

**Old Newton with Dagworth & Gipping Village Hall and Playing Field**

Charity No. 271292

# **Old Newton Village Hall**

## **Fire Risk Assessment**

### **A Safety Guide for Users of the Hall**

Assessment by the Trustees

**July 2021**

## Description of Premises

Old Newton Village Hall was built in the 1970's as a purpose built community building situated at the centre of the village on Church Road, next to the playing field. *It meets all current building regulations regarding fire hazard and disabled access.*

The building comprises an entrance lobby, separate men's, women's and disabled toilets, a storage room (for furniture and other equipment), a small meeting room (The Woodward Room), the main Village Hall and a separate kitchen and bar (each with its own fire-proof, serving hatch). A plant room, which can only be accessed from outside, houses the oil tank and boiler. At the south east corner of the site is an enclosed waste bin store. Internal doors are fire-resistant and have Dor-Gard units fitted. Exit doors open outwards. The main heating and hot water is via the oil powered central heating boiler, however this is supplemented by additional electric heaters in the main hall and electric hot water in the kitchen.

Capacities for the Hall and Woodward Room are as follows:

Main Hall: The main hall area of 16.1m x 9.3m can hold about 200 people standing (about 100 dining at tables). It should be noted that the usable area excluding the stage is approx. 13.75m x 9.3m.

Woodward Room: 7.3m x 5m (holding about 36 people seated or 24 sitting at tables).

All parts are available to hire for both private and public events.

The car park to the side of the building, has space for approximately 50 cars (including 5 disabled spaces). Additional overflow car parking for approximately 40 cars is also provided to the east of the main building.

**Three emergency exits** lead directly out of the building - from the main hall, from the Woodward Room and from the lobby. They are clearly lit with **emergency lighting**. The area to the rear of the building is fenced off but provides an enclosed playspace for the Under 5's/Preschool Group together with access for cleaning and maintenance.

To the rear of the building is a playing field with a children's play area.

The designated ASSEMBLY POINT is within the car park adjacent to the playing field.

The Hall is a **NO SMOKING** area.

No **FIREWORKS, GAS APPLIANCES, FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES** or **INGNITED CANDLES** are permitted inside the building. **Smoke detectors** in various places trigger an alarm in the event of fire.

**Fire extinguishers** are situated in the Woodward Room, the main hall and foyer. A fire blanket is situated in the kitchen. They are routinely inspected. The certificate is displayed on the premises and the last inspection was February 2021.

**Fire Hazard is low, and therefore RISK IS LOW.**

### **Principal Uses of the Village Hall**

The hall is hired by a range of organisations, and private individuals for a wide variety of activities. 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 does not hold a license for the sale of alcohol. Private Hirers may bring their own alcohol with the consent of the Trustees. The Trustees encourage all 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.

This Fire Risk Assessment has been done by the Trustees to cover all aspects of the Hall, but in particular for those Hirers who are not familiar with the layout and equipment.

**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 (see Roll Call on page 5).**

The Trustees encourage 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 and is also displayed on the wall within the lobby by the front entrance. They should also identify the assembly point.

A Trustee only staffs the hall during a booked event when it is agreed as being necessary. 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 Committee contracts with a self-employed part-time caretaker, who has a key to the building and is generally on his own when working.

**Trades People:** The Trustees employ 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 Clerk or Caretaker, while others may be escorted by the Booking Clerk or the Caretaker.

**Hall Users (up to 200 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 on 2 sides. Emergency lighting is installed over fire doors and around the hall, and this is tested regularly. There is a set of double-fire doors in the main hall that exit directly outside and are fitted with a push-bar release. The Woodward Room has a single fire door also 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 wheelchairs.

**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 playground.

### **Possible Causes of Fire**

- a) Main power supply fault
- b) Wall mounted electric heaters fault
- c) Portable electrical appliances fault
- d) Kitchen equipment faults (other than portable electrical appliances)
- e) Cooking accidents
- f) Waste (accidental ignition)
- g) Soft furnishings – accidental ignition
- h) Stage scenery and props – accidental ignition
- i) Deliberate ignition

