

The Williams Hall – Stoke St Gregory

This document was originally issued as the Fire Risk Assessment and Policy in July 2007. It has been revised and augmented by the inclusion of Health and Safety Risk Assessment elements. This new document was formally approved by the Trustees on.

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Trustee Policy on Preventing and Managing Fire and Minimising Health and Safety Risk

This policy applies to **The Williams Hall, Stoke St Gregory**.

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Revised and re-issued: 16 Jan 2017

POLICY

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that so far as is reasonably practicable there are suitable arrangements in place for preventing the outbreak of fires, for the safe evacuation of people in the event of fires within its buildings and premises, and to ensure that Health and Safety risks are minimised.

AIMS

The aims of the trustees is to ensure that:

those trustees / persons with specific responsibilities for fire safety receive suitable information, instruction and training to fulfil their roles

suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments are undertaken and that regular fire safety inspections take place and recorded;

other persons using the premises are aware of the fire risk assessment and inspection processes and are informed of the fire arrangements;

up-to-date written emergency plans exist, and that all relevant persons are informed of the contents of the plans at induction;

where appropriate, regular fire drills are held and that records of drills are kept.

fire detecting and fire-fighting equipment is maintained and tested at suitable intervals and that records are kept;

the suitability of fire routes, fire detection and fire fighting equipment is considered following any reorganisations;

the hiring out of premises or parts of premises includes information about number of people that can attend, the fire warning arrangements and escape routes; and

that contractors or others entering the premises manage the fire risks that might arise from the work that they undertake and are informed of the fire evacuation arrangements for the building or premises.

REVISION AND AUDIT

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustee's, and when there is any significant change in legislation or best practice.

The original assessment was done on 1 November 2006 by Liz Hembrow (Trustee) and Alex Morrice (Trustee). It is based on HMSO Publication 05 FRSD 03338(b) (May 2006) (Guide to Fire Safety Risk Assessment for Small and Medium Places of Assembly), and follows the format of Part 1 thereof. It has been revised to include Health and Safety considerations.

FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT
WILLIAMS HALL STOKE ST GREGORY

The Assessment is made up of five Steps. It is a structured analysis of the premises to:

- Identify the fire hazards
- Reduce the risk of those hazards
- Decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are needed to ensure the safety of people if a fire does start

The guide defines the key terms as follows:

- **Hazard** – anything that has the potential to cause harm
- **Risk** – the chance of that harm occurring.

STEP 1 – IDENTIFY FIRE HAZARDS

1.1 SOURCES OF IGNITION

The hall has no gas supply nor oil fired appliances. Space heating is by wall-mounted electrical heaters. All electrical wiring and fittings have been installed by professionals, tested and certificated. There is strict “No Smoking” policy. All hall electrical equipment has been tested, and the hiring agreement requires that all electrical equipment brought into the hall meets safety standards and has correctly fitted plugs. The use of candles is allowed only by express permission and then only in solid containers. Users are required to remove all rubbish after events so accumulation of rubbish near heat sources is a low risk.

1.2 SOURCES OF FUEL

The building is relatively new, constructed in 2006. Construction, doors, hatches and windows conform to fire standards. All curtains and soft furnishings are clear of heat sources. Under-stage storage is on wheeled pallets. No alcohol, paint or solvents will be stored in the hall when not in use. Cleaning materials are stored in a locked cupboard.

In the mezzanine storage (installed in 2013) drama costumes and scouts equipment are stored. These storage facilities are remote from any ignition risk. Storage of gas for camping stoves is prohibited in the entire hall.

1.3 SOURCES OF OXYGEN

No bottled oxygen is used or stored in the Hall. There is no mechanical ventilation system. The only Oxygen source is the natural airflow in building.

