

Health & Safety Policy



St Mary's Church Devizes New Park Street Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1DS

Policy ratified by St John's & St Mary's PCC			
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Review date	January 2023	Actual	

Health and Safety Policy (H&S)

Name of Church: St Mary's Church **Address:** New Park Street, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1DS

A - General Statement of Policy

Our policy, so far as 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 reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church 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 will be reviewed annually, and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that H&S matters are kept constantly under review, an item on H&S will be on the agenda for all meetings of the Buildings and Grounds Committee which will in turn report to the Parochial Church Council; employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on H&S matters.

B - Organisation and Responsibilities

1. Responsibility of the Priest in Charge: Overall responsibility for H & S is that of the Rector,

Rev Jonathan Poston

who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy H&S regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice. Specific responsibilities may be delegated to church personnel.

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 as noted here:

Robert Simpson / Jane Scorer

3. Responsibility of the Parochial Church Council: The Parochial Church Council has general responsibility to ensure that the H&S policy is implemented.

4. Responsibility of the Health & Safety Officer: The following person, appointed by the Parochial Church Council, carries the responsibility for the day to day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this Policy:

Alan Martin.

Unless otherwise stated, the Responsibility of the H&S officer shall be to:

- 1 Be familiar with H&S regulations as far as they concern church premises
- 2 Be familiar with the H&S 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 The wardens will ensure that the church is clean and tidy.
- 5 The wardens will advise **Wiltshire County Council** should there be any concerns over the maintenance of the churchyard and pathways, including the safety of monuments
- 6 Individual users will ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by themselves and all others where this is required
- 7 Users will ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that they and all other operators have received the appropriate training
- 8 Wardens, sidesmen, and all other persons on duty on church premises at any time, will ensure that adequate access and egress are maintained
- 9 The Parish Administrator will ensure adequate firefighting equipment is available and maintained

5. Responsibility of employees and voluntary workers: All employees and voluntary workers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this H&S 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 Parish Administrator
- 4 Report all accidents (however minor) injuries, near misses, or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible to the Parish Administrator
- 5 Not misuse anything provided in the interest of health and safety

6. Responsible persons: The named persons below are responsible for safety as follows:

By activity

Activity	Responsible	Activity	Responsible
Accident book & Accident reporting	Alan Martin	Condition of churchy'd	Devizes Town C'cl
Fire Extinguishers	Administration	Light bulb changing	Administration
Bell ringing	Elizabeth Merritt	Working at high levels	Contractors only
Emergency evacuation	Wardens/Hirers	Food preparation	N/A
Portable electrical appliances	Administration	Manual handling	Own duty of care
Fixed electrical system	Architect	Building defects/glazing	Architect/Wardens
Gas equipment	Administration	Child protection	Gerry King
Hazardous substances	N/A	Personal safety	Own duty of care
Plant and machinery	Administration	Outings	N/A
Condition of floors, stairs and steps	Wardens	Choir/music	Graham Coatman
Tower access/tours	Catherine Brown & Elizabeth Merritt	Health & Safety training	Alan Martin
		First Aid	Administrator

By area

Area	Responsible	Area	Responsible
Main body of church	<i>Church Wardens</i>	Churchyard	<i>Devizes T C'cl./ Wardens</i>
Clergy vestry	<i>Church Wardens</i>	Pathways	<i>Wiltshire T C'cl./ Wardens</i>
Ringling chamber	<i>Elizabeth Merritt</i>	Organ/piano	<i>Graham Coatman</i>

C - Arrangements - Implementation of the policy

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

1. Accidents and first aid:

First aid box is located in:	<i>North Choir Stalls</i>
Trained/qualified first aider is:	<i>N/A</i>
The accident book is located in:	<i>With First Aid box in North Choir Stalls</i>

All accidents and incidents are entered into the accident book. If the church hall is let to outside organisations, they are told in writing, that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

Accident books and accident records will be regularly reviewed by the appointed H&S Officer

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 - 'RIDDOR'. These accidents will be reported by the responsible person (H&S Officer)

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:

- 1 An assessment of the fire risks in the church and associated buildings and the risk to our neighbours. This is carried out as part of our general Health & Safety risk assessments
- 2 A check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned
- 3 A check that people who may be in the building can get out safely including the provision of emergency lighting and fire exit signage in the Parish Rooms
- 4 To provide reasonable fire fighting equipment
- 5 A check that all those in the building know what to do in the event of a fire
- 6 A regular check that our fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable and that there is an annual maintenance contract with a reputable company.

