

UTTERBY VILLAGE HALL FIRE SAFETY POLICY

1. Policy Aim

Utterby Village Hall Management Committee aims to keep its users safe and takes its fire safety duties seriously. This policy helps comply with its legal obligations to users and visitors.

2. Users' Duties

- All Hall users, including committee members, have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm.
- They are also expected to co-operate fully with the management committee in complying with any procedures that it may introduce to protect the safety and well-being of users and visitors.

3. Communication – what Utterby Village Hall will do to inform users about fire safety

- The Hall Hire Agreement includes information about fire safety (see Appendix 1) and evacuation procedures for the premises (See Appendix 2).
- Hirers will read and agree to the Hire Agreement, including the fire safety information, when booking.
- Additionally, fire safety and evacuation procedures will be explained to each new Hirer at the start of their hire, including awareness of the position of fire exits, location of the fire assembly point and firefighting equipment.
- Once explained, regular/ongoing Hirers are required to adhere to the policy and procedures for each hire, ensuring their users are aware of what to do in the event of a fire.
- Evacuation procedures will be displayed by each fire exit and in the kitchen.
- Contractors will be expected to follow fire safety procedures and to inform the committee if any potentially hazardous work, that may impact fire safety, is likely to take place.
- The management committee will keep users informed of any changes that are made to the fire safety procedures and fire risk assessment.

4. Procedures – what Utterby Village Hall will do to maintain high standards of fire safety

- The premises will be checked before and after every hire (by either a committee member or regular Hirer who is responsible for opening/closing), ensuring fire exits are clear, electrical equipment is switched off and there are no signs of smouldering embers.
- All committee members will be instructed in fire safety and evacuation procedures by the responsible person.
- A Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken by Safelincs Fire & Safety Solutions (Jan 2024) which will be reviewed annually by the committee. A copy is online and in the policy file. Actions from this assessment and any subsequent reviews will be acted upon and recorded as required. Risks will be continually monitored. Reviews will occur if there are changes that will impact on its effectiveness.
- All escape routes will be clearly signposted, checked regularly for ease of opening and kept free of obstructions at all times.
- Portable electrical equipment will be tested yearly (PAT testing).
(See also Appendix 1 regarding Hirer responsibility for safety/use of electrical equipment).

- The Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) will be carried out every five years, by a qualified, electrical contractor and any required remedial works carried out.
- All fire fighting equipment will be serviced annually and maintained/replaced.
- Smoke/heat alarm systems will be tested quarterly by the responsible person/committee and annually by a qualified electrician.
- Emergency lighting will be checked monthly by the responsible person/committee and fully serviced annually, by an electrical contractor.
- Records of all testing will be kept in the Fire Safety Log Book.
- Fire evacuation practice will take place at least once a year and be recorded.
- Any hazardous/flammable liquids will be stored in the locked store cupboard.
- Signs will be displayed indicating smoking, vaping and use of e-cigarettes are not permitted.
- Candles/naked flames, barbecues, LPG appliances, indoor fireworks or highly flammable substances will not be permitted.
- The maximum number of 100 people capacity will not be exceeded.
- See also 4. Communication (above).

5. Actions required by all users

Hall users have the responsibilities to:

AWARENESS

- Read fire safety and evacuation procedures as part of the booking process and ask any questions.
- Make sure everyone in their group is aware of fire exits.
- Ensure everyone in their group knows what to do in the event of a fire. (Appendix 1)
- Make the committee aware of any concerns or issues linked to fire safety.

ORGANISATION

- Ensure there is at least one person in charge of every meeting or event to take a lead in the event of a fire.
- Ensure the maximum number of 100 people is not exceeded.

RISK

- Follow agreed fire safety and evacuation procedures (Appendix 1 & 2).
- Ensure they are aware of any specific risks to their group/activities/type of event they undertake, and ensure they minimise any risks.
- Pay specific attention to ensuring anyone with a disability understands the fire evacuation procedures and is assisted if/as required.
- Ensure children are assisted in the event of an evacuation.
- Keep fire exits clear at all times.

Responsible Person

Simon Lashbrooke-Small is designated to this role for the building, on behalf of the management committee. If this person was to leave the committee, there is a legal responsibility for ensuring a replacement is appointed beforehand for proper handover of information and responsibilities.

The Hirer, as stated in the signed Hire Agreement, is the Responsible Person for fire safety during their hire.

FIRE SAFETY UTTERBY VILLAGE HALL

The named Hirer is the Responsible Person for fire safety during the hire.

The Hirer shall -

PREVENTION

- ⌋ Ensure that any decorations used are not a fire hazard.
- ⌋ Ensure that barbecues, LPG appliances, indoor fireworks or highly flammable substances are not brought onto the Premises.
- ⌋ Ensure that items, other than cookware, are not put on top of the hob in the kitchen.
- ⌋ Ensure use of hob, oven, microwave, kettles, are supervised at all times.
- ⌋ Ensure candles/naked flames are not used.
- ⌋ Ensure that smoking or use of e-cigarettes does not take place on the Premises.
- ⌋ Ensure that any equipment or electrical appliances brought onto the Premises and used there shall be certified as safe and in good working order, and used in a safe manner.

SAFETY

- ⌋ Ensure everyone knows where the fire exits and Evacuation Meeting Place are. (Evacuation Meeting Place – the Village Green).
- ⌋ Ensure that all entrances/fire exits are kept clear at all times and are not blocked with items such as chairs, tables, buggies, equipment or trailing cables/leads.
- ⌋ Ensure everyone knows how to open doors to fire exits.

IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

- ⌋ Take charge to ensure the building is evacuated in the event of a fire, checking all areas as exiting, to ensure no one is left inside.
- ⌋ Ensure someone has a fully charged phone on them.
- ⌋ Ensure that the Fire Brigade is called to any outbreak of fire, however slight.
- ⌋ **See Fire Evacuation Procedure for what to do in the event of a fire.**

A copy of the Evacuation Procedure is also displayed by the fire exit in the main hall and in the entrance area opposite the toilets. These will be pointed out by the representative from the Hall, when they explain the fire safety information.

The Hirer must make themselves familiar with the Evacuation Procedure.

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

If a fire is discovered -

Person discovering the fire calls out loudly, clearly and calmly,
“FIRE! FIRE! EXIT THE BUILDING!”

Smoke/heat alarms may also sound. Do not ignore these!

Repeat this loudly, but calmly, over and over.

Call the Fire Brigade 999 -

“Fire at Utterby Village Hall, Main Road, Utterby LN11 0TQ.”

Everyone stops what they are doing and leaves calmly through nearest, marked fire exits. (Entrance double doors on to car park/front single door to Main Rd)

Small children can be carried.

Wheelchair users or those with mobility problems or other disabilities should be helped as necessary.

Do not stop to take any belongings.

If anyone is already outside, do not re-enter the building.

Toilets/kitchen checked for people as you leave.

Last person closes the door after exiting.

Everyone gathers together and remains in a group at the
Evacuation Meeting Place in The Village Green.

Head count and account for anyone missing, so Fire Brigade can be told on arrival.

No person may re-enter the Hall without the permission of the Fire Brigade.

Fire Fighting

If a fire is discovered in its early stages, it may be appropriate to tackle it with the nearest suitable fire extinguisher/fire blanket only if it is considered safe to do so and only after the alarm has been raised. If it is not possible to extinguish the fire, every effort should be made to contain it to the room or area of origin. Regardless of whether the fire is successfully extinguished, the Fire Service must still be called, and people must not be allowed to re-enter the building until the senior fire officer has deemed it safe to do so.