

St Mary the Virgin Health and Safety Policy

**St Mary's PCC
High Road West,
Walton,
Felixstowe,
Suffolk IP11 9DS**

Date: October 2018

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the regulations made under it. It covers St Mary the Virgin Church in Walton, St Mary's Church Hall and St Philips Wadgate Road Felixstowe.

The Policy is in three sections:

- A. General Statement of Policy
- B. Organisation and Responsibilities
- C. Arrangements

Note: Instructions and Guidance are in italics

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SECTION A

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Everyone is responsible for their own safety and the safety of others!

We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, staff, vulnerable people, children, contractors, visitors and others who may use the church, churchyard and any associated buildings.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out in section B.

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 by the PCC and the appropriate changes made.

In order 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 Annual Parochial Church Council Meetings.

Signed:
Vicar/Rector/Priest in Charge/Church Warden(s) (delete as appropriate)

Date:

Review Date:October 2018

This policy is reviewed at regular intervals by the PCC.

SECTION B

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Responsibility of the Vicar/Rector/Priest in Charge

Overall responsibility for health and safety lies with the Priest in Charge and or the Church Wardens during an Interregnum. PCC members will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health and Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. *(Legally if the person(s) contributing to an accident can not be determined it is whoever is responsible for the management of the property)*. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church members.

2. Responsibility of the Churchwardens

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Churchwardens.

3. Responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer

The Health and Safety Officer or the Church Warden if the post is vacant has responsibility for advising on the arrangements outlined in this policy, they should:-

1. be familiar with the health and safety arrangements and encourage there observance, particularly that risk assessments are undertaken for all activities
2. ensure Fire risk assessments are reviewed for all buildings managed by the PCC
3. be familiar with Health and Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises and advise the Church Wardens & PCC accordingly
4. encourage so far as is reasonably practicable, the adoption of safe systems of working
5. monitor the church and halls, so that they continue to provide a safe environment
6. monitor the churchyard to ensure it remains a safe environment
7. encourage the use of safety equipment and clothing where this is required
8. encourage budget holders that contractors are made aware of their Health & Safety Obligations and adopt safe working practises when their verbal or written contract is issued
9. advise the Church Wardens and PCC that adequate access to premises is maintained for services
10. check that fire fighting equipment is available and maintained
11. check that emergency lighting is regularly tested
12. check that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

4. Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the health and safety policy is implemented and reviewed at regular intervals.

5. Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and 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 appropriate person (Church Warden, Administrator or HSO) and where practical make safe.
4. report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible, to the church Warden.
5. not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

6. Responsible Persons / Agencies

The Church Wardens are responsible for Health and Safety in all church premises as are all users of the facilities.

Suffolk Coastal District Council maintains the Churchyard and therefore shares a responsibility for maintaining the churchyard as a safe environment.

(Child protection issues have been delegated to the Church's Child Protection Officer(s). However the C of E and the Health & Safety Executive would still hold the Priest in Charge accountable.)

(Suffolk Coastal District Council, has responsibility for ensuring our compliance of health and Safety legislation. It is also responsible for the enforcement of Food Hygiene regulations.)

SECTION 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.

1. Risk Assessments:

Fire Risk Assessments will be undertaken when ever alterations are made to any part of the fabric of the building and in any case will be reviewed every 3 years, by the PCC.

Health and Safety Risk Assessments which can include Fire Safety shall be undertaken for all Church Activities. It is the responsibility of the person leading the activity to ensure an appropriate Risk Assessment has been undertaken.
(An event may have more than one appropriate Risk Assessment)

2. Accidents and First Aid:

Trained/qualified First Aiders:

The church aims to have at least 3 qualified first aiders as part of our Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection policy. Their certification is recorded by our Child Protection Officer and the Church Administrator

First Aid boxes and Accident books are located in the:

- Church kitchen
- Hall kitchen.
- St Philips kitchen

Completed Accident report forms are held by the Church Administrator. All accidents and incidents should be entered in the accident book or on an accident report form by the event organiser, the Church Warden should be informed and when appropriate our insurers advised.

Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences must be reported immediately by the quickest practicable means to the Local Authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. (RIDDOR)

The following is a summary of the injuries or occurrences which must be reported:

- – any fatality on Church premises
- – major injuries to employees (this includes any injury resulting in admission to hospital for more than 24 hours and any accident that causes more than three consecutive days off work).
- – Injuries to non-employees which require the injured person to be taken straight to hospital for treatment.

These accidents will be reported by the Church Warden or nominated representative *An incident can be registered online at www.hse.gov.uk*

Any group using the church or church hall shall be notified in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book by the organiser or their nominated representative and the Church Warden informed.

3. General Fire Safety:

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997. In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

An assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings. This is carried out either as a specific exercise every 3 years or as part of our general health and safety risk assessments.

A record is filed with the Church Administrator.

