

Lydeard St Lawrence Village Hall

Covid 19 Risk Assessment and Guidance



Keeping users of the hall safe

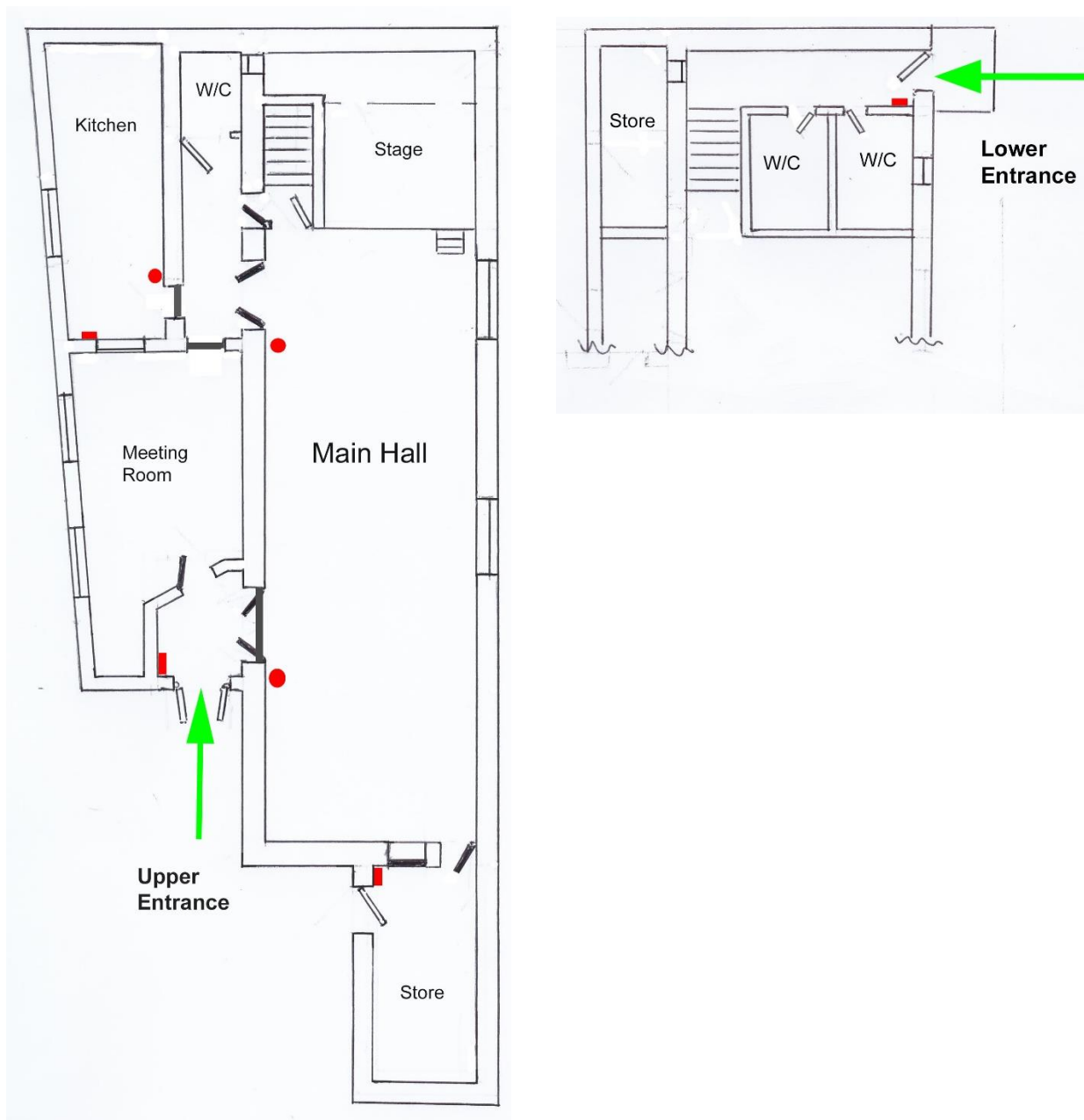
Assessment by the Trustees, July 2020

Description of Premises

Lydeard St Lawrence Village Hall is a stone-built, community building situated in the middle of the village 100m downhill from the church. It was substantially extended in 2005 and meets the building regulations current at that time regarding access.

The building comprises a main hall, meeting room and kitchen, with two entrance lobbies, one having level access via a ramp at the back of the building and the other via stairs up to a landing with access to the main hall and another hallway between the kitchen, and meeting room.

Plan of the building showing entrances



Risk Assessment

This assessment has been developed from the one prepared to consider the use of the hall as a post office. It has been broadened to include other activities. These activities are limited by legislation and government guidance. A number of indoor activities will be permitted from 25 July, subject to confirmation, but limitations regarding the mixing of households, social distancing and the types of activity still apply. Version 1.0 of the assessment is still valid and applies to the post office.

This assessment refers to the guidance in the Information Sheet issued by ACRE [“Re-opening Village and Community Halls post COVID-19 closure Issue 2 – Current at 4th July 2020”](#) and risk assessments prepared by hirers for particular activities should refer to that document.

People for consideration

- The general public
- Regular hirers
- Occasional hirers
- Post office customers
- Post office staff
- Cleaning contractor
- Grounds maintenance contractor
- Other contractors
- Trustees
- Any of the above falling into the Covid 19 vulnerable category as defined by the Government.

