**WILLASTON MEMORIAL HALL**

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 520090

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

March 2024

**Introduction**

Willaston Memorial Hall is a registered charity managed by a Committee of Management comprising Trustees, the majority of whom are appointed by the prime users of the Hall. Under normal operational conditions the Committee meets every other month but special meetings can be called, preferably with seven days’ notice. The names of the current Trustees and the elected officers who manage the day to day affairs of the Hall can be found on the Hall’s website ([www.willastonmemorialhall.co.uk](http://www.willastonmemorialhall.co.uk/)).

Willaston Memorial Hall has no paid employees. Regular cleaning is undertaken by a self-employed cleaner and maintenance is dealt with by specialist companies, as required. This document has been produced in the interest of promoting the safe use of the Hall and its facilities.

**Description of Premises**

Willaston Memorial Hall is a stone-built single-story community building situated on the Green, Neston Road, Willaston. The building comprises an entrance hall, a committee room, a boiler/storage room, separate men’s, women’s and accessible toilets, a small furniture storage room off the entrance hall, a separate kitchen with a serving hatch, the main hall, a storage/boiler room (for furniture and other equipment) and a storage room for the Playgroup’s equipment. The Premises Licence stipulates that the maximum number of persons permitted to use the premises at any one time shall not exceed:

(a) For all purposes: 135 persons

(b) For dancing: 100 persons

(c) For functions utilising seating at tables: 100 persons

(d) For purposes combining (b) and (c) above: 80 persons

(e) For closely seated audience (moveable seating): 160 persons

The capacity of the committee room is 25. The Hall is available to hire for both private and public events and is licensed for the following activities (and similar entertainments) indoors: the performance of plays; the exhibition of films; indoor sporting events; boxing or wrestling entertainment; the performance of live music; and the performance of dance. It is also licensed for the playing of recorded music both indoors and outdoors. It does not hold a licence to serve alcohol, although users may apply for a temporary alcohol licence with the permission of the Trustees.

There is public car parking to the front of the building, with space for approximately 25 cars and further parking in a public car park at the rear of the Hall. There are emergency exits leading directly out of the building from the north and south sides of the Hall and there are disabled ramps at both the front and rear of the building.

The area to the side and rear of the building is enclosed and mainly laid to artificial grass; access to this area is from the rear of the building and by a gate at the front.

The Hall is hired by a range of voluntary organisations, private individuals and statutory organisations for a variety of activities. A written agreement between the Memorial Hall and the hirer forms the basis of the hiring arrangement. The Hire Agreement and Conditions of Hire draw hirers’ attention to the health and safety and licensing obligations that the booking places upon them. Hirers are expected to meet the requirements of licensing conditions.

**General Policy**

It is the policy of the Trustees of the Willaston Memorial Hall to:

* provide healthy and safe conditions in the Hall for all users, including hirers, Trustees, volunteers, visitors and contractors
* provide safe equipment in the Hall for all users
* ensure that all users of the Hall are aware of our safety requirements

It is the intention of the Trustees to actively promote health and safety both for the users of the Hall and for contractors involved in maintenance and repair activities at our premises.

The Trustees recognise that the prevention of accidents relies as much on an attitude of mind as the condition of the Hall and its equipment. To this end the Trustees will endeavour to ensure that all hirers and contractors observe safe working practices during their time at the premises.

The wording of the Hire Agreement in use places a clear responsibility on hirers to comply with any safety notices at the Hall and to accept responsibility for preventing injury to themselves and others at their event.

**Responsibilities**

***Overall responsibility*** for Health and Safety rests with the Management Committee, but on a day to day basis power vests in the Chair to take any immediate action s/he considers necessary to limit risks to people at the Hall without reference to other Trustees. Where the matter is not time critical, the Chair will seek ratification for his/her proposed action through the Management Committee. Where a decision is time critical, the Chairman will endeavour to seek agreement to his/her proposed course of action from a minimum of one other member of the Management Committee. Otherwise his/her decision will be final to expedite a timely solution.

***Operational safety*** rests with all users who, under the terms of their Hire Agreement, undertake to take active responsibility for health and safety during their use of the premises. At one-off gatherings, the hirer should take responsibility for making clear to the participants the procedures for evacuation of the building in the event that it is considered necessary. At ongoing group meetings, the hirer should make such matters clear to new members and remind their members at least annually.

The hirer is responsible for reporting any identified safety issues/defects to the Bookings Secretary or a member of the Management Committee.

**Health and Safety Risk from Activities**

There is a general Risk Assessment for the premises which is reviewed annually.

Feedback will be by direct comment from hirers or via a representative Trustee.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the premises and all equipment are maintained in a safe condition and any identified maintenance is carried out promptly and by an appropriately qualified person.

All maintenance issues and action taken will be reported at bi-monthly meetings of the Management Committee.

**Harmful Substances**

There are no quantities of harmful substances requiring full assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. Normal domestic quantities of standard household cleaners are kept in a child safe kitchen cupboard which will deter access by children. Where possible children should be excluded from the kitchen area by hirers.

WMH is aware of the extent of drug use in society and will be alert to the possibility that drugs might brought into the Hall, even though this is strictly forbidden and illegal. Post-hire checks will be carried out to ensure that no drugs have been left in the Hall.

**Competency Training**

No specific requirements for competency training have been identified.

**Accidents and First Aid**

An up-to-date first aid kit is maintained in the kitchen and kept alongside the refrigerator, together with an accident report book. All accidents must be logged and reported to a member of the Management Committee. It is incumbent upon the Trustees to fully investigate any more serious incident and to take corrective action when considered appropriate. Where necessary, the Police and/or Health and Safety Executive will be informed in order that any appropriate investigations may be carried out.

The Management Committee does NOT provide qualified first aiders for events.

A named Trustee is responsible for ensuring that supplies within the first aid box are both complete and in date.

**Fire Risk Assessment**

A separate Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out and documented.

The Hall is provided with two clearly marked fire exits. It is well provided with fire extinguishers which are professionally serviced on an annual basis.

The Hall is equipped with a fire alarm system which is professionally serviced annually in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and tested weekly by a nominated trustee.

Users of the Hall are encouraged, when possible, to take their rubbish away with them but suitable facilities are provided outside at the rear of the Hall.

**Escape Routes**

Escape routes are checked at the time of each meeting of Trustees to ensure that routes are clear.

**Emergency Evacuation**

Clear evacuation procedures are posted within the Hall. The Hall is used by a number of individual user groups and each is encouraged to carry out a test fire evacuation at least annually to ensure that their members are aware of procedures.

**Electricity and Gas Safety**

Portable electrical appliances are tested annually and the electrical supply system is tested every five years by appropriate professional contractors. The gas boilers and central heating system are serviced annually by an appropriate professional contractor.

**Safeguarding**

A separate Safeguarding Policy has been drawn up to cover the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults who use the Hall.

**Review**

This Health and Safety Policy will be formally reviewed annually by the Management Committee.