



New Alresford Town Council

Alresford Recreation Centre, The Avenue, Alresford, Hants, SO24 9EP

Tel: 01962 732079. Email: townclerk@newalresford-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.newalresford-tc.gov.uk

Fire Safety and Emergency Policy

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1.0 Policy

New Alresford Town Council recognises that fire has the capability to cause multiple fatalities and extensive property damage. A serious fire could result in extensive disruption to the organisation, and would involve losses that would only be partially covered by insurance.

Fire safety involves preventative measures, which attempt to ensure that fire does not start, and precautions which are aimed at minimising the effects of fire on people and property. New Alresford Town Council recognises the fact that legislation concentrates on precautions, but will ensure that major effort will be placed on prevention and the legislation will be regarded as the minimum standards to be achieved.

New Alresford Town Council will ensure that steps taken in relation to fire precautions will always include the provision and maintenance of adequate means of escape from buildings, means of fighting fires, fire alarm systems, emergency lighting, and, where appropriate, automatic fire detection.

Fire risk assessments will be undertaken, emergency plans will be drawn up, and nominated colleagues trained to implement them. Provision will also be given to the training of colleagues in the use and selection of fire extinguishers.

2.0 Responsibilities

The following people have responsibility for fire safety in the organisation:

- Town Clerk
- Deputy Clerk
- Caretaker
- Fire Warden

3.0 Arrangements

General Arrangements

- The Town Council will ensure that quantities of flammable solvents and materials used are kept to a minimum. These should be stored in secure areas and only handled by trained personnel.
- Waste material of a flammable nature will be consigned to rubbish bins and skips. These skips and bins will, so far as is possible, be kept in designated areas away from buildings in order to minimise the effects of arson. Emptying of bins and skips will be arranged at sufficiently frequent intervals to ensure that the need for overflow storage is minimised.
- Any 'Hot Work' being undertaken must not commence without a valid Permit-To-Work signed by a competent person.

- All portable electrical equipment will be inspected for safety by a competent person at least annually. Records will be kept, filed, and made available upon request.
- All fixed wire installations must be thoroughly inspected by a competent person, every five years (or at a period determined at the last inspection) and records kept and made available upon request. Any action arising will be acted upon accordingly.
- All gas installations and appliances must be maintained and serviced annually by a competent person and records kept and made available upon request. Any action arising will be acted upon accordingly.
- All new building work and alterations to existing buildings will be carried out in accordance with the fire safety requirements of the Building Regulations, Approved Document B (Fire Safety).
- Smoking will only be allowed in designated smoking areas.
- High standards of housekeeping will be maintained at all times, reducing the risk of fire from a build up of waste material.

Fire Risk Assessments

- It is the Town Clerk's responsibility to ensure that Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) will be, or have been, carried out as required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by a competent person/external provider.
- Any recommendations or actions arising from a fire risk assessment will be actioned within the time frame given on the FRA and documented as such (signed and dated).
- It is the Town Clerk's responsibility to ensure that Fire Risk Assessments will be reviewed annually to ensure that they are still suitable and sufficient, taking into account any significant change in building, fabric, layout, task, activity carried out and number of employees.
- If there has been no change in building, fabric, layout, task, activity carried out and number of employees, a simple review will be sufficient. If there has been any change, a new FRA will be commissioned.
- To ensure that the FRA is up to date and relevant, a new FRA will be commissioned by a competent person every three years, even if there has been no change.
- It is the Town Clerk's responsibility to ensure that tenants of the building have suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments in place for their demise and activities.

Fire Fighting Equipment

- Fire extinguishers will be serviced annually by a competent external provider.
- As per BS5306-3:2009 recommendations, fire extinguishers will have the date of service/maintenance recorded on them.

- Records of service and maintenance will be recorded in the fire log and documented evidence will be kept and be made available upon request.

Fire Alarms

- The Caretaker will test fire alarms weekly, rotating the test alarm point to ensure that all points are subject to tested.
- Records of fire alarm tests will be recorded in the fire log.
- Fire alarms will be serviced/maintained annually by a competent external provider.
- Annual service and maintenance documented evidence will be kept and made available upon request.

Emergency Lighting

- The Caretaker will test emergency lighting monthly.
- Records of monthly testing of emergency lighting will be recorded in the fire log.
- Servicing and/or maintenance will be carried out annually by a competent external provider.
- Annual service and maintenance documented evidence will be kept and made available upon request.

Inspections

- The Fire Warden or Caretaker will carry out a monthly fire safety inspection and record that inspections have taken place in the fire log book.
- Inspections will include looking at extinguishers, walkways, escape routes, lighting, housekeeping, and ensuring that logbooks have been completed.
- Actions noted on the inspections will be remedied as soon as possible.

Emergency routes and exits

- Emergency routes and exits will lead as directly as possible to a place of safety.
- It must be possible for persons to evacuate as quickly and safely as possible.
- Emergency doors must not be locked or fastened. They must be easily and immediately opened by any person that requires to use them in an emergency. Where possible there should only be one fastening.
- Final exit doors will not lead people into an enclosed area from which there is no further escape.
- Emergency routes will be indicated by signs.
- Emergency routes and exits will be kept clear at all times.

Signage

- Fire safety signs, including fire equipment signs and signs indicating exit routes and doors, will be provided in all buildings. Such signs will comply with the requirements of The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

Training

- At induction, all staff will be made aware of the fire evacuation plan.
- All staff will be trained in fire safety awareness and records kept.

Evacuation plans

- The Council will ensure that suitable fire evacuation plans are in place, and that all relevant personnel are trained in the plans.
- The Council will ensure that tenants in the premises have suitable fire evacuation plans in place for persons in the tenants' demise.

Fire Drills

- Fire evacuation drills will be carried out at least annually, in conjunction with building tenants.
- Any fire evacuation, whether planned or otherwise, is to be recorded in the fire logbook.
- Planned fire drills do not include false alarms.

Third parties on premises

- Any third parties on premises will be taken into account with regard to any fire arrangements made.
- Fire arrangements include participating in the reviews of the FRA, participating in fire drills, informed of any significant changes made to evacuation policies or instruction etc.
- Tenants on the premises are required to conduct their own fire risk assessment and to ensure that they have suitable fire safety arrangements in place.
- Tenants are required to ensure that all electrical and gas appliances in their control are suitably inspected and maintained.
- Visitors and contractors on the premises will be made aware of the fire evacuation procedure.
- Hirers of premises facilities will be informed of the emergency evacuation procedure.

Persons requiring assistance

- In instances where persons, visitors or employee, have been identified as requiring assistance, the Town Council will need to put in place Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).
- The PEEPS is to be discussed with the person concerned to allow their input.
- A copy of the PEEPs will be given to the person concerned, and a copy will be kept in personnel files, if for an employee.

4.0 Associated Documents

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 Approved Code of Practice (L64)

BS5306-3:2009

Fire Risk Assessments

Fire Evacuation Plan