

# Etal Village Hall - Fire Safety Risk Assessment

## Description of Premises

Etal Village Hall is a stone-built single-storey community building situated in Etal Village, 10 miles from Berwick upon Tweed and Wooler. The Hall is a registered charity and is run by a Management Committee of local volunteers. The committee consists of representatives from user groups and elected members of the public.

The facilities comprise of the main hall, meeting room, an entrance lobby, separate men's, women's and disabled toilets and a small storeroom. A catering kitchen is attached to the meeting room with a serving hatch. The Hall is available to hire for both private and public events. The Main Hall can hold up to 100 people and the meeting room, 20 people.

There is a car park to the side of the building, with space for 20 cars (plus 1 disabled space). There are emergency exits leading directly out of the building from the meeting room and the lobby area. 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 Standard Conditions of Hire draw the hirers' attention to the health and safety and licensing obligations that the booking places upon them.

## Principal Uses of Etal Village Hall

The Village Hall is used for a wide variety of functions. These cover, but are not limited to: Yoga, Pilates, Basket Making classes, Film nights, Meetings, Plays, Private Parties and Charity Fund raisers.

The Village Hall Management Committee 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 Management Committee 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, is published on the web site and is also on the notice board in the Main Hall.

## People at Risk of Fire

**Staff:** The Village Hall Committee does not employ any staff.

**Trades People:** The committee employs local trades people on both an ad-hoc and scheduled basis for the purposes of cleaning, safety checks and building maintenance. The cleaner has a code to the building and is generally on her own when working. Local trades people who are familiar with the building may gain access to the Hall by asking for the door code from the booking's secretary or other committee member, while others are always escorted by one or more committee members.

**Hall Users (up to 120 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 area is open plan and has 2 easily identifiable fire exits and the meeting room has 1 easily identifiable fire exit. Emergency lighting is installed over fire doors and around the Hall, and this is tested regularly. A fire alert and detection system with audible sounders is installed, and this is tested regularly. There are fire doors fitted with push-bar releases that exit directly outside at the side of the meeting room. The main double entrance doors to the Hall must be kept unlocked whenever the Hall is in use for a function.

**Disabled Persons:** At a typical function there may possibly be a limited number of disabled persons. It is the responsibility of Hall hirers to ensure disabled persons are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation. Emergency exit doors in the meeting room have a small step down to the path, The main double door exit is on a level with the paths outside, which are finished with tarmac, so there are no barriers to wheelchairs.

**Children:** It is the responsibility of hirers to ensure all children within the Hall are supervised and that they are given adequate assistance in the event of an evacuation. Primary Hall user groups are expected to have carried out their own Fire Risk Assessment.

**Other Members of the Public (who are not using the Hall):** Members of the public may walk past the front of the Hall and through the car park.

### Possible Causes of Fire

Source of Ignition	Source of Fuel	Source of Oxygen
Faulty electrical system in mains power supply, ring mains or lighting circuits.	Any material close to the source of the fault (e.g. the cupboard in which the consumer unit is located, plaster board, wood panelling).	Open to the air
Gas leak in mains supply to boilers.	Any combustible materials close to the boilers	Open to the air
Faulty portable electrical equipment (e.g. kettles Water boiler, etc)	The portable device itself and then any combustible materials close to it	Open to the air
Kitchen appliances (i.e. hob, oven, fridge, grills 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
Arson	Could be any source	Open to the air
Candles and other naked flames	The candles and combustible materials close to them.	Open to the air

## Control Measures reduce

## Measures to avoid or

Fire Hazard	Likelihood 1=Low 5=High	Risk to people from the fire hazard	The Hazard	Risk to people
Fire inside the Hall	2	Smoke inhalation. Burns. Death.	<p>Ensure sufficient and correct fire fighting 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. 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 and the web site.</p> <p>A test of continued illumination in event of a power failure will be done quarterly. Ensure that village hall furnishings are made of a non-combustible material or a material that has been Fire Proofed to the standard applicable at the time of purchase. This includes blinds, chairs, etc. Hall users will be asked to remove all their rubbish when they leave the building (i.e. emptying any bins)</p>	<p>Ensure Hall users/hirers know how to evacuate the building, where the fire-fighting equipment is located and where the assembly point is. A fire alert system has been installed so that an alarm can be raised if a fire is discovered.</p> <p>Ensure the hirers know that they must organize a fire martial to check the building has been vacated after alarm and that the fire brigade has been called out (as appropriate). 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 Management Committee 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 aware of their responsibilities under the Premises License (via the Booking process).</p>
Fire on the premises outside.	1	Evacuating people towards the source of the fire.		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.
Faulty electrics in mains power supply, ring mains, lighting circuits, kitchen appliances or portable devices.	1	Electrocution while attempting to put out the fire with water.	A qualified practitioner checks the fixed wiring once every 5 years and portable appliances are checked every year. A Certificate of Inspection will be obtained for each inspection.	Ensure suitable (not water) fire fighting equipment is available close to the likely sources of electrical fires.
Gas leak in supply to the cooker.	1	Death from Explosive combustion and associated damage.	Ensure that the gas appliances are maintained and tested at least once per year. A safety inspection certificate to be obtained after each service.	

Smoking	1	Smoke inhalation. Burns.	A No Smoking policy enforced throughout the premises inside.	
Cooking Accidents	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.	
Children playing with matches or other combustibles	2	Smoke inhalation. Burns.		Ensure hirers are aware of their responsibility to supervise children while inside the Hall.
Arson	1	Smoke inhalation. Burns.	Ensure Hall 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.

## **Fire Assembly Point:**

### **At the bottom of the Car Park**

*Adopted by Etal Village Hall trustees January 2024*

*Reviewed: - 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026*