

LVH Fire Safety - Risk Assessment

1. Premises details

Name: Levens Village Hall (Institute)

Address: Lowgate, Levens, LA8 8NL

Levens Village Hall is a two story slate roofed, stone-built community building situated on the junction of Lowgate and Hutton Lane in the centre of the village. The Hall is a registered charity and is run by a committee of local volunteer Trustees.

The facilities comprise the Main Hall, Lower Hall, main entrance lobby, lower entrance lobby, main kitchen and lower kitchen, stairs connecting the two floors, separate men's, women's and disabled toilets and a number of storage spaces. The Hall is available to hire for both private and public events. The maximum occupancy of the building will not exceed 185 people. The Main Hall can hold up to 100 standing/85 seated and the Lower Hall 85 standing/50 seated.

In addition to the main doors in the entrance lobby there are emergency exits leading directly out of the building from the Main Hall, the lower Hall and the lower entrance lobby. The premises meet all the requirements of the current Disability Discrimination Act and are licensed for entertainments including dance, plays, films and music.

The Hall is hired by a range of voluntary organisations, private individuals and statutory organisations for a variety of activities, some of which are licensable. A written agreement between the Village Hall and the Hirer forms the basis of the Hiring arrangement. The Hire Agreement and conditions of hire draw the hirers' attention to the health and safety and licensing obligations that the booking places upon them. Hirers are expected to provide attendants to meet the requirements of and relevant licensing conditions.

2. Principle Uses of the Village Hall:

The Village Hall is used for a wide variety of functions. These include, but are not limited to, toddler group, youth activities, fitness classes, art & craft classes, dance rehearsals, film, musical performances, private parties and charity fund raisers.

The Village Hall Trustees encourages all regular 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.

The Trustees encourages 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 on the notice boards of the Main Hall.

3. Responsible persons

- Chair of Trustees

Fiona Sanders
Seaview Cottage, Hutton Lane, Levens, LA8 8PB
Telephone: 07970 754355
Email: changing.perspective@icloud.com

- Nominated H&S Trustee

Adam Hearnden
26 The Green, Levens, LA8 8NH
Telephone: 07525034232
Email: adam.hearnden62@btinternet.com

4. Fire Safety Risk Assessment

- Risk Assessor's details

Name: Adam Hearnden
Email address: adam.hearnden62@btinternet.com
Phone number: 07525034232

Experience and qualifications: 30 years working in a various professional safety roles in the defence manufacturing and construction industry, including 7 years as H&S Director. 5 years as Chair of UK Nuclear Industry Safety Directors Forum. Honours Degree in Nuclear Engineering & Reactor Physics. NEBOSH general certificate.

- Relevant fire safety legislation

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

- Enforcement Authority

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service enforces the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in England and Wales. They have the power to inspect premises, issue

notices for improvements and even close buildings if fire safety measures are inadequate.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service local contact:

- Watch Manager, Kendal Fire Station 01539 797666

4.1 Information about the premises

- **General description of premises**

Levens Village Hall was built in 1903 as a two story stone-built community building. It has a pitched roof of local slate over a timber frame with no internal divisions. Internal walls are of stone, block or timber stud construction depending on location. All internal walls are hard plastered over the stone/block work or, in the case of stud walls, over plaster board or laths. The majority of the plaster work is sound although some of the plaster over laths is in poor condition. The stairs connecting the two floors are of timber construction with a heavy door to close access to the top. The floors are a mixture of timber (e.g. Main Hall) and concrete. The windows are all uPVC framed double glazed units with suitable locks and hinges. The main double door to the front is of timber and glass construction. There is no external cladding on the building but the main kitchen has uPVC cladding fitted to the ceiling. This uPVC cladding has a fire rating of C or D. Lighting and heating throughout the building is powered by mains electricity. There is no mains or bottle gas supply to the building.

