

# **CHIPPERFIELD VILLAGE HALL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

## **Part 1: General Statement of Policy**

This document is the Health and Safety Policy of Chipperfield Village Hall.

Our policy is to:

- a) Provide healthy and safe working conditions and equipment for our self employed staff, contractors, volunteers, Committee members and hirers;
- b) Keep the village hall in a safe condition for all users; and
- c) Provide such training and information as is necessary to staff, volunteers and users.

It is the intention of Chipperfield Village Hall (CVH) Management Committee to comply with all health and safety legislation and to act positively where it can reasonably do so to prevent injury, ill health or any danger arising from its activities and operations. CVH Management Committee considers the promotion of the health and safety of those who work in and use its premises, including contractors who may work there, to be of great importance. The Committee recognises that the effective prevention of accidents depends on a committed attitude of mind to safety as well as on the operation and maintenance of equipment and safe systems of work. To this end, it will seek to encourage contractors, Committee members and users to engage in the establishment and observance of safe working practices. Hirers and visitors are expected to recognise that there is a duty on them to comply with the practices set out by the Committee, with all safety requirements set out in the hiring agreement and with safety notices on the premises and to accept responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves or others.

Signed: (On behalf of the Management Committee)

Name:

Position:

Date:

## **Part 2: Organisation of Health and Safety**

CVH Management Committee and its Chair have overall responsibility for health and safety at Village Hall.

It is the duty of all volunteers, workers at the Hall, hirers and visitors to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their activities and to cooperate with the Management Committee in keeping the premises safe and healthy, including the grounds. Should anyone using the hall come across a fault, damage or other situation which might cause injury and cannot be rectified immediately they should inform the Caretaker or Bookings Secretary, as soon as possible so that the problem can be dealt with. Where equipment is damaged a notice should be placed on it warning that it is not to be used.

Committee members with responsibility for aspects of health and safety will report to the Committee regularly, including any accidents, faults, misuse by hirers or other matters which could affect the health and safety of users or employees.

## **Part 3: Safety Rules for Users and Hirers**

All hirers will be expected to read the whole of the hiring agreement and should sign it as evidence that they agree to the hiring conditions. All new hirers are also given the Hall Information Pack which includes information about safety procedures at the hall which they will be expected to follow (e.g. fire evacuation procedures, use of trolleys to move equipment, use of equipment) and will be informed of the location of the accident book.

The following practices must be followed in order to minimise risks:

- Make sure that all emergency exit doors are clear and emergency exit lights switched on when the hall is to be used and throughout the hiring (switch located on panel on stage)
- Do not operate or touch any electrical equipment where there are signs of damage, exposure of components or water penetration etc.
- Do not work on steps, ladders or at height until they are properly secured and another person is present
- Do not leave portable electrical or gas appliances operating while unattended
- Do not bring onto the property any portable electrical appliances which have not been Portable Appliance Tested.
- Do not attempt to move heavy or bulky items (e.g. stacked tables or chairs) - use the trolleys provided to move no more than 2 chairs at once
- Do not stack more than five chairs
- Do not attempt to carry or tip the hot water urn when it contains hot water. Leave it to cool.
- Do not allow children in the kitchen except under close supervision. Avoid over-crowding in the kitchen and do not allow running.

- All rubbish and waste materials must be disposed of safely.
- Spillages must be cleaned up as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Wear suitable protective clothing when handling cleaning or other toxic materials
- Report any evidence of damage or faults to equipment or the building's facilities to the Caretaker or the Bookings Secretary

Be aware of and seek to avoid the following risks:

- creating slipping hazards on stairs, polished or wet floors – mop spills immediately
- creating tripping hazards such as trailing wires, buggies, umbrellas, mops and other items left in halls and corridors
- tripping in poorly lit areas – always use adequate lighting
- risk to individuals while in sole occupancy of the building
- risks involved in handling kitchen equipment e.g. cooker, water heater and knives

#### Accident reporting and investigation

All accidents however minor, must be recorded in the accident book which is situated in the main kitchen near the dishwasher. Report the fact of the accident to the Caretaker or the Bookings Secretary. More serious injuries such as a broken limb or any accident requiring admission to hospital may require reporting to the HSE under RIDDOR 1985.

