

## **Fire Risk Assessment for St John's Methodist Church complex, Argyle Road, Whitstable, CT5 1JS**

### **Area: Wesley Hall and attached Utility Room and upper storage area**

Use: Church activities, social functions, meetings, club activities

#### **1. Identify Fire Hazards**

##### **1.1. Sources of Ignition**

- 1.1.1. Electrical sockets and lighting
- 1.1.2. Portable electric heaters
- 1.1.3. User group equipment (computers, TVs, music players, amplifiers, etc)
- 1.1.4. Microwave
- 1.1.5. Central heating boiler

##### **1.2. Sources of Fuel**

- 1.2.1. Paper materials and notices
- 1.2.2. Materials stored in Utility Room
- 1.2.3. Materials stored in upper storage area

##### **1.3. Sources of Oxygen**

- 1.3.1. Doors
- 1.3.2. Windows

#### **2. People at Risk**

- 2.1. Those attending activities and events, including young children
- 2.2. Adults and children hiring the venue for parties, etc – normally not more than 25
- 2.3. Church members including children and the elderly
- 2.4. Very occasionally, a small number of members who are vulnerable or who have mobility difficulties
- 2.5. Those attending Haven Project

#### **3. Evaluate, Remove, Reduce and Protect from Risk**

##### **3.1. Evaluate the risk of the fire occurring**

- 3.1.1. The building is within a no-smoking complex
- 3.1.2. No naked flames are permitted, except for occasional use of candles for church activities; this must be under adult control
- 3.1.3. No other sources of ignition are permitted within the building
- 3.1.4. Electrical checks and gas boiler checks are carried out iaw Methodist Insurance guidelines
- 3.1.5. The risk of a fire occurring is assessed as very low

##### **3.2. Evaluate the risk to people from a fire starting in the premises**

- 3.2.1. The upper storage area is used for storage of a variety of materials and documents. No meetings or activities occur in this area. Lighting is good and egress is via a wide staircase and out through a fire-rated door to the Wesley Hall
- 3.2.2. The gas central heating boiler is in an open, fenced-off, area; no materials are stored in this area

- 3.2.3. The Utility Room is mainly used by church and Haven Project personnel. Occasionally it may be used by other groups for food or drink preparation. Lighting is good and egress is through a fire-rated door to the Wesley Hall
- 3.2.4. The risk to people from a fire starting in the premises is assessed as very low
- 3.3. Remove and reduce the hazards that may cause a fire
  - 3.3.1. There is a microwave oven and three fridges in the Utility Room, plus two washing machines and two tumble dryers. No other potential sources of ignition have been identified
- 3.4. Remove and reduce the risks to people from a fire
  - 3.4.1. The Wesley Hall is a Grade II listed building built predominantly of brick with a slate roof. Windows are double glazed within steel frames; there are no curtains or blinds.
  - 3.4.2. The Wesley hall was a stand-alone building which was adjoined to the church by a new-build lobby, kitchen and office complex during refurbishment in 2007. As a result of the new build, the original walls are breached in three places: one door providing access to the Utility Room and storage areas, and one providing access to the lobby and main exit to the complex. Both these doors are fitted with fire-rated doors and viewing panels. The third breach is a hatch to the kitchen which is fitted with a steel roller shutter, opened only when used for serving teas during large events.
  - 3.4.3. There are two exits from the Wesley Hall. Both doors open outwards. One exit comprises double doors to the outside; the other is a single fire-rated door giving access to the lobby and main exit to the complex.
  - 3.4.4. The building has a fire alarm system, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting. These are regularly maintained and checked by a commercial fire and safety company (Crimefighter Alarms Ltd).
  - 3.4.5. The HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide (ISBN: 978 1 85112 820 4) indicates at page 66 that for a low risk building with double doors in excess of 1.050mm width, up to 240 people could be safely evacuated from the building.
  - 3.4.6. The maximum practical capacity of the Wesley hall is assessed as 125 people, based on practical experience of people attending a variety of events, and thus any risk to people from a fire is assessed as extremely low.