- **Occupancy details**

Levens Village Hall is used daily and can be occupied any time between 7.00am and 11:00pm

- **Size**

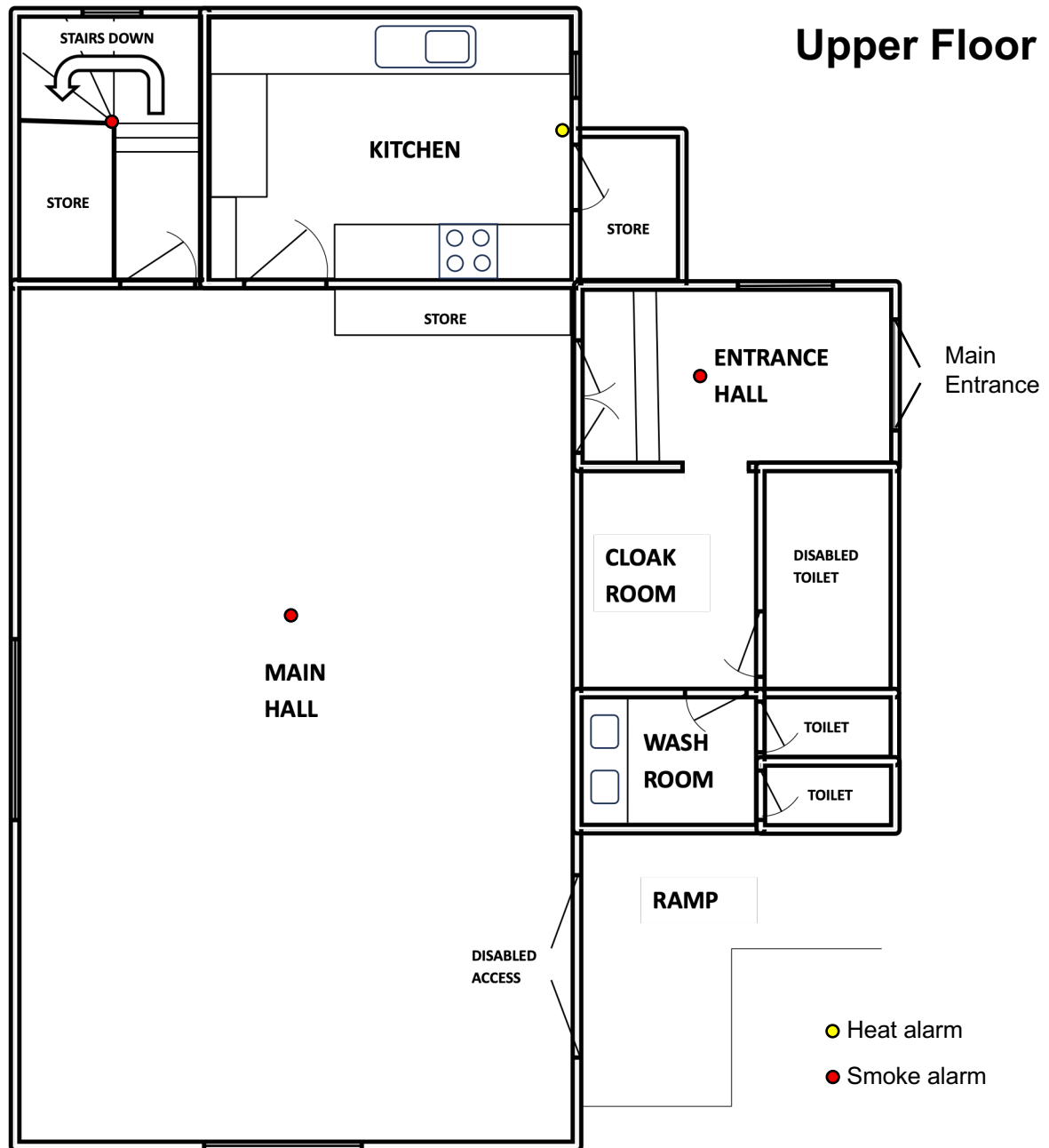
- Building footprint (metres by metres): tba
- Number of floors: 2
- Number of basements: 0
- Number of stairs: 1