All accidents involving personal injury to a member of the general public, contractors, employees and village hall users should be reported to the Chair.

#### First Aid

In the event of an accident, first aid should be given with simple treatment if it is within the knowledge and capabilities of the person administering first aid. There is a first aid box in the main kitchen and a small first aid kit in the bar kitchen.

#### Fire and evacuation

Individuals who have hired the hall or who are responsible for running an event in the hall must ensure that attendees are aware of the fire exits. They must ensure that there are safe and clear ways in and out of the premises. These should remain free from obstructions, slipping and tripping hazards, etc, at all times.

Fire appliances must be kept clear of obstruction, serviced regularly, records maintained and used only for the purpose for which they are intended.

Only those who are trained in the use of fire fighting appliances or feel competent to do so, should attempt to tackle a fire. **The priority is always safe evacuation of the building.**

The Hall Fire Safety Plan may be found at Annex A to this document.

#### Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

All users of the hall and anyone employed by the hall using hazardous substances, including cleaning materials, in the hall are required to use, handle and store them in the way prescribed by the safety data available for the product/substances.

Where possible the Committee will endeavour to replace hazardous chemicals with less harmful alternatives.

#### Violence and aggression

CVH Management Committee has a policy of zero tolerance to violence or aggression of any kind on the premises.

#### **Part 4: Review of Health and Safety Policy**

The Management Committee will review this policy annually. The next review is due in May 2026.

## **Chipperfield Village Hall**

### **Fire Safety Plan**

This updated document has been seen and approved by the Committee and signed off by:

[Chair, Village Hall Committee]

This document will be reviewed annually in tandem with the Health and Safety Policy

#### **Statement of Intent, Level of Risk and Principal Fire Safety Measures**

The Village Hall Management Committee recognise their responsibility to protect both the building and its users from the risks stemming from an outbreak of fire.

Users will include young people and, possibly, those with reduced mobility, probably accompanied by carers or adults.

The main front entrance door is located to the side of the hall, with fire exit doors to the flank and via the kitchen.

The building is surrounded by a grassed area and those buildings located adjacent lie within about 15m.

Chipperfield is considered to be a safe area and none of the churches nor the school, the cricket and football clubs, or the Hall have been subject to arson since 1980 (and probably way back further).

The Village Hall was constructed initially in about 1880 and has been extended, probably in the 1920's.

The main walls are constructed in masonry and the roof is tiled.

Generally, the floors are solid and that to the hall is overlaid with timber strip boarding.

The hall has high ceilings which permit smoke to rise to some level above occupiers.

Heating is provided by a 'wet' system and the boiler is positioned to a purpose-made enclosure located to the rear wall, close to the kitchen.

There are no areas for clutter to obstruct means of escape.

Occasionally, the attic room is used during theatre group functions and is also used for the storage of costumes. Access to this is via a sliding ladder.

There are no internal fire doors but escape from the Hall is effected easily via the double doors to the main front elevation and the entrance doors to the Hall, both of which are fitted with panic bolts.

A further escape door is located to the lobby to the kitchen and it is generally considered that the car park adjacent to the driveway to the Hall constitutes an assembly area in the event of a fire.

The floor to the Hall is uncarpeted and accommodates no litter receptacles. A small receptacle is located to the entrance hallway, one to the bar kitchen and a larger one to the main kitchen.

Gas to the boiler is supplied via a metal pipe. Hot water to the main kitchen is supplied by a gas fired multipoint heater located in the boiler cupboard. A water heater, located under the sink in the bar kitchen, provides hot water instantaneously.

Ventilation is supplied naturally via the opening doors and windows.

The stage curtains are fire-retardant.

The hall is provided with fire extinguishers and these are maintained regularly and checked annually.

