

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY  
FOR

‘ALL SAINTS’ CHURCH  
CHURCH ROAD  
EAST HUNTSPILL  
SOMERSET  
TA9 3 QQ

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

The policy is in four sections:

Section A      General statement of policy

Section B      Organisation and responsibilities

Section C      Arrangements

Section D      Risk assessments

## **SECTION A            General Statement of Policy**

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for any of our employees, casual labour or voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church, churchyard and associated premises.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed at least every three years and more frequently if there are significant changes and the appropriate amendments made.

To ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety will be on the agenda for all meetings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC), and employees and voluntary workers will be regularly consulted on their views on health and safety matters.

Signed:

Priest in Charge

Date:

Review Date:

## **SECTION B**

## **Organisation and Responsibilities**

### **1. Responsibility of the Priest in Charge.**

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the priest in charge, the Reverend Tonya Nixon, who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and relevant Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel and voluntary workers as set out below. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended accordingly.

### **2. Responsibility of the Churchwardens.**

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in the policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Churchwardens as noted below:

Susan Elsworth

Vacant

### **3. Responsibility of the PCC.**

The members of the PCC have a general and active responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is observed and maintained. From time to time, the priest in charge may delegate a specific responsibility to individual members.

### **4. Responsibility of the Secretary to the PCC.**

The Secretary to the PCC has responsibility for the maintenance of all records relating to health and safety. In addition, the Secretary is the point of contact between the PCC and the voluntary Health and Safety Advisor whose duties are set out below.

### **5. Duties of the Voluntary Health and Safety Advisor.**

The following person:

Roger J Ouston

has agreed to give day to day advice on health and safety matters to the PCC, undertake periodic inspections of the premises and the arrangements of this

policy and to present a report to every meeting of the PCC. The specific duties are:

- a. Be familiar with health and safety regulations so far as they concern church premises.
- b. Be familiar with this health and safety policy and its arrangements and report immediately any noted non-observance to the Secretary to the PCC.
- c. Give advice so that, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe systems of work are in place.
- d. Inspect the church at least monthly for cleanliness, tidiness and clutter and report any adverse observations to the Secretary to the PCC.
- e. Inspect the churchyard at least monthly for the proper maintenance of trees, bushes and grass and that walls, monuments and tombstones are safe and report any adverse observations to the Secretary to the PCC.
- f. Give advice on the provision and wearing of safety equipment and clothing where appropriate.
- g. Give advice on the proper maintenance of any church owned plant, equipment and tools and the provision of appropriate training to all operators.
- h. Give advice on the provision and maintenance of adequate access and egress.
- i. Give advice on the provision and maintenance of suitable and adequate firefighting equipment and inspect such equipment at least monthly and report any adverse observations to the Secretary to the PCC.

## **6. Responsibility of Employees and Voluntary Workers.**

All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of the health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises. Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

- a. Comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.

- b. Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
- c. Report any defect or fault in equipment to the appropriate person.
- d. Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards to the appropriate person as soon as possible.

## **6. Responsible Persons.**

The following persons/positions are responsible for safety in specific activities:

Accident book and reporting:	Sec to the PCC
Fire Extinguishers :	Sec to the PCC/Contractor
Emergency Evacuation:	H&S Advisor/Sidesmen
Portable Electrical Appliances:	Sec to the PCC/Contractor
Fixed Electrical Systems:	Sec to the PCC/Contractor
Hazardous Substances:	Churchwardens
Plant and Machinery:	H&S Advisor/Contractor
Condition of Floors and Stairs:	Churchwardens
Low Level Light Bulb Changing:	Mrs Ann Hancock
Working at High Levels:	H&S Advisor/Sec to PCC/C'tor
Manual Handling	H&S Advisor
Building Defects/Glazing:	Sec to PCC/Architect/Contractor
Child Protection:	Mrs Sara Puddy
Personal Safety:	Treasurer to PCC
Fetes and Similar:	Mrs Sabina Brooks
Bell Ringing:	Mrs Ann Major
Contractors:	H&S Advisor/Sec to PCC
Music:	Mrs Susan Elsworth
H&S training:	H&S Advisor/Sec to PCC

## **SECTION C**

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

### **1. Accidents and First Aid.**

An accident and first aid risk assessment is at Section D1.

