

Cotes Heath and Standon Village Hall

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

A safety guide for users of the hall

Assessment by the Committee, Jan 2024

Description of the Premises

Cotes Heath and Standon Village Hall is a single storey, brick-built building situated on Station Road in the centre of Cotes Heath, near the road junction with the A519 Newcastle Road.

The building comprises an entrance lobby which provides access to both the main hall (with the raised stage) and the small hall, a separate kitchen, bar area, separate men's, women's, and disabled toilets and three storage rooms (containing cleaning equipment, furniture and boiler). At the front of the building is the bin store, and to the back of the hall is a small enclosed children's play area and a larger grassed lawn, which provides access to the oil storage tank. Cooking appliances are all electric and the water-heating system uses an oil-fuelled system.

There are a number of internal doors separating different areas. Exit doors open outwards and there is a wheelchair ramp providing access to the main front door.

The hall complex is subdivided into the following main areas:

- (1) the small hall 10m x 7m (holding approximately 30 people sitting at tables)
- (2) the main hall 14m x 20m (holding 100 people seated around tables or 200 people in lecture-style seating or 300 people standing).
- (3) the kitchen - accessed from the main hall
- (4) the bar area – accessed from the kitchen or the small hall.
- (5) the toilets (men's, women's and disabled with baby change facility) – access from the main hall

All parts are available to hire for both private and public events. The total capacity of all the space in the Village Hall is not to exceed 300 people.

The car park to the front and East side of the building has space for approximately 25 cars (including two disabled spaces).

There are three emergency exits leading directly out of the building – one from the back of the main hall, one from the back of the small hall and one from the front lobby. They are clearly lit with emergency lighting. The **grassed area behind the hall** is the designated **assembly area**.

All internal areas of the village hall, including the children's play area, have been designated as **non-smoking**.

No smoke machines, pyrotechnics¹, portable cooking appliances, portable heating appliances flammable substances or naked flames² are permitted inside the building. Smoke detectors in various places trigger an alarm in the event of fire. All portable electric appliances – including phone chargers – must be checked by the user of the hall to ensure there are no exposed wires, or signs of damage to cables, before being plugged in to any sockets within the village hall.

Fire extinguishers are situated in the kitchen, bar, both halls, lobby and boiler room. They are routinely inspected. The certificate is held at the registered address. Last inspection Feb 2023.

¹ Including fireworks and sparklers

² With the exception of small candles on celebration party cakes

Principal Uses of the Village Hall

The hall is hired by a range of organisations, and private individuals for a wide variety of activities, some of which are licensable. A written agreement between the Village Hall and the Hirer forms the basis of the hiring arrangement. The Booking Form and Rules of Hire draw the hirer's attention to the health and safety and licensing obligations that the Booking places upon them.

The Hall holds a license for the sale of alcohol. Private Hirers, are responsible for meeting the obligations of the license, and must seek permission from the Management Committee to serve or sell alcohol.

The Village Hall Management Committee encourages all regular users of the Hall to carry out their own Fire Risk Assessment, highlighting the areas that pertain to their own group of users and their activities.

The Management Committee encourages hirers to make themselves aware of the exit routes, the firefighting equipment and the plan of the Hall detailing the location of the equipment and the escape routes. The plan is available to all Hall users, is published on the web site and is also on the notice board in the lobby.

The hirer is deemed the "responsible person" and is designated as the person in charge of the hall during the hire period. It is advisable to take a note of the name of everyone attending your event. They should also identify the assembly point.

A committee member will only be present at an event by prior agreement. It is the responsibility of hirers to ensure the hall is securely locked after use, as the building should never be left open and unoccupied.

People at Risk

Those at risk in the event of fire are:

Staff: The Village Hall does not directly employ any staff.

Trades People: The committee engages with local trades people on both an ad-hoc and scheduled basis for the purposes of cleaning, safety checks and building maintenance. Local trades people who are familiar with the building may gain access to the hall by borrowing a key from the Booking Secretary, while others are always escorted by one or more committee members.

Hall Users (members of the public - up to 300 inside at any time): These will generally be familiar with the hall. Those that aren't will find the simple layout easy to navigate and assimilate. The main hall area is open plan and has easily identifiable fire exits. Emergency lighting is installed over fire escapes and around the hall, and this is tested regularly. There is a set of double-doors in the main hall that exit directly outside and are fitted with a push-bar release.

Disabled Persons: At a typical function there may be a limited number of disabled persons. It is the responsibility of hall hirers to ensure disabled persons are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation. All emergency exit doors are on a level with the areas or ramps outside, which are either tarred or paved, so there are no barriers to wheel chairs.

Children: It is the responsibility of hirers to ensure all children within the Hall are supervised and that they are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation.

Other Members of the Public (who are not using the hall): Members of the public may walk past the hall on their way to the playing field or shelter.

