

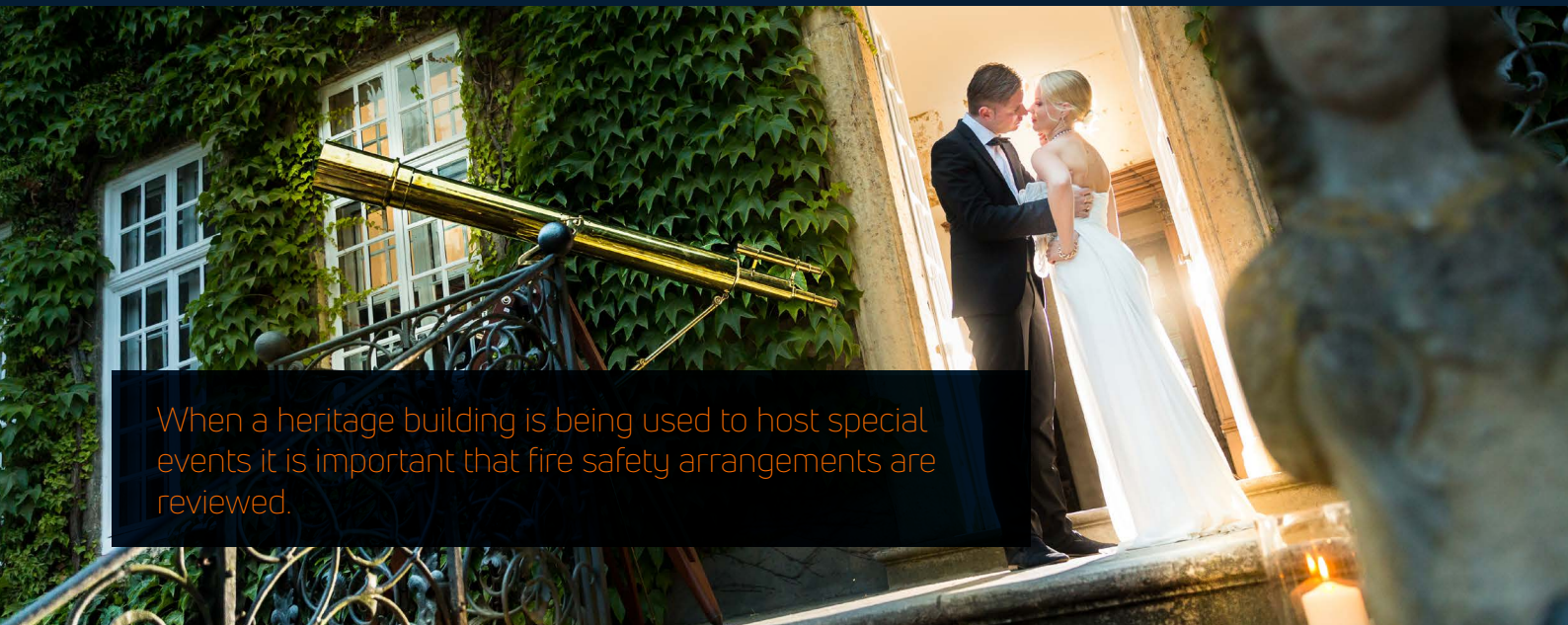
# 10.0 Fire safety and special events

This guidance highlights the actions that can be taken to limit the possibility of fires occurring during special events.

## RISK ADVICE LINE

Having read this guidance should you have any additional questions on this topic or other risk related matters, as a valued Ecclesiastical customer you can contact us through our 'Risk Advice Line' on 0345 600 7531 (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm, excluding bank holidays) and one of our in-house risk professionals will be able to assist. Alternatively you can email us at [risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com) and one of our experts will call you back within 24 hours.

For queries about your policy cover or claims please contact your insurance broker.



When a heritage building is being used to host special events it is important that fire safety arrangements are reviewed.

Examples of special events include conferences, concerts, TV filming, exhibitions, military ceremonies and weddings.

For events where a licence is required e.g. music concerts or theatrical shows the licensing authority will consult with interested parties including the local Fire and Rescue Services.

## Fire risk assessment

Your fire risk assessment should be reviewed and you should consider the following:

- Assess the number of persons likely to be present at the event and re-evaluate your emergency evacuation procedures. The local Fire and Rescue Service may need to be advised if expected attendance numbers are more than 500 people.
- You may need to review the number of stewards on site to support evacuation procedures and additional training may be necessary.
- Additional means of escape signage may be required.
- The event may increase the risk of fire ignition and, therefore, existing controls may need to be increased e.g. additional fire extinguishers may be required. These should be supplied by the event organiser or any attending vendors.
- Some events may involve installing generators and cabling to the main property.

## Pre-event planning

This is strongly recommended and should involve the host, the event organiser (if different) and other interested parties. The emergency services must be involved along with contractors who provide marquees and caterers. Items to consider include the following:

- Security procedures and requirements should be reviewed.
- For larger events a volunteer ambulance crew should be considered e.g. Red Cross or St Johns Ambulance.
- If in-house catering services are not being used, create a list of preferred catering suppliers who agree to contractually comply with your fire safety arrangements.
- Agree safe areas for the location of film and catering crews.
- Special attention is needed to LPG bottle usage and storage.
- Deep fat frying should not be permitted.
- Ensure permit to work conditions are implemented for electrical extensions and equipment.
- Licenses should be obtained from relevant authorities as appropriate.
- Will or all or part of the main building be used to the host the event?
- It may be beneficial to undertake a fire drill rehearsal before the event.
- If the event requires isolation of fire detection systems alternative arrangements will need to be made.
- Aisles and gangways should be designed to ensure that no one is seated at an appropriate distance from a fire exit as determined by your fire risk assessment.

## Special hazards

### Pyrotechnics and Fireworks

It is important that you inform Insurers if pyrotechnics are to be used at the event. Pyrotechnics and fireworks must only be discharged and permitted in the open air. A competent contractor must be used and you should obtain references (if not known to you) from other heritage organisations and obtain evidence of current liability insurance coverage.

The contractor must supply a bespoke safety risk assessment for the event. A generic risk assessment should not be accepted.

The event organiser should ensure fireworks are stored in a shipping container if possible until the day of the event. Weather conditions need to be considered before any event commences. The contractor should ensure used and unused fireworks are clear from the site before the area is handed back to the property owner.

### Marquees

Any marquees or tents erected at the event to be used as temporary structures should be sited at least 10 metres from buildings. They must meet the flammability requirement for tented structures as per the relevant British Standards BS 5438 and BS476.

### Lighting

Some events may require temporary additional lighting to be brought to the site. It is common for generator trucks and trailers to be used for filming. These items should be positioned well away from the main building with agreed cable routes. Spare fuel for the generators should be securely stored in a fire resisting compartment. Adequate portable fire extinguishers should be sited in close proximity.

## Key messages

- Arranging special events at historic buildings require special attention and additional precautions to be taken,
- Fire risk assessments should be reviewed to ensure they are suitable and sufficient to reflect the change in circumstances.
- Pre-planning of the event is critical. Seek advice from your local Fire and Rescue Service.
- Using pyrotechnics, tents and lightning require special consideration and control of these higher risk items.

## Further information

- [www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/)

**Important Note – For any interventions to your building you will require Listed Building Consent (if a listed building). Also, you should consider any advice given by Historic England, the Amenity Societies and other conservation bodies.**

This guidance is provided for information purposes and is general and educational in nature and does not constitute legal advice. You are free to choose whether or not to use it and it should not be considered a substitute for seeking professional help in specific circumstances. Accordingly, Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc and its subsidiaries shall not be liable for any losses, damages, charges or expenses, whether direct, indirect, or consequential and howsoever arising, that you suffer or incur as a result of or in connection with your use or reliance on the information provided in this guidance except for those which cannot be excluded by law. Where this guidance contains links to other sites and resources provided by third parties, these links are provided for your information only. Ecclesiastical is not responsible for the contents of those sites or resources. You acknowledge that over time the information provided in this guidance may become out of date and may not constitute best market practice.

