

Safety guide for community premises



Health and safety, and in particular fire safety, are the council's highest priorities. The purpose of this guide is to let you know what the council is doing to ensure community halls used by tenants, leaseholders and other residents are safe. It also lets you know how we can help and the role the TRAs have in helping to ensure the halls are run safely for all users.



Health and safety of community premises

Southwark Council is responsible for:

- Carrying out annual, or more frequent, fire risk assessments
- Carrying out gas, electrical, water and asbestos compliance tests
- Keeping a record of inspections
- Insuring the building.

Who to contact


- If you have concerns about fire safety or advice on any aspects of fire safety call the inspection team on 020 7525 3499
- If you smell gas or suspect fumes please call 0800 111 999 immediately
- If you are concerned about asbestos that may have been disturbed, call the contact centre (24hrs) on 0800 952 4444
- If there is a fire in your building please call **999** immediately and follow your fire drill
- Please email the premises officer at community.premises@southwark.gov.uk or call 020 7525 3326 if you wish to carry out any works to the building or need any other advice.

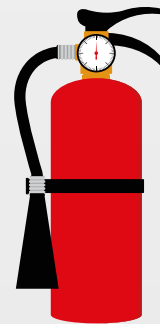


How can you help?

Fire safety

- Allow the council and its contractors regular and planned access to your building so we can ensure it is safe
- Ensure you are aware of your venue's maximum capacity (as stated in your most recent fire risk assessment report which you should display at your hall)
- Keep fire exit doors unlocked when the property is in use, keep fire escape routes clear from obstructions and ensure users are aware of the exit routes
- Ensure fire doors are not wedged open
- Do not tamper with or misuse anything provided for fire safety measures
- Ensure smoking is not allowed in the hall
- Ensure electrical intake cupboards are not used as storage
- Do not use untested or non approved electrical equipment in your community hall (all electrical appliances must have a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) to ensure that they are safe to use)
- Carry out regular housekeeping to ensure there is no clutter in order to reduce the fire risk
- Put together a simple fire action plan and discuss regularly at committee meetings
- Carry out a fire drill every six months with records of this kept
- All fire action notices, displayed on escape routes, must specify assembly point
- Notify the council of key holders or when key holders change (please do this by e-mailing community.premises@southwark.gov.uk)
- Ensure people with mobility needs or vulnerable persons have arrangements in place to be evacuated if required
- Ensure users are aware of how to raise an alarm (i.e. fire alarm call points)
- Carry out monthly testing of the fire alarm system and keep a record of the tests
- Ensure users are aware of the assembly point in the event of an evacuation and what to do

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- Only tackle a small fire with a fire extinguisher if it safe to do so and you are trained to use the equipment. Untrained users could put themselves and others in more danger by attempting to tackle a fire. The priority should always be to evacuate the building and call the fire brigade. The council provides free fire fighting equipment training, for more details please see page 11
 - Ensure all hirers have signed a hire agreement and are aware of the hire conditions. Brief those hiring the hall about the location of fire exits, how to evacuate in the event of a fire and the assembly point. This should also be included in the hire agreement.



General health and safety

- All works or modifications to the building need authorisation from the council before any work commences
- Try to make health and safety a standing item on meetings and any actions minuted
- Report and accidents or incidents to the council by e-mailing community.premises@southwark.gov.uk as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the event
- Have all the relevant licenses for all the activities that take place within the halls. For advice on licensing contact events@southwark.gov.uk (0207 585 2000). Information about Food Safety can be found at www.southwark.gov.uk/buisness
- Have community group/charity public liability insurance policy in place with adequate cover for the activities which take place in the premises
- If you employ staff (even on an informal basis) it is important that you take out employers' liability cover
- It is essential that any taps or showers not used for longer than seven days need flushing. Showers and taps need to be cleaned regularly and disinfected
- Ensure you provide access when required for council engineers and contractors to carry out statutory compliance and maintenance inspections and testing
- Ensure keys/access is available on these appointed days to all areas, including those to to which third parties may occupy
- At the very least, access is needed for following tests each year:
 - Once a year: fire risk assessment, fire fighting equipment testing, asbestos management inspection, landlords gas safety inspection service, portable appliance and other electrical testing
 - Twice a year for checks of the water tanks
 - Four times a year for the fire alarm system to be tested
 - Once a month for the emergency lighting to be tested.



Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Southwark Council is responsible for:

- Making sure staff and contractors wear correct ID badges when visiting TRA halls and community premises
- Ensuring that Ofsted is aware of any un-registered pre-school or day nursery operating from halls
- Responding when there is suspicion or evidence of a child or vulnerable adult being abused or neglected.

