

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Flint, Higher Wiscombe, East Devon.



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Fire risk assessment – Small premises with paying guests

Responsible person (e.g. employer) or person having control of the premises:

Alistair and Lorna Handyside

Assessor:

Paul Bray GFireE

Address of premises:

Flint, Higher Wiscombe Holiday Cottages,
Southleigh, Colyton EX24 6JF

Number of floors:

1(sloping with steps to higher ground floor level)

Number of bedrooms:

3 (maximum of 6 adults sleeping)

Construction:

This property, known as 'Flint' is a single-story holiday cottage with an open plan kitchen, dining and lounge area with three ensuite bedrooms.

The main building runs at 90 degrees to the owner's residence, connecting to a large, pitched roof triple garage.

This has been completed in accordance with building regulations and the necessary fire separation between the garage and Flint has been provided.

Flint is of traditional construction, with stone walls, brick faced windows and door openings, with wooden window frames and doors.

The main building is covered with natural slate pitched roof, with two openable roof lights on each side.

The roof of the third bedroom is pitched and covered with clay tiles.

There is ramped access from the drive of the main complex and a small threshold step at the front main entrance to Flint. Flint is suitable for guests of limited mobility (M1).

The main door opens into a small entrance hall. To the right of this is the door leading to the first ensuite bedroom. This is the room suitable for persons with limited mobility.

Left from the entrance hall is a wooden door leading to the open plan area, containing lounge area with a wood burner. The dining area is further on with the kitchen area beyond that. The kitchen is equipped with a large fridge/freezer, range cooker with electric oven and gas hob, there is an integrated dishwasher underneath the worktop.

A washing machine and tumble dryer are in the boiler room, which is located behind a door on the right-hand side of the entrance to the open plan area.

The main building has a vaulted ceiling, with the structural roof timbers exposed as a feature.

Between the lounge and dining area, in a wall opposite the main entrance, is an exit into the fenced garden area. This area has a gate allowing access to the road.

There are 5 steps on the left-hand side of the kitchen leading to a small landing. The landing provides access to the second and third ensuite bedrooms.

Both these bedrooms have plasterboard and plastered ceilings.

The second bedroom has an external door leading a fenced and gated garden area with an exit to the main driveway.

The internal walls are predominately plastered with some areas left un-plastered exposing brickwork and stone for decorative effect.

The solid floor is fitted with ceramic tiles in the living areas with carpet in the small main hallway and bedrooms.

The overall length of Flint is approximately 18m. The width of the main building is approximately 4m.

The property has underfloor heating.

The premises is provided with mains wired fire alarms.

Carbon monoxide detection has been installed in accordance with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015 (As amended).

Each exit door is fitted with thumb turn locks and lever handles.

Date of fire risk assessment:	27 October 2023
Date of previous fire risk assessment:	30 th September 2023
Suggested date for review:	27 October 2024

This report is intended to assist you in compliance with Article 9 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (As amended) (the “Fire Safety Order”), which requires that a risk assessment be carried out.

The Fire Risk Assessment ‘A guide to making your small paying-guest-accommodation safe from fire’ guide published in March 2023 is the primary source for the standards applied in this holiday let.

Fire hazards and controls

Are fixed electrical installations inspected and tested every 5 years?

Yes / No

Are electrical appliances periodically inspected and tested?

N/a Yes No

Is the use of trailing leads and adaptors avoided where possible?

Yes No

Relevant information

The business owners have a strict policy for guests in respect of;
Use of untested electrical appliances, this is clearly outlined in the general information provided to all guests via the bespoke app. Guests are advised to download this using a QR code.

The information for guests says the following – ‘Under no circumstances are you to bring electrical appliances to Higher Wiscombe, other than laptops and phone chargers, without explicit written permission. This includes air conditioning units. Guest appliances have not been PAT tested and could invalidate our insurance. We will levy a charge if we find they have been operating without consent.’

Trailing leads were not being used at the time of this assessment and are not allowed.

Electrical installations are inspected and tested every 5 years, the last test was completed in December 2022

The last portable appliance tests were completed January 2023.

Are gas appliances inspected and tested every 12 months?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Gas appliances are inspected annually – the most recent test was 08/03/2023.

Is smoking permitted on the premises?

Yes No

Are suitable arrangements in place for those who wish to smoke?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

The owners have a no smoking policy which is made known on the booking website. 'These are smoke-free cottages, no smoking of any substance including vaping should take place inside any of the properties or by the swimming pool and games room. Buckets are provided outside each of the properties for cigarette butts. Please do not drop them on the ground.'

Are the premises adequately secured to prevent unauthorised access?

Yes No

Relevant information

Access to the site is via a long single-track road, and there is CCTV and good nighttime lighting to deter unauthorised access.

Are combustible materials, waste and refuse bins stored safely clear of the premises or in purpose-built compounds/rooms?