Step1 Checklist

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Have you identified all potential ignition sources? | Yes |
| • Have you identified all potential fuel sources? | Yes |
| • Have you identified all potential sources of oxygen? | Yes |
| • Have you made a note of your findings? | Yes |

STEP 2 – IDENTIFY PEOPLE AT RISK

2.1 Those at risk comprise the cleaner, caretaker (when appointed), regular users of the Hall and “occasional hirers”. The building comprises four interconnected areas, all at ground level, each with immediate access to the outside. There is also a mezzanine storage area accessible from the main hall. This area does not have a secondary exit but as this is a storage area accessed on an infrequent basis for short periods of time the risk is considered minimal. Access to exits are not issues for any user. Under the terms of the hiring agreement children using the hall will always be accompanied by a responsible adult. With the exception of a disabled person in the hall entirely on his/her own (an extremely unlikely situation) all users will be at low risk.

Step 2 Checklist

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Have you identified who is at risk | Yes |
| • Have you identified why they are at risk | Yes |
| • Have you made a note of your findings | Yes |

STEP 3 – EVALUATE, REMOVE AND PROTECT FROM RISK

3.1 Risk of Fire Occurring

Consideration of Section 1.1 leads to the conclusion that the three main potential hazards are: electrical fire caused by faulty equipment or wiring, cooking accidents and arson. The most common type of arson attack is to set fire to the refuse bins close to the hall structure.

3.2 Risk to People

The hall is a small single storey structure with four main compartments: kitchen, foyer, main hall and meeting room. Each of these has direct access to the outside by automatic release emergency doors (two double doors in the case of the main hall and the foyer) and each has immediate direct access to adjacent compartments. As the kitchen is not an “intensive catering facility” Part 2 Section 1.11 confirms that no compartment of the hall is a high fire risk area. Even so the serving hatches to the foyer and main hall have been constructed to 30 minute standards.

As constructed there is a risk of individuals becoming inadvertently becoming locked inside the mezzanine storage area with no access to unlock the doors from the inside. This will be corrected by installation of a more appropriate lock that can be activated from the inside.

The risks as defined in Section 3.2 of the Guide are assessed as minimal.

3.3 Remove or Reduce the Hazards

Sources of ignition will be reduced/controlled by:

- Control of the use of candles
- The strict no smoking policy in the hall - but provision has been made to provide users smoking outside the building with a means of safely disposing of smoking materials
- Routine checking of electrical equipment
- Routine inspection of wall sockets for signs of overheating/charring

- Fix dustbin to the fence behind the hall by a lockable chain.

Sources of fuel will be reduced by:

- Ensuring that all soft furnishings conform to accepted standards and are stored/positioned clear of heat sources
- Never storing flammable materials (paints/solvents) permanently in the hall
- Ensuring that all foam based equipment are of combustion modified foam
- Storing scenery not in use on an open stage in an approved stowage.

Oxygen sources will be reduced by:

- Closing doors and windows when not required and always when the Hall is unoccupied.

3.4 Remove or Reduce the Risk to People

3.4.1 Fire Detection and Warning Systems

The Guide states that “*in many premises a fire may be obvious to everyone as soon as it starts (e.g. in a simple open plan village hall). In these cases, where the number and position of exits and the travel distance to them is adequate, a simple shout of 'fire' or a simple manually operated device, such as a gong, whistle or air horn that can be heard by everybody when operated from any single point within the building, may be all that is needed*”.

Our system with smoke detectors, call points, control panel and zones would meet the requirement for a much bigger multi-storey, multi-occupancy building, and is plainly well above the standard required for our hall.

3.4.1 Checklist	
Can the existing means of detection ensure a fire is discovered quickly enough for the alarm to be raised in time for all the occupants to escape to a place of total safety?	Yes
Are the detectors of the right type and in the appropriate locations	Yes
Can the means of warning be clearly heard and understood by everyone throughout the whole building when initiated from a single point? Are there provisions in locations where the alarm cannot be heard?	Yes
If the fire detection and warning system is electrically powered, does it have a back-up power supply?	No

3.4.2 Firefighting Equipment and Facilities

This section concerns mainly road access by fire engines, and fixed systems such as dry rising mains, sprinkler, gas and foam flooding systems. Following previous experience the postcode has been modified to more accurately reflect the Hall’s position adjacent to Church Close rather than the top of Dark Lane. For our hall the questions principally centre on the provision and maintenance of the fire extinguishers and fire blanket provided, and the prevention of vandalism.

