

Overview of NNVHC's Portable Appliance Testing Scheme

Why might you need it? Appliance Testing is a health and safety measure. This applies to all portable appliances used in halls irrespective of whether they are owned by the Trustees or users. It is best practice, and many insurance companies require it, as do rural touring schemes like Highlights. Members should consider it for these reasons and for the protection of your trustees and users.

What sort of appliances are covered? Basically anything with a plug on it which can be moved. That includes: kettles, urns, floor cleaners, vacuum cleaners, fridges, microwaves, portable electric heaters, desktop computers, lamps, toasters, extension leads, fans etc.

What does the scheme provide? The Consortium owns two test kits and two microwave emission testers. These are used by a team of trained volunteer testers to carry out the required testing in those halls which have requested it. This is usually done on an annual basis.

Who can use the service? Paid-up members of our Village Hall Consortium.

How do we join the scheme? If a hall wishes to join this scheme, it should contact the Secretary and request the service.

How much will the service cost? : The charge for testing up to 5 appliances will be £15, between 6 and 10 appliances £20, between 11 and 30 appliances £30 and for 31 or more appliances, £1 per appliance. No VAT is charged and this price includes travel costs.

Where does the income from fees go? The money goes to cover the Consortium's annual costs. These include the annual insurance premium and calibration costs, depreciation for the tester units, labels, travel costs and training new testers.

When will our appliances be tested? Member halls have been grouped together geographically and each group linked to one volunteer tester to reduce the travel time and costs. The volunteers will arrange to carry out testing for all halls in their group within a specific time frame (usually one or two months) and as near as possible 12 months after the last test. If your hall has never been tested then we will give it priority.

How will the scheme be managed? It is co-ordinated by the Secretary, George Courtice. The volunteer testers receive a basic mileage rate of 35p for each mile recorded travelling to the halls to do testing. The Consortium has taken out an insurance policy for the scheme, covering Public Liability and Professional Indemnity for the two test units to be used concurrently.

What can you expect? We aim to provide a professional & personal service which offers the same or better quality as commercial providers. Your volunteer tester will arrange the visit direct with you. It would help enormously if participating halls listed their appliances to be tested prior to that visit on the Equipment Register form. The tester will then test each item and label it with a sticker. Halls will then be posted an invoice from the Consortium.