



The Seagull Lowestoft CIC

Fire Risk Assessment

The Seagull

19 - 75 Morton Road

Lowestoft

NR33 0HJ

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assess the risk of fire within the Seagull premises and provide a written account of the risk management processes in place. The document further provides evidence to satisfy the requirements of the Fire Safety Order.

Complying with fire Safety duties

The following table gives a summary of how we comply with the main fire safety duties

You must appoint one or more 'competent persons', depending on the size and use of your premises, to carry out any of the preventive and protective measures required by the Order ¹ (you can nominate yourself for this purpose). A competent person is someone with enough training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to be able to implement these measures properly.	A competent person has been appointed who holds the IOSH qualification. We also had an external risk assessment completed by a commercial provider which has informed this assessment.
You must provide your employees with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified by the fire risk assessment, about the measures you have taken to prevent fires, and how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.	The FRA is provided to all staff at induction. Regular Fire Awareness training is also undertaken annually.
You must consult your employees (or their elected representatives) about nominating people to carry out particular roles in connection with fire safety and about	As a small organisation with 6 payroll staff we do this informally. Health and safety is a standing agenda item on every weekly staff meeting and colleagues are invited to comment.

proposals for improving the fire precautions.	
You must, before you employ a child, provide a parent with clear and relevant information on the risks to that child identified by the risk assessment, the measures you have put in place to prevent/protect them from fire and inform any other responsible person of any risks to that child arising from their undertaking.	We do not employ children. However, the full FRA will be made available on our website to facilitate parents of children who attend activities at our building.
You must inform non-employees, such as temporary or contract workers, of the relevant risks to them, and provide them with information about who are the nominated competent persons, and about the fire safety procedures for the premises.	We provide the risk assessment on our website and advise all visiting parties and hirers to review the information.
You must co-operate and co-ordinate with other responsible persons who also have premises in the building, inform them of any significant risks you find and how you will seek to reduce/control those risks which might affect the safety of their employees.	Not applicable as the building is not shared.
You must provide the employer of any person from an outside organisation who is working in your premises (e.g. agency providing temporary staff) with clear and relevant information on the risks to those employees and the preventive and protective measures taken. You must also provide those employees with appropriate	We provide the risk assessment on our website and advise all visiting parties and hirers to review the information.

instructions and relevant information about the risks to them	
You must consider the presence of any dangerous substances and the risk this presents to relevant persons from fire.	Cleaners' materials are assessed in line with COSHH arrangements. Paint is stored in a secure paint cupboard.
You must establish a suitable means of contacting the emergency services and provide them with any relevant information about dangerous substances.	We have operational phone lines and access to the internet.
You must provide appropriate information, instruction and training to your employees, during their normal working hours, about the fire precautions in your workplace, when they start working for you, and from time to time throughout the period they work for you.	We provide a detailed induction pack including the relevant information. We provide detailed signage and information around the building. We provide annual training in Fire Awareness for all staff and volunteers.
You must ensure that the premises and any equipment provided in connection with firefighting, fire detection and warning, or emergency routes and exits are covered by a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained by a competent person in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.	We employ external contractors to maintain emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and the fire alarm on an annual basis. Weekly checks are undertaken by competent people and recorded.
Your employees must co-operate with you to ensure the workplace is safe from fire and its effects, and must not do anything	Staff are briefed at induction and disciplinary policies in place to ensure ongoing compliance.

that will place themselves or other people
at risk.

We provide annual training in Fire
Awareness for all staff and volunteers.

Fire Hazards

Sources of Ignition

The following table outlines the possible sources of ignition found in our building and any mitigation taken

faulty or misused electrical equipment (including projectors, lasers, rewinding machines), including equipment brought in by visiting companies;	We maintain an inventory of electrical equipment which is subject to spot checks on a rotating basis to identify likely damage, faults or misuse. Visiting companies should have all equipment provided PAT tested. Any items of concern are PAT tested by our trained in house PAT tester (Assistant Manager Tech)
luminaires and lighting equipment, e.g. halogen lamps, display lighting or projectors;	Theatre lighting is maintained on a regular basis and subject to visual inspection prior to every performance. All lighting has been PAT tested. Halogen lighting has been reduced and replaced with less heat emitting LED lighting where possible.
hot surfaces and obstruction of equipment ventilation;	The urns in the building are subject to regular inspection. Urns are kept in a well ventilated area.
central heating boilers	The theatre has three boilers and one additional hot tank. The large boiler and secondary water heating boiler are in the basement and measures are in place to avoid the storage