3.4.2 Checklist (as appropriate to our Hall)

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Are the extinguishers suitable for the purpose? | Yes |
| • Are there enough extinguishers sited throughout the premises at appropriate locations? | Yes |
| • Are the right types of extinguishers located close to the fire hazards? | Yes |
| • Can users get to them without exposing themselves to risk? | Yes |
| • Are the extinguishers visible? | Yes |
| • Have you taken steps to prevent the misuse of extinguishers? | Yes |
| • Are those who test and maintain the equipment competent to do so? | Yes |

We considered the question “Have you taken steps to prevent the misuse of extinguishers?” to be futile. The extinguishers must be easily accessible and therefore physical protection is out of the question. All we can do is to emphasize the responsibilities of users in the hiring agreement.

3.4.3 Escape Routes

The hall has four main compartments: kitchen, foyer, main hall and meeting room. All have direct access to the outside by automatic release emergency doors (two double doors in the case of the main hall and the foyer) and each has access to adjacent compartments internally. The recommended escape route lengths (Section 4.1 of the Guide - Table 2) are 32 metres for seating in rows and 45 metres for other uses. The whole building has overall dimensions 24m x 16m – the escape routes are therefore satisfactory.

See also section 3.2

3.4.3 Checklist

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Are any holes or gaps in walls, ceilings and floors properly sealed, e.g. where services such as ventilation ducts and electrical cables pass through them? | Yes |
| • Can all the occupants escape to a place of total safety in a reasonable time? | Yes |
| • Are the existing escape routes adequate for the numbers and type of people that may need to use them | Yes |
| • Are the exits in the right place and do the escape routes lead as directly as possible to a place of total safety? | Yes |
| • If there is a fire, will at least one route from any part of the premises remain available? | Yes |
| • Are the escape routes and final exits kept clear at all times? | Yes |
| • Do the doors on escape routes open in the direction of escape? | Yes |
| • Can all final exit doors be opened easily and immediately if there is an emergency? | Yes |
| • Will everybody be able to safely use the escape routes from your premises? | Yes |
| • Are the people who work in the building aware of the importance of maintaining the safety of the escape routes, e.g. by ensuring that fire doors are not wedged open and that combustible materials are not stored within escape routes? | Yes |

3.4.4 Emergency Lighting

The Guide advises that *in complex premises it is likely that a more comprehensive system of electrical automatic emergency escape lighting will be needed*. The system fitted in our hall is probably more sophisticated than is strictly required.

3.4.4 Checklist

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Are your premises used during periods of darkness? | Yes |
| • Will there always be sufficient lighting to safely use escape routes? | Yes |
| • Do you have back-up power supplies for your emergency lighting? | Yes |

3.4.5 Signs and Notices

Our fire exits are clearly marked by pictogram and the fire notices that conform to Figure 11 of the Guide

3.4.5 Checklist

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Where necessary, are escape routes and exits and the locations of firefighting equipment and indicated by appropriate signs? | Yes |
| • Have you provided notices such as those giving information on how to operate security devices on exit doors, and fire action notices for staff and other people? | Yes |
| • Are you maintaining all the necessary signs and notices so that they continue to be correct, legible and understood? | Yes |

3.4.6 Installation, Testing and Maintenance

This is largely self evident, but the Guide makes recommendations for scheduled checks. These are analysed, and a checking regime defined for the hall, in the final section of this assessment.

STEP 4 – RECORD, PLAN, INFORM, INSTRUCT AND TRAIN

4.1 Record

As the hall is licensed we are required to record the outcome of the assessment.

