

Birchmeadow Centre

Birchmeadow Road

Broseley

Telford

TF12 5LP



Fire Risk Assessment

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

**January 2016**

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to provide an assessment of the risk to life from fire in the premises identified and, where appropriate, to make any recommendations necessary to ensure full compliance with extant fire safety legislation.

This report does not specifically identify the risk to property or business continuity from fire.

The submission of this report to the client does not constitute a warranty of future results by Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd, nor any assurance against risk. The report represents the best judgement of the assessor only and is based, in part, on information provided by others. The information, facts and opinions that have been expressed in this document are believed to be correct in light of currently available information. Although the assessor has exercised all due diligence during the inspection of the premises and in preparing the report, it is possible that other matters were not advised to the assessor which might materially change the outcome of this fire risk assessment. The “responsible person” must consider carefully the report in full to satisfy themselves that all the significant fire hazards and associated risks within your business have been identified.

Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd, nor the assessor accept any responsibility in respect of the implementation of the recommendations made and no liability can be accepted for the accuracy of any information provided by others.

This report is based on a selection from the following bibliography;

***Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Small & medium places of assembly,*** , DCLG London, 2006

**The Health & Safety (safety signs and signals) Regulations 1996, Guidance on regulations,** HSE Books, 1996

***Maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low risk environments***, HSE Books, 1996.

***Reducing False Alarms of Fire***, Chief Fire Officers Association, 2011

***BS 5839 Part 1, Fire detection & alarm systems for buildings. Code of Practice***. BSI, 2011

***BS 5306 Part 8, Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises. Code of Practice for the inspection and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers. Code of Practice.*** BSI, 2012

***BS 5266 Part 1, Emergency lighting. Code of practice for emergency lighting of premises other than cinemas and other certain specified premises used for entertainment***. BSI, 2011.

***BS 5499 Part 4. Safety signs including fire safety signs. Code of Practice for escape route signing***. BSI, 2000.

***BS 5499 Part 4. Safety signs including fire safety signs. Code of Practice for Signs with specific meanings***. BSI, 2002.

***BS 5588 Part 12. Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings. Managing Fire safety.*** BSI, 2004.

***The electricity at work regulations 1989***. SI 1989/635.

***The electrical equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994***, SI 1994/3260.

***BS 5588 Part 5. Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings. Access and facilities for fire fighting***. BSI, 2004.

***BS 5588 Part 8. Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings. Code of Practice for means of escape for disabled people***. BSI, 1999.

***BS EN 1155: Building hardware. Electrically powered hold open devices for swing doors. Requirements & test methods***. BSI, 1997.

***BS EN 1869: Fire Blankets***. BSI, 1997.

***BS 7671: Requirements for electrical installations: IEE wiring regulations***. BSI, 2011.

***Design principles of fire safety***. The Stationery Office, 1996.

***Ensuring best practice for passive fire protection in buildings***. Building Research Establishment, 2003.

**LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS**

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O) was introduced, under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001, on the 1st October 2006 and replaced many references to fire safety in other legislation to bring about much simpler identification of fire safety requirements for business. The Order applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space put to certain uses. It identifies the ‘**responsible person’** as the person who is required to;

* Carry out, or nominate a competent person to carry out, a fire risk assessment
* Consider who may be especially at risk
* Ensure that staff are regularly trained in fire safety
* Eliminate or reduce the risk from fire as far as is reasonably practical
* Provide general fire precautions to deal with any residual risk.
* Ensure maintenance of all fire safety systems.
* Create a plan to deal with any emergency and, in most cases, document your findings.
* Review the findings on a regular basis.

**FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

A fire risk assessment is the cornerstone of the RR(FS)O and is undertaken to ascertain the risk of fire to persons who may be legally on the premises or persons who are nearby and may be affected by a fire on the premises (known as ‘relevant persons) and must be formally recorded where there are 5 or more employees, the premises are licensed by an authority or are subject to an alterations notice issued by the fire and rescue service.

The fire risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that, as far as ‘***reasonably practicable’\****; the risk of fire occurring and spreading is as low as possible, and specifically:

That everyone in the premises will be able to reach a place of safety without outside assistance

That general fire precautions are adequate and that any defects are identified and rectified as soon as possible

That suitable management policies exist to ensure adequate maintenance of the premises and maintenance and testing of fire safety systems

That suitable training programmes exist for staff fire safety training

That the risk from work processes and combustible hazards are properly controlled

That this is understood by all employees, occupiers, tenants etc.

