

ST LUKE'S CHURCH PAROCHIAL
CHURCH COUNCIL MAIDENHEAD

Health & Safety Policy Statement

Signed

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Position **Vicar**

Date **7th March 2023**

Safety Officer – Simon Bader

ST LUKE'S CHURCH PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MAIDENHEAD

Health & Safety Policy Statement

This is the health & safety policy statement of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Luke's Church, Maidenhead and applies to the premises of the Church, Parish Communal Area and Churchyard

It is intended that it should cover the recommendations and requirements of our insurers, **Ecclesiastical Insurance** and will cover their Guidance Notes on Church Health & Safety.

Health & Safety legislation applies to all places of religious worship. The **Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974** requires every employer with 5 or more employees to *"prepare and bring to the notice of their employees a written statement of their general policy with respect to health and safety at work of their employees and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out that policy."* Although St Luke's PCC has fewer than 5 paid employees the **Health & Safety Executive (HSE)** now regards volunteers as employees and persons who make use of volunteers as employers.

This policy is reviewed annually by the PCC.

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the **Parochial Church Council (PCC)**.

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice is delegated to the **Safety Officer**.

All users of the Church, Churchyard and Parish Communal Area have a duty to:

- Co-operate with the **PCC** on health & safety issues
- Take reasonable care of their own health & safety and that of others
- Report all health & safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement)

Health & Safety Risks Arising from Our Activities

Risk assessments will be undertaken by the **Safety Officer, Vicar**, or by other persons as requested by the **PCC**.

The findings of risk assessments will be reported to the **PCC**

The action to remove or control risks will be approved by the **PCC**.

The **Safety Officer** will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented.

The **Safety Officer** will check that the implemented actions have removed or controlled the risks.

Assessments will be reviewed every 12 months, when the work activity changes or following an incident, whichever is the soonest.

Church Fabric

Responsibility for fabric issues is delegated to the **Fabric Committee** by the **PCC**.

The **Fabric Committee** will be responsible for identifying all fabric needing maintenance.

The **Fabric Committee** will be responsible for ensuring that effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.

The **Fabric Committee** will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

Any problems found with the Church fabric should be reported to a **Churchwarden**, **Assistant Churchwarden** or the **Vicar** .

Information, Instruction and Supervision

Health & Safety advice is available from the **Safety Officer**.

Accidents & First Aid

First aid boxes are located at the back of Church on the cabinet to the left of the main door and in the parish office. These should be checked and re-stocked on a regular basis by the Health and Safety Officer.

Accident books are kept by each of the first aid kits in which all incidents are to be recorded. The **Safety Officer** will be responsible for investigating all entries and bring any recommendations to the attention of the **PCC**.

Churchyard

When litter-picking care should be taken as hazardous waste may be found. Gloves and stout shoes should be worn.

In the event of used syringes being found they should be placed in a sharp's container using tongs or forceps. Sharps boxes and forceps can be obtained on an exchange basis from the Community Warden.

The **Parish Administrator** shall be responsible for requesting these as required.

The graves and headstones will be checked annually, and the results and any defects will be reported to the relevant council department.

Boiler Room

The gate at the bottom of the steps to the boiler room will be kept locked when not in use. The steps leading down to the boiler room will be inspected every 6 months and cleared of moss and growth. The action will be recorded.

Fire Safety

The **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** applies to all places of worship and states that a comprehensive, annually revised assessment will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of fire precautions. The **Safety Officer** will be responsible for ensuring this is done and reporting any significant findings to the **PCC**.

Safeguarding

The **PCC** will appoint a **Safeguarding Officer** who will be responsible for maintaining the Parish Safeguarding Policy following the guidelines laid down by the **Diocese of Oxford** and the **House of Bishops**.

Ladders & Stepladders

Ladders are a means of access, not a working platform and so should be used only for minor jobs of short duration (30 minutes or less) which require the use of only one hand so that the other hand can be used to hold on to the ladder. **Ecclesiastical Insurance** also advises that no job at a height of over 5 metres should be carried out using a ladder. However, the layout of the church requires a ladder to be used to change light bulbs. To ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of those carrying out this task, the Safe System of Work devised by the **Fabric Committee** must be adhered to. When working at height a ladder safety harness must be worn and a head torch to be used in preference to a hand - held one.

