

Our Ref: EHDC

Your Ref:

The person dealing with this is: **David Cowley**

Direct Dial No. (01386) 565225

Rous Lench & Radford Village Hall Committee  
c/o Ms P Williamson  
Mistletoe House  
Rous Lench  
Evesham  
WR11 4UW

10 July 2012

Dear Madam

**Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974**

**Re: Rous Lench & Radford Village Hall, The Green, Rous Lench**

Further to my health and safety inspection of the above on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2007 and my meeting with yourself and Mrs Bullock, I bring the following matters to the Committee's attention. The inspection was not necessarily exhaustive and the above Act places the responsibility on the dutyholder to comply with all the relevant health and safety legislation.

**Unpaid workers and volunteers**

Unpaid workers and volunteers working or helping out at your premises who are not your employees for the purposes of tax and national insurance *may* be treated as employees for the purposes of your duties under health and safety legislation if they are working under your control and direction. It will depend on the degree of control and direction and only the courts can determine application of health and safety legislation to a volunteer or unpaid worker on a case by case basis.

***Legal requirements***

**Managing health and safety in the workplace**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require dutyholders to assess the health and safety risks to their employees that may arise from their employment. The dutyholders must also assess if their work activities present health and safety risks to the other persons, e.g. the public or visitors. If the dutyholders finds there are significant uncontrolled risks, then they must take action to eliminate or adequately control the risks in order to comply with health and safety legislation. The enclosed booklet "Five Steps to risk assessment" explains how to carrying out risk assessments at premises and activities under your control. If you have internet access you can find examples of risk assessment on the Health and Safety Executive's web site at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/examples.htm>.

**Premises Safety**

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require that all stairs are provided with suitable handrails or handholds on at least one side of the staircase. The short set steps leading up to the rear part of the hall must be provided with suitable hand rails securely fixed to the walls at each side of the steps. Also give the overall width of the hall it may be appropriate to consider the provision of a hand rail at the mid-point of the steps. The rise of the two steps uneven with a low first step and a very high rise to the second almost as if a step is missing. The steps should be adjusted to provide either two or three steps with an even rise between each one and the change in levels should be clearly defined.

**David Cowley**

**Environmental Health, Commercial Services**

**Direct Dial** 01386 565225 **Fax** 01386 561826

environmental.health@wychavon.gov.uk

### **Electrical safety**

The Electricity at Work Regulations requires all electrical systems to be suitably earthed to prevent the risk of danger. I note that you have entertainers or musicians who need to plug their equipment into a power supply at the premises. Any socket outlets that you provide for this purpose must be protected by residual circuit devices (RCD's) rated 30 milliamp 30 milliseconds. The safest type is where the RCD is built into the socket outlet and it should be installed by a competent electrician. I enclose a Health and Safety Executive guide "Electrical safety for entertainers" for further information as to the risks and safety precautions.

### **Recommendations / Guidance**

#### **Workplace injuries**

The enclosed "First aid at work" booklet tells you what items your first aid box should contain and whether you need to have either a trained first aider or an appointed person to deal with injury or illness at your workplace. Serious workplace injuries are "reportable". The enclosed RIDDOR leaflet explains what is reportable and how to report to the Incident Contact Centre, work related injuries or cases of disease that have happened to employees or the public as a result of the employer's work activities.

#### **Electrical safety**

The Electricity at Work Regulations requires all electrical systems and equipment to be properly maintained to prevent the risk of danger. Not all portable appliances need an annual test however you should have a system of formal visual inspection, and where appropriate test, of the items of electrical equipment used in the premises. The enclosed booklet "Maintaining portable electrical equipment in offices and other low risk environments" tells you how frequently to inspect or test items of electrical equipment within low risk premises.

#### **Preventing slips and falls**

I noted that the wooden floor to the lower part of hall has yet to be renovated and treated. You should be aware that the application of inappropriate surface treatments or the use of incorrect methods of cleaning can affect the slip resistance of the floor. You need to ensure that the finished wooden floor surface is not likely to cause a person to slip or fall. I have enclosed a Health and Safety Executive booklet on slip trips and falls.

#### **Further advice**

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) produces a (priced) health and safety pack as well as other useful information sheets on all aspects of running / managing of village and community halls. A list of their publications is enclosed and they can be contacted at Somerford Court, Somerford Road, Cirencester, Glos., GL7 1TW or via their web site at <http://www.acre.org.uk/>.

If you have any health and safety queries about my visit or any other health and safety matter, you can contact me at the above telephone number. If you feel however that the points I have raised in this letter are not justified, please contact Debbie Herbert, the Commercial Services Manager, on 01386 565490. To keep up to date with health and safety issues you can visit the Health and Safety Executive's home page at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) and access and order from HSE's online catalogue at [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk). You can also call the HSE InfoLine 0845 345 0055 for general health and safety advice.

Yours faithfully

David Cowley  
Health and Safety Inspector