

# Dementia Active Launton

## Fire Evacuation and Fire Safety Procedure

Combined version: the site-specific Launton procedure has been retained and strengthened with the generic fire safety, prevention, training, dementia-support, and risk assessment content from the general fire emergency procedure. Site-specific information for other premises has not been copied where it conflicts with Launton arrangements.

<b>Centre</b>	Dementia Active Launton
<b>Floor level</b>	Ground floor
<b>Layout</b>	Three-roomed centre
<b>Fire exits</b>	Three fire exits - one at each end of the building and one in the middle
<b>Accessibility</b>	Exit points have ramps for wheelchair users
<b>Assembly point</b>	Driveway into Grange Mews
<b>Fire alarm buttons/call points</b>	Not fitted due to the small size of the building. Alarm is raised verbally.
<b>Members supported</b>	People living with dementia, including people who may need reassurance, direction, supervision, mobility support, or wheelchair access
<b>Evacuation strategy</b>	Immediate evacuation to the assembly point, unless the current fire risk assessment states otherwise

This procedure should be checked against the current fire risk assessment for the premises and reviewed regularly.

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to make sure that all members, staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors leave the building quickly and safely in the event of fire, smoke, suspected fire, or any other emergency requiring evacuation.

The procedure also provides a planned response so that everyone understands their responsibilities, the building can be evacuated safely, and people are moved to a place where they are not in danger.

As all members may be living with dementia, staff must assume that some people may not understand the situation, may become distressed, may move slowly, or may try to stay inside or return to the building. The key responsibility of everyone in the team is to ensure members do not panic, feel safe, and are helped to leave the building in a calm and controlled manner.

### 2. Fire Warden and Senior Staff Responsibilities

The Fire Warden, or the most senior staff member on duty, is responsible for managing the response to a fire or suspected fire. All staff and volunteers must follow their instructions.

- Take charge of the evacuation.
- Confirm which of the three exits is safest to use.
- Direct staff to support members to the nearest safe exit.
- Ensure wheelchair users and people with limited mobility are guided to a ramped exit.
- Make sure all three rooms are checked if safe to do so.
- Ensure toilets, kitchen areas, office areas, storage areas, and any quiet spaces are checked if safe.
- Take the attendance register, visitor book, staff list, and emergency contact details if immediately available and safe to collect.
- Make sure 999 has been called.
- Direct everyone to the assembly point at the driveway into Grange Mews.
- Complete or oversee the roll call.
- Tell the Fire and Rescue Service immediately if anyone is missing, unaccounted for, distressed, unable to leave, or believed to still be inside.

Review at least annually and after any fire, evacuation, drill, or near miss.

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No one should attempt to tackle a fire unless they are trained, it is safe to do so, and evacuation is not delayed. Staff and volunteers must never put themselves or members at risk.

### 3. Raising the Alarm

As the centre is too small to have fire alarm buttons or manual call points, any person discovering fire, smoke, a burning smell, or another serious fire risk must raise the alarm immediately by shouting clearly:

#### **Fire - everyone out.**

The person discovering the fire must alert the Fire Warden or most senior staff member straight away. The Fire Warden, or a nominated member of staff, must call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service. All staff must know how the alarm is raised verbally and must respond immediately when they hear the instruction to evacuate.

### 4. Immediate Action on Discovering a Fire

1. Raise the alarm immediately by shouting: Fire - everyone out.
2. Alert the Fire Warden or most senior staff member.
3. Call 999, or make sure another named staff member does so.
4. Begin evacuation if safe.
5. Close doors behind you where possible to help slow the spread of smoke and fire.
6. Do not attempt to fight the fire unless trained, safe to do so, and evacuation is not delayed.

### 5. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

- Stop activities immediately.
- Stay calm, speak clearly, and appear confident.
- Guide members to the nearest safe exit.
- Use one of the three fire exits, depending on which is safest.
- Use the ramped exits for wheelchair users and anyone with limited mobility.
- Support members to the assembly point at the driveway into Grange Mews.
- Keep members together once outside.
- Prevent members from returning to the building.
- Report any concerns immediately to the Fire Warden.

Staff should not spend time collecting personal belongings, coats, bags, or paperwork unless this is safe and does not delay evacuation.

### 6. Fire Exits and Evacuation Routes

The centre has three fire exits:

- Exit 1: Fire exit at one end of the building with wheelchair ramp.
- Exit 2: Fire exit at the opposite end of the building with wheelchair ramp.
- Exit 3: Fire exit in the middle of the building with wheelchair ramp.

Staff should use the nearest safe exit. If one exit is blocked by fire, smoke, obstruction, or any other danger, staff must use another safe exit. All fire exits, ramps, and escape routes must be kept clear at all times.

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## 7. Wheelchair Users and People with Limited Mobility

As the exit points have ramps, wheelchair users should be evacuated through the nearest safe ramped exit.