Under the RR(FS)O, anyone who has control in a building or anyone who has a degree of control over certain areas or systems may be designated a responsible person, for example;

* The employer for those parts of the premises they have control over.
* The managing agent or owner for the common parts of a premises or common fire safety equipment such as fire warning systems, sprinklers, emergency lighting etc.
* The occupier of a premises that are not workplaces such as chairman in a parish hall.
* Any other person who has some control over a part of a premises may be the responsible person in so far as that control extends.

\* The term ‘reasonably practicable’ is widely used within Health and Safety/Fire Safety law and is a balance of risk versus cost. The greater the risk, the greater the need to control it and the more resources that will need to be committed to reduce or control the risk.

In essence, making sure a risk has been reduced to as low as reasonably practical is about weighing the risk against the sacrifice needed to further reduce it. The decision is weighted in favour of health and safety/fire safety because the presumption is that the duty-holder should implement the risk reduction measure.

To avoid having to make this sacrifice, the duty-holder must be able to show that it would be grossly disproportionate to the benefits of risk reduction that would be achieved. Thus, the process is not one of balancing the costs and benefits of measures but, rather, of adopting measures except where they are ruled out because they involve grossly disproportionate sacrifices (cost benefit analysis).

If you comply with current good practice, you should have complied with the term reasonably practicable.

**BUILDING REGULATIONS AND PLANNING CONSENT**

The Building Regulations are approved by Parliament and manage the minimum standards of design and building work required for the construction of domestic, commercial and industrial buildings. They specify the definitions of what is regarded as “building work” and the procedures for ensuring that it meets the standards laid down. Parliament has given the main responsibility for planning to local planning authorities.

Building Regulations deal mainly with health and safety considerations to make sure that buildings are properly designed and constructed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of persons using them and are focused on specific areas of the construction of the building and include, for example:

* Structural stability
* Fire safety
* Access and facilities for the disabled
* Electrical safety

Planning permission deals with the use of the land, the appearance of buildings, landscaping, highway access and the impact that the development will have on the general environment.

It is assumed that the building inspected by Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd for this report is put to a use approved by the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and that the occupation of the building is in accordance with any approval given by the LABC.

**REVIEW AND REVISION**

This Fire Risk Assessment should be reviewed annually or at any other time it is no longer considered relevant as identified in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

 The fire risk assessment should be reviewed if

There is any reason to suspect it is no longer valid; or

There has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates; or

Where the employer employs a young person (under 18 years).

However, where the above points do arise, or there is evidence of non-compliance on a regular basis or the Fire Authority has issued an improvement or prohibition notice then the fire risk assessment should be reviewed immediately. The fire risk assessment should be seen as a ‘living document’ and the fire risk assessment process as a continual review and/or revision of the control measures necessary

The first annual review of this risk assessment should be conducted in

**January 2017.**

**PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd has conducted the fire risk assessment and the assessor has prepared the report based upon the information gained on site and during the tour of the premises. Although the assessor is experienced and trained to a high standard, he/she has no statutory powers to demand entry or the production of documents or information.

The advice in the report is therefore provided in good faith based upon the evidence provided to the assessor at the time of the inspection. No guarantee can be given that during any subsequent inspections by persons with statutory powers that other, non-compliance situations, may not be found.

Every care is taken to interpret the Acts, Regulations and Approved Codes of Practices, however these can only be authoritatively interpreted by a Court of Law.

**PREMISES FIRE RISK RATING**

**RISK RATINGS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fire Hazard**  | SLIGHT HARM | **MODERATE HARM** | EXTREME HARM |
| LOW | Trivial | Tolerable | Moderate |
| **MEDIUM** | Tolerable | Moderate | Substantial |
| HIGH | Moderate | **Substantial** | Intolerable |

The risk of ignition at the premises, taking the fire prevention measures into account observed at the time of the risk assessment is:

**Low Risk**

In this context, a definition of the above terms is a follows:

***LOW RISK***

**Premises or workplaces where there is minimal risk to persons lives, where the risk of a fire occurring is low with few combustible materials, no highly flammable substances and virtually no sources of heat, or the potential for fire, heat and smoke spreading is negligible and people would have plenty of time to react to an alert of fire and escape.**

*MEDIUM RISK*

Premises or workplaces where there are sufficient quantities of combustible materials and sources of heat to be of greater risk than low but where an outbreak of fire is likely to remain confined or spread slowly allowing persons to escape to a place of safety.

