**BVHT Covid-19 Risk Assessment for Reopening of the Village Hall**

Date/Version: 16 August 2021, v.5

**Risk Assessment – Bramley Village Hall: RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

Venue – Bramley Village Hall, The Street, Bramley, Hants RG26 5BP

**Background:** As a response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and in keeping with Government regulations, Bramley Village Hall closed on 23 March 2020, apart from Little Apples Nursery which continued to provide childcare facilities for keyworkers. The Hall reopened in July 2020 and provided a limited facility during the summer, in line with Government regulations and following good practices throughout. A cleaning service was maintained by our Caretaker, with the frequency of visits increasing in line with the additional operating hours of the nursery and to meet the needs of other users who returned during the summer.

On 4 November 2020, the Government initiated a second lockdown and the Hall closed with the exception of Little Apples. Lockdown ended on 2 December and Hampshire was designated a Tier 2 ‘High Alert’ area under the new restrictions applied across England. North Hampshire subsequently moved into Tier 4 on 26 December but on 4 January the Government announced that a further national lockdown would commence the following day and all community facilities would be closed from 5 January 2021. The Village Hall closed from that date, with the exception of Little Apples which continued to provide a service in line with Government protocols. In April the Government announced a national roadmap to bring the lockdown to an end and some activities at the Hall resumed, although we continued to maintain a Covid safe environment and encouraged social distancing by our users. The Village Hall reopened on 12 April, chiefly for indoor children’s activities but it was not until 19 July that we were permitted to offer a full range of activities as the Government announced an end to limits on social contact.

**Current Situation**: The Village Hall closed on 19 July for external work to improve drainage and for resurfacing of the car park. This work was completed by 23 August and the hall resumed activity on that date. In doing so, we asked users of the Hall facilities to make informed decisions and act carefully and proportionally to manage risk to themselves and others. While legal restrictions no longer apply, we will endeavour to follow Government guidance; all community events and activities and private hires will be able to take place with risks managed by users e.g., through ventilation, encouraging social distancing, hand washing and use of hand sanitiser.

Nevertheless, the greater transmission risk associated with the Delta variant means it remains important to respect and be considerate of those who are more vulnerable and who may wish to take a more cautious approach. It will therefore be appropriate at some activities or events that measures (including wearing face masks and social distancing) are taken so that people who are clinically more vulnerable or not yet fully vaccinated can attend. It will be the responsibility of users to determine what measures may be appropriate to the group or activity involved. Good ventilation is the best means of reducing risk of transmission so an ‘open windows’ policy would be sensible along with careful consideration of the density of the number of users in the venue. In support of this, we will retain the physical measures already in place, such as QR posters, hand sanitiser stations, posters requiring face coverings on entry and more frequent cleaning of regularly touched surfaces, so that people feel comfortable using our facility.

The Bramley Village Hall Trust will only accept bookings for venues at the Hall provided prospective users will utilise the facility in a manner which reduces the risk of infection and respects the efforts and intentions of those who require a higher level of safeguarding. This assessment identifies the risks involved in using the facility and suggests ways in which users can be more risk aware and adapt behaviours to reduce the risk of infection.

Hiring going forward will be based on risk management and the ability to provide the safest possible environment and the hirer to have control measures in place to keep their guests safe whilst in the Hall. The Trust will make decisions regarding users bearing in mind the government guidance for vulnerable groups, social distancing and any other considerations. Hirers will be responsible for providing their own PPE, cleaning materials and rubbish bags and will make own decisions based on good practice. The Village Hall will not be held responsible for the actions of hirers within their own groups.

It is believed that it will be necessary to complete this risk assessment and compare it alongside the risk assessment of hirers and ascertain the control measures which are necessary should the hirer reasonably be able to meet the required social distancing and hygiene practices. We will also set out the key responsibilities of each party to ensure all good practices are done and in good time.

This risk assessment will be reviewed regularly by the Chairman, the H&S Officer and the Bookings Manager and amendments will be made, confirmed with the Trustees and will be made available on the notice board in the Village Hall and on our website.

