

Health and safety policy

Parish of Finchampstead and California

St James' Finchampstead, Church Lane, Finchampstead, RG40 4LU (SJ)

St Mary and St John's Parish Centre, Vicarage Close, Finchampstead,
RG40 4JW (SMSJ)

St Eligius' Community Church, Tope Road, Arborfield, RG2 9NB (SE)

Date: 11 November 2019

Review Date: November 2020

unless there are any major changes in H&S legislation prior to that date

Health and Safety Representative : Joanne Myall, tel: 07908757254, email:

joannemyall@hotmail.co.uk

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

The policy is in three sections:

Section A - General statement of policy

Section B - Organisation and responsibilities

Section C - Arrangements

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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 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, church grounds 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 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 regularly and the appropriate changes made.

Signed.....

Incumbent Signed.....

SJ Churchwarden Signed.....

SMSJ Churchwarden Signed.....

SE Churchwarden Signed.....

H&S Rep Signed

B. Organisation and responsibilities

1. Responsibility of the Incumbent

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety is that of the Rector who 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, particularly the Health and Safety Representative.

2. Responsibility of the Churchwardens

The responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary lies with the Churchwardens, who are responsible for their respective churches within the parish. The churchwardens will nominate someone, preferably with some knowledge of Health and Safety and/or First Aid, to help them fulfil their obligations. This person will be known as the Health and Safety Representative. Should the H&S Rep not be a member of the PCC then they shall, if necessary, be invited by the churchwardens to any PCC meetings where any relevant issues of Health and Safety are to be discussed.

3. Responsibility of the Health and Safety Representative

The Health and Safety Representative (H&S Rep) is responsible, on behalf of the churchwardens, for ensuring that this policy document is kept up to date and to be aware of any changes in legislation that may be relevant to the church. The H&S Rep is a first point of contact for any matter concerning Health and Safety, and will work with the Rector, Churchwardens and the PCC to ensure that the Health and Safety Policy is implemented. The H&S Rep may act in place of the churchwardens in any of the sections listed below but does not take away the churchwardens' or Rector's overall responsibilities for those items. The H&S Rep shall also be the appointed person for the purposes of the First Aid at Work Act and the responsible person under the Fire Safety Order.

4. Responsibilities of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the Health & Safety Policy is implemented.

5. 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. use protective clothing and equipment when it is required
2. report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the appropriate person
3. report all accidents (however minor), injuries or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible
4. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety
5. Comply with safety rules, operating instructions, and working procedures.

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C. Arrangements

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.

1. Accidents and First Aid

The Appointed Person is: Health and Safety Rep

Our First Aiders are:

Joanne Myall (SJ)

Ashlyn Webster, Sharon White (SMSJ)

TBC (SE)

Kate Meads (EMPLOYEE)

We endeavour to have at least one employee and one churchwarden from each worship centre holding relevant, in date first aid qualifications.

First Aid boxes are located in:

SJ – Church Vestry and Church Centre Kitchen

SMSJ – Parish Centre Office (services in Gorse Ride School use the school's box located in the school kitchen)

SE – Church Kitchen

The Accident Book is located in:

SJ – Church Centre Kitchen

SMSJ – Parish Centre Office (services in Gorse Ride School use the school's book located in the school kitchen)

SE – Church Kitchen

All accidents and incidents occurring to church personnel and/or at church events are entered in the Accident Book. The Accident books and accident records are regularly reviewed by the appointed person. Serious incidents should (as well as being recorded) be notified to the appointed person as soon as possible after the incident, in case any further action needs to be taken, such as reporting to our insurers or under RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. Any serious reportable accidents or dangerous occurrences as specified in RIDDOR will be reported to the relevant enforcing authority.

2. Fire safety

The responsible person is: Health and Safety Rep

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

- To provide reasonable fire-fighting equipment;
- To regularly check that our fire-fighting equipment, including alarms, is in place and is serviceable, and that there is an annual maintenance contract in place with a reputable company (currently Reading Extinguisher Services);

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- To ensure that designated fire exits are unobstructed and that they are clearly marked;
- To display notices giving instructions as to action to be taken in the event of fire;
- -To undertake a three yearly fire risk assessment, based on the HMG "Fire Safety Risk Assessment for Small to Medium Places of Assembly (including Churches) – June 2006";
- To undertake fire evacuation drills annually

3. Electrical safety

Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested 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.

Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out. 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 or Health and Safety Rep
- (iii) Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment;
- (iv) Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods;
- (v) Flexible cables should be so positioned and protected that they do not constitute a trip hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.

4. Gas equipment safety

Our gas-fired central heating boilers and any other gas equipment are maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is listed on the Gas Safe Register. (www.gassaferegister.co.uk). Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

5. Hazardous substances

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.

Where possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

- For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as 'harmful, irritant, corrosive, toxic, very toxic, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', safety data sheets (SDS) or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct operating procedures,

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particularly parts 4 to 8 of the SDS regarding storage, handling and any emergency procedures. Part 15, regarding any dangers of the substance should also be understood.