Potential hazard –

Infection by aerosol transmission

Aerosol infection means breathing in air containing the virus that has been breathed or coughed or sneezed out by an infected person. Government advice is that aerosol transmission is a low risk if a 2m separation is maintained between individuals. If this separation is not possible, particularly in an enclosed space, Government requires that a face covering should be worn (for example on public transport). World Health Organisation advice is that a 1m distance provides an acceptable level of risk, though unintended physical contact is much more likely at that distance. The length of time people are close to each other is also relevant, so briefly walking past someone at a distance of less than 2m may be less of a risk than spending an extended period at a distance of 2m. The degree of ventilation is also significant, hence the different treatment of indoor and outdoor activities.

Infection by contact

Infection by contact is possible when mucus from an infected person is picked up by someone else. Even if there is no physical contact it might occur indirectly from a surface that has been contaminated. The infected person may show no symptoms, but coughing, sneezing, or spitting will produce an infected mucus that may be spread by touch. The virus has a protective shell that means it can stay active outside the body for up to 72 hours on a hard surface (less time on an absorbent surface). This protection is very effectively broken down by soap or detergent – hence the emphasis on hand washing and cleaning surfaces that might be touched. The virus is not transmitted through the skin, but through the mucus membranes on the face, via the eyes, nose or mouth, so a hazard to be aware of is touching your face if you have previously touched a contaminated surface.

Potential for aerosol transmission in the village hall

Government advice on social distancing suggests that 2m separation provides low risk of aerosol transmission of the virus. Each room needs to be considered separately. Access and egress must be considered for each activity. Good ventilation is also important, as the virus may stay suspended in still air for some time. Regular air change will help reduce the risk of aerosol transmission.

Potential for contaminated surfaces in the village hall

Surfaces that are likely to be touched by anyone entering the village hall include

- the door handles and push plates, keys and locks.
- tables and chairs
- heating controls
- Light switches
- Taps and basins, wc seat and flush, toilet brush.
- kitchen equipment – kettle, refrigerator, microwave, crockery and cutlery etc
- Post office equipment

Arrangements for preventing contamination of surfaces and reducing the risk of aerosol transmission are set out below.

Procedure for Keeping the Hall Safe

Constraints

- The lower entrance to the hall is less than 2m wide and involves steps and a handrail.
- The path around the hall to the upper door is less than 2m wide and is not visible from end to end so hall users may not be able to maintain the recommended social distance as they pass.
- Each hirer will need to instruct hall users on a procedure to maintain safe access and egress for their particular activity.
- Ventilation in the main hall is problematic as the windows are small.

Mitigations

- Planned activities will limit the number of people attending. Hirers will be required to have a plan should additional people turn up.
- The layout provides a natural break between the various rooms.
- The building is relatively small and familiar to most users so there should be no need for “exploring” to locate facilities.

Procedure

Trustees will assist potential hirers in preparing their risk assessments and procedures.

Hygiene requirements and facilities are clearly displayed and available to people entering the building.

Hirers must plan for the management of social distancing for people arriving and leaving. This may mean organised queueing or staggered arrival times. If the activity involves casual dropping in there must be a procedure for marshalling so that numbers and contacts are managed. Members of the same household (or bubble) do not need to maintain a social distance from each other, but they must observe social distancing requirements from other households and hygiene requirements.

The dimensions of the various rooms provide theoretical limits for the number of attendees.

These limits are based on a 2m separation.

Main Hall - 15 people

Meeting room - 6 people

Kitchen - 3 people

Toilets and foyers – 1 person

Consideration must be given to ventilation, this may mean keeping some doors, including fire doors, propped open. Given the low occupation numbers and the comprehensive fire alarm system it is believed that the need for good ventilation outweighs the need to divide the building into two fire zones. This may change if a greater number of people are allowed to use the building.

Plans for circulation are required, for example for entry and exit or for preparing or serving food or drinks. If it is not possible for people to pass each other in without entering another person’s 2m space, (for example in the kitchen) a face covering must be worn.

A register of names of all users and a means of contact must be provided and kept by the hirer for 21 days.

Hand Sanitiser will be provided at each active entrance.

Notices will be provided with instructions and guidance.

The toilets will only be available one person at a time. Sanitary wipes will be provided and users required to wipe all the surfaces they have touched. Hand washing instructions will be displayed above every hand washing sink.

At the end of the session, the hirer will wash with detergent or wipe down with sanitising wipes,

- Any equipment to be left in the village hall
- Any kitchen equipment, handles, cups, crockery and cutlery used during the session
- All door handles, push plates, keys and locks used during the session
- Any sinks, taps and toilet facilities used during the session

All used sanitizing wipes will be bagged and removed from the village hall by the hirer at the end of the session.

Materials

The Village Hall trustees will supply hand sanitizer, masks, sanitizing wipes and detergent for cleaning. Signs advising on Covid 19 infection precautions will also be provided.

Trustees, cleaner, grounds maintenance and other contractors

Everyone will use hand sanitiser on entering the hall and use detergent or sanitizing wipes to clean any surfaces that they touch, if they might be touched by others within 72 hours.

The cleaner and grounds maintenance contractors shall avoid carrying out their work during hired sessions.

Any other contractors will be provided with this document and encouraged to determine their own safe working methods in line with Government advice.

Vulnerable People

People classified as vulnerable to Covid 19 according to Government guidance shall not be encouraged to visit the hall until this is permitted by legislation.

Covid 19 symptoms, NHS test and Track and Trace

If someone who has attended an event at the Hall develops Covid 19 symptoms they should follow Government guidance. This means to self-isolate get an NHS test as soon as possible. Everyone in their household should self-isolate too. They must inform the event organiser too. All those attending the event, and their households must self-isolate until the results of the test are known. The event organiser must inform the Track and Trace Service. The Village Hall Booking Secretary must also be informed so that appropriate cleaning can be organised.

If the test is positive all those attending must continue to follow Government advice about self-isolating. If the test is negative and no other attendees have shown Covid 19 symptoms, all those involved can stop self-isolating.