Yes No

Relevant information

There was no external fire loading noted at the time of this assessment.
All combustible storage is kept in defined areas away from buildings and ignition sources.

Are fixed heating systems subject to periodic maintenance?

N/a Yes No

Are portable heaters subject to periodic inspection and used safely?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Portable heaters or air conditioning units are not permitted to be brought on site by guests.
Underfloor heating is provided throughout.
The heating is checked and serviced as part of the annual service.
The last service was completed on 10/10/2023.

Are there adequate fire precautions in the use of open fires and log burners? e.g. regular chimney sweeping

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

There is a log burner in the lounge. The chimney is swept annually. The chimney was last swept in February 2023.

Are adequate measures taken to prevent fires from cooking equipment? e.g. prohibiting deep fat fryers

N/a Yes No

Are filters and ductwork subject to regular cleaning?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

All cookers and filters are subject to a thorough clean at every changeover.

Deep fat fryers are not provided.

Electrical equipment is serviced as part the annual PAT testing.

The last portable appliance tests were completed January 2023.

Is the standard of housekeeping adequate to avoid the accumulation of combustible materials and waste e.g. from tumble dryers?

Yes No

Are combustible materials kept separate from ignition and heat sources?

Yes No

Relevant information

The premises are maintained to an exceptionally high standard.

Tumble dryer dust filters are cleaned at every changeover and guests are reminded to clean the filters after every use.

All spare linen is kept in storage in another building.

All waste is taken away and kept in a suitable storage area away from other occupied buildings.

Is it ensured that all contractors who undertake work on the premises are competent and qualified?

Yes No

Relevant information

All works are completed by authorised and competent persons.

Are suitable measures in place to address the fire hazards associated with the use and storage of dangerous substances?

N/a Yes No

Are there any other significant fire hazards in the premises?

Yes No

Other Significant Fire Hazards That Warrant Consideration

Ignition of thatch of nearby property – permit to work scheme will always be required for any hot works.

Fire protection measures

Are all escape routes kept clear of obstructions to enable people to escape safely?

Yes No

Are all fire exits easily and immediately openable?

Yes No

Are distances to final exits considered reasonable?

Yes No

Do the walls and structures protecting the stairway and escape routes provide an adequate level of fire resistance?

N/a Yes No

Is the fire resistance of doors to stairways and escape routes considered adequate?

N/a Yes No

Where necessary, are doors fitted with suitable self-closing devices that close the doors effectively?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

This is a single storey building, with escape to a place of safety available in two directions.

Escape from bedroom three avoiding moving through the living area would require exiting through the exit door in bedroom two. This will involve a short walk across the landing at the top of the stairs leading from the open plan living area, to enter bedroom two.

It is acknowledged that this should be avoided, however this has been deemed acceptable for the following reason –

- the distance across the landing is very short – less than 1.5m
- the premises will be provided with a Grade D1 LD1 fire alarm system giving early warning in case of fire to alert guests to evacuate.
- The premises will only be occupied by a single 'family unit' so the door to bedroom two will not be locked, so no locks should be fitted to this door.
- A sign indicating the escape route has been installed on the wall outside bedroom three.
- A sign indicating the escape route has been installed above the exit door in bedroom two.
- All guests will be made aware of the escape route on arrival.

Fire doors are not required, the existing doors to the bedrooms are deemed acceptable for this single storey property.

The maximum travel distance from front to back of this property is approximately 18m. The maximum allowable travel distance for a single storey building with two directions of escape is 35m (normal risk).

One escape is via the entrance, which has an outward opening door.

There are 2 other doors which can be used for means of escape.

The door leading from the lounge area into the fenced garden is outward opening and fitted with thumb turn and lever handle.

The third door provides an exit from the second bedroom. This is an outward opening door with a thumb turn and lever handle.

All exit doors are fitted with a thumb turn latch, and handle, which is acceptable.

Bedroom one has level access and egress via the main entrance, this room is suitable for use by persons with limited mobility.

Internal access to bedrooms two and three is via 5 steps, so would be unlikely to be suitable for use by persons with limited mobility. However, if the rooms are used, level egress could be possible via the exit door from bedroom two.

Are there adequate levels of artificial lighting provided in the escape routes?

Yes No

Where necessary, has a reasonable standard of emergency escape lighting been provided?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Emergency hard wired lighting is installed at key points in the property. A battery operated emergency light/torch is also provided.
This is in accordance with the 'Paying guest accommodation in small premises guide'

Where necessary, is a reasonable standard of fire exit and fire safety signs provided?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

It is not necessary to install fire exit signs in throughout this property however signs have been installed directing guests in bedroom three to the exit door in bedroom two, and the lock to bedroom two has been disabled/removed to ensure the exit via bedroom two is available at all material times.
Emergency procedure signage is covered elsewhere in this report.

