

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

Important reminder

This example risk assessment shows the kind of approach a small organisation of this nature might take.

Use it as a guide to think through some of the hazards in your organisation and the steps you need to take to control the risks.

Please note that it is not a generic risk assessment that you can just put your name on and adopt wholesale without any thought. This would not satisfy the law – and would not be effective in protecting people.

Every organisation is different – you need to think through the hazards and controls required for yourself.

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.

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 followed the guidance in *Five steps to risk assessment* (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf).

- 1 To identify the hazards, the secretary:
 - looked at HSE's web pages for free health and safety advice and guidance for small businesses;
 - walked 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 pose a risk; and

- spoke to other users of the hall, and to people who had done jobs at the hall, to learn from their experience and to get their views on health and safety.
- 2 The secretary then wrote down who could be harmed by the hazards and how.
- 3 They wrote down what controls were in place to manage these risks and then compared these to the guidance on HSE's website.
- 4 They put the findings of the risk assessment into practice, writing down who was responsible for doing what, and by when. They decided to tick off each action when it was completed, and to record the date when it was done.
- 5 The secretary discussed the findings with the management committee. The committee decided to put in place all the additional risk controls the secretary had suggested. They also decided that the risk assessment would be shown to all workers doing jobs at the hall, and given to all users of the hall, and that it would be discussed with the representatives of all groups using the hall for the first time. A copy was also put up in the reception and kitchen areas. The management committee decided to review the risk assessment every year, or immediately if any changes occurred to the hall or how the hall was used.

Company name: Village hall

Date of risk assessment: 1 June 2007

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Slips, trips and falls Eg uneven surface of car park, cleaning floors etc.	Users of the hall and car park may suffer injuries such as fractures or bruising if they slip, eg on spillages or trip over objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car park surface maintained to be as even as possible. ■ Parking spaces for visitors with disabilities available next to hall entrance. ■ Good lighting in car park and all rooms and corridors in hall. ■ Users know (through hire agreement) to clear up spillages immediately and know where equipment for this is kept. ■ Mats at entrances to stop rain water being carried in. ■ No storage in corridors. ■ No trailing electrical leads/cables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Surface to be inspected regularly and repaired as necessary. 	Secretary/ Treasurer	Inspect three-monthly	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	16/6/07	8/6/07
Work at height Eg changing light bulbs, cleaning windows, putting up decorations etc.	Anyone working at any height could suffer injuries, possibly very serious ones, should they fall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appropriate, commercial stepladder securely stored and available for use. ■ Hall users know (through hire agreement) that they are responsible for using the stepladder safely. ■ Hall committee members and cleaner know how to use the stepladder safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Print copies of HSE guidance on safe use of stepladders and make available to those who may use stepladder. 	Secretary	16/6/07	8/6/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put in place system for checking condition of stepladder. 	Secretary	16/6/07	8/6/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider implications for work at height of any future alterations to the hall. 	Secretary	As needed	

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Vehicle movement	Pedestrians could suffer serious injury if struck by cars entering/leaving car park or moving in it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Entrance/exit to car park clearly marked. ■ For large events, parking controlled by marshals wearing high-visibility vests. ■ Car park well lit. ■ Skip/recycling collection takes place at times when hall not in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Apply 5 mph speed limit in car park and put up signs. 	Secretary	30/6/07	30/6/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advise users of hall, through hire agreement, to consider whether they need to control car parking. 	Secretary	30/6/07	30/6/07
Hazardous substances Eg cleaning products	The cleaner, and others cleaning, risk skin problems, eg dermatitis and eye damage, from direct contact with cleaning chemicals. Vapour may cause breathing problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mops, brushes and strong rubber gloves provided. ■ Cleaning products marked 'irritant' replaced with milder alternatives. ■ Cleaner trained 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"> ■ Cleaner reminded to check for dry, red or itchy skin on her hands and, if finding any, to go to doctors for advice and to tell the secretary to the management committee. 	Secretary	16/6/07	8/6/07
Electricity	Users risk electric shocks or burns from faulty equipment or installation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fixed installation correctly installed by qualified electrician, and inspected regularly. ■ All repairs by qualified electrician. ■ Safety plugs in sockets. ■ Portable equipment checked for visual signs of damage before use. ■ Hall users know they are responsible for any equipment used on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make sure hall users know where the fuse box is and how to switch supply off in an emergency. 	Secretary	30/9/07	25/9/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind users that portable equipment considered unsafe should be marked and taken out of use. 	Secretary	30/9/07	25/9/07
Stored equipment	Users could be injured by collapsing stacks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Users know that they must stack tables and chairs carefully so that they do not collapse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action needed. 			
Manual handling	Users may suffer back pain if they try to lift objects that are too heavy or awkward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trolleys available to move heavy equipment and users know where they are kept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action needed 			

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Asbestos	Staff, and others, carrying out normal activities at very low risk. Asbestos only poses a risk if fibres are released into air and inhaled. Maintenance workers are most at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No risk controls at present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out if hall contains any asbestos (eg in ceiling tiles, wall panels). If so, and if asbestos is in good condition, record where it is and put up signs warning that it is asbestos and is not to be disturbed (and then make regular checks to ensure it remains undisturbed and the signs maintained). Damaged asbestos to be removed by specialist contractors. If hall is ever demolished/refurbished, asbestos should first be removed by specialist contractors. 	Secretary	30/9/07	21/8/07
Fire	If trapped, staff could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation/burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire risk assessment done, see www.communities.gov.uk/fire and necessary action taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the actions identified as necessary by the fire risk assessment are done. 	Chair of the Management Committee	From now on	

Assessment review date: 1/6/08