	of flammable liquid in close proximity to those boilers. The third boiler is in the accessible toilet and is placed in a position where no flammable items can be nearby. The heated water tank is in the admin office and is away from sources of flammable materials. All gas fired hot water boilers are now in the process of decommissioning
naked flames, e.g. candles or gas or liquid-fuelled open-flame equipment;	Candles are sometimes lit in the foyer space, but only under supervision Any naked flames on stage are rare and subject to individual risk assessment and additional mitigation.
special effects, such as fireworks and pyrotechnics;	Any stage pyrotechnics are hired in on a case by case basis and are very rare. Any such pyrotechnics will be subject to individual risk assessment and additional mitigation
Arson	Our building is in a residential street with street lighting and standard levels of security. The building has an alarm and CCTV in place to deter unwanted visitors
cooking and catering appliances and equipment including hot ducting flues and filters;	Only relevant items are kettles and microwaves.

smokers' material, e.g. cigarettes, matches and lighters;	The building is a no smoking site with smoking areas located outside the front doors. A pack of matches is kept in the foyer for lighting candles
electrical, gas or oil-fired heaters (fixed or portable), room heaters; and	Some electric heaters can be found in the office areas and these are subject to PAT testing and supervision.
hot processes, e.g. welding by contractors.	Any hot processes used by contractors will be subject to their procedures agreed with the theatre in advance.

Sources of Fuel

The following table outlines the possible sources of ignition found in our building and any mitigation taken

flammable-liquid-based products, such as paints, varnishes, thinners and adhesives;	Paints and other flammable liquids are kept in a secure locker in the workshop Cleaning materials are kept in a secure cupboard
flammable liquids and solvents, such as alcohol (spirits), white spirit, methylated spirit, cooking oils and disposable cigarette lighters;	Alcohol is stored in the secure bar area and locked within a cupboard
flammable chemicals, such as certain cleaning products, photocopier chemicals and dry cleaning products that use hydrocarbon solvents; flammable gases such as liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and acetylene;	Only cleaning materials from this list can be found in the building. Cleaning materials are kept in a secure cupboard.
displays and stands;	We have a large amount of displays around the building. These are subject to visual checks to ensure they are not too close to sources of heat.
costumes, untreated drapes and hangings, scenery and banners;	We have a large amount of costumes and curtains. From time to time set design will include hangings and drapes Items used on stage should be treated to be flame retardant and kept away from sources of heat. Spot checks may be conducted by Technical staff.

packaged foodstuffs;	Crisps and confectionary are kept in the bar area and stored in locked cupboards
packaging materials, stationery, advertising material and decorations;	Packaging, posters and decorations are kept in the box office area. They are stored away from sources of heat.
plastics and rubber, such as video tapes, polyurethane foam-filled furniture and polystyrene-based display materials;	There are a small number of display items in the foyer made from polystyrene and some stored in the workshop These are stored away from sources of heat.
upholstered seating and cushions, textiles and soft furnishings;	These exist in all areas
litter and waste products, particularly finely divided items such as shredded paper and wood shavings, off cuts, and dust accumulation amongst lubricated equipment; and	The workshop contains dust and shavings at times. Signs are in place along with some dust extraction.
fireworks and pyrotechnics.	When pyrotechnics are used (rarely) they are hired from a licenced provider and subject to separate risk assessment and mitigation. Storage is undertaken in accordance with the instructions provided by the supplier.

Sources of Oxygen

In most areas our building has natural airflow through doors and windows. In the main auditorium and in studio 1 there is additional air conditioning. This is subject to annual maintenance by licenced operator. In some areas electric fans may also be used to enhance airflow during hot periods.

People at Risk

In general the people are risk in our building fall into four categories.

- 1) Staff and volunteers
- 2) Visiting companies, performers, artists and organisers
- 3) Audience members for events/shows
- 4) People attending events where parts of the building have hired for that purpose.

In addition those especially at risk include

Employees and volunteers who work alone and/or in isolated areas, e.g. cleaners, maintenance staff, security staff, cinema technicians and production crew;	Our cleaner is regularly alone in the building whilst technical staff and some management may also be very isolated within the building.
people who are unfamiliar with the premises, e.g. visitors and customers;	Some audience members, and particular people visiting events where the building has been hired by an outside agency, may not be familiar with our layout.
unaccompanied children and young persons, particularly at performances for children or where children comprise a large percentage of the audience;	Particularly during Christmas, but also during the summer holiday activities and our evening. Youth theatres, there will be a significant number of unaccompanied children in the building.

people with disabilities* (including mobility impairment, or hearing or vision impairment, learning disability etc.);	We regularly cater for groups of adults with learning disabilities, those with poor mobility and those with dementia or age related confusion. These groups also have higher than normal levels of supervision and support.
people who may have some other reason for not being able to leave the premises quickly, e.g. elderly customers, pregnant women or parents with children	A small proportion of any audience may fall into this group. But particular notice should be taken of mother and toddler groups as two of these access the building regularly.
sensory impaired due to alcohol, drugs or medication;	It would be the exception for us to have someone who is sensory impaired due to alcohol or drugs in the building. However on band nights in particular there may be a larger than normal amount of audience members who are partially inebriated.
people with language difficulties	Any audience or group may include a small number of people with language difficulties
Other people in the vicinity	We are immediately adjacent to a centre for young people with learning disabilities and are also in a public residential street.

