

RISK ASSESSMENT: GARMENT & TEXTILE REPAIRS

Venue: Shalford Upper Village Hall

Assessment Date: 12th September 2026

Assessor: Eric Stammers

Review Date: September 2027 (or following any safety incident)

1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

This risk assessment covers all activities relating to the inspection, hand-sewing, machine-sewing, darning, patching, and ironing of clothing, curtains, bags, and other fabric textiles. It applies specifically to volunteer repairers and visiting members of the public within the designated textile station at the Village Hall.

2. RISK RATING SYSTEM

Likelihood: 1 (Rare), 2 (Unlikely), 3 (Possible), 4 (Likely), 5 (Almost Certain)

Severity: 1 (Negligible/Minor Cut), 2 (Minor Injury/First Aid), 3 (Moderate/Medical Treatment), 4 (Major Injury/Hospitalisation), 5 (Fatality)

Risk Level: Likelihood $\times$ Severity

1 to 4: Low Risk (Acceptable, monitor regularly)

5 to 11: Medium Risk (Controls must be strictly enforced)

12 to 25: High Risk (Stop activity until stronger controls are in place)

3. HAZARD REGISTER & CONTROL MEASURES

HAZARD 1: Thermal Burns from Irons and Steamers

People at Risk: Volunteer Repairers, Visitors (especially children).

Specific Risks: Severe skin burns from touching hot iron soleplates, or scalds from escaping steam. Fire risk from an iron left face down on fabrics or a village hall table.

Initial Risk Rating: Medium (Likelihood 4 $\times$ Severity 2 = 8)

Mandatory Control Measures:

Heat-Resistant Resting Mats: All irons must be used with a dedicated silicone or heavy-duty heat-resistant resting pad. They must be stood upright or placed on the mat when not actively gliding over fabric.

Unattended Rule: Irons must be unplugged or switched off immediately at the wall socket if the volunteer steps away from the textile bench for any reason.

Dedicated Ironing Station: Ironing boards must be set up on a stable, flat surface away from the edge of the table and completely out of reach of visitors or children walking past the bench.

Residual Risk Rating: Low (Likelihood 2 $\times$ Severity 1 = 2)

HAZARD 2: Needle Punctures and Cuts from Sewing Tools

People at Risk: Volunteer Repairers, Visitors handles items.

Specific Risks: Sewing machine needles piercing fingers, accidental cuts from sharp dressmaking shears, rotary cutters, or fabric unpickers (seam rippers).

Initial Risk Rating: Medium (Likelihood 4 × Severity 2 = 8)

Mandatory Control Measures:

Needle Guards: Where available, mechanical plastic finger guards should be fitted to the sewing machines. Volunteers must keep their fingers a safe distance from the active needle bar.

Safe Tool Storage: Dressmaking shears and rotary cutters must be kept closed or retracted when not in use. Scissors must never be left open on the table.

Pin Cushions: Loose pins and needles must be kept in a pin cushion or magnetic tray, never scattered loose on the tabletop or held in the mouth.

Residual Risk Rating: Low (Likelihood 2 × Severity 1 = 2)

HAZARD 3: Electrical Failure of Sewing Machines or Irons

People at Risk: Volunteer Repairers, All Village Hall Occupants.

Specific Risks: Faulty wiring inside older sewing machines or water leaking from steam irons into electrical components, causing shocks or short circuits.

Initial Risk Rating: High (Likelihood 3 × Severity 4 = 12)

Mandatory Control Measures:

The 4-Step PAT Mandate: Just like the electrical bench, any mains-powered appliance brought by a volunteer or visitor (sewing machines, overlockers, irons) must undergo a Visual Inspection and a Pre-Repair PAT Check before use. They must be re-tested after any electrical adjustments.

RCD Protection: All textile power leads must plug into an RCD-protected block.

Water Management: Steam irons must be filled using a small cup or jug, never carried to a tap while plugged in. Any water spilled on the table must be dried instantly.

Residual Risk Rating: Low (Likelihood 1 × Severity 4 = 4)

HAZARD 4: Ergonomic Strain and Poor Lighting

People at Risk: Volunteer Repairers.

Specific Risks: Eye strain from working on fine threads in poorly lit sections of the hall, or back/neck pain from hunching over tables for extended periods.

Initial Risk Rating: Medium (Likelihood 4 × Severity 1 = 4)

Mandatory Control Measures:

Task Lighting: Supplementary adjustable LED desk lamps must be provided at each sewing bench to ensure clear visibility without straining.

Regular Breaks: Volunteers should stand up, stretch, and step away from the machine every hour to prevent physical fatigue.
Residual Risk Rating: Low (Likelihood 2 × Severity 1 = 2)

HAZARD 5: Biological Hazards from Unwashed Garments

People at Risk: Volunteer Repairers.

Specific Risks: Contact with heavily soiled clothing, mouldy textiles from damp lofts, or insect infestations (like moths or fleas) brought into the village hall.

Initial Risk Rating: Medium (Likelihood 3 × Severity 1 = 3)

Mandatory Control Measures:

Cleanliness Hygiene Policy: All garments brought in for repair must be clean and freshly laundered. Volunteers have the absolute right to refuse to handle any item that is visibly dirty, damp, or smelly.

Hand Hygiene: Antibacterial hand gel and disposable gloves must be available at the station. Volunteers should wash hands before eating or drinking.

Residual Risk Rating: Low (Likelihood 1 × Severity 1 = 1)

4. EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

In the Event of a Needle Puncture: If a needle breaks in a finger or pierces the skin, clean the wound immediately under running water. Apply a sterile plaster from the first-aid kit. If a fragment of a needle is embedded under the skin, do not attempt to dig it out; refer the individual to a minor injuries unit.

In the Event of an Iron Burn: Immediately immerse or run the burn under cool, clean water for a minimum of 20 minutes. Do not apply ice, butter, or ointments. Cover loosely with a sterile, non-adherent dressing from the village hall first-aid kit.

In the Event of an Electrical Trip: If a machine or iron trips the hall's electricity power loop, leave the items plugged out, isolate the faulty machine, and notify the event coordinator to reset the RCD breaker.

5. ASSESSOR SIGN-OFF

By signing below, the Lead Fixer confirms that the controls listed above will be actively set up, checked, and enforced at every scheduled event.

Lead Fixer Name: Eric STAMMERS

Signature:  **Date:** 12-9-2026