*HIGH RISK*

Premises or workplaces where there is a serious risk to life from fire, there are substantial quantities of combustible materials and/or the available time needed to evacuate the area is reduced by the speed of development of a fire. Or, where the reaction time to an alert of fire is slower, either because of the type of person present (elderly or infirm) or owing to the activity in the workplace (persons sleeping on the premises).

The consequences for life safety, in the event of a fire, taking into account the nature of the building, its occupancy, management and all fire protection measures observed during this fire risk assessment, are assessed as:

**Moderate**

In this context, a definition of the above terms is a follows:

Slight Harm: Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant.

**Moderate Harm: Outbreak of fire could result in injury of one or more occupants, but is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.**

Extreme Harm: Significant potential for serious injury or death

It is therefore considered that the overall risk to life from fire at this building is:

**Tolerable**

**Section 2: The Fire Risk Assessment**

The “responsible person” for all fire safety matters is deemed to be the Chairman of The Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee, currently Caroline Bagnall.

Day to day responsibility for fire safety matters is vested in Mr Simon Milan.

This fire risk assessment was carried out by Martin TIMMIS a Fire Risk Assessor & Principal Consultant for Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd.

Date of Assessment: 8th January 2016.

Previous Assessment: There has been no professional fire risk assessment previously. However, the committee has provided its own assessment in the past.

Next routine review: January 2017

**General information**

Birchmeadow Centre is owned by Broseley Town Council and managed by The Birchmeadow Centre Management Committee, each of whom are Trustees.

The building is constructed primarily from brick walls with wooden floors under a tiled, pitched roof. The external walls are largely rendered. A number of small extensions have been added in recent years using brick and block construction.

Internal arrangements include compartmentation providing a minimum of 30 minutes’ fire separation. This is supplemented by self-closing fire resisting doors (FD30) where required.

There are three floors, ground floor used mainly as main hall, bar etc., first floor having the Brownie Room, and mainly storage on second floor. The majority of the building is actually single storey, albeit with high ceilings in the main hall.

The building is used as a community centre with bar, kitchen, hall with stage and other communal rooms. The committee hire rooms to members of the public and other community groups.

**Previous fire history**

None

**Firefighting facilities**

The building is secure at all times.

The fire assembly point is located to the rear of the premises.

Access for firefighting using roadways is adequate. There is vehicular access to the front, rear and one side elevation.

Adequate water supplies for firefighting are available from public fire hydrants nearby.

**Occupancy**

The building may be occupied between 0900 and 2400 hours, seven days a week.

There are two part-time staff and a number of committee members.

The number of people resorting to the premises is limited by the size of specific rooms. In general, the following occupancies are expected:

Brownie Room 12 to 15

Pritchard Room – fewer than 60

Main Hall – up to 120.

The number of contractors attending the premises is minimal.

There may be people with disabilities present on the ground floor, where there is level access.

**Ignition sources identified**

* The mains electrical system for the building.
* Television, kettle and electric fan in Brownie Room
* Lighting controls in Lighting Room
* Beer pumps and coolers in cellar
* Gas cooker, microwave ovens, fridges, dishwasher, cash register in kitchen
* Gas fired (domestic) heating boilers
* Display fridges in bar area
* Extensive scene lighting in Main Hall
* Deliberate fire setting.

**Fuel sources**

* Building contents including fixtures and fittings
* Electrical equipment and appliances.
* Costumes and props in store
* Stage props etc.

