

All Saints Church Hacheston

Health and Safety Policy

Revised and Updated 3rd July 2017

Revised	15 th December 2011 (AMD)
Amended	29 th April 2013 (AMD)
Updated	6 th August 2014 (Churchwardens LB and KD, and David Clough, Tower Captain)
Reviewed	13 th July 2013 (KD, Churchwarden, and DC, Tower Captain)
Addendum	18 th October 2015 (KD and DC)
Reviewed	18 th May 2016 (KD and DC)

Health and Safety Policy All Saints Church, Hacheston

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for the Incumbent, council members, congregation and visitors, voluntary workers, Norfolk and Suffolk Community Rehabilitation Company, and visiting professionals, eg architect, surveyor and contractors (including visiting bell ringers).

This Policy has been prepared in accordance with the Health and Safety Regulations 1992. This policy was brought into effect by the PCC at its meeting on 2nd December 2010.

The Policy has been revised in the light of any changes in legislation and particularly following any material changes to the Church building or activities within the Church.

A “current” Policy is held by the Secretary, displayed in the church, and is available to all PCC members. Churchwardens and Tower Captain also have copies.

This policy recognises that there is no legal requirement for a policy to be implemented by a company or organisation unless it has five or more formal employees.

The PCC recognises that under current legislation the term 'voluntary workers' should be understood to include future employees or casual labour. It further recognises that in some circumstances volunteers may be classed as employees and they are therefore entitled to the same protection.

This Policy will be reported on at each Annual Parochial Church Meeting and will be used to inform the PCC at any meeting where there is any matter which requires action or discussion.

After their appointment (or reappointment) at the Annual Parish Meeting, the Churchwardens and the Health and Safety Officer will, as 'best practice', to fulfil the PCC's duty of care, carry out

- an annual risk assessment,
- an annual Fire Risk assessment
- a review of the Health and Safety policy, and report to the PCC, as necessary, on any matters or issues arising therefrom.

In the light of the foregoing and to fulfil the PCC's Duty of Care:

Adequate insurance cover will always be a priority item of expenditure for the PCC.

Responsibilities of the PCC

All Members of the PCC are responsible for ensuring that Health and Safety Policy is implemented, by informing all users of the Church of the Policy and of anything they, the users, need to do to ensure their safety and the safety of others. Lone workers should, where possible, either work with someone or at least inform others of their whereabouts. Another consideration is for care with manual handling, particularly of bulky or awkward items, eg the Bishops Chair.

PCC Members need to:

1. Be vigilant and bring to the attention of the Safety Officer any matter they feel may have an impact on this Policy.
2. Ensure that any equipment they use is used correctly and safely.
3. Be aware of the procedures for informing users of the church about the Health and Safety Policy.

Responsibilities of the Churchwardens

In addition to the above the Churchwardens are responsible for providing regular users of the Church with formal information and the appropriate instructions outlined in this Health and Safety policy.

They need to:

1. Maintain the fire notices, safety notices and first aid box notices (see Appendix Pages 1-4 inclusive)
2. Make arrangements for the cleaning and tidying of the Church.
3. Ensure the maintenance of a clear and safe stairwell to the bell ringing chamber.
4. Ensure that the Churchyard is properly maintained, including regularly checking the safety of gravestones, trees, boundary fences and Mausoleum. Check clearance of branches around power lines (3m radius), contact power company if pruning necessary.
5. Ensure that any equipment used is correctly maintained in a safe manner and serviced as necessary.
6. Ensure that adequate smoke detectors and fire fighting equipment is provided and that they are regularly serviced.
7. Keep the First Aid boxes, the Accident Report books, records of maintenance and the Fire Procedure notices and general safety notices up-to-date.
8. Ensure that the fabric, fixtures and fittings of the Church are properly maintained.
9. Ensure that the boiler is serviced regularly.

Responsibilities of the Tower Captain

The Tower Captain is responsible for providing all bell ringers (regulars and visitors) with information and instructions outlined in this Health and Safety policy and the specific Health and Safety policy for bell ringers (see Appendix Page 5).

Responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer

The Healthy and Safety Officer is responsible for carrying out, with the Church Wardens, an annual Risk Assessment and an annual Fire Risk Assessment
Health and Safety Officer, Mr David Clough.

Fire Safety

The PCC will fulfil its obligations under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 and 1999. The Churchwardens and Health and Safety Officer on behalf of the PCC will carry out a fire risk assessment annually. The initial fire risk assessment follows on page 6 of this document.