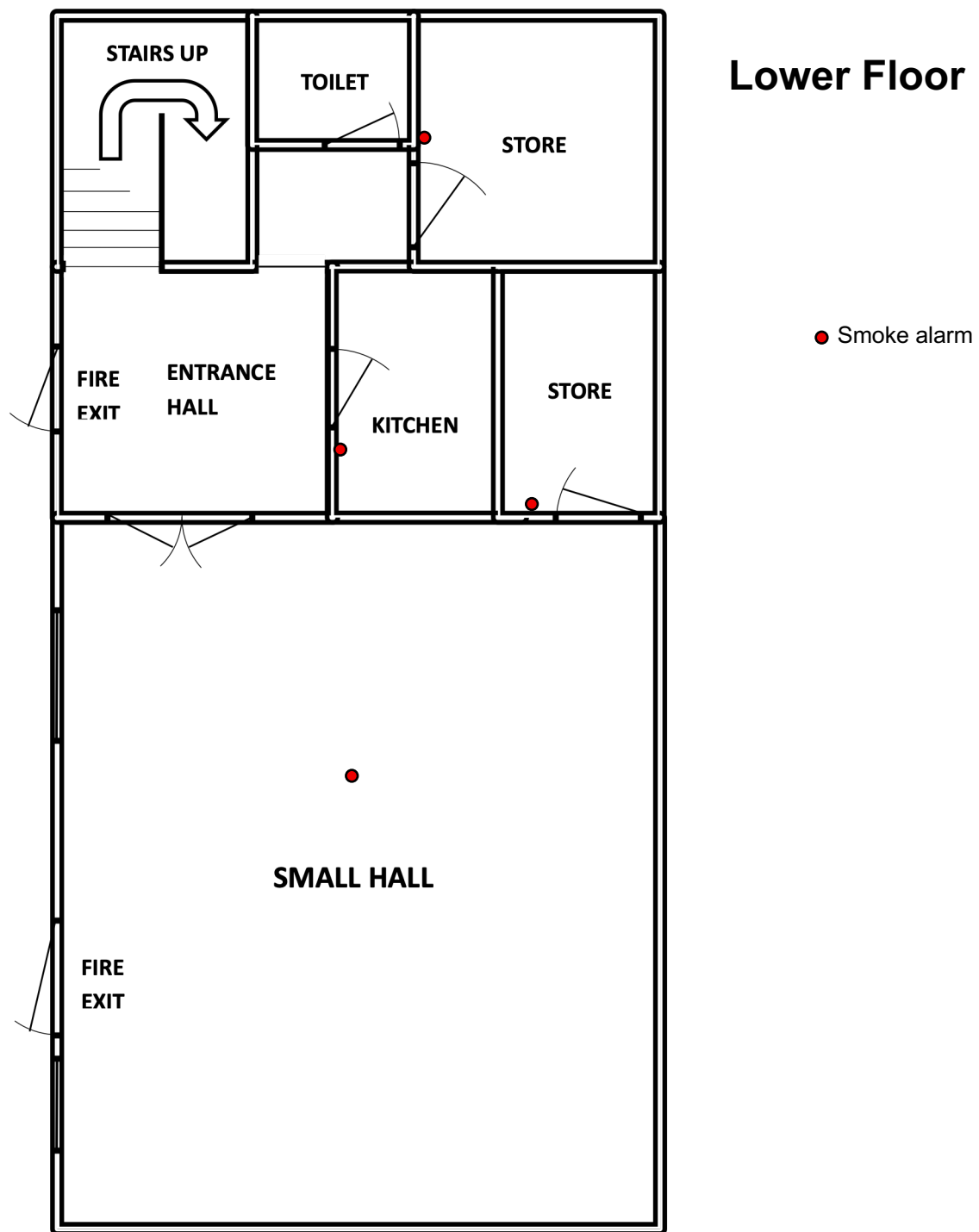
4.2 People at Risk

- **Staff:** The Trustees do not employ any staff at Levens Village Hall.

