

HAMDON YOUTH & FAMILY CENTRE

FIRE SAFETY POLICY 2023

This policy applies to all Committee Members, volunteers, user groups, hirers, regular users and contractors using and working at the Centre.

Background

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which took effect in 2006 applies to premises in England and Wales. It replaced the majority of fire safety legislation at that time with one simple order.

The Order, which is enforced by the Fire and Rescue Authority, requires: -

- The appointment of a 'responsible person(s)'
- A fire safety risk assessment and
- Fire precautions to be put in place where appropriate and where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

1. Responsibilities of the Centre Management Committee: -

- (a) The Centre Management Committee will, as the body in control of the premises, be the 'responsible person'.
- (b) The Committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and is required to either, carry out a Fire Risk Assessment and then take the necessary steps to reduce or remove the risk so that it is as low as possible, or delegate this task to somebody else.
- (c) The Committee must appoint one or more 'Competent Persons' (who can be committee members) to undertake the risk assessment and carry out, or arrange to have carried out, the preventative and protective measures required.
- (d) A 'Competent Person' is someone with enough training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to be able to implement these measures properly. (A Centre Committee member who knows the building and the uses made of it could probably be judged to have enough 'knowledge and other qualities' if provided with information about the companies servicing the hall's fire protection equipment, maintenance schedules, fire officer's contact details and previous advice).
- (e) There is no requirement to undertake a training course.

2. Responsibility to Volunteers, User Groups and Hirers: -

- (a) The Centre Management Committee has a responsibility to ensure that user groups, hirers and any volunteers are aware of the current fire safety regulations and that the user/hirer appoints a person to take responsibility at each session/meeting/event.
- (b) Volunteers, user groups and hirers should be provided with necessary advice and information in respect of fire procedures, including evacuation and the

use of fire safety equipment. A signed copy of the Policy should be held by the Management Committee

- (c) The person appointed by users/hirers who is responsible for the sessions/meeting/events held on the premises must ensure that they have a list of all persons attending.
- (d) In the event of an evacuation of the building, the 'Responsible Person/s for that session/meeting/event will take the record of attendees to the assembly point and assist with the evacuation of the building.

3. Duties of the 'Competent Person'

- (a) Ensure safe systems of work are in place with regard to fire safety
- (b) Check that the fire safety equipment is maintained and in appropriate positions
- (c) Ensure that the fire escape lighting and signage is in good order and serviced on a regular basis
- (d) Undertake annual risk assessments and report the findings to the Committee
- (e) Report any defects that may compromise fire safety to the Committee
- (f) Report any obstructions to fire doors, fire escape routes and fire-fighting equipment and deal with them immediately if reasonably practicable.
- (g) Ensure that new volunteers, hirers and users have been made aware of the fire procedures, including means and direction of evacuation, location of fire exit doors, means of raising the alarm and location/use of fire-fighting equipment.

4. Duties of the nominated 'responsible person' for each hirer/user in the event of a fire

- (a) Ensure that an alarm has been sounded.
- (b) Confirm that the fire and rescue service has been called.
- (c) If possible, without endangering themselves, locate the person raising the alarm and determine the extent of the fire.
- (d) Ensure that all employees, users, hirers and any other occupiers are aware of the emergency.
- (e) Ensure, without endangering themselves, that everyone leaves the building immediately and that no-one remains in the building.
- (f) Ensure that the doors are closed once everyone has left the building.
- (g) Ensure that no persons re-enter the building during the emergency.
- (h) Proceed to the assembly point and check that all persons are accounted for.

- (i) On the arrival of the fire and rescue services, make him/herself known to the officer in charge and pass on any relevant information such as if anyone is not accounted for.
- (j) Although fire-fighting equipment is available, the main task is to evacuate all persons safely paying particular attention to vulnerable users. Only those with the competence to use extinguishers safely should fight the fire unless the extinguishers are essential to ensure a safe exit.

5. Fire risk assessment

- (a) A Fire Risk Assessment must be carried out in conformance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (England & Wales). The Centre Fire Risk Assessment is maintained and updated annually by the nominated 'Competent Person/s
- (b) All volunteers, user groups and hirers must ensure that they are familiar with this risk assessment and with the alternative means of escape in case of fire by walking the routes from the area which they are using. They should also familiarise themselves with the designated assembly point on the pavement in West Street outside the Centre and all the fire exits in the building.
- (c) All regular users of the Centre should carry out their own fire risk assessment highlighting the risks that relate to their own group of users, their activities, and any vulnerable attendees.

6. Any person suspecting or discovering a fire should:

- (a) Raise the alarm and warn the 'responsible person' for the group.
- (b) Dial 999 – ask for the Fire and Rescue Service and give them the building address and postcode TA14 6QG
- (c) Leave the building by the nearest available exit route and make their way to the assembly point in West Street
- (d) Close the door on the way out
- (e) Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- (f) Do not attempt to fight the fire unless you are competent to do so and you would not be endangering yourself or it is necessary to create a safe escape route

7. Any person hearing an alarm must:

- (a) Leave the building by the nearest available exit route
- (b) Go directly to the assembly point.
- (c) The 'Responsible Person' for the user group/hirer should ensure that all persons have left the building

- (d) Never re-enter the building until instructed to do by the Fire and Rescue Service
- (e) Follow instructions given by the 'Responsible Person'.

8. Evacuation procedures for wheelchair users and those with disabilities

- (a) On hearing the fire alarm the 'Responsible Person' within that area will ensure that anyone with a disability, who is sight or hearing impaired or is vulnerable in any other way is assisted in evacuating the building by the nearest available exit to the assembly point. The appropriate exit in this case is the Entrance Lobby exit, which can be accessed by wheelchairs.

Procedures for users who require assistance in this way should be covered in regular user groups own fire risk assessment.

- (b) The 'Responsible Person' for user groups and regular Centre users should carry out periodic fire drills with their specific attendees

FIRE SAFETY TESTING PROCEDURES

1. Testing of Fire Alarm Systems

- (a) The Centre has a central fire alarm system with the Control Panel situated in the Entrance Lobby. It is key-protected for testing, with the key being situated in the key box above the Panel. Those Committee members who act as Competent Persons are in possession of the code to open the key box.
- (b) The system comprises of sounders in each of the two halls, a smoke alarm in the kitchen and alarm panels at each of the two external door exits. It is serviced and maintained on an annual basis by SES Fire & Security in Yeovil. Our Customer number is HY1807 and their telephone number if 01935 433488.
- (c) The system is tested on a weekly basis by one of the Competent Persons and the results entered into the Fire Logbook.
- (d) The Fire Logbook is kept in the locked Cleaners Cupboard in the kitchen. All Committee members have access to the keycode for the padlock.

2. Emergency Lighting System

The Centre also has emergency lighting which is self-testing. This is checked by the Competent Person on a monthly basis and the results entered into the Fire Logbook.

3. Assembly Point

The assembly point is the pavement outside the driveway to The Wellingtonias, the large house to the right as you exit the Centre.