Possible Causes of Fire

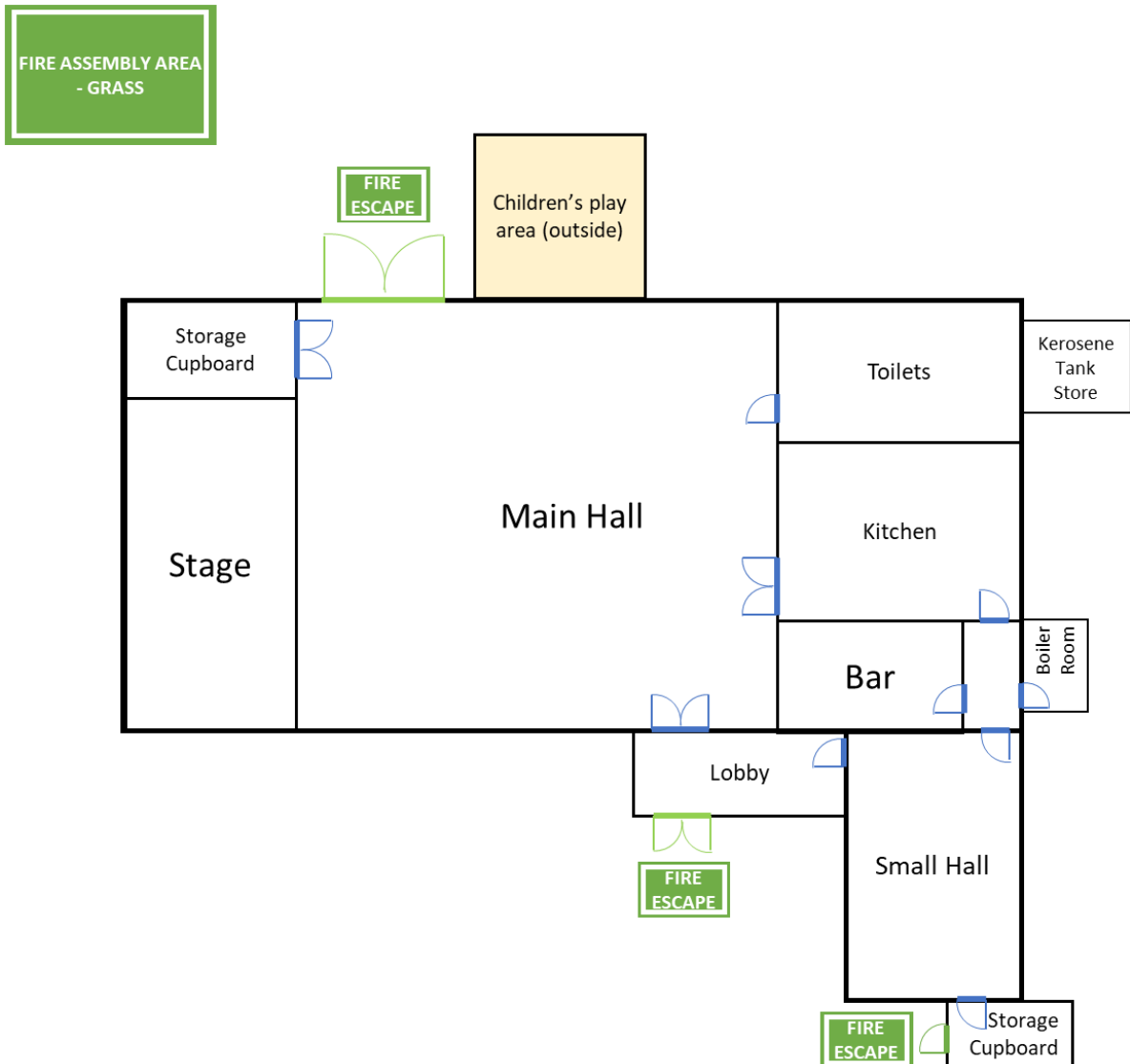
Source of Ignition	Source of Fuel	Source of Oxygen
Fault with mains electrical system – including lighting circuits and ring main supply	Any material close to the source of the fault (e.g. the cupboard in which the consumer unit is located, skirting boards, plaster board, wood panelling).	Open to the air
Boiler fault	Combustible materials close to the boiler	Open to the air
Portable appliance electrical fault	The portable device itself and then any combustible materials close to it	Open to the air
Kitchen appliance fault	The appliance itself, nearby food products, kitchen cupboards, tea towels, cleaning products	Open to the air
Cooking accidents	Cooking oil or food, kitchen cupboards, tea towels, cleaning products	Open to the air
Deliberate ignition (arson)	Building materials, soft furnishings, waste, any other source of fuel nearby	Open to the air
Accidental ignition – e.g. from naked flames	Building materials, soft furnishings, waste, any other source of fuel nearby	Open to the air
Power tools from trades people and associated activities (e.g. grinding / welding)	Fabric of the building, building materials, soft furnishings	Open to the air

Plan of the Village Hall Premises

Fire Assembly Point: The front car park

External fire escapes are identified in **green**.

Internal access doors are shown in **blue**.