A first aid box and accident book with basic RIDDOR Rules is in the Vestry.

In the unlikely event of an accident occurring which is more serious than a minor cut or bruise, 999 should be called and an ambulance asked for.

### **2. Fire Safety.**

A fire safety risk assessment is at Section D2.

#### **2.1 Fire extinguishers** are kept in the following locations:

- a. Porch – 2Kg carbon dioxide
- b. Nave – 3L foam
- c. Chancel – 3L foam
- d. Vestry – 2kg carbon dioxide

The above extinguishers are checked monthly by the H&S Advisor for presence and non-discharge. They are also checked annually in February by the providing company.

#### **2.2 Fire Alarm System** – Not applicable.

#### **2.3 Other Fire Protection Equipment** – Not applicable.

#### **2.4 Evacuation Procedure** –

- a. The south door and the vestry door must be unlocked before any event and marked with the running man sign.
- b. In the event of an emergency, an announcement to leave the building will be made by a sidesman or a member of the PCC.
- c. In the absence of emergency lighting, at least two torches must be available to the sidesmen or members of the PCC.

d. Persons will assemble in the car park and take a body count by ensuring that the persons sitting or standing by them in the church are present.

e. The emergency services will be contacted by a sidesman or member of the PCC using a mobile phone.

**2.5 Evacuation Drills** – Physical drills will not be conducted, but the PCC and sidesmen will be reminded of the evacuation procedure annually.

### **3. Electrical Safety.**

**3.1** A list of all of our portable electrical appliances will be held by the Sec to the PCC.

**3.2** Every quarter the H&S Advisor will visually inspect plugs, cables and sockets for defects which, if any, will be reported to the Sec to the PCC for remedial action.

**3.3** All of our portable electrical equipment will be inspected annually by a competent contractor as arranged by the Sec to the PCC.

**3.4** Every quarter the H&S Advisor will visually inspect the fixed electrical system for defects which, if any, will be reported to the Sec to the PCC for remedial action.

**3.5** Every five years, a ‘Full Scope’ inspection and test of our fixed electrical system will be made by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT as arranged by the Sec to the PCC.

**3.6** Every four years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers as arranged by the Sec to the PCC.

**3.7** We will not sell any second-hand electrical goods.

**3.8** Flexible cables will be positioned and protected so that they do not form a tripping hazard and are not subject to damage.

### **4. Gas Equipment Safety** – Not applicable.



## **5. Hazardous Substances**

**5.1** The Churchwarden(s) will limit the hazardous substances to the minimum types and quantities of necessary cleaning materials.

**5.2** When not in use, cleaning materials will be kept in a locked container or cupboard.

**5.3** Cleaning persons will be provided with appropriate protective clothing such as overalls, gloves and safety spectacles.

**5.4** Cleaning materials must not be mixed as an explosion or the release of a highly toxic gas may occur.

**5.5** Cloths or dusters used for applying or polishing a vegetable based cleaning material must not be left in a pile as spontaneous combustion may occur. Such cloths should be washed.

**5.5** Cleaning materials must not be stored in unmarked containers.

## **6. Plant and Machinery**

The Sec to the PCC will maintain a list and maintenance schedule of all items of church owned plant and machinery.

## **7. Slips, Trips and Falls**

**7.1** A risk assessment is at Section D 7.

**7.2** A weekly inspection of the church floor for relevant hazards will be made – see Risk Assessment 2.1e – and either removed or reported to the Sec to the PCC.

**7.3** A monthly inspection of the churchyard's relevant hazards will be made – see Organisation 5e.

## **8. Lighting**

To ensure adequate lighting the Churchwarden(s) will inspect the lighting weekly and report any low level bulb failures to Mrs Ann Hancock for replacement or to the Sec to the PCC for high level replacement.