4.1 Checklist

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Have you recorded the significant findings of your assessment? | Yes |
| • Have you recorded what you have done to remove or reduce the risk? | Yes |
| • Are your records available for inspection by the enforcing authority? | Yes |

4.2 Emergency Plans

Again, as the hall is a licensed premise we must have an Emergency Plan, but the Guide advises that for simple layouts such as ours, a fire action notice is sufficient. Details of this are attached to the assessment as a separate section (Appendix 2)

4.2 Checklist

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Do you have an emergency plan and, where necessary, have you recorded the details? | Yes |
| • Does your plan take account of other emergency plans applicable to the same building? | N/A |
| • Is the plan readily available for staff to read? | Yes |
| • Is the emergency plan available to the enforcing authority? | Yes |

4.3 Inform and Instruct

We are required to give clear information to our employees, users and temporary workmen about preventing fire, and what to do in the event of fire. This is achieved by placing all the required information including Post Code and OS Grid Reference in the emergency plan (Appendix 2) and hiring agreement (Appendix 3)

4.3 Checklist

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Have you told your staff about the emergency plan? | Yes |
| • Do you know the location and identity of people you have nominated to do a particular task? | N/A |
| • Have you given staff information about any dangerous substances? | Yes |
| • Do you have arrangements for informing temporary or agency staff? | Yes |
| • Do you have arrangements for informing other employers whose staff are guest workers in your premises, such as maintenance contractors and cleaners? | Yes |
| • Do you inform guests and visitors about what to do in an emergency? | Yes |

4.3 Fire Safety Training

This concerns the training and drilling of employees. The check list gives a flavour of the target activity:

- Have your staff received any fire safety training?
- Have you carried out a fire drill recently?
- Are employees aware of specific tasks if there is a fire?
- Are you maintaining a record of training sessions?

Apart from the part time cleaner who spends around 4 hours a week in the hall, we have no employees. However the trustees have responsibilities in this area; bearing in mind the physical layout and the nature of its use, this requirement can best be met by providing a clear briefing based on the Emergency Plan and the Fire Notices in the Hiring Agreement. These are attached to this document as Appendices.

STEP 5 – REVIEW

This simply points out the need for a review in the event of significant changes to the use and or fittings of the hall, or following a known failure of the fire detection or alarm system.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT
WILLIAMS HALL STOKE ST GREGORY

This Assessment amplifies and extends the analysis of the Fire Risk Assessment. The principle and simple conclusion that the H & S Risk is low stems from the fact that this is a new build, which is now in its second decade of full use, It was built been built to meet all statutory building and design requirements.

The main H & S points arising from the building design and the Management's experience during these years are:

1. The Kitchen was designed to meet the highest standards. The flooring has moulded shirting to ensure easy of cleaning and prevent accumulation of debris in inaccessible corners. All the surfaces are stainless steel and all units, with the sole exception of the sinks and draining boards unit, are on lockable wheels to allow efficient cleaning of floor, walls and the units themselves. The Kitchen is fitted with a UV bug trap to reduce potential contamination
2. One area of concern was identified when it was noted that some hirers had not followed the instructions to "drain down" the commercial dishwasher after completion of its use. The instructions to hirers have been changed and as an added incentive a charge will be levied from the deposit to cover the cost of a full strip down and clean in the event that the correct procedure is not followed.
3. The overall design is of a single storey building. There are two raised areas. The stage which is accessed by a fixed broad staircase with balustrade from the Meeting Room (which acts as the "Green Room" for theatrical purposes). Access from the front is by a moveable 3 rise set of steps with handrail. The second raised area is the mezzanine storage area which is accessed from the rear of the Hall. This is an infrequently used area for storage purposes only
4. We have a "scaffolding tower" permanently available in the hall to enable safe access to the ceiling lights and theatrical lighting bars.
5. There are no loose floor coverings.
6. All fixed electrical equipment is SIPS tested annually. Potable equipment is subject to annual PAT testing Users are advised that it is their responsibility to ensure the electrical safety of any equipment brought into the hall.
7. In the toilet block all fittings (except the wastepaper bins) are fixed to the walls.
8. All cupboards have simple locks to discourage entry by unauthorised people (as distinct from forced entry by determined thieves). The cleaner's store and the School store (housing gym equipment) have full security locks.
9. Outside the hall the footpath from the main road to the Hall entrance is "white-lined". There is a security light which illuminates the car park and approaches, and the porch lights are activated by a sensor. Ther is a well-defined car parking area with marked spaces for disabled users. There is an extension to the car parking area to use a grassed area adjacent to the existing car park.