Evaluating the Risk

Housekeeping

As a small organisation the capacity of housekeeping has previously been low. However, this has been considerably increased in recent years with additional daily cleaning implemented in 2019. The provision of a private waste removal contract ensures that our waste is removed from the site regularly and our skip type dustbin is large.

Over busy weekends the amount of waste can build up, but this rarely exceeds the capacity of the bin and is safely stored.

Bins are spread throughout the building to avoid the build-up of waste and users are generally good at maintaining a safe environment. The cleaner is able to check this daily. The auditorium is checked for waste after performances and is cleaned thoroughly the next day by the cleaner.

Areas of concern for the build-up of waste would be

- The workshop space has clearly delineated areas for waste and wood storage – these should be regularly monitored
- Offices - the build-up of paper in some offices should be addressed to minimise waste and potential sources of fuel
- Box Office - the number of posters and flyers can cause an untidy area which build-up of flammable materials.

Evaluation - Low Risk

Storage.

Generally storage areas are well managed, with offsite storage in a secure site being used to reduce the risk onsite.

Areas with existing mitigation includes

- Paint storage - kept in lockable secure cabinets
- Costume Store - kept in restricted dedicated area with no direct heat sources
- Wood storage - as mentioned above
- Cleaning chemical storage - kept in a locked cupboard
- Props and furniture - kept offsite in metal storage containers away from sources of ignition.
- Alcohol - stored either in a locked cupboard and / or in the bar area with restricted access.

Evaluation: Low risk

Equipment and Machinery

A small number of hand tools are kept in the workshop - this is a restricted area

Heating - boilers are serviced regularly and subject to ongoing decommissioning

Some electric heaters continue to be used in winter months in some spaces - work to remove the need for these should be accelerated.

Evaluation : Low Risk

Electrical Safety

Small appliances are kept in an inventory and subject to visual checks on a rotating basis.

The organisation has its own certified PAT tester, but small appliances do not carry a PAT test sticker

Items brought into the theatre should be PAT tested but no solid system is in place to enforce this.

5 Year electrical installation testing was completed in 2023

Evaluation: Low Risk

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited within the building. Dedicated smoking areas are provided outside the main doors of the building.

On the rare occasions when smoking is required on stage, a separate risk assessment and mitigation is required.

Evaluation : Low Risk

Managing Building Work

A large scale construction project completed in January 2024.

A new FRA was completed to account for changes in the building.

Arrangements for those in wheelchairs or will limited mobility.

Each performance will include a minimum of two members of staff/ volunteers in the building who are physically able and one of whom will be a trained first aider. In the event that the ground floor fire exit is unavailable, and an audience member is unable to use the stairs to the rear of the auditorium, the two staff/volunteers will physically assist the person to leave via the stairs.

Hot Works

The construction partner has not identified any hot works required, but will provide suitable permits for any such work should it become necessary.

Corridors and Stairways

The building contains only one corridor, but includes three stairways.

The corridor is located on the mezzanine floor between the Green Room and the south stairwell. This corridor is a potential site where inappropriate storage may happen. Regular inspection of this area ensures it is not over cluttered.

The north and south stairways provide all the access to the upper floors. The north stairway acts as a fire escape and has a push bar exit door at the bottom. The south stairway is the main access route to the upper stairs and contains a lockable door.

With the following exceptions, all upper floor rooms have two independent exits via these two stair ways.

Exceptions

Studio 2 - this room has a capacity below 60 and can only directly access the south stairs. However, its entrance doorway is adjacent to that for another studio, through which access is possible to the North Stairway.

Studio 3 has the opposite issue to Studio 2, having access directly to only the north stairs, but with through routes via studio 1 to the south stairs.

Admin office - this small room has access to both stairways but only through another office. However as there is access to a stair in two directions, should one exit be blocked it still has access via another office.

A metal stairway provides access for a strictly controlled number of people to the costume store. This stairway is another potential area for unwanted storage and also requires ongoing monitoring.

Wheelchair access in upper floors

The upper floor can be accessed by wheelchair users using a lift which takes them into studio 2.

In the event of fire, this room will become a refuge with the main door providing 30minutes of resistance to fire.