## **9. Working at High Levels**

**9.1** Any part of the internal or external structure which is more than 3.5 metres (approximately 11½ feet) above floor level is regarded as high level.

**9.2** Competent volunteers may work at heights up to 3.5 metres providing one hand can be held on the ladder or stepladder.

**9.3** Competent contractors may work at any height providing suitable access equipment and safety harness, where applicable, is used. The Sec to the PCC will make the arrangements for such work.

## **10. Preparation of Food.**

Food is not prepared in the church.

## **11. Manual Handling.**

**11.1** A risk assessment is at Section D 11.

**11.2** Our policy is to reduce manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.

**11.3** No single person is to lift a load of more than 20 kilograms in weight- approximately, a heavy suitcase.

**11.4** A single chair in each hand or a stack of two chairs in both hands is acceptable as is a single table in both hands.

**11.5** Whenever possible, the lift should:

- a. Avoid twisting or bending the back.
- b. Use the leg and arm muscles to lift and not the back muscles.
- c. Hold the load close to the body.
- d. The drop should reverse the lift.

## **12. Display Screen Equipment.** Not applicable.

## **13. Hazardous Buildings and Glazing.**

**13.1** A risk assessment is at Section D 13.

**13.2** Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. To achieve this the buildings are visually inspected from ground level every quarter by the voluntary H&S Advisor who will advise the Sec to the PCC of any defects and the procedures put in hand for temporary safety measures and permanent repairs.

**13.3** An asbestos survey has been carried out and is held by The Secretary to the PCC. It is possible that a very small amount of asbestos is concealed in enclosed spaces and removal is not necessary. Information regarding the possible presence of asbestos will be given to and signed for by any person who needs to know.

#### **14. Child Protection.**

Our church follows the procedures set out in the current Church of England House of Bishop's Policy Document. The Safeguarding Officer is Mrs Sara Puddy who was trained in May 2014, renewed April 2017 and will be renewed every 3 years.

#### **15. Personal Safety.**

**15.1 Lone Working.** Whenever possible, lone working should be avoided. However, volunteers, such as cleaners or flower arrangers, will at times be alone in a building. It is important that such persons let a close relative or friend know where they will be and for how long so that in the event of accident or illness, rescue is not disproportionately delayed. Such persons are also strongly advised to carry a mobile phone with them.

**15.2 Treasure.** Persons handling cash and valuables are at risk from thieves. Efforts must be made to hide cash and valuables from sight so far as is possible including the use of a safe which must be kept locked except when in use. Valuables such as church silver should only be in sight after a number of known parishioners are present. The transfer of cash from safe to bank should be made by using a variety of routes and times and preferably with another person present.

#### **16. Activities.**

Occasional activities, such as bazaars, craft fairs and so on, sponsored fundraising activities and churchyard maintenance excluding grave digging will require separate risk assessments and the voluntary H&S advisor should be consulted. Grave digging is undertaken by a contractor to the relevant Funeral Director

## **17. Contractors.**

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than voluntary workers, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed must:

**17.1** Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of it.

**17.2** Produce evidence that they have appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained by the Sec to the PCC for a minimum of six years.

**17.3** Comply with all of the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.

**17.4** Where plant and machinery is brought onto the church premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.

**17.5** Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However responsibility will remain with the contractors.

**17.6** All contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.

**17.7 Construction Design and Management Regulations.** All construction work in the UK is subject to these regulations. So far as is known, there is no competent person within the church professional or volunteer organisation capable of managing such a project.

Consequently, the contracted church architect is designated the responsible person for such undertakings.

**18. Information and Enforcement.**

**18.1 Our local Environmental Health Department.** Sedgemoor District Council – phone 0300 303 7800 and the operator will put you through to the Department.

**18.2 Health and Safety Medical Advisory Service.** In the very unlikely event that this service is required – phone Cardiff Health and Safety Executive on 0845 3450055.

