

Abbots Road United Reformed Church
Abbots Road Leicester
Our Health and Safety Policy

21st April 2022

Review date 21st April 2023

A) General statement of policy

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

The policy is in three sections:

Section A – General statement of policy

Section B – Organisation and responsibilities

Section C – Arrangements

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.

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, carpark, gardens 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.

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 Church meetings sub committees where they exist and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on Health & Safety matters.

Signed

On behalf of the Elders

Date

Review date 26th April 2023

(This policy should be reviewed Annually

B) Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility of the Elders

Overall responsibility for Health & Safety is that of the Eldership 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. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended accordingly.

Responsibility of the Management Committee

The following working group carries the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy:

Management Committee

The responsibility of the Management committee shall be to:

- 1 be familiar with Health & Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises
- 2 be familiar with the 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 the church and hall and rooms are clean and tidy
- 5 ensure the church car park is properly maintained including the safety of any paving, fixtures and fittings.
- 6 ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required.
- 7 ensure that all 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 exit is maintained

9 ensure adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained

10 ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

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 Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required
- 3 Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the Management Committee.
- 4 Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
- 5 Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Responsible persons

The Elders may delegate responsible persons for safety in particular areas of the Church.

Signed

On behalf of the Elders

Date

Review date 26th April 2023

(This policy should be reviewed Annually)

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 in: Church Porch, Main Hall and passage way outside kitchen and Laburnham room.

We recommend each organisation/Hirer has a Trained/qualified First Aider present during their event.

The accident book(s) is located in: The area just outside the Kitchen door.

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book or on an accident report form and our insurers advised of serious accidents and incidents. Please refer to Our lettings policy.

If the church rooms are let to outside organisations, they are informed in writing through the lettings policy that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

Accident books and accident records are regularly reviewed.

The following accidents will be reported immediately to the Emergency Authorities.

- Fatal accidents,
- major injuries,
- outbreak of diseases
- and dangerous occurrences

(normally the telephone)

A written report should be submitted to the Elders as soon as possible after the Major accident/incident as listed above. If there is any doubt as to whether the accident is reportable please seek advice from an Elder.

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. A Plan of the Church premises and escape routes is displayed in locations around the Church ie Church Porch abbots road side and Cardinals walk side, Laburnham room porch and area outside the kitchen.
 - 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.
- NB: We discourage the use of naked flames such as tea lights and candles etc unless used under strict supervision with a risk assessment review already in place.**

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

- Church Porch (cardinals walk side)
- Church hall Porch (Abbots Road side)
- Church Balcony
- Church hall stage
- Laburnham room porch
- Lobby near back door to Garden.
- Kitchen (including fire blanket)
- Lounge
- Ark room.

Each Extinguisher is clearly labelled as to the Type of extinguisher and capacity (eg Carbon Dioxide 2kg). The labels also include what type of fire they are to be used for.

The extinguishers noted above are checked every 3 months by the Management committee to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. The extinguishers noted above are checked annually by an independent body to ensure they meet current regulations.

Evacuation procedure

For large services and concerts, where the congregation/audience exceeds 10 our procedures for stewarding/evacuation are as follows:

- 1 All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the 'Running Man' symbol
- 2 A check must be made that all doors can be opened
- 3 A trained steward must be allotted to each door and have responsibility for persons in a specific part of the church Area of church Exit door(s)

4 Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to trained stewards

5 Emergency lighting is not available, therefore torches must be available for each steward.

6 In the event of an emergency (fire/bomb threat, etc.), an announcement to leave the building will be made by the Minister/Worship leader/Elder/Steward.

7 Persons will assemble on the grass verge across the (Abbots) road.

8 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by a nominated person using Mobile phone.