- **Trades People and Contractors:** The Trustees employs local trades people and contractors on both an ad-hoc and scheduled basis for the purposes of cleaning, safety checks and building maintenance. The cleaner has access to the building via a key stored in an external key safe and is generally on her own when working. Local trades people who are familiar with the building may gain access to the Hall by borrowing a key from the bookings secretary, other committee members or may be provided with the code to the external key safe. Other trades people or contractors are always escorted by one or more committee members.
- **Hall Users (up to 185 maximum inside at any time):** These will generally be familiar with the Hall. Those that are not will find the simple layout easy to navigate and assimilate. The Main Hall has 3 easily identifiable fire exits which serve the upper floor. The lower floor has 2 easily identifiable fire exits, one in the Lower Hall and one in the lower entrance lobby. Emergency lighting is installed over fire doors and around the building and this is tested regularly. A fire detection and alert system with audible sounders comprising wireless linked smoke and heat detectors is installed and is tested regularly. Each fire exit is fitted with either a push-bar release or a simple thumb latch requiring a single turn.
- **Disabled Persons:** At a typical function there may possibly be a limited number of persons with one or more disabilities (e.g. mobility issues, impaired sight or hearing). It is the responsibility of Hall hirers to ensure such disabled persons are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation. Emergency exit doors from the Main Hall and Lower Hall exit to level ground or via ramps to level ground, so there are no barriers to evacuation with a wheel chair.
- **Children and Young People:** It is the responsibility of hirers to ensure all children and young people within the Hall are supervised and that they are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation.
- **Other Vulnerable Groups:** It is the responsibility of hirers to ensure that individuals who might be classed as 'vulnerable' are supervised and that they are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation.
- **Residents:** There are no residents who occupy the building and there are no provisions for sleeping on the premises.
- **Other Members of the Public (who are not using the Hall):** Members of the public may walk past the front or rear of the Hall. There are domestic dwellings in close proximity to the Hall.

4.3 Plan of premises





4.4 Potential Causes of Fire Hazard

| Source of Ignition | Source of Fuel | Source of Oxygen |
|---|---|------------------|
| Faulty electrical system in mains power supply, ring mains, fused and unfused spurs, lighting circuits or wall mounted heaters. | Any material close to the source of the fault/ignition (e.g. the cupboard in which the consumer unit is located, skirting boards, plaster board, wood panelling). | Open to the air |
| Faulty portable electrical equipment (e.g. kettles, toasters, radios, etc) | The portable device itself and then any combustible materials close to it | Open to the air |
| Kitchen appliances (i.e. hob, oven, fridge, kettle, microwave) | The appliance itself and then any combustible materials close to it | Open to the air |
| Smoking | Material in waste bins or any other areas where cigarettes may be left or disposed of. | Open to the air |
| Cooking accidents | Hot oil igniting on the hob or under a grill. Food burning in the oven or on the hob. | Open to the air |
| Chemical reaction | Any material close to the source of the fault (e.g. the cupboard in which the hazardous materials are stored). | Open to the air. |
| Lightning | Combustible materials in building and roof structure. | Open to the air |
| Arson | Could be any source of combustible material. | Open to the air |