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

Likelihood – 1 low/5 high Residual Risk – 1 low/5 high

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| **Item** | **Hazard** | **Who may be harmed** | **Likelihood** | **Consequence** | **Control Measures/Mitigations** |
| 1 | Use of BVH furniture and equipment. These provide opportunity for spread of virus. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community | Cleaning regime by users. At the end of their hire, hirers will be required to clean down chairs, tables and any other equipment used during their hire using anti-bacterial spray, this will include cleaning door handles.  Residual risk level 2. |
| 2 | Use of equipment belonging to user groups stored in the Hall. These provide opportunity for spread of virus. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Before returning equipment to storage areas or removal from BVH, users will be required to clean any equipment used during their hire using anti-bacterial spray.  Residual risk level 2. |
| 3 | Use of kitchen space. The kitchen is an area where the surfaces will harbour the virus as will all the cutlery, crockery and glasses. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Minimise use of kitchen space by users, only where necessary e.g., nursery. Users must thoroughly wash all crockery and utensils and clean down work areas with anti-bacterial spray.  Residual risk level 2. |
| 4 | Observance of social distancing | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Discourage congregation by users in entry and common areas. Use signage to remind of the need for social distancing, especially at ‘pinch points’ within the Hall (see below)  Residual risk level 2. |
| 5 | Opening and closing practices. Beginning and end of day practices are sufficient for normal times, with the increased risk of Covid-19 transmission there is risk of the virus remaining active overnight. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | All current opening and closing procedures will apply. In addition, a cleaning schedule must be adhered to prior to any member of the public gaining access to and before locking up the building as well between each hire. Hirers will be asked to assist with sanitising the equipment they use during their hire    This cleaning schedule includes common transmission areas such as door handles, worktops, tables and chairs.  Residual risk level 2. |
| 6 | Pinch point: Main entry and reception area. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Access points and common areas will retain 2 m gap floor markings and signage to remind users.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 7 | Pinch point: Toilet access | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Access points to the toilet corridor will retain 2 m gap floor markings and signage to remind users not to enter corridor until space is vacant and to give way to users vacating toilets.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 8 | Pinch point: kitchen access | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Access points and common areas will retain 2 m gap floor markings and signage to remind users.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 9 | Little Apples Nursey access | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 2 | Spread of disease within the community. | Pre-existing segregation rules for Little Apples will reduce risk; their space is not shared with other users during working hours.  Residual risk 1 |
| 10 | Communal Space Visitors can congregate in communal areas, including entry/reception; this will increase the opportunity for virus spread as social distancing is not adhered to. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Visitors must be discouraged from congregating or waiting for children or family members in the communal areas.    Residual risk level - 1 |
| 11 | Hirers behaviour Groups in the rooms – the Hall has very little influence over the conduct of hirers whilst in the room. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | The observance of social distancing will be the responsibility of the hirer.    Residual risk level - 1 |
| 12 | Disabled toilet, baby change and hand basin are areas where the virus can remain. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Use of these facilities are limited to one family unit at a time naturally. Users take appropriate hygiene measures before and after using the facility.  Residual risk level - 1 |
| 13 | Rubbish and handling of rubbish can provide cross contamination opportunities. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 2 | Spread of disease within the community. | Rubbish will be removed by the hirer at the end of the hire. Rubbish must be bagged and closed/sealed and deposited in the commercial waste bin. Users should use hand sanitiser after doing so.  Residual risk level - 1 |
| 14 | General practice | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | All are required to wash hands often, use hand sanitiser, catch, bin and kill sneezes.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 15 | Wearing face coverings within the premises. | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | Users will determine the need to wear face coverings given the density of numbers within their group and the presence of more vulnerable individuals; signage is in place at entrances.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 16 | Track and Trace requirement; use of QR Code | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 3 | Spread of disease within the community. | All users will make use of the QR Code displayed at the entrances to the Hall. This applies even if the event organiser has a list of attendees and their contact details.  Residual risk level - 2 |
| 17 | Signage | Trustees, employees and users/hirers | 2 | Spread of disease within the community. | Appropriate signage including PHE requirements as well as signposts to assistance and information will be displayed throughout the Hall.  Residual risk level - 1 |
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