

St Paul's Church Health and Safety Policy 2024



Health and Safety Policy

Name St Paul's Church

Address 67, Wickham Avenue, Bexhill on Sea, TN39 3ES

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 churchyard. We also know that, where we are an employer or control premises in certain circumstances, we have to meet the requirements of health and safety law.

In particular, we know that if we are an employer having five or more employees, we are required to have a written health and safety policy. As such, we have drafted this policy to meet our duty under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

St Paul's has a small congregation, with **no paid staff**; the minister, Rev Dr P J Gadsden does not receive a stipend and is independently financed.

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 members, congregation and visitors and others who may use the church, churchyard, car park or hall. This will be in accordance with good practice and any relevant statutory provisions where they apply.

The Elders and Deacons accepts its 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 for it. We will appoint a member of the Eldership to have specific responsibility for this policy and its implementation.

We will keep health and safety matters under review at appropriate intervals.

We will monitor the effectiveness of the policy, amending it where we believe it is no longer valid.

It is the duty of each member, associate and visitor 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 his or her part in its implementation.

Further detail about our church body 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.

St Paul's Church and responsibilities

1. The person with overall responsibility for implementing our policy is

Rev. Dr. P J Gadsden

- The standards set out in this policy are implemented and maintained
- Where necessary, specialist health and safety assistance is obtained
- Any hazards reported to them are rectified immediately
- Only competent persons carry out repairs, modifications, inspections and tests
- Any accidents are investigated, recorded and reported if necessary
- Relevant health and safety documents and records are retained
- They keep up to date on health and safety matters relevant to the church
- Set a personal example on matters of health and safety

2. The **Deacons** have day-to-day responsibility for implementing our policy.

They will ensure that:

- All employees and volunteers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities
- Adequate precautions are taken as set out in this policy and related risk assessments
- Adequate information and training is provided for those that need it
- Any hazards or complaints are investigated and dealt with as soon as possible
- Where defects cannot be corrected immediately, interim steps are taken to prevent danger
- All accidents are reported in-line with the requirements of this policy
- Advice is sought where clarification is necessary on the implementation of this policy
- Set a personal example on matters of health and safety

3. All members of the congregation and associates 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 ensure that they:

- Read this policy and understand what is required of them
- Complete their work taking any necessary precautions to protect themselves and others
- Comply with any safety rules, operating instructions and other working procedures
- Report any hazard, defect or damage, so that this might be dealt with
- Warn any new worshippers, visitors or volunteers of known hazards
- Attend any training required to enable them to carry out their duties safely
- Do not undertake any repair or modification unless they are competent to do so
- Report any accident
- Do not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

Arrangements

This section sets out our general arrangements for managing health and safety and dealing with specific risks.

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

Our person appointed to assist us is: Mr. C Edmondson, CFR (FROS)

Risk Assessment

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 we suspect that they are no longer valid.

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 self-employed people who may need this to complete their work safely.

First Aid

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 for worshippers and volunteers.

Our first aid box is located in:

The Vestry

Our person in charge of first aid arrangements is:

Sarah Edmondson

Accident Reporting

We will keep an accident book and record details therein. 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.

Our Accident Book is kept in: **The Vestry**

Monitoring

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

Contractors

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

Record Keeping

Our Health and Safety Risk Assessments, records and other documents are kept in the filing cabinet in the Vestry

Specific Arrangements

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 (for example, building contractors). We will keep records of the checks, assessments and plans we have made.

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 contractor may be required. Where necessary, temporary measures will be taken to prevent danger until permanent repairs can be made.

This will include glazing.

Churchyard / carpark

We will ensure that boundary walls and gates are kept in good repair. We will have trees inspected by a competent person and have any necessary work carried out to make them safe. Headstones, tombs and monuments will be checked regularly to ensure they are properly maintained.

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 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

Electricity

We will ensure that any electrical system, fixed machine and portable appliances is 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.

Events

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

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.

Heating Systems

We will ensure that any 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.

Hazardous Substances

We only use domestic cleaning products apart from the kitchen where we use professional cleaning products. We will ensure that these are stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions taking any necessary precautions that are specified.

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 *team lifting*.

Preparation of Food

The kitchen is registered with Rother Council's EHO. Food Hygiene Rating: 5

Slips and Trips

We will implement suitable precautions to prevent slips or trips, taking account of any difficulty the frail, elderly or disabled may have in negotiating access. We have wheelchair access to the Sanctuary, and now have 'disabled' access to the hall.

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 manage pathways in winter weather.

Working at Height (use of a ladder)

Where possible we will try and 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. We will make sure that these are implemented, including the provision of any training and checks to ensure the safety of any equipment used.

Work Equipment

Any work equipment (including any hand / gardening 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.

Working Alone

Members of our congregation may work alone, such as for cleaning purposes. We have a guidance sheet with precautions for implementation to ensure personal safety.

Please refer to our Risk Assessment (hard copy in the Vestibule and online via our website: www.saintpaulschurch19.wixsite.com/community/ for further information.