4.5 Hazard and Risk Control Measures

| Fire Hazard | Likelihood 1=low 5=high | Risk to persons from the hazard | Measures to remove or reduce | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | The Hazard | Risk to persons |
| Fire inside the Main or Lower Hall | 2 | Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death. Particular attention to be paid to children, young people, disabled or vulnerable people and those attending large events. | <p>Good housekeeping to minimise ignition sources and storage of combustible inventory in the Halls.</p> <p>Ensure sufficient and correct firefighting equipment is available and that a qualified practitioner inspects it at least once per year and provides advice on changing or moving locations as appropriate.</p> <p>The location of fire-fighting equipment and exits are clearly marked on a plan of the village Hall, which is published on the notice boards.</p> <p>A test of illumination of emergency lights shall be undertaken monthly and a test of continued illumination in event of power failure will be done annually.</p> <p>Ensure that village hall furnishings are made of a non-combustible material or a material that has been Fire Proofed to the</p> | <p>Ensure Hall users/hirers know how to evacuate the building, where the fire-fighting equipment is located and where the emergency exits and assembly points are. A fire detection and alert system has been installed comprising wireless linked smoke and heat detectors so that an alarm can be raised if a fire is discovered.</p> <p>Ensure the hirers know that they must organize a fire marshal to check the building has been vacated after alarm and that the fire brigade has been called out (as appropriate).</p> <p>Ensure all Fire Exit doors are checked for illumination, ease of opening and that the Emergency Exit Routes are clear on a weekly basis. The Trustees tests the ease of access to and through the escape routes and to the assembly points at least once per year and logs the results. Users will be made</p> |

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| | | | <p>standard applicable at the time of purchase. This includes window curtains, chairs, etc.</p> <p>Hall users will be asked to remove all their rubbish when they leave the building (i.e. emptying any bins)</p> | <p>aware of their responsibilities via the Booking process.</p> <p>Regular user groups will be advised that they should carry out their own Risk Assessment and that a copy should be lodged with the Trustees.</p> |
| Fire on the premises outside the two Halls. | 1 | Evacuating people towards the source of the fire. | <p>Good housekeeping to minimise ignition sources and storage of combustible inventory throughout the building.</p> <p>The location of fire evacuation routes and exits are clearly marked on a plan of the village Hall, which is published on the notice boards.</p> | <p>Ensure hirers understand and accept their responsibility to evacuate the building in the event of a fire and to allocate a responsible person to ensure the evacuation is coordinated properly and safely.</p> |
| Electrical fire due to fault in mains power supply, ring mains, fused and unfused spurs, lighting circuits, space heaters, kitchen appliances or portable devices. | 1 | Electrocution while attempting to put out the fire with water. | <p>A qualified practitioner checks the fixed wiring once every 3 years and portable appliances are checked every year. A Certificate of Inspection will be obtained for each inspection.</p> <p>Installation of suitable RCD devices to minimise ignition risk in the event of electrical fault.</p> <p>Warning notices to avoid electrical overload on unfused electrical spurs.</p> | <p>Ensure suitable (not water) firefighting equipment is available close to the likely sources of electrical fires.</p> |

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| Smoking | 3 | Smoke inhalation. Burns. | A strict No Smoking policy is enforced throughout the premises. No Smoking signs strategically placed throughout the building. | Ensure users are aware of and accept the No Smoking policy. |
| Cooking fire | 3 | Smoke inhalation. Burns. | Ensure users are aware of appropriate safety precautions concerning the use of the cooker. No deep fat fryers allowed. Ensure there is a fire blanket available close to the hob, for putting out oil fires. | Ensure users are aware of appropriate safety precautions concerning the use of the cooker. |
| Chemical fire | 2 | Explosion. Toxic smoke inhalation. Burns | Ensure inventory of hazardous materials and substances hazardous to health is minimised. Such materials shall be stored in a suitable locked storage container with strict access control. Details of the materials and the nature of their hazard characteristics shall be stored separate from the materials. | Ensure users are aware of appropriate safety precautions concerning the use of hazardous chemicals and harmful materials. |
| Children playing with matches or | 2 | Smoke inhalation. Burns. | | Ensure hirers are aware of their responsibility to |