Assessment Type <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>		Organisation: Cotes Heath and Standon Village Hall	Date of Assessment: 27 Feb 24	Risk Assessment Ref:
Specific	Generic		Risk Assessment Title: Village Hall Fire Risk Assessment	

The competent person will undertake this risk assessment to ensure that all the significant risks are adequately controlled before commencement of work

If, with all measures in place, the work is still considered unsafe, the competent person should seek advice.

Level of Likelihood	Severity of Hazard
1. Very unlikely	1. Minor injury (self-treat), no lost time or damage to surroundings
2. Unlikely	2. Minor injury (first aid required), non-reportable, and minor damage
3. Likely	3. Reportable injury, over 3 days sick, temporary disruption to operations
4. Very Likely	4. Major injury, amputation, damage to buildings or equipment
5. Certain	5. Fatality, major damage to buildings or equipment

Risk Rating		
Low Risk:		Acceptable, proceed as planned
Medium Risk:		Proceed with caution and line manager approval
High Risk:		Stop work, do not proceed

Formula: Likelihood x Severity = Risk Rating

X	Severity (S)					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Likelihood (L)	1	1	2	3	4	5
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	5	5	10	15	20	25

Who is at Risk: C = Contractor / V = Visitor/Hall user / P = Member of Public

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Hazards	Who is at risk?			Risks	Initial risk			Control measures	Risk rating			Remarks / Comments
	E	V	P		L	S	R		L	S	R	
Fire inside the building (see causes of fire above) – risk of injury during evacuation / incomplete evacuation	Y	Y	Y	Slips, trips and falls Crush injuries Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death.	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire risk assessment provided to all hirers of the hall upon booking • Evacuation routes and assembly point signage to be clearly displayed at each fire exit and on the noticeboard in the lobby • Fire escape lighting to be clearly visible – tested and checked every year • Fire escapes must be kept clear at all times – no storage of furniture inside or out 	1	5	5	
Boiler fault	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death.	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boiler to be inspected and serviced every year by qualified tradesperson • Boiler cupboard not to be used for storage of any other material or equipment – reducing the likelihood of any other sources of ignition or fuel being present • Boiler cupboard to be kept locked and secured – only authorised members of the VHMC to have access • Correct fire fighting equipment for oil fired heater to be located adjacent to the boiler cupboard – certificates to be stored on site 	1	5	5	
Portable appliance electrical fault	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death	3	5	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No portable appliance to be left plugged in and unattended when the hall is not in use • All sockets will be tested every 3 years as part of the building fixed wire testing inspection. Certificate to be displayed on the noticeboard in the lobby 	1	5	5	
Kitchen appliance fault	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns.	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All kitchen appliances installed by a qualified trades person • All electrical circuits will be tested every 3 years as part of the building fixed wire 	1	5	5	

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				Death				testing inspection. Certificate to be displayed on the noticeboard in the lobby			
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct fire fighting equipment for kitchen fires to be readily available in the kitchen area – certificates to be stored in the kitchen use folder Manuals for the correct use of kitchen appliances to be stored in the kitchen use folder No kitchen appliances to be left on or unattended when the hall is not in use 			
Cooking accidents	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct fire fighting equipment for kitchen fires to be readily available in the kitchen area – certificates to be stored in the kitchen use folder. Includes a fire blanket for cooking fires. Only cooking equipment provided by the village hall to be used for cooking. No additional appliances can be brought in by users – to be made clear in the terms and conditions of hire Manuals for the correct use of kitchen appliances to be stored in the kitchen use folder Smoke alarms installed in the kitchen Rubbish bins to be emptied after each event – no debris left lying around to fuel a fire. 	1	5	5
Deliberate ignition (arson)	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death	1	5	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Hall hirers are aware of their responsibility for the Hall during their occupation and take reasonable steps to prevent wilful damage Building to be kept locked up at all times when not in use Security alarm system installed All external waste bins are not to be stored against the external wall of the 	1	5	5

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								building – to be included on building checklist for hirers and checked during weekly maintenance visits			
Accidental ignition – e.g. from naked flames	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village hall is a no smoking premises – to be made clear in the terms and conditions of booking and through signage Smoke alarms installed in the throughout the building Fire fighting equipment available throughout the building - certificates to be stored on site No smoke machines, pyrotechnics (including fireworks and sparklers), portable cooking appliances, portable heating appliances flammable substances or naked flames (with the exception of small candles on celebration cakes) are permitted inside the building All external waste bins are not to be stored against the external wall of the building – to be included on building checklist for hirers and checked during weekly maintenance visits 	1	5	5
Power tools from trades people and associated activities (e.g. grinding / welding)	Y	Y	Y	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only qualified tradespeople will be contracted to carry out any maintenance or building works. Liability insurance to be checked when work is contracted Smoke alarms installed in the throughout the building Fire fighting equipment available throughout the building - certificates to be stored on site 	1	5	5

Risk Assessment completed by:		Risk Assessment approved by:		Overall Risk Rating (highest risk)
Name	Emily George	Name		5 – Low Risk
Role:	Village Hall Management Committee Member	Role:		
Signature:		Signature:		
Manager Assessment Review				
Review Date:				Review frequency
Name / Signature:				Annually