2.1. Fire Extinguishers: Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Location - Church	Type of extinguisher and capacity
<i>By Organ entrance</i>	<i>2k Carbon Dioxide</i>
<i>By South Door</i>	<i>9ltr Water</i>
<i>On right of west door</i>	<i>9ltr Water</i>

The extinguishers noted are checked monthly by the Wardens to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged. This check is evidenced in the appropriate file.

The extinguishers noted above are checked annually by **Devizes Fire Protection Ltd. Coate, SN10 3LP**

There is no other fire protection equipment. A cold water tap is located between pews on the North wall.

2.3. Evacuation procedure: For services and concerts, our procedures for stewarding and evacuation are as follows:

- 1 After entering St Mary’s Church through the Vestry door, the door will be locked from the inside and the key remain in the lock.
- 2 The west doors are secured on the inside by bolts and a lock. A check must be made that all doors can be opened by unlocking and drawing the bolts.
- 3 The south door will be closed at the commencement of a service/event. An adjacent steward will control further access/egress.
- 4 Trained stewards must be allotted to the vestry and west doors and have responsibility for ensuring safe egress.

(These procedures are in place to conform to our agreed practice of ensuring that a high level of security is maintained when services or events are held in St Mary’s Church)

Area of Church / building	Exit door
<i>Sanctuary & Choir</i>	<i>Vestry door – or nearest safe exit</i>
<i>All other areas</i>	<i>West door or South door – or nearest safe exit</i>

- 6 Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to trained stewards
- 7 Torches will be made available for each duty steward; torches are kept in the following clearly marked locations:

<i>1</i>	<i>In Organ Console</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>In Priest’s Prayer Desk</i>
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- 8 In the event of an emergency (fire/bomb threat/etc) an announcement to leave the building will be made by the senior person in charge of the service/event
- 10 Persons will be directed to assemble as follows:

Evacuation area	Assembly point
<i>St Mary’s Church</i>	<i>East end of the churchyard</i>

- 11 The emergency services will be contacted immediately by the senior church warden/person in charge of the event, using a mobile phone or accessing a neighbouring property.
Responsible persons will be aware that they need to provide our post code to the emergency services. Our post code and address is permanently displayed on the notice boards in the south porch.

2.4. Evacuation drills: If and when the St John's Choir are present, at St Mary's, the Director of Music will advise on the means of escape. Likewise, the senior person in charge of a service or event, will brief all on our evacuation procedures.

All employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

2.5. If you discover a fire – no matter how small:

- 1 Immediately raise the alarm by warning all
- 2 Telephone the emergency services following the procedure in 2.3/8/10/11 above.
- 3 Check the building for occupants
- 4 Attack the fire if possible within your capability, using the appliance provided, but without taking risks
- 5 If it is not possible to attack the fire, or you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you.
- 6 Evacuate to the designated assembly point (see section C 2.3/10 above)
- 7 Ensure clear access is maintained for emergency vehicles

(A 'Fire Risk Assessment' is held by the H&S Officer; a copy is enclosed here with the H&S policy)

3. Electrical safety:

- 1 A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the Parish Administrator.
- 2 Every quarter plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the Parish Administrator to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs required will be noted and actioned by the Administrator. This quarterly check will be evidenced by date and signature in a file kept for this purpose and retained with the list of portable appliances.
- 3 Every two years all our portable electrical equipment will be tested (PAT) by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, knows how to use it and correctly interpret the results. Any unsafe equipment will be disposed of.
- 4 Every six months a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by the Parish Administrator and the Chair of the Parish Rooms committee. These six monthly checks will be evidenced by date and signature in a file kept for this purpose and for convenience retained with the list of portable appliances. Any defects will be noted and actioned.
- 5 Every five years our fixed electrical system will be inspected by a competent contractor who is a **'Full Scope' member of the NICEIC, ECA or NAPIT**. Any necessary remedial work will be carried out.
- 6 At intervals of not more than two and a half years our lightening conductor system will be examined and tested by a competent firm of lightening engineers. A certificate of compliance is held on file.
- 7 It is our policy not to sell any second-hand electrical goods.
- 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:
 - a) Visually check all electrical equipment before use
 - b) Report all faults to the responsible person
 - c) Must not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment
 - d) No electrical equipment to be brought onto our premises and used until it has been tested and entered into the electrical equipment record by the Parish Administrator.
 - e) Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods
 - f) Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard

and are not subject to mechanical damage

4. Gas equipment safety: Our gas boiler (and associated equipment) is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor (*Shire Building Services*) who is registered with the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately. This check is overseen by church wardens.

