

ST. HILDA'S CHURCH, WARLEY WOODS

HEALTH AND SAFETY (INCLUDING LONE WORKING) POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT

This updated health and safety policy ("**this Policy**") was formally adopted at a meeting of St. Hilda's Parochial Church Council ("**the PCC**") on 25th October 2022]. The next review date is October 2023.

As a church, we understand that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church, hall or church grounds. We are also aware that, as an employer and controller of premises, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

As we no longer have five or more employees, we are not required to have a written health and safety policy under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. However, we have decided to maintain this Health and Safety Policy as a matter of good practice.

This Policy intends to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that our activities are carried out safely and do not pose a risk to the health of our employees, volunteers, congregation, visitors and others who may use the church, church hall, church grounds and any other building for which we are responsible. This will be in accordance with good practice and any other relevant statutory provisions which may apply. The PCC accepts the overall responsibility for this. We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective. Any decisions we make will have due regard to it.

It is the duty of each employee and volunteer to exercise personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This Policy will be brought to their attention. We will try to ensure that everyone involved with the church plays their part in its implementation. A copy of this Policy will be kept in church and made available on request.

We will keep health and safety matters under review each year. We will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy and amend it where we believe it is no longer valid.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Lead person

We have appointed a member of the church to have specific responsibility for this Policy and its implementation. The member of the church with overall responsibility for implementing this Policy is: Richard Haynes

This person is responsible for ensuring that:

- the standards set out in this Policy are implemented and maintained;
- where required, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained;
- any hazards reported to them are rectified without delay;
- only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests;
- any accidents are investigated, recorded, and reported if required;
- relevant Health and Safety documents and records are maintained; and
- they keep up to date on Health and Safety matters relevant to the church and set a personal example on matters of health and safety

Churchwardens and PCC responsibilities

The day-to-day responsibility for implementing the Policy is assigned to the Churchwardens. As we currently have no Churchwardens, the responsibility for implementing the Policy falls on the PCC and the Incumbent. They are responsible for ensuring that:

- All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibility; a
- Adequate precautions are taken as per this Policy and risk assessments made in connection with it; a
- Adequate information and training is provided for those who need it; a
- Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible; a
- If defects cannot be corrected straight away, interim steps are taken to prevent danger; i
- All accidents are reported in line with this policy; a
- Advice is sought if clarification regarding the implementation of this Policy is needed; a
and
- They set a personal example on matters of Health and Safety t

Employees and volunteers

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to cooperate in the implementation of this Policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others while on church business or premises. They will be expected:

- to read this policy and understand what is required of them; t
- to complete their work, taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others; t
- to comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures determined by the PCC, the Churchwardens (when in post) or the church's person responsible for health and safety; t
- to report any hazard, defect or damage to a Churchwarden (when in post), to the person responsible for health and safety or to a PCC member, so that it might be dealt with; t
- to warn any new employees or volunteers of known hazards; t
- to attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely; t
- not to undertake any repair or modification unless competent to do so; and n
- not to misuse any health or safety equipment. n

ARRANGEMENTS

External advice

We will, if necessary, appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations and record details of this person.

Risk assessments and method statements

We will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law and prepare method statements setting out those steps. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these when we consider they may no longer be valid.

Copies of our health and safety Risk Assessments, Method Statements, records and other documents are kept in the Church office. Those for the Church only are kept in the Vicar's vestry.

Information and training

We will provide necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers where necessary and keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors or others who may need this to complete their work safely.

First aid facilities

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including - as a minimum - a suitably stocked first aid box and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. We will also provide relevant information to employees and volunteers.

Our first aid box is located on the window sill in the inner porch of the church.

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is Richard Haynes

Accident books

We will keep an accident book in each of the church and hall. We record in it details of any accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public. We will, where required, report details of them to the appropriate authority in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

The church accident recording book will be kept on the shelf adjacent to the war memorial in the inner church porch. The one for the hall will be kept in the kitchen of the church hall.

Regular checks and inspections

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our health and safety precautions remain effective and adequate.

We will ensure that the fabric of our buildings is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe. Defects will be rectified or made safe as soon as is practicable, bearing in mind that a Faculty may be required. Where necessary, temporary arrangements will be made to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing.

We will ensure that the boundary walls/fences of our grounds do not present a health and safety risk.

We will have trees inspected periodically by a competent person and will have any necessary work carried out to make them safe.

Electrical risks

We will ensure that electrical equipment, fixed machines and portable appliances are maintained so as to prevent danger. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made where appropriate.

Fire risks

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent and detect fire and what steps to take in the event of a fire. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where we suspect they are no longer valid. We will ensure that means of escape from both the Church and hall are kept free from obstructions.

We will ensure that any heating system is suitably maintained and checked periodically by a competent person. We will keep records of the checks made and either rectify any defects or decommission the defective equipment until it is repaired or replaced.