In future this area will be expanded to provide better access to other parts of the building and an improved refuge area with evac chaire

Restricting the Spread of Smoke

The building is fitted with a large number of fire doors to all main rooms. These are clearly labelled and act to reduce the spread of fire and smoke.

These doors do not have the means to peg them open, and users are asked to not use items to block the door open.

Removing and reducing the risk to people

Fire Detection systems

The building has a manual fire alarm system which relies on the actions of individuals to set off the alarm. Call points are provided throughout the building and are serviced regularly by a suitable qualified company. Manual testing of call points happens weekly with a different call point selected each week. This process also tests the alarm sirens.

A heat and smoke detection system was installed as part of the new build. This covers the new workshop and tech area as well as the new toilet block.

Consideration should be given to a light based alarm to provide notification to users with hearing impairments, along with further extending the detection system to other areas of the building.

Fire fighting Equipment

A range of fire extinguishers are located throughout the building. Locations have been agreed with a certified contractor and are maintained on an annual basis.

A visual check of condition for extinguishers is done on a weekly basis and recorded.

Fire Extinguisher training was provided to a core team of permanent staff – this should be repeated on a regular basis to cover any new staff and volunteers.

Escape Routes

Escape routes throughout the building have been arranged to provide two sources of escape wherever possible. Those rooms without two sources of escape have a limited capacity under 60 which is maintained through the booking system.

Arrangements for the Auditorium

The Auditorium has a capacity of 150 and has three formal fire exits as well as an additional escape route. The auditorium has one large fire exit which directly access the outside and is above the width required for the capacity of the space. A second exit is also sufficiently wide

to for the capacity of the room and allows exit via the foyer. A third exit has a smaller capacity by provides access to the dressing room fire exit.

The auditorium also has access to a large exit which would provide access to a fourth independent exit via the workshop.

In the event of any one of these exits being blocked there are a further three in any given situation.

Escape times for able bodies users are within 2.5 minutes and usually within 1 minute.

Regular fire evacuation drills are conducted which show a full evacuation in a minute.

Inner Rooms

The building has the following inner rooms

1. Backstage Kitchen. This room has close access to the Fire Exit in the dressing room as well as access to the fire exit in the workshop and the main entrance in the foyer.
2. New Dressing room. The entrance to the new dressing room within the workshop space is directly adjacent to the fire exit for the workshop, so while strictly speaking an inner room, this space still has very direct access to its own fire escape.
3. Recording studio – these rooms access the fire exit stairs via a small foyer in front of studio 3. Again this makes them an inner room, but they have very close access to the fire exit
4. Middle Office – the middle office in the admin mezzanine has access rooms to both sides. Since this room normally has an occupancy of one person, the risk is acknowledged and mitigated by maintain easy access through the neighbouring rooms.

Age and type of construction

The building is of Victorian construction with solid brick walls.

There are few partition walls within the building and where they exist, most noticeable in the backstage area and in studio 1 they do not block fire exits and are not used as fire routes.

Emergency escape lighting

A system of emergency escape lighting is in place throughout the building and is tested weekly

The system is maintained and serviced annually.

Signs and notices

Appropriate signage is on display throughout the building and complies with requirements.

Checks and maintenance**Daily**

- Ongoing monitoring of waste areas, storage and escape routes.

Weekly

- Testing of fire alarm call points, sirens and emergency lighting
- Visual checks on fire extinguishers
- Formal check on fire exit routes

Annual

- Servicing of boilers, fire alarm system, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting by accredited company.

Record of Significant findings

The following key actions have been identified

Reducing Sources of Ignition

Ensure visiting companies are required to provide evidence that any electrical equipment is PAT tested – **Ongoing monitoring**

Ensure signage warns of the danger of covering Urns

Deadline **Jan 2025**

Ensure additional signage warning of the danger of covering hot items in the shared kitchen

Deadline **April 2024**

Maintain vigilance over the levels of wood and other materials stored in the workshop

Deadline **Ongoing**

Other key actions

Provide additional fire extinguisher training for new staff

Deadline **Ongoing**

Ensure current FRA is available to all volunteers and outside contractors via our website

Deadline **Jan 2025**

Emergency Plan

We use the Fire Action format to display our emergency plan throughout the building.

In addition, we have a formalised Evacuation plan displayed throughout the building.

Inform and Instruct

All members of staff and volunteers receive an induction using a standard induction pack.

New staff and volunteers are shown the location of call points and fire extinguishers and informed not to use Fire extinguishers unless trained.

Twice yearly a fire safety briefing is held for all volunteers and staff.

Each week staff meetings include a standing agenda item on Health and Safety and all staff are given the opportunity to raise any concerns or contribute a learning point.

Review

This fire risk assessment will be held in constant review.

Completed by

Des Reynolds

9th January 2025