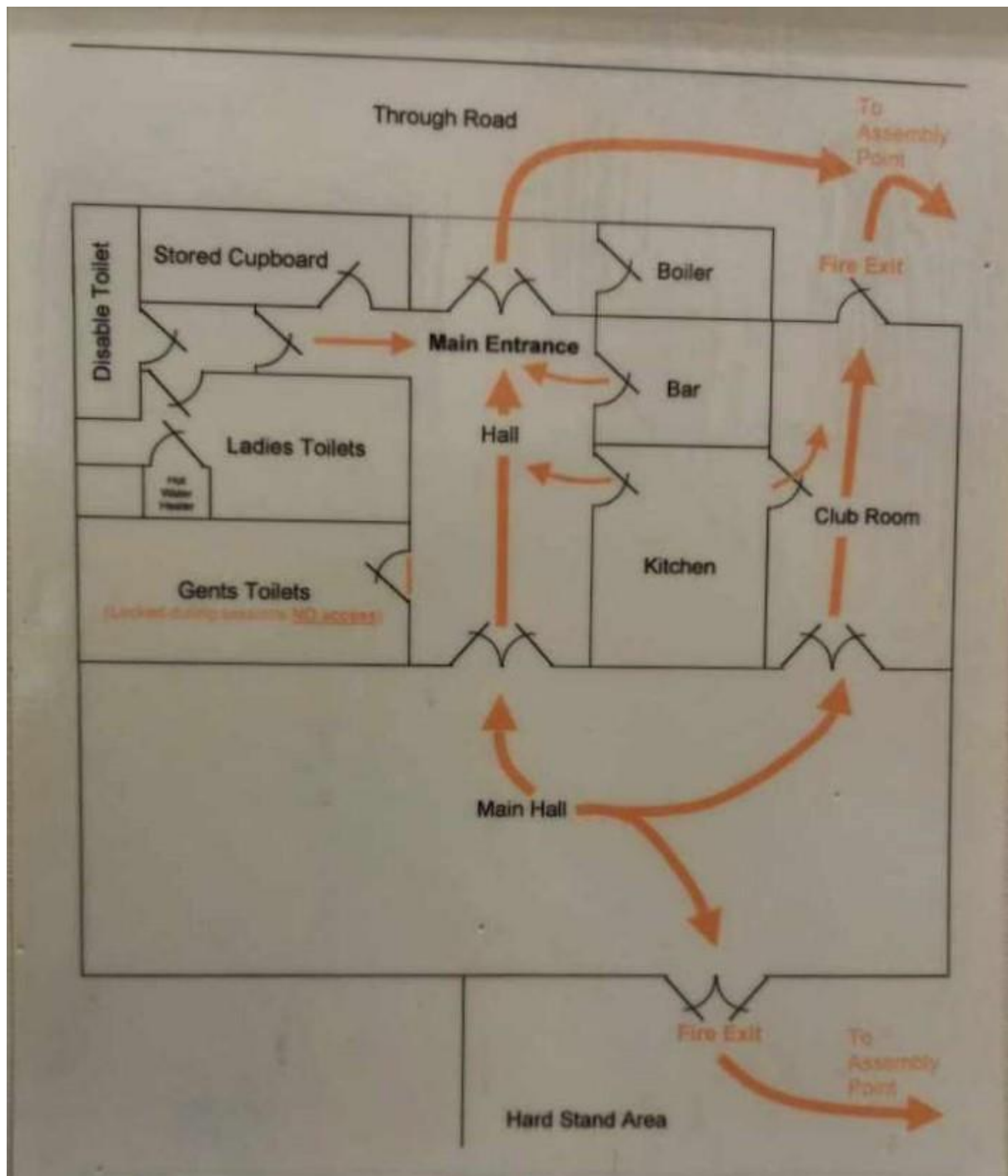
### **Control Measures**

The primary and general control measures taken by the Trustees are to ensure that:

- **Sufficient and correct fire-fighting equipment is available** and that a qualified practitioner inspects it at least once per year. A Certificate of Maintenance will be obtained for each inspection. ***The equipment currently consists of the following: 6 extinguishers: 2 x 2kg CO2, 4 x 9 litre Foam (AFFF); a Fire Blanket.***
- **The advice of the inspection practitioner** to increase, change or move location of the fire-fighting equipment is followed.
- **The location of the fire-fighting equipment**, emergency lighting and escape routes are clearly marked on a Plan that is displayed on the wall by the front entrance and available to all users and staff.
- **All Fire Exit doors are checked for illumination**, ease of opening and that the Emergency Exit Routes are clear on a weekly basis. A test of continued illumination in event of a power failure will be done quarterly. A test of the Smoke Alarms will be done quarterly.
- **The Trustees test** the ease of access to and through the escape routes and to the assembly points at least once per year and log the results.
- **Any furnishings** belonging to the Village Hall that are less than one metre from the floor are made of a non-combustible material, or a material that has been Fire Proofed to the standard applicable at the time of purchase.
- **The central heating boiler** is serviced annually.

- **All electrical equipment** is PAT tested annually.
- **Security lighting** is provided and maintained on both Western and Southern elevations as well as in the Car Park in order to discourage potential intruders.
- **The waste bins are checked** each time the kitchen is cleaned for any fire hazards (eg: loose, inflammable materials such as paper). Where any loose material is found it will be placed inside the exterior waste bins or removed from site.
- **All Village Hall Users will be made aware** of their responsibilities under the Premises License via the Booking Form.
- **All Regular User Groups will be advised** that they should carry out their own Fire Risk Assessment. Whilst the Trustees will advise and encourage, they cannot be held responsible for a group not carrying out its own Fire Risk Assessment.

# DIAGRAM OF VILLAGE HALL SHOWING FIRE EXITS



Note that the ASSEMBLY POINT is: to the rear of the Car Park, adjacent to the Playing Field.

## **FIRE!**

**In the event of a Fire**

**DIAL 999**

**1) The *Responsible Person* (see page 2) will instruct all persons to leave the building using the nearest available Emergency Exits, and to muster together as soon as possible at the ASSEMBLY POINT – the playing field, and its surrounds.**

**2) A Roll Call should be taken.**

**3) NO MATTER HOW SMALL THE FIRE, CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE.** There is no public telephone in the Village Hall. If you have a mobile phone, **Dial 999** and give this address:

**Old Newton Village Hall, Church Road, Old Newton, Stowmarket IP14 4ED.**

**What 3 Words: defenders.case.widely**

**What 3 Words for playground: enclosing.pulsing.stem**

**4) The *Responsible Person* should ensure that once the Village Hall has been evacuated, members of the public do not re-enter the building to collect personal belongings, etc. under any circumstances.**

**5) On the arrival of the Fire Brigade, the *Responsible Person* should report to the Officer in Charge that a Roll Call has taken place and all persons are safe, or should inform him/her of anyone who is missing from their last known position.**

**6) Attempts to extinguish the outbreak of fire using the fire extinguishers should be only carried out if it is considered to be safe. If any doubt get out of the building.**

**7) If you have a mobile phone and after you have carried out all of the above, and circumstances allow it, please call (Chairman) or (Bookings Clerk).**

**NOTE: All incidents no matter how small have to be recorded in the Incidents Log and reported to the Village Hall Booking Clerk**

**Village Hall Contacts:**

Caretaker	Stuart Boulter
Booking Clerk	Diane Tween