

Example risk assessment for a village hall



Setting the scene

The management committee decided to do a risk assessment of their village hall to control the risks to people who used the hall and were involved in its maintenance and upkeep.

The management committee did not have a legal requirement to record the findings of this risk assessment as less than five people work at the hall.

Much of the repair and maintenance work at the hall was done by self-employed workers, who have responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as for other issues like the hours they work and their financial and tax arrangements. A cleaner works at the hall every morning and stores the cleaning materials in a locked cupboard.

However, the management committee decided that there were sound legal and business reasons to record the findings of the risk assessment, and to take steps to make sure that they were brought to the attention of those working or holding an event in the hall.

The secretary of the management committee did the risk assessment.

How was the risk assessment done?

The secretary first looked at relevant guidance on the HSE website including:

- The health and safety toolbox: How to control risks at work (www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/index.htm)
- Checklist for managers of a village or community hall (see www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/)

He then identified the hazards in the village hall. He did this by:

- walking around the hall, car park and other areas with another member of the management committee, and a regular user of the hall, noting things that might cause harm
- talking to users of the hall, and those who had done jobs there to learn from their knowledge and experience and get their views on health and safety.

As he identified the hazards he also thought about who could be harmed by them and how accidents might happen.

He noted what he was already doing to control the risks and considered whether he needed to do anything more. He recorded any further actions required.

Putting the risk assessment into practice the secretary set out what any actions needed to be taken, who would do them and by when.

How to use this example

This example risk assessment shows a wide range of hazards that might be present in this type of small business. It can be used as a guide to help you think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks.

However, this is not a generic risk assessment. Every business is different. To satisfy the law you must identify and assess the hazards your business poses, think through the controls required to provide effective protection to people who may be affected by them, and record the significant findings from your risk assessment of your business.

The secretary discussed the findings with the management committee who determined to carry out the additional risk controls suggested, and a copy was put up in reception and the kitchen area.

It was agreed the risk assessment should be shown to anyone doing jobs at the hall and discussed by representatives of groups using the hall for the first time. The committee decided to review the risk assessment whenever there were any significant changes, such as alterations to the hall

Company name: Village hall Date of risk assessment: 1 June 2012

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Slips and trips Doorways (rain), uneven surfaces of car park, cleaning floors	Hall users may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car park surface is well maintained with parking spaces for disabled visitors available next to hall entrance ■ The car park is well lit ■ Doormats are placed at the entrance in wet weather ■ Cable covers are used for all electrical leads/cables ■ People know (through hire agreement) to clear up spillages immediately and know where equipment is kept 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspect the car park surface regularly and repair as necessary 	Secretary/Treasurer	Periodic checks	16 June, then every three months
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Check that hall cleaner knows which products to use on which type of floor 	Secretary	16/6/12	8/6/12
Working at height Changing light bulbs, cleaning windows, putting up decorations	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Suitable ladders are available for use ■ Hall users know (through hire agreement) that they are responsible for using the ladder safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put a procedure in place to ensure regular safety checks of ladder 	Secretary	16/6/12	8/6/12
Vehicles	Pedestrians could suffer serious injury if struck by cars entering/leaving car park or moving within it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car park well lit with entrance/exit to car park clearly marked ■ For large events, parking controlled by marshals wearing high-visibility vests ■ Skip/recycling collection takes place at times when hall not in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider 5 mph speed limit sign in car park 	Secretary	30/6/12	30/6/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advise users of hall, through hire agreement, to consider the need to control car parking 	Secretary	30/6/12	30/6/12
Hazardous substances Cleaning products vapour may cause breathing problems	The cleaner risks skin irritation or eye damage from direct contact with cleaning chemicals. Vapour from cleaning chemicals may cause breathing problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mops, brushes, strong rubber gloves provided ■ Cleaner shown how to use products safely, eg follow instructions on the label, dilute properly and never transfer to an unmarked container ■ Cleaning products stored securely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Replace 'irritant' chemicals with milder alternatives, where possible 	Secretary	16/6/12	8/6/12

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Electrical equipment Kitchen equipment and heaters	Hall users could get shocks or burns from faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hall users know they are responsible for any equipment used on site ■ Have safety plugs in sockets ■ Portable equipment checked for visual signs of damage before use ■ Safety checks of the electrical equipment and installations are carried out to ensure that the equipment continues to be safe. Where necessary this is done by a competent electrician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make sure hall users know where the fuse box is and how to safely turn off the electricity in an emergency 	Secretary	30/9/12	25/9/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind hall users that portable equipment considered unsafe should be marked and taken out of use 	Secretary	30/9/12	25/9/12
Manual handling Lifting and moving tables and chairs	Hall users risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy/ bulky objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trolleys available to move heavy equipment and users know where they are kept ■ Users know that they must stack tables and chairs carefully so that they do not collapse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No 			
Asbestos	Maintenance workers are most at risk when carrying out work on the building, in case fibres are released into the air and inhaled. Staff carrying out normal activities are at very low risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find out when hall was built to establish if it contains any asbestos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If asbestos containing materials are present, but in good condition, record where it is and put warning signs up that the area is not to be disturbed - Make regular checks to ensure it remains undisturbed and signs maintained - Any damaged asbestos to be removed by specialist contractors 	Secretary	30/9/12	21/8/12
Fire Faulty electrics	If trapped, hall users could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation/ burns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fire risk assessment has been done, and any necessary action taken, see www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities 		Chair of management Committee	From now on	

Assessment review date: 01/06/13