Are smoke and/or heat alarms/detectors provided and is the extent and coverage considered adequate? Consider also CO alarms.

Yes No

Relevant information

The premises is provided with mains wired fire alarms. The provision of fire alarms and detection system is installed to comply with BS 5839-6:2019+A1:2020, Grade D1 LD1 standard.

Is there a reasonable provision of firefighting equipment (fire extinguishers, fire blankets)?

Yes No

Relevant information

Firefighting equipment is not required for self-catering accommodation, however a fire blanket is provided and fixed to a suitable location near the kitchen.

Management of fire safety

Are procedures in the event of fire appropriate and documented?

Yes No

Is the information on fire safety and the action to take in the event of a fire given to guests?

Yes No

Relevant information

There is clear instruction on what to do in case of fire contained in the information for guests which is downloadable when making a booking.

A fire action notice has also been fixed to a prominent location near the entrance.

To ensure all guests can be accounted for and have a safe place to await arrival of the emergency services in the event a fire, as suitable fire assembly point has been provided, in the 'parking barn' towards the rear of the complex, this is outside and away from the premises. The covered open sided garage area provides shelter in the event of inclement weather.

Are any staff members given regular instruction and training on the action to take in the event of a fire?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Staff are given verbal instruction on emergency procedures and what to do in the event of a fire.

Are frequent checks carried out to ensure exit routes are kept clear and fire exits remain easily openable?

Yes No

Relevant information

Staff complete a thorough check of all fire precautions at each changeover.

The stairs from the patio area at the rear of the premises are in constant use and kept clear of obstructions and free of algae growth.

All checks that are completed are recorded on a fire safety checklist.

Are periodic checks carried out on fire doors to ensure they remain in good condition and close effectively?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Fire doors are not required, the existing doors to the bedrooms are deemed acceptable for this single storey property.

Are domestic smoke and heat alarms tested at least monthly? Include CO alarms in testing.

Yes No

Relevant information

Fire alarms are checked at every changeover or weekly whichever is sooner.

Where fitted, are weekly testing and six-monthly servicing routines in place for the fire detection and alarm system?

N/a Yes No

Re – servicing - The fire alarm system is subject to a maintenance regime as required in BS 5839 part 6 2019.

The British Standard for domestic fire alarms (BS 5839 part 6) does not specifically recommend that Grade C, Grade D and Grade F systems are maintained by a competent person, unless identified in the manufacturer's instructions. This says there should be a visual inspection, cleaning, and functional testing. This should be done as part of a regular maintenance regime.

In self-catering premises, are all smoke/heat alarms (or fire detection and alarm systems, where fitted) tested at every changeover?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

The owner maintains a changeover checklist where the checking the fire alarms is required by staff.

Where fitted, are monthly and annual testing routines in place for the emergency escape lighting?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

The owner maintains a changeover checklist where the checking the emergency escape lighting is required by staff.

Where provided, are fire extinguishers subject to annual maintenance?

N/a Yes No

Relevant information

Fire extinguishers are not provided, the fire blanket is subject to a visual check as part of the changeover routine.

Are records of testing and maintenance maintained?

Yes No

Relevant information

Records of fire safety arrangements should be kept and available for inspection as necessary, it is understood that testing of fire alarms and checking emergency lighting units/torches is completed at changeover. This is recorded on a changeover checklist.

Records of all testing and maintenance is kept in the health and safety folder.

Other matters

The local fire and rescue service visited the premises several years ago and have an operational plan for dealing with emergencies at this location. It is recommended that DSFRS are contacted to revise their plan to ensure any changes are included.

Risk Assessment outcome

Taking into account the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the hazard from fire (likelihood of fire) at these premises is: **Medium**.

That is – there are **Normal fire hazards** (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).

Taking into account the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this fire risk assessment, it is considered that the consequences for life safety in the event of fire would be: **Slight harm**.

That is an outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).

Accordingly, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is **Tolerable**.

That is - No major additional controls required. However, there might be a need for improvements that involve minor or limited cost.

Action plan

If any of the above boxes are ticked with a 'No', the deficiencies should be described below, along with proposed action for rectification.

There are no outstanding actions for this fire risk assessment.

Item	Deficiency	Proposed action	Timescale	Person responsible
Future Considerations (where appropriate)				
1.	The local fire and rescue service visited the premises several years ago and have an operational plan for dealing with emergencies at this location. It is recommended that DSFRS are contacted to revise their plan to ensure any changes are included.			

Confirmation of understanding of the findings and action required of this FRA.

The above findings and action plan have been discussed with the business owner.



Signed:

Paul Bray GIFireE

We, Alistair Handyside and Lorna Handyside, agree with the findings of the fire risk assessment and will be taking appropriate action to implement changes or improvements, within the timescales as detailed in the action plan.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alistair Handyside". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'A'.

Alistair Handyside MBE

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lorna Handyside". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'L'.

Lorna Handyside