

## FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

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1 Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service are visiting premises for inspection and assessment. They compile a risk score from what they see. The score determines the frequency of visits. At the visit they will check forms and the fire risk assessment done by the owner/occupier. They will also check the records for the testing fire alarms and emergency lighting. They will provide forms and paperwork. They will inform what needs to be done. Village Halls are normally low risk. Emphasis is on Hall Management Committee adopting best practice and doing these things as a matter of routine.

### 2 Fire Risk Assessment

(a) Carrying out a fire risk assessment is largely common sense.

Look for:

- Areas of ignition
- Sources of fuel
- That control measures are in place
- Stage curtains are fire proofed
- People who may be at risk
- Ways to improve things

#### (b) Notices

Ensure that appropriate notices are in place:

- Should fire alarm be activated
- Clear guidance to Assembly Places
- Examples of the forms are available from John Wright.

#### (c) Walk Around

- Look at the exit routes – are they clear and uncluttered
- Ensure the occupancy figures are linked to the area of the building.
- If any alterations have been made – check the occupancy.
- Check Fire Doors
- Presence of extinguishers and maintained annually – minimum of two per floor.
- Dry powder extinguishers should NOT be used inside a premises any more.
- Look at any hazards
- Cutains, particularly stage curtains need to be flame retardant

#### (d) Fire Warning System

- Do you need one – for advice get in touch with John Wright.
- mains wired smoke detectors may be sufficient in the absence of an alarm system.

### 3 Post Audit

- You will receive verbal guidance on what has been seen and anything that needs to be done.
- An informal letter perhaps suggesting some actions
- If anything serious – a formal letter will be sent
- If no action the final stage can be court action but only as a last resort.

### 4 Offer of Help

The Fire and Rescue Service wants to work with our members and not against them. If Hall adopt best practice that is ideal.

Help is available:

- The forms that have to be used
- Log Books

**5 Points Raised**

- (a) A fire Risk Assessment is best written down**
- (b) Licenced Premises (sale of alcohol) – must have a fire risk assessment**
- (c) Fire exits must not have a curtain in front.**
- (d) Fire Alarm System must be inspected every 12 months by trained engineer (weekly check by hall committee).**
- (e) Fire Extinguishers must be checked every 12 months.**
- (f) How do you find out the frequency of the Fire and Rescue service Audit – Ask John.**
- (g) Emergency Lighting – checked each month (using a test switch or simulated mains failure).**