A further fire extinguisher is located to the kitchen, as is a fire-retardant blanket.

Emergency lighting is installed to the following locations:

The Hall  
Stage  
Lobby Store room  
Parish Council Office  
Corridor leading to WC lobby/WCs/Parish Council office

Fire escape direction illuminators are installed to the double doors to the Hall and also to the entrance hallway.

The emergency lighting system is checked regularly.

The electrical system is tested every 5 years.

Portable appliance testing is completed every 12 months.

### **Additional mitigation**

The Committee has taken action to remove the main causes of fires.

Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the premises and there are no known breaches of this policy; the caretaker will report on finding any cigarette butts inside the building.

Poor behaviour influenced by alcohol; it is not the Committee's intention that the building be licensed for the sale of alcohol. Any such sale is limited to Committee events and private functions; these are authorised by the Licensing Authority under the TEN system.

Deep fat frying; this does not occur and no suitable utensils are provided in the kitchen.

Waste bins; as detailed above, one small waste bin is located to the entrance hallway, one to the bar kitchen and a larger one to the kitchen. These are emptied by the cleaner or caretaker on a regular basis.

Training for users; the Hall Committee consists of up to about 12 members who are trained and refreshed periodically on matters of fire safety and the evacuation of the building. Training is provided by a suitably qualified person familiar with the organisation of the Hall.

The Hall generates income by letting it to private users. As well as occasional hires, it is also let to regular user groups, which include:

- Chipperfield Theatre Group who hire it for plays and pantomimes
- Exercise classes including Yoga, Zumba and Pilates
- Chipperfield Choral Society
- RSPB Hemel Hempstead Branch
- Indoor bowls
- The Horticultural Society
- Chipperfield Care

Generally speaking, functions are limited to around 120 people seated or an absolute maximum of 180 standing.

The 'Hall Information' pack (sent out with the hiring contract) contains paragraphs on smoking, exits and evacuation and the location of extinguishers and safety rules to be followed by hirers.

### **Further measures taken to reduce hazards and the spread of fire:**

#### **Kitchen**

##### Hazards

Cooking on the gas hob and oven.

Electrical equipment i.e. hot cupboard, kettle, fridge and dishwasher.

##### Preventative Measures

Fire blanket

Extinguisher

All sockets RCD protected

No storage of flammable items outside cupboards and drawers

#### **Hall**

##### Hazards

User activities.

Candles on birthday cakes (other candles are not to be used).

Fire from any electrical equipment in use.

##### Preventative Measures

All sockets RCD protected.

Smoking prohibited.

2 no. fire extinguishers, 1 no. by the kitchen door, 1 no. by the central fire doors.

No provision for rubbish storage.

#### **WC Areas**

No fire hazard areas identified.

## **Parish Clerk's Room**

### Hazard

Clerk uses plug in electric radiator.

### Preventative measure

Sockets are protected by RCD on separate consumer unit to bar kitchen

## **Circulation Areas**

All flammable materials stored within cabinets.

Emergency lighting installed to corridor leading to WCs etc.

## **Storage Room**

Limited flammable materials stored on the shelving.

## **Attic Room**

Used for the storage of theatrical costumes but generally unoccupied.

The access ladder is to be maintained in position during the rare occasions when the attic room is in use and the storage room below is fitted with an emergency light fitting.

## **Cleaning Materials**

Stored securely in the kitchen.

## **Hazardous Activities on the Premises**

It is not considered that any activities occur within the Hall which are of a hazardous nature in respect of fire.

## **Proactive Removal of Hazards**

The Caretaker is responsible for periodic checks to ensure that:

- Escape doors are fully functional
- Fire extinguishers are in place
- There is no accumulation of rubbish
- Gas boiler functioning satisfactorily
- No evident escape of gas or burning
- Consumer unit checked for tripped circuits

The Caretaker and other members of the Committee visit the Hall regularly and will take action if any new fire hazard is identified.

May 2025