- Reassure the person before moving them.
- Check that the route and ramp are clear.
- Move at a steady and controlled pace.
- Avoid rushing.
- Keep the person away from smoke, fire, congestion, or uneven ground.
- Support the person to the assembly point.
- Make sure the person remains with the group after evacuation.

Any member who regularly needs help to leave the building should have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, also known as a PEEP. The PEEP should include the support the person needs, whether they use a wheelchair or walking aid, which exit is normally best, whether one or two staff are needed, dementia-related communication or distress needs, and any moving and handling requirements.

## 8. Supporting Members Living with Dementia

Staff must assume that members may become anxious, confused, distressed, slow to move, or reluctant to leave. Staff should use calm, simple instructions and reassurance.

- Come with me.
- We are going outside.
- You are safe.
- This way, please.
- Everyone is meeting outside.
- I will stay with you.

Staff should approach members from the front where possible, use the person's name, give one instruction at a time, avoid lengthy explanations, avoid repeatedly saying fire if this increases distress, use familiar staff to support anxious members where possible, offer an arm or gentle guidance where this is part of the person's care plan, and report immediately if a member refuses to leave or becomes distressed.

If an alarm or evacuation instruction causes panic, staff should calmly explain that everyone is going outside and that staff know what to do. The priority is to appear calm, keep members reassured, and move people safely rather than quickly.

## 9. Assembly Point

The assembly point is the driveway into Grange Mews.

At the assembly point, staff must:

- Keep members together.
- Keep members away from the building.
- Keep members away from emergency vehicles.
- Keep members safe from traffic or moving vehicles.
- Reassure members continuously.
- Complete a roll call.
- Check staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors.
- Prevent anyone from returning to the building.
- Wait for instructions from the Fire Warden or Fire and Rescue Service.

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No one may re-enter the building until the Fire and Rescue Service or authorised responsible person confirms it is safe.

### 10. Roll Call

The Fire Warden or nominated staff member must check:

- Members present.
- Staff present.
- Volunteers present.
- Visitors present.
- Contractors present.

Any missing person must be reported immediately to the Fire and Rescue Service. Staff must not re-enter the building to search for someone unless instructed by the Fire and Rescue Service.

### 11. If a Member Refuses to Leave

7. Stay calm.
8. Use the member's name.
9. Use short, reassuring instructions.
10. Ask another familiar member of staff to assist.
11. Avoid arguing or raising your voice.
12. Try changing the wording, for example: Let's go outside together. Everyone is meeting outside. I'll come with you.
13. Inform the Fire Warden immediately if the person still refuses.

If there is immediate danger, staff should follow the person's care plan, moving and handling guidance, and emergency risk assessment.

### 12. Checking the Three Rooms

If safe to do so, staff should check:

- Room 1.
- Room 2.
- Room 3.
- Toilets.
- Kitchen or refreshment area.
- Office area.
- Storage areas.
- Quiet spaces or side areas.

Staff must not place themselves at risk by entering a room affected by fire or smoke. Doors should be closed behind staff where possible to help slow the spread of smoke and fire.

### 13. Fire Risk Assessment - Generic Controls Added to Launton Procedure

The following generic fire risk assessment content should be used alongside the site-specific fire risk assessment for Dementia Active Launton. It identifies common hazards and controls that support a planned response to fire or suspected fire.

Hazard	Prevention and controls	Needs action / Yes-No / Notes
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Sources of potential ignition: cooking or refreshment equipment, electrical equipment, office equipment, heating, portable appliances, sockets, chargers, and any temporary equipment.	Electrical equipment should be visually checked before use and PAT tested where applicable. Heating and fixed systems should be maintained in line with manufacturer guidance. Staff must report burning smells, damaged leads, overloaded sockets, faulty appliances, or equipment that becomes hot. Combustible items must be kept away from heaters, sockets, and kitchen equipment.	
Sources of combustible fuel: soft furnishings, activity materials, paper, laundry, rubbish bins, packaging, cleaning products, and stored items.	Keep combustible materials to a minimum. Store activity materials safely. Do not allow rubbish, laundry, paper, or packaging to build up. Empty bins regularly and at the end of sessions. Store any cleaning products safely and away from ignition sources. Do not store unnecessary flammable substances on site.	
Escape routes, fire exits, and ramps blocked or difficult to use.	All three fire exits, ramps, and internal escape routes must be kept clear at all times. Doors must open easily. Bags, wheelchairs, mobility aids, furniture, deliveries, and activity equipment must not block exit routes or ramps.	
Alarm not raised quickly because there are no fire alarm buttons or call points.	The Launton centre raises the alarm verbally. Any person discovering fire, smoke, a burning smell, or serious fire risk must shout clearly: "Fire - everyone out." All staff, volunteers, and regular visitors must understand this instruction and respond immediately.	
Fire safety equipment not functioning or being misused.	Any fire safety equipment provided at the premises must be checked in line with the fire risk assessment and service schedule. Only trained staff should use equipment, and only if safe to do so and evacuation is not delayed. Staff and volunteers must not put themselves at risk.	
Staff, volunteers, or visitors do not understand their role during evacuation.	All staff and volunteers must receive fire procedure training, including how to raise the alarm verbally, the location of the three exits, use of ramped exits, roll call, calling 999, and how to support members living with dementia. New staff and volunteers must receive site-specific induction before supporting sessions.	
Response to suspicion of fire is delayed or unclear.	Always investigate a smell of burning if safe to do so. If smoke, flames, or another serious risk is seen, raise the alarm immediately, alert the Fire Warden or most senior staff member, call 999, and begin evacuation if safe.	
Miscommunication between staff and volunteers during an emergency.	The Fire Warden or most senior staff member takes charge. Staff should use clear, short instructions and report concerns immediately. The priority is to keep members calm, guide them to safety, and prevent anyone returning to the building.	
Members living with dementia become anxious, confused, distressed, slow to move, or try to remain inside or return to	Staff must appear calm, use the person's name, give one instruction at a time, and use simple reassuring phrases	