Who to contact:

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, you should contact the Southwark Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 7525 1921 (or 020 7525 5000 out-of-hours).

If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult being abused, contact Southwark Adult Social Care on 020 7525 3324. In an emergency always dial 999.

If you have concerns about a childcare provider (e.g. nursery or childminder), contact Ofsted on 0300 123 1231. Information about registering childcare provision can be found here: gov.uk/register-childminder-childcare-provider

How can you help?

- Contact the relevant organisations or council departments above if you have any concerns about activities relating to children or vulnerable adults
- Ensure that any activities concerning vulnerable persons, such as large groups of children, are carefully managed and monitored
- Seek permission from Southwark Council and Ofsted for childcare services, such as pre-school, day nursery, after school and holiday clubs, to operate from the TRA hall
- Ensure that any childcare provision in a TRA hall is properly registered with Ofsted:
 - Where TRA halls are used to provide child care services, Ofsted may require TRA volunteers and staff – and others who have access to to the halls when children are occupying them – to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Scheme check
 - Where the hall is being used for other childcare activities (e.g. for children over eight, or for less than two hours a day), the council recommends that the childcare provider is registered with Ofsted on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register
- For some activities that take place (such a childcare) a DBS check may be required. You should contact the DBS service for advice on 03000 200 190 or visit www.gov.uk/DBS
- Notify the council of any long-term arrangements you have in place with organisations or bodies operating from within the premises. This includes, but it is not limited to, businesses or charities running activities such as classes, nurseries, day centres, catering or clubs
- If the hall is being used regularly by children or vulnerable adults, it is recommended that the TRA develop its own safeguarding policy in line with the requirements of Southwark Safeguarding Board: www.safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk
- If you have any other concerns about activities taking place, bullying, harassment or health and safety do not hesitate to contact community.premises@southwark.gov.uk or 020 7525 3326.

Repairs and maintenance

Southwark Council is responsible for:

- Managing day-to-day repairs and maintenance of the halls in order to ensure that these spaces are warm, dry, safe and fit for purpose.

Who to contact

- To report a repair, please call 0800 952 4444. If you are using a mobile phone it might be cheaper if you call 020 7525 2600. Please have the full address including postcode ready as it will help our call centre staff.

How can you help?

- It is important that you report any issues and repairs needed as soon as possible
- Please give as much information about the repair as possible including whether you have reported the repair before
- Please provide your contact details to assist with access.



Management committee responsibilities

Southwark Council is responsible for:

- Supporting and advising tenants and residents' associations on good governance and management of our halls
- Recognition of tenants' and residents' associations
- Ensuring our buildings are fit for purpose
- All landlord responsibilities.

Who to contact

- Please stay in touch with your resident involvement officer on 020 7525 3326.

How can you help?

- Ensure that the hall is used for the main purpose of benefitting the local community
- Make sure that the space being let out is suitable for the activity
- Ensure that all accounting and book-keeping is up to date
- Ensure all activities do not cause nuisance to residents.



Further information and support

The council offers free training and advice for TRAs and management committees on their responsibilities in managing health and safety. This includes a one day training course on the basics of how to manage a TRA hall with a focus on legal requirements and health and safety. Training in First Aid is also available.

The council also offers free fire safety and fire fighting equipment training. This training is compulsory and we recommend that at least one TRA hall management committee member is trained at any given time.

This is a certificated course which means it is accredited by the CPD (Continuous Professional Development Office).

To view the training courses available search for Tenant and Homeowner Training at www.southwark.gov.uk

The council has a dedicated community premises officer to be a single point of contact for help and support. The council is also introducing other opportunities for TRA committees to meet each other to discuss any issues regarding managing TRA halls and share best practice. For more details or if you have any questions or require advice please contact community.premises@southwark.gov.uk or 020 7525 3326.

Useful contacts

Fire Safety Team

Tel: 020 7525 3499

Report a gas leak

Tel: 0800 111 999

Disturbed asbestos contact centre (24hrs)

Tel: 0800 952 4444

Fire and rescue service

Tel: 999

Premises officer

Email: community.premises@southwark.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7525 3326

Southwark Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 020 7525 1921 (or 020 7525 5000 out-of-hours)

Southwark Adult Social Care

Tel: 020 7525 3324

Ofsted

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Report a repair

Tel: 0800 952 4444 or (from a mobile) 020 7525 2600

Resident involvement officer

Tel: 020 7525 3326

North Team

northhousing@southwark.gov.uk

Central Team

centralhousing@southwark.gov.uk

South Team

southhousing@southwark.gov.uk