To minimise the risk we undertake to:

1. check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
2. Monitor the storage and use of combustable materials
3. check that people who may be in the building can get out safely.
4. provide reasonable fire fighting equipment.
5. A monthly check of Emergency lighting is made at all church buildings used by the public.
6. St Mary's Hall has the Fire Alarm tested monthly as a requirement of our Local Authority licensing and should be recorded in the Church Office.
7. check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire.
8. regularly 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.

3. Electrical Safety:

- Whenever used, mains voltage plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the user to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or leads. Any necessary repairs will be actioned, via the Church Warden, by a competent person, unsafe items will be removed from use.
- Every year a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation. Any defects will be reported to the Church Warden for action.
- Every two years all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent person to ensure that all appliances are safe. Any unsafe equipment will be repaired or safely disposed of.
- Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of an approved body. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.
- At intervals of not more than five years, currently two years or if damage is observed our lightning conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent specialist firm of engineers.
- A copy of the test records will be kept by the Church Administrator in the Church Office or electronically on a designated database.

4. Gas Safety (St Mary's Hall & St Philips)

Our gas boilers and any other gas equipment is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is a "Gas Safe" registered gas installer. Any safety work is implemented immediately. A record is kept by the Church Administrator.

5. Hazardous Substances

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

Name	Hazard	Type	Storage	Protection	Accident Procedure
Bleach	Irritant	Oxidant	Secured in cleaners store	Gloves	Eye contact – rinse with water and seek medical advice. If swallowed, seek immediate medical advice; show container or label. Accident Report, Warden informed.
Toilet cleaner	Irritant		As above.	Gloves	As above.

6. Asbestos

We maintain a Health and Safety Asbestos Monitoring log of all known and suspected Asbestos Containing Materials, ACM's. It is updated noting any deterioration due to weathering or mechanical damage and repaired where appropriate. Contractors and volunteers undertaking project or maintenance work are advised of the potential risk.

7. Plant and Machinery

Ladders may only be used when they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties or two person operation.

Where appropriate the aluminium Access tower should be used.

Electrical Floor cleaners, polishers should only be used by persons trained in their use.

Any defect and damage found to any item of plant or machinery must be reported to the Administrator or Church Warden.

8. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS (Condition of floors, steps, paths)

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made regularly by the Church Warden(s) of all floors and stairs in the church and halls, and all paths and steps in the churchyard.

Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths. Any defects observed or reported to the Wardens, will be risk assessed and appropriate action taken.

8. LIGHTING

Any failed lighting will be reported to the Warden, who will ensure remedial action is implemented when and where appropriate.

9. WORKING AT HEIGHT (Above 2m)

The following areas are designated as high level:-

Interior:- Tower above ringing level; Nave and Chancel ceiling height.

Exterior:- All gutters; flat roof above choir vestry/kitchen etc.

Only contractors and competent volunteers may work at high level:

A second party must always be in attendance, when such work is in progress.

10. PREPARATION OF FOOD

We observe the Food Standards Agency guidelines on food preparation and storage and will register with the Local Authority Food Hygiene inspectors if we decide to operate the kitchen as a commercial operation. (e.g. Just a Bite)

When the paying public are present, at least one of those responsible for food preparation on the premises must have a current food hygiene certificate.

We ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised of the facilities and procedures. (*Church shared lunches are considered private parties and do not need to comply with food hygiene regulations*)

11. MANUAL HANDLING (Lifting, carrying and moving loads)

Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable. Where this is not possible a suitable trolley or lifting gear should be used.

12.DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT.

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer work stations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible in consultation with the users. It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure this is undertaken.

13.HAZARDOUS BUILDINGS/GLAZING

Any defects noted are reported to the Wardens and procedures put in hand for 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.

14. CHILD PROTECTION

The St Mary's has a Child protection policy monitored by the PCC approved child protection officer

15. PERSONAL SAFETY

Risk Assessments need to be considered to assess the risks to persons working alone in the church, offering lifts, accepting persons into their homes, visiting and handling cash and other valuables.

1. Where practical, money is counted by two people working together, and stored in a safe location preferably in the Church safe.
2. Petty cash is kept in the church safe
3. Money is paid into the bank as soon as practicable, but not at a regular day of the week or time.
4. When working with children and vulnerable people we follow our child protection policy
5. Pastoral Care visits, are informally risk assessed by the visitor and where appropriate measures taken to minimise risk to all involved

16. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a risk by the leader of the activity, in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. These assessments to be filed with the Church Administrator. *(A template is attached to this policy)*

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:-

1. Have their own health and 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.

18. INFORMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Environmental Health Service Information:

Suffolk Coastal District Council,
East Suffolk House
Riduna Park
Station Road
Melton Hill,
Woodbridge,
Suffolk IP12 1RT. Tel.: 01394 444357

Employment Medical Advisory Service Information:

Medical Advisory Service
Wren House,
Hedgerows Business Park,
Colchester Road,
Chelmsford,
Essex CM2 5PF Tel.: 01245 706200