**Existing control measures**

* There is an adequate fire safety policy with associated procedural documents. This is provided on-line for all potential hirers to digest.
* There is a well-managed “no smoking” policy
* There is a BS 5839: Part 1, Type L2 fire detection and alarm system which provides protection to all escape routes from the building.
* There is a Type M manual electric break glass system with manual call points at all exits and at strategic points
* The fire alarm is controlled by a BS/EN54 panel which utilises three zones, with the alarm panel located in the main entrance hall.
* The electrical installation has been subjected to periodic inspection, most recently in January 2013. Although the next test date is recommended as January 2016 there is no requirement for the test to be completed sooner than 2018.
* All electrical equipment appears to be well maintained and some has been subjected to portable appliance testing. We suggest that the portable electrical equipment is generally low usage and therefore a three yearly inspection would be adequate.
* The emergency lighting system which consists of some spotlights is extensive and will be tested at appropriate monthly intervals.
* Firefighting equipment has been provided and will be regularly inspected and tested annually. The next test is due in March 2016.
* Efforts are made to separate ignition sources from fuels.
* Waste materials are regularly removed from site by third party contractor.
* Adequate checks are being made of escape routes to ensure that they are in good order.
* All furniture is relatively new and meets the current fire resisting standards.
* Heating is provided by hot water radiators fed by the domestic boilers. There may be some supplementary electric heaters, for example fixed electrical heater in the BroADS store. The boilers are tested annually.
* There is a good security system in place.
* Travel distances to a place of relative safety, and then to a place of ultimate safety (outside) are generally within approved guidelines and tolerances.
* Fire resisting doors provided in refurbished areas have intumescent strips rather than smoke seals. These are accepted other than where noted in the action plan.

**Significant findings**

The “lighting room” is an inner room of the Brownies Room. This room is rarely access, having a locked door. There is smoke detection within the Brownies Room to give early warning of a fire. This is considered adequate.

Assuming the door to the terrace is not used as a fire exit door, the measured maximum travel distance from the kitchen, through the bar to the nearest final exit is approximately 24 metres. The distance to where there is escape in two directions is approximately 15 metres. The maximum travel distance in one direction permitted is 18 metres and 45 metres with escape in two directions. We therefore consider the existing distances to be acceptable subject to there being smoke detection within the bar area as well as corridors (the kitchen is an inner room which requires this level of protection).

The main hall is provided with three double exit doors. Each door will permit 240 people to exit in the accepted time (based on low risk). Two of the double doors fall within the parameters of the 45 Degree rule which means one is discounted in calculating exit capacity. A further door is discounted as if it were affected by fire. This means the theoretical exit capacity is calculated at 240 people. However, given the space available, we suggest that the maximum safe and comfortable **capacity of the Main Hall should not exceed 120 people**. This also allows for all of the occupants of the hall and up to 60 occupants of the Pritchard Room to use the rear/side escape route.

We note that the door to the second floor BRoADS storage room is not fire resisting. However, we have determined that there are no ignition sources of note within the room, the room is not occupied (normally locked) for long periods, there is smoke detection in the stairway outside, there is a separate means of escape from the room, and there is a fire door at the foot of the stairs. Consequently, the door need not be fire resisting.

The rooms on the first floor discharge into a protected staircase. Consequently, there is no requirement for the secondary means of escape through the prop room. The external escape is therefore not required and does not need to be signed.

**Section 3: Action Plan**

In order to satisfy current guidance and Codes of Practice, and to ensure compliance with regulations, a number of Actions are required. These actions are related to the significant findings of the fire risk assessment, in other words, areas of non-compliance with regulations.

The Actions are colour coded as follows to provide an indication of priority:

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| --- |
| Immediate action required |
| Action within one month |
| Action within three months |
| Action within 12 months |
| Recommendation only |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action number** | **What is required?** | **Completion date** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Means of escape** |  |
| 2016/01 | The Yale lock has been removed from the door at the foot of the stairs to the second floor. This has left a hole which must be filled to ensure the integrity of the protected staircase. |  |
| 2016/02 | The double door outside the cellar (into the staircase) should be provided with a new self-closing device so that the door remains fully closed to protect the integrity of the escape route from the upper floors. |  |
| 2016/03 | The door into the Pritchard Room should be provided with smoke seals to ensure that smoke cannot affect the main escape route from the building. |  |