- If necessary then a COSHH risk assessment should be undertaken by a churchwarden or the Health and Safety Rep, or a person with experience of the particular substance.
- Any stored fuel is solely for the use of garden machinery for maintaining the churchyard and grounds of the parish buildings and will be kept only in purpose made and labelled containers. The amount will not exceed five litres if stored in plastic cans or not exceed ten litres if stored in metal cans. This is the limit deemed safe for domestic use and will be reviewed annually, along with this policy. The fuel cans will be kept in a locked shed separate from the main church buildings, and will only be used by competent authorised adults.

6. Safety of plant and machinery

- Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use.
- Before attempting to use any item of plant or machinery, the user must undertake a check to ensure it is safe to do so, and where appropriate, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) MUST be worn. Guidance on PPE can be sought from the H&S rep.
- Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made.
- After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used.
- Persons under the age of 18 are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery.
- Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the churchwarden.
- All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements.
- Persons must not work on their own unless they have a means of communication and have notified a colleague of the details of the work being undertaken and agreed a procedure to ensure their safety is checked on.

7. Working at high levels

Where working at height is required (that is, in locations where a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury), due regard must be paid to the requirements of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 subsequently amended by the Work at Height (Amendment) Regulations 2007.

- In particular, no employee or volunteer may undertake work above six feet from floor level, [or ground level if working outside], without having been fully trained in the use of any equipment needed to reach the working area required. Prior permission for any works that fall into this remit must be sought from the H&S representative.

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- 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 and footing of the ladder.
- If use of a ladder is required, and the work necessitates the user being at a height where their feet are more than six feet above ground level, this work should only be carried out with the aid and assistance of second competent person.

8. Slips, trips and falls

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every week by the Churchwardens of their respective worship centres for any hazards, including immediate surrounding paths and land.

9. Lighting

The churchwardens of each respective worship centre should ensure that there is adequate lighting for their worship centres and report any faults to the H&S rep, who is responsible for ensuring appropriate action is taken.

10. Preparation of food

We ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs. Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected.

Hirers of premises are responsible for ensuring that food is prepared and stored in accordance with Food Hygiene Regulations.

11. Manual handling - lifting, carrying, and moving loads

This section refers to manual handling of heavy loads that cannot be safely undertaken by one person without risk of injury.

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments and make appropriate use of lifting aids.

Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks. Prior permission for undertaking manual handling tasks must be sought from the H&S rep.

12. 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.

Any concerns around using computer workstations should be referred to the H&S rep as soon as they arise, who will be responsible for ensuring that an appropriate solution is found and put into place.

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13. Hazardous buildings and glazing

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.

In order to achieve this, the buildings are inspected every quarter by the Churchwardens. Any defects are noted and procedures put in hand for necessary repairs.

Where necessary, temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.

Glazing is checked on a more regular basis and repaired as soon as possible, being made safe until such repairs are carried out. A check is made of any asbestos in the building by a competent person noting its location, type and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by an approved contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected.

14. Child protection

We maintain a separate Safeguarding Policy, which includes a named Safeguarding officer. The details of that policy follow the current Church of England Guidelines.

Any youth group which undertakes an activity away from the usual meeting place will have a risk assessment completed and parental permission forms collated. This is the responsibility of the activity organiser. Any concerns relating to this must be raised with the H&S rep.

15. Personal safety

Risk assessments will be undertaken to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, travelling to and from church, accepting people into their homes, and handling cash and other valuables. Any concerns in any of these aforementioned areas or any other aspects of personal safety should be referred to the H&S rep as soon as they arise.

16. Risk assessments

To meet our obligations under The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals and by a competent person.

17. 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:

- Have their own Health & Safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same;
- Produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained;

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- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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. Work on the church buildings which will last for more than 30 working days or involve more than 20 workers, or 500 person/days of work will be subject to The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2007. These regulations require the appointment of a CDM Co-ordinator, a Designer and a Principal Contractor and also the production of a Health & Safety File for the contract. The Churchwarden will ensure that the necessary arrangements are put in hand to comply with the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations.

18. Information and enforcement

Environmental Health Service information.

Address: Environmental Health Department

Wokingham Borough Council

Civic Offices

Wokingham RG40 1BN

Telephone: 0118 974 6382

e-mail: environmentalp&h@wokingham.gov.uk

Employment Medical Advisory Service information.

Address:

Health & Safety Executive

Grosvenor House

Basing View

Basingstoke

RG21 4HG

Telephone: 0845 345 0055

Fax: 01256 404100

19. Health & Safety law pocket guide

A copy of the HSE pocket guide 'Health and Safety Law – what you need to know' will be provided to all employees and any others requiring this information. Copies may also be downloaded from the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/law.pdf>

(Note: because we will supply this booklet we are no longer obliged to, and will not, display the Health and Safety Law poster)