The procedure to be followed in the event of the discovery of a fire is outlined in Appendix Page 1.

This procedure is to be displayed prominently, as a Notice, in the Church at all times.

Fire Risk Assessment - All Saints Church, Hacheston

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005 covers all domestic premises in England and Wales, including Churches and Church Halls. The law makes it the responsibility of the PCC to ensure the safety of all users of the building, by taking steps to reduce the risk of fire and to ensure that in the event of fire people can escape safely.

Reference Document: H M Government Guide: Fire Safety Risk Assessment Small and Medium Places of Assembly
ISBN 13.978 1 85112820 4

Section 1 - Fire Hazard

1. Ignition Sources

- Matches, tapers, candles and lighters
- Electrical wiring and appliances (eg kettle, organ blower) and vacuum cleaner
- Sockets, lights (particularly halogen spot lamps)
- Central heating oil-fired boiler

2. Fuel

- Oxygen – always present (through doors, windows, vents etc.)
- Wooden furniture and fittings, hassocks and altar cloths, hymn books, unlit candles, etc. Church decorations, particularly Christmas and Easter
- Flammable cleaning materials
- Flammable rubbish
- Fuel oil

3. Arson

Section 2 – People at Risk

Congregation - normally less than 40

Clergy

Visitors

Other people particularly at risk include:

Unaccompanied children (particularly during school holidays)

Cleaners and flower arrangers (who may be alone in the Church)

Organist (who may also practise alone in the Church) PCC members and volunteer helpers should always work in pairs if possible. If circumstances arise where a person needs to work alone in the church, they must tell someone they are going and when they expect to return. If possible they should have a mobile phone with them; doors must be left unlocked and open if appropriate.

Bell Ringers (needing to descend from the ringing chamber)

Elderly, Infirm and disabled– both congregation and visitors

Those working at heights. No member of the PCC or volunteer helper is to use ladders. Step ladders may be used provided they are opened fully and locked properly before attempting to climb them, and also provided a second adult is present to steady the steps. Care must be taken when using step ladders not to over-reach or stretch beyond a safe working distance. If the task cannot be completed at a safe working distance using a step ladder, the matter must be reported to the PCC secretary and professional help sought.

Section 3 - Evaluation of Risk

1 The *main* risk from fire is to the building fabric, as the Church is open and unattended for the majority of the time.

2 The risk of fire starting *accidentally* is minimal, as major ignition sources such as candles are never left unattended and they, together with matches, are removed to safe storage in the vestry after services. Cleaning materials and chemicals must not be stored in close proximity to a source of heat (e.g. boiler, candles) nor in locations where, in the event of a fire, they could act as an accelerant and so hamper safe exit from the building (e.g. the cupboard under the stairs). Cleaning materials and chemicals should be stored in the wall cupboard within the masonry of the church at the west end of the nave. When using cleaning materials and chemicals, rubber gloves must be worn at all times.

The boiler is only lit manually when required and is switched off after services. The timer is no longer in use.

3 The risk of fire starting by *omission* (caused by something we fail to do) is considered unlikely.

4 The risk from *arson* is high but given the location of the church is considered unlikely. The CCTV which monitors both drives to the church and the oil tank further reduces this risk.

5 The risk to people is greatest for bell-ringers, who may not hear the 'Fire' alarm being raised verbally above the noise of the bells and they need time to descend from the ringing chamber.

Risk Reduction

- Fire extinguishers are situated beside the organ, in the nave at the entrance to the vestry (central heating boiler), and in the silence and ringing chamber. These are serviced annually.
- Smoke detectors are situated in the bell tower and the ringing chamber.
- There are emergency lights in the ringing chamber.
- Rubbish is removed frequently, is not stored in bin bags, but is placed in the SCDC 'wheelie bins' stored well away from the church.
- Only small quantities of cleaning materials and other materials are kept, and when not in use, are kept in the wall cupboard high on the west wall of the south aisle, out of reach of children [COSHH 2002]
- The Boiler is serviced annually.
- All lighting and electrical appliances are switched off, unplugged or disconnected when not in use, with the exception of the wifi router. The whole electrical installation is inspected every five years
- All doors and windows are shut when the Church is empty.
- The boiler fuel oil is stored externally in a locked tank, which is monitored by solar powered floodlight and CCTV.
- The stairwell to the Ringing Chamber is to be kept clear at all times, and locked when bells not in use.
- The Health and Safety for Bell ringers forms a separate section of this Health and Safety Policy.

