



Christ Church, Staines-upon-Thames

Health and Safety Policy

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) understands that we owe a duty of care to ensure the safety of those who visit or use our church, hall or church land.

We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we must meet the requirements of health and safety law. We know that if we are an employer having five or more employees, we are required to have a written health and safety policy. Although we do not currently have such employees, we are aiming to follow best practice and have drafted this policy to meet the duty under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

General statement of policy

Our policy is 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, hall hirers and others who may use the church, church land or any other building we are responsible for. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The PCC accepts its overall responsibility for this. We will ensure that adequate resources are made available to achieve this objective and allocate resources according to our health and safety action plan. Any decisions we make will have due regard to our responsibilities.

We will appoint a member of the PCC to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation. To keep matters under review, we will include 'health and safety' as a standing item on the agenda for all meetings of the PCC. We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

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 and offered training where necessary.

Further details about our church and arrangements for managing health and safety is set out in this document. A copy of it will be kept in the church and made available to others on request.

Signed:

The Revd James Bunyan

on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, as agreed at a meeting on:

6th November 2025

1. Organisation and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for implementing our policy lies with the Parochial Church Council.

The PCC will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy satisfy any health and safety law, seeking specialist health and safety advice if necessary.

The Churchwardens have day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy.

They will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy are carried out.

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.

2. General Arrangements

This section sets out our general arrangements for managing health and safety.

2.1 Competent Assistance

Where necessary, we will appoint someone who is competent to assist us in meeting our health and safety obligations. Where such an appointment is made, we will record the details.

2.2 Risk Assessment

Where necessary, we will complete risk assessments to identify what we need to do to comply with health and safety law. We will record our findings, implementing any necessary precautions. We will review and revise these where they are no longer valid.

2.3 Information and Training

We will provide any necessary information and training for our employees and volunteers in a timely manner. We will keep a record of what is provided. We will also give relevant information to contractors and hall hirers who may need this to complete their work safely.

2.4 First Aid

We will provide adequate first aid facilities including, as a minimum, suitably stocked first aid boxes (in the church and hall) and a person who will take charge of the first aid arrangements. A defibrillator is located in the church, adjacent to the entrance to the toilets. We will also provide relevant information for employees and volunteers.

Our first aid boxes are in: The Church Vestry and the Hall Kitchen.

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is: Lois Bunyan.

2.5 Accident Reporting

We will record details of any accidents that occur (in an accident book). We will report to the enforcing authority and keep records of certain accidents to employees, volunteers and members of the public in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. All major accidents and incidents will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The Accident Book is kept in:

The Church Vestry.

2.6 Monitoring

We will make periodic checks to ensure that our precautions remain effective and adequate. We will carry out an annual maintenance inspection of the Church building and the Halls. We will also ensure that any lifting, work or electrical equipment and church utilities are inspected as necessary to ensure that they remain safe. We will keep records of the checks we make.

2.7 Contractors

If we employ contractors, we make sure that they have their own health and safety policy and Public and Employers' Liability Insurance by asking to see copies of the relevant documents before they start work.

2.8 Record Keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments, records and other documents are kept in:

The Church Vestry.

3. Specific Arrangements

This section deals with arrangements for managing specific risks.

3.1 Asbestos

We will take steps to identify the presence of asbestos in our buildings and, if so, assess any risk from it. We will then implement any plan to manage that risk. We will also provide relevant information to others who might need it (e.g. building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

3.2 Church Buildings

We will ensure that the fabric of our buildings is regularly inspected to make sure it is safe. Defects will be repaired as soon as is practicable bearing in mind that a Faculty may be required and funds sought. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made. This will include glazing. The Church spire will be inspected every ten years.

3.3 Church grounds

We will ensure that boundary walls, gates and pathways and paving are kept in good repair. Where appropriate, we will have trees inspected by a competent person and have any necessary work carried out to make them safe.