5. Hazardous substances: There are no hazardous substances kept on the premises. In the event of any hazardous substance being stored in the future, the Parish Administrator will maintain a list.

Sharps. If bags or other containers of 'sharps' are found in the churchyard, or on church premises, the finder is advised to arrange for them to be collected by Wiltshire Council, from private premises. Wiltshire Council should be informed on 03004 560100. Or, if convenient, deposited in the 'Open Door' sharps box, or the sharps box located in the Parish Office. (Note – containers with 'sharps' should not be handled unless it is considered safe to do so)

6. Safety of plant and machinery: 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. See section 9 below – 'Working at High Levels'.

7. Condition of floors, steps and paths: In order to reduce as far as reasonably practicable, the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made each quarter by the Church Wardens of:

- 1 All floors, steps and stairs.
- 2 All paths in the churchyard. Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on pathways. Any defects will be reported to *Wiltshire County Council* who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.
- 3 These checks are evidenced by signature and date and kept by the Parish Administrator in a file maintained for this purpose.

8. Lighting: In order to ensure that the church and Parish Rooms are adequately lit, and inspection will be carried out every quarter by the Church Wardens. to ensure that all lights in the church, and churchyard are working.

Any bulbs that require replacing will be reported to our administrator who will ensure that the bulbs are replaced following appropriate safety procedure. These checks are evidenced by signature and date and kept by the Parish Administrator in a file maintained for this purpose.

9. Working at high levels: The following areas are designated as high levels:

- 1 Any part of the Church fabric, internally or externally, that requires the use of equipment other than for work that can be managed at a height, governed by the use of 'domestic' style step ladders.
- 2 Working at height in St Mary's tower, off ladders set firmly in place for the purpose, is permitted so long as no individual undertakes work off ladders, in any area of the tower, without a second person being in attendance.

10. Preparation of food:

1. No food is prepared in St Mary's Church.
- 2 Through our hiring agreement we ensure that all hirers who wish to provide foodstuffs are advised that St Mary's Church has no food preparation area nor a suitable food storage facility.

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 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. The necessary training will be given to all those employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling. Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.

12 Display screen equipment: Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer work stations (viz. the Parish Administrator) and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible. The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

- 1 Stability and legibility of the screen
- 2 Contrast and brightness of the screen
- 3 Tilt and swivel of the screen
- 4 Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs
- 5 The workstation environment
- 6 The user-friendliness of the software

Where necessary, risk assessments will be carried out by the H&S Officer.

13 Hazardous buildings/glazing: Our policy is to ensure that our buildings are safe and without risk to health, safety and the welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this:

- 1 The building is inspected every six months by the Church wardens. These checks are evidenced by signature and date and kept by the Parish Administrator in a file maintained for this purpose.
- 2 Any defects are noted and immediately reported the Parish Administrator and the procedures put in hand for repairs. In some cases, the Wardens will take responsibility for auctioning immediate 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 If work or repairs are necessary, a check will be made by a competent person of any asbestos in the building, noting its location, type and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by a licensed contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected.
- 5 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 safe material or is protected against damage.

14 Child & vulnerable persons protection: St Mary's Church (together with St. John's Church) has a policy on child and vulnerable persons protection issues, as set out in the current Church of England House of Bishop's Policy Document. The responsible person will ensure that a statement upholding our procedures will be made at each annual church meeting and be suitable recorded. A permanent record will be maintained of all accidents involving children.

15 Personal safety: The safety of individuals carrying out their business on behalf of our church, is of paramount importance to us. Risk assessments will be provided for those engaged in such business, providing them with suggested control measures to ensure their wellbeing. (See Risk Assessment agreed by PCC March 2017)

16 Risk assessments: At regular intervals Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises for all activities that carry a significant risk, by the H&S Officer, in order to meet our obligations under *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999*.

17 Contractors: Anyone entering the church for the purpose of carryout work, other than an employee or a 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 our H&S policy and cooperate with church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
- 4 Where plant or 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 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 in which they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This 'permit to work' will also specify and safety precautions they must undertake.
- 7 A Hot Work permit will be required before any 'hot works' are undertaken.

18 Information and enforcement:

<i>Environmental Health Dept.</i>	<i>WCC 0300 456 0107 or in person Crossmolina Buildings, Snuff St., Devizes</i>
<i>Health & Safety Executive</i>	<i>Advisory team 0300 003 1747 / Government Buildings, Phase 1, Ty Glas, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5SH</i>

19* Health & Safety Law Poster: A copy of the HSE poster, '*Health & Safety Law – what you should know!*' is available in the Parish Office.