It is concluded that the Health and Safety Risk in this hall is low.

**ANALYSIS OF CHECKS RECOMMENDED BY
HMSO PUBLICATION 05 FRSD 03338(b) (May 2006)**

The checking routine defined by 05 FRSD 03338(b) is structured to cater for all the requirements of a multi-storey, multi-use building, fitted with sophisticated automatic fire fighting/suppressing systems, housing large organisations with classical management structures in charge of daily operations, where one user's escape route might be under the control of another independent user and access by emergency agencies jeopardised by third parties.

There are clear difficulties involved in mapping this onto our hall. This is a single storey rural community facility comprising principally of four main compartments, each with direct access to the outside by automatic release emergency doors and with no high fire risk area. Additionally, as with all such buildings, it is used by local user groups and other clients through a booking system. There is no permanent "staff" onsite during occupation by clients.

That said the trustees have a duty to incorporate into a fire check regime for the hall all of the material provisions of 05 FRSD 03338(b) that are pertinent to the village hall fabric, its management and its users.

The following regime is based on the checks listed in 05 FRSD 03338(b), edited to make sense in the context of the Williams Hall to produce a regime for consistent regular, recorded checks.

HALL OPENING CHECKLIST

On every day when the hall is booked the caretaker or responsible key holder opening the hall will conduct the following fire checks before the hall is used:

Escape routes

Can all emergency exits be opened immediately and easily?

Are emergency exits clear of obstructions?

Are escape routes clear?

Fire warning systems

Is the indicator panel showing 'normal'?

Escape lighting

Are luminaires and exit signs in good condition and undamaged?

Is emergency lighting and sign lighting working correctly?

Firefighting equipment

Are all fire extinguishers in place?

Are fire extinguishers clearly visible?

This check will not be recorded, but immediate action is to be taken to rectify any defect found.

Monthly Checklist

On the first Monday of each month the Hall will be opened and the following checks made in addition to the Hall opening checks

Escape Routes

- Can all escape routes be opened immediately and easily?

- Are emergency exits clear of obstruction?
- Are escape routes clear?
- Do all emergency fastening devices to emergency exits work correctly?
- Are external routes clear and safe?

Escape Lighting

- Do all luminaries and exit signs function correctly when tested?

Fire Warning Systems

- Is the indicator panel showing normal?
- Does testing a manual call point send a signal to the indicator panel?
- Does the alarm system work correctly when tested?

Fire Fighting Equipment

- Is all equipment in good condition?
- Is the pressure in the stored pressure fire extinguisher correct?
- Additional items from manufacturers recommendations?

Electrical Sockets and Equipment

- Does any electrical socket show signs of overheating?
- Does any electrical fitting or equipment show signs of malfunction?

Date: _____ **Signature:** _____

Three-monthly checks

Additional items from manufacturer's recommendations.

Six-monthly checks

Trustees to arrange tests by competent persons of:

The Fire Warning System

All luminaires operation on test for one third of their rated value

Additional items from manufacturer's recommendations.