Section 4 - Procedure in case of fire

The Procedure in the case of fire is outlined in Appendix Page 1.

a) Regular, voluntary workers in the Church (i.e. sidespersons, flower arrangers, cleaners, organists, etc) are to be notified by the Churchwardens of the 'Procedure in case of fire'. (Appendix Pages 2)

b) The Churchwardens are to ensure that the 'Procedure in case of fire' notices are clearly displayed in the Church to inform visitors to the Church. (Appendix Page 1)

c) If fire breaks out during a service, the Churchwardens and sidespersons are responsible for ensuring that the 'Procedure in case of fire' is followed. They should note the fact that there is no exit via the vestry, and that the south door and west exit doors do not open outwards, i.e. with the flow of people.

The south door to be left unlocked during services and other public gatherings.

During evening services, churchwardens and sides persons have torches to aid safe evacuation of the building in the dark.

d) Bellringers have their own procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Appendix Page 5)

Health and Safety for Bell Ringers

The PCC is mindful that bell ringing is possibly the most risky activity within the Church. The Church bells were refurbished, augmented and hung in a new frame by Hayward Mills Associates in 2000. A full survey of bells, frame and tower was carried out May 2017 by Alan Moulton, DAC Bells Advisor.

The PCC recognises the importance of the Tower Captain, to oversee the maintenance of the bell, ringing itself and the training of ringers. The Tower Captain should be a competent and experienced bell ringer who is aware of the responsibility and trust the PCC have placed on him or her. As of May 2016, the Incumbent to hold a copy of the Tower Captain's DBS Certificate and 'Confidential Declaration', and to check that they are current. Tower Captain to also hold Safeguarding Level 2 Certificate issued by the Diocese.

Safety Procedures :

- No-one is to enter the Tower without permission from the Tower Captain, except for Fram broadband for emergency maintenance of their equipment in unsocial hours.
- No-one is to enter the Tower when it is windy
- No-one is to enter the Tower unless accompanied
- Bells must always be left in the down position.
- The trap door to the ringing chamber to be kept locked when the bells are not in use.
- Visitors wishing to use the bells should contact the Tower Captain and/or the Tower Correspondent (as listed in the current Suffolk Guild of Ringers Handbook).

Maintenance:

It is the responsibility of the Tower Captain to advise the PCC on the care and maintenance of the bells. Technical advice may be obtained from the Suffolk Guild of Ringers: www.suffolkbells.org.uk. The bells are to be inspected regularly and routine maintenance is to be carried out where appropriate. A formal record of maintenance must be kept.

Defects must be reported to the PCC.

Ringling:

It is the responsibility of the Tower Captain to supervise practice nights, ringing and to monitor the development of the skills of individual ringers.

The PCC is aware of the special regulations that need to be complied with when dealing with the training of children and should this event arise, the officer appointed by the Suffolk Guild of Ringers will be contacted to advise on the conditions that need to be met, before undertaking any work with children.

Responsibilities of the Tower Captain

- 1 To ensure that the Bell Ringing Chamber floor trap doors are secured in the down/closed position before bell ringing begins and that after bell ringing finishes, the trap doors are to be left down and padlocked to prevent access to the ringing chamber.
- 2 To make all ringers aware of health and safety issues involved in bell ringing.
- 3 To ensure that the health and safety notices in the bell chamber are maintained.
- 4 To ensure the presence of the first aid kit and Accident book.
- 5 To report to the PCC on health and safety matters in respect of the bells, the tower and the ringing chamber at the Annual Church Meeting.
- 6 Two adults to be present at all times, one of whom must hold a current DBS certificate.

1) Fire

The tower has a smoke alarm in the belfry above the bells and in the ringing chamber. Emergency lighting has been installed in the ringing chamber and there are fire extinguishers, for both electrical and combustible materials.

In the event of fire the procedure to be adopted is outlined in Appendix Page 5.

2) Other Risks

General safety issues for all bell ringers are outlined in Appendix Page 3.

3) Visiting bell ringers

Visiting bell ringers will be notified of our health and safety policies, which are displayed in the ringing chamber by the Tower Captain. (see Appendix Pages 3 and 5).

4) A first aid box and an accident book are kept in the bell chamber.

This Policy was revised in July 2017

.....K.Dawe

.....L.Ginn
Churchwardens

.....D.Clough

..... Date