

# DRUITT HALL

*The hall in the heart of Christchurch*

Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AB – situated in Druitt Gardens at the rear of the library

General correspondence / contact as above, email [trustees@druiythall.org.uk](mailto:trustees@druiythall.org.uk), or phone

01202 485688 (your call will be forwarded to our mobile phone

All bookings and billing for hires are handled on our behalf by the Regent Centre - 01202 588956 - email [sara@regentcentre.co.uk](mailto:sara@regentcentre.co.uk)

## **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT and FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

Druitt Hall  
Druitt Gardens  
High Street  
Christchurch  
BH23 1AB

updated  
**29th October 2017**

# **Fire Risk Assessment**

This Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken by C R Guest (one of the Trustees) and is an update and review of the previous assessment of July 2014.

The Assessment was undertaken in accordance with the general risk assessment principles set out in The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in order to identify hazards that could contribute to injury of persons working in or resorting to the building.

There are five aspects that are considered:

- Identification of hazards**
- Assessment of those at risk**
- Evaluation of the risk**
- Methods of control**
- Further controls that are necessary**

Due regard has been given to the standards of fire safety required for the premises and training that is necessary to maintain and wherever possible to improve those standards, and the records to be kept. The detail in the risk assessment has been obtained by our trustee from four years of association with the building in carrying out improvements and maintenance and from a particular inspection of the premises for this assessment.

The conclusions of the Risk Assessment have been reached by consideration of the current codes of practice, guides, British Standards, the Fire Regulations and best industry standards. They have been applied reasonably to provide and maintain satisfactory Fire Safety and Fire Safety Management.

The responsibility for the ongoing management of the premises and the decision to allow the premises to be used for its present purpose remains with the responsible person. Any subsequent changes to the premises, subsequent faults in equipment, or deterioration in the premises and testing requirements, which may affect fire and life safety must result in a revised Assessment where necessary.

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# **THE REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2005**

## **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

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The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the risk to life from fire in these premises, and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation. The report does not address the risk to property or business continuity from fire.

Assessed for:	Druitt Hall Community Association
Address of Property:	Druitt Hall, High Street, Christchurch BH23 1AB
Assessor:	C R Guest
Date of Fire Risk Assessment:	17th October 2017
Date of Previous Fire Risk Assessment:	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Suggested Date for Review:	October 2018

*(This risk assessment should be reviewed by a competent person by the date indicated above or at such earlier time as there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid or there have been significant changes i.e.: extensions or alterations to the property, a change of use or process, an increase of staff, a change of ownership or occupancy etc)*

## **The Premises:**

### **Brief details:**

Druitt Hall is a timber-framed building. All walls are formed in framed timber, faced internally and externally with oil-tempered hardboard or plywood. The walls have been lined internally with insulated plasterboard in the areas where improvements have been carried out (sheet MDF over insulation in the Meeting Room).

The roof structure comprises a series of steel trusses with secondary roof members (purlins and rafters) in timber.

The roof covering is asbestos-cement sheeting.

The original ceilings (all retained) comprise timber joists with a fibreboard-panel infill. In the improved area a secondary (dropped) ceiling has been installed comprising timber joists and plasterboard (MDF in the Meeting Room).

The building has solid floors throughout.

There are a total of four external doorways providing exits from three sides.

The interior is subdivided into nine areas/rooms (two storage rooms, kitchen, main hall, lobby, meeting room, female wc, male wc and DDA-compliant wc).

The building is single-storey with a gross floor area of approximately 215m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Other Relevant Information:**

The hall is owned and insured by the local authority. Druitt Hall Community Association (DHCA) lease the building from the local authority and are about to sign a lease extension (to September 2027).

DHCA have held a lease on and have administered the hall since 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 and, in that time, have made alterations to the interior of the premises. The alterations comprise the reformation / modernisation of all toilet facilities, the kitchen and the meeting room plus the provision of a DDA-compliant single external door. Further work planned includes forming improved access to one of the internal storage areas and the rebuilding of a former annexe to the hall (the Markham Room).

This is a short-form preliminary fire risk assessment for the property to identify any fire safety life issues.

## **Occupants**

The hall is administered on a 'responsible hirer' basis, with a named person identified in every letting agreement. The terms of hire include information on the fire procedures for the premises.

The hall users range in age from the very young to the very old, with a concomitant range of abilities (mobility, vision etc).

Maximum number of persons:

Main hall (108 m2)

- the notional limit allowed by the width of the exits is 217 (standing, with no furniture present)
- however the Trustees have set a limit to hirers of 120 standing and 80 seated

Meeting Room (14.6 m2)

- the notional limit for seated persons is 14, for standing persons 48
- however the Trustees have set a limit by providing a table and 10 chairs, with a recommended occupancy of 8 seated

## **Occupants at special risk**

Sleeping, disabled, and in remote areas

No-one will be sleeping on the premises. This is not permitted under the terms of the lease.