Hazardous substances

We will ensure that hazardous substances are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

Manual handling

We will avoid the need for lifting or carrying heavy objects as far as possible. Where this is not practical, we will make use of lifting aids such as trolleys or take other precautions, such as team lifting.

Working at height

Where possible we will try to avoid the need to work at a height. Where this is not practicable, we will ensure that any work is properly planned to identify suitable precautions. We will make sure that these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

Equipment

Any work equipment {including hand tools} that we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. We will periodically check equipment {e.g. ladders} to make sure they are safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

Food hygiene

We will ensure that on those occasions where we prepare food, we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food in such a way as to avoid contamination and provide hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste.

External contractors and works

Where maintenance, refurbishment or restoration work is planned, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned before work starts. We will also

determine if we have any responsibilities under the Construction {Design and Management} Regulations and comply with these if necessary.

If we employ contractors, we will ensure that they have their own Health and Safety Policy and Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents (which may be in the form of a broker's certificate).

Epidemics and pandemic

We will comply with Government and Church of England Guidance in relation to COVID and any pandemic including the preparation of risk assessments.

Large gatherings

Where we intend to hold large or unusual concerts, services or events, we will identify any additional precautions that are necessary and implement these.

Access

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty people who are frail, elderly or have a disability may have in negotiating access. We will make periodic checks to ensure that floors, coverings, steps and pathways remain in good condition, free from obstruction and that any precautions {such as hand rails or lighting} remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks we make. We will have arrangements in place to maintain pathways in winter weather.

Lone working

We will identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety in accordance with the lone working provisions below.

LONE WORKING

Introduction

These provisions within this Health and Safety Policy for the safety of lone workers reflect our concern for ensuring the safety of people who are working alone at St Hilda's church. It applies to employees, sessional workers, and volunteers. They recognise that both the PCC and the individuals to whom this Policy applies have responsibilities to be aware of risks and to make decisions about any practical measures which will be taken to manage those risks.

Our Ecclesiastical Insurance includes cover for people who work alone. Insurance guidance about personal safety advises that risk assessments need to be undertaken to assess the risks to persons:

- working alone in the church, hall or church grounds,
- travelling to and from church as part of their employment (eg to a crematorium);
- accepting people into their homes; and
- handling cash and other valuables.

The following definitions are used in this Lone Working Policy:

- a **“Lone Worker”** – is an individual who spends all or some of their time working alone, either as an employee or as a volunteer;
- a **“Hazard”** - is a potential source of harm or adverse health effect on a person or persons; and
- a **“Risk”**– is a likelihood that a person may be harmed or may suffer adverse health effects if exposed to a hazard.

Statement of principles

These lone working provisions apply to all people employed by the PCC and all people working on a voluntary basis in the Church, Church Hall, grounds and any other premises for which the PCC may become responsible in future. The principles applying to these lone working provisions are:

- People who are working alone should not be put at more risk than other employees;
- The law requires employers to consider carefully, and then deal with, any health and safety risks for employees working alone;
- For volunteers we seek to adopt good and safe working practices in relation to lone working;
- A sensible and proportionate approach should be taken by all who are involved in the risk assessment process;
- Every person who works alone in the premises or grounds of St Hilda’s should be aware of their own responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and of other people affected by their activities. They should be aware of hazards and risks and take all possible safety measures
- Each worker should be consulted about the risk assessment for their own area of work because this is required by law and because they best know about any hazards and risks;
- For each person who works alone, there should be a systematic, written individual assessment of hazards, risks and a personal safety plan; and
- The process should be overseen and co-ordinated by a person or a group of persons, on behalf of the PCC which has overall responsibility for the health and safety of employees and volunteers who work alone in the Church grounds or premises.
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Job and voluntary roles which include lone working at St Hilda’s

Employees

Current employees on the payroll of the PCC or the Church of England whose job roles sometimes involve them being alone on Church premises or in the grounds are: the Vicar, any Curate, the Lay Pastoral Minister, Organists (where paid), and the Church Hall Cleaner.

Self-employed people and contracted workers

This includes people who are paid on a sessional basis and whose roles sometimes involve them being alone on Church premises or in the grounds, for example vergers and visiting Clergy.

Volunteers

People who work at St Hilda's as volunteers and whose roles sometimes involve them being alone on Church premises or in the grounds include: Church Wardens, Readers, voluntary Organists, Church cleaners, the gardening team (including those on the lawn mowing rota) and other people who have duties of a voluntary nature.

Risk assessment process

We will follow the process below for each lone worker or group of lone workers.

Hazards

The first stage of a risk assessment is to identify the hazards or main sources of potential harm or adverse health effects arising from working alone (see Appendix) These will be generic for most roles but it is important to identify any that are specific to a particular role.

The main sources of potential harm or adverse health effect on a person or persons arising from lone working are:

- Accessibility to all members of the public;
- The unpredictable behaviour of some members of the public; and
- Limitations on a person's ability to call for assistance when needed due to illness, injury, threat, attack or (inadvertently or deliberately) being locked in.

