g. have appropriate qualifications, experience, references.
- The contractor has adequate public liability insurance cover and the committee has seen the relevant certificate.
- The contractor has seen the hall's Health and Safety Policy Statement and is aware of any hazards which might arise (e.g. electricity cables or gas pipes)
- The contractor does not work alone on ladders at height (if necessary a second person should be present)
- The contractor has their own health and safety policy for their staff.
- The contractor knows which member of the WVHMC is responsible for overseeing that their work is as agreed and to a satisfactory standard.
- The contractor must comply with current regulations relating to electrical installations, electrical equipment and gas installations.
- The contractor has advised the WVHMC of any flammable or toxic substances that may be used on the premises.
- The contractor will have regard to the safety of hall users when working on the premises and/or in respect of anything left/stored on the premises.
- The contractor has a mobile phone for use in emergencies.

6. Safety Information

Fire Procedure notices are displayed around the hall and a Fire Prevention notice is displayed on the hall notice board.

In addition, each group that regularly uses the hall is advised to have its own evacuation and fire drill procedure.

The service record for the fire safety equipment is available from the WVHMC upon request.

7. Safety Practices

The hall interior is a NO SMOKING area.

The following are best practices and should be adhered to in order to minimise risks:

- Do make sure that all emergency exit doors are clear and operate correctly as soon as the hall is to be used and throughout the hiring period.
- Do not operate or touch any electrical equipment where there are signs of damage, exposure of components or water penetration etc.
- Do not work on steps, ladders or at height until they are properly secured and another person is present.
- Do not attempt to lift, take down from above head height or move anything that you know is probably beyond your capability; if necessary ask for help.
- Do not leave portable electrical or gas appliances operating while unattended.
- Do not bring onto the premises any portable electrical appliances which have not been Portable Appliance Tested (PAT) in the last two years.
- Do not attempt to move heavy or bulky items (e.g. stacked tables or chairs); use the equipment provided.
- Do not stack more than five chairs high.
Ensure that freestanding equipment will not topple over.
- Do not allow children in the kitchen except under close supervision (e.g. for supervised cookery lessons) or, in the case of older children, for supervised serving of food at functions. Avoid over-crowding in the kitchen and do not allow running.
- Follow the hygiene guidelines
- Ensure there is adequate lighting for the activity being undertaken.
- Ensure there is nothing which may be a fall or trip hazard.
- Do not put anything on the heaters or their guards.
- Mop up liquid spills immediately.
- Store hazardous substances (e.g. bleach), identified by a warning label comprising an orange square containing a black symbol, out of reach of children.
- Wear suitable protective clothing when handling cleaning or hazardous substances.
- Report, as soon as practicable, any evidence of damage or faults to equipment or the building's facilities to a member of the WVHMC.
- Report every accident in the accident book (in the kitchen) and, as soon as practicable, to the Hall Administrator

8. Hygiene Guidelines

In the interests of good hygiene, the following guidelines should be observed:

- hands must be thoroughly washed before and after food preparation
- all surfaces at which food is prepared, served and eaten should be thoroughly cleaned with an appropriate cleaner
- food brought to the hall for consumption or sale should be prepared using the highest standards of hygiene

- thoroughly wash all crockery etc. after use
- follow the instructions for the dishwasher displayed in the kitchen and drain down after use
- follow the detailed instructions for the preparation and serving of food in the kitchen and observe all relevant food health and hygiene legislation and regulations, in particular, dairy products, vegetables and meat on the premises must be refrigerated and stored in compliance with the Food Temperature Regulations.

9. On Leaving The Premises

The person in charge should:

- search for smouldering fires or burning cigarettes and dispose of all flammable material including waste paper
- check that heaters and cookers are turned off
- check that all electrical appliances are switched off and unplugged (the cooker in servery to stay on – it will not work if clock switched off)
- turn off all lights not required for security purposes; check the toilet lights are switched off
- check all taps in the kitchen and toilets are turned off
- close all internal doors
- check that all windows are securely closed and all external doors are closed and locked.

10. Accidents

First Aid box is located in the kitchen.

All accidents must be recorded in the accident book, located in the kitchen and reported to the Hall Administrator.

Woodbastwick Village Hall Committee March 2025