The number of disabled persons would vary and is dependent on who hires the facility and the type of event.

There will be no occupants in remote areas.

## **Fire loss**

The former annexe to Druitt Hall, known as the 'Markham Room', was damaged by fire in, it is believed, 2008. The superstructure of this annexe was subsequently entirely removed. This fire is understood to have been caused by a discarded cigarette and did not spread to the main building. All required testing of the electrical installation and certification of new electrical works is observed by DHCA.

## **Electrical sources of ignition**

Fixed installation tested / PAT testing / Policy on personal appliances / Leads / adapters

The electrical installation was last tested and inspected in 2017.

Annual PAT testing is carried out.

The terms of hire require hirers to use only tested leads and equipment.

## **Smoking**

Prohibited anywhere on the premises

## **Arson**

Security / fire loading in proximity

This is a lock-up premises without a monitored intruder alarm or fire alarm system. A non-monitored CCTV system is installed.

There is no fire loading in close proximity to the outside of the building.

## **Portable heaters / Heating**

Avoided / more hazardous / minimize ignition / maintenance of fixed heating

Heating is provided in the main hall area by high level wall mounted electric heaters.

Heating in the toilets, kitchen and meeting room is provided by thermostatically-controlled fixed wall-mounted electric heaters.

## **Cooking**

Measures to prevent fires / extinguishers available

Cooking is provided by electrical appliances: two enclosed ovens and a worktop-hob. These are supplemented by the provision of two 2-ring portable electric ring-heaters.

The fire fighting equipment comprises a fire blanket and a CO2 extinguisher.

## **Other significant ignition sources**

None present

## **Housekeeping**

Standard ok / combustibles separated from ignition / accumulation of waste – combustibles / storage of hazardous materials

Good housekeeping is fundamental to reducing risk. Controlling the presence of combustible materials and ignition sources not only reduces the potential for accidental fires to start and develop; it also significantly reduces the scope for deliberate fires. It ensures escape routes are free of obstructions and trip hazards that might hinder the evacuation of people from the building and access for fire-fighters.

Housekeeping was satisfactory at the time of this fire risk assessment.

Cleaning materials and flammable liquids are stored in a locked metal cabinet (non-fireproof).

## **Outside contractors**

Control / conditions imposed / in house maintenance

Any contractors employed to carry out work within the premises should have to furnish confirmation of their Health and Safety policy before being engaged to carry out work. They should also be suitably insured and qualified.

## **Means of escape**

Reasonable / design / travel distance / suitable protection / adequate exits / exits easily openable

The means of escape from the hall in the event of a fire is via 1.4 metre wide doors at the front of the property and 1.4 metre wide doors from the main hall to the side of the property. There is also a 750mm wide exit door from the kitchen to the side of the property.

Allowing for the loss of one of the main exit doors, there is a remaining exit capacity for 230 people within the premises (without taking account of the kitchen exit). Currently the main hall is suitable for 100 people seated or 217 standing with no furniture – but this has been further limited by the Trustees (as noted above).

The means of escape from the meeting room in the event of a fire is via a 0.72 metre wide door to the entrance lobby and thence via the 1.4 metre wide doors at the front of the property.

Whenever the premises are occupied, it is important that both of the double doors which form part of the exit from the front lobby and the main hall are immediately available for use without the use of a key or a drawbolt.

The Trustees have identified that, although not marked as a fire escape route, the external door of the kitchen (with its emergency light overhead) has the potential to be used as a means of escape from the building. The door leads to a side path (outside the leased premises but a right of way under the lease) which leads in one direction to the rear of the hall, an area containing significant trip hazards and which is fenced off from the main Druitt Gardens, and in the other direction to the parking area at the front of the hall but which route is closed off by a locked gate. There is the potential for persons to find themselves trapped in this area alongside the hall.

The Trustees have resolved that the said gate should be replaced and that it should be fitted with a suitable panic bolt (and not locked) to permit egress from the side path in the event of an emergency.

## **Measures to limit fire spread/ development**

Compartmentation / linings

The internal partition walls and doors have less than 30 minutes fire resistance. To compensate for this, automatic fire detection has been provided in the premises as described in the 'Means of giving warning' section below.

Detector / sounders have been provided in the kitchen, hall, meeting room and lobby.

## **Escape lighting**

Reasonable standard

Three hour non maintained style escape lighting is provided in the hall, kitchen, lobby, meeting room and disabled toilet.

## **Signs and notices**

Reasonable standard

Nothing further required at this time.

## **Means of giving warning**

Reasonable manual – electrical system / AFA provided / remote transmission

A fire alarm is the current means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire. This comprises interlinked mains-electric with battery-backup fire detection: a heat detector in the kitchen, two 'optical type' smoke detectors in the main hall and one 'optical type' detector in the entrance lobby area and also in the meeting room. This is equivalent to British Standard 5839 part 6, grade D, category LD2

## **Manual fire extinguishers**

Reasonable provision / hose reels

Sufficient fire fighting equipment is provided, positioned as advised in the last assessment.

