

Health & Safety Policy May 2024
Based on version 15/9/2019

All Saints Church
West Avenue
Gosforth
Newcastle
NE3 4ES

Date of production: June 2024

Reviewed by: Andrew Shipton 15 September 2019 and used by subsequent meetings of PCC and Fabric Committee. The Last Covid Health and safety policy doc (additional to this) was produced on **15/3/2021**.

Introduction

This document has been produced in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, and makes reference to other guidance and regulation as relevant in the pursuance of a culture of safe working practices for all involved with All Saints Church.

Notice to all Employees, Volunteers and Contractors

The success of this policy depends on the co-operation of all who work, in whatever capacity, in and around the buildings at All Saints Church. This policy is freely available to all staff, helpers and contractors. Advice for users of the premises can also be found within the Code of Practice for all hirers; the Fire Risk Assessments for the Church and Church Centre (separate 16 page Doc 28/11/17); and the maintenance records and routine procedures carried out in relation to the use of the buildings. See the Parish Office for further information.

A. Health & Safety Policy Statement

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

It is recognised that this is a two way process, and the views of those mentioned above are actively sought and to be considered as part of this process (and which may also be raised via the meetings mentioned below).

We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety & welfare of the members of the congregation, contractors, and visitors to the church, church Centre and grounds. The allocation of duties in relation to safety management and the arrangements in place are set out below.

This policy will be kept up to date with regular reviews: please see the date on the front of this document for the latest available version. Changes to procedures and systems at the Church and Church Centre should be incorporated within this policy.

In order to ensure that health & safety matters are constantly under review an item on this matter is permanently on the agenda for all meetings of the Parochial Church Council and the Fabric Committee.

Signed:

Name: (for the PCC)

Date:

B. Organisation & Responsibilities

This section sets out the overall responsibilities in place for the management of Health & Safety at All Saints.

1. Responsibility of the Vicar

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety is that of the Vicar.

2. Responsibility of the PCC (Parochial Church Council)

The PCC has general responsibility to ensure that Health & Safety Policy is implemented and to report and act upon anything that they might be concerned about in relation to this policy

3. Responsibility of the Church Wardens

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Church Wardens appointed by the PCC. The current Church Wardens are Dana Corso and Nick Glover. Christine Willoughby is the chair of the fabric committee.

4. Responsibility of the Health & Safety Officer

The Health & Safety Officer (currently Charlie Mussett) is in place in a voluntary role to support the work of the PCC and Church Wardens in an advisory capacity. This role is not a fulltime or paid one and as such is not designed to provide active day to day monitoring of systems. The Health & Safety Officer will:

- Work with the Fabric Committee in its role to ensure the wellbeing, maintenance and compliance of Church buildings, electrical and gas systems, lighting and maintenance programmes
- Be familiar with Health & Safety regulations as they are likely to concern and affect Church premises
- Help to define and create safe systems of work
- Help to design systems of work that are effective, simple to understand and that promote a culture of safety at All Saints
- Support line managers and committees in their work

5. Responsibility of Employees, Voluntary Workers and Premises Hirers

All employees, volunteers and Centre/church hirers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst in church business or premises. Therefore all must, in accordance with the code of practice provided to all hirers and made available to staff and volunteers:

- Comply with safety rules, codes of practice and given instruction whether verbal or written
- Report any fault, defect or concern with buildings or equipment
- Report all accidents, near misses or potentially risky hazards as soon as possible

6. Responsible Persons

This list is not intended to be exhaustive but shows those with a particular responsibility for certain activities:

Activity	Name / Position
Accident book & reporting	Louise Waugh, Parish Administrator
Maintenance of first aid boxes	Louise Waugh, Parish Administrator Tricia Maylia, Caretaker
Fire Extinguishers	Tricia Maylia, Caretaker, on instruction from the Fabric Committee
Emergency Evacuation	Event organiser / event lead
Portable electrical appliances	Tricia Maylia, Caretaker, on instruction from the Fabric Committee
Fixed electrical system & lighting	Fabric Committee, working with approved contractors
Gas Equipment / heating	Fabric Committee, working with approved contractors
Hazardous substances (see Fire Risk Assessment for details)	Church Wardens (items within the vestry in Church – see Fire Risk Assessment); cleaning contractor N&P (Church Centre)
Risk Assessments	Churchwardens
Plant & Machinery	Fabric Committee, working with approved contractors
Condition of the Buildings, flooring, fittings etc.	Fabric Committee, working with approved contractors

Manual handling	Person responsible for the designated activity
Display screen and office equipment	Louise Waugh, Parish Office
Child protection and Safeguarding	Safeguarding Committee
Events and Outings	Person responsible for the designated activity
Bell Tower usage and access for bell ringing	Yvonne Cairns, Tower Captain
Bell Tower access for works and maintenance	Fabric Committee, working with approved contractors
Contractor access to the premises	Fabric Committee / Tricia maylia, Caretaker
Training Matters	The PCC
Use of the Church Centre	Tricia Maylia, Caretaker

C. Arrangements to Implement the Health & Safety Policy

This section sets out, as far as is reasonably practicable, those arrangements in place to minimise the risks to the health, safety & wellbeing of all who use the church whether in a working or visiting capacity.