Identification of risks

For each role and activity, whether the person is employed, self-employed or a volunteer, and in consultation with that person, we will undertake a systematic written identification of the risks i.e. the different likelihoods that the person may be harmed or may suffer adverse health effects if exposed to one of the hazards of lone working.

Assessment of risks

We will consider each risk in terms of whether it has a low, medium or high likelihood of happening and a high, medium or low severity of impact.

Through this we will decide both the priority rating of each risk and the resulting level of action which might be required.

Safety actions and measures

After completing a risk assessment, we will put in place safety measures to remove, reduce or manage each identified risk i.e. we will identify whether it can be reduced or

removed or whether it is acceptable for it to continue, but with a heightened level awareness and with all possible safety measures in place.

Preparing a personal safety plan

We will prepare a personal safety plan for each role. This may be a generic personal safety plan for a group of people who have similar roles and responsibilities. However, we will make each person within the group aware of what this contains and add any risks and safety measures which apply specifically to that individual.

Implementing personal safety plans

Finally, we will implement each personal safety plan. Some of the safety measures can be put in place by the individuals concerned, and some, which involve decisions and/or allocation of resources, will require approval and action from the PCC.

Annual reviews of Risk Assessments and Personal Safety Plans

We will undertake an annual review of each Risk Assessment and Personal Safety Plan and record the results of that review in writing.

We will also review each Risk Assessment and Personal Safety Plan and wider safety measures every time there is a change to the nature of the role involving lone working and each there is a change of the person undertaking that role.

Risk Assessment and Personal Safety Plan templates

Ecclesiastical Insurance, in their Policy and Guidance Notes provide an outline 'Personal Safety Plan for Church People'

The Appendix is a risk assessment check list, designed to help a person or persons to work through the stages of a risk assessment for lone workers at St Hilda's, and to have a record which can be retained centrally and personally, for future reference. This risk assessment check list is divided into sections for identifying hazards, risks, personal safety measures and PCC safety measures. The statements in the check list are partly derived from Ecclesiastical Insurance's personal safety plan.

There are spaces at the bottom of each section to include any hazards, risks and safety measures which apply specifically to that individual.

Each risk assessment can be reviewed and changed at any time. It does not need to go to PCC for approval unless decisions and/or allocation of resources are required from the PCC.

References

In addition to our own experience, the following references have been used in writing these lone working provisions:

- [HSE: Information about health and safety at work www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

- <http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/Images/Church%20insurance%20health%20and%20safety%20policy%20with%20guidance%20notes.pdf>
- <http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/Images/Personal%20safety%20plan.pdf>
- 'Practical Church Management. A Guide for Every Parish' James Behrans (2008)

Appendix

A Risk Assessment Record and Personal Safety Plan template for Lone Workers in the premises and grounds of St Hilda's Church.

Name of Worker Employee / Sessional Worker / Volunteer?

Role Location

Details of Lone Working

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Hazard	
H1	Accessibility to all members of the public.
H2	The unpredictable behaviour of some members of the public.
H3	Limitations on ability to call for assistance when needed due to illness, injury, threat or attack.
H4	
H5	

Risk	
R1	A sudden onset of illness
R2	An episode or worsening of an existing illness
R3	Injury due to falling
R4	Injury due to an accident
R5	Injury due to an unexpected assault
R6	Lack of an escape route
R7	Inability to call for help
R8	Inability to receive a response to a call for help

Risk	
R9	Other people unlocking a locked door without your knowledge
R10	Lack of access to keys to lock or unlock a door
R11	A key which does not unlock the door from the inside
R12	Feeling trapped in an unsolicited conversation
R13	Being alone with an angry person
R14	Feeling threatened, pressurised or afraid
R15	Being asked for help in ways which are beyond your scope or means
R16	
R17	

Personal Safety Measures	
PS1	Never be alone in the Church or Church Hall with the doors unlocked, no matter for how short a time.
PS2	Whenever practicable, have someone else with you.
PS3	Do not leave keys lying around.
PS4	Ensure you have an escape route.
PS5	Ensure that someone else knows where you are.
PS6	Always have a mobile phone with you and ensure that it is easily accessible.
PS7	Ensure that you know how to speed dial the emergency services from your phone.
PS8	Ensure that you know where the first aid equipment is and how to use it.
PS9	
PS10	

PCC Safety Measures	
PCC1	A clear policy that no one should be alone in the Church or Church Hall with the doors unlocked, no matter for how short a time.
PCC2	A policy of ensuring that in consultation with the individuals concerned, risk assessments are completed and safety measures are put in place for all employees, sessional workers and volunteers whose duties include lone working.
PCC3	A policy of ensuring that risk assessments and safety measures are regularly reviewed.
PCC4	An inventory of who holds keys to the Church and Church Hall.
PCC5	A quality check of these keys to ensure that the door keys work for both locking and unlocking from the inside as well as the outside.
PCC8	Provision of training or awareness sessions about managing risk and about how to respond to angry or potentially violent people and about first aid
PCC9	Access to adequate first aid equipment
PCC10	Provision of CCTV cameras