3.4 Construction Work

Where maintenance, refurbishment and restoration work is planned for our church, we will identify what we need to do to ensure the safety of all those concerned (contractors, visitors and hall hirers) 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.

3.5 Display Screen Equipment

Where our employees and volunteers regularly use computers, for continuous periods of an hour or more daily, we will analyse workstations to identify precautions, implementing these as necessary. We will also provide information, training, eye/eyesight tests (on request) and spectacles if needed.

3.6 Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliance is inspected, tested and maintained by someone who is competent to prevent danger. We aim to carry out Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) of electrical appliances every two years* but any defective equipment e.g. damaged cables or leads will be replaced immediately. Any defective equipment will not be used until it is repaired or replaced. We will keep records of the checks made. The lightning conductor will also be inspected annually. (* The Health and Safety Executive advise that The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 require that any electrical equipment that has the potential to cause injury is maintained in a safe condition. However, the Regulations do not specify what needs to be done, by whom or how frequently (i.e. they do not make inspection or testing of electrical appliances a legal requirement, nor do they make it a legal requirement to undertake this annually).)

3.7 Events

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

3.8 Fire

We will complete a specific risk assessment to identify what steps are necessary to prevent, detect and 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 that they are no longer valid. Fire extinguishers will be inspected annually.

3.9 Heating Systems

We will ensure that any electric, oil or gas heating system is suitably maintained and

checked annually by a competent person. Any defects found will be corrected immediately and we will keep records of the checks made.

3.10 Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning or horticultural products and petrol. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

3.11 Lifting Equipment

We will ensure that any lifting equipment is properly maintained and thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person.

3.12 Manual Handling

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

3.13 Oil Storage

Where we store large quantities of oil, we will take adequate precautions to ensure that oil cannot leak into the ground or any water course. This may include the provision of a double skinned plastic tank, an adequate bund, regular checks and proper maintenance etc.

3.14 Preparation of Food

We will only serve food that has been prepared by volunteers or employees who have completed the Food Safety and Hygiene Certificate Level 2. We will not serve or share food prepared at home by parishioners who do not hold this certificate. We will ensure that on those occasions when we prepare food in the Hall kitchen, we use a clean and disinfected work surface, utensils and equipment. We will store food in such a way as to avoid contamination, provide hand-washing facilities and suitable arrangements for the disposal of waste. We will ensure that any refrigerator or freezer is maintained and has required temperature control for food. We will not bring food with peanuts or crustaceans to the church or hall, but we will warn those attending functions where food is served that we cannot guarantee to prevent cross-contamination.

3.15 Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty frail, elderly or disabled people 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, handrails, lighting) remain adequate. We will correct any defects identified, keeping records of the checks, we make. We will have arrangements in place to manage pathways in winter weather.

3.16 Working at Height

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 apply to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury. A place is 'at height' if a person could be injured falling from it but excludes staircases. As part of the Regulations, duty holders must ensure:

- all work at height is properly planned and organised
- those involved in work at height are competent
- the risks from work at height are assessed and appropriate work equipment is selected and used
- the risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled.

Where possible we will try to avoid the need for work at height. Where this is not practicable, we will ensure that any work is properly planned to identify suitable precautions. No person will work at height on their own. We will make sure that these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

3.17 Work Equipment

Any work equipment (including any hand tools) we provide will be suitable, in good condition and properly maintained. Where necessary, some equipment (such as ladders) will be regularly checked to make sure they are safe. We will keep records of any checks we make.

3.18 Working Alone

We will identify circumstances where our employees and volunteers work alone and implement suitable precautions to ensure their safety. See separate Christ Church Lone Working Policy.

3.19 Safeguarding

The PCC has agreed a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually. That policy and the training and reporting mechanisms put in place to implement it, sit alongside the Health and Safety Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the PCC and next in:

November 2027.

We acknowledge Ecclesiastical Insurance in the use of their model Health and Safety Policy for small churches on which this policy is based.