

Moulton Parish Church Health & Safety Policy¹

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

To all employees, voluntary helpers and contractors:

The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for Health & Safety.

The policy is in three sections:

Section A - General statement of policy

Section B - Organisation and responsibilities

Section C - Arrangements

¹ The policy will be reviewed every year, or earlier if there are any substantial changes to buildings or activities.

This document was last reviewed in November 2022

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 all our employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

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

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

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our buildings or activities. The policy and the way in which it is operated will be reviewed regularly and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that Health & Safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on Health & Safety will be on the agenda for all meetings of the Parochial Church Council. Relevant sub committees, employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on Health & Safety matters.

Signed

Churchwarden, on behalf of Vicar, Churchwardens and PCC

B - Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility for Health & Safety

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety rests with the Churchwardens on behalf of the PCC, being the legal entity responsible. The Churchwardens will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health & Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel.

Thus, the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy rests with the Churchwardens, who will act as joint/co safety officers, unless a specific Health & Safety Officer is appointed by the PCC.

In addition to or instead of appointing a Health & Safety Officer, the PCC may choose to delegate responsibility for certain aspects of Health & Safety, for example food hygiene regulations.

The responsibility of the Churchwardens, or Health & Safety Officer if one is appointed, shall be to:

- 1** be familiar with general Health & Safety Regulations and guidance (for example, as published by the Health & Safety Executive) as far as they concern the use of church premises and the safety of all participants in church activities
- 2** be familiar with the PCC's Health & Safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed
- 3** ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place
- 4** ensure that the church and halls are clean and tidy, such that their condition is not a hazard to anyone in or using the premises
- 5** ensure the car park and church grounds are properly maintained
- 6** ensure that any safety equipment and clothing is required is provided and used by all personnel where this is required
- 7** ensure that any plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training
- 8** ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained
- 9** ensure adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained
- 10** ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the Health & Safety Policy is implemented and made known to all staff and volunteers, as appropriate.

Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this Health & Safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

- 1** comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
- 2** to carry out risk assessments for all activities/events for which they are leading on. These should be submitted to the Vicar for approval at least 7 days in advance of the activity. The Vicar may require certain events/activities to be risk assessed

before making a decision as to whether they may go ahead or not. All risk assessments should be used to prepare a set of health and safety instructions for leaders/participants at events. **THESE INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE COMMUNICATED IN WRITING TO ALL LEADERS/PARTICIPANTS PRIOR TO THE ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE.** As a matter of good practice all new activities are approved by the PCC for insurance purposes. Team leaders must ensure that approval has been gained by PCC before proceeding.

- 3** use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
- 4** report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person
- 5** report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- 6** not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

General responsibility of all participants in church activities

All users of church premises and all participants in church activities have a personal responsibility to ensure that they; do not put themselves or others at risk of harm; adhere to this policy; satisfy themselves, to the best of their knowledge, that activities are safe for themselves and others; always look out for possible risks; bring to the attention of someone in authority any risks of which they become aware.

C Arrangements (implementation of the policy)

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

Accidents and First Aid

First Aid boxes are located:

Church Centre: in the church kitchen, the office.

Church: in the servery area.

The first aid boxes are maintained by: Alison Amos.

Trained/qualified First Aiders are:

Nick Alexander, Julia Alexander, Alison Amos, Nick Lambert, Pete Brown, Peter Storey.

The blank accident forms are located: in the Church servery and Church Centre Office. Completed forms are kept locked in the Church Office.

All accidents and incidents are entered on a report form, and our insurers advised.

When the Church or Church hall is let to outside organisations, they must be told in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered on an accident form. These accidents will be reported by the responsible person. Accident forms are regularly reviewed.

A trained first aider must be present at every event.

2. Fire safety

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

- An assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risks to our neighbours. This is carried out either as a specific exercise or as part of our general Health & Safety risk assessments.
- A check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned
- A check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including if necessary the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage
- To provide reasonable fire fighting equipment
- A check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire
- A regular check that our fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company. A fire safety log book is available for inspection in the office.

2.1

Fire extinguishers

The location of fire extinguishers is contained in the aforementioned fire safety logbook held in the Office.

The extinguishers noted above are checked every twelve months by a fire safety contractor. The Office administrator also undertakes a monthly visual check to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. There is a maintenance contract in place.

2.2

Smoke alarms

The Church Centre is fitted with smoke sensors. There are no sensors in the Church. The sensors in the Church centre are covered by a maintenance contract. The sensors are checked on a six monthly basis.

2.3

Other fire protection equipment

There is a 1m x 1m fire blanket in the Church Centre kitchen and Church Servedy. These are covered by a maintenance contract and are replaced periodically as required by law.