When using any ladder an allowance of one metre of its length should be made above the highest rung being used.

For electrical work, ladders of a non-conductive material should be used or where practicable the power should be switched off.

Ladders must not be painted as this may hide defects.

Stepladders should be used for only minor maintenance at a height not exceeding 2

metres. The platform should never be used to stand on.

An inspection of all equipment used to gain access to places at height should be undertaken and recorded every 6 months. A visual check prior to each use should also be carried out.

Tower

Any work carried out in the tower should always be undertaken when at least one other person is present – either in the tower itself or elsewhere in the Church building. One of these persons must be in possession of a Mobile Phone.

Garden Machinery

Those using their own equipment to care for the Churchyard will be encouraged to follow the manufacturer's recommendations in the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment – including appropriate footwear – and the maintenance of safe distances when operating equipment in the presence of other persons.

Church Evacuation

For regular service's the number of people attending and the familiarity of the majority of these people with the layout of the building mean the provision of a specific evacuation procedure is not warranted.

There are some occasions where special measures may be needed:

- Services with many visitors e.g. Baptisms, Weddings etc.
- Services specifically for children and their families
- Services where large numbers of lighted candles or other hazards are present, and/or the lighting of the Church is dimmed
- Any other occasions where visitors predominate i.e. concerts etc., or the Church is attended to capacity

The exits and toilets are clearly marked, and attention drawn to them as well as the assembly point on the Vicarage forecourt before the event.

In the event of an evacuation the **Welcome Team** will be responsible for escorting people from the building as per the instruction card issued to them, with the **Duty Churchwarden** being the last to leave having ensured no people remain inside. No one is to place themselves in immediate danger whilst doing so.

In case of fire the **Duty Churchwarden, Vicar or Verger** on site will liaise with the Fire Service on their arrival.

Where the church is used by an external group for a concert it shall be the responsibility

of the named contact to have appropriate arrangements in place as outlined in the Terms & Conditions issued to them.

Church Office

When the office, is staffed it is important the person in the office has the Tower door locked so that no one can enter the building unseen. The connecting door into the main body of the church will be left unlocked during the day, however if **Parish Administrator** is alone in building the external door to church must be locked.

It is the **PCC's** responsibility to carry out electric safety checks on equipment in the office

Personal Safety

It is a sad fact of modern life that even when in Church we cannot be sure that we are entirely safe.

The greatest risk arises when people are alone and therefore it is recommended this be avoided where possible. If someone is alone in the church, they may wish to lock the external glass door.

Servery

People using the servery need to be aware that the one tap is used to provide boiling water and great care should be exercised to prevent scalding.

When the servery is in use especially for the serving of tea and coffee it is recommended that the entrance door is kept closed to prevent unnecessary access and also that the number of people behind the counter is kept to a minimum.

When the church is being used by large numbers of children (Messy Church, school visits etc.) and hot drinks are being served to adults these must be served in the safety cups provided.

Fellowship Area

It is recommended that all cupboard doors in the Fellowship Area are kept locked at all times.

Care should be taken when moving tables and chairs in this area especially if folding tables are being taken out of or replaced in the appropriate cupboard.

Lighting

There are activity-operated lights at each of the entrances to the Church.

Appropriate access methods as discussed in the 'Ladders & Stepladders' section of this policy should be referred to in the event of bulbs needing to be replaced.

External floodlighting will be inspected from ground level. Appropriate methods of access are to be used when replacing bulbs depending on their location – contacting the installer if necessary.

Replacing light bulbs in the main church building will require working at height and the guidelines from the **HSE** and **Ecclesiastical Insurance** regarding ladders should be referred to. When replacing bulbs in the Office/Vestry area a stepladder should be used.

Electrical Equipment

The Council for the Care of Churches recommends that fixed installations should be inspected and tested at 5 yearly intervals.

Portable electrical appliances need to be examined at regular intervals with the frequency of such inspections being set by experience. This should be at least annually with equipment subject to heavy usage – for example vacuum cleaners – needing to be examined more frequently.

Any defects with portable electrical appliances should be reported to the **Safety Officer**, a **Churchwarden** or the **Vicar**.

Last review: 8th March 2022. This review: 7th March 2023

Next review: March 2024