**18.3 Health and Safety Poster.** A poster is not required.

## **SECTION D      RISK ASSESSMENTS**

### **1.      Accidents and First Aid.**

a.      Given the size of the congregation, it is not reasonably practicable to ensure a trained first aider is available at all times. No further action required.

b.      The risk rating of an accident occurring in the church and churchyard is assessed as low. Nevertheless, a small first aid box and an accident book with pen should be kept in the Vestry. Action by Sec to PCC.

c.      Rules concerning the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 should be kept with the Accident Book. Action by H&S Advisor.

### **2.      Fire Safety.**

#### **2.1      Fire Risks.**

a.      **Lightning** - controlled by lightning conductor at west end of church which will be examined and tested every four years by a competent specialist firm of lightning engineers. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

b.      **Faulty electrical systems** – controlled by:

Quarterly visual inspection by the H&S Advisor of the fixed and portable systems. Any repairs needed will be reported to the Sec to the PCC for action.

Annual testing of our portable electrical equipment by a competent contractor. Unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of.

The inspection and testing of our fixed electrical system by a competent contractor who is a 'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.

- c. **Cleaning Materials** – controlled by keeping in a lockable container except when in use by designated cleaners.
- d. **Candles and Associated Materials** – controlled by keeping in a lockable container except when in use only by the officiating priest and the sidesmen.
- e. **Rubbish** – controlled by weekly visual check on a Saturday of whole church by the South Door ‘unlocker’ and safe disposal of any rubbish.
- f. **Arson** – control is not reasonably practicable.

**2.2 Can a Fire be Detected in a Reasonable Time and People be Warned** – the Church is a reasonably small open space with no nooks or crannies apart from the entry porch and a small semi-enclosed side Vestry. Smoke or flames would easily be visible to everyone in the Church. Further control is not reasonably practicable.

**2.3 Can People in the Building Get Out Safely** – there is easy egress, including disabled, through the main South doorway in the porch. However, the porch contains the majority of the controls of the fixed electrical system next to a fixed wooden ladder to the bell tower and both the outer and inner doors in the porch are flammable. If a fire started in the porch, egress might not be safe. There is one other exit door through the vestry which could not be accessed by a wheelchair; however, this is currently locked and barred at all times. Furthermore, the ground is reached from the door by means of steps which have, in places, collapsed and are unsafe.

It is therefore assessed that the risk rating of not having a second means of safe egress is the highest possible and it is recommended that the priest in charge consider taking urgent remedial action.

**2.4 Is there Adequate Firefighting Equipment** – Yes – see Section C 2.1.

**2.5 Do People Know what to do if there is a Fire** – Currently, there is only one option for egress and all sidesmen have been instructed (Jul 2016) on telling the congregation to leave in an orderly fashion and assemble in the car park where a body count will be carried out. Until the remedial action at 2.3 above is completed, no other controls are reasonably practicable.

## **2.6 Firefighting Equipment Checks, Training and Maintenance -**

**Checks** – see Section C 2.1.

**Training** – all sidesmen were instructed in the use of firefighting equipment in Jul 2016 and it is recommended instruction be given on induction training as a sidesman or every three years – action by Sec to PCC with H&S Advisor.

**Maintenance** – the firefighting equipment is checked annually (February) by the company providing the equipment.

**2.7 What Effect would a Fire have on our Neighbours** – None, the Church is surrounded by the churchyard and the nearest building is approximately 50 metres away.

**7. Slips, Trips and Falls** – there are no loose floor coverings in the church, the floor is reasonably even and the steps from the nave to the chancel are clearly visible with wide treads and low risers. The car park surface is in excellent condition. The churchyard grass is kept reasonably short and the paths clearly marked and have a flat wood chip surface. Overall, slip, trip and fall hazards are virtually non-existent. No remedial action is necessary.

**11. Manual Handling** – day to day activities do not involve the manual handling of any loads heavier or more difficult than the movement of lightweight chairs and fold-up tables. The risk of musculo-skeletal damage is minimal and it is not reasonably practicable to introduce aids or control measures.

**13. Hazardous Buildings and Glazing** – there is no glass below waist height and no action is required.