Evacuation drills

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out every six months. All employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

Event of a Fire

If you discover a fire (no matter how small)

- 1 Immediately raise the alarm.
- 2 Telephone the emergency services
- 3 Check the building to alert others on the premises.
- 4 Attack the fire, if possible, within your capability using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk
- 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.
- 7 Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles

Electrical safety

- 1 A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the Management Committee.
- 2 Every six months plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the responsible person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be actioned immediately removal and of the equipment until satisfactorily repaired or replaced.
- 3 Annually 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.
- 4 Every six Months a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by the Management Committee. Any defects will be reported to for action.
- 5 Every five years, (quinquennial inspection) 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
- 6 At intervals of not more than five years our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested as part of the quinquennial inspection/report.
- 7 It is our policy not to sell any second hand electrical goods unless they have been inspected and tested by a suitably qualified person and a register of such equipment is maintained
- 8 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 responsible person
- (iii) Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
- (iv) No electrical equipment (unless authorised by the management committee or the Elders is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the electrical equipment record.
- (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 is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is a CORGI registered gas installer. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

Hazardous substances

The Management team will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church/hall. 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, flammable, highly flammable, extremely flammable, explosive, oxidising or dangerous for the environment', 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. These items will be stored carefully and out of the reach of harm.

Accidents: Before use of any chemicals we would advise to read the manufacturers instructions carefully. If an accident occurs the Manufacturers instructions should be followed.

Do not mix chemicals. Do not store chemicals in unmarked containers.

Safety of plant and machinery The Management committee will maintain a list of all items of plant and machinery. The procedures for checking and rules for use are as follows:

- 1 Employees and voluntary workers must not operate plant or machinery that they are not trained and authorised to use
- 2 Employees and voluntary workers must not ride on any parts of machinery not intended for that use
- 3 Machinery must be switched off before any adjustments are made
- 4 After carrying out maintenance and adjustments, all guards must be replaced before the machinery is used
- 5 Before using any item of plant or machinery, a check must be made to ensure it is in a safe working condition, correctly adjusted, and there are no loose nuts, bolts or other defects.
6. The appropriate personal protective equipment detailed below must be

worn when operating any item of plant or machinery

7 Persons under the age of 18 are not permitted to operate any power driven item of plant or machinery

8 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

9 Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the Management committee.

10 All plant and machinery will be regularly maintained and a schedule kept of maintenance requirements. In some cases when using machinery, boots, gloves, eye protection and overalls should be worn).

11 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

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We recognise that the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 clearly states that Personal Protective Equipment should only be used when risks cannot be avoided or sufficiently reduced by other preventive measures or through work re-organisation. All PPE issued must be stored as per the manufacturer's specification and staff and volunteers have the legal duty to comply with the policy and directions and not to alter or misuse any health and safety equipment, including PPE, supplied for their safety.

Slips, trips and falls – condition of floors, steps and paths

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every Three months by the Management Committee of

1 all floors and stairs in the church and hall, and

2 all paths and steps in the church carpark and garden. Particular note will be made of Raised slabs, broken pathway, moss, algae and leaves on paths. Any defects will be isolated and arrangements for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

Lighting

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every three months by the Management committee to ensure that all lights in the church, hall and rooms are working. Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported to The Management Committee who will ensure that the bulbs are replaced ensuring that the safety procedures for the replacement of bulbs is followed.

Working at high levels

Any item which requires climbing equipment such as steps or a ladder is deemed as high level. The balcony within the main Church is also deemed as high level.

The following procedures must be followed when working with steps or a ladder.

Replacing of light bulbs, windows, clock timing, painting and decorating. These can only be carried out by a minimum of two persons present and

only after precautions have been taken to limit the risk of an accident. Under no circumstances should objects be used to stand on to gain height.

Preparation of food

Our Policy is as follows

1 To ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs

2 We aim to ensure that all food handlers have received adequate supervision, instruction and training

3 We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risk 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 Food stuffs may only be prepared in the following areas: Kitchen and any pre notified and agreed area.