The equipment comprises one water and one carbon dioxide extinguisher in the lobby, a water extinguisher in the hall, a fire blanket and carbon dioxide extinguisher in the kitchen.

The extinguishers are inspected and checked twice-annually.

## **Management – procedures and arrangements**

Person responsible / competent persons to assist / appropriate fire procedures / persons nominated to respond to fire / persons nominated to assist with evacuation / liaison with fire service / routine in house inspections

The person responsible for fire safety within the premises is Chris Guest or such alternative person as may be named by the Trustees of DHCA.

Included with this fire risk assessment is a site specific fire routine for persons hiring the facilities. A copy is made available to persons hiring the facilities and is displayed in the main hall (at the light switches). There will be no permanent staff at the premises.



## **Testing and maintenance**

Adequate maintenance / weekly testing and servicing of alarm – detection system / monthly- six month – annual test of emergency lights / annual maintenance of extinguishers / rising mains

The fire extinguishers are inspected annually.

The automatic fire detection is tested monthly in conjunction with testing of the escape lighting

### **FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

The following simple risk level estimator is based on a more general health and safety risk level estimator contained in BS 8800: 1996 (*Guide to occupational health and safety management systems*):

Potential consequences of fire →	Slightly harmful	Harmful	Extremely harmful
Fire hazard ↓			
Low	Trivial risk	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk
Medium	Tolerable risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
High	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

Taking into account the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the hazard from fire (probability of ignition) at these premises will be:

Low:	✓	Medium:	-	High:	-
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Taking into account the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the consequences for life safety in the event of a fire would be:

Slightly harmful:	-	Harmful:	✓	Extremely harmful:	-
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In this context, the definition of the above terms is as follows:

Slightly harmful:	Outbreak of fire is unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant
Harmful:	Outbreak of fire could result in harm to one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant; any such injury or death is unlikely to involve multiples of people
Extremely harmful:	Potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants

Accordingly it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is currently:

Trivial	-	Tolerable	✓	Moderate	-	Substantial	-	Intolerable	-
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A suitable risk-based control plan should involve effort and urgency that is proportional to risk. The following risk-based control plan is based on one advocated by BS 8800 for general health and safety risks:

<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Action and timescale</b>
Trivial	No action is required and no detailed records need be kept
Tolerable	No major additional controls required. However, there may be a need for improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
Moderate	<p>It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures should be implemented within a defined time limit.</p> <p>Where moderate risk is associated with extremely harmful consequences, further assessment may be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures.</p>
Substantial	Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the building is unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the risk has been reduced. If the building is occupied, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	The building (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS / SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS**

It is considered that the following recommendations should be implemented within the time scales as indicated below, in order to reduce fire risk to, or maintain it at, the following level when the proposed alterations to the premises are completed:

Category A = Recommendations that should be implemented immediately or as soon as reasonably practicable. (within 6 months)

Category B = Recommendations that should be implemented in the short term. (within 12 months)

Category C = Recommendations of a non-urgent nature. (within 24 months)

Category D = Recommendations for the longer term. (Up to 24 months or more)

Trivial	-	Tolerable	✓
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	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Category</b>
1	Whenever the premises are occupied, it is important that both of the double doors which form part of the exit from the front lobby and the main hall are immediately available for use without the use of a key or a drawbolt.	A
2	Included with this fire risk assessment is a sample site specific fire routine for persons hiring the facilities. A copy should be available for persons hiring the facilities.	A
3	Replacement of the side gate leading from the path on the north side of the building to the library car park, such gate to be fitted with a panic bolt and not to be kept padlocked.	A

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# DRUITT HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## FIRE SAFETY POLICY

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This policy has particular relevance to those organising functions in the Hall.  
A copy of the policy will be posted in the Hall - function organisers will be made aware of it and must observe and support it.  
The Trustees will review the policy annually.

### Aims

- To ensure that all users of Druitt Hall know what actions should be taken in the event of a fire in the building.
- To identify and eliminate where possible fire risks that may exist within the hall.
- To ensure that the testing and servicing of all fire fighting and warning equipment is carried out regularly by an appropriate body.
- To display appropriate signage.

### **Procedure - In the case of a fire in Druitt Hall all users should:**

- evacuate the building in an orderly way to an Assembly Point away from the Hall in the High Street
- only attempt to put out the fire if they feel competent to do so without endangering themselves
- switch off appliances and close all doors and windows before leaving if it is safe to do so
- call the fire service on '999' - *use a mobile phone if at all possible (otherwise ask at the library / other nearby building to make the call; a public phone is available at the junction of the High Street with Fountain Way (outside Lovetts Estate Agents))*
- inform the Trustees as soon as possible (*call 01202 485688*)
- not return to the building until approval is given by the Fire Service
- write an account of the incident and provide this to the Trustees