2.4

Evacuation procedures

Whilst the building is in use and people are inside, fire doors must be unlocked. All employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed. All users of premises should be made aware of fire safety and evacuation procedures. A map is available. The muster point for the Church is the paving outside between the Church and the Church Centre. The Muster point for the church Centre is just in front of the Church.

2.5

If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

- 1** Immediately raise the alarm
- 2** Telephone the emergency services
- 3** Check the building for occupants
- 4** Attack the fire if possible, but only if it has not taken hold and you can do it safely within your capability using the appliances provided, as long as you know how to use them
- 5** If not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you. The general rule is people before property
- 6** Evacuate to the designated assembly point, which is the Church car park
- 7** Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles

No Smoking policy

The church operates a strict "No Smoking" policy on the premises. This is, in part, to reduce the risk of fire as well as to ensure that people participating in church activities on the premises (especially the very young and the very old) are able to do so in a smoke-free environment.

Electrical safety

- 1 Testing of electrical equipment is undertaken by a competent contractor (who is a member of the NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting), ECA (Electrical Contractors Association) or other approved body) to ensure that all appliances are safe. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of
- 2 Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill.

All employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:

- (i) Visually check all electrical equipment before use
- (ii) Report all faults immediately to the Churchwardens
- (iii) Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
- (v) Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods
- (vi) Flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage

Gas equipment safety

Our gas boilers and any other gas equipment are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is Gas Safe registered. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately. These arrangements are checked by the responsible person.

Hazardous substances

Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, they are stored safely in locked storage facilities. These are the store room off the Church Centre cupboard.

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident.

Safety of plant and machinery

- 1 Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use
- 2 The appropriate personal protective equipment detailed below must be worn when operating any item of plant or machinery
- 3 Persons under the age of 18 and are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery
- 4 Ladders may only be used when other equipment such as tower scaffolds or mobile elevated work platforms cannot be used and for work of short duration provided they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties
- 5 Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the Churchwardens
- 6 All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements

Use of the church kitchen

The management of the Church Centre kitchen will be guided by the Food Standards Agency Document: 'Providing Food at Community and Charity Events' <https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events>

Only authorised users are permitted to prepare food in the kitchen. Drinks may be prepared by others as long as all relevant notices are complied with. The leader of all food preparation activities should carry a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate. The leader of the food preparation should ensure that all kitchen helpers are briefed as to appropriate food hygiene practice for the particular meal being prepared.

Children are not allowed into the kitchen at any time.

Users are required to leave the kitchen clean and tidy after use.

Preparation of food

- 1 For formal church events we shall follow the food hygiene regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs
- 2 We shall ensure that all food handlers for these formal events have received adequate supervision, instruction and training
- 3 We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at the correct temperatures.
- 4 Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected
- 5 Foodstuffs may only be prepared in the kitchen area
- 6 All hirers who wish to use the kitchen facilities must be advised of the conditions of use and that they make their own arrangements for adequately trained staff to undertake food preparation and handling
- 7 A log of all events where food preparation has occurred in the kitchen should be kept. This will include records of food temperature probe results.

Manual handling - lifting, carrying and moving loads

- 1 Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable
- 2 Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts and hoists as far as possible
- 3 The necessary training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling
- 4 The general instruction to users of church premises is that only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks
- 5 It should be noted that moving the new chairs in the re-ordered church represents a manual handling hazard.

Display screen equipment

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer workstations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible. The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- Stability and legibility of the screen
- Contrast and brightness of the screen
- Tilt and swivel of the screen
- Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs
- The work station environment
- The user friendliness of the software

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen. Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the responsible person.

Personal safety

Risk assessments will be undertaken regularly to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, travelling to and from church, accepting persons into their homes and handling cash and other valuables.

Risk assessments/activities

Risk assessments will be carried out - by the member of the Ministry Team responsible for the activity - on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, amended 2003 and 2006.

Risk assessments should be submitted to the Vicar for approval at least 7 days in advance of the activity. The Vicar may require certain events/activities to be risk assessed before making a decision as to whether they may go ahead or not.

All risk assessments should be used to prepare a set of health and safety instructions for leaders/participants at events. THESE INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE COMMUNICATED IN WRITING TO ALL LEADERS/PARTICIPANTS PRIOR TO THE ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE.

Lone working arrangements

Staff are members of a *WhatsApp* Group through which they can summon help in the event of an emergency or possible threat.

Contractors

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

- 1** Have their own Health & Safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same
- 2** Produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained
- 3** Comply with all the requirements of this Health & Safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation
- 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

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

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

Information and enforcement

Environmental Health Service Information:
West Northants Council - 0300 126 7000

Employment Medical Advisory Service Information:
Employment Medical Advisory Service
Health and Safety Executive
Belgrave House
Greyfriars
Northampton
Tel 01604 738300

Health & Safety Executive
Information Line: 0845 345 0055
HSE Books: 01787 881165

Health & Safety law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law - what you should know' is displayed in the church centre kitchen