1. Accidents & First Aid

First Aid boxes are located in the Church Centre (Kitchen) and the Church (Vestry and the area by the main door off West Avenue). Qualified first aiders for events within the premises are to be provided by event organisers. Regular scheduled church services do not have designated first aiders but the audience may often contain first aid and/or medically trained individuals.

The Accident Book is held in the Parish Office and the Vicars Vestry. Where reports cannot be made immediately they are to be made at the earliest available opportunity by the relevant person (which may be a member of staff, PCC member, Church Warden etc.).

Where applicable accidents or near misses will be reported under the conditions of RIDDOR.

The advice of all clergy and activity leaders is that medical help be sought in all instances especially where vulnerable people are involved : where older people or the vulnerable are affected always call for an ambulance. Where children are involved this could change if parents are present and override that. If in any doubt regardless of age call for an ambulance.

2. Fire Safety

A full fire risk assessment is in place (as of November 2017- 16 pages) detailing the risks in existence and the controls in place to minimise those risks: the last visit of the Fire Service was in November 2013 and a recorded programme of remedial works exists to ensure that the Church and Church Centre are fully compliant with all regulatory demands. Where relevant and required (due to the nature of the premises) fire alarms and fire fighting equipment are in place. The locations of such equipment – and what to do in the event of fire - are included in the Code of Practice and made known to hirers, users and core staff. All such alarms and equipment are maintained, with records held by the Parish Office and checked / actioned by the Fabric Committee.

3. Evacuation Procedures

Church: A system for evacuation exists for the Church, written for the busiest single event (Christmas Eve Service). This is held by the Parish Office and to be shared with Church Wardens, helpers and volunteers.

Church Centre: the Code of Practice displayed in the venue and given to all hirers shows the system for evacuation: this is a well-equipped building with alarm, fire doors, illuminated signs, running man exit routes.. During working hours the Parish Office staff / Caretaker would make checks on occupancy of the Centre in the event of any need for evacuation. At other times hirers / event organisers would be responsible for all persons in their care or present at their event.

Consideration should be given by the Church management to which areas of the Centre are used by groups: for example, a group that may have older or less able participants may wish to consider use of ground floor rooms to reduce the time taken to exit the premises in the event of evacuation being required.

4. Electrical Safety

The Fabric Committee, working with the PCC & Parish Office, will ensure regular checks of all electrical systems and equipment are carried out by a competent person. They will also address reports of damage, fault or concern relating to electrical matters. The schedule of such checks is a recurring item on the Fabric Committee agenda. The Fire Risk Assessment also references this matter.

5. Gas Safety

The Fabric Committee, working with the PCC & Parish Office, will ensure regular checks of all gas systems for both cooking (within the Church Centre kitchen) and heating (across Church and Church Centre) and associated equipment are carried out by a competent person. They will also address reports of damage, fault or concern relating to gas safety matters. The schedule of such checks is a recurring item on the Fabric Committee agenda. The Fire Risk Assessment also references this matter.

6. Hazardous Substances

Use of these is very limited. The management of such substances are addressed within the Fire Risk Assessment for the Church. Within the Church Centre the cleaning contractor N&P will store cleaning materials and provide a folder of COSHH assessments and relevant information. Where needed the Caretaker will use these cleaning materials and thus must be made aware of the contents.

7. Safety of Plant & Machinery

Use of this is limited: fixed systems (see items 4 & 6 above) are maintained in accordance with regulation. Power tools may be used at the premises by church staff, volunteers and contractors. Church staff should only use any equipment or machinery that they have received proper training on and are comfortable with the use of. Volunteers (e.g. the monthly Gardening Group) should always be led by a responsible person, working to an agreed maintenance activity plan. Contractors using plant & machinery should provide risk assessments and method statements governing how such work will be carried out.

8. Slips, trips and falls – reduction of risk

In order to minimise incident of accident regular inspections will be undertaken by the Fabric Committee, with concerns and reports of any areas of concern covered as an agenda item at Fabric Committee meetings, where remedial works will be considered and brought to action as required. The church contains steps and different levels within it that are often traversed during a service by volunteers/helpers. It is important from a welfare point of view that the Church management liaise in a sensitive manner with group leaders to do their utmost to ensure that those who assist with church activities (e.g. choir, services) are not putting themselves under undue burden and risking injury. This could, for example, see advice given to less physically able people to use a route that provides the most support.