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the building.	such as "Come with me", "We are going outside", "You are safe", and "This way, please". Familiar staff should support anxious members where possible. Staff must report immediately if anyone refuses to leave or becomes distressed.	
Wheelchair users or people with limited mobility cannot leave quickly.	Use the nearest safe ramped exit. Check the route and ramp are clear. Move at a steady controlled pace and avoid rushing. Any member who regularly needs help to leave should have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) covering support needs, usual best exit, staffing, communication needs, and moving and handling requirements.	
Unclear evacuation plan or roll call process.	Immediate evacuation is the default strategy. Staff must use the nearest safe exit unless blocked by fire, smoke, obstruction, or other danger. The Fire Warden or nominated person must take attendance information if safe, direct everyone to the driveway into Grange Mews, complete roll call, and tell the Fire and Rescue Service immediately if anyone is missing or believed to be inside.	

### 14. Fire Prevention and Daily Checks

The Fire Warden or nominated staff member should make sure:

- All three fire exits are clear.
- All wheelchair ramps are clear and safe to use.
- Doors open easily.
- Escape routes are not blocked by furniture, bags, mobility aids, or equipment.
- Combustible items are kept away from heaters, sockets, and kitchen equipment.
- Electrical equipment appears safe.
- Attendance records are accurate.
- Staff know which members may need support to evacuate.
- The assembly point remains suitable and accessible.
- Bins, paper, activity materials, laundry, and packaging are not allowed to build up.
- Any smell of burning, damaged equipment, blocked route, or other concern is reported immediately.

### 15. Training

All staff and volunteers must be trained in:

- This fire procedure.
- How to raise the alarm without fire alarm buttons.
- The location of all three fire exits.
- The use of all ramped exits.
- Supporting people with dementia during evacuation.
- Supporting wheelchair users and people with limited mobility.
- Moving members safely to the driveway into Grange Mews.
- Roll call procedure.
- Calling 999.

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- What to do if someone refuses to leave.
- What to do if one exit is blocked.

Training should include practice evacuation arrangements where appropriate and should make clear that staff must not use lengthy explanations during an evacuation. New staff and volunteers must receive individual fire training on evacuation procedures, member support needs, routes, and the verbal alarm process.

### 16. Fire Drills

Fire drills should be carried out regularly and recorded. Drills should test:

- Use of each of the three exits.
- Wheelchair ramp access.
- Staff response without fire alarm buttons.
- Moving members safely to the driveway into Grange Mews.
- Roll call accuracy.
- Supporting members who are confused, distressed, or slow to leave.
- Staff understanding of their roles.

Drills involving members with dementia should be handled sensitively, but staff must still be able to show that the evacuation plan works in practice.

### 17. Review

This procedure should be reviewed:

- After any fire, evacuation, drill, or near miss.
- If the layout of the centre changes.
- If the assembly point changes.
- If the number or needs of members change.
- If a member starts using a wheelchair or needs more support.
- After the fire risk assessment is reviewed.
- At least annually.

### 18. Key Safety Statement

Dementia Active Launton is a ground-floor, three-roomed centre with three ramped fire exits. In the event of fire or suspected fire, staff must raise the alarm verbally, call 999, support all members to leave by the nearest safe exit, and move everyone to the assembly point at the driveway into Grange Mews.

Staff must give particular attention to members living with dementia, wheelchair users, and anyone who may need reassurance, supervision, or physical support to evacuate safely.

### Review Record and Actions

Andrew Gill 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Review date 17<sup>th</sup> May 2027

Review at least annually and after any fire, evacuation, drill, or near miss.