6 Only persons who have received the appropriate training may prepare and serve foodstuffs.

7 We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures.

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 encourage individuals to use carry out risk assessments and make use of lifting aids, including trolleys, or lifting in pairs ie tables, 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

Hazardous buildings/glazing

1 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 six months by the Management committee

2 Any defects noted are immediately reported and procedures put in hand for repairs

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

4 A check is made of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows below waist height and in doors and beside doors below shoulder height is of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

Legionella Bacteria

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2013 (COSHH) provide a framework of actions designed to assess, prevent or control the risk from bacteria like Legionella and take suitable precautions.

The Management committee is responsible for ensuring that: -

- arrangements are in place for checking the safety of water in the church premises;
- any control measures identified in surveys are put in place;
- regular inspections in line with HSE recommendations are carried out;

- appropriate remedial work is carried out to prevent contamination, and prevent stagnant water gathering in dead legs of pipework etc.;

- staff and volunteers are kept informed of any incidence of legionella bacteria;

- an inspection record is kept in the church records.

Child and Vulnerable Adult protection

Please refer to the Abbots Road united Reformed Church Safeguarding Policy. Copies available from The Elders, Safeguarding officers, Lettings Officer and through our website. There is also a copy available for viewing in the vestibule.

Personal safety

Risk assessments need to be undertaken to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, travelling on Church related business, accepting persons into their car/homes and handling cash and other valuables.

Risk assessments/activities

Risk assessments is a must and will be carried out 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. For all hazardous activities, you need to carry out risk assessments and produce procedures that must be followed. These procedures need to be based on your own situation. You will then need to write your own procedures and

submit them to the Elders before commencement of your activity.

- Fêtes, including the use of bouncy castles
- Rummage sales/table top sales
- Visits and outings
- Sponsored events,
- All events on the Church premises
- Visitors/Occasional Hirers

Risk assessment guidance notes are available from the Elders.

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. This should be detailed in the contract.

Staff Welfare

We recognise our obligation and responsibilities under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. The church will ensure that the premises meet the health, safety and welfare needs of all its staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors. The Church Elders will consider and introduce measures to ensure that the working environment is adequate in respect of ventilation, working temperature, lighting, traffic routes, house-keeping, and general welfare provision – i.e. toilets, washing facilities, drinking water, changing rooms and eating/rest facilities. The Church Elders will also ensure that workplace facilities are maintained to an acceptable level accessibility to all ages and ability, of hygiene and of repair.

Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol

We have a zero tolerance to the use of Drugs, Smoking and Alcohol within the Church premises.

The Church Elders will not allow any member of staff, visitor or volunteer who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs to enter the church premises or undertake work on its behalf. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours is a disciplinary offence, which might be considered gross misconduct. It could lead to disciplinary action including summary

dismissal. It is Church's policy that drug or alcohol misuse should be treated in the first instance as a health issue rather than a disciplinary issue. Smoking is prohibited anywhere within the church premises.

Waste Management

We will comply with all Waste Management regulations. It will ensure that: -

- all waste stored on the premises will be suitably protected and stored responsibly;
- all waste electrical equipment is disposed of as per the WEEE regulations;
- any storage is in keeping with the current Fire Regulations.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for: -

- arranging to clear up spillages, which occur whilst they oversee the area concerned;
- reporting accumulation of waste, or large items of waste that require special attention, to the Management Committee who will arrange for its removal and disposal;
- reporting other spillages or leaks to the Management Committee who will arrange for them to be dealt with.

This Health and Safety Policy is also supported by the Abbots Road United Reformed Church Lettings Policy. The two documents work side by side.

Safety law poster

A copy of the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – what you should know' is displayed in the Abbots Road entrance foyer. *(If we have any employees then you need to display the HSE poster 'Health and Safety Law – What you should know.'* This is available from HSE Books or HMSO bookshops. ISBN 0 7176 2493 5)

**Signed
On behalf of the Elders**

**Date
Review date 26th April 2023**

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