Annual checks

Trustees to arrange tests by competent persons of:

Escape and emergency lighting

Firefighting equipment

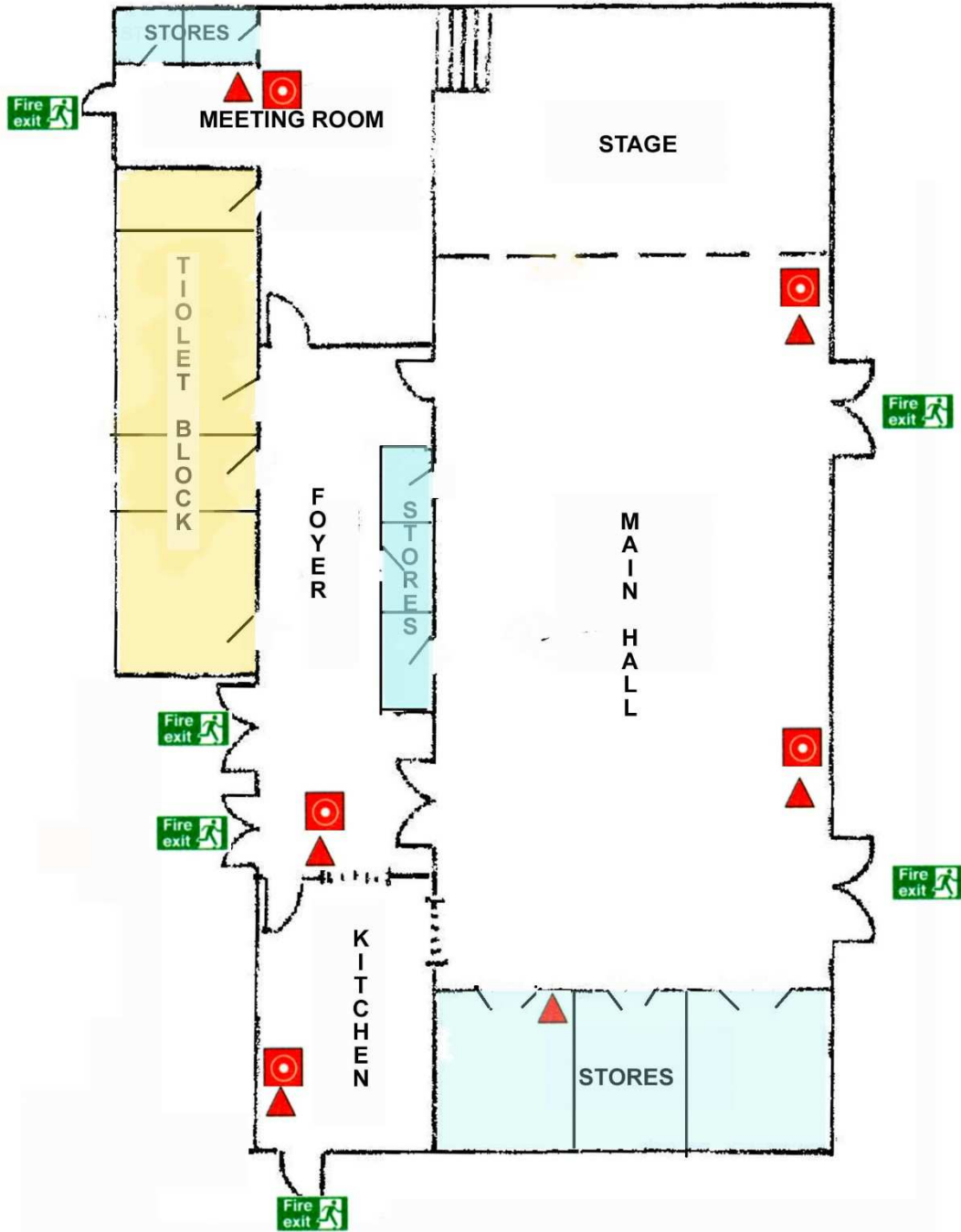
FIRE/EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Guide (05 FRSD 03338(b) advises that for simple layouts a fire action notice is sufficient. This plan is an expanded version of the Fire Action Notices displayed in the hall.