9. Working at Height & use of ladders

Due to the nature of the buildings some work at height and/or use of ladders is inevitable: some tasks will by their very nature fall to contractors brought in by the Church to perform regular or specialist maintenance tasks. Ladders may be used – subject to proper use and workers taking sensible precautions in terms of footing, job assessment and safe use – but only for short (e.g. sub 20 minute) jobs. Where longer work at height is required scaffold or powered access should be considered first. However it is recognised that the caretaker's role will involve some use of ladders for routine tasks: guidelines on working at height and the use of ladders are included within the job description and supporting information for this role. Where needed and highlighted this information can be shared with others who may perform similar tasks (e.g. voluntary maintenance teams working under the overall auspices of the Fabric Committee and the scheduled monthly maintenance mornings). Where possible working at height is being reduced e.g. through the use of low level test points being installed for emergency lighting.

10. Food Hygiene and Preparation

The Church is committed to following appropriate regulation in terms of food storage and the Food Hygiene Regulations. Those using the kitchen are provided with guidance which is prominently displayed and all hirers intending to use the Church Centre kitchens are made aware of the need to comply with all regulation.

11. Manual Handling

The Church's policy is to eliminate this wherever possible, and where not assessments should always be made to allow for the task to be tackled in the best available manner which could include trolleys, barrows, additional human resource or specialist support. The job description and guidance for the caretaker reflects this. It is recognised that some activities – eg the flower arranging within church – can involve the movement and carrying of heavy vases and watering cans. It is important from a welfare point of view that the Church management liaise in a sensitive manner with group leaders to do their utmost to ensure that those who carry out these roles are not putting themselves under undue burden and risking injury.

12. Display Screen Equipment

The Church Office role involved regular daily use of a personal computer and screen. The Church encourages comment from its staff and volunteer helpers to ensure that the optimum working

conditions can be created to ensure that users have the right equipment, furniture, light levels and support to help them in their work.

13. Child Protection & Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Committee, a sub-committee of the PCC, has been set up at All Saints in accordance with diocesan guidelines and has produced a policy to cover this aspect. Its role is to oversee the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children, young people and vulnerable adults within our church community and those who work with them. See the Parish Office for a copy of this policy reviewed annually. All who help with Faith at 4, the All Together Services, and all children's and Young people's activities must be briefed on this to ensure compliance and their own protection.

14. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are to be carried out to assess the potential risk from hazards associated with the activities and actions carried out on and off the premises in pursuit of the Church's work and aims. These include risk assessments relating to Fire Safety; outdoor pursuits and trips away from Church; use of candles in church; Christmas Fairs; and use of the bell tower. All church members looking to organise an event or special activities are requested to complete a risk assessment. A set of completed risk Assessments are available in the Office. The Health & Safety Officer is available to offer support and advice in relation to this process.

15. Lone working

It is accepted that an amount of lone working is inevitable: the parish office staff, caretaker and clergy will all be in the church and or Centre on their own at times. The Centre should at all times outside of public events / services be kept locked and the door entry system used for access management. There will be times when the Church is open during the day and staff / church volunteers are working within at the same time as public access is allowed. To best protect staff & volunteers the Church management must adopt a culture of safety and encourage all staff working alone to inform others of the times they are on the premises, to carry a charged mobile phone and to think about their own personal safety when planning visits, work or maintenance. Church management are to brief all key holders and those who lead groups/activities on the need to take this seriously.

16. Contractors working in and around the premises

All contractors are requested to show evidence of their own Health & Safety Policy and commitment to safe working practices as well as appropriate insurances, method statements, assessments for the work involved and understanding of the nature of the task and the environment they are to work in. The Church will, via the support of the Fabric Committee provide full details of all works to be carried out and the timelines in which they are to be done so as to minimise the risks to all. Contractor access will be supervised by the Church Wardens, caretaker and /or Fabric Committee as required and subject to the nature of the work involved which may vary from routine cleaning to specialist roles such as steeple jacks. The principles of CDM Regulations will be applied to all works to ensure checks on competence, provision of background information, provision of welfare facilities and the allocation of suitable time and resource. Notifiable projects under the CDM Regulations will be managed accordingly in line with the approved code of practice.

D. Reviewing the Health & Safety Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months and may be subject to review and amendment at other times should it be required or requested by the PCC or where changes to guidance or experience dictate a need.

Terrorist use of firearms and weapons. It is important to consider this method of attack and a proportionate response to cope with such an incident.

Below are some general guidance to aid planning in this area.

Stay Safe • Find the best available ballistic protection, for instance, behind substantial structures such as brick walls, and not wooden fences, glazing or car doors. • Remember, out of sight does not necessarily mean out of danger, especially if we are not ballistically protected.

See • If is a firearms / weapons incident. • Judge exact location of the incident. • Number of gunmen. • Type of firearm are they using a long barrelled weapon or handgun. • Direction of travel are they moving in any particular direction.

Tell • Immediately contact the police by calling 999. Use all the channels of communication available to inform all of the danger.

Act • As far as we can, limit access and secure the immediate environment. • Encourage people to avoid public areas or access points. If rooms are in the location, lock the doors if possible and remain quiet.