



# MERRIOTT VILLAGE HALL

## FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Registered charity number 1209414

Reviewed: 15 July 2023

Review frequency: Every 2 years

### Policy Statement

The Merriott Village Hall ("MVH") Trustees recognise their responsibility for fire safety at and around the hall.

As part of our Health and Safety steps, all staff, volunteers and hall users will be briefed and trained on fire safety and procedures in the event of a fire.

MVH has a designated Fire Safety Manager to help us meet the standards required. The current Fire Safety Manager is: Andrew Hayman (Trustee) 07794 540762 / 01460 271400. The Chairman of the Trustees and the Fire Safety Manager will undertake appropriate Fire Safety Training.

MVH has designated Martin Rowswell (Caretaker), 1 Melbury Row, Merriott as Fire Marshall. The Fire Marshall will undertake appropriate training.

MVH commits to regular testing of all alarms, appropriate maintenance and servicing of equipment and to hold regular fire drills and information sessions annually.

Fire drills may be held at regular and random intervals.

Since MVH Trustees are generally absent, it is essential that hall users, regular hirers and occasional hirers are aware of their own responsibilities for Fire Safety.

### MVH Trustees' responsibilities

- carry out regular fire risk assessments
- inform staff about any risks identified
- put in place, and maintain appropriate fire safety measures
- plan for an emergency
- provide staff with information, fire safety instruction and training
- provide hall users with information, fire safety instruction and training

Awareness training will be given to key personnel regarding any firefighting equipment installed/held, its location, and its uses fighting different kinds of fire.

Fire safety posters are displayed and exits clearly signed.

Users of the hall will be briefed on policy and procedures. In each user group, a person will be nominated to take fire safety responsibility for each and every event.

## **Fire Risk Assessment**

As the “responsible person”, MVH Trustees will carry out regularly fire risk assessments of the premises (last independent, professional assessment: April 2023 – document available for inspection).

## **Carrying out the assessment**

MVH Trustees will take advice from the local Fire and Rescue Authority / professionals and carry out the fire risk assessment appropriately. The assessment identifies the fire hazards; identifies people at risk; provides an evaluation of risk and steps to minimise it. The Assessment is available for inspection and is reviewed regularly.

## **We will take into consideration:**

- emergency routes and exits
- fire detection and warning systems
- firefighting equipment
- the removal or safe storage of dangerous substances
- an emergency fire evacuation plan
- the needs of vulnerable people, for example, the elderly, young children or those with disabilities
- providing information to employees and other people on the premises
- staff fire safety training

## **Fire safety and evacuation plan**

We have considered:

- a clear passageway to all escape routes
- clearly marked escape routes that are as short and direct as possible
- enough exits and routes for all people to escape
- emergency doors that open easily
- emergency lighting where needed
- training for all employees to know and use the escape routes
- a safe meeting point for staff
- **People with mobility needs** - We will make special arrangements for people with mobility needs, for example, ensure that there are people to help a wheelchair user if there is a fire.

## **Fire detection and warning systems**

MVH has a fire detection and warning system.

## **Maintenance and testing**

MVH Trustees will carry out regular checks to make sure that:

- all fire alarm systems are working
- the emergency lighting is working
- any faults in systems and equipment are recorded and subsequently rectified
- all escape routes are clear, and the floor is in good condition

- all fire escapes can be opened easily
- fire exit signs are in the right place

### **Enforcement, appeals and penalties**

The local fire and rescue authority may visit our premises to check the fire risk assessment and that fire prevention measures are appropriate. Fire safety officers may help us understand the rules and comply with them.

### **Employees, Volunteers and Hall Users Responsibilities**

1. Employees and volunteers should carefully read and familiarise themselves with the fire regulations which are displayed on notice boards.
2. Fire exits and routes should be kept clear at all times of clutter, blockages or flammable material.
3. Training should be undertaken during induction on Fire safety. Refresher training will be required.
4. Electrical appliances are regularly tested. Users should make sure that the cables, plugs etc. are not damaged; **do not** use any electrical equipment that shows signs of damage, even if minor. Report any faults. Report any concerns around fire safety.

### **Procedures in the event of Fire**

#### **On discovering a fire, raise the alarm.**

1. Immediately evacuate the building using the nearest safe exit.
2. The senior person will take charge and collect any registers or signing in book.
3. Staff, volunteers and visitors will be led out in an orderly manner and should assemble at the designated assembly point. Particular attention to be paid to babies, children and vulnerable adults.
4. The Manager or senior person in charge will check all area including toilets, staff room, store rooms, baby changing area, reception and play areas.
5. Close all doors behind you as you proceed out.
6. Dial 999 and ask for the fire service. Do not replace the handset until the fire service confirms our address.
7. Check the register/ signing in book to ensure everyone is accounted for. Account for all staff and all others in the building. Only if it is not too dangerous and if you are sure you can do it quickly and safely, attempt to put out the fire using the appropriate firefighting equipment, which can be found hanging next to all fire exits.

**Our designated assembly point is:** Beside car park at rear of hall, behind No. 1 Melbury Row.

#### **Further Documentation:**

*"Fire Safety in Village Halls, ACRE Information Sheet 37"*

*Fire Risk Assessment – undertaken by MGC Services for MVH, 20 April 2023*