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|  | **Signs and notices** |  |
| 2016/04 | The following additional directional exit signs are required:On the wall at the foot of the protected staircase pointing towards the final exit door (arrow right)http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/__data/assets/image/0019/26146/Fire-exit-door-arrow-new.jpg |  |
| 2016/05 | The following additional directional exit signs should be removed from the emergency lights:* Foot of the protected staircase leading back into the community centre
* From above the link door in The Pritchard Room
 |  |
| 2016/07 | Each break glass alarm should be provided with a sign to the current standard. This is a requirement in premises where there is regular public entertainment.http://www.thefpa.co.uk/filemanager/root/site_assets/publications/signs/6421.jpg |  |
| 2016/08 | General fire notices should be provided adjacent to each final exit to remind occupants of the basic escape procedure – raise the alarm, exit the building, call the fire brigade, only tackle fires if safe to do so. These should be in standard format.http://www.safetybuyer.com/media/catalog/product/cache/1/image/800x/9df78eab33525d08d6e5fb8d27136e95/1/4/1420_2.jpg |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2016/09 | The exit door from The Pritchard Room to the rear exit should be provided with a notice indicating the direction to turn the thumb turn device.http://www.oakrange.co.uk/store/media/catalog/product/cache/1/image/9df78eab33525d08d6e5fb8d27136e95/t/u/turn_clockwise_to_open.jpg |  |
| 2016/10 | Each of the final exit doors should be provided with a notice indicating “Fire Exit Keep Clear”. These should be located on the outside of the doors.http://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0492/2329/products/keep-clear-fire-exit-sign.png?v=1406157639 |  |
| 2016/11 | A sign indicating the location of the assembly point should be provided.https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/57/ISO_7010_E007.svg/2000px-ISO_7010_E007.svg.png |  |
|  | **We recommend signs with photo-luminescent properties** |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Management issues** |  |
| 2016/12 | A fire safety testing and maintenance regime should be implemented, in line with the following guidance:**FIRE WARNING SYSTEM**The fire warning system must be tested **weekly** and the results of this test recorded in a fire log book. The system should also undergo servicing by a competent electrical engineer annually.**EMERGENCY LIGHTING SYSTEM**The emergency lighting system must be tested monthly by a simple on/off test for each unit to ensure correct operation and the results of this test recorded in the fire log book. Further, the system is required to undergo an annual service by a competent electrical engineer.**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**The portable fire extinguishers should be inspected monthly by the occupier, to ensure there is no obvious damage to them and that they are located correctly. These inspections are required to comply with BS5306 and the Fire Safety Order.They will also require to be inspected annually by a competent engineer. **ESCAPE ROUTES AND EXIT DOORS ETC**Good practice would indicate that all escape routes, fire doors and exit doors should be inspected on a regular basis to ensure there are no identified hazards or defects and the results of this inspection must be recorded in the fire log book.  |  |
| 2016/13 | Staff should receive fire safety training on an annual basis and records of dates and content should be kept.The training should cover:* Fire safety measures in the building
* Action in event of fire
* Action on the fire alarm
* Method of operating manual call points
* Location and use of Fire Fighting Equipment (FFE)
* Means for summoning the Fire Service
* Identity the people who will use FFE

General Fire Awareness courses cover all of these issues plus a wealth of other information including practical use of fire extinguishers. |  |
| 2016/14 | It is important that at least two fire drills are conducted each year and that these are recorded in a log book.We suggest these take place when the Brownies are occupying the first floor. |  |
| 2016/15 | In order to further tighten the management procedures, we recommend that each room hirer is required to state they have read and understood the fire policy and fire plan for the building, and that during their use of the building they are responsible for the safety of their party.This might best be achieved by the use of a “confirmation tick box” on the web form. Failure to check the box would result in the Management Committee declining the hire. |  |
|  | **Other matters** |  |
| 2016/16 | We note that some fire extinguishers have not been fixed on brackets. This is important to ensure extinguishers are available in appropriate locations when required.This should be actioned in March 2016 during the annual service. SFRMS will be pleased to quote for servicing. |  |
| 2016/17 | A plan of the building indicating the location of fire alarm zones should be provided adjacent to the fire alarm panel. |  |
| 2016/18 | We note that the fire separation between the kitchen (most likely origin of a fire) and the remainder of the building is compromised by the use of door hold-open devices. We recommend provision of an automatic hold-open device linked to the fire alarm system. This is not required for life safety but for property protection and business continuity. |  |
| 2016/19 | Stage curtains should be treated with fire retardant to reduce the likelihood of fire spread. When next they are cleaned, the curtains should have an appropriate fire retardant applied. |  |
| 2016/20 | We recommend that additional emergency lighting is provided outside the rear of the building to illuminate the car park in the event of power failure. |  |
| 2016/21 | The waste bins are located against the building. It is recommended that bins are located away from the building, and preferably secured to prevent fires spreading to the building. |  |

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