On discovering a fire that cannot be brought under immediate control using the fire fighting equipment in the hall:

- 1. Alert everyone within earshot**
- 2. Operate the nearest fire call point**
- 3. Evacuate the building using all main and emergency exits.**
 - All exits are fitted with quick release locks which are operated by simply depressing the door handle
 - If safety permits close all windows before evacuating a room
 - If safety permits check that there is no one in the toilets
 - The last person out of a room must if possible close the door
- 5. Do not stop to collect personal belongings.**
- 6. Call the Fire Brigade. The address of the hall is:**
 - Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory TA3 6EU
 - The Ordnance Survey reference is ST 348274
- 7. Report to the Assembly Point – the footpath area at the entrance to the hall grounds in Dark Lane.**

Williams Hall - Fire Exits, Callpoints and Extinguishers



- ▲ Fire extinguisher
- 🚪 Fire exit sign
- 🚨 Break glass call point

FIRE NOTICES FOR HIRERS

The following is an extract from the “notices to hirers” which all hirers sign as having read and accepted.

Fire Precautions

- There is no telephone in the hall. Hirers must ensure that they have an operational mobile phone by which they can contact the emergency services. The post code and OS grid reference of the hall are: TA3 6EU and ST 348 274
- No smoking is permitted in any part of the hall.
- Any electrical equipment brought into the hall must be in good working order and have been checked by a competent person.
- Under 18's are not permitted to be in the hall unless in the presence of a responsible adult.
- All rubbish and refuse must be removed by hirers on vacating the hall after an event.
- Barbecues must have prior explicit permission and must not be positioned within 5 metres of the building.
- Use of any naked flame (eg candles) must have prior explicit permission, and then only in solid non-flammable containers.
- No soft furnishings or decorations are permitted near the heaters and light fittings.
- Regular and occasional hirers must ensure that everyone in the hall is aware of the location of the emergency exits, fire extinguishers and procedures to be followed in an emergency. An “announcement” suitable for use at the outset of an event or meeting is at the end of this notice.
- All doors and windows are to be kept in the closed position unless otherwise required for ventilation or access.
- No furniture or other obstacle is to be positioned so as to obstruct any doorway.

Additional notes for Workmen & Contractors:

- All employees and sub-contractors are to be briefed on their fire risk responsibilities and requirements.
- Flammable materials are not to be stored in the hall overnight unless positively agreed by the caretaker or other hall key-holder.
- All rubbish and refuse must be removed at the end of each working day.

Additional notes for regular user groups:

- It is suggested that the “Fire Precautions Announcement” (see next page) be read at regular intervals during the year, and that elementary fire evacuation drills be carried out as they deem necessary.

Emergency/Fire Evacuation

The following procedure is to be followed by the persons responsible for an event on discovering a fire that cannot be brought under immediate control using the firefighting equipment in the hall.

- Alert everyone within earshot
- Operate the nearest fire call point
- Evacuate the building using all main and emergency exits.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- If safety permits close all windows before evacuating a room
- If safety permits check that there is no one in the toilets
- If safety permits the last person out of a room must close the door
- Call the Fire Brigade. The address of the hall is:

Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory TA3 6EU

The Ordnance Survey reference is ST 348274

- Report to the Assembly Point – the footpath area at the entrance to the hall grounds in Dark Lane.

Fire/Emergency Precautions Announcement

In the event of a fire or other emergency the building is to be evacuated as quickly as possible.

Do not delay to collect personal belongings

Leave by the nearest exit or emergency exit (indicate).

All are clearly marked (indicate)

All exit doors are fitted with quick release lever locks. These open by simply pressing down on the handle.

Once outside the building proceed to the assembly point which is the pavement area at the hall entrance on Dark Lane.