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| other combustibles | | | | supervise children while inside the Hall. |
| Arson | 1 | Smoke inhalation. Burns. | Ensure hirers are aware of their responsibility for the Hall during their occupation and take reasonable steps to prevent wilful damage and lock up on departure. | Wherever possible, locking mechanisms for ensuring internal safety without comprising emergency routes are fitted. |

4.6 Source of fuel and storage of combustible materials

There is no mains or bottle gas supply to the Village Hall and no other fuel type is stored on the premises. There are two large log stores outside the premises adjacent to the north wall. These are situated on private land and belong to a neighbouring property but represent a potential fire hazard to the Village Hall in the event of arson or other source of ignition. General waste is deposited in small bins within the Village Hall which are emptied regularly. All upholstered furniture is fire retardant to the required standards. All curtains and window blinds should be similarly fire retardant. There are some items of furniture (wood 'pews' in the main hall, wooden tables stored above the stairs) which are manufactured from Class A combustible materials. Throughout the building there are a number of cupboards and storage locations which may contain accumulations of Class A combustible material. As a number of these locations were locked they could not be examined for the purpose of risk assessment.

4.7 Structural features that could promote the spread of fire

There are very few structural features which could promote the spread of fire. The main roof void is open with no internal fire partitions. However, for this size of building this does not require any corrective action. There is a single enclosed staircase with a heavy timber door closing access to the top. Some internal walls are of lath and plaster construction with uninsulated voids without fire stopping. However, the noggins used in the construction of these walls will provide an effective barrier to the spread of fire within the walls so no corrective action is necessary.

5. Summary Evaluation of Fire Safety Precautions

| Evaluating Fire Safety Precautions | Yes/No | Action Required | Responsible Person | Required date |
|---|--------|---|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Are possible ignition sources kept separate from combustible materials? | Yes | None | | |
| Are possible ignition sources controlled to minimise the risk of fire? | Yes | None | | |
| Is combustible inventory managed to minimise the risk of fire? | No | 1. Undertake a thorough room by room review of combustible materials. 2. Implement action plan to minimise and or improve storage. | 1. NB, JM, AH 2. NB, JM, AM | 31.01.26 |
| Would a fire be discovered quickly and would everybody be warned immediately? | Yes | None | | |
| Is escape possible in more than one direction? | Yes | None | | |
| Is there a detailed evacuation plan and are evacuation routes clearly marked? | No | Develop detailed evacuation plan and confirm/revise evacuation route marking as necessary. | AH | 31.01.26 |
| Are the fire exits easy to identify and reach? | No | Review signage on fire exits and confirm/update as necessary. | AH | 31.01.26 |
| Are escape routes free of obstruction? | Yes | None | | |
| Do fire exit doors open outwards? | Yes | None | | |

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| Are fire exit doors easy to open? | Yes | None | | |
| Is the fire detection and alarm system tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | None | | |
| Is the emergency lighting system tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | None | | |
| Are fire extinguishers and firefighting equipment tested and maintained correctly? | Yes | None | | |

6. Management – Procedures and Arrangements

Fire safety is managed by:

- Nominated H&S Trustee

Adam Hearnden
 26 The Green, Levens, LA8 8NH
 Telephone: 07525034232
 Email: adam.hearnden62@btinternet.com

- Company hired to maintain and service fire safety equipment:

Castle Fire & Security, Ghyll Mill, Beehive Lane, New Hutton, Kendal 01539 722500

Procedures in the event of fire

A standalone Fire Evacuation Procedure has been produced for Levens Village Hall. This procedure is subject to periodic review to ensure it maintains alignment with this risk assessment and relevant regulatory requirements.

Fire drills

A fire evacuation drill will be undertaken at least once per year to demonstrate the adequacy of the fire safety and evacuation arrangements. Details are set out in the Fire Evacuation Procedure.

9. Fire Risk Assessment

Taking into account the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is the opinion of the Fire Risk Assessor that the hazard from fire (likelihood of fire) at these premises is:

Low ☒ Medium ☐ High ☐

Taking into account the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this fire risk assessment, it is the opinion of the Fire Risk Assessor that the severity for life safety in the event of fire would be:

Slight harm ☒ Moderate harm ☐ Extreme harm ☐

Accordingly, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is:

Trivial ☐ Tolerable ☒ Moderate ☐ Substantial ☐ Intolerable ☐

Risk level action and timescale

- **Trivial** - no action is required and no detailed records need be kept.
- **Tolerable** - no major additional fire precautions required. However, there might be a need for reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
- **Moderate** - it is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures, which should take cost into account, should be implemented within a defined time period. Where moderate risk is associated with consequences that constitute extreme harm, further assessment might be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures.
- **Substantial** - considerable resources might have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the premises is unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the

risk has been reduced. If the premises is occupied, urgent action should be taken.

- **Intolerable** - premises (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.

Note: although the purpose of this section is to place the fire risk in context, the above approach to fire risk assessment is subjective and for guidance only.

All hazards and any actions identified in this risk assessment should be addressed by implementing all recommendations contained in the following action plan.

10. Action plan

To remedy the areas identified in the above, the following recommendations should be implemented in order to reduce fire risk to the following level:

Trivial ☒

Tolerable ☐

| Action No. | Action Required | Target Completion Date | Actual Completion Date | Actionee. | |
|------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--|
| 1 | Review hire agreement and conditions of hire to align with this risk assessment. | 31.01.26 | | AMH | |
| 2 | Prepare building fire evacuation plan for inclusion in Risk Assessment, Evacuation Procedure, Info to Fire & Rescue Service and for display in Halls. | 31.01.26 | | AMH | |
| 3 | Review adequacy of fire safety signage inc. fire exits, evacuation routes, location of firefighting equipment, location of hazardous materials, etc. and revise as necessary. | 31.01.26 | | AMH | |
| 4 | Confirm upholstered furniture, curtains and blinds are suitably fire retardant. | Curtains 28.02.26 | Furniture 01.12.25 | NB, JM, AMH | Furniture confirmed to be compliant with relevant regulations. |
| 5 | Review the need retain any furniture manufactured from Class A combustible materials. | | 01.12.25 | | All identified furniture to be retained following review. |
| 6 | Prepare file of information for use by the Fire & Rescue Service in the event of a fire call out. | 31.01.26 | | AMH | |

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|----|---|----------|----------|-------------|--|
| 7 | Undertake a room by room review and rationalisation of combustible materials holdings/storage with a view to minimise quantities of Class A materials (wood, paper, etc.) | 28.02.26 | | NB, JM, AMH | |
| 8 | Undertake an urgent review and rationalisation of the hazardous and potentially hazardous materials and other combustible materials within 'Henry's Cupboard'. | | 16.08.25 | NB, JM, AMH | Room was cleared of all hazardous and potentially hazardous materials. |
| 9 | Following Action 9, undertake a COSHH assessment of the residual holdings of hazardous materials and implement all necessary recommendations. | | 16.08.25 | AMH | No action required following 8. |
| 10 | Undertake a 6 monthly review of fire safety provisions using the check list at Appendix A. | Ongoing. | | AMH | |

Appendix A

Management – Maintenance and Testing Check List

1. Is there a maintenance programme for the fire protection measures in the premises by appropriate competent person(s)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments:

Action needed:

2. Are regular checks of fire resisting doors, walls and partitions carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed:

3. Are regular checks of escape routes (including external) and exit doors carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed:

4. Are regular checks of fire safety signs carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed:

5. Is there a service and test regime for the fire detection and alarm system?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed:

6. Is there a service and test regime for the emergency lighting system?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed:

7. Is there an inspection and maintenance regime for the fire-fighting equipment?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Frequency:

Observations:

Action needed: