

Risk assessment guide for home openers

Every home opener should do a risk assessment for their home. A risk assessment may be necessary for you to be covered under the insurance of the organisers. Your risk assessment must cover all areas of your home that are open to the public during the event.

This is one of a series of information sheets for community groups organising green open homes events. Find the rest at www.greenopenhomes.net

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What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment means considering the safety hazards in the home, and then taking action to remove or reduce the chance (risk) that someone will get hurt. For example, clutter in walkways is a hazard because there is a risk of a visitor tripping over – just remove it.

Examples of hazards include:

- Cables
- Clutter
- Small/uneven steps
- Low ceilings
- Slippery surfaces
- Incomplete building work

Examples of risks include:

- Slips and trips (uneven surfaces, steps/stairs; trailing wires, cables, cluttered personal belongings/furniture, slippery floor etc.)
- Cuts and burns (from hot surfaces, bare wires, sharp items, or edges etc.)
- Collision (including low doorways or ceiling beams etc.)
- Impaired vision (when moving from bright to dimly lit areas)

Although risks will be minimal at most domestic properties, it is worth paying particular attention in homes where retrofitting or building work is yet to be fully completed.

Risk assessments should highlight what action will be taken to minimise risk and who is responsible. Volunteers and visitors should be made aware of any potential risks upon arrival to the home and reminded again at the relevant place in the home (signs make this easy). Any accidents or medical incidents must be reported to the event organisers on the day.

How to do a risk assessment

Don't over complicate the process; you probably know most of the hazards anyway.

- Identify the hazards – do a walk through and make notes.
- Determine who might be harmed and how – is it the visitor, the volunteer steward, or the home opener?
- Evaluate the level of risk; is it High, Medium, or Low (H, M, L) – use the risk matrix.
- Decide what control measures to put in place to reduce the risk e.g. removing a hazard, putting up a sign, or warning visitors.
- Evaluate the level of risk once the control measure has been introduced? Has it changed?
- Is there anything else you can do to reduce the risk further? This might be measures you take during the event.
- Once you have completed the risk assessment, ask someone else to review and date it. They might see something you missed, or you may need to review this risk assessment for a future event.

If a risk is still classified as 'high' after completing the risk assessment, this means the risk is too severe. Remove that area from your tour. You can use information boards to depict the feature instead.

You can still proceed if a risk is defined as 'medium' but just make sure to implement the necessary control measures.

This information sheet was produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy. We're committed to supporting low carbon retrofit by promoting open homes events and helping you get going with resources, practical support and funding.

You can find more advice at www.greenopenhomes.net.

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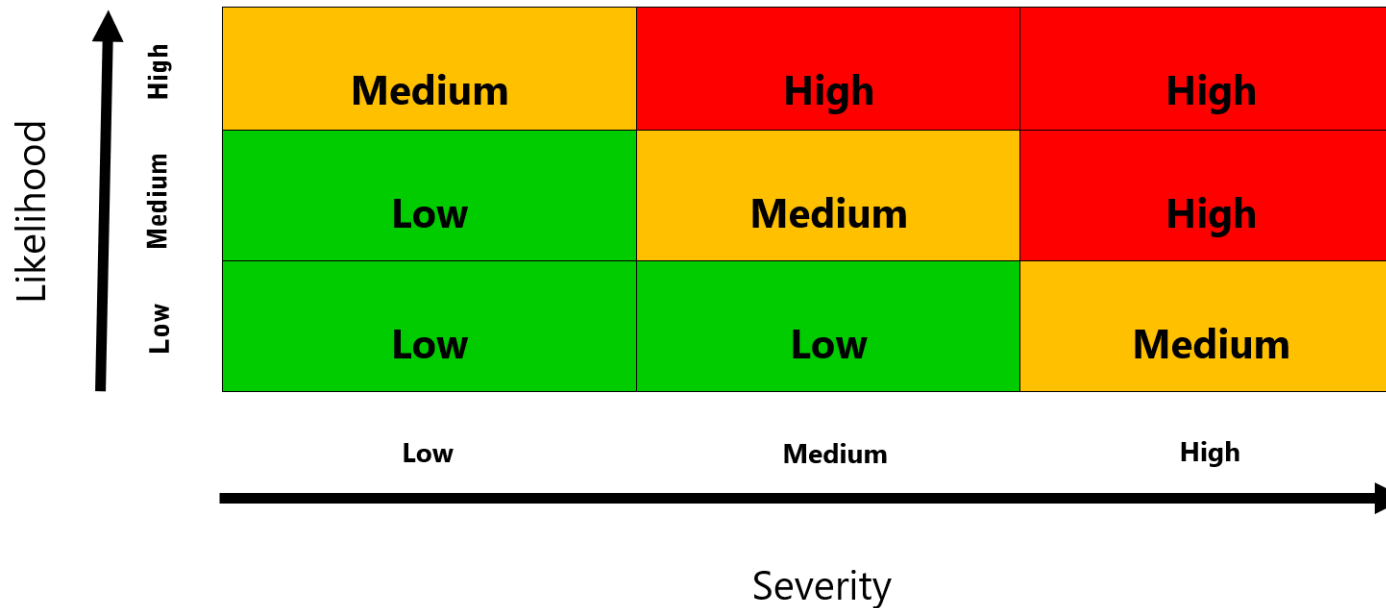
Risk assessment example

Hazard examples	What is the risk, and who is affected?	Initial Rating (L, M, H,)	Control Measures	Final Rating (L, M, H,)	Additional Action Required (action by whom and completion date) and if which signs needed
Rug on wooden floor in hallway	Slips / trip for Visitor, Volunteer, & Home Opener	M	Remove rug from hallway for Open Homes Weekend.	L	
Candles, stove, open fire	Fire resulting in minor/severe burn, injury, or death.	H	Do not light any candles and make sure all cooking appliances are switched off and the fire is not lit. Make sure all exit routes are clear.	M	Final check by Home Opener before event begins.
Low doorway from corridor	Collision for Visitor, Volunteer & Home Opener	M	Put up warning sign: 'Mind Your Head'	L	Home Opener to verbally warn visitors and volunteers when accessing area. 'Mind your head' sign needed on the day.
Ladder to access loft	Slip / fall / collision	M	Put up warning sign, 'Visitors access the ladder at their own risk'. Remove any obstruction at the top/bottom of the ladder. Have a volunteer to stabilise ladder whilst in use.	L	Home Opener to test on the day, verbally warn visitors and volunteers before using the ladder and ask someone to stabilise.
Wood/vinyl flooring or cobbles on rainy day	Slip / fall	M	Put up warning sign: 'Caution Slippery Surface'	L	'Slippery surface' warning sign placed on the day by Home Opener.

Hazard examples	What is the risk, and who is affected?	Initial Rating (L, M, H,)	Control Measures	Final Rating (L, M, H,)	Additional Action Required (action by whom and completion date) and if which signs needed
Loft under construction – unstable flooring	Severe fall	H	Insufficient time to complete works before event. Temporary boarding put down but not secured.	H	Close off area with 'No entry' sign. Display boards with photos of the work being done in that area instead of opening it.

Risk assessment matrix

Use this matrix to help you rate each risk based on its severity and likelihood to occur. For example, if you consider a risk to have a low severity but high likelihood it would get an overall score of 'medium' for your risk assessment.



Risk assessment template

Event name:	Date:	Address of site:	
People at Risk: Visitors, Volunteers, Home Openers		Additional Information:	
Author:			Review Date:
Role: Home Opener		Assessment Date:	

Hazard Examples	What is the risk and who is affected?	Initial rating (L/M/H)	Control Measures	Final rating (L/M/H)	Additional action required (by whom, completion date and signs needed)

Hazard Examples	What is the risk and who is affected?	Initial rating (L/M/H)	Control Measures	Final rating (L/M/H)	Additional action required (by whom, completion date and signs needed)

Add additional rows if needed...

Disclaimers

Although steps have been taken to make your visit as safe as possible, please be aware that your visit takes place at your own risk.

The views of the Home Opener do not necessarily reflect those of the organisers of Green Open Homes.



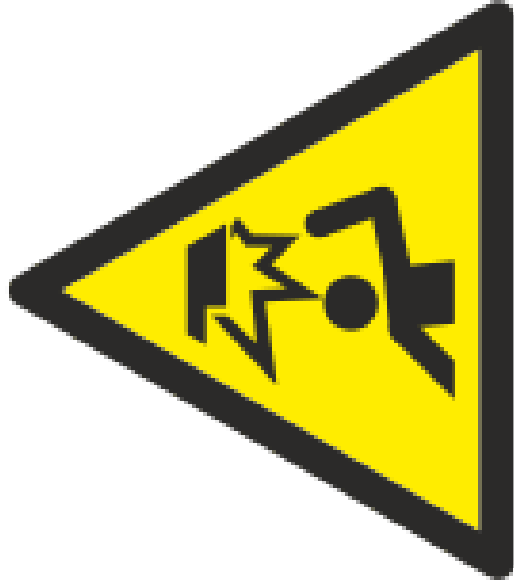
**No
entry**



Caution
